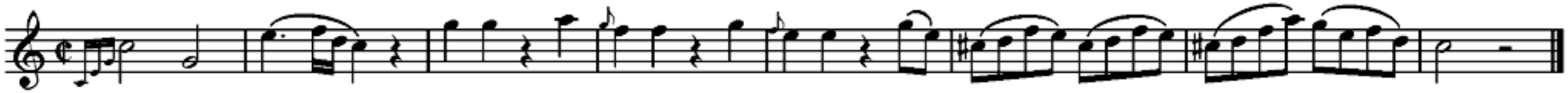
Sonata Form

The Exposition

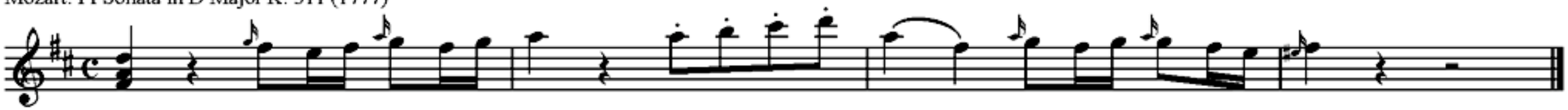
Primary Theme(s)

- Tendency towards triadic quality
- Tend to be generated motivically
- Tend to be “etched” in that they are easily recognizable and easily developed.

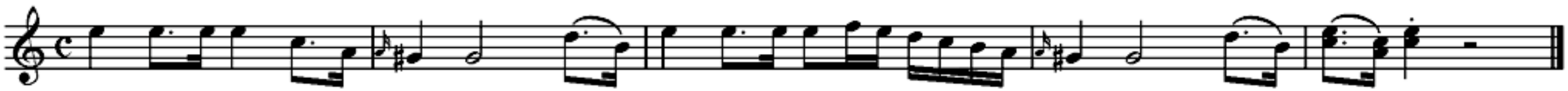
Mozart: Pf Sonata in C Major K. 309 (1777)



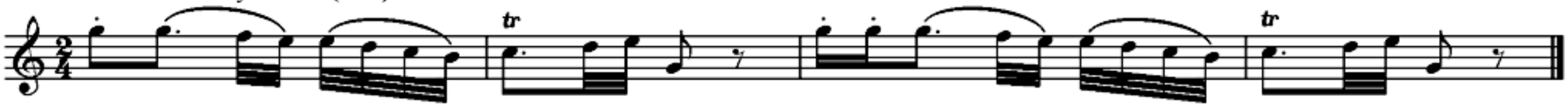
Mozart: Pf Sonata in D Major K. 311 (1777)



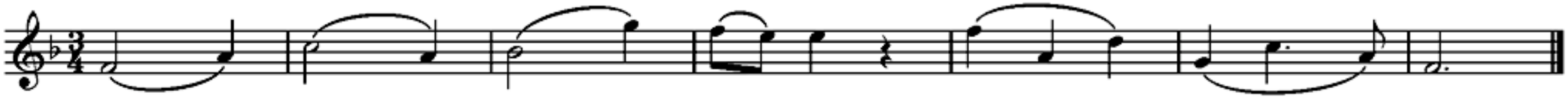
Mozart: Pf Sonata in A Minor K. 310 (1778)



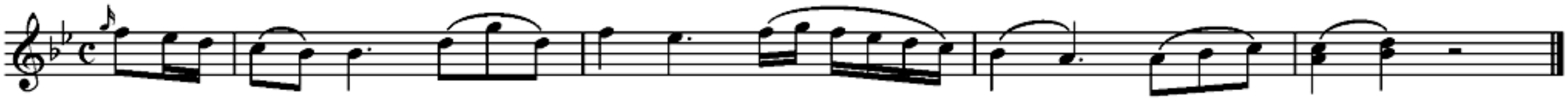
Mozart: Pf Sonata in C Major K. 330 (1778)



Mozart: Pf Sonata in F Major K. 332 (1778)



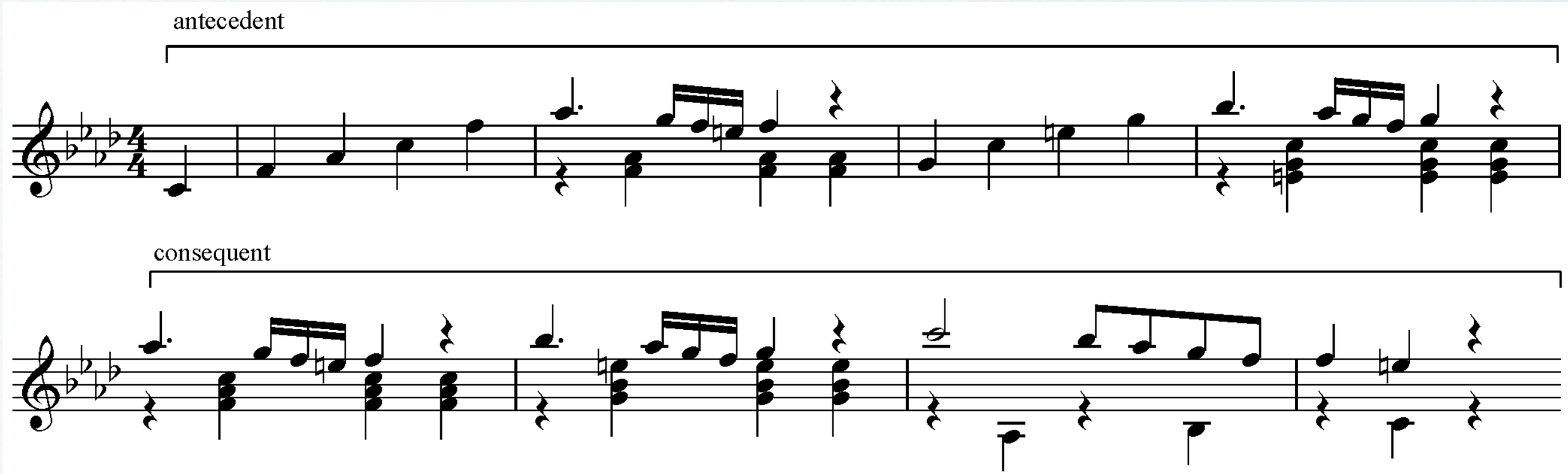
Mozart: Pf Sonata in B-Flat Major K. 333 (1778)



Primary to Transition

- Periodic Theme
  - May be designed so as to be “open” from the beginning.

Beethoven Op. 2 No 1, I

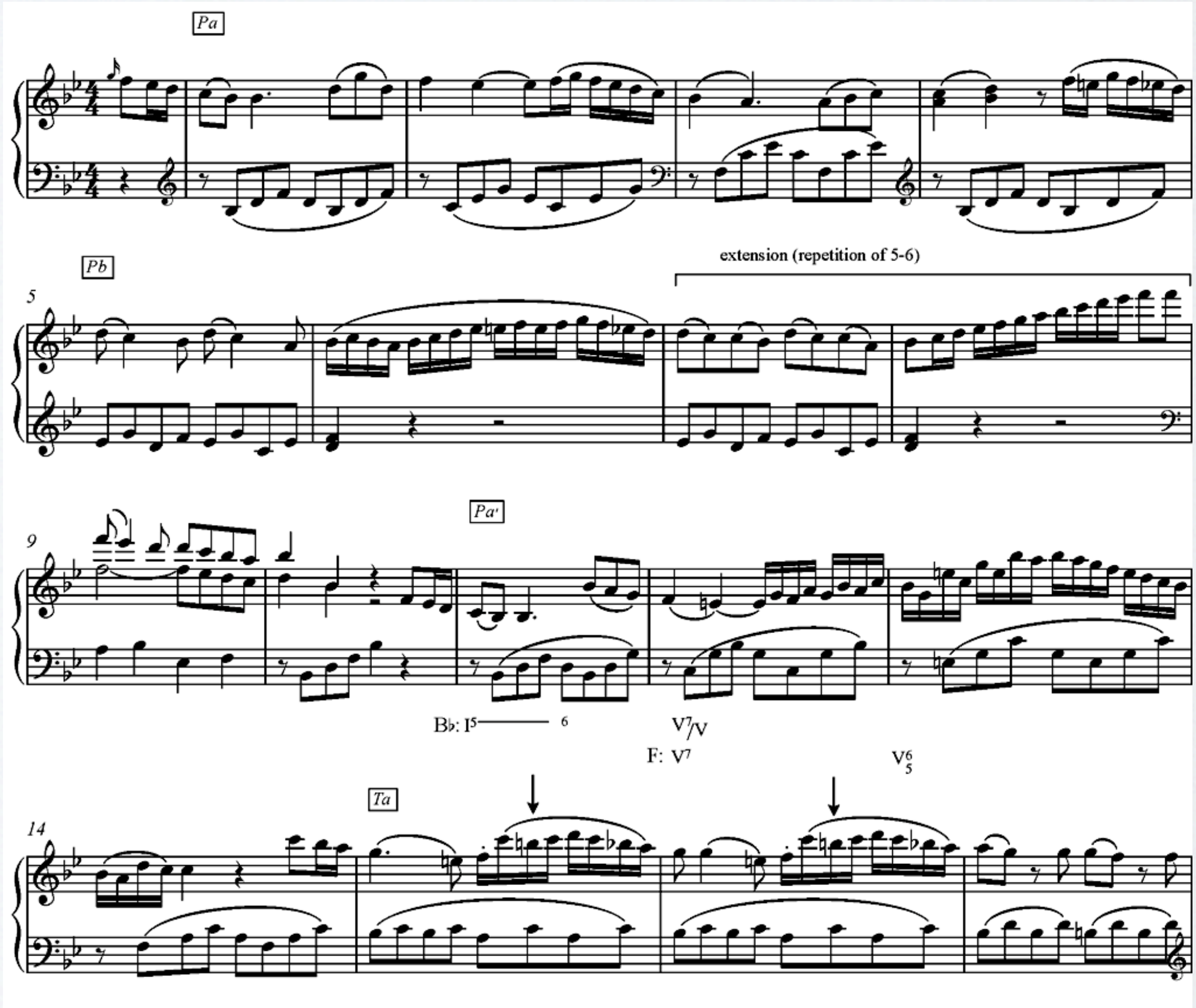


The consequent phrase ends on a half-cadence (and on a weak beat) which allows the phrase to remain open and allows for more development -- in this case, a move to the secondary key.

Primary to Transition

- On a repeated statement, the antecedent may “open” and allow the transition to proceed.

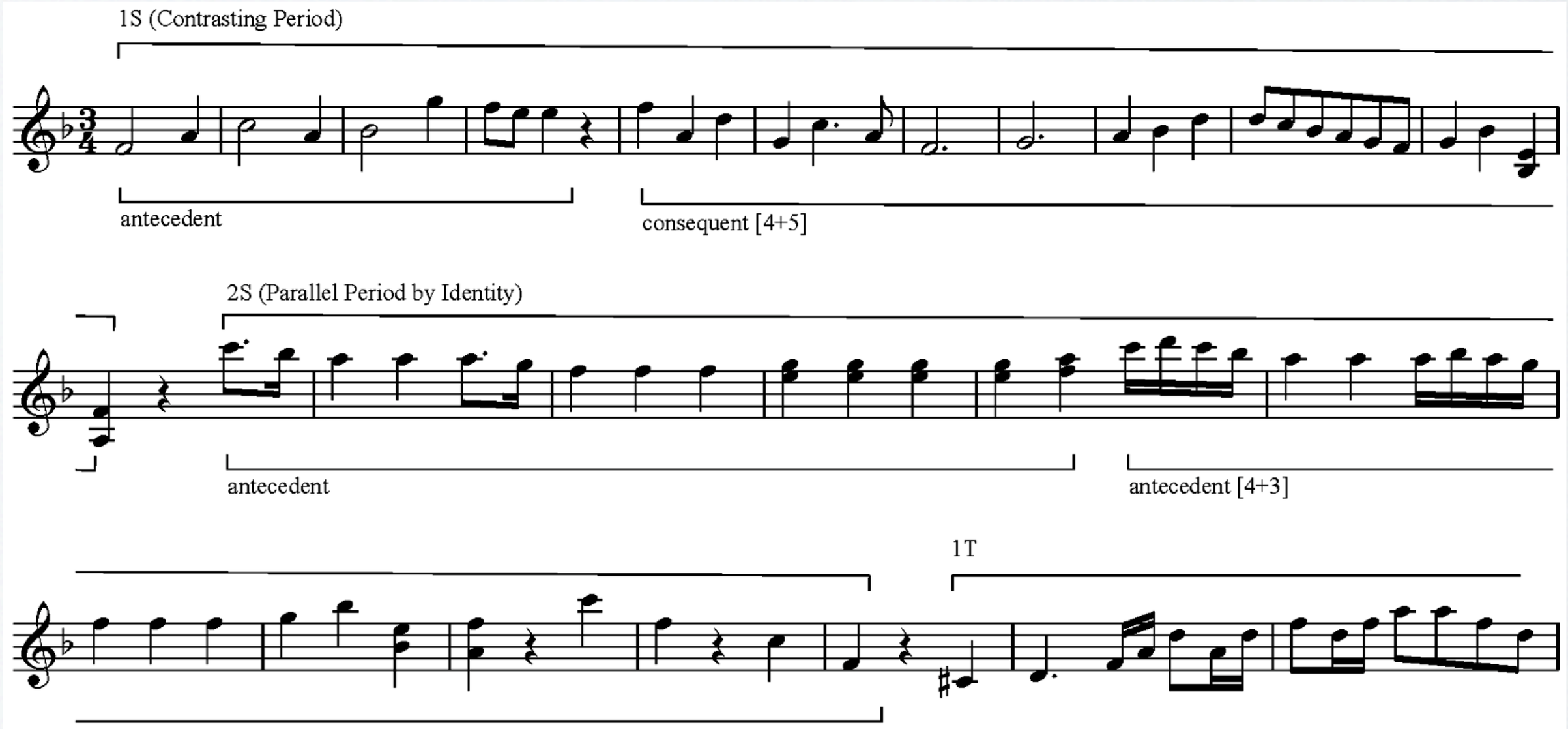
Mozart: Sonata in B-flat, K. 333



Primary to Transition

- A completely closed theme might require a following theme (2S) which will be open enough to enter the transitional phase.

Mozart: Sonata in F Major, K. 332



1S is completely closed off with a PAC. Therefore, a theme 2S -- also fully closed off -- is extended and allowed to lead into 1T, which picks up the rhythm of 2S's extension.

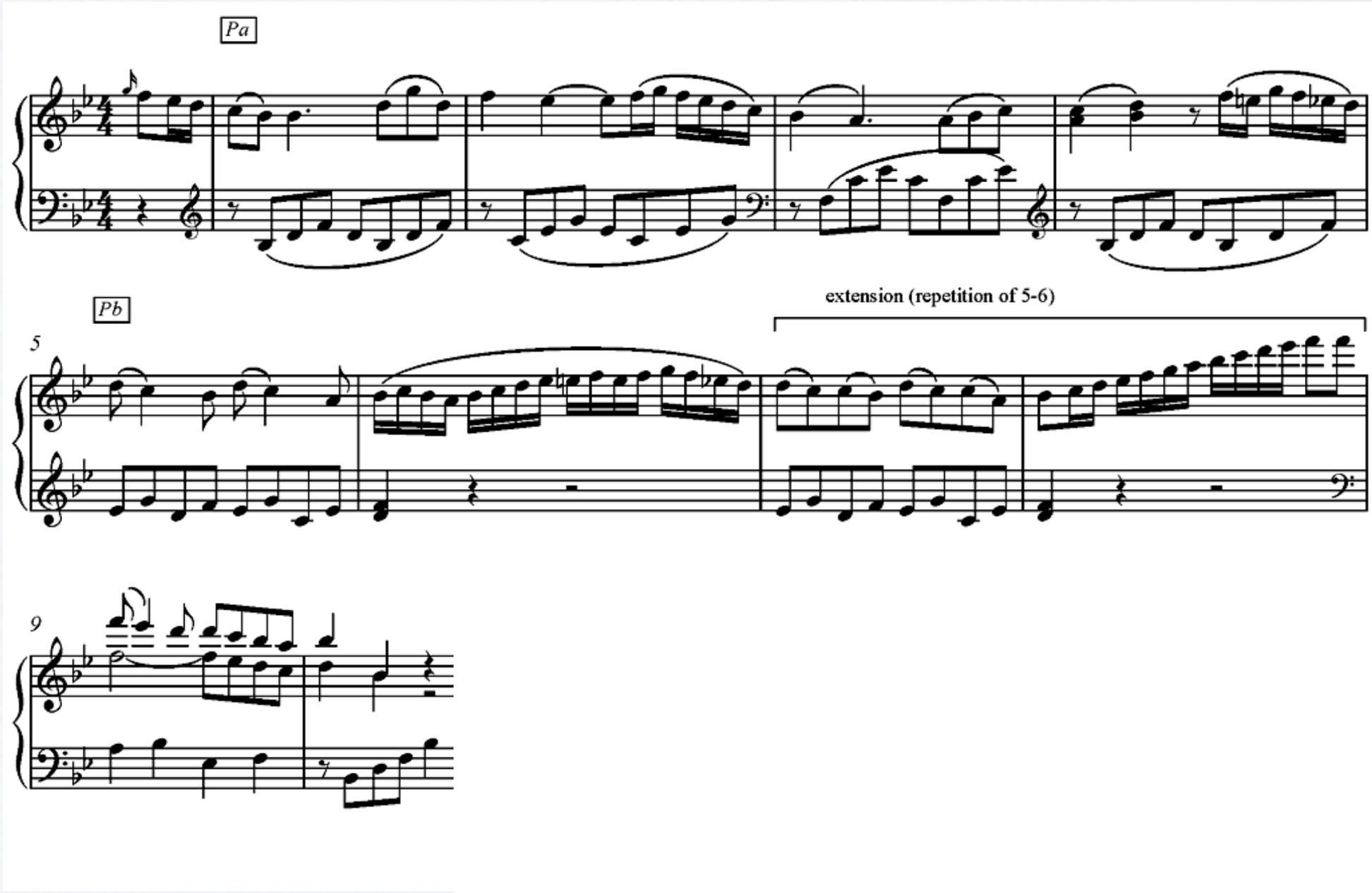
Transition (1T)

- The first transition can:
  - Grow from a repetition of the primary theme
  - Be new material following some kind of cadence
  - Be new material interrupting the primary theme.

Transition (1T)

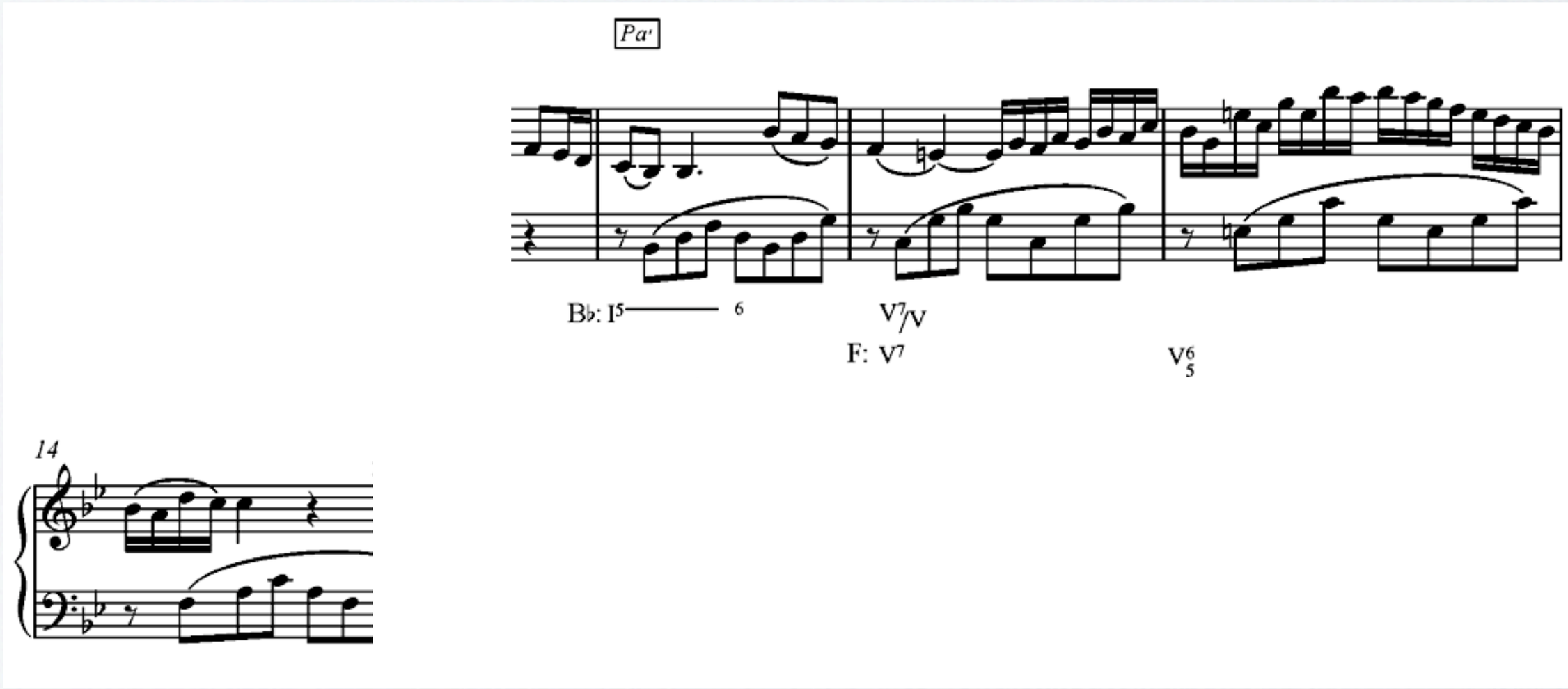
- Mozart: Piano Sonata in B-flat Major, K. 333

1P



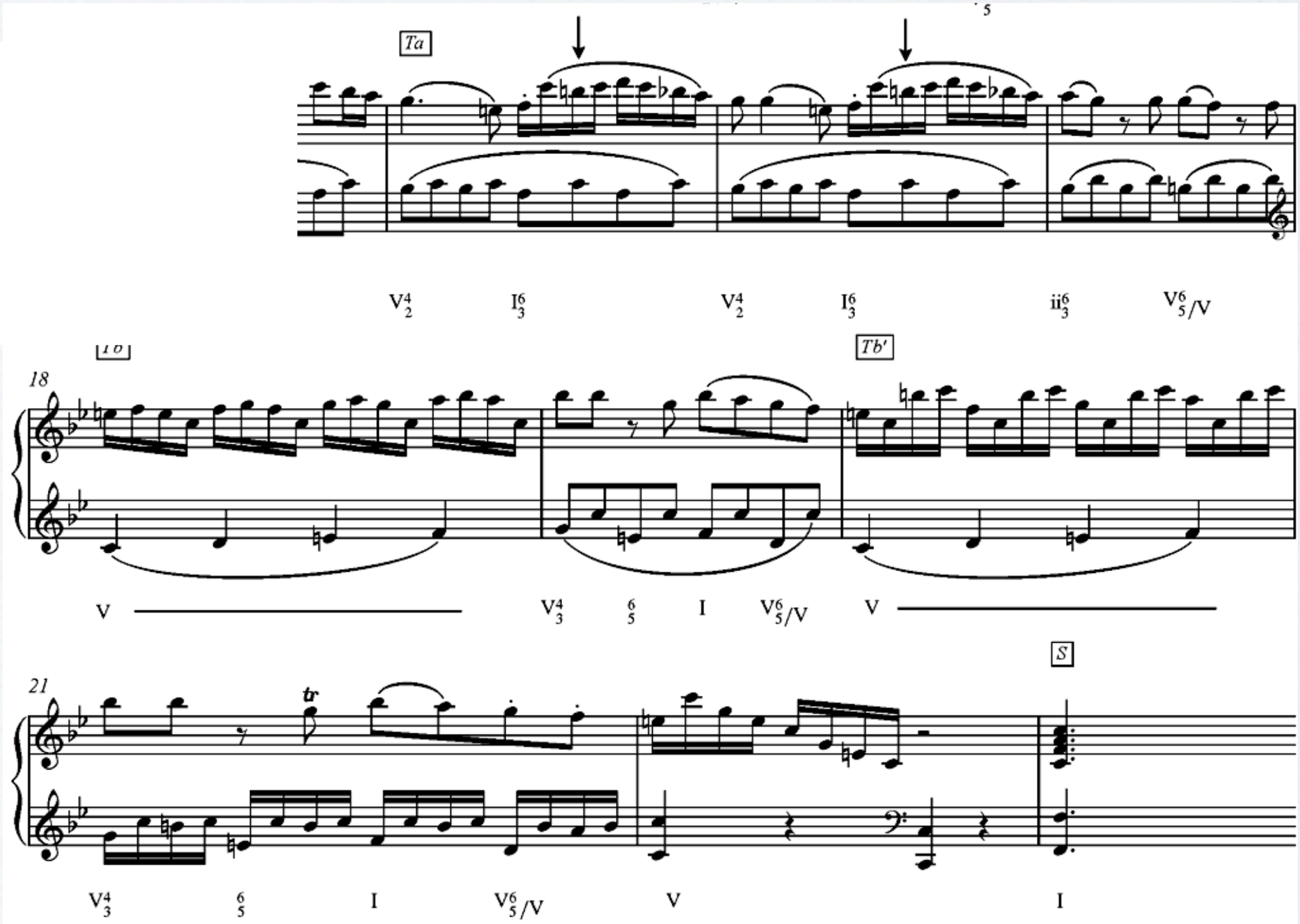
Two phrases: Pa = 4 measures; Pb = 2+[2]+2

1P Repeated



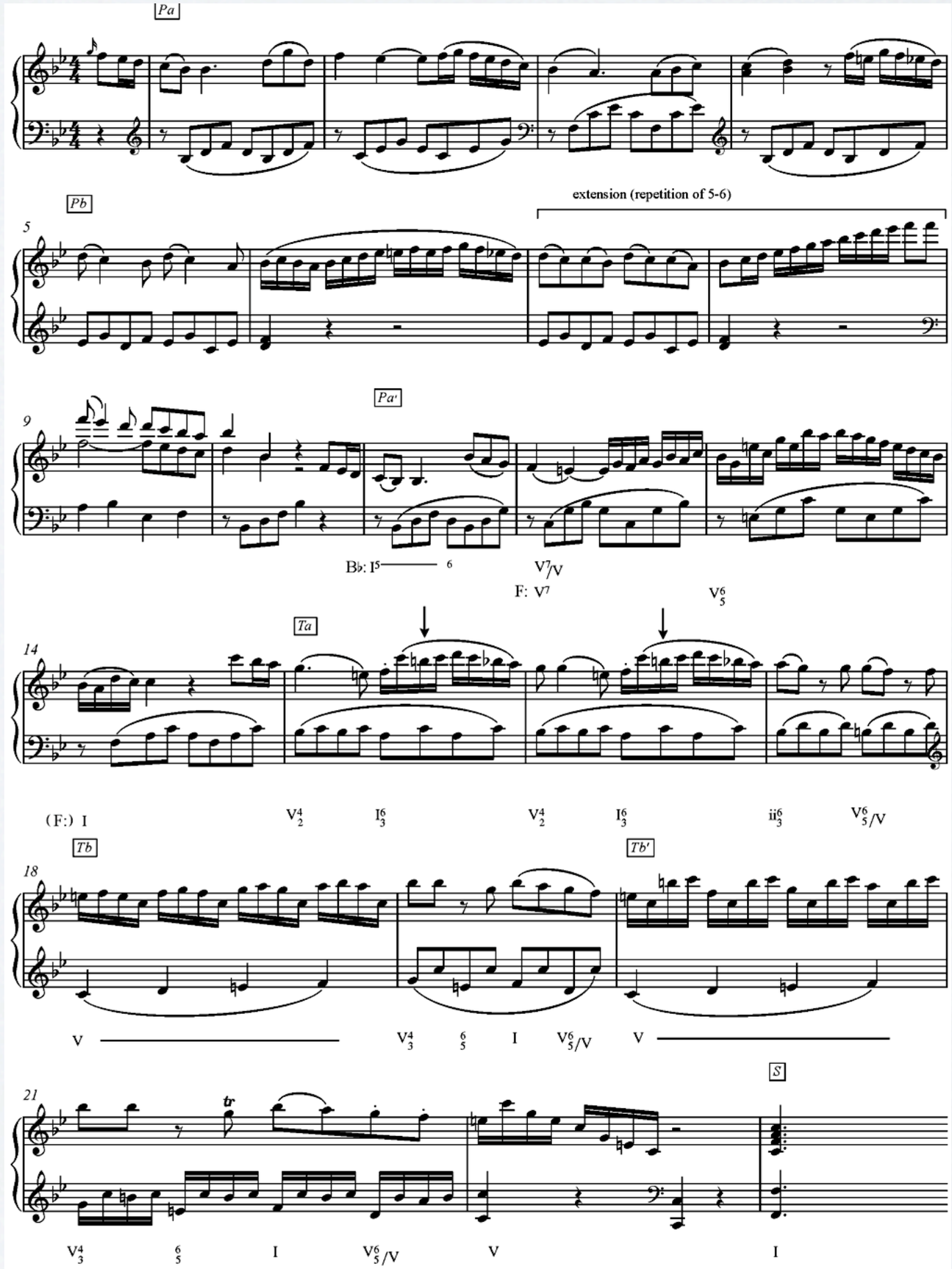
Pa' begins moving to a vi6 which acts as a pivot chord, to modulate to F Major. At this point, F Major is far from stable.

T



In order to stabilize F Major, it is necessary to establish V/V *in the key of F Major* -- which Mozart begins to do in measure 15 with B-natural (suggesting V/V) as an accented neighbor tone. The chord itself is stated in measures 17 and 19. Note, however, that B-flats are still possible they occur throughout the passage, and in measure 21 act to create a strong V7 chord in F Major. The arrival at S in measure 23 is firm and convincing.

P through S

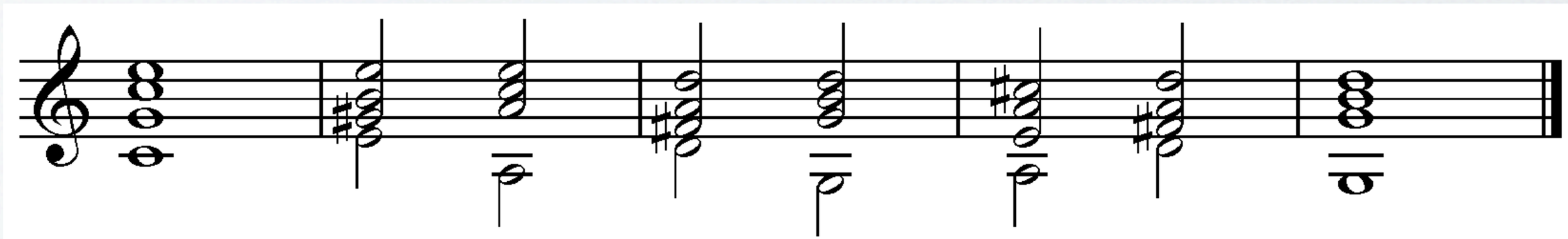

Pa
Pb
extension (repetition of 5-6)
5
Pa'
9
B♭: I⁵ 6
V⁷/V
F: V⁷
V⁶₅
Ta
14
(F:) I
V⁴₂
I⁶₃
V⁴₂
I⁶₃
ii⁶₃
V⁶₅/V
Tb
Tb'
18
V
V⁴₃
⁶₅
I
V⁶₅/V
V
S
21
tr
V⁴₃
⁶₅
I
V⁶₅/V
V
I

P through S

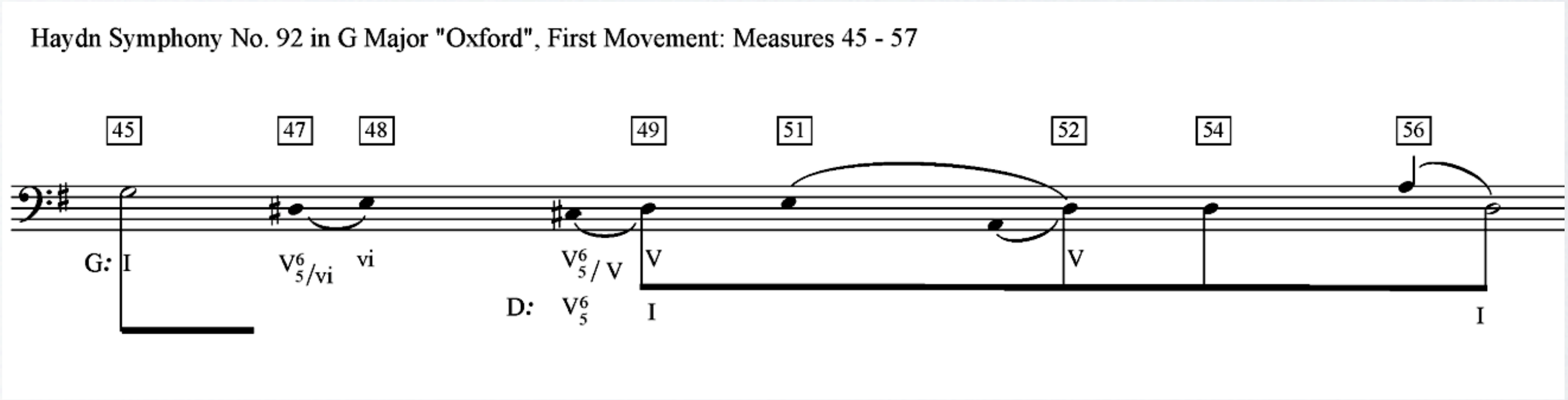
P*a*	P*b*	P*a'*	T*a*	T*b*	T*b'*	S
1	5	11	15	18	20	23
4	2+2+2	*4*	*3*	2	2+1	
I			V			
	imp. cadence	vi6 pivot				

Transition

- A typical strategy might be a motion to V/vi, and then into a sequence which moves into the dominant key.



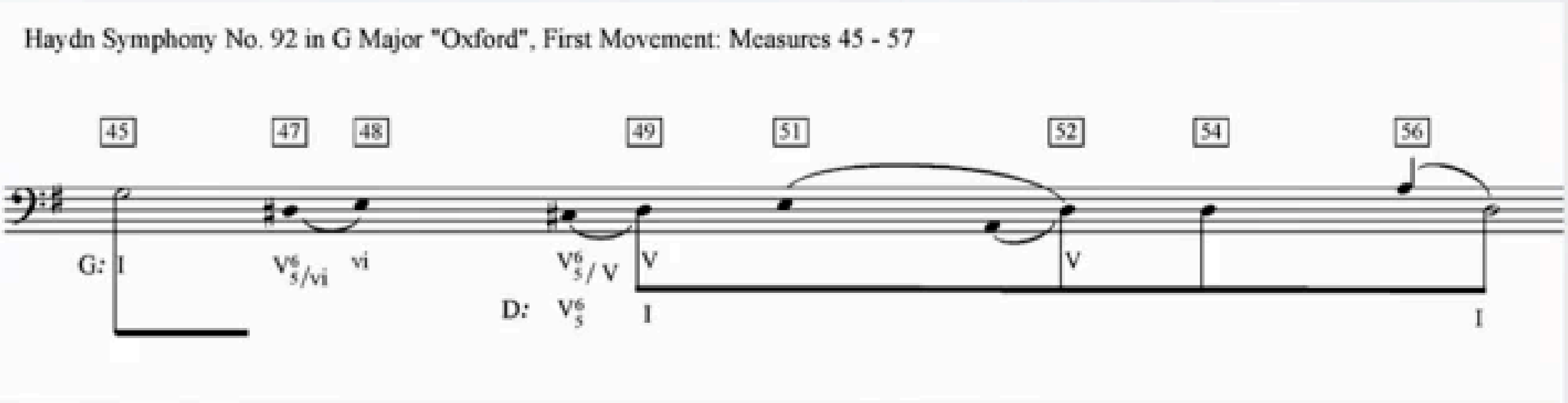
Haydn: Oxford Symphony



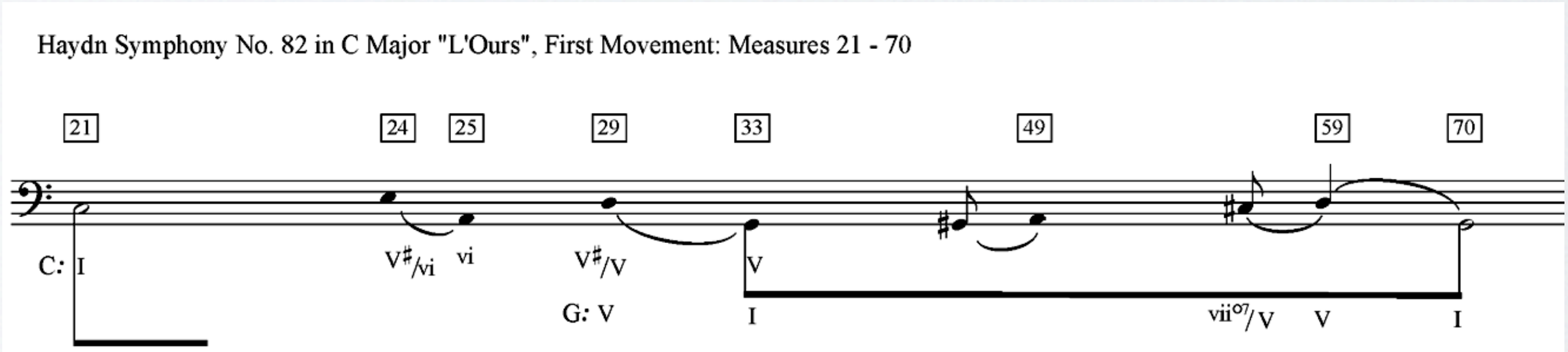
The modulation is created using V/vi (measure 47), which then gives way to V in D Major, which is the target key. After a period of motion to ii and V in D Major, the arrival into the target key feels secure.

Note: the themes in this movement begin *on the dominant*, which can make the key a bit harder to hear.

Haydn: Oxford Symphony

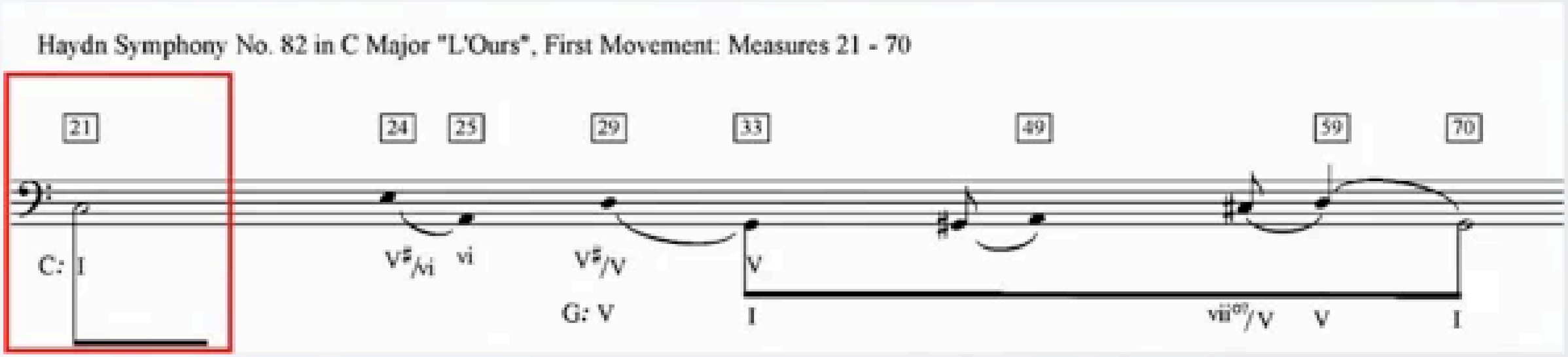


Haydn: Symphony No. 82 “The Bear”



The modulation is similar to that in Symphony No. 92: V/vi gives way to V/V, which is V in G Major (the target key.) The key confirmation that follows is lengthy (as opposed to the quick modulation in Symphony No. 92) and employes the use of vii7/V to reach a stable dominant key at measure 70.

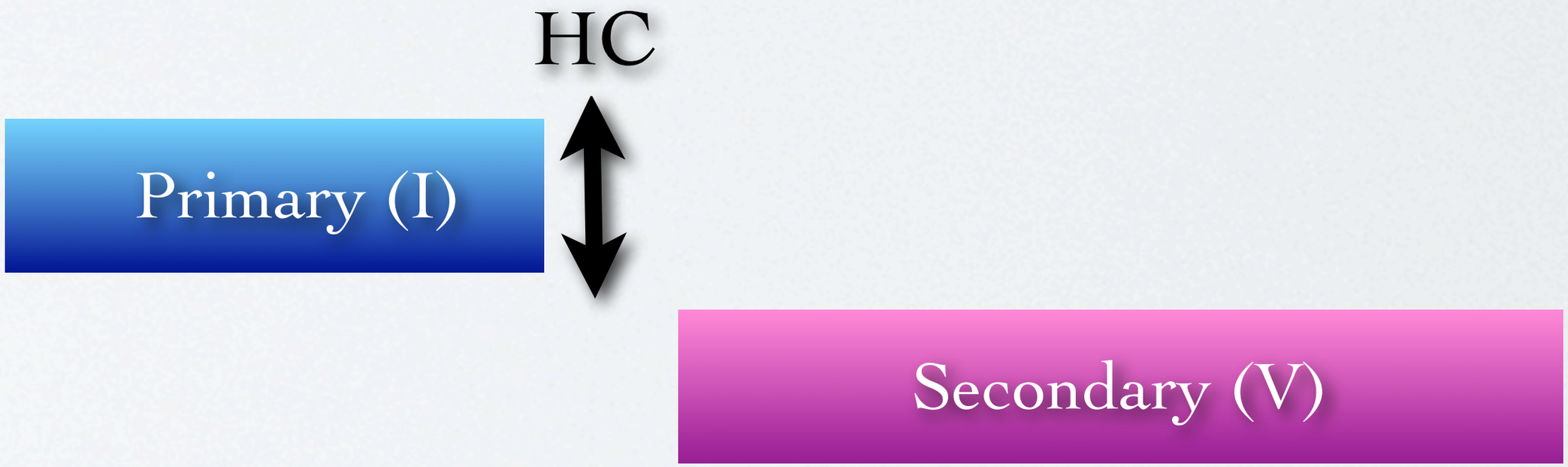
Haydn: Symphony No. 82 “The Bear”



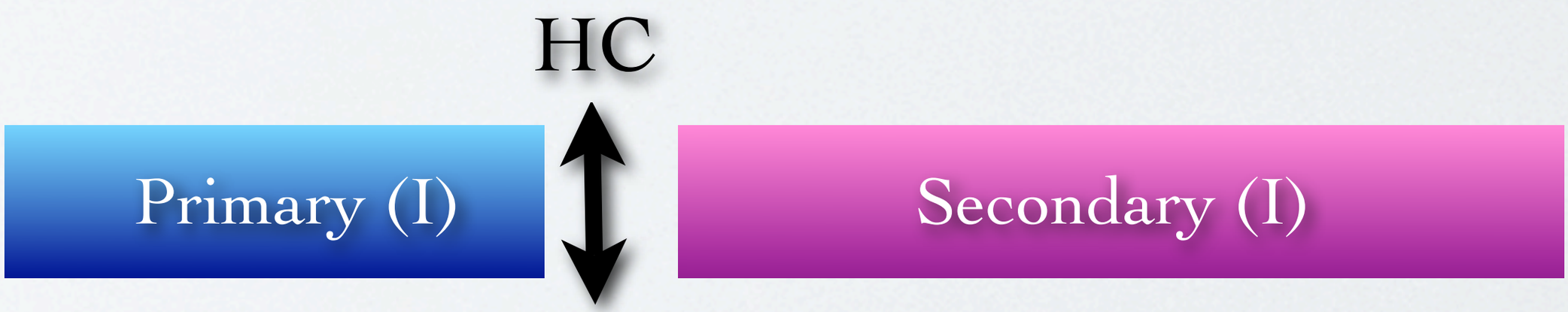
Bifocal Close

- A motion to a half-cadence at the end of the Primary Theme, followed by the Secondary Theme in the key of the dominant.
- The transition is therefore completely sidestepped.

Exposition



Recapitulation



Bifocal Close

- The secondary key is not stable upon arrival; the remainder of the Exposition will be spent in stabilizing the secondary key.

Bifocal Close

- Appears to have been part of the musical language in the 1750s and 1760s
- Was still encountered in the 1780s in opera overtures

Haydn Sonata HXVI:6, III

- Primary theme to half-cadence.

Haydn Sonata HXVI:6, III

- Secondary Theme in the Exposition

Haydn Sonata HXVI:6, III

- Secondary Theme in the Recapitulation

Haydn Sonata HXVI:6, III

- Primary to Secondary Theme in Exposition

Haydn Sonata HXVI:6, III

- Primary to Secondary Theme in Recapitulation: Haydn could have written it just by gluing the original Primary Theme to the Secondary Theme in G Major.

Haydn Sonata HXVI:6, III

- Primary to Secondary Theme in Recapitulation: Haydn wrote it this way instead.
- The Primary Theme has been shortened in comparison with the Exposition's version.

Haydn Sonata HXVI:6, III

- Why would Haydn change the Recapitulation?

Haydn Sonata HXVI:6, III

- The *Bifocal Close* can be used to write a "shortcut" to the sonata form -- there is no re-writing in the Recapitulation, only transposing everything from S on to the end.

- It is indeed used that way sometimes by busy composers, especially in pieces which probably won't be heard carefully -- which explains why it pops up in opera overtures.

Haydn Sonata HXVI:6, III

- The *Bifocal Close* can also be an interesting approach to the problem of stability/instability in sonata form, and in the hands of a more aware composer like Haydn, it will present a "compositional problem" which must then be worked out satisfactorily.

- Haydn's solutions to such problems can make for fascinating study.

Bifocal Close

- It can also be used very poorly, as this example by G.B. Sammartini attests.
- Sammartini was not a harmonically sophisticated composer; Haydn referred to him as a “scribbler”.

Mozart: Overture to "Le Nozze di Figaro"

- Classic use of the Bifocal Close.
- Mozart was rather fond of this technique and used it fairly frequently.
- It is rarely found in Haydn's later works, and disappears entirely by the 1790s.

Mozart: Overture to "Le Nozze di Figaro"

Pa	*b*	*Pa*	*b*	*1Ta*	*b*	*c*
1	8	18	25	36	45	51
4 + 4	4 + 6	4 + 4	4 + 6	2 x 3 + 2 + 2	4 + 2	2 x 2 + 4
I						HC ***bifocal close***

Sa	*a*	*2T*	*3T*[k]	*3T*	*K*	*K*	*Codetta/Trans*
59	67	75	85	95	108	116	124
4 + 4	4 + 4	2 x 3+ 4	2x3+4	2x3+4	4 + 4	4 + 4	2 x 5 + 4 + 4
in V							

"Three-Key" Exposition

- The Transition itself has a strong key center -- typically iii or vi -- and a strong enough theme to sound like a secondary theme.
- Beethoven pioneered this technique, which was picked up by the more formally-aware Romantics such as Brahms.

"Three-Key" Exposition

- The Transitional theme may, at this point, take on all the functions of a secondary theme -- and is probably best analyzed as one.
- Therefore, 1S may be in a key other than the "normal" secondary key, while 2S may be in the "normal" secondary key.

Brahms: Symphony No. 2

	P	*1T*	*2T*	*1S*	*2S*^{k}	*3S*	*4S*	*1S*	
‖:	1	44	66	82	118	127	136	156	**:‖**
	D			iii	V		V/V	V	

Note: it might be possible to analyze the theme at measure 82 as yet another transitional theme, but it is also used as a substitute for the "K" theme at the end of the exposition, this time stated in the "normal" secondary key of A Major. Because of that, I have chosen to analyze it as 1S instead of as 3T.

Brahms: Symphony No. 2

	P	*1T*	*2T*	*1S*	*2S*[*]	*3S*	*4S*	*1S*	
‖:	1	44	66	82	118	127	136	156	:‖
	D			iii	V		V/V	V	

Secondary Theme

- Often much more venturesome harmonically then the Primary Theme
- Doesn't have to carry the harmonic weight of the Primary Theme; it confirms, rather than establishes, a key center.

Secondary Theme

- *Monothematic* sonata form is one in which the Secondary Theme is the same as the Primary Theme.
- The term itself is a misnomer: there usually are multiple themes in a *monothematic* sonata form.

Secondary Theme

- So-called "monothematicism" is one of Haydn's favorite practices, and is quite common.
- However, many other composers used it as well -- and not the Haydn *seguaci*, or "clones", who dotted the musical landscape of the late 18th century.

Mozart: Symphony No. 39, IV

- Mozart was probably honoring Haydn in the last movement of Symphony 39.
- Strongly monothematic: even the closing theme is similar to the primary.

Minor Dominant

- In the early Classical, it was fairly common for the secondary key, in major, to be a *minor* dominant key instead of the expected major.
- Early Haydn works show this clearly; it is in fact one of the tools musicologists can use to date Haydn's early works, which aren't securely catalogued.

Minor Dominant

- George Matthias Monn -- important Viennese composer of the 1740s and 50s -- Symphony in G Major.
- Typical of this idiom, 1S is in the dominant minor, then 2S follows in the dominant major.