

Festiveness Expressive quality and historical semantics in Beethoven*

FRANK HENTSCHEL

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The focus of this article on the so-called festive quality of Beethoven’s music rests on two mutually related areas of interest, namely, the increasing role loudness played in nineteenth-century music and an understanding of the emotional effect music had on listeners of that era. An examination of the expressive quality and meaning of the finale of Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony—a prototype of festiveness—encompasses three lines of inquiry: an investigation of the tradition from which such qualities stem; the consideration of texts accompanied by the same type of music (for instance *Egmont*, Choral Fantasy); and a determination of the specific dramatic manifestation of this expressive quality in Beethoven’s music. Finally, a socio-psychological hypothesis concerning the significance of this mode of expression is proposed.

Music in the 19th century was becoming ever louder and grander in scale—we only need to think of composers such as Beethoven, Berlioz and Mahler to be convinced of that. But what lies behind this trend? Traditional musicology has seen this as a somewhat unusual question because loudness has as a rule been considered a secondary characteristic of music that is not a part of its essential substance.¹ However, this point of view does not acknowledge the vital role that loudness plays; thus, we should lend our support to Andreas Haug when he argues for a *Bedeutungsgeschichte des Lauten* [a history of the significance of loudness].² Contemporary accounts document how loudness and [162] massive sonic forces had become an essential feature of certain music around 1800.³ In this vein, Johann Friedrich Reichardt reaffirmed that his choral works required such massive numbers of performers:

You know that I only work with large masses in my choral works and that these pieces are not effective and it’s almost impossible to grasp the idea of the work with too few singers—it’s like trying to impress upon someone the grandeur of the colonnade in St. Peter’s Square in Rome at night using a small hand-held lantern.

Reichardt was referring to the performance by François-Joseph Gossec of one of his Psalm settings—which exact piece remains uncertain—and an Italian Passion—most likely his *La Passione di Gesù Christo* from 1783. Reichardt rejected the performance because there were only

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¹ I don’t want to suggest that this aspect has never been examined before. Especially in studies of the category of the sublime, which was so important in 18th-century music, loudness has been thematized several times in different studies. At a bare minimum, the following studies should be mentioned: Claudia L. Johnson, “‘Giant Handel’ and the Musical Sublime,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 4 (1986): 515–533; Mark Evan Bonds, “The Symphony as Pindaric Ode,” in *Haydn and his World*, ed. Elaine Sisman (Princeton: 1997), 139f.; Stefanie Steiner, *Zwischen Kirche, Bühne und Konzertsaal: Vokalmusik von Haydns ‘Schöpfung’ bis zu Beethovens ‘Neunter’* (Kassel: 2001); Richard Will, *The Characteristic Symphony in the Age of Haydn and Beethoven* (Cambridge: 2002), 196–200; Kiene Brillenburg Wurth, “The Grand Style and the Aesthetics of Terror in Eighteenth-Century Musical Performance Practices,” *Tijdschrift voor muziektheorie* 9 (2004): 44–55; Nicola Gess, *Gewalt der Musik, Literatur und Musikkritik um 1800*, 2nd ed. (Freiburg and Berlin: 2008), (= *Berliner Kulturwissenschaft*, 1): 243–312.

² Andreas Haug, “Zu einer Bedeutungsgeschichte des Lauten: Das Crescendo in Beethovens Leonoren-Ouvertüren,” *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 28 (1997), 3–18.

³ Cf. the extensive material that can be found in the studies cited in footnote 1.

resources for a choir one-to-a-part with just four singers⁴. The sonic saturation was such an essential part of how the works were composed that it was not possible to simply thin out the orchestration. In 1820, a correspondent from the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* reported that Johann Nikolaus Forkel had complained that,

many compositions these days particularly those that are overloaded with brass instruments have (although these instruments should merely serve the purpose of filling out the texture and doubling other voices) even entrust so much of the essential content of the pieces to these instrumental groups that it is almost impossible to do justice to these works in smaller concert halls where the resources for such large ensembles are lacking.⁵

Admittedly, Forkel did not explicitly mention the marked increase in loudness of the music, but this is implied in his reference to the orchestral forces employed. Thus, both authors recognized the substantial role of loudness, although they each assign different values to the dynamic elements in the music of the day.

Beethoven in particular was criticized for the extreme loudness of his music. Even as late as 1828, the following passage about Beethoven's Seventh Symphony could be read in the *Allgemeinen Musikzeitung zur Beförderung der theoretischen und praktischen Tonkunst*:

It consists of four movements, each of which lasts almost a quarter hour adding up to a total duration of at least three quarters of an hour, and the piece is a real medley of tragic, comical, profound, and trivial ideas that, divorced of all context, quickly multiply from hundreds to thousands and are repeated to the point of tedium producing such an unrestrained racket that the listener's eardrums are about to burst.⁶

That loudness was an essential element of Beethoven's symphonic writing was apparently undisputed; the only controversy was how to judge this. As time passed, listeners characterized the loudness as a true achievement. In 1836, Amadeus Wendt stated:

Here we are confronted with the brilliant trio of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. It is through them that German feelings, which were surrounded and inspired by the richer and freer life that has come about in the last two decades of the past century as a result of the most extraordinary transformations of civil society, could be expressed in ever freer, deeper, profounder, and more powerful tones.⁷

[163] In a similar vein, Gustav Schilling wrote in 1841:

He [Beethoven] wanted to create something more powerful on an inner level; therefore, he also needed to employ more powerful means on the external level. The effect he achieved was like nothing else that had been known up to that point. As such, there was now the danger that one would not see the relation between the use of large masses of instruments and the surrounding harmony with the correspondingly greater energy in his thoughts and ideas, but would instead ascribe this to the sheer mass of the instrumentation and thus to elevate it to a principle and canon of composition and orchestration. After all, on the external level it is the will of the powerful that always bends the masses and faith of the people to their desire.⁸

⁴ Johann F. Reichardt, *Vertraute Briefe aus Paris 1802/03*, ed. Rolf Weber (Berlin: 1981), 164.

⁵ "Einige Nachrichten über die Cultur der Musik in Göttingen," *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* 22, no. 50, column 839.

⁶ *Allgemeinen Musikzeitung zur Beförderung der theoretischen und praktischen Tonkunst* 2, 1828, column 21.

⁷ Amadeus Wendt, *Über den gegenwärtigen Zustand der Musik besonders in Deutschland und wie er geworden* (Göttingen: 1836), 3.

⁸ Gustav Schilling, *Geschichte der heutigen modernen Musik, In ihrem Zusammenhange mit der allgemeinen Welt- und Völkergeschichte* (Karlsruhe: 1841), 750.

The question would therefore be what this tendency toward large masses, loudness, and greater dimensions could mean. Is it possible to further develop Gustav Schilling's statements about thoughts and ideas, which we can at most use on a metaphorical level, into some sort of academically tenable concept?

As a result of a long tradition in musicology that shifted much of the scholarly attention to the structural, thematic-motivic aspects of music, other parameters such as the one discussed here—the physical energy of sound that we perceive as loudness—occupied a blind spot. At the same time, these are often properties of music that are in fact crucial for the aesthetic experience of the music in question. And that which lends the music its immediate power has been least investigated in a certain tradition of musicology. But when we listen to Beethoven, it is the stirring rhythms, the surprising harmonic shifts, the moving or simply beautiful melodies, the expressive motives, the never before heard timbres, or even the tender, quiet moments, and the impulsive outbreaks of extreme loudness that shape the listening experience: the motivic development and relationships, or the clever plays on conventions—though they are of course present and provide interesting and fertile ground for interpretation—may play more of a subordinate role in shaping the immediate effect of the music.

When we turn our focus to these moments, the emotional effect of the music also comes to the fore. Therein lies an opportunity. For some time now, the academic investigation of historical emotions has justifiably been attracting more attention, and music is predestined to be the object of such investigations, as it is a medium that transmits emotions in a particularly intense way. If we are able to explore this, we will then be able to isolate the very elements responsible for the immediate effect of music and make them assessable to historical research. It would mean being able to read the expressive level of music as a historical document and would enable us to ask what these emotions can tell us about that time, or conversely enable us to better understand music in its historical context.

Of course, this approach also has its pitfalls. How can we know whether what one person hears in Beethoven corresponds with what another person hears? And it is even more of a stretch to claim that what people today hear in Beethoven corresponds with what people heard in his music 200 years ago. The turn towards structural analysis in the musicological tradition mentioned above had good reasons behind it. The musicological literature had been dominated by too much subjective and ideological arbitrariness [164] so that the move towards banning the emotional dimension of music from the discipline was more than understandable from a historical and methodological viewpoint. Thus, our goal should not be to give up the methodological rigor that the field has gained from its move towards more exacting standards. On the contrary, our line of inquiry demands an especially well-developed and delicate feeling for methodology. Nor should we shy away from repeating that which seems already well-known and is now backed up by sound methodological considerations.

I. From loudness to festiveness

Beethoven is the obvious case study, on the one hand, because he clearly played an important or at least a representative role in the process of the increasing loudness of music in the 19th century and, on the other hand, because in his day loud sounds were not so omnipresent as in the later 19th century, when loudness became an essential element in many genres and contexts whether in grand opera, symphonic music, liturgical music, or song festivals. Beethoven can be located at the end of a transitional phase between a time when the spheres of loudness were still unambiguously fixed and anchored in convention and a time when this was no longer the case.

By isolating the various types of loudness in Beethoven, tracing them back to their roots in the 18th century and observing how Beethoven changed them per se and in terms of their contextualization, it is possible to draw conclusions about their historical expressive character, and their effect and semantics. Out of the numerous varieties of loudness found in Beethoven, only one particular variant will be examined in detail in the following, and that is the variety that we will label the festive.⁹ Here we are introducing a term that played no particular role in the contemporary aesthetic discourse, which however has the potential to more precisely describe an aesthetic moment. (Contemporary categories are not necessarily best suited for describing historical subjects.) All the same, Johann Abraham Peter Schulz and Johann Georg Sulzer wrote in an entry describing the symphony: “[It] is mainly suited to the expression of the great, the festive and the sublime.”¹⁰ However, the term ‘sublime’—just like the terms ‘power’, ‘strength’, and ‘greatness’—as well as the term ‘celebratory’ [feierlich] are too unspecific: for example, the sublime also includes the terrifying and the confusing, and on the other hand the celebratory has in addition to its loud forms also quiet forms such as silent devotion. We speak of devotional silence [Andacht] but not of festive silence.

[165] Of course, the central idea of every typology also applies here: the musical moments in Beethovenian music that are classified under the term festiveness—and the related semantic field—are each individual cases and can in no way simply be reduced to tokens of this type. A typology is fundamentally a simplification, but a simplification that can help make something visible that would remain invisible if one does not transcend the individuality with the help of typologization.

Perhaps, the clearest realization of the festiveness topos in Beethoven is to be found at the beginning of the finale of the Fifth Symphony, and thus we will take this as our starting point. The features that define the festiveness topos can be relatively easily extracted from this example¹¹:

- The music is loud.
- The movement is in the key of C major. Traditionally, this key represented brilliance, clarity, and brightness.
- The brass—horns, trumpets, and trombones—dominate the texture. The entire orchestra seems to take up the idea of a brass fanfare. Timpani and dotted rhythms lend support to the overall texture.

⁹ The only musicological study that deals with festiveness as a musical category that I am aware of is Haug, “Zu einer Bedeutungsgeschichte des Lauten” (cf. footnote 2), 13.

¹⁰ “Symphonie”, *Allgemeine Theorie der Schönen Künste*, vol. 2 (Leipzig: 1774): 1122 (citation from the electronic edition Berlin 2002).

¹¹ The term ‘topos’ will be used here when we wish to place the accent either on the technical aspect how the music is composed or on the context in which the corresponding type of music is traditionally found; in contrast, the term ‘expression type’ is preferred when we want to focus on the expressive quality of the music. Other terms are used throughout the text for reasons of linguistic variety, and in such cases no clear distinction is intended nor is one necessary. In the case of the festive, it is appropriate to speak of a topos because the festive is part of a distinct tradition that transcends individual composers. If one were to focus on features that were only found in Beethoven, then a term such as ‘stylistic idiosyncrasy’ would be more appropriate. And just because something can be labeled as an expression type does not mean it can also be labeled as a topos. That is, however, not important. For, the concept of the topos is merely employed with a heuristic intention because in the case of the festive, it automatically comes to mind as a result of its general use in language. Any specific reference to the recent field of research in musicology to which Leonard G. Ratner, Kofi Agawu, Robert S. Hatten and Raymond Monelle belong is unintentional (for more on this research, see: Nicholas McKay, “On Topics Today,” *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Musiktheorie* 4 (2007): 159–183. However, in the present context, Monelle’s book *The Musical Topic, Hunt, Military and Pastoral*, Bloomington and Indianapolis 2006, is particularly relevant for its observations on the march and trumpet signals.

- Especially the introductory fanfare is stately. (The finale effect is not so much due to a fast tempo, but rather a result of the redemptive celebrated tonic suddenly bursting forth.)
- The motivic material consists of a rising triadic arpeggio and a descending scalar figure, which both simply outline the tonic—without any disturbance or deviation.
- For 35 measures, there is no modulation; harmonically, a sense of calm pervades throughout the passage.
- The movement is extremely consonant and significantly emerges attacca from a quiet, dissonant passage at the end of the third movement so that the effect of the undisturbed harmony is clearly underlined. [166]
- There is no rhythmic ambiguity; the four-four meter is just as clear and well established as the tonic. As such, the finale is the polar opposite to the opening of the symphony.
- Dotted rhythms are reminiscent of the rhythmical topoi of the fanfare-like.

In order to determine what such music means, an obvious place to start is to look back to the 18th century, where the root of Beethoven's music were and where the contexts of festive music were still very unambiguously defined. Of course, there is a methodological problem with this approach in that there are no empirically objective guidelines for which musical passages can be designated as festive. The term festive is not a clearly delineated historical category, but rather a term that was chosen here to describe a particular musical expression type. Its existence is thus first and foremost a construction by a historian. In labeling the first bars of the finale of the Fifth Symphony as festive, we are making a terminological proposition. This proposition already implies assumptions about the meaning of the corresponding expression type, but these have by no means been substantiated at this point.¹² Therefore, it is crucial to look for works with the features that come together to make up the expression type defined as festive and to look for information about their meaning.

If we start by focusing on the criterion of loudness, the historical material available will be reduced drastically. This is due to the fact that before the second half of the 18th century decidedly loud music was encountered, if not exclusively, then in the vast majority of cases in only three clearly defined contexts: first, in representations of the terrifying, possibly including the representation of fury and anger, especially occurring in dramatic music; second, in settings of hymns of praise, be it the *Te Deum* or the Sanctus of the mass etc.; and finally, in the context of courtly or military representations and demonstrations of power. To be sure, this is a simplification, as the music depicting joy can also be loud. Moreover, degrees of loudness are a part of a continuum so that there is no absolute unambiguous answer to the question what is loud. Of course, in cultural studies in general, there is a certain amount of imprecision that we have to live with, and when seen from the extremes of the loudest sounds, the three contexts mentioned above are quite unambiguous as semantic and contextual sites of loudness. For evidence of this, which here can only be provided through some exemplary cases, we can refer to excerpts of works whose instrumentation unambiguously indicates that the highest degree of loudness is a central feature of the music. These are excerpts that one could not—even as a thought experiment—imagine with a reduced volume.

¹² For more on the German term *Fest* [celebration / festival / feast] and in particular its aesthetic relevance, see Hans Georg Gadamer, *Die Aktualität des Schönen* (Stuttgart: 1986), 52–60; Godo Lieberg and Wigand Siebel, “Fest,” *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, ed. Joachim Ritter [et al.] vol. 2, 1971 (Basel: 1971–2001): 938–940, citation from the digital edition, Berlin 2007; Bernhard Teuber, “Fest / Feier,” *Ästhetische Grundbegriffe*, ed. Karlheinz Barck [et al.], Studienausgabe, vol. 2 (Stuttgart and Weimar: 2010): 367–380.

[167] As an example of music depicting the terrifying, we can look to the fourth scene of act one from Rameau's opera *Hippolyte et Aricie* (1733). The thundering that announces the appearance of the goddess Diana is mainly imitated with rapid scalar passages and tremolo figures in the strings. Trumpets and timpani are tacet. In the chorus (no. 23) "But the waters overwhelmed their enemies" from Handel's *Israel in Egypt* (1738), thundering rolls on the timpani are not just an example of tone painting but also serve to instill a sense of terror.¹³ Also in the duet (no. 7) "Er donnert, dass er verherrlichtet werde" from Telemann's *Donner-Ode* (1756), it is timpani rolls that represent and evoke the terrifying aspect of the power of God.¹⁴ Without a doubt, it would be necessary to distinguish the terrifying in music from fury and anger, and then to also further differentiate these categories. However, for the present study this is not necessary, as these variants of loud music do not have any obvious direct connection to the expression type of the festive as found in the finale of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony.

In contrast, the musical realization of praising God is a much clearer precursor of the expression type we have designated as the festive in Beethoven. Notable examples include the Prelude from Charpentier's *Te Deum* (1692), J. S. Bach's Mass in B minor (1724), especially the Sanctus, or again Telemann's *Donner-Ode*, but here the chorus (no. 1) "Wie ist dein Name so groß" (1756). Here trumpets and timpani are as a general rule in the foreground; the voice leading emphasizes consonances and remains in major. These representations of praise are musically indistinct from music featuring courtly and military representations, such as Lully's *Thésée* (1675), the beginning of the second act from Purcell's *Fairy Queen* (1692), or Handel's *Music for the Royal Fireworks* (1749). In the case of Handel's work, the instrumentation was even a source of conflict between Handel and King George II.¹⁵

Such music conveys glory, splendor, strength, and power; however, it does this with a certain sense of ambivalence that forms an essential part of the character of these passages. This has parallels to the holy. As Rudolf Otto so aptly described it, the holy arises out of the "contrasting harmony" of fear and fascination,¹⁶ and the same is also applicable to worldly power. The "Germans" brought forth with their wooden trumpets "that mighty sound which so often lifted the hearts of our forefathers and struck fear into their enemies," [168] so wrote for example Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart.¹⁷ Thus, it is not surprising that the topos of timpani and trumpets* occurs quite often in music for soldiers armed for battle. Its use is particularly characteristic for military marches. Such marches can be found in Lully's *Thésée* in droves, but also in Handel's *Rinaldo* (version from 1711, act III, scene 9, no. 37). Of course, such marches are as a rule already mixed with feelings of triumph or expectations of victory as is explicitly the case in Handel's opera: "Or la tromba in suon festante / Mi richiama a trionfar. / Qual guerriero e

¹³ For more on the influence of Handel's choral writing on the depiction of the sublime in Beethoven's music, see Nicholas Mathew, "Beethoven's Political Music, the Handelian Sublime, and the Aesthetics of Prostration," *19th-Century Music* 33 (2009): 110–150.

¹⁴ As Nicola Gess wrote in *Gewalt der Musik* (see footnote 1) about music around 1800, this is not simply a representation of the sublime, but rather the music itself is sublime (289, 291, 300).

¹⁵ Christopher Hogwood, *Händel. Eine Biographie*, trans. Bettina Obrecht (Frankfurt a. M.: 2000), 369–373.

¹⁶ Rudolf Otto, *Das Heilige, Über das Irrationale in der Idee des Göttlichen und sein Verhältnis zum Rationalen* (1917) (Munich: 1963). The term "Kontrastharmonie" [contrasting harmony] can be found on p. 42.—C. P. E. Bach's *Heilig* (1776) can, due to its combination of terrifying and resplendent moments, be understood as a realization of exactly this ambivalence of the holy.

¹⁷ *Ideen zu einer Ästhetik der Tonkunst*, Vienna 1806, Reprint, ed. Fritz and Margrit Kaiser (Hildesheim: 1990), 309.
* Translator's note: the widely used German expression "mit Pauken und Trumpeten" [with timpani and trumpets] is equivalent to the English expression "with great pomp and circumstance." However unlike in English, the association between this particular instrumentation and elaborate displays of power is still very much present for German speakers.

qual amante, / Gloria e amor mi vuol bear.” The terror concomitant with power is often explicitly mentioned in the text. In Vivaldi’s oratorio *Juditha Triumphans* (1716), the choir of soldiers sings: “Arma caedes, vindictae, furores, / Angustiae, timores, / Precedite nos,” and in Rameau’s *Hippolyte et Aricie*, the enraged Phaedra calls forth the “dreaded signal” of the Trumpets, which is meant to announce her intent to destroy Diana’s temple: “Je vous entends; eh bien! que la trompettes sonne, / Que le signal affreux se donne” (act I, scene 4). As a rule, trumpets and timpani are combined in such contexts,¹⁸ and this instrumental constellation had become firmly established over the previous 200 years.¹⁹

Schubart summarized the character of trumpets by branding them “downright warlike”, speaking of their “blaring, heart-shaking” tone, and labeling them as “totally heroic, rousing to arms, and shouting for joy.” Trumpets are to be used without mutes “only at major, festive, and majestic occasions.” Accordingly, also in church they “should only be used on major feast days”.²⁰ In music that employs the timpani-and-trumpet topos, politics or religion are at the heart of the compositions; here it is impossible to make a distinction between the external occasion the work was written for and the work per se. This music is not autonomous [169] in its inner depths. The loudness here is essential. And it is possible to more precisely characterize this loudness as the sound of the “warlike” and the “festive”. Where the accent lies can only be decided by the context; attempting to always unambiguously separate the festive from the warlike would be anachronistic. These semantic issues should be taken into consideration even though in the following we will as a rule and for the sake of simplicity only speak of the festive.

In representative or liturgical contexts, music “celebrates” the earthly and heavenly rulers in indistinguishable forms. How conscious this analogy between religious and earthly power was drawn can be seen for example by taking a look at Angelus Silesius’s description of paradise in *A Sensuous Representation of the Four Last Things*, specifically the “Eternal Joy of the Blessed” from 1675. Not only do the arrangement of the garden (stanza 17), the overflowing riches (stanza 32), the hierarchical regimentations (stanza 75) and the banquet (stanza 91) depict courtly pomp, but the enthroning of Jesus (stanza 70) is also celebrated with music that could be a paraphrase of the B minor Mass were it already written at the time:

Then is struck up a jubilant sound
Upon timpani and trumpets,
There does music resound

¹⁸ This pairing with timpani is not found in trumpet concertos and in particular trumpet arias, where—as far as I am aware—the trumpets alone are the instruments that evoke the associations with war. For more on the trumpet aria in Venice, see Ellen Rosand, *Oper in Seventeenth-Century Venice*, Berkeley 1991, pp. 329–333. I would like to thank Christian H. Moll, who made me aware of the trumpet aria tradition. For more on the trumpet in opera sinfonias, see Axel Teich Geertinger, *Die italienische Opernsinfonia 1680–1710: Komposition zwischen Funktion und Selbständigkeit* (Marburg: 2009): 36–37. Here the trumpet also operates in its function of solemn representation (cf. *ibid.* 44, 50, 53f., 67). For the symbolism of the trumpet illustrated with examples from Telemann, see Simon Rettelbach, *Trompeten, Hörner und Klarinetten in der in Frankfurt am Main überlieferten “Ordentlichen Kirchenmusik” Georg Philipp Telemanns* (Tutzing: 2008), (= Frankfurter Beiträge zur Musikwissenschaft, 35): 88–129.

¹⁹ For more on this, see Lorenz Welker, “Die Musik der Renaissance”, in *Musikalische Interpretation*, ed. Hermann Danuser, (Laaber: 1992), (= Neues Handbuch der Musikwissenschaft, 11): 138–215, in particular 141, 143, 151, and 167. On the festiveness of the trumpet, see also Detlef Altenburg, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Trompete im Zeitalter der Clarinblaskunst (1500–1800)* (Regensburg: 1973), (= Kölner Beiträge zur Musikforschung, 75): in particular 100–104, 122–132, and 138f.

²⁰ Schubart, *Ideen zu einer Ästhetik der Tonkunst* (see footnote 17), 309–311. Also cf. Johann Ernst Altenburg, *Versuch einer Anleitung zur heroisch-musikalischen Trompeter- und Pauker-Kunst* (Halle: 1795), in particular 22–30.

Upon flutes and cornetts.
Music played on strings more beautiful
Than ever was heard before.
The best singers most plentiful,
A thousand choirs and more. (Stanza 82)

There is to be heard the Gloria
By all the angels sung,
There resounds the Halleluiah
Through the air is flung.
There the Sanctus is oft cried
Most stately enacted
And the Hosanna multiplied
Most artfully refracted. (Stanza 83)²¹

Here Angelus Silesius imagines a music of large dimensions and great volume that was designed to glorify the Lord and to express his power, strength, and His glory. And it was not by chance that Bach was able to repurpose the congratulatory cantata for the birthday of the Electress Maria Josepha (BWV 214) from 1733 for the jubilant opening chorus of the Christmas Oratorio (BWV 248). The same music was used to celebrate the birth of the electress and the birth of Jesus.²² In the context [170] of a functioning system of absolutism, the use of identical gestures in both situations was no accident, but rather an expression of the level of worship accorded to temporal lords, whose archetype was religious worship (or perhaps the other way round). While the tremolos of the violins simply imitate anger, the timpani-and-trumpet topos is itself the actual means employed as a demonstration of power. This explains why the music that features this topos is so often thematized as being self-referential. This was the case in the examples cited above by Rameau (namely in the words sung by Phaedra) and Handel (in Rinaldo's words) as well as in Purcell's *Fairy Queen*, where we are told: "Let the fifes and the clarions / and shrill trumpets sound, / And the arch of high heaven / the clangour resound", and in Bach's cantata, where the music is evoked by the words: "Sound, you drums! Ring forth, trumpets!" Both in terms of the physical power of the instruments as well as their actual political functionalization, the music itself is the strongest expression of power and glory, and the text is merely able to repeat this message.

To the extent that the term festiveness captures an essential moment in such music and to the extent that it is legitimate to use the history of festivals and celebrations to draw conclusions—which would otherwise be difficult to make—about the broader function of such music, the functional horizon of this music can perhaps be stated more precisely. Apparently, festivals have always served to strengthen the community. They achieved this goal, on the one hand, by interrupting everyday routines and involving all the members of a particular group and thereby transcending divisions common to the everyday due to the division of labor and, on the other hand, through communal reflection on a particular idea. This was how the community of

²¹ Angelus Silesius, *Sämtliche Poetische Werke*, three volumes collected into one, ed. Hans Ludwig Held, vol. 3 (Wiesbaden: 2002, after the third expanded edition of 1952), 291.

²² This complex subject concerning the relationship between the royal and the divine touched upon here has its own extensive body of literature, which is beyond the scope of this study. See, for instance, Rainer A. Müller' study on the divine rights of kings in *Der Fürstenhof in der frühen Neuzeit* (Munich: 1995), (= Enzyklopädie deutscher Geschichte, 33): 8f. This idea also became established as a part of courtly celebrations (ibid., 57). For more on the political function of these celebrations and the representational function of art and architecture see ibid., 34, and Volker Bauer, *Die höfische Gesellschaft in Deutschland von der Mitte des 17. bis zum Ausgang des 18. Jahrhunderts, Versuch einer Typologie*, (Tübingen: 1993), (= Frühe Neuzeit, 12): e.g. 37, 39, 46, 52, 58, 93.

believers experienced church services or religious feasts, and so too did those attached to a royal house experience courtly festivities. Rapture and ecstasy as a path for the individual to lose one's self and merge with the collective also played a central role in festivals.²³ Thus it is possibly not too farfetched to connect the function of particularly loud music with such ecstatic moments.²⁴ The strong physical—and perhaps even ecstatic, narcotic—effect of music was in any case documented by contemporary writers. For example, Johann Nikolaus Forkel wrote: “the effect of the sound of trumpets and timpani, even more the din of drums during battle, can be put forward as evidence here. Such a din causes one to shudder, the heart to beat faster, the blood to quicken, the breathing to become heavy and often even causing one to break out into a full fever.”²⁵

[171] The finale of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony has elements in common with baroque festive music: the loudness, the unambiguous nature of the harmonic and rhythmic composition, the stability of the tonic, the triadic motives, the simplicity of the harmony, the dotted rhythms that are reminiscent of fanfares as well as the prominent role entrusted to the brass—in particular the trumpets—and the timpani. Therefore, the question that arises is the question of the meaning of the festiveness topos in Beethoven given that it cannot be interpreted in the same unambiguous religious or courtly context.

II. Adaption of the topos

In the following, we will attempt to answer this question along two different lines: first we will examine how the topos lost its original function and was repurposed, and second the link between the topos and its discernible semantic content in the works of Beethoven will be investigated.

Beethoven was part of a tradition in which the festiveness topos had already been integrated into symphonic compositions—to a lesser extent in concertos—for several decades. When trying to get an overview of this tradition, one is of course again confronted with a methodological problem similar to the one mentioned above, as the festiveness topos is not clearly defined, and indeed it cannot be defined. Individual manifestations of the festiveness are related to one another by a family resemblance in the sense of Wittgenstein's *Familienähnlichkeit*.²⁶ The features that are, on the one hand, derived from baroque works and, on the other hand, have been extracted from Beethoven's Fifth Symphony are present in different ratios to one another and are more or less clearly manifested; they are not always all present, and we can assume that they are also not exhaustive. This is however not even necessary; it is only important that enough features are present so that it is reasonable to speak of a more or less similar musical instances of an idealized expression type. As a matter of principle, one must be careful to avoid ontologizing the topos: it is constituted of a set of characteristics, which are sometimes more and sometimes less prominently and completely displayed; and the topos can always (and in its post-baroque history as a general rule will) occur simultaneously with other topoi or expression types. In order to help us get an overview of the continuous tradition of the

²³ Lieberg and Siebel (see footnote 12), 939, report that the break from everyday routines during festivals can culminate until it reaches an ecstatic state.

²⁴ Cf. Karsten Mackensen, “Abschied von der Kontingenz. Das Erhabene aus systematischer Perspektive”, in *Händels 'Messiah', Zum Verständnis von Aufklärung, Religion und Wissen im 18. Jahrhundert*, ed. Wolfgang Hirschmann (Halle: 2011), 81–84.

²⁵ As quoted in Gess, *Gewalt der Musik* (see footnote 1), 255.

²⁶ Cf. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophische Untersuchungen*, in *Werkausgabe*, vol. 1, 225–580, (Frankfurt am Main), no. 66ff. (277ff.).

topos between ca. 1750 and Beethoven without going into tedious discussions of individual works, we will employ the rather crude selection criteria of instrumentation, namely, selecting orchestral works that call for timpani and trumpets. If this is the case, one can assume that the topos of festiveness occurs at one or more points in the work and that it is more or less clearly displayed. A comprehensive survey is not the goal here, a spot check should suffice. Instead, [172] we will take the symphonic works of J. Stamitz, J. C. Cannabich, J. Haydn and W. A. Mozart as a representative sample of the music in this period.

Of the 58 symphonies by Stamitz that are considered authentic, seven works call for timpani and trumpets,²⁷ around 12%. Cannabich used these instruments in 13 symphonies,²⁸ which amounts to 16% of his approximately 80 symphonies. While all of Stamitz's symphonies that included trumpets and timpani were written in the "trumpet key" of D major,²⁹ Cannabich included these instruments in three C-major symphonies and in one E-flat-major symphony. In many of Haydn's symphonies, timpani and trumpets seem to have been added at a later stage; moreover, Haydn combines horns instead of trumpets with timpani in several symphonies.³⁰ Accordingly, the symphonies to be considered here vary between 22 and 36 works, i.e. between almost 21% and 34%.³¹ The key of D major and C major are by far the most frequently encountered, but others also occur: G major, C minor, B-flat major, E-flat major—thus also in this sense the use of timpani and trumpets broke new ground. The 12 London Symphonies, Haydn's last symphonies, without exception included trumpets and timpani. With Mozart, we see a very similar picture, only with him already 38% of the symphonies feature timpani and trumpets, namely 19 out of 50 (of course, one can argue about which works should be included).³² If one also counts the symphonies that are scored for trumpets but [173] lack an

²⁷ According to Eugene K. Wolf, *The Symphonies of Johann Stamitz: A Study in the Formation of the Classical Style*, (Utrecht: 1981): D3, ca. 1752–55 (p. 398 f.); D8, 1748–52 (p. 403 f.); D11, 1747–50 (p. 405 f.); D15, 1748–50 (p. 408 f.); D17, 1746–50 (p. 409); D22, 1747–50 (p. 412 f.); D25, 1742–47, alternate version for two horns instead of timpani and trumpets (p. 415).

²⁸ According to Eugene K. Wolf, *The Symphony at Mannheim* (New York und London; 1984) (*The Symphony 1720–1840. A Comprehensive Collection of Full Scores in Sixty Volumes*, ed. Barry S. Brook, Series C, Volume III): 11 (D11) (p. lxxviii); 27 (D10) (p. lxx); 35 (D20) (p. lxxi); 38 (D14) (p. lxxii); 40 (D19) (p. lxxii); 43 (C11) (p. lxxii); 44 (C10) (p. lxxii); 46 (D17) (p. lxxiii); 53 (D18) (p. lxxiii); 55 (C8) (p. lxxiv); 63 (D15) (p. lxxv); 66 (E2) (p. lxxv); 70 (D16) (p. lxxv). The numbers are based on a chronological list that can be traced back to Cannabich (*ibid.*, p. li, lxxv, lxxvi). The dates of composition are not known; however, it has been established that Symphonies up to number 55 were composed before September 1778 and the remaining were written afterwards (*ibid.*, p. li).

²⁹ For more on this key, see also Neal Zaslaw, *Mozart's Symphonies, Context, Performance Practice, Reception*, Oxford 1991, p. 161.

³⁰ According to Monelle, *The Musical Topic* (see footnote 11), 172, Haydn employed horns instead of trumpets in his earlier symphonies.

³¹ Cf. the list of symphonies by Georg Feder, "Haydn", MGG 2, Personenteil, vol. 8, column 989–1000: 37 (C major, before 1758), 32 (C major, before 1766 / 1760?), 33 (C major, before 1767 / 1760?), 20 (C major, before 1766 / 1762?), 13 (D major, 1763), 72 (D major, before 1781 / 1765 / 1763?), 38 (C major, before 1769 / 1768?), 41 (C major, before 1770 / 1768?), 48 (C major, before 1769?), 50 (C major, 1773), 60 (C major, before 1774), 54 (G major, 1774), 56 (C major, 1774), 69 (C major, before 1779 / um 1775/1776?), 61 (D major, 1776), 53 (D major), 70 (D major, before Dec. 1779 / 1778/1779?), 75 (D major, before 1781 / 1779?), 73 (D major, before 1782 / around 1781?), 86 (D major, 1786), 82 (C major, 1786), 88 (G major, 1787?), 90 (C major, 1788), 92 (G major, 1789), 96 (D major, 1791), 95 (C minor, 1791), 93 (D major, 1791), 94 (G major, 1791), 98 (B-flat major, 1792), 97 (C major, 1792), 99 (E-flat major, 1793), 101 (D major, 1793/1794), 100, (G major, 1793/1794), 102 (B-flat major, 1794), 103 (E-flat major, 1795), 104 (D major, 1795).

³² Cf. the list of symphonies by Ulrich Konrad, "Mozart", MGG 2, Personenteil, vol. 12, column 670-674. The symphonies in question are the following: K 45 (D major, 1768), K 48 (D major, 1768), K 73 (C major, 1772), K 97 (D major, 1770), K 96 (C major, 1771), K 110 (G major, 1771), K 111 (D major, 1771), K 161 (D major, 1773/1774), K 250 (D major, 1776/1777), K 297 (D major, 1778), K 318 (G major, 1779), K 320 (D major, 1779), K

explicitly notated timpani part, as the performance practice in this period would dictate the trumpets would most likely be augmented by improvised timpani parts,³³ then eight more symphonies would be added to our list.³⁴ According to this count, one could even say that well over half of Mozart's symphonies are scored for trumpets and timpani.

All of these observations are only based on a small sample; however, they paint a picture that lends credence to the idea that this result cannot be due to pure chance. Apparently, the expression type of festiveness played an ever-increasing role in symphonic music towards the end of the 18th century; this was a development towards large masses of loud sounds and large-scale forces, which finally also reached the slow movements:

In a few sublime passages in one of his Adagios in G or F, Haydn had the trumpets and timpani enter in a most surprising manner, he did this in a judicious and calculated manner: then came those who rode on his coat tails [i.e. the imitators]—and now we seldom see a symphony with an Andante without timpani and trumpets, we have become used to it, it no longer has the same effect.³⁵

This was written by Carl Friedrich Zelter in 1798. From this statement, it becomes clear that from his perspective at the time he could not recognize that this innovation was not merely an effect that lives from the moment of surprise, but it was rather part of a more general broadening of the expressive spectrum of symphonic music.

For the interpretation of the topos, it is crucial to examine the functional shift from—to put it simply—its baroque existence to its use in the symphonic music of the later period. The topos of festiveness is detached from its fixed context and transforms to become part of the musical vocabulary of composers in general. Thus, in a first step, it was appropriated by composers. Therein, we can recognize a socio-historically relevant moment: after all, festiveness was reserved for two socially meaningful spheres until around the middle of the 18th century. At the same time, composers of the day began to borrow this topos from its original contexts and use it for other purposes. However, as a general rule, it is impossible to determine these purposes, as the works were by no means generally written for particular occasions that would allow us to understand the function of the festiveness. Put concretely, we have to ask what does the function of the festiveness at the end of the Fifth Symphony mean, that is to say what semantic elements replaced those elements that the topos possessed in the Baroque era relating it to the majestic. Simply posing the question is at the same time itself the first step to answering the question. As soon as festiveness is seemingly decoupled from its point of reference, and an externally predefined point of reference at that, it results in a sort of self-referentiality, which can be interpreted as an expression of [174] self-confidence. In the moment when there is no longer a context-dependent object on which to project the majestic-festive, it is reflected back on the work itself and its composer. It celebrates itself as it were.

In any case, the festive is divorced from its clear social context, which did not go unnoticed by critics at the time. In 1780, Georg August Julius Leopold wrote the following:

The English may hear the beating of drums as an irresistible invitation to dance; as far as I'm concerned, there could also be just as many Germans who seek to ape the English and say: drums and bagpipes are the only proper

338 (C major, 1780), K 385 (D major, 1783), K 409 (C major, 1782/1783), K 425 (C major, 1783), K 504 (D major, 1786), K 543 (E-flat major, 1788), K 551 (C major, 1788).

³³ Zaslav, *Mozart's Symphonies* (see footnote 29), p. 466.

³⁴ K 133 (D major, 1772), K 184 (E-flat major, 1773), K 162 (C major, 1773), K 181 (D major, 1773), K 200 (C major, 1773), K 202 (D major, 1774), K 204 (D major, 1775), K 208 (C major, 1775).

³⁵ "Abhandlung: Bescheidene Anfragen an die modernsten Komponisten und Virtuosen" (continuation), *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 1/10, (1798): 153; cf. Zaslav, *Mozart's Symphonies* (see footnote 29), 388.

instruments for dance music: I for one am not convinced. Timpani are capable of suggesting the glory of a coming deity, the terrible magnificence of a storm, or to accompany a saint etc. in Bach: in brief, its tone is through and through fashioned for the majestic. But who under the sun can stand so much majesty and pure sublimity? Not that we were lacking a sense of grandeur. O! We are born just as capable of that as the English. But that is for certain: our nerves are far more sensitive to melodic and calming music than for the sheer sublime, and for this we can thank God and the climate.³⁶

Leopold's wording is very precise, indeed: he refers to sublime music but makes a distinction between, on the one hand, the aspect of the terrifying—with the term '*Furchtbarprächtigt*' (the terrible magnificence) even in all its ambivalence³⁷—and, on the other hand, the festive, even going so far as to cite the contexts by unerringly employing the terms glory, deity, and majesty. And perhaps it is not going too far to assume that a socio-historical moment lies behind his critique of the prevalence of loudness and sublimity: festiveness should still be reserved for the divine and majestic. We can find more evidence for this interpretation in one of his contemporaries who was writing at almost the same time in 1783 and who did not restrict himself to a discussion of English music:

In a word, one need only go to such a concert to be convinced that such a powerful orchestration is totally unsuited to chamber music and that timpani and trumpets are better placed behind a cavalry regiment than behind the grand piano. I am not opposed to large choral pieces in the church, even if the number of musicians is large; the long notes and the slower tempos combined with the high, vaulted ceilings of the building all help to ensure that it does not dissolve into chaos.³⁸

Here the author tries to hide his by now old-fashioned tastes behind arguments about acoustics. In fact, the reviewer apparently would have preferred if loudness and more specifically festiveness had been still reserved for religion (the church) and the court (the regiment). Loudness itself as a 'pure' aesthetic phenomenon was not rejected, rather its recontextualization met with resistance, even though it was perhaps only perceived as a decontextualization. The quote comes from the same year in which Mozart's *Linz Symphony* K 425 was composed. This piece requires a large orchestra: 14 parts with timpani and trumpets. In Beethoven's works, prototypically in the finale of the Fifth Symphony, this moment of festiveness is unambiguously foregrounded.

[175] In this context, it is questionable what significance we should ascribe to the well-known influence of composers coming out of the milieu of the French Revolution on Beethoven.³⁹ Without a doubt, it would be naïve to argue that such a connection caused Beethoven to adopt the political connotations of "revolutionary music" in his music. In musical ceremonies of the French Revolution, an explicit repurposing of festiveness was undertaken: In François-Joseph Gossec's Opera *La Triomphe de la République ou Le Camp de Grand Pré* from 1792–1793, to just name one example, a personification of freedom appears, for whose invocation and glorification Gossec employs the topos of festiveness. The musical unfolding of pomp, pageantry, and glamor was diverted into the political in exact alignment with revolutionary ideals. However, a comparably unambiguous use of the festiveness topos is not to be found in Beethoven, first and foremost because of the different political situation in the German *Reich*.

³⁶ Georg August Julius Leopold, *Gedanken und Konjekturen zur Geschichte der Musik*, (Stendhal: 1780), 7.

³⁷ After all, the "pleasing dreadful call" of the "silver trumpets" is also celebrated in song in Handel's *Judas Maccabaeus* (Act II) (cf. Steiner, *Zwischen Kirche, Bühne und Konzertsaal* [see footnote 1], 128).

³⁸ *Cramers Magazin der Musik*, quoted in Peter Schleuning, *Der Bürger erhebt sich, Geschichte der deutschen Musik im 18. Jahrhundert*, 2nd edition (Stuttgart and Weimar: 2000), 119.

³⁹ This has been best summarized by Michael Broyles, *Beethoven: The Emergence and Evolution of Beethoven's Heroic Style* (New York: 1987), 119–126.

Distinct from the context of the revolution, in the case of Beethoven there is no unambiguous object upon which to project the topos.

Reconstructing the meaning of later variants of this topos in music from the second half of the 18th and early 19th centuries by examining its appropriation of an earlier clearly codified topos leads us to an initial result that is painted with a rather broad brush, namely, the imprecise hypothesis that the corresponding music celebrates itself or its composer and that this represents a socio-historical moment to the extent that the composers have decoupled a topos from its previous societally determined purposes and have employed it on their own authority and perhaps even directed it at themselves. In the following sections, we will zero in on this thesis in two steps first in terms of content and later from a theoretical perspective.

III. Textually mediated content

One direct possibility to add more precision and nuance to this thesis is by investigating works of Beethoven using the topos of festiveness in semantically determined contexts. Here we once again encounter the same problem that also complicated our examination of the historical antecedents of the topos: we lack any objective, exclusively empirical criteria for determining which works make use of the topos. For, of course, we are dealing with individual compositions, no two of which can be reduced to the exact same expressive profile. It is even not desirable to cast aside such plurality in favor of a radically simplified interpretation. We will therefore start from the features that have been described and find works that—despite numerous differences—also exhibit a pronounced commonality in terms of their expressive content that will [176] first of all distinguish them from other works and second will allow us to make further conjectures about the possible semantic content of the music. We must, however, be careful to not lose sight of the fact that defining this common expression type in all works only captures a single momentary expression and is in no way meant to account for the entire expressive and emotional complexity of each individual work.

Neither the *Kantate auf die Erhebung Leopold des Zweiten zur Kaiserwürde* (1790) nor the oratorio *Christus am Ölberge* op. 85 (1803, revised 1804 and 1811) or even the C major Mass op. 86 (1807), in which the topos is albeit less unambiguously pronounced,⁴⁰ can be said to repurpose the topos or divorce it from its original function. On the contrary, the works mentioned represent an even clearer continuation of the topos and its original function as the underlying text makes plain: “Bow down, you millions, before the exultant altar! Look up to the lord of the thrones, who blessed you with salvation. Ring out, you jubilant choruses! So that the world can hear.” (Cantata, no. 5 Coro), and: “Glorious worlds above us spire, Happy Seraphs sing your joys, Man, join in the holy choir, Hail the great Redeemer’s praise.” (Oratorio, Finale, no. 6: Coro, Maestoso, in particular mm. 259–276; 384–431). In this respect, it would perhaps even be appropriate to speak of extending the original functionality rather than repurposing it, for the new contextualization in no way precludes the traditional semantics of the topos.

In turning our attention to the Cantata *Meeresstille und Glückliche Fahrt* op. 112 (1815) based on two Goethe poems,⁴¹ we leave behind the spheres of both the court and the church, but the poems that are set are so open to interpretation that it is impossible to derive from them any particularly precise answer to the question why the topos of festiveness plays such a large role in

⁴⁰ See in particular the Gloria, mm. 1–7, mm. 61–65, m. 97f. (also see later on in the movement), mm. 224–238, Sanctus, mm. 27–32, mm. 45–48, mm. 142–154 (ending).

⁴¹ See in particular mm. 88–103, 107–128, 140–155, 181–205.

Beethoven's works. The sea metaphors can refer to the most varied range of contexts. Rescue, overcoming struggle, luck, and relief are some of the terms that the text revolves around and their emotional content clearly permeates the music. However, how Beethoven understood these terms as metaphors (if he did) remains for the time being hidden.

In contrast, compelling points of reference are provided by the *Choral Fantasy* op. 80,⁴² for which Beethoven specifically commissioned a text.⁴³ In two respects, the hypothesis formulated above that the composer celebrates himself with the topos of festiveness is supported and substantiated by this composition. For one thing, Beethoven expressly wrote this work to serve as the "brilliant final piece" of his 1808 Akademie concert where along with other works two movements from the Mass in C major, the Fourth Piano Concerto and the Fifth and Six Symphonies were performed. With the *Choral Fantasy*, Beethoven was apparently seeking to create a sort of reprise of the entire concert, for this work takes up [177] again numerous elements from the preceding works on the program⁴⁴ so that in the context of the concert it had the effect of a finale concluding and synthesizing the entire concert. Moreover, the text by Christoph Kuffner possesses a self-referential quality that is related to the idea of the *Choral Fantasy* as a brilliant finale: the text sings the praises of art, in particular lauding the power of poetry and music, two elements that are indeed combined in the *Choral Fantasy*:

When music's enchantment reigns
And word's benediction speaks,
Magnificence takes form,
The night and tempest turns to light:

Outer peace and inner bliss
Reign o'er the fortunate ones.
All art in the spring's sun
Changes sorrow to light.

Greatness, once it has pierced the heart,
Then blooms anew in all its beauty.
Once one's spirit has taken flight,
A choir of spirits resounds in response.

Accept then, you beautiful souls,
Joyously the gifts of beautiful art.
When love and strength are united,
divine grace is bestowed upon Man.⁴⁵

In the end, Beethoven pays homage to himself too when he has the choir sing: "When music's enchantment reigns / ..., /Magnificence takes form, / The night and tempest turns to light." However, the festiveness topos first makes an appearance in the last two verses, which speak of greatness, of the gifts of beautiful art, of the qualities of love and strength that are bound together, all of which can be traced back to the artistic creator. They lead to divine grace, and Beethoven

⁴² See in particular mm. 140–156, mm. 189–204, mm. 322–355 (*Marcia assai vivace*), mm. 444–466, mm. 490–530, mm. 555–612 (ending).

⁴³ According to Carl Czerny; see Klaus Martin Kopitz, "Wer schrieb den Text zu Beethovens Chorfantasie?: ein unbekannter Bericht über die Uraufführung", *Bonner Beethoven-Studien* 3, (2003): here 43.

⁴⁴ For more on this, cf. Wilhelm Seidel, "Chorfantasie", in *Beethoven, Interpretationen seiner Werke*, ed. Albrecht Riethmüller [et al.], vol. 1, 2nd edition, (Laaber: 1996), p. 621f.

⁴⁵ Translation of the version of the German text given in Armin Raab, "Kritischer Bericht", in *Beethoven, Werke für Chor und Orchester*, (Munich: 1998), (= Beethoven Werke, 10, 2): 197.

casts himself as the vessel through which they pass. This speaks for a well developed sense of self-confidence, and to be sure a self-confidence that has its origins in Beethoven's work as an artist. Here we can perhaps find the first indications how Beethoven's self-confidence can be placed in the context of wider socio-historical developments, for the reflection on the effect of one's own work described above can be easily interpreted in terms of the principle of meritocracy that underpinned the bourgeois sense of self-confidence. The social standing was derived from the individual achievements of the citizen.⁴⁶ As such, Beethoven's work is an implicit celebration of achievements that has been made possible for him as a member of the growing bourgeoisie; in this sense, the music also expresses his pride.⁴⁷ Individual achievement is even expressly linked with a [178] moment of community building: "Once one's spirit has taken flight, / A choir of spirits resounds in response."

Around the time the *Choral Fantasy* was being written, Beethoven also composed the incidental music for Goethe's *Egmont* op. 84, in which the overture (mm. 295–347 [ending]) and the *Siegessymphonie* [Symphony of Victory] (Nr. 9) are the most closely related to the Fifth Symphony in how the festiveness topos is employed. Here both the subject and in particular the scene directly preceding the *Siegessymphonie* as well as the title of the music—which was prescribed by Goethe—provide a particularly precise semantic focus on the topos. The end of the overture already closes with the material from the *Siegessymphonie*, but this final movement of the incidental music is more significant: it is limited to this material, and it provides the key to unlocking the meaning of the overture and understanding the intended content. *Egmont* is a hero who is loved by the people because he grants them liberty, but he becomes the victim of a repressive political regimen because of his own intrinsic love of freedom. Before his execution, his lover, Klärchen, appears to him in a dream as an allegory of freedom. At the same time, this apparition awakens triumphal feelings in *Egmont*. Sure of his victory, the play ends with the *Siegessymphonie*, which in Beethoven's version is a true apotheosis. The music expresses the victory of freedom.

At the time of the German Campaign of 1813, Beethoven wrote a whole series of compositions, whose festiveness is rooted in the context of the victory over Napoleon. This is the largest directly politically motivated series of works by Beethoven. In 1823, the first work to be completed was *Wellingtons Sieg oder Die Schlacht bei Vittoria* op. 91, the second half of which was also titled *Siegessymphonie*, and as in the *Siegessymphonie* from the incidental music to *Egmont*, this music is also very similar to the finale of the Fifth Symphony (in particular mm. 363–421; 440–491). As in the subsequent pieces in this series of works, any further examination of the semantics of this composition is unnecessary. It celebrates the victory over Napoleon and the freedom of the territories previously occupied by France. In stating this, however, we have to acknowledge that the situation was not so cut and dry. As someone who was born in the Rhineland and then later emigrated moving to Vienna, Beethoven's relationship with France was a fickle one.⁴⁸ This is however not reflected in the music, or perhaps to put it more precisely:

⁴⁶ A summary of these developments can be found in Jürgen Kocka, "Das europäische Muster und der deutsche Fall," in *Bürgertum im 19. Jahrhundert*, vol. 1: *Einheit und Vielfalt Europas*, ed. Jürgen Kocka (Göttingen: 1995), 17f.

⁴⁷ Along these lines, Friedrich Rochlitz wrote in 1805: "The experience of the sublime is hence something that resembles a noble pride, and it also expresses itself in the same manner." ("Ueber den zweckmässigen Gebrauch der Mittel der Tonkunst," in *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* 8/4 (1805): column 49)

⁴⁸ For more on Beethoven's relationship with France and in particular the French Revolution, see Thomas Sipe, *Beethoven: Eroica Symphony*, (Cambridge: 1998), 30–53, and Manfred Osten, "Eine Kanone namens Beethoven: Der Komponist und sein Verhältnis zu den Franzosen," in *Die Wirklichkeit erfinden ist besser: Opern des 19. Jahrhunderts von Beethoven bis Verdi* (Stuttgart: 2002), 1–8.

hearing this level of subtlety in Beethoven's music is a task that goes far beyond the capabilities of the current musicological methods.

Beethoven wrote the other remaining compositions in this series in next to no time, all after the victorious Battle of Nations at Leipzig and for the occasion of the Congress of Vienna in 1814: for the premier of the Cantata *Der Glorreiche Augenblick* op. 136 on November 29, all of the [179] monarchs invited to the Congress of Vienna were in attendance.⁴⁹ According to Anton Schindler the concert was seen as nothing less than a "court festival".⁵⁰ In addition to the Seventh Symphony, the program of this concert also included appropriately enough *Wellingtons Sieg*. The size of the audience—6000 people are said to have witnessed the event⁵¹—helps to give some impression of the meaning of the music. The concert was a victory celebration of almost pan-European dimensions in which the sense of community was of central importance—regardless of the pragmatic political outcomes of the Congress of Vienna and the subsequent course of European history. In this glorious moment [*"Glorreichen Augenblick"*], the people from different social milieus and different European countries and principalities celebrated one and the same event, and in the Cantata, Europe, the rulers, Vienna, the empire, and God were lauded. Beethoven used his skills, whose praise he had full of civic pride already sung in the *Choral Fantasy*, to celebrate a current event. Also in the last stages of the German Campaign or during the Congress of Vienna, Beethoven composed the final song for Friedrich Treitschke's Singspiel *Germania*, the *Chor auf die verbündeten Fürsten* and the choral piece *Es ist vollbracht*, which was also written for the ending of a Singspiel by Treitschke (*Die Ehrenpforten*).

In both sets of incidental music for *König Stephan* op. 117 and *Die Ruinen von Athen* op. 113 (or the later adaptation *Die Weihe des Hauses*), Beethoven also touches lightly on the festiveness topos, but it is much less clearly manifested in these works and the underlying texts do not yield any new facets of the topic. In these commissioned works, one can find a victory march and hymns of praise to kings. These were designed, sometimes explicitly and at other times implicitly, to pay homage to the Emperor Francis I of Austria, who was as ruler of the imperial and royal monarchy also the King of Hungary. The occasion of the commission was the opening of the theater in Pest.⁵²

However, new semantic perspectives present themselves when we extend our investigation to include two further larger works, parts of which are identified with the topos of festiveness: the finale from *Fidelio* op. 72 as well as the finale of the Ninth Symphony op. 125. In the opera, the topos is reserved for two distinct thematic motives: on the one hand, the chorus celebrates the arrival of their rescuer Don Fernando singing "Blessed the day, / Blessed the hour," and he responds that he has come at the "will and pleasure" of "our gracious Majesty" to ensure justice (which is explicitly praised in the text) will prevail (no. 16: Finale, mm. 19–42, 65–70, 86–89). Don Fernando represents a view of sovereignty that was compatible with the idea of bourgeois self-confidence: No longer kneel like slaves before me, / Tyrant's grimness I detest. / A brother's come to seek his brethren, / And can he help, he gladly helps." Such a concept of the state is celebrated here along with [180] the moment of rescue and justice, also implying a delivery from the authoritarian arbitrariness of the state. However, in the same finale, the festiveness topos returns again, but now it is in the context of the mutual trust and support found

⁴⁹ Esteban Buch, *Beethoven's Neunte, Eine Biographie*, trans. Silke Hass (Berlin and Munich: 2000), 90.

⁵⁰ Quoted in Arnold Schmitz, *Das romantische Beethovenbild* (Berlin: 1927), 70.

⁵¹ Buch, *Beethoven's Neunte* (see footnote 49), p. 90; the second performance of the concert had a much smaller audience (ibid., p. 98).

⁵² For more on the background, see Ruth E. Müller "Musik zu ‚Die Ruinen von Athen‘", in *Beethoven. Interpretationen seiner Werke*, ed. Riethmüller [et al.], vol. 2 (see footnote 44), 185–190, and Frank Schneider, "Musik zu König Stephan", in ibid., 197–202.

in marriage: “Who calls a faithful wife, his own, / Join in our song of joy! / Never be it praised too highly, / Your husband’s savior to become.” (mm. 227–244, 252–257, 293–423 [ending])

Despite being separated by a number of years, we can draw a remarkably straight line from the finale of *Fidelio* to the symphonic version of Schiller’s *Ode to Joy*. Here too, the motive of marriage plays a prominent role: “Who has succeeded in the great attempt, / To be a friend’s friend, / Whoever has won a lovely woman, / Add his to the jubilation!” In his setting of Schiller’s text, Beethoven takes advantage of the possibility to reinterpret the very same passage in the text by casting it in contrasting musical frames. However, a comprehensive interpretation of the poem in Beethoven’s setting goes beyond the scope of this study. Thus given the present goals, it will suffice to identify the passages of the text that are set to music employing the festiveness topos. The clearest example of this are the lines: “Joy, beautiful sparks of the gods, / Daughter from Elysium, / We enter, drunk with fire, / Heavenly One, thy sanctuary! / Your magic binds again / What convention strictly divides; / All people become brothers, / Where your gentle wing abides.” (mm. 543–594, 803–810, 824–832). Thus, the music celebrates the idea of the unification of all people, which is also mentioned later in the text: “Indeed, who calls even one soul / Theirs upon this world! / And whoever never managed, shall steal himself / Weeping away from this union!” (mm. 285–290). Finally, Beethoven returns to the topos when the religious facets of joy come to the fore: “She gave us kisses and the fruit of the vine, / A tried friend to end. / Lust has been given to the worm, / And the cherub stands before God!” (mm. 312–330). Moreover, it is worth remarking that the line “Do you fall in worship, you millions?” (mm. 631–634, 730–733), even though it is not set with the festiveness topos, is reminiscent of the line “Bow down, you millions, before the exalted altar!” from the Leopold Cantata discussed above.

If we attempt to summarize our findings so far, it is advisable to place a special emphasis on recurrent motives, as they suggest that the link between the musical topos and semantic elements can be made with a certain degree of reliability. Of course, the point is not to reduce the multivalence of the topos (and the multitude of different forms in which it appears) to an unambiguous simplified form. From a methodological perspective, the only preliminary result that we can establish at this point is to describe some of the constituent parts of the semantics of the topos. It should be clear that non-conceptual musical compositions that in each case emerge as individual creations can in no way be reduced to this semantic level. Having said this, we can at least be confident in the preliminary result that this topos as expressed in Beethoven’s works maintains on the one hand its traditional semantic dimensions signifying praise of God and the sovereign, while on the other hand its meaning is extended by new or newly accented moments: the theme of victory as such was also a part of the festiveness topos in the baroque context, but now it has been linked with freedom (both in the sense of driving out occupying powers and in the sense of self-determined actions against political coercion, as [181] it was at least thematized in *Egmont*). And while the community of believers were obscured behind the baroque praise of God and the community of the people who were subject to the sovereign’s power were concealed behind the praise of the sovereign, community itself becomes a celebrated motive in Beethoven: beginning with friendship and the institution of marriage and culminating in the idea of the brotherhood of all people.⁵³ Bourgeois self-confidence found in the *Choral Fantasy*, where it is

⁵³ In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the symphony was understood as a genre that was expressly aimed at a large community. According to Heinrich Christoph Koch, a symphony for example depicted the “sentiment of an entire mass of people”. Quoted in Wolfram Steinbeck, *Die Symphonie im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, vol. 1: *Romantische und nationale Symphonik*, (Laaber: 2002), (= Handbuch der musikalischen Gattungen, 3,1): 32; other comparable quotes can be found on pp. 29 and 32f. as well as in Mark Evan Bonds, “The Symphony as Pindaric Ode,” in *Haydn and his World*, ed. Elaine Sisman (Princeton: 1997), 147, 148, and 149, and Stefan Keym, “Vom

understood as pride in individual (perhaps specifically bourgeois) achievements, is only explicitly associated with the festiveness topos in this one work in Beethoven's vocal music. Nevertheless, we will investigate this further for two reasons: First, the motive follows naturally from the preceding line of argument due to the appropriation and decontextualization of the topos. Second, it is part of the characters of Egmont and Don Fernando, which are, of course, bourgeois projections. Moreover, the motive can also be found in more hidden layers of the line "All people become brothers"—Schiller's original version of the line was "Beggars become brothers of lords", and Beethoven quoted this line in his sketches in the form "The lords are beggars".⁵⁴ Here the accent is not so much placed on individual achievements, but rather on the equality of people, which however also implies a self-confidence, namely, the self-confidence when dealing with the traditionally higher status social milieus.

IV. The dramatic nature of festiveness

Up to this point, the argumentation has mainly revolved around the similarity of the festiveness topos in the Baroque and the Enlightenment; however, something that becomes apparent in a side-by-side comparison of festive passages in Beethoven with their baroque archetypes, such as Charpentiers *Te Deum*, is that in Beethoven these passages occur as a rule as moments of a drama. This could, on a superficial level, be seen to simply be a result of the changing aesthetic conventions. The doctrine of the affections⁵⁵ was no longer relevant in Beethoven's time. But one must ask what the origins of such change in aesthetic preferences were and whether this change is of any historical significance. The dramatization of music restrained the nature of the festive to a certain extent, but in return it opened up new semantic nuances. Although this aspect is clearest in the symphonies—so clear that the topos of festiveness in the finale of the Fifth Symphony can be considered exemplary [182]—it also pays off to take another look at the works that were only briefly discussed above in order to identify concrete semantic points of reference.

In the process of writing the history of music, there is a good deal of manipulation that occurs when works that historians do not like or those that simply refuse to fit into a conceptual framework are summarily dismissed as occasional pieces. This sort of procedure is dubious and increases the chance of falling into the methodological pitfall that is inherent in art history, the tendency to construct the history from the retrospectively sanctioned and canonized works and thus basing historical narratives on anachronistic aesthetic judgments.⁵⁶ On the other hand, such judgments can certainly agree with the judgments of contemporaries. In this vein, one critic wrote the following after the performance of Treitschke's Singspiel *Die Ehrenpforten*:

When one considers that in the case of occasional pieces the happy moment is all that counts; when one takes into consideration the short amount of time in which these sort of ephemeral products must be written: then the poet will not lack the proper indulgence of his audience.⁵⁷

'revolutionären Te Deum' zur 'Marseiller Hymne der Reformation', Politische und religiöse Liedzitate in der Instrumentalmusik des 19. Jahrhunderts," *Musikforschung* 65 (2012): 362.

⁵⁴ Buch, *Beethoven's Neunte* (see footnote 49), 96.

⁵⁵ For more on the doctrine of the affections, see Rolf Dammann, *Der Musikbegriff im deutschen Barock*, 3rd ed., (Laaber: 1995), 166.

⁵⁶ Cf. Frank Hentschel, "Über Wertung, Kanon und Musikwissenschaft," in *Der Kanon der Musik: Theorie und Geschichte: Ein Handbuch*, ed. Klaus Pietschmann and Melanie Wald (Munich: 2013), 74f.; for more on the narrowing perspectives in the history of reception of Beethoven, see Nicholas Cook, "The Other Beethoven: Heroism, the Canon, and the Works of 1813–14," *19th-Century Music* 27 (2003): 3–24.

⁵⁷ *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 17/34 (1815): column 567f.

Beethoven did not assign the final chorus *Es ist vollbracht* with an opus number, and perhaps it is legitimate to ignore such compositions without opus number.

When we examine the remaining works, it is striking how often festiveness appears as a result of a preceding battle or drama, even if this is not the case in all pieces. This basic pattern is the model that is often known under the Latin expression *per aspera ad astra*, through hardship to the stars, and the Fifth Symphony in particular is a classical example of this. However, this model is just as clearly expressed in the *Choral Fantasy*. And in the incidental music for *Egmont*, *Wellingtons Sieg*, and the Cantata *Meeresstille und Glückliche Fahrt*, the dramatic moment has already been established in the plot. Freedom, victory, or rescue is achieved through the death of the hero, battle, or patience, while at the same time a musical arch of tension and release amplifies the idea of *per aspera ad astra*.

More important still is that the festiveness itself, whether it appears as a result of such a struggle or not, is often imbued with its own dramatic arch. The *Siegessymphonie* from *Egmont* rings out at first triumphantly emerging from the turmoil and tragedy in the previous passages in the overture, but even when taken on its own, there is a clear dramatic arch in the *Siegessymphonie*: it begins with a swift upward gesture that drives the orchestra up into the high register, already in the second measure, the horns introduce a further disturbance by introducing syncopations, and in the eighth note motive that enters in the third measure, it is first repeated twice each time following a half note and then repeated four times in succession without a break. [183] In the following, sforzati pile on top of one another, and after measure 14 just when any further ratcheting up of the tension with the same forces seems impossible, the texture changes. A forward driving ostinato figure in the low strings as well as the bassoons, which begins each time with a sforzato, builds the base for a fast motive that is first heard in the violins, and its sixteenth note triplets are by far the shortest notes so far in the piece. Directly following, the orchestra climbs once more up into the high register as was the case in the beginning. The actual peak is finally reached on an unadorned arpeggiated F major triad that is repeated several times in the trumpets until the moment right before the final chords are heard. Here the dramatic arch of the victory is itself composed as a celebration.

In *Meeresstille und Glückliche Fahrt*, it is the juxtaposition of stillness, darkness, and fear on the one hand and a gentle breeze, light, and luck on the other hand that establishes the dramatic situation. However, again, it is true that the dramatic arch of the partially festive second section is inherent to the musical structure, for Beethoven reflects the motive of the swift sailing in the music and uses tone painting to playing on the images of wind and waves. Thus, the music itself sets sail upon the sea.

In der *Siegessymphonie* from *Wellingtons Sieg*, the inner dramatization does not exhibit this sort of programmatic link. The victory had already been achieved and the Symphony simply celebrates it after the fact, but it does this in a form that conserves the dramatic elements as if they were some kind of reminiscences. Already the fanfare that opens the symphony, which simply consists of arpeggiated D major triads, is composed as an ascending process: in the first six bars, the first violins continually move upwards spanning a range of two and half octaves. Directly following the fanfare, the next march-like section with its lively rhythms and tempo—it is marked “Allegro con brio”—brings new energy into the piece. Again the texture is dominated by rising gestures, and the continual introduction of new motives such as the triplet runs starting in bar 386 or the figure made up of four sixteenth notes followed by a quarter note first heard in bar 397 help to maintain the persistent dynamic level just as do the multiple interjections of sforzati that begin in measure 393.

However, no composition realizes the dramatic moment so consequentially and complexly as the Fifth Symphony does; despite all the festiveness, the apotheosis of the finale takes up the dramatic elements that are characteristic for the *per aepera ad astra* process. With this in mind, the main motive of the first movement and the entire symphony can be understood as the accompanying rhythm of a fanfare that is so to speak still suppressed by the hardship of the unfolding *per aspera ad astra* process; only later will the fanfares break out. Such anacrusis rhythms,⁵⁸ which give special weight to certain notes, are most familiar from marches and are thus, by evoking the warlike sphere, related to the festiveness topos. In Beethoven's own marches, we can find characteristic examples. The most widely spread form consists of two sixteenths followed by two eighth notes, and we can find such a figure in the Marches WoO 20 (e.g. m. 16) and WoO 24 (e.g. m. 9): [184]

Musical example 1: March WoO 24, m. 9f.

More infrequently encountered but more directly related to the main motive of the fifth Symphony is the triplet anacrusis figure, an example of which can be found in the March WoO 18:

Musical example 2: March WoO 18, mm. 14–16

Finding these sort of figures that are decidedly military in their connotations in a piece such as the choral song *Germania* (m. 8), is not at all surprising, but when its presence lends a similar martial nuance to the epithet of God “omnipotens” in the Gloria of the C major Mass, it is perhaps more of a surprise:

⁵⁸ For more on this, see Monelle, *The Musical Topic* (see footnote 11), 166f.

Musical example 3: Mass in C major op. 86, m. 97f.

[185] This sort of march figure can be found in the symphonic literature before Beethoven.⁵⁹ In the Fifth Symphony, Beethoven only gradually lets the rhythm of the main motive take on the function of a festive-martial accompanying rhythm. This happens for the first time at the end of the Andante (mm. 240–242). Starting in m. 19 of the third movement, the motive appears in a form in which it already has a fanfare or signal-like effect; however, at this point it does not yet assume the characteristic accompanying role. This first occurs in the fourth movement. In a certain way, one can thus say that only in the moment in the last movement when this figure assumes its stereotypical accompanying role and fades into the background of the musical events does it come into its own (this can be found in several passages, in particular: mm. 48–50, 122–132, 257–259 and 261):

The image shows a musical score for measures 121-123. The instruments listed are: Corno I, II in C; Clarino I, II in C; Trombone I Alto; Trombone II Tenore; Trombone III Basso; Timpani in C-G; Violini I; and Violini II. The score features a prominent triplet rhythm in measures 121 and 122, marked 'più forte'. The timpani part has a triplet of eighth notes in measure 121. The violin parts have a similar triplet in measure 121. The brass parts (trumpets and trombones) have a similar triplet in measure 122. The score is in C major and 4/4 time.

Musical example 4: Fifth Symphony, Finale, mm. 121–123

However, this process of gradual emergence, while important, is more of a secondary narrative in the symphony as a whole. The latent C-major festiveness is much more clearly foreshadowed in the slow movement, where it breaks through in three passages as if from another world in a chromatic median relationship to the A-flat major tonic of the Andante (mm. 31–37, 80–86, 147–156). It is as if it was already there below the surface—“as if a wave of restrained courage rashly surging forward”⁶⁰—that must first be set free as happens in the last movement. Contemporary audiences also heard this as “harsh and warlike”⁶¹—as [186] has already been demonstrated, the festive-majestic and the warlike-terrifying cannot be clearly separated from one another.

⁵⁹ E.g. Haydn, no. 30, movement I, m. 10f., no. 48, movement I, m. 5f.

⁶⁰ Anonymous, “Uebersicht der musikalischen Productionen in Mannheim: Winterhalbjahr 1811–12,” *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* XIV/23 (1812): column 383.

⁶¹ Anonymus, *Musik in Leipzig*, in: *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* XI/28 (1809): column 434. As Beate Angelika Kraus has shown, this interpretation was particularly highlighted by French critics. One possible explanation is that they recognized something in common with the tradition of revolutionary music. (“Beethoven and the Revolution: The View of the French Musical Press”, in *Music and the French Revolution*, ed. Malcolm Boyd (Cambridge: 1992), 303–306).

While the festiveness in the first movement thus remained suppressed, the exact opposite happens in the last movement. The last bars of the Scherzo, which E. T. A. Hoffmann described as eerie, are brushed aside when the C-major fanfare at the beginning of the last movement enters *attacca*. Nevertheless, the drama is deeply embedded in the finale, which itself is the triumphal⁶² result of it. This is first of all because the fanfares present the central musical material that Beethoven subjected to a dramatic development over the course of the piece, but also—and much more important for our present investigation—because the festive material itself is imbued with the dramatic, for it exhibits numerous dynamic and climactic elements. Beginning in bar 6, the first two repetitions of eighth note runs culminate in a held note on c^3 ; in the third repetition, the figure is extended up to e^3 . A “consequence” of this overstepping the set range is that starting in bar 12 a series of new motivic materials are introduced that culminate in an acceleration of the overall speed of the music: a sixteenth note motive that is repeated energetically six times with the interval between the repetition becoming shorter after the first repetition. Once more the tension can only continue to be ratcheted up by introducing new material: the descending eight note lines bring a new dynamic into play, as they are marked with *sforzati* that contradict the meter. The downward tendency of these figures is contrasted with a moment of growth as the range is successively expanded so that any semblance of calming down is counteracted. And the movement continues on in this vein. However, there is not even a hint of modulating away from the tonic: here we have the highest drama that does nothing more than reinforce the tonic. The pomp of timpani and trumpets is used to create a pseudo-drama. But this term is a somewhat inexact characterization; it would be more appropriate to say that a moment of the dramatic is inherent to this kind of festiveness in its innermost core. Like a distant reverberation, this festiveness itself carries the struggle, the fight, and the exertion. The music articulates a hard-won festiveness. This is probably why images of victory, triumph, and the heroic are encountered so often in descriptions of Beethoven’s works. If feelings linked to ideas like self-confidence, community, equality, and freedom are evoked in the festive passages of this music, then they clearly do not sound like a cool description of the state of affairs but rather a difficult achievement, as values or states that have been hard fought. Thus, we could also perhaps speak of the heroic-festive (or the warlike-festive) in Beethoven—in contrast to the concept of the majestic-festive, which formed the basis of the festiveness topos in the Baroque. [187]

V. The mental state of the bourgeoisies

So far, we have for obvious reasons looked for examples that realize the expression type of festiveness in a particularly clear manner. However, in the vast majority of cases, this expression type is more or less of a foreground or background element woven into a highly complex, perhaps even contradictory, expressive fabric. Beethoven’s music cannot be reduced to festiveness, and this expression type is not assigned a special status. It is a single facet of Beethoven’s rich expressive world. It seems to be significant, but that is surely also true of other expression types. Of course, one has to start somewhere if the goal is to understand the meaning of the expressive content of Beethoven’s music (as well as that of his predecessors and contemporaries). In addition, the festive as found in Beethoven is distinctive in that it is seldom present in such a monolithic manner as in Charpentier’s *Te Deum*, but rather it is as a rule

⁶² The term ‘triumph’ is also to be found in contemporary reviews: Anonymous, *Uebersicht der musikalischen Productionen in Mannheim* (see footnote 60), column 382; Anonymous, *Conzert, Wiener allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 19, (8 May 1813): column 293.

opposed with totally different characters and to some extent also undermined by these so that the festiveness is sometimes just a momentary flash or an indistinct figure behind a veil etc.

As the object of study is expressivity, it seems obvious to ask what we can learn from Beethoven's biography that may be helpful in explaining the character of the music, as has been often attempted. However, individual elements only begin to take on a distinct contour when they can be distinguished from the general, and in his use of the festiveness topos, Beethoven is part of a longer tradition, where that which was conserved was just as constitutive as that which changed. It is therefore necessary to first interpret the semantics of the festive in this horizon. Trying to simultaneously play off that which is specific to Beethoven against that which is specific to Haydn or Cherubini seems to be less informative, and it implies a premature differentiation (differentiation is one of the most often misused and even inherently dubious virtues in academic studies). Thus, in interpreting the expressivity of Beethoven's music we first need to focus on the more general aspects that may be present by identifying the cultural, social, or political factors and ideas that gave rise to festiveness. This implies a socio-psychological turn in our argumentation where we view Beethoven as a representative of a larger, more or less clearly definable historical-social milieu.

Of course, we need to be careful to not claim that specific concrete events are directly responsible for the festiveness topos. Elsewhere I tried to argue first of all that we should think of thought patterns as concepts that result to a certain extent as it were out of a sedimentation of fundamentally similar and related historical-cultural experiences that do not presuppose the exact same experiences of producers and recipients—and second that thought patterns certainly transcend their individual concretizations.⁶³ The same is also true for a musical expression type such as the festive. For example, it would be wrong to try to link the topos in Beethoven [188] directly with the German Campaign of 1813. As we saw, the topos occurs in a wide range of Beethoven's works. It can be found embedded in complex expressive textures in all of the symphonies. Thus, it cannot be adequately understood by looking at isolated contexts. To try to understand it as just the sum of the individual cases discussed above still fails to capture the actual complexity that the expressive power of music possesses. The methodological step taken above, in which music based on concrete historical events and the setting of unambiguous texts were used as the key to interpreting musical expression, can only give us an initial indication. Rather than searching out passages in the music that are a simple reflection of concrete content and events, we must try to reconstruct the deeper emotional level, the mental state of the people who produced and consumed such music, i.e. to dig down, so to speak, from the concrete references to reach the sedimentary content. This also means that we must be vigilant to avoid both extremes: on the one hand, being seduced by the simple—and in this reductive approach false—assertion that, for example, the festive in the *Glorreichen Augenblick* just denotes the victorious German Campaign of 1813 and, on the other hand, to suppress any deeper digging musicological interpretation of the expressive quality of passages such as the festive elements of the Seventh Symphony just because there seem to be no links to concrete contents and occasions.

In 1852, Franz Brendel called Beethoven's music democratic; in 1852, Johann Christian Lobe countered that: "If it is possible to have a democratic music, would it not be just as legitimate to speak of an aristocratic music? [...] But you can rest assured that we will never have partisan music, and even though there will always be those who will write: 'Art must be

⁶³ Frank Hentschel, *Bürgerliche Ideologie und Musik. Politik der Musikgeschichtsschreibung in Deutschland 1776–1871* (Frankfurt am Main and New York: 2006), 315–331.

democratic'; it will not be, for it cannot, just as it cannot become aristocratic."⁶⁴ Brendel's oversimplification and the reinterpretation of a methodological challenge into an ontological axiom in the case of Lobe—both attitudes were politically motivated from opposing camps—are of course not the subtlest of approaches, and there are certainly more nuanced views that we could bring to bear.

Music expresses emotions (this is at any rate true for many varieties of music). But political systems are not emotions. However, emotions (feelings, moods etc.) are responses to the environment, and in this respect, music could indeed express emotions that were caused by political circumstances, convictions, problems, and aversions, even though it goes without saying that emotions are caused by a large number of factors in which social, cultural, political aspects on the one hand and individual, psychological influences on the other hand become interlocked with one another in the most complicated manner. If Beethoven was reacting to the political-social circumstances of his time, then he did this as both an individual and as a representative of a particular milieu. In as much, the perception of reality that comes to the fore must be that of—here (for the time being) it is unavoidable [189] to be somewhat vague—the milieus that Beethoven himself belonged to, the sophisticated middle class that was gaining in power, i.e. the emerging and not yet distinct merchant and educated middle class. The question remains to be answered what it was about their mental states that the people in these milieus shared in common due to their collective political-social experiences. For it is most likely these mental states that above all shaped the expressive character of the music. In the German context, we should be careful to not overemphasize the aspect of opposition between the bourgeois and the aristocracy, and we should also keep in mind the continuation of traditional themes such as the celebration of the divine. However, the general and gradual strengthening of the middle class and their increasing self-confidence cannot be examined without taking into account the events surrounding the French Revolution, but also the formulation of human rights, and the sympathy for the German Campaign of 1813, which does indeed presuppose an identification with other communities—political and national alliances—and thus transcends the structure of a territorial states and also ushered in an era when people were increasingly more involved in politics. The idea of equality, the pride citizens felt as a result of their enhanced political-social status, the concept of freedom, and a new understanding of community that was associated with this were still tied to the moment of struggle because of their association with the character of triumph and victory. After all, they did indeed represent new achievements—regardless of whether these had come to fruition in reality or were still just an ideal.⁶⁵

It is not the events that are reflected in the music, rather, the expressive quality of the composition reflects the emotional state of the people, which ultimately can be traced back to those particular situations and events. That victory, triumph, freedom, equality, self-confidence or pride, community, and—lest we forget—religiosity can be shown to be subjects of festive music by Beethoven, does not so much imply that the music expresses these, but more precisely

⁶⁴ Franz Brendel, *Geschichte der Musik in Italien, Deutschland und Frankreich von den ersten christlichen Zeiten an bis auf die Gegenwart*, 22 *Vorlesungen*, (Leipzig: 1852 [1851]), 357; Johann Christian Lobe, *Musikalische Briefe: Wahrheit über Tonkunst und Tonkünstler für Freunde und Kenner von einem Wohlbekannten*, vol. 1 (Leipzig: 1852), 131. Cf. Frank Hentschel, *Bürgerliche Ideologie und Musik* (cf. footnote 63), 265.

⁶⁵ We should of course not forget that the historical context of such ideas of equality and community included sexist and ethnocentric exclusionary mechanisms. Inasmuch, the significance of music as an emotional witness to history should also be examined critically, as it only tells history from a particular perspective.

identifies the environment from which the emotions expressed in the music arose. In this way, music could be understood as a politics that has been transformed into the psychological.⁶⁶

Naturally, we cannot limit the mental state of bourgeois milieu to the moment of festiveness. For a more comprehensive interpretation of the music of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, it would therefore be a promising endeavor to extract different expression types,⁶⁷ evaluate the significance in each case, and to then interpret each type on its own. It goes without saying that these are first of all ideal types that never occur in their simple abstracted form and second that new emotional qualities can emerge out of the entanglement of different, even completely contradictory expression types, which transcend their individual component parts. All that I am claiming here is that an expression type, which I have described as festiveness, can in principle be identified in the music of Beethoven and that it describes an expressive quality in which a moment of the bourgeois state of mind is articulated, a state of mind that itself is a result of numerous, multilayered social and political processes. Since we are able in retrospect to identify this context even if only approximately, it is possible to understand the music (inter alia) as an emotionally mediated expression of history. Music enables us to take a deep look into the psyche of a particular historical-cultural milieu.

⁶⁶ For more on this, see my interpretation of music in horror films from the 1970s: *Töne der Angst, Die Musik im Horrorfilm* (Berlin 2011) (= Deep Focus, 12): 32.

⁶⁷ Melanie Wald-Fuhrmann's work on melancholy '*Ein Mittel wider sich selbst*': *Melancholie in der Instrumentalmusik um 1800* (Kassel 2010) sheds light on one of the facets that should be taken into consideration.