

~~interesting question as to how well it serves the music of some other composers. In this chapter, I look first at a Beethoven movement in which Schenker's approach is very much at home and then at a Chopin piece for which it is a less immediately obvious fit. The remainder of the chapter is devoted to a discussion of one of the most important Classical large-scale structural paradigms, sonata form.~~

## **Allegretto from Beethoven's Piano Sonata, Op. 14, No. 1**

The second movement of Beethoven's Piano Sonata in E major, Op. 14, No. 1 fits well with Schenker's idea of divided form. As outlined below, the E minor Allegretto section very tangibly draws out the tension of a descent from  $\hat{3}$ , displaying a clear two-part interrupted form (despite its slightly unusual lack of repeats). This is followed by a C major trio section, which eventually leads back to a repeat of the Allegretto. This is music with a clear sense of direction, a quality that Schenkerian analysis is particularly good at demonstrating. To get to grips with this movement you will need a copy of the music and either nimble enough fingers to play it through or a recording.

Example 6.2 shows how first the two phrases of the Allegretto outline a miniature interrupted *Urlinie* descent from  $\hat{3}$  in m. 1 to  $\hat{1}$  in m. 16 (shown by the caretted numbers in brackets). The details of this small-scale interruption mirror the phrase structure of the music: the end of the first eight-measure phrase is marked by the interruption, while the second reprises the same material but this time continuing the descent to  $\hat{1}$ . According to the principle of obligatory register outlined in Chapter 3, however, this descent cannot represent the final closure of the movement because of the register transfer of  $\hat{3}$  up an octave in m. 9. The music from the opening is

Example 6.2 Beethoven, Piano Sonata in E major, Op. 14, No. 1, Allegretto, mm. 1-16

a)

3-prg

e: I VI VII/V -VII I V I V

b)

9

13

c)

3-prg

I VI VII/V -VII I V I V<sup>6</sup><sub>4</sub> = <sup>5</sup><sub>3</sub> I

d)

p

cresc.

sf

transposed up an octave so that the descending third arrives on  $\hat{1}$  over the tonic in a different register from that established at the beginning. The perfect cadence in m. 15 therefore feels lacking, and the tensions of the piece will not be resolved until there has been a descent in the original register. Schenker's understanding of form relies on the idea that we expect particular types of closure. This will typically involve a descending linear motion to  $\hat{1}$  over the tonic in the register established at the beginning of a piece. The extract in Example 6.2 does not fulfill that expectation and therefore creates a logic, or even a necessity, of continuation.

It is worth noting a couple of details from Example 6.2a before exploring the rest of the movement. I am concentrating initially on the tensional arch of the piece, asking how the music sets up the tension of  $\hat{3}$  and then prolongs its resolution. The Allegretto starts with an unfolding from E to G that introduces the *Kopfton*; most of the first 16 measures can then be understood as a prolongation of this  $\hat{3}$ . In this movement, the tension of  $\hat{3}$  is heightened in the foreground by the fact that the arrival on G in m. 3 is accompanied by a diminished seventh and a dramatic *sforzando*. The top line moves down from this high point of tension towards  $\hat{1}$ , but the temporary arrival on this goal at the beginning of m. 5 is undermined both because it is supported by a first inversion rather than a root position tonic and also because the melodic line regains G at the end of the measure. The prolongation of  $\hat{3}$  therefore continues until m. 7, where a half close on the dominant underpins an elaboration of  $\hat{2}$ . The pattern is very much the same in the second phrase of the extract, except for the fact that  $\hat{2}$  continues down to  $\hat{1}$ .

The defining feature of the first 16 measures, then, is the upwards register transfer in m. 9, which means that the overarching descent from  $\hat{3}$  to  $\hat{1}$  concludes an octave higher than it began. Example 6.3 shows what happens when this material is reprised in m. 33: the first phrase begins in the higher register before being subjected to a descending register transfer in m. 41 into the lower register for the second phrase, reversing the pattern from before. The music otherwise follows much the same course—an interrupted descent from  $\hat{3}$  to  $\hat{1}$ —so the descent onto  $\hat{1}$  in m. 51 now fulfills Schenker's criteria for satisfactory structural closure by being in the register established at the beginning. We can now see the basic dramatic shape of the piece: the initial 16 measures create a tension by shifting into a higher register, while the reprise resolves that tension by moving from the upper octave back into the original register. The resolution of this tension is slightly delayed, however, by a modification that Beethoven makes to the reprise of the second phrase. Measures 41–2 are the same as their equivalents at mm. 9–10, but in m. 43 the music leaps to C rather than the expected G, which results in the phrase being extended by three measures. As shown in the analysis, the C turns out to be the beginning of a third progression that leads onto an extended elaboration of A. This A is ultimately a neighbor note onto the G at m. 49, which is the note that was originally expected

**Example 6.3** Beethoven, Piano Sonata in E major, Op. 14, No. 1, Allegretto, mm. 33–51

33                      35                      39                      41

CS                      3-prg                      2                      (unfolding)

a)

e: I    VI    VII/V-VII    I    V IV    I    VI

b)

*p*                      *sf*                      *cresc.*

43                      48                      50

3-prg    N                      3 2                      1

VII<sup>7</sup>/IV<sub>3</sub><sup>6</sup>    IV                      V <sup>6</sup>/<sub>4</sub> — <sup>5</sup>/<sub>3</sub>    I

*sf*                      *sf*                      *sf*                      *cresc.*                      *p*

in m. 43. The previous six measures can therefore be understood as a delaying of resolution—the neighbor note introduces a new harmonic and linear tension that ultimately heightens the effect of the closure when it occurs in m. 51.

Example 6.4 puts the first sixteen-measure phrase (A) and its modified reprise at m. 33 (A') in their wider context—the pattern of two small-scale interruption structures with symmetrically balancing register transfers can clearly be seen. As shown in Example 6.4, my suggestion is that these two local interrupted *Urlinien* are part of a larger interrupted descent from  $\hat{3}$  across the whole piece. The *Urlinie* descent across the first sixteen measures is shown as a prolongation of  $\hat{3}$ , which moves to  $\hat{2}$  only in m. 32. This overall structure again involves a register transfer, with the point of interruption displaced up an octave. The main body of the descent, however, in line with Schenker's ideas on structural register, all takes place within the same octave (i.e. the  $\hat{3}$  at the beginning and the  $\hat{2}-\hat{1}$  at mm. 50–1). The difference between a register transfer and a coupling was discussed in Chapter 3: the former displaces notes of the *Urlinie* while the latter creates long-term structural connections between two registers. This Allegretto shifts the middle of its interruption structure up an octave and this part of the *Urlinie* does not appear in the main register. As a result, this is probably best understood as a register transfer as it constitutes a displacement of rather than a connection between registers.

The only part of this larger-scale interruption structure that we have not already seen is the B section from m. 17, an extract from which is shown in Example 6.5. These eight measures lead back into the reprise at m. 33. The reprise is prepared for by a pause on the dominant at m. 32, which represents the main interruption of the *Urlinie* shown on Example 6.4. Despite Schenker's rethinking of form, it is actually typical for the structural division of the *Urlinie* to coincide with the traditional formal division of the movement in this way. If the first 16 measures can be understood as a prolongation of  $\hat{3}$  through a local descent in E minor, mm. 25–29 elaborate the same scale

**Example 6.4** Beethoven, Piano Sonata in E major, Op. 14, No. 1, Allegretto, mm. 1–62, middleground analysis

The image shows a musical score with a middleground analysis. The score is in E major and 3/4 time. It features a treble and bass clef. Above the staff, measures are grouped into sections A (measures 3-9), B (measures 17-25), and A' (measures 32-35, 41-49, 51). The analysis includes Schenkerian symbols: a large hat 3 with a double bar line and a hat 2 with a double bar line, indicating a prolonged structural tone. Below the staff, Roman numerals I, V, and I are used to denote harmonic structure, with a VI chord appearing in measure 25. A bracketed structure I VHV6-5/4-3 I is shown at the end of the piece.

degree in a different way. These few measures are spanned by a decorated consonant skip from G to E, but the harmonic context is now completely different—not E minor but C major (chord VI in relation to the tonic). From a Schenkerian point of view, this constitutes a further delaying of the inevitable final closure onto  $\hat{1}$  and thus a continuation of the structural tension of  $\hat{3}$ . Measures 17–24 (shown only in outline on Example 6.4) follow a similar pattern to Example 6.5: it starts with the same passage an octave lower before ending on the dominant of C.

A traditional formal analysis would show the various sections of this piece along with their motivic and harmonic content. A Schenkerian view, however, is more dynamic, interpreting music in terms of a single motion towards a goal (closure on  $\hat{1}$ ) that is beset by “obstacles, reverses . . . detours, expansions, interpolations, and, in short, retardations of all kinds.”<sup>1</sup> The first “retardation” shown in Example 6.4 is the transfer of register at m. 9, the second is the detour to chord VI at m. 17, and so the piece unfolds until closure is achieved in m. 51. This is not, however, the end of the Allegretto. As discussed previously, the arrival on  $\hat{1}$ , which is the structural end of a piece, does not necessarily have to be the actual end. Although

**Example 6.5** Beethoven, Piano Sonata in E major, Op. 14, No. 1, Allegretto, mm. 25–32

Example 6.5 consists of two parts, (a) and (b), illustrating the Schenkerian analysis of measures 25–32 of Beethoven's Piano Sonata in E major, Op. 14, No. 1, Allegretto.

Part (a) shows the melodic line. It begins with a decorated skip from G to E, marked with a circled 3. The melodic line is then marked with a circled 2. The harmonic structure is indicated by Roman numerals: e:I, V, II, V, I, VI, and V<sup>4</sup>—3.

Part (b) shows the harmonic structure. It begins with measure 25 and ends with measure 30. The harmonic structure is indicated by Roman numerals: e:I, V, II, V, I, VI, and V<sup>4</sup>—3.

locating the final descent onto  $\hat{1}$  is not always straightforward, there is nothing particularly mysterious about this process either—the *Urlinie* final descent is essentially the last plausible  $\hat{2}$  to  $\hat{1}$  motion that occurs over a V–I in the obligatory register.

This is essentially how Schenker redefines the traditional notion of a coda, which he describes as any music that occurs after the final arrival on  $\hat{1}$ .<sup>2</sup> Example 6.6 shows the coda of this Allegretto, and again Schenkerian and traditional notions of form coincide. A traditional formal analysis would designate this passage as a coda for several reasons: first, it represents an “extra” phrase in relation to the first appearance of the A section; second, it largely consists of a series of cadential gestures; third, it employs a thematic device sometimes called liquidation—the repetition of a small thematic fragment (the eighth-note figure originally heard in m. 4). From a Schenkerian point of view, there is no further hint of a descent in the main register—the passage consists instead of a series of neighbor notes that prolong  $\hat{1}$  in various octaves.

Although the Allegretto is therefore basically a two-part structure, divided around the point of interruption in m. 32, it is part of what traditional theory would designate as larger ternary form. A *Maggiore* section immediately follows the Allegretto after which the whole movement is rounded off with a *da capo*. Many minuet and trio forms of this type consist of two more-or-less independent movements, but a Schenkerian analysis will generally attempt to show how the whole structure is unified. For minor key minuets that follow the common pattern of moving to the tonic major for the trio, this sense of unity is often little more than conceptual. As shown in Example 6.7, in such cases the minuet and trio each have an independent *Ursatz* structure, but the whole can be understood as a prolongation of the minuet’s *Ursatz* by means of “mixture” (i.e. the change from minor to major).

Beethoven’s *Maggiore* trio in Op. 14, No. 1, however, can be understood as part of a unified movement in a more fundamental sense. Most of the *Maggiore* consists of varied repetitions of and developments on the C major

**Example 6.6** Beethoven, Sonata in E major, Op. 14, No. 1, Allegretto, mm. 51–61

The musical score for Example 6.6 shows measures 51 through 61. The treble clef staff contains the main melodic line, which is annotated with a Schenkerian *Urlinie* (indicated by a dotted line and an upward-pointing arrow at the beginning). The bass clef staff provides a rhythmic accompaniment. The score includes dynamic markings such as *cresc.*, *sf*, *p*, and *pp*. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. The notation includes various rhythmic values and articulation marks.

**Example 6.7** Typical structure for minuet and trio

Example 6.7 illustrates the typical structure for a minuet and trio. The notation is presented in two systems, (a) and (b), across three measures.

**System (a):** Shows three measures of a minuet (I-V-I) and three measures of a trio (I-V-I). The minuet sections are marked with fingerings  $\hat{3}$ ,  $\hat{2}$ ,  $\hat{1}$  above the notes. The trio section is marked with a  $\hat{\#3}$  above the first measure and  $\hat{3}$ ,  $\hat{2}$ ,  $\hat{1}$  above the second and third measures. The chord symbols I, V, and I are indicated below the notes.

**System (b):** Shows a single measure of I and a single measure of V-I. The chord symbols I and V, I are indicated below the notes.

passage from mm. 89–95 (shown in Example 6.8). The trio is therefore, from a Schenkerian perspective, a tonicization of chord VI. As such the whole Maggiore section can be understood as a hugely extended neighbor note (C) in the bass to the home dominant (B) and therefore is not a self-contained structure like that of the trio in Example 6.7. There is also another sense in which this structure unifies the movement as a whole: the structural basis for the B section of the Allegretto is also a prolongation of chord VI as neighbor note to the dominant (see Example 6.5). The way in which the same elaboration is extended in the trio can therefore be understood as an organic development of an earlier idea, helping further to unify the two sections of the second movement.

### ~~Chopin, Grande Valse Brillante, Op. 18~~

~~The second movement of Beethoven's E major piano sonata is interpreted in the above analysis as a continuous and dynamic unfolding. Schenker's *Ursatz* is most at home in pieces such as this in which there is a genuine feeling of unbroken momentum from beginning to end. The only point before m. 51 where there is any real possibility of closure is m. 16, and even without Schenker's concept of obligatory register it is clear that this cannot be the end of the movement. Similarly, the suggestion that the middle section of this ternary structure is subsumed into the overall sense of forward momentum only expresses something that is already intuitively felt. Not all~~