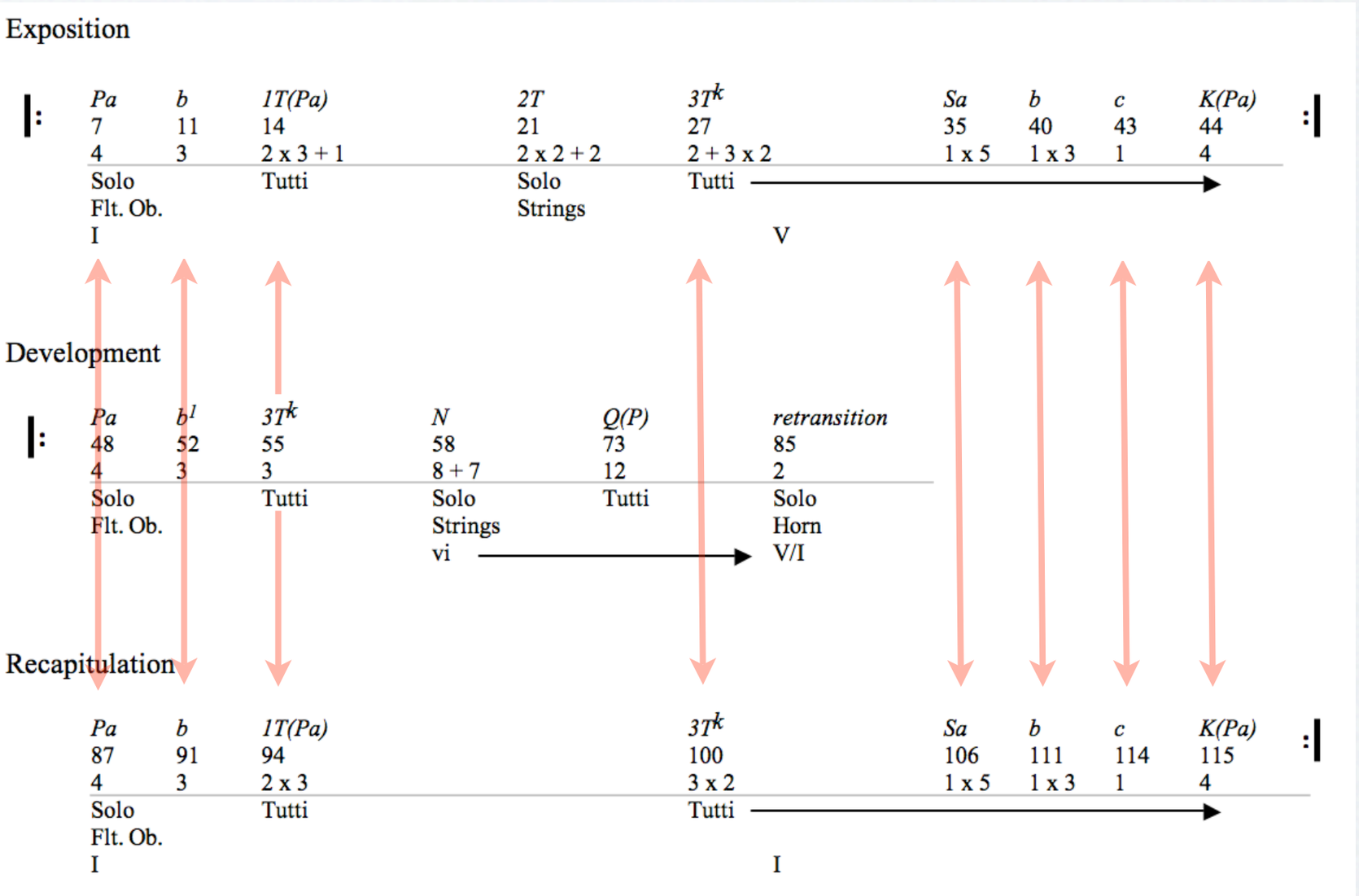
Sonata Form

Recapitulation

According to Czerny/Marx

- The Recap is the same as the Exposition, with the first transition passage rewritten so as to avoid the modulation to the secondary key.
- There are Recaps which actually *do* follow this model.

Haydn: Symphony No. 6



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.

Recaps in Real Life

- More often than not, however, the Recap is significantly different from the Exposition.

Recaps in Real Life

- There is no compelling reason for the Recap to be an Expo-without-Modulation.
  - Sonata Principle dictates restatement of material in secondary key, but not primary key.
  - The notion of Recapitulation is later than most works actually written in sonata form.

Recaps in Real Life

- Later Haydn, in particular, departs dramatically from the 'textbook' versions.
  - Is liable to treat the Recap as an expanded Development.
  - May well compress and re-combine materials to the point where it is hard to say there is a Recap at all.

Recaps in Real Life

- Mozart tends to write more ‘textbook’ Recaps -- and because of that, the ‘textbook’ form came to be considered the norm.

Recaps in Real Life

- Beethoven is often quite conservative with his Recaps as well, but typically makes up for this by writing gigantic codas.

Recaps in Real Life

- The Romantics, by and large, follow the ‘textbook’ structure closely -- by the 19th century, it had become a kind of orthodoxy.

Recaps in Real Life

- Many 20th Century composers seem to have returned more to Haydn's approach, in which the Recap is much freer and often continues the developmental process.

Recap Shortcuts

- A "shortcut" is a technique of writing a recapitulation which renders the potential re-writing of the first transition much simpler, and may do away with it altogether.
- These techniques all share in common the potential for creating a recap by doing little more than transposing everything from S through K into the tonic key.

Recap Shortcuts

- It should be stressed that these 'shortcuts' can also be used by adventuresome composers as ways of working with balances in sonata form -- i.e., not as shortcuts at all.

- However, they are often encountered precisely where you would expect a shortcut to be needed -- short keyboard works, opera overtures, ballet music (all instances in which the music isn't front and center in the audience's attention.)

Recap Shortcuts

- It should also be stressed that a ‘shortcut’ does nothing at all about lessening the need to write a Development.

Recap Shortcuts

- “Degenerate” Recapitulation
  - Recap begins in IV rather than I

Recap Shortcuts

- Bifocal Close Recapitulation
  - The bifocal close in the Expo makes it possible to write a Recap just by transposing everything from S onwards to the tonic.

Recap Shortcuts

- Mirror Recapitulation
  - The recap begins with S rather than P; P is heard *after* K; therefore S-K can be transposed to the tonic and used verbatim, then P stated and closed off.

Recap Shortcuts

- ‘Binary’ Sonata Form
  - P is skipped altogether in the recap; therefore, S-K is transposed to the tonic key and ‘plugged in’ for the recap.

Recap in IV

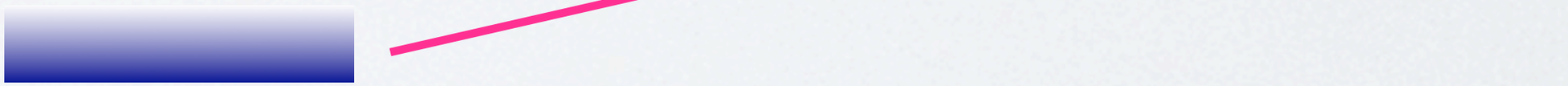
- Often scorned by music commentators and theorists as a "degenerate" practice of lesser-trained composers.
- Found in early Romantics such as Schubert and Schumann.

Recap in IV

Primary (I)

Modulates up by
a fifth to V

Secondary (V)



Primary (IV)

Modulates up by
a fifth to I

Secondary (I)

The Recap can be created by transposing everything in the Expo from P-S down a fifth, and then transposing everything from the Expo's S-K down a fifth -- and then just repeat the Exposition with those keys. *Absolutely no recomposition is necessary*.

Hypothetical Version

- Clementi C Major Sonatina, rewritten so as to use the Recap in IV.

Allegro

Piano

f

p

7

f

12

p

18

f

24

f

p

30

f

34

Allegro

Piano

f

p

7

f

12

p

18

f

24

p

cresc.

31

f

35

Mozart: Sonata in C Major, K. 545

- In the first movement, Mozart begins the Recap on IV -- but then he *doesn't transpose the Exposition directly from that point*.

Mozart: Sonata in C Major, K. 545: I

Piano

1 P

5 1T

9 2T

13 S

18 3T

22 1K

26 2K

29

42 P

46 1T

50 1T'

54 2T

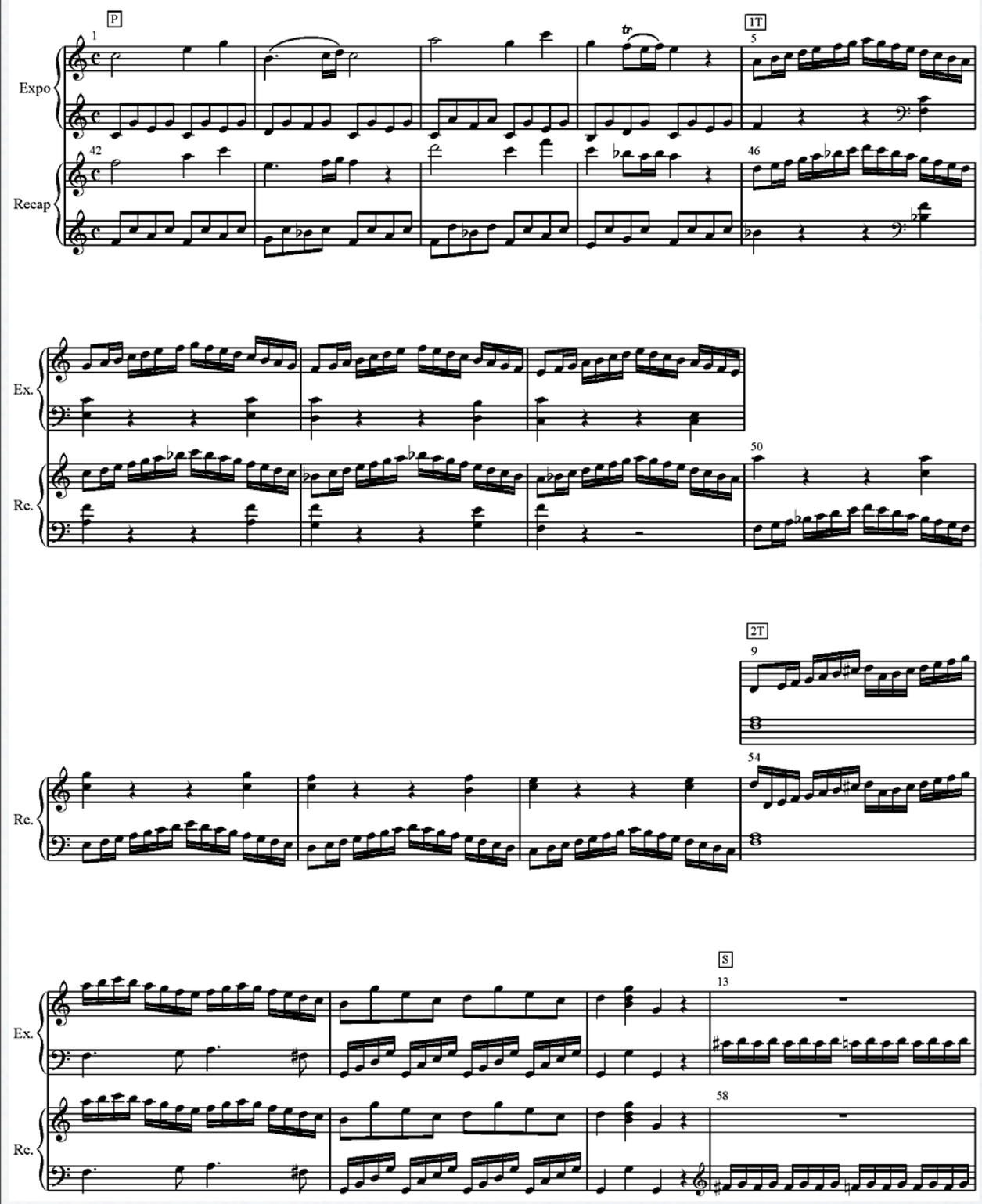
58 S

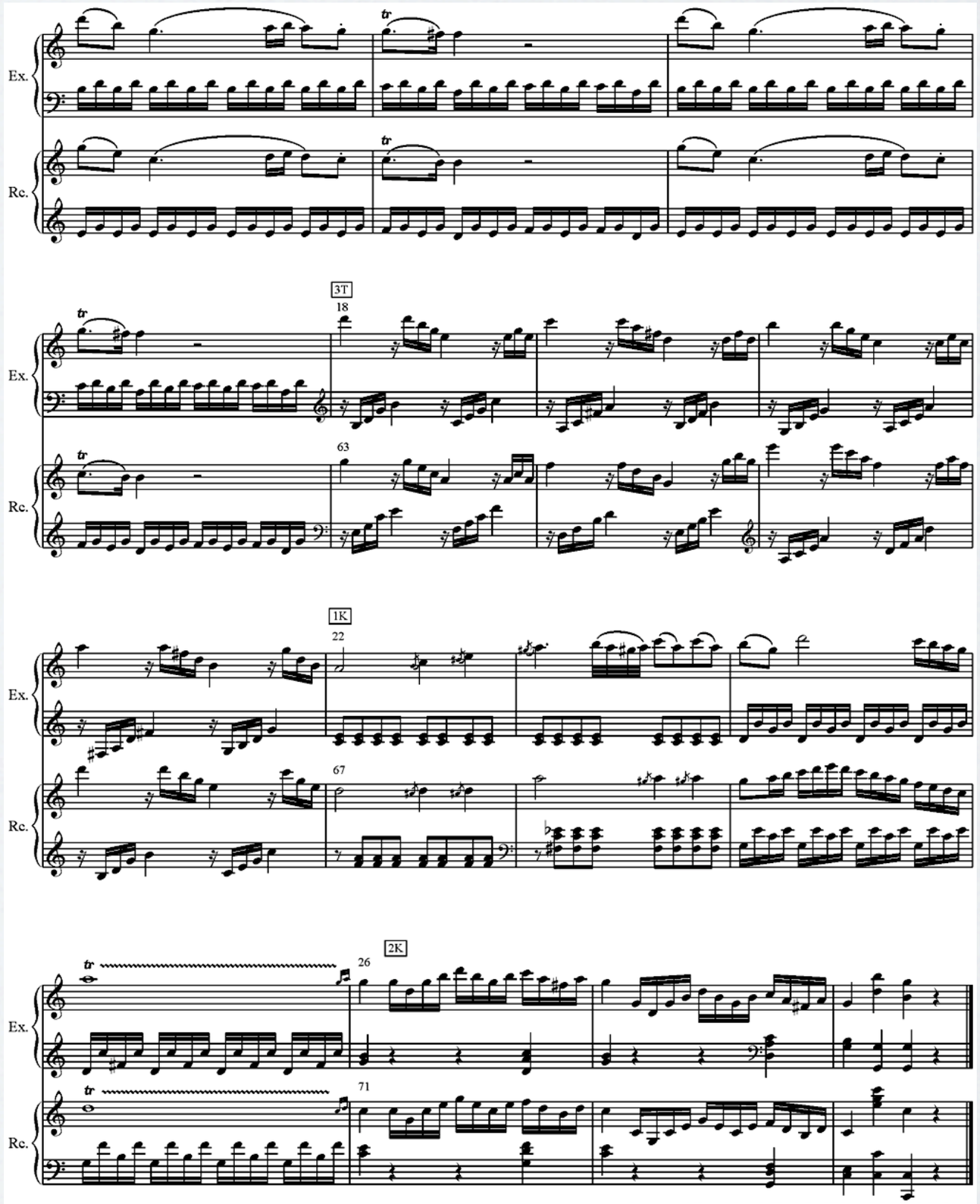
63 3T

67 1K

71 2K

Mozart: Piano Sonata in C Major, K. 545 - First Movement, Exposition and Recapitulation





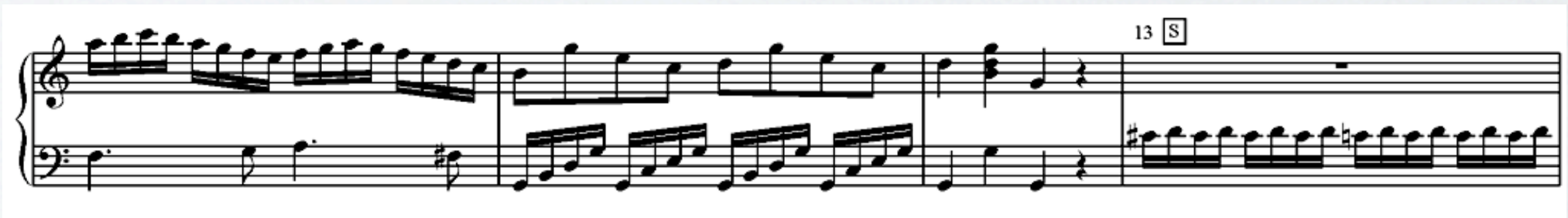
If I superimpose the Expo and Recap on each other, the difference becomes immediately discernible: there is an added passage from measures 50 - 54 in the Recap.

So, Why?

- *Why* is there this difference? If the idea of starting a recap on IV is to avoid any recomposition in the recapitulation, why did Mozart recompose the recap anyway?
- You don't get any points if you answer is "because he thought it was more interesting" or "stroke of genius" or anything like that.
- There's a solid reason for it!

The Reason

- The source of the change in the Recap is measures 12 - 13 in the exposition. This is a ‘bifocal close’; a half-cadence in the tonic key is followed by the key of the dominant, as though there had been a modulation -- when in fact there was none. (So in the Expo, the half-cadence goes unresolved.)

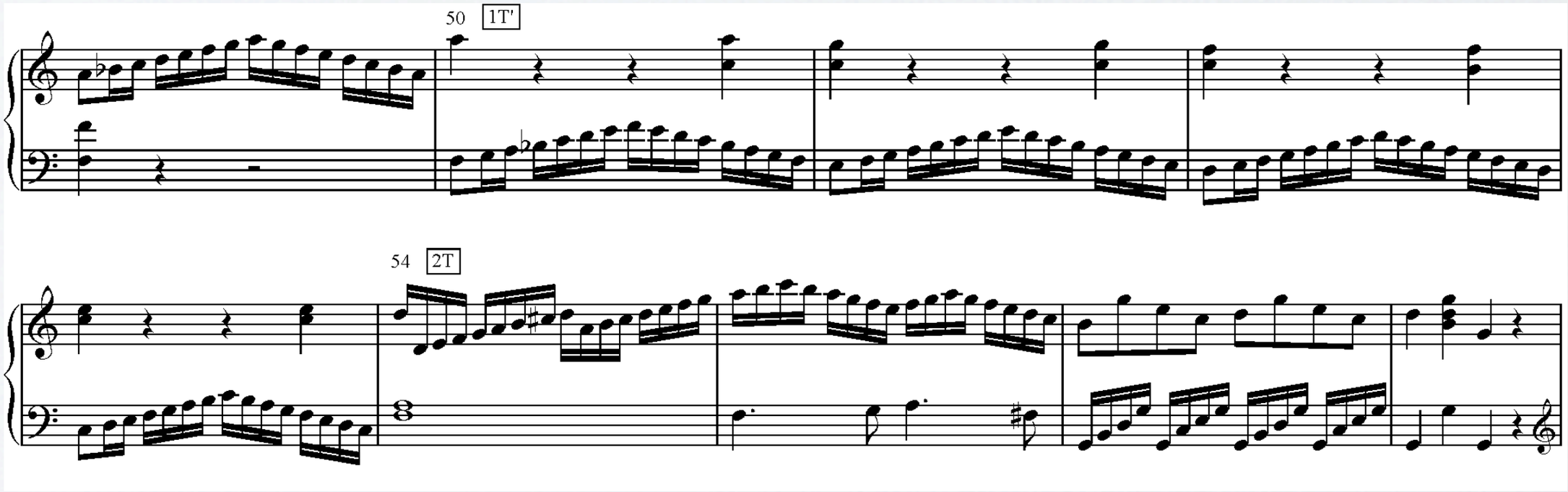


The Reason

- But Mozart begins the recapitulation in the *subdominant* -- so he repeats P verbatim (although transposed to IV). However, as he reaches the equivalent of measure 12 (the half-cadence), the basic instability created by the bifocal close in the Exposition here goes unaddressed, and unresolved.

The Reason

- Therefore, Mozart has to rewrite a passage leading up into the bifocal close, so that it is a half-cadence in C Major, and not in F Major -- and therefore the half-cadence is properly resolved and all is balanced.



The Reason

- Therefore we can understand Mozart's use of the "Recap on IV" here as being a response to the balancing challenge of the *bifocal close* -- one of many responses to using this technique in a creative way.

Footnote

- Occasionally people will hear the "Recap on IV" as a false recapitulation instead -- and therefore tend to hear the arrival at S the true beginning of the Recapitulation. That's true of any piece that recapitulates on IV, and not just this sonata.

- It's not *wrong*, but reflects a more professional ear and is probably not the way the average listener would hear the piece. (Like a magician watching another magician do a trick.)

- However, composers may well take advantage of just those levels of sophistication in listening in order to work with the challenges of the bifocal close or the Recap on IV.

For Further Listening

- Schubert: Symphony No. 5, I
  - This movement also contains a Recap on IV.
  - Is it a “shortcut” use or not?

“Binary” Sonata Form

- P is altogether skipped in the Recap, which begins later -- either at 1T or even at S.

“Binary” Sonata Form

- Haydn: Sonata in G Major, H XVI:6, I

Haydn: Piano Sonata in G Major, H XVI:6

Exposition

1P	*1S*	*2S*	*1T*	*1K*	*2K*	*1K*
1	5	8	11	13	15	16
2+2	3	3	2	2	2	2
I	V (bifocal)	V/V	V/V	V	v	V

Development

1P	*1P*	*1K*	*N(1P)*
19	21	25	27
2	2+$^{1}/_{2}$x3	2	4
V	I	vi	IV->V/I (half cadence)

Recapitulation

	1S	*2S*	*1T*	*1K*	*2K*	*1K*
	31	36	40	42	44	46
	2+$^{1}/_{2}$x5	4	2	2	2	2
	I	V	V	I	i	I

Haydn: Piano Sonata in G Major, H XVI:6

Exposition

1P	*1S*	*2S*	*1T*	*1K*	*2K*	*1K*
1	5	8	11	13	15	16
2+2	3	3	2	2	2	2
I	V (bifocal)	V/V	V/V	V	v	V

Development

1P	*1P*	*1K*	*N(1P)*
19	21	25	27
2	2+$^{1}/_{2}$x3	2	4
V	I	vi	IV->V/I (half cadence)

Recapitulation

1S	*2S*	*1T*	*1K*	*2K*	*1K*
31	36	40	42	44	46
2+$^{1}/_{2}$x5	4	2	2	2	2
I	V	V	I	i	I

Mirror Recapitulation

- In a "Mirror" Recap, the entire secondary key area is heard first (S-K) and then P follows, acting in some ways like a coda -- and may introduce a coda, in fact.

Mozart: Sonata in D Major, K. 311

- You will find that there is a bifocal close in Exposition.
- It's possible that the "Mirror" Recap is yet another response to the bifocal close.
- Note that the Haydn sonata (Binary sonata form) also had a bifocal close in the Exposition.

Mozart: Piano Sonata in D Major, K. 311

Exposition

1P	*2P*	*1Ta*	*1Tb*	*1Sa*	*a*[1]	*2S*	*1K*	*1K*	*2K*
1	7	11	13	17	21	24	28	32	36
3x2	2x2	1x2	1x2 + ½x3	4	4	1x4	2x2	2x2	2+2
I			I-> V/I bifocal close	V					

Development

2K	N	2K	N	2K	N	1K	1K	N	1Tb
40	42	44	46	48		58	62	66	75
1x2	2	1x2	2	2x2 + 1x2 +2	2	2x2	2x2	1x5 + ½ x 3 + 1	1x2 + ½x3
ii		I		vi-iii-	vi	IV		IV	V/I half cadence = 13

Recapitulation

1Tb	1Sa	a[1]	2S	1K	1K	1P	N (Coda)	2K
75	79	83	87	91	95	99	105	109
1x2 + ½x3	4	4	1x4	2x2	2x2	3x2	4	4
V/I half cadence = 13	I							

Mozart: Piano Sonata in D Major, K. 311

Exposition

1P	*2P*	*1Ta*	*1Tb*	*1Sa*	*a*[1]	*2S*	*1K*	*1K*	*2K*
1	7	11	13	17	21	24	28	32	36
3x2	2x2	1x2	1x2 + ½x3	4	4	1x4	2x2	2x2	2+2
I			I-> V/I bifocal close	V					

Development

2K	N	2K	N	2K	N	1K	1K	N	1Tb
40	42	44	46	48		58	62	66	75
1x2	2	1x2	2	2x2 + 1x2 +2	2	2x2	2x2	1x5 + ½ x 3 + 1	1x2 + ½x3
ii		I		vi-iii-	vi		IV		IV	V/I half cadence = 13

Recapitulation

1Tb	1Sa	a[1]	2S	1K	1K	1P	N (Coda)	2K
75	79	83	87	91	95	99	105	109
1x2 + ½x3	4	4	1x4	2x2	2x2	3x2	4	4
V/I half cadence = 13	I							

Analyzing a Recapitulation

- A Recap only makes sense when analyzed against the Exposition.
- A phrase-by-phrase comparison between the Expo and the Recap is the critical first step.
- Sometimes the Development might have an important role to play in understanding the Recap as well.

Analyzing a Recapitulation

- Differences between the Expo and Recap need to be considered carefully.
- Some are relatively trivial
- Others may be extremely important

Areas of Interest in a Recap

- Statement of P
  - Complete or not?
  - Varied or not?
  - Any significant changes from the Expo?

Areas of Interest in a Recap

- Transition
  - Critically important -- how does the composer get from P to S?
  - Often, this contains some of the most interesting harmonic writing in the Recap.
  - A full harmonic analysis is *highly* recommended.

Areas of Interest in a Recap

- Secondary Development: sometimes the first transition can veer off into what begins behaving like a second development section, complete with retransition.
- Beethoven was particularly fond of this.

Areas of Interest in a Recap

- Secondary Theme(s)
  - Are all S themes present?
  - Are there any critical differences between S in the Recap and S in the Expo?

Areas of Interest in a Recap

- Closing Themes: are they all present from the Expo?

Areas of Interest in a Recap

- Is there a coda?
- If a coda exists, might there be a *structural* reason for the coda?

Areas of Interest in a Recap

- Overall:
  - Significant differences in shape between Recap and Expo? (Mirror, binary sonata form, etc.)
  - Significant differences in *length* between Recap and Expo (not including a coda, if present.)
  - Any harmonic anomalies (compared to the Expo)?