

The Aesthetic Exploration and Ideological Implication of Mozart's "Jupiter" Symphony

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Abstract. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791), one of the greatest Austrian musicians who was undisputedly considered as the supramundane genius in the history of Western classical music. Mozart's symphony No. 41 "Jupiter" is his last symphony. This article elaborates that "Jupiter" symphony not only has innovation and superior consciousness, but also has cosmological characteristics through example illustrations and analysis of application of counterpoint or polyphonic writing in the last movement of "Jupiter" symphony. Its composition technique that pursues symmetrical sequence is close to Boethius's definition of Musica Mundana that it contains numeral, the order, and the supreme harmony of the heaven.

Keywords: Mozart, "Jupiter" Symphony, Counterpoint, Bach, Haydn Family, Cosmology.

1. Introduction

As European classical music evolved into the Classical period, a talented and unique composer who can sum up experiences from predecessors and be a pioneer and innovator for music development into the upcoming Romantic period is paramount, this composer is Mozart. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791), one of the greatest Austrian musicians, is regarded by many as the only supramundane power of intellect in long Western music history. He left a great deal of compositions to the world in his short life. He is one of the most representative composers of the Classical period. Mozart was born in Salzburg of the Holy Roman Empire in 1756, and he showed extraordinary talent of music in his childhood. Mozart laid a solid foundation of performance and musical composition through careful and strict music enlightenment education of his father Leopold Mozart since his childhood. When Mozart was 6 in 1762, he followed his father and his sister on the tour of Europe. For the next decade, little Mozart following his father and his sister performed at predominant European courts and in capitals of European countries, the courts were amazed at the little genius at that time. Meanwhile, Mozart largely and rapidly absorbed wonderful acoustics and advanced composition techniques from maestros at that time by his outstanding memory and good sense of perception. He had already accomplished a considerable number of music works at that period and it is Mozart's initial stage of his music composition. For almost a decade from 1772 to 1781 in Mozart's second stage of music composition, Mozart's extensive experience of creation and his life experience supported his confidence and hope to his capability and future. In the 1780s, Austria was under the influence of the Enlightenment from France and Germany, the intellectual class of Austrian society widely accepted the idea that human value should be based on talent and morality rather than origin or family background. (Yu, 2003) Mozart was naturally impacted by the idea. Because Mozart was insulted by the bishop Hieronymus von Colloredo at that time, he broke with the bishop against his father's advice and resolutely left Salzburg, then, he started his free period of music composition in Vienna. Persisting in freedom and independence of music creation is Mozart's shift of thought, which was the beginning of forming his cosmology and laid a foundation of innovation and advancement in his composition. Mozart's last ten years is considered as his glorious period, because most of his great works were accomplished in Vienna. He is considered in the Viennese classical school with Haydn and Beethoven. Although Haydn and Beethoven were contemporaneous people with Mozart, they differ from each other, folk music is the symbol of Haydn's music; Beethoven's music reflects struggle and victory; Mozart's music emphasizes more on emotion and spirit. Robert Schumann even once said that Mozart's music could not be described by words. Thus, Mozart is music. Mozart composed more

than 600 music works in his 35 years, which contain 41 symphonies, these symphonies run through his entire music career, among these symphonies, “Haffner” symphony K.385, “Linz” symphony K.425, “Prague” symphony K.504, and his last three symphonies including symphony No. 39 K.543, symphony No. 40 K.550, and “Jupiter” symphony K.551 accomplished from June to August of 1788, they are most valued by people and still predominant for today’s concert. (Yu, 2003) “Jupiter” symphony is on a grand scale, which is also magnificent and splendid. Mozart sufficiently indicated the infinite charm of homophony and polyphony in “Jupiter” symphony, flexible application of fugue by Mozart makes the symphony stand out and has become the most famed one among all his last three symphonies, his last three symphonies, which established Mozart’s significant position as a composer of symphony, Mozart’s symphony No. 41 is still considered as the apex among his last 3 symphonies. Later, the impresario Johann Peter Salomon nicknamed Mozart’s symphony No. 41 as “Jupiter”. “Jupiter” is name of the god of sky in ancient Roman religion, based on a description in a book *Classical Music: The Era of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven*, the last one of the trilogies of Mozartian late symphony was appropriately named “Jupiter” with reference to the god who uses wind, rain, and lightning as weapons; thus, the symphony also possesses extraordinary power and dominant momentum, which has become one of the greatest symphonies in Western classical music. (Downs, 1992) The unified style of symphony is strengthened in compositional form of “Jupiter” symphony, which also makes stronger musical contrast between movements and various themes of each movement; on the content, the symphony possesses strongly dramatic feature, these are crucial elements of Mozart’s cosmology in “Jupiter” symphony.

2. Integration and Inheritance

The reason why Mozart’s “Jupiter” symphony can be deified is that the composer did not repeat what the book says, Mozart’s early experience of European tour with his father and sister provide Mozart chances to obtain and absorb composition techniques from different maestros like Harpsichord Concertos by J.C. Bach and *Miserere* by Gregorio Allegri, Mozart’s musical composition contains almost all music genres which were popular in 18th century such as divertissement, sonata, symphony, concerto, and opera etc. Mozart later wrote that no one had put as much time and effort into musical composition as he had and there were no famous maestros whose music pieces he had not deeply studied. (Machlis, 1995) Based on study from other musicians’ music pieces, Mozart composed his music pieces by adding his innovation and integrating what he had studied. The “Jupiter” symphony was strongly influenced by Bach and Haydn in composition; he inherited sonata form from Haydn, arranging symphony in 4 movements; Mozart not only got inspiration from Bach in polyphony, but also integrated his own compositional features. Therefore, the Mozart’s symphony embodied rigorous texture, inward feelings, his philosophic thoughts, and logic.

2.1 Integration with Bach’s Composition

Mozart did adore Bach. Mozart became a member in the circle of Gottfried van Swieten in 1782 and accessed Bach’s compositions including *Die Kunst der Fuge*, *Das Wohltemperierte Klavier*, and other great works. Then, he became acquainted with Prince Lichnowsky who later became a steadfast sponsor of Beethoven. Mozart in-depth studied Bach’s great works through manuscripts collected by Prince Lichnowsky including *Zwei- und dreistimmige Inventionen*, *French Suites*, and *English Suites*. After solid research, Mozart recomposed Bach’s music pieces and composed several independent fugues in late Baroque style, such as *Fantasy No. 1 with fugue in C major, K.383a (K.394)* for keyboard and *Fugue in C minor, K.426*. In addition to these, Bachian contrapuntal texture and polyphonic mind can be easily found in Mozart’s late compositions like six string quartets dedicated to Haydn, *Great Mass in C minor, K. 427*, and *Requiem* etc. However, Mozart was neither merely a Bach’s worshipper, nor a composer who blindly pursued traditions. He was deeply fascinated discovering surprises and challenges from Bach’s compositions. (Wolff, 2012, Chinese version)

Under the influence of Bachian polyphony, Mozart employed stretto, an important compositional technique in fugal writing which enhances imitation by gradually shortening time intervals between different themes and gathers musical image, in the last movement of “Jupiter” symphony. The first stretto in Molto Allegro of the symphony occurs in m. 64, it is firstly played by the flute and violins in D major followed by stretto by the oboe, bassoons, violas, and basses two beats later. Thus, solid foundation support inherited innovation and it reflects the characteristic of integration of Mozart’s “Jupiter” symphony.

Example 1. Mozart, Symphony No. 41, “4th movement, mm. 64-70”



(Mozart, Wolfgang. A, Symphony No. 41, Gustav Nottebohm & Carl Reinecke & Paul Walderssee, examples below are all from the score)

Another stretto begins in measure. 219, the secondary theme of the first tonal area constitutes the imitative texture between different parts.

Example 2. Mozart, Symphony No. 41, “4th movement, mm. 219-224”



Mozart skillfully utilized previous polyphonic theory by Bach, and he effortlessly and smoothly employed constitutive elements including transitions, insertions, and music phrases. The integration makes the symphony more innovative.

2.2 Inheritance from Haydn Family

In addition to Bach's influences, Joseph Haydn and his younger brother Michael Haydn also deeply influenced Mozart. In Mozart's childhood, when he started European tour as a music prodigy, Michael Haydn was a court musician and met Mozart. They had a good and deep relationship; the so-called symphony No. 37 of Mozart was actually M. Haydn's symphony No. 25, it reflects the close relationship between Michael Haydn and Mozart otherwise there would be no such misunderstanding. Charles Sherman, a scholar of Michael Haydn, speculates that M. Haydn's symphony No. 39 was finished a few weeks earlier than the "Jupiter". Its last movement also has a fugue, its theme begins with two whole notes. Mozart possibly researches M. Haydn's symphony No.39 when he composed the last movement of "Jupiter" symphony. Although Mozart did reference Haydn brothers' compositions, the inner momentum and contrast in the "Jupiter" apparently go beyond them. In fact, J. Haydn's late string quartets and his "London" symphony also effected through Mozart. (Yu, 2003) In 18 years after Mozart's death, Haydn deeply researched Mozart's last symphonies but had no harvest. Haydn once said he had known how to exert functions of winds until his later years, but he would sink into the grave before applying them. (Qin & Bai, 1998) Thus, it profoundly reflects Mozartian innovativeness and superior consciousness.

2.3 Citation from himself

Besides inheriting other composers in compositional forms and styles when Mozart composed the "Jupiter", he added innovations in it, and he even musically cited from his own works. Opera is one of the most significant genres of his musical output. A quotation from his independent Aria occurs in the first movement of the "Jupiter" in m. 101. The material came from un bacio di mano K. 541. The Aria theme then returns and adds a broader extension to the development section, a fake recapitulation phrase gently appears in F major after the extension. In final, music proceeds into recapitulation in C major after repeating the aria theme in development. The recapitulation is regularly stated except for some extension of modulations and minor parts, people can easily feel smart musical thoughts and abundant color in the Mozartian symphony.

Example 3. Mozart, Symphony No. 41, "1st movement, mm. 101-120"

This image shows a page of musical notation for Mozart's Symphony No. 41, measures 101 through 120. The score is arranged in two systems. The first system contains measures 101-109, and the second system contains measures 110-120. Each system features multiple staves for different instruments, including woodwinds, strings, and keyboard. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'p' and 'pizz.'.

In the “Jupiter” symphony, Mozart applied Cantus Planus in the trio of the third movement, image of the four notes can be seen clearly. The four-note Cantus Planus motif can be traced to Messe by Josquin des Prez who was a French maestro of polyphony in the 16th century. Mozart was interested in these musical materials. As early as 1764, when Mozart composed his first symphony, Cantus Planus appeared in it briefly. He later used the same musical material in other works including Credo of Mass in F major, K. 192 (1774), first movement of No. 33 symphony, and of course, trio in third movement of the “Jupiter”.

Example 4. Mozart, Symphony No. 41, “3rd movement, mm. 68-79”

This image shows a page of musical notation for Mozart's Symphony No. 41, measures 68 through 79. The score is arranged in two systems. The first system contains measures 68-75, and the second system contains measures 76-79. Each system features multiple staves for different instruments, including woodwinds, strings, and keyboard. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'f' and 'p'.

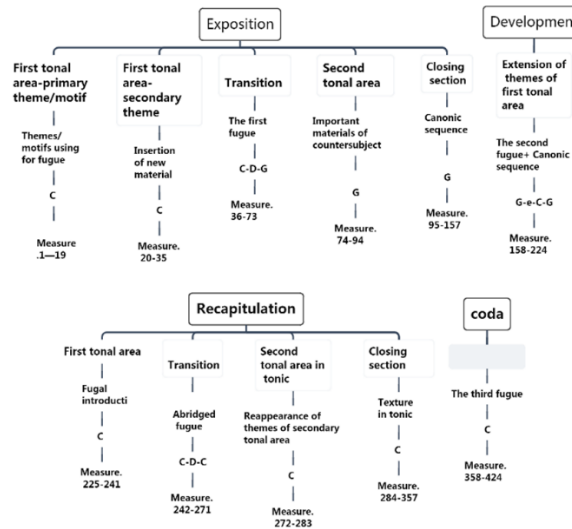
Mozart had already integrated deeply rooted essence of traditional music composition with his imaginative music language. He not only inherited and developed the conventional composition technique from Baroque period, but he also created a new style of music language/rhetoric in late 18th century period, which promoted continuation and development of polyphony.

3. Innovation in the Last Movement of “Jupiter”

Mozart had his own ideas about polyphony, and he tried bold innovations that moved further from the tradition. The most critical innovation he contributed to music history is inserting fugue and imitation into sonata form. The final movement of his “Jupiter” Symphony best represents it by incorporating fugue into sonata form.

In the finale, there are three themes/topics with distinctive characteristics presented in two primary themes and one secondary theme. These three functions as important materials for the fugue structure, its rich contents, and musical language that is definitely fit for fugue themes.

The chart below shows structure of the last movement



(The chart above is applied from Mind mapping of TreeMind https://mind.shutu.cn/?works_guid=4d0815f973f676117d4711ffba6e63dc)

According to the chart above, Mozartian uniqueness in composing the movement is apparent. Mozart skillfully employed fugue and interrelated/interlocking canon sequence, which embodies its distinctive contrapuntal style. Michael Kennedy states in *The Oxford Dictionary of Music* that a specific part of a movement resembles fugue in structure, that is using imitative polyphony for developing themes without systematic extension of middle section and recapitulation, which is referred to as fugue. (Kennedy, 1994) The last movement of the “Jupiter” contains three fugal sections which are evenly distributed in the exposition, development, and coda, these sections possess different functions and their means of structure.

First fugue occurs in connection in exposition of the last movement, its structure includes both the exposition and a free development. Constant occurrences of three notes of primary theme constitute the first fugal exposition beginning with m. 36, each instrumental group of strings enters once. In a sequential order, five times in total (2nd violin-1st violin-violoncello-Bass). The texture becomes thicker and dynamics become stronger in each three-note entrance, which gives the image of primary theme more prominence and clearness. The fugal section is in the initial stage of transition/connection. It derives from the primary theme.

Example 5. Mozart, Symphony No. 41, “4th movement, mm. 36-50”



Mozart utilized fugal development to extend the tonic range, the tonal modulation in transition/connection to the dominant can be considered as a free development of the first fugue. There is more flexibility in tonal arrangement and employment of materials in fugue, these features appropriately reach requirements in music composition and function and the transition become more vigorous due to the theme's image.

Based on Downs (1992), as components of Mozartian sonata form, exposition and recapitulation are critical, however, development merely occupy relatively little proportion, not so much it is development section as a fluent passage. Although the development section is definitely refined, it is plentiful in content and use of compositional skills.

The second fugue as the introduction of development section occurs in m. 158. It is a double fugue with two themes of the first tonal area in C major. These two themes are presented successively, and an admirable balance is achieved among multiple parts. The first violins play the four notes of primary theme from m. 166, then the flauto and fagotti play the second theme in inversion. Both themes evolve independently, and music is marked by instability and increasing intensity of the development section.

Example 6. Mozart, Symphony No. 41, "4th movement, mm. 158-172"



All materials occur in layers in the coda of the last movement, which forms a spectacular integration and unity. According to the score below, the primary theme of the first tonal area and the theme of the second tonal area constitutes the double fugue section. From m. 371, the two themes are sequentially stated four times, intertwining with each other in an incredible feat of compositional skill.

Example 7. Mozart, Symphony No. 41, “4th movement, mm. 371-399”

(Mozart, Wolfgang. A, Symphony No. 41, Howard Chandler & Robbins Landon, 1957, Bärenreiter-Verlag, Kassel, examples above are all from the score)

According to the score above, the theme of the second tonal area is firstly played by the cellos and the first bassoon. Then the primary theme of the first tonal area is stated by the bass and the second bassoon after two beats, after which the secondary theme of the first tonal area appears after two beats in the violas and the second oboe. These critical materials and motifs are all weaved together in double counterpoint. The characteristics of the long contrapuntal tutti in the last movement of the “Jupiter” symphony can also be considered as the most symphonic and vigorous finale among all last movements of symphonies.

4. Cosmology of “Jupiter” Symphony

In the apex of Classical period, times have changed. In the 18th century, the continuous development of science, technology, and industry in Europe promoted development of European civilization. Due to influence by Enlightenment, the idea of 'liberty, equality, fraternity' guided Mozart and impacted his music. Mozart lived in the time when people gradually form their worldview. As Newton's system, everything in the world depends on initial conditions and is within causal logic, “determinism” seems to be the rage and which mainly highlights stability and equilibrium. (He, 1983) Mozart's worldview can be founded in his music, tonic chord is predominant, dominant and subdominant as auxiliary support harmonic progression of the tonic chord. Therefore, it reflects nous, well-ordered musical creation, and perfect and unity of music form in music composition.

According to the article *A Genius Finds Inspiration in the Music of Another* by the recognized expert on Einstein in the world A. I. Miller, Einstein was obsessed with Mozart's music and he believed he had similarity with Mozart in some extent, also, the article shows that “Einstein once said that while Beethoven created his music, Mozart's ‘was so pure that it seemed to have been ever-present in the universe, waiting to be discovered by the master.’” (Miller, 2006) Although his words sound simple, he made high praise to Mozart's music. Why Einstein believe he has similarity with Mozart? Because Einstein learned the violin in his childhood and had fine grasp of music, he founded that all subjects/areas are interlinked in their supreme developments when Einstein's scientific studies peaked, thus, he deeply understood Mozart's musical creation. Einstein as a physicist believed Mozart's music transcends the limitation of time and space and his music has connection with the Universe. In actual, music makes people commonality transcending boundaries of both culture and language, Einstein might believe people can find commonality from Mozart's music and make them feel the connection with the Universe.

Mozart as a musician whose genius had already been recognized could do what most people could not imagine, “Jupiter” symphony was published only 15 days after his symphony No. 40, the integration of fugue and sonata form had been evaluated to a high degree by Mozart, moreover, simple counterpoint, sequence, and imitation were employed. Counterpoint makes each part sound much more vibrant, employment of counterpoint in the last movement of “Jupiter” symphony has reached an unprecedented level. In coda, the combinatorial art of one contrapuntal theme, two transitions, and two motifs of secondary theme ends triumphally in final, this has similarity with mathematical principles. Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius (c. 480–524 AD), a prominent Roman historian, philosopher and authoritative music theorist of the Early Middle Ages, wrote a book *The principles of Music*, the content of this book is fundamentally based on the ancient music theory of the literature including musical thoughts of Pythagoras, Aristoxenus, and other ancient theorists. Boethius inherited perspectives of the ancients and put more emphasis on ethical influence and human edification by music, he believed that music should assist people to deeply and rationally recognize rules and principles in the Earth instead of excessive emotional expression, he also trusted that people should pursue rapport of psyche from music rather than purely auditory pleasure. Boethius divided music into three categories including *musica mundana* (the music of the Universe), *musica humana* (human music), and *musica instrumentalis* (instrumental music). Boethius believed that the best music is *musica mundana*, which means order and harmony in the Universe. (Yu, 2003) Mozart used counterpoint and weaved various musical lines together, and he created harmonious music structure. The structure and symmetry are similar with mathematical principles. Based on its music structure and Boethius's perspective of *Musica mundana* that music of the Universe which embodies order and heavenly harmony and represents harmony, “Jupiter” symphony can be regarded as *Musica mundana*. According to Einstein's statement that “Mozart's ‘was so pure that it seemed to have been ever-present in the universe, waiting to be discovered by the master.’ ” (Miller, 2006), Mozart had put his worldview or his cosmology in “Jupiter” symphony, which belongs to the Universe.

5. Conclusion

“Jupiter” symphony is one of the greatest monuments to symphonies in the history of Western classical music. Mozart’s “Jupiter” symphony embodies the advanced thought of Enlightenment that people strongly believe the bright future, people defend their rights rebel against authoritarianism. Whatever in ideology or in music, Mozart was frustrated in realizing his ambition at that time, but his thinking was forward-looking. He firmly abandoned antiquated aesthetic principle and laid the foundation of development of realism music. Although sadness occasionally appears in Mozart’s music, his music color is bright and positive in overall, which reflects his vision of happiness and his life and relentless pursuit of music. Based on foundation of polyphonic composition technique of Baroque period, Mozart flexibly integrated conventional composition technique with imaginative music language together with his bold innovation in term of compositional technique, which newly styles music language of late 18th century, the innovation of last movement of “Jupiter” symphony has promoted and extended the development of European music in especial. Mozart’s symphony No. 41 “Jupiter” has rigorous musical texture and rich musical language, it is heavenly pure and cosmically mysterious. It can be said that Mozart’s symphony No.41 can be called “Jupiter” is because it has reached the height of musica mundana, the symphony shares certain commonality with the Universe, Mozart tried to express his worldview and cosmology by it.

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