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Author(s): Susan McClary
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A Musical Dialectic from the Enlightenment: Mozart's *Piano Concerto in G Major, K. 453*, Movement 2

Susan McClary

> Of all the tasks awaiting us in the social interpretation of music, that of Mozart would be the most difficult and the most urgent.
>
> — Theodor Adorno[1]

A couple of years ago, I attended a concert with a colleague in the humanities. Among the compositions on the program was Mozart's Piano Concerto in G Major, K. 453. When the concert was over, my companion expressed disapproval of the soloist's performance of the

1. *Introduction to the Sociology of Music*, trans. E. B. Ashton (New York: Seabury Press, 1976), 70. This article is indebted to several other works of Adorno as well, including *Prisms*, trans. Samuel Weber and Shierry Weber (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1981), and *Philosophy of Modern Music*, trans. Anne G. Mitchell and Wesley V. Blomster (New York: Seabury Press, 1973). My title itself alludes, of course, to the book Adorno wrote with Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. John Cumming (New York: Seabury Press, 1972).

For other Adorno-informed work on Mozart, see Rose Rosengard Subotnik, "Evidence of a Critical World View in Mozart's Last Three Symphonies," in *Music and Civilization: Essays in Honor of Paul Henry Lang*, eds. Edmond Strainchamps, Maria Rika Maniates, and Christopher Hatch (New York and London: Norton, 1984), 29-43 and Christopher Ballantine, "Social and Philosophical Outlook in Mozart's Operas," *The Musical Quarterly* 67 (1981): 507-26. Ballantine uses the same epigraph to introduce his essay.

middle movement on grounds that he found it "romantic" and "self-indulgent."

Now, I had rather liked the performance, especially that of the middle movement, and so we began to discuss the nature of our different reactions. I argued (with the score and at a piano) that the soloist had been articulating (very dramatically, to be sure, but entirely within appropriate limits) certain unusual compositional strategies indicated in Mozart's text. He protested that Mozart did not deal with notions of the sort I was suggesting. Finally, our discussion settled on our radically divergent concepts not just of this piece or even of Mozart in general, but of the whole of the eighteenth century and its significance. The fact is that his image of the Enlightenment's foremost musical figure could not tolerate or absorb what I claimed the movement was about. Or even that a movement of classical instrumental music could be said to be "about" anything.

This discussion might have been just one evening's conversation, the critical afterglow that makes academics feel that they have experienced more than simple entertainment at a concert or movie. But it has continued to haunt me, particularly with the release and widespread popularity of the film *Amadeus*, which derives its dramatic tension from the dichotomy drawn between the "obvious perfection" of Mozart's music (performed — appropriately enough, given the theme of the film — in a flat, undifferentiated fashion) and the ratty little lowlife who composed it. The film concedes that the man himself may have had feet of clay: that much we can ascertain through historical documentation. But as a composer, he spoke only as the Spirit gave him utterance, unworthy vessel though he may have seemed to human sensibilities. God works in mysterious ways.

My conversation concerning the performance of the concerto, my discussions with colleagues of *Amadeus*, and other subsequent incidents have made me increasingly aware of a much larger issue: that many "cultivated" people (even — perhaps especially — humanities scholars) by and large regard the eighteenth century as a kind of rationalist's Garden of Eden before the fall into subjectivity, and that music of that time (particularly that of Mozart) is considered to be the articulation of perfect order — abstract, universal, free from the stain of human interests. *Amadeus* demonstrates that one may perhaps demystify the man, but that the music itself is beyond critique. Therein, apparently, lies the miracle.

And, to my astonishment, I since have found that even many literary and cultural critics who specialize in deconstructive methods wish to draw the line at Mozart and the music of the eighteenth century. For even if we have declared God to be dead and verbal texts to be rupturable constructs, we still seem reluctant to let go of the classical music through which we yet have (the illusion of) access to transcendental truth: truth that seems not to have been put together by human hand.

This paper seeks to perform a cultural critique on the "perfect order" of Mozart's music. In dealing with Mozart's music critically, I do not intend to denigrate him or to "cut him down to size" (unless insisting on his socially-informed human status qualifies as so doing). I am interested first in considering how Mozart's music articulates meaning within and up against a particular mode of social discourse: eighteenth-century musical style. And second, I am concerned with the ways in which Mozart's music can be said to mean socially in today's struggles and negotiations over cultural definition.

Music as Social Discourse

Music articulates social meaning in several different ways. As is the case with any semiotic discourse, meaning in music is produced in part through the use of codes (specific repertories of gestures, rhetorical devices, associations, and so on) shared by both composer and presumably listeners —codes that assume, acknowledge, affirm, and reinforce the social bonds among them.[2] Any given musical code is vast, multi-dimensional, highly eclectic. It can include virtually anything that is regarded as significant by members of the social groups with which it is engaged —for instance, the set of melodic/harmonic/rhythmic shapes that conventionally convey in classical music the affect of "anger"; the implication of negative emotional states in minor-key passages; or the connection with Nazi Germany of a well known tune from a Haydn quartet.[3] In none of these instances is there anything *in-*

2. For further reading in the semiotics of music, see Wilson Coker, *Music and Meaning* (New York: The Free Press, 1972); Deryck Cooke, *The Language of Music* (London: Oxford, 1959); Alan Durant, *Conditions of Music* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1984); Peter Kivy, *The Corded Shell* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1980); J.J. Nattiez, *Fondements d'une sémiologie de la musique* (Paris: Union Générale d'Editions, 1975); Frits Noske, *The Signifier and the Signified: Studies in the Operas of Mozart and Verdi* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1977); and Nicolas Ruwet, *Langage, musique, poésie* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1972).

3. When watching a movie concerning World War II, if one does not know that

herent in the sounds themselves that is angry, sad, or fascist: meaning can be said to be present only by virtue of social agreement. Moreover, any living code is in constant flux: meanings are continually being introduced, fought over, altered, neutralized, or reactivated as part of the on-going process of cultural activity. It is precisely the fact that its codes are produced, shaped, transmitted, and declared meaningful only through social interaction that music must be understood to be a form of social discourse.

Second, meaning is produced through the use of formal procedures that are accepted in the musical community as norms or conventions. In other words, even those abstract, seemingly self-contained formal procedures that regulate rhythm, melody, and harmony — that seem so insulated from the workings of the outside world — are social constructs.[4] This is true in quite an obvious, almost trivial sense: when a group of people decides how music is to go, what procedures are to govern or delimit its composition and performance, then this decision is by definition a social one. Some of the decisions may, in fact, be arbitrary —matters of taste that cannot easily be connected to the outside world except insofar as they are marks of the preferences of that social group— though many of the conventions of a musical style bear traces of the values of the group that develops or subscribes to them.

But regardless of whether they are arbitrary or not, the ways in which musical conventions are manipulated in particular pieces always constitute a form of social practice.[5] Inasmuch as these (socially shared and sanctioned) conventions embody the norms of musical behavior

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even a fragment on the soundtrack of "Deutschland über Alles" indicates lurking Nazis, one simply cannot follow the film competently. To be sure, Haydn had no such intention in writing his quartet, but the matter has passed well out of his control. The piece and its meanings are in the public domain.

4. Most of the work that has been done on connecting musical practices to social ideology has focussed (not surprisingly) on the musics of other cultures in ethnomusicology, a discipline closely connected with anthropology. See, for instance, John Blacking, *How Musical Is Man?* (Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 1973). These questions are beginning to be applied also to Western music, often in studies which have comparatist slants — testimony to their debt to ethnomusicology. See, for example, Durant, *Conditions of Music*; Richard Norton, *Tonality in Western Culture* (University Park, Penn.: Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 1984); Lewis Rowell, *Thinking about Music* (Amherst: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 1983), and Christopher Small, *Music — Society — Education* (London: John Calder, 1977).

5. Much of this model is drawn both from Adorno's many essays and from Jacques Attali, *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1985).

in that society, they stand for order. Instances of departures from these norms qualify as noise.

A piece of music therefore can be perceived as a dialectic between order and noise, a strategic model of how violence or deviance may be tolerated and channeled within a given social framework. Depending on the value placed in a given society on individuality of expression, noise may be policed or encouraged.[6] To perform in complete accordance with conventions (a common practice in sacred societies in which the music is to be transmitted as exactly as possible) is to submit the individual voice entirely to social stricture; to abandon them absolutely —to sing in a private language (a common practice among many members of the mid-twentieth-century avant-garde) — is to choose self-alienation and virtual noncommunication.[7]

These conventions and their meanings are always being altered, always being renegotiated. One generation's heretical violation becomes the next generation's status quo that may be, in turn, reacted against. Thus the terms of the dialectics in musical culture, as in all others, are constantly shifting in accordance with many unpredictable factors — some almost strictly musical (options suggested by the musical system itself and its limits), many social or political in origin (though always, of course, heavily mediated through the terms of existing musical procedures).

Conventions of the Eighteenth-Century Musical Style

To return to the task at hand, the Mozart piano concerto movement with which we are concerned neither makes up its own rules nor derives them from some abstract, absolute, transcendental source. Rather it depends heavily on conventions of eighteenth-century harmonic

6. Music of the French and Italian seventeenth century can be usefully compared in this way. See my afterword, "The Politics of Silence and Sound," in Attali's *Noise*, 155-56.

7. An interesting paradox underlies a good deal of twentieth-century music, especially that (such as serial music) which is generated by means of abstract, externally devised systems: the music gives the impression to the nonspecialized listener of total noise when, in fact, it is obsessively, mathematically ordered. Is it noise or is it order? One's answer depends on where one is positioned socially with respect to the enterprise. See Adorno's *Philosophy* and Carl Schorske's treatment of Schönberg in his *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna* (New York: Vintage, 1980), 344-64.

syntax, formal procedure, genre type, rhythmic propriety, gestural vocabulary, and associations. All of these conventions have histories: *social* histories marked with national, economic, class, and gender — that is, political — interests.

Thus understanding Mozart's piece as a social text requires reconstructing the semiotic codes[8] and the formal conventions within and against which the piece is articulated. The movement with which we are concerned operates within at least three principal formal conventions: *tonality* (which defines harmonic syntax, both locally and structurally), *sonata procedure* (which defines the overall thematic schema), and *concerto format* (which defines how the contrasting performing forces of orchestra and soloist interact).

1. Tonality

On the most basic level, Mozart's movement is a tonal composition. The kind of tonal language Mozart employs emerged in the seventeenth century, and it remained the basis of concert music through the nineteenth century.[9] While most music of the twentieth-century avant-garde has departed deliberately from the constraints of tonality, this same harmonic language continues to underlie our popular musics and the music of movies and advertisement. Thus, even those members of Western societies who do not think they know what tonality is understand intuitively (like the Bourgeois Gentleman who had been speaking prose unknowingly all his life) how it operates, how to follow its logic, how to perceive deviations from its norms.

All tonal compositions share certain characteristics. First, they are

8. Fortunately, there existed in the eighteenth century an area of inquiry that strongly resembles semiotics, an area known to scholars today as the *Affektenlehre*, or doctrine of the affections. Theorists such as Bach's contemporary, Johann Mattheson (*Der vollkommene Capellmeister*, Hamburg, 1739), systematically codified both the various signs available for constructing representations of the affections and also the ways in which they could be combined in composition. Classical rhetorical strategies were likewise applied systematically to the purposes of musical composition. Thus we do not have to grope in the dark for what various gestures were thought to signify — or even to conjecture *that* they were thought to signify.

9. See, once again, my afterword to Attali's *Noise*. See also my "Rise and Fall of the Teleological Model," *The Paradigm Exchange* (Univ. of Minnesota, forthcoming), and "The Expansion Principle: An Account of Seventeenth-Century Tonality" (unpublished typescript).

strongly goal oriented. Underlying each piece is a kind of narrative schema in which the principal events are (a) establishment of and departure from the stable tonic key area, (b) encounters with and arrivals on a series of other keys, and ultimately (c) return to the stable tonic. Second, they make use of a highly rule-bound harmonic syntax that, because it indicates at all moments both what the goals are and how far we are from them, seems rational, controlled, and progressive. These two dimensions of tonality combine to create the impression of logical coherence and inevitability. And they articulate a social world organized by means of values such as rational control and goal-oriented striving for progress — the values upon which leaders of the upwardly mobile bourgeoisie traditionally have grounded their claim to legitimacy, authority, and "universality."

To a large extent, we can assume that Mozart did not *consciously intend* much of what adheres ideologically to tonality: it was simply part of his universe, as invisible to him and unquestioned as the air he breathed. Yet even when they are unconscious or undeliberate, these assumptions and reflexes are essential parts of his compositions. They define the options, the limits, the shared priorities, goals and beliefs of the community that had developed, transmitted, preserved, and thus identified with this musical style.

In other words, if Mozart was to communicate effectively with his contemporaries and identify himself as a member of the "tribe," his music had to shape itself in keeping with those premises. Unless he wanted to alienate himself or to be unintelligible, his compositions all had to follow the narrative plan outlined above and employ the harmonic syntax that makes it possible. Indeed his pieces all finally affirm the opening tonic area, and his harmonic strategies ally him with beliefs in rationality, progress, and ceaseless, obsessive striving for goals.

Doesn't everyone believe in these ideals? Well, no. Tonality emerged in the seventeenth century in direct opposition to a musical language that (like the church and aristocracy that nurtured it) articulated a static worldview in which notions such as radical progress and destabilizing goal-seeking were threats.[10] Likewise, the rationality of the eighteenth century was called into question by the nineteenth-century Romantics who rejected what they regarded as "instrumental

10. For a theoretical model of late sixteenth-century musical procedures, see my *The Transition from Modal to Tonal Organization in the Works of Monteverdi* (Ph.D. diss., Harvard Univ., 1976).

reason" in their celebrations of the irrational: in music, this rejection was manifested in unconventional narrative plans and in an increasingly individualistic, convoluted, deviant harmonic language.[11] Early twentieth-century composers sought to banish tonality and its attendant "bourgeois" ideology altogether.[12] If we today want to identify with and uphold these values (and the music of the eighteenth century), well and good. But universals they are not. Recognizing Mozart's participation in this ideological landscape is essential if we are to understand the terms upon which hinge his compositional strategies.

2. *Sonata Procedure*[13]

We can further locate Mozart's position in the history of musical style (understood as a kind of trace of European ideological history) by comparing Mozart's formal procedures within a tonal framework with those of Bach — a composer preceding Mozart by two generations. First, Mozart's movements are generally more expansive, the intermediate goals more remote, and the procedures for achieving them more dramatically delineated.

Second, they are articulated structurally by means of highly individualized themes (even several easily recognized melodies) and thus are more concerned with identity —but with identity construed as a problem rather than as a given. By contrast, Bach's movements tend to have a single flexible overriding motive that permeates and unifies the narrative flow. Those of Mozart involve a principal, self-contained theme and its dynamic relationship with at least one or, at times, a group of subsidiary themes.

Third, the formal structures that develop with this new emphasis on

11. See Adorno "Spätstil Beethovens" and "Schubert" in *Moments musicaux* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1964), 13-36; Morse Peckham, *Beyond the Tragic Vision: The Quest for Identity in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: George Braziller, 1962); Rose Rosengard Subotnik, "Adorno's Diagnosis of Beethoven's Late Style: Early Symptom of a Fatal Condition," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 29 (1976): 242-75, and "The Historical Structure: Adorno's 'French' Model for the Criticism of Nineteenth-Century Music," *Nineteenth Century Music* 2 (1978): 36-60; and my "Pitches, Expression, Ideology: An Exercise in Mediation," *Enclitic* 7 (1983): 76-86.

12. Schorske, in his *Vienna*, 358, discusses Schönberg's plans in 1912-14 for a symphony celebrating the death of the "Bourgeois God." See also Adorno's *Philosophy*.

13. For a broader study of sonata, complete with many examples, see Charles Rosen, *Sonata Forms* (New York: Norton, 1980).

problems of identity and alterity highlight confrontation and eventual resolution. Conflict and struggles for dominance for purposes of establishing and maintaining all-valued self-identity become essential preoccupations in this style (and, one might argue, at this moment in history).

Sonata procedure is the late eighteenth century organizational paradigm in tonal music: (a) an exposition that presents the first main theme in the tonic key area and then its "Other," a theme that differs from the first in key and usually in affective character; (b) a development, in which fragments of the themes appear in a variety of interrelationships (fragmented, combined, juxtaposed, alternated) and other keys; and (c) a recapitulation, in which the first theme is re-presented, once again in its tonic key, and in which the second theme reappears — now in the tonic as well, rather than in its original key. In other words, the second theme and key are often presented as a kind of threat to the identity of the first, but ultimately that threat is controlled by being assimilated, absorbed into the key area of the first theme.[14] The outcome is invariable, predetermined — the first key and its theme *have* to prevail if this is truly to count as a piece of tonal music — yet the threat must always appear genuine so that we can repeatedly celebrate the triumph of the tonic protagonist and the appropriation of the "Other." And it is, finally, only by virtue of the encounter with the second theme and key that the identity of the first seems able to affirm itself narratively. It depends on its "Other" for extension and self-definition.

3. Concerto Format[15]

One last major convention must be dealt with before we can begin to talk about what Mozart himself articulates in the particular composition I have chosen. The piece is a piano concerto. The concerto

14. See Jane R. Stevens, "Georg Joseph Vogler and the 'Second Theme' in Sonata Form: Some Eighteenth-Century Perceptions of Musical Contrast," *Journal of Musicology* 2 (1983): 278-304, for an account of how eighteenth-century theorists described thematic alterity.

15. See Scott Balthazar, "Intellectual History and Concepts of the Concerto: Some Parallels from 1750-1850," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 36 (1983): 39-72, for an account of the concerto that involves its contemporaneous theoretical formulations and the ways in which those formulations are informed by philosophical positions of the day.

came into being in the seventeenth century (at the same time and from largely the same impulses as tonality), and its very name manages to resonate etymologically with Italian words for "playing together" and "struggling against." It both requires mixed performing forces to collaborate and also pits them against each other. The eighteenth-century concerto is usually concerned with a soloist and a large, communal group, the orchestra. It thus enacts as a spectacle the dramatic tensions between individual and society, surely one of the major problematics of the emerging middle class.

Classical concerto procedure represents a subspecies of both tonality and sonata: it satisfies all the requirements of both and adds a few wrinkles of its own. Normally, the orchestra begins a concerto movement alone with an extended block of music called the "ritornello." The ritornello introduces most of the themes for the movement, yet it remains completely in the tonic, postponing the dynamic process of key conflict until later. Next the soloist enters, in the tonic and usually with the principal theme of the ritornello. The soloist goes on, however, to begin the move to another key and theme area. Whereas the communal statement of materials was static, the individual renders them dynamic and seems to be responsible for the conquest of new areas, usually celebrated by punctuating entrances of the ritornello. Throughout the movement (which follows the basic outlines of sonata procedure), the soloist and orchestra interact — sometimes cooperatively, sometimes antagonistically. Eventually the tonic is reachieved for the point of recapitulation, the second theme is presented in its new garb of captivity, and the soloist is given a moment of sheer improvisatory virtuosity (the cadenza) before the orchestra takes over to conclude the piece. The individualistic "violation" is itself socially encoded. In an eighteenth-century concerto, whatever antagonisms were manifested between individual and society appear to have been resolved by the end: the stable community has withstood the adventures and conflicts of the soloist, and they have been reconciled to coexist in mutually beneficial bliss.

These, then, are the principal paradigms in terms of which Mozart's movement articulates its choices, its meanings. As we have seen, they all are already heavily saturated with cultural values and interests before the individual composer approaches them to endow them with specific content. Indeed, the problematics addressed in tonality, sonata procedure, and concerto are the familiar issues of the late eighteenth

century: the narrative construction of identity and the threat of alterity, the relationships between individual freedom and collective order, between objective reason and subjectivity, between stability and dynamic progress. Moreover, as a set of intersecting models with somewhat different traditions and priorities, they already bear certain incongruities and contradictions that become evident (at the very least as technical problems) as soon as they are invested with particular themes and strategies.

The composer has many options within this discourse: to affirm or subvert the conventional significances of the paradigms, to point up or downplay contradictions that may be inherent in them. Meaning then is produced by the particular choices made within these limits — choices which (intentionally or not) articulate a specific casting of these essential problematics. It is by following the ways in which Mozart's concerto movement conforms to or resists the various strictures of his inherited models that we will be developing readings of the piece.

An Aside: On Following Musical Analyses

A word to readers who are not trained in music or who cannot read music. One of the great obstacles in introducing music into the ongoing, interdisciplinary enterprise of cultural critique is that of its specialized vocabulary and notation. Most members of a culture recognize by ear the patterns through which their music articulates meaning and know how to respond. But because they do not know how consciously to account for their responses, the effects of music remain, for the most part, cloaked in mystery —thus music's reputed "ineffability."

To begin putting words on the processes by means of which music achieves its effects seems a crucial undertaking for any critique of culture. Yet music seems impervious to common verbal assault. This is not a problem in an oral presentation in which the musical passages and details in question can be performed and thus rendered audible. But in a written account, one has the choice either of describing a piece of music impressionistically (that is, in terms that are nonspecific to a degree that would never be acceptable in the analysis of any other art form) or referring specifically (by way of notation and specialized terminology) both to the particular configurations in a given composition

and to the stylistic assumptions against which the particularities of the composition acquire significance.

The explanations that follow have been made as jargon-free as possible, however, and the descriptions are designed for readers and listeners who are not music specialists. It ought to be possible to follow the arguments after listening to a recording of the movement (though if neither score nor recording is consulted, the discussion will probably be incomprehensible).

This process may seem tedious, frustrating, or inconvenient; yet the alternative is to continue to exempt music from critical scrutiny — to let it have its way without our having the tools to question it. When the verbal going gets rough, just remember that we are trying to dismantle a highly resistant cultural barrier: one of the last toeholds of a universalist metaphysics.

Analysis

1. Synchronic Overview

In terms of its broad outlines, the movement follows unproblematically the conventions presented above. It is clearly a tonal composition — it sets out from the tonic, arrives on several other, less stable keys, and returns for closure to the tonic key area in the final third of the piece. It also maintains a strong sense of harmonic control throughout. As a piece conforming to sonata procedure, it has three principal sections (exposition, development, recapitulation), each of which is heavily demarcated thematically. And, as is typical of concerto movements, it begins with an orchestral ritornello, adds the soloist, alternates orchestra and solo, and finally reconciles the two forces at the end — simultaneously with the harmonic and thematic closure required by the other two operative paradigms. In other words, the movement satisfies all of the demands for orderly procedure raised by the various interlocking conventions Mozart engages.

It might, thus, be heard as entirely affirmative — as the presentation of pure formal order, at least as defined by the aesthetic of his day. But on closer listening, several problems arise within the narrative, problems that concern the ways in which Mozart chooses to define the tensions within this particular composition.

First, the movement is introduced and then articulated structurally

by a five-measure phrase (which I will call the "motto"). Its insistence and formal prominence force us to ask repeatedly what it is and why it is there. Because it is not related to any particular convention, these questions can only be dealt with contextually: its presence is a choice, purely a result of Mozart's strategy. Eventually, of course, it ought to be (and is) integrated with the other, more conventionally explicable, strands of the composition. How does that integration occur? What does it signify?

Second, the piano solo is strikingly different in terms of affect than the orchestral ritornello. Music commentators have called it "passionate";[16] my friend found it "romantic" and self indulgent." Yet somehow this passionate individual voice is led in the process of the movement to be reconciled with the orchestral collective. How is this reconciliation brought about and justified?

Third, the piano tends to depart radically from the keys defined by the orchestra. It finally manages to move through almost every key theoretically possible —and yet tonality and sonata procedure demand a return to the tonic key for the recapitulation. How is this conversion brought about, and how are we to understand it from the point of view of this particular composition and its priorities? What happens, in other words, when the will, the narrative of the soloist/protagonist is at odds with that of the convention?

Thus while Mozart's piece conforms at least to the letter of all external formal demands, it also poses serious problems precisely about what that conformity signifies, what it permits, and what it costs. In order to grapple with these issues, we must leave this comfortable, distanced synchronic overview and immerse ourselves in the unfolding of the piece's own narrative.

2. Narrative Unfolding

a. Orchestral Ritornello (mm. 1-29)

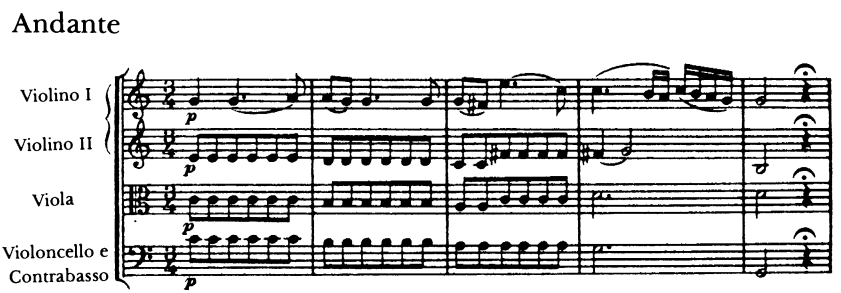
The orchestral ritornello divides, very asymmetrically, into two principal thematic parts: the opening five measures comprise the first of

16. Charles Rosen, *The Classical Style* (New York: Norton, 1971), 223. Rosen's analysis of this movement is much more formal (that is, restricted for the most part to purely musical observations) than what is being attempted here, but it is extremely insightful.

these (the "motto"), and the remaining twenty-four bars, the second. Oddly enough, the temporal imbalance between these two segments is more than compensated for by their relative weights — the motto is deceptively dense and portentous, while the rest is exceptionally light, airy, and apparently inconsequential. Moreover, the two seem to have little to do with one another. Indeed, the most important event in the ritornello — the one most in need of explanation — will turn out to be the fact of the juxtaposition of the two units.[17]

The motto [Ex. 1] sets a tone of stillness.[18] Its gestures have their

Example 1: "Motto" (Ritornello, mm. 1-5)



17. Rosen (*Classical Style*, 223-24) likewise highlights this juxtaposition.

18. Harmonically and syntactically the motto is extremely simple: a move from the tonic to the dominant triad, which is one of the most fundamental ways (even in "primitive" styles of rock music) of opening up a stable opening sonority. The bass moves by step from the one chord to the other, creating (because we all know what to expect and yet have to wait for our expectations to be confirmed) a sense of inexorability. This sense is intensified by the sixfold reiteration of each chord in the harmonic sequence: a reiteration that, because it counts the pulse, makes the time it takes to get to the goal seem very long phenomenologically. In fact, we may even feel suspended in timelessness inside each of the chords, for there is a strong sense of clock-time passing with little or no actual motion. This temporal suspension in turn heightens the significance of the chord changes when they do occur.

Some work on music and phenomenology has been done. See, for instance, Gisèle Brelet, *Esthétique et création musicale* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1947); Mikel Dufrenne, *The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience*, trans. Edward S. Casey, Albert Anderson, Willis Domingo, Leon Jacobson (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1973); Jonathan Kramer, "New Temporalities in Music," *Critical Inquiry* 7 (1981): 539-56; Rowell, *Thinking*; Victor Zuckerkandl, *Sound and Symbol* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1956).

semiotic roots in the sacred music of the Baroque, and it suggests serious, introverted contemplation — even prayer.[19] It also introduces the norm/individual dialectic by means of the tension between the inevitability of the harmonic bass and the resistances of the melodic line.[20]

19. As compelling as it may be, this passage is not a presentation of unmediated emotion or pure order. It is constructed by means of gestures and associations within the shared musical code of the time. For instance, the technique of employing a pulsating rhythm over a slowly moving harmonic pattern was common earlier in the eighteenth century, especially in pieces associated with lamentation, grief, or serious contemplation: Bach frequently used it in combination with texts with funereal or teardrop imagery. (Compare, for instance, the aria "Erbarme dich," from the *St. Matthew Passion*, the aria, "Zerfliesse mein Herze," from the *St. John Passion*, the first aria from Cantata 82, *Ich habe genug*, and the opening "Sonatina" of the funeral cantata, Cantata 106, *Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit.*) Here, in a purely instrumental composition, it still has the effect of slowing action and suggesting contemplation, perhaps even prayer — in any case a state that "transcends" the mundane and the indulgently emotional.

20. The melody presented by the violin is songlike and manages to sound almost verbally articulate. (Since the early seventeenth century, the violin has been the instrumental representative of the expressive human voice.) It begins with a pitch native to the opening harmony and then tries tentatively to move away, only to be pulled back down to its original pitch. Yet that pitch sounds very different the second time, both because the harmony has changed underneath giving the pitch a new function and because, given the apparent attempt at moving away, the pitch now implies either a change of intent or a failure to escape the gravitational pull of that position — not simply a neutral starting point. Note that when the melodic line returns to the original pitch, it does so delicately, resignedly with a *sigh* (an extremely important sign of sensitivity in eighteenth-century musical semiotics).

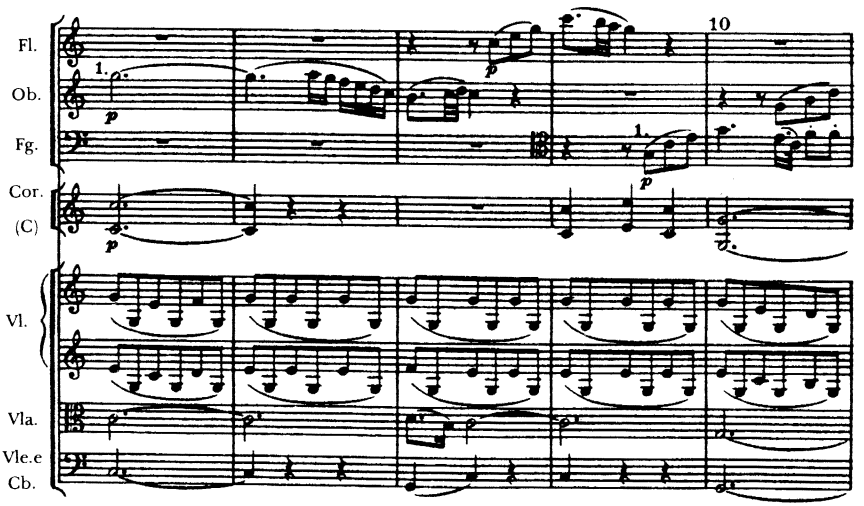
In the third measure (or third harmonic unit), this persistent pitch finds itself no longer consonant with the new harmony, and the melodic line resolves down accordingly — again with a sigh — only to escape suddenly by flinging itself up to very high, unstable pitch which it holds until forced down by the harmonic resolution, for which we have been waiting. Yet although the melody is required (by laws of good voice-leading and musical order) to resolve back down to its opening position, it does so in its own time. It holds on poignantly to a dissonance against the harmonic chord of arrival and only gradually and reluctantly returns (through a suspension that sounds like an "amen"). Indeed its reluctance causes the phrase length to be extended one measure past the paradigmatic four we expect for both external and internal reasons. (Stylistically, four measures is the normal length of classical phrases, and Mozart's chord progression too had led us to think that the harmonic arrival would be the end of the phrase — for discussions of rhythmic organization in this period, see Rosen, *Classical Style*, especially part 2; Edward Lowinsky, "On Mozart's Rhythm," *The Creative World of Mozart*, ed. Paul Henry Lang [New York: Norton, 1963], 31-55; and Leonard Ratner, "Eighteenth-Century Theories of Musical Period Structure," *The Musical Quarterly* 42 [1956]: 439-54.)

If the harmonic dimension of the motto seems inevitable and its arrival gratifying to our sense of being able to predict musical unfolding, the melody both attempts to resist this inevitability, but also (when despite all its efforts it succumbs) reinforces pre-

Formally it seems, on the one hand (partly because of the simplicity of its syntax), to convey a sense of sublime certainty and inexorability. Yet, on the other hand, it is open-ended and in need of an answer (or consequent phrase) if it is to attain closure.

After the pause that concludes the motto, we expect (because of everything we have ever experienced in music of this sort)[21] a continuation or further development of what we have heard in the first five bars —to be specific, the consequent phrase to answer the motto's question. What we get instead is musical material entirely unrelated affectively or thematically to the opening. It is as though the dilemmas posed by the enigmatic motto prove to be too much and — rather than addressing those issues — the piece simply turns into something completely different [Ex. 2].

Example 2: Ritornello (mm. 6-10)



cisely the inevitability it initially defies. Yet it does manage at least to inconvenience the inexorable march of the harmonic progression by forcing it to wait. And since the final harmony is based on the note the melody has maintained throughout, one could even make the case that the harmony has been brought around indirectly to conforming to the dictates of the melody.

21. For a theoretical account of continuation and hierarchicalization in classical music, see Leonard B. Meyer, *Explaining Music* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1973).

If the opening phrase can be characterized as votive or at least seriously contemplative, the second section is far more typically secular, extroverted, gracious. Yet for all the compensating qualities of this new material, it seems rather conventional.[22] It moves easily, to be sure, but almost without resistance and, thus, without newly produced meaning. A good deal of information is presented in this segment, yet the extravagant squandering of thematic fragments itself betrays the essential emptiness of the passage. It all serves to avoid, to distract attention from the opening five bars which continue to exert a powerful undertow throughout this very pleasant if vacuous diversion. (Incidentally, this "pleasant if vacuous" material actually sounds much more like our stereotypical "Mozart" than anything else — either the quasi-religious or the "romantic" materials — in the movement.)

At the end of this segment, a concluding phrase suddenly returns us to the weightiness of the opening. Once again, the bass pulsates with constant, time-counting beats, and the major-key orientation of the piece goes through a moment of self-doubt with the introduction of sighing, minor-mode inflections. The cadences (points of temporary closure) actually occur on the major version of the tonic triad, but this closing frame does serve to return us to the more serious vein of the motto.

b. Piano Exposition (mm. 30-64)

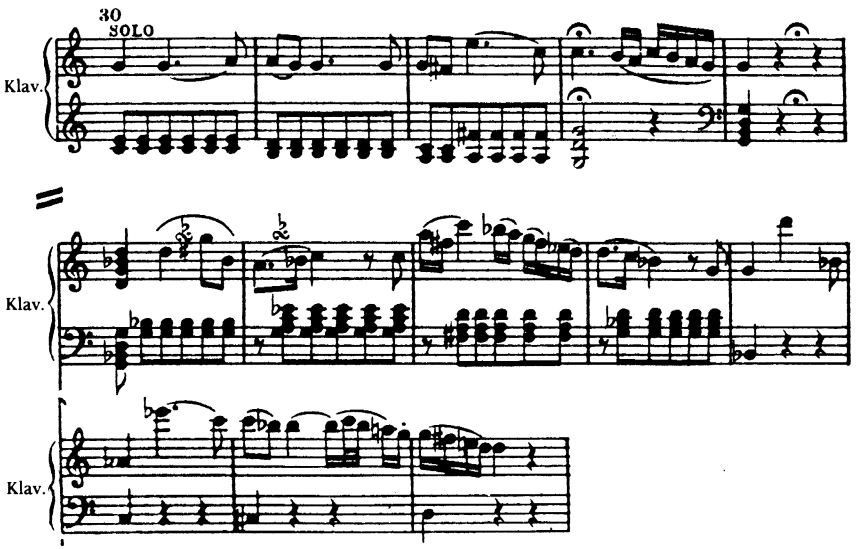
It is now the piano's turn. Our protagonist enters, reiterating the ritornello's weighty opening phrase, note for note. Once again, the motto is followed by a pause. And once again, we are given a reaction to — as opposed to an answer, consequent, or explication of — the motto.

22. The motto seems dense not only because virtually every pitch is multi-significant, but also because the pitch range is so limited — the voices are all tightly packed together — and the participants (all strings) are homogeneous in sound. The continuation opens up the range to high and low registers, the instrumentation to a heterogeneous mixture of string and wind sonorities. The rhythmic figuration likewise seems liberatory, for instead of pulling us down with time-counting pulsations into every half beat it gives the impression of leisurely, open, forward motion.

It either finds the quickest path to its implied goal (mm. 6-9), or sits complacently (mm. 10-11), or moves through predictable sequence, rendered "more significant" by means of cheaply sentimental altered notes (mm. 12-16), or plays cadential games in which forceful, authoritative chords in the strings demand tittering consequent responses in the high (read: feminine) winds (mm. 18-24).

But whereas the orchestra responded to these measures with prettiness (starting all over in the tonic key area as though nothing had happened), the piano responds by pivoting to another — minor — key and by plunging headlong in the contrary affective direction, defining itself immediately in terms of anguish or sorrow [Ex. 3]. While there is little

Example 3: Piano Entry and Continuation (mm. 30-42)



mistaking its emotional type,[23] its intention is rather more difficult to discern. Certainly it is willfully deviant, turning away as it does to reject passionately whatever was suggested either by the shared motto or by the orchestra's earlier continuation. It strikes out against the placidity offered by the group, refuses to be part of it.

One can read this passage in at least two ways. On the one hand, it

23. It takes the arrival on the dominant triad at the end of the previous phrase to be the establishment of a new key, converts it to the minor mode (associated quite firmly by this time in musical history with negative emotional states), and pronounces forthrightly, dramatically, a new melodic idea — one unprepared by the orchestral introduction. The piano's theme is not a difficult one to unpack because it plays off all the conventional signs developed in the Baroque for expressing sorrow or grief: minor key; reiterated chords in the harmony; ornamental turns that seem to twist in anguish; huge, unprepared melodic leaps (as though the melody is casting about wildly, trying desperately to escape some awful truth); sobbing motives; and chromatically altered pitches (especially the Neopolitan in m. 40).

may be heard as the individual voice, heroic in its opposition to the collective orchestral force. But on the other, it may be heard principally as flamboyant, theatrical, indulgent in its mode of self-presentation. It is perhaps to be regarded as a histrionic, exhibitionistic, romantic artist/child (which actually is how Mozart, the man, is portrayed in some of his more recent biographies).[24]

Here the piece requires us as listeners to position ourselves. There is not one clear, unambiguous message being presented, but rather a dynamic forcefield of characters and strategies. A listener who tends to identify with flamboyance or noise in the face of order will probably hear the soloist as a sympathetic protagonist. One who has gone to Mozart to hear a celebration of order may well feel offended or consternated at this "subjective" outburst. (My companion mentioned in the introduction and I clearly differ in our responses and our readings of the piece on this fundamental level.) Moreover, interpretations of the remainder of the piece's narrative will depend on the ways in which the piano's character is construed.

But regardless of one's sympathies, it remains, even in the abstract, that the piano has thrown down — with its affective opposition to the opening key and themes — a dangerous gauntlet: it has situated itself as "Other," rather than collaborator, with respect to the orchestra's narrative. This means either that the soloist will have to be brought under the control of the orchestral forces or else that the conventions of formal closure will have to be suspended. (The piece, if it were to follow the soloist's lead, would end necessarily in a different affective mode than it began.) With the former option, the identity of the individual would suffer; but with the latter, nothing less is at stake than the foundations of social order. This is the dilemma Mozart poses at this early point in the movement. There are no easy answers.

The orchestra re-enters with material already presented in the second section of the ritornello; and while in its earlier setting this sequence of slightly sentimental cadential patterns was relatively meaningless, now it seems to respond to the piano's outburst by consoling, gently coaxing the soloist back into the affirmative fold.

And return it does, with gushing elaborations of cadential confirmation in the orchestra's major mode. It transforms the signs of its for-

24. See, for instance, Wolfgang Hildesheimer, *Mozart*, trans. Marion Faber (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1982).

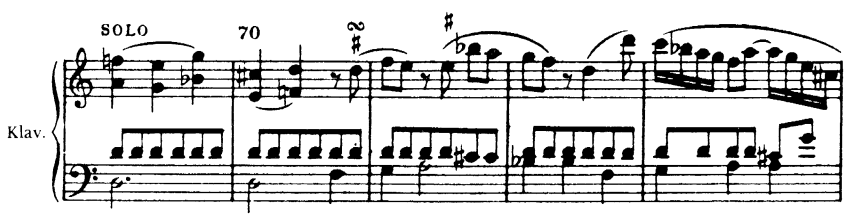
mer grief (the wide leaps, the turns, the chromatic alterations, etc.) into extravagant expressions of joy and self-satisfaction. Finally, it even converts the orchestra's rather wistful concluding theme by skipping merrily in subdivided triplets, through yearning ascending sighs (shared by the orchestra), to a triumphant cadential arrival, complete with measure-long, flag-waving trill.

To summarize, by the end of this exposition, the soloist has pulled away decisively from the orchestra, declaring its independence, but it has subsequently been re-assimilated. Its rebellion was very temporary, perhaps intended primarily for display, yet easily expunged by the group. The social group and individual now seem to present a unified front. Once again, one's positioning with respect to the characters determines whether one hears this tentative détente on the part of the soloist as rehabilitation, as selling out, or as ironic overstatement.

c. Development (mm. 64-90)

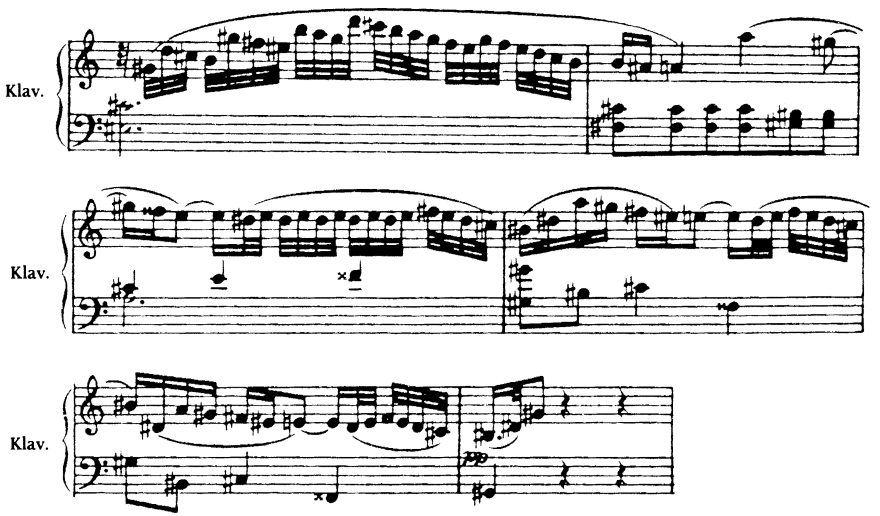
The middle section of the movement, the development, begins with yet another statement of the still-enigmatic motto, stated now in the key of the dominant in which we find ourselves. After the usual pause, the piano enters. Once again, it chooses to pivot to the minor mode and to plunge into the negative emotional side; and once again its affect is fairly easily identified through conventional semiotics. This time, however, it is less deliberately theatrical in style. It is expressive now of melancholy. Many of the same signs reappear (the throbbing, reiterated harmonies —which now seem like a dull, persistent ache— the leaps, the turns), but they all fold back on themselves. It is as though the piano is no longer concerned with public display (to say nothing of the facile escapism offered by the orchestra), but rather with genuine expressions of loss [Ex. 4].

Example 4: Development, Soloist (mm. 69-73)



The orchestra, always confident of its therapeutic capabilities, enters to try once again to console; but the piano resists with ever more insistent melodic gestures, moving farther keywise in the direction of ever greater tension. It spirals into increasingly remote (read: irrational) key areas, with the orchestra always tagging behind trying to lure it back. Finally, the piano throws the orchestra's would-be influence off altogether and lays bare its despair in twisted melodic turns, perversely altered pitches, and reiterations (in several different registers) of an utterly gloomy cadential conclusion [Ex. 5].

Example 5: Development, Soloist (mm. 81-86)



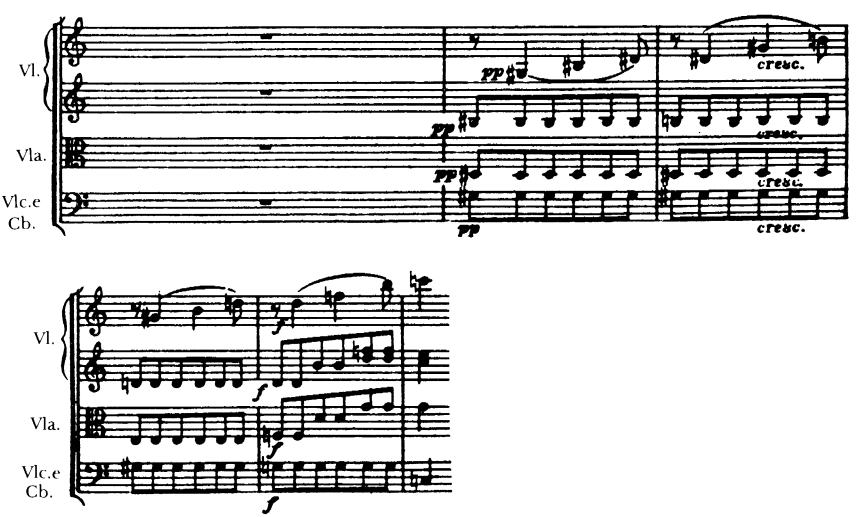
The piano finally lands on the dominant of C# minor, a G# major triad. The movement itself is in C major. While these two keys are based on pitches separated by only a half-step (the smallest increment in the tonal scale), they are functionally as far apart as is conceivable. From the point of view of tonal norms, the piano has retreated to a position of the most extreme irrationality, and normal tonal logic cannot really be marshalled to salvage it.[25]

25. Given that G# is enharmonically equivalent to A^{b} the lowered sixth-degree in the C major scale, the move could also be understood as an instance of the phenomenon discussed in detail in my "Pitches, Expression, Ideology."

Yet we are also at the moment in the composition at which the return to both the tonic key and the opening thematic materials is conventionally required. We are at a crossroads not only with regard to the defiance of the group by the soloist, but also with regard to formal demands and to the harmonic and structural syntax that lends eighteenth-century music its sense of coherence. Usually the latter part of the development section is devoted to a lengthy preparation of this return, such that when the original key and theme reappear, they seem (even to the casual listener) inevitable: the affirmations of identity demanded by the very Order of Things and by the internal necessities of the composition's own organic unfolding — in other words, *not* simply the results of extrinsic social convention or ideology or rigid formal rules.

But to get back to C major from C# minor in a tonally logical manner (that is, to make the return seem naturally inevitable) would take quite a long time. Mozart forgoes this alternative and chooses rather to cut right through the Gordian knot. In the scant interval of four measures, the orchestra seizes this remote key and forces it (through a series of sleight-of-hand harmonic puns) back to the tonic and the opening motto [Ex. 6].[26]

Example 6: Transition into Recapitulation (mm. 86-90)



26. See again Rosen, *Classical Style*, 223.

d. Recapitulation (mm. 90-135)

The return to tonic is usually the moment in a piece of this period that is most unambiguously affirmative of rational logic — the demonstration of the purposeful achievement of ultimate goals and of the maintenance of identity in the face of confrontations with other forces. The moment of recapitulation in this movement, however, raises difficult questions with regard both to the conventions of the style-period and their attendant ideologies and also to the tensions internal to this particular composition.

Concerning the conventions — while the movement does conform to the norm by returning both to the tonic and to opening thematic materials, it does so in a way that further problematizes rather than resolves. For the "inevitable" was achieved irrationally, not by means of the pure, pristine logic of conventional tonality. There are several possible readings of this abrupt return, and again, one's positioning with respect to the soloist and the narrative thus far will influence heavily one's reading of this moment.

For instance, it might appear that the collective suddenly enters and saves the day. Just at the moment at which the soloist seemed hopelessly lost in despair, the orchestra valiantly salvages the situation, returns the piece to the comfort of "rationality:" a *deus ex machina* turnaround (though if rationality is what we are celebrating, then attaining it by irrational means seems questionable at best).

It could just as easily seem (especially if one has identified with the soloist protagonist) that the organic necessities of the individual are blatantly sacrificed to the overpowering requirements of social convention. In that case, what we have here would be no diplomatic Enlightenment move in which differing points of view are rationally negotiated and reconciled to consensus. It would have to be perceived as an ends-justify-the-means strategy: the social norm comes to the fore and stamps out the deviant strain. It might be argued that the orchestra does so for the soloist's own good — that is, rescues and returns it to the security and safety of the tonic key area — but that is the kind of argument that leads to politically motivated psychiatric treatment. If eighteenth-century musical procedures purport to be based on the premise that harmony between social order and individual freedom is possible, then this version of the moment shows the authoritarian force that social convention will draw upon if confronted by recalcitrant nonconformity.

It is possible to see Mozart here as defying compositional convention in a way that will become identified with Romanticism, especially with Beethoven.[27] If structural norms effectively prevent genuinely individualistic expression, then an alternative strategy to papering over the conflict is to dramatize it. In other words, Mozart may be causing us to identify both with the "universal" qualities of these procedures *and* with the expressive imagination of the soloist, and then demonstrating that you cannot have it both ways.

The rupture in logic at this moment reveals the incompatibility of those two ideals. But, paradoxically, in the very act of demonstrating how individuality of expression is crushed by convention, Mozart is actively subverting the conventions which he seems to be bending: in order to extol conformity, he is required audaciously to violate norms of rational procedure.

It might also be argued that there is something at stake within the narrative of the piece itself that necessitiates this abrupt, under-motivated recapitulation — in defiance of the niceties of conventional harmonic logic. Put another way, the piece may not be returning simply because of external exigency, but rather in response to some need within its own logic.

Returning, then, to the particular processes of the movement: what, first of all, is this motto that seemingly will not go away? Both orchestra and soloist have tried to avoid it (the orchestra by resorting to conventional prettiness, the soloist by outbursts of anger, sorrow, grief), but it continues to reassert itself at every major juncture. It seems, thus, to stand as a unit independent of either the orchestra (as a thematic entity) or the soloist, problematic to both. The return indicates, among other things, a willingness to confront the motto (whatever it is) once again on its own home turf — the tonic key area.

The motto, as we saw earlier, is characterized through signs conventionally expressive of prayerfulness. Thus, unlike the other thematic ideas in the movement, it has specifically religious overtones. In view of this association, the repeated rejections and denials both by the orchestra (which turns to the comfort of secular pleasantries) and by the soloist (which responds with anguish, melancholy, and so on) begin to make a kind of narrative sense. What we may be witnessing here is the initial resistance to but eventual acceptance of some principle that *tran-*

27. See Adorno, "Spätstil."

scends both the social order and individual subjectivity. (We will return to the implications of this reading below.)

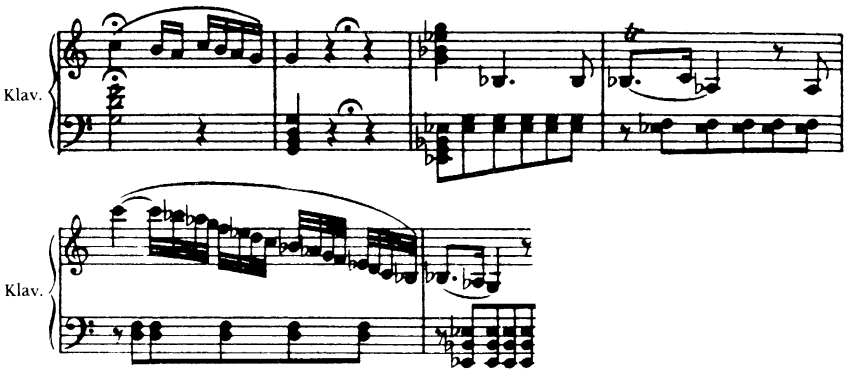
There was another dimension to the motto also that was remarked at the outset: within its tiny five-measure span, it delineates a paradigm of the slippage between conventional, syntactical expectation on the one hand and individual freedom of motion on the other. In none of its presentations has it been decidable which side is to be regarded as dominant. Each relies heavily on the other for sense, motivation, interest — they are curiously mutually dependent and yet mutually resistant. One might say that the tensions first revealed within the paradigmatic motto have been playing out narratively (with the orchestra playing the role of the harmonic progression, the piano the role of the violin melody) during the course of the movement thus far.

At the moment of recapitulation, the formerly resistant, newly converted soloist not only acquiesces to convention, it even takes the lead —embracing warmly and confidently the opening motto. The ornamental nuances it adds to the melodic line lend an air of greater certainty to what has always been somewhat tentative: it apparently concurs wholeheartedly with whatever the motto stands for and is even willing to elaborate on it. Then, after the usual pause, the piano plunges not into its previous forms of melancholy but into the most declaratively affirmative material in the entire composition.

Now if we are following the reading that suggests the soloist has been *forced* back to the tonic and the motto, then the unmotivated gusto of this statement rings uncomfortably ironic. It is as though, having been forced to deliver the party line, it will overdo it in order to call attention to its subjugation. But if we are following the opposing reading — if the moment of recapitulation represented a genuine conversion— then this may be perceived straightforwardly as a joyous outburst by the formerly depressive soloist. (The performer here as elsewhere will make an enormous difference to the way this is perceived.)

The key of the outburst (E^b Major) is once again one that is irrational with respect to the principal key of the piece, but its major-key quality and heroic affect make it seem a socially acceptable form of irrationality [Ex. 7]. The orchestra accompanies, apparently supporting — even applauding — this aberrant statement. Following its spectacular phrase ending, the piano slips back temporarily into its minor-key subjectivity, but the orchestra immediately enters as it did in the parallel moment in the exposition, consoling and leading the piano

Example 7: Recapitulation, Soloist (mm. 93-98)



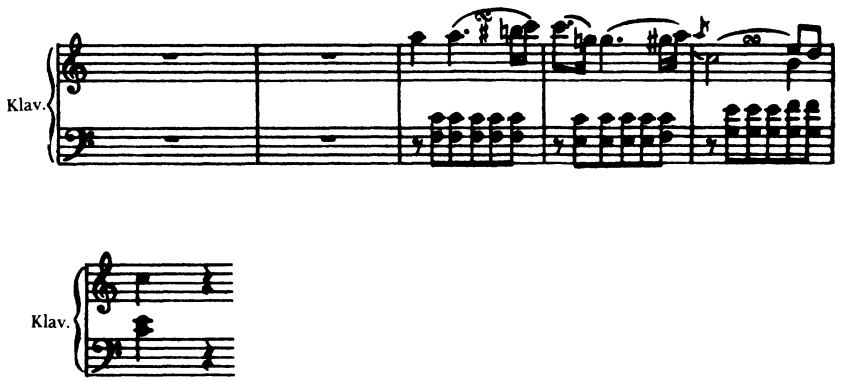
back to the straight and narrow. Magically (once again through a chain of harmonic puns), we find ourselves not distantly, irrationally removed, but still in the tonic.

From this point to the end, the soloist and orchestra perform together without tension. The piano's virtuosity is at all times at the service of the tonic key and the playing out of the narrative of the orchestra's original ritornello. In other words, the protagonist's individuality of *style* has been preserved — the piano still gets to show off with runs, skips, and ornaments — but its penchant for self-indulgent depression and subjectivity and its attempt at narrative subversion have been "cured." Even the solo cadenza is (as the convention demands) firmly harnessed to the harmonic confirmation of the principal key: that is, it is permitted to do whatever it likes, provided that it leads back (inevitably) to the stable tonic.

The conversion of the soloist is so secure by this point that the two forces — soloist and orchestra — actually trade off characteristic roles toward the end. The final orchestral statement of the opening motto becomes chromatically inflected, as though infused with doubt (previously the soloist's prerogative); but the soloist enters with an altered presentation of the motto that finally delivers the long-awaited consequent phrase in answer to its repeated question [Ex. 8].

By stating the motto on a different pitch-level (the subdominant), the piano is able to bring both melody and harmonic progression down powerfully, logically, poignantly (through a progression associated conventionally with "amen") to the tonic. Definitive closure and

Example 8: Code, Soloist answers "Motto" (mm. 127-30)



full acceptance of faith are thus achieved with the soloist in the lead. Finally, with the acceptance of the discipline of the motto, the divisiveness between the group and the individual has been overcome. And, indeed, the motto itself is brought to a state of completeness only when its appeal is answered. The tension between the desires of the syntactical convention and the actual melody (which has been a constant element in the motto from the outset) is finally resolved, simultaneously with the resolution of soloist and group. The subsequent codetta material (always slightly tinged with wistfulness, even in the opening ritornello) is rendered upbeat by mirthful ascending scales and an almost childlike cadential passage in the domesticated piano.

This finally, then, is a world that contains transcendental ideals, social order, and subjective alienation. A world that professes equal dedication to individual freedom and social harmony, that demands originality of expression and yet the unvarying affirmation of a pre-determined bottom line. A world in which all these elements, these contradictions appear to be reconciled through effortless, rational means — a Utopia.

Discussion

Now, what are we to make of all this? To the casual listener, this movement of Mozart's may seem to fall in line with all the other presentations of perfect order we hear (or want to hear) in eighteenth-century music. There do seem to be genuine (if tastefully subdued) conflicts in

the movement — enough, anyway, to hold our interest and to give the impression of imaginative freedom — yet they all are finally resolved, the soloist and group amiably reconciled. But to the less casual listener (and here I include my friend, who knew that this piece did not fit his preconception of Mozart), the strains are much more disturbing than the apparent conversion of the soloist and the pat ending can eradicate. One can either say of the soloist's extravagances (as he did), "*That* isn't Mozart," or else perhaps identify that deviant voice as truly representing *Mozart* embedded within a complex of conventional "Mozart."

If we accept that the movement articulates a society/individual problematic (which, as we have seen, virtually all music of this time does), then what exactly is the nature of this model? How do we define the tensions, the reconciliation, the closure? What is the plot, and what does it imply?

On the most basic level, the soloist and group move from positions of quite radical disagreement to reconciliation and consensus. Elements of the identity of each are preserved — but while the group has its way with the key and basic thematic material, the soloist manages to maintain only its virtuosic, flamboyant style of rhetorical delivery.

Whether we regard this ending as a happy one or not depends in large part on the leanings of the listener. To those who value social order and find subjective expressivity self-indulgent, the winning over of the soloist to the harmonious, positive world of the orchestra is a triumph — another heart-warming rescue brought to you by the Powers of Enlightenment. But to those who identify with the free agency of the individual voice up against a repressive social order, the harmonious closure at the end (at the expense of the soloist surrendering thematic and key identity, accepting decorative style as its sole identifying feature) must seem bitter — all the more so in that it is presented as inevitable. Ultimately, it is probably both: we are perhaps both relieved at the achievement of reconciliation (the alternative is, it seems, madness) and, at the same time, saddened — even horrified — at the compromise it required.

As we saw above, most of the conventions within which Mozart is operating are designed to enact a dialectic between order and noise, but it is a dialectic the outcome of which is known before the piece begins. Closure *will* occur, the first theme of its key area *will* engulf and assimilate all others to its identity, the group and soloist *will* be recon-

ciled (to the favor of the group), and so on. Whatever tensions arise can be (*and must be*) resolved, such that perfect harmony and formal balance will have been achieved.

A lovely message, to be sure. But what if you do not quite believe it? Or what if you find yourself continually in the marginalized position — the second-theme slot — with respect to this predetermined formula, as the willful individual always being forced to conform to the demands of a dominant group? Once again, a great deal depends on positioning.

The person we have not been consulting thus far in trying to decide among possible readings is Mozart himself. This is in part because, of course, he is not consultable. He has left only this text...

Even if he were consultable, it is not clear that he would care to enter into the theoretical discussion here underway in order to cast the determining ballot. Most composers try to avoid verbal explanations of what they have wrought —partly because words fall so far short and are so distortive of what they have constructed so precisely through pitches and rhythms, and partly because they prefer to strike a balance between revealing their hand (carefully articulating their narratives through shared conventions) and concealing it (claiming all the while to be playing only with notes). Yet he did leave us this text...

As the forger of the narrative, where would he seem to fit in? With which of the several dynamic forces in the piece (*all of his invention*) is he likely to identify and sympathize? What is the authorial point of view, which is his voice?[28]

Given that Mozart usually played the piano solos in his concertos himself,[29] and given that the other elements in the piece (structural and thematic) tend to stand for the conventional, it would seem that the rebellious piano and its adventure occupy center stage. We may be thus inclined to identify Mozart with the noisy aspects of the piece, rather than with those that represent "Mozartian" order — the order that repeatedly subdues and finally bends the piano to its will.

28. See Edward Cone, *The Composer's Voice* (Berkeley: Univ. of California, 1974). I do not want to be making the case here that Mozart owns the meaning of his piece or that in order to interpret one must have access to what he intended, consciously or unconsciously. But insofar as this narrative was constructed by a particular individual for whom it "made sense," additional information concerning that individual and his position with respect to society is relevant.

29. This one happens to have been written for and premiered by Barbara Ployer.

For it does seem that the piano was an unlikely participant in the celebration of its own submission. The happy ending, the requisite closure, was attained at too high a cost: the lobotomy at the moment of recapitulation. To be sure, the valued quality of inevitability is present here — but in the literal sense of "unavoidable:" regardless of how hard the soloist protested and tried to escape this conventionally predetermined fate, its struggles were futile. This is hardly the sense of "inevitable" we think we are celebrating when we valorize eighteenth-century music, but perhaps this iron fist is always hiding within the velvet glove.

This image conjures up *Don Giovanni*, in which Mozart poses a different ending to the problematic posed in the concerto. In the opera, the social rebel refuses — even in the face of death and hell itself — to conform to convention. Convention finally wills his destruction (and also the insipid "happy ending" celebration that follows so anticlimactically), but it is a rare listener who feels comfortable with that conclusion. Too much of our sympathy has been expended on the Don and too little on the representatives of normalcy to permit us to rejoice. It is not contrary to what we know of Mozart's character to imagine him identifying with the side of "disorder."

By contrast, the rebel in the concerto is converted. In the "Coronation Scene" of *Boris Gudonov*, Mussorgsky presents to us both the affirmative singing of the crowd and the coercion that brought it about. Mozart seems to offer here something of the same story: the subduing of the individual voice, the silencing of opposition, and forced lip service to oppressive convention.

But Mozart's version is more subtle: it is articulated wordlessly through pitches alone. It *had* to be more subtle. Recall that Mozart never successfully separated himself from the strictures of aristocratic patronage. He both depended on the monies he received from providing the music for genteel entertainments and resented deeply his appropriation to those ends. If he played the tunes they called and paid for, he frequently seems to have enclosed a barb in the process that can (if one discerns it) undercut the surface message. Even as it is, this movement stands discreetly sandwiched in between two extremely affirmative movements — the Papageno-style variations that follow this quickly blot out the memory of this rather more somber, disturbing interlude.

Mozart is speaking to us from *inside* the Enlightenment, from which

vantage point its contradictions are all too real. He is enacting the unsolvable dilemmas and paradoxes within an ideology that champions both social harmony and individual freedom. He harnesses both our tendency to identify with the soloist in a concerto and with our desire for closure and reconciliation in order to pull the dilemma deep down inside the listener. (My friend, it seems, was an excellent listener. He just did not want to believe his ears.)

One last element remains to be considered. What are we to make of the quasi-religious motto and the strategy by means of which Mozart interweaves this with his drama of society/individual? I have already suggested that the motto represents a kind of spiritual challenge that is resisted both by the group (which moves away in the direction of comparatively trivial, secular niceties) and by the soloist (which responds with theatrical, perhaps self-indulgent expressions of anguish and melancholy), but that eventually serves as a catalyst for reconciliation between the group and the soloist. A sacred/secular reading of the motto strategy would account for the sudden, irrational conversion of the soloist at the point of recapitulation: the soloist "sees the light," as it were, and takes the leap of faith necessary to return from its C# minor depression to C-major serenity. Interestingly, it is the *individual* (not the group) that utters the full acceptance of faith, that is able to follow the implications of the motto so as to render, in the final measures of the movement, its consequent that gives closure to its perennially open-ended challenge. The group in this instance follows, is shown the way to transcendence by the individual, by the self-indulgent artist.

But what kind of statement is this for a composition of the Enlightenment: that reconciliation and harmony are ultimately to be found in submission to religion?[30] One might well argue that the motto need not represent actual religion but rather any kind of transcendental principle — even, perhaps, the new secular-based metaphysics of the time which prominently included art. Yet, revealingly, the shapes are the same. The individual and social norms are required to submit to some higher order (and here is the irony) for the purpose of satisfying the necessities of tonality and sonata procedure, both of which conventionally stand for the quite specifically secular and bourgeois principles of the rational achievement of goals through purposeful striving.

30. We do, however, know that Mozart was Catholic and that he despised Voltaire's atheism.

In other words, there was no utopian Garden of Eden in the eighteenth century, which is where we wish usually to locate it. Hidden there in our would-be Paradise of "absolute music" lurk the serpents of dissent, coercion, and even what appears to be a kind of closet theology. In the words of David Byrne, "Same as it ever was..."[31] And this really ought not to seem that surprising. The work that has been done on literary and philosophical texts of the eighteenth century have likewise arrived at this conclusion and have dismantled the illusion of a prelapsarian moment of truth.[32] Why should music — the music of Mozart — be any different?

It seems clear that even in the works of Mozart, on whom so many of us have pinned our hopes and aspirations, the models that seem to offer the possibility of perfect reconciliation are fraught with rupture and contradictions. Mozart's is the last moment before the illusion breaks open publicly; but the faultlines within the models are already quite evident, their centrifugal forces contained only very tenuously.

Our Mozart

The Mozart I have been describing is not the one beloved by the fans of *Mostly Mozart* concerts. Nor should we feel compelled to turn in the "Mostly-Mozart" Mozart automatically for one perhaps more historically accurate, for our cultural priorities and definitions are radically different than the ones that obtained during Mozart's life. Indeed there exists today not just one, but a plurality of Mozarts, each playing a role within a differently construed cultural game, each satisfying some cluster of cultural needs. Thus I am not especially interested in attempting (futilely) to impose a historically reconstituted Mozart forceably on the listening public, to imply that it is either *this* Mozart — resituated within his context — or none at all.

My motivation for undertaking the above analysis of the Mozart movement, however, is not simply historical curiosity (though that does play a part). Rather, it is because other modes of reception can be most effectively contrasted and critiqued up against such a reconstruction.

31. The Talking Heads, "Once in a Lifetime," *Remain in Light* (Sire Records, 1980).

32. See, for instance, Derrida on Rousseau in *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri C. Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1976), 97-268.

It would seem to be a commonplace of culture that, as the priorities and values of a society change, the artifacts produced by previous generations either are supplanted or undergo quite thorough transformations in meaning. The reasons for keeping a piece in the collective cultural baggage are invariably different from the ones that motivated its composition. Thus to examine critically subsequent rereadings — or even what we might regard as misreadings — is not necessarily to castigate. It is, rather, to attempt to uncover the problematics, the new priorities of the successive groups who choose to retain (and, necessarily, to redefine) the baggage.

Surprisingly to us, perhaps, Mozart's music was perceived by many of his contemporaries and immediate successors as "romantic." Indeed, E.T.A. Hoffmann, one of the leading proponents of German Romanticism, regarded Mozart as one of his models: he claimed to be trying to achieve in words the quality of the Romantic spirit that Mozart achieved in music.[33] It was to the rebel in Mozart that Hoffmann responded, the rebel whose dialectic we can observe operating in the concerto movement or in *Don Giovanni*.

But Mozart's image as an ethereal, not-quite-human figure also dates from the 19th century. His life story was popularly re-fashioned in order to make his short career, tragic death, and mysterious burial fit models borrowed from hagiography. Tchaikovsky called him "that Christ of music," and few who have come after have questioned the rightness of that designation.

Tchaikovsky's Mozart was born of the widespread nostalgia of his time that longed to attribute perfection and stability to the late eighteenth century: that time before the political disruptions of revolutions, before the widespread flaunting of convention by iconoclastic, independent artists. It required a systematic reinterpretation of Mozart's life and music —a rereading that converted every sign of noise into another instance of pure order. Yet this image of Mozart was one that satisfied a deep need for order in that period. Compared with the severe ideological upheavals that nineteenth-century society and art had experienced, Mozart's music (which at least did invariably deliver closure and the semblance of rationality) seemed an island of repose. The terms of the cultural dialectic shifted, and so did Mozart's position

33. See his "Don Juan," *Kunstnovellen* and "Beethovens Instrumentalmusik," *Kreisleriana*.

within it. The rebel became the standard of order.

Today the most common way of understanding Mozart is still to hear his music as a manifestation of pure, perfect order. This is true for the most part even for professional musicians, both performers (who tend to offer up polished, seamless surfaces in their renditions of Mozart's music) and theoreticians (who devote their efforts to distilling the laws of that *assumed* perfect order).[34]

What purpose do these "pure order" interpretations serve today? If my readings earlier of the concerto movement have any validity, this piece itself calls into question such automatic assumptions of perfect syntactical and formal order. And to impose a reading of "pure order" onto it is not just to reduce out its specific content but effectively to invert it: what began life as a critique becomes a flat affirmation of precisely that which it tried to rupture. What would hinder us as a culture from throwing the nineteenth-century Mozart out in exchange for the new, reconstituted model?

Mozart's music (when construed as pure order, as "the way music is supposed to go") permits us to experience something we have come to regard and treasure as absolute certainty. In the Middle Ages, the need to believe in a realm that transcended human construction was satisfied by religion. By the eighteenth century, the previously theological underpinnings of culture had been largely replaced by a secular, humanistic foundation; yet the need to ground fundamental assumptions on something that we did not appear to have made up ourselves — something permanent and stable — remained intact. The nineteenth century "transcendentalization" of the arts served in part to fill that void left vacant by the expulsion of religion from intellectual culture.[35]

Music of the late eighteenth century, moreover, satisfied that need perhaps than any other of the arts. This is true especially of instrumental genres, which — because they bear no verbal or visible traces of their

34. Formalist theories prevail in the discipline of Music Theory, and criticism or studies that concern themselves with the articulation of meaning are extremely rare. For a historical account of this state of affairs, see Joseph Kerman, *Contemplating Music* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1985).

35. See Jacques Barzun, *The Use and Abuse of Art* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1974). See also Peter Kivy, "Mozart and Monotheism: An Essay in Spurious Aesthetics," *Journal of Musicology* 2 (1983): 322-28 for a discussion of how a letter spuriously attributed to Mozart in the nineteenth century sought to ascribe God-like properties to Mozart's creative processes.

time or place of origin — seem to map directly the pure, unfabricated essence of thought and emotional life. In addition, this music appears to be nonrepresentational, at least as representation is usually construed. Unlike literature or the visual arts or even texted music, instrumental music seems to be generated from its own self-contained, abstract principles. Clearly, it is much easier to demonstrate the content (both literal and ideological) of stories, pictures, and libretti than of patterns of tones, for which most people have no verbal vocabulary. Since most listeners do not know how intellectually to account for their responses to music, they tend to understand it as communicating in an entirely unmediated fashion. Many guard jealously that mystified notion of music, precisely because it permits that experiencing of what is taken to be a higher order of being than the corrupt socio/political world in which they live. To drag music back inside that world, then, is to destroy that refuge, that last illusion of metaphysical certainty.

Why Mozart's music above all? Well, pieces of earlier music were either tied expressly to texts or (in the case of Bach,[36] for instance) to actual religion or else were too brief, too obviously tied to the social functions (such as dance) to qualify as representations of secular universal order. And later music, beginning with Beethoven, is so powerfully marked with violent rupture that the rebellious human force behind it is always evident — even rhetorically celebrated. Mozart represents that moment in the history of Western music in which the means existed for creating complex non-texted compositions, but before the systematic attack was undertaken on the conventions that made the illusion of pure order possible.

We have chosen to freeze that particular moment culturally also because its conventions of tonality and sonata procedure tell the stories we as a society still want to hear — stories in which effort is always rewarded with achievement of ultimate goals, in which foreign territories and characters are absorbed (of necessity) into the protagonist's identity, in which all conflicts reach closure, in which individuality and social harmony are reconcilable — these are the stories of the High Bour-

36. For a similar discussion of Bach's music in both its original ideological context and in a succession of moments of reception, see my "The Blasphemy of Talking Politics during Bach Year," in *Music and Society: The Politics of Composition, Performance, and Reception*, eds. Richard Leppert and myself (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, forthcoming).

geoisie. We get to experience those stories while denying we made them up. They count not as constructs but as the way things are supposed to go.

We listen to Mozart in order to experience utopia: a specifically Bourgeois utopia. We want to believe in a time and place in which it all made perfect sense — before the contradictions and tensions (which continually plague our ability to realize our ideals) set in. And we project that magical time and place onto Mozart's music. To get inside Mozart's piece dialectically, therefore, is to have to acknowledge that there never was such a moment, that the contradictions and tensions have always been there.

Thus one principal reason for re-examining Mozart's piece in terms of its own discourse is to begin dislodging this metaphysical apparatus that has become attached to it. But not simply for the sake of ripping away an innocuous security blanket (I do not really care if people want to believe in Santa Claus on their own time), but because "transcendentalized" Mozart plays a very important political role in today's cultural dialogue.

The Mozart of "pure order" currently serves as an icon of the old cultural order for purposes of warding off — or at least institutionally marginalizing — the increasingly successful encroachments of new, previously disenfranchised producers (ethnic minorities, members of the working class, women) and forms of culture. "Mozart" is now a term in a metadiscourse. His repertory *as a whole* occupies a semiotic position within a pluralistic struggle concerned with the hierarchicalization of competing claims to cultural hegemony. In the context of such a struggle, it makes sense to erase internal dialectics or traces of violence, such that the repertory as a whole can stand as a solid front of "Order" to oppose "Others." For so long as the claim of "pure order" in classical music is honored, all other competing musics (and their champions) must be understood, under the terms of that standard, as deficient and unworthy of official support.

To acknowledge Mozart's music itself, then, as the product of another struggle over cultural meaning — a struggle that left its imprint on, that is enacted in the very musical processes themselves — is to place it on the same methodological footing as other repertories: all would have to be defined as products of particular social discourses, grounded in the priorities of the groups that create, perserve, and transmit them.

That is why the kind of dialectical reading performed above of Mozart's concerto movement would tend to be resisted. But that is also why it is finally necessary. To continue privileging this single repertory is to sacrifice its competitors to the interests of an institutionally dominant group.

Conclusion: Recycling Mozart

Whenever any received meaning is destabilized, its status within the cultural baggage has to be renegotiated. If Mozart's music no longer gets to count as pure, perfect order, what function(s) is it to serve? What does one do with a purely human Mozart?

First, once Mozart is demystified it becomes possible to assess his compositions in terms of the problematics of his own time and to introduce his music into the on-going interdiscipliary critique of eighteenth-century culture. To be sure, recontextualizing requires us to alienate him temporarily, to suspend habits of hearing him as timeless and universal, and to situate him firmly in late eighteenth-century Vienna within a musical code in terms of which his choices signified. But if he loses universality, he gains — *meaning*. His music becomes a useful historical resource for rediscovering (even, in a sense, for experiencing) the issues of his time. By means of the special capabilities of music, Mozart was able to produce a range of complex models and imaginary projections of how the contradictory impulses, norms, and ideals of that society were perceived and negotiated. His compositions become invaluable documents that grant us access to aspects of our cultural and ideological heritage available through no other medium. And they become more interesting — even as works of art — when we are able to restore signification to their compositional choices, rather than regarding them quite simply as objects exemplifying perfect order. Surely one of the reasons we prefer Mozart to his less imaginative, more normative contemporaries is because of his noise factor: he is able to make irregularities, deviations, and interruptions of expected patterns seem more idiosyncratic and yet, at the same time, the way things *really* ought to be. Thus to suppress precisely this dimension — the source of his greater value — seems bizarre.

Second, with the notion of a timeless, static Mozart discarded, it becomes possible to take seriously for purposes of cultural critique the various presentday modes of Mozart-reception. To the extent that

many in our society wish to identify with Mozart's music, he is still an active part of our culture — even though these contemporary Mozarts (the Mozarts of *Mostly Mozart* concerts and of *Amadeus*) mean something quite different from "Mozart's Mozart." And this widespread identification with Mozart's music can give us certain clues concerning the values of certain segments of society and their relationships to culture, especially if we can separate out what that music means to them — as opposed to what it means variously to the eighteenth century, to music professionals, to humanities scholars.

Last summer I attended a snooty "Arts Fair," in which crafts, ice cream, balloons, and live music were all being peddled simultaneously. Suddenly, during a lull between the blue-grass group and the flute choir, I heard booming out over the public address system the terrifying opening strains of Mozart's *Requiem*. Plugged in as I am to an anachronistic semiotics, I found myself unable to continue munching happily on my popcorn with the sound of the Last Judgment thundering at me from all sides. But everyone I asked replied: "Oh, that's the soundtrack from *Amadeus*. Don't you recognize it?"

Now this is, in fact, predictable, given current networks of cultural distribution and electronic reproduction. There is nothing in this mode of consumption inherently good (a triumph of music education) or bad (the degradation and reification of Great Art). But it is a very important cultural phenomenon, worthy in itself of further study for what it can tell us about our own times. Such an examination of reception modes requires, however, at the very least, that the object whose reception is being studied already be demystified, socially grounded. The kind of analysis of the concerto movement offered above provides a backdrop for studies of this sort, in that it destabilizes the image of Mozart as a pure, static, and consecrated entity. It frees us to consider meanings that attach to that repertory however and wherever they may appear.

Third, if the interpretation of Mozart's music became a generally accepted activity, much livelier and better thought-out performances could result. In a context in which pieces of music are supposed to represent "pure order," performances all sound very similar, for the only legitimate performance is one that plays the dots on the page as precisely as possible. I have proposed in the analysis above several different ways of construing those dots, each of them creating a particular set of tensions among characters, each casting a new light on the narra-

tive. Those readings can be translated into sound (through coloring, pacing, inflection) such that they are perceptible to listeners by means of the sound itself. The performance to which I referred in the introduction was clearly a strong interpretation of the piece. It made choices, it took risks (for most audiences are outraged these days by such non-purist readings), and *it made sense* — emotional and intellectual sense. An "uninterpreted" reading of a Shakespeare play is unacceptable today and so should a straight rendition of Mozart's notation.

Fourth, Mozart's music, when resituated in its social context, can provide a model for today's artists of how to compose both within and against a powerful set of norms. Many of our century's "serious" composers have abandoned the use of musical norms and have cast their lot with extreme individuality at the expense of incomprehensibility. Yet they long nostalgically, enviously, for what they quite erroneously take to have been Mozart's situation: a time in which it was possible to write pure music and yet be understood universally.

As we have seen, however, Mozart's "universality" is owing in large part to his willingness to write within a language circumscribed by convention, against which his slightest deviation registers as significant. To demystify Mozart, to understand him as operating within a social discourse, puts him in a different position: he no longer appears as that ineffable vessel of God, that purveyor of pure order, or that formidable father-figure, but rather a composer making choices — *socially significant* choices. Such a reorientation is not guaranteed to relieve altogether the Anxiety of Influence, but it ought to make for a healthier attitude toward musical production than the current one, so informed by the canon. Mozart still may be one of the most talented individuals ever to put pen to staffpaper, but he was, in the final analysis, a human being making compositional decisions within a socially defined context.

Doesn't Beauty (that ineffable supplement that justifies the cultural imperialism of music appreciation classes) enter into this discussion? Well, if we are to understand aesthetics as somehow transcending the social, then — no. Something is beautiful to one to the extent that it mirrors one's values, one's understanding of the world: the same work that I admire may be (and ought to be) loathsome to someone who finds him/herself marginalized or objectified in it. To expect a woman, for instance, to find the portrayals of the Queen of the Night and

her co-opted daughter "beautiful" or a black to be able to bracket the racism in *Magic Flute* in the interest of "appreciation" is to ask them to identify against themselves, to participate in the celebration of their own demise.[37] Beauty can be appealed to, but not in any kind of absolute, extracontextual fashion. The judgment of beauty always falls back into the broader argument concerning fundamental social values.

The question then is not whether I personally find Mozart's music beautiful or not. (I have to restrain myself from weeping every time the piano in this concerto movement answers and completes the motto, both because of the glory of that illusion of certainty and because I know what that "certainty" cost.) Rather, it becomes *why* (up against what habits, what beliefs, what preconditioning) I respond as I do. And, furthermore, *if* (with full knowledge of the implications of the music) I should continue — and under what conditions — to respond to and to transmit evangelically its seductive beauty. Not even Mozart is to be exempted from continual critical examination and re-assessment.

This does not suggest, however, that his music is to be censored. Indeed, it is precisely those cultural artifacts that have been thus canonized that need the most intensive examination, for their very canonization indicates that they resonate with beliefs society holds most dear. We can (and ought to) appreciate Mozart's accomplishment, but we must not continue to obscure what it articulates. If justifications for expansionism, suppression of women, the Bourgeois work ethic all inform and are transmitted through this music we used to regard as supremely autonomous, then these need to be duly noted in public dialogue.

One of the most effective ways of responding to classical music today is being practiced by some of the composers referred to as "Postmodernists," such as Philip Glass and Brian Eno. In contrast to many composers earlier in the century who studiously avoided inherited conventions, the Postmodernists have developed a new way of dealing with the canonized materials of past (though omnipresent) culture: to take up its patterns, to offer enough of the patterning to elicit

37. One of the few works to initiate a feminist critique of classical music is Catherine Clément, *L'opéra ou la défaite des femmes* (Paris: Editions Grasset & Fasquelle, 1979). See especially pages 138-49 on *The Magic Flute*. See also my "Mozart's Women," *Hurricane Alice* 3 (1986): 1-4; to be reprinted in *border/lines*.

the Pavlovian perception of "pure order," and then repeatedly to introduce rupture into those patterns.[38]

These new composers, then, appropriate the stuff of classical music, take it onto their own ground, and convert its patterns into shapes at once both familiar and alien for their own ends. Such strategies cause the classical gestures to be perceived as constructs — as shapes made up by human beings that are not exempted from critique or renegotiation, as raw materials available for the production of new meaning. Ironically, perhaps, such jostling and recycling do not so much damage those fragile shells we have been passing along so reverently as to infuse them with new life. They even cause us to hear performances of the earlier music with different, more attentive ears. And because this critique is enacted within a musical practice, it stands to be far more effective than the kind of debate that occurs in the academic margins of the cultural struggle.

For what these composers are doing is actively setting up a new dialectic, a dialectic in which the earlier terms of "High" and "Popular" art are collapsed and in which codes, expectations, and procedures within pieces themselves once again become resources for the articulation of new, socially encoded meaning. And some of their iconoclastic, rupturing strategies sound oddly familiar. We have heard them before (if we have been listening) in Mozart himself.[39]

38. For instance, Philip Glass, in *The Photographer*, continually creates phrases and sequences that imply imminent, climactic closure — only to loop back at the last moment in order to repeat the cycle again. The first time through one of these sequences, one follows quite directly through the expectations of classical concert music, up until the moment of deception. From the moment of the first deception onward, listeners can choose either to distance themselves and realize how very programmed they are to respond to the ineffable, "pure music" manipulation of that age-old construct or else to cut through the continual desire for closure to the appreciation of the moment for what it is.

Brian Eno's *Three Variations on the Canon in D Major by Johann Pachelbel* (on *Discreet Music*, JEM Records, 1975) takes the compulsively teleological little canon we all know, and puts it through a kind of meltdown. All the parts are still recognizably there, but because they are moving at different rates toward their various goals, they all blur together. The canon is cut free from its work ethic and, once again, one realizes what one's usual reactions to classical procedures normally signify, and one also experiences in contrast to that a different sense of time flow.

39. My thanks to Richard Leppert, John Mowitt, Thomas Nelson, Thomas Russell, Gregory Sandow, Rose Rosengard Subotnik, and Robert Walser, all of whom read drafts of this paper and made invaluable suggestions for its improvement. Special thanks to Michael Root.