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## The Performer as Analyst in the Piano Sonata Opus 12 by Jean Sibelius

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**THE PERFORMER AS ANALYST  
IN THE PIANO SONATA OPUS 12 BY JEAN SIBELIUS**

By

JESSE TINGLE, Bachelor of Music

Presented to the Graduate School of

Stephen F. Austin State University

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements

For the Degree of

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STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY

May, 2020

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IN THE PIANO SONATA OPUS 12 BY JEAN SIBELIUS**

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JESSE TINGLE, Bachelor of Music

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis examines and models the process of analysis as a means for performers, particularly pianists, to engage with the large-scale organizational features of musical works, using the Piano Sonata, Opus 12 by Jean Sibelius as a case study. The unique character and structure of each of the three movements suggests an equally wide range of approaches to analysis, including studies in sonata form, construction of a musical narrative based on external source material, and the use of concepts from Sonata Theory to explain the logic of a highly unconventional tonal and thematic design. The analyses are interwoven with a large-scale approach to performance interpretation, which provides a framework for making surface-level performance decisions.

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## INTRODUCTION

“Anyone who only liked music because he could analyze it would be a crushing musical bore.” –Nicholas Cook, *A Guide to Musical Analysis*.

Musical performance and analysis are related by their use of musical compositions as source material for the creation of new musical products (i.e. performances, and analyses and theories). It follows that because of this common source material (conventionally, notated scores), the potential exists not only for interaction but for collaboration between the two approaches or disciplines. This thesis examines the three-movement Piano Sonata in F Major, Opus 12 by Jean Sibelius through an analytical lens in order to uncover functional and structural relationships among the elements of the work and to explore how those concepts can be used as a framework for creating a compelling interpretation.

Sibelius’s Piano Sonata, composed in 1893, provides an interesting case study because of the unique formal and gestural features of its individual movements, suggesting the use of a different analytical and interpretive strategy in each movement. This thesis approaches the first movement in the context of a highly developed and widely used compositional approach: sonata form. The study of the second movement engages with extra-musical source material to

create a narrative interpretation of its tonal, harmonic, and gestural features within a simple formal plan. The highly unusual formal, thematic, and tonal organization of the third movement invites the performer-analyst to question how its disparate elements may be functionally interconnected, and to find coherence in the presentation of musical events.

### **Literature Review**

There is a growing body of literature on the relationship between musical performance and analysis. The nature of the interaction between a performance and an analysis of any given work is subject to an infinite variety of permutations, so case studies provide a practical means of approaching the topic of performance analysis (e.g. Schmalfeldt 1985; Swinkin 2016). Each source, however, seems to take some kind of philosophical stance on the matter as well.

One of the most significant features of the literature is the question of primacy—if either performance or analysis is a more legitimate source of interpretive insight. Viewpoints which do attribute primacy to one discipline or the other may be considered on a continuum between two extremes. On the one end, the analysis (or the analyst) dictates to the performer how he or she must approach the musical work in order to present an interpretation that serves the analysis; or in an extreme version of this view, the performer is not to interpret at all. On the other, the performance—and the composition itself—is a vehicle for

the performer's creative expression, and analysis is superfluous. Between these two opposed ideologies, there is a productive middle-ground in which the creative potential and interpretive prerogatives of both disciplines are respected, and meaningful collaboration is possible.

### Positions of Primacy

The analytically-driven ideology posits that performers must turn to analysis in order to find the truth of a musical work, and it is their responsibility to express or interpret it faithfully. Performance is thus the vehicle for conveying the findings of the analysis. The most extreme version of this view is expressed in Wallace Berry's *Musical Structure and Performance*: "The purely spontaneous, unknowing and unquestioned impulse is not enough to inspire convincing performance, and surely not enough to resolve the uncertainties with which the performer is so often faced" (1989, 217). A more moderate view is found in one of the early studies in performance analysis, *Musical Form and Musical Performance* by Edward T. Cone. In this work, Cone posits a purely intuitive, expressive approach as the prevailing view in performance pedagogy at the time of the book's publication, and presents an analysis-driven approach as a "counterbalance" (1968, 97). "...Valid performance depends primarily on the perception and communication of the rhythmic life of a composition. That is to say, we must first discover the rhythmic shape of a piece—which is what is meant by its form—and then try to make it as clear as possible to our listeners"



(Cone 1968, 38-39). The idea that multiple valid performance interpretations suggest multiple valid analytical readings, rather than a single analysis which all interpretations must follow, was perhaps one of Cone's most important ideological contributions.

Abbate expresses the opposite position, that performance is intuitive and serves primarily as a vehicle for creative expression (2004). In her estimation, questions of musical hermeneutics—specifically theory, analysis, and musicology—are counterproductive and ludicrously out of place in the context of actual live performances, particularly when one is executing the performance rather than simply listening. Such inquiry is “almost impossible and generally uninteresting as long as real music is present—while one is caught up in its temporal wake and its physical demands or effects” (Abbate 2004, 511). While Abbate's preceding statement only refers explicitly to musicological inquiry, she subsequently includes theoretical analysis as well when speculating that academic inquiry may not be pertinent at all to any performance-oriented endeavor:

Perhaps we should simply acknowledge once more that both formalist and hermeneutic approaches to musical works mean dealing in abstractions and constructs under the aspect of eternity, as activities that will have little to do with real music—the performance produced and absorbed, which then disappears. And continue as usual. But musicology's ancillary credo that its insights are relevant to musical performance, as a basis for producing or judging good performance, will not be abandoned, even in part, without certain agonies (2004, 512-513).

Abbate makes two important points. First, attempting to analyze a work while in the act of performance is unproductive and potentially distracting. And second, using analysis as the sole basis for judging the merits of a performance is equally unproductive, particularly in the context of a dialogue between disciplines (see Lester 1995). However, the opposite assertion—that the insights of musicology and analysis are completely irrelevant to performance—does not necessarily follow from these points.

To attribute primacy to either a performance- or analysis-oriented position excludes the possibility of meaningful interaction between performance and analysis. In the first position, performers are robbed of their role as creative agents. The second position, expressed by Abbate, is equally dismissive of the insights offered by analysis (along with theory and musicology). So rather than asserting the primacy of one discipline over the other, this thesis posits that collaboration between analysis and performance is possible, to the enrichment of both endeavors.

### Collaborative Positions

A third group of authors suggest that collaboration is perhaps the most useful means of facilitating meaningful interaction between the disciplines of analysis and performance. The extent of the collaboration and the nature of the interaction varies, and often one discipline or the other will take a leading role. One might place each study on a sliding scale with one end representing a

completely performance-oriented position and the other representing an analytically-oriented position. This is only a useful visualization; the way in which a study is weighted toward one focus or the other, as well as the extent to which it is weighted, may vary.

Janet Schmalfeldt's groundbreaking case study of two Bagatelles by Beethoven presents a dialogue between her two personas of pianist and analyst, with each taking a (more or less) equal share of the leadership of the discussion (1985). Schmalfeldt suggests that analysis may serve as a guide for interpretation, and that performance may raise meaningful questions for analysis to address. Although this study is focused on a performance product, the way Schmalfeldt casts the dialogue (with the analyst as pedagogue to the performer) suggests that the views of the analyst carry more weight than the intuitions of the (less-experienced) performer. Presenting the case study as a dialogue at all, though, was a significant shift toward collaboration.

Joel Lester contributes significantly to the demarcation of this middle ground with a call for professional collaboration. He decries that the voices of performers are largely absent from analytical discourse: "Analyses are assertions about a piece, not about a particular rendition. Performers and performances are largely irrelevant to both the analytical process and the analysis itself" (Lester 1995, 197). Lester supposes, probably rightly, that such a position may tend to antagonize performers, and proposes "explicitly taking note of performances

[and] accounting for them as part of the analytical premise” (1995, 199).

Performances—especially recordings, because of their permanence—are imminently useful to analysts in their studies because they connect analysts with musical decision-making in performance.

Jeffery Swinkin’s *Performative Analysis: Reimagining Music Theory for Performance* is one of the most recent publications to take this view of the interaction between analysis and performance, casting both in equal and analogous relationships to the actual musical work: “performance and analysis stand in a symmetrical relationship relative to the work, each capable of realizing its potentials and of offering equally valid interpretations” (Swinkin 2006, 13).

The present document takes a collaborative position: not only are analysis and performance equally valid means of engaging with musical works, but each approach can be used productively in the context of the other discipline. Performers can benefit from using the analytical tools developed by theorists, and analysts need to keep in touch with the reality of music as a thing performed and heard. Schmalfeldt’s dialogue (1985) is an inspiration and model for this project, particularly the idea that one should incorporate analytical study into the preparation of a work for performance. The idea of using musical form as a unifying element in performance comes from Cone. Lester provides a vital insight that performance has as much to teach, as does analysis. Of all the authors referenced, though, only Swinkin suggests that performance and analytical study

can be effectively undertaken by the same person (2016, 1-7).<sup>1</sup> I do not suggest that performers devote themselves to research, or that theorists leave off writing to give concerts. But what better way is there to create an integrated approach to performance and analysis and to provide a model for meaningful collaboration than to undertake a study from both perspectives?

### **Theory and Analysis as Performance Tools**

Since performance and analysis are both modes of musical interpretation, and the potential for collaboration exists between the two, it follows that a performer or analyst could incorporate both processes into a project in order to enhance both the preparation and the final product. One might undertake an analysis of a work while preparing for a performance, or perform a work as part of the analytical process. Actively employing both processes in the course of a project may enhance the understanding of the work beyond what one can access through either performance or analysis alone. This generally results in a more compelling product, a performance or analysis that seems to be realized with conviction. In the case of performance, one way this may manifest is as a sense of intentionality in the temporal organization of the performance.

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<sup>1</sup> Abbate suggests the opposite, that analysis and performance studies are least effective when undertaken together (2004, 511).

<sup>2</sup> Even assuming that the composer's intentions should be honored, only so much information can be communicated in notation and language. If a performer attempts to perform only what can be extrapolated from primary sources, with zero "interpretation," much of the work's

### Purpose of this Study: A Collaboration of Processes

This paper explores the process of analysis as a contributor to the creation of a musical performance. So, while the body of this paper is analytical, the analysis was created as a framework for an interpretation that is primarily expressed in performance. Broadly, the literature on performance analysis is deeply influenced by the question of which discipline has primacy over the other; and the most reasonable answer is one which acknowledges the value of both disciplines, which is the position of Lester and Swinkin. On an individual level, and even more in the context of a specific project, this question is framed and answered in terms of one's musical role and goals. In the context of specific musical events (e.g. recitals or academic papers), performance studies may serve as a collaborative partner to a primarily analytical endeavor, or vice versa. But in most contexts, one will be subordinate to the other depending on the context. In this case study, the performance is the product.

If composition is the process of creating a piece of music and distilling it into written information (the score), then the goal of performance is to conceptually realize the piece of music from the score, giving it a physical existence as sound through performance. This highly individual and specific process is creative in every sense of the word, and relies on the performer's

interpretive input.<sup>2</sup> Analysis, like performance, is an interpretive process that uses the score to realize some of the interpretive “potentials” of a work, to use Swinkin’s word. It is different in that it explores the organizational principles of the composition rather than the experiential potentials of performance realization. This is where the value lies, when one considers analysis as a collaborative partner to performance: analysis can provide an approach to an organizational interpretation of the work which can serve as a conceptual framework or sketch for creating a performance realization.

#### Interpretation vs. Objective Study

The organizational interpretation of a work manifested in an analysis is substantially different from the “objective,” almost empirical view advocated by Cook (1964) and Berry (1989). This is especially true of an analysis created for the purpose of enhancing an actual performance. Such an analysis serves as a sketch of the work, on which the performer can create his or her realization. It is a framework on which to create or improvise musical gestures aurally and kinetically, which serves to unify and enhance these gestures. This analysis should draw upon the objectively defined structural features of the piece, where

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<sup>2</sup> Even assuming that the composer’s intentions should be honored, only so much information can be communicated in notation and language. If a performer attempts to perform only what can be extrapolated from primary sources, with zero “interpretation,” much of the work’s potential will be unrealized in that performance. Furthermore, it is crucial to remember that the process of performance, like composition, is never realized as a generalization (no matter how general the discussion of it), but always as an instance of the creation or realization of a specific work by an individual. So to speak of composition or performance is to speak of individual realizations of those creative processes.

those features exist and are identifiable as known types (of forms, harmonic features, or other elements).

But creating a functional interpretation of a complete work is somewhat subjective and rarely straightforward. There may be no single “right” reading, obviously incorrect ones notwithstanding, but it is quite possible to create a convincing one. In this sense, creating an analysis for the purposes of informing or enhancing performance may be viewed as posing a Socratic question about the way the organization of the work manifests in musical time. The analysis does not dictate how the performer should shape each section of the work; it shows the relationships between parts of the work and provides a focus for the performer’s shaping of it in musical time. The analysis facilitates the performer’s creation of an interpretation of the composition in a way that is coherent and convincing. It may be impossible to define this objectively, but it is often possible to tell a performance that is convincing from one that is not.

### The Performer as Analyst

The process of creating an analysis, more than simply the analysis itself, is an effective way for performers to grasp the entirety of a piece of music, particularly one that is new to the performer. In my own performance, analysis is an essential part of the process of internalizing the work. Grappling with the piece conceptually, defining its form and organization, is a way of finding those points that are most structurally firm—that is, those points around which the rest of the



piece is shaped.<sup>3</sup> Once those points are identified, artistic decisions can be made about how to shape the rest of the work. There is a great deal of subjectivity in this, and the results are more easily identified in an actual performance than in prose.

It is important that the analysis used by the performer ultimately be his or her own. It is not enough that the work is coherent or that others have found structure in it; the performer must develop a sense of the structure of the work because it is foundational to the performer's concept of the work and ultimately the realization. This kind of study lends coherence and a sense of thoughtful planning which manifests in the performance. Analysis may not be the only way to do this, but it is certainly a viable one. Without any sense of organization, the performance may lack a sense of narrative progression.<sup>4</sup> With such a sense of organization, the physical acoustic phenomena of performed music can be framed within the context of a larger plan, and the expressive power of each individual gesture is enhanced by its relationship to the larger structure.

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<sup>3</sup> This is most clearly exemplified in the analysis of the third movement of the Sonata Opus 12.

<sup>4</sup> The term "narrative" is used loosely. The temporal sequence of events in much music can either be described in terms of strictly musical events (cadences, thematic organization, etc.) or as an extramusical narrative (whether organic to the work—e.g. choral text, notes by the composer—or not).

## **Case Study: The Piano Sonata Opus 12 by Jean Sibelius**

This thesis uses the Piano Sonata, Op. 12 by Jean Sibelius as a case study to demonstrate how analytical study may be used to craft a compelling performance interpretation of a large-scale musical work. This approach assumes a functional relationship between performance and analysis, specifically that the process of creating a formal analysis of the work influences the performer's conceptualization of the temporal organization of the piece. In order to capture the most fundamental essence of a work, analysis must take into account the performative nature of musical expression, particularly if it is to be of any practical utility to musicians outside the discipline of music theory. To demonstrate this, I have undertaken an in-depth analytical study of the Piano Sonata Opus 12 by Sibelius, while also learning and performing the piece. I have drawn upon my analysis of the piece in organizing my performance, and performing the work has been equally instructive. In this thesis I use both perspectives to generate an integrated approach to the Sonata, and to examine the general nature of the interaction between performance and analysis of musical form.

### Analytical Texts

The analysis of the Piano Sonata Opus 12 by Sibelius is focused on the formal organization of the three individual movements and the work as a whole, using standard formal models and terminology from James Hepokoski and

Warren Darcy's *Elements of Sonata Theory* (2006). Although the subtitle refers to the "Late-Eighteenth-Century Sonata," this book is one of the most significant texts on the subject in current use, and the models presented in this volume are applicable to a wide range of later (and earlier) repertoire including all three movements of Sibelius's Piano Sonata, Op. 12. The first and second movements of the Sonata largely conform to formal models presented by Hepokoski and Darcy. Sonata Theory also provides a framework for the discussion of functional and structural features in the third movement of the sonata. This movement does not conform exactly to any type described in Hepokoski and Darcy, yet the application of Sonata Theory provides an important theoretical framework for an analysis of the movement.

William Caplin's treatment of function as distinct from type is especially useful when discussing structure as something that functions in a real-time musical narrative rather than a conceptually static model (2009). Although most of the terminology used in this thesis is from Hepokoski and Darcy, Caplin provides an expanded vocabulary for the discussion of formal function.<sup>5</sup> Specifically, Caplin's organizational spectrum of musical elements from "tight-knit" to "loose" is a useful framework for discussing the figurative distribution of structural weight within a piece (2009, 38).

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<sup>5</sup> Most of this terminology is listed in the chapter "What are Formal Functions?" in *Musical Form, Forms, and Formenlehre: Three Methodological Reflections* (Caplin 2009).

## Discography

Both performers and analysts benefit from collaboration between the two disciplines. While this thesis focuses primarily on my own study of Sibelius's Piano Sonata, I have drawn on recordings by other pianists in both my performance and analysis of this work. Recordings by Håvard Gimse (1999) and Erik T. Tawaststjerna (1987) have been particularly influential. Gimse's performance is in many ways similar to my own. Tawaststjerna's treatment of the piece is quite different, and the contrast is useful in highlighting different approaches to performance.

## Analytical Approach

Analytical and performative study interact very differently in each movement of the Sonata Opus 12 by Sibelius.<sup>6</sup> The first movement provides an opportunity to explore how performance and analysis interact within a well-established model for tonal composition: sonata form. The form provides a clear framework for developing a performance approach in two specific areas: creating and expressing contrast between thematic elements, and considering how to present these elements as part of a larger organizational plan. The movement presents unique opportunities because of its simple harmonic language; key

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<sup>6</sup> Hepokoski and Darcy's *Elements of Sonata Theory* (2006) is the principal source of information on the sonata as a genre used in this document. However, to my knowledge, there are no published analyses of the Sonata Opus 12 by Sibelius. The analysis presented in this document is my own.

areas are frequently distilled into single chords, which provides great flexibility in melodic expression.

The interpretation of the second movement explores creating an extramusical narrative based on the composer's extant source material, in this case an unfinished song by Sibelius with text from *The Kalevala*. Analysis reveals manifestations of conflict as well as programmatic elements implied or expressed by the text, which transform the score into a performative script with multiple possible expressive readings. This chapter uses narrative terminology from Almén's study of narrative archetypes in music to characterize and provide an interpretive context for the tonal and thematic events of the movement (2003). In the context of the case study, this movement provides the opportunity to consider an analytical approach based on narrative content, rather than formal structure.

Form is again the topic for the analysis of the third movement; however, in this case the movement engages with foundational principles of the sonata but includes significant deviations from the model presented in Hepokoski and Darcy. This movement's departure from an established formal model makes finding continuity and creating coherence in this movement very challenging. Terms from the sonata model are applied only to the extent that they express functional relationships between elements of the movement that are in dialogue with sonata form.

## Performance Approach

The analytical chapters in this paper are somewhat broad in their treatment of the Sonata. This is perhaps to be expected, as the act of analysis—particularly when using traditional models of form—lacks the physical immediacy characteristic of performance. Although performance and analysis are both interpretive, correspondence between the two is not always direct. Instead, analysis can provide information or a certain perspective on how the composition is organized, and it falls to the performer to interpret those insights just as he or she interprets the score. To put this another way, there is not a one-to-one relationship between analytical information and performance decisions. Rather, analysis often shows what is to be interpreted; the performer must decide how.

Regarding performance, this document speaks of a specific interpretation of the Sonata in order to illustrate the relationship between analytical findings and interpretive decisions. As previously stated, analysis does not show performers how to interpret musical works. So rather than attempt to be objective and consequently say nothing—because there is a significant degree of subjectivity in the act of musical interpretation through performance—the chapters on performance discuss how I have chosen to address the issues raised in the analysis. No assertion is made that my performance is the only way of interpreting the analysis presented; rather, the intent is to illustrate the logic which ties analysis to performance.

## **MOVEMENT I: ALLEGRO MOLTO**

### **Introduction**

Approaching the first movement of the Sonata Opus 12 by Sibelius, the performer must grapple with several unique compositional features that have far-reaching narrative and formal implications, often directly impacting large sections of the movement. Analysis using Sonata Theory is a highly useful approach for engaging with these interpretive challenges. Through this process, the performer can create a large-scale interpretive framework for shaping the performance, in which innumerable smaller decisions may be made in dialogue with the overall interpretation.

An effective performance of this work will express a clear understanding and a compelling interpretation of its structural and organizational logic. In this case study, a performance interpretation of the first movement of the sonata is shaped in dialogue with an analytical study of the movement. Sonata Theory may be used to create a framework in which to place the elements of the composition, and in some cases to define the function of those elements in the larger context of the movement as a whole. The application of an established model also highlights those instances in which the composition does not follow the expected formal plan or functional narrative. In the sonata, these deviations are equally

problematic in creating a performance interpretation. The insights gained through analytical study may be used to explain why the work is challenging in those respects, and provide the performer with decision-making tools in addressing those challenges. It should be remembered that the performance solutions to analytical problems presented in this chapter represent only some of the interpretive possibilities in realizing this movement in performance.

This chapter is divided into several parts, each of which deals with a portion of the movement. The first three parts involve comparative study of the exposition and the recapitulation, focusing on substantively different features of the recapitulation that alter the narrative of the work. The most significant area of inquiry centers on the primary theme and transition. This is followed by a mostly performance-oriented study of the secondary theme, and a brief discussion of structural cadences and closing material. The final part is a study of the organizational logic of the development.



**Table 1.1. Form Diagram of Sibelius, Sonata, Op. 12, I. Allegro molto.**

Section	Exposition										
Theme	P - A	P - B	TR - A' (dissolving restatement)					S - A	S - B		C
ST Marker							MC				EEC
Measure	1	13	21	25	29	32	37	40	41	49	63
Harmony		5 ped	PAC		5 ped		HC			V prolongation	PAC
Key	F		Ab		C min - C				A min		C
Key as RN	I		bIII		v - V				vi/V		V

Section	Development													
Theme			P - A		P - A		P - A	P - A				P - B		
ST Marker	Link	EZ				T		CAZ				RT		
Measure	87	99	102	111	115	123	127	131	139	142	147	169	177	197
Harmony				5 ped				ii	V	HC	5 ped		5 ped	HC
Key	G# min				F# min				Ab		F min			
Key as RN	#ii [biii]				#i [bii]				bIII		i			

Section	Recapitulation													
Theme	P - A	P - B	TR - A' (dissolving restatement)					S - A	S - B		C	Coda		
ST Marker				crux			MC				ESC			
Measure	205	217	233	236	237	241	249	252	253	261	279	279	299	315
Harmony	PAC	b3-2-5	PAC			5 ped	HC			V prolongation		PAC		PC
Key	F			Db	F min - F	F		F min		D min	F			
Key as RN	I			bVI	i - I	I		i		vi	I			

### Analytical Model

The first movement of Sibelius's Piano Sonata, Op. 12 largely conforms to the formal model Hepokoski and Darcy classify as a Type 3 Sonata (2006). Presentation of thematic material, choice of key areas in the exposition and the recapitulation, and placement of structurally significant cadences all conform to this conventional formal plan (Table 1.1). Hepokoski and Darcy also provide a convenient vocabulary for discussion of formal types (e.g. exposition, medial caesura, etc.). This model is a necessary starting place for a discussion of a work in sonata form, and provides a context for a discussion of the function of these

formal types in the temporal narrative of the work, which is highly relevant to performance.

### **The Medial Caesura and the Primary Theme and Transition Complex**

The relationship between the exposition and the recapitulation is perhaps the most significant characteristic of sonata form, and much of the interest in working with sonata movements may be found in drawing comparisons or contrasts between the exposition and the recapitulation. In this movement, the recapitulation is substantively altered compared to the exposition, to a much greater degree than required by formal conventions. To Hepokoski and Darcy, these differences, which satisfy “the important considerations of art and elegance,” are “all the more salient for being generically superfluous” (2006, 236). The most analytically significant of these points of contrast in the recapitulation is that of the primary theme (P) and transition (TR). Addressing these differences is also the most significant interpretive task in the movement, as the way P and TR are interpreted can influence listeners’ perception of the entire thematic cycle which is the substance of a sonata.

## Analysis

Figure 1.1. Sibelius, Op. 12, I, mm. 37-42.

The extent of the P-TR complex is clearly articulated by a strong half cadence and medial caesura (mm. 37-40, Figure 1.1). As an entity, the V:HC MC divides the tonic-key primary theme and transition from the dominant-key secondary theme and closing which it introduces (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 24). In the first movement of Opus 12, a literal medial caesura is difficult to define precisely, as there is no literal cessation of sound between the cadential arrival and the secondary theme. The use of ties across the bar lines in m. 39 blurs the rhetorical caesura even further by obscuring any metric accents which might clearly define the space. Instead, the “purposefully activated and prolonged” half cadence (m. 37) strongly indicates that a medial caesura is expected.

Consequently, although the moment of pause is ambiguous, the medial caesura is present within the pause in activity following the cadential arrival. In this case, the shorthand V:HC MC, I:HC MC in the recapitulation, serves to represent the cadence-caesura complex and its function in the organization of the movement.

In the first module of the exposition, the primary theme establishes most of the melodic gestures, textural approaches, and harmonic language for the movement (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 65). P<sup>A</sup> (m. 1) establishes the tonic key then moves through the mediant (m. 9) to P<sup>B</sup> (m. 13), which is characterized by a dominant prolongation. The transition begins as a restatement of the primary theme, and together the P-TR complex comprises a rounded binary form.

The transition (m. 21) begins as a restatement of P<sup>A</sup> (with the melody down an octave from the beginning), but quickly dissolves into the harmonic transformation characteristic of a sonata exposition.<sup>7</sup> The transition in this movement includes elements characteristic of continuation function—modulation to the dominant key, a dominant pedal in the new key, melodic “spinning out”,—which ultimately lead to the MC V:HC (mm. 37-40).<sup>8</sup>

It is in the nature of this type of TR module (dissolving restatement) that the transition function is not immediately perceptible when listening to the work, and this is certainly the case in the exposition. Because of the repetition of the opening material in TR, everything in the exposition preceding the medial caesura may be conceptualized as a rounded binary form. This is also the case for P and TR in the recapitulation.

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<sup>7</sup> For a discussion of the “dissolving” transition type, see Hepokoski and Darcy (2006, 95 and 101).

<sup>8</sup> Hepokoski and Darcy consider the cadential arrival and the literal medial caesura to be separate events, though they also use the shorthand V:HC MC or I:HC MC to refer to “the whole complex of musical activity” (2006, 24). This idea is quite aptly expressed in Sibelius Op. 12 mvt. I, as the literal caesura gap is completely filled by the sustained cadential resolution.

Characteristically for a sonata exposition, the transition modulates to the dominant key and ends with an emphatic half cadence (m. 37). This structurally significant moment is marked by a fortissimo dynamic, a change in rhythm (quarter note triplets), and dense chords in both hands incorporating a striking flat ninth. The last of these chords is held for a full two measures, approximating the formal function of the medial caesura in a Classical sonata though there is no actual silence (m. 40). After the arrival of the HC, the implied gap is filled through both a sustained caesura-fill and the upbeat of S.<sup>9</sup>

**Table 1.2. Primary Theme and Transition. Corresponding Passages in the Exposition and Recapitulation of Sibelius, Op. 12, I.**

Exposition												
Theme	P					TR (dissolving)					MC	
Section	A		B			[no corresponding passage in exposition]	A'					
Key	F Maj						C Maj					
Chord	I	iii	V				I	IV7/bIII	bIII	dominant pedal	HC	
Measure	1	9	13	17			21	24	25	29	37	39
Duration	12		8				4		4	8	4	

Recapitulation											
ST Marker	P					TR (dissolving)					MC
Section	A		B			A' (crux)					
Key	F										
Chord	I	bIII	biii [#ii]	vii dim 6/5	V7	I	vio6/bVI	bVI	dominant pedal	HC	
Measure	205	213	217	221	225	233	236	237	241	249	251
Duration	12		16			4		4	8	4	

Typically for a sonata, the recapitulation closely parallels the exposition in form (see Table 1.2). In this movement, however, extensive differences between

<sup>9</sup> For a discussion of caesura-fill, see Hepokoski and Darcy 40-41.

correspondence passages in the exposition and recapitulation give the recapitulation a very different character (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 231). One of the most significant performance challenges in the movement stems from the treatment of TR in the recapitulation (m. 233). In the exposition, the arrival of TR is somewhat obscured and the transitional material seems to grow organically from the restatement of the opening material, both typical for dissolving transition types. In the recapitulation, however, the arrival of the transition is strongly emphasized. Hepokoski and Darcy devote considerable attention to this phenomenon: “One need only observe that in some cases the recapitulatory TR is given an intense, expanded treatment on its way to the MC. The hermeneutic obligation is to explain why” (2006, 237).

The emphasis placed on TR in the recapitulation is largely a product of the alterations of the primary theme. Unlike in the exposition, where P is confined to diatonic harmonies, P in the recapitulation is highly chromatic. As shown in Table 1.2, the first alteration of P from the version presented in the exposition occurs in m. 213, where bIII is substituted (replacing iii as in the exposition). This dramatically alters P<sup>B</sup> (m. 217): instead of the simple dominant prolongation of the exposition (m. 13), the arrival of the dominant is delayed by a highly chromatic harmonic progression (#ii [biii], vii<sup>o</sup>) in m. 217. The intensity of the harmonic tension culminates in a much stronger dominant arrival in m. 225.

Figure 1.2. Sibelius, Op. 12, I, mm. 21-25 and 233-237.

21 TR

*mf*

F: I C: IV7 bVI 6/4 \*

233 TR

*f*

crux

F: I V7/iv iv vii°6/bVI bII6/4 bVI6/4 \*

Paradoxically, the comparative stability of the dominant prolongation in the corresponding passage of the exposition (m. 13) opens the door for later chromatic exploration and modulation, whereas in the recapitulation, the harmonic instability of  $P^B$  (m. 217) has the effect of giving it a markedly separate function from the stable  $P^A$ . Instead of simply providing contrast and tying  $P$  as a whole to  $TR$ ,  $P^B$  now seems separated from  $P^A$  and functions as a secondary space for harmonic development leading to  $TR$ , greatly reinforcing the cadential resolution of the arrival of  $TR$ .

Texturally, the dissolution of the contrasting thematic material (harmonized chromatically) into eight measures of grandiose dominant chords (mm. 224-231)

almost makes TR seem like a stronger thematic arrival than P. It is certainly more powerfully realized in terms of volume and texture. How the performer chooses to treat the primary theme, especially the second phrase, significantly impacts the listener's perception of the beginning of P or TR as the "real" point of arrival.

One effect of this unique passage (mm. 217-231) is that the first eight measures of P are much more compartmentalized from the B section or the transition in the recapitulation than in the exposition. Instead of the restatement of P dissolving seamlessly into transitional material (as in the exposition), TR is strongly marked as the beginning of a new section. Following its spectacular arrival, though, the remainder of TR corresponds much more closely to the exposition. As is often the case in sonata recapitulations, the material preceding the Medial Caesura (m. 251) is altered in order to avoid modulating to the dominant. In this instance the crux, the moment where the harmonic trajectory is altered, takes place on the fourth beat of m. 236 (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 239).



Interpretation

**Figure 1.3. Sibelius, Op. 12, I, mm. 221-234.**

The extensive changes in the recapitulation suggest that the entire section has not only a different formal function but also a different expressive character than the exposition and therefore requires a unique interpretation. One of the most significant interpretive problems in this movement stems from the fact that the arrival of TR in the recapitulation, which begins with a restatement of the opening of the primary theme (m. 233, Figure 1.3), is so much grander than the actual arrival of P at the beginning of the recapitulation (m. 205). This subverts the normal function of a dissolving transition, which is to move seamlessly from

the restatement of P into transitional functions (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 101). The break in texture at m. 231, coupled with the strong harmonic emphasis on the dominant for the previous six measures, also subverts the rhetorical function of the medial caesura (m. 252), particularly since the cadence at m. 233 (I:PAC) is harmonically stronger than the MC (I:HC).

The texture is a significant contributor to this subversive treatment. The left hand is an octave lower (which produces a much more robust sound on the piano), a louder dynamic is given (*forte*), and most importantly the arrival of TR is preceded by powerfully voiced dominant chords (m. 223). The scales at a reduced dynamic in m. 231 allow the reverberations from the large chords to decay enough for the thematic entry in m. 233 to speak clearly without having to cut through a dense texture. In contrast, the thematic arrival at m. 205 is more restrained. The overall effect is that the arrival of the transition is significantly more impressive than the arrival of the primary theme.

However, the functional difference between the two thematic statements (the beginning of P, and the beginning of TR) allows the performer to rationalize them differently. P, approached as it is through a melodic retransition (through an active dominant scale degree with little harmonic support), is both the destination of all the developmental activity which preceded it, and the initiation of the final thematic cycle. The beginning of TR, in contrast, represents a much more fully realized cadential arrival, and is the immediate impetus for the movement's

closure. The compartmentalization of P-A, and the close ties between P-B and TR, so very unusual in this movement, create the potential for greater emphasis on the thematic arrivals in the recapitulation and consequently a strong sense of return, resolution, and stability.

### Performance

One of the most significant problems in the movement is how to treat the extraordinary B section of the primary theme in the recapitulation (beginning in m. 217), particularly the passage that immediately precedes the arrival of TR (mm. 225-232, TR m. 233). This has a direct impact on the interpretation of a large section of the movement, from the retransition (m. 177) to the recapitulatory MC (m. 251).

I choose to emphasize the passage at mm. 225-232 and the arrival of TR at m. 233 even more strongly than the score explicitly indicates, making it the focal point of the retransition (m. 177) and P in the recapitulation (m. 205). The retransition and the first eight measures of the recapitulation are restrained in terms of dynamic and tempo, suggesting a gradual unfolding of musical ideas as in the exposition. The sforzando arrival of bIII in m. 213 is the first event to suggest that something about the recapitulation is significantly different from the exposition. This triggers a steady increase in dynamic and intensity through the highly chromatic P<sup>B</sup>. The dominant chords preceding TR comprise one of the loudest moments in my performance aside from the ending, more even than my

treatment of the MC in either the exposition or recapitulation. This has the effect of creating a musical event similar to the medial caesura, but much earlier in the recapitulation than expected. This highlights the event at mm. 225-233 as one of the focal points of the movement. Surprisingly, this treatment does not detract from the impact of the medial caesura. Rather, after the astonishing event that preceded it, TR itself anticipates the arrival of MC (m. 251) not only as an essential part of the form but as a welcome return to the expected narrative of the movement.

### **Secondary Theme**

After the compositional transformation of the first part of the recapitulation, the arrival of the medial caesura (m. 252) is not only expected but welcomed as a return to the normal narrative structure of sonata form paralleling the exposition. But immediately following this return to a normal narrative, the secondary theme in the recapitulation (m. 253) is different from the exposition in one significant way: it is written in the minor mode instead of major. While the change does not substantially alter the form of the movement or the tonic function of the key area, the choice of minor mode is in itself surprising. Coupled with lower registration and slight harmonic alteration of correspondence bars (the flat ninth in m. 265 is particularly striking), this creates a wholly different set of expressive potentials from the exposition.

**Table 1.3. Secondary and Closing Themes. Corresponding Passages in the Exposition and Recapitulation of Sibelius, Op. 12, I.**

<b>Exposition</b>													
Theme/Marker		S								C, EEC			
Key	C	A min								C			
		I+	V 6/4	i - V - i - V	V	V9	[no corresponding passage in exposition]	i - V9 - i - V9	viø	ii viio	viø	ii	V
Measure	41	45	46	47	49	53	53	57	59	60	61	62	63
Chord	I												
Measure	41	45	46	47	49	53	53	57	59	60	61	62	63

<b>Recapitulation</b>														
Theme/Marker		S								C, ESC				
Key	F min	D min								F				
		i	bIII	V 6/4	i - V - i - V	V	Vb9	V7	i - V - i - V	viø	ii viio	viø	vii	V
Measure	253	258	259	260	261	265	269	273	275	276	277	278	279	
Chord	i	bIII	V 6/4	i - V - i - V	V	Vb9	V7	i - V - i - V	viø	ii viio	viø	vii	V	I
Measure	253	258	259	260	261	265	269	273	275	276	277	278	279	

## Analysis

The contrasting character of the secondary theme in the exposition (m. 41) and recapitulation (m. 253) is largely suggested by the mode and range. The melody is lower and the initial chord voicing spans only one octave, instead of two in as the exposition.

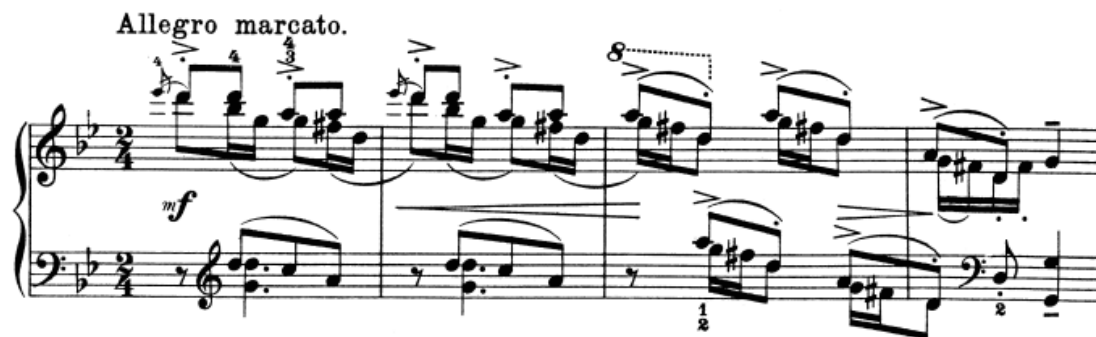
Small differences in harmonic progression also exist. The version in the recapitulation is slightly more harmonically active, exploring bIII (m. 257), V (m. 261), and III<sup>7</sup> (m. 269), whereas the theme in the exposition confines itself to vi (m. 47) and III (m. 49). The harmonic activity in the recapitulation is accompanied by a four-measure expansion (mm. 269-272), as shown in Table 1.3, which allows room for a delayed tonicization of D minor analogous to the more extensive exploration of A minor in the exposition, avoiding an alteration of the ESC. The delay of this tonicization in the recapitulation, and corresponding extension of the tonal lock of F minor, serves a purpose similar to that of the chromatic intensification of the recapitulatory P-TR. It both reinforces the stability of the tonic, and intensifies the non-tonic-ness of the submediant. The strangeness of a tonicized vi in tonic minor further increases the sense of urgency, propelling the drive toward the ESC.

## Interpretation

In the exposition, the secondary theme possesses a bright and extroverted character. This is in part a product of the major mode and the

placement of the melody in a higher range where the piano's tone is brighter. Fully-voiced triads in open spacing at the beginning of the theme (m. 41) also provide warmth and richness. In contrast, the closed spacing and sparser voicing (lacking the chordal third, except in the melody) of m. 253, coupled with the melody beginning in a more subdued register, suggest restraint and solemnity. In the liner notes to his recording, Tawaststjerna highlights this contrast, drawing on his personal knowledge of the composer: "The initial theme in the second section has a jagged contour and a halling-like rhythm reminiscent of Grieg, whilst the elegiac sequel breathes a nature mysticism typical of the young Sibelius" (1987). The mention of Grieg may refer to his "Norwegian Dance: Halling" from *Lyrical Pieces*, Op. 38 (Figure 1.4). "Halling" refers to an acrobatic dance performed by young men (Grove), and the reference suggests an energetic interpretation of the expositional secondary theme. This presents a striking contrast to its contemplative character in the recapitulation.

**Figure 1.4. Grieg. Lyrical Pieces, Op. 38, "Norwegian Dance: Halling," mm. 1-4.**



## Performance

My interpretation of corresponding statements of the secondary theme in the exposition and recapitulation is crafted to highlight contrasts between not only the two thematic statements themselves, but also their respective functions in relation to the P/TR groups that precede them. In the exposition, the bright and extroverted character of S is in keeping with the sparkling, uncomplicated presentation of the preceding P and TR. Contrastingly, the recapitulatory S begins hesitantly, with somber introspection, and becomes increasingly intense in its drive to attain the ESC. The passage also seems to evoke a complex inner turmoil, perhaps in response to the interpretive problem presented by the extensive alteration of the recapitulatory P/TR, a normal MC notwithstanding. Perhaps the impact of that event creates an expressive shift in the narrative even after the narrative events themselves have normalized.

**Figure 1.5. Sibelius, Op. 12, I, mm. 249-254. Recapitulatory MC.**

249 I:HC MC  
253 S

The interpretive differences between the secondary themes in the exposition and recapitulation begin with my treatment of the medial caesura (Figure 1.5). In the exposition, S flows naturally out of the pause created by the



composition of the MC (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 117), and I push the tempo very slightly through the quarter-note triplets and the lengthy sustain, careful not to let the dynamic fall too quickly. The MC consequently represents only a brief pause, enough to allow S to sing out but not enough that momentum is lost. The pickup to S (m. 40) is assertive despite the soft dynamic, and S is played with a crisp finger action and clear definition to the beginning of each tone. While the articulation softens slightly in the contrasting section of S (m. 49), the sound becomes warmer and the harmonic language brightens through the addition of a chordal ninth in m. 53. The brief tonicization of A minor in this section provides harmonic tension in preparation for the arrival of the EEC.

Contrastingly, the recapitulatory medial caesura manifests as a much more thoughtful pause than the expositional MC. Some time is required to mentally process or cope with the unforeseen cadential pause that marks the beginning of TR in the recapitulation, discussed in the previous section. The medial caesura (m. 251) provides that much-needed time. For this reason, I allow the tempo to decrease through the quarter-note triplets and the sustained chord. The diminuendo is much more rapid than in the exposition, allowing for a pronounced decay during the long sustained chord.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> An alternative interpretation may be to perform the recapitulatory medial caesura in a manner similar to the exposition. This would compartmentalize the caesura event of mm. 235-232 and the minor-mode secondary theme in the recapitulation as two separate alterations of the correspondence bars in the exposition. The result of this approach might be to create two surprising events within the recapitulation, rather than an entirely altered parallel narrative.

The secondary theme itself is also, in a sense, a response to the events that preceded it. It is a reserved, thoughtful, and initially cautious attempt to proceed with the normal narrative of the sonata. When it does gain strength, it is characterized by a surprising emotional intensity and complexity that was not present in the exposition. The pickup to S (m. 252) is energetic, but with a searching quality rather than the vivacity of the expositional secondary theme. The finger action in the recapitulatory S is gentler, a little less crisp and more expressive, more cantabile, creating a less percussive sound. Tempo increases through the first eight measures of S (mm. 253-260), slightly interrupted by the tenuto at m. 258. The contrasting section (m. 261) has more of the energy of the prequel, but with a new intensity that is in part a product of the searching quality of the preceding material. The addition of four measures to this section provides time for the dynamic to grow. The harmonic tension is increased through delaying the tonicization of the submediant until the ninth measure of this section, rather than shifting to vi concurrently with the change of texture.

### **Structural Cadences and Closing Theme**

#### Analysis

The structural cadences (V:PAC EEC, m. 63, and I:PAC ESC, m. 279) in this movement are approached in an unusually abrupt fashion, following an extended tonicization of the local submediant. The tonicization of vi ends with the

sudden substitution of V before the arrival of the closing theme, which corresponds with the cadential resolution of the EEC or ESC (Figure 1.6). The resolution is stabilized by the local tonic pedal sustained throughout the entire closing theme.

**Figure 1.6. Sibelius, Op. 12, I, mm. 61-65, 277-270. Structural cadences: Essential Expositional Closure and Essential Structural Closure.**

61

Closing Theme  
EEC

A min: vi<sup>o</sup>      ii    Direct mod.    C Maj: V    I  
V:PAC

277

Closing Theme  
ESC

F: vii<sup>o</sup>/V      vii    V      I  
I:PAC

S (m. 41) in the exposition is calmer and more restrained than the preceding material. It begins in the dominant key, typical for a major-key sonata movement (Hepokoski and Darcy, 2006), but quickly modulates to A minor (m. 46). The modulation is followed by an extended dominant pedal (m. 49) and

apparent cadential preparation (m. 59) in A minor. Then the evasion of a cadence in A and the substitution of a PAC in C major takes place very quickly (mm. 62-63). This cadence, the Essential Expositional Closure (V:PAC), is the most structurally significant tonal event in the exposition, having ramifications for the rest of the movement. However, the dramatic way in which it is approached - a direct modulation after an extensive detour in the wrong key - is far from conventional (Figure 1.6). The closure of the EEC is confirmed not by extensive cadential preparation but by the harmonically static closing theme, consisting entirely of a tonic chord in the dominant key (C major).

The ESC serves as the harmonic resolution of the entire movement (Figure 1.6). Hepokoski and Darcy state that “the attaining of the ESC is the most significant event within the sonata” (2006, 232). Because of the functional importance of the essential structural closure, it is crucial that this cadence (m. 279) is not ignored in performance. Because the EEC serves as cadential closure for the exposition only, it is not as important to the overall harmonic scheme as the corresponding cadence in the recapitulation. One must therefore consider the two cadences individually with regard to interpretation, and not simply perform both of them the same way by default.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> That is not to say that a performer may not choose to perform the two cadences in the same way, merely that the decision should be intentional.

Differences in compositional details between the EEC and ESC suggest interpretive differences as well, particularly with regard to the treatment of the left hand. The large downward leap approaching the EEC (mm. 62-63, from G<sup>2</sup> and G<sup>3</sup> to C<sup>1</sup> and C<sup>2</sup>) breaks up the bass voice leading from dominant to tonic in favor of separating the thematic entry from the preceding material. In contrast, having the left hand leap down an octave two beats earlier in the recapitulation (m. 278) approaching the ESC preserves the cadential rhetoric in the bass voice (C<sup>2</sup> and C<sup>1</sup> to F<sup>2</sup> and F<sup>1</sup>), and unifies the dominant with the cadence. This seems appropriate as the ESC serves a more important structural function than the EEC (as its name would suggest).

### Performance

In interpreting these cadences, one may choose to emphasize the harmonic function of the dominant chord approaching the ESC only, without doing so in the exposition. This approach would bring out the thematic importance of the closing material in the exposition and clear the way for further harmonic exploration in the development, and emphasize the finality of the essential structural closure.

Alterations of dynamic, tempo, and articulation, although unwritten, may be employed in the last two beats of m. 278 to emphasize the dominant chord that approaches the ESC. In doing so, one may separate it aurally and conceptually from the preceding material tonicizing the submediant, and connect

it instead to the cadential resolution it prepares. The increase in dynamic to forte (m. 279) suggests a crescendo. Interestingly, this dynamic marking is absent in the exposition, though the omission may be an error since subsequent dynamic markings match. There is more room for flexibility with regard to articulation and tempo. Tawaststjerna (1987) uses a heavily marked staccato in the left hand in the last two beats of mm. 62 and 278, which is particularly striking in the second instance because of the downward leap. His approach also includes a slight acceleration in tempo. However, a slight tenuto on the dominant chord is also a viable choice, as in Gimse's recording (1999). Either approach emphasizes the cadential function of the dominant chord as part of the ESC, and by extension the attainment of harmonic resolution in the movement.

## Development

**Table 1.4. Form Diagram: Development, extract from Table 1.1.**

Section	Development														
Theme			P - A		P - A			P - A	P - A					P - B	
ST Marker	Link	EZ				T		CAZ						RT	
Measure	87	99	102	111	115	123	127	131	139	142	147	169	177	197	
Harmony				5 ped				ii	V	HC	5 ped		5 ped	HC	
Key		G# min						F# min					Ab	F min	
Key as RN		#ii [biii]						#i [bii]					bIII	i	

Understanding the organization of the development is useful in creating a coherent interpretation. Within the model presented by Hepokoski and Darcy, the developmental space in a sonata movement is defined as an area for thematic exploration in related key areas that ultimately leads to a retransition and the

recapitulation. The primary theme (or elements of it) often comprises much of the melodic content of the development, and the retransition function is usually achieved through a dominant prolongation. But there is a much greater degree of flexibility in the organizational logic of the development than in either the exposition or recapitulation. The development in this movement is quite lengthy (130 measures, over one-third of the movement). In addition, it is thematically fragmented, texturally varied, and harmonically unstable, and so presents great interpretive freedom, as well as a significant executive challenge, to the performer. Broadly, the development may be considered in four sections: a short link, the entry zone, the central action zone, and the retransition (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 229-230).

#### Link and Entry Zone

The link that ushers in the development (mm. 87-98) is quite brief, only twelve measures, and consists entirely of a modulation from C through E to the distantly related key of G# minor (enharmonically, biii of F, the key signature notwithstanding). Although Hepokoski and Darcy consider the link to be part of the development (and in fact it is developmental in function), in this movement the link seems disconnected from the entry zone (m. 99) due to its lack of melodic content and, until the arrival of the entry zone, an obvious harmonic goal.

The entry zone (mm. 99-130) of this movement's development may be understood as two parallel twelve-measure sections followed by an eight-

measure transition. Each section consists of four measures of a distinctive chord texture (from the transition following the secondary theme, m. 49) followed by an eight-measure statement of the opening of the primary theme. Harmonically, each section consists of a pedal tone, first the local tonic (G# minor) then dominant (D# major). The transition is marked by an increase in the harmonic rhythm, from two chords prolonged over twenty-four measures to changing every two measures in an eight-measure modulation to F# minor (Fig. 1.7, mm. 123-130).

**Figure 1.7. Sibelius, Op. 12, I, mm. 123-130.**

The musical score consists of two systems of piano accompaniment. The first system, measures 123-126, is in G# minor. It features a constant bass pedal point (G#) and a treble part with sustained chords and a melodic line. Dynamics are marked *ffz* and *meno forte*. The second system, measures 127-130, is in F# minor. It continues the bass pedal point and the melodic line in the treble. Dynamics are marked *ffz* and *meno forte*. Roman numerals *iv* and *i* are placed below the bass staff to indicate the harmonic structure.

Central Action Zone

The central action zone (mm. 131-176) consists of further exploration of the opening of the primary theme in F# minor (enharmonically, bII), leading to an





the tonic key of the movement, and mm. 177-204 of this movement does just that.

The retransition is unusual in the fact that this tonal function is executed primarily through functions related to scale degrees rather than through prolongation of the dominant chord. The dominant pedal in this section is the most significant manifestation of harmonic function, and that is absent for measures at a time.<sup>12</sup> Also, the introduction of pedal C as a melodic tone (in the example above) subverts that harmonic function in favor of a melodic one. Approaching the recapitulation melodically (reserving a fuller harmonic realization of the harmonic arrival for later in the recapitulation) creates significant expressive potential.

The goal of the retransition is thematic as well as harmonic: it demands the return of the primary theme. In a previous section, the PAC caesura immediately preceding TR in the recapitulation (m. 233) was interpreted as the main focus of the recapitulation up to the MC.<sup>13</sup> This suggests that the caesura event (m. 233), not the arrival of P (m. 207), is the ultimate goal of the retransition at the end of the development.

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<sup>12</sup> Although present as both a melodic pitch and a chord tone, the pitch C does not manifest strongly as a bass voice. When it does appear in the bass, its function is primarily melodic. And as a sustained tone underpinning the harmony, it only appears in a high register. The singular exception is the downbeat of m. 197.

<sup>13</sup> This is discussed in the section titled "Primary Theme and Transition".

This reading requires careful management of the retransition's potential to gain energy (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 197), while still conveying a sense of movement toward upcoming thematic and tonal events. There must be sufficient momentum to carry the musical narrative for an extended time (mm. 177-233), with enough restraint to allow for a significant increase in intensity in the final stretch (mm. 217-232).

A performance, then, should leave as much space as possible for later increases in dynamic intensity, textural activity and harmonic tension. It should begin in m. 177 with quiet restraint, unsettled and tense. This approach is supported in the score by the restrained dynamic and texture, sparse and unstable harmonic language, and a focus on melodic gestures. A slightly slower tempo can also be effective. Tone color also plays a very important role in the effect of this passage, along with the extreme gentleness normally required by the *pianissimo* dynamic.

The atmosphere of uncertain anticipation intensifies with the tentative entrance of a dominant pedal (C<sup>4</sup>, m. 181), played without emphasis. In m. 189, placing a noticeable accent on the same note provides active support for the increased melodic activity and the descent into the bass over the next eight measures, emphasizing the tonal imperative of the dominant to resolve. The accent is an unwritten gesture, but an effective one. The intensity of this tonal imperative increases until a complete dominant chord is articulated, *forzando* (m.

197). This is followed by an extended scalar fill, again played with restraint, sustaining the harmonic tension if not the actual sound of the dominant chord, with a short crescendo leading into the arrival of the primary theme (m. 205). This approach acknowledges the primary theme as the immediate goal of the retransition, without discharging all the potential energy of the retransition in a grand arrival. Instead there is ample space for continued progression toward later goals in the musical narrative.

### **Conclusion**

The first movement of Sibelius's Piano Sonata presents large-scale interpretive challenges for both analyst and performer. The massive cadence-caesura event between P and TR in the recapitulation (m. 233) effectively alters the entire trajectory of a large section of the movement from the retransition to the recapitulatory medial caesura (mm. 177-252), and has far-reaching implications for the rest of the movement. The darkly altered secondary theme in the recapitulation is an important interpretive consideration for the performer, particularly after the dramatic alteration of the primary theme. The treatment of the structural cadences is abrupt, but considering the harmonic function of the closing themes as prolongations of the cadential arrivals can establish and reinforce the structural functions of the EEC and ESC. And maintaining a sense

of progression and direction in the development requires a strong grasp of its organization.

Analysis using Sonata Theory provides a means for performers to engage with these events not only as local phenomena, but as structurally important moments interconnected within a larger narrative. Each of these interpretive decisions thus becomes a catalyst for shaping the entire work in performance. The large-scale interpretive framework created through performance-oriented analysis can then be used in dialogue with the interpretation of moments in musical time to create a multi-layered performance, encompassing both depth and immediacy.

## MOVEMENT II: ANDANTINO

### Introduction

In contrast to the outer movements of the Sonata Opus 12 by Sibelius, the interpretation of the second movement is based on narrative archetypes rather than abstract musical constructs. This approach is suggested by the source material: an unfinished song by Sibelius with text from the Finnish national epic, *The Kalevala*. Comparison of the refrain of this rondo form movement and the original song, as completed by Eric Bergman, implies the existence of conflicting tonal goals within the thematic material.<sup>14</sup> The compositional treatment of the relative major key (D flat) as a tonal and harmonic goal creates conflict with the established tonality of the movement (B flat minor). This conflict and its implications play out narratively over the course of the movement, and are discussed in terms drawn from Byron Almén's narrative archetypes in music (2003). The comic archetype—the triumph of chaos over order—is suggested in Bergman's treatment of the choral original, as it breaks the tonal system and

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<sup>14</sup> The minor-key refrain of the second movement of Opus 12 progresses to a cadence in the relative major key; however, the first two refrains do not reach a final cadence in either key. The last refrain progresses through the relative major but with an authentic cadence in the tonic minor key. Listening to Bergman's completion of the song "Heitä, koski, kuohuminen", as recorded by the YL Male Voice Choir on *The Sibelius Edition, Vol. 11*, I observe that the harmonic progression in the song corresponds to that of Opus 12 until the cadence in the relative major, after which the song does not return to the original tonic minor key.

ends in a non-tonic major key. In contrast, the narrative in Opus 12 is a tragic one, where the drive toward the relative major ultimately ends in defeat, locked in the tonic key of the movement (B flat minor). Ultimately, resolution is found outside the movement, in the return to the tonic F major of the sonata cycle as a whole.

The large-scale function of the sonata's second movement is a typical one: a central slow movement provides "a space of contrast" between two similar, fast outer movements (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 336). More than simply providing balance, though, the central movement serves as a transformational space in which the linear narrative of the Sonata is affected (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 336).<sup>15</sup> The composition of this movement in the minor subdominant (Bb minor), represents a considerable darkening of the atmosphere from the sparkling outer movements in F major. The simple formal structure and highly marked contrasts between sections provide space for subtle transformational processes applied in the melodic and harmonic events of the musical narrative. In this context, the powerful emotive content of the source material creates the potential for a more visceral kind of storytelling than the elaborately formal drama of the previous movement.

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<sup>15</sup> This is particularly true of works where the central movement is in a non-tonic key (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 336).

## Source Material and Narrative Applications

**Figure 2.1. Excerpt from *The Kalevala*, Rune XL “The Birth of the Harp” (Crawford 1888).**

Heitä, koski, kuohuminen, vesi vankka, vellominen!  
Kosken tyttö, kuohuneiti! Istuite kihokivelle,  
kihopaaelle paneite! Sylin aaltoja aseta,  
käsin kääri käppyröitä, kourin kuohuja kohenna,  
jottei riusko rinnoillemme eikä päällemme päräjä!  
"Akka aaltojen-alainen, vaimo kuohun-korvallinen!  
Nouse kourin kuohun päälle,  
yksin aallollen ylene kuohuja kokoamahan,  
vaahtipäitä vaalimahan,  
jottei syytöintä syseä,  
viatointa vierettele!

Cease, O cataract, thy roaring,  
Cease, O waterfall, thy foaming!  
Maidens of the foaming current,  
Sitting on the rocks in water,  
On the stone-blocks in the river,  
Take the foam and white-capped billows  
In your arms and still their anger,  
That our ships may pass in safety.

The source material for the first theme is an unfinished choral work by Sibelius, “Heitä, koski, kuohuminen” (Barnett, 2007, 83)<sup>16</sup>. The text of the choral work is drawn from the Finnish national epic, *The Kalevala* (Figure 2.1). The human desire to control the elements of chaos in nature is a source of conflict because that desire for safety cannot be fully realized. My interpretation of this movement focuses on the tragic narrative of the protagonist—the speaker in the

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<sup>16</sup> A commercial recording of the song as completed by Erik Bergman was released by the YL Male Voice Choir of Helsinki in 2015 (*The Sibelius Edition, Vol. 11*) and is currently available on Amazon.



text—represented by the transformation of the main theme through the musical narrative of the movement.

Byron Almén suggests that, although music is not inherently capable of expressing a semantically precise sequence of events analogous to literature, broad narrative archetypes are applicable to the relationship of musical elements within a work or movement (2003, 11-13). He further asserts that narrative function in a musical work is not derived from an external narrative, but may manifest in a potentially infinite number of permutations alongside a plausible external narrative (Almén 2003, 13).

In the case of the sonata's second movement, the specifically connected source material—the song—provides a highly plausible basis for narrative, emotive and expressive associations beyond the musical content of the score.<sup>17</sup> The fact of the connection between score and extra-musical material is explicit; but the specific ways in which the broader context interacts with the score are primarily interpretive. The interpreter—analyst or performer—must identify or suggest plausible interactions between sources and musical features for such an interpretation to be defensible. For the performer as interpreter, positing specific interactions between source material and musical features can provide the

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<sup>17</sup> Edward T. Cone posits that incorporating extra-musical elements in the interpretation of a work requires detailed and specific musical analysis in order to elucidate meaning (1982, 234-5). It is not possible, in my view, to analyze a work without drawing upon one's knowledge of its external context.

framework for equally specific performance decisions, as the remainder of this chapter demonstrates.

**Table 2.1. Form Diagram of Sibelius, Op. 12, II.**

Section		Exposition									
Theme	P - A	P - B	TR - A' (dissolving restatement)				S - A	S - B	C		
ST Marker						MC			EEC		
Measure	1	13	21	25	29	32	37	40	41	49	63
Harmony		5 ped	PAC		5 ped		HC			V prolongation	PAC
Key	F			Ab			C min - C			A min	C
Key as RN	I			bIII			v - V			vi/V	V

Section		Development											
Theme	P - A	P - A	P - A	P - A	P - A	P - A	P - A	P - A	P - A	P - B			
ST Marker	Link	EZ			T		CAZ			RT			
Measure	87	99	102	111	115	123	127	131	139	142	147	177	197
Harmony								ii	V	HC	5 ped	HC	
Key				G# min					F# min	Ab	F min		i
Key as RN				#ii [biii]					#i [bij]	bIII			

Section		Recapitulation											
Theme	P - A	P - B	TR - A' (dissolving restatement)				S - A	S - B	C				
ST Marker				crux			MC			ESC			
Measure	205	217	233	236	237	241	249	252	253	261	279	299	315
Harmony	PAC	b3-2-5	PAC			5 ped	HC			V prolongation	PAC		PC
Key	F			Db		F min - F		F		F min	D min	F	
Key as RN	I			bVI		i - I	I		i		vi	I	

## Tonal and Thematic Narrative

The second movement of the sonata is a simple rondo, consisting of a refrain (A) and a single contrasting theme (B) (Table 2.1). The refrain is explicitly derived from the choral source material, “Heitä, koski, kuohuminen.” This implies a strong association with the narrator of the text. Each statement of this theme may be interpreted as expressive of the desire for safety and mastery. Furthermore, the refrain is significantly transformed each time it appears, illustrative of the tragic progression of the narrative as the desire for control brings the protagonist into conflict with nature, ultimately resulting in defeat and resignation. These melodic statements are juxtaposed with a contrasting Presto section, pianissimo in a high register, easily imagined to represent the “white waters” on the surface of the rapids, which ultimately lose their energy in gradual transitions back to the theme. Each thematic section acts upon the next in order to produce a sense of narrative transformation that spans the entire movement.

The refrain, a lyrical melody in B flat minor with initial inflections of dorian mode, provides the impetus for the entire narrative. Like the initial dramatic scenario, man’s attempt to control nature, the theme itself seems to contain the seeds of its own undoing. The refrain seeks the relative major as a harmonic goal, attaining a III:IAC in m. 32 (and in corresponding points at mm. 118 and 208, see table 2.1).

Phrase structure is a significant element of the musical narrative in each refrain. The refrains are organized in eight-measure phrases, punctuated by a III:IAC at the end of the fourth phrase. This implies a larger structure of eight phrases, although that structure is not completed until the final refrain. In each refrain, there is a conflict between attaining a stronger cadence in the relative major, and returning to the initial key area. Although this drama plays out very differently in each statement of the refrain, each time it results in an undermining, if not total avoidance, of tonal closure and a distortion of the regular phrase structure suggested by the first thirty-two measures of the refrain. The refrain, then, is a manifestation of some impulse in conflict with the order of the compositional system used in Opus 12.<sup>18</sup> Any resolution of this impulse will either break the system, or frustrate the attempts of the refrain to attain its goal. Ultimately, the latter is the case.

In performance, this refrain is emotive and complex, full of conflicting impulses, potentially requiring the analyst or performer to wrestle with conflicting interpretive ideas and instincts. These divergent potentials have the ability to tear the performance apart and render it indecisive, if one has not committed to a

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<sup>18</sup> Although Bergman's completion of Sibelius's song "Heitä, koski, kuohuminen" cannot be taken as a representation of Sibelius's original intent, his choice to end the realization of the short choral work in an off-tonic major key represents a plausible resolution of the tonal conflict created by the presence of the III:IAC at the end of the first phrase group. Sibelius grapples with this tendency in his treatment of the refrain in Opus 12, ultimately rejecting III as a final tonal destination in favor of tonal closure, and creating a tragic resolution rather than the triumphant one suggested by Bergman's treatment of the song.

single approach. At the same time, though, one cannot deny that there is conflict without destroying the drama of the movement. My own performance of the work highlights the striving for tonal escape into the relative major, but acknowledges that respite as temporary and elusive. In every instance, the brightening of tone is dimmed by the return of minor mode, but with that return comes an increase in intensity, and a sense that the drive for tonal escape is not complete.

Consequently, the narrative conflict expressed in this interpretation of the central movement of Sibelius Opus 12 is not between two opposing themes, but internal to the first theme and manifested in the struggle to break out of the tonal lock of the movement's minor key. From a narrative perspective, breaking out of the tonal context and achieving closure in a new, major key may be analogous to a fantastic triumph over the ordered system of nature by the action of some force that supersedes it, suggesting Almén's comic narrative archetype. This is the case in the fortieth rune of *The Kalevala* from which the text is taken.<sup>19</sup> But this does not happen in Opus 12. Instead, the order of nature remains unassailable, and the tonal system of the movement - now much more than just a requirement of the sonata context - remains closed.

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<sup>19</sup> To summarize, the shaman-like figure Wainamoinen speaks the enchantment "Cease, o cataract..." while journeying by boat. Suddenly, the boat is stranded, having struck a monstrous pike. After two unsuccessful attempts by other characters to slay the creature, Wainamoinen finally kills the fish with a magic fire-sword, and creates the first kantele (a Finnish folk harp) from its bones and teeth.

This complicates the interpretation of the contrasting section B, which necessarily represents nature itself, specifically the rapids the narrative protagonist wishes to conquer. It is easy to personify the contrasting theme as an intentionally opposing force, but this is perhaps an overly simplistic view. Nature does not intentionally oppose, it simply is. While man may seek to conquer nature, the reverse is not true, except as a metaphor for the sheer indomitability of the natural world. In this movement, the contrasting theme does not oppose the refrain. It is a representation of the elements of nature against which the refrain struggles, and which the refrain ultimately fails to conquer. The contrast is between human emotion and will, and the cold water of the cataracts.

### **Analysis and Interpretation**

#### First Refrain

The unusual texture of the refrain at the beginning of the movement—offbeat chords without a sustained bassline—leaves the melody strangely unsupported. The addition of the bass in m. 17 eventually prompts a transition to the chorale style of the original song (m. 25), including pedal tones similar to Sibelius's choral writing in "Heitä, koski, kuohuminen," attaining a III:IAC in m. 32 (D flat major, Figure 2.2). The sense of closure at the cadence is amplified by the sustained texture (mm. 25-32) and dominant pedal, yet the decrease in dynamic at the beginning of the phrase (m. 25) suggests restraint.

**Figure 2.2. Sibelius, Sonata, Op. 12, II. Andantino, mm. 31-50.**

31

Bb min: III:IAC iv iv4/2 ii° v I iv

41

Db (III): V7 I IV V7

Db (III): ii

*dim. e rit.*

1

The strength of the cadence is insufficient to establish a new key area, and the next eight-measure phrase returns to the initial key of B flat minor, though without cadential support (Figure 2.2). The final phrase of the theme fails to attain either harmonic resolution or proportional symmetry, instead reaching an impasse between conflicting harmonic and melodic goals. The melody from the previous phrase is harmonized with a dominant prolongation in D flat; however, the anticipated melodic descent toward B flat rejects the implied cadential goal of D flat major, and is itself frustrated by the harmonic context. Instead of resolution, the first statement of the main theme ends in silence.

### First Contrasting Section

The expressive contrast of the presto section in C sharp Phrygian (m. 51) is not one of conflicting impulses, but of implacability unaffected by the emotive context of the refrain. The distant quality of the phrygian mode suggests

something inhuman, incapable of empathy. If the refrain is representative of the Kalavela narrator, this section may be interpreted as the first hint of cold white water. Unlike the harmonically active and tonally-conflicted refrain, the contrasting sections in the movement are almost completely static. In contrast to the warmth and darkness of tone in the refrain, this section may be performed with a cold, clear tone. A color change using the *una corda* pedal may be appropriate, though no such use is indicated and the score and opinions among pianists are divided. As a matter of personal interpretation, the tempo need not be as fast as possible, simply a clear contrast to the *Andantino*, in order to create a sense of cold indifference rather than emotional intensity.<sup>20</sup> The expression in the brief quotation from the refrain (m. 77-78) is consequently much more poignant.

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<sup>20</sup> My tempo is markedly slower than either *Gimse* or *Tawaststjerna*.



Second Refrain

**Figure 2.3. Sibelius, Op. 12, II, mm. 111-119.**

111

Bb min: *con Ped.*

114 III: 5 pedal

117

III:IAC

The second refrain (m. 87) is the dynamic and formal center of the movement, and represents the most powerful manifestation of the tonal conflict between tonic lock and the harmonic drive to the relative major, as well as the most vivid programmatic representation of the conflict in the implied literary narrative. Flowing arpeggiation in the left hand supports the cantabile melodic statement. The figuration is initially reminiscent of the harp of the text, but the use of unstable second inversion triads in the first phrase may also suggest something less benign, and certainly less stable. The first part of the second refrain, from m. 87 to the cadence in relative major in m. 118, is lush and lyrical,

moving smoothly away from tonic harmony toward III. The hold of tonic is weakened by the introduction of the III chord at the beginning of the second eight-measure phrase of the refrain (m. 95), which initiates the drive toward III as a harmonic goal. The third phrase ends with a plagal cadence in III (m. 109), and the fourth phrase ends with a III:IAC (m. 118). The undulating eighth-notes in m. 111 and following represent a semi-independent inner voice (Figure 2.3) not seen in the rest of the movement. This addition to the texture coincides with a dominant pedal in the relative major driving toward the III:IAC in m. 118.

This part of the second refrain, mm. 87-118, may be performed with a lyrical grace, *cantabile e dolce*. The figuration, along with the harmonic transformation, provides momentum through the section. Though there are no Chopinesque multi-measure phrase markings, the long melodic phrases in the right hand should sing out over the figuration. Playing with a smooth legato, then shaping each phrase expressively, should be a priority. The bass line in the left hand should be clearly voiced, and give the sense of a long line uninterrupted by the figuration.

True to the tragic narrative archetype, the temporary attainment of the theme's goal does not signal a true resolution but merely the beginning of its undoing. The attainment of cadential realization in the relative major seems to instigate a change in figuration from chordal arpeggiations to a rumbling figuration made ominous by the low registration (m. 118, Figure 2.3). The

harmonic movement away from III (m. 119), with a change in harmony every two measures, seems to demand a slow buildup of intensity to match the increase in harmonic tension. The tension becomes much more acute in mm. 123-126 where a written crescendo coincides with a  $ii^{o7}-V^{b9}$  progression in the tonic key (Figure 2.4). Intensity increases as  $ii^{o7}$  is prolonged for three measures, delaying the established harmonic rhythm. Playing the downbeat of m. 126 tenuto accentuates the delay. The modulation down a semitone (m. 127, with the pitch A as a common tone) becomes a breakthrough moment, unleashing chaos. The remainder of this refrain is characterized by melodic fragmentation, a continuous growth in dynamic, and lacking a clear harmonic goal. At this moment of greatest intensity and emotive potential, the melody's command, "Cease, O cataract, thy roaring," is in danger of being lost in the fury of the waters. And finally, the melody is subsumed by the rapids, for a while.

Figure 2.4. Sibelius, Op. 12, II, mm. 119-128.

119

120 Bb min: iv

123 iv 4/2 *cresc.*

126 ii°7 (enharmonic) *f*

V *ped.* \* *ped.* \*

A min: 5 pedal

### Second Contrasting Section

The second contrasting section, although still distantly cold, is not quite as sharply inhuman as the first (m. 51). Rather, it seems to reflect some of the pathos of the preceding refrain. The return of section B (m. 141), previously at odds with the chorale melody, occurs this time in the same key signature.

Although the mode is F phrygian, this second statement of the Rapids theme sounds and feels more organic than the first, perhaps because it shares the same pitch set with the refrain and because of the close relationship between the local tonic F and the movement's tonic B flat. In a lower key, the timbre of the theme loses a little of its piercing brilliance, and takes on a measure of the emotional intensity of the refrain which preceded it.

Surprisingly, the quotation of the refrain at the end of this section changes harmonically from F major (m. 167) to F minor (m. 168) (Figure 2.5). Played unconvincingly, it may sound like a mistake, so it must be approached with intentionality. With a slight stress on the downbeat of m. 168 and a diminuendo through the rest of the measure, the change of mode implied by the A flat is quite expressive. In a sense, the change of mode in this quotation reflects the failure in the preceding section to affirm the desired major key that was its harmonic goal.

**Figure 2.5. Sibelius, Op. 12, II, mm. 165-171.**

### Third Refrain (m. 177)

The final refrain (m. 177) attains both tonal closure and completion of a regular phrase structure, rather than breaking down as in previous refrains. In doing so, it provides an ending to the dramatic narrative. The final refrain is colored by reminders of the unattainable harmonic goal of the relative major, but the narrative remains a tragic one and the ultimate resolution of the tonal drama is inescapably in the tonic minor key of the movement. The simple chorale style of the section is extremely emotive, and should be approached with acute sensitivity to the harmony's dramatic role as well as the linear shape of each phrase and of the section as a whole.

Unlike the other refrains, the last one begins with D flat major (III, m. 177). However, given that none of the preceding refrains have secured that harmonic goal, and the lack of cadential support for the arrival at m. 177, there is a strong sense that this harmonic state is transient. This impression is reinforced by the transformation of F from a local tonic to dominant function in mm. 171-176.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, the first phrase of the final refrain (mm. 177-184) ends with tonic minor (Bb). Together with the preceding material (m. 171), this phrase offers the first hint of tonal closure since the chaos which ended the second refrain (m. 119-

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<sup>21</sup> Although there is not a strong sense of cadential function at the beginning of the final refrain (m. 177), one could interpret m. 177 as the resolution of a deceptive cadence.

140). The Bb minor resolution of mm. 183-184 should not be played too strongly, however, since it is only the opening statement of the final refrain.

The second phrase (mm. 185-192), marked by textural expansion and an increase in volume, articulates the drive for the relative major that has been the main source of conflict in the movement. The D flat chord in m. 188 provides impetus for this expansion, along with providing some resistance to the pull of tonic. The phrase ends with VI, strongly suggesting a predominant function in III. The measured increase in harmonic intensity provides opportunity for the performer to be emotive, acknowledging the drive to attain release from tonic minor. The next two phrases (mm. 193-198) build upon this, returning to Bb minor several times but always resisting its pull. The most marked instance of this resistance is in m. 199, when the third phrase ends with a metrically weak arrival of Bb on beat two. This arrival (m. 199) also includes a textural collapse into closed voicing. The texture re-expands in m. 201 after leaving Bb.

The drive toward the III:IAC (m. 208) is treated with an increased intensity, pulling back the tempo slightly to emphasize the last cadential arrival in the relative major. Particular care should be taken in mm. 205-206 to maintain the linear flow of the music despite the thick voicing of the chords. Clarity may be achieved through careful attention to the voice leading, particularly the linear contour of the upper voice. As in the previous refrains, the III:IAC proves to be the high point of the push toward the relative major. Unsupported by expressive

text or dynamics in the score, the cadential arrival is accented only by its placement at the end of a regular thirty-two measure phrase group.

Subsequent events inexorably lead to the undoing of this temporary attainment of III. This process begins in the very next measure (209), with the immediate destabilization of D flat by the bass movement to E flat (4). And the treatment of III as a harmonic goal is completely shattered by the incredible dissonance of a i:HC arrival in m. 215, a sforzando  $V^{b9}$  accented by the robust chord voicing in the left hand. The stark treatment of the following phrase (mm. 217-224), melody in three octaves with only partial chord voicing, seems to be a reaction to the overwhelming force of the i:HC. At the end of this phrase (m. 224) VI again serves as a waypoint between tonic and mediant.

The remainder of the refrain is perhaps most expressive of the loss of III as a harmonic goal. The entrance in m. 225 is tentative, in part because of the piano dynamic and the placement of a rest on beat one. For six measures, D flat is tonicized, then the harmony collapses to Bb minor (m. 231), with an agogic and texturally accented iv chord on beat two of m. 231. The last phrase (m. 233) is made even more expressive by the repetition inherent in the parallel phrase structure (mm. 225-end). The denser voicing of the chords in m. 236 (compared to m. 228) implies a heavier treatment—accented and slightly pulling back in tempo—to emphasize the transience of this last glimpse of III.



The tonal resolution of the movement (mm. 237-end) is perhaps emotionally unsatisfying, given the strong presence of III as a harmonic goal throughout the movement. The indirect harmonic approach to the final tonal goal (bVI, bVII, i, m. 239-240) emphasizes this, as does the expansion of the last phrase from eight measures to thirteen (further extended by a fermata in the last measure). Indeed, without this expansion the movement would lack the even meagre sense of closure provided by the plagal cadence at the end of the movement. As it is, that closure comes after the first arrival of Bb in m. 239, and is only attained through the repetition of the tonic and (major) subdominant chords (mm. 239-end). An emphasis on the chordal third of the subdominant (B natural) brightens the chord somewhat and shines a ray of light on what would otherwise be a dark ending.

### **Conclusion**

The final refrain provides a microcosm of the movement: the temporary attainment of a harmonic goal outside the parameters of the tonal system of the composition carries with it the implication of its fall back into the tonal lock of the movement's tonic minor. The narrative implied by the source material is thus a tragic one, and the interpretation unlocks great emotive potential in the movement. This emotionally-driven narrative, rather than a formal one, provides a transformative, contrasting space between the outer movements. From the

sparkling surface of the first movement, the Andantino draws out the suggestions of emotional depth and explores them through a different kind of narrative. After the catharsis of the final refrain, the return in the third movement to the brightness and activity of the sonata's tonic major key is even more joyful, a realization of the release sought in the second movement.

## **MOVEMENT III: VIVACISSIMO**

### **Introduction**

Upon first listening to the third movement of the Piano Sonata by Sibelius, one may well ask, “What is this?” When listening to a recording, it is easy to be caught up in the rhythmic activity, repetitive melodic patterns, and the constant drone-like effect of long harmonic prolongations over entire thematic modules. But the performer or analyst cannot simply be swept up in the music; he or she must make sense of it.

The compartmentalization of this movement’s content into thematic modules is very straightforward, suggesting a rondo. But the large-scale organization of thematic and harmonic modules within the movement is atypical. Indeed, no single formal model fits the movement in all respects. Simply playing the modules one after the other is insufficient to produce a compelling performance. Tawaststjerna, in the notes from his 1987 recording, draws attention to the theme immediately preceding the coda as a point of interest as much because of its “triumphant return” as for the inherent “song-like quality.” This suggests an organizational logic to the work that enhances the impact of its most salient features. In this problematic case, a study of the movement’s formal

logic provides crucial information for the performer in determining its center (or centers) of gravity, which may be used to create a compelling interpretation.

The third movement of the Sonata Opus 12 defies categorization within a traditional model, yet interacts with the model of sonata form presented in Hepokoski and Darcy (see Table 3.1). Most significantly, the placement of thematic modules within the overall narrative of the movement, together with crucial harmonic events, implies an organizational scheme consisting of two large-scale rotations that is functionally similar to sonata form. In order to address the sonata-like rotational organization of the movement, terms associated with the type three sonata are used in the analysis of the third movement. Although deformations from sonata form are extensive enough to raise serious doubts about the identity of this movement, Sonata Theory is dialogic rather than conformational in function and purpose (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 614). In this case, a dialogue is extremely useful.

**Table 3.1. Form Diagram of Sibelius, Opus 12, III.**

Section	Exposition									
Measure	1	21	29	37	53	61	77	81	89	
Content	A	A		B		A		C		
Marker	P	TR							EEC, Closing	
Key	F	A	A minor	C			Bb			
Key as RN	I	III	iii	V		IV				
Harmony	tonic	tonic	dominant	tonic	tonic	dominant	IV:IAC			modulating

Section	Development		
Measure	97	101	121
Content	(C continues)	B	
Marker	Link		RT
Key		G# [Ab] min	F
Key as RN		#ii [biii]	I
Harmony	modulating	dominant	bVI, I, IV I:PC

Section	Recapitulation									
Measure	129	149	158	162	170	185-204	205-224	225-228	229-249	
Content	A	A				C				
Marker	P	TR		RT		ESC, Closing	Coda			
Key	F									
Key as RN	I					I:IAC	V	iv		I:PC
Harmony	I	III	IV7	V7	I:IAC	V	iv			I:PC

### A Reverse-Sonata

In the analysis of the third movement, the recapitulation (mm. 129-204) establishes the thematic and harmonic relationships that place the movement in dialogue with sonata form. Thematic presentation in the recapitulation is succinct:

the brief retransition (m. 166-184) following P(A)-TR(A') consists entirely of continuation of thematic material. Harmonic progression is equally direct. After TR(A') moves to the mediant chord as in the exposition (m. 158), it continues immediately to IV<sup>7</sup> (m. 162) and then to a dominant prolongation (m. 170). The dominant prolongation continues, increasing in intensity, until the simultaneous arrival of C and I:IAC ESC (m. 185). The tight-knit organization of the recapitulation affirms the functional relationship between P(A) and C.<sup>22</sup>

The exposition is defined largely retroactively in light of the functional relationship of P(A) and C within a larger thematic rotation, as seen in the recapitulation. This relationship is far less clear in the rondo-like exposition, as will be discussed in a later section. This is completely opposite of the normative procedure in a sonata, in which “the exposition’s *rhetorical* task...is to provide a referential arrangement or layout of specialized themes and textures against which the events of the two subsequent spaces—development and recapitulation—are to be measured and understood” (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 16). It is crucial, then, that the performer understand the thematic relationships presented in the recapitulation, and interpret the exposition in a way that highlights those relationships, providing coherence for the entire movement.

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<sup>22</sup> Caplin does not explicitly define his usage of Schoenberg’s term “*fest*, tight-knit” or its opposite “loose” (*locker*) to describe formal organization; however, both terms are associated with a number of compositional processes (2009, 37). His characterization of features indicating tonal stability, motivic uniformity, and regular metric structure as “tight-knit” provides some sense of its meaning (Caplin 2009, 38).

## Deformations from Sonata Identity

In this movement the number and extent of deformations from normative processes in sonata form is perhaps sufficient to prevent its recognition as a sonata upon first listening. They raise significant questions about the movement's identity, and a dialogue with sonata form requires that these objections be addressed. However, the goal in the application of a sonata model is not to force conformity but to identify the functional elements that make the movement work like a sonata, and to make use of those elements in creating coherence in interpretation.

It is perhaps in part because of its decidedly odd tonal and thematic organization that Tawaststjerna labels the movement as a rondo (1987). The additional thematic modules in the exposition obscure normal correspondence with the recapitulation to a large extent, instead suggesting a looser thematic structure.<sup>23</sup> Certainly its stylistic characteristics suggest a resemblance to rondo form, specifically the modular presentation of themes, juxtaposition of tonal areas, and regular rhythmic and metric structure. However, this does not necessarily disqualify the movement as a sonata.<sup>24</sup> Precedent exists for the

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<sup>23</sup> The insertion of a few measures—as in the first movement of Opus 12 (see Tables 1.2 and 1.3)—is not enough to alter any perceived associations, but two entire thematic modules is another matter.

<sup>24</sup> “On rare occasions, a composer might even explicitly designate an individual piece or movement as a ‘rondo’—apparently quite a free term at that time—that is in fact, from today’s perspective, an unequivocal sonata form” (Hepokoski and Darcy 2009, 399). Hepokoski and

transition from a rondo exposition into development and recapitulation procedures from sonata form, as well as the omission of a refrain immediately before the coda (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 416, 417).<sup>25</sup> More importantly, even the addition of two thematic modules to the exposition does not completely disallow correspondence within a large-scale rotational structure.

The unusual key structure represents a substantial deformation from sonata form, and instead suggests a more loosely-organized tonal plan (see Table 3.1). One of the additional expositional modules, the A section in C major (m. 61) is especially problematic, largely due to the fact that it is in the dominant key. Its placement at the beginning of the movement seems to suggest a rondo-like organization of thematic material with A as the refrain. It is not normative, however, for a rondo refrain to appear in a non-tonic key as is the case here (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 388n).<sup>26</sup> However, it may play a role in emphasizing the relationship between the primary theme (m. 1) and the upcoming closing theme (m. 81). This hints at the structural importance of the latter, as well as the much stronger association between these two themes in the recapitulation.

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Darcy refer explicitly to Mozart's Rondo in D, K. 485 (type three) and the type two finale of *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*, K. 525 (399).

<sup>25</sup> As examples of rondos that behave like a type three sonata after the exposition, Hepokoski and Darcy cite the finales of three string quartets by Haydn: op. 74 no. 2, and op. 76 nos. 2 and 5 (2006, 416).

<sup>26</sup> Hepokoski and Darcy cite Beethoven's occasional placement of a "wrong-key" refrain near the coda of a rondo, and C.P.E. Bach's unusual usage of partial statements of refrain material in some of his works (2006, 388n, 403). In the latter case, they assert that "while refrain-material does appear in several different keys, it is anything but clear that all of the nontonic, often incomplete soundings are 'refrains' in any appropriately structural sense."



The weakness of the proposed EEC (m. 81) is problematic as well. The subdominant is not a strong choice for the key of the EEC, and the cadence in IV is particularly weak after a modulation away from the dominant key.<sup>27</sup> By Hepokoski and Darcy's definition, an imperfect authentic cadence is not sufficient to establish expositional closure (2006, 120).<sup>28</sup> The "main point" of the EEC, however, is "to cadence decisively in the second key, thus setting up and forecasting the parallel point of essential structural closure (ESC) in the recapitulation (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 124). If the sense of correspondence with the recapitulatory cadence is sufficient to establish a relationship between the two, an argument may be made for IV:IAC EEC (m. 81) as the most satisfactory authentic cadence in the exposition. A much stronger case can be made for I:IAC ESC (m. 185), as it is preceded by a retransition (m. 162) and

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<sup>27</sup> The subdominant is not included in Hepokoski and Darcy's discussion of normal tonal choices for a secondary key area in the exposition (2006, 120). However, a similar tonal layout, with a normative second key area and diatonically related non-normative third key area, is found in the finales of Schubert's Violin Sonatas D. 385 and 408 (i-III-VI) (Hunt 2009, 90n52). In minor-mode works, the mediant is a first-level default choice for the secondary key area (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 119).

One significant difference between the third movement of the Sonata Opus 12 and three-key expositions in the works of Schubert and Brahms as discussed by Hunt is the lack of strong cadential articulation for either key area (see Table 3.1). The EEC which articulates the third key (m. 81) is weak, and there is no cadence at all to mark the second key (m. 53). This is quite different from Schubert's usual practice of strongly accentuating both the second and third key areas (Hunt, 2009, 81 and 101). Instead, it resonates more with Hunt's description of Brahms's mild treatment of secondary key areas in his three-key expositions (Hunt, 2009, table 103, 104). Indeed, the lack of even one medial caesura in the third movement of Opus 12 indicates that this is not actually a trimodular block at all (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 170-171).

<sup>28</sup> "One central feature of Sonata Theory is its emphasis, after the onset of the secondary theme, on the attainment of the first satisfactory perfect authentic cadence that proceeds onward to differing material. This is the moment that we term *essential expositional closure* ("the EEC"). It is toward the accomplishing of this PAC, marking the end of S-space, that we understand all of the preceding music to have been aiming" (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 120).

several measures of dominant lock (m. 170). Although the two cadences are approached differently, their placement at the beginning of the expositional and recapitulatory closing themes strengthens their correspondence. The lack of a medial caesura is not inherently a barrier to sonata identity, but instead indicates a continuous exposition. In this type of exposition, there is no S; instead, TR continues all the way to the EEC. This interpretation works in the recapitulation of this movement, as TR (m. 149) spins out seamlessly into RT (m. 162) followed by dominant lock (m. 170) and I:IAC ESC (m. 185). But it is problematic, perhaps impossible, to argue for a continuous exposition because of the additional modules. In fact, the strong sense of thematic identity in section B (m. 37), along with the lack of a medial caesura to indicate S-space, suggests a rondo with B (m. 37) as the first contrasting section after a double refrain.

These deformations from sonata form may be extensive enough to prevent the movement from being recognized as a sonata, particularly to a listener unfamiliar with the work, and there is no benefit in forcing the movement to fit the model purely for the sake of conformity. However, this is no barrier to engaging in a productive dialogue with sonata form in order to discern the foundational principles of the form within the movement's structure.

#### Thematic Centers of Gravity: Engaging with the Sonata Model

A sonata model is useful in studying this movement for one crucial reason: it provides a means of accessing underlying principles from Sonata Theory as

they apply to the unique composition of this movement. Structurally, this movement works on many of the same principles as a sonata. This assertion is based upon the presence of a strong primary theme and transition complex (mm. 1-36, 129-184) and the closing module approached by an authentic cadence (mm. 81-96, 185-204). These elements function as structural centers of gravity around which two rotational structures are built, corresponding to the exposition and recapitulation of a sonata. This is the underlying principle on which normative sonata movements are constructed (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 611). The opening section A (m. 1) corresponds functionally to the primary theme in a sonata, in that it initiates a rotational cycle of thematic presentation and establishes the tonic key of the movement. Section C (mm. 81) is the closing module of that cycle, presented in a secondary key. Corresponding passages later in the movement (P(A), m. 129, and C, m. 185) define a second, concluding rotation in the tonic key. Hepokoski and Darcy describe the underlying concept in

*Elements:*

Although they differ in their degrees of subtlety and strictness, sonata movements are engaged in a dialogue with a more basic architectural principle of large-scale recurrence that we call *rotation*. Rotational structures are those that extend through musical space by recycling one or more times—with appropriate alterations and adjustments—a referential thematic pattern established as an ordered succession at the piece's outset," (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 611).

This movement engages with this concept perhaps to a lesser extent than a sonata precisely because the referential relationship between exposition and

recapitulation is attenuated by the insertion of additional expositional modules. Instead of uninterrupted correspondence, the links between exposition and recapitulation are established by four thematic centers of gravity punctuated by structural harmonic events. These events suggest a large two-part rotational structure with a brief developmental area between them. The first rotation is expositional: it introduces the themes, establishes the tonic key, and initiates tonal transformation. The second, immediately preceded by a retransition, is recapitulatory, restating the main themes in the tonic key and ushering in the coda, providing tonal and thematic closure to the movement and the work. Of equal importance, the succinctness of the recapitulation (m. 129-204) closes the over-large gap in the exposition between P(A) and C. In the recapitulation the intervening modules between P(A) and C are distilled to a retransition composed of melodic “spinning-out” from TR(A’) and consisting almost entirely of dominant prolongation (m. 166). In shortening the gap between P(A) and C, the association between these two most structurally important modules becomes apparent, which suggests a retroactive association of the corresponding expositional modules.

#### Performance Application

The preceding discussion may seem academic, particularly when dealing with performance. However, the application of the sonata model illuminates not only form but function. The sprawling structure of the movement hangs upon the

two crucial themes (P(A) and C, see Table 3.1). Without this awareness, a performance of this movement can appear to wander without a clear goal in sight, seeming to be nothing more than a disordered succession of themes, until the final closing theme (C, m. 185) arrives seemingly out of nowhere. Fixing upon those structural moments and their relationship to each other, and interpreting the material in between to lead from one structural point to the next, transforms the performance from a rambling series into a coherent narrative.

For this movement to work in performance, the listener should gravitate to certain structurally significant events, which lead the listener through the experience of hearing the movement. In formally conventional works where the organizational logic is apparent on the surface, this is a relatively straightforward process. However, in idiosyncratic movements such as the third movement, it is not reasonable to expect an unfamiliar listener to be able to define the movement's form. But it is possible for the performer to highlight the thematic arrivals of P(A) and C as the most structurally important moments in the work, associated by their respective functions as the beginning and end of each thematic rotation. Intervening material can then be placed in context between these two themes. These moments provide a sense of progression and direction for the listener in navigating through the connective tissue that links these moments together in musical time.

## Exposition

### Rotational Function and the Exposition

As previously mentioned, the identity of the exposition is defined largely retroactively, based on the close relationship of P(A) and C as demonstrated in the recapitulation (mm. 129-204). The association is far from obvious in the exposition: the interpolation of two additional thematic modules (B, m. 37, and a dominant-key A, m. 61) between P(A) and C causes the relationship between the two themes to attenuate in several distinct ways, to the extent that a direct relationship between P(A) and C is not as apparent in the exposition as it is in the recapitulation.

For the rotational structure to be used effectively to create a coherent performance, the relationship between the two themes must be discernible in the exposition as well as the recapitulation. In a sonata movement, the primary theme (A) initiates a cycle of harmonic progression culminating in cadential closure (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 65), which in this movement coincides with the closing theme. The performer's interpretation, then, should lead the listener from the opening function of P(A) through the contrasting section B (m. 37) through the dominant-key restatement of A (m. 61) to the arrival of the EEC and closing theme (m. 81).

## Primary Theme and Transition

**Figure 3.1. Sibelius, Op. 12, III, mm. 1-4.**

The musical score shows the first four measures of the primary theme. The right hand (treble clef) plays a melody of eighth notes, starting on F4 and moving up stepwise. The left hand (bass clef) plays a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes, starting on F3 and moving up stepwise. The dynamic is marked 'pp' (pianissimo). The tempo is 'Vivacissimo'. The score is labeled 'F: I' below the first measure.

The primary theme (m. 1) is lively and energetic, establishing the tonic key of the movement and of the overall sonata cycle (F major) with an active texture and folk-like melodic idea, distinctive because of the soft dynamic and low tessitura. (Figure 3.3). The last quality is partly due to the narrow ambitus of the melody and the dronal harmonic language.<sup>29</sup> Performances by Tawaststjerna (1987) and Gimse (1999) present this theme energetically and with an emphasis on melodic clarity, a concept supported by the lack of pedal markings (particularly compared with the liberal use of the pedal indicated in other sections, e.g. mm. 37 and 81). The importance of the tonic pedal tone may be emphasized by bringing out the first note in the first measure with the left hand (tenuto with a slight accent) then adjusting the balance to favor the melody. Finger-pedaling and judicious use of the damper pedal may be used to create the

<sup>29</sup> See Harrison (2016, 18-20).

impression of a sustained sound in the left hand, over which the melody can still be projected clearly.

The transition (m. 21) is entirely based on the primary theme, differing only in that it modulates to A (III) in its ninth measure (m. 29). The modulation is only minimally prepared. Combined with the change of dynamic (*sforzando* in m. 26, *mezzo-forte* in m. 27), the suddenness of the change after the stability of the preceding material is unsettling. This provides harmonic context for section B (m. 37) as an unstable and harmonically intense dominant prolongation in the mediant key, albeit with a change of mode to minor.

#### Non-Corresponding Modules: Section B

The first module following TR is a contrasting section (B) consisting of a dominant pedal in the mediant key, A minor (m. 37). Without a medial caesura or cadence at the end of TR, characterization of this section as a secondary theme is not plausible: “if there is no MC, there is no S” (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 117).<sup>30</sup> In fact, it is more like a contrasting theme in rondo form. This interpretation seems to be confirmed when the primary theme material (A) returns in the dominant key (m. 61). Reading the movement as a quasi-sonata

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<sup>30</sup> The absence of correspondence or referential material in the recapitulation is of almost equal importance. Although the reordering or reworking of modules is not unheard of (see Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 233-4), the suppression of S-C and consequently the ESC is an “extreme deformation, registering some catastrophe or act of violence that has befallen the structure as a whole” (ibid, 247 ff.). In the Sonata Opus 12, however, the omission of the B module (and the dominant-key P material) does not prevent the attainment of tonal closure at all. Instead, the alteration of the recapitulation strengthens the ESC substantially.



rotational form requires that both sections be treated not as thematic statements but as connective tissue between thematic events within the exposition, an extension of TR into additional melodic and tonal phases. This is reinforced by the gestural similarity of section B to the primary theme, specifically the narrow melodic ambitus and the tremolo figure. The intensity of section B (m. 37), enhanced by the forte dynamic and the tension of the dominant prolongation (in iii) and minor melodic inflection, contributes to the sense of instability, and of a place between stable structural elements.

Non-Corresponding Modules: Dominant-Key P Restatement

Figure 3.2. Sibelius, Op. 12, III, mm. 53-84.

53

*fz* *dim.*

C: Restatement of P material

60 *pp* *con Ped.*

67 *fz* *ppp*

74 Transition

Closing Theme

81 **L'istesso tempo** Commo chord mod C: IV7 Bb: V7

*mf* *con Ped.*

Bb: I

One of the most surprising events in the movement is a dominant-key (C major) statement of the primary theme material just before the expositional

closing theme (m. 61, Figure 3.2). The key would be a significant, though not unprecedented, deformation in rondo form (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 388n).<sup>31</sup> Its location in the interior of a non-P module is not unprecedented, although a complete restatement is unusual.<sup>32</sup> The diminuendo (m. 59) and pianissimo dynamic (m. 61) de-emphasize the entrance of this material. The establishment of C major as a local tonic in m. 53, eight measures prior to the thematic quotation, weakens the thematic arrival by placing it after the attainment of the key area rather than allowing the two events to coincide. Textural reduction and restriction of range further reduce the impact of this material. The hands move closer together, narrowing the range by an octave and moving the melody down a perfect fourth from its original tessitura (m. 1). The melody is further obscured by its treatment as an inner voice. The subtle approach (m. 59, Figure 3.2) leading to the restatement obscures the arrival of the theme itself: the scalar descent and initiation of the tremolo in the left hand moves seamlessly into the theme itself. This treatment, along with the restrained texture and dynamic, suggests that the thematic statement at m. 61 is a clever flashback to the primary theme rather than a structurally significant moment in itself, particularly in light of the dramatic arrival of P in the recapitulation (m. 129).

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<sup>31</sup> A case study of non-tonic refrain material in the rondos of C.P.E. Bach may be found in Hepokoski and Darcy (2006, 406). Non-tonic exploration of primary theme material frequently occurs in the development of a type three sonata (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 196, 205).

<sup>32</sup> As an example, Hepokoski and Darcy note the common bass motif in P and S (m. 65) of the first movement of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony (2006, 140).

Considered as a flashback to the primary theme, rather than the primary theme itself, the restatement of the same material can be useful to the performer in reinforcing the relationship between P and C. To ensure that the listener does not get the impression that m. 61 is a structural return of the primary theme, merely a restatement of the same material, the performer must be very careful to observe the pianissimo dynamic (m. 61) and particularly the whisper of a pianississimo in m. 73. Interestingly, Gimse in this recording treats this section in a more sustained manner than the structural primary themes (mm. 1 and 129), which are somewhat dry (1999). This seems to foreshadow the lyrical closing theme. While I do not follow this approach, I do allow the drone in the upper voice to ring out over the melody, which accomplishes the same purpose by different means. The transition at the end of this section (mm. 77-80) may be approached by a slight crescendo and a warming of the sound to usher in the closing theme, aided by the suspension (B natural to C) in the upper voice.

#### Closing Theme and Essential Expositional Closure (m. 81)

The essential expositional closure, despite its crucial harmonic function, seems almost circumstantial to the thematic arrival of the closing, a product of the use of  $F^7$  (mm. 77-80) as a pivot chord to modulate around the circle of fifths from C major to Bb major. This is due in part to the expressive treatment of the material preceding the cadence, but the harmonic context itself also plays a role. As discussed previously, the subdominant is itself an unusual choice for a

secondary key area in a sonata, let alone a third expositional key area.

Approaching it by modulating from the dominant, a rhetorically stronger key and the default choice for the secondary key area in a major-mode work, dramatically weakens the impact of the cadential arrival.<sup>33</sup> Combined with the use of an imperfect authentic cadence rather than the default PAC, the treatment of this crucial structural point is surprisingly gentle.<sup>34</sup>

The closing theme itself is the most lyrical and richly harmonized part of the movement. The melody, supported by lush chords in the right hand, is in a higher register than any previous section in the exposition, and the wide interval between melody and bass is filled by the left hand (triads and seventh chords in inner voice in the exposition, a sweeping figuration in the recapitulation).

Because of the augmentation of melodic pace, subdivision and harmonic rhythm in the closing theme, it is appropriate to broaden the tempo somewhat in spite of the explicit instruction *L'istesso tempo*.<sup>35</sup> The opposite tendency to rush is certainly counterproductive from a technical perspective, and it spoils the effect of the expansive texture. This approach can provide a little temporal space to

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<sup>33</sup> For a discussion of secondary key areas in the exposition in the context of S and EEC, see Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 119-20.

<sup>34</sup> The weakness of the IAC (m. 81) is mitigated somewhat by the strong bass motion—particularly as part of a circle-of-fifths progression—and by the inclusion of the chordal root Bb as a chord tone in the right hand (although not the uppermost voice).

<sup>35</sup> In his recording, Gimse ritards slightly into the closing theme each time it occurs (1999). There is not a large difference in speed, but this theme seems relaxed and expansive compared to the preceding material. Tawaststjerna's approach is more dramatic, with a pronounced slowing one or two measures before the thematic arrival (1987).

project the closing theme's expansive character in performance, highlighting the theme within the larger context of the work.

### Thematic Function and Interpretation

Interpreting the final closing theme (m. 185) as a center of gravity implies that the expositional closing theme (m. 85) has a similar role in the listener's experience of the movement, particularly as closure to the exposition. Non-corresponding elements lessen this similarity, particularly with regard to the indirect way in which the closing theme is approached harmonically.

Nevertheless, compartmentalizing the tension of section B (m. 37) with quietly energetic P and P-based modules can help tie the primary theme more directly to the closing theme. This brings out the structural, functional, and surface contrasts between P and C more vividly, highlighting these two thematic modules within the exposition and tying them to the corresponding material of the recapitulation.

## **Development, Recapitulation, and Coda**

### Development

The brief development (mm. 97-128) consists entirely of a short link (m. 97, a continuation of the closing theme) a restatement of section B (m. 101) in G# minor (enharmonic biii, with a dominant prolongation throughout), and a short retransition (m. 121) ending with a plagal cadence in F major (iv - I, m. 127). The construction around a single module with only brief transitions suggests a rondo

episode, as does the presence of the same material in the exposition (m. 37).

The steady increase in intensity of section B, a product of texture, gradual changes in dynamic, minor mode melodic inflection, and dominant prolongation, should be carefully managed in performance, reserving the most dramatic buildup for the retransition.

The retransition (m. 121, Figure 3.3) is a powerful moment, breaking the dominant-lock in G# minor (beginning in m. 101), and propelling the music through a combination of gestural repetition and downward motion in the bass toward a powerful fortississimo plagal cadence in the tonic key (m. 127) announcing the imminent return of P and the beginning of the recapitulation (m. 129).

### Recapitulation

The recapitulation is much more interpretively straightforward than the exposition. As stated previously, the mere proximity of the primary and closing themes, and the harmonic directness of the retransition approaching the ESC (m. 185), creates the potential for the functional roles of P and C within the thematic rotation to be expressed clearly. In the exposition, the interpolation of additional material makes it difficult to discern an underlying formal scheme connecting individual thematic modules. In the recapitulation, however, the primary theme is strongly marked by a dramatic cadential arrival (m. 127), which strongly suggests a re-beginning of some rotational process. The placement of C shortly after the

end of TR, omitting nearly all of the intervening material of the exposition, brings P-TR and C into close proximity in musical time allowing for the perception of a direct causal relationship between the two: P begins a thematic rotation, which ends with C. The recapitulation is consequently the fulfillment of a rotational potential that was obscured in the exposition. Because of the organizational clarity of the recapitulation, the performer can enjoy the transparent realization of potentials that were previously hidden.

**Figure 3.3. Sibelius, Op. 12, III, mm. 115-132.**

115

RT

*crescendo poco a*

122 G# min: V [F: V/bIII bIII6/4] F: bVI

*poco*

127 Plagal Cadence i P iv

*fff* *pp subito*

The beginning of the recapitulation (m. 129, Figure 3.3) is a technically challenging moment for the pianist: repeated tonic chords, fortississimo, are



followed immediately by the entrance of the primary theme subito pianissimo. As a practical consideration, the downbeat of the theme cannot be lost in the wash of sound. A clean release of the damper pedal between mm. 128 and 129 is required, and clean release and articulation with the fingers. The pianist also must judge the timing of the decay of the fortississimo chords in the performance space; a slight pause is required in order to allow any reverberation to decay a little before the entrance. The entrance itself must be quiet enough to make a sharp contrast, while still projecting clearly. Firm control over the tempo is an absolute requirement, otherwise there will not be adequate time to make the contrast required in the score.

The recapitulatory primary theme itself is texturally interesting because of the bell-like octave Cs in the right hand, with the melody in the middle voice of the right hand. Although the placement of the melody in an inner voice is similar to the internal dominant-key section A of the exposition (m. 61), at m. 129 the high register mitigates some of the issues regarding melodic projection and textural clarity that occur in the lower range of the piano. Instead, the pianist must control the ringing of the octave Cs in favor of a warm, full tone in the melodic voice.

The transition (m. 149), in the same low register as the exposition, is also marked by bell-like tones in an upper voice performed by crossing the left hand over the right. Use of the damper pedal is indicated in the score, presumably to



162) then a dominant harmonic prolongation (m. 170). This direct approach to harmonic progression creates a much stronger push toward the ESC and closing theme (m. 185) than in the exposition (Figure 3.4). The cycling of F#, G, and Bb in the middle and upper voices over the dominant pedal (mm. 173-187) amplifies the tension. As at the beginning of the recapitulation, care should be taken to keep the tempo under control so the entrance of the closing theme (m. 185) is not rushed, particularly in mm. 181-184 when the alternation of left and right hand tends to speed up. In fact, broadening the tempo slightly is one interpretive possibility. The rapid increase in dynamic (m. 180-184) should also be measured in order to allow space for the closing theme to emerge from the wash of sound.

The closing theme itself (m. 185) is epic, including sweeping arpeggiations in the left hand and thickly voiced chords in the right. Approached by a dominant prolongation (m. 170), the thematic arrival in the movement's tonic key (F major) coincides with a much-anticipated I:IAC ESC. Movement to the minor subdominant chord late in the theme (m. 198), however, destabilizes the theme harmonically and invites an affirmation of tonal closure in the coda. The bass resolution to F (beat 1 of m. 204) may be allowed to ring a little, slightly elongated despite the tremolo, before moving through the rest of the measure into the Coda (m. 205).

## Coda

The coda (m. 205), beginning on the dominant chord, is a microcosm of the movement's overall tonal plan. The unusual compositional choice to follow a dominant-key thematic statement with an essential expositional closure in the subdominant key (B flat major) is echoed in the use of a plagal cadence in F major (m. 229) to provide final affirmation of the key tonic key. The coda incorporates tremolando pedal tones characteristic of P, as well as melodic references to both P (mm. 213-216) and the scalar retransition from the first movement (compare III. mm. 225-228 and I. m. 196-203). The plagal cadence (m. 229) precipitates a growing cascade of tonic arpeggios with an added sixth over a tremolo in the left hand, culminating in a roar of sound at m. 237. The damper pedal can be used to great effect in this passage, creating an increasingly sustained texture during the crescendo, and held wide open from m. 237 to the downbeat of m. 241.

## **Conclusion**

The unusual structure of the third movement of the Sonata Opus 12 presents a unique interpretive challenge. Instead of fulfilling all of the expectations inherent in sonata form, the movement uses the more foundational principle of thematic rotation and return to bridge a large musical space with an expansive and complex structure (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 15). In this

movement, consideration from both analysis and performance perspectives is essential to the development of an interpretive concept. Performance study was essential to my understanding of the flow of the piece, particularly since the movement does not follow an established model. In playing and listening to the movement, I gravitated toward the return of the primary and closing themes in the recapitulation (as they are now labelled), which led me to consider their structural significance. Analysis provided a language for describing the experience as well as a theoretical rationale. This was liberating in performance, as it provided a framework for musical expression.

## **CONCLUSION**

### **The Sonata Opus 12**

Having spent most of the preceding pages working through individual movements of the Piano Sonata by Sibelius, it is perhaps appropriate to briefly discuss the relationship of the individual movements to one another and to the whole. Certainly this is something that the pianist should consider in performing the complete work.

The first movement of Opus 12, in sonata form, establishes the work's identity as a sonata cycle, immediately suggesting a set of generic potentials not only for the movement but for subsequent movements as well (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 14-15). After establishing the formal, tonal, and stylistic context for the work, the first movement ends with a cadence and a pause that opens up the musical space for something new and different.

The second movement, which I begin with an accented tenuto F (the dominant of the movement), functions as a transformational space between the sparkling formality of the first movement and the unbridled energy of the third (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 336). Simply constructed in terms of form, this movement is driven by narrative and compositional processes not of resolution

but conflict, which prevent the satisfactory attainment of harmonic goals. In the central refrain this manifests with incredible violence, calmed by the chill of the contrasting theme. While the final refrain attains closure in terms of harmony and phrase structure, the narrative is one of catharsis instead of triumph.

After the intensely emotional second movement, the final movement ushers in an “increased exhilaration” (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 336). Because of the unusual harmonic plan including a subdominant key EEC, the return to the tonic key of the work (F major) is only a promissory note with regard to tonal closure. And because of the length of the multimodular exposition, the delay of closure is long enough to be discomforting. The plagal cadence preceding the recapitulation (m. 127), dramatic in itself, is even more powerful in the context of the complete Sonata. This is even more true of the arrival of the “triumphant” closing theme and the final I:IAC ESC (Tawaststjerna 1987; Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 337).

Hepokoski and Darcy describe the composition of a sonata as “a feat of engineering, like the construction of a bridge ‘thrown out’ into space,” “permitting the spanning of ever larger expanses of time” (2006, 15). For the pianist, the task of performing a complete sonata is a comparable feat not only in terms of technical ability but cognition. This requires the formation of a multi-layered concept of the work both as a whole and in acute detail. In this endeavor, the process of analysis, along with the requisite verbal expression of aural, kinetic,

and notational concepts, can be useful in unifying an accretion of detailed observations into a larger conceptual structure, providing a framework for developing an interpretation. For this reason my analytical interpretation of the piece has played a large part in the shaping of my performance concept.

In addition to these demands, Sonata is unique in many of its compositional features. To one interested in the architecture of musical works, these unusual elements invite questions about how the parts function together to bridge the expanse of musical time in a coherent and structurally sound way. Engaging with these questions inevitably impacted the interpretation of the work, which influenced subsequent performances. The final performance product would be very different without these insights.

### **Reflection on Analysis and Performance**

As I approached the Piano Sonata by Sibelius simultaneously through performance and analysis over the course of the project, the envisioned performance product and the analytical product increasingly became manifestations of the same interpretation. This interpretation was conceptualized as a performance visualization overlaid with a formal plan or structural framework expressed in analytical terms. Both developed simultaneously, sometimes changing significantly as the result of a single realization, idea, or decision. These insights came through both studying the work analytically and engaging



with the work performatively. These two means of conceptualizing a single interpretation became very strongly interconnected over the course of the project. To alter the analysis was to reshape or reconceptualize the performance or vice versa, with far-reaching implications.<sup>36</sup> This in my view is the strongest possible representation of the close relationship between analysis and performance as processes of musical interpretation.

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<sup>36</sup> One of the last significant analytical revisions was the decision in the third movement to reconsider the underlying rotational principle as being in dialogue with sonata form rather than rondo. The perception of conflicting tonal goals in the second movement—which, incidentally, occurred during a performance—was a much earlier realization.

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## VITA

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