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Coram Deo: The Trombone and the Sublime in Works by Beethoven

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Musical Arts

by

Gwang Hyun Kim

2023

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Coram Deo: The Trombone and the Sublime

in the Works by Beethoven

by

Gwang Hyun Kim

Doctor of Musical Arts

University of California Los Angeles, 2023

Professor William Andrew Kinderman, Chair

This dissertation explores the profound role of the trombone (in German: *Posaune*) as a musical embodiment of the presence of God, or *Coram Deo*, and discusses its contribution to the aesthetics of the sublime in compositions by Ludwig van Beethoven.

The first chapter examines the *Drei Equali* WoO 30, Beethoven's only work for trombones by themselves. The expressive qualities of these pieces are associated with spiritual and transcendent qualities in the rich historical context of Tower Music (*Turmmusik*). Beethoven's only opera, *Fidelio*, invites study of Beethoven's use of the trombone in passages associated with death or *ombre* style, as found in the grave-digging scene in the last act. Beethoven's use of the trombone in association to death follows his predecessors such as Mozart, and calls to mind the prominence of the trombone in the *Tuba Mirum* of the

Mozart *Requiem*. The second chapter of the dissertation investigates Beethoven's employment of trombones in the Fifth Symphony to emphasize qualities of brotherhood, freedom, and hope, themes connected to the ideals of the French Revolution, and to those Masonic attributes bound up with the sublime. The Sixth Symphony explores use of the trombones to portray an aspect of fear inherent in the sublime--"Gottesfürcht" ("fear of God")--an element referenced in writings by Edmund Burke. The final chapter addresses the Schillerian notion of the sublime embraced by Beethoven in his Ninth Symphony and *Missa solemnis.* These works employ the trombone to help convey spiritual themes evoking a sense of the sublime. In this pair of choral-orchestral compositions, the distinctive tonal qualities of the trombone, with its deep and resonant sound, enhance the sonic representation of the voice of God or *Vox Verbum*.

Drawing on an interdisciplinary approach combining musicology, theology, and aesthetics, this project assesses recurring motives, orchestration choices, and other musical techniques that emphasize the trombone's association with the divine. By examining the special role of the trombone as an instrument with a distinctive range of expressive and spiritual associations, we can enhance our understanding of the relationship between the trombone, spirituality, and the sublime.

The dissertation of Gwang Hyun Kim is approved.

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2023

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Soli Deo Gloria!

VITA

Gwang Kim is the second trombone of the Bakersfield Symphony Orchestra and has performed with notable ensembles around the world including the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Hollywood Bowl Orchestra, New West Symphony, Seocho Philharmonic, and the Daesan Philharmonic. He has also performed at Coachella with artists from 88 Rising and has recorded for numerous television shows including ABC’s *The Fosters* and Netflix original *The Chef’s Table*. As an educator, Gwang has been invited as a guest clinician for the Rockport Brass Festival, Pasadena City College, California State University Northridge, WMU Symphony and KAYS Orchestra.

Currently, Gwang serves on faculty at Loyola Marymount University and Ventura College Schwab School of Music while continuing his duties as teaching associate at the Harmony Project, at the Pasadena Conservatory of Music, and at UCLA. As an advocate for serving communities in need, he also is the teaching artist at YOLA-Los Angeles Philharmonic, Inglewood. He holds his Bachelor of Music degree from the USC Thornton School of Music and a Master of Music degree from the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music. With the present dissertation, he concludes his Doctorate in Musical Arts degree at the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music.

I. Beethoven, Trombones, and the *Drei Equali*, WoO 30

Toward the end of the year 1812, Ludwig van Beethoven experienced a turning-point in his life and art. His "Immortal Beloved" crisis occurred in July of that year, forcing the composer to become resigned concerning his long-desired prospects for a happy married life. Artistically, Beethoven had completed a remarkably productive period since 1800, during which eight of his nine symphonies were written as well as his only opera, *Fidelio*, which would undergo its final thorough revision and at last find enduring success on the stage in 1814. Beethoven spent time during summer 1812 at the spa resorts in Bohemia, where he met the celebrated poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, who was "amazed" by Beethoven's talent, but found him to be an "utterly untamed personality."[1] Despite all his creative achievements, Beethoven entered an unproductive phase during 1813. The composer's biographer Maynard Solomon comments that "Beethoven wrote no work of the slightest significance during 1813: essentially, he abandoned composition during the first seven months of this year."[2] It would take another decade before the increasingly isolated and soon virtually stone-deaf composer completed the pair of choral-orchestral works that would crown his career: the *Missa solemnis*, virtually finished by 1823, and the Ninth Symphony, first performed in 1824.

[1] Alexander Wheelock Thayer, *Life of Beethoven*, revised and edited by Elliot Forbes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), 537.
[2] Maynard Solomon, *Beethoven* (New York: Schirmer, 1977), 221.

A conspicuous feature of several of Beethoven's orchestral works—including *Fidelio* and the *Missa solemnis* as well as the Fifth, Sixth, and Ninth Symphonies—is the expansion of sonority and expression produced by instruments not conventionally employed. Particularly striking among these is his use of trombones, which appear already in Beethoven's oratorio *Christ on the Mount of Olives* from 1803, and then in *Fidelio* (whose first versions date from 1805 and 1806), preceding their crucial use in the finale of the Fifth Symphony and last two movements of the *Pastoral* Symphony, works premiered in December 1808. On the other hand, the role these instruments play in both the *Missa solemnis* and Ninth Symphony is hardly less impressive and resourceful. In the context of Beethoven's special musical treatment of the Mass text, and the rich imagery of Schiller's "Ode to Joy" in the choral finale of the Ninth, these instruments assume an outstanding symbolic significance.

Before examining these larger works, let us set the scene by recalling Beethoven's visit to Linz, Austria, a city west of Vienna, during October 1812, following his meetings with Goethe and his time spent in Teplitz, Bohemia, in September. One reason for Beethoven's travel was to visit his brother Johann in Linz, where he tried to interfere with his brother's relationship with a woman—Therese Obermayer—who was soon to become his sister-in-law. However, the trip to Linz had another, more positive aspect. Beethoven visited his musician friend Franz Xaver Glöggl, Kapellmeister of the Linz

cathedral, and this encounter resulted in his only composition for trombones alone, the *Drei Equali*, WoO 30, composed by early November of that year.

While staying in Linz, Beethoven received a commission from the Kapellmeister Glöggl to compose these so-called "*Equali*" for 4 trombones in dedication to All-Souls' Day (2 November). Beethoven was eager to do so. Some uncertainty surrounds the exact origin of the musical form called *Equali*. During the observation of All Souls' Day in Linz, the inhabitants of the town, all classes and professions, every age group and lineage, would typically walk out to the cemetery to visit graves of deceased relatives. On the evening before All Saints' Day (1 November) and on the morning of All Souls' Day (2 November), the town musicians or *Stadtmusiker* would lead a performance with trombones heard from the balcony of the Town Hall or tower of the cathedral, an earnest *memento mori* for the living. The figure below (Illustration 1a) shows present-day Linz Cathedral (also known as Alter Dom), the location of the *Drei Equali*'s premiere (dated 2 November 1812). The high towers (Illustration 1b) feature openings beneath the clocks where *Turmmusik* would have been performed. This venerable tradition associated the use of the trombone with matters of death and the afterlife, and as we shall see, this same tradition extended to Beethoven's own funeral held thirteen years later, in 1827.

Illustration 1a. Old Cathedral in Linz[3]

Illustration 1b. The Towers of Old Cathedral in Linz[4]

Let us consider the tradition of tower music (*Turmmusik*) in the broader historical context of central Europe. Municipal musicians (*Stadtpfeifer*) included players in various towns especially in German but also some Czech-speaking areas, who performed on a variety of wind instruments, including the trombone (Illustration 2).

[3] Dein Freund der Baum, "Alter Dom Linz," Photograph, (Linz: CC BY-SA 3.0, 15 June 2009).
[4] Michael Kranewitter, "Alter Dom Außen II. Jpg," Photograph, (Linz: CC BY 2.5, 10 May 2008).

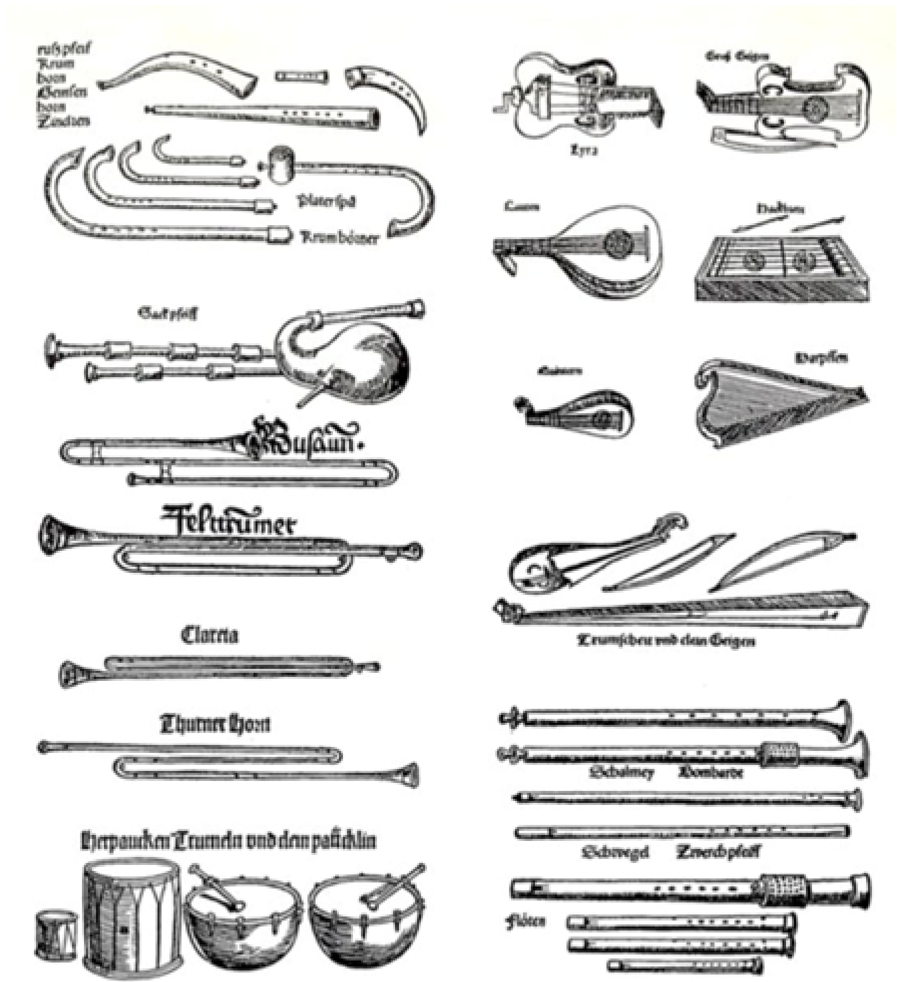

Illustration 2. Instruments used by *Stadtpfeifer* including trombones[5]

In earlier times, *Turmmusik* was often performed in the celebration of large religious events, thereby proclaiming the souls of the dead. It was used for sacred processions which required the performance of *Ablassen* (fanfare) pieces (sacred works for the trombone and trumpet) from towers, rituals connected to biblical passages (2 Kings 11:14, 2 Chronicles 23:13). Such specific traditions related to *Stadtpfeifer* can be traced back especially to the Moravian church, which has the

[5] Sebastian Virdung, *Musica getutscht und ausgezogen* (Basel, 1511). See also, "Stadtpfeifer um 1475: Die historischen Vorbilder unserer Gruppe," Landshuter Stadtpfeifer, accessed May, 1 2023, http://www.landshuter-stadtpfeifer.de/index.php?id=spieler_200901.

most richly documented history of continuous usage of the trombone. Trevor Herbert states that "the Moravian church stands alone in having an extensive and continuous tradition of amateur trombone playing. . . the church can be traced to fifteenth century Bohemia and Moravia and the followers of the radical Czech religious reformer Jan Hus. . . this community created the German town of Herrnhut in Saxony, the first of many settlements formed throughout the world by Moravian communities."[6]

The perception of trombone sound heard from a tower conveys sacred associations. One such example stems from the later eighteenth-century history of a Moravian community in Pennsylvania. According to one of the stories documented on Christmas morning 1755 in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, a recently converted member notified the Moravian community of a planned attack from the Indians. When the bishop heard this news, he responded not with violence, but with trust in God for their protection. With this response, the Moravian community is said to have prayed as the trombone players of the tower continued to play. At four o'clock on Christmas day when the trombones played again, it is said that the sound of the trombones "mystified the Indians, who took it to be a sign of the Moravians' spiritual protection and fled."[7] Although there is a shortage of evidence to fully prove the details, such a report shows how the sublime tone of the trombone heard from a tower assumed special

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[6] Trevor Herbert, *The Trombone* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), 230. Herrnhut (Czech: Ochranov), founded in 1722, is in the Görlitz district of Saxony.
[7] Herbert, *The Trombone,* 229-237

associations for such communities, carried forth from one generation to the next.[8] Regarding the traditions of tower music, according to Herbert, "it stands to reason that the practice of using trombones owes much to the tradition established at Herrnhut, and it has been argued that this in turn might derive from the German *Stadtpfeifer* tradition, but it is equally possible that the credibility of trombones in religious worship is aided by references of *Posaunen* in the Lutheran Bible."[9] David Guion, in his book *The Trombone,* surveys older handbooks while providing translations in his first chapter, entitled "The Trombone and its Music in the Seventeenth and Nineteenth Centuries: An Introduction," from which I draw some of the following references.

Johann Phillip Eisel, in his *Musicus autodidactos, oder der sich selbst informirende Musicus* (1738), writes that according to Philo's testimony, the trombone is believed to have been invented by Moses in 2400 BC.[10] Johann Heinrich Zedler in his *Grosses vollständiges Universal-Lexicon* (1741), claims that the trombone served to bring together the people of God. This coming together of citizens could have been triggered by important public events, as when high officials and kings would be present for a call to battle, or a signal of victory in war. In addition, the trombone could signal or contribute to a sacrificial procession, religious services,

[8] See also, Sarah Justina Eyerly, *Moravian Soundscapes: A Sonic History of the Moravian Missions in Early Pennsylvania,* (Indiana:Indiana University Press, 2020).
[9] Herbert, *The Trombone,* 229-237.
[10] Johann Philipp Eisel, *Musicus autodidactos, oder der sich selbst informirende Musicus* (Erfurt: Johann Michael Funcken, 1738), 70-74. See also David Guion, *The Trombone: Its History and Music, 1697-1811* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 40-46.

coronation of kings, and also serve to signal danger from watch towers.[11] Writers like Johann Mattheson, Christian Friedrich Schubart, Johann Philip Eisel and Johann Heinrich Zedler observe a continuous thread of associations of the trombone to a sacred or ceremonial role. With the passing of time and the eventual emergence of a rising middle class and the upper class of German society, the trombone continued to hold a significant symbolic place in German musical traditions.

The Protestant and specifically Lutheran context provide an excellent bridge for analyzing the role of the trombone in expressing the sublime. Martin Luther's Bible translation renders both Hebrew word 'shofar' and the Greek 'salpigx' as "*Posaune*," so designating those instruments used to signal the solemn pronouncements of the Lord, and the Last Judgment.[12] The *shofar* is an ancient instrument that was used by the Egyptian and Jewish people. It is made from the horn of a ram and is played by buzzing on the small end of the instrument. The *salpigx* is an ancient Greek brass instrument that is also played by buzzing through the smaller end. The *salpigx* was mainly used for military, ceremonial and sporting events. Both instruments appear in the Bible, the *shofar* as the tool used to pronounce the presence of God, the *salpigx* as the instrument to signal the Last Judgment. In Luther's bible, these names were translated as *Posaune*. An example of

[11] Johann Heinrich Zedler, *Grosses vollständiges Universal-Lexicon* 64 vols. (Leipzig: Zedler, 1732-50), vol. 6, col. 1145; vol. 28, col. 1695-1700; vol. 45, col. 1089-90. See Guion, *The Trombone,* 47-59.

[12] In this dissertation, I shall generally capitalize the noun *Posaune* as in modern German usage.

a passage from the Luther bible[13] in which we see the trombones being used in conjunction with the presence of God is Revelation 1:10: "Ich war im Geist an des Herrn Tag und hörte hinter mir eine große Stimme wie einer Posaune" ("I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trombone"). Another passage stems from Revelation 4:1 where the voice from heaven is depicted to be like the trombones: "Darnach sah ich, und siehe, eine Tür war aufgetan im Himmel; und die erste Stimme, die ich gehört hatte mit mir reden wie eine Posaune, die sprach: Steig her, ich will dir zeigen, was nach diesem geschehen soll." ("After this I looked, and behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice that I heard was as it were of a trombone talking with me; which said, come up here, and I will show you things which must be hereafter"). Through these passages, we can observe how the *Posaune* from Luther's bible is used as the instrument to signal the *Coram Deo* (the presence of God).

The Bible also references the *Posaune* as the instrument used to gather the people of God for worship. In Joel 2:15, "Blaset mit Posaunen zu Zion, heiliget ein Fasten, rufet die Gemeinde zusammen!" ("Blow the trombone in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly!"). Another passage that portrays the trombone as the instrument used for calling the people of God to worship is also seen in Joshua 6:4, "Und laß sieben Priester sieben Posaunen des Halljahrs tragen vor der Lade her, und am siebenten Tage geht siebenmal um die Stadt, und laß die Priester die Posaunen blasen." ("And seven priests

[13] All German biblical passages in this dissertation are from the Luther Bibel 1545 edition.

shall bear before the ark seven trombones of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trombones"). Lastly, in Psalm 150, the passage shows how the trombones are clearly listed as an instrument used to praise and worship God. Psalm 150:3 states "Lobet ihn mit Posaunen; lobet ihn mit Psalter und Harfen" ("Praise him with the sound of the trombone: praise him with the psaltry and harp").

The *Posaune* finally also achieves its role as the signifier of judgment at the call of the last trump when the trombone shall sound. Matthew 24:31 states, "Und er wird senden seine Engel mit hellen Posaunen; und sie werden sammeln seine Auserwählten von den vier Winden, von einem Ende des Himmels zu dem andern," ("And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trombone, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other"). Again in 1 Corinthians 15:52, "Und dasselbige plötzlich, in einem Augenblick, zur Zeit der letzen Posaune. Denn es wird die Posaune schallen, und die Toten werden auferstehen unverweslich, und wir werden verwandelt werden." ("In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trombone shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed"). And lastly, Revelation 8:1-2 states, "Und da es das siebente Siegel auftat, ward eine Stille in dem Himmel bei einer halben Stunde. Und ich sah die sieben Engel, die da stehen vor Gott, und ihnen wurden sieben Posaunen gegeben" ("When he broke open the

seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about a half an hour. And I saw that the seven angels who stood before God were given seven trombones”). These passages from both the Old and New Testaments goes to show how the *Posaune* reflects the *Coram Deo*, the calling for assembly of God’s people, and the sound representing the final day.

A noteworthy point arises in the Bible, where God commands Moses to make two trumpets for calling the communities without any mention of God or His presence. Notice how the *Posaunen* in this case is replaced with *Drommeten* (trumpets), “Und der Herr redete mit Mose und sprach: Mache dir zwei Drommeten von getriebenem Silber, daß du sie brauchst, die Gemeinde zu berufen und wenn das Heer aufbrechen soll. Wenn man mit beiden schlicht bläst, soll sich zu dir versammeln die gaze Gemeinde vor die Tür der Hütte des Stifts. Wenn ihr aber drommetet, so sollen die Lager aufbrechen, die gegen Morgen liegen. Und wenn ihr zum andernmal drommetet, so sollen die Lager aufbrechen, die gegen Mittag liegen. Denn wenn sie reisen sollen, so sollt ihr drommeten (4 Mose 10: 1-6 Luther Bibel 1545)” (“The Lord said to Moses: “Make two trumpets of hammered silver, and use them for calling the community together and for having the camps set out. When both are sounded, the whole community is to assemble before you at the entrance to the tent of meeting. If only one is sounded, the leaders—the heads of the clans of Israel—are to assemble before you. When the trumpet blast is sounded, the tribes camping on the east are to set out. At the sounding of a second blast, the camps on the south are to set out.

The blast will be the signal for setting out (Numbers 10:1-6)." In this context, we can recognize that the general perception of the trombone was that of an instrument signaling topics related to the divine, such as service of worship, burial services, and the dead. This background of associations is highly relevant to our consideration of Beethoven's only work for trombones alone, *Drei Equali,* WoO 30.

Let us now return to Beethoven's visit to Linz in 1812. According to the Kapellmeister's son Franz Glöggl's recollection of the origins of the *Equali*, during the autumn of the year 1812 Beethoven received a commission from Franz Glöggl's father, the Kapellmeister Franz Xaver Glöggl, to compose these so-called *Equali* for 6 trombones for All Souls' Day (2 November).[14] This could have included the soprano and quart trombones in Franz Glöggl's instrument collection.[15] However, whether the number of trombones was four or six is seriously in question. Some scholars, such as Howard Weiner, maintain that it was Franz Xaver Glöggl's faulty memory that was a possible cause for this discrepancy.[16] Uncertainty also surrounds the exact origin of the musical form called *Equali*. What exactly is this musical form called *Equali*, and how did Beethoven come to write these for trombones?

[14] *Thayer's Life of Beethoven*, revised and edited by Elliot Forbes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), 541.
[15] Göggl supposedly had a soprano and a *quart* trombone, and those instruments are apparently still held in Vienna in the Kunst Historisches Museum Wien.
[16] Howard Weiner, "Beethoven's Equali (WoO 30): A New Perspective," *Historic Brass Journal 14* (2002), 215.

Kapellmeister Franz Xaver Glöggl wrote a guide for music performance during church services published in 1828, in which he mentions the use of trombones on several occasions. According to Weiner, in Glöggl's book *Kirchenmusik-Ordnung* (*Church Music Regulations),* he describes the funerals as follows: "In der ersten Klasse wird bei Ankunft der Geistlichkeit durch eine kurze Trauermusik mit Posaunen oder andern Blasinstrumenten das Zeichen zur geistlichen Trauerhandlung für die Anwesenden gegeben, nach deren Vollendung sich der Leichenzug in Bewegung setzet, welches wieder mittelst der blasenden Trauermusik angezeigt wird, mit welcher dann wahrend des Zuges di Gesangmusik, ein drei-oder vierstimmiges Miserere singet, abwechselt bis zum Eingang der Kirche oder Grabstätte, wo vor der Einsegnung der Vors.: *Requiem eternal,* gesungen wird ("In the first class, the start of the spiritual service (*Geistlichkeit*) is marked by a brief music of lament (*Trauermusik*) (Equal) with trombones or other wind instruments, giving announcement of the ceremony. After its completion, the funeral procession is set into motion with those present, and the lamenting music is heard along with the vocal music, with a three-or four-voice *Miserere* sung in alternation, until the church or burial place is reached, whereupon before the blessing a *Requiem aeternam* is sung.")".[17] According to Glöggl, the tradition at funerals was to let a group of trombones or other wind instruments play a short mournful piece, known as an Equale, meaning "a work in which instruments or voices of the same type play each part. In

[17] Franz Xaver Glöggl, *Kirchenmusik-Ordnung: erklärendes Handbuch des musikalischen Gottesdienstes, für Kappellmesiter, Regenschori, Sänger und Tonkünstler; Anleitung, wie die Kirchenmusik nach Vorschrift der Kirche und des Staats gehalten werden soll; in drei Abteilungen* (Wien: Wallishausser, 1828), 20-21. See also Howard Weiner, "Beethoven's Equali (WoO 30): a New Perspective," *Historic Brass Journal* 14 (2002), 227.

Austria during the eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries, the term denoted a type of short piece played, usually by four trombones, at a funeral service,"[18] before the ceremony started, alternating with a choir singing the text of the *Miserere*, during the funeral procession.[19] A *Miserere* is a setting of Psalm 51 that acknowledges the recurring problem of sin in mankind, and the need for repentance resulting in redemption and restoration. This same musical work as the *Miserere* was performed at Beethoven's own funeral (Illustration 3a), to pay final respects to the composer. In the illustration, note how the four trombonists are leading the funeral march with singers following immediately behind. This vivid tie between Beethoven and the trombone alerts us once more to the symbolism of its role in association with funeral ceremonies.

[18] Franz Xaver Glöggl, *Kirchenmusik-Ordnung: Erklärendes Handbuch des musikalischen Gottesdienstes, fur Kapellmeister, Regenschirm, Sänger und Tonkünstler,* translated by William Kinderman (Vienna: J.B. Wallishauser, 1828). See also Howard Howard Weiner, "Beethoven's Equali (WoO 30): a New Perspective," *Historic Brass Journal* 14 (2002), 227.
[19] Sebastiaan Kenmer, "The Choral Sublime: A Study of Beethoven's *Drei Equale," Music and Practice,* https://www.musicandpractice.org/volume-8/the-choral-sublime-a-study-of-beethovens-drei-equale/.

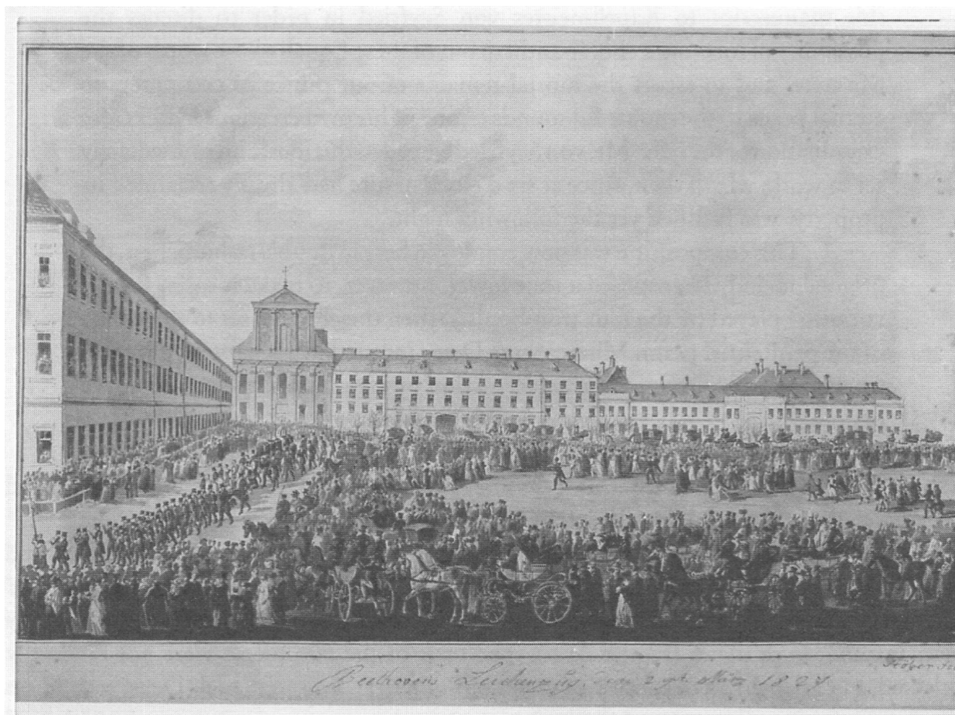

Illustration 3a. Beethoven’s Funeral Procession, 29 March 1827. Watercolor by Franz Stöber. Beethoven-Haus Bonn, Sammlung H.C. Bodmer. Trombones can be seen at the head of the procession on the left.

Illustration 3b. Detailed view of Figure 3a showing four trombonists followed by the choir.

Weiner states that, as Beethoven was lying on his deathbed, Tobias Haslinger, who had been one of Franz Glöggl's choirboys in Linz, took the manuscripts of the *Equali* to Kapellmeister Ignaz Ritter von Seyfried to have the text of the *Miserere* added to two *Equali* for use at the funeral. In addition to this arrangement, he also employed the funeral march from Beethoven's Piano Sonata op. 26 for 4 trombones

and men's chorus.[20] Three months later, the inside cover of Haslinger's publication of Seyfried's arrangement of the *Equali* included a description of the funeral by Seyfried, including information of the genesis of the *Equali*. The translation of the transcription states that:

> "In the autumn of the year 1812, when L. van Beethoven was visiting his brother, then residing as an apothecary in Linz, he was asked by the Kapellmeister of the Cathedral there, Mr. Glöggl, to compose for him so-called equali for four trombones for All Souls' day (2nd November), to then have his musicians play these, as was usual, on this feast."[21]

Regarding these origins of the *Equali*, we note that the requested number of trombones was only four. It is noteworthy that although Franz Xaver Glöggl mentions "several" pieces of music were made and given to Haslinger--evidently four pieces—Glöggl kept one for himself. The question is if three of the *Equali* are found in Beethoven's *Drei Equali,* where then is the fourth? Could it be that the missing fourth is that composition written for six trombones as Franz Xaver Glöggl recollects? On the other hand, Othmar Wessely puts forth a theory in view of Franz Xaver Glöggl's letter to Robert Schumann, according to which Beethoven wrote *four* equali for Glöggl,

[20] Georg Predate, "Behind the Curtain Beethoven's Funeral Music," *Interlude* (December 19, 2020), https://interlude.hk/behind-the-curtain-beethoven-funeral-music/.
[21] First edition of the *Miserere/Amplius* (Vienna, 1827). Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Musikabteilung, 4 Mus. pr. 16808. See also Howard Weiner, "Beethoven's Equali (WoO 30): a New Perspective," *Historic Brass Journal* 14 (2002), 215.

three pieces for four trombones and one for six trombones, the latter of which he kept for himself.[22] As of now, there is no clear proof of an *Equal* composed by Beethoven that was written for six trombones. Until one finds such evidence, the most convincing claim is that Franz Xaver Glöggl simply had an untrustworthy memory of the genesis of Beethoven's *Equali*.

In 2018, Bernhard Rainer mentioned the discovery of an anonymous example of an *Equal* turning up in the Diocesan Archives in Linz.[23] Linz of course was a center of the tower music tradition, and the very location at which Beethoven was commissioned to write his *Equali.* This newly found manuscript (A-Lld-49) is not in Beethoven's handwriting but does correspond to that of Glöggl. In this working sketch, the arrangement is set for three vocal parts and four trombones. As Rainer points out, when comparing Beethoven's *Equali* to this newly found Linz *Equal*, the differing compositional techniques and scribal handwriting do not support a convincing argument that this was Beethoven's presumed lost *Equal*.[24] However, the notation for the trombone parts is labeled in alto clef for two trombones, tenor and bass clef for the remaining two trombones. This corresponding and yet unusual notation is found in Beethoven's *Equali* as well. Could this after all relate to the missing *Equal*? The most probable answer

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[22] Othmar Wessely, "Zur Geschichte des Equals," in *Beethoven-Studien: Festgabe der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zum 200. Geburtstag von Ludwig van Beethoven*, ed. Erich Schenk, Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Musikforschung 11 / Sitzungsberichte der philosophisch-historischen Klasse 270 (Vienna: Böhlau, 1970), 341–60; and Howard Weiner, "Beethoven's Equali (WoO 30): A New Perspective," *Historic Brass Society Journal* 14 (2002): 215–77.

[23] Bernhard Rainer, "In Search of a Lost Composition by Beethoven: The Equale in A-Lld-49," *Musicological Austriaca: Journal for Austrian Music Studies* (March 10, 2022).

[24] Bernhard Rainer, "In Search of a Lost Composition by Beethoven: The Equale in A-Lld-49,".

is no, but this example nevertheless provides a clear testament to Linz's *Stadtmusiker* tradition in using trombones as the messenger of an earnest *memento mori* for the living.

In the first and second pieces of Beethoven's *Drei Equali*, WoO 30, the rhythmic motive of a dotted half note and quarter note is used conspicuously (music example 1a). My suggestion is that the performers could connect this motive to Beethoven's later works such as the setting of "judicare" in the Credo of the *Missa Solemnis.* Already in Beethoven's earlier sketch of "judicare," as found in Gustav Nottebohm's transcription from the manuscript (music example 1b),[25] we can observe this rhythm of dotted half with a quarter note, as fits to "ju-di-[care]". This rhythmic motive is no mere coincidence, but a sharp difference is that at the moment of the "judicare" in the Mass, with the sole trombone's weighty announcement of God as Judge, the tempo is rapid and urgent. In the *Drei Equali*, by contrast, the tempo is slow, an *Andante,* almost as if the rhythmic motive is taking its solemn final breath. The dynamic level in this first of the *Equali* is *piano*, as compared to *forte* in the Credo of the Mass.

[25] Gustav Nottebohm, *Zweite Beethoveniana,* (Leipzig: Peters, 1887), 155.

Music example 1a. Dotted half note, quarter note motive (Beethoven, Drei Equali No. 1 mm. 1-7)

Music example 1b. Dotted half note, quarter note motive (Gustav Nottebohm, *Zweite Beethoveniana)*

In *Equali* 1 (music example 2), the key center is D minor continues throughout until the D major ending. The instrumentation texture is either as a quartet (mm. 1-3), or individually (mm. 15-18). All of

the *Drei Equali* are written with techniques that are reminiscent of Renaissance harmonic treatment.[26]

Music example 2. Beethoven, *Equal* No. 1

[26] See in this regard Thomas Scherman, "Three Equals," in *Beethoven Companion,* ed. Thomas Scherman and Louis Biancolli (Garden City: Doubleday and Co., 1972), 747.

As with the Renaissance compositional technique, the *Equali* are structured in homophonic four-part chordal progressions. The final four-measure unit features the plagal cadence; the minor iv chords in mm. 46-47 create a clear close in D major. Although there are no contemporary statements about the symbolism of D minor in church music, Glöggl in his 1828 treatise makes a comment about D major in accordance with Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart, describing D major as the "tone of triumph, of hallelujah ("Ton des Triumphes, des Halleluja").[27] For much of the first piece, the trombone quartet moves as a unit, but some individual moving lines occur, first with trombone 1 beginning the new phrases. Each time the individual voices highlight the ascending lines, the transition from the full quartet to the solo voice yields a rather lonely, rather melancholy solemn tone. The ascending line is not responded to by the other voices, except by the trombone 4 in measure 9; it is as if the group does not accept this hopeful inflection. This passage then brings us back to the same figure as the opening in measure 14. This time, trombone 1 plays a descending line which then is responded to in identical motion by all other trombonists in a sequential order (mm. 16-18). It is as if this time, the implied descent to the grave is a message accepted by the other voices. However, in measure 19, the trombone quartet comes into conflict. Trombones 1 and 2 ascend, trombone 3 descends, while trombone 4 repeats the same note. This leads to the loudest dynamic marking so far, a repeated *sforzando* in the

[27] Franz Xaver Glöggl, *Kirchenmusik-Ordnung: Erklärendes Handbuch des musikalischen Gottesdienstes für Kapellmeister, Regenschirm, Sänger und Tonkünstler; Anleitung, wie die Kirchenmusik nach Vorschrift der Kirche und des Staates gehalten werden soll* (Vienna: Wallishausser, 1828), 19-22. Glöggl clearly refers in this and the following key characteristics to Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart, *Ideen zu eiiner Ästhetik der Tonkunst* (Vienna: Degen, 1806), 377-80.

corresponding measures, followed by a soft response, as if to portray the point of most intense expression. Perhaps Beethoven was expressing here a juxtaposition of the living and the dead in a technique similar to that employed many years later in the "judicare" in the Credo of the *Missa solemnis*. In the following phrases (mm. 20-24), we see Beethoven shifting back and forth between the two opposites of the dynamic spectrum. For two measures, the music displays *sforzando* markings which then is followed immediately by a *piano* marking (Figure 5). This pattern is then repeated. After this point of conflict, resolution is needed, as the trombone 1 returns with the ascending quarter notes in measure 31, which then is accepted and repeated in the other trombones. This trading of the ascending quarter notes leads to the climactic *fortissimo* section in measure 40, once again echoed by soft responses. The trombones continue to fade, but this time ascending lines lead the music out of D minor, leading into the hopeful D major mode, yet without much strength, remaining *pianissimo*.

If we regard the *Drei Equali* as a group of pieces, we can see how Beethoven structurally unifies this trilogy *of Equali* with similar compositional techniques. Each of the pieces begins with homophonic writing, which then is repeated in a progressive chord structure. In piece no. 1, it is only at the third time the melody is played, that Beethoven breaks out of the chorale texture to introduce polyphony to the composition.

Equal No. 2 (musical example 3) begins in D major, the same key in which *Equal* No. 1 has ended. Once more, the dotted rhythmic motive of a dotted half-note followed by a quarter note is especially repeated at the end. But in this piece, some musical features stand out.

2 (316) No. 2.

Poco Adagio.

dolce

Musical example 3. Beethoven, *Equal No. 2*

In measure 6, the trombone 4 plays an ascending passing tone. Not too long afterwards, in measure 8, the trombone 4 returns with descending

quarter notes, which then are repeated in the other trombones in descending order.[26] The striking chromatic descent in mm. 9-11 suggests a lamenting cry while showcasing Beethoven's proficiency in writing for the trombones. The slide allowed the trombones to easily move chromatically—a feature unique to the instrument—providing an ominous sonic effect. Clive McClelland categorizes this sound as the *ombra* style stating that "chromaticism as a device by which composers could express pain and suffering was well-established by the eighteenth century...as a vehicle for expressing awe and fear chromaticism is especially appropriate, since it often involves the blurring of tonality and the introduction of dissonance, and it is therefore no surprise that chromaticism in melodies, bass lines, and harmony is a pervasive feature of the *ombra* style."[28] In mm. 10-12, the parts cross each other in range, another prominent feature of this piece, perhaps suggestive of how lower realms and higher realms can coexist. In mm. 22-25, D minor is resolved to A major twice in a row. It is not until the third time in measure 26, that D major emerges, leading us to our final line of music. Starting from measure 28, the dotted-half and quarter-note motif is especially prominent. Beethoven lends variety with this motive in measures 32 and 33, giving the second trombone its own moving voice on beat two. Beethoven's use of the lone trombone voice throughout his compositions is noteworthy. The lone second trombone--much like in the "judicare" in the Mass--functions as an interruptive voice in the midst of the other voices, as if portraying the deity as the final

[28] Clive McClelland, *Ombra: Supernatural Music in the Eighteenth Century* (Lexington Books: Maryland, 2012), 39.

judge. Finally, as this work was originally prepared for All Souls' Day and later performed at Beethoven's own funeral, performers do to well remember the composer's original intentions. A performance should not be too casual or experimental but may more properly suggest hymns sung inside a cathedral. Therefore, in No. 2, when the first eight measures are repeated in measures 14-21, the ensemble may perhaps consider performing those phrases as musical echoes, the first louder and the second more muted. Such musical echoes can be observed later in Beethoven's treatment of the "Be-ne-dic-tus" section of his second Mass, as we shall see. In *this Poco adagio,* note how structurally Beethoven again employs homophonic voicing for the first two full phrases (mm.1-8) before moving in polyphony.

Equal 3 (musical example 4) is set in triple meter and the key of B flat major for its whole duration and could be considered as the simplest of the three in compositional content. The key to Bb major, again according to Schubart, represents "cheerful love, good conscience, hope" ("heitere Liebe, gutes Gewissen, Hoffnung").[29] Cheerful, and hopeful would be good adjectives to describe this number.

[29] Franz Xaver Glöggl, *Kirchenmusik-Ordnung: Erklärendes Handbuch des musikalischen Gottesdienstes für Kapellmeister, Regenschirm, Sänger und Tonkünstler; Anleitung, wie die Kirchenmusik nach Vorschrift der Kirche und des Staates gehalten werden soll* (Vienna: Wallishausser, 1828), 8. Glöggl clearly refers in this and the following key characteristics to Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart, *Ideen zu einer Ästhetik der Tonkunst* (Vienna: Degen, 1806), 377-80.

Nº 3.

Poco sostenuto.

B. 293.

Music example 4. Beethoven, *Equal No. 3*

With these five-bar phrases, the first two bars announce a pattern, to which the next three bars respond. The third bar of each phase (mm. 1- 10) includes the dotted-half and quarter-note motive, helping hold the three pieces together. Even in its simplicity, the *Equali* 3 features new techniques in its composition. Rhythmic doubling occurs for the first time in mm. 10-11 (trombones 3 and 4) and in mm. 10-13 (trombones 1 and 2). Lastly, this final number features the 3/2 time signature, in contrast to the duple meters of the other two numbers. Scherman finds this piece to be "the most solemn and moving of the three."[30] The three-quarter-note upbeat figure leading to a long note (mm. 10-14) might remind the listener very distantly of Beethoven's favorite tendency to use such upbeat motives with repeated notes in

[30] Scherman, "Three Equals," in *Beethoven Companion,* 747.

larger compositions, such as the so-called *Appassionata* Sonata op. 57 or even the so-called “fate” motif launching the Fifth Symphony, but quite unlike those pieces, the musical character here is gentle and sustained. This time, instead of notes descending a third, the music tends to ascend by thirds, with its shifting sonorities conveying a hopeful character. As one might expect, the funereal feeling motivates a dark, solemn tone, yet Beethoven chooses to complete his set of *three Equali* in an uplifted, moving spirit. The voices now move together, in ascending fashion, while unveiling a major key. It is noteworthy to point out that Beethoven coordinates the structure of the three *Equali*, in that this number too has the first two phrases (mm. 1-10) voiced as homophony; only at the third appearance of the main phrase does polyphony unfold.

In concluding our discussion of the *Drei Equali*, let us consider choices of instruments, as there are options regarding the different types of equipment used to perform this work. The most obvious issue involves the clef listed: alto, alto, tenor and bass. As Herbert mentions, Viennese scoring publication practices standardized the categorization of alto, tenor and bass clef and therefore should not always be taken literally.[31] Another school of thought maximizes the instruments available to present-day musicians. Some performers employ alto trombone, small tenor trombone, large tenor trombone and bass trombone. While this may exploit to good advantage a collection of instruments, it seriously conflicts with the overriding principle

[31] Herbert, *The Trombone*, 165.

of *Equali*. The Oxford definition of *Equali* specifies "a musical piece for equal voices or instruments,"[32] suggesting that this work should be played on equal, uniform instruments. The score itself does not specify what type of trombone to be used.

When musicians--typically trombonists--refer to the tenor trombone, they often consider this instrument the basic default version of the instrument. This could suggest that the music be performed by tenor trombone on all parts. The range of all parts written by Beethoven are not too high or low and fits well within the normal tenor trombone range. Furthermore, this limited range clearly was not due to Beethoven's limited understanding of the trombone nor the instrument's historical capabilities during that time, since his earlier compositions with trombone, such as Symphonies No. 5 and No. 6, all have extended ranges encouraging other options. The Fifth Symphony and the Ninth, as we shall see, benefit from the use of an alto and bass as well as a tenor trombone. With all due consideration, I strongly recommend that the *Drei Equali* be performed by equal-voiced instruments and played on tenor trombones for all four parts, honoring the composer's intentions and the musical context in its historical setting of *Turmmusik.*

[32] Jane Bellingham, "Equale," The Oxford Companion to Music. Ed. Alison Latham. Oxford Music Online, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e2296> (2009), accessed 12 June, 2009.

II. *Fidelio,* and the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies

Beethoven's first work including trombones is his oratorio *Christ on the Mount of Olives,* op. 85, completed in early 1803 to a text by Franz Xaver Huber. He began composing the oratorio soon after his recent appointment to be resident composer for the Theater-an-der-Wien and the writing of his *Heiligenstadt Testament*. This moving personal document, dated October 6 and 10, 1802, can be regarded as marking Beethoven's acceptance of his own fate with deafness; he refers to contemplating suicide on account of his incurable deafness and to rejecting such action in favor of renewed commitment to his art. In a similar light as Beethoven's own personal struggle, his oratorio depicts Christ's struggle before his fate of dying on the cross to atone for the sins of mankind. Maynard Solomon describes it as "an unorthodox exploration of the psychological presence of Christ."[33] Beethoven's own religious faith was unorthodox,[34] but it seems clear that the subjects of God, death and human destiny occupied the composer's thoughts during this period and beyond.

With death as the subject, trombones find a natural place in the orchestration of the music of *Christ on the Mount of Olives.* Guion

[33] Maynard Solomon, *Beethoven* (New York: Schirmer, 2001), 247-249.

[34] See in this regard also, Nicholas Chong, "Beethoven's Theologian: Johann Michael Sailer and the *Missa solemnis*," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* Volume 74, No. 2 (August, 2021), 365-370.

identifies the trombone writing in the oratorio as follows, as a "tradition that can be traced through Haydn back to Handel rather than the Austrian tradition exemplified by Fux and Mozart. Beethoven's trombone parts are largely independent. They never slavishly double the chorus as in traditional Austrian church music, but they never take on a soloist role, either."[35] Although Beethoven does not strictly follow the Austrian church music traditions, the writing for the trombones (alto, tenor, and bass) in this work for the most part doubles the alto, tenor and bass vocal parts of the work. Daniel Cloutier observes that "they serve a *cola voce* role and do little else except for a few supportive chords in *tutti* sections."[36] In *Christ on the Mount of Olives,* trombones are used in four of the six numbers of the work: Number 1, the Introduction and Recitative; Number 2, the Chorus; Number 3, Recitative; and Number 6, Final Chorus. In all these sections, the trombones serve a specific purpose. This purpose is to play when God (Numbers 2, 3, and 6) or a message from God (Number 1) is being presented. However, in the music of Beethoven in general, we can recognize how the trombone's contributions extend beyond the symbolic representation of the deity.

The next work including trombones is Beethoven's only opera. The beginnings of this work reach back to around the end of 1803, the same year *Christ on the Mount of Olives* was premiered. After becoming

[35] Guion, *The Trombone: Its History and Music, 1697-1811,* 223.

[36] Daniel R. Cloutier, "*Ludwig van Beethoven's orchestration of the trombone*" (DMA diss., West Virginia University, 2009), 24.

strongly discontent with the fanciful libretto he was offered by Emanuel Schikaneder for a projected opera entitled *Vesta’s Fire*,[37] Beethoven rejected that text and soon discovered *Leonore* in early 1804, a French libretto by Jean-Nicolas Bouilly that had in 1798 been brought to the stage as an opera in Paris. This French text was adapted and translated into German by Joseph Sonnleithner of the Vienna Court Theatres. Concerning the complicated evolution of *Fidelio,* Beethoven’s nineteenth-century American biographer Alexander Wheelock Thayer quotes the composer’s friend Stefan von Breuning as follows: “…nothing, perhaps, had caused Beethoven so much vexation as this work, the value of which will be appreciated only in the future…”[38] With the *Eroica* Symphony in gestation at the same time, Beethoven agonized over his only opera. On November 20, 1805, the opera, which then began with the *Leonore* Overture No. 2, was premiered as *Fidelio.* On this premiere date--due to the occupation of Vienna by Napoleon’s army--the initial performance and those following were but sparsely attended. Other, later performances of the revised opera on March 29 and April 10, 1806, at which the *Leonore* Overture No. 3 was performed, were still not so well received. It was not until 1814, following the success of the “battle symphony” *Wellington’s Victory,* op. 91, that the nearly final revised version of *Fidelio* was performed at the Kärntnertor Theater in Vienna on May 23, 1814, and the opera then entered the permanent repertoire.

[37] See William Kinderman, *Beethoven* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 115.

[38] Alexander Wheelock Thayer, ed. Elliot Forbes, *Thayer’s Life of Beethoven* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), 393.

For clarity of discussion, the 1805-06 version will here be called *Leonore,* and the 1814 version *Fidelio.* Notably, Beethoven changes the orchestration of trombones between the versions of the opera. *Leonore* is scored for three trombones (alto, tenor, and bass), while *Fidelio* is scored for just two (tenor and bass). Already during this time of Beethoven's life as he tackled the opera--soon after the composer's confession in his *Heiligenstadt Testament* of almost taking his own life while it was only art that held him back--the topic of death was surely at the forefront of the composer's thoughts. His works during this period include the famed *Eroica* Symphony with its impressive funeral march in C minor, the key that returns so decisively in the Fifth Symphony, op. 67. In *Fidelio*, the grim grave-digging scene displays an ominous dramatic effect with its haunting bassline, whereas the following hopeful trio (*Euch werde Lohn*) leads toward the climactic vocal quartet in the dungeon with Leonore's heroic intervention, enhanced by the electrifying off-stage trumpet call from the tower, announcing the arrival of the Minister Fernando, and thereby confirming Florestan's rescue.

An earlier celebrated musical passage involving trombones that Beethoven would have known is the opening chorus of Christoph Willibald Gluck's *Orphée et Euridice* from 1762. Gluck died at Vienna in 1787, the year the young Beethoven first visited the city. Gluck's *Alceste* and *Orpheus* were performed as early as 1785 at Bonn, where the young Beethoven played viola in the court orchestra.[39] Regarding

[39] See *Thayer's Life of Beethoven*, 80.

these performances, Edgar Istel states that Beethoven "held the post of theatre-accompanist on the "cembalo," and even assisted at the rehearsal of two works by Gluck; later, in Vienna (1793-1802), he was a pupil in vocal composition of Antonio Salieri (1750-1825), of whom Gluck had said that he was the only one who had learned from him; therefore it is not improbable that Beethoven was also influenced—at least indirectly—by Gluck, more especially as the Cherubini-Spontini school deriving from Gluck was so congenial to him."[40] As we shall observe, Beethoven's musical setting of the scenes associated to death, and especially scenes that include graveyards and funerals, will imply how Gluck's operas were a prominent influence on Beethoven's only opera. The impressive music from the opening act of *Gluck's Orfeo* presents Orpheus and the chorus mourning at the grave of Eurydice. This scene portrays Gluck's use of trombones to enhance sacred and supernatural events of the drama. Of the seven instruments that provide accompaniment for the voices, three are trombones. The trombones double the voices as they express their loss and grief in a funeral ritual. As shown in the image below (music example 5), the trombones play the same musical figures as the vocal parts adding onto the harmonic tensions which intensify the atmosphere.

[40] Edgar Istel, "Beethoven's 'Leonore' and 'Fidelio', *The Musical Quarterly,* Vol. 7, No. 2 (April, 1921), 229.

Music example 5. Gluck, *Orphée et Euridice* Act I, Scene 1, mm. 15-22

Timothy Dueppen states that "by using the trombone in this church-based compositional manner, Gluck is able to help certify to the audience that this scene is of strong sacred significance."[41] The solemn sonority of the trombones and voices together achieve an enhancement of tone that would have been found in Renaissance church music practices. In the temple scene of Gluck's later opera *Alceste,*

[41] Timothy M. Dueppen, "The Trombone as Sacred Signifier in the Operas of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart," (DMA dissertation, University of Houston, 2012), 51.

from 1767, the trombones, together with bassoons and horns, again play an essential role in the stirring passage that leads to the solemn oracle.[42] In Beethoven's opera, on the other hand, the grave-digging duet involving Fidelio (the disguised Leonore) joining the jailer Rocco in the dismal task for preparing her own husband's grave, is comparable to Gluck's opera in its solemn association with mortality. This association involves in Eurydice's case her actual death; in Florestan's case, his (seemingly) imminent death. In this context, the trombones serve to darken the sound texture, while also imparting expressive associations made familiar from other works that Beethoven knew.

Consider, for example, how trombones are used in parts of the overarching narrative in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, another work well known to Beethoven already from his youth. A key dramatic event is the death of the Commendatore at the outset, leading much later to the graveyard scene where Don Giovanni incautiously invites the sepulchral voice of the Stone Funeral Monument to dinner (showing Don Giovanni's disbelief and lack of fear or reverence for things spiritual), and finally to the climactic confrontation in the finale of the last act, where the Stone Guest appears and demands that the Don repent (which he does not). In this context, the Stone Guest is embodied in sound conspicuously including trombones on account of his returning from the dead. As Dueppen states, "Mozart uses the trombone section (consisting of an alto, tenor, and a bass trombone) to represent the otherworldly nature of the Commendatore's ghostly

[42] See Alfred Einstein, *Gluck,* translated by Eric Blom (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964; first published in German in 1936), 70.

spirit, embodied in the statue of the murdered Commendatore, and its use is closely associated with the statue's appeal to have Don Giovanni repent for his sins—a type of death-bed offer of atonement—and ultimately with the Commendatore's (working as one of God's messengers) subsequent decree of eternal damnation."[43] In both scenes, the trombones enhance the ghostly spirit of the Commendatore through their contribution to the harmony, dynamics and tonal color. In Act II, Scene I, the trombone section's presence helps convey a sense of the supernatural. Throughout the opera, Mozart uses distinct strategies of orchestration to achieve such expressive effects.

Consider for instance the entrance of the Commendatore's voice as the trombone section plays together to deepen the atmospheric tone of the graveyard scene in Act 2. Edward Dent notes how Mozart originally intended only trombones to be used in this passage, but then added winds to his score before the premiere to reinforce the orchestral balance.[44] The passage is set in D minor, that key of vengeance which we can observe elsewhere in *Don Giovanni* as well as in the famous revenge aria of the Queen of the Night in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte.* By beat four of measure 51, Mozart adds an A minor chord that is followed by a dissonant D-sharp diminished seventh chord (vii07/V) in the key of A major (cadence in this key in measure 54). The dissonant harmony occurs as the statue speaks "pria dell'aurora" ("cease before

[43] Dueppen, "The Trombone as Sacred Signifier in the Operas of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart", 77.
[44] Edward Dent, *Mozart's Operas, a Critical Study* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 169.

dawn”), foreshadowing Don Giovanni’s future damnation in hell while raising the dramatic tension (music example 6).

Music example 6. Mozart, *Don Giovanni* Act II, Scene 11, mm. 51-54

Later in this scene (music example 7), as Don Giovanni seeks the origin of the ghostly voice, the Commendatore resumes, stating, “Ribaldo, audace lascia a’morti la pace” (“Audacious scoundrel! Leave the dead in peace.”). Death is musically portrayed in the alto and bass trombone’s chromatic descent as McClelland describes “a fully chromatic descent from tonic to dominant is a clear indication of lamentation.”[45]

[45] McClelland, *Ombra: Supernatural Music in the Eighteenth Century,* 63.

Music example 7. Mozart, *Don Giovanni* Act II, Scene 11, mm. 59-63

Here, once again, the trombone section--along with oboe, clarinets, bassoon, and the low strings--accompany the statue's message. The music begins in C major (m. 59), but cadences in G major by measure 63. Mozart employs the trombones yet again to highlight dissonance (the C-sharp diminished seventh) in measure 60 as the statue speaks 'audace' ('audacious') without any true harmonic resolution. In measure 61, the bass trombone and the low strings descent by half steps, musically supporting the text "morti" ("the dead"), until arriving at D major in measure 62 (4-3 suspension in the tenor trombone and bassoon 2) with the beginning of the text "pace" ("peace"). Finally, with the G-major chord in measure 63, Mozart

resolves the tension as the Commendatore utters the word "pace" ("peace"). The sudden dissonance within this short excerpt portrays how Mozart uses trombones to underscore and highlight the text, notably with its link to the Commendatore; an eerie depiction of a ghostly supernatural spirit. The use of the trombones in conjunction with the sacerdotal themes of the statue's text deserve special attention as Laurel Zeiss notes: "the supernatural elements of the plot call forth musical language that goes beyond the ordinary. The ghost of the Commendatore, for example, does not 'speak' in normal tones."[46]

In Act II, Scene 15 (music example 8), the trombones enter at the Commendatore's first words in the finale. The scene opens in the vengeful key of D minor, with the trombone section playing a *fortissimo* G-sharp diminished chord (vii07/V), once again providing dissonance and a lack of harmonic resolution. Then the Commendatore begins his text "Don Giovanni, a cenar teco m'invi" ("Don Giovanni, you invited me to dine with you"). After this initial jolting entrance, the lone trombone section follows the text with a soft D minor chord (m. 438), and soft A minor chord (m. 440), helping convey the "solemnity of the scene."[47]

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[46] Laurel Zeiss, "Permeable Boundaries in Mozart's 'Don Giovanni,'" *Cambridge Opera Journal 12,* no. 2 (July 2001), 132.

[47] Dent, *Mozart's Operas,* 173.

Music example 8. Mozart, *Don Giovanni* Act II, Scene 15, mm. 433-440

In the aforementioned passage, the trombones provide a duality of roles in conjunction to the Commendatore, announcing the coming of judgment while conveying an atmosphere of the supernatural. Further into the scene in mm. 487-501 (music example 9), as we have seen, Mozart again uses trombone sound to underscore the Commendatore’s question, “verrai tu a cenar meco?” (“Will you dine with me?”). This moment can be understood as asking Don Giovanni to join the Commendatore in his “last supper” before arriving at the destination in the afterlife. Mozart uses the trombone section independently, giving it parallel octaves with sudden *forte-piano* and *crescendo* markings to highlight the text. The *forte-piano* opposition begins each phrase, and the *crescendo* propels the tension into measure 500, where the final question “verrai tu a cenar meco?” (“Will you dine

with me?") is posed in a sudden mysterious *piano* as if to allude to sacred implications extending beyond the mortal sphere. This sacred aroma is juxtaposed with the presence of death and fear through the chromatically ascending passage in octaves. Each *forte-piano* stamps the rising of an augmented tonality that is bridged by the haunting chromaticism.

Music example 9. Mozart, *Don Giovanni* Act II, Scene 15, mm. 487-501

The next trombone entrance with otherworldly or sublime connotations occurs in mm. 523-527 (music example 10) when the Commendatore offers

Don Giovanni his final chance to repent. As we can observe in measure 525, the trombones reinforce the word "vita" ("life") in D-dominant seventh chord, and "momento" ("moment") on a G-minor chord, lending weight to important words of the Commendatore's text.

Music example 10. Mozart, *Don Giovanni* Act II, Scene 15, mm. 523-527

Mozart's most intensive use of the trombones to highlight the drama can be seen in the ensuing mm. 538-545 (music example 11) as the Commendatore insistently delivers "Pentiti!" (Repent!") while Don Giovanni responds "No!" ("No!"). Mozart uses dynamics to portray the sharply contrasting attitudes of the protagonists. A solemn *piano* marking (m. 538, 540) depicts the irresistible Commendatore, while *forte* is used for the mortal Giovanni insisting on maintaining his own ways and sinful desires (m. 539, 541), and *forte-piano* is employed as a combination of the two "Si!" ("Yes!"). Clive McClelland

states that in the music of the eighteenth century, a darkened *ombra* effect conveying the supernatural can be achieved through "juxtaposition of soft and loud passages serving to heighten the effect."[48] This technique of depicting the text with contrasting dynamics is a resource Beethoven also uses to depict the living and dead in his *Missa solemnis*, as we shall see.

Music example 11. Mozart, *Don Giovanni* Act II, Scene 15, mm. 538-545

In mm. 549-553 (music example 12), the tension of this climactic scene with Don Giovanni refusing to repent continues to build, with the Commendatore stating "tempo più non v'è" ("there isn't any more

[48] Clive McClelland, *Ombra: Supernatural Music in the Eighteenth Century* (Lexington Books: Maryland, 2013), 12.

time”). Here the trombones are again placed in octaves, but this time the bottom two trombones are in unison, as if to foreshadow the underworld in comparison to the octaves in mm. 487-501, where the top two voices are in unison.

Music example 12. Mozart, *Don Giovanni* Act II, Scene 15, mm. 549-553

Then in mm. 563-570 (music example 13), as Don Giovanni is dragged down to hell to the accompaniment of the chorus of spirits, the trombones highlight this moment of divine reckoning, that damnation Don Giovanni has brought about for himself. In measure 563, the alto and bass trombone are placed in octaves, followed by unisons in the top two trombones and octaves for the bass trombone. This orchestration shows how Mozart brings a final form of variation to the trombone voicing by giving octaves to the alto and bass, while waiting to provide a unison passage until the latter half of measure 563. Visually, the span of over two octaves seems to depict a sense of top and bottom, with the second trombone stuck between, as if

dragged down into a boundary realm with no escape. Robert Donington rightly points out how in this finale, the trombones leave the audience without any doubt of the solemnity of this moment.[49]

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Alto Trombone

Tenor Trombone

Bass Trombone

Choir

Tut - to a tue col - pe è po - co. Vie-ni: c'è un mal peg - gior!

[Everything for your sins is little. Come there's a pain worse.]

Music example 13. Mozart, *Don Giovanni* Act II, Scene 15, mm. 563-570

In this passage where divine wrath towards the unrepentant Don Giovanni is being unleashed, McClellend observes that "musical features such as sforzati, strong dynamic contrasts, pauses" are all joined to portraying the *ombra* character.[50]

Bernard Williams, in his essay "Don Giovanni as an idea," advances the idea that Mozart's musical embodiment of the Stone Guest in the second-act finale, with its prominent trombones, is bound up with the supernatural and the sublime, but lacks explicit sacred implications. He writes that

[49] See Robert Donington, "Don Giovanni Goes to Hell," *The Musical Times* 122, no. 1661 (July, 1981), 448.

[50] McClelland, *Ombra: Supernatural Music in the Eighteenth Century,* 13.

> If Giovanni's willful defiance does not have a luciferian significance, then what he is defying cannot be God. The Commendatore in stone is on any showing an impressive figure: [George Bernard] Shaw said that those trombones were "a sound of dreadful joy to all musicians." But his is not the voice of God. He is made of stone, and does not come from Heaven (whatever he says about his diet), but from the churchyard where we first heard him.[51]

Mozart's use of the trombone to depict a divine call to judgment is found as well in the tenor trombone solo of the *Tuba Mirum* in his Requiem (music example 14). Here the text is sung by the baritone voice, accompanied by the solo trombone, which emits a "wondrous sound":

> Tuba mirum spargens sonum per sepulcra regionum, coget omnes ante thronum.
>
> Mors stupebit et natura, cum resurget creatura, judicanti responsura. Liber scriptus proferetur, in quo totum continetur, unde mundus judicetur. Judex ergo cum sedebit, quidquid latet, apparebit, nil inultum remanebit.
>
> Quid sum miser tunc dicturus? quem patronum rogaturus, cum vix justus sit securus?

[51] Bernard Williams, "Don Giovanni as an idea," in *W.A. Mozart: Don Giovanni*, ed. Julian Rushton. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 88.

The trombone will send its wondrous sound throughout earth's graves and gather all before the throne.

Death and nature will be astounded, when all creation rises again, to answer the judgment.

A book will be brought forth, in which all will be written,by which the world will be judged. When the judge takes his place, what is hidden will be revealed, nothing will remain unpunished.

What shall a wretch like me say? Who shall intercede for me, when the just ones need mercy?

Music example 14. Mozart, Tuba Mirum from Mozart's *Requiem,* mm. 1-18

The "Tuba mirum" solo trombone leads, providing a lone declamatory three-measure solo in B-flat major which the bass voice follows, much like an echo of the congregation. Mozart's employment of the trombone by itself to convey a supernatural message is a technique used by Beethoven in his "judicare" in the *Missa solemnis,* and at "Seid umschlungen Millionen" in the choral finale of the Ninth Symphony. When the voice sings the above Mozartian text "sonum" ("sound"), the trombone plays a succession of eight notes that lead back to Bb major, as if preparing to convey a message. The trombone passage from mm. 8-18 (end of passage) is independent in content, yet serves here

as accompaniment to the baritone voice, providing harmonic structure and phrasing. From mm. 8-10, the phrases descend in these opening measures, before ascending at the text "per sepulcher regionum, coget omnes ante thronum" ("throughout earth's graves, and gather all before the throne") in mm. 11-18. The trombone's *obbligato* line seems to portray those ghostly spirits awakening from the call of the trombone, which rise out of the earth's graves up before God as the final judge at His throne. Although present-day practice encourages *legato* playing for all the notes after the opening call, it is worth noting how the only slur marking is written in mm.15-17, when the text refers to all gathering before the throne. Perhaps this is Mozart's way of portraying the solemnity of the presence of the ultimate royalty, God himself.

Such use of the trombone in sacred music is richly evident, especially by Catholic and Lutheran churches. Relevant in this context is the longstanding use of such instruments by European *Stadtpfeifer* in the tradition of *Turmmusik* (Tower Music), in which the trombone assumes a significance, particularly in relation to funeral rites, as we have seen. In Mozart's case, the composer could portray his Catholic identity particularly in the Requiem, whereas his standing as a Freemason comes into prominence especially in *The Magic Flute* from 1791, a work Beethoven also knew intimately and regarded as the greatest of Mozart's operas.

In Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, trombones are used to help create the sonorities representing sacred characters, especially Sarastro and his brother priests. German literary ideas, Freemasonry and Christian values seem to be reflected symbolically in this work as well. The famous gestural "threefold chords" are apparent at once in the overture, when the orchestra sounds the opening sequence of Eb major, C minor and Eb major chords (music example 15).

Music example 15. Mozart, *Die Zauberflöte* Overture, mm. 1-3

These threefold chords can be understood as foreshadowing Tamino's quest and later those initiation rituals that he will face, while also alluding to the three-step initiation rituals that all Freemasons complete before being admitted into the secret society. In

a Masonic ceremony, the Grand Master asks those members present whether they find a prospective applicant to be worthy. If the Masons respond with three knocks repeated three times, this indicates acceptance of a candidate. Much like this ritual ceremony, Mozart from the very outset of the drama begins with such a "threefold chord," giving a nod to the secret society to which he himself belonged. In the first statement of the chords, the trombones join the winds and strings, with a loud *sforzando* providing support. Later, at the threshold of the development of the overture, the threefold chords return in mm. 97-102 (music example 16), this time without the strings and while remaining harmonically stable on Bb major chords.

Music example 16. Mozart, *Die Zauberflöte* Overture, mm. 97-102

The omission of the string section underscores the role of the trombones, increasing their aural presence in the orchestration. The threefold chords are played by the trombone section for a third time in Act II, Scene 1 (music example 17), heard between the dialogue separating *March der Priester* (March of the Priest) and Sarastro's aria, *O Isis und Osiris* (Oh Isis and Osiris), alluding to the ancient Egyptian deities. This dialogue rather explicitly portrays the Masonic ritual of the Grand Master (Sarastro), who asks his members (his priests) whether the individual (Tamino) is deemed worthy to be initiated into their secret society hence the threefold chord (three knocks) of the trombones and winds. The clear marking of the three chords, and even an inclusion of the fermatas, shows that Mozart wanted the chords to be played like gestural knocks, interspersed with pauses.

Music example 17. Mozart, *Die Zauberflöte,* Act II, Scene 1, mm. 1-6 (between *Marsch der Priester and O Isis und Osiris)*

The trombones also assume a weighty role when they are used to enhance the sonority of the solemn march. Jacques Chailley describes the “March of the Priests” from Act II as “solemn and meditative, it immediately situates this act in a quasi-liturgical ambiance.”[52] The parallel thirds found in the alto and tenor trombone lines, according to Branscombe, were extensively used in known Masonic music.[53] The three notes following those phrases are marked *legato* but require good articulation in the front of each note, as if to evoke the quality of chanting amongst the priests. Appropriately, we can observe how the trombones included in these scenes assume sublime and sacred connotations, with Masonic elements enhancing the implications of this use of the trombones. Yet another scene which Mozart uses the trombones to enhance sacred elements of the scene is found in Sarastro’s aria at the beginning of Act II, Scene 1, No. 10 (music example 18), where Sarastro prays to the gods Isis and Osiris to watch over Tamino and Papageno. The aria begins with a *legato* passage for the trombones containing parallel intervals, which Chailley describes as an “orchestration for Masonic winds (with doublings by the strings without violins. . . the style of the religious canticle is *fauxbourdon,* in which abound series of parallel sixths and thirds,”[54] thereby supporting the sacred character of this scene. In mm. 5-8, the alto trombone closely outlines the melody of Sarastro, and as shown at the end of the example (m.12), the threefold chord motive returns.

[52] Jacques Chailley, *The Magic Flute Unveiled: Esoteric Symbolism in Mozart’s Masonic Opera,* (Rochester, Vermont, 1992), 235.

[53] Peter Branscombe, *W.A. Mozart: Die Zauberflöte,* Cambridge Opera Handbooks (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 137.

[54] Chailley, *The Magic Flute,* 240.

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Nº 10. ARIE MIT CHOR.

Adagio.

Corni di Bassetto.
Fagotti.
Tromboni Alto e Tenore.
Trombone Basso.
Viola I.
Viola II.
Sarastro.
Violoncello.

O I - sis und O - si - ris, schen-ket der Weis-heit

Music example 18. Mozart, *Die Zauberflöte* Act II, Scene 1 (No. 10), mm. 1-7

In mm. 21-24 of the same act (music example 19), the bass trombone doubles Sarastro, giving further evidence that the trombones were used to support voices, or perhaps even serve as the instrument representing those voices of characters with sacred ties. The combination of trombone and bass voice is not new but follows a practice also reflected in the *Tuba Mirum* of Mozart's Requiem, which depicted the final call of judgment day. Much like the *Tuba Mirum* trombone solo, and throughout the course of *Die Zauberflöte*, Mozart uses a musical rhetoric embodying what Katharine Thomson calls the "chain of brothers"[55] found in Masonic music. As observed in the

[55] Katharine Thomson, "Mozart and Freemasonry," *Music and Letters* 57, no. 1 (January, 1976), 29.

example, the trombones are given a *legato* figure with parallel intervallic motion enhancing Sarastro’s line.

Music example 19. Mozart, *Die Zauberflöte* Act II, Scene 1 (No. 10), mm. 21-24

In the finale of Act II, Scene 10 (music example 20), the trombones announce the “threefold chord” yet one final time, signaling the armored men’s duet to the text that a “person who walks this difficult path is purified through fire and water, air and earth; if he can overcome fear of death he will receive illumination and be enabled to devote himself to the mysteries of Isis.”

Music example 20. Mozart, *Die Zauberflöte* Act II, Scene 10 (Finale), mm. 190-195

The melody sung to this text (mm.206-215) is set to Martin Luther's 1524 chorale *Ach, Gott, vom Himmel sieh darein* (music example 21a). As the image shows (music example 21b), Mozart's only change from Luther's original melody involves the doubling of notes in each phrase, lengthening notes, and transposing the key up a fourth. The trombone parts, besides the change in key, do not alter from the original Luther hymn. Dueppen states that "the use of the instrument (trombone) in this chorale during Tamino's initiation into Sarastro's order, one of the most solemn scenes in the entire singspiel, connects him to both his Catholic and Lutheran audiences who understood the trombone as a sacred instrument within their liturgical music."[56]

[56] Dueppen, 130.

Music example 21a. Martin Luther’s melody from *Ach, Gott, vom Himmel sieh darein,* mm. 1-6

Music example 21b. Mozart, *Die Zauberflöte* Act II, Scene 10 (Finale), mm. 206-215

Much like the way the text in the *Singspiel* set to this melody speaks of remaining faithful through the difficult path of trials--which leads to the illumination and enablement of the individual--the text set to Luther's hymn, Psalm 12, teaches faithful Christians to call on the Lord for help in remaining faithful in the human race; this is a depiction of fraternity. As for his final use of the trombones in *The Magic Flute*, Mozart employs these instruments in the solemn march that occurs as Tamino and Pamina await their final trial. The trombones--along with the timpani, clarinets, and horns--punctuate the harmonies heard under the solo flute (the *Zauberflöte* or titular "magic flute"), which occurs after their love-duet. While at the conclusion, Tamino and Pamina lack supernatural connotations, they assume enormous dramatic importance in jointly assuming progressive humanistic leadership over the spiritual order.

The trial duet found in Mozart's remarkable *Singspiel* reminds us at least distantly of a duet in the last act of *Fidelio,* the piece heard when Rocco and Leonore enter the dungeon to follow Pizarro's orders to prepare the grave. Florestan does not recognize Leonore in her disguise as Fidelio; the weakened prisoner is languishing near death. The trombones in this scene help embody in sound the dark expressive character of this death-haunted episode in the dungeon. The physical proximity of the grave in the deepest level of the prison is reinforced by the extremely vulnerable state of a prisoner near death.

These trombones contribute a sepulchral character to the gloomy, death-tinged atmosphere of Rocco's resigned utterances, whereas Leonore's vocal part is supported by a brighter contrasting accompaniment.[57] The compositional history offers clues about the role of C major for this duet, touching on a key association within the whole opera and even with relevance to later Beethovenian symphonies, notably the powerful transition into the culminating Finale of the Fifth Symphony. As Michael Tusa observes, "Beethoven's earliest sketches for the duet associate the key of C major with Leonore, and throughout the compositional process he always foresaw that her heroic and selfless decision to rescue the helpless victim would come to resolute cadence in C major."[58] This is musically a very dark scene, a grim, almost hopeless situation, with Leonore compelled to help prepare her own husband's grave. Surely there is nothing triumphant or redemptive here. Nevertheless, as Tusa reports from his study of the sketches, Beethoven strove to coordinate his music for Leonore with a hopeful associated key of C major, despite the dark tone of the duet taken as a whole.

In order to point out how the trombones enhance this scene in the dungeon, we should note their earlier appearance at the text in Act

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[57] See in this regard especially Michael C. Tusa, "Beethoven and Opera: The Grave-digging Duet in Leonore (1805)," *Beethoven Forum* 5 (University of Nebraska Press: Lincoln & London 1996), 16.

[58] Tusa, "Beethoven and Opera: The Grave-digging Duet in Leonore (1805)," *Beethoven* Forum 5 (University of Nebraska Press: Lincoln & London 1996), 52.

I, No. 8 at Pizarro’s text “Cisterne” (“Grave”) with his mention of the dungeon: “Dann werd’ ich selbst vermummt, Mich in den Kerker schleichen” (“then I’ll sneak into the dungeon myself disguised”) (music example 22), foreshadowing the trombone’s later presence in the grim grave-digging scene.

Music example 22. Beethoven, *Fidelio* Act I, No. 8

Beethoven only includes the trombones briefly to underscore this text, with its key word “Cisterne,” and these instruments do not return until No. 10, just after Fidelio requests that the prisoners be allowed into the fortress garden to experience the outside air of this beautiful day, a request to which Rocco consents. As if to portray the spotty rays of the sun from the prison cells, this moving number opens with ascending strings, *pianissimo*. The beauty of the

sunlight lends hope to the prisoners, and as the modulation from Bb major into G major brings about this hope, the solo prisoner sings "bauen, die Hoffnung flüstert sanft mir zu: Wir werden frei, wir finden Ruh, wir finden Ruh" ("build, hope whispers softly to me: We will be free, we will find peace, we will find peace"), with the chorus responding "O Himmel! Rettung! Welch ein Glück! O Freiheit; o Freiheit, kehrst du zurück, kehrst du zurück" ("Oh Heaven! Rescue! How Fortunate! Oh freedom; oh freedom, if you return, you return"). Then reality sinks in, and the key of Bb major returns with a sudden *sforzando piano* dynamic, music set to warnings that the prisoners lower their voices, since the eyes and ears of the guards are upon them. The duality of hope emerging in the midst of fear continues, until the prisoners are guided back into the darkness of their cells. Then follows a duet between Rocco and Fidelio, where Rocco delivers the positive news that both the marriage of Marzelline with Fidelio and Fidelio's assistance in the dungeon have been approved. Fidelio momentarily celebrates, until she hears more about their task, namely that the prisoner will be killed by Pizarro, and that the two must prepare the grave in which the doomed prisoner is to be buried. An entrance of the trombones occurs at Rocco's text "Wir beide graben nur das Grab" ("We two only have to dig the grave"), again illustrating the use of trombones to intone the musical character associated with death and impending burial.

The trombones then enter in No. 12 (music example 23) as Fidelio and Rocco enter the dungeon to begin digging the grave. The triplets in the strings set the mood of the two picking at the ground, while the flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns and the trombones contribute to the death-haunted tone of the music, with the contrabassoon's triplet figures suggesting the digging. The trombones are used jointly with Rocco's texts yet significantly disappear when Leonore speaks.

Music example 23. Beethoven *Fidelio* No. 12

In this grave-digging music, the trombones play in octave As and descend a half step to G sharp, then moving back to A. In this precise orchestration, the trombones maintain a continuous sonority

with Rocco, and move consistently in octaves. Beethoven clearly intended the trombones to be a conspicuous feature in this scene. The descending thirds heard in the trombones (music example 24a), foreshadow Pizarro's vengeful melodic motif announcing Florestan's death ("Er sterbe!") during his exchange in the climatic No. 14 (compare music examples 24a and 24b).

Music example 24a. Beethoven, *Fidelio* No. 12, falling thirds in the trombones

Music example 24b. Beethoven, *Fidelio* No. 14, Pizarro’s descending thirds at ”Er sterbe!” (“He dies!”)

Rocco urges Fidelio to continue digging, as time is running out. Their exchange continues until Florestan awakes after remaining unconscious ever since he fainted after his hallucination. Then, following the grave digging, interactions between Florestan and Fidelio occur, resulting in Fidelio’s successful negotiation to allow food and water to Florestan. Florestan remains still unaware of the true identity of Fidelio, but gratefully accepts the gesture. Then, with the digging completed, Pizarro enters, determined to murder Florestan and dispose of his body in the grave before Minister Fernando should arrive.

Pizarro arrogantly represents himself as a force Florestan should have feared, as an avenger, while an exaggerated, falsely tainted trumpet call including the horns is heard (music example 25).

Music example 25. Beethoven, *Fidelio* No. 14, "false" trumpet call (Pizarro)

To this utterance, Florestan responds by deflating him, labeling Pizarro as a murderer, which again prompts music suggestive of the "false" fanfare involving trumpets, horns and timpani (music example 26), but this time rising triadically.

Music example 26. Beethoven, *Fidelio* No. 14, “false” trumpet call (Florestan)

The music throughout this section is articulate, often using the sixteenth quarter-note rhythmic motive akin to the trumpet call Pizarro had ordered, but that will mark the end of his tyranny. As the tension rises with a constant back-and-forth between the tyrant and innocent prisoner, the strings busily descend downwards while the brass (excluding the trombones) hold *fortepiano* chords with a *crescendo* heard as the tyrant Don Pizarro lurches towards Florestan with a dagger. At this critical moment, Fidelio intervenes, revealing her true identity, and will soon draw a pistol to hold Pizarro at bay. At the moment Leonore reveals herself as “his wife” on a high B flat--the key center that was earlier used to present the prisoners at the fortress garden--the breathless pacing of the action veers to

a sudden halt. Here she introduces herself as Leonore, with music beginning with a cautious *pianissimo* and growing to *fortissimo* as she reaches again the high B flat at "Verderben dir!" ("Damn you!"). The tense exchanges continue, and with Pizarro still determined to kill both Florestan and his wife Leonore, he lurches toward with a dagger until stopped in his tracks by Leonore's pistol.

This pivotal moment is marked by the offstage trumpet call from the tower, announcing the imminent arrival of the minister Don Fernando and depicting an end of the evil tyrant's plans and the prospect of a safe haven for the innocent prisoners. The text set to the hymn of praise that Leonore and Florestan sing upon the arrival of the Minister (p. 566) involves Florestan asking "O! O was ist das?" ("Oh! Oh, what is that?"), to which Leonore responds "Ach, du bist gerettet, großer Gott!" ("Oh, you are saved, great God!"). Earlier in the action, upon hearing the second trumpet call from the ramparts, Rocco states "Gelobt sei Gott! Wir kommen, ja, wir kommon augenblicklich," ("God be praised! We're coming, yes, we're coming in a moment"). In this context, at this sudden dramatic shift, the signal from the tower might even be regarded as embodying a symbolic redemptive or even divine voice, or if we recall Milton's *Paradise Lost*, as invoking a heavenly tower of utopian ideals.

Tower symbolism is prominent in Milton's *Paradise Lost of* 1667. Satanic pride and delusion are set against the heavenly tower of

utopian ideals of freedom and the common good. In Beethoven's *Fidelio,* these poles collide, as the warning signal of the Satanic Pizarro is usurped, stolen from the tyrant through Leonore's intervention and the concomitant timing of the approach of the Minister Don Fernando. In a single instant--a moment of dramatic reversal--the function of the trumpet fanfares from the tower are transformed from being merely Pizarro's strategic signal into its opposite, the proclamation of a new, enhanced reality, in which his cruel sway is overcome and abolished. Edmund Burke refers to the image of the tower to illustrate various emotions depicted in the sublime, using Milton's illustration of Satan in comparison to a tower.[59] In this context, *Turmmusik* can be recognized as being referenced by Beethoven to communicate the pivot-point or fulcrum of the opera, involving a sudden shift from the darkness of the grave to a bright shining ray of life. Florestan's impending death--even though eventually averted through Leonore--forms an overriding topic of the action, motivating Beethoven to include trombones in the orchestration.

Just two trombones are used in the grave digging scene, the same number employed in the Sixth Symphony, as compared to the trio of trombones found in Beethoven Fifth and Ninth Symphonies and in the *Missa solemnis*. I believe this is a purposeful decision by Beethoven to employ the brighter timbre enabled by the inclusion of the third

[59] Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas on the Sublime and the Beautiful,* (London — New York, 1958), 62.

instrument in the Fifth and those later works, thereby treating the trombone choir as more trumpet-like in character. The strategic absence or intermittent disappearance of trombones in the grave-digging duet is significant. While she does not yet block Pizarro but digs the grave, trombones are heard; when she utters her text, the trombones are absent, their voices muted.

We can recognize here how trombones stand here for a proximity to death, which touches upon a longstanding association with an historical context. It is helpful to explore this context, which arose centuries before Beethoven and extended beyond his lifetime up to the present day. Consider for example a little-known poem by Heinrich Bernstein published around the centenary of Beethoven's death, which begins with an allusion to the sound of trombones at the composer's grave site in March 1827:

> *Phantasie. An Beethoven's Grabe* by Heinrich Bernstein
>
> Wen trugen sie da so stille hinaus?
>
> In's Grab, in die kühlende Erde,
>
> Zu legen den Körper in's irdische Haus,
>
> Bis wieder erschallet das: W e r d e !
>
> Wem tönet der dumpfe Posaunenklang?
>
> Wen klaget der düstere Grabgesang?

Fantasy at Beethoven's Grave by Heinrich Bernstein

Whom do they carry forth with such stillness?

To the grave, in the cooling earth,

To lay the body in its earthly house,

Until again shall sound that: A w a k e n i n g !

For whom sounds the languishing tones of trombones?

Who laments the grim graveyard song?[60]

As we have seen, a trombone quartet was indeed employed at the composer's funeral, and these instruments indeed marked the lowering of the composer's body into the "cooling earth" of the Währinger Cemetary on the northside of Vienna in 1827. We shall return to the music played during the funeral procession, that music composed by Beethoven himself at Linz in 1812.

The use of the trombones in the opera does not convey divine intervention in the grave-digging scene in *Fidelio.* But the crucial intervention that rescues Florestan portrays the divine by answering

[60] *Erstes poetisches Beethoven-Album, Zur Erinnerung an den grossen Tondichter und an dessen Säcularfeier, begangen den 17. Dezember 1870,* [First Poetic Beethoven Album, in Memory of the Great Composer and on the Celebration to His Honor on 17 December 1870], ed. Herrmann Josef Landau. Published by the editor (Prague 1872), 150. Translation by William Kinderman. This poem first appeared in the *Allgemeine Theaterzeitung und Unterhaltungsblatt für Freunde der Kunst, Literatur und des geselligen Lebens*, Vienna, 5 April 1827, 165, with the author's name given as Heinrich Börnstein, and it was reprinted in *Drei Begräbnisse und ein Todesfall*, ed. Michael Ladenburger and Silke Bettermann (Bonn: Beethoven-Haus, 2002), 128.

his prayers through the very human actions of Leonore. Florestan's first words of the opera cries out "Gott!" ("God!"), asking how much longer his misery shall last. This prayer is partially answered when Fidelio provides bread to the malnutritioned Florestan--the first message of hope--which symbolically parallels the Christian ideals of communion. Then Fidelio urges the discouraged Florestan to find discernment through faith, professing "Vergiss nicht, was du auch hören und sehen magst, vergiss nicht, dass überall eine Vorsicht ist. Ja, ja! es ist eine Vorsicht" ("Do not forget, whatever you may hear and see, that there is a Providence over all! Yes, yes, there is a Providence over all"). During the frenzied moments where the heroine Leonore enters, Florestan describes her in succession as "O Gott!" ("Oh God!"), "Mein Weib," ("My Wife"), and "Leonore!" ("Leonore!"). Pizzaro advances in fury, raising the dagger, to which Leonore draws a small pistol as the sound of the trumpet signals from the tower. This marks the fall of the Satanic tyrant and the answer of prayers through the divinely inspired helper as Florestan praises "Gott! wie gross ist dein Erbarmen" ("God! How great is your mercy!").

Trombones are also used in *Fidelio* in support of the emphatic moments proclaiming the ideals aligned with the French Revolution: liberty, equality, and fraternity. Especially notable is Beethoven's use of trombones to support the text "die Liebe wird im Bunde mit Mute dich befrei'n" near the end of the No. 14 Quartet in *Fidelio*, where Beethoven includes these instruments to intone the text "befrei'n"

(be free”). There follows Florestan and Leonore’s ecstatic duet (*O namenlose Freude!--”Oh unnamed joy!”)*, an expression of thanksgiving that Mosco Carner describes as an “expression of an elemental paroxysm of joy (that) has no parallel in operatic literature.”[61] The trombones in this instance are used to help support the texts and sounds that portray freedom. In the subsequent finale (No. 16), the chorus involving the now liberated prisoners sing as conjoined spirits as Don Fernando appears to bring final judgment to the situation. Here, Don Fernando symbolizes equality, far from the harshness of evil tyranny. He also comes as a brother seeking his own brothers, expressing fraternity. And finally, he gives Leonore the honor of completing the liberation, as she is given the key to free Florestan from the chains of evil tyranny. Unlike Mozart’s use of the female character of the Queen of the Night, who represents darkness, and has an antagonist role, with Beethoven, Leonore is an active dramatic heroine, and the bringer of hope. As Kinderman points out, the feminine liberty symbol of the French Revolution assumes much broader meanings, with ties to various freedom emblems including the Statue of Liberty, for instance. From a biblical perspective, the Greek word translation used to describe woman is *Parakletos*, describing woman as “helper”. This is not a derogatory term, but rather, it is the same word as used to describe God. Thus in addition to the feminine symbols of freedom connected historically to the ideals of the French Revolution, we may add another symbol, that of the divine (or divinely inspired) helper.

[61] Mosco Carner, ”’Leonore’ and ’Fidelio’,” *The Musical Times,* Vol. 92, No. 1297 (March, 1951), 117.

The role of the trombone in supporting the stoic atmosphere of the grave scenes, and the ideals aligned with the French Revolution seems consistent with the varying Leonore overtures. Beethoven eventually sidelined each of the three *Leonore* overtures for use as curtain raisers, and presumably came to view especially No. 2 and No. 3 as too grand and self-sufficient. Istel states that Richard Wagner described the overture as "far from furnishing a mere musical introduction to the drama, it presents this drama more completely and movingly than we find it in the ensuing disjointed stage action. This work is not simply an overture, but in itself a most powerful drama."[62] One of these impressive moments which also portray Beethoven's consistent use of the trombones can be observed in *Leonore #3* (music example 27) at the *Presto* coda, beginning with the rapid violin runs. The first violins begin playing descending eight notes that rise one note at a time dizzyingly, at the end of each sequence. The second violin joins in a new perspective, perhaps from a liberated perspective where they only join in for the ascending portion of the run. This build-up leads to the intense climatic point as represented in the orchestration, dynamics, and sonorous range (mm. 534-537), where the trombones after having been absent come back to support the ensemble, leading to its later climax on a major-ninth chord in celebration of the ideals of freedom. Surely, Beethoven uses an enhanced orchestration here to present the idea of liberated prisoners celebrating in solidarity for freedom. These political

[62] Istel, "Beethoven's 'Leonore' and 'Fidelio'", 236.

connotations together with a presence of trombones are carried over in turn to Beethoven's Fifth Symphony.

Music example 27. Beethoven, *Leonore #3* mm.530-538

Following Beethoven's arduous operatic labors, he turned his attention during 1806-1808 to orchestral compositions including his Fifth and Sixth Symphonies. The earliest sketches for these symphonies are found in the "Eroica" Sketchbook, showing that the genesis of these works actually reaches back to 1804.[63] This implies that Beethoven's thought processes with these compositions likely overlapped with his labors on the first versions of his opera.

[63] *Beethoven: Symphony No. 5 in C minor*, ed. Elliot Forbes (Norton Critical Score with commentary). New York: Norton, 1971.

Let us now examine Beethoven's treatment of the sublime in the transition to the finale of his Fifth Symphony, a work completed by 1808. Both the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies found their premiere performances at Vienna's Theater an der Wien on 22 December 1808. In his commentary on the Fifth, E.T.A. Hoffmann famously described Beethoven's music as "disclos[ing] to us the realm of the tragic and the illimitable."[64] Despite Hoffmann's lofty praise, according to Thayer, composer Johann Friedrich Reichardt describes the initial performances in 1808 in a down-to-earth fashion as follows:

> "I accepted the kind offer of Prince Lobkowitz to let me sit in his box with hearty thanks. There we continued, in the bitterest cold, too, from half past six to half past ten, and experienced the truth that one can easily have too much of a good thing--and still more of a loud. Nevertheless, I could no more leave the box before the end than could the exceedingly good-natured and delicate Prince, for the box was in the first balcony near the stage, so that the orchestra with Beethoven in the middle conducting it vexed our patience in the highest degree. Poor Beethoven, who from this, his own concert, had found in the rehearsals and performance had lot of opposition and almost no support. Singers and orchestra were composed of heterogenous elements, and it had been found impossible to get

[64] Arthur Ware Locke and E.T.A. Hoffmann, "Beethoven's Instrumental Music: Translated from E.T.A. Hoffmann's "Kreisleriana" with an Introductory Note," *The Musical Quarterly* Vol. 3, No. 1 (Jan., 1917), 128.

> a single full rehearsal for all the pieces to be performed, all filled with the greatest difficulties."[65]

The adverse conditions of the concert included a freezing cold concert venue, a mammoth four-hour program, and a less-than-optimal performance of the pieces due to inadequate rehearsal. Amongst the works performed that night, the insufficiently rehearsed Choral Fantasia, Op. 80 which was finished only a short time before the concert, resulted in the deaf composer restarting the piece again from the beginning.[66]

According to Theodore Albrecht, the trombonists who played in the premiere of Beethoven's Fifth and Sixth Symphonies on 22 December 1808 can be identified as follows: Franz Hörbeder (1760-1841) and Phillip Schmidt (1791-1851), who played in both symphonies and were joined in the finale of the Fifth by Leopold Segner (1762-1834).[67] These performers indeed deserve recognition for having first performed that celebrated transition from darkness to light that carries the symphony into the triumphant fanfare opening of the finale! Within Beethoven's purely 'instrumental music', this passage may be perhaps the most powerful single musical event that involves the trombone. In this work, the piccolo, contrabassoon and trombones enter for the first time in the symphony's finale, providing an expansion of range and orchestration in the overall narrative. In the mysterious transition to the finale, the timpanist softly taps out

[65] Alexander Wheelock Thayer, *Life of Beethoven,* ed. Elliot Forbes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), 448.
[66] Thayer, *Life of Beethoven,* ed. Elliot Forbes , 448-449.
[67] Theodore Albrecht, "Beethoven's Portrait of the Theater an der Wien's Orchestra in His Choral Fantasy, op. 80," *Beiträge zu Biographie und Schaffensprozess bei Beethoven,* ed. Jürgen May. (Bonn: Beethoven-Haus/Carus, 2011), 24.

the key rhythmic motive on a low C, which then is joined by the strings. The gradually rising line of the strings leads gradually eventually to the dominant-seventh chord taken up by the orchestra, with a *crescendo* at the threshold of the breakthrough to the finale (music example 28).

Music example 28. Beethoven, Symphony No. 5 Transition into the Finale

As Kinderman states, “the motivic scrap from the scherzo is quietly repeated over and over, and drifts higher and higher until it converges into the dominant-seventh chord for full orchestra that resolves to the emphatic beginning of the ensuing Allegro, marked by the first appearance of trombones in the symphony. The impact of the dominant seventh is enhanced by the mysteriously understated, yet logical and even inevitable quality of the transitional passage. The finale of the Fifth Symphony emerges suddenly, like a mirage in the desert. As it appears, however, the apparent mirage takes on the glaring force of reality and exposes the desert as the illusion.”[68] This intensely dramatic, sudden appearance of C major in the finale of the Fifth Symphony is somewhat comparable to the sudden emergence of “Light” in Haydn’s *The Creation*, following the Depiction of Chaos. In these musical narratives, a preceding mood is mysteriously dark and veiled, leading into a transition to a turning-point, a grand arrival. In the Fifth, this arrival is embodied once more in the key of C major, also the key associated with Leonore, who symbolized the enlightened, selfless and all-embracing love of humanity. John Wilson writes about the sublime character of the C major finale of the Beethoven’s Fifth that “it says a great deal that in this political turbulent age, the attractive image of C major as *tabula rasa* and its complicated relationship with the sometimes-triumphant, sometimes-ungainly militaristic sublime remained part of the musical

[68] William Kinderman, *Beethoven* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 150.

language of freedom, perhaps also reflective of an unavoidable duality in real life."[69]

The opening of the Finale (music example 29) reveals a triumphant, fanfare-like statement. The trombones provide depth and enhancement to the body of sonorities of the brass. The timbre and the overall volume of the instrument provides added weight and color to all of the previously heard brass sounds, setting this moment apart. This opening passage of the finale exemplifies Beethoven's symphonic writing style for trombone. The alto and tenor trombone are written within an octave of each other, while the bass trombone closely parallels the low strings. The bass trombone's close doubling of the lower strings can also be heard in *Christ on the Mount of Olives* and in *Fidelio.* The trombones are also written with simplified rhythms compared to the other instruments of the symphony. Guion explains this phenomenon by stating that, "Beethoven's trombone parts have less in common with the traditional Viennese manner of writing…than with the new style from France…French composers were severely limited in what they could expect of trombones because of the lack of expert players. French trombone parts therefore consist exclusively of the least interesting of the instrument's capabilities: doubling, rhythmic punctuation, harmonic filler, and making loud sounds."[70] The French influence also reflects the high F written for the alto

[69] John David Wilson, "Wer ist ein freier Mann?" C Major as the Sublime Tabula Rasa, and its Shifting Meaning for Beethoven," *Beethoven 6: Studien und Interpretationen, "*ed. Mieczyslaw Tomaszewski and Magdalena Chrenkoff (Krakow: Akademia Muzyczna w Krakovie, 2015), 73.

[70] David Guion, *The Trombone: Its History and Music, 1697-1811* (New York: Gordon and Breach, 1988), 135.

trombone. Howard Weiner states that Gluck was already writing the high F for the tenor trombone in his opera *Alceste,* written forty-one years before Beethoven's Fifth Symphony.[71] Regardless of the extent of Beethoven's detailed awareness of Gluck's practice, Solomon states that Beethoven's heroic style forged "a collaboration between Vienna and France."[72]

Music example 29. Beethoven, opening measures of the Finale in Symphony No. 5

The registral reinforcement of the trombone section spanning over three octaves is repeated on two more notes, C and F. The note F on the trombone portrays the highest point in the range spectrum of the instrument, almost as if Beethoven were purposefully representing a symbolic voice speaking from beyond, or even from the heavens. Hugo Riemann categorizes the role of the trombones in the finale of the

[71] Howard Weiner, "When is an Alto Trombone an Alto Trombone? When is a Bass Trombone a Bass Trombone?—The Makeup of the Trombone Section in Eighteenth-and Early Nineteenth-Century Orchestras," *Historic Brass Society Journal 17* (2005), 64.

[72] Solomon, *Beethoven,* 179-180.

Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony as follows: “the classical composers employ trombones in symphonies only by way of exception, such as Beethoven in the finale of the C minor Symphony, where they play a major role in the performance of two main themes.”[73] The themes depicted then are from the opening theme, and later with the melodic descending profile in mm. 72-75 (music example 30). In both cases, the trombones do not play a background supporting role, but join in vigorously with the main melodic motives and their embodiment in orchestral sound. But the prominence of trombones is not limited to these two themes, as Riemann seems to imply. Both Riemann and Wilson seem unaware of the distinct French Revolutionary echoes or allusions in the finale, with the “la liberté” resonances of later passages leading into the midst of the development and into the coda, passages both prominently employing the trombones.

Music example 30. Beethoven, Symphony No. 5 mm. 72-75

[73] Hugo Riemann, *Handbuch der Musik-Instrumente* (Berlin: Max Hesses Verlag, 1919), 89-91.

In commenting on Beethoven's musical style, Solomon among others has perceived the impact of the French Revolutionary currents[74]. Kinderman cites a close affinity to Claude Joseph Roguet de L'Isle, *Hymne dithyrambique: "Chantons la liberté, courron nous sa statue"* (music example 31a), a theme which is closely bound up with the French Revolution itself. In the Fifth Symphony, this theme is taken up by the bassoons, horn and trombones (music example 31b).[75]

Music example 31a. Claude Joseph Roguet de L'Isle, *Hymne dithyrambique: "Chantons la liberté, courron nous sa statue*

Music example 31b. Symphony No. 5 mm. 113-118

[74] Maynard Solomon, *Late Beethoven* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 198.

[75] Kinderman, *Beethoven: A Political Artist in Revolutionary Times* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2020.), 152.

As Kinderman puts it, this is "a hymn celebrating the fall of Robespierre written by Claude Joseph Rouget de L'Isle, composer of the *Marseillaise.* Rouget de L'Isle declaims the key word of the revolution, "li-ber-té" as a rising major third in long notes. This figure bears the revolutionary text "Chantons la liberté, courron nous sa statue" ("we sing of liberty, we crown its statue")."[76]

The trombones are most conspicuous both times this theme appears, just before the relapse to the theme of the scherzo in the minor (in the development) and once again in the important passage leading into the coda. Beethoven scores the trombones differently in these two passages. The trombones are at first somewhat held back in the passage leading into the coda, before they then emerge very prominently, which is significant, in view of the great power built up at the end of the finale.

As we can see in these examples, the rising scale outlining a major third followed by a pick-up note is also part of his writing for the brass and bassoons in the Fifth Symphony. This hymn, written by French composer Claude Joseph Rouget de L'Isle, celebrates the fall of Robespierre by highlighting the word "la li-ber-té," as a rising scale outlining a major third. The accentuation and lengthening of the last, top note of this motive corresponds to the accentuation of the French phrase. The word "la li-ber-té" thus has a distinct link

[76] Kinderman, *Beethoven: A Political Artist in Revolutionary Times* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2020.), 152.

to the French Revolution and a tangible symbolic connection to the Fifth Symphony. Much like Beethoven's use of the trombones in *Fidelio* during the liberation of the prisoners, the trombones are used here again in a critical moment depicting freedom.

How do we understand the meaning of such gestures in their historical setting? Beethoven embraces the ideals, but not the historical realities, of the French Revolution, which were betrayed in the Reign of Terror of 1793-94, and then again when Napoleon Bonaparte seized absolute power as emperor by 1804. As the idealistic humanistic goals of the Revolution had by stages become remote or unrealizable, it would require an ideal vision to still bring it about. Schiller wrote about this issue in his essays during the 1790s and spoke of an "effigy of the ideal" as a cultural goal or task for the artist, a challenge Beethoven enthusiastically adopted. In the passages of the Fifth Symphony finale alluding to "la li-ber-té," Kinderman interestingly points out that "since the motive is played here as a four-note figure with upbeat, it evokes the words "la li-ber-té," while the famous four-note "ta-ta-ta-taaaa" motive of three eights and a quarter in the orchestra offers affirmative echoes in compressed rhythm."[77] As Kinderman shows, Beethoven paid much attention to Friedrich Schiller's writings, and of course used his "an die Freude" ("To Joy") in the Ninth Symphony (we shall explore this connection in chapter 3).

[77] Kinderman, *Beethoven: A Political Artist,* 153.

Brotherhood, freedom, and hope are all themes closely associated not only with the ideals of the French Revolution, but also with those Masonic attributes that resemble the sublime. In terms of the darkness and light analogy, we are reminded of Mozart's *Magic Flute*, and the Masonic duality portrayed by the duality of darkness (Queen of Night) and light, with the latter associated with Enlightenment.

Noteworthy in the heart of the finale of the Fifth is the relapse into the minor in the development section, so that the recapitulation embraces a varied recall of the earlier transition from the scherzo to the finale. The plaintive solo oboe from the first movement also returns with the thematic material from the shadowy scherzo in C minor, resetting the mood of the symphony. The journey to the "effigy of the ideal" in C major is momentarily halted here, as the music returns to a similar setting of the Scherzo. Then the timpani return, and for the final time the orchestra is thrust back into the triumphant C major recapturing the opening of the movement. The enhancement of the orchestration (piccolo, contrabassoon, trombones) helps generate a coda that cannot again be negated by a relapse back into the minor. Beethoven himself noted this expansion in sound, stating that "the last movement of the symphony includes three trombones and piccolo - to be sure, not three timpani, it will however make more noise than six timpani and to be sure a better

noise."[78] The trombones are used again for the themes depicted prior to the coda, but in mm. 289-294, only the trombones 1 and 2 move in octaves, leading into C as its highest point of the phrase. This time, when the trombones play the "la li-ber-té" motive, the whole orchestra joins the voices of the trombones, as if in fraternity with one another (music example 32). Then, in the *Presto*, the trombones again carry a very significant and distinctive part in mm. 376-390. The bass trombone and tenor trombone come in, but the lone tenor trombone moves with piccolo and strings in measure 387 leading into the final recall of the opening finale motive. The movement of the tenor trombone there seems significant in view of Beethoven's special treatment of the lone second trombone, as we will observe in Beethoven's later works. If the role of the trombones *in Fidelio* is haunted by death in the grave-digging scene, the trombones participating in the finale of the Fifth help convey a sense of liberation somewhat analogous to the finale of the last act of the opera, with the unchaining of Florestan and liberation of all the other prisoners, reunited them with their loved ones. A glorification of freedom is evoked here.

[78] German edition of Thayer's Beethoven biography: *Ludwig van Beethovens Leben,* ed. H. Deiters and Hugo Riemann. Leipzig, 1907-1917. Vol. 2, p. 11. Translated by William Kinderman.

Music example 32. Beethoven, Symphony No. 5 mm.382-390

In terms of performance considerations, the dynamic markings in this symphony are not as frequent nor detailed as modern-day composers do. Therefore, a more detailed realization of dynamic inflections is needed. In addition, the context of each dynamic differs depending on the orchestration and role of the trombones in the musical excerpt. At the opening of the finale, the marking *fortissimo* is best taken literally, with the music played with passion and power. There are differing views concerning the equipment choice in Beethoven's works, including the Fifth Symphony. Some commentators promote a common misconception that the trombonist should play the instrument indicated by the clef. For example, alto clef should be played on alto trombone, tenor clef on tenor trombone and bass clef on bass trombone. As logical as this seems, as Herbert states, the most probable cause of the different clefs would be due to publishing

practices in Vienna rather than an indication of instruments.[79] Regardless, when considering the range and texture of the symphony, it seems most logical to perform with alto trombone on the first, small tenor trombone on the second to match the alto trombone's timbre, and to use a small bass trombone with one trigger to follow the pattern. Jay Friedman, long time principal trombone of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, writes that "I have a smaller alto trombone mouthpiece that I use for Beethoven 5 and 9. There you would want a "trumpety" sound because these are (especially the 5th) very percussive type of writing, unique in the literature."[80] I would agree that in the general context of the "French military style", Jay Friedman's point of producing a "trumpety" sound would be appropriate. Recognition of the French revolutionary resonances of Beethoven's finale supports this proposal, and the notion of the trumpet's sound from the tower in *Fidelio* goes still further to convey the tone of freedom.

Symphony No. 6

Beethoven's Sixth Symphony portrays the sublime very differently from the finale of the Fifth. Instead of the idealistic political connotations of the C minor Symphony, the F major work conveys the sublime in a naturalistic but highly symbolic context. In comparison with the celebrated dichotomous drama of the Fifth Symphony, with its

[79] Trevor Herbert, *The Trombone,* 165.

[80] Jay Friedman, "Alto Trombone", posted December 8, 2003, Alto Trombone – Jay Friedman.

passage from dark to light, the naturalistic context of the *Pastoral* Symphony provides a completely different expressive context. A passage in the *Heiligenstadt Testament* relevant to the Sixth Symphony is the following: "Oh Providence—grant me at least but one day of pure joy—it is so long since real joy echoed in my heart. Oh when—oh when, do Divine one—shall I feel it again in the temple of Nature and of mankind!" Along with the "temple of Nature and of mankind" echoing the real joy, the depiction of the thunderstorm in the penultimate movement motivates an artistic portrayal akin to Edmund Burke's notion of the dynamically sublime, "that no awe, no degree of terror, accompanies the idea of power, and have hazarded to affirm, that we can contemplate the idea of God himself without any such emotion…yet no conviction of the justice with which it is exercised, nor the mercy with which it is tempered, can wholly remove the terror that naturally arises from a force which nothing can withstand."[81] To further understand the relationship between nature and the sublime in this symphony, it is important to observe the bird call passage (music example 33) near the end of the second movement of the symphony ("Scene by the Brook"). In this episode, Beethoven includes three birds: the nightingale (flute), quail (oboe) and the cuckoo (clarinet). Raymond Knapp observes in the context of the prophetic bird calls that benevolent nature becomes "an imperiled paradise to be reclaimed in the finale through the devout faith expressed in the

[81] Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful,* edited with an introduction by Adam Philips, (OUP, 1990), 62-63.

shepherd's hymn."[82] It is especially the quail's call that forewarns of the coming of the storm in the fourth movement.

Music example 33. Beethoven, Symphony No. 6 Bird Call Section

The bird calls including that of the quail bring our attention to Beethoven's 1803 song for voice and piano, *"Der Wachtelschlag" ("The Call of the Quail"),* WoO 129. This composition is based on the setting of Samuel Friedrich Sauter's poem: "Ach, wie schallt's dort so lieblich hervor" ("Oh, how do those lovely sounds come forth"). Three-note figures of repeated tones with a dotted rhythm signal the warning cries of the quail. The bird's calls are coordinated with the three verses of Beethoven's song, as the quail's cry becomes symbolic of pious entreaties to "Fear the Lord!", "Love the Lord!", "Praise the Lord!", "Thank the Lord!", "Ask the Lord!", and "Trust the Lord!"[83] In the Bible, the quail is mentioned in reference to God's

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[82] Raymond Knapp, "A Tale of Two Symphonies: Converging Narratives of Divine Reconciliation in Beethoven's Fifth and Sixth," *Journal of the American Musicological Society,* Vol. 53, No. 2 (Summer, 2000), 341.

[83] See Kinderman, *Beethoven A Political Artist,* 149.

provision to his people of Israel (Exodus 16:13, Numbers 11:3 and 32, Psalm 105:40). By incorporating the quail in the symphony, Beethoven presents the words associated with its call as a representation of nature's song of praise and thanks to God.

Owen Jander also presents an intriguing connection to the Fifth Symphony's cryptic message often regarded as portraying "fate" through its long-long-long-short rhythmic pattern. He points out how amongst the lamenting nightingale, the quail and cuckoo present the opposite pattern to the Fifth's famous short-short-short-long message (music example 34). Jander states that "Beethoven should have caused his three prophetic birds to deliver their message via a cryptic reversal of his symbolic short-short-short-long, again conforming to ancient tradition. Prophecy has forever taken on a more supernatural aura when crouched in cryptic terms."[84] When the bird calls from the Sixth Symphony (music example 33) are looked at closely, it reminisces an exact copy of the rhythmic figure found in Beethoven's 1803 work for voice and piano (music example 35).

[84] Owen Jander, "The Prophetic Conversation in Beethoven's "Scene by the Brook," *The Musical Quarterly,* Vol. 77, No. 3, (Autumn, 1993), 525-526.

Music example 34. “Long-long-long-short" cryptic message

In this example, we can clearly recognize the dotted sixteenth and thirty-second note followed by a quarter note as motivically exclaiming “fürchte Gott!” (“fear God!”). This same rhythmic figure is then used in the music representing the quail in the Sixth Symphony. According to Kinderman, “Beethoven’s meditations on the natural world are documented in his substantially annotated copy of Christoph Christian Sturm’s voluminous work *Betrachtungen über die Werke Gottes in der Natur* (*Observations about the Works of God in Nature*) in an edition from 1811, which shows his deistic or pantheistic inclinations. In one passage, Beethoven writes next to the poetic text the inscription “appropriate material for music,” and marks the entire text in pencil, with its evocation of a transformative force in nature, manifested in the sun and flowers, bees and trees, weather and landscape.”[85]

[85] Kinderman, *Beethoven: A Politicial Artist*, 150.

Music example 35. Beethoven, opening of "Der Wachtelschlag" WoO 129 ("The Quail")

Nature is the central factor in Beethoven's portrayal of the sublime in this symphony. The first movement establishes the beauty of nature, setting up the prophetic bird calls of the second movement, which returns in the scherzo as a warning in the form of a trumpet call. Knapp states that "in parallel to the message at the end of the second movement, this more emphatic warning emanates from the human activity to which we have been witness, yet stands oddly apart from it, with a similar effect of suddenly heightened reality."[86] David Wyn Jones describes this moment as "a figure that sounds like a bugle call or posthorn signal."[87] Much like the trumpet's call from the

[86] Knapp, "A Tale of Two Symphonies," 337.
[87] David Wyn Jones, *Beethoven: Pastoral Symphony* (Great Britain: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 72.

tower in *Fidelio,* in the Sixth symphony, this signal alerts the arrival of the judge, foreshadowing judgment. Soon afterwards in the symphony, in the fourth movement, the thunderstorm scene intrudes on village life. The ensuing movements are directly connected to one another. Beethoven interrupts the dancing merrymaking of the peasants with a deceptive cadence, as the natural elements force their attention on the country folk. The storm, with its wind, rain, thunder, and lightning, is a frightful emanation of the "Lord of nature," in Sauter's words."[88] The trombones enter in octave Cs (music example 36), doubling the flutes, oboes, first violins, and the timpani, in syncopation along with these other instruments form the diminished chords. The powerful octave, syncopation and the harmonic texture all bring out the effect of surprise that could be described as the burst of the trombones. The chord spans over four measures (piccolo sustains for 6 measures), four successions of *sforzando* call and response. Curiously, Beethoven does not include the trumpets and trombone in the response portion of the second *sforzando*, most likely to make sure the moving half notes in the bassoon is heard throughout.

Hector Berlioz vividly describes this scene as if "no longer just a wind and rainstorm: it is a terrible cataclysm, a universal deluge, the end of the world."[89] In this dramatic moment, the trombones then are used in the same orchestration as in the Fifth symphony, set in octaves to represent nature's vocalization of authority and power.

[88] Kinderman, *Beethoven: A Political Artist,* p. 149.

[89] Hector Berlioz, *A Critical Study of Beethoven's Nine Symphonies* (tr: Edwin Evans) (Reeves: First Edition (January, 1958), 45.

Beethoven, as in the Fifth Symphony, employs the piccolo to extend the range and overall brightness of this moment. The portrayal of the sublime in nature, and Beethoven's use of the trombone to announce its ominous appearance, utilizes the 'Gottesfürcht' ("fear of God") element as referenced by Edmund Burke. Christoph Sturm's observations are that divinity reveals itself manifold ways: in a violet, in a storm. Kant also defines the dynamically sublime as portraying an object of fear and describes how "it must be represented as a source of fear...hence the aesthetic judgement can only deem nature a might, and so dynamically sublime, in so far as it is looked upon as an object of fear."[90] The passage cited above in *Sturm's Betrachtungen* carries the inscription "God's Omnipresence," and depicts a divine force as embodied in light and darkness and in all phenomena. Richard Will adds on stating that "God appears in or as a storm in both the Old and New Testaments: Moses, for instance, receives the Ten Commandments in a cloud that thunders and flashes with lightning and fire, and in Revelations John the Divine describes thunder and lightning as emanating from God's throne."[91] Kinderman writes as follows about Beethoven's quotation from Sturm's treatise: "'Hear my weak song, and hear, omnipresent one, the sound of the cherub's harp at the foot of your throne.' This message with which Beethoven identified expresses a humble prayer of thanks and expression of reverence for a spiritual presence manifested in the external

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[90] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment,* (Macmillan, 1951), 260. Translation by J.H. Bernard.

[91] Richard Will, "Time, Morality, and Humanity in Beethoven's "Pastoral" Symphony"," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* Vol. 50, No. 2/3 (Summer-Autumn, 1997), 321. See also Deuteronomy 5:22, Exodus 19 and 20, Revelations 4:5, Psalm 18, John 12:28-29 for passages of God speaking through thunder.

physical world of nature. The *Pastoral* Symphony conveys similar sentiments, as a ferocious storm yields to a pantheistic sense of harmony in the ensuing shepherd's hymn in the final movement."[92]

Music example 36. Beethoven, Symphony No. 6, Depiction of "Thunderstorm"

In Beethoven's Sixth Symphony, trombones are included in the fourth and fifth movements. Beethoven here uses a pair of trombones labeled

[92] See Kinderman, *Beethoven: A Political Artist,* 150.

alto and tenor, the same orchestration as in *Fidelio*. Guion mentions that in the score, the trombones were listed last (atypical to the traditional score order), suggesting that the trombone parts were only an afterthought.[93] The timpani enter at the transition point into the finale, but this time in reverse of their role in the Fifth Symphony. Instead of the *crescendo* at the progression into the finale, in the Sixth, the timpani first enter *forte*, and then fade into the background, as the storm fades away (music example 37).

Music example 37. Beethoven, Symphony No. 6, Timpani in transition to the Finale

[93] Guion, in *The Trombone: Its History and Music, 1697-1811,* 61, states that this orchestration of alto and tenor trombone was a common practice in Viennese church music. Also see Cloutier's dissertation, 63.

Using a similar instrumentation as at the Fifth's transition to its finale, Beethoven, when moving from the dancing peasants to the storm and into the Hymn of Thanksgiving, provides a new scope of effects to represent the passing away of the storm. The ending of the storm movement (Gewitter, Sturm), also features the oboe securing the major mode, which according to Raymond Knapp makes an appropriate reference to the opening theme of the Sixth Symphony, and to J.S. Bach's chorale "*Brich an, o schönes Morgenlicht*," from the second part of the Christmas Oratorio.[94] Once again, much like his other symphonies, and most notably his Fifth and Ninth, Beethoven utilizes the oboe as a leading melodic voice at the moments of intense expression. The oboe leads soon after the beginning of the final movement of the Sixth Symphony to C major, a key traditionally associated with light and hope. The oboe line, much like its role in the Fifth symphony, carries a ray of light or "schönes Morgenlicht" as the storm recedes, creating an appropriate transition to the grateful hearts of the finale. Wyn Jones expresses this moment as a musical representation of a rainbow.[95] The illustration is convincing, as a musical rainbow in the flute forms with the appearance of the sun after the storm (music example 38). The final ascending flute passage also suggests a physical return of the sun leading into the finale. As Knapp points out, "Beethoven's musical rainbow may be seen to represent the covenant between God and humanity enacted after the Flood."[96] In the

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[94] Raymond Knapp, "Tale of Two Symphonies," 318.

[95] Wyn Jones, *Beethoven: The 'Pastoral' Symphony (Cambridge Music Handbooks),* Cambridge University Press, 1996), 84-85.

[96] Knapp, "Tale of Two Symphonies", 318. See also Richard Will, "Beethoven's *Pastoral* Symphony," 322.

Holy Bible, the rainbow represents a token of covenant between God and every living creature: “And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth” (Genesis 9:12-13, King James Bible Version).[97] The divine presence of God can seem to be portrayed here after the storm, represented through a connection between the heavens and the earth, and in sound through the oboe’s *dolce* phrase, the musical illustration of the rainbow.

[97] All English biblical passages in this dissertation will be from the King James Bible translation.

Music example 38. Beethoven, Symphony No. 6, Oboe solo and ascending flute into the Finale

The finale returns to the key to the opening movement, F major, as the interval of falling fourths, the main interval for the opening theme, is highlighted in the clarinets to begin the fifth movement. When the French horns take over the falling interval motive, the falling fourths and rising fifths creates an archaic sonority, something that may remind us of the future setting in the opening of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. Will states that the "arpeggiated horn calls like those that open the movement and form the basis for the principal theme have a long lineage in religious pastoral music."[98] Surely the atmosphere here is sacred, as if one were standing in a

[98] Will, "Beethoven's *Pastoral* Symphony," 323.

cathedral amongst the presence of the infinite, godly, or sublime. This leads us into measure 9, where this divine atmosphere relapses back into the village of thankful and joyous villagers, or back to earth amongst the mortals as represented by the violin's melody, outlining the opening theme. It is worth noting that the harmonies, orchestration and phrasing remind us of a hymn-like structure, like the profession of faith expressed by the shepherd's hymn. The brass joins in at measure 25, over the triplet sixteenths in the violins, in *fortissimo.* Beethoven's inclusion of the trombones in the storm and after the storm critically hints that his use of the instrument serves to portray the presence of deity in all aspects. He is portrayed as an Almighty God, as we are reminded of his power through the thunderstorm, but also is portrayed as a God of love that humans praise and to whom they give thanks. In the fourth movement, the trombones are joined to the full *tutti* at the peak of the storm, embodying threatening aspects of nature. In the final movement, on the other hand, the trombones join in an expression of thanksgiving following the cataclysm, or "universal deluge," in Berlioz's words. The trombones are employed in two successive movements of strongly contrasting character of the divine, first as embodying the God of Wrath, then the God of love.[99]

Although the Sixth Symphony in comparison to the Fifth Symphony shows differences in how the trombone is used, some similarities in the structure of the parts can be observed. As in the Fifth, Beethoven

[99] See also Raymond Knapp, "A Tale of Two Symphonies," 338, who describes the two faces of God as "wrathful and forgiving."

simplifies the rhythms for the trombone, in comparison to the other brass instruments. The same kind of simplification is found later in the same movement in measures 132-139, but at measure 139, Beethoven gives the trombones and string bass a quarter note, while the rest of the orchestra has an eighth note. The trombones in this same passage also play the downbeat of each measure of the melody, but none of the rhythmic passages. Clearly, Beethoven had thought through the trombone's role in the overall texture. Cloutier states that the Sixth Symphony includes "customary Beethovenian orchestrational techniques for trombones—-rhythmic abbreviation, doubling the woodwinds, octave playing, use of thirds and sixths, and longer note values—"[100] The Sixth Symphony includes all these facets, but does so in the simplest form possible, which perhaps further reflects aspects of these two symphonies as a contrasting work-pair.

According to the sketchbook known as *Landsberg 10* (now in the possession of the Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz in Berlin), that lyrical theme now known as "The Shepherd's Song" was once characterized by Beethoven as follows: "Expression of thanks. O Lord, we thank Thee. Slide softly throughout."[101] Beethoven's attitude of gratitude and joyful communion seems to outline the overall narrative of the symphony. As we observed earlier, the bird calls, specifically that of the quail, present prophetic calls implying "Fear the Lord!",

[100] Cloutier, "Ludwig van Beethoven," 66.

[101] F.E. Kirby, "Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony as a "Sinfonia caracteristica," *The Musical Quarterly,* October, 1970, Vol. 56, No. 4, Special Issue Celebrating the Bicentennial of the Birth of Beethoven, 618. See also the quote reproduced by Dagmar Weise, in *Ein Skizzenbuch zur Pastoralsinfonie op. 68,* 17: "Ausdrucks des Danks [.] O Herr wir danken dir [.] schleifen durchaus sanft."

"Love the Lord!", "Praise the Lord!", "Thank the Lord!", "Ask the Lord!", "Trust the Lord!". The sketchbook *Grasnick 3*, according to Kirby, holds a leaf containing references to the *Pastoral Symphony* with the words "Praise be to God on high — in the church style — holy in the church style."[102] With the idea of thanking God reflected in its hymnal character, the theme of joy is eminently represented in the Sixth Symphony. This Beethovenian motive of *Freude* (Joy) can be seen in a larger context as stemming from an overcoming of adversity in the finale of the Fifth Symphony, while also serving as a launching-pad for the narrative trajectory of his Ninth Symphony, with its choral finale set to Friedrich Schiller's "Ode for Joy."

Concerning instrumentation, this work paired with the Fifth Symphony would probably do best with the same proposed choices of alto trombone, tenor trombone and bass trombone. In the case of the Sixth Symphony however, Beethoven uses just a pair of trombones, instead of the symbolic three of the Fifth. With this in mind, the second trombonist should match the principal trombone's instrumentation to provide the most uniform sound. For example, if the principal player chooses to perform on an alto trombone, a smaller sized tenor would be recommended. But if the principal player chooses a small tenor, then a large tenor would be appropriate. I would encourage the performers to choose the equipment that would most appropriately

[102] Kirby p. 619; see also the Sketchbook *Grasnick 3*, fol. 16 (*Ein Skizzenbuch zur Chorfantasie op. 80 und zu anderen Werken,* ed. Dagmar Weise (Veröffentlichungen des Beethovenhauses in Bonn, Neue Folge, 1. Reihe; Bonn, 1957), 92: "Ruhm sei Gott in der Höh im Kirchenstil heilig im Kirchenstil.").

bring out the emphatic octave chords in the thunderstorm episode. In this particular symphony, one could imagine that the *forte* in the pastoral context is not the same *forte* found in Symphony No. 5. However, in the thunderstorm scene, the trombonist should play with conviction, offering a potent disruptive sonority suggestive of a forceful sublime presence, or "Gottesfürcht," in Sauter's sense.

The Sixth Symphony provides a striking example of Kant's description of the Isis inscription, which he found to be the pinnacle of both sublime thought and sublime expression. Much like the Veil of Isis, the thunderstorm conveys an experience of a limit suggestive of mortal humans confronting the sublime, in this instance a seemingly omnipotent creative force inherent in the natural world. Significantly, however, the trombones are heard not only in the thunderstorm, but they continue in the finale, showing that their role does not end with the portrayal of stormy conflict, but also embraces a character of thanksgiving to the deity.

III. The *Missa solemnis* and the Ninth Symphony

Missa solemnis

Beethoven's view of the sublime embraced the Kantian duality of the moral law on earth and the starry heavens above. In Beethoven's conversation book dated the beginning of February 1820, his citation of Immanuel Kant's inscription "The moral law within us, and the starry heavens above us"[103] surely pinpoints the philosopher's influence in relation to the genesis of the Mass. As William Kinderman states, the sketchbook inscription of the quotation from Kant gives us clues about Beethoven's thought process during his composing stages.[104] The philosopher's quotation alluding to morality and to the mysteries of the sublime, which would never be fully revealed to mankind, finds its symbolic expressions especially in the Gloria, Credo, and Benedictus of the Mass, and later in the choral finale of the Ninth Symphony. Only *tacet* in the opening Kyrie, the Mass features the most active and varying parts that Beethoven ever composed for the trombone.

The first entrance of the trombones occurs in the Gloria at a critical point, at the triple *fortissimo* explosion of sound (mm. 185-188)[105], which spans almost five octaves (music example 39), surely depicting the sublime with its overwhelming aesthetics to the

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[103] *Ludwig van Beethovens Konversationshefte,* vol. 1, p. 235. According to the editors, this entry was copied not directly from the conclusion of Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason* but from the article "Kosmologische Betrachtungen" by the astronomer Joseph Littrow, printed in the *Wiener Zeitschrift* on 20 January and 1 February 1820.
[104] William Kinderman, *Beethoven* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 266.
[105] All measure numbers are from the score edition of Beethoven, Ludwig van, Missa solemnis op. 123, Urtext, edited by Norbert Gertsch, G. Henle Verlag, (München, 2000).

text “Deus pater omnipotens” (“God the father Almighty”). Scott Burnham describes this mighty Bb seventh chord, reinterpreted as an augmented sixth chord resolving to the dominant of D, as “sonically overpowering, but the effect of overwhelming transcendence is also projected.”[106]

Music example 39. Beethoven, *Gloria* (“Deus pater omnipotens”)

In her book on the Gloria of the Mass, Birgit Lodes devotes attention to what she describes as “contrast without synthesis,” by which she refers to the sharp disparities between heaven and earth, God and

[106] Scott Burnham, “God and the Voice of Beethoven,” in *The New Beethoven: Evolution, Analysis, Interpretation,* ed. Jeremy Yudkin (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2020), 245.

humanity, which are projected again and again in the music.[107] A passage like the overwhelming setting of "o-mni-pot-ens" set against the gentle "Do-mi-ne fi-li u-ni-gen-ni-te" embodies this powerful contrast. Indeed, the sonorous impact of the syncopated chord with trombones on "o-" seems to forcibly project the presence of the ominipotence of the deity in a sudden eruption of sound, even before the chorus can utter more than just the opening vowel of the idea: "**o**-mnipotens".

As this exceptionally intense sonority soon fades, the next text excerpt refers to "the only begotten Son"; about which Roger Fiske explains that "Beethoven prefers soft music for Christ and an emphasis on tunes in thirds or, less often, in sixths."[108] The next trombone entrance occurs to the text "miserere nobis" ("Have mercy upon us") (mm. 292-295), in *fortissimo,* entering ahead with the horns and winds, before the voices are heard an eighth-note later (music example 40).

[107] See Birgit Lodes, *Das Gloria in Beethovens Missa solemnis* (Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 1997), 90-101.
[108] Roger Fiske, *Beethoven's Missa Solemnis* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1979), 41.

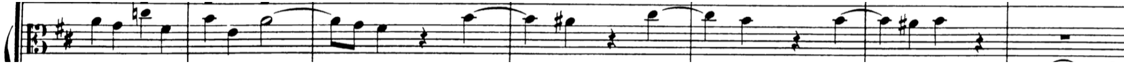
Music example 40. Beethoven, *Gloria* ("miserere nobis")

At "miserere nobis," the chord is F sharp minor following on F major--a completely unexpected sonority reinforced by syncopation. The trombones (in the top staves of the example) do not quite complete the text setting: they stop an eighth note earlier than the singers and winds. Beethoven directs the reverberant sonority of the trombones to be present from the beginning of the text--so much so as to put it out slightly *ahead* of the singers--but he terminates their spectral sound an eighth-note before the other parts, with a *decrescendo to piano*, ensuring that the resonance would be dying away at the close of the vocal phrase on "nobis".

At Beethoven's next inclusion of the trombones—in the stirring fugue of the Gloria—the presence of these instruments reinforces the powerful dynamic level, generating enhanced resonance. In the *Allegro, ma non troppo e ben marcato* section, the trombones (alto, tenor and bass) closely double the corresponding voices, adding significant reinforcement to the text. The bass trombone plays the exact notes of the bass voices, and the tenor trombone the exact notes of the tenors. What is noteworthy is that the alto trombone plays the same as the alto voices except for the parts where the alto voice extends to high Ds and Es. For example, in mm. 386-388, the alto voice line has a melodic figure B-A#-B-C#-D-C#-A-D for the text "a-men" (music example 41a.), of which the alto trombone only has B-A#-B (figure 41b.) and returns in measure 389 on G with the alto voice. Of all the music in which Beethoven includes trombones, the alto trombone part of this fugue section is most awkward with these sudden omissions of high Ds and Es given to the alto voices. William Drabkin states that "No published score of the *Missa solemnis* meets the present editorial standards of the musicological profession."[109]

Music example 41a. Beethoven, *Gloria,* Alto line (mm. 383-389)

[109] William Drabkin, *Beethoven: Missa Solemnis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 23.



Music example 41b. Beethoven, *Gloria,* Alto trombone line (mm. 383-389)

Certain scholars, such as Fiske, cite an account from 28 September 1823--when Beethoven was visited by his publisher from the time, Tobias Haslinger--as an explanation for this situation. During this visit, Beethoven asked Haslinger about the highest possible note on the trombone but was dissatisfied with the answer. Fiske claims that consequently, Beethoven advised his copyists to leave out the high D’s and E’s in the alto trombone part that support the alto voice.[110] Although this story seems to offer insight into how the composer would have approached writing for the trombones, not only does Beethoven include a high D in measure 391 of the Gloria, but he had already included the high Fs in his earlier Fifth Symphony, discrediting Fiske’s theory. If anything, the instrument’s capabilities and musicians’ abilities would have been extended after Beethoven’s Fifth, where previous limits of the orchestra were already extended, and new standards of the orchestral writing were introduced. Norbert Gertsch in his Critical Report published in his score devotes a section of his commentary to the trombone parts. He observes how Beethoven made comments in the manuscripts to the effect that the trombone parts for various sections of the Mass were written on separate sheets, but these separate sheets have disappeared, so

[110] Fiske, *Beethoven’s Missa solemnis,* 48.

that original manuscripts in his hand cannot be consulted. This applies to Gloria mm. 292-295, 360-459 and 488-569; Credo 1-123, 240-305, 363-371, 398-438 and 470-472; Sanctus 51-52 and 68-78, and all trombone parts in the Agnus Dei.[111]

Below are the trombone parts with the inclusion of the omitted high notes (music example 41c, 41d, 41e):

Music example 41c. Beethoven, *Gloria* (mm. 390-396)

Music example 41d. Beethoven, *Gloria* (mm. 399-402)

[111] Beethoven, Ludwig van, Missa solemnis op. 123, Urtext, ed. Norbert Gertsch (Munich: G. Henle Verlag,), 299.

Music example 41e. Beethoven, *Gloria* (mm. 416- 427)

In the Sanctus for the most part, Beethoven wrote the trombone parts directly into his autograph score because he had room; otherwise, the 20-stave paper he used did not allow enough space to notate the trombone parts. Also, he started including trombones at the "judicare" in the Credo, and then added them in many places, also in the preceding movement, the Gloria. The omission of these high notes in the alto trombone is further clarified through Cloutier's findings in his dissertation. He observes that Beethoven's copyist of nearly 25 years--Wenzel Schlemmer--had died in August 1823, so Schlemmer's labors did not contribute to the final stages of revision of the *Missa solemnis* .[112] Alan Tyson supplements this claim by quoting Beethoven's 1825 letter to Schott: "I have no intelligent copyist…the copyist I had and upon whom I could depend has been in the grave for eighteen months.[113] Therefore, it is most likely that the trombone parts, frequently composed at the end of the compositional process, would have been notated by the new copyist Wenzel Rampl. Tyson states that Rampl's rendering of the trombones could have resulted in notes being omitted or awkwardly placed in the score. A plausible explanation for the irregularity in the trombone writing in my opinion is that it derived from an honest mistake on the part of Beethoven's copyists, who after Schlemmer were often categorized as substandard. I advocate that these missing notes for the alto trombone should be supplied in future editions and performances of

[112] Daniel R. Cloutier, "*Ludwig van Beethoven's orchestration of the trombone*" (DMA diss., West Virginia University, 2009), 166.
[113] Alan Tyson, "Notes on Five of Beethoven's Copyists," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 23, N. 3 (Autumn, 1970), 470.

the Mass. To my knowledge no updated editions or performances has included these notes but adding them would enhance the overall effect in the stirring fugue of the Gloria.

In the Gloria, there are moments where Beethoven curiously employs only the trombones to accentuate the text that the chorus sings. An example occurs at the “amen,” (m. 502) where only the trombone section and the chorus have two quarter notes intoning this word (music example 42).

Music example 42. Beethoven, *Gloria*, quarter-note “amen” figure in trombones

Another instance occurs when the trombones randomly accent the "a-men" sung by the soloists. Holding the chords in the Gloria, the trombone section has a lone moving quarter note, while the musical setting at "Deo" (m. 558) again highlights the presence of the *Posaunen* (music example 43).

Music example 43. Beethoven, *Gloria,* trombone movement on "Deo"

These punctuations seem like sonic effects intoning the presence of God through the embodied voice of trombones. A stirring visual artwork from 1682 conveying this kind of message stems from Johannes Brandenberg of Zug, and is found in the ceiling of a Benedictine

monastery in Einsiedeln, Switzerland, featuring the Latin words *Vox Verbi* ("Voice of the Word"). A trombone is lodged at the very center of the image (Illustration 4a).[114]

Illustration 4a. Ceiling of the Oratory of the Benedictine Monastery

[114] Photograph from Benedictine Monastery: Oratory in Einsiedeln, Switzerland, available online: http://www.emblemata.ch/emblemata.ch/Objects_%26_Emblems/Pages/Einsiedeln_%28SZ%29,_Oratory.html?fbclid=IwAR1UnKQnPlphMVUWWegQvCRa7U1bY01OUXaex4b8SKn8UELNG9mAP52QE2Y#8 See also Will Kimball's article "The Trombone as a Symbol of Vox Verbi," https://kimballtrombone.com/2019/10/08/trombone-symbol-vox-verbi/

Illustration 4b. Close-up view showing *Vox Verbi* with the trombone

The details of this vaulted ceiling with stucco decorations portray the text written on scriptural type manuscript, with the trombone seen in radiating light (Illustration 4b). The Benedictine Monastery located in the village of Einsiedeln, municipality of Einsiedeln, Canton Schwyz, was an Abbey of Benedictine monks; founded in the 10th century, it was later rebuilt during late 17th and 18th centuries. This religious emblem surely would have been placed in a room considered sacred and used for theological disputations. In simple English translation, the meaning of "Voice of the Word" might not seem immediately significant in relation to the trombone. However, there is a biblical reason for the presence of the trombone. John 1:1 states: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,

and the Word was God." In the Latin Vulgate, the text is: "In principio erat Verbum, et Verbum erat apud Deum, et Deus erat Verbum." Since the Latin term *Verbi* is the genitive case of *Verbum,* the text in the image means the "voice of the Word (God)" and it is visually represented by the central *Posaune* depicting the *Coram Deo.* The trombone serves then as the divine voice.

Wilfrid Mellers states that "the Credo is about the relationship of Man to God; from man's point of view, in that it is a doctrinal statement of what the Church, a humanly created institution, requires us to believe."[115] In its broader form, the Credo is organized into four main parts: *Allegro ma non troppo* up to "descendit de coelis," with a key center of Bb; the slow section from Incarnatus to the Resurrexit with the key center of D; the *Allegro molto* at "et ascendit in coelum" to the recapitulation with a key center of F major; and the fugue and coda "et vitam venturi saeculi, amen," with the key center of Bb.[116]

The trombones in the Credo mainly double the chorus, and become especially prominent in supplementing the text at "consubstantialem Patri" ("being of one substance with the Father"), as the tenor and bass trombone in octaves easily overpower the other instruments. Surely Beethoven envisioned the trombones as empowering the singers in their assertion of this text. Soon follows the text "descendit" as descending eight notes in the strings help bring this dynamic image musically to life. In a delicate later passage, a portrayal of the

[115] Wilfrid Mellers, *Beethoven and the Voice of God* (London: Travis & Emery, 2007), 317.
[116] See the analysis in Kinderman, *Beethoven,* 268.

sublime involves slow hovering flute trills to the text "de spiritu sancto" ("from the Holy Spirit") (music example 44).

Music example 44. Beethoven, *Credo* mm 135-137

Here, the violins outline the vocal line as the other strings accompany. But it is the hovering solo flute whose slow trills most vividly symbolize the sung text. Mellers states that "Over the fugue entries of the voices a solo flute hovers, quivering in slow trills that have the paradisiacal implications habitual to trills in late Beethoven (bars 135-137) … here the trills, which start on the words de spiritu sancto, breathe into the Word 'the breath of life'...the trills also emulate the fluttering wings of the Holy Dove."[117] Fiske reaffirms Tovey's conviction: 'There is no reasonable doubt,' wrote

[117] Mellers, *Beethoven and the Voice of God*, 323.

Tovey, 'that the picture in Beethoven's mind is that of the Holy Ghost hovering in the likeness of a dove.'"[118] The Holy Dove references the biblical passage of Genesis 8, where the dove is the messenger of new life after the flood incident of Noah's Ark and Jesus' baptism from Matthew 3:16-17.

Then follows the tenor's solo describing "et homo factus est," ("and was made man"), implying Jesus Christ, God made human through the Virgin Mary. Beethoven's musical progression from D Dorian to D major places the creation of tonality in relation to the creation of humanity. A telling feature of Christ in the ensuing section of the Credo is his crucifixion on the cross to bear the sins of humankind. The pain and terror of the nailing is depicted in the sudden shift of mood into the minor, with double-dotted eight and thirty second notes, marked *sforzando piano* (music example 45). This depiction of pain reflects Christ's suffering, and certainly embraces *ombre* style through its dissonance and fluctuating dynamics. In this violently evocative passage featuring aggressive dynamics suggesting nails being hammered into the body on the cross, the trombones (implying a Godly presence) are conspicuously absent.

[118] Fiske, *Beethoven's Missa Solemnis*, 59.

Music example 45. Beethoven, *Credo* "Crucifixion"

Before one can fully process this tragic narrative, following the "death" chord (m. 187) with a sonority missing the third, the tenor voice intones "Et resurrexit tertia de secondum scripturas" ("And the third day he rose again according to the scriptures"). In Beethoven's orchestration, the tenor voices begin the phrase, and the remaining voices join in the middle of the phrase to musically embody the text, conveying Christ's rising on the third day (music example 46).

Music example 46. Beethoven, *Credo* "Et resurrexit tertia de secondum scripturas"

Then follows Christ's ascent to Heaven to the sound of the rising scales to the text "et ascendit in coelum" ("and ascended into heaven"). The exhilarating ascending lines burst with energy. In a theological context, this passage might perhaps call to mind Mary Magdalene, after first seeing that the stone from the tomb had been taken away: "The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre. Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him. Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre. So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre." (John 20:1-4). The rising scalar lines lead to an emphatic F major chord with high A on the top, a sonority depicting Heaven--or the heavens--high above. After this musical portrayal of

resurrection, and just preceding the key word “judicare,” the tenor trombone returns urgently to signal the “last trump” at the four-syllable motive “ju-di-ca-re” marking Judgment Day (music example 47).

Music example 47. Credo mm 221-228

As we have seen, the text of the “last trump” is rendered as “die letzte posaune” in Luther’s Bible, and hence in the German cultural context, it is the last *trombone* call that signals God’s judgment, or *judicare*. The C flat breaks the expected sequence of modulations and marks a divine message. As Mellers writes, according to the biblical texts “traditionally trombones, like trumpets, were solemn and sacred instruments through which spoke, on the Old Testament analogy, the breath of God (Exodus 19:16; Zechariah 9:14). The New Testament handed them to God’s minions, the angels, who ‘blew a great sound’ to ‘gather together his elect’. Majesty, splendour, judgement and fear

are qualities manifest in the sonorities of trombones throughout the music of European tradition."[119]

Much like the bass trombone entrance in the finale of the Ninth Symphony (to be discussed below), the trombone at "judicare" precedes the voice entrance to signal the call. This method of orchestration alerts the listener with the powerful, symbolic sound of the trombone. In accordance with this thought, Maynard Solomon also states that the role of trombones in the "judicare" section was to "symbolize divine power."[120] The entrance here, where the tenor trombone enters before the tenor voice, represents Beethoven's sole use of the trombone as a solo voice heard by itself. After the many dotted rhythms set to "gloria" and the rapid driving momentum of the passage leading to "judicare," the sudden rhythmic augmentation of the motive exposed in the trombone has an electrifying impact. The alto and bass trombones along with organ, bassoon and horn, then join in with their corresponding voices supporting the text "*et iterum venturus est cum gloria judicare vivos et mortuos,"* which is translated as "and he shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead."

In addition to the biblical reference, another possible explanation for the use of the tenor trombone might have to do with the tenor trombone solo written in the *Tuba Miriam* of the Mozart Requiem. As William Drabkin states, "the sacred work which [Beethoven] seems to

[119] Mellers, *Beethoven and the Voice of God*, 329.
[120] Maynard Solomon, *Beethoven* (New York: Schirmer Books, 2001),400.

have cherished above all was Mozart's *Requiem*; he staunchly defended it when rumors of its doubtful authenticity reached Vienna in the mid-1820's."[121] An article by Bathia Churgin discusses a Beethoven sketchleaf that came to light on which the Kyrie of the *Requiem* is written out in short score, with extensive annotations of its themes and formal sections. Such analysis by Beethoven was surely made for purposes of study, and dates during the period of work on the "et vitam venturi" fugue of the *Missa Solemnis*.[122] With the selection of the tenor trombone as the solo voice at the setting of the Last Judgement, it could very well have been the Mozart *Requiem* that influenced Beethoven's Credo, with its tenor trombone intoning the four syllables "ju-di-ca-re." By examining Beethoven's sketchbooks, as studied by Gustav Nottebohm and others, we can also observe how that chord with trombones was purposefully selected after long deliberation.[123]

Beethoven's sketchbooks offer insight into how and when he developed his ideas about the character and orchestration of the Mass. On p. 25 of the "Wittgenstein" Sketchbook, used in 1819, he writes "deus omnipotens," referring to the text "deus, pater omnipotens" ("God, omnipotent Father") in the Gloria, and he also writes the words "alte tonarten" ("old modes") next to a D minor sonority, while adding below the notation "sepultas historisch in den alten Tonarten"

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[121] William Drabkin, *Missa Solemnis,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 21.
[122] Bathia Churgin, "Beethoven and Mozart's Requiem: A New Connection," *The Journal of Musicology* Vol. 5, No. 4 (Autumn, 1987), 459-463.
[123] Gustav Nottebohm, *Zweite Beethoveniana: nachgelassene Aufsätze* (Leipzig: Peters, 1887), 155.

("burial [to be] historic in the old modes").[124] This shows his strong interest in employing archaic modality in certain passages, and in the finished work, D dorian is indeed used at "Et incarnatus est," in the Credo.

Near the end of the "Wittgenstein" Sketchbook, on p. 74, Beethoven sets the text "judicare," but with no indication of trombones or of any instrumental anticipation of the vocal setting. This sketch dates from early 1820. But by April 1820, at the bottom of the first page of the following "Artaria 195" Sketchbook, Beethoven indicates the anticipation of the "judicare" motive using a trombone or trombones, already envisioning this distinctive musical treatment of the Last Judgement.[125]

Immediately after "judicare," there follows a musical portrayal of the living and the dead as Beethoven employs the rapid dynamic changes from the "vivos" in *fortissimo* to "mortuos" in *piano* (music example 48a and b).

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[124] Joseph Schmidt-Görg, ed., *Ein Skizzenbuch zu den Diabelli-Variationen und zur Missa solemnis, SV 154* (Bonn: Beethoven-Haus, 1968, appeared 1971 [facsimile vol.]; Bonn: Beethoven-Haus, 1972 [transcription, commentary, and critical notes vol.]). See Robert Winter's review of this edition in *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 28 (1975), 135-38. This source is known as the Wittgenstein Sketchbook because it was for a time in the possession of the famous Viennese Jewish family to which the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein belonged. A discussion of the cultural background of the family is offered in chapter 6 of Allan Janik and Stephen Toulmin's *Wittgenstein's Vienna* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973), 167-201.

[125] William Kinderman, *Artaria 195: Beethoven's Sketchbook for the* Missa solemnis *and the Piano Sonata in E Major, Opus 109* Volume 3: Transcription (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 1.

Music example 48a. Beethoven, *Credo,* setting of "vivos"

Music example 48b. Beethoven, *Credo*: "mortuos"

In Beethoven's deliberate approach to composition, we can view the sudden changes in dynamics and inversions of meaning to be significant to the symbolism portrayed in the Mass. The word "mortuos" is set *subito piano*, with low notes depicting the dead souls through its restrained mournful sonority. Warren Kirkendale

categorizes these sonorities as "'dead' chords, without a third."[126] According to Kinderman, in Beethoven's sketches for the *Egmont* Overture, the composer wrote that "death could be expressed by a rest,"[127] or silence, reminding us how Beethoven was sensitive to the music reflecting the import of the text. The silence and sudden stillness at "mortuos" are noteworthy, and the suppression of the music's vitality conveys death through the removal of energy.

What follows next is the third appearance of the "Credo" motive, which assumes the role of recapitulation despite its distinctive tonal orientation in F major spanning over thirty measures. Kindreman states that "here the return and development of the "Credo' motif carries the music through the most doctrinal parts of the Mass text, where the words are rattled off syllabically, rendered inconspicuous by the many imitative entries of the "Credo" motif."[128] In addition to the symbolic text of "descendit" and "ascendit"--referring to Christ's descent into the world and ascent back to the heavens--the large-scale contrast setting the music from the Incarnatus to the Resurrexit apart from the rest of the Credo is important and noteworhty.

The Sanctus opens calmly after the glorious ending of the Credo, featuring the solemn tones of the trombone chorus which leads to the alto voice singing "Sanctus" ("Holy") (music example 49).

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[126] Warren Kirkendale, "New Roads to Old Ideas in Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*", *The Musical Quarterly* Vol. 56, No. 4 (Special Issue Celebrating the Bicentennial of the Birth of Beethoven) (Oct., 1970), 681.
[127] Kinderman, *Beethoven,* 170.
[128] Kinderman, *Beethoven,* 271.

SANCTUS.

Adagio.
Mit Andacht.

Flauti.
Oboi.
Clarinetti in A.
Fagotti.
Contrafagotto.
Corno II in E.
Corno III. IV in D.
Trombe in D.
Timpani in D. A.
Trombone Alto.
Trombone Tenore.
Trombone Basso.

a 2.
(Corno I. tacet.)

Music example 49. Beethoven, *Sanctus, mm. 1-11*

The trade-off between the human voice and the symbolic voice of God fits well to the text depicting the Holiness of Lord, God of Hosts. The long-short-long rhythm recalls motives heard already in the *Kyrie* (music example 50). The movement titled *Sanctus* which translates as *holy* is designated as "mit Andacht" meaning "with devotion" or "with prayer" which certainly designates a sacred atmosphere for the four measures of brass ensemble (mm. 9-12), and seems significant when we recall the biblical passage depicting the Holiness of God in Isaiah 6: 1-4 which one can read by imagining the awe-striking vision of God Isaiah evokes: "In the year that King Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with

twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke." What the prophet Isaiah is describing is both majestic and awe-inspiring, much like the tone of the radiant brass instruments. The Lord's robe which fills the temple evokes a sense of power and strength, and the seraphs cover their eyes to shield them from such divine force. Their cries of praise lift up God's holiness and glory, shaking the temple filled with smoke.

Before the *Allegro pesante* section, the trombones return (mm. 30-33) with the solemn tones which evoke the spiritual in a mysteriously hushed atmosphere which Warren Kirkendale observes: "the rhetoric of the Sanctus is further illuminated through the pianissimo tremolos on the identical minor ninth chord for a passage of similar religious content in the Ninth Symphony: "Über Sternen muss er wohnen" (measures 650-54)."[129] Kirkendale further observes that the chords intoned by the brass chorus are like "Tower Music" representing singing of angels[130] depicting the presence of God. William Drabkin states that "it is easy to overinterpret this evidence, yet Kirkendale's contribution is a valuable reminder to us that, whatever our own perception of Beethoven's antecedents may be, Beethoven's

[129] Kirkendale, "New Roads to Old Ideas in Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*", 672.
[130] Kirkendale, "New Roads to Old Ideas in Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*", 686.

perception of them was certainly different."[131] I would agree that this passage connects to the tower music tradition whereby Beethoven's *Drei Equali* certainly portray the music evoking a divine presence. In his Ninth Symphony, Beethoven reflects Schiller's text musically at the moment of pondering about the "One" who dwells above the canopy of stars.

Music example 50. Beethoven, *Missa solemnis*, Kyrie motive

Passages alluding to the deity follow later in the *Benedictus* section (music example 51). An implied presence of the divine may be sensed in the remarkable violin solo in the Benedictus, which precedes the trombone section's clear enunication of the four syllables of "Be-ne-dic-tus."

[131] William Drabkin, *Beethoven: Missa solemnis,* Cambridge University Press (Great Britain, 1991), 5.

Music example 51. Beethoven, Benedictus, violin solo

As Kinderman observes, "the violin solo of the Benedictus effectively symbolizes the absolute, ideal quality of the divine presence, using the high G major chord as a point of departure and return."[132] The visual/spatial dimension evoked through the sonorous descent of this violin solo from the high exalted realm (Heaven from the Christian perspective; the stars above in Kantian philosophy) to earth provides a fitting balancing response to the earlier upward scales of the Credo. The distinct orchestration of flutes with violin may remind us as well of the passage from the midst of the Credo, with slow flute trills representing the Holy Dove.

[132] Kinderman, *Beethoven*, 277.

This lofty G major triad in first inversion is thus embodied by a pair of flutes with solo violin. This is comparable to the second inversion E flat major triad, with a similar flute-violin pairing, heard at the end of the Credo. As in response to the ascending scales at the end of the Credo, the slow descending violin in the 12/8 meter portrays what Mellers calls the portrayal of the Holy Ghost (Holy Spirit), "A high G major triad in first inversion shines on two flutes and solo violin. Inevitably we recall the second inversion of an E flat major triad, at the same pitch, in a similar flute-haloed sonority, at the end of the Credo. . . for the solo violin as Holy Ghost–or as the Jewish Messenger of Peace, or the Arabian Rohmat Allah–floats down from the heights in a swinging 12/8. This slow declension answers the 'aspirational' upward scales at the end of the Credo; we cannot miss the parallel because Beethoven releases the Holy Dove with a chord and sonority so similar, though in a different key, to that on which the Credo's soaring prayer has ended."[133] The Holy Spirit can also be seen as having a role of a Parakletos, or a divine counselor.

If the violin's descent evoking the Holy Spirit carries religious significance, then a parallel meaning may be attributed to the trombones. At "Be-ne-dic-tus," a kind of soft four-syllable chant is sounded by the trombone choir (music example 52).

[133] Mellers, *Beethoven and the Voice of God*, 342.

Music example 52. Beethoven, *Benedictus,* trombones enunicating "Be-ne-dic-tus"

Fiske states that "The three close-knit strands slowly descend, symbolizing the Real Presence of Christ coming down from heaven to earth and entering the Host."[134] The Holy Dove references the biblical passage of Genesis 8, where the dove is the messenger of new life after the flood incident of Noah's Ark and Jesus' baptism: "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God, descending like a dove, and lighting upon him. And lo a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,"(Matthew 3:16-17).

This moment in the Benedictus enables us to venture a parallel to the book of Matthew. By analogy, the Spirit of God (violin) descends like a dove (flutes), and is blessed by a heavenly voice (soft trombones). The trombone section highlighting the word "Be-ne-dic-tus" plays *pianissimo,* in conjunction with the violin solo, played *dolce e cantabile*. Beethoven's sensitive employment of the trombones intoning

[134] Fiske, *Beethoven's Missa Solemnis*, 77.

the four syllables "Be-ne-dic-tus" lends to this passage a sublime aura associated with the sublime and the supernatural.

According to Tovey, when the Italian conductor Sir Michael Costa conducted the Benedictus in the middle of the nineteenth century, he decided that these trombone chords were echoing a cheap dance music cliché, and to Tovey's fully-justified indignation, Costa very foolishly crossed them out.[135] But not only is this passage musically moving, but also fascinatingly allusive, for these *Posaune* are indeed quietly speaking, enunciating the word "Benedictus". Later in the Benedictus, the same group of brass instruments intone the text "be-ne-dic-tus" together with the voices, providing further confirmation of this association. The implications of text subtly conveyed through the sonority of the brass led by the trombones is without doubt. When performing this piece, it is crucial that the performer(s) understand the symbolic role conveyed by the music. As we have seen, in the *judicare*, the tenor trombone outlines the motivic rhythm set to that word: "ju-di-ca-re." The four-syllable motive at "Be-ne-dic-tus" is rhythmically similar, yet utterly different in its expressive character. *Judicare* should be played boldly, whereas *Benedictus* should be rendered warmly, endowed with a sacred aura. I recommend the use of the different trombones to match the very different musical contexts of these passages. To best convey the varying characteristics of the Mass, I would recommend that the bass trombonist play a large modern bass trombone with a 0.562 bore

[135] Fiske, *Beethoven's Missa solemnis*, 78.

size and a bell size of 9.5" to provide the necessary warmth of tone. The tenor trombonists should play a modern F-trigger tenor trombone with a 0.547 bore size and 8.5" bell size to appropriately match the size of the bass trombone while still being able to contain the bright sonority required for the "judicare." And lastly, the alto trombonist should play the alto trombone to match the timbre of the alto voice and to have assistance for the high range. The choice of larger equipment especially for the bottom two voices will help project the solemn tones of the Benedictus at a soft dynamic level. The *Missa Solemnis* features the most extensive and some of the most resourceful and original writing for the trombone among all of Beethoven's compositions.

A brief but striking passage in the Agnus Dei, which begins in the low voices, low strings, bassoons and the bass trombone, written *fortissimo* with accented pitches, sets falling sixths (music example 53a) to the text "dona nobis pacem", where the music seems to allude to the passage in Handel's *Hallelujah* Chorus "And he shall reign for ever and ever" (music example 53b).

Music example 53a. Beethoven, *Agnus Dei,* “Dona nobis pacem”

Music example 53b. Handel, *Hallelujah Chorus,* "And he shall reign for ever and ever"

According to Fiske, "[Beethoven] is known to have studied and copied out several Handel choruses with a view to preparing himself for the composition of the Missa Solemnis, and this was surely one of them."[136] Beethoven had the highest regard for Handel, even claiming him as "the greatest composer who ever lived."[137] Laura Tunbridge, referring to Churgin's aforementioned study, supports this claim, stating that "[Beethoven] did expand his knowledge of the repertoire beyond his familiarity with the Masses of Haydn and Mozart, exploring the music of J.S. Bach, Handel, and copying out parts of Mozart's *Requiem."*[138] An influence of Handel on Beethoven's later works seems undeniable, especially in connection with the depiction of the sublime through the allusion to a heavenly Father or deity beyond the heavens. Amy Carr-Richardson states that "if Beethoven did model his Gloria on ideas from the *Messiah,* his reasons for doing so could have been mixed, characterized both by a desire to pay respect to Handel and also an interest in competing with his musical accomplishments."[139] This idea is impressively treated as well in the choral finale of Beethoven's final grand symphonic work: the Ninth Symphony.

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[136] Fiske, *Beethoven's Missa solemnis,* 90.
[137] Alexander Thayer, *The Life of Ludwig van Beethoven,* revised and edited by Elliot Forbes, (Princeton: 1967), 871.
[138] Laura Tunbridge, "Spirit: Missa solemnis, op. 123 (1823)" in *Beethoven: A Life in Nine Pieces* (Yale University Press, 2020), 187. See also Bathia Churgin, "Beethoven and Mozart's Requiem: A New Connection" *The Journal of Musicology,* Vol. 5 No. 4 (Autumn, 1987), 457-458.
[139] Amy Carr-Richardson, "Handel's *Messiah* as Model and Source for Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis", Musicological Explorations* Vol. 13 (December, 2012), 117-118.

Ninth Symphony

The general kinship with and influence of Enlightenment (and especially Kantian) thought on Beethoven and his contemporaries reminds us of their awareness of the philosophical basis for the concept of freedom and duty. As Kant writes in his treatise *Religion within the limits of Reason alone* (1793), "there are mysteries which are hidden things in nature (arcana) and there can be mysteries (secrecies, secrets) in politics which ought not to be known publicly; but both can, after all, be known to us, in as much as they rest on empirical causes. There can be no mystery with respect to what all men are in duty bound to know (i.e. what is moral)."[140] This notion of unknowable mysteries of the "arcana" and of a moral law within us on this earth is reflected in Beethoven's perspective and attitudes. Mellers states that "only with respect to that which God alone can do and the performance of which exceeds our capacity, and therefore our duty, can there be a genuine, that is a holy mystery (mysterium) of religion; and it may well be expedient merely for us to know and understand that there is such a mystery, not to comprehend it."[141]

Friedrich Schiller, in his *Aesthetic Letters* of 1796, already argued that artists could embody insights and perspectives not capable of

[140] Pasternack, Lawrence and Courtney Fugate, "Kant's Philosophy of Religion", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2022 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2022/entries/kant-religion/>.
[141] Mellers, *Beethoven and the Voice of God,* 11.

representation through reflection alone. Beethoven then, much like a philosopher, could be regarded as having sought the presence of a supernatural Creator, while reflecting upon moral laws amongst the mortals. Raymond Knapp organizes the structuring of Schiller's poem stating that "in setting the first three stanzas of Schiller's *An die Freude* for the first choral section of the finale, Beethoven sets only the first two quatrains of each stanza, leaving out the final quatrain even though the ABB musical structure he employs could presumably have accommodated the full text, with minor accentual revision. Two of these omitted quatrains return, however–beginning "Seid umschlungen" and "Ihr stürzt nieder," respectively–to form a fifth, two-part stanza with a subject matter different from all that has come before: humanity's longing and search for "ein lieber Vater." Thus, what had been a local strategy for Schiller, to move within each stanza from projecting the union of "Was die Mode streng geteilt" (explicitly, he refers to the "brotherhood" of mankind; implicitly, to the modern German states) to a shared religious feeling, becomes a more global strategy in Beethoven's finale, which adds the dimension of reuniting what Beethoven himself had "artificially divided."[142] In his selection of lines from Schiller's poem "To Joy" (*An die Freude*) in the choral finale of the Ninth Symphony, Beethoven included the text "Seek him beyond the canopy of stars!" ("Such' ihn über'm Sternenzelt!") referring to the quest of humanity for a Creator existing beyond the starry vault. In a conversation book used by the deaf composer in 1820, Beethoven wrote

[142] Raymond Knapp, "Reading Gender in Late Beethoven: An die Freude and An die ferne Geliebte," *Acta Musicologica* Vol. 75 Fasc. 1 (2003), 47.

down a paraphrased version of a famous quotation from Kant: "The starry heavens above us, and the moral law within us." Kant!!!" in which his enthusiastic attribution to the philosopher underscores his commitment to this perspective.[143] Through such evidence, we can see how Beethoven's convictions about a transcendent ultimate reality or deity coexisted with other ideals, such as the values of liberty, fraternity and equality, those idealistic values bound up with the French Revolution which were often negated in the chaotic aftermath of post-revolutionary France.[144]

As Solomon points out, in Schiller's essay, "Naive and Sentimental Poetry (1795-96), in the closing section entitled "The Idyll", Schiller attempts to recapture an idyllic or utopian condition: "no longer can we return to Arcadia, forward to Elysium."[145] As we approach the Ninth Symphony, and the key role of the trombones in the choral finale, it is helpful to gain insight into the overall narrative trajectory of the work. The Ninth Symphony as a whole can be understood as the narrative of a journey towards Elysium, whereby the sublime is a key element. Especially in the first movement with its mysterious opening hovering over the interval of open fifths in *pianissimo*, there is a mysterious vagueness demanding clarification. The ambiguity is further heightened by the descending motivic fifth, E to A, in the violins, a seminal idea that proves so important in

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[143] *Ludwig van Beethovens Konversationshefte*, vol. 1, ed. Karl-Heinz Köhler and Grita Herre (Leipzig: VEB Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 1972), 235.
[144] Yet another work that should be mentioned here is Beethoven's cantata "Der glorreiche Augenblick" (The Glorious Moment), which prominently includes trombones at the setting of "Europa steht" ("Europe stands"); see in this regard John David Wilson's essay "Beethoven's Popular Style: *Der glorreiche Augenblick* and the art of writing for the galleries," in *Beethoven und der Wiener Kongress (1814/15)* (Schriften zur Beethoven-Forschung 26), ed. Bernhard A. Appel, Joanna Cobb Biermann, William Kinderman, and Julia Ronge , (April, 2016), 219-283.
[145] Maynard Solomon, "Beethoven's Ninth Symphony: A Search for Order," *19th-Century Music,* Vol. 10, No. 1, Summer, 1986), 9. See also *The Works of Friedrich Schiller: Aesthetically and Philosophical Essays,* ed. Nathan Haskell Dole (New York, 1902), II, 36.

the symphony. What are some landmarks of the overall narrative? The build-up from the ambiguous opening might be thought to depict elements of Creation, leading later to the trio of the second movement--which Harry Goldschmidt considers a musical metaphor for rustic innocence or Arcadia[146]--before we ultimately reach the disorienting chaos of the "terror fanfare" or *Schreckensfanfare* at the threshold to the finale, before concluding with the final journey in the choral finale toward Elysium. This is the destination point where the brotherhood of mankind overcomes its struggle and casts its gaze beyond, toward the starry heavens.

The opening section of the first movement to set the setting of the finale. In the opening movement, the dark, ominous mood is immediately set with horns softly holding an open fifth, while the violin II and cellos murmur sextuplets (music example 54).

[146] Harry Goldschmidt, *Beethoven: Werkeinführungen* (Leipzig, 1975), 66.

Music example 54. Beethoven, *Symphony No. 9,* Opening

David Levy writes that "Beethoven heightens the mystique of his opening by introducing, *sotto voce,* a rhythmic motive that begins to bring order and shape to the amorphous murmur of sounds."[147] This mysterious ambiguous gesture brings us back to the Violin I descending from E to A, then from A to E, echoed by the violas and basses. Kinderman describes this opening as "the journey out of the sphere of the inaudible into that of the audible."[148] The bassoon entrance in measure 15 breaks this sequence, and descends to a D instead of an E. This harmonic digression is quickly dissolved but leads to the first ensemble statement in mm. 17-21, to what seems to cadence in D minor, but in measure 24, the low strings leap a sixth interval from the subdominant chord to a surprise chord, Eb major. The Eb major chord, elsewhere associated with the Divine, in the

[147] David Benjamin Levy, *Beethoven: The Ninth Symphony* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003), 50.
[148] Kinderman, *Beethoven*, 293.

midst of unclarity, seems important, as the trumpets and timpani respond with a fanfare like motive in mm. 27-30. Beethoven also employs the contrasting dynamics from *forte* to *piano,* surely a gesture of importance. To further the rich ambiguity of this opening to the symphony, Beethoven places *sforzandi* on weak beats (mm.31-34), to metrically displace the listener, and further destabilize the atmosphere. Then follows a sweeping gesture of thirty-second notes in the violins and violas, while the second violins and cello resume the sextuplets from the opening. This brings us back to a setting like the opening, again with descending intervals, but this time a step lower in pitch, from D to A. Once more the motive develops, and the bassoon breaks the chain and thrusts the orchestra into an unexpected key, Bb major in measure 51. But again, this key is short-lived, and sequential messages between the winds and strings lead the music into A major (measure 63), forming a parallel to the "Neapolitan" relationship between Eb and D in earlier passages of the movement. The unfolding events of this first section of the great initial movement are unpredictable yet orderly.

Beethoven's planting of thematic allusions and gestures throughout all four movements is apparent: he subtly anticipates the "Joy" theme, cautiously anticipating the jubilant finale.[149] Notice how in mm. 74-79 the leading voice of this theme is the flute, the instrument that was used in the Mass during the passages that intoned scared and divine implications. Later episodes in D major, most

[149] For detailed discussion of Beethoven's anticipation in earlier movements of the "Joy" theme of the choral finale, see especially; Maynard Solomon's essay, "Beethoven's Ninth Symphony: A Search for Order," in his *Beethoven Essays,* (Harvard University Press, 1990).

strikingly, the horn passage in the coda, with its luminous vocal timbre, resonates in the character of the chorus finale. The recapitulation of the movement, featuring a jolting first-inversion D major chord, which long precedes the horn's later anticipation of the "Joy" theme, sustains the unpredictable yet orderly character of the first movement. This impactful moment of the recapitulation with the powerful orchestra *fortissimo*, is in the key center of D major, but with F# in the bass providing the necessary impact while still recalling the open, hollow sonority of the open intervals as featured in the opening. Certain scholars like Levy describe this moment with F#s in the low strings spanning over two octaves and with "thundering" Ds in the kettle drums as "apocalyptic."[150] Beethoven continues to intensify the tension, with fanfare chords, now in the tonic major, replacing the expected tonic minor. But this too is cut off prematurely, as Bb momentarily returns in the bass, leading the orchestra back into "the darkness of minor, with unmistakable expressive overtones of "Verzweiflung," or despair."[151] The recapitulation remains in minor, while showing much emphasis on the Neapolitan degree, a half step above the tonic. Yet Beethoven uses the horns and other winds to perform the D major *dolce* passages with the unmistakable motivic figures of the opening lurking in the background.

A dramatic quality of unpredictability amid order rings true throughout the symphony. One example of this is in the fourth

[150] Levy, *Beethoven: The Ninth Symphony*, 62.
[151] Kinderman, *Beethoven*, 296.

movement, where the ascending A to E interval is prominent in the recitative in the lower strings heard after the first *Schreckensfanfare.* Fear is a primary aspect of Friedrich Schiller's ideas about the sublime. He writes in his essay *Über das Erhabene (About the Sublime)* that

> "the feeling of the sublime is a mixed compound feeling. It arises as a combination of *painful apprehension (Wehsein)*, which reaches its highest intensity as fear, and happiness *(Frohsein)*, which can be intensified to ecstasy; and although not quite a result of desire, it is something that for sensitive souls reaches beyond the sphere of our desires
>
> (Das Gefühl das Erhabenen ist ein gemischtes Gefühl. Es ist eine Zusammensetzung von *Wehsein,* das sich in seinem höchsten Grad al sein Schauer äußert, und von *Frohsein*, das bis zum Entzücken steigen kann und, ob es gleich nicht eigentlich Lust ist, von feinen Seelen aller Lust doch weit vorgezogen wird)."[152]

Beethoven paid much attention to Schiller's writings, and of course used his "An die Freude" in the Ninth Symphony, so there is no doubt about Schiller's ideas striking Beethoven directly.

The notion of the sublime involving "painful apprehension" is reflected in other arts from this historical period. Joseph Wright of

[152] Schiller, Friedrich, *Über das Erhabene* (*About the Sublime*), in Schiller, *Vom Pathetischen und Erhabenen,* Stuttgart: Reclam, 1970; first published 1793). Quotation above from p. 87 of Reclam edition; translation by William Kinderman.

Derby's painting, *Vesuvius from Portici* (Illustration 5), held in the collection of the Huntington Library in San Marino, California, visually illustrates the sublime by evoking something of the deep vitality of our planet erupting from within.

Illustration 5. *Vesuvius from Portici,* Joseph Wright of Derby

Wright sketched the erupting volcano during a visit to Naples in 1774, after becoming intrigued by the destructive power and awesome beauty of Mt. Vesuvius. The painting shown depicts the sublime, in its aesthetic orientation arousing fear, with the thrill of danger enhancing the experience of pleasure. The painting magnifies the

volcano's intensity as compared to the defenseless buildings on its side. The moon off to the side evokes light, but the central bright light created by the massive explosion shines mightier than does the pale moonlight, and in direct comparison, the blast of light in the midst of smoke and clouds enhances this portrayal of the sublime. The painter is of course powerless to generate sounds, but Beethoven's *Schreckensfanfare* at the threshold of his choral finale is a fitting musical portrayal of the painful sensation that evokes the sublime.

That "terror fanfare" or *Schreckensfanfare* (music example 55)—to cite the Wagnerian expression—consists of the combination of the tonic triads of the keys most important in this symphony as a whole—D minor and Bb major. This dissonant harmony erupts out of the peaceful meditation of the *Adagio,* posing a problematic question that demands an answer.

Presto. ♩. = 96.

Flauto I.
Flauto II.
Oboe I.
Oboe II.
Clarinetto I. in B.
Clarinetto II. in B.
Fagotto I.
Fagotto II.
Contrafagotto.
Corni in D.
Corni in B.
Trombe in D.
Timpani in D. A.

Music example 55. Beethoven, *Symphony No. 9,* "terror fanfare"

Beethoven recalls music from each of the preceding movements, interspersed with recitative. Then the "Joy" theme is discovered, and variations of the theme unfold in the orchestra, before the return of the "terror fanfare" (harmonically enhanced) sets the scene for the baritone's entry. The solo baritone intones the recitative figure with Beethoven's text "O Freunde, nicht dies Töne! Sondern laßt uns angenehmere anstimmen, und freudenvollere. Freude! Freude!" ("Oh friends, not these tones! Rather let us sing more cheerful and more joyful ones. Joy! Joy!") (Music example 56).

Music example 56. Beethoven, *Symphony No. 9,* solo baritone recitative

The soloist proclaims the same notes in reverse of the opening, as if to musically portray new tones of joy in contrast to the dark tones of terror. It is noteworthy that Beethoven deliberated over his choral finale, and even sketched an alternative instrumental finale in case he would not have used Schiller's optimistic text.[153] In the end, Beethoven retained Schiller's text, bringing his final symphony to a culmination and final destination: Elysium. This proclamation triggers the famous "Ode to Joy" theme, with the choir singing the text from Schiller's poem "An die Freude" ("Ode to Joy"). The key is now in D major, the transition from pure instrumental music to vocal music is achieved, and the quest for "Joy, divine sparks of the Gods; for Elysium, with its promise of brotherhood, reconciliation, and internal life"[154] ensues. The brotherhood of mankind absorbs humanistic and Masonic influences as well, such as are also found in the chorus of the prisoners in *Fidelio*. In the ensuing *Allegro assai,* when the baritone soloist intones "Freude," the male chorus echoes the same text in conjoined spirits. As the solo baritone sings this

[153] Kinderman, *Beethoven: A Political Artist in Revolutionary Times,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020), 197.
[154] Solomon, "Beethoven's Ninth Symphony: A Search for Order," 15.

text, the oboe--the instrument that assumed an important symbolic role in *Fidelio*--dominates the accompaniment sonority, surely conveying a fragrance of hope reminiscent of the opera. The vocal soloist and the chorus echo one another in call-and-response. It is worth pointing out that in the chorus, Beethoven omits the soprano in the first phrase of the vocal variation ("Whoever has been so fortunate"). The soprano joins by taking up the tenor's line for the text "He who has obtained a dear wife/Add his jubilation," giving to a musical text an added poetic effect. The Ninth Symphony might be described in Schopenhauer's terms as "express[ing] the deepest wisdom in a language which. . . reason does not understand."[155] Such language conveys something of the idealism of the Enlightenment and the ideals of the French Revolution,[156] depicting the sublime in its awe-inspiring vastness.

A depiction of the sublime surfaces at the critical juncture point of the choral finale. The vocal presentation of the tune motivates the D major to Bb Major transition in Beethoven's finale to the text "und der Cherub steht vor Gott!" This transition to B flat major finale brings about a great transition--an extension of the sixth variation of the "Joy" theme with emphasis on the last words of this text excerpt: "vor Gott." ("before God"). At this pivotal moment (music example 57), it is important to realize what emphasis Beethoven puts on the text by highlighting "vor Gott" as an ultimate message during this impressive and dramatic musical moment. At the last climactic

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[155] Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Idea,* vol. I (Garden City, N.Y., 1961), 271.
[156] Levy, *Beethoven: The Ninth Symphony,* 90.

repetition of "vor Gott," it is as if time stops, and the community gazes upward, as all are focused on the deity "above the canopy of stars." The musical lines leading up to this moment move upwards while the immutable rhythm portrays mortals chanting in awe, overcome by an atmosphere of sublime expectancy. Kinderman writes that "for Beethoven himself, the single most decisive compositional model for the choral finale was his own *Missa solemnis*. Its influence is felt particularly in those parts of the choral finale that have a religious text, such as the pivotal phrase "und der Cherub steht vor Gott" ("and the cherub stands before God"), the setting of which forms the first great climax of the movement."[157] It is in this key center that the F-major chord with A on top which intones the text "coelis" ("heaven") in the Mass is followed by a descent down to earth with music of the Incarnatus. In the Ninth Symphony, the dominant of D is tonicized by the G# moving to A, as the bass falls to F, forming a harmonically incomplete, hollow sonority highlighting the name of "Gott" ("God"). Burnham finds that "we are suddenly aware of just what it means to be standing before the throne of God: this sudden vastness is sublime."[158]

This momentous passage is followed by "Turkish" march-like music in the key of Bb.

[157] Kinderman, *Beethoven*, p. 304.
[158] Scott Burnham, "God and the Voice of Beethoven," in *The New Beethoven: Evolution, Analysis, Interpretation,* ed. Jeremy Yudkin (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2020), 246.

Music example 57. Beethoven, Finale of *Symphony No. 9*, transition at "vor Gott"

According to Kinderman, "Beethoven's treatment here of the modulation from D to Bb and the ensuing military processional music recall the *Agnus Dei* of the Mass (*Missa Solemnis*)...the setting of "Gott" as a long-protracted sonority, with A at the top, corresponds with the climax on the Bb in the Credo.[159] Levy states that the music of *Fidelio* as well was influenced by "Turkish" music, which was later absorbed into the Ninth Symphony.[160] Levy describes the "Turkish" March which follows as befitting "Schiller's chorus, with its comparison of heroes running their victorious course like suns flying through Heaven's firmament, [which] may be more religiously-based than commonly believed."[161] Lawrence Kramer argues that Beethoven's treatment of the "Turkish" March "extracts, arranges, and handles verses from Schiller's "Ode to Joy" in ways that resonate with a

[159] Kinderman, *Beethoven*, p. 304.
[160] Levy, *Beethoven: The Ninth Symphony*,45.
[161] Levy, *Beethoven: The Ninth Symphony,* 105.

narrative paradigm that flourished in the symphony's cultural milieu...this "universal history," as Hegel called it, focused most often on the relationship between Greek antiquity and German-Christian modernity."[162] One plausible explanation of the religious influence can be found by comparing the text of the chorus to Psalm 19: 5-7 as it would have been written in Luther's Bible.

Psalm 19: 5-7:

"Und dieselbe geht heraus wie ein Bräutigam aus seiner Kammer und freut sich wie ein Held zu laufen den Weg. Sie geht auf an einem Ende des Himmels und läuft um bis wieder an sein Ende, und bleibt nichts vor ihrer Hitze verborgen. Das Gesetz des Herrn ist vollkommen und erquickt die Seele; das Zeugnis des Herrn ist gewiß und macht die Unverständigen weise."

("In them hath He set a tent for the sun; which is as a bridgegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run his course. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it; and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof").

Schiller's Text:

[162] Lawrence Kramer, "The Harem Threshold: Turkish Music and Greek Love in Beethoven's "Ode to Joy"," *19th-Century Music* Vol. 22, No. 1 (Summer 1998), 79.

Froh, wie seine Sonnen fliegen. Durch des Himmels prächt'gen Plan Laufet, Brüder, eure Bahn, Freudig, wie ein Held zum Siegen.

("Happily, flying like his suns through Heaven's splendid firmament, run, Brothers, your course. Joyfully, like a hero towards victory").

The parallels between these texts are unmistakable. Psalm 19 falls into three parts, of which part one (vv. 1-6) recalls the story of creation in Genesis 1, declaring that the heavens and firmament portrays the glory of God. The sun represents not a heavenly being, or a deity to be worshiped, but has been placed there by its Creator, and illustrates the poet's imagination of a youthful, vibrant bridegroom on the first day of married life. Full of energy and hope, it runs from one edge to the other full of jubilance. Similarly, Schiller's text embodies a sense of jubilant spirits of heroes, triumphantly heading towards victory. Levy comments that "in Beethoven's day, "Turkish" music could simply have been an exoticism, but it also could have been interpreted as a code for heroism."[163] In other words, as Nicholas Cook states, "Turkish music is not an alien element or a cheap piece of exoticism; it is absorbed within the organic structure of the music."[164] We should note Beethoven's consistent use of key centers in this symbolism, with a transition from the moment where all gaze toward God in the key of D major, but then look earthward in the key of Bb, the key chosen for the chorus of prisoners in *Fidelio.*

[163] Levy, *Beethoven: The Ninth Symphony,* 108. See also, Lawrence Kramer, "Music and Love in "Ode to Joy"," 78-90.
[164] Nicholas Cook, *Beethoven: Symphony No. 9* (Great Britain: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 39.

It is relevant in this connection that Beethoven recalled at least part of Schiller's "An die Freude" in a paraphrased form in *Fidelio*, as shown below:

"An die Freude" 2nd strophe:

Wer ein holdes Weib errungen, Mische seinen Jubel ein!
(He who has obtained a dear wife, add his jubilation!)

Fidelio (Act II, Finale):

Wer ein holdes Weib errungen, stimm' in unsern Jubel ein!
(He who has obtained a dear wife, join in our rejoicing!)

Kinderman observes that "according to the Schillerian concept embraced by Beethoven. . . freedom is manifested in a resistance to despair or suffering, modalities associated in this case with the first movement or with the *Schreckensfanfare*."[165] I would further note that this concept is also depicted in *Fidelio*, in which the evil tyrant, Don Pizarro, negates the pursuit of liberty, equality, and fraternity. In the Ninth Symphony, it is the baritone solo which liberates the orchestra from the shadow of terror; in *Fidelio,* it is the female heroine who breaks the chains of evil tyranny. The opera concludes with a text rejoicing over the courageous wife, whereas the

[165] Kinderman, *Beethoven*, 302.

Ninth features a powerful chorus of united spirits, almost resembling a congregation praising God. The setting of "Gott" with its elongated duration, with A atop an F sonority, parallels that climax on the dominant of Bb at "descendit de coelis" in the Credo. The orchestration and registers of the voices also match closely, highlighting "God" in the symphony and "heaven" in the Mass. At the last line of the *Adagio ma non troppo, ma divoto,* Beethoven uses a similar treatment of referential sonorities drawn from the Mass to emphasize the text through music.

Music example 58. Beethoven, finale of *Symphony No. 9,* mm. 595-610

In connection with Beethoven’s use of the trombone, it should be mentioned that certain parts of Schiller’s poem quickly attracted his attention for use of this instrument. Early in the process of composition and while contemplating the use of “Turkish” music, Beethoven wrote a memorandum that “On Welt Sternenzelt forte trombone blasts.”[166] This reference refers to the slow section of the choral finale, with its consecutive lines “Ahnest du den Schöpfer, Welt?” (“Do you sense the Creator, world?”) and “Such’ ihn über’m Sternenzelt!” (“Seek him above the canopy of stars!”). There is indeed a brief *forte* trombone “blast” anticipating “Welt?” in the chorus, and a sustained *fortissimo* support from the trombones occurs at the ensuing monolithic setting of “Above the starts must He dwell.”

Already at the beginning of this slow section of the choral finale, in the *Andante maestoso,* the bass trombone enters, doubling the tenor and bass voices (music example 58). Berlioz describes the trombones in this section as “religious, solemn, and immense.”[167] Here, once more, the bass trombone enters as an upbeat before the voices; Cloutier describes it as “like an intonation of an organ to alert a cantor to introduce the new text.”[168] The text, which proclaims the Freemasonry ideals of a Brotherhood of Man followed by mention of a heavenly Father, fits well to the symbolic role of the trombone. Beethoven’s music to “Seid umschlungen Millionen” in this *Andante*

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[166] See *Thayer’s Life of Beethoven*, 891.
[167] Hector Berlioz, *Beethoven: A Critical Appreciation of Beethoven’s Nine Symphonies, and His Only Opera, Fidelio, with Its Four Overtures,* translation by Ralph De Sola (Boston: Crescendo Publishing Company, 1975), 47.
[168] Cloutier, “Ludwig van Beethoven,” 161.

maestoso in G major features the bass trombone intoning the same notes and rhythmic gesture of the male voices. A noteworthy point is how the bass trombone briefly *precedes* the low voices, with its tonal quality thereby heard clearly by the audience. Beethoven writes *staccato* to prescribe chant-like articulations, and he even adds *sforzando* markings to highlight the accompanying instrumental tones. This archaic-sounding setting in conjunction with the Schiller text emphasizes the sacred aura of the *Posaune*. The words sung are as follows:

"Seid umschlungen, Millionen! Diesen Kuss der ganzen Welt!
Bru¨der—u¨berm Sternenzelt Muss ein lieber Vater wohnen."

"Be embraced, you millions! Here's a kiss for all the world! Brothers! Above the canopy of the stars there must dwell a loving Father!"

As Kinderman points out, the "canopy of the stars" reminds us of Kant's view of the polarity between impersonal nature and the introspective individual, "the starry heavens above us and the moral law within us."[169] This assimilation of Kantian thought in combination with the mention of a "loving Father" provides the motivation for this depiction of the sublime. Furthermore, the presence of the bass trombone in conjunction with the low voices pronouncing such a text adds to the sacred quality of the artistic expression. Levy states

[169] Kinderman, *Beethoven*, 305-306.

that "the use of trombone here is another one of those semiotic codes, as this instrument traditionally was associated with sacred music.[170] Almost as a confession, the theme of the "Brotherhood of Man and the Fatherhood of God" reminds the listener of the Masonic and religious aura, the association with the sublime. The Viennese practice of doubling the trombone voices with its corresponding choral parts is in full effect throughout the finale of this symphony.[171] Beethoven's invocation of a Kantian depiction of the deity, which conveys the sense of a supernatural musical transcendence, is mediated through an impressive naturalistic image of the starry canopy looming above the earth.

Trombonists should consider a smaller bass trombone to appropriately match the diction and clarity of the male voice. The second trigger is not necessary to perform all the notes indicated in the music, and often it seems more suitable for a single trigger bass trombone in terms of blend with the human voice. Special attention should be paid to the text being sung by the male voices, especially to punctuations such as commas where a logical breath should be taken. The trombone and vocal sound need to support one another. One should be careful about breaking up words and do best to match the phrasing of the low voices. Although this passage is a standard excerpt, all leads should be made by the voices, with the bass trombone as an essential supporting role.

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[170] Levy, *Beethoven: The Ninth Symphony,* 112.
[171] See David Guion, "What Handel Taught the Viennese about Trombone," *Historic Brass Society Journal XV* (2003), 291-321.

A climax of this passage occurs as Beethoven references Schiller's text: "Ahnest du den Schöpfer, Welt? Such' ihn über'm Sternenzelt!" ("Do you sense the Creator, world? Seek him beyond the starry dome!") thereby setting forth a vision extending beyond the limitations of human perception, and striving toward the sublime (music example 59).

Music example 59. Beethoven, *Symphony No. 9,* "Über Sternen muss er wohnen"

This upward gaze toward the infinite or "*Blick nach oben*" is reflected near the end of the finale, where Beethoven seems to reflect upon Kant's depiction of the phenomena of the deity. In the *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788), Immanuel Kant describes two things that evoke the sublime, filling our senses with admiration and awe:

"Der bestirnte Himmel über mir, und das moralische Gesetz in mir."[172]

[173]

"The starry heavens above me, and the moral law within me."

As Kinderman reminds us, "This dictum from Kant, embraced by Beethoven, gives expression, in terms not of speculative or received doctrine but of concrete experience, to the relationship between eternal, infinite nature on the one hand and man's subjective inwardness on the other. This polarity resonates throughout the Mass, and especially in its later movements."[174] As stated above in our discussion of the *Missa solemnis,* Beethoven wrote this dictum into his conversation notebook around February 1820 in the following form:

"das Moralische Gesez in unß, u. der gestirnte Himmel über uns" Kant!!! Littrow Direktor der Sternwarte[175]

"the moral law in us, and the starry heavens above us." Kant!!! Littrow Director of the Planetarium

A recent essay by Franz Michael Maier convincingly amplifies the context of Beethoven's notation, with its emphasis on Kant.[176] As Maier shows, Joseph Littrow had been appointed director of the planetarium in Vienna in September 1819, and he contributed a series

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[172] Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft. Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten. Werkausgabe* vol 7, ed. Wilhelm Weischedel (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1978), 300.

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[174] William Kinderman, "Beethoven's Symbol for the Deity in the *Missa solemnis* and the Ninth Symphony" *19th-Century Music* Vol. 9, No. 2 (Autumn 1985), 118. See also his book, *Beethoven,* 306.

[175] *Ludwig van Beethovens Konversationshefte*, vol. 1, ed. Karl-Heinz Köhler and Grita Herre (Leipzig: VEB Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 1972), p. 235.

[176] Franz Michael Maier, "Beethoven liest Littrow," in *Beethoven liest*, ed. Bernhard R. Appel and Julia Ronge (Bonn: Beethoven-Haus, 2016), 251-288.

of essays on *Cosmological Observations* to a journal which Beethoven read and to which he also contributed. Between 1820 to 1823, the years in which Beethoven's Mass and final symphony were written, Littrow wrote no fewer than 19 essays for this journal which Beethoven also received. Beethoven copied this dictum not directly from Kant's writings but from one of Littrow's essays in this series of *Kosmologische Betrachugen (Cosmological Observations)* in early 1820. In Littrow's inscription of the text, he reverses the order of the awe-striking features, placing first the "moral law" and then the "starry heavens." For Littrow, the formulation is shifted to the plural, "the moral law within us" and "the starry heavens above us," providing an appropriate tone of fraternity in conjunction to Schiller's ode *An die Freude (To Joy).* Scott Burnham further points out that the emphasis of this passage occurs on the text "Welt" and then "Zelt",[177] surely a purposeful technique to highlight nature and to convey a communal scene under the starry heavens. As we observe the voices, and especially the sopranos, we can see how the melodic line gradually ascends, as if in an effort to gaze toward the heavens, while still remaining on earth, while the chorus sings together, chanting the same rhythms. The upward leap from G to E at "über'm Sternenzelt!" reminds us perhaps distantly of the "leap of faith" heard at the very opening of the Credo of the Mass. Burnham states that "this great cry of faith from the height of Beethoven's most extended, most exalted harmonic monolith thus far seems both an expression of faith and a plea for faith: "He *must* live there!" One

[177] Scott Burnham, "God and the Voice of Beethoven," in *The New Beethoven: Evolution, Analysis, Interpretation,* 252-254.

could hear this outburst as an attempt to overwhelm doubt by sheer sonic force."[178]

Then a brief silence ensues, which is broken by a mysterious, almost ghostly diminished-seventh chord, now soon blending with the notes of the chorus. The bass then breaks the monolithic chords by moving to A, creating a dominant-seventh sonority of D including a minor ninth, while quietly pulsating, like the stars shining in the starry heavens. The chorus returns in *pianissimo*, first with the highest two voices, followed by the low voices featuring the high G yet again, but now without a sense of blessed assurance. Maynard Solomon describes this sonority as the sound of "deus absconditus," the absent God,[179] until D major returns with the syncopated altos on high D proclaiming "Seid umschlungen, Millionen! Diesen Kuss der ganzen Welt!" followed by the sopranos echoing this call, with the tenor and bass voices joining soon after. The trombones soon join as well, in the glorious D major celebration of the "Joy" theme, leading at last to the frenzied and dramatic close of the choral finale—the end of a quest that seems to embrace so much, the Alpha and the Omega.[180]

By no means did Beethoven hold orthodox Catholic beliefs. However, if Beethoven possessed understanding of Kant's thought as reflected in his *Religion within the limits of Reason alone* (1793), he would have had insight into "mysteries (secrecies) beyond the knowledge of society,"[181] and might well have posited and affirmed the existence of

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[178] Burnham, "God and the Voice of Beethoven," in *The New Beethoven: Evolution, Analysis, Interpretation*, 253.
[179] Maynard Solomon, "The Ninth Symphony: A Search for Order," in *Beethoven Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 30.
[180] See also Revelation 21:6 and Revelation 22:13 where God is described as "Alpha" and the "Omega."
[181] Kant Immanuel, *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone,* translated by Theodore Meyer Greene and Hoyt H Hudson, edited by John R. Silber, (New York: Harper & Row, 1960).

an ultimate, supernatural, divine Being. Around 1819, when Beethoven began his work on the Mass, he copied three ancient Egyptian inscriptions, which he kept framed under glass of his desk.[182] These inscriptions were drawn from Friedrich Schiller's essay "Die Sendung Moses" ("The Mission of Moses") which Schiller found in turn from the 1789 study of the Freemason scholar and Kantian philosopher Carl Leonhard Reinhard. In this manuscript, Beethoven copied a famous dictum associated with the veiled Egyptian goddess Isis, a dictum known to be derived from the temple of Sais which the composer carefully copied in German:

I am all That is, That was, and That shall be. No mortal human has lifted my veil.

Ich bin alles, Was ist, Was war, und Was seyn wird. Kein sterblicher Mensch hat meinen Schleyer aufgehoben.

In his *Critique of Judgement* (1790), Kant, referring to this same dictum, commented that "perhaps nothing more sublime was ever said and no more sublime thought ever expressed than on the Temple of Isis (Mother Nature)."[183] The ancient Greek philosopher, Heraclitus, similarly stresses the same three states of temporality to describe the cosmos to have been always, is always, and shall be always and everlasting.[184] In this connection, one can reflect on the manifold states of the deity in the Bible, as when God appears before Moses as

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[182] See *Beethovens Glaubensbekenntnis: Drei Denksprüche aus Friedrich Schillers Aufsatz* Die Sendung Moses," ed. Friederike Grigat (Bonn: Beethoven-Haus, 2008).
[183] See the "Analytic of the Sublime" in Kant, *Critique of Judgment,* trans. J. H. Bernard (New York: Hefner, 1951), 160.
[184] William Kinderman, "Beethoven's "Upward Gaze" ("*Blick nach* oben") in the *Missa solemnis:* Compositional Genesis and Musical Symbolism, *Beethoven-Haus* (Bonn: Beethoven-Haus, 2024), 12. See also Josef Chytry, *Cosmotheism: Cytherean Sitings Between Heraclitus and Kittler* (New York: Peter lang, 2020), 366.

a burning bush in Exodus 3:14 -15, and on the three states as when God describes himself to Moses as "And God said unto Moses, I am that I am: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I am hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, the Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name forever, and this is my memorial unto all generations."

Following this train of thought, the *Missa solemnis* provides to the listener especially rich insight into Beethoven's expression and interpretation of the sublime. The power of the music, often overwhelming, reflects the intense efforts of the composer to portray a sublime mystery. Mellers observes that "the Credo of the Mass in D has an overwhelming note of authenticity; the words doubtless expressed something of which Beethoven was passionately convinced; but his conviction was probably better expressed in the mystical sentences he was fond of copying down from Eastern literature. Such phrases as "I am that which is. I am all that was, that is, and that shall be," part of a creed that Beethoven copied out in his own handwriting and kept permanently framed on his desk, probably expressed better, through their very vagueness, Beethoven's intuitions."[185] This "mystical sentence," as we have seen, actually derived from ancient Egypt, and indeed seems connected to Beethoven's determined quest to convey ultimate reality through artistic means.

185 Mellers, *Beethoven and the Voice of God,* 141-143.

In the choral finale of the Ninth Symphony, Beethoven's quest for the deity focuses on the mention of a Heavenly Father. Sullivan states that "it is rather that we feel that the spirit which has climbed up the heights of those three movements should now, like Moses on Sinai, be granted a vision of God Himself. To turn back from the serene, unearthly heights of that great Adagio to the warm human world of humanitarian ideals and optimistic rejoicings, is to disappoint our expectation of, and craving for, some ultimate sublimity."[186] According to the biblical texts, Mount Sinai symbolizes where God's presence was felt. Sullivan's reference to Moses on Sinai provides an analogy in that the listener, drawn into the Ninth Symphony, may be transported toward higher insight, and even perhaps brought toward the presence of the everlasting and divine.

The passages we have discussed from the Credo and Benedictus, and the choral finale, all allude emphatically to the heavens as a symbol of perfection and a goal for spiritual aspiration.[187] In the Mass, the portrayal of the sublime and omnipotent power in the heavens in comparison to the limited mortal earthly sphere sets the scene for the depiction of a human journey towards Elysium. In this context, the trombones, and especially the bass trombone, contribute solemn tones that enhance the sonorous quality, heightening the symbolic depiction of the deity. Beethoven himself once wrote on a musical sketchleaf that "the height of the stars [can be conveyed] more by the way of the instruments."[188] In the choral finale of the Ninth

[186] J.W.N. Sullivan, *Beethoven: His Spiritual Development* (New York: Vintage Books, 1960), 141-143.
[187] Kinderman, *Beethoven*, 305-306.
[188] The inscription is transcribed in Gustav Nottebohm, *Zweite Beethoveniana: nachgelassene Aufsätze* (Leipzig: Peters, 1887), 186.

Symphony, where many of the same techniques of the Mass are shared, Beethoven builds on the rich associations of Schiller's poem to provide a climatic depiction of human experience in the presence of God (*Coram Deo*).

Afterword

Around the 20th of March, 1820, just a few weeks after Beethoven's enthusiastic embrace of the Kantian dictum about "The moral law within us, and the starry heavens above us, he made a series of entries in a conversation-book. He may then have suffered from a dental problem, because he notated the name and address of a dentist in the center of Vienna, on the Graben close to St. Stephen's Cathedral. Directly beneath this entry for the dentist, Beethoven wrote a pattern of rising entries of the "Credo" motive marked "*cre*[*scendo*]," leading to an assertion of that "Credo" figure marked "*tutti*"; these are surely early sketches related to the beginning of the Credo. Then, below the musical excerpt, the composer writes the following:

> Ganzes orchester erst bey patrem omni potentem / d.h. Pauke u Tromp[eten / trombonenn
>
> Full orchestra [to be used] first at patrem omni potentem / that means timpani and trumpets / trombones[189]

Hence the notion of unlimited power of the deity is associated by Beethoven with the augmentation of his orchestral resources to include trombones as well as organ, instruments with rich associations extending to the sacred, sublime, and supernatural.

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[189] The conversation-book entry is found in *Ludwig van Beethovens Konversationshefte,* vol. 1, ed. Karl-Heinz Köhler and Grita Herre (Leipzig: VEB Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 1972), 176. Also see Norbert Gertsch Critical Report to his edition of the *Missa solemnis* (*Beethoven Werke: Abteilung VIII*, *Band 3, Missa solemnis* (Munich: Henle, 2000), 298. An extra "n" is written by Beethoven in his notation of the word "trombonenn".

Noteworthy as well is the rhythmic context: the syncopated onset of the powerful prolonged sonority, which is imposed upon a lively, driving motivic texture leading up to "omnipotem." Such a musical treatment of omnipotence fits not only to this passage in the first part of the Credo, but also to the setting of "Deus pater omnipotens" ("God the father Almighty") in the first part of the Gloria, as we have seen. As Warren Kirkendale observes, we also witness Beethoven's characteristic musical treatment related to faith such as the shaping of his four-note Credo motive (music example 60a.), featuring a falling third and fifth with dotted rhythm, which parallels his later use in 1825 of this rhythmic figure in a riddle canon with the text "Gott ist eine feste Burg," WoO 188 (music example 60b.).[190]

Music example 60a. Beethoven, *Credo* motive

[190] See Warren Kirkendale, "New Roads to Old Ideas in Beethoven's "Missa Solemnis", *The Musical Quartely,* Vol. 56, No. 4 [Special Issue Celebrating the Bicentennial of the Birth of Beethoven (Oct., 1970)], 682-683.

Music example 60b. Beethoven, “Gott ist eine feste Burg,” WoO 188[191]

The notion of a high looming tower as in a “mighty fortress” (“Feste Burg”) carries with it a sense of the supernatural, appropriately evoking an atmosphere eminently fitting to the sound of the *Posaunen*, that instrument biblically associated with God’s presence. Multiple perspectives apply here. From a Christian perspective, the Bible describes God himself as a strong tower, “The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe,” (Proverbs 18:10). From a secular perspective, Katarzyna Murawska states that “the tower’s height, and the privileged position of those at the top of it, were still associated with social prestige and power.”[192] And from a poetic/philosophical perspective, Edmund Burke discerns the sublime as embodied in towers through his examination of Milton’s *Paradise Lost*.[193]

My own attempt to come to grips with Beethoven’s *Turmmusik* included a performance of the three *Equali* with esteemed colleagues as part of my Doctoral of Musical Arts program at the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music. A link to this performance in June 2022 is provided here: https://on.soundcloud.com/NMSAM. My fellow performers in this recording are Hiram Rodriguez, Nathan Culcasi, and Charles Brunson.

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[191] Ludwig van Beethoven, "Gott ist eine feste Burg", zweistimmiger Kanon WoO 188, Prelinger , Beethoven-Haus Bonn, Sammlung H. C. Bodmer, Nd 11 / 1907 Prelinger, HCB Nd 11 / 1907 Prel. https://www.beethoven.de/de/media/view/5206106078969856/Ludwig+van+Beethoven%2C+%26quot%3BGott+ist+eine+feste+Burg%26quot%3B%2C+zweistimmiger+Kanon+WoO+188%2C+Prelinger?fromWork=5085608691105792 See also Kirkendale,

[192] Katarzyna Murawska, “An Image of Mysterious Wisdom Won by Toil: The Tower as Symbol of Thoughtful Isolation in English Art and Literature from Milton to Yeats”, *Artibus et Historiae* Vol. 3, No. 5 (1982), 142.

[193] Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas on the Sublime and the Beautiful,* (London: New York, 1958), 62, 72.

Musical guidance for this quartet was provided by James Miller (Associate Principal Trombone, Los Angeles Philharmonic and Lecturer of Trombone, UCLA). As with many live performance recordings, this performance may be less perfect but it encapsulates the spirit of the program at UCLA, complementing my dissertation by bringing these works to sound. As I have recommended, everyone is playing the tenor trombone, maintaining thereby the spirit and tone of an *Equal.*

In reflecting on the symbolism of the tower, and its prominent literary background, let us observe how tower symbolism is prominent in Milton's *Paradise Lost* of 1667. Satanic pride and delusion are set against the heavenly tower of utopian ideals of freedom and the common good. Furthermore, the biblical passages related to the "Tower of Babel" represent humanity's misguided attempt to level oneself with God (Genesis 11:1-9), or in the Kantian sense, represent a vain attempt to overreach the starry heavens, or lifting that veil that should remain a mystery.[194] Anthony Low views the tower as "a unifying device…it helps connect the activities and aspirations of Heaven, earth, and Hell as each creates its own characteristic architecture."[195] In Beethoven's *Fidelio*, these poles collide, as the warning signal of the Satanic Pizarro is usurped, stolen from the tyrant through Leonore's courageous intervention and the concomitant timing of the approach of the Minister Don Fernando. In an instant, a moment of dramatic reversal, the function of the trumpet fanfares

[194] Even the most recent developments in astrophysics—such as black holes and dark matter—continue to make us ever aware of mysteries that elude complete comprehension.
[195] Anthony Low, "The Image of the Tower in Paradise Lost," *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900,* Vol. 10 No. 1 (Winter, 1970), 181

from the tower are transformed from being merely Pizarro's strategic signal into the opposite, the proclamation of a new, enhanced reality, in which his cruel sway is abolished.[196] In yet another example, Beethoven's *Drei Equali* assume the symbolic function of *Turmmusik*, representing signals from the tower portraying the sublime.

This dissertation has surveyed Beethoven's usage of the trombones in depicting the sublime, and in some cases representing the voice of God. The phrase "in the presence of God", or in Latin, *Coram Deo,* appears in Psalm 55:13[197] and is now the identifying motto for the reformed churches. Reformed theologian R.C. Sproul states that "this phrase literally refers to something that takes place in the presence of, or before the face of, God…under the gaze of God."[198] Hence the role of the *Posaunen* in the works of Beethoven with its context to *Turmmusik* and the Bible seems to appropriately convey the aural presence of the divine. The *Missa solemnis* and the Ninth Symphony were the last big choral-orchestral works for Beethoven, which especially highlights such use of the instrument. At the age of fifty-six, not long after finishing the alternate Finale for his String Quartet Op. 130, Beethoven's last breath on earth would follow. The trombones leading the funeral procession for the composer, intoning the solemn tones of the chorus, to the biblical

[196] See in this regard especially Kinderman, *Beethoven: A Political Artist in Revolutionary Times,* 134.
[197] See Psalm 56:13 in modern translations
[198] R.C. Sproul, "What does "Coram Deo" mean?" Ligonier, November 13, 2017, https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/what-does-coram-deo-mean. See also, R.C. Sproul's *In the Presence of God: Devotional Readings on the Attributes of God* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2003).

text Psalm 51, embodied Beethoven’s musical deed—even now after his death--of employing *Posaunen* to depict the sublime and *Coram Deo*.

An autopsy was performed on 27 March 1827, with Beethoven’s funeral two days later on 29 March, held at the church in Alsergrund—the ninth district of Vienna—before the body was buried in the Währing cemetery. The funeral became a momentous event, with an estimated 10,000 to 30,000 onlookers lining the streets from Beethoven’s final residence—the *Schwarzspanierhaus*—to the cemetery. Illustration 6 shows a watercolor by Franz Stöber which illustrates Beethoven’s coffin being carried from the church of the Holy Trinity—*Dreifaltigkeitskirche*--where the funeral procession began. Notable figures who participated as torchbearers included Johann Nepomuk Hummel, Carl Czerny, and Franz Schubert. The musical details of the funeral service were programmed by conductor and composer Ignaz von Seyfried.

Illustration 6. Beethoven's Funeral Procession, 29 March 1827. Watercolor by Franz Stöber. Beethoven-Haus Bonn, Sammlung H.C. Bodmer.

This program featured Beethoven's *Drei Equali* WoO 30—originally composed for trombone ensemble—now arranged for men's chorus singing to the Miserere Latin text. According to Seyfried, on the morning of 26 March, when it was clear that Beethoven was dying, the publisher Haslinger took the manuscript of the *Equali* to Seyfried, with the suggestion that the music of these pieces be arranged to the words of a *Miserere* in a choral setting. Seyfried quickly made the arrangement. According to Theodor Frimmel, Seyfried is also known to have also arranged the funeral march from Beethoven's Piano Sonata Op. 26 (3rd movement) for four trombones and men's chorus,[199] and he also conducted the "Chorale of the Brethren of Charity," from the

[199] Theodor Fimmel, *Beethoven-Handbuch,* vol. 2 (Leipzig, 1926), 330.

opera *Wilhelm Tell* by Bernhard Anselm Weber. The four trombone players in the funeral procession are named as the two brothers Böck, as well as Weidl, and Tuschky.[200] Seyfried also featured his own compositions with a setting of "Libera me" including quotations from Mozart's *Requiem.* The *Requiem* was performed in full at the commemorative service for Beethoven, just a couple of days later.

Today, Beethoven's earthly remains are buried in the Central Cemetery to the south of Vienna, resting in the "Musicians Corner," while his eternal spirit endures in the resounding legacy of his music. As we have seen, his important use of trombones in *Fidelio* and the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies was followed by his remarkable but still too little known *Equali* in 1812, pieces bound up with an age-old tradition of central European funeral music. More than a decade later, after the completion of his final symphony and around the time of the first publication of his *Missa solemnis*, in 1827, Beethoven's contribution to the ancient tradition of *Turmmusik* with trombones accompanied his own burial at Vienna, while his determined upward gaze--his *Blick nach oben*--continues to inspire our collective artistic aspirations, bound up as they are with an urgent, irrepressible spiritual quest.

[200] Michael Ladenburger, "Beethovens Begräbnis am 29. März 1827" ("Beethoven's Funeral on 29 March 1827") in *Drei Begräbnisse und ein Todesfall: Beethovens Ende und die Erinnerungskultur seiner Zeit* (Three Funerals and One Death: Beethoven's End of Life and the Culture of Remembrance of His Time) (Bonn: Beethoven-Haus, 2002), 118-120.

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