A Study of Thematic Introduction in Beethoven's Music

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A thesis submitted to McGill University in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Masters of Arts

McGill University
Montréal, Québec, Canada
July, 2011

ABSTRACT

Beethoven's contribution to the expansion and development of musical form is a prevalent topic in the scholarly literature on this composer. Surprisingly, though, one important aspect of this contribution remains unexplored—the role that *thematic introduction* plays in the structure of his works and the development of his style. According to William Caplin, introductions fall into one of two categories: *thematic* or *slow*. Whereas the former consists of 2-4 measures that precede the onset of the main theme, the latter comprises a more extensive section of music that prepares the exposition. This binary position, however, does not capture the plurality of introduction techniques employed by the composer. Chapter 1 confronts this difficulty, among others, in conjunction with current theories of thematic introduction.

The remainder of the thesis lays out and develops the theoretical foundations for a fresh perspective on thematic introduction in Beethoven. By systematically presenting *introduction types* and *integration techniques*, we come to understand the highly varied nature of introduction function in this music. Chapter 2 outlines briefly the five introduction types found in Beethoven's oeuvre: *accompanimental*, *hammer-stroke*, *generative*, *head-motive* and *anacrusis*. Chapter 3 provides in-depth analyses of specific works to illustrate these types in greater detail and incorporates three integration techniques (*framing*, *motivic influence*, and *metamorphic*) to show the various ways in which Beethoven uses introductory material throughout a given composition.

RÉSUMÉ

La contribution de Beethoven à l'expansion et au développement de la forme musicale est un sujet répandu dans la littérature savante portant sur ce compositeur. Cependant, il est curieux qu'un aspect important de sa contribution demeure encore inexploré - le rôle joué par *l'introduction thématique* dans la structure de ses œuvres et le développement de son style. Selon William Caplin, les introductions se répartissent en deux catégories, soit *thématiques* ou *lentes*. Alors que la première se compose de deux à quatre mesures qui précèdent l'apparition du thème principal, la dernière comprend une section de musique plus vaste qui prépare l'exposition. Cette position binaire ne tient cependant pas compte de la pluralité des techniques d'introductions utilisées par le compositeur. Le chapitre 1 confronte cette difficulté, entre autres, en conjonction avec les théories actuelles de l'introduction thématique.

Le reste de la thèse expose et développe les fondements théoriques d'une nouvelle perspective sur l'introduction thématique dans la musique de Beethoven. En exposant systématiquement les *types d'introductions* et les *techniques d'intégration*, nous arrivons à comprendre la nature très variée des introductions utilisées dans cette musique. Le chapitre 2 décrit brièvement les cinq types d'introductions que l'on retrouve dans l'œuvre de Beethoven: *accompagnement*, *premier coup d'archet*, *générative*, *motif* et *anacrouse*. Le chapitre 3 fournit une analyse en profondeur d'œuvres spécifiques permettant de mieux illustrer ces types d'introductions et présente trois techniques d'intégration (*cadrage*, *influence motivique*, et *métamorphique*) démontrant les différentes façons dont Beethoven utilise les introductions tout au long d'une composition.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I am indebted to my supervisor, Professor William E. Caplin, for his guidance in the completion of this project. His many thoughtful suggestions, along with his keen eye for editing, both facilitated and enriched the writing process. I am also very appreciative of the advice given by Professors Don McLean, Jonathan Wild, Julie Cumming, Steven Huebner, and Ichiro Fujinaga.

I am thankful to McGill University for appointing me to instruct an undergraduate class relevant to my thesis in the Summer 2010 semester. The teaching experience stimulated a number of ideas that factored into my work. I would also like to extend a special thanks to Julian Ward for his help at various stages of the project, to Caitlin Martinkus for our inspiring conversations, and to Karine Emond for her assistance in editing the French abstract. Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends for their continued support.

INTRODUCTION

Beethoven's contribution to the expansion and development of musical form is a prevalent topic in the scholarly literature on this composer. Surprisingly, though, one important aspect of this contribution remains unexplored—the role played by *thematic introduction* in the structure of his works and the development of his style. William Caplin defines thematic introduction as a brief passage of music (no more than four measures in length) that occurs before the onset of the main theme.[1] Like many before him, Caplin also proposes a category of *slow introduction* to account for a more expansive section of music that prepares the actual beginning—or "exposition"—of a piece in sonata form. Whereas this binary distinction between thematic and slow introduction captures well the opening techniques used by Haydn and Mozart, it breaks down when faced with Beethoven's more experimental music, which frequently features form-functional ambiguity. For instance, it is often unclear whether the very first gesture of a movement serves a *beginning* or *before-the-beginning* function. As examples of non-conventional openings abound in Beethoven's oeuvre, a more refined approach to thematic introduction (i.e., one that goes beyond the binary scheme noted above)

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[1] William E. Caplin, *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven* (New York: Oxford UP, 1997), 15. Several of the core musical form textbooks of the past few decades include no mention of thematic introduction or an equivalent. See, for example, Douglass M. Green, *Form in Tonal Music* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1979) and Ellis B. Kohs, *Musical Form* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976).

promises to reflect more accurately the plurality of composition-starting strategies that are so integral to the Bonn master's voice as a composer.

The goal of this study is twofold. First, it aims to provide a theoretical framework in which thematic introductions are understood to be more than local-level phenomena: how, and to what effect, does Beethoven integrate seemingly introductory ideas throughout the course of a movcement? Second, it attempts to understand formally ambiguous situations in light of this framework: how, for example, do we navigate the boundary between thematic and slow introduction?

Chapter 1 surveys current theories of thematic introduction and confronts some of the analytical difficulties found therein. Both Caplin's theory of formal functions and Hepokoski and Darcy's modular system of analysis are explored and critiqued in light of their assessment of before-the-beginning passages.[2] The section as a whole concludes with a small number of relevant observations on the subject by Charles Rosen. Chapter 2 lays out the theoretical foundations for a fresh perspective on thematic introduction in Beethoven by systematically introducing new concepts and terminology as a way of understanding the highly varied nature of introduction function in this music. The chapter provides a nuanced classification scheme that allows the analyst to confront the peculiarities of Beethoven's opening ideas. The third and final chapter presents a more in-depth discussion of the theoretical categories introduced in chapter 2 and explores some ambiguous cases that deviate from the traditional profiles of both slow and thematic introduction. An investigation of such deviations probes deeply into the fundamental

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[2] James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth-Century Sonata*. New York: Oxford UP, 2006.

question of what constitutes a thematic introduction and examines problematic instances of germinal ideas that fail to project a single indisputable temporal function (i.e. beginning versus before-the-beginning). The treatment of these ambiguous cases is perhaps the most important aspect of my work since it concerns what is most individual to Beethoven's use of introduction techniques.

CHAPTER 1

Thematic Introduction and its Treatment in Current Theoretical Thought

Recent theoretical accounts of thematic introduction can be found in Caplin's *Classical Form* and in James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy's *Sonata Theory*. While both treatises recognize the existence of in-tempo material that precedes the onset of a sonata form's main theme, the principles according to which they delineate the formal boundary between introduction and main theme produce vastly different conclusions. These interpretive discrepancies largely result from differing views of what Hepokoski and Darcy call "sonata-space." From the perspective of *Sonata Theory*, this term refers to the "space articulated by the generic sonata form proper: normal treatments of the exposition, developmental space, and recapitulatory rotation."[3] In Caplin's theory, an area analogous to sonata-space is implied by the existence of framing functions, which account for music that lies outside the structural boundaries of a theme.[4] Despite apparent similarities of interpretation, each view nuances the notion of formal outliers differently in order to complement its respective foundational ideas. These differences in theory can be outlined as follows.

Caplin's approach identifies a series of low-level structural building blocks from which larger formal units are formed. In addition to providing a comprehensive

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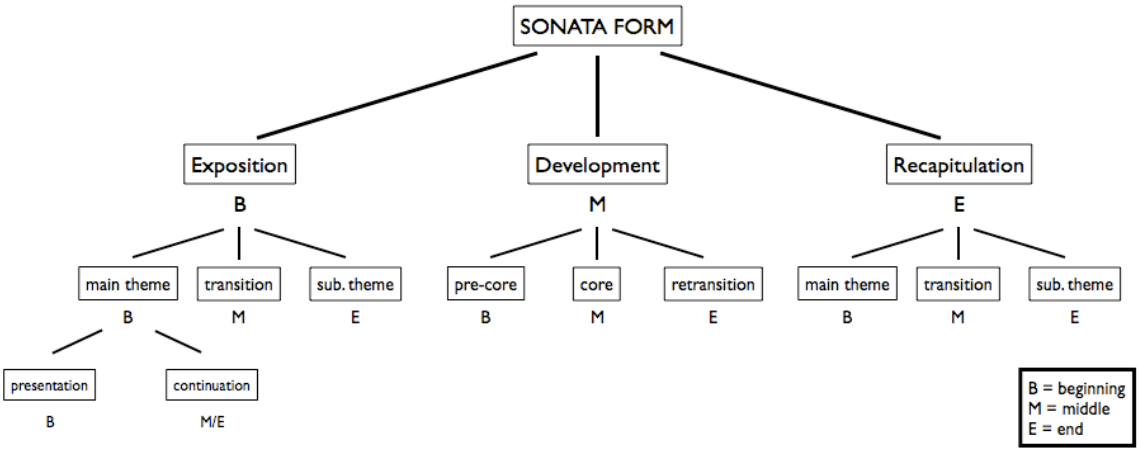
[3] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Sonata Theory*, 281. According to *Sonata Theory*, a recapitulatory rotation refers to a recycling through materials as they appear in the exposition despite local variants. "[The rotation's] expanse begins with the [exposition's] first module . . . and continues until the last one has been sounded." Ibid., 231.

[4] *Classical Form*, 15.

nomenclature to facilitate the study of classical form, he makes a compelling argument concerning phrase-structural syntax that holds on numerous hierarchical levels. In short, each musical passage exhibits specific features congruent with its temporal placement within a larger structure. For instance, passages that act to initiate a phrase demonstrate a sense of harmonic stability through paradigmatic prolongational progressions. These characteristic units fulfill a specific *formal function* within a standard syntactical progression from phrase initiation to closure—beginning, middle, and end—and manifest themselves on multiple hierarchical levels within a sonata form. It would be inaccurate to use the metaphor of nesting, however, since the features that characterize a beginning on one level are not the same as those that typify the same function at a different level of structure. Fig. 1 offers an incomplete breakdown of these three temporal functions in connection with a movement in sonata form, where the main theme is structured as a sentence.

Fig. 1 Sample of beginning, middle, and end functions in sonata form



In addition to beginning, middle, and end functions, Caplin recognizes units that serve before-the-beginning and after-the-end roles. On the level of an entire sonata movement, a slow introduction fulfills the former function and a coda fulfills the latter. At a lower level of structure, a thematic introduction and closing section fill analogous posts. No matter the hierarchical level at play, these units serve what Caplin terms a *framing function*, meaning that they occur outside of the structural boundaries of either a sonata movement (in the case of slow introductions and codas) or a theme (in the case of thematic introductions and closing sections). For Caplin, a thematic introduction consists of a short passage of music (2–4 measures in length) that sounds prior to the main theme, prolongs tonic harmony, and contains "minimal melodic activity".[5] On the contrary, a closing section follows a perfect-authentic thematic closure and generally dissipates the accumulated energy of the theme's cadential drive.[6] Just where exactly in the structural hierarchy thematic introductions and closing sections fall, however, is a complicated

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[5] In certain cases, a thematic introduction prolongs dominant harmony (ibid., 258).

[6] Caplin also defines a *standing on the dominant* as a post-cadential framing function. The term itself, however, is fraught with definitional complexities. On the one hand, a standing on the dominant consists of a post-half-cadence passage that prolongs V (i.e., it serves an after-the-end function). On the other hand, the expression may refer to a compositional technique used in the middle of a ternary form (i.e., one that does not serve an after-the-end function but rather acts medially). To complicate matters further, a standing on the dominant can follow non-cadential ending points such as dominant arrivals and premature dominant arrivals. In light of these difficulties, only closing sections factor into our discussion of framing functions. Ibid., 257.

matter. An investigation into the anatomy of a main theme according to Caplin clarifies the situation.

Fig. 2 Lower-level formal hierarchy of a sentential theme

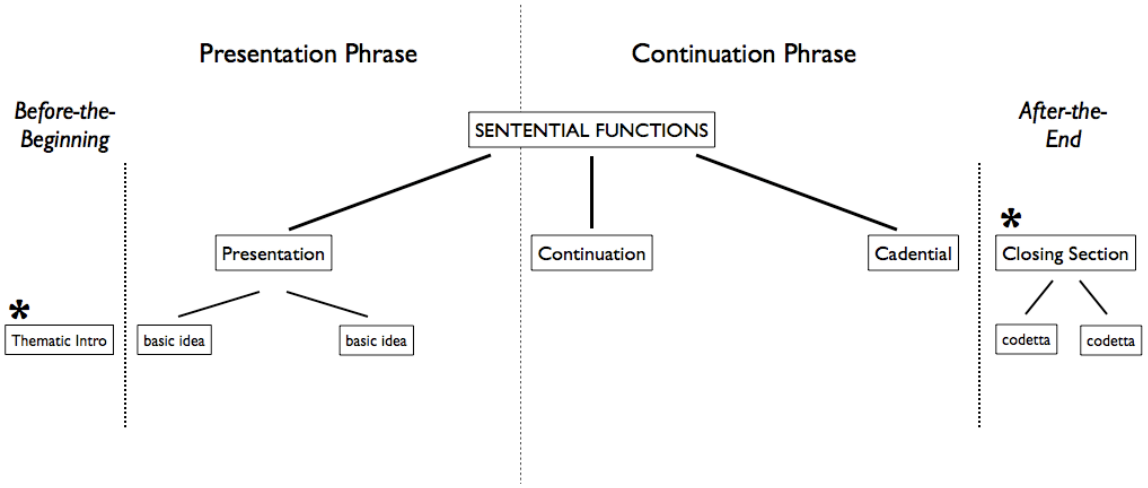
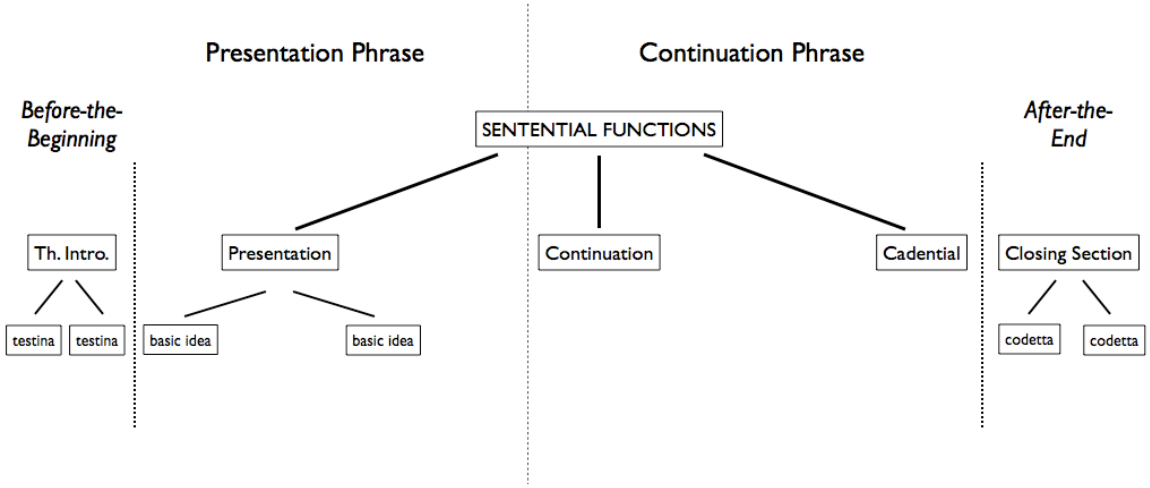


Fig. 3 Lower-level formal hierarchy of a sentential theme with testinas



At the broadest level of structure, a main theme can be broken down into its constituent phrases. The sentence, for instance, consists of a presentation phrase followed

by a continuation phrase, and these phrases, in turn, express various formal functions. As Fig. 2 demonstrates, the two phrases of a sentence are further divided into three functions: presentation, continuation, and cadential.[7] The presentation phrase exhibits presentation function while the continuation phrase expresses both continuation and cadential functions. These functions are then subdivided into a lower-level grouping structure where presentation function, for example, consists of a two-measure basic idea that is repeated. A similar pattern emerges from closing sections. These reside at the same level as presentation, continuation, and cadential functions, and are made up of codettas, which find their place alongside basic ideas and the like. Given this breakdown, one would expect Caplin to situate thematic introductions amidst presentations, closing sections, and similar units. Instead, he lumps them together with basic ideas, contrasting ideas, cadential ideas, and codettas.[8]

Though puzzling at first, this position makes sense. Since thematic introductions are most often 2–4 measures in length, they occupy the same space as a typical codetta. Moreover, they usually consist of a single unit that cannot be subdivided reasonably into lower-level groups. Yet despite its merits, this perspective ignores the possibility of divisions internal to a thematic introduction—divisions that would function at the level of codettas and render a greater degree of theoretical consistency. By recognizing the existence of what I term *testinas* (Italian for "little heads"), one eliminates the somewhat

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[7] Subordinate themes often present a clear division between all three functions so that continuation and cadential functions need not be conflated in analysis.

[8] Ibid., 203–04.

counterintuitive practice of placing thematic introductions on a different hierarchical level than closing sections.[9] Fig. 3 shows the resulting reconfigured hierarchy.

The opening movement of Beethoven's Piano Sonata in B-flat, Op. 22, demonstrates the theoretical value of testinas. As Ex. 1 shows, a repeated one-measure unit is followed by a flourish outlining the tonic triad; only at the downbeat of m. 4 does the music settle into a two-measure unit that could be construed as a basic idea. The theme then continues as a standard sentence leading to a half cadence. Caplin, on the contrary, analyzes this passage as a *nonconventional* main theme, one that evokes "a heraldic, fanfare style," and projects a strong sense of opening—beginning at m. 1—via a stubborn tonic pedal. For him, the lack of a clear two-measure basic idea complicates classification of the theme into one of the standard types.[10] Although Caplin's view acknowledges the unusual stature of this theme in relation to the high classical style as a whole, it downplays the prevalence of such beginnings in Beethoven.[11] It thus seems appropriate to account for these openings in a general theoretical framework rather than to create exceptional categories for their inclusion. The view espoused here argues for the recognition of a prefatory gesture followed by a genuine presentation phrase rather than a double initiation of sorts. In this view, the first measure is analyzed as a testina that is at

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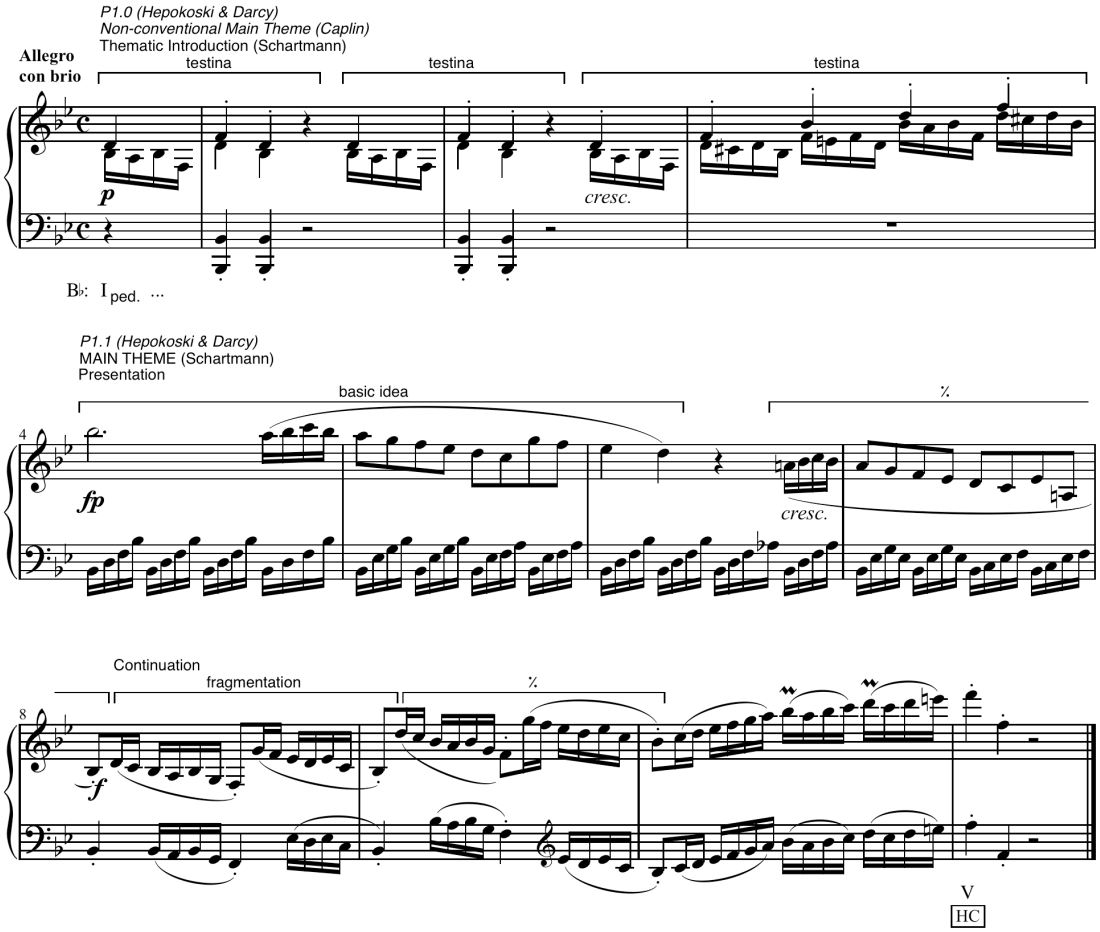
[9] Although this term is of Italian origin, I am adopting it here as an English word (much in the spirit of "codetta"). As such, the plural form "testinas" will be used.

[10] Ibid., 199 & 280n.21.

[11] Hepokoski identifies similar passages in a number of works, including: Op. 7, i, 1–4; Op. 127, iv, 1–4. See James Hepokoksi, "Approaching the Tempest Through Sonata Theory," in *Musical Form, Forms & Formenlehre*, ed. Pieter Bergé, co-ed., Jeroen D'hoe and William E. Caplin (Leuven: Peeters, 2009), 188.

first repeated and then followed by a triadic ascent, which comprises a third, albeit different, testina. All of these taken together form a thematic introduction that leads seamlessly into the onset of the main theme.

Ex. 1 Beethoven, Piano Sonata in B-flat, Op. 22, i, 1–11



One might argue that, in many cases, it is the sense of hesitancy—in this case, the indecisive opening testinas—that erroneously causes us to call something an introduction. This perspective is often reasonable, but I would argue that the existence of a true presentation phrase following the initial moment justifies finding the beginning of a main

theme several measures into a work. In Op. 22, Beethoven marks the introduction with a crescendo (m. 3) and calls for a slight accent at the moment of the main theme's arrival (m. 4). Caplin's counter-argument would presumably identify the music beginning at m. 4 as continuational in nature due to the active left-hand figuration and the somewhat unusual harmonic progression—one not typically found in initiating units. Although this perspective (or at least a Caplin-based view) offers valuable insight into the features that make the passage so unusual and highlights the reasons why a definitive form-functional analysis is so elusive, it downplays the fact that features of continuation function are judged relative to the surrounding music.[12] Given the burst of energy in m. 3, there is no real change in surface-rhythmic activity at the onset of Caplin's continuation. There is, however, a definite sense of fragmentation beginning at m. 8 leading into the half cadence, which renders mm. 8–11 continuational when compared to the broad 2-measure sweeps of mm. 4–7. As for the harmony, there is no doubt that it is unusual in its tonicization of IV, but that does not mean it is without precedent in main themes. In fact, the opening of the first movement of Beethoven's first published work (Piano Trio in E-flat, Op. 1/1) makes use of the 8–b7–6–natural-7–8 melodic pattern (one that is typical of closing sections) right from the first chord of the main theme proper.[13] This issue aside, the bass line does not move until m. 8, where an alternation between tonic and dominant

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[12] These features include fragmentation, acceleration of harmonic rhythm, increase in surface-rhythmic activity, sequential harmonies, and liquidation; see Caplin, *Classical Form*, 41–42.

[13] Perhaps the best-known example of this melodic-harmonic pattern in a main theme occurs in Mozart's Piano Sonata in F, K. 332, 1–4.

begins: the firm pedal point supporting the presentation phrase is abandoned in order to add a greater bass mobility in line with the change of formal function. In the end, the argument comes down to where the main theme proper actually begins, but the more relevant point here is that regarding testinas. By recognizing a formal analogue to the codetta within before-the-beginning territory (i.e., testinas), we clarify previously confused hierarchical distinctions and encourage a more refined discussion of a thematic introduction's component parts.

Turning back to the topic of formal boundaries, Caplin's theory places all thematic introductions within exposition space. In other words, while these openings may serve a before-the-beginning role at the theme level, they are always internal to the territory staked out by the exposition. Slow introductions, on the contrary, which function at the level of the exposition, development, recapitulation, and coda, are always considered by Caplin to exist outside of this space. Hepokoski and Darcy's *Sonata Theory,* on the contrary, provides a slightly more nuanced perspective on where exactly these initial gestures lie within the formal hierarchy—one that does not always align with Caplin's view. A brief outline of some key components of their theory clarifies this point.

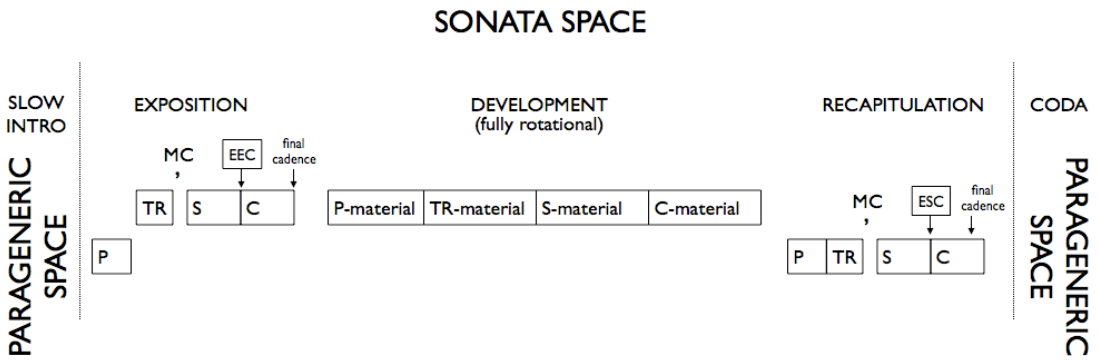
Sonata Theory recognizes a progression of action spaces, each of which corresponds to more traditional formal divisions, e.g., P-space = primary theme (main theme, first subject, etc.). These spaces are viewed against a backdrop of normative

procedures characteristic of the time in which a given sonata was written.[14] Thus, each space is expected to pursue a specific point of articulation—a cadence in most cases—in accordance with stylistic norms. Within the context of an exposition, a generic formal layout proceeds from P-space through TR-space (transition-space) to a MC (medial caesura), which is a textural gap that clears the way for S-space (secondary-theme space). At the end of S-space, a satisfactory perfect authentic cadence (essential expositional closure—EEC) initiates C-space, which brings the exposition to a close. The ensuing development section typically reworks material of the exposition in varying degrees, and the recapitulation, which rounds out the structure, generally (with the exception of Haydn) revisits the expositional material in the same order with the appropriate tonal adjustments. This generic formal layout is summarized in Fig. 4.

According to this perspective, the notion of introduction takes on an interesting guise. Musical material that falls outside of sonata-space, as defined above, belongs to what Hepokoski and Darcy term *parageneric spaces* (see Fig. 4). The most common of these, introductions and codas, appear as appendages to a fully-coherent sonata form. Excepting rare occurrences of parageneric spaces that momentarily interrupt an otherwise

fluid sonata-space, the concept is similar to Caplin's notion of framing functions, but differs considerably when considered at lower structural levels.[15] Whereas Caplin offers a black and white assessment of openings in terms of sonata-space boundaries, Hepokoski and Darcy account for differing degrees of relatedness to the opening theme.

Fig. 4 Tri-rotational sonata according to Sonata Theory[16]



In *Sonata Theory*, these varying degrees are denoted by superscript numbers called *modular designators*. Designators, in general, stem from a view of musical form that recognizes coherent chunks of music—modules—that are strung together to create larger structures. In analysis, each of these modules receives a decimal designator to

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[15] One such interruptive technique occurs when a composer interpolates coda-like material before all of the recapitulatory modules—individual, coherent chunks of music—have been sounded (*coda-rhetoric-interpolation*). The procedure typically inserts "coda music" between two C modules, thus "producing a concluding musical rhyme with the end of the exposition" (ibid., 288).

[16] This figure is a simplified version of that found in Hepokoski and Darcy, *Sonata Theory*, 17. The horizontal placement of units reflects the tonal structure of a sonata movement. Higher-positioned boxes refer to non-tonic regions.

Ex. 2 Beethoven, Piano Sonata in F minor, Op. 2/1, i, 1–8 (modular analysis)

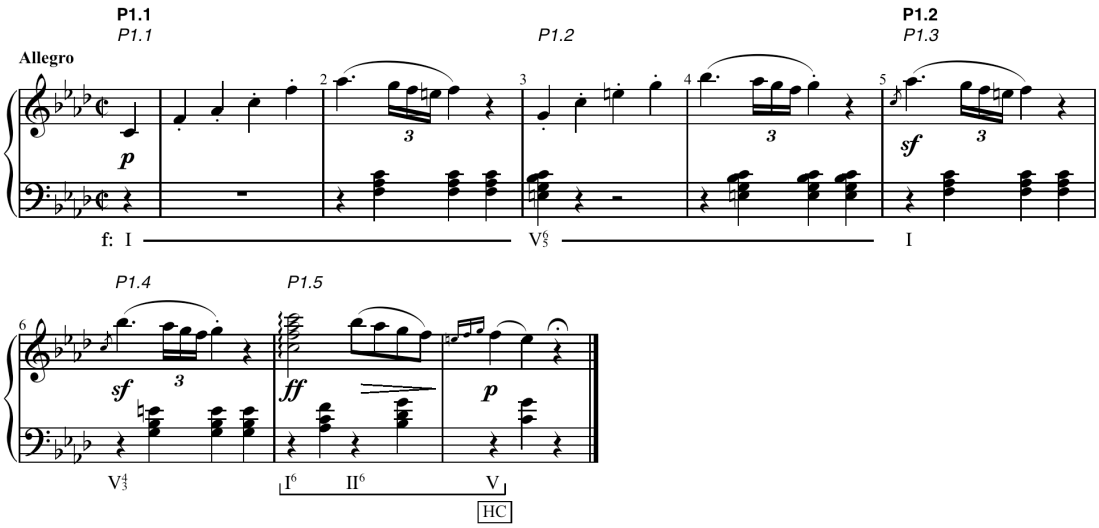


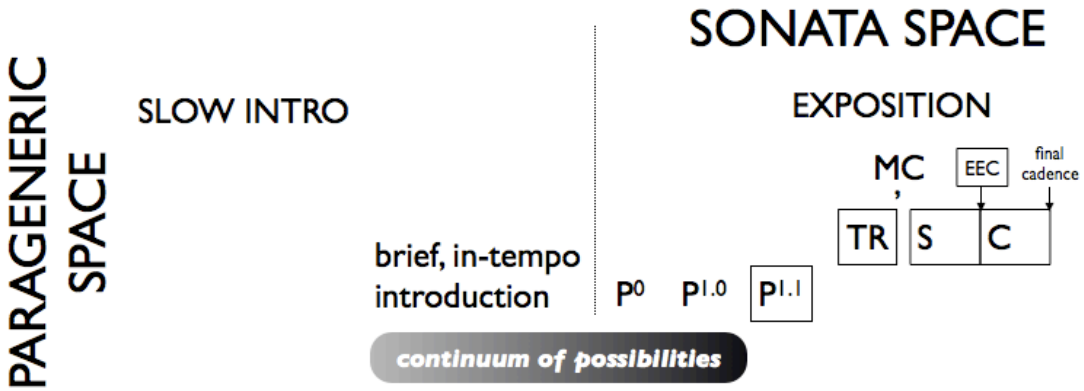
Fig. 5 Formal features denoted by decimal designators in Ex. 2

Analysis #1	**Module**	**1.1**	**1.2**			
	Form	presentation	continuation			
Analysis #2	**Module**	*1.1*	*1.2*	*1.3*	*1.4*	*1.5*
	Form	basic idea	basic idea	frag.	frag.	cad. idea

denote its status as part of a larger whole—one that is indicated by the first of two numbers (i.e., the one that precedes the decimal point). These numbers are then tacked on to the letter that corresponds with the action space in which the relevant music is found. For example, a main theme (part of P-space) that is structured as a sentence could be divided into two distinct modules—one representing presentation function ($P^{1.1}$) and the other acknowledging a formally distinct continuation function ($P^{1.2}$). Implicit in this

method of analysis is the existence of various structural levels, and it is up to analysts to choose which level(s) they want to show. Ex. 2 demonstrates two different ways in which one might analyze the opening of Beethoven's Piano Sonata in F minor, Op. 2/1. One interpretation proceeds as stated above with $P^{1.1}$ and $P^{1.2}$ representing presentation and continuation functions respectively (in bold), whereas the other interpretation labels lower-level units (in italics). Fig. 5 describes the formal features denoted by decimal designators in each reading. With this system in mind, it will now be possible to clarify Hepokoski and Darcy's account of introduction function.

Fig. 6 Parageneric spaces versus 0-modules



At the broadest level, slow introductions are always considered to exist outside of sonata space (that is, in a parageneric space). They divide smaller-scale openings, however, into three categories: two of these are identified by the modular labels P^0 and $P^{1.0}$; a third is characterized as "a brief, in-tempo introduction." The first two designators identify music that is part of P-space, whereas the latter describes music that is both

short-lived and in the tempo of the main theme (unlike a slow introduction) but that occurs outside of P-space (see Fig. 6). The difference between a 0 module and a 1.0 module is simply the degree of separability from the main theme—"a P^0 idea being somewhat more hypothetically 'dispensable' than a $P^{1.0}$ idea."[17] This perspective is undoubtedly more malleable than Caplin's, as one can mould theoretical concepts to the work at hand. But that built-in flexibility can also lead "inevitably to situations that are open to interpretation, and in practice, [theoretical] distinctions are not always so unequivocally made."[18] Consider, for instance, the opening of Haydn's String Quartet in G, Op. 33/5 (Ex. 3).[19] The first two measures, which carry with them a cadential quality, are not included in the expositional repeat and thus suggest a brief, in-tempo introduction; however, when Haydn reveals the punch line of his joke in mm. 9–10, where the V-I progression takes on its generic place as a cadential goal, a retrospective P^0 label seems more fitting (an "after-the-fact conceptual incorporation into P" according to Hepokoski and Darcy).[20]

No matter how one understands these opening measures according to modular designations, the ambiguity exemplifies how easily a vast gray area emerges amidst loose definitions—one that leaves too much, too soon to interpretation. The analyst is tempted,

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[17] Ibid., 86.

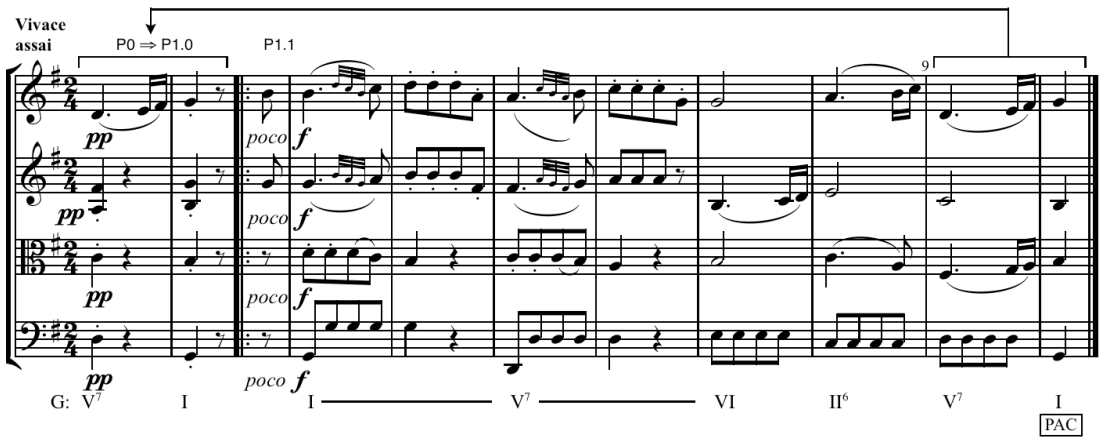
[18] Ibid., 87.

[19] This example is used by Hepokoski and Darcy to highlight the difficulty that sometimes arises when distinguishing between a brief, in-tempo introduction and a P^0 module. See Ibid., 87.

[20] Ibid.

as Caplin puts it, to "constantly [change] and [revise] definitions in light of the compositional complexities presented by the music," resulting in a potentially useless plethora of possibilities, which are difficult to comprehend in the absence of rigidly defined categories.[21] It thus seems reasonable, at least in Beethoven's music, to adhere to strict definitions of thematic-introduction norms given his tendency to reuse techniques over and over again: while these techniques may be deformational for Haydn and Mozart, they can be rightly appropriated into the set of standard compositional practices employed by Beethoven.[22]

Ex. 3 Haydn, String Quartet in G, Op. 33/5, i, 1–10



[21] Caplin, "Response to the Comments," in *Musical Form, Forms, and Formenlehre*, 52.

[22] "[Deformations], in dialogue with a norm, should not be regarded as redefining that norm unless the composer continued to employ that idiosyncratic feature in other works (thus customizing the norm for his own use) or unless later composers picked up the deformation as one of their more or less standard options" (*Sonata Theory*, 11).

Having reviewed two well-established theoretical views, one finds that neither Caplin nor Hepokoski and Darcy account in any technical sense for introductions that do not fit the traditional profiles of either slow or thematic introductions. This is not so much a shortcoming of their approaches as it is a practical omission: both theories are concerned with outlining the norms of a relatively broad style, so they cannot reasonably address the idiosyncrasies of an individual composer. In a study such as this one, however, a more pointed investigation aimed at shedding light on Beethovenian introductions is appropriate. In order to bring greater focus to the table, I will begin by identifying various *types* of introductions and *integration techniques* in Beethoven. After identifying these categories, I will trace their development throughout a given work, thus permitting us a better understanding of Beethoven's style as a whole. Some general observations concerning stylistic trends in Beethoven as they are currently understood will set the stage for our discussion.

Charles Rosen, though not the author of a theory of form *per se*, identifies several key components of Beethoven's style that relate directly to thematic introductions. Possibly the most salient of these is the composer's tendency to integrate all of the musical material presented at the outset of a composition. We regularly observe that the composer revisits in the course of a work nearly everything he put forth at its beginning. Though we can attribute this penchant for motivic work to Beethoven's apparent obsession with short, kernel-like ideas, the very nature of his musical material nurtures a highly developmental approach to composition. Unlike those of Haydn and Mozart, the building blocks of Beethoven's music bring with them an almost primal quality. As Rosen

notes, “the use of the simplest elements of the tonal system as themes lay at the heart of [his] personal style from the beginning.”[23] Perhaps this accounts for why so many of the composer’s thematic introductions—“dispensable” forebears to the true opening of a work—are never abandoned, and, instead, weave their way in and out of the compositional fabric, sometimes ceaselessly, as a wholly integrated component of the larger musical idea. More colloquially speaking, these germinal introductions contribute something persistent and everlasting to the sound world being constructed, quite in contrast to the ephemeral status that is so often accorded them. It is in this spirit that we begin our journey toward a better understanding of introduction in Beethoven’s artistic sphere, a sphere in which “the equilibrium between harmonic and thematic development so characteristic of Haydn and Mozart is often lost ... [and] where thematic contrast and transformation seem to outweigh all other interests.”[24]

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[23] Charles Rosen, *The Classical Style: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven* (New York: Norton, 1972), 389.

[24] Ibid., 380.

CHAPTER 2

A New Theory of Thematic Introduction for the Music of Beethoven

As argued in the previous chapter, existing theories for the analysis of thematic introductions—namely the modular theory of Hepokoski and Darcy and Caplin's framing functions—do not address openings that resist such classification in any significant way. For Caplin, there are only two possibilities: thematic introduction and slow introduction. And for Hepokoski and Darcy, the sole flexible criterion is an introduction's degree of relatedness to the main theme proper. Although still limited when analyzing many Beethovenian before-the-beginnings, the latter perspective raises an interesting point concerning integration: an introduction that returns is considered to be more integrated than one that does not and thus receives a $P^{1.0}$ label as opposed to a P^{0} designation.[25] This distinction brings us to the first theoretical tenet of this study.

Thematic introductions can be distinguished as either *integrated* or *non-integrated*. By recognizing these general categories, we can differentiate openings that play out on a larger scale from those that remain merely local. An obvious example of the integrated introduction is the 'fate' motive beginning Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. Given its brevity, emphasis on tonic and dominant, and pre-thematic position, the opening qualifies as a thematic introduction, and its prevalence as a motive throughout the course

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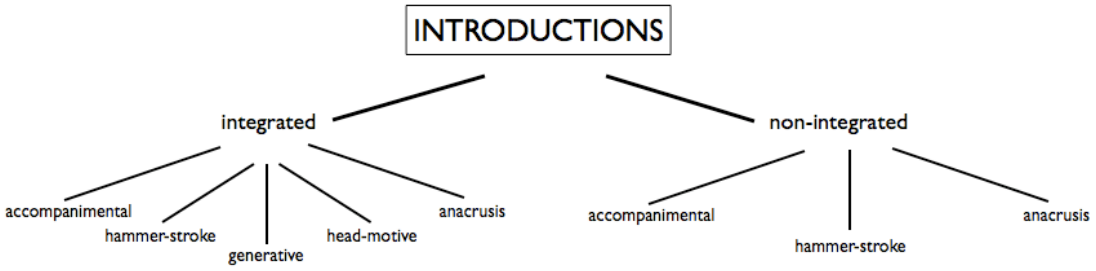
[25] The criterion that an introduction must return to obtain 1.0 status (as opposed to 0) is not stated explicitly in *Sonata Theory*, but is mentioned in passing and clearly implied by the authors' various discussions of zero-modules. Although the presence of a return is not the only feature to determine an introduction's "hypothetical [dispensability]", and, thus, its modular status, it is certainly an important one. See Hepokoski and Darcy, *Sonata Theory*, 86–88.

of the work makes it a clear candidate for the integrated category. On the contrary, the start of the *Eroica* Symphony is non-integrated: it plays an exclusively local role. While the exclusively tonic underpinning, short-lived existence (a mere two strokes), and prefatory status of the attention-grabbing chords all point to their being a thematic introduction, the opening material does not return at any point throughout the remainder of the movement and thus renders it non-integrated. As the above example demonstrates, non-integrated introductions do occur in Beethoven, but in practice, the majority of thematic introductions manifest themselves in more sophisticated ways that have yet to be described fully by theorists.

Fig. 1 Types according to integration possibilities



Further classification breaks down these brief introductions into five principal *types*: *accompanimental*, *hammer-stroke* (*le premier coup d'archet*), *generative*, *head-motive*, and *anacrusis*. Whereas the latter three types participate regularly in a broad-scale web of compositional manipulations, both accompanimental and hammer-stroke introductions seem at first glance to be non-integrated, because they are more naturally inclined to function locally (i.e., are non-integrated). More specifically, these

introductions are typically more conventionalized and thus offer less that is characteristic to be developed.[26] As we will see in chapter 3, however, these seemingly local introductions are often highly-integrated on a movement-wide scale. Fig. 1 summarizes the integration possibilities of all *types*.

Introductory Types

The following discussion defines the above-mentioned introductory types in turn and provides a typical example of each.

Accompanimental Introductions

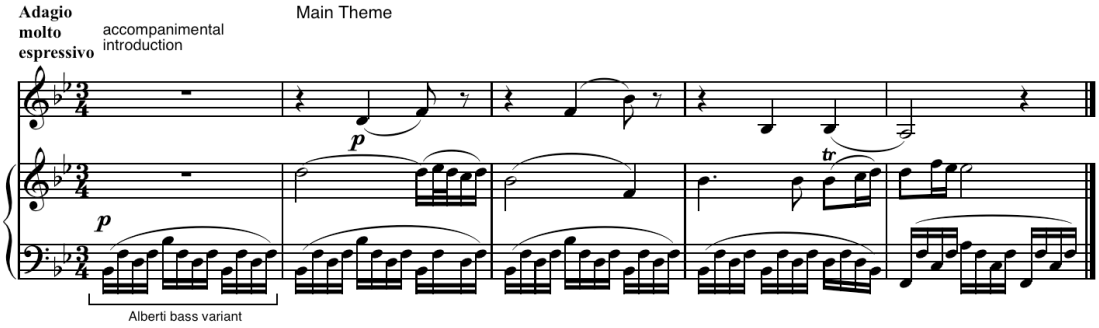
Accompanimental introductions, as their name makes clear, most often consist of a conventionalized accompanimental pattern having no significant melodic component that precedes the entry of the main theme. Most frequently found are the Alberti bass, the drum bass, the murky bass, and variants thereof (see Ex.1). The second movement of Beethoven's *Spring* sonata, for example, begins with a single bar of an Alberti bass variant that precedes the main theme's entrance (Ex. 2). This measure's prefatory function is confirmed when it is omitted upon repetition of the main theme, this time with the melody in the violin. The smooth rhythmic flow established by such introductions has led Hepokoski and Darcy to invoke the metaphor of running water—a "rhythmic stream" to be precise—and this characterization possibly relates to Caplin's observation that this type of introduction occurs most frequently in subordinate themes: the sense of a relaxed current typical of such before-the-beginning functions lends itself well to the more

[26] The distinction between characteristic and conventional material comes from Caplin, *Classical Form*, 37.

subdued and docile feel that characterizes the opening of secondary themes in the classical era.[27] According to *Sonata Theory*, accompanimental introductions are, more often than not, inextricably linked to the beginning of the main theme proper (i.e., Caplin's basic idea), and, as a result, they use the modular designation $P^{1.0}$.[28]

Ex. 1 Conventionalized accompaniment patterns

Ex. 2 Beethoven, Violin Sonata in F, Op. 24, ii, 1–5

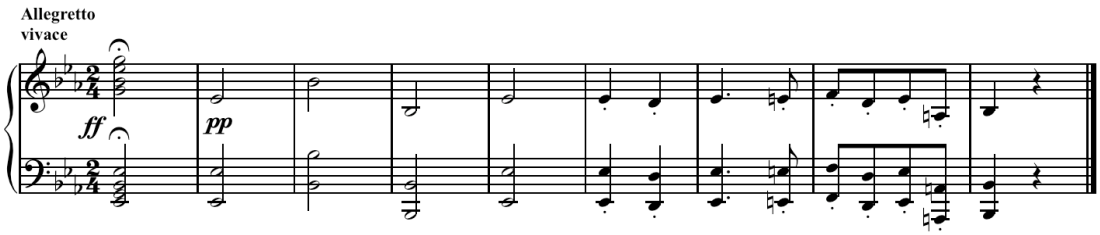


[27] See "rhythmic stream" in *Sonata Theory*, 87; see *Classical Form*, 119 regarding this type of introduction in subordinate themes.

[28] Hepokoski and Darcy explain the difference between this designation and P^0 in *Sonata Theory*, 86. "We identify such a preparatory gesture as either a P^0- or a $P^{1.0}$ module, depending on one's assessment of its conceptual separability from $P^{1.1}$—a P^0 idea being somewhat more hypothetically "dispensable" than a $P^{1.0}$ idea."

Hammer-stroke Introductions

Ex. 3 Beethoven, Variations in E-flat, Op. 35, 1–9



Hammer-stroke introductions derive from the 18th-century *premier coup d'archet*, which was well-liked among French audiences, especially those in Paris. Its popularity in the French capital made such an impression on Mozart—albeit not a very good one—that he felt compelled to include it in his *Paris* Symphony.[29] The startling effect, traditionally associated with the symphonic genre, consists of a loud tutti passage—a call to attention—that clears the air, so to speak, for the main theme proper.[30] Whereas early uses of the device tend to involve silence following the sonic outburst, later instances often replace this void with music at a soft dynamic, thus resulting in a *forte-piano* marking. The form-

[29] Mozart's view on the matter is summarized in his correspondence with Leopold: "I have been careful not to neglect the premier coup d'archet—and that is quite enough. What a fuss the oxen here make of this trick! The devil take me if I can see any difference. They all begin together too, just as in other places. It is really a joke." Neal Zaslaw, *Mozart's Symphonies: Context, Performance Practice, Reception* (New York: Oxford UP, 1991), 333.

[30] David Boyden and Peter Walls, "Coup d'archet", in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan Publishers Ltd., 2001), 579.

functional role played by an opening hammer-stroke chord(s) varies on a case-by-case basis. For instance, the device acts as part of the main theme proper in the aforementioned Mozart symphony, but it was often used to preface a genuine first thematic unit.[31] A traditional rendering of the latter technique occurs in Beethoven's *Prometheus* Variations, Op. 35, where silence occupies the space between a loud opening chord and the entrance of the theme (Ex. 3).[32] Completely divorced from the theme itself, the chord amounts to what Hepokoski and Darcy call "a brief, in-tempo[?] introduction, not a zero-module proper."[33] The opening of the *Eroica* Symphony echoes this non

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[31] Occasionally one finds a slow introduction that opens with a hammer-stoke. When this occurs, the blow may or may not participate in the first identifiable thematic unit of the introduction. The latter case results in a nested set of introduction functions (an introduction within an introduction, so to speak); see, for instance, the outer movements of Beethoven's Septet in E-flat, Op. 20. For an example of a non-nested, slow-introduction hammer-stroke see Symphony in A, Op. 92, i, and Piano Concerto in E-flat, Op. 73, i.

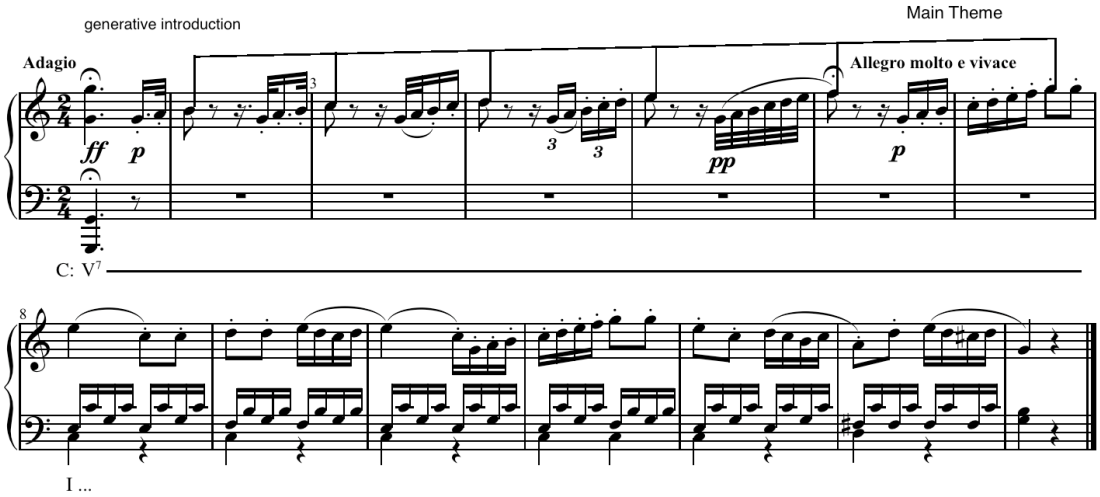
[32] Other examples in Beethoven include Symphony in A, Op. 92, iv, 1–4, Violin Sonata in A, Op. 47, iii, 1, and Trio in C, Op. 87, i, 1–2.

[33] According to Hepokoski and Darcy, hammer-blow openings function most typically as pre-P modules; however, one cannot possibly assign the "in-tempo" aspect of their label to Op. 35 due to the fermata, which dissuades the performer from setting up a retrospective tempo with what follows. In the end, the authors do not seem to have a category that embraces examples like the *Prometheus* variations. Even with the fermata, Op. 35 is in obvious dialogue with Hepokoski and Darcy's "brief, in-tempo introduction" category; see *Sonata Theory*, 86. For a similar example, see Beethoven's Violin Sonata in A, Op. 47, iii, 1–2.

integrated introduction, and, by virtue of its orchestral setting, bows to the established custom even more so than the earlier set of variations.[34]

Generative Introductions

Ex. 4 Beethoven, Symphony in C, Op. 21, iv, 1–14



The term "generative introduction," coined by Hepokoski and Darcy, describes "situations in which the introduction, or at least the concluding portion of it, spawns, nurtures, or otherwise generates the theme that will be fully formed and launched within the sonata's P-theme."[35] This prefatory unit resides outside of sonata-space and functions to set up the sonata form proper. The finale of Beethoven's Symphony in C, Op. 21,

[34] It is interesting to note that Beethoven's piano writing was, by this time, much more orchestral in nature. Lewis Lockwood remarks that Op. 35 "points the way to the orchestra-like keyboard writing of [Beethoven's] middle period and his later piano writing, including that of the later piano concertos"; Lewis Lockwood, *Beethoven: The Music and the Life* (New York: Norton, 2003), 142.

[35] *Sonata Theory*, 303.

begins with what is perhaps the *locus classicus* of the generative type (Ex. 4). A *premier coup d'archet*, marked *fortissimo* and sustained by a customary *fermata*, opens the work. This initial jolt is followed by an immediate shift to *piano* and a vast reduction of texture that leaves only the first violins to start the generative process. Beginning with the outline of a major third, the passage continually expands upward as though a wedge were gradually staking its claim to the octave territory that defines the Allegro's principal idea.[36] Beethoven adds to the hesitant quality of the opening with a push-and-pull rhythmic profile that introduces adjacent thirty-second notes in m. 3 before pulling back to a steady flow of sixteenth-note triplets in the ensuing measure. But this stability is short-lived as a smattering of black ink stretches the *ambitus* all the way to a minor seventh until the seams burst and the main theme takes flight. In short, this "brief introduction 'constructs' the P-theme" right before our very eyes (or ears, as it were).[37]

Head-motive Introductions

Identified by Hepkoski and Darcy, a head-motive introduction is "an abrupt, peremptory initial stamp, . . . played forte, usually in octaves, before the "real" theme (P1.1) starts to flow forward."[38] These openings are typical of minor-mode works and introduce motives that factor significantly into the compositional fabric. Due to the vast

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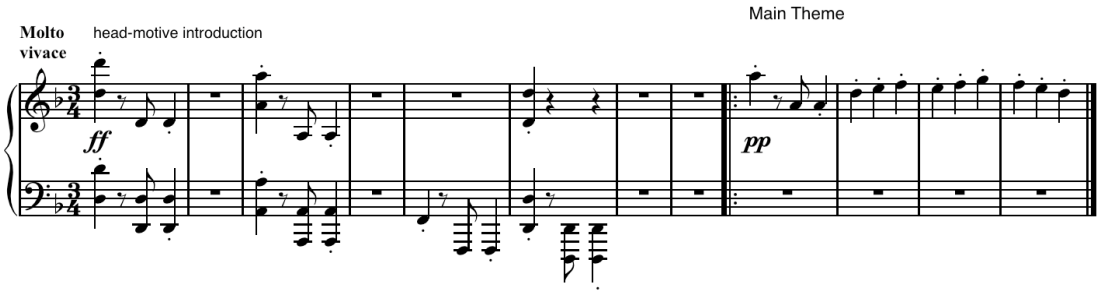
[36] Donald Francis Tovey's playful description captures nicely the technique being employed: "The finale begins with a Haydnesque joke; the violins letting out a scale as a cat from a bag"; Donald Francis Tovey, *Essays in Musical Analysis: Symphonies,* 14th ed., vol. 1 (London: Oxford UP, 1972), 24.

[37] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Sonata Theory*, 303.

[38] Ibid., 87.

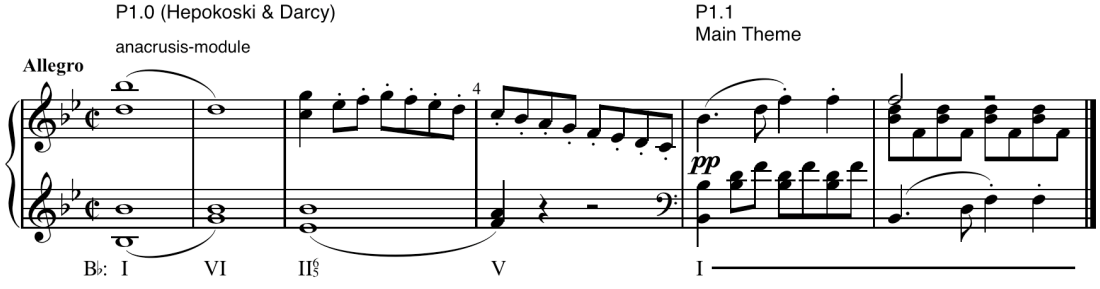
theoretical literature employing motive-based analysis, this is perhaps the most familiar of introduction types, and, as such, requires only minimal illustration. The *fortissimo* strokes with which the second movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony begins are exemplary (Ex. 5) . Both the octave leap and the rhythmic profile of mm. 1–8 provide much of the motivic material that pervades the movement. The influence of these prefatory measures is immediately obvious at the start of the main theme where both the leap and the rhythmic figure play a characteristic role.

Ex. 5 Beethoven, Symphony in D minor, Op. 125, ii, 1–12



Anacrusis Introductions

Ex. 6 Schubert, Symphony in B-flat, D. 485, i, 1–6



Hepokoski and Darcy identify an "anacrusis-module" as one of their $P^0/P^{1.0}$ subsets whereby "a composed-out initial gesture is elided with the onset of $P^{1.1}$, functioning as a large upbeat to it."[39] In addition to elision, one common feature of this zero-module is its tendency to return at various points throughout the movement. The touchstone example of this type, according to *Sonata Theory*, occurs in the opening movement of Schubert's Symphony in B-flat, D. 485, where "P1.0 is included in the expositional repeat" and is subjected to a "large-scale expansion" technique in the development section (Ex. 6).[40] Though this anacrusis feature is common enough to warrant its own category in a theory that encompasses the whole of late-eighteenth-century sonata music, it is rarely found in Beethoven's oeuvre. Sure enough, an expanded upbeat-like gesture does factor into the composer's work from time to time, but it does not adhere to the definition given by Hepokoski and Darcy. More specifically, Beethoven's anacrusis introductions are more expansive than the 4-measure Schubert example and seldom elide with the opening of the main theme proper. Moreover, they rarely return at any point in the movement.

A textbook Beethovenian instance of this type occurs in the finale of the *Eroica* symphony, Op. 55.[41] Based on the Op. 35 variations, the movement opens with a frenzied flourish of sixteenth notes and eventually gives way to the bare bones of a theme that come to serve as the basis for a series of variations (Ex. 7; compare Ex. 3, the opening of

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[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid.

[41] For a similar example, see Piano Sonata in E-flat, Op. 81a, iii, 1–10, which, in contrast to the *Eroica*, omits a fermata on the expectant dominant seventh chord.

Op. 35). The *fortissimo* passage returns only near the very end of the movement in varied form and serves only to set up the theme's opening E-flat through dominant preparation.

One cautionary note is in order: anacrusis introductions often sound very similar to those of the generative type. In fact, both types project the sense of an extended lead-in. Yet whereas generative introductions tend to build gradually, anacrusis introductions typically consist of a mad *forte* flourish that drives with incessant energy to a point of formal articulation, which moment of demarcation usually takes the form of a fermata.[42]

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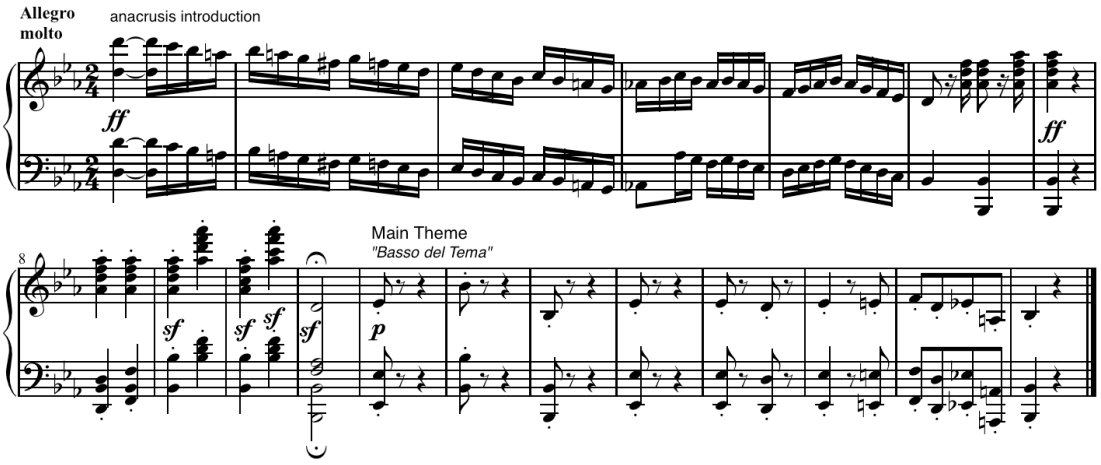
[42] Having surveyed briefly the introductory types, we can now turn to an important point concerning the integration possibilities outlined in Fig. 1. Although head-motive introductions are by their very nature integrated, the omission of the generative type from the list of non-integrated introductions requires further explanation. As generative introductions build the actual content of a theme from the ground up, so to speak, composers tend to preserve the construction process as an integral component of the idea itself. As such, the introductory element sounds at each return of the main theme, making it, *de facto,* integrated. On the contrary, although anacrusis introductions share many features with the generative type, the upbeat material (i.e., the anacrusis) does not necessarily contain motivic links to the main theme proper. As a result, the composer is less inclined to maintain the connection between before-the-beginning and beginning functions at each return of the main theme.

Ex. 7 Beethoven, Symphony in E-flat, Op. 55, iv, 1–19



Integration Techniques

In addition to *types*, introductions can be categorized according to the ways in which they play out over an entire movement. These methods are referred to as *integration techniques,* of which three are readily identifiable in Beethoven: *framing*, *motivic influence*, and *metamorphosis*. *Framing* technique refers to cases in which introductory material reappears to delineate formal boundaries, thus acting as a musical *frame* of sorts. This technique can occur on the level of a single theme, an exposition, or an entire movement. We can identify *motivic influence* when a seemingly neutral opening figure emerges gradually as one of a work's characteristic *motivic* stamps. And, finally, *metamorphosis* involves an idea that seems introductory at first, but that is retrospectively understood to form part of the main theme proper. These modes of integration are best understood in connection with analyses that are more detailed than those undertaken in this chapter. The following chapter will thus flesh out these techniques in greater depth.

CHAPTER 3

In-depth Analysis of Types, Integration Techniques, and Selected Works

This chapter expands on the theoretical framework outlined in chapter 2 by fleshing out the individual introduction types in turn, along with commentary on how they engage various integration techniques. The chapter concludes with a discussion of ambiguous cases of introduction in Beethoven's oeuvre. First, however, more must be said on the broader distinction, raised at the head of chapter 2, between integrated and non-integrated introductions. As mentioned there, several introductory types are normally considered by theorists to function exclusively at a local level, the two common types being the accompanimental and hammer-stroke introductions. Though often accurate, this view inhibits further discussion of how a prefatory gesture may become involved in larger-scale formal processes. *Sonata Theory*, for instance, considers both of these introductory types solely in terms of their relationship to the nearest formal "space". And only upon mention of head-motives do Hepokoski and Darcy briefly consider the developmental tendencies latent in some introductory ideas.[43] In *Classical Form*, Caplin focuses entirely on the immediate function of such passages without regard to their potential for development. Since this perspective results, in part, from his minimizing "motivic content as a criterion of formal function,"[44] one cannot fault Caplin given his aims, but both his theory and that of Hepokoski and Darcy leave room for a more nuanced investigation into the role played by thematic introductions.

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[43] *Sonata Theory,* 86–88.

[44] *Classical Form*, 4.

One notable exception to this focus on the localizing aspect of introductions is found in the work of Charles Rosen, whose study of sonata forms includes an important observation concerning a special kind of melody-to-accompaniment relationship. According to Rosen, the interplay between these two parameters became more pronounced throughout the 18th century, thus leading to an intricate texture in which seemingly pedestrian figures became integral to a work's motivic palette. In focusing on accompaniment that transfigures into melody, he traces the origins of this compositional masquerade to Haydn:

> This technique is first worked out by Haydn in the symphonies of the 1770s (although there are earlier precedents for it in his and other composers' works, but less convincingly presented). The incentive to develop this motivic interchange between melody and accompaniment was no doubt the renewed interest in contrapuntal style that appears in Austria in the late 1760s, and finds its finest expression in the early 1770s with the quartets of Florian Gassmann and with Haydn's quartets op. 20. The revival of the old contrapuntal art with its ideal of equality among all voices of the polyphonic texture (an ideal generally compromised in its realization) was, however, only a halfway house. The real challenge was to retain the late eighteenth-century hierarchy of melodic voice and accompanying parts while giving the accompaniment motivic significance; only then could a true unity of texture be achieved. An accompaniment could occasionally be fashioned out of the motifs of the principal voice, but the most fruitful solution was to learn how to make themes out of formulas of conventional accompaniment. This was Haydn's discovery, and led to some of Beethoven's greatest triumphs.[45]

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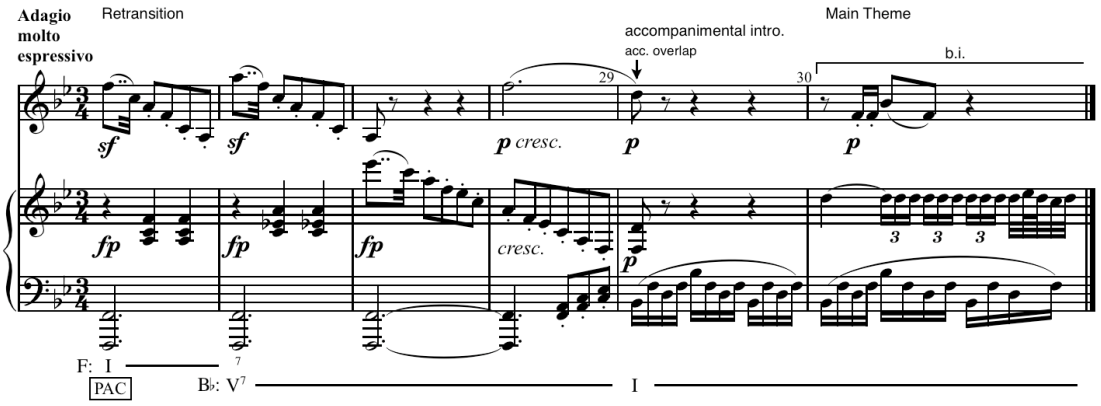
[45] Charles Rosen, *Sonata Forms*, rev. ed. (New York: Norton, 1988), 181.

As Rosen notes, Haydn's innovation found its way into Beethoven's creative well of ideas and, like a musical chameleon sliding in and out of different musical capacities, colored some of the latter composer's most innovative beginnings. Most relevant to the present discussion is the implication that accompanimental introductions are in many cases highly integrated. The following two sections further the case for accompanimental integration and extend the argument to hammer-stroke introductions as well.

Accompanimental Introductions

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Hepokoski and Darcy typically assign a modular designation of P1.0 to accompanimental introductions due to their uninterrupted, smooth connection with the start of the main theme proper. Although this label is helpful on a local level, it fails to address the large-scale involvement of prefatory rhythmic tides. The ensuing argument attempts to rectify this omission by distinguishing the categories of integrated and non-integrated introductions. It so happens that all cases of accompanimental introduction in Beethoven, save one (to be addressed later on), are integrated. Nonetheless, the distinction is useful when examining other types of initiatory units to be discussed later on in the chapter. Starting with the premise that all accompanimental introductions are of the integrated kind, I outline the various ways in which this integration takes place. Since none of these methods are mutually exclusive, it is most fruitful to envision a constellation of integration techniques that remain in dialogue with one another.

Ex. 1 Beethoven, Violin Sonata in F, Op. 24, ii, 25–30

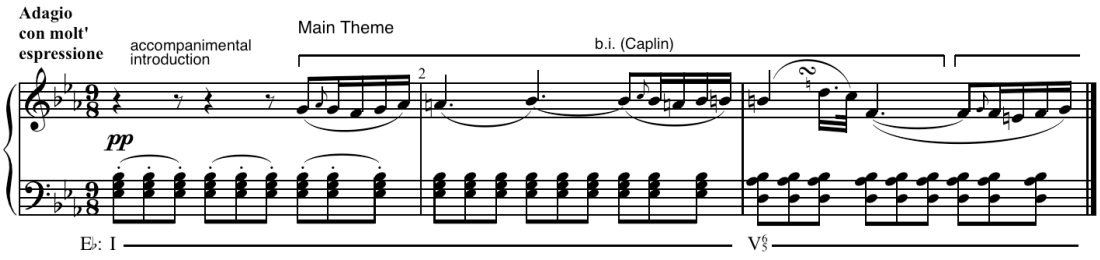


When they do occur in Beethoven's music, accompanimental introductions return, at the very least, in the recapitulation. More often than not, they engage in the boundary process of accompanimental overlap—not to be confused with elision—at the onset of this large-scale return, presumably in order to avoid a deadening of the metric pulse.[46] The middle movement of Beethoven's Violin Sonata in F, Op. 24, exemplifies this point (Ex.1). A sonata-without-development form moves from exposition space to the recapitulation through a brief retransition. Following a PAC in the subordinate key of F major, Beethoven introduces the home key's dominant seventh (E-flat) that leads the music to a point of arrival (albeit non-cadential) on the downbeat of m. 29. While this moment of articulation represents the beginning of the recapitulation, it acts only as an accompanimental introduction and not as the start of the main theme proper. As such, m. 29 participates in the boundary process of accompanimental overlap and not elision. Had

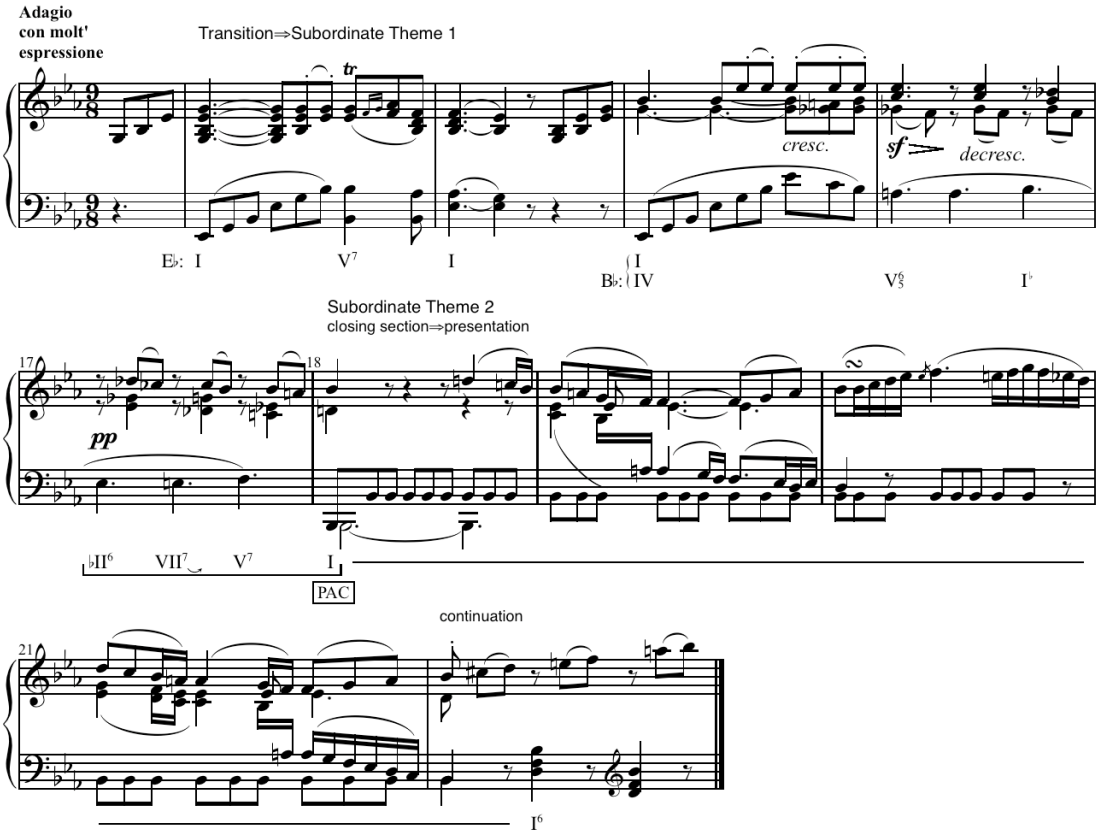
[46] See Caplin, *Classical Form*, 121, for a more detailed discussion of the difference between elision and accompanimental overlap.

the end of the retransition occurred on the downbeat of m. 30 (the start of the basic idea), we would recognize a formal elision.

Ex. 2a Beethoven, Piano Sonata in B-flat, Op. 22, ii, 1–3



Ex. 2b Beethoven, Piano Sonata in B-flat, Op. 22, ii, 13–22



As far as the recapitulatory return of an expositional thematic introduction is concerned, both integrated and non-integrated introductions act in similar ways; however, from a functional standpoint, they vary considerably. Whereas non-integrated introductions continue to fulfill the same formal role, namely, a before-the-beginning function, integrated introductions accumulate various form-functional interpretations as a given work progresses. The second movement of Beethoven's Piano Sonata in B-flat, Op. 22, illustrates what I mean.[47] As shown in example 2a, a drum bass—one of three conventionalized patterns typically found in this type of opening—occupies the first two beats of the work. When the main theme enters on the upbeat to the second measure, the "rhythmic stream" established at the outset continues to flow steadily under the melody as it traces its colorful course. Though accurate, this statement, which focuses on the before-the-beginning nature of this opening, does not do justice to the rich tapestries woven, in part, from commonplace materials. Routine gestures—in this case, the drum bass—often play out on a broad scale and carry with them various developmental possibilities and musical meanings. In fact, only rarely does one find a thematic introduction of this type that remains non-integrated—that is, serving an exclusively local

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[47] For an example of a performer's sensitivity to the function of the opening measure, see Robert Taub, *Playing the Beethoven Piano Sonatas* (Pompton Plains: Amadeus Press, 2002), 215. "I play the opening left-hand chords with a pure accompaniment touch—flat fingers gently sweeping off the keys. There is no ambiguity of role; these chords establish the tonal, melodic, and rhythmic context for the melodic line that enters later in the measure."

role.[48] In the Op. 22 sonata, we observe a common feature of movements that employ an integrated accompanimental introduction: material from the preliminary passage functions both as a before-the-beginning and a closing device. In the transition of Op. 22 (Ex. 2b), which functionally fuses with the first subordinate theme, Beethoven temporarily abandons the stable pulsating pedal tones in favor of a less grounded texture.[49] This "ornamental" modification gives the passage greater mobility to complement the modulation to B-flat major, a major "structural" change.[50] As soon as a PAC sounds in the new key at m. 18, however, Beethoven reinstates the steady heartbeat accompaniment with which the work began. What we initially hear sounds like a closing section to the transition/subordinate theme fusion, but as the music continues, it is understood to be a "false closing section," thus serving as the initiating unit of a second subordinate theme. Yet by the moment of retrospective reinterpretation, the notion of closure is irreversibly wedded to the accompanimental figure's compositional rhetoric. From a logical standpoint, it comes as no surprise that opening material would be reused

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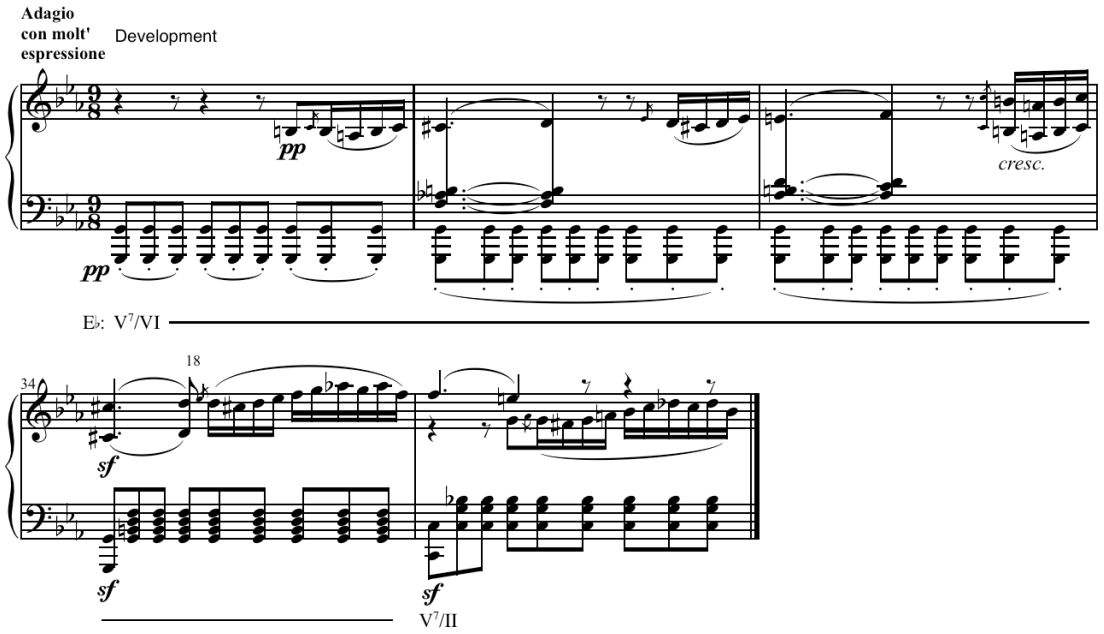
[48] For an example of an introduction that does not yield further development, see m.1 of the second movement of Violin Sonata in F major, Op. 24,

[49] Fusion refers to "the merging of two formal functions within a single unit" (*Classical Form*, 255)

[50] The distinction between structural and ornamental changes comes from Caplin's *Classical Form*; however, the context within which he uses these terms is not preserved here. Whereas Caplin uses the terms to compare analogous passages within a single movement (e.g., to compare an exposition with its corresponding recapitulation), I am employing them here to differentiate surface-level features from foundational ones. See *Classical Form*, 161.

to express a sense of closing down given the tendency of the music of this period to progress from a state of rest, through motion, back to rest. This symmetrical structure—rest, motion, rest—albeit oversimplified, lends itself well to a bookending technique that reuses opening material.

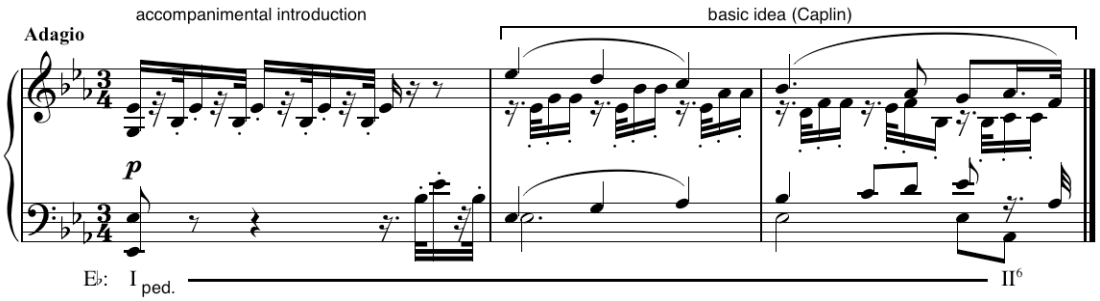
Ex. 2c Beethoven, Piano Sonata in B-flat, Op. 22, ii, 31–35



Continuing on in the piece, we see that the functional duality of using an accompanimental passage as both an opening and ending comes to the fore at the onset of the development section (Ex. 2c). There, a tentative pedal tone (G) sounds at first like it is introducing a new beginning—accentuated by an entirely new harmonic color—but then takes on the characteristics of a standing on the dominant, a possible post-cadential

function.[51] The mounting tension created by this gradual shift in function is perfectly suited to the expressive demands of a development and demonstrates well Beethoven's ability to cloak the simplest of ideas in a variety of guises as dictated by the form.[52] This phenomenon adds an interesting dimension to Wallace Berry's distinction between progressive and recessive dynamics in that the same idea can be used by the composer to project both a sense of opening up and closing down. This perspective seemingly heightens the role of context in determining function while somewhat lessening

Ex. 3a Beethoven, Symphony in B-flat, Op. 60, ii, 1–3



[51] Despite the obvious function of this passage as a temporal beginning, its build up over a dominant seventh chord recalls retransition technique as it anticipates the imminent arrival of a fresh harmonic start.

[52] For another example of a dual-functioning accompaniment figure, see String Quartet in F, Op. 18, ii, m.1, mm. 106–108; also note the end of the development section—mm. 54–58 in particular—where fragments of the main theme, supported by the same accompaniment pattern, presage a full return. See also Caplin's discussion of situations in which "a retransition . . . starts with reference to the opening material from the main theme" (*Classical Form*, 159).

the importance of musical content *per se*. In other words, the temporal placement of material clarifies potential functional meanings expressed by the music itself.[53]

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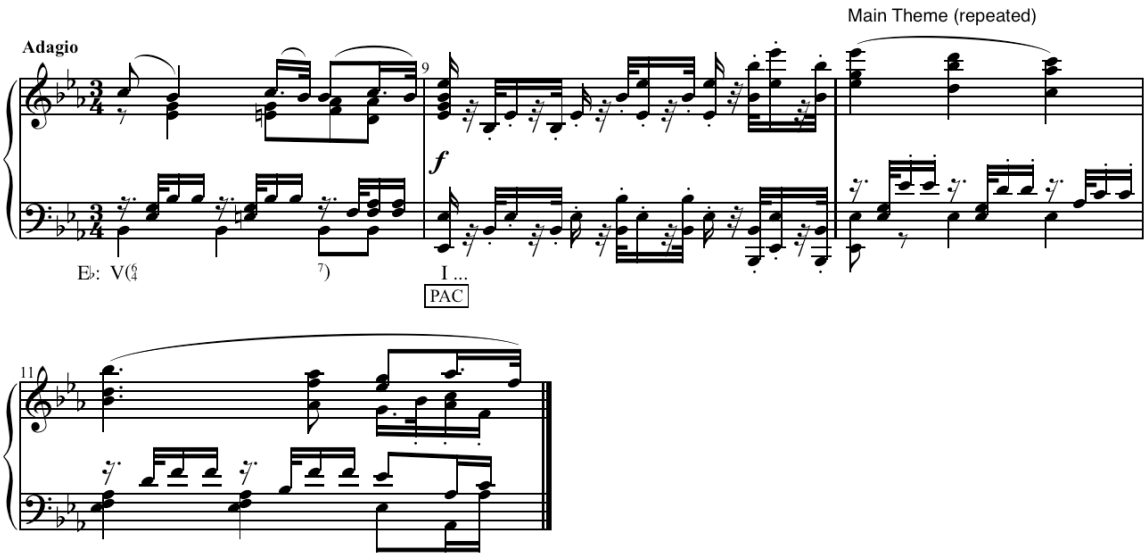
[53] Wallace Berry, *Structural Functions in Music* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1976), 7.

It is appropriate here to recall Tovey's remark that "the first condition for a correct analysis of any piece of music is that the composition must be regarded as a process in time." See Donald Francis Tovey, *A Companion to Beethoven's Pianoforte Sonatas* rev. ed. (London: ABRSM Publishing, 1998), 1.

The functional ambiguity of content on a higher structural level is expressed clearly in the opening movement of Beethoven's Piano Trio in E-flat, Op.1/1. Here, the main theme makes use of a melodic pattern that is traditionally associated with closing sections: 8–b7–6-nat-7–8. When this same configuration is used over a tonic pedal in a post-cadential setting, it becomes evident that context takes priority over content; the aforementioned succession of melodic tones was clearly a viable option for beginning a work despite its prevalent use in closing sections. See also: String Quartet in E-flat, Op. 74, i. For a deformational variant of this progression in a main theme setting, see Symphony in E-flat, Op. 55, i, mm. 1–11, as discussed in Hepokoski and Darcy, *Sonata Theory*, p. 92.

Interesting to note in conjunction with main themes supported by this harmonic progression is their tendency to express what Hepokoski and Darcy have termed tonal overdetermination, whereby multiple authentic cadences in P-space "produce an effect of local redundancy." (*Sonata Theory*, 91) Multiple affirmations of the home key allow the composer to assert its dominance in wake of a heavily-emphasized subdominant harmony. The *locus classicus* of this effect is surely Mozart's Piano Sonata in F, K. 332, mm. 1–22. A number of scholars have remarked on its emphatic statement of tonic within the main theme group. See, for example, Rosen, *Sonata Forms*, 245–46; *Sonata Theory*, 74–75.

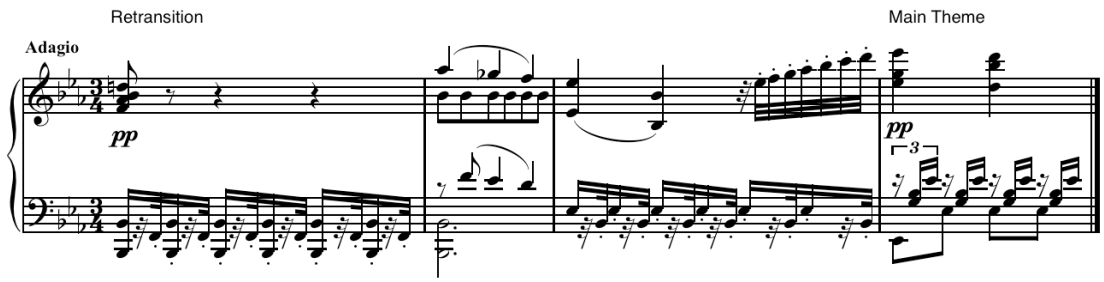
Ex. 3b Beethoven, Symphony in B-flat, Op. 60, ii, 8–11



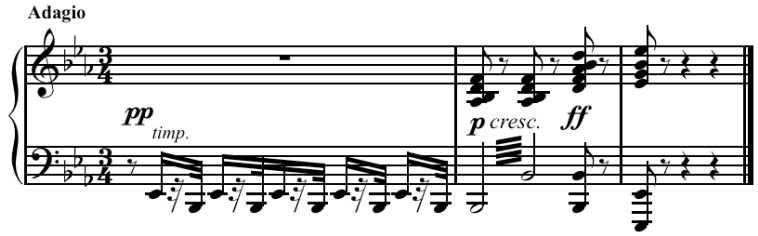
The second movement of Beethoven's Fourth Symphony, Op. 60 is an even more sophisticated example that remains in dialogue with the notion of beginning-end dual functionality, while bringing a strong sense of motivic development to bear. The work begins with what sounds at first like a typical thematic introduction (Ex. 3a), setting the rhythmic profile of the accompaniment. When the same material returns in various forms throughout the movement, however, its initial status as a local framing function demands reevaluation. For instance, the figure's return at m. 9 (Ex. 3b) elides with the end of the main theme proper and functions locally to emphasize the goal tonic, as supported dynamically by the brief forte outburst. In this context, the dotted rhythmic figure fulfills more of a post-cadential role than an introductory one, and in light of this newfound purpose, the ensuing repeat of the main theme occupies only eight measures—one fewer

than the initial statement that is preceded by an introduction.[54] When the final cadence of the main theme's second iteration elides with the opening of the transition at m. 17, the tutti texture and forte marking allow the listener to experience a connection between m. 9 and the onset of a new formal section despite the absence of the characteristic rhythmic figure. Thus, the thematic introduction delineates the boundaries between statements of the main theme as well as alluding to the boundary of the main theme group and the transition.

Ex. 3c Beethoven, Symphony in B-flat, Op. 60, ii, 62–65



Ex. 3d Beethoven, Symphony in B-flat, Op. 60, ii, 101–03



[54] It could be argued that there is a true elision here where the idea is post-cadential and introductory at the same time. This view is perfectly viable and does not take away from the dual function of the passage.

A more literal development of the opening gesture occurs at the end of the exposition where the motive is used first as a restful whisper underlying the closing section and then provides the sole material for a retransition that injects the music with a newfound energy as it moves toward a return of the main theme (Ex. 3c).[55] Since this passage marks the end of a large formal section (the exposition), we can identify a more pronounced case of the motivic link between beginnings and ends that is set forth by the main theme. In fact, a large-scale binding of sections using the same material continues throughout the sonata-rondo form[56]—a sewing together, so to speak, of differentiated formal units. Evidently, the opening measure provides much more than a rhythmic flow over which the main theme proper emerges. As an integral part of the compositional whole, the initial murmur of the second violins becomes a form-defining vector pointing the music ever forward while incorporating past events into a steadfast formal trajectory. Moreover, the structural importance of this introductory breath was surely not lost on the

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[55] For another instance of thematic introduction serving a retransitional role, see Beethoven's String Trio in E-flat, Op. 3, iv, mm. 57–65.

[56] Charles Rosen identifies this work as being in slow-movement form (essentially a sonata form movement without a development section). His account is historically-grounded and musical, but does not address the obvious connection between this movement and sonata-rondo form. This oversight is likely due to Beethoven's use of main theme material in the development section (C of the sonata-rondo form), which Rosen accounts for by invoking the notion of a secondary development (i.e., further development of expositional materials in the recapitulation). While acknowledging the importance of Rosen's position, I privilege a sonata-rondo reading in my analysis. See Rosen, *Sonata Forms*, 106–112.

composer who recalls the motive one last time in the coda where, in between two violent strokes of the orchestra, it exhales a final whisper in the voice of a timpani (Ex. 3d).

Related to the Fourth Symphony introduction is the finale of the String Quartet in A minor, Op. 132, where an established motive becomes part of the accompaniment figuration—the opposite procedure as that found in the Symphony, in which a conventionalized introductory idea becomes motivic as the piece progresses.[57] Introduced by a recitative-like passage that recalls the opening movement of the quartet, the Allegro relocates the last two bars of the prior section's melodic voice—the F-E motive—to an inner part, where it becomes part of a rousing accompaniment figuration that introduces the main theme (Ex. 4). This use of a simple half-step motion—a fundamental component of the work's motivic fabric—exemplifies an increasingly prevalent feature of Beethoven's later style: no idea, no matter how minute, escapes development. In this movement, the motivic connection just outlined carries with it cyclical implications. As Daniel Chua writes, "the music is returning to its origins...And, just to make it blatantly obvious, Beethoven...injects the semitonal cells of the motto-motif into the

[57] See the finale of String Quartet in B-flat, Op. 130, for an instance of motivic development on the level of a single movement. Beethoven uses the viola's opening octaves to great coloristic effect by sprinkling its staccato articulation throughout the voices and verticalizing the octave leap in order to obtain a melodic line (see mm. 42–43, 46–47, 50–51, and analogous places). In addition, the composer makes use of the introduction in many of the standard ways discussed thus far. Observe, for instance, the pedal point in mm. 25–32 where the opening is used to frame a larger section, and the exciting retransitional passage in mm. 210–225 that employs the verticalized-octave version of the motive. Once again, the highly-integrated development of seemingly trivial accompaniment patterns seems to emerge only in Beethoven's late style.

accompaniment....”[58] This author’s description of the second movement illustrates the degree to which the Op. 132 quartet is germinally saturated:

> Every moment is one of narcissistic reflection, as the motivic shape shuffles between the parts, without even the disguise of retrograde or inversion devices. Indeed, the motivic element is so crystallized and so tightly interlocked that the principle of unity inverts into one of monotony, even to the point of organic disunity.[59]

Taking this idea further, several authors have noted motivic relationships that carry through a number of Beethoven’s late works, including the last five string quartets.[60] To be sure, the pervasive use of musical kernels is no illusion; however, one might wonder whether its importance, as evidenced by the amount of attention it has garnered, is overstated. Leonard Meyer observes that the weakening of compositional constraints in the 19th-century yielded a concept of unity based on similarity relationships, one that was consistent with the prevailing ideology of oneness and easily understood by the bourgeoisie. As a result, we must be cautious in assuming that all discernible relationships serve aesthetic ends: some exist to facilitate composition rather than

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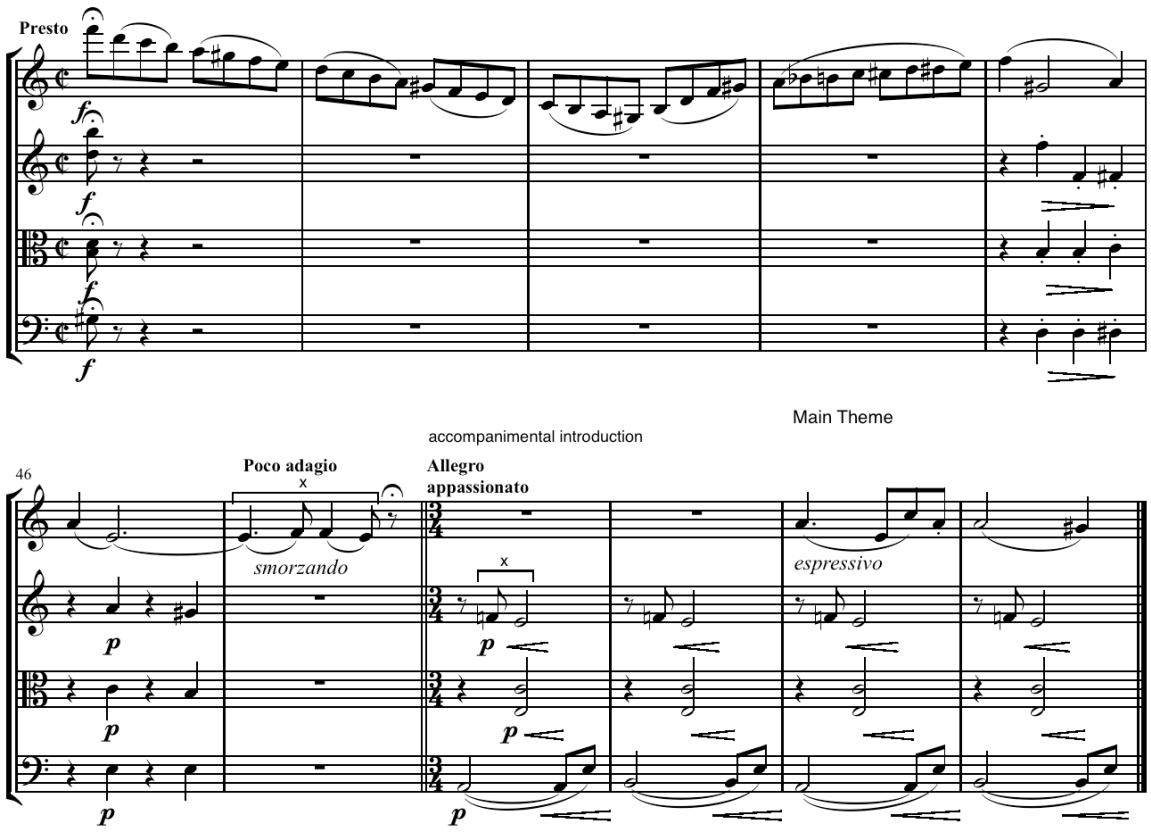
[58] Daniel K. L. Chua, *The “Galitzin” Quartets of Beethoven: opp. 127, 132, 130* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1995), 159.

[59] Ibid., 110. For a similar position, see Joseph de Marliave, *Beethoven’s Quartets* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2004), 339–40.

[60] See, for example, William Kinderman, “Beethoven’s Last Quartets: Threshold to a Fourth Creative Period?” in *The String Quartets of Beethoven*, ed. William Kinderman (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 282.

comprehension.[61] Within Meyer's contextual framework, it is unclear whether this fully-integrated accompanimental introduction represents a genuine motivic integration technique *per se*, one that is meant to be perceived as such, or exists as a mere byproduct of Beethoven's penchant for motivic saturation in his late style.[62]

Ex. 4 Beethoven, String Quartet in A minor, Op. 132, iv, 41–51



[61] Leonard B. Meyer, "A Pride of Prejudices; Or, Delight in Diversity", *Music Theory Spectrum* 13/2 (Autumn, 1991), 241–51.

[62] Beethoven's growing obsession with germinal materials in his late work might stem, in part, from his studious return to the music of Bach and Handel, in which motivic development plays an integral role. See Lockwood, *Beethoven*, 366–76.

In addition to motivic and framing integration techniques, one also finds metamorphic accompanimental introductions in Beethoven's work.[63] A prime example of this procedure can be found in the opening movement of Beethoven's *Waldstein* sonata. Lewis Lockwood's quip that the work "begins like no other by Beethoven or anyone else" confirms the unusual experience created by an apparent accompaniment figure transforming itself into the initial part of the main theme proper (i.e., $P^{1.1}$ in Hepokoski and Darcy's terms or, to use Caplin's vocabulary, the "basic idea").[64] Lockwood's remark also reminds us of Rosen's observation stated at the beginning of this chapter concerning Beethoven's tendency to fashion themes from conventional accompaniment patterns. As shown in Ex. 5, a conventional drum bass in the low register launches what is later understood to be the first statement of a 4-measure idea. Sounding at first like a typical accompaniment figuration, this gesture becomes part and parcel of the basic idea only when the entire unit is repeated down a step.[65] As far as I am aware, no one has acknowledged the conversation between this opening and the rhetoric of thematic

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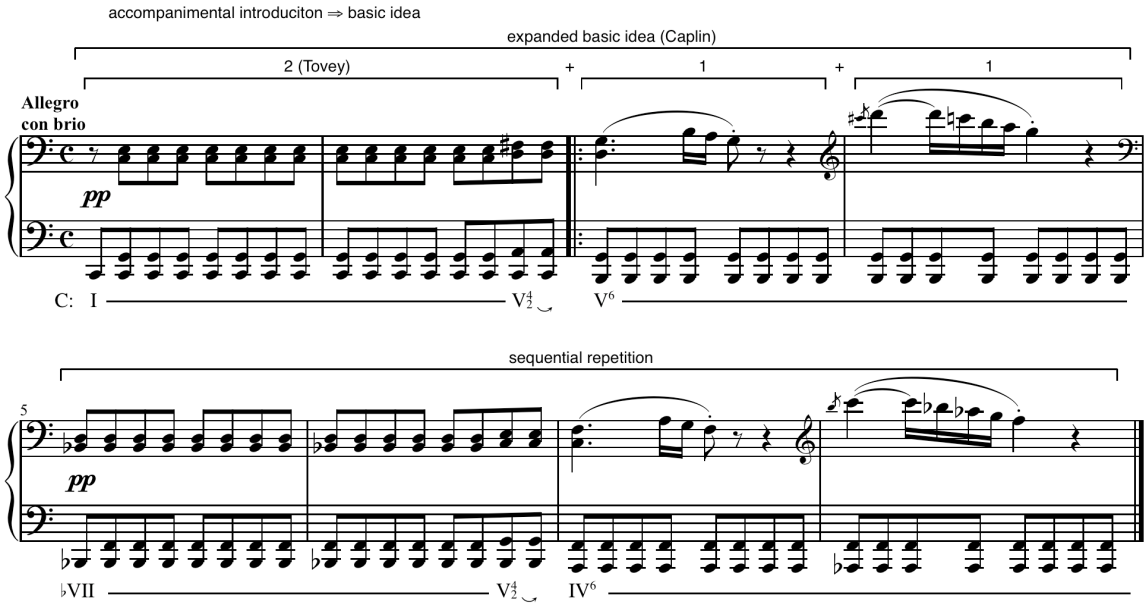
[63] Recall that the integration technique of metamorphosis involves a retrospective shift in perception. In this case, what seems at first like an accompanimental introduction is later understood to be part of the main theme proper.

[64] *Beethoven*, 294. As Lockwood notes, the oddity of this opening lies also with its tonal language, in particular, the very early move within the exposition to E major (III). The tonicization of IV in mm. 6–7 is also a noteworthy feature, but precedents of this harmonic move in opening themes can be found in the revolutionary Op. 31 sonatas. See Piano Sonata in G, Op. 31/1, i (whose subordinate key is also the major mediant) and Piano Sonata in D minor, Op. 31/2, i.

[65] As Caplin explains, the repetition of a basic idea helps to define the boundaries thereof. *Classical Form*, 10.

Ex. 5 Beethoven, Piano Sonata in C ("Waldstein"), Op. 53, 1–8



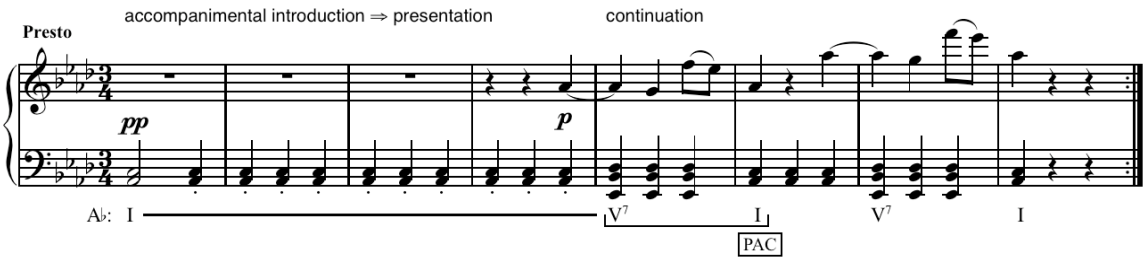
introductions. For Caplin, the Waldstein's beginning exemplifies the deviation technique of expansion, which involves "the internal lengthening of the constituent members of a formal function."[66] Another view, put forth by Tovey, sees the initial four measures as a subdivided whole (2+1+1).[67] Though similar on the surface, these two views differ in an important way. Whereas Caplin understands the opening to be an internal blowing up of a two-measure phrase-structural unit, Tovey seems to identify a genuine four-measure group. Caplin's view is advantageous in that it contextualizes the phrase within a historical framework of normative formal procedures—basic ideas typically last two measures—but it says nothing about the stand-alone two-measure group with which the piece opens. On the contrary, Tovey's perspective acknowledges the separability of the

[66] Ibid., 254, 264n.28.

[67] *Companion*, 150.

initial measures, as evidenced by the presence of a "2" in his analysis. The concept of metamorphosis—of "becoming"—proposes a middle ground between these competing views: the music begins with a two-measure accompanimental introduction (Tovey) that is then reinterpreted as part of a fully-integrated four-measure unit (Caplin).[68]

Ex. 6 Beethoven, Bagatelle in A-flat, Op. 33/7, 1–8



Beethoven's seventh bagatelle from the Op. 33 set involves a similar case, albeit somewhat less complex from a form-functional point of view (Ex. 6). Once again we observe that an accompaniment-like drum bass in thirds constitutes the beginning of the main theme. Unlike the Op. 53 sonata, however, the lonely pulse accounts for the entire 4-m. initiating phrase, in which no deviation techniques are present. It could be argued, of course, that dividing the left-hand's quarter-note figure into two distinct parts (i.e., a basic idea and its repetition) is an exercise in *petitio principii*, but this does not affect the more

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[68] This solution adds a layer of complexity to Caplin's phrase expansion technique in that it proposes a distinction between the *Waldstein* excerpt and his in-text example, K. 550, iii, 1–3. The latter does not converse with introduction rhetoric whereas the former does. See *Classical Form*, 40.

important point at play, namely that these measures function as a formal initiation.[69] The point is that composers employ specific techniques in order to express different temporal functions. In this case, a functional beginning is expressed through tonal stability (the harmony is tonic throughout) and context (the passage precedes a cadential phrase).[70] To view this passage as an introduction followed by a cadential phrase is nonsensical from a form functional point of view in that it requires us to accept both the idea of an "introduction" to nothing and a "closure" of nothing.

When considering metamorphic introductions more generally, one observes that an apparent preliminary passage does not disrupt the normative quadratic structure of the theme, which still comprises an even number of measures. In other words, such an opening is reinterpreted as belonging to the main theme proper and thus participates in the standard grouping-structure of main themes. Although symmetry alone does not account for an idea's inclusion in the theme proper (as opposed to its being merely introductory), it is interesting to note how Beethoven tends to use a quadratic grouping structure in metamorphic introductions—perhaps his way of distinguishing them from genuine accompanimental introductions. This cannot be said for other kinds of accompanimental introductions where the initial measure results in asymmetry, thus further supporting Caplin's notion of framing functions.

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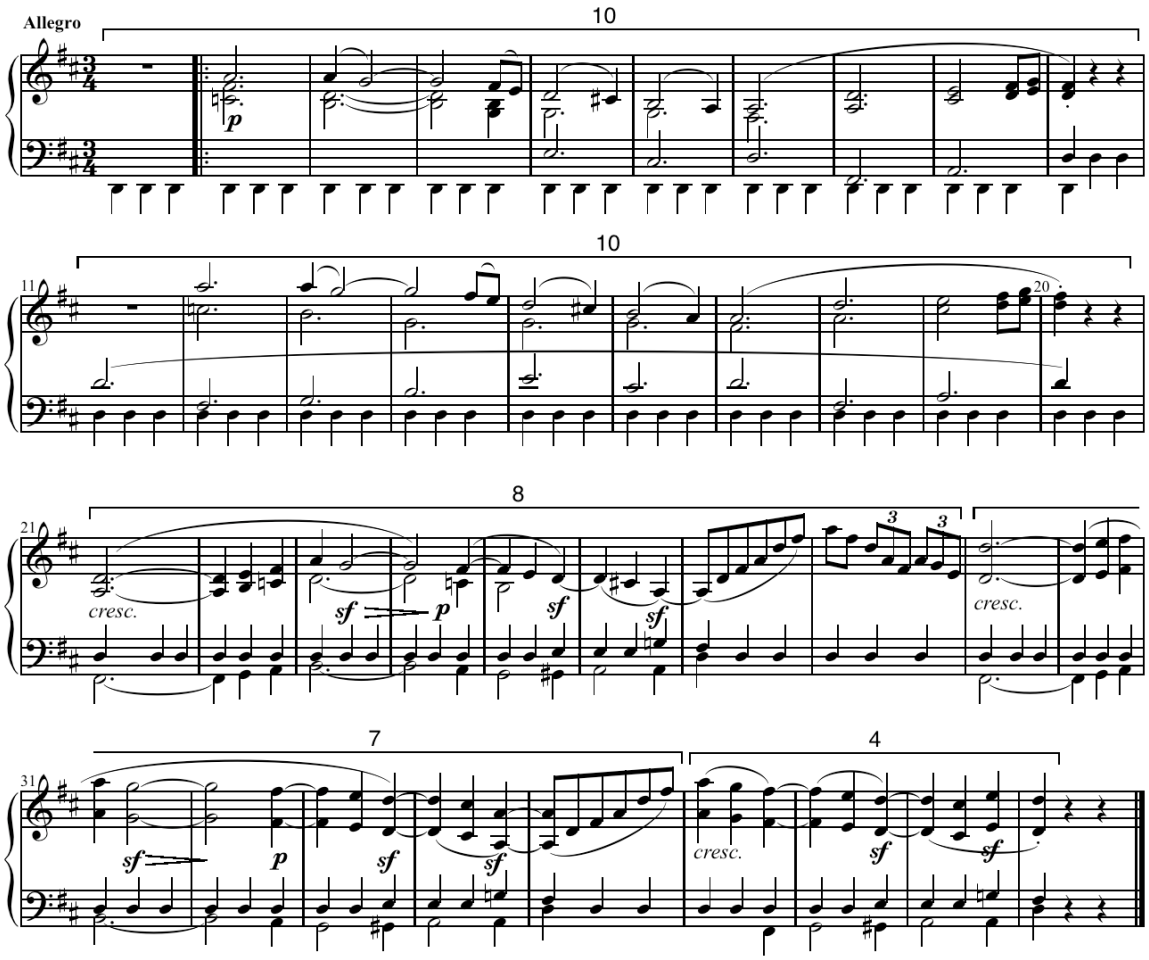
[69] See Warren Darcy, "Review of *Classical Form* by William E. Caplin*," Music Theory Spectrum* 22/1 (Spring, 2000), *123–24,* for a critique of Caplin's penchant for "quadratic syntax".

[70] One could also argue for the existence of an implied melody that is "closed" by the cadential figure that follows.

Ex. 7 Beethoven, Piano Sonata in D, Op. 28, 1–39



Beethoven's Piano Sonata in D, Op. 15, (Ex. 7) presents a case in which the boundary between introduction and main theme is thrown into question in an interesting way. At first glance, the opening measure both appears and sounds like a clear-cut case of a simple accompanimental, non-metamorphic, introduction. But as the theme moves forward, its transformational quality becomes apparent. By analogy, the tenor voice's entry in the left hand at m. 11, which unfolds as a long sweeping line, binds the opening ten measures into a single unit, such that mm. 11–20 are heard as a varied repetition of

mm. 1–10. In other words, we can retrospectively understand m. 1 to be a real part of the theme proper. In addition, the ever-shortening breaths beginning at m. 21, which are so essential to the expressive quality of the main theme, can only be felt in relation to an evenly-structured initiating idea: a large-scale grouping of 10+10+8+7+4 lends a mounting sense of energy to the theme as it drives toward its final cadence. To identify the first measure merely as an accompanimental introduction undermines the music's beautifully-crafted architectural curve, and to lump it together immediately with the main theme ignores the fugacious and subtle qualities that make Beethoven's art so rich.[71]

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, standardized figurations dominate accompanimental introductions. In fact, all of the metamorphic introductions discussed to this point employ the same conventional accompaniment pattern—the drum bass. On occasion, however, one finds more intricately-woven passages that exhibit introductory qualities. The final movement of Beethoven's Violin Sonata in G, Op. 30/3, exemplifies this technique (Ex. 8). An interesting line in itself, the opening four measures have thematic potential from the outset, yet one cannot deny the sense of anticipation that these bars bring about and the distinctly preparatory quality that they project. The repetitious figure and pedal tone in the bass conjure images of a "vamp," somewhat akin to those found in broadway musicals, but much more fluid in texture. Although this music

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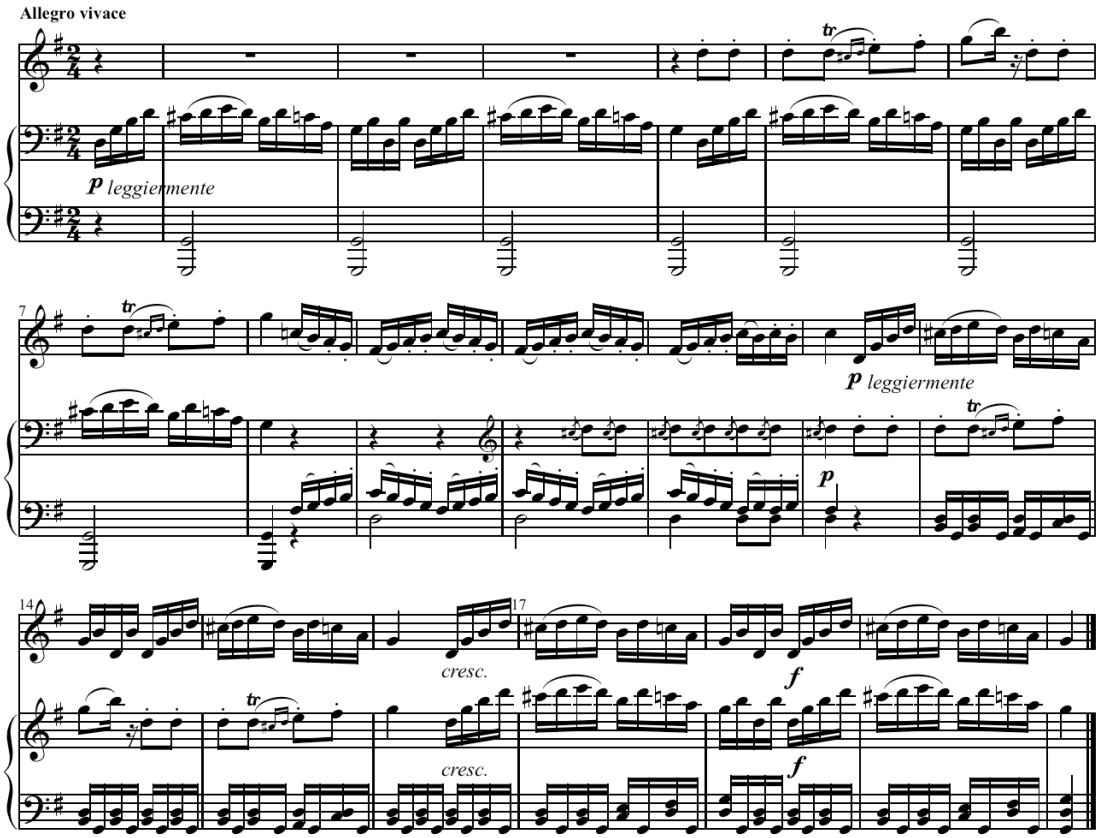
[71] In line with the idea that all introductions remain in dialogue with a set of standard introductory procedures, we can further observe that the first measure of Op. 28 also participates in broader motivic and framing processes, the latter playing out on a movement-wide scale. See the movement's closing measures.

is so clearly part of the main theme (especially beginning at the upbeat to m. 17), it would be analytically simplistic to disregard the evident rapport between main theme and

Ex. 8 Beethoven, Violin Sonata in G, Op. 30/3, iv, 1–20



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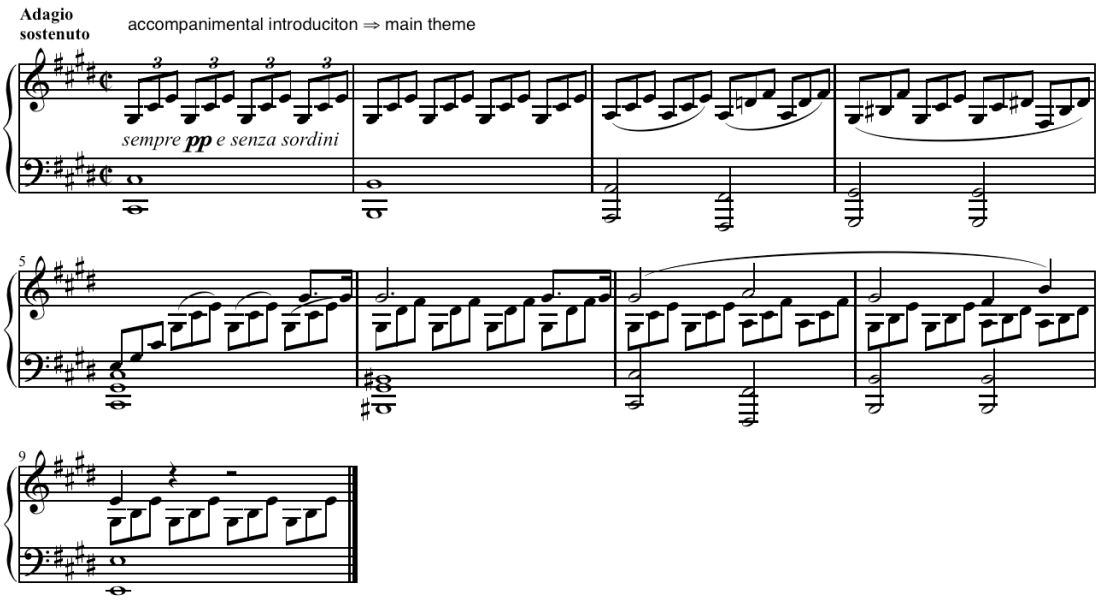
introduction functions. Hesitance to accept this rather complex formal interpretation is understandable given its rarity in Beethoven's music, but a glance at 19th-century repertoire confirms the importance of motivic-metamorphic openings in compositional practice. In fact, one could conceivably argue that Chopin lifted the technique from Beethoven. Consider, for instance, the similarities between the Op. 30/3 passage just discussed and the first measures of Chopin's Op. 28/3 prelude (in the same key). Or the

tempestuous rumblings of the finale of Beethoven's *Appassionata* and how Chopin emulates them in his *Revolutionary Etude*, both of which maintain their "tragic power to the end".[72] Admittedly there is some variability in these works' respective relationships to introduction function, but to deny the existence of a common thread seems short-sighted.

Ex. 9 Beethoven, Piano Sonata in C# minor, Op. 27/2, i, 1–20



[72] Lockwood, *Beethoven*, 298. Lockwood's remark pertains solely to Beethoven's Op. 57, but the kinship between this work and Chopin's Op. 10/12 extends far beyond the formal sphere into the realm of emotional content. The painful circumstances under which Chopin composed his etude provide fertile ground for expressive analogies to the *Appassionata* despite Chopin's apparent distaste for Beethoven's music. See Wayne C. Petty's "Chopin and the Ghost of Beethoven," *19th-Century Music* 22/3 (Spring, 1999), 281–99, for an expert account of some fundamental problems involved in studying the relationship between the two composers.

One final example, the *Adagio sostenuto* of Beethoven's *Moonlight* Sonata, demonstrates even further the extent to which the perceptual border between accompanimental introduction and theme can be blurred (Ex. 9). Notoriously difficult to analyze, this famously-titled work led Berlioz to write that "the Adagio is one of those poems that human language does not know how to qualify."[73] Even so, a general consensus can be found in the literature as to how this work is organized—a "blended" sonata-fantasia of sorts, one that retains elements of both formal types.[74] As Charles Rosen notes, "the harmonic plan of the first movement gives the impression of a free improvisation, but it is guided both by convention and by Beethoven's previous treatment of the minor mode."[75] From a formal perspective, both Rosen and Tovey recognize—much as Hepokoski and Darcy would, had they included the work in their treatise—a dialogue with sonata form. Whereas Rosen is quick to conflate the "second group" and development section in search of a sonata-form analogy, Tovey treads more carefully by avoiding explicit mention of the ubiquitous formal type.[76] More specifically, he describes the movement as "a continuous melody on an enormous scale with elements of development and recapitulation."[77] Despite these differences, both authors identify the first four measures as an introductory unit. But to relegate the movement's opening to this

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[73] Berlioz quoted in Charles Rosen, *Beethoven's Piano Sonatas: A Short Companion* (New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 2002), 156.

[74] Lockwood, *Beethoven*, 221. See also Robert Taub's remark that the *sonata* "lacks a second theme" in *Playing*, 125.

[75] *Beethoven's Piano Sonatas*, 157.

[76] Ibid., 158.

[77] Tovey, *Companion*, 104.

prefatory status is to miss out on an intricate aspect of the formal discourse: mm. 1–4 fulfill a crucial main-theme requirement of sonata form in that they confirm the home key. A more nuanced view recognizes a metamorphic introduction at the theme level, whereby an accompanimental introduction (characterized by the lack of melody) becomes main theme.[78]

Hammer-Stroke Introductions

As with accompanimental introductions, the "conceptual separability" of an opening idea from the ensuing main theme becomes an issue when analyzing hammer-stroke beginnings. In Sonata Theory, a tripartite nomenclature accounts for the varying degrees of relatedness that a preliminary gesture can express. In order of ascending cohesiveness, the grades are as follows: a brief, in-tempo introduction; P^0; and $P^{1.0}$ (see again the discussion in chapter 1, pp. 14–18). Under this system, an introduction that returns in the recapitulation would be considered part of P-space (i.e., P0 or P1.0), whereas prefatory music that does not return would more likely be categorized as a brief, in-tempo introduction. As Hepokoski and Darcy explain, however, "qualifications like these inevitably lead to situations that are open to interpretation," and "such distinctions are not always so unequivocally made."[79] One sub-type of hammer-stroke introduction brings with it an ambiguity that is difficult to represent using the modular system as it stands. The opening movement of Beethoven's String Quartet in B-flat, Op. 18/6, shows

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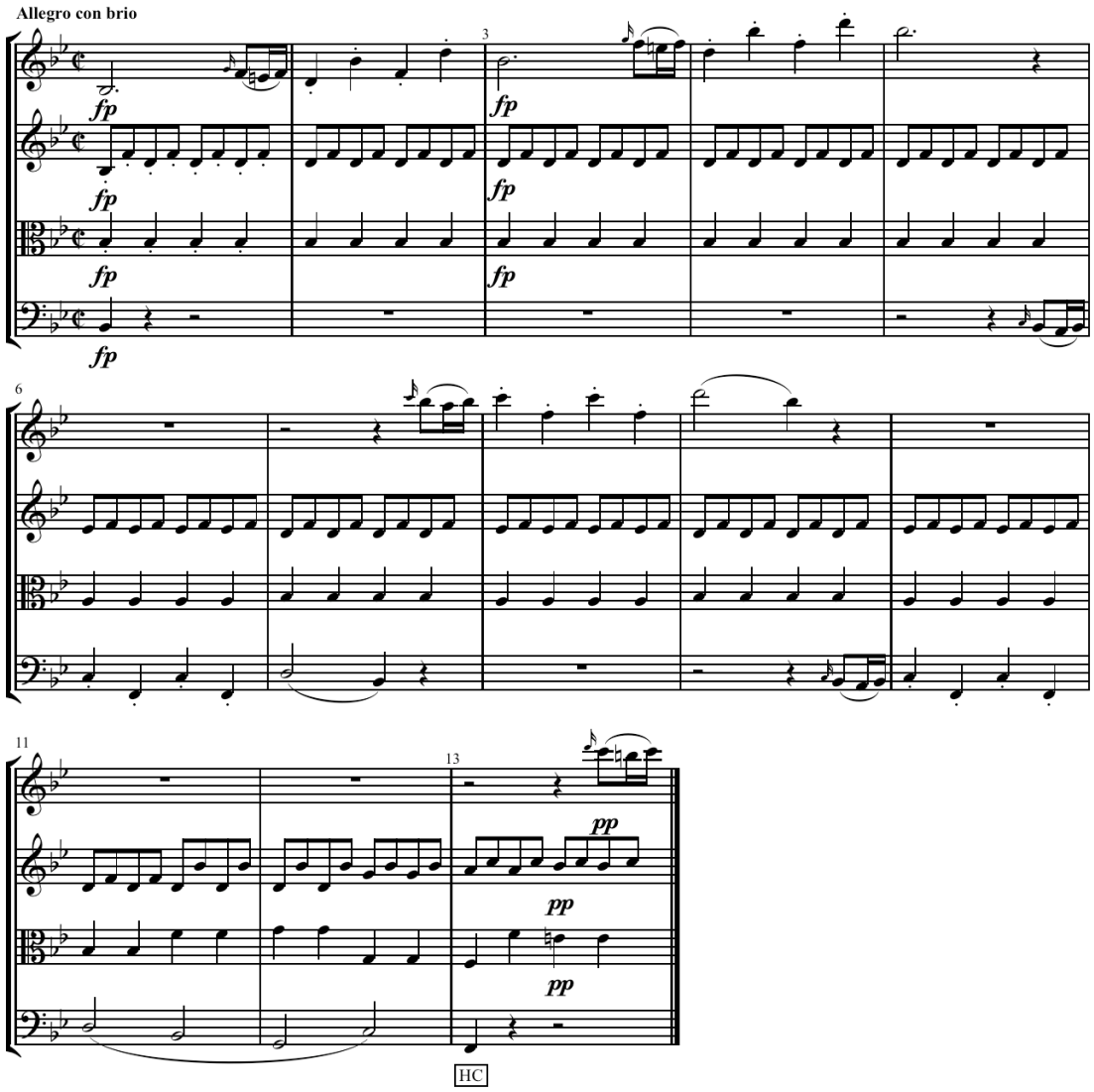
[78] When considered in connection with mm. 3–5, the presence of A–F#–G#–C in the bass at mm. 40–42 invites comparison to the framing technique outlined earlier in this chapter.

[79] *Sonata Theory*, 87.

how an initial blow can give rise to an accompaniment figure over which the main theme unfolds (Ex. 10). In such cases, it is often difficult to tell whether or not the opening measure is part of the basic idea. This opening is problematic because the forte-piano

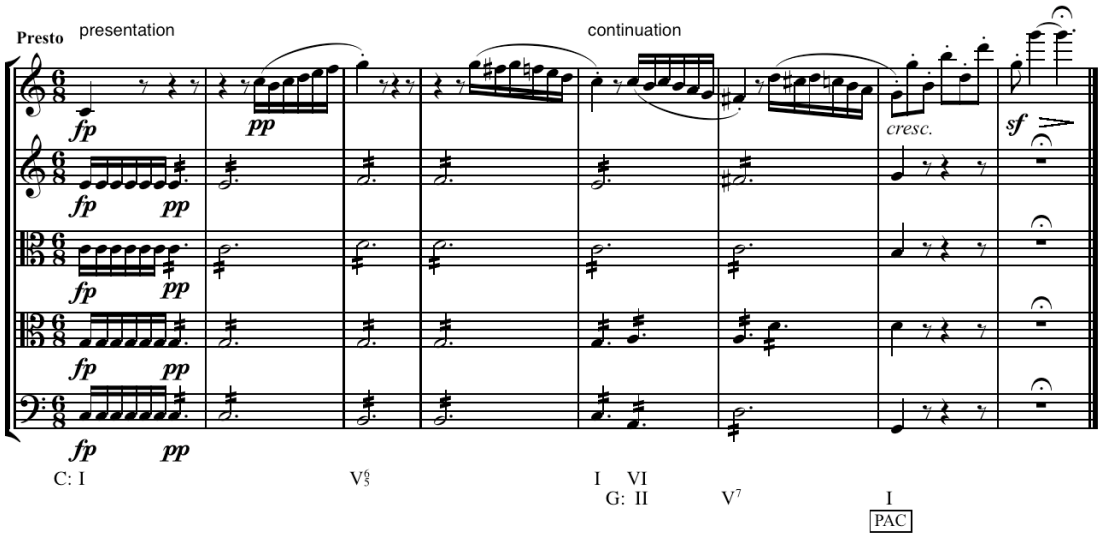
Ex. 10 Beethoven, String Quartet in B-flat, Op. 18/6, i, 1–13



dynamic marking is repeated on the downbeat of m. 3, thus giving the impression that the basic idea is being restated. Looking ahead to the half-cadence at m. 13, however, one

understands the asymmetrical grouping by reinterpreting the initial measure as a hybrid introduction of sorts that exhibits both accompanimental and hammer-stroke characteristics.[80] Thus, the large-scale grouping structure is understood as follows: 1 + 8 + 4. In modular terms, this case seems to call for a more complex decimal interpretation. Though one could settle for 1.0, the designator 1.1.0 seems more fitting to the situation.[81]

Ex. 11a Beethoven, String Quintet in C, Op. 29, iv, 1–8

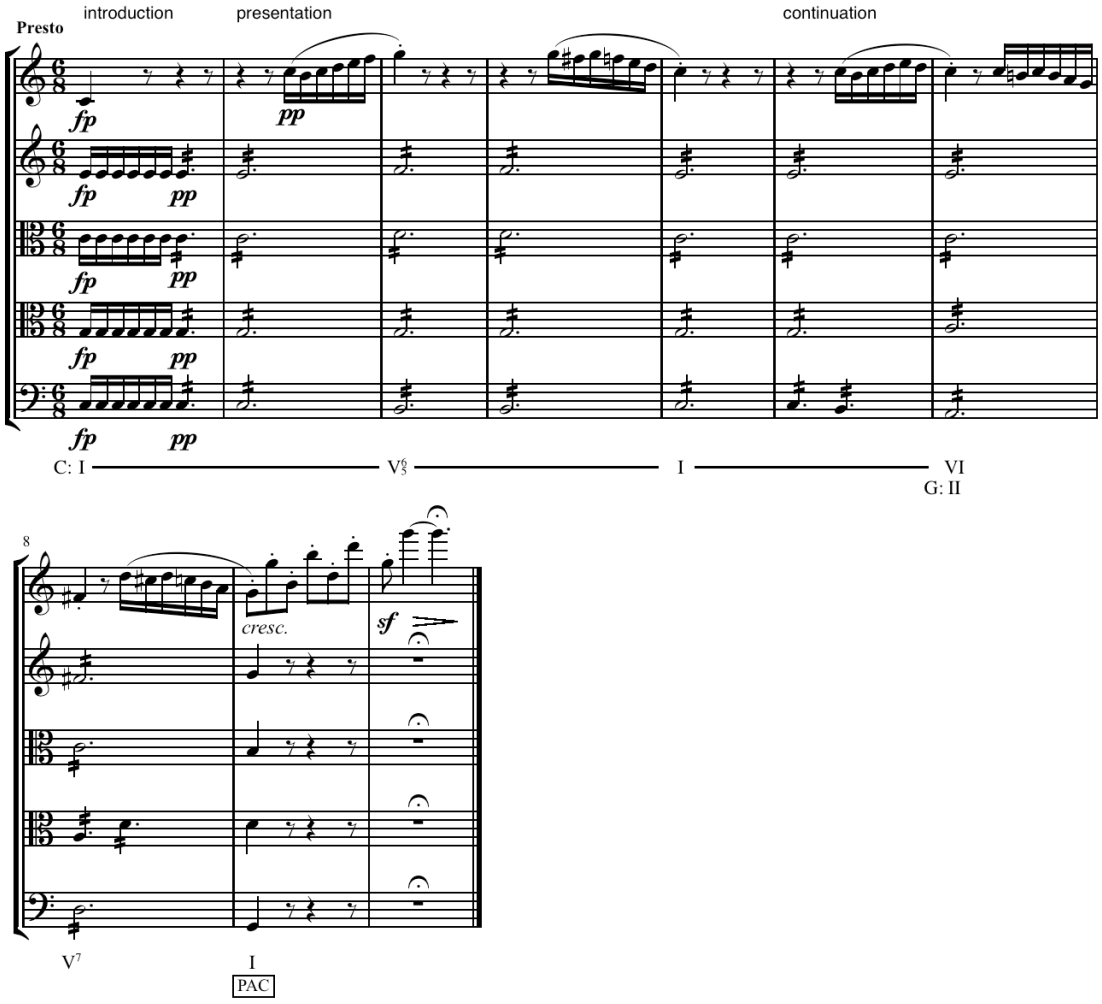


[80] Caplin identifies a reinterpreted half cadence at m. 13, where a brief modulation to the dominant is immediately followed by a return to the home key (*Classical Form*, 57).

[81] See also Beethoven's String Quartet in E minor, Op. 59/2, iv, 1–10. Leonard Ratner's view of this passage (i.e., Op. 59/2) does not acknowledge an introduction—rather, he parses the theme into three parts (2 + 2 + 2.5 + 2.5)—however, his interpretation resonates with mine in that it aims to highlight the tendency of classical composers to incorporate asymmetries into superficially even-numbered phrases. See Leonard G. Ratner, *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style* (New York: Schirmer, 1980), 76.

Before leaving the subject of hammer-stroke introductions, it is worth reinforcing the point that thematic introductions in Beethoven's music are multi-faceted and exhibit an extraordinarily rich tapestry of procedures that are in constant communication with one another. Consider, for example, Beethoven's String Quintet in C, Op. 29 (Ex. 11a). According to traditional accounts of form, the finale's opening eight measures contain nothing introductory; however, this interpretation becomes evident only upon completion of the presentation phrase. Our initial experience could easily lead us to expect a basic idea that begins only with the second measure, and the facility with which one can reconstruct the passage to reflect this hearing demonstrates the viability of such a reading (Ex. 11b). Attentive listening along these lines invites one to hear a hammer-stroke opening that gives way to an accompanimental introduction, which then becomes the basic idea. Furthermore, this interaction between introductory types and integration techniques allows us to maintain distinct theoretical categories while avoiding restrictive definitional traps.

Ex. 11b Beethoven, String Quintet in C, Op. 29, iv, 1–10 (rewrite)



Generative Introductions

If we adhere rigidly to the definitions of *Sonata Theory*, generative introductions are not considered to be tightly bound to the onset of the main theme. Rather, they are categorized with the "slow introduction" subset of parageneric spaces—one of two frequently encountered "accretions" that gained prominence in the latter half of the eighteenth century.[82] As an expressive function, the concept of a generative introduction

[82] The other subset being "codas"; *Sonata Theory*, 281.

is provocative. And because such openings provide fertile ground for interpretations of meaning, they bode well with Hepokoski and Darcy's agenda to heighten the importance of hermeneutic endeavors. However, classifying these beginnings alongside other parageneric formal elements presents a theoretical inconsistency. An examination of the repertoire reveals that many generative introductions exhibit a fluidity of both textural and thematic material that links them more closely with P-space than some zero-modules. It thus seems more accurate (and analytically fruitful) to regard these procreant passages as *hybrids* that traverse the boundary between what Caplin calls "slow" and "thematic" introductions.

We can identify a number of features typically associated with slow and thematic introductions to assist in the analysis of hybrid introductions. Fig. 1 summarizes some important differences that serve as a basis for comparison. The features listed in this chart combine my own observations with those of Caplin, Hepokoski and Darcy.[83] That these details represent only the normative tendencies

Fig. 1 Comparative chart of slow and thematic introduction features

Parameter	Slow Introduction	Thematic Introduction
Tempo	- slower than main theme	- same as main theme
Tonality	- tonic key throughout	- tonic key
Harmony	- prominent tonicizations - emphasis on minor mode	- little or no harmonic progression

[83] See *Classical Form*, 203-08; *Sonata Theory*, 292–304.

Parameter	Slow Introduction	Thematic Introduction
Cadence	- HC (dominant goal) - PAC (elided)	- none
Grouping Structure	- two- to four-part	- one-part
Texture	- discontinuous - frequently interrupted	- homogenous
Dynamic	- initial *forte* to *piano*	- consistent - often *forte*
Affect	- heraldic to solemn - hesitant	- energetic - anticipatory - in-motion
Return	- very rare (but see Op. 13, i)	- common

of each category allows for individual elements of hybrids to be teased out and sorted according to their respective origins. In keeping with *Sonata Theory*'s concept of dialogic form, we can then gain a clearer idea of how individual cases stack up against a backdrop of standard compositional practices.[84] Imagine, from the composer's point of view, a network of introductory tropes from which innovative structures can be forged. It is exactly this mindset that leads us closer to a comprehensive understanding of introductions in Beethoven.[85]

The enigmatic opening of Beethoven's Piano Sonata in F-sharp, Op. 78, can be understood using the concept of hybrid introductions (Ex. 12). On the one hand, several

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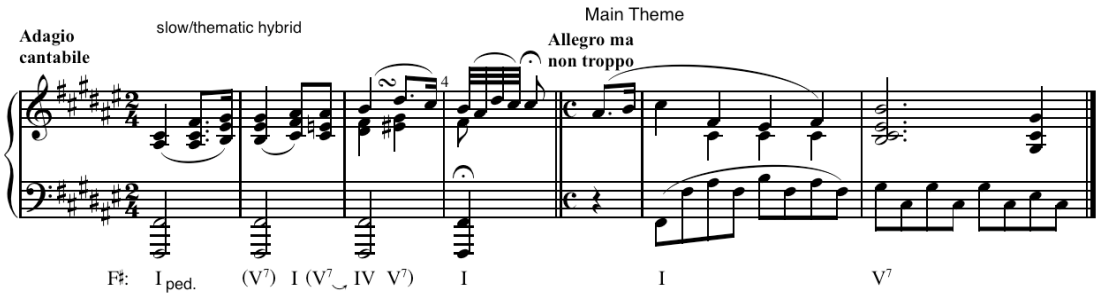
[84] To refresh, Hepokoski's concise definition of dialogic form reads as follows: "form in dialogue with historically conditioned compositional options." See Hepokoski, "Sonata Theory and Dialogic Form" in *Musical Form, Forms & Formenlehre*, 71–72.

[85] It is somewhat puzzling that Hepokoski and Darcy did not extend the concept of dialogic form to their classification of introduction types more explicitly.

features of mm. 1–4 invoke the tradition of slow introduction: the passage's slow tempo and solemn character are perhaps the most salient. In addition, the considerable amount of harmonic activity taking place over the tonic pedal contributes to the slow-introduction feel of this music, not to mention that the *Adagio cantabile* never returns. On the other hand, the one-part grouping structure (and, thus, its brevity), homogenous texture, consistent dynamic, and lack of a cadence suggest the category of thematic introduction.[86] To summarize, the features of this before-the-beginning section are more or less evenly split among the two categories of introduction.

Ex. 12 Beethoven, Piano Sonata in F-sharp, Op. 78, i, 1–6



The potential for hybridity provides insight into to why generative introductions have a distinctly slow-introduction flavor to them. As an examination of Beethoven's overtures reveals, this compositional practice can be understood as a truncation technique of sorts, whereby only the end of a normative slow introduction is preserved. The first

[86] In this respect, it is worth noting that the harmonic progression overlaying the pedal point is cadential. The passage does not, however, have cadential function, and the pedal undermines the possibility of a cadential arrival.

Leonore overture, Op. 138, is exemplary (Ex. 13a).[87] Opening with a *premier coup d'archet*, the slow introduction proceeds to visit all of Hepokoski and Darcy's introductory "zones" in turn.[88] The final zone—"dominant preparation"—beginning in m. 33, contains an expectant kernel from which the main theme is born. This motivic seed, introduced in m. 37, begins *pianissimo* and gradually builds its forces as it bleeds seamlessly into the *Allegro con brio*. Following an intensely dramatic standing on the dominant, the main theme takes its cue and lunges forward into P-space on the upbeat to mm. 58. If we reconstruct Beethoven's composition to begin with m. 37 (inserting a rest on the downbeat), we end up with something very similar to the last movement of Op. 21 (Ex. 13b). These works may be further classified as motivically generative introductions.[89]

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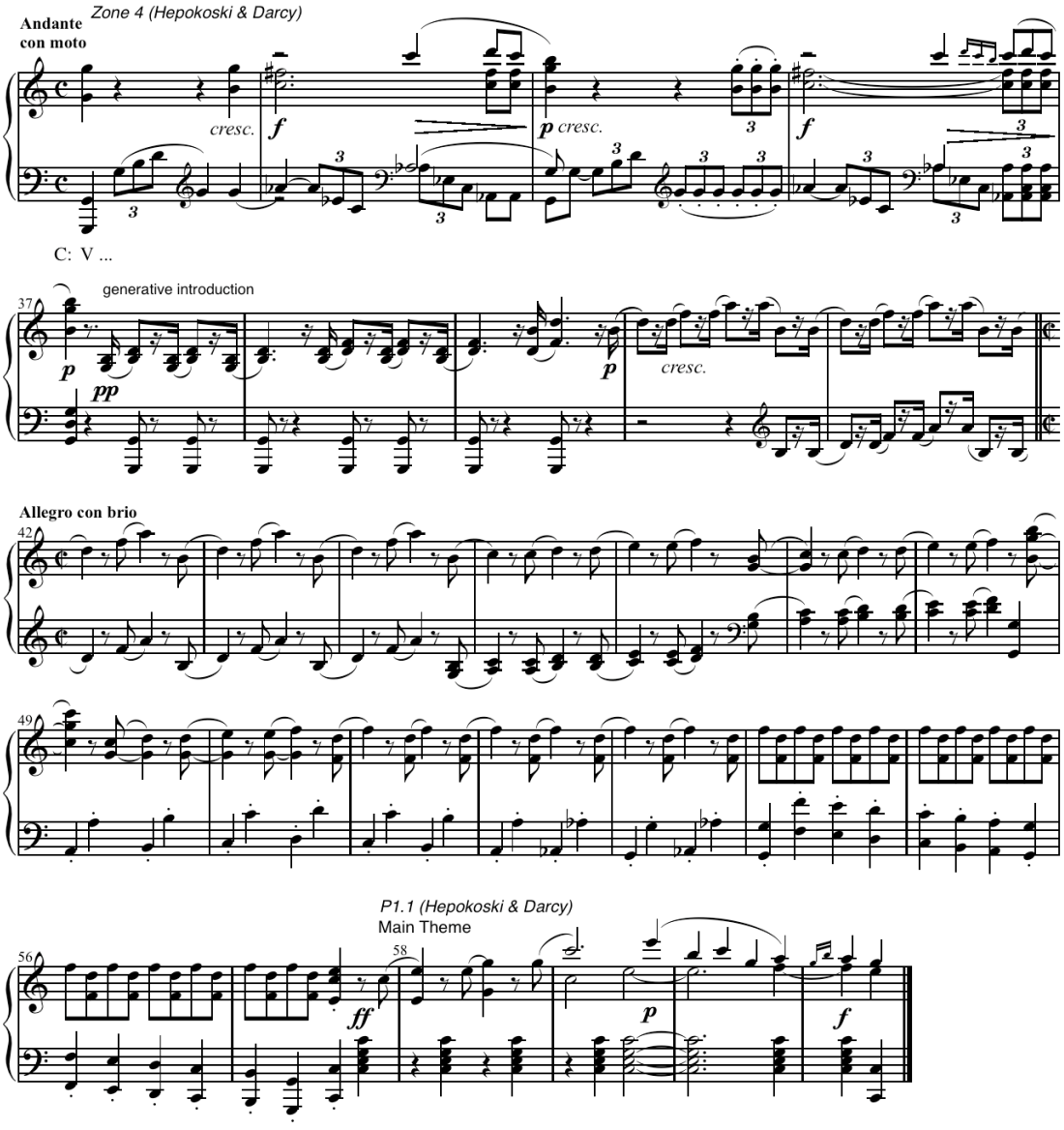
[87] Chronologically speaking, Leonore No. 1 is actually the third of the *Fidelio* overtures despite its title. See Alan Tyson, "The Problem of Beethoven's 'First' Leonore Overture," *JAMS* 28 (1975), 292–334.

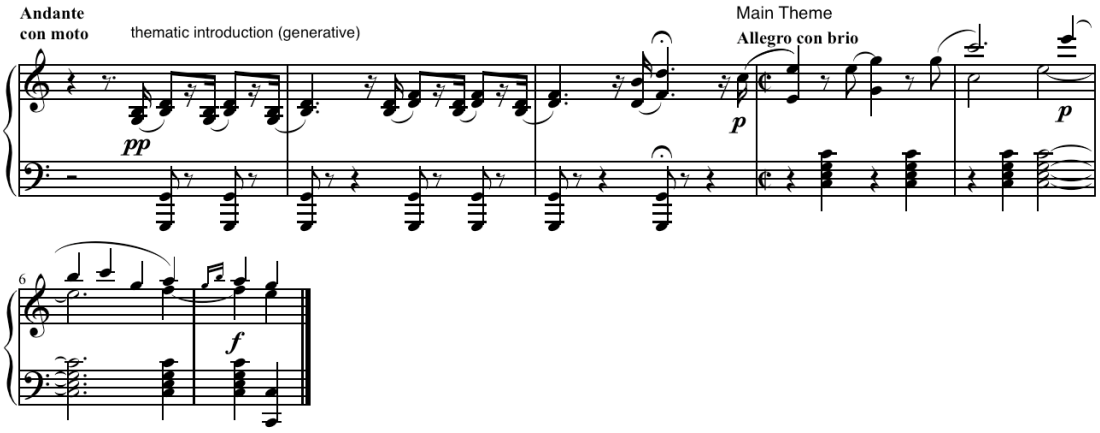
[88] While Hepokoski and Darcy acknowledge that it is "difficult to generalize about what can happen in slow introductions," they identify four principal functional zones that can be omitted, elided, or intermixed: zone 1 - a heraldic or annunciatory call to attention; zone 2 - quieter material, often a brief, lyrical melody; zone 3 - sequences; zone 4 - dominant preparation. See *Sonata Theory*, 297–299.

[89] It is redundant to point out the motivic nature of generative introductions. Since they construct the main theme from the bottom up, they are *de facto* motivic elements. Similarly, if a generative introduction is used in a Type 3 sonata, it will frame the work in most cases by its very nature.

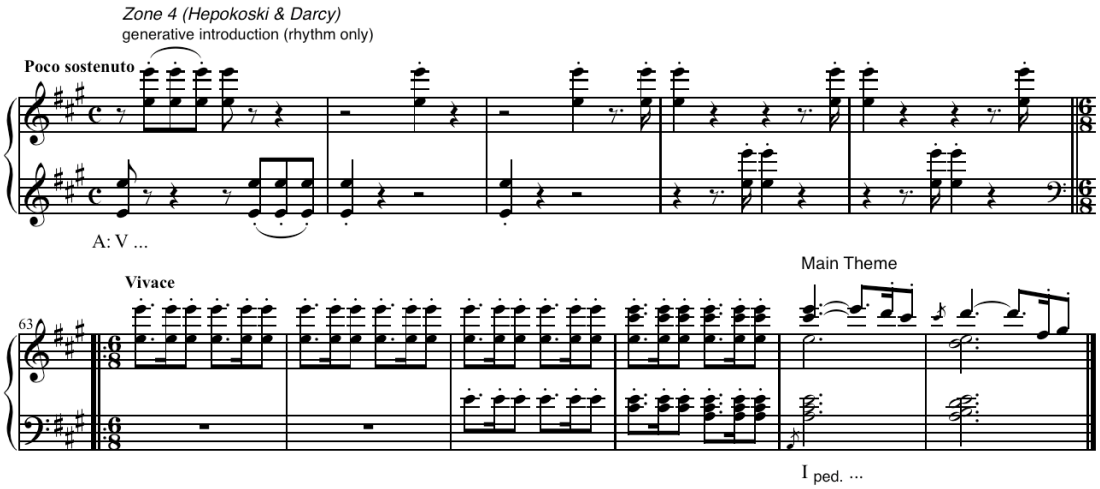
Ex. 13a Beethoven, *Leonore* Overture, Op. 138, 33–61



Ex. 13b Beethoven, *Leonore* Overture, Op. 138, rewrite



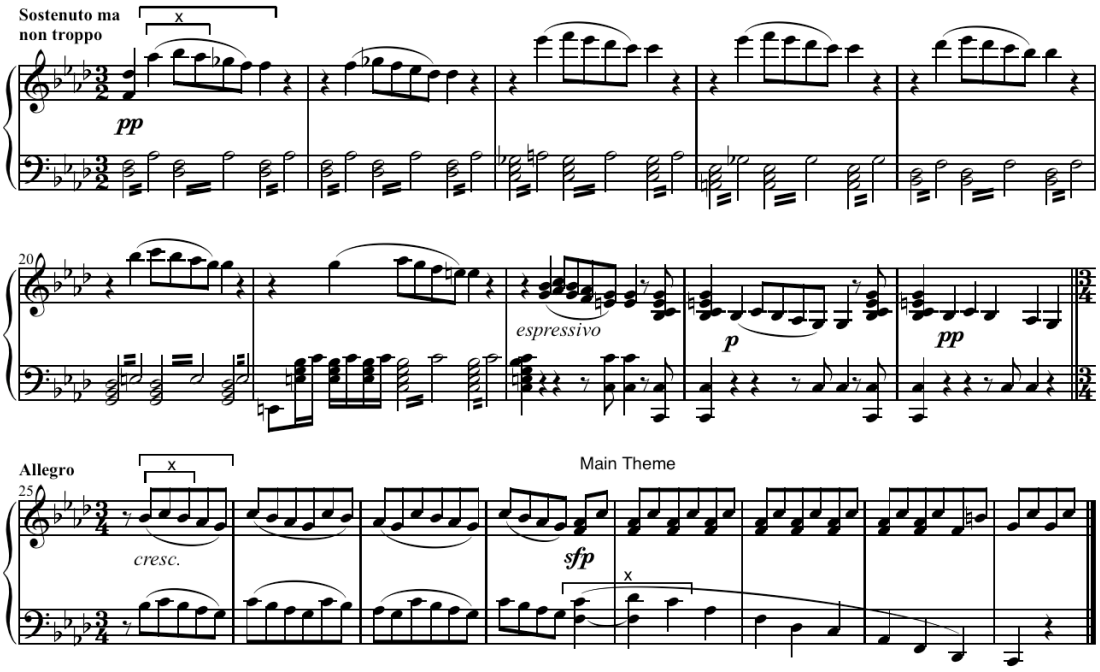
Ex. 14 Beethoven, Symphony in A, Op. 92, 58–68



Similar examples in Beethoven exhibit this generative technique in a slightly different manner. Whereas the instances cited thus far engineer melodic-motivic material from the ground up, many cases provide an impulse or acceleration into the faster tempo without such explicit preparation of the main theme. The anticipation of main-theme

material may take the form of a characteristic rhythm, as in the first movement of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony, Op. 93, where a single note launches the exposition (Ex.

Ex. 15 Beethoven, Egmont Overture, Op. 84, 15–32

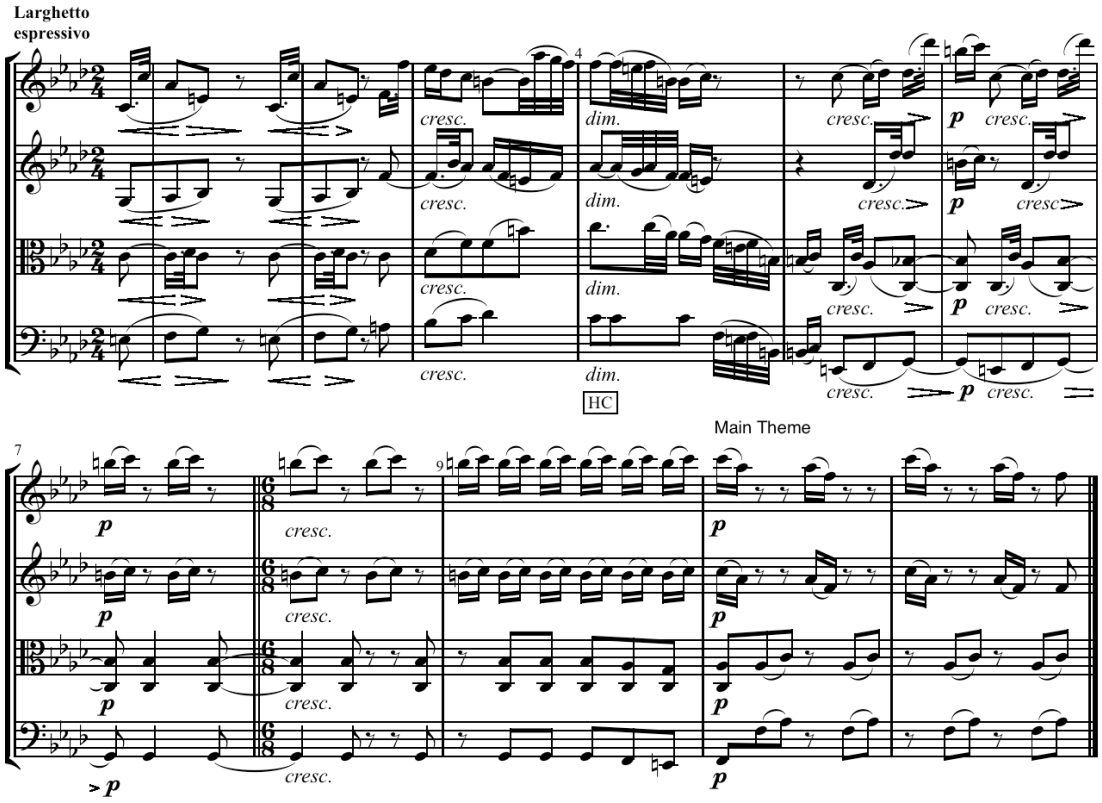


14). Or it may furnish a smooth link by generating only a small part of the principal theme's motivic profile, as in the *Egmont* overture, Op. 84 (Ex. 15—see the neighbor-note motive marked x).[90] On occasion, one finds introductions that make use of the generative principle in an even less thematicized way, such as where the accelerando link by itself acts as the propelling force. Beethoven's String Quartet in F minor, Op. 95, participates in this logic (Ex. 16). On the subject of this quartet, Joseph Kerman observes a "radical private war [being waged] on every fibre of rhetoric and feeling that Beethoven

[90] For another example, see Beethoven's *Fidelio* Overture, Op. 72.

knew or could invent. Everything unessential falls victim, leaving a residue of extreme concentration, in dangerously high tension."[91] Though, according to Kerman, this

Ex. 16 Beethoven, String Quartet in F minor, Op. 95, iv, 1–11



succinct, raw profile results from "Beethoven's impatience (or fury) with conventional bridge and cadential passages of every kind—the more or less neutral padding material of the classic style"—it is present throughout.[92] As a case in point, the final movement's slow opening exhibits a brevity typical of the composer's mid- to late-period introductions. Whatever its purpose may be, the *Larghetto espressivo* is a specimen of

[91] Joseph Kerman, *The Beethoven Quartets* (New York: Norton, 1979), 169.

[92] Ibid., 171.

concision, leaving the composer's fleeting attention to focus on the ensuing *Allegretto agitato*.[93] In the span of eight measures, Beethoven eschews conventional slow-introduction forms by writing a concise periodic structure. The antecedent phrase, structured as a mini-sentence, cadences on the dominant in m. 4 before giving way to a more densely-motivic consequent-like phrase. Whereas the opening four measures follow standard formal procedures, the latter four do not. Rather, in place of the expected strong cadence, Beethoven gives us a non-cadential V-I that elides with main theme. Glancing quickly at the music, one might observe a rhythmic-motivic connection between m. 7 and the main theme's basic idea; however, the passage from mm. 7–9 is simply a written-out accelerando whose kinship with the steady pulse of the main theme is minimal at best.

On occasion, a generative procedure may be used to provide a smooth link between movements. Beethoven's *Pastoral* Symphony is a prime example (Ex. 17). The light drizzle with which the penultimate movement of this work begins (*Gewitter, Sturm*) builds quickly to a full-fledged storm wrought with musical thunder stokes and bolts of lightning. When the skies clear, painted by the pure sound of an oboe, the music leads calmly to a rising flute passage (marked *dolce*) that elides with the opening measure of the finale. Though the written score indicates the beginning of a new movement here, a performance of the work provides a continuous source of sound. The clarinet's triadic figures, which are soon handed off to the horns, bridge the gap between two movements while generating the main theme of the finale. This theme, structured as an eight-measure

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[93] Kerman, for example, suggests that the opening bars "liquidate the obsessive dotted rhythm of the [third movement's] march. See Ibid., 181.

hybrid, begins in m.9 and is repeated with varied orchestration at m.17.[94] Given that these measures form a complete theme and that the overall harmonic motion of the first eight measures is simply a non-cadential V-I, we can convincingly deem the opening of the "Song of the Shepherds" as a before-the-beginning function—one that serves as a connective tissue, so to speak.

In keeping with this binding tendency, we find that one of the most common integrative techniques espoused by generative introductions is that of framing. It is in the very nature of this introductory type to conjure a fully-formed musical idea, and as such, its function as a musical border of sorts is logical. Having already fulfilled the role of bringing about the main theme at the very start of a work, generative material provides a unified way for the composer to transition back to the beginning of the exposition, and in triple-rotational Type 3 sonatas, furnishes a bridge to the development section.[95] The finale of Beethoven's First Symphony, Op. 21 (discussed in Chapter 2, see Ex. 4), illustrates this technique. Following the build-up of the main theme, variants of the opening generative passage appear periodically and serve as a form-framing device. A retransition following the exposition's closing section, for instance, leads the music

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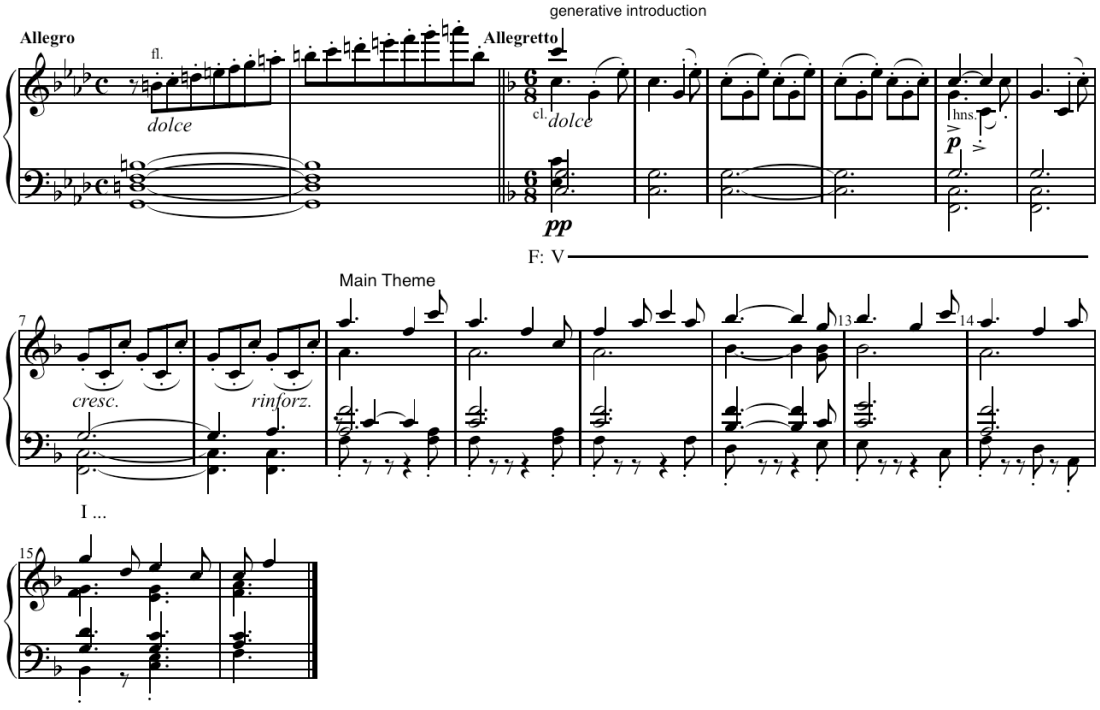
[94] The exact hybrid type is not entirely clear given the music in mm.13–14. On the one hand, these measures sound like a response form of the basic idea. On the other hand, there is an acceleration of harmonic rhythm that renders the passage more continuational.

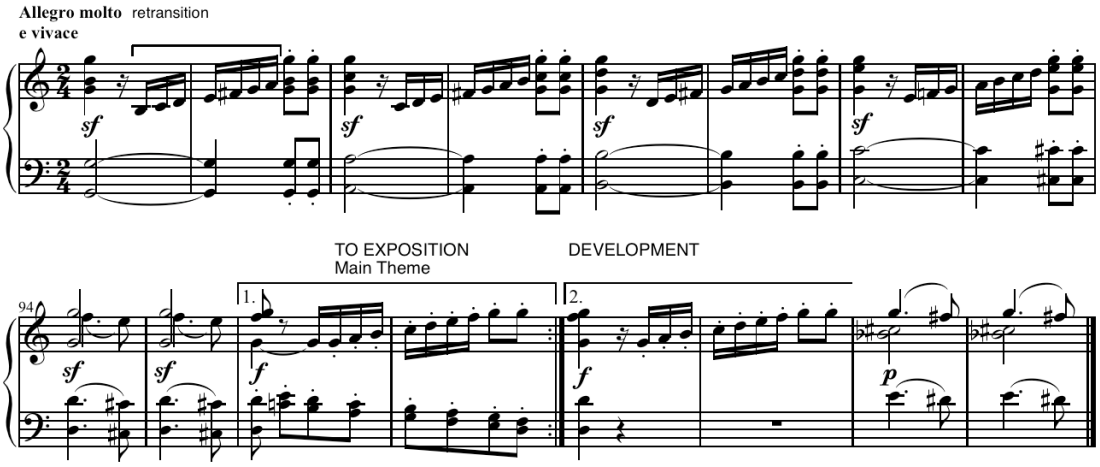
[95] According to *Sonata Theory*, a Type 3 sonata is one in which a given order of thematic modules is revisited in all three principal formal sections (i.e., exposition, development, and recapitulation). Hepokoski and Darcy attribute the basic tenets of this view to Charles Rosen, but elevates the procedure to "a foundational axiom of interpretation." See *Sonata Theory*, 612–13.

smoothly into an expositional repeat by generating the main theme in much the same way as the introduction—the main difference being that this latter case is in-tempo (Ex. 18a). Similar music marks the opening of the development section and its concluding standing on the dominant (Ex. 18a & 18b), and even the coda is framed in such a way that incorporates the work's charged initiating idea (Ex. 18c). In short, each major section of the work is bound by this formal adhesive.

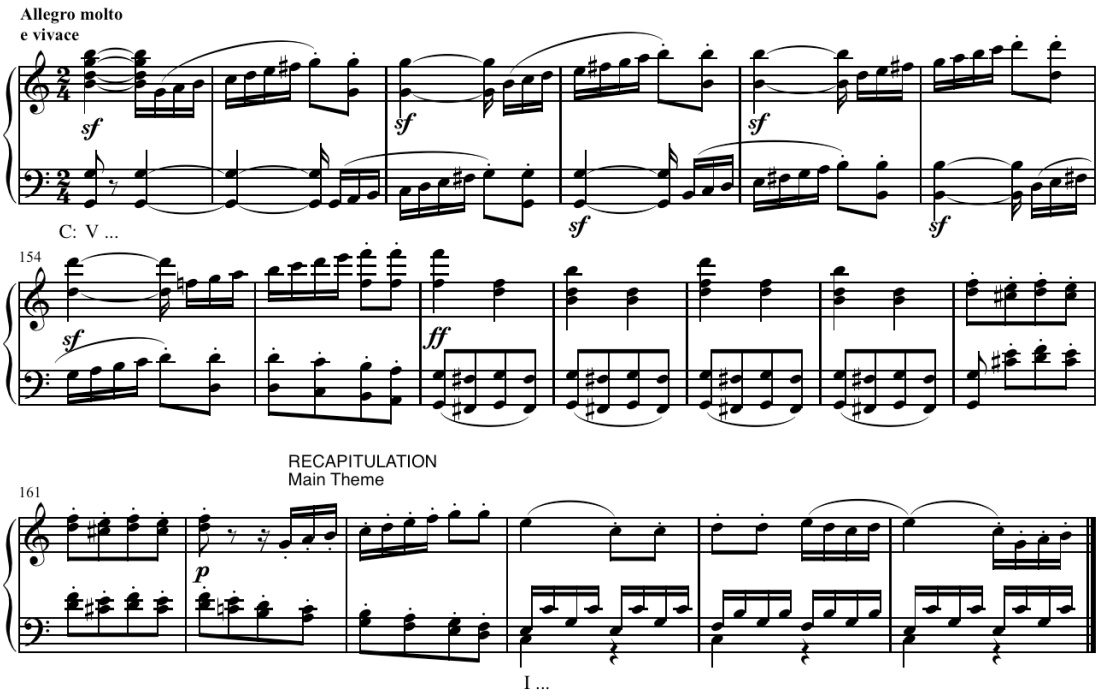
Ex. 17 Beethoven, Symphony in F, Op. 68, transition from movement iv to v



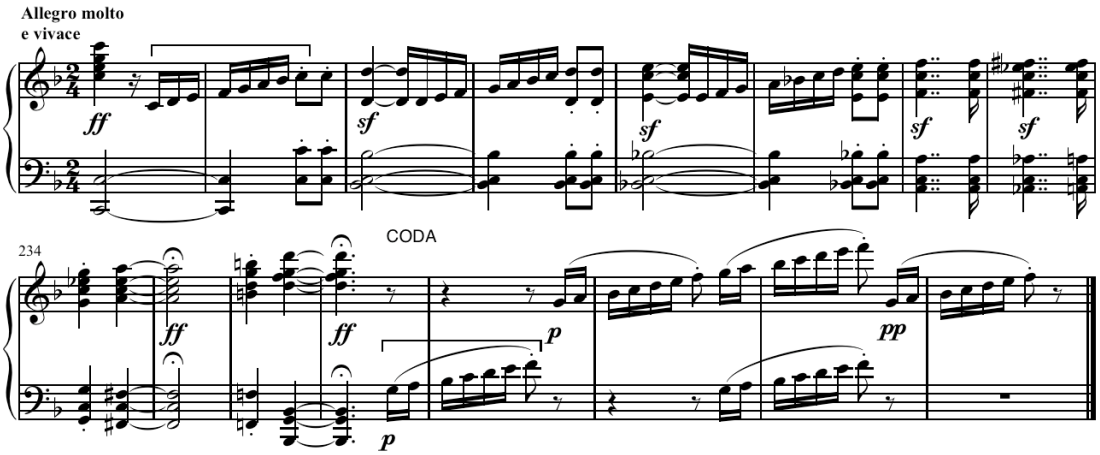
Ex. 18a Beethoven, Symphony in C, Op. 21, iv, 86–97



Ex. 18b Beethoven, Symphony in C, Op. 21, iv, 148–166



Ex. 18c Beethoven, Symphony in C, Op. 21, iv, 226–241



Head-Motive Introductions

As noted in the previous chapter, there is a substantial literature on motivic analysis in Beethoven. While many authors have scoured scores for hours upon end in search of motivic links that somehow unify a work, others have scorned the method as a fruitless treasure hunt. On the subject of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, for instance, Tovey writes that the significance of the persistent rhythmic figure—short-short-short-long—is overblown:[96]

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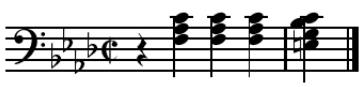
[96] The extremes to which the importance of this "fate motive" has been taken are impressive. To cite just one example, Paul Loyonnet's analysis of Beethoven's first piano sonata "uncovers" the short-short-short-long motive at the heart of the Allegro's opening gesture: "Le thème-clé réside dans cette locution rhythmique trop peu observé par les analystes. C'est ce que l'on connaîtra plus tard sous le vocable "thème du Destin:"



See Paul Loyonnet, *Les 32 Sonates pour piano: journal intime de Beethoven* (Verdun, QC: Louise Courteau, 1988), 18.

> In the first fine careless rapture of Wagnerian analysis it was discovered that the 'four taps', with which destiny knocks at the door in the first movement, recur elsewhere; once (quite accidentally, though in an impressive passage) in the slow movement, and very prominently in the second theme of that dream of terror which we technically call the scherzo. This profound discovery was supposed to reveal an unsuspected unity in the work; but it does not seem to have been carried far enough. It conclusively proves that the Sonata Appassionata, the G major Pianoforte Concerto, the third movement of the Quartet, op. 74, and, with the final consummation of a fifth tap, the Violin Concerto, all belong to the C minor Symphony; for the same rhythmic figure pervades them too.[97]

Taking Tovey's caution to heart, the head-motive, in general, is not immediately to be understood as a form-defining device until the relationship between motive and form is shown. Possibly influenced by Tovey's thought, Rosen asserts that, in late-eighteenth-century sonatas, "the motif . . . emphasizes the articulations of form, and—most important of all—is inflected in response to these articulations."[98] He then notes that C.P.E. Bach was one of the first masters of this technique, and, staying true to his word, Rosen spells out these articulations and inflections in a work by the esteemed 18th-century composer. After identifying two principal motives in a Bach sonata, Rosen goes on to describe how "[they] are transformed throughout by their function within the form."[99] In other words, he explains how each motivic variant is appropriated to its formal role. Rosen's fleshing out of this framing technique leads him to conclude that "the structure is elucidated thematically," and that "it is not, in the end, helpful to claim

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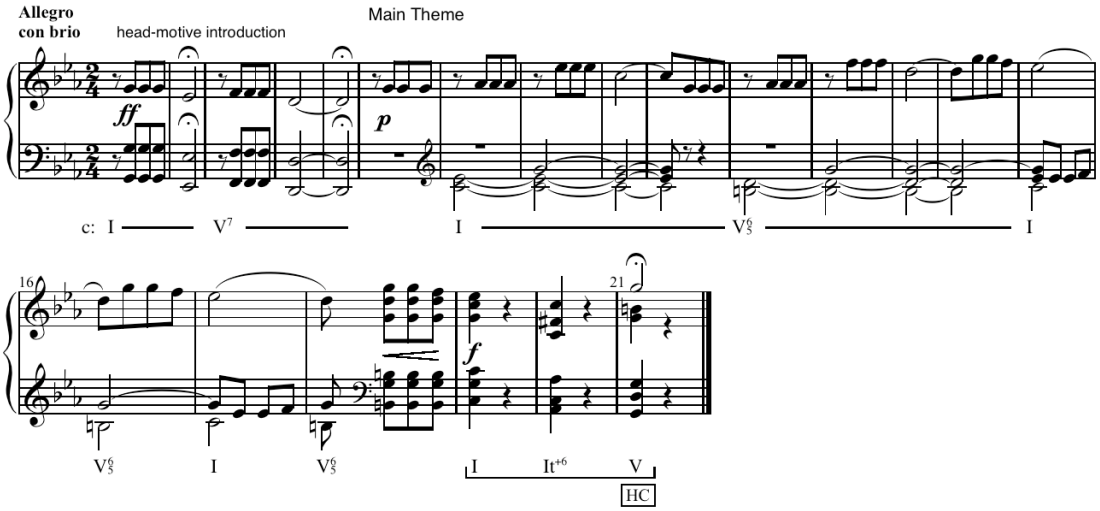
[97] *Essays*, 39.

[98] *Sonata Forms*, 178.

[99] Ibid., 180.

that sonata form is basically harmonic rather than melodic (or even textural/ rhythmic).”[100] This approach addresses Tovey’s qualm with motivic analysis in that it concerns itself with how germinal ideas function at various stages; the ordering and content of motivic variations become crucial to formal expression in Rosen’s view. Interesting to this study is that head-motive introductions tend to follow along with this logic.

Ex. 19a Beethoven, Symphony in c minor, Op. 67, i, 1–21



When seen in this light, the “fate-motif” of Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony becomes a lucid form-delineating device rather than a ubiquitous rhythmic figure that mysteriously

[100] Ibid., 181.

unifies the opening movement.[101] Taking account of the three large sections of the exposition—the main theme, the transition, and the subordinate theme—we find an expressive logic at play as regards the work's prefatory idea. At the movement's start, the G–E-flat–F–D motive reflects the stability demanded by an initial theme. As this opening thematic unit has the responsibility of defining the home key, an implied I-V garners both stability and anticipation—the former is achieved by using the principal anchoring chords of the tonal system, and the latter by coming to rest on a directionally-charged dominant chord (Ex. 19a).[102] Following the half cadence that ends the main theme, Beethoven sounds a transposed version of the four-note motive (Ex. 19b). Marking the onset of the transition, this variation is hesitant and issues forth a sense of instability well-suited to its place in the form. With just a single iteration of the motive, the statement-response balance of the opening is lost, and the implied highly-dissonant diminished-seventh sonority acts as a portal to the unruly world that lies ahead. Once the agitated transition comes to an end, a new form of the "fate-motive" bursts through in highly-consonant

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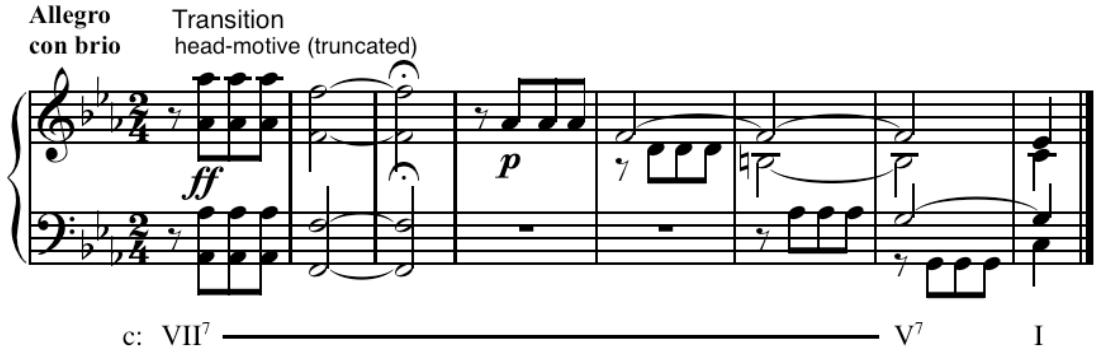
[101] Admittedly, this view still flies somewhat in the face of Tovey's critique since it elevates the opening four notes to a form-defining feature. Tovey, crediting Weingartner, finds the symphony's sweeping phrases to be its most remarkable feature—sentences that, "instead of being 'built up' from a single figure, break up into other sentences of even greater variety and breadth" (*Essays,* 38).

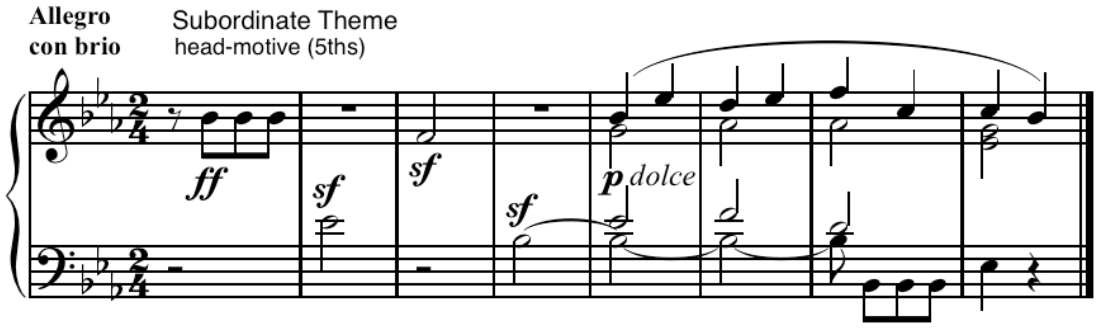
[102] This is not to undermine the clever omission of a bass note that causes the opening, upon repeat of the exposition, to sound briefly in the secondary key of E-flat major. E.T.A. Hoffmann, for instance, characterized the very opening of the symphony in E-flat upon first hearing. See E.T.A. Hoffmann, "Review of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony," in *E.T.A. Hoffmann's musical writings: Kreisleriana, The poet, and the composer*, ed. David Charlton. trans. Martyn Clarke (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004), 234-51.

perfect fifths—akin to the sound of church bells—and immediately softens the character of the music (Ex. 19c). Such a declaration is perfectly suited to the docile temperament typical of subordinate themes, including the one presented here. These three examples demonstrate the formal significance of such beginnings as a structural frame and show how, in Rosen's words, "alteration by theme [or in this case, thematic introduction] is fundamental to the stylistic language."[103]

Ex. 19b Beethoven, Symphony in c minor, Op. 67, i, 22–29



Ex. 19c Beethoven, Symphony in c minor, Op. 67, i, 59–66



[103] To clarify, Rosen means thematic alteration based on location; *Sonata Forms*, 181.

Anacrusis Introductions

We begin by returning to the example of anacrusis introduction given in chapter 2: the finale of Beethoven's *Eroica* Symphony (Ex. 20). Recall that the movement begins with a fiery succession of descending "waves" that leads to a six-measure span of heavily-orchestrated, declamatory chords, the last of which comes to rest on a dominant-seventh that lies in wait of the variation theme to make its entrance. Given that the model for this work, Op.35, begins with a mere hammer-stroke, it is curious that Beethoven bothered with such musical fireworks. Why did he write such an opening? Did he feel the need to offer a bombastic beginning to the finale of an unprecedented grand symphony that once carried with it a triumphant Napoleonic program? Or is subjecting this passage to careful study a much-ado-about-nothing enterprise? A partial answer to these questions may lie in the content of the main theme itself, which goes well beyond the hesitancy typical of principal themes.[104] Lewis Lockwood aptly describes the post-introduction music as an unusual specimen that would later find expression in some of Beethoven's most beloved works:

> The *Eroica* finale consists of a large introduction (labeled as such in Opus 35) that builds up the basic thematic material of the movement in stages. First, as in the piano variations, Beethoven establishes the bass of the theme—he literally calls it "Basso del Tema"—creating an expectation that must be fulfilled; then he handsomely fulfills it by adding the upper-line melody itself. The whole process is something like a mirror of Beethoven's compositional process in small, laid out for the world to see, in its gradual assemblage of an intelligible bass and melody in a simple song form. It could well have derived from an improvisation in which

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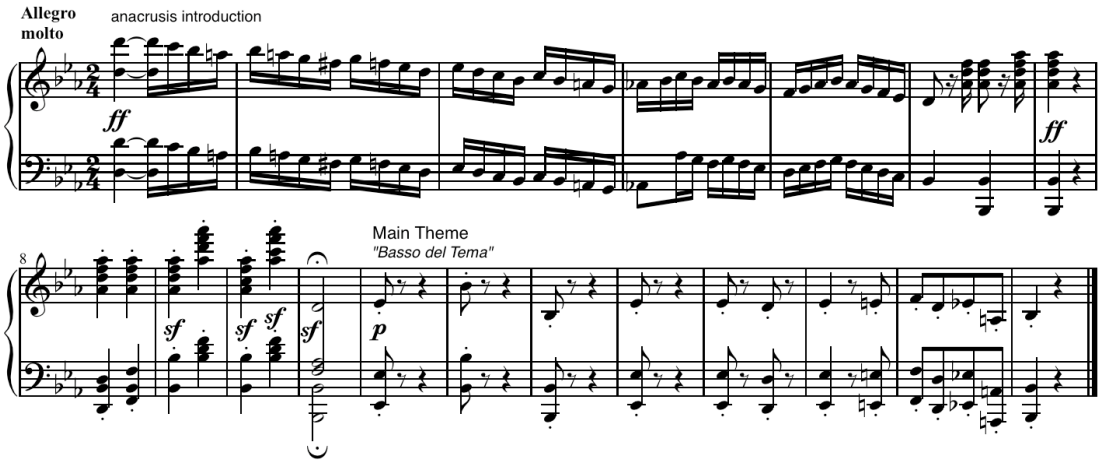
104 Caplin, *Classical Form*, 197.

> he first presented a bass, elaborated it as a bass with other voices, and then combined it with a main theme. The introduction also anticipates those other instances in which a great theme arrives as the culmination of a gradual process of preparation—two later examples are the slow movement of the Seventh Symphony and the long and complex preparation for the arrival of the "Ode to Joy" in the finale of the Ninth.[105]

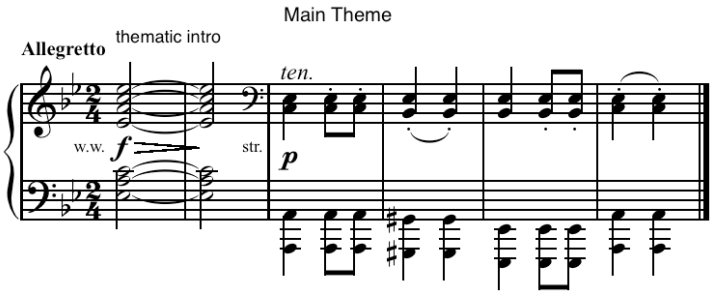
That the theme is not only quiet, but also incomplete, perhaps explains why Beethoven felt it necessary to open with a firm and decisive gesture. As to the difference between the beginning of movement in question and Op. 35, it seems appropriate that the finale of a large public genre receive more emphatic treatment, especially given the *Eroica*'s status as an artistic temple of vast proportions.

Ex. 20 Beethoven, Symphony in E-flat, Op. 55, iv, 1–19



[105] *Beethoven*, 205.

Ex. 21 Beethoven, Symphony in A, Op. 92, ii, 1–6



Returning to the first point, consider the other works mentioned by Lockwood in connection with Op. 55: it is no coincidence that each of these generative "themes" (not to be confused with generative "introductions") are accompanied by a solid, and often assertive, prefatory idea. The *Allegretto* movement of Beethoven's Symphony in A, Op. 92, opens with a single chord in the winds prior to a string-dominated statement of the theme's lower voices over which variations are later sounded (Ex. 21), and the finale of his Symphony in D minor, Op. 125, cries out with a violent brass-heavy stroke that yields, like the *Allegretto*, building blocks in subsequent development of the theme.[106] That all three of the above-mentioned works are, in some way, themes and variations is also significant: the generative process so typical of introductions is a perfectly natural development of the form given its penchant for additive techniques. It could even be argued that this innovation gave Beethoven the ability to expand musical forms to the

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[106] Given the proportions of this movement, the formal situation is considerably more complex than that of the A-major Symphony, as is to be expected given the Ninth Symphony's status as one of Beethoven's most original inventions. For instance, the initial outburst returns several times, and the theme and variations element is far from being clear cut.

extent that he did. Consider, for instance, the opening movement of the Ninth Symphony, which features an enormously expanded generative theme. The conflation of what was initially a feature of introductions (i.e., generation of some sort) and main themes seems to have freed Beethoven from the strictures of his inherited forms.[107] Whereas the fusion of formal units typically results in a condensed product, this particular fusion yields formal expansion. This is not as paradoxical as it may seem at first given that the fusion in question involves a compositional technique and a formal unit rather than two formal units—to speak of a technique's typical length is meaningless.

Interestingly enough, several examples of anacrusis introductions in Beethoven lead to main themes that involve a layering technique that is in dialogue with both the generative introduction defined in chapter 2 and the additive method identified by Lockwood. The final movement of Beethoven's *Appassionata* illustrates this point (Ex. 22)[108]. Following an insistent harping on the diminished seventh chord of F minor, a series of scalar passages sound in the right hand and anticipate the accompaniment pattern of the main theme. This music-in-the-making feature opens the door for what might be termed a *generative/anacrusis hybrid* and thus highlights the strong bond

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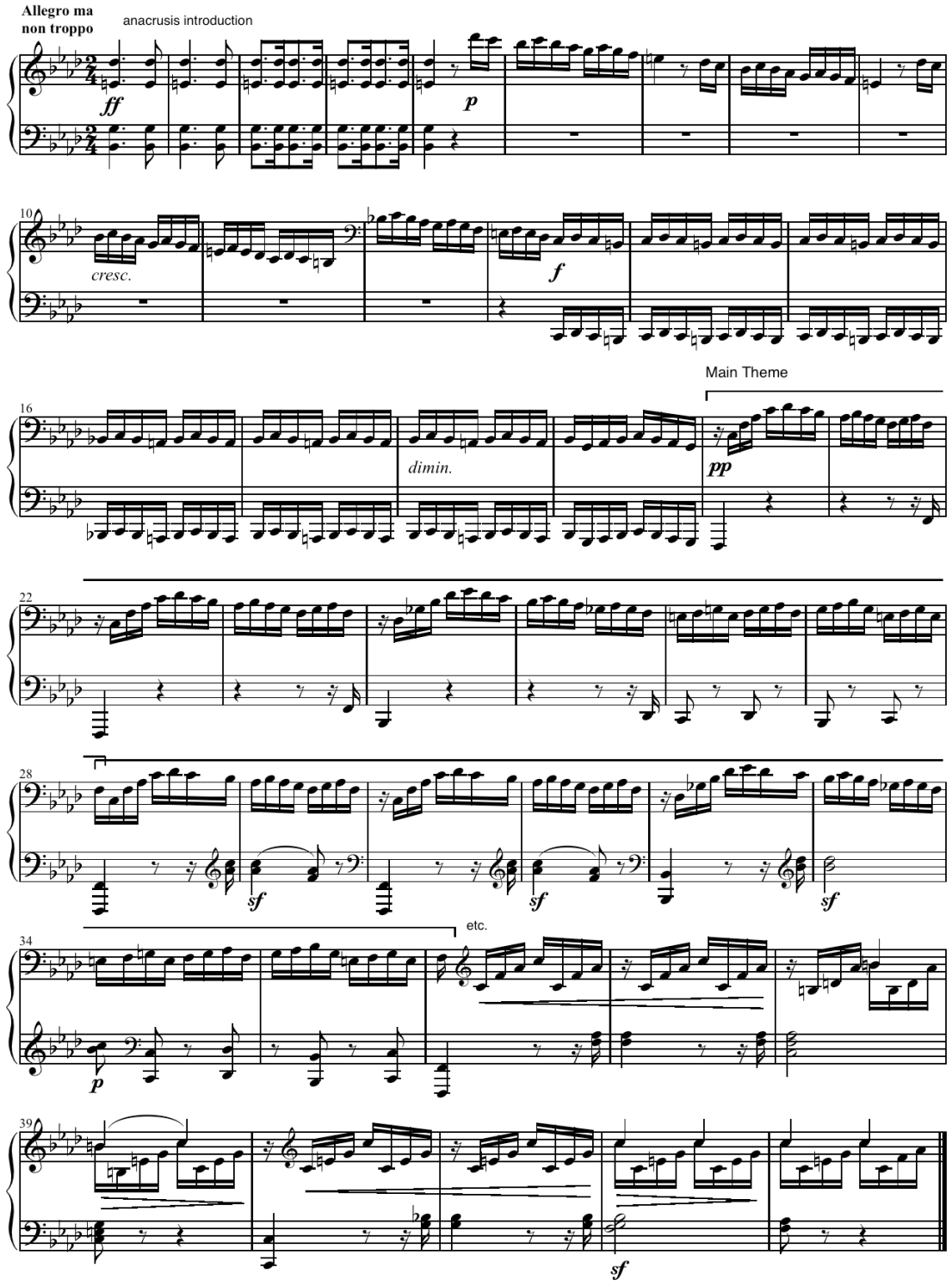
[107] Picking up on the exclusivity of this example, Hepokoski and Darcy introduce gen- and tel- designators (generative and teleological respectively). As they note, the entire P-zone, *creatio ex nihilo*, "is a process of growth and intensification . . . toward the production of [a] thematic goal or telos."; *Sonata Theory*, 92. The first movement of Op. 111 also participates in this logic.

[108] Tovey identifies mm. 1–19 as an "introduction" that fulfills the function of "dominant preparation;" *Companion*, 175.

Ex. 22 Beethoven, Piano Sonata in F minor, Op. 53, iii, 1–43



between these two types.[109] In addition to the apparent generative quality, a closer look at the principal theme reveals a piecing-together approach similar to the *Eroica* and the Seventh Symphony. As Ex.22 demonstrates, the theme consists of a series of elided units, each of which builds upon the previous one, and, once again, we see Beethoven presaging the arrival of a gradually-assembled finale theme with an aggressive introductory passage.

One final example, the first movement of Beethoven's *Ghost* Trio, Op. 70/1, demonstrates a more complex situation in which the metamorphic integration technique comes to bear on an anacrusis introduction; the example also illustrates how a blurred boundary between main theme and introduction has the potential to create a rich sensory experience that throws expectation into doubt. The movement begins with a *fortissimo* ascent that sounds at first like an agitated introductory stir akin to those found in earlier examples, but the ensuing music complicates matters considerably. Beginning at m.7, the melody sounds on top of a dominant pedal whose status as such is open to interpretation. Is A the root of a V chord or the fifth of a I chord? The answer to this question is significant, since it determines whether or not the cello's theme serves as an initiating function or a medial one (presentation versus continuation in Caplin's terminology). If one takes the latter position (Ex. 23a) then the seemingly introductory passage is, in actuality, the theme's initiating passage (and thus not an introduction at all), where the

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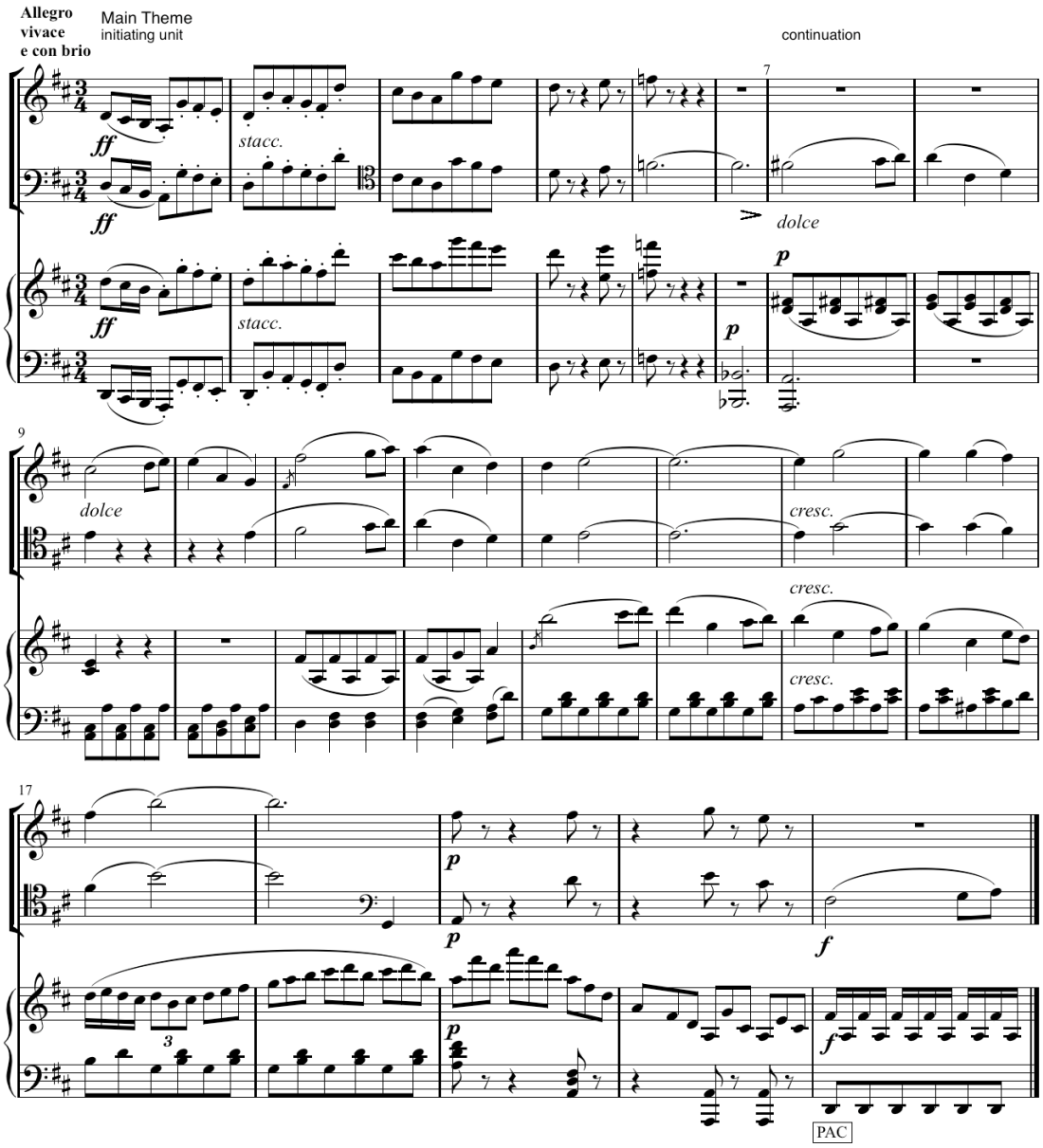
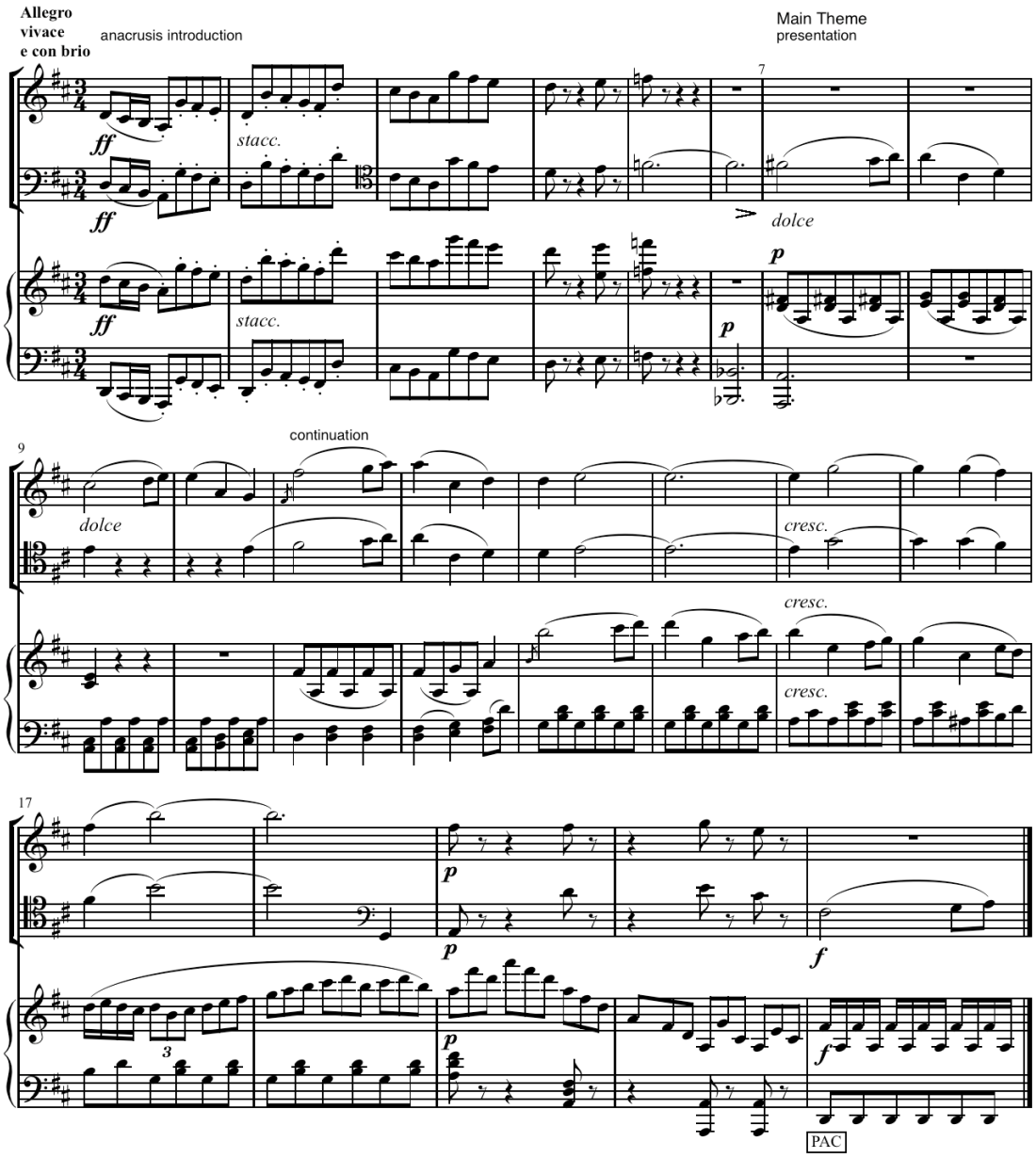
[109] Despite the implication that all generative introductions are, in a sense, anacrusis introductions, we can still draw a clear distinction between the two types. Whereas all generative introductions can be construed as up-beats, not all anacrusis introductions are generative.

Ex. 23a Beethoven, Piano Trio in D, Op. 70/1, i, 1–21 (no introduction)



Ex. 23b Beethoven, Piano Trio in D, Op. 70/1, i, 1–21 (with introduction)



opening's emphatic root-position tonic garners the necessary stability. On the contrary, if one hears a tonic harmony over an A pedal in mm. 6–7 followed by a dominant in mm. 8–9 then the opening can convincingly be heard as an introduction (Ex. 23b)—the presentation phrase in this analysis consists of a statement-response repetition over an A

pedal.[110] If we opt for a non-conventional theme (as defined by Caplin), preceding which there is no introduction, it might be more in tune with our experience to adopt the metamorphic integration technique in analysis where mm. 1–5 sound introductory at first but then come to be understood as the main theme's initiating unit. A black and white interpretation that identifies a thematic introduction followed by the main theme proper recognizes a sentence with an extended continuation, but significantly downplays the highly-integrated nature of the work's initial octave flare—after all, the same idea reappears in the recapitulation, sets the development into motion, and frames the work as a whole by capping off the coda.[111]

Having explored the various introduction types in depth, we turn now to some case studies that consider potential analyses of formally-ambiguous situations.

Case Study #1 - Piano Sonata in D minor, Op. 31/2, i

Since its completion in 1802, Beethoven's *Tempest* sonata has attracted countless theorists who have struggled to grasp its highly unusual opening. The first movement has proved so puzzling that its complexities are often times cast aside as deformations too great to understand through convention and thus are attributed to the work's supposed Shakespearian muse. This inherent analytical challenge is surely one reason why the

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[110] This type of presentation phrase is occasionally found in subordinate themes where a more looser structure is typical; see, for example, the subordinate theme of Piano Sonata in F minor, Op. 2/1, i.

[111] See the following for openings in dialogue with this technique: Beethoven, Piano Sonata in D, Op. 10/3, i; Beethoven, Piano Trio in D, Op. 70/1, iii.

work has both intrigued and seduced amateurs and scholars alike for over two centuries. Relevant to this study is the status of mm. 1–21, which are most commonly considered to embrace the main theme in its entirety.[112] Several authors, while maintaining the main-theme status of the opening 21 measures, opt for a more phenomenologically complex position that sees the work as a process of becoming. The most recent advocate of this view is Janet Schmalfeldt who, in her essay "Form as the Process of Becoming: The Beethoven-Hegelian Tradition and the *Tempest* Sonata," argues against finding definite formal boundaries between the work's various formal sections and instead joins Dahlhaus in his interpretation that understands the exposition as a series of formal units that demand retrospective reinterpretation to understand their true function:

> The opening, seemingly an introduction, can be viewed in retrospect as an exposition [i.e., main theme], since it is set in a single key and constitutes an initial, if rudimentary, instance of thematic substance. Conversely, when [at bar 21] the arpeggiated chord coalesces into a terse theme with the character of an exposition, it eventually proves to be a transitional modulatory passage.[113]

Critics of this perspective take issue with, among other things, the idea of an introduction becoming a main theme. As Caplin notes, few, if any, of the features present in mm. 1–21 suggest a slow introduction:

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[112] See, for example, Tovey, *Companion*, 121, and Caplin, "Form-Functional Considerations" in *Beethoven's Tempest Sonata: Perspectives of Analysis and Performance*, ed. Pieter Bergé, co-eds., Jeroen D'hoe and William E. Caplin (Leuven: Peeters, 2009), 88–96.

[113] Dahlhaus cited in ibid., 88–89. See also Janet Schmalfeldt, "Form as the Process of Becoming: The Beethoven-Hegelian Tradition and the Tempest Sonata," in *Beethoven Forum* 4 (1995), 37–71

> The section [mm. 1–21] does not stand apart from the exposition, in that it is included within the repeat of the latter; the tempo is not distinctly different from the rest of the exposition (most of the section is allegro); the formal organization of the section is a periodic hybrid, though the second phrase is, to be sure, highly expanded; and the harmonic goal is the home-key tonic within the context of a perfect authentic cadence."[114]

Moreover, the concept of a thematic introduction becoming the main theme is problematic (mm. 1–2 and 7–8 being seen as fulfilling the role of thematic introduction) "since [the former] is already embraced within the structural expanse of the theme it is introducing." At issue here is an important distinction between structure "as is" and structure "as experienced". When considering the entirety of mm. 1–21, it is clear that the Adagio passages contribute to the partial symmetry of the complementary phrases that define the main theme.[115] From an experiential point of view, however, the music at first sounds as though it is part of a slow introduction—a feeling that is undoubtedly enhanced by Beethoven's invocation of the recitative.[116] Essentially, both Schmalfeldt and Caplin

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[114] Ibid., 90.

[115] As Rosen puts it, "the Largo and Allegro are related as question and answer". Similarly, mm. 1–8 and 9–20 (Tovey's "counterstatement") are also related in this way. Rosen, *Beethoven's Piano Sonatas*, 169; Tovey, *Companion*, 121.

[116] The recitative implication of the opening gesture is an oft-cited feature of the work. See, among others: Burnham, "Singularities and Extremes," in *Beethoven's Tempest Sonata*, 45–48; Bergé & D'hoe, "To Play or Not to Play," in ibid., 12; Hatten, "Interpreting Beethoven's *Tempest Sonata* Through Topics, Gestures, and Agency," in ibid., 166–67.

are right given their respective points of departure. As Rosen succinctly writes, "the first music we hear suggests a slow introduction, but it turns out to be nothing of the kind."[117]

Like Caplin, Hepokoski is skeptical of a processual interpretation of the main theme. For him, although by no means normative, the beginning measures play out against a backdrop of procedures that occur frequently enough in Beethoven—the enigmatic opening of the *Tempest* is not entirely unprecedented. According to *Sonata Theory*, the *Largo* acts as a $P^{1.0}$ module and is followed by an *Allegro* $P^{1.1}$. The repetition of this pattern yields a main theme construction of $P^{1.0}$–$P^{1.1}$–$P^{1.0}$–$P^{1.1}$. With this succession of modules in mind, Hepokoski finds precedents in Beethoven's Piano Sonata in A, Op. 2/2, i, 1–32 and the Fifth Symphony, among others.[118] This perspective is compelling but is hindered by its tendency to lump together passages that precede a genuine two-measure basic idea (such as the Fifth Symphony) with those that precede a continuation phrase (see my analysis of the *Tempest* below). The crux of the matter is that mm. 1–2 of the *Tempest* are far more integrated than the 'fate' motif of the Fifth—the former is part of the main-theme complex (as will be shown) whereas the latter fulfills a genuine before-the-beginning function.

In light of these complexities, it is perhaps more fruitful to lay out in full the broad network of associations that contribute to an understanding of this opening. Of the features typical of slow introduction, only one appears here: the *Largo* tempo. As for thematic introductions, only the anacrusis type comes into play, in the sense that the

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[117] Rosen, *Beethoven's Piano Sonatas*, 169.

[118] Hepokoski, "Approaching the Tempest Through Sonata Theory", in *Beethoven's Tempest Sonata*, 188–89.

harmonic emphasis on dominant "leads into" the downbeat tonic—a potential structural beginning. And yet, even with the loose dialogue between this opening and anacrusis introductions, it is a stretch to identify mm. 1–2 as prefatory in nature based solely on the harmonic situation. Several of Beethoven's movements begin with off-tonic openings that we would readily identify as the basic idea. The final movement of the Piano Sonata in F-sharp, Op. 78, for instance, begins with an augmented-sixth chord that leads quickly to a dominant—all part of the basic idea. In short, the only highly unusual feature of this opening is the tempo.[119] Given the extraordinarily experimental nature of Beethoven's music at this time, it is not unreasonable to suggest that the composer crafted a more expressive fabric by altering the traditional content of a basic idea, even giving it an introductory tint by invoking the recitative. In truth, there is nothing more unusual about this perspective than that of a conflated introduction-main-theme complex where one somehow 'becomes' the other at some unknown point in time. If we consider mm. 1–2 as the basic idea, we obtain a somewhat unusual periodic structure—one in which a two-measure basic idea, followed by an extended contrasting idea that takes the form of a continuation phrase, combine to form an antecedent. One might argue that the absence of a tonic underpinning flies in the face of Caplin's definition of a basic idea. As explained earlier, however, it is no longer helpful to adhere strictly to the notion that a basic idea

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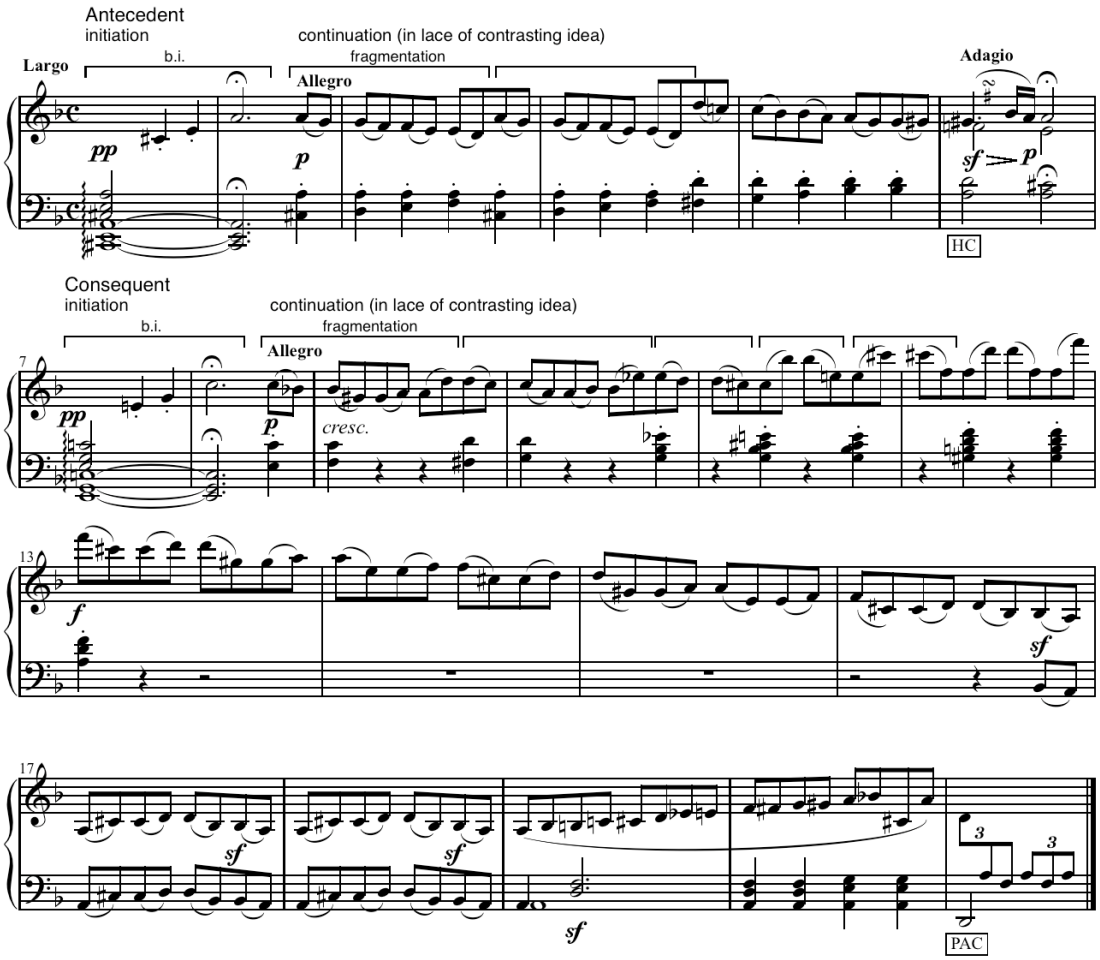
[119] The fermata does not constitute a second unusual feature since it is subsumed by the change in tempo. Also, one might invoke the framing integration technique given that the beginning of the transition is marked by a highly modified version of the *Largo* idea, but such an interpretation would involve extending the technique's reach to significantly altered versions of the opening motive. See Bergé & d'Hoe, "Motivic Connections", in *Beethoven's Tempest Sonata*, 12–13.

Ex. 24 Beethoven, Piano Sonata in D minor, Op. 31/2, i, 1–21



must be supported by tonic harmony at this stage of Beethoven's career, especially with the innovative Op. 31 set of sonatas.[120] Continuing on with the analysis, the basic idea is followed by a continuation phrase (in place of a contrasting idea) that features fragmentation and leads to a half cadence. The basic idea then returns over bVII (or V of III), leads to a second continuation phrase that features fragmentation into one-measure units and is then extended by a series of half-measure fragmented units and an expanded

[120] Consider, for instance, the first movement of Beethoven's Piano Sonata in E-flat, Op. 31/3. Or, for an early example, Piano Trio in E-flat, Op. 1/1, iii.

cadential progression that lead to a PAC in D minor (Ex. 24).[121] That this arpeggiated motive returns at the onset of the development section strengthens the case for this reading. As Caplin notes, one common way in which to begin a pre-core is by stating the basic idea, which happens here in m. 93.[122] While this view is not intended to downplay the unusual effect Beethoven creates by alternating tempi within a main theme, it aims to dampen the over-hyped introductory quality that evaporates after a mere three measures of music. When framed in such a way, the structure of the theme becomes comprehensible without either defying classical traditions or exaggerating Beethoven's stylistic quirks.

Case Study #2 - Piano Trio in C minor, Op.1/3, i & iii

Surely the first to notice the oddities of this trio was Beethoven's original mentor in Vienna, Joseph Haydn. As the story goes, Haydn was "wary of [the trio's] fierce idiosyncrasies" and advised against its publication.[123] Needless to say, Beethoven was not pleased. What exactly Haydn took issue with in this work, we will never know, but a formal analysis of the opening of both the first and fourth movement reveals atypical structures that force us to reconsider the nature of thematic introductions.

The finale of Op. 1/3 begins with an 8-measure flourish that leads to a fermata and is followed by a 27-measure compound period (Ex. 25a—note that this example does

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[121] For other examples of basic ideas that repeat over bVII see the opening movements of Piano Sonata in C, Op. 53, and Piano Sonata in G, Op. 31/1.

[122] *Classical Form*, 151.

[123] Lockwood, *Beethoven*, 99.

not include the whole period). While mm. 9–35 are clearly main theme material, the status of the opening is somewhat unclear at first. At first glance, the opening could be construed as an 8-measure sentence (or 7-measure, depending on whether or not you include the measure of rest) where a 2-measure basic-idea is repeated over VI and followed by fragmentation leading to a half cadence. Our inclination in this case would likely be to call this passage the first of two main themes. A closer look, however, calls this interpretation into doubt. First, it is unclear whether or not m. 7 even brings a cadence—a necessary requirement to end a main theme. Due to the octave texture that marks the would-be continuation phrase, the harmony of this measure is impossible to determine definitively. Given that the bass note so clearly sounds on the downbeat of each measure up to this point, it seems most reasonable to hear a B natural as the lowest voice rather than an implied G, which renders the passage non-cadential. Second, by granting the opening eight measures main theme status we recognize the existence of a main theme group containing one sentence and one compound period. This combination, unusual to begin with, involves one theme ending with a half cadence and the other with a perfect authentic cadence, whereas in classical practice, the themes of a main theme group all end with perfect authentic cadences.[124] Third, and most importantly, the *fortissimo* section does not return at the beginning of the recapitulation. In fact, it does not reappear at all following the start of the development section. How then do we classify this opening?

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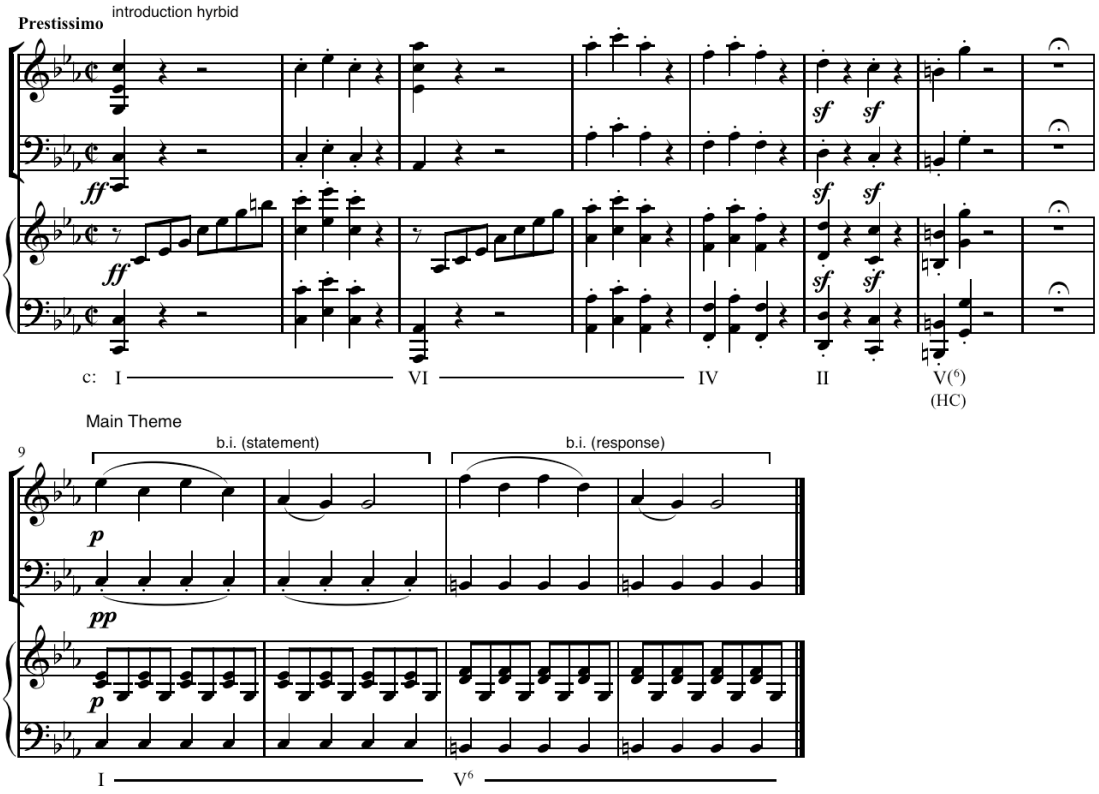
[124] Caplin, *Classical Form*, 197.

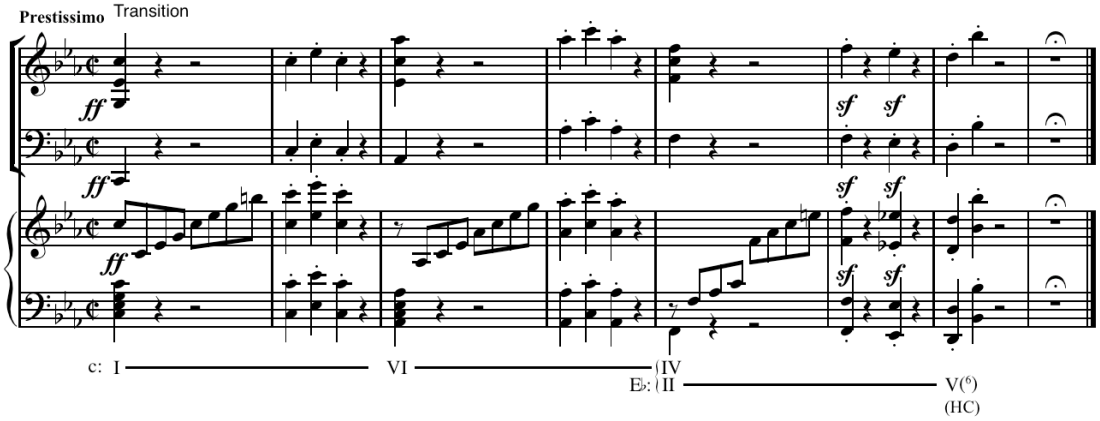
Ex. 25a Beethoven, Piano Trio in C minor, Op. 1/3, iv, 1–12



In light of the above discussion, introduction function (more specifically, a slow/thematic hybrid) seems to fit best the music from mm. 1–8. Its slow introduction features include a fairly active harmonic rhythm and dominant preparation, the anticipatory quality of which is heightened by a fermata effect due to the rest in m. 8, and its thematic introduction characteristics include its tempo (same as the main theme), lack of cadence, consistent fortissimo dynamic, homogenous texture, and energetic affect. The passage also exhibits framing characteristics, but in a rather peculiar way. For instance, the opening music returns at m. 35 to initiate the transition in its entirety rather than simply launching it (Ex. 25b), and as such, does not bring the cadence that is typical of this

function due to a bass problem analogous to the work's beginning. In a more typical vein, the framing integration technique presents itself at the onset of the development section.

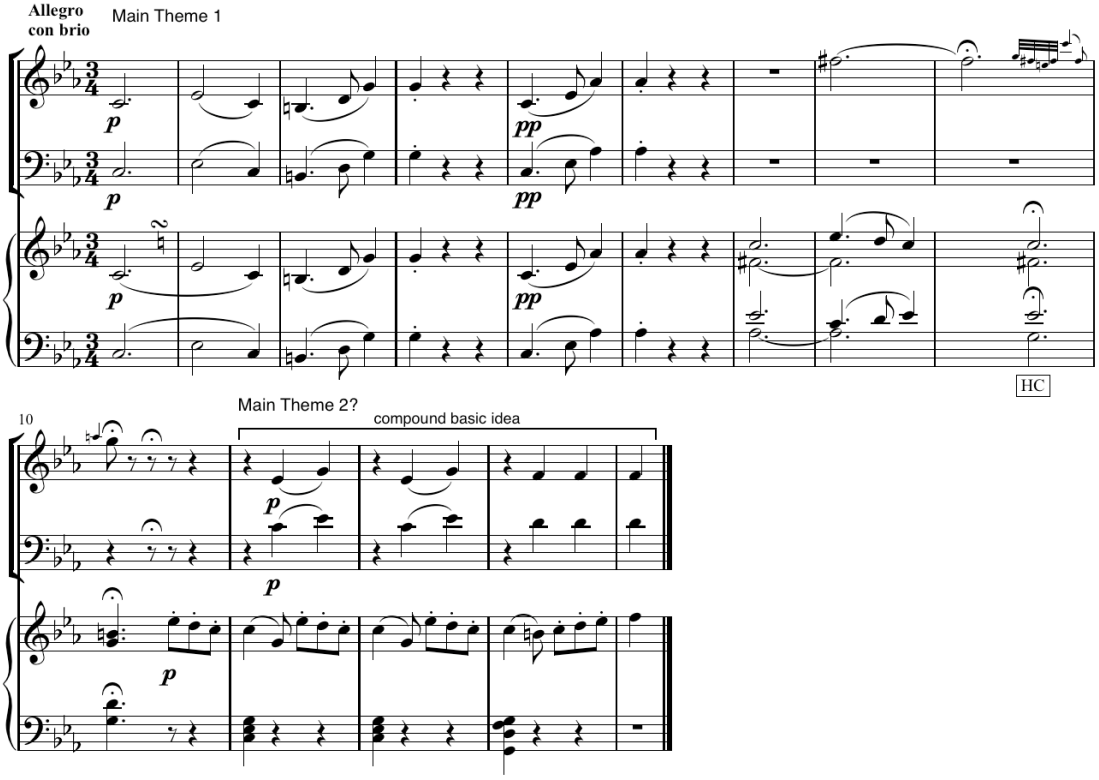
Ex. 25b Beethoven, Piano Trio in C minor, Op. 1/3, iv, 35–42



Despite the plethora of introductory characteristics, the theme-like quality of the opening presents a certain functional ambiguity that is not sorted out fully by the argument above. One might argue that the main theme group is simply deformational in its cadential content (i.e., a HC followed by another HC, and finally, a PAC) and that the first of two main themes is eliminated in the recapitulation according to the standard cropping techniques often found in this section.[125] This view would also recognize that the cadence at the downbeat of m. 7 is parallel to one ending the transition (m. 41), thus normalizing that function.

[125] Ibid., 161-77.

Ex. 26 Beethoven, Piano Trio in C minor, Op. 1/3, i, 1–14



The opening movement of the same trio presents a similar, yet very different, case of form-functional ambiguity. Here, the opening brings a 10-measure non-conventional theme type that ends clearly with a half cadence and is followed by a compound sentential structure (Ex. 26). Similar to the finale, the cadential situation of the material leading up to the transition proves problematic. While the music from mm. 10–17 undoubtedly constitutes a compound presentation phrase, the ensuing passage fails to

cadence and instead ends with a premature dominant arrival.[126] Given the classical norms for a main theme group cited in the previous example, the functional status of this opening passage becomes unclear. Another possibility presents itself when a modulating transition begins at m. 30. If we back up in time, the compound sentence could be seen to act as the first part of a two-part transition, ending on V of the home key, thus leaving the modulation and arrival on V of the subordinate key to the second part. Unfortunately, this interpretation contradicts the compositional logic at the heart of two-part transitions where, in general, the first part follows on the heels of a main theme ending with a PAC and reopens the structure by ending on a half cadence. This is, of course, impossible since the would-be main theme (mm. 1–10) ends with a half cadence.

At this point, it seems as though the opening ten measures act in much the same way as the 8-measure beginning of the finale (i.e., a hybrid introduction); however, when the opening music returns at the start of the recapitulation, its status as a genuine main theme becomes more plausible. This is confirmed when the compound sentence is eliminated and returns only in the coda, thus leaving the originally ambiguous passage as the sole main theme. With these striking differences in mind, it is puzzling that

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[126] According to Caplin, a dominant arrival is "a non-cadential articulation of formal closure marked by the appearance of a dominant harmony near the end of a theme-like unit (especially a contrasting middle, transition, retransition, or development)." A *premature* dominant arrival "appears before the end of the prevailing melodic-motivic and phrase-structural processes;" in this case, at the beginning of the continuation phrase. See Ibid., 254 & 256.

Hepokoski classifies the opening of both movements as P^0 modules.[127] The lack of clarity in our theoretical assessment of this music opens the door for an interesting perspective that questions whether we should even consider either of the two opening ideas to serve main theme function. Instead, perhaps each phrase, in turn, functions as a potential-filled module that takes on different guises according to the elusive principles of formal balance that lie at the heart of the classical style.

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[127] Hepokoski, "Approaching the Tempest Through Sonata Theory", in *Beethoven's Tempest Sonata*, 188.

CONCLUSION

While both *introduction types* and *integration techniques* provide some of the nomenclature necessary for a discussion of thematic introduction, the analysis of specific works develops an intricate web of interrelated concepts that can be used to understand better this oft-neglected area of musical form—how do the idiosyncrasies of one work resonate with those of another? To be sure, each case presents unique challenges, yet notwithstanding the complex construction of opening strategies, thematic introductions and their hybrid counterparts tend to remain in dialogue with the types and integration techniques developed over the course of this study. In fact, even the most perplexing of starts, despite their seemingly *sui generis* nature, tend to make use of techniques that can be found elsewhere in similar combinations. It is thus preferable to adhere strictly to the definitions of types and techniques in clear-cut cases, and to be analytically flexible and adaptive when analyzing more difficult passages.

The categories of this new theory are intended both to promote the dialogical concept put forth by Hepokoski and Darcy in *Sonata Theory* and to encourage productive discourse within a common language that probes the infinite puzzles presented by Beethoven's highly-original approach to musical form. And while I hope this discourse brings fresh perspectives to timeless works, it is also my wish that it improve upon and refine the theoretical framework developed in this essay. Among the several interesting questions that remain to be explored, one might ask whether testinas exhibit common features in much the same way as codettas, or whether there is merit in distinguishing different levels of integration (i.e., those that have impact at a broad level of structure

versus those that pertain only to the surface-level). Whatever the investigative endeavors inspired by this work accomplish, one can be sure that Beethoven's innovative introductory ideas, of which he had a near endless wealth, will remain one of the most salient and original features of his work.

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