

Haydn, *String Quartet in D minor, Op. 42, ii*
Analysis by David Mitchell

Haydn's *String Quartet in D minor* is a minuet and trio form. But Haydn does a couple of things in this piece that are not typical of minuet and trio form. For example, the minuet does not modulate. Additionally, the first perfect authentic cadence in the minuet does not occur until the end of the entire minuet. This is unusual because when an exposition is nonmodulating it will usually close with a perfect authentic cadence. The trio modulates instead of the minuet. This is unusual because the primary harmonic conflict generally occurs in the minuet, but in the case, Haydn is pushing the boundaries of minuet and trio form. The trio is a modulating small binary form, 8 (A) + 4 (B) + 4 (A') in the key of D minor. The fact that the minuet is nonmodulating and the trio modulates three times is the most unusual feature of the second movement this string quartet. And the modulating character of the trio is what provides the most striking fundamental contrast between the minuet and trio.

The minuet, in minuet and trio form, usual provides the principal tonal conflict of the entire movement. But in this piece, the entire minuet is a nonmodulating small ternary in the key of D major. But in this string quartet the minuet is entirely in the key of D major. The exposition of the minuet is a nonmodulating hybrid compound basic idea + continuation. The exposition functions as the main theme and ends with a half cadence in D major at measure eight. This is an unusual feature because, in most cases, if an exposition is nonmodulating it usually ends with a perfect authentic cadence. Another unusual feature is the extended tonic prolongation that starts in measure one doesn't end until the down-beat of measure six. The continuation that starts in measure five features increased rhythmic activity with melodic and harmonic sequencing. Dynamically, it

contrasts with the compound basic idea with the use of *forzando*. But the most interesting thing about this section is the prolific the retrograde technique in the melody and the harmony. Motive b from the first violin part in measure four is played by the viola in measure five a retrograde. The same texture is repeated by the viola and second violin in measure six. Harmonically, Haydn uses this same retrograde technique in the harmonic progression that starts in the fourth measure and ends in measure eight. The harmonic progression is V, ii, I, ii, V. This is a harmonic palindrome.

The contrasting middle section starts after the repeat sign in measure nine. It is nonmodulating and is made up of standing on the dominant prolongation. Standing on the dominant contrasting middle sections are the most typical form in small ternary. Also the use of repeat signs after section A and after the recapitulation is typical of small ternary/rounded binary. The prolongation of the dominant is achieved through the use of a pedal tone on note a in the bass and neighboring chords. Motives a and b from the basic idea return in measures nine, ten and eleven. There is an extended cadential progression from measure twelve to measure fourteen that ends with a half cadence on the dominant. This cadential progression is accentuated by the extensive use of staccato markings. The dominant in measure fourteen becomes a retransition chord with the addition of the seventh on beat four of measure fourteen. This is also evidence that there is no elision of the contrasting middle section and the recapitulation that begins with measure sixteen.

The recapitulation is an exact repetition of the exposition until measure twenty-two beat four. Here, we find tonal adjustment that appears to lead to the long-awaited perfect authentic cadence, but instead we find a deceptive cadence. This naturally leads

to a codetta that finally brings our perfect authentic. This perfect authentic cadence is marked by a dramatic crescendo and the highest note of the entire movement in the first violin part at the down-beat of measure twenty-eight.

The Trio instantly starts with a phrase modulation to the parallel key of D minor. Then it modulates to the key of F major in measure thirty-four. It modulates a third time with a return to the key of D minor in measure forty-one. This represents the primary tonal conflict of the movement. This tonal conflict usually occurs in the minuet. Normally, the trio has more diatonic harmonies. Another very interesting aspect of the trio is the fact that the entire section is made up of only the basic idea from the compound basic idea in measure twenty-nine. It is layered on top of itself in a number of ways. This is reminiscent of a round. Haydn allows all the parts to play the basic idea in a homophonic texture starting in measure forty-one. This basic idea is much simpler and calmer and the drama opening up of the melody that is begun in measure one of the expositions basic idea. This new basic idea actually descends from its highest note a in measure twenty-nine to f-sharp in measure thirty-six. This helps close down the tremendous melodic ascent that finishes the minuet. It also helps build anticipation for a return of melodic activity when the A section returns. This calming down in the melody is contrasted by a sharp increase in harmonic activity. This harmonic activity and contrast is very refreshing to the ear after the primarily D major key of the A section. Dynamically, the entire trio is marked piano. This contrasts with the highly changeable dynamics of the A section. Also this is the first time we see ornamentation during this movement.

Haydn really turns the minuet and trio form on its ear harmonically by switching the roles of the minuet and trio. There is also some outstanding use of motivic devices like retrograde and sequencing in both the minuet and trio. Structurally, both minuet and trio are tight knit themes with the exception of the extension of the recapitulation through the use of a codetta to bring about the perfect authentic cadence. Cadentially, Haydn is into delayed gradification with this movement.

This document was created with Win2PDF available at <http://www.win2pdf.com>.
The unregistered version of Win2PDF is for evaluation or non-commercial use only.
This page will not be added after purchasing Win2PDF.