

拼貼另一個貝多芬？ 一九七〇年代起貝多芬於西方藝術音樂 接受史的觀察

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摘 要

1970 年，歐洲最具影響力雜誌之一的德國《明鏡》週刊，在封面全幅貝多芬的肖像下，附上一個簡潔有力的封面標題：「貝多芬／告別神話」；這個標題的背後，乃因德國作曲家卡赫爾在黑白電影《路德維希·范》中對於貝多芬形象的處理，繼而引發學界對於貝多芬「去神話」的討論，認為近兩百年來堅定不移的貝多芬意象，在二戰後的年代裡開始面臨質疑與拆解。

然而筆者認為，這樣的省思和質疑，是源於特殊的政治意識與背景，具有其地區性意義，不宜偏頗地化約解讀成那就是貝多芬於一九七〇年代之後的整體接受史。因此，本文嘗試提供另一個觀察視角，在引用和拼貼貝多芬音樂的手法當中，檢視當代藝術音樂作曲家型塑出的貝多芬接受史。

研究結果顯示，在本文所蒐集的 20 首相關作品中，和貝多芬晚期風格有所連結的即有 14 首，顯見貝多芬晚期的斷片、留白、多元風格並置、以及脫離圓融和明確性之風格，預言式地啟發了後現代的藝術音樂。這是在「去神話」的表象背後，一股隱隱匯聚的轉化力量，在拉開時空距離之後，益發清晰。預言和回顧有了對話，讓作曲家在回首過往之際，亦創化了未來。

關鍵詞：貝多芬、接受史、晚期風格、引用、拼貼、當代音樂

A Different Beethoven through Collage? Observations on Beethoven's Reception History in Western Art Music since the 1970s

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Abstract

On September 7, 1970, the German magazine *Der Spiegel*, one of the more influential weekly magazines in Europe, published a cover story under the short but strong title “Beethoven / Abschied vom Mythos” (Beethoven / Farewell to Myth) accompanied by a full-sized portrait of Beethoven on its front page. The antecedent behind this title was the black-and-white film *Ludwig van* (1970) by the Argentinian-German composer Mauricio Kagel (1931-2008), whose presentation of Beethoven challenged many aspects of the long-cherished “Beethoven myth”. Using a collage of fragments by Beethoven, Kagel’s film betrayed the conventional image of the most idolized composer of Western Art Music and instigated many debates about “demythologizing” Beethoven among musicologists.

The author suggests that these conflicting views on Beethoven originated from the idiosyncratic socio-political ideology of the post-war period in Europe and should not be interpreted as the general reception of Beethoven after the 1970s. This article examines the reception of Beethoven through a study of the intertextual quotations and collage techniques which occur in the compositions by contemporary composers.

Among the 20 pieces which have been collected and which are discussed in this essay, 14 contain intertextual references to the late works of Beethoven; the elevated percentage of references to Beethoven’s “late style” defies any possibility of being coincidental. It is apparent that his late works, which feature techniques such as fragmentation, musical stasis, multi-faceted juxtaposition and, more importantly, the departure from harmonic and formulaic patterns, anticipate the musical evolution towards avant-garde music and inspired postmodern musicians. Concealed behind the act of “de-mythologizing” lies a source of potential energy, which is about to burst forth with the distancing effect due to the passage of time and space. The dialectic between retrospective and prospective musical thought allows composers to actuate a new future as they are revisiting the past.

Keywords: Beethoven, history of reception, late style, quotation, collage, contemporary music

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A Different Beethoven through Collage? Observations on Beethoven's Reception History in Western Art Music since the 1970s

Hsi-Ju CHEN

Summary

When the world fervently celebrated the bicentennial of the birth of Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) in 1970, the German magazine *Der Spiegel*, one of the more influential weekly magazines in Europe, published a cover story under the short but strong title “Beethoven / Abschied vom Mythos” (Beethoven / Farewell to Myth) accompanied by a full-sized portrait of Beethoven on its front page.

The antecedent behind this title was the black-and-white film *Ludwig van* (1970) by the Argentinian-German composer Mauricio Kagel (1931-2008), whose presentation of Beethoven challenged many aspects of the long-cherished “Beethoven myth”. Using a collage of close to 30 musical fragments by Beethoven, Kagel’s work confronted the aesthetic principle of “being faithful to the original.” Despite Kagel’s claim that the film had been intended as a “declaration of love” (Liebeserklärung), critics generally acknowledged the film’s embedded potential of criticism which resisted or even betrayed the conventional image of the most idolized composer of Western Art Music. Inevitably highly contested issues such as the “de-mythologization of Beethoven” and the composer’s reception history surfaced within academic discussions. The German musicologist Helmut Loos postulated the end of an era when Beethoven was generally regarded as the supreme composer of art music and though that the reception history of Beethoven’s works had suffered a rupture; the German music critic Eleonore Büning suggested that *Ludwig van* stirred the general public’s imagination by destroying the idolized image of Beethoven which

had generally been accepted over the last two centuries; the American musicologist Scott Burnham even placed Beethoven within the contemporary popular culture and claimed that Beethoven's popular image may have merely become one of many commercialized cultural icons.

These examples constitute some aspects of the “de-mythologization” of Beethoven which took place during the last decades of the 20th century; the author of the present article attributes these phenomena to the idiosyncratic socio-political ideology of the post-war period in Europe, pointing out that this type of interpretation has been restricted to certain local traditions of political thought. Above all, an interpretation which collocates Beethoven in the realm of commercialized culture commits the fallacy of superficial observation and completely fails to develop a true understanding of Beethoven's art. In the present essay, the author explores Beethoven's impact on 20th-century music from a different perspective, i.e., through the re-reading of the Beethoven quotations and Beethoven collages which occur in contemporary musical composition, and through the implicit interpretation of Beethoven's music which has artistically been expressed by 20th-century composers through their use of intertextuality. The juxtaposition, confrontation, amalgamation and fusion between “old” and “new” elements generates a sense of history which has been called “composed reception” (*komponierte Rezeption*) by the Swiss composer Heinz Holliger (b. 1939).

According to the research by the author, there has been, over the course of the second half of the 20th century (and most especially after 1970), a noticeable increase in the number of works which featured intertextual references to Beethoven's music. Composers from many different countries attempted to transform the image of Beethoven from an all-inclusive and neutral icon of Western Art Music into an ingredient of their own individual works. Among the 20 pieces which have been collected and which are discussed in this essay, 14 contain intertextual references to the late works of Beethoven; the elevated percentage of references to Beethoven's “late style” defies any possibility of being coincidental. Prominent late works that are constantly alluded to or appropriated include Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, his late string quartets, his late piano sonatas, the

Bagatelles and the *Diabelli Variations* op. 120. Contemporary composers, in striking a balance between the quotations from Beethoven's scores and their own musical language, aim at creating a uniquely heightened tension which results from the clashes between the familiar and the strange across time and space. Listening to these works can become an unraveling experience which requires the audience to constantly shift its attention between the known and the unknown elements of the musical language; it is through this procedure that new meanings and forms take shape.

In his celebratory tribute written for Beethoven's centenary in 1870, Richard Wagner (1813-1883) called for the audience to practice "inner listening" when appreciating the late works of Beethoven. From the perspective of hermeneutics, "inner listening" forges a space through which the contemporary composers allow their audience to freely feel and interpret works. In other words, the multi-faceted connections between Beethoven's late works and contemporary works may be integrated in the process of the audience's listening.

The scholarly research on Beethoven's late style often highlighted the coexistence of structurally coherent and incongruous elements in his music; the most significant study in this direction had been presented by the German philosopher and musicologist Theodor W. Adorno (1903-1969). According to Adorno's philosophy of music, Beethoven's late style features "desubjectivized musical material" (entsubjektiviertes musikalisches Material). Adorno characterized Beethoven's late style as fragmented and arbitrary, therefore suggesting that his late scores may not be fully understood and interpreted within the framework of logical thinking. Adorno's theories have been absorbed or mimicked by many later philosophers and musicologists.

As Adorno and other German post-war musicologists have convincingly shown, Beethoven's music acted as one of the pivotal models for Arnold Schönberg (1874-1951), who expanded the existing techniques of disjoint harmony, of intrinsic negativity and of musical stasis in his scores from his periods of free atonality and

12-tone serialism. Through this association, the late style of Beethoven not only became one of the cornerstones of 20th-century music and the archetype of modern musical aesthetics but, more importantly, it also shaped the compositional procedures of musical post-modernism through its radically new musical vocabulary. The German composer and conductor Hans Zender (1936-2019) illustrated these connections between Beethoven's late style and that of postmodernism through his own composition called *33 Veränderungen über 33 Veränderungen* (2011). He transformed the avant-garde and experimental elements, which he had observed in the works by Beethoven, and expressed them through the contemporary composition techniques of his time; the resulting work may be characterized as post-modernized Beethoven.

Beethoven's late style, with its innovation, highly personal character, its inherent originality, its musical abstractness and structural purity has found a resonance in many works by post-modern composers. Despite the fact that the ruptures of structural continuity which are typical of Beethoven's late style and the incongruities which characterize those scores of contemporary music which are employing collage techniques result in multiple fragmentations of the musical discourse and in disjoint musical idioms, a profound sense of historical continuity emerges when these works are intertwined with each other. The resulting intertextuality demonstrates how contemporary composers resort to the model of Beethoven's art in order to gather musical inspiration and receive aesthetic nourishment. Techniques such as fragmentation, musical stasis, multi-faceted juxtaposition and, more importantly, the departure from harmonic and formulaic patterns, already during the first decades of the 19th century foreshadowed the advent of post-modern musical art. The so-called "de-mythologizing of Beethoven" does not necessarily aim to negate or eradicate the eternal significance of Beethoven's art; on the contrary, it can initiate a process of metamorphosis which leads from historicization of the past to the creation of novel structures for the future. Concealed behind the act of "de-mythologizing" lies a source of potential energy,

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which is about to burst forth with the distancing effect due to the passage of time and space. The dialectic between retrospective and prospective musical thought allows composers to actuate a new future as they are revisiting the past.

Keywords: Beethoven, history of reception, late style, quotation, collage, contemporary music

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