

The Case of Classical Motivic Thorough-Composition

Music, Education, and Morality

The following report on the subject of the connection between the principles of Classical musical composition and morality, fulfills the requirements specified in “The Substance of Morality.” We add here the following three summary remarks on the subject of the report itself.

Firstly, we stress to the reader, that at the very outset of the report, authors Liliana Celani and Kathy Wolfe restate that report’s primary mission most compactly, in the following words: “Composition of Classical music according to the Italian Renaissance principle of *bel canto* (‘beautiful singing’), is one of the best examples of mankind’s ability to discover an existing physical principle, and to use that discovery to create new works of science and art, which then increase mankind’s power to build civilization.”

The report fulfills that mission by providing the reader what has become, in recent decades, otherwise rarely available essential material on the subject of music itself. This lesson from music is presented by emphasis upon selected material of a type which, otherwise, happens to be essential for two classes of readers. For professional musicians and other educators engaged in programs of teaching music to pupils at the elementary and secondary

schools levels. On the first count, this report guides the reader to reenact, in his or her own mind and experience, that process of discovery of those principles which represents the essential core principles of singing and interpretive performance. In addition, for even those amateurs who previously qualified to follow only parts of the musical concepts presented, this provides much-needed guidance to those parents and others who must choose the kind of musical educational program which must be restored to today’s severely distressed, almost destroyed, public education systems.

Secondly, it is important that the reader be reminded of the purpose and scope of the essay in whose province the present report is situated. Classical musical composition, otherwise termed, generically, “motivic thorough-composition,” was developed chiefly in the span from Johann Sebastian Bach through Johannes Brahms. This form of composition and musical performance, which emerged out of the continuation of the Fifteenth-century practice of *bel canto* singing, has an essentially moral function. This form of development in music traced from Classical Greek roots, uses the special features of the musical medium to cultivate in both the musician and the audience certain moral qualities of passion, qualities which naturally tend to spill over, in other ways, from musical composition itself, into the development of the character of the musical audiences. To accomplish that purpose,

it is necessary to begin regular *bel canto* training of the singing voice with young children; music is a language, which is best learned beginning the age the child should acquire the rudiments of a literate form of native language. Furthermore, it is not possible to account adequately for the moral collapse erupting today among adolescent and younger pupils, without recognizing that much of this moral decay coincides with the recent, virtual eradication of most of what used to be even a minimum standard of literacy for musical programs in public schools.

Thirdly, unlike so-called “popular musical” entertainments, this moral quality of Classical motivic thorough-composition, expresses the same specific kind of principled potentialities of the individual human mind, the which are also expressed by those same cognitive processes without which no experimentally validated discoveries of new physical principles could occur in, or outside of classrooms.

The connections of this third point should be recognized by the reader who compares the case for music developed by the authors of this report with my argument on the subject of mathematical economics, as presented recently in “An American Century Seen as a Modular Mathematical Orbit.”¹

—Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr.
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1. *Executive Intelligence Review*, July 24, 1998 (Vol. 25, No. 29).