



Music ATAR Year 11 and Year 12

Designated works

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Year 12: Symphony

Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky (1840-93)

(alternative spelling: Pyotr Ilyich Chaikovsky)

Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 64., 1st and 3rd movements

CONTENTS

Introduction – 2

Tchaikovsky's Life and Career - 2

Analysis – 7

Suggested Further Reading - 16

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Introduction

Thinking about Tchaikovsky and his Fifth Symphony involves engaging with a range of broader ideas and issues that are central to the history and historiography of nineteenth-century Western Art Music. Here was a Russian composer writing in a genre that was dominated by Austro-German models; a figure who was considered cosmopolitan by his colleagues at home, yet who was marked by his national affiliation when he travelled abroad; a product of conservatory training and a professional composer, yet one who sometimes associated with a group of ethnic nationalist artists who prized auto-didacticism; and an artist committed to theatrical genres and open to the idea of providing a programme for his instrumental works, yet who was also wary of the pitfalls of this new symphonic convention. His life and career are an opportunity to broach broader themes of **Romanticism** and **nationalism** in music, and the relationship between his symphonic works and the **history of the symphony** offer an avenue into contemporary debates about **'programme music'** and **'absolute music'**. Critical and scholarly discussions about what impact, if any, Tchaikovsky's homosexuality had on his compositional output, and whether this facet of his personal life should shape our understanding of his music, also allows for an opportunity to discuss aspects of **reception history** and changing intellectual conventions in the discipline of **musicology**.

Tchaikovsky's Life and Career

Tchaikovsky was born in 1840 in Kamsko-Votkinsk, in the Vyatka province of Russia. His father, Il'ya Petrovich Tchaikovsky, was a mining engineer; his mother, Aleksandra Andreyevna Tchaikovskaya, was from Assier in France. When Tchaikovsky was eight years old the family moved to St. Petersburg, the imperial capital, so that his father could find new work, and a year later they were located in a mining town just outside of the city. Tchaikovsky's family was musically literate, and there was a mechanical organ in the home.

Tchaikovsky went to a school of jurisprudence from 1852-59, and on finishing his studies he went into work as a civil servant in the Ministry of Justice. In his spare time he continued to attend opera performances (which were mostly in Italian at this time) as well as French theatre productions. As we shall see below, the emergence of Russian as a language of literature and art was contemporaneous with Tchaikovsky's lifetime, but when he was a young man his artistic and literary interests necessitated a knowledge of several European languages, which became useful later in his life when he worked as a translator for his father's business associate to gain supplementary income. He also travelled extensively in broader Europe.

In 1854 Tchaikovsky's mother died—an event which had a profound effect on his life. He continued to hold his civil service job, but also began to compose. It just so happened that Tchaikovsky's burgeoning interest in composition coincided with a broader movement toward institutionalising music pedagogy in Russia, resulting in the establishment of the Russian Musical Society in 1859, and the founding of the St. Petersburg Conservatory in 1862, to mark Russia's 1000th birthday. Tchaikovsky enrolled in the new Conservatory in 1863 and was one of its first graduating class in 1866. He learned composition under Anton Rubenstein, whose brother Nikolay Rubinstein established a conservatory in Moscow in 1866, and who, upon Tchaikovsky's graduation, offered him a job teaching music theory at his Moscow conservatory.

Moving to Moscow opened up a new range of artistic associates for Tchaikovsky, and exposed him to some of the major debates in music in Russia and wider Europe of the day. He gradually secured his reputation as a professional composer, yet needed to supplement his income with

translation and music arranging. He became well known in social circles and his works began to achieve occasional acclaim. Tchaikovsky was teaching at the Moscow conservatory and living in Nikolay Rubinstein's house, becoming a part of his Artistic Circle, and enjoying the freedoms, albeit with limitations, of expressing himself and his sexuality among the liberal-minded members of the circle. Despite this private context, Tchaikovsky was also clearly mindful of the potential implications of social prejudices (including reviews that described his music as overly feminine), and in an ill-conceived move he married Antonina Ivanovna Milyukova in 1877. He separated from Antonina after only two months, and this period is generally seen as one of quite extreme turmoil for Tchaikovsky, both emotionally and financially, as documented in his diaries and his letters to friends.

In 1878 Tchaikovsky found a private benefactor and, being released from the deadlines of his teaching post, he left Moscow and began to travel relentlessly, trying to recover from his personal trauma as well as to discover new expressive means in his composition. It was at this time that he wrote his Fourth Symphony, which although uneven in its expression displayed a new freedom in terms of generic conventions. His reputation outside of Russia was developing strongly at this time, and his works received performances in Germany, Austria, France and America. For example in 1876 the acclaimed conductor Hans Richter performed Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet* in Vienna, and in 1878 his works were performed at the International Exhibition in Paris. These types of performances consolidated his growing reputation, yet the critical reception of his works remained mixed. One influential commentator who was particularly critical of Tchaikovsky's music was the Viennese Eduard Hanslick, who wrote the following of the premiere of Tchaikovsky's Violin concerto in 1881:

The Russian composer Tchaikovsky is surely not an ordinary talent, but rather an inflated one, with a genius-obsession without discrimination or taste. Such is also his latest, long and pretentious Violin Concerto. For a while it moves soberly, musically, and not without spirit. But soon vulgarity gains the upper hand, and asserts itself to the end of the first movement. The violin is no longer played; it is pulled, torn, drubbed. The Adagio is again on its best behaviour, to pacify and to win us. But it soon breaks off to make way for a finale that transfers us to a brutal and wretched jollity of a Russian holiday. We see plainly the savage vulgar faces, we hear curses, we smell vodka. Friedrich Vischer once observed, speaking of obscene pictures, that they stink to the eye. Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto gives us for the first time the hideous notion that there can be music that stinks to the ear.

One can see in this review the tendency to equate Tchaikovsky with a sense of Russian national character, yet the composer was an experienced traveller who sympathised with Western European musical styles, had a cosmopolitan outlook in art and theatre, and whose musical training in the conservatory was primarily Germanic. Indeed Tchaikovsky had always tried to avoid any outward association with the Russian Musical Society and its nationalist agenda, yet when he returned to Moscow he found himself called upon to capitalize on his international exposure to promote the cause of Russian music in broader Europe. His activities along these lines, though, resulted in bringing him to the attention of powerful figures in Russia, and he was granted a state pension.



Another aspect of Tchaikovsky's new activities promoting Russian music was his developing association, in the late 1860s and early 1870s, with the group the *moguchaya kuchka* (translated as 'The Mighty Little Heap', but also known as 'The Five'), headed up by Mily Balakirev (1837-1910), more on whom below.

It was at this time that Tchaikovsky also embarked upon his Fifth Symphony. It had been a decade since he composed his Fourth Symphony, and was now in a more stable position socially, financially and emotionally, with a reputation both within and beyond Russia. This was Tchaikovsky's penultimate symphony. He died only a few days after conducting the premiere of his Sixth Symphony, in 1893, of undetermined causes.

The Symphony in the Nineteenth Century

The history of the symphony in the nineteenth century is often seen in terms of various responses to the legacy of Beethoven—either to the provocative opening left by Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, that for the first time drew voices into an otherwise purely instrumental genre, or more generally to his spirit of originality and formal innovation. For some, Beethoven's addition of voices into his Ninth seemed to signal that the symphonic genre had reached its limits as an instrumental genre, and that new heights of expression were only possible by combining it with aspects of other arts—for example, by deriving formal and stylistic features from a narrative programme or literary allusion (including the development of one-movement orchestral works such as Liszt's idea of the 'Symphonic Poem', or Richard Strauss' 'Tone Poem'); or by viewing symphonic procedures as intimately bound up with dramatic expression (as in Wagner's idea of 'music drama' or the total artwork--*Gesamtkunstwerk*). However others (such as Brahms) responded to the post-Beethoven challenge by pursuing formal and harmonic innovation within the bounds of the classical symphonic genre.

To get a sense of the debate between those who advocated for symphonic writing as a vehicle of 'programme music', and those who advocated for a continuation of the symphony as a form of 'absolute music' (a debate sometimes referred to as the 'War of the Romantics'), we turn to the figures of Liszt and Brahms. After his virtuoso touring, Liszt moved from Paris to Weimar in the momentous year of 1848. He became a vocal advocate of progressive music and a strong supporter of Wagner, together with whom he became a key figure in the 'New German School'. The new symphonic form developed by Liszt—the 'Symphonic Poem' (*Symphonischer Dichtung*) was a one-movement orchestral form formatted along the lines of a narrative programme. The form was a distillation of the sonata idea, including a large-scale tonal plan and thematic contrast. It was sectional (in place of movements) and also relied on thematic transformation. Liszt composed twelve such works between 1848 and 1857.

Listening Example: Liszt *Les préludes*

In contrast to Liszt's emphasis on progressive forms, Brahms pursued his art within the conventions of older forms and was aligned with the conservative, anti-Wagner aesthetics of Hungarian violinist Joseph Joachim and the Viennese critic Eduard Hanslick, mentioned above, though he also explored forms of rhythmic dissonance and harmonic innovation that led him to be thought of as a progressive in other ways. Brahms did not complete a symphony until he was in his forties. He began his First Symphony, Op. 68, in the 1850s, and it was premiered in 1876. The notion that Brahms was grappling with the symphonic legacy of Beethoven was explicit, and in

the final movement of the First Symphony, the main theme sounds very much like the 'Freude' theme of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

Listening Example: Brahms, Symphony no 1 in C minor, op 68, fourth movement

Symphonies written in the nineteenth century that were a continuation or development of classical predecessors—like those of Brahms but also of many others who did not follow the path of the New German School—are stylistically varied, though in generic terms they tend to exhibit the following characteristics:

- 1.) They are works for large orchestra.
- 2.) They usually have 3-4 movements, or sometimes 5 movements (most often 4)
- 3.) The movements generally follow this pattern (although the inner movements are sometimes reversed):
 - First movement – extended, sonata form, often with a slow introduction
 - Second movement – lyrical and slow, sonata form, theme and variations or ABA
 - Third movement – scherzo or dance, triple time
 - Fourth – finale, faster pace than inner movements
- 4.) They are usually directed toward the public or large group (town, city, state/nation), as opposed to music presented in chamber or domestic settings, either for aristocratic audiences or in vernacular contexts.
- 5.) They exhibit a range of instrumental textures, with generally equal treatment of instrumental voices, as opposed to the concerto with a single virtuoso

As a result of these latter characteristics, the nineteenth-century symphony was seen as a vehicle for the articulation of the will of the collective, rather than that of the individual composer, and therefore was a genre that had a special emotional and political importance in a century characterised by the rise of the idea of popular sovereignty, the nation state and nationalism. When the critic Gottfried Wilhelm Fink wrote in 1835 that the symphony is 'a story, developed within a psychological context, of some particular emotional state of a large body of people', he encapsulated a widely held view.

The Symphony and Russian Nationalism

Symphonies written by Russian composers during this period tended to follow one of two models. The first was the dominant Austro-German model founded on the legacy of Beethoven and disseminated through the newly-established conservatories in St. Petersburg and Moscow by the Rubinstein brothers. The second style was associated with the *moguchaya kuchka*, also called the New Russian School because of their alignment with the progressive forms developed in the New German School, but with an emphasis on Russian exceptionalism and deriving authenticity from styles and techniques that they saw as expression of the sentiment of Russian folk.

Russia was a powerful empire in the nineteenth century. Military victories such as holding the Napoleonic invasions at bay in 1812, combined with an intensification of historical consciousness during this period that saw the production of consolidatory writings such as Nikolay Karamzin's monumental 12-volume *History of the Russian State* (1818–1826), as well as the emergence of Russian as a literary language, with writers such as Pushkin, Gogol, and Lermontov.



Moguchaya Kuchka ('The Five' or 'The Mighty Little Heap'), comprising Mily Balakirev (1837–1910), Tsezar' Kiii (César Cui, 1835–1918), Aleksandr Borodin (1833–87), Modest Musorgsky (1839–81), and Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844–1908)

The idea that the story of the symphony in Russia is one of ethnic Russian nationalists against the cosmopolitan figures of the conservatories become a commonplace of Russian music history told from the Western perspective. And indeed Russian artists who toured abroad—such as Sergei Diaghilev and his *Ballets Russes*—capitalised on this sense of difference and exoticism. Yet the *kuchka* were centrally engaged with the absolute music vs. programme music debates that were occurring elsewhere in Europe, and positioning themselves against the establishment was a part of a broader gesture that typified progressives.

Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5 – Programme or Absolute Music?

One of the persistent questions about Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5 is whether it was intended to have some kind of programme—an allusion to certain themes or ideas across the movements, lending the symphony a narrative meaning. There is evidence to suggest that the composer did have a particular sequence of themes in mind, at least initially. In a note that was appended to his first musical jottings he wrote:

Programme: 1st movement of symph[ony].

Intr[oduction]. Total submission before fate, or, what is the same thing, the inscrutable designs of Providence.

Allegro. 1) Murmurs, doubts, laments, reproaches against... XXX

II) Shall I cast myself into the embrace of *faith*???

A wonderful programme, if only it can be fulfilled.

There are also a few other thematic notes under musical ideas throughout his initial sketches. Yet many of these early musical ideas went by the wayside as his work on the Symphony developed, and in mid-1888 he wrote a letter to the Grand Duke Konstantin Konstantinovich to the effect that 'at the present time I am fairly busy and working diligently on composition of a symphony, without a programme'. Either way, it is certainly the case that the symphony is more tightly argued than Tchaikovsky's other symphonies, with motifs appearing across movements and a whole-symphony harmonic model.

Analysis

First Movement

The first movement of Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5 follows many of the conventions of sonata form that we encountered in the first movement of Mozart's Symphony No. 41, but also demonstrates some of the genre's expansions and innovations in the mid to late nineteenth century. While Tchaikovsky broke no new formal ground, there are quite a few noteworthy features that are indicative of the compositional practice and aesthetic of the era:

- 1) The first movement has an introduction which presents a theme (often called a "motto") that recurs in all subsequent movements, and thus thematically unifies the entire symphony (known as "cyclic form"). It is also the seed from which the other themes in the first and subsequent movements will grow.
- 2) While the movement can be divided into the standard sections (ie exposition, development, and recapitulation), their boundaries are often blurred, and thus establishing a clear delineation between them can at times be problematic.
- 3) Note the expanded instrumentation and dimensions compared to Mozart's Symphony No. 41. Mozart's first movement was 313 bars, in comparison to Tchaikovsky's 542 - a full 73% longer. The expansion of form and orchestral forces were common themes in the nineteenth century.
- 4) Key areas are related by second. In a sonata form from the classical era, we would expect the exposition to modulate to the dominant in a major key work, the mediant (or dominant) in a minor key work. In the romantic era, composers began to prefer keys related by third (for example, bIII or bVI were common destinations for modulation in major key movements). Tchaikovsky instead modulates by second, with the exposition beginning in E minor, and modulating to the unexpected key of D major. He then utilises mode mixture in the recapitulation, beginning in E minor for P1 and modulating to E major for S1.
- 5) An unusual re-transition which centres around scale degree flat-5. Instead of the standard dominant pedal, a compositional device that typically relies on repetition of scale degree 5 to prepare the listener for the return of the tonic, Tchaikovsky instead employs a pedal on scale degree flat-5. Enharmonic reinterpretation of a German augmented sixth chord is then required to usher in the return of the tonic. Ambiguity and novelty - eschewing the predictable conventions of the past in favour of the original and unexpected - was a prime concern of composers of this era.
- 6) In contrast to the singular tempo and meter of the Mozart example, there are numerous tempo changes throughout the course of the movement, and a meter change between the introduction and start of the exposition.

Introduction: mm. 1-37 (E minor)

The Andante introduction is characterised by a mournful E minor melody in the clarinets (**Fig 1**), playing in their lowest register, supported by homophonic (and largely homorhythmic) accompaniment in the strings. This melancholic - and somewhat ominous - theme (or "motto") unifies the entire symphony by returning in each movement at least once, and serves as the motivic seed from which other themes will develop.

Fig 1: “motto” theme, clarinets, mm. 1-10



This opening theme presents two important melodic ideas: a neighbour motion between scale degrees 3 and 4 (mm. 1-2), and a descending scale which spans a 6th (mm. 4-6). Harmonically, the progression i-iv-i (E minor - A minor - E minor) is repeated consistently; this plagal motion will return in the opening bars of P1. An emphasis on the subdominant (and conspicuous absence of the dominant) was a common feature of works from the Romantic era.

After a fermata in m. 20, the clarinets obsessively restate the opening two bar motive above shifting harmonic accompaniment. Bassoons also enter in m. 21, mostly doubling the bass. The descending 6th motive, instead of arriving on the tonic E minor, now twice leads to a C major chord (VI), creating a sensation of delayed resolution (not unlike an interrupted cadence, although these are not cadences). The introduction finally ends with an imperfect cadence on a B major chord (V) in m. 36, again creating the exception of resolution.

The fermata, double bar and subsequent meter change all make for a clear delineation between the introduction and the first theme group which will commence in the following bar. This introduction is the only portion of the movement that is in common time, with Tchaikovsky altering both meter and tempo from the start of the exposition in m. 38.

Exposition: mm. 38-225 (E minor -> D major)

The start of the exposition is clearly marked by a meter and tempo change in m. 38, moving from a relatively slow common time for the introduction, to a relatively brisk Allegro 6/8 for the exposition.

First Theme Group: mm. 42-115

We remain in E minor as the strings continue their quiet homophonic i-iv-i accompaniment, while the clarinets and bassoons, now doubling at the octave, introduce and immediately repeat **P1** (upbeat to m. 42) (**Fig 2**). The minor mode and solemn mood of the introduction persists, and P1 itself is derived in part from the opening “motto” theme. This can be seen in its i-iv-i harmonic progression, scale degree 3-4-3 neighbour motion (G-A-G, mm. 42-43), and prominent use of the interval of a 3rd (see G->E descent in m. 2, compared with G->F#->E descent in mm. 44-45)

Fig 2: P1 theme, clarinets and bassoons, mm. 41-49

For the remainder of the first theme group, P1 and its permutations are stated pervasively throughout as Tchaikovsky explores different textural combinations, building from the thin texture and gentle *ppp* of m. 38 to full orchestral forces and *fff* in m. 100. Fragmentation and variation of the P1 motive begin almost immediately, first with flutes and clarinets in mm. 49-57. The ascending scalar run introduced in m. 49 will become an important figure throughout the first theme group, and immediately becomes a counter melody to P1 (see scalar motive in the winds, P1 in the strings from m. 57). The introduction of C#'s temporarily steers the music toward B minor, forcefully presenting P1 fragments and the ascending scale motive at m. 84.

The first theme group begins to reach a climax with a punctuated antiphonal call and response between the strings and winds/brass at m. 96, alternating F# half-diminished seventh and E minor sonorities, leading to repeated *fff* statements of P1 that ultimately arrive back on the tonic E minor (m. 108) accompanied by a descending bass line. At m. 115, a cadence on F# major (V/V) is reached, and the texture is cleared to only strings, thus signalling the beginning of the transition.

Note again the expanded dimensions. Tchaikovsky's first theme group has unfolded over 115 bars. In contrast, Mozart's first theme group was a very concise 23.

Transition: mm. 116-153

The strings further emphasise F# with interjections from the winds (mm. 115-127). The melody in the strings features a scalar ascent of a sixth (F#->D, mm. 116-118) (**Fig 3**), which has its origins in the descending 6th of the opening theme (mm. 4-6). The perpetual circling of F# appears to set the stage for a strong arrival in B minor (the dominant of E, and a common destination for modulation).

Fig 3: Transition theme, first violins, mm. 116-118



Tchaikovsky, however, has something much more interesting in mind. The texture thins as antiphonal treatment of winds/brass and strings take the listener through a circle of 5ths sequence (mm. 144-148), arriving on a C# half-diminished seventh chord in the winds/brass, which is then delicately echoed in the strings. This is followed by an E minor seventh chord treated in the same way. Are we preparing for a plagal cadence in B minor?

After a grand pause on the first beat of m. 152, Tchaikovsky surprises us with a sudden tempo, dynamic, and texture change. Pizzicato strings arpeggiate an A dominant 7th chord, ushering in the arrival of the second theme group in the unexpected key of D major (relative major of B minor).

In hindsight, we can view this progression as a seamless preparation of D major - from mm. 147-154, we have I-IV-viiø7-ii7-V7-I - and an excellent example of a sequence as a quick and effective tool for modulation.

Second Theme Group: mm. 154-225

While the destination of modulation is unexpected - Tchaikovsky has eschewed the more traditional dominant or mediant in favour of the sub-tonic D major (VII) - the treatment of the second theme **S1** (**Fig 4**) is predictable. It contrasts highly with P1, as is typical of the form.

Fig 4: S1 theme, mm. 154-157

And it contrasts in nearly every way possible. It's in a major mode (vs. the minor mode of P1), at a faster tempo (*Un pochettino piu animato* ie "A little bit more animated"), features a completely different texture (S1 is treated antiphonally, divided between strings and winds vs. the homophonic melody+accompaniment of P1), and is a bold *forte* dynamic (vs. delicate *pp*). It even contrasts in its thematic construction: the S1 theme is clearly divided into antecedent and consequent halves, with the forceful and angular first half in winds/brass juxtaposed against the lyrical and stepwise consequent in the strings. In comparison, P1 is quite homogenous as a single, long melodic line confined to the winds. In spite of the differences, S1 is still related to the opening motto theme - note the rising 6th (A-> F# in violin 1 mm. 156-157), an inversion of the descending 6th E->G (mm. 4-6).

Another tempo change (m. 170) marks the entrance of **S2** in the violins, accompanied by the lower strings and a countermelody in the winds (**Fig 5**). The slower tempo and lyrical, lilting quality of the off-beat descending figures stands in stark contrast to both P1 and S1.

Fig 5: S2 theme, violins, mm. 170-174

But this moment of repose doesn't last long - the lyrical S2 theme builds in intensity, returning to a **fff** dynamic and the original tempo by m. 194, followed by the forceful return of S1 proclaimed homophonically with full orchestral forces at m. 198. This intensity can't be sustained, and Tchaikovsky gradually reduces the dynamic and texture until the horns state the antecedent phrase of S1 alone at m. 214, followed by a variation of the consequent phrase in the strings. A second statement suddenly shifts to the parallel minor mode (D minor) at m. 218, and a third statement at m. 222 (on an F dominant seventh chord, pointing to Bb major) sets the stage for the development.

Development: mm. 226-320

Unlike the Mozart example, there is no double bar delineating the end of the exposition and the start of the development. In fact, it's difficult to draw a firm line between these two sections - one could just as easily view the start of the development at m. 214 with the entrance of the sudden and unexpected horn solo. For the purposes of this analysis, we will view m. 226 as the start of the development, due to its juxtaposition of P1 fragments in the strings against S1 fragments in the horns and winds (mm. 226-231), but this is by no means the only "correct" perspective. This kind of sectional elision was common for the time, as composers embraced and valued ambiguity over the classical era preference for clarity.

The juxtaposition between P1 and S1 fragments - creating the sense that they are in conflict and fighting for supremacy - continues to m. 254, at which point the P1 theme seems to emerge victorious as the texture thickens and dynamics increase. Measure 269 features a melody in the strings based on the theme from the transition, offering a brief diversion before returning to the forceful struggle between P1 and S1. At m. 297, P1 again claims victory with **fff** homophonic statements which utilise the full orchestra, leading us to the re-transition.

Tchaikovsky's treatment of the re-transition is quite unusual. Typically a re-transition features a dominant pedal, which prepares the listener for the return of the tonic key. With a home key of E minor, the dominant pedal should be B - instead, from m. 306 Tchaikovsky introduces a pedal of Bb in the bass and cellos, and employs a clever chord progression to bring us back home to E minor. In the key of D minor, the progression is G minor iv (m. 306), E half diminished iiø7 (m. 309), C# fully diminished vii°7 (m. 311), C dominant seventh VII7 (m. 313). This C dominant seventh (arrived at through semi-tonal voice leading in the horns) is then enharmonically reinterpreted as a German augmented 6th chord in E minor, resolving to a second inversion E minor triad at the start of the Recapitulation in m. 320.

Tchaikovsky has employed the common cadential formula German +6 -> i6/4 -> V7, but unexpectedly treated the i6/4 as the destination of resolution without continuing on to V7. This is another example of "plagal" motion and the deliberate removal of the dominant from cadential progressions. In spite of the augmented 6th chord (a pre-dominant harmony) resolving straight to tonic without an intervening dominant, the 5th in the bass of the i6/4 makes this resolution not only possible, but convincing (and is indeed a favourite progression in the nineteenth century). The large decrescendo (**fff** in m. 297, to **ff** in m. 309, to **pp** in m. 319) and dramatic thinning out of texture also helps to call attention to the return of P1 and delineate the sections.

Recapitulation: mm. 321- 486 (E minor -> E major)

First Theme Group: mm. 321-372

Tchaikovsky returns to the homophonic texture and **pp** dynamic of the first theme group with a restatement of P1 back in E minor, but now with a bassoon solo and altered voicing in the strings. Instead of playing the root of the chord, as in the exposition, the bass doubles the cello line - chords that were in root position now oscillate between the less stable 2nd inversion (E minor) and 1st inversion (A minor).

The first theme group unfolds in much the same way as the exposition, playing with fragments/permutations of P1 and the ascending scale motive. However it is truncated (51 bars vs. the exposition's 71 bars), and modulates rather unexpectedly to F# minor at m. 365 (in the exposition this 8 bar passage leading to the transition was in E minor - compare mm. 365-372 with mm. 108-115).

At m. 372 a cadence is reached, but this time on G# major (V/V in the key of F# minor, and a whole step above the F# major chord employed at this cadential point in the exposition). As in the exposition, this cadence signals the start of the transition.

Transition: mm. 373-410

An exact transposition (up by a whole-step) of the exposition's transition, complete with surprise pizzicato and tempo change signalling the entrance of S1, now in E major.

Second Theme Group: mm. 411-486

Like the transition, this is an exact transposition (up by whole-step) of the exposition's second theme group, but now in E major (the parallel major to E minor), consistent with Tchaikovsky's use of a major mode (D major) in the exposition. In the nineteenth century, composers began to treat the major and minor modes interchangeably (like two sides of the same coin which could be flipped at will), and hence such treatment was not unusual for the time.

A transition to the Coda begins around m. 479, returning us to the sound world of E minor. Much like the end of the exposition and start of the development was difficult to identify with certainty, the beginning of the transition to the Coda is also ambiguous.

Coda: mm. 487-542

In this relatively long Coda (55 bars), Tchaikovsky forcefully explores P1 back in the original key of E minor. As we've seen before in this movement, energy gradually dissipates, moving from full orchestral forces and a **fff** dynamic in m. 503 to a **ppp** dynamic and sparse texture of only lower strings, bassoons and timpani by m. 535, closing the movement with an ethereal timpani roll.

Third Movement - Valse

While the symphonies of Mozart's time typically included a Minuet, Beethoven popularised the use of a Scherzo in its place (an important and enduring change to the structure of the symphony). Tchaikovsky's use of a Waltz instead of a Scherzo or Minuet is a noteworthy departure, and his ongoing preference for the dance helped to elevate its status. Like a typical Minuet/Scherzo, the movement is in ternary form (ABA). But unlike the Menuetto in Mozart's Symphony, it is not divided into a separate Minuet + Trio - there are no clearly delineated sectional divisions or double bars. In contrast to Tchaikovsky's solemn first movement, the third movement is lighthearted, lyrical, and at times borders on the comedic. It is structured around the unfolding of lyrical themes which are contrasted by their presentation with different instruments, timbres and textures. Like the first movement, its themes are derived from the opening "motto" of the introduction, with the "motto" theme itself explicitly and unexpectedly returning to close the movement.

A section: mm. 1-72

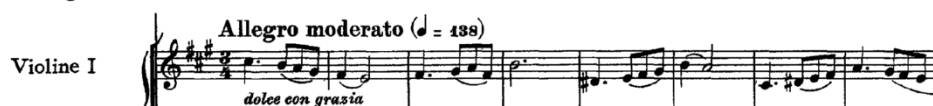
In the key of A major, the A section is structured around the presentation of three closely related themes, delineated by constantly changing texture and instrumentation.

a1 Theme

Measures 1-8

The first violins introduce the first lyrical theme **a1**, supported by homophonic and *piano* accompaniment in the horns, bassoons, and pizzicato strings (**Fig 6**). The strings punctuate vertical harmonies on beat 2 and bassoons/horns on beat 3, together creating the stereotypical "oom-pah-pah" waltz rhythm.

Fig 6: a1 theme, first violins, mm. 1-8



The **a1** theme, which begins with a descending 6th (C#->E, mm. 1-2), is derived from the descending 6th motive of the "motto" from introduction of the first movement (see E->G in the clarinets, mm. 4-6).

Measures 9-11

An imperfect cadence on V in m. 8 is immediately elided, seamlessly giving way to a brief transition of bowed strings alone which, in addition to providing textural and rhythmic contrast, removes any sense of arrival and pushes forward to the next statement of **a1**.

Measures 12-19

The first violins restate **a1** an octave higher, doubled by the second violins at the octave, while the texture dramatically thickens. The accompaniment moves from simple homophonic chords to more active counterpoint - note the contrary motion in the violas and cellos against the theme in the violins (mm. 12-13), and the imitation and inversion between the violas/cellos (mm. 14-15) and flutes/oboes (mm. 16-17).

a2 Theme

Measures 20-36

The oboes and bassoons present the second theme **a2**, clearly derived from the

first in rhythm, contour and character (**Fig 7**). The brief contrapuntal complexity of the preceding bars clears, with a return to homophonic accompaniment in the strings. The sudden thinning out of texture, timbral juxtaposition of the melody in the winds, and use of mode mixture (note the D minor sonorities, borrowed from the parallel minor system) makes for a strong contrast, and clearly delineates the new theme.

Fig 7: a2 theme, oboe and bassoon, mm. 19-27

The image shows a musical score for three woodwind instruments: Oboe I, Clarinet I, and Bassoon I. The score covers measures 19 to 27. The oboe and bassoon parts are marked 'Solo' and play a melodic line with a 'mf' dynamic. The clarinet part is mostly silent, with some notes in measure 19. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4.

The **a2** theme is then passed to the clarinets at m. 28, while strings and horns continue their homophonic accompaniment, before coming to a close with an imperfect cadence at m. 35. Note that thus far, there has not been a single perfect cadence - all have been tonicized imperfect cadences, and all have been elided. This is a common compositional technique that allows composers to maintain momentum and a sense of forward motion, saving the stability of perfect cadences for more important structural moments.

a1 Theme

Measures 37-56

Theme **a1** returns at m. 37, and unfolds almost like a refrain of the opening but with the melody now in the clarinets/bassoons. At m. 45 **a1** is repeated in the flutes and oboes at the same pitch level as the violins from m. 12 (note the transition from mm. 8-11 is missing), and like m. 12 the texture once again becomes more contrapuntal as the strings shift from homophonic accompaniment to ascending chromatic lines.

This second statement of **a1** is incomplete, instead turning to new material at m. 49, and again ending with an imperfect cadence (m. 56) that is elided with the **a3** theme.

a3 Theme

Measures 56-72

As we've seen before, Tchaikovsky employs textural and timbral contrast to strongly delineate theme **a3**. The new melody is presented in a bassoon solo from m. 56 (**Fig 8**), accompanied only by pizzicato strings. The funky offbeat rhythms and disjunct melody with large leaps in m. 60-63 offer an almost comic alternative to the smooth, lyrical and rhythmically straightforward melodies presented thus far.

Flutes and clarinets join in and repeat **a3** from mm. 64-72 before the A section abruptly ends on a **ff** A major chord, strongly punctuated by the strings and horns on beat 2 of m. 72.

Fig 8: a3 theme, bassoons, mm. 56-64

The image shows a musical score for Bassoon I, measures 56 to 64. The bassoon part is marked 'Solo' and features a 'cresc. al - - - - f' dynamic marking. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4.

B section: mm. 73-144

The B section arrives unexpectedly on the upbeat to m. 73, and immediately contrasts with the A section in just about every way imaginable. There is a sudden modulation (ie. a “direct” or “unprepared” modulation) to F# minor (the relative minor to A major), the forte dynamic and full texture have been reduced to a hushed *piano* violin solo, the lilting quaver-dominated themes are replaced by relentless semiquavers (the fastest rhythmic value in the piece thus far), and any sense of the oom-pah-pah waltz is gone.

Measures 73-88

The fast, aggressive **b1** theme begins on the upbeat to m. 73 in the first violins (**Fig 9**) and is repeated at the upbeat to m. 77. The process begins again as the theme is passed to the violas at the upbeat to m. 81 and repeated at the upbeat to m. 85. Because the melodic pattern of the theme is grouped in two-beat chunks, Tchaikovsky plays with our sense of meter (suggesting duple instead of triple).

Fig 9: b1 theme, first violins, mm. 73-76



Measures 89-125

From m. 89, **b1** is fragmented and passed between the strings and winds in a complex contrapuntal texture until the strings drop out at m. 113 - for first time in the movement the texture is all winds and brass. The strings return at m. 119, stating a **b1** fragment antiphonally between the first violins and violas.

Measures 126-144

At m. 126 the material from beginning of B section (from m. 73) returns, and continues on until the pizzicato E major chord in m. 142, which leads to the return of A major and re-statement of **a1**.

A' section: mm. 145-266

Measures 145-212

The **a1** theme returns back in A major and at the original pitch level, but now in the oboes. Instead of returning to the homophonic texture of the opening, the strings continue their rapid semi-quaver fragments of the **b1** theme, now as counterpoint in contrary motion to **a1**. This creates a sense of seamless elision between the two sections - quite a different approach to the clear delineation seen in the Mozart *Menuetto*.

Finally at m. 153 the strings abandon their semi-quavers and return to the texture and figuration of the A section, repeating material originally heard in m. 12. From this point, Tchaikovsky repeats the A section more-or-less verbatim until the conclusion of theme **a3** at m. 213.

Measures 213-240

After the **a3** theme in the first A section, the listener was suddenly and dramatically thrown into the tumultuous F# minor B section. This time around Tchaikovsky has other surprises in store, with an unexpected cadential

progression centring around bVI (another chord of mode mixture). While the first violins repeat a melodic fragment derived from **a3**, the listener is taken through a progression of applied leading-tone chords (also known as secondary sevenths) $a\#^{\circ}7 \rightarrow b m$, $b\#^{\circ}7 \rightarrow c\# m$, leading to a sudden *forte* homophonic statement of F major (bVI) with full orchestral forces at m. 219, alternating C major (V/bVI) and F major.

The texture thins and D# is added to the F major chord at m. 225, transforming the triad into an Italian augmented 6th chord, and setting in motion the standard cadential progression $It+6 \rightarrow I6/4 \rightarrow V7 \rightarrow I$ in A major (mm. 225-227). This process is repeated verbatim, but this time the final authentic cadence on A major unexpectedly brings about a return of the “motto” theme (see the introduction of the first movement) at m. 241.

The return of the motto theme in the clarinets and bassoons (the same instruments that originally presented it in the introduction), complete with homophonic texture and pizzicato string accompaniment, explicitly solidifies the thematic ties between movements. The use of mode mixture (bringing in F major bVI and b half-diminished seventh $ii\flat 7$, borrowed from the parallel minor mode) help to darken the harmony and recall the minor tonality of the opening movement.

From m. 256, the remainder of the Valse is effectively an expansion of the tonic, with the final 12 bars alternating between A major I and b half-diminished seventh $ii\flat 7$, with a final “cadence” of $ii\flat 7-I$. One could argue that this is a kind of “plagal” cadence (typically IV-I), but with the IV chord replaced by its predominant cousin $ii\flat 7$ (with which it also happens to share three common tones).

Regardless of how one labels it, this kind of mode mixture (using a chord from the parallel minor system) and plagal cadence (using a chord that is typically pre-dominant in function in place of the dominant) are common devices of late nineteenth century composers.

Suggested Further Reading

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