

Chapter 27: Sonata Form in the Minor Mode

Mozart Symphony No.40 in G minor, K.550 – IV *Finale: Allegro assai*

Outline the overall form of this movement, partitioning the different sections with measure numbers. Designate where the specific themes begin and end, as well as their principal keys.

EXPOSITION

The opening theme of this movement is made up of two four-bar phrases. Since both phrases begin with the same melodic idea, determine what kind of parallel period it is, and make a graphic analysis of its tonal structure. When making your analysis, think about the harmonic meaning of the beginning of the consequent phrase (bar 5), as well as whether the *Kopfton* is $\hat{3}$ or $\hat{5}$.



Template 27.1

As is often the case with parallel periods, the opening eight bars make up the first part of the opening theme, which is cast as a mini three-part a b a form. Make a middleground graph of the complete opening theme (bars 1-32), which is essentially in quatrain form (see footnote 1 on p.260 of the textbook).

Following the statement of the opening theme, the movement proceeds to establish the contrasting key of the exposition, B-flat major. The initial appearance of this key occurs in bar 49. In your analysis of the beginning of this transitional passage, show how this key is established.



Template 27.2

Although B-flat major is tonicized in measure 49, we don't feel a true arrival in this key until the new theme at bar 71. This is the movement's "second" theme (analyzed on pp.226-227 of the

textbook), and it follows immediately after the strong medial caesura at bar 70. The F-major chord that articulates the medial caesura is the natural form of VII in the movement's key of G minor. In preparing your analysis of the modulation from I to III, show how the motion from the opening tonic leads to this VII at bar 70. How does the brief tonicization of B-flat major in bar 49 function in the overall modulation to the mediant key? Presenting your analysis in several structural levels will be extremely helpful before preparing the foreground analysis.



Template 27.3

Following the appearance of the second theme in the mediant key, the exposition ends with a clear cadence in B-flat major, before plunging into the start of the development section which begins with a distorted version of the opening theme.

DEVELOPMENT

The fragmented unison statement of the opening theme at the start of the development section is regarded as one of the most remarkable passages of the Classical era. Eleven of the twelve notes in the chromatic scale are employed before the arrival on the A-major chord in bar 135. Beginning with the B-flat statement of the opening theme at the beginning of the development, graph the eleven bars leading up to this point. Think about the tonal implications of the first few measures at the beginning of the development, and where the governing context of B-flat major breaks down. What sequential pattern seems to be implied, and what is the chord that leads directly into the root-position A-major chord at bar 135?



Template 27.4

At the arrival in A major in bar 135, the opening theme returns but slightly varied, descending down a fourth from the peak of the “rocket” arpeggiation. Four measures later, a sequence stated in alternation between the first violins and winds begins, leading to a forte statement of the varied





Template 27.8

Following the turn to C minor, Mozart combines the two variants of the opening theme in stretto. Throughout this unsettled passage, the thematic statements in the four string parts are accompanied by expressive tritone skips stated in unison by the winds. Only at bar 175 does the seething passion subside with the arrival in G-sharp major. How does Mozart get from C minor to G-sharp major.



Template 27.9

After arriving in G-sharp major, this harmony is prolonged for 17 measures before becoming the dominant of C-sharp minor, which is established at bar 191. At this point another sequential passage begins, ultimately leading to a diminished-seventh chord over F-sharp, which serves to bring us back finally to G minor at the recapitulation beginning in bar 207. Graph the passage leading from C-sharp minor at measure 191 to the F-sharp diminished-seventh chord in bar 205.



Template 27.10

Having examined the development sections in successive stages, we are now in a position to look at its overall tonal plan. Make a middleground graph showing how B-flat major at the end of the exposition leads to the diminished-seventh chord that functions as the dominant of G minor at the end of the development.

RECAPITULATION

Although the opening theme appears at the beginning of the recapitulation in exactly the same way as the outset of the movement, Mozart now omits the written-out repeats. Because there is no need for a modulation to a new key, the recapitulation remains in the tonic key of G minor throughout. Nevertheless, a transitional passage connects the two principal themes over bars 222–246. Graph the 25 measures leading from the end of the opening theme to the beginning of the second theme in G minor.



Template 27.11

The arrival of the second theme in G minor at bar 247 heralds the final phase of the movement and its imminent structural completion. Prepare both foreground and middleground graphs of the second theme in the tonic key of G minor.

In the coda that follows, Mozart is much more explicit about articulating the *Urlinie* descent from $\hat{5}$ to $\hat{1}$. Determine where this final structural melodic descent occurs, and make a middleground graph of it.