

FIRST-MOVEMENT FORM IN
SELECTED EARLY SYMPHONIES OF MANNHEIM AND VIENNA

by

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Introduction

The years following 1750 were a diverse period in music. Bach had just composed his "Art of Fugue", the epitome of high Baroque contrapuntal style, Gluck was beginning a major reform of grand opera, and the classical symphony was experiencing birth pangs from various sources.

The development of the early classical symphony from the late Baroque style and forms has puzzled historians for two centuries, and has provided fertile ground for disagreement and controversy. Hugo Riemann and his followers have long promoted Johann Stamitz (1717-1757) and his fellow composers from Mannheim as sole creators of the classical sonata form and style, but this rather lopsided and impractical viewpoint has been challenged with increasing diligence; Guido Adler has countered Riemann by offering Georg Matthias Monn (1717-1750) and his contemporaries in Vienna as fathers of the classical symphony.

It is hardly likely, however, that only one composer or groups of composers invented sonata form or the classical symphony style. This paper will examine the first-movement form of selected early symphonies by Mannheim and Viennese composers in an attempt to arrive at a better understanding of the form that resulted from the mid-nineteenth century transformation of style.

Sonata Form

The problem of arriving at a working definition of sonata form has plagued theorists and historians for more than a century. While it is true that many pieces called sonata form parallel the textbook definition, at least as many more fail to, and the analyst is left with the difficulty of determining how far beyond the boundaries of the definition a piece may wander and still be labeled sonata form.

Czerny claimed to be the first to describe sonata form around 1840, though A.B. Marx was probably the first theorist to use the term "sonata form" in musical analysis. This points out an interesting problem--sonata form as such was an invention of nineteenth-century theorists to describe an eighteenth-century style of writing. As a result, sonata form was first defined as a melodic structure. The presence of contrasting melodic material, or a "second theme," at the point of the secondary key area of the dominant or relative minor was viewed as a decisive element that distinguished sonata form from its Baroque predecessor, the binary form. But equally unsatisfactory is the more recent practice of defining sonata form on purely tonal grounds. The move to the dominant and return to the tonic after passing through several additional key areas such as the relative minor and subdominant can be seen in most of the earlier Baroque forms, especially in the binary form.

Obviously, it is necessary to approach sonata form as a combination of these factors, but more importantly, our treatment of the sonata as a form must be revised. The sonata style is not a definite form like

the minuet or da capo aria; it is, "like the fugue, a way of writing, a feeling for proportion, direction, and texture rather than a pattern."¹ The key words here are proportion and direction, two aspects of the sonata style that have long been overlooked as essential qualities. Rosen, in The Classical Style, defines first-movement sonata form as being comprised of events rather than subjects or key areas.² This approach allows for the consideration of harmonic and rhythmic motion, balance, and effect, substances which are not accounted for in the textbook definition. According to Rosen, sonata form is in two sections, either of which can repeat, and both of which contain two major events. The first section's events are the movement to the dominant and the final cadence at the dominant. Both of these events are characterized by an increase in the rhythmic and harmonic motion and may contain as many melodies as the composer wishes to utilize. The two events of the second section are the return to tonic and the final cadence in the tonic, with the return to tonic generally accompanied by the return of the opening material. The delay of the return in order to increase its effect creates a developmental section which is characterized by fragmentation of the melody and rapid harmonic motion. In order to contain a sufficient feeling of harmonic proportion, the return must occur no later than three-fourths of the way through the movement.

Rosen's approach to the sonata is one of style rather than form. While this approach may be insufficient in itself as the initial introduction of sonata form to young musicians, its radically different point of view is valid, and indeed helpful, in understanding the purpose

¹Charles Rosen, The Classical Style, p. 30.

²Rosen, Classical Style, pp. 99-100.

and result of the sonata style. It has shifted the emphasis from the traditional melodic and harmonic outlook to one of proportion, direction, and balance. The main focus of attention is on the location and effect of the recapitulation. Rosen sets forth no guideline concerning the treatment of material within the recapitulation beyond defining it as a symmetrical resolution of previous tensions (harmonic, rhythmic, and melodic). He further states that an important musical idea is unresolved until it is played in the tonic key. The stipulation that the recapitulation must occur no later than three fourths of the way into the movement reinforces his emphasis on the feeling of proportion and balance that sonata form must obtain. As the dramatic climax should occur at the point of return, or soon after, the return to tonic must receive considerable emphasis; it should be a climactic resolution, employing familiar melodic material from the first section. Obviously, the most emphatic and effective material to employ would be the opening material, but whether or not it is basic to sonata form is open to dispute. There are many examples in early Classical literature of a climactic return accomplished with other than the opening melodic material, as we shall see.

William S. Newman, in The Sonata in the Classic Era, is a bit more traditional in his discussion of "first quick movement" form, but still points out quite explicitly that the difference between a binary and ternary interpretation is dependant on the return to the initial idea, and the extent of the feeling of departure and return.

"In more complex forms of this quick, ternary movement, the portion from the inner double bar to the restoration of the tonic takes on the sense of a departure more and more as it gains independence through greater extent, through sectional, motivic, or other structural interest of its own, through avoidance of any appreciable emphasis on the tonic key, and even through the introduction

of new material. The restoration of the tonic takes on the sense of a return more and more as it gains emphasis through another statement of the initial idea at that point, through adequate harmonic, rhythmic, and dynamic preparation for this idea, and through the idea's placement far enough after its restatement at the double-bar and before the closing figure's restatement to sound like the start of a third independent section."³

Newman goes on to say that the return will sometimes be ushered in by the secondary melodic material (that is, the material which appears after the modulation of the dominant in the first section has been completed), especially if it is of a sharply contrasting nature or if the departure had begun with a definite statement of the initial material.

These two approaches to sonata form, although different in many ways, reflect a growing trend among musicians to relax the strict textbook definition of sonata form as handed to us by nineteenth-century theorists. We are beginning to remember that sonata form was not a set of rules an eighteenth-century composer abided by in order to write a first movement, but a pattern of writing that composers gradually began to follow and which were only later considered rules.

For the purpose of this paper, which is not to label these pieces but to understand their form and design, a strict definition of sonata form is undesirable. We will concern ourselves mainly with the total effect of the pieces, paying particular attention to proportion, direction, and balance.

³William Newman, Sonata in the Classic Era, p. 144.

Mannheim

Mannheim has traditionally been considered the birthplace of the Classical symphony, especially since Riemann's rediscovery and publication of music by Mannheim composers in 1907. While this viewpoint has been modified in more recent years, the court at Mannheim was definitely one center of music that contributed greatly to that birth.

The "Mannheim school" was actually a group of musicians employed for the court orchestra by elector Duke Carl Theodor from 1743 to 1778, when the Duke relocated the court in Munich. Reknowned throughout Europe for introducing uniform bowing and phrasing, brilliant dynamic effects such as crescendi and diminuendi, and a high standard of performing excellence and ability, this court orchestra continually astonished visitors by its quality of performance. Many literary sources from the late eighteenth century refer to the symphonic style of playing heard at Mannheim, and Charles Burney even refers to the orchestra as an "army of generals."⁴

The founder and leader of the Mannheim orchestra until his death in 1757 was Johann Wenzel Stamitz, a Bohemian violinist, conductor, and composer. Stamitz was born in Deutschbrod 19 June 1717 into a wealthy and musical family. His early life was spent in a Jesuit school where the musical instruction in performance, theory, and composition were

⁴
Dr. Burney's Musical Tours, Vol. 2, p. 35.

of a very high quality. His brilliant performance at the coronation activities in Prague in 1741 attracted the attention of Carl Theodor, who brought Stamitz back to Mannheim to play in the orchestra. Stamitz's advancement to leader of the group did not take long; in 1744, after just four years, he was named concert master and director of chamber music at Mannheim.

Although records indicate that Stamitz remained in the employ of the Mannheim court until his death, he did take several extensive leaves of absence. The most important was his visit to Paris in September of 1754, where he was engaged as leader and composer for the private Orchestre de Passy by Jean de La Poupelinière. Stamitz proved to be highly popular in Paris, and his success can be seen in the printing by French publishers of a large amount of his later music. Little is known about his final years at Mannheim where he died 27 March 1757 at the age of forty.⁵

The degree of Stamitz's importance to early Classical music is to some degree dependent on the chronology of his works. As Riemann's arguments supporting Stamitz as the important pivotal figure in the transition to Classical style state that Stamitz was the first composer to write in this style the composition dates become increasingly important. However, the lack of authentic copies and autographs affects the establishment of a tentative chronology, and Parisian prints offer only a terminal date of composition. Eugene K. Wolf, in his 1972 dissertation on the symphonies of Stamitz, attempts to establish a chronology for the fifty-seven correctly-attributed works based on

⁵Grove's Dictionary, Vol. 5, pp. 41-42.

various evidence: paper type and watermarks of the few extant manuscripts, a comparison of different Parisian publications and style analysis. Therefore, the dates given for the Stamitz symphonies, taken from Wolf's dissertation, are approximations at best. (Dates for works by the remaining composers discussed in this study are given only when the edition consulted provides one, or if it is found in the Breitkopf Thematic Catalogue.)

While Stamitz's importance to early Classical music is unassailable, the extent of that importance is quite another matter. Slonimsky writes that Stamitz "virtually created the Classical sonata form through the introduction of the contrasting elements into a single movement. . . and with variety governing the development of the themes."⁶ Perceval Graves is not quite as flamboyant, but does say that Stamitz "developed the sonata form and the sequence of symphonic movements as used by later classics."⁷

While Stamitz did introduce contrasting elements within a single movement into his music, it is difficult to consider these elements as themes. There is really no standard that Stamitz seems to follow concerning the introduction and treatment of these elements, and labeling is made even more difficult by the motivic rather than thematic quality they consist of. For example, the first movement of Sinfonia a 8 in E-flat (published as No. 1 in La Melodia Germanica, Bayard, Paris), ca. 1755,⁸ contains eight major motives which are found in varying order throughout.

⁶Baker's Biographical Dictionary, p. 1648.

⁷Grove's Dictionary, Vol. 5, p. 41.

⁸Mannheim Symphonists, Vol. 1, p. 36.

motive: a b c d e f c g h i d (seq) f e h i d a b (coda)
 key: T-----D-----T ~~~~~T-----
 bar: 1 11 31 75 92 139 144

It is obvious from this diagram that Stamitz has not treated his motives (most of which are close to a bar in length) thematically. The order in which they appear has a random look, though the 'f' motive seems to act, at least on paper, as sort of secondary material. It heralds the establishment of the dominant key and also appears at the strong reestablishment of the tonic key after the developmental passage.

Formally, this movement must still be seen as a somewhat expanded binary form. There is no proper development section, and the strong reestablishment of the tonic key in measure ninety-two is far too late, and hardly forceful enough, to be considered a recapitulation. Though it might be considered by some analysts as a sonata form without a recapitulation of the "first theme," this will not work here because of the lateness of the return (and hence an unsatisfactory harmonic balance and proportion) and the different combination of motives found in that return. We do see contrasting elements within a single movement--for example, motive 'c' is a lyric contrast to the more rhythmically forceful 'f'motive--but that, and the lack of a double bar, are really the only concessions that can be made to sonata form by this movement.

Example 1: motive 'c' and motive 'f'



Another interesting example of Stamitz's lack of systemized treatment of his motives, although this time that lack is seen from a different standpoint, is found in his Sinfonia a 11 in D, Op. 3, No. 2, ca. 1752-54.⁹

a b c	c d e f b c	d e f b c (coda)
T-----	~D-----	~T-----
1	25	53 65 103 115 124

In this case, the order of the motives is much the same at the return as at the beginning. (The 'a' motive is simply a coup d'archet (blow-of-the-bow) introduction of several tonic chords.) However, the placement of those motives with relationship to the harmonic pattern is most unusual. The return to tonic in bar sixty-five is accompanied by the 'd' motive, which also accompanied the establishment of the dominant key in bar twenty-five. We might first consider this to be similar to the first sinfonia cited--a recapitulation without the first thematic material. However, that first thematic material has been recapitulated before the return to the tonic key. There are no developmental passages, and the only forceful and climactic moment we feel is the repeat of the 'b' theme in bar 103, twenty-three bars before the end of the movement. Again, this does not fulfill enough requirements to be considered sonata style.

The first movement of the Sinfonia a 8 in D (published as No. 1 in La Melodia Germanica), ca. 1754-55¹⁰, contains what functions as true secondary melodic material at the dominant section. It is of a lyrical and contrasting nature and is much more melodic than the short motives we have come to expect from Stamitz.

⁹ Mannheim Symphonists, Vol. 1, p. 84.

¹⁰ Mannheim Symphonists, Vol. 1, p. 14.

Example 2: motive 'g'



Stamitz has also provided this second theme with a new method of approach which enables it to assume a more prominent role.

a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	(seq of e)	a	e	f	g	h	c (coda)
T-----	~~~~~	D-----	~~~~~	T-----					T-----					
1		25	38	70					82	103	126	137		

The new 'e' and 'f' motives are actually transitional material, beginning somewhat firmly in the dominant and ending on three V/V chords and followed by a beat of rest. This stops the rhythmic flow completely and provides the measure of the introductory eighth-note accompaniment pattern with an even greater opportunity for contrast.

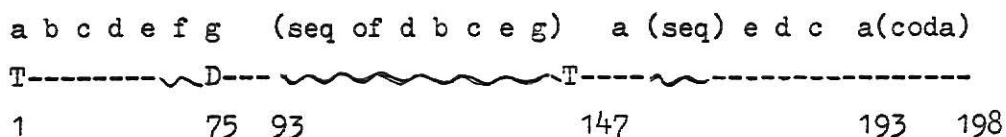
Following a short twelve-bar developmental section composed almost entirely of sequences based on the 'e' motive, the opening coup d'archet motive gives us a definite feeling of return, the first instance we have seen in which Stamitz uses the opening motive to reestablish the tonic key. He then proceeds to omit all of the remaining tonic-key material from the exposition and go directly to the transitional 'e' and 'f' motives and the secondary thematic material. Stamitz closes with a short coda derived from the 'c' motive.

This movement actually fulfills most of the requirements for sonata style writing. The literally-defined second theme is of great importance here, not because we need a second theme in order to call this sonata form, but rather because of its thematic rather than

motivic nature. This theme does more in its combination with the opening motive to provide us with a strong sense of return than a literal repeat of the entire 'a', 'b', 'c', and 'd' motives could have.

Although the shortness of the developmental section, and the fact that it develops only one motive, do not give a strong feeling of departure, this movement is definitely in the spirit of early sonata style.

Slonimsky's statement that Stamitz created sonata form by introducing "variety governing the development of the themes" can be both argued and supported. Of the seven Stamitz sinfonias available for this study, two did not contain any developmental work (Sinfonia a 8 in E-flat, No. 3 of La Melodia Germanica, and Sinfonia a 11 in D, Op. 3, No. 2), and four contained developmental passages built around one or, rarely, two motives, generally through sequencing (Sinfonia a 8 in D, No. 1 of La Melodia Germanica; Sinfonia a 8 in G, Op. 3, No. 1; Sinfonia a 12 in D, Op. 5, No. 2; and Sinfonia a 6 in B-flat, Op. 8, No. 5). Only one, Sinfonia a 8 in E-flat, Op. 4, No. 6, ca. 1757,¹¹ develops more than two motives. The overall first movement can be diagrammed as follows.



This is obviously not a successful sonata form for several reasons, all dealing with the treatment of the return, which is much too late and fails to solidly reestablish the tonic key because of its immediate sequencing pattern. But the development section is the most advanced

¹¹Mannheim Symphonists, Vol. 1, p. 107.

and imaginative we have witnessed from Stamitz. Five of the seven major motives found within the work are dealt with in some fashion, usually sequencing. The constant rhythmic flow comes to a halt only twice during the brief statement of the 'c' motive, and as a result, the harmonic rhythm is very fast and almost Baroque in nature. Therefore, this development may be viewed as looking both forward and backward--forward by the amount of material it chooses to develop, and backward by the treatment of the material and the resulting harmonic flux.

Anton Filtz was born in Eichstätt in September of 1733. Nothing is known of his early life; he was a pupil of Johann Stamitz and from 1754 to his death in March, 1760 at the age of twenty-six was first cellist of the Mannheim orchestra. He was extremely prolific in such a brief lifetime, writing at least forty-one symphonies, a great deal of chamber music, and a number of concerti. His works must have been popular at the time, as much of his music was pirated from the original Paris prints by publishers in London and Amsterdam.¹²

Although Filtz's sinfonias are in many ways not as interesting and imaginative as Stamitz's, they are more advanced in terms of style. Immediately noticeable upon a close perusal of his sinfonias is his love for the pedal point and the arpeggio, even within his developmental sections. These result in extremely slow, almost static harmonic rhythm, quite a change from the rapid, Baroque-like movement through various key centers from his elder contemporaries. For example, in the first movement of his Sinfonia a 8 in A (published as No. 2 of Sinfonies periodiques, Chevardiere, Paris),¹³ twenty-five of the

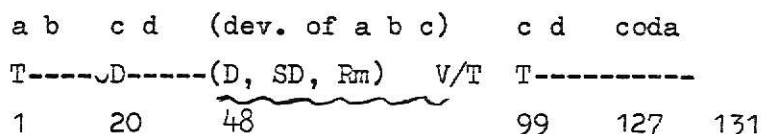
¹² MGG, Bd. 4, Sp. 202-203.

¹³ Mannheim Symphonists, Vol. 1, p. 227.

thirty-two bars of the opening passage to the beginning of the transition material are accompanied by a constant tonic eighth-note pedal tone in the bass; of the twenty-seven bar developmental section, the first sixteen contain an eighth-note E pedal in the viola. These instances are not isolated examples and may be found throughout Filtz's works. Although the issue as to whether this retardation of harmonic rhythm is more a Classical or a Baroque characteristic is debatable, the fact remains that this is something we have not seen previously from the Mannheimers.

Another stylistic feature that seems to be advanced in Filtz's works is the decrease of the number of motives found within a single movement, which has resulted in a stronger feeling of sectional identification. Lang remarked that Filtz was "entirely dominated by melodies, at times songlike, at other times impish or coy, but always fresh and beautifully rounded."¹⁴ And it is true; Filtz is more melodically and thematically oriented than Stamitz, using his formal structure to support his themes rather than using the themes to outline the form.

Structurally, the four opening movements are consistent in treatment, and all fit rather well into the requirements of sonata style. Two have no recapitulation of the first thematic area, but because of the treatment of the return, this lack is hardly felt. The opening movement of Sinfonia a 11 in D (No. 10 in Sinfonies periodique)¹⁵ is diagrammed below.



¹⁴Lang, Music in Western Civilization, p. 610.

¹⁵Mannheim Symphonists, Vol. 1, p. 247.

With the exception of the lack of a recapitulation of motives 'a' and 'b', this fits nicely into the textbook definition of sonata form. The return to the tonic key in bar ninety-nine (exactly three-fourths of the way into this movement) is the dramatic climax, which Filtz achieves by coming to a complete halt on a large dominant chord immediately preceeding the reestablishment of the tonic key. Therefore, even though that reestablishment is accompanied by the secondary thematic material rather than the first, the overall feeling of balance and resolution is maintained.

The two opening movements which contain a full recapitulation do not come to a stop prior to the return to the tonic key, but that is not needed. For example, Sinfonia a 8 in E-flat, Op. 2, No. 6¹⁶ announces the return with the opening 'a' motive (which is underlaid by the sustained tonic pedal) less than two-thirds through the movement.

a b	c d	(Dev. based on a)	a b	c d
T----	D----	~(D, Rm, ST, D)~	T-----	
1	29	65	88	109 138

The Sinfonia a 8 in A (No. 2 in Sinfonia periodique)¹⁷ is handled in the same fashion, only omitting the repeat of the 'a' and 'b' motives in the recapitulation.

a b c a b	d	: : (Dev. based on a)	a b c	d
T-----	D----	~~~~~	T-----	
1	51	73	100	118 139

¹⁶Mannheim Symphonists, Vol. 2, p. 24.

¹⁷Mannheim Symphonists, Vol. 1, p. 227.

Filtz's developmental sections tend to include more varied motivic material in the sinfonias which do not contain a full recapitulation. Both of the movements with full return of both primary and secondary melodic material basically develop the opening 'a' motive with less frequency of the sequence, resulting in movement through fewer key areas.

Christian Cannabich, successor to Stamitz as instrumental music director at Mannheim, was born in 1731 at Mannheim, where his father was employed as an oboist and flautist. He received early musical training from his father and then from Stamitz, and was appointed violinist in the Mannheim orchestra in 1747. Some time after that, he traveled to Rome to study composition under Jommelli until 1753. Upon the event of Stamitz's death in 1757, Cannabich was named the director of instrumental music at the Mannheim court, a post he retained after the court was moved to Munich in 1778. While visiting his son Carl, a conductor in Frankfort, he died 20 January 1798 at the age of sixty-seven.¹⁸

At least ninety symphonies by Cannabich are known, as well as a large collection of chamber music and around forty ballets (only about a dozen of which are extant). Not only was he a prolific composer, but a successful conductor as well. The Mannheim orchestra, excellent under Stamitz, became outstanding under the leadership of Cannabich. Mozart, who visited Mannheim in 1777-78, wrote his father that Cannabich was the best conductor he had ever met, and Dr. Burney was equally complimentary of his talents. It is actually the period of Cannabich's tenure as music director that the Mannheim orchestra was best noted and praised.

¹⁸Grove's Dictionary, Vol. 2, p. 42.

Although the following observations are based on the study of only one sinfonia by Cannabich, it is easy to see that his writing is understandably closer in structure to sonata form than that of Stamitz or Filtz. His younger age and his studies in Rome exposed him to the growth of sonata style long after both of his predecessors had died, and this is reflected in all aspects of his work, particularly in the length of his developmental section and his full recapitulation.

The Sinfonia a 12 in B-flat Major, No. 5,¹⁹ is extremely motivic, but Cannabich's systematic use of those motives is much more orderly than was Stamitz's.

a	b	c	d	e	f	g	(a)	a	b	h	(Seq. of a)	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	(a)	a	b	h
T-----						d	N/V/D	D-----			(D, SD, Rm)	T-----						t	N/V/T	T-----		
1						41		55			81							117			153	167 194

The order of the motives is precisely the same in the exposition as in the recapitulation, and the 'a' motive becomes the unifying factor throughout.

Example 3: motive 'a'



Its nature is such that it can appear simultaneously with many of the other motives, and it is especially suited for development and sequence utilization. But more important than the motive question is the interesting treatment of the secondary melodic material. This theme is preceded by a complete cessation of the music for three beats on a dominant-seventh chord the new key, a technique we saw only once from Stamitz. As a

¹⁹Mannheim Symphonists, Vol. 2, p. 103.

result, the listener hears the following melodic material as something totally new, despite the fact that it is underlaid by the 'a' motive. The unique approach to the second theme can be seen in Cannabich's decision to use the dominant minor key to present this new motive, moving through the key area of D-flat (neopolitan/V of the dominant key) to the re-use of the 'g' motive in the minor tonic and returning to the major tonic for 'a', 'b', and 'h'. Cannabich's development section, although longer than Stamitz's usual ones, is similar in treatment. It is based almost entirely on the sequencing of the 'a' motive with a rapid harmonic rhythm, but is notable in that there is again a cessation of motion on a dominant-seventh chord immediately preceeding the return or recapitulation.

This movement displays characteristics which allow us to label it as sonata form. The definite segregation of the sections by rests, the full recapitulation which resolves all melodic material with relation to the tonic key, and especially the climax at the point of recapitulation, all provide a strong feeling of direction and proportion which we did not experience from Stamitz or Filtz.

Vienna

Vienna's reputation as a flourishing musical center had long attracted musicians from all over Europe. In the early part of the eighteenth century this was particularly true, and the resulting atmosphere proved to be conducive to the growth and expansion of new ideas and styles. The late Baroque opera was rivaled in importance by instrumental music, and composers such as Monn, Wagenseil, and Wanhall formed a school of composition that contributed significantly to the development of the early symphony.

Georg Christoph Wagenseil, keyboard player, theorist, and composer, was born in Vienna 29 January 1715. Fux, his first composition instructor, recommended him for a court scholarship in 1736, and in 1739 he was named court composer, a position he held until his death 1 March 1777. Although he wrote a great many operas and was perhaps most popular for his keyboard music, his thirty symphonies are for us the most important of his works.²⁰

Only one of Wagenseil's three works examined in this study can be considered sonata style writing. The Sinfonia in G minor (listed in the 1766 Supplement to the Breitkopf Thematic Catalogue) is our only work in a minor key and is notable for several things.²¹

a b c d	e f e g h	(Seq. of d e f g e d)	a b e f g e h
t-----	d-----	(D, RM, Sd)	t-----
1	16	32	53 59 75

²⁰Grove's Dictionary, Vol. 9, p. 88.

²¹Accademia Musicale, 1972.

First, the diagram justifies sonata form very neatly. (The recapitulation obviously lacks the 'c' and 'd' motives as these are the modulatory materials from tonic to dominant.) Second, the secondary thematic material is in the dominant minor key rather than the more usual relative major. But a closer look at the music itself reveals a strange combination of definite Baroque techniques and effective "classical" nuances as seen in the most mature works of his younger colleagues. Wagenseil's bass line does not have the same appearance as the bass lines we have seen in music of the Mannheim school. It is much livelier and more independent than the pedal tones of Filtz, and at times, especially at cadence points, takes on the appearance of a true Baroque basso continuo line.

Example 4: Wagenseil's bass line



The viola often doubles the bass line, either at the unison or the octave, which contributes to the feeling of bass and melody dominance. (This attitude can also be seen in his *Symphonie in D Major*, DTO, Vol. 31, p. 28, which is written for two violin parts and bass.)

Equally as Baroque in character is his disregard for the bar line. In a movement in $\frac{4}{4}$ meter, Wagenseil will begin a theme on the first beat one time and the third beat the next. For example, in the *Symphonie in D* (DTO, Vol. 31, p. 16), Wagenseil begins the return to the initial motive on the third beat and the remainder of the movement is irregular by two beats.

Wagenseil's developments can be distinguished from the Mannheimers' developmental passages by the inclusion of practically all previous

thematic material. His treatment of this material is basically what one would expect--sequencing through various key areas--but he has separated the sequences from one another by bringing each one to a halt, sometimes even ending with a cadence. This is quite the opposite of what we witnessed in the developmental practice of constant motion by the Mannheimers. Wagenseil is a bit more daring harmonically than even Cannabich, however, as he uses augmented triads, diminished sevenths, and contrasts of the major and minor modes. This provides his developments with the "typical symphonic atmosphere that so fascinates us in the Classical symphony."²²

The remaining two symphonies studied are both much closer to a binary rather than a ternary structure. The three-voice Symphonie in D contains a developmental passage that remains firmly in the tonic key for half of its twenty-two bars, and even then "develops" through sequencing a motive which is merely a sixteenth-note rhythmic pattern. The larger Symphonie in D, DTO 31, p. 16, has only a ten-bar developmental section, and the feeling of departure is simply not enough to provide a climactic sense of resolution at the return little more than halfway through the movement.

Wagneseil's works clearly place him in a transitional role. Not only his structural, but his stylistic techniques reflect both the dying of the old Baroque style and the birth of the new Classical style.

Matthias Georg Monn (also known as Georg Matthias, or Mann)

²²Lang, p. 612.

was born in Vienna 9 April 1717. Virtually the only biographical information we have is that he was appointed organist at the newly-built Karlskirche in Vienna in 1738 and appears to have remained there until his death at the age of thirty-three on 3 October 1750.²³

Monn's symphonies reflect many of the same transitional characteristics as Wagenseil, though he is more ingrained in the Baroque and less influenced by the Classic style. His Symphonie in D, dated 24 May 1740 (DTO 31, p. 37), is the earliest example in symphonic literature of a four-movement symphony with a minuet. The first movement is totally through-composed and has no recapitulation of any motivic material, with the exception of a sixteenth-note passage which re-occurs at the point of modulation.

Example 5: modulatory passage



The melodic material is extremely motivic and imitative, and the extensive use of the flutes as solo instruments gives the piece a concerto flavor rather than a symphonic one.

The first movement of his Symphonie in E-flat, another four-movement work (DTO 31, p. 51), is similar in treatment but a bit different in structure.

a	b	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	e	c	f	c	d	coda
T-----~D-----~T-----														
11					26				48				80	85 95

²³Ingrid Kollpacher, "Monn, Matthias George," MGG Bd. 9, Sp. 470-471.

This is obviously a binary form. There is no departure following the dominant passage, but an immediate reestablishment of the tonic key accompanied by new motivic material. The utilization of the horns in the extended solo passage in bar twenty-six again provides a concerto feel to the work, but the absence of anything representing a ritornello or even a later solo passage by the horns precludes this idea.

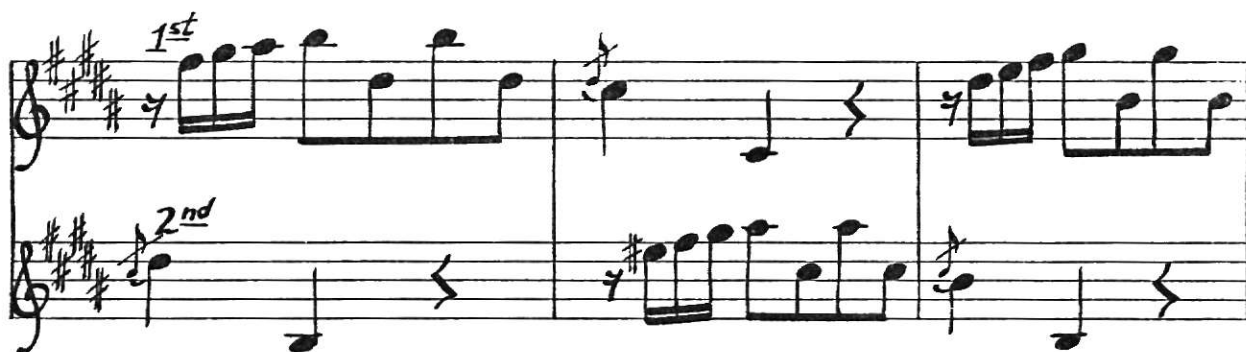
The only work by Monn with a semblance of sonata style writing included in this study is his *Symphonie in B* (DFO 31, p. 51), ironically the one symphonie without a minuet.

a b c	d	: : a e f	a b g c	coda(d)
T-----	~D--	~(D, d, ST)~	T-----	
1	26	32	60	87 92

The introduction of a new motive in the recapitulation is somewhat unsatisfactory, as is the reappearance of the dominant 'd' motive for only a five-bar coda; more serious is the lack of impact and climax at the point of return. The developmental section, which has added new melodic material as well, modulates back to the tonic key in a sequence pattern of only several bars, and as a result, it is not until somewhat later than the actual point of return that we feel firmly at home once again. By this time, the new, unfamiliar material begins and the listener is confused again. Thus, although the movement contains traces of a structure that will evolve into sonata form, the style does not lend a great deal of support to that structure.

This movement utilizes the greatest amount of imitation of any of the three pieces by Monn, with almost every motive presented imitatively between the first and second violins.

Example 6: motive 'b'



The opening 'a' motive is even a canon at the unison between the violins with a time interval of four bars. The extreme use of sequences, not only in the developmental section but throughout, gives the work a Baroque quality.

Johann Baptist Wanhal (born Jan Váňhal), an Austrian composer of Bohemian birth, poses the biggest biographical problem in the spelling of his name. The Germans spelled it Wanhal or Wanhall and it became van Hall to the Dutch; some English editions even spelled it Vanhal. Born in Nechaniez, Bohemia, Wanhal studied music diligently as a child and managed to attract the patronage of the Countess Achaffgotsch who took him to Vienna in 1760 to study with Dittersdorf. He spent two years in Italy with the assistance of Baron Riesch and then returned to Vienna for several years, where he became quite popular with the nobility. In 1771, he suffered a nervous breakdown, recovering only after a somewhat extended visit to Hungary, after which he settled again in Vienna in 1780, degenerated into salon music, and finally died 20 August 1813.²⁴

Landon refers to Wanhal as the most prolific and talented of the

²⁴ Milan Postolka, "Váňhal, Jan," MGG, Bd. 13, Sp. 1255-1256.

"second Haydn School,"²⁵ and this viewpoint is supported by the single symphony obtainable for this study. The Breitkopf Thematic Catalogue lists the Sinfonia in F in its 1771 supplement, making it one of the early works which so delighted Burney.²⁶ In a study of this piece, we are at last able to dispense with motivic labels, as the melodic material is unquestionably thematic rather than motivic.

Example 7: primary theme



Though this theme is based on the rhythmic motive of the first measure, the combination of, and additions to, this basic motive have provided a phrase which would be incomplete without all of its ingredients. An offshoot of this new approach is the first indication of a regular periodic phrase structure which determines and shapes the harmony rather than being directed by it. The decline of the motive as the sole source of melodic material was necessary for periodic development; the ease with which a motive could be sequenced and developed discouraged composers from combining motives into longer rhythmic units. Whether the lengthening of the motive brought about a stabilization of the harmony or vice versa, the end result is clear. The consistent

²⁵Landon's Haydn, Vol. 2, p. 380.

²⁶Diletto Musicale, 1978.

four-, six-, or eight-bar phrases found in this movement by Wanhal provide it with a feeling of grace and lyricism that the early composers simply were not able to obtain.

The formal outline of the work is much more simple in design than we have grown accustomed to in this study, for the lack of motivic organization allows us to refer to the melodic material as themes: primary theme = PT, secondary theme = ST, closing theme = CT, and bridge = B. The result is a classic textbook sonata form.

PT	B	ST	CT	: : Dev.	PT	B	ST	CT	Coda
T-----	~~~~~	D-----	-----	----- (D, SD, Rm) ~	T-----	~~~~~	-----	-----	-----
1	13	19	37	50	77	89	101	118	125 130

The primary theme begins immediately now, with no Mannheim-like opening chords to grab our attention. It is an eight-bar antecedent-consequent phrase structure with the consequent repeated to extend the theme to twelve bars. A short independent bridge indicates that Wanhal had yet to adopt the technique of beginning the bridge with primary material, resulting in the dependent bridge so popular with later composers. The secondary theme is a graceful outgrowth of the primary theme.

Example 8: secondary theme



Wanhal created a contrast, however, by giving it a continuous flow and placing it in sixths with the second violins, and then following it up immediately by a forte rush of sixteenth-note passage-work

in the strings. The closing theme provides a sharp release by the sudden relaxation of motion, and a quick push to the double bar.

Example 9: closing theme



The development section works almost exclusively with the two portions of the secondary theme material. Wanhal takes us through the usual key centers--dominant to subdominant to relative--but lacks the drive, excitement, and imagination that Cannabich was able to instill in his development. This could partially result from the nature of the two themes: they do not lend themselves well to motivic expansion and rapid harmonic motion. Wanhal ends the development with three prominent forte dominant chords, and the return of the primary theme is a climactic release of tension as a result. This is a full recapitulation; the bridge and closing material are kept intact and Wanhal's only alteration has been the addition of a five-bar coda based on the bridge material.

Wanhal's first movement succeeds as sonata style then, not only objectively but subjectively. The balance of the phrases and the rhythmic treatment provide a forward impetus that, combined with the resolution of all melodic and harmonic tensions in the recapitulation, creates a very proportioned and satisfying result. Wanhal had certainly advanced along different lines by 1771 than had Cannabich.

Conclusion

It is now possible to distinguish some basic elements characteristic of the Mannheim and the Viennese schools. The Mannheim symphonists employ the motive as their chief melodic unit, seldom using any idea that requires more than a measure to state. Stamitz's important innovation of the introduction of contrasting motives within a single movement was expanded upon by his followers, and although the motives never reach the point where they can be considered thematic in concept, there is an increasingly consistent use of certain motives to act as unifying factors. Both Filtz and Cannabich understood the need for the tonic return to be accompanied by an easily recognized major motive in order to provide the necessary climax and resulting release of tension.

The texture is extremely homophonic; the motives generally appear in the first violins (occasionally doubled or augmented by woodwind instruments), with the second violins in thirds, sixths, or accompanying eighth-notes. The violas and cellos are almost always in constant eighth-note octaves. Only within the developmental portions do we see any imitation between parts, and even that imitation is limited to interplay between the first and second violins.

The complexity of the developmental sections increases somewhat in the later Mannheimers, but not to a remarkable degree. All three composers tend to prefer sequencing patterns based on one or two motives, and rarely cadence in key areas other than the dominant,

subdominant, and relative. The development generally leads directly back to the tonic return with little preparation or extensive modulation. Not only do Filtz and, particularly, Cannabich use major motives for the tonic return, they display a growing concept of the need for balance and proportion with relation to the return. No matter how short the departure in the development, the return occurs at the point of highest dramatic activity with regard to rhythm, harmony, and tension.

The Viennese composers, with the exception of Wanhal, also favor the motive as the melodic unit. There is less contrast within a movement than we tend to see in Stamitz and Cannabich, but there is also greater (and chronologically earlier) use of the opening motive to usher in the return, and a review of the motives in the original exposition order.

The pieces are much more polyphonic than any by the Mannheimers, however. The teaching and influence of Fux are quite obvious in the styles of Wagenseil and Monn, and not until Wanhal is there a real feeling of Classical texture and approach. There is a consistent use of imitation through the movements by the older Viennese, and although the cello and viola are again often in accompanying octaves, the harmonic rhythm is faster, allowing the bass line more freedom of motion. A noticeable change in orchestration is seen in the greater importance of the woodwinds and horns. Wagenseil introduces some new and important motives with these instruments, and several of Monn's pieces even contain extended sections of solo passages for horns or flutes. This greater emphasis on equality of parts, imitative and motivic approach, and faster harmonic rhythm, all combine to provide

these pieces with a distinct Baroque flavor not present in the works from Mannheim.

The Viennese display a greater propensity towards the use of numerous motives within their developmental passages. Again, sequencing seems to be the favorite device in providing expansion and movement through various key areas, most noticeably, dominant, sub-dominant, and relative minor. The return to tonic is often preceded by a halt of rhythmic motion on a dominant or dominant-seventh chord, and is almost without exception accompanied by either the opening motive or the motive used at the secondary key area of the original section. Wagenseil and Monn both write relatively short developments, and thus the feeling of departure is often insufficient to provide the tonic return with a feeling of climax and resolution. This also distorts the proportion of the pieces and gives them a binary rather than ternary design. Wanhals's works are a different matter. His neat divisions by way of thematic association and cessation of motion, and satisfying balance of the sections, lead the Viennese school directly into the Classical ternary sonata form.

It is obviously impossible to credit a single school of composition with the "invention" and development of the sonata style. The characteristic importance of the Mannheim school appears to have been not in the form of their pieces, but in their progressive style that marked the transition from Baroque to Classical thought. The lack of the imitative treatment of the motives, and particularly the more static bass line, reflect a change of style that is not seen in the Viennese writing until later. All of the basic requirements for sonata style and textbook sonata form can be seen at one place or another in

the music from both schools, and clearly the later development of that style and form was dependent upon the mutual framework built by the Mannheim and Viennese composers.

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FIRST-MOVEMENT FORM IN
SELECTED EARLY SYMPHONIES OF MANNHEIM AND VIENNA

by

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FIRST MOVEMENT FORM IN
SELECTED EARLY SYMPHONIES OF MANNHEIM AND VIENNA

An Abstract

The report examines the first-movement form of the symphonies of six composers from Mannheim and Vienna in order to arrive at a better understanding of the early development of the Classical sonata form. The pieces were selected mainly for their general availability; seven sinfonias by Johann Stamitz, four by Anton Filtz, and one by Christian Cannabich represent the Mannheim School, while three symphonies by Georg Wagenseil, three by Georg Matthias Monn, and one by Johann Wanhall represent the Viennese School.

A general discussion of the problems involved in defining sonata form, and several viewpoints concerning the solution of those problems, arrives at the conclusion that sonata form is actually a style of writing rather than a list of rules to be followed. For the purpose of the report, some basic guidelines for recognizing that style are set forth.

A detailed discussion of the pieces and their adherence to these guidelines provides us with some interesting conclusions which challenge the traditional acceptance of Mannheim as the birthplace of sonata form. The symphonies by the Viennese composers, while containing a Baroque essence not found in the Mannheim sinfonias, are equally important in the growth of the Classical sonata style.