Music 850: Sonata Theory

This is a proseminar in practical analysis, introducing the techniques, concepts, and terminology of a single methodology. Sonata Theory is a genre-based approach to analyzing sonata form and the multimovement sonata, ca. 1770-1820, and its principles are readily adaptable to sonata-based structures throughout the ensuing century. The method is grounded in a theory of *dialogical form*, entailing a consideration of hierarchies of compositional options and principles of deviation from those options. The course includes a consideration of some fundamental issues in sonata hermeneutics. Basic texts: Hepokoski-Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory* (2006), and several scores of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and others.

Scores:

Mozart, *Complete String Quartets* (New York: Dover, 1970)


Mozart, *Complete Sonatas and Fantasies for Solo Piano* (Mineola: Dover, 1996)

Book:


Seminar Expectations:

- Weekly preparation (analyses of assigned works); active seminar participation and consistent ability to interrelate current and prior readings and analyses.
- Weekly reading assignments from the *Elements of Sonata Theory*. You will be expected to have a close awareness of its methodologies and terminology. Regular review of past reading assignments in this book.
- Several short, skill-oriented assignments to hand in throughout the semester: exercises in phrase identification (Caplin, etc.); exercises in individual piece/score “labeling” or analyses (e.g., a photocopied score with your analytical markings); brief-analysis worksheets (Mozart Piano Sonatas and other works.), to be announced on a weekly basis.
• Additional reading of chapters and articles handed out in class or placed on reserve, to be announced. Occasionally: two to four extracts or articles (or book-chapters) may be assigned in a given week—usually printed discussions of the assigned pieces (from differing points of view) or the analytical principles involved.
• Two brief papers (Weeks 6-9) involving individual analysis of selected sonata movements. Pieces to be announced.
• Final exam. This will probably include an analytical discussion of two or three movements from the perspective Sonata Theory. The exam should demonstrate a strong familiarity with the seminar’s terms, concepts, and definitions, some of which you may be asked to define.

Seminar Schedule

This seminar is grounded in analytical issues: mostly Mozart, but also Haydn, Beethoven, and others. Most of our seminar time will be spent directly in analysis and interpretation—with score and by ear—although from time to time we shall also be discussing larger issues of methodology. The central aim is to develop the specific technique of sonata analysis proposed by Sonata Theory.

In general, we shall proceed from an initial overview of expositions, exposition-types, and the differences involved with major- and minor-mode sonata analysis. Theories of rotation, development, recapitulation, and codas—as well as an investigation of different “sonata types,” deformations, and multimovement shapes—will emerge throughout the seminar but will be of special concern in the second half.

Normally, we shall be looking at from two to four movements during each seminar session. We shall sometimes also prepare for seminar sessions by investigating what others have written about the movements in question.

Compositions to be Considered in the Seminar Meetings: Initial Plan

(We shall make our way through the list as time permits.
Additions, deletions, reorderings, sudden inspirations, or other alterations may be made—indeed, almost surely will be made—as the seminar proceeds. Individual moments from other pieces will also be considered, including a few for your analytical “labeling” or worksheet assignments.)

Mozart, Quartet in F, K. 168, first movement
Mozart, Symphony No. 30 in D, K. 202, first movement
Mozart, Quartet in E-flat, K. 160, first movement
Mozart, Symphony No. 28 in C, K. 200, first movement
Mozart, Quartet in B-flat, K. 172, first movement
Mozart, Piano Sonata in B-flat, K. 333, first movement
Mozart, Piano Sonata in F, K. 332, first movement
Mozart, Quartet in G, K. 387, first movement
Mozart, Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550, first movement and finale.
Beethoven, Violin Sonata in F, op. 24 ("Spring"), first movement
Beethoven, String Quartet in C Minor, op. 18 no. 4, first movement
Beethoven, Piano Sonata in C, op. 2 no. 3, first movement
Beethoven, Piano Sonata in F, op. 10 no. 2, first movement
Haydn, Quartet in B minor, op. 33 no. 1, finale
Haydn, Quartet in E-flat, op. 33 no. 2, first movement
Mozart, Quartet in B-flat, K. 458, first movement
Mozart, Quartet in D Minor, K. 421, first movement
Haydn, Symphony No. 44 in E Minor, first movement and finale
Mozart, Symphony No. 39 in E-flat, K. 543, first movement and finale

The Type 2 Sonata Group:

C. P. E. Bach, Keyboard Sonata No. 1 in F ("Prussian"), finale
Mozart, Symphony "No. 1" in E-flat, K. 16, first movement
Mozart, Symphony "No. 6" in F, K. 43, first movement
Mozart, Symphony "No. 5" in B-flat, K. 22, first movement
Mozart, Symphony "No. 4" in D, K. 19, first movement
Mozart, Quartet in D, K. 155, slow movement (in A)
Mozart, Violin Sonata in D, K. 306, first movement
Mozart, Piano Sonata in D, K. 311, first movement
Mozart, Quartet in G, K. 387, finale
Mozart, Symphony No. 41 in C, K. 551 ("Jupiter"), first movement (if time) and finale
Mozart, Symphony No. 38 in D ("Prague"), first movement
Mozart, Piano Concerto No. 17 in G, K. 453, first movement.
Mozart, Piano Concerto No. 20 in D Minor, K. 466, first movement
Mozart, Piano Concerto No. 21 in C, K. 467, first and second movements
Selected Bibliography
(Principal Sources of the Reading Assignments:
within the books we shall be concerned only with selected pages.)


