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**Original scientific paper**

**HARMONIC LANGUAGE AND ITS FUNCTION  
OF MUSICAL HUMOUR IN THE *SEXTET K. 522*  
(A MUSICAL JOKE) OF W. A. MOZART**

*UDC 781.41:785.76 Mozart W.A.*

**Marko S. Milenković, Marko P. Janković**

University of Niš, Faculty of Arts in Niš, Serbia  
University of Niš, Faculty of Electronic Engineering in Niš, Serbia

**Abstract.** *The paper offers a review of the most significant papers dealing with the musical sentence, the underlying layers (fragmental structures) as well as with the supra-sentential level, i.e. the permeation of the characteristics of the musical sentence and the period. Relying on the consulted literature, the paper considers the attitudes of the musical theoreticians in the recent publications. Relying on comparative analysis with an emphasis on different approaches, the paper aims to highlight some opinions which can serve as a reliable foundation for the pedagogical practice in teaching courses on musical forms. Different approaches and methodological steps in the analysis of musical syntax unequivocally indicate the complexity of the phenomenon of the musical sentence. This means that in the process of studying the musical form, it is important to offer different theoretical standpoints, as well as numerous examples from the literature. Such an approach definitely opens wider perspectives, not only for understanding the definitions of the musical sentence, but also for its appearance in a variety of styles and genres.*

**Key words:** *Mozart, harmonic language, chord, tonality, modulation, humour*

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**Corresponding author:** Marko Milenković

University of Niš, Faculty of Arts in Niš, Kneginje Ljubice 10, 18000 Niš, Serbia

E-mail: lionheartmarko@gmail.com

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“Mozart is more a composer of the twentieth century than of the nineteenth century,  
And more of the nineteenth century than of the eighteenth century“  
(Чичерин 1987, 71)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the history of music, one of the most popular Austrian and world composers, W. A. Mozart (1756–1791) was recognizable by his extensive opus and authentic musical quality, although it was manifest within a short lifespan and creative age. The composer to whom the great Tchaikovsky “owed” the life dedicated to music, wrote his *Sextet K. 522*, i.e., *Divertimento for two horns and string quartet* in his mature creative period (1787), when he had the premiere of his famous opera *Don Giovanni*.

The subject of our paper is the final cadence of the third slow movement of *Sextet K. 522*, especially its final, polytonal cadence, which is the most prominent not only among all Mozart’s but also among the classical pieces, due to its harmonical and tonal boldness, and strong contrast to the harmonic texture of the whole work. To the primary aim of our work – explanation of polytonal context of the stated cadence and the means by which Mozart achieved it, thus stylistically announcing the twentieth century even as a joke – we added another aim, the extension of theoretical and analytical approach in musical pedagogy by using specific similar examples. They enormously differ from standard and stereotypical solutions in individual styles as well as the styles of the epoch. We found the paragon for dealing with this and similar examples in the textbook *Harmony with Harmonic Analysis* written by D. Despić, Serbian member of Academy of Science and Art, composer, music pedagogue and writer (Despić 2002). Here, the author explains Mozart’s obvious, early example of polytonality, done more than a century before the occurrence of polytonal musical thinking by “Mozart’s playful spirit ... [that came up with] .... slightly ridiculous illustration of untuned instruments and performing ignorance of rural musicians.... [so that in final cadence] five different adjacent tonics: Eb,F,G,A,Bb simultaneously sound in five different scores.”

In his previously written book, Despić concludes: the composer ingeniously devised to conjure up out-of-tune playing of a village orchestra by simultaneous leading the parts of the score in various keys, as their vertical contrasting, superposition etc. Despić’s brilliant analytical insight into ‘justified’ occurrence of polytonality in Mozart (Despić 2002, 395–396) and methodological approach to traditional harmonic analysis, combined with hermeneutic insight, intrigued and inspired us to explore not only the final cadence, but also specific harmonic language of the whole piece with the function of musical humour. For that reason, we applied a historical method using undeniable facts from Mozart’s extensive correspondence with his father with critical views of abundant studies of musicologists, culturologists and a psychiatrist related to the issue of musical humour and the appearance and meaning of *A Musical Joke*. Besides harmonic trivialities used by Mozart in order to illustrate an imaginary amateur-composer, our analytical attention was drawn by naïve, clumsy thematic development in the formation of form, as an additional component of musical humour in the form of classical anti-aesthetic. The described mockery at ruling, well-established and conventional types of cadences in *A Musical Joke*, as one of stylistic paradigms of classical musical heritage, made us explore other elements of musical language in the role of humorous, parodically ironic means of musical expression. Mozart’s conscious making mistakes in his humorous presentation

was primarily directed towards an imaginary composer and the virtual performers. Mozart could not take his immediate predecessor Haydn as his ideal, to whom he dedicated string quartets, but Maria Goeth states that “intentional amateurism consistently appeared as a strategic means of creating musical humour as early as from the Renaissance” (Goeth 2015, 37). Let us here recall “false” recapitulation of Beethoven’s *Eroica*, two bars before real beginning, which, besides symbolising humour as a performer’s mistake, refers to “neglection of conventions aimed at forming a new style” (Ibid., 35).

## 2. HISTORICAL SOURCES. UNJUSTIFIABLE CRITICISM

Taking into consideration the theses of malicious critics, alluding to the Oedipus complex of the composer related to the time when *A Musical Joke* was created, which was only seventeen days after the death of his father Leopold, let us review relevant historical data. A short interval between his father’s death and the appearance of the humorous piece generated a great number of reviews which became meaningless by the insight into Mozart’s correspondence with his father, as an undeniable factual source. Although some “months, even years of Mozart’s short life are for us wrapped in darkness”, this was not the case with *Sextet K. 522*, whose roots can be found as early as in 1777, i.e. ten years earlier, when Mozart informed his father on musical circumstances in Augsburg and his acquaintance with the composer Friedrich Hartmann Graf. The description of Graf’s *Concerto for two flutes* explained everything: “Concerto was not good even for the ear. It was not natural. It often marched with tones... all these without a bit of mastery” (Луцкер & Сусидко 2008, 437). To make the disaster bigger, Graf „was standing like somebody who believed that something special was happening during this journey through tones, thus finding that he could be even more special, and, regardless to his hearing began striking upon the clavichord; in a word, everyone was amazed” concluded Mozart (Mozart 2003, 69–70). On the other hand, in a letter to his son next year (1788), Leopold described „the scene from life in Salzburg, not sparing on sarcastic remarks which included contours of future ‘Musical Joke’. Namely, a group of amateurs led by Count Chernin intended to congratulate the birthday to the Countess Lodron. They composed music themselves, and they also performed it. Both produced a series of critical ridicules in Leopold” (Луцкер & Сусидко 2008, 437).

In a study of the American psychiatrist A. Esman (Esman 1951) the relationship between the father and the son was treated with an emphasis on Leopold’s key role in the formation of the creative genius of his son. As a prominent musician from Salzburg, Leopold was a “domineering personality in Mozart home”. As an “author of internationally known treatise on playing the violin” “methodically meticulous” and ambitious Leopold was a real ideal and authority. On Wolfgang’s journey to the stars, a strict and religious father with “a sharp eye for commercial advantage” played a significant role. Esman reminds that Mozart “never went to school and never had any other teacher but Leopold, either in musical or general studies, which provided him with more than customary opportunities to adopt his father’s ideas and principles, thus identifying with him.” His father’s influence, not only in his religiosity, but also in everything else was so great, that as Esman says “Mozart’s words are often quoted: ‘After God, Dad!’”. However, over time, after his mother’s death, “during Mozart’s maturation, especially while he was travelling in Europe without his father, the signs of revolt were more and more apparent.” Esman finds them in Mozart’s independence in “personal business management... unrealistic and impractical

financial schemata which Leopold accepted horrified and unsatisfied... unsatisfactory marriage... deviation from church dogmas and finally entry into the Masonic order.”

In light of the consideration of their relationship, Esman favours the thesis of the separation of father and son, “weakening of Mozart’s feelings for his father”, thus expressing the climax of his partiality by stating: “He accepted Leopold’s death in 1787 with prominent calmness, advising his father in a letter immediately before the event to accept his death as a friend, without fear, but with great expectations” (Esman 1951, 603–607). However, Esman is not wrong when he claims that Mozart’s “emotional maturity”, or to be more precise immaturity “took him to economic disaster” (Ibid., 608). Further analysing Mozart’s unsuccessful “emotional maturation through the relationship with women” this author goes into banality by combining Mozart’s hostility and “indignation at his father’s superiority... his aspiration to outpace and conquer him.”

We find another paradox in Esman’s conclusion that was the source of Mozart’s insatiable urge for composing. Here, we simply can only wonder: did Leopold not subordinate and invest his whole life in realisation of his idea to make Wolfgang outpace him? In Freudian manner of psychological analysis, the same author even dares to ascribe Mozart’s valuable creative work as “return to blessedness on his mother’s bosom... unconscious negation of hostile impulses towards his father...even mitigating the risk of castrations”. We would not like to sound sarcastic, but it seems here that Esman knows much more about Mozart’s emotion and reasons of his creative zeal than Mozart himself did! Finally, stating the fact that Mozart „created most brilliant, most beautiful and most joyful music in the period of his life that was at least very hard”, the author unconsciously provides the answer that we need “humour to feel happy” (Ibid., 600–610). Besides, it is just the correspondence between the son and the father (Миленкович & Здравич Михайлович 2021, 106) that genuinely illustrates the roots of the idea of *A Musical Joke*, much earlier, as a parody of amateurish composers and performers whom they daily met. Until the “date of Leopold’s death on 28 May 1787, a larger part of the piece had already been composed” (Keefe 2017, 452). More than that, only two years before, Leopold had the satisfaction of hearing Haydn proclaim his son ‘the greatest composer known to me’ (White 1991, 47). Here, we simply cannot but quote J. Haydn, the oldest representative of Vienna School: “I tell you as before God and as an honest man: your son is the greatest composer of all I know personally and by name; he has excellent aesthetic sense, and above that he has the most extensive knowledge of the science of composing” (Kremnev 1968, 79). Another referential connoisseur of Mozart’s life and creation, the English musicologist J. G. Rush states that *A Musical Joke* “had been started several months earlier” and denies “interpreting this piece as mockery of Leopold, or the powerful statue music in *Don Giovanni* as a sign of guilt towards a parent he had betrayed. The statue is not Don Juan’s father, and the musical joke celebrates a sense of humour that Mozart shared with Leopold, who was no less inclined to castigate musical incompetence in performers and composers alike. Both come under Mozart’s lash. K. 522 which is a composition lesson in itself, a catalogue of what not to do, with its lame formal and contrapuntal procedures, including crude modulations...and the enthusiastic ending in which all the players cadence in different keys” (Rushton 2006, 156). Finally in the analysis of Mozart’s early aesthetic evolution, learning musical heritage and absorption of current stylistic models into his own musical thinking and speech, an Austrian culturologist M. Wagner provides us with the answer to the issue of the key role and importance of the father. Wagner explains this phenomenon within the “range from a concentrated process of musical socialization, which comprised an exclusive preoccupation

with music, to the specific fact of his travelling activity at that time (approx. 10 years of Mozart's life) to his good fortune in receiving, as a natural accompaniment in life, a musical education which was focused exclusively on high standards and enabled Mozart to become acquainted with almost the whole of the central European intelligentsia, to a consciously economic way of working which helped him to translate his experience of life into a work of art" (Wagner 1998, 115–117). Here, we would shortly conclude that Leopold completely succeeded in the realisation of his aim to create a prodigy child and later unsurpassed musical genius within the parameters of light and beautiful musical thought of the classical era, primarily thanks to his unselfish, persistent and perhaps phanatic musical education.

### 3. THEORIES ABOUT HUMOUR RELATED TO MOZART'S MUSICAL HUMOUR

First time we experience the piece, we find that Mozart's *Sextet K. 522* includes obvious parameters of musical humour and according with the attitude of Junk-Kaizer and Dietrich „it seems to be predestined to work as a reference object for 'humorous musical' genre, which is expressed by wrong tones and primitive amateurish sentences (Ute Jung-Kaiser & Stephan Diedrich 2015). It was just in Mozart's "deformation" of motif and tonal development that we recognised a strong element of musical humour. However, before the observation and analytical discourse about humorous means, let us present a short insight into linguistic theories of humour, and then musical humour as a theoretical framework aimed at establishing a referential musical tool. Musical humour undoubtedly arises from linguistics, which is described by many authors (Vuksanović 2015; Palmer 2015; Jung-Kaiser & Diedrich 2015). The basic problem we are faced with here can be found in the musical research of humour, where it cannot semantically, and naturally reach precise verbal expression of humour in spoken utterances. We consider that incongruity theory is a baseline, and it is also supported by numerous philosophers, theoreticians, pedagogues and musicologists. The American musicologist G. Willock detects incongruity in the "creation of possibilities for subversion of traditional categories and hierarchies, when used in strange combinations and contexts" (Palmer 2015, 5). The American philosopher J. L. Salamone states that "there has been no satisfactory theory of humour so far". His thesis is that "instead, scholars have advanced a variety of lenses through which we can appreciate the many facets of this complex human emotion". Salamone further writes that "combination of traditional theories of humour in combined approaches helps with the development of complex understanding of humour [therefore] the incongruity per se is scarcely sufficient to make something humorous" (Salamone 2017, 46). Comparing the theories of humour of the philosopher Michael Clark that "it is not mere incongruity that produces humour, but subjective recognition, acceptance and enjoying incongruity", which again demands "a basic level of knowledge by the recipient" and that of the philosopher Mike Martin, based on the criticism of the former, Salamone states that "both remain within the incongruity theory" (Ibid., 47). The incongruity theory is also supported by the German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer, who locates laughter in the centre of humour "identifying it as a 'very exceptional phenomenon', a response to incongruity" (Ibid., 48). Salamone finally concludes that understanding the humour in music "must necessarily combine the aspects of the three theories: the relief theory, the superiority theory and the incongruity theory", where "musical understanding relies to a great extent to normative expectations, thus preparing the listener to recognise unexpected

deviations” (Ibid, 49). When we include contemporary psychological approaches in this network of various theories, the insight into musical humour and its source and effects becomes clearer. According to the above mentioned theories we can conclude that humorous potential is higher if the recipient’s musical knowledge is greater, therefore Salamone presents the thesis that “the musician alone is the agent of the humour” (Ibid., 56).

When it comes to musical humour, we would add a multitude of factors to the basic criterion of incongruity, where an abrupt contrast to the predominating conventional and stylistic expression is primary. In this respect, the previously mentioned absence of the expected, stereotypical final cadence and suspension of affirmation of the tonal centre in the form of its transformation into polytonality, creates a humorous effect to a (musically educated) recipient, thus offering by an inappropriate sense of ending the final reconciliation with the previous meaningless development. German musicologist and sociologist V. Kalisch presents the thesis that in his *Musical Joke*, “Mozart confronted the phenomenon of kitsch and musically expressed it... In breaking the rules, a moment of irony echoes, the composer hides the criticism behind irony, thus revealing that he is worried for the kitsch of his time and the kitsch in general” (Kalisch 1992, 55–57). The author detects Mozart’s realisation of a joke through the “negation of stereotypical expectations, which is manifested at various musical levels, not only in non-fulfilment of certain (typical) norm, but also in partial fulfilment, remarkable fulfilment and exaggerated fulfilment” (Kalisch 1992, 57). In that context, L. Lister considers *A Musical Joke* “from two perspectives”: on the one hand he understands the sextet as a “parody to adequacy of composing”, and on the other as a “humorous game with musical grammar” (Appel 1997, 143).

We shall first come to know a series of humorous means in Mozart’s *Musical Joke* from the point of view of the previously mentioned Russian authors Lucker and Susidko. Although this Divertimento is entitled *Sextet of Village Musicians*, “it is hardly possible”, according to their claim, “that the ensemble is really rural, (but) the parody was addressed to independent urban orchestras who perform serenades outdoors.” Sharing the same opinion with the German musicologist H. Abert that the real object of “parody are not the musicians who perform this sextet, but the implied author”, an ignorant composer, these authors take the *Joke* as an example of how “music should not be written”, as “musical anti-debate on the art of composing, where the rules can be judged based on the wrong” (Луцкер & Сусидко 2008, 437–438).

From the very beginning of the Divertimento, a listener notices Mozart’s abandoning of the ideals of Italian melody in favour of thematic ideas without more pronounced individuality. Even if the theme is pretentiously exposed, the first impression conveys constraint and thoughtlessness of its development. The piece is apparently structured in a typically classical manner using too simple composing technique, so we would say that this is a piece of Mozart from his earliest youth, which, in semantic sense points to the composer’s looking down on incompetent musicians, who stick to predetermined rules, unfortunately, insufficiently mastered. Therefore, in the musical score a whole series of musical-grammatical imprecisions and imperfections emerge: typical schematic development based on simple melodic-rhythmical, multiplied and persistent repetitions with naive variations and sequencing, without adequate classical, logical development of musical thinking, until bad mistakes. To express that “wrong” sound and approach to musical piece and aesthetics, Mozart had to employ non-conventional means. In fact, it was a “transition from perception and fancy to manipulation of outer signs”, described by D. Wellbery while dealing with issues of semiotics and aesthetics (Rumph 2012, 25). In the description of

Mozart's "masterful psychological analysis" on the example of "operatic masterpiece" *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, the Croatian musicologist Andreis refers to Mozart's words that "a man overwhelmed with fierce anger rejects all rules, all borders beyond measure; he cannot recognize himself anymore; hence music cannot recognise itself either" (Andreis 1976, 99). Finally, Mozart's experience and developed sense of drama and reality of the scene, fully-developed psychological analysis and characterization of the characters on stage, and characteristics of opera buffa must have had a significant influence on the composer's concept of jokingly-parodic sextet. In that context, an interesting intertextual interpretation is offered by the musicologist P. Kovačević, who in the "scenario of *Musical Joke* recognises elements of *dramma giocoso* or *commedia dell' arte*... which is presented by instruments in the ensemble" (Kovačević 2018, 124). In Mozart's violins, Kovačević recognises "a couple – like duets of consent in opera .... with establishment of the relationship between a dominant lover (Don Giovanni) and all those ladies that constantly gravitate towards him (Donna Anna, Donna Elvira and Zerlina)" (Ibid., 125).

In accordance with the contents of the piece, psychological portraying is not related to the characters on the scene here, but to an imaginary amateur-composer. The Bergamo-Koren writes that "humour in Mozart is the product and result of necessity and the aid in realisation of his basic artistic concept and creative credo, the tendency to make a musical piece most genuine, although poetic reflection of real life" (Bergamo-Koren 1985, 93). The question arises whether Mozart might have exaggerated in his humorous criticism of ignorant musicians, within a multitude of expressive means from parallel fifths, "otherworldly" whole-tone texture, until the polytonal musical texture, although he boldly, stepped into the future through joke.

We are faced with this outstanding, ingenious, parodic stylization of bad composers thanks to Mozart's enormous creative talent, his lucidity and artistic freedom of unrestrained spirit. And as the sextet develops, the line of Mozart's humour grows simultaneously, we would say, beyond real life, extremely depicting the conditions in art, criticising, warning, admonishing and finally acting educationally and instructively. On the back cover of their book, Lucker and Susidko justifiably conclude that "for Mozart, composing music was a joy, a game, a spiritual rest. He did not draw the contrast between light and darkness, heavenly ascension of spirit and hell abysses, out of his personal experience and life events. His inspiration was primarily drawn by artistic and aesthetic impulses" (Луцкер & Сусидко 2008).

#### 4. HARMONIC LANGUAGE THAT FUNCTIONS AS MUSICAL HUMOUR

To this day, the final cadence of the *Sextet K. 522* captures us with its harmonic-tonal boldness and strong contrast with harmonic texture of the whole piece and the overall musical heritage. The expected, authentic cadence, as a general stylistic characteristic of classical style and musical thinking was subject to Mozart's individualism, the set goal and musical dramaturgy, by replacing it with "inappropriate" polytonal cadence in his illustration of out-of-tune performance of ignorant musicians, both rural and urban. This type of cadence formula, as a stylistic exception, is an authentic harmonic-tonal and composing phenomenon in the individual style of the composer, and the style of the epoch, with direct announcement of a polytonal texture characteristic to the twentieth century music. Mozart's polytonal "speech" in only three final bars of the piece appears as a climax of humorous techniques, stylistic inconsistency, but primarily stylistic

negation (!), as well as negation of complete musical heritage. Russian musicologist Mihailov states that “final cadence contains expressive and formative-communicative function, with clearly expressed predominance of the last one. Besides, it resembles Casella’s selection of final perfect cadence as ‘formal invariability’ [and illustration] of its diverse changes through the evolution of European harmony within nearly a thousand years” (Михайлов 1990, 242). However, in the core of classical style, in Mozart’s creation, we find incongruent, strongly contrasting cadence as an undoubtedly stylistic-aesthetic phenomenon.

Namely, final thematic recapitulation in the part of horns, on the material of the first theme of rondo, in the recognisable structure 1+1+2 (from bar 429) leads to general fragmentation of one-bar series based on broken tonic triad. Although the confirmation of tonic seems to be redundant and excessive, an acceptable and potential ending of the piece occurs in bar 454. However, a new thematic impulse of double two-bar material, as a supplementary cadence is introduced into horns, for which other performers seem not to be prepared. For that reason, horns are probably the only instrument in the ensemble which, in three final chords of the whole piece, confirm basic F major key. Other performers, potentially “surprised” with the post-cadence which horns begin without them, perform cadences in various keys: Violin 1 in G major, Violin 2 in A major, Viola in E $\flat$  major and Cello in B $\flat$  major. By vertical reduction we determine that the first chord appears as a product of conflict of tonics of adjacent keys, consisting of eight tones: B $\flat$ -C-C $\sharp$ -D-E $\flat$ -E-G-A (B $\flat$ : T (tone B $\flat$ ) + A: T (tones A-C $\sharp$ -E) + G: T (tones G-D) + F: T (tones C and A) + E $\flat$ : T (tones E $\flat$ -G=B $\flat$ )). The next chord brings stronger dissonance because the tone C from the previous chord disappears, but the tones F and B are added as key tones in F major and a third in G major (absent in the previous chord). Finally, the third and final chord of the piece is much less dissonant, therefore it can conditionally represent the illusion of more consonant chord as a final resolution of a series of contradictions. Normally, that incongruity is obvious and pronounced, acting as a gross mistake, standing as a symbol of amateurism and exceptional means of humour.

Although a listener might expect a “false” ending, this is in fact the final cadence which does not interrupt the previous, but seems to negate it with its tonally inhibiting meaning. Mozart aimed at the psychological aspect of perception of polytonal relationships and strong contrast in relation to ruling reasoning, thus subjecting to parody the programmatic contents and aims – the wish of bad musicians for effective finalisation, and paradoxically, their confidence in doing their best. The earliest classical example of polytonal bizarreness is Mozart’s symbolical element of humour in the fight for classical art. Vertical sum of the final three chords of the Divertimento, created as a result of “erroneous” handling the parts of individual instruments, has both expressive and colouring significance, with non-functional, polytonal sense of the final sound. Entering the nature of their functional and tonal character would make little sense due to their polytonal nature, but we tried to make a step further in that sense. Polytonal structure with unresolved dissonances, without clearly expressed final key, or with clearly expressed five keys, ruins the unity of the whole. That type of anomaly is the break with tradition and whole classical style and heritage, thus spreading the horizons of musical expression until the distant future of the twentieth century.

A particular curiosity is that Mozart, like in polytonal notations of the twentieth century, orthographically noted the stated keys in synchronic sound, thus realising, according



to the idea of performers, a gradational ending, but in fact – harmonic opposition. By the polytonal cadence, the end is emphasized as a specific relief after 458 bars of absurd polytonal sound at the time, which per se generates perception of the strange and the sense of comic. The strength of contrast and sound differences from the previous musical progression and the effect of unexpectedness do not allow moderate effect of the final balance, which should be brought by the cadence. The previous sound reduction is replaced with fullness and density of tonal material for targeted effective completion. The activity of final chord is related to its final character, whereby instead of stability and serenity, a sharp dissonance appears.

Example I

The image shows a musical score for Example I, consisting of five staves. The top staff is a vocal line with lyrics. The second staff is a piano accompaniment. The third and fourth staves are for two violins. The fifth staff is for a cello and double bass. The score ends with a polytonal cadence. Chord labels are placed above the staves: F: T (above the first staff), G: T (above the second staff), A: T (above the third staff), Es: T (above the fourth staff), and B: T (above the fifth staff). A question mark is placed at the end of the fifth staff. Below the staves, there is a line with 'F: T' on the left and 'S \_\_\_\_\_ ?' on the right.

The mere location of a slow movement (*Adagio cantabile*) in the position of the third movement of the sonata cycle points to a kind of oddity. Established classical norms do not only propose a slow movement in the position of a second movement, but also minor key as a contrast to major from the previous sonata *Allegro*. Such type of unfulfillment of classical formal standard points to the deviation from the usual order, which is justified by creative evolution and extension of individual limitations, or style of the epoch, or, as in this case, symbolises a joke and Mozart’s mockery of ignorant composers. The impression of a joke and mild irony is intensified with „wrong” development of the melodic component. Namely, the *cantabile* melody in violin 1 moves quite vividly. The composer’s ambition is aimed at captivating the listeners with melodic eloquence and refinement of expression. The two-bar motif contains kinetic potential of punctuated iambic motif and dissonant energy of sharp subdominant degree (tone F $\sharp$ ) which additionally (after escape on the tone A) resolves in the tonic fifth on latent, and then real harmonic base. Successive appearance of the second tone F $\sharp$  brings the harmony of secondary dominant, but the third occurrence of the tone F $\sharp$  makes strong discrepancy, deviation from classical standards due to the “opposite” descending movement of the sharp subdominant degree, although on the base of the chord DD<sup>7</sup>. The described Mozart’s melodic manipulation does not stay on the melodic element only, but leads to a specific tonal game and ambiguity. Namely, triple occurrence of the leading tone F $\sharp$  imposes the phenomenon of tonal ambiguity between C major and G major. The initial harmonic progression in C major: T – DD<sup>7</sup> – D can theoretically be rethought, and by using multi-functional properties of chords translated to G major: S – D<sup>7</sup> – T, accordingly expressed through diatonic scale chords of main degrees. Nevertheless, C major prevails not only because of completely authentic confirmation that follows, but also because the third chord – C major dominant in a third position - cannot sound as confirmed tonic and adopt the status; although by “free” treatment of tone F $\sharp$  a “clumsy”

composer seems to alter the musical progression into G major, thus provoking incongruent ambiguity and combining akin tonal spheres.

Example 2

*Adagio cantabile.*

C: T      DD<sup>7</sup>      D      II      2 D<sup>6</sup>      7      T  
 (G: S      D<sup>7</sup>      T      )

The middle part of the slow movement begins with the previously described two-bar motif from the beginning of the movement, now in G major. Self-confident melody with triple occurrence of alteration of the sharp subdominant degree and harmonic accompaniment T – DD<sup>7</sup> -D, brings melodic-harmonic and tonal association to dominant D major. Successive descending sequence by a second alters musical progression into F major with inclinations towards C major. Opposite to the interpretation scheme of musical progression by the American musicologist I. Godt, tonal predominance is nevertheless on G major (first two-bars) and F major (the second two bars). However, Godt is right when he says that “our hero (rem. by M. M.: Mozart’s imaginary composer) having failed to effect harmonic development where it was called for in the allegro, blunders into it here where it disrupts the repose that might have been more appropriate in a movement that sets out to be decoratively lyrical” (Godt 1986, 35–36). Unpretentious tonal plan in the first movement is replaced by emphasized tonal dynamics: G major -F major - (A minor) – E minor – A minor - D major- C major - E<sup>b</sup> major -G major. Instant accent on vertical component of musical texture in the first phase brings organised tonal movement in descending by seconds: G major – F major – (A minor) – E minor, with prominent chromatic modulation. “Our hero” begins the formation of the key order in the second phase of development by following the principle of ascending fourths: E minor – A minor – D major – C major, but even now, like in the first phase, he does not keep to the same scale type, but uses the opposite type for the third key. In accordance with his intention to create gradation, modulations into A minor and D major bring sharper tonal reversals achieved by chromatic, elliptic turns. In the third phase the keys are organised more freely, by future Romantic principle of a third, now of major scale types C - E<sup>b</sup> - G. In addition to harmonic expressiveness in the form of chromatic breaks, the avoidance of resolution in terms of elliptic turns for “presentation of knowledge” in modulations, we also notice the contrast of scale types, especially when instead of major, a minor tonic appears, even as a modulatory means (bar 35 and bar 37). In the final tonal turn from E<sup>b</sup> major to G major we “find the proof” that the imaginary composer mastered the technique of enharmonic modulation by using a seventh chord consisting of major triad and minor seventh. The above mentioned chord gives the impression of DS<sup>7</sup>, however in resolution, the real sense of this chord is revealed in enharmonic movement towards double diminished four tone chord on the sharp subdominant in G major, although both in sound and stylistically, a darker G minor would rather be expected.

In the presented imaginary composer's confrontation with the problem of development of melodic thought and architectonics of the tonal plan, we find an obvious discrepancy between his ambition and real capacity. Musical progression does not emit recognisable softness of Mozart's melodic thinking that would delicately and elegantly move through keys. Tonal plan of the extreme modulatory frequency is reduced to less distant keys with modulation frame of 5. Mozart tells us about the elements of competence of the imaginary composer by using tough and raw modulations, manipulation with scale types which are not only poorly combined, but are also presented by simpler harmonic means. The naivety of musical development is seen in musical progression which seems to have no aim, no gradational movement towards culmination, but sounds as if the composer did not know what to do while modulating into one key, thus "finding salvation" in a new key. In that marching of tones, Lucker and Susidko find the base for „unsuccessful harmonic oscillations which permeate the slow movement of Mozart's 'Joke'. Thirteen bars of development (bars 24-36) 'march' over keys 'without a bit of mastery': tonal deviations are clumsy and conceived, while ellipses are exactly what should provide bad knowledge of composing" (Луцкер & Сусидко 2008, 438).

Example 3

The image displays three systems of musical notation for piano accompaniment, each with a corresponding line of harmonic analysis below it. The notation includes treble and bass clefs, notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *mf* and *f*. The harmonic analysis uses letters (G, F, D, T, S, K, C, Es) and numbers (5, 7) to denote chords and their positions. Some chords are enclosed in boxes, and arrows indicate voice leading or specific chord functions. The analysis for the first system shows: G: T, DD<sup>7</sup>, D, F: T, DD<sup>7</sup>, D, D<sub>II</sub><sup>5</sup> [III], VII<sub>b</sub><sup>7</sup>, D<sup>6</sup>. The second system shows: t, S, D<sup>7</sup>, a: t, D<sup>5</sup>, t, s, D, D: D<sup>5</sup>, 7, T, S, K<sup>5</sup>, D, C: [III], D<sup>5</sup>, T, DD<sup>5</sup>. The third system shows: D, (Es: T), Es: [III], D, 5, 7, T, S.

T ————— II<sup>7</sup> — D<sup>7</sup> — T — D<sup>7</sup><sub>VI</sub> — VI DS<sup>7</sup><sub>VII<sub>3</sub></sub> D — 7 — T — DS — S — D

After a trivial exposition in the first movement, even more trivial part - development follows. Mozart realises its musical parody using naive thematic development, naive and rough modulations in “correct”, relational keys (dominant, subdominant and parallel dominant), but without adequate order and preparation of modulation moment. Considering that the development begins with the material of the first theme, which even in the exposition arouses considerable suspicion related to musical quality and aesthetic value, we conclude that it is without any individuality and expressiveness, and is, according to Godt’s claim even “a musical content close to absolute zero” (Godt 1986, 28).

Since “our hero” knows that the development includes work with motifs from the exposition in various keys, he does it. The initial two-bar motif of the first theme is harmonized in C major: D<sup>5</sup> – T. In the varied, repeated two-bar material, a whole rhythmical naivety is visible in a kind of diminutive work with motif. The third two-bar material, as a part of simple, rudimentary development/completion (!) of the imaginary form of 6-bar sentence, brings darker expression of unchallenged (!) minor tonic as a mutual chord with B<sup>b</sup> major and, it seems to us, premature cadence. The following 6-bar phrase, conceived on the same principle, also without adequate development and harmonic preparation brings modulation to A minor, although, due to renaming T<sup>6</sup> in B<sup>b</sup> major to Neapolitan sixth chord in A minor we can find justification for harmonious musical development. However, in the next modulation (into the basic F major) roughly realised and in a very narrow region over Phrygian fifth chord in A minor, which probably remained in the memory from the previous modulation (!) of the imaginary composer, we find a distant similarity with future, unexpected modulations of Prokofiev for the sake of cadence.

Mozart conducts an interesting tonal game at the beginning of the fast final movement (Presto). The first theme in the form of ternary song (aa<sub>1</sub>a<sub>2</sub>) is untypical of its monothematic principle of composing, and even more unusual by its tonal characteristics. The first four-bar phrase (b. 1– 4) is based on the movement from tonic to dominant, and similar to many classical examples, the second one is expected to respond with corresponding movement from dominant to tonic. However, the second four-bar phrase of the first part (b. 5–8) with clumsy, but likeable<sup>1</sup> motif development of the first phrase, in the form of sequential descending repetition of a third, leads to completely authentic cadence of parallel D minor. Tonal progression F major – D minor seems to have arrived unexpectedly in a “wrong” parallel minor, hence Mozart, on behalf of the imaginary composer, added two more bars of completely authentic cadence, but in basic F major, as

<sup>1</sup> It seems that Mozart, as much as he wanted, could in no way hide his melodic talent and all ingenuity of melodic development which arose out of every written note.

Example 4

The image displays a musical score for piano accompaniment, divided into two systems. The first system (measures 1-10) and the second system (measures 11-28) are shown with their respective harmonic analyses below. The analysis uses letters for chords and numbers for figured bass. The first system's analysis is: C: T ——— D<sup>5</sup> ——— T ——— D<sup>5</sup> ——— T ——— B:<sup>b</sup> II<sup>6</sup> ——— K<sup>4</sup> D<sup>7</sup> T ——— D<sup>5</sup> ——— T ———. The second system's analysis is: D<sup>5</sup> ——— T ——— a: N<sup>6</sup> ——— k<sup>4</sup> D<sup>7</sup> t ——— F: S ——— II<sup>6</sup> S<sup>7</sup> D<sup>5-6-7-8</sup> S ——— II<sup>6</sup> S<sup>7</sup> D ——— T ——— D ——— T ———.

if the previous cadence in parallel minor had not happened (!), on a “never mind” principle (Atkinson 2019). However, a subsequent thought, harmonized by a completely authentic cadence seems to correct the “mistake” by bringing the musical progression back to the basic F major. The second part (a<sub>1</sub>) consists of two four-bar phrases deprived of the melodic element, reduced to repetition of the chord tones. The established harmonic model T -S (b.11–12) is repeated in an ascending sequence of a second, but clumsily, because instead of harmonic progression II – major D, the turn II – minor D occurs. (!) The chord of the minor dominant (b.14) is a mistakenly selected modulatory connection with mediant A<sup>b</sup> major, where the previous four-bar material is exposed as: T-S (b.15–16) and II – D (b.17–18). By using a minor dominant, the composer obviously made the keys closer and found a mutual chord, but such overcoming of the „critical” point of modulation moment F major - A<sup>b</sup> major resulted in a rough impression of an inorganic linking of the two-bar material, like a tonal jump in the wrong segment of form. In an untypical recapitulation (a<sub>2</sub>), the first four-bar phrase (b.19–22) ends on A<sup>b</sup> major dominant, while the second one (b. 23–26) in sequential a third-descending repetition ends in completely authentic cadence in F minor. Mozart’s composer easily solved the problem of tonal completion of the first theme by inserting a two-bar supplement of cadence in F major (b.27–28). This is followed by a typical example of *fugato* with real response on the dominant, together with additional composing problems of the imaginary composer.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Mozart's musically expressive means of humour in *Sextet K. 522* are significantly more extensive in comparison to those presented here. In addition to tonal deviation in the form of unexpected, clumsy and rough tonal development, incongruity in the form of humour is also symbolised in motif-rhythmical absence of ideas, in conceiving *grosso modo* themes, and their simplified, rigid and schematised elaboration in the form of etude-like scale sequencing and chord breaking. Mozart applied the suspension of musical grammar and classical conventional norms in a more extensive range: from whole-tone melody in the solo cadenza of the *Minuet* (s. Миленкович & Здравич-Михаилович 2021), a transformation of a Minuet character by using fanfare motifs, the incorporation of Mozart's motif *Alleluia* as a symbol of "theft" of Mozart's melodic idea by the imaginary composer, parallel fifths, mistakenly applied dynamics, ornamentation, the orchestration which leads horns to sound bizarre for a while, until polytonality and the absence of the classical ideal of nice, harmonious and moderate expression without Mozart-like charm, grace and subtlety.

Mozart's *Musical Joke* shows perfect aesthetics of humour realised by an ingenious composer. Einstein emphasizes that composing this piece was probably "kind of violence against own self, a sort of compulsion to something unacceptable and unnatural for Mozart. A musician with such a 'sharp ear' must have tended to adjustment because every false note, in his opinion was an insult to the whole world order" (Ейнштейн 1977, 207). Mozart composed this piece out of the need for reproach and correction of amateur-composers and their counter-aesthetics, probably not only because of the strong internal impulse but also for pleasure. His criticism is expressed from the viewpoint of an uncompromising musical authority, a genius with perfect knowledge of overall musical culture and heritage, stylistically, technically and ideologically unrivalled. During his whole life Mozart fought for spiritual independence and creative freedom, and his whole nature probably urged him to resist, through music, to the activity of amateur-musicians and mediocrities. They undoubtedly horrified Mozart and spoiled his life and peace, although some of them were accepted in certain social circles, such as poor F. H. Graf, whom Mozart mentioned to his father with contempt. Anyway, precious work was left to heritage, and for us clear evidence of a moment in social and cultural life, the music that bears criticism, resistance and other secrets of the great artist's heart. *A Musical Joke* is the composer's criticism against society, kitsch and absence of not only musical education, composing style and technique, but also a measure and taste to which Mozart, as still a synonym of musical perfection, could not and did not want to stay immune to and without adequate answer through the language of music. In that respect, Einstein justifiably considers Mozart the "bearer of musical-theoretical wisdom... great dramatist... the keenest, incorruptible and ruthless observer of human passions" (Ейнштейн 1977, 207).

The power of Mozart's humour and tragicomical relationship with ignorant composers as anomalies of social and cultural life in his era, lies exactly in Mozart's absorption of unexpectedness and break with conventions in musical and expressive means and musical architectonics and form. A harmonic component contains extraordinary musical potential which the composer used in musical segments of developmental type, i.e., modulatory progression with unpredictable tonal plan, until the final polytonal expression, like the eighteenth century "atomic bomb", due to strong rule of traditional harmony. Polytonal modernity of this cadence hardly has a rival in the history of music. In that context, a Norwegian musicologist Eriksen states that "even today, these measures may be simply

perceived as bizarre by listeners not knowing that the work was probably (com. M. M.?) meant to depict incompetent composing as well as bad playing. The author concludes that “bad playing” representing the normal and expected in this context, and the musical style the violation, the conclusion of Mozart’s work calls to mind the incongruity between the ideal (the purity of the musical style universe) and the imperfect (an unfortunate rendering of this universe)”.

Final cadence of the *Sextet K. 522*, as the most specific harmonic segment of the piece and the whole classical style should certainly have more significant position in studying the harmonic language of W. A. Mozart. With it, Mozart “betrays” his listeners and artistic percipients of the piece, as much as various “musicians”, composers and performers probably betrayed him by most of their compositions and interpretations. At any rate, Divertimento is a suggestive, metaphorical musical picture which, in the sum of anti-musical associations actualizes the handicap of amateur musicians as well as their inclination towards exposure. Insufficiently trained musical professionals, proud of their “musicality” lead the final cadence to the aspect of bizarre, grotesque, even unnatural. Obviously, all these are different perspectives, aspects of Mozart’s view of such music and musicians, but thanks to them, ingenious W. A. Mozart two centuries earlier practically “opened the door” to a new aspect of tonal organisation, characteristic to the twentieth century. This joke as an expression of Mozart’s humour is a genuine presentation of his artistic and human strength, dynamic but still a classically refined view of the social phenomenon in music at the time, thus challenging not only amateur-musicians, but also the whole heritage: “music can express everything”! That is why Mozart was, as lucidly Petar Konjović, a classic of Serbian musical culture bore witness “one of the masters of the past who take command over the eternal present era” (Konjović 1922, 43).

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## HARMONSKI JEZIK U FUNKCIJI MUZIČKOG HUMORA U SEKSTETU K. 522 (MUZIČKA ŠALA) V. A. MOCARTA

*Mocartov Sekstet K. 522 predstavlja kompozitorovu kritiku društva, kiča i nedostatka ne samo muzičkog obrazovanja, kompozicionog stila i tehnike kompozitora-amatera, već i mere i ukusa, na šta Mocart, kao sinonim muzičkog savršenstva, nije mogao, ni želeo da ostane imun, bez adekvatnog odgovora jezikom muzike. Harmonaska komponenta sadrži izuzetan humoristički potencijal koji kompozitor koristi u muzičkim segmentima razvojnog tipa, tj. modulatornog toka, sa nepredvidivim tonalnim planom, sve do završnog politonalnog izraza, kao „atomske bombe” 18. veka, usred snažne vladavine tradicionalne harmonije. Politonalna modernost ove kadence gotovo da nema premca u istoriji muzike. U radu je dat prikaz politonalnog koncepta pomenute kadence kojom Mocart najavljuje XX vek, kao i ostalih harmonskih postupaka, u prvom redu tonalne devijacije u vidu nečekivanog i nesprenog, grubog tonalnog razvoja kao svojevrzne tonalne igre koju Mocart sprovodi. Kao muzičko-izražajno sredstvo humora, kompozitor koristi i motivsku melodijsko-ritmičku bezidejnost prilikom koncipiranja tema grosso modo, te njihovu simplifikovanu, krutu i šematičnu razradu u vidu etidnog, lestvičnog nizanja ili akordskog razlaganja. Suspenzija muzičke gramatike primenjena je na širokoj skali: od celostepene melodije u solističkoj kadenci, preobražaja menuetskog karaktera fanfarnim motivima, inkorporacije Mocartovog motiva Aleluja kao simbola „krađe” Mocartove melodijske ideje od strane imaginarnog kompozitora, paralelnih kvinti, pogrešno primenjene dinamike, ornamentata, orkestracije koja horne na momenat dovodi do zvučne bizarnosti, do politonalnosti i uopšte nedostatka klasičnog ideala lepog, skladnog i umerenog izraza, bez mocartovske ljupkosti, gracioznosti i suptilnosti. I upravo zbog toga Mocart jeste, kako to lucidno svedoči klasik srpske umetničke muzike – Petar Konjović – „jedan od gospodara prošlosti, koji gospodari većinom sadašnjošću.”*

Ključne reči: *Mocart, harmonski jezik, akord, tonalitet, modulacija, humor*