

HAYDN

The Online Journal of the Haydn Society of North America

Volume 4
Number 1 *Spring 2014*

Article 3

March 2014

Listening for Tertiary Rhetoric in Haydn's Op. 77 String Quartets

Floyd Grave

Follow this and additional works at: <https://remix.berklee.edu/haydn-journal>

Recommended Citation

Grave, Floyd (2014) "Listening for Tertiary Rhetoric in Haydn's Op. 77 String Quartets," *HAYDN*: Vol. 4 : No. 1 , Article 3.

Available at: <https://remix.berklee.edu/haydn-journal/vol4/iss1/3>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Research Media and Information Exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in HAYDN by an authorized editor of Research Media and Information Exchange. For more information, please contact jmforce@berklee.edu.

Listening for Tertiary Rhetoric in Haydn's Op. 77 String Quartets

by Floyd Grave

Abstract

In a pair of recent essays, Elaine Sisman has advanced a novel approach to the critical analysis of eighteenth-century instrumental works whose invention and publication fall within the familiar custom of the opus group. Citing George Kennedy's distinction between two species of rhetoric—primary (the speech act itself) and secondary (involved with the reflective practice of rhetorical analysis)—Sisman proposes a third kind, a tertiary rhetoric by which we may imagine the works in an opus group to be engaged in conversation among themselves. Because the rhetorical field envisaged by Sisman's concept normally comprises a full set of six works (or two sub-groups of three each), the possibilities of tertiary rhetoric are naturally limited in an opus that a composer has left unfinished—limited but not necessarily vitiated. In a famous case of the unfinished opus, Haydn's Op. 77, which comprises just two quartets, we can discern an array of complementary relationships, stylistic dichotomies, and telling points of intersection by which the two pieces are variously opposed or bound together. The strands of an imaginary dialogue are thus in place, a musical conversation from which fresh insight into the music and its composer can be gained as we listen to the quartets' discourse over such topics as tonal orientation, thematic construction, motivic process, ensemble play, rhetorical strategy, and the ingredients of structural cohesion.

I. Introduction: the Opus Concept

Early in the spring of 1799, an announcement in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* told of Haydn's plan to write a new set of string quartets.¹ This was a formidable enterprise, given the array of competing obligations with which he had burdened himself, most notably the commitment to follow the recently completed *Creation* with

¹ [Anon.], *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 1 (1798-99), 446.

² In an 1806 letter that evidently accompanied delivery of the score to the publisher, Gottfried Christoph

another large-scale oratorio, *The Seasons*. By the end of the year, only two of the proposed six quartets were finished. Meanwhile, Haydn pressed on with other major endeavors, including the oratorio (completed in 1801) and the last three masses for Princess Marie Hermenegild: *Theresienmesse* (1799), *Schöpfungsmesse* (1801), and *Harmoniemesse* (1802). The quartet project was not abandoned altogether, despite the composer's failing health. And yet in the end, the two completed works were followed by only the two middle movements of a third (1803). Haydn consented to have the two finished quartets published in 1802 as Op. 77; the incomplete cycle eventually appeared in 1806 as Op. 103.²

The last phase of Haydn's career as a composer of string quartets was thus marked by fragments: an incomplete opus group comprising merely two works, and a partial quartet cycle. The latter is a real anomaly, for despite the fact that it was endowed with an opus number of its own, it can hardly be understood as a complete composition in any conventional sense. But what about an opus group of two? Publishing chamber compositions in sets of six was a long-established custom, one that Haydn himself had previously honored (from Op. 9 onward) with just one exception, the lone D minor quartet, Op. 42, issued by Hoffmeister as part of chamber music series that actually did involve individual pieces (a lone quartet of Mozart's, the "Hoffmeister," K. 499, was one of them).

The evident care with which Haydn designed his opus groups suggests something more than entrenched habit: far from being haphazard collections of pieces, they betray the signs of planning and calculation. Each quartet in a set of six has a different home key and a distinctive temperament—its particular array of ensemble sonorities, topical

² In an 1806 letter that evidently accompanied delivery of the score to the publisher, Gottfried Christoph Härtel, August Griesinger wrote "Here, my friend, is Haydn's swansong. ... Haydn still does not abandon all hope that in a fortunate moment he might be capable of adding a small rondo. We wish it would come to pass but there is not much chance that what Haydn was unable to finish since 1803 could be added now." Quoted in Daniel Hertz, *Mozart, Haydn and Early Beethoven: 1781-1802* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2009), 667. William Drabkin, who several years ago composed a first movement for Op. 103 (discussed and presented at the annual meeting of the American Musicological Society in November 2009), has recently written a movement to complete Op. 103. See Drabkin, "A Finale for Haydn's Last String Quartet," in *HAYDN: Online Journal of the Haydn Society of North America* 2.2 (Fall 2012).

allusions, compositional devices and structural idiosyncrasies. Some kind of logic may often be discerned in the ordering of a set of six (or two groups of three each, as was more or less the case from Opp. 54/55 onward);³ and the particular mix of tempos, meters, styles, topics and forms found in one group may resonate with those of another (as with Haydn's Opp. 9 and 17).⁴ An opus group may serve as a forum for compositional technique in various specific ways. The first movements of Haydn's Op. 50 quartets may be understood to offer a lesson in how the different available meter types (no fewer than five are represented) may function as defining elements of style and character; the first three quartets of Op. 76, each of which has a finale that progresses from minor to major, offer a threefold demonstration of ways to showcase modal transformation as the centerpiece of a quartet's culminating movement;⁵ and the first three quartets of Op. 20 (in the original ordering) are comparably special in that their last movements display three approaches to the technique of fugue as the basis for cyclic culmination.

The notion of extending our critical purview to encompass not only the individual work but the opus to which it belongs has been explored in two remarkable studies by Elaine Sisman.⁶ In viewing the opus group phenomenon from a rhetorical perspective, Sisman cites a distinction drawn by the classicist George Kennedy between two kinds of rhetoric: primary, that of the speech act itself; and secondary, involved with the

³ As the double numbering suggests, both Op. 54/55 and Op. 71/74 were issued as two groups of three each. Although Kozeluch's edition of what became recognized as Op. 64 comprised a single set of six from the start (advertised in April 1791), Sieber's edition, advertised in June of that year, divided the set into two groups, designated Op. 64 and Op. 65. The earliest publications of Op. 76 in London and Vienna were likewise issued in two parts.

⁴ See Floyd Grave and Margaret Grave, *The String Quartets of Joseph Haydn* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 167-76.

⁵ On the finales to Haydn's Op. 76 nos. 1-3, see Elaine Sisman, "Rhetorical Truth in Haydn's Chamber Music: Genre, Tertiary Rhetoric, and the Opus 76 Quartets," in *Haydn and the Performance of Rhetoric*, ed. Tom Beghin and Sander M. Goldberg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 310-14, and Floyd Grave, "Galant Style, Enlightenment, and the Paths from Minor to Major in Later Instrumental Works by Haydn," *Ad Parnassum* 7 (2009): 33-41; see also Grave, "Recuperation, Transformation and the Transcendence of Major over Minor in the Finale of Haydn's String Quartet Op. 76 No. 1," *Eighteenth-Century Music* 5 (March 2008): 27-50.

⁶ Elaine Sisman, "Rhetorical Truth in Haydn's Chamber Music"; and eadem, "Six of One: The Opus Concept in the Eighteenth Century," in *The Century of Bach and Mozart: Perspectives on Historiography, Composition, Theory, and Performance*, ed. Sean Gallagher and Thomas Forrest Kelly (Cambridge: Harvard University Department of Music, 2008), 79-107.

reflective practice of rhetorical analysis.⁷ Adopting this model, we can say that the music speaks to us directly through the agency of the performers, whereas the notes on the page offer themselves for our contemplation (primary and secondary rhetoric, respectively). Against this backdrop, Sisman advances the novel idea of a third kind of rhetoric, a tertiary rhetoric by which we may imagine the works to be engaged in conversation among themselves.⁸ Through the critical apparatus of tertiary rhetoric, we give an opus group's compositions a voice, a mode of communication by which they can speak to one another about the web of relationships that connect them. We can then choose to listen in on the multiple conversations that arise: reflections, perhaps, on compositional style and technique; and strands of mutual contemplation as the works variously elaborate, reevaluate, refute or reaffirm one another's musical arguments. From this perspective, the multi-work rhetorical field embraced by an opus group provides an interpretive foundation for examining compositional choices that take place within its boundaries, their significance as alternatives within the conventions of the genre in question, and the meanings they may be heard to embody.⁹

II. Op. 77 as an Opus: Two Quartets in Dialogue

This brings us back to Op. 77 and what its incomplete state might signify from the vantage point of Sisman's argument. Do the curtailed possibilities of inter-work relationship within this fragmentary opus necessarily undermine the tertiary-rhetoric argument? Possibly not, for whatever paths of communication may have been opened by the addition of further works to the set, it is easy to find evidence of a special bond between the two completed quartets: a network of complementary relationships,

⁷Sisman, "Rhetorical Truth," 300.

⁸ "Good composers create works that both speak a persuasive oral discourse [i.e., primary rhetoric] and offer themselves for analysis as rhetorical texts [secondary rhetoric] ... I assert that pieces within the multi-work opus speak intertextually to each other and only through each other to the audience [tertiary rhetoric] ... another form of communication and persuasion stemming from the author of musical works, who allows us to hear the works in conversation with each other" (Sisman, "Six of One," 89-90).

⁹ Sisman suggests that "the 18th-century multi-work opus, which through the labor of the composer puts works into sounding conversation with each other, produces the agent of transformation to create the musical meanings that draw us in" ("Six of One," 107).

stylistic dichotomies, and telling points of intersection and divergence, all stemming from what would appear to have been a special plan on the composer's part, namely to begin a crowning opus with a pair of exemplary, contrasting specimens of the genre.¹⁰ As each forges a path through the late eighteenth-century domain of string-quartet composition, the two display overlapping yet distinctly different profiles with respect to character, technique and design. In their enactment of alternative possibilities, we can readily imagine the elements of an animated dialogue—an exchange of proposals and counterproposals encompassing matters of tonal orientation, thematic construction, motivic process, ensemble play, narrative strategy and structural cohesion. By attending to the strands of musical conversation that thus materialize, we can perhaps gain insight into otherwise elusive facets of Haydn's musical personae, their various manifestations in these last completed quartets, and the range of meanings that can inform our understanding of both the music and its composer.

To begin with large-scale organization, it would appear that the two quartets are intent on pursuing two contrasting cyclic models, both deeply embedded in Haydn's own prior endeavors (see Table 1). The String Quartet in G major, Op. 77 no. 1, conforms to the movement order that had become his preferred choice for opus groups subsequent to Op. 42—fast, slow, minuet/trio, fast—the succession generally found, for example, in the Viennese concert symphony. This format allows for dramatized contrast in tempo and style early in the cycle, and it offers the dance movement the opportunity to dispel a slow movement's air of brooding intensity as it makes way for a high-spirited finale.

¹⁰ It is possible that a perceived middle-period inclination of Beethoven's owes something to Haydn's Op. 77 precedent. James Webster observes the following with regard to such pairings as the symphonies nos. 3 and 4, 5 and 6, or 7 and 8: "Beethoven's middle period often appears to exhibit pairs of individual works; in these pairs, the first work to be completed or published usually seems to be the bolder, larger, or more expressive, the second work the more modest, less pretentious, more Classical." See "Traditional elements in Beethoven's Middle-Period String Quartets," *Beethoven, Performers, and Critics*, ed. Robert Winter and Bruce Carr (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1980), 125-26. See also the discussion of Beethoven's string quartets Opp. 59, 74 and 95 in Nancy November, *Beethoven's Theatrical Quartets* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 164-65.

Table 1: Order of Movement Types for Op. 77 Nos. 1 and 2.

	Op. 77 no. 1 in G	Op. 77 no. 2 in F
i	G. Allegro moderato modern common time sonata form	F. Allegro moderato compound 4/4 time sonata form
ii	Eb. Adagio common time sonata form	F–Db. Presto, ma non troppo 3/4 time minuet – trio
iii	G–Eb. Presto 3/4 time minuet – trio	D. Andante 2/4 time theme and variations
iv	G. Presto 2/4 time sonata form	F. Vivace assai 3/4 time sonata form

The alternative model, exemplified by the String Quartet in F major, Op. 77 no. 2, places the sociability of the dance on the heels of the first movement—a buffer of sorts between the opening allegro's exuberance and the reflective concentration of a slow movement, from which a fast-paced finale will provide eventual relief. This had once been Haydn's string-quartet norm: all six quartets of Opp. 9 and 17 are fashioned this way, as are Op. 20 Nos. 1, 3 and 5, Op. 33 Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4, and Op. 42.

The two quartets of Op. 77 represent challenging, high-strung versions of these two opposing schemes, as each strains the customary premise on which it is based. In the G major quartet, the contrast between a martial allegro moderato and a theatrical, soloistic adagio is followed by a stunning change of pace and atmosphere with the advent of a presto minuet and trio. This movement's brilliance will then be exceeded by the cumulating energy of a presto finale that features declamatory unison textures,

extended stretches of sixteenth-note figuration, and first-violin flights that reach high above the treble staff.

The F major quartet offers a counterproposal that indulges no less than its companion in technical difficulty and juxtaposition of extremes. It displays a whimsical play of contrasts as it jumps from an ingratiating allegro moderato to a wildly antic, metrically dissonant minuet-trio, designated presto (like the dance movement of Op. 77 no. 1). The third movement comes as a drastic change in virtually all respects as it lands us in a remote key, D major, shifts to a relaxed andante tempo, and reduces the texture at the outset to a duet of first violin and cello. The two instruments' presentation of a Haydnesque walking-style theme furnishes the basis for a series of variations whose complexities will require no less attention from performers and listeners than Op. 77 no. 1's more operatically styled second-movement adagio. The cycle concludes with a vivace assai finale, distinguished by metrical complication, fast rates of change of theme and texture, and intricate ensemble play. In sum, Op. 77 no. 2 may be understood as a latter-day realization of an earlier chamber-music ideal, affirming its enduring viability while significantly updating its components to rival the consummately modern idiom of its companion.

In his choice of home keys for the two works, Haydn revisits familiar territory: no fewer than seven previous sets had included quartets in G (Opp. 1 no. 4, 9 no. 3, 17. no. 5, 33 no. 5, 54 no. 1, 64 no. 4 and 76 no. 1), while four opus groups had quartets in F (Opp. 2 no. 4, 17 no. 2, 50 no. 5 and 74 no. 2). To at least some extent, differences in character between Op. 77's two members recall Haydn's earlier approaches to the home keys in question. Among the F major quartets, for example, the first movement of Op. 17 no. 2 shares with Op. 77 no. 2 a degree of nuance, understatement and a preference for lyrical delivery over brilliance. The opening movement of Op. 54 no. 1 in G, by contrast, anticipates the assertive, first violin-oriented delivery of Op. 77 no. 1.¹¹

¹¹ As can be seen in the relevant summary statements collected in Rita Steblin, *A History of Key Characteristics in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1983), later eighteenth-century writers are by no means unanimous in their descriptions of characteristic differences between G major and F major. Some correspondences with Haydn's usage can nonetheless be discerned: G major is described by Vogler (1779) as "already livelier [than C major], although not stormy"

III. Tonal Issues

With regard to tonal usage within their respective domains, the quartets' dialogue turns on the issue of expanding horizons, as each proposes ways to surmount the standard limitation to closely related keys for the slow movement and the dance movement trio. In so doing, they recall precedents in quartets from the two preceding opus groups: Op. 74 no. 2 in F (dance movement trio in D flat); Op. 74 no. 3 in G minor (slow movement in E); Op. 76 no. 5 in D (slow movement in F sharp); and Op. 76 no. 6 in E-flat (slow movement in B, or perhaps C-flat enharmonically respelled, i.e., the lowered submediant). Op. 77 no. 1 features the lowered submediant (E-flat) for both non-tonic sites in the cycle,¹² while Op. 77 no. 2 weighs in with a more diverse third-relationship scheme by leaning several steps in the sharp direction for its slow movement (to D major), but then situating the dance movement trio in F major's own lowered submediant, D-flat (as in Op. 74 no. 2). This latter relationship aligns with Op. 77 no. 1's favoring of the flat submediant but also suggests a subtle point of tonal contention, as the key in question (D flat) stands at the maximally remote distance of a diminished fifth from the G major quartet's tonal center. (Further complicating any undercurrent of tonal play is the pivotal move to D flat at the very center of the G major quartet's slow movement; see Example 1, bars 43-44.)

(274), and by Grétry (1797) as "warlike" (275). By contrast, F major is identified by Schubart (c. 1784) and Knecht (1792) with calm and gentleness. Perhaps most pertinent to our discussion of Op. 77 is the contrast between Vogler's observation that G is livelier than C and Heinse's (1795) proposal that F is "a degree more sober than C major" (261).

¹² A significant number of later eighteenth-century instrumental movements in G are marked by an otherwise uncommon momentary shift to the lowered submediant (memorable examples include the first movement of Haydn's string quartet Op. 33 no. 5, bars 272-78, and the finale to Mozart's string quartet K. 387, bars 221-23). Seen in this light, Op. 77 no. 1's choice of E-flat as an interior-movement tonic constitutes a natural, key-specific approach to tonal enrichment of the cycle, in effect promoting the customary, privileged G/E flat relationship to a higher order of magnitude.

Example 1: Haydn, Op. 77 no. 1, mvt. 2, bars 38-44.

Basic distinctions in style and character come into focus from a tonal perspective when we consider the placement of the quartets' home keys along the familiar spectrum of tonal space—G major standing one accidental to the sharp or dominant side of C, while F, with one flat, occupies the symmetrically opposed position on the subdominant side. From this vantage point, we can speak of a scheme of tonal relationship that embraces both works as they face each other across the divide between sharp and flat domains. True to the terms of this model, the opening movement of the G major quartet exhibits traits that point toward the energy, directional motion, and rhetorical urgency customarily associated with progression from tonic to dominant. Correspondingly, the first movement of the F major quartet (especially in the manner of its closely related primary and secondary themes) inclines toward the composure and interiority often witnessed as hallmarks of the subdominant.¹³

¹³ In discussing eighteenth-century theoretical foundations for differences in character between the dominant and the subdominant, Steblin (*History of Key Characteristics*, 104) cites a relevant passage from Rameau's *Observations sur notre instinct pour la musique* (Paris: Prault fils, 1754): "The former indicates that the voice must rise, the latter that it must descend; the former being supported always by a new sharp, the latter by a new flat; the former generally sharing strength and joy, the latter weakness, softness, tenderness, and sadness" (xii-xiii). As noted by Charles Rosen in *Sonata Forms*, rev. ed. (New York: W. W. Norton 1988), "the subdominant plays a special role in sonata style; it acts itself as a force for resolution, an antidominant, in fact" (288). In a related vein, perhaps more specifically relevant to our discussion of Op. 77, Scott Burnham writes that "moves to the sharp side of a key, the dominant side, involve an increase of tension and a sense of moving out of that key. Explorations of the flat side of a key seem rather to move within the key, to speak of its inner depths ... And because the tonic harmony can be said to contain the subdominant harmony within it, as a kind of nether projection from the tonic note, the subdominant harmony itself can be heard as a sign of interiority." *Mozart's Grace* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 103-104.

Reinforcing the sense of an all-embracing dominant-subdominant polarity between the two works is the way in which C, the tonal system's central point of reference, may be heard as an element of connection between them—a tonal center of gravity, perhaps, but also a locus of mediation in character and temperament. The prominence of C in Op. 77 no. 2 is largely a consequence of tonal conventions to which both quartets adhere: as the dominant of F, C is the obligatory secondary key in all three F major movements. But the pitch-class C makes its presence felt in that quartet's D major variation movement as well: once, near the middle of the movement, where the rise to c''' on the downbeat of bar 66 highlights a temporary reversion to the quartet's home key of F (as the seventh of a V⁷/V chord), and once near the end of the movement (bar 121), where the second violin's accentuated c' helps lend weight to a valedictory call to the movement's subdominant (G) over a D pedal point.¹⁴

More telling is the heavily accentuated, not so readily explainable prominence of C in Op. 77 no. 1. In the first movement, a sudden tonal shift just after the start of the development section lands us on that note with a unison *fortissimo* thud (bar 64), as if some outside force were imposing its presence and causing surface activity to freeze while open C strings resound in the viola and cello (see Example 2). The note C makes a comparably stark, weighty appearance close to the middle of the second movement (bar 42). Here, as the dominant of a temporarily established F minor (prior to a deflection to that key's submediant D-flat, noted above in Example 1), it is well ensconced within the movement's tonal structure. Yet it stands out nonetheless, nearly matching the first movement's unison C in resonance as both viola and cello fall to their low open strings. Sustained by a fermata for added emphasis, this unison C compares with that earlier occurrence in giving the impression of a gravitational pull that draws the music into a C-centered orbit.

¹⁴ Although the pronounced subdominant pull of the passage in question (bars 121-129, the last nine bars of the movement) falls within the realm of conventional late eighteenth-century practice, especially for the effect of an inward-looking *morendo* close to an Adagio, this unusually prolonged allusion to the orbit of G major can perhaps be savored as a subtly ironic nod to Op. 77 No. 2's extroverted G-major companion.

Example 2: Haydn, Op. 77 no. 1, mvt. 1, bars 58-68.

The sense of being drawn down, as if to a tonal floor, recurs at the start of the trio's second reprise, where the cello's open C string resounds as the root of a richly scored C minor triad (bar 102, repeated in bar 136). Although there is no comparable downward tug in the finale, we do find a thrust in the opposite direction as the first violin soars to C^{'''} (bar 149; its height is exceeded only by the climactic D^{'''} in the third movement)—a dramatic release from the C-centered force of gravity. At the same time, this high point provides a reaffirmation of the marked importance of that pitch-class, not merely as an idiosyncrasy of an individual quartet but also as an ingredient of the dialogue between this G major work and its F major neighbor.

IV. Opposition in Style and Character: The Opening Themes

As it pertains to the two quartets' opening themes, that dialogue proves to be deeply engaged in a play of contrast in matters style and character. Thus Op. 77 no. 1, in

keeping with its dominant-side position on our tonal spectrum, begins with an animated, forward-directed stride, carried along by throbbing quarter notes and repetitive march-rhythm figures—a virtual parody of military style that insists on open-ended continuity from one idea to the next as the theme's three phrases pass in review (4+4+6; see Example 3).

The rhythmic and melodic elements are simple and transparent at the outset, as the first violin establishes its motivic authority; but complications arise in the third phrase (bars 9-14), where the drumming quarter notes get woven into the melodic line at the start of a long descent through the staff. The heavy downbeat emphasis on bar 14, nearly matching that of the opening chord, signifies both closure and—by analogy with bar 1—the beginning of a developmental restatement that will soon dissolve in waves of transitional, triplet-eighth figuration.

Complicating the theme's otherwise well-grounded metrical structure is a certain ambiguity that proves central to its character. Specifically, where does the opening phrase actually begin? Does it start with the heavily stressed initial downbeat, or are the performers marking time here with a bar of pulsating tonic chords before beginning in earnest with the thematic dotted-rhythm figure on the upbeat to bar 2? Neither way of parsing the phrase structure needs to take unequivocal precedence over the other. Rather, the tension between the two may be understood as a source of propulsion, continually pitching the theme's melodic phrases forward and thus driving the end of one phrase into the beginning of the next. The ambivalence is forcefully underscored in bar 14, whose substance closely matches bar 1, as noted above. Thus it designates a fresh start, even as its downbeat cadence marks the end of the initial primary-theme statement.¹⁵ The phrase-overlap device will prove to be a distinguishing trait of the movement as a whole, contributing to an impression of nearly relentless motion, which informs subsequent occurrences and elaborations of primary- and secondary-theme material. (In keeping with a familiar rhetorical strategy of Haydn's, witnessed in both

¹⁵ My thanks to Channan Willner for his valuable insights into the structure of this theme.

Op. 77 first movements, the secondary theme draws on primary-theme material in such a way that the two signify different facets of a single principal idea.)

Example 3: Haydn, Op. 77 no. 1, mvt. 1, bars 1-19.

Allegro moderato

The musical score is presented in three systems, each with four staves (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass). The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo is marked **Allegro moderato**.
 - **System 1 (Bars 1-6):** The first theme is introduced. Dynamics range from *f* to *p*. A *mezza voce* marking is present in the first staff. The second staff has a *f* dynamic. The third and fourth staves have *f* and *p* dynamics respectively.
 - **System 2 (Bars 7-13):** The second theme begins. Dynamics range from *fz* to *p*. The first staff has *fz* and *p* dynamics. The second staff has *fz* and *p* dynamics. The third and fourth staves have *fz* dynamics.
 - **System 3 (Bars 14-19):** The first theme returns. Dynamics range from *f* to *p*. The first staff has *f* and *p* dynamics. The second staff has *f* and *p* dynamics. The third and fourth staves have *f* and *p* dynamics. A triplet is marked in the first staff in bar 19.

In opposition to Op. 77 no. 1's emblems of military resolve, Op. 77 no. 2 begins by invoking a pastoral realm and an altogether different kind of pace. More a stroll than a march, it responds to its neighbor's martial imperative with something rather bucolic and song-like: a jaunty, lightly accompanied melody that wends its way down the tonic scale with a bare minimum of harmonic or textural artifice (see Example 4). And despite their sharing the same tempo marking (*allegro moderato*), the same common time signature and a similar preoccupation with dotted-rhythm figures, they stand opposed as each argues the case for a different kind of impetus and metrical orientation: whereas the opening movement of Op. 77 no. 1 adopts a modern, streamlined common time, with a strong sense of motion in half- and quarter notes, that of Op. 77 no. 2 chooses to inhabit the domain of an older compound 4/4, marked by the metrical near-equivalence of first and second halves of the bar and a predilection for rhythmic detail within the beat.¹⁶

Example 4: Haydn, Op. 77 no. 2, mvt. 1, bars 1-10.

Allegro moderato

The musical score consists of four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The tempo is marked *Allegro moderato*. The score begins with a *forte* dynamic in the first violin. The melody in the first violin is characterized by dotted rhythms and a generally descending contour. The accompaniment in the other parts is light and rhythmic, often using eighth and sixteenth notes. Dynamics vary throughout, including *piano* (*p*) and *forte* (*f*) markings.

¹⁶ See Floyd Grave, "Metrical Displacement and the Compound Bar in Eighteenth-Century Theory and Practice," *Theoria* 1 (1985): 25-60.

Perhaps in an effort to ensure that both quartets begin on an equal footing, Haydn starts this movement with a *forte* tonic accent to match that of its neighbor; but its own distinctive qualities of reflection and motivic intricacy soon become evident. To begin with, bars 1-4 present a balanced pair of two-bar incises in which the second grows integrally from the first, transposing bar 1 down a fifth in bar 3 and recasting the first half of bar 2 as a relatively decisive, phrase-ending punctuation in the middle of bar 4. So far so good; but subsequent events will require the listener to recalculate. First of all, the sixteenth-note drumroll at the end of bar 4 is a new element (perhaps a tongue-in-cheek allusion to the G major quartet's martial pretensions). It subtly alters the prevailing character as it provides an upbeat to the next phrase. But instead of launching a new idea, bar 5 recalls and develops the three-note figure just heard. Thus bar 5 looks back to bar 4 much as bar 4 had looked back to bar 2; and the recurrence of the drumroll on the upbeat to bar 6 further underscores an emerging ambivalence in phrasing.

It now seems that bars 4 and 5 belong together in terms of phrasing; and as the germinal dotted-rhythm figure proceeds to dominate the theme's progress in the bars that follow, the double function of bar 4 becomes manifest: even while ending the opening four-bar phrase, it forms the beginning of a five-bar unit. Not only do the initial notes of the recurrent figure suggest a continuous melodic trajectory (F in bar 4, G in bar 5, A and B-flat in bar 6, C in bar 7), but the first violin's surface rhythm in bars 4-7 articulates a precisely measured pattern of acceleration: the dotted figure, heard once in each of bars 4 and 5, occurs twice in bar 6 and four times in bar 7—a continuous span of developmental process, all directed toward the descent to a half cadence in bar 8.

The complete, on-schedule break in bar 8 confirms expectations of a customarily regular phrase rhythm (4+4, notwithstanding the ambivalent role of bar 4). Yet it also provides a reminder that this theme reflects back on its own generative elements as it comes into being, even as those very elements demonstrate their potency as sources of expansion and elaboration. Of the latter there will be plenty as the movement progresses; but meanwhile the attention of performers and listeners is drawn to the details that unfold within the initial phrase-pair—a closed-off musical space that evokes the intimacy of a

drawing room. By contrast, the relatively untrammelled, forward-driving pace that greets us at the outset of Op. 77 no. 1 seems to invoke some larger venue as it sets the stage for a nearly pervasive sense of continuity. Elements of Op. 77 no. 2's complicated response to its neighbor's zeal for propulsion and connection may be heard in bar 8's decisive punctuation—a pause for breath that brings forward motion to a halt—and also in the energy of evolving motivic process that leads up to this point: not a robust, pulsating drive as heard in the opening of Op. 77 no. 1, but rather a more subtle impression of growing momentum as the first violin's surface activity accelerates in bars 5-7. Narrative direction and cohesion will not be lacking as this movement progresses, but structural goals will be marked variously by unambiguous cadences or by surface punctuations that bring activity to a halt—an occasion for performers and listeners to reflect and regroup before proceeding. (In the most extreme instance, just prior to the start of the recapitulation, the music stops for a full bar.)

V. Concert Style vs. Chamber Style

The ingredients for a dialogue of character and temperament are thus in place as the two movements exemplify contrasting approaches: the momentum of open-ended phrasing, as opposed to the greater preponderance of closed phrases within a more private, reflective musical environment. For simplicity's sake we can identify this distinction with the terms "concert" and "chamber," the former emphasizing brilliance and continuity, as if projecting to an audience, while the latter tends toward an inner-directed concern with the nuances of motivic elaboration.¹⁷ Notwithstanding the overall affiliation of Op. 77 no. 1 with the former and Op. 77 no. 2 with the latter, neither of our first movements qualifies as a pure example of one or the other. In fact, as we listen to

¹⁷ This distinction corresponds to that drawn by Michael Broyles between sonata- and symphony-related idioms in "The Two Instrumental Styles of Classicism," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 36 (Summer 1983): 210-42. Citing the writings of Heinrich Christoph Koch and August Friedrich Kollmann, Broyles notes that "the symphony style emphasizes supra-period activity; gestures tend toward the larger units, creating a sense of melodic sweep through the binding or overlapping of cadences ... In sonata style ... elaboration, nuance, and detail play a much greater role, and cadences are heard more as actual divisions between which the manipulation of motivic figures is centered" (220).

them we can attend to their occasional role-changing forays as one quartet appropriates something of the other's manner to advance its own musical argument.

In the course of Op. 77 no.1's first-movement exposition, for example, a cadence in the dominant on the downbeat of bar 39 elides with the start of a strategic retreat to chamber-style conversation. Here the second violin and cello propose a new legato figure in contrary motion as the group leader rests (see Example 5, bars 39-40). When the figure is taken up by the first violin and viola after two bars, all members of the ensemble are brought into a state of equilibrium and balanced relationship; and the impression of ensemble equality is reaffirmed by the relatively homogenous rhythm and sonority of bars 43-45. This latter passage finds each part dwelling in its own registral space as quarter- and triplet-eighth momentum is withdrawn to provide relief from full-throttle surface activity. But the pullback also serves as the springboard for a span of first-violin triplet figuration (starting in bar 46), which will lend impetus toward the end of the exposition. Here the quartet leader's return to concert-style authority seems all the more commanding, following a moment of reflection and chamber-style distribution of responsibility among the performers.

If the vehicle for this allusion to chamber style was a stretch of ancillary transitional material prior to the bluster of a solo-dominated closing theme, then a certain passage in the first movement of the F major quartet may be heard as a response: the passage in question, quoted in Example 6, is comparable to the one cited in Example 5 in its transitional function and in its independence from the movement's primary theme. But this span of connective tissue serves not to lead away from the movement's secondary theme but rather to approach it as a structural landmark. And whereas the thematically alien passage from Op. 77 no. 1 (Ex. 5) involved restraint and reduced surface activity, our corresponding phrase in Op. 77 no. 2 (Ex. 6) draws on the resources of gathering momentum and concert-style insistence, despite the ubiquitous concentration on motivic process. The motive in question, first introduced in bars 20-21, consists of a repeated-note anacrusis that leads to an appoggiatura on the downbeat. It generates directional motion through multiple recurrences in the bars that follow; and on the

upbeat to bar 29 it resonates in all four parts. The solidified harmony and rhythmic impact of this event underscore the impression of an imminent turning point in the exposition's narrative, and the first violin's accentuated leading tone acts as a sign that tonal inertia is about to be overcome. From this point to the structural divide in bar 36, a rhythmically animated, full-ensemble texture will supply the necessary momentum to cross the threshold into the new key.

Example 5: Haydn, Op. 77 no. 1, mvt. 1, bars 38-48.

The image displays a musical score for Haydn's Op. 77 no. 1, mvt. 1, bars 38-48. The score is written for four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. The score begins at bar 38 and ends at bar 48. The first system (bars 38-42) shows the first violin playing a melodic line with a trill-like figure, while the other parts provide harmonic support. The second system (bars 43-48) features a more complex texture with triplets and a forte (*fz*) dynamic marking. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

VI. Obstructions in the Musical Narrative

The two transitional passages cited above will be recalled later on, as the two movements find themselves matching wits in a delicate maneuver, deep in the midst of their respective development sections. At issue in both movements is the confrontation with a musical obstruction: an interruptive force or event that somehow blocks the way. In Op. 77 no. 1, elaborations of primary- and transition-theme material have led to the distant region of F-sharp minor and its dominant, C-sharp, a tritone away from tonic (Example 7, bars 101-104). A quickly executed turn to A and that key's parallel minor (bars 105-108) promises an impending return to the domain of close key relationships. But at this juncture (bar 109) the music stalls. Not only does the swirling triplet figuration disappear, but the marching quarter notes are suddenly gone as well. Performers and listeners are left in a temporal vacuum as the first violin drifts down from above the staff in half notes. Motion toward an eventual cadence in D minor resumes cautiously through a reintroduced quarter-note pulse in bar 112. With the arrival on a dominant seventh chord in bar 115, new life courses through the inner parts; and by bar 116, the joining of triplet figuration by the cello confirms the sense of resumption and recovery.

Perhaps in keeping with Op. 77 no. 2's generally more introspective, detail-oriented manner, this movement's response—its corresponding encounter with blockage or impairment—proves to be more engaged in processes of motivic development and tonal excursion than in matters of surface momentum, as in Op. 77 no. 1. The excerpt quoted below in Example 8 shows overlapping elaborations of the transitional motive cited above in Example 6. Here it leads through a tightly compressed pattern of falling fifths (bars 78-81): E⁷ (V⁷ of A minor), A (V of D minor), D minor, G (V of C minor), C⁷ (V⁷ of F minor). Now this minor-inflected succession veers to a distant E-flat minor (bar 82), where harmonic progress is stymied. Bar 84, resembling Example 6 (bars 28-29) in its synchronized ensemble effort, finds the parts coalescing in unison, as if some uncanny force had withdrawn the harmony and the forward motion it normally supports; and the sense of an impediment is confirmed by the silent downbeat that follows.

Example 7: Haydn, Op. 77 no. 1, mvt. 1, bars 100-120.

The image displays a musical score for Haydn's Op. 77 no. 1, mvt. 1, bars 100-120. The score is arranged in four systems, each containing three staves (Violin I, Violin II, and Cello/Double Bass). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The first system (bars 100-104) features a *ff* dynamic. The second system (bars 105-108) continues with *ff*. The third system (bars 109-116) includes *mezzo voce* markings for the upper staves and *f* for the lower staves. The fourth system (bars 117-120) concludes with *f* dynamics. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

In contrast to the temporal blockage in Op. 77 no. 1, which involved a momentary evacuation of the movement's quartet-note pulse and its accompanying background of triplet eighths, the obstructive force in Op. 77 no. 2 freezes the harmony and stops the ongoing pattern of tonal motion in its tracks. As if shuddering from the impact, an upper-register echo in bar 85 prolongs the moment in which continuity is challenged. Groping their way now as if through the heart of a labyrinth, the parts enter one after another; but all reach an impasse by bar 92, where the motive becomes mired in A-flat minor (the relative minor of C-flat, distant by a diminished fifth from the tonic F major). Harmonic stasis persists through bar 93. But unbeknownst to the listener, a way out has been found, through a providential transformation of the motive's grammatical meaning, tonal orientation and rhythmic impulse: what had been a locally stable E-flat (now spelled as D-sharp) has become a leading tone that points to E (previously the appoggiatura F-flat) as its note of resolution. By virtue of this recuperative move, the path will be cleared for a tonally cohesive transition to the recapitulation as the music passes downward through E minor, A minor and D minor, and from there to the dominant of F by which the recapitulation will be prepared.¹⁸

VII. Impairment and Recuperation

Narrative strategies involving interruption and recovery are not uncommon in later eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century instrumental music,¹⁹ and striking instances may be found among Haydn's own earlier quartets: for example the first movement of Op. 17 no. 2, where mystifying shifts to white note-values intrude on an otherwise cohesive syntax to evoke an eerie sense of suspended animation.²⁰ What makes the Op.

¹⁸ Specifically, the pattern of falling fifths that governs the tonal progress from here to the end of the development revisits that of bars 78-81, with the C⁷ chord of bar 81 now spread out over four bars (109-12) in anticipation of the recapitulation at bar 113.

¹⁹ In contemplating a signal instance of interrupted progress, from the development section of Beethoven's Third Symphony (bars 248-52), John Harutunian notes that the "syncopated reiterations inhibit the sense of forward motion. At this point Beethoven intensifies the effect of his formal expansion by a dramatic distension—the music reaches a point of immobility." *Haydn's and Mozart's Sonata Styles: A Comparison* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2005), 177.

²⁰ Specifically, an abrupt quarter note rest at the end of bar 31 is followed by two bars of relatively long note values before normal surface activity resumes in a drive to a heavily marked cadence in the dominant. A replica of these events (now in tonic) begins with the quarter note rest at the end of bar 93.

77 quartets' interruptions outstanding is the play of complementary elements involved as each negotiates an impasse that matches its character. In Op. 77 no. 1, which relies on the persuasive force of sustained continuity, interruption will involve the sudden cessation of the movement's life-giving pulsation of quarter notes and their attendant triplet eighths. The blockage is temporal, and recovery comes through the gradual return to a state of animated surface rhythm. With Op. 77 no. 2's greater concentration on motive and harmony as sources of continuity, blockage arises as those very elements become paralyzed. The condition is then relieved by an enharmonic transformation that corrects the errant tonal trajectory.

Both incidents arise in close proximity to a point of furthest tonal remove, where instability prevails and the need for continuity seems paramount. To address that urgency, each has drawn on an inherently unstable, open-ended transitional figure from its exposition—connective tissue, designed from the outset to be amenable to stretching, reshaping, and pitch inflection, and therefore suitable for helping to span the distance between structural landmarks. Ironically, this is the very material that will later work to bring about disruption. (It is perhaps essential to the compositional strategy of either movement that principal- and secondary-theme material remains intact, so that the core personality of each, and the essence of the distinction in character between them, is preserved.)

In Op. 77 no. 1, the momentary cessation of surface activity at bar 43, too fleeting to register as an impediment, had defined the starting-point for the descent to a structurally salient cadence in bar 46. But when a replica of that event is prolonged and distended in the development section (bars 109-111), continuity is threatened. Correspondingly, the motivic density of Op. 77 no. 2, which had proved vital to the exposition's move into the dominant key, will turn out to be an obstacle in the motivically congested environment of the development section. The seeds of disruption and narrative complication are thus planted in the two movements' expositions as the G

The suspended-animation effect extends to four bars in the latter part of the development section (bars 64-67).

major quartet's eventual confrontation with loss of energy and momentum is matched by the F major quartet's experience of derailment. Both instances find the music at a critical threshold, beyond which the performers will resume, in a spirit of renewal and strengthened resolve, emerging from the development section's turmoil and into the reassuring stability of a recapitulation.

VIII. Conclusion

These cases of musical impairment and recuperation call to mind something from Haydn's personal correspondence—a letter of 12 June 1799 to Christoph Gottlob Breitkopf in which the composer describes alarming symptoms of a condition that was destined to become increasingly debilitating in his remaining years:

Every day the world pays me compliments on the fire of my recent works, but no one will believe the strain and effort it costs me to produce them: there are some days in which my enfeebled memory and the unstrung state of my nerves crush me to the earth to such an extent that I fall prey to the worst sort of depression, and thus am quite incapable of finding even a single idea for many days thereafter; until at last Providence revives me, and I can again sit down at the pianoforte and begin to scratch away again.²¹

That Haydn was able to complete two superbly crafted quartets despite the seriously imperiled state of his health attests to his fortitude and the enduring integrity of his compositional resources. In this view, the contrast between advancing disability and seemingly undiminished creativity may be understood as evidence for a case of separation between art and life. And yet certain strands of musical conversation that these quartets invite us to listen for—notably those that concern the portrayal of disruption and recovery—point instead toward an intimate proximity of the music and

²¹ Translated in H. C. Robbins Landon, ed., *The Collected Correspondence and London Notebooks of Joseph Haydn* (Fair Lawn, NJ: Essential Books, 1959), 154.

its creator, as Haydn himself experienced threatening obstacles but also the recuperative forces of renewal.

Haydn's ever-worsening infirmity would ultimately deprive us of a full group of six quartets and thus limit the interpretive possibilities promised by the concept of tertiary rhetoric. But within the circumscribed field of rhetorical play sanctioned by the publication of Op. 77 as a group of two, we at least have the composer's consent to comprehend the quartets as a pair, and not only to contemplate the threads of conversation that connect them but to ponder Haydn's artistic and personal engagement as that conversation takes place.

IX. Works Cited

Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung 1. Leipzig: 1798-99.

Broyles, Michael. "The Two Instrumental Styles of Classicism." *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 36 (Summer 1983): 210-42.

Burnham, Scott. *Mozart's Grace*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013.

Drabkin, William. "A Finale for Haydn's Last String Quartet." *HAYDN: Online Journal of the Haydn Society of North America* 2.2 (Fall 2012).

Grave, Floyd. "Galant Style, Enlightenment, and the Paths from Minor to Major in Later Instrumental Works by Haydn." *Ad Parnassum* 7 (2009): 33-41.

_____. "Metrical Displacement and the Compound Bar in Eighteenth-Century Theory and Practice." *Theoria* 1 (1985): 25-60.

_____. "Recuperation, Transformation and the Transcendence of Major over Minor in the Finale of Haydn's String Quartet Op. 76 No. 1." *Eighteenth-Century Music* 5 (March 2008): 27-50.

Grave, Floyd and Margaret Grave. *The String Quartets of Joseph Haydn*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Harutunian, John. *Haydn's and Mozart's Sonata Styles: A Comparison*. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2005.

- Hertz, Daniel. *Mozart, Haydn and Early Beethoven: 1781-1802*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2009.
- Landon, H. C. Robbins, ed. *The Collected Correspondence and London Notebooks of Joseph Haydn*. Fair Lawn, NJ: Essential Books, 1959.
- November, Nancy. *Beethoven's Theatrical Quartets*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Rosen, Charles. *Sonata Forms*. New York: W. W. Norton 1988.
- Sisman, Elaine. "Rhetorical Truth in Haydn's Chamber Music: Genre, Tertiary Rhetoric, and the Opus 76 Quartets." In Tom Beghin and Sander M. Goldberg, eds. *Haydn and the Performance of Rhetoric*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.
- _____. "Six of One: The Opus Concept in the Eighteenth Century." In Sean Gallagher and Thomas Forrest Kelly, eds. *The Century of Bach and Mozart: Perspectives on Historiography, Composition, Theory, and Performance*. Cambridge: Harvard University Department of Music, 2008.
- Steblin, Rita. *A History of Key Characteristics in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries*. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1983.
- Webster, James. "Traditional elements in Beethoven's Middle-Period String Quartets." In Robert Winter and Bruce Carr, eds. *Beethoven, Performers, and Critics*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1980.