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Clara Wieck’s A minor Piano Concerto: Formal Innovation and the Problem of Parametric Disconnect in Early Romantic Music

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Clara Wieck’s Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 7 (1833–5), presents a particularly intriguing example of the formal developments that were occurring within the genre of the Romantic concerto in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. In line with a growing number of concertos from this period, Wieck’s work offers a number of “progressive” or non-classical traits: a unitary exposition, truncated first-movement form, run-on movements, and cyclic thematic links between movements. Such features can be found individually or in conjunction in other concerted works from the preceding decade by composers such as Louis Spohr, J. B. Cramer, Carl Maria von Weber, Felix Mendelssohn, Charles-Valentin Alkan, and Ignaz Moscheles, amongst

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1This article was presented in shorter form at the Schumann anniversary conference in Oxford, June 2019, and at AMS 2019 in Boston, and I would especially like to thank Joe Davies, Julian Horton, Julie Pedneault-Deslauriers, and Stephen Rodgers, as well as the anonymous readers for this journal, for their discussion and thoughts on this piece.

others. What distinguishes Wieck’s work, however, is the extent to which she takes and combines these innovative contemporary techniques in a single piece.

Wieck’s Op. 7 serves as an exemplary case study in the development of the early Romantic concerto; moreover, it affords a particularly revealing illustration of various issues in musical form and syntax in the decades after 1820, concerns highly germane to recent attempts at developing a Romantic Formenlehre. The first two analytical sections of this essay will explicate some of the salient formal qualities of Wieck’s work in relation to contemporary concerto practice and outline some of its idiosyncrasies. I will then argue in the final part of this article that what is challenging about her music is the extent to which parameters that were formerly closely coordinated – tonal structure, form-functional phrase type, thematic identity, topic and texture – now appear dissociated from their generically expected interrelation, a situation I will term “parametric disconnect.” The ramifications of this feature for how we are able to theorize form are potentially far-reaching.

**Structural Innovation in Wieck’s Op. 7**

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Prominent in Wieck’s A minor Concerto is a group of formal features often associated with progressive concerto composition in the decades around 1835. Most straightforward is the use of a single or unitary exposition, doing away with the double exposition characteristic of the classical or Mozartian model for first-movement concerto form. As with several other examples of the unitary exposition from this period (e.g. Moscheles’s Piano Concerto No. 6 in B<flat>, Op. 90 [Fantastique, 1833], or Friedrich Kalkbrenner’s Piano Concerto No. 4 in A<flat>, Op. 127 [1835]), vestiges of the R1 / S1 textural opposition between ritornello and soloist are still present in Wieck’s opening movement (to this extent unlike the more drastic compression found, for instance, in Mendelssohn’s G minor Piano Concerto, Op. 25 [1831]). A sixteen-bar orchestral theme serves as introduction to the dramatic entry of the soloist on Neapolitan harmony for an extended exordium, cadential confirmation being withheld until bar 37, corresponding to the return of the opening theme, now presented in the piano and clearly serving as the movement’s primary thematic material. The textural contrast between tutti and soloist is thus still present; yet this opening tutti is extremely brief, being confined to a single thematic phrase with no hint of any secondary material, and there is consequently no sense in which the opening sixteen bars stand as a complete exposition or full R1. If anything the effect is of a single, small ternary primary theme group, with the soloist joining at the start of the contrasting middle or B section.

Second is the drastic truncation of the first movement’s expected design at what would be the end of the exposition. After a string of secondary thematic ideas in non-tonic keys, a dominant build up from bar 111 leads to a forceful tutti interjection confirming E major (the dominant major, bar 129), rounded off in turn with a version of the primary theme’s head motive (bar 138) – gestures that unmistakably allude to the R2 tutti that customarily marks the end of the exposition and leads to the soloist-dominated development section (or S2 in ritornello terms). However, the

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4 On the replacement of the double exposition by single exposition for concerto first movements in the period around 1830 to 1840 see especially Lindeman, Structural Novelty and Tradition, 25–6; more generally on the move from the ‘Type 5’ to ‘Type 3’ sonata in the nineteenth century, James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth-Century Sonata (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 434–5.

5 Isabella Amster (Das Virtuosenkonzert in der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des deutschen Klavierkonzertes (Wolfenbüttel and Berlin: G. Kallmeyer, 1931), 64) similarly notes the omission of development and recapitulation sections (as does Diergarten, ‘‘Mehr
dynamics and texture quickly fall away as the movement leads directly into a “Romanze” in the remote key of A<flat> major, which serves as the slow central section in the concerto’s three-movement design.

This feature links directly to the third of the traits outlined at the start: the running together of the concerto’s three separate movements into a single continuous span. Not only does the first movement break down and lead into the second, but the latter in turn – though formally complete as a ternary structure – connects to the concluding **Allegro non troppo** through a post-cadential passage that provides a mediating harmonic link to the A minor finale. Though instances of run-on intermovement designs can be found in conjunction with formally complete constituent movements (Beethoven’s “Emperor” Concerto, with its link between second and third movements, is a well-known example), this feature is evidently facilitated here in Wieck’s concerto by the truncation of the first movement’s form.6

In other words, the slow movement substitutes for (or “overwrites”) the first movement’s missing development section. Indeed, the implication here might well be of the 3-in-1 “double-functional” or “two-dimensional” forms that would become increasingly prominent across the nineteenth century, the Romanze serving in Sonata Theoretical terms as an “episode within development space.”7 It is extremely common Phantasiestück als Concert’,” 121). My reading departs, however, from several earlier analyses of this work by English-language scholars, which identify a development section as having started at some point before this tutti at bar 129. Although this reading is understandable given that some developmental rhetoric is arguably present before this point, these commentators appear to have misunderstood the formal design of the opening movement and its relation to concerto norms in this period. This point will be discussed below.

6 This use of a truncated first movement (normally breaking off at the end of an erstwhile sonata exposition) and the subsequent running-on of movements becomes a hallmark of the later 19th-century concerto, often overlapping in this respect with the **Konzertstück**. Prominent examples can be found in the Violin Concertos of Bruch (No. 1), Dvořák, and Glazunov; Saint-Saëns’s First Cello Concerto offers a more extended version featuring the thematic continuation of the opening movement in its finale.

in this period for the development section of a concerto’s first movement to be given over to a lyrical section dominated by the soloist (S2), often set in a remote key such as $<\text{flat}>\text{VI}$.

On hearing the emergence of the *Andante* softly in the piano after the breakdown of the R2 tutti, listeners may indeed be inclined to believe that they are hearing a lyrical S2 development episode; it is only as the music continues (probably by the ternary return of the Romanze’s A theme at bar 38) that we come to realize that the first movement has already ended and this is in fact a slow movement.

In using $A<\text{flat}>$ major for this slow episode – $<\text{flat}>I$ of the home tonic $A$ minor, and a key already prefigured earlier in the first movement – Wieck is taking the more usual choice of $<\text{flat}>\text{VI}$ or $<\text{flat}>\text{II}$ for this S2 episode and extending it into something yet more remote. Such far-flung tonal relationships seem to be markers of the virtuoso concerto, *Konzertstück*, or fantasy genres around this time (the key-scheme of Schubert’s “Wanderer” Fantasy of 1822 – $C–C<\text{sharp}>m–A<\text{flat}>–C$ – is a well-known example). Indeed the intertextual link with another A minor Piano Concerto – that by Wieck’s future husband, no less – is conspicuous here. The first movement of Robert Schumann’s Piano Concerto, Op. 54 (1845, which started out as a single-movement *Phantasie* from 1841), features a nocturne-like episode in this very same key of $A<\text{flat}>$ major, $<\text{flat}>I$, within its S2 / development section.\(^8\)

\(^8\) An influential paradigm can be seen in John Field’s Piano Concerto No. 7 in C (1822–32), which offers a nocturne episode in the dominant G major within S2; the practice is particularly clear in William Sterndale Bennett’s three published minor-key concertos (No. 1, 1831; No. 3, 1834; No. 4, 1838), all of which move to $<\text{flat}>\text{VI}$ at this point. Even the B minor S2 passage – an extreme $<\text{sharp}>i$ of the tonic B<flat> major – in the first movement of Mozart’s final Piano Concerto, K. 595, might be related to this tradition.

\(^9\) The link between these genres requires more detailed examination than can be given in this study; it is probably rooted, however, in the background of performance and improvisation. The penchant for distant tonal relationships perhaps grows from the practice of preluding and improvising links between different pieces – a challenge for performer-composers to move smoothly between keys as remote as possible from each other. (In this light we might understand the off-tonic Neapolitan opening of Chopin’s First Ballade.) These principles also spill into the more canonic genres by the early nineteenth century, as for instance in the *quasi una fantasia* principle encountered in Beethoven’s sonatas and quartets (Op. 131 offers an intriguing example of many such traits).

\(^10\) Robert in fact helped orchestrate the finale of Clara’s work, though his involvement – if any – with the first two movements is not known. His use of the nocturne episode in Op. 54 has also been plausibly related to John Field’s Seventh Concerto, though that work the episode is in G major, a less outlandish V of Field’s home key of C minor (see Horton, ‘John Field and the Alternative History of Concerto First-Movement Form’, 70–9). The most extensive study of Op. 54 is given by Claudia
Schumann’s theme is very clearly a transformation of the movement’s primary thematic material. Only slightly less obviously, though, is Wieck’s Romanze theme derived from the material of her first movement (see Ex. 1a, discussed in more detail below).

What partially undermines the two-dimensional suggestion is the fact that the finale, while closely related thematically to the opening movement, nonetheless does not directly reprise material. In this context, a comparison with an ostensibly similar work written in this period is revealing. Charles-Valentin Alkan’s *Concerto da Camera* in C<sharp> minor, Op. 10 No. 2 (1833 or 1834), likewise features a unitary exposition which is cut short at the concluding R2 tutti, and leads into a soloist-dominated *Adagio* in A major (<flat>VI), heard either as an S2 episode or slow movement. However, Alkan’s finale overtly reprises in the tonic the secondary material of the opening section, heard originally in the relative major E, forming a balancing recapitulation to the concerto’s first-movement exposition. Alkan’s work is of miniature proportions (the whole concerto coming in at under eight minutes), and the fulfilment of generic formal demands in the finale means that the piece can readily be heard as operating at both the levels of form (sonata) and cycle (three movements) – though the *Adagio* admittedly suspends sonata activity for its duration. In other words, Alkan’s second concerto can be considered “two dimensional”; this is much less the case in Wieck’s piece, longer and considerably more complex in design, where such clear recapitulatory function is not so explicit in the finale. In this sense, Alkan’s first *Concerto da Camera* in A minor (1832) is actually closer to Wieck’s work, in that its finale does not reprise first movement material, despite the otherwise similar structural features (truncated unitary exposition, run-on movements).

Nonetheless, the thematic links between the movements of Wieck’s concerto are an important aspect of the work’s design, and situate the piece within a wider practice in the early Romantic concerto and instrumental fantasy (again Schubert’s “Wanderer” Fantasy provides a well-known instance – another work famous as an early example of two-dimensional form). Most obviously, the finale’s opening theme transforms the first movement’s primary theme into a polonaise-like idea, along with its general arch-shaped contour (Ex. 1a). Likewise, the slow movement is clearly heard to grow from the extension of the first-movement primary theme’s rising scalar motive in the linking passage at the end of the movement (bar 141); it is thus related to the two

outer movements that flank it. In turn, the Romanze’s contrasting central section offers a transparent inversion of this chromaticized motive. Even its remote key of A<flat> is prefigured in a brief though significant passage from the first movement (bars 92ff) that offers the most lyrical, “second-theme”-like substance in the exposition (albeit within the context of a display episode); the thematic content (the rising line ^3–^4–^5) moreover relates to the characteristic pitch level of the motive presented in the Romanze. The same key will be furthermore revisited in the finale (bars 206–8) for a brief parenthetical aside within an apparent S3 recapitulation in A minor, a passage surely intended to reference earlier occurrences of this crucial key area.

Ex. 1a

Within movements, too, material is often clearly related by common contour or use of inversion (as seen already in the Romanze): a case in point is the secondary material of the finale (itself shared across larger P and S groups), in which the theme presented in descending form at bar 42 and bar 74 is inverted into ascending form at bar 57 (and subsequently at bars 189 and 274, Ex. 1b).

Ex. 1b

As Table 1 shows, a number of concertante works from the decades around the composition of Wieck’s Concerto share many of the same traits. These properties need not necessarily all be present in a given work, but they are often found in conjunction and in several cases are clearly interrelated. Two-dimensional form, for instance, is invariably going to be found alongside linked movements and the presence of cyclic thematic connections (the example from Spohr is a special case, where the suggestion of two-dimensionality is ultimately abandoned); and, with the exception of Cramer’s Eighth and Herz’s Fourth Concertos, the truncation of the first movement after the end of the exposition is always allied with a unitary exposition.

Table 1

The rising motive in bars 141–44 is also prefigured in several places in the opening movement, most clearly in the exordium passage, bars 17–20, and its subsequent sequential ascent at bars 33–36. The three movements were actually composed in reverse order, so in terms of genesis it might be more accurate to say that Wieck reworked the finale’s material in the first movement.
While Alkan’s two concerti provide notable precedent for Wieck’s procedure, alongside the more general models of Weber’s *Konzertstück* and Mendelssohn’s G minor Concerto, the probable influence of Spohr’s popular Eighth Violin Concerto, “In modo di scena cantante,” from 1816 is also apparent. Cast in A minor, the two share affinities in thematic construction (Wieck’s opening theme is close to that of Spohr’s finale in contour, rhythm, and harmonization, Ex. 2) beyond numerous other points in common.

Ex. 2a

Ex. 2b

Wieck’s choice of the rather outlandish key of A<flat> (<flat>I) for her slow movement is notably prefigured in Spohr’s slow movement for its central scherzo-like section sandwiched as a developmental episode within an F major Adagio. As in Wieck’s concerto, too, Spohr’s finale is a substantial structure unexpectedly cast in concerto first-movement form, like Wieck’s incorporating an unusual number of returns of the primary ritornello theme in the tonic (though rather more normal in its harmonic layout), implying two recapitulatory rotations. Where Wieck’s work differs is in its more overt sharing of thematic material across all three movements through its process of thematic transformation, as well as in the nature of its relationship to the sonata-form model. While Spohr might initially seem to allude to an underlying expositional layout in following a brief, primary-theme-like opening movement with a lyrical *Adagio* (forming a possible secondary theme, albeit linked unusually through an extended cadenza), as this *Adagio* continues into the interpolated scherzo section

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12 Wieck dedicated her work to Spohr; Janina Klassen also notes the likely influence of Spohr’s concerto on Op. 7 (*Clara Schumann: Musik und Öffentlichkeit* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2009), 128). Weber’s *Konzertstück* was part of Wieck’s performing repertoire from 1842 onwards, though she must have known it for much longer (it had been published in 1823 and was one of Weber’s most popular works); her Piano Sonata in G minor (1841) also starts with a virtual quotation of Weber’s piece. It is not clear whether she would have been aware of Alkan’s two concertos at the time of writing her own. Alkan’s A minor Concerto was first performed by the composer in Paris on 29 April 1832, two weeks after Wieck had left that city, and published the following year. Lindeman believes Wieck and Alkan are “very likely” to have “extensively observed and influenced each other’s work” and points to the fact that Alkan’s work had been published by the time Wieck came to write the first two movements (*Structural Novelty and Tradition in the Early Romantic Piano Concerto*, 115, 137).
the hint of larger sonata form breaks down, to be replaced by a paratactic succession of movement types.\(^{13}\)

**Harmonic Idiosyncrasies**

As presented so far, Wieck’s Concerto appears as an original contribution to a developing Romantic concerto tradition, not completely novel in any single aspect but resourcefully combining many of the most contemporary formal techniques in a way realized by few works before it. In this sense it compares favourably with more celebrated but historically posterior examples in the genre by Robert Schumann (Op. 54) and Franz Liszt (the First Piano Concerto, started in the 1830s but only completed two decades later, whose cyclic procedures – often held up as groundbreaking – rework what was already an established practice in the 1830s).\(^{14}\) Both in intermovement form and in thematic construction the essentials of Wieck’s work are fairly straightforward. However, the picture becomes considerably more complex when we turn our attention to harmonic design, and how this interacts with the generic articulation of form through other musical parameters.

The use of a i–I–I key scheme over the three movements is merely the outermost manifestation of a larger tendency towards harmonic unorthodoxy, for in harmonic layout Wieck’s work is often distinctly unconventional. The larger trajectory of the opening movement appears straightforward, but even here closer inspection reveals curious elements: the apparent secondary tonal area of C major reached at bar 65 is never stable, and after an extended and tonally discursive secondary group the exposition concludes in E major (see Table 2). While a three-key exposition i–III–V may be suggested, this does not hide the fact that the dominant major is still an unusual destination for a minor-key sonata exposition (though the opening section of Weber’s F minor *Konzertstück*, a likely influence, does in fact

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\(^{13}\) As Spohr’s title indicates, the purported allusion is not to an instrumental form at all but rather to a looser “scena” structure. It would nevertheless be an exaggeration to minimize his concerto’s point of contact with instrumental form; despite a few echoes of operatic procedure (the increasingly loose harmonic and syntactic nature of the opening section, the frequent recitatives, the final *stretta*-like tutti), a basis in instrumental designs is clearly present, above all in the finale. The freer design of Weber’s own *Konzertstück* a few years later, with its own quasi-operatic programmatic justification, is probably also influenced by Spohr in this aspect.

trace this tonal plan), or that between the C major PAC at bar 65 (which seems to initiate a secondary group) and the final confirmation of E major at bar 129 (the start of R2), the music seems just as readily drawn to F major, A<flat> major, or even the tonic A minor, as to C.

Table 2

The concerto’s opening, at least, is unproblematic: a tutti statement of the primary theme (bars 1–16) is succeeded by the soloist’s exordium (bars 17–22), leading back via a long dominant prolongation to the re-presentation of the primary theme (bars 37ff), which is modified in phrase structure to suggest a large-scale sentence. Its continuation is now extended and moves towards the relative C major (bar 52), perhaps feinting at a transition function (implying a fairly standard small-ternary reprise becoming transition technique), but instead leads back to V / A minor (bar 57). The standing on the dominant in this new passage, alongside the injection of greater rhythmic energy, is more suggestive of transitional rhetoric, though the actual modulation to III is effected only in the last bar (bar 64).

Problems really arise, however, with the secondary material that seems to begin at bar 65. For a start, the section starts with a PAC to C major at this point, though in the context of the movement this cadence clearly functions as a Medial Caesura. Although considered unusual within Sonata Theory for the later eighteenth century, a III:PAC MC is not in fact so noteworthy by Wieck’s time; the opening movement of her G minor Piano Sonata a few years later offers an even clearer example of one. But what is more significant is that the material presented here is hardly best designed to serve as a full-blown secondary theme. While sentential in construction and thus relatively tight-knit in form-functional terms, not only does it sound continuational

15 Weber’s opening Larghetto is, however, rather less obviously orientated around concerto first movement form (it is not even necessarily a sonata exposition), and the secondary key of C major in which it closes serves as a dominant to the ensuing F minor scherzo section (Allegro passionato). By shifting from E major to A<flat> major for the Romanze, Wieck destroys any such obvious linking function. As stated, the dominant major as secondary tonality in a minor-mode sonata is unusual; prominent earlier examples such as Schubert’s A minor Sonata, D. 784, and the slow movement of Mendelssohn’s “Italian” Symphony were not yet published at the time Wieck wrote the concerto’s first movement.

16 Hepokoski and Darcy (Elements of Sonata Theory, 27–9) consider the use of the PAC MC “infrequent” within the late-eighteenth-century repertoire.
(owing in large part to its harmonic instability) but it is also tonally mobile, starting in C but reverting to A minor after two bars, and closing with a PAC in F major (bar 74). It has also been foreshadowed some bars earlier in the continuation of the primary theme’s reprise (bars 46–50), blurring the putative distinction between primary and secondary thematic areas.

At this point a section of faster passagework begins, which in generic terms corresponds to the display episode (DE) almost invariably heard in a concerto exposition after the cantabile secondary theme. Yet this in turn proves tonally unstable, beginning in F major but circling repeatedly back to the tonic A minor and the short-lived secondary key of C, while fragments of the dotted anacrusis from the primary theme permeate the texture. No sooner is G settled on as potential V/C (bar 85) than a tonally disorientating passage of chromatic slipping leads to a new cantabile theme in A<flat> (bar 92). Heard as a parenthetical insertion within the latter stages of the secondary group, this is the most lyrical and distinctive secondary material in the movement, but the key – <flat>I – is bizarre as a secondary tonal area in its own right, and while initially presented in a sequential pair of four-bar phrases, the theme’s continuation after bar 112 gradually unravels without coming to a cadence. The key – A<flat> within a purported C major secondary tonality – might instead strongly suggest the <flat>VI “purple passage” commonly interpolated into the latter stages of a display episode, though C major has hardly been sufficiently grounded prior to this, and this lyrical theme dissolves instead into a long dominant of E minor (bar 111) that eventually resolves to the major mode with the R2 tutti entry

One explanation for the curious III:PAC MC and S theme that modulates to VI might be to view F major as the true secondary tonal area (especially given the fact that b<flat>s are introduced as early as the theme’s second bar, b. 66), with the initial PAC to C effectively functioning in place of a more conventional HC onto the dominant of F. Yet the C major in bar 65 does not sound like a dominant, and the tonal fluidity of the following bars dissolves any sense of overriding tonal centre. Modulating secondary themes are possible, but normally an off-tonic opening is clarified by subsequent events, which does not happen here.

The term “display episode” (Spielepisode) derives from Hans Engel (which is indeed how he describes this passage in Wieck’s concerto; see Engel, Die Entwicklung des deutschen Klavierkonzertes von Mozart bis Liszt (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1927), 242), and was popularized by Leon Plantinga, Beethoven’s Concertos: History, Style, Performance (New York: Norton, 1999), and subsequently by Hepokoski and Darcy in Elements of Sonata Theory.
some eighteen bars later (PAC, bar 129).\textsuperscript{19} This concluding tutti is based initially on subsidiary primary-group material from bars 23ff, but leads to a forceful restatement of the opening theme at bar 138, closed by a further PAC at bar 141.

Some earlier commentators have indeed suggested that a development section has started some point before this tutti at bar 129.\textsuperscript{20} This view is in many ways problematic, as it overlooks the clear relation of Wieck’s movement to the generic proportions and topical layout of expositions in contemporary piano concertos. The second part of the solo exposition in the early Romantic concerto is almost invariably extensive and multimodular, spun out through the long section of virtuoso passagework constituting the display episode, which commonly digresses into a remote key (often $<\text{flat}>VI$ of $S$) before re-establishing the dominant pedal and culminating in trills in the solo part that herald the $R2$ tutti. Moscheles’s G minor Concerto (No. 3, Op. 58, 1820) – a work in Wieck’s repertoire – is a good example, in which the second part of the solo exposition (bars 183–302) is nearly twice as long as the first part (bars 117–82) and over half its length is given to the display episode (bars 235–302). Closer to Wieck in presenting a unitary exposition and tonally digressive second group is another favourite work of hers, Mendelssohn’s G minor Concerto, Op. 25 (1831), whose proportions (first part up to the Medial Caesura 72 bars, second part 80 bars, albeit sidestepping the expected $R2$ tutti) correspond more closely to Wieck’s (64:64).

Hence in the context of contemporary practice it is hard to hear the tutti in the dominant major at bar 129 of Wieck’s concerto as anything other than the $R2$

\textsuperscript{19} This is the only real candidate for the “EEC,” given the continual oscillation between C and F earlier in the erstwhile secondary group. (The only other clear cadence is that at bar 74, but this is into F major at the end of a theme that had started in C.) While a strong cadence at the close of the secondary theme immediately preceding the display episode is probably most common in earlier nineteenth-century piano concertos (making the entire DE function as a closing group), it is not uncommon either for the EEC to occur at the end of the DE with the $R2$ tutti (with the DE thus forming a continuation of the secondary zone, as happens here). See further Hepokoski and Darcy, \textit{Elements of Sonata Theory}, 534, 542–8, and Taylor, “Mutual Deformity,” 92–5.

expected at this juncture, which would mark the end of the exposition. Still, the material from bar 65 onwards is more tonally mobile than would be expected for the second half of an exposition, and, combined with the continual resurfacing of the primary theme, the music to this extent takes on something of developmental rhetoric. The loose-knit construction of a display episode – typically a repeated pair of two- or four-bar phrases outlining tonic and dominant followed by extensive sequential writing – easily suggests the model-and-sequence construction of a developmental core, and in fact Wieck’s music here is looser in design than a standard display episode, already modulating after the initial three-bar model from F major to A minor, at which point the primary theme re-emerges as an element in the texture. While it is surely wrong to speak of a development section as such, there is nevertheless an element of developmental activity present within the latter stages of the exposition, which might in some sense serve in lieu of the development section that is missing following the R2 tutti.\textsuperscript{21}

What is particularly striking in this movement is the fluidity of the harmonic language and instability of tonal areas visited across the exposition. Right from the opening theme, whose first three harmonies are given as root-position tonic, submediant and mediant chords (Am, F, C, see Ex. 2b again) and whose responding consequent-like phrase (bar 9) presents the opening A minor phrase sequentially in C major, the music shows itself liable to slip freely between the tonic minor and the relative major. In turn, the reworked reprise of the small ternary primary theme at bar 38 offers a response of its compound basic idea on III (bar 42), and as we saw subsequently feints towards C major (bar 52), as if its continuation has already become transformed into a transition – a suggestion that is immediately quashed as

\textsuperscript{21} Lindeman (\textit{Structural Novelty and Tradition in the Early Romantic Piano Concerto}, 136) speaks ambiguously of “a development-like passage” from the brief arrival at A<flat> at bar 92, but rightly describes the following E major tutti as a “second” ritornello. Engel (\textit{Die Entwicklung des deutschen Klavierkonzertes}, 242) calls the opening movement a “halber Sonatensatz,” though is hazier about how it relates to formal expectations, speaking merely of a \textit{Spieleepisode} and the development of the first theme. Of other commentators, Janina Klassen (\textit{Clara Wieck-Schumann: Die Virtuosin als Komponistin} (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1990), 138–42) is more circumspect in noting some of the relations to generic models but coming down on the side of the \textit{sui generis} nature of the movement (a more extreme case is found in Helen Walker-Hill’s “Neglected Treasure: The Piano Concerto of Clara Wieck Schumann,” \textit{Women of Note Quarterly: The Magazine of Historical and Contemporary Women Composers} 1 (1993), 25, which ignores the relation to generic concerto form completely).
the music returns to the dominant of A minor, necessitating a further attempt at securing the modulation in the following passage. Hence it is hardly surprising that throughout the second half of the exposition the erstwhile secondary key of C major proves unstable, often returning to the overriding tonic (a feature exacerbated by the extent to which motivic constituents of the opening theme pervade the later parts of the exposition). When tonic and relative are already closely intertwined, more exotic tonal relationships have to come into play in order to provide sufficient contrast, and the overall fluidity of the syntax and looseness of thematic construction easily supports such harmonic proliferation.

The Romanze, meanwhile, is fairly straightforward in its ternary design, the highly reiterative opening melody being expanded on its reprise as part of a duet with the solo cello. Its A<flat> major tonality and thematic content can be related to the “purple patch” in the first movement display episode, while the use of E major (the enharmonic flat submediant) for its central section provides a convenient link back to the key in which the first movement had ended, and forward when returned to at the close of the movement as dominant to the finale’s A minor.

Most troublesome for formal analysis, however, is the finale. In this movement, roughly equal in length to the other two combined, numerous generic formal markers are referenced, though not only are the post-expositional stages obscure but the tonal structure is often manifestly at odds with the generic thematic and topical layout. Table 3 shows an outline of the movement’s form. Again, the opening sections are relatively straightforward, but complications soon arise. The primary group is characterized by a succession of modules, succeeding each other paratactically, and while the C major secondary theme at bar 74 is easily identifiable, not only is its harmonic preparation cursory at best (A minor is still in evidence only two bars before), but its material has furthermore already been stated in the tonic minor in the preceding section (bar 42, exacerbating the thematic blurring between sections that was present in the opening movement). By bar 90, the end of the secondary theme’s loose consequent phrase has fallen back to V of A minor, and there now enters a rondo-like restatement of the primary theme, here transformed into the tonic major (bar 96).

In itself, of course, the tonic return of the opening theme might simply suggest rondo form, an unremarkable choice for a finale (or single-movement concert piece), but in topical/gestural and textural terms the subsequent course of the music strongly
suggests instead the continuation of a standard first-movement expositional trajectory, the ensuing display episode starting at bar 112 and R2 tutti at bar 154 corresponding precisely to the expected events at the close of the exposition in first-movement concerto form. Improbably, though, these passages are back in the tonic, and this is a finale, a movement type which traditionally does not follows the sonata-ritornello model. From this perspective, we are faced with a monotonal exposition (or more precisely, a modulating exposition that quickly reverts to monotonal), in which the secondary theme is given in both primary and secondary keys, and in which the otherwise straightforward course of topical events is disrupted by an anomalous return of the primary theme in the tonic midway through.

Table 3

To explain this monotonal reversion and the curious reference to first-movement form here, it might be tempting to read the finale’s exposition not in isolation but as recapitulatory in function at the level of the three-movement cycle. This would of course explain the truncation of the first movement at the end of its exposition: the absence of a recapitulation there is compensated for by the return of its material in the finale, albeit transformed into a new thematic variant, alongside the curious reference to first-movement form in this movement. Whether or not the thematic transformation of the first movement’s primary theme into that of the finale provides sufficient justification for this reading (it should be remembered that most purported “two-dimensional” forms likewise transform rather than simply reprise material in their finale sections), what is still rather crucially absent here is any clear tonal resolution of the first movement’s secondary material – in this, unlike Alkan’s C<sharp> minor Concerto (whose brief final movement essentially recapitulates only the latter half of the first movement’s exposition – in other words, fulfils the stipulations of the “sonata principle” or the “central generic task” of Sonata Theory).22

What constituted the secondary theme in Wieck’s opening movement was, admittedly, not entirely clear, though one might have expected the idea from bar 65 to return in the finale. Intriguingly, the finale’s secondary idea is not entirely dissimilar from that in the first movement (see Ex. 3a and 3b). Both themes feature a repeated

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motive consisting of a prominent initial arpeggio descending onto a longer note that proves dissonant in relation to the accompanying harmony; in the first movement the appoggiatura quality of the latter is latent (escaped by transferral into the higher octave) rather than explicit, as in the finale. In fact, the foreshadowing of this idea earlier in the opening movement is slightly closer to the version given in the finale, especially in the form heard in bars 48–9 with the quintuplets and appoggiatura (see Ex. 3c). Some similarity is probably sensed, though the correspondence is far from exact.23 The two-dimensional qualities of Wieck’s concerto are tantalizingly present, while not fully spelled out.

Ex. 3a
Ex. 3b
Ex. 3c

On the other hand, compositional genesis would cast doubt on the supposition that the exposition was designed to serve as a recapitulation at the level of the three-movement cycle, for the finale was in fact the first movement written by Wieck, as an independent Concertsatz in 1833, before she added the first two movements to complete the concerto in 1835.24 (The curious amalgam of the rhetorical and textural layout of concerto first-movement form with the tonal elements of a rondo-finale structure might seem more explicable given this context, though the movement still hardly admits straightforward interpretation.) Nothing of this downplays the thematic links and potential for the work to be read – retrospectively – as a two-dimensional design, but it is dubious to claim that the tonal reversion in the finale’s exposition originated from such a conception.

Alternatively, one could simply view the structure as a monotonal exposition (in this, like the first, orchestral exposition in a classical concerto’s double exposition). The idea is unusual, though not unheard of: a precedent might be sought in the opening movement of Frédéric Chopin’s Piano Concerto No. 1 in E minor, Op. 11 (1830) – a work Wieck had heard the composer perform the previous year in Paris – while

23 Given the otherwise clear thematic and harmonic connections made throughout the concerto, it would be anomalous for the secondary themes of the outer movements not to take part in the process; this might add plausibility to the conjectured link. My view remain open on this question.

24 On the work’s genesis see Klassen, Clara Wieck-Schumann, 132–8.
several examples can be found in other genres around this period. 25 Furthermore, two concertos from the immediately following years – Moscheles’s Piano Concerto No. 7 in C minor (*Pathétique*, 1835–6) and William Sterndale Bennett’s Piano Concerto No. 4 in F minor (1838) – both feature first movements that move from tonic minor to relative major, only to return to the tonic minor for the R2 tutti. In both cases, the procedure seems designed to suggest failure to escape from the tragic minor mode. 26 Yet another option would be to distinguish the major from the minor mode of the tonic: contrast is effected not by tonal centre but by mode. As with Chopin’s E minor Concerto, the parallel major offers the type of tonal contrast more usually reserved for the relative major (conversely, in Chopin’s recapitulation, the second theme actually returns in the relative).

One final possibility would be to see elements of sonata rondo as being overlaid here on a loose first-movement sonata-ritornello form (with the addition of an extra tonic major rondo return at bar 96). Sonata rondo is itself hardly an unusual design for a finale, and the reversion to the opening theme in the tonic at the end of the exposition would make perfect sense in this context. It is simply unusual to have this combined with the rhetorical and topical features typical of the latter stages of a concerto’s first-movement solo exposition, namely the display episode and R2 tutti. The result is the curious mixture of rondo, sonata-ritornello, and sonata-rondo forms that appear to be variously present in Wieck’s finale. And either way, irrespective of whichever reading one prefers, tonal events later in the post-expositional stages of the movement will complicate formal interpretation still further.

Following the (tonic major) R2 tutti, the music moves to F major (bar 161), and a dreamy soloist-led statement of the S theme at bar 182 would appear to correspond to the typical S2 development “nocturne” episode, the affinity underscored by the key of <flat>VI. However, an apparent S3 recapitulation of the P theme in A minor at bar 201 is interrupted at bar 218 by a sequential, core-like section typical of a

25 For instance Schubert’s early String Quartets D. 18 (1810? G minor to V/G minor) and D. 94 (1811/12, D major throughout), Chopin’s Piano Sonata No. 1 in C minor (1828; entire exposition in C minor) and Piano Trio in G minor, Op. 8 (1829, again tonic minor throughout), and later in Franck’s Piano Trio Op. 1 No. 1 (1840; F<sharp> minor to F<sharp> major)

26 I discuss these two cases, along with some of the issues they raise for a Sonata Theoretical explanation, in “Mutual Deformity”. Friedrich Kalkbrenner’s D minor Concerto, Op. 61 (1823), forms a milder precedent, in which the R2 tutti reverts almost immediately to the tonic minor; Klassen (Clara Schumann, 125) notes the influence of this work on Wieck’s linking passage into her finale.
development section, before leading to the resumption of the recapitulation rotation from bar 250 (corresponding to bar 31 in the exposition) – albeit now in E minor! It is not uncommon for P material to be further developed in a reprise, though given that the ostensible development section (S2) was essentially static the effect is strangely inverted; it is as if the S3 recapitulation at bar 201 had been premature (an impression exacerbated by the unexpected return of the same theme earlier within the exposition’s ostensible second group at bar 96). What is most bewildering, though, is the subsequent dominant minor recapitulation, especially in light of the exposition’s own reversion to the tonic at its close. The music follows the thematic layout of the exposition fairly closely here, bar 262 corresponding to bar 42 and the inverted version of the theme at bar 274 to that in bar 57.

The fact that an apparent dominant recapitulation can be found in an earlier A minor work by Beethoven (the first movement of the String Quartet, Op. 132) does not disguise the fact that an ultimately monotonal exposition leading to a tonally mobile recapitulation appears to be a quixotic idea, albeit one with precedent in a handful of early works by other composers featuring monotonal expositions and tonally proliferative recapitulations (including Chopin’s E minor Concerto). There is of course a potential parallelism between the tonal trajectory of the first movement (consisting of a modulating exposition whose ultimate goal is E major) and the larger course of the finale; E major, it should not be forgotten, also forms the central key of the Romanze. Yet if the dominant is understood as articulating the largest tonal contrast with the tonic minor, the traditional function of the relative, C major, is placed in jeopardy. This key was the ostensible secondary tonality of both outer movements’ expositions, though in each case was abandoned before their end. In the first movement, indeed, C major, far from forming an opposite pole to A minor, seems rather a stage or a mediating term in a larger movement towards E. It may be

27 One option is thus to situate Wieck’s procedure within this small though significant corpus of compositions, including works by Schubert and Chopin. Indeed, viewing such practice as deliberate, rather than merely a misunderstanding of proper tonal behaviour, might pave the way to understanding such music as grounded in a new conception of tonal trajectory, formed not by tonal polarization and resolution (a closed, hierarchical system, dualism ultimately subordinate to a deeper monism) but by increasing diversification (an open system), what I would call “tonal proliferation.” Again, this is a topic deserving more extensive study. For another perspective see Andrew Aziz, “The Evolution of Chopin’s Sonata Forms: Excavating the Second Theme Group,” *Music Theory Online* 21/4 (2015), <http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.15.21.4/> , accessed 5 March 2019.
tempting, consequently, to see C major as part of a double-tonic complex with A minor, especially given how effortlessly from the beginning of the work Wieck moves between these two keys, with stronger harmonic contrast provided by more remote keys like E major or even A<flat> major.

What perhaps justifies the curious choice of the dominant here in the finale’s later recapitulatory stages is the sense that both versions of the secondary theme have already been heard in the tonic in the exposition (bars 42 and 57), owing to the sharing of material across the latter modules of the primary group and into the secondary theme. There is consequently much less sense of a tonal “burden” to resolve the theme in the finale’s post-expositional stages, though the result is a process of greater tonal proliferation, the same idea heard first in A minor (exposition, P group), then C major (exposition, S group), F major (development), and finally E minor/major (recapitulation).28

Whatever the explanation that might be offered for it, the extended section of E minor/major does function quite effectively as a large-scale dominant preparation for the return of A minor at the Allegro molto (bar 290), which brings the concerto to a close. Serving as a coda to the movement, these final sixty-six bars are based on material closely akin to a display episode, effectively continuing the rotational parallel with the course of the finale’s exposition.29 Despite the generically unexpected swath of dominant in the ostensible recapitulatory stages of the movement, then, the larger harmonic trajectory, taken on its own terms, can be accounted for. The result is a tonal scheme akin to a rondo or ritornello form, in which the tonic continually reappears between episodes in related non-tonic keys (III, VI, V).30 And yet this rondo-like tonal

28 At a stretch, the post-expositional statement of the S theme in F major at bar 182 might be interpreted as a balancing submediant resolution of the exposition’s C major, though this occurs in a part of the form that can only suggest the development section, and this hardly explains the subsequent return of the theme in the dominant in the recapitulation.

29 The coda’s material is similar though not identical to the earlier passage from bar 112: display episode figuration is often so generic and elementary in underlying harmonic structure that the substitution of new material in a recapitulation is in fact not unusual in the Romantic piano concerto. Wieck is here following precedent set by Johann Nepomuk Hummel in his highly popular A minor Concerto, Op. 85 (1816), whose model is followed in numerous other concerti from the second quarter of the nineteenth century (for instance, Carl Czerny’s own A minor Concerto, Op. 214 (1829), and works by Kalkbrenner, Moscheles, and Herz).

30 The possibility of a rondo reading is also noted by Klassen (Clara Wieck-Schumann, 176), though she likewise notes the looseness of the model.
structure is dissociated from the clear generic markers of a rival sonata-ritornello layout.\textsuperscript{31} The potentially far-reaching implications of this manifest disconnection between parameters are worth following through now in this article’s concluding section.

\textbf{Parametric Complications and the Problem of Formal Identity}

In itself, the curious tonal structure of the finale can be largely explained \textit{sui generis} through the function of each part within the movement. It is more in how this individual tonal layout interacts with generic expectations for the distribution of tonal areas, and how this in turn interacts with the generic arrangement of topical and textural elements in the concerto, where problems can arise.\textsuperscript{32} This brings us as a result to certain larger methodological concerns that are highlighted by Wieck’s piece. At issue here is essentially the question of \textit{identity}. In Wieck’s concerto, designating parts and their functions becomes particularly difficult, owing to her loosening of the customary mutual support between musical parameters such as tonality, thematic content, phrase type, topic or rhetorical type, and texture.

This issue is seen most clearly of all in the tonal structure of the outer movements. Features like the use of the dominant for the apparent recapitulation of the exposition’s secondary material in the finale, or the return to the tonic major midway through the putative “exposition,” simply turn established paradigms on their head. To speak of a section ending in the tonic as forming an exposition, or the reprise in the dominant of a theme originally heard in the tonic as constituting a “recapitulation,” would, on the face of it, be courting theoretical paradox. The opening movement adds its fair share of confusion, too, with an apparent S theme starting in the relative major but ending precipitously in the submediant, the display episode continuing in this key but then moving back to both relative major and tonic minor, the most distinctive cantabile theme given in the flattened tonic (in quite the wrong place), and an ending in the unusual dominant major. As this description shows, even the connivance of a

\textsuperscript{31} Despite the amalgam of rondo and sonata-ritornello elements, the possibility of a sonata rondo or “Type 4” sonata reading thus seems strained in this case.

\textsuperscript{32} In other words, the problem here arises from the “negative” comparison with an external, pre-existing repertoire (to use Steven Vande Moortele’s distinction) – from the expectations that are set up from the piece’s numerous apparent allusions to generic formal models – rather than “positively” from within the individual, ad hoc terms of Wieck’s own piece. See Vande Moortele, “In Search of Romantic Form,” \textit{Music Analysis} 32 (2013), 404–31.
“three-key exposition” fails to do justice to the harmonic proliferation in evidence here.

Thematically, the permeation of common thematic elements across all three movements and across internal sections likewise undermines potential attempts to assert identity according to thematic content. Most obviously, the finale’s “secondary” theme is already presented in the tonic in the latter stages of the extensive primary group. On the subsequent reprise of this material in post-expositional stages of the movement it is hardly possible to define whether we are hearing a primary or secondary theme – the more so since the tonal structure offers no help whatsoever at these points. In parallel fashion, the first movement’s ostensible secondary theme at bar 65 is already strongly suggested within the continuation of the primary theme’s small ternary reprise (bar 46, see Ex. 3a & 3c), while the primary theme’s opening motive reasserts itself throughout the exposition – often pulling apparent secondary material (which itself is less strongly characterized) back to the tonic. Elsewhere the common use of transformation or inversion to derive themes from each other more rarely results in such confusion (the B section of the central Romanze, for instance, is clearly distinct from the outer sections, whose theme it nonetheless inverts), though as noted, whether the finale acts as a large-scale recapitulation of the first movement’s curtailed exposition (i.e. its larger formal identity) depends on what status one gives to its thematic transformation of the first movement theme.

Little is clarified by appeal to Caplinian form-functional principles either. As is so often the case with early Romantic music, the distinction between tight-knit primary theme, a slightly looser secondary theme, and loose-knit connecting passages, is much slighter than in classical exemplars. Thematic areas are already loose at the start. The first movement’s primary theme, for instance, is formed as a pair of responding phrases: a four-bar compound basic idea (bars 1–4) is answered by a softer four-bar phrase prolonging the dominant, which nonetheless takes part of its motivic content from the opening material. The return of the opening phrase in sequence at bar 8

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33 It could be proposed that what distinguishes the primary theme version from the secondary is mode: thus the F major return at bar 182 references the secondary theme. However, the common enough technique of recapitulating a relative major second theme in the tonic minor means that the E minor return at bar 262 could equally be a reference to primary or to secondary material. Even more eccentrically, the inverted form of the theme was originally heard only in A minor within the P group (bar 57); however, in the recapitulation this rising form is given now in the dominant major (bar 274), suggesting an alignment with the mode of the secondary group (in which it had never been stated).
might suggest a large-scale presentational response, though following the return of the answering phrase and an IAC at bar 16 the overall effect is of the balancing halves of a diffuse period. If anything, on this theme’s return in the piano (bar 38) the initial structure is tightened by excising the answering phrase of bars 5–8 and using the four-bar compound basic idea as the presentation unit in a large-scale sentence (c.b.i. bars 38–41, response bars 42–5), though the continuation from bar 46 is expanded and leads to transitional material after the standing on the dominant at bar 57. As noted, the putative secondary theme at bar 65 starts with a broadly sentential eight-bar phrase, but despite this is tonally unstable, and in general the construction of themes throughout the work shows either the consistent loosening of initial presentation phrases into open-ended themes that rarely cadence or even remain in the same key (seen especially in the first movement), or simply the paratactic stringing together of phrases (especially in the finale).

Often overlooked and undervalued in theories of form is the part played by the generic arrangement of topical and textural elements, which in the concerto genre especially have a crucial role in articulating structure. In topical or gestural terms, however, Wieck’s use of characteristic thematic types is often just as heterodox as her tonal structure. So many of the familiar rhetorical or topical elements of the genre are present in her concerto, but where they occur within the form is not necessarily where one would expect them to occur in the form, and their function can also be quite different. Take what in rhetorical terms is by far the most suitable candidate for a cantabile second theme in the first movement (one that moreover relates in motivic content and key to the eventual slow movement): this occurs in quite the wrong place – an interpolation within the display episode, using the characteristic \(<\text{flat}>VI\) key (A<flat> within a hypothesized C major) of the “purple patch” often found at this point. Likewise, as argued earlier, a mild sense of developmental function is overlaid on the exposition’s latter stages, the display episode serving as a repository for some of the rhetoric that would normally be expected in the (missing) development section.

Especially prominent in the finale is the appearance of generic rhetorical or textural

34 In this, Wieck is contributing – albeit more radically – to a wider tendency at this time. As Horton notes, the relation between topic and formal function is one that is reconfigured in other piano concertos of the time, such as those by Chopin and (Robert) Schumann (“Listening to Topics in the Nineteenth Century,” in Danuta Mirka (ed.), The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 648–56). See also the same author’s ‘Formal Type and Formal Function in the Post-Classical Piano Concerto’.
markers in locations that confuse rather than clarify the movement’s relationship with generic form. If it were not primarily for the display episode at bar 112 and the ensuing clear R2-style tutti at bar 154 signalling the close of the exposition (albeit in the tonic), it would be far easier, for instance, to read the finale as a sonata rondo structure – a much more reasonable design for a concerto finale and one that generally corresponds rather better with the tonal structure – with a second rotation beginning already at bar 96 with the return of the primary theme in the tonic major. The uncertainty over the recapitulation – the apparent S3 return of the primary theme followed by a core-like developmental passage – results from a similar confusion created by customary rhetorical markers of form.

The result of such desynchronization or uncoupling of the customary association between different parameters – what I propose here to call “parametric disconnect” – is that it becomes much harder to designate the identity of certain passages according to established theoretical terms. (I have felt this discomfort in the present account, in speaking of “secondary themes” in the two outer movements, of “recapitulations” that behave like expositions, or “expositions” that behave as would a recapitulation.) So much of our means of formal analysis depends on the harmonization of different parameters in generically established associations that when this interrelation breaks down, the identity of the musical parts becomes threatened.

“Parametric disconnect” is not a notion that has been theorized in quite the way I am proposing here, though aspects are prefigured in a number of writings from the last few decades. Leonard Meyer, for instance, has noted that the late-eighteenth-century hierarchy of primary and secondary parameters becomes blurred over the nineteenth century, a point taken up by Kofi Agawu, while James Webster’s concept of “multivalent analysis” makes a virtue of an analytical method open to music’s multiple parameters or “domains”.35 As Webster further notes, “patterns that arise in

the various domains need not be congruent, and may at times even conflict,” and such
dissociation between parameters has been discussed more recently in terms of
sectional “overlap” or “non-congruence.” By this term, however, I am not merely
meaning that this music consists of and needs to be approached from the perspective
of multiple parameters; nor am I just meaning that some of the parameters are on
occasions in conflict with others. Neither, too, is this simply a case of functional
reinterpretation (or “Becoming”), when one apparent function for a passage is
overridden, or suspended, by another. Rather, “parametric disconnect” marks a more
extreme escalation of the ambiguities or tension between opposing understandings of
function witnessed in the idea of parametric non-congruence, whereby faced with
such parametric indeterminacy, it is difficult to affix labels at all, because one does
not know which parameter should be taken as primary for defining function.

Of course, some tension between parametric identities is common in all musical
styles. But normally in the presence of some parametric incongruence there is
consensus that there are some parameters which seem to be more significant or
foundational for attributing identity, and can thus be hierarchically privileged without
apparently doing too much violence to the music. Thus previous analytical approaches
have usually sought to privilege one parameter over others in defining the identity of
passages. For instance, a century ago sonata form was widely defined as thematic in
essence, driven by the dualism of themes – a situation in which the eighteenth-century
monothematic exposition posed a problem. From the mid twentieth century onwards,
however, tonality increasingly came to be seen as primary, at least in Anglophone
scholarship. This works well for a late-eighteenth-century repertoire, but in turn

36 Ibid., 129. On sectional overlap see, for example, Peter H. Smith “Liquidation, Augmentation, and
Brahms’s Recapitulatory Overlaps,” 19th-Century Music 17/3 (1994), 237–261, and Carissa Reddick,
“Becoming at a Deeper Level: Divisional Overlap in Sonata Forms from the Late Nineteenth Century,”
Music Theory Online 16/2 (2010), accessed 5 March 2019. The idea of parametric “non-congruence”
has been used by many theorists in recent years.

37 See for instance Janet Schmalfeldt, In the Process of Becoming: Analytic and Philosophical
Perspectives on Form in Early Nineteenth-Century Music (Oxford and New York: Oxford University
Press, 2011), and Nathan John Martin and Steven Vande Moortele, “Formal Functions and
Retrospective Reinterpretation in the First Movement of Schubert’s String Quintet,” Music Analysis

38 A key text here is Leonard Ratner’s “Harmonic Aspects of Classic Form,” Journal of the American
Musicalological Society 11 (1949), 159–68.
proves more problematic for the later nineteenth century. More recent developments in the so-called New Formenlehre usually take their bearing from some refinement of this latter tonal perspective: for William Caplin, for instance, it is phrase-type set against an underlying tonal foundation; for Hepokoski and Darcy, an amalgam of thematic and rhetorical layout with larger cadential trajectories, in which tonality still seems to play the most fundamental role in resolving tensions.\(^{39}\) As a result, both of these approaches work very well for the classical repertoire, but require serious modification applied to an early Romantic repertoire.

Wieck’s A minor Concerto exemplifies these issues perfectly. The problem for us here in Wieck’s concerto is that it is not clear that any one parameter can be taken as foundational. Classical tonal relations, while present, seem to be weakened and drained of some of their form-defining force, while thematic grounds are undermined by the commonality of material (an ironic upshot of the organicist aesthetic). Formal-functional grounds offer no help, while usually salient rhetorical and textural events occur in quite the wrong location. Here, the relative equilibrium between all parameters makes such hierarchical grounding far more problematic. To come up with a plausible understanding of passages, we need to switch between different parameters, while being ever aware that the implied identity can be non-congruent with that suggested by other parameters.

This is not necessarily a problem for the music. After all, Wieck did not have any of these analytical systems in her head: she would have learned about generic formal schemes and methods of construction primarily through playing through and hearing a large repertoire of contemporary piano concertos.\(^{40}\) One might speculate, for instance, that in composing her concerto she took a prominent generic feature such as the display episode, which she has played numerous times and has “in her fingers,” and then innovates with it, utilizing it for a quite different though no less apt function – for developmental activity in the first movement or as a closing section in her finale. Or she combines the <flat>VI S2 episode with a slow movement in a proto-two-


\(^{40}\) On Wieck’s repertoire and the models known to her at the time of composition see Klassen, Clara Wieck-Schumann, 122–32. Starting in 1830, she also had theory and composition lessons in Leipzig with Theodor Weinlig and Heinrich Dorn.
dimensional formal design, in a manner suggested by a handful of progressive works by Spohr, Weber, and Alkan.

Such a viewpoint implicitly counters one possible response, which would be to dismiss these concerns as simply resulting from questionable qualities in the music. Wieck wrote this concerto between the ages of fourteen and sixteen, and had (so this view runs) evidently not yet learned the proper relationship between musical parameters: the problems thus merely reflect a problematic work. Such an approach would obviously be awkward in our current scholarly climate, owing both to the contemporary fear of making explicit value-judgments of quality and to our wariness of patronizing a female composer quite so evidently. But, while questions of compositional quality should not be swept completely under the carpet (admission that the teenage Wieck was still developing as a composer is not the same as sexism, and I could concede that some listeners might find the finale a little sprawling on first acquaintance), unusual tonal schemes persist into Wieck’s later compositions, and much in her concerto compares favourably with the practice of her contemporaries.

And more crucially, the loosening of parametric congruence is precisely what was happening in other music in this period: such denial overlooks the real theoretical

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41 This is the type of response one could imagine, for instance, from Charles Rosen, who comments haughtily on the monotonal exposition of Chopin’s C minor Piano Sonata, Op. 4 (1828): “Chopin was only sixteen [recte: eighteen] when he wrote it, but it is not the kind of mistake Mozart would have made when he was six. They evidently did not have very clear ideas about sonatas out there in Warsaw.” Rosen, Sonata Forms (New York: W. W. Norton, 1988), 392 n. 3. It is hardly plausible, however, that the young Chopin was not aware of sonata norms (see for instance Halina Goldberg’s Music in Chopin’s Warsaw (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008)); as with the examples by Schubert and Franck cited above, it would be more profitable, surely, to view this monotonal practice as deliberate essays in creating new formal principles.

42 On the reception of Wieck’s work and the patronising attitudes often adopted towards it by male critics see especially Macdonald, “Critical Perception and the Woman Composer,” 27, 35–7.

43 Wieck’s subsequent works in large-scale genres, the Piano Sonata in G minor (1841/2) and Piano Trio in G minor, Op. 17 (1846), are less irregular in formal construction, although both feature unusual tonal choices. The outer movements of the sonata employ the flat submediant E<flat> for their secondary themes and the finale further reprises this material in the mediant B<flat>, inverting the usual order; in the finale of the trio the secondary theme is given in the unusual dominant major and recapitulated almost entirely in the relative major. The later unfinished Konzertstück in F minor for Piano and Orchestra of 1847 does not really allow us to draw broader conclusions about her developing ideas of concerto form, since the sketch breaks off after only 175 bars at the end of the projected exposition (see further Klassen, Clara Wieck-Schumann, 185–6).
dilemma raised. What study of Wieck’s A minor Concerto reveals is how when customary associations between parameters are loosened, hierarchical systems become strained and the attempt to identify formal functions become problematized. It points to a deeper difficulty with how we theorize Romantic music at a time when established orders are increasingly questioned and “classical” norms becoming rather less normative.

44 I think here especially of Chopin’s pieces in more extended forms, which often loosen the customary correspondence between parameters such as tonal articulation, thematic identity, syntax, and topic. On this feature see the recent study by Eric Grunstein, “Towards a Theory of Chopin’s Large-Scale Forms,” PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 2021.
### Tables and Musical Examples

Table 1: Concertos in the period 1816–1850 featuring "progressive" formal traits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Date completed</th>
<th>Unitary exposition</th>
<th>Truncated first movement</th>
<th>Run-on movements</th>
<th>“Two-dimensional” implications</th>
<th>Cyclic thematic links</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spohr: Violin Concerto No. 8, Am (“In modo di scen a cantante”)</td>
<td>1816</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>(x)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. B. Cramer: Piano Concerto No. 8, Dm</td>
<td>1819</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Weber: <em>Konzertstück</em>, Op. 79, Fm</td>
<td>1821</td>
<td>(x)</td>
<td>(x)</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mendelssohn: Piano Concerto No. 1, Gm</td>
<td>1831</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alkan: <em>Concerto da Camera</em> No. 1, Am</td>
<td>1832</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alkan: <em>Concerto da Camera</em> No. 2, C&lt;sharp&gt;m</td>
<td>1833</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>(x)</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moscheles: Piano Concerto No. 6 “Fantastique,” B&lt;flat&gt;</td>
<td>1833</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wieck: Piano Concerto Op. 7, Am</td>
<td>1835</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mendelssohn: Piano Concerto No. 2, Dm</td>
<td>1837</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bennett: Piano Concerto No. 4, Fm</td>
<td>1838</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>(x)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bennett: Piano Concerto in A minor (“Concert-Stück”)</td>
<td>1843</td>
<td></td>
<td>(x)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Herz: Piano Concerto No. 4, E</td>
<td>1843</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mendelssohn: Violin Concerto in E minor</td>
<td>1844</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Schumann: Piano Concerto in A minor</td>
<td>1845</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
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<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Liszt: Piano Concerto No. 1, E&lt;flat&gt;</td>
<td>1849</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td></td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bars</td>
<td>Sonata Function</td>
<td>Concerto Function</td>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>Key</td>
<td></td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>1–16</td>
<td>Exposition</td>
<td>(R1→P (small ternary): A (hybrid) –)</td>
<td>Am</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>17–37</td>
<td>B (CM) (solo exordium – standing on V) –</td>
<td>&lt;flat&gt;II–V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>38–57</td>
<td>A’ (sentential, continuation foreshadows S and feints at III, suggesting A’→Tr, but reverts to tonic)</td>
<td>Am</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>57–65</td>
<td>standing on V → Tr</td>
<td>V/Am → C (III:PAC MC, 65)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65–74</td>
<td>S(?) (sentential, but tonally mobile)</td>
<td>C → F (PAC 74)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>74–91</td>
<td>DE (tonally mobile, some developmental rhetoric) –</td>
<td>F → Am → C …</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>92–111</td>
<td>“purple patch” (alternative S?) –</td>
<td>A&lt;flat&gt; →</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>111–29</td>
<td>standing on V</td>
<td>V/E[m]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>129–41</td>
<td>→ Development R2</td>
<td>C (P explicitly returns at 138)</td>
<td>E (PAC 129 &amp; 141)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>141–5</td>
<td>[→S2] transition to movement II (Romanze)</td>
<td>E → V/A&lt;flat&gt;</td>
<td></td>
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Table 3: Wieck, Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 7, finale, formal design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bars</th>
<th>Sonata Function</th>
<th>Concerto Function</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Key</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5–24</td>
<td>Exposition</td>
<td>(S1+R1)</td>
<td>P1 (Sentence with periodic presentation)</td>
<td>Am (PAC 24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24–34</td>
<td></td>
<td>P2 modules (feint at Tr?)</td>
<td>Am</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35–41</td>
<td></td>
<td>P3→</td>
<td>Am</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42–57</td>
<td></td>
<td>P4 (continuation of P3; – S material)</td>
<td>Am</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57–74</td>
<td></td>
<td>P5 (inversion of P4) →Tr1</td>
<td>Am → (PAC in C, 74)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74–89</td>
<td></td>
<td>S ( = P4 material; period with dissolving consequent)</td>
<td>C → (no final PAC)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90–95</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tr2</td>
<td>V/Am</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96–111</td>
<td></td>
<td>P1 (Rondo return)!</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>112–53</td>
<td></td>
<td>DE</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>154–81</td>
<td></td>
<td>R2</td>
<td>A (PAC 154)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>182–200</td>
<td></td>
<td>S2</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>F 6/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201–217</td>
<td></td>
<td>S3</td>
<td>P1</td>
<td>Am (+ A&lt;flat&gt;-interpolation)</td>
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<tr>
<td>218–244</td>
<td>[Development]</td>
<td>Core</td>
<td>Am</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>244–49</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Re transitional / on V</td>
<td>V/Em</td>
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<tr>
<td>250–53</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P2.2</td>
<td>Em</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>254–261</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P3</td>
<td>Em</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>262–73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P4 (=S?)</td>
<td>Em</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>274–89</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P5 (inversion of P4; sounds like new S version?)</td>
<td>E → V/Am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>290–356</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DE (new?)</td>
<td>Am (PAC 342)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ex. 1a  Clara Wieck: Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 7, intermovement thematic links

I: P1 theme

I: lyrical theme in DE

- linking passage to II

II: A theme

II: B theme

(inversion)

III: P1 theme

Ex. 1b  Thematic inversion in finale

III: P4 theme (=S)

III: P5 theme
Ex. 2a: Louis Spohr: Violin Concerto No. 8 in A minor, Op. 47, finale

Allegro moderato

Ex. 2b: Wieck, Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 7, first movement

Allegro maestoso
Ex. 3a: Wieck, Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 7, first movement, possible S theme

Ex. 3b: Wieck, Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 7, Finale, S theme

Ex. 3c: Wieck, Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 7, first movement, foreshadowing of S theme in P group
Abstract
Clara Wieck’s Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 7 (1833–5), presents an intriguing example of the formal developments that were occurring within the genre of the Romantic concerto in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. In line with a growing number of concertos from this period, Wieck’s work offers a number of “progressive” or non-classical traits: a unitary exposition, truncated first-movement form, run-on movements, and cyclic thematic links between movements. Such features that can be found individually or in conjunction in other concerted works from the preceding decade, but what distinguishes Wieck’s work is the extent to which she combines all these traits in a single piece. This article examines the formal procedures of Wieck’s Op. 7, which is taken as an exemplary case study of the development of Romantic form and syntax in the period after 1820. It argues that what is distinctive about this concerto is the extent to which parameters that were formerly closely coordinated – tonal structure, form-functional phrase type, thematic identity, topic and texture – now appear dissociated from their generically expected interrelation. This situation – what I term “parametric disconnect” – has far-reaching ramifications for how we are able to theorize Romantic form.

Keywords
Clara Schumann (née Wieck), concerto form, Romantic Formenlehre, parametric disconnect

Biographical note
Benedict Taylor is Reader in Music at the University of Edinburgh and co-editor of Music & Letters. His work focuses on the music of the late eighteenth to twentieth centuries, analysis, and philosophy. Publications include Mendelssohn, Time and Memory: The Romantic Conception of Cyclic Form (Cambridge, 2011), The Melody of Time: Music and Temporality in the Romantic Era (Oxford, 2016), and Music, Subjectivity, and Schumann (Cambridge, forthcoming 2022). He is the recipient of the Jerome Roche Prize of the Royal Musical Association and has held fellowships from the Institute for Advanced Study Berlin and Alexander von Humboldt Foundation.