

## Mozart, Fragment of an Allegro moderato in A minor for String Quintet, Fr 1791c

### Three Completions by Timothy Jones

#### Date and Context

Mozart's String Quintet in A minor, had he completed it in 1791, would surely have occupied a special place in his output and contributed significantly to his posthumous reputation. It was one of his last chamber music projects – possibly the very last;<sup>1</sup> one of only three large instrumental pieces he composed in A minor;<sup>2</sup> and only his sixth String Quintet – a relatively new instrumental genre at which he excelled. The fragment belongs to the orbit of the two string quintets that Mozart completed in the winter/spring of 1790–91: the D major Quintet K. 593 (December 1790) and the E flat Quintet K. 614 (dated 12 April 1791 in Mozart's *Verzeichnüß aller meiner Werke*). He was presumably planning a set of three quintets for publication. That project was, in turn, part of a wider concentration on chamber music for strings in the last two years of his life. When Mozart composed the quintets he was already half way through a set of six string quartets, with three finished pieces (K. 575 in D, K. 589 in B flat, and K. 590 in F) and at least two others in progress (Fr 1789b in E minor and Fr 1789i in G minor). A String Trio (Fr 1789g) was also in progress during 1791.

Fr 1791c is the 72-bar exposition section of the first movement of the Quintet. A ten-bar fragment of an *Andante* in F major, Fr 1791b, is in all likelihood the opening of the second movement. There is no documentary evidence to explain why these movements were still fragments when Mozart died on 5 December 1791, but his schedule between May and December gives one obvious reason. As always, Mozart prioritised work for immediate performance over work for publication. From the late spring until July 1791 his focus was on *Die Zauberflöte*. Then the unexpected commission of the Prague coronation opera *La clemenza di Tito* became his top priority from late July until its first performance on 6 September. He spent the rest of September travelling back to Vienna and completing the remaining numbers of *Die Zauberflöte* in time for its premiere on 29 September. In October he completed the Clarinet Concerto K. 622 (a piece that had been a fragment of a Bass Horn Concerto since 1789) for Anton Stadler's Advent season concerts. In the remaining weeks of his life he made serious progress towards fulfilling the commission for a Requiem that had come his way earlier in the year, and which had an imminent deadline relating to the anniversary of the death of Countess von Walsegg zu Stuppach.<sup>3</sup> So it seems that work on the quintet fragments stalled because of more pressing priorities, not necessarily because Mozart lost interest in them or thought them to be of poor quality. Had he lived into 1792 and finished the Requiem, it is easy to imagine that Fr 1791c and Fr 1791b – along with the string quartet fragments – would have become his most pressing compositional concerns.

In 1793 Artaria published the two completed string quintets (K. 593 and K. 614) with a preface declaring that they had been 'composed for a Hungarian amateur' ('composto per un amatore ungharese').<sup>4</sup> Although there is no corroborating evidence, it has been customary to identify Johann

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<sup>1</sup> On the evidence of the autograph manuscript's paper type, Alan Tyson dated Mozart's work on this Quintet to 'no earlier than March 1791'. The only other chamber music works from 1791 are the String Quintet in E flat K. 614 (April 1791) and the Adagio and Rondo for Glass Harmonica, Flute, Oboe, Viola and Cello K. 617 (May 1791).

<sup>2</sup> The other two being the Piano Sonata K. 310 (summer of 1778) and the Rondo for Piano K. 511 (11 March 1787).

<sup>3</sup> The only other work from those last weeks is the 'Little Masonic Cantata' *Laut verkünde unsre Freude* K. 623 dated 15 November. Again, this was for immediate performance.

<sup>4</sup> Bibliographical reference to the first edition, from Haberkamp.....

Tost, the dedicatee of Haydn's Op 64 String Quartets, with this statement. Several features of Fr 1791c are stylistic exoticisms that nod in the direction of a Hungarian patron or dedicatee.

The semiotics of exotic styles in late-eighteenth-century Viennese instrumental music has been the topic of several recent musicological studies.<sup>5</sup> These range from lists of characteristic stylistic features to discussions of how the 'other' was constructed and what it represented in Viennese culture. Ralph Locke has listed the gestures characteristic of the *alla turca* style, including the following found in Fr 1791c:<sup>6</sup>

- Keys with few sharps or flats
- Duple metre
- Sudden shifting from one tonal area to another
- Repeated notes (or thirds) in melodies and repeated brief rhythmic figures
- Repeated rhythmic patterns
- Unison textures and parallel part-writing
- Melodies decorated by neighbour notes or escape notes
- Quick melodic decorations
- Modal touches in the melodic line
- Melodic motion that moves rapidly stepwise
- Phraseological inanity or impulsivity

As Catherine Mayes notes, 'music *alla turca* and early representations of Hungarian-Gypsy music cannot, for the most part, be considered discrete topics from a stylistic point of view'.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, she discusses some subtle distinctions between the two. The 'Hungarian' style eschewed the Janissary percussion instruments characteristic of martial *alla turca*, and some distinctive 'Hungarian' rhythmic figures derived from Hungarian dances: for example, the *saltus hungaricus* or Hungarian leap – a strongly accented syncopated figure – typically found in Verbunk dances.<sup>8</sup>

The key of A minor is rare in Mozart's work, mostly embedded within works in another key as assign of the exotic musical 'other'. Examples include the violent 'Turkish' episode in the Finale of the A major Violin Concerto K. 219 (1775), the Rondo 'all Turca' in the Piano Sonata in A major K. 331 (1783), and the closing section of Osmin's F-major aria 'Solche hergelaufne Laffen' ('Erst geköpft, // Dann gehangen...') in Act 1 of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (1782). In *Le nozze di Figaro* (1786) the only ethnic Spanish dance in the score is the fandango in A minor within the Act III Finale. The biggest cluster of embedded A minor sections is from late in Mozart's career. Among the ballroom dances he composed between 1787 and 1791, there are six Trio sections in A minor:

K. 509/5/Alternativo      Prague, 6 February 1787  
K. 567/5/Trio              Vienna, 6 December 1788

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<sup>5</sup> For example: Bellman, Jonathan, *The Style Hongrois in the Music of Western Europe* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1993); Bellman, Jonathan, ed., *The Exotic in Western Music* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998); Head, Matthew, 'Haydn's Exoticisms: "Difference" and the Enlightenment' in *The Cambridge Companion to Haydn* (ed. Caryl Clark), (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 77–92; Locke, Ralph P., *Musical Exoticism: Images and Reflections* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Mayes, Catherine, 'Reconsidering an Early Exoticism: Viennese Adaptations of Hungarian-Gypsy Music around 1800', *Eighteenth-Century Music*, 6 (2009), 161–181; Mayes, Catherine, 'Turkish and Hungarian-Gypsy Styles' in *The Oxford Companion to Topic Theory* (ed. Danuta Mirka), (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 214–237

<sup>6</sup> Locke 2009: 118–121

<sup>7</sup> Mayes 2014: 217

<sup>8</sup> Mayes 2014: 218–9

K. 571/2/Trio	Vienna, 21 February 1789
K. 586/5/Trio	Vienna, December 1789
K. 586/11/Trio	Vienna, December 1789
K. 602/4/Trio	Vienna, February 1791

The second period of the D-minor Trio of K. 571/6 is treated by Mozart as a self-contained episode in A minor. While these Trios preserve the decorum of a courtly dance to varying degrees, the A-minor episode in K. 571/6 and the whole of K. 586/5 violate decorum strikingly with chromatic and non-normative voice leading.<sup>9</sup>

The pitch contour at the start of Fr 1791c begins (E – D sharp – F natural – E) seems to have been particularly associated with the key of A minor in Mozart's mind. It is also prominent at the opening themes of the only two instrumental pieces he completed in this key, the Piano Sonata K. 310 (1778) and the piano Rondo K. 511 (1787) – works characterised by expressive intensity and melancholy.<sup>10</sup>

Mozart's essays in musical exoticism help bring the topical basis of the 'Hungarianisms' and their innovative treatment in Fr 1791c into focus.<sup>11</sup> They are also an invaluable guide to elaborating the *particella* of the exposition and composing the development section and recapitulation. But they are only one set of components in the network of connections – generic, expressive, gestural, topical, formal and structural – within which the fragment lies. Perhaps most important is the relationship between Fr 1791c and the first movements of the two completed string quintets from 1790/1791. Several aspects of the opening of the fragment suggest that Mozart was interested in the complementarity of the three works. Most striking is the texture with which each of them begins:

K. 593/1	Solo cello pitted against the rest of the ensemble
K. 614/1	A pair of violas pitted against a tutti texture
Fr 1791c	Solo violin pitted against the rest of the ensemble

Another is the melodic scale degree at the head of each principal theme:

K. 593/1	3 (in violin 1)
K. 614/1	1 (in viola 1)
Fr 1791c	5 (in violin 1)

Another is the tempo marking at the head of each movement:

K. 593/1	Larghetto
K. 614/1	Allegro di molto
Fr 1791c	Allegro moderato

<sup>9</sup> See especially the parallel ninths between treble and bass in bar 15 of the Trio from K. 571/6 and the melodic contour of the treble in bars 9–10 that anticipates the opening of Fr 1791c. A description of the non-normativity of K. 586/5 Trio is in McKee, Eric, 'Ballroom Dances of the Late Eighteenth Century' in Mirka 2014, 164–193; pp 184–6

<sup>10</sup> A further link between Fr 1791c and the A minor Sonata K. 310 is the thematicisation of running semiquavers: in the opening theme of the quintet and in the first movement's second subject in the sonata.

<sup>11</sup> A discussion of the exotic details in Fr 1791c follows below in *Analysis of the Fragment*

These are all clearly audible but essentially local characteristics linking the three movements. The deepest level of connection between them is the marked originality of the relationship they construct between their particular gestural language, their topical discourse, and the articulation of musical periods within sonata form. In order to establish the context of my compositional decisions in my completions of Fr 1791c it is necessary to review the salient compositional features of the first movements of the other two quintets.

*The first movement of K. 593*

Period 1 (bars 21<sup>4</sup>–45<sup>1</sup>) of the Allegro in K. 593 is well known for its idiosyncratic array of topics. It has been the subject of celebrated topical analyses, including one of the centrepieces of Kofi Agawu's seminal study *Playing with Signs*.<sup>12</sup> The rest of the exposition has received less critical attention, despite the impressive plasticity with which its materials are derived from Period 1. Period 2 (bars 45–63) is generated entirely from the four-bar phrase that closes the Period 1. In Period 3 (bar 63<sup>4</sup>–75<sup>1</sup>) Mozart retains the harmonic outline and 12-bar grouping of Period 1's opening theme (local I–ii–IV–I–ii<sup>6</sup>–V–I), but he reconfigures the relationship between foreground gestures and the contrapuntal substrate. The initial tonic chord is elongated to accommodate the imitation of the head motive in bars 64–7; the *alla zoppa* gestures in bars 67–9 have greater tonal mobility, spanning the supertonic minor and the subdominant, while the subdominant is further elongated through the cello's appropriation of the head motive in bars 69–71. Period 1's shocking outburst of brilliant style at bars 25<sup>4</sup>–27 is transformed into a lyrical sub-phrase with a chromatic overlay of *Empfindsamer* gestures in the first violin at bars 72–3; the tonic is far less conspicuous in bar 73 than in bars 25–7. In sum, the phrase pattern and its articulation with different topics is transformed from [2+2] + {2+2} + 4 in bars 22–33 to [4+2] + 6 in bars 64–75.

Foreground variation processes link the next three periods of the exposition. At the start of Period 4 (bars 75–80) the cello latches onto and extends the singing style of the violin 1 line in the previous three bars. The start of Period 5 (bars 81–89<sup>1</sup>) is a moment of reversal:

- Period 4's 1+4 texture is inverted
- the mode switches from major to minor
- there is a contrast in articulation from cello *legato* to violin 1 *détaché* (though, in a display of typical Mozartian parametric non-congruence, the change occurs in the bar before Period 5)
- there is a contrast in articulation from a 'spoken' articulated gracefulness in the accompanying lines (themselves rhythmically derived from the opening theme's *alla zoppa* figures in Period 4) to heavy sustained chords
- the running figure in the *Hauptstimme* changes from largely stepwise to largely disjunct intervals
- the lyrical topic of Period 4 gives way abruptly to *Sturm und Drang*.

The motivic link between Periods 5 and 6 is the rhythmic variation of the descending fifth e<sup>2</sup>–a<sup>1</sup> in violin 2 between bars 87–88 and 89–90; the calmness of the cadential progression at the end of Period 5 prepares the fragile stability of the pedal point at the start of Period 6. The diminished seventh chord above the pedal A in bars 95–96 undermines the Period's harmonic stability. The violin 1 upper neighbour note g natural<sup>2</sup> in bar 96, clashing deliciously with the G sharp in viola 2, sets up the reconfiguration of A from local tonic to the root of a V<sup>7</sup> chord in bars 97–100.

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<sup>12</sup> Agawu, Kofi, *Playing with Signs* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), especially pp 72–79

The way in which Mozart constructs the development section from exposition materials in K. 593 is an object lesson for completing Fr 1791c. The development section has three phases:

1. The harmonic destabilization at the end of the exposition continues through bars 101–105 with a partial chromatic voice exchange (b flat<sup>1</sup>/c sharp<sup>1</sup> → c natural<sup>2</sup>/b flat) in viola 1 and cello, leading to a third inversion V<sup>7</sup>/F. Gesturally these bars rhyme with the end of the exposition. But they contain some reversals: in bars 97–100 the violas and cello are invariant while the violins unfold the V<sup>7</sup>; in bars 101–105 the violins are invariant and the voice-leading action takes place in the viola 1 and cello. The cello's articulation changes from slurred pairs in bars 97–100 to staccato pairs in bars 101–5 (compare the end of Period 4). And the crescendo from bar 102 means that while the end of the exposition lapses into silence, the rhetorical gesture at the end of this second transitional phrase is *abruptio* – a breaking off.
2. Period 7 leads from the local tonicisation of F (flat III) in bar 106 to a strong perfect cadence marking the local tonicisation of F sharp minor (iii) at bar 123. The path the music takes between these tonal poles is a labyrinth designed to disorient: both the surface configuration of gestures and topics and their strict contrapuntal substrate eschew the 'natural' flow usually associated with Mozartian discourse. On the signifying surface of the music the breakdown of the *alla zoppa* gesture into groups of three staccato chords alternating between the violins and the violas/cello from bar 111 seems to take the music into radically athenatic, gesturally neutral territory. But it serves several functions – putting the underlying voice leading into the spotlight, referring back to the transitional phrases into Period 7, and even echoing the metrical dislocation the cadential chords from the opening theme (bars 28–9 *passim*). As Example 1 shows, the underlying voice leading develops the ascent from local I to ii that has characterised the opening theme since the start of the movement. Between bars 106 and 108 the local tonic (F major, flat III) ascends to its local supertonic minor (G minor, iv). The E flat chords in bars 110–111, though prominent in the foreground, are in the middleground only a chromatic lower neighbour note to the inner voice E natural in bar 112. The seventh chord in bar 112 sets of an ascending 6–7 linear intervallic progression between bars 112 and 117, expressed in the foreground as a chain of 6/4/2 – 7/5/3 pairs. Thus sevenths resolve to other sevenths, keeping the harmonic tension high until an enharmonic twist in bar 117 (the cello E sharp substituting for the F natural it played in bar 115) directs the music purposefully towards V of F sharp minor, landing there at bar 119.<sup>13</sup>
3. If Period 7 was characterised by harmonic twists and turns and by the liquidation of motives, then Period 8 (bars 122<sup>4</sup>–144) returns to a discourse of strong motivic identity and clear contrapuntal goal orientation. Mozart unfolds a more obvious overarching process at a steady pace throughout the period. At bar 122<sup>4</sup> violin 1 launches a brilliant-style roulade in triplets, derived from Period 1's third topic in bars 25–27. Violin 2 answers a fifth lower, accompanied by punctuating chords: Period 1's fourth topic. The exchange sets in motion a

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<sup>13</sup> In a detail which intrigues me, Mozart anticipated this very enharmonic twist in Period 5 of the exposition. After the switch to the minor mode in bar 81, a 6-3 chord of F major (resulting from the neighbour-note motion E–F natural shared by viola 2 and violin 2) is prolonged throughout bar 82. The phrase continues in A minor, progressing to its dominant by bar 84; but with a sudden shift of texture and dynamic in bar 85, the F natural is reinterpreted as E sharp in the cello and the music is suddenly outlining a weak perfect cadence in F sharp minor. This is 'corrected' two bars later with the more emphatic cadence in A major that marks the start of Period 6. The harmonic sleight of hand in bar 85 is quite outrageous, but its effect is considerably softened by the litotes of the sudden *piano* and lighter texture.

descending circle of fifths iii – vi – ii – V – I – IV, with the brilliant-style figuration shared by the four upper instruments through bars 123–134. When the cello begins its brilliant-style contribution at bar 134<sup>4</sup>, viola 2 breaks the harmonic pattern by landing on c sharp (rather than c natural) at bar 135<sup>1</sup>. The triplet gesture is shortened to one bar, the rate of harmonic change doubles, and the progression becomes V<sup>6-5</sup> – I – II<sup>6-4-3</sup> – V over bars 135–138. The dominant is now prolonged by an exchange of *alla zoppa* figures between viola 1 and violin 1 over triplet figuration before contrary motion converts V to V<sup>(6)-5-3</sup> in bars 141–143 and the end of the development is framed – like its beginning – with silence.

As Example 1 shows, the transition and Period 7 compose out a chromatic ascent e<sup>2</sup> – e sharp<sup>2</sup> – f sharp<sup>2</sup> in bars 100–123. The local tonicisation of F major at bar 106 is an enharmonic expression of the E sharp in bar 122. In Period 8 the circle of fifths in bars 123–133 is an 8-5 descending linear intervallic pattern elaborating octaves F sharp – E – D in the deep middleground. The final progression to V is approached by a 10-10 linear intervallic progression in bars 135–8, and a chromatic descent a<sup>2</sup>–g sharp<sup>2</sup>–g natural<sup>2</sup> converts V to V<sup>7</sup> in bars 138–143. I find it charming that between bar 138 and bar 145 the middleground treble contour enlarges the Allegro's head motive, anticipating its return in the foreground at the start of the recapitulation at bar 144<sup>4</sup>.

INSERT EXAMPLE 1 HERE

The periodic proportions of K. 593/1's development section give an example of the intricate formal patterning that was second nature to Mozart at that point in his career:

Framing silence + Transition + Period 7	bars 101–122	[1+] 21 bars
Period 8 + Framing silence	bars 123–144	21 bars [+1]

In addition to this internal balance, the development section echoes other aspects of the movement's formal proportions:

Larghetto	bars 1–21	21 bars
Allegro: Periods 1 + 2	bars 21 <sup>4</sup> –63	42 bars
Allegro: Periods 4 + 5	bars 81–101	21 bars
Allegro: Periods 3, 4, 5, 6 + Transition to Period 7	bars 64–105	42 bars
Allegro: Framing silence + Period 9	bars 144–164	21 bars

It is equally noteworthy that while the recapitulatory reconfiguration of material brings Period 9 into proportion with the patterns noted above, all the other reconfiguration of material in the recapitulation over-rides Mozart's sense of movement-wide formal symmetry, but introduces a new ratio of its own:

Periods 9 + 10	bars 144 <sup>4</sup> –188 <sup>1</sup>	44 bars
Periods 11–13 + Transition	bars 188 <sup>4</sup> –232	44 bars

Finally, the initial ratio reappears in the movement's Coda:

Framing silence + Larghetto + framing silence	bars 232–252	21 bars
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In preparing completions of Fr 1791c, the obvious question to ask is if the last five bars of the exposition are crucial to the development section, with the V<sup>7</sup> chord acting as a pivot back to the repeat of the exposition and pointing forward.

### **The source of the fragment**

The fragment consists of the *particella* of a 72-bar sonata form exposition. The only authentic source for the piece is an autograph manuscript of three leaves. Today the source is split between two libraries. Leaves 1 and 2 are part of the Piatti-Lochis Collection held by the Civico Istituto Musicale Gaetano Donizetti in Bergamo. Leaf 3 is held by the Bibliotheca Mozartiana in Salzburg. All three leaves are on landscape format paper ruled with 12 staves, on a paper type that Mozart used only from the Spring of 1791. The fragment's exposition is written on the first five pages and the sixth page is blank. For a brief critical commentary on the source, see Manfred Hermann Schmidt's Critical Report on the String Quintets in the Neue Mozart-Ausgabe [NMA, VIII/19/1, Kritische Bericht, 2003, p. 103]. There is a slightly longer report by Ulrich Konrad in *Mozart Fragmente* [NMA, X/30/4, 2002, p. xxx, with a facsimile on pp. xx-xx]. See also Eisen and Sieffert (eds), *Mozarts Streichquintette: Beiträge zum musikalischen Satz, zum Gattungskontext and zu Quellenfragen* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1994) especially pp. xx-xx.