

JOHN WILLIAMS: “THE RISE OF SKYWALKER” FROM *STAR WARS EPISODE IX* (2019)

OVERALL	<u>FIRST ROTATION</u> (INTRODUCTORY/EXPOSITORY)								
Theme	<u>Victory</u>				<u>Friendship</u>				
Tonal Center	$D\flat \rightarrow E \rightarrow D\flat$				$D\sharp \rightarrow F\sharp$				
Internal Form	Compound Period				Compound Period				
	Antecedent (Dev. Clause)		+ Consequent (Dev. Clause)		Antecedent (Periodic Clause)		+ Consequent (Periodic Clause)		
	<i>Development 1</i> $a^1 + a^2$	<i>Divergence 1</i> $a^3 + a^4$	<i>Development 2</i> $a^1 + a^{2'}$	<i>Divergence 2</i> $a^5 + a^6$	<i>Antecedent</i> $b + c^1$	<i>Divergence 1</i> $c^2 + c^3$	<i>Antecedent</i> $b + c^1$	<i>Divergence 1</i> $c^2 + c^3$	<i>Codetta</i> b
Cadences	HC: $F\flat$		HC: E		PAC: $D\flat$ (I)		HC (modal): $F\sharp$		PAC: $F\sharp$
Measure No.	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>34</u>
Notes	Tonally-closed theme in style of a hymn , comprised of initial statement (antecedent) in winds, restatement (consequent) in strings. Basic a -motif persists through each phrase and subphrase, evokes Rey's Chimes , Dies Irae motifs. Richards 2019 observes that a^1 represents a perfect inversion of Luke/Main theme. Shape of a^5 motif anticipates rhythm and contour of c motif from Friendship theme. Harmonization studiously functional, with brief suggestions of parallel minor and lydian modes. Internally modulatory within antecedent phrase, tonicizing region of \flat III ($F\flat$ -maj, spelled enharmonically as E-maj). Root position tonics notably held in reserve throughout.				Comparatively lyrical, upwards arching theme built from a pair of contrasting motifs: b (a lydian double-neighbor figure) and c (an upwards chord-outlining figure). Basic b -motif very closely related to a from Victory : a neighbor figure on $\hat{5}$ followed by descending fifth to $\hat{1}$ (thanks to Mark Richards for drawing this connection). Tonally non-rounded: first half of large-scale period in D-major (a semitone above Victory theme). Then modulates up a major third to $F\sharp$ -major for second half, in which it concludes. Harmonization emphasizes oscillations by step (I \leftrightarrow II \sharp , IV \leftrightarrow iii), characteristic of Williams's sentimental style.				

OVERALL	<u>SECOND ROTATION</u> (DEVELOPMENTAL)									
Theme	<u>Friendship</u>				<u>Victory</u>	<u>Free, Retransitional</u>			<u>(Victory)</u>	
Tonal Center	(Dm?) \rightarrow Am	$B\flat/A$	$Am6 \rightarrow B\flat m6 \rightarrow$	$B\sharp m/G \rightarrow G \rightarrow C$	$E \rightarrow Am/C$ (iv 6 /E?) \rightarrow	B^{sus4}_{mix} (V/E?)	$Dsus^6/9 \rightarrow$	$G^2 \rightarrow C \rightarrow$	$G\flat/D\flat = \flat VI/B\flat \rightarrow Cm7\flat 5/F = V/B\flat$	
Form	b (on A4, C5, A5)	$b^{diminuted}$ (on F4)	d	b, d (on D4, G5)	a^1 (on B3, E5)	$e^1 + e^2$	e^3	e^4	a^7 ^{diminuted} (March of the Resistance?)	
Cadences										HC: $B\flat$
Measure No.	<u>37</u>	<u>44</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>57</u>	<u>65</u>	<u>69</u>	<u>71</u>	
Notes	Free, developmental section with more angst and tonal instability than preceding thematic rotation. Both Victory and Friendship themes subjected to fragmentation, diminution and intensificatory sequencing. Structured overall as series of two crescendos (37-49, 56-73) achieved by densifying orchestration and increasing harmonic clarity. Several modules based on new motifs not directly drawn from Victory and Friendship introduced (d , e^{1-4}) which help generate forward momentum towards big pedal-point on F (“Dominant Lock” for final key of $B\flat$) at m. 73 for preparation of recapitulatory/climatic rotation. Motif d has highly characteristic Waltonian rising sequence of inverted major-6 th chords. Motifs e^{1-4} essentially a succession of colorful fanfare topics in winds and brass. Final short module (m. 73-76) fragments and diminishes head motif of Victory theme in a manner that strongly suggests a transformation of the March of the Resistance theme (appropriate given the dramatic context in-film for this moment). Several chunks drawn more or less directly from TROS cue 8m14 (“Ben to Rey,” “Farewell” on OST): mm. 49-55 [c.f. “Farewell,” 3:43-3:55] and mm. 60-75 [c.f. 3:55-4:19].									

“THE RISE OF SKYWALKER” CONT.

OVERALL	<i>THIRD ROTATION (CLIMACTIC/CODA)</i>							
Theme	Victory (Breakthrough)						(Friendship)	
Tonal Center	B♭ → D♭ → B♭							
Internal Form	Modified Compound Period				Free Cadential Afterglow Material			
	Antecedent (Clause)		+ Consequent (Clause)		Antecedent	Cadential 1	Cadential 2	Tonic Pedal
	<i>Development 1</i> $a^1 + a^2$	<i>Divergence 1</i> $a^3 + a^4$	<i>Development 2</i> $a^1 + a^{2'} + b^{\text{transformed}}$	<i>Divergence 2</i> $a^4 + \text{G.P.}$	<i>Chorale</i> a^1	Cadential 1—Diatonic f^1	Cadential 2—Chromatic f^2 (<i>Rebel Fanfare?</i>)	$b^{\text{transformed}}$
Cadences	HC: D♭			IAC: B♭	HC: B♭?	HC: B♭?	CC: B♭	
Measure No.	75	83	91	99	103	107	111	115-122
Notes	Climactic third section, almost entirely based on Victory theme in full tutti orchestration (plus wordless choir in film version) and 2/2 time; formal and thematic rhetoric very much one of breakthrough (<i>durchbruch</i>). Countermelody in horns at m. 84 shows lingering presence of Friendship theme, now in sublimated role. All material from 79-90 drawn from climax of TROS 8m14, depicting the final victory over the First Order and Palpatine at the Battle of Exegol. All music following cadence in B♭ unique to arrangement, serving as codetta continuous with big statement of Victory Theme. Brass chorale iteration of a^1 at mm. 90-92 parallels similar post-cadential chorale in Rey's Theme concert arrangement. New thematic material mm. 92-96 less obvious in derivation from other themes, though harmonically f^2 clearly evokes tonal and textural makeup of the Rebel Fanfare if not its rhythm. Final measures (mm. 96-100) on tonic pedal with slight dissonance provided by transformed iteration of b motif from Friendship; itself prepared by countermelody at m. 84, and resembling a number of incidental motifs from Sequel Trilogy (most notably Tragedy and its derivatives and Ben Solo's Redemption – see Lehman 2022)							

Principal Thematic Constituents	Associations
<p>Victory</p> <p><i>Compound Period: Antecedent</i> Developing Clause: Presentation a^1 (Basic Idea) a^2 a^3 a^4 D♭/F D♭ E♭m7/D♭ A♭7/C D♭/F D♭/A♭ Am B7(sus2) B7 E/B B7(sus2) E/B E F#m/C# A♭ I = D♭ HC: E I = E (♭III/D♭) HC: D♭</p> <p><i>Developing Clause: Divergence</i></p>	<p><i>Heroism, solidarity, triumph over First Order</i></p> 
<p>Friendship</p> <p><i>Compound Period: Antecedent</i> Antecedent b (Basic Idea) c^1 (Contrasting Idea) c^2 c^3 D D9 D G F#m G F#m G Em9 Em/G I = D M-HC: F#</p> <p><i>Compound Period: Consequent</i> Antecedent b (Basic Idea) c^1 c^2 c^3 F# G#/F# F# F#2/C# B(sus2) B A#m/E# A#m F# B/F# A#m B(sus2) B B/A# G#m7 B/C# F# I = F# PAC: F#</p>	<p><i>Bond between main trio (Rey/Finn/Poe), hope</i></p> 