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The Use of Minor Mode and Playing With Sonority in the Expositions of Haydn's String Quartets, Opp. 9 and 17

by Adem Merter Birson

Abstract

Haydn's early string quartets have been receiving more scholarly attention than previously within the last decade. Whether they treat these works as part of larger discussions of the entire *oeuvre* of Haydn's quartets, or as the focus of studies in their own right, scholars have recently been willing to break from the traditional focus on quartets beginning from Op. 33 and allow for deeper engagement with the early quartets on terms more broadly conceived. This study aims to add to the growing body of knowledge on Opp. 9 and 17 by demonstrating how the first movements of Op. 9 no. 1 in C major, Op. 17 no. 2 in F major and Op. 17 no. 6 in D major each employ the minor mode at analogous moments in the exposition, with a disruptive effect on both the harmonic progression and the emotional register of the music. The impact of these modal digressions is analyzed, as they lead to climactic moments of fixation on a dissonant sonority. This momentarily freezes all four voices of the ensemble in a chromatic harmony that lends an expressive, at times even eccentric, character to the tonal drama. Thus important musical moments are uncovered, which have mostly gone unnoticed due to a general lack of emphasis of the early quartets as serious works. This approach opens up new avenues to understanding of the harmonic and expressive capability of Haydn's approach to sonata form.

I. Introduction: A Survey of Recent Literature on Opp. 9 and 17

As recent commentators have noted, Joseph Haydn's string quartets Opp. 9 and 17 (1768-71) have either historically been neglected by scholars and performers, or dismissed as immature, even flawed, compositions. James Webster has probed the reasons for this indifference.¹ In particular, he locates evolutionist attitudes in the historical narrative with respect to Op. 9.² In this line of thought, the first "Classical" quartet was achieved with Op. 33 (1781) and depended on composition for four equal voices whose melodic figures could serve equally as melody or accompaniment. This understanding of voice equality dates back to contemporary reception in Haydn's time. In the third volume of his *Versuch einer Anleitung zur Composition* (1793), Heinrich Christoph Koch defines it as a distinctive feature of the "modern" quartet style:

The quartet, currently the favorite piece of small musical societies, is cultivated very assiduously by the more modern composers. If it really is to consist of four obbligato voices of which none has priority over the others, then it must be treated according to the fugal method. But because the modern quartets are composed in the *galant* style, there are four main voices which alternately predominate and sometimes this one, sometimes that one forms the customary bass.

While one of these parts concerns itself with the delivery of the main melody, the other two [melodic voices] must proceed in connected melodies which promote the expression without obscuring the main melody. From this it is evident that the quartet is one of the most difficult of all kinds of compositions, which only

¹ James Webster, "Haydn's Op. 9: A Critique of the Ideology of the 'Classical' String Quartet," *Essays in Honor of László Somfai on His 70th Birthday*, ed. László Vikárius and Vera Lampert (Lanham, MD:

² Webster locates the origin of this definition in modern musicological literature in Adolf Sandberger, "Zur Geschichte des Haydn'schen Streichquartetts," *Altbayerische Monatschrift* 2 (1900): 41-64. It is also found in the more recent work of Charles Rosen, especially *The Classical Style: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven*, expanded ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 1997), 111-42.

the composer who is completely trained and experienced through many compositions may attempt.³

Here, Koch not only sets the parameters for voice equality within the *galant* style, but he also equates it with the highest level of compositional mastery of his time. He goes on to single out four composers as masters in this respect: Haydn, Pleyel, Hoffmeister and Mozart. Today, this textural-theoretical ideal is commonly described as musical conversation, and has led scholars to interpret the Haydn quartets in philosophical and historical terms as representative of egalitarianism during the Age of Enlightenment.⁴

Other commentators have argued that Haydn first discovered his own compositional maturity with Op. 20 (1772).⁵ Even so, in light of the "Classical" ideology, the critical acclaim of Op. 20 is mitigated by the presence of fugal finales. Following Koch, by the late-eighteenth century, fugue evoked an antiquated and rather different solution to the problem of voice equality, thus rendering the technique outside the aesthetic and chronological boundaries of the modern *galant* style. Challenging popular opinion that Haydn discovered either his own mature style with Op. 20 or the high Viennese Classical style with Op. 33, Webster writes:

And yet such views are indefensible: they reduce Haydn's immense and multifarious quartet *oeuvre* to an evolutionist "progress" toward some "goal." It is of little consequence whether the latter is taken as the "great" Op. 20 or the

³ Heinrich Christoph Koch, *Introductory Essay on Composition: The Mechanical Rules of Melody, Sections 3 and 4*, trans. Nancy Kovaleff Baker (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 207.

⁴ One of the earliest references to musical conversation comes from Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, and can be found in *Goethe's Letters to Zelter*, trans. and ed. Arthur Duke Coleridge (London, 1892), 369 (9 November 1829). For a discussion of the conversation metaphor with respect to the Enlightenment in the musicological literature, see David P. Schroeder, *Haydn and the Enlightenment: The Late Symphonies and Their Audience* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 62.

⁵ W. Dean Sutcliffe, *Haydn: String Quartets, Op. 50* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 8-9, 13; William Drabkin, *A Reader's Guide to Haydn's Early String Quartets* (Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 2000), vii.

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“Classical” Op. 33; within any such framework, all earlier quartets must be marginalized as immature or at best experimental.⁶

In his article, Webster points to the crux of the issue: namely, focusing on voice equality alone forces us to reduce our understanding of Haydn’s quartets to a single, primary domain.⁷ True to Webster’s observations, Opp. 9 and 17 are generally believed to be lacking in expression and technical mastery on account of their largely first violin-dominated textures, and writing on Haydn’s string quartets tends to apologetically relegate Opp. 9 and 17 to the status of musical “craftsmanship,” harbingers of greatness yet to come in Op. 20 or 33.⁸ In an effort to break away from these long-held opinions, Webster identified the quartets from Op. 9 as masterpieces that helped pioneer a nascent Viennese quartet style, and introduced many of the trademark elements of Haydn’s style that would play a role in the genre for decades to come: this opus established the format for slow movements and finales; the use of witty endings-as-beginnings, as in the Minuet and Trio of Op. 9 no. 1; and the presence of multi-movement thematic unity, especially in nos. 3-5.

Another critical approach is to highlight the domination of the first violin in the slow movements of Opp. 9 and 17, which are cast as instrumental arias. Nancy November has interpreted the following 1772 quotation from Charles Burney as evidence for the importance of these slow movements in contemporary reception, in an effort to establish a link between aria and string quartet:

⁶ Webster, “Haydn’s Op. 9,” 139. See also Webster, *Haydn’s “Farewell” Symphony and the Idea of Classical Style: Through-Composition and Cyclic Integration in his Instrumental Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 345-46.

⁷ The concept of “domain” is explained in further detail by Webster in “Formenlehre in Theory and Practice,” in *Musical Form, Form & Formenlehre*, ed. Pieter Bergé (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2009), 128-9.

⁸ Reginald Barrett-Ayres, *Joseph Haydn and the String Quartet* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1974), 57-68, 94-118; Hans Keller, *The Great Haydn Quartets: Their Interpretation* (London: Dent, 1986), 8.

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Between the vocal parts of this delightful concert, we had some exquisite quartets, by Haydn, executed in the utmost perfection: the first violin by M. Startzler [Starzer], who played the *Adagios* with uncommon feeling and expression; the second violin by M. Ordontez [Ordonnez]; [*sic*]. All who had any share in this concert, finding the company attentive, and in a disposition to be pleased, were animated to that true pitch of enthusiasm, which, from the ardor of the fire within them, is communicated to others, and sets all around in a blaze; so that the contention between the performers and hearers was only who should please, and who should applaud the most!⁹

Due to the date and lack of further specific information, we cannot be sure to which quartets Burney was referring, whether Opp. 9, 17 or 20. However, in this quote, he singles out the *Adagios* as having been uncommonly well-executed by the first violinist. It seems that in order for the musical conversation to reach fever pitch, it was fine for the “conversation” to be dominated by one member of the quartet, at least at times. In fact, as both November and Floyd K. Grave have pointed out, it would not at all have been logical for Haydn to have composed such an *Adagio* in any other manner.¹⁰ Burney’s concert paired vocal pieces with string quartets, a fact that perhaps underscores the connection between song and instrumental music, both of which would feature a soloist who stood in hierarchical relationship to the other musicians. Nonetheless, there is a sense of egalitarianism, as well as an intense kind of musical communication, depicted in this scenario: all those who had a “share” in the concert apparently interacted with one another—audience members and performers alike.

⁹ Charles Burney, *The Present State of Music in Germany, the Netherlands, and United Provinces*, 2nd ed. (London: Becket, Robson, and Robinson, 1775), vol. 1, 292. This quote was taken from Nancy November, “Instrumental Arias or Sonic Tableaux: ‘Voice’ in Haydn’s String Quartets Opp. 9 and 17,” *Music & Letters* 89, no. 3 (2008): 346.

¹⁰ Floyd K. Grave, “Concerto Style in Haydn’s String Quartets,” *Journal of Musicology* 18 (2001): 76-97.

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With the exception of Op. 9 no. 4 in D minor, one of the lacunae in the recent discourse on Haydn's early quartets is discussion of the sonata form first movements.¹¹ The above-mentioned studies have tended to refer to inner movements or theoretical aspects that do not necessarily deal with detailed analyses of sonata form, *thematische Arbeit* or harmonic progression. I argue that Haydn's approach to sonata form expositions, typically characterized as monothematic and end-directed, was already fully-realized by the time of Op. 9, and that Op. 9 no. 1, Op. 17 no. 2 and Op. 17 no. 6, in particular, feature moments of musical expression that rival anything in Haydn's later output. While musicologists and theorists may traditionally have preferred to select from the post-1781 repertoire to demonstrate Haydn's mastery of his unique approach to sonata form, the quartets from Opp. 9 and 17 deserve recognition, having to date been needlessly overshadowed by their successors.¹²

By the time of Opp. 9 and 17, Haydn already understood how to dramatically delay the arrival of the structural cadence in the second group until the very last moments of a sonata-form exposition. Especially striking in this regard is the use of the parallel minor of the second key in major-mode sonata forms as an initial agent of destabilization.¹³ These destabilizing modal shifts tend to appear shortly after the second key begins; they are marked by contrast of mode, motive and rhythm, and the local harmonic impact that they create serves to extend phrasing patterns of the movements in which they appear. These modal shifts may be said to be form generating, as their dissonant relationship to the local tonic demands more music in order to reach harmonic resolution by the end of

¹¹ Keller, 19-29; November, "Register in Haydn's String Quartets: Four Case Studies," *Music Analysis* 26, no. 3 (2007): 294-97.

¹² For two recent and influential works that deal with "norms" in late eighteenth-century approaches to sonata form, see William E. Caplin, *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); and James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth-Century Sonata* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

¹³ Webster treats the role of destabilization further in Haydn's instrumental music in *Haydn's "Farewell" Symphony*, 127-54. This use of parallel minor seems also to have been a trait in Haydn's keyboard sonatas from the 1760s. See László Somfai, *The Keyboard Sonatas of Joseph Haydn: Instruments and Performance Practice, Genres and Styles*, trans. Charlotte Greenspan (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 229-77.

the exposition. After this initial destabilization, Haydn's next main compositional goal during the second harmonic area of the exposition is to gradually establish the new key via re-articulation and further intensification of V/V—a harmony that, I argue, served as the locus of increased chromatic and expressive activity—before finally settling on the structural cadence at the conclusion of the exposition.¹⁴

Building on the work of Janet Schmalfeldt, one can understand the arrival in the second key in Haydn's quartets as a "process of becoming," not cleanly separated harmonically or thematically from the first group, but rather hinted at, constantly in flux and incrementally explored for further harmonic possibilities.¹⁵ The first movements of Op. 9 no. 1 in C major, Op. 17 no. 2 in F major and Op. 17 no. 6 in D major stand out in this regard. In these movements, during the above-described process of delaying the structural cadence, there are climactic moments in which the sense of harmonic progression is halted and Haydn takes time to dwell on the sonority of a particular chromatically-inflected chord that stands in an extremely dissonant relationship to the local harmonic context. This study aims to demonstrate an advanced harmonic language in Haydn's early string quartets in which the elements of chromatic harmony, sonata form and musical gesture merge to create moments of powerful expression.

II. Op. 9 no. 1 in C major

(Refer to Example 1 in the Appendix for the following discussion.)

In the first movement of Op. 9 no. 1 in C major, the type of prolonged, irregular phrasing commonly referred to in scholarly discourse on Haydn's sonata forms makes one of its

¹⁴ These observations run counter to the traditional view of the Classical sonata form exposition as a dramatic polar opposition between tonic and dominant, instead pointing to what Scott L. Balthazar has described as a process of gradual establishment of the second key as harmonic goal. See Balthazar, "Tonal and Motivic Process in Mozart's Expositions," *Journal of Musicology* 16 (1998): 421-66.

¹⁵ Janet Schmalfeldt, *In the Process of Becoming: Analytic and Philosophical Perspectives on Form in Early Nineteenth-Century Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). Schmalfeldt analyzes the first movement of Haydn's Op. 33 no. 3 in C major, and the finale of his Piano Trio in C major (Hob. XV:27), 62-73.

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earliest appearances. An important component to this style of phrasing is what James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy have referred to as essential expositional closure, the moment marking the first perfect authentic cadence of the second group.¹⁶ Haydn's first compositional aim upon the arrival of the second key in a sonata-form exposition would seem to be that of confirming the stability of the new key via a perfect authentic cadence; and yet he repeatedly delays its arrival. By avoiding expositional closure, Haydn extends the phrases, creating the formal asymmetry for which his style is known. The first group of Op. 9 no. 1 leads up to a concluding half cadence in the tonic at bar 14. The start of the next phrase in bar 15 transports us immediately to G major for the second group by way of a bifocal close to the previous half cadence.¹⁷ However, as the new key of G major is about to be confirmed with a perfect authentic cadence in bar 19, Haydn undermines this cadence by introducing the parallel minor. The introduction of the minor mode here robs the listener of an immediate confirmation of G major; simultaneously, the contour of the theme from bar 15 has been reversed, rendering thematically disturbing an already harmonically poignant effect. The appearance of the minor mode introduces a dissonance that prolongs the phrase and must now be resolved back into the major before the exposition can conclude.

However, before this resolution occurs Haydn takes the opportunity to further explore the harmonic dimensions of the new key—now tinged with the parallel minor—and also to infuse the music with a sense of drama yet to be heard in the movement thus far. The upcoming passage merges chromatic harmony and expressive gesture to form the climax of the exposition. The combination of minor mode and the inverted theme leads toward an F-sharp diminished seventh chord, arpeggiated in syncopation by all four voices of the ensemble, beginning with the cello in bar 22 and spreading across the entire ensemble by bar 23. By means of the arpeggiation, Haydn suspends ordinary voice-leading and melodic-harmonic progression; renders the rhythm dissonant via

¹⁶ Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 120.

¹⁷ This refers to a half cadence at the end of the first group in the tonic in a sonata-form exposition that leads directly to the second key. See Robert Winter, "The Bifocal Close and the Evolution of the Viennese Classical Style," *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 42, no. 2 (Summer, 1989): 275-337.

syncopation; and abandons the ornamented surface of the music in favor of an unadorned Fuxian fourth-species texture. Here we have a moment in which all four players participate in an ensemble-wide fixation on the dissonant sonority of the diminished seventh chord. In being thus exposed, the skeletal counterpoint itself is rendered thematic and the ensemble interaction is such that no one voice holds precedence over another. Even if the first violin is still heard as guiding the group as the soprano voice, it is doing so from a precarious position, placing the hierarchy of the ensemble in momentary doubt. The cello even has the melodic figure that leads up to the fermata in bar 25. The diminished seventh chord had of course long been used to expressive ends in instrumental music. A contemporary exponent was C. P. E. Bach, in whose *Versuch das wahre Art das Klavier zu spielen*, for example, mention is made of the emotional and harmonic impact of the chord.¹⁸ It is possible to imagine the above-mentioned diminished seventh moment in Op. 9 no. 1 as having made a dramatic impact on the level of that Charles Burney described in his 1772 account.

The parallel minor and F-sharp diminished seventh chord work together to form part of a larger dramatic unfolding: the re-articulation and chromatic intensification of V/V. The F-sharp diminished seventh chord culminates in a fermata on a dominant seventh chord in first inversion, with F-sharp in the cello in bar 25, a harmonic motion achieved by shifting the first violin a semitone from e-flat' to d' while the other strings hold firmly to the remaining notes of the diminished seventh chord.¹⁹ D had first been established as the new dominant with the arrival of the new tonic, G major, at bar 15, and it appeared in a full cadential progression in bar 18. However, the first inversion D dominant seventh chord at the fermata in bar 25 represents an intensification of the chord as a dissonance with respect to the local tonic. In the bars leading from the introduction of the parallel minor to the fermata, it seems that Haydn's goal was to dramatically foreground the dominant; after all, the dominant is playing a pivotal role

¹⁸ Carl Phillip Emmanuel Bach, *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, trans. and ed. William J. Mitchell (New York: W. W. Norton, 1949), 434-38.

¹⁹ This semitonal relationship between diminished and dominant seventh chords appeared frequently and to great expressive effect throughout Haydn's quartets. One example of his mastery of their interchangeability is found in the minuet in the form of a canon in Op. 76 no. 2.

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both as the means of defining G major as tonic and yet standing in dissonant relationship to that tonic, providing a locus for chromatic and expressive activity. The original contour of the main theme then returns, beginning in bar 26, as part of a three-stage sequence that restores the original light mood, returns to the major mode with b-natural" in the first violin, and prepares us for another cadential progression in G major. In bar 28, the F-sharp diminished seventh makes yet another appearance, a ghostly recollection of the climactic sonority just previously heard. This time, however, it gives way to the completion of the cadence, thus resolving the dissonance and bringing closure to the exposition.

To summarize the process thus far with respect to V/V: Haydn first established the cadential function of V/V at the end of the first phrase of the second group (bar 19), only to subvert this cadence by shifting to the parallel minor; V/V was then re-approached and intensified at its subsequent appearance (bar 25); and finally it was allowed to fulfill its harmonic role as part of an authentic cadence at the third approach (bar 30). Due to this process of delaying the structural cadence, prolonging the phrase of the second group and incrementally intensifying the V/V, it is impossible to say when the second key is fully attained in this exposition. It therefore seems more accurate to describe the arrival of the second harmonic area in Op. 9 no. 1 not as a single moment, but rather as a gradual process of becoming that afforded Haydn the opportunity to insert ever more dissonant relationships and animated forms of expression along the way.

III. Op. 17 no. 2 in F major

(Refer to Example 2 in the Appendix for the following discussion.)

Another quartet in which we encounter use of the parallel minor mode and a climactic dissonant sonority is Op. 17 no. 2 in F major. The second group of this quartet follows a similar progression to that of Op. 9 no. 1: Haydn uses the parallel minor of the second key as the initial destabilizing agent to extend the phrasing beyond the moment of a cadence, leading ultimately to a climactic dissonant sonority based on a semi-tonal

relationship to the new dominant. The minor mode, once it is introduced as a dissonance, needs to be handled in such a way that the music can return convincingly to the major. Its appearance therefore necessitates what we may term the parallel minor passage: a harmonic detour at the start of the exposition's second key that begins in minor and is resolved back to major through the use of a chromatic harmony like the diminished seventh or augmented sixth chord.²⁰ These two chords, in particular, are important for their semi-tonal relationship with the dominant. As stated in the previous example, the dominant is, in Haydn's style, a locus for heightened chromatic activity, and the diminished seventh and augmented sixth chords represent fully-harmonized half steps away from it. The parallel minor passage thus offers Haydn a means of both extending the phrase and chromatically intensifying the new dominant. Haydn also used the dominant as a locus for dramatic expression. The dominant's function as the articulator of the tonic gives it an inherent quality of expectation, especially at the moment of cadence, and Haydn seizes on the dramatic potential of this at every opportunity. As in Op. 9 no. 1, there is a climactic dissonant sonority built around the dominant that immediately precedes the first perfect authentic cadence of the second group. This quartet differs from the former, however, in that the sonority occurs after the conclusion of the parallel minor passage and in the context of the major mode.

The first structural dominant of the second group of Op. 17 no. 2 is reached in bar 20, where a pedal tone g" is held in the first violin, and the rest of the ensemble alternates between C major and G dominant seventh chords, implying a structural half cadence, or what Hepokoski and Darcy would refer to as a medial caesura.²¹ However, rather than cadencing Haydn inflects the harmony to C minor in bar 22, creating a parallel minor passage and extending the phrase beyond this potential resting point. The parallel minor leads to a striking arpeggiation in the cello in bar 23, which culminates in an augmented sixth chord in bar 24. The augmented sixth chromatically colors the dominant in bar 25, the half-step relationship intensifying the presence of the dominant

²⁰ Haydn's use of climactic augmented sixth chords was discussed with respect to development sections by Mark Anson Cartwright in his "The Development Section in Haydn's Late Instrumental Works," PhD diss. (City University of New York, 1998), 88-118.

²¹ Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 24.

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and allowing Haydn the opportunity to return to major, which he does in the subsequent bars. To this point, we have had two approaches to the dominant of the new key, the second of which is intensified by the parallel minor and a chromatic harmony. The harmonic progression is then directed towards a perfect authentic cadence in C major in bars 25-28, but the composer surprises us again with a deceptive cadence. The deflected resolution here is not to a submediant or subdominant first inversion triad, as one might expect, but rather to an F-sharp diminished triad in first inversion, the a in the cello providing the deceptive bass motion from the previous g. This chord then leads to a C major triad in second inversion, and Haydn oscillates between these two harmonies for two bars until resting on the diminished triad in bar 31. This harmonic alternation is unusual and quite dissonant, and Haydn confronts us with this sonority for three measures, which form the harmonic and expressive climax of the exposition. As had been the case in Op. 9 no. 1, all sense of progression is lost with the arrival of this sonority.

Here, too, we feel the impact of ensemble interaction in Haydn's chamber music style. In this particular instance, the repetition and rhetorical pause make it seem as if the ensemble, as a collective, simply refuses to let the other shoe fall. What follows is a gesture similar to that of Op. 9 no. 1, in which the ornamented surface texture is rendered unadorned and a half-diminished seventh chord (here half-diminished because of the major mode) is presented in fourth-species.²² This is the same chord after which the music had paused a bar prior, and this gesture therefore appears dramatically as an outgrowth of those same harmonic forces. It also represents further degeneration of any sense of musical normalcy, be it harmonic progression, rhythm, melody, or hierarchy within the ensemble. After one bar, Haydn resolves this dissonance and finally allows the first structural perfect authentic cadence of the exposition to occur in bar 36.

²² In Op. 9 no. 1, the diminished seventh occurs within the context of the parallel minor passage, in which case the E-flat forming the diminished seventh is diatonic to the mode. In Op. 17 no. 2, the chord occurs outside the parallel minor, making the half-diminished seventh diatonic within the local harmonic context.

IV. Op. 17 no. 6 in D major

(Refer to Example 3 in the Appendix for the following discussion.)

Parallel minor passages can occur at different points in an exposition, and can last for various amounts of time. In both Op. 9 no. 1 and Op. 17 no. 2, the parallel minor passages occurred within the context of the second group and were relatively short, moving immediately to a chromatic chord and resolving to the re-articulated and chromatically-intensified dominant. Op. 17 no. 6 in D major is the most extensive exploration of the parallel minor passage of the group. The form of the exposition is much more difficult to dissect in Op. 17 no. 6, as the harmonic domain of second key and the formal domain of transition/second group do not coincide. In this case, the parallel minor passage occurs in the dominant but within the context of the counterstatement/transition; thus this part of the form is expanded. Secondly, rather than quickly returning to the major, as had been the case in the previous two examples, Haydn dwells instead in the minor for several bars, and even modulates to its relative major. With this exposition, therefore, Haydn, to the greatest extent in the examples yet discussed, reveals the harmonic depths that he could attain in the parallel minor, as well as the expressive capacity of his musical language in sonata form.

After an opening statement in D major, a counterstatement in the tonic begins in bar 15. A perfect authentic cadence is sounded in the tonic in bar 24, but in the same measure Haydn reopens the structural close that this cadence would have otherwise created. When the dominant is again approached in bar 26, a grace note g-sharp" now ornaments a melodic f-sharp" in the first violin, signaling a shift in tonal center to A major, the second key of the exposition. This shift is form generating, as it has denied the cadence and created the need for new material, extending the phrase as A major now alternates with an E dominant seventh chord in second inversion over the course of bars 26-29. The passage now has the sense of a modulating transition.

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What happens next is Haydn's by now familiar destabilizing strategy: the second key's parallel minor is heard. In bar 30 A minor is reached, the modal shift signaled dramatically by a leap in the first violin from the e' to a high c-natural", and the introduction of a new theme. The parallel minor passage is followed by an arrival on a dominant pedal in bars 40-3. In similar fashion to the above-discussed quartets, the dominant is here intensified and becomes a locus for increased chromatic activity. A jagged melodic line colored with chromatic neighbor notes in the first violin in bars 38-9 leads to this dominant pedal. At bar 40, the first violin's e' is encircled by d-sharp' and f-natural', creating chromatic neighbor notes on either side of the pitch and further intensifying V/V. This dominant arrival is rendered all the more tense due to the fact that it is still within the bounds of A minor, or the parallel minor passage that was initiated in bar 30. There has been no augmented sixth or diminished seventh chord to pull us out of the harmonic space engendered by the minor mode. And so, at bar 43, the ensemble stops at what at first hearing seems to be a large half cadence in the key of A minor.

However, the process is not over. In bar 44, as the rest of the ensemble drops out, the first violin holds the e', then pushes up to g', while the cello enters with a low C in bar 45, making for the start of a new idea in C major. This is a striking and boldly imaginative gesture on the part of Haydn: the music seems to have come to a stop on a structural half cadence at bar 43, but then the listener is whisked away into the exotic sound of C major. This C major sound world feigns melodic and harmonic motion but in reality remains static, even dreamy. To summarize the main tonal shifts so far: from the parallel minor passage, which is one level of remove from the true local tonic of A major, we had settled on a dominant pedal, an instance of foregrounding and intensifying the V/V, which is yet another level of remove from the home tonic. Then, from that platform, the listener launched into a sonorous world that seems far away from where we should be.

Haydn moves away from C major by sequence to arrive back in A minor, then uses an augmented sixth chord to arrive at a structural half cadence, in bar 56. The strange sonority that was C major thus proved to be a parenthetical insertion in a transition passage that prolonged and intensified the dominant of A. The use of the augmented sixth to arrive at a structural half cadence in bar 56 mitigates the effect of the parallel minor, leaving us to expect a return to A major afterward. The combination of these elements places this moment in the same category as the other two dissonant sonorities previously discussed. The fact that the sonority in this case is not a dissonant chromatic chord but rather a major triad renders this expression unique. There is no breakdown of texture and rhythm, and although the harmony and voice leading are completely static there is a melodiousness and sense of motion in the first violin.

The music that follows re-introduces the main theme of the movement, now in the key of dominant, and fulfills the promise of the cadence originally expected at the start of this counterstatement/transition in bars 24 and 26. Haydn initially promised a cadence after bar 26, yet the use of g-sharp" and the A minor music diverted our attention from this, and the phrase was expanded to arrive ultimately at the C major passage, inserted between the statements of V/V. After this climactic sonority, a return to normalcy almost takes place. The sound of A major is a welcome one, and this key is made all the more stable by the presence of the main theme, which signals a focus on the main point of the argument after an intense musical discourse. This phrase goes on to cadence in bar 62. Bars 63-70 then reintroduce the cadential progression, just as had been the case at the start of this process back in bar 26, this time allowing it to fulfill its original cadential destiny, providing closure to the exposition.

When applied to this exposition, Schmalfeldt's notion of formal "becoming" is once again relevant. The above reading of overall structure implies a division into first group, massive and expanded transition, and second group, yet the thematic and harmonic processes complicate this reading. That we are in the midst of a modulating transition only becomes clear at bar 26, and even then the extensive and stable thematic material in A minor and C major that immediately follows obscures any sense of modulation. The

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duration of the music in C major combined with its melodic profile give this movement the feeling of a three-key exposition, and the effect it produces resembles that of the analogous moment in the exposition of Schubert's String Quintet in C major, D. 956 (1828).

V. Conclusion

Typically, we do not associate sonata-form expositions in Haydn's early quartets with the daring harmonic progressions detailed in the above case studies. More frequently in scholarly discourse, his monothematic and end-directed approach to sonata form is described as a means of demonstrating how his music resides outside the realm of "normalcy" for sonata types of the late eighteenth century. Yet this very approach to sonata form—the lack of a clear-cut division between first and second groups and the delay of a closing structural cadence in the second key—is evident in Opp. 9 and 17 and is part of what enabled Haydn to feature such intense tonal digressions within the context of his expositions. These examples demonstrate that Haydn, in the late 1760s, exhibited compositional mastery that extended to the controlled manipulation of form, harmonic progression and dramatic gesture to create musical moments of deep expressivity, worthy of admiration and continued study.²³

An important aspect of Haydn's style in these quartets and beyond is the way in which the dominant is made the focal point during the delaying of the structural cadence of the second group. For Haydn, the most intense chromatic activity occurs in the context of the dominant, and in many respects serves to intensify it, foregrounding its dissonant relationship to the local tonic before allowing it to assume its role in articulating the tonic at the point of cadence. Delaying the arrival of this cadence, initially through the introduction of a parallel minor passage, extends the phrasing of the exposition for

²³ A comparable harmonic and formal process occurs in exposition of the first movement of Op. 76 no. 3 in C major, which in the midst of a parallel minor passage in the second group tonicizes to the key of E-flat major.

Haydn, and offered him an opportunity to explore ever more distant harmonic relationships as they revolved around this ever more intense and pivotal chord.

Furthermore, these moments display evidence of a keen awareness of part writing and “conversational” ensemble interaction on the part of the composer, in spite of, and as well as, the predominance of the first violin in Opp. 9 and 17. As Tovey stated regarding Op. 9:

In the Quartets of Op. 9 . . . the four string parts are equally necessary and equally alive. They are not equally prominent; because the criterion is not polyphony but self-sufficiency for the purposes of this kind of music; and in this kind of music the normal place for the melody is on the top.

It is no imperfection . . . that the first violin is full of brilliant features which the other instruments cannot share. The other instruments are perfectly happy in their place, and there is not a dull or useless note.²⁴

In Op. 9 no. 1 and Op. 17 no. 2, the breakdown of harmonic progression and use of contrapuntal fourth-species texture offer opportunities in which the ensemble could interact as equals, stepping outside the boundaries of hierarchical propriety. For Koch in the 1790s, the level of voice equality in these moments seemed to be of paramount importance for the enjoyment of music societies across Europe, while for Burney in the 1770s it was not a prerequisite for fostering an engaging and even passionate discourse between performers and audience in an intimate concert setting.

Tovey is correct to say that all of the parts are necessary and “alive” in these early quartets. This is especially clear during these climactic dissonant sonorities, where the otherwise normative and hierarchical ensemble interaction is fundamentally altered. The fourth-species F-sharp diminished seventh chord in Op. 9 no. 1 is a powerful

²⁴ Donald Francis Tovey, “Haydn’s Chamber Music,” *Essays and Lectures on Music* (London: Oxford University Press, 1949), 26. This quote was taken from Webster, “Haydn’s Op. 9,” 142.

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moment in which the whole ensemble comes “to life”. The syncopation adds rhythmic element to this harmonic dissonance, and also suggests the effect of “breathing” throughout the ensemble, as though the players were expressing the dissonance of the harmony in a bodily way.²⁵ As the quartet’s musical momentum collapses, it is almost as though the ensemble itself is overcome by the severity of the dissonance, or the intensity of the discourse.

Musicologists, theorists and performers have, in the past, unfairly marginalized Opp. 9 and 17, owing to their own ambivalence. Perpetuated by an evolutionist “Classical” ideology, this historical lack of interest has caused us to overlook the finer points of Opp. 9 and 17, such as the “uncommon feeling” in the Adagios and the powerful musical expression in the sonata-form first movements. Within the last decade or so, increased attention from Grave, Webster and November has helped pave the way for serious academic study of these quartets. Further breaking down of the historical and ideological barriers that have been placed between these early quartets and the later works is still needed, as are new ways of considering the value of Opp. 9 and 17 in their own historical, analytic and aesthetic terms.

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²⁵ For a discussion of the relationship between bodily and musical gesture, see Elisabeth Le Guin, *Boccherini’s Body: An Essay in Carnal Musicology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

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VII. Appendix: Musical Examples 1-3.

Example 1: Haydn, String Quartet in C major, Op. 9 no. 1, mvt. 1, bars 15-30.

The musical score for Example 1 consists of three systems of staves, each containing four parts: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature is C major and the time signature is 3/4. The first system begins at bar 15, marked with a '15' above the first staff. It features a triplet figure in the Violin I part, which is mirrored in the Violoncello part. The second system starts at bar 17, marked with a '17' above the first staff, and continues the melodic lines with various articulations. The third system begins at bar 19, marked with a '19' above the first staff, and includes dynamic markings of *p* (piano) in the Violin I, Violoncello, and Viola parts.

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24

26

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28

Musical score for measures 28-29. Measure 28 features a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes, including a triplet of eighth notes. The bass clef part provides a harmonic accompaniment with a key signature of one sharp (F#). Measure 29 begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#), featuring a complex triplet of eighth notes. The first two measures of measure 29 are shown, with the second measure ending in a repeat sign.

29

Musical score for measures 29-30. Measure 29 continues with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#), featuring a complex triplet of eighth notes. The first two measures of measure 29 are shown, with the second measure ending in a repeat sign. Measure 30 features a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a melody of eighth notes. The bass clef part provides a harmonic accompaniment with a key signature of one sharp (F#).

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Example 2: Haydn, String Quartet in F, Op. 17 no. 2, mvt. 1, bars 12-38.

The musical score is presented in four systems, each containing four staves for the instruments: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature is one flat (F major) and the time signature is common time (C). The first system (bars 12-14) shows the initial entry of the instruments. The second system (bars 15-17) features dynamic markings of forte (f) and piano (p). The third system (bars 18-20) continues the musical development with various dynamics and phrasing.

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21

Musical score for measures 21-23. The score is in G minor (one flat) and 3/4 time. It features three staves: Violin I, Violin II, and Cello/Double Bass. Measure 21 shows a first violin melodic line with a slur and a dotted quarter note, while the second violin and cello/bass play rhythmic accompaniment. Measure 22 continues the first violin line with a slur and a dotted quarter note, with the second violin and cello/bass providing accompaniment. Measure 23 features a first violin melodic line with a slur and a dotted quarter note, with the second violin and cello/bass playing accompaniment.

24

Musical score for measures 24-26. The score is in G minor (one flat) and 3/4 time. It features three staves: Violin I, Violin II, and Cello/Double Bass. Measure 24 shows a first violin melodic line with a slur and a dotted quarter note, while the second violin and cello/bass play rhythmic accompaniment. Measure 25 continues the first violin line with a slur and a dotted quarter note, with the second violin and cello/bass providing accompaniment. Measure 26 features a first violin melodic line with a slur and a dotted quarter note, with the second violin and cello/bass playing accompaniment.

27

Musical score for measures 27-29. The score is in G minor (one flat) and 3/4 time. It features three staves: Violin I, Violin II, and Cello/Double Bass. Measure 27 shows a first violin melodic line with a slur and a dotted quarter note, while the second violin and cello/bass play rhythmic accompaniment. Measure 28 continues the first violin line with a slur and a dotted quarter note, with the second violin and cello/bass providing accompaniment. Measure 29 features a first violin melodic line with a slur and a dotted quarter note, with the second violin and cello/bass playing accompaniment.

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30

p

p

p

p

34

f

f

f

f

tr

36

p

p

p

p

crescendo

crescendo

crescendo

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Example 3: Haydn, String Quartet in D, Op. 17 no. 6, mvt. 1, bars 15-73.

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

15

p

20

26

f

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31

Musical score for measures 31-35. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It features four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. The music consists of eighth-note patterns in the strings and a melodic line in the first violin with slurs and accents.

36

Musical score for measures 36-40. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It features four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. The music continues with eighth-note patterns and a melodic line in the first violin.

41

Musical score for measures 41-45. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It features four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. The music continues with eighth-note patterns and a melodic line in the first violin.

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47

Musical score for measures 47-52. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It features four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some rests and ties. The key signature is G major.

53

Musical score for measures 53-58. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It features four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some rests and ties. The key signature is G major. The dynamic marking *f* (forte) is present in measures 55, 56, 57, and 58.

59

Musical score for measures 59-64. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It features four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some rests and ties. The key signature is G major. Trills (tr.) are marked above the notes in measures 60 and 61.

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65

Musical score for measures 65-68. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It consists of four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Cello, and Bass. Measure 65 shows the beginning of a phrase with a slur over the first two notes in the Violin I part. The Cello and Bass parts have a similar melodic line. Measures 66 and 67 continue the phrase with various rhythmic patterns and slurs. Measure 68 concludes the phrase with a final note and a fermata.

69

Musical score for measures 69-72. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It consists of four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Cello, and Bass. Measure 69 continues the phrase from the previous system. Measures 70 and 71 show a continuation of the melodic line with some rhythmic variation. Measure 72 concludes the phrase with a final note and a fermata.