Sonata Form

Introduction
Identifying a Form
The identification and study of sonata form is the work of many theorists, but two in particular stand out:

- Carl Czerny
- Adolf Bernhard Marx
Carl Czerny
Carl Czerny

1791-1857
Carl Czerny

1791-1857

Student of Beethoven
Carl Czerny

- 1791-1857
- Student of Beethoven
- Extremely influential piano teacher: pupils included
  - Liszt
  - Thalberg
  - Heller
Adolf Bernhard Marx
Adolf Bernhard Marx

1796-1866
Adolf Bernhard Marx

1796-1866

Worked with Mendelssohn
Adolf Bernhard Marx

- 1796-1866
- Worked with Mendelssohn
- Developed terminology still in use today such as *liedform*
Czerny-Marx Model
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- Primarily a compositional, rather than analytical model
Czerny-Marx Model

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- An amalgam of the writings of both theorists
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- Neither Czerny nor Marx saw it as a “template”
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An amalgam of the writings of both theorists

Neither Czerny nor Marx saw it as a “template”

The form, as taught thereafter, tends to be presented as a kind of template anyway.
Components
Components

- Exposition
  - Presents the main material; ends in secondary key
Components

- Exposition
  - Presents the main material; ends in secondary key

- Development
  - Develops the material; moves from secondary to home key
Components

- Exposition
  - Presents the main material; ends in secondary key

- Development
  - Develops the material; moves from secondary to home key

- Recapitulation
  - Re-presents the main material; ends in home key
Exposition

Primary Group (I) -> Transition -> Secondary Group (V) -> Closing Group (V)
Basic Outline of the Exposition

Exposition

Primary Group (I) -> Transition -> Secondary Group (V) -> Closing Group (V)
The Primary Theme, or Group, in the tonic key opens the Exposition.
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Usually at a restatement of the Primary Theme, we enter a transition which takes us from the primary key to the secondary key -- usually the dominant (major keys) or the relative major (minor keys.)
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Another quasi-transition can follow (but there is no modulation).
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The Exposition may then be repeated.
Basic Outline of the Development
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The Development works with the material from the Exposition, re-combining it, varying it, and stating it in various key centers and modes.
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Eventually the Development enters a passage which strongly points towards an arrival into the original key center -- this is known as the “Retransition”.
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The end of the Development is simultaneous with the beginning of the Recapitulation.
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Eventually the Development enters a passage which strongly points towards an arrival into the original key center -- this is known as the “Retransition”.

The end of the Development is simultaneous with the beginning of the Recapitulation.

There is no set form for the Development.
Basic Outline of the Recapitulation
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In its most basic form, the Recapitulation will have the same order of events as the Exposition.
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The Secondary Theme/Group and Closing Theme are then stated in the home key, rather than in the secondary key.
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A Coda may or may not follow the Closing Theme.
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May Classical-era Sonata Form moves mark the Development/Recapitulation section of a sonata form work to be repeated. In practice, that repeat is often skipped.
Objections: Exposition

Exposition

Transition

Primary Group (I)

Secondary Group (V)

Closing Group (V)
1. Transition: there may be no actual transition, but a *bifocal close* instead.
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2. Transition: the transition may explore a new key center (the so-called *three-key Exposition*).
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3. Transition: transitions can sound like secondary groups, challenging the listener to distinguish between the two.
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4. Secondary Theme: it may be the same as the Primary Theme, or closely related.
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6. Secondary Theme: there may be little harmonic stability in the Secondary Group, not to be resolved until the arrival at the Closing Group.
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8. Closing Group: the Closing Theme may resemble the Secondary Theme, or be an altered restatement of the Primary Theme.
9. Closing Group: the Closing Theme may lead directly into a transitional passage that either leads back to the beginning of the Exposition, or forward into the Development.
Objections: Development

Development

Retransition
1. The Development may have the same overall structure as the Exposition.
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5. Retransition: there may be no clear retransition, but a blurred distinction between development and recapitulation.
Objections: Recapitulation

- Recapitulation
- Transition
- Primary Group (I)
- Secondary Group (I)
- Closing Group (I)
- Coda
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9. Coda: not required. In many of Haydn’s mature works, it is virtually impossible to distinguish as coda from the main body of the recapitulation.
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10. Coda: the Coda may occur within the recapitulation -- especially immediately before the Closing Group.
The “Sonata Principle”
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- Material is stated in two key centers—primary and secondary.
The “Sonata Principle”

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Material stated originally in the secondary key center is treated as a large-scale dissonance, or instability.
The “Sonata Principle”

- Material is stated in two key centers—primary and secondary.

- Material stated originally in the secondary key center is treated as a large-scale dissonance, or instability.

- Before the work ends, the important material originally stated in the secondary key must be restated in the primary key, to achieve balance.
Sonata as Hegelian
Sonata as Hegelian

- Thesis: the primary key and its material
Sonata as Hegelian

- Thesis: the primary key and its material
- Antithesis: the secondary key and its material
Sonata as Hegelian

- Thesis: the primary key and its material
- Antithesis: the secondary key and its material
- Synthesis: the resolution of the secondary key material into the primary key.
Analyzing Sonata Form
Analyzing Sonata Form

Jan LaRue analysis symbols for sonata form
Analyzing Sonata Form

* Jan LaRue analysis symbols for sonata form

* From “Guidelines for Style Analysis”
Analyzing Sonata Form

Jan LaRue analysis symbols for sonata form

From “Guidelines for Style Analysis”

Have become a common language for sonata-form discussion.
## LaRue Symbols

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Primary Theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>Transitional Theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>Secondary Theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Closing Theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>Introductory Material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>New material occurring after the Exposition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td>Questionable functions, ambiguous</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LaRue Symbols

\( a, b, c, \text{ etc.} \)
\( x, y, z, \text{ etc.} \)
\( 1P, 2S, \text{ etc.} \)
\( P^1, S^2 \)
\( P^k \)
\( S(1P) \)
\( > \)
\( r \)
\( h \)

Phrases or smaller-dimension functions
Following \( a, b, c, \text{ etc.} \), indicate motivic levels.

Before the indicator: constituent themes
Superscript indicates variants
Closing function apparent
Derivation: \( S \) is derived from \( 1P \)
Further derivation: \( K(1S>2P) \) indicates that \( K \) is derived from \( 1S \), in turn derived from \( 2P \)
Isolates the rhythmic element of a theme
Isolates the harmonic element of a theme.
LaRue Symbols

2+2  Indicates two phrases of 2 measures each

4x2  Indicates two repetitions of a 4-measure unit: read as 4 measures times 2.
LaRue Symbols

1Pax
First phrase of first primary theme, employing motive ‘x’

2T(2Pb)
Second transitional theme, derived from the second phrase of the secondary primary theme.

2S^k (1Pr)
Second secondary theme, with a closing function, derived from the rhythm of the first primary theme.

2P^t First variant of the second primary theme.
# A LaRue-Style Sonata-Form Graph

## Exposition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pa</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>IT(Pa)</th>
<th>2T</th>
<th>3Tk</th>
<th>Sa</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>c</th>
<th>K(Pa)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2 x 3 + 1</td>
<td>2 x 2 + 2</td>
<td>2 + 3 x 2</td>
<td>1 x 5</td>
<td>1 x 3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Solo**

*Flt. Ob.*

I

**Solo**

*Strings*

Tutti

---

**Development**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pa</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>3Tk</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Q(P)</th>
<th>retransition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8 + 7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Solo**

*Strings*

vi

**Solo**

*Horn*

**Tutti**

*V/I*

---

**Recapitulation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pa</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>IT(Pa)</th>
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<th>Sa</th>
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<tr>
<td>87</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
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**Solo**

*Flt. Ob.*

I

**Tutti**

I
A LaRue-Style Sonata-Form Graph

### Table

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<tr>
<th>Pa</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>1T(Pa)</th>
<th>2T</th>
<th>3T^k</th>
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- **Solo**
- **Ft. Ob.**
- **I**

### Analysis

Uppermost line: analytical symbols
# A LaRue-Style Sonata-Form Graph

## Middle line: measure numbers

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<th>1T(Pa)</th>
<th>2T</th>
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<th>Sa</th>
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Solo | Tutti | Solo | Strings | Tutti
Flt. Ob. | I | I

I: I
V: V
A LaRue-Style Sonata-Form Graph

Lower line: phrase divisions by measure
A LaRue-Style Sonata-Form Graph

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Solo       | Tutti       | Solo   | Tutti             |
Flt. Ob.   | Strings     |        |                   |
I           |             | V      |                   |

Below the gray line divider: notes (in this case about orchestration)
A LaRue-Style Sonata-Form Graph

Bottom: harmonic sketch (in this case limited to the two key planes.)
In the graph as a whole, note that care has been taken to align similar materials—such as the locations of the materials in Exposition and Recapitulation, but also in the Development where such alignment might be appropriate.
A LaRue-Style Sonata-Form Graph with Harmonic Reduction

**Exposition**

- **Pa** 7, 4
- **b** 11, 3
- **1T(Pa)** 14, 2 x 3 + 1
- **2T** 21, 2 x 2 + 2
- **3T** 27, 2 + 3 x 2
- **Sa** 35, 1 x 5
- **b** 40, 1 x 3
- **c** 43, 1
- **K(Pa)** 44

**Haydn: Symphony No. 6 in D Major (Le Matin)**

**Analytic Sketch of the First Movement (Allegro)**

**Development**

- **Pa** 48, 4
- **b** 52, 3
- **3T** 55, 3
- **N** 58, 8 + 7
- **Q(P)** 73, 12
- **retransition** 85, 2

**Recapitulation**

- **Pa** 87, 4
- **b** 91, 3
- **1T(Pa)** 94, 2 x 3
- **3T** 100, 3 x 2
- **Sa** 106, 1 x 5
- **b** 111, 1 x 3
- **c** 114, 1
- **K(Pa)** 115

**D: I**

**V**

**V/V**

**A: I**

**V**

**I**

**(A:) I**

**D:**

**vi**

**ii**

**V**

**I**

**V**

**I**