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Analysis Techniques

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Franz Schubert: Symphony No. 4 in C minor – **I. Adagio molto—Allegro vivace**

“Adagio molto” (Introduction) [Po]

- The work begins with a short, slow introduction that is organized in a mini-sonata form. Only one theme is used in this form, therefore making it monothematic.
- The key of C minor is first established in the **“exposition”** with a melodic line using chromatic passing tones that hover around VI, V, and i. Half cadences are preferred in this section, and the tonic of C minor is often avoided on strong beats, creating a sense of instability within the metrical placement. This melody is passed between treble and bass registers of the orchestra. The accompaniment then pivots to unconventional harmonies while sequencing the melody by using chromatic motion and suspension, as well as diminished seventh chords to abruptly modulate to a fermata G-flat major chord in m. 10. *Common-tone modulation* can be used to describe the processes Schubert used. The process converts “tonic” harmonies into diminished ii chords that resolve to harmonies a whole step below, creating this sequence. The final key of Gb is a tritone away from the tonic but only adding 3 flats—unexpected harmonic motion away from C minor.
- This next section in G flat major is the **“development”** due to its abrupt new key center in its treatment of the theme and extension of sequential process (as well as it following a fermata). The harmony continues to modulate in the same way described—fully diminished seventh chords that pivot to new harmonies, with suspended chromatic tones in the melody. G flat major is quickly left for these sequential modulations that hover around flat keys. Registrally, the section continually descends until reaching a final, unexpected G major chord that returns us back to the tonic key.
- The **“recapitulation”** of this section begins after the obvious cadence back to G in m. 21. This brings back the original theme in the tonic key, and uses dominant lock. The section further establishes C minor, but heavily resolves to half cadences repeatedly back to G. The section ends in a half cadence on G, setting up the main “Allegro” material finally stated in C minor on metrically strong “downbeats.”
 - **Revision:** The hypermeter of the “exposition” is interesting—there is no true repeated phrase length. I notated it as a 3 bar phrase (treble melody), 2 bar phrase (bass melody interjection), and then a 4 bar phrase (sequenced modulation of theme). This same metrical organization occurs in the same way in the “development” with only 1 difference—the sequenced modulation phrase adds a single bar to make it a 5 bar phrase. The “recapitulation” has straightforward hypermeter—4 bar phrases, with a single half cadence at the end (I called it a “parenthetical cadence”).

“Allegro vivace” (Primary Material) [P₁]

Exposition:

- **[P₁]** begins with a very short and unusually 9-bar Allegro theme. The hypermeter is interesting—a 4-bar phrase with smaller 2-bar cells increase in register and intensity, until a 3rd bar finally descends into an expected cadence. Instead, this expected 4th bar cadence is interrupted by an evaded cadence, a repetition of the previous 2-bar fragment. There are two peculiarities: (1) the **phrase rhythm** is briefly changed from 4 to 3, while (2) **phrase overlap** of this shift creates a further instability. This interruption finally cadences to a strong PAC in C minor, quickly introducing the [TR].
- **[TR]** begins with strong, tutti block chords with energy gain in descending chromatic sixteenth note gestures on the weak beat 2, in a 4-bar phrases. This “A” phrase is juxtaposed with a “B” phrase throughout the transition—a melody and accompaniment texture with rising eighth-notes in thirds (once again, 4 bars). This idea “cadences” to a “C” phrase lyrical, legato quarter notes that establish the end of the larger phrase (once again, 4 bars). These 3 phrases continue to extend—the “A” phrase is repeated, but this time extended to two phrases and modulate directly to A-flat major. The B and C phrases are again repeated in their exact form, but in the new key. I revised the [MC] as the beginning of [S] because the PAC in the secondary key WITH a new theme begins at [S] rather than the previous cadence. Initially, it seemed to me that the [MC] was established within the [TR] before truly launching into [S], but our discussion helped me understand that this isn’t the case!
- **[S]** introduces a new lyrical theme that somewhat references the texture of the “C” phrase of the [TR]. Fully in the secondary key of A-flat major, this melody and accompaniment texture uses chromatic passing tones and a metrical accent on beat 2 (weak beat). The hypermeter of the second phrase (grace-note phrase) is interesting—instead of the expected 4-bar presentation, the final bar does not cadence and adds 1 more bar, creating an elongated 4th beat (**revision**). This uneven reinterpretation is repeated every time the grace-note phrase returns, and creates further tension to cadences and breaks monotony of lyrical 4-bar phrases. In m. 85, the roles of the previous melody and accompaniment texture are inverted—the bass instruments take a shortened version of the grace-note theme in accented repetition, while the soprano instruments provide ostinato accompaniment. These phrases are interrupted with new arpeggiated 4-bar phrases that wildly shift in key center with no cadential preparation—in m. 89, E major abruptly appears, in m. 97 C major appears, and finally in m. 105, Ab major abruptly returns in this theme. *This unexpected gesture, pivoting in key and theme, is used later in the recapitulation to modulate back to the tonic without preparation.*
- The **[EEC]** occurs in m. 126—the first true PAC in Ab major that concludes the [S] material. Up to this point, there was no direct V→I that included all members of the chord (a few imperfect authentic cadences occurred previously, where V resolved to the note of Ab, rather than the chord of Ab). The cadence quickly falls into a V7 chord, and into transitional [C] material. I initially thought it was at m. 105, but our discussion helped me realize that it wasn’t a true PAC at that moment (tonic in bassline).

- **[C]** introduces new material—a transitional tutti and sf unison statement that resolves to the 3rd of the chord. After this transition, a new 2-bar modulatory idea appears, following Ab→Db→Eb→Fm→Ab, repeating itself and further establishing Ab with more and more PACs in the secondary key (Ab major). A final true PAC in Ab (m. 126) seemingly ends the exposition, until a brief 3 bar modulation half cadences to G, back in the original key of C minor for the repetition of the exposition. Hypermetrically, this section follows traditional 4-bar phrase rules, except for the final transitional bars—the half cadence is confidently stated on beat 3 of the 3rd bar. This is an extremely weak point in the phrase and meter, creating the brash signal that the exposition is truly over and the phrase rhythm was broken.

Development:

- The formal development only truly varies the P theme, and does not include any other themes.
- The short and unusual development launches with a P-derived unison tutti rising theme that borrows rhythm from the P theme. Once again, the 2nd (weak) beat of the meter is accented, creating that unique characteristic phrase idea that has been presented throughout the work. This motive is sequenced in quick juxtaposition, setting up tonics and quickly escaping to a half step above on beat 2 (weak)—Cm is established, quickly escaping to and accenting Db. Then pickups establish Fm, Bbm, then Ebm, until reaching an Eb diminished chord. This unstable antecedent is responded to by a lyrical consequent that establishes a stable Bb minor. In m. 138, the P theme is fully restated in this new key of Bb minor. Most interestingly in this section, restatements of the P theme complete their expected phrase lengths rather than being interrupted (as in the exposition). This P theme is then stated in bass instruments, using register to develop the P theme, and finally in contrapuntal elaboration (m. 158), with both voices performing the theme 2 beats apart. The theme is shortened once more and sharply repeated in melody and accompaniment, transitioning to the recapitulation.
- The **retransition** occurs within this section at around m. 170. This symphony does not use standard harmonic features, being a hallmark of Schubert's style. Noting the differences between Sonata Theory and Schubert's adherence to formal guidelines provides the basis of my belief that *the recapitulation does not initially return to the tonic key*. The retransition prolongs the V chord of the following key (D major), and sets up the recapitulation beginning in G minor at m. 173.

Recapitulation:

- As I stated, the exposition does not return to the tonic key. Instead, it begins in G minor (as if that was the original tonic), and exactly transposes the exposition into G minor, and correctly modulates into Eb major (just like the exposition—VI) in m. 202.
- In m. 232, the exposition breaks from its formal adherence to G minor. Instead, the arpeggiated E major theme as presented in the exposition returns in the same key (rather than being transposed to fit the new tonic of G minor). **This figure represents the pivot in the recapitulation**—moving from the remote and informal G minor back to the

original tonic. From this point in m. 232, the musical material is identical to the exposition. However, Schubert once again subverts the expectation—in m. 240, when the same unexpected C major modulation occurs (just like the exposition), the entire tonic of the work abruptly changes to fit this key! The arpeggiated theme does not repeat again and directly launches into the [ESC] and [C] section (m. 244) of the recapitulation, this time, in C major. This key is not the tonic, but closely related as the parallel major of the original C minor.

- The [C] section is stated in the same form as the exposition, but transposed to C major. In m. 265, the material differs—a unison cadence to C is held for a whole note, then launching into brand new coda material to finish the movement. This new coda material at m. 266 includes simple rising scales in the bass with tutti chords on beat 3 (strong beat), reaching I—V—I cadences until finally arpeggiating and presenting tutti C major chords, ending on a unison C just as the work began.
 - The hypermeter of this coda section is also interesting—moving from 2 and 4 bar phrases, the new coda abruptly shifts back to the 3-bar phrase idea. On the final 3-bar phrase, **phrase overlap** is utilized when 3=1, and reinterprets the cadential 3rd bar as the downbeat of a new phrase. This final phrase is a simple 4-bar brilliant arpeggio that expectedly falls to tutti, “hammer blow” C major chords.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS for SYMPOSIUM:

- Did you notice Schubert’s lack of prepared modulation or formal adherence to harmonic principles? Was it difficult or easy to find the important cadences of Sonata Theory?
 - “Schubert also finds unorthodox means of preparing his unorthodox keys. Often he does not establish keys, but juxtaposes them—by a brief, frequently abrupt modulation through a common tone or pivot chord. Or he prepares some key other than the one in which the second group actually begins. Or he makes a complex progression through several remote keys, the eventual goal remaining uncertain until the last moment.”
 - Webster, James. "Schubert's Sonata Form and Brahms's First Maturity." *19th-Century Music* 2, no. 1 (1978): 18-35. doi:10.2307/746189.
 - **Schubert’s use of his characteristic “purple patches”** (a term coined by Donald Francis Tovey). Schubert’s purple patches – themes abruptly presented in unprepared keys. These are often juxtaposed or used as a harmonic flavor that may prepare other keys in the future, but not directly.
- What did you notice about the frequency that Schubert introduces and develops themes throughout the work? Does he clearly state an A and B theme, or not?
 - I found that Schubert employs many more themes than expected in usual sonata form. Schubert interweaves many themes within the Transition (TR), Secondary area (S), and Coda area (C).

- How does Schubert use hypermeter and metrical reinterpretation? Is it frequent, or sparse? What effect does it have on the music?
 - In my movement, 4-bar phrases were very consistently used. Phrase overlap was used at certain “important” moments in the form to create drama and energy gain. I also notice that Schubert ties THEME with HYPERMETER—a theme that uses a certain phrase overlap or reinterpretation is repeated in the same way throughout the work. When the theme doesn’t follow these established beat patterns, Schubert is intentionally developing and altering the theme for larger structural purposes!

REVISIONS (AFTER SYMPOSIUM, 7/10/19)

(ALL REVISIONS ARE REFLECTED IN ANNOTATED SCORE AS WELL)

- **Revision:** I revised the [MC] as the beginning of [S] because the PAC in the secondary key WITH a new theme begins at [S] rather than the previous cadence. Initially, it seemed to me that the [MC] was established within the [TR] before truly launching into [S], but our discussion helped me understand that this isn’t the case!
- **Revision:** The [EEC] occurs in m. 126—the first true PAC in Ab major that concludes the [S] material. Up to this point, there was no direct V→I that included all members of the chord (a few imperfect authentic cadences occurred previously, where V resolved to the note of Ab, rather than the chord of Ab). The cadence quickly falls into a V7 chord, and into transitional [C] material. I initially thought it was at m. 105, but our discussion helped me realize that it wasn’t a true PAC at that moment (tonic in bassline).
- *I forgot to analyze the hypermeter of the Adagio section at the beginning.* **Revision:** The hypermeter of the “exposition” is interesting—there is no true repeated phrase length. I notated it as a 3 bar phrase (treble melody), 2 bar phrase (bass melody interjection), and then a 4 bar phrase (sequenced modulation of theme). This same metrical organization occurs in the same way in the “development” with only 1 difference—the sequenced modulation phrase adds a single bar to make it a 5 bar phrase. The “recapitulation” has straightforward hypermeter—4 bar phrases, with a single half cadence at the end (I called it a “parenthetical cadence”).
- **Revision:** The hypermeter of the second phrase (grace-note phrase) is interesting—instead of the expected 4-bar presentation, the final bar does not cadence and adds 1 more bar, creating an elongated **4th beat (revision)**—not 5 bar phrase). This uneven reinterpretation is repeated every time the grace-note phrase returns, and creates further tension to cadences and breaks monotony of lyrical 4-bar phrases.

TRAGISCHE SYMPHONIE.

(Componiert im Jahre 1816.)

Po - Introduction
 [Exposition.]
 Adagio molto.

Viol. I. Bässe

ff *pp* *Viol. I.* *Bässe*

Cm *Ab* *G* *Cm* *Ab* *G* *F*

Fl. Viol. Clar. *Viola* *Viol. I.*

Fl. Viol. *Clar. cresc.* *Viola* *Viol. I.*

Cm *Bb* *Ab* *Abm* *Cb* *Bb* *Bbm* *Db* *Gb*

[development.]

Ob. *Viol. II.*

[development.] *Ob.* *Viol. II.*

G6 *F* *C* *F* *v' - I* *v' ->* *Bbm* *G6* *F* *A0* *(vii: ->)*

Fl. Holz. *Viol.* *Bässe* *Holzbl.*

Fl. *Holz.* *Viol.* *Bässe* *Holzbl.*

Bbm *Fag.* *Bb0* *Eb* *Ab* *A0* *Db* *G6* *C7b5* *Fn* *F0*

[recapitulation.]

Viol. *Fag.* *Viol.*

[recapitulation.] *Viol.* *Fag.* *Viol.*

Bb *F#0* *G*

Fl. Viol. I. Fl. Cl. H.C. or. Horn. paratitential cadence

Ob. Fag. Viol. II. Str.

4 p 2 3 pp 4

P₁ Exposition 1 Allegro vivace.

p Str.

1 2 3 4 1

TR P.A.C.

Tutti.

2 3 1 2 1 2

(evaded cadence)

A.C.

3 fz 4 fp Str. Holzbl. 2 3 4

P.A.C.

1 fp 2 3 4 Tutti. 2

3 fz 4 1 fz 2 3 fz

Handwritten annotations: *fp*, *fp*, *fp*, *fp*, *fp*. Red numbers 4, 2, 4. Red vertical bar lines.

Handwritten annotations: *fp*, *fp*, *fp*, *fp*, *fp*. Red numbers 1, 2, 4, 4. Blue box containing "MCS". Red vertical bar line. "Streichqu." label.

Red numbers 3, 4, 1, 2, 3, 4. Red vertical bar lines.

Instrument labels: Fl., Viol. u. Ob., Bässe u. Fag. *mf*. Red numbers 1, 2, 3, 4. Red vertical bar lines.

Instrument labels: Viol. u. Clar., Bässe. Red numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 1. Red vertical bar lines.

Instrument labels: Bässe. *Tutti*. Red numbers 2, 3, 4, 2. Red vertical bar lines.

Instrument labels: Viol. u. Clar., Bässe. ** F!*. Red numbers 3, 4, 1, 2, 3. Red vertical bar lines.

4 *ff* Tutti. 2 3 4

Viol. u. Clar. * C:
Viola Bässe *ff* Tutti. Ab:

2 *3ff* 4 Streichqu. Holzbl. 2

Fl. Ob. Clar. Fag. Streichqu.

Viol. Fl. Ob.

2 *cresc.* 2 1 2

Viol. Holzbl. *f* 2 1 *f* 2 *p* 2 *f* 3 *f*

EBC PAC C

Development,

96

(P-derived)

ff Str. und Holzbl. f_z 2 f_z 3 f_z 4 f_z 1 1^{ff} Ob. Fag.

Viol. I. p Streichqu. 2 3 4 1

B^bm:

2 3 1 2 3 Fag.u.Vcll. (P theme)

1 2 3 4 1 2

(P theme) Viol. 3 1 2 f 1 2

3 1 2 3 4 1

retransition:

Handwritten musical score system 1, featuring piano accompaniment in G minor. The system includes two staves with various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. Red numbers 2, 3, and 4 are written above the notes. A blue vertical line is present in the middle of the system.

Recapitulation,

Handwritten musical score system 2, continuing the piano accompaniment. It features two staves with musical notation and dynamic markings. A blue vertical line is present at the beginning. Red numbers 4, 2, 3, and 4 are written above the notes. A blue vertical line is present at the end of the system.

Gm:

Handwritten musical score system 3, continuing the piano accompaniment. It features two staves with musical notation and dynamic markings. Red numbers 2, 3, 1, 2, and ff Tutti are written above the notes. A blue vertical line is present at the end of the system.

(TR)

Handwritten musical score system 4, featuring piano accompaniment and orchestral parts. It includes two staves for piano and staves for Viol. I and Holzbl. Musical notation includes notes, rests, and dynamic markings. Red numbers 2, 3, 4, 2, and ff are written above the notes.

Viol. I.

Holzbl.

Handwritten musical score system 5, continuing the piano accompaniment. It features two staves with musical notation and dynamic markings. Red numbers 4, 2, 4, and ff Tutti are written above the notes.

Handwritten musical score system 6, continuing the piano accompaniment. It features two staves with musical notation and dynamic markings. Red numbers 2, 4, 2, and 3 are written above the notes.

Handwritten annotations: 4, fp, 2, fp, 3, 4

First system of a musical score, featuring piano accompaniment with treble and bass staves. It includes dynamic markings like *fp* and handwritten numbers 4, 2, 3, 4.

Handwritten annotations: Eb, (MC)(S), fp, 2, fp, 4, p

Second system of the musical score, including dynamic markings like *fp* and *p*, and handwritten notes *E_b* and *(MC)(S)*.

Handwritten annotations: 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 3

Third system of the musical score, featuring piano accompaniment with treble and bass staves, with handwritten numbers 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 3.

Handwritten annotations: 4, mf, 2, 3, 4

Fourth system of the musical score, including dynamic markings like *mf* and handwritten numbers 4, 2, 3, 4. Instrument labels *Fl.u.Ob.* and *Viol. I.* are present.

Handwritten annotations: 1, 2, 3, 4, f

Fifth system of the musical score, including dynamic markings like *f* and handwritten numbers 1, 2, 3, 4. Instrument labels *Viol. u. Clar.*, *Viola.*, and *Bässe.* are present.

Handwritten annotations: 2, 3, 4, ff, Tutti, 2

Sixth system of the musical score, including dynamic markings like *ff* and *Tutti*, and handwritten numbers 2, 3, 4, 2.

Handwritten annotations: 3, 4, 1, 2, 3

Seventh system of the musical score, including handwritten numbers 3, 4, 1, 2, 3. Instrument labels *Viol. u. Clar.*, *Viola.*, and *Bässe.* are present.

4
ff Tutti.

p.A.E.
fz fz fz ff
Fl. Ob. Clar. Pag. Str.

2
fz
Viol. I. Bläser.

1 2
p cresc.
Fl. Ob. Clar. Pag. Str.

ESC... (final coda) (C)
ff
Viol. I. Bläser.
Str.

3 fz 2 3 fz 1 2 3

fz 1 2 3=1 2 3 4 1 2 3