

Example 1. Isotopies in Beethoven String Quartet in E-flat Major, Op. 127: I. Maestoso—
Allegro

	mm.	Formal Section / Thematic Content	Topics, Modalities, and other expressively significant musical features	Agency: Order-imposing or Transgressive
I	1-6	Introduction	<i>Maestoso</i> , timeless, sweeping, grand Primary modality (PM): “Being”	Order-imposing
II	7-22.1	<i>Exposition begins</i> P.1 (Primary theme, part 1)	<i>Allegro</i> , marked <i>teneramente</i> , <i>sempre p e dolce</i> Pastoral topic: gentle, begins on the subdominant. PM: “Becoming”	Transgressive
III	22.1-32.1	P.2 (Primary theme, part 2)	Symphonic style: perpetual motion, high energy, and carefree Primary modality: “Doing” Secondary modality (SM): “Will”	
IV	32.3-40.1	Transition	“Learned” style, with low energy—unusual for a transition passage and expressively marked relative to the high-energy symphonic style of isotopy III. PM: “Becoming”	
V	40.1-65.1	S (Secondary theme)	Deeply pathetic, “Empfindsam” style, tragic, <i>pianto</i> gesture. PM: “Doing”	Order-imposing
VI	65.1-74	Closing	Tentative repeated notes alternate with forceful harmonic resolution (sub. <i>p</i> dynamic juxtaposed with sub. <i>f</i> .)	Conflict between the two
VII	75-80	Re-Introduction	<i>Maestoso</i> Re-Introduction: timeless, sweeping, grand, but also surprising. PM: “Being” decreases / “Doing” increases SM: “Know” The context renders this re-introduction expressively different from the introduction at 1-6.	Order-imposing
VIII	81-97.1	<i>Development begins</i> P.1	<i>Allegro</i> , no imitation. Slightly more serious in expression than isotopy II; reaching quality. PM: “Becoming,” with added “Doing”	Transgressive
IX	97-121.1	Transition: uses P.1 material from isotopy VIII	Imitative, “Empfindsam” style, tragic PM: “Doing”	Order-imposing
X	121-134	D (New development theme)	Sturm und Drang topic, based on symphonic topic from P.2 PM: increased “Doing” relative to IX	
XI	135-140	Climax (introduction material)	<i>Maestoso</i> . Postmodalizes isotopy X. PM: “Doing” SM: increased “Will” compared to I and VII.	
XII	140-147.1	P.1	Uses P.1. Staccatos are expressively important. PM: “Becoming”	Transgressive
XIII	147-166	Re-transition	Sequence based on <i>pianto</i> gesture, which modulates back to tonic key of E-flat major. Obsessive assertion of order-imposing hierarchy. PM: “Doing”	Order-imposing

			SM: Low level of "Believe"	
XIV	166-182.1	<i>Recapitulation</i> P.1	Pastoral topic emerges subtly from and postmodalizes XIII. PM: "Becoming" SM: High level of "Believe"	Transgressive
XV	182-198.1	P.2	Symphonic, driving forward. PM: "Doing" SM: "Will"	Victory implied
XVI	198-231.1	Transition → S	Imitation → <i>Empfindsam</i> , lyrical, no longer tragic. PM: "Becoming"	
XVII	231-240	Closing	Analogous to VI, suggesting that <i>Maestoso</i> may return SM: "Must" very high	Victory confirmed
XVIII	241-282	Coda	Uses P.1, emphasizing pastoral quality through emphasis of IV. PM: "Becoming" → "Being" SM: "Believe"	