Galant Style Composition Using Koch's Versuch and Voice-Leading Schemata

Adem Merter Birson Merter Birson

GALANT-STYLE COMPOSITION USING KOCH'S *VERSUCH* AND VOICE-LEADING SCHEMATA

Adem Merter Birson

A productive way of approaching the chronological organization of the typical two-year music theory sequence[1] is to use style composition, engaging students in historical role-play whereby they attempt to emulate a given musical style according to its own tastes and tenets. In endeavoring to recreate the music of past, students not only get to enjoy the theory classroom as an outlet for their creativity as composers, they are also invited to ask questions as historical musicologists by identifying the components that make up a particular musical style period. The normally independent disciplines of composition and musicology do not always find their way meaningfully into a typical theory class, and their integration with theory provides students with a well-rounded learning experience. As an added benefit, this kind of activity affords the instructor the opportunity to assess student work in real musical output, rather than abstract theoretical exercises and terminology written in prose.[2]

---

[1] The chronology of the theory sequence can range roughly from the late seventeenth century to the early twentieth century. Aldwell and Schachter's *Harmony and Voice Leading*, for example, is self-described as a "course of study in harmony in the music of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries." Kostka and Payne's *Tonal Harmony* provides an "introduction to the resources and practices of Western music from the seventeenth century to the present day." See Edward Aldwell and Carl Schachter, preface to *Harmony and Voice Leading*, 3rd ed. (Thomson Schirmer, 2003), xi; Stefan Kostka and Dorothy Payne, preface to *Tonal Harmony*, 6th ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2009), v.

[2] The use of style composition is consistent with research in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), which favors active or experiential learning over passive absorption of material through a lecture. Active learning is defined as any activity that allows students to engage the course materials during instruction. See David A. Kolb, *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1984); and Dee L. Fink, *Creating Significant Learning Experiences: An Integrated Approach to Designing College Courses* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishing, 2003).

With respect to style composition for a second-semester theory class, I devised a syllabus aimed at transporting my students into the eighteenth-century composer's workshop. Given what is known about composition in the European courts during the eighteenth century, musicians would have focused on Vienna as a cultural center and would have been trained in a musical language based in large part on the galant style found in Italian opera buffa.[3] As Robert Gjerdingen has demonstrated, composers trained in the galant style studied characteristic voice-leading progressions, known as partimenti, which were codified in the pedagogical treatises of the Italian maestri of the era.[4] Gjerdingen's study is rooted partially in cognitive science, using the term "schemata" to describe these progressions and their ability to produce fluency in this musical idiom. The deep influence of the galant partimenti can be seen in the lives and works of the Viennese masters, as Haydn likely studied partimenti with Nicola Porpora during his early career in the 1750s,[5] and Mozart had absorbed the galant style and the buffa repertory so well that he went on to compose the quintessential examples of the genre, *Le nozze di Figaro* (1786) and *Don Giovanni* (1787).[6]

---

[3] Daniel Heartz, *Music in European Capitals: The Galant Style 1720-1780* (New York: Norton, 2003), 16-24.

[4] Robert Gjerdingen, *Music in the Galant Style* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Giorgio Sanguinetti, *The Art of Partimento: History, Theory, and Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). For collections of partimento exercises from several Italian masters, see the website, http://faculty-web.at.northwestern.edu/music/gjerdingen/partimenti/.

[5] Haydn apprenticed for three months with the Neapolitan master. He is reported to have said, "I profited greatly with Porpora in singing, in composition, and in the Italian language." See Georg August Griesinger, *Biographische Notizen über Joseph Haydn*, trans. in Vernon Gotwals, *Joseph Haydn: Eighteenth-Century Gentleman and Genius* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 12.

[6] Wye J. Allanbrook, *Rhythmic Gesture in Mozart: Le nozze di Figaro and Don Giovanni* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983). Gjerdingen discusses Mozart's use of voice-leading schemata in *Galant Style*, pp. 333-58 and 359-68.

2

Although Gjerdingen has demonstrated the value of schemata as a lexicon of idiomatic voice-leading progressions from the galant style, his study does not necessarily engage with how musicians were taught form. Fortunately, there is no shortage of eighteenth-century writing on the subject, including works like Joseph Riepel's *Anfangsgründe der musicalischen Setzkunst* (1752-68) and Johann Philipp Kirnberger's *Die Kunst des reinen Satzes* (1771-79). Perhaps no eighteenth-century treatise is as comprehensive with respect to form, however, as Heinrich Christoph Koch's *Versuch einer Anleitung zur Composition* (1782-93), the third and final volume of which contains a series of exercises for the beginning composer.[7] For Koch and other eighteenth-century theorists, the first movement of a symphony was connected to the smaller dance forms, the former growing out of the latter by extending musical periods.[8] As such, the tasteful arrangement of periods can be identified along with voice-leading schemata as essential elements of the galant style and its pedagogy.[9] To replicate the eighteenth-century composer's workshop, therefore, I asked my students to practice schemata at the keyboard and to think in terms of arranging periods within short compositions.

Studies devoted to style-composition in eighteenth-century music have tended to deal with the composition of a single work, divided into its individual components. In one such instance, Stefan Eckert identified a lack of connection between music theory and its historical context, observing that students did not naturally "feel bound by the rules of common-practice

---

[7] Heinrich Christoph Koch, *Introductory Essay on Composition*, trans. Nancy Kovaleff Baker (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983). This edition presents volumes 2-3.

[8] Leonard Ratner, "Eighteenth-Century Theories of Musical Period Structure," *Musical Quarterly* 42/4 (1956): 439-54; Elaine Sisman, "Small and Expanded Form: Koch's Model and Haydn's Music," *Musical Quarterly* 68 (1982): 444-75.

[9] Jan LaRue, *Guidelines for Style Analysis*, 2nd ed., Marian Green LaRue, ed. (Michigan: Harmonie Park Press, 2011).

tonality."[10] Eckert's solution to this problem was to engage his students with the rules of the musical past by using a minuet composition assignment based on the childhood minuets of Mozart, K. 1-7, and Riepel's *Anfangsgründe* (figure 1).

Figure 1. Stefan Eckert, Minuet Assignment

1) The first part of your minuet must be at least 10 measures, the second at least 14 measures in length. While the basic minuet structure usually consists of two times eight measures, this basic structure can be extended by means of: (1) repetition (R), (2) insertion (I) of new/contrasting material, (3) expansion (E), i.e., lengthening, and (4) doubling (Dblg) of the cadence, i.e. a repeat of the cadential measure(s). You may write a contrasting Trio after which the Minuet is usually repeated.

2) You must not have an uneven number of measures and you should try to compose a minuet with balanced melodic sections (4+4, 2+2, etc.); try to compose a minuet that could be danced!

3) The minuet must have at least two voices: a melody in the soprano (treble clef) and a bass (bass clef); the melody may, of course, also appear in the bass. You may want to add a third voice or harmonize the soprano-bass frame, so that every group member has its own part.

4) The large-scale harmonic structure of the early Mozart Minuets (K. 1-7) conforms to the following progression:

||: I – V :||: X – I :||

• The first part begins by confirming the Tonic (I) and ends on the Dominant (either with a HC or a PAC in the Dominant (V), which requires a modulation to the Dominant).
• The second part opens with either one of three continuation patterns (Monte, Fonte, or Ponte) or any other contrasting section (X) and always ends with a PAC in the Tonic (I).

5) Make sure that your minuet is a coherent composition. For this, it is a good idea to repeat aspects of the first part in the second.

6) Finally, make sure that all your group members are involved in the performance of the minuet!

---

[10] Stefan Eckert, "'So You Want to Write a Minuet?': Historical Perspectives in Teaching Theory," *Music Theory Online* 11/2 (2005), http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.05.11.2/mto.05.11.2.eckert.html.

4

Eckert's assignment emphasizes the balanced style of phrasing advocated for in Riepel's treatise, even incorporating techniques of phrase irregularity observed in Mozart's minuets, suggesting that the normal periodic structure (8+8) of a minuet in binary form be extended through various means of repetition, insertion, and expansion of musical material. The assignment also offers guidance on how to treat the music after the first repeat, presenting a choice between continuation patterns found in Riepel: the "Monte," "Fonte," or "Ponte."[11] This approach provides students not only with an engaging musical activity from which to learn theory in an eighteenth-century style, it also offers historical insight into the instructional process of the galant composer, who often began by composing minuets.

Sylvia Parker similarly makes a compelling case for the pedagogical value of model composition in an assignment to write a movement in "classical" sonata-allegro form for piano, pointing out that students who attempt to compose such pieces achieve a deeper understanding of the form than through analysis alone (figure 2).[12]

Figure 2. Sylvia Parker, Sonata Form Assignment.

> The project, compose a single movement for piano in classical sonata-allegro form, comprised [of] intermediary assignments:
>
> 1.a) Choose principal and secondary themes from your sight singing text.
>   b) Optional: Compose a closing theme of your own.
> 2. Transpose the themes to appropriate keys for both exposition and recapitulation.
> 3. Provide accompaniments in classical piano style.
> 4. Compose transitions for exposition and recapitulation. These should sound the same although they serve different modulatory functions. They may be dependent or independent.

---

[11] Riepel wrote that the beginning galant composer should never forget these three melodies, as they are useful after the double bar of a minuet. For more on these particular continuation schemata, see Gjerdingen, *Galant Style*, 61-71; 89-106; 197-215.

[12] Sylvia Parker, "Understanding Sonata Form Through Model Composition," *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy* (2006): 119-137.

5

5. Compose a development:
    a) Label the thematic material in the exposition that you are developing.
    b) Begin in the key in which the exposition ended.
    c) Modulate to at least three different keys.
    d) End the development on a prolonged dominant harmony.[13]

Parker's assignment is aimed at highlighting the formal arrangement of a classical sonata form, focusing primarily on themes and the transitions used to connect them. The use of pre-existing melodies from the repertory as first and second themes gives students a stylistic reference point from which to fashion appropriate left-hand accompaniments, and the transitions highlight the different modulatory functions of the exposition and recapitulation. The harmonic function of the development section is also identified as modulatory, moving to three different keys before preparing for the double return of the tonic and main theme at the recapitulation.[14]

This assignment is less situated in historical theory than Eckert's, and it may have been designed differently if the intention were greater historical accuracy. The way in which students were guided to "fill in the mold," so to speak, of a prototypical sonata exposition appears more closely related to twentieth-century textbook models than eighteenth-century practices.[15] In the eighteenth century no separate term existed for sonata form, and yet when describing first-

---

[13] Parker, 124.

[14] In a related study, Peter Silberman also designed a composition assignment in sonata form, identifying unidiomatic keyboard texture as a recurrent problem in student compositions. In order to remedy this, Silberman compiled a list of possible eighteenth-century accompaniments, like the Alberti bass, quarter-note bass lines, arpeggios, and repeated block chords, along with appropriate musical contexts for their application. See Silberman, "Teaching Classic Era Style Through Keyboard Accompaniment," *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy* 26 (2012): 141-88.

[15] A composition assignment from a textbook cited by Parker is found in Earl Henry and Michael Rogers, *Tonality and Design in Music Theory*, vol. 2 (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson-Prentice Hall, 2005), 227-29. Henry and Rogers focus on the exposition and similarly advocate a process beginning with composing first and second themes and adding a linking transition afterwards. See Parker, 122-23.

6

movement allegros theorists tended to emphasize modulation over thematic content, not necessarily considering the latter to be a formal necessity.[16] Furthermore, there would have been no such description of a single ideal sonata prototype, as different forms were related to a general sonata practice.[17] As such, the strict formal boundaries represented in this assignment render the compositional process more mechanical than it would have been in the eighteenth-century, a period whose theorists favored an organic model of sonata form.

These assignments each in their own rights helped students achieve a wide range of learning goals in music theory and simultaneously demonstrated the richness of the musical language of the eighteenth century with an engaging activity. However, their focus on individual forms could be viewed as limiting with respect to broader eighteenth-century practice, which we know from Koch consisted in part of a basic approach to phrasing applicable to both small and large forms. In this respect, Eckert's minuet assignment concludes the process prematurely, ending with a single short composition before demonstrating the full range of possibilities of galant composition within the larger forms. Conversely, Parker's sonata-form assignment can be viewed as having been too difficult for students so early on in the theory sequence, as they might have benefited from exposure to the smaller forms before attempting to write a sonata.[18]

Koch's *Versuch* is invaluable when it comes to bridging the conceptual gap between the two extremes of a minuet and a sonata. The treatise has been widely studied for the purposes

---

[16] Bathia Churgin, "Francesco Galeazzi's Description (1796) of Sonata Form," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 21/2 (1968): 181-99.

[17] Charles Rosen shows the outgrowth of sonata practice from eighteenth-century formal types in *Sonata Forms* (New York: Norton, 1980), 16-27. James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy also point out the interrelatedness between forms by identifying five separate "sonata types" in *Elements of Sonata Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 343-45.

[18] Parker says that students used prepared themes from a sight-singing textbook in order to save time, perhaps an indication of the difficulty of the assignment. See Parker, pp. 126, 135-36.

7

of understanding eighteenth-century compositional theory and aesthetics, yet it can also be used in the modern theory classroom.[19] In the third volume of his *Versuch*, Koch provides a series of exercises for the beginner student, demonstrating his step-by-step method for teaching composition. In Chapter Two of this volume, Koch focuses on short, binary forms in a series of four exercises; Chapter Three offers three more exercises for expanding phrases and periods; and Chapter Four describes the larger forms that can arise out of expanding short compositions, ending with detailed descriptions of the exposition and development section of a symphony.[20] For my purposes the first series of four exercises was sufficient, as one of my course aims was to instill in students the ability to develop the phrasing style of galant composition. Koch begins the second chapter as follows:

> In this chapter we begin to know and to practice the connection of melodic sections with regard to their rhythm and punctuation. To attain this objective, the shortest compositions common in music are chosen first, because the different possible ways of connecting their few melodic sections can be most easily perceived and imitated. These short compositions are:

> 1.   the current dance melodies
> 2.   the melodies to odes and songs, and
> 3.   all short pieces arbitrarily arranged with respect to the meter, the rhythm, the length, the punctuation, and the tempo.[21]

Koch lists the gavotte, bourrée, polonaise, anglaise, minuet and trio, and march as potential dance melodies, the chorale and figured melodies for song and ode forms, and the theme of a

---

[19] Nicholas Cook adapts Koch's expansion techniques in *Analysis Through Composition: Principles of the Classical Style* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 109-18. A similar approach building from small formal units to sonata form can be found in Arnold Schoenberg, *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, ed. Gerald Strang, (London: Faber and Faber, 1970).

[20] Koch, *Introductory Essay*, 78-128; 129-65; and 165-248. The terms "exposition" and "development section" do not appear in this treatise.

[21] Koch, 78.

8

theme and variations as an example of a short piece "arbitrarily arranged." He also highlights the importance of four-measure phrases and eight-measure periods, emphasizing their simplicity as being important for the comprehension of the beginning composer.

The exercises themselves follow this pattern, increasing in difficulty according to the arrangement of their cadences. The simplest kind of short composition according to Koch is in two periods, each of which ends with a perfect authentic cadence (PAC) in the home tonic; there is no modulation.[22] In this type of piece there are two options for the arrangement of cadences within individual phrases: the first phrase can be an imperfect authentic cadence (IAC) followed by a PAC and the third phrase a half cadence (HC) followed by a PAC, or vice versa, with the IAC and HC switching places. The second exercise is identical to the first except that its opening period modulates and cadences with a PAC in a subsidiary key (V in major-mode compositions, III in minor-mode ones).[23] In this second exercise, the most common arrangement arises when the first phrase of the opening period ends with an IAC in the tonic and the second phrase concludes with a PAC in the second key. The first phrase of the second period then leads to a HC in the original tonic and the composition concludes with a final PAC. Koch goes on to describe the three other cadential combinations in this second exercise, which, after the first example, become increasingly complex.

Our current understanding of cadential hierarchy accords with that of Koch, who views the PAC as the most conclusive of all cadences, with the IAC and HC representing respectively weaker forms of closure.[24] What is arguably unique to Koch is the way in which he describes

---

[22] Koch, 85.

[23] Koch, 95.

[24] William E. Caplin, *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 28-29. Caplin's

9

incrementally weaker forms of cadence and their harmonic distance from the tonic as potentially form-generating. By weakening the cadential punctuation of the phrases and periods of these short compositions, Koch systematically removes levels of tonal stability in a manner akin to taking the training wheels off a child's bicycle, preparing the student composer for larger musical journeys. As the first exercise of Koch's demonstrates, the possible combinations of cadential types and harmonic goals of each period are limited to two when no modulation has taken place in a composition. Once modulation has occurred in the second exercise, the possible cadential combinations have increased to four, requiring greater command of the composer.

The third exercise in short compositions is one in which only the final phrase of the piece concludes with a PAC in the home tonic. In this type of composition, all other phrases are to feature IACs or HCs in the tonic or a subsidiary key. Here Koch says "this exercise would abound with different punctuation forms if the melodic sections…could follow one another without restriction," the restriction being that no two successive phrases can lead to consecutive IACs or HCs in the same key.[25] Finally, in the last exercise of Chapter Two, Koch begins to discuss the use of more than four phrases, opening the path to creating larger forms:

> Although short compositions consisting of more than four melodic sections are arranged according to these maxims, I yet hope that it will not be deemed to long-winded when I now point out the most useful forms in the following exercise and present even more examples. The knowledge of these forms is useful to the beginning composer not only in itself but also with regard to the larger products of the art; for these forms are at the same time representations in miniature of larger compositions.[26]

theory has been formatted for instructional purposes as *Analyzing Classical Form: An Approach for the Classroom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). In this version cadential function is discussed on pp. 14-19 and 55-59.

[25] Koch, 110.

[26] Koch, 118.

In this exercise, Koch deals with compositions in which the second half is lengthened, a form that corresponds to rounded binary. Of this formal type, there are two versions, each with their own sets of cadential combinations: one in which the first half ends with a PAC in the tonic, and the other in which it ends with a PAC in the subsidiary key.

This concludes Koch's series of assignments in simple compositions. The subsequent chapter goes into means of extension and irregular phrasing (moving away from the four-measure model), ultimately leading to discussion of the larger compositions, one that includes the aria, solo (keyboard) sonata, string quartet, symphony, and concerto. This means that the path to the eighteenth-century sonata form is achieved through mastery of the smaller forms, that is, through dances and songs. This is corroborated in a letter from Mozart to his father from Paris (1778), when the young Mozart humorously describes his frustrating attempts at teaching beginner composition to his student, the daughter of a Parisian nobleman, the Duc de Guines:

> I gave her fourth lesson today and, so far as the rules of composition and harmony are concerned, I am fairly well satisfied with her…But she very soon gets bored, and I am unable to help her…Among other things I hit on the idea of writing down a very simple minuet, in order to see whether she could not compose a variation on it. It was useless. "Well," I thought, "she probably does not know how she ought to begin."…So I wrote down four bars of a minuet and said to her: "See what an ass I am! I have begun a minuet and cannot even finish the melody. Please be so kind as to finish it for me." Well, I shall see tomorrow what she has done.[27]

Mozart, when tasked with the training of a beginner composer, introduced the subject of minuet composition already by the fourth lesson. In the same letter, Mozart also reports that the duke had instructed him the following: "[My daughter] is not to compose operas, arias, concertos, [and] symphonies, but only grand sonatas for her instrument and mine." The duke, in a relic of the domestic limitations on female musicianship during the eighteenth-century, prohibits Mozart

---

[27] *The Letters of Mozart*, trans. Emily Anderson (London, 1938), 2:795-96.

from advancing his daughter to the more public of the larger forms, allowing only the modest solo or duet sonata for her to perform with her father.

For my composition assignments, I slightly modified Koch's method by designing a structured progression in ten stages from smaller to larger forms. My primary teaching goal was to instill in my students an understanding of the overall galant approach to phrases and their cadences such that they would be able to compose in all the forms, including ones featuring modulation to multiple keys outside the tonic. In order to accomplish this, I began with four-measure phrases and proceeded to antecedent/consequent periods, theme and variations, binary dance forms, and concluded with a rondo. I used the rondo as an example of an intermediate-length composition that can be achieved using the style of phrasing taught at the basic levels of Koch's program.[28] An aspect of galant composition not comprehensively covered in any of the aforementioned composition assignments—even Koch—is idiomatic voice leading, for which I depended on Gjerdingen's voice-leading schemata (figure 3).[29]

---

[28] Koch discusses rondo as a large composition in his description of the aria and the symphony, pp. 72 and 202. Cf. my discussion of the rondo assignments below. I deliberately avoided sonata form because it is more sophisticated than the simpler structures I wanted my students to compose; in later stages of a curriculum devoted to galant-style composition, sonata form would be the ultimate learning outcome based on the same techniques of phrasing.

[29] While Eckert used the "Monte," "Fonte," and "Ponte," his assignment offered no further guidance on schemata that could be used in the opening period and closing phrase of the minuet.

Figure 3. My Composition Assignments, 1-10.

Assignment 1: Compose a 4-measure phrase, 2 measures of which comprise an opening schema (Meyer, Romanesca, etc.) and 2 of which feature a cadence (compound, simple, doppia, Cudworth, or one at the end of a Prinner). You choose the key and meter, but stick to the major keys of less than 3 sharps or flats and choose between 3/4 and 4/4 meters.

Assignment 2: Same as Assignment 1, but choose a different key and meter.

Assignment 3: Antecedent/consequent period (2 phrases of 4 measures each).

Assignment 4: Use your antecedent/consequent period as the original theme on which you compose 2 variations. The first is a melodic variation, while the second is a rhythmic/textural variation. Remember to maintain your original voice leading throughout.

Assignment 5: Compose an 8-measure period the second phrase of which modulates and cadences in a subsidiary key.

Assignment 6: Compose a binary dance form with the following elements:
a. The first half should be a modulating period of 8 measures.
b. The second half should utilize a 4-measure "Ponte" to prepare for the return of the tonic.
c. The final phrase in the tonic should be the second phrase of the first half, transposed so that you wind up cadencing in the tonic by the end of the piece.

Assignment 7: Compose a binary dance form of 16 measures.

Assignment 8: Revisit your variation assignment and compose three more variations. One of the three variations should be a slow, aria-like melody over a basic accompaniment, and another should be in the minor mode. The last one should be a restatement of the main theme, with additional embellishments.

Assignment 9: Compose a rondo form. In a rondo there is an opening period, or refrain, that begins and ends in the tonic, followed by "episodes:" irregular periods that modulate and use different themes. Your task is to compose a rondo refrain and the first episode. If you choose a major key, your first episode should be in the dominant; if your tonic is minor, your episode should be in the relative major.

Assignment 10: Compose one more episode for your rondo, this one in a different key from your main theme and your first episode. If your tonic is major, your first episode was in V, and your second episode should be in minor: ii or vi. If your tonic is minor, your first episode was in III, and your second episode should be in iv.

13

The first four assignments introduced students to a series of foundational topics, including the four-measure phrase, a list of possible schemata, and two cadence types: the PAC and HC. Assignment 1 called for the composition of a four-measure phrase consisting of an initial, two-measure opening schema followed by a two-measure PAC in the tonic. To ensure that the students were comfortable with these fundamentals, I assigned them the same task for a second consecutive week. The next step was to build out from a single phrase into an eight-measure antecedent/consequent period with parallel thematic structure in Assignment 3. This assignment simultaneously introduced students to the HC and allowed them to use the same opening schema for the start of the second phrase.

Closing out this particular unit was the theme and variations in Assignment 4, the use of which recalled Koch's statement that the theme of a variations movement was an appropriate form for a practice piece "arbitrarily arranged with respect to the meter, the rhythm, the length, the punctuation, and the tempo," the third of his categories of small forms.[30] Assignment 4 called for the composition of a theme plus two variations, and Assignment 8—given later in the semester—completed the form with three more variations. One of the benefits of the exercise was that students got to experiment with generating length out of a single non-modulating period; although Koch did not create large forms in this manner, my intention was to enable students to compose a movement-length composition of forty-eight measures without much difficulty and no new concepts.

In the first student example, an antecedent/consequent period provides the theme for a variations movement by Student A. All of the elements of the first three composition assignments were put to use in this piece. Her opening schema is the two-stage variant of the

---

[30] Koch, 78. Cf. fn. 20.

"Do-Re-Mi" in F major,[31] harmonized I-V6-V6/5-I, with a march-like dotted rhythm, followed by a "Prinner,"[32] and a HC in the tonic. The second phrase begins with a parallel thematic structure, using the same opening in mm. 5-6, but ending with a PAC in m. 8 (example 1).

Example 1. Student A Theme and Variations in F Major, mm. 1-8.

For her first variation, Student A changed the texture by using hocket-style alternation in eighth-notes between melody and accompaniment. The arrangement of the voice-leading schemata in the original theme remains intact in this variation (example 2).

---

[31] Gjerdingen, 77-88. The "Do-Re-Mi" is an opening gambit characterized by a soprano melody of $\hat{1}$-$\hat{2}$-$\hat{3}$, a bass of $\hat{1}$-$\hat{7}$-$\hat{1}$, and a sequence of chords in 5/3, 6/3, and 5/3 positions.

[32] Gjerdingen, 45-60. The Prinner is a riposte to an opening gambit characterized by a soprano melody of $\hat{6}$-$\hat{5}$-$\hat{4}$-$\hat{3}$, a bass of $\hat{4}$-$\hat{3}$-$\hat{2}$-$\hat{1}$, and a sequence of chords in 5/3, 6/3, 6/3, and 5/3 positions.

15

Example 2. Student A, Theme and Variations in F Major, mm. 9-16.

At this point in the semester I temporarily put aside the variations in order to move on to other topics, later returning to them for Assignment 8. For the first of these new variations (third overall), Student A returned to the contour and figurations of the original theme, using the parallel minor to achieve contrast (example 3).

Example 3. Student A, Theme and Variations in F Major, mm. 25-32.

16

The next group of assignments was designed to lead to binary forms that incorporated modulation, corresponding with Koch's second-level exercise. Assignment 5 was to compose an 8-measure period the second phrase of which modulates and ends with a PAC in V (III in minor). This then led to the next two composition assignments, 6 and 7, for which students were expected to compose full binary dance forms. The students were to begin their dances with a modulating period using any of the above-discussed schemata, followed by a four-measure "Ponte."[33] The second phrase from the first half was then repeated transposed in order to conclude with a PAC in the original tonic. This kind of composition required a lesson in which schema to use after the first reprise, beginning the second half of the piece with a "Ponte."

For Assignment 6, Student A composed a march in D major with a similar voice-leading progression as her theme from Assignment 4: an opening "Do-Re-Mi" gambit followed by a "Prinner" riposte and cadence (example 4). Koch would have approved of the unity of this composition, as Student A renders the dotted rhythm motivic; it appears in every measure of the melody, and is even expressed in the bass at cadences in mm. 8 and 16. Notable in this respect are the climactic octave A's, *forte*, in the left hand of m. 12, a touch that gives the rhythm an appropriately comic, galant character by placing a grand gesture on the motive at an important structural moment. The voice-leading in the "Ponte" of mm. 9-12 is also excellent, offering a stepwise ascent from a' to g'' in the right hand. Upon reaching its apex at the start of m. 12 a descending arpeggio of a dominant-seventh chord prepares the return of the tonic in m. 13.

---

[33] Gjerdingen, 197-215; Cf. fn. 12. The "Ponte" is a bridge passage built on the repetition or extension of the dominant triad or seventh chord. It is characterized by scales and arpeggios focused on the tones of the dominant seventh chord over a pedal point on $\hat{5}$.

17

Example 4. Student A, March in D Major.

The final two assignments were to construct a single rondo movement consisting of a refrain and two episodes. These rondo assignments represented the culmination of the semester, as students were by now writing a multi-period movement featuring multiple themes and modulations to two keys outside of the tonic. Koch writes about the rondo in Chapter Four on the arrangement of large compositions, in this case with respect to the aria. This is the first large form Koch describes in his fourth chapter, making it appropriate as the next stage in the lengthening process the students were undergoing:

> In music the rondo differs from all other compositions mainly in that its different periods or episodes have no such similarity of melodic sections in common as do the periods of other compositions; for its every period has a special combination of specific melodic sections. The first of these, or the so-called rondo theme, consists of only one single complete melodic section, which is presented first as a V-phrase [HC], but in its immediate repetition is transformed into a closing phrase of the main key.[34]

Student B wrote the following sixteen-measure antecedent/consequent period in B minor as the rondo refrain (example 5). Her opening schema, mm. 1-4, is a combination of a "Romanesca,"[35] for its opening leap from scale-degrees $\hat{1}$ to $\hat{5}$ in the melody, and a "Do-Re-Mi" for its harmonic progression, I-V6-V6/5-I. The creativity of my students had fully emerged by the end of the semester, as this gentle theme can be described as languishing above its softly rolling accompaniment, its sighing gestures in mm. 3-4 evocative of a sad *buffa* character comically pining away over their unreturned affections for a love interest.

Example 5. Student B, Rondo in B minor, mm. 1-16.

---

[34] Koch, 172.

[35] Gjerdingen, 25-44. The "Romanesca" is an opening gambit built on a soprano of $\hat{1}$ $\hat{5}$ $\hat{1}$ $\hat{1}$, a bass of $\hat{1}$ $\hat{7}$ $\hat{6}$ $\hat{3}$.

19

Example 5 (*continued*)

     In addition to touching on the larger forms with this rondo assignment, I also took the liberty of asking my students to consider using techniques of expansion in the episodes, and to be especially creative in the moments of modulation to and from the original refrain. In this case, Student B used the repeated eight-note d'' in the right hand of m. 16 to lead into the first episode, suddenly harmonized in D major with a new theme beginning in m. 17 (example 6). The modulation to D major combined with the ascending stepwise motion of the new theme, a dotted rhythm followed by three repeated notes, provides both tonal and thematic contrast to the B minor refrain. Measures 17-20 are a complete four-measure phrase in D major, opening with a "Do-Re-Mi," followed by a PAC in D major based on a melodic scalar descent $\hat{5}$-$\hat{4}$-$\hat{3}$-$\hat{2}$-$\hat{1}$. The resolution of this cadence elides with the start of the next phrase at m. 21. After repeating the opening "Do-Re-Mi," Student B spins out the dotted motive into a sequence beginning in m.

20

23, causing the expansion of her phrase from four to six measures and dramatically leading back to the tonic for the start of the refrain by m. 27.[36]

Example 6. Student B, Rondo in B Minor, mm. 17-30.

Following the second iteration of the refrain, Student B began the second episode in the key of E minor (iv). For the first time in the semester, students were being asked to modulate to a second key outside of the tonic; being a step beyond the initial subsidiary key of V or III, this represented the furthest tonal distance covered so far. Student B, remaining in the minor mode, achieved contrast with with a powerful new theme, *forte*, with punctuating repeated left-hand

---

[36] Koch, 157.

21

chords and a leaping, disjunct melody in the right hand, a striking instance of emotion evoking the *Sturm und Drang*. After an opening four-measure "Aprile,"[37] the phrase continues on to what at first appears to be a cadential progression beginning with m. 39. However, mm. 39-40 are repeated, *piano*, in mm. 41-42, creating a beautiful progression that leads to a dramatic PAC in E minor in mm. 43-44 (example 7). This repetition extends the second half of this phrase from 4-6 measures, making for a ten-measure phrase before the return of the refrain in m. 45.

Example 7. Student B, Rondo in B Minor, mm. 35-49

---

[37] Gjerdingen, 122.

22

The result of these final two assignments was a rondo movement of sixty measures in total length. Using Koch's method of arranging musical periods, Student B was able to progress from the composition of a four-measure phrase in the tonic at the beginning of the semester to a full rondo form, ABACA, including modulation to two keys outside of the tonic. The voice-leading schemata enabled Student B to compose three idiomatic, contrasting themes for the refrain and two episodes, each of which possessed a well-developed character. Student B also creatively modulated to and from the subsidiary keys of the episodes, and used different kinds of repetition to extend each of the periods from a regular eight to an irregular ten measures.

As Gjerdingen notes, the masters of the eighteenth-century Neapolitan conservatories had the distinct advantage of telling their students to do as they say "because that is the way it is done."[38] Today this is not the case, as classroom music theory teachers are often tasked with providing historical justifications for a theory applicable to another time and place. Style composition projects remove this potential awkwardness by placing theoretical precepts in their historical and social contexts as much as possible. Using this method, students experienced first-hand the way in which eighteenth-century composers were trained in the galant style, and learned much about the social and cultural milieu in the process; this was evident from their mimicry of galant social gestures in their music. The methodologies applied to these composition assignments lent both historical and cultural access to this class that cannot be equaled by modern scholarship. Koch, after all, published the third volume of the *Versuch* while Haydn was actively composing, and only two years after Mozart's death. The schemata also gave the class a

---

[38] Gjerdingen 370.

view of eighteenth-century pedagogy, the effectiveness of which can be seen in the students' ability to quickly internalize voice-leading patterns and use them creatively.

Upon completion of the course, my students indicated that they all enjoyed the composition assignments the most out of any aspect. They constantly sought opportunities to improve their pieces, and were eager to perform them on the due dates. The students were perhaps most excited for the potential to study further, yet the fact that they were in their second semester of theory meant that they were going to move on in the sequence to Romantic harmony. All was not lost, however, as Koch's eighteenth-century method for arranging musical periods and Gjerdingen's galant voice-leading schemata do find varying degrees of application in other style periods. Romantic composers certainly continued to use them and the arrangement of short song and dance forms has never gone out of fashion. Schema theory also has much wider applications in the study of musical style, the implications of which are only now being realized in jazz, pop, and world music. More than the ability to compose in the galant style, these techniques provided students with skills for approaching the study and practice of any kind of music. Although at the start of the course some of my students indicated greater interest in music outside the Western art tradition, by semester's end they all reported that they valued the skills they acquired in class, especially the ability to compose their own music.

24

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aldwell, Edward and Carl Schachter. *Harmony and Voice Leading*. 3rd ed. Thomson Schirmer, 2003.

Allanbrook, Wye J. *Rhythmic Gesture in Mozart: Le nozze di Figaro and Don Giovanni*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983.

Balensuela, C. Matthew. "Music History/History of Theory: Dynamic Tensions between Theory and Composition in the Classical Era." *Vitalizing Music History Teaching*, ed. James R. Briscoe, 93-104. Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 2010.

Bribitzer-Stull, Matthew. *Anthology for Analysis and Performance for Use in the Music Theory Classroom*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.

Burkholder, J. Peter. "Peer Learning in Music History Courses." *Teaching Music History*, edited by Mary Natvig, 205-24. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002.

Byros, Vasili. "Prelude on a Partimento: Invention in the Compositional Pedagogy of the German States in the Time of J. S. Bach." *Music Theory Online* 21/3 (2015). http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.15.21.3/mto.15.21.3.byros.html.

Callahan, Michael. "Teaching Baroque Counterpoint Through Improvisation: An Introductory Curriculum in Stylistic Fluency." *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy* 26 (2012): 61-99.

Churgin, Bathia. "Francesco Galeazzi's Description (1796) of Sonata Form." *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 21/2 (1968): 181-99.

Cook, Nicholas. *Analysis Through Composition: Principles of the Classical Style*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Eckert, Stefan. "'So, you want to write a Minuet?': Historical Perspectives in Teaching Theory." *Music Theory Online*, 11/2 (June 2005). http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.05.11.2/mto.05.11.2.eckert.html.

Gjerdingen, Robert. *Music in the Galant Style*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Gotwals, Vernon. *Joseph Haydn: Eighteenth-Century Gentleman and Genius*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963.

Heartz, Daniel. *Haydn, Mozart and the Viennese School 1740-1780*. New York: Norton, 1995.

_____. *Music in European Capitals: The Galant Style 1720-1780*. New York: Norton, 2003.

Henry, Earl and Michael Rogers. *Tonality and Design in Music Theory*. Vol. 2. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson-Prentice Hall, 2005.

Koch, Heinrich Christoph. *Introductory Essay on Composition*, translated by Nancy Kovaleff Baker. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1983.

Kostka, Stefan and Dorothy Payne, *Tonal Harmony with an Introduction to Twentieth-Century Music*. 6th ed. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2009.

LaRue, Jan. *Guidelines for Style Analysis,* edited by Marian Green LaRue. 2nd ed. Michigan: Harmonie Park Press, 2011.

Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus. *The Letters of Mozart*. 3 Vols. Trans. and ed. Emily Anderson. London: 1938.

Roig-Francolí, Miguel A. *Harmony in Context*. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2003.

Ratner, Leonard. "Eighteenth-Century Theories of Musical Period Structure." *Musical Quarterly* 42/4 (1956): 439-54.

Sallmen, Michael. "Sound Experiments: The Use of Four-Voice Writing in the Study of Twentieth-Century Music." *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy* 20 (2006): 81-116.

Sanguinetti, Giorgio. *The Art of Partimento: History, Theory, and Practice.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Schoenberg, Arnold. *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*. London: Faber and Faber, 1970.

Silberman, Peter. "Teaching Classic Era Style Through Keyboard Accompaniment." *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy* 26 (2012): 141-88.

Sisman, Elaine. "Small and Expanded Form: Koch's Model and Haydn's Music." *Musical Quarterly*, 68 (1982): 444-75.

White, John D. *Guidelines for College Teaching of Music Theory.* 2nd ed. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2002.

Yang, Sandra Sedman. "Singing Gesualdo: Rules of Engagement in the Music History Classroom." *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 3/1 (2012): 39-55.

26