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## Joseph Haydn's "witty" play on Hepokoski and Darcy's *Elements of Sonata Theory*

James Hepokoski/Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth-Century Sonata*, New York: Oxford University Press 2006

Quo vadis, Formenlehre?<sup>1</sup>

Roughly around 1970, interest in the subject of Formenlehre decreased significantly, a trend that went hand in hand with a notable rediscovery of important eighteenth-century sources, in particular composition treatises by Joseph Riepel and Heinrich Christoph Koch.<sup>2</sup> Compared to the extensive and profound treatment Formenlehre received in the first half of the twentieth century as well as in the first post-war decades, after that critical moment very few textbooks, treatises, or studies on musical form were published in either German- or English-speaking countries.<sup>3</sup> Symptomatic of this tendency is Clemens

Kühn's diagnosis from 1987 that Formenlehre owed its bad reputation to its schematic approach, which tends to neglect both the individuality of musical works and their historical dimension.<sup>4</sup> About a decade before, Carl Dahlhaus had spelled out the radical implications of a Formenlehre that abandons its persistent focus on the general in favor of a thorough examination of the particular: "The consequence of a theory that regards musical form as individuality and musical individuality as form is, however, a dissolution of Formenlehre into analysis."<sup>5</sup> As a result, Formenlehre would ultimately be deprived of its pedagogical half, the *Lehre* (the teaching of form), and would thus turn into the *analysis* of the variety of *forms* that emerge from individual pieces under changing historical conditions.<sup>6</sup> However, according to Dahlhaus, formal models (though abstract in themselves) continue to play an essential role as heuristic tools that serve to reveal the individuality of a musical composition: the degree to which a given work departs from an assumed normative system is seen as a measure of its uniqueness.<sup>7</sup>

- 1 I would like to thank (in alphabetical order) Pieter Bergé, Poundie Burstein, Felix Diergarten, David Lodewyckx, and Christoph Wald for their critical readings of earlier drafts of this paper, as well as Claire Blacher for her help with language editing. The research presented here has been supported by the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO).
- 2 Riepel 1996 and Koch 2007. Important studies from the 1970s and 80s on the historical sources of form theory are cited in the editor's introduction to Koch's *Versuch*, see Koch 2007, 12 f.
- 3 Textbooks, treatises, and studies written in the twentieth century up to 1970 include those by Riemann 1902, Krehl 1902-1903, Richter 1904, Leichtentritt 1911, Stöhr 1911, Tovey 1911/1944, Goetschius 1915, Klauwell/Niemann 1918, Blessinger 1926, von Tobel 1935, Daniskas 1948, Ratz 1951, Lemacher/Schroeder 1962, Stein 1962, Green 1965, Berry 1966, Schoenberg 1967, Stockmeier 1967, and Erpf 1967. Formenlehre treatises between 1970 and 1998 include Kohs 1976, Altmann 1981, Rosen 1980 (1988), and Kühn 1987.

4 Kühn 1987, 7.

5 Dahlhaus 1978, 177 [my translation]; see also Dahlhaus 1975, 4.

6 Representative of the contempt for form in the last third of the twentieth century, Heinz von Loesch coins the dictum of a "mysterious overestimation of musical form" ("geheimnisvolle Überschätzung der musikalischen Form") with respect to Dahlhaus' work (see von Loesch 1996 [my translation]).

7 Cf. also Dahlhaus 1975, 5: "They [schemata] are viewed, rather, merely as expedient means for a first conceptual approach to a work: just like bridges which one destroys as

In accordance with Kühn, William E. Caplin noted in 1998 that Formenlehre had become disreputable in North American theory as well: "Once a venerable subdiscipline of music theory, the traditional *Formenlehre* [...] has largely been abandoned by theorists and historians, for many reasons."<sup>8</sup> One of the reasons Caplin identifies is the overwhelming influence of Schenkerian theory, which disregarded form as a mere foreground manifestation of the voice-leading processes operative at various background levels of the musical structure. After his stay in Berlin in the 1970s, where he became familiar with Erwin Ratz's *Einführung in die musikalische Formenlehre* in a seminar given by Dahlhaus, Caplin himself made a significant contribution to the revival of Formenlehre through his 1998 treatise *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven*. The genuinely form-functional approach adopted in this book, displaying much greater scientific clarity and rigor than either Ratz's or Schoenberg's treatise, was and still is well-received, not only in English-speaking countries.<sup>9</sup> In part a reaction to Caplin's book, the *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformation in the Late-Eighteenth-Century Sonata* by James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy (hereafter: H. & D.), published in 2006, further revitalized the growing international discussion on Formenlehre that is now beginning to affect the German-language discourse as well.<sup>10</sup>

soon as the passage over to a description of the individuality of the work has been successful."

8 Caplin 1998, 3.

9 Anton Webern also deserves a mention here, since he contributed significantly to the dissemination of the form-functional approach through a series of lectures given in Vienna in the 1930s, see Webern 2002.

10 Some parts of their theory had been published in separate studies prior to the *Elements* (cf., among others, Hepokoski & Darcy 1997 and Hepokoski 2002). Reviews and articles that deal with the *Elements* include Spitzer 2007, Drabkin 2007, Hunt 2007, Wingfield 2008,

The current revival of Formenlehre is closely connected to a renewed interest in sonata form. To be sure, no other form has received such a high degree of attention since the sonata form's extensive theorization began in the early nineteenth century with Antonin Reicha, Heinrich Birnbach, Carl Czerny, A.B. Marx, and others.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, no other form is said to embody the dramatic nature of the so-called "Classical style" (Charles Rosen) as the sonata form does.<sup>12</sup> If this holds true, then it is necessary to continue studying sonata form in order to gain insight into the secrets of this particular stylistic period. In this respect, H. & D.'s monumental and near-exhaustive monograph *Elements of Sonata Theory* in particular might prove promising and doubtless deserves further critical engagement.

H. & D. offer a remarkably sophisticated theory of sonata form, which they call "Sonata Theory." This theory combines a number of philosophical and literary-theoretical approaches (such as hermeneutics, genre theory, literary criticism, phenomenology, reader-response theory, and others)<sup>13</sup> with genuinely music-analytical accounts (e.g., form-functional analysis and Schenker-inspired modes of thinking) in a highly fruitful manner. The authors explicitly restrict the scope of their theory to the discussion of the late-eighteenth century sonata, though they also incorporate to some extent mid-eighteenth-century ("pre-classical") compositions as well as nineteenth-century music as late as Brahms, Liszt, and Mahler.<sup>14</sup> To paint a picture of the historical

Christiaens 2008, Riley 2008, and Whittall 2008. The reception of the *Elements* in Germany is evident, for instance, in Fuß 2009, Hust 2009, and Diergarten 2011 (forthcoming).

11 Reicha 1824, Birnbach 1827, Czerny 1832/1986, and Marx 1838.

12 Rosen 1971.

13 This general intellectual background is made explicit in Appendix 1 ("Some Grounding Principles of Sonata Theory" [603–610]).

14 All the compositions they cite in their treatise are listed in a separate "Index of Works" [639–648].

situation that is as comprehensive as possible, H. & D., unlike some of their precursors, not only take into account the works of the “Classical triad” of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven (the “master composers,” [e.g., 268]), but also include a selection of so-called *Kleinmeister* as well. However, none of their works occupies a prominent place in the *Elements*; mostly, analyses of *Kleinmeister* compositions appear in the footnotes.

One might tend to think that because of the extensive treatment of sonata form since its “birth” in the nineteenth century, not much substantial remains to be said about it; however, H. & D. claim to offer nothing less than a fresh and novel approach to the subject, one that aims to “defamiliarize” an all-too-familiar repertoire – the sonata-form compositions of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven – and thus to enable us “to hear them in [...] more rewarding ways.” [12] To be sure, the *elements* assembled in H. & D.’s “Sonata Theory” are not entirely new, since many of them can also be found in preceding eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and twentieth-century approaches: some key concepts are borrowed from eighteenth-century theories, such as the cadential plan that plays a prominent role in Koch’s interpunction form, and the notion of *Essential Structural Closure* (ESC) that resembles in many respects the type of closure realized in a Schenkerian *Ursatz*.<sup>15</sup> There are, however, also some significant differences to prior theoretical conceptions that deserve mention:

1. Unlike Charles Rosen in his *Sonata Forms* (1980), who (following earlier theorists such as Ratner and Larsen<sup>16</sup>) emphasizes the importance of the harmonic structure (as opposed to the thematic outline), H. & D. seek to rehabilitate the once essential role of the thematic design by focusing on both the arrangement and specific temporal succession of themat-

15 On Koch’s interpunction form, see, for instance, Dahlhaus 1978. H. & D. situate the expositional analogue to the ESC within a Schenkerian conception of sonata form [147–149]

16 Cf. Ratner 1949, Larsen 1963, and Rosen 1988.

tic modules – on what they term (thematic) “rotation.”<sup>17</sup>

2. In contrast to Caplin’s form-functional theory, H. & D. reevaluate what scholars often refer to as “secondary parameters” (i. e., parameters other than harmony) and “rhetorical” features (such as textural or rhythmic breaks), attributing structural significance to them. “Sonata Theory” also differs from Caplin’s theory in that it approaches a composition in a top-down manner, starting with the identification of the most important structural markers (in an expositional context, the so-called “Medial Caesura” (MC) and the “Essential Expositional Closure” (EEC)), proceeding on to the local details that surround them: “Productive analyses often start in the middle of the exposition and work outward to the beginning and the end.” [24] A form-functional approach, by contrast, departs from the basic building blocks (i. e., the intra-thematic functions within each formal section, such as “basic ideas,” “cadential functions,” etc.), and moves on in a bottom-up fashion to ever-increasing units situated on the next higher levels.

H. & D. propose not only novel analytical concepts and methods but also some more general concepts that prove particularly useful in dealing with the thorny problem of sonata-form norms, such as the notion of “dialogue,” multi-layered norm (i. e., the notion of “default levels”), and “deformation” [10f.]. It is characteristic of “Sonata Theory” that it does not stop at a detailed analytic description of the object in question, but also attempts to address hermeneutic issues (considered post-analytical) as well, especially when the formal strategies that materialize in a given piece depart from a normative background, or, to put it in “Sonata Theory’s” terms, “enter into a *dialogue* with an intricate web of interrelated norms” [10]. In addressing the issue of formal norms, music analysts have commonly made use of a rather “tendentious” concept of norm: formal strategies have been regarded as more or less normative than others, with normativity under-

17 On “rotation,” see Appendix 2 [611–614].

stood as essentially a binary concept allowing only two possibilities: “norm” or “deviation.”<sup>18</sup> H. & D., in contrast, offer a multi-layered concept of norm that comprises (in a sonata-form context) no less than four “default levels.” Although they tend to conflate normativity with statistical frequency of occurrence, “Sonata Theory’s” answer to the intricate question of what constitutes the normative background that guides listeners’ expectations is far more precise than previous approaches.<sup>19</sup>

“Sonata Theory’s” notion of “dialogic form” [10; see also 615 ff.], with dialogue understood as an ongoing process unfolding in time, goes hand in hand with the conception of sonata form as an action space, using the historically grounded metaphor of a sonata as “a representation of a perfect human action” [252]. Each section within a sonata-form movement is considered to represent an action space in which composers had a great number of distinct formal options at their disposal from which they could choose at any given moment within a larger temporal sequence. This idea also shows some affinity to the metaphor of a musical game, which re-appears throughout the entire book, along with the teleological notion of a sonata as “a linear journey of tonic realization” [251].

In line with their overall dialogic approach, H. & D. also invite dialogue at the level of academic discourse: “At any point, the method outlined here can be expanded or modified through criticism, correction, or nuance. Indeed, we invite this. The proposed construct

is intended only as a beginning, a work-in-progress – not as a fixed set of finalized dicta. [...] the utility of Sonata Theory as a whole does not rest on the unexceptionable validity of any correctible subpart.” [9]

I gratefully accept this invitation. To be sure, much can be said about H. & D.’s theory, and earlier reviews of this book have already approached it from a variety of perspectives. However, as a Haydn scholar who has been working in the field of *Formenlehre* for several years, I would like to adopt a genuinely Haydnian perspective on “Sonata Theory” – not simply because this is the repertoire I am most familiar with, but also because I believe that such a perspective might prove instructive in revealing some blind spots in H. & D.’s theory.<sup>20</sup> Especially their concept of the ever-witty Haydn [e.g., 49], who constantly plays on formal norms in a highly original manner, seems to me to paint a somewhat misleading picture, both of the composer himself and also, more importantly, of the compositional (formal) practice of the second half of the eighteenth century within which Haydn was working.<sup>21</sup> The notion of “formal wit,” in particular, implies that the norms with which a certain composer is playing have already been firmly established beforehand.<sup>22</sup> However, it can be argued that this is not invariably the case with all the strategies put forth in the *Elements*: there are some supposedly “witty” ambiguities H. & D. identify in conjunction with Haydn that only come about through application of an anachronistic and

18 Such a binary notion of norm can be found in, e.g., Caplin’s *Classical Form* 1998.

19 For a critical evaluation of the problem of defining “general practice” statistically, see Rosen 1988, 6. Unfortunately, in not laying bare detailed results of their statistical research (nor the methods used), H & D behave somewhat like those scholars Robert Gjerdingen once characterized as bandying “about words like ‘typical’, ‘characteristic’, or ‘standard’ with the open confidence of embezzlers who, knowing that they alone keep the books, cannot imagine being called to account.” (Gjerdingen 1991, 127)

20 Previous reviews have tended to focus on specific repertoire: Spitzer (2007) prevailingly on Beethoven, Drabkin (2007) on Mozart and Beethoven, Wingfield (2008) on Clementi and the sonata-form practice of the nineteenth century. My approach, by contrast, deals with sonata form from the perspective of an earlier mid-eighteenth-century tradition, since this is the repertoire that provides the context for an adequate historical understanding of the so-called “Classical” period.

21 Cf. Wingfield 2008, 147.

22 On the relation between “Witz” and “deformation” [see 618].

(in some respects) ahistorical framework of theory. Adopting a more rigid historical point of view, by contrast, would help resolve or at least attenuate some of these alleged ambiguities. Therefore, I will address each of the three main sections within a sonata-form movement (focusing on what H. & D. call "Type 3 sonata"), restricting myself to exposition, development, and recapitulation, in order to illustrate my points of concern.

### The concept of the "medial caesura" and different types of exposition

H. & D. differentiate between two types of expositions according to the presence (or absence) of what they call the "medial caesura" (MC) – a rhythmical break following a cadence roughly midway through the sonata form's first section that subdivides it into two tonally distinct parts.<sup>23</sup> If an exposition exhibits such a caesura, they term the resulting formal type a "two-part exposition;" if it lacks a medial caesura, however, the resultant exposition is said to be "continuous." Moreover, the presence of a "medial caesura" not only determines the formal type of exposition but is also closely connected to the rhetorical character as well as the form-functional role of the passage that follows the MC, notably whether or not this passage can be considered a true "second theme" in the subordinate-key area ("S" stands for "secondary-theme zone"). "Sonata Theory's" axiomatic words seem to create a strictly deterministic relationship between two formal concepts: "If there is no medial caesura there is no second theme."<sup>24</sup> [52;

23 Evidently, their focus on such rhetorical markers stands in the Kochian tradition of inter-punctuation form (see Hepokoski & Darcy 1997, 115). Spitzer consequently uses the term "punctuation model" in conjunction with "Sonata Theory" (see Spitzer 2007, 151).

24 See also: "As a result, when one is dealing with a continuous exposition, one should not try to determine where the secondary theme (S) is located: there is none, since that concept pertains only to the two-part exposition. Seeking to determine where the second-

117] This statement, in its scientific precision, will doubtless provoke critical debate, even more so since it remains unclear whether it is to be understood as a definitional proposition or an empirical one.<sup>25</sup>

As to the former, one could assume that the absence of a medial caesura implies *by definition* the lack of a true second theme. The medial caesura would then be considered an indispensable prerequisite for a second theme to come into existence. It seems unlikely, however, that such an interpretation along purely logical lines was intended, especially when considering the fact that the authors had attenuated their strict, axiomatic statement a few pages earlier by acknowledging that "[u]nequivocal S themes lacking a preceding MC are very rare." [49] The principal (though, according to their view, infrequently chosen) possibility for a second theme to occur in compositional practice despite the lack of a preceding MC suggests that H. & D.'s statement is meant to be understood as an "empirical" assertion, one that aims to describe a prevailing tendency (a striking correlation between two formal concepts) within a given repertoire, rather than what would amount to a "logical implication." After all, it remains unclear why the formal role of a given section (here, S) should depend on what precedes it (in this case, the MC) more than on its own intrinsic features. The crucial question would thus be, to what extent the lack of an MC can be said to override the unequivocal intrinsic formal character of a larger segment (here, its clear "S-ness").<sup>26</sup>

In contrast, interpreting the assertion as empirical would imply that H. & D., in their extensive survey, found not a single instance that lacks a medial caesura and, at the same time, contains a second theme. Examination of this interpretation of H & D's statement

ary theme is within a continuous exposition makes invalid assumptions about expected thematic treatment." [52]

25 Critical remarks can be found in Wingfield 2008, 166 f. and Caplin 2009, 53; 59–61.

26 Cf. Caplin 2009, 60.



leads again to unsatisfactory results. Paul Wingfield, in his review of the *Elements*, levels criticism at the universal character of H. & D.'s axiom by pointing out the practice of a later, nineteenth-century repertoire: "Of course, there are many movements with supposedly 'continuous' expositions that contain what appears in rhetorical terms to be an incontrovertible secondary theme despite the lack of a medial caesura, a choice of layout that became increasingly common in the nineteenth century."<sup>27</sup> The problem Wingfield raises is, however, acknowledged by H. & D., who point to some cases in which "[...] the identification of S seems clear – even unequivocal – but what precedes it does not seem to be a normative medial caesura."<sup>28</sup> [48] In the face of this qualification, the unnecessary strictness of the "MC-S axiom" might surprise readers, especially considering that the discussion of "troubleshooting MC identifications" [48 f.] takes place *before* H. & D. propose their axiom. The section on "troubleshooting MC identifications," which suggests four possible ways of dealing with this specific problem, makes it clear that the universality with which the axiom is stated seems scarcely justifiable.

It is in the context of this particular discussion that Haydn takes on the role of a "problematic" composer (albeit in a positive sense), one who subversively and highly originally plays with or even undermines formal conventions.<sup>29</sup> Here, the authors refer to Haydn's

very last Piano Sonata in E-flat major (Hob. XVI:52/i; composed in 1794), which they interpret in a way that may be considered paradigmatic of their whole analytic approach: "In this movement, 'preprepared' generic themes seem *wittily* to enter in the wrong (non-normative) places. Surely the work *is about these ambiguities*, which should be folded into any analytical discussion of the movement. The point of any analysis is not to smooth over difficulties but rather to bring forth the tensions and dilemmas presented by the piece at hand." [49; my emphasis] To be sure, H. & D. caution that "merely to label the sturdy, dominant-key reappearance in m. 17 of the head-motive of P [primary theme] as 'S' would be reductive without a sufficient accompanying explanation." [49]<sup>30</sup> However, what they offer as an alternative to the classificatory approach, the interpretation of Haydn's compositional choices as a witty engagement with formal norms, is hardly satisfying. If a given piece does not conform to an assumed formal model (or to formal norms), H. & D. prefer to proceed to a meta-level and regard the work in question as representing a meta-discourse *about* formal norms, thus alluding to the old nineteenth-century topos of music reflecting on its own rules and conditions. In so doing, H. & D. make it clear that they do not intend to resolve the ambiguity they recognize in a given piece [63]. Rather, their declared aim in music analysis is to *explicate* the very conditions under which a state of ambiguity can arise, and to propose viable interpretative options to deal with such situations. However, ambiguity can in principle only come into being when a particular theory is applied to a given analytical object in a consistent and rigid manner. Similarly, invoking the notion of formal wit is to presuppose the validity of a given formal model from which the analytical

27 Wingfield 2008, 166 f.

28 The opposite case – an unequivocal MC without subsequent S – is conceivable as well, as, for instance, in Haydn's Piano Sonata Hob. XVI:37/i, in which one encounters a prototypical MC gesture (m. 16), but the ensuing material refuses to fit the conventional notion of a genuine second theme.

29 In H. & D.'s words: "In Haydn this situation is sometimes made more recognizable by the quirks of his own compositional practice. [...] Still, lacking a proper MC, such expositions *thematize ambiguities and conceptual discomforts*, which are sometimes played out cleverly in what follows in the rest of the structure." [49; my emphasis]

30 Note that "explanation" (as opposed to labeling) is not used in the sense of "scientific explanation" here. Throughout the book, (hermeneutic) "explanation" of formal choices means their contextualization in the dialogic web of a normative backdrop.

object in question deviates in such a way as to lead analysts to assume that this deviation (or “deformation”) has been purposefully made. Instead of casting doubt on their own analytical pre-assumptions and axioms (in particular, the notion that there must be an MC in order for a second theme to exist), they attribute witty intentions to the analytical object itself, thus protecting their theoretical model from falsification.<sup>31</sup> However, since H. & D. subscribe to Dahlhaus’ heuristic understanding of formal models [386 f.], it is all the more surprising that the authors tend to think of wit as a property of the musical object itself, rather than regarding wit as a result of the use of twenty-first century formal models, as they acknowledge elsewhere: “These heuristic norms need not be considered as literally existing ‘things.’ Rather, they may be understood as [...] what we prefer to consider as regulative guides for interpretation.” [8]

Though H. & D.’s analysis of Haydn’s E-flat major Keyboard Sonata is rather fragmentary, it might prove instructive to reconstruct the assumed compositional problems that puzzle the authors of the *Elements* – all the more so when bearing in mind that this particular example is regarded as “a textbook illustration of the uncertainties involved with these sorts of issues [i.e., troubleshooting MC identifications]” [49]: the transition (mm. °11–16) here is countergenerally played *piano* (instead of *forte*, as expected), thus allegedly giving the impression of being “rendered indecisive.” Owing to its intrinsic features (especially the reference to the incipit of the main theme in m. 1), the module starting at m. 17 is understood as the “second theme” despite the lack of an MC preceding it: there is no rhythmic break anywhere between the prolonged dominant of the half cadence (V:HC in m. 14) and the second theme, thus giving rise to

31 With lesser-known *Kleinmeister*, the typical reaction of many analysts would be to assume a flaw on the part of the composer rather than witty intentions. This suggests that often the analytical assessment is implicitly (or unconsciously) guided by knowledge of the identity of the composer.

what H. & D. call “a medial caesura deformation” (that is, “a genuinely unusual situation, an overriding of the norm” [49]).<sup>32</sup>

The following account proposed by H. & D. further illustrates the complexities that result from the mutual dependency of the available sonata-form categories (in particular MC, S, EEC, and C): “If so, then S-space is declared by *fiat* in that measure. This in turn leads to *complications down the road*: is the early V:PAC in m. 27, for example, the EEC? And if so, how does one account for the re-emergence of a *forte*, P-based module at m. 33?” [49; my emphasis] This is a highly remarkable statement, one that has particularly revealing implications as to the underlying theory: first, there can in principle be only one true moment of EEC and only one (true) second theme preceding it, an assumption that is in line with the basic teleological model of sonata form H. & D. have inherited from Schenker.<sup>33</sup> If the (early!) V:PAC in m. 27 is considered the EEC, then the subsequent P-based module at m. 33 in the dominant key cannot be, by definition, the second theme. It must therefore be granted the formal status of a closing section (C).<sup>34</sup> The next difficulty, not mentioned by H. & D., is the emphatic V:PAC in mm. 39–40, a particu-

32 In the analyses presented here, the following abbreviations will be used: PAC (perfect authentic cadence), IAC (imperfect authentic cadence), and HC (half cadence). The Roman Numeral used in conjunction with a particular cadential type indicates the key in which this cadence takes place (e.g., I:PAC denotes a perfect authentic cadence in the tonic key).

33 Similar reservations also apply to expositions with an apparent “double medial caesura” [170–177]. Here, the first MC is typically characterized as somehow preliminary or even “false.”

34 In Schenker’s own interpretation, outlined in *Der Tonwille*, the first V:PAC by no means terminates the exposition as a whole but only what he refers to as the first of two “Teilgedanken” that make up the second-theme zone, thus dividing it into two parts. It is only after the second V:PAC that the closing section enters (cf. Schenker 1922, 3–21, and Garland 1999, 184).



larly strong cadential closing gesture that likewise carries potential structural importance. This, of course, raises problems as to where one should locate both the MC and the EEC. As a third-level default MC, the V:PAC at m. 27 would appear too late; the secondary key has already been unequivocally established in m. 14 (V:HC).<sup>35</sup> As an EEC, the V:PAC would occur somewhat too early, given the dimensions of the exposition.<sup>36</sup> One could imagine – as a kind of thought experiment that serves to test our analytical intuitions – that if the exposition ended somewhere shortly before m. 33 with another strong V:PAC, no one would hesitate to read m. 27 as the moment of EEC. Given the assumption that the musical process as a whole is teleologically directed toward a particular moment of structural closure, the fact that such a moment would occur twice (a possibility that is, by definition, excluded) would then considerably undermine the closing quality of each of these moments: structural closure can by definition only occur once; otherwise, the earlier closing gesture is said to be preliminary or “false” (i. e., misleading). On the other hand, assuming the possibility of more than one structurally important closing gesture would only be consistent with a less “dramatic” (teleological) conception of sonata form, one that is more circular in nature.

Let us briefly consider an alternative interpretation of Haydn’s sonata, one that takes into account a cyclic, ritornello-based type of sonata form: to begin with, one might argue that the transition is introduced *piano* because the recurring main-theme idea (mm. 1–5; 9–10) is invariably stated *forte*, a reading that pays attention to the resulting dynamic drama-turgy of alternating *forte* and *piano* passages

35 First-level default: V:HC MC; second-level default: I:HC MC; and fourth-level default: I:PAC MC.

36 This is, of course, a fact that a listener who is following the music in real time learns at the very end of the exposition. As H. & D. point out, temporal proportions play a crucial role in guiding the analyst’s decisions. On the issue of temporal location of MCs, see also James MacKay 2004, 39–68.

characteristic of ritornello forms (this alternation applies not only to the transition “proper” but to mm. 6–8 as well). The “monothematic” design realized in Haydn’s movement likewise shows retention of the ritornello principle that was manifest in several forms of the second half of the eighteenth century (e. g., in aria and concerto forms). In László Somfai’s words: “Three variants of the first theme articulate the exposition [of Hob. XVI:52/i], as if *ritornelli*.”<sup>37</sup> As a result, the concerto-like design seems to be superimposed on what one would commonly regard as a genuine sonata form. Such an explanation, drawing on the potential influence of the baroque concerto form, might prove historically more apt to account for the multiple recurrences of the primary theme in distinct formal zones (notably in the secondary-key area).

A second major point I would like to make regarding H. & D.’s theory of the exposition concerns the genuinely historical relationship between two-part and continuous expositions. In H. & D.’s view, the continuous exposition must be understood as being derived from the two-part exposition, the former supposedly playing on the normative background provided by the latter. The two-part exposition is said to be the far more frequent standard format, while the continuous exposition occurs less frequently in the repertoire. This particular relationship, the priority of the two-part over the continuous exposition, is also central because it enables the psychological effect of typological conversion historically-informed listeners might experience: “When we are presented instead with a continuous exposition of the expansion-section subtype, there is usually a moment of psychological conversion [...] – a personal understanding at some mid-expositional point that the more standard, two-part form is not going to be realized.” [52]

If this holds true, the qualification that one specific type of continuous exposition, the so-called “expansion-section subtype” (“subtype 1”), also appears in “pieces from the earlier part of the century” [54] might surprise read-

37 Somfai 1995, 235 (my emphasis).

ers. In addition to G. B. Sammartini's symphonies and C. P. E. Bach's *Prussian* and *Württemberg* Sonatas from the 1740s [64, note 13], H. & D. cite Haydn's Symphony No. 13/i (from 1763) as an early instance of a continuous exposition. However, these pieces were written at a time when the two-part exposition was not yet fully developed. As a result, the medial caesura (particularly in the form of a half cadential goal midway through the exposition) was not among the most preferred choices for a mid-eighteenth-century composer. It is thus questionable, from a historical point of view, whether one can justifiably speak of an "MC declined" [45–47, 53] here, a concept closely related to the overall formal type of a continuous exposition. In Haydn's Symphony No. 13/i, for instance, the first potential cadence in the subordinate key – a V:PAC that promises structural closure rather than an MC – is denied at m. 28 in favor of a deceptive cadential goal (vi). It is only at the very end of the exposition (in m. 34) that the first and final V:PAC occurs (repeating the previously failed cadential process in mm. 31–34), thus providing the essential structural closure (EEC) that H. & D. suggest. This example, however, is markedly different in many respects from later cases, such as Haydn's Symphony No. 96/i (from 1791), or from other instances that clearly give the impression of MC proposals that have been *purposefully* rejected within a potentially "witty zone of conversion from a two-part to a continuous exposition" [58].<sup>38</sup>

This particular historical issue regarding the chronological precedence of one expositional type over another also emerges in cases in which the categorical distinction between MC and EEC is decidedly blurred. Clearly, unlike the more natural choice of an HC MC (either in the key of V or, less frequently, in the tonic key), third-level default MCs (V:PACs) pose a conspicuous problem for the theory [27–29]. According to H. & D., these MCs frequently occurred in "earlier and briefer works" [27], such as, for instance, some of Haydn's early pieces from the 1760s (e.g., in his Symphony No. 10/i, to be discussed below). The problem lies in the fact that V:PAC MCs "are heard as

signs of closure, not of expectancy" because "they sound the same perfect authentic cadence that will define the EEC concluding the second theme [...]." [27] Thus, these V:PACs give rise to potential confusion over their formal/structural function, notably whether they are to be understood as MCs or EECs. Three criteria are proposed that might help the analyst distinguish between these two interpretive options [28–29]: (1) One important factor is the "temporal location" of the V:PAC: the later it appears in the exposition, the more likely it acts as an EEC rather than an MC. Criteria (2) and (3), by contrast, relate to what one might call the "local context," in particular what directly *precedes* and what *follows* the cadential moment: (2) how was the V:PAC prepared and introduced, and (3) is the ensuing passage more S- or more C-like in its rhetorical character? H. & D. note that such a "situation arises with some frequency in Haydn, who had a fondness for planting a decisive V:PAC in the 55–70 percent range of the exposition." [29] Haydn's choice is again understood as giving rise to a potential ambiguity, to a "witty or purposefully 'difficult' gesture" [29, note 7]. It is only in a footnote that H. & D. suggest the possibility of a third type of exposition, "perhaps one customized by Haydn for individual use or perhaps one known to him from more local traditions?" Since H. & D. add between brackets the remark that "similar situations crop up also in midcentury sonatas of less-known composers," they could have easily (and justifiably) abandoned the question mark, especially when considering extensive studies by Wilhelm Fischer, Michael Polth, Poundie Burstein, and others, who have shown persuasively how widespread this particular compo-

38 With regard to Haydn's String Quartet op. 33 No. 1/iv, which H. & D. refer to as the "locus classicus" of the continuous exposition, it is questionable whether a historical listener would have indeed expected an MC midway through the exposition. The exposition of this movement unfolds so logically in a "Fortspinnungs"-like manner that one does not get the impression that a decisive structural marker is lacking here.

sitional choice (presumably originating from the Neapolitan opera *sinfonia*) was in the Viennese environment (and beyond) in the 1760 and early 70s (e.g., Monn, Wagenseil, Vanhal, Dittersdorf, and many others).<sup>39</sup>

Numerous early expositions (from the 1760s) feature characteristic interpunction schemes such as the following: the tonal goal of the primary theme section consists of establishing either an imperfect authentic cadence or a half cadence in the home key.<sup>40</sup> The latter may serve as a “bifocal close”<sup>41</sup> that allows the subordinate key to follow without a modulation proper. An emphatic perfect authentic cadence, one that makes use of characteristic embellishments (such as a “cadential  $V^6_4$ ”), is customarily saved for a later place in the formal process: it is employed both to confirm the modulation to the subordinate key and to provide structural closure to the entire “expansion section.”<sup>42</sup> The confirmatory power of such a V:PAC may be retrospectively weakened by the ensuing passage that often does not qualify as a “secondary theme” proper but rather as an inserted “contrasting episode” or an “Einschiebsel,” to use a term coined by Joseph Riepel.<sup>43</sup> This section displays some or all of the following features: (1) dominant mi-

nor mode (using a modal shift technique); (2) reduced dynamics; (3) reduced instrumental texture; (4) polyphonic imitation; and (5) a sustained note either in the bass or in an inner voice (along with a static harmony). The function of this episode seems to be twofold: first, it undermines the structural closing quality of the preceding PAC in the dominant key, and second, it delays the final *tutti* passage that promises to provide full structural closure to the exposition. Sometimes the closing zone resumes prior transitional activity and resembles the transition in that it accomplishes the second V:PAC (e.g., in Haydn’s Symphony No. 3/i and his Piano Sonata, Hob. XVI:6/i).<sup>44</sup>

Keeping this mid-eighteenth-century interpunction model in mind might help analysts to better account for the early practices of Haydn (and of other contemporaneous composers).<sup>45</sup> Consider, for instance, Haydn’s Symphony No. 10/i (from 1758/60), H. & D.’s own example of a two-part exposition featuring a V:PAC MC that “could hardly be clearer” [27]. The tonic key area closes with a I:HC in m. 17 and is followed by a six-bar phrase that both accomplishes the modulation to the dominant key (with the help of a Monte-model) and provides the first PAC in the dominant key (m. 23) – a “unison cadence” that makes use of a bass clausula in all parts. To view mm.

39 Fischer 1915, 59f., 81ff.; Engel 1961, 290ff.; Hell 1971, 211; Longyear 1971, 202ff.; Churgin 1986, 37; Kimball 1991; Polth 2000, 274ff.; and Burstein 2009. Among Haydn’s symphonies are Nos. 1/i, 2/i, 3/i, 4/i, 10/i, 14/i, 15/i, 18/ii, 20/i, 32/i, 33/i, 37/i, and 41/i. Examples from his string quartets include opp. 1,2/v, 1,4/i, 2,1/v, 2,2/i, and 2,4/v.

40 For a detailed investigation of the main-theme area in Haydn’s early symphonies, see Neuwirth 2011.

41 Winter 1989, 275–337.

42 “Expansion section” is the standard translation of the German term “Entwicklungspartie” originally coined by Jens Peter Larsen in his “Sonatenform-Probleme,” 226. See also Fischer 1915, 59: “[...] oder es wird die nachdrückliche Kadenz zur Seitentonart durch Dehnung des Überleitungssatzes soweit hinausgeschoben, daß ein endlich auftretender neuer Gedanke schon als Schlußsatz wirkt.”

43 “Contrasting section” is my translation of the German term “Kontrastteil” coined by Michael Polth 2000, 274–284. For a further discussion of “contrasting sections” in 18th-century music, see, for instance, G. Cook Kimball 1991, 279–293. “Contrasting sections” may likewise be preceded by a V:HC rather than a V:PAC.

44 H. & D. note the possibility of using TR-material in the S zone to accomplish the trajectory toward the EEC [141] – a phenomenon Dahlhaus termed “display episode” [“Spiel-episode”] to indicate the influence of the ritornello-based concerto form on sonata-form expositions [543, note 58]. However, the authors are reluctant to relate this option to an earlier compositional practice.

45 On interpunction form in Haydn, see Diergarten 2010a and 2010b.

1–17 as the primary theme or mm. 18–23 as transition, however, does not do justice to the formal function (and historical meaning) of these sections. Although the I:HC in m. 17 is the first cadence up to this point, mm. 12–17 – a “Prinner model” merging into a converging half close – already convey the rhetorical character of a transition, which is then continued in the ensuing formal unit.<sup>46</sup> However, to expect a second theme to enter directly after the I:HC, thus ascribing unequivocal transitional function to the passage leading to the half close, would no doubt be based on an anachronistic point of view.

If P and TR are problematic labels for characterizing the exposition’s first half, is it appropriate to think at least of the *cantabile* section after the V:PAC as a true second theme (as H. & D. suggest with their reading of m. 23 as the moment of MC)? Obviously, the *cantabile* section shows some essential features of the above-mentioned “contrasting episodes,” such as the reduced texture and dynamic level, as well as the sustained fifth scale degree in an inner voice (mm. 26–29). Strikingly, the final two bars of the *cantabile* section (mm. 30–31) resemble the last two bars of the tonic key section (mm. 15–16) in the manner of approaching the A-major chord: the elided ending of the *cantabile* section in m. 32 suggests a half cadence in the tonic (!) key, similar to the I:HC in m. 17. It is thus the task of the final *tutti* section, which has a rhetorical character of closing despite the lack of a preceding PAC, to restore the dominant key and to confirm

it with another strong cadence (mm. 35 and 37). Yet not only the *cantabile* section but also the final *tutti* section refer to an earlier point in time, owing to the initial tremolo gesture in the first violins (cf. mm. 32–33 and 17–19) and the “unison cadence” Haydn had used to close off the exposition’s first half. Given the circular design of the exposition at hand, the analytical reading of the *cantabile* passage as an inserted “contrasting episode” that serves to interrupt the forward-directed time flow seems a viable and historically sound alternative to H. & D.’s understanding of this passage as a secondary-theme zone following an MC.

Though in many respects similar to Haydn’s symphony, H. & D. analyze Vanhal’s Symphony in F major (F3; written before 1771) as a continuous rather than a two-part exposition, in particular as “a variant of the second type” of the former [158, note 1]. H. & D.’s reasoning can be seen as based on two arguments: the first argument relies on proportional issues, i. e., the fact that the first V:PAC (m. 35) occurs after 69 percent of the exposition. Interestingly, in Haydn’s Symphony No. 10/i, the first V:PAC appears only slightly earlier, after 62 percent (a scarcely perceivable difference of one or two bars). Both movements thus exhibit a firm V:PAC at roughly the same point midway through the exposition. Both PACs conclude an expansion section (*tutti*) that is subdivided into two parts by a I:HC (in Vanhal’s symphony, in m. 21).

The second argument concentrates on the unit that follows the V:PAC. In Haydn’s symphony, this passage consists of eight measures and is thus interpreted as S by H. & D.; in Vanhal’s case, it is only four measures in length and hence poses problems in interpretation: it is characterized as either “pseudo-S [?] or C [?] material,” a “feint toward a ‘real’ S-idea.” In both cases, however, these units may be best understood as expressing analogous functions, irrespective of the difference in length: they essentially act as interpolations between two *tutti* sections, the latter resuming the cadential activity established by the former (in Vanhal mm. 21–23 and mm. 30f.) and approaching the second (final) V:PAC. Given their interpret-

46 The term “Prinner” has recently been coined by Robert Gjerdingen to denote a specific voice-leading model that is primarily used to respond to an opening idea (typically a “Romanesca” or a *do-re-mi* model, etc.) and may optionally be concluded with a cadence (typically an IAC). It features a descending tetrachordal line 4-3-2-1 in the bass combined with parallel thirds or tenths in the upper voice (6-5-4-3). Thus, due to its tonal characteristics, the “Prinner” has clear form-functional (and thus temporal) implications: it typically appears as the second part of a larger formal entity (see Gjerdingen 2007, 45–60).

tation of this “pre-classical” sonata-form practice, it is all the more surprising that H. & D. aptly describe the expositional minor mode passage (following a V:PAC) of the much later Symphony No. 1/i (mm. 77–87) by Beethoven as a “darkened interpolation,” thus implicitly acknowledging the retention of an earlier formal convention [125].<sup>47</sup>

It becomes clear from my analyses that the use of common sonata-form labels such as P, TR, S, and C is far from unproblematic. That this observation applies not only to mid-eighteenth-century practice but also to the so-called Classical period becomes evident from H. & D.’s reading of Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf’s Symphony No. 1/ii in C Major (on Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, from ca. 1781) – another instructive example of how ambiguity and thus dialogue arises in the light of a twenty-first-century theory: “It may be that Dittersdorf was playing on the ambiguity and S-character of the ostensible ‘C’ theme, mm. 35ff, only to clarify and rescue the situation late in the game by recapturing the cadential module of the originally proposed EEC, thereby folding the ambiguous new material into S-space. The whole exposition rests on the witty interplay of predicted zone-proportions and seemingly puzzling thematic characters.” [158] And they add: “Analytical issues among the *Kleinmeister* surface in provocative ways in Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven.” [158] Hermeneutic explanation and the assumption of a dialogue with a normative backdrop, however, hardly solve the problem at stake here. Rather, they seem to reinforce the validity of prior analytical assumptions concerning the basic formal framework that consists of P, TR, possibly S, and C.

Additional noteworthy phenomena arise when applying this framework to later Classical music. One of them is the supposedly “delayed” S zone H. & D. (and others before them) have come across in many late Haydn

symphonies (primarily those written for Paris and London). The analytical practice of referring to a late S in the case of two-part expositions (as, for instance, in reference to Haydn’s Symphony No. 82 [39, note 15]), or coining the label “Cpre-EEC” with respect to continuous expositions [59] is clearly a makeshift solution, one that involves an inconsistent, if not arbitrary, use of criteria. “Cpre-EEC” (a “‘C’-like theme that occurs before the EEC proper”), an “admittedly awkward label” used to indicate the ambiguity of the zone [59], is in fact a *contradictio in adjecto* because a closing theme can by definition only occur *after* the moment of structural closure, unless one privileges intrinsic rhetorical features over tonal (or cadential) context (in this case, the appearance of the alleged “C” before the moment of V:PAC EEC). The critical question remains whether one can distinguish at all between S and C on the basis of their respective intrinsic qualities.<sup>48</sup>

To support the argument that the interpunctuation model outlined above is still at work in Haydn’s later works, briefly compare Haydn’s Symphony No. 10/i with No. 93/i: No. 93/i, though not discussed by H. & D., would no doubt be analyzed in terms of their theory as an unequivocal continuous exposition, one that lacks an MC and hence a secondary-theme zone. However, the two movements are similar in that they both contain a *cantabile* section that occurs after the first V:PAC (m. 74 in No. 93) and that leads to a second V:PAC (m. 95), which is in turn followed by a final *tutti* section. To use different labels – C in the case of No. 93 and S for No. 10 – to refer to these contrasting sections denies this similarity. Yet the two expositions differ primarily in terms of their temporal dimensions, not in their formal design (i. e., the shared rhetorical qualities these contrasting sections express and the cadential context within which they appear).

This comparison suggests a certain continuity in compositional practice ranging

47 Compare this passage with the (minor mode) contrasting section of Haydn’s much earlier Symphony No. 2/i in C major (mm. 42–53), that likewise contains a circle-of-fifth sequence.

48 According to Caplin, it is difficult to differentiate between S and C on the basis of their intrinsic qualities (cf. Caplin 2009, 59).



from the 1750s to the 1790s. In the light of these considerations, the practice of presenting a *cantabile* section after the first V:PAC, whether or not this section is read as S or C, does not seem to have been intended as a play upon a firmly established convention (as either a delay or omission of S). Given the chronological priority of the continuous exposition that H. & D. explicitly acknowledge, along with the assumption of a certain continuity in music history, one cannot help getting the impression that Haydn's witty engagement with formal norms is, at least in part, a theoretical artifact that heavily relies on the anachronistic employment of the two-part model.

### Developmental rotations and Haydn's "false" recapitulations

To throw their own model of the development into sharp relief, H. & D. discuss two alternative approaches that have figured prominently in the history of sonata-form theory [228–230]:<sup>49</sup> (1) topical theory, which is based on the work of Ratner, Allanbrook, Agawu, and others, a theory that conceives of the development as what H. & D. refer to as "topical drama;" and (2) the "Ratz-Caplin model" that postulates a tri-sectional structure of the development, an assumption that is said to apply to a great number of examples within the classical repertoire. H. & D. reject both approaches, essentially because they regard each as one-sided and thus as failing to fully explain the range of possibilities available in the design of a development. However, their rejection of topical theory in particular ignores the fact that this theory *deliberately* restricts its focus to the discussion of the topical discourse only. In addition, its purpose has never been to devise a theory that is solely applicable to development sections: a topical drama can take place within any formal context, even beyond sonata-form movements.

49 Note that the existence of a development is not considered a necessary requirement for sonata form: "Type 1 sonatas" lack a central development section [343–352].

Furthermore, it is striking that the developmental model advanced by H. & D. does not differ significantly from what they refer to as the Ratz-Caplin model, the overtly polemic tone with which they criticize Caplin's theory notwithstanding. Both models share the assumption of a basic tri-partite structure that consists of: (1) an initial section called "entry or preparation zone" by H. & D., "introductory section" (pre-core) by Caplin; (2) a medial section H. & D. refer to as "central action," for which Caplin instead uses the term "central core;" and (3) a final zone termed "retransition" in both theories. The only significant difference between "Sonata Theory" and Caplin's form-functional approach lies in the former's application of the rotation concept, which does not play any role in Caplin's model of the development (nor in his overall theory):<sup>50</sup> "Most – though not all – developments" are said to follow a rotational pattern in one way or another, "presenting their thematic material in such a way as to suggest that its ordering corresponds to that of the exposition." [206] Using the concept of rotation with regard to the development section thus means comparing the thematic outline (the ordering of thematic modules) of the development with that of the exposition.<sup>51</sup> Measuring the development against this frame of reference allows H. & D. to propose a distinction between "complete" and "incomplete" rotations, the latter involving P-TR as well as S-C half rotations. The notion that development

50 H. & D.'s criticism of Caplin's theory of the development reads as follows: "In practice the Caplin model also seems indifferent to the interpretation of the ordered selection of thematic materials (and their implications) within the development – to issues of rotation, substitution, and so on. We concluded that the system was underdeveloped and *overly reliant on only one typical aspect of developmental procedure, sequence-blocks.*" [229; my emphasis]

51 The type of material that initiates the development helps distinguish different kinds of developmental strategies according to their underlying rotational pattern.



sections are guided by the rotation principle thus contradicts the long-standing tradition of viewing developments essentially as “free fantasies” in which (unlike in the exposition) there were very few constraints on the composer’s creative choices.<sup>52</sup> Though the rotational approach naturally yields descriptively precise results, its normative implications, however, are far from unproblematic; as a reconstruction of the horizon of expectations shared by (historical) listeners, the assumption that the full-rotational model of the development forms the first-level default is no doubt controversial, to say the least.<sup>53</sup>

In the remainder of my discussion of the developmental model put forward in the *Elements*, I shall confine myself to one aspect only: the noteworthy phenomenon H. & D. refer to as the “False-Recapitulation Effect.” The so-called “false recapitulation,” defined as “the ‘deceptive’ sounding of what might at first be mistakenly taken for the onset of the recapitulation” [221 f.] is a compositional device that is said to be a typical Haydnian strategy. Although this formal option is commonly associated with the notion of musical wit, H. & D. steer clear of the simplistic account one often encounters in the literature

52 An early criticism of the notion of the development as fantasy – Rosen speaks of the development’s “essential freedom” (see Rosen 1988, 163) – can be found in Czerny 1832/1986, 263.

53 The problem of distinguishing clearly between developments that are explicitly non-rotational (“blinking out”) and those that are in dialogue with the expositional rotation (“writing over” and thus dialectically suggesting the tacit presence of the rotational norm) is acknowledged but not resolved in the second appendix of the *Elements* [613]. This problem has provoked some criticism in the literature: Michael Spitzer (2007, 168), for instance, raises doubts regarding the adequacy of the rotation concept when it comes to the development, see also Wingfield 2008, 167 f. To avoid potential confusion with the term “rotation” as used in physics, Wingfield suggests the term “periodicity” as an alternative (Wingfield 2008, 150).

and treat the subject with admirable sensitivity (219; 221–228). In particular, they offer a novel approach to this much-discussed and seemingly well-understood phenomenon: instead of forcing a clear-cut either-or decision, which would assign a “double return” the formal status of either a false or a true recapitulation, they propose the idea that what they call the “false-recapitulation effect” is more appropriately understood as gradual in nature, i.e., as lying on a continuum. Where on this continuum a potential false recapitulation appears is determined by no less than seven criteria involving, among other things, the temporal location of the “double return,” its contextual framing (in particular, how it is harmonically prepared), and its degree of similarity to the opening main theme [224–226]. All these factors are considered to contribute in one way or another to the sense of a recapitulation, which later on may turn out to be “false” (due to subsequent unambiguously developmental activity). In this regard, H. & D. are much more precise and circumspect concerning the attribution of a potential deceptive effect to an occurrence of the main theme within the development section. Their approach is in accordance with the general tendency of “Sonata Theory” to avoid clear-cut analytical solutions and to explicate instead the interpretative possibilities analysts have at their disposal.

H. & D. not only report standard accounts of the false reprise (as found in Mark Evan Bonds’ comprehensive study<sup>54</sup>) but also refer to more critical work, in particular to Peter Hoyt who, in his dissertation, pervasively argued that the concept of false recapitulation heavily relies on anachronistic expectations.<sup>55</sup> Hoyt suggests the more neutral term “medial double return” as an alternative to “false recapitulation” to make clear that a “double return” within the second part of a sonata-form

54 Bonds 1988.

55 Hoyt 1999. Surprisingly, H. & D. do not take into consideration Hoyt’s dissertation on this phenomenon, but refer only to a lecture given by him at Harvard.

movement – Reicha’s “seconde partie” – does not necessarily have potential recapitulatory implications.<sup>56</sup> Given the genesis of sonata form (with baroque concerto form and aria form as its historical sources), it is conceivable that multiple recurrences of the main theme in the tonic (and other keys) were understood as *ritornelli* and thus no specific large-scale formal function was attached to them.<sup>57</sup> Seen as a *ritornello*, the “medial return” would communicate nothing that could not be said again.

Though in principle H. & D. do subscribe to Hoyt’s argument, they do not completely agree with its rather radical consequences as to the essentially teleological nature of their sonata-form model: “There is much to commend this argument. And even though when defended too ardently it courts overstatement, it alters at a stroke the way that the ‘false-recapitulation effect’ is to be investigated.” [223] Somewhat later they continue: “And yet in the most difficult cases it is *counterintuitive* to suggest that at least *some sort of intended wit* or deception was not involved in the tonic-return of P, even though that explanation alone does not suffice to explain all of the implications at hand.” [223; my emphasis] This last point is, however, somewhat at odds with the reservations H. & D. voiced at the outset of their discussion with regard to the explanatory power of the concept of a “false recapitulation,” which is seen as a “mere label, claiming nothing more than the registering of a momentary personal deception. By itself it explains nothing about the piece.” [224] “Sonata Theory’s” slightly ambiguous view of the “false recapitulation” may be caused by one particular problem: the assumption that a tonic-return of P midway through the second half of a sonata-form movement does not necessarily impart the sense of a recapitula-

tion would considerably undermine the basic dramatic model that is so central to H. & D.’s conception of sonata form. Like the EEC or the ESC, the moment of recapitulation should ideally only occur once. “Double-Recapitulation Effects” are consequently regarded as among “the strangest, and rarest, deformations” in the classical repertoire [279]. Yet the very possibility of such an effect is immediately contradicted by their analysis of what they see as the prototypical example, Clementi’s Piano Sonata op. 34 No. 2/i (1795): here, H. & D. interpret the second rotation (“the ‘real’ recapitulation?”) as a “corrected version” of the first, which is thus relegated to the status of a “supposed recapitulation” [280].

#### Altered recapitulations and Haydn, “the exceptional”

According to H. & D. (and many theorists before them), the concept of recapitulation requires the return of P (typically but not necessarily in the tonic key). In some cases, even the initial module of P is sufficient to announce the expected rotation of the thematic material as presented in the exposition. Placing the rotation principle at the center of the discussion, H. & D. define the recapitulation as “a post-developmental recycling of all or most of the expositional materials [...]” [231] Of course, that definition does not imply that the expositional material must be restated literally. As a matter of fact, recapitulations were subjected to certain revisions that seem to have been almost inevitable if a composer did not want to violate the “sonata principle.”<sup>58</sup> In general, these recompositions affect what H. & D. call the “pre-crux” area. Following Kirkpatrick’s lead, they see the recapitulation as subdivided into two parts by the moment of “crux” [239–241]. To satisfy the “sonata principle,” it

56 Cf. Hoyt 1999, 43, on the notion of “medial double return:” “[...] the term *medial double return* will generally be employed here to indicate a tonic statement of a version of the primary material.” (emphasis in original)

57 On the potential sources of sonata form and its evolution, see Rosen 1988, chapters III.–VII.

58 In James Webster’s words: “The ‘sonata principle’ [...] requires that the most important ideas and the strongest cadential passages from the second group reappear in the recapitulation, transposed to the tonic.” (see Webster 2001, 688) H. & D. provide a critical evaluation of the sonata principle [242–254].

was much more common for an eighteenth-century composer to revise the pre-cruce area, which featured the modulation to the subordinate key in the exposition, rather than the post-cruce zone, which would stay in the home key regardless.<sup>59</sup>

Less normative than recomposing the transition, but nevertheless viable for eighteenth-century composers, was the formal option to revise P. Here, one formal option, aptly referred to as “synecdochic strategy” [233] – the citation of only one module of P that stands for the whole – deserves mention. Haydn is seen as “exceptional in this practice,” and H. & D. hasten to add: “One should not draw general conclusions about eighteenth-century recapitulations from his idiosyncratic works.” [233] Here again, it can be argued that such an assessment of Haydn’s seemingly unique practice ignores its roots in a mid-eighteenth-century convention. Rosen, for instance, noted that it is “a stereotype of the middle of the eighteenth century” to begin the third rotation with the initial (or medial) part of the main theme only and therefore to omit its remainder.<sup>60</sup> Following Rosen’s suggestion that the “synecdochic strategy” was employed by other composers as well, I have shown in a case study that Haydn’s contemporary Franz Asplmayer (certainly in addition to many others) made use of this formal option in some of his string quartets op. 2 from the late 1760s.<sup>61</sup>

In sonata-form movements of the eighteenth century, one encounters not only recapitulations in which some constituent parts have been revised, but also in which the temporal succession of events (i. e., the rotational pattern) has been altered in one way or another – a procedure referred to as “reordering” by H. & D. Some of these revisions may

yield notable structural differences between the exposition and the recapitulation as far as the temporal location of the moment of structural closure (as well as the thematic material that is used to achieve such closure) is concerned. The procedure of reordering may also give rise to a form-functional redefinition of certain formal units that now fulfill different roles in the overall tonal process.

A composer figuring prominently in H. & D.’s account is once again “the constantly original Haydn” [231]: “Not surprisingly, recapitulatory reorderings may also be found in Haydn, since [...] his recapitulations are always unpredictable.” [234] As an “amusing instance” that “seems to begin with a tonic-TR” [258, note 4], they cite the final movement of Haydn’s Keyboard Trio Hob. XV:29 in E-flat major. The procedure of “reordering” poses some problems in comprehension, however. From the perspective of the “sonata principle,” changing the order of events in the recapitulation, rather than revising them more substantially, seems unnecessary and even superfluous since for the most part it does not alter the tonal trajectory in any profound way. The rearrangement of expositional modules in the recapitulation, far from being “amusing” in itself, might be better understood by taking into account the need for variation or the avoidance of redundancy: if a formal section (e. g., the main theme) features a repetitive structure of some sort, then a composer could not only opt for an omission of the repeated parts but also for their postponement, thus producing a reordered structure of the recapitulation. H. & D. rightly voice some reservations regarding redundancy-based explanations: “This invites an interpretation based on a telescoping theory, according to which one supposes that the composer’s goal was to avoid the redundancy of double-stated P-modules in the recapitulation, even though that had not been considered a problem in the exposition. [...] This is cogent reasoning, but it is uncertain whether composers around 1800 would have shared the later-nineteenth- and twentieth-century (high-modernist) aversion to repetition. For that reason one might

59 “It was common for a composer to modify the recapitulatory P and/or TR zones. The TR, in particular, was a passage that invited recomposition.” [235]

60 See Rosen 1988, 285.

61 See Neuwirth 2009, 116. This technique is also employed in numerous sonatas by C. P. E. Bach.

be suspicious of that explanation. [...] Still, the idea that a shortened or telescoped recapitulation can suggest *an eagerness to rush toward the central moment*, the ESC [...] might be both relevant and viable.”<sup>62</sup> [258; my emphasis]

With their very last qualification, H. & D. not only underline their essentially teleological conception of sonata form, but also implicitly acknowledge the relevance of Koch, who writes in his *Versuch* that “the most prominent phrases [in the “dritte Hauptperiode”] are compressed, as it were.”<sup>63</sup> In a similar vein, Floyd and Margaret Grave put forth what they call “maintenance of momentum”<sup>64</sup>, which they regard as a primary compositional goal in the recapitulation, one that avoids an overly strict separation of formal parts and that aims to create a continuous flow of musical events. It is conceivable that the technique of “reordering” may have served in part as a means of helping to improve momentum in music. As a general rule, the recapitulations of many sonata-form movements are thus shorter than the corresponding expositions. In addition, they are more fluent in nature than their expositional counterparts.

The principle of “maintenance of momentum” may well have been one of the manifest intra-musical reasons that led composers such as Haydn to revise their recapitulations. It is thus questionable whether the nineteenth-century idea of “through-composition” along with the conceptions of “vitalism” and compositional wit had such a great impact on the composer’s choices as the following account

62 Similarly with regard to variation: “Moreover, appeals to the supposed ‘need for variation’ are among the least cogent groundings for any compositional change: they cover everything and explain nothing. Whatever their aims, in pushing forward an easy answer, their result is to discourage hermeneutic reflection, not to promote it. [...] *The hermeneutic obligation is to explain why.*” [237; my emphasis] Similar arguments concerning redundancy-based accounts can be found in Neuwirth 2010, 376.

63 Koch 1793/2007, 310.

64 Grave & Grave 2006, 66f.

from “Sonata Theory” suggests: “This principle of through-composition also resonates with eighteenth-century scientific conceptions of vitalism, according to which individual living particles are understood to grow spontaneously and continuously. Metaphorically, Haydn may be suggesting, at times wittily, that the task of the composer facing such self-willed vitalistic (musical) particles is to trim and shape their innate tendency toward unstoppable growth and self-mutation, to make certain that their compulsively generative sproutings (*Fortspinnungen*) do not lead the work into blind alleys or counter-generic directions. Apart from Haydn, this practice is exceedingly rare, although it is characteristic of the Haydnesque temperament, seeking constant surprise, invention, and originality.” [233]

#### “Sonata Theory” vs. “Form-functional Theory” vs. “Interpunction Form”

Some earlier reviews (by Spitzer and Wingfield) devote specific attention to the opposition between Caplin’s form-functional theory and H. & D.’s “Sonata Theory,” an opposition that is also reinforced by H. & D.’s at times rather harsh criticism of Caplin’s approach: no other author seems to receive such a critical treatment in the course of the book. The differences between these two theories are further elucidated in the dialogically designed volume *Musical Form, Forms, and Formenlehre* (containing essays by Caplin, Hepokoski, and James Webster) recently edited by Pieter Bergé<sup>65</sup>: here, apart from disagreements on analytical details, one major difference that surfaces in the controversy between Caplin and Hepokoski regards the fundamental issue of “analytical labeling” vs. “hermeneutic explanation.”

H. & D.’s main criticism of form-functional theory comes to the fore in the context of Caplin’s treatment of the development: “In our experience, though, to use Caplin’s primary classifications for developments, not to mention his numerous subclassifications and ex-

65 Bergé 2009.

ceptions [...] tangles one in a web of classificatory labeling without any larger explanatory purpose.” [229] That they regard this charge as applicable to his theory as a whole, becomes clear from Darcy’s review of Caplin’s treatise, in which he provides a similarly critical assessment of the form-functional approach: “Caplin’s taxonomical machinery was clearly designed with good intentions, but at a certain point it simply spins out of control, classifying and categorizing everything in sight.” Darcy’s conclusion, at the same time, set the agenda for the “Sonata Theory” project: “[...] it is to be hoped that future research into the subject of musical form will be less concerned with classifying compositional choices and more concerned with explicating the expressive purposes behind them.”<sup>66</sup> However legitimate Darcy’s concern may be, to speak of mere “classificatory labeling” (as opposed to “hermeneutic explanation”) paints a misleading picture of analytical classification: it ignores the fact that labeling is by no means a quasi-automatic endeavor but rather the result of a complex analytical process, a process that requires a considerable amount of musical sensitivity. Hermeneutic explanation, on the other hand, in the manner H. & D. practice it, is all too often content with the attribution of musical wit to the analytical object – a label that primarily indicates that the piece in question departs from (or is in dialogue with) an assumed normative background in one way or another.

A second aspect linked to the issue of labeling is that the choice of one particular formal category often seems to “automatically” induce (or exclude) the use of another. It is this specific problem that leads Hepokoski to the following critical assessment of Caplin’s theory in general: “Once its premises and definitions are accepted and placed beyond question, all else follows: the dominos fall, one by one.”<sup>67</sup> However, this remark applies not only to Caplin’s theory but to H. & D.’s approach as well: tonal markers and formal zones such as MC

and S (or EEC and C) are considered dependent on each other in “Sonata Theory,” just as subordinate-theme function and V:PAC are in Caplin’s theory. In this respect, “Sonata Theory” and Caplin’s “Theory of Formal Functions” are not so far removed from each other as is at times maintained; they just tend to focus on (and give priority to) different levels of musical structure. Consider, for instance, their dispute over whether an exposition must contain a second theme. The fact that the two theories arrive at diverging conclusions does not imply that they are in principle incompatible. Rather, these differences stem from distinct notions of what constitutes “S”: whereas “Sonata Theory” conceives of a second theme essentially as a characteristic thematic structure (what one might loosely call a “tune”) that can follow any new-key cadence (either HC or PAC, in either the tonic or dominant key), Caplin thinks of “S” as a structural “function” that is primarily defined in terms of tonal context.<sup>68</sup> In Caplin’s understanding, which is much closer to the spirit of the inter-punctuation model mentioned above, the proper function of “S” is to confirm the subordinate key by means of a perfect authentic cadence – a function that can be realized by a variety of musical material as long as it fulfills the requirement of expressing the basic temporal qualities (beginning, middle, and end) typically associated with an inter-thematic function.<sup>69</sup> If an unequivocal second theme is missing along the

68 According to H. & D., a second theme must meet certain harmonic or tonal criteria: “S must be harmonically and tonally stable. If not – if S is tonally unstable, or if it is undergirded with a dominant pedal or some other tension-producing device – then one is dealing with the deformation of a generic norm.” [129] Due to this rigid definition, problems in dealing with sequential second themes arise, e.g., in Haydn’s Symphony No. 6/i: “[...] the expositional TR proceeds to a normative second-level-default I:HC MC in m. 20. The S that follows in m. 21 is marked at its outset by, if anything, the absence of a theme – a *witty effect*, perhaps suggesting that a preassigned theme had missed its cue and failed to enter.” [239; my emphasis]

66 Darcy 2000, 125.

67 Hepokoski 2009, 41.

way from the I:PAC (which typically closes the primary-theme zone) to the V:PAC, Caplin consequently identifies a fusion of transition and subordinate-theme functions.

This comparison clarifies that the differences in interpretation of expository design are largely based on divergent (though not incompatible) approaches to the question of which musical dimensions are to be considered truly form-defining: harmonic/tonal organization (Caplin's position) or thematic ("rhetorical" or rotational) design (H. & D.'s preference). As Caplin rightly observes, H. & D.'s "Sonata Theory" and his own "Theory of Formal Functions" are thus not mutually exclusive; rather, they can readily be used in analytical practice as complementary approaches for the benefit of a better understanding of the complexities found in eighteenth-century music.<sup>70</sup>

If the classificatory approach is inevitable for any theory, what should one then offer as a viable alternative? During my discussion of the exposition, I alluded to the eighteenth-century notion of interpunction form, which explicitly focuses on the specific arrangement and clausal strength of cadences. The thematic modules that occur between these cadences are said to receive their formal meanings from the cadences that directly surround them, rather than from their own intrinsic qualities. This cadence-oriented approach helps to avoid some of the problems associated with the use of common sonata-form labels such as P, TR, S, and C, not only with respect to music from the 1760s and 70s but with regard to the later "Classical" period as well. Likewise, it helps to circumvent potential problems that may result from the application of the widespread teleological sonata-form model to the development section, since large-scale considerations are not deemed essential within the interpunction model. On the contrary, many theorists of the eighteenth century (such

as Riepel, Kirnberger, Koch, Galeazzi, and Gervasoni) even demand the use of the main theme in conjunction with the main key in the development section, because this device would provide a tonal anchor to the listener and help him or her to recall the main ideas.<sup>71</sup> What is commonly seen as deception of the listener – a seemingly premature resolution of a large-scale dissonance – is, in terms of historical theory, an effective means of guiding the listener along a complex tonal journey.<sup>72</sup>

Despite the critical engagements offered in this article, the *Elements of Sonata Theory* is clearly one of the most important books in the field of music theory written in the past decade. Given its monumental dimensions and its near-exhaustive and profound treatment of the subject, this book will doubtless present a major challenge to future scholars who wish to critically come to grips with sonata form: numerous articles and books by both American and European scholars who have taken up this challenge have already been published since the *Elements* came out in 2006. In sum, this book is a must for everyone who seeks to study the principles of sonata form in great depth, whether as a music theorist, a musicologist, or as a musician.

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69 Note, however, that a subordinate theme can also start *in medias res*, thus becoming more "loose" in formal organization, see Caplin 1998, 111f.

70 Caplin 2009, 61.

71 E.g., Koch 1787/2007, 169–171, and Koch 1793/2007, 307f. For an extensive discussion of this issue, see Neuwirth (forthcoming).

72 A further advantage of the interpunction model is that it does not attach importance to the categorical differences between what traditional Formenlehre tends to describe as distinct forms: in terms of the interpunction model, sonata form, concerto form, and aria form are much closer to each other than has previously been acknowledged.



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