

MTO 13.4 Examples: Ng, Review of Peter Smith

(Note: audio, video, and other interactive examples are only available online)

<http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.07.13.4/mto.07.13.4.ng.php>

Example 1. Recapitulation of the main theme in op. 60/i

(Smith's Example 3.6, showing motive X bridging between retransition and recapitulation)

Example 2. Op. 60/iii, recapitulation of the main theme in m. 78

Example 3. Smith's summary of the expressive trajectory of op. 60/i

Example 6.9. Summary of Expressive Trajectory

Exposition		Development					Recapitulation			Coda
Primary Material	Transition	Secondary Material	Pre-core: Primary Material	Core: Primary Material		Retransition: Secondary Material	Primary Material	Transition	Secondary Material	Primary Material
Part 1	Part 2	Variations and codetta		Part 1	Part 2		Part 1 only		Theme and new variations	
C minor	To E♭ major	E♭ major (with hints of minor)	E♭ minor	B major	G major	C minor but on G	C minor but on G	To G major via E♭	G major as tonic, then as dominant	C minor
Foreboding and anxiety (Part 1) lead to angry outburst (Part 2).	Long and gradual recovery of emotional control prepares	reprieve from suffering although solace is colored by underlying hints of anxiety.	Return to minor completes framing of E♭ solace by overwhelming despair.	Fantasy of triumphal escape from despair.		Rude awakening from fantasy to the reality of unbearable emotional agony that builds to	scream of anguish and catastrophic emotional collapse.	Process of apparent recovery of composure allows for	hopelessly unsustainable memory of earlier time of solace.	Reverie of past solace awakens to grim reality, followed by ever more desperate attempts to avoid a fate that proves inescapable.

Example 4.

Normal unit	Expressive state	Musical Elements	
		Surface elements (including intervals, motives, rhythm, local harmonies, keys, etc.)	Structural elements (any characteristic revealed by structural analysis)
Primary material (Part 1)	Foreboding and anxiety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descending tetrachord from C to G (topical sign for death or lamentation) • Prevalence of falling half-step motion (sigh motive) • Piano octaves, the rhythmic stops and starts, the arrival on the empty dominants, and slower surface rhythms • The <i>unheimlich pizzicato</i> E[♯]s 	
Primary material (Part 2)	Angry outburst	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tonic pedal of incessant eighth-note repetition • Strong-strong metric reinterpretation of the sigh motive as hammer blows • Climactic arrival on C-minor tonic triad 	
Transition	Long and gradual recovery of emotional control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lengthy, de-energizing 	
Secondary material (including secondary theme and closing zones)	Reprieve from suffering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-flat major promotes stability, affirmation, and its conformity with convention represents positive emotions • Theme and variations form of secondary material ensures that the local E^b tonic will be articulated every eight or nine measures • Straightforward tonal continuity underlines extended sense of arrival 	
	although solace is colored by	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variation form also leads to excessive tonal stability as 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Developing variation of the sigh motive and

	underlying hints of anxiety	<p>well as fixation on a single thematic unit, which can be seen as symptoms of overeagerness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ominous resonances of the main theme's sigh motive interact with modal mixture in secondary material to reinvigorate C-minor angst • Third variation: outright shift to E-flat minor; a restless undercurrent of tense sixteenth-note motion heightens the change in character 	<p>descending line in m. 21 as origin of head motive of second theme (discussed in Chapter 5))</p>
Development (Pre-core: primary materials)	Return to minor completes framing of E-flat solace by overwhelming despair		
Development (Core: Primary material)	Fantasy of triumphal escape from despair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grandiose transformation of the foreboding main theme suggests victory over despair. Yet transformed theme arrives in the remote key of B major and then in G major; that neither local tonic enters via its dominant undermines the putative victory, projecting instead a fantasized triumph that is nevertheless overcome by inescapable anguish. • Rhythmic ambiguity of the main theme's head motive undermines the vision of victory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large-scale tonal structure of the development articulates a version of the quartet's augmented-triad motive. Augmented triads often function as symbols of emotional anguish in Brahms
Development (Retransition: secondary material)	Rude awakening from fantasy to the reality of unbearable emotional agony	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enormous tension through three sets of imitative entrances; successively shorter phrases and increasingly tighter stretto • Pulsing triplets and rising chromatic bass in the piano; angry <i>marcato pizzicato</i> 	

		<p>figures in the cello, crescendo from <i>piano</i> to <i>fortissimo</i>, <i>agitato</i> of the last phrase</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abrupt shift to octave Gs constitutes a push past the breaking point. The Gs push up to A♭s in the last burst of anger, followed by a collapse 	
Primary material (Part 1 only)	Scream of anguish and catastrophic emotional collapse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main theme culminates in empty piano chords, followed by fragmentary statements of the head motive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Elements of overlap across the entrance of the recapitulation described in Chapter 3 prevent the thematic entrance from restoring either musical or emotional stability.)
Transition	Process of apparent recovery of composure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Momentarily points toward a recapitulation of the theme and variations in the major tonic • Putative transition to C major collapses back into material from the first paragraph of the main theme 	
Secondary material	Hopelessly unsustainable memory of earlier time of solace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E♭ carries recap into G major, which provides relief only on the surface, but remains highly dependent on a tonic resolution • Inability to return to tonic symbolizes the psychological distance of positive memories from the reality of the recapitulation • New extreme dynamic and expressive markings contribute to a heightened intensity of expression • G⁷ harmony destabilizes local tonic and signals collapse into C minor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • G major has already been exposed as a harmony destined to collapsed into tragic C minor via its prolongational connection with the home dominant of the retransition • Expressive irony: the recapitulation regains composure only via tonal materials that remain hopelessly unsustainable within the overriding C-minor arc of the movement. The resulting undivided <i>Ursatz</i>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recomposed climax prepares for an unstable return to C major • Return to the main-theme material underlines the fact that the G-major area of solace must give way to the C-minor primary material 	overwhelms the stability normally afforded by sonata recapitulation and obliterates the potential for resolution into C major
Coda	Reverie of past solace awakens to grim reality, followed by ever more desperate attempts to avoid a fate that proves inescapable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated failed attempts at tonic resolution • Appoggiatura lament motive from the head of the main theme creates overall mood of anger and frustration • Triplets motor rhythms express oppressiveness and inescapable emotional crisis • Motivic similarities between coda and retransition allow final measures to recall the extreme emotional anguish of the reprise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excessive tonal delay (delay of the tonic <i>Stufe</i>) creates sense of frustration and makes the tonic all the more devastating when it finally arrives

Example 5a.

opening paragraph x = sigh motive y = lament tetrachord

Allegro non troppo

Violine

Bratsche

Violoncell

Pianoforte

Allegro non troppo

f *dim.*

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Example 5b. Smith's foreground graph of the tonic key area of op 60/i (his Example 2.11)

The image shows a musical score with a foreground graph overlaid. The score is divided into two systems. The first system contains measures 3, 10, 13, 17, and 21. The second system contains measures 27, 32, 38, and 42. The foreground graph consists of vertical stems and horizontal lines connecting notes across staves. Labels include 'i', 'V', 'A 3', and 'A 2'.

Measure numbers: 3, 10, 13, 17, 21, 27, 32, 38, 42

Graph labels: i, V, A 3, A 2, i, V, i

Other labels: 6 6 6, 10, 10 > 10, 10, 6, 6, 6, 6, 5 - 6 5 - 6 5 - 5 10, 5 6 7

