

December 5, 2007

Predecessors to Symphonic Forms:

- The concertos and orchestral suites of J.S. Bach can be seen as predecessors to symphonies.
- Opera overtures too.

G.B. Sammartini, J-C 39 (before 1744, possibly late 1730s):

- (see handout of score)
- The movement begins with two introductory measures which firmly establish the tonic key.
- The first melodic gesture (analogous to the “first theme” of a sonata form) leads first to an imperfect authentic cadence in the tonic key in m. 4. (Despite the second violins having the highest line, this is an IAC because the first violins carry the main theme and rest on B in the cadence.) After this, we find a tonicization of V creating a half cadence. The second melodic gesture (the “second theme”) takes off in the dominant key. A terminative section follows, starting in m. 9, built on the “Pachelbel” progression. (It was quite common at this time to make use of such stock progressions and phrases.)
- After the repeat, Sammartini starts the development with the opening material, this time transposed to the dominant key. From there, he moves towards the submediant (E minor). He reaches this goal at the end of m. 26, but doesn’t actually provide a conclusive cadence. The key of G minor is explored briefly to add a little drama before the recapitulation.
- The recapitulation begins in m. 34. M. 38 is altered so as to remain in the tonic key.

Stammitz, Sinfonia a11 (a8)

- (see handout of score)
- The first theme area is introduced with a gradual crescendo (the famous Mannheim steamroller). The first “theme” is rather noisy and does not cadence but rather goes right into the transition. Harmonically, this piece arpeggiates the tonic triad by modulating through the key of the mediant on its way to the dominant. The second theme is much lighter (Rothfarb: “not as much racket”) and is followed by a series of terminative cadences. Rather than end with a clear structural boundary, this terminative section elides directly into the development.
- The development begins with the first theme in the dominant key (just like the example above). The recapitulation begins with the second theme in the tonic key, indicating that this movement is in binary sonata form. The piece ends with a closing section based on the first theme (much like Mozart K.311).