

## **Faculty Information Literacy Stipend Final Report**

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**Course:** MUTH 3350 (Form and Analysis)

**Semester:** Fall 2021

### **Introduction**

This course is designed to develop competency in intermediate music theory, including terms, symbols, practices, and conventions of Western music. The primary, but not exclusive, focus of the course is on the analysis of musical forms normative to the Baroque Period, the Classical Period, and the Nineteenth century. Form analysis is the process of discerning the discrete temporal units of a piece of music at various architectonic levels. These units are discrete in that they form distinct entities, they are temporal because form describes the organization of time, and they are architectonic because they function in multiple time domains simultaneously (moment, movement, piece). Upon completing the course, students will have achieved the following learning objectives:

- Define terms related to formal analysis as discussed in class
- Classify elements and structures in a given piece of music using appropriate terminology
- Modify a performance based on an understanding of formal analysis
- Analyze the form of a piece of music
- Create a descriptive diagram demonstrating an understanding of formal analytical concepts
- Assess analyses of music theory scholars according to the style and terminology covered in class

I created the Mid-Term Writing Project (in collaboration with Pamela Pagels) in order to provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate specific aspects of the theoretical knowledge that they have learned during the class as applied to an actual musical work. In addition, the project requires the students to support their analytical theories by researching professional level publications and to present an informed analytical theory based upon both the students' original hypotheses and the previously established ideas of existing scholarship. This project was well suited to the Information Literacy Stipend award, because it included a significant role for the music librarian (Pamela Pagels) and challenged the students with a number of information literacy related tasks, such as searching for meaningful sources, understanding the differences between different types of academic source materials, and correctly citing these sources in their writing projects.

### **Description of the Information Literacy Assignment or Activities**

The information literacy component consists of multiple, guided steps within the process of research associated with the creation of an outline and annotated bibliography for the first of two

analytical essays that the students will complete during the semester. Consistent with the inclusion of MUTH 3350 within the Common Curriculum Proficiency of “Writing in the Major,” the class will focus on the higher-level critical thinking skills needed to generate the original analytical insights detailed in the two essays. Each writing project will require students to create original formal analyses of complex musical works and to document and meaningfully engage with the existing scholarly literature most relevant to the students’ specific research topics.

Foundational preparation for the assignment includes class lectures over specific analytical methodologies that the students may apply to their own, original analyses. In addition, assigned readings will pertain to musical analyses specific to Beethoven’s late-period string quartets (the general subject area that is specified for the first analytical essay) and other relevant musical works.

Since most undergraduate students have limited experience with the methods of academic research, an important part of the class will provide foundational research and critical assessment tools for the students as modules or facets of the total research process. Students will assess research tools (such as choice of database or journal), assess authority and methodologies in professional academic literature within the field of formal music analysis, and search and locate articles to make connections to their research topic for their annotated bibliography and outline as they prepare for the mid-term essay assignment. Through each step of the process, students will have assessment and feedback from the course instructor, music librarian, and from student peers.

The information literacy component assignment will feature three explicit tasks (referred to as Assignment #6, #7, and #8 in this application and in the course syllabus) and will directly facilitate the process of acquiring the bibliographic skills needed to create an original analytical essay as well as the critical thinking skills necessary to compare and evaluate the relevant information within the academic source materials.

Students will be able to identify and distinguish between the different types of authority that may be relevant for their chosen topics. For example, a formal analysis published in the first half of the twentieth century would not be expected to be entirely congruent with an analysis that follows the methods developed by James Hepokoski (as described in his book *Elements of Sonata Theory*, published in 2006). Another example would be a published formal analysis that closely follows the principles of Schenkerian analysis, which could be evaluated or even challenged based upon the general strengths and weaknesses of Schenkerian theory as an analytical methodology. Students also will need to determine the intended audience for which their source materials were written, based upon the format, content, and style of the written material and then meaningfully assess how the sources may relate to the students’ original analytical theories. This requires the students to understand that most published formal analyses were intended for a small subset of music theorists who already subscribe to one of several distinct groups of analytical theories. In creating their own original analyses the students may choose to agree with some existing analytical frameworks, or to challenge others, but in any case the potential analytical viewpoint and bias of the author should be appropriately considered.

### **Method of Assessment**

Students will be provided with detailed and specific suggestions at each stage of the assignment process. Comments and feedback will come from multiple entities including the instructor, librarian, and student peer groups. The review process will focus on the quality and nature of the source materials and the suitability of the source materials for the analytical models chosen by the students for their own, original analytical essays. Accurate, consistent bibliographic citation style also will be included for assessment.

The method of assessment reinforces the concept of “research as process,” one that is iterative and that requires constant review and revision for meaningful engagement. By following the process of tool selection and evaluation (Assignment #6), instructor and peer review (Assignment #7), and creating one or two revised versions of the outline and bibliographic annotations (Assignment #8), the information literacy component will provide an important opportunity for students to acquire and develop skills related to academic research as they prepare their Mid-Term Writing Project. This structure also provides an opportunity for the instructor to assess and evaluate the critical reasoning abilities that students are expanding upon through their activities in the course.

Ultimately the formal assessment for the Mid-Term Writing Project follows the rubric provided in the appendix to this report.

### **Results and Impact on Student Learning**

The most easily demonstrated impact on student learning is certainly the quality of the student papers, which were consistently high and noticeably improved from previous semesters. In addition, the students seemed to be significantly motivated to successively complete the assignment and several students expressed their enthusiasm for the project and for the literacy information component of the activity. Perhaps most importantly, the project enabled the students to meaningfully engage with the process of thoroughly researching their topics and allowed the students to establish a relationship with the music librarian that will likely continue throughout their course of study at the university.

### **Summary and Next Steps**

My primary response to the completion of the project is satisfaction with the quality of the papers that the students produced for both the Mid-Term and Final Projects. In addition, I am certainly pleased by the level of engagement with current scholarship that the students demonstrated during the completion of their projects, as well as the extent of meaningful collaboration that the students experienced with Pamela Pagels, the music librarian. One area for consideration is that some students had difficulty completing their Final Projects on time, perhaps because of the short period of separation between the Mid-Term and Final Projects. In evaluating the results and instructional methods used to implement the Mid-Term Project, I have determined that the participation of Pamela Pagels, the music librarian, was perhaps the most successful aspect of the activity and I have therefore asked her to continue the same kind of involvement with this assignment in future semesters.

**Appendix**

Assignment and Instructions (Rubric)

Examples of Student Work

MUTH 3350  
Mid-Term Writing Project  
100 points

You will write an analytical essay that investigates the formal structure of an individual movement from one of the late-period String Quartets of Ludwig van Beethoven (Op. 127, Op. 130, Op. 131, Op. 132, Op. 133, and Op. 135). Your essay must include two different and distinct formal analyses of the same movement. The topic of your essay, as well as the analytical methodologies discussed in your project, must be approved in advance by the instructor. The project should include a bibliography that is directly related to the individual work that is the topic of the project or is related to the analytical theories that are described in the essay.

Assignments #6, #7, and #8 will provide preliminary work for your completed essay. After the submission of each of these assignments, students will meet individually with the instructor to discuss the writing process. The instructor may ask for specific revisions and improvements to be made before these assignments are accepted for a grade. The project is due on Monday, November 15 at 11:00 a.m.

Assignment #6 (due: October 25) – Outline and Bibliography

Assignment #7 (due: November 1) – Abstract and Thesis Statement

Assignment #8 (due: November 8) – Draft Introduction

Length Requirement: Between 2,000 and 3,000 words. The word count includes only the primary text and does not include the title, abstract, footnotes, bibliography, examples, or other supporting materials.

Format: The essay should be typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12 pt. (or other similar fonts). Your project should include a title page that provides your name and the title of the essay. Footnotes and bibliographic citations should generally follow the Turabian style manual, but may be adapted as needed. All other issues related to style should follow the Chicago Manual of Style, but may be adapted when necessary. Technical musical terms may follow Richard J. Wingell's *Writing about Music*.

Purpose: This analytical essay provides an opportunity for you to demonstrate your ability to write at the collegiate level, as well as to expand your knowledge and skills related to the analysis of complex musical forms from the common practice period. The process of writing this essay requires that you engage critically with the existing work of scholars in the field of music theory before offering your own original contribution, appropriately using the terminology of analytical music theory.

Assessment: The project will be assessed according to the attached rubric.

Reserve Sources— The following sources are available on reserve in the Hamon Arts Library:

Caplin, William E. *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven*. Oxford University Press, 1998.

Chua, Daniel. *The “Galitzin” Quartets of Beethoven*. Princeton University Press, 1995.

Cooke, Deryck. “The Unity of Beethoven’s Late Quartets.” In *Vindications: Essays on Romantic Music*. Cambridge University Press, 1982.

Cooper, Barry. *Beethoven*. Oxford University Press, 2000.

Hepokoski, James and Warren Darcy. *Elements of Sonata Theory*. Oxford University Press, 2006.

Kerman, Joseph. *The Beethoven Quartets*. New York: Knopf, 1967.

Kinderman, William. *Beethoven*. Oxford University Press, 1995.

———. *The String Quartets of Beethoven*. University of Illinois Press, 2006.

Rosen, Charles. *Sonata Forms*, revised edition. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1988.

Solomon, Maynard. *Late Beethoven*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.

Winter, Robert and Robert Martin, eds. *The Beethoven Quartet Companion*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

### Mid-Term Writing Project Assessment Rubric

Supporting Skill	Exemplary 5	Accomplished 4	Developing 3	Beginning 2	Absent 1
<b>Presents ideas clearly in well-organized prose that meets the needs of its audience.</b>	Writing conveys a confident but unobtrusive awareness of its audience. At all three levels (sentence, paragraph/section, and whole), its organization is logical, rhetorically adept, and where appropriate, thesis-driven. Grammar, syntax, punctuation, and spelling demonstrate a high degree of correctness.	Writing generally meets the needs of its audience. Organization is logical and clear at all three levels (sentence, paragraph/section, whole), and the whole, where appropriate, governed by a thesis. Minor errors in grammar, syntax, punctuation, and spelling generally do not obscure meaning.	Writing conveys some understanding of its audience's needs, but inconsistently. It is generally clear at two of the three levels (sentence, paragraph/section, whole). One or more of the following may apply: the ordering of paragraphs is static or mechanical rather than purposeful. Paragraphs lack a controlling idea. Sentences lack organization, emphasis, and clarity.	Writing conveys little understanding of its audience's needs or expectations. Communication is impeded by two of the following: The ordering of paragraphs/sections, which is static or mechanical rather than purposeful. Paragraphs lack a controlling idea or are underdeveloped. Frequent errors in grammar, syntax, punctuation, and spelling undermine clarity and authority.	Writing conveys no awareness of an audience. Communication is impeded by all of the following: the ordering of paragraphs/sections is haphazard rather than purposeful. Paragraphing is absent, or paragraphs lack a controlling idea or are underdeveloped. Frequent errors in grammar, syntax, punctuation, and spelling undermine clarity and authority.
<b>Uses critical reasoning skills in written work.</b>	Work reveals a comprehensive understanding of its materials through claims fully and consistently grounded in evidence, and conclusions that follow logically from these claims. External <u>sources</u> , where required, are well-chosen and used effectively.	Work generally reveals a good understanding of its materials through claims generally grounded in evidence, and conclusions that generally follow logically from these claims. External <u>sources</u> , where required, are sufficient and generally used effectively.	Work reveals some understanding of its materials, but is compromised by frequent misconstruction, ungrounded or implausible claims, or unwarranted conclusions, whether or not these are dependent on external sources.	Work reveals only a rudimentary understanding of its materials, and is compromised by ungrounded claims and conclusions, whether or not these are dependent on external sources.	Work reveals almost no understanding of its materials, or attempts at informed critical reasoning may be absent.
<b>Uses the stylistic conventions, citation styles, and formatting expected of academic writing in the field of music theory.</b>	Consistently uses the correct style and formatting for academic writing in the field of music theory.	Uses the correct style and formatting for academic writing in the field of music theory, with occasional lapses.	Uses the correct style and formatting for academic writing in the field of music theory, with numerous lapses.	Inconsistently uses the correct style and formatting for academic writing in the field of music theory.	Displays no attempt to use the correct style and formatting for academic writing in the field of music theory.

# Beethoven's Opus 131: A Traditionally Extraordinary Finale

Ludwig van Beethoven is one of the most important composers who ever lived, not because of how he wrote music, but because of how he changed music for the next 200 years. He thrust music from a traditional classical art into a bolder, more experimental romantic hunger. This German composer lived from 1770 until 1827, and his career is generally divided into three stylistic periods: the early, middle, and late periods. In his early period, which lasted from approximately 1792 through 1802, Beethoven forged his own musical style by composing within the classical genre that had dominated for a century. His music during this time is reminiscent of Mozart and Haydn. By his middle “heroic” period, however, Beethoven had left his unique mark on music forever. From his Symphony No. III to his Violin Concerto, Beethoven freed music from its previous length and motivic restraints. This period lasted from approximately 1802 until 1812. The works of this middle period were longer, louder, and more contrasting than audiences had ever heard before. However, the piece that will be analyzed in this paper comes from his Late Period, a period which lasted from approximately 1812 until 1827, before Beethoven passed away. The works from this final period are noteworthy for their structural innovations and their intense expression despite their traditional instrumentations. While Beethoven will always be praised and well-known for his “Chorale” Symphony No. 9, he also turned to the more intimate, but equally expressive string quartet during this point in his compositional career. His string quartets, like his symphonies, were extremely lengthy for their contemporary musical period, sometimes exceeding 40 minutes. They included modernistic and harsh motifs that had never been given to “gentle” string quartet before. His *Grosse Fugue*, which was composed around the same time as this quartet, exemplifies this style of contrasting, biting music that Beethoven set to paper. The common classical listener usually thinks of Beethoven’s music composed during his “Heroic” Period, so one often feels the need to preface his intense string quartets with the phrase “the Late Beethoven.” This phrase feels like a pre-apology, since Beethoven experimented so



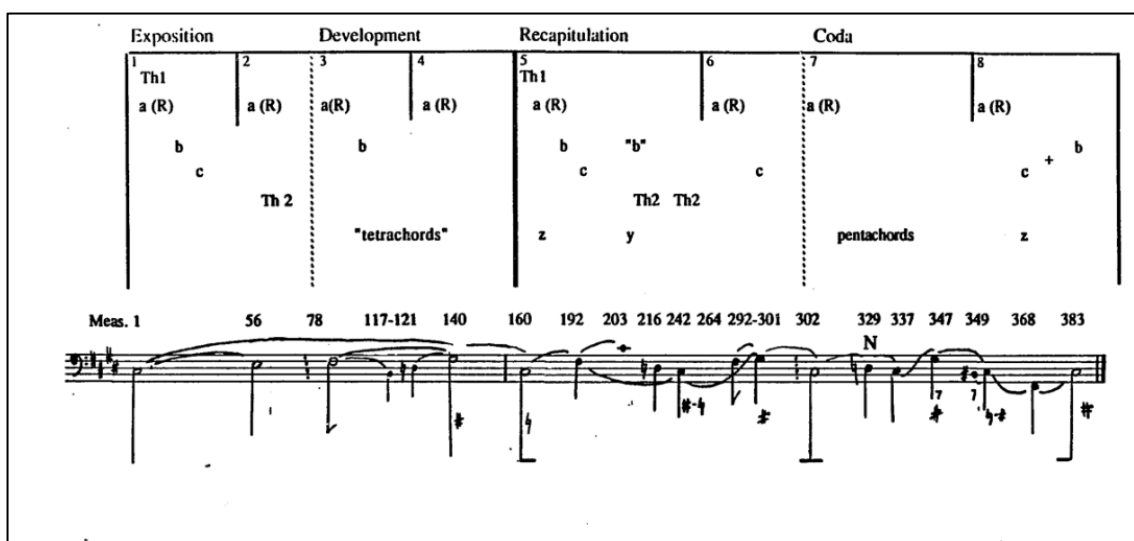
heavily in his music, and especially in his string quartet, considering it was only the early 1800s. In his late period, he used highly unusual structural forms and modern sounding opposing themes to achieve his lyricism. This is the avant-garde background in which Beethoven's String Quartet No. 14, Opus 131 will be analyzed.

The specific movement that will be analyzed in this paper comes from the Opus 131 String Quartet No. 14 in C-Sharp Minor, which Beethoven wrote in 1826. The *Allegro* finale of this seven-movement work will be explored. The overall work is rather lengthy for a string quartet at a 40-minute duration, and it feels particularly long because the entire piece is relatively continuous. Beethoven uses very subtle transitions between the seven movements of this piece instead of traditional inter-movement pauses. The opening and final movements of this string quartet have the same "home" key of C-sharp minor, while the inner five movements explore other key areas. This finale is indeed a finale, as its structural, harmonic, and textural elements are extremely grand and intense. After the fortissimo unison opening motif, the music explodes into an orchestral-like broken rhythmic theme led by the first violin from mm. 5 until mm. 55. This march-like theme is rhythmically reminiscent of the second broken theme from the *Grosse Fugue*, which Beethoven had originally intended to be the finale of Opus 130, according to Robert Kahn, who holds a master's degree focusing on Beethoven's string quartets. However, Beethoven ultimately chose to make the *Grosse Fugue* an independent work, but the piece likely left it. Indeed, the opening of this final movement seems to be fugal, with its unison first subject. However, the rest of the movement indicates a different structural formation. After this brutal first section lasts for around a minute, a highly contrasting piano theme emerges in the first violin in mm. 56. This second theme is equally fast rhythmically, but has a much gentler, *espressivo* texture compared to the war-like first theme. The movement alternates between these two themes in a structure that will be discussed later in the paper. The music seems to gradually slow to a halt in a "Poco Adagio" just before the quick closing gesture of the piece in mm. 383 through 388. In this final coda, the music quickens and crescendos back into the first theme, before a Picardy-third cadence in C-sharp major. This is a highly unusual major-key ending, given the presentation of this harsh theme strictly in minor keys throughout the movement. It would sound like a Bach-like baroque ending, if not for the broken, thrice-repeated fortissimo chords. This "ending of an ending" gives the finale a true sense of heroic closure, despite its avant-garde nature. This

movement, and the string quartet have been admired by both Beethoven's contemporaries and successors. The Austrian composer Franz Schubert declared after a listening to the work, "After this, what is left for us to write?" Romantic composers Ricard Wagner and Robert Schumann have expressed similar sentiments about the finale's grandeur. For all its praise, then, how did Beethoven organize this movement structurally?

There are two ways to analyze this monumental movement, the first of which is a traditional sonata form! Dr. John Edward Crotty's analysis of movement VII employs a primarily two-theme sonata analysis, with Theme 1 lasting from mm. 1-55, and the contrasting, softer Theme 2 lasting from mm. 56-77. These are the primary first two subdivisions of the exposition section lasting from mm. 1-77. Crotty also subdivides the first war-like Theme 1 further into a, b, and c. Then, the development arrives and lasts from mm. 78-159. The recapitulation then lasts from mm. 160-301, which appropriately includes both themes 1 and 2, in that order. The coda lasts from 302-388, which includes several iterations of theme 1, but no theme 2. This analysis appears compelling for relating the themes heard on an initial surface-level hearing. The two contrasting themes would seem to indicate this type of sonata-form analysis, with an early recap and lengthy coda. Figure 1 is extracted from Crotty's dissertation, and it includes a Schenkerian theory and sonata form analysis of this Beethoven finale movement.

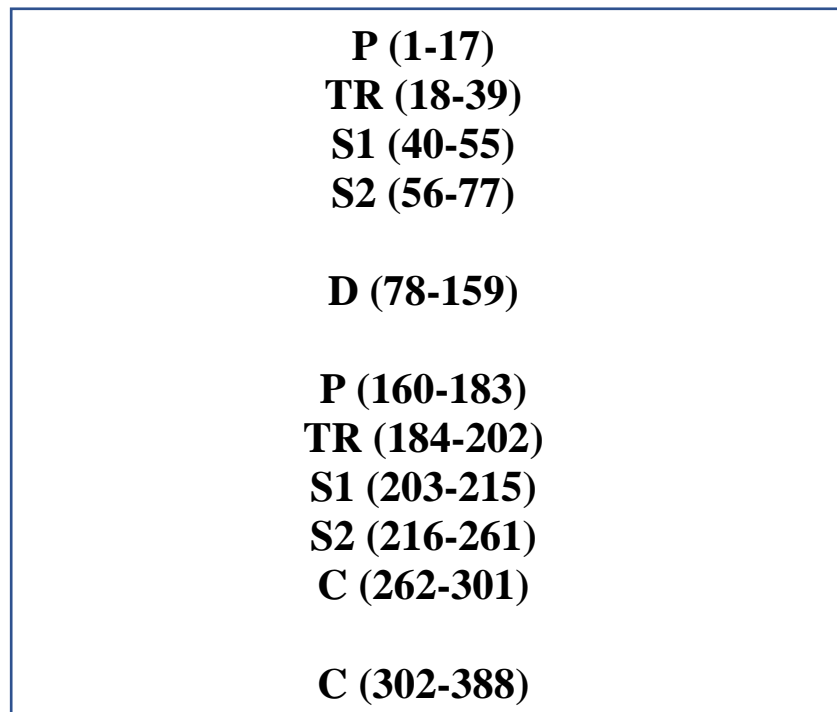
**Figure 1: Crotty's Analysis of Beethoven Opus 131, Movement No. 7**



Broadly, the exposition lasts from mm. 1 to 77, the development lasts from mm. 78 to 159, the recapitulation from mm. 160 to 301, and the coda lasts from mm. 303 to 388. In typical Beethovenian style, the coda begins with seemingly another recap of theme #1, much like in the first movement of his Fifth Symphony. In *this symphony*, the titanic four-note theme is repeated in tutti of the full orchestra to begin the final coda, before a dramatic pause. This Opus 131 quartet coda is launched by a similar unison repetition of Theme #1 by the entire quartet, followed by a similar musical pause.

A similar Hepokoski analysis to this finale movement is shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 2: Personal Hepokoski Analysis of Opus 131, Movement No. 7**



This Hepokoski analysis essentially agrees with Crotty's sonata form analysis; they are roughly mirror images of each other. There are two main rotations. Overall, there is a strong argument that this finale should be analyzed as a sonata form.

However, there are also weaknesses to Dr. Crotty's architecture of the sonata-form movement. He provides a highly lopsided sonata form analysis, with the development ending before half of the movement has even elapsed. Over the course of the finale, the last 228 of the 388 total measures, or 59% of the piece, comes after the development has ended. This is an atypical, unequal sonata structure. There seems to be

a greater and lengthier discussion of the two themes during the recapitulation section than during the development section. Furthermore, there is possibly an incomplete third Hepokoski rotation in the closing section of the recapitulation (Figure 2), but it is incomplete because it does not contain the lyrical S2 theme. This long closing section of the recapitulation functions as a false entry that leads into the full coda in mm. 302, which is also extremely unusual. The coda is full of unusual pauses, tempo changes, and a brief but powerful D Major **Neapolitan section**. Will all of this tradition broken, there is perhaps a better, though unexpected structural analysis than the sonata form.

A better breakdown may consist of the first few notes of the opening movement representing the entire structure of the string quartet, which includes the finale quartet and other works of Beethoven's, such as *String Quartet No. 15, Opus 132*. Specifically, the opening motif of the *Adagio, ma non troppo e molto espressivo*, the title of movement No. 1, may strangely foreshadow the opening theme of the final movement.

**Figure 3: All-encompassing opening of Opus 131, Movement No. 1**

**No. 1**  
**Adagio, ma non troppo e molto espressivo.**

Violino I.

Violino II.

This quintessential beginning gesture is shown in Figure 3. The first four notes in this figure mirror the directionality of the Theme #1 of the finale. It contains the same chromatic style too. The dynamic emphasis is on these first two measures (and one pickup note), marked by the crescendo and subito forte, explains why Theme #1 of the finale is so loud, so jolting, and more repeated than the second Theme #2, which is embodied by the following quarter notes in the opening. Specifically, the descending gesture in mm. 3-4 in this opening mirror the lyrical Theme #2 of the finale. Both these second themes are marked piano too. It parallels the descending (but briefly ascending interruption) direction and faster, continuous rhythmic subdivision of this second theme. As explained before, the sf-first gesture and Theme #1 is far more important, with the

piano-second gesture and Theme #2 serving as the inferior foil. When one thinks of this opening Adagio of Opus 131, the G-B#-C#-A motif immediately leaps to mind, but the quarter-note gesture that follows does not. Similarly, when a listener thinks of what theme was most memorable from the Allegro finale of this string quartet, the listener will almost always include a part of Theme #1, not the contrasting, and slightly convoluted Theme #2. This explains the incomplete third rotation of the first theme only in the finale, not the second theme.

Furthermore, the D-Major Neapolitan complex can be foreshadowed by this opening theme. At the end of measure 4, with the first entrance of a second instrument (and thus the first harmony), the C-sharp and G-sharp suggest a tonic C-sharp minor chord, just like in the dramatic coda of the finale. The second violin then enters as a sort of fugal “answer” in the adagio, as suggested by Dr. Barbara Barry, professor of musicology. In measure 6, the second violin’s D-natural and first violin’s A-natural suddenly suggest a dramatic Neapolitan chord marked forte piano, before this sonority disappears. This parallels how the Neapolitan section of the finale coda was so brief, yet so significant. It is a tremendous harmonic distance to travel to the Neapolitan key so soon after the tonic key. William Dougherty, PhD music, has even referred to this Neapolitan section as ironic, because it is so unexpected. This is part of how Beethoven used harmonic ingenuity and broke barriers in this piece. Overall, the greater repetition of the strong Theme #1 over the weaker Theme #2, in addition to the unanticipated Neapolitan complex in the coda, suggest a non-sonata form analysis. The Allegro Finale may be better understood as an expanded form of the quartet’s opening theme, rather than as separate sonata-form movement with independent themes.

Overall, this string quartet was immensely popular and effective with audiences. Beethoven successfully elevated the humble string quartet into possessing the power of a full-blown orchestra. With his broken accompaniments, grand themes, intense contrasts of volume and style, and advanced forms, this German composer took chamber music to new heights. Beethoven helped launch a new genre of modernist music where composers could experiment with musical forms and harmonic development more freely. He empowered the next generation of composers to search beyond the classical styles and challenged them to find expression without strictly following common-practice rules. In his own words, Beethoven wrote not for

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Professor Lively  
11/22/2021

contemporary ears, but for the future. This term was later coined as *Zukunftsmusik* by Ricard Wagner. According to Curtis Professor Harvey Sachs, this futuristic outlook was virtually pioneered by Beethoven. Regardless of whether the *Allegro* finale of the Opus 131 is viewed as an independent or dependent musical form, the movement's brilliance launched the "late" Ludwig van Beethoven to unprecedented commendation, a pedestal from which he has never descended.

### Bibliography

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- Woolfe, Zachary. "At Mozart Festival, Dvorak and Others Shine." The New York Times. The New York Times, August 8, 2011.

**Fragments in Space:  
The Key to the Impossible Rondo**

Emma Bolton

Dr. Michael Lively

MUTH 3350

11/22/2021



### Fragments in Space: The Key to the Impossible Rondo

Beethoven's Op. 131 String Quartet in C# minor is regarded, along with Beethoven's other late string quartets, among the crowning achievements of Beethoven's late period due to its innovation, depth of character and introspective nature. The divide in aesthetics between the string quartets of his earlier output compared side-by-side with the later works look a world apart from one another in scope and form. Along with this, the feat of its sheer composition is a wonder in itself, considering Beethoven was fully deaf during this period. While this in no way diminished Beethoven's genius, we can observe the introduction of certain, newer techniques that are practically unique to this late period that seem to have been created as a reaction to Beethoven's ever decreasing listening faculties. One of these techniques was the use of spatial, almost canon-like entrances to indicate entrances or exits of certain theme sections. Like manuals on a harpsichord, such a configuration would allow Beethoven to *see* the beginning and end of a particular section, even though he could not hear it. While lovely to listen to and observe, these fragmentations seem to create a bit of confusion for some analysts, especially in the fifth movement of Op. 131. Being a scherzo, the form should be compound ternary (plus a coda, a common occurrence in early Romantic quartets), but the fragmented exits and entrances create problems for a truly fit application of said form. When following this rule of the fragments signifying entrances and conclusions, the resulting theme sections are disproportionate, and the sum of them certainly rules out a compound ternary. The alternative would normally be a seven-part rondo, but the number of sections needed to fully classify each group of thematic material far exceeds that amount. The fragmentary endings indicate that this scherzo is really one in character only, by juxtaposing a strict reading of this scherzo as a compound ternary versus one that follows the indications of the fragmentary beginnings and endings. I believe that, upon a

close faithful reading of the signs that Beethoven left us, that this scherzo can be read not as a simple compound ternary, but as a fourteen-part rondo with small sections of varying length that constantly keep the listener and score-reader on their toes.

The late quartets of Beethoven dwell under the heading of said composer's "Third Period," the last of three generally accepted compositional eras determined by consensus as beginning c. 1814 and lasting until his death in 1827. This categorization provides context integral for understanding Op.131, not only for general stylistic reasons (as will be elaborated upon further), but for a more careful dissection of the reception history of the work. Beethoven's third era is often defined as his most innovative and cutting edge, perhaps even his greatest, but where did this notion originate? As K.M. Knittel points out in his study on the reception history of this very third era, Beethoven's late output was initially met with skepticism at best, and outright scorn at worst. Knittel cites contemporary critics such as Oulibicheff with more incendiary examples, albeit accompanied with the disclaimer that such vitriol was uncommon. More often, the case was that the preconceived notion of Beethoven as a divine genius was simply colored with a tinge of discomfort at the premiere of these works, and that "Even the most sympathetic critics occasionally used [his] deafness to explain or excuse some specific musical problem" (Knittel, pp. 5). Thus, the excuse of Beethoven's declining health and hearing was used during early reception periods as a crutch for contemporary musical commentators and critics, an easy fix to explain away musical decisions that made them uncomfortable. It wasn't until one Romantic composer almost as famous for his incendiary articles as his musical output flipped the script on the interpretation of Beethoven's forward-thinking compositions. The idea of Beethoven's final period of composition as a fully deaf and increasingly anti-social recluse being his most transcendent, rather than a stumble at the finish line, was a notion created and promoted by none

other than Richard Wagner. It was in an article simply titled *Beethoven* (published in 1870) that Wagner put forth the concept of the Third Period serving as the culmination of Beethoven's maturity as an artist, and, as the final climax for this self-development, he now "revealed the extent of his 'inner vision'" (Knittel, pp. 18). Wagner, a loud promoter of the (potentially artificial in origin) grand German musical tradition, had sown the seeds for a musicological tradition whose roots influenced compositional history both within the German school and beyond. Who could say that, if Wagner had never sketched Beethoven's final works as signaling a potential future focused vision left unfulfilled, composers such as Schönberg would have been inspired to continue in his stead? Nationalistic undertones aside, it would be petty to dismiss the effect Wagner's essay had on the reception of both this specific quartet as well as the rest of the Third Period's works, as his concept of the tortured genius turned inwards served as the germ for the way that we view Beethoven's late works today.

Thus, knowing the origins of this train of thought, it is important to conduct analysis with the knowledge that such preconceived notions may affect the conclusions from said analysis. In the aim of a more empirical approach to music theory, such biases must be applied with caution. Therefore, I will provide first the what, meaning the excerpts, measure numbers, and appropriate musical landmarks in a close reading exercise; then I will follow with the why, inserting this analysis back into the aforementioned context.

In terms of form, the eyebrow-raising claim of a borderline blasphemous fourteen-part rondo requires a hefty defense and demonstration. In my initial attempts to apply the traditional compound ternary scherzo form to this movement, I kept running into the issue of the sheer repetitiveness of the thematic material. Ironically, just as the meter is in an untraditional 4/4, so the form is divisible by two only, and not three.

- Scherzo (m. 1- 168)
  - A (m. 1-65)
  - B (m. 66-169)
- Trio (m. 169-334)
  - A (m. 169-233)
  - B (m. 234-334)
- Scherzo (m. 335-469)
  - A (m. 335-446)
  - B (m. 447-454)
- Coda (m. 469-498)

*Figure 1: analysis of mvt. 5 as a Compound Ternary with a coda*

While one can find three large sections to categorize as the scherzo, trio, and scherzo (respectively), the core problem that persists is that there is no difference between the trio and the scherzo. It is the same material, repeated again with not a hint of variation that would warrant any different classification than the so-called “scherzo” that came before it. One of the core attributes of a ternary form is the highlighted contrast between A and B, but if there is no contrast to be had, then the form serves no practical, analytical purpose.

Rather than settling for this contradictory form, I return again to the prospect of analyzing this movement as a fourteen-part Rondo. Further justification of such a tedious form can be found from Amy Carr-Richardson’s dissertation on the very form of Beethoven’s late quartet scherzi, and by extension, her skillful summary and application of Joseph Kerman’s description of Beethoven’s approach to musical structure within the late scherzi. According to Carr-Richardson, Kerman describes the form of these movements as imbued with “popular lyricism” and calls them “dance movements,” refusing to deign them as scherzi due to the form’s incompatibility with the formal definition of a scherzo (Carr-Richardson, pp.24). Instead, Kerman analyzes these movements as having a “doublet phrase structure,” mimicking vocal

popular song structure. Further, Carr-Richardson defines this form as “a succession of small, self-contained melodic units, which are songlike and popular in nature. They are rhythmically simple, their harmony is often an elaboration of a drone, and they generally consist of two very similar four-measure halves” (Carr-Richardson, pp. 24). The fifth movement of Op.131 is used as a direct example of this form, and is an excellent framework to explain the repetitive small pool of thematic material that invalidates the movement’s eligibility as a true compound ternary. However, this structure minimizes the existence of slightly larger sections that give the movement cohesiveness over multiple phrases. Therefore, the concept of a fourteen-part rondo takes the concept of multiple smaller sections and blows it up into a slightly larger scale that gives a broader structure across the movement (see fig. 2).

- A (m. 1-19)
- B (m. 20-44)
- A (m. 45-66)
- C (m. 67-170)
- A (m. 171-184)
- B (m. 185-210)
- A (m. 211-233)
- C (m. 234-334)
- A (m. 335-350)
- B (m. 351-376)
- A (m. 377-398)
- B (m. 399-424)
- A (m. 425-446)
- C (m. 447-498)

*Figure 2: analysis of mvt. 5 as a fourteen-part "Rondo"*

It is important to note that the use of the “A,B,C,” denomination is necessary as well, due to the exact repeats. In application to mvt. 5, the doublet phrase structure falls short in that no set labelling system exists to further categorize doublets containing the same material. As is custom for the analysis of common practice Western canon, like sections are given the same

letter/number, as repetition in a piece is hardly an accident on the composer's part. As with any piece, textual patterns are essential to crafting a successful analysis, and so a lettered system is a must.

The final example that lends support to this form is the previously mentioned fragmented endings sprinkled throughout the movement, at the beginnings and endings of each respective section. The gradual fading and rising in volume as each instrument drops out and returns (see fig. 3) creates a natural set of bookends for each section, directing the ear but also the eye. This is labelled the "new" type of part writing that exemplifies late period Beethoven by Nancy November in her book on the Op. 131 quartet (November, pp. 65). Without peripheral context, this may seem more fanciful than practical, or even conforming to any of Beethoven's longer-term trajectories within his overall development as a composer. However, a simple reading of the score betrays the main use of such part writing: the visual aspect. Beethoven, having gone completely deaf by the time of the late quartets' composition, began to experiment with spatial elements and silence as a "fifth voice" in his music; not just for the musical value, but for the accompanying visual elements these dramatic ingredients bring to the work (November, pp.65). As such, these visual indicators do a great service to the theory analyst, for they give us the very clear indication of beginnings and endings. To follow this rule to the end creates a shorter A and B, with an elongated C; a bit of a lopsided distribution, but one that stays consistent and highlights the relatively small sampling of thematic variety that exists.

Molto poco  
adagio. Tempo I.

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The musical score shows a fragmented ending in G major, 4/4 time. It consists of four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. The music is marked 'Molto poco adagio.' and ends with 'Tempo I.'. The score includes dynamics such as 'dim.', 'più p', and 'pp'. The ending is fragmented, with phrases appearing in a non-sequential order across the staves.

Figure 3: Fragmented ending

The purpose of these fragmented endings stretches much farther than clarity of form. In taking on the role of an empirical music theorist, the written score serves as the conduit through which we ascribe meaning about the goals of the piece, and they are accessed through technical analysis as I have done here. But seeing as the line between the studies of music theory and the studies of musicology are often blurred and shared between the factions, I would be remiss not to apply the textual implications of Beethoven's "doublet rondo" fragmented endings to the greater context of the surrounding history. If the theory of the fragments' existence being used as an example of Berliozian spatial composition is true, then we have a concrete example of Beethoven actively working to adapt to his ever-changing circumstances when contemporaries thought he was losing his mind. He may have been regardless, but this compositional choice gives empirical credibility to the Wagnerian tradition of regarding Beethoven's third period not as the lackluster misfires of a crumbling man, but as the musical transformation of an ever-eager mind; a mind that saw setbacks such as deafness merely a new door through which to explore ever more provocative musical ideas.

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