



## Remarks on Form and Temporality in *Rondo I Wq. 57* by Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach

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### Abstract

**Objectives:** The research aims at identifying the temporal structure that constitutes the C. Ph. E. Bach's Rondo and determining the tools through which temporality operates on different structural levels.

**Methods:** The research uses a descriptive-analytical phenomenological approach based on the notated musical text, where the method of development and unfolding of the musical piece over time is accurately described by detailing the various structural relationships in melody and tonality of its sections.

**Results:** At the higher level of the musical structure, several parallel temporal frameworks are revealed: 1) the temporality of the rondo with its recurring refrains; 2) an overall tripartite form similar to that found in the sonata-rondo; 3) a cycle of repeated transitions using similar melodic elements in constantly changing configurations, along with recurring pauses and semi-cadential interruptions. At the mid-level, temporality manifests in the specific compositional technique used to produce new sound configurations from the ornaments and melodic elements in a continuous manner.

**Conclusions:** The phenomenological description revealed temporality as a fundamental factor in the eventfulness and development of the musical composition, influencing the work at multiple structural and semantic levels.

**Keywords:** C. Ph. Em. Bach; rondo form; phenomenological description; temporality; cycles of recurrence; combinatorial technique

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## ملاحظات حول القالب والزمانية في الرondo 57 لكarl فيليب إيمانويل باخ

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### ملخص

**الأهداف:** يهدف البحث إلى تحديد البنية الزمنية التي تتكون منها مقطوعة روندو كارل فيليب إيمانويل باخ، وتحديد الأدوات التي تعمل من خلالها الزمانية على مستويات بنوية مختلفة.

**المنهجية:** يستخدم البحث المنهج الوصفي-التحليلي الفينومينولوجي المعتمد على النص الموسيقي المدون، حيث يتم وصف طريقة تطور وفتح العمل الموسيقي في الزمن بدقة من خلال وصف العلاقات البنوية اللحنية والمقامية المختلفة لأجزاءه.

**النتائج:** على المستوى الأعلى من البنية الموسيقية، تكشف عدة هيكل زمانية تتطور بالتوازي: (1) زمانية الرondo مع دوراتها من الريفرننس المتركرة؛ (2) ثلاثة كليات مماثلة لتلك الموجودة في السوناتا الرondo؛ (3) دورة وصلات متكررة تستخدم عناصر لحنية متماثلة في تركيبات متغيرة باستمرار بالإضافة إلى فترات صمت متكررة وانقطاعات شبه-القفلات. على المستوى المتوسط، تتجلى الزمانية في التقنية التركيبية المحددة المستخدمة لإنتاج تركيبات جديدة الصوت من الزخارف والعناصر اللحنية بشكل مستمر.

**الخلاصة:** وقد كشف الوصف الفينومينولوجي عن الزمانية كعامل أساسي في حداثة وتطور المؤلف الموسيقي الذي يؤثر في العمل على عدة مستويات بنوية ودلالية.

**الكلمات الدالة:** كارل فيليب إيمانويل باخ؛ قالب الرondo؛ الوصف الفينومينولوجي؛ الزمانية؛ دورات التكرار؛ التقنية التركيبية.



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## 1. Introduction

The current research presents a phenomenological description of Rondo I Wq. 57 by C. Ph. Em. Bach with special focus on structural and temporal aspects of the works. It builds upon the phenomenological approach developed by Thomas Clifton in his book *Music as Heard* (1983), and also further develops ideas expressed in my previous article *Music Analysis as a Description of Eventing in Time: A Phenomenological Description of Bartók's Improvisation op. 20 no. 3* (2022). In its musical-analytic and historical-stylistic aspects it is indebted to the papers of Suzanne Clercx on C. Ph. Em. Bach (1935) and Witold Chrzanowski's dissertation *Das Instrumentale Rondeau und die Rondoformen im XVII. Jahrh.* 1911), as well as to the work of Lawrence Ferrara (1991), in which fundamental aspects of the *Phenomenology of Music* are explored. A phenomenological description articulate how we hear and perceive music as eventing, unfolding in time; a description in which presuppositions and pre-conceptions are suspended, and in which the work's Gestalt is grasped in its immediate and direct presence as it sounds to us and as we encounter it, in the totality of its singular, organic and dynamic being as becoming, its presentation as the eventing of its idea and form and the unfolding of its *Eigenzeit* (own time). The research aims at identifying the temporality employed in C. Ph. E. Bach's Rondo is composed and determining the tools through which temporality operates on different structural levels. This determines our textual, temporal-structural approach, and the research is not to be regarded as an investigation of the development of the rondo form within a historical context, nor as a stylistic analysis of the oeuvre of C. Ph. Em. Bach. The choice of the work was determined by its intricate and complex natures of the temporal, thematic and semantic structural relations, present at various levels of the composition's temporality. Throughout the work there is a continuous line of opening-up of temporality toward the future as possibility and anticipation through the incessant reinterpretation of recurring refrains, episodes and transitions, by way of employing a dialectic of stability and lability of temporal, tonal and thematic structures. Thus, eventings perpetually signifies and points toward what lies beyond the work as *possibility* and *anticipation*. Therefore, our research will employ a phenomenological descriptive-analytical text-oriented methodology, in which the manner of unfolding of the composition and its *eventings* in time is meticulously described through the various thematic, tonal and semantic structural relations of its parts.

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714-1788) was one of the significant composers linking the art of the high Baroque with the Classical era. His vast oeuvre includes symphonies, concertos, as well as keyboard and chamber compositions for various ensembles. The cycle *Drei Sonaten and Drei Rondos für Kenner und Liebhaber* Wq. 57 is the third of six cycles (Wq. 55-59, 61), written during the period 1779-87, and encompassing a large number of Sonatas, Rondos and Fantasias. The current cycle Wq. 57 includes three Sonata and three Rondos, which are, as was the case in the preceding cycle, coupled in pairs of a Rondo followed by a Sonata. The cycle was composed in 1781, during the period he worked as *Kappelmeister* in Hamburg, where he succeeded his mentor G. Ph. Telemann.

Living his entire life in Germany, and like many of his compatriots, Bach experienced strong influences originating from French art and composers, such as F. Couperin, J.-Ph. Rameau and J.-B. Lully. Various foreign dances, including French, were already being amply used in Germany during the Baroque, but it wasn't until the middle of the XVIII that the typical French *rondeau* started to spread actively. According to Witold Chrzanowski, "Writers on music in the first half of the 18th century devote few words to the Rondeau and give it little or no attention. <...> The theory after 1750 was dissatisfied with the rondeau, which appeared ad nauseam in all piano compositions (Forkel) and felt 'almost tickled to death' by it (Reichardt). Riepel in particular sheds a lot of light on this matter, wanting to leave all 'rondaux to their grey-bearded lovers as well as to their fellow countrymen'". (Chrzanowski 1911: 33; and further). As suspicious as it made music theorists, the rondo, nevertheless, managed to enter the German musical scene of this transitional time, only to become, together with sonata-rondo, one of the most important forms of the Classical era.

Listening to the music of Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, one encounters an *eventing* of freedom, passionate freedom. In his works, we discover an inventive combinatorial technique, a play of transfiguring mirrors and prisms that present themes in a never-ending series of adumbrations and permutations. In his Rondos, instead of following the traditional clear and balanced scheme of the French rondo, the refrain appears in ever-new keys proceeding by free variation of thematic and

structural character. Thus, the structure of his Rondos becomes that of a free flow without a well-defined overall structure (Clercx 1935:153). It is in these free flow and variation that one senses an original feeling of temporality, a temporality immersed in both fluent unfolding and sudden restraining interruption, in both referring to the past and opening-up toward the future, and in a combinatorial technique understood as temporal. It is for its inventive and imaginative fecundity in these aspects that I chose the current Rondo to exemplify a phenomenological description focusing on form and structure as temporality, and in which other musical parameters like tonality, thematic variation and dynamics are to be considered as temporal dimensions as well.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

A *Phenomenological description* is one that aims to understand and experience *how* we hear and perceive music as *eventing, unfolding* and *building up* (sich aufbauen) *in time*; a description in which our musical-theoretical and aesthetic idioms are suspended, and in which the work as a whole, its *Gestalt is grasped in its immediate and direct presence* as it *sounds* to us and as we encounter it. To perceive it in the totality of its singular, organic and dynamic *being*. At the same time, the language employed in this description, its character and components, are essential in determining the form and content of a description by way of the emphases and accents it willingly or unwillingly lends. As Lawrence Ferrara notes in his book *Philosophy and the Analysis of Music*, “Description, phenomenological or not, can only be as pure as the language it utilizes. However, Language grows from and in culture bringing with it culture’s inherent prejudices and biases. There is no escaping this relativism” (Ferrara 1991: 156). The acts of perception and understanding are thus marked by an intrinsic pre-judgment and pre-conception. This leads to any description being “grounded in something we grasp in advance – in a ‘fore-conception’” (Heidegger 1962: 191). One of the most fundamental and essential of these prejudices and fore-conceptions is the notion of *completeness as an achievement*. It is a sense of the fulfillment of an anticipation that has developed into an expectation of completeness. As we listen to music, we continuously anticipate this completion and hope for it. What Gadamer refers to as the foreconception of completeness (Gadamer 2013:305) anticipates and expects a perceivable and conceivable structure to unfold; it is an anticipation of structure, or rather, of structuredness.

But a phenomenological description entails a *listening to the eventing of sound*, in the dual meaning of *the sound* and *the sounding*, in the *sounding of sounds* and the *sound of sounding* (Schuback 2018). Thomas Clifton in *Music as Heard. A Study in Applied Phenomenology* explores various aspects of musical temporality and temporal relations. According to Clifton, phenomenology sees time as neither objective nor subjective. It is constituted in consciousness as a person experiences an eventing, it is “*a relation between a person and an experienced event*” (Clifton 1983: 114). This means that eventings bear their own time within themselves. Time is in the eventing, in the music, or, more precisely, in the work. Clifton sets up a line of eventings gradually increasing with regard to the mutual resistance between elements: change – contrast – opposition – interruption. *Interruption* is described as “*an achievement of foreground elements cutting into the continuity of the elements being interrupted. [...] a way of thrusting a different and relatively unanticipated foreground into the foreground and middleground levels of the piece*” (Clifton 1983: 110).

Another important aspect of temporality I propose in the differentiation between a centrifugal motion of development leading to an opening-up of a work’s temporality, and a centripetal motion leading to a rounding-up of its temporality. This differentiation becomes especially clear in the cyclicity of repetitions and recurrences of certain thematic elements and the degree and quality of their variation and development. An opening-up of temporality is an opening toward the future, toward possibilities manifest in protentions, anticipations and expectations. It is an opening-up achieved through a high level of variation in thematic return, and through constantly offering new versions of musical events. Its opposite is a rounding-up in the traditional formal understanding that implies an encapsulating gesture defining an *eventing* as an *event*, a completeness of fulfilled meaning, an independence and wholeness of structure, gesture and signification (for a more elaborate discussion of this subject and a further example, see Mohammad, 2022).

## 3. A phenomenological description: Rondo I in E major Wq. 57

### 3.1. Refrain

The Rondo begins with the **refrain**, which can easily be described as a double period consisting of four two-measure

phrases ( $a - a^1 - a - a^2$ ) (Ex. 1). The sounding of the music is, however, much more complex, as I perceive the intricacies of dynamic, rhythmic and motivic variation as they unfold. The refrain presents a pastoral-like motif with a fluent stepwise melodic outline encompassing the descending perfect fourth G $\sharp$ <sup>2</sup>-D $\sharp$ <sup>2</sup>, touching upon the upper neighboring note A<sup>2</sup>, and ending on the dominant. It has a smooth chordal texture with the outer voices moving in parallel compound thirds around a mostly sustained middle B<sup>1</sup>. This motif, which I will hereafter refer to as motif  $x$ , ends on the dominant with a suspension E<sup>2</sup>-D<sup>2</sup> in the upper voice, which is preceded by the secondary dominant function (VII<sub>6</sub>/V-V). Together, the suspension and the secondary dominant allude to a half cadence (HC). In m. 2 I perceive a change in pace, somewhat *contrasting* with the steady eighth-notes pace of m. 1, as I hear the more freely flowing eight sixteenth-notes on its second and third beats. These form an overall descending line D $\sharp$ <sup>2</sup>-G $\sharp$ <sup>1</sup> with parallel lower thirds and a *circulatio* around the goal third E<sup>1</sup>/G $\sharp$ <sup>1</sup>. The latter is preceded by the dominant forming a clearer and stronger imperfect authentic cadence (IAC), with the tonic's third G $\sharp$ <sup>1</sup> in the upper voice. There is also a discernible change in texture, from the parallel voiced chordal texture of m. 1 to a more differentiated texture, in which the bass line counterpoints with the upper melodic voice. Thus, through this relative contrast of the two measures and the perceptible two cadences, a sense of an antecedent/consequent *meaning* emerges. My attention is also caught by the specific gesture of the last cadence, with its two-sixteenth-note appoggiatura leading to a double suspension to the final tonic, reached only at the measure's last eighth-note. I will hereafter refer to this figure as cadencial figure 1 (CF1).

Example 1: Refrain (mm. 1-11)

The second phrase (mm. 3-4) *answers* the first in an antecedent/consequent gesture on a higher, bi- or super-metrical level. This relationship is perceptible, first, through the literal *recurrence* of m. 1 in m. 3, and, second, through the minimal necessary *contrast* offered by m. 4 in relation to m. 2. Here the sixteenth-notes are curtailed to only one beat, the second, in order for a more leisurely laid out perfect authentic cadence (PAC: I<sup>6</sup><sub>4</sub>-V-I) to unfold on the third and fourth beats. The cadence also occurs over a slightly more active bass that includes eighth-note octave leaps. The eighth-note dominant chord has written out over it both a mordent and a turn, a cadencial figure to which I will henceforth refer as cadencial figure 2 (CF2).

The beginning of the third phrase (m. 5) is first heard as another *recurrence* of the opening measure, but then, as the sounding of m. 6 unfolds, is *reinterpreted* as a *recurrence* of the whole first phrase, and as such evokes an anticipation of the *repetition* of the entire opening period, i.e. of *a repetition of the beginning* (Clifton 1983: 83-84). However, this interpretation is countered by the sudden dynamic shift to *f* and the transformation of the bass line. The latter is heard as a continuation of the more active and lower in range bass line of the preceding cadence. These abrupt dynamic and registral changes are here the dominating perceptual eventings and the center of *attentional focus* (Ihde 2007), while the notion of *recurrence* is registered more as an implicit *field-eventing* (Ihde 2007). On the other hand, m. 6 presents an exact *recurrence* of m. 2 with the dynamic dropping back to *p* and the bass line returning to its original register. This reinforcement of contrast between the two measures emphasizes the antecedent/consequent *meaning* of the phrase's internal 1+1 structure, which thus becomes the focal center of

*eventing*. Together with being a *recurrence*, the third phrase presents an opening of structure, and thus of *temporality*, by strengthening the inner contrast by means of introducing new dynamic and registral elements, which evoke new protentions and anticipations as *meanings* and *possibilities*. It is an opening up towards the *future*.

The fourth phrase puts yet more stress on these aspects of *eventing*, on the inner contrast and its rhetorical dramatization, as well as on motivic variation. Thus, m. 7 presents a *recurrence* of m. 5, together with its dynamic indication *f*, albeit with the upper melodic line transformed to sound rhythmically syncopated, and with its final three chords raised an octave to E<sup>3</sup>-D<sup>3</sup> to form a local climax. The contrasting m. 8, returning to *p*, now offers a strongly transfigured version of mm. 2, 4 and 6, consisting of sixteenth and thirty-two note ornamental figurations, which, nevertheless, still include the descending line D#(!)<sup>2</sup>-E<sup>1</sup> of the earlier lower-level consequences. Thus, a new motivic idea is born to which I will henceforth refer to as motif *y*, bearing in mind both that it, having originated from the lower-level consequent of mm. 2 and 4, is in its essence more general and malleable than the emblematic opening motif *x*.

Thus far, I perceive in the refrain an inner cyclicity, which is here made more poignant by the growing inner contrast of the phrases. It is a cyclicity perceptible on three levels of antecedent/consequent *structures* as the music unfolds and my intentional attention modifies from a narrow to a broader “*temporal focus act*” (Ihde 2007: 90): 1) on the lower metrical level between the two measures of each phrase; 2) on the middle bi-metrical level between the two phrases of each period; and, 3) on the higher periodic level between the two variants of the two-phrase period. These antecedent/consequent *structures* perceived on various levels firmly establish a *dialogical principle*, which will determine the extent and content of my protentions and anticipations, especially with regard to their temporal aspects. In parallel with this cyclicity, a gradual, growing in significance, process of destabilization is perceptible as permeating the entire refrain, in which variation develops through *contrast* into *opposition*, leading to a hyperbolized bi-measure juxtaposition by its end. The fragmented one-measure temporality of the second period, due to both dynamic contrast and thematic variation, is in strong contrast to the over-reaching homogenous temporality of the first period, relying solely on thematic variation for its structural antecedent/consequent gesture. This tendency effects an opening-up of structure and temporality that counters the periodicity and cyclicity of the refrain on its various levels. There is an overall *centrifugal* force determining the development and unfolding of eventing, the opening-up of its temporality toward the future.

### 3.2. First Episode

The refrain is immediately followed by the first episode (mm. 9-20; Ex. 2) sounding in B major. There is a perceivable tonal lability to the episode as a whole, a repeated departing from and returning to the dominant key, lending it a developmental character. Already m. 9 contains a VII<sub>6</sub>/II-II progression which then leads to a half cadence (HC) in B major with an implicit reminder of CF2. The whole measure is then sequenced one degree higher to end with an IAC in the VI-degree key of G# minor. Only m. 11, marked *pp* to contrast with the preceding two *mf* measures, sounds in clear B major ending with *what sounds to be* a rather weak IAC (VII<sub>6</sub>-I<sup>3</sup>). At this point, the anticipation of a two-measure phrase seems to have been fulfilled with the phrase extended to three measures by the opening sequence. However, what sounded as a cadence is interrupted in m. 12 by a II<sub>6</sub> chord marked *f*, with a variant of motif *y* that ends with an HC, a weaker cadence than the one at the end of the preceding measure, employing CF2. Thus, the phrase has an intrinsic ambivalence and imbalance to it. Its *meaning* and *temporality* are *reinterpreted* anew with the sounding of each measure as the phrase unfolds. There is an *interruption* of the anticipated two-phrase periodicity highlighted by the *f* marking, the sudden shift to II<sub>6</sub>, and most of all by the weaker cadence at the end of m. 12. We end up with a new labile unpredictable four-measure structure contrasting with the invariable, established and foreseeable two-measure structure of the refrain. The episode seems to struggle to overcome the refrain’s straightforward periodicity employing a series of dynamically underlined temporal interruptions functioning as factors of extension and prolongation. It is not only the two- vs. four-measure structure that marks the new temporality, but rather the emerging lability and unpredictability of the episode’s eventing. The last measure with its combining of both motif *y* and CF2 is itself a semantic temporal interruption of the unfolding episode as it refers back to the refrain. I do not use Clifton’s term *intercut* here as the phrase *does not resume* after this measure, but rather ends with it.



**Example 2: First Episode (mm. 7-22)**

In m. 13 a sudden dynamic drop occurs back to *pp* while the F# in the bass from the preceding cadence is sustained. Above it I hear in parallel compound thirds the first four notes of motif *x* in B major. Thus the recurrence of elements from the refrain started in m. 12 continues. The ensuing two-beat rest is clearly heard as a *temporal intercut* with an arrested pulse rather than an arrested “*respiration*” or “*breathing*” (Clifton 1983: 113). It is time listening to itself. The same motif is repeated in m. 14 a second higher, together with the ensuing intercutting silence, the F# in the bass still present. An abrupt rupture breaks the silence as at the beginning of m. 15 four chords marked *ff*, a quasi-inversion of the same first half of motif *x*, sound the harmonic sequence V<sup>6</sup><sub>5</sub>/VI-VI - V/V-III, with the upper voice resolving the secondary dominants’ leading notes A#<sup>2</sup>-B<sup>2</sup> - E#<sup>2</sup>-F#<sup>2</sup>. The two pairs of chords themselves present two forms of interrupted progressions. A sudden drop in dynamics to *p* facilitates the perception of the ensuing progression VII/V-V as a HC in B major. However, once again the perceived cadence is interrupted by a slightly altered version of motif *y* marked *f*, this time leading to a PAC. This interruption of a quasi-cadence by motif *y* which in its turn leads to another cadence, in different ways mirrors: 1) mm. 7-8, where the HC marked *f* is *answered* by motif *y* marked *p* and ending with a stronger PAC; and, 2) mm. 11-12, in which an IAC marked *p* is *interrupted* by motif *y*, marked *f* and leading to a weaker HC. It is as if a combinatorial play of transfiguring mirrors were at work here with symmetrically opposite dynamic and cadencial relations. This mirroring as semantic and temporal cross-referencing actually presents a series of *temporal intercuts* as each recurrence *refers back* and *reminds* me of previous similar intercuts, including the refrain.

The following third phrase returns to the opening motif of the episode. But now it sounds calmer (*p*), in diatonic E major over a dominant pedal point as *retransition*. And, although the motif is clearly a recurrence of the episode’s opening phrase, the measure’s last beat is replaced by CF1 from mm. 2 and 6, constituting another temporal intercut, another combination of elements referring to the refrain. This motif is sequenced diatonically a second higher in m. 18, which, however, ends with an interrupted V<sub>7</sub>-VI progression, and leads in m. 19 to a sequence based on motif *x*, yet another temporal intercut by refrain elements. Once more, a sudden rupture, marked *ff* and mirroring that of m. 15, *interrupts* the sequence with the harmonic progression V<sup>6</sup><sub>5</sub>/II-II, a stormy hypostasis of motif *y* leading to a HC in E major that incorporates CF2.

The first episode thus has connotations of both development and contrast related to its tonal and harmonic lability, with its numerous secondary dominants, on the one hand, and to a combinatorial technique that include *temporal intercuts* and *interruptions*, on the other. This lability of both harmony and structure, together with a highly imaginative use of combinatorial devices, evoke a multiplicity of contrasting and alternating protentions. As soon as a relatively specific direction of development is anticipated, it demands to be reinterpreted in light of what we hear, as phrases and cadences

are interrupted and temporal intercuts, rests and passages are interpolated. We cannot decisively tell whether we are hearing an episode or a transition other than retrospectively as we reach its end.

The contrast this episode presents in relation to the preceding refrain is not only thematic and tonal, but also strongly *temporal*. So, how does temporality manifest itself? If we accept David Huron's thesis that the basis of temporal perception, and thus of the perception of temporality, is not periodicity in itself – but *predictability* (Huron 2006: 199), this would mean that temporal contrast emerges from the frustration of protentions, but such that would offer another, alternative, and thus contrasting temporal structure, together with new *alternative* and *contrasting* protentions and anticipations. In the broader temporal field, there is a clear contrast between the even periodicity of the refrain and the three-phrase structure of the episode. As the episode unfolds, however, its second phrase is reinterpreted to mean a temporal intercut, with all its elements referring back to the refrain, while the outer first and third phrases acquire the meanings of antecedent and consequent. Simultaneously, the third phrase carries a recapitulative connotation within an overall ternarity, as it returns to the episode's opening motif transposed to E major. The second phrase as a temporal intercut also includes lower-level intercutting silences, rests in which the music's pulse is arrested and the sense of anticipation becomes both tense and vague. These intercuts of silence accumulate tension that is resolved in the four *ff* chord of m. 15. Counter-effecting this intercutting connotation of the second phrase is the fact that it is the only of the three phrases to end with a PAC, which endows the ensuing third phrase with an additional *re-transitional* meaning supported by the dominant pedal point as it is transposed back to the main key.

Another aspect of temporal contrast that the episode presents is one between its four-measure phrases and the two-measure regularity of the refrain. Thus, as the first phrase unfolds, I anticipate another two-measure phrase, then reinterpret m. 10 as an extension by way of a sequence to a three-measure phrase as I interpret the IAC at the end of m. 11 as the phrase's actual cadence. However, this perception is then interrupted by the *ff* supertonic function that leads to the final HC. This overall structure (2+1+1) is actually shared by all three phrases of the episode. All of them have a simulated cadence in the third measure interrupted by a *ff* chord, a secondary dominant in the second and third phrases, followed by different hypostases of motif y. Notwithstanding that a cadence at the end of m. 19 is hardly discernible, it still includes a VII-I progression. These interruptions are always accompanied by a sudden *p/f* contrast, a recurring feature that is somewhat disrupted by the preceding *ff* only in the intercutting second phrase, in which the four *ff* chord are already an interruption of an ongoing eventing. Noteworthy is the fact that these recurring *ff* interruptions by motif y present the opposite relation of dynamics to the motif's original sounding in mm. 7-8. Also common to all three phrases are the sequences that occupy the first two measures of each phrase, and which lend them a discernible forward-directed impetus. But as already mentioned, the more fundamental temporal contrast between the refrain and the episode originates in the *disruption of periodicity and predictability*, in the *structural and thus temporal lability* of the episode as a whole.

I thus perceive the eventing of the first episode as presenting a *different temporality* that also includes a *cyclicity* of its own, quite different from, and contrasting with that of the refrain. This cyclicity in fact occurs on two levels. The first is related to the recurrence of structure and of thematic elements within the three-phrase episode, the second to the combinatorial recurrences of motifs and elements from the refrain as temporal intercuts with their temporal past-oriented semantic referential connotations.

It is also important to note the aspects by which the episode continues the refrain's tendency of opening up both structure and temporality. On the one hand, there is an opening toward the future in the change of key and the introduction and sequencing of a new motif, in the intercutting meaning of the second phrase and the intercutting and anticipating silences within it, in the dual perception of the last phrase as recapitulation and retransition, in the fact that it ends with a HC in the home key as opposed to the PAC in the dominant key at the end of the intercutting middle phrase, and in the overall contrasting temporality of the episode. On the other hand, we hear an opening toward the past in the referentiality and the restraining meaning of the temporal intercuts and interruptions on various levels that include motifs x and y, CF1 and CF2, in the large variety of dynamic nuances and contrasts as well as their irregularity and asymmetry, and in the inner cyclicity of all these eventings. The episode is all but temporally encapsulated and closed-off from the preceding and ensuing

eventings. In fact, it is the overall tonal-harmonic and structural, *temporal* lability of the episode that effects the opening-up of the work's *temporality*, a signification of the future, a pointing toward the not-yet and the yet-to, and thus to an alterity outside the *now* that manifests itself in similarly labile protentions and anticipations.

### 3.3. Second Episode

The subsequent refrain (mm. 21-30; Ex. 3) retains the overall formal double period structure of the opening refrain, albeit with a two-measure transition interpolated between the two periods. But it presents a very *different temporality* from that of the opening. The first phrase (mm. 21-22) is identical with the opening of the Rondo. It is answered by a stormy consequent, marked *f*, which is a variation on the original consequent with thirty-second-note figurations in the right hand, in which the melodic line of the *x* motif is heard in the higher off-beat notes (m. 23), followed by another version of the *y* motif (m. 24), similar to that of m. 20. This first period thus emphasizes the two-measure phrase temporality resulting from the phrase-to-phrase juxtaposition, with the two phrases contrasting in dynamics, layout and thematic variation. It is noteworthy that the bi-metric dynamic contrast (*pp/f*) is the opposite of the (*f/p*) metric contrast of the opening refrain's second period. Contrary to the first phrase, the inner contrast of the second phrase is clearly mitigated by the continuous motion throughout mm. 23-24 supported by the added passing chord  $V^4_2$  connecting the two measures. Thus, an additional temporal dimension is presented in this period, heard in the juxtaposition of the (1+1) antecedent/consequent gesture of the first phrase with the two-measure, more unified gesture of the second.

Example 3: Refrain 2 (mm. 18-32)

After a short two-measure modulating transition the Rondo's second episode sounds in F major. Almost identical to the first period, its most poignant feature is *tonality*. The period-to-period structural, thematic and dynamic juxtaposition of the first refrain is mitigated to allow the attentional focus to be directed precisely toward *tonality*, which is introduced in this refrain as a new dimension of contrast on the higher antecedent/consequent level. *Tonality* thus emerges as an aspect of *temporality*; it is *tonality as eventing*. The two periods present a temporality based on a double two-phrase period with a *dynamically* emphasized middle-level, and a *tonally* emphasized higher-level antecedent-consequent structures. On the higher temporal level we hear an *accumulative temporal juxtaposition*, with mm. 21-30 perceived as 4 (1+1 / 2) // (2) // 4 (1+1 / 2). However, tonality in this refrain plays a very different role than it did in the first episode. There is the change of key, as well as the key itself were anticipated; this allowed for an overall lability of both tonality and structure. In the refrain, however, both the modulation as such and the specific key of F major are unexpected, they are an interruption of *eventing*, a rupture of protention and a diversion from the anticipated line of development and unfolding. Therefore, no intrusion by new elements of dynamic contrast or thematic variation is allowed to disrupt the forthright reiteration of the first period. The key of the lowered second degree, also the triton of the dominant key of the first episode (!), brings with it a perceptible plagality, a softer and damped sounding, simultaneously forming a linkage to the coming minor subdominant A minor key of the second episode. The period establishes for itself an independent realm, in strong contrast to the preceding period, a sovereign temporal segment. The unitary structure of the refrain is torn open from the inside, its identity is questioned, its oneness and sameness have become dubious, uncertain.

The second episode unfolds in only five measures (mm. 33-37; Ex. 4) that at first listening sound relatively homogenous. However, behind this curtain of various forms of arpeggiation and broken chords is hidden a multitude of forms of temporal organization. The overall temporality of this episode is characterized by an instability resulting from the continuous variation in the forms and temporal organization of arpeggiations and broken chords. However, whereas the temporal lability of the first episode was one of larger structural significance, here we are presented with a lability of harmonic pace and rhythm, a *fantasia* of harmonic-rhythmic progressions. There is a general movement toward instability permeating the episode from a more stable quarter-note pace in mm. 33, through the eight-note pace of mm. 34-35 and the enhancement of contrast with the *f/p* alternation of dynamics in m. 36, all characterized by differentiation and contrast of rhythmic and harmonic paces. Finally, this line of development culminates in the more quickly changing harmonic functions of m. 37. The episode as a whole, however, presents a disintegration of periodicity. All that remains of the various level structures of the previous refrains and the first episode, i.e. periodicity, the antecedent/consequent gesture, intercutting, interruption, interpolation, and combinatorial devices, are a vague sense of *cyclicity* reflected in the notion of *sequencing* on the harmonic level. This breakdown of temporality as structure makes the second episode the final stage of a progressive eventing of freedom, an opening-up of structure and temporality, of protentions and anticipations, an eventing permeating the Rondo from its beginning up to the current moment. Though the episode is centered on A minor, *tonal* lability is also an important factor in the unfolding of this episode, as it is mainly founded on an imaginative variety of V – I chromatic progressions with a constantly shifting tonic function.

A page of sheet music for two staves, likely for a woodwind instrument. The top staff is in common time (indicated by 'C') and the bottom staff is in 2/4 time (indicated by '2/4'). Measure 30 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 31 continues the sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 32 begins with a sixteenth-note pattern followed by eighth-note pairs. Measure 33 continues the eighth-note pairs. Measure 34 consists entirely of eighth-note pairs. Measure 35 begins with eighth-note pairs followed by sixteenth-note pairs. Measure 36 consists entirely of sixteenth-note pairs. Measure 37 begins with sixteenth-note pairs followed by eighth-note pairs. Measure 38 concludes with eighth-note pairs.

**Example 4: Second Episode (mm. 29-39)**

The second episode is followed by a literal restatement of the first period of the original refrain in E major transposed an octave lower (mm. 38-41; Ex. 5). On the one hand, this curtailed refrain presents a new, more compact version of the refrain's temporality. On the other hand, by virtue of its return to the home key of E major after the intermitting F major variant, and its literal restatement of the opening period without any variation except its octave transposition, it presents a *past made present, a recurrence per se*. It is a *more fundamental recurrence and return*, and as such, it foreshadows the coming statements of the refrain, so that this recurrence will be retrospectively reinterpreted as one of the more fundamental ones. Though curtailed, it will be remembered as a moment of stability, as a point of reference for the original tonality. The ensuing five-measure transition (mm. 42-46) functions as a linkage to the central episode in F sharp major.

A musical score for piano, featuring four staves of music. The top staff shows a series of eighth-note patterns with diagonal hatching. Measure 38 is indicated above the staff. The second staff begins with a sixteenth-note pattern, followed by eighth-note patterns. Measure 40 is indicated above the staff. The third staff shows eighth-note patterns with diagonal hatching. Measure 44 is indicated above the staff. The bottom staff shows eighth-note patterns with diagonal hatching. Measure 46 is indicated above the staff. The score is in common time, with various dynamics and performance instructions like *pp* (pianissimo) and *mf* (mezzo-forte).

**Example 5: Refrain 3 (mm. 37-46)**

### 3.4. *Third Episode*

The third, central episode that follows (mm. 47-54; Ex. 6) is actually a version of the refrain in compound 12/8 time and in the key of F sharp major. It is thus the first refrain to *begin* in a different key. Its first period is a literal restatement of the original retaining its dynamics (*pp*) and antecedent/consequent structure as gesture. We are thus allowed to direct our attention to the new *temporality* and to *tonality as eventing*. Again, tonality is here a temporal factor as it, together with the new time-signature, allows the refrain theme to separate itself and form an independent realm, a *new eventing*, an *eventing of alterity*, and thus to become an *episode* in the overall structure of the Rondo. Tonality and time signature are, therefore, what make it an episode, by effecting our temporal perception of it as part of the form as a whole.



#### Example 6: Third Episode (mm. 47-59)

The internal temporality of the episode re-presents that of the second refrain (mm. 21-30) in another combinatorial mirroring, in which the juxtaposition of periods reflects the juxtaposition of phrases in the second refrain. The dynamic indications of the second period's two phrases (mm. 51-54) are *mf* and *f* respectively, presenting a clear contrast to the *pp* of the first period. The second period (mm. 51-54) also presents a thematic variation that is, especially in its second phrase (mm. 53-54), quite similar to that of the second refrain's second phrases (mm. 23-24; 29-30). Thus, a certain kind of linkage is created between *refrain*, especially its second sounding, and the third *episode*, that acts *across* the overall rondo structure. It creates a *twist* in the work of temporality, and we simultaneously hear both *refrain* and *episode*. As we hear a new statement of the refrain that clearly points toward its previous soundings, its *temporality* and its *tonality as eventing*, as well as its *placement*, make it an episode that breaks with the line of recurring refrains. The question of *placement* is one of *pretending* and *anticipation*. I *anticipate* an episode, I *hear it* before it begins, so I hear it *when* it begins, and the unfolding of both the new key and the *different dance-like meter* fulfill these pretensions and anticipations.

Yet another three-measure transition (mm. 55-57), the fourth if we count the short transition between the second refrain's two period (mm. 25-26), modulates to C major for a return of the refrain in the triton key in relation to the third episode.

It is at the latest *here* that I start perceiving the transitions as a *recurring eventing* in itself, contrapuntal to the recurrences of the refrain. I have henceforth perceived four transitions. The first transition was internal to the second refrain, developing a small figuration from the preceding measure. Transitions 2 and 3 start by developing through sequencing the beginning of motif *x*, then move on to a broken chords texture that refers to the ensuing/preceding second episode. The somewhat longer third transition then additionally takes up the development of motif *y* of the refrain. The fourth transition starts by sequencing the final figuration of the previous measure in a manner similar to the first transition, then presents a further

development of motif y, circumventing the broken chords stage of the preceding two transitions. It is clear that these transitions demonstrate a combinatorial technique not less inventive than that illustrated in the recurrences of the refrain and the intermitting episodes.

### 3.5. *Remainder of the Rondo*

To summarize the remainder of the Rondo, as of m. 57 from a total of 94, the point of the triton schism, a series of eventings is initiated that combines recapitulative and retrograde gestures with future oriented features of an opening-up of structure and temporality. First, we hear a two-period refrain in C major. One is tempted to characterize the sounding of the first period of this refrain in the key of the lowered sixth degree as plagal and warm, even velvet sounding with CF1 and CF2 in place again, all evoking a discernible sense of *recapitulation*.

Following the refrain, we hear an almost literal restatement of the first episode transposed to G major, thus reproducing the tonic/dominant relation of the Rondo's opening, together with all its structural and temporal peripetia. With the episode ending on a HC in E major another truncated version of the refrain follows in the home key.

The subsequent transition presents another remarkable example of Bach's use of combinatorial technique. Unlike preceding transitions, it forthrightly combines two segments from the first episode. With its employment of various combinations, this transition is the outcome of the development of the combinatorial technique gradually building up throughout the Rondo's transitions. It represents the climax of a parallel line of development and recurrences that comprises five transitions. The ensuing return of the second episode with all its temporal and harmonic details, but in the home key of E major, affirms our sense of recapitulation.



Example 7: Closing Section and Cadence (mm. 90-94)

The whole Rondo ends with a last two-phrase statement of the refrain (mm. 91-94; Ex. 7). And, as if to prove the point, even in this final statement does Bach leave the work as if open toward the future, toward possibilities foreseeable and unforeseeable. For it is in the last consequent that he decides to alter the harmonic structure for the first time throughout the whole Rondo by adding a secondary dominant sequence to the second-degree key of F-sharp minor, related to the central episode, on the border of the refrain's third and fourth measures, right before the final cadence. It is a final opening-up of structure and temporality, in fact of the whole work, manifesting that it does not end by necessity but by an act of freedom.

## 4. Conclusion

The phenomenological description carried out above has revealed temporality as an essential factor in the eventing and unfolding of the composition under consideration. It has shown that temporality is manifest and operates in the work on a number of structural and semantic levels.

First, on the higher level of musical form several temporal structures parallelly unfold: 1) the temporality of the Rondo with its cyclicity of recurring refrains, which are, however, temporally, tonally and thematically varied and reinterpreted with each return, conferring a discernible forward directed impetus to this cyclicity that attenuates the sense of mechanical recurrence. 2) an overall ternarity similar to that of a sonata-rondo, albeit with two returning episodes in the recapitulation,

of which only the second is transposed to the home key, and a central episode presenting a temporally reinterpreted version of the refrain theme. 3) a cyclicity of recurring transitions employing the same motivic elements in ever changing combinations as well as returning intercuts of silence and interruptions of quasi-cadences.

In this place I would like to draw attention that the abovementioned article, dedicated to smaller piano piece by Bartók, I had arrived at similar conclusion regarding its temporal structure. There it was possible to identify on the higher-level elements of ternarily, cyclicity and a concentric concave-shaped form. On the lower level we found cross-referencing and symmetries of intonations, rhythms, pitches and chordal structures. I also outlined the crossing of contrarily directed motions and the circularities, existing on various levels. I did not refer to the aspect of opening up musical structure and form discussed here.

Second, parallelly unfolding eventings on the lower-level temporal structure, such as the three-level antecedent/consequent gesture of the refrain, and the ternarity of the first episode simultaneously unfolding with an antecedent/consequent gesture with an interpolated middle phrase, which results in a dual recapitulative/re-transitional function of the consequent.

Third, on the middle level temporality a specific combinatorial technique is used to perpetually produce newly sounding combinations of various motifs and thematic elements, mainly the two motifs of the refrain theme and the corresponding cadential figures. These devices function semantically and acquire a specifically temporal meaning as they present a network of temporal intercuts and interpolations as cross-references to past and future motifs and elements. They signify the past and/or future become present and interpolated into a currently ongoing eventing.

Fourth, throughout the work, there is a continuous line of opening-up of temporality toward the future as possibility and anticipation through the incessant reinterpretation of recurring refrains, episodes and transitions, right up to the final refrain statement. This is achieved by way of employing a dialectic of stability and lability of temporal, tonal and thematic structures. A statement of the refrain is a factor of stability by virtue of its recurrence, and a factor of lability due to it being a new reinterpreted version of a past eventing, presented in an unanticipated thematic variation, key, placement, or with altered dynamic indications. Thus, eventings perpetually signify and point toward what lies beyond the work as *possibility* and *anticipation*.

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