THE SMOOTHING-OVER OF FORMAL JUNCTURES AS A STYLE ELEMENT IN MENDELSSOHN'S INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

by

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Abstract

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by

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This study investigates Mendelssohn's flexible treatment of formal junctures at various levels of tonal structure and form, starting with the overlapping of the smallest formal units (subphrases and phrases), and proceeding to his unusual handling of reprises and recapitulations in small and large (sonata) forms. I then continue to explore the peculiarly Mendelssohnian devices of smoothing-over in other salient formal junctures in sonata forms, as well as his practice of linking together entire movements in multi-movement compositions.

The analysis of formal boundaries in nearly ninety instrumental pieces and movements by Mendelssohn reveals, in the first place, the extent to which he learned from his musical predecessors in this respect. This is not surprising, in view of the well-known conservatism of his musical taste and approach to composition. In the second

place however, the extent and manner of his application of these techniques is unusual and bears the unmistakable stamp of his individual musical style.

In the concluding chapter I attempt to assess Mendelssohn's practice in a wider historical perspective, by offering a certain structural and aesthetic rationale for some of the more characteristic musical techniques encountered throughout this study. Thus, his instrumental forms often reconcile a Baroque-like continuity with Classical-style dramatic formal articulation and division. The final chapter also includes analyses of related compositional techniques in music by earlier composers (Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven), who most probably influenced Mendelssohn, as well as by other composers in Mendelssohn's generation (Chopin and Schumann). Finally, I cite one example by a later composer, Brahms. This historical survey demonstrates that while Mendelssohn's ties with the musical tradition of past generations are exceptionally, perhaps uniquely, deep, Mendelssohn's predilections for smoothing-over formal junctures also express (along with other features of his style) an unmistakably romantic compositional practice.

Acknowledgements

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It would be impossible, of course, to acknowledge the debt owed to so many teachers, students, colleagues and friends who have influenced my work in one way or another. I must thank in particular Golan Gur, an outstanding graduate student at the Tel Aviv University, for the many hours he spent in preparing the musical examples. I am also especially grateful to Professor Ariel Meirav, a wonderful friend, for his painstaking reading of my drafts and his innumerable excellent suggestions.

Finally, a heartfelt gratitude is due to my wife Edna and my daughters Emma and Daniella for their unfailing support. The completion of this study owes much to their endless reserves of patience.

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INTRODUCTION

In his review of Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 3 in A Minor ("Scottish") Robert Schumann observed: "Every page of the score attests to the finesse with which Mendelssohn is able to recall an earlier theme, how he is able to embellish a transition or a return so that the old material appears to us in an entirely new light, how full and interesting is the musical detail, yet without overloading [the texture] or [degenerating into ostentatious] philistine displays of pedantic learning...."[1]

Indeed, Schumann's observation hits the nail on the head. As we shall see in the following analysis of Mendelssohn's instrumental music, Mendelssohn is at his very best, demonstrating remarkable powers of inventiveness and originality, in the context of repetition. Interestingly, Schumann provides a wonderful substantiation for Mendelssohn's oft-quoted assertion that music is not too vague but rather too definite for verbal translation.[2] For he amplifies his observation on Mendelssohn's style in the charming little piece for piano which he composed to memorialize November 4th, 1847, the day of Mendelssohn's death. In this nearly Mendelssohnian Song without Words—titled "Erinnerung (4. November 1847)," No. 28 in Schumann's *Album for the Young*—

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[1] Robert Schumann, from "Symphonies for Orchestra" (review-essay), Neue Zeitschrift fur Musik 18/39 (1843), 155–56. Translated by Thomas Grey in his article "Orchestral Music," in *The Mendelssohn Companion,* ed. Douglass Seaton (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2001), pp. 543–44. The brackets are in Grey's translation.

[2] Mendelssohn expressed this view on words and music in a celebrated letter to Marc André Souchay in 1842. See Oliver Strunk, ed. (revised edition, Leo Treitler, general editor) *Source Reading in Music History, vol. 6, The Nineteenth Century*, ed. Ruth A. Solie (New York: Norton, 1998), pp. 156–159.

Schumann makes the same point, now using notes instead of words: indeed, each return of the basic thematic idea appears in an entirely new light.[3]

Schumann was not the only person in Mendelssohn's circle who noticed the latter's predilection for recomposing the beginnings of reprises in various imaginative ways, often concealing, but sometimes highlighting the thematic return. The music critic Henry Chorley, Mendelssohn's friend, wrote already in 1854 about the peculiarly "shy" reprises in Mendelssohn.[4] Several recent scholars (Rothstein, Schachter and Cadwallader) also regard the unusual treatment of the beginning of reprises (and recapitulations) as a hallmark of Mendelssohn's style.[5] Furthermore, Mendelssohn's deliberate efforts to link individual movements in multi-movement works is well known,

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[3] According to David Brodbeck, three other pieces in Schumann's *Album for the Young*, nos. 21, 26, and 30—which are untitled but headed with three stars—were thought by Brahms to indicate Mendelssohn's death day. See "Brahms's Mendelssohn," in *Brahms Studies*, vol. 2, ed. David Brodbeck (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press,1998), p. 213, note no. 8. In his article "Substance and Illusion in Schumann's 'Erinnerung', Op. 68: A Structural Analysis and Pictorial (Geistlische) Description," in *In Theory Only 4/1* (1978): 9–17, Joel Lester points out the conflict between formal layout and tonal structure in this Mendelssohn-like piece by Schumann. See especially Lester's reading of the beginning of the reprise (voice-leading graph is on page 16), and compare with Mendelssohn's reprises and recapitulations beginning on an apparent tonic, which I discuss in chapters 2 and 3 of the present study.

[4] See Henry F. Chorley, *Modern German Music* (London, 1854. Reprint. New York: Da Capo Press, 1973), vol. 2, p. 414.

[5] William Rothstein, *Phrase Rhythm in Tonal Music* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1989), p. 198; Carl Schachter, "Rhythm and Linear Analysis: Aspects of Meter," in *Unfoldings: Essays in Schenkerian Theory and Analysis*, ed. Joseph N. Straus (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 112; Allen Cadwallader, "Form and Tonal Process," in *Trends in Schenkerian Research*, ed. Allen Cadwallader (New York: Schirmer Books, 1990), note no. 20 on p. 19; See also Charles Rosen's perceptive remarks on the reprise of Mendelssohn's Op. 7/1 in *The Romantic Generation* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1995), p. 588.

and his tendency to bridge over other formal divisions has likewise been noticed by various commentators.[6] The present study aims to demonstrate that all these features of Mendelssohn's compositional practice are related to one another, not only because they share certain technical characteristics, but also because they result in analogous structural ramifications and reveal similar aesthetic purposes.

The astounding reevaluation of Mendelssohn that has taken place in recent decades has given rise to an impressive number of excellent scholarly publications. Indeed, contemporary Mendelssohn scholarship includes many significant studies dealing with a wide variety of subjects such as biography and reception, ideology and aesthetics, compositional training, sketch studies, specific genres, early and late style and so forth.[7]

This mounting interest in Mendelssohn has also been reflected in the ever-growing number of analytically-oriented investigations of Mendelssohn's music. After a

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[6] R. Larry Todd calls attention to Mendelssohn's strategy of eliding the exposition and development sections in his overtures. See *Mendelssohn: The Hebrides and Other Overtures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 66. Greg Vitercik remarks—in his discussion of the Scherzo of the String Quintet in A Major, Op. 18—that "smoothing over the articulations is by now a familiar element of Mendelssohn's style." *The Early Works of Felix Mendelssohn: A Study in the Romantic Sonata Style* (Philadelphia: Gordon and Breach, 1992), p. 172.

[7] Mendelssohn's new image is probably best portrayed in R. Larry Todd's recent monumental biography, *Mendelssohn: A Life in Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003). An excellent recent account of Mendelssohn scholarship can be found in Douglass Seaton, ed. *The Mendelssohn Companion* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2001). A further representative example of current trends in Mendelssohn research is R. Larry Todd, ed. *Mendelssohn Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). Another indispensable and comprehensive account of Mendelssohn scholarship is John Michael Cooper's recent *Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy: A Guide to Research* (New York: Routledge, 2001).

hundred years of almost total neglect, today we already have some extensive analyses—using a diversity of analytical approaches—of individual pieces, as well as of collections of pieces. Perhaps the most influential studies of Mendelssohn's style—centering on a specific genre or period—are Friedhelm Krummacher's study of Mendelssohn's chamber music, Greg Vitercik's book on Mendelssohn's early sonata style and R. Larry Todd's book on Mendelssohn's overtures.[8] In addition, there are several significant studies of Mendelssohn's music—especially Songs without Words[9]—which use a Schenkerian approach: the most comprehensive work in this category remains the chapter on Mendelssohn's Songs without Words in William Rothstein's book on phrase rhythm.[10] Excellent analyses of individual Songs without Words have also been published by Carl Schachter, Allen Cadwallader and David Gagné.[11]

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[8] Friedhelm Krummacher, *Mendelssohn der Komponist: Studien zur Kammermusik für Streicher.* Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1978; Greg Vitercik, *The Early Works of Felix Mendelssohn: A Study in the Romantic Sonata Style.* Philadelphia: Gordon and Breach, 1992; Todd, *Mendelssohn: The Hebrides and Other Overtures.*

[9] In what follows I will often abbreviate "Song without Words" by SWW (in the plural SWWs).

[10] William Rothstein, "Mendelssohn: Songs without Words," Chapter 6 in *Phrase Rhythm*, pp. 183–213. Rothstein analyzes the following SWWs: Op. 30/6 in F♯ Minor; Op. 19/1 in E Major; Op. 62/2 in B♭ Major; Op. 38/4 in A Major; Op. 102/2 in D Major. Rothstein's chapter also includes analysis of Mendelssohn's "Sehnsüchtig" for piano, Op. 7/6 and the part-song "Der Wasserfahrt," Op. 50/4.

[11] Carl Schachter includes an analysis of Mendelssohn's SWW in G Minor, Op. 102/4 in his article "Rhythm and Linear Analysis: Aspects of Meter," in *The Music Forum, Vol. 6, Part I*, ed. Felix Salzer, Carl Schachter, and Hedi Siegel (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), pp. 1–59, reprinted as chapter 3 in Schachter's *Unfoldings*, pp. 79–117. The SWW in G Major, Op. 62/1 is analyzed by Schachter in his article "The Triad as Place and Action," *Music Theory Spectrum 17*, no. 2 (1995): 149–69, reprinted as chapter 6 in *Unfoldings*, pp. 161–183. Allen Cadwallader also analyzes Op. 62/1, as well as the SWW in F Major, Op. 85/1 in his "Form and Tonal Process," pp. 1–21. Another analysis of both Op. 62/1 and Op. 85/1 is presented by Allen Cadwallader and

In this study I wish to explore, by means of an orderly analysis of Mendelssohn's instrumental music, a specific compositional practice which I believe to be a hallmark of his style: the smoothing over of formal junctures of various types. By and large, Mendelssohn's dynamic treatment of formal junctures reflects a general concern with regard to continuity and momentum, a compositional issue that has always presented a challenge to composers in the Western music tradition.[12] The main purpose of our investigation, then, is to delineate the specific techniques that Mendelssohn used in his constant efforts to bridge over formal divisions. In what follows I shall investigate the procedures habitually used by Mendelssohn in order to mitigate formal boundaries.

As we shall see, numerous works by Mendelssohn feature a clear (and apparently deliberate) tendency to create larger continuities by means of bridging over divisions, regardless of the formal prototype or level of structure. On the other hand, an almost Mozartian clarity is often preserved. This might at first appear as a contradiction, but Mendelssohn, as I shall attempt to demonstrate, was able to find ingenious ways of eating his cake and having it.

In handling the traditional forms, Mendelssohn often presents a conflict between the thematic layout and the tonal structure. The purpose of such conflicts may differ widely: concealment of borders, avoiding the most banal and expected, achieving

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David Gagné in *Analysis of Tonal Music: A Schenkerian Approach* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 262–272 and 189–193 respectively.

[12] For an excellent account of early theoretical discussions of this general compositional issue—by Zarlino, Rameau, and Koch—see Joel Lester, *Compositional Theory in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1992), pp. 18–19, 115–119, and 285–288 respectively.

enhanced rhythmic flux, highlighting a crucial juncture, bringing to light a certain hidden potential of a theme or a musical idea, indulging in sheer variation in the context of repetition, etc. By and large, all of these effects served Mendelssohn's ideal of beauty and expression, aesthetic values that he most naturally—considering his background—wished to maintain.

As R. Larry Todd has aptly observed, Mendelssohn's music "concerns exploring the continuity of the European musical tradition more than celebrating its rupture. As a result, Mendelssohn's music constantly mediates between the past and present ...."[13] To be sure, Mendelssohn primarily built on the inherited compositional practice of his beloved eighteenth-century predecessors, whose music he knew exceptionally well; thus, in the course of this study, Mendelssohn's treatment of formal junctures will have to be measured against the norms of the late eighteenth century. I shall attempt to demonstrate how he expanded and transformed this tradition into a strikingly personal idiom, thereby producing a remarkable individual synthesis, a personal, Mendelssohnian manner of bridging over formal articulations.

The five main chapters of the present inquiry endeavor to provide a systematic investigation of Mendelssohn's treatment of boundaries, starting with his characteristic techniques of linkage of small units (chapter 1), moving on to sections in small—and then large—forms (chapters 2–4), and concluding with entire movements in multi-movement works (chap 5). In the closing chapter (6) I shall consider Mendelssohn's handling of formal junctures in a larger historical perspective by comparing his practice with that of other composers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

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[13] Todd, *Mendelssohn: A Life in Music*, p. xxvii.

In the course of the discussion that follows I often address general aesthetic and stylistic issues, as well as particular individual features of the work being considered; sometimes I refer the reader to significant observations by other commentators in connection with a certain work or some other pertinent subject. Nevertheless, any conclusions that we might draw with regard to a composer's style and aesthetic must be anchored, I believe, primarily in a careful exploration of the musical techniques used. Hence, the core of this investigation is an analysis of Mendelssohn's music.

The analytical approach is essentially Schenkerian, incorporating several techniques of rhythmic analysis that were further developed by eminent Schenkerian scholars (notably Schachter and Rothstein). The music examples in this study are for the most part voice-leading sketches and graphs, chordal and rhythmic reductions and related presentations. In order to facilitate the reading of some of these examples, I sometimes include a simplified outer-voices version of the actual music (or at least some portion of it). Needless to say, the reader is strongly advised to consult the actual scores.[14]

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[14] A considerable portion of Mendelssohn's instrumental music is easily accessible, as it has been reprinted by Dover Publications, Inc. These reprints include the following collections: *The Complete Works for Pianoforte Solo* (2 volumes); *Major Orchestral Works*; *Complete Chamber Music for Strings*; *Chamber Works for Piano and Strings*; *Complete Works for Piano and Orchestra.* The "Reformation" and "Lobegesang" Symphonies (which are not included in the above-mentioned collection of orchestral works) are easily available in various editions, and so is the E-minor Violin Concerto (which is also included in Dover's reprint titled *Great Romantic Violin Concertos).* Two other overtures that I discuss here (that is, "Melusine" and "Ruy Blas") are both available in Edwin F. Kalmus miniature-orchestra-scores series. The barely known Violin Sonata in F Major was published by Edition Peters (the two excerpts from this hard to come by piece are supplemented, however, with actual-score music examples).

The selected instrumental works of Mendelssohn that will be analyzed in this study belong to three major categories: orchestral music (symphonies, overtures and concerti), chamber music, and piano music. I do not include childhood compositions written prior to Mendelssohn's Op. 1.[15] On the other hand, some works that were not published in Mendelssohn's lifetime for various reasons are featured. The vast majority of the pieces that we shall look at are reasonably well known and easily accessible. Some compositions are rarely performed, but were nonetheless chosen because they amply exemplify a musical technique that is significant from the perspective of the present investigation.

Nowadays there is probably a less urgent need than there was until a few decades ago to refute the old (and unfortunately widespread) notion, according to which Mendelssohn's output from around 1835 until his untimely death at 1847 is a poor match for the great masterpieces of his astonishingly early maturity.[16] Yet, a few words about chronology and quality might be in place here: the present study examines works that range from 1822 (the Piano Quartet in C Minor, Op. 1) to 1847 (the String Quartet in F Minor, Op. 80, Mendelssohn's last major composition). It includes small as well as large

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[15] For an excellent study of Mendelssohn's earliest attempts at composition, see R. Larry Todd's book *Mendelssohn's Musical Education: A Study and Edition of his Exercises in Composition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983). An instructive survey of the early String Symphonies is included in Greg Vitercik's book, *The Early Works of Felix Mendelssohn: A Study in the Romantic Sonata Style* (Philadelphia: Gordon and Breach, 1992), Chapter 2, pp. 41–47.

[16] Perhaps the most eloquent expression of this view of Mendelssohn is Tovey's well known idea that there might have been, so to speak, two Mendelssohns: the real one, the composer of the *Midsummer-Night's Dream* and *Hebrides* overtures, and the pseudo-Mendelssohn of early Victorian idolatry. Donald Francis Tovey, *Essays in Musical Analysis 4: Illustrative Music* (first published in 1937), Tenth Impression (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 90.

forms of instrumental music. Most of the examples are from undisputed, frequently performed compositions, but there are also some from little known and occasionally even from less inspired works. The compositional and stylistic features that this wide variety of compositions share show that Mendelssohn on the whole maintained his personal, idiosyncratic traits throughout his career as a composer, regardless of genre, form, and even inspiration, I would dare say. In response to much unjust criticism which almost ruined his reputation in the past, a careful study of Mendelssohn's instrumental works reveals that he is a master of subtle nuance and understatement. Focusing on one specific attribute of his compositional practice, our investigation seeks to contribute to the gradually developing understanding of his remarkably fresh music.

CHAPTER 1

PHRASE AND SUBPHRASE OVERLAP

Throughout the history of Western music, it has been characteristic of composers to seek ways of avoiding various sorts of breaks in the flow of the music. In the context of different historical styles, sophisticated techniques of phrase overlap developed, and in certain musical genres the overlap of melodic as well as harmonic and rhythmic units became rather normative.[1] Sometimes, however, one finds differences in overlapping that are at least to some extent attributable to individual style rather than to differences in period or genre.

Although Renaissance and Baroque overlap techniques are far from being irrelevant to the current investigation, it is clear that with regard to Mendelssohn's personal style, classical types of phrase overlap form the best point from which to begin our discussion: Mendelssohn's instrumental music, not unlike the music of the great composers in the classical style, heavily depends on duple hypermeter.[2] Hence, his

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[1] Sixteenth-century sacred polyphonic music and Baroque fugues are notable examples of such a normative practice. There are numerous accounts of this norm in the literature. See, for instance, Robert Gauldin, *A Practical Approach to Sixteenth-Century Counterpoint* (Prospects Heights, Illinois: Waveland Press Inc., 1985), pp. 56 and 90–91; Peter Schubert, *Modal Counterpoint, Renaissance Style* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 218; William Renwick, *Analyzing Fugue: A Schenkerian Approach* (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1995), p. 24.

[2] Many commentators address the fundamental difference between the phrase rhythms of Classic and Romantic music and those of earlier styles. See, for instance, Edward T. Cone, *Musical Form and Musical Performance* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1968), pp. 78–82; Rothstein, preface to *Phrase Rhythm in Tonal Music* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1989), p. vii; Channan Willner discusses the crucial role of a duple durational framework in Classic and Romantic music in "Sequential Expansion and Handelian

handling of phrase rhythm naturally relies on classical techniques. But as we will see, he further developed and refined some of the inherited traditional means of phrase overlap, and arrived at certain compositional habits that are recognizably Mendelssohnian. Pointing out exactly when a certain method of phrase or subphrase overlap ceases to be traditional and enters the domain of specifically Mendelssohnian peculiarities is not always possible. Instead of attempting to delineate a clear-cut border between the two related phenomena, I wish to trace in what follows a line of development and transformation from the general tradition to the highly individual practice.

The forthcoming investigation will start with very small formal units, that is, with subphrases and short melodic segments that do not constitute a complete tonal unit. Later on, complete phrases of various lengths will be examined. At both subphrase and phrase levels, I shall start by examining the rhythmic and metrical circumstances in which overlap occurs, and later proceed to focus on tonal peculiarities. To be sure, in most cases rhythmic and tonal aspects are interrelated, and therefore, their separation might seem somewhat artificial. But for the sake of orderly presentation, it seems necessary to distinguish between rhythmic and tonal issues. In each of the categories discussed, I shall briefly cite instances of overlap where Mendelssohn follows the practice of earlier composers, and then investigate in greater detail instances which best exemplify Mendelssohn's distinctive, sometimes even idiosyncratic, compositional practice.

Phrase Rhythm," in *Schenker Studies 2*, ed. Carl Schachter and Hedi Siegel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 212–216.

In the ensuing discussion, I shall consider phrases and subphrases as overlapping in the following compositional situations:

1. When the last note (or notes) of the first phrase is featured simultaneously as the first note (or notes) of the next phrase (or subphrase).

2. When the last chord (sometimes a prolonged harmony that encompasses several chords[3]) of one phrase acts simultaneously as the first chord (or harmony) of the following phrase.

3. When the last metrical (often hypermetrical) unit of the first phrase (or subphrase) doubles (or, as is often the case, is reinterpreted) as the first unit of a new phrase (or subphrase).[4]

Since the subject matter of this study concerns smoothing over in general, the present chapter presents not only examples corresponding to one or another of these three compositional situations, but also some examples in which phrases or subphrases are linked to one another by devices that operate on the musical surface, such as articulation slurs, lead-ins, etc. In addition, there will be one case in which the surface linkage of two phrases is enhanced by a deeper, middleground harmonic continuity.[5]

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[3] See Examples 1.20 and 1.21.

[4] Techniques of overlap are widely discussed in the literature. See, for instance, Fred Lerdahl and Ray Jackendoff, *A Generative Theory of Tonal Music* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1983), pp. 55–62 and Rothstein, *Phrase Rhythm*, pp. 43–56.

[5] See Example 1.24.

The Subphrase Level

I. Regular Hypermeter

Examples 1.1–1.3 show a subphrase overlap within the framework of a regular duple hypermeter. The melodic beginnings of the subphrases—in relation to the hypermeter—are in varied positions, that is, beginning on the downbeat, the afterbeat or the upbeat.[6]

Example 1.1, taken from the second theme of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* Overture, is an illustration of a very simple subphrase overlap. As we can see, $d\sharp^2$, the last note in the first subphrase (bar 134, downbeat), is also the first note in the second subphrase. Since the length of each subphrase exceeds the four-bar hypermetrical unit, the overlap not only secures the continuous flow of the music, but also enables Mendelssohn to maintain a regular four-bar hypermeter. This traditional type of overlap is fairly simple, and conveys no personal peculiarity on Mendelssohn's part.

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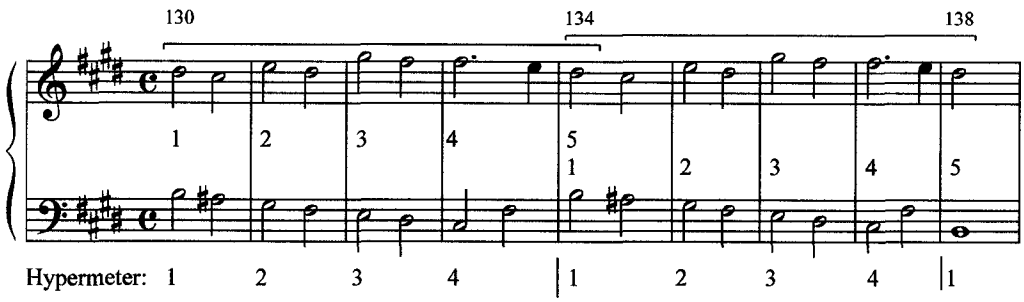
[6] As noted by numerous commentators, nonalignment of grouping and meter is a very frequent situation in tonal music. See, for instance, Wallace Berry, "Metric and Rhythmic Articulation in Music," *Music Theory Spectrum* 7 (1985): 7–33; Lerdahl and Jackendoff, *A Generative Theory*, pp. 25–30.

Example 1.1. Overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Allegro di molto, bars 130–138, outer voices

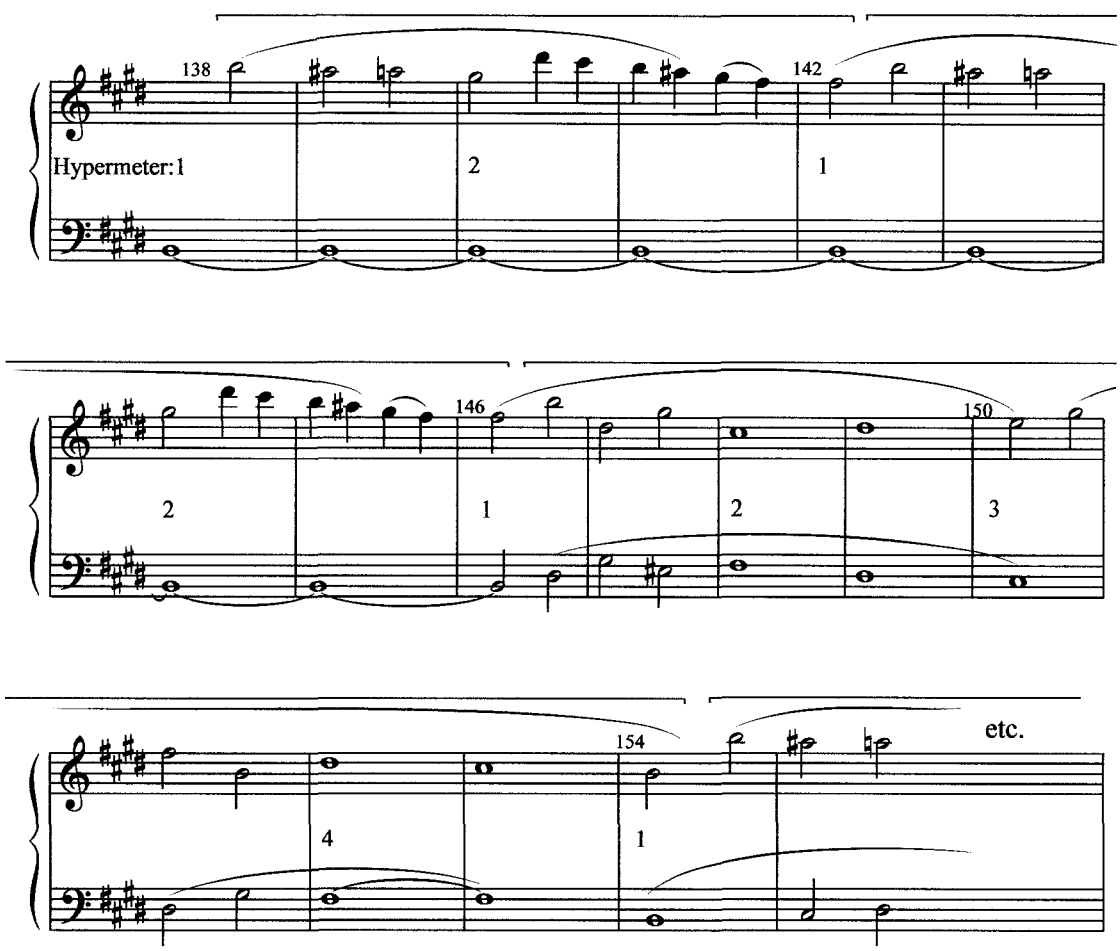


Continuing with the same theme (Example 1.2), we can see that in bar 138 there is no melodic overlap, and that an afterbeat pattern begins on the second half of the bar. The new melodic idea is four bars long: its last note, f♯^{2}, is reached at the beginning of bar 142. Nonetheless, Mendelssohn's articulation slur connects this f♯^{2} to the next subphrase (bar 142 second half-note, to bar 146 downbeat), which repeats the melody of bars 138–142.[7] Although this overlap is only on the surface, it enables the theme to maintain an attractive rhythmic flexibility and to shift between downbeat and afterbeat patterns quite naturally. Looking now at the next subphrase junctures (bars 146, 150, and 154, shown in Example 1.2), we can easily see how Mendelssohn's articulation slurs in the outer voices continue to indicate similar shifts from downbeat to afterbeat patterns.

[7] As pointed out by William Rothstein, an afterbeat pattern can easily give rise to overlap. See his analysis of Bach's C-major Invention in *Phrase Rhythm*, pp. 30 and 50.

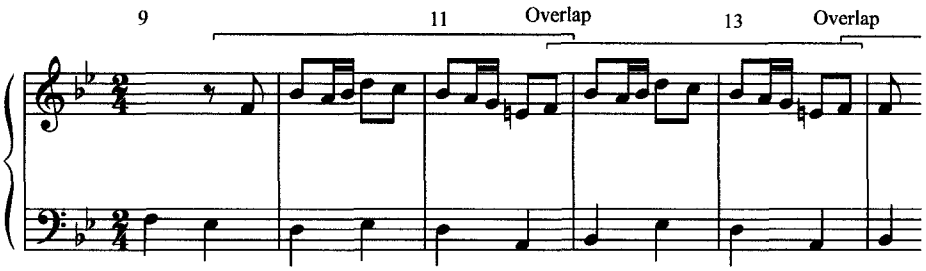
Note that the articulation in the outer voices is consistently out of phase, a feature which seems to enhance the sense of fluidity even further.

Example 1.2. Overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Allegro di molto bars 138–155, outer voices



The third and last example for subphrase overlap within regular hypermeter (taken from the SWW Op. 85/6) features an upbeat pattern. Once this pattern is established (upbeat to bar 10 in Example 1.3), we expect the upbeat eighth note to be repeated consistently. This requires that the two-bar subphrase end on the third eighth note of bar 11. But as we can see, this position is occupied by a dependent dissonance, $e\natural^1$, which must resolve to f^1 if the subphrase is to be completed. As it happens, the very same f^1 is also the upbeat of the next two-bar unit (bars 12–13); it is precisely analogous to the upbeat of bar 10. Thus, the two subphrases (as well as the following subphrases that are not shown in Example 1.3) are linked together.

Example 1.3. SWW in B♭ Major, Op. 85/6, Allegretto, bars 9–14, outer voices



II. Expanded Hypermeter

Regular hypermeter is by no means a precondition for overlapping. Our next example (1.4) presents a subphrase overlap that occurs within an expanded hypermeasure, in which metrical organization is in no way regular. In comparison with the fairly simple examples considered so far, the overlap of small segments within the celebrated lyrical second theme of the *Hebrides* Overture is highly individualized.[8] The sense of unusual elasticity here results, I believe, from the afterbeat beginnings on the one hand, and the unequal pacing of the harmonic events on the other. Example 1.4a is a slightly simplified version of the entire eleven-bar phrase (bars 47–57). The subdivision of the phrase into smaller segments is indicated above the melody.

As we can see, the initial afterbeat pattern of bar 47 recurs two more times as the phrase unfolds, first in bar 51 and then in bar 55. But in sharp contrast to bar 47, in which the melody begins after a quarter-note rest, those two further beginnings (indicated in Example 1.4a as subphrases 2 and 3) are linked to the small repeated melodic segments (each indicated as a suffix in the example) that precede them. Those short segments seem to halt the further progress of the phrase: although they do not literally repeat the end of the longer melodic idea that they follow, they clearly sound like static extensions, offshoots of the main subphrase unit. Both at bar 51 and bar 55, the end of the suffix fragment is also the beginning the following subphrase, and

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[8] Tovey praises the second theme of the *Hebrides* Overture as "the greatest melody Mendelssohn ever wrote." See his *Essays in Musical Analysis*, vol. 4, Tenth Impression (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), pp. 92–93.

therefore the beginnings of subphrases 2 and 3 are not immediately perceived as such. They are recognized in retrospect, once the analogy—as regards melodic contour and rhythm—between bars 51 and 55 and bar 47 (which is initially masked by the overlap) is noticed.

In Example 1.4b I have removed the suffix extensions, attempting to reveal the phrase's basic length and its implied middleground prototype.[9] The resultant phrase suggests that a duple hypermeter does exist here: each subphrase begins on a strong measure, and the closing cadence arrives at the tonic on the beginning of the fourth hypermetrical unit. The numbers at the bottom of Example 1.4b indicate both the seven-bar basic length and the underlying hypermetrical organization.

The example also reveals that the subphrases overlap one another also at the middleground level. Nonetheless, the overlappings, at bars 3 and 5 of Example 1.4b, are impossible in practice. As the asterisks in those bars show, there is an unattractive (to say the least) dissonant clash between the first notes of subphrases 2 and 3 (that is, D and A respectively) and the prevailing harmonies on the downbeat of those bars (that is, E minor and B minor, II and VI respectively). The dissonant clashes result from the fact that both subphrases 2 and 3 begin on a chord built on the upper third of the prevailing harmony. Thus, subphrase 2 begins on IV, the upper third of II, and subphrase 3 begins on "I," the upper third of VI. Hence, the suffix extensions may now be understood as

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[9] The concept of basic length is taken from Rothstein. See *Phrase Rhythm*, pp. 106–7. Implied prototypes are discussed by Oster, Schachter and Rothstein. See Oster's footnote 4 on p. 124 of Schenker's *Free Composition*. Schachter discusses the idea in "Aspects of Meter." See *Unfoldings*, ed. Joseph N. Straus (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 102–108. Rothstein addresses the concept in "Rhythm and the Theory of Structural Levels," (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1981), pp. 162–171 and also in *Phrase Rhythm*, pp. 92–93.

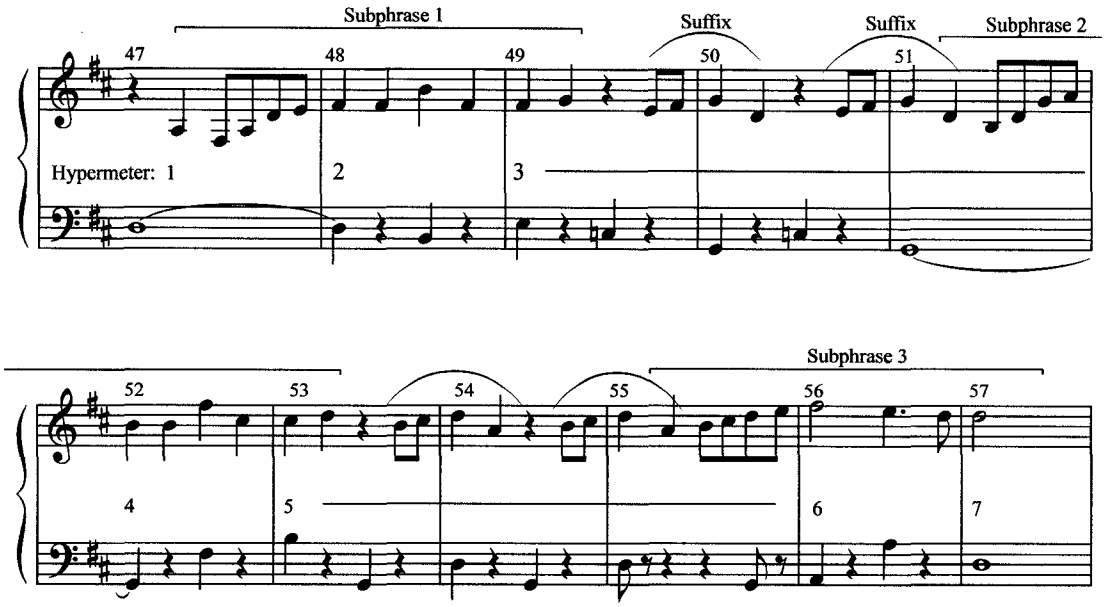
more essential components of the phrase than they might have appeared to be initially. Although they do not embody true harmonic progress, they enable the next subphrase to emerge seamlessly from a "friendly" consonant surrounding.

In Example 1.4c I attempt to show how expansions and overlaps give rise to the remarkably elastic theme. Note that the conceptually vertical thirds (E–G and B–D) in the condensed prototype are unfolded in time. We can think of this extension of our hypothetical prototype (shown on the left side of Example 1.4c) as having two stages. The first adds one suffix unit to each of the basic subphrases; such an extension is necessary in order to remove the impossible dissonant clash from the condensed model. Thus, we now have an "improved" prototype in triple hypermeter (middle part of 1.4c). The second stage of the extension is a non-essential expansion, brought about by the further repetition of each suffix (see the right side of the example). To summarize, seven bars had to be extended to nine bars, and those nine bars were further expanded to create the eleven-bar phrase in the actual music.

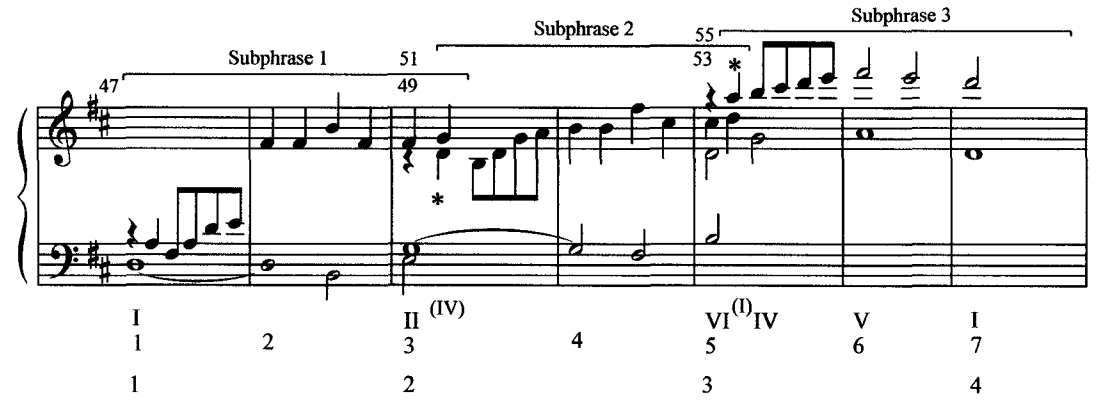
Example 1.4d is a voice-leading graph of the entire phrase. As we can see, the main harmonies, namely I, II, VI (upper fifth of II)—before the closing cadence (V–I)—coincide with the hypermetrical organization shown in Examples 1.4b and 1.4c. The suffix segments, by contrast, are clearly subordinate to II and VI which they expand. Indeed, unusual metrical and tonal organization join forces here to create an extraordinary Mendelssohnian phrase.

Example 1.4. The *Hebrides* Overture, Op. 26, Allegro moderato,

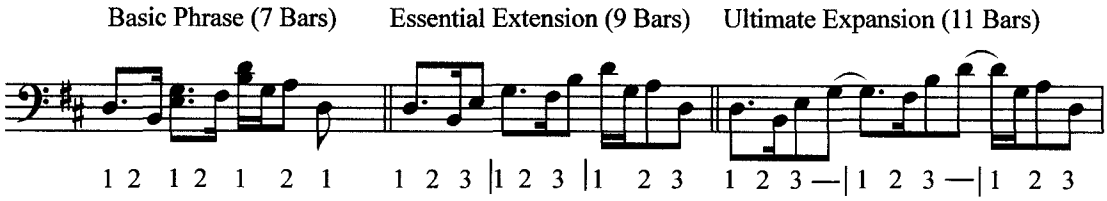
a) Bars 47–57, melody and bass



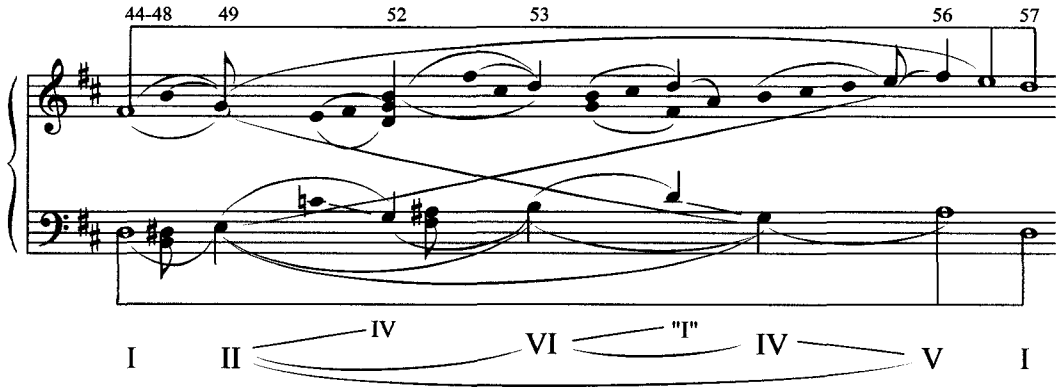
b) Bars 47–57, hypothetical basic length



c) Bars 47–57, durational reduction 𝅝=♪



d) Bars 47–57, a voice leading graph



III. Metrical Shifts and Conflicts

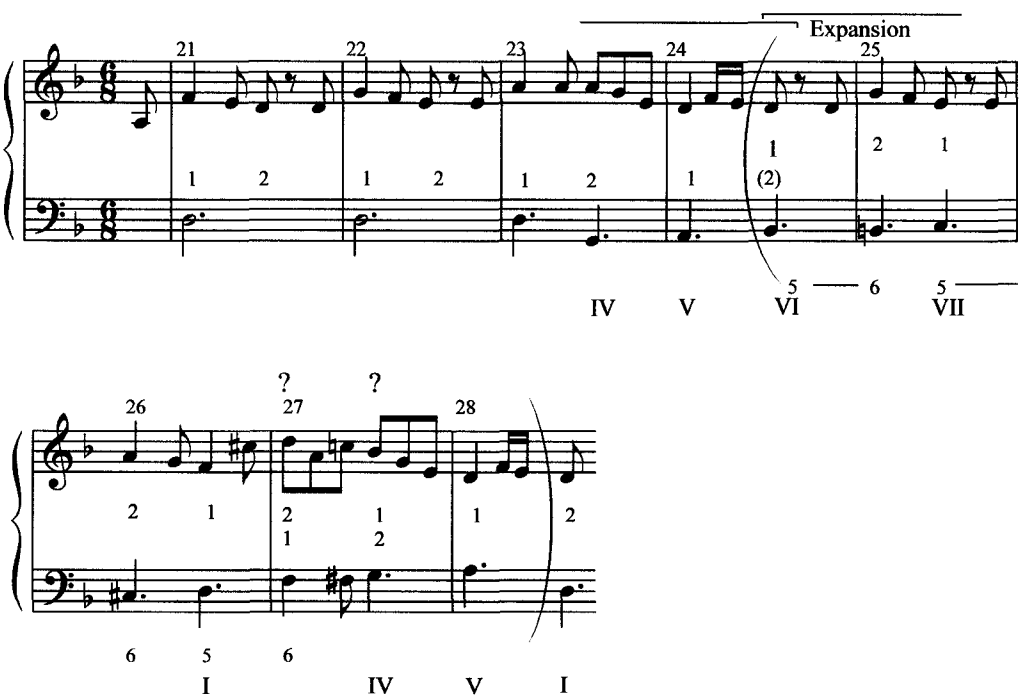
As Schachter and Rothstein have most convincingly shown, one of the most ingenious aspects of Mendelssohn's compositional practice is his manipulation of meter, and more specifically his highly developed technique of "Conflicting Meters."[10] The next four examples, still investigating the subphrase level, will focus on Mendelssohn's handling of meter. As we shall see, the manipulation of metrical patterns is often the main agent in producing overlaps. As it happens, shifting from one metrical pattern to another, or resolving metrical conflicts between two rival patterns, often occurs in conjunction with a formal boundary between phrases or subphrases. Thus, these manipulations can have a significant role in the smoothing over of such junctures. I shall first look at a traditional shift of metrical accent (Example 1.5) and then move on to a more typically Mendelssohnian treatment of meter and hypermeter.

Example 1.5 features an expanded phrase from the third movement (Menuetto) of the Sextet in D Major for Piano and Strings, Op. 110 (1824). As we can see, the closure expected at bar 24 is delayed until bar 28. A deceptive motion V–VI in bar 24 not only postpones the resolution and expands the entire phrase, but it also upsets the metrical organization, shifting metrical emphasis to the second half of the notated bars. The second beat of bar 24 is the crucial turning point, acting simultaneously as the last

[10] Schachter discusses metrical conflict in two of Mendelssohn's Songs without Words, Op. 102/4 and Op. 62/1. The former is analyzed in "Rhythm and Linear Analysis: Aspects of Meter" (reprinted in *Unfoldings*, see pp. 97–115). The latter is analyzed in "The Triad as Place and Action" (reprinted in *Unfoldings*, see pp. 165–170). Rothstein discusses conflicting downbeats in three other of Mendelssohn's Songs without Words (Op. 62/2, Op. 38/4, and Op. 102/2) in *Phrase Rhythm*, pp. 199–213.

(weak) metrical unit of the first subphrase (bars 21–24) and the first (strong) unit in the next subphrase. As the figures below Example 1.5 show, the metrical shift is attained by means of tonal rhythm: the chromaticized 5–6 sequence can only be perceived as strong (5)–weak (6).[11] Bar 27, however, is a turning point: the question marks in the example indicate that the metrical situation in that bar is rather ambiguous. At bar 28, nonetheless, the original notated meter prevails, and the cadence that was evaded in bar 24 is completed.

Example 1.5. Sextet for Piano and Strings in D Major, Op. 110, III, Menuetto, Agitato, bars 21–28, outer voices



[11] Similar metrical shifts in Bach's music (that is, shifts arising from tonal rhythm) were recently discussed by Charles Burkhart in his article "Mid-Bar Downbeats in Bach's Keyboard Music," *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy* 8 (1994): 3–26.

The slow movement of Mendelssohn's first Piano Trio, Op. 49, is one of numerous movements in which metrical conflict is a salient feature. I shall address the movement's beginning later in this chapter. At the present stage, let us focus on just one eight-bar phrase, starting at mid-bar 16 and ending at mid-bar 24. As we can see in Example 1.6a, the duple metrical pattern begins in mid-measure, disagreeing with the notated meter,[12] but as the asterisks at bar 17 and 18 indicate, the notated meter is also felt: the high d^2, placed on the notated downbeat of bars 17 and 18, is largely responsible for this rival metrical pattern. As the phrase unfolds, the tentative pattern of the notated meter takes over, and the shift from one meter to another gives rise to a typically Mendelssohnian overlap.

The notated downbeat of bar 20 is the precise point at which the metrical shift occurs. We expect the first half of bar 20 to complete a hypermeasure (and also a subphrase) of four half-bar units (see indication at the bottom of Example 1.6a). Instead of being just an end of the hypermeasure, however, the first half of bar 20—not unlike a pivot chord in a modulation—is reinterpreted as the beginning of a new hypermeasure (and also a new subphrase). The pivot note g^2 marked by *sforzando* fulfils, so to speak, the suggestive promise of the high d^2 of the previous subphrases. It is no accident that this is the highest note in the entire eight-bar phrase.

As shown in Example 1.6a, the next subphrase is expanded (note the expanded harmony in bar 21), as if to compensate for the missing half-bar that the overlap in bar 20 has brought about. In Example 1.6b, I have normalized the phrase rhythm, removing

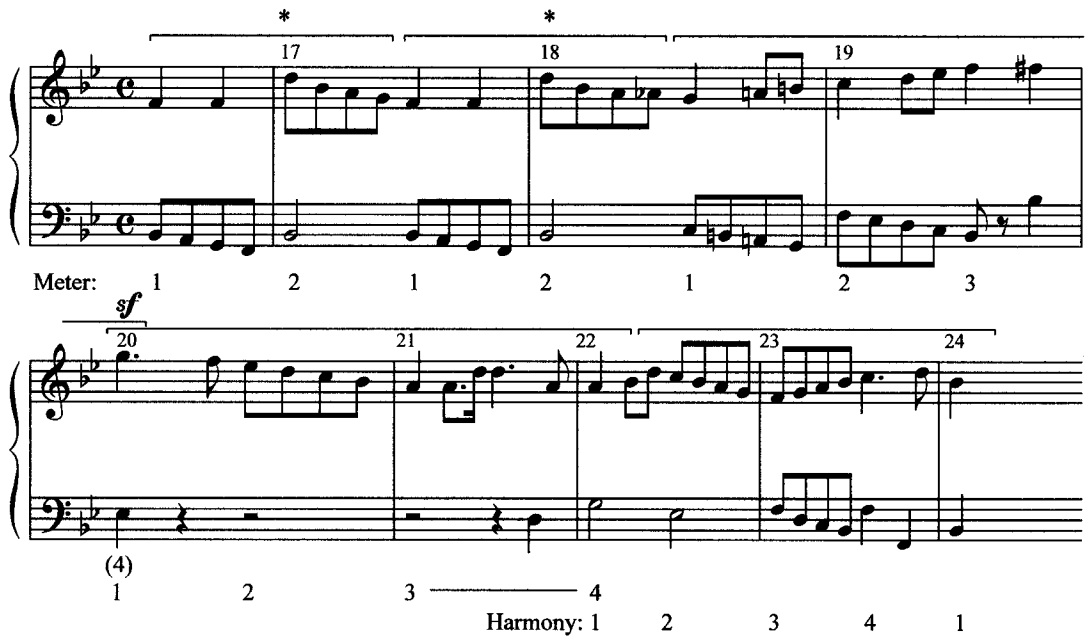
[12] The movement features the mid-bar metrical pattern from the outset (see also Example 1.17). By bar 16 this pattern is already well established.

both the contraction of bar 20 and the expansion of bar 21. Comparing the banality of the normalized version to the elasticity of the actual music may illuminate Mendelssohn's exquisite skills in handling phrase rhythm.

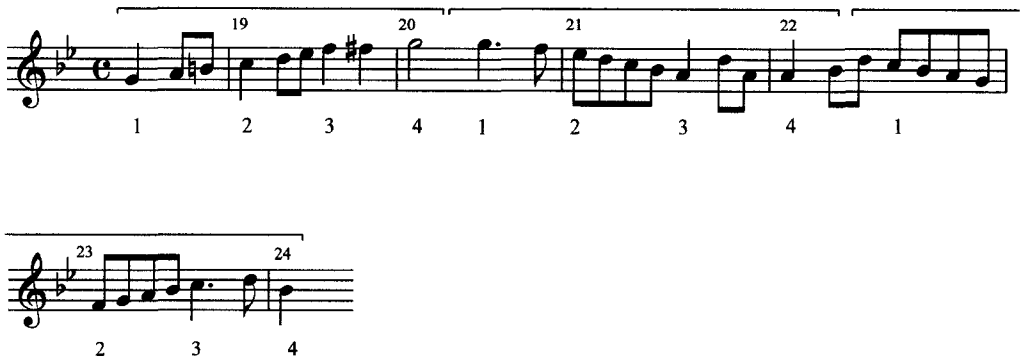
Although the remaining two bars (mid-bar 22 to mid-bar 24) return to normal length, the harmonic rhythm now clearly supports the notated metrical pattern (see indication in Example 1.6a). Thus, despite the slight separation in the melody between the last two subphrases (bar 22), the metrical pattern created by the harmony guarantees continuity and bridges over the melodic segments.

Example 1.6. Piano Trio No. 1 in D Minor, Op. 49, II, Andante con moto tranquillo

a) Bars 16–24, outer voices



b) Bars 18–24 melody recomposed, phrase rhythm normalized



The remarkable flexibility achieved by manipulation of meter is, as noted above, an unmistakable trait of Mendelssohn's style.[13] A fairly early example of "metrical conflict" that produces overlaps at the subphrase level is the beginning of another slow movement, that of the third Piano Quartet in B Minor, Op. 3 (1824–1825).[14] As we can see in Example 1.7, the competition for a downbeat status in this phrase is rather harsh. Since both mid-bar and notated downbeats are emphasized by means of a variety of signals (such as harmonic rhythm, melodic high points etc.), there is no easy way to tell

[13] For a comprehensive study of metrical conflicts as a prominent feature in Schumann's music see Harald Krebs, *Fantasy Pieces: Metrical Dissonance in the Music of Robert Schumann* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

[14] Mendelssohn, apparently proud of his third Piano Quartet, dedicated the piece to Goethe.

which metrical pattern is the leading one, and which one is the shadow competitor.[15] As the brackets in bars 1–4 of Example 1.7 indicate, melodic segments overlap each other rather obsessively: once a melodic unit reaches a (local) goal, the next one, a half-bar down the road, takes over.

As shown in the metrical analysis, three phases in the metrical drama may be discerned here: In the first one, bars 1–2, the mid-bar pattern is somewhat stronger, and the notated pattern hovers as the threatening shadow. In the second phase, bars 3–5, the struggle between the two conflicting meters is at its peak, and both are felt more or less equally. (Note the contradictory signals—especially dissonant harmonies and arrivals at melodic goals—that are featured at the beginning, as well as in the middle, of bars 3, 4 and 5.) However, in the third and last phase of this battle, bars 6–8, the notated meter clearly takes over. Note especially the reinterpretation (and consequently, the overlap) that occurs on the downbeat of bar 6, where an expected weak (fourth) unit in the rival meter is pushed aside in favor of the notated meter. From this turning point to the completion of the cadence in bar 8, the notated meter is the only player in the field.

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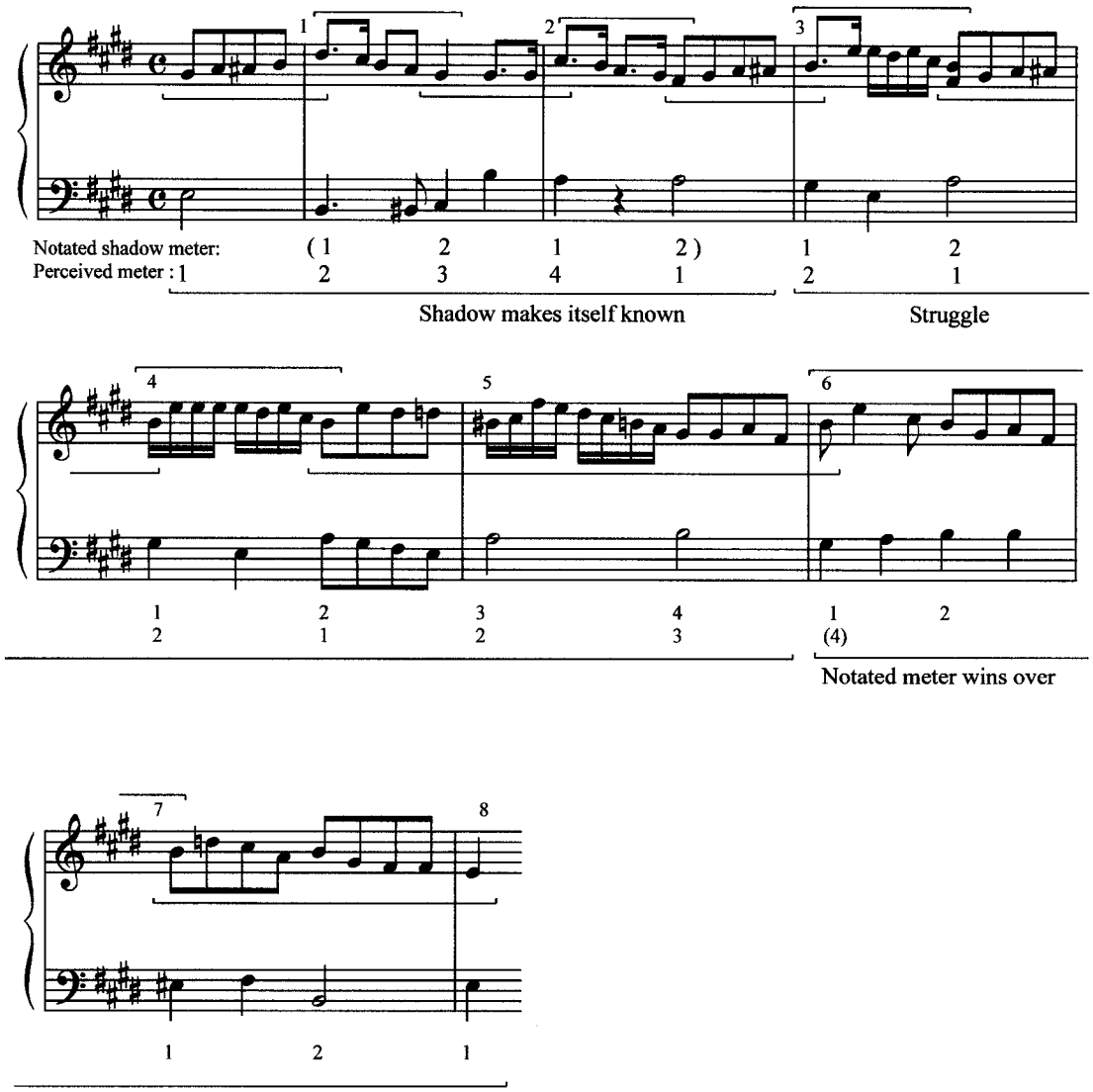
[15] Calling a rival metrical pattern "shadow meter" is suggested by Frank Samarotto. See his article "Strange Dimensions: Regularity and Irregularity in Deep Levels of Rhythmic Reduction," in *Schenker Studies 2*, pp. 222–238.

Example 1.7. Piano Quartet in B Minor, Op. 3, II, Andante, bars 1–8, melody and bass (simplified)



A different manifestation of conflicting metrical patterns occurs in our next excerpt (*Midsummer Night's Dream* Overture, bars 230 ff.). The overlap shown in Example 1.8a is brought about by the melodic afterbeat pattern, which does not coincide with the four-bar hypermeasures. The melody begins on the second bar of one

hypermeasure and ends on the first bar of the second. Overlap is unavoidable, since the four-bar patterns in the bass (representing the harmony) and in the melody are out of phase.[16] Even though the true hypermetrical downbeats here are in the bass, the beginning of the melodic subphrase on the second bar of the hypermeasure produces the shadow of a conflicting metrical pattern, one of Mendelssohn's favorite devices.

As shown in the durational reduction (Example 1.8b), the underlying pattern resembles a simple nonalignment of grouping and meter, a phenomenon which we have already encountered at the beginning of this chapter (see Example 1.2). However, in contrast to the simple excerpts above, the accentuation pattern that is built into the melody in the actual music here acquires a quasi metrical character (see the metrical analysis above the stave in 1.8a). Hence I call the pattern featured by the melody a pseudo hypermeter.[17]

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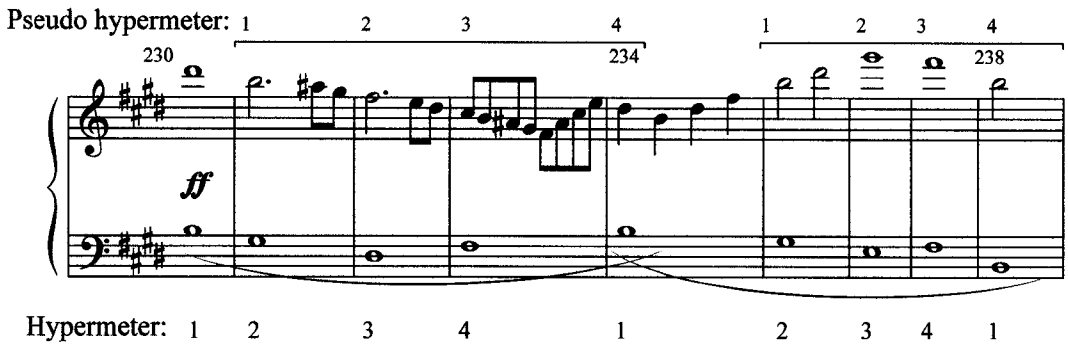
[16] Schenker cites a similar hypermetrical conflict in the first movement of Mendelssohn's "Scottish" Symphony. See *Free Composition*, Figure 147, 4.

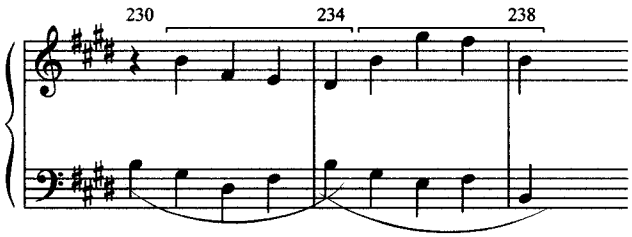
[17] Thrasybulos Georgiades discusses comparable phenomena in the music of Mozart and Schubert. See "Zur Müsiksprache der Wiener Klassiker", in *Mozart Jahrbuch* (1951), pp. 40–59; *Schubert: Musik und Lyric*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967.

Example 1.8. Overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

a) Bars 230–238, outer voices



b) Bars 230–238, durational reduction 𝅝=𝅗𝅥



The Phrase Level

I. Rhythmic and Textural Aspects

1. Regular Hypermeter

Moving now from short melodic segments and subphrases to complete phrases,[18] I shall again start with traditional classical techniques of phrase overlap, and then focus on the more peculiarly Mendelssohnian overlaps.

In the first movement of the Octet Op. 20, near the end of the exposition, we encounter a typically classical overlap. In bar 113, the powerful closing cadence of the second group reaches a conclusion on the local B♭-major tonic. The very same bar is also the beginning of the codetta, which consists of two short phrases. In addition to the overlap at bar 113, the two almost identical codetta phrases are also linked together in bar 117, as Example 1.9 illustrates.

As we can see, the last bar of the five-bar phrase (113–117) doubles as the first bar of the varied and expanded repetition of what is basically the same phrase, in bars 117–123. Similar tonic overlaps, either in phrase or subphrase level, are very common in classical second groups, and the Octet excerpt demonstrates Mendelssohn's mastery of the overlap techniques of his immediate predecessors.

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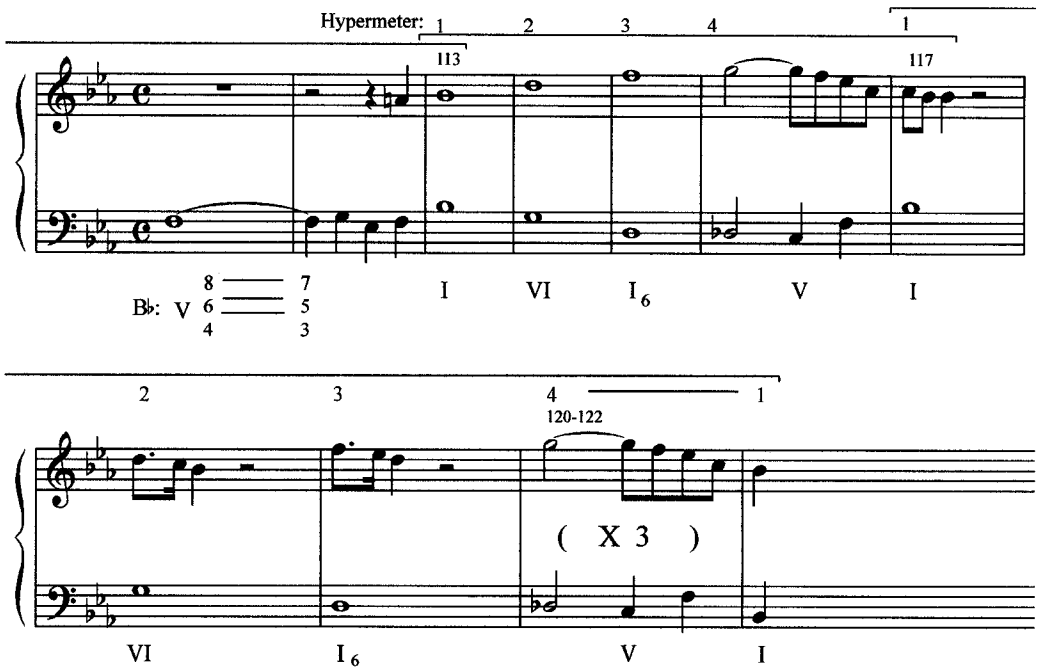
[18] The distinction between subphrases and phrases is based on the completeness and/or independence of the formal unit under discussion. I use it here somewhat flexibly. Strictly speaking, some of the "phrases" in the following discussion (for instance, Examples 1.9 and 1.25) are not exactly independent or complete. However, for the purpose of overlap technique, it makes sense to include them here.

Example 1.9. Octet in E♭ Major, Op. 20, I, Allegro moderato ma con fuoco, bars 111–123



2. Extension of Cadences

Another traditional rhythmic device which is frequently encountered in Mendelssohn's music is the extension of cadences. When the end of one phrase "invades" the territory of the new phrase, the outcome is a phrase overlap.

The first phrase in the second-theme group of the first movement of Mendelssohn's first Cello Sonata, Op. 45 in B♭ Major (bars 61–69), could easily fit into eight bars. However, in order to produce overlap with the consequent phrase, Mendelssohn expands the cadence of the phrase so that it reaches its tonal goal only at the ninth bar. As the durational reduction of Example 1.10a shows, the cadence (bars 67–69) is stretched out so that the chord of resolution does not arrive at bar 68 as expected (as shown in Example 1.10b, the normalized version). Instead, it coincides with the beginning of the second phrase in the group (bar 69).[19] Note also that instead of a C-major chord, the consequent phrase features a C-minor chord at its beginning (bar 69).

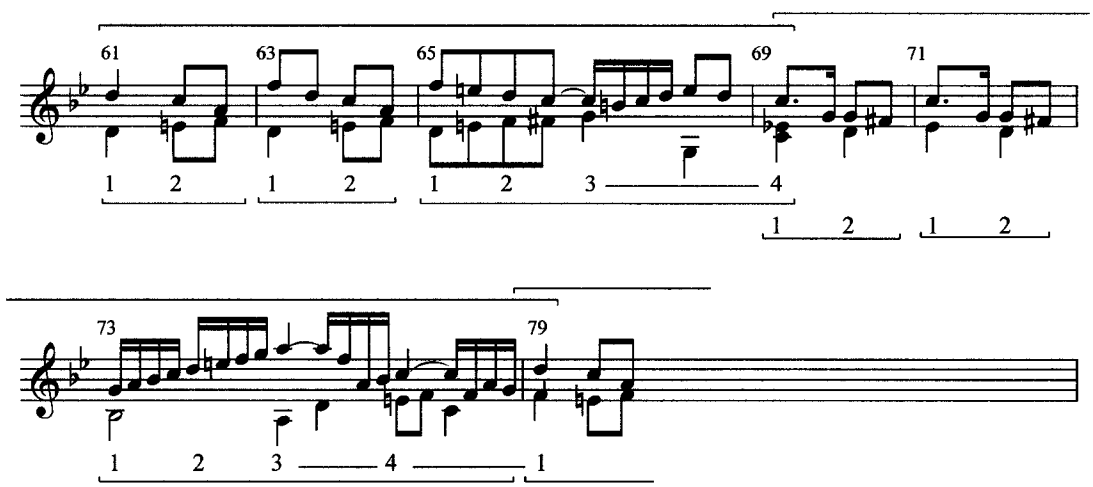
The somewhat expanded consequent phrase (bars 69–79) is similarly stretched out near its end so that its final F chord overlaps (bar 79) the beginning of the following phrase. Here, in addition to the overlap produced by a traditional technique, we encounter a distinctly nineteenth-century aspect at the point of overlap: since the theme (that the piano now leads, see bars 79 ff.) does not begin with tonic harmony (that is F major) but rather with a diminished chord built on D (the sixth scale degree, see bar

[19] An identical overlap technique in Beethoven's Piano Sonata Op. 2, No. 3 is shown by Rothstein. See *Phrase Rhythm*, pp. 44–5.

61),[20] Mendelssohn also has to adjust its varied repetition (starting on bar 79) to the preceding phrase, which concludes with an authentic cadence in F major. His solution: the same diminished chord, now, however, with F in the bass.[21] This chord, then, functions as a common-tone diminished seventh chord (thus, a dissonant transformation of the expected F-major tonic). At the same time, nonetheless, it preserves the non-tonic D-minor sound, which characterizes the beginning of the theme (of which the phrase that begins in bar 79 is a varied repetition).

Example 1.10. Cello Sonata No. 1 in B♭ Major, Op.45, I, Allegro vivace,

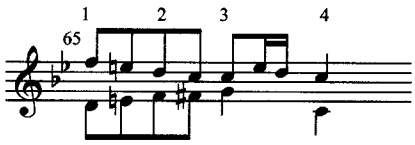
a) Bars 61–80, durational reduction 𝅝=♩



[20] On the downbeat of bar 61 there is an implied D-minor chord (VI in F major). I shall address the unusual preparation and beginning of the second theme in Chapter 4 (see Example 4.6).

[21] In order not to mix overlap techniques, I am not discussing the important polyphonic aspect of the overlap in bar 79. Polyphonic overlaps, nonetheless, will be shown in Examples 1.12 and 1.13.

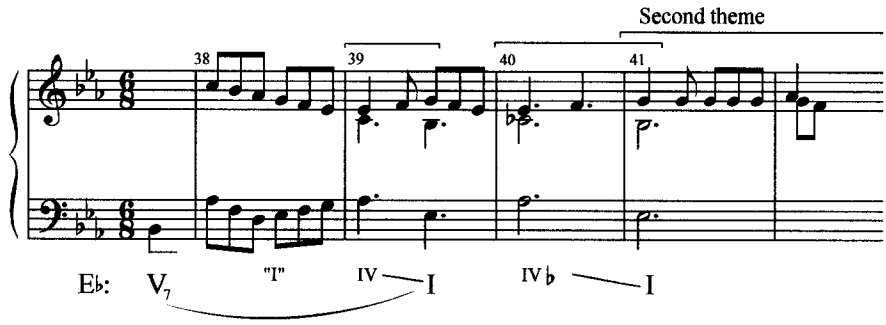
b) Bars 65–68, expansion removed, durational reduction 𝅗𝅥=♩



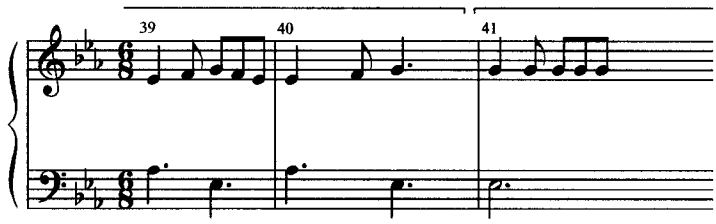
We similarly find this technique of stretching a phrase beyond its expected length, so as to create an overlap, in our next example (1.11), taken from the slow movement of the Octet, Op. 20. As we can see, the dominant seventh chord near the end of the bridge section resolves (as sometimes happens in sonata-form movements) to E♭ major, the local tonic chord of the second theme, at bar 39. The plagal IV–I progression in that bar is then repeated, now using the minor form of IV (bars 39–40). However, as shown in Example 1.11a, the repetition is twice as slow, so that I (bar 40) can also serve as the beginning of the next phrase (the second theme). Had Mendelssohn preserved the original pacing of the IV–I progression, the result would have looked like Example 1.11b, producing an unattractively static effect. Thus, the overlapping by means of cadence expansion creates a much smoother effect at the phrase border, compared with the banal segmentation in the normalized version.

Example 1.11. Octet in E♭ Major, Op. 20, II, Andante

a) Bars 38–42, outer voices



b) Bars 39–41, normalized rhythm

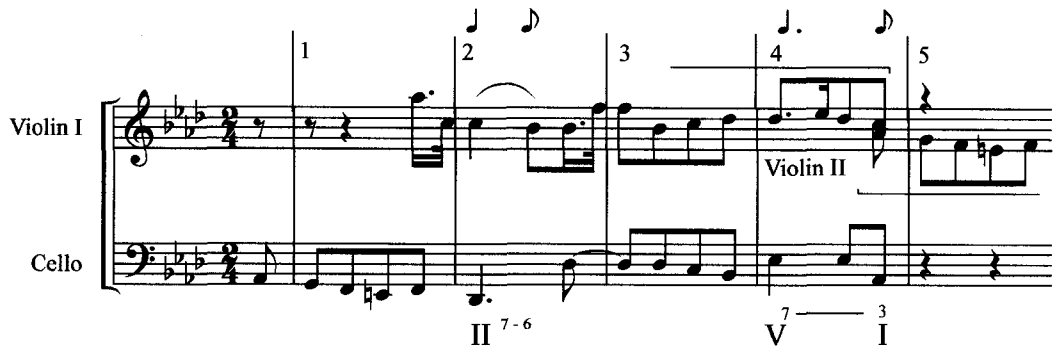


3. Polyphonic Overlaps

As a final example of an expansion that produces overlap, and at the same time as a first example of polyphonic overlap (that is, when the end of one phrase and beginning of a new phrase are presented simultaneously but either in a different voice or in a different instrument), I shall now consider the beginning of the slow movement of Mendelssohn's last String Quartet, Op. 80 in F Minor. The opening phrase begins with an eighth-note upbeat, and it is thus expected to end on the third eighth note of bar 4. Example 1.12 quotes the cello and the first violin; above the violin part I attempt to illustrate an unusual rhythmic feature of this phrase: note how the quarter to eighth dissonant–consonant figure at bar 2 (7–6 over II) is expected to be answered in an identical rhythm in bar 4. However, the dissonant D♭ in the melody of bar 4 (7 over V that needs to be resolved to 3 over I) is prolonged by a neighbor-note figure (D♭–E♭–D♭) and resolves only at the last eighth note in the bar. At the very same place (upbeat to bar 5), the second violin already starts the next phrase. This use of polyphonic texture to obtain phrase overlap is somewhat reminiscent of Renaissance overlapping technique. However, the unexpected delay of the dissonance resolution and thus the expansion of the phrase beyond its natural length sounds characteristically Mendelssohnian.[22]

[22] The tonal ambiguity at the beginning of this movement will be further investigated in Chapter 5. (See Example 5.6.)

Example 1.12. String Quartet in F Minor, Op. 80, III, Adagio, bars 1–5



The next excerpt shows another polyphonic overlap, this time in the context of an orchestral texture. The first phrase at the beginning of the Allegro in the first movement of the "Scottish" Symphony begins at bar 64 and ends at bar 85. However, by the time the violins reach melodic closure on a^1 (that is, on the downbeat of bar 85) the flutes and clarinets have already started the theme's consequent on e^2. Example 1.13a, a simplified durational reduction, illustrates.[23]

As shown in Example 1.13b, in which I have reduced the last part of the antecedent phrase to its basic length by removing the expansion of bars 78–83, the overlap does not interfere with the underlying four-bar hypermeter. The last note in the first phrase (a^1) coincides with the beginning of a new hypermetrical unit, but since the consequent begins on e^2, the only way to preserve the hypermeter at the phrase juncture is to employ polyphonic overlap. Had Mendelssohn used the violins also at the beginning of the consequent, he would have had an awkward extra bar here.

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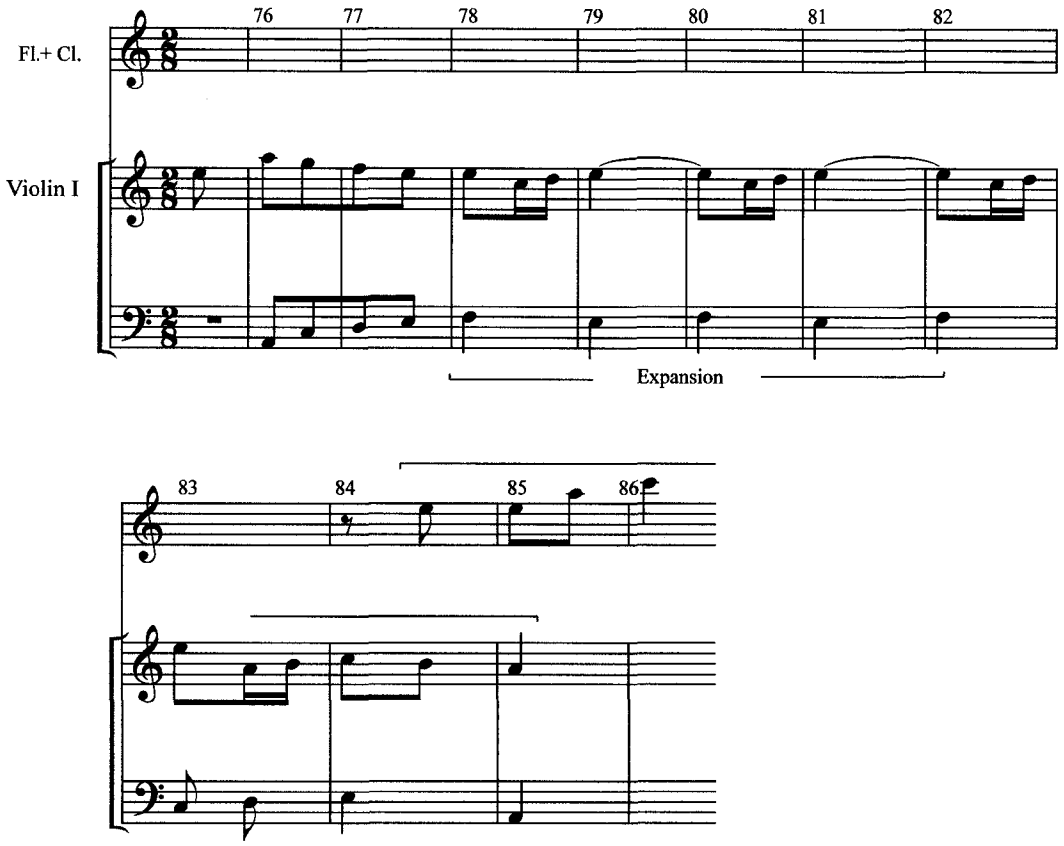
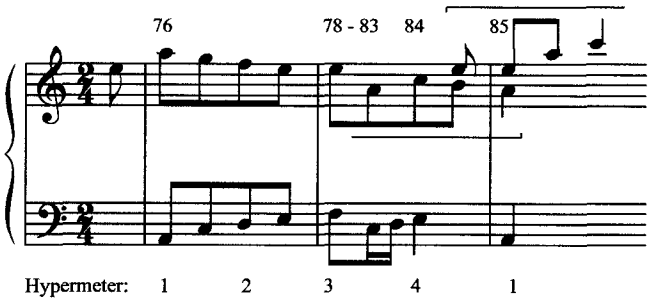
[23] The expansion indicated in Example 1.13a has an obvious motivic significance. The E–F–E idea is the most prominent motive in the symphony. See also Example 5.9 in Chapter 5.

Example 1.13. Symphony No. 3 in A Minor ("Scottish"), I, Allegro un poco agitato

a) Bars 76–86, durational reduction ♩.=♪



b) Bars 76–86 without expansion, durational reduction ♩.=♪



4. Metrical Reinterpretation[24]

Before turning to Mendelssohn's metrical peculiarities, I shall briefly discuss his use of the traditional overlap technique known as metrical reinterpretation, which, as Rothstein has accurately observed, "... never occurs without overlap."[25] Overlaps caused by metrical reinterpretation are quite frequent in Mendelssohn, and they usually occur in relation to perfect authentic cadences that threaten to bring about unwanted breaks in rhythmic motion. The next three excerpts (Examples 1.14, 1.15 and 1.16) illustrate this traditional usage by Mendelssohn. All three are themes taken from chamber music where the norm of presenting a melody by two different instruments successively gives rise to overlap: since the first statement of the theme ends with a

[24] Rothstein cites discussions of metrical reinterpretation in older and more modern theoretical writings. See *Phrase Rhythm*, p. 309, note 40.

[25] Ibid., p. 52.

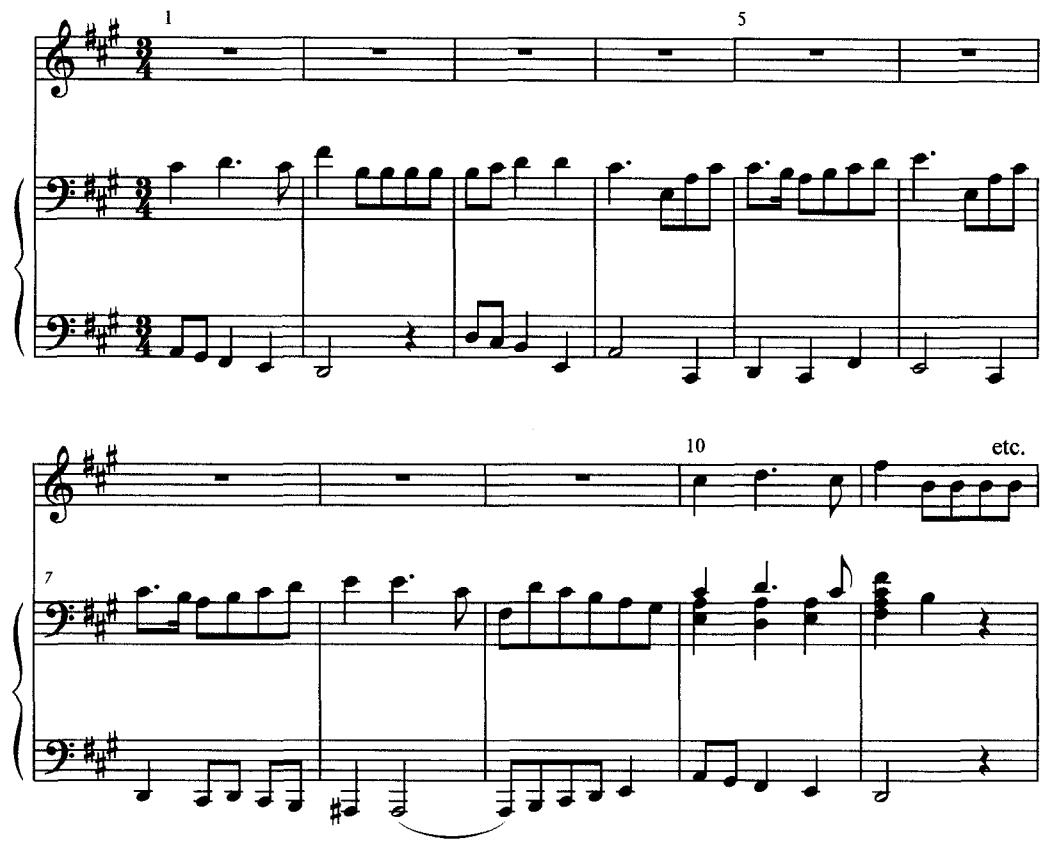
perfect authentic cadence and the second statement (in another instrument) also begins on the tonic, overlap is necessary in order to prevent an unwanted static effect and to secure continuity.

Example 1.14a shows the beginning of the slow movement of the Violin Sonata in F Major (1838).[26] The opening ten-bar phrase can be understood as an expanded eight-bar phrase; the expansion is brought about by repetition (compare bars 5–6 to 7–8). The last bar in the phrase, bar 10, is supposed to be a weak one. However, the entrance of the violin in bar 10 reinterprets it as strong (see the indications of strong and weak bars in Example 1.14b), and hence, the danger of an overly conclusive closure is removed.

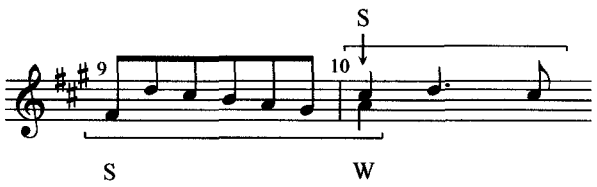
[26] The F-major Violin Sonata, probably not the most inspired work by Mendelssohn, has no opus number. It was discovered and edited by Yehudi Menuhin, and published by Edition Peters in 1953. In my judgment, the slow movement of the sonata is by far the most attractive. The unusual beginning of the recapitulation in this movement will be considered in Chapter 3 (see Example 3.16). Valuable information on the history of this sonata can be found in R. Larry Todd's *Mendelssohn: A Life in Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 366.

Example 1.14. Violin Sonata in F Major, II, Adagio

a) Bars 1–11, simplified



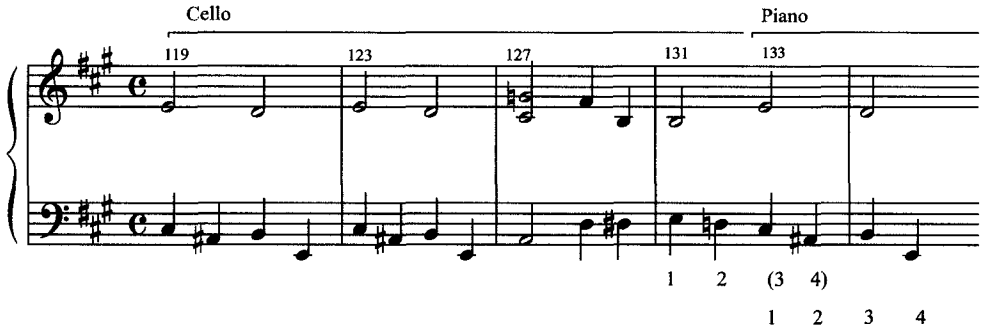
b) Bars 9–10



The next example, the beginning of the second theme in Mendelssohn's Piano Trio in D Minor, Op. 49, first movement, involves a similar technique. Reinterpretation here encompasses the last two measures of a sixteen-bar phrase, subdivided into four equal spans of four bars. As we can see in Example 1.15, a rhythmic reduction of the simplified outer voices, the metrical reinterpretation occurs in the middle of the fourth hypermeasure (bar 133, melody in the piano). The numbers below the example indicate that the expected third and fourth bars in that hypermeasure have now become first and second bars in the new phrase.

Example 1.15. Piano Trio in D Minor, Op. 49, I, Molto Allegro agitato

bars 119–136, durational reduction 𝅗𝅥.=♩



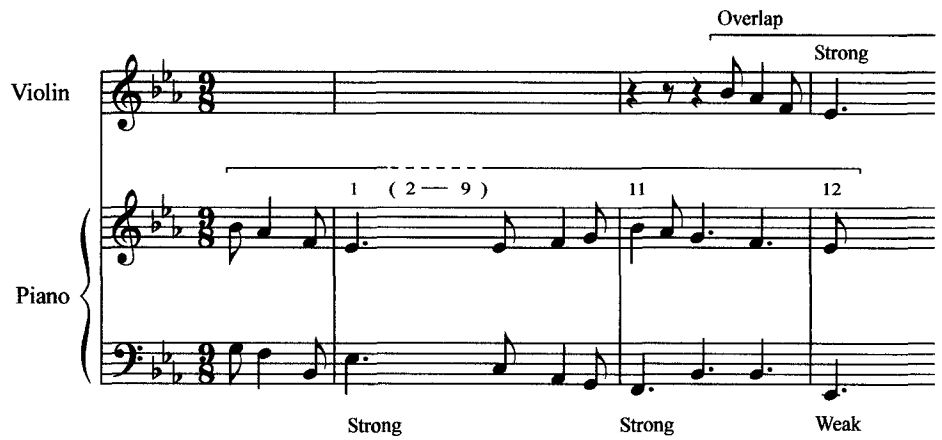
Another slow movement, that of Mendelssohn's second Piano Trio (Op. 66 in C minor) begins with a similar reinterpretation: the entrance of the violin and cello coincides with the cadence in the piano part (see Example 1.16a). However, the overlapping unit in this case is larger than one chord: the entire upbeat figure, consisting of eighth–quarter–eighth, occurs at the same time as the piano's cadence. As a result, the

last weak bar of the first phrase (bar 12) is reinterpreted as the first strong bar of the second phrase.

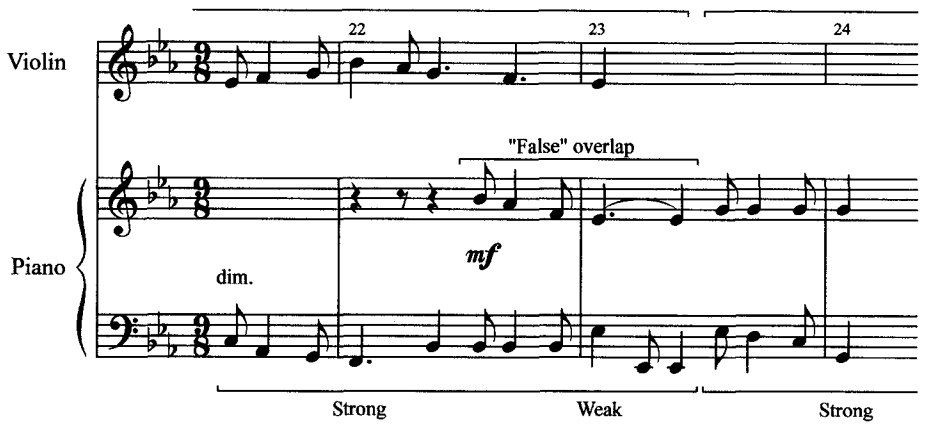
We can see here how the design of the opening, carefully planned in many Mendelssohnian beginnings, ensures the potential for a subsequent overlap. The preparation here is twofold: first, the opening melodic figure (up to the e♭¹ at bar 1) can also fit as a melodic ending; secondly, the upbeat beginning of the first phrase enables it to make a particularly smooth reentrance. As shown in Example 1.16b, at the end of the second phrase (bars 22–3) Mendelssohn brings in the opening upbeat motive in the piano, as if he is going to employ yet another phrase overlap. However, this impression is only temporary, as the overlap turns out to be a false one: the piano's apparent beginning simply reinforces the melodic closure in the violin; it does not begin a new phrase, and does not affect the metrical pattern which alternates strong and weak bars.

Example 1.16. Piano Trio in C Minor, Op. 66, II, Andante espressivo

a) Bars 1–12



b) Bars 22–24



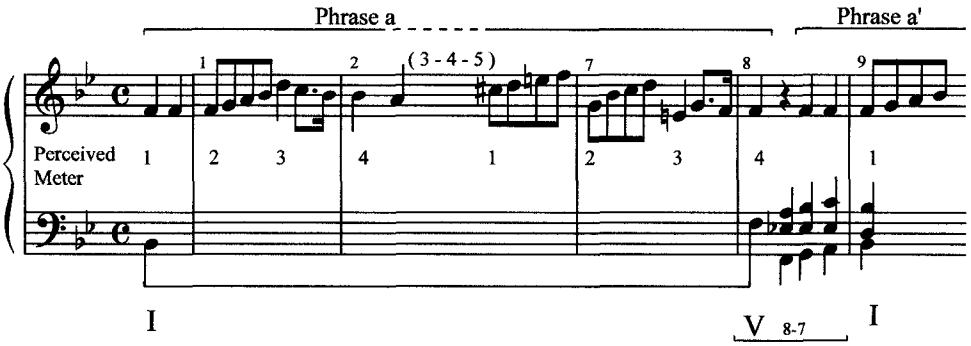
5. Metrical Shifts and Conflicts

As already mentioned in the discussion of subphrase overlap, metrical conflict is a distinctly Mendelssohnian predilection, and a strikingly efficient agent of overlap (see Examples 1.6 and 1.7 above). The next two examples (Examples 1.17 and 1.18) demonstrate phrase overlaps that are shaped via metrical conflict. In example 1.17, the opening of the slow movement of the first Piano Trio, Op. 49 in D Minor, both harmony and metrical accent are deliberately restaged at the beginning of the consequent phrase. The ambiguous metrical design of the antecedent phrase is a prominent feature of this particularly Mendelssohnian overlap.

As Example 1.17 attempts to illustrate, the perceived metrical accents in the opening phrase occur consistently on beat 3, contradicting the notated meter. On the other hand, first beats do not give up that easily: certain accents, created by duration and/or change of harmony, keep the notated meter alive and felt, though in the shadow,

so to speak, of the perceived mid-bar pattern. When we arrive at the formal juncture between the two phrases (bar 8), the potential of the shadow meter comes to light: the second half of bar 8, i.e. the beginning of the second phrase, is clearly a weak metrical unit; its inclusion in the dominant harmony prolongation (entire bar 8) makes no other interpretation possible. The notated downbeat of bar 9, with its root-position tonic, is no longer in the shadow, but rather is an unequivocal downbeat. As indicated at the bottom of Example 1.17, both harmony and meter make bar 8 a discrete, indivisible unit, and the two phrases are thus linked together.

Example 1.17. Piano Trio in D Minor, Op. 49, II, Andante con moto tranquillo, bars 1–9, meter and tonal outline

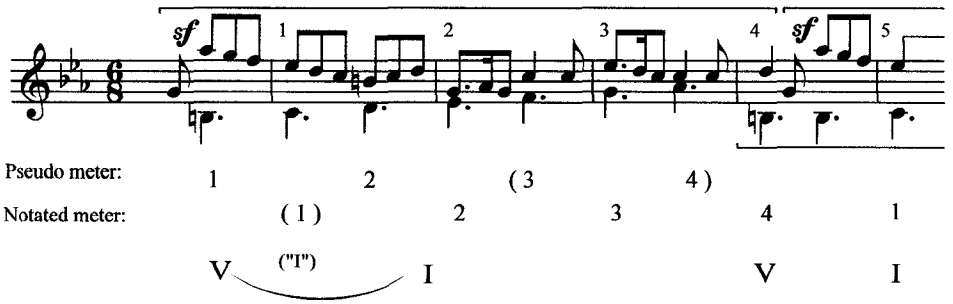


Example 1.18, the beginning of the *finale* of the second Piano Trio, Op. 66, presents yet another overlap where harmony and meter join together to create a fresh context at the beginning of the second phrase. As we can see in Example 1.18, the movement starts on a leading-tone chord (V^6_5) notated as an upbeat unit, but perceived

as a downbeat. (See the indication "pseudo meter.") The goal of this antecedent phrase is, normally, the dominant, arrived at in bar 4, in $\frac{6}{3}$ position. Now the consequent phrase, starting in the middle of bar 4, continues the dominant harmony of the beginning of the bar (adding a fifth to produce $\frac{6}{5}$ construction). Therefore, it can hardly be perceived as downbeat. Granted, the *sforzando* marking creates emphasis at the beginning of the second phrase, but harmonic rhythm suggests that only at bar 5, when tonic harmony arrives, do we reach a true downbeat, in agreement with the notated meter.

Interestingly, the metrical conflict alters the harmonic meaning of the phrase's second chord. While in the antecedent phrase we hear the C-minor chord (bar 1, downbeat) as a passing "I" subordinate to the prevailing dominant harmony, the analogous chord in bar 5 sounds—as a result of its metrical position—like a real tonic harmony. (See harmonic analysis in Example 1.18.)

Example 1.18. Piano Trio in C Minor, Op. 66, IV, Allegro appassionato, bars 1–5



II. Harmonic Issues

1. Overlaps on V

The last two examples, where the actual overlap was seen to prolong dominant harmonies, may serve as a connection to the next phase of our discussion, that is—harmonic peculiarities associated with phrase overlap. In the classical style most phrases begin (and many of them end) on the tonic. Overlaps therefore normally occur within tonic prolongations. Nineteenth-century composers, on the other hand, occasionally begin a piece or a theme away from the tonic (most frequently of course on the dominant).[27] Such beginnings can bring about a typically romantic overlap on harmonies other than I.[28]

The beginning of the second theme group in the *finale* of the E-minor String Quartet, Op.44/2, features an overlap over a dominant seventh chord.[29] This highly dynamic second theme group avoids a stable tonic harmony until the cadential phrases which begin at bar 125. And its first and second phrases (bars 75–91 and 91–124 respectively) are in the domain of a prolonged V^7 harmony. As shown in Example 1.19a (a rhythmic as well as tonal reduction of bars 75–93), the surprising overlap at bar 91 is

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[27] See L. Poundie Burstein, "The Non-Tonic Opening in Classical and Romantic Music," Ph.D. diss., City University of New York, 1988.

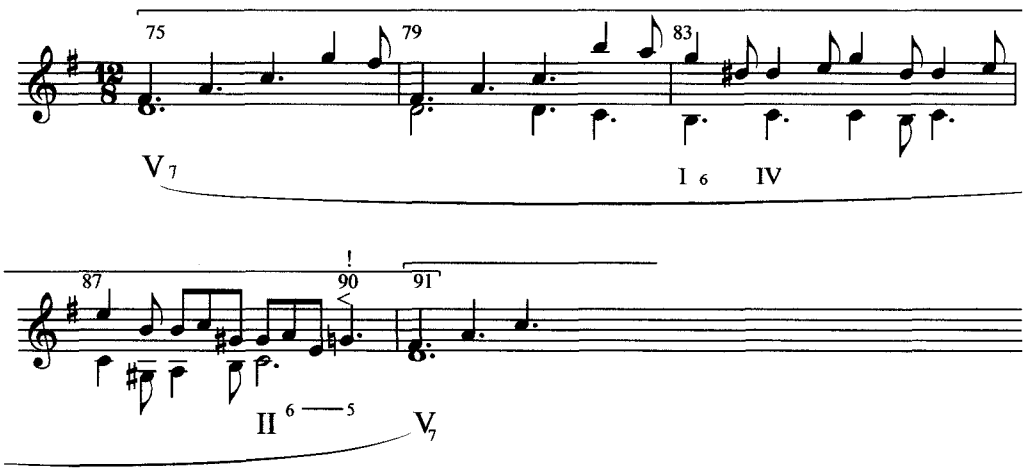
[28] Rothstein presents several non-tonic overlaps in Chopin. See for instance his analysis of Chopin's first Mazurka (Op. 6/1) in *Phrase Rhythm*, pp. 46–48.

[29] The rather unusual preparation of this second group will be addressed in Chapter 4. See Example 4.8.

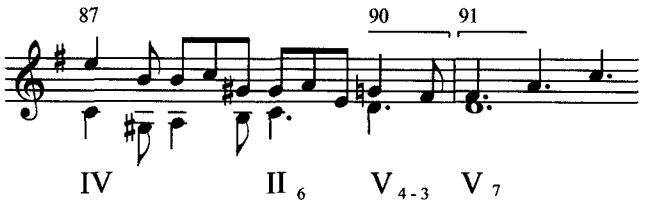
carefully designed by a series of accented dissonances on the first quarter of bars 84, 86, 88, 89 and 90. As a result of the rhythmic acceleration and increase in density in the bars leading up to 90, we expect a resolution of the g^1 to $f\sharp^1$ (4–3 over an implied D in the harmony; see Example 1.19b) in bar 90, the sixteenth bar of the phrase (the fourth beat in the fourth hypermeasure in Example 1.19a). However, Mendelssohn stretches the accented unaccompanied g^1 for the entire measure, and allows it to move into its unavoidable resolution, $f\sharp^1$, only at bar 91, where the next phrase begins. Note also that the arrival at the dominant harmony occurs only at the beginning of the consequent phrase (bar 91), so that the accented g^1 in the melody becomes a passing fifth between II^6 and V^7. (Compare the harmony in bars 90–91 in Examples 1.19a and 1.19b.)

Example 1.19. String Quartet in E Minor, Op. 44/2, IV, Presto agitato

a) Bars 75–93, durational reduction ♩.=♩.



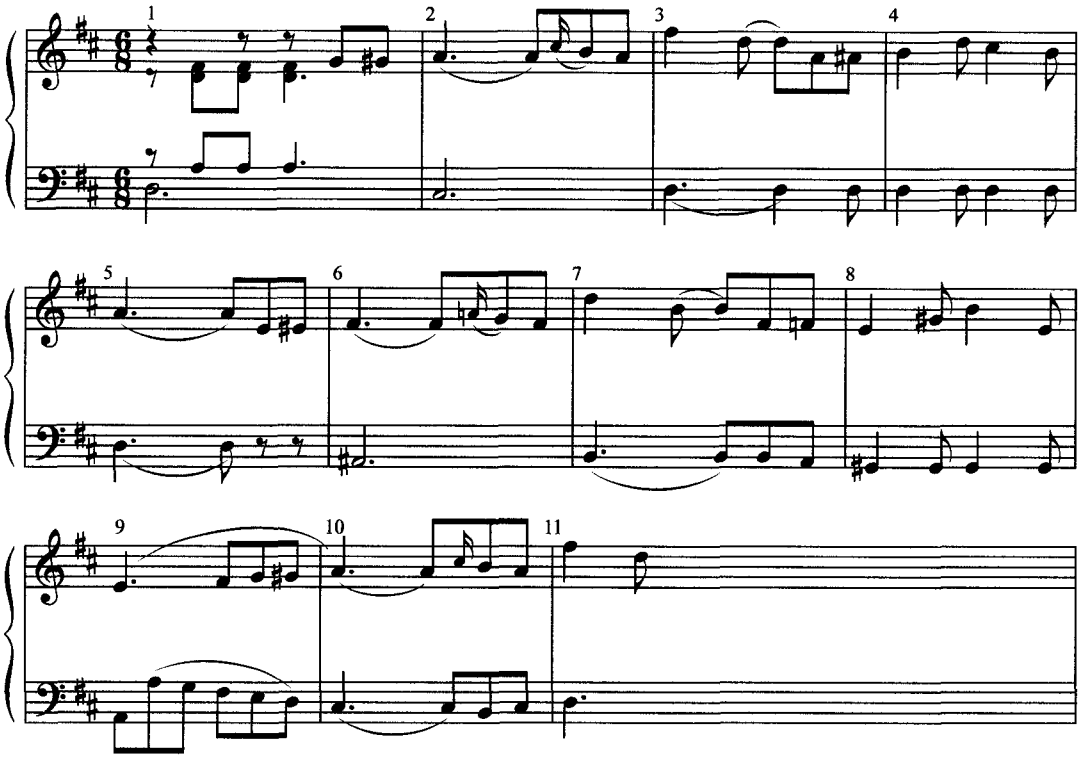
b) Bars 87–93 normalized, durational reduction 𝅗𝅥.=♩.



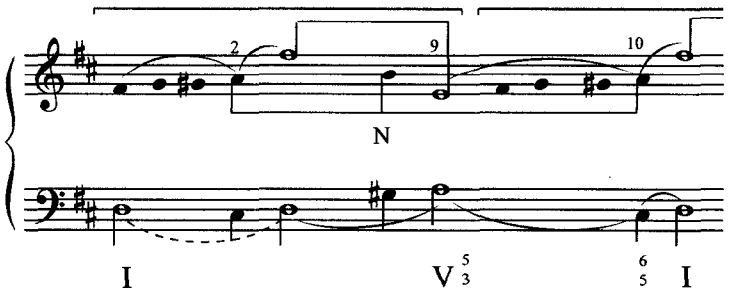
The design of the beginning of the D-major Children's Piece, Op. 72/4 (1842), exemplifies one of Mendelssohn's favorite devices: an introductory bar that establishes the tonic in the antecedent phrase is absent in the consequent phrase, thus relegating the "tonic" of bar 9 to a fleeting passing chord at the juncture between the two phrases. As we can see in Example 1.20, the last harmony in the antecedent, V (bar 9), is composed out until bar 10 (the beginning of the consequent), where it appears as a seventh chord in first inversion. The border between the two phrases, then, is bridged over by the harmonic prolongation of V. Note the difference between the V^6_5 chords of bars 2 and 10: the former participates in a prolongation of the tonic, whereas the latter extends the dominant. The polyphonic structure of the melody gives rise to another beautiful thread of continuity between the two phrases. Here b^1, which is a prominent neighbor-note near the end of the antecedent phrase (bar 8), resolves to a^1 only at bar 10, already in the consequent phrase. (The motivic neighbor-note figure a^1–b^1–a^1 is shown as an alto voice in Example 1.20.) Note also Mendelssohn's articulation slur in bar 9, which precludes any division (in performance) between the antecedent and consequent.

Example 1.20. Piece for Children in D Major, Op.72/4, Andante con moto,

a) Bars 1–11, simplified



b) Bars 1–11, voice leading

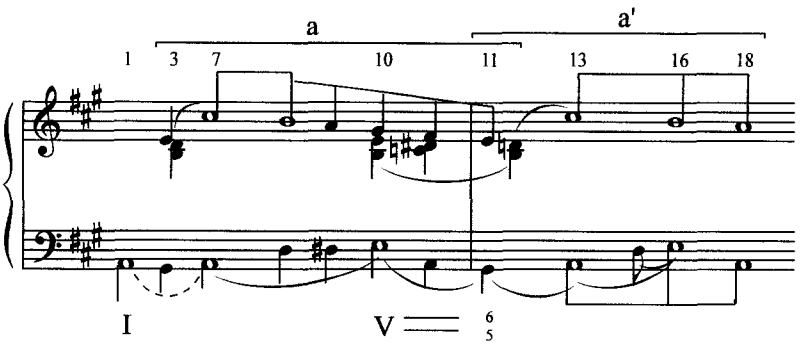


An almost identical overlap within a prolonged V chord occurs between the two opening phrases of the SWW Op. 53/6 in A Major.[30] We can see in Example 1.21 that while the first phrase achieves its harmonic goal (V) at the beginning of bar 10, a chain of dissonant suspensions (starting already in bar 8) maintains the forward momentum (completing a descending fifth-progression in the upper voice from b^1 to e^1) until the downbeat of bar 11. The melodic goal, e^1, is also the first note in the consequent phrase. The dominant harmony, arrived at in bar 10, is prolonged until bar 11 (V^6_5) by means of a diminished neighbor chord in the second half of bar 10. Thus, both melody and harmony are inseparable at the phrase border. At the same time, formal clarity (symmetrical antecedent–consequent construction) is maintained.

As illustrated in Example 1.21, the harmonic context here is very similar to the previous example. Again, Mendelssohn employs a tonic introduction (bars 1–2) in order to conform with the tonic-beginning norm. But since the beginning of the "vocal line" is on the inverted dominant seventh chord, he can integrate the consequent phrase into a dominant harmony, altering the meaning of the V^6_5 (compare bar 3 to bar 11), and hence bridging over the phrase border.

[30] For discussion of the two unusual reprises in Op. 53/6, see Examples 2.6 and 2.24 in Chapter 2.

Example 1.21. SWW in A Major, Op. 53/6, Molto Allegro vivace, bars 1–18, voice leading



2. V suppresses I

A rather curious harmonic situation characterizes the phrase overlap that occurs at the beginning of the lyrical second theme in the slow movement of the String Quintet Op. 87, in B♭ Major. The most unusual feature of this overlap is the beginning of the consequent phrase on the second eighth-note at bar 32: one feels that the phrase lacks its first eighth-note downbeat. Example 1.22a illustrates.

Normally, when two phrases are elided, we perceive the first phrase as lacking its last metrical unit.[31] Here, however, the situation is reversed. The expansion of the antecedent phrase (by one eighth note) results in its reaching into the normal time span of the consequent phrase, which is expected to begin on the tonic at the downbeat of bar

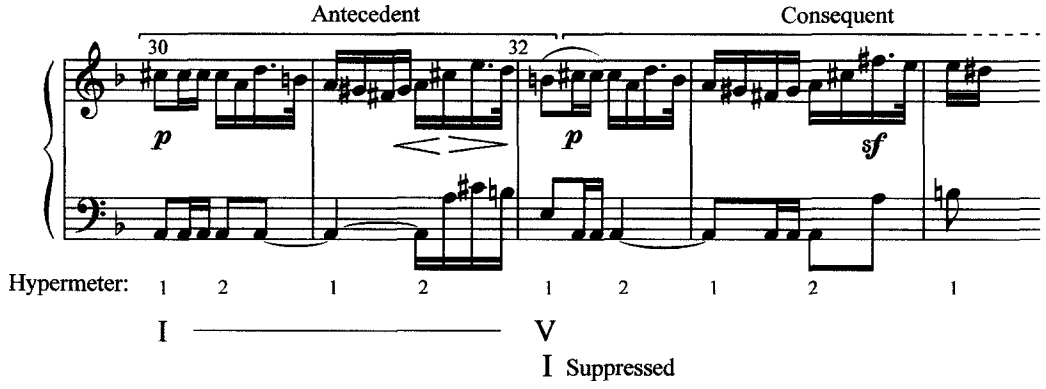
[31] See, for instance, Example 1.15 above.

32. Had the last harmony of the first phrase been identical to the first harmony of the second, we would have had a simple overlap. But the half cadence of the antecedent makes such a solution impossible. Mendelssohn could have delayed the beginning of the consequent phrase to the second half of bar 32 (Example 1.22b, upper staff), or shortened the antecedent phrase by one eighth note (Example 1.22b, lower staff). Compared with the actual composition, both alternatives seem rather unattractive.

Mendelssohn's solution is thus quite unusual. He shortens the beginning of the consequent phrase, suppressing its tonic downbeat. Notably, the articulation slur at the beginning of bar 32 even further masks the border between the antecedent and consequent phrases. This slur connects, on the musical surface, two events that do not belong together: V that ends the first phrase and I that begins the second.[32]

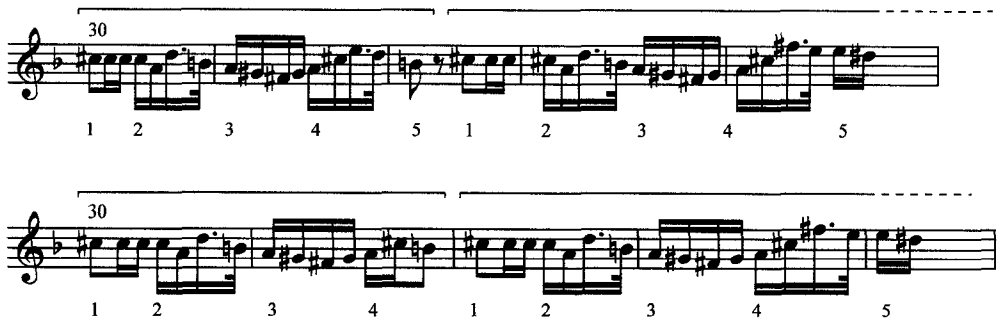
Example 1.22. String Quintet in B♭ Major, Op. 87, III, Adagio e lento

a) Bars 30–34, melody and bass



[32] Similar slurs can be found at the beginnings of Mozart's Piano Sonata K310, slow movement (bar 4), and the Rondo K511 (bar 4). I am grateful to Carl Schachter for bringing them to my attention.

b) Bars 30–34, melody recomposed (two versions)



3. V Reinterpreted as I

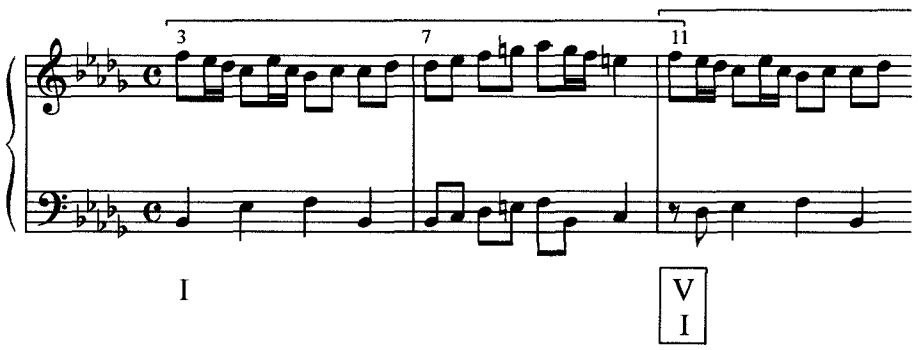
An even more unusual harmonic conflict between dominant and tonic can be seen in the next excerpt. The two first phrases in Mendelssohn's B♭-minor Etude, Op. 104/1 are elided in such a manner that we can hear the point of the overlap (bar 11) as simultaneously representing dominant and tonic harmonies. Example 1.23a is a rhythmic reduction of the outer voices, and as it shows, the cadence of the antecedent phrase (that is, an authentic cadence in the dominant key, F minor) reaches its conclusion on the downbeat of bar 11. At the very same point, the consequent phrase begins, repeating the beginning of the antecedent (compare bars 3 and 11).

As shown in Example 1.23b, in which I have normalized the rhythm of the antecedent's cadence, the overlap is brought about through the expansion of the penultimate chord of the cadence, from a normal half bar to a complete bar (that is, bar

10 in the actual composition). Considered from a rhythmic perspective only, there is nothing special here: we have already encountered overlaps that originate in cadence expansion (see for instance Example 1.10). But in the Etude the harmonic circumstances complicate the possibility of overlap, as the last structural harmony in the antecedent phrase is V, whereas the first harmony in the consequent phrase is I. Mendelssohn handles this challenging problem masterfully: he simply writes no bass note at the beginning of bar 11, a perfect solution for an otherwise lose-lose situation. Had the bass note been an F (V), it would only have worked for the first phrase. On the other hand, a B♭ (I) would only have fit the second phrase. Having only f^1 in the melody and avoiding the bass register altogether makes it possible to hear both V and I, a rather rare possibility.[33]

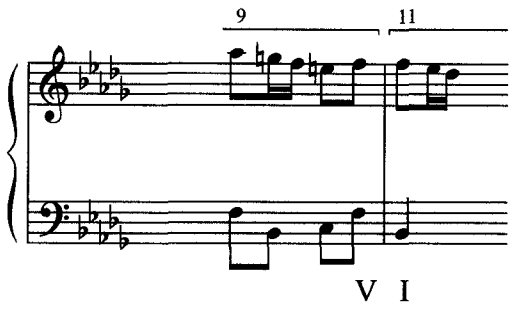
Example 1.23. Etude in B♭, Op. 104/1, Presto,

a) Bars 3–14, durational reduction 𝅝=𝅗𝅥



[33] For another special harmonic reinterpretation of V as I in Chopin's Op. 10/3, see Rothstein's *Phrase Rhythm*, pp. 222–226.

b) Bars 9–11, normalized version, durational reduction 𝅗𝅥=♩



III. Two-Level Overlap

The second theme in the slow movement of the Octet Op. 20 is constructed, like many other second themes in the tonal literature, as a parallel period, consisting of antecedent and consequent phrases. Mendelssohn links the two phrases of his theme both in the exposition and the recapitulation, but these instances are quite different from one another: in the exposition, continuity between the antecedent (bars 41–45) and consequent (bars 46–56) phrases is achieved by the rather simple lead-in technique. As we can see in Example 1.24a, the overlap is only on the surface: the last two eighth notes in bar 45 guarantee rhythmic continuity, but they obviously belong to a lower level, and their presence does not affect the clear division produced by the interruption structure.[34]

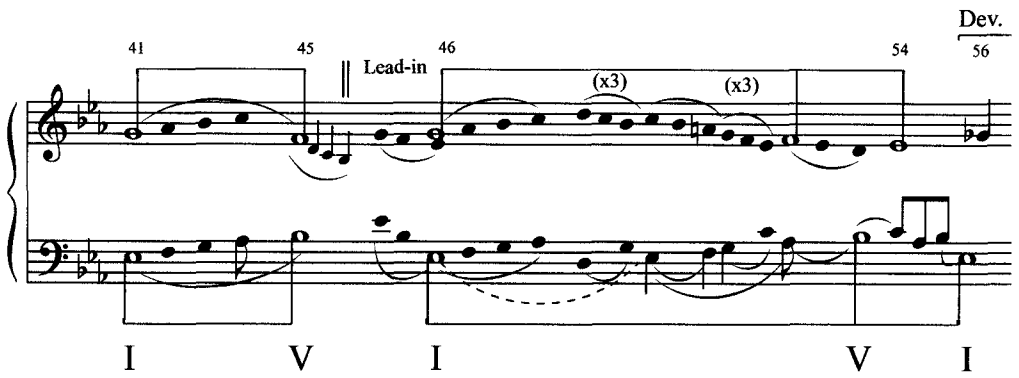
[34] In his extensive and insightful discussion of the Octet, Greg Vitercik presents an analytic graph, which implies that he reads, in contrast to the analysis offered in my Example 1.24a, a dominant-to-tonic resolution in bars 45–46. See *The Early Works*, p. 99, Example 21.

On the other hand, the overlap at the analogous place in the recapitulation is much more daring harmonically. The antecedent phrase in C major is complemented by a consequent that starts in A♭ (VI in C minor). Example 1.24b shows that here too, a surface lead-in figure (bar 80) bridges the two phrases. Nonetheless, another deeper-level continuity is brought about by the unusual harmonic structure, as illustrated in Example 1.24c. When considered together, the two phrases form a sort of higher-level phrase. The A♭ temporary key at the beginning of the consequent has two important roles. First of all, it cancels the major mode of the second theme (that is, C major), and brings us back to the domain of C minor. Secondly, it leads eventually to the Neapolitan sixth chord (bar 87) and thus participates in a long-range progression, I♮–VI–♭II–V–I, that bonds both antecedent and consequent.

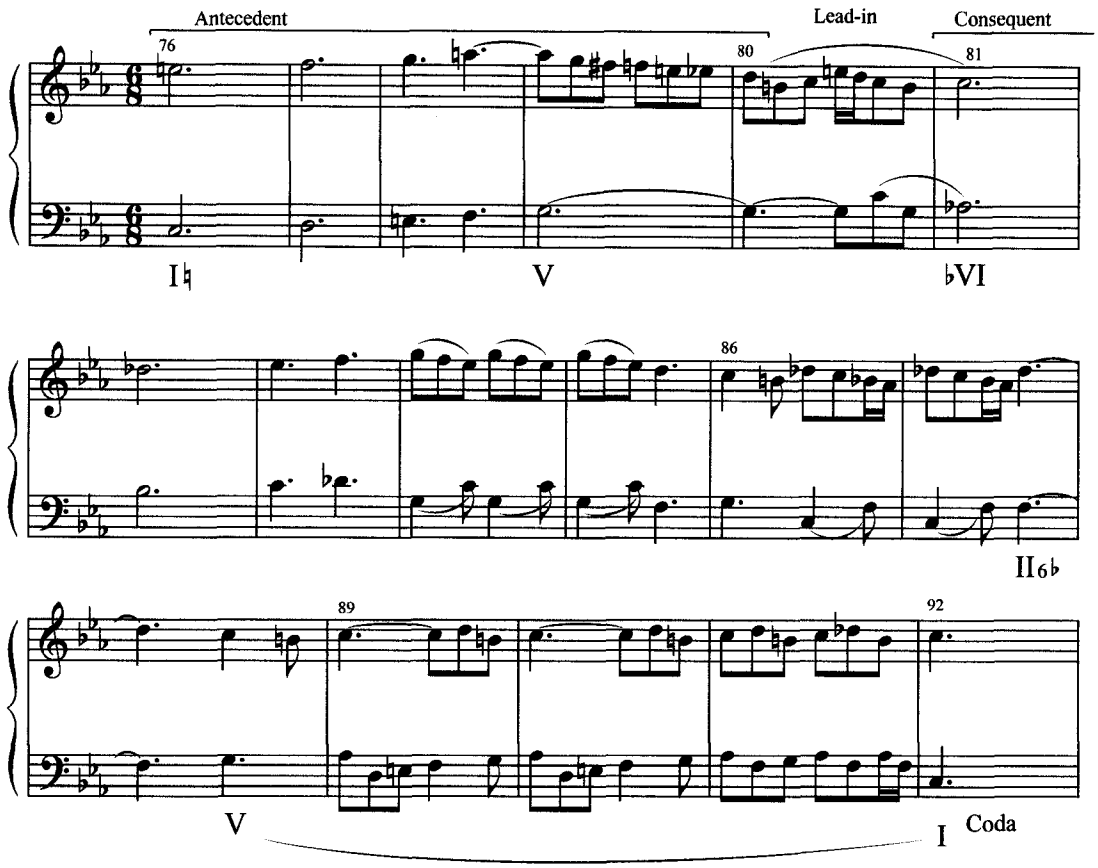
Note that owing to the unusual change of keys (from the illusory A♭ major to the real C-minor tonality), the consequent phrase does not make full sense without the C-major point of departure at the beginning of the antecedent phrase. In addition, the V chord at the end of the antecedent phrase (bar 80), which first sounds as if it were articulating an interruption, is retroactively understood as a lower-neighbor chord, which connects the initial I♮ to ♭VI. Indeed, the harmonic content of this two-phrase theme becomes clear only when we view them as one continuous entity. Compared to their equivalents in the exposition, then, the two phrases that comprise the second theme in the recapitulation display a much deeper continuity. Thus there is overlap on two levels: the foreground link in bar 80, and the middleground continuity effected by the large harmonic progression.

Example 1.24. Octet in E♭ Major, Op. 20, II, Andante

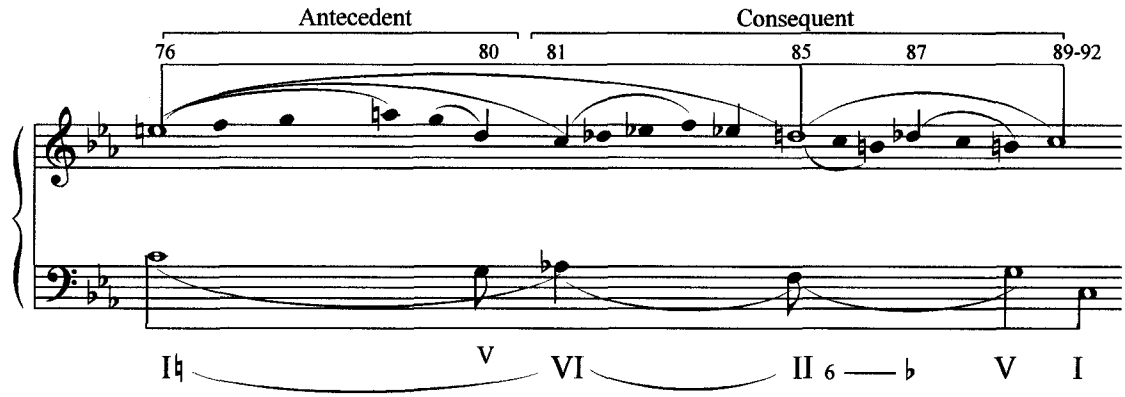
a) Bars 41–56, voice leading



b) Bars 76–92, simplified



c) Bars 76–92, voice leading



IV. Masking a Phrase Border by Sequence

When the beginning of a new phrase occurs in the midst of a sequence, the resulting seamless motion masks the phrase border particularly well, making it discernible only in retrospect. This somewhat Baroque-like device is the main point in the next example (1.25), taken from the second movement of the Fantasy for Piano, Op. 28.[35] This new facet of overlap, nonetheless, does not stand in isolation. Rather, it is combined with metrical reinterpretation, a technique that we have already encountered in numerous excerpts.

As shown in the simplified version (part b) of Example 1.25, Mendelssohn begins a rising sequential pattern at mid-bar 7. Two rising units (mid-bar 7 to mid-bar 9, indicated as a^1 and a^2 in Example 1.25b) are answered by two descending units (mid-bar 9 to mid-bar 11, indicated as b^1 and b^2) in the same rhythm. But the last of these four units, surprisingly, serves already as the beginning of the next phrase, repeating the movement's opening phrase. In addition, the first half of bar 11 is reinterpreted as a strong metrical unit, as the metrical analysis at the bottom of Example 1.25b indicates. The shift in metrical emphasis is brought about by means of the harmonic content in bars 11–12. The second half of bar 11 features a lighter harmony (that is, VII^6 of V) than the first half of both bars 11 and 12, which introduce root-position chords. Hence, we perceive the notated meter in these bars as the real one.

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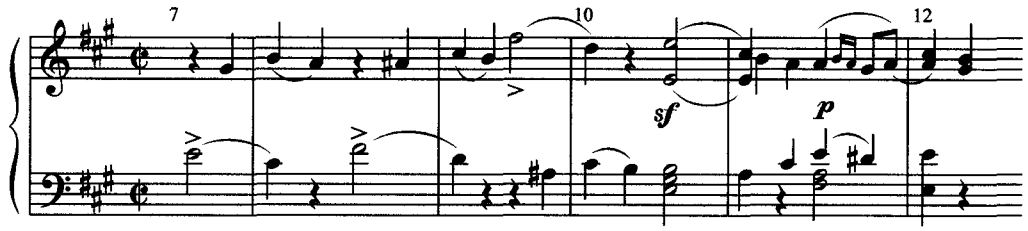
[35] For an example of this device in Bach, whose influence on Mendelssohn is indisputable, see also Chapter 6 (Example 6.1).

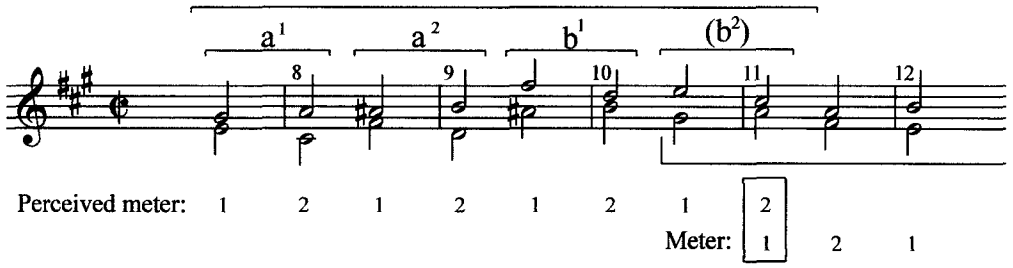
To be sure, Mendelssohn highlights the new beginning (mid-bar 10) by his favorite *sforzando*, as well as by the thicker orchestration of the chord there. Nevertheless, the reinterpretation of both metrical and sequential units enhances a sense of surprise.[36]

Example 1.25. Piano Fantasy in F♯ Minor, Op. 28, II, Allegro con moto,

a) Bars 7–12



b) Bars 7–12, reduction



[36] Incidentally, as we shall see in Chapter 2, in the main reprise of this movement, Mendelssohn uses the sequence-reinterpretation technique in a much more daring fashion. See Example 2.32.

A Final Example

As a final example of overlap at both the phrase and subphrase levels, I shall now consider the second theme (bars 50–73, see Example 1.26a) of the last movement in the String Quintet Op. 18, in A Major.[37] This is a particularly good example of Mendelssohn's treatment of small formal units, as it demonstrates rhythmic flexibility and tonal continuity at various levels, achieved by an array of compositional means. It seems that Mendelssohn is making a deliberate effort to thwart square periodicity and symmetry, qualities that often characterize lyrical second themes.[38] Consequently, even matters such as basic tonal structure become rather elusive, as we shall presently see.

The basic formal layout of the 24-bar "lyrical" theme is as follows: antecedent phrase (phrase A), bars 50–57; consequent phrase (phrase B^1), bars 58–65; slightly varied repetition of the consequent (phrase B^2), bars 66–73. Example 1.26b and c suggest a possible interpretation of the theme's voice leading.[39] Whereas graph b concentrates on the bass structure of bars 50–73, graph c adds a skeleton of the upper voices' structure and presents the lyrical theme's structure in a wider context, encompassing almost the entire exposition. Focusing on bars 50–73, we can see in both graphs that the most unusual feature in the tonal structure is the prolongation of the

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[37] Vitercik (*The Early Works*, pp. 163–190) praises the A-major String Quintet as one of Mendelssohn's most original works.

[38] Rothstein offers a convincing explanation for the tendency of second themes to feature stable hypermeter and symmetrical phrase structure. See *Phrase Rhythm*, p. 114.

[39] There is another possible interpretation of the tonal structure of the theme: the opening I leads to IV in the second phrase, whereas V (end of first phrase) is relegated to a lower level.

dominant (bars 57–72) via its prolonged lower neighbor, IV (bars 61–69). This tonal structure appears to contradict the division of the theme into three eight-bar phrases.

In order to clarify the means by which this remarkable continuity is achieved, I present a rhythmic reduction in Example 1.26d. The somewhat simplified outer voices are beamed according to Mendelssohn's articulation marks. A glance at Example 1.26d reveals that the grouping caused by articulation is highly flexible. It is not only that the grouping of the outer voices is occasionally contradictory (that is, the bass and soprano are grouped differently). More importantly, it masks the border between the eight-bar phrases. Thus, both outer voices at the end of phrase A (bar 57) are slurred across the phrase's border and achieve a continuity that blurs the formal juncture. The bass (though not the upper voice) does exactly the same at the next juncture (between phrases B^1 and B^2) as well. The numbers above and below Example 1.26d attempt to indicate the flexible grouping that the articulation brings about. Note the four-bar groups (made of one bar belonging to one phrase, and three bars belonging to the next) that are shown in Example 1.26d by brackets. The articulation within the phrases also produces flexible, mostly non-duple groupings.

Going back now to tonal organization, we can see that the main "victim," so to speak, of the unusual articulations that cross phrase borders is the transformed tonic harmony at the beginnings of phrases B^1 and B^2 (bars 58 and 66 respectively). Thus, the $\frac{6}{5}$ chord in bar 58 (G♯–B–D♮–E) does not articulate a beginning of the second branch of an interruption structure, but rather connects V (bar 57) to its lower neighbor IV (bar 61).

At the beginning of the B^2 phrase (bar 66), the same $\frac{6}{5}$ chord is not permitted to articulate the phrase division at all, despite the beginning of the articulation slur in the

first violin. Here Mendelssohn maintains the $\frac{6}{5}$ across the phrase border from bar 65, the last bar of the B^1 phrase, to bar 66. The syncopated harmonic rhythm at the juncture between B^1 and B^2 (bars 65–66) is a powerful way by which phrase division is masked.

Harmonic rhythm is the main concern of Example 1.26e. The figures below the bass part indicate the inner groupings and divisions that result from the harmonic rhythm, whereas the slurs at the top maintain the groupings and divisions generated by the articulation. The most drastic manipulation here is the hypermetrical shift that occurs at the juncture between B^1 and B^2. Note how the harmony creates a quasi-metrical group, which begins in the last bar (and chord) of B^1 and continues through the first three bars of B^2.[40] Compared with the surface overlap created by articulation slurs in bars 57–58 (border of A and B^1), the continuation of the same harmony here (bars 65–66) links the two B phrases together much more strongly.

One last remark on harmonic rhythm: as shown in Example 1.26e, the main points of harmonic arrival negate any possibility of symmetrical duple structure within the phrases. Note especially that the lower neighbor IV arrives (in both B^1 and B^2) at the weak fourth measure (bars 61 and 69). If we consider all the compositional means that blur divisions and counteract square rhythmic structure, we may realize what makes this theme sound so elastic, flexible and dynamic, or, simply put, what makes it characteristically Mendelssohnian.

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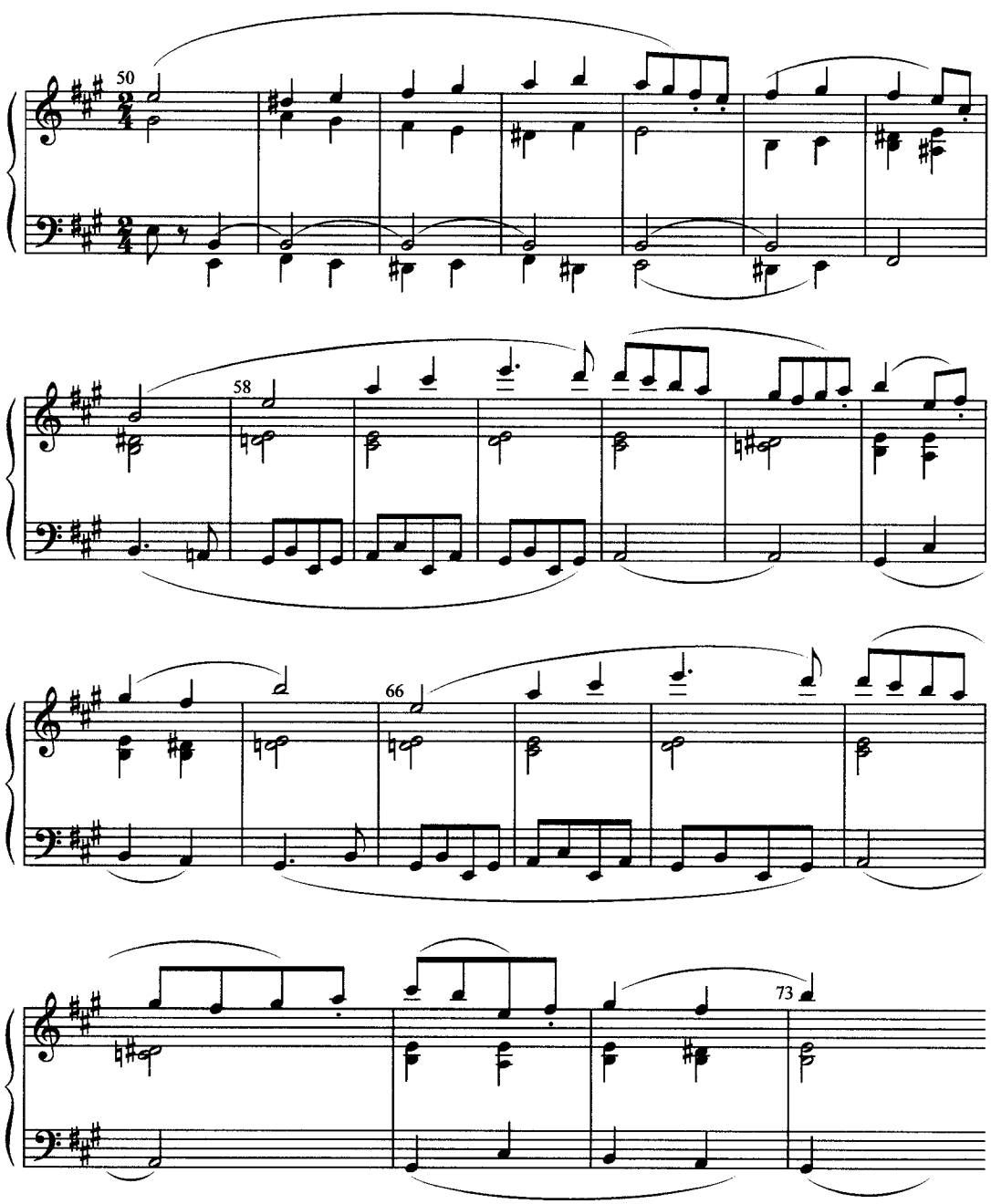
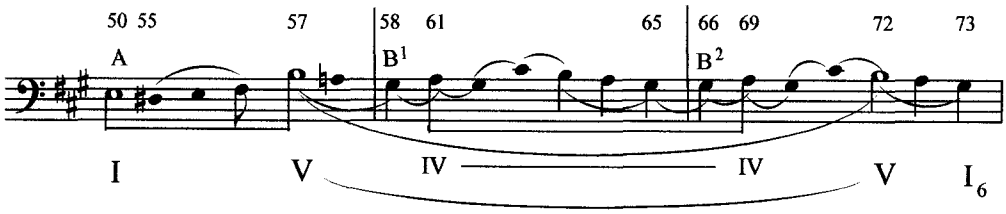
[40] For a comprehensive explanation of quasi-metrical effects, see Schachter "Aspects of Meter," *Unfoldings*, pp. 92–93.

Example 1.26. String Quintet in A Major, Op. 18, IV, Allegro vivace

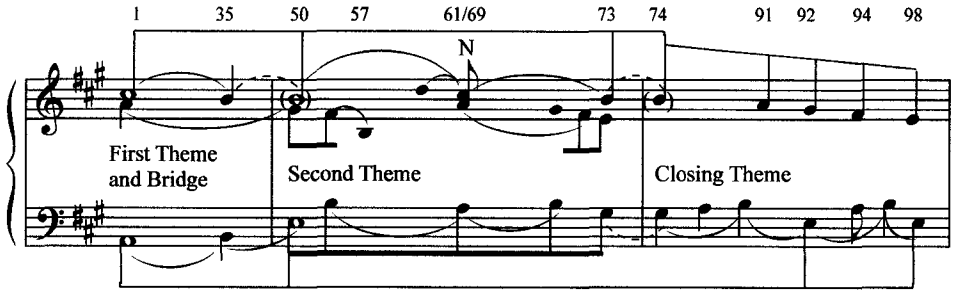
a) Bars 50–73 (inner voices simplified)



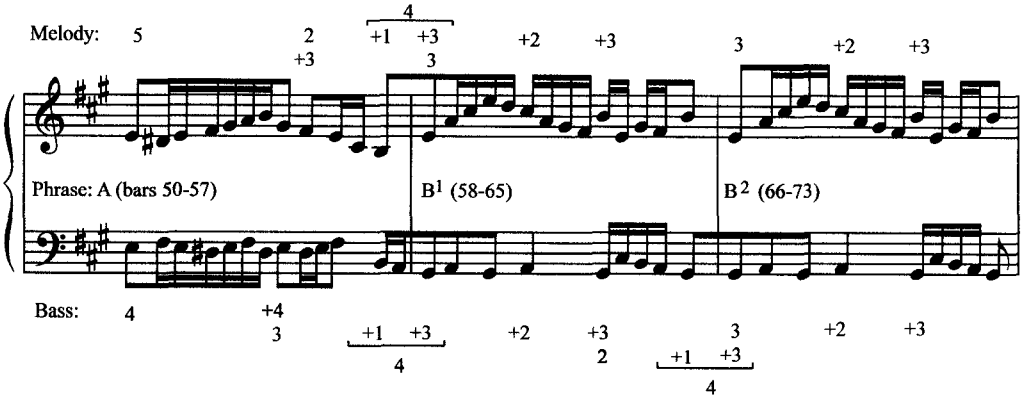
b) Bars 50–73, bass structure



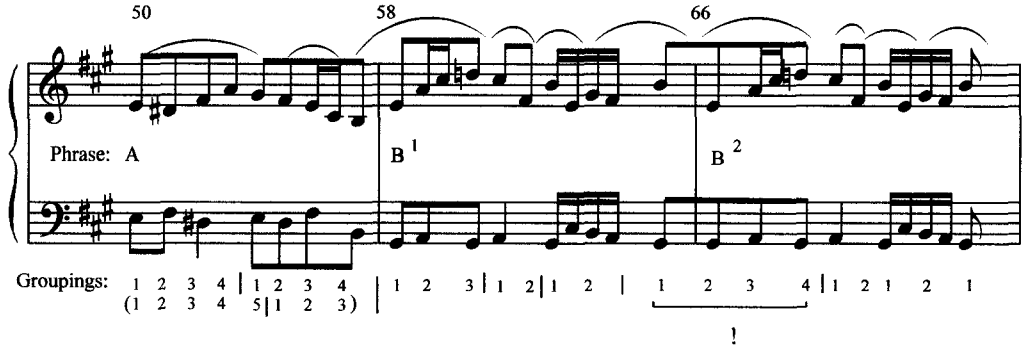
c) Bars 1–98, voice leading



d) Bars 50–73, durational reduction ♩=♪



e) Bars 50–73, durational reduction ♩=♪



CHAPTER 2

UNUSUAL TREATMENT OF THE REPRISE IN SMALL FORMS

As we have seen in chapter 1, Mendelssohn's most individual and innovative overlaps of small units often occur in the context of repetition. Indeed, if one considers two phrases cast in antecedent-consequent construction as constituting a miniature binary form, the second phrase would then count as the reprise section.[1] When we now move from the phrase to the section level in genuine small forms, we can see that the beginning of the reprise section remains the formal juncture where Mendelssohn demonstrates a superb compositional ingenuity that is unmistakably personal. Unusual treatment of the reprise in small forms (the recapitulation in large forms will be investigated in the next chapter) is deservedly considered a hallmark of Mendelssohn's style.

Most of the examples in the present chapter are short piano pieces (many, naturally, Songs without Words), but I shall also discuss several dance movements (Scherzo and/or Trio sections) from Mendelssohn's chamber and orchestral music. The notion of a reprise in the present chapter generally refers to complete pieces or movements, with two notable exceptions. In both cases, these present small forms within a larger form: 1. small-scale reprises within a single section of a composite movement (e.g., dance movements in multi-movement pieces); 2. small-scale reprises that occur in

[1] In the tonal literature, complete pieces consisting of antecedent and consequent phrases are rare. Several instances, however, can be found in Chopin's Preludes, Op. 28. With the notable exception of the A-major Prelude, the consequent phrases in those miniature forms are expanded. See, for instance the C-major, E-minor and G-major Preludes.

themes constructed as a quatrain, even though the theme might constitute only a tiny portion within a much larger form.

Small-Form Prototypes

In a very general way, small forms in Mendelssohn's instrumental music can be classified according to the following categories:[2]

1. Simple Binary: A || B. By definition, this sort of formal construction has no reprise and thus seems to be irrelevant to the present discussion.
2. Quatrain: A | A || B | A. (Repetition, literal or varied, of one or both halves is possible.) This song form is very frequently used as an independent composition, as a theme for variations or a rondo, and also as a second and occasionally even first theme within a larger form.
3. Rounded Binary: A || B A. (Repetition of one or both parts is possible.) One of Mendelssohn's favorite schemes.
4. Continuous Ternary: A |B| A'. Frequent in short piano pieces with homogeneous textures and thematic design. This type is sometimes hard, even impossible, to distinguish from Rounded Binary.[3]

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[2] There are numerous discussions and classifications of small form prototypes in the literature. See, for instance, Douglass Green, *Form in Tonal Music* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1965), p. 91; Jan La Rue, *Guidelines for Style Analysis* (New York: Norton, 1970), pp. 179–186; William Rothstein, *Phrase Rhythm in Tonal Music* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1989), pp. 105–110.

[3] Ternary forms (as well as quatrains and rounded binary forms) are sometimes expanded by means of a varied repetition of the last B and A sections. Despite the rondo-like characteristic of the resulting formal layout, it is better, I believe, to regard

5. Composite Ternary A || B || A. In this rather sectionalized construction, section B has its own themes, texture and most often also key. With the notable exception of certain dance movements (minuet or scherzo) in multi-movement pieces, Mendelssohn appears to have been less interested in this form than some other composers of his generation. When he uses it, however, he often succeeds in lessening the apparent sectionalization.[4]
6. Mini-Sonata: A B || Development | (A') B'.[5] Several of the Songs without Words and other short piano pieces are constructed in this manner.[6] Their small dimensions make it more appropriate, I believe, to treat them in the present chapter and not the next one.

In all the formal types listed above (except, of course, category 1 and sometimes, though not always, category 5), the reprise follows a dynamic, open-ended B section (or development). According to traditional norms, the end of this B section is supposed to prepare the approaching reprise with a dominant harmony. This expectation is normally fulfilled at the return of the opening A section and hence one hears the beginning of the reprise as a crucial formal juncture. Indeed, Mendelssohn often deviates from the normative practice described here and blurs (or highlights, or both!) the sectional

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these instances as expanded forms. For examples of an expanded ternary form, see Op. 72/5 (Example 2.3) and especially Op. 53/6 (Examples 2.6 and 2.24).

[4] See, for instance, Examples 2.9 and 2.32 in this chapter.

[5] The A section in the reprise is in parenthesis since sometimes Mendelssohn follows Scarlatti's practice and omits the first theme from the reprise.

[6] See, for instance, Op. 19/5, Op. 30/4 and Op. 85/3.

division at this point of formal articulation.

The classification of the small forms according to the above categories, significant as it is for formal analysis, is not necessarily the decisive factor for our investigation of the treatment of the reprise. The boundary between the open-ended B (or development) and the returning A sections presents a fundamentally similar compositional situation in most of the formal prototypes cited above. Thus, the following discussion will not be ordered according to formal types but rather by musical context at the beginning of the reprise—that is, harmony, rhythm and other compositional aspects that affect both design and structure. Since the various shaping elements cannot be completely separated from one another, and in order to obtain an orderly presentation, I shall classify most of the reprises according to harmonic criteria. Within each harmonic category, an attempt will be made to present other compositional means in accordance with their increasing complexity and their varying impact on (and relation to) the larger context.[7]

[7] Quite often, the literal chord at the beginning of the reprise is not the decisive factor for harmonic categorization, but rather the larger harmonic context from which it emerges. This is especially true with regard to tonicizations of III in the major mode. See Examples 2.17–2.26.

Enhanced Dynamic Quality of The Resumed Tonic: Reprise Begins on I^6

As a first example of Mendelssohn's preference for enhanced tonal dynamism, Example 2.1 offers a comparison between the first bars of the beginning and those of the reprise in the first section of the Scherzo Movement of the "Lobgesang" Symphony. As we can see in Example 2.1a the movement begins, like most other pieces, with a simple prolongation of a stable root-position tonic. But when the opening music returns (bars 49 ff.), the resumed tonic is staged in such a way that it acquires a new dynamic quality. There are two facets to this fresh tonal dynamism: First, the tonic appears in first inversion ($\frac{6}{3}$), a much more tense position than the initial root position. Secondly, the reprise is carefully prepared by an intensification of texture and harmonic tension in the preceding bars (45–49). Note the enhanced rhythmic drive created by the *stretto* imitation: As illustrated in Example 2.1b, the tenor produces a shadowy hypermetrical pattern, in which the fourth unit (upbeat to bar 49), instead of completing its imitation of the soprano, is reinterpreted as the first bar in the reprise. From the perspective of the background structure, the I^6_3 in bar 49 represents the resumed structural tonic. However, on the surface of the music it exemplifies (albeit on a rather small scale) Mendelssohn's predilection for varied reprises.[8]

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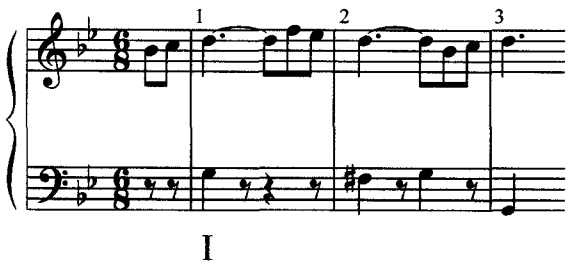
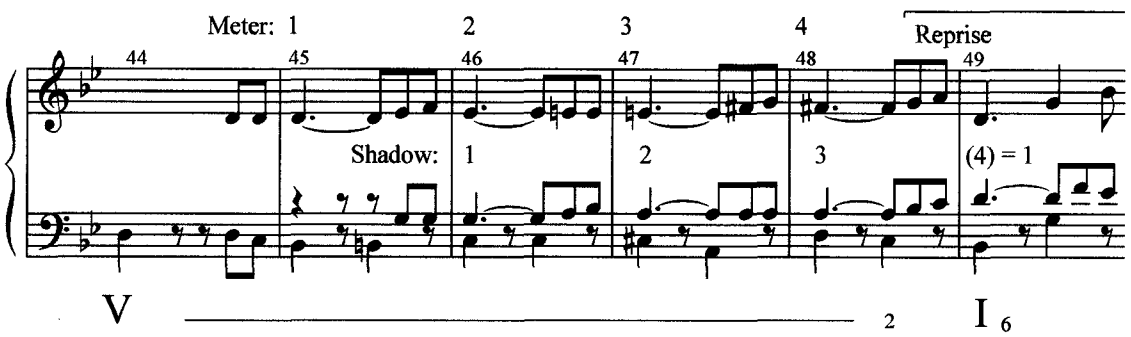
[8] Simply substituting for a root-position by using a first inversion tonic at the beginning of the reprise is rather rare in Mendelssohn. See, for instance, the first movement of the String Quintet in B♭, Op. 87, bars 226–227, and the third movement of the String Quartet in D Major. Op. 44/1, bar 70. However, Mendelssohn sometimes presents an opening root-position chord in the introductory bar (or bars) and then begins the main body of the composition on I^6. This enables him to start the reprise (or recapitulation) on this less stable chord. See, for instance, the SWW in E♭ Major, Op. 53/2, bars 1–2 and 50, and the SWW in C Minor, Op. 38/2, bars 1, 24 and 48.

Example 2.1. Symphony No. 2, Op. 52 ("Lobgesang"), II, Allegretto un poco agitato

a) Melody and bass, bars 1–3



b) Bars 44–49



Displacement of The Resumed Structural Tonic at the Beginning of the Reprise

I. Foreground Displacement of the Tonic by the Dominant

1. Reprise Begins on V (including inversions)

The following examples feature several Mendelssohnian reprises in which the harmonic structure, in contrast to the norms described above, is not coordinated with the sectional layout. The beginning of the thematic reprise occurs on the dominant harmony and the expected tonic harmony is resumed somewhat later. As a result, the restatement of the opening music sounds surprisingly fresh.

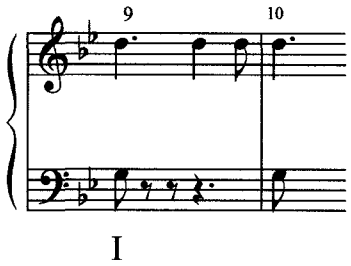
The reprise in the SWW in G Minor, Op. 53/3 (Example 2.2b), exemplifies a slight displacement of the resumed tonic. Following a powerful closing cadence in the key of III (B♭), the melodic opening of the song falls on V_5^6 in bar 88, and the tonic chord is postponed to the next bar (89). The *subito piano* of bar 88, following *fortissimo* dynamics and *sforzando* markings in the left hand part near the end of the B section (bars 84–7), is yet another striking feature of this reprise. In more sectionalized forms V_5^6 (or the even more common V_3^4) normally provides a necessary link between the tonicized III and the resumed I in the course of a retransition (which does not belong to either section).[9] Here, however, Mendelssohn brings in the thematic return simultaneously with the transitional harmony, delaying the tonal return for the next bar

[9]See, for instance, Mozart's Rondo in A Minor, K511, bars 21–23.

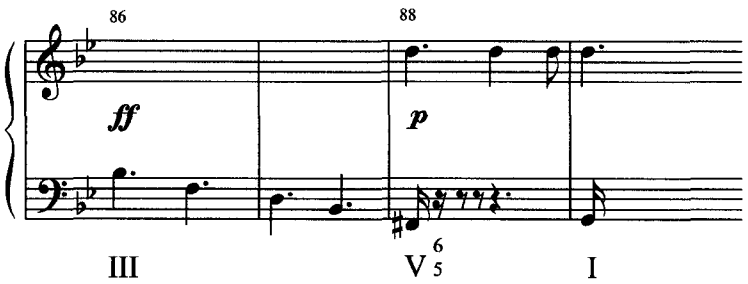
(88). Example 2.2 offers a comparison between the beginnings of the "vocal song" (2.2a) and the reprise (2.2b).

Example 2.2. SWW in G Minor, Op. 53/3, Presto agitato

a) Bars 9–10, melody and bass



b) Bars 86–89, melody and bass



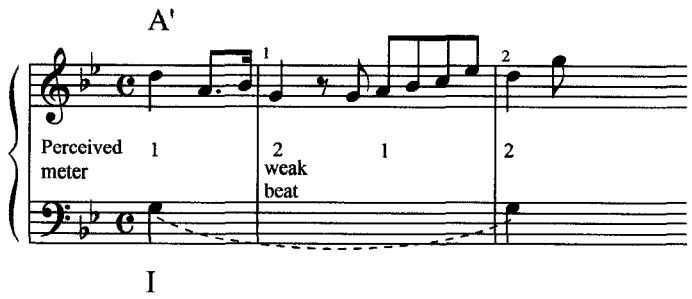
A slight delay in the return to the resumed structural tonic occurs also in our next example, the G-minor Piece for Children, no. 5 of Op. 72 (1842). The piece begins on $\hat{5}$ (d^2), harmonized as the fifth of the tonic chord. But when the melody is restated at the beginning of the reprises, the d^2 in the melody is unaccompanied, and it is perceived as belonging to the dominant harmony that ends the preceding B sections.[10]

Example 2.3a illustrates the harmonic as well as the metric context at the beginning of the piece. As we can see, the tonic harmony is prolonged through the first half of bar 2, whereas the metrical pattern initiated at mid-bars is perceived as the real meter of the piece. As shown in Example 2.3b, however, the reprise emerges (mid-bar 21) out of a different harmonic and metric context. The first melodic note in the reprise, d^2, is still in the domain of the dominant that concludes the B section (as of bar 18). Regarding meter, mid-bar 21, as opposed to the opening half bar, does not attract metrical emphasis. Rather, it sounds like an extension of the preceding metrical unit. By contrast, the tonic harmony at the beginning of bar 22 now sounds like a downbeat. In other words, if we compare the beginning of the piece to the beginning of the reprise, we can see that both harmony and meter have been reinterpreted: tonic has been replaced by dominant, and strong beat reshaped as weak.

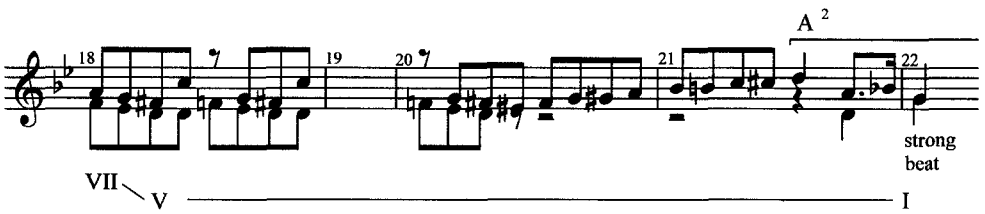
[10] There are two reprises here, since the B section is repeated in variation. Despite the expansion in the second B section (bars 29–44, compared with bars 8–21), the beginning of both reprises is identical. Therefore, I only treat the first reprise here.

Example 2.3. Piece for Children in G Minor, Op. 72/5, Allegro assai

a) Bars 1–2, harmony and meter

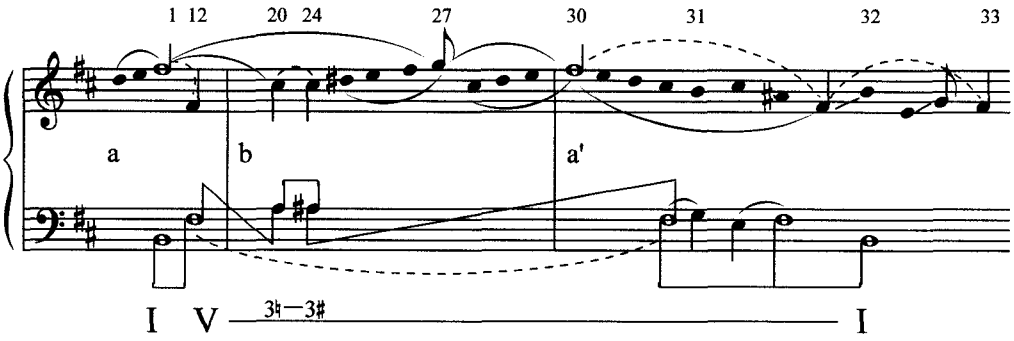


b) Bars 18–22, beginning of the first reprise



The small reprise which we find within the A section in the second movement of Mendelssohn's Cello Sonata in D Major, Op. 58, is another instance in which scale degree 5 is reharmonized at the beginning of the reprise. As shown in Example 2.4, the contrasting b section (bars 13–29) ends on a V^6 chord (see bars 24ff.). When the a section returns (upbeat to bar 30), the opening melodic figure (d–e–f♯) is unaccompanied, so that $f♯^2$ (bar 30) is perceived as if still belonging to the prevailing dominant harmony. Not until two bars later (bar 32) is tonic harmony resumed.

Example 2.4. Cello Sonata No. 2 in D Major, Op. 58, II, Allegretto scherzando, bars 1–33, voice leading



Our next example of a reprise on V does not refer to a complete piece or movement but rather to a small portion of a larger form. The G-major second theme in the first movement of the Violin Concerto Op. 64 in E Minor is constructed as a quatrain. Mendelssohn's original handling of the solo violin at the beginning of the second theme has been praised by numerous commentators.[11] Having the solo violin holding its low open G string beneath the flutes and clarinets is indeed one of the most notable moments in the entire concerto literature. Equally unforgettable is the latter part of the quatrain, where the solo violin plays a most moving counterpoint against the principal melody. As for structure, all the four phrases here begin with a three-quarter-note upbeat, and the formal divisions are as follows:

a: bars 132–139; a': bars 140–147; b: bars 148–155; a": bars 156–168.

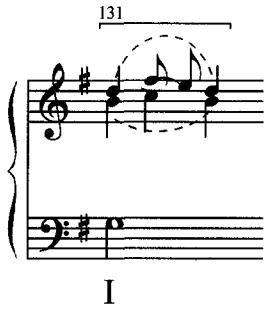
[11] See, for instance, Tovey, *Essays in Musical Analysis*, vol. 3, Thirteenth Impression, (London: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 179; Thomas Grey, "The Orchestral Music," in *The Mendelssohn Companion*, ed. Douglass Seaton (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2001), pp. 516–517.

Unlike the first two a phrases, which begin on a I that supports the upper-voice upbeats, the last a (i.e. the reprise) begins on the dominant harmony and returns to the tonic only at bar 157. Thus, dominant harmony binds the b and a" phrases together. The melodic upbeat d^2, a common tone shared by both V and I, is easily absorbed into the dominant harmony that ends the preceding phrase (bar 155). Example 2.5a illustrates the beginning of the theme. As shown, the neighbor-note figure d–e–d in the upper voice occurs in the domain of tonic prolongation.

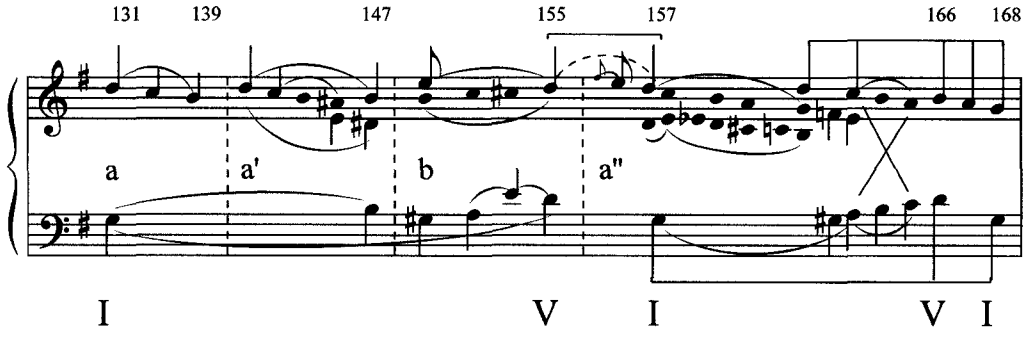
As we can see in Example 2.5b, however, when the same motive (d–e–d) recurs in bars 155–57, the two d^2s belong to two different harmonies. The first one (bar 155) is still in V, the harmony which concludes the contrasting b phrase. The second d^2, nonetheless, coincides with the return of the tonic at bar 157.

Example 2.5. Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64, I, Allegro molto appassionato

a) Bars 131–133, voice leading and motive at the beginning of the second theme



b) Bars 131–168, voice leading



We have already encountered one reprise that begins on V_5^6 (see Example 2.2). The first inversion of the dominant seventh chord is indeed one of Mendelssohn's favorite opening chords. Sometimes he literally starts a piece or a movement on V_5^6.[12] More often V_5^6 follows a short tonic introduction.[13] In these cases, too, the actual beginning of the form is best considered as V_5^6 since an introduction (by definition) is a formal prefix.[14] Whether there is an introduction or not, those V_5^6 openings enable Mendelssohn to begin the reprise on V_5^6 and thus postpone the arrival of the resumed structural tonic. One could say that—unlike the usage of V_5^6 in Example 2.2—in the present category the displacement of the tonic is an almost automatic consequence of the design of the opening.[15] Nevertheless, there is no single way for V_5^6 to be connected to the preceding B section. We shall encounter a simple, very characteristic possibility in the next two examples (2.6 and 2.7). Later in the present chapter, however, we shall see other possible contexts as well.[16]

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[12] For two familiar instances, see the SWW in G Major, Op. 62/1, and the beginning of the "vocal song" (bar 3) in the SWW in B Minor, Op. 30/4. See also the following discussion (Example 2.7) of the slow movement of the "Lobgesang" Symphony.

[13] See, for instance, Examples 1.20 and 1.21 in chapter 1.

[14] In his book *Musical Form and Musical Performance* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1968), Edward T. Cone has an interesting discussion of the possible roles that introductions might play in a variety of contexts. See especially p. 23.

[15] In his article "Form and Tonal Process: The Design of Different Structural Levels," in *Trends in Schenkerian Research*, ed. Allan Cadwallader (New York: Schirmer Books, 1990), pp. 1–21, Allan Cadwallader offers an elaborate explanation for the implications of such non-tonic opening chord for the structure, form and design in Mendelssohn's Song without Words, Op. 62/1, in G Major. See especially note 19, p. 19.

[16] See especially the beginnings on V_5^6 that follow a tonicization of III in major (for instance, Examples 2.21 and 2.23–2.25).

The SWW in A Major, Op. 53/6, features a typical usage of V^6_5 at the beginning of a reprise.[17] The piece begins in a characteristically Mendelssohnian fashion with a two-bar tonic introduction. The true beginning of the first A section is at bar 3, the start of the actual "vocal" song. It is precisely here that we first encounter the rather emphasized V^6_5 chord that accompanies the entrance of the melody. In this initial context, V^6_5 is a lower neighbor chord within a tonic prolongation. In subsequent returns to the melody's beginning (whether on the phrase or section level) there is, of course, no tonic introduction and V^6_5 can acquire a different meaning.[18]

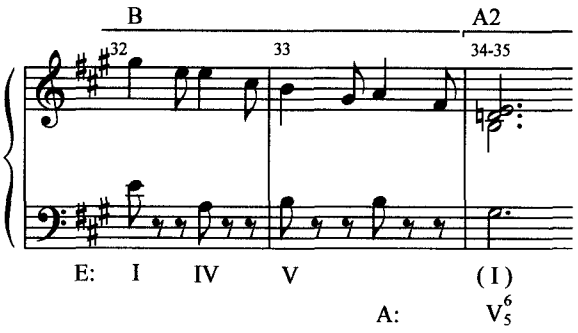
The first reprise at bar 34 indeed makes use of this possibility. As shown in Example 2.6, the final bars of the first B section (bars 32 ff.) feature a cadential motion in the dominant key (E major), and one expects the section to end on a root-position E-major chord at bar 34. However, this expectation is not realized; bar 34 brings back the $\frac{6}{5}$ E chord of bar 3, and a surprising return to the opening music of section A. The harmonic surprise also has a rhythmic dimension: perhaps in order to compensate for the missing last bar of the cadence in E major, the V^6_5 (of A major) is now stretched over two bars (34–35), further highlighting the elision of the sectional border.

---

[17] There are two reprises here, at bars 34 and 66. The second reprise will be addressed later in this chapter. See Example 2.24.

[18] We have already seen how this beginning enables overlapping at the phrase level. See Example 1.21.

Example 2.6. SWW in A Major, Op. 53/6, Molto Allegro vivace, bars 32–35, frustrated cadence at the end of the first B section



The first theme in the slow instrumental movement (*Adagio religioso*) of the "Lobgesang" Symphony, Op. 52, is constructed as a quatrain: a (bars 1–8), a' (bars 9–16), b (bars 17–28) and a' (bars 28–35). The reprise in this small form, that is, the return of the a' phrase after the contrasting b phrase (bar 28, see Example 2.7a), exemplifies yet another typically Mendelssohnian overlapping reprise on V_5^6. The potential for the unusual reprise is again a feature of the movement's beginning on V_5^6.[19] Nonetheless, the return of this beginning still takes us by surprise, since it usurps the root-position A-major chord that we expect to conclude a firm authentic cadence in the key of the dominant in bar 28. Example 2.7b illustrates such a normal resolution.

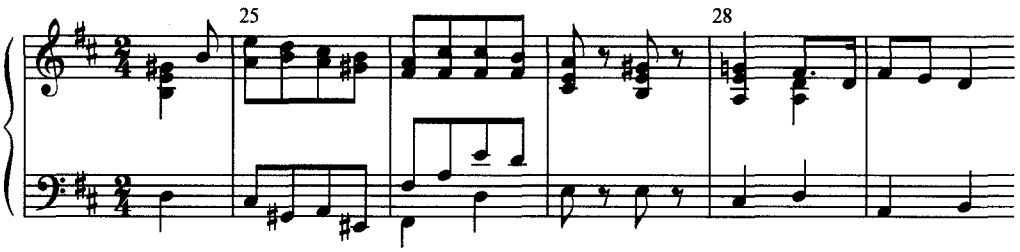
However, as shown in Example 2.7c, the most remarkable feature in this case is the frustrated leading tone, G♯, in the upper voice (bar 27), which moves down chromatically to G♮ (the diminished fifth of V_5^6 in the home key, D major). A first hint of

[19] The significance of this opening to the piece's overall unity will be taken up in Chapter 5. (See Example 5.8.)

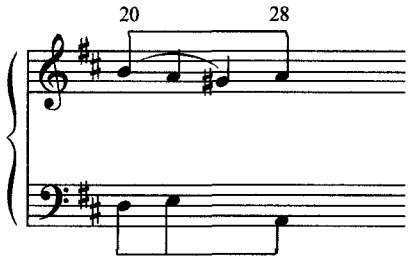
this cadential frustration is given already in bars 23–24: Instead of concluding an eight-bar b phrase here, bars 24–27 expand the phrase by means of repetition, leaving the leading tone G♯ at bar 23 unresolved. Usually such expansion leads eventually to an even stronger cadence at the conclusion of the phrase. But here, by avoiding a resolution of bars 23–24, the subsequent elision of the sectional border in bar 28 (caused by the frustrated cadence at the beginning of the reprise) is prepared.

Example 2.7. Symphony No. 2, Op. 52, III, Adagio religioso

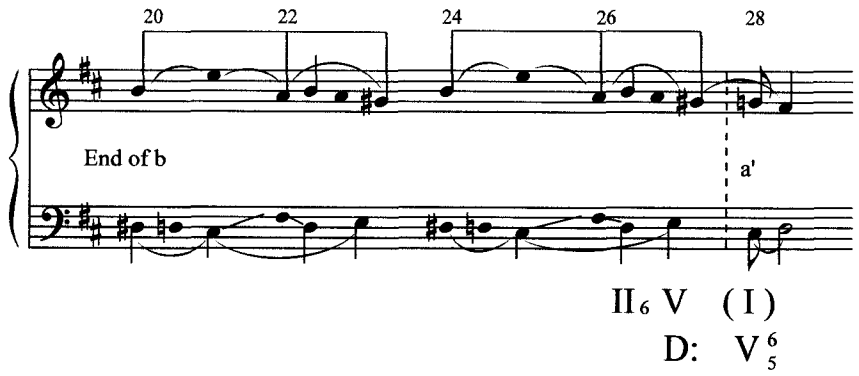
a) Bars 24–29, simplified



b) Bars 20–28, expected voice leading



c) Bars 20–28, actual voice leading



Compared with V^6_5, the dominant in $^6_3$ position is much lighter in character. Therefore, it is generally less suitable for accented beginnings similar to those that we have encountered in the last two examples. However, the two reprises in the Allegro-assai (second) movement of the F-minor String Quartet, Op. 80, which begin on V^6_5 and V^6_3 respectively, show that these two chords are easily interchangeable. As we will see in the main reprise of the movement (Example 2.9), V^6_3 can provide no less tension and drama.

Mendelssohn begins this movement with an accented V^6_3 on the first downbeat. In the composite form which he uses (that is, a Scherzo–Trio–Scherzo scheme[20]), there are two reprises that similarly begin on inverted dominants. First, there is the small-scale

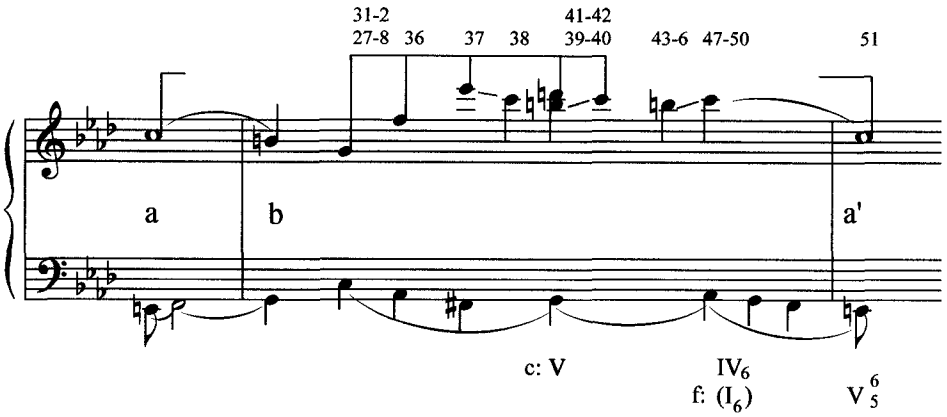
[20] Mendelssohn does not use these titles. He simply writes *Allegro assai* at the beginning of the movement.

reprise within the Scherzo (bars 51–85), and then, at the complete-movement level, there is the main reprise, as the entire Scherzo returns (at bar 179) after the exceptionally dark middle section ("Trio"). In the case of both reprises, the beginning merges with the end of the preceding section, as we shall presently see.

Example 2.8 illustrates the voice leading in the first reprise. As shown, an auxiliary cadence in C minor (starting already at bar 25) is desperately struggling to achieve definite closure towards the end of the b section. Such a desired resolution is denied, however. In bar 40 the upper voice reaches its goal, c^3, but the bass is "stuck" on the dominant note G, so that harmonic closure is prevented. A second attempted cadence is similarly frustrated in bars 41–42, and then, the next to last chord of the cadence (a highly tensed V_7^9) is fervently reiterated four more times (bars 43–46). When finally allowed to move, the dissonant dominant (still in the local key of C minor) lands on IV^6 (bars 47–50), in the manner of a deceptive cadence.

In retrospect, we may understand this inverted F-minor chord, which enters as IV^6 in C minor, as the pivot chord in the modulation back to F minor. It is followed immediately by V_5^6 (a slight variation of the opening V_3^6) in the home key of F minor (bars 51–52) at the beginning of the Scherzo's A' section. However, only when the reprise begins do we realize that a change of key has taken place. The surprisingly intense character of this sort of reprise results from the fact that the expected cadence has been denied its expected resolution, as well as the fact that a sudden modulation has occurred.

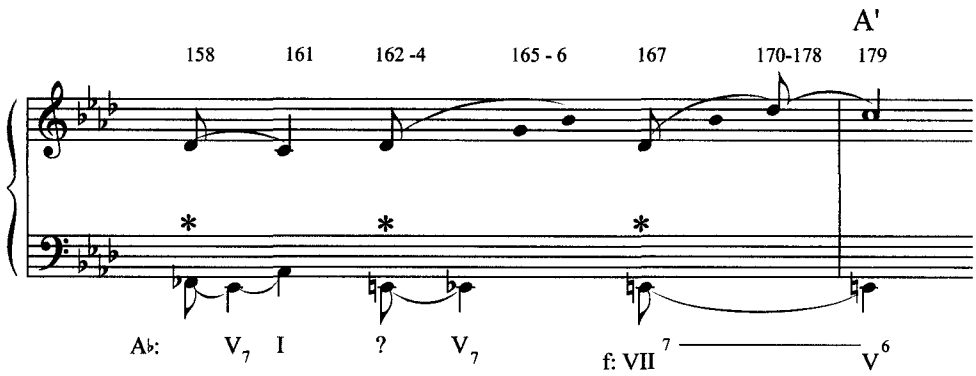
Example 2.8. String Quartet in F Minor, Op. 80, II, Allegro assai, bars 1–51, voice leading



Turning now to the main reprise in this movement (bar 179), we encounter a somewhat different situation. Here there is an extended preparation (retransition) for the return of the Scherzo, quite unlike the explosive quality of the previous reprise. However, there is also a clear similarity between the two reprises. Again Mendelssohn "deceives" us, creating expectation that a quasi-cadential move to A♭ major is about to be repeated. At bar 162 he seems to initiate a third repetition of the previously heard pattern in A♭: compare with the analogous bars 154 and 158. As indicated in Example 2.9, the bass note of bar 162 is notated this time as E♮, the enharmonic equivalent of the F♭ in bars 154 and 158. Aurally one does not yet know that this is an E♮: it supports the very same diminished seventh chord as the previous F♭s. Furthermore, in bar 165 the E♮ bass moves, like F♭, down to E♭. At this stage only the slowing down of the harmonic rhythm might make the listener (supposing he does not see the score) aware that the

music is about to take a new direction. However, the further insistence on E♮ (bar 167 ff.) and the tremendous crescendo (both in respect of dynamics and that of rhythmic activity and texture) signals the return to the Scherzo in bar 179.

Example 2.9. String Quartet in F Minor, Op. 80, II, Allegro assai, bars 158–179, voice leading



2. Reprise Begins on Cadential $\frac{6}{4}$

Reprises (and recapitulations in larger forms) that begin on a cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ chord are quite frequent in Mendelssohn.[21] In the case of many themes, especially those which outline the tonic triad at their beginning, the cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ offers the best option for reharmonization at the beginning of the reprise.[22] The rhythmic emphasis which cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ chords normally receive helps to draw attention to the return of the theme. On the other hand, its harmonic function (that is, dominant) guarantees the continuity of tonal tension. The next two examples (2.10 and 2.11) illustrate thematic reprises that coincide with the arrival at the cadential $\frac{6}{4}$.

The C-major trio section of Mendelssohn's C-minor Piano Quartet, Op.1 (1822) is an early example of a fresh-sounding return of the opening music on a cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ chord (bar 25; see Example 2.10a). As Example 2.10b shows, the b section features a tonicization of A♭ (♭VI) in bars 14–22.[23] At bars 23–24 an F♯ (an augmented sixth above the bass) is added to this harmony in order to direct it towards the dominant of the main key, C-major. The resolution of this dissonant $\frac{6}{3}$ "Italian" chord to a cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ chord coincides with the beginning of the a' section at bar 25. As a result, the return to the root-position tonic chord is delayed to the next bar (26), and the stability of the resumed tonic is somewhat weakened.

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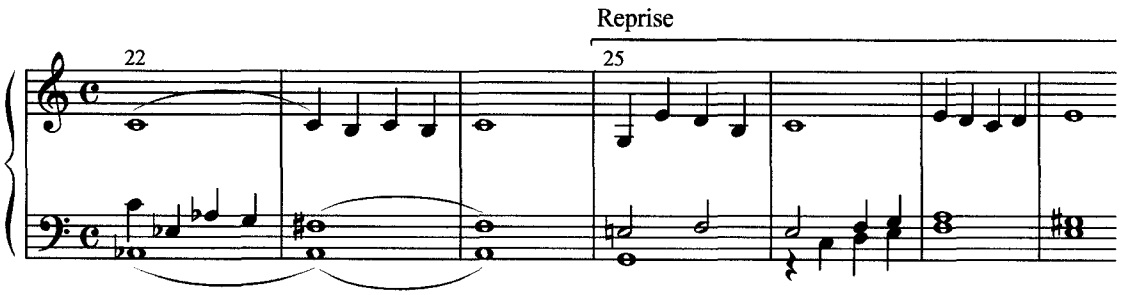
[21] Other composers of Mendelssohn's generation, notably Chopin, also favored reprises on the cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ chord. See Chapter 6.

[22] In addition to the examples that I present in this section, see also the following SWWs: Op. 62/5 in A Minor; Op. 102/1 in E Minor; Op. 102/6 in C Major.

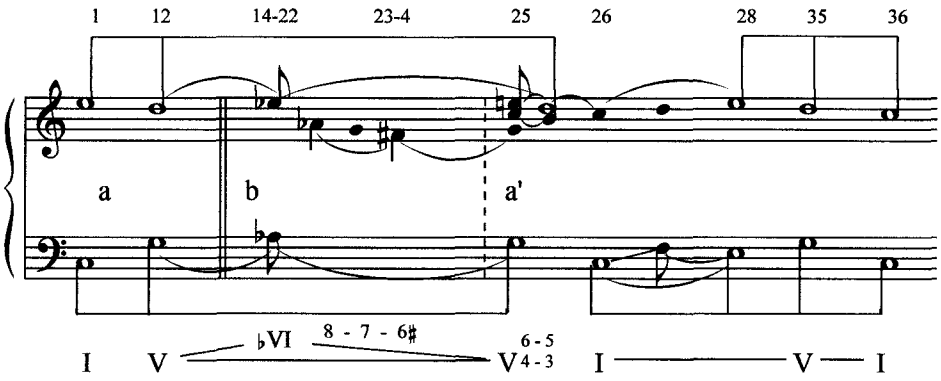
[23] I count the first measure of the trio as bar 1.

Example 2.10. Piano Quartet in C Minor, Op. 1, III, Trio of Scherzo, Presto,

a) Bars 22–28



b) Bars 1–36, voice leading

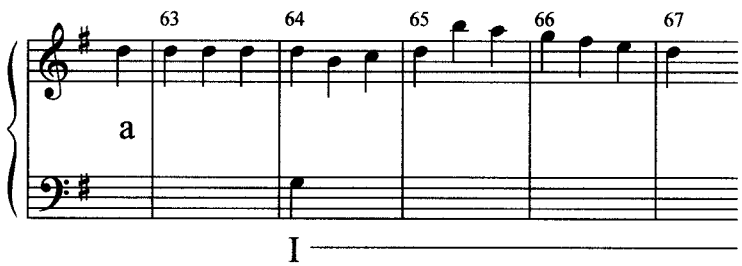


Another trio section, that of the "Reformation" Symphony, similarly features a reprise that begins on a cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ chord: not unlike our previous example, the thematic reprise coincides with the arrival at the cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ (bar 108). Because the harmony at the end of the trio's middle section is II (bars 62–63), the original upbeat D's (see Example

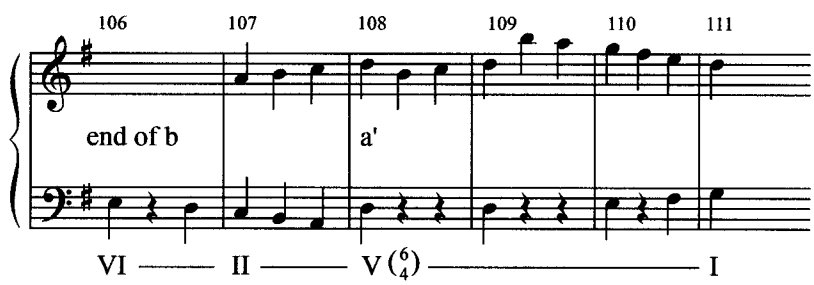
2.11a) that led into the first section of the trio are now left out at the beginning of the reprise. As shown in Example 2.11b, the return to the tonic is delayed until the fourth bar in the reprise's first phrase (bar 111), following a rising stepwise progression in the bass.

Example 2.11. Symphony No. 5 in D Minor ("Reformation"), Op. 107, II, Allegro vivace

a) Bars 63–67, melody and bass at the beginning of the Trio



b) Bars 106–111, outer voices



II. Further Displacement of the Resumed Structural Tonic by the Dominant

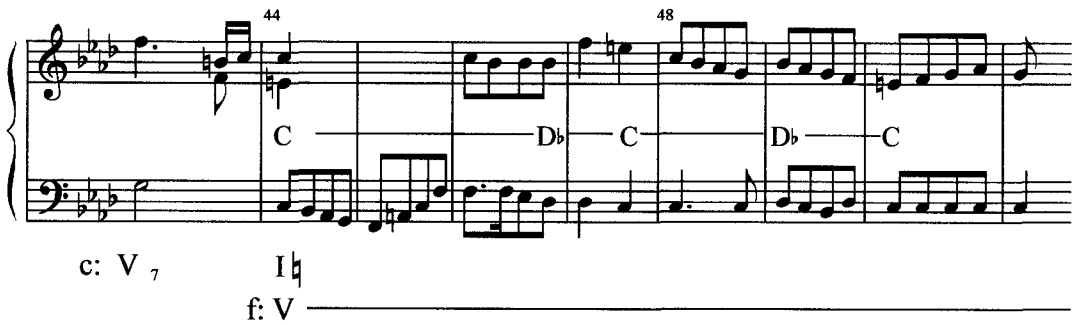
In the next example, the F-minor Prelude from the Six Preludes and Fugues, Op. 35, we encounter a somewhat more drastic procedure. Here, the middle section ends with a powerful cadence in the key of C minor. However, the last chord of this cadence, C major, serves also as V in F minor as it begins the reprise.

As we can see in Example 2.12a, the opening melody of the prelude shifts at the beginning of the reprise to the bass part. As a result, the main note in this melody, C, obtains a different harmonic meaning. Instead of being the fifth in an F-minor tonic chord (as is the case in bars 1–4; see Example 2.12b) it is now (bars 44–47) the root in the C-major dominant chord. When the melody returns to the upper voice (bars 48 ff.) the dominant is further prolonged. Note also that the significant expressive motive C–D♭–C (indicated by letters in both parts of the example) continues its prominent role in this further prolongation of the dominant.[24]

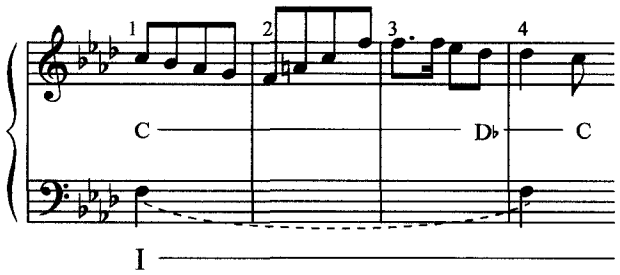
[24] Example 2.12a does not show that a stable tonic is reached only at bar 67, that is, where the closing cadence of the prelude is completed. However, the next example (2.13) will focus on such a long-range displacement of the structural tonic.

Example 2.12. Prelude in F Minor, Op. 35/5, Andante lento

a) Bars 43–51, outer voices



b) Bars 1–4, outer voices



In our next example, the SWW Op. 30/1 in E♭ Major, the reprise begins again with the arrival at the cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ (bar 23). The resolution to the structural tonic, however, occurs only at the closing cadence of the piece, completed in bar 30. Hence, from the standpoint of harmonic structure it is not a true reprise.[25] The thematic design,

[25] Rothstein's notion of deceptive recapitulation refers to similar situations. See *Phrase Rhythm*, pp. 190–197.

however, justifies its formal designation as ternary. Example 2.13a attempts to illustrate the overall harmonic structure of the piece. The powerful dominant harmony that embraces the entire reprise section (bars 23–30) is approached in such a dramatic fashion that one can (and perhaps needs to) read the dominant harmony at the end of the opening A section (bars 11–12) as a lower-status entity, that is, a back-relating dominant. If this is true, we have here a dynamic one-part inner form.[26]

As we can see in Example 2.13a (Example 2.13b is a more detailed graph of the bass part), the harmony in the middle section first crystallizes around I^6_3 (in the minor version) and ♭III (bars 13–15), and then emphasizes the minor form of IV (bars 19–22). The further crucial step toward V ($^6_4$ formation) coincides with the beginning of the thematic reprise at bar 23. Even though metrical conflict is not a central issue in this piece, quasi-metrical emphasis at mid-bars gains a certain prominence in the course of the middle and also the last sections of the piece. We reach the minor IV at mid-measure 19, and Mendelssohn insists on emphasizing it there, as well as in the following bar 20. Upsetting the metrical order in this area serves two purposes: it facilitates our hearing the progression from ♭III to IV♭; and it announces, so to speak, the dramatic beginning of the thematic reprise that soon follows. Similar mid-bar accents in the next section (see bars 27–8) prevent the "danger" of a premature arrival at the tonic.[27]

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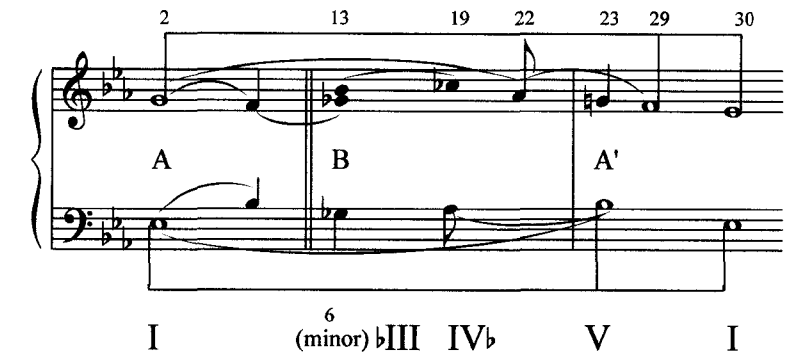
[26] The distinction between "inner" and "outer" form follows Rothstein. See *Phrase Rhythm*, p. 104.

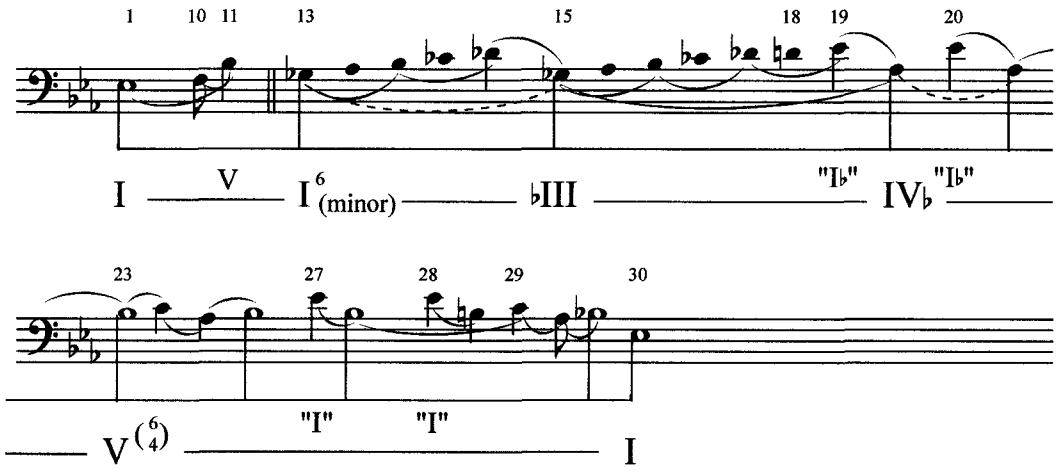
[27] The two E♭ chords on the downbeats of these bars are no more than apparent tonics; they do not sound as a resolution of the V. They should be understood as low-level embellishments of the main bass motion from B♭ to B♮, which is emphasized by the accents at mid-bars 27–28.

Example 2.13. SWW in E♭ Major, Op. 30/1, Andante espressivo

a) Bars 1–30, middleground sketch



b) Bars 1–30, bass motion outline



In our next example (our last as far as reprise on the dominant is concerned), the SWW Op. 85/2 in A Minor, we encounter a somewhat different situation at the beginning of the reprise. The dominant is already reached at the end of the previous B section, and this dominant now extends into the returning A section.[28]

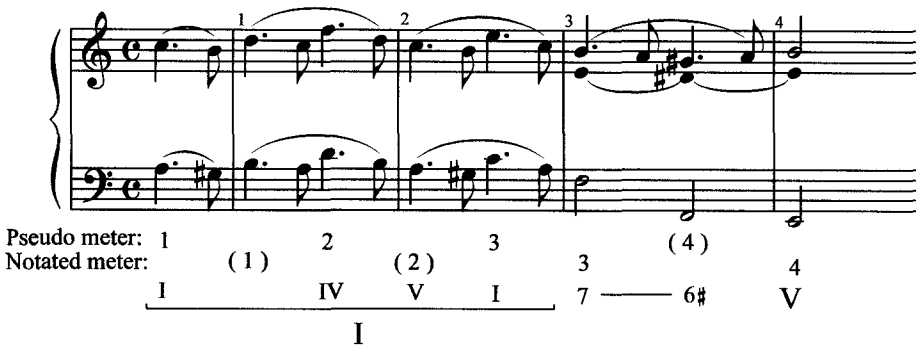
As shown in Examples 2.14a and b, this harmonic variation (that is, dominant instead of tonic at the beginning of the reprise) is accompanied by a rhythmic one, as Mendelssohn brings his favorite metrical conflict into play here. At the song's beginning (see Example 2.14a), the metrical pattern initiated at mid-bars seems to be the real meter of the piece. Yet, the articulation slurs in both outer voices hint that this is just a pseudo-meter. Indeed, in bar 3 we already perceive the notated meter: the dissonant suspension (7–6♯) makes no other interpretation possible.

By contrast, the beginning of the reprise appears to resolve the metrical conflict in favor of the notated pattern. The closing cadence of the B section (bars 21–22) conforms to the notated bars, and the re-entry of the opening melody at mid-bar 22, which does not present any harmonic change, hardly manages to present a serious competition to the prevailing metrical pattern.

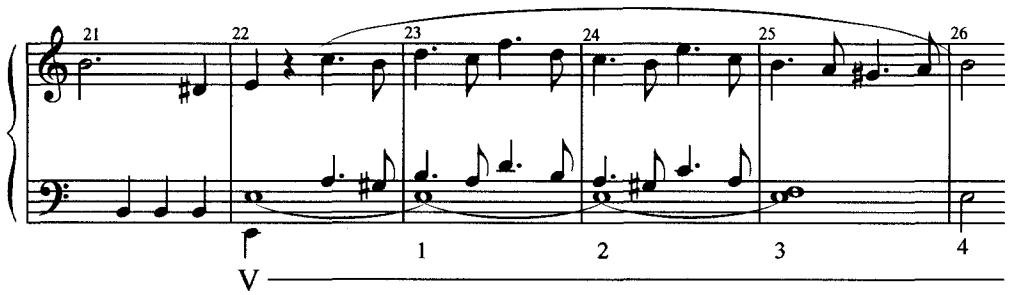
[28] A similar dominant pedal point at the beginning of the reprise occurs also in the SWWs Op. 62/4 in G Major (bars 20–24) and Op. 85/5 in A Major (bars 22–25).

Example 2.14. SWW in A Minor, Op. 85/2, Allegro agitato

a) Bars 1–4



b) Bars 21–26



III. Other Harmonic Possibilities

1. Reprise Follows a Tonicization of III in Minor

The harmony built on III has two tones in common with the tonic chord, that is, one fewer than the cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ that we discussed above.[29] Nonetheless, it is another option for reharmonizing the beginning of a theme in reprises.

In the main reprise of the second movement of the Cello Sonata in D Major, Op. 58 (that is, after the contrasting B section in D major), Mendelssohn displaces the return to the tonic, using the common tones that the tonic has with III. The unaccompanied rising third D–E–F♯, normally $\hat{3}$–$\hat{4}$–$\hat{5}$ over a tonic B-minor chord in numerous appearances in the course of the movement, is now (bars 88–93) heard as $\hat{1}$–$\hat{2}$–$\hat{3}$ over III (D major), the local key of the contrasting middle section. As shown in Example 2.15, arrival of the tonic is postponed until the third bar of the reprise, bar 95. The connection of III to the resumed tonic is achieved via II^6 and V, so that the bass echoes the rising-third motive D–E–F♯, as the brackets in Example 2.15 indicate.

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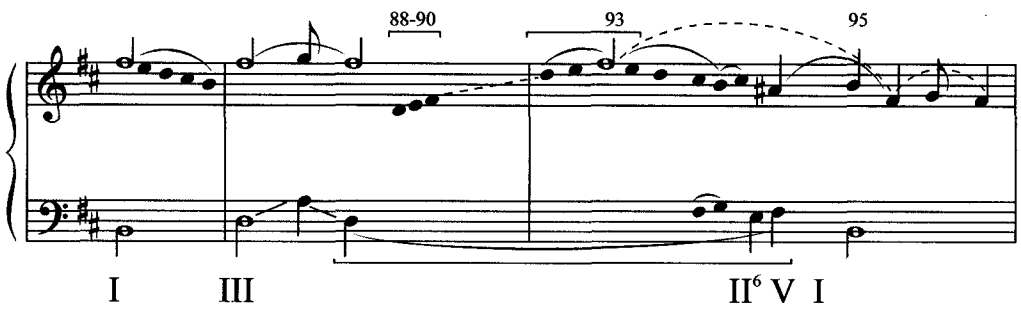
[29] This is also true with regard to VI. For examples of recapitulations that begin on VI, see Chapter 3.

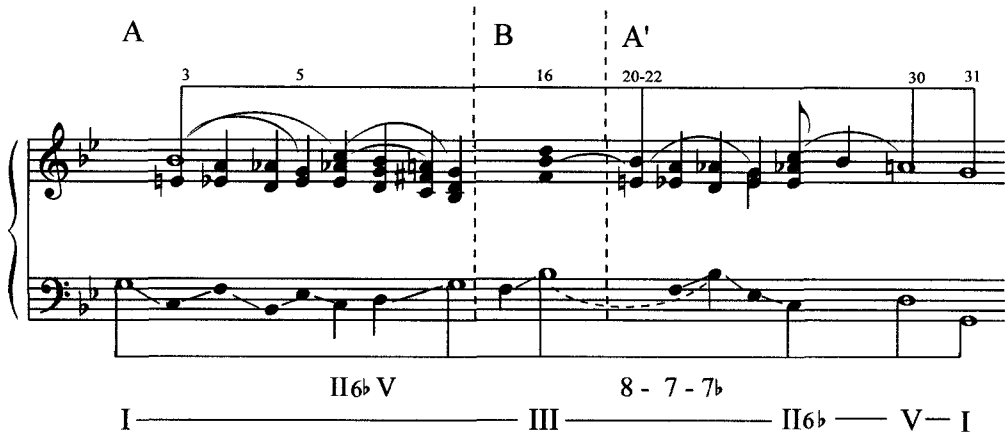
Example 2.15. Cello Sonata No. 2 in D Major, Op. 58, II, Allegretto scherzando, bars 1–96, voice leading outline



A unique non-tonic reprise that emerges from a tonicization of III in minor occurs in Mendelssohn's SWW Op. 102/4 in G Minor. Since a comprehensive analysis of this piece has already been published, I shall only present here a concise version of its structure.[30] As indicated by the harmonic analysis at the bottom of Example 2.16, the entire piece is unified by a single harmonic motion beginning on I (A section), then moving to III (B section), and ultimately leading to an impressive closing cadence. At the beginning of the reprise (bar 22) the chromatic chord that originally, at the piece's beginning, follows a tonic introduction (see bars 1–3), is incorporated within the prolongation of the tonicized III. Thus, despite the clear ternary outer form, tonal structure creates a highly original one-part inner form.

[30] See Schachter, "Aspects of Meter," *Unfoldings*, pp. 112–115.

Example 2.16. SWW in G Minor, Op. 102/4, Andante un poco agitato, bars 1–31, middleground sketch



2. Reprise begins on, after, or in the midst of tonicizations of III in major

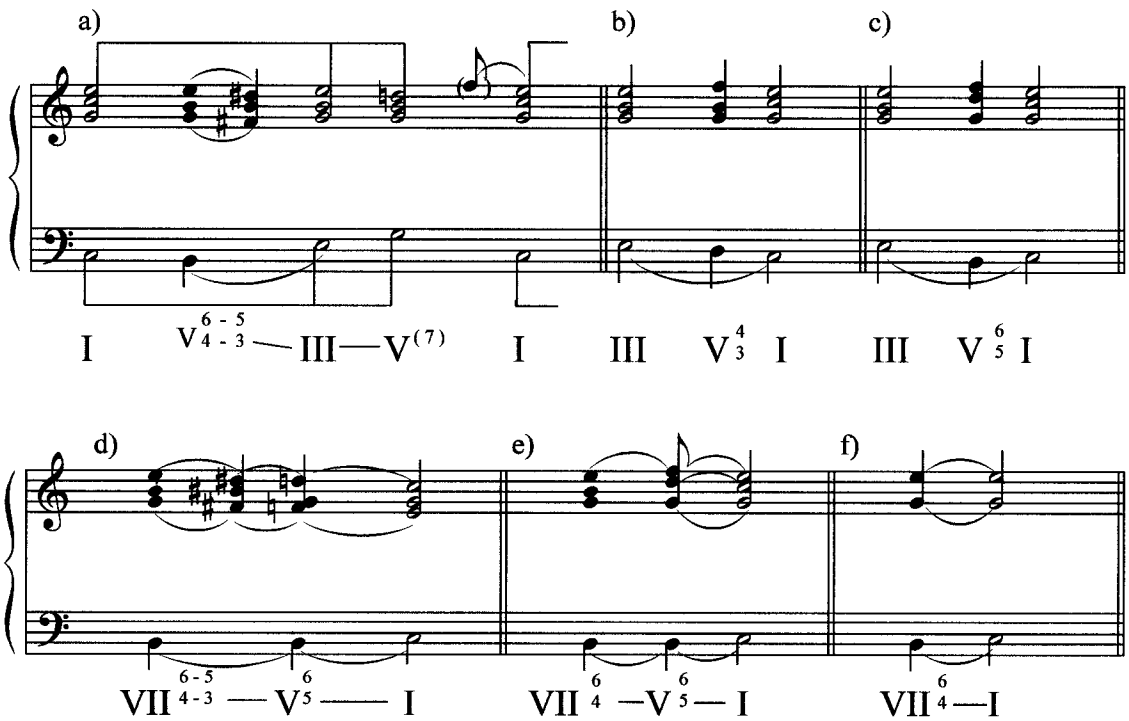
One of Mendelssohn's favorite tonal schemes in major keys features a modulation to the key of III in the contrasting B section. In order to return smoothly from III to a new beginning on the tonic one generally needs to pass through V. Example 2.17a illustrates such a harmonic progression. As shown, V can (and often does) appear also in $\frac{4}{3}$ (2.17b) or $\frac{6}{5}$ (2.17c) positions.

Three possible shortcuts of this progression are shown in Examples 2.17d, e and f. As we can see, III, the harmonic goal of the tonicization, is taken out. The connective V now appears in first inversion ($\frac{6}{5}$, example d) rather than the root and $\frac{4}{3}$ positions. Hence, in Example 2.17d V of III moves directly to the inverted dominant seventh

chord. Since both chords are built on the same bass note (that is, the leading tone) this progression is particularly smooth.

V of III (= VII♯) can also be shortened, as we can see in Example 2.17e. Now only the $\frac{6}{4}$ position represents the dominant of III, and this $\frac{6}{4}$ is followed directly by V^6_5 and I. Example 2.17f illustrates the ultimate shortcut of our basic pattern. As shown, V^6_5 (in the main key) is also left out and the cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ formation on VII is followed directly by the tonic.

Example 2.17. Abstract illustration of characteristic progressions from tonicized III back to I

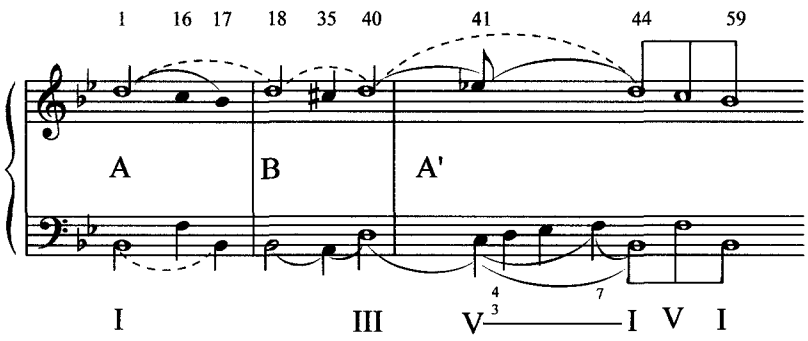


The general harmonic plan in the SWW in B♭ Major, Op. 85/6, resembles the scheme shown in Example 2.17b. The cadence in the key of III is completed near the end of the B section (bars 39–40), and the reprise begins on the eighth-note upbeat to bar 41. As we can see in Example 2.18a, bar 41 features the connective V^4_3, and the return to the tonic is at bar 44, following a three-bar prolongation of dominant harmony.

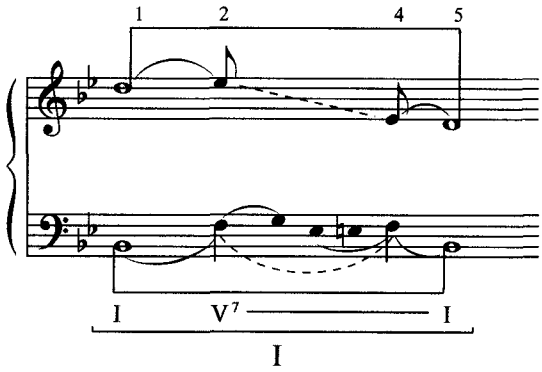
When we compare the beginning of the reprise with the analogous opening, we can see that the composed-out V, which initially participated in a prolongation of the tonic (bars 1–5, Example 2.18b), now provides a necessary link from the tonicized III to the resumed I. However, as shown in Example 2.18a, the thematic reprise does not coincide with tonic arrival. Rather, it starts within the domain of III (last eighth note in bar 40), and only at the end of the song's first phrase (that is, at bar 44) do we reach the tonic.

Example 2.18. SWW in B♭ Op. 85/6, Allegretto

a) Bars 1–59, middleground sketch



b) Bars 1–5, voice leading.

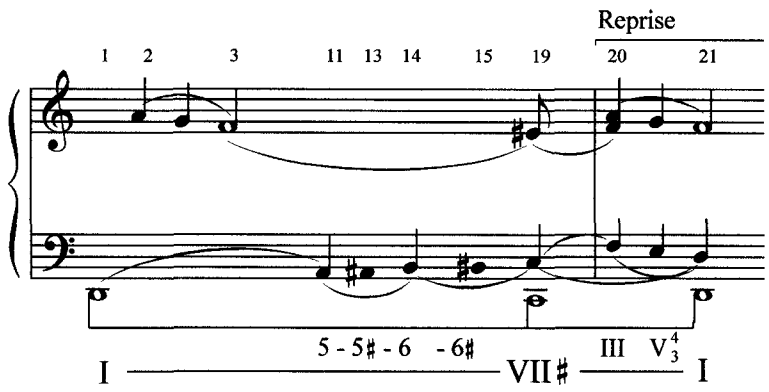


A different pacing of our basic progression (Example 2.17b) occurs in the SWW Op. 85/4 in D Major. As we can see in Example 2.19, a middleground voice-leading graph, the B section now ends on VII♯ (=V of III, bar 19), and III arrives at the beginning of the reprise (bar 20). Return to the tonic (via connective V^4_3) is further delayed to bar 21. But the relation of harmonic events and sectional layout is not the only unusual feature of the reprise here: the status of these harmonies is also different from what we have seen in our previous example (2.18). As illustrated in Example 2.19, the dominant in the key of III (that is, VII♯) is structurally more significant than its tonic.[31] Thus III is best understood here as an anticipatory chord, built on the upper

[31] For a comprehensive theoretical discussion of dominants that structurally overweigh their local tonics, see Schachter, "Analysis by Key: Another Look at Modulation," *Music Analysis* 6, no. 3 (1987): 289–318. Reprinted in *Unfoldings* as Chapter 5, pp. 134–160.

third of I. The main connection is thus from VII♯ at the end of section B to the I which is reached at the second bar (21) of the reprise.[32]

Example 2.19. SWW in D Major, Op. 85/4, Andante sostenuto, bars 1–21, outline



In the SWW Op. 67/3 in B♭ Major, the implied III harmony at the beginning of the reprise also has a lower structural status than the analogous III in Example 2.18. As suggested in Example 2.20a and b, metrical conflict plays a major role in this piece. Furthermore, it provides us with crucial help regarding the elusive tonal structure at the beginning of the reprise. As shown in Example 2.20a, the initial tonic prolongation (bars 1–2) gives rise to a mid-bar metrical pattern. By contrast, when the same music is

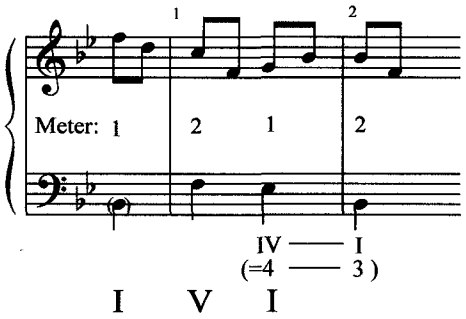
[32] The SWW Op. 102/2, also in D major, similarly emphasizes VII♯ (V of III) more than III (the local tonic). The resulting progression in the second reprise (bars 19–21) is thus VII♯ to V. Rothstein, however, reads III to V. See *Phrase Rhythm*, pp. 204–213, and also note no. 28, p. 325.

repeated in bars 26–28, we perceive the notated metrical pattern, established in the contrasting B section, as the real meter (see Example 2.20b).

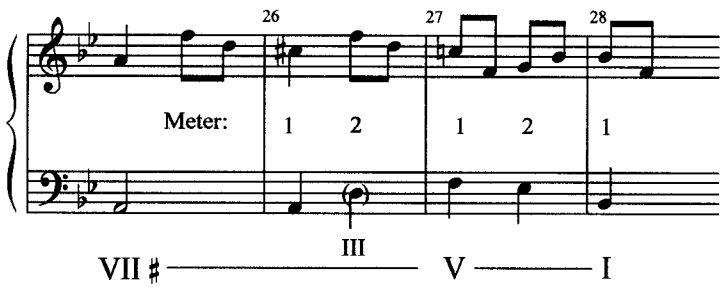
The first two notes in the song's melody, f^2 and d^2 (mid-bar 26), are thus reinterpreted both harmonically and metrically. Harmonically we hear them as expressing D minor (III), since they follow the dominant of D minor. Metrically, these opening notes now fall on a weak unit. As it happens, the main harmonic connection is from VII♯ to V and then back to I, whereas III is relegated to a lower status. The subordination of a local tonic (D minor) to its dominant is already familiar from the previous example (2.19). As we will see in what follows, a similar hierarchy can also be found in several other SWWs.

Example 2.20. SWW in B♭ Major, Op. 67/3, Andante tranquillo

a) Bars 1–2, outer voices (simplified)



b) Bars 25–28, outer voices (simplified)



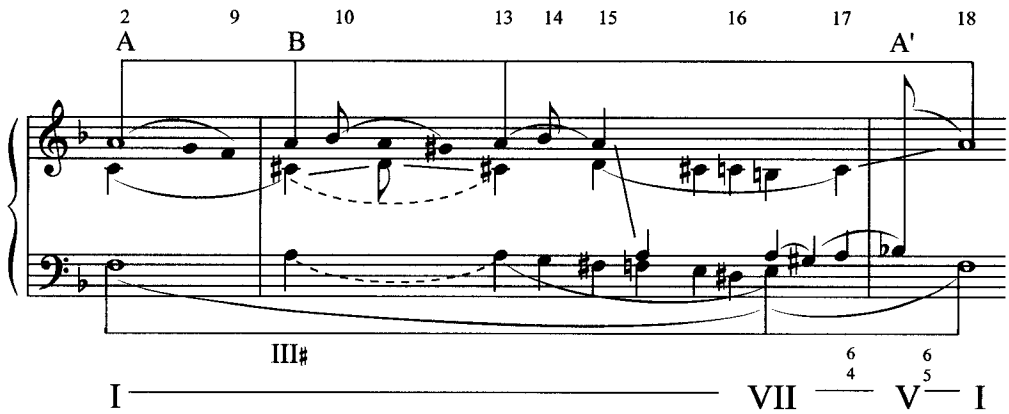
The next example, the SWW Op. 53/4 in F Major features a frustrated cadence in the key of III near the beginning of the reprise. As shown in Example 2.21a, the middle section first establishes III♯ (V of VI, bars 10–13), locally suggesting a tonicization of the relative D-minor key. But then, starting at bar 15, we begin to hear A minor (diatonic III) as the real harmonic goal. However, the cadential motion towards A minor only reaches the $\frac{6}{4}$ chord E–A–C at the beginning of bar 17. At the last beat of this bar the upbeat V^6_5 of the home key (F major) already begins the A' section, securing a continuous flow from the contrasting B section to the beginning of the reprise.

Example 2.21b attempts to illustrate another important aspect of the piece's unusual tonal structure. As shown, the overall harmonic plan conveys a remarkable enlargement of the opening bars of the piece. The two neighbor-note figures F–E–F (bass) and A–B♭–A (upper voice) of bars 1–2 occur also on a dramatically larger scale. The harmonic plan (that is, I–VII♯–V^6_5–I) clearly reflects the F–E–F idea. As to the upper voice, the parallelism is much less obvious: A, the bass of the prominent III♯ chord (bars

10–15), is built on the upper third of the tonic. In a deep sense we can regard the progression I–III♯ as an unfolding of a vertical third. Thus A, the upper member of this third, belongs to a different, non-bass voice. Indeed, in the actual composition this A is linearly continued in the inner voice, where it moves to G♯ (bar 16) and then on to A and B♭ (bar 17). As the brackets in Example 2.21b indicate, the resulting line A–G♯–A–B♭ beautifully parallels the upper voice in the song's opening bar.[33]

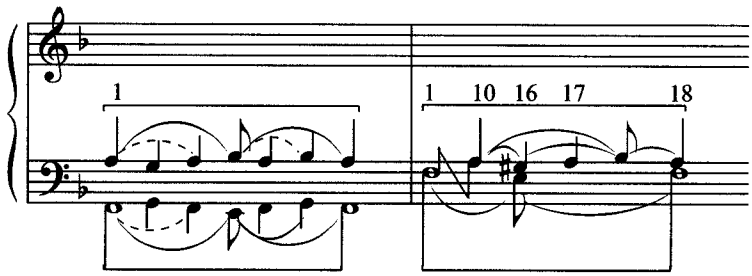
Example 2.21. SWW in F Major, Op. 53/4, Adagio

a) Bars 2–18, voice leading



[33] For an outstanding exploration of the concept of motivic parallelism see Charles Burkhart, "Schenker's 'Motivic Parallelisms'," *Journal of Music Theory* 22 (1978): 145–175.

b) Bars 1 and 1–18, motivic parallelism



An even more extreme shortcut with regard to our abstract scheme (see Example 2.17f) occurs at the beginning of the reprise in the SWW Op. 30/5 in D Major. At bar 24, the cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ chord in the key of III (that is, F♯ minor) moves, quite exceptionally, directly to the D-major tonic. Example 2.22 presents an outline of the overall tonal organization of the piece.

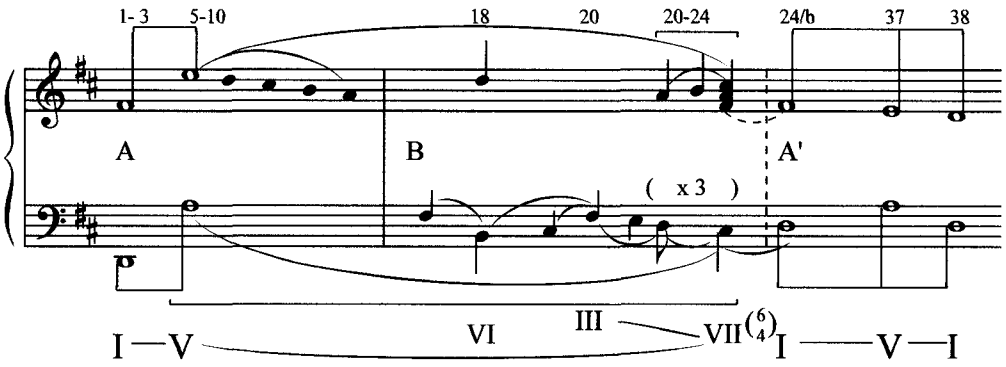
As we can see, the middle section connects V to I by means of an ascending stepwise motion, which emphasizes VI as a key area (bar 18) and then moves on to VII (introduced as V of III).[34] However, the leading tone in the bass supports a $\frac{6}{4}$ chord, which is not transformed into the characteristic V^6_5, but rather goes directly to the tonic at the beginning of the reprise.

This is an extreme case, and perhaps this kind of voice leading is not the most convincing. But this curious juncture might be motivated by another factor. As shown in

[34] We have already encountered a similar harmonic plan in another D-major SWW, Op. 85/4. See Example 2.19.

Example 2.22, the bass part in bars 20–24 repeats the two-note motive D–C♯ three times. This appears to be a remarkably disguised recomposition of a salient idea from the opening of the piece, namely the murmuring neighbor-note figure in the left-hand part (bar 1). Had Mendelssohn taken the extra time needed to incorporate a preparatory V^6_5 chord before the beginning of the reprise, this attractive parallelism to the song's beginning would have been lost.

Example 2.22. SWW in D Major, Op. 30/5, Andante grazioso, middleground sketch



The next three examples (2.23–2.25) do not go to the extremes of Op. 30/5, as they do include V^6_5 before the resumed tonic. The most unusual feature in these excerpts is the frustration of the expected closure in the key of III, a phenomenon already encountered in Example 2.21. But in each piece the specifics of the disrupted cadence vary according to its individual melodic, rhythmic and motivic design.

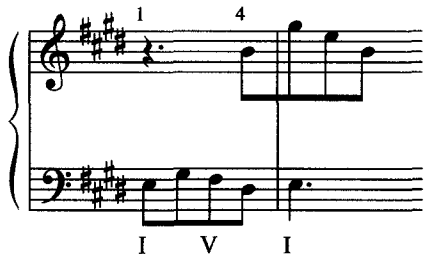
Harmonic progression that is rather similar to the abstract Example 2.17e occurs in the SWW Op. 67/6, in E Major. Cadential motions in the key of III (G♯ minor) start as early as bar 37. The first one (bars 37–43) reaches a G♯-minor chord in $\frac{6}{3}$ position and $\hat{5}$ ($d\sharp^2$) in the upper voice. The second cadential motion (bars 44 ff.) is even more intense: note especially the climactic $d\sharp^3$ at bar 45. However, this cadence is also deprived of satisfactory completion. Bars 49–50 are repeated, first in identical pacing (bars 51–52), and then in a slower harmonic rhythm (bars 53–56): each chord now occupies two bars instead of one. In bar 57 the cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ in G♯ minor (D♯ G♯ B) gives way to the familiar V^6_5 in the key of E major. This V^6_5 chord, which initiates the reprise, is stretched over four bars (57–60), as if to give us time to overcome the surprising change of key that we have just experienced. Example 2.23c illustrates the outer voices from bar 44 to the beginning of the reprise in a rhythmic reduction (each bar in the composition is represented by an eighth note in the graph).

In retrospect, this four-bar long V^6_5 is understood as a recomposition of the analogous one-bar upbeat in the opening section (that is, bar 4). A comparison of Example 2.23a and 2.23c reveals these relationships. As shown, a one-bar upbeat at the beginning of the piece becomes a six-bar elongated upbeat before the reprise. Furthermore, in order to recompose b^1 as an upbeat, Mendelssohn had to shift it from its natural accented position. In Example 2.23b I have removed the harmonic shortcut as well as the rhythmic manipulation from the formal juncture between B and A'. As we can see, the two b^1s, belonging to the $\frac{6}{4}$ and $\frac{6}{5}$ chords respectively, occur at different metrical positions (see the indications in Example 2.23b). But in the actual composition, the $\frac{6}{4}$ chords were pushed ahead so that they now occupy weak bars (see Example

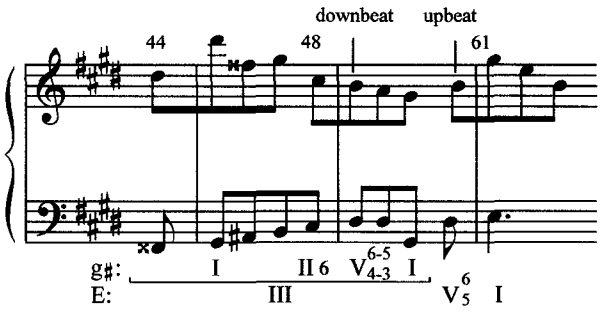
2.23c). Eventually, this metrical position enables Mendelssohn to obtain a long upbeat that encompasses both the $\frac{6}{4}$ chord built on VII and the V^6_5 chord.

Example 2.23. SWW in E Major, Op. 67/6, Allegretto non troppo

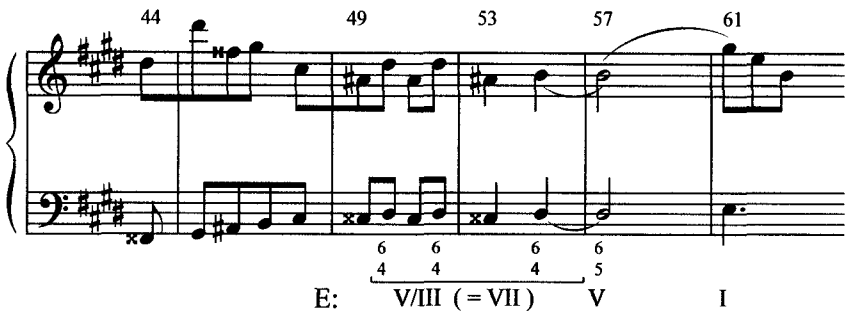
a) Bars 1–5, durational reduction ♩.=♪



b) Recomposition of bars 44–63, durational reduction ♩.=♪

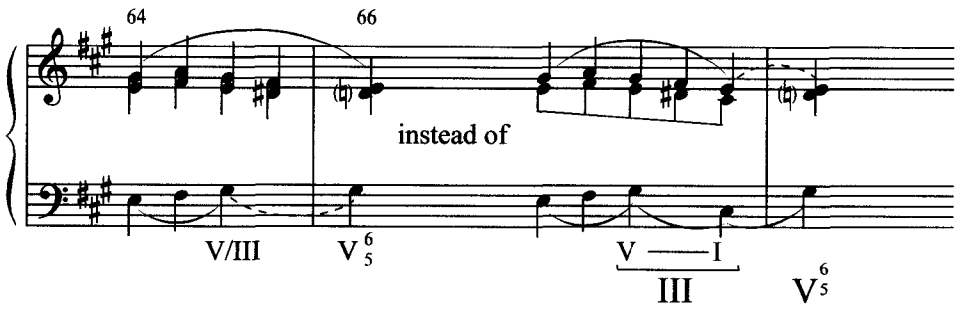


c) Bars 44–63 durational reduction ♩.=♪



As we have already seen in Example 2.6, a frustrated cadence in the dominant key signals the first reprise in the SWW Op. 53/6 in A Major. The varied repetition of the B section (bars 51–65) now features a modulation to the key of III, and the completion of the cadence in this key is similarly frustrated at the beginning of the second reprise (bar 66). As shown in Example 2.24, a powerful cadential motion begins in bar 64, but instead of landing as expected on a root-position C♯-minor chord (III), we again return to the familiar V^6_5 (bars 66–7), the first harmony in the last A section.

Example 2.24. SWW in A Major, Op. 53/6, bars 64–66, frustrated cadence at the end of the second B section



The next example in the present category is the SWW Op. 85/5, in A Major, one of the most impressive examples of Mendelssohn's technique of "conflicting-meters."[35] The disruptive cadence in the key of III at the end of the B section now coincides with a sudden shift from the mid-bar metrical pattern back to the notated meter.

As shown in Example 2.25, a two-voice reduction of the entire piece, the metrical conflict is organized here in a remarkably systematic fashion: The mid-bar metrical pattern dominates the introduction (repeated also as a postlude) and the B sections, whereas the A sections and the closing cadence adhere to the notated metrical pattern.[36] As indicated in the example, whenever one metrical pattern takes the lead, its competitor somehow makes itself felt by various means of emphasis, as if threatening to

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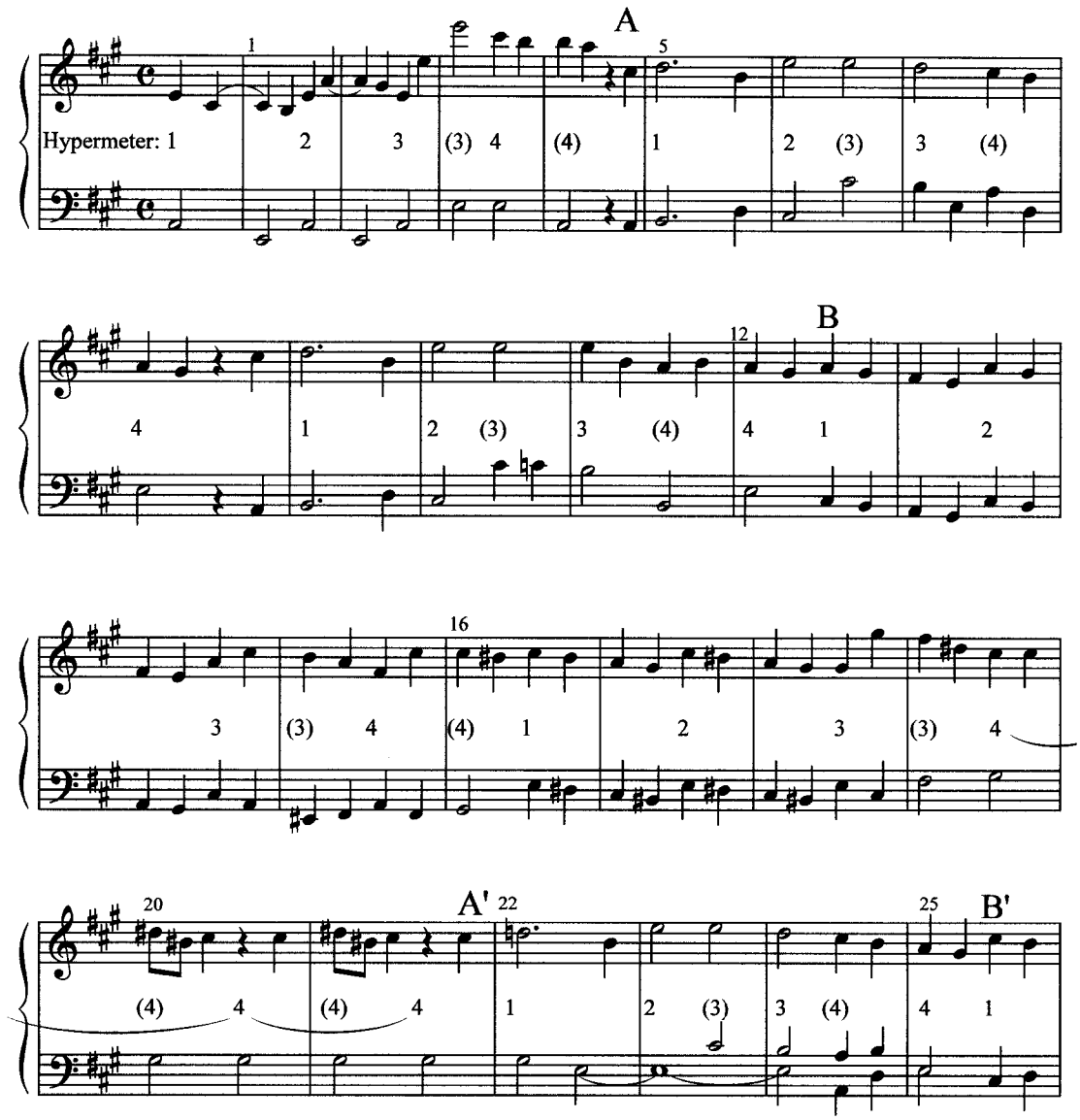
[35] Rothstein makes brief mention of the metrical conflict in Op. 85/5. See *Phrase Rhythm*, note 25, pp. 324–25.

[36] Note the hemiola-like expansion in the closing cadence (mid-bar 29 to mid-bar 32). I read these bars as an expanded (and also varied) repetition of the incomplete cadence of mid-bar 27 to mid-bar 29. Therefore, in the hypermetrical analysis, they are similarly indicated as 3 and 4.

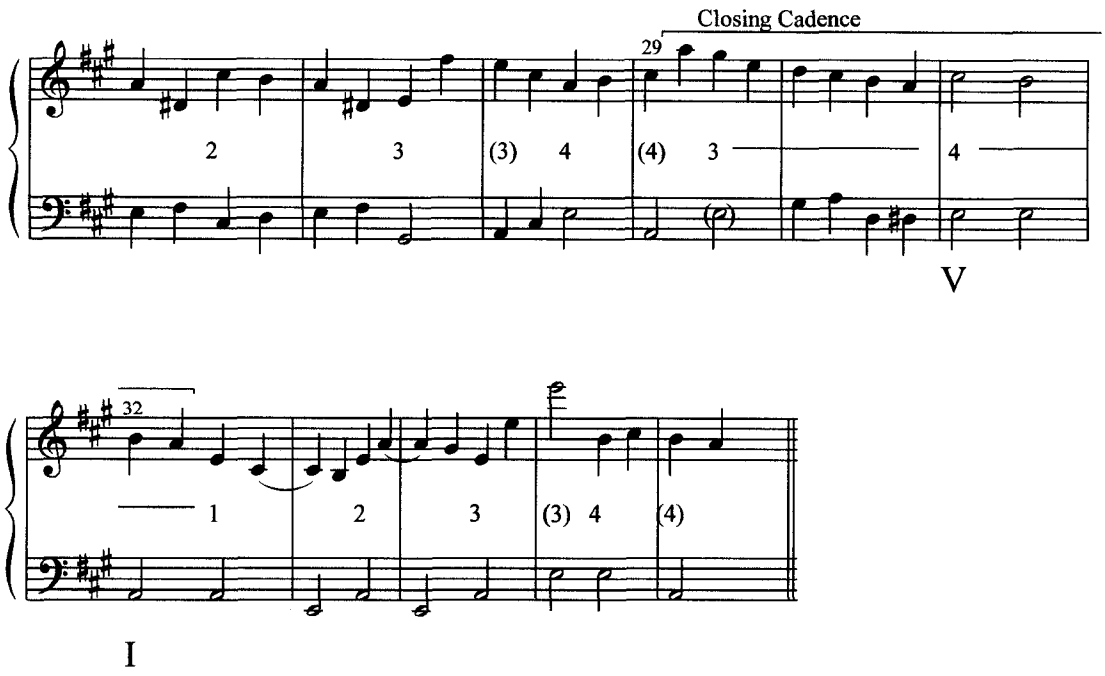
take over soon. And indeed both patterns fulfill their "threats" rather systematically. In Example 2.25 I indicate the competing metrical pattern, whenever felt, by the numbers in parenthesis.

As we can see, the metrical drama is most intense near the beginning of the reprise. The closing cadence in the key of III (C♯ minor) is deprived of complete closure (bar 20) since the bass is "stuck" on G♯, the dominant of the tonicized III. The fourth unit of the last hypermeasure (mid-bar 16 to mid-bar 20) in the B section, then, must be repeated in order to complete the cadence. Hence, two more cadential motions are initiated at mid-bars 20 and 21. However, these attempts are similarly unsuccessful: at the beginning of bar 22 the mid-bar pattern is pushed aside almost brutally, as the reprise bursts in on V^6_5, the first downbeat event in the A' section. In retrospect, the three eighth notes at the end of bar 21 are understood as a recomposed version of the analogous upbeat figure in bar 4.

Example 2.25. SWW in A Major, Op. 85/5, Allegretto, simplified outer voices, hypermetrical analysis



(Example 2.25 continued)



The SWW Op. 102/3 in C Major apparently follows a pattern that we have already encountered in several examples. The contrasting B section (bars 9–31) seems to move towards a tonicized III (that is, E minor), but the expected closure in this key is never completed. Rather, V of III (=VII♯), the last harmony in the middle section, is followed directly by the restatement of the opening music (bars 32–39). Nevertheless, as shown in Example 2.26, the C-major chord in bar 32 does not represent the return to a structural tonic.

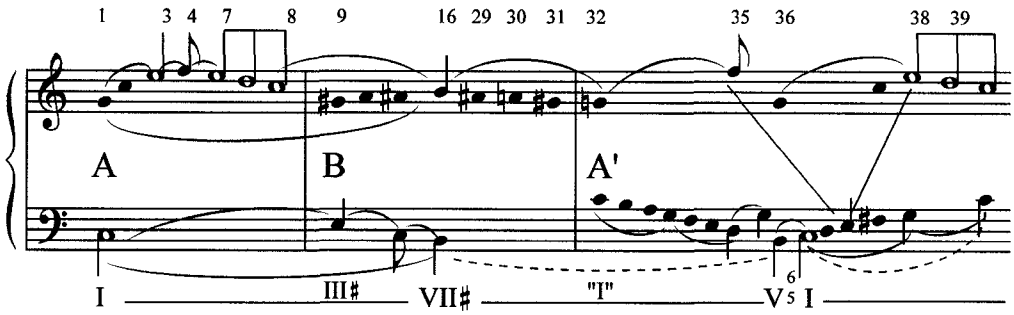
Two factors make this reprise a particularly smooth one. First, the high register of the first bass note (c^1, bar 32) makes it sound like an inner voice rather than a real

harmonic point of articulation. Secondly, the upper part features a descending chromatic motion b–a♯–a♮–g♯ (bars 28–31). Thus, the first melodic note of the reprise, g♮[1] (bar 32), is perceived as a natural continuation. We do not hear a change in the design at the beginning of bar 32. Furthermore, we expect the melodic line to go on and complete a descending linear progression of a perfect fourth (B to F♯) within the dominant harmony of E minor. It is, then, an extremely smooth reprise, one that is noticeable only in retrospect.

As Example 2.26 illustrates, the main harmonic connection at the formal juncture is from VII♯ (bars 16 ff.) to V^6_5 (bar 36). The low register of the bass note, B, in bar 36 helps one hear this connection, since there has been no other low bass note since the B in bar 31. A real return to I, then, does not occur until the second beat of bar 36, where the first tonic in the consequent phrase of the A' section is reached. Incidentally, the cadence in bars 38–9 is not convincing as a decisive closure for the entire piece. Only the cadence in bars 53–54 (that is, within the lengthy coda section) conveys a sense of finality.[37]

[37] However, in the voice-leading graph that I present in Example 2.26, I refer to bars 1–39 as a complete tonal unit. Thus, the cadence at 38–39 is shown as a final closing cadence.

Example 2.26. SWW in C Major, Op. 102/3, Presto, bars 1–39, middleground sketch



3. Reprise Follows III♯

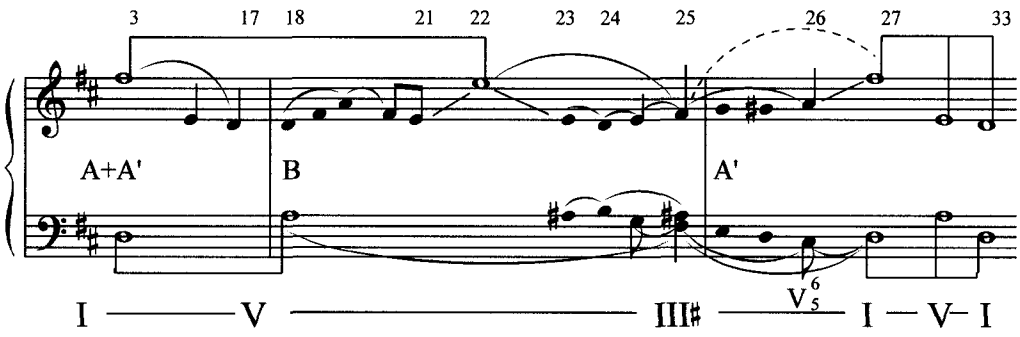
Unlike the numerous examples for reprises that follow a tonicization of III, Mendelssohn (in contrast to other composers of his generation) rarely uses III♯ before a reprise or recapitulation.[38] One such instance of III♯ can be found in No. 4 of the Six Pieces for Children, Op. 72.[39] This attractive D-major piece, a Song without Words in all but name, is constructed as a quatrain. The contrasting B phrase, bars 18–25, consists mostly of a dominant pedal, but its last three bars feature a Phrygian-like cadence in the relative minor (bars 23–5), a typical way to approach III♯. As is often the case with III♯,

[38] Both Chopin and Schumann favored III♯ as a goal of motion in contrasting middle sections. III♯ is also frequently used at the end of development sections in the late Classical Period. See David Beach, "A Recurring Pattern in Mozart's Music," *Journal of Music Theory* 27, no.1 (1983): 1–29, and also Carl Schachter, "Analysis by Key."

[39] We have already encountered Op. 72/4 in Chapter 1. See Example 1.20.

however, it does not lead to the alluded-to VI, but rather back to the tonic via V^6_5, the first downbeat harmony in the song. Since the one-bar tonic introduction at the piece's opening is absent at the beginning of the reprise, the resulting harmonic progression is III♯–V^6_5–I. In a broader view, III♯ connects the dominant of the first branch of the interrupted structure to the tonic that begins the second branch. Example 2.27 illustrates.

Example 2.27. Piece for Children in D Major, Op. 72/4, Andante con moto, bars 1–33, middleground sketch



4. Reprise on Apparent Tonics

The first excerpt in this chapter (see Example 2.1) exemplified a reprise that begins on a dynamic, tense tonic. Sometimes the instability of tonic chords at the beginning of reprise sections poses a difficult analytic dilemma: is this a real return to the structural tonic, or are we dealing with an apparent tonic chord, subordinate to deeper harmonic prolongations? The answer differs from case to case, as it depends exclusively on the specific context. Occasionally both interpretations make sense, and sometimes they seem equally valid. It is even possible to think that in certain reprises only a combination of two contradictory readings can do justice to the two conflicting dimensions of the composition which somehow coexist. Reading a real tonic (albeit transformed or weakened) emphasizes the thematic design that is responsible for the outer form of the piece. On the other hand, reading an apparent tonic puts more weight on the inner form which results from a continuous tonal structure.

The SWW in F Major, Op. 85/1, is a good example for such analytic contradiction. In his perceptive analysis of this piece Allen Cadwallader chooses to read an interruption structure, that is, a return to the structural tonic at the beginning of the reprise.[40] However, he also refers to an alternative reading—one that relegates the transformed I^6 into a lower-status detail within the prolongation of the structural dominant—as "one well worth considering."[41] In this specific case it seems to me that

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[40] Allen Cadwallader "Form and Tonal Process: The Design of Structural Levels," in *Trends in Schenkerian Research*, ed. Allen Cadwallader; New York: Schirmer Books, pp. 1–21.

[41] Ibid., note 21, pp. 19–20.

this alternative interpretation is somewhat more convincing, but obviously there is no way one could prove such preferences, as they reflect personal judgment and taste. In some of the following examples for reprises that begin on an apparent tonic, it is likewise possible to read a real tonic. In those cases where, in my judgment, two conflicting interpretations seem almost equally valid, I shall make mention of the other reading as well.[42]

An ingenious, perhaps unique, reprise on an apparent tonic occurs in the Gondola Song in A Major (1837). The end of the B section and the beginning of the reprise are given in Example 2.28a. As shown in Example 2.28b, the B section (bars 23–34) begins with a four-bar dominant pedal (23–26), and the next four-bar unit also begins as if it is going to continue the dominant prolongation. However, the upper neighbor chord to the dominant, F♮–A–D (bar 29), does not return to V, as expected, but rather moves surprisingly to a C-major chord (bar 30). One might assume that before the end of the B section, Mendelssohn would somehow return to the dominant in order to prepare the tonic reprise.

But as we can see in Example 2.28b, the dominant does not return before the reprise. The emphasized C-major harmony (bars 30–33) initiates an elaborate retransition back to the tonic, arrived at in bar 38, whereas the thematic reprise begins in the midst of this retransition. The return to the tonic resembles a plagal cadence, IV–I. IV is reached in bar 37 in $\frac{6}{3}$ position and then, still in the same bar, shifts to a root

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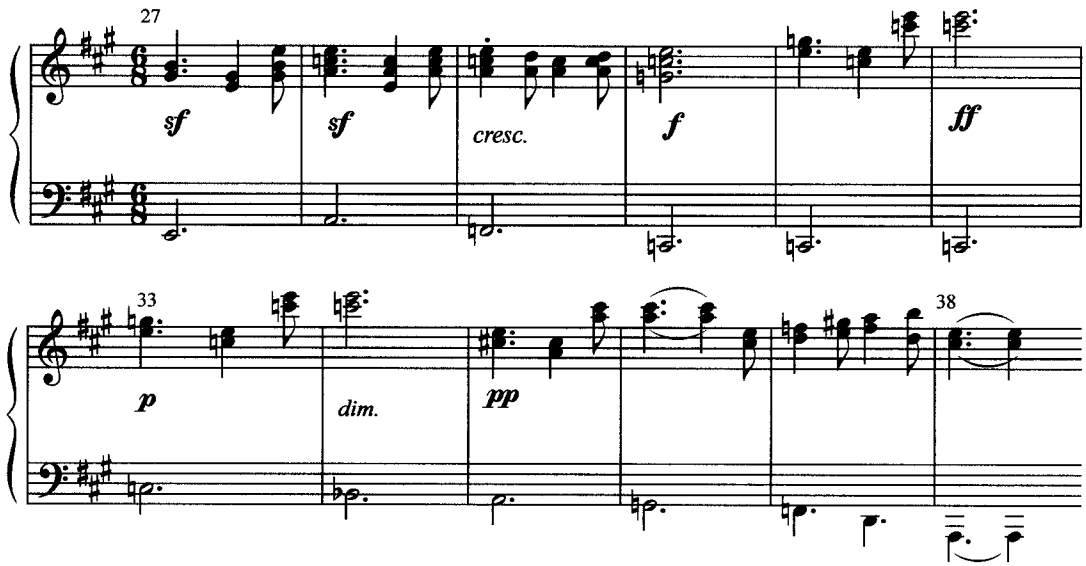
[42] For a recent interesting discussion of the analytic challenge which is sometimes posed by tonic chords, see Peter H. Smith, "Structural Tonic or Apparent Tonic?: Parametric Conflict, Temporal Perspective, and a Continuum of Articulative Possibilities," *Journal of Music Theory* 39 (1995): 245–283.

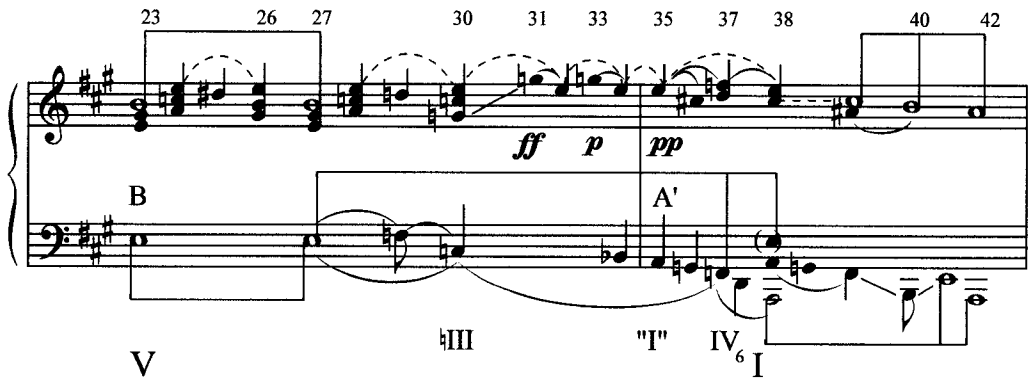
position just before the move to the tonic in the next bar (38). Notably, the F♮ in the bass resolves to the fifth of the tonic chord, expressing a prominent motive E–F–(sharp or natural)–E, a motive that is highlighted earlier in the piece (see bars 9–10 and 17–18). Furthermore, the entire descending bass in bars 33–38 is a somewhat hidden repetition of the bass descent in the introduction (bars 3–6). As is often the case with Mendelssohn, the highly unusual reprise is far from being whimsical: it still incorporates significant elements of the song's motivic fabric. Example 2.28c shows these relationships.

Example 2.28. Gondola Song in A Major, Allegretto non troppo

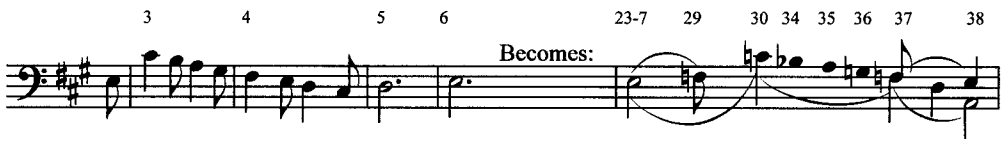
a) Bars 27–38



b) Bars 23–42, voice leading from middle section to closing cadence



c) Bars 3–6 and 23–38, motivic parallelism



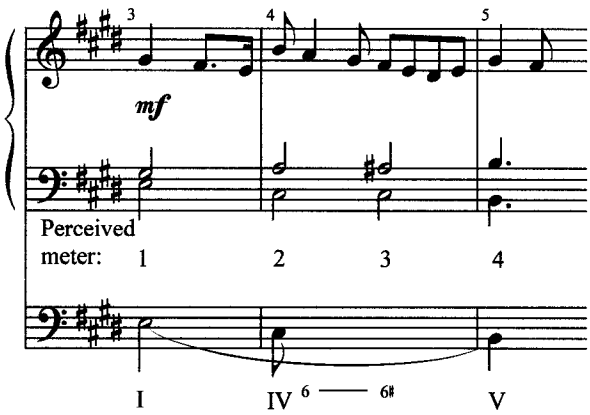
The SWW Op. 30/3 in E Major features an entirely different kind of apparent tonic at the beginning of the reprise, one that results from metrical conflict. As we can see in Example 2.29 (compare a with b), the return of the opening music at mid-bar 17 is almost identical (as far as notes are concerned) to the beginning of the song at mid-bar 3. However, the metrical manipulation endows the beginning of the reprise with a new tonal meaning: it is absorbed into the preceding dominant prolongation (bars 15–17), and a real return to the tonic is thus postponed until the cadence resolution at bar 21.

The analysis of the meter in Example 2.29a reveals that the "vocal" line begins at mid-bar 3 on a perceived downbeat. The notated meter makes itself felt through various accents (height, dissonance, and especially harmonic change) at the notated downbeats of bars 4 and 5, and we may regard it as a shadow meter, which constantly threatens the mid-bar downbeats. The two competing metrical patterns continue throughout the entire first section of the piece (mid-bar 3 to mid-bar 11), as well as into the B section up to bar 15.

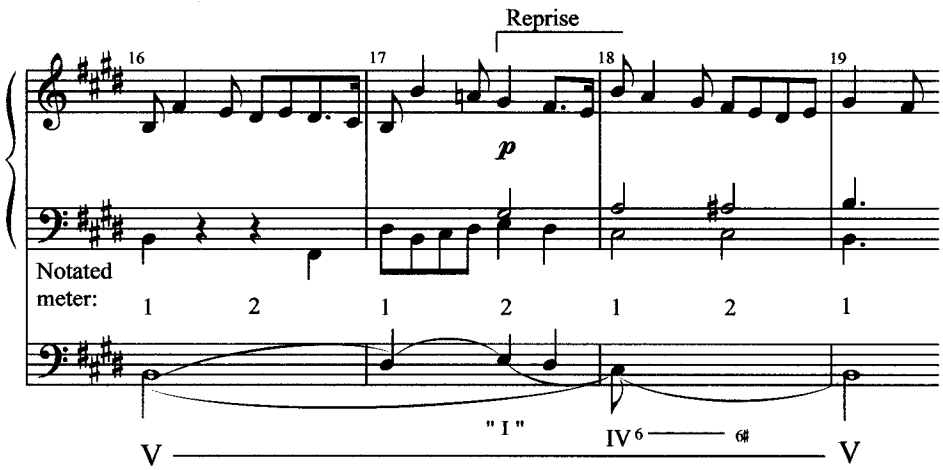
Nonetheless, once the dominant B-major chord is reached at bar 15, the metrical conflict disappears: bars 15–17 conform to the notated meter. When the reprise begins at mid-bar 17 (note the *piano* marking) it is perceived as beginning on a weak metrical unit. Mid-bar accents (at bars 17, 18 and 19) have lost their leading status: indeed, now they are the shadow pattern. Example 2.29b illustrates my reading of the metrical and harmonic context at the beginning of the reprise section.

Example 2.29. SWW in E Major, Op. 30/3, Adagio non troppo

a) Bars 3–5, harmony and meter at the beginning



b) Bars 16–19, harmony and meter at the reprise



The False Reprise

In our next example, the SWW Op. 38/3 in E Major, Mendelssohn sets up a contradiction between design and structure, a contradiction that makes it hard to decide where exactly the reprise actually begins. Judged from the perspective of thematic layout, the return to the opening idea (that is, the thematic reprise) at bar 46 must be considered as the beginning of the reprise. The preparatory dominant of bars 40–45, especially the broken diminished chord in bars 44–45, strengthens such an interpretation: similar material (note bars 5–6) precedes the song's opening A section. However, if the beginning of the reprise has to be decided according to tonal structure, then the reprise does not start until bar 54, where we arrive at the structural tonic. From the perspective of tonal structure, thus, bars 46–53 must be considered as a false reprise.[43]

As shown in Example 2.30, the harmonic excursion of this false reprise is attained by means of enharmonic modulation. C♮, the minor ninth of the dominant chord is enharmonically transformed into a B♯, the leading tone to C♯. Now this C♯ is the dominant of F♯ minor, the illusory key of the false reprise. Only at bar 53 an inverted dominant seventh (that is, V^6_5) signals the return to E major, the "correct" key. The fact that the phrase initiated at bar 54 is analogous to the consequent phrase of the opening section (bars 15–22) seems to suggest that the tonally false reprise should after all be

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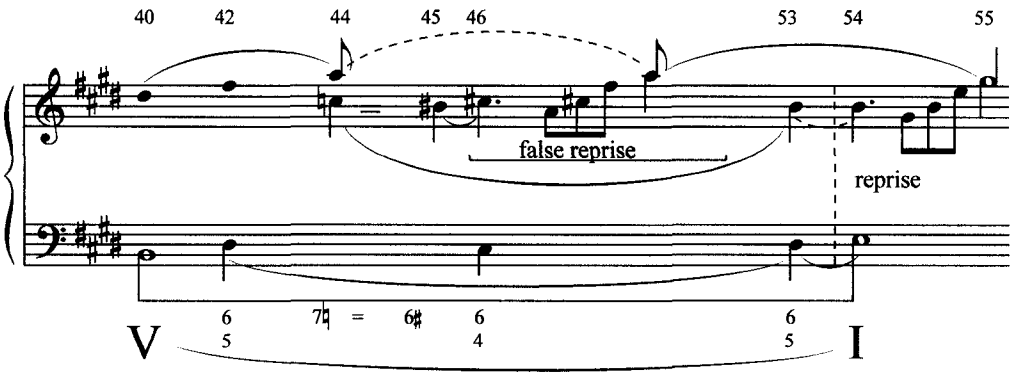
[43] Similar thematic reprises in the "wrong" key occur in Chopin's Impromptu in F♯ Major, Op. 36, and Mazurka in A Minor, Op. 59/1. For an illuminating discussion of Op. 36, see Charles Burkhart "Schenker's Theory of Levels and Musical Performance," in *Aspects of Schenkerian Theory*, ed. David Beach (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), pp. 102–105.

regarded as a real one. On the other hand, since Mendelssohn frequently shortens his reprises, one is left with the insolvable dilemma as to where the reprise in fact begins.

Example 2.30. SWW in E Major, Op. 38/3, Presto e molto vivace, bars 40–55, voice leading



Reprise Emerging From a Sequence

In our next example, the SWW Op. 38/4 in A Major, Mendelssohn lets the reprise emerge in the midst of a sequential pattern which begins near the end of the B section, thereby considerably smoothing-over the sectional division.[44] As we can see in Example 2.31a, V is prolonged throughout the contrasting middle section of the song (bars 16–21). Starting at bar 20, a rising sequence leads back to the opening music. Since the first segment of the returning A section (bar 22) continues the motivic pattern of the two previous bars (20–21), formal division here is substantially weakened. Note especially that the completion of the ascending third, a–b–c♯, initiated at the beginning of the sequence in bar 20, is attained only at bar 23. This linear progression also bridges over the formal border.

If we now compare the opening A section with the beginning of the reprise, we can see how context can bring about a marked difference in harmonic stability. As shown in Example 2.31b, the actual beginning of the song (bar 4) follows a stable tonic introduction (bars 1–3). Thus, the I^6 chord at bar 4 continues to prolong this stable tonic. By contrast, the very same I^6 chord at bar 22 (Example 2.31a) anticipates the stable root-position tonic of bar 23. Despite the fact that tonic prolongation begins at bar 22, that is, the beginning of the reprise, this tonic is by far more dynamic than the analogous one of bar 4.

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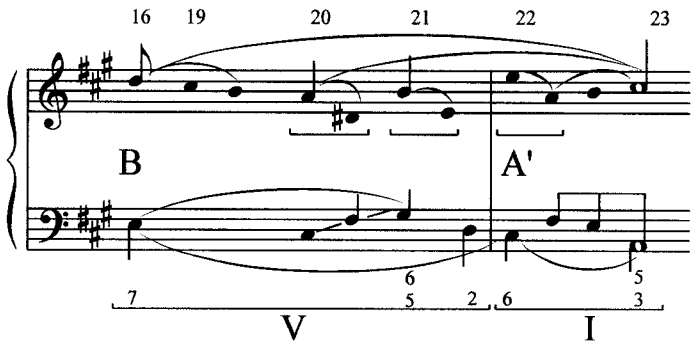
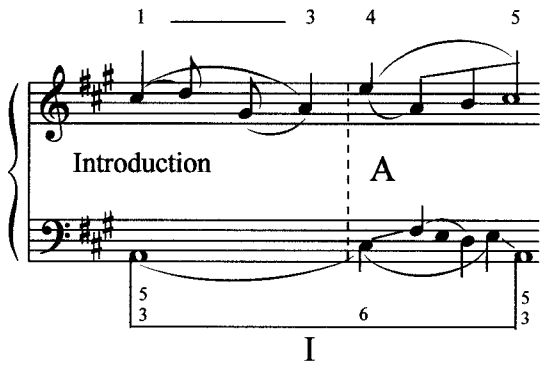
[44] A similar device can also be found in the SWW Op. 38/2 in C Minor. Rothstein (*Phrase Rhythm,* p. 198) mentions the metrical reinterpretation that occurs at the beginning of the first reprise (bar 24).

Example 2.31. SWW in A Major, Op. 38/4, Andante

a) Bars 16–23, voice leading



b) Bars 1–5, voice leading



The reprise in the second movement of the Fantasy for Piano in F♯ Minor, Op. 28 (1833), features a modulation from D major, the key of the middle section, back to A major, the movement's home key. In many similar composite forms (i.e. Scherzo–Trio–Scherzo), composers either round off the middle section and then restart the opening

music in its original key, or use a modulating retransition, which transforms the middle section tonic into a IV in the main key.[45] Nevertheless, in order to avoid unwanted sectional division, Mendelssohn chooses a different strategy here: He ends the middle section with a codetta, still in D major, that contains a sequential pattern of applied chords and their resolution. Then, in the seeming third repetition of this codetta phrase, he suddenly reinterprets one of the sequential units as the beginning of the returning A section, already in A major. Example 2.32 illustrates.

As we can see, the second unit of the sequence, originally V/V resolving to V in D major (bars 61–62, 65–66) becomes (in bars 69–70) V–I in A major. Indeed, one perceives both the key change and the elusive formal juncture only in retrospect. The repetition of the former phrases and (notably) the unexpected transformation of the second unit of a sequence into the beginning of a new phrase in a new key are highly surprising. As we have already seen in chapter 1 (Example 1.25), the reinterpretation of these two opening chords within a sequential context is a prominent agent of continuity in this movement.

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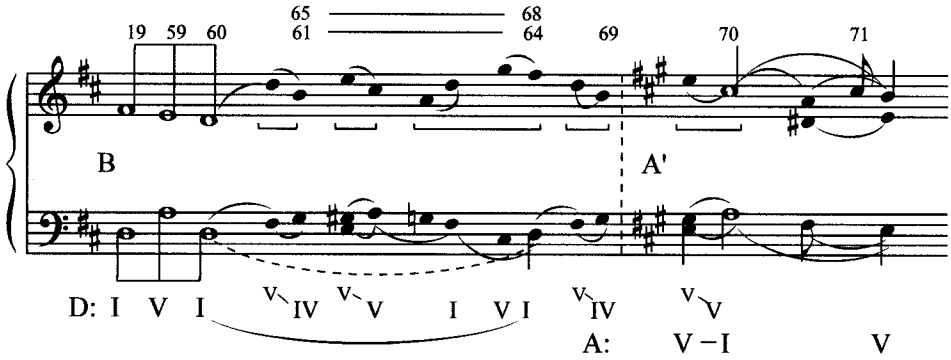
[45] For a familiar example, see Schubert's Impromptu in A♭ Major, Op. 142/2.

Example 2.32. Fantasy in F♯ Minor, Op. 28, II, Allegro con moto, bars 19–71, tonal outline



In the SWW Op. 85/3 in E♭ Major, the reprise begins on II, a slight variation of the beginning of the song on IV^6. (Compare mid-bar 1 to mid-bar 27.) But this local harmonic variation is certainly not the main issue here. Rather, it is the overall design and tonal structure that make the reprise, and indeed, this mini-sonata as a whole, quite unusual. Example 2.33a shows the basic voice leading in bars 1–3. Note (in the music) that the auxiliary cadence-like beginning of the "vocal song" (mid-bars 1–3) follows a half-bar tonic introduction. When the same music returns at mid-bar 27, there is no tonic introduction that precedes it. Rather, the non-tonic beginning is integrated into the sequence that ends the developmental middle section. Example 2.33b illustrates the voice leading in the transition from the development to the reprise.

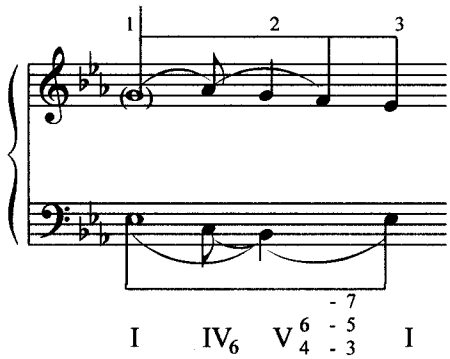
As shown in Example 2.33b, the descending sequential pattern initiated in bars 25–27 is continued at mid-bar 27, where the song's opening music returns. Despite the fact that the repetition is not an exact one, there is enough similarity to create a clear

sense of continuity when the reprise begins. The harmonic progression from III♮, the main harmony in the middle section, to II (in both the major and minor forms) and then to V and I^6 is indicated below the example. The question whether I^6 in bar 29 represents the resumed structural tonic or is just an apparent tonic is not an easy one to answer. My personal preference is not to read a structural tonic at bar 29. As we can see in Example 2.33c, a synoptic view of the voice leading, I see this part of the reprise as a recomposition, on a higher structural level, of the auxiliary cadence with which the song begins. The additional staff above the example attempts to show this relationship.

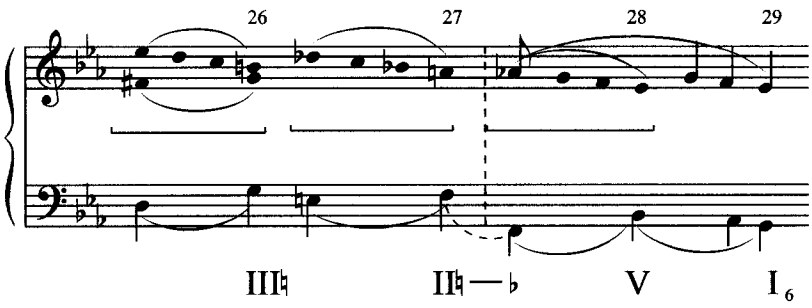
Another fascinating feature of this recomposition is that $a♭^1$, an incomplete neighbor note in the upper voice (mid-bars 27 and 29), comes from the inner voice g^1 (as of bar 19). This appears to parallel the unusual beginning of the piece (review bars 1–3 and Example 2.33a), in which the half-bar tonic introduction presents G in the inner voice, and the incomplete $a♭^1$ in the "vocal" line is understood as continuing the inner-voice G.

Example 2.33. SWW in E♭ Major, Op. 85/3, Presto

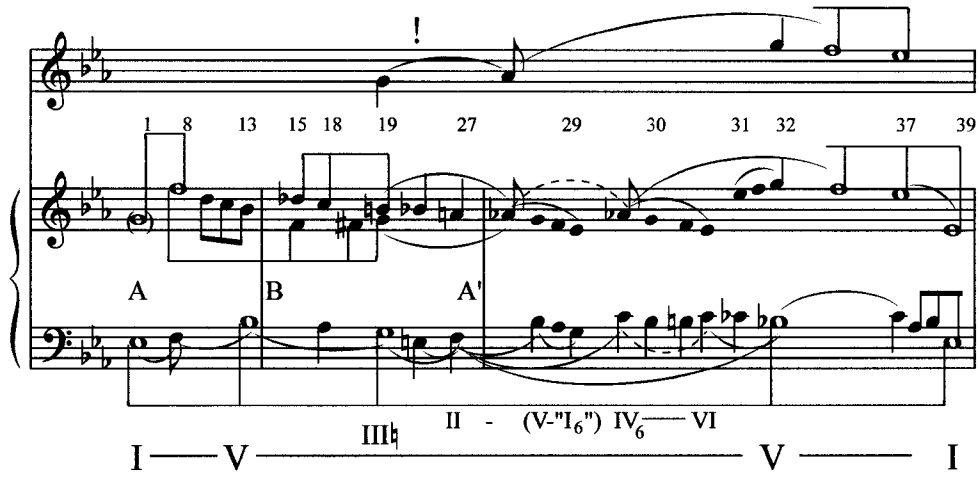
a) Bars 1–3, voice leading



b) Bars 25–29, voice leading



c) Bars 1–39, voice leading



As we have seen in the course of this chapter, incongruity between thematic layout and tonal structure is rather frequent in Mendelssohn's small forms. Sometimes the conflict between the thematic and tonal reprise is a local matter, since the arrival at the resumed structural tonic is only slightly displaced. Still, the fresh and often surprising contexts from which many Mendelssohnian thematic reprises emerge, endow this crucial formal juncture with an unmistakable attractiveness.

More ingenious, perhaps, are the cases where "inner" and "outer" forms are sharply at odds with one another. As it happens, a continuous one-part tonal form sometimes coexists with the clearly divided form that thematic repetition yields. In a brilliant article, Larry Laskowski accurately observes that in small forms, contradictions between different dimensions of form are more likely than in the larger sonata forms,

where "a significant coincidence of design and structure is probably required."[46] Still, as we shall see in the next chapter, in a few large-scale sonata-form movements, Mendelssohn presents a no less striking degree of flexibility in the relation of the thematic design to the tonal structure. In some extreme case, he even manages to obtain continuous tonal structures that are comparable to the ones we have encountered in the present chapter.

[46] Larry Laskowski, "Bach's 'Binary' Dance Movements: Form and Voice Leading," in *Schenker Studies*, ed. Hedi Siegel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 84–93. See his highly convincing discussion of contradictions between formal design and tonal structures on pp. 90–93. The above quotation appears on p. 92. For a different approach to this issue, see Charles J. Smith's recent extensive article "Musical Form and Fundamental Structure: An Investigation of Schenker's Formenlehre," in *Music Analysis* 15, nos. 2–3 (1996): 191–297.

CHAPTER 3

DEVIATIONS FROM THE NORMS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE RECAPITULATION IN SONATA FORMS

Subsequent to the discussion of Mendelssohn's inventive overlapping of subphrases, phrases and small sections, the investigation in the present chapter will focus on his equally resourceful handling of a still larger formal unit, namely the recapitulation in sonata forms.[1] As I have done in the previous chapters, I shall start with fairly simple examples, which demonstrate—on a small, local scale—distinctive Mendelssohnian deviations from the classical norm of "the double return,"[2] These foreground displacements (with respect to the thematic recapitulation) of the resumed structural tonic will be arranged according to harmonic categories. In the concluding part of the chapter, our study will go beyond the local formal juncture: an attempt will be made to account for the inclusive structural impact.[3] As we shall see, in some extreme cases the resultant sonata-form structure undergoes a significant transformation, as the

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[1] Mendelssohn's treatment of other significant junctures in sonata forms will be examined in Chapter 4.

[2] This norm has been widely discussed in the literature. See, for instance, Charles Rosen, *Sonata Forms*, revised edition (New York: Norton, 1988), p. 287, and more recently, William E. Caplin, *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 161.

[3] For a related discussion see Robert P. Morgan, "The Delayed Structural Downbeat and its Effect on the Tonal and Rhythmic Structure of Sonata Form Recapitulation" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1969.)

overlapping of the development and recapitulation sections may have far-reaching ramifications for the movement as a whole.

Formal organization based on the sonata principle was as natural to Mendelssohn as it had been to his classical predecessors.[4] In addition to the traditional first, slow and last movements in multi-movement works, Mendelssohn often made use of the sonata principle in his celebrated scherzo movements. Sometimes we encounter the sonata principle even in the most unexpected types of pieces, such as fantasies and caprices. A few of the Songs without Words, as we have seen in Chapter 2, as well as other short pieces for piano with various titles, also feature sonata-principle organization. This remarkable diversity and flexibility of Mendelssohn's sonata forms allow us to look at a wide range of pieces of very different nature and scope.

Sonata-Form Prototypes

When we speak about sonata forms in Mendelssohn's *oeuvre*, we can, in a very general way, distinguish the following formal prototypes:

1. "Regular" sonata. Common in all types of movements. Normally, the three sections (namely exposition, development and recapitulation) are organized by a two-branch interruption structure. Several movements by Mendelssohn,

[4] For an excellent recent examination of the concept of "sonata principle," see James Hepokoski, "Beyond the Sonata Principle," in *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, vol. 55, no. 1 (Spring 2002): 91–154; and idem, "Back and Forth from *Egmont*: Beethoven, Mozart, and the Nonresolving Recapitulation," in *19th-Century Music* 25 (2002): 127–154.

especially Scherzo movements, present a three-branch structure, resulting from the fact that the development section starts with a statement of the first theme (often in a shortened version) in the tonic key.[5] (Such beginnings of the development section are not to be confused with fleeting apparent tonics that often appear at the beginning of development sections.[6])

2. Sonata-rondo. Especially common in *finale* movements. Sometimes these movements are subdivided as follows: $A^1B^1A^2$ | C (and/or development) | A^3 B^2 | A^4 (= coda). More often the grouping follows a three-branch pattern: A^1B^1 | A^2C

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[5] See, for instance, the second movements of the "Scottish" Symphony and the E-minor String Quartet, Op. 44/2. See also the SWW in A Minor, Op. 38/5. For a rare instance in a first movement, see the E♭-major String Quartet, Op. 12. Ernst Oster refers to this structural possibility in a celebrated footnote in Schenker's *Free Composition*. The three instances that Oster cites are the first movements of Brahms's Symphony No. 4 and Violin Sonata in G Major, Op. 78, and the first movement of Haydn's late Piano Sonata (Hob. XVI:51) in D Major. See *Free Composition*, p. 140. Jack Adrian adds to Oster's list two more movements by Brahms: the first movements of the Piano Trio in C Major, Op.87, and the Clarinet Sonata in E♭ Major, Op. 120/2. See his article "The Ternary Sonata Form," *Journal of Music Theory* 34 (1990): 57–80. Another first movement by Brahms, that of the Piano Quartet No. 1 in G Minor, Op. 25, probably belongs to this category as well. However, in his article "From 'Concertante Rondo' to 'Lyric Sonata': A Commentary on Brahms's Reception of Mozart," in *Brahms Studies*, vol. 1, ed. David Brodbeck (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), pp. 111–138, John Daverio includes (unconvincingly, in my judgment) the first movement of Brahms's Op. 25 in the list of movements that are in a form he calls "amplified binary." See p. 116.

[6] For a discussion of this possibility, see Jack Adrian, "The Function of the Apparent Tonic at the Beginning of Development Sections," *Intégral* 5 (1991): 1–53.

(and/or development) | A^3B^2 | A^4 (= coda).[7] When this is the case, I shall refer to the form as a three-branch sonata-rondo.[8]

3. Two-part sonata ("sonata without development"). Rather rare, but can be encountered in slow movements.[9]
4. Scarlatti-type sonata.[10] Since the first theme is absent at the beginning of the recapitulation, the resulting pattern is A B | Development | B. (Theme A might return in the coda.) This type is characteristic in slow movements.[11]
5. Other patterns that (fully or partly) feature elements of the sonata form and/or the sonata principle, but their individual, often unique, formal layout makes it impossible to categorize them in any of the above patterns.[12]

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[7] A familiar earlier example of a three-branch sonata-rondo is the *finale* of Mozart Piano Sonata in B♭, K333. Incidentally, Mendelssohn rarely makes use of the sonata-rondo prototype in which A^3 is omitted. (One such rare case is the *finale* of the String Quintet in A Major, Op. 18.) This pattern is characteristic of Mozart's *finale* movements. (See the list on p. 114 in John Daverio's article, cited in note 5 above.)

[8] In three-branch Sonata and Sonata-Rondo I shall sometimes refer to the beginnings of the second and third sections as first and second recapitulations respectively.

[9] See Example 3.9 below.

[10] This prototype is what Hepokoski calls a Type 2 ("binary") sonata. See his article "Beyond the Sonata Principle," p. 137.

[11] Two well-known examples of a Scarlatti-type sonata form are the slow movements of the Octet Op. 20, and the "Italian" Symphony. See also the slow movements of the "Lobgesang" Symphony and the Piano Quartet in B Minor, Op. 3, and the SWW in F♯ Minor, Op. 19/5.

[12] One such unclassifiable case is the second movement (Scherzo) of the String Quartet in E♭ Major, Op.44/3.

Before we turn to the actual analyses, mention should be made of another general point: Mendelssohn tends to shorten his recapitulations drastically, and in most cases the first group (that is, first theme and bridge phrase/s) is where the recapitulation undergoes the most substantial cuts—in comparison with the equivalent area in the exposition.[13] The ultimate shortening, namely the total elimination of both the first theme and the bridge, gives rise to the Scarlatti-type sonata form (category 4 above). But even in less extreme cases, compressing the first portion of the recapitulation often enables Mendelssohn to join this latter formal part to the preceding development and/or retransition in a most lively fashion.

Foreground Delays in the Return to the Structural Tonic

I. Recapitulation Begins on Cadential $\frac{6}{4}$

A good place to start our investigation is Mendelssohn's Op. 1, the Piano Quartet in C Minor. The last movement, in "regular" classical sonata form, is surely one of his earliest examples of irregular beginnings of the recapitulation.[14] The obvious harmonic device used here is already familiar to us from the previous chapter: the thematic

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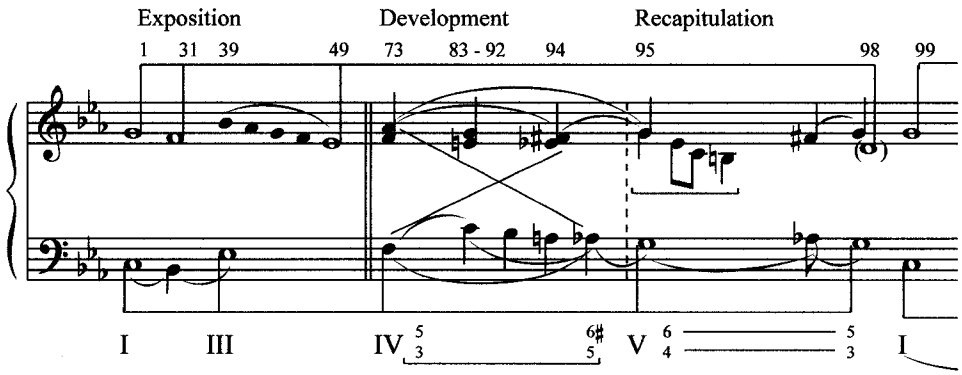
[13] This tendency surely reminds one of Haydn's practice. I shall elaborate on the possible influence of this feature of Haydn's style on Mendelssohn in Chapter 6.

[14] In his book *The Early Works of Felix Mendelssohn: A Study in The Romantic Sonata Style* (Philadelphia: Gordon and Breach: 1992), Greg Vitercik cites Mendelssohn's Op. 1 (along with the Piano Quartets Op. 2 and 3, and the Piano Sextet Op. 110) as an example of "classicist tendencies ... realized with rigid explicitness...." Vitercik, however, analyses only the first movement of Op. 1. See pp. 47–53.

recapitulation coincides with the arrival at the cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ chord[15] (bar 95) and thus, the return to the structural tonic is postponed to the beginning of the next phrase (bar 99).

Interestingly, the special effect of surprise in this recapitulation goes beyond the local reharmonization. If we examine the development section (Example 3.1) we can see that Mendelssohn has prepared this unusual formal juncture by making C (that is, the tonic) sound first as a preparatory dominant of F minor (bars 83–92) and then, rather abruptly "correcting" his mistake: a powerful chromatic motion (bars 92–94) leads to V^6_4 of C minor and the first theme (and hence, the recapitulation) bursts in unexpectedly (bar 95). As shown in the voice-leading graph (Example 3.1), the dominant prolongation persists throughout the first phrase of the theme (bars 95–98) and only at bar 99 do we reach the resumed structural tonic.

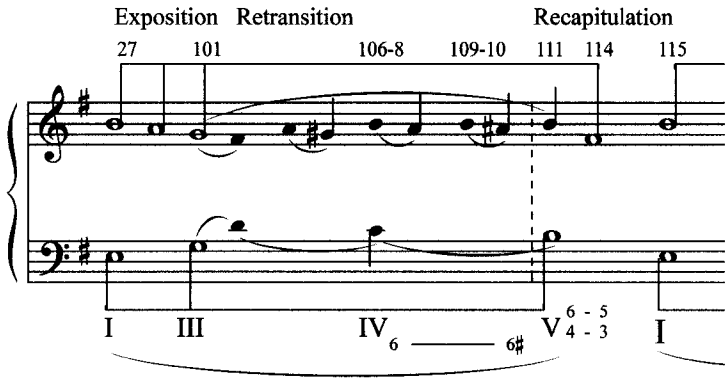
Example 3.1. Piano Quartet in C Minor, Op.1, IV, Allegro moderato, bars 1–99, tonal outline



[15] This type of recapitulation is very common. In addition to the examples that I present here see also the following: String Quartet in E Minor, Op. 44/2, III; String Quartet in E♭ Major, Op. 44/3, II; String Quartet in A Minor, Op. 13., I and II.

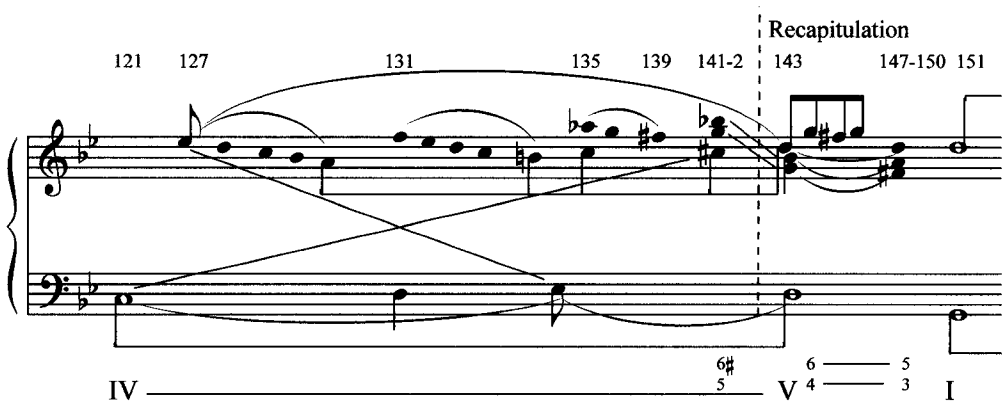
In another early piece, the Rondo Capriccioso in E Major, Op. 14 (1824), we also encounter a recapitulation that begins on a cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ chord. Following a slow introduction in E major (bars 1–26), the main E-minor body of the Rondo (*Presto*) is organized as a two-part sonata form plus coda. A brief retransition (bars 101–110) connects the exposition and recapitulation sections. As shown in Example 3.2, this retransition leads from the tonicized III of the exposition (bar 101) to an augmented sixth chord (bar 110), and the beginning of the recapitulation section then coincides with the resolution of this dissonant "Italian" chord to the cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ in the next bar (111). Not unlike what we have seen in the previous example, a stable tonic chord is reached only four bars later (bar 115) at the beginning of the theme's second phrase.

Example 3.2. Rondo Capriccioso in E Major, Op. 14, Andante and Presto, bars 27–115, outline



The thematic recapitulation in the celebrated Scherzo of the Octet, Op. 20, similarly begins when the cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ is arrived at, being the climactic goal of the development section. As shown in Example 3.3, the last phase in the development starts to gain momentum on IV (reached at bar 121), which is composed out by means of an elaborate voice exchange, and then turned into an augmented sixth chord (bars 141–142) that leads to a cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ chord (bar 143). The dissonant $\frac{6}{4}$ formation on V resolves to the consonant $\frac{5}{3}$ only at bar 147, and tonic resolution is reached at bar 151. The thematic recapitulation, however, begins already at bar 143, and when the tonic arrives at 151, the entire first phrase of the opening theme has already been stated.

Example 3.3. Octet in E♭ Major, Op. 20, III, Scherzo, Allegro leggierissimo, bars 121–151, voice leading



The recapitulation in the first movement of the "Italian" Symphony begins on a cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ chord (bar 346), so that the return to the tonic is delayed until bar 350. The

beginning of the recapitulation follows a long retransition, and the arrival at the dominant $\frac{6}{4}$ is the culmination of an impressive compositional crescendo.[16] Example 3.4a illustrates the voice leading on the way to the recapitulation.

As we can see, the motion towards the dominant begins at bar 290, where the development reaches a climactic VI. This VI (that is, F♯ minor) is locally tonicized, and the tonal motion freezes on its dominant, C♯ (bars 304–323). The direction of the harmony then becomes somewhat elusive: a V $\frac{6}{5}$ of D major suggests D as a goal (bars 324–332). However, an accelerated drive brings us back to VI (bars 341–345) and finally to the recapitulation on the cadential $\frac{6}{4}$.[17] We may understand the "false," fleeting D-major tonality as a sophisticated preparation, in a much slower rhythm, for the 5–6–6♯ motion on VI that precedes the arrival at the actual recapitulation. Example 3.4b, an outline of the tonal structure of the entire movement, attempts to illustrate this relationship. As shown, VI as a key area is destabilized in order to move towards the dominant, but this is accomplished in two stages: first there is the large-scale 5–6 motion (bars 290–332; see the "tenor" voice in Example 3.4b) that gives rise to the illusory D-major key; and then there is the small-scale 5–6–6♯ (upbeat to bar 346), which leads to the beginning of the recapitulation.

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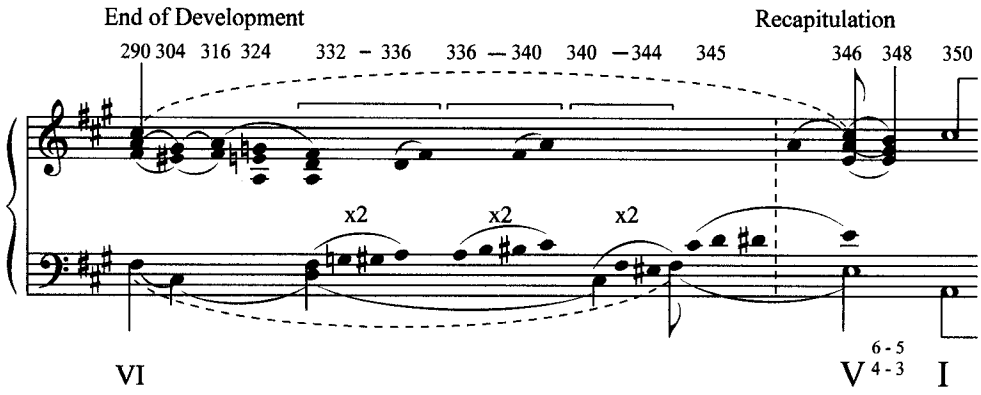
[16] Tovey describes the compositional "decline" (referring undoubtedly to bars 309–332) that follows the climax of the development section as a "great romantic event." He then goes on to assert that the subsequent crescendo leading to the recapitulation influenced Brahms in the first movement of his First Symphony. See *Essays in Musical Analysis*, vol. 1, Fourteenth Impression (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 221.

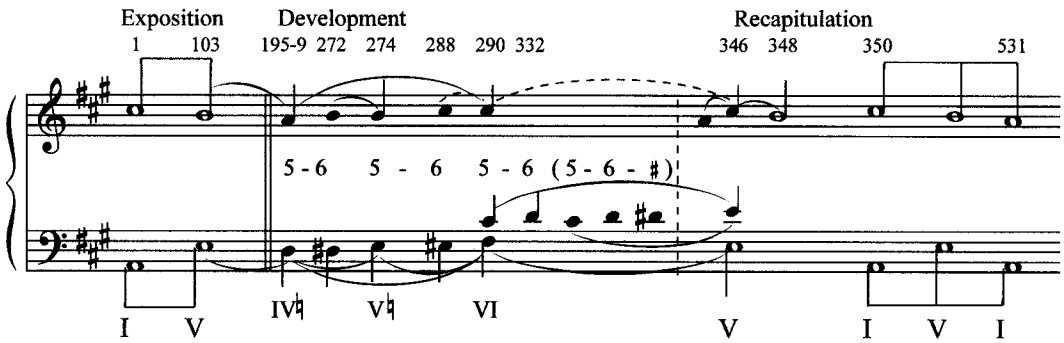
[17] In his book *Form in Tonal Music* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965) Douglass Green cites the beginning of the recapitulation in the first movement of the "Italian" Symphony as an example of a conflict between design and tonal structure. See pp. 207–208.

Example 3.4. Symphony in A Major, Op. 90 "Italian," I, Allegro vivace

a) Bars 290–350, voice-leading sketch



b) Bars 1–531, overall tonal outline



A similarly elaborate retransition leads to the unusual recapitulation on a cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ chord in our next example, the first movement of the E-minor String Quartet, Op. 44/2.[18] Here the development section reaches the normative structural dominant already in bar 146, and one expects the arrival at the tonic already in bar 155, following a nine-bar dominant preparation. However, in a most surprising fashion, Mendelssohn now takes his time: instead of the expected recapitulation, bar 155 quotes the opening bars of the lyrical second theme, now in C major (bars 155–159).[19] As of bar 160 the C-major chord (VI) initiates an elegant retransition, and the recapitulation finally begins at bar 168. As Example 3.5 shows, the thematic return does not coincide with a harmonic arrival at the tonic, but rather occurs on the cadential $\frac{6}{4}$, which completes a large-scale prolongation (by means of an upper-neighbor chord VI) of the structural dominant. Only at the fourth bar of the recapitulation (bar 171) do we arrive, at last, at the tonic we have been waiting for since bar 155.

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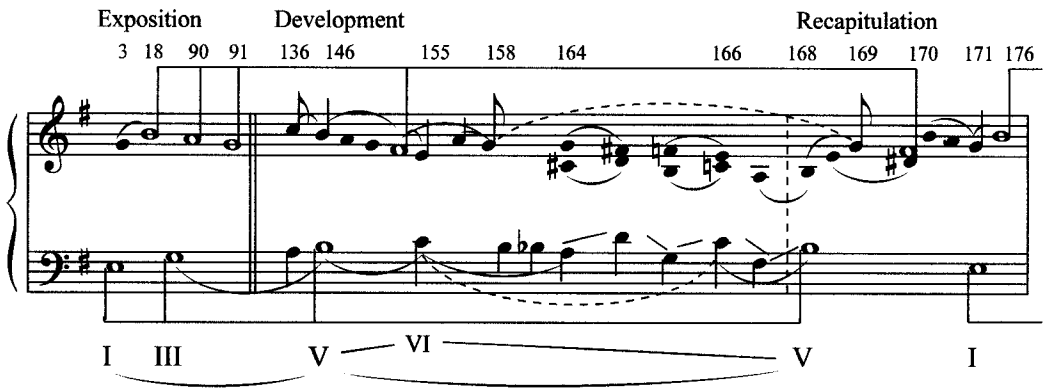
[18] The first movement of Op. 44/2 is often cited as an example of the later Mendelssohn's tendencies to an overly rigid regularity, as opposed to his "spontaneous" youthful freedom. This view of the E-minor String Quartet originates in Krummacher's study of Mendelssohn's chamber music, and it is expressed also by Greg Vitercik. See Friedhelm Krummacher, "Zur Kompositionsart Mendelssohns: Thesen am Beispiel der Streichquartette," in *Das Problem Mendelssohn*, ed. Carl Dahlhaus, Studien zur Musikgeschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts 41 (Regensburg: Bosse, 1974), 169–84, translated by Douglass Seaton as "On Mendelssohn's Compositional Style: Propositions Based on the Example of the String Quartets," in *The Mendelssohn Companion,* ed. Douglass Seaton (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2001), pp. 551–68; Vitercik, *The Early Works*, pp. 309–311.

[19] The deceptive cadence effect in bars 154–155 is a salient feature of this movement. I shall address the unusual first appearance of that theme in the exposition in the next chapter. See Example 4.7.

Example 3.5. String Quartet in E Minor, Op. 44/2, I, Allegro assai appassionato

bars 1–176, tonal outline



An exceptionally beautiful recapitulation on a cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ occurs in our next example, the Overture to "The Fair Melusine," Op. 32. As major-minor mixture is a salient compositional feature of the Overture, the beginning of the recapitulation on the major form of the cadential $\frac{6}{4}$, following a dark minor passage, has a unique, magical effect.[20] Example 3.6a illustrates the bass structure of the overture from its beginning up to the return of the structural tonic in the second phrase of the recapitulation. As shown, the development section crystallizes around minor IV (reached at bar 216), a harmony that connects the tonicized ♭III of the exposition to the preparatory dominant (as of bar 246). The extensive prolongation of the dominant (up to bar 263) similarly

[20] A recent extensive discussion of both programmatic and structural issues in "The Fair Melusine" Overture can be found in Thomas Grey's chapter on orchestral music in *The Mendelssohn Companion*, pp. 475–483.

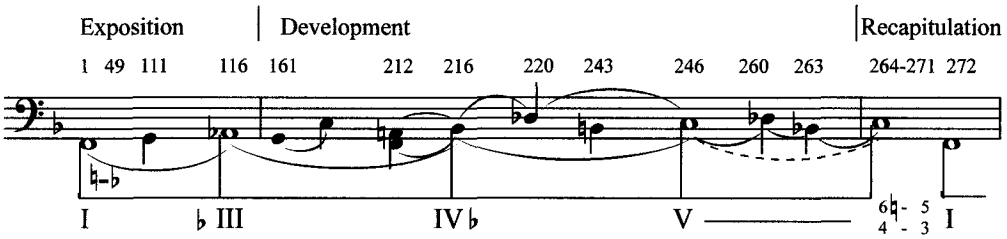
emphasizes elements of the minor mode, so that the major sixth (a♮) of the cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ at the beginning of the thematic recapitulation (bar 264) sounds remarkably fresh.

Example 3.6b focuses on the local phrase overlap at the beginning of the recapitulation. As we can see, a two-bar unit (bars 260–61) is repeated with slight variation as of bar 262. This second statement, however, is expanded beyond its expected length (note the extension of the third hypermetrical unit at bar 263) so that the entrance of the F-major "Melusina" theme is linked to the preceding unit.[21]

Example 3.6. The Fair Melusine Overture, in F Major-Minor, Op. 32,

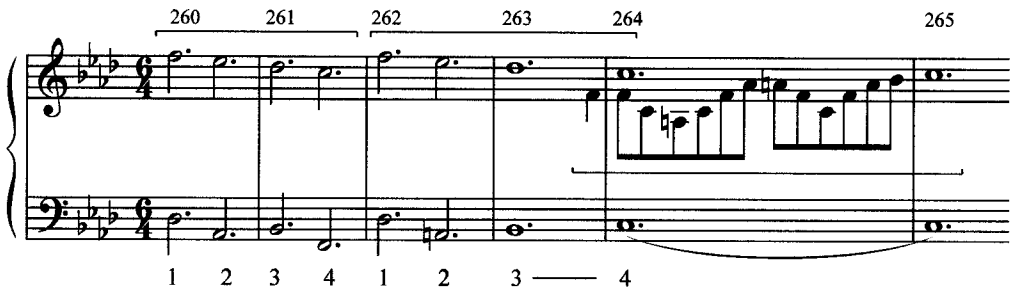
Allegro con moto

a) Bars 1–272, bass motion outline



[21] We have already discussed this technique of phrase overlap in Chapter 1. See Examples 1.10, 1.11 and 1.12.

b) Bars 260–265, outer voices (simplified)



II. Recapitulation Begins on a Passing $\frac{6}{4}$

A different type of recapitulation beginning on $\frac{6}{4}$ occurs in the slow movement of Mendelssohn's Piano Concerto No. 2 in D Minor, Op. 40. Here the $\frac{6}{4}$ chord on the dominant is, in fact, not a cadential chord but rather a passing chord. The top voice d^2, the chord's sixth (mid-bar 67), is a passing tone between $e\flat^2$ and c^2.[22] Despite the *sforzando* marking, which highlights the return of the piano's first theme, there is no serious challenge here to the notated meter.[23] Hence, the metrically weak $\frac{6}{4}$ chord is best understood as a passing chord. As we can see in Example 3.7a, the widely stretched preparatory dominant, beginning already at bar 62, does not resolve to the tonic until bar

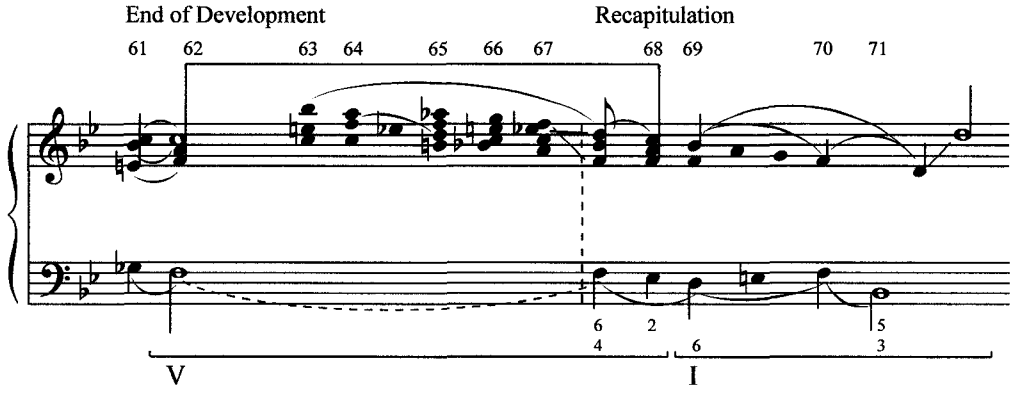
[22] The d^2 is locally a passing tone, but on a deeper structural level is in fact a neighbor to c^2. See Example 3.7a.

[23] The "conflicting meters" technique seems to play a significant role in this movement. The mid-bar metrical pattern is felt strongly especially in the second theme (as of bar 44 in the exposition and 77 in the recapitulation), which is first presented by the orchestra at bar 17 ff.

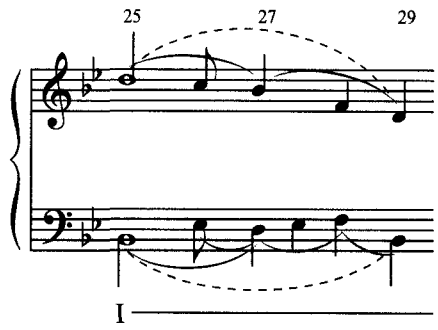
69, where we reach a first-inversion tonic chord. A stable root-position tonic harmony is featured only two bars later (71), at the end of the first phrase of the recapitulation. Thus, the beginning of this piano solo is much more dynamic than the analogous place in the exposition, where the piano presented the same theme starting on a stable root-position tonic (mid-bar 25, shown in Example 3.7b). Another obvious difference between the exposition and the recapitulation of the piano's first theme is that while in the former appearance, the piano solo follows a substantial tonic prolongation (orchestral first theme, bars 6–25), in the latter it emerges from the lengthy dominant preparation (bars 62–68, Example 3.7a).

Example 3.7. Piano Concerto No. 2 in D Minor, Op. 40, II, Adagio, Molto sostenuto

a) Bars 61–71, voice leading



b) Bars 25–29, voice leading



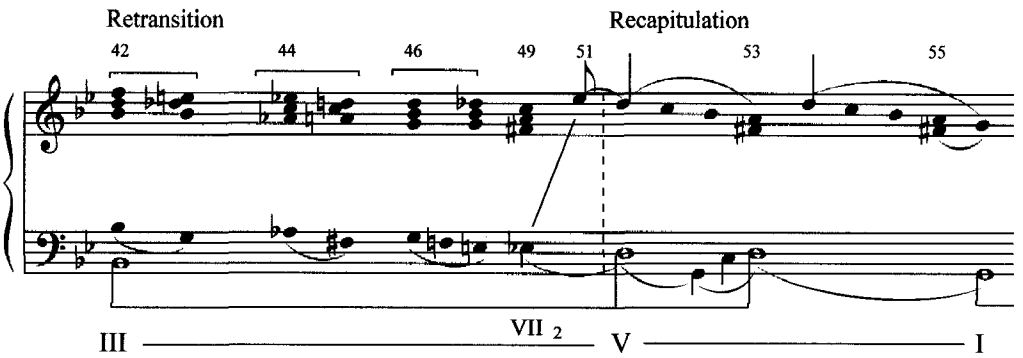
III. Beginnings on V

A dominant harmony that extends from the development (or retransition) to the recapitulation (thereby bringing about harmonic continuity across sections) results almost inevitably when the opening music starts on V.[24] Such is the case in the G-minor Scherzo of the String Quintet No. 2, Op. 87. In this two-part sonata-form movement both first and second themes are structured on the dominant, and tonic arrivals are consistently postponed to the end of phrases. The recapitulation begins on the last eighth-note in bar 51, and it is preceded by a sequential retransition that leads from the tonicized III (that is, B♭ major, the key of the second theme in the exposition) to the V at the beginning of the recapitulation. Example 3.8 shows the voice leading in the retransition that links the exposition to the recapitulation. As we can see, the return of

[24] For another such instance (that I do not discuss here), see the sonata rondo *finale* of the D-minor Piano Trio, Op. 49.

the first theme coincides with the arrival at V, whereas the actual return to the structural tonic occurs only at bar 55.

Example 3.8. String Quintet No. 2 in B♭, Op. 87, II, Andante scherzando, bars 42–55, voice leading

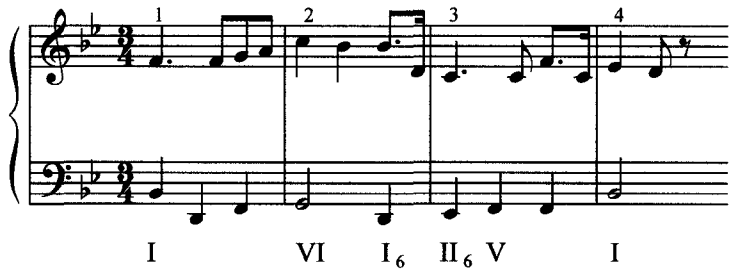


A somewhat more intense sectional overlap occurs in our next example. The slow movement of the String Quartet in E♭ Major, Op. 12, is another two-part sonata form, consisting of an exposition (bars 1–28) and a recapitulation (bars 28–65). In contrast to the previous example, there is no retransition here. Rather, the closing harmony of the exposition, a tonicized dominant (i.e., I in F major), doubles as the first harmony of the recapitulation (V in Bb major). Similarly, the final melodic note in the exposition, f^1 at bar 28, is at the same time the first note in the recapitulation. The reestablishment of the tonic harmony in the recapitulation occurs only at the end of the first four-bar subphrase at bar 31. Example 3.9 offers a comparison between the stable tonic beginning of the movement (3.9a) and the dynamic dominant beginning of the recapitulation (3.9b).

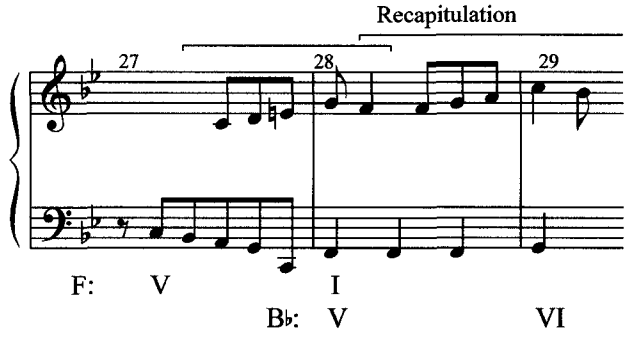
Three characteristics make this elision of formal sections particularly effective: first, the above-mentioned change in the tonal meaning of the F-major chord; secondly, the appoggiatura G–F (bar 28) which prevents any break in the rhythmic flow; and finally, the use of the same melodic idea for both the beginning of the first theme and the conclusion of the second (see brackets in Example 3.9b). When all these devices are joined together the result is a remarkably fluid formal juncture.

Example 3.9. String Quartet in E♭ Major, Op. 12, III, Andante espressivo, largo

a) Bars 1–4, melody and bass



b) Bars 27–29, melody and bass



The first 19 bars in the first movement of Mendelssohn's Piano Concerto No. 1 in G Minor, Op. 25 have a somewhat foggy, introductory character. Despite the fact that the movement begins on the tonic, the design of the opening bars—with regard to melodic contour, dynamic and orchestration—makes this opening sound like a formal upbeat. Only at bar 20 does one feel that the real first theme has begun.[25] At the beginning of the recapitulation (bar 179) Mendelssohn integrates a shortened, altered version of the introductory material into the preceding preparatory dominant (V has already been reached in bar 169), so that the arrival at the tonic coincides with the return of the main thematic idea at bar 185. The comparison of the beginning of the exposition with the beginning of the recapitulation (Example 3.10a and b respectively) shows that instead of starting the rising upward gesture on G, as he has done in bar 1, Mendelssohn now begins the same idea a fifth higher on D (bar 179). Note also that 19 bars in the exposition (divided between orchestra and piano solo) have been replaced at the beginning of the recapitulation by 6 bars (179–184, orchestra only). [26]

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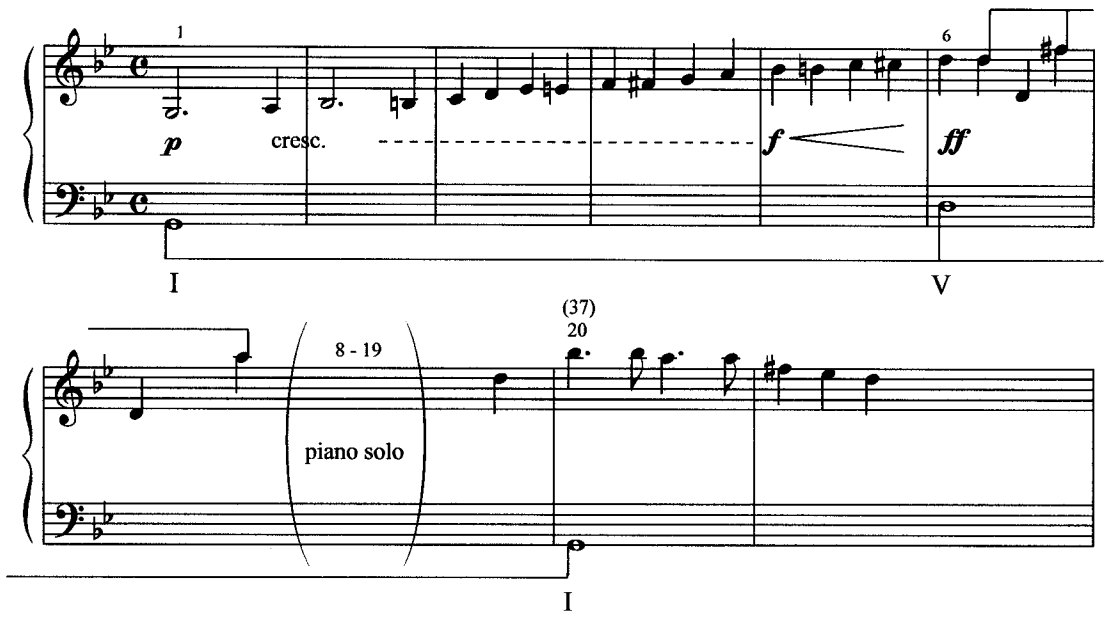
[25] The "real" first theme is given first to the soloist at bar 20, and then to the orchestra at bar 37. The solo theme of bar 8 has an introductory character (it continues to prolong the dominant which has been reached at bar 6). Its prominence throughout the movement, however, has led many commentators to regard bar 8 as the beginning of the first theme. See for instance Stephan Lindeman's analysis of this movement in *Structural Novelty and Tradition in the Early Romantic Piano Concerto* (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1998), p. 89. Mendelssohn might have been inspired here by Mozart's imaginative practice of anticipating the genuine beginning of the first theme in the solo exposition with introductory materials or themes, presented at the first entrance of the piano solo. (See, for instance, the first movements of Mozart piano concerti K466, K491, and K503.)

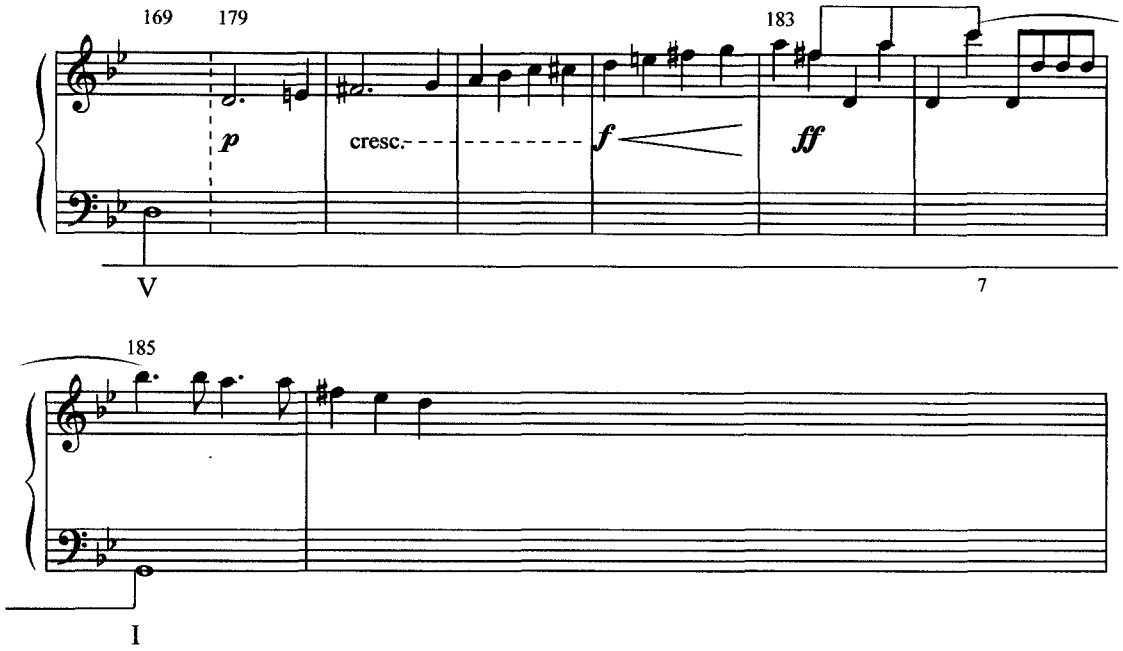
[26] If we consider bar 185 as analogous to bar 37, where the orchestral *tutti* has presented the theme, then the shortening of the beginning of the recapitulation is much more drastic. To be sure, the omission of the piano's introduction (of bars 8 ff.) from the beginning of the recapitulation is largely responsible for this shortening of the introductory section.

Example 3.10. Piano Concerto No. 1 in G Minor, Op. 25, I, Molto Allegro con fuoco

a) Bars 1–21, simplified



b) Bars 169–186, simplified



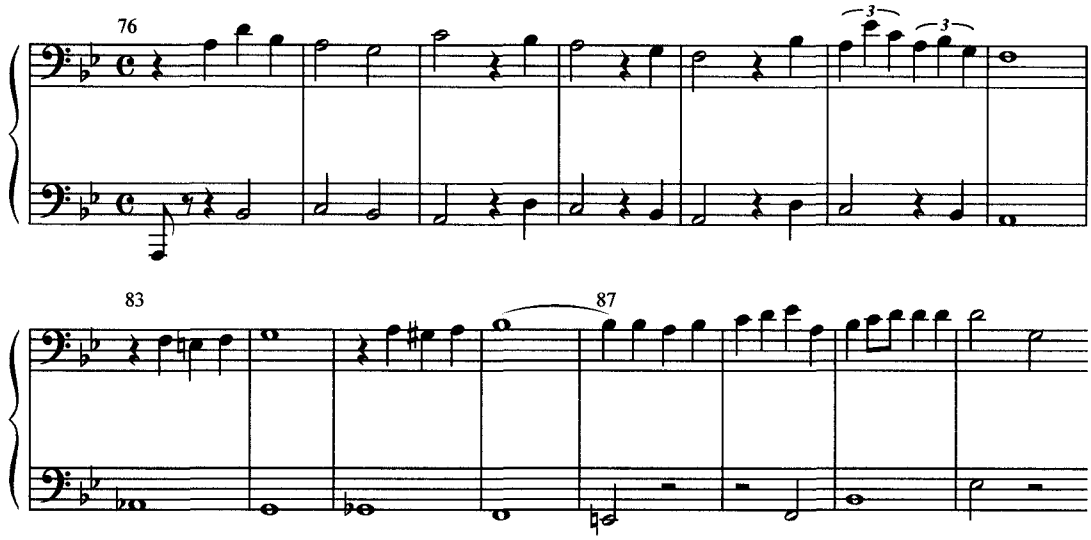
The first recapitulation in the sonata-rondo movement that concludes Mendelssohn's Cello Sonata No. 1 in B♭ Major, Op. 45 (see Example 3.11a), features a different type of sectional overlapping within a dominant prolongation.[27] As we can see in Example 3.11b, the thematic recapitulation begins at bar 87 in the midst of a composed-out dominant harmony, which stretches out from the frustrated closing cadence of the preceding B section. In order to smooth over the formal boundary, Mendelssohn transforms the final chord in the B section, an expected F-major tonic (bars 78, 80 and 82), into a V_5^6 (of B♭) that prepares the return of the B♭-major rondo

[27] The formal grouping in this movement gives rise to a three-branch sonata-rondo, that is: A^1 B^1 | A^2 + development) | A^3 B^2 | +A^4 (= coda). I am thus referring to A^2 and A^3 as the first and second recapitulations respectively.

theme. This dominant preparation extends from bar 80 to 88; however, the theme begins at bar 87 (on V^6_5 of V), so that when the tonic is reached at bar 89, we are already in the third bar of the thematic recapitulation.[28]

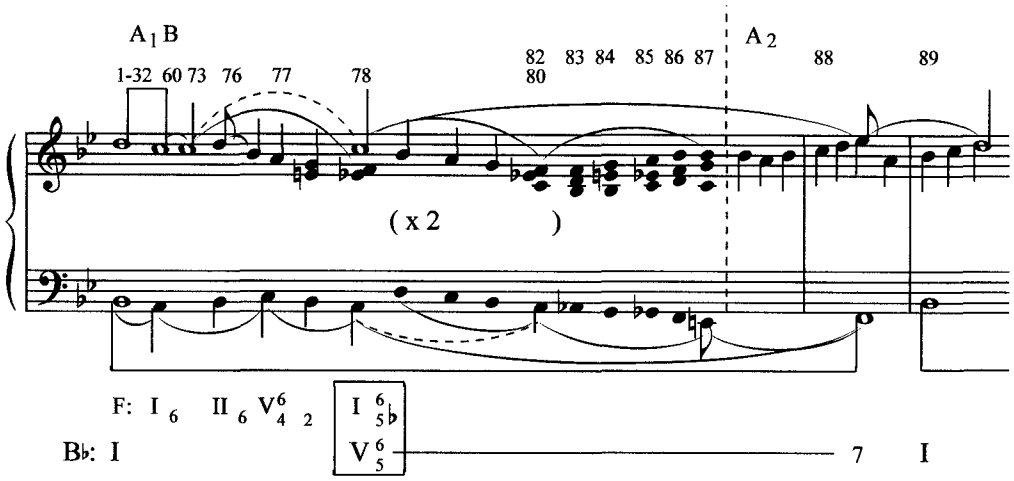
Example 3.11. Cello Sonata No. 1 in B♭ Major, Op. 45, III, Allegro assai

a) Bars 76–90, outer voices



[28] Throughout this movement, the beginning of the rondo theme is presented in several ingenious harmonizations. Later in this chapter I shall discuss the second recapitulation. See Example 3.17.

b) Bars 1–89, outline



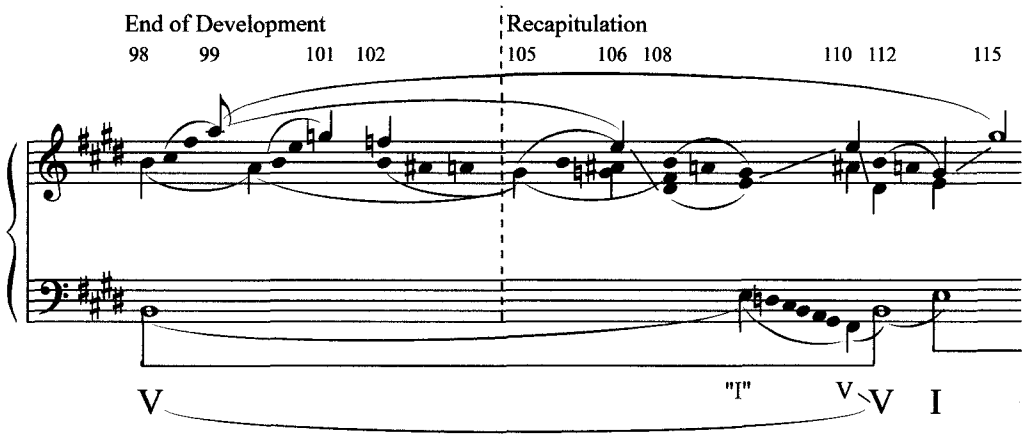
IV. Dominant Pedal Extends from the Development Section

As a last example of a recapitulation that begins on the dominant, I shall now discuss the first movement of the Piano Sonata in E Major, Op. 6. Here, the thematic return begins (bar 105) in the midst of a dominant pedal that has been initiated seven bars earlier (bar 98), still in the domain of the development section. A decisive return to the structural tonic occurs only at bar 112, that is, the eighth bar of the recapitulation.

Example 3.12 attempts to trace several threads of continuity in the complex web of the voice leading, a continuity that helps to integrate the beginning of the thematic recapitulation into the persisting dominant pedal smoothly, almost seamlessly. As can be

seen, in the uppermost "voice" there is a registral as well as harmonic connection from a^2 at bar 99 to $g\sharp^2$ at bar 115. While a^2 is conceptually retained, a stepwise motion into the inner voice crosses the formal boundary: note especially how e^2 at bar 106 continues the line a^2–$g\natural^2$–$f\natural^2$ (bars 99, 101 and 102 respectively). And finally, $g\sharp^1$—the theme's first note (bar 105)—also continues previous linear motions (from b^1) on two different levels: locally it is integrated into the chromatic descent (as of bar 102) b^1–$a\sharp^1$–$a\natural^1$, but on a slightly deeper level it is heard as analogous to the b^1 of bar 98 and a^1 of bar 100.

Example 3.12. Piano Sonata in E Major, Op. 6, I, Allegretto con espressione, bars 98–115, voice leading



V. Recapitulation Begins on (or after) VI

One of Mendelssohn's best-known, unusual beginnings of a recapitulation occurs in the Overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* The celebrated opening third, e^2–$g\sharp^2$, which expresses tonic harmony (E major) at the beginning of the overture (Example 3.13a), returns at the beginning of the recapitulation (bar 394) where C♯ still sounds in the bass (Example 3.13b). Thus the VI (C♯ minor) that ends the development section continues into the recapitulation.

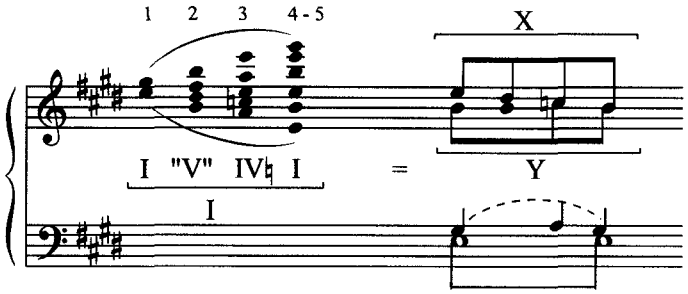
Example 3.13a offers a tonal, as well as motivic, analysis of the four opening chords of the overture (bars 1–5). As shown, this initial tonic prolongation gives rise to two prominent motives: the descending tetrachord E–D♯–C♮–B (motive X) and the neighbor-note figure B–C♮–B (motive Y). The presence of C♮ in both motives expresses the modal mixture so characteristic of the piece.

Turning now to Example 3.13b, we can see that VI, the harmonic goal of the development, resolves eventually to an inner-voice B, the fifth of the E-major tonic that returns shortly afterwards (bar 397). As shown in the "tenor" voice of Example 3.13b, C♯ first moves to C♮, the third of the minor IV, and then continues to B, the fifth of the tonic chord. Thus, the salient neighbor-note idea C to B and the major-minor mixture are beautifully expressed here. Many listeners would agree, I think, that although the delay in tonic arrival here is rather short, the beginning of the recapitulation in the Overture to

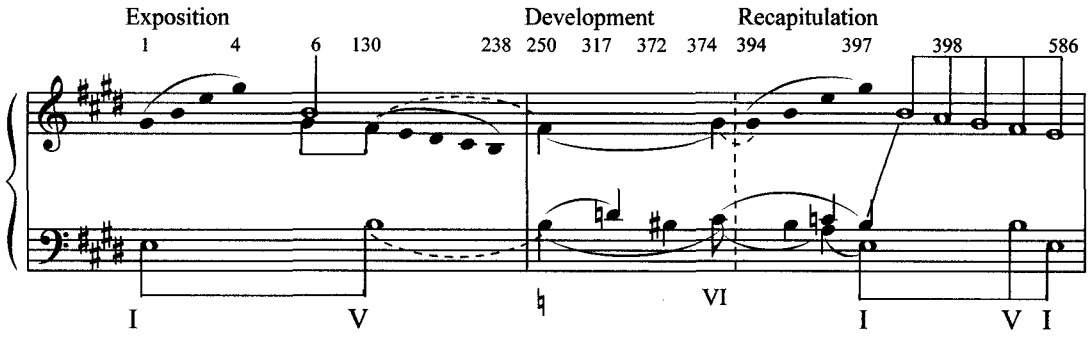
A Midsummer Night's Dream is an unforgettable and magical moment.[29]

Example 3.13. Overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Op. 21, Allegro di molto

a) Bars 1–5, harmonic and motivic analysis



b) Bars 1–586, synoptic view of the formal layout and tonal structure



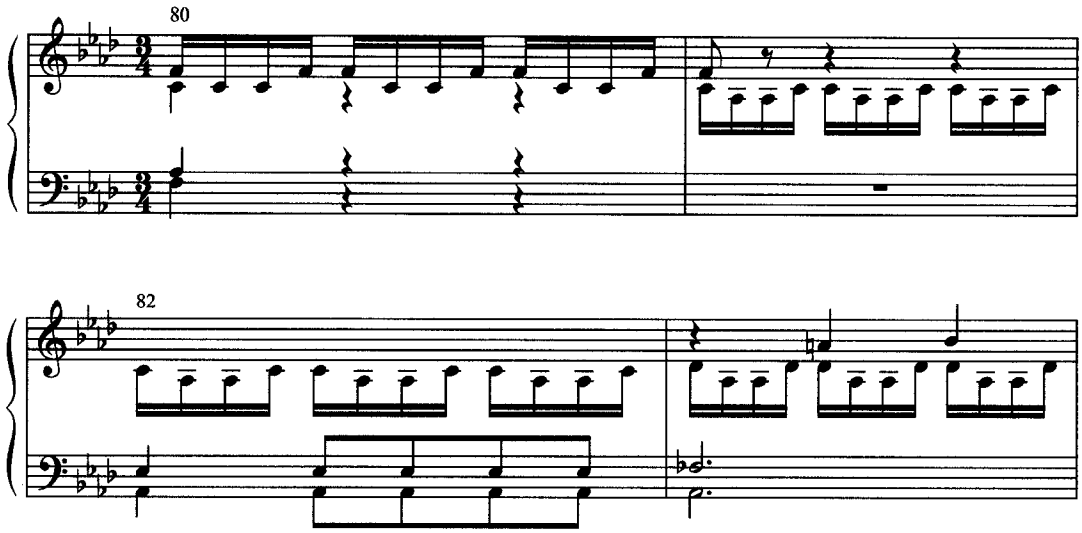
[29] Tovey's poetic description of the beginning of the recapitulation (*Essays* 4, p. 102) deserves quoting: "A soft light shines over the last minor chord. It is the first of the four fairy harmonies...." And Charles Rosen says: "The E-major return has the simplicity of genius...." See his *Sonata Forms,* revised ed. (New York: Norton, 1988), p. 274.

Resolution of the root of VI to the fifth of I at the beginning of the recapitulation occurs also in our next example, the slow (third) movement of the String Quartet in E♭ Major, Op. 44/3 (see Example 3.14a). Similarly to the *Midsummer Night's Dream* Overture, this expressive movement (in A♭ major) features $\hat{5}$–$\hat{6}$–$\hat{5}$ as a salient motive from the very outset. As shown in Example 3.14b, the development section ends on a prolonged VI (F minor, bars 74–81), an upper neighbor to the structural V (E♭ major) of the exposition. At the beginning of the recapitulation (bar 82) the root of the VI, F, resolves to the tonic's fifth, namely E♭. Example 3.14c quotes the melody at the beginning of the movement, and as we can see, the neighbor-note figure E♭–F♭ (!)–E♭ is a prominent feature of this opening.[30]

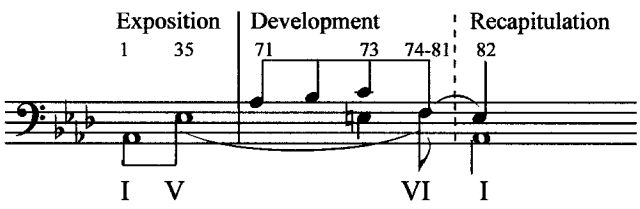
[30] For another, almost identical, instance of VI to I, see the end of the middle section and the beginning of the reprise (bars 143–147) in the second movement (Tempo di Menuetto) of the Piano Sonata in E Major, Op. 6. However, this resemblance is only at the surface: in the Menuetto of Op. 6, VI returns at bar 151 and the F♯-minor chord at bar 147 is best understood as an apparent tonic.

Example 3.14. String Quartet in E♭ Major, Op. 44/3, III, Adagio non troppo

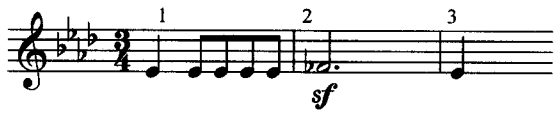
a) Bars 80–83



b) Bars 1–82, bass outline

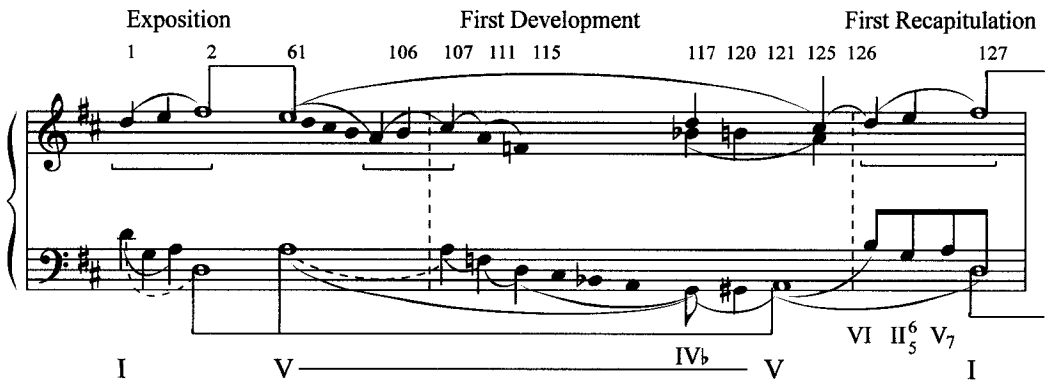


c) Bars 1–3, melody



A slight displacement of I by VI at the beginning of the recapitulation occurs also at the *finale* of the String Quartet Op. 44/1 in D Major. The first recapitulation in this Haydnesque sonata-rondo begins on VI (bar 126), which surprisingly—not unlike a deceptive cadence—follows a dominant preparation (bars 121–125).[31] As shown in Example 3.15, the tonic, substituted for by VI, arrives at the next bar (127), and we can understand bars 126–127 as an auxiliary cadence, initiated on VI.

Example 3.15. String Quartet in D Major, Op. 44/1, IV, Presto con brio, bars 1–127, voice leading

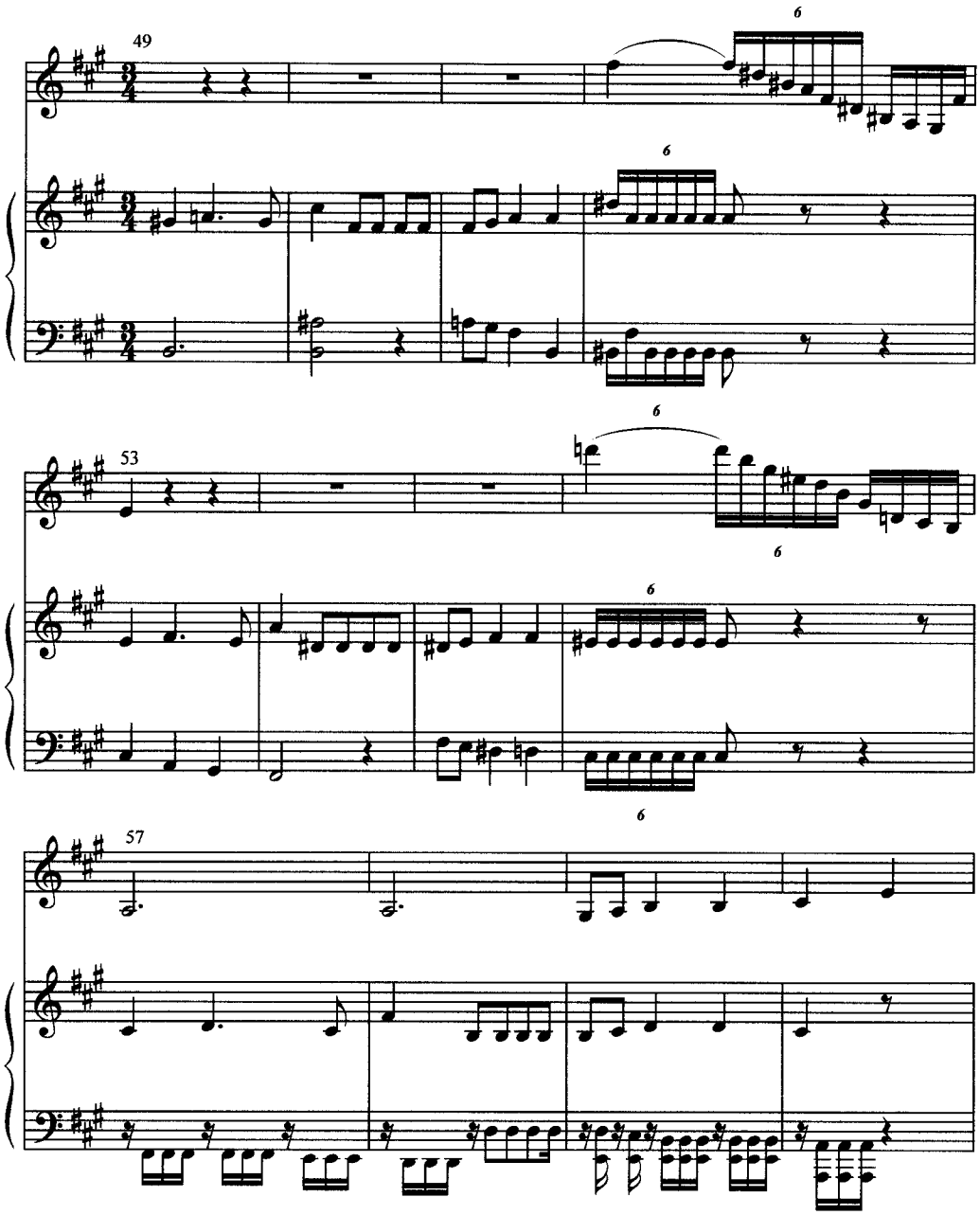


[31] Quite unusually, this three-branch sonata-rondo has two development sections. Hence, the second statement of the rondo theme is a genuine first recapitulation.

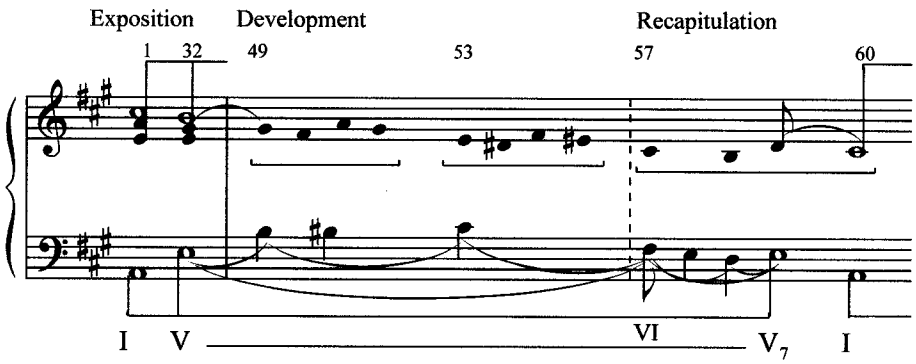
A much more unusual recapitulation on VI occurs in the slow movement of the F-major Violin Sonata (1838, no opus number). Here, the beginning of the recapitulation on VI is not articulated by the design, but rather masked. The short development section (bars 49–57; see Example 3.16a) quotes the opening theme (that is, the melody of bars 1–4) three times: first in E major over a cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ (bars 49–52), then in C♯ minor, which is transformed into V^7 of F♯ minor (bars 53–56). A third statement, now in F♯ minor, begins at bar 57, but F♯ (first perceived as a local tonic) is retroactively reinterpreted as VI in the home key of A. It is not until the end of this four-bar phrase (bars 57–60) that we realize that the recapitulation has already started. As Example 3.16b illustrates, the entrance of the theme in bar 57 continues the pattern that has started in bar 49. Each four-bar statement of this melody starts a third lower than the previous one. This quasi-sequential design (see brackets in Example 3.16b) does not call attention to the third entrance more than it does to the preceding one; if we add this design to the tonicized VI harmony, we can realize how well Mendelssohn masks the beginning of the recapitulation here.

Example 3.16. Sonata for Violin and Piano in F Major, II, Adagio

a) Bars 49–60, simplified



b) Bars 1–60, outline



Our last example for a recapitulation that follows VI comes from the F-major slow movement of the String Quintet in A Major, Op. 18. To be sure, tonicizing VI (an upper neighbor to V) near the end of development section is hardly unusual: it is widely recognized as a stylistic norm in major-mode sonata-form movements.[32] But as we can see in Example 3.17a, Mendelssohn goes here beyond the inherited tonal pattern when he transforms the diatonic minor VI (reached at bar 67) into a prominent major chord (bar 72). This expressive VI♯ is now prolonged and stabilized (72–78), and the recapitulation begins (upbeat to bar 81) in the course of a brief harmonic transition (bars 79–80), which consists of $\frac{6}{3}$ and $\frac{6}{5}$ chords built on $\hat{6}$ and $\hat{7}$ respectively.

Normally, a bass line that rises from the dominant to the tonic stepwise (that is, $\hat{5}$–$\hat{6}$–$\hat{7}$–$\hat{8}$) would suggest that VI (or IV^6) is a passing chord within a prolonged

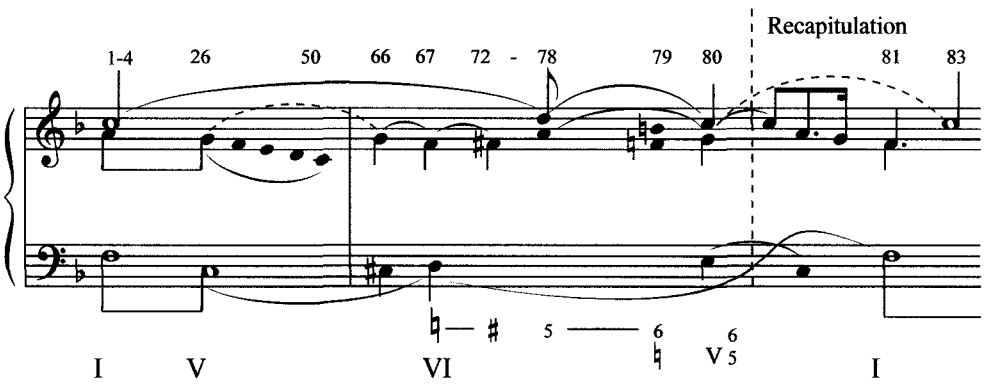
[32] See Charles Rosen, *Sonata Forms*, revised ed. (New York: Norton, 1988), p. 263; and William Rothstein, *Phrase Rhythm in Tonal Music* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1989), p. 112.

dominant. But here, the exceptional emphasis on VI♯, as well as the transient nature of the V^6_5 at bar 80, makes such an interpretation unconvincing. Hence, I read the primary progression as VI♯–I, and regard the chords in between as passing.[33]

As shown in Example 3.17b (a brief quotation from the opening bars of the movement), the emphasis on $\hat{6}$ as a neighbor to $\hat{5}$, both melodically and harmonically, is a prominent feature of this movement from the very outset. We might then regard the unusual tonal events near the end of the development section as yet another manifestation of the same idea.

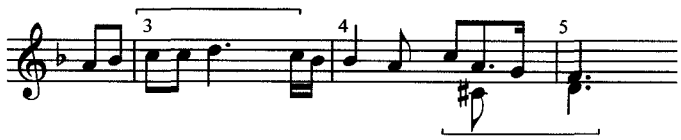
Example 3.17. String Quintet in A Major, Op. 18, II, Intermezzo, Andante sostenuto

a) Bars 1–83, outline of tonal structure



[33] An almost identical progression from an emphasized VI♯ back to I via a light inverted dominant occurs in Mozart's String Quartet K.421, second movement (*Andante*), bars 12–15, and also in Beethoven's Bagatelle Op. 33/3 (*Allegretto*), bars 8–9. Interestingly, both excerpts are—like our Mendelssohn example—in F major.

b) Bars 3–5, first appearances of $\overset{8}{6}$ as a prominent idea



VI. Dominant Preparations of "Wrong" Keys

1. Recapitulation Follows III♯ (V of VI)

An unusual impact is achieved in certain Mendelssohnian recapitulations that begin surprisingly in the midst of, or following, a dominant preparation in the "wrong" key. This kind of "deception" seems to have its roots in the classical practice of ending development sections on III♯, which is locally perceived as V of VI. The tonic recapitulation that follows often creates a startling and magical effect.[34] In retrospect, V of VI is understood as III♯, a prominent chromaticized harmony that divides the large-scale fifth—from the tonicized V at the end of the exposition to the I at the beginning of the recapitulation—into two thirds.[35]

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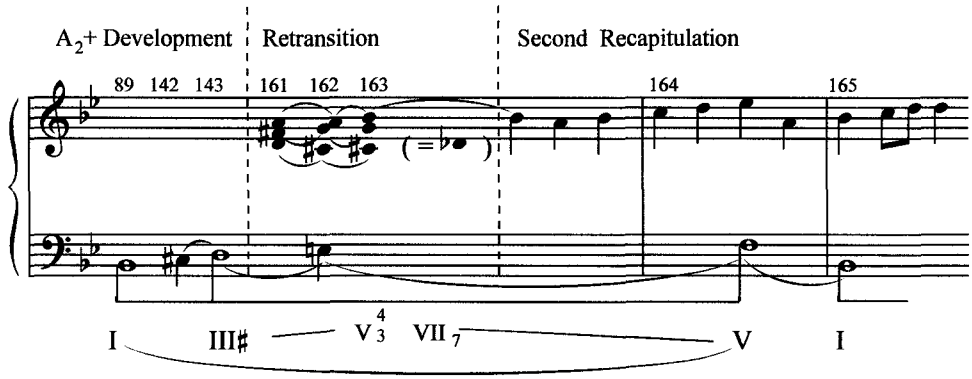
[34] For a well-known example, see the first movement of Beethoven's "Spring" Sonata, Op. 24.

[35] I have already discussed this pattern in Chapter 2 (see pp. 119–120 and footnote no. 36). For further discussion of the role of III♯ at the end of classical development sections see Rothstein, *Phrase Rhythm* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1989), p. 113.

The second recapitulation in the *finale* of Mendelssohn's Cello Sonata No. 1 in B♭ follows an extensive prolongation of III♯ (bars 143–161). A smooth harmonic progression leads (bars 161–165) from III♯ to V and eventually back to I. As shown in Example 3.18, the path from III♯ to the dominant (bars 162–163) involves an enharmonic reinterpretation: C♯, the leading tone of III, behaves as if it were a D♭, the diminished seventh in VII^7 of V (that is, in the home key B♭). The thematic recapitulation begins in the midst of this retransition (second beat of bar 163), and thus the formal border is rather concealed. Not until bar 165, the third bar of the theme, do we realize that a new statement of the main theme has already begun.

Example 3.18. Cello Sonata No. 1 in B♭ Major, Op. 45, III, Allegro assai, bars 89–165, voice leading



2. Recapitulation Follows VII♯ (V of III)

A rather exceptional deceptive preparatory dominant occurs near the end of the development section in the first movement of the String Quartet in E♭ major, Op. 12. Instead of culminating on a dominant preparation, the end of the development section articulates a D-major chord (VII♯ in E♭, bars 171–176), which sounds—locally—as the dominant of III, that is, G minor.

As Example 3.19a illustrates, this "false" dominant does lead to a tonic recapitulation. At mid-bar 176, a brief G-minor chord supports the first note ($b♭^1$) of the theme, leading immediately to a root-position tonic chord (E♭ major) at the next bar (177). Thus, the main link in the bass is from the leading tone D to the tonic note E♭. This harmonic progression may seem somewhat bold,[36] but it can be better understood, perhaps, if one takes into account the special emphasis that the D-major sonority (and more specifically F♯, the chromatic element) receives throughout this movement. Of its numerous occurrences I shall mention just the first one, which occurs most prominently at bar 5 of the slow introduction. As shown in Example 3.19b, the voice leading that encompasses the entire second part (that is A^2 + development, bars 97–171) of this

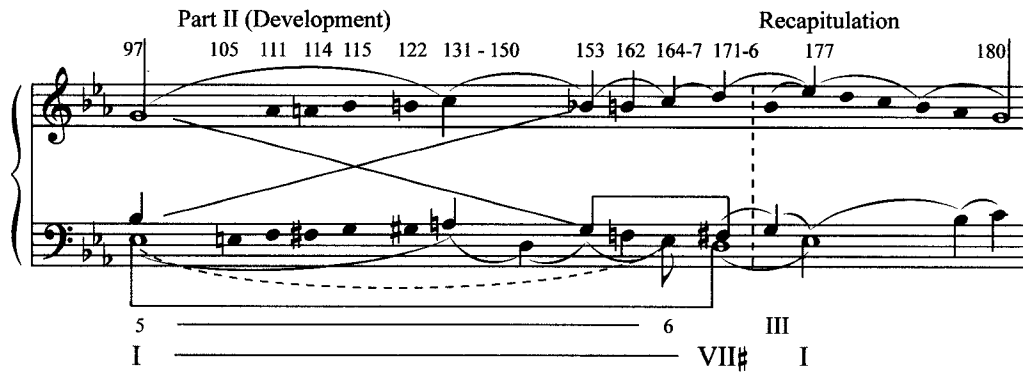
[36] For earlier instances of recapitulations that follow VII♯, see L. Poundie Burstein's article "Surprising Returns: The VII♯ in Beethoven's Op. 18, No. 3, and its Antecedents in Haydn," in *Music Analysis*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (October, 1998): 295–312. Mozart presents VII♯ as the harmonic goal of the development section in the first (Allegro) movement of the great Divertimento for String Trio in E♭, K563 (see bars 102–107). But the actual beginning of the recapitulation (bar 111) follows a short retransition (bars 108–110) that leads from VII♯ via V back to the tonic.

unusual three-branch sonata-form movement displays a striking similarity to the voice leading at bars 3–5.[37]

Example 3.19. String Quartet in E♭ Major, Op. 12, I,

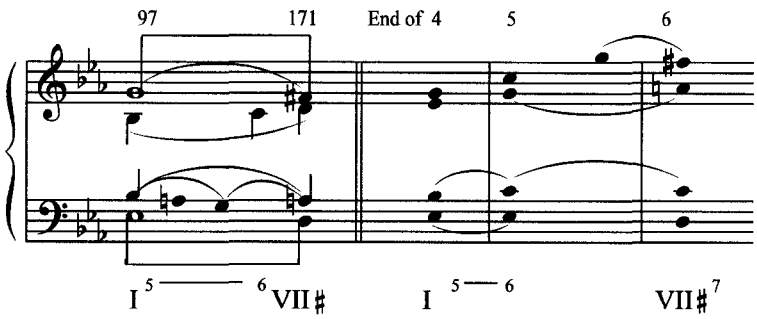
Adagio non troppo and Allegro non tardante

a) Bars 97–180, voice leading



[37] In their perceptive discussions of the first movement of Op. 12, both Greg Vitercik and Charles Rosen elaborate on the unusual beginning of the recapitulation. Vitercik asserts that "the tonic itself provides a submediant coloring in relation to the G minor out of which it emerges...," and concludes that "the lyric impulse provides the basis for the formal organization of the movement." Rosen notes that "these violations of the Classical tradition only serve to attach Mendelssohn all the more tightly to it...." See Vitercik, *The Early Works*, pp. 267–277; and Charles Rosen *The Romantic Generation,* fifth printing (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1998), pp. 582–586.

b) Bars 97–171 and 4–6, concealed motivic repetition



VII. Recapitulation Begins on Apparent Tonics

The first movement of the String Quartet Op. 80 in F Minor demonstrates how Mendelssohn makes use of the special attributes of his openings in order to change the context when the same music (more or less) returns at the beginning of the recapitulation. The opening phrase of this remarkable quartet (bars 1–14) displays a dramatic crescendo from a soft tonic to a loud dominant. Contour, spacing and register join forces in creating a rather Beethovenian drama, as the shy opening tonic of bar 1 rapidly moves on to an extrovert dominant in bar 9. Example 3.20a illustrates.

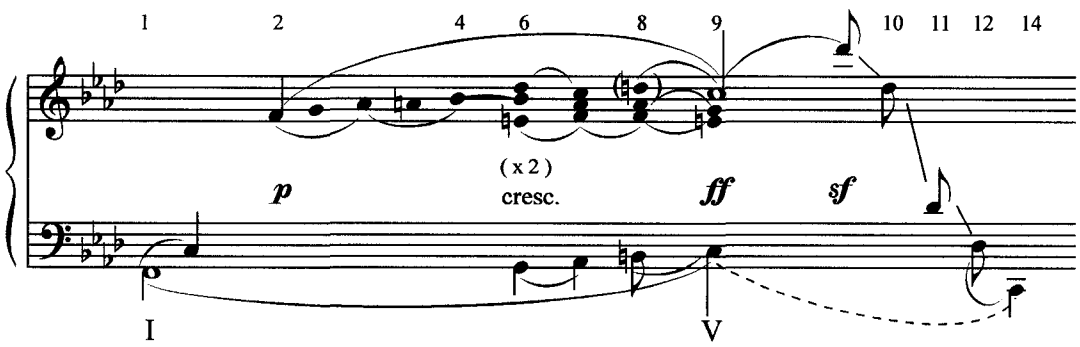
Despite the powerful emphasis on dominant harmony and, on a smaller scale, on the dissonant diminished seventh chords (bars 6–7), the opening tonic must be understood as structural, since this is the opening phrase of the movement. However, at the beginning of the recapitulation the timid nature of this F-minor chord enables

Mendelssohn to integrate the opening music into a non-tonic prolongation (see Example 3.20b below).

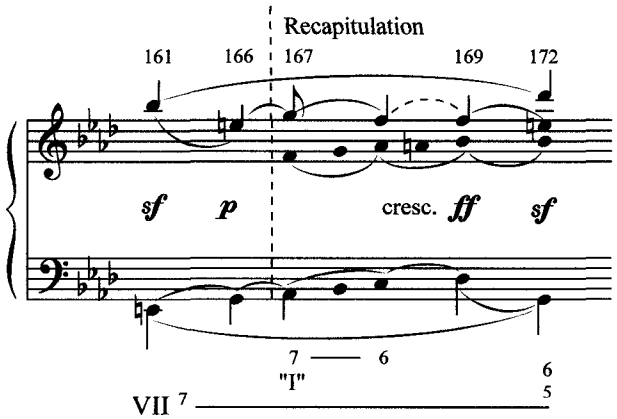
The development reaches a climax at bar 161 with a diminished seventh chord (VII^7). This is exactly where the agitated tremolos, so characteristic of the piece's opening, are brought back in. In the next bar (162) the second violin (note the *piano* dynamics in the second violin only) recalls the opening motive: the ascending—and then descending—fifth is adjusted, of course, to the prevailing diminished-seventh harmony, so that it now ascends from g to d♭ (bars 162–163 and 164–165; see the score). At bar 167 the first-theme melody at its original pitch (that is, starting on f^1) begins the thematic recapitulation. The F-minor chord at bars 167–168 is now in $\frac{6}{3}$ position (unlike the root-position tonic in the exposition), and furthermore, a dissonant 7–6 suspension in the first violin endows bar 167 with a highly kinetic nature. As illustrated in Example 3.20b, there is no return yet to a real tonic harmony. The phrase continues its dramatic drive until bar 172, where it halts on the $\frac{6}{5}$ position of the very same diminished seventh chord. Hence the F-minor $\frac{6}{3}$ chord at bar 167 (the beginning of the thematic recapitulation) is an apparent tonic, that is, a lower-level chord within the prolonged VII^7 harmony.

Example 3.20. String Quartet in F Minor, Op. 80, I, Allegro vivace assai

a) Bars 1–14, voice leading, dynamics and register at the opening



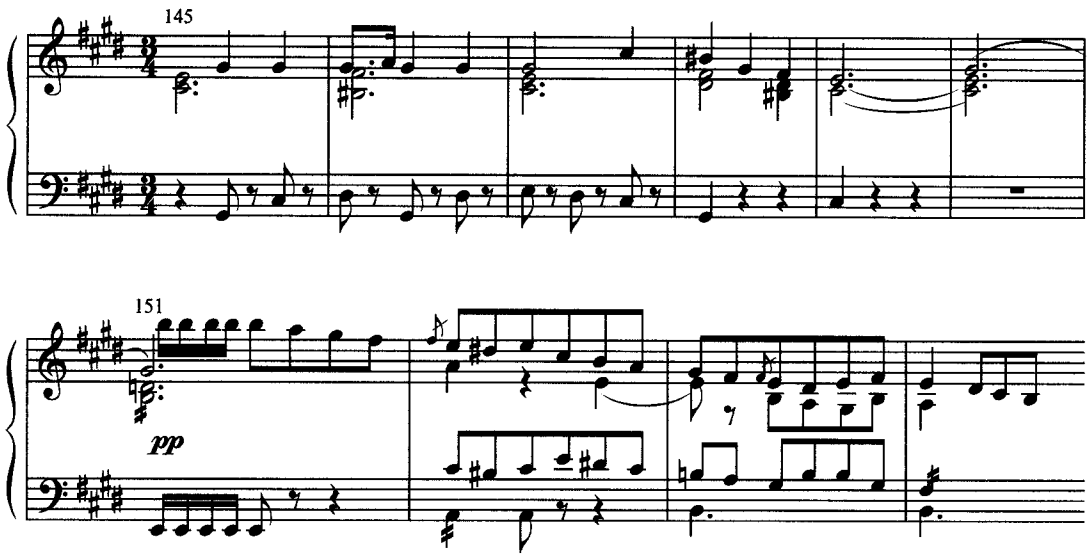
b) Bars 161–172, voice leading and dynamics at the beginning of the recapitulation



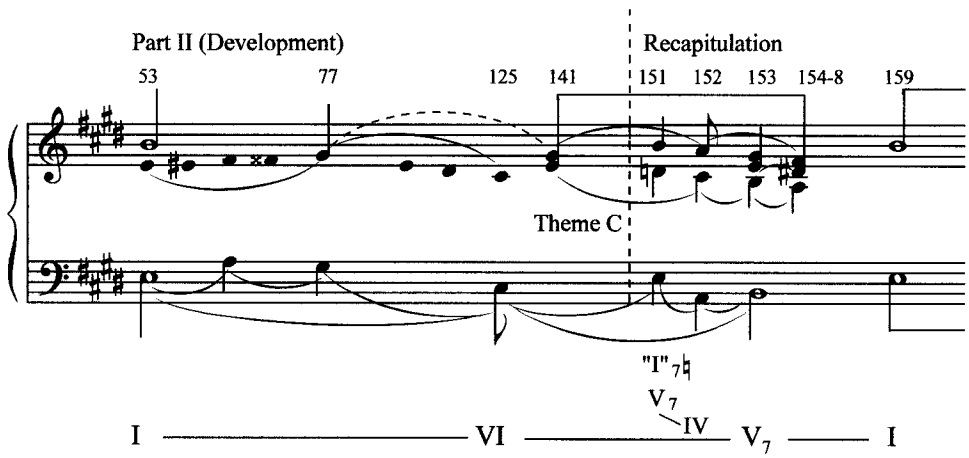
The second movement (Scherzo) of the E-minor String Quartet, Op. 44/2, is a three-branch sonata form. The second part (bars 53–150) first repeats the opening theme in the tonic (bars 53–60); then a long development leads toward C♯ minor (reached at bar 125), and a new melodic idea (= theme C) enters near the end of this section (bars 141–150), shortly before the ensuing recapitulation. Unlike the two former statements of the first theme, the one at the beginning of the recapitulation (bar 151; see Example 3.21a) is marked *pianissimo*. Furthermore, a minor seventh ($d\natural^1$ in the second violin) is now added to the E-major chord, which, in context, does not at all sound like a genuine tonic harmony. As shown in Example 3.21b, the E-major seventh chord is an applied V^7 of IV, subordinate to the main harmonic progression from the tonicized VI of the middle section to the IV, which arrives, as expected, at bar 152. IV now leads to an extended V^7 (bars 153–158), and the return to the structural tonic is thus postponed until the beginning of the next phrase (bar 159).

Example 3.21. String Quartet in E Minor, Op. 44/2, II, Scherzo, Allegro di molto

a) Bars 145–154



b) Bars 53–159, voice leading



Enhanced Conflicts between Tonal Structure and Thematic Design

Unlike the foregoing examples, in which the return to the tonic at the beginning of the recapitulation is somewhat delayed (but still takes place within the first theme), the following examples feature a further, considerably deeper disagreement between thematic and tonal returns. Thus, tonic arrival in most of these recapitulations is postponed until the point where the recapitulation has already left the domain of the first theme.[38]

As we have already seen in Chapter 2, postponing the return to the structural tonic is not always a local matter. Indeed, in the small forms it was sometimes possible to avoid a stable tonic until the very final cadence. In large-scale sonata-form movements, however, such an extreme procedure might seem highly unlikely. For the relationship between exposition and recapitulation is based, traditionally at least, on a certain sense of equilibrium. In other words, balancing the non-tonic (albeit locally stable) material of the second group of the exposition with its restatement (in the recapitulation) in the tonic key is the very basic sonata-principle.[39]

But as we shall see in what follows, in a few extreme cases Mendelssohn does not return to the structural tonic until the completion of the closing cadence of the

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[38] In one instance, the Overture "Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage," the conflict between thematic design and tonal structure is more drastic in conjunction with the second theme. See Example 3.25 below.

[39] The term "Sonata Principle" was coined by Edward Cone. See his book *Musical Form and Musical Performance* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1968), pp. 76–77.

second-theme group.[40] When this happens, the resultant one-part inner form conflicts with the traditional norms of the sonata form rather radically.

The first movement of the Fantasy for Piano in F♯ Minor, Op. 28, is constructed, without contesting the fantasy-like nature of the piece, as a "regular" sonata form.[41] But when we examine the formal border between the development and recapitulation sections (Example 3.22a and b), we can see that both the first theme (bars 84–91) and the bridge phrase (bars 92–102) are swallowed up, so to speak, by the dominant prolongation that begins near the end of the development at bar 81.[42] When we finally arrive at the structural tonic (bar 102, downbeat), the closing cadence (in F♯ major) has already been completed and the following bars (102–107) then feature the closing theme.

Since both the closing cadence and the closing theme in the recapitulation are essentially a transposition of the analogous A-major cadence and theme in the exposition (compare bars 41–49 with bars 100–107), we should focus more on the different settings of the first theme in these sections. Thus we can see that, whereas the first group in the exposition presents the tonic note in the bass at the beginning of each phrase (bars 9 and 17), the corresponding phrases in the recapitulation (bars 84 and 92) consistently evade

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[40] See especially Example 3.28, and also Example 4.22 in the next chapter.

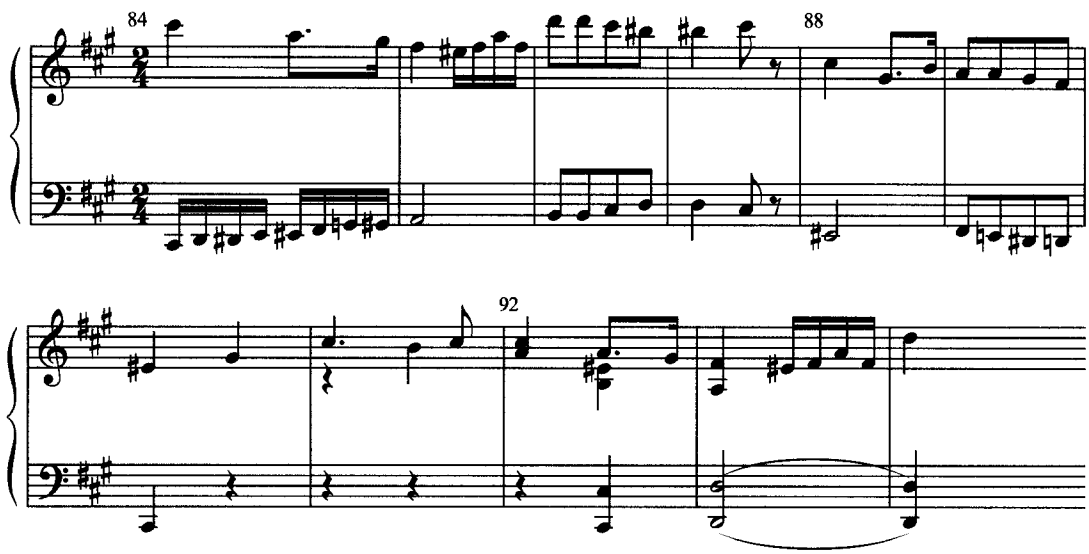
[41] This is also the case with regard to the last movement of the Fantasy, which I do not discuss here.

[42] In the recapitulation, the phrase (bar 92 ff.) that first seems to be analogous to the consequent phrase of the first theme in the exposition (bar 17 ff.) turns out later as analogous to the end of the bridge. (See bar 41 ff. in the exposition and bar 100 ff. in the recapitulation.)

F♯ in the bass.[43] Especially worthy of note is the beautiful rest in the bass at the beginning of the second phrase of the recapitulation (bar 92, Example 3.22a; compare to the analogous bar 17), which enables a further prolongation of the dominant harmony by means of an upper (and later also a lower) neighbor in the bass, as illustrated in Example 3.22b.

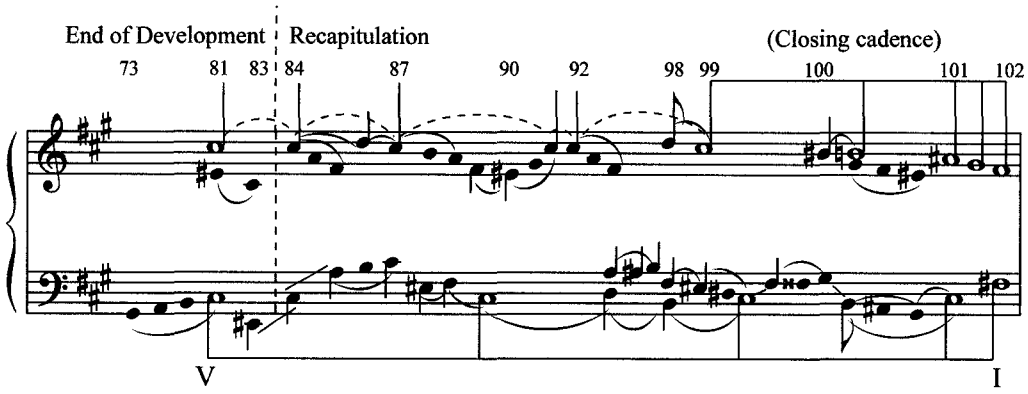
Example 3.22. Fantasy in F♯ Minor, Op. 28, I, Con moto agitato and Andante

a) Bars 84–94, simplified



[43] The open fifths in the left-hand part at bars 9 and 17 might embody a "Scottish" character. For further information on the history of Op. 28, which was originally titled "Scottish Sonata," see R. Larry Todd "Piano Music Reformed: The Case of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy," in *The Mendelssohn Companion*, pp. 600–601.

b) Bars 73–102, voice leading



The second movement of the Symphony in A Minor ("Scottish") is a fine example of a resumed structural tonic that coincides with the arrival at the second theme group (bar 193) in the recapitulation (the actual beginning of the thematic recapitulation is shown in Example 3.23a). The first theme, radically shortened at the beginning of this unusual recapitulation (bars 176–192, compared with bars 9–56 in the exposition), is integrated, harmonically speaking, into the vast dominant prolongation that extends from the preceding middle (development) section.[44]

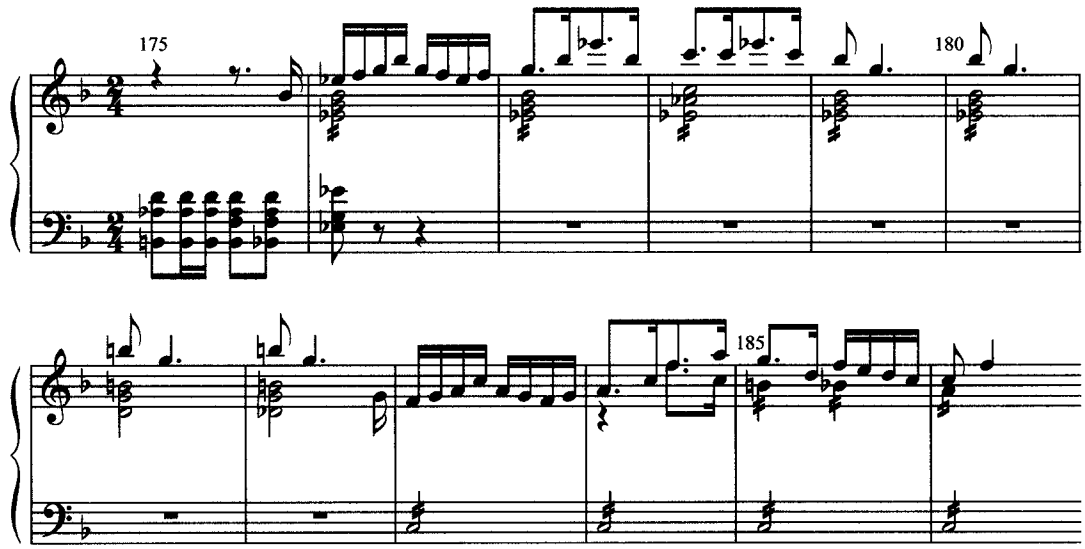
As we can see in Example 3.23b, the preparatory dominant is reached already at bar 152. Then, at bar 168, a lower neighbor to the dominant (VII^7 of V) is expected to return to V, but surprisingly, its bass note, B♮, behaves as if it were a C♭ and thus descends to a B♭ (last eighth-note of bar 175). The resulting B♭ dominant seventh immediately resolves to the illusory E♭-major key, and the flute features the first phrase

[44] This is another case of a three-branch sonata form, in which the second part (that is, development) begins with a shortened restatement of the first theme in the tonic.

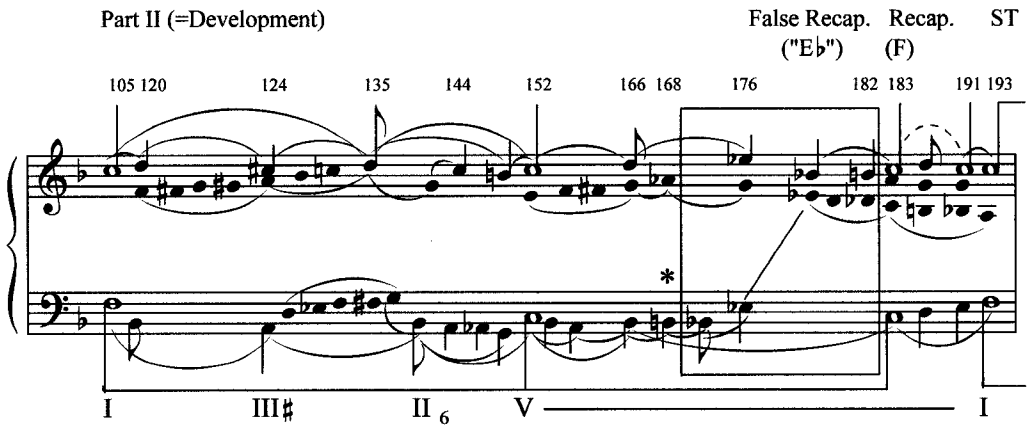
of the movement's first theme in that key (bar 176 ff.). This "mistake"—one of the most magical moments in the whole of Mendelssohn's instrumental music—is "corrected" shortly afterwards, when the bass descends chromatically (E♭–D♮–D♭–C) to the dominant of F major (bar 183). Now the consequent phrase of the theme starts, on a cadential $\frac{6}{4}$, and the bass ascends (as of bar 189) back to the tonic. The stepwise ascending bass (namely, C–D–E–F) expresses the most prominent motive in the movement, that is, the rising fourth C–F (see bars 3–4). And when the tonic is reached (bar 193), we are already at the beginning of the second theme. The wide gap between the thematic articulation of the recapitulation (starting with the false E♭ entrance of the first theme at bar 176) and the harmonic return to the tonic (bar 193) is indeed remarkable.

Example 3.23. Symphony No. 3 in A Minor ("Scottish"), Op. 56, II, Vivace non troppo

a) Bars 175–186, simplified



b) Bars 105–193, voice leading



As far as quality is concerned, the Overture to Victor Hugo's *Ruy Blas* is certainly no match for the "Scottish Symphony."[45] Nevertheless, the beginning of the recapitulation features a similar delay in the arrival at the structural tonic. In other words, the resumed tonic again coincides with the beginning of the second theme in the recapitulation. In contrast to our previous example, the first theme here (including the slow "motto") is not so drastically shortened. Yet the beginning of the thematic recapitulation exemplifies a typical Mendelssohnian skill and imagination. Indeed, in my judgment this moment alone in *"Ruy Blas"* justifies the study of this otherwise unattractive overture.

As we can see in Example 3.24a, the development section reaches a climax on IV (bar 236), a harmony that is frequently used in minor-mode sonata-form movements to connect the tonicized III at the end of the exposition with the structural V that would normally conclude a large-scale background progression (I–III–V) near the end of the development section. Here, however, the structural V does not follow IV directly: the outer voices move in parallel tenths from IV via a passing "I^6" (bar 246) to II♯ (V^7 of V, bar 249); V is reached at bar 250 and prolonged until the return of the second theme (in C major, bar 269) by means of an extensive pedal point. The thematic recapitulation of the first theme has already begun on "I^6" (bar 246) in the midst of the passing progression that I have described above.

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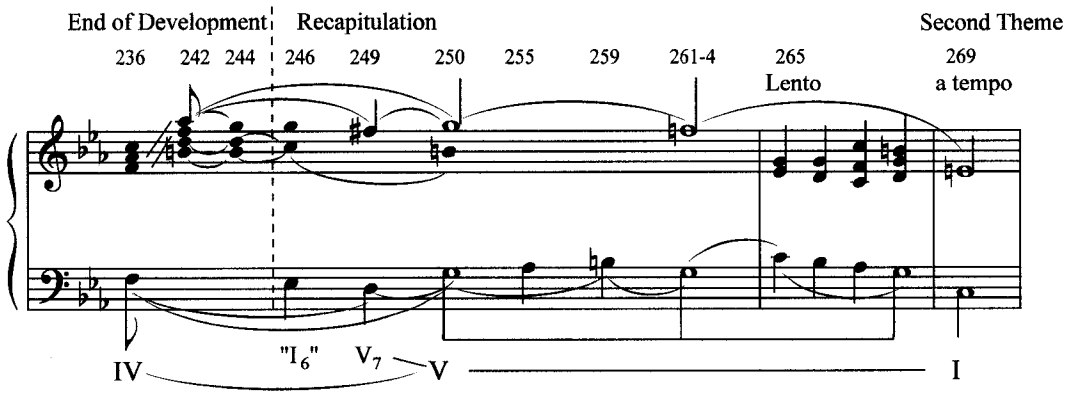
[45] Mendelssohn apparently detested Hugo's play, but at the same time he was proud of having the piece composed, copied and rehearsed within six days. See Mendelssohn's account in a letter to his mother in *Briefe aus den Jahren 1830 bis 1847*, ed. Paul Mendelssohn Bartholdy and Carl Mendelssohn Bartholdy (Leipzig: Hermann Mendelssohn, 1865), p. 190.

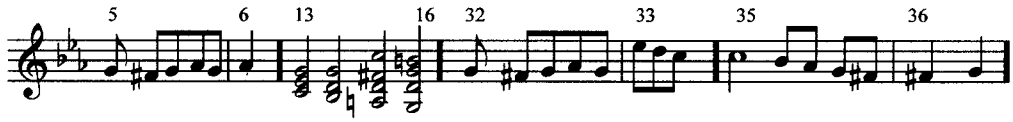
Example 3.24b illustrates the motivic significance of F♯ (and also A♭) at the beginning of the piece. As we can see, these lower and upper neighbors to $\hat{5}$ are prominent from the very outset, especially in conjunction with the turn figure (that is, F♯–G–A♭–G, or A♭–G–F♯–G). Hence, the upper voice structure in the climactic juncture of the development and recapitulation sections (bars 242–250; see Example 3.24a) can be understood as a beautiful enlargement of this very same turn figure.

Example 3.24. Overture to *Ruy Blas*, Op. 95, Lento and Allegro molto

a) Bars 236–269, voice leading



b) Bars 5–36, motivic prominence of upper and lower leading tones to $\hat{5}$



An exceptional separation of the thematic and the tonal recapitulations can be seen in Mendelssohn's "Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage" Overture, Op. 27. The sonata-form portion of the overture starts at bar 99, following the "Calm Sea" (*Adagio*) section (bars 1–48) and the transitional bars (49–98) that initiate the "Prosperous Voyage" (*Molto Allegro e vivace*) part.[46] The three main themes in the exposition, namely the first theme (theme a, bar 99 ff.), the bridge theme (theme b, bar 149 ff), and the second, lyrical, theme (theme c, bar 185 ff), are all recapitulated in D major in the latter part of the overture. But the order and the harmonic context in which they return is anything but regular. Unlike most other Mendelssohnian irregular recapitulations in which—despite the delay in the return to the tonic—one can safely regard the return of the first theme as the beginning of the recapitulation, in the present case, design and structure join forces to make it hard, perhaps impossible, to determine where the

[46] For a highly valuable discussion of the genesis, musical influences, form, and programmatic aspects of Op. 27, see R. Larry Todd, *Mendelssohn: The Hebrides and Other Overtures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 20–26, 44–47, 58–63, 74–78.

recapitulation in fact begins. And indeed, commentators have not reached a consensus regarding this crucial formal issue.[47]

In Example 3.25 I attempt to present the main thematic events of this unusual sonata form in conjunction with the harmonic structure, represented by the bass. As we can see, the main difficulty is what to make of the surprising return of the lyrical second theme at bar 379, over a *pianissimo* $\frac{6}{4}$ cadential chord. Reading the beginning of the recapitulation here is surely problematic: consider the light orchestration, the soft dynamics, and especially the fact that this thematic statement is precisely analogous to the C♮-major statement of bars 335 ff. These aspects of the design seem to suggest that this thematic return still belongs to the development. On the other hand, if we do not consider bar 379 to be the beginning of the recapitulation, then the latter section (which will have to be taken to start at bar 401) is indeed a highly exceptional recapitulation, one that omits the second theme altogether: note that the recapitulated bridge theme (bars 417 ff.) in the last section does not lead to the second theme (as it has done in the exposition), but rather to the closing cadence that rounds off the recapitulation section.

As indicated by the question and exclamation marks in Example 3.25, I prefer to read the recapitulation at bar 401. Like Vitercik, I regard the recapitulation as an incomplete one, as far as the thematic aspect is concerned.[48] One aspect of the harmonic

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[47] Todd takes bar 379, where the second theme returns, as the beginning of the "inverted" recapitulation. (See *Mendelssohn: Hebrides and Other Overtures*, pp. 62–63.) Vitercik, on the other hand, considers bar 401, in which the first theme returns, as the beginning of the recapitulation. (See *The Early Works*, pp. 156–157.)

[48] Vitercik accurately observes that the restatement of the lyrical theme (bars 379 ff.) does not sound as an important structural event. However, his suggestion that the "tonic, perched over a dominant pedal..." is to be understood as the dominant of the preceding G-minor harmony (reached at bar 371) is surely incorrect. See *The Early Works*, p. 156.

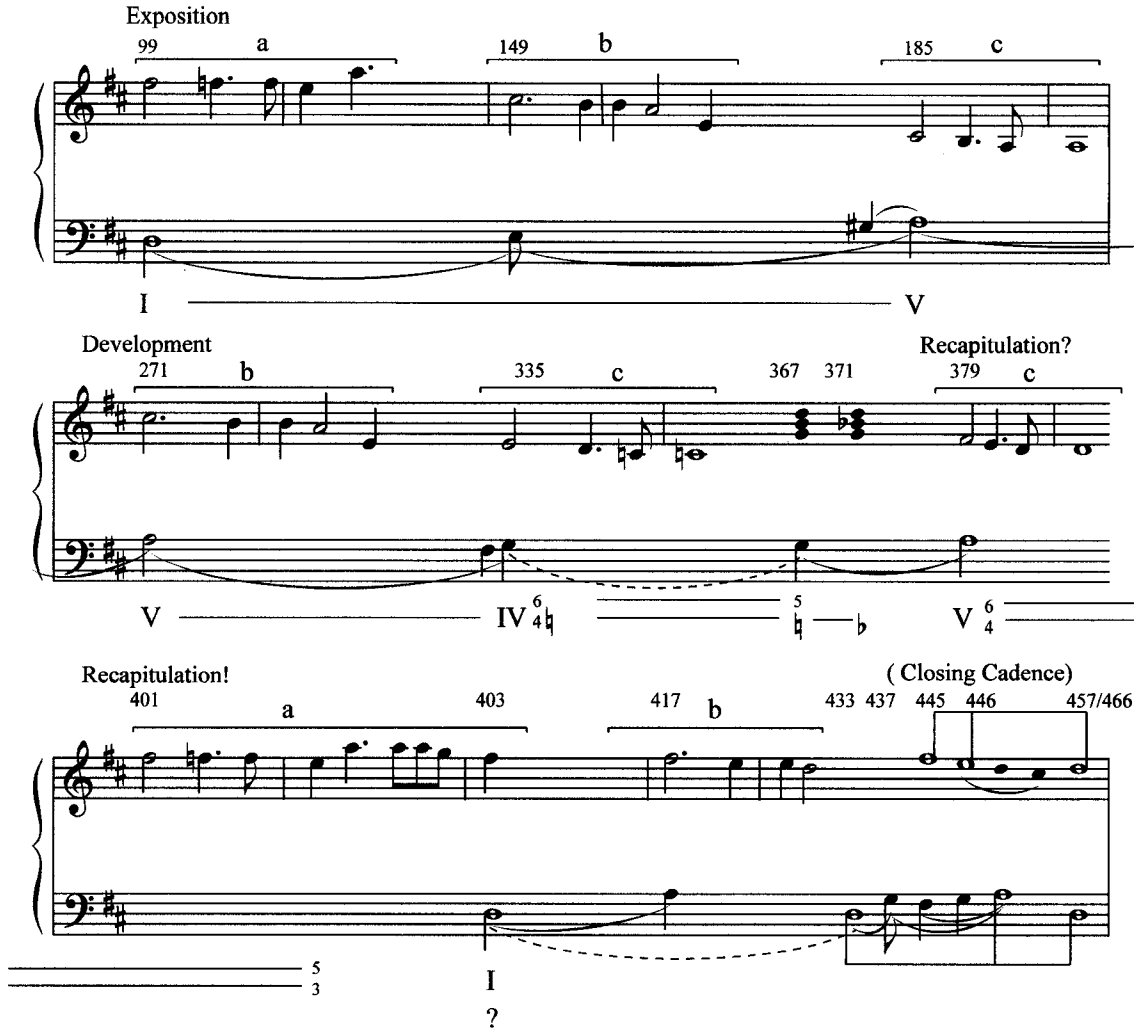
analysis also deserves comment here: at bar 403 the extensive dominant pedal point on A (initiated at bar 379 with the return of theme c) moves, at last, to D. Notwithstanding my reading this D-major chord as a resumed structural tonic, there is also a possible alternative reading: one could view the D-major chord at bar 403 as an apparent tonic and read a structural tonic at bar 433, or even at the completion of the closing cadence (bar 457).[49] As already noted, Mendelssohn's predilection for "shy" tonics in his reprises and recapitulations often makes the life of analysts hard (albeit interesting).

[49] However, in the following analysis of the *finale* of the F-minor String Quartet (see Example 3.27), I shall prefer a less "conservative" view and thus read an apparent tonic at the beginning of the recapitulation.

Example 3.25. Overture in D Major, "Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage," Op. 27,

Adagio and Molto Allegro e vivace,

bars 99–466, thematic layout and harmonic structure



A remarkably large-scale delay in the return to the structural tonic occurs in the last movement of the String Quartet in E Minor, Op. 44/2. In this highly dynamic sonata-rondo (organized as a three-branch sonata form) the third large section, namely the recapitulation, is announced by a powerful dominant pedal, reached at bar 262.[50] However, the structural tonic does not return until the beginning of the closing theme at bar 379.

Example 3.26a illustrates the progression from IV (bar 240), the most prominent harmonic event in the development section, to V (bar 262) near the end of the development section. We can see how the dominant harmony (expressed essentially by a $\frac{6}{4}$ formation, and decorated by an appoggiatura-like V^7 chord) is further prolonged in the opening bars of the recapitulation. As shown, the stubborn return to the dominant note (B) in the bass part (bars 270, 278, 282) produces a continuous and unrelenting harmonic tension throughout the entire rondo theme. Occasional E-minor chords (whether in root position or in first inversion) do not embody a genuine return to the tonic. At the end of Example 3.26a, I show that the V moves to its upper neighbor, VI (bar 284). Although the bass of VI (C) is located just one half-step above the prevailing V (B), in the composition this move is dramatized by the *forte* dynamic, by

[50] The recapitulation officially begins at bar 266, as indicated in Example 3.26a. But since bar 262 already anticipates the rondo theme, one could already regard bar 262 as the beginning of the recapitulation. The difference between these two interpretations appears to be relatively negligible.

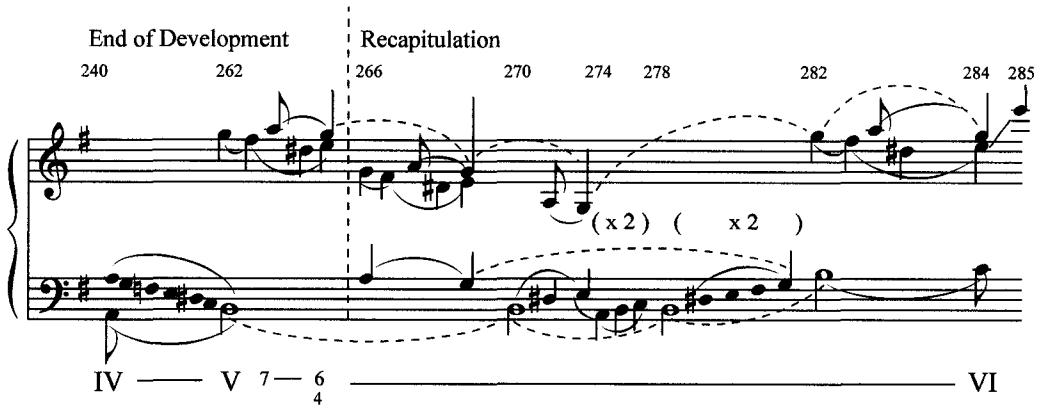
the sudden rhythmic halt on the VI, and, above all, by the explosive high register of bars 284–285.[51]

The music that now follows (bars 288 ff.) may be designated as a bridge of a sort; eventually it prepares (and leads to) the E-major second theme, which starts at bar 329. As shown in Example 3.26b, the VI (bar 284) is transformed into IV^6 (bar 327) by means of a large-scale 5–6 motion. IV^6 then smoothly leads to V^7 (bar 329), the harmony which dominates the entire second theme. The long-awaited tonic finally arrives when the closing theme begins at bar 379. Note also (Example 3.26b) that the seventh of the vastly stretched-out V^7 (as of the beginning of the second theme at bar 329) resolves into $g\sharp^2$ ($\hat{3}$ in E major) at bar 379.

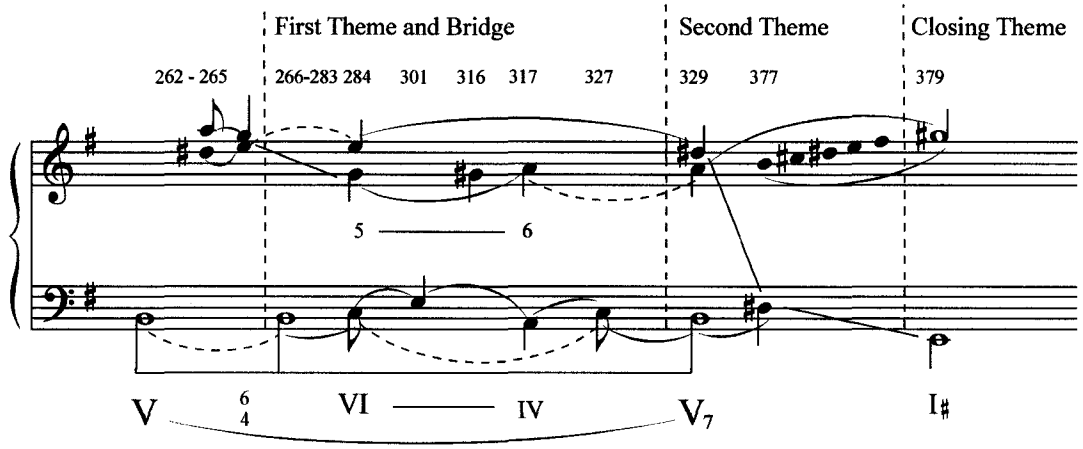
[51] In a celebrated article, Ernst Oster cites a large-scale connection, achieved by means of register, from bar 287 to bar 332. See his "Register and The Large-Scale Connection," in *Readings in Schenker Analysis and Other Approaches*, ed. Maury Yeston (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), pp. 62–63.

Example 3.26. String Quartet in E Minor, Op. 44/2, IV, Presto agitato

a) Bars 240–285, first phase of the dominant prolongation in the recapitulation



b) Bars 262–379, overview of the composed-out V



Our next example, the *finale* of the String Quartet in F Minor, Op. 80, basically follows the outline of a regular sonata form. The beginning of the recapitulation appears to be a normal one: the first theme is brought back on a tonic pedal that persists for seven bars (bars 269–275). However, viewed in a larger context, this F-minor pedal is better understood, I believe, as representing an apparent tonic, not a genuine one. In retrospect, the powerful dominant that is reached at bar 277, and then prolonged until bar 288, overshadows the preceding "tonic" return (bars 269 ff.) and sounds as a continuation of the extensive dominant (bars 181–268) of the development section. Hence, I prefer to read a genuine tonic arrival only at the point at which the first authentic cadence of the second group is completed (bar 305).[52]

Example 3.27 illustrates my reading of the overall harmonic structure of this extraordinarily charged *finale* (up to the second theme in the recapitulation[53]). As we can see, the development section reaches its harmonic goal, V, already at bar 181. The lengthy pedal point on C (bars 181–212) is followed by a sequence that leads eventually to an inverted dominant seventh chord (V^6_5, bars 265–268). Mendelssohn facilitates our hearing of the connection between the two dominant arrivals (that is, at bars 181 and 265) by assigning both an identical *fortissimo* dynamic. The thematic recapitulation at bar 269 is marked *piano*, and a crescendo that begins at bar 270 soon leads to yet

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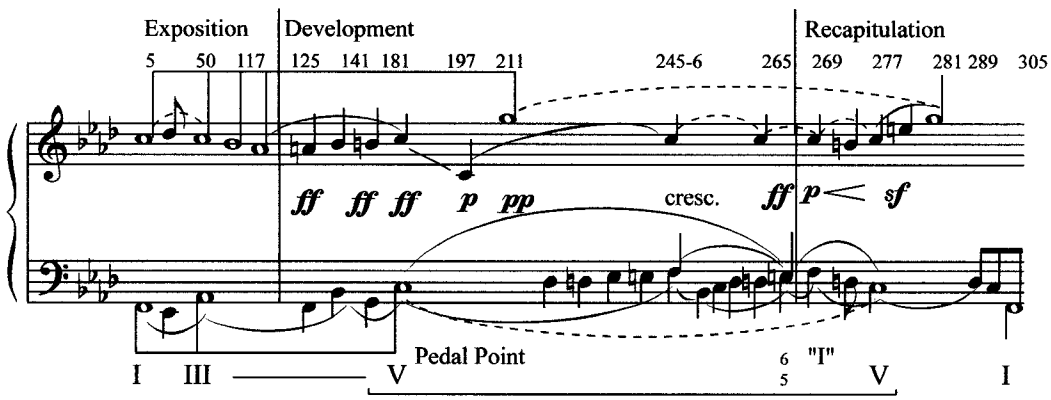
[52] The cadence in bars 304–305 is rather weak, and should not be counted as the closing cadence of the movement. Indeed, only the very last bar (461) of Op. 80 embodies a sense of tonal closure in a convincing manner.

[53] The auxiliary cadence with which the second theme begins in the exposition is not shown in Example 3.27. I shall analyze the delay in the arrival of III in the exposition in the next chapter. See Example 4.3.

another loud climax on V (bars 277 ff.)[54]. In short, the three prominent dominants (bars 181, 265, and 277) are closely associated with one another as powerful high points of articulation. Thus they seem to relegate all the other events that occur between them—including the thematic recapitulation of the first theme in bars 269 ff.—to a lower structural status.

Example 3.27. String Quartet in F Minor, Op. 80, IV, Allegro molto,

bars 1–305, tonal outline



As a final example for the present chapter I shall treat a highly exceptional sonata-form movement in Mendelssohn's *oeuvre*, the last movement of the "Italian" Symphony. In comparison with the previous large-scale examples in the foregoing discussion, the delay in the return to the structural tonic here is even more extreme: I is not reached until the closing structural cadence of the movement is completed (bar 234).

[54] Bars 277 and 279 have a *sforzando*, while bar 285 is marked *forte*.

In terms of the background tonal organization, Mendelssohn dispenses with an interruption structure altogether. Indeed, we face here a one-part inner form, which is sharply at odds with the sonata principle.

Furthermore, the last pages of the "Italian" Symphony are equally exceptional with regard to the thematic layout: strictly speaking, neither one of the two exposition themes is "properly" recapitulated in the last section (bars 196 ff.) of the piece. One may well wonder in what sense this last section is a recapitulation at all.[55]

On the other hand, the return to the home key near the end of the development (alongside with the dramatic preparatory dominant in bars 175–195) makes us expect a subsequent recapitulation. The immediate return (bar 196) of the development's fugue theme in A minor (on a dominant pedal), as well as the recollection of thematic ideas from the exposition (albeit mostly in a varied, fragmented form) near the end of the movement, still justify the designation of bars 196 ff. as at least a "quasi-recapitulation."[56]

Interestingly, Mendelssohn must have had certain misgivings about the second, third and fourth movements of the "Italian" Symphony. In 1834 he made a number of significant revisions in all these movements.[57] In the *finale*, the most prominent revision

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[55] In his brief discussion of the *finale* of Op. 90, Tovey, while not going into any technical formal analysis, comments that this movement has "all the tendency of romance to vanish around the corner." See his *Essays* 1, pp. 222–223.

[56] An excellent account of the thematic aspect of the *finale*, and especially its role in unifying the entire symphony, is included in Vitercik's book on Mendelssohn. See *The Early Works*, pp. 218–222.

[57] Concerning the different versions of Op. 90, see the following: Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, *Symphony in A Major ("Italian"): Facsimiles of the Extant Musical Autographs*, ed. John Michael Cooper, 2 vols. (Wiesbaden: Ludwig-Reichert-Verlag,

is especially relevant to our discussion: as of bar 196 (that is, of the familiar 1833 version), the second theme is recapitulated in A minor. In other words, Mendelssohn attempted to transform this final section into a more "normal" recapitulation.[58]

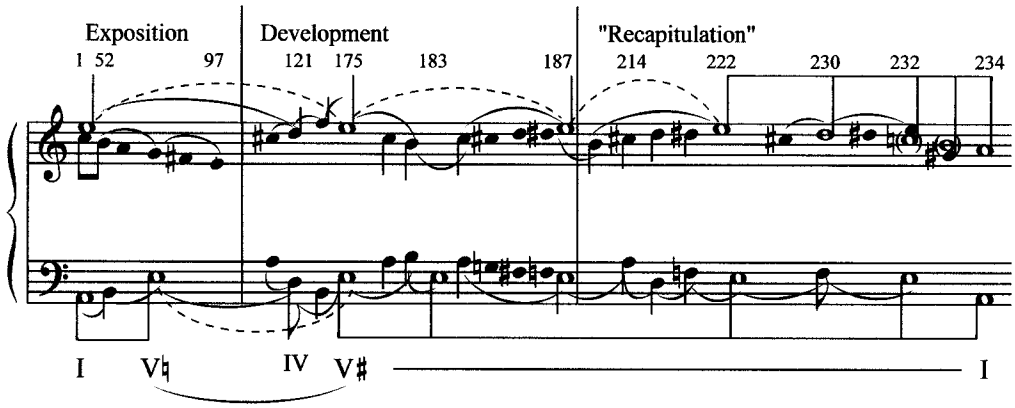
Example 3.28 illustrates my reading of the overall harmonic structure of the movement in its original (1833) version. As we can see, the exposition basically follows a normal sonata structure, tonicizing minor V (that is, E minor) in the second theme group. The development first presents IV (bar 121), the lower neighbor of V, and then transforms the tonicized V of the exposition into an E-major chord, the dominant of A minor. This goal is first achieved at bar 175, but even more powerful and definitive arrivals at V follow in bar 183 and especially bar 187 (stubbornly reiterated at bars 189 and 193–195, which are not shown in Example 3.28).

Instead of a recapitulation on I, as expected in bar 196, we now have an extensive dominant pedal (bars 196–213), and V is still composed out, though not literally present, in bars 214–222. At this point (bar 222) the powerful closing cadence of the movement begins (including, of course, a convincing melodic closure, as indicated in the upper voice of Example 3.28). The long-awaited tonic is finally reached at bar 234, and what follows (not shown in Example 3.28) is clearly no more than a reinforcement of the closing structural tonic.

1997); Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, *Symphony in A Major ("Italian"): First Edition of the Revised Version of 1834*, ed. John Michael Cooper (Wiesbaden: Ludwig-Reichert-Verlag, 1999); John Michael Cooper, *Mendelssohn's "Italian" Symphony* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

[58] Tovey asserts that "no defect is discoverable" in the *finale*, but he speculates that "Mendelssohn could have wished to broaden its design towards the end." See his *Essays*, 1, pp. 218–220.

Example 3.28. Symphony No. 4 in A ("Italian"), Op.90, IV, Saltarello, Presto, bars 1–234, middleground sketch



We have focused throughout this chapter on the most crucial juncture in sonata forms, that is, the beginning of the recapitulation section. I have tried to demonstrate how Mendelssohn finds inventive ways of weakening (and in some cases avoiding altogether) the tonal stability that traditionally articulates this formal juncture. As our investigation of sonata forms continues in the next chapter, we shall see that Mendelssohn deviates from the norms of formal articulation at other significant boundaries as well, deviations that often result in remarkably dynamic sonata forms.

CHAPTER 4

JOINING TOGETHER OTHER SECTIONS IN SONATA FORMS

After studying Mendelssohn's treatment of the most crucial formal juncture in sonata-form movements in Chapter 3—that is, the beginning of the recapitulation—we shall now focus on two other important formal junctures in these forms. I shall begin the present investigation with the juncture that normally divides a sonata exposition into two sections, namely the boundary between the modulating bridge phrase and the second theme.[1] Then the discussion will turn to the formal border between the exposition and the development. Since numerous movements by Mendelssohn contain deviations from the norms at both junctures, it will sometimes be unavoidable to deal with two portions of the same piece separately. However, as a final example I shall present a somewhat more comprehensive analysis of a complete movement, so that the resultant overall structure can be more fully appreciated.

If we examine the classical norms with regard to the two formal junctures that are relevant to our discussion, we can immediately notice a fundamental difference between them. The boundary between the first and the second groups of the exposition is normally announced, so to speak, by a preparatory dominant of the key of the second group. On the other side of the formal border, the simplest possibility is to begin a stable

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[1] Since all the expositions by Mendelssohn that I discuss in the present chapter—representing Mendelssohn's practice from Op. 1 (1822) to Op. 80 (1847)—contain a modulating bridge phrase, I do not mention here the important possibility (often encountered in Mozart) of ending the first part of the exposition on a half cadence in the original tonic key, and thus dispensing with a modulating transitional phrase.

new theme on the tonic of the key that has just been prepared. In other words, a clear formal division appears here as a result of the fact that there is, on the one hand, a dynamic, open-ended first group, and on the other hand a second group with a tonally (and often rhythmically) stable beginning.[2]

As for the boundary between the exposition and the development (or retransition), this is normally brought about solely by the firm closure of the former, namely the closing cadence of the second theme group.[3] In many sonata-form movements there is more than one such cadence, so that the sense of closure is even further enhanced.[4] By contrast, the beginning of the following development (or

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[2] For a fuller discussion of this norm (as well as some other possibilities), see Charles Rosen's chapter on the exposition in *Sonata Forms*, revised edition (New York: Norton, 1988), pp. 229–261. An excellent discussion of the normative subdivision of the exposition in classical sonata forms can be found in Rothstein's *Phrase Rhythm in Tonal Music* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1989), pp. 113–115. James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy present an elaborate investigation of this juncture in their article "The Medial Caesura and its Role in the Eighteenth-Century Sonata Exposition," in *Music Theory Spectrum* 19, no. 2 (Fall 1997): 115–154. William E. Caplin also elaborates on this formal border in his recent book *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 99–121.

[3] The crucial significance of the closing cadence (or cadences) at the end of the exposition has been emphasized in numerous writings on sonata forms. For a significant eighteenth-century account see Heinrich Christoph Koch, *Introductory Essay on Composition*, translated and edited by Nancy Kovaleff Baker (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1983), pp. 199–201. The much later writings of Schenker, Ratner and Rothstein similarly emphasize the role of cadential goals. See Schenker, *Free Composition*, translated and edited by Ernst Oster (New York: Longman, 1979), pp. 133–141; Leonard Ratner, *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1980), p. 221; Rothstein, *Phrase Rhythm*, p. 111.

[4] As pointed out by Charles Rosen, "at the end of the exposition, in order to confirm the new harmonic center, a considerable amount of insistence upon the now-tonicized dominant is called for." *Sonata Forms*, p. 242.

retransition) is much harder to characterize. One can find an array of possible beginnings in classical development sections, and it seems unproductive to attempt any rigid categorization of norms. That is to say, it is above all the clear impression of closure at the end of the exposition that calls attention to the formal division at this significant juncture.[5]

In what follows, we will study Mendelssohn's handling of these two significant formal junctures in comparison with the norms that were briefly presented in the foregoing paragraphs. As in the previous chapters, I shall first present several simple, foreground manipulations, and then proceed to discuss more drastic procedures. As we shall see, Mendelssohn's most inventive procedures, with regard to the juncture between the first and second groups in the exposition, is the presentation of "wrong" preparatory dominants at the end of the modulating bridge, as well as illusory tonics at the beginning of the second theme groups. As to our second formal juncture (the end of the exposition), Mendelssohn's most extreme violation of classical norms is the daring frustration of powerful closing cadences at the end of the exposition. In certain

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[5] If the closing cadence near the end of the exposition is not perfectly clear, the articulation of the form is almost automatically weakened. Even an unmistakable beginning of the ensuing development section might not suffice for effecting a clear-cut border. For instance, the absence of a clear authentic cadence at the end of the exposition in Mendelssohn's overture "Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage," Op. 27, leads R. Larry Todd to assert that "there is no formal break here...." This is despite the fact that the beginning of the development section is articulated most noticeably by a restatement of the bridge theme (see also Example 3.25 in Chapter 3). Todd's assertion is perhaps too sweeping, but it demonstrates the crucial importance of the closure of the exposition for the articulation of this formal juncture. See R. Larry Todd, *Mendelssohn: The Hebrides and Other Overtures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 62.

exceptional cases, the resultant tonal structures are sharply at odds with the inherited classical tradition.

The Juncture between Bridge and Second Group

As is well known, expositions normally divide into two main groups: one consists of both the first theme and the modulating bridge; the other contains the second theme as well as the closing or cadential themes.[6] In most cases, the end of the bridge phrase (on a preparatory dominant) is the distinct point of articulation between the two groups. When tonal structure is perfectly synchronized with thematic and rhythmic organization—as is the case in many sonata movements by Mozart and early Beethoven, though somewhat less in Haydn—the local tonic of the second key is featured, sometimes in $\frac{6}{3}$ position,[7] at the very beginning of the ensuing second group. Quite often, this new group presents a lyrical theme, as well as a stable phrase rhythm.

Sometimes, however, the beginning of the new theme still prolongs the dominant of the new key, and thus the arrival at the local tonic is somewhat postponed. Such delay

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[6] The distinction between cadential and closing themes is suggested by Rothstein. See his discussion of the sonata exposition in *Phrase Rhythm*, pp. 113–120.

[7] Mozart often begins the second theme group on such inverted local tonics, thereby lessening the harmonic stability of the beginning of the second group. This procedure facilitates a long-range connection between the preparatory dominant and the eventual arrival on the new tonic in root position as a structural harmony. For two familiar examples, see the first movements of the A-minor Piano Sonata K310 and the "Jupiter" Symphony.

in harmonic arrival can endow an exposition with a special dynamic quality.[8] As we shall see, Mendelssohn's expositions frequently follow this "exceptional" pattern. In numerous other instances Mendelssohn finds other inventive ways of smoothing over the divisions between the first and second groups of the sonata exposition.

I. Delay in the Arrival of a Locally Stable Tonic in the Second Group

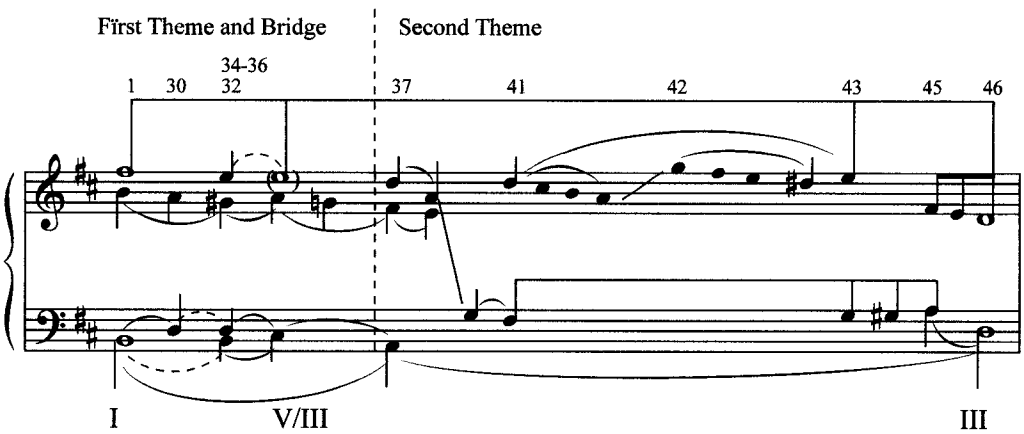
1. Second Theme Begins on Dominant of Tonicized Area

In the third (slow) movement of the String Quartet in D Major, Op. 44/1, the first part of the exposition (that is, the first theme and the modulating bridge, bars 1–36) is perfectly normal. As shown in Example 4.1, the bridge ends on the preparatory dominant of D major (bars 32–36), so that one expects that the new theme, as well as the local tonic harmony, will be presented simultaneously at bar 37. However, this expectation is only partly fulfilled: the new theme enters over a "stubborn" dominant pedal, and the resolution to the local tonic (D major) occurs only at bar 46, that is, at the

[8] For well-known examples, see the first movements of Beethoven's Piano Sonatas Op.2/1, Op.13, and Op.31/2. In the first four examples in the present chapter (4.1–4.4), Mendelssohn appears to follow Beethoven's strategy. In his book *Classical Form*, William Caplin cites additional late-eighteenth-century antecedents. See pp. 113–115. Caplin also has an insightful discussion of obscured boundaries between the transition and the subordinate theme. See pp. 201–203.

end of the single phrase which comprises the second theme.[9] Example 4.1 illustrates the essential voice leading of the passage.

Example 4.1. String Quartet in D Major, Op. 44/1, III, Andante espressivo con moto, bars 1–46, voice leading



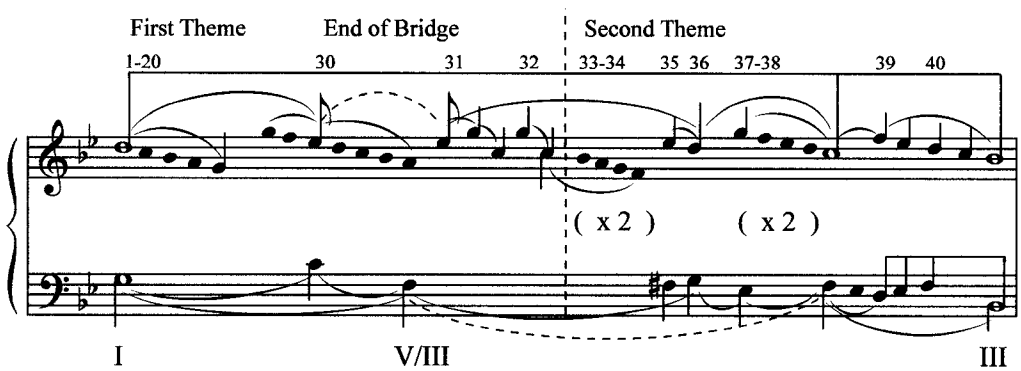
A rather similar tonal organization characterizes the beginning of the second theme in the Andante scherzando (second) movement of the String Quintet No. 2 in B♭ Major, Op. 87. Here again, the preparatory dominant of the second group (bars 30–32) creates expectations that a new theme will begin on a stable B♭ tonic, but the new theme starts (bars 33) in the domain of the dominant of III, and this dominant persists until an auxiliary cadence (bars 39–40) finally leads to the local B♭ tonic.

As shown in Example 4.2, the continuity between the bridge and the second theme is further enhanced by the registral connection of the unresolved dissonant

[9] The codetta phrase that begins at bar 46 also belongs to the D-major second group. However, its repetition (as of bar 50) already leads elsewhere. See Example 4.14 below.

seventh ($e\flat^2$) at the end of the bridge to d^2 at bar 36. Another beautiful thread of continuity can be seen at bar 37, where the upper voice returns to the prominent g^2, which was left unresolved—at least as far as register is concerned—since bars 31–32. (In those bars g^2 was featured as a dissonant ninth above the prolonged dominant seventh chord built on F.)

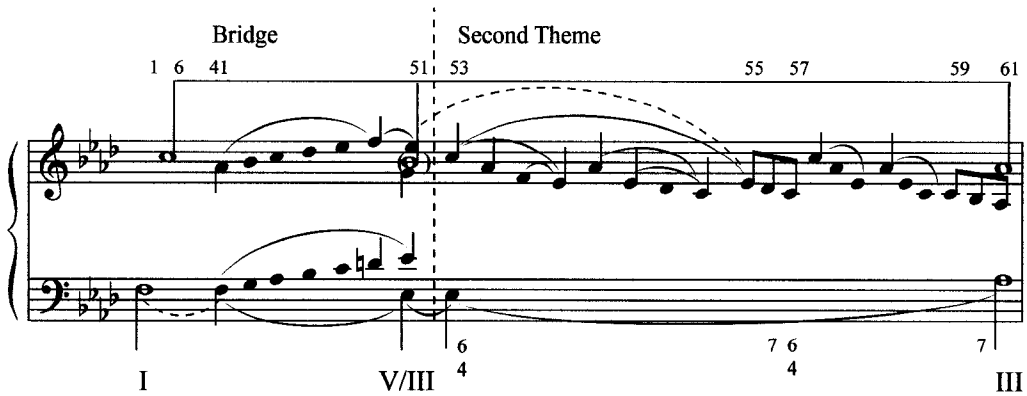
Example 4.2. String Quintet No. 2 in B♭ Major, Op. 87, II, Andante scherzando, bars 1–40, voice leading



Our next example of a second theme that begins on a dominant pedal—the first movement of the String Quartet in F Minor, Op. 80—is somewhat more intense. The bridge phrase (bars 41–53) moves rapidly towards the dominant of A♭ major, the key of the second theme, and reaches its harmonic goal (that is, E♭, the dominant of III) at bar 51. This E♭ harmony is prolonged in the following two bars (up to the downbeat of bar 53). The immediate entrance of the new theme on the second beat of bar 53 (without any

pause or break) connects the two sections, carrying forward the rhythmic and harmonic momentum in a rather Beethovenian fashion. As shown in Example 4.3, the tonic of the second theme, A♭ major, arrives only at bar 61, the end of the first phrase of the second theme. Nonetheless, it makes only a brief, short-lived appearance, not unlike many other tonics in this restless piece.

Example 4.3. String Quartet in F Minor, Op. 80, I, Allegro vivace assai, bars 1–61, outline

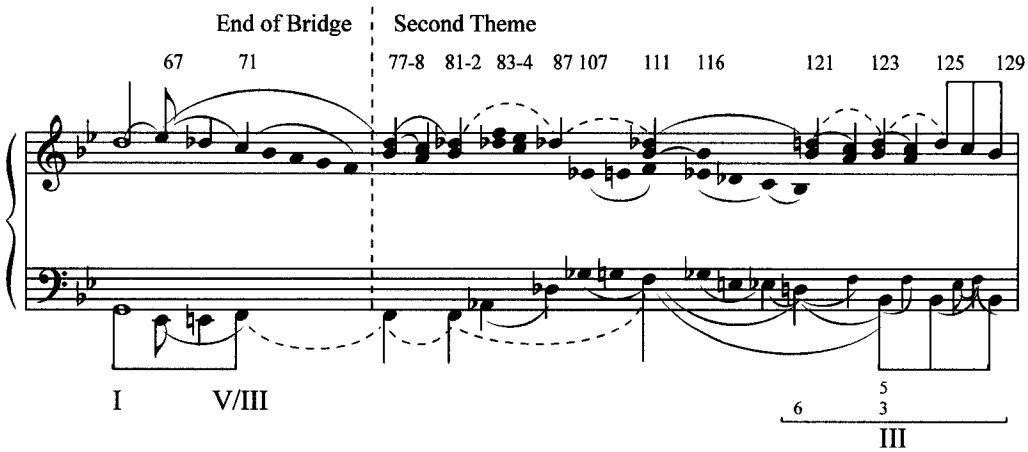


The next example (the last one in which the second theme continues the preparatory dominant of the bridge) comes from the first movement of the Piano Concerto in G Minor, Op. 25. Unlike the previous examples, where the arrival of the local tonic was postponed to the end of the first (or only) phrase of the second group, the delay of the resolution here is on a dramatically larger scale. As can be seen in Example 4.4, Mendelssohn even finds the time in this vast second group to indulge in an

expansive Schubertian usage of modal mixture, when he tonicizes D♭ (♭III in the local tonality of B♭ major; see bars 83 ff.).[10] Only at bars 121 and 123 (that is, after more than 40 bars in the second theme!) do we finally arrive at the long-awaited B♭ tonic.[11]

Example 4.4. Piano Concerto No. 1 in G Minor, Op. 25, I, Molto Allegro con fuoco

bars 1–129, voice leading



[10] This excursion to D♭ is probably related to the frequent appearance of C♯ in both the first and the third movements. (The first of these emphasized C♯s is featured at the end of bar 5, first movement.)

[11] The highly exceptional manipulation of the closing cadence in this exposition will be discussed in the second part of this chapter. See Example 4.15.

2. Second Theme Begins with an Auxiliary Cadence

A dominant pedal is not the only possible way to create a non-tonic beginning of a theme. Our next example shows another possibility for such a beginning, namely, an auxiliary cadence.[12] As we can see in Example 4.5b, the bridge phrase (bars 17–48) in the last movement of the F-minor String Quartet establishes the key of the second theme, A♭ major (the end of the bridge and the first phrase of the second theme are shown in Example 4.5a). But the preparatory dominant at the end of the bridge (bars 47–8) does not resolve to the expected III (that is, the local A♭ tonic), but rather to VI of III (bar 49), producing an effect similar to that of a deceptive cadence.[13] The tonic of the second theme makes its first (albeit fleeting) appearance only 16 bars later (bar 65), at the juncture between the antecedent and the consequent phrases of the second theme. A stable A♭ tonic, long awaited since the end of the bridge, is not heard until the very end of the exposition (bars 117–124, not shown in Example 4.5b).

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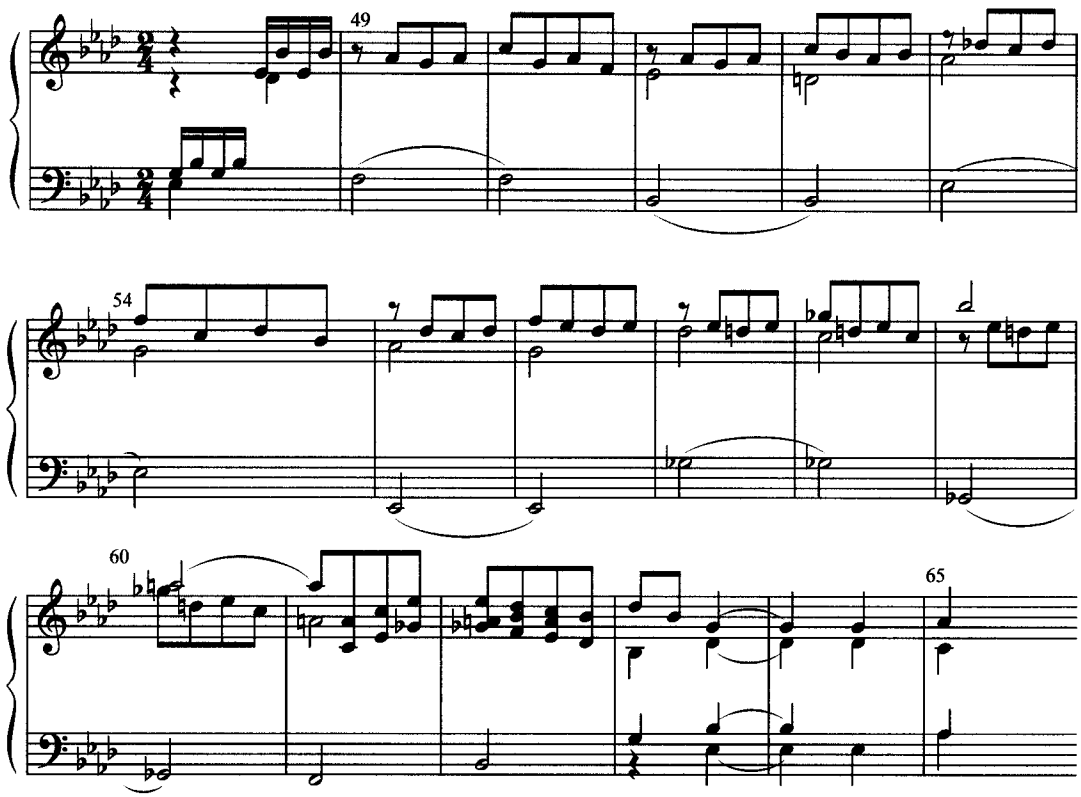
[12] For two familiar antecedents of a fairly complex auxiliary cadence at the beginning of the second group, see the first movements of Mozart's "Linz" Symphony, K425, and Beethoven's "Pastoral" Piano Sonata, Op. 28.

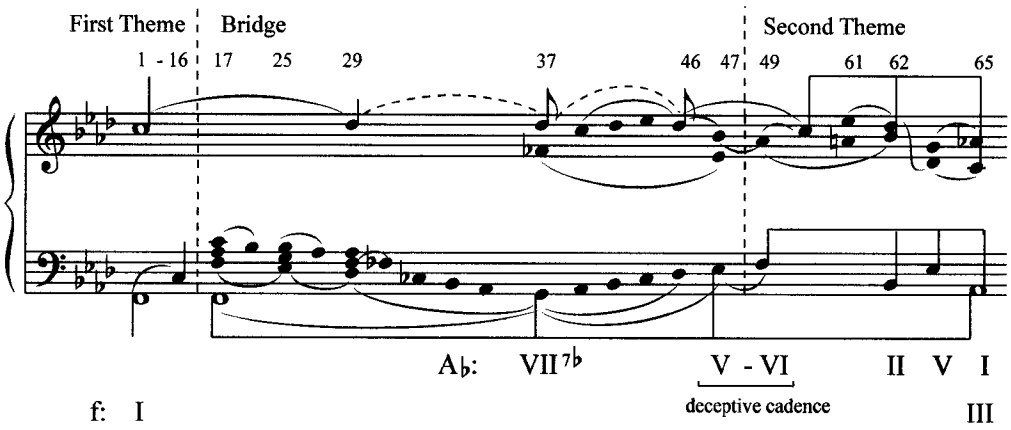
[13] Deceptive cadences are a prominent feature in the *finale* of Op. 80. See for instance bars 80–81 and 212–213. See also Example 3.27 in the previous chapter.

Example 4.5. String Quartet in F Minor, Op. 80, IV, Allegro molto

a) Bars 48–65, simplified



b) Bars 1–65, voice leading



II. Manipulation of Keys

A further deviation from the norms at the juncture between the first and second groups of the sonata exposition occurs when the dominant preparation at the end of the bridge and the initial tonic of the second theme belong to two different keys. To be sure, one of these keys (or, in one exceptional case, both of them) turns out to be "wrong." In the following excerpts, we shall see several junctures between bridge and second theme in which Mendelssohn employs such tonal illusions.[14]

1. Preparatory Dominant in the Wrong Key

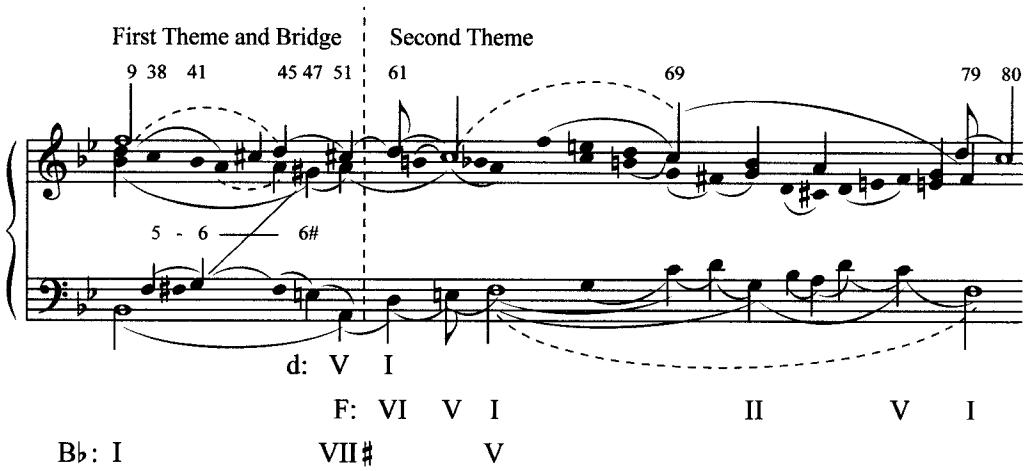
The bridge in the first movement of the Cello Sonata in B♭, Op. 45, features such a deceptive preparation. Although the key of the second group is the customary dominant (F major), the end of the modulating bridge on VII♯ (V of III) makes us expect that the second theme will begin in D minor. The ten-bar dominant preparation (bars 51–60) indeed leads to the expected D-minor chord (bar 61, downbeat), but this harmony immediately turns out to be VI in F major. A short auxiliary progression (bars 61–62) leaves no doubt with regard to the true tonic (that is, F major) of the second theme.

[14] For a discussion of apparent tonal centers and illusory keys of various kinds, see Carl Schachter's "Analysis by Key: Another Look at Modulation," *Unfoldings*, pp. 139–151.

Example 4.6 illustrates the voice leading up to the first closing cadence of this new theme.[15]

Example 4.6. Cello Sonata No. 1 in B♭ Major, Op. 45, I, Allegro vivace

bars 9–80, voice leading



A more dramatic tonal surprise at the beginning of the second theme occurs in both the first and last movements of the String Quartet in E Minor, Op. 44/2. In the bridge sections of these movements Mendelssohn prepares a modulation to B minor, but the key that is alluded to turns out to be an illusion: the new themes in both movements feature G major as their real tonality from the very outset.

In the first movement, as shown in Example 4.7a, an extensive F♯ pedal (bars 39–52) moves surprisingly to G major at bar 53, thus producing the impression of a

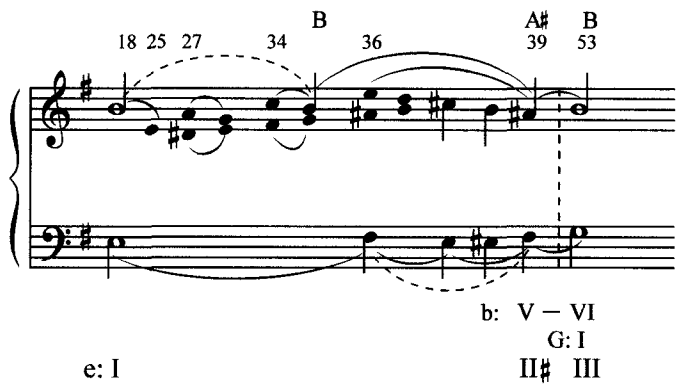
[15] Certain unusual aspects of the phrase rhythm in this second theme were already discussed in Chapter 1. See Example 1.10.

deceptive cadence in B minor.[16] But as the second theme unfolds, experienced listeners would probably not hear the G-major music as a temporary diversion and thus would not expect the music to return to the unfulfilled B-minor tonality. Rather, the lyrical theme in G major is a stable tonal event, which—in retrospect—relegates the B-minor tonality to the status of a temporary illusion. In addition to the significant deceptive-cadence idea, the unusual tonal events at this formal juncture can be understood as yet another expression of a salient chromatic motive, namely B–A♯–B, first presented at the beginning of the movement (bars 1–4). Example 4.7b illustrates the initial appearance of this idea (see the "alto" voice). The background upper voice—extending over the first theme, the bridge, and the beginning of the second theme—repeats this very same motive (see Example 4.7a), but on a remarkably larger scale.

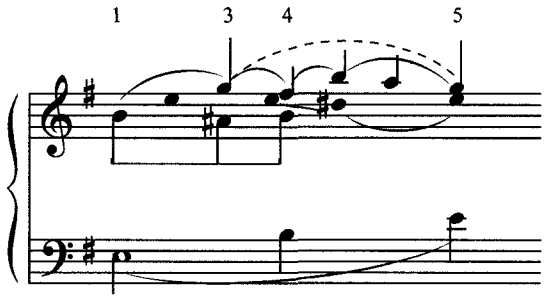
[16] The relation of the deceptive-cadence illusion at the beginning of the second theme to other deceptive cadences in the course of the movement is discussed in Schachter's "Analysis by Key," *Unfoldings*, p. 151, and Greg Vitercik's *The Early Works of Felix Mendelssohn: A Study in the Romantic Sonata Style* (Philadelphia: Gordon and Breach, 1992), pp. 311–313.

Example 4.7. String Quartet in E Minor, Op. 44/2, I, Allegro assai appassionato

a) Bars 18–53, voice leading



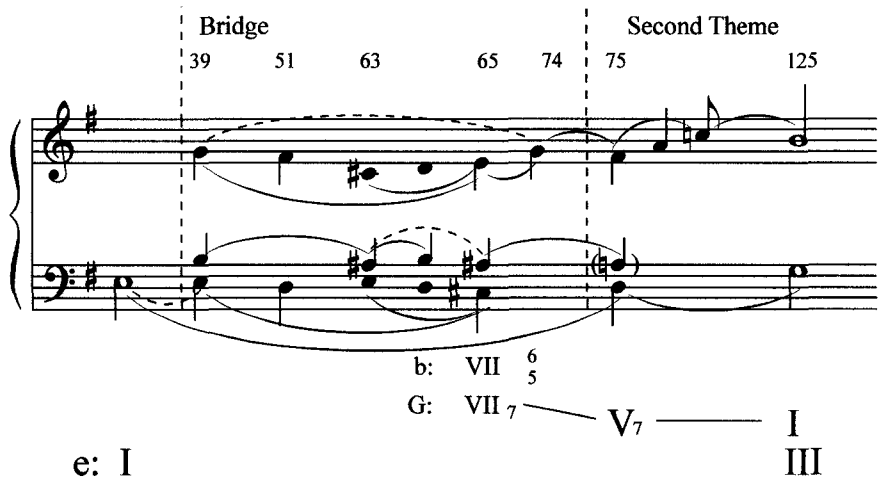
b) Bars 1–5 voice leading and motive



Turning now to the *finale* of the String Quartet Op. 44/2, we can see that the bridge section (starting at the end of bar 39 and ending at bar 74) similarly prepares an illusory B-minor tonality: VII $\frac{6}{5}$ of B minor (C♯–E–G–A♯) is reached at bar 65, and then

prolonged until bar 74. However, since the first portion of the second theme group features an extensive prolongation of the dominant (of the relative key of G major), the harmonic progression at the formal juncture is considerably more complex than the deceptive cadence that we have seen in the first movement. As illustrated in Example 4.8, the sixth of this diminished chord (A♯) behaves like its enharmonic equivalent (B♭), so that the diminished chord is understood at least in retrospect as VII^7 of V in G major. The resolution of this leading-tone seventh chord to V^7 of G major (bar 75) coincides with the beginning of the second theme.[17]

Example 4.8. String Quartet in E Minor, Op. 44/2, IV, Presto agitato, bars 39–125, outline



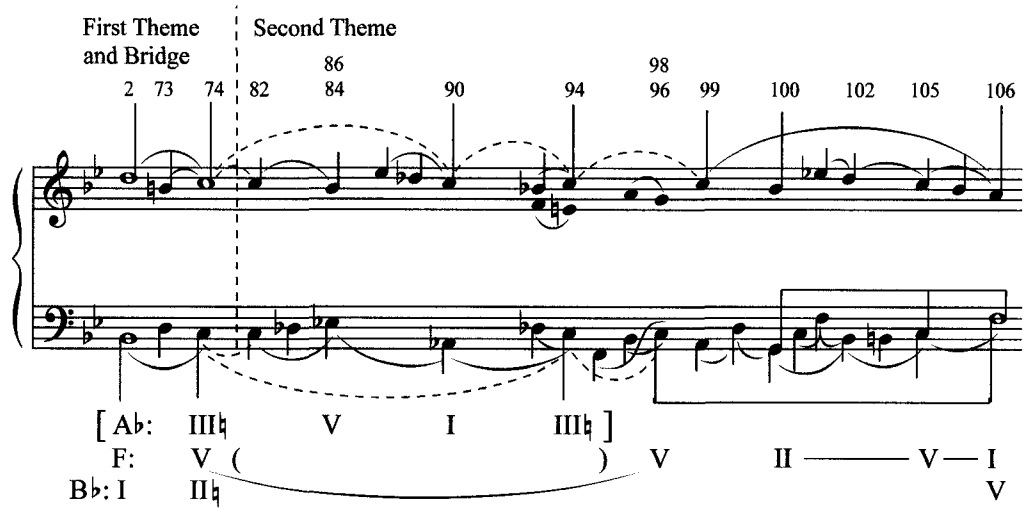
[17] For a more detailed discussion of this second theme, see Chapter 1, Example 1.19.

2. Second Theme Begins in the Wrong Key

After studying three examples of a deceptive preparation (that is, expositions in which the bridge prepares a "wrong" key), we shall now examine two junctures in which the tonal situation is quite the opposite. In other words, the bridge does end on the correct dominant preparation, but the second theme begins in what turns out to be no more than a temporary and illusory key.

In the first movement of the Symphony No. 2 ("Lobgesang") in B♭ Major, Op. 52, the bridge ends normally on a C-major chord, that is, V of V (see bars 74–81). But instead of beginning the lyrical second theme in F major, as expected, Mendelssohn reinterprets the C-major chord as III♮ in A♭ major, and the entire first phrase of the new theme is in that "wrong" key. The very same C-major chord returns at bar 94 (still perceived as III♮ in A♭ major). Now, however, the opposite reinterpretation takes place: the C-major chord functions as V in F major. Thus, the following phrase (bars 95–106) is in the genuine second-theme key. As Example 4.9 illustrates, the surprising A♭ tonality at the beginning of the second theme might be best understood (at least in retrospect) as a parenthetical diversion within a large-scale prolongation of V of F major. Example 4.9 also indicates that the structural arrival at the true local tonic (namely F) occurs only at bar 106, where the first cadence in this key is completed.

Example 4.9. Symphony No. 2 in B♭, Op. 52, I, Maestoso con moto and Allegro, bars 2–106, voice leading

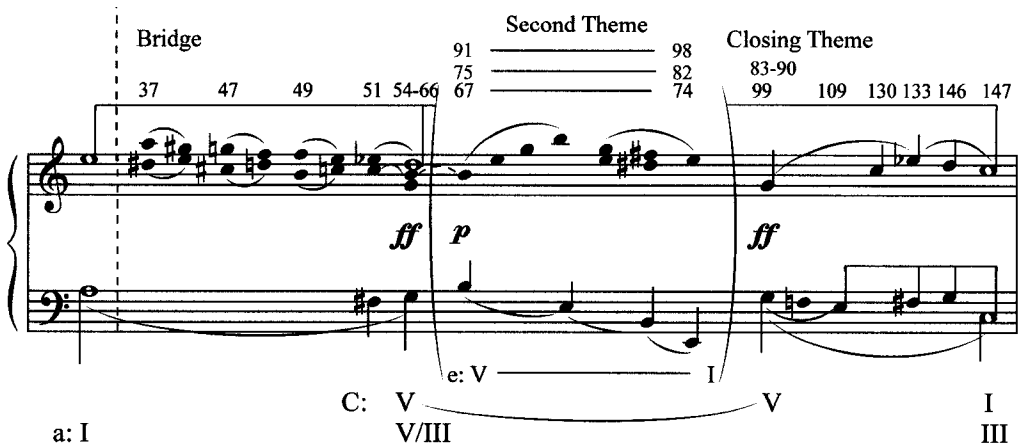


In the *finale* of the "Scottish" Symphony the modulating bridge (bars 37–66) prepares the ultimate contrasting key of the exposition, namely C major (III). As can be seen in Example 4.10, the dominant preparation of C major begins at bar 54 and continues until bar 66. However, the leading tone in the expected C-major key, namely B (the third in the V chord that is presented as the dominant preparation of C major), is temporarily treated as if it were the dominant of E minor. The extraordinarily beautiful second theme enters surprisingly at bar 67 in this transient E-minor tonality. Mendelssohn alludes to the parenthetical and illusory nature of this key by assigning a

piano dynamic to the new theme, in sharp contrast to the *fortissimo* immediately preceding it.[18]

As we can see, C major does not give up that easily: in bars 83–90 it tries to fight the E minor off (note the *fortissimo*!). At this stage, the magical E-minor theme seems to be equally stubborn: it enters again at bar 91. Only later on, at bar 98, Mendelssohn finally declares C major victorious, and the exposition eventually closes firmly in the key of III. Interestingly, the dynamic quality of this unusual exposition is further enhanced by the fact that III, the genuine second-theme key, is not presented in a stable root position before the closing cadence of the exposition is complete.

Example 4.10. Symphony No. 3 in A Minor, Op. 56 ("Scottish"), IV, Allegro vivacissimo, bars 37–147, voice leading



[18] Thomas Grey perceptively interprets "the muffled bagpipe-like timbre" of the E-minor theme as suggesting "something heard from a distance, while the blustery C-major from all the remaining instruments clearly conveys an immediate presence." See his "Orchestral Music," in *The Mendelssohn Companion*, ed. Douglass Seaton (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2001), p. 457.

3. Both Preparation and Beginning in Wrong Keys

Our last example of tonal manipulations at the juncture of the bridge and second theme is rather exceptional: in the first movement of the Piano Concerto No. 2 in D Minor (Op. 40), both the dominant preparation at the end of the bridge and the beginning of the second theme turn out to be in the "wrong" keys (the beginning of the second theme is given in Example 4.11a). As we can see in Example 4.11b, the modulating bridge ends with an extensive dominant preparation in the key of A minor (bars 75–89), a plausible option for a second theme in a D-minor piece. But after such a lengthy dominant preparation the second theme begins (bar 90) in C major (bars 91–100). The E-major chord that was expected to function as V in A minor is reinterpreted as III♯ in C major, initiating an auxiliary cadence in this key. It is no coincidence that this seeming auxiliary cadence avoids a root-position C-major chord. As it happens, the search for the true key of the second theme continues: another auxiliary cadence (bars 102–106) now leads to F major. This fresh, unprepared tonality is the genuine key of the second theme group.[19]

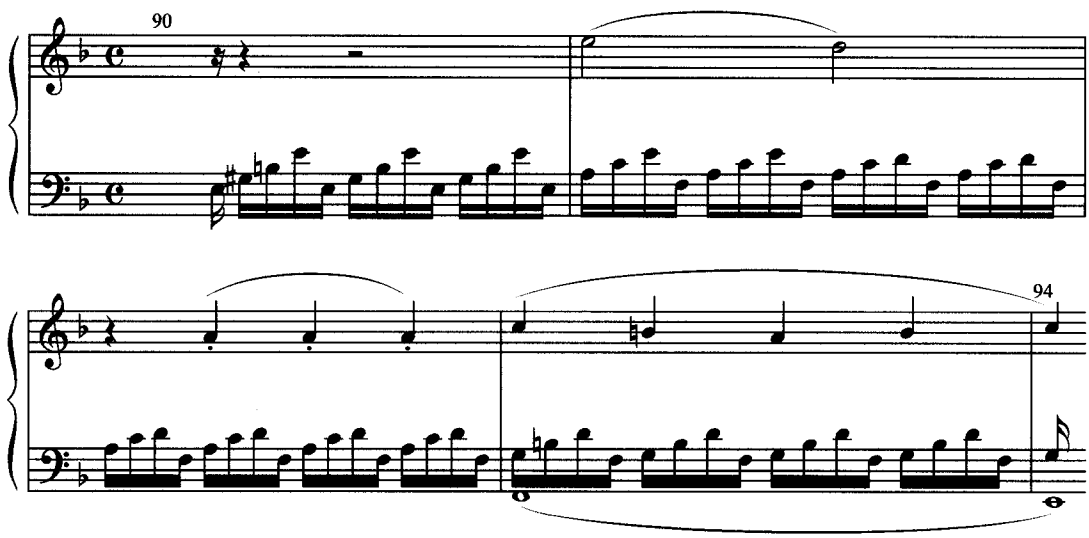
Indeed, the auxiliary progressions (in two different keys, neither of them prepared) endow the beginning of the second theme with a special improvisatory character. As we can see at the bottom of Example 4.11b, the basic progression—that is, I–II♯–III—is identical to that of the first movement of the E-minor String Quartet (see

[19] Thomas Grey praises the unusual approach to the second theme and notes its Schumannesque character. *The Mendelssohn Companion*, p. 514.

Example 4.7).[20] However, unlike the abrupt nature of the deceptive cadence in the quartet, the two-phase search for the right tonality of the second theme in the first movement of the D-minor Concerto creates an almost fantasy-like effect.

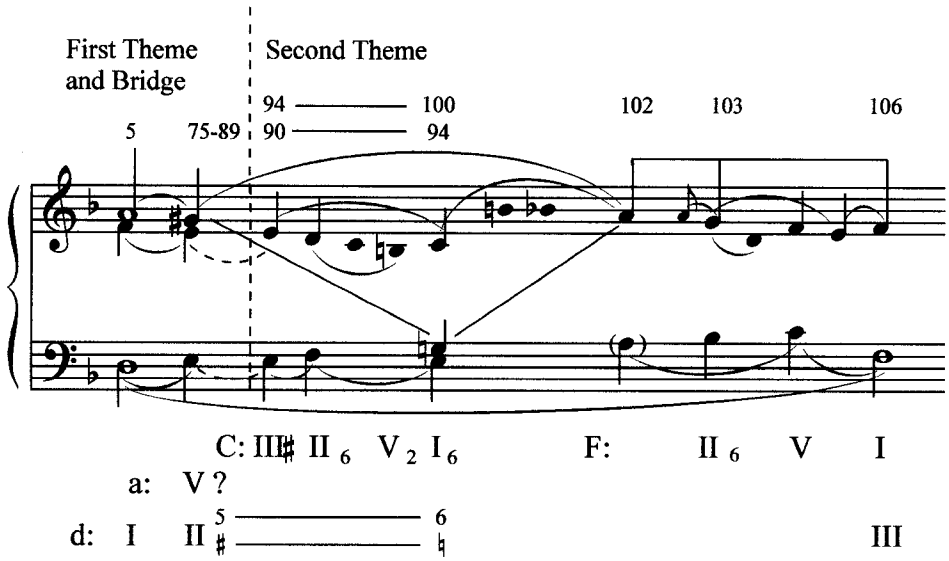
Example 4.11. Piano Concerto No. 2 in D Minor, Op. 40, I, Allegro appassionato

a) Bars 90–94



[20] As we can see in the voice-leading graph (Example 4.11b), the II♯ is transformed into a diatonic chord E–G♮–C (I^6 in C major; VII^6 in D minor) at bar 94. Normally, one would prefer to regard the diatonic element as the main harmony. Here, nonetheless, the unusual emphasis that the chromatic harmony, II♯, receives in the music—above all, its striking placement at the end of the bridge—requires a different interpretation.

b) Bars 5–106, voice leading



The Border between Exposition and Development

We now arrive at the second formal juncture in our present investigation, namely the border between the end of the exposition and the beginning of the development. As already mentioned, the most significant sign that the exposition is reaching its end is the imperative closing cadence in the non-tonic key. It seems mandatory for the articulation of the form to round off the second group with a perfectly clear closure.[21] Furthermore, according to the sonata principle the music of the second group has to be repeated in the recapitulation section, and this strong cadence (now in the tonic key) should bring the entire structure to a convincing closure.[22] In the following discussion, I shall first present several foreground overlaps in which the closure of the exposition remains intact. Then, the focus of our study will shift to Mendelssohn's highly individualized practice of frustrating the closing cadence of the exposition.

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[21] The "official" end of the exposition might not coincide with the completion of the last cadence of the second group, since a codetta, or transitional passages of various natures, may still follow. Nonetheless, the crucial role of the closing cadence(s) is by no means impaired.

[22] However, as pointed out by William Caplin, there are several sonata-rondos by Beethoven in which the second group lacks cadential closure. *Classical Form*, p. 237. (Caplin cites these instances in Beethoven sonata-rondos in note 25, pp. 284–285.)

I. Surface Links

A beautiful surface overlap of the exposition and development sections occurs in the slow movement of the Octet Op. 20. As shown in Example 4.12, the closing cadence of the second theme displays a separation of the melodic and harmonic resolutions to the local tonic, E♭. Whereas the melody reaches its goal at bar 54, the bass evades E♭ until bar 56.[23] However the upper voice at this bar (56) presents a G♭, so that the local tonic harmony is—quite surprisingly—an E♭-minor chord. As it happens, this minor III also functions as the first chord in the development section, which begins with a slightly varied version of the unforgettable sequence that was first presented in the modulating bridge of the exposition (see bars 29 ff.).[24] Example 4.12 illustrates the voice leading of the entire development section, from the III♭ of bar 56 to the arrival at the structural V at bar 65.[25]

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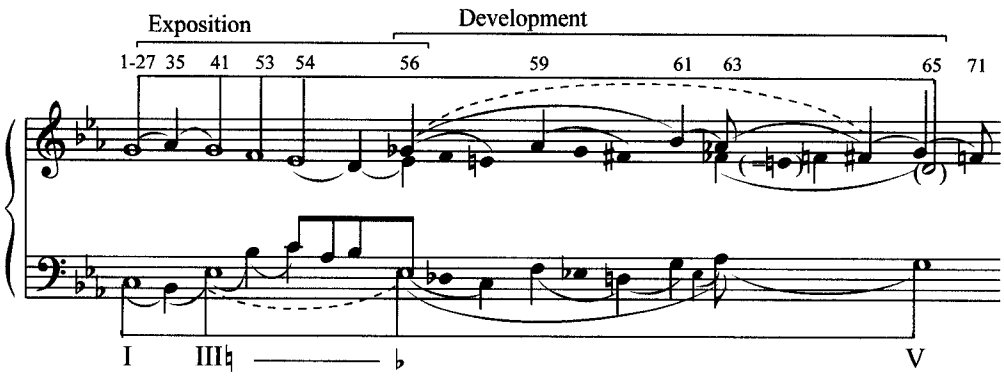
[23] There is another feasible reading of this cadence: the E♭ at bar 54 can be understood as a passing tone within a prolonged V (of E♭). In this alternative reading, the melodic resolution to E♭ is at bar 56, in perfect agreement with the bass. Another instance in which I prefer to read a melodic resolution to $\hat{1}$ prior to the harmonic arrival at I is the closing cadence in the SWW Op. 85/3, also in E♭ major. See Example 2.33c.

[24] Greg Vitercik asserts that using the bridge material in this way to function as the main body of the development is unique to Mendelssohn, and occurs only twice: in the slow movements of the Octet Op. 20 and Symphony No. 1, Op. 11. See *The Early Works*, pp. 100–101.

[25] For a detailed graph of the second theme in the exposition, see Example 1.24a.

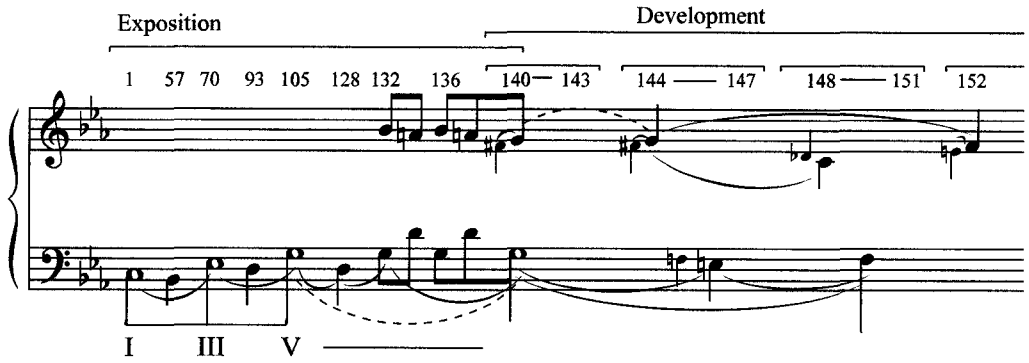
Example 4.12. Octet in E♭ Major, Op. 20, II, Andante, bars 1–71, voice leading



In our next example, the first movement of the Piano Trio Op. 66, the linkage of the exposition to the development section is brought about by a delicate overlap of the design. As indicated by the square brackets in Example 4.13, the closing G-minor chord that marks the end of the exposition (bar 140) also signals the beginning of the development section by initiating a distinct rhythmic and textural pattern (bars 140–143), which is clearly repeated in the two subsequent four-bar units (bars 144–147 and 148–151). Thus, as far as tonal structure is concerned, bar 140 belongs to the exposition. But at the same time—from the perspective of the surface design—this bar already belongs to the ensuing development section.[26]

[26] Mendelssohn might have learned this type of textural overlap from classical antecedents such as the first movement of Mozart's Piano Concerto in A Major, K488, where the codetta of the exposition already begins the texture and orchestration of the following development section. See bars 143 ff.

Example 4.13. Piano Trio in C Minor, Op. 66, I, Allegro energico e fuoco, bars 1–152, outline



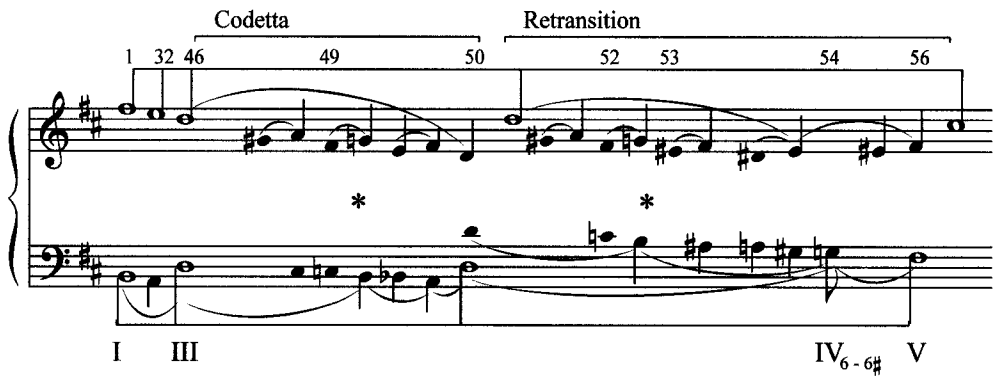
Our last example of a surface overlap is the slow (third) movement of the String Quartet in D Major, Op. 44/1. Although the closing cadence that normally marks the end of the exposition is perfectly clear (bars 45–46; see also Example 4.1), the design of the following measures masks the "formal" end of the exposition. As already mentioned, the closing cadence of the second theme falls at bar 46. The arrival at the long-awaited tonic (that is, D major, the key of the second theme) is then followed by a phrase (bars 46–50) that reinforces the closing cadence and sounds like a codetta. At bar 50 Mendelssohn seems to initiate yet another repetition of this codetta phrase. However, soon enough (bars 52–56) this phrase takes a new direction and leads to the structural V (bars 56–69) that already prepares the recapitulation.[27] Example 4.14 illustrates the essential voice

[27] Despite the relative length of this portion (20 bars), I prefer to call bars 50–69 a retransition rather than a development section, since 14 out of those 20 bars are a dominant preparation for the recapitulation.

leading from the completion of the cadence that tonicizes III (bar 46) to the arrival at the dominant (bar 56).

Despite the obvious repetition that bonds the codetta phrase of bars 46–50 to the phrase that starts at bar 50, the latter unit must be understood as already belonging to the following formal unit, namely the retransition: the harmonic motion from III to V (bars 50–56) is the decisive factor. Nonetheless, our awareness of the fact that we are no longer in the domain of the exposition is a retroactive one: when the music of bar 46 returns at bar 50, there is still no way to know that a new formal section has begun.[28]

Example 4.14. String Quartet in D Major, Op. 44/1, III, Andante espressivo con moto, bars 1–56, voice leading



[28] A very similar strategy can be seen in numerous classical bridges, which begin as a repetition of the first theme; only the subsequent modulation makes us reinterpret those beginnings as a new formal unit (see for instance Mozart's Piano Sonatas K310 and K333). For examples (similar to those that we have seen here) of codetta phrases that undergo subsequent reinterpretation—see Schubert's *Impromptu* Op. 90/1 in C Minor, bars 34–40 and also the *Quartett-Satz* in C Minor, bars 13–26.

II. Breaking the Closing Cadence of the Exposition

In contrast to the foreground overlaps of the exposition and the development sections that we have seen so far, the following examples demonstrate a much more drastic procedure, namely, the frustration of the closing cadence at the end of the exposition.[29] In all of the examples that follow, the incomplete cadence first appears to initiate a most firm closure of the exposition, but then, surprisingly, this "promise" is not fulfilled, and we suddenly become aware that the exposition has already given way to the development section.[30]

Our next three examples, the first movements of the two Piano Concerti, Op. 25 and 40, as well as the opening movement of the celebrated Violin Concerto, Op. 64, exemplify this drastic deviation from the classical norms most clearly. In these three expositions, the closing cadences reach the dramatic trill on their respective local $\hat{2}$, but

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[29] Rothstein is certainly correct in pointing out that at least one authentic cadence is required in order to round off the exposition of a sonata form. See *Phrase Rhythm*, pp. 111 and 113–114. Caplin also emphasizes this norm in *Classical Form*, p. 97. (Nonetheless, he also cites two expositions that end exceptionally with an imperfect authentic cadence. See note no. 10, p. 270.) Hepokoski cites a rare exception, namely Haydn's String Quartet in G Minor, Op. 20/3, first movement. See his recent article "Beyond the Sonata Principle," *Journal of The American Musicological Society* 55/1 (Spring 2002): 142–143. For another precedent, see Beethoven's String Quartet in E Minor, Op. 59/2, I. Additional examples in Mendelssohn that I do not analyze here are the slow movement of the F-major violin sonata and the first movement of the F-minor string quartet, Op. 80.

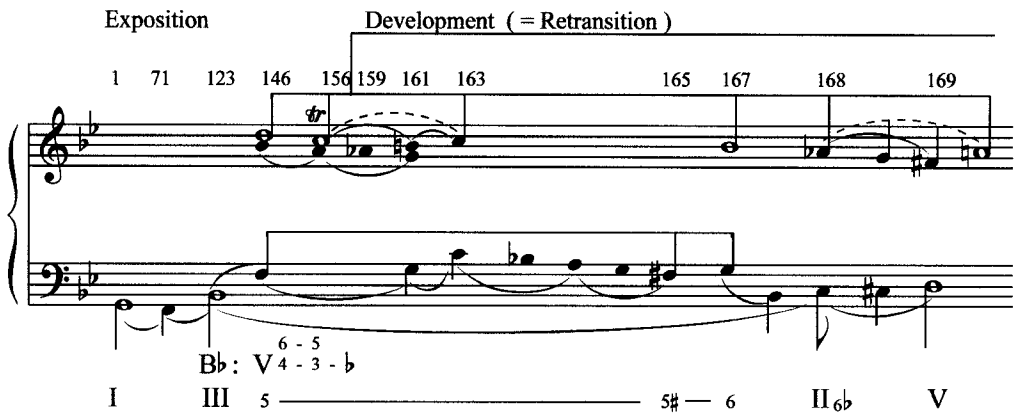
[30] As pointed out by Kofi Agawu, "the effect of a promised cadence is in some ways comparable to that of an actual cadence." For this highly interesting discussion of "the 'feel' of closure," see his article "Concepts Of Closure and Chopin's Opus 28," *Music Theory Spectrum* 9 (1987): 1–17.

then avoid the expected closure. As a result, the development sections in these movements come to be effectively bonded with the preceding expositions.

In the first movement of the Piano Concerto in G Minor, Op. 25, the second theme seems to be heading towards a climactic closure when we arrive at the cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ at bar 146. Since there has not yet been any cadence in B♭ major—the key of the second theme—we certainly expect a compelling closure to round off this expansive exposition. Indeed, ten bars later (156) the solo piano has the characteristic trill on $\hat{2}$ (in B♭), so that the cadence appears to approach the inevitable closure. At bar 159, nonetheless, the local dominant harmony (an F dominant-seventh chord) is suddenly transformed into a half diminished-$\frac{6}{5}$ chord (A♮ is replaced by A♭; E♭ goes down to D), so that in fact F no longer functions as a dominant at all. Thus, the closing cadence of the exposition seems to dissolve and never reaches a conclusion, and we unexpectedly find ourselves in the domain of the development.

As shown in Example 4.15, the unresolved F (bars 146 ff.) eventually moves to F♯ and G (bars 165 and 167 respectively). Together they form a sort of an inner ("tenor") voice that expresses a linear motion 5–5♯–6 over a conceptually stationary B♭ in the background. The deeper-level harmonic progression then passes through the Neapolitan sixth chord (bar 168) to the structural V (bars 169 ff.). This vast motion (stretching from bar 123 to 169) encompasses the latter portion of the exposition and the entire development section. Indeed, it is exactly the frustration of the closing cadence in B♭ that enables Mendelssohn to create such an exceptional structure.

Example 4.15. Piano Concerto in G Minor, Op. 25, I, Molto allegro con fuoco, bars 1–169, tonal outline

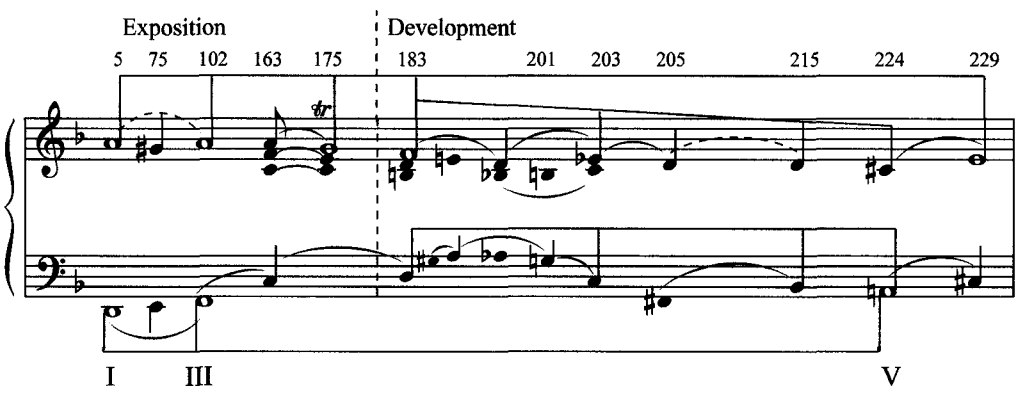


In the first movement of his second Piano Concerto (Op. 40 in D Minor) Mendelssohn similarly frustrates the closing cadence of the exposition. As shown in Example 4.16, the upper voice resolves as expected (bar 183) to $\hat{1}$ in F major, the key of the second theme, but the harmony formed by all the voices is not the normal I but rather a diminished chord built on D. The immediate impression is not unlike that of a deceptive cadence, but in contrast to most deceptive cadences in the tonal literature, avoiding a final I does not constitute merely a temporary delay: F as a key area never returns, and one soon becomes aware that we are already in the domain of the complex development section.

As can be seen in the voice-leading graph (Example 4.16), V—the ultimate harmonic goal of the development—is reached (bar 224) via a descending bass motion D–C–B♭–A, accompanied in parallel tenths in the upper voice. We may view the linear

descending fourth in the bass (that is, D to A) as a gigantic motivic parallelism, composing out the basic motive that is announced at the beginning of the concerto by the first two notes (D–A, bars 1–2). But even without assuming such a parallelism (which might be considered somewhat speculative), the overall tonal structure of the exposition and development is remarkably original, and Mendelssohn's unusual treatment of the formal juncture between these sections is again most ingenious.

Example 4.16. Piano Concerto in D Minor, Op. 40, I, Allegro appassionato, bars 5–229, middleground sketch



Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E Minor, indisputedly his greatest work in this genre, features—similarly to the two piano concerti—a very special frustrated cadence at the end of the exposition in the first movement. In contrast to Op. 25, the forceful cadential motion that signals the end of the exposition is not the first closing cadence in the second group. As we have already seen in Chapter 2, the lyrical G-major theme (bars

131–168, see Example 2.5b) ends with a perfect authentic cadence. However, the compositional build-up towards the end of the exposition unmistakably creates expectations for a yet more impressive closure at the end of the closing theme. And indeed, at bar 208 Mendelssohn reaches a climactic cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ and two bars later (210) we hear the inevitable trill on the local $\hat{2}$ (that is, A).[31] However, the bass at this bar presents a D♯ (instead of continuing the D, $\hat{5}$ in G major) so that we already have a diminished seventh chord instead of a dominant seventh. At this point one does not know what direction the music is going to take, but when we arrive at IV of E minor (bar 226) it becomes clear that the incomplete cadence at bars 208–210 was the last event in the domain of G major (III) and that the development has already begun at bar 210.

As we can see in Example 4.17, the tonal organization of the development section is rather traditional: a further step from IV (bar 226) to the structural V (bars 282–295) is achieved by means of a chromatic passing tone A♯ (bars 277–281).[32] Incidentally, when A♯ is first introduced in the bass it sounds like the dominant of D♯. Only the "correction" of the upper voices at the very last moment (bar 281) directs the motion towards the genuine dominant note (B).[33] One more detail in this development section deserves comment here: the A in the upper voice at bar 210 has a tremendous

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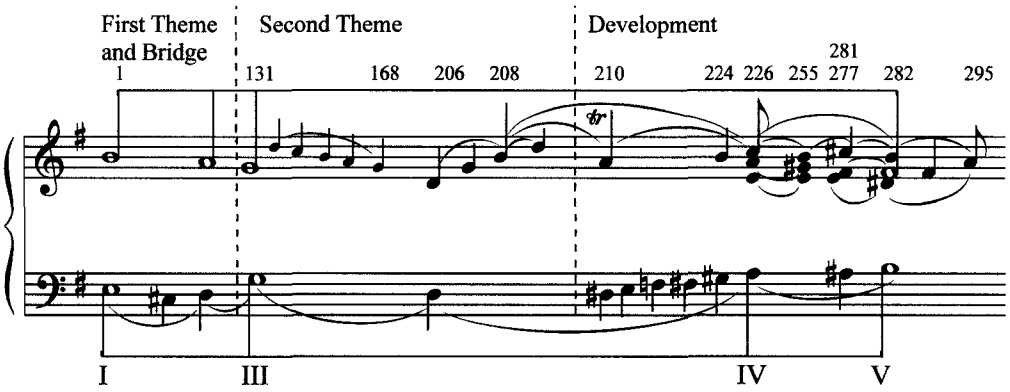
[31] As noted by Tovey, the climactic trill ("shake," as he calls it) is exceptionally given to the orchestra and not to the soloist. See his *Essays*, vol. 3, p. 179.

[32] As is well known (but not shown in Example 4.17), the structural V is further extended by the solo cadenza (bars 298–335), which Mendelssohn exceptionally places at the end of the development section.

[33] Tovey praises this somewhat elusive retransition as an example of "the poetic power of a great composer." *Essays*, vol. 3, p. 180.

"motivation" to resolve downwards; this is true whether we view it as $\hat{2}$ in G major (its original linear function) or as a diminished fifth above D♯ in the bass (its local vertical role). But Mendelssohn appears to have been determined to push this A upwards—against its will, so to speak—in order to reach C in the upper voice (bar 226). As shown in Example 4.17, this C is connected to the climactic B at bar 208, as well as to the B at bar 282 (where V is reached). Thus, the resulting upper voice expresses the prominent $\hat{5}$–$\hat{6}$–$\hat{5}$ (i.e. B–C–B) motive that is so characteristic of the entire concerto.[34]

Example 4.17. Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64, I, Allegro molto appassionato, bars 1–295, middleground sketch



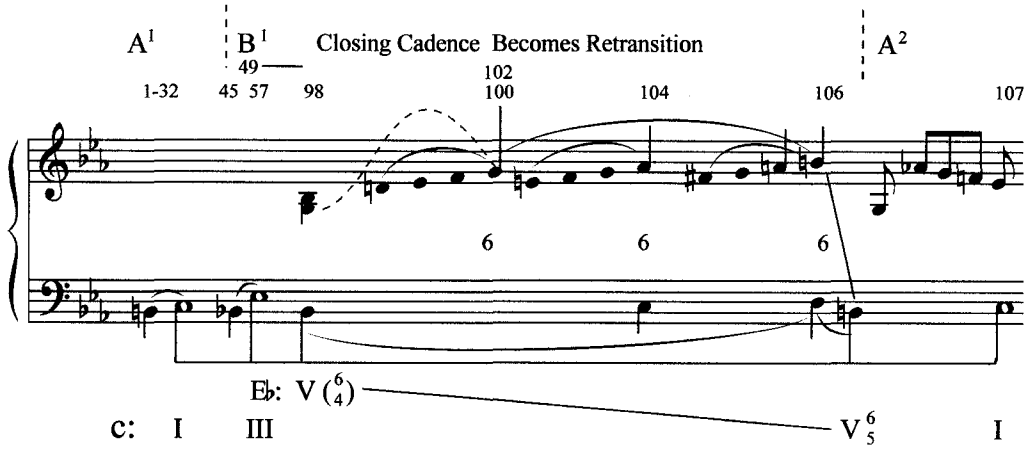
[34] For a further discussion of this motive as a salient unifying element in the Violin Concerto, see Chapter 5, Example 5.12.

The Finale of the Piano Trio in C Minor, Op. 66, is constructed as a sonata-rondo. In this unusual movement, the second-theme group in the exposition (bars 49 ff.) displays a remarkable tonal dynamism: although the tonality of the second theme, E♭, is never in question, the root-position E♭-major chord is constantly avoided, with the exception of one fleeting appearance in bar 57. Since this is a sonata-rondo, the disruptive closing cadence at the end of the second theme group does not flow to a development section, but rather leads back (via a brief retransition) to the main rondo theme.[35]

As shown in Example 4.18, a cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ at bar 98 seems to initiate a firm closure of the second group in the local key of E♭. But similarly to what we have seen in the Violin Concerto, Mendelssohn "ignores" the need of G—the sixth of the cadential $\frac{6}{4}$—to resolve downward. The upper voice freezes, so to speak, on G (bars 100 and 102) and then starts moving upwards, forming parallel sixths with the bass voice. At the end of this rising sequential pattern (bar 106), we arrive at the dominant of the home key, C minor. Since the rondo theme begins on V^6_5, B♮ shifts to the bass, thus forming a large-scale connection with the frustrated B♭ of bar 98.

[35] The opening bars of the rondo theme were discussed in Chapter 1. See Example 1.18.

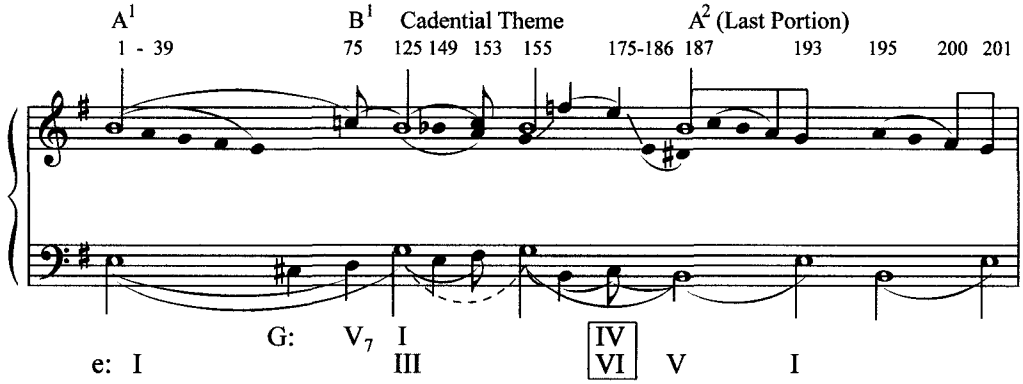
Example 4.18. Piano Trio in C Minor, Op. 66, IV, Allegro appassionato, bars 1–107, tonal outline



The sonata-rondo *finale* of the String Quartet in E Minor (Op. 44/2) also creates expectations for a decisive closure at the end of the second theme group in the exposition. The need for a particularly convincing closure here is even enhanced by the absence of tonal stability throughout the G-major second group. As can be seen in Example 4.19, Mendelssohn does not present the local tonic (that is, G major) until he arrives at the cadential theme in bar 125. The preceding lyrical second theme (bars 75 ff.) features a vast prolongation of V^7 and avoids any resolution to the G-major tonic. The cadential theme thus initiates, as expected, what appears to be a tremendous drive towards a closing cadence: a first attempt ends (bar 153) with a "disappointment" on V^6_5. A second wave of cadential motions (as of bar 155) culminates on a dramatic arrival at IV (a C-major chord, bar 175). At this point one may rightly assume that a firm closure in G major is inevitable. Nonetheless, Mendelssohn had other plans for the powerful C-

major chord: he reinterprets IV in G major as VI in the home key of E minor. After the dramatic expansion of this chord (bars 175–186) he simply brings back the closing portion of the original E-minor rondo theme (compare bars 185–201 with bars 23–39) and thus rounds off the first big section of this movement.[36] To be sure, the dramatization of the C-major chord (bars 175–186) is a recomposition of bars 20–23, which feature a similar climax on that harmony. Nevertheless, the daring and highly surprising harmonic reinterpretation (IV = VI) in the midst of a mandatory closing cadence is remarkable.

Example 4.19. String Quartet in E Minor, Op. 44/2, IV, Presto agitato, bars 1–201, middleground graph



[36] This section comprises the rondo theme (bars 1–39), the bridge (bars 40–74), the second group (bars 75–185), and a partial repetition of the first theme (bars 185–201). The two other sections that constitute this three-part form are: the middle (development) section (bars 202–262), which starts with a shortened version of the rondo theme (bars 202–209); and the recapitulation (as of bar 262). The beginning of this latter section was discussed in Chapter 3, Example 3.26.

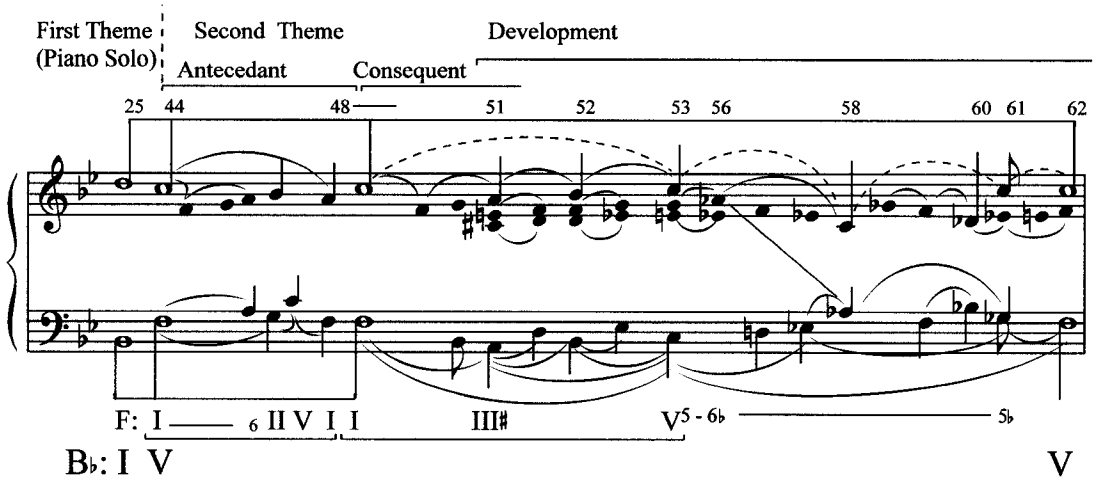
The second movement of the Piano Concerto in D Minor (Op. 40) features an even more peculiar disrupted cadence than what we have seen so far. The second theme (in F major, the dominant key) consists of a simple antecedent-consequent structure. The antecedent phrase (mid-bar 44 to mid-bar 48) concludes with an authentic cadence, but the upper voice ends on $\hat{3}$ (a^1) and thus demands a continuation. But the consequent phrase (as of mid-bar 48) does not quite fulfill our expectations for a more stable resolution to the F-major local key. On the contrary, it breaks suddenly at bar 51 on III♯, and instead of a closing cadence, Mendelssohn initiates (as of bar 51) a rising sequence that already belongs to the development section.

As we can see in Example 4.20, it takes the entire development section to arrive back at the F-major chord, which has not been heard since bar 48. Granted, when this F-major harmony returns at bar 62 it already functions as V in the home key of B♭ major. If we consider bars 48–62, then, as a unified harmonic unit that deprives F major of its initial status as local tonic and transforms it eventually into a dominant, we realize that formal layout and background harmony are sharply out of phase here. Normally, the transformation of V from a local key to a preparatory dominant takes place within the development section. Here Mendelssohn begins this process already in the exposition, and in doing so he almost manages to erase the formal border between the sections.

The choice of III♯ as the breaking point of the second theme is highly unusual, but in no way whimsical: Mendelssohn carefully prepares us for the startling A-major sonority at bar 51. Note that on three occasions prior to this crucial bar a sensitive listener expects to hear III♯: at the last eighth note in each of the bars 19, 23 (still in the domain of B♭), and 46 (already in F major) we have a VII^4_3, a half-diminished seventh

chord in second inversion. Instead of resolving normally (!) to III♯—thus producing the effect of II^4_3 resolving to V in the relative minor—this inverted half-diminished seventh chord moves to a somewhat "disappointing" I^6_3 (see the downbeats of bars 20, 24 and 47). Thus, when we finally hear (at bar 51) a III♯, it makes perfect sense. Note also the emphasis on this chromatic harmony in bars 84 and 85, where the recapitulation approaches its closing cadence.

Example 4.20. Piano Concerto in D Minor, Op. 40, II, Adagio, molto sostenuto, bars 25–62, voice leading



A most radical deviation from the norms at the end of a sonata-form exposition can be found in the first movement of Mendelssohn's String Quintet in A Major, Op. 18. Unlike our previous examples, in which the closing cadence of the exposition was left

incomplete, the exposition here does end with a complete cadence. However, this cadence—and indeed, the entire closing section of the exposition (bars 110 ff.)—is in the key of VI (F♯ minor). This is a harmony that normally belongs, from the perspective of tonal structure, to the ensuing development section.

As shown in Example 4.21a, a normal closing cadence in the second-theme key (namely E major, the dominant) appears to be inevitable, but three consecutive attempts (initiated at bars 102, 106, and 108) are frustrated abruptly. The harmony constantly returns to the F♯-minor chord (II in the local E-major key), and eventually (bar 110) this chord is reinterpreted as a local tonic. Then a cadential theme (in F♯ minor) reaches closure (bar 130), and the exposition thus ends in that highly unusual local key, which on a deeper level still represents II in E major (i.e. the upper neighbor of the dominant).[37]

A superficial examination of the succession of keys in the exposition might lead one at first to believe that we have here a "normal" case of a three-key exposition, and also that the conclusion on VI is analogous to antecedents in Beethoven.[38] But when we

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[37] Schenker describes the shift to F♯ minor as "a strange example for such a progression by seconds." He accurately reads the latter key as II of E major, and notes that "the last thematic complex (... a mere deceptive cadence!)... sticks to F♯-minor." At the end of his brief discussion Schenker asserts that such key changes (by seconds) are by far more frequent in modulatory and development parts. *Harmony*, edited and annotated by Oswald Jonas, translated by Elisabeth Mann Borgese (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1954), p. 249.

[38] Greg Vitercik indeed offers such a comparison, asserting that the "large scale harmonic pattern of the exposition, moving from the tonic to the minor submediant, is reminiscent, perhaps, of the first movement of Beethoven's C-major Quintet, Op. 29... As in the Beethoven, the descending third motion... proves to be only the first step in a long chain of thirds that runs well into the development section." *The Early Works*, p. 181.

consider the structural hierarchy of the tonicized harmonies, it becomes clear, I think, that Mendelssohn creates here a unique conflict between sectional layout and tonal structure: unlike any normal pattern of three-key exposition that I am aware of, it is quite obvious that in this exposition, the second key (tonicized V) is structurally more significant than the third key (tonicized VI).

My reasons for considering the tonicized VI to be subordinate to the tonicized V are as follows: the modulation to the dominant key is brought about via an exceptionally long bridge (bars 35–82; the dominant of E is reached at bar 72); such preparation indicates (and enhances) the structural importance of the new key. Furthermore, the opening music of the E-major portion sounds as stable as any other normal second theme in sonata forms. On the other hand, the F♯-minor cadential theme bursts in abruptly, giving the impression of a parenthetical insertion. One is indeed surprised that Mendelssohn concludes the exposition in this "wrong" key, and wonders whether he has forgotten, so to speak, that this is just a temporary excursion. Incidentally, the recapitulation does not contain an analogous excursion: both the second and the cadential themes are featured in A (major and minor respectively).

As it happens, the eventual return of V (not tonicized, of course) at the end of the development section reveals VI as a prolonged neighbor of the dominant. As can be seen in Example 4.21b, the arrival at the preparatory dominant near the end of the development is announced by a IV^6_3 (bar 218), which is best understood as originating from a large-scale 5–6 motion on VI. This background contrapuntal motion starts in the closing section (in F♯ minor) at the end of the exposition, and continues when the development section reaches the IV^6_3 at bar 218. As Example 4.21b illustrates, the

eventual arrival at the dominant (bar 230) is preceded by a chromaticized version ("Italian" sixth chord) of the same IV^6_3.

The overall tonal structure (encompassing both the exposition and the development sections) is hence basically normal. But the daring displacement of VI to the exposition—instead of first presenting it in the development, as is the case in many major-mode sonata-form movements—gives rise to the exceptionally sharp conflict between design and tonal structure. Normally, the tonicized V and the preparatory V are located at the ends of the exposition and the development respectively. Neighbors to V (VI, IV or both) are presented elsewhere in the development section. Here, nonetheless, the tonicized V is not permitted to articulate the end of the exposition, since the tonicized neighboring VI bursts in prematurely at bar 110 and shifts it aside rather brutally.

Another striking feature of this movement is the motivic significance of the descending fourth in the upper voice (a–g♯–f♯–e) that unifies the upper voice of the latter part of the exposition and the end of the development. As it happens, it is the very same motive that we encounter most prominently at the beginning of the movement (bars 2–4; see Example 4.21c), and also at the prolongation of the subdominant harmony within the second theme (bars 94 ff.; see Example 4.21a). We may, then, consider this salient motivic parallelism as another powerful means by which Mendelssohn synthesizes the exposition and development sections.[39]

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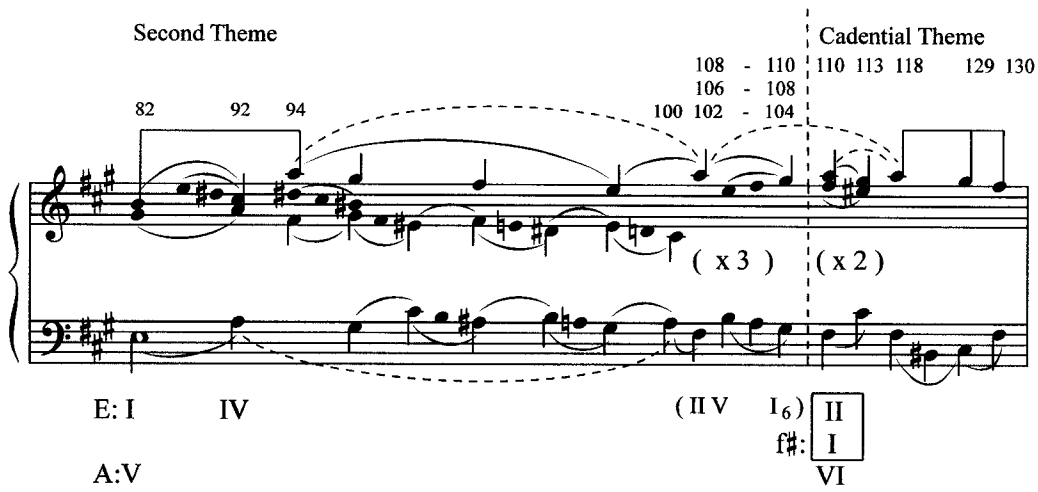
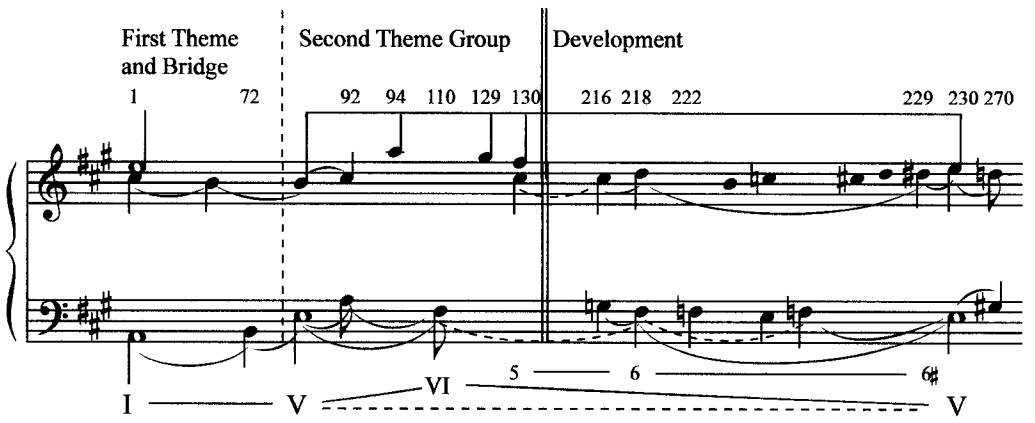
[39] Vitercik also discusses the appearance of this motive at bars 94–99. Then he analyses the upper voice of bars 102–110 as expressing this same motive twice. He does not relate the descending fourth to bars 2–4, and also does not refer to the large-scale

Example 4.21. String Quintet in A Major, Op. 18, I, Allegro con moto

a) Bars 82–130, voice leading

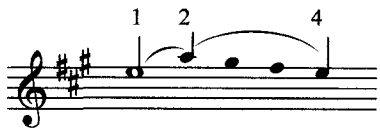


b) Bars 1–270, middleground sketch



manifestation of this motive, which I attempt to show in Example 4.21b. See *The Early Works*, pp. 180–184, and especially Examples 52b and 52c on p. 182.

c) Bars 1–4, upper voice



A Final Example

As a final example of Mendelssohn's unusual treatment of formal junctures in sonata forms, I shall discuss the celebrated slow movement of the "Italian" Symphony.[40] Although far from following any regular textbook scheme, this movement belongs in the wide family of sonata forms: the sonata principle—namely, that thematic material which is not in the tonic key in the first part returns in the tonic key in the last part—is clearly at work here. The second theme, first presented in the dominant key (bars 45–56), is brought back in the tonic key at bars 74–86. Since the first theme (bars 4–35) does not return at the recapitulation, we deal here with a Scarlatti-type sonata form, a favorite Mendelssohnian choice for slow movements.[41]

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[40] I shall not address here the "programmatic" aspects that are traditionally associated with this movement. For an example of such interpretation, see Tovey's discussion of the "Italian" Symphony in *Essays*, vol. 1, pp. 221–222. Thomas Grey has an excellent discussion of the traditional interpretations of this movement in his article "The Orchestral Music," in *The Mendelssohn Companion*, pp. 442–445.

[41] In the coda (bars 86 ff.) Mendelssohn brings in the bridge theme of the exposition and also (as of bar 96) a brief and fragmented recollection of the first theme.

As it happens, Mendelssohn manipulates the two formal junctures that are basic to our present discussion. The second theme (in the exposition as well as in the partial recapitulation) continues to compose out the preparatory dominant that it follows. And in a highly unusual manner, the mandatory closing cadence of the exposition is left open. These deviations from the norms, as well as the Scarlatti-type layout, result in a unique one-part tonal structure.

As shown in Example 4.22a, a middleground sketch of the entire movement, the main harmonies are I, II♯ (V/V), V and I. Whereas the opening tonic coincides with the beginning of the first theme (as of bar 4), the structural closing tonic is reached only at the end of the recapitulation (bar 86), and its subsequent prolongation already belongs to the coda. We can also see that the II♯ (V/V) is arrived at (normally) near the end of the bridge (bar 43), but it is then prolonged throughout the entire second theme, and moves to V only in the development section. This de-tonicized V already prepares the recapitulation in D major. The prolongation of V, similarly to that of V/V in the exposition, persists through most of the partial recapitulation, delaying the arrival at the structural tonic to the last possible moment, namely the end of the second theme in the recapitulation.

The unusual prolongation of dominants throughout the second themes (in both the exposition and the recapitulation sections) is certainly a most prominent feature of this movement. As shown in Example 4.22b, a more detailed voice-leading graph of the second theme in the exposition, this prolongation encompasses both the antecedent and the consequent phrases that constitute this beautiful and unusual theme. Especially noteworthy is the consequent phrase, which emphasizes IV as a lower neighbor of V. As

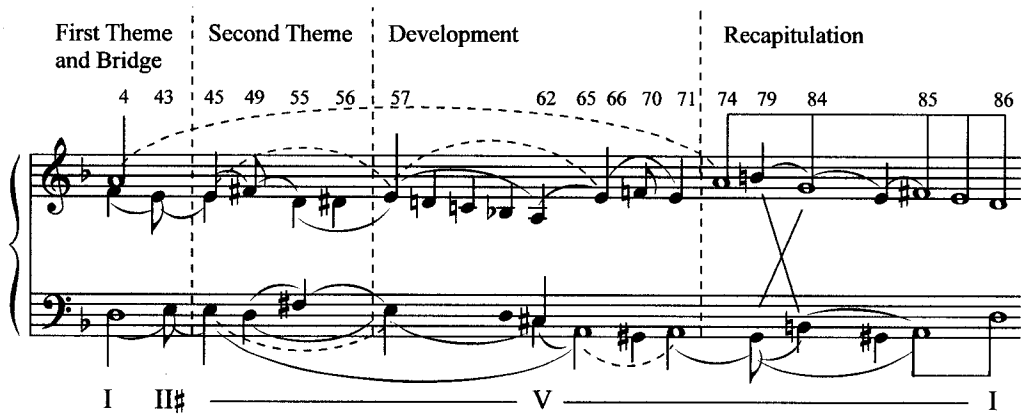
we have also seen in previous examples, there are again two "attempts" (bar 51–54) to conclude the second theme with a proper cadence. Nonetheless, such closure is avoided, and at the third attempt (as of bar 55) the neighboring IV is transformed into a chromatic diminished seventh chord (VII^{6}_{5} of V, bar 56). Thus, most remarkably, the exposition ends on this diminished chord and the development (as of bar 57) regains V/V (in D), a harmony that was first presented at the end of the bridge (bar 43) and still waits, so to speak, to be resolved to the dominant.

Continuing with the development section (and thus returning to Example 4.22a), we can see that the resolution of V/V (II♯) to V occurs at bar 62, where V is no longer a local key but a preparatory dominant, which is then composed out throughout the rest of the development section.[42] Note also the descending fifth (motion into the inner voice) at bars 57–62. This linear progression reaches A (bar 62), a melodic goal that the unsuccessful cadences in the key of A major (bars 51–55; see 4.22b) had never achieved. As already mentioned, when this A is finally reached, we already hear it as the V of D and not as a tonicized dominant.

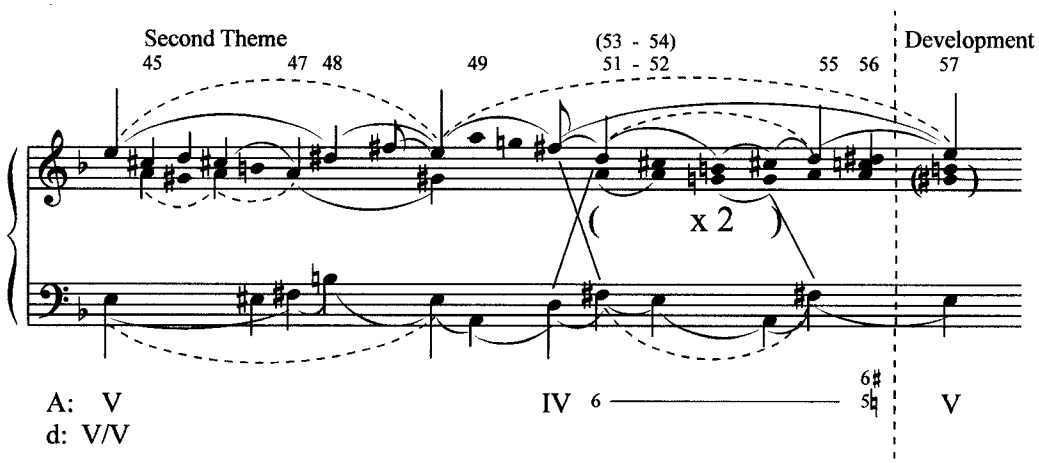
[42] It is possible also to read an arrival at a tonicized V (A minor) at bar 59. But this local A-minor tonic seems to me too brief and unstable in relation to the powerful dominant (of A minor) that precedes it (bars 57–58). Thus I prefer not to read a resolution of E to A at this point but rather at bar 62.

4.22. Symphony No. 3 in A Major ("Italian"), Op. 90, II, Andante con moto

a) Bars 4–86, overall tonal structure and sectional layout



b) Bars 45–57, voice leading



CHAPTER 5

LINKING MOVEMENTS IN MULTI-MOVEMENT WORKS

Our study of Mendelssohn's treatment of formal junctures reaches its final stage as we now arrive at the largest formal unit in our investigation, the complete movement. Indeed, Mendelssohn's practice of linking movements to one another is well known.[1] Recent scholars have shown that Mendelssohn clearly expressed his conception of multi-movement compositions as unified wholes in a number of letters.[2]

Bridging over formal boundaries at the multi-movement level, however, is not comparable to that of any other formal level that we have seen in the foregoing chapters. Since the vast majority of the individual movements in Mendelssohn's instrumental music—with one rare exception[3]—are tonally closed (that is to say, they are independent

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[1] Two of Mendelssohn's most celebrated works, the E-minor Violin Concerto and the A-minor ("Scottish") Symphony, are probably responsible for Mendelssohn's reputation in this area. The beautiful connective transitions in the concerto, as well as the instructions for *attacca* performance of individual movements in the symphony, are often cited as examples of a typically Mendelssohnian practice of unifying multi-movement compositions.

[2] Thomas Grey mentions one such letter in the course of his discussion of the "Scottish" Symphony in his article "Orchestral Music," Chapter 7 in *The Mendelssohn Companion*, ed. Douglass Seaton (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2001), p. 449. Greg Vitercik cites Mendelssohn's complaint about people's inability to recognize the unity of the whole of the String Quartet Op. 13. See *The Early Works Of Felix Mendelssohn: A Study in the Romantic Sonata Style* (Philadelphia: Gordon and Breach, 1992), p. 263.

[3] The one exception is the *finale* of the String Quartet in E♭ Major. The change of key near the end of the movement makes no sense if one does not take into account the overall tonal organization of the quartet. See Example 5.1. If one regards the recitative of the Piano Sonata in E Major (Op. 6) as an independent movement, it can be counted as another exception.

and complete tonal structures), the very nature of overall tonal unity in multi-movement works becomes an elusive analytic issue. To be sure, tracing cyclic tendencies in several compositions, or pointing out the obvious influence of the later Beethoven on early Mendelssohn (especially with regard to the use of transitional passages and recitatives between movements), is certainly valuable in assessing Mendelssohn's large compositions. Nevertheless, one still has to address the question whether the tonal unity in these multi-movement compositions is analogous to the tonal structures that unify small forms or individual movements.

There is no simple, clear-cut answer to this question. But it appears reasonable to suggest that Mendelssohn sometimes attempted to create a sort of inclusive tonal unity in his multi-movement compositions, notwithstanding the fact that the individual movements also make sense as complete tonal structures. As we shall see, at least in certain cases one can indeed think of an overall structure encompassing the entire composition, thus relegating the local tonality of an individual movement to a "lower-level" entity (that is, a scale degree) within a large and all-encompassing tonal structure.

However, the equivalence of such hypothetical tonal unity in multi-movement compositions to that of an individual movement is only partial. A tonally unified movement is not only controlled by harmony; it also features a cohesive top-voice structure, namely Schenker's *Urlinie.* Even in those multi-movement works where an overall tonal unity seems likely, the existence of an *Urlinie* that spans all movements (or even more than one) is, I think, very doubtful. Nonetheless, as we shall see in what follows, melodic motives, operating on an exceptionally large scale, sometimes do link two—or even three—successive individual movements. All these things considered, the

notion of an inclusive tonal unity in multi-movement compositions should be approached with caution.

In contrast to the treatment of other formal junctures that we have studied in the previous chapters, it appears that as far as linking movements in multi-movement compositions is concerned, both the genre and the period of composition are, at least to some extent, relevant to Mendelssohn's practice. This will be reflected in the organization of the following discussion, which begins with the early string quartets and piano music, pieces that clearly depend on Beethovenian models. Then I shall examine two late chamber works and three symphonies. In the final portion of this chapter, I shall consider the three mature concerti, a genre in which Mendelssohn's predilection for unified wholes seems to be particularly compelling.

Early String Quartets

The String Quartets Op. 12 and Op. 13 (in E♭ major and A minor respectively[4]) exemplify Mendelssohn's early attempts to create a unified whole in a multi-movement composition. Both quartets are widely recognized as being dependent on earlier models by Beethoven (Op.74 and Op.132 respectively) in the same keys.[5] Notwithstanding this

[4] The A-minor Quartet (Op.13), although published as Mendelssohn's second string quartet, was composed before Op. 12.

[5] For discussions of the influence of Beethoven's late string quartets on Mendelssohn's Opp. 12 and 13 (and especially the striking dependency of Op. 13 on Beethoven's Op. 132) see Friedhelm Krummacher, "Synthesis des Disparaten: Zu Beethovens späten Quartetten und ihrer frühen Rezeption," *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 37 (1980): 99–134; Joscelyn Godwin, "Early Mendelssohn and Late Beethoven," *Music and Letters* 55 (1974): 272–285; Charles Rosen, *The Romantic Generation* (Cambridge, Massachusetts:

dependency, most commentators tend to agree that although Mendelssohn's early string quartets cannot compete, as far as artistic greatness is concerned, with their celebrated models, they are still successful and surprisingly original compositions.[6] Indeed, both Op. 12 and Op. 13 are among the most frequently performed chamber works by Mendelssohn.

I. String Quartet in E♭ Major, Op. 12

When we examine the overall key scheme of the String Quartet in E♭ Major, Op. 12, we can immediately recognize a highly unusual feature: the *finale*, in sharp contrast to the classical tradition, is not in the home key of E♭ from the outset, but rather it begins in C minor; furthermore, it features a full-fledged sonata form in this relative-minor tonality. Only near the end of the quartet (bars 229 ff.) does the music shift back to the principal E♭ tonality.[7] As it happens, this last section of the *finale* more or less restates the music of the analogous closing section of the first movement.

It is clear that Mendelssohn strives to achieve an inclusive unity here. This unity has two aspects: a thematic one, attained by quoting materials of the first movement; and

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Harvard University Press, 1995): 574–586; Greg Vitercik, *The Early Works*, pp. 228–290; Margaret Notley, "'With a Beethoven-Like Sublimity': Beethoven in the Works of Other Composers," in *The Cambridge Companion to Beethoven*, ed. Glenn Stanley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 239–254.

[6] See, however, Vitercik's rather negative judgment of Mendelssohn's Op. 13. *The Early Works*, pp. 263–267.

[7] The two-key plan of the fourth movement of Op. 12 might have influenced Schumann, who similarly introduced a C-minor/E♭-major scheme in the *finale* of his Piano Quintet in E♭ Major, Op. 44 (1842).

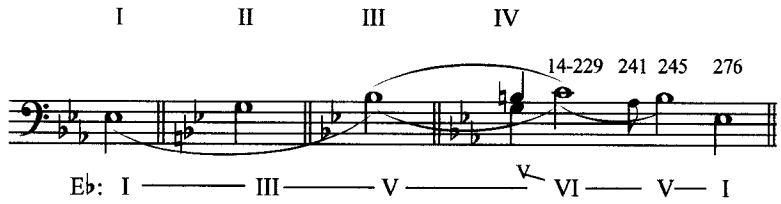
a tonal one, effected by the inevitable return to the home tonic of E♭. Needless to say, the two-key scheme of the last movement of Op. 12 makes no tonal sense when considered outside the context of the complete work. Thus, it is obvious that one is justified in viewing the entire quartet as an inclusive tonal structure in E♭. With this in mind, the preparatory dominant of C minor, on which the *finale* begins, can also be incorporated into a larger context: it provides a logical tonal connection from the preceding slow movement in B♭ major. As shown in Example 5.1a (an overview of the inclusive tonal plan of Op. 12), B♮, the leading tone to C, functions as a chromatic passing tone.

The roman numerals below Example 5.1a show that the keys of the first three movements create a rising arpeggio (that is, I–III–V) and then, the unusual *finale* emphasizes VI, the upper neighbor of V, before returning to the home key for the final V–I cadence. Example 5.1b shows the bass structure near the end of Op. 12. As can be seen, the retransition back to E♭ major begins at bar 229 when the C-minor harmony is heard as a tonic for the last time. Then the dominant of E♭ arrives at bar 245. The structural tonic is reached at bar 276, concluding an elaborated auxiliary cadence.

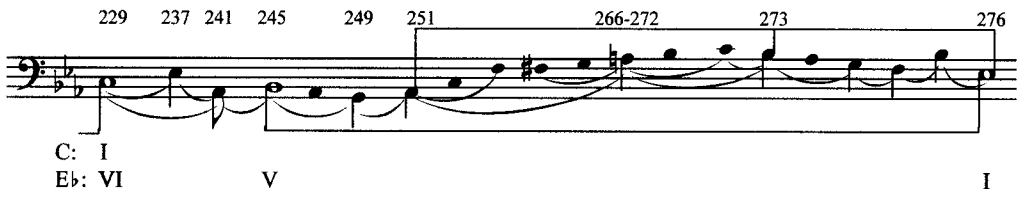
Interestingly, the unusual emphasis on C minor in the overall plan of the quartet Op. 12 seems to reflect an inherent "weakness" for C as an active melodic element, as well as a lower-level harmony. Of the numerous occasions that embody this tendency towards C, I shall mention two: first, the opening bars of the quartet, which highlight c^2 as a melodic goal (see the first violin part); secondly, the beginning of the *Allegro non tardante* in the first movement (bars 18 ff.), which features a C-minor chord on the very first downbeat of the main theme. Example 5.1c illustrates those early prominent occurrences of C (see the asterisks).

Example 5.1. String Quartet in E♭ Major, Op. 12.

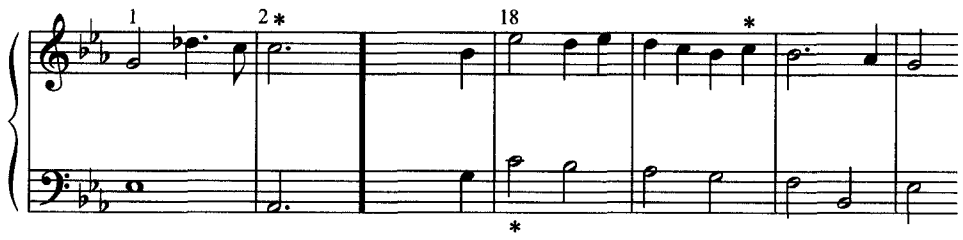
a) Overall Tonal Plan.



b) IV, Molto allegro e vivace, retransition to E♭, bars 229–276, bass outline



c) I, Adagio non troppo and Allegro non tardante, bars 1–2 and 18–21



II. String Quartet in A Minor, Op. 13

In contrast to the String Quartet Op. 12, which presents a new key in each of its individual movements, Mendelssohn's earlier String Quartet, Op. 13 in A Minor, is by far less varied with regard to the tonalities of its movements. With the sole exception of the second (slow) movement in F major, all of the other three movements of Op. 13 are in A minor. To be sure, such a key scheme is far from being exceptional: many classical four-movement compositions (symphonies, quartets and sonatas) similarly feature a contrasting tonality only in the slow movement.

Despite the fact that the tonal continuity between the third and fourth movements is automatically secured (both movements are in A minor), the tonally unstable beginning of the fourth movement—that is, the recitative-like introduction—endows the juncture between those two last movements of Op. 13 with a dynamic quality that deserves close investigation. As shown in Example 5.2a, the introduction to the *finale* first points towards D minor: the diminished seventh chord built on C♯ indeed resolves

to a D-minor chord at bar 9 and again at bar 23. However, another diminished seventh chord (as of bar 25), now built on G♯, directs the tonal motion to the real tonic, A minor.

The searching quality created by the initial impression of D minor is obviously suitable for a recitative. There might be, nonetheless, an additional motivation—certainly a less obvious one—for this voice leading. As indicated by the letters between the two staves of Example 5.2a, the entire progression, from the stable A-minor ending of the third movement up to the reestablishment of A minor at bar 25 of the *finale*, contains a disguised repetition of the salient motivic idea A–B♭–A–G♯, an idea that is featured most prominently in the fugal middle section of the slow (second) movement. Example 5.2b first shows this motive (indicated by a square bracket as motive a) in a condensed form, and then quotes two of its earlier prominent appearances in the slow movement (at the beginning and at the end of the middle section).

In parts c and d of Example 5.2, I attempt to illustrate the further significance of motivic parallelism as guaranteeing unity in Op. 13. Example 5.2c reveals the close relation of motive a to the other prominent neighbor-note idea E–F–E (motive b). As can be seen, both motives are beautifully interwoven into the polyphonic fabric at the beginning of the first theme (bars 24 ff.) in the opening movement. Then, on the right-hand side of Example 5.2c, we can see how motive b clearly dominates the opening melodic idea of the third movement. Example 5.2d presents an abstract overview of the entire quartet. Note that motive b links the first three movements, whereas motive a (as already indicated in 5.2a and b) bonds the third and fourth movements together.[8]

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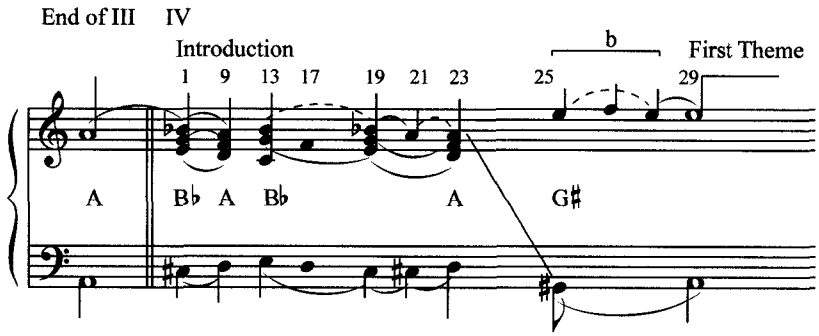
[8] For additional instances of $\hat{5}$–$\hat{6}$–$\hat{5}$ motives that span three successive movements, see also Example 5.9a ("Scottish" Symphony) in the present chapter, and, especially, Example 6.6 (Beethoven's "Appassionata") in the next chapter.

This seemingly speculative interpretation of F, the key of the second movement, as an upper voice in relation to the background A-minor tonic (see Example 5.2d) requires comment here. My reasoning is twofold. First, if we examine the slow movement as an independent tonal entity, we can see that although F major is undisputedly the framing tonality of the *Adagio non lento*, the amount of time given to F makes it a somewhat unconvincing tonal center. Note especially how the unusual length and density of the middle section (that is, bars 20–92, in a 125-bar movement!) impairs the stability of the framing F-major sections. Secondly, at the very end of the slow movement (bars 124–125) the F-major harmony shifts into a high, lofty register, so that one tends to associate this sonority with the upper voice e^2–f^2–e^2 motive in the first-violin part in the ensuing *Intermezzo*. Therefore, both the brevity and the lightness of the F-major tonality of the second movement appear to validate the interpretation of F as shown in Example 5.2d.

Example 5.2. String Quartet in A Minor, Op. 13

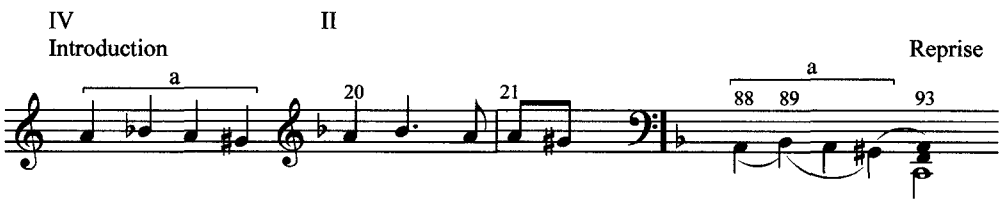
a) From the last bar (163) of III (Intermezzo, Allegretto con moto),

to the beginning of the first theme of IV (Presto), bars 1–29



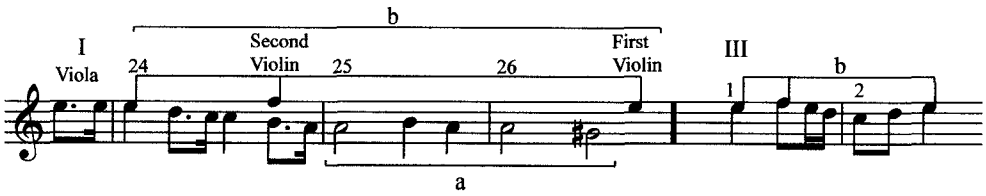
b) Motive a at the juncture of III and IV, and its earlier occurrences

in II (Adagio non lento), bars 20–21 and 88–93

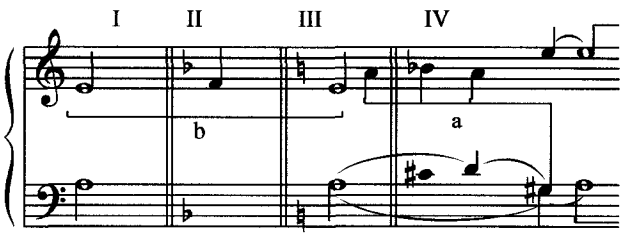


c) Motives a and b in I (Adagio and Allegro vivace), bars 24–26,

and motive b in III, bars 1–2



d) Motives a and b in the framework of the inclusive tonal plan



Sonata and Fantasy for Piano

Our next two examples are multi-movement compositions for piano, namely the early Piano Sonata in E Major, Op. 6 (1826), and the Fantasy ("Scottish Sonata") in F♯ Minor, Op. 28 (1833).[9] As it happens, both pieces present a Beethovenian mixture of sonata and fantasia elements.[10] Even so, it should be noted that, with the striking exception of the gigantic recitative in Op. 6, all the individual movements in both Op. 6 and Op. 28 display complete tonal structures. As we shall see, there are subtle threads of continuity that bridge over movement borders. Thus it appears probable that Mendelssohn strived to achieve some kind of inclusive unity in these pieces.[11]

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[9] According to R. Larry Todd, the original version of the Fantasia, titled "Scottish Sonata," was probably composed as early as 1828. See his "Piano Music," Chapter 9 in *The Mendelssohn Companion*, p. 600, and note 55 on p. 619.

[10] The unmistakable influence of Beethoven's Piano Sonatas Opp. 101 and 90 on Mendelssohn's Op. 6 is addressed by Charles Rosen in *The Romantic Generation*, pp. 570–574. For a discussion of both the E-major Sonata and the F♯-minor Fantasy, see Joscelyn Godwin's article "Early Mendelssohn and Late Beethoven," pp. 272–278.

[11] Another piece for piano (written earlier than our two Mendelssohn excerpts) that mixes sonata and fantasia elements is Schubert's Fantasy in C Major, Op. 15 ("Wanderer"). Schubert's strategy is entirely different, however: he leaves all the movements (except the last one) open at the end, thereby creating an all-encompassing, continuous structure.

I. Piano Sonata in E Major, Op. 6

Example 5.3a illustrates the inclusive movement scheme (as well as the tonal plan) of the E-major Piano Sonata. As we can see, the most unusual feature of this overall layout is the extensive transitional section that connects the second movement (titled *Tempo di Menuetto)* with the concluding *Molto Allegro e vivace*. This section of the sonata is surely not an independent movement. From a tonal perspective, its main role is to provide a logical link from F♯ minor, the key of the *Menuetto*, to the E-major home key of the *finale*. The F♯-minor tonality of the second movement (representing II in relation to the governing E-major tonality of the sonata) is indeed a highly unusual choice for an inner movement. A direct continuation from II to I, quite impossible as a simple harmonic progression, seems also unconvincing as a key scheme involving two adjacent movements. Therefore, the lengthy and adventurous transitional section eventually crystallizes around a preparatory dominant of E major (bars 48–62), thus providing the inevitable necessary link (namely V) between II and I.

As shown in Example 5.3a, the transitional section basically divides into two waves of motion (indicated by square brackets above the example). Each of these waves consists of *Recitativo*, *Andante*, and *Allegretto*.[12] The first wave leads to V already at bar 22, but then (bar 28) the second wave leads away from the dominant, and only after an

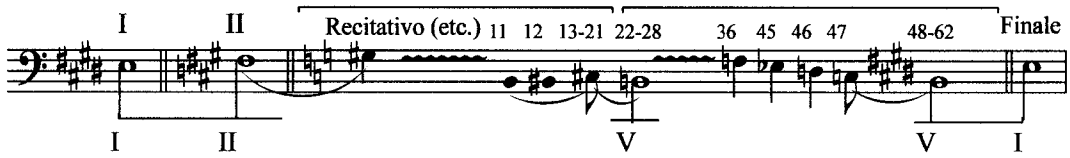
[12] The thematic content of the *Allegretto con espressione*, that is, the descending arpeggiated chords, serves the purpose of overall unity in Op. 6 by quoting the closing bars of both the exposition and the recapitulation sections of the first movement (bars 76 ff. and 156 ff. respectively). Near the end of the *finale* Mendelssohn presents another *Allegretto con espressione* section. Now he first brings back the opening materials of the first movement, and then rounds off the entire sonata with the same descending-chords idea.

extensive, fantasy-like probing and searching do we reach the dominant preparation at bar 48. Since this unique passage contains some of the most daring harmonic progressions in the whole of Mendelssohn's work, I also present here two more detailed voice-leading graphs (Example 5.3b and c), attempting to illustrate the two respective arrivals at V.

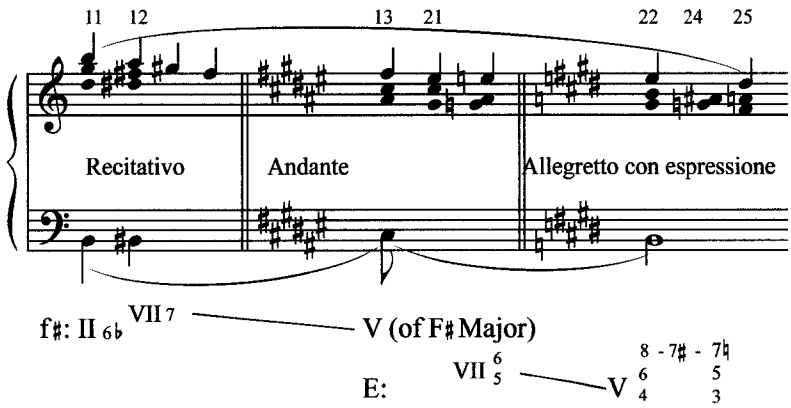
Example 5.3b traces the crucial change of key that takes place at the end of the first part of our transition. As can be seen, a seeming cadential-like motion towards F♯ minor (bars 11–12) and the *Andante* prolonging the dominant of F♯ major (bars 13–21) suddenly shift to the dominant of E major (end of 21–22). However, as shown in Example 5.3c, the second part of the transition leads elsewhere: a series of diminished seventh chords (bars 33–35) brings about a second *Andante*, a transposition of the first, now prolonging F♮, the dominant of B♭ major (bars 36–44). The ensuing *Allegretto* first features the "wrong" dominant, that of A♭ (bars 45–46), and then moves gradually (note the enharmonic reinterpretations at bars 46–48) until the dominant seventh of E major is reached at bar 48. Thus the F♮ bass of bars 36–44 is eventually continued in the upper-voice F♯ of bars 47–48 (see the indication in Example 5.3c). All in all, the young Mendelssohn not only achieves a logical overall unity encompassing the entire sonata, but also succeeds in combining a sonata-like order and a fantasy-like freedom in a remarkably original and daring fashion.

Example 5.3. Piano Sonata in E Major, Op. 6

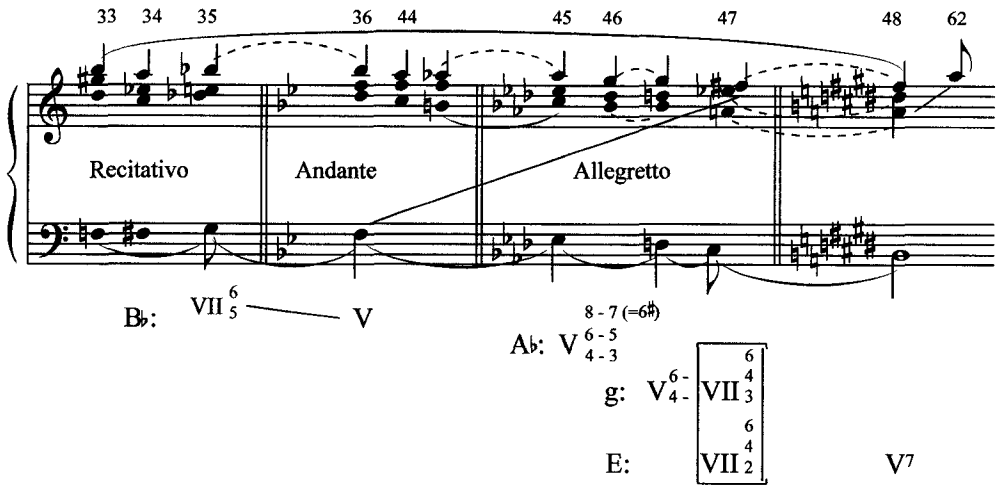
a) Overall Tonal Scheme



b) First Phase of Recitativo (etc.), bars 11–25, voice leading



c) Second Phase of Recitativo (etc.), bars 33–62, voice leading



II. Fantasy for Piano in F♯ Minor, Op. 28

Despite its title, the Fantasy for Piano, Op. 28, does not present (at the complete movement level) any fantasy-like transitions of the sort we have seen in the E-major Sonata.[13] Rather, each of the three movements seems to be an independent tonal entity, and furthermore, the seemingly conventional key scheme of the work (F♯ minor–A major–F♯ minor) does not at all suggest that any of the individual movements is linked to the preceding or following movement. Nevertheless, a study of the formal boundaries between the movements reveals that a certain degree of continuity, as regards tonal

[13] In Op. 28, fantasy-like features are abundant in the first movement only. But one may also regard the vigor and passion of the third movement as a good reason why Mendelssohn decided to call the piece a fantasy rather than the original title ("Scottish Sonata").

motion, does exist here. In my judgment, Mendelssohn indeed attempted to create a larger tonal entity, encompassing the entire composition.

As shown in Example 5.4, the inclusive bass structure of the fantasy is based on a large-scale arpeggiation of the tonic F♯-minor harmony. The sense of progression from I to III at the border between the first and second movement is rather obvious: the second movement begins on the dominant of A major, thus creating a most characteristic progression from I to III across the movement boundary. On the other hand, the beginning of the third movement presents a more elusive sort of tonal continuity from the immediately preceding A-major movement.

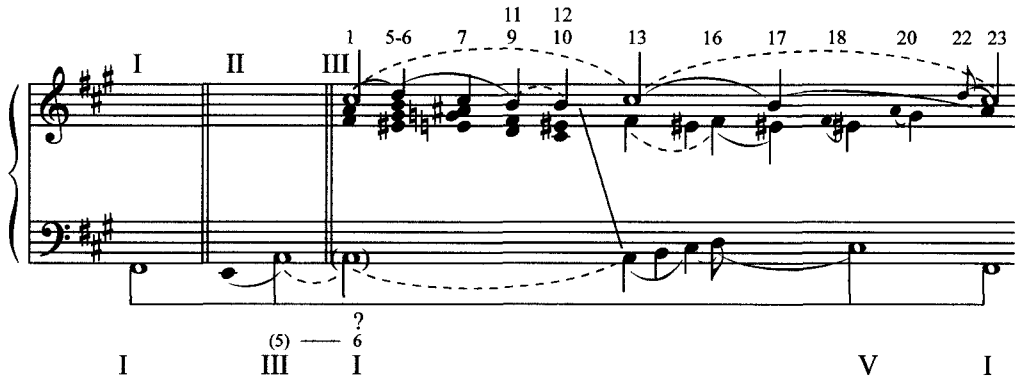
If we were to analyze the opening bars of the third movement without considering the second movement, we would probably read an implied structural F♯ in the bass. But the low sounding A bass of the second movement can (and perhaps should) lead one to amend this almost automatic interpretation. Thus the opening bars of the last movement are better understood as featuring I^6 and not a root-position tonic. In other words, I suggest that we read the harmony of the opening bars of the third movement as arising from a contrapuntal motion 5–6 over a sustained A in the bass.

As shown in Example 5.4, this interpretation is supported by the appearance of a low A in the bass at bar 13. The low register clearly suggests that this is the first true bass note in the movement. As for the F♯ tonic note, its first appearance in the bass register is only at bar 23, where it completes a cadence-like progression that unfolds from the very beginning of the Fantasy.

It is probably no coincidence that Mendelssohn chose this specific structure as an inclusive plan for the piece. As we have already seen, tonal structures—even at this

inclusive level—often reflect the most prominent features of the foreground. In the case of Op. 28, the arpeggiated tonic chord is the first thing one hears at the very outset of the composition. (It is also characteristic of numerous other places in the outer movements.)[14]

Example 5.4. Fantasy for Piano in F♯ Minor, Op. 28, inclusive tonal outline (up to bar 23 in the third movement)



[14] Another salient unifying motive in the F♯-minor Fantasy is the turn figure that ornaments $\hat{5}$, namely C♯, in the outer movements. Note that both D and B♯ (the neighbors of C♯) are highlighted in the themes of these movements.

Late Chamber Works

Our next two examples come from two late chamber works, namely the second cello sonata (in D major, Op. 58) and the last string quartet (in F minor, Op. 80). When compared with the early string quartets that we studied at the beginning of the present chapter, both works appear to exemplify the later Mendelssohn's change of style, at least with regard to straightforward cyclic tendencies: there are no direct quotations or recollections of themes from earlier movements.[15] But as we shall see presently, they still feature, at the multi-movement level, the fundamental Mendelssohnian predilection to achieve larger continuities across formal borders.

I. Cello Sonata in D Major, Op. 58

The Cello Sonata No. 2 in D Major, Op. 58, follows the traditional four-movement scheme. The key plan is as follows: D major, B minor, G major and D major. The main clue that Mendelssohn might have intended an overall tonal unity is at the beginning of the finale, where a transitional passage leads from the G-major tonality of the third (slow) movement to a preparatory dominant seventh chord in the key of D

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[15] Mendelssohn's later chamber works, namely the two Cello Sonatas, the two Piano Trios, and the three String Quartets Op. 44, are sometimes cited as examples of the unfortunate "regularity," which—supposedly—characterizes the later Mendelssohn. The F-minor String Quartet, nevertheless, has usually escaped such characterization in the literature. For a recent example of this deep-rooted bias, see Chapter 6 in Greg Vitercik's book, *The Early Works*, pp. 307–314.

major. Thus, in retrospect the preceding tonality of G major can be heard as representing a large-scale IV in the inclusive tonal plan.

As can be seen in Example 5.5a, the key plan of the first three movements presents a familiar pattern of descending thirds, that is, I–VI–IV. As is the case in many phrases (or larger formal units) that are thus organized, the IV does not move to I but rather leads to V, and the dominant then proceeds to the tonic. In other words, Mendelssohn presents here a customary harmonic progression on the largest possible scale.

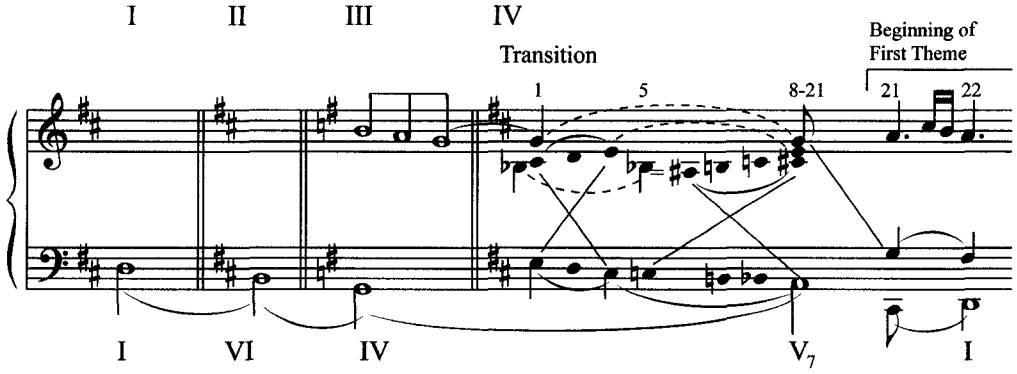
The transition at the beginning of the *finale* is based, as illustrated in Example 5.5a, on a series of chromaticized voice exchanges, which eventually transform a diminished seventh chord (E–G–B♭–C♯) into a dominant seventh (A–C♯–E–G). Note that three of the four pitches in these chords are identical, and that the G in the upper voice, the most stable element at the beginning of the transition (being a tonic in the very recent past), is retained throughout until it becomes the most unstable component, that is, the seventh of the dominant harmony. As it happens, the only pitch that is found exclusively in the first chord, namely B♭, first undergoes an enharmonic transformation to A♯ (see bar 5), but then it reappears in the bass as B♭ (bar 7) and proceeds to the crucial A in the following bar.

The considerable emphasis on the diminished-seventh sonority is probably not accidental. Upon hearing this prolongation of the diminished chord, and especially being puzzled by the temporary enharmonic ambiguities that are involved, one is reminded of the recently heard climax of the preceding (slow) movement. As shown in Example 5.5b, the crucial juncture (bars 26–29) between the middle (B) section and the reprise

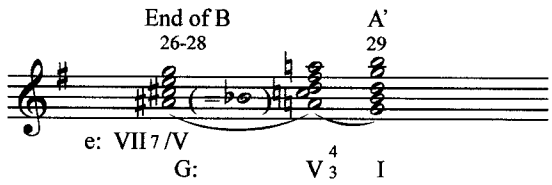
(A′) in this exceptionally expressive *Adagio*, is articulated by the very same diminished seventh chord. As indicated, this juncture also involves enharmonic reinterpretation: the notated bass note, A♯, is first presented as the leading tone to the dominant of a locally tonicized E minor, but then it unexpectedly moves downwards to A♮, and therefore we hear it—in retrospect—as B♭.

Example 5.5. Cello Sonata No. 2 in D Major, Op. 58

a) Inclusive tonal plan, voice leading of the retransition at the beginning of IV (Molto Allegro e vivace), bars 1–22



b) III, Adagio, bars 26–28, chordal reduction



II. String Quartet in F Minor, Op. 80

A special sort of tonal continuity across the boundary of a movement can be found in Mendelssohn's last major composition, the String Quartet in F Minor, Op. 80 (1847). With the exception of the slow (third) movement, the key of F minor endows all the other three movements of this quartet (including, rather exceptionally, the middle "trio" section of the second "scherzo" movement) with an unmistakable tragic and dark quality. This is often and I think rightly associated with the biographical circumstances of the composition of Op. 80.[16] But even the major-mode slow movement is far from

[16] Friedhelm Krummacher presents an illuminating biographical study of Op. 80 in "Mendelssohn's Late Chamber Music: Some Autograph Sources Recovered," in *Mendelssohn and Schumann: Essays on Their Music and Its Context*, ed. Jon W. Finson and R. Larry Todd (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1984), pp. 71–84 (see especially the reference to the portrayal of the piece by Moscheles and Knepler on p. 80). For an early interpretation of Op. 80 as a piece that expresses Mendelssohn's reaction to the death of his sister Fanny, see the unsigned 1853 article that is cited in *The Mendelssohn Companion*, pp. 575–576.

providing true relief from the sad F-minor quality of the quartet as a whole: the A♭ tonic of the slow movement is seriously clouded, so to speak, by the F-minor sound.

The formal juncture between the second movement (a scherzo in all but name) and the third (slow) movement is particularly relevant to the present study. As shown in Example 5.6a, when we consider the opening phrase of the third movement in isolation we may consider the first sounded note (A♭) as representing the tonic harmony. But both the upbeat position of this A♭ and the continuation in the first full bar makes such an interpretation doubtful (hence the question mark in Example 5.6a). The emphasis that F receives in bar 1, via the turn motive G–F–E♮–F, is especially crucial to one's tendency to hear the opening eighth note (A♭) as the third in an F-minor sonority.

If we now take into account the fact that this ambiguous opening follows two movements in F minor, we may exclude the possibility of A♭ harmony at the upbeat to bar 1 altogether. As illustrated in Example 5.6b, the F of the previous movement continues to operate as a tonic across the movement juncture, so that the third movement reaches its true tonic (i.e., A♭) only at bar 4. (Incidentally, the second theme in the exposition of both the first and the last movements also features a temporary delay—albeit of a different nature—in its arrival at the A♭ tonic.[17])

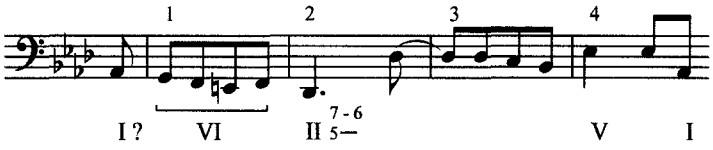
The "invasion" of the F-minor tonality into the "territory" of A♭ is not confined to the beginning of the movement. As illustrated in Example 5.6c, near the end of the movement (bars 102–103 and 111–112) Mendelssohn recollects the opening notes of the Adagio in the first violin part. Note especially the curious spelling at bars 111 and 112,

[17] For a discussion of the delay in the arrival at the A♭ tonic of the second theme in the expositions, in both the first and the last movements of the String Quartet in F Minor, see Chapter 4 (examples 4.3 and 4.5).

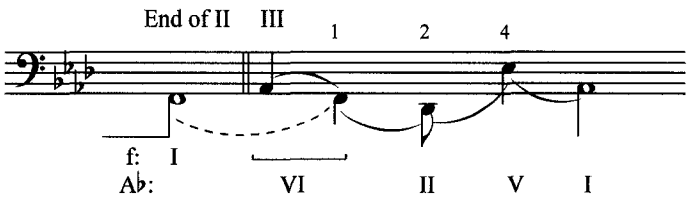
where the integrity of the diminished fourth (A♭–G–F–E♮) is preserved regardless of the E♭ which follows E♮. The accents on E♮ in these bars even further enhance the F-minor quality of the melodic fragments. The quotations in Examples 5.6d, e, and f reveal that this diminished-fourth idea has a salient presence in each of the other three movements. Indeed, this remarkable motivic association plays a central role in unifying the individual movements of Op. 80 into a coherent whole.

Example 5.6. String Quartet in F Minor, Op. 80

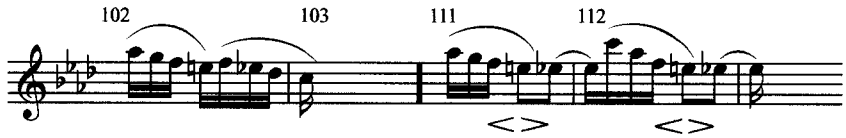
a) III, Adagio, bars 1–4, bass part



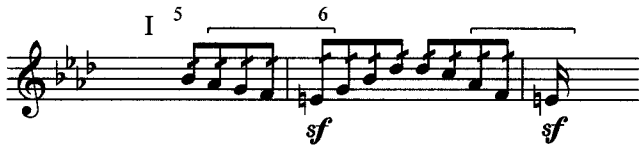
b) End of II (Allegro assai) to beginning of III



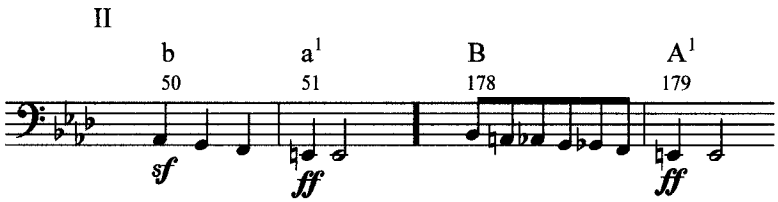
c) III, bars 102–103 and 111–112, first violin part



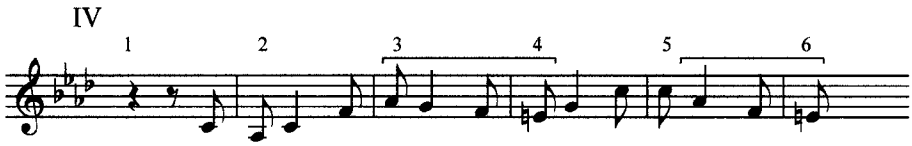
d) I, Allegro vivace assai, bars 5–7



e) II, bars 50–51 and 178–179



f) IV, Allegro molto, bars 1–6



Symphonies

Although all three of the works that follow are titled symphonies, they differ considerably from one another as regards various aspects of their musical and extra-musical content, style and even artistic quality. I shall first examine the early and rather disputable "Reformation" Symphony. Then the opening instrumental movements of Mendelssohn's Symphonic Cantata, the "Lobgesang", will be considered. Finally, we shall investigate certain unifying aspects in the great "Scottish" Symphony.

I. Symphony No. 5 in D Minor ("Reformation"), Op. 107

The all-inclusive tonal scheme of the "Reformation" Symphony in D Minor, Op. 105, is strikingly reminiscent of the later Cello Sonata in D Major, which we have already studied. Since the basic mode of the symphony (to be accurate, of the crucial first movement) is minor, the inner movements are now properly in B♭ major and G minor, thus representing VI and IV respectively in the home key of D minor.[18] The *finale* begins with a short section (*Andante con moto*) in G major, which introduces the famous chorale "Ein' feste Burg." Then, a faster retransition (*Allegro vivace*) transforms G into a seventh in the dominant preparation for the true key of the last movement,

[18] In his discussion of the "Reformation" Symphony, Greg Vitercik elaborates on the primacy of the minor over the major mode in the first movement. See *The Early Works*, pp. 200–201.

namely D major.[19] The main body of the last movement, a full sonata form in D major—*Allegro maestoso*—begins at bar 63. Example 5.7a illustrates the overall plan of the symphony.

The sense of large-scale continuity is not confined, however, to the unusual beginning of the *finale*. The juncture between the scherzo (*Allegro vivace*) and the slow (*Andante*) movement also presents a beautiful thread of continuity: the descending-third idea that ends the scherzo seems to shift to the lower part in the introductory bars of the slow movement (see Example 5.7a), producing a very concrete effect of continuous motion. D, the last melodic note in the upper voice (second movement, bar 232), becomes the first note in the bass at the beginning of the third movement, initiating a descending fifth line—divided into two thirds—from D (the dominant) to G (the tonic).

As indicated by the brackets at the end of Example 5.7a, relating to the fourth movement, bar 65, and then in Example 5.7b, this melodic idea (the descending third) appears at climactic points also in the two outer movements. Thus it can be understood as a motto of a sort, which unifies all the individual movements of the symphony. As we have already observed in previous examples, the materials and motives that Mendelssohn chooses to use at the formal junctures between movements in his multi-movement works are often derived from salient musical ideas that he presents elsewhere in the composition.

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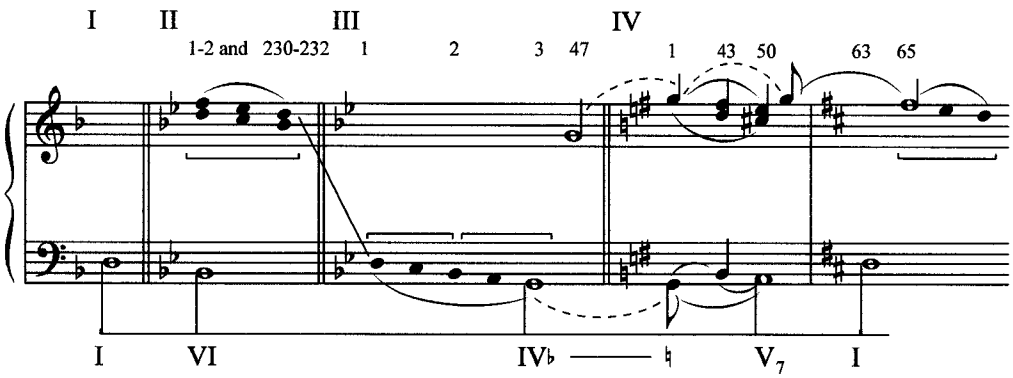
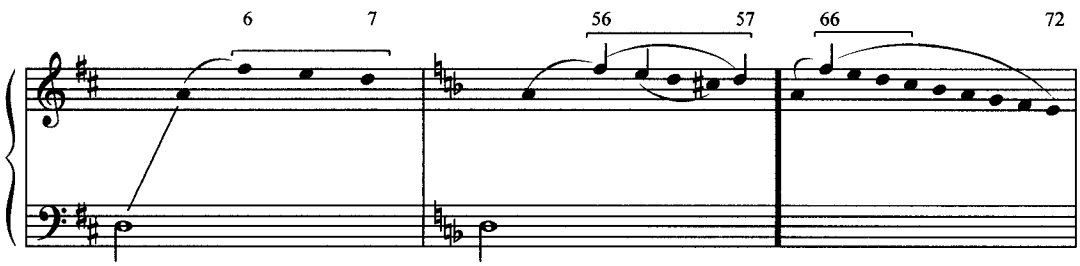
[19] For an illuminating discussion of the history, content and reception of the "Reformation" Symphony, see Thomas Grey's "Orchestral Music," in *The Mendelssohn Companion*, pp. 416–426. See also Judith K. Silber's "Mendelssohn and the Reformation Symphony: A Critical and Historical Study," Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1987.

Example 5.7. Symphony No. 5 in D Minor ("Reformation"), Op. 105

a) Overall tonal plan, transitions from II (Allegro vivace) to III (Andante), and from III to IV (Andante con moto, Allegro vivace, and Allegro maestoso)



b) I, Andante and Allegro con fuoco, bars 1–72, the descending-third motive



II. Symphony No. 2 in B♭ Major ("Lobgesang"), Op. 52

Turning now to the instrumental portion of the Symphony No. 2 in B♭ Major ("Lobgesang"), Op. 52, we have an even clearer example of a unifying motto, one which serves again as a resource for musical material at the junctures between individual movements.[20] As shown in Example 5.8a, the opening motto at the beginning of the symphony is made up of two melodic ideas. The first, indicated as motive a in the example, presents a neighbor-note figure F–G–F ($\hat{5}$–$\hat{6}$–$\hat{5}$ in B♭ major). The latter portion of the motto, indicated as motive b, presents a four-note melodic figure B♭–C–E♭–D ($\hat{1}$–$\hat{2}$–$\hat{4}$–$\hat{3}$), highlighting its last (and highest) two notes, that is E♭ and D.

As we can see in Example 5.8b, the motto returns at the end (bar 376 ff.) of the first movement (see the upper stave in the example). Then, as of bar 379, the modulating transition to G minor, the key of the second movement, features the last three notes of the motto, namely C–E♭–D. Despite the change of key, this portion of the motto retains its original pitches. But the prominent E♭–D idea has now become $\hat{6}$–$\hat{5}$ in G minor. As shown at the right-hand side of Example 5.8b, the theme of the ensuing second movement (*Allegretto un poco agitato*) continues to emphasize this expressive neighbor-note idea (that is, E♭–D). The relation of the fresh-sounding theme to motive b of the motto is quite obvious. Less obvious, perhaps, is the fact that the pitches that comprise

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[20] The discussion here is limited to the three orchestral movements of the "Lobgesang." To be sure, the unifying role of the motto-theme (first presented at the beginning of the orchestral introduction) is not limited to the instrumental portion of Op. 52. The motto reappears at the first number of the vocal cantata (which follows the orchestral *Sinfonia*), and it also returns at the very conclusion of the whole work. See Stephen Town, "Mendelssohn's 'Lobgesang': A Fusion of Forms and Textures," *Choral Journal* 33 (1992): 19–26.

the *Allegretto* theme (up to bar 4) are identical to those of the motto. To be sure, in this G-minor paraphrase of our B♭ motto, motive a is drastically less significant. But as indicated by the asterisks in Example 5.8b, F and G (the pitches of motive a) are still associated with one another: being the highest notes in their respective melodic segments, both F and G cover the main melodic line (based on motive b) from above.

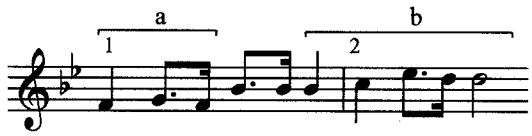
Example 5.8c focuses on the juncture between the second and third movements. Although this juncture does not feature a transition, there is still a clear sense of linkage. The main agent of continuity is again the motivic repetition. As indicated by the brackets in Example 5.8c, the last melodic fragment in the *Allegretto*, F–E♭–D, is immediately repeated (in a varied and expanded form, G–F♯–E♮–D) when the *Adagio religioso* begins.[21] Note that the last tonic note in the second movement (g^1, bars 176–177) is reiterated in the upper voice as soon as the third movement begins, thereby creating the motivic expansion. Another factor that contributes to the sense of continuous flow across the border of the movements here is the non-tonic beginning of the slow movement. One may hear—in retrospect—the last tonic chord in the second movement as the first component of an auxiliary cadence in D major ($IV_{♭}$–V^6_5–I).

[21] Thomas Grey asserts, however, that the *Adagio religioso* "is the movement with the least direct ties to the larger conception of the work." See his "Orchestral Music," p. 433.

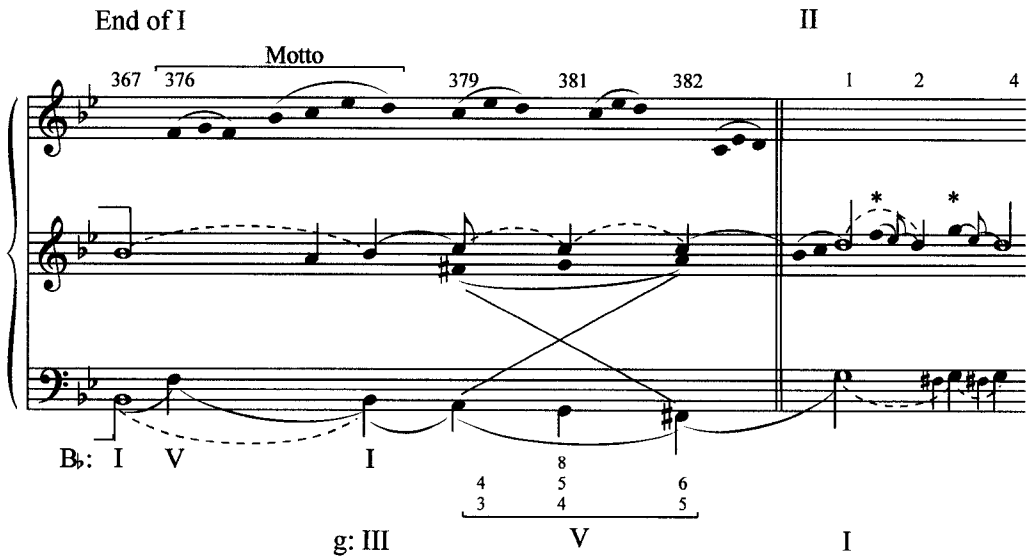
Example 5.8. Symphony No. 2 in B♭ Major ("Lobgesang"), Op. 52,

(instrumental portion only)

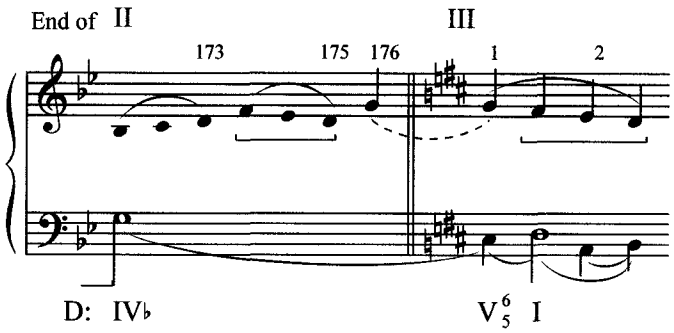
a) I, Maestoso con moto and Allegro, bars 1–2, motto



b) End of I and beginning of II (Allegretto un poco agitato) voice leading and motto



c) End of II and beginning of III (Adagio religioso), motivic association



III. Symphony No. 3 in A Minor ("Scottish"), Op. 56

Mendelssohn's famous instructions that the individual movements of the "Scottish" Symphony should follow one another without pause surely attest to his intentions to achieve some sort of an all-encompassing unity in this great symphonic masterpiece.[22] The key scheme of the symphony is rather simple: the first and last movements are in A minor, the second (scherzo) movement is in F major, and the third (slow) movement is in A major. Since the two last movements share the same tonic (A), our attempt to trace an overall tonal structure need only account for the first three

[22] Douglass Seaton observes that the genesis of the "Scottish" Symphony, spanning fourteen years (from the trip to Scotland in 1829 to the publication in 1842), "typifies Mendelssohn's compositional process: there are large-scale structural reworkings, refinements of motivic and thematic detail that enhance the sense of overall unity...." See *The Mendelssohn Companion*, p. 715. The cyclic design of the symphony has been considered also by Rey M. Longyear in his article "Cyclic Form and Tonal Relationships in Mendelssohn's 'Scottish' Symphony," *In Theory Only* 4 (1979), pp. 38–48, and more recently by Greg Vitercik in *The Early Works*, pp. 291–306.

movements. Thus, the integration of the F-major scherzo with the surrounding first and third movements (in A minor and A major respectively) is our first concern.

As shown in Example 5.9a, Mendelssohn bonded the scherzo to the ensuing slow movement by retaining the bass note F (the tonic of the second movement) at the beginning of the third movement. This F bass, now supporting a IV^6 chord, initiates a nine-bar introduction which leads (via a preparatory V^7 harmony) to the A-major tonic. As indicated by the figured bass below Example 5.9a, this progression across the movement border (retaining F in the bass) represents a 5–6 contrapuntal motion. As suggested by the hypothetical "tenor" part that I have added in the first movement, the F tonic of the second movement is heard as a continuation of the implied upper fifth (E) of the home key, A minor (hence the upward stem of the F in the second movement). Simply put, the F-major tonality of the scherzo is closely related to E in both the preceding and following movements. From the perspective of the inclusive A-minor tonality, this F is a large-scale neighbor note, arising melodically (5–6) and resolving harmonically (VI to V).[23]

The gigantic E–F–E neighbor-note figure (see the bracket in Example 5.9a) expresses this salient motive at the deepest structural level, unifying, as it happens, three consecutive movements. In Example 5.9b I attempt to show how this connection is made concretely perceptible in the foreground. As can be seen, Mendelssohn makes a most beautiful use of registral association in order to bring the E–F–E relationship to the fore.

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[23] In his analysis of cyclic aspects of the "Scottish" Symphony, Greg Vitercik also gives considerable emphasis to the E–F–E motive. However, I find his remarks concerning the tonal ambiguity at the beginning of the second movement unconvincing. The pentatonic tune of the first theme does not impair—in my way of hearing—the clear sense of F major as a tonic. See *The Early Works*, pp. 294–295.

Near the end of the first movement (bar 516) the melodic figure f^2–e^2 is left hanging in the air as the highest sounding element. Then, at bar 4 of the second movement, f^2 is reached again (it is the highest pitch up to that point). Hence, the relation of E and F (see the asterisks in Example 5.9b) is easily audible.[24]

Looking now at the boundary between the second and third movements, we can see that Mendelssohn exercises a similar strategy with regard to register. The last-sounding tonic note in the upper voice, namely the f^2 of bar 265 of the scherzo, returns at bar 6 of the slow movement. Note that this f^2 is now presented as a poignant dissonance, forming a minor ninth above the E in the bass. As shown at the end of Example 5.9b, the resolution of f^2 to e^2 occurs at bar 9 of the slow movement.

An even more subtle connection that bonds the second and third movements of the A-minor Symphony is illustrated in Example 5.9c. As can be seen, the scherzo—in the coda section—features a rather unusual chromatic figure, which rises from an implied inner voice C (shown in parenthesis) through D, E♭, and E♮ to the conceptually retained F in the upper voice. The chromatic "intruder," E♭, surely recollects the unusual tonicization of that pitch at the beginning of the thematic recapitulation.[25] But this chromatic line might have another compositional role: as shown in the continuation of Example 5.9c, the main melodic line at the beginning of the slow movement beautifully repeats the very same pitches of the memorable chromatic figure (except the final f^2,

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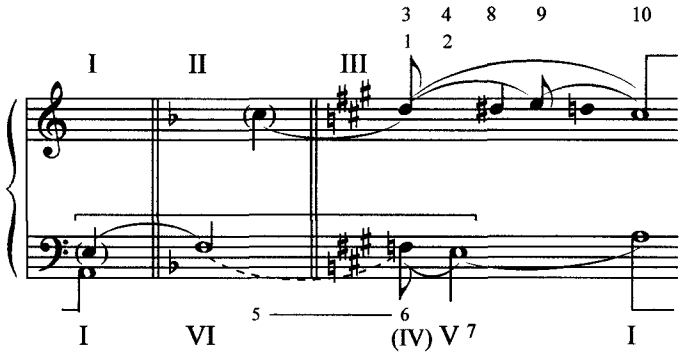
[24] An identical E–F–E motive is made audible by means of a similar strategy (registral connection) in the last three movements of Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 in A Major, Op. 92. I am grateful to Carl Schachter for bringing this remarkable antecedent to my attention.

[25] The false recapitulation in the illusory key of E♭ major is analyzed in Chapter 3. See Example 3.23.

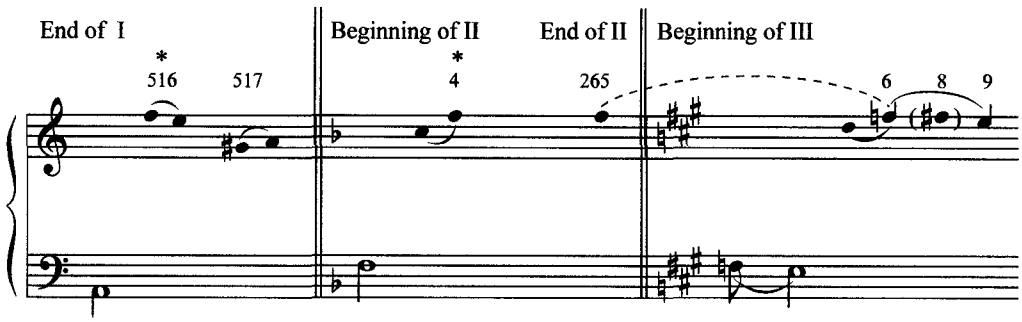
obviously). Note that $e\flat^2$ is now spelled as $d\sharp^2$, leading to the temporary goal e^2. The missing f^2 at the end of the chromatic figure is not entirely absent. Indeed, in a miraculous parallelism to the coda of the previous movement, f^2 is retained above the rising chromatic figure until bar 9, where both $d\sharp^2$ and f^2 converge on e^2.

Example 5.9. Symphony No. 3 in A Minor ("Scottish"), Op. 56

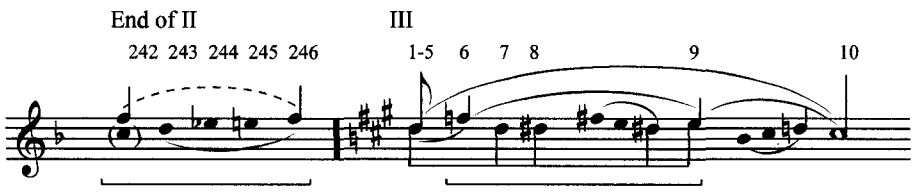
a) Overall tonal structure from first to third movements



b) E–F–E motive at the boundaries between I (Andante con moto and Allegro un puco agitato) and II (Vivace non troppo), and between II to III (Adagio)



c) II, bars 242–246 and III, bars 1–10, motivic parallelism



Concerti

In the concluding portion of the present chapter I shall discuss Mendelssohn's linkage of entire movements in his three mature concerti (the two piano concerti Opp. 25 and 40, and the Violin Concerto Op. 64).[26] More than in any other instrumental genre, Mendelssohn's deliberate intention to join individual movements together—and thereby to create a continuous and unified whole—is evident in his concerti.[27] All these three works feature transitional passages that connect the first and second (slow) movements and then also the second and third movements.

The immediate antecedent of Mendelssohn's prototype of the concerto form is Weber's *Konzertstück* in F Minor, Op. 79 (1823), which undoubtedly influenced Mendelssohn's design.[28] Additionally, Mendelssohn's practice in the concerti was probably inspired by Beethoven's Violin Concerto (see the retransition to the dominant

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[26] A complete list of Mendelssohn's works using concerto form is given by Stephan Lindeman in his book *Structural Novelty and Tradition in the Early Romantic Piano Concerto* (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1998), p. 78. See also Marian Wilson, "Felix Mendelssohn's Works for Solo Piano and Orchestra: Sources and Composition" (Ph.D. diss., The Florida State University, 1993).

[27] In his recent book *A Portrait of Mendelssohn* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003) Clive Brown cites an anonymous critic in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* who praised Mendelssohn's Op. 25 in January 1833 as "a piano concerto in a complete new form; the usual three movements are naturally connected...." See pp. 41–42.

[28] Stephan D. Lindeman discusses the possible influence of Weber's *Konzertstück* on Mendelssohn's piano concerti in *Structural Novelty and Tradition*, pp. 84–96. (See especially the list of common features on p. 88.) According to William Smith Rockstro (1823–1895), who attended the Leipzig Conservatory in 1845–6, Mendelssohn taught Weber's *Konzertstück* in his advanced piano class. See Roger Nichols, *Mendelssohn Remembered* (London: Faber and Faber, 1997), p. 72.

of D major at the end of the second movement), as well as by the Piano Concerti No. 4 and, especially, No. 5.[29] (Unlike Mendelssohn, however, Beethoven does not connect *all* the movements in any of his concerti.)[30]

In the analyses that follow, each transitional passage will first be looked at separately; then I will attempt to point out significant motivic relationships that add to the overall unity of the work. As we shall see, in all three concerti the transitional passages indeed make use of significant motivic elements. Consequently, the unity of Mendelssohn's concerti is a motivic one as well.

I. Piano Concerto No. 1 in G Minor, Op. 25

As shown in Example 5.10a, a voice-leading sketch of the transition from the first to the second movement in the Piano Concerto in G Minor, Op. 25, the turning point towards E major, the key of the second movement, is announced by the alteration of the G-minor tonic (bar 246) into a G-major chord (bar 250). Then, a 5–6 motion over G initiates a progression towards the dominant of E minor (reached at bar 256). This preparatory dominant seventh is now prolonged until bar 3 in the second movement and then resolves (bar 4) to E major, the initial structural tonic of the slow movement. As

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[29] For a poetic description of the transition from the slow movement to the *finale* in Beethoven's last concerto, see Tovey, *Essays in Musical Analysis*, vol. 3, Thirteenth Impression (London: Oxford University Press, 1978), pp. 86–87. Charles Rosen presents an attractive view concerning the dependent status of the slow movement in Beethoven's G-major Concerto in *The Classical Style* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1972), p. 392.

[30] This is true also with regard to other genres, in which Beethoven most often links only the *finale* movement to the preceding slow movement.

indicated by the roman numerals below Example 5.10a, the entire harmonic progression can be understood as an auxiliary cadence, ♮III–V^7–I in E major. Note also the square brackets which call attention to two prominent melodic ideas: the chromatic ascent from B♭ to B♮ (bars 246–250), and the neighbor-note figure B♮–C (bars 260–264). The full significance of these two ideas will be revealed later.

Turning now to the other transitional passage, between the slow movement and the *finale*, we can see (Example 5.10b) that the E-major tonic of the slow movement is first transformed into an E-minor chord (bar 7 of the third movement). Then a sweeping chromatic motion in the upper voice (see the brackets above 5.10b), as well as a chromatic descending bass (i.e., E–E♭–D), lead to the dominant of G (bar 21), which resolves to the tonic G major at bar 40 (the actual beginning of the *finale*). As indicated below Example 5.10b, E, the tonic of the slow movement, has been ultimately reinterpreted as VI in the inclusive tonality of the concerto, G. The decisive final "push" towards the dominant of G is achieved by the augmented sixth E♭–C♯ (bars 16–20).

One more remark on Example 5.10b: note the prominence of both B–C♮ and B–C♯ in the lower, "alto" voice (indicated by brackets). These two-note figures are clearly reminiscent of the similar figures that we have seen in the earlier transition. As I attempt to show in Example 5.10c, there is a suggestive relation between the two-note figures in both transitional passages and the opening of the concerto. As it happens, the first chromatic motion in the concerto is the very same B♭–B♮ that we have encountered in the first transition (see 5.10a). The continuation from B♮ to C is featured in both transitions. Finally, the ultimate motion C♯–D is highlighted in the second transition (see

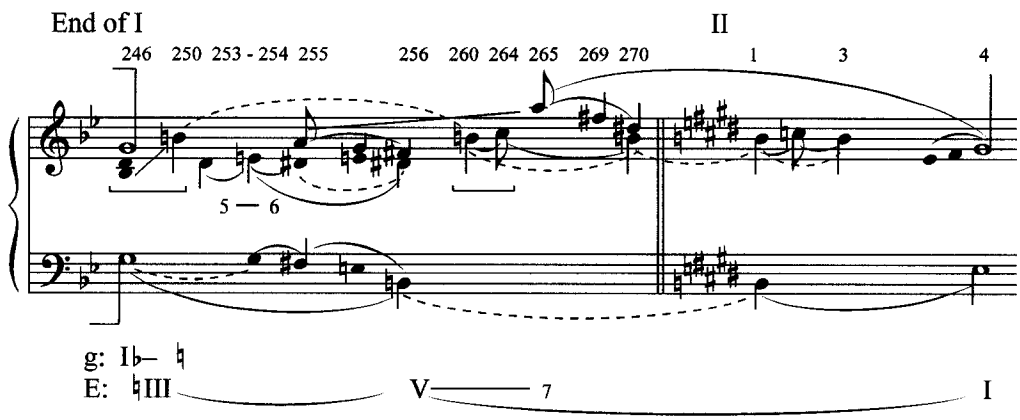
5.10b) as the peak of a sweeping upward motion, the relation of which to the opening phrase of the concerto is obvious.

Rhythm is another significant agent of unity in Op. 25. Both transitions feature a similar rhythmic figure, which consists of three eighth-note upbeats that lead to a half-note downbeat. This rhythmic figure appears to be derived from the beginning of the first theme at the recapitulation in the first movement (see bars 184–185), where a three-eighth-note upbeat leads to a dotted-quarter downbeat. Finally, there is the obvious and well-known cyclic unity in Op. 25: the surprising—and moving—return of the second theme of the first movement (in G minor) in the *finale* (bars 217 ff.) enhances the sense of an exceptionally unified whole in this original concerto.

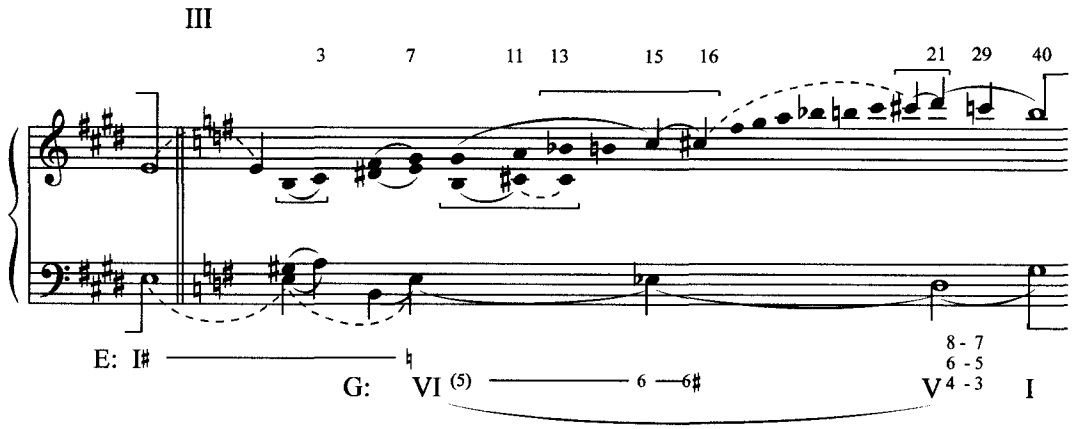
Example 5.10. Piano Concerto No.1 in G Minor, Op. 25.

a) Transition from I (Molto allegro con fuoco), bars 246–end,

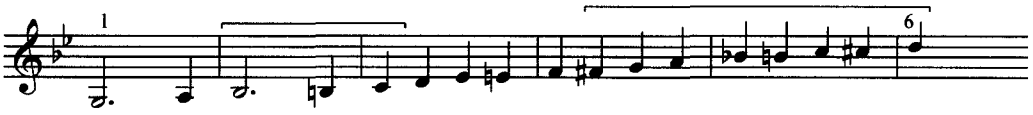
to II (Andante), bars 1–4, voice leading



b) Transition from II to III (Presto), bars 1–39, voice leading



c) I, bars 1–6, melody, motivic relation to both transitions



II. Piano Concerto No. 2 in D Minor, Op. 40

Like Op. 25, Mendelssohn's second Piano Concerto, Op. 40, in D Minor, features transitional passages between the individual movements.[31] Example 5.11a presents an overview of the inclusive tonal plan of the D-minor Concerto. As shown, the tonality of the second (slow) movement (that is, B♭ major) is introduced via a preparatory dominant. The seventh of this dominant harmony, namely E♭, serves as a neighbor note to D in both the first and the second movements. However, the two D's differ in function: In the first movement D is the closing tonic, that is, $\hat{1}$, whereas in the second movement, it is the initial structural $\hat{3}$.

When the B♭ tonic of the slow movement moves to a G-minor chord at the beginning of the third movement (on its way to A, the preparatory dominant of the last movement), the E♭ returns, now resulting from a 5–6♭ motion over IV (a G-minor chord). As can be seen in Example 5.11a, the eventual tonality of the *finale*—despite the dark "Phrygian" coloring that E♭ brings about—is D major. The prominent presence of E♭ at both transitions makes one suspect that Mendelssohn, via this association, is perhaps attempting to draw our attention to a deeper-level unity in this concerto. And indeed, an investigation of the motivic design of the concerto reveals that again, the most prominent elements in the transitional passages are derived directly from a signal

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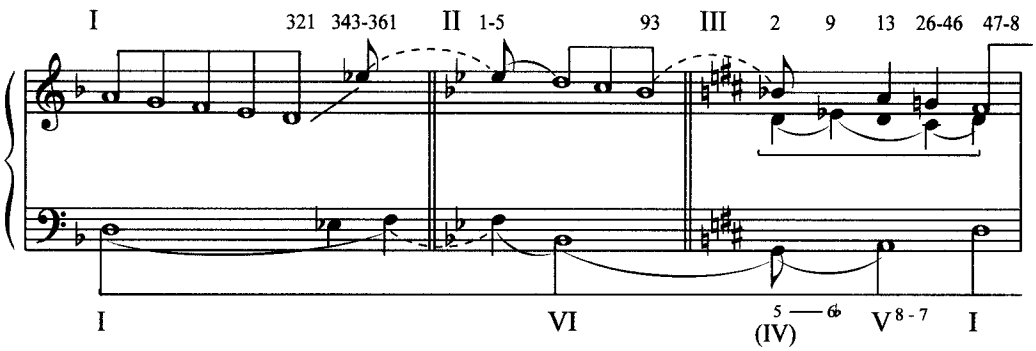
[31] As pointed out by Thomas Grey, the D-minor Concerto follows the model of the earlier G-minor Concerto in many particulars, including the general character of individual movements and the techniques used to link the three movements together. Grey finds no justified explanation for the critical bias against Op. 40. See his "Orchestral Music," in *The Mendelssohn Companion*, pp. 513–515.

motive, namely the double-neighbor figure (D–C♯–E–D) that we encounter at the beginning of the concerto (first movement, bars 3–5).

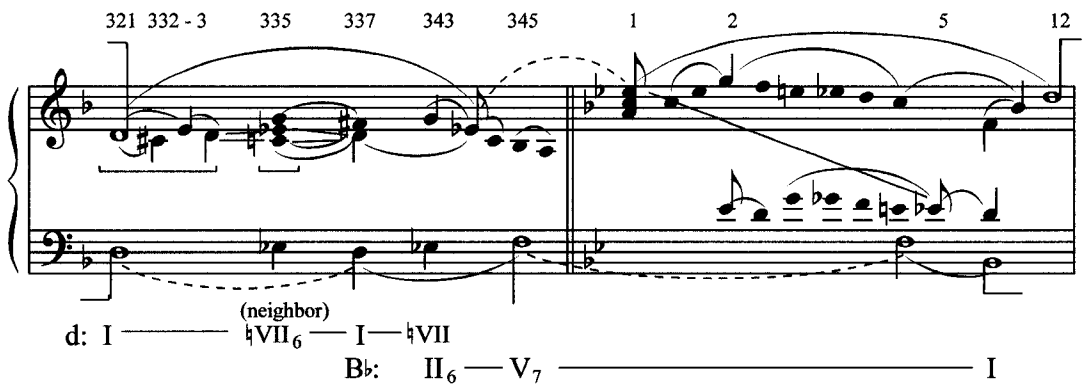
Example 5.11b illustrates the voice leading of the transition from the first to the second movements in some detail. As can be seen, the double-neighbor figure that I have mentioned above is used again (bars 332–333), following the arrival at the final tonic (bar 321) of the first movement. As indicated by the square brackets between the staves in Example 5.11b, E♭ and C♮ now (bar 335) replace the preceding E♮ and C♯, thereby producing a distinct "Phrygian" coloring in the continuing double-neighbor decoration of D (see the resulting ♮VII chord at bar 335). To be sure, both the E♭ and the C♮ are necessary elements in bringing about the key change from D minor to B♭ major. Nonetheless, by introducing them first in the domain of D minor Mendelssohn achieves a beautiful connection across the boundary of the first and second movements. Returning now to Example 5.11a we can see that the double-neighbor figure (D–E♭–C♯–D, see bracket in the third movement portion, bars 2–47) operates as an agent of continuity also in the transition from the *Adagio* to the *Finale* (the actual beginning of the form in the *Presto scherzando* is bar 47). Thus tonal continuity and motivic unity again join forces in creating a convincing unified whole in this concerto.

Example 5.11. Piano Concerto No. 2 in D Minor, Op. 40

a) Overall view of the tonal structure. Transitions from I (Allegro appassionato) to II (Adagio, Molto sostenuto), and from II to III (Presto scherzando)



b) First transition, I, bars 321–361 to II, bars 1–12, voice leading and motive



III. Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64

The last and finest work in our final category is the great Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64. As has been the case in the two earlier piano concerti, Mendelssohn unites the three individual movements of his last concerto by means of transitional passages, which express a most salient motive of the work, namely $\hat{5}$–$\hat{6}$–$\hat{5}$. Example 5.12a illustrates the voice leading in the transition that bonds the first and second movements. As shown, the passage is initiated by a motion from B to C in the "tenor" part (II, bar 1), expressing a linear 5–6 over a conceptually retained E in the bass. This initial motion is followed by similar stepwise progressions in the other voices (bars 2–4), until the dominant of C major, the tonic of the slow movement, is reached at bar 5. The structural tonic of the second movement arrives at bar 7, followed (two bars later at 9) by the actual beginning of the theme. As shown in Example 5.12a, the solo's celebrated melody begins with the same two-note figure.[32]

Example 5.12b is a further reduction of the voice leading, showing the middleground, as well as the diatonic background of the passage. As indicated by the square bracket over the "tenor" part in the most remote version, the initial rise B–C is eventually complemented by the reverse descent C–B (now forming a 4–3 over G, the dominant of C major). Hence, the entire transition expresses the motive B–C–B, a

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[32] Tovey praises the freshness of this transition and describes it as one of Mendelssohn's most romantic changes of key and mood. He also complains about "a burst of applause between the first movement and the andante," which have often prevented him (in public concerts) from hearing Mendelssohn's "most remarkable stroke of genius." See *Essays*, 3, pp. 178–181.

reflection—so it appears to be—of the basic motive of the first movement.[33] The $\hat{5}$–$\hat{6}$–$\hat{5}$ idea is a prominent feature also in the second and the third movement. Thus the C-major melody of the first section in the slow movement highlights G and its upper neighbor A (bar 10), whereas the middle section, in A minor, emphasizes E–F–E (bars 52–53). In the *finale* both themes (presented in the exposition in E and B major, see bars 9 and 55 respectively) similarly feature the $\hat{5}$–$\hat{6}$–$\hat{5}$ idea in a most prominent fashion.

Looking now at the transition from the slow movement to the *finale* (Example 5.12c), we can see that a 5–6 motion over a sustained bass (namely G–A over C; see II, bars 109–110) is once again the initial stage in a modulation, this time from C major back to E. Thus the stable final chord of the slow movement (a root position C-major triad) is transformed into a sixth chord (C–E–A), which now functions as a IV^6 in the ensuing return to the tonic E. As can be seen, the crucial step from C (which supports VI and IV^6 in the inclusive tonality of E minor) to the preparatory B, the root of the dominant harmony, occurs most prominently in the bass part (bars 110 and 114–117).

As illustrated in our last graph (Example 5.12d, a further reduction of the transition from II to III), the seventh of the dominant chord (A), first presented at the very beginning of the retransition (bar 110), resolves to the inner part G♯ only at bar 9 of the last movement, where the sonata-form body of III (in E major) actually begins.[34] Mendelssohn places a structural B in the upper voice (above this G♯, bar 9), thus

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[33] Concerning the $\hat{5}$–$\hat{6}$–$\hat{5}$ motive in the first movement, see also Chapter 2, Example 2.5 and Chapter 4, Example 4.17.

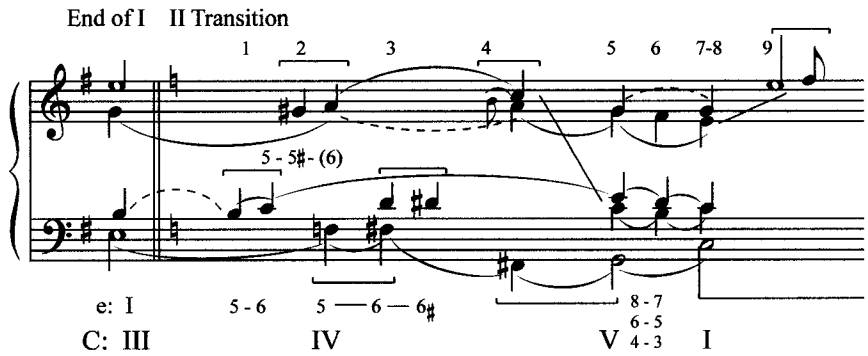
[34] R. Larry Todd is surely incorrect in reading the form of the *finale* as a rondo. However, he aptly notes the overall significance of the B–C–B motive. See *Mendelssohn: A Life in Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 479–482.

bringing to the fore another background C–B relationship, which I have attempted to indicate in Example 5.12d by the slur in the upper voice, connecting the C at bar 99 of the second movement to the B at bar 9 of the *finale*.

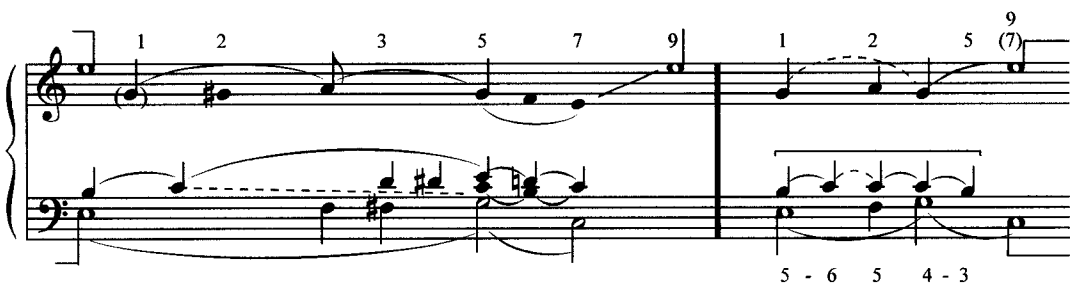
Example 5.12. Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64

a) Transition from I (Allegro molto appassionato) to II (Andante),

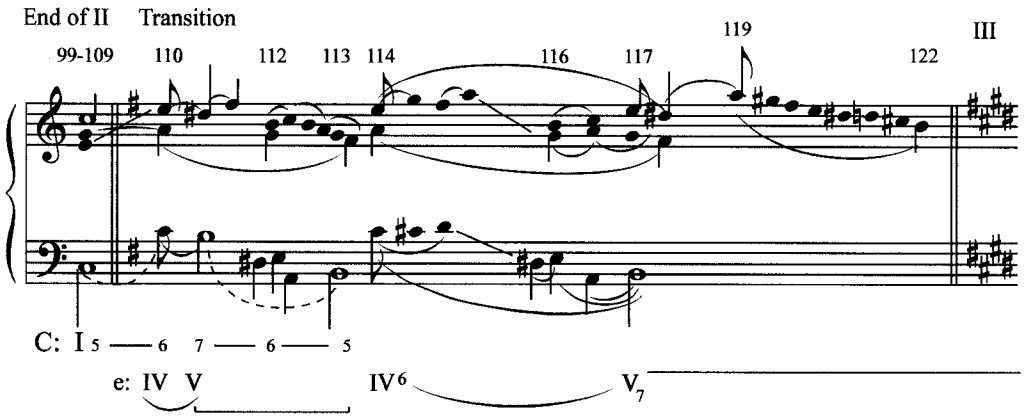
voice leading (foreground)



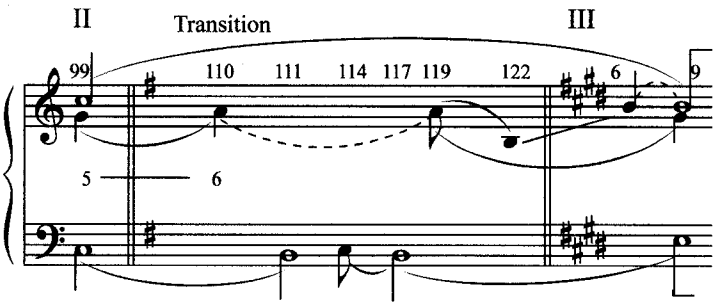
b) Transition from I to II, further reduction of the voice leading (two stages)



c) Transition (Allegretto non troppo) from II to III (Allegro molto vivace), voice leading (foreground)



d) Transition from II to III, background outline



CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

In this concluding chapter, I wish to consider Mendelssohn's treatment of formal boundaries in a historical perspective, that is to say, to place the individual compositional techniques in some sort of stylistic framework. As we shall see, Mendelssohn's individual compositional predilections are best understood as a remarkable personal synthesis, combining the inherited traditions of the eighteenth century with certain unmistakably romantic (nineteenth-century) tendencies.[1] By and large, it is clear that Mendelssohn did not attempt any revolutionary break with the music of his great predecessors; rather, he built on their achievements and expanded the received tradition.

In the fascinating memoirs of Johann Christian Lobe, describing his conversations with Mendelssohn, we find the following quotation (attributed to Mendelssohn): "To clear a path that no one has walked before you? But first this new path would have to lead to much more beautiful, more charming territory. For just

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[1] The present discussion is confined to musical style and compositional technique. For a wider perspective of Mendelssohn's aesthetics see the following: R. Larry Todd, *Mendelssohn: A Life in Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), Preface, pp. XIX–XXIX; Clive Brown, "Aesthetic and Aspiration," Chapter Eight in *A Portrait of Mendelssohn* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), pp. 311–322; Leon Botstein, "Neoclassicism, Romanticism, and Emancipation: The Origins of Felix Mendelssohn's Aesthetic Outlook," in *The Mendelssohn Companion*, ed. Douglass Seaton (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2001), pp. 1–28; Laurence Kramer, "Felix Culpa: Goethe and The Image of Mendelssohn," in *Mendelssohn Studies*, ed. R. Larry Todd (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 64–79; Greg Vitercik, "The Mendelssohn Problem," Chapter One in *The Early Works*, pp. 1–7; Eric Werner, *Mendelssohn: A New Image of The Composer and His Age*, translated by Dika Newlin, New York: Free Press of Glenco, 1963.

clearing a new path can be done by anyone who knows how to wield a shovel and move his legs. In every nobler sense, however, I deny forthwith that there are new paths to be cleared, for there are no more artistic territories. All of them have long since been discovered. New ground! Vexatious demon for every artist who submits to it! Never, in fact, did an artist break new ground. In the best case he did things imperceptibly better than his immediate predecessors."[2]

Indeed, Mendelssohn's words attest that he strongly opposed the very idea of breaking new ground in music. In the same conversation that Lobe recalls, Mendelssohn goes on to deny that even Beethoven in his last period really "cleared a new path."[3] In his view, the only viable avenue for the further development of musical style was gradual evolution. In a letter to Wilhelm Taubert Mendelssohn expressed what Leon Botstein calls his aesthetic credo rather explicitly: "the first obligation of any artist should be to have respect for the great men and to bow down before them... and not to try to extinguish the great flames, in order that his own small tallow candle can seem a little brighter."[4]

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[2] Johann Christian Lobe, "Conversations with Felix Mendelssohn," translated by Susan Gillespie, in *Mendelssohn and His World*, ed. R. Larry Todd (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), pp. 187–205. See especially pp. 193–194.

[3] Ibid, p. 194.

[4] This quotation from an 1831 letter is cited by Leon Botstein in his excellent article "The Aesthetics of Assimilation and Affirmation: Reconstructing the Career of Felix Mendelssohn," in *Mendelssohn and His World*, pp. 5–42. See especially the illuminating comparison of this conservative view with the Wagnerian modernist ideology on p. 13.

Mendelssohn's outlook is certainly not surprising. His strict training in composition is well known and documented.[5] And this distinctively traditional background has rightly led many to regard him as a unique exception among the composers of his generation.[6] Indeed, Mendelssohn displays a remarkable mastery of eighteenth-century techniques and traditions; his bond with the compositional practice of the eighteenth century seems to be stronger than that of any other composer of his generation.[7] On the other hand, viewing Mendelssohn as a mere imitator, a "neo-classicist," is far from accurate. As some of the highly individualized "habits" that we have seen in the course of this study demonstrate, Mendelssohn—like other great composers of the nineteenth century—did manage to transform the inherited traditions into an unmistakably personal idiom.

In what follows, I shall first briefly summarize the most salient Mendelssohnian predilections that we have seen in the previous chapters. Then the discussion will turn to the following: (1) pointing out the probable influence of certain stylistic features of

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[5] See R. Larry Todd, *Mendelssohn's Musical Education: A Study and Edition of his Exercises in Composition*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

[6] In a well-known letter to Clara in 1838, Schumann offered a comparison of Mendelssohn's talents with his own, and concluded that "had I grown up in circumstances similar to his, destined from childhood for music, I would surpass them all." This quotation is cited in Leon Plantinga's "Schumann's Critical Reaction to Mendelssohn," in *Mendelssohn and Schumann: Essays on Their Music an Its Context*, ed. Jon W. Finson and R. Larry Todd (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1984), p. 18.

[7] Mendelssohn surely appreciated the advantages of his strict education and background. As reported by J. C. Lobe, Mendelssohn rejected the idea that a thorough technical schooling might become "a drag to genius" as "an insult to both reason and experience," wondering also "why this absurd idea occurs to so many musicians?" See Lobe's "Conversations with Felix Mendelssohn," *Mendelssohn and His World*, pp. 188–189.

earlier composers on Mendelssohn; (2) comparing Mendelssohn's practice with regard to "smoothing-over" with that of other composers of his own generation, namely Chopin and Schumann; (3) tracing a possible stylistic link with one later composer in particular—Brahms—regarding the treatment of formal junctures. Needless to say, a full account of the treatment of formal borders in the music of such composers is far beyond the scope of this study. Therefore I shall cite just a very limited number of examples that embody an assortment of procedures that seem directly pertinent to Mendelssohn's practice.

Mendelssohn's Synthesis

In the foregoing study we have seen that Mendelssohn habitually evades expected divisions between formal units. These consistent efforts to avoid the expected norms with regard to certain formal boundaries are an unmistakable feature of his personal style. In trying to assess this salient feature, we can perhaps view the effect of smoothing over formal divisions as a unique synthesis, resulting from Mendelssohn's attempt to reconcile two apparently contradictory principles of composition: first, the Baroque ideal of constant motion, momentum, and growth (especially relevant in this respect are genres which habitually feature a one-part tonal structure, such as binary forms and fugues); secondly, the Classical standard of clear formal articulation, which often yields distinct division and repetition; this is the usual practice both in small forms—ternary and rounded binary prototypes—and in sonata forms.

In other words, it appears that Mendelssohn strove to achieve the utmost Baroque-like continuity in his compositions, but at the same time he also wished to preserve the Classical clarity of his forms. Mendelssohn's most striking deviations from long-established conventions occur in the context of either repetition (consequent phrases, reprises and recapitulations) or closures (closing cadences). Indeed, both resumed beginnings and distinct closures are effective means that set up clear-cut divisions. And such divisions are precisely what Mendelssohn attempted to mitigate.

Many of the Classical formal prototypes that Mendelssohn uses often feature two compositional situations that "endanger" the sense of continuous growth and momentum. First and most significant are the stable beginnings—especially re-beginnings—on the tonic. Such situations are frequent in formal units of various dimensions: Unnecessary tonal stability may occur in the course of a single phrase, or in the middle of a parallel period, that is to say, the beginning of a consequent phrase. As I attempted to show in Chapter 1, Mendelssohn often undermines the tonal and rhythmic stability at the boundaries of these small formal units.

Likewise, the reprise in small forms and the recapitulation in large forms have a potential to present an undue tonal immovability. In Chapters 2 and 3 we have encountered an overwhelming number of reprises and recapitulations, in which the normative initial stability was weakened via an array of compositional resources. Mendelssohn often reveals his very best—regarding inventiveness and originality—in his manner of introducing reprises and recapitulations.[8]

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[8] In his comprehensive study of Mendelssohn's early works in sonata form, Greg Vitercik often points out Mendelssohn's irregular treatment of the recapitulation. However, he does not relate Mendelssohn's special treatment of recapitulations to the

On the other hand, the beginning of second theme groups in sonata forms, and the opening bars of a new movement in a multi-movement work, do not involve repetition, so that the normative tonic on which they begin often sounds fresh. Even so, they also present a sort of static new beginning in the middle. And thus Mendelssohn, as we have seen in Chapters 4 and 5, often enlivens these beginnings by linking them to the preceding formal units.

End-articulating gestures, namely cadences, are the second "danger" for compositional momentum and continuity. This is especially true when perfect authentic cadences are involved: distinct closure articulates formal units of diverse size and nature, such as ends of phrases, small sections, expositions of sonata forms, and—of course—complete movements. Half cadences do not embody a similarly distinct closure. Nonetheless, they also halt motion and create divisions: arresting motion on the dominant habitually articulates the end of antecedent phrases, B sections of small forms, as well as bridges and development sections in sonata forms. As we have seen in the course of this study, numerous formal articulations that involve cadences (whether open or closed) are often averted in Mendelssohn's works. The most radical manifestation of this procedure is the avoidance of closing cadences at the end of expositions in sonata forms, investigated in Chapter 4.

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equally unusual procedures that are found in the reprises in numerous small forms. This has probably to do with Vitercik's notion that Mendelssohn's most successful works are all in sonata form (written between 1825 and 1834). See *The Early Works*, pp. 5–6.

Possible Influence of Earlier Composers

Attempting now to trace the sources of Mendelssohn's compositional practice in the music of his great predecessors, I shall try to exemplify some specific techniques—all directly related to the Mendelssohnian predilections that we have studied—in the music of earlier composers. The excerpts that follow suggest a possible influence of these earlier stylistic features on Mendelssohn. The first composer to be considered is J. S. Bach, after which I shall focus on the three great Classical masters, namely Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven.

I. J. S. Bach

Introducing themes in a new context was an endless challenge for Mendelssohn, and indeed, a vital aspect of his personal style. As we have seen, Mendelssohn's ability to smooth over crucial junctures that entail re-beginning is often related to the design of his themes at the outset. In other words, the unstable nature—tonally and/or rhythmically—of the beginnings enabled the imaginative change of context when the opening theme returns. Impossible to prove as it might be, one could assume that Mendelssohn's superb technique of bringing back the beginning of a theme seamlessly,

often emerging almost unnoticed out of a fresh harmonic and rhythmic context, can be linked to his excellent knowledge of Bach's fugues.[9]

The imaginative recreation of a fresh context whenever a fugue theme re-enters is a remarkable hallmark of Bach's strategy. Numerous fugue themes (many of which—incidentally—do not start on the downbeat, much like numerous Mendelssohnian themes) appear to be designed in a way that precisely allows seamless entrances of the theme as the fugue unfolds. This fascinating aspect of Bach's fugal technique is especially admirable near the end of many fugues, where the theme habitually returns in the original key.[10] However, these returns often do not coincide with an arrival at a stable tonic harmony.[11] Mendelssohn undoubtedly marveled at these thematic "reprises." As his own imaginative handling of thematic returns suggests, this normative feature in Bach's fugal writing must have inspired him.

The F♯-major Fugue from the Well-Tempered Clavier, vol. 1 (Example 6.1), illustrates Bach's typical practice. As we can see in Example 6.1a, the first statement of the fugue's theme (bars 1–2) clearly expresses a tonic prolongation (the implied harmony is indicated by the Roman numerals below the stave). However, when the theme is

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[9] Schumann praised Mendelssohn's outstanding command of Bach's fugal style in his review of Mendelssohn's Preludes and Fugues Op. 35, admitting that Mendelssohn's fugues had changed his view that fugues could no longer be written. Robert Schumann, *Schumann on Music: A Selection from the Writings*, translated and ed. Henry Pleasants (New York: Dover, 1988), pp. 123–125.

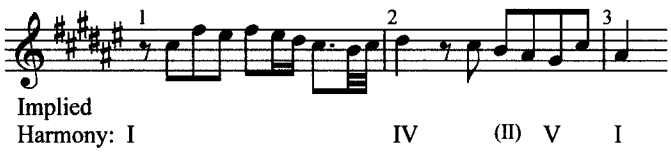
[10] The complex interaction of thematic design, form, and tonal structure in Bach's fugues is discussed by William Renwick in his excellent book *Analyzing Fugue: A Schenkerian Approach* (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1995), pp. 202–205.

[11] Renwick addresses the norm of return to the home key, as well as its impact on tonal structures. Ibid., p. 204.

restated in the home key near the end of this fugue (as of mid-bar 31), it is absorbed into a harmonic prolongation of IV.[12] As shown in example 6.1b, in addition to the fresh—non-tonic—harmonic context, Bach also veils the entrance of the theme by means of the sequential repetition: since the opening four-note motive of the theme has already been presented one step higher a bar earlier (mid-bar 30), one is not immediately aware of the entrance of the theme at mid-bar 31. The brackets between the staves show the sequential relationship between these bars. As we have seen in Chapters 1 and 2, Mendelssohn often used a similar technique in order to smooth over formal junctures.

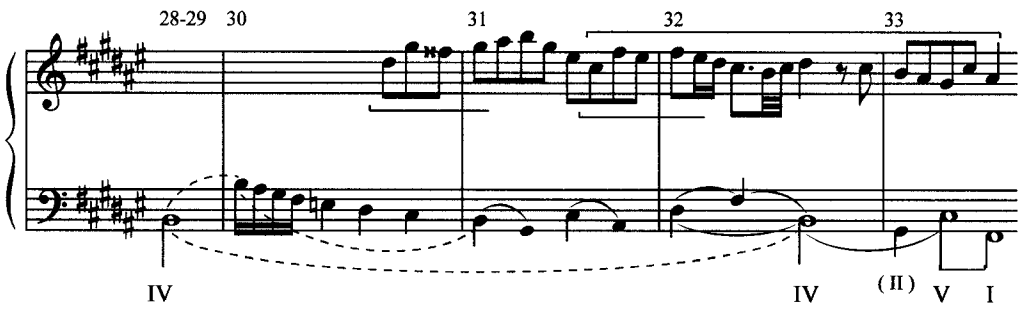
Example 6.1. Bach, WTC I, Fugue No. 13 in F♯ Major

a) Bars 1–3, theme and implied tonic prolongation



[12] Renwick analyses the F♯-major Fugue in its entirety. He also reads a prolongation of IV as of mid-bar 28. Ibid., pp. 195–199 (see especially the graph on p. 196). Likewise, in his comprehensive analysis of Bach's Fugue in B♭ Major from the WTC, vol. 1, Carl Schachter reads the last thematic statement (bars 41–55) as the upper fifth of the subdominant rather than a structural tonic. See *Unfoldings*, p. 255.

b) Bars 28–33 "reprise" of theme



The next excerpt (Example 6.2) shows a smoothing over of a formal juncture in the fugal movement (*Kyrie eleison*) that opens Bach's great Mass in B Minor.[13] As the last section (bars 102–126) of this unique movement basically repeats the opening orchestral section of bars 5–29 (a ritornello[14] of a sort, which is also stated in the dominant key, F♯ minor, in bars 48–72), the compositional situation here resembles a genuine reprise. The ingenious design of the beginning of the last section, nonetheless, brings about a remarkable elision of the formal boundary, one that erases any sense of division.[15]

As can be seen in Example 6.2a, the opening ritornello begins on a stable tonic at bar 5, where the celebrated fugue theme is first presented. It follows a Phrygian cadence

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[13] I am grateful to Uri Golomb (personal communication) for bringing this example to my attention.

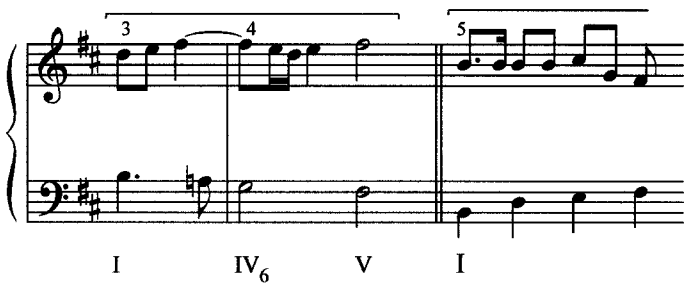
[14] My use of the term ritornello here follows Tovey. For his insightful remarks on this movement, see *Essays in Musical Analysis*, vol. 5, Tenth Impression (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), pp. 25–28.

[15] Tovey remarks that "though the form is so absurdly simple, it is so poised that no human ear can detect the moments when recapitulation begins." Ibid., p. 28.

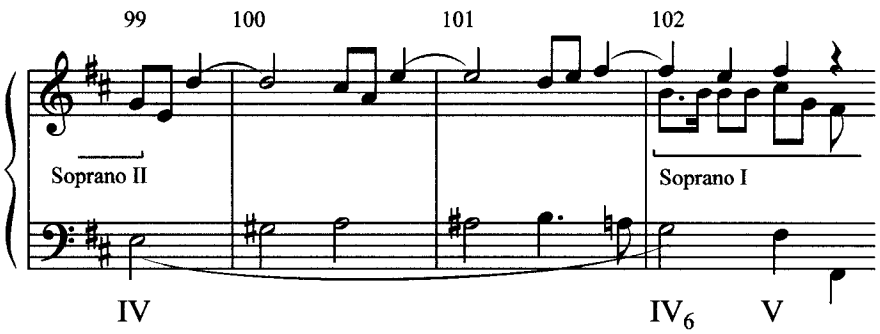
(completed at bar 4), which concludes the four-bar choral introductory phrase. However, when the last ritornello begins (bar 102, see Example 6.2b) there is no similar division: bar 102 also presents a Phrygian cadence (a climactic conclusion of the fugal exposition of bars 81–99), but at the same time this bar (102, see the first soprano part) already initiates the reprise of the entire ritornello. Thus, two events—namely the cadence and the beginning of the ritornello—that were originally separate (bars 4–5) are now elided, creating an outstanding formal overlap.

Example 6.2. Bach, Mass in B Minor, I, Kyrie eleison

a) Beginning of first ritornello, bars 3–5, outer voices



b) Beginning of last ritornello, bars 99–102, simplified



A related, and somewhat more obvious Bach influence on Mendelssohn's unusual reprises is what Rothstein calls the deceptive recapitulation, that is to say, the return of the opening motive in the latter part of a binary form, in a non-tonic context.[16] As we have observed in Chapters 2 and 3, Mendelssohn strives to achieve a similar "deceptive" impact in numerous "real" reprises and recapitulations. Delaying the arrival at the structural tonic until the final closing cadence of the piece thus creates a Baroque-like one-part tonal structure.[17]

A characteristic Bachian usage of a deceptive reprise in binary forms can be seen in Example 6.3. The opening motive (bar 1) of the Polonaise from the French Suite in E Major is featured again at the beginning (bar 17) of the last phrase of the piece, but the thematic return does not signify a genuine reprise. As shown in Example 6.3, there is no return to the structural tonic harmony at bar 17. Rather, the E dominant-seventh chord is an applied dominant of IV. The Roman numerals below the example show that VI (bar 16) eventually returns to the structural V (bar 20); thus, the tonic is reached only at the final bar (24) of the Polonaise. Incidentally, the apparent tonic of bar 17 (connecting VI and IV on the way to V) is somewhat similar to the beginning of the recapitulation in Mendelssohn's Scherzo—also in E major—in the E-minor String Quartet (Op. 44/2), analyzed in Chapter 3.[18]

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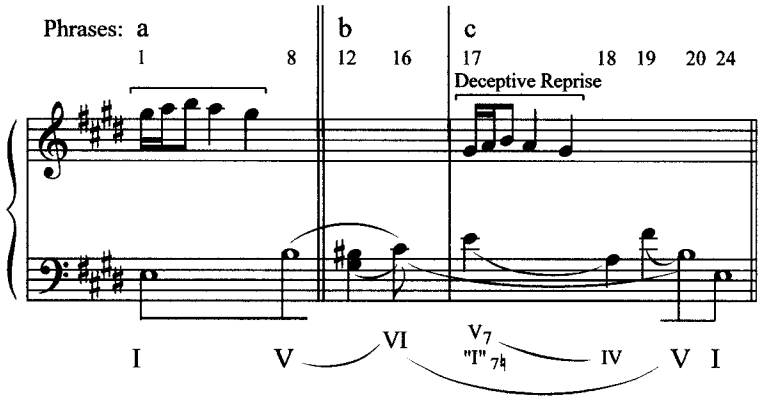
[16] Rothstein claims that "it seems clear that this is a technique that Mendelssohn learned from his beloved J. S. Bach." *Phrase Rhythm*, p. 190. (See also his convincing analyses of Mendelssohn's Op. 7/6 and Op. 30/6 on pp. 190–198.)

[17] See especially Examples 2.13, 2.16, and 2.33 in Chapter 2, Example 3.28 in Chapter 3, and Example 4.22 in Chapter 4.

[18] See Example 3.21.

Example 6.3. Bach, French Suite No. 6 in E Major, Polonaise, analytic sketch



II. Antecedents in The Classical Style[19]

Turning now to Mendelssohn's close affinity with the Classical style of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, I should like to begin with a quotation from a letter that Mendelssohn wrote to his beloved teacher Karl Friedrich Zelter from Paris on February 15, 1832. After reporting the wide-spread admiration for Beethoven's symphonies Mendelssohn says: "But I don't believe a word the others say, the great squawkers and enthusiasts, for they disparage the other masters on his account, speak of Haydn as if he were a powdered wig, of Mozart as if he were a simpleton ... and such a narrow-minded enthusiasm cannot be genuine. For if they felt what Beethoven intended they would also know what Haydn was and would be compelled to behave more humbly; ... I simply cannot stand the denigration of Haydn and Mozart, it drives me mad."[20] Mendelssohn's words reflect his deep understanding of the close relationship of Beethoven's music with that of his predecessors. They also make clear that in addition to the often-cited Beethovenian models for numerous works of Mendelssohn, his dependency on Haydn and Mozart is just as compelling.[21]

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[19] Since many antecedents in the music of Haydn, Mozart, and especially Beethoven were cited in the previous chapters, I shall present here just one analysis of music by each of these composers.

[20] Felix Mendelssohn, *A Life in Letters*, ed. Rudolf Elvers, translated from the German by Craig Tomlinson (New York: Fromm International Publishing Corporation, 1990), p. 178.

[21] According to Josef von Wasielewski, who attended Mendelssohn's composition lessons in the Leipzig Conservatory, Mendelssohn advised one of his students to copy the form of a quartet by Haydn or Mozart, as his teacher Zelter made him do. This information is reported by Carl Reinecke, and it is cited by Roger Nichols in *Mendelssohn Remembered* (London: Faber and Faber, 1997), p. 77.

1. Haydn

It is hard to imagine one of the most noticeable predilections of Mendelssohn—namely his drastic changes in the recapitulation section of sonata forms—without the numerous antecedents of imaginative rewriting in the recapitulations of Haydn.[22] Haydn's marked fondness of significant changes—sometimes amounting to a thorough rewriting—in his recapitulations must have inspired Mendelssohn in several ways.[23]

One unmistakably Haydnesque trait, easily traceable in Mendelssohn, is the tendency to shorten the first group (first theme and bridge) in the recapitulation section of sonata forms. Such a procedure is fairly common in Haydn, but much less in Mozart or Beethoven, who more often than not make the first group in the recapitulation approximately as long as the analogous section in the exposition. Obviously, Haydn's favored monothematic expositions often necessitate such abbreviations, in order to prevent excessive thematic monotony in the tonic key.

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[22] Unlike the numerous references to certain Beethovenian and Mozartian features in Mendelssohn's music, Haydn's influence on Mendelssohn seems to be somewhat underestimated in the literature.

[23] This feature in Haydn's sonata forms has been widely discussed in the literature. See, for instance, Ethan Haimo, "Haydn's Altered Reprise," *Journal of Music Theory* 32 (1988): 335–351; Eugene K. Wolf, "The Recapitulation in Haydn's London Symphonies," *Musical Quarterly* 52 (1966): 71–89; William Caplin cites many instances of Haydn's characteristic procedures in recapitulations in *Classical Form*, chapter 11, pp.161–173. See also the highly imaginative recomposition of the recapitulation in a number of Haydn's symphonies, which L. Poundie Burstein presents in "Comedy and Structure in Haydn's Symphonies," in *Schenker Studies 2*, ed. Carl Schachter and Hedi Siegel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 67–81.

A well-known instance of a Haydn recapitulation that is drastically altered as well as considerably shortened—compared with the exposition—is the first movement of the String Quartet Op. 76/2 in D Minor ("Fifths"). This movement is obviously an extreme case, even for Haydn.[24] But many other "average" movements by Haydn may equally well serve as an example of the characteristic Haydnesque recomposition of a recapitulation.[25] We may thus assume that Mendelssohn, who habitually shortened his recapitulations (noticeably the first-group portion), was influenced by this aspect of Haydn's style.

The Trio section of the third movement of yet another string quartet by Haydn, Op. 74/3 in G Minor (Example 6.4), features a different sort of recomposition of reprises in Haydn's music. A first glance at this wonderful Trio reveals that the outer form of the piece confirms to the rounded-binary model, with a seemingly regular reprise. Indeed, the design gives rise to the following sectional layout: a (bars 35–46); b (bars 47–62); a' (bars 63–74). However, if we take into consideration the tonal structure (see Example

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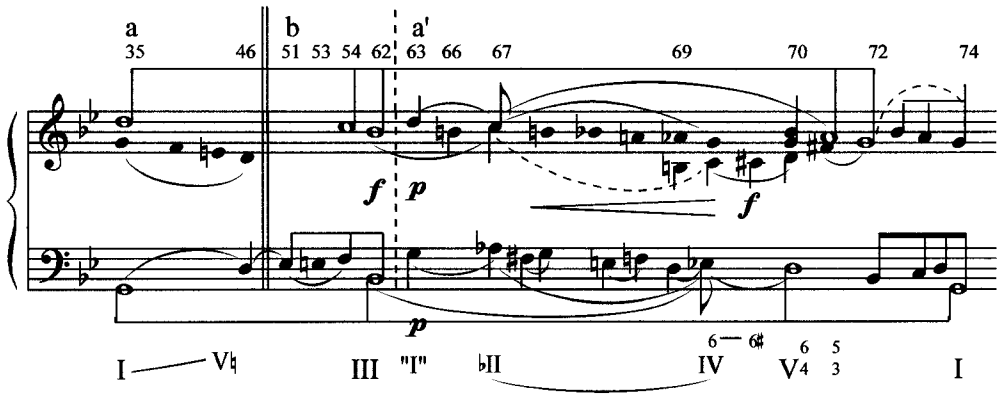
[24] Another extreme case, the first movement of the String Quartet in B Minor, Op. 64/2, is analyzed by Caplin. See *Classical Form*, pp. 174–177.

[25] If we compare, for instance, the first group in the exposition with the analogous section in the recapitulation in the first movement of the String Quartet Op. 76/1 in G Major (consult the score), we can see that the latter is considerably shorter. The three phrases of the first group in the exposition are organized as follows: two phrases (bars 3–18 and 19–32) constitute the first theme, and one phrase (bars 33–42) is the modulating bridge. In the analogous beginning of the recapitulation Haydn presents only two phrases (bars 140–151 and bars 152–165), compressing the original second and third phrases into one phrase (compare bars 19–42 with bars 152–165). In addition, the first phrase—initially occupying 16 bars (3–18)—is shortened at the beginning of the recapitulation to 12 bars (140–151). All in all, 40 bars of the exposition have become 26 bars at the recapitulation. As mentioned above, this procedure is not an exception in Haydn's sonata forms; rather, it is the norm.

6.4), we realize that Haydn's thematic reprise is in fact a deceptive reprise of sorts. That is to say, the restatement of the opening idea in G minor (bars 63 ff.) does not coincide with a return to the structural tonic. Rather, the thematic reprise, starting in G minor, is interpolated in the midst of a larger motion from III (bar 62) to IV (bar 69). As shown in Example 6.4, Haydn makes a beautiful use of dynamics in order to project the larger tonal organization of this complex passage. The loud arrival at III (bar 62) is followed by a soft "I" (the thematic reprise of bar 63), and only at bar 69 (where IV^6 is arrived at, in both its diatonic and chromaticized forms) do we reach a *forte* dynamic again. The conflict between design and structure here is reminiscent of what we have seen in several pieces by Mendelssohn in previous chapters.[26] Thus, we may infer that such antecedents in Haydn might have influenced Mendelssohn, as his similarly subtle treatment of thematic reprises attests.

[26] See Examples 2.28 and 2.29 (Chapter 2) and also 3.27 (Chapter 3).

Example 6.4. Haydn, String Quartet Op. 74/3, III, Trio, form and tonal structure



2. Mozart

Comparisons of Mendelssohn's style and aesthetics to those of Mozart have been commonplace since Mendelssohn's lifetime, starting probably with Schumann's well-known assertion that "Mendelssohn is the Mozart of our time."[27] Indeed, the elegance, the clarity, the outstanding compositional technique, the rhythmic elasticity and fluidity, the perfection of "small" details, the apparent simplicity and facility, and even the nature of the early musical education and biography (early travels), make the notion of Mozartian qualities in Mendelssohn inescapable. Detecting a clear-cut influence in the area of the smoothing-over technique is somewhat less obvious.

One specific "trick" that Mendelssohn used quite often, namely the deletion of the initial tonic—expressed in the introductory bars—from the beginning of the reprise, could be thought of as taken directly from a celebrated Mozart antecedent in the first movement of the Symphony No. 40 in G Minor (K550).[28] Although Mendelssohn uses this technique in small—rather than sonata—forms,[29] the resemblance to Mozart's famous recapitulation is indeed striking. In addition, as we have noted in Chapter 4,

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[27] Schumann's comparison appeared in his 1840 review of Mendelssohn's Piano Trio in D Minor, Op. 49, in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 13/50 (19 December 1840), p. 198. Douglass Seaton offers a translation of Schumann's review in *The Mendelssohn Companion*, p. 574.

[28] Since the first movement of K550 is very well known, a brief reminder should suffice here: the absence of the introductory bars enables Mozart to bring in the beginning of the recapitulation on the dominant (upbeat of bar 189). The arrival at the tonic follows at bar 190.

[29] See, for instance, the Songs Without Words Opp. 30/1, 85/3, and 102/4, and their analyses in Chapter 2 (Examples 2.13, 2.33, and 2.16 respectively).

Mozart often begins the second group of the exposition on an unstable $\frac{6}{3}$ local tonic chord. This could also be regarded as a step in the direction of Mendelssohn's practice.

The following Mozart example (6.5) exemplifies another possible Mozart influence on Mendelssohn, namely the use of pseudo-metrical patterns that conflict and compete with the notated meter. As we have seen in Chapter 1, this technique is extremely useful in the smoothing over of phrases and subphrases. We have also noticed that Mendelssohn's manipulations of meter—undoubtedly a hallmark of his phrase rhythm[30]—often serve the purpose of recreating a new context in formal junctures that entail thematic repetitions. Although Mozart is not the only Classical composer who features conflicting metrical patterns, and regardless of the fact that he does not use them as extensively as Mendelssohn, several excerpts in his music sound nearly Mendelssohnian.[31]

Let us consider the *finale* of Mozart's early Piano Sonata (No. 3, K. 281) in B♭ Major. Example 6.5a illustrates the metrical as well as the harmonic structure of the opening rondo theme (bars 1–8). As indicated by the Arabic numbers below the example, the first two bars highlight a pseudo-metrical pattern (initiated at mid-bars) so as to overshadow the true (i.e., the notated) meter. In addition to the melodic grouping, the implied tonic harmony at the very beginning plays a crucial role in our tentative perception of this mid-bar beginning as a downbeat. Note, however, that the quarter rests

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[30] See Examples 1.6 and 1.7.

[31] Two familiar instances: Zerlina's aria "Batti, batti, o bel Masetto" from *Don Giovanni* and the G-major Rondo theme of the last movement of the G-minor String Quintet, K516. For another fascinating example, see Larry Laskowski's article "Voice Leading and Meter: An Unusual Mozart Autograph," in *Trends in Schenkerian Research*, ed. Allen Cadwallader (New York: Schirmer Books, 1990), pp. 41–49.

in the bass (up to bar 3) hint at the dubious quality of this mid-bar metrical pattern. As soon as we reach bar 3, only the notated meter is felt: the harmonic rhythm created by the prolongation of IV at bar 3 is largely responsible for that change. Temporarily, at least, the metrical conflict is resolved.

When the consequent phrase begins at mid-bar 4, nonetheless, the mid-bar pattern recurs, at least with regard to the grouping of the melodic segments. But as we can see in the harmonic analysis below Example 6.5a, the absence of the tonic harmony at mid-bar 4 (a quarter rest again) also brings about a subtle smoothing over of the two phrases: the beginning of the consequent phrase continues to prolong the V (which has been reached at the downbeat of bar 4) and the tonic arrives only at bar 6. Thus, at mid-bar 4 Mozart gives up the tentative downbeat quality of the mid-bar beginning (which was featured at the opening of the antecedent phrase) in order to bridge over the phrase division. As we have seen in Chapter 1, Mendelssohn uses a closely related technique in a remarkably individualized fashion in order to smooth over phrase borders.[32]

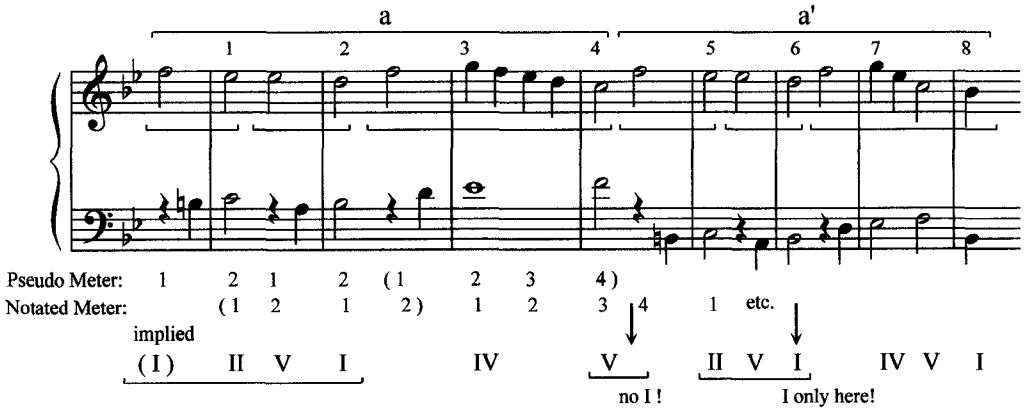
Example 6.5b shows that the special metrical and harmonic design of the opening in this Mozart *finale* also enables him to avoid a stable structural tonic at the section level. Indeed, the fourth statement of the rondo theme (bars 114–124) is integrated into a vast prolongation of the dominant (as of bar 109), and the arrival at the structural tonic is postponed until the recapitulation of the movement's second theme (as of bar 124). Hence, the thematic articulation of the form ("outer form") and the tonal structure ("inner form") are set in conflict. It seems probable that Mendelssohn, certainly

[32] See especially Examples 1.17 and 1.18 in Chapter 1.

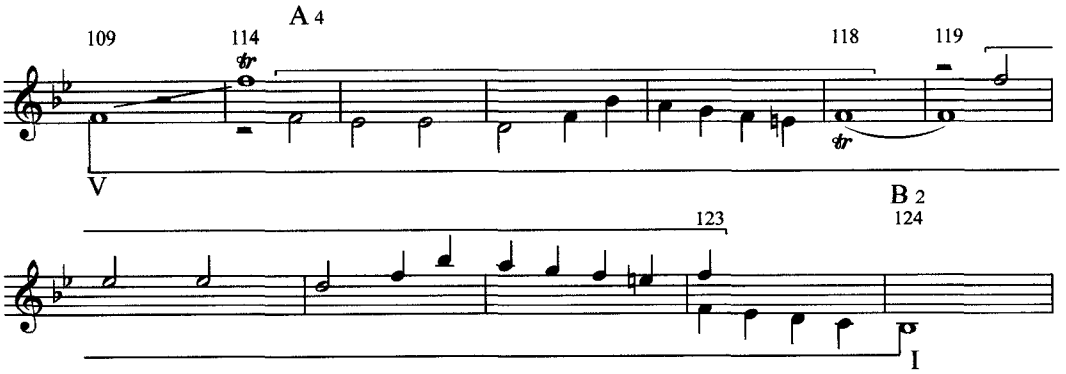
admiring such compositional sophistication, was thus inspired to produce similar conflicts in his composition.

Example 6.5. Mozart, Piano Sonata in B♭ Major, K281, III (*RONDEAU*), Allegro

a) Bars 1–8



b) Bars 109–124



3. Beethoven

As already noted in the previous chapter, Beethoven's influence on Mendelssohn's style is the most clearly detected, especially with regard to multi-movement compositions in Mendelssohn's early quartets, the Piano Sonata Op. 6, the symphonies and the concerti. Mendelssohn was almost certainly the first nineteenth-century composer who used the later Beethoven's sonatas and quartets as models. Most impressively, he did that even at the very early phase of his career, and produced certain astonishingly successful compositions, which are based on these late Beethovenian models.

Beethoven's remarkable ability to attain an overall unity in multi-movement works is not confined, of course, to the compositions of his last years. Example 6.6 illustrates the overall tonal plan of Beethoven's Piano Sonata in F Minor, Op. 57 ("Appassionata"). As far as formal junctures are concerned, the most unusual feature here is the overlap of the second and third movements. As shown in Example 6.6, the expected final D♭ tonic at bar 96 of the second movement is substituted for by a diminished seventh chord (VII of F minor). The top voice does arrive at the desired D♭, but the surprising harmony brings about an effect quite similar to a deceptive cadence. Then, this diminished chord is stretched over into the preparatory section (bars 1–19) that opens the F-minor *finale*. As is often the case in Beethoven, the most prominent figure in this juncture, namely the motion from D♭ to C (see the upper voice at the right end of Example 6.6), conveys a prominent motive in the sonata. Thus, in addition to

bridging over the division between the second and the third movement, the motivic unity of Op. 57 is further expressed and enriched.[33]

Furthermore, if we consider the overall tonal plan of the piece, we can understand the D♭ tonality of the middle movement as yet another manifestation of the C–D♭–C motive. As indicated by the letters between the staves in Example 6.6, the key of D♭ (second movement) embodies a large-scale neighbor-note motion from the fifth (C) of the main tonic (F minor). The neighbor-note idea is then completed at the beginning of the third movement, where D♭ returns to C. As we have seen in Chapter 5, Mendelssohn similarly presented such all-encompassing $\hat{5}$–$\hat{6}$–$\hat{5}$ motions in several of his multi-movement works.[34] Indeed, Beethoven's practice in the "Appassionata", as well as in some other pieces, must have been Mendelssohn's model.

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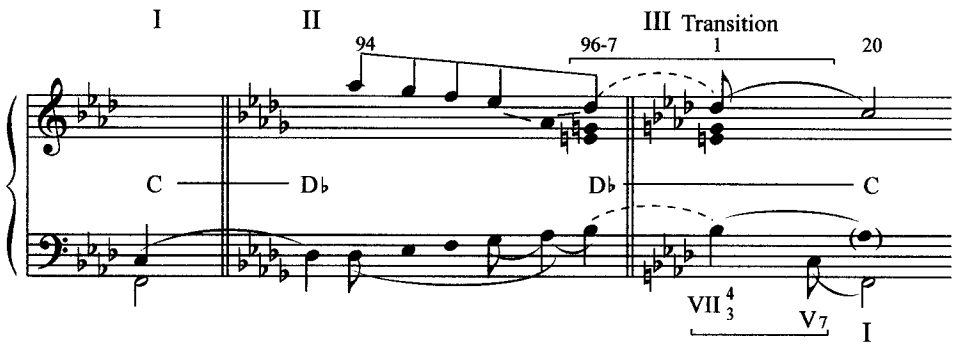
[33] Schenker notes that the *finale* goes back to the first movement's $\hat{5}$–$\hat{6}$–$\hat{5}$ (that is C–D♭–C) neighbor-note motive (both in a complete and an incomplete version). For his illuminating discussion of the motivic unity in Beethoven's Op. 57 see *Der Tonwille,* vol. 7 (1924), pp. 17 and 21.

[34] See Examples 5.2 (String Quartet Op. 13), 5.9 ("Scottish" Symphony), and 5.12 (Violin Concerto). Note also the reference to Beethoven's Symphony no. 7 as a possible model for Mendelssohn's "Scottish" Symphony.

Example 6.6. Beethoven, Piano Sonata Op. 57, overall plan



Mendelssohn's Generation

If we compare Mendelssohn's style to that of the other two great composers of his own generation, Chopin and Schumann, we can immediately see that with regard to certain important aspects of composition Mendelssohn was by far the most conservative composer of the three.[35] By and large, his music does not feature the daring tonal experiments that can be found in some pieces by Chopin, or the unusual tonal ambiguities that are often encountered in Schumann's music. If we think of the one genre in which all these three composers produced a sizable corpus of works, namely the short piano piece, we can also detect another difference: the vast majority of Mendelssohn's piano pieces are markedly less adventurous—regarding texture and sonority—than those of both Chopin and Schumann.[36] As far as large forms are concerned, Mendelssohn appears to have been much more at ease than the other two in his handling of sonata-principle movements. His remarkably varied production in this area exceeds both that of Chopin and of Schumann, who appear to have been more at home with free, fantasy-like constructions than in the works that follow classical models.

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[35] Mendelssohn's unsympathetic view of the music of the two prominent "progressive" composers of his generation, Berlioz and Liszt, is well known. See, for instance, his 1831 letter to his father concerning Berlioz's "Fantastic" Symphony, which is cited by Mozelle Moshansky in his book *Mendelssohn: His Life and Times* (Neptune City, N.J.: Paganiniana Publications, 1981), p. 77, and WM. A. Little's "Mendelssohn and Liszt," in *Mendelssohn Studies*, ed. R. Larry Todd (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 106–125.

[36] Rothstein observes this difference in his chapter on Mendelssohn's Songs without Words. See *Phrase Rhythm*, p. 190.

Notwithstanding these, as well as other, significant differences, there is also a clear stylistic link between Chopin, Schumann and Mendelssohn, a link that is relevant to the foregoing study of Mendelssohn's smoothing-over techniques. Chopin and Schumann strove, as Mendelssohn did, to achieve the utmost continuity and rhythmic flux in their compositions. And they, too, devised some highly individualized techniques, which turned out to be a hallmark of their style.[37]

To be sure, a thorough examination of the rhythmic idiosyncrasies of Chopin and Schumann is far beyond the scope of the present study. For the sake of comparison with Mendelssohn, nevertheless, the following excerpts from their music focus on no more than one aspect of their compositional practice, namely, the imaginative treatment of reprises. Although they are perhaps somewhat less obsessive than Mendelssohn with regard to the recomposition of reprises, still both Chopin and Schumann appear to have favored reprises that present the opening music in a new context. As we shall see, certain features of the markedly personal style of each of these composers are clearly evident in their treatment of this formal juncture.

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[37] Chopin's individuality with regard to continuity is thus often associated with his original melodic technique, while Schumann is well known for his use of daring rhythmic dissonances. For comprehensive studies of these stylistic features in Chopin and Schumann see William Rothstein, "Chopin: Nocturnes, Mazurkas, and Etudes," Chapter 6 in *Phrase Rhythm*, pp. 214–248, and Harald Krebs, *Fantasy Pieces: Metrical Dissonance in the Music of Robert Schumann* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999) respectively. In his book *The Romantic Generation* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1995), Charles Rosen also provides much valuable insight into the personal styles of Chopin and Schumann.

I. Chopin

In Chopin's music, one often encounters reprises that begin on the dominant. If the piece starts on a stable I, the most frequent unusual reprise would begin on a cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ chord. Like Mendelssohn, Chopin takes advantage of the fact that the tonic chord and the cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ have the identical pitch content, so that the opening melody can return unchanged at the beginning of the reprise. Fairly simple examples of this procedure can be seen in the Etude Op. 10/10 in A♭ Major (see bars 55–56) and the Nocturne Op. 62/2 in E Major (bars 58 ff.).[38] Another typical and fairly frequent strategy of Chopin is to begin the piece on the dominant.[39] When he approaches the reprise, the harmonic arrival at the dominant—normally the climactic goal of the middle section—is designed so as to coincide with the beginning of the thematic reprise. Thereby, a large-scale harmonic motion bridges over this crucial formal juncture. Following an analysis by Schachter, Rothstein shows a beautiful example (the Mazurka in G♯ Minor, Op. 33/1) of this Chopinesque strategy, that is to say, a large-scale harmonic motion that culminates on V at the beginning of the reprise section in a small ternary form.[40] Note, however, that the initial V–I progression is designed as a closing cadence rather than as

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[38] Rothstein presents a much more complex instance in his analysis of the first section of the Mazurka in A Minor, Op. 59/1. See *Phrase Rhythm*, pp. 234–239.

[39] Mendelssohn sometimes does that too (see the SWW Op. 62/1), but more characteristically he starts the piece with a tonic introduction.

[40] See *Phrase Rhythm*, pp. 229–233.

the upbeat to an initial tonic. As Rothstein accurately observes, at the beginning of the reprise the ending-quality potential of the opening is fully realized.[41]

A similar strategy can be seen in the highly expressive Mazurka in G Minor, Op. 24/1. As shown in Example 6.7a, the piece begins with a quasi-cadential motion V–I. When this opening idea returns at bars 49–50 (see the actual music in Example 6.7b and the underlying voice leading in Example 6.7c), the V–I progression is not only the beginning of the last section of the Mazurka. At the same time this cadence-like progression is also the end of a large-scale harmonic motion. The first part of the piece features a progression from an initial tonic (as of bar 2) to a tonicized III. Stable arrivals at B♭ occur at bar 24 and at the second ending of bar 32 (none of these are shown in Example 6.7). Then the second part of the Mazurka crystallizes around a tonicized VI (first reached at bar 34), and we reach the V–I at bars 49–50. Regarding the transition from VI to V, note that VI is first destabilized by the addition of a minor seventh (D♭, bar 48) and that this seventh turns out to be an augmented sixth (C♯, same bar). As it happens, the first two bars of the reprise (49–50) are strongly bonded to the preceding E♭-major section. Thus, bars 49–50 complete a vast harmonic progression that encompasses the entire Mazurka up to this point.

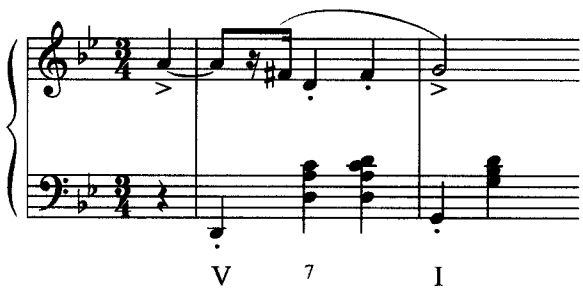
One "small" detail in this reprise deserves attention here: at bar 1 the seventh (c^1) of the V chord is presented on the second beat, whereas at the analogous bar 49 the seventh ($c♮^1$) is featured at the beginning of the bar. The resulting chromatic line in the alto, E♭D–D♭–(=C♯)–C♮–B♭ (bars 46–50; see also the bracket below the alto voice in Example 6.7c), secures an unbreakable continuity from the tonicized E♭ of bars 34–46

[41] Ibid., p. 231.

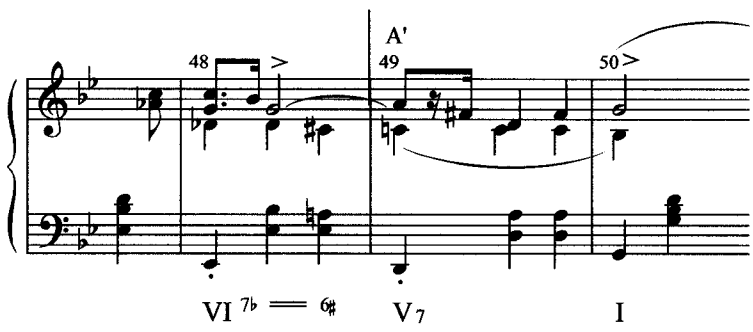
up to the consonant tonic at bar 50. Therefore, the chain of dissonances in the alto (bars 47–49) provides a forceful link across the formal border.

Example 6.7. Chopin, Mazurka in G Minor, Op. 24/1

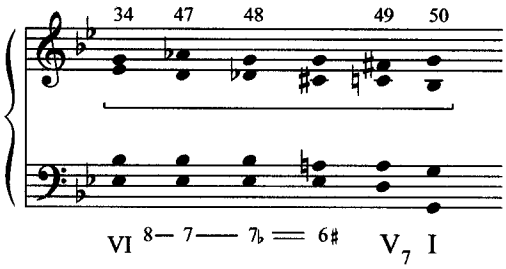
a) bars 1–2



b) bars 47–50



c) bars 34–50 chordal reduction



A different and remarkably fresh reprise can be seen in the following example (Chopin's Mazurka in C♯ Minor, Op. 63/3), in which Chopin reharmonizes the opening melody at the beginning of the reprise, replacing the initial tonic with a German $\frac{6}{5}$ chord. This reharmonization is possible owing to the two notes ($\hat{1}$ and $\hat{3}$) that are common between I and the German $\frac{6}{5}$.

Example 6.8a illustrates the tonic prolongation with which the Mazurka begins (bar 1–4). Note how the actual theme begins on $\hat{1}$ ($c\sharp^2$) at the second beat of bar 1. When we reach the reprise (bar 49) this theme emerges from an entirely different context. As shown in Example 6.8b, the B section (in the parallel major key, spelled enharmonically as D♭) presents a tonicized IV (G♭ major, bars 41–44) and then proceeds in a rising sequential motion (see the brackets above Example 6.8b), which briefly tonicizes G♭ major (bar 46), A♭ minor (bar 47) and—apparently—A major (bars 48–49). However this latter "key" (that is, A major) never reaches a stable "tonic." The bass note A (bar 49) supports an augmented sixth chord (spelled as a dominant seventh) and the reprise section starts on that harmony (bar 49, as of the second beat). The required resolution of

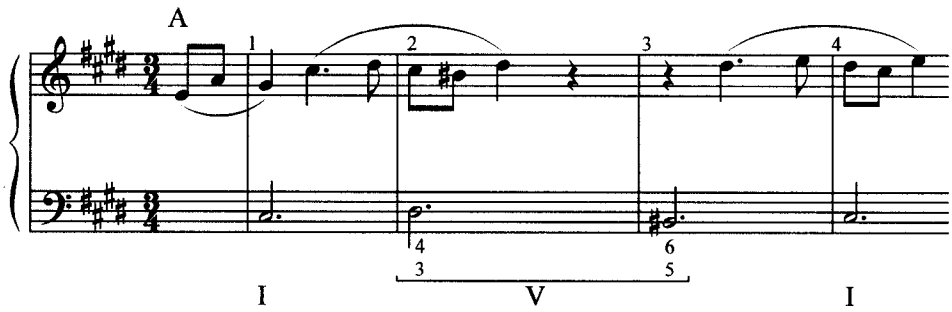
the dissonant German $\frac{6}{5}$ chord to V^7 occurs in the following bar (50) and the tonic is reached only at bar 52, where the first four-bar phrase of the reprise is completed.

As indicated in Example 6.8b, the augmented sixth chord (bar 49) arises out of a chromaticized voice exchange with the IV at bar 44. To be sure, the notational shift to flats in the B section is not a genuine enharmonic change. Rather, it is necessary to facilitate the reading; hence, the deeper middleground structure should be viewed from the perspective of the C♯-minor/major tonality. Therefore, the G♭ chord at bar 44 is to be understood as an F♯ harmony. The third of that chord, A♯, becomes an A♮ at bar 49 (the bass part) and the root note, F♯, becomes an F𝄪 ("misspelled" as G♮ at bar 49).

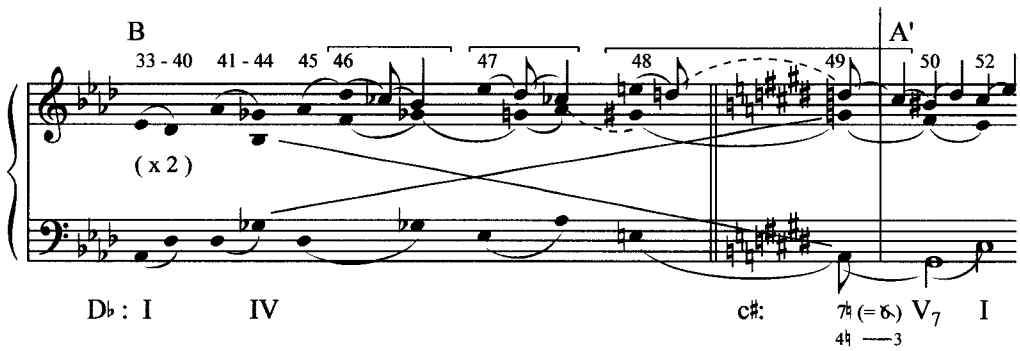
Especially noteworthy in this typically Chopinesque overlap of sections is the way in which the first melodic note of the theme ($c♯^2$, second beat of bar 49) is introduced. Note that the dissonant $d♮^2$ (bars 48–49) that precedes this $c♯^2$ in the melody is extended in time (in comparison with the analogous dissonances in the two earlier phases of the sequence, that is, $c♭^2$ and $d♭^2$ at bars 46 and 47 respectively); its further extension from bar 48 to the first beat of bar 49 (where it becomes a dissonant fourth above the A in the bass) intensifies the need for a resolution. Thus, the first note in the reprise, namely $c♯^2$, which provides the desired consonant relief (bar 49, second beat), is strongly tied to the preceding B section.

Example 6.8. Chopin , Mazurka in C♯ Minor, Op. 63/3

a) Bars 1–4, simplified



b) Bars 33–52, analytic sketch



II. Schumann

Schumann's enthusiastic admiration for Mendelssohn's abilities and talents is well documented in his writings. However, Schumann's views with regard to progress in music and the desired musical style of the future, as well as his marked tendency towards the whimsical, capricious, fantastic and extra-musical, reflect his much more "modern" orientation, compared with Mendelssohn.[42]

In Schumann's short forms, one also encounters occasionally a reprise on a cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ chord.[43] More typical perhaps are the unusual reprises that almost automatically result from the non-tonic beginnings that Schumann often presented.[44] In order to compare Schumann's practice with Mendelssohn's, our first Schumann example (6.9) will show how Schumann brings back such a beginning in conjunction with a manipulation of hypermetrical units.

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[42] As pointed out by Leon Plantinga, Schumann had a lasting notion of the evolution of musical style, in which Mozart's classicism remained outside the progression from Bach through Beethoven to the romantic composers of his own time. Thus, when Schumann compared Mendelssohn to Mozart, he also implied that Mendelssohn's music is somewhat removed from the dominant trends of his own day. See "Schumann's Critical Reaction to Mendelssohn," in *Mendelssohn and Schumann*, pp. 18–19.

[43] See, for instance, the reprise (as of bar 25) in the celebrated *Vogel als Prophet* (from *Waldszenen*, Op. 82).

[44] Schumann's predilection of beginning a piece off the tonic sometimes lead him to the extreme procedure of structuring an entire piece on an auxiliary cadence. For a particularly beautiful inquiry of this exceptional strategy see Charles Burkhart's article "Departures from the Norm in Two Songs from Schumann's *Liederkreis*," in *Schenker Studies*, ed. Hedi Siegel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 146–164.

Example 6.9 features the B section (in G minor) of the first movement of Schumann's *Faschingsschwank aus Wien*, Op. 26, starting at the upbeat to bar 25. The simplified reduction attempts to reveal the inner subphrase structure up to the return to the opening idea of the section (bars 45 ff.). As indicated by the brackets above Example 6.9, Schumann begins here with three four-bar hypermeasures (25–28, 29–32, and 33–36, indicated as a^1, a^2, and b^1 respectively). One surely expects another four-bar phrase to begin at bar 37. Furthermore, the subphrase (b^2) that begins at bar 37 is a sequential repetition of the immediately preceding subphrase (bars 33–36). Schumann, however, does not quite fulfill these expectations. Two bars later (39) he abruptly brings in a new four-bar subphrase (b^3). That is to say, instead of being the third bar in the four-bar phrase that was initiated at 37, bar 39 has been reinterpreted as a first bar in a new hypermetrical unit.[45] This highly surprising beginning is detached—harmonically as well as melodically—from the incomplete idea of bars 37–38. Note that in order to emphasize this disconnection Schumann indicates a new dynamic (*mf*) at bar 39.

As can be seen six more bars down the road, the almost brutal reinterpretation at bar 39 is not an isolated whim: Schumann repeats the same trick at bar 45. Instead of resolving the B♭—the last quarter note in bar 44—to the expected A♭ (subphrase b^4, starting at bar 43, clearly points to F minor as an expected goal at 45), he "forces" B♭ to serve as an upbeat to the ensuing reprise (indicated as a^3) of the G-minor music at bar 45.

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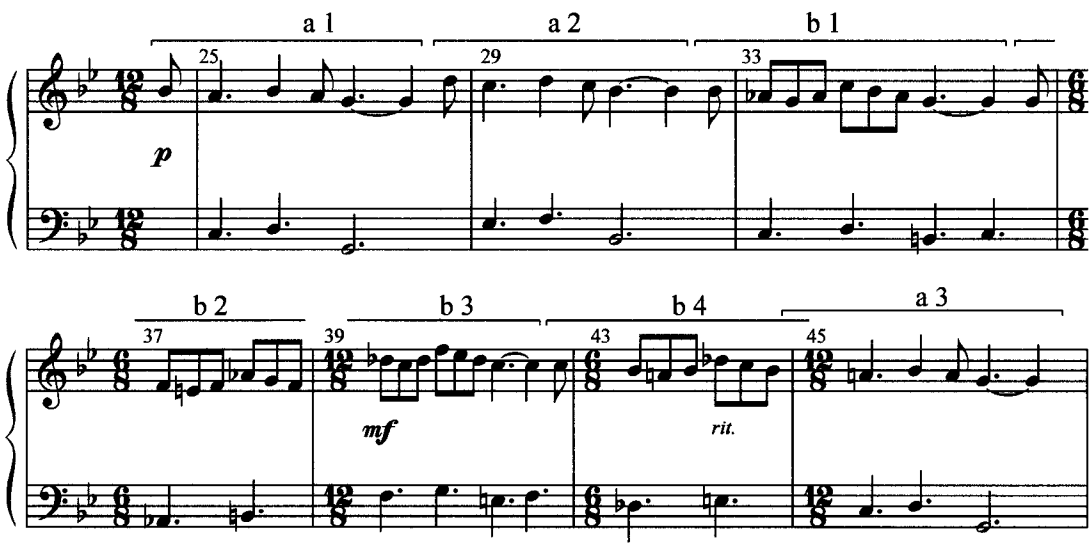
[45] Krebs also sees a metrical reinterpretation at bar 39. However, he characterizes this point as ambiguous, asserting—incorrectly, I think—that bar 39 could also be heard as the third unit in the previous hypermeasure. See *Fantasy Pieces*, pp. 215–216.

The explosive nature of the metrical reinterpretations here results from the tonal content of our G-minor section. In a characteristically Schumannesque fashion, all of the hypermetrical units in the B section (indicated by brackets in Example 6.9) begin with an auxiliary cadence (that is, away from their local respective tonics). Note that at the beginning of bars 39 and 45 the expected tonics (C minor and F minor respectively) are absent; instead, new auxiliary cadences in unexpected keys (A♭ major and G minor respectively) burst in. Thus, the manner of bridging over formal divisions here attests to Schumann's famous predilection for turbulent surprises, a feature of his style that is diametrically opposed to Mendelssohn's preference of much smoother procedures.

Example 6.9. Schumann, *Faschingsschwank aus Wien*, Op. 26, I, Allegro, bars 25–48, durational reduction 𝅗𝅥. = 𝅗𝅥.



A different, but no less idiosyncratic instance—I think—of a Schumannesque reprise can be seen in the next example, the second song in the song cycle *Frauenliebe und -Leben*, Op. 42. Example 6.10 focuses on the opening four-bar vocal phrase of the song (a^1, bars 2–5). This phrase returns later at bars 29 and 57 (a^2 and a^3, first and second reprises respectively); those formal junctures are smoothed over by means of the imaginative restaging of the harmonic context out of which these reprises emerge. Like Mendelssohn, Schumann designs the opening precisely in a way that enables the surprisingly fresh returns later on.

Example 6.10a illustrates the beginning of the song (bars 1–5). As indicated by the parentheses in the lower stave (bars 1–2), Schumann avoids the tonic note E♭ in the bass, even though a structural tonic harmony is clearly implied by the context. As a result of the initial bar-and-a-half rest in the bass part, the actual bass line of the entire phrase (from mid-bar 2 up to bar 5) resembles an auxiliary cadence pattern—a favored Schumannesque beginning—notwithstanding the fact that the prolongation of the initial structural E♭ harmony starts at the outset of the song. It is this carefully designed airy beginning that enables Schumann to vary the later reprises of his opening so wildly.

Example 6.10b illustrates the harmonic context of the first reprise (the brackets above bars 29–32 indicate the exact location of the vocal four-bar phrase). As can be seen, the inverted dominant seventh is reached rather surprisingly at bar 28.[46] Then a chromatic motion in bars 29–30 leads to a root-position dominant-seventh at bar 31, and

[46] The surprise here results from the cadential progression in G minor in bar 27, which is denied the expected resolution at the beginning of bar 28.

the tonic is resumed only at the following bar (32). As it is, the arrival at the tonic harmony occurs in the last (fourth) bar of our phrase. Thus, the suggestive auxiliary-like character of the opening has come to be realized.

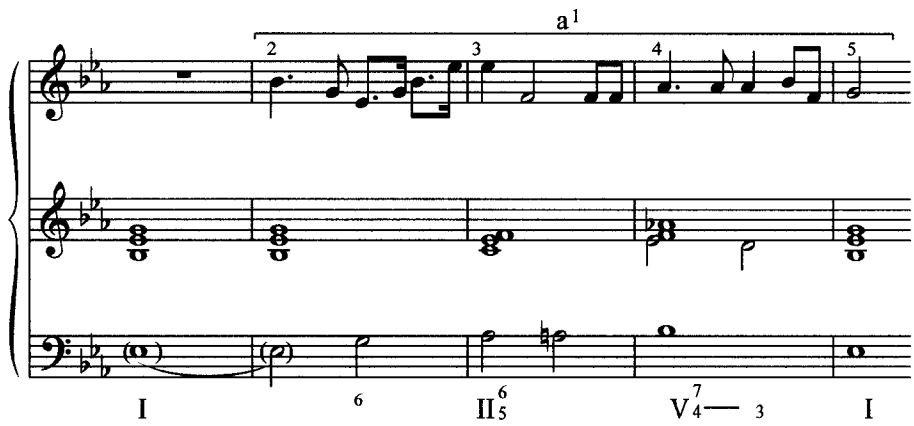
The second reprise of the opening phrase (bars 57–60) is even bolder. As shown in Example 6.10c, a relentless chain of dominant seventh chords—each one leading to the next—begins at bar 54. The thematic reprise at bar 57 is swallowed, so to speak, by this dynamic harmonic progression by fifths, so that any break in the flow of the music at the formal juncture (bar 57) is out of the question. Only at bar 60, the fourth bar of our a^3 phrase, do we reach a stable tonic. Perhaps the most abnormal feature of this unique reprise is the strange change that occurs in the vocal part at bar 57, where Schumann presents—instead of the arpeggiated E♭-major chord that initiates this phrase elsewhere in the song (see bars 2, 10, 18, and 29)—an arpeggiated C-major chord. To be sure, he does so in order to fit the melody to the harmony; the resultant phrase, nonetheless, is remarkably strange (see the upper stave in Example 6.10c). To summarize, even the sense of E♭ as the tonic key does not exist (neither in the harmony nor in the melody) at the beginning of this exceptional reprise; rather, the E♭ tonality emerges gradually (starting at bar 58), and it is unequivocally confirmed only at the end of the phrase (bar 60).

These two excerpts by Schumann thus disclose a stylistic link with Mendelssohn. Although these unusual reprises are distinctly Schumannesque, the fundamental compositional strategy resembles Mendelssohn's practice. In other words Schumann, like Mendelssohn, designs the opening of his works in such a way that imaginative recomposition at the crucial formal juncture of the reprise becomes possible.

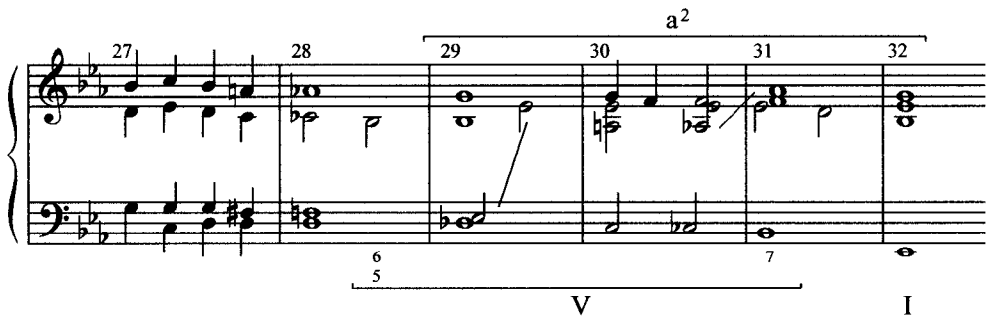
Example 6.10. Schumann, *Frauenliebe und Leben*, Op. 42, No. 2,

"Er, der Herrlichste von Allen" (Innig, lebhaft)

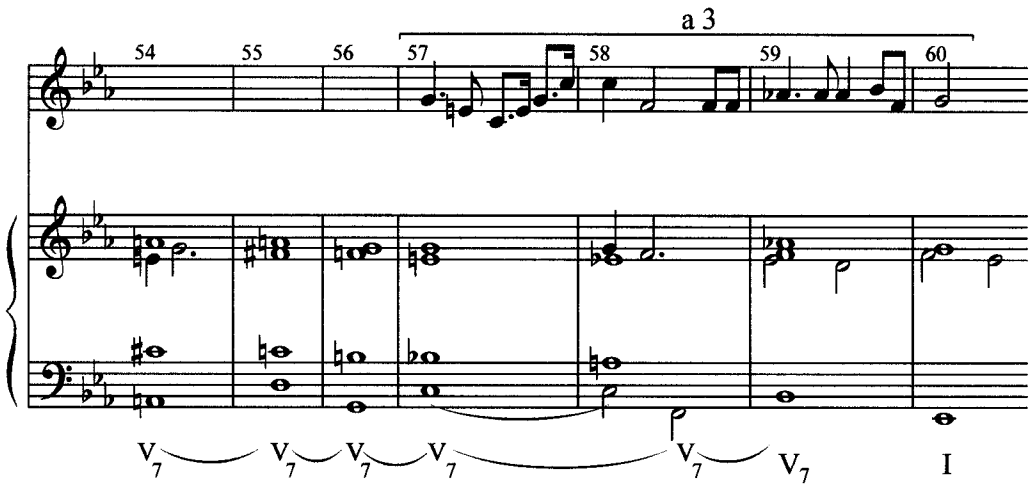
a) Bars 1–5, tonic prolongation



b) Bars 27–32, first reprise emerging out of dominant prolongation



c) Bars 54–60, second reprise, emerging out of a sequence



Obsessive Interest in Smoothing Over after Mendelssohn: Brahms

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, Brahms is the most significant composer with an interest in smoothing over, an interest that is no less obsessive than that of Mendelssohn, to say the least. Although Brahms was less influenced—directly at least—by Mendelssohn than he was by, say, Beethoven or Schubert, there are still considerable parallels between these two prominent guardians of the classical tradition.[47] And as far as our subject of investigation is concerned, Brahms's overtly personal techniques of bridging over formal divisions reflect—similarly to Mendelssohn's—a remarkable synthesis of traditional compositional techniques. It is true nevertheless that these are expanded and transformed by him in a distinctly individual manner.[48]

The E-major slow (third) movement of the Piano Quartet in C Minor, Op. 60, contains—as do many other works by Brahms—an overwhelming amount of smoothing-over at various formal junctures.[49] Example 6.11 illustrates a few of them, starting

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[47] For a discussion of the possible influence of Mendelssohn on Brahms, see David Brodbeck's "Brahms's Mendelssohn," in *Brahms Studies*, vol. 2, ed. David Brodbeck (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), pp. 209–231.

[48] Brahms's idiosyncrasies with regard to metric displacement and conflicts between design and structure are widely discussed in the literature. See, for instance, David Lewin, "On Harmony and Meter in Brahms's Op. 76, No. 8," *Nineteenth-Century Music* 4 (1981): 261–265; Walter Frisch, "The Shifting Bar Line: Metrical Displacement in Brahms," in *Brahms Studies: Analytical and Historical Perspectives*, ed. George S. Bozarth (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990), 139–163; Peter H. Smith, "Brahms and the Shifting Barline: Metric Displacement and Formal Process in the Trios with Wind Instruments," in *Brahms Studies*, vol. 3, ed. David Brodbeck (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001), pp. 191–229.

[49] Certain features in Brahms's Op. 60, most noticeably the thematic material and the shift to C major in the last movement, are reminiscent of Mendelssohn's Piano Trio in C Minor, Op. 66. According to the singer George Henschel, Brahms himself

(6.11a) with the overlap of the last phrase (bars 17–27) of the first theme and the bridge (bars 27–34).

As can be seen in Example 6.11a, bar 23 already sounds like the penultimate bar of an authentic cadence. But the expected conclusion on the tonic is postponed: the cadential pattern of bar 23 is repeated in bar 24, and then again—in an expanded version—in bars 25–26 (the brackets below these bars indicate those repetitions). Note also how the exchange of parts—that is to say, the transfer of the figures in the upper voices of bar 23 into different instruments and registers—gives rise to a dramatic expansion of the texture at bar 25. Consequently, the expectation of a firm closure is enhanced, and the crucial resolution into the tonic (in both the bass and the melody) indeed arrives at bar 27. Conclusive as this cadence is, the ending at bar 27 is also designed as the beginning of a new phrase. The two eighth-notes upbeat to bar 27 (see the upper part in 6.11a) initiates a three-note pattern (two eighths and a quarter), which is now repeated sequentially, as the bridge phrase begins to unfold. By presenting this new forward-moving element simultaneously with the cadential closure, Brahms manages to avoid both the undesirable break in the rhythmic flow and the separation of formal units.

Turning now to the border between the bridge phrase and the second theme (bar 34) we can see another typically Brahmsian handling of formal junctures. As shown in the voice-leading sketch (Example 6.11b) this fairly short and simple bridge crystallizes

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acknowledged the similarity between the piano accompaniment in the beginning of the *finale* of his Op. 60, and the opening theme in the first movement of Mendelssohn's Op. 66. See George Henschel, *Personal Recollections of Johannes Brahms* (1907; reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1978), p. 30.

around a preparatory dominant-seventh harmony (of B major, the key of the second theme) at bars 31–34. Starting at bar 32, the violin features a downward arpeggio (decorated by figuration) of the governing F♯ dominant-seventh chord. However, in the last phase of this arpeggio—that is, the motion of a third from A♯ to F♯—the movement halts on a poignant chromatic passing tone, namely G♮. At this point (bar 34, second beat) our eagerness to hear a further half step to an F♯—and thereby a normal end to the bridge phrase—is at its highest level. However, the inevitable F♯ resolution (last eighth note of bar 34) already begins the second theme; it initiates a rising-fourth motive (chromaticized and syncopated) that signifies the new section.

Note also (in the score) the eighth-note rest that separates the G♮ from the F♯ resolution at bar 34 (violin). This idiosyncratic separation of the dissonance from its consonant resolution intensifies the elision of the bridge and the second theme. As it happens, the F♯ dominant harmony also extends into the second theme, so as to create another dimension of continuity that crosses formal borders. As we shall see presently, the resolution of this dominant to a stable B-major tonic is avoided altogether in the ensuing second theme. (The background harmony in the second theme is a $\frac{6}{4}$ built on F♯, the dominant of B major.)

The exceptional absence of a closing cadence from the second theme brings us now to the next formal juncture, namely the border between the exposition and the development sections. Example 6.11c illustrates the voice leading near the end of the exposition (bar 57 ff.). As shown, the sequential motion embodies the motivic rising fourth (from F♯ to B, see the letters between the staves); more significant to our discussion is the fact that when the bass arrives at the structural B (bar 62), it supports a

dominant-seventh chord, V^7 of E major. At bar 62 one may still suspect that Brahms is just temporarily deferring the allegedly obligatory closure in B major. But B major as a key area does not return after this point, so that very soon (at bar 63) we realize that the development section has already begun.[50]

My designation of bar 62 as a turning point reflects precisely such a retrospective inference. One could also read bar 63 as the decisive turning point. My preference for bar 62 is based on the design of the music that follows (not shown in Example 6.11c): since bars 64–65 are exactly analogous to bars 62–63, it seems awkward not to include bar 62 in the development. Indeed, the formal boundary between the second theme and the development section is the most elusive juncture in the entire movement.

The last juncture to be considered in our Brahms example is the beginning of the recapitulation (as of bar 78). The tentative analytic sketch that I offer in Example 6.11d reveals that the return to the first theme (and to the structural tonic) is yet another manifestation of Brahms's individualized practice of veiling structural intersections. Normally, the dominant harmony is reached at the end of development sections in order to prepare the return of the tonic. Here, by contrast, only the first phase of the development (bars 62–68) presents a prolonged dominant. Starting at bar 68, Brahms enlivens the tonal structure by a series of auxiliary-like motions that give rise to a number of brief tonicizations (keys descend in major thirds): he first moves to E minor (bars 68–70), then to C minor (bars 70–75), and finally to A♭/G♯ minor (as of 75). In

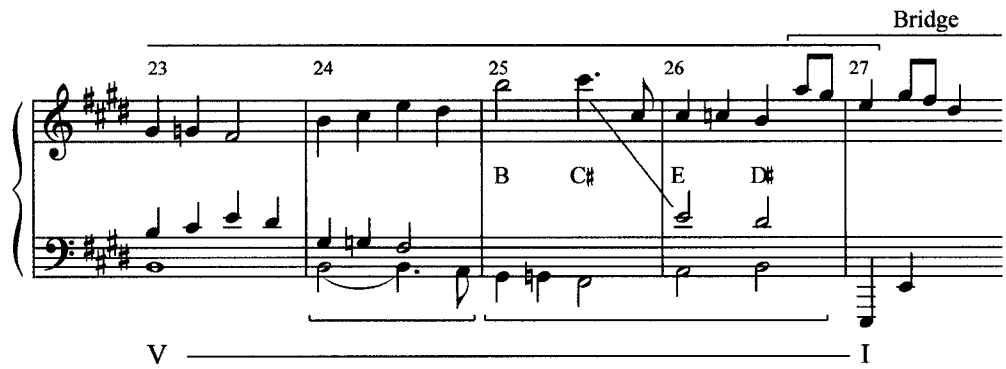
[50] Note the striking similarity of this unusual structure to that of Mendelssohn's slow movement of the "Italian" Symphony (see Example 4.22).

Example 6.11 these keys are indicated by the small letters. Note also the overlappings that are indicated by the brackets and beams in the melody and the bass respectively.

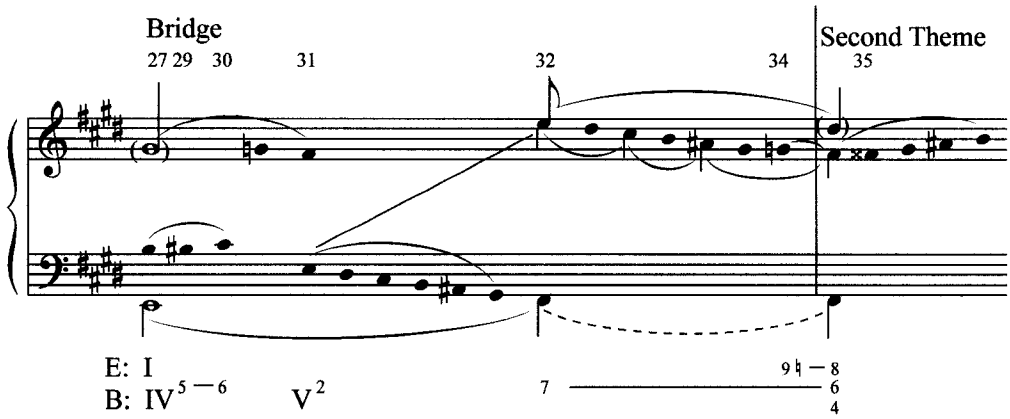
The last of these short-lived tonicizations (G♯ minor) does not reach its expected tonic at bar 78. Instead of completing the cadence in G♯ minor, Brahms surprisingly brings in the first theme in the home key of E major at this bar (78), which turns out to initiate the recapitulation. The E-major entrance continues the thematic pattern (see the bass part at bars 70 and 75), as well as the downward motion of keys in major thirds. This motion can be understood as an enlarged expression of the prominent melodic-idea (G♯–E–C♮) of the first theme. Note also that E major bursts in at bar 78 two bars earlier than expected (in comparison with the preceding C-minor unit). Consequently, one almost senses a stretto-like effect at the beginning of the recapitulation.

Example 6.11. Brahms, Piano Quartet in C Minor, Op. 60, III, Andante

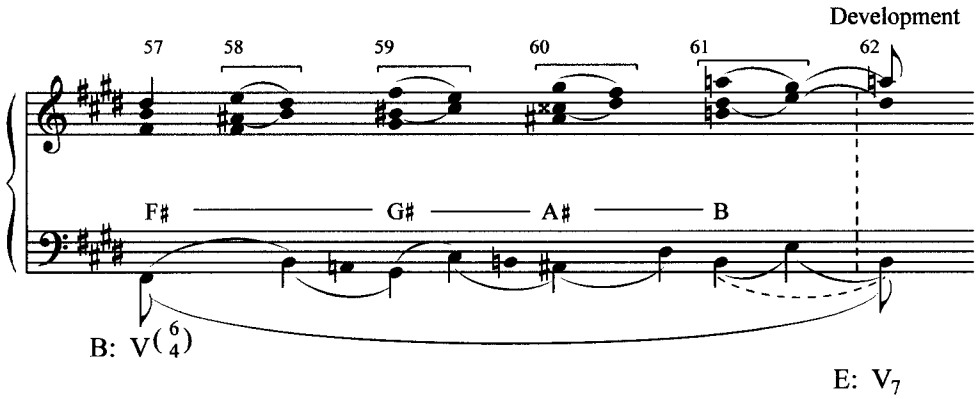
a) Bars 23–27, simplified



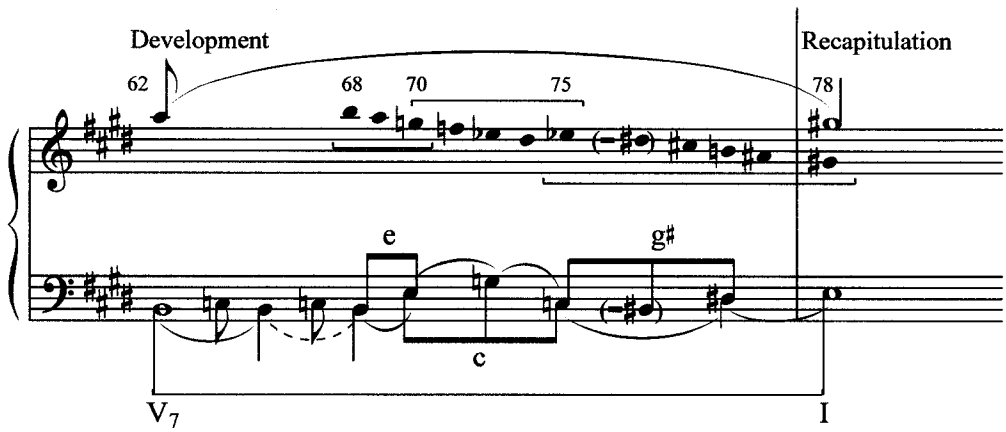
b) Bars 27–36, voice leading sketch



c) Bars 57–62, voice leading



d) Bars 62–78, voice leading



As we have seen in the four parts of Example 6.11, Brahms, like Mendelssohn, had an obsessive interest in the smoothing over of formal junctures. Some of the compositional techniques that we encountered are reminiscent of Mendelssohn. Generally speaking, it is evident that both Mendelssohn and Brahms aimed to achieve the utmost formal dynamism and flexibility. One specific similarity is the delay in the resolution of a dissonance (see Example 6.11b), a technique that we have encountered in Mendelssohn too. Another shared peculiarity is the avoidance of a closing cadence at the end of the exposition (6.11c). The seamless integration of the recapitulation into a sequence (6.11d) also suggests a possible stylistic connection.

On the other hand, there are also noticeable differences between these two composers. The delay in the resolution of dissonances (and rhythmic displacement in general) is much more extreme—indeed, very nearly excessive—in Brahms's music, and can be regarded as a hallmark of his style. As for the effect of smoothing over formal junctures, Brahms's purpose—for the most part—appears to be the concealment of formal borders. Often these joints are so carefully veiled that they are discernible only in retrospect. Mendelssohn sometimes does that too, but as frequently his evasion of the expected course of action articulates (rather than masks) the crucial formal junctures. This aspect of Mendelssohn's style is especially striking in many of his reprises and recapitulations.[51] Consider in this respect also Mendelssohn's radical averting of the imperative closing cadences near the end of the expositions in his concerti: the absence of the normative closure surely surprises us, but at the same time the abnormal excursion is so dramatized as to call attention to the cadence that has been forestalled.[52]

Finally, Brahms's conservative tastes and his renowned admiration for the great composers of previous generations are akin to Mendelssohn's approach. Many facets in the music of these composers reflect their distinctively traditional position and taste.[53] But while the overt complexities and the explicit idiosyncrasies in Brahms's compositional practice have ever since attracted attention, enhancing his historical position as a great nineteenth-century composer, the seeming simplicity and facility of

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[51] See, for instance, the recapitulation in the second movement of the "Scottish" Symphony (Example 3.23 in Chapter 3).

[52] See Examples 4.15–4.17.

[53] A good account of Brahms's outlook is given by Michael Musgrave in his book *A Brahms Reader* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), pp. 59–120.

Mendelssohn's music had resulted in a drastic deterioration of his reputation shortly after his untimely death.

The foregoing study of Mendelssohn's instrumental music has been primarily concerned with revealing one specific attractive feature of his personal style—his inventive and subtle practice of smoothing over formal junctures. In this final chapter we have seen that the various devices for "bridging over," (illustrated in music by Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin, Schumann, and Brahms) constitute a fundamental resource of the tonal system. What is peculiarly Mendelssohnian is the extent to which he uses these devices at many levels of tonal structure and form, and also some of his specific applications. Among these, the most prominent are: the metrical manipulations (Chapter 1); the restaging of opening themes in numerous beginnings of reprises and recapitulations (Chapters 2 and 3); leaving sonata expositions open at the end (Chapter 4); and linking all the movements in multi-movement works, especially concerti (Chapter 5). If this study is in any way convincing, it may serve as a modest contribution to the growing understanding and appreciation of Mendelssohn's music.

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