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The ‘Royal Theme’ from *A Musical Offering* In Dialogue among Bach, Mozart, And Beethoven

by Ortrun Cramer

The idea of creative contributions by sovereign individuals of any historical era, which act upon all other contributions of the past, present, and future, can be wonderfully studied in a kind of “dialogue” among the three greatest musical composers, Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven—a dialogue on one subject, which is discussed by all of them, and where new contributions and new solutions for a discovered problem are provided by each of them, on each level. (There exist more contributions to the dialogue, both from the three composers discussed, and from other composers as well, than the examples we will discuss here.)

This chapter will investigate three compositions: Bach’s *A Musical Offering* (1747), Mozart’s C minor Fantasy for Piano K. 457 (1784) and C minor Sonata K. 475 (1785), and Beethoven’s Sonata for Piano Op. 111 (1821/22). For reasons of clarity, Beethoven’s Sonata for Piano Op. 13, the so-called “Pathétique” (1798/99), is briefly referenced. All these works are composed in (or, as the earlier composers would have said, “out of”) the key of C minor.

‘Setting the Theme’:

J.S. Bach’s *A Musical Offering*

After some hesitation, in 1747 Bach accepted an invitation of the Prussian King Frederick II (“The Great”) to visit Potsdam, where Bach’s son, Carl Philipp Emanuel, had been serving as music master to the court since 1740. Bach’s older son, Wilhelm Friedemann, accompanied his father on the visit, and the descriptions of the course of the visit are based on his eyewitness reports. On the first day of the visit, Frederick intro-

duced Bach to his collection of the newly developed Silbermann fortepianos. Bach was invited to try them, and to improvise new compositions. After a while, he asked the King to give him a subject, which he started to execute immediately, without preparation.

Later, after Bach’s return to Leipzig, he elaborated the subject into a 13-section composition, which he titled *A Musical Offering* (BWV 1079) and dedicated to Frederick, with the following words: “In deepest humility I dedicate herewith to Your Majesty a musical offering, the noblest part of which derives from Your Majesty’s Own August Hand. . . .” With respect to the subject and its elaboration, Bach wrote: “I noticed very soon, however, that, for lack of necessary preparation, the execution of the task did not fare as well as such an excellent theme demanded. I resolved therefore and promptly pledged myself to work out this right Royal theme more fully and then make it known to the world. . . .”

The work, which carries the inscription “Regis Iussu Cantio Et Reliqua Canonica Arte Resoluta” (“At the King’s command, the song and the remainder resolved with canonic art”), whose first letters are an anagram spelling out the word “Ricercar,” of which we find one in three parts, and later one with six parts, composed in a much freer manner. The work also includes a number of “various canons on the Royal Theme” (two of these are shown in **Figure 4.1**), which are indicative of Bach’s mastery in the art of inversion. Then, finally, there is an extensive, three-movement trio sonata for flute (the instrument played by the King),

violin, and bass continuo.

A Musical Offering later became known also as the “Prussian Fugue.” A letter by J.S. Bach to his cousin Elias Bach, written in 1748, indicates, how the piece was later distributed: “I cannot oblige you at present with the desired copy of the Prussian Fugue, the edition having been exhausted just today, since I had only 100 printed, most of which were distributed gratis to good friends.”

From a letter of the Austrian ambassador to the Prussian court, Gottfried van Swieten, from 1774—that is, more than 25 years after Bach’s visit at Potsdam—we learn that Frederick the Great told him about Bach’s visit, and “sang, in a loud voice, a chromatic fugal subject, which he had given this old Bach, who immediately made from it a fugue in four, then five, and finally in eight parts.” Thus, we know, that van Swieten, who hosted Haydn, Mozart, and, later, Beethoven in his Vienna salon, knew of the *Musical Offering*.

For a better understanding of the key part of the *Musical Offering*, the six-part Ricercar, it is helpful to introduce some comments from the first biography of J.S. Bach, published in 1802, which was written by Johann Nicolaus Forkel in close cooperation and correspondence with Bach’s sons Wilhelm Friedemann and Carl Philipp Emanuel. In this book, Forkel writes about Bach’s method of composing: “Now, when Bach began to unite melody and harmony so that even his middle parts did not merely accompany, but had a melody of their own, when he extended the use of the keys, partly by deviating from the ancient

FIGURE 4.1

Two canons from J.S. Bach's *A Musical Offering*

Canon 1. a 2



4. a 2. per Augmentationem, contrario Motu

The various clefs indicate the inversions intended by Bach, in both horizontal and vertical directions.

modes of church music, which were then very common even in secular music, partly by mixing the diatonic and chromatic scales, and had learned to tune the instrument so that it could be played in all the 24 keys, he was at the same time obliged to contrive another mode of fingering, better adapted to his new methods, and particularly to use the thumb in a manner different from that hitherto employed.”

Bach “considered music entirely as a language, and the composer as a poet, who, in whatever language he might write, must never be without sufficient expressions to represent his feelings.”

On Bach’s polyphonic setting, Forkel—who often literally quotes from the letters of C.P.E. or Wilhelm Friedemann—writes: “Very different is the case when two melodies are so interwoven with each other that they, as it were,

converse together, like two persons of the same rank and equally well informed. . . . [T]his kind of union of two melodies gives occasion to new combinations of tones and consequently to an increase of the store of musical expressions. In proportion as more parts are added and interwoven with each other in the same free and independent manner, the store of musical expressions increases, and finally becomes inexhaustible when different time and the endless variety of rhythms are added.” And later, Forkel elaborates: “But to produce such harmony, in which the single parts must be in the highest degree flexible and yielding towards each other if they are all to have a free and fluent melody, Bach made use of quite peculiar means, which were not taught in the treatises of musical instruction of those times, but with which his

great genius inspired him. These means consisted in the great liberty which he gave to the progress of the parts.”

A little further on: “Hence, in the modulation of his instrumental works, every advance is a new thought, a constantly progressive life and motion within the circle of the keys chosen and those nearest related to them. Of the harmony which he already has, he retains the greatest part; but at every advance, he mixes something related to it; and, in this manner, he proceeds to the end of a piece so softly, so gently and gradually, that no leap or harsh transition is to be felt; and yet no bar is like another. With him, every transition is required to have a connection with the preceding idea, and to appear to be a necessary consequence of it.” And: “A single part never needs to force itself through, but several must, in their combination, occasionally turn, bend, and yield in a very intricate and delicate manner. This of necessity causes uncommon, strange, and entirely new, hitherto unheard-of turns in the melodies.”

Concerning the composition of fugues, we read: “It fulfills all the conditions which we are otherwise accustomed to demand only of freer species of composition. A highly characteristic theme; an uninterrupted principal melody [*Gesang*], wholly derived from it and equally characteristic from the beginning to the end; not mere accompaniment in the other parts, but in each of them an independent melody, in accordance with the others, also from the beginning to the end; freedom, lightness, and fluency in the progress of the whole; inexhaustible variety of modulation combined with perfect purity; the exclusion of every arbitrary note not necessarily belonging to the whole.”

Concerning this latter point, the “exclusion of every arbitrary note,” Forkel writes of Bach’s method of teaching composition: “Every note was required to have a connection with the preceding: if any one appeared concerning which it was not apparent whence it came, nor whither it tended, it was instantly banished as suspicious. . . . The confused mixture of the parts, so

that a note which belongs to the tenor is thrown into the alto and the reverse; further, the untimely dropping-in of several notes in certain harmonies—notes which, as if dropped from the sky, suddenly increase the established number of the parts in a single passage, to vanish in the next one following, and in no manner belong to the whole; in short, what Bach is said to have called ‘*mantschen*’ [daubing, or mixing notes and parts together in a disorderly manner]—is not to be found either in himself or in any of his pupils. He considered his parts as if they were persons who conversed together like a select company. If there were three, each could sometimes be silent and listen to the others until it again had something useful to say. But, if in the midst of the most interesting part of the discourse, some uncalled for and importunate strange notes suddenly rushed in and attempted to say a word, or even a mere syllable, without sense of vocation, Bach looked on this as a great irregularity, and made his pupils comprehend that it was never to be allowed.”

Forkel’s treatise represents an almost contemporary document, and it gives today’s readers beautiful insights into how Bach’s music and composition generally were thought about, in the time of Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven.

Now, let us turn to a brief examination of the six-part Ricercar from *A Musical Offering*. This is a six-part fugue, composed in a rather free manner, in which the parts (or voices) enter pairwise, and—as is typical for Bach’s treatment of the middle voices—with the third and second voices followed by the fifth and fourth. Only after a brief interlude, do the soprano and bass voices enter, and here, we can already observe a first change in the continuation of the soprano voice after the opening statement. In the subsequent development, new subjects are introduced in the various parts, which are nonetheless all derived from the original theme; they are all changed through inversion and modulation. At the end, all are interwoven, until the bass voice finally, in conclusion, re-presents the theme in its orig-

FIGURE 4.2a

J.S. Bach, six-part Ricercar from *A Musical Offering*, open-score version

The entrance of the second voice creates all the crucial intervals, which Mozart later picked up on in his K. 475 Fantasy: the diminished seventh from the “modulated” theme, the minor third, the Lydian, and the augmented second.

FIGURE 4.2b

J.S. Bach's own keyboard reduction of the six-part Ricercar from *A Musical Offering*

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system contains measures 1 through 8. The second system contains measures 9 through 13. The third system contains measures 14 through 19. The fourth system contains measures 20 through 24. The notation includes treble and bass clefs, a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat), and a common time signature. Specific annotations include 'dim. 7th' above measure 11, 'min. 3rd' below measure 10, 'Lydian' below measure 11, and 'aug. 2nd' below measure 12. Measure numbers 2 through 24 are indicated above the notes.

inal form. A wonderful example of a predecessor of *Motivführung*.

For the sake of later discussion, let us briefly look, close up, at the characteristic conflict, or paradox, that is created right at the beginning, when the second voice enters, and the first shifts to sing an additional part. The second voice, which presents the theme in a modulated form, runs into a conflict with its companion, when the modulated falling interval from $e\flat$ to $f\sharp$ is contrasted to a longer c of the companion first voice. Here, we observe a pair of two intervals, which create a shift, from the $e\flat$ - c minor third, to the c - $f\sharp$ Lydian interval, which indicates a way out of the C minor key of the composition. Also note, that at the beginning of the next measure, we find another characteristic interval $b\flat$ - $c\sharp$, an augmented second, which we will meet again later on.

This paradoxical result of juxtaposing two voices—of two compositional levels, or “keys,” if you wish—is also what we will meet again later, as we

move on to Mozart and Beethoven.

Bach originally wrote the six-part Ricercar, as shown in Figure 4.2a, on six different staves, without indicating which instruments are to play them. He himself re-wrote it also, on two staves (Figure 4.2b), so that it could be played on keyboard instruments. In the original open score, each staff has a different clef, indicating a different implied species of human singing voice. With the exception of a few notes in the extreme high and low registers, the fugue can be readily sung by a *bel canto*-trained six-part choir.

In general, the distinguishing characteristic of the theme lies in the connection of the minor-triad with the chromatic line, which opens up a great number of options for development—as Bach proves in his *Musical Offering*. It is an outstanding theme, especially for a musical amateur like Frederick the Great. However, C.P.E. Bach was in his service, and many researchers consider it a possibility, that he may have helped the King to formulate the theme. In

1774, C.P.E. Bach wrote in a letter to Forkel, about his father: “When he listened to a rich and many-voiced fugue, he could soon say, after the first entries of the subjects, what contrapuntal devices it would be possible to apply; and to which of them the composer by rights ought to apply, and on such occasions, when I was standing next to him, and he had voiced his surmises to me, he would joyfully nudge me when his expectations were fulfilled.”

Mozart: ‘Nothing Is Played, But Handel and Bach’

We know for a fact, that Mozart studied Bach’s works in the house of Gottfried van Swieten, the already-mentioned Austrian diplomat, whose father, an immigrant from The Netherlands, had been the personal physician of Empress Maria Theresa. In 1782, Mozart wrote to his father in Salzburg: “Every Sunday at noon, I visit the Baron van Swieten—and there, nothing is played but Handel and Bach.—I am just now making a collection of the Bach fugues, of Sebastian and Emanuel and Friedemann Bach” A few days later, he writes to his sister Nannerl: “The cause of his fugue’s coming into the world is really my dear Konstanze. Baron van Swieten, to whom I go every Sunday, has let me take all the works of Handel and Sebastian Bach home, after I played them through for him. When Konstanze heard the fugues, she fell quite in love with them. She will hear nothing but fugues, especially (in this field) nothing but Handel and Bach. Now, since she had heard me frequently improvise fugues, she asked me whether I had never written any down, and when I said ‘No,’ she gave me a proper scolding for not wanting to write the most intricate and beautiful kind of music, and she did not give up begging me until I wrote her a fugue, and that is how it came about.” In the same letter, Mozart described van Swieten’s musical library as “although in quality a very large store of good music, yet in quantity a very small one.”

The proof that Mozart must have known the *Musical Offering*, or at the

very least its subject, is in his piano sonata in C minor, K. 457, to which he later added the C minor Fantasy K. 475.¹ The Fantasy was written in 1785, less than three weeks before the composition of the *Lied* “Das Veilchen” (see Chapter 1), which also represents a milestone in the development of musical composition.

In the opening section of the sonata’s first movement (**Figure 4.3**), we find all the elements of the “Royal Theme,” but in a changed presentation and registration. We also find, more elaborated, the conflict of the two parts of Bach’s composition, which is now presented in the horizontal development also: a juxtaposition of the opening arpeggio in C minor, and the “repetition” a fourth lower, starting from G, and appearing as if in G major!

In the course of the exposition, one can also study how a “second subject” of the sonata is derived—according to the *Motivführung* principle—from the first, but in such a way, that it can hardly be recognized at first. In this piece, we again find the chromatic element, in inversion and rhythmically changed (**Figure 4.4**).

The opening motif of the third movement (**Figure 4.5**) represents a direct quotation from the opening theme of the first movement, but in a doubly-inverted way. In addition, we are led to our conflict of two keys and modes, the C minor–“G major” confrontation, leading into the presentation of our “old acquaintance” interval e^b – f^{\sharp} , now presented as a melodic line (**Figure 4.6**).

In the sonata’s second movement, Mozart again presents the *Motivführung* elements of the entire sonata, which we recognize this time in inversion and modulation of the intervals of the opening theme, and we find the chromatic element, used as a means of expression (**Figure 4.7**, measures 21–22). The second theme introduced in the movement (**Figure 4.7**, measures 5–6)—again through inversion—is later picked up, almost verbatim, as the leading theme in the second movement of Beethoven’s “Pathétique” sonata. It is indicative, both for understanding the movement

FIGURE 4.3

W.A. Mozart, Sonata K. 457, opening of first movement

The opening of the first movement shows the “Royal Theme,” in a different gestalt.

FIGURE 4.4

Ascending chromatic sequence in Mozart’s Sonata K. 457

A seemingly new element, in the exposition of the first movement, is generated by inverting the chromatic descending line from the “Royal Theme.”

FIGURE 4.5

Opening of third movement of Mozart's Sonata K. 457



The opening motif of the third movement consists of an inversion of the first movement's opening theme.

FIGURE 4.6

E^b-F[#] interval in third movement of Mozart's Sonata K. 457



FIGURE 4.7

Opening, and second theme, of second movement of Mozart's Sonata K. 457



The second theme of the slow movement of this sonata was chosen by Beethoven as the theme for the second movement of his Sonata for Piano Op. 13, "Pathétique."

in respect to clear voice registration, and for the conception of the expression, that Mozart added the indication "sotto voce" at the beginning of this movement, as a hint to the performer and listener.

Before undertaking a brief examination of the opening of the Fantasy K. 475, let us keep in mind C.P.E. Bach's short definition of the intervals, from his famous *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1949): "The comparison of one tone with another, is called an *interval*" ("Die Vergleichung eines Tons mit dem anderen heißt ein Intervall"). In other words, it is the *relationship* of the tones, and not their distance, which is heard by the mind.

In the C minor Fantasy, Mozart adds qualitatively new steps, which put this piece above the K. 457 sonata, which was already a milestone in Mozart's works, in respect to its density and coherence. Here, we find him examining a problem, which we have so far met only in the interweaving of two voices: the importance of the F[#], not only as the "leading tone" to the dominant key of G minor/G major (as seen from C major/C minor), as it is usually taught, but in its importance for the C minor/C major mode, and the incredibly complex potentialities of development, which includes the entire sphere of the 24-key well-tempered domain. [text continues on page 62]

In hearing the opening (**Figure 4.8**), it is more difficult to recognize the “Royal Theme,” because it is changed, in a characteristic way, already at the beginning, and the chromatic line appears “only” in the harmonic progression.

We find that Mozart has integrated the F \sharp , which we know from Bach, and from the third movement of the sonata, into the theme itself—i.e., the paradox is now in the theme. We find the Eb-F \sharp interval, now in its inversion an augmented second. The irony of the integration is underlined by the short two figures, which again repeat this interval, accompanied by half-steps in different directions, underlining the principle of inversion.

We now recognize in this opening part how this integrated F \sharp becomes the pivot-point of constant change, through which the complexity of the 24-key well-tempered domain is explored: We find the F \sharp , and its “well-tempered twin” G \flat ; we find the F \sharp in the context of C major/C minor, of B major, of F \sharp major, and then, through a new, and surprising turn, showing up briefly as part of a clear D major (**Figure 4.9**)! Each time, the F \sharp is involved, and each time, its surrounding has changed. Keep in mind the fact, that there is a scale from C, which contains the F \sharp —namely, the famous “Lydian mode,” which Beethoven so obviously picked up in all of his late works, not only in the “Heiliger Dankgesang” of his Op. 132 string quartet.

In conclusion, there is a contemporary report, which is very important, concerning the relationship of Mozart and J.S. Bach: During Mozart’s last visit to Berlin, in 1789, he traveled through Leipzig, where he immediately visited the cantor at St. Thomas Church, Johann Friedrich Doles, who had been a student of Bach. A witness (most probably J.F. Reichardt) later says of this visit: “On April 22, he was heard without prior announcement, and without financial compensation, on the organ in the St. Thomas Church. He played there, for one hour, beautifully and artistically, for many listeners. The organist Görner and the late Cantor Doles were with

FIGURE 4.8

Opening of Mozart’s Fantasy for Piano, K. 475

The opening of Mozart’s Fantasy K. 475 integrates the Lydian C-F \sharp interval. It contains all key intervals generated by Bach in the interaction of the first two voices in the six-part Ricercar.

FIGURE 4.9

Pivot around F# in Mozart's Fantasy K. 475

Musical score for Mozart's Fantasy K. 475, measures 22-27. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It shows a pivot around the F# note. Dynamics include *fp*, *f*, *p*, *pp*, *cresc.*, *sf*, and *calando*.

him, pulling the stops. I saw him myself, a young man, dressed according to the fashion, and middle-sized. Doles was excited about the playing of the artist, and thought that the old Seb. Bach, his teacher, had been resurrected." At the end of his visit, Cantor Doles and the St. Thomas choir sang for Mozart Bach's motet "Singet dem Herrn ein neues *Lied*." According to the report, Mozart listened with concentration, and then said: "This is something to learn from!" He asked for the parts—a full score did not exist—spread them all out before himself, and studied them carefully. [text continues below]

FIGURE 4.10

Beethoven Piano Sonata Op. 111, opening of first movement

Musical score for Beethoven's Piano Sonata Op. 111, opening of first movement. The score is in G major and 3/4 time, marked *Maestoso*. It shows a pivot around the F# note. Dynamics include *f*, *sf*, *p*, *cresc.*, and *dim. 7th*.

Beethoven chose the key interval from Bach and Mozart as the opening of his own last piano sonata.

Beethoven: 'He Could Become A Second Mozart'

There is a well-known pun by Beethoven, on J.S. Bach: "Nicht Bach—Meer sollte er heissen" ("He shouldn't be called Brook ["*Bach*"]; his name ought to be Ocean").

Already in his early education in Bonn, Beethoven had been introduced to Bach's works—at that time a rather exceptional experience—through his teacher Christian Gottlob Neefe. Neefe had studied law in Leipzig, but had then switched to music, and became a student of the later Cantor at the St. Thomas Church, Johann Adam Hiller. Hiller himself had been a student of Doles. In 1783, Neefe wrote in an article in Cramer's *Magazin der Musik*: "Louis van Bethhoven, son of the above-mentioned

tenor, a boy of 11 years, who has a talent that promises much. He plays very fluently and powerfully on the clavier, reads very well at sight, and, to say everything in a word, he plays most of the *Well-Tempered Clavier* by Sebastian Bach, which Mr. Neefe has placed in his hands. Anyone who knows this collection of preludes and fugues in all the keys (which one could almost call the *non plus ultra*) will know what that means. . . . This young genius would deserve support so that he might travel. He would certainly become a second Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart if he were to continue as he had begun.”

Later, in Vienna, Beethoven was among the guests in van Swieten’s salon, and he dedicated his First Symphony to him. Through his entire life, he considered Bach to be one of the greatest composers. In his conversation books, there is an exchange, where Beethoven ironically asks a visitor: “Bach, is he dead?” He asked his publishers for copies of Bach’s works, and included also Bach’s sons in his high estimation. In a letter to his publisher Breitkopf und Härtel in Leipzig, in 1809, he wrote: “Generally, I would appreciate, if you would gradually send me most of the scores, which you have, for example Mozart’s *Requiem* etc., Haydn’s masses, Bach, Johann Sebastian Bach, Emanuel, etc. I have only a few of Emanuel’s piano works, but some of them must not only serve the artist for his pleasure, but also for his studies.”

But Beethoven speaks out most clearly in his compositions, which stand in the context of the Bach-Mozart treatment of the “Royal Theme.” We find elements of the problem treated in many works, but most directly first in his Piano Sonata Op. 13 in C minor, the famous “Pathétique.” While the first movement, with its “*Grave*” introduction, and then the jump into the “*Allegro molto e con brio*,” appears to be a sort of synthesis of Mozart’s Fantasy and the sonata’s first movement, the second movement quotes explicitly from the second theme of Mozart’s second movement.

Thus, Beethoven, already relatively early on, deals with the Bach-Mozart

FIGURE 4.11

Beethoven Piano Sonata Op. 111, opening theme

Allegro con brio ed appassionato

Measures 17-23. Dynamics: *cresc.*, *sf*, *f*, *ff*, *mezzo p poco ritente*. Includes triplets in measures 18, 20, and 23.

FIGURE 4.12

Opening of second movement of Beethoven Sonata Op. 111

Arietta
Adagio molto semplice e cantabile

Measures 1-18. Dynamics: *p*, *cresc.*, *sf > p*, *dolce*, *sempre legato*. Includes first and second endings in measures 8-10 and 16-18.

FIGURE 4.13

Triple trill in Beethoven's Sonata Op. 111

The musical score for Beethoven's Sonata Op. 111, measures 104-124, is presented in two systems. The first system (measures 104-112) shows a triple trill in the right hand starting at measure 104, marked with a crescendo and *sf*. The left hand has a steady accompaniment. The second system (measures 113-124) shows the continuation of the triple trill, marked with *p cresc.* and *dim.*, and the left hand accompaniment marked with *pp*. The key signature changes to C major at measure 113. The score includes performance instructions such as *espressivo* and *sempre pp*.

Immediately after the highest point of tension and condensation, in the triple trill, Beethoven introduces a remembrance of the opening of Mozart's Fantasy K. 475.

material, and the sonata marks a key point in his own development.

The high point of the dialogue among the three geniuses, however, is found in Beethoven's final piano sonata, No. 32, Op. 111 in C minor, composed in 1821/22. Already the opening (Figure 4.10) attacks the core, the *punctum saliens* of the dialogue. We meet again our familiar interval Eb-F#, this time in a falling line, played in all voices, *forte* and in unison, in the "Maestoso" introduction of the first movement, before the theme is introduced in the "Allegro con brio ed appassionato" section (Figure 4.11). Thus, this movement again, like the Pathétique, appears to be a kind of synthesis of Mozart's C minor Fantasy and Sonata. One is obliged to understand the entire sonata from the standpoint of Bach's and Mozart's dealing with the given problem; and, at the same time, to re-examine them from the new, higher standpoint of Beethoven, which adds new value to their effort!

In conclusion, a brief examination of the second movement of Beethoven's Op. 111 sonata provides some striking elements, in the context of the "C minor issue." The sonata has "only" two movements. The second one is a large-scale integrated variations movement, which in the course of development become more and more complex, but also free. The movement is called "Arietta," to be played "Adagio molto semplice e cantabile" (Figure 4.12). Thus, we again find explicitly the demand, which we know from Bach's "playing in a singable fashion," something strongly reiterated by C.P.E. Bach in his book on playing keyboard instruments.

At the end of the second movement's fourth variation, which also marks the beginning of an extremely free, coda-like end section, we have the incredible triple trill, never heard before, and right afterwards, with a brief shift in the key signature to the "C minor coding," we find reference to an old acquaintance: a modified form of the opening of the Mozart fantasy (Figure 4.13)! [text continues on page 66]

From there, Beethoven proceeds to the final development of the movement (Figure 4.14), which ends in a unique way: We find variants of the movement's theme presented under and above a long, pedal-point-like trill, which, although the same tones are always played, is constantly changing its voice and registral characteristic. Thus, an old means of fugal polyphonic composition, the pedal-point, concludes the fugue, by giving a clear bass orientation to the conclusion of the modulations. Here, we find a “pedal-point,” which itself becomes a kind of pivot-point.

Much remains to be discovered in the dialogue among these works. And, many later composers have gotten involved: even Chopin, for example.

It was not an arbitrary choice by Lyndon LaRouche, to repeatedly insist in the unique importance of the “C minor series,” for understanding of the development of Classical composition. It was the process of “standing on each other’s shoulders,” of looking a little further or deeper, that made the successive qualitative steps possible. It will be the intense, in-depth re-living of these experiences, that will enable us, in the future, to bring forth new “partners in the dialogue.”

1. The original manuscript of the fantasy and sonata was re-discovered in 1990, in Philadelphia. A facsimile of the manuscript has been published by the Internationale Stiftung Mozarteum Salzburg, and by Bärenreiter-Verlag (ISBN 3-9500072-1-2 [Internationale Stiftung Mozarteum] and ISBN 3-7618-1041-5 [Bärenreiter]).

FIGURE 4.14

Conclusion of Beethoven Sonata Op. 111

The musical score for the conclusion of Beethoven Sonata Op. 111, measures 160 through 173, is presented in a grand staff format. The right hand (treble clef) and left hand (bass clef) are shown. The score includes various musical notations such as trills (tr), dynamic markings (f, pp, cresc.), and a prominent pedal-point-like trill in the bass line. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major/C minor), and the time signature is 3/8. The score is divided into systems, with measure numbers 160, 163, 165, 167, 169, 171, and 173 clearly marked. The final measure (173) features a crescendo marking.

continued on following page

FIGURE 4.14 (continued)



The trill forms a higher-order “pedal point,” which becomes a pivot-point of the conclusion.

5

W.A. Mozart’s Fantasy in C minor, K. 475, And the Generalization of the Lydian Principle Through Motivic Thorough-Composition

by John Sigerson

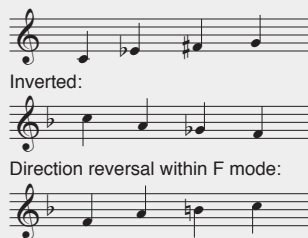
FIGURE 5.1

Opening of K. 475 Fantasy



FIGURE 5.2

Derivation of Lydian scale



Let us take as our point of departure, the following passage from Lyndon LaRouche’s main article, a passage that has specific bearing upon Mozart’s composition of the Fantasy in C minor, K. 475, in May 1785:

“A further refinement is required. The mind hears the inversion of any interval (e.g., C-E-G heard as G-E-C), to such effect that a simple Lydian scale is derived as an inversion of a C-minor, F \sharp pivotted scale. The effort to bring the intervals represented by the scale indicated by the inversion, [into coherence] with the scale which has been inverted, introduces a further degree of refinement of the well-tempering. Add, the inversion heard across the polyphonic parts to the inversions generated within each part, and a further refinement is introduced.”

Mozart opens the K. 475 Fantasy with a bare statement of just such a “C-minor, F \sharp pivotted scale” (Figure 5.1). But before we plunge into the work itself, let us first see precisely what kinds of inversions are required to derive a “simple Lydian scale” from it. Let us represent the leading features of

the original scale as C-E \flat -(F \sharp)-G. The intervals described are an ascending minor third, followed by an ascending augmented second, and then an ascending half-step. Now, using C as our pivot, invert the direction of the intervals from ascending, to descending. The result is C-A-(G \flat /F \sharp)-F, a kind of F major with a G \flat hovering just above the tonic. Finally, taking F as our point of departure, take the C-G \flat /F \sharp interval and reverse the direction again, projecting it upward (Figure 5.2). The result: F-A-(B \sharp)-C, a simple Lydian scale. That the mind hears such relations implicitly, is proven beyond a doubt by the power of Mozart’s K. 475 Fantasy.

Another unique property of Lydian intervals should also be touched upon before we begin to grapple with Mozart’s compositions in detail. Disregarding different spellings for the moment (in actual composition, they are crucial for the shaping of tone), one quickly discovers that there exist six, and only six, unique Lydian intervals in the well-tempered domain, namely: C-F \sharp , D \flat -G, D-A \flat , E \flat -A \sharp , E \sharp -B \flat , and F \sharp -B \sharp