Rethinking Sonata Failure: Mendelssohn's Overture *Zum Märchen von der schönen Melusine*

Second Themes and Failed Sonatas

The second theme of Mendelssohn's Overture *Zum Märchen von der schönen Melusine* poses significant challenges for *Formenlehre*. Its arrival in the exposition, shown in Example 1, is announced by an ostensible i:IAC medial caesura, although the approach to i via $\natural$vii°⁷ and subsequent oscillation of these chords qualifies this description [**insert Example 1 here**]. The second group is then launched immediately and consists of a sentence (labelled B1 in Example 1) and its varied repetition (labelled B1¹).[1] As Example 1 explains: a statement in mm. 107–9; response in mm. 109–111; and continuation in 111–15, shading into an expanded cadential progression (ECP), which is once evaded before a III:PAC is attained in m. 123. B1¹ initially replicates this design, allowing for transition-based interjections that expand the statement and response, but the continuation function is omitted, the music instead passing straight into the ECP at m. 132.[2]

Thanks to its oblique opening, B1 is tonally end-weighted: III is secured by the PAC in m. 123, rather than the medial caesura, which imbalance Mendelssohn then exploits in order to undermine the second group's structural integrity. Rather than engineer a tautology and close B1¹ with a PAC as well, the rhetorical signposts of a closing section – including the recovery of TR material, renewed tutti orchestration and significant energy gain – emerge at bar 144 without cadential articulation.[3] Instead, mm. 116–123's ECP is replaced in mm. 132–

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[1] I use A and B rather that MT, P or S to connote first and second themes. Subdivisions within an inter-thematic function are labelled by integer suffixes (A1, A2 etc.); reprises are signified by super-script integers (A1¹; B1¹, etc.). In this respect I follow Horton 2011, 2015 and 2017, and subsequently Hyland 2016.

[2] I use ECP in William Caplin's sense: see Caplin 2013, 60–63.

[3] *Pace* Caplin 1998, 122, which notes the de-energizing character of classical closing sections, allowance has to be made here for the Romantic and post-Romantic habit of

138 by a bass ascent from ③ to ①, after which the texture fragments over a I–V vamp.[4] In fact, no cadence is achieved until the III:PAC in mm. 155–156, which is five measures before the exposition's end. All of the music between 144–156 can be interpreted as an ECP: the I^6 chord at m. 144 eventually moves upwards to V in m. 155, and everything in-between either facilitates or elaborates this progression.

This distribution of cadences opens up a classically atypical gap in the exposition's form. The first PAC is too early to be structural, and the second is very late, meaning that what Hepokoski and Darcy call the essential expositional closure (EEC), or PAC completing the second theme and initiating the closing section, is hard to locate.[5] If we choose m. 123 for this role, then B1[1]'s function becomes inexplicable; if we choose m. 156, then all of the music with closing-section rhetoric is annexed to the second group and the closing section itself becomes microscopically small.[6]

Example 2 shows the corresponding music in the recapitulation [**insert Example 2 here**]. Again, Mendelssohn does not prepare the second group's key, but slips from an F minor 6-4 chord into D flat major, in which key B1 begins at m. 289, producing a VI:PAC at m. 305. This digression is rectified with B1[1]'s turn towards F minor. Again, however, there is

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composing an energizing closing section, which often refers back to the first theme or transition, which is either pre- or post-EEC and invokes more dramatically charged topics than the preceding second theme. Examples are widespread, including the first movements of Mendelssohn's symphonies nos. 2, 3, 4 and 5, Schumann's nos. 1, 2 and 4, all of Brahms's symphonies, and especially Bruckner's symphonies, which exhibit increasingly self-contained closing themes that supply the gestural goal of the exposition, whether they follow a structural PAC (as in nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and 8) or not (as in nos. 5, 6 and 9). On first-theme and TR-based C sections, see Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 184–6.

[4] Employing the terminology for labelling bass steps adopted in Gjerdingen 2007, 20–21.

[5] As defined in Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 18 and 120–31.

[6] Caplin's view (1998, 122) that, in situations where multiple themes appear before there is a codetta, "the closing section follows the cadence ending the last theme of the group" is more hospitable to what happens in *Melusine,* but nevertheless produces a reading in which the closing section is disproportionately brief. An alternative would be to regard the music from m. 144 as a $C^{pre\text{-}EEC}$ as explained by Hepokoski and Darcy: that is, a situation in which the rhetoric of a closing section begins in advance of the EEC; see 2006, 190–1.

no definitive cadence: instead the music is deflected into a half cadence in mm. 318–19, from which point closing-section rhetoric is asserted. Even though we are now in the tonic, the consequences of cadential deferral are more severe here than in the exposition, because at no point before what rhetorically seems to be a coda at m. 361 does any cadence occur: an ECP is initiated at m. 343 and evaded in mm. 348–9, but then abandoned completely as the whole cadential process stalls over $\natural$vii°⁷/V in mm. 355–360. In sonata-theoretical terms, there is no essential structural closure (ESC) within sonata space: the tonic PAC closing the second group fails to materialize. The music has recapitulatory rhetoric, but there is only one PAC, which is tonicizes VI.

Melusine's tactics resonate with two concepts in recent *Formenlehre*. Primarily, its cadential malfunctions and non-tonic B reprise invoke sonata theory's notion of failure, formulated by James Hepokoski in response to Beethoven's *Egmont* Overture and subsequently elaborated with Warren Darcy in the *Elements of Sonata Theory*.[7] Applied to the exposition, they define failure as follows:

> The purpose of S [the subordinate theme group] within the exposition is to reach and stabilize a perfect authentic cadence in the new key. In eighteenth-century sonatas this aim is almost invariably accomplished …. The generic model inherited from the earlier eighteenth century is overwhelming in its consistency and purpose: S exists to drive to a secured PAC. Were the PAC/EEC left unaccomplished … the exposition would be an illustration of frustration, nonattainment or failure.[8]

Pursuing this into the recapitulation, they write:

[7] Hepokoski 2002, and Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 177–9 and 245–9.
[8] Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 177.

Since the main generic requirement of a recapitulation is to secure the ESC with a

satisfactory I:PAC at the end of S, any recapitulation that falls short of this obligation,

leaving the rhetorical recapitulation tonally or cadentially open, is problematic. Such a

'failed' recapitulation is a strong expressive gesture – a deformation – and the

expected cadence, and tonal closure for the piece, is deferred beyond sonata space into

a coda.[9]

In *Egmont*, Hepokoski focuses on the second theme's non-tonic return – also in D flat

despite a global F minor tonality.[10] Unlike *Melusine* – which initially threatens a non-tonic

recapitulation before correcting to a minor-mode tonic recapitulation in which there is no

ESC – *Egmont* retains D flat until the end of sonata space, which means that the ESC appears

erroneously as a VI:PAC. As a result, "the recapitulation has not produced a tonal resolution.

All of its closures are in a 'false' VI, D flat major, not the 'true' tonic, F."[11] In fact, *Egmont*'s

failure is twofold, because the second group's transposition prevents its tonic-major

reorientation, which means that both its tonal stability and the "generic" requirement to yield

a major-mode tonic ESC are compromised.[12] For Hepokoski, *Egmont* therefore instantiates

the most extreme kind of sonata deformation.

The second concept that *Melusine* invokes is "becoming," defined in Janet

Schmalfeldt's well-known formulation as "*the special case whereby the formal function*

initially suggested by a musical idea, phrase, or section invites retrospective reinterpretation

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[9] Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 245.
[10] Mendelssohn certainly knew *Egmont*. He conducted a performance of it in Düsseldorf on November 22nd, 1834, the same year in which *Melusine* was composed. See Todd 2003, 287.
[11] Hepokoski 2002, 130.
[12] On the normative ESC, see Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 20; on its responsibilities in a minor key, see ibid., 306–7.

within the larger formal context."[13] Invoking the Hegelian thread of musical thought from A.

B. Marx to Theodor Adorno and Carl Dahlhaus, Schmalfeldt nominates becoming as a

defining characteristic of music in "the Beethoven-Hegelian tradition,"[14] the formal

functionality of which is enmeshed in a dialectically unfolding *process* that actively

implicates listening. Thus construed, becoming works towards a synthesis of subject and

object in Hegel's sense: subjectivity, or the condition of music's "being," resides in the

unmediated musical idea, on which objectivity is conferred by thematic working, the progress

of which is "*the process of becoming.*"[15]

Schmalfeldt identifies becoming in Mendelssohn's Piano Trio No. 1, Op. 49 and

Octet Op. 20; but it is also apparent in *Melusine*.[16] In both exposition and recapitulation, we

might reasonably argue that the second group *becomes* the closing section. In the absence of

liminal cadences, the two functions merge, creating a zone of ambiguity, during which the

second group has not yet closed, but the music behaves rhetorically as if a structural cadence

had already occurred. $B1^1$ is critical to this process in both cases. In the exposition, the

retrospective annexation of mm. 144–155 to the closing section is articulated by the

dovetailing of thematic processes: $B1^1$ fragments while TR's closing-section variant is

adumbrated. In the recapitulation, no such overlap occurs, but $B1^1$ carries the additional

burden of establishing a tonic that B1 has not initially secured. Both passages project a

version of Schmalfeldt's dialectic: material that experientially seems like an extension of the

second group retrospectively acquires closing-section functionality. To apply Schmalfeldt's

symbology: in both cases, B⇒C.

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[13] Schmalfeldt 2011, 9, italics in original.

[14] Schmalfeldt 2011, Chapter 2, and before it Schmalfeldt 1995. For Adorno's equation of Beethoven and Hegel, see for example Adorno 1976, 210, Adorno 1993, 136 and Adorno 1998.

[15] Schmalfeldt 2011, 30–1 and also Adorno 1976, 210.

[16] Schmalfeldt 2011, 159–94.

At the heart of *Melusine*'s analytical challenge, then, is not only the problem of how to account for its distinctively post-classical tactics, but also the broader dilemma of how to reconcile the formal theories with which it resonates. Failure plays out in Mendelssohn's dialogue with sonata theory's norms, which means that it is perceived in a series of formal rejections, as cadences fail to appear in-line with eighteenth-century precedent. As Seth Monahan avers, such evasions invoke "the principle of negative semantic function," a move that, for Monahan, permits coordination of a work's structural goals with its expressive trajectory.[17] Becoming on the other hand concerns the music's processual specificity; and we might reasonably ask whether it can be integrated into the sonata-theoretical reading, as the processual basis of *Melusine*'s dialogic evasions. Process is, to be sure, part of sonata theory's apparatus as well: as Monahan explains, it "is less a rigid mould or schematic template than a *dynamic process* [italics mine], structured around a set of genre-defining *tasks* or *goals*."[18] Nevertheless, to say that the subversion of convention expresses failure is not necessarily to say that the objectives of a work's process go unfulfilled: becoming captures a material logic, which operates irrespective of the normative status of sonata theory's 'essential sonata trajectory' or EST.

Approaches to Romantic Form

The tension between failure and process is one expression of a conceptual dichotomy underpinning attitudes towards Romantic form, which Steven Vande Moortele has characterised respectively as "negative" and "positive" approaches. Vande Moortele aligns positivity with form-functional theory and negativity with sonata deformation theory; the

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[17] See Monahan 2011, 37–58, at 40. As explains, in some of Mahler's sonata forms, "the ability of a recapitulation to bring certain expositional non-tonic materials into the home key correlate strongly to a movement's expressive outcome." See ibid., 37.

[18] Monahan 2011, 38.

former allows Romantic sonatas conceptual and historical autonomy; the latter locates them in the shadow of Viennese classicism:

> Simply put, a positive approach would strive to establish a series of types and norms for nineteenth-century form based solely on what happens in nineteenth-century music itself. A negative approach would measure nineteenth-century form against a set of types and norms that are external to it. The former option would mean re-doing Caplin's taxonomic project for a new repertoire, while the latter is already built into Hepokoski and Darcy's theory of norm and deformation.[19]

Deformation inevitably binds Romantic forms to classical precedents: its premise is that the fulfilment or evasion of high-classical norms constitutes subsequent practice's operational basis.[20] It thereby incorporates a music-historical premise as well: sonata form is an essentially Viennese-classical phenomenon, towards which Romantic practice is orientated not only because Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven supply the theory's primary evidence, but also because their music is constructed, historically and geographically, as a centre.[21] Sonata form's evolution is then understood as the historical process, through which deformations become normative over time.[22] Theorists in the lineage of Caplin's form-functional theory have instead focused on syntax and process. Schmalfeldt explores a distinctively Romantic

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[19] Vande Moortele 2017, 10.

[20] Recalling Hepokoski and Darcy's definition in 2006, 614.

[21] *Elements of Sonata Theory*'s corpus has been a matter of debate, the principal complaint being that it is heavily skewed towards Mozart. See for example Drabkin 2007, 98–100 and also Wingfield, 2008, 145. The corpus is reconstructed from its index in Moynihan 2019, 91–5.

[22] As Hepokoski and Darcy explain (2006, 11): "What was a deformation in Beethoven could become a lower-level default in Schumann, Liszt or Wagner – part of a larger network of nineteenth-century sonata-deformation families." Hepokoski debates the normativity of *Egmont*'s recapitulatory second-theme fifth transposition in 2002, 133.

processuality, which changes classical forms by reimagining their form-functional protocols. Vande Moortele adopts a more stringently empirical mentality, undertaking a generically bounded corpus study from which a form-functional taxonomy is drawn.

This article's central objective is to arbitrate this debate by exploring the interaction of failure and process in *Melusine* as a limiting case for the theory of Romantic form. Although Mendelssohn self-evidently invokes classical precedent, I argue that *Melusine*'s form coheres thanks to its processual logic, not its dialogue with classical precepts. I therefore develop a taxonomy of process for the Overture, which situates Schmalfeldt's concept of becoming in a framework comprising ten categories:

1. *Becoming*, or retrospective functional transformation. *Melusine* exhibits three kinds of becoming: *progressive* transformation reinterprets a function as its expected successor (introduction $\Rightarrow$ first theme); *regressive* transformation reinterprets a function as its expected predecessor (first theme $\Leftarrow$ introduction), and consequently implies *negation*; and, invoking Martin and Vande Moortele (2014), *circular* transformation oscillates between two possible functions within a larger formal span (introduction $\Leftrightarrow$ first theme). Adapting Caplin's terminology, I also differentiate becoming by functional level, and therefore distinguish *intra-thematic*, *inter-thematic* and *large-scale-formal* transformations; that is, becoming acting *inside* a theme, becoming acting *between* thematic and other functions, and becoming acting on the largest functional units (introduction, exposition, development, recapitulation and coda).[23]

2. *Proliferation*, or the expansion of thematic units, such that multiple intra-thematic levels accumulate within a single inter-thematic span.[24] Mendelssohn most often

[23] Caplin 1998, 17. I maintain this threefold distinction throughout the analysis as a means of differentiating the formal levels on which processes act.
[24] For earlier formulations of this concept, see for example Horton 2015, 85 and also Horton 2017, 46–8. For a recent application, see Hogrefe 2019.

deploys this tactic in expositional first themes, where it undermines Caplin's

distinction between tight-knit and loose formation as the factor generating thematic

contrast.[25]

3. *Truncation*, or the compression or elimination of material at an intra-thematic, inter-

thematic or large-scale formal level. In first themes, recapitulatory truncation often

balances expositional proliferation, creating a distinctively Romantic formal

asymmetry, which often results in the conflation of formal functions.[26]

4. *Deferral*, or the withholding of structural cadences. Deferral is central to sonata

theory's concept of failure, but in Mendelssohn's music it acquires the status of a

processual convention.

5. *Non-congruence*, or the non-alignment of parameters, such that the action of one

parameter completes after another has commenced. Non-congruence is often

facilitated by deferral: if closing-section rhetoric precedes the arrival of a structural

PAC, then formal function and bass progression are non-congruent.[27]

6. *Overlap*, or the deployment of non-congruence at an intra-thematic, inter-thematic or

large-scale formal juncture, creating the impression that a new formal function has

begun in one parameter before another has closed, which I symbolise as ⇆.[28] For

example: TR⇆B.

7. *Dislocation*, or the classically unconventional relocation of structural tonal or

harmonic features. Dislocation might involve prematurely located cadences, dominant

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[25] On which see Caplin 1998, 84–6 and more recently 2013, 203–5. For Schmalfeldt's
analysis of the first theme of Mendelssohn's Op. 49, see 2011, 164–73.
[26] On conflation, see Horton 2015, 112 and subsequently Hogrefe 2019, 8–9.
[27] See Smith 1994 and 2005 for earlier formulations of this idea. Non-congruence is one
expression of the concept of "multivalence" advocated by James Webster; see for example
1991, 4–5 and 2009, 128–39.
[28] This term references Reddick 2010, 2.

prolongation or MC effects applied within themes, significant non-tonic emphasis in a

first theme, or tonic emphasis in an expositional second theme.

8. *Digression*, or the transposition of tonic structural events into a non-tonic key, or of a

tonic or non-tonic structural event into a more remote key.

9. *Parenthesis*, or the isolation of a passage of music from the formal discourse.

Hepokoski's deformational category of "episodes within development space"

exemplifies parenthesis, and it is a critical large-scale feature of *Melusine*.[29]

10. *Alignment*, or the coordination of inter-thematic junctures with perfect-cadential or

half-cadential closure. Alignment incorporates sonata theory's classically normative

EST, which can be understood as a kind of perfect-cadential inter-thematic alignment.

Whereas Caplin (1998, 9) defines processes as the *constructive* mechanisms of

classical formal functions, these processual categories are *conceptual*: they capture the idea

conditioning *Melusine*'s syntactic organisation at a given form-functional level, in addition to

the means by which formal functions are constructed.[30] The categories may be active at the

intra-thematic, inter-thematic and large-scale formal levels, and are by no means exclusive:

Melusine's form is defined by their inter- and intra-level collaboration or antagonism in a

kind of multivalent processual counterpoint. Together, the categories delimit the conceptual

framework within which form and syntax are temporally mediated.[31] The sum of their

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[29] Hepokoski 1993, 6–7. This idea overlaps with the concepts of parataxis often noted in
Schubert, on which subject, see Mak 2006 and 2010, and Hyland 2014. My usage is not the
same as William Rothstein's, who employs parenthesis in a Schenkerian context to explain
techniques of phrase expansion, or Brian Edward Jarvis and John Peterson, who elaborate
Rothstein's usage into a form-functional model of phrase expansion in Mendelssohn's music.
Rather, my idea captures the retrospective suspension of a passage of music's participation in
a work's formal process. See Rothstein 1989, 199 and Jarvis and Peterson 2019.
[30] Caplin specifically nominates repetition, fragmentation, extension and expansion. My
processual categories have more in common with the Schoenbergian "structural" functions
advocated in Arndt 2018, but I differ from Arndt in foregrounding the conceptual-strategic
rather than the temporal basis of functions.
[31] For a sensitive analysis of the relationship between form and temporality, which takes
Mendelssohn's String Quartet Op. 13 as its case study, see Taylor 2011, 154–9.

interactions I call the *processual network*; my central claim is that close attention to the

network's mediation of syntax, form and structure enables a reading of Op. 32, which moves

beyond sonata failure towards a fuller recognition of its instantiation of Romantic form. As I

will show, this reading also benefits our efforts to grasp *Melusine*'s programmatic meanings.

First Themes, Introductions and Processual Networks

The taxonomy's utility becomes clear when we try to locate *Melusine*'s first-theme group. On

initial hearing, we might assume that mm. 1–48, summarized in Table 1 [**insert Table 1**

here], serve this function, given their clear thematic profile, small-ternary organization and

untroubled F major tonic; by this reading, m. 49 initiates the transition. Yet the relationship

between mm. 1–48 and 49–107 is not recognizably that obtaining between a classically

orthodox first theme and transition. The mode switch to F minor from m. 49 is not transitory,

but, as the subsequent modulation to A flat confirms, supplies the sonata form's functional

tonic; classical precedents for an expositional tonal scheme, in which the second group

relates to the transition diatonically but to the first group via modal mixture are hard to

discover. The perception of mm. 49–107 as transitional is further compromised by their

recognizably thematic syntax, and by mm. 1–48's rhetorical segregation from the sonata

action: a decisive I:PAC closes at m. 40, and the subsequent eight-measure codetta dissolves

towards gestural and harmonic stasis by m. 47, after which the formal momentum has to be

recovered from scratch. In effect, the music after m. 49 usurps mm. 1–48's thematic function,

converting them, retrospectively, into an introduction.[32]

Measures 49–67, also included in Table 1 and quoted with analytical annotations in

Example 3, are nonetheless syntactically unconventional [**insert Example 3 here**], and

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[32] In this respect, *Melusine* confirms Steven Vande Moortele's perception that introductions
in Romantic overtures "often have a fully-fledged and tendentially closed musical form." See
Vande Moortele 2017, 110.

consequently also problematic as a first-theme group. Although their design superficially resembles a sentence, the internal details qualify this description at virtually every step. Measures 50–53 establish a basic idea, but Mendelssohn supplies no response, moving directly to a sequential continuation in mm. 54–58, which deploys the basic idea's final motivic particle above an ascending bass step progression. This idea fragments as m. 60's converging half cadence approaches, but the process overshoots the cadence and continues above mm. 60–67's standing on V, completing in m. 67 with the tonic's anacrusic arrival. In sum, we have an 18-measure theme, the syntax of which is basic idea+continuation (sequence+fragmentation)+half cadence+standing on V (liquidation), and which is asymmetrically arranged around the elided half cadence, giving a subdivision into 11 and 7 measures respectively. The cadence is therefore medial, even though the theme group is in other respects tight-knit.

Expressed as a processual network, measures 49–67 exploit three intra-thematic processes. First, the absence of a response or contrasting idea implies *truncation*. Second, the half cadence and subsequent standing on V deploy *dislocation*: the HC is the theme's only cadential event, but it is medial; and the standing on V conveys transitional or retransitional rhetoric, despite its first-theme context. Third, the persistence of fragmentation across the half cadence projects *non-congruence*: the basic idea's motivic treatment stretches from mm. 52–67 unimpeded by half-cadential articulation. The theme group's *syntactic* identity is expressed in the sequence 'basic idea+continuation+half cadence+standing on V'; but its *processual* identity is formed from the interplay of truncation, dislocation and non-congruence.

Altogether, mm. 1–67 play off syntax, process and form at three levels. The dualism of stability and instability is intra-thematic in origin, but it generates inter-thematic becoming: phenomenologically, we might perceive mm. 1–48 as a first theme; but mm. 49–

67 reconstitute 1–48 as an introduction and thereby retroactively place them in *parentheses*.[33] Measures 1–48 are consequently subject to *regressive transformation*, which negates their putative first-theme status and retroactively renders them parenthetical. In brief: for mm. 1–48, A$\Leftarrow$ Int. (parenthesis), which simultaneously converts mm. 1–48 into A$^{\text{neg.}}$, that is, into an introduction, the first-theme function of which has been negated. This also moves mm. 1–48 up the formal hierarchy: beginning life as a putative inter-thematic function (A), they become a large-scale framing function (the introduction). Measures 1–67 consequently express a dialectic between the instability that the interplay of truncation, dislocation and non-congruence generates in mm. 49–67, and the stability that *alignment* engenders in mm. 1–48. The dialectic is articulated by modal mixture – mm. 1–48's stability affiliates with F major; mm. 49–67's turbulence with F minor – which adds an additional ingredient to the formal dynamic, since Mendelssohn must later arbitrate between the conflicting expressive demands of major- and minor-mode sonatas.[34]

A third possibility locates the first-theme group from m. 68, anacrusis 67.[35] By this reading, mm. 49–67 constitute a thematic introduction in Caplin's terms, or a P0 module in sonata theory's usage, although the music's thematic syntax problematizes this description.[36] As Table 2 shows, mm. 67–107 are tonally closed and disclose a thematic syntax, to which *proliferation* is central [**insert Table 2 here**]. Measures 67^3–71 establish a four-measure compound basic idea (c.b.i.), which is immediately repeated; and mm. 75^3–83 could be read as a continuation phrase, which ostensibly devolves into a four-measure model and its repetition. Mendelssohn however reprises and varies mm. 67^3–83's entire design in mm. 83^3–99, which means that mm. 67^3–83 now acquire the character of a c.b.i., in which the basic

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[33] This possibility has led Todd (2003, 288) and Mintz (1957) to identify a double exposition in *Melusine*.

[34] This issue is extensively documented in Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 306–17.

[35] This is the interpretation advocated by Thomas Grey (in press).

[36] Caplin 1998, 15–16 and Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 72–3 and 86–91.

idea (mm. 67^3–71) and the contrasting idea (75^3–79) are both repeated. At a higher formal level again, 67^3–83 take on the function of a compound statement, to which 83^3–99 supply the response. Measures 99^3–103 then move into a continuation phrase, and the whole formal unit ends with mm. 103^3–107's i–♮vii° oscillation, which furnishes prolongational rather than cadential closure, as Caplin terms it.[37] As Table 2 reveals, this music is proliferative at three levels: a c.b.i. forms the basic idea of a larger c.b.i., which is then used as the statement of a statement-response design.

Rather than try to arbitrate these three readings, it is perhaps better to recognise the shifting processual dialectics in which they are implicated. The syntax of mm. 67–107 and their refusal to modulate confers a thematic functionality, which we only appreciate once the second theme has commenced, and which in turn converts mm. 49–67 into the first part of a much larger bipartite A-theme design. In other words, TR⇐A2, as a result of which A⇒A1, giving an overall formal succession in mm. 1–107 of A⇐Intro., A⇒A1, TR⇐A2, each stage of which is characterised by a specific processual category, or set of categories, thus: A (alignment)⇐Int.; A (truncation+dislocation+non-congruence)⇒A1; TR (proliferation)⇐A2. This analysis in turn explicates B's opening as a further instance of non-congruence. Measures 107–123 have a presentational function in that they establish the sentential syntax of B; but the bass progression undertakes the modulatory labour that TR fails to supply. The tonal action of TR therefore completes with m. 123's PAC. At B's onset, non-congruence generates *overlap*, which in turn responds to TR's regressive transformation: TR⇐A2, ∴ TR⇆B. This perception emerges not simply because of A2's tonal stasis – transitions ending with a I:HC MC are after all also non-modulatory – but because of mm. 103–107's

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[37] Caplin 2018, 14–16, as defined on 14.

ostensible *closural* function: they are not bifocal in the manner of a I:HC MC, but serve as a thematic end function in Caplin's terms, an effect reinforced by the music's decisive rhetoric.

We can now appraise the exposition *in toto*. The late arrival of the mediant-securing III:PAC in m. 123 is both a residue of mm. 67–107's TR/A2 functional ambiguity and the source of the EEC's deferral. As TR/A2 functionality overlaps with B, so B functionality overlaps with C: the cadential termination of TR's bass progression at m. 123 defers B's structural PAC to the end of the exposition. In sum: A (alignment)$\Leftarrow$Int. (A$^\text{neg.}$); A (truncation+dislocation+non-congruence)$\Rightarrow$A1; TR (proliferation)$\Leftarrow$A2; TR/A2 (non-congruence)$\leftrightarrows$B1; B1^1 (deferral; non-congruence; becoming)$\leftrightarrows$C. Understood as a logically implicative processual network, this succession captures *Melusine*'s expositional strategy.

In the recapitulation, the exposition's dialectic of introduction and first-theme functions is critically reconceived. The introduction returns in F major over V6-4 at m. 264, and its A section is then reprised but varied, producing a period closed with a I:PAC in m. 279. Yet when B1 comes back in D flat at m. 289, neither the rest of the introduction, A1 nor TR/A2 have reappeared. Instead, Mendelssohn composes a new transition, beginning at m. 280, based on introduction material, which darkens to F minor from m. 285. Becoming is here mobilised as a large-scale process. With the return of B1, we have to reinterpret the introduction's reappearance in terms of first-theme functionality, because it now occupies first-theme space. From the perspective of the B-theme recapitulation, the introduction encroaches on sonata space and *becomes* A, as a result of which A1 and A2 forfeit their first-theme status, and A1 disappears completely from the form. This turn of events counteracts the exposition's *regressive* transformation, by *progressively* transforming the introduction into A under the auspices of truncation (the introduction's contrasting middle and A^1 and the whole of A1 and TR/A2 are excised). In the exposition, the introduction's first-theme identity is *negated*; in the recapitulation, it is *sublated* in the Hegelian sense, meaning that its initial

condition of negation is now overcome at a higher formal level. In effect: contrasting A⇐Int. (A$^{\text{neg.}}$), we now have Int.⇒A$^{\text{subl.}}$. Measures 1–48 are consequently liberated from their parenthetic condition, but this transformation comes at a price, because the music's formal self-containment is compromised by truncation and divisional overlap. Measure 264's 6-4 harmony reflects the persistence of the retransitional bass V attained in m. 246, which only moves to F at the start of the consequent phrase in m. 272: as Example 4 clarifies, RT⇆Intro.⇒A$^{\text{subl.}}$ [**insert Example 4 here**].

The exposition's A material does not however now recede completely; when TR/A2 returns in F minor from m. 319, it brings with it an echo of the exposition's functional order as well as its minor tonality. As Example 5 shows, there follows a struggle between Int./A$^{\text{subl.}}$ and TR/A2, explicitly from m. 327, where the former's *Hauptmotiv* appears in the violins as a counterpoint to the latter's distinctive ^5-^♮4-^♭4-^♮3 continuation figure [**insert Example 5 here**]. One way to read this is as a belated attempt to restore the affective universe of A1 and A2 in the wake of their formal excision, which fails, because the heavy formal burden that the C section now carries precludes a structural tonic cadence. The non-arrival of the ESC is, in short, bound up with the introduction's annexation of first-theme space. There is no decisive F minor cadence, because the closing section is preoccupied with reasserting F minor as a premise, rather than consolidating it as a goal.

In a move resonating with *Egmont*, the resolution of these insecurities is supplied by the coda, which retrieves the introduction from m. 361, initially punctuated by B-theme interjections, and allows it to run to its I:PAC in m. 387. In effect, the dominant acquired at the recapitulation's start is only structurally resolved at this point: as such, m. 387 converts m. 279's I:PAC into the ESC that should have occurred in sonata space. This strategy, and the exposition's corresponding bass motion, are compared in Example 6 [**insert Example 6 here**]. The exposition enacts a conventional i–III progression, even though the abandoned

B1[1] ECP is transferred into the closing section; the recapitulation is contrastingly poised over a huge dominant prolongation. The second theme projects VI as a neighbour to the dominant, by which it is surrounded, since TR recovers V at its end, and B1[1] returns to F minor over V at m. 306, but fails to escape the encompassing bass dominant, which persists into C without resolution. The sheer ubiquity of dominant prolongation back-projects onto the recapitulation's start, overriding the PAC in bar 279, which retrospectively feels like a cadence of limited scope, or the delayed resolution of a retransitional V that is already undermined by an overlapping dominant extending into the recapitulation.

Completing the processual network: the recapitulation exploits five interacting categories. The A-theme recapitulation incorporates divisional overlap, non-congruence and progressive transformation; B1 contrasts this with digression; B1[1] and C collectively exploit deferral; and C expresses non-congruence at its start and end, producing a divisional overlap with the coda. Ostensibly, all of this compels a deformational reading in two senses: the non-resolving recapitulation works in tandem with an 'introduction-coda frame', which bookends the Overture with 'parageneric' spaces.[38] Yet the introduction's recapitulatory transformation further complicates this analysis, because by m. 361 this music has become dialectically freighted. In one sense, the coda returns $A^{subl.}$ to its framing function, and as such enacts a regressive transformation ($A^{subl.} \Leftarrow$ Int. as coda). At the same time, the coda retains the memory of $A^{subl.}$'s thematic identity; and its "parageneric" condition is also twofold, since it has now appeared both "before the beginning" and "after the end."[39] More properly, we might read mm. 361–387 as embodying both *circular* transformation, since the music simultaneously *is* and *is not* functional within sonata space, and *progressive* transformation,

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[38] As explained in Hepokoski 1993, 6. Parageneric space is the subject of Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 281–305.

[39] In Caplin's usage: see for instance 2009, 23–7.

because a pre-formal framing function now serves as a post-formal framing function: therefore, $A^{subl.} \Leftrightarrow (Int. \Rightarrow Coda)$.

These processual complexities inevitably complicate analysis of the development, the design of which is appraised in Table 3 [**insert Table 3 here**]. If we hear mm. 1–48 as the first theme, then the order of thematic recall seems broadly rotational in the sonata-theoretical sense, because the development begins by returning to the opening. If we hear mm. 1–48 as an introduction, however, then their recall in mm. 161–211 invokes Hepokoski's 'introduction-coda frame' deformation.[40] Yet the thematic ordering is significant more for its processuality than for its rotational design. The introduction's return is comprehensible as an intermediary stage between its initial functional negation and its restoration in the recapitulation, in which respect it is telling that A1 plays no role at all in the development: the introduction substitutes for A1 in the rotational ordering. Its use therefore signifies rehabilitation: $A^{subl.}$ supplants A1 at the recapitulation's start as the result of a progressive transformation that the development initiates. Moreover, the material succession is not discrete: introduction, A2 and B1 do not simply follow on, but as Table 3 illustrates, are rather non-congruent, creating regions of overlap, during which the liquidation of one idea is dovetailed with the recovery of another.

Measures 161–263 are a locus of processual as well as material development, because each theme's network is reformed or deconstructed. For the introduction, this involves dismantling its tight-knit syntax, by loosening the condition of alignment that obtains in mm. 1–48. The agent of this is sequence: after m. 180, it becomes clear that the tonal dislocation of antecedent (which closes on V) and consequent (which closes on V/iii) in mm. 166–180 will not be cadentially redressed, as the sequential progression fragments towards C^6 in m. 196. A2, in contrast, is recovered in mm. 199–209 and then syntactically re-organised from

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[40] Hepokoski 1993, 5.

m. 212 (contrasting idea now precedes basic idea). And from m. 228, B1's basic idea is subject entirely to sequence and fragmentation, as a result of which its form-functional stability is sacrificed.

As Example 7's bass diagram explains, the development's underpinning structural function centres on C major's reinterpretation as V rather than I [**insert Example 7 here**]. As a deep-middleground phenomenon, V's recovery at m. 246 serves to confirm the structural interruption, presaging the recapitulation's resumption of an *Urlinie*. Mendelssohn dramatizes modal mixture in order to engineer this. The introduction's return recovers the orbit of F major, but the developmental overlapping of the introduction and A2 in mm. 199–207 also facilitates a mode switch: V of F major yields to iv of F minor as A2 takes control of the discourse from m. 208. B1 in turn pulls towards F minor from m. 228, but subsequently reaches VI in m. 234, which, as an upper neighbour to V in m. 246, prefigures the bass progression that underpins B's recapitulation.

Failure at a Deeper Level? Form and Large-Scale Voice Leading

Melusine's intra-thematic interplay of syntax and process and the resulting network of inter-thematic dialectical transformations generate two *large-scale* processes: a working-out of the formal problematic created by the dialectic of thematic and pre-thematic functions acting on mm. 1–48; and the negotiation of two modalities, which successively present themselves as tonic- and first-theme-defining. That these processes dislodge the EST is plain to hear; but the form as a whole only fails insomuch as its processes do not map onto sonata theory's classical frame of reference. To put this in the terms advocated above: although *Melusine* doesn't express expositional and recapitulatory inter-thematic alignment, we can nevertheless explicate the form via the logic of its processual network; this is the domain of Vande Moortele's "positive" formal theory. The Overture's strategy is not classically normative

because its intra-thematic syntax and the processual network it supports are formally generative in a way that is classically alien; but there is no reason why analysis should foreground classical precedent rather than the Overture's processual specificity. The EST, in brief, fails dialogically; but the work's formal strategy succeeds, to the extent that its logic is pursued to a conclusion.

One concomitant question concerns these processes' impact on the work's deep voice leading: if processual characteristics hamper the detection of an *Ursatz*, then failure could be rehoused in the Overture's *structure* rather than its *form*.[41] The first obstacle *Melusine* presents to an orthodox Schenkerian reading is the identification of a *Kopfton*. The task of completing the *Urlinie* clearly lies with the retrieval of the introduction's I:PAC in mm. 380–387, given that neither B's nor C's recapitulation yields a PAC. This means that the *Urlinie* should be present *in nuce* in mm. 1–48; or rather, the features held in common between mm. 1–32 and 361–387 lead us to anticipate an *Ursatz* parallelism in 1–32. The projection of the introduction's voice leading across the form as a whole is consequently its defining deep-structural characteristic. Example 8 however shows that, although the opening measures clearly nominate ^5 as *Kopfton* via an *Anstieg*, neither the PAC in mm. 37–40 nor in 380–387 discloses a structural ^4 [**insert Example 8 here**].[42] Scale-degree ^5 naturally recurs with the attainment of A^1 in m. 25, and again in m. 369, and ^3 is acquired as a neighbour to ^2 embellishing an arpeggiation from C in mm. 39 and 385; but in neither case is there a connective ^4. Instead, the soprano ascends towards ^2 in the c2 register by m. 36, in relation to which the cadential 6-4 in m. 38 serves as a neighbouring elaboration; mm. 380–387's deferred ESC simply reproduces this problem.

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[41] I'm mindful here of recent attempts to merge *Formenlehre* and Schenkerian analysis, prominently in Schmalfeldt 2011 and see also Smith 2019 and 2014.

[42] I also acknowledge with thanks the suggestion of one of this article's readers that ^4 could be located beneath the covering C in m. 385, anticipated in m. 30.

Positing ^3 as *Kopfton* also requires special pleading. Example 9 rethinks the opening in these terms [**insert Example 9 here**]. Rather than apprehending an *Anstieg* in mm. 1–2, we could regard the arpeggiation up to ^5 here as part of an octave transfer of F from the c1 to the c2 register, meaning that mm. 1–4 really comprise a motion from ^1 to ^2 displaced through an octave and arrived at in m. 3, which motion is then completed with the arrival of ^3 back in the c1 register in m. 6. In other words, the A in m. 6 constitutes the *Kopfton*, to which mm. 1–5 supply a prefatory linear ascent, which couples the c1 and c2 registers. A third, more unorthodox solution, presented in Example 10, would be to retain ^5 as the *Kopfton*, but see the ^4–^3 as completed by m. 6, leaving only ^2–^1 to form the eventual PAC [**insert Example 10 here**]. In all of these scenarios, the *Kopfton* and the descent through ^2 are registrally disjunct, since both mm. 37–40 and 380–387 position the ^2–^1 descent in the c2 register.

A second issue concerns modal mixture: the action of the *Urlinie* is played out in F major, despite the predominance of F minor in sonata space. In this respect, the sonata form's cadential deferrals acknowledge F minor as a deep-middleground *Mischung* rather than a background phenomenon, confirming Schenker's insistence in *Free Composition* that mixture always ultimately resides in the middleground.[43] As Example 11 appraises, this structure ultimately inverts A1's parenthetical influence on the introduction [**insert Example 11 here**]. Once we realise that ultimate closure can only be achieved in F major via the agency of the introduction's I:PAC, the entire sonata form retrospectively becomes a parenthesis, as if Mendelssohn had inserted a sonata form in F minor within a song without words in F major.

The recapitulation's conversion of A$^{neg.}$ into A$^{subl.}$ is problematic in this respect, because it constitutes an intrusion of F major into what has thus far been a minor-mode

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[43] Schenker 2002, 40–2, and especially 40.

Schenkerian interruption. The end of the exposition secures a third divider between i and V, and the arrival of RT completes the bass arpeggiation of the tonic triad, revealing the sonata form to this point as a ^3-line halted by an interruption at ^2. The first-theme recapitulation does not, however, properly resume this putative *Urlinie*, because it swaps ^♭3 for ^♮3, and because its modality presupposes a different model of interruption, which expects ^2 to arrive over V at the exposition's end. Example 11 resolves this issue by positing two interlocked backgrounds: an overarching 3-line in F major, in relation to which the F minor sonata is parenthetical; an incomplete F minor 3-line, the *Kopfton* of which is secured in m. 51, and which proceeds as far as its medial interruption, before being derailed by ^♮3's intervention and never properly resumed, having its final echo above the ♮vii°/V with which C ends in mm. 355–360. The two lines are irremediably discontinuous: the minor-mode interruption implies a resumption and resolution that is frustrated; the recapitulatory recovery of ^♮3 refers to a deep structure that has nothing to do with the exposition.

Melusine's structural dialectic is condensed into this critical moment. As a *Kopfton*, ^♮3 cannot resolve within sonata space, even though the recapitulation posits it as a solution to ^♭3's incapacity. The minor-mode *Ursatz*'s recession after the interruption leaves a negative trace on its major-mode antithesis, because it guarantees that the 'real' major-mode *Ursatz* requires the introduction's framing return before structural closure can be attained. Perceived this way, the sonata form 'fails' because it does not convey the real *Ursatz*, not because it rejects the EST's classical norms. On the largest scale, Mendelssohn plays off dialectically opposed concepts of parenthesis: the sonata form gains traction by bracketing off the material of mm. 1–48; but structural closure is achieved by rendering the sonata form parenthetical to the material of mm. 1–48 and their ultimate reprise.

Form, Structure and Programme

Another way to explicate these complexities is to engage the work's programme. As Thomas Grey has recently explained, *Melusine* has two likely sources: Ludwig Tieck's novella *Die sehr wunderbare Historie von der Melusina* of 1800; and a libretto of 1813 by Franz Grillparzer, which formed the basis for Conradin Kreutzer's opera *Melusina*, heard by Mendelssohn in 1833, a year before he composed the Overture.[44] The sources' endings differ, but they recount the same basic tale: Melusine – a water nymph, mermaid or half-girl, half-serpent – is discovered in human form in her forest spring by the knight Raimund, whom she agrees to marry on the condition that he must never see her on one designated day of the week, on which, unbeknown to him, she must retire to her secret bath in order to regenerate her serpent form. Eventually, Raimund's desire to uncover the truth overcomes him, and he discovers her bathing, as a result of which her true form is revealed. Raimund is horrified, and Melusine flees, finally assuming her serpent identity.

Grey argues that the introduction and second group symbolise contrasting aspects of Melusine's character. The introduction portrays her stable, supernatural form; the second group expresses two facets of her condition in Raimund's world; the chromaticism of mm. 107–14 signifies her desire to *become* human; and the comparatively assured music of mm. 115–123 signifies a more stable condition of *being* human.[45] In the introduction, Melusine's nature is normative for her, but apart from the human world; in the second group, she is at once a part of the human world and outside of it, betraying an antithesis of being and becoming, which Grey associates with Schmalfeldt's concept of dialectical process.[46]

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[44] Grey in press, 4–5. I am grateful to Professor Grey and to Benedict Taylor for making this chapter available to me in advance of its publication. I cite the page numbers in the final copyedit.

[45] Grey in press, 12.

[46] Grey in press, 5–6 and also n. 21.

Grey reads the Overture as mapping these identities onto a deformational sonata, driven by a first theme (TR/A2 in my analysis), which represents Raimund's chivalric character.[47] The introduction's intrusions into sonata space narrate the contest between Melusine's supernatural identity and the ultimately futile struggle to have her true form humanly accepted. The recapitulation C section's failure to stabilise F minor and its eventual dissolution over a secondary diminished seventh express the story's dénouement, with Melusine abandoning her efforts to become human, as the music abandons its expanded cadential progression. The coda retrieves the introduction, as the only remaining "stable" facet of Melusine's character:

> One way to summarize all of these equivocal formal details is simply to point out this: once the introduction (associated with Melusine's original, natural-supernatural form) asserts its presence within the main 'sonata-allegro' body of the overture, starting with the initial development stage at b. 161, this presence complicates the remainder of the form, dominating that remainder until it is *all* that remains, as coda or frame, from b. 361 to the end.[48]

Grey's programmatic analysis resonates with the perception that failure is a deep-structural matter in *Melusine*. The work's structural problematic arises in the fact that the sonata form ultimately serves as a prolongational device and only has contact with the overarching *Urlinie* thanks to the intrusion of $\hat{3}$ in the recapitulation, which is a disruptive rather than a synthetic event. The relevance of this for Grey's dualism of human and supernatural is easy to perceive: the true *Urlinie* resides within the supernatural world, which

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[47] Grey in press, 13–14.
[48] Grey in press, 15.

in sonata-theoretical terms is parageneric. Its intrusion into Raimund's sonata world yields no resolution within sonata space, but merely precipitates the F minor *Urlinie*'s collapse once the recapitulation has recovered the minor-mode sonata process. All of this maps onto the more fundamental dichotomy of major and minor modes, which the two *Urlinien* articulate and project over time.

Table 4 modifies Grey's reading in order to accommodate the analysis sketched above [**insert Table 4 here**]. *Melusine* unfolds three parallel and internally consistent narratives, which are processually defined. Measures 1–48 (supernatural Melusine) *are* a theme, *regressively become* an introduction, *progressively become* a theme again, and ultimately transform into a coda, which preserves both the material's pre-thematic and thematic identities. A1 (Raimund) begins as a theme but loses its functional identity, which it becomes the task of TR/A2 to compensate. And B (human Melusine) remains *functionally* stable – it is *always* the second theme – but sacrifices its *tonal* stability, trading its expositional security in A flat for a directed D flat–F minor trajectory in the recapitulation. None of these three elements prevails; but the form's design is nonetheless coherent, and so at a higher level becomes more than the sum of its inter-thematic parts. Programmatically, this means that Raimund is the Overture's ultimate casualty, since he is the only character whose identity never recovers from its dialectical encounters.

Ultimately, *Melusine*'s meaning residing in a dialectic between material that is *inside* and material that is *outside* the sonata form. The former connotes a normative human world; the latter is Melusine's supernatural alternative. Mendelssohn works to incorporate the parageneric material within the form, culminating in the recapitulation's displacement of A1 and its mode, an event that offers the tangible promise of a synthesis of both the programmatic dialectic of interior and exterior and the tendency towards parenthesis that has served as its formal vehicle. In the end, however, closure can only be achieved by returning

the introduction to its parageneric condition, even though the memory of its thematic function is now impossible to erase. Melusine's stable identity is regained, but only once her intrusion into the human 'sonata' world has caused it to exchange deep-structural for processual coherence.

Conclusions

> The formal concept [in the first movement of Beethoven's Sonata Op. 31, No. 2] resides, not in a trick which the listener sees through, but rather in an ambiguity which he [*sic*] must bear in mind as an aesthetic principle in its own right: the contradiction between gesture and tonality in the exposition shows not that the work lacks form but what that form means.[49]

Carl Dahlhaus's distinction between absence (what the form "lacks") and presence (what the form "means") in Beethoven's Sonata Op. 31, No. 2 usefully apostrophises *Melusine*'s analytical challenge. Dahlhaus readily acknowledges Op. 31 No. 2's relationship with eighteenth-century convention. At the same time, he insists that its "aesthetic principle" resides not in the classical conventions that it dialectically problematizes, but in the problematization itself: the form's "meaning" is a function of its ambiguity, not its "negative semantics", to cite Monahan again.

My central claim has been that explicating *Melusine*'s form and meaning depends crucially on *Formenlehre*'s capacity to account for processual ambiguities in precisely Dahlhaus's sense. Sonata failure falls short in this regard not because Op. 32's structural-cadential malfunctions are disputable, but because their explanation is more appropriately sourced to the processual network than to the misprision of classical norms. It is, of course,

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[49] Dahlhaus 1989, 14–15.

irresponsible to suggest that Mendelssohn of all people composed without regard for classical precedent. Advocating for a "positive" approach to Romantic form, however, is less a matter of ignoring *Melusine*'s classical resonances than of acknowledging the epistemological priority of processual specificity, essential to which is the subjection of material to an ongoing functional critique, which happens cumulatively at all formal levels and generates the circumstances in which EST evasions occur. In other words, a critical *idea* of how process and syntax should interact conditions the work's form; and it is under this idea's duress that a distinctively Romantic sonata style is forged, and classical form is concomitantly transformed.

Explaining *Melusine* in this way has benefits not only for *Formenlehre*, but also for hermeneutics. Sonata theory is, to be sure, much engaged with hermeneutics: Hepokoski's perception of failure in *Egmont* is central to his interpretation of its meaning; this aspect of failure in Mahler's symphonic sonata forms has since been explored in depth by Seth Monahan (2011). Yet we should recognise that Mendelssohn's processual style is also aesthetic, engendering a teleology that voices Romantic notions of longing, struggle and transcendence, and this in turn facilitates *Melusine*'s programme: its conveyance is both expressively and narratologically reliant on the music's processual strategies. The Overture's drama is, moreover, in essence dialectical: it pivots on the *external* antithesis of Melusine and Raimund – which brings with it the associated dichotomies of natural and supernatural, masculine and feminine – and on Melusine's *internal* dialectic of supernatural being and human becoming. *Melusine*'s programme, for better or worse, is a narrative of the interplay of these binary identities, for the expression of which Mendelssohn's processual sonata style is ideally suited.

Finally, the sheer ubiquity, in Mendelssohn's music, of the tactics that *Melusine* instantiates also allows us to arbitrate disputes in reception history, prominent among which

is the claim, variously made by Friedhelm Krummacher and Greg Vitercik, that Mendelssohn's Achilles heel was his ultimate inability to ramify sonata form and lyric style.[50] For Vitercik, Mendelssohn accomplished this in his opp. 12 and 13 string quartets; but in the Op. 44 string quartets, classical form and lyricism became polarised and non-complementary.[51] *Melusine*'s tactics are however pervasive from the chamber music of the 1820s to the String Quartet Op. 80; and it is not clear that Op. 44 implements a significant shift in practice. To isolate three examples: the variant of becoming Schmalfeldt identifies in the first-movement first theme of the Piano Trio Op. 49 also appears in the first movements of the Octet Op. 20, the String Quartet Op. 44, No. 1, the Piano Trio Op. 66 and the String Quintet Op. 87;[52] EEC subversion operates in the first movements of the Piano Concerto Op. 25 and the String Quartet Op. 80, and in the Finale of the String Quartet Op. 44, No. 2; and divisional overlap blurs the boundary between transition and second theme in the first-movement expositions of the Piano Concerto Op. 25, the Cello Sonata Op. 45 and the String Quartet Op. 80. Mendelssohn, as Vitercik avers, is a progressive composer; but this accolade embraces his mature instrumental oeuvre and is grounded in the interplay of process and syntax, not style and form. *Melusine*'s deformations, in brief, are Mendelssohn's pathways to Romantic form.

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[50] Krummacher 1974/2001; Vitercik 1989 and 1992.
[51] Vitercik 1989, 334.
[52] Schmalfeldt 2011, 164–73.

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