THE TRAGIC REVERSED RECAPITULATION IN THE GERMAN CLASSICAL TRADITION

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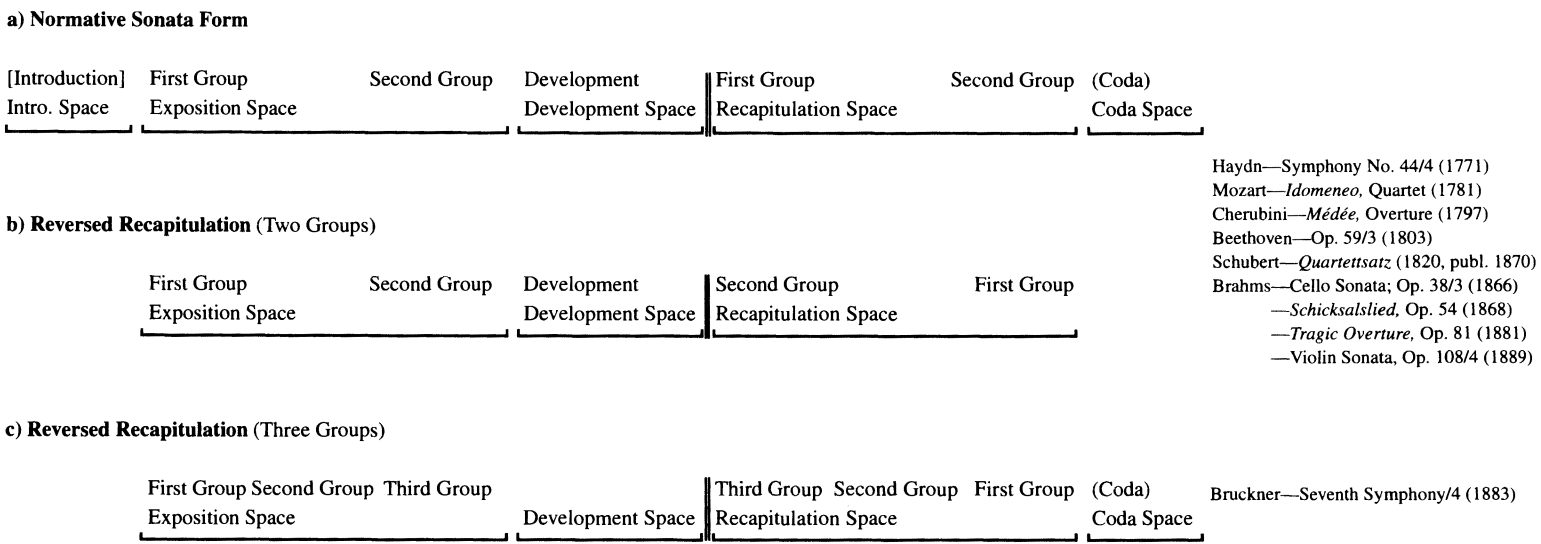
For Jack Adrian, *in memoriam.*

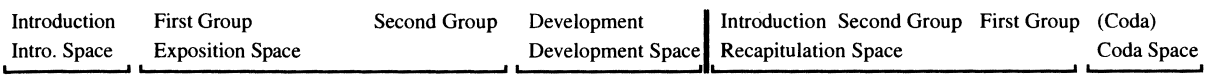
In a small but highly significant repertoire of late eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth century sonatas, the reversed recapitulation may be interpreted as a tragic-programmatic deformation of "textbook" standard sonata form. The genre, *topos*, or iconographic tradition of the "tragic" reversed recapitulation is the subject of the present study.[1] In this repertoire, standard order in the recapitulation is reversed as a deviation from an assumed norm, and is to be perceived and explained as a deformation rather than as a stable, chiasmus-like symmetrical design. A subgenre, the partially reversed recapitulation, will also be discussed. The genre's possible origins in classical rhetorical and dramatic theory are explored. The discussion proceeds from an overview of design-structure interrelationships to consider specific pieces in the German classical tradition from Haydn to Brahms.

In late eighteenth and nineteenth century German sonata forms, parallelism between the order of groups in reprise and exposition is normative. Reversed sonata forms are uncommon in this tradition after about 1770; in the few examples one can find, reversing the groups in the recapitulation may have programmatic significance. The "spatial" organization of normative sonata form is displayed in fig. 1a.[2] In this form, the groups in the exposition occupy "exposition space," the corresponding

Figure 1: Normative, Reversed, and Partially Reversed Sonata Forms

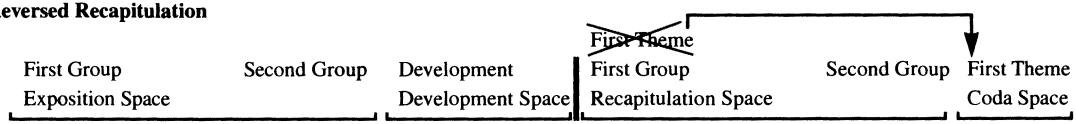


d) Reversed Recapitulation (Variant)



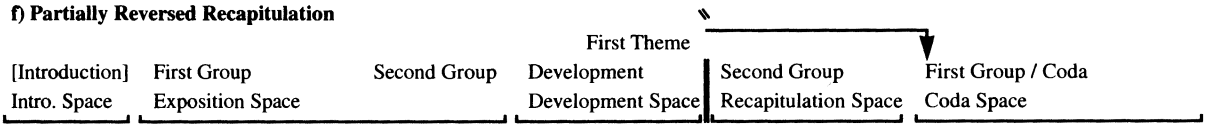
Mahler—Sixth Symphony/4 (1904)

e) Partially Reversed Recapitulation



Brahms—Fourth Symphony, Op. 98/1 (1884)
—Piano Trio, Op. 101/1 (1886)

f) Partially Reversed Recapitulation



Tchaikovsky—*Tempest Overture* (1873)
—Fourth Symphony/1 (1877)

groups in the recapitulation are assigned to "recapitulation space," and the introduction, development, and coda each occupy their own respective spaces. Reversed sonata form (fig. 1b–d), on the other hand, reverses the order of groups in the recapitulation. In a two-group reprise, the second group, rather than the first, initiates recapitulation space (fig. 1b). When the exposition comprises three groups, the reversed recapitulation may take the form, third group, second group, and first group (fig. 1c).[3] A variant places the recapitulated introduction before the reversed groups (fig. 1d). Two different types of partially reversed recapitulation are identified in figs. 1e–f. In the first, the normative order of the groups is preserved in the reprise, but the sonata design is "reversed" by shifting the first group's opening music after the second group, where it appears as the beginning of the coda (fig. 1e). Another type of partially reversed sonata form occurs when the groups are reversed and the first group's first theme becomes the climax of the development (fig. 1f).[4]

The essence of the rhetorical figure is that it be a *vitium*, a violation of normal usage to create a particular emotional effect. In linguistic rhetorical theory, *hyperbaton* is a class of figures in which normal word order and semantic logic are abrogated, the dislocation reflecting violent or disordered feelings. These figures may be used not only to depict the tragic but also the grotesque and the comic. Shakespeare handles them with an infinite variety of tonal effect, especially in tragedy. To cite a famous example of *hyperbaton* from a Shakespearean tragedy, Othello plans to murder Desdemona, not by sword, but by strangulation, since he "would not mar that whiter skin than snow."[5] In this case, the dislocation of the *hyberbaton* both depicts Othello's jealous rage and foreshadows its tragic consequences. By violating the formal-tonal order of normative sonata form, the tragic reversed recapitulation may be identified as a large-scale *hyberbaton*. Indeed, the Baroque musical rhetorician Johann Adolph Scheibe identifies *hyberbaton* as "the removal of . . . [a] musical idea from the expected order" (Buelow 1980, 794).

In employing the term "deformation" in connection with the tragic reversed sonata form, I draw upon recent work of James Hepokoski, who defines sonata deformation as "a strikingly non-normative individual structure, one that contravenes some of the most central defining traditions, or default gestures, of a genre while explicitly retaining others" (Hepkoski 1992, 143). The point of reference is "the normative practice, or set of reified defaults, urged by the *Formenlehre* traditions, for better or worse a fundamental frame of reference for the institution of Germanic art music at least from the time of A. B. Marx on" (Hepkoski 1993, 6–7).

The tragic reversed sonata form as a deformation of normative sonata form has a different pedigree and significance from the symmetrical sonata form of the early classical period (c.1740–80).[6] Early classical

sonatas in symmetrical sonata form incorporate the reversed recapitulation as a stable, symmetrical formation. Symmetrical sonata form is not a deformation of normative sonata form, and the tonic at the beginning of the recapitulation is usually real rather than displaced or apparent. Examples of the symmetrical recapitulation are found in Johann Stamitz's symphonies from 1740 through 1750, although this formal disposition is less common in Stamitz's music than generally believed (Wolf 1981). Some twelve works by Haydn feature symmetrical recapitulations. Mark Evan Bonds remarks that "this procedure is largely abandoned after 1770," observing how, "it is all the more striking that Mozart abandons the procedure [of the reversed recapitulation] so suddenly and at almost precisely the same time as Haydn" (Bonds 1988; 287, 301–2).[7] After about 1770, reversing the recapitulation thus appears to have been perceived as a special deformational effect rather than as a normal way of organizing the recapitulation. However, the symmetrical recapitulations of the first movements of Mozart's Piano Sonata, K. 311 (1777) and Violin Sonata, K. 306 (1778) show that Mozart had not entirely abandoned the earlier formal practice. Both of these works were composed during the composer's trip to Mannheim and Paris, and so perhaps exhibit local influences. Indeed, French composers had a penchant for symmetrical sonata form well into the nineteenth century. Cherubini employs it in his overture to *Anacreon* (1803), as does Berlioz in the first movement of the *Symphonie Fantastique* (1828), *Harold in Italy* (1834), and the Overture to *Benvenuto Cellini* (1838).[8] Perhaps influenced by French models, Wagner employs three-group symmetrical sonata form in the Overture to *Tannhäuser* (1845).

The genre of the tragic reversed sonata form stands, for the most part, in stark contrast to the "dark-to-light" or "strife-to-victory" model. In the narrative plots of pieces examined below, the cruel blows of Destiny are never overcome as they are, for example, in Beethoven's Fifth and Ninth Symphonies, Schumann's Second Symphony, and Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony (Newcomb 1984; Kraus 1991). In the repertoire of works in the tragic reversed sonata form, there is no rescue, no *Deus ex machina*, no song of rejoicing.

Technical Aspects of Design-Structure Correlation

Beach (1993) succinctly explains the essential distinction first made by Felix Salzer between "design" and "structure," a distinction which will be assumed throughout the present discussion. In view of the centrality of the frequently complex, even contrapuntal design-structure correlation in sonata form, it is surprising how little has appeared on this subject. As is well known, Schenker's pioneering discussion of the structures underlying sonata design in *Free Composition* does not constitute

an exhaustive inventory of the structural or design possibilities of sonata form, a deficiency which Oster sought to remedy in his notes and addendum (Schenker 1979, 133–40). Schenker remarks cryptically that "even a reordering of the original sequence of the material is possible in the recapitulation, since the fundamental line and the bass arpeggiation ultimately restore the balance" (Schenker 1979, 138).

More recently, a number of distinguished analysts have begun to fill in some of the many gaps in Schenker and Oster's published account of sonata form. Beach (1993), for example, has studied subdominant recapitulations in Schubert. Sonatas with subdominant recapitulations and sonatas with reversed designs may be generically related insofar as both avoid an expected structural tonic at the beginning of the recapitulation, and both replace interruption with an undivided *Urlinie*. Schachter's (1991, 250–51) analysis of the ♭III recapitulation in the Finale of Schubert's Ninth Symphony also sheds light on the problem of Schubert's off-tonic recapitulations. More generally, Jack Adrian's detailed studies of sonata form systematically explore some of the territory already mapped out by Schenker and Oster (Adrian 1990a; 1990b). Building on Oster's addendum, Adrian defines the ternary sonata form as a sonata in which the initial structural tonic supporting the *Kopfton* returns twice in the course of the sonata: at the beginning of the development section and again at the onset of the recapitulation. Such a ternary sonata would contain three, rather than the customary two, "structural downbeats," as defined by Morgan (1969). According to Adrian, this repertoire includes the first movements of Brahms's Violin Sonata in G Major Op. 78 (1878–79), Piano Trio in C Major Op. 87 (1880), Fourth Symphony Op. 98 (1884–85), and Clarinet Sonata Op. 120, No. 2 (1894). As I argue below, however, the first movement of Brahms's Fourth Symphony is a special case, in that the structural tonic supporting the primary tone does not appear at the real beginning of the recapitulation (m. 259) but is instead reserved for the onset of the coda (m. 394) in the partially reversed sonata form.[9]

Let us now examine various ways in which dislocation of the standard sonata design in reversed sonata form may influence large-scale tonal structure. Tragedy is represented not simply by reversing the order of groups in the recapitulation, but by tonal displacement of the tonic normally associated with the beginning of the recapitulation. Figuratively speaking, the cruel hand of Destiny upsets not only the sonata design, but also destroys or distorts the expected harmonic-tonal structure. In some examples of tragic reversed sonata form, reversing the order of groups in the recapitulation involves displacing the recapitulated second group's tonic by a more background chord, sometimes by a prolonged dominant extending forward out of the development. As a result of this dominant extension, the definitive return of the tonic (with its associated structural

downbeat) does not coincide with the return of the second group, but rather is saved for the culminating recapitulation of the first group.[10]

The background tonal structures in tragic reversed sonata forms are quite different from the interruption structures underlying sonata form presented by Schenker in *Free Composition*. With the most common type of late eighteenth century reversed sonata form, the primary tone is not regained at the beginning of the recapitulation. Instead, the upper voice is undivided as V/$\hat{2}$, prolonged through the development and the recapitulation of the second group, resolves to I/$\hat{1}$ over the recapitulation of the first group. Because I/$\hat{1}$ (which coincides with the return of the first group) completes the large-scale structural descent in the upper voice, the recapitulation of the first group may simultaneously function as a coda. In normative sonata structure, interruption coincides with the break in the musical discourse between the end of the development and the onset of the recapitulation. In reversed sonata form, however, recapitulation of the second and first groups constitutes a design-structural unit; thus, instead of interruption between the end of the recapitulated second and first groups, V/$\hat{2}$ resolves to I/$\hat{1}$ within an undivided structure. In Schenker's sonata model, the return to the structural tonic supporting the primary tone at the beginning of the recapitulation signifies a tonal return deep in the middleground. However, the idea of a second chance in the deep middleground is foreign to tragic reversed sonata form; in the tragic context, the undivided upper voice and continuously unfolding harmonic-contrapuntal process may connote the inexorable unravelling of tragic destiny.[11]

Tracing the genre of tragic reversed sonata form through two centuries exposes a complex network of overlapping and interpenetrating connotations. Thus, when Haydn, Mozart or Brahms employ the genre, the plasticity of their treatment rings variations upon its inherited significances. Analyzing late eighteenth and early nineteenth century precedents in Haydn, Mozart, Cherubini,[12] Beethoven, and Schubert contributes to the understanding of Brahms's treatment of the form. A few late-eighteenth century instances of the tragic, programmatic signification of reversed sonata form can be found in the Finale of Haydn's Symphony No. 44 in E minor (1771, subtitled, possibly authentically, the "Trauersymphonie"), in the great quartet from Act III of Mozart's *Idomeneo* (1781), and in the overture to Cherubini's *Médée* (1797). At the heart of Mozart's unusual handling of form in the quartet is subversion of natural order, particularly that in the natural bond between father and son. Tragic subversion of nature by infanticide is also played out in violations of natural harmonic-formal order in the overture to *Médée*.

Once the normative procedures of sonata form had been codified in the *Formenlehre* of the mid-nineteenth century, composers and theorists working in the second half of the century attached special significance to deviations. The reversed sonata form of the *Andante* from Beethoven's

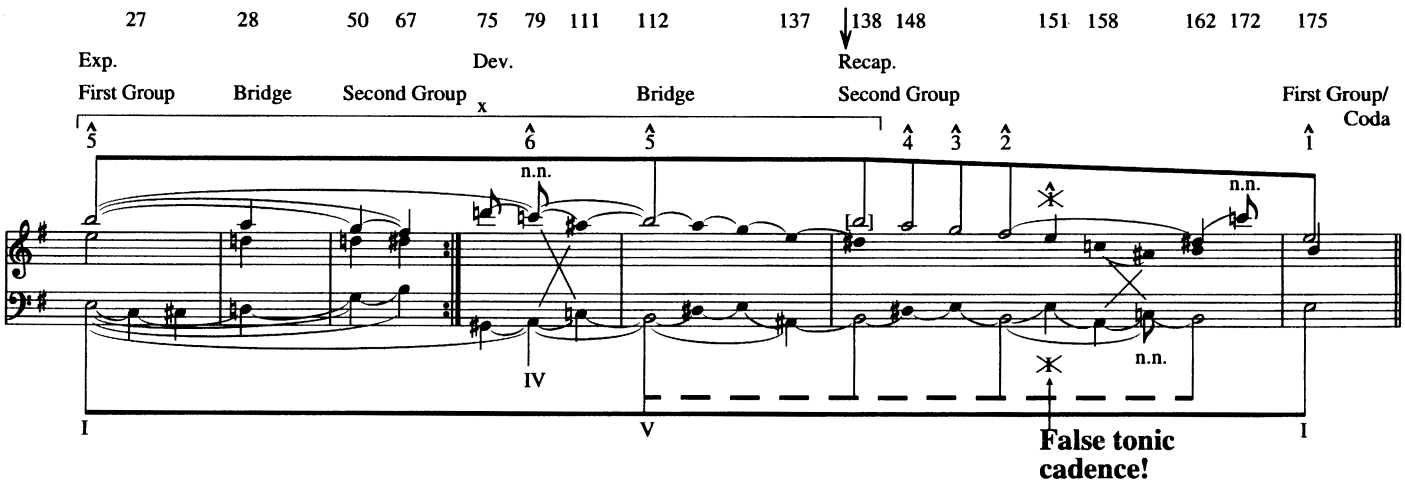
Third "Razumovsky" Quartet (1803), which may have served Schubert as a model for his *Quartettsatz* of 1820, prompted A. B. Marx to describe it as "seltsam fremd" (Kerman 1967, 149). Schubert's *Quartettsatz* (which Brahms owned in manuscript) may have provided Brahms with a formal model for four tragic works in reversed sonata form: the Finales of the first Cello Sonata in E minor, Op. 38 (1866) and the Third Violin Sonata in D minor, Op. 108 (1889), the *Schicksalslied*, Op. 54 (1868–71), and the *Tragic Overture*, Op. 81 (1881).[13]

If some interpreters have misread the design of works in reversed sonata form, this may be in part because the form has not been recognized as a legitimate genre. Donald Francis Tovey regards instances of reversed sonata design in Cherubini as evidence of a "deficient sense of form," observing rhetorically and yet paradoxically that "Cherubini had a very good sense of form; he was profoundly moved by Haydn and Mozart, nor did Beethoven fail to influence him more than he liked to admit to himself. But his treatment of the Viennese forms results only by a precarious series of flukes in anything that can be judged by the same criteria" (Tovey 1989a, 173). Furthermore, the relationship between reversed sonata design and undivided tonal structure in this repertoire is frequently complex, and so can easily provoke confusing, even contradictory analyses. Too often, the source of ambiguity lies more with the analyst than the composer. For example, contrary to Coren's (1974) assertion of "*ambiguity* [my emphasis] in Schubert's recapitulations," the relationship between design and tonal structure in Schubert is generally complex but unambiguous.

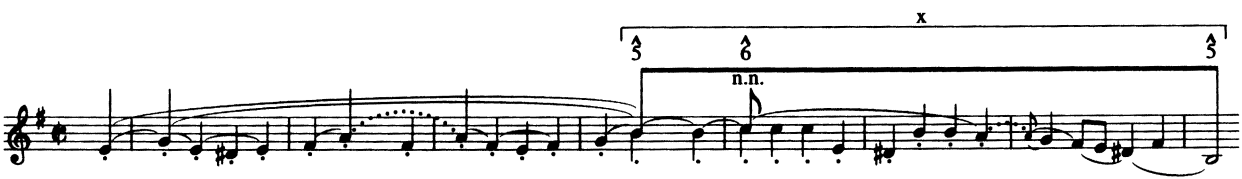
The Second Group over Dominant Prolongation

The most common way of composing the second group's recapitulation in the reversed sonata form is to continue dominant prolongation through the return of the second group. An initial example is provided by the Finale of Haydn's Symphony No. 44. Recomposition of the bridge section (mm. 112–137) leads directly into the recapitulation of the second group (ex. 1a). Displacement of the tonic in the recapitulation is taken a step further by converting the expected tonic in m. 151 into a V of IV. The chromatic voice-exchange in the development is then recomposed (m. 158) leading into an extension of the dominant, which prepares the definitive tonic return. The arrival on the structural tonic (m. 175) coincides with the return of the first group's material, which doubles as a coda. The large-scale $\hat{5}$-$\hat{6}$-$\hat{5}$ neighbor note 'x,' which spans exposition, development, and recapitulation of the second group, constitutes an enlargement of the motive presented by the subject (exs. 1a-b).

The Quartet from Mozart's *Idomeneo* provides a more elaborate example of the reversed recapitulation. The formal-textual correlation in



Example 1a: Haydn, Symphony No. 44 ("Trauersymphonie"), *Finale,* Middleground



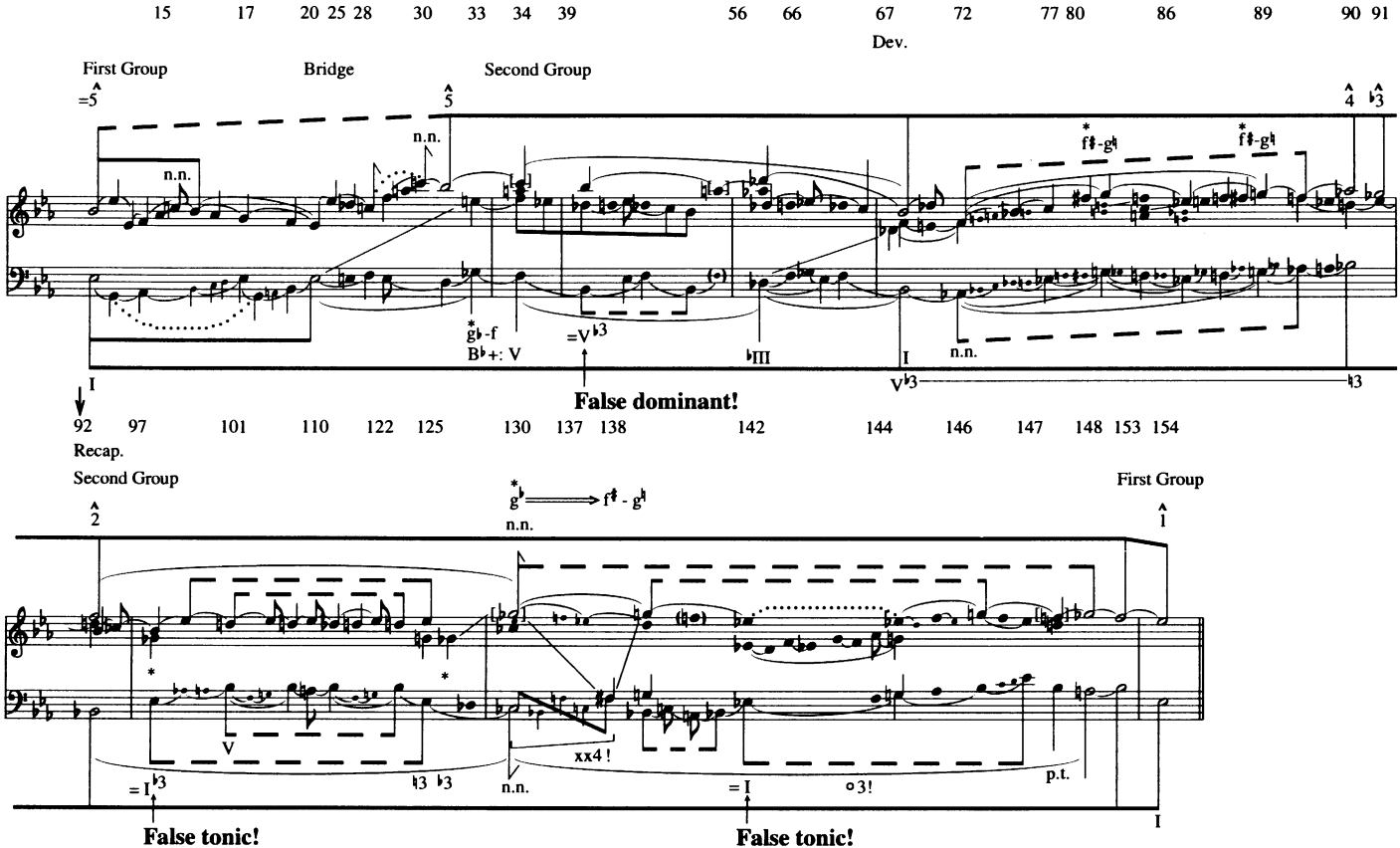
Example 1b: Haydn, Symphony No. 44, *Finale,* Opening Theme

the Quartet is consistent with the reversed design shown in ex. 2. Terzetti 3–5 ("Serena il ciglio irato [. . .]") are consistently set by the second group in the exposition (mm. 34–67) and recapitulation (mm. 92–153), while terzetti 1-3 ("Andro ramingo e solo [. . .]") are initially set by the first group and bridge in the exposition (mm. 1–33) and, when the text is repeated, by the development (mm. 67–91). The truncated recapitulation of the first group (mm. 153–end) returns to the first line of the opening terzet.[14]

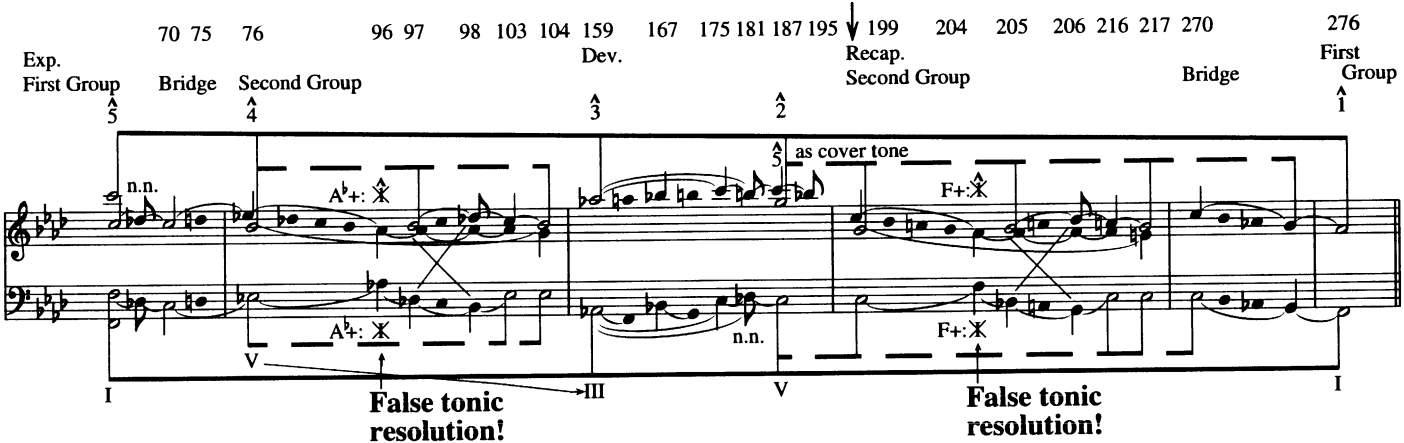
Although the second group in a major mode sonata is usually in the dominant, ex. 2 shows that the expected dominant in the Quartet's second group is displaced to the beginning of the development by a descending arpeggiation of the dominant minor, F-D♭-B♭. The B♭ minor of mm. 39–55 is an apparent dominant inserted into this over-arching arpeggiation. The dominant attained at the beginning of the development is prolonged through the recapitulation of the second group and definitively resolves to the tonic only in the recapitulation of the first group at the end. As the graph illustrates, two huge prolongations of an apparent tonic are inserted into the large-scale motion from B♭ (V) to C♭ major (♭VI) and back to B♭. Although the initial tonic minor prolonged in mm. 97–129 is greatly extended by a drawn-out prolongation of its dominant (mm. 101–18), this tonic is an apparent I♭3, caught within the underlying motion from V to ♭VI. The tonic major in mm. 142–47 is similarly an apparent I caught within the motion of ♭VI back to V. These massive, false harmonic spaces in the second group, which appear to contradict the underlying harmonic logic, may embody Idomeneo's dilemma: either he violates natural order through infanticide, or political-social-moral order (which, as king, he is duty-bound to uphold) through the breaking of his vow.

In Cherubini's *Médée* Overture (ex. 3), rather than prolong III in the second group, as is typical of minor mode sonatas, the composer poises the entire second group on V/III. In m. 96, the music suggests the E♭ major dominant resolving to the A♭ major tonic; however, the A♭ major chord (m. 96) proves to be an apparent tonic caught within continuing dominant prolongation. The withheld III chord is definitively achieved only at the beginning of the development, where it immediately disintegrates in unfolding modulations. By recapitulating the second group in exact transposition from V/III to V/I, the F major tonic (m. 205 corresponds to m. 96) also functions as an apparent rather than structural tonic; thus, the dominant reached at the end of the development is prolonged through the recapitulation of the second group, definitively resolving to the tonic only with the recapitulation of the first group (m. 276ff.).

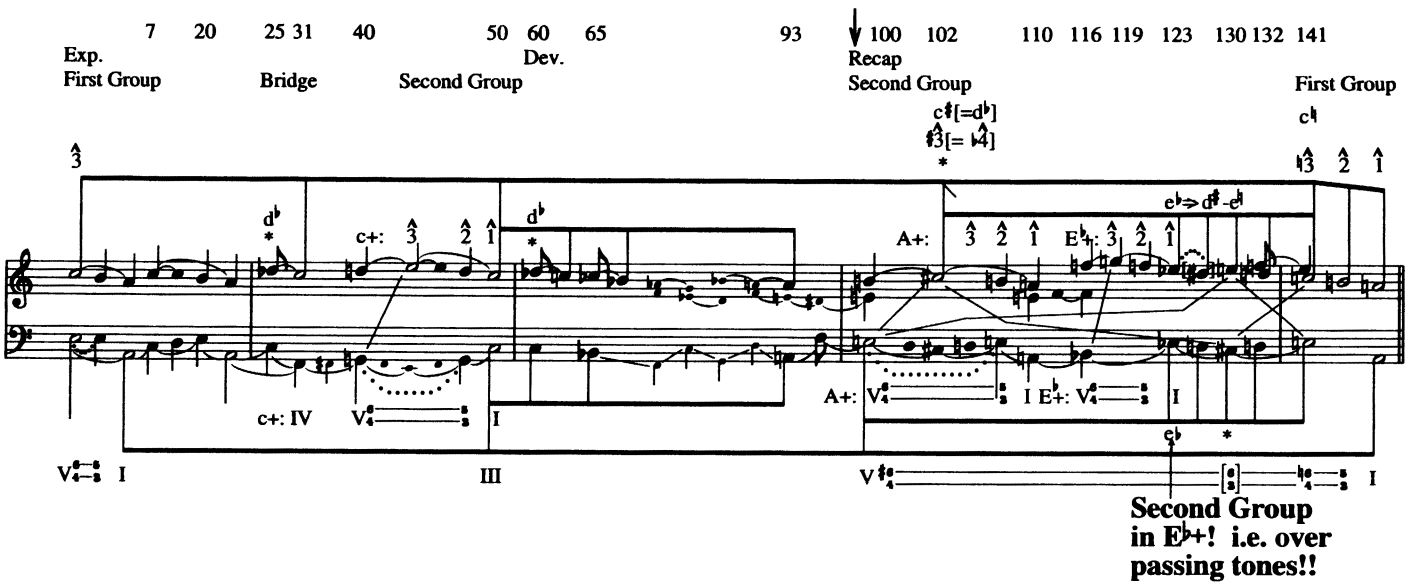
In the reversed recapitulation of the A minor *Andante* of Beethoven's Op. 59, No. 3 (ex. 4a), the second group returns first in A major (mm. 100–13) and then in E♭ major (mm. 119–29), prior to the recapitulation of the first group (mm. 141ff.). Joseph Kerman, apparently unfa-



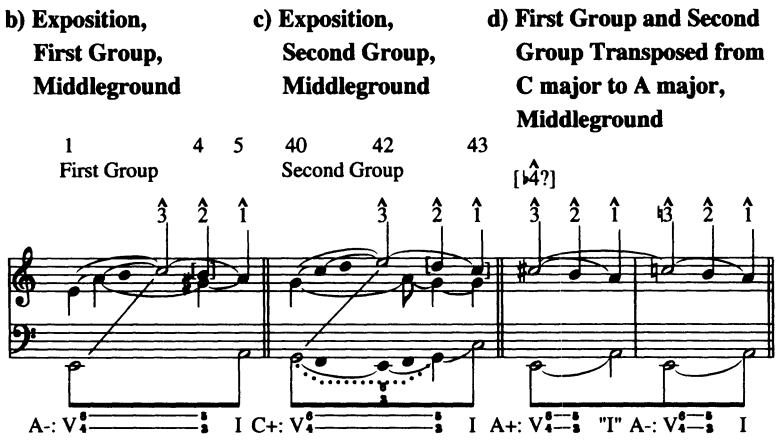
Example 2: Mozart, *Idomeneo,* Act 3, Quartet, Middleground



Example 3: Cherubini, *Médée,* Overture, Middleground



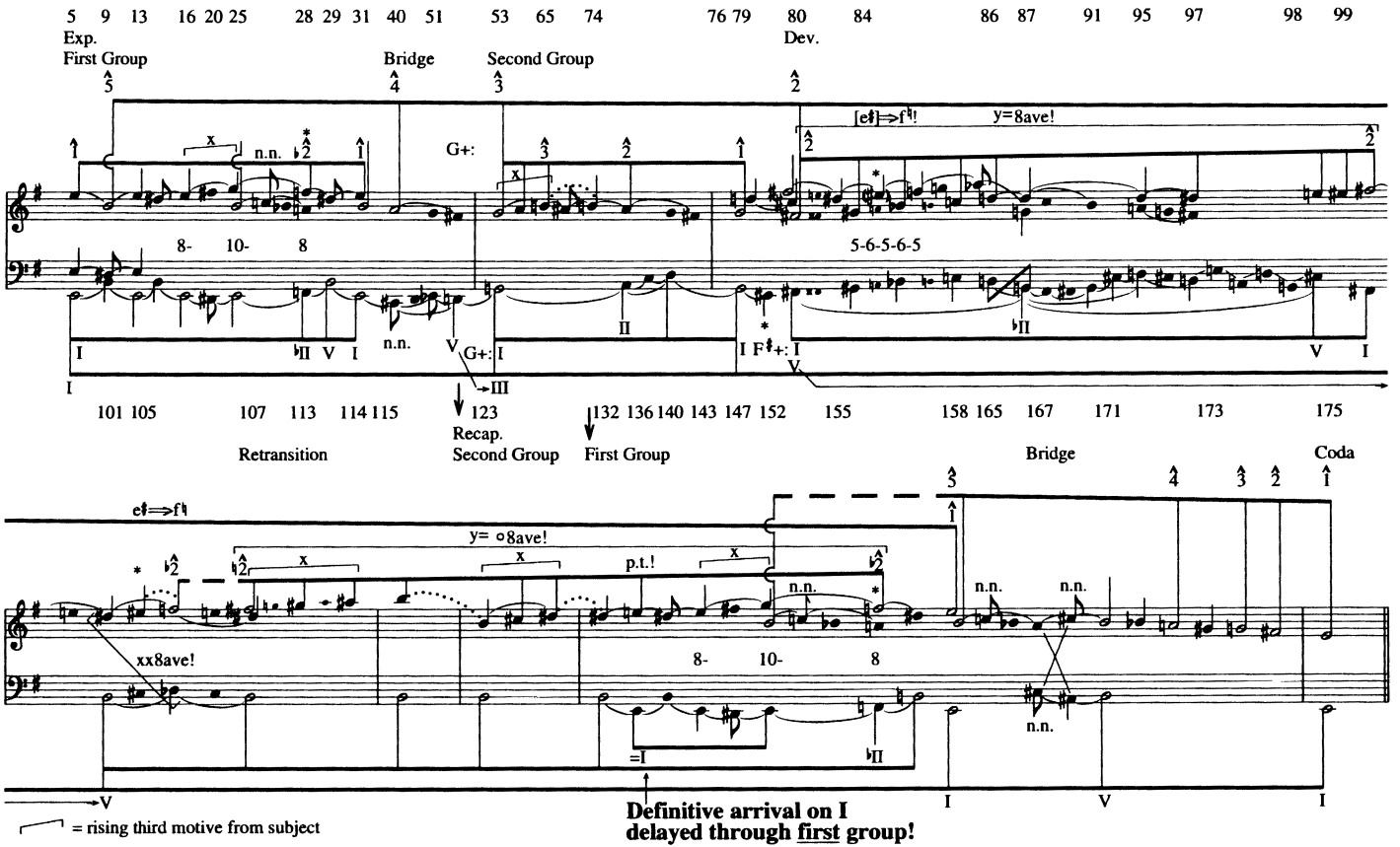
Example 4a: Beethoven, String Quartet, Op. 59 No. 3, *Andante,* Middleground



Examples 4b–d

miliar with reversed sonata design, equivocates about the form of the *Andante:* "Classification of this *Andante* as a movement in sonata form makes little sense, even though it incorporates a section rather like—yet curiously unlike—a development section, and even though it manages what sounds like a 'second theme' with passable sonata-form normality.[. . .] To speak of such a movement as a sonata form with irregularities is like calling a dog irregular when it grows long whiskers, washes its face, and miaows" (Kerman 1967, 150).[15]

Common sense analysis interprets the tonic (A) major of the second group's recapitulation (mm. 100–13) as a structural tonic, and, indeed, this is how it is understood by Bruce (1969). A more sophisticated analysis, however, explains this A major as an apparent tonic undermined by surrounding events. In order to understand the tonal structure of this reversed recapitulation, it is helpful to observe the structural parallelism between the opening themes of the first and second groups. As shown in exs. 4b–c, each group presents an *Anstieg* to a descending $\hat{3}$-line over a cadential V^{6}_{4}-$^{5}_{3}$. In the second group, the prolongation of the dominant six-four is achieved in a rather unusual way by shifting from six-four to six-three position prior to the cadential resolution. Transposing the second group from C major to A major (ex. 4d) leads to closer structural parallelism—with mixture—between first and second groups. Since the order of the groups is reversed in the recapitulation, the first group's primary tone C ($\hat{3}$, m. 1) is displaced by the recapitulated second group's C♯ (♯$\hat{3}$, m. 102), which then collapses as if it were D♭ (♭$\hat{4}$) to the recapitulated first group's C ($\hat{3}$, m. 141, exs. 4a and d). This idea is prepared early in the piece by emphatic statements of the descending semitone D♭-C (mm. 25–30 and mm. 60–63).



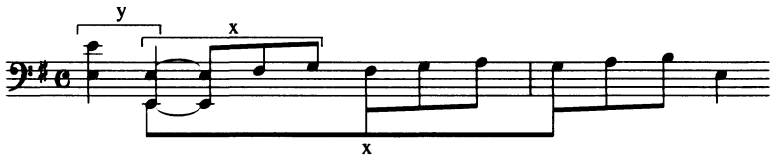
Example 5a: Brahms, First Cello Sonata, Op. 38, *Finale,* Middleground

The tonic (m. 110, ex. 4a) initially seems to represent the definitive resolution of the cadential dominant supporting the beginning of the second group's recapitulation (mm. 100–9); however, subsequent events subvert this tonic resolution. The short transition employing a 5-6 exchange (mm. 113–115) leads to B♭ as dominant of E♭, which initiates a surprise repetition of the second group in the remote key of E♭ major (mm. 116–129, ♭V of A). This E♭ major repetition is caught within a large-scale voice exchange involving E and C♯, which prolongs the dominant six-four by shifting it from six-four to six-three and back to six-four position.[16] The E♭ major repetition produces chromatic passing tones in the outer voices: E♭ in the upper voice functioning as D♯ filling in the third C♯-E, and E♭ in the bass descending within a chromatically filled in third, E-E♭-D-C♯. Through the duality of D♯ and E♭ passing tones, Beethoven suggests an augmented seventh (E♭-D♯) in the deep middleground.

In the Finale of Brahms's First Cello Sonata, the dominant prolongation is extended deeper into the reversed recapitulation than in any of the previous examples (ex. 5a). In the Cello Sonata, the definitive tonic return is displaced beyond the recapitulation of the second group into the middle of the recapitulation of the first group. The first group is a fugal exposition containing the subject in the tonic at mm. 1–4 with the answer at the dominant in mm. 5–9. Brahms achieves the extraordinary effect of continuing the dominant prolongation through recapitulation of the first group (m. 132ff.) by an astonishingly simple device: he omits the initial four-measure tonic statement of the subject so that the recapitulation begins with the answer on the dominant. Although Brahms then restates in mm. 132–58 the contents of mm. 5–31 virtually unchanged, these measures are tonally revalued in the larger context. Whereas in the exposition, the tonic at mm. 1–4, 9–12, 16–19, and 25 is structural, in the recapitulation this same tonic is caught within continuing dominant prolongation; its function in the later context is to support a passing tone E in the upper voice (m. 136) on its way up to F (m. 158).

The middleground of this work grows out of two essential motivic ideas contained in the fugue subject: the ascending third, motive 'x'; and the octave leap, motive 'y' (ex. 5b). Enlargements of 'x,' sometimes filled in chromatically, are indicated with brackets in ex. 5a. The middleground voice-leading of the development grows organically out of 'y,' which is first stated as F♯-F♯ (mm. 80–99) and then distorted as a diminished octave F♯-*F♮* (2̂-♭2̂, mm. 107–155). This second, distorted enlargement of the octave motive, filled in by enlargements of the rising third motive, spans the retransition, the return of the second group, and at least half of the return of the tonally revalued first group.

In the *Schicksalslied* (ex. 6a), Brahms modifies reversed sonata form by omitting the first group from the recapitulation. Implicit in reversed sonata form is the idea of circularity or return to point of origin. In tragic



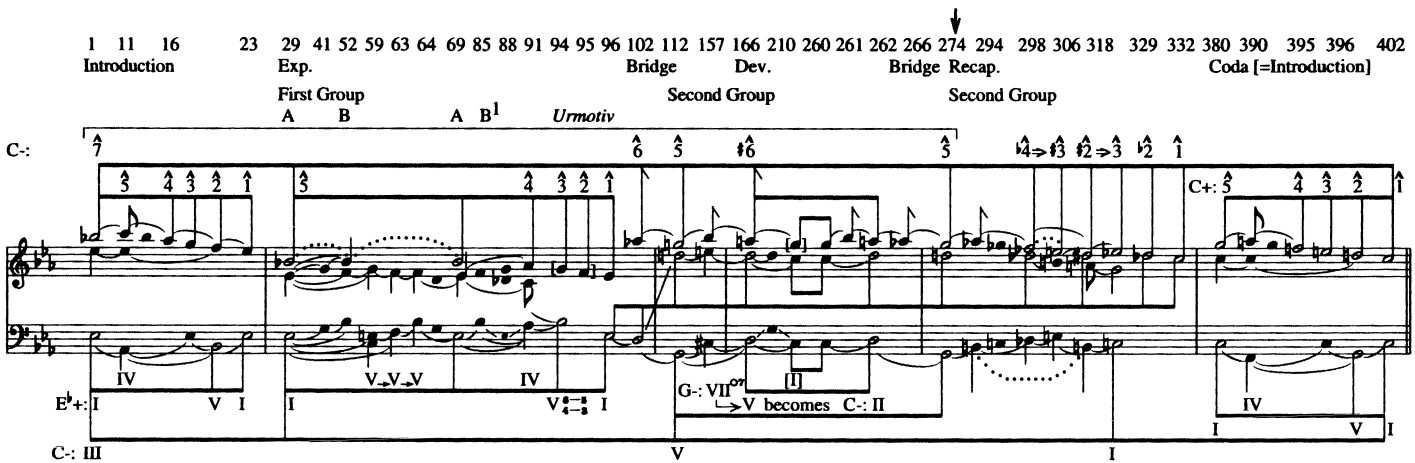
Example 5b: Brahms, First Cello Sonata, *Finale,* mm. 1–2

situations, circularity becomes metaphorical for entrapment or flight without escape. The above-cited Quartet from Mozart's *Idomeneo*, for example, concludes with Idamante's opening cry of despair. Indeed, all of the characters in the Quartet find themselves caught on a treadmill of tragic destiny, since a solution to the conundrum has not yet presented itself. Although Brahms sacrifices the recapitulation of the first group in the *Schicksalslied*, the idea of circularity implied by the reversed sonata design is intensified there by redeployment of the introduction as a coda.[17]

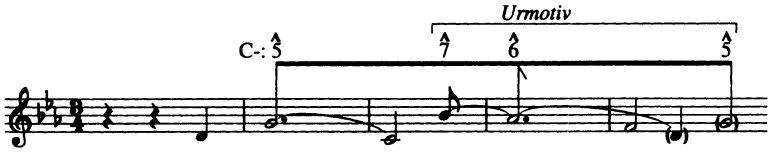
Two recent analyses of the *Schicksalslied* by Luhring (1985) and Daverio (1993) concur in their interpretation of the design as a "double sonata form."[18] Both analysts regard the setting of the first two stanzas (mm. 29–96) as a sonata in E♭ linked by a transition to the setting of the third stanza, a second sonata in C minor. In this interpretation, the first sonata lacks a development section, the motion to the dominant in m. 64 substituting instead for the development. According to the alternative formal-tonal analysis proposed in ex. 6a, however, Luhring and Daverio's first sonata constitutes the first group of a single reversed sonata form.

This first group (mm. 29–96) is a strophic binary design AB/AB′. The poem's initial two stanzas are composed of six and nine lines respectively. The strophic design of the setting parallels the poem's design, as A and A′ set the first four and six lines of each strophe respectively, and B and B′ set the remaining two and three lines. From a structural standpoint, the dominant in m. 64 functions as a divider, and not as a structural dominant supporting interruption, as one might expect in a sonata or sonatina. This dividing dominant serves to articulate the setting of the two strophes into antecedant and consequent.

Both Luhring and Daverio describe the second sonata as being in C minor, reading a move from I to V in its exposition (mm. 104–79). However, my analysis in ex. 6c shows that Brahms never establishes the tonic in this section; instead, the key of C minor is suggested by prolonging its dominant, G.[19] As shown in the analytical graphs (exs. 6c-d), the tonic chords in mm. 113, 128, and 210–50 are trapped within middleground progressions. Ex. 6d, a graph of the development, shows how the C minor tonic tries vainly to free itself from the unrelenting grasp of the prolonged dominant of the dominant. This tonic entrapment grows out of the earlier subversion of the tonic by the prolonged dominant (ex. 6c). Lacking a



Example 6a: Brahms, *Schicksalslied,* Op. 54, Middleground



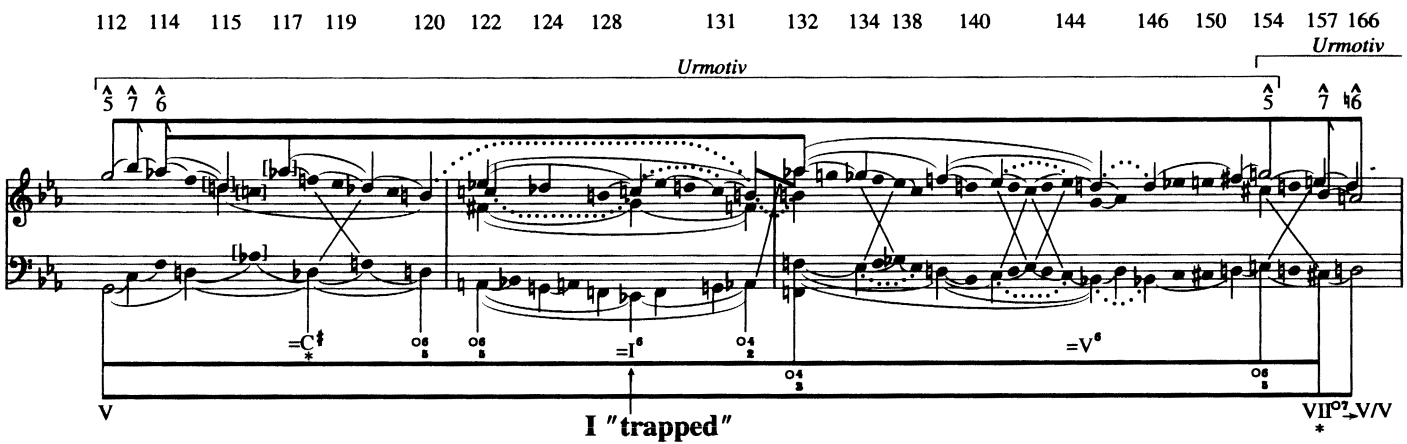
Example 6b: Brahms, *Schicksalslied, Urmotiv*

modulation and a tonally defined second group, the passage encompassing mm. 104–79 does not constitute a complete sonata exposition. Instead, this section functions as the second group within the over-arching reversed sonata design. As shown in ex. 6a, the recapitulation of the second group (m. 274f.) begins over the dominant of the ultimate C tonic, dominant prolongation having been initiated by the second group in the exposition. The upper voice of the work as a whole constitutes an enlargement of the *Urmotiv,* which is embedded in the storm theme (ex. 6b): B♭, $\hat{5}$ of E♭ major, is drawn into the orbit of C minor as $\hat{7}$, and then collapses through A♭ ($\hat{6}$) to G ($\hat{5}$, compare exs. 6a and b).[20]

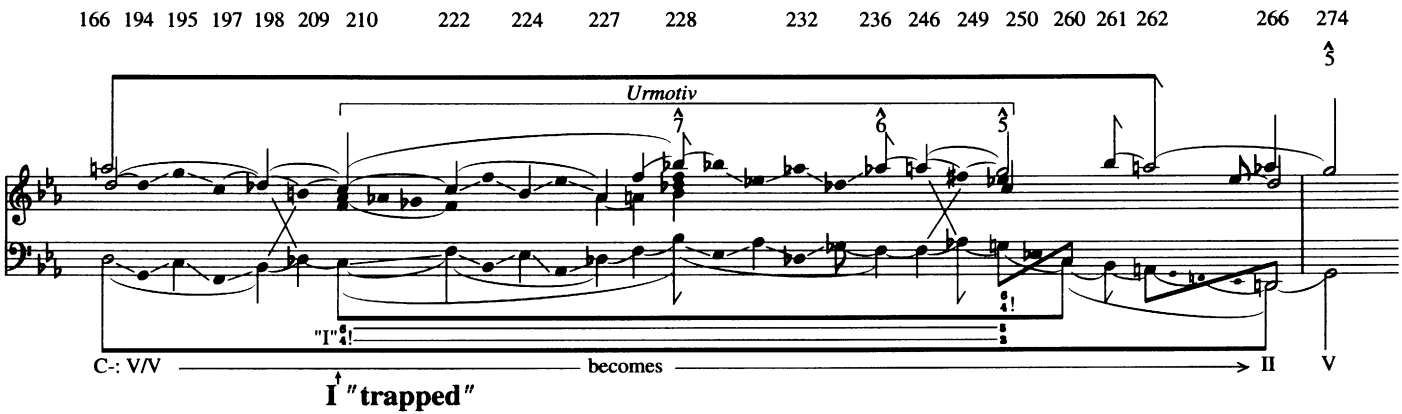
The Second Group over a Passing Tone

The unusual form of Schubert's *Quartettsatz* has provoked conflicting analyses. For example, Webster (1978, 26) claims that the movement "is not in sonata form," while Coren (1974, 576) vacillates in his interpretation.[21] However, reversed sonata design is clearly delineated in the *Quartettsatz*, as shown in ex. 7a.[22] The brief but intense first group (mm. 1–26) leads directly into an extended second group composed of three distinct thematic ideas: a lyrical first theme (mm. 27–60), a violent second theme (mm. 61–76) followed by a brief transition (mm. 77–90), leading to a lyrical third, closing theme (mm. 93–140).[23] The development spans mm. 141–94. The reversed recapitulation preserves the established sequence of the three thematic areas within the second group, while modifying the material tonally: the first theme returns at mm. 195–228, the second theme, at mm. 229–40, the transition, at mm. 241–56, and the third theme, at mm. 257–304. The coda then takes care of the recapitulation of the first group at mm. 305–end. As we have seen, it is not uncommon in reversed sonata designs for the recapitulation of the first group to simultaneously function as the coda. In the *Quartettsatz*, as in the above-cited Haydn and Mozart examples, the coda doubles as the recapitulation of the first group.

The structural tonic is attained (m. 257 in ex. 7a) sixty-two measures after the onset of the design recapitulation. The middleground of the *Quartettsatz* constitutes a massive enlargement of the opening *Aussensatz*, c-d-e♭-e-f-f♯-g in the upper voice supported by a descending tetrachord, the *basso lamento* C-B♭-A♭-G in the bass (ex. 7a-b).[24] Thus, the B♭



Example 6c: Brahms, *Schicksalslied,* Exposition, Second Group (mm. 112–66), Middleground



Example 6d: Brahms, *Schicksalslied,* Development (mm. 166–266), Middleground

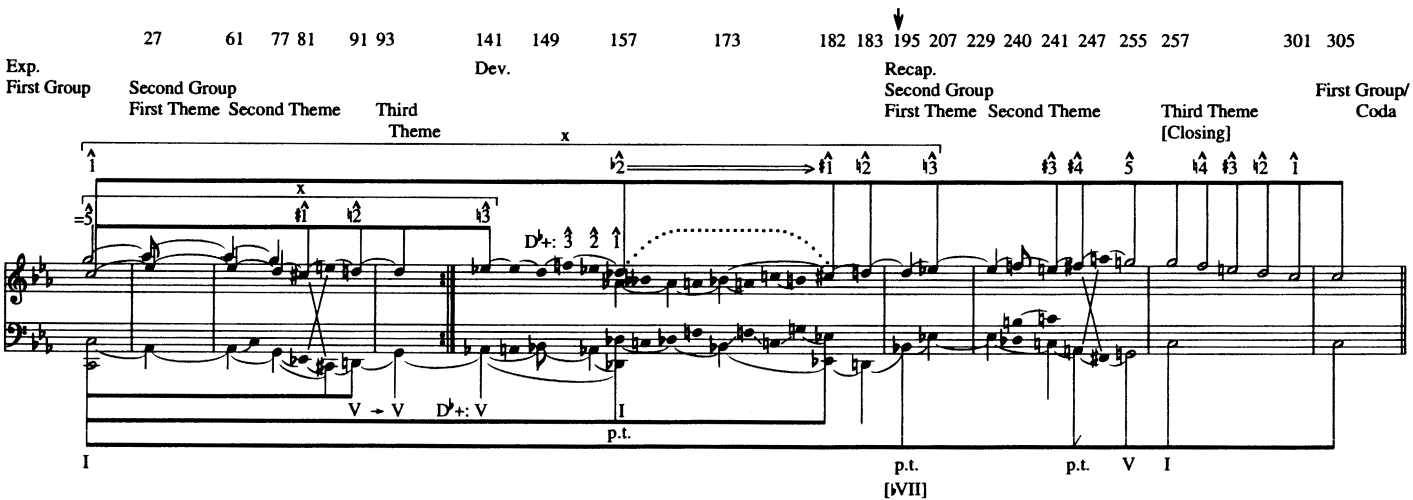
over which the second group returns (m. 195) is revealed to be a passing tone within the descending tetrachord.[25]

The Second Group over Submediant Prolongation

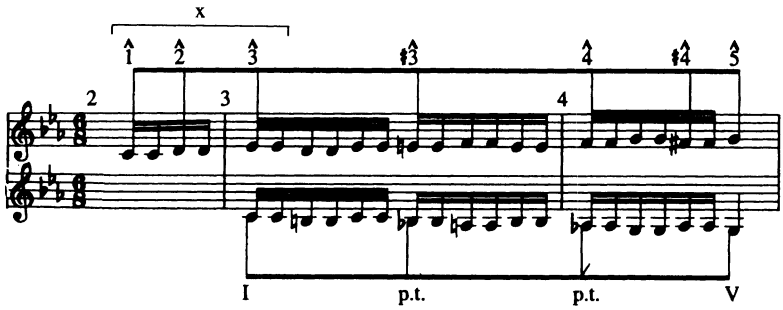
Schubert's bold and imaginative projection of the reversed recapitulation over ♭VII could have deeply impressed Brahms, who owned the manuscript of the *Quartettsatz*, and urged its publication in 1870. The complex relationships between design and tonal structure in Schubert's sonata forms may well have inspired Brahms's own imaginative design-structure counterpoints. The Finale of Brahms's Third Violin Sonata provides a further remarkable example of reversed sonata form; in this case the second group is recapitulated over VI.

If analysts have debated whether to describe this Finale as a sonata or rondo, their differences may be ascribed to the movement's especially complex design-structure correlation. An unpublished analysis preserved in the Oster Collection reveals that Schenker (1920b, 279–82) regarded the form as a seven-part rondo "after the Mozartean model," as follows: "A1- (mm. 1–38, in D minor) B1- (mm. 39–112, in A minor) A2- (mm. 114–29, in D minor) C1- (mm. 130–71, moving from G minor through B♭ minor, C♯ minor to F minor) A3- (mm. 172–217, F minor to D major) B2- (mm. 218–92, D minor) A4 (coda, mm. 293–end, D minor)." This undated analysis is probably quite early, predating 1923. In an analysis published in the early thirties, Edwin Evans offers both a rondo interpretation similar to Schenker's and a sonata analysis in which the recapitulation of the first group begins in m. 172 (Evans 1935, 241–42). However, Evans seems uncomfortable with his own sonata analysis, especially with locating the return in m. 172, remarking that "the slight reference to first subject at the return (or third rondo section as the case may be) is a feature almost amounting to omission of the theme." Perhaps a more compelling, rondo interpretation would assimilate Schenker's and Evans's second return (mm. 172–213) within a larger C (mm. 130–217) to yield a six-part rondo form: ABACBA.

Is the return of the opening material in mm. 114–29 the first return in a rondo or a reminiscence, which initiates a sonata development? Designating the first group A, the second group B, and the development C, it becomes clear that the five-part reversed sonata form ABCBA is related, at least outwardly, to the six-part rondo form ABACBA. Furthermore, if the composer makes reference to the opening (A) at the beginning of the development—a common procedure in sonata forms—reversed sonata form can easily become confused with rondo. Mitschka (1961, 280) identifies the Violin Sonata's Finale as being in sonata form without commenting on the order of the groups in the recapitulation. Musgrave (1985, 192) asserts that "the form is not a rondo, but rather another special type



Example 7a: Schubert, *Quartettsatz,* Middleground

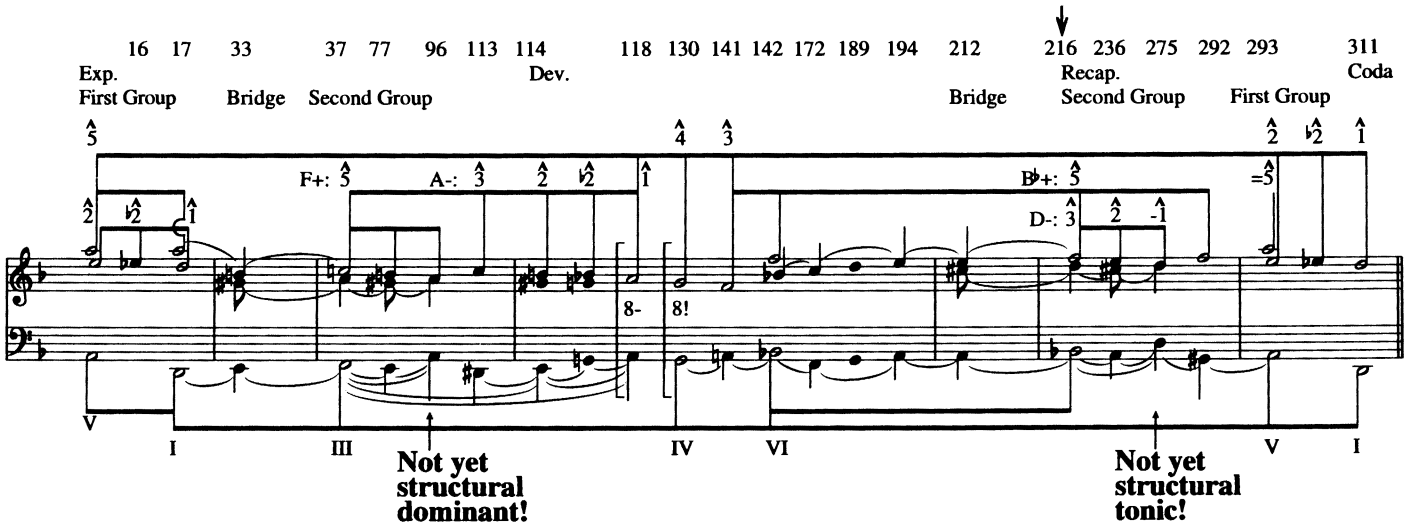


Example 7b: Schubert, *Quartettsatz,* mm. 2–4

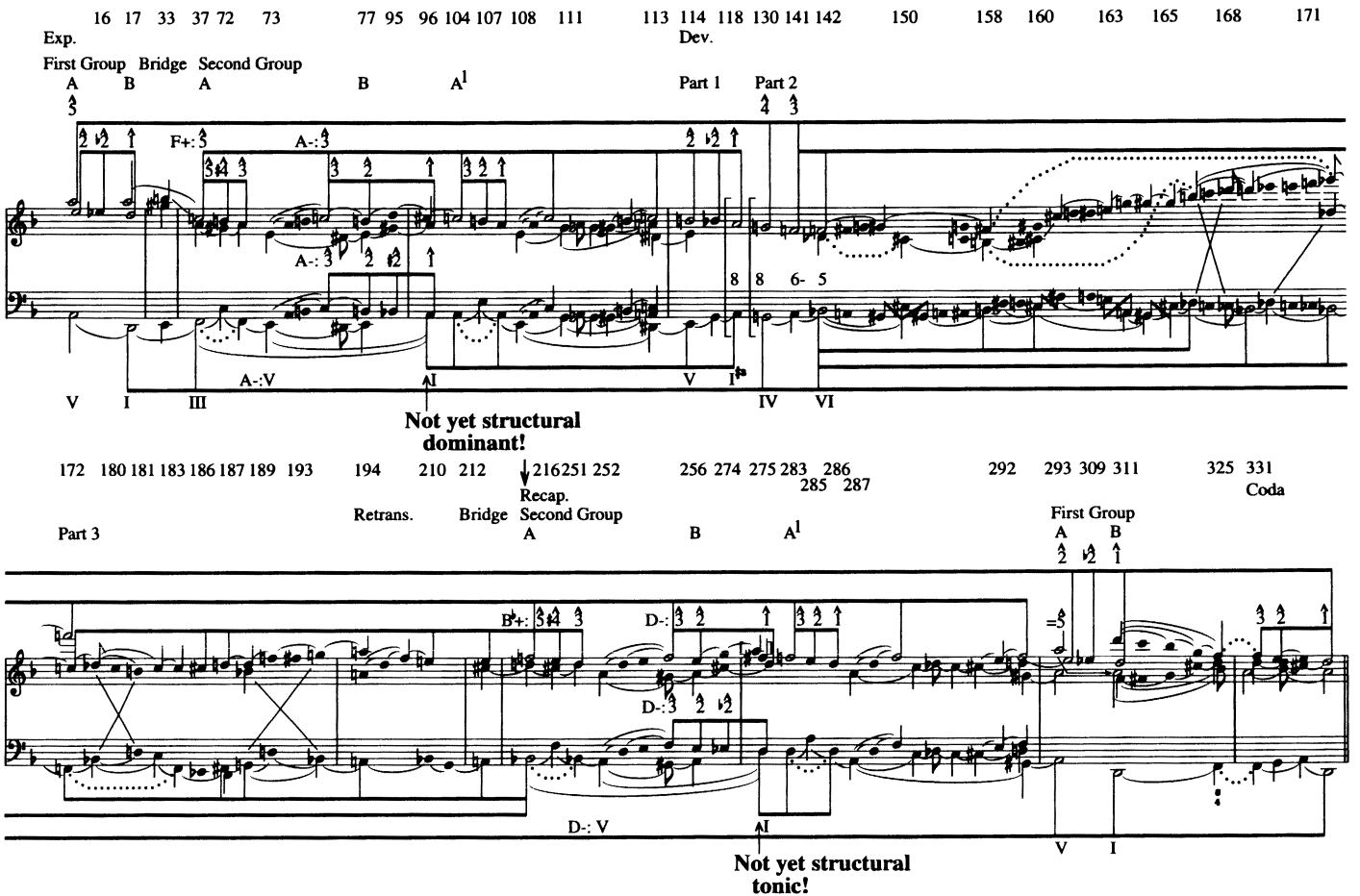
of sonata form in which the first subject reappears as though a rondo after exposition, to lead to development after which the second subject is recalled with the rest of the original material."

Different concepts, however, underly the reversed sonata and rondo forms. In sonata form (with both regular and reversed recapitulations), the exposition is characterized by polarity between groups, which are distinguished by key, thematic content, and general mood. Exposition and recapitulation counterbalance one another, the boundaries and materials of each group generally being preserved in the recapitulation, even if order is reversed and certain modifications are made to accommodate tonal structure. In rondo, the returns of A serve as goals of tonal action, separated by recurrences of B and C, which function as intervening episodes. If the opening material (A) returns at the beginning of the development in a sonata, it serves as a point of departure for the development (C) rather than as a goal. A further distinction between the two forms concerns the subsequent treatment of the second group in the sonata and the first episode in the rondo. Essential to the sonata idea is that the recapitulation of the second group be rigorously modeled on the second group in the exposition, preserving its polarity with the first group. In the rondo, on the other hand, the recurrence of B material is potentially freer in its recapitulation.

It is informative to compare the first return in the Finale of Brahms's Violin Concerto—a genuine six-part rondo form (ABACBA+Coda)—with the reminiscence of the opening at the beginning of the development in the Violin Sonata's Finale. In the concerto-rondo, the first return (mm. 93ff.) is a clearly marked goal. It occurs in the tonic and retains the theme's character, basic shape and harmonic structure. If the Finale of the Violin Sonata were in rondo form, one might expect the auxiliary cadence of mm. 1–21 to be brought back in full. Instead, the return is truncated so that only mm. 1–16 return as mm. 114–29, perched entirely on



Example 8a: Brahms, Third Violin Sonata, Op. 108, *Finale,* First Middleground



Example 8b: Brahms, Third Violin Sonata, *Finale,* Second Middleground

an apparent dominant.[26] The usual practice in rondo is to preserve the incipit of the theme and vary the continuation. But the incipit in mm. 114–17 differs from mm. 1–4, further weakening the rondo effect.

In my view, then, the Violin Sonata's Finale is a reversed sonata form rather than a rondo, the first group being recapitulated in mm. 293–330 after the second group in mm. 216–292 (ex. 8a). True to the sonata principle, Brahms recapitulates the second group exactly. This group (mm. 37–113) is subdivided as a small ternary form—A at mm. 37–76, B at mm. 77–103, A' at mm. 104–13 (ex. 8b)—and is recapitulated note-for-note at mm. 216–92. The first group (mm. 1–30) is a small binary form composed of two sections supported by an auxiliary V-I cadence: A (mm. 1–16) on the dominant, and B (mm. 17–30) on the tonic. This small form is recapitulated after the second group, with A at mm. 293–310 and B at mm. 311–30. The bridge from the exposition (mm. 31–36), which prepares the return of the second group in mm. 210–15, is attached to the retransition at mm. 194–209. The modified return of the opening (mm. 114–29) may be interpreted plausibly as a reminiscence initiating the development. The form of development (mm. 114–93) is thus described as follows: varied reminiscence of the opening (part 1, mm. 114–29), fantasy on material from the first and second groups (part 2, mm. 130–71), and contrapuntal development of first group material (part 3, mm. 172–93).

The analytical sketches further show the complex and unusual interrelationship between reversed sonata form and undivided tonal structure. Major junctures in design do not invariably coincide with harmonic points of arrival. For example, the first group and its recapitulation provide a clear instance of harmonic-structural overlap. The design of the first group (mm. 1–30) straddles a V-I cadence. When this group is recapitulated (mm. 293–330), the initial auxiliary dominant becomes the structural dominant supporting $\hat{2}$, which resolves to the final tonic supporting $\hat{1}$. The structural coda begins in m. 311 with the final tonic, but the design recapitulation of the first group continues past this structural coda to m. 330. The design coda begins only after the general pause in m. 331. In this case, design lags behind structure. From a structural perspective, the main point of departure for the development is the subdominant (m. 130), while a design perspective would have the development initiated earlier (m. 114), with the varied recollection of the opening. In this case, design outpaces structure. These design-structural "misunderstandings" may be part of the purely musical tragedy embodied in this impassioned work.

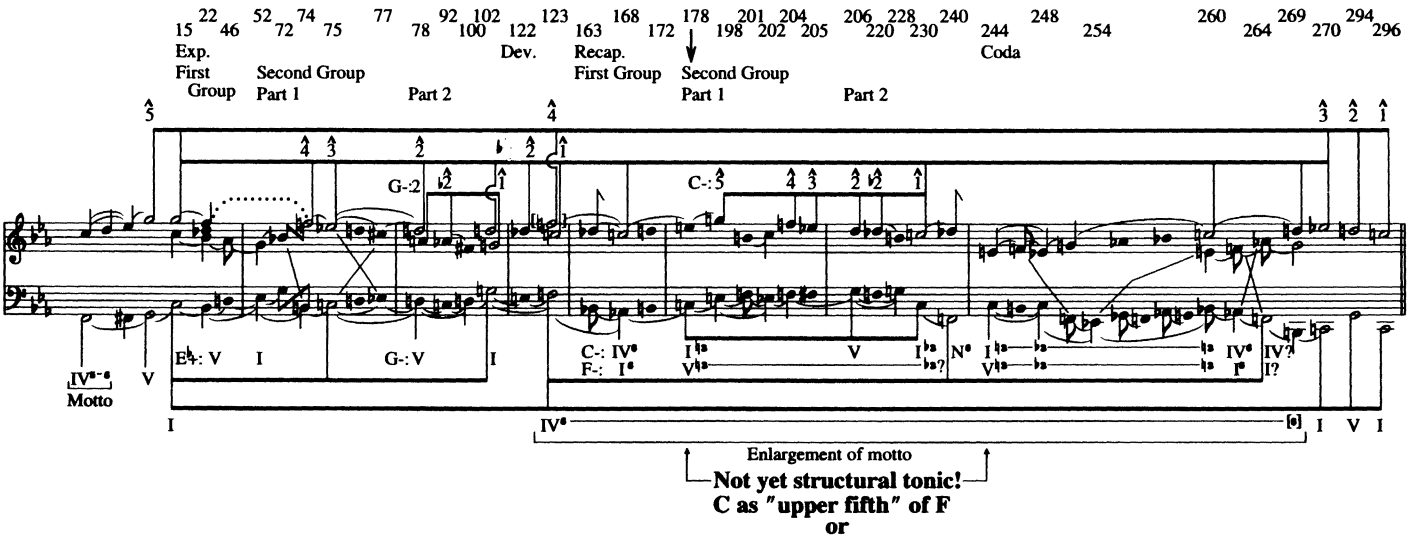
Before leaving the Finale of the Third Violin Sonata, a further unusual aspect of the work requires comment. The listener is struck by the direct octaves stated by the violin and piano (bass) as the A chord supporting $\hat{5}$

(m. 129) moves down to the G chord supporting $\hat{4}$ (m. 130). As already noted, the A chord in the second group (mm. 92–107) is to be understood as the upper third of F (III), rather than as a definitive arrival on the dominant of D. (The structural dominant in the undivided background is saved for m. 293.) Thus, these octaves are ameliorated by correct voice-leading in the background as the F chord (III, m. 37) ascends to the G chord (IV, m. 130). In spite of this background justification, the surface octaves are particularly striking and, to my ears, hardly "beautiful," to use Brahms's term of approbation for octaves in his collection of octaves in other composers' music (Mast 1980; Laudon 1992). Is their harsh, even sullen affect also connected with the work's tragic effect?

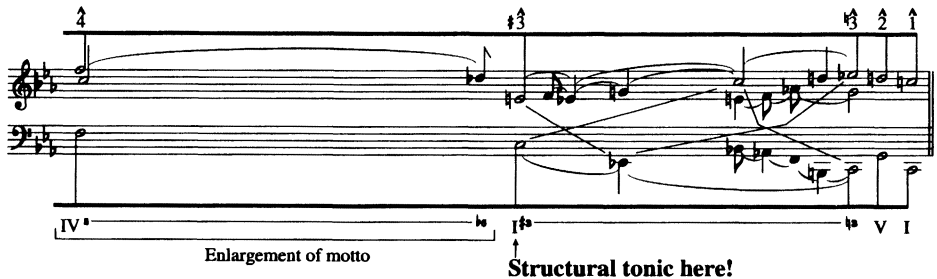
The Second Group within a Large-scale 5-6 Exchange

The complex interaction of reversed sonata design and tonal structure in Brahms's *Tragic Overture* has presented serious challenges to analysis. Webster (1983, 111) proposes that the form of this work is an overlay of "sonata-without-development, sonata-rondo, ABA, and ritornello principles, even though the sonata idea remains paramount." However, by simultaneously identifying so many different schemes, Webster obscures important distinctions among the designs invoked and blurs the reversed sonata design of Brahms's composition. Webster observes that Brahms omits the first group at the beginning of the recapitulation (m. 300ff.) without recognizing Brahms's broader design strategy. The recapitulation of the first group is not simply left out; rather, a recapitulatory apotheosis of the first group's initial section—in which mm. 367–402 transform mm. 1–20—is placed after the recapitulation of the second group (mm. 300–366, ex. 9b).[27] This complex reversed sonata form may outlined as follows:

Section 1: Exposition (mm. 1–184)
  First Group (mm. 1–65)
    Part 1 (mm. 1–20)
    Part 2 (mm. 21–65)
  Bridge (mm. 66–105)
  Second Group (mm. 106–84)
    Part 1 (mm. 106–25)
    Part 2 (mm. 126–41)
    Part 3 (mm. 142–184)
      Bridge to Development (mm. 185–207, based on introduction)
Section 2: Development (mm. 208–263)
Bridge to Recapitulation (mm. 264–99)



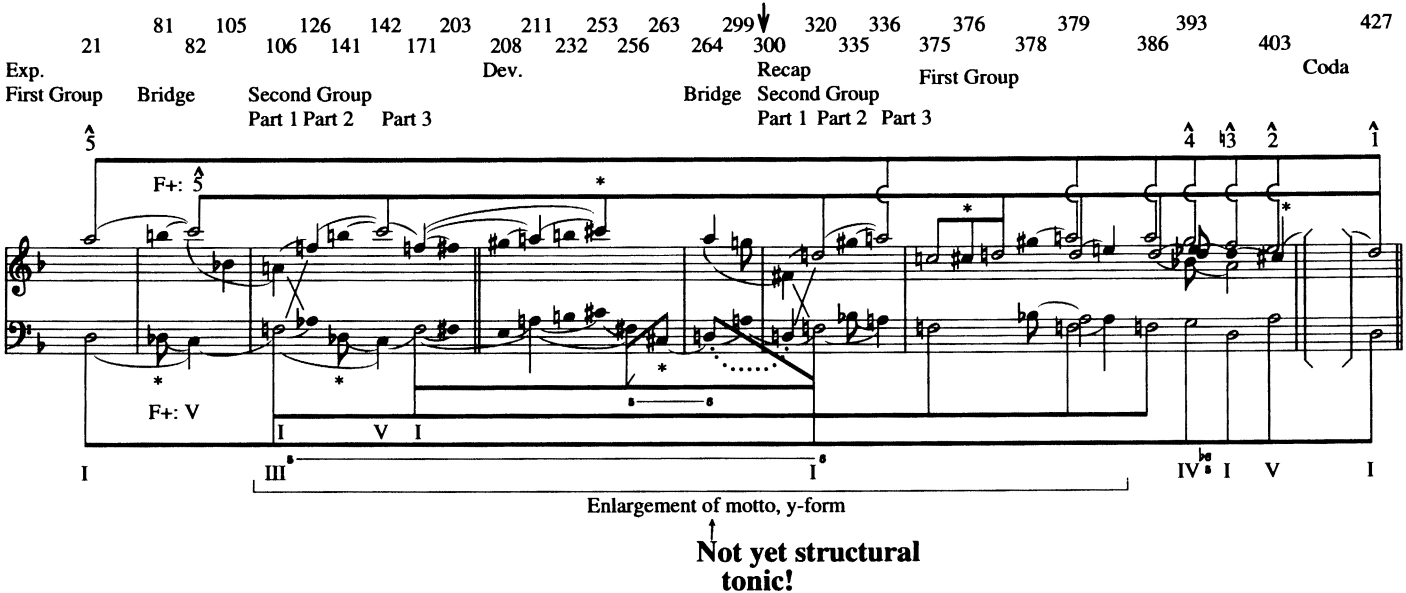
Example 9a: First Reading



Structural duality represents Coriolan's indecision, his "two-mindedness".

Example 9b: Second, Alternative Reading

Examples 9a–9b: Beethoven, *Coriolan Overture,* Op. 62, Structural Duality in the Middleground

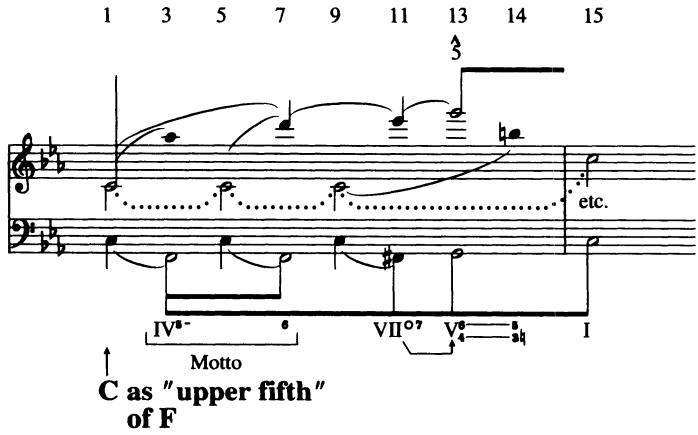


Example 9c: Brahms, *Tragic Overture,* Op. 81, Middleground

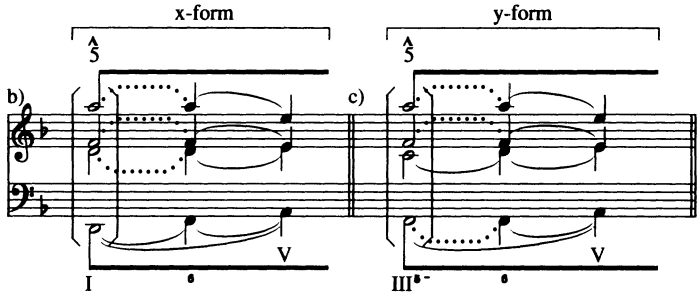
Section 3: Recapitulation of Second Group (mm. 300–66)
Part 2 (mm. 320–35)
Part 3 (mm. 336–66)
Recapitulation of First Group, Part 1 (mm. 367–402)
Coda (mm. 403–22)
Conclusion (mm. 423–end)

Beethoven's *Coriolan Overture* may have served as a model for Brahms's *Tragic Overture*. In both overtures, the major tonic associated with the recapitulation of the second group is trapped within a large-scale 5-6 exchange (compare exs. 9a and c). The middlegrounds of the *Tragic Overture* and *Coriolan Overture* are conditioned by a 5-6 motto presented in the opening measures (compare exs. 10a and c). In the *Coriolan Overture*, the C major recapitulation of the second group's lyrical Part 1 (mm. 178ff. and m. 244ff.) may be interpreted both as the dominant of the subdominant, ensnared within the large-scale 5-6 exchange over the prolonged subdominant (ex. 9a), and as the tonic major (ex. 9b); this structural duality may represent Coriolanus's prolonged indecision, his "two-mindedness" regarding whether to attack Rome or heed his mother's plea to retreat.[28] In Brahms's *Tragic Overture*, the recapitulation of the second group's lyrical Part 1 in the tonic major (mm. 300ff.) becomes similarly ensnared within a large-scale 5-6 exchange over the prolonged mediant (ex. 9c).

Exs. 10b–c show the two harmonic implications of the motto of Brahms's *Tragic Overture*. In the first interpretation (labeled 'x' in ex. 10b), the D minor six-three chord is a re-voiced extension of an implied



Example 10a: Beethoven, *Coriolan Overture,* mm. 1–15, Middleground

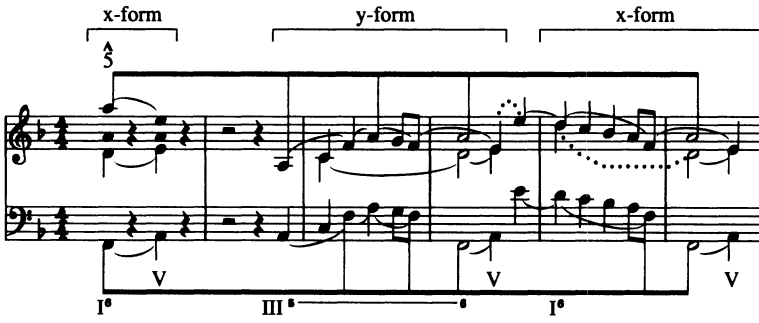


Examples 10b–c: Brahms, *Tragic Overture,* 'x' and 'y' Forms of the *Urmotiv* Implied by the Motto

root position tonic. In the second reading (labeled 'y' in ex. 10c), the D minor six-three chord is produced through a 5-6 exchange over the root position, mediant F major. Brahms realizes both implications in the work's first six measures (ex. 10d).[29] In the deep middleground, the 5-6 exchange initiated in the exposition's second group (m. 106ff.) bridges over the recapitulation of the second group's Part 1 (mm. 300–19) as a colossal enlargement of the motto's 'y' form (ex. 9c). This large-scale 5-6 connection is reinforced by the tremendous weight of the second group's Part 2 (mm. 320ff.), and also by Brahms's change of key signature back to D minor in m. 320.

The Partially Reversed Recapitulation in Brahms

Brahms modifies reversed sonata form in two important late works, the first movements of his Fourth Symphony and C minor Trio. In both compositions, the opening of the recapitulation is suppressed and shifted to the beginning of the coda. This design is only partially reversed, since the initial part of the first group is placed after the recapitulation of the second group. In conjunction with the design displacement, the return of the structural tonic supporting the *Kopfton* is shifted from the beginning of the recapitulation to the beginning of the coda (exs. 11a and 12a). The backgrounds of the first movements of the Fourth Symphony and the C minor Trio, like those of all other sonatas considered in this article, are undivided; neither composition employs interruption. In the Fourth Symphony (ex. 12a), the recapitulation begins (m. 259ff.) over the submediant as upper fifth of the Neapolitan augmented sixth chord (m. 373ff.) embellishing the tonic (m. 394ff.), while in the Trio (ex. 11a), the recapitulation (m. 126ff.) is supported by a dividing dominant. In both pieces, the structural action of the *Urlinie* descent is displaced to the design coda.[30]

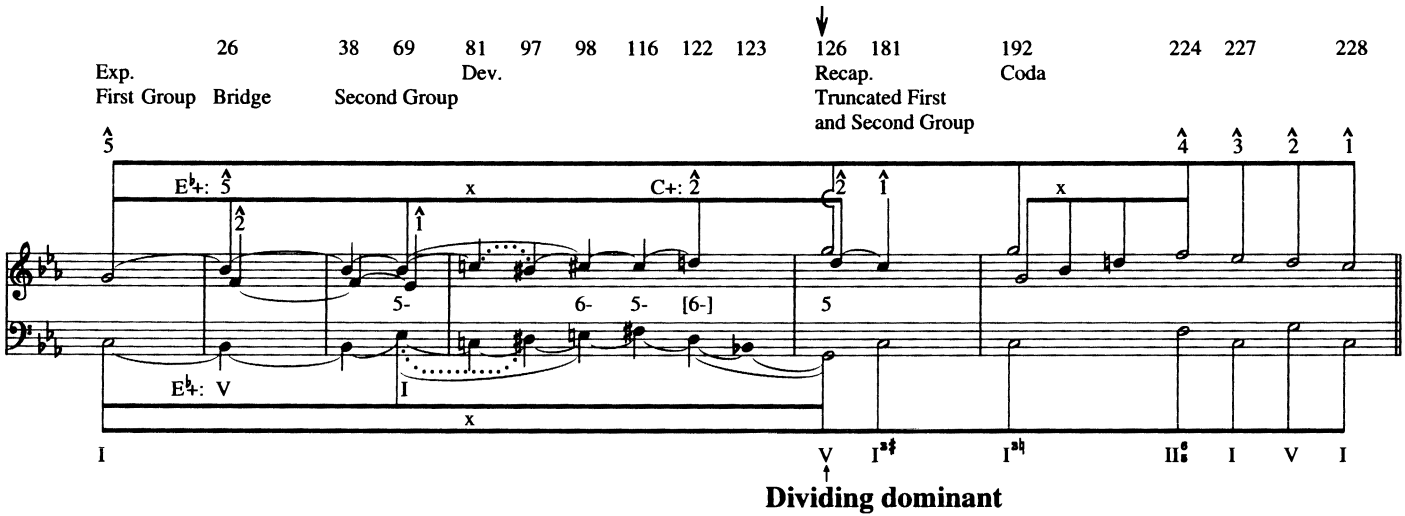


Example 10d: Brahms, *Tragic Overture,* 'x' and 'y' Forms of the *Urmotiv* Presented in mm. 1–6

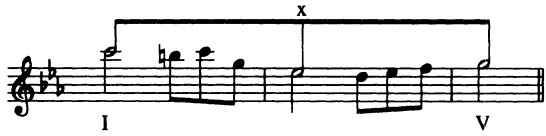
The ascending triadic motive 'x' (ex. 11b) presented at the outset of the first movement of the C minor Trio also underlies the first subject of the second group (ex. 11c). A motivic reason for Brahms's decapitating the first group's recapitulation may be clarified with reference to the middleground graph (ex. 11a). Detaching the structural tonic supporting the *Kopfton* $\hat{5}$ from the beginning of the recapitulation (m. 126) and shifting it to the coda (m. 192) allows the outer voices to project enlargements of 'x' deep into the recapitulation.

In the first movement of the Fourth Symphony, the shadowy reference to the opening at mm. 246–58 does not constitute the definitive beginning of the recapitulation either structurally or motivically. Rather, the true beginning of the recapitulation is postponed until m. 259ff., when the music literally recapitulates m. 5ff. in the exposition. Ex. 12a analyzes the illusory return at mm. 246–58 in the context of the movement as a whole. Specifically, the graph shows the structural tonic supporting $\hat{5}$, which one would expect at the beginning of the recapitulation, displaced to the beginning of the coda (mm. 394ff.). As in the C minor Trio, the beginning of the coda (mm. 394ff.) doubles as the structural-design recapitulation of the initial four measures of the first group.[31]

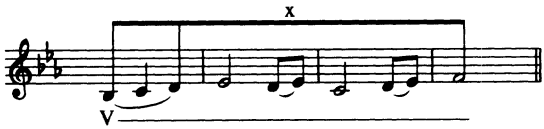
The end of the development (strings, m. 258) is motivically connected with the end of the recapitulation (m. 373ff.) through the interval of the augmented sixth F-D♯ ($\flat\hat{2}$-$\sharp\hat{7}$; see the asterisks in ex. 12a). The dominant prolonged through the second group in the exposition and the development is not a structural dominant supporting interruption, as in normative sonata form, but rather the upper fifth of the tonic, which then moves to the submediant as upper fifth of the Neapolitan. Thus, the main body of the movement is suspended over a colossal 5-6-5 exchange, as the tonic moves up to the Neapolitan in a contrapuntal neighbor motion, I-♭II-I. The harmonic I-II-V-I action of the *Ursatz* is reserved for the coda.



Example 11a: Brahms, Trio, Op. 101, First Movement, Middleground



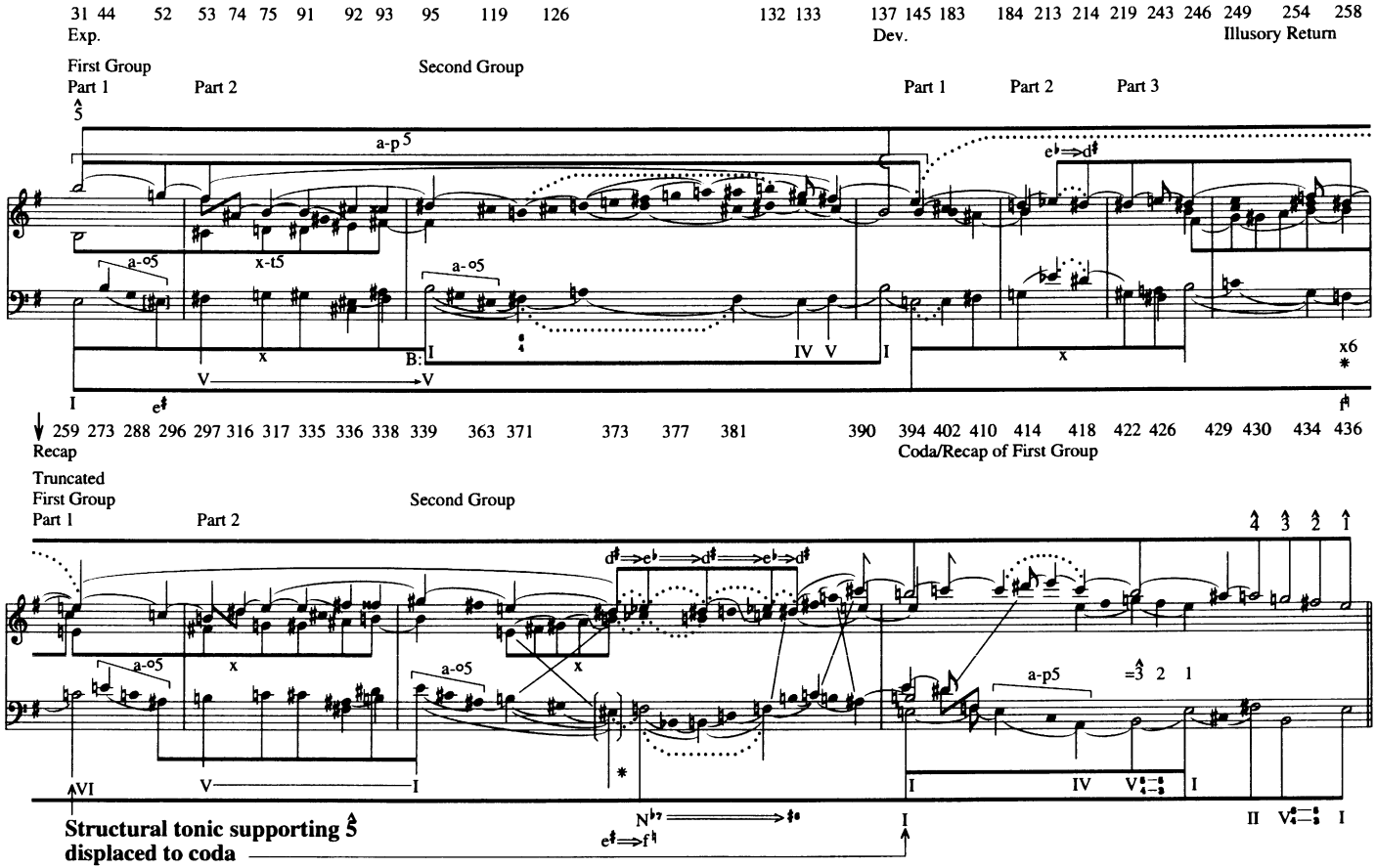
Example 11b: Brahms, Trio, Motive 'x' in the First Theme



Example 11c: Brahms, Trio, Motive 'x' in the Second Theme

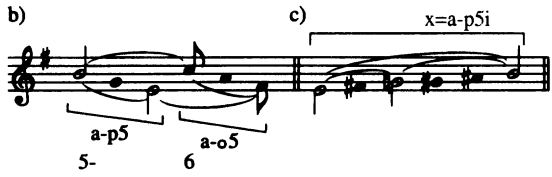
Exs. 12b-d call attention to significant foreground motives, which are connected with the middleground voice-leading shown in ex. 12a. Much has been written regarding the motivic significance of the falling third (Schoenberg 1984, 406; Frisch 1984, 143; Litterick 1987, 228–32). Certainly, chains of falling thirds are a motivic preoccupation of Brahms, especially in his late works.[32] But the motivic substance of this movement is derived primarily from the *fifth*—descending and ascending, perfect and diminished forms—which is subdivided into thirds (exs. 12b-d). The aforementioned 5-6-5 exchange in the background grows naturally out of the first theme, which comprises two descending fifths, perfect ('a-p5') and diminished ('a-°5'), separated by a sixth (ex. 12b). The inversion of the initial fifth, filled in chromatically, forms a significant motive, labeled 'x' on ex. 12c ('x' = 'a-p5i'). Brahms calls attention to the inversional relationship between 'a' and 'x' at the outset, as B-G-E ('a,' m. 1) becomes E-G-B ('x,' m. 5). Overlapping enlargements and diminutions of 'x' are exhibited in ex. 12d, spanning both Tovey's "cloudy, mysterious" chords at mm. 358–62 and the fanfare motive at mm. 363–71 in the second group (Tovey 1989a, 221–22).

Recognizing the unifying role of 'x' in the first group of the exposition reveals the motivic relationship, through invariant statements of 'x,' between the first group, the development, and the recapitulation of the first group (ex. 12a).[33] Because 'x' in the bass ('x'-t0') and 'x' transposed up a fifth ('x-t5') in the inner voice simultaneously span both parts of the exposition's first group (mm. 1–95), when the first group is transposed down a fifth in the recapitulation (mm. 259–339), 'x' is held invariant at t0 in the inner voice. These invariant enlargements of 'x' in the exposition and recapitulation are linked by the massive enlargement of 'x' in the bass of the development (mm. 145–246). In a rough, unpublished graph preserved in the Ernst Oster Collection, Schenker (1920a) profiles 'x' in



* - The augmented sixth associates these points in the movement

Example 12a: Brahms, Fourth Symphony, Op. 98, First Movement, Middleground



Examples 12b–c: Brahms, Fourth Symphony, First Movement, Motive 'a' (Descending Fifth) and 'x' (Ascending Fifth)

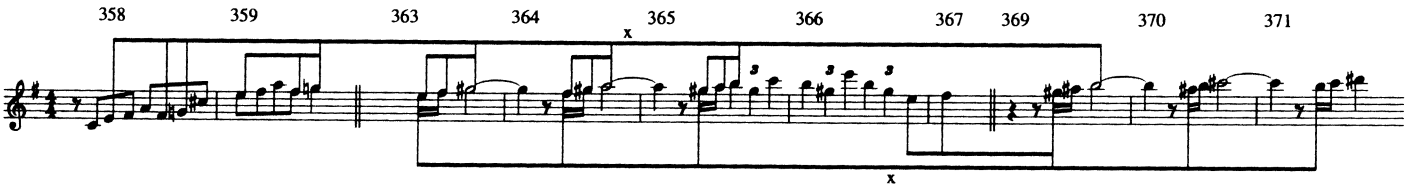
the bass of the development. However, he fails to exploit this insight to explain the motivic connection, through 'x,' between the organization of the bass in the development and other parts of the piece.

The Tragic Significance of the Reversed Recapitulation

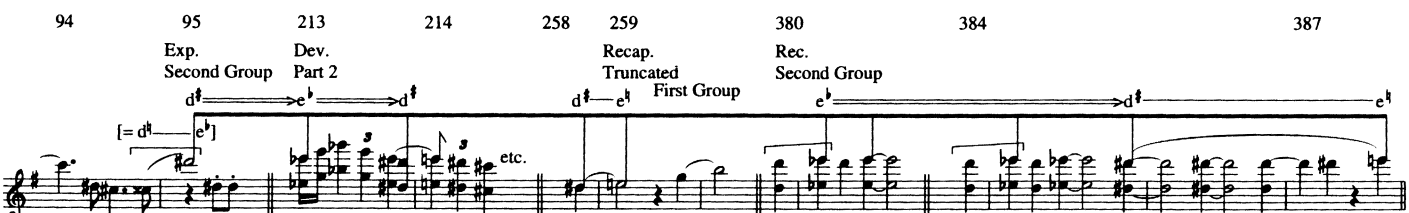
Tracing the genre of reversed sonata form through two centuries reveals a web of overlapping, interpenetrating, and inherited significances. Almost certainly, German composers did not deliberately set out to compose Aristotelian notions of tragedy or figures of ancient Greek linguistic rhetoric into their tragic works.[34] Rather, the thinking of these masters was subtly conditioned by ancient ideas of drama and expression. As Vickers (1982, 133) observes, "[classical] rhetoric was a major concern of most writers at the formative period of their lives, when habits of reading and writing are picked up, seldom to be shaken off. We need to relive this culture in order to appreciate the importance of rhetoric . . . in hundreds of contexts of life then, and to habits of mind which have since disappeared."

In the Quartet from Mozart's *Idomeneo*, the Overture to Cherubini's *Médée,* and Brahms's *Schicksalslied* and *Tragic Overture*, the assertion of the "tragic" significance of the reversed recapitulation can be supported with reference to the plot or program. On his way back from the Trojan war, Idomeneo has procured rescue from a great storm at sea by promising Neptune to sacrifice the first person he meets upon his return, which turns out to be his own son. Mozart's deformational reversal of the recapitulation is clearly motivated by Idomeneo's threatened violation of the natural bond between father and son with all its tragic consequences. In the overture to *Médée,* Cherubini also employs the reversed recapitulation to represent infanticide. The tragedy of Medea's transgression of natural order by the murder of her own children is paralleled by the violation of normative sonata form.[35]

The incompleteness of the reversed sonata form in Brahms's *Schicksalslied* evokes broken circularity in the domains of form and tonality:



Example 12d: Brahms, Fourth Symphony, First Movement, Overlapping Statements of Motive 'x'



Example 12e: Brahms, Fourth Symphony, First Movement, the E♭/D♯ Enharmonic Motive

the expected recapitulation of the first group is suppressed and the introduction returns as the coda, but in the "wrong" key of C major, rather than the expected E♭ major. Here, the tragedy of human destiny is expressed in striking formal and tonal discontinuities. Just as men, jealous of the gods, wish to share in the gods' blissful, immortal existence, the opening music desperately tries to return to its point of tonic origin, but without success. The road back to the E♭ major realm of the gods is blocked by omission of the expected recapitulation of the first group and by transposition of the introductory music from E♭ to C major. Man's futile attempts to close the broken circle only serve to drag him down, depicted by the downward transposition of the opening music.

Some have claimed that Brahms attempts to synthesize the antithetical worlds of the gods and men, and thereby "go beyond" Hölderlin's poem.[36] As is well known, Brahms toyed with the idea of bringing back the chorus to sing the first two lines of the poem in the coda. Had he done so, he would have suggested that the gods could somehow inhabit, or at least, merge with the human scheme, thereby confirming the notion of synthesis. But, in order to remain true to the poem's pessimistic, strikingly unresolved antithesis—and to his original conception of the *Schicksalslied*—Brahms decisively rejected any such resolution.

Webster's (1983, 100) analysis of Brahms's *Tragic Overture* takes the D major of the second group's recapitulation as a fundamental harmony on the same structural plane as the D minor tonic.[37] Furthermore, Webster (1983, 115) criticizes Brahms for a too literal recapitulation of the second group beginning in the tonic major (mm. 300–66) after the extended major tonic transition (mm. 264–99):

> the fact that a work in sonata style must ordinarily observe the 'sonata principle,' recapitulating material which originally appeared outside the tonic, does not compel a composer to repeat every paragraph literally. The 'pathos' of the tonic major has already been exploited, and the addition of nuances . . . do not compensate for the redundancy or the loss of psychological cogency. It is a pity that Brahms did not take lessons in the free recapitulation of second groups from Haydn.

Although the recapitulation of the second group is indeed a literal transposition, as shown in ex. 9c, the material is completely revalued in the larger context of the motion III-I6, the colossal enlargement of the opening motto. Surely, such revaluation in the face of invariance is a feat as remarkable as any thematic transformation. Nor does the music lose "psychological cogency," as Webster claims; rather, Brahms's literalness is motivated by his program. The nature of tragedy is such that, try as one might to elude it, Destiny is both inexorable and inescapable. Even as the music attempts a completely regular recapitulation of the second group,

the enlarged motto asserts its hegemony, bending the literally recapitulated material to its will and revaluing it in its own image.

The "tragedy" expressed by deformational reversal of the recapitulation in "pure" instrumental music is admittedly of an abstract, undefined nature. For example, tragedy "in the abstract" is evoked by the reversed recapitulation and suppression of the expected tonic in the Finale of Haydn's "Trauer" Symphonie; a similar effect is created by the reversed recapitulation and unexpected, retrospective undermining of the major tonic (m. 110) in the *Andante* of Beethoven's Op. 59, No. 3. The illusory, mirage-like return of the opening theme at the beginning of the recapitulation in the first movement of Brahms's Fourth Symphony sets up the coda's tragic denouement.[38] As the music passes through once familiar territory (the recapitulation of the truncated first and second groups), landmarks now appear changed and foreign because of the tonal revaluation of the recapitulated material in the undivided structure. During that music's prolonged absence, attenuated by the partially reversed recapitulation, Fate has destroyed its "home" in the lyrical opening theme, which is now restated in a broken, anguished, double forte *stretto* beginning at m. 394 (compare with the passage starting at m. 208 in the Trio).

Taking the musical-rhetorical theory of earlier centuries as its point of departure, the present study has identified a tragic genre of the reversed and partially reversed recapitulation. Within this genre, reversing the order of groups in the recapitulation generally entails displacing the background tonic normally expected at the beginning of the recapitulation. Thus, the genre's formal and tonal *hyberbaton* bespeaks a deep-structural compositional rhetoric, which supports and, in certain cases, even peripheralizes the tragic gestures of the foreground. Perhaps Tovey (1989b, 204) was intuitively aware of this all-encompassing background rhetoric when he wrote,

> The true tragedy, whether in pure music of the most 'absolute' kind or in literature, might, then, be described as a grand design, compelling our assent, and containing elements which, while making a powerful appeal to our emotional sympathies, are placed, so to speak, *out of the centre of the design* [my emphasis], so that the true and inevitable working out of the design brings these emotions to a crisis as it crushes the objects of our sympathy, and leaves us, not miserable with impotent vexation, but strengthened by the conviction of its own supreme grandeur and truth.

NOTES

1. Rosen (1988, 286) takes note of the reversed recapitulation only in passing. Webster (1978, 19) includes a bibliography of studies of sonata form to 1978; Wolf (1966) and Kamien (1976) are devoted to the recapulation.
2. I am indebted to discussions of form in the writings of Felix Salzer, Saul Novack, Carl Schachter, and James Hepokoski.
3. For example, the Finale of Bruckner's Seventh Symphony (see my forthcoming, "The Finale of Bruckner's Seventh Symphony"). I have not identified any further examples of the reversed three-group recapitulation exhibiting other possible permutations of the three groups.
4. Jackson (1995a) offers a detailed discussion of Tchaikovsky's use of this form in the *Tempest Overture* and the first movement of the Fourth Symphony.
5. Shakespeare, *Othello*, Act 5, Scene 2, Line 3. On Shakespeare's use of the "vices of language," and of *hyberbaton* in particular, see Joseph (1947, 54–56).
6. I prefer to identify this early classical reversed recapitulation as "symmetrical sonata form," thereby eliminating the term "reversed" with its connotation of "deformation." The reversed recapitulation is also essentially different from palindrome, in which the musical materials themselves are retrograded; see Newbould (1992) and Dalen (1989) for recent discussions of palindrome in Schubert and Berg.
7. The interested reader may wish to examine these works listed by Bonds, which include: the symphonies, 21/II (1764), 31/I (1765), 59/IV (1766–68), 44/IV (c. 1770), 87/IV (1785); and the string quartets, Op. 1/1/III (1755–59), Op. 2/6/V (1755–59), Op. 50/3/I (1787), Op. 71/2 (1793).
8. In the *Symphonie Fantastique*, symmetrical sonata form (identified by Schumann in his famous review) has a very special programmatic significance, the effort to secure the tonic in the recapitulation being programmatically connected with the attempt to concretize the dream-image of the beloved. See my forthcoming "The Finale of Bruckner's Seventh Symphony."
9. Adrian claims a tonic return at the beginning of the recapitulation in the first movement of the Fourth Symphony. Another example of ternary sonata form not mentioned by Adrian is the slow movement of Bruckner's Sixth Symphony (1879–81). Interestingly, Brahms and Bruckner independently first explored the ternary sonata form at roughly the same time, 1878–81.
10. Thus, this article and Morgan's dissertation are related. Morgan is primarily concerned with non-reversed sonata designs in which the return of the structural tonic with its associated structural downbeat is delayed. This study probes the delay of the structural downbeat resulting from the postponed recapitulation of the first group in the reversed sonata form.
11. This connotation is not intrinsic to reversed sonata form, but context-dependent. One would be hard pressed to consider as "tragic" the first movement of Schubert's "Trout" Quintet, which also has an undivided *Urlinie* (Beach 1993).
12. Although Cherubini was trained in Italy and later resided and worked in France, his essentially classical language is so close to that of late Haydn and Mozart, and middle period Beethoven, that he may be included in the present discussion of the "German classical tradition."
13. Reversed sonata form is also employed in Liszt's *Les Preludes* (1848), the Finales

of Bruckner's String Quintet (1879) and Seventh Symphony (1883), the Finale of Mahler's Sixth Symphony (1904), the first movement of Schoenberg's Second String Quartet Op. 10 (1907, see my forthcoming, "The Finale of Bruckner's Seventh Symphony"), the Finale of Sibelius's Fourth Symphony Op. 63 (1909, see my forthcoming, "The Meta-Ursatz"), and the the first movement of Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony Op. 36 (1877, see Jackson 1995a).

14. Heartz (1980, 239) misreads the formal design of the Quartet and its large-scale harmonic structure. Following the repetition of the text beginning in m. 67, he oversimplifies matters by dividing the design into two parts, mm. 1–67 and 67–end.
15. For a critique of Kerman's naive "analysis" of the development, see Mitchell (1967).
16. The prolongational strategy is established in the second group (mm. 40–42, ex. 4c).
17. Schubert in "Am Meer" from *Schwanengesang* similarly reuses the introduction as coda to represent tragic circularity.
18. Daviero's study is the more wide-ranging, but his conclusions about the work's form and meaning are remarkably similar to Luhring's.
19. Schachter (1987) explores techniques of suggesting a key without prolonging its tonic.
20. Programmatically, mankind tries to reverse this fall in mm. 298–332 by converting "fallen" F♭ (♭$\hat{4}$) into "redeemed" E (♯$\hat{3}$, ex. 6a), but is pulled back into the mire with D♯ (♯$\hat{2}$) falling as E♭ ($\hat{3}$), through D♭ (♭$\hat{2}$) to C ($\hat{1}$). For the religious significance of enharmonic transformation, see Jackson (1990a; 1990b, 121–22; 1995b, 63–64; 1995c, 97).
21. Bruce (1969) had already identified the reversed recapitulation in the *Quartettsatz*, although he believed the work to contradict the sonata style in its larger tonal organization. The subdivision of the second group into three sections was observed by Westrup (1969, 29).
22. Coren (1974, 576) comes close to identifying reversed sonata form, observing that "it is possible, when one looks back over the movement, to understand everything from the return of the secondary theme at measure 195 to the end as a recapitulation with the primary material displaced to the closing bars." However, he discounts the possibility that the opening may function both as a coda and recapitulation of the first group, asserting that the music of mm. 305–end is "not left-over recapitulatory material." In the end, Coren rejects the reversed recapitulation as "working on paper" but going "against the psychological effect of the piece." Instead, he hears the development continuing through the return of the secondary theme, with the precise beginning of the recapitulation remaining "ambiguous."
23. Unlike Bruce (1969), I do not regard mm. 93–140 as a third group. Whether one reads a two or three group exposition does not affect a reading of the tonal structure, however. If mm. 93–140 constitute a third group, then the recapitulation exhibits the irregular order, second group, third group, followed by first group. I find it more elegant to view mm. 93–140 as part of the second group, so that the recapitulation is simply reversed, with the second group following the first.
24. The *topos* in this piece, as in so many other tragic works by Schubert, is "confrontation with death in midst of life," the soul's mournful reaction to mortality

represented by the *basso lamento* or descending tetrachord. On this point, see Jackson (1991, 348), Schwarmath (1969), and Rosand (1979).

25. The first theme of the second group beginning in A♭ major (VI) in m. 27 does not occur over a structural harmony or *Stufe* occupying its own harmonic-durational space. Rather, as shown in the analytical sketch, A♭ is caught within a prolongation of the initial tonic, which moves to the dominant of the dominant in m. 91. A chromaticized voice exchange (involving C♯, E♭, and E) leads from the initial tonic (m. 1) to the dominant of the dominant (m. 81). As shown in ex. 7a, the voice exchange creates a chromatic line in both outer voices, C (m. 1)–C♯ (m. 81)–D (m. 91). This chromatic line (labeled 'x') is then recomposed through the development, as D♭ (m. 157) is enharmonically converted into C♯ (m. 182). The bass from the opening through the beginning of the recapitulation is organized in unfolded thirds, the ascending third C (m. 1)–E♭ (m. 182) answered by the descending third D (m. 183)–B♭ (m. 195).

    I have benefited from Beach's (1994, 13–17) bass graph of the *Quartettsatz*. Beach, like Webster, hears G prolonged through mm. 77–93. As is apparent from my graph and accompanying remarks, I attach greater significance than Beach to the linear progression C–C♯–D (my motive 'x') in the exposition, which I hear recomposed through the development in the manner described above.

26. Harmonically, this apparent dominant chord (mm. 118–29) is not further stabilized (ex. 8a–b): instead, as the graphs show, it is a back-relating sonority, dependent on the F major triad of mm. 40ff. as its upper third.

27. Webster mistakes this varied recapitulation of the first group for the onset of the coda, which he takes too soon at m. 379. Mitschka (1961, 228), like Webster, does not recognize that mm. 367–403 represent the recapitulation of the first group. Mitschka thus completely overlooks the reversed sonata design and, like Webster, takes the coda too soon. He regards the coda as beginning in m. 367, even earlier than Webster. In my view, the coda spans mm. 404–22 and is unusual insofar as it constitutes an interpolation within the final descent $\hat{2}$-$\hat{1}$, rather than the customary elaboration of $\hat{1}$ (see the parentheses in ex. 9c). Like many earlier analysts, Webster believes that the *Tragic Overture* is in some kind of sonata form; Spies (1983, 391–98), on the other hand, claims that sonata form per se is a "fiction" and that, in the *Tragic Overture*, Brahms recapitulates segments of earlier material to "restore deluded confidence to believers in 'form,' and to appear to resolve ambiguity for sceptics."

28. Morgan (1969, 64–69) asserts that "the recapitulation of the opening cadential chords [. . .] has mistakenly been called a subdominant reprise." Morgan's bass graph suggests that the subdominant in the development functions as a lower neighbor to a structural dominant reached as early as m. 72 and prolonged until m. 228 (see also Mozart, Piano Sonata in C Major, K.545, first movement, where the reprise is supported by a subdominant neighbor to the prolonged dominant). In my view, however, the structure of Beethoven's *Coriolan Overture* is essentially different. As ex. 9 suggests, the prolonged subdominant is here a fundamental harmony or *Stufe*, rather than a neighbor chord to the dominant. This subdominant prolongation initiated in the development may extend through the recapitulation (ex. 9b) and even deep into the coda (ex. 9a). Perhaps this massive subdominant prolongation has programmatic significance. Just as Coriolanus is prevented from attaining his goals—first becoming Roman consul and, later, destroying Rome—

the music is tragically prohibited from reaching the normative goal at the beginning of the recapitulation: the tonic supporting the primary tone, $\hat{5}$. Instead, the definitive tonic return is deferred until well into the coda (m. 270, ex. 9a), where it supports $\hat{3}$, rather than $\hat{5}$. To represent Coriolanus's prolonged hesitation, the *Urlinie* is picked up only late in the coda; thus, the greatly attenuated $\hat{4}$/IV acts as a kind of "*Urlinie* suspension" whereby the resolution $\hat{3}$/I is postponed—like Coriolanus's decision to desist from his course of revenge—until the "eleventh hour." Wagner's intuitive appreciation of this delayed resolution is revealed by his comment that, in the passage beginning at m. 270, "all inward storms and struggles rush together in one great resolution; the offering of self is sealed" (Wagner 1966, 227).

29. Notice that the dominant in the motto is "back-relating," dependent on the preceding tonic six-three or mediant five-three.
30. One detects the influence of Beethoven here. See, for example, the above analysis of the *Coriolan Overture*, in which the $\hat{5}$-$\hat{1}$ *Urlinie* descent is shown to continue out of the main body of the piece through the design coda. Thus, the general principle articulated by Schenker that codas prolong $\hat{1}$ after the structural action of the *Urlinie* requires qualification. See also Brahms's *Tragic Overture*, where the coda is interpolated between the resolution of $\hat{2}$ to $\hat{1}$.
31. Analysts have interpreted the design of Brahms's Fourth Symphony's first movement in quite different ways. Most regard the development as beginning in m. 145 with a reminiscence of the opening twelve measures (mm. 145–56), a procedure evoking the tradition of the repeated exposition. Robert Pascall accounts for the truncated recapitulation of the first group (mm. 259ff.) by explaining the recall of the opening in mm. 145–56 as the beginning of the recapitulation, which is then interrupted by the development and recommences in mm. 259ff. He therefore interprets the design as a "sonata with displaced development" in which "the development has been moved into the recapitulation (or the recapitulation has been split into two unequal parts and the first of these has been displaced)" (Pascall 1974, 59). Surely, however, the reminiscence of the opening at the beginning of the development—a common procedure in classical sonata form—is related to the convention of repeating the exposition, and should not be mistaken for the beginning of the recapitulation, as in Pascall's interpretation.
32. See, for example, the Finale of the D minor Violin Sonata, discussed above, and the *Vier ernste Gesänge*, Op. 121, discussed by Whittall (1983, 191–207).
33. Regarding the exposition of the Fourth Symphony, some writers identify a three-group layout (or a three-key exposition), while others delineate only two groups (or a two-key exposition). The distinction between these competing interpretations depends upon the status of the music in mm. 53–94, and specifically whether this music constitutes the second group of a three-group exposition (Tovey 1989a, 221; 1989b) or an "intermediate motive" within a two-group exposition (Evans 1935, 146–54). In my reading, simultaneous enlargements of 'x' in the bass and 'x' transposed up a fifth ('x'-t5) in the inner voice (ex. 12a) weld mm. 1–95 into a harmonic and formal unity. Thus, Tovey's "second subject" (mm. 53–94) is subsumed within Evans's first group (mm. 1–94), the real second group commencing later at m. 95. In my reading, then, design and tonal structure correlate so that the arrival of the dominant as upper fifth of the initial tonic coincides with the onset of the second group in m. 95. The F♯ major chord supporting Tovey's second subject—

the V/V of m. 53ff.—is subsumed within the ascending fifth in the bass ('x'). Notice that 'x' prepares the ostinato subject in the *Finale*.

A final comment on ex. 12a: notice the top voice's enharmonic prevarication, which spans the movement. The upper voice queries whether C𝄪–D♯ is really D–E♭, the issue being definitively decided in favor of the former interpretation only just prior to the coda (m. 387, ex. 12e).

34. We do know, however, that Brahms was deeply interested in the culture and thought of classical antiquity.
35. Cherubini's unusual harmonic procedures in the second group are also programmatic: just as III (A♭ in the exposition) and the major I (F major in the recapitulation) are overwhelmed by prolonged dominants (V/III and V respectively), Medea's natural maternal instincts are completely annihilated by her insatiable lust for revenge.
36. According to Luhring (1985, 6), "a new condition exists [in the coda] for both the blessed and mortals." Daverio (1993, 108) agrees, arguing that Brahms wishes to suggest "gods and mortals, contrary to the ultimate message of Hölderlin's poem, are interdependent, not antithetical terms."
37. Certainly, one has to be very careful about "reading away" tonics. In this case, however, the major tonic is to be understood as an apparent rather than a structural tonic for the structural and motivic reasons I have presented above.
38. Tovey (1989a, 222) hears in mm. 246–58 of the Fourth Symphony the prophecy of a catastrophe: "the great cloud figure . . . separates the first two steps of the theme, with all the majesty of the Norns prophesying the twilight of the gods."

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