

### *Form and large-scale harmony*

According to common wisdom, Tchaikovsky's greatest weakness was form; Laroche already articulated widespread opinion when he complained: "It appears that he [Tchaikovsky] was able to cope with all other technical difficulties, but mastery of form persistently eluded him" – a view that has been restated many times in the literature.<sup>1</sup> Tchaikovsky himself acknowledged a "lack of continuity in the sequence of separate episodes." Perhaps, when comparing their music with that of their "Classical" predecessors, a number of late nineteenth-century composers rightly worried that their music was insufficiently "organic." The ideal of the Classical sonata had been dynamism: through harmonic motion coupled with subtle motivic relatedness and transformation the music powerfully created the associated effects of goal-oriented forward motion and organic unity. But in the hands of later nineteenth- and early twentieth-century composers (Tchaikovsky, Bruckner, Strauss, Mahler) sonata form ran the risk of stultifying in excessively stable and self-contained thematic-harmonic units. Perhaps this general tendency toward formal sectionalization combined with harmonic stasis resulted from composers learning sonata form from theorists' codifications in *Formenlehre* treatises instead of from living tradition. And perhaps with some justification, some composers like Tchaikovsky (Bruckner also comes to mind) were right to complain that their "seams showed," i.e. that their music was a succession of good ideas clumsily or neatly, in Tchaikovsky's case, patched together as opposed to an organic whole.

But the assertion that Tchaikovsky's music is formally unsophisticated, or awkwardly confined in conventional formal-tonal straitjackets, is simply not borne out by careful analysis. On the contrary, the music exhibits remarkable innovation, freedom, and imagination in its treatment of form. Furthermore, it is precisely in the area of form that inno-

vative works like the *Manfred* Symphony and the *Pathétique* were most influential on the next generation (especially on Mahler and Rakhmaninov). Tchaikovsky recognized the innovative aspects of design and structure of his last symphony, not only in terms of his own symphonic oeuvre but in the larger context of the symphonic repertoire as a whole. In a letter to Bob, he observed: "There will be much that is new in this symphony where form is concerned, one point being that the Finale will not be a loud allegro, but the reverse, a most unhurried adagio."<sup>2</sup>

Before considering the unusual form of the *Pathétique* in greater detail, it is helpful to contextualize its formal innovations by reviewing the conventions of symphonic form, sonata form, and the formal structures of Tchaikovsky's preceding symphonies. To explain the *Pathétique*'s form, it is necessary to recognize that "normative" formal categories operate on three levels: (1) on the "global" level of a group of interrelated symphonies, i.e. the "meta-symphony" comprising the interrelated Symphonies Nos. 4–6, (2) the "macro"-level of the individual symphony as a whole, and (3) on the "micro"-level of the individual symphonic movement. "Normative" macro-symphonic form defines the four-movement disposition of the symphony as standardized in the later symphonies of Mozart, and especially the earlier Beethoven symphonies. Normative sonata form is defined by common practice of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century composers (especially late Haydn and Mozart, and Beethoven) and codified by mid-nineteenth-century theorists (e.g. Marx, Lobe). One might argue that, isolated as a Russian composer, Tchaikovsky remained "out of touch" with this mainstream European tradition and that his music cannot be measured against the yardstick of "normative" symphonic and sonata forms as defined by German-speaking composers and theorists. But both the biographical facts and the internal evidence of the music speak loudly against this conclusion: through his training and travels, especially in Germany, Tchaikovsky constantly kept in touch with important musical developments in central Europe; additionally (as we shall see shortly), his music conforms in large measure to the formal categories codified by the German-speaking composers and theorists. In spite of his partiality for French opera (discussed earlier), Tchaikovsky's orientation in formal matters was clearly German, this German influence probably originating in his early training under the Germanophile theorist Nicholas

Zaremba and pianist-composer Anton Rubinstein at the St. Petersburg Conservatory.

In many nineteenth-century symphonies, both the macro-symphonic form and/or the individual micro-sonata form may play out the strife-to-victory "redemption" paradigm, also described as *per aspera ad astra* ("through adversity to the stars"). The strife-to-victory narrative may incorporate within itself a battle *topos*, whereby military imagery may assume spiritual and amorous connotations (cf., for example, the discussion of the March in Chapter 4). Within the symphony as a whole, the large-scale harmonic plan may realize the *ad astra* narrative through the victory of the major over the minor mode in the Finale. In this case, the macro-symphonic structure is "end-weighted," the underlying compositional idea being to defer the achievement of redemption until the Finale, or until the last possible moment in the musical discourse, i.e. until the Finale's coda. Tchaikovsky's First, Second, Fourth, Fifth, and *Manfred* Symphonies conform to this model. Similarly, within the minor-mode sonata form of the individual movement, victory may be represented by the triumph of the major mode in the recapitulation. The first movements of Tchaikovsky's First and Second Symphonies attempt but fail to achieve this kind of modal victory.

To facilitate discussion of form, I shall follow the conventions of twentieth-century analytical parlance. In normative sonata form, the groups in the exposition occupy "exposition space"; the corresponding groups in the recapitulation occupy "recapitulation space." The introduction, development, and coda each occupy their own respective "spaces." Generally speaking, both introduction and coda spaces remain extraneous to the sonata space proper. The exposition and recapitulation "spaces" are generally divided into a first group and second group, and sometimes a closing group. In recent work, a number of scholars have begun to investigate the way in which Tchaikovsky and his contemporaries transformed, "deformed," and "re-formed" the normative sonata form paradigm.<sup>3</sup> There are various types of "deformations." Within the individual sonata form, these include harmonic procedures conflicting with the normative harmonic patterns of sonata form and unusual formal dispositions, which generally affect the recapitulation. For example, the recapitulation might be cut or truncated in various ways, or it might be reversed or partially reversed. Additionally, new material

could be introduced unexpectedly into the sonata form, a technique which has been described as break-through (or "Durchbruch"). Let us consider Tchaikovsky's use of these deformations.

"Truncated" sonata form may be realized by omitting the recapitulation of the first group; in this case, the role of reprise is assumed entirely by the second group. The second version of the Finale of Tchaikovsky's Second Symphony provides a clear example of the "truncated" reprise: revising the symphony in 1879–80, Tchaikovsky eliminated the recapitulation of the first group. The effect of this cut is that the recapitulation in the final version is reduced to the second group (mm. 513–651), which leads directly to the coda (m. 652–end). In "reversed" sonata form, the groups are recapitulated in reversed order so that the second group rather than the first initiates recapitulation space. While Tchaikovsky does not employ the reversed recapitulation in his symphonic works, he does use a type of "partially reversed" recapitulation in which the first theme of the first group is superimposed upon the end of the development and thus occurs within development space (it also marks the climax of the development). The anticipated recapitulation of the first group is then "interrupted" by the recapitulation of the second group, which initiates recapitulation space (as in reversed sonata form). In view of this displacement, the coda takes on the assignment of realizing the previously "interrupted" first group's recapitulation.<sup>4</sup>

The term "Durchbruch" was coined by Paul Bekker to describe the sudden, unexpected arrival on D major at the end of the development in the first movement of Mahler's First Symphony (mm. 352–57). Adorno, Hepokoski, and others have generalized Bekker's "Durchbruch" as an event which (in Hepokoski's words), "sunder[s] the piece's immanent logic."<sup>5</sup> The break-through may involve the unexpected presentation of new thematic material anywhere in the sonata form, although it generally occurs in the development or recapitulation rather than the exposition. But if the break-through takes place in the exposition, its material stands outside the sonata form proper and is never recapitulated in the normal way.<sup>6</sup> In terms of the *ad astra* redemption paradigm, the break-through may be an epiphanal revelation of the redemptive state to be definitively experienced at the end of the spiritual pilgrimage.

### Super-sonata form and macro-symphonic diachronic transformation

Normative macro-symphonic form may be defined as the four-movement form generally employed in the later symphonies of Haydn and Mozart, and in those of Beethoven. The first movement, usually in a faster tempo, is in sonata form. The second movement is in a slower tempo, while the third movement is either a Minuet with Trio or a Scherzo. The Finale, usually in a fast tempo, can be in either rondo or sonata form. Tchaikovsky's Symphonies Nos. 1, 2, 4, and 5 conform to this four-movement macro-symphonic paradigm. The Third Symphony achieves its five-movement disposition by interpolating the "Alla tedesca" as an "extra" movement between first movement and the "Andante." Not only are the first five symphonies essentially traditional in their macro-symphonic formal disposition, each concludes with a triumphant Finale fulfilling the *ad astra* metaphor (although one might question the sincerity of the triumphs depicted in the Finales of the Fourth and Fifth symphonies).

For programmatic reasons, Tchaikovsky deforms normative macro-symphonic form in *Manfred* and the *Pathétique*; the forms of these symphonies are Tchaikovsky's most complicated macro-symphonic deformations. The technique of synthesizing individual movements of a composition within a single, unified sonata form, first explored by Beethoven in his last works and further developed by Liszt in his tone poems and piano sonata, had a profound effect on later nineteenth-century composers, including Tchaikovsky. I shall refer to this kind of synthesis as "super-sonata symphonic form." In super-sonata form (sometimes called a "sonata-in-one"), the three spatial divisions of sonata form – exposition, development, and recapitulation – are superimposed upon the design of a unified – usually (but not always) continuous – four-movement macro-symphonic form. In this superposition, the first movement generally fills the exposition space containing the first and second groups of a normative sonata form, and the Finale is assigned to recapitulation space and encompasses the recapitulation of the first and second groups. The spatial envelope of either "development space" or "recapitulatory space" is then extended by interpolating spatial envelopes for the other movements, usually a slow movement



and Scherzo, into the spatial envelope of the development or recapitulation.

Manfred's "disquiet" and "restlessness" are programmatically composed into the *Manfred* Symphony's large-scale formal dislocations. In the first movement, the sonata form's development space is eliminated, the exposition (mm. 1–288) being immediately followed by the recapitulation (mm. 289–end). Within the exposition, the massive first group presenting Manfred's motives (mm. 1–170) is followed by the second group associated with Astarte (mm. 171–288). The first movement's displaced development space is "restlessly" "bumped up" ("exiled," like Manfred himself) to the next level of spatial organization, namely the macro-symphonic form. At this next (macro-symphonic) level, the Scherzo and Andante (second and third movements) occupy development space. Thus, the formal displacement of the development in the first movement converts the symphony's normative four-movement macro-symphonic form into a super-sonata symphonic form encompassing the entire symphony: the first movement occupies exposition space, the Scherzo and Andante development space, and the Finale recapitulation space.<sup>7</sup>

In later years, Tchaikovsky became dissatisfied with the *Manfred* Symphony as a whole (although he still believed in the first movement's intrinsic quality). Perhaps a weakness of *Manfred*'s super-sonata symphonic form is the (programmatically?) "fitful" sectionalization it imposes upon the Finale, the major formal units tending to be separated by rests, which destroy continuity. One could argue that, in the *Pathétique*, Tchaikovsky sought to recompose certain elements of the *Manfred* Symphony, especially its programmatic macro-symphonic deformations; yet this time he achieved that elegant simplicity of expression which he felt had eluded him in the earlier work. This may account for the many significant parallels between the *Manfred* Symphony and the *Pathétique*. Most notably, both are tragic symphonies in B minor, both are program symphonies dealing with "forbidden" liaisons (the *Manfred* Symphony representing the tragic consequences of Manfred's incestuous union with his sister Astarte, the Sixth Symphony the homosexual relationship of the composer with his nephew), and both can be understood as super-sonata symphonic forms in which the outer movements function as exposition and recapitulation and the interior movements

occupy development space. In the Sixth, this super-sonata effect is realized more subtly than in *Manfred*: whereas in the earlier symphony, the Finale relies upon thematic reprise from the first movement to achieve the super-sonata form, in the Finale of the Sixth, there is no recapitulation from the first movement; instead, the Finale more subtly creates the effect of symphonic super-sonata form by recomposing the first movement's large-scale harmonic structure (as we shall see, its  $\hat{3}-\hat{5}-\hat{1}$  auxiliary cadence).

Elsewhere, I have proposed a theory of diachronic transformation that is related to Saussure's concept of "diachronic" linguistic transformation, observing that

Saussure's distinction between synchronic and diachronic "facts of a different order" can illuminate the entelechy of musical structure . . . A musical work may embody in its endstate a conceptually prior state, which has become the endstate through a diachronic transformation. From a synchronic perspective, the endstate is a "distortion" of the previous state and vice-versa . . . Diachronic transformation ruptures a steady state to create a duality of previous state and endstate and, from a single synchronic perspective, distortion and paradox.<sup>8</sup>

Drawing upon this theory of "diachronic transformation," I posit a conceptually "previous" formal state of the *Pathétique*'s macro-symphonic form, which is "distorted" in the work's "endstate." Essentially, I propose that, in its conceptually earlier state, the symphony conforms to normative macro-symphonic form (articulated in Symphonies Nos. 4–5) by concluding with a March-Finale and fulfilling the *per aspera ad astra* redemption narrative. Then, in a diachronic transformation designed to undercut the *ad astra* narrative, the slow movement is shifted from an interior position and transformed into the Adagio Finale, the March thereby being converted from a triumphant Finale into the third movement. Within the "global" "meta-symphonic" discourse spanning Symphonies Nos. 4–6, the Fourth and Fifth Symphonies both conform to and establish the macro-symphonic norm; but in the "endstate" of the *Pathétique*, the slow movement, shifted from its proper place *prior* to the March, tragically concludes both the symphony and the meta-symphony.<sup>9</sup> In the annotations in the sketchbook, Tchaikovsky refers to the third movement as both a Scherzo and a March. This terminology notwithstanding, the March is certainly not a traditional Scherzo either in

form or substance. But Tchaikovsky does not abandon the traditional Scherzo idea; rather, in the spirit of super-sonata symphonic concept, he amalgamates the Scherzo with the first movement by assigning its character and spatial mass to the first group and bridge in the first movement's exposition (mm. 22–88).

To summarize, in the *Pathétique* the normative four-movement macro-symphonic paradigm experiences expansion, synthesis, and diachronic transformation. In its "endstate," the first movement conflates a Scherzando-fantasy with the opening movement proper. In the "previous state," the defiant March attempts to assert itself as the Finale, but the spatially shifted *Adagio lamentoso* usurps its dramatic role. In the "endstate," the symphony is noteworthy for its treatment of the *ad astra* metaphor: as a residual effect of the "previous state" (lurking in the "background"), the initial three movements play out the *ad astra* narrative, which is fulfilled in the March; but this triumph is then brutally undercut by the *Adagio lamentoso*. For this reason, I shall refer to the overall symphonic narrative as a "failed" *ad astra* metaphor. This capriciously undercut *ad astra* metaphor is closely connected with Tchaikovsky's larger conception of malevolent Fate dramatically intervening in the "endgame" – whether of life or cards or musical form is immaterial – with disastrous results. An essential idea in the *Pathétique* – also clearly formulated in *The Queen of Spades* – is that the protagonists gamble on controlling Destiny; they call Fate's bluff and it responds by cheating. In the final scene of *The Queen of Spades*, for example, just at the point when Hermann thinks he has played the winning ace, Destiny substitutes the Queen of Spades; similarly, in the Sixth Symphony, just in the instance when the March believes it has achieved the *ad astra* narrative, it is undercut by the tragic Finale.

### Meta-symphonic connections

The Fourth through Sixth Symphonies are harmonically linked in several dimensions. Firstly, the large-scale F–B tritonality presented so emphatically by the first movement of the Fourth Symphony is also played out by the cornerstone symphonies of the narrative, i.e. by Symphony No. 4 in F and No. 6 in B – and also within the Sixth Symphony's outer movements as B–E# (cf. the discussion of Appendices A–C in



Chapter 4). Secondly, the E major-minor tonality of the Fifth Symphony concretizes the "fateful" appearances of the E major as "undertonic" to F major-minor in the Fourth Symphony's introduction and Finale (i.e. in the interpolated introduction in the Finale, mm. 199ff.). Finally, the Fifth Symphony is linked to the Sixth through the *Pathétique*'s introduction, which suggests a continuation of the Fifth Symphony's E minor tonality (only subsequent events reveal that B minor rather than E minor is destined to be the tonal center of the *Pathétique*).

### First movement

The sonata form of the *Pathétique*'s first movement is innovative in its design-structural coordination. The space normally allocated to the first group is occupied by material which I shall call Scherzando-fantasy. Since a narrative unfolds through the course of the movement (indeed, the symphony as a whole), Tchaikovsky avoids a literal or close recapitulation of the first group; rather, its reprise (mm. 245–67) significantly transforms the Scherzando material to depict novel events in the drama. The structural dominant at the end of the recapitulated first group (mm. 277ff.) supports a new, "Oracle" theme in the trombones, which creates the effect of a break-through.

Considered from a harmonic perspective, the first movement also deforms the traditional harmonic plan of a minor-mode sonata. The remarkable character of the Sixth Symphony's highly unstable opening becomes immediately apparent when compared with the much more conventional openings of Symphonies Nos. 1–5.<sup>10</sup> The introduction (mm. 1–18) suggests a tonic – E minor – but subsequent events soon undermine this impression (the invocation of E minor links the Sixth with the Fifth Symphony). At the beginning of the movement proper, i.e. at the "Allegro non troppo" (mm. 19ff.), the music clearly indicates that B minor is the main key center but a strong, root position B minor tonic is nevertheless withheld (Appendix A, a). The root position B minor tonic chord, which should resolve the first inversion dominant chord at the end of the introduction, is suppressed never to appear; rather, in the opening gesture, the expected root position tonic chord is displaced by a highly unstable first inversion tonic, which immediately moves to an unresolved dominant (m. 19).

Let us continue the harmonic analysis of the first movement, and specifically its first group. Assuming the character of a Scherzo, the first group is highly unusual harmonically. At no point does Tchaikovsky land on a structural tonic chord in root position. The only candidate for a structural tonic might be the B minor root position triad in mm. 36–38, but closer analysis reveals this chord to be passing in nature. In context, it is construed as the “upper fifth” of the preceding E minor chord (in mm. 27–34). Indeed, the Scherzo as a whole beginning on D in m. 26 is controlled by a playfully animated ascending fifth sequence, the B chord being just one link in the chain: D (m. 26) – A (m. 26) – E (m. 27) – B (m. 36) – F# (m. 42) – C# (m. 50) – G# (m. 66), which resolves as a leading tone to A (m. 70). The underlying idea is to arpeggiate the D chord: D (m. 26) – F# (m. 42) – A (m. 70). This chord, established in the Scherzando first group, is then prolonged throughout the second group (mm. 89–160).

Although the music has avoided a structural tonic throughout the first movement's introduction and exposition, one might expect it to conform to sonata form convention by articulating a strong structural tonic at the beginning of the recapitulation. But this expectation remains unfulfilled; rather, as at the outset (m. 19), the composer again suppresses a root position tonic at the beginning of the recapitulation (m. 245), landing instead on the first inversion of the B minor tonic chord. By avoiding a root position tonic at this formal-structural juncture, the music “passes through” the expected tonic, prolonging D in the bass from the exposition through the development to the beginning of the recapitulation. The bass then ascends from D to F#, which is first construed as G♭ (m. 263) and subsequently transformed enharmonically into F# (m. 267). The definitive arrival on the tonic, now converted from B minor to major, is delayed until the beginning of the recapitulated second group (mm. 305–34) and the “design” coda (mm. 335–54).<sup>11</sup> In this way, over the course of the first movement in its entirety, the bass realizes a massive enlargement of the auxiliary cadence: D–F#–B (3̂–5̂–1̂, 1<sup>6</sup>–V–I).

### The later movements

In his memoirs, Balanchine perceptively calls attention to the *Pathétique*'s unity:

And it's all masterfully, wonderfully connected: the melodies in the Finale resemble the theme in the first movement. And the tonalities are similar. Everything, everything is thought out! It's extraordinarily interesting to follow how it's all done.<sup>12</sup>

An essential compositional idea in the first movement is to take the D major chord established in the Scherzando exposition (mm. 26ff.) and, by exchanging its fifth A with the sixth B above the bass D, to convert the D chord into a B minor tonic six-three at the beginning of the recapitulation (Appendix A, a). To forge subtle links between movements, Tchaikovsky also employs this strategy in the symphony's later movements: it becomes the basis for the large-scale harmonic organization of both the second movement and the Finale (Appendix A, b and d). In the second movement, which is a large-scale ternary form A (mm. 1–56) B (mm. 57–95) A' (mm. 96–151) plus coda (m. 152–end), the B section in B minor is surrounded by A and A' sections in D major (Appendix A, b). At no point in the B section, however, does Tchaikovsky allow the music to articulate a stable root position B minor triad; rather, the entire B section extends the B minor chord in six-three position. Clearly, the compositional idea here is to generate the B minor passage by means of exchanging the A of the D chord for B, which then resolves back to A (5̂–6̂–5̂ over D). Tchaikovsky works the same procedure of converting a D major five-three into a B minor six-three in the Finale. In this movement, which is conceived as a strophic binary form A (mm. 1–36) B (mm. 37–81) A' (mm. 88–146) B'/Coda (mm. 147–end), the B section or second subject greatly extends the D major chord (mm. 37ff., Appendix A, d). At the climax of this passage (mm. 70–71), the D major chord is converted into a B minor six-three chord (*not* a root position five-three chord). This procedure accords with Tchaikovsky's larger harmonic strategy: as in the first movement, he wants to delay the definitive arrival on the B minor tonic in root position until the end of the movement (mm. 147ff.).

The third movement, the March, is a large bipartite structure (as opposed to the normative ternary form of a Scherzo): Part 1 comprises mm. 1–138 and Part 2 mm. 139–end (Appendix A, c). Each of these two large parts is then further subdivided into two sections, with a cadenza between the second A' and B' to yield the form: Part 1: AB / Part 2: A' Cadenza B.' The first A section is binary: a (mm. 1–34 and mm. 138–72)

– b (mm. 35–70 and mm. 173–94). The role of the A section is introductory, i.e. it foreshadows the presentation of the March theme proper in the second B section. The B section (the March theme in its entirety) is a ternary form: a (mm. 71–96 and mm. 229–54) – b (mm. 97–112 and mm. 255–82) – a' (mm. 113–38 and mm. 283–end). The extended cadenza (mm. 195–228) leads to the second, final statement of the March.

Armed with this outline of the third movement's form, let us consider its larger harmonic organization (Appendix A, c). The movement as a whole is clearly in G major. At first glance, the music appears to begin on the G major tonic; however, closer examination of the harmonic framework reveals a very curious harmonic twist: at the outset, the initial G chord – the putative tonic – does not really function as the tonic at all but rather is interpreted in context (of the A section, mm. 1–70) as III of E minor. Thus, in the first eight-measure phrase, the harmony presents an auxiliary cadence in E: III (mm. 1–6) – V (m. 7) – I (m. 8). E is then clearly prolonged through its extended dominant (mm. 19–26). The G that underpins the b section (mm. 37ff.) is still heard not as the definitive tonic but rather as III of E minor; it is the middle term of the arpeggiation: E (m. 8) – G (m. 37) – B (m. 61) spanning the A section. In the B section (mm. 71–138), Tchaikovsky employs mixture, moving from E minor to major, the full March theme being presented in E major. In the A' section, the bass moves again from E (m. 146 = m. 8) to G (m. 175 = m. 37) but instead of continuing up a minor third to B as the dominant of E (as it did in m. 61), it ascends a whole step to A (m. 191), which functions as the supertonic of G. The cadenza's purpose now becomes obvious: its role (mm. 195–228) is to dramatize the cadence into G major and the decisive arrival on the tonic: II (mm. 195–220) – V (mm. 221–28) – I (mm. 229ff.).

Let us return now to the Finale which, of all the later movements, is most closely related to the first. Kinship between the outer movements is established by a number of common features. Harmonically, the primary themes of the first and last movements are interrelated. In the first movement, the main theme (mm. 19–20) articulates the incomplete harmonic progression  $I^6-V$ ; if the "dysfunctional" seventh chord at the beginning of the Finale is explained as a B minor tonic chord "with added sixth" ( $G\sharp$ ) in first inversion, then the overall harmonic progression underlying the Finale's main theme (mm. 1–2) is similarly  $I^6-V$ . In the Finale, as in

the first movement, this  $I^6$ -V harmonic progression is first presented by the opening theme *in nuce* and is then expanded to become the basis of the large-scale harmony. And as in the first movement, the resolution of V to I is provided by the tonic at the return of the B section (mm. 147ff.), which simultaneously functions as a coda. To be sure, one might propose as a candidate for "strong root position tonic" the root position B minor chord in m. 12. But my interpretation of this harmonically complex passage does not accord this B minor chord definitive tonic status; instead, it is construed as a passing harmony. The overall harmonic progression in these measures (mm. 1-18) is  $I^6$  to III (m. 6) to  $II_5^6$  (mm. 16-18): the B minor triad in m. 12 is heard in the context of the passage as a whole as a passing harmony generated from the D chord in m. 6 and interposed between the  $D_3^5$  (m. 6) and  $E_5^6$  (m. 16) chords.

The III chord (D major) established at the beginning of the B section (m. 37) is converted into a  $I^6$  chord at the climax (m. 71), as noted above. In the larger context of the A and B sections taken together (mm. 1-73), the bass descends through the augmented fourth  $F\sharp$ -C:  $F\sharp$  (m. 2) - E (m. 30) - D (m. 37) -  $C_4$  (m. 73). Essentially, the tonic six-three articulated in m. 1 moves to the emphatic arrival on the Neapolitan (C) in root position in m. 73. The rushing descending octave scales (mm. 77-80) broken off abruptly by the ascending octave (m. 81) and followed by the rhetorical pause (extended by the *fermata* over the rest) create the impression that the movement might attempt to conclude in the key of C. The transition (mm. 82-89) recomposes - as a "composed-out echo" - the upper voice of the previous passage, the descending octave scale  $g^2$ - $g^1$  (mm. 82-88) now being "answered" by the ascending octave  $f\sharp^1$ - $f\sharp^2$  (m. 89). Perhaps one might be tempted to interpret the B minor chord in the transition (m. 84) as a definitive arrival on the tonic, but Tchaikovsky subverts its tonic status by transforming it into a passing chord: in the passage as a whole, the bass ascends by step,  $A\sharp$  (m. 83) - B (m. 84) -  $C\sharp$  (m. 87), as the upper voice descends by step, G (m. 83) -  $F\sharp$  (m. 88). In mm. 88-89, the music regains the  $I^6$ , which initiates the reprise (mm. 90ff.). In the larger context of mm. 81-88, then, the bass ascends chromatically from the Neapolitan (C) back to the tonic in first inversion on D: C (m. 81) -  $C\sharp$  (m. 87) - D (m. 88).

In the recomposition of the A section (mm. 104-46), the Neapolitan again receives tremendous emphasis (i.e. as in mm. 73-81). This time,



however, it occurs in six-three position (mm. 115ff.) and functions as a pre-dominant chord. This Neapolitan supports  $c^4$ , the "Phrygian" supertonic (B minor:  $b^2$ ) and goal of the upper voice, which collapses stepwise through three octaves to  $c^1$ :  $c^4$  (m. 115) –  $b^3$  –  $a^3$  (mm. 116–17) –  $g^3$  –  $f^3$  (m. 118–19) –  $e^3$  –  $d^3$  (mm. 120–21) –  $c^\sharp^3$  –  $b^2$  (mm. 122–23) –  $a^2$  –  $g^2$  (mm. 124–25) –  $f^\sharp^1$  (mm. 126–34) –  $e^1$  (m. 135) –  $d^1$  (m. 136) –  $c^1$  (m. 139, cf. the discussion of the "registral embrace" metaphor in Chapter 4). The definitive arrival on the tonic (mm. 147ff.) coincides with the definitive resolution of the Phrygian  $b^2$  (C) to  $\hat{1}$  (B). The entire recomposition of the B section (m. 147) simultaneously functioning as the coda extends the final tonic resolution of the auxiliary progression  $I^6$  (m. 109) –  $V_4^6$  (m. 126) –  $V_3^5$  (m. 146) –  $I$  (m. 147).

The unified harmonic structure of the *Pathétique*'s super-sonata form is shaped and conditioned by the auxiliary cadence (Appendix A). In exposition space, the first movement presents the auxiliary cadence D–F $\sharp$ –B (bracket "a" in Appendix A, a), which becomes paradigmatic for the symphony as a whole; in recapitulation space, the Finale recomposes the D–F $\sharp$ –B of the first movement (bracket "a" in Appendix A, d). Furthermore, the D of the second movement is regained by the D at the beginning of the fourth movement (see the dotted beam in the example); thus, the D–F $\sharp$ –B auxiliary cadence can be understood to be expanded over the last three movements. Like the symphony's first and last movements, the March is structured as an auxiliary cadence, the larger harmonic strategy being to withhold the definitive arrival on the tonic (as in movements I and IV) until the end of the movement. The March theme is foreshadowed in the "dark" key of E minor (mm. 1ff.), then played through in the "wrong" key of E major (mm. 71ff.), foreshadowed again in E minor (mm. 139ff.), finally to triumph in the "right" key of G major (mm. 229ff.). This progression from "darkness to light" is realized by means of the auxiliary cadence E–A–D–G (G major: VI–II–V–I), the background sequence of descending fifths (equals ascending fourths) clearly being motivically generated from the foreground fourths in the March theme itself.

- Zemlinsky's, Schulhoff's, Weill's, and Gershwin's Jews would be transfigured as Southern Blacks).
- 12 Other painters associated with David whose work has homosexual overtones include Anne Louis Girodet (1767–1824, a man), Pierre Narcisse Guérin (1774–1833), and Claude Marie Dubufe (1790–1864).
  - 13 In the scientific literature of Tchaikovsky's time, homosexuals were described as "buggers," "perverts," and "inverts"; see Greenberg, *The Construction of Homosexuality*.
  - 14 Ibid., p. 400.
  - 15 This causal linkage between Carmen's questioning of Destiny through the oracle of the cards and her murder was made even more explicit in the first version of the opera's conclusion (*redundantly* obvious in Bizet's later view): in the original version, after she had been stabbed but before she expired, Carmen made a gesture of cutting the cards. Bizet even allowed her to speak in a monotone as she died imitating the earlier oracular pronouncement of the cards (in eight subsequently cut and now-lost measures, he interpolated a transformation of text and music from the card-divination scene in Act 2). For the earlier versions of the ending in so far as it has survived in the manuscripts see Fritz Oeser, *Georges Bizet, Carmen. Kritische Neuausgabe nach den Quellen* (Kassel, 1964), pp. 840–47.
  - 16 One of the many issues debated in the recent literature concerns the enigmatic allusions to emotions encrypted in the symbols "X" and "Z" in the diary. Most commentators have interpreted these designations as coded references to the composer's homosexual urges. Noting that "X" and "Z" almost always occur in the context of references to games of vint and gambling, Poznansky has proposed that these letters may also refer to emotions emanating from the card-game vint (a Russian form of bridge).

## 2 Background and early reception

- 1 See Poznansky, *The Quest for the Inner Man*, pp. 556–57; Holden, *Tchaikovsky*, p. 332.
- 2 Poznansky, *Tchaikovsky's Last Days*, pp. 27–28.
- 3 Holden, *Tchaikovsky*, p. 333.
- 4 Foreword to the Sikorski pocket score of the Symphony in E $\flat$ , 1961.
- 5 Holden, *Tchaikovsky*, p. 333.
- 6 Foreword to the Sikorski edition of the Symphony in E $\flat$ .
- 7 Poznansky, *Tchaikovsky's Last Days*, p. 63.
- 8 Holden, *Tchaikovsky*, p. 333.
- 9 Kraus, "Tchaikovsky," p. 321. It is possible that the original "Life" program *per se* – but *not* the musical ideas associated with it – eventually "bifurcated"

into *both* the first three movements of the *Pathétique* and the final version of the E $\flat$  Major Piano Concerto (after the symphonic version of the E $\flat$  music had been rejected). Accordingly, the first movement of the Concerto might represent “Youth,” the second movement “Love,” and the third movement “Struggle and Victory,” as has been proposed recently by pianist-musicologist Andrei Hoteyev (“Tchaikovsky Reconsidered: Andrei Hoteev Talks to Martin Anderson,” *Fanfare* 22/4 (March 1999), pp. 74–92). Regarding Hoteyev’s suggestion that Tchaikovsky intended the optimism of the E $\flat$  Major Concerto to counterbalance the pessimism of the *Pathétique*, this hypothesis overlooks the fact that Tchaikovsky tore up the symphonic version of the E $\flat$  major music, violently “banishing” it from the symphonic narrative. By “exiling” this optimistic music to a different, peripheral genre, it is clear that he did *not* wish it to participate in the symphonic discourse and thereby mitigate the overwhelming pessimism of that narrative (see pp. 71–73). However, Hoteyev does provide important new information about the piano concertos as a whole and the last works for piano and orchestra in particular.

- 10 Brown, *Tchaikovsky*, vol. IV, p. 443. Poznansky in *Tchaikovsky’s Last Days*, p. 27, gives different dates, stating that the sketch was completed by 24 March and orchestrated between 19 July and 19 August.
- 11 It is believed that Tchaikovsky played through the symphony in the two-piano arrangement with Lev Konyus.
- 12 Poznansky, *Tchaikovsky’s Last Days*, p. 58.
- 13 Volkov, *Balanchine’s Tchaikovsky*, pp. 219–20.
- 14 Holden, *Tchaikovsky*, p. 345.
- 15 Poznansky, *Tchaikovsky’s Last Days*, p. 27.
- 16 *Ibid.*, p. 27.

### 3 Form and large-scale harmony

- 1 Kraus, “Tchaikovsky,” p. 300.
- 2 Holden, *Tchaikovsky*, pp. 332–33.
- 3 For some recent studies of sonata deformation see Hepokoski, *Sibelius. Symphony No. 5*; Warren Darcy, “Bruckner’s Sonata Deformations,” in *Bruckner Studies*, ed. Timothy L. Jackson and Paul Hawkshaw (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 256–77; and Jackson, “The Finale of Bruckner’s Seventh Symphony.”
- 4 The two works by Tchaikovsky exhibiting this form, the *Tempest Overture* (1873) and the first movement of the Fourth Symphony, are analyzed in detail in my 1995 “Sexuality and Structure in Tchaikovsky.” There, I noted the generic relationship of this kind of partial reversal to “break-through”

- technique, observing that “The brief, climactic appearance of the first theme at the climax of the development in both the *Tempest* and the Fourth Symphony is generically related to what James Hepokoski calls a ‘break-through deformation,’ this being defined as ‘an unforeseen inbreaking of a seemingly new . . . event in or at the close of the “development space,” [which] typically renders a normative . . . recapitulation invalid.”
- 5 Cf. Hepokoski’s discussion of “Durchbruch” in “Strauss’s *Don Juan* Revisited,” p. 142.
- 6 Tchaikovsky already employs the break-through technique in the outer movements of his First Symphony (1866, revised 1874). The sonata form of the first movement eloquently reveals the composer’s penchant for unorthodox formal-harmonic thinking. The exposition (mm. 1–250) is subdivided into a first group (mm. 1–67), an extended bridge (mm. 68–136), and a second group (mm. 137–250) following “textbook” sonata models. The second group, however, is remarkable for its harmonic freedom within the dominant prolongation and its break-through-like interpolation (mm. 162–210) – a passage which is not recomposed in the recapitulation. The break-through also figures prominently in the First Symphony’s Finale. The introduction, which makes reference to the first movement (mm. 1–64), leads to a brilliant first group (mm. 65–88); a *fugato* bridge section (mm. 89–125) introduces the chorale-like second group (mm. 126–200). A terse, contrapuntal development (mm. 201–81) culminates in the recapitulation of the first group (mm. 282–304). The reprise of the *fugato* bridge section (mm. 305–42) intimates the recapitulation of the second group; but, at this point (mm. 343ff.), the recapitulation deforms the normative sonata form paradigm: instead of the expected reprise of the second group, a ghostly allusion to the second subject (mm. 343–58) is transformed into a break-through recall of the introduction (mm. 359–66), introducing a remarkable, extended chromatic fantasy (mm. 367–414) based on augmentations of the descending figure from the second subject. Only in m. 415 is the second group released as an apotheosis of the chorale theme. In terms of the larger narrative, the role of the “meditative” chromatic fantasy is to prepare the protagonist for the final, redeeming revelation. Thus, the *ad astra* redemption-metaphor, thwarted in the first movement, can be fulfilled in the last.
- 7 In the context of *Manfred*’s super-sonata symphonic form, its Finale bears a double recapitulatory burden: the Finale’s recapitulatory obligations include reprising its own sonata’s first and second groups along with those of the first movement (in conformance with the super-sonata idea). Tchaikovsky solves this problem by employing no fewer than three recapitulatory spaces. As in normative sonata form, the exposition is divided into first (mm. 1–80) and second groups (mm. 81–160), a transformed reminiscence of *Manfred*’s

material (mm. 161–205) from the beginning of the first movement rounding out the exposition. The development section (mm. 206–66) is a double fugue based on the principal themes of the Finale's first and second groups, which is brought to a close (like the exposition) with a reminiscence of *Manfred's* opening (mm. 267–81). The first recapitulation (mm. 282–302) reprises the Finale's first theme combined with *Manfred's* theme from the first movement; the second recapitulation (mm. 337–93) reprises the Astarte material, which had been omitted from the recapitulation in the first movement, while the third recapitulation (mm. 394–end) presents a transfigured recapitulation of the first movement's reprise of *Manfred's* music, the strong parallelism between the conclusions of the outer movements reinforcing the effect of super-sonata symphonic form.

8 Quoted from Timothy L. Jackson, "Diachronic Transformation in a Schenkerian Context. A Study of the Brahms Haydn Variations Op. 56a-b," in *Schenker Studies 2*, ed. Hedi Siegel and Carl Schachter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

9 In other words, in the *Pathétique*, the normative sequence of movements in the standard paradigm of macro-symphonic form is deformed – i.e. "interrupted" and rearranged – through a formal *peripety* so as to undercut the *ad astra* narrative established in the Fourth and Fifth Symphonies. This "tragic" movement-reversal is generically related to the group-reversal in the "tragic" reversed recapitulation (cf. Jackson, "Tragic Reversed Sonata Form").

10 According to sonata form convention, both the exposition and recapitulation should begin on the tonic chord in root position, a paradigm which Tchaikovsky follows in his first three symphonies. In the first movements of Symphonies 1–5, and "7," the sonata exposition opens firmly on the tonic. The First Symphony unfurls a pseudo-folk melody against the backdrop of a stable tonic tremolo. The Second and Third Symphonies each begin with extended introductions, which prolong the dominants of their main keys in the manner of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven; in both of these symphonies, however, the prolonged dominant in the introductions resolves strongly to the root position tonic at the onset of the sonata form proper. The introductions to the Fourth and Fifth Symphonies both open firmly on the tonic, as do their sonata expositions. The E♭ Major "Seventh" Symphony, which does not feature an introduction, emphatically opens on its tonic. In the first movements of Symphonies Nos. 1–3, the structural recapitulation reasserts the tonic (First Symphony, m. 40; Second Symphony, m. 220; Third Symphony, m. 308).

11 I distinguish between "design" coda and "structural" coda. The "design" of a composition is its motivic-thematic substance; the "structure" is its tonal



organization. The distinction between design and structure was first made by Felix Salzer in *Structural Hearing* (New York: Charles Boni, 1952) and has since been widely adopted in the Schenkerian literature. The “design” coda generally occurs after the “design” of the exposition has been fully represented in the recapitulation; the structural coda usually begins after the fundamental line (the Schenkerian *Urlinie*) has descended to the tonic. Usually the design and structural codas are initiated simultaneously. In other words, the recapitulation of the design is realized so that its termination coincides with the definitive resolution of the structural upper voice (on  $\hat{1}$ ). But in the Tchaikovsky, the design coda and structural coda are “out of phase.” As shown in Appendix A, ex. a, the fundamental line is undivided, the structural descent continuing through the recapitulation of the first group by eliminating the expected interruption (on  $\hat{2}$ ) at the beginning of the reprise. Since the fundamental line definitively descends to  $\hat{1}$  in the recapitulation of the second group, the structural coda *anticipates* the design coda. In my analysis of the Finale of Brahms’s Third Violin Sonata Op. 108 (“The Tragic Reversed Recapitulation in the German Classical Tradition,” *Journal of Music Theory* 40 [1996]), pp. 85–88), I show how, in this piece, the structural coda also precedes the design coda; design similarly outpaces structure. I observe that “these design–structural ‘misunderstandings’ may be part of the purely musical tragedy embodied in this impassioned work.” Similarly, the first movement of the *Pathétique* embodies a tragic design–structure “misunderstanding.”

12 Volkov, *Balanchine’s Tchaikovsky*, p. 120.

#### 4 The “not-so-secret” program – a hypothesis

1 Poznansky, *The Quest for the Inner Man*, p. 559.

2 Ibid.

3 Solomon Volkov, *Testimony. The Memoirs of Dmitri Shostakovich* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979; repr. 1990), p. 235. The work of reconstructing the texts of Tchaikovsky’s censored letters has been undertaken by V. Sokolov, and is presented in *P. I. Tchaikovsky: Forgotten and New Reminiscences of Contemporaries, New Materials and Documents*, ed. Vaidman and Belonovich (Moscow, 1995). In “Unknown Tchaikovsky: A Reconstruction of Previously Censored Letters to His Brothers (1875–79),” in *Tchaikovsky and His World*, ed. Kearney, pp. 55–98, Poznansky is nebulous regarding whether his English translations are based on his own reconstructions or are simply translations of those published by Sokolov. But, if anything, the uncensored letters as presented in Poznansky’s translations reveal the depth of