

# BEETHOVEN'S THIRD SYMPHONY: ITS TRUE CONTENT DESCRIBED FOR THE FIRST TIME

BEETHOVENS DRITTE SINFONIE  
ZUM ERSTENMAL IN IHREM WAHREN  
INHALT DARGESTELLT {29-101}

TRANSLATED BY  
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*to Beethoven the Hero*

## I DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTENT

### First movement

The Urlinie of the first movement moves within the space of a third:  $\hat{3}-\hat{2}-\hat{1}$ .

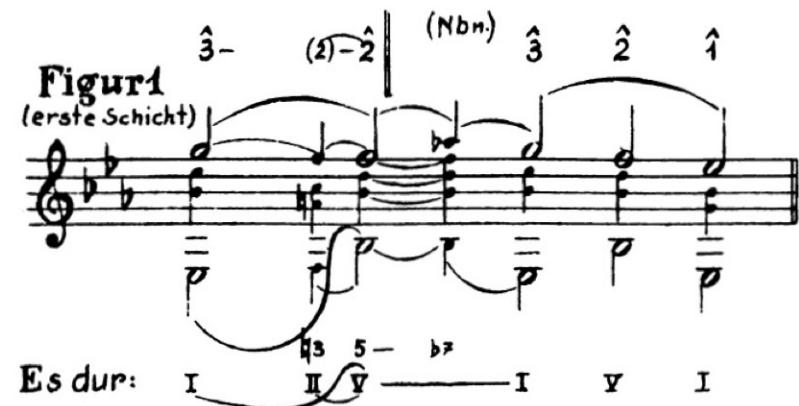
The first middleground layer (see Fig. 1) shows the interruption  $\hat{3}-\hat{2}||\hat{3}-\hat{2}-\hat{1}$ . The seventh over V, instead of arising as a result of passing motion from the octave ( $V^{8-7}$ ), seems to come about by means of a leap of a third from the fifth ( $V^{5-7}$ ). By virtue of its superior position above the  $\hat{3}$ , however, this seventh ultimately creates the impression of a neighbour note:  $\hat{3}-4-\hat{3}$ ; see 'Der freie Satz'.<sup>1</sup>

The second middleground layer (see Fig. 2) introduces descending linear progressions from the first  $\hat{3}$  and  $\hat{2}$ , then from the neighbour note and finally once more from  $\hat{3}$  and  $\hat{2}$ .

<sup>1</sup> [At the time Schenker published *Meisterwerke III* the third and final volume of his 'Neue musikalische Theorien und Phantasien', i.e. *Der freie Satz*, was not yet completed in its final form and was not to appear in print for another five years. Though it was, of course, impossible for Schenker to assign page numbers to references to *Der freie Satz*, it is likely that, by 1930, he had a clear idea of its contents and was thinking of a specific passage when he referred the reader to it.

The passage from the definitive version of *Der freie Satz* that is of relevance to the present discussion comprises §§106-12 and concerns the neighbour note in the first middleground layer.]

The third middleground layer (see Fig. 3 on pp. 12-13) shows the prolongations of the bass. The third-progression from the first  $\hat{3}$  is contrapuntally combined with the bass progression I-II-V-I,<sup>2</sup> and the fifth-progression from the first  $\hat{2}$  with a cadence, apparently in B♭ major ([also] I-II-V-I): here the bass first makes a leap of a third - [the harmony] at this point is still  $\frac{6}{3} \frac{5}{\sharp 3}$  - and then proceeds in stepwise motion to V; see 'Der freie Satz'.<sup>3</sup> The seventh-progression



<sup>2</sup> [This I-II-V-I is not marked on Fig. 3. It is not to be confused with the larger-scale I-II-V-I whose final I coincides with the second  $\hat{3}$ .]

<sup>3</sup> [§57, a commentary on Fig. 14/3, forms part of a more general discussion of the combination of Urlinie with bass arpeggiation at the middleground level. Fig. 14/3c shows the effect of I-IV-V, with the third implying 'only a passing motion, even though the second tone of the filling-in is missing' (the emphasis is Schenker's).]

**Figur 2** (Terzzug) (zweite Schicht) (2)-2 (Quintzug) (Übgt.) (Nbn.) (Septzug) 3 (Nbn. durch) (Terzzug) 1

Es dur: I - -11-5- (b7) 5 (b7) 5 I II Y I

from the neighbour note takes place over the dominant of the main key, and all the motion in the bass can be traced back to a single neighbour-note motion.

I now turn to the penultimate layer (see the Foreground Graph of the first movement<sup>4</sup>).

**Bars 1-15** The  $\hat{3}$  is established in bars 3-7 by means of an arpeggiation of the  $E_b$  major chord in open position. The root and fifth are presented by cello in bars 3 and 5, the third by violin 1 in bar 7. As if summing up, however, the way to the fifth in bar 5 passes through the third in bar 3 in close position; both this third and the fifth occur on weak beats:

**Fig. 4** (Gdt.-Terz — Quint)

Es dur: I - -

<sup>4</sup> [siehe das Bild 1. For this analysis, Schenker abandons his long-standing practice of referring to this as the 'Umlinie-Tafel', a term which had become inappropriate as the notion of 'Umlinie' became more specifically associated with the upper voice of the background level. He did return to the term two years later, in the publication of the *Fünf Umlinie-Tafeln*, where it can refer either to the entire nexus of voice-leading graphs for a single work or to the specific representation of the foreground.

For practical reasons the Foreground Graphs of the symphony have been reprinted together at the end of this volume.]

The bass motion in bars 3-6 merely supports the arpeggiation; hence, as far as the counterpoint of the outer voices [*Aussensatz*] is concerned, this motion simply signifies a stationary  $E_b$ . Not until bars 6-8 does the bass make its first move, a descent to  $C^\sharp$ . Generally such a descent implies a chromatic alteration of the kind associated with a tonicization of IV or II,<sup>5</sup> and thus in both cases, in order to remain within the key of the symphony, a  $D_b$  and not a  $C^\sharp$ :

**Fig 5 a)** (Nbn.) **b)** (Nbn.)

I - (Dg)-IV Y  $\frac{1}{2}$  I I - (Dg)-VI  $\frac{1}{2}$  II Y  $\frac{1}{2}$  I

In bar 7, however, the bass, surprisingly, has  $C^\sharp$  instead of  $D_b$ . The sole purpose of this is to enable  $C^\sharp$  to drive back up to D (see the *cresc.* etc.). This upward drive communicates itself to the treble, which now also rises in a *cresc.* {30} to the neighbour note  $a^b$  (*sf*, bar 10). The fifths indicated by oblique lines in the Foreground Graph are avoided by means of syncopation.

This first upward drive is, so to speak, the initial breath of the movement. Thereafter it continues to be of importance for the procurement of the content,

<sup>5</sup> ['IV or VI' in the original text. Fig. 5b shows a move to VI<sup>1/2</sup>, as part of a tonicization of II; this may be the origin of Schenker's mistake.]

Bild 4

Finale

Url.23

(vgl. in Beethovens Op.35: „Introduzione col Basso del Tema“,  
„Tema“ und „Finale alla Fuga“)

5 10 15 20

(Vl. I) (Nbn.) „basso del Tema“ (Wiederholung) (Holzbl.)  
(B.) (Strch. pizz.) (Strch. pizz.)  
(Terz— (5-6, 5-6, 5)-7 -Gräton) (Quintzug aufw.)

Mtg: (  $\frac{b^{\sharp}}{Y}$  als Nbnhm. zu ————— ) I—  
vdg: ( ————— )  $Y^{b^{\sharp}}$  ————— I—  $-VI^{H3}-II-$   $Y^{5-}$  (

25 30 35 40 45

Fortsetzung des „Tema“ (Wiederholung) (Bl. — — Bl.) (Holzbl.)  
(Bl.) (Strch. pizz.) (Strch. — — Strch) (Strch. pizz.) (Vcl. II)  
(Vcl. arco)

$ff$   $p$

$Y^{5-}$  (8) —————  $b^{\sharp}$  I —  $IV$  —  $V$  — I

Url. 24

50 55 60

(= 3 - -2 || (Nbn.) 3 - 2 - 1)

(Vl. I) (Vl. I) (Vl. I) (Br.) (Vl. II)

(Vcl.)

— (VI<sup>3</sup>) II ( ) Y<sup>5</sup> — || — b7 — I — (IV<sup>5</sup>) II Y — I — I —

65 70 75

(= 3 - -2 || (Nbn.) 3 2 1)

(Vl. II) (Vl. I) (Vl. I) (Ob.)

(Br.) (Br.) (Vcl.) (Vcl.) (Fg. Horn.)

(B. pizz.)

(zu 3 T. 254)  
„tema“  
(Anstieg  $g^2 - as^2 - b^2$ , T. 76-93-96)

— (VI<sup>3</sup>) — II Y<sup>5</sup> — b7 — (I<sup>b7</sup> IV — II<sup>b5</sup> Y — I) I —

(„basso del tema“)