

Chapter 20: Nontonic Expansions

Beethoven Symphony No.3 in E-flat, op.55 “Eroica” – I *Allegro con brio* (bars 3-15)

One of the most memorable features in the opening theme of the first movement of Beethoven’s “Eroica” Symphony is the ominous C \sharp 3 in bar 7. Part of its mysterious quality lies in the tonal uncertainty of this note following the diatonic clarity of the arpeggiated E-flat major tonic triad in the theme’s initial four bars. What key is intimated by the unexpected appearance of this foreign note and the tonal events that immediately follow it? How is this unexpected key ultimately deflated and the tonic key of E-flat restored?



Template 20.1

Brahms Violin Sonata No.2 in A, op.100 – III *Allegretto grazioso (quasi Andante)* (bars 1-12)

The expansive twelve-bar theme that opens the last movement of Brahms’s Violin Sonata in A serves as the refrain of a sonata rondo. The theme reaches its melodic climax on C \sharp 5 over a half-diminished seventh chord with D-sharp in the bass in bar 6. In the key of A major, this would be understood as a \sharp IV 7 , the altered form of subdominant harmony that would normally lead to V. Instead of continuing as expected, however, this chord is diverted, and the theme eventually goes to C-sharp minor, III in A major, in measure 10. How is C-sharp minor tonicized, and does it function as a structural harmony? If not, what is the main harmonic progression of this theme, and how does the C-sharp minor harmony fit into its overall tonal structure. Analyze the theme in several stages, before making up the foreground graph.



Template 20.2