The Initial Movements of Mozart's Piano Sonatas K. 280 and K. 332: Some Striking Similarities

David Beach

As the title suggests, this paper explores what I perceive to be strong similarities between the opening movements of two Mozart piano sonatas, K. 280 and K. 332. The first of these is the second in a group of six sonatas, 1 some of which were apparently composed in Salzburg during the latter part of 1774; the set was completed in early 1775 while Mozart was in Munich for the premier of his opera La finta giardiniera. The dating of the second sonata being considered, which is the third in a group of four,² is far more problematic. According to Einstein,³ these sonatas were written in Paris during the summer/fall of 1778, but Tyson⁴ places them much later, possibly in the summer of 1783. Though this issue is by no means crucial to my thesis, it is not without relevance. For example, we know from Mozart's letters that he played all six sonatas of the earlier group several times during the journey of 1777-78.5 and thus, if there is any validity to Einstein's

¹The six sonatas are K. 279 (C major), K. 280 (F major), K. 281 (B[♭] major), K. 282 (E[♭] major), K. 283 (G major), and K. 284 (D major). The last was written for Baron Thaddäus von Dürnitz.

 $^{^2} The$ four sonatas are K. 330 (C major), K. 331 (A major), K. 332 (F major), and K. 333 (B $^{\flat}$ major); the last was published separately from the others.

³See Köchel, Chronologisch-thematisches Verzeichnis sämtlicher Tonwerke Wolfgang Amadé Mozarts, 3d ed., ed. A. Einstein (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1937).

⁴Alan Tyson, *Mozart: Studies of the Autograph Scores* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987), 29-30.

⁵The following quotes are from *The Letters of Mozart and his Family*, 2d ed., trans. and ed. Emily Anderson (New York: St. Martin's, 1966). (1) From a letter to his father (Augsburg, 17 October 1777): "Here

date, we can be reasonably sure that the earlier one was fresh in Mozart's memory (as well as in his fingers) at the time he would have composed the later one. But even if Tyson is correct (and his methods are certainly more scientific that were Einstein's), I think we can reasonably assume that Mozart continued to play the earlier F-major sonata, and, if not that, to utilize it as a teaching piece throughout his life, although there is no evidence of which I am aware to substantiate that idea. As far as external evidence is concerned, there is nothing to suggest these two works are in any way related. Instead we must look to the music itself.

I want to make it perfectly clear from the beginning that I am not suggesting these two works are somehow the same. Quite the contrary: despite the features they have in common, they are very different in character. For the most part, the similarities I will be describing do not exist at the musical surface; rather, many of them become apparent only after repeated hearings and familiarity with the voice leading at deeper as well as at more immediate levels of structure. To represent these different levels, I will utilize voice-leading graphs, the purpose of which will be to highlight certain compositional features (the similarities), rather than to present a comprehensive analysis of the two movements.

The types of associations that exist between these two movements—beyond the obvious facts that both were written in F major and in a triple meter, and both have the same overall formal design—seem to fall into three general categories: (1) the sharing of similar motives, (2) the sharing of similar voice-leading patterns, and (3) similar manipulation of registers, often resulting in connections that cross formal boundaries. The primary motives of both movements are the arpeggiation of the tonic triad (particularly descending, but also ascending) and the prominent neighbor-note D (ô). The first of these plays a particularly important role at deeper

and at Munich I played all my six sonatas by heart several times" [p. 329]. (2) From a letter to his father (Mannheim, 4 November 1777): "I played all my six sonatas today at Cannabich's" [p. 355].

levels of structure, the most interesting occurring at the deep middleground—as the means through which the return to the tonic is achieved at the beginning of the recapitulation.⁶ Less obvious are the similarities in voice-leading patterns at equivalent places in the formal design—e.g., the extended and chromatically-elaborated voice exchange in the bridge to the second key area. One feature of both movements that is immediately apparent is the treatment of $\hat{4}$ (Bb) in the upper register. The "hanging Bb," as I shall occasionally refer to it, is perhaps sufficient in itself to suggest more than a casual association between these two movements, a supposition that is strengthened when we consider all the evidence.

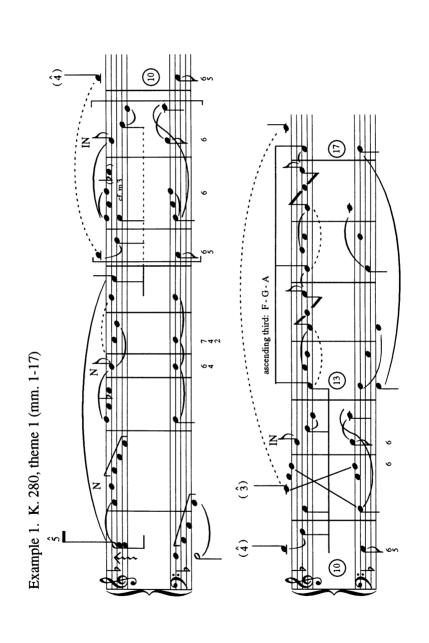
The following discussion is divided into two sections: (1) an examination of the initial theme and bridge to the second key area in each of the two movements, and (2) a comparison of the two development sections. Within each section, I will discuss first the main features of K. 280, then K. 332. I have not provided musical excerpts, but instead ask the reader to consult the detailed analytic graphs.

I. Initial Theme and Bridge

K. 280

A graphic representation of the opening theme (plus the first few measures of the following bridge) from the first movement of K. 280 is provided in Example 1. The two primary motives, the arpeggiated tonic triad and the neighbornote D, are stated very clearly in the opening six measures. The first of these is heard three times in immediate succession, first in ascending form as part of the opening chord, next as part of the descending arpeggiation in the left-hand part, and

⁶This large-scale motivic connection was described in my article "A Recurring Pattern in Mozart's Music," *Journal of Music Theory* 27 (Spring 1983):1-29.



then embellished in the right-hand part. The neighbor-note D, which is first heard as part of this decorated statement of the tonic triad, is immediately developed: it is introduced from above (by F-E¹-E) in m. 3) and subsequently prolonged by a motion to its lower third before resolving to $C(\hat{5})$ in m. 6. What follows is the sudden and unexpected introduction of $\hat{4}$ in the upper register (B \nmid 5). The resolution of $\hat{4}$ to $\hat{3}$ occurs only in the lower register for now, and—as my graph suggests—the following gesture, which introduces D from above, may be taken as a reference to mm. 3-4. however, the D does not move to C, but instead skips down to G (2) and subsequently its lower third E, harmonized by the progression ii⁶-V, as if completion of the phrase were imminent. What happens, of course, is that Mozart avoids closure, repeating the contents of mm. 7-9 in slightly varied form. This time the Bb is resolved in both registers and the motion to closure is completed.

As shown in Example 1 by the beam connecting the downward-stemmed notes of the right-hand part, the descending fifth from $\hat{5}$ to $\hat{1}$ is completed in the lower register in m. 13, while in the upper register the line proceeds only as far as A_5 . This registral partitioning is but one manifestation of the motivic fifth's division into its component thirds, C-A and A-F. The opening gesture of the bridge, which is articulated by a change to triplets, is a stepwise ascent in the lower register to A_4 followed by an immediate arpeggiation to A_5 , creating a registral and pitch link between the opening theme and this transitional passage.

Example 2 provides a graphic representation of the voice leading of the remainder of the bridge to the second theme, first as it occurs in the exposition and below it the corresponding passage in the recapitulation. Though Mozart has made some minor alterations in the latter (one would assume for the sake of variety), no changes were required, since the motion in the original is directed toward the dominant rather than toward V/V, the more common goal. In both passages, the large-scale motion is from 3 (supported by I) to 2 (supported by V). The former is prolonged by a

Theme 2 (2) $(\hat{2})$ (2) 04 (8) Example 2. K. 280, bridge in exposition and recapitulation (mm. 17-28 and 99-110) $(\hat{3})$ (3) (8) (2)

chromatically-elaborated voice exchange spanning six measures, and one might consider the chromatic motion in the bass (F-E $^{\natural}$ -E $^{\natural}$ -D, etc.) to be an expanded reference to the melodic motion of mm. 3-4.⁷ The following cadential progression (ii 6 -V) supports additional references to the neighbor-note D, which is once again left without resolution in the immediate context.

In summary, the following are what I take to be the main features of this material: (1) the various statements of the fifth motive and the neighbor-note D in the opening measures, (2) the sudden introduction of B_{\downarrow} in the upper register (in m. 7 and again in m. 10), (3) the completion of the descending fifth in the lower register at the beginning of the transitional passage, (4) the subsequent ascending third in the lower register and the reintroduction of $\hat{3}$ in the upper register (m. 17), (5) the chromatically-elaborated voice exchange (mm. 17-22), and (6) the subsequent drive to the cadence.

K. 332

The opening movement of K. 332 is not only different in character from K. 280, as I have already noted, but it is considerably more complex. As shown in Example 3, the initial thematic area contains two separate—though related—ideas, marked 1a and 1b. The first of these is twelve measures in length and can be subdivided into three four-measure groups (not indicated in Example 3). It is possible to consider these twelve measures as an expansion of eight by treating the second of the four-measure groups as parenthetical (though, I hasten to add, by no means superfluous). With minor rewriting of either mm. 3-4 or m. 9, it is possible to move directly from the first to the third group, thereby creating an eight-measure phrase. Not only is the result musically unsatisfying, of course, but, by making this change, one

⁷This idea, as well as the notion that m. 8 might be derived from the chromatic motion in m. 3, originates with Ernst Oster.

 $(\hat{3})$ (4) (\$) (3) (8) (4 Example 3. K. 332, theme 1 (mm. 1-22) (3) (2)

eliminates the first references to the hemiola pattern that plays such an important role in this movement.⁸ The sole advantage of this rather contrived analysis is to suggest the possibility that this idea—like the opening theme of K. 280—has been expanded internally, though of course in a very different manner.

The movement opens with the ascending arpeggiation of the tonic triad (F-A-C), and I think it is significant that we hear this gesture again only at the opening of the transition, where it is transposed and elaborated. The descending fifth, however, occurs numerous times. As shown by the beams connecting the downward-stemmed notes of the right-hand part, the stepwise descent from 5 to 1 spans the entire theme, as it did in K. 280. My notation suggests that one might hear this descent at two levels: that is, one hears an initial descent to F_A in m. 7 followed by a stepwise ascent back to the third on the downbeat of m. 9, but at a different level one hears mm. 5-8 as extending A₄ before completion of the fifth in m. 12. These two levels of motion articulate the division of this fifth into its component thirds, C-A and A-F. Meanwhile, \$\frac{2}{5}\$ has been prolonged by its upper neighbor D in mm. 5-6 and 9-10 before the local descent to 3, which is achieved by transfer of the dissonant Bb to an inner voice before its resolution. This simultaneous unfolding of the complete fifth and the third C-Bb-A (\$-\$4-\$3) is yet another manifestation of the division of the primary fifth into its two thirds. Surface statements of the arpeggiated fifth—in mm. 6-7, imitated immediately in the bass, and elaborated in m. 10—are marked in Example 3 by brackets.

Theme 1b imitates the tonal motion of 1a in the upper register. It begins with a statement of the descending-fifth motive followed by a stepwise ascent to the third, which is reminiscent of the melodic motion in mm. 7-9. After a

⁸See Maury Yeston, *The Stratification of Musical Rhythm* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), 103-8, for a discussion of some of the ways in which the three-against-two pattern is realized in this movement.

(%) Example 4. K. 332, bridge in exposition and recapitulation (mm. 20-42 and 152-178) Z 55 Theme 2 ₹ • > 9 <u>\</u> ١ (©) (F) _ (ন্ব

(2) Theme 2 changes here Ŝ 25 Example 4, continued **9**. 3 (3) (9)

restatement of the descending fifth, the lower third of the triad proceeds to closure, as it had done earlier, while the prolonged C moves to A through Bb. Once again, the resolution of the Bb occurs only after transfer to an inner voice, setting the stage for a return to the upper register at a later time. The initial theme group then closes with statements of the unembellished fifth C-F in both registers, as if to summarize all that has come before.

The transition passage opens with references to the two primary motives. There is a motion through the chromatic passing-tone C# to D—the upper neighbor of C—which is followed immediately in the right-hand part by embellished statement of the ascending triad, now on D. The latter leads to A₅, creating a registral link to theme 1b and supplying the "missing" resolution of the Bb in that register. As shown in the top system of Example 4, this material and its subsequent extension (up to the G-major harmony [V/V] in m. 37) are contained within a chromatic voice exchange, where the stable harmony is transformed into an augmentedsixth chord in the key of the dominant. This interpretation depends upon hearing the motion to D that opens the transition passage in relation to the larger controlling bass note F and the tonic harmony. Thus, the overall harmonic motion of this passage (from the close of the first theme to the opening of the second theme) is I-II^{\(\beta\)} [V/V]-V, supporting a large-scale melodic motion from 3 to 2. The equivalent passage in the reprise is rewritten, of course, to direct the motion to the primary dominant, one result of which is the elimination of the chromatic voice exchange. The purpose of the arrows in my graph of this material is to show that the motion through C# to D at the beginning is reversed later by That is, though the the return to C via an extended Db. controlling bass motion is I to V, as indicated by the large slur, one can understand the sounding bass as a chromatic extension of the motivic neighbor-note relationship: $C-C^{\sharp}-D(N) \longrightarrow D^{\flat}-C.$

In comparing this material to the equivalent passages in K. 280, I ask the reader to focus on the points of similarity.

In both, the various statements of the triadic fifth motive and references to the upper neighbor-note D are quite apparent, as are the shift to the upper register (theme 1b) and return to that register in the transitional passage. Although the "abandonment" of the high B is certainly less dramatic here than in K. 280, I think it is important to one's hearing of subsequent events. And though the chromatic voice exchange is certainly not as obvious as the chromatically-elaborated yet diatonic voice exchange in the equivalent passage in K. 280, the parallel, once discovered, seems perfectly clear.

II. Development

K. 280

Since the development section of K. 280's first movement is based directly on material from the second theme, I would like to digress briefly to discuss that material. As shown in Example 5, the theme is divided into two phrases. each with its own characteristic articulation. Most obvious in the first phrase is the bass's unaccompanied statement of the ascending triad on the dominant and the immediate answer in the right-hand part by the same triad, now descending and filled in. The overall motion of this phrase is the descent to the third of the chord, which is embedded within a prolongation of its fifth before the descent to local closure at the end of the second phrase. As indicated by the parentheses in my graph, this descent is not stated in full at this point, but—as so often happens in Mozart's music—it is confirmed by subsequent cadences.⁹ When one considers this same material as it appears in the recapitulation, the controlling triad is the tonic,

⁹For a detailed discussion of this implied descent to local closure, see David Beach, "The Six-Four Chord as Support for Scale-Degree Three of the Fundamental Line," *Journal of Music Theory* 34 (1990):81-99.

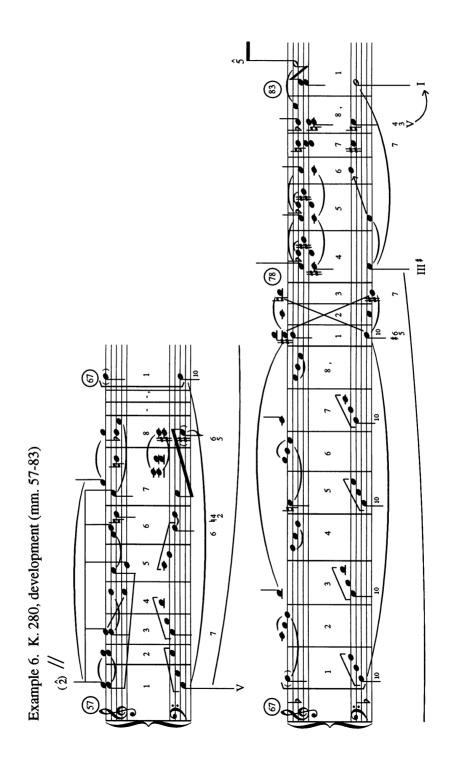
4 5 (5) 6 6 5 (5) 6 6 5 (5) <u>®</u> 3 (2)

Example 5. K. 280, theme 2 (mm. 27-43)

and the connection to the opening motivic ideas becomes all the more apparent.

A representation of the design and voice leading of the development section is provided in Example 6. At the largest level, the bass's motion to the opening chord of the recapitulation articulates a greatly expanded statement of the movement's primary motive, C-A-F, supporting the harmonic progression V-III\(\frac{1}{2}\)-I. Although, in one sense, this motion may be understood in relation to an underlying V-I structural progression, the subdivision of this fifth into its component thirds (the motivic design) could not be clearer. connection between III# and I is made by a passing V₃, and the path between V and III# is accomplished first by a motion through C# to D (itself an expansion of the important neighbor-note motive), and from there the descent through the augmented-sixth chord on B to III, as if this goal were to be heard in the local context as V/vi. As shown in Example 6. this harmonic progression supports two melodic motions from the initial G₅. At the most remote level, this G progresses via the harmonized turn figure B-A-G to A, which, with its supporting harmony, is suddenly shifted to the lower register in preparation for the return of the opening material. role of B and G as decorative pitches to A becomes immediately apparent in the brief prolongation of III# in mm. 78-80. Meanwhile, there is an implied descent to an inner voice, as indicated by the downward-stemmed notes in the graph. Following the transformation of G5 from stable to unstable by the introduction of C#, the line moves to an implied F₅ in m. 67, which one would assume has been omitted for the sake of direct reference to the second theme's opening gesture. From there, the line continues to E₅ over C, to D₅ as part of an augmented-sixth chord, and—following the chromatic voice exchange—to C[#]₄ as part of the A-major chord. This line continues to C^{\dagger} in preparation for the return, while the upper line seems to progress chromatically back to the opening C_5 ($\hat{5}$).

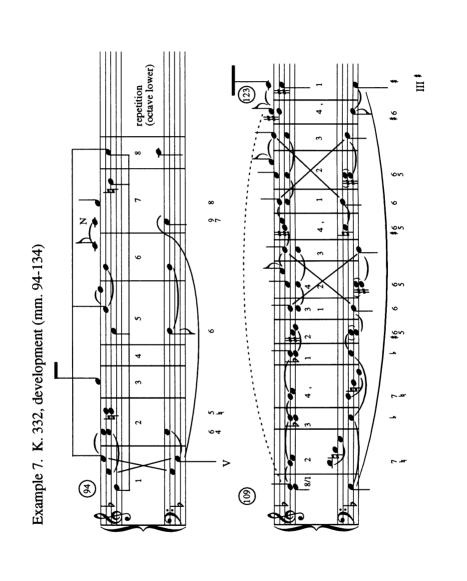
There are two additional features of the development section which are worthy of attention. First, there are the

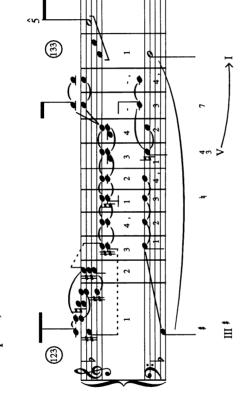


numerous references to the arpeggiated fifth motive. Initially they are minimally disguised, but beginning in m. 67 (at the outset of the sequence based upon the second theme's opening gestures) they are stated directly. Second, there is the matter of the A-major chord's metric placement within the prevailing hypermeter. As shown by the Arabic numerals between the staves, the larger metric structure falls into three groups of eight measures. The first group is actually ten measures in length, an expansion of eight by repetition of the final two-measure segment. The following sequence confirms the clear two-measure hypermeter, and the augmented-sixth chord of m. 75 falls not only on a hypermetric downbeat, but in the initial measure of an eight-measure group-at the super-hypermetric level, so to speak. The subsequent threemeasure extension of the augmented-sixth chord upsets the established pattern, thus drawing our attention all the more to the goal of the motion, the A-major chord, which, as we have seen, articulates the mid-point in the large-scale descending arpeggiation of the tonic triad.

K. 332

The initial phrase from the development section of K. 332's first movement sounds at first like a new idea, but closer examination reveals a strong relationship to the exposition's second theme. As shown in Example 7, its main features are the prolongation of $\hat{2}$ (G₅) by its upper neighbor, and two melodic lines converging on C₅, one from the third above and the other from below. The phrase is then repeated an octave lower. Following an initial prolongation of 2 in the lower register, the melodic line then proceeds by sequence involving voice exchanges with the bass and a series of overlappings—to the upper register, where 2, now altered to G# as part of the augmented-sixth chord, leads to A₅ supported by the A-major chord (III*). Having achieved its immediate goal, the line falls away to the inner-voice tone E, after which this gesture is repeated in the lower register in preparation for the return to the opening material. The path to this return





Example 7, continued

involves first the cancellation of C^{\sharp} to C^{\natural} and then the addition of a connecting dominant over the passing-tone G in the bass.

The main thrust of the development section is a largescale motion from the dominant to III# (the A-major chord in m. 123) as the mid-point in the arpeggiation back to the tonic. Thus, as in K. 280's first movement, the connection from exposition to recapitulation is organized around a greatly enlarged statement of the primary motive, the descending fifth of the tonic triad. Here, however, there is an additional factor to consider, namely the two-measure extension of the In the immediate context, this connecting dominant. dominant seventh chord may simply be considered an extension of the preceding ⁴/₃ chord, but, because of its registral distribution, one cannot help but hear the high Bb in relation to the A₅ eight measures earlier and the prolonged G₅ of mm. 96ff. That is, I believe this seemingly innocent—and, I would say, almost puckish—echo in the development's final two measures introduces an element of conflict for the astute listener. On the one hand, there is a large-scale arpeggiation in the bass—an expression of the motivic design. suddenly, with the introduction of the high Bb, there is an alternate way of hearing the development: as a prolongation of the structural dominant supporting a motion from its fifth to its seventh—that is, supporting the registrally articulated third G5-A5-Bb5.

A crucial issue in one's interpretation may be how one hears the arrival of the A-major in relation to the prevailing quadruple hypermeter. If one counts groups of four measures from the beginning of the development, the A-major chord falls in the middle of a hypermeasure, as does the dominant seventh chord eight measures later. Therefore, the final two measures serve not only an important tonal function (the completion of the large-scale motion to the seventh of the dominant), but they complete the underlying hypermetric scheme. These are two reasons why the two measures seem so "right" and their omission so "wrong." At the same time, I think the repeated four-measure pattern prior to m. 123 causes one to hear the A-major chord as falling on a

hypermetric downbeat, as I have indicated in Example 7. That is, I believe there has been a shift in the hypermeter prior to m. 123, and the original grouping is then re-established later with the shift in register and the completion of that pattern by the two-measure extension of the dominant. However one might hear this passage, the introduction of high Bb at this point and the lack of resolution in that register in the immediate context may be taken as a reference to an important compositional feature of the opening theme. Once again the high Bb, as dissonant seventh of the dominant, is left hanging, so to speak—an event that cannot go unnoticed by anyone with the slightest musical sensitivity.

* * *

Although there is much more one could say about each of these movements. I believe I have sufficiently demonstrated that there is more than a superficial relationship between them. The one question that remains, perhaps, is how we are to interpret this information. At the one extreme, one might claim that Mozart consciously patterned the K. 332 movement on the earlier one, but, of course, there is no way to substantiate such a supposition. At the other extreme, one might dismiss these similarities as coincidence resulting from Mozart's use of particular devices and procedures from his established repertoire of compositional tricks. Although I have always had difficulty viewing Mozart's art in these terms, there is a certain amount of truth to this point of view. That is, if one were to look at a number of Mozart's works, one might conclude that there are certain patterns and procedures which occur with regularity. For example, it is not at all uncommon to find themes and motives based on an arpeggiation of the tonic triad, and, under such circumstances, one would be hard pressed to name a movement where the upper neighbor to 5 does not play a prominent role. And I would hardly want to suggest that a voice-leading procedure such as the chromatically-elaborated voice exchange is unique to these particular movements. Rather, it is the combination of

146 Intégral

similarities—particularly the treatment of 4 in the upper register—and their placement within the two movements that suggest to me more than mere coincidence.

Perhaps the answer, if there is one, lies in the circumstances under which these sonatas were composed. I think it is a reasonable assumption—but, I admit, only an assumption—that they, like some of Mozart's other works, were originally improvised and only later refined and written down. Under these circumstances, where Mozart would be faced with immediate invention and continuation. I think it only natural that he would rely on solutions which had proven successful before, and, to be more specific, I would suggest that a natural tendency would be to rely on proven solutions in that particular key. I do not want to suggest that Mozart's compositions in F major are all alike, but, at the same time, I would not be surprised to find that they, like these two All of this is movements, share certain characteristics. speculation, of course, but I think not without some justification. Perhaps it would be best to let the evidence speak for itself.