

Mozart's expansion of the  
transition and extension in the recapitulation of  
*Piano Sonata in Bb Major*  
Analysis by David Mitchell

Mozart's *Piano Sonata in Bb major* is an excellent example of what happens most often in the recapitulation of most classical period sonatas. The main theme and subordinate theme are recapitulated in their entirety with tonal adjustments to stay in the tonic key. Instead, Mozart alters the transition after the main theme and the extension at the end of the first subordinate theme. He extends both by several measures to destabilize the tonic and dramatize the entire to the tonic key.

The transition is altered starting in measure 104. The transition in the exposition modulates to the key of F major. So Mozart has to provide tonal adjustment to stay in the tonic at the end of the transition. The transition in the recapitulation is fifteen measures and the transition in the exposition is twelve measures. He uses the opportunity to extend the transition through model sequence. The harmonic sequence is Bb, G, and E. It starts in measure 105 and ends in measure 108. Interestingly, the progression of the model sequence arpeggiates the E diminished chord that occurs in measure 108 and acts as a seven chord that resolves to the dominant seventh chord in measure 109. Mozart seems to be hint at the subdominant key by starting the sequence with a dominant seventh of key of Eb major. This sequence briefly destabilizes the tonic key. This is important because the rest of the transition is tonally adjusted to remain in the key of Bb major.

The extension from the exposition is recapitulated, but Mozart expands it from only four measures in the exposition to ten measures in the recapitulation. The expansion is the result a descending fifth model sequence that starts in measure 143 and in measure

147. There is a diminished fifth adjustment in measure 145. This keeps the piece from getting too far away from the tonic. Measures 147 to 151 are very interesting. There is an ascending chromatic melodic line in the treble clef and a pedal Bb in the bass and treble clef. There is an Italian sixth chord at the end of measure 148, but it looks like this is tonic prolongation that ends at the downbeat of measure 150 with an imperfect authentic cadence. There is a change of dynamic to piano to coincide with the imperfect authentic cadence. But the real perfect authentic cadence elides with the begin of the second theme in measure 152. The point of extending this extension is to destabilize the tonic and dramatize the return to Bb major at 152. Measures 147 to 151 could be seen as a compressed hybrid sentence. Measures 147 and 148 are the compound basic idea with tonic prolongation and measure 149 and 150 are the continuation phrase. 151 to 152 are the cadential idea.

Mozart is definitely concentrating his attention on the transition and extension from the exposition to destabilize the tonic in the recapitulation. This helps break up the monotony of the tonic key in the recapitulation.

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