

Sektion VI/1

Malcolm Bruno, Glasfryn, Cwmcarvan, UK

MESSIAS=MESSIAH 1789–1803

In preparation for Breitkopf's new critical edition of Mozart's orchestration of *Messiah* many questions have arisen in a fresh examination of the primary source material. This paper takes Mozart's 1789 completion of van Swieten's 'Grundpartitur' as a starting point and assesses the subsequent editorial processes – during the 1790s up to first publication in 1803 – and offers suggestions for a reconstruction of Mozart's pre-edited original work.

From the start of the nineteenth century Mozart's newly-orchestrated *Messiah* provided a unique 'orchestral' entrée for *Messiah* performance in a new era, effortlessly transporting Handel's masterpiece from the conventions of the baroque opera-house to the symphonic stage. *Messiah* thereby gained access into the large-scale Anglo-German choral repertory that included *Schöpfung/Creation*, *Elias/Elijah* and eventually Bach and Brahms. The increasing acceptance of (versions of) Mozart's orchestration as a 'standard' *Messiah* text, however, created a musical amalgam of a Handelian/Mozartean *Messiah*, masking unwittingly – as much as Handel's original – the musical significance of Mozart's work in its own right. This state of affairs came to light abruptly with Chrysander's definitive 'Mozart-free' edition in 1901, the shock waves of which continued editorially into the half-century following.

But what is – or what was – Mozart's earliest 1789-*Messias*? Despite numerous widely disseminated editions of Mozart's '*Messiah*', this question eluded both Handel and Mozart 'Gesamt-Ausgabe' editors (Chrysander, et al.), who in principal eschewed this kind of hybrid *Messiah* (as neither-Handel-nor-Mozart). Not until the NMA volume prepared by Andreas Holschneider in 1959/60 would the 'Mozart *Messiah*' receive its first critical assessment. Using the primary sources (a partial autograph score and a large portion of original performance material now in the Lobkowitz archive along with the fair copies made in the van Swieten scriptorium), the NMA edition gives a view of the work's transformation from the wet ink of Mozart's pen to first publication. It pays appropriate tribute, too, to the stature of the Mozart orchestration in itself, as indeed for more than a century and a half Mozart's '*Messiah*' had effectively been 'The (*only*) *Messiah*'.

Though an important milestone at the time, a critical weakness of Holschneider's scholarship may now be seen in its unintentional conflation of portions of the primary source material. From Mozart's original orchestration completed in 1789, on to van Swieten's significant cuts, and then, after van Swieten's death, to Johann Adam Hiller's final editorial revision, Mozart's orchestration reached first publication in the 1803 Breitkopf edition. Mozart's "Urmessias" of 1789, however, vanished in the process and has since evaded definitive description. The pre-van Swieten primary sources in the Lobkowitz archive remain tantalisingly incomplete: original vocal and orchestral parts only existing for Parts 1 and 2 along with the autograph (Mozart's completed Grundpartitur) for Part 3 only. Conversely no autograph score for Parts 1 and 2 exists nor any original orchestral parts for Part 3. That this state of 'complementary incompleteness' is historic (going back to the Lobkowitz acquisition of significant portions of the van Swieten library in 1803) is attested by contemporaneous auction details held in Nelahozeves.

Taken as a whole, van Swieten's substantial cutting and brutal crossings-out of Mozart's original as can be seen in Part 3, along with much further trimming in the individual parts of Parts 1 and 2, raises significant questions when considered apart from either van Swieten's fair copy of score and parts or from Hiller's final 1803 publication for Breitkopf. The 'complementary incompleteness' of the material, however, also opens up the possibility of using van Swieten's 'editorial praxis' in Part 3, to analyse and then reconstruct a true Mozartean 'Urmessias 1789' from the original parts of Parts 1 and 2 as well as a repair of Part 3.