Music History from Primary Sources An Introductory Essay

Alfred Mann

A vellum leaf, 22 by 17 cm., from a prayer book. The letter forms of early Gothic script suggest the twelfth century, or a period even earlier. Neumes (marked in red) are placed above the first four lines of the Latin text. The entire page is richly illuminated in black, red, and blue, with a heavy gold layer decorating the initial A for the phrase beginning "Adoro te." The leaf was obtained for the Moldenhauer Archives from the music dealer and publishing firm Schneider, Tutzing.

The Art of Musical Notation

In its primary sources, music merges with the representational arts. Oral tradition has played a fundamental role in all ages, but in its formal sense, history--and the history of music--begins with the visual record.

Musical notation, having emerged on a wide scale in all civilizations, produced in itself a highly individual record of artistic endeavor. The medieval monks who compiled the missals and other liturgical books for the service of worship rose from their function as scribes to artists in their own right; among the greatest documents of Baroque art are the holographs by Bach; and an entirely novel phase in artistic musical score design was initiated in the twentieth century. The primary sources of music reproduced in this volume rely on various aspects of the graphic arts, but foremost among them stands the representation of the musical sound itself, the art of musical notation.

Among the manifold forms the written image of music has taken are letters or syllables, to represent individual tones, and symbols to represent groups of them. But a more advanced approach is expressed in notation guided not only by the wish to fix the immediate impression of a given musical sound but by the attempt to render the act of musical performance in its continuity. The notational signs which were to prove of the most lasting influence were the highly expressive neumes; it was from them that the generally surviving style of musical script arose. The term was derived from the Greek word *neuma*--a nod or motion, and in this particular context the manual gesture or gestures to establish different pitch levels--and it suggests the melodic flow as indicated by the leader of an ensemble. Widely used in Eastern and Western music practice, the neumes were invariably connected with vocal performance whose notation was also greatly aided by the joining of musical symbols with verbal text.

The decisive step in the evolution of a readily perceptible image for the musical sound was taken by the Benedictine monk Guido of Arezzo (circa 1000), the preceptor of the cathedral choir school at that northern Italian city and a theorist of unusual pedagogical gift. Guido's achievement was in placing the neumes on lines, for clearer orientation drawn in different colors and representing the interval of a third. With this invention he created the basis of a system that has remained alive in modern practice. So immediately successful was his method that Pope John XIX, "after brief instruction, and to his own surprise, was able to sight-read a melody not previously known to him, without any error," and in justified pride, Guido added "*musica sine linea est sicut puteus sine fune*" ("music without lines is like a well without a rope").[1]

Guido's refinements in the definition of pitch were followed by corresponding advances in graphically defining the musical sound's duration. The use of neumes gradually gave way to that of square-shaped notes and combinations of notes in so-called ligatures. While obviously emanating from the forms of neumes, these new symbols served their purpose with greater exactness of detail.

contribution to the history of music. Influences from the south and east met with those from the north and west by which traditions of monophonic music--unaccompanied melody--merged with developments in probing the harmony of simultaneously sounding voices. They led to the work of the masters at Notre Dame in Paris and various other regions of northern France, the first figures in music history who stand out as individual composers of indigenous styles. In the early polyphonic settings of chant, long and short note values were distinguished by applying the rhythmic modes, inferred from the verse meters of antiquity, to groups of notes. But fourteenth-century theorists declared a categoric difference between old and new styles (*ars antiqua* and *ars nova*), the latter reflected by means of notation that departed from the modal system and adopted a system of strict measuring, the so-called mensural notation. The differentiation of note values grew, adding to the horizontally placed square shapes more precisely placed diamond shapes; and the color of notes changed from black to white (i.e., a mere black outline of the note shape which, once again, ensured greater precision of notation).

The magnificent appearance of missals from the waning Middle Ages and early Renaissance, with their lavish illuminations, may make it at times difficult to decide which is the greater artistic achievement: the manuscript itself, or the art it represents. We are dealing with a period that was not yet fully conscious of the distinction between artist and artisan known in later ages. But the time was approaching when the work of the scribe was supplanted by that originating in centers of printing whose interest and influence reached beyond the sphere of the individual artifact. The process of music printing obviously grew in stages. In early phases, merely the lines were given in print, the neumes being entered by hand, or folios were produced by "double printing"--the lines in red and, in a second imprint, the notes in black. The first printer of mensural music, the Venetian Ottaviano Petrucci, was for a long time considered the inventor of the art of printing music with movable type, yet his excellent work (begun about 1500) was preceded by that of various print shops in the north.

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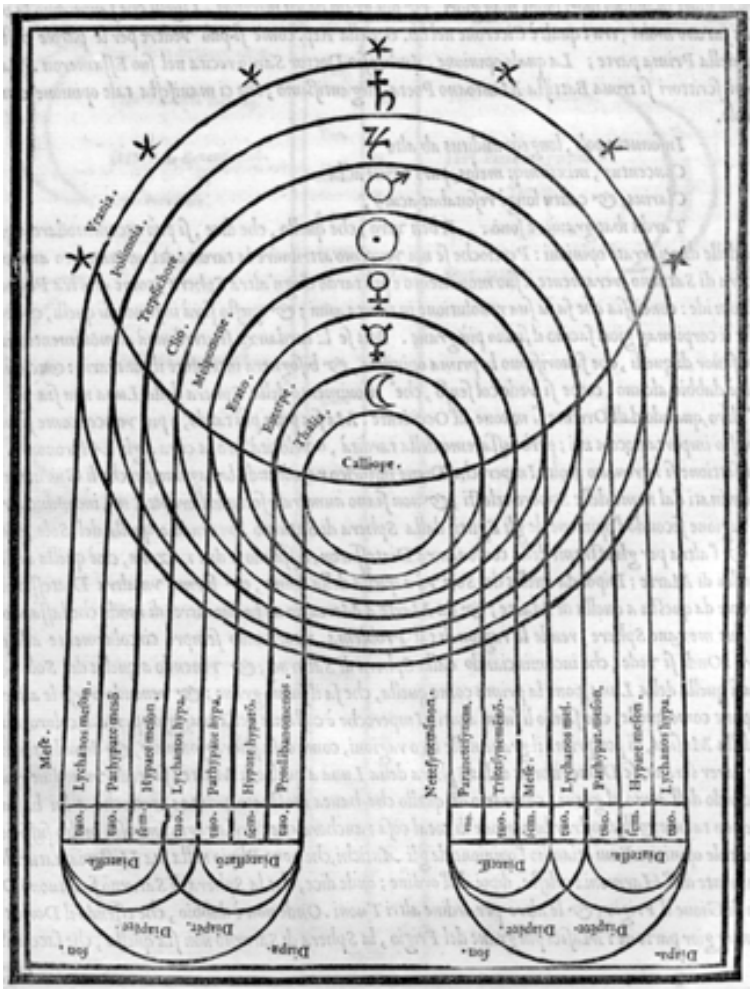
The sixteenth century became a "golden age" that produced the classical summaries of the art of vocal polyphony in sacred and secular music as well as in treatises on music theory. Among the latter, *L'Istitutioni Harmoniche* (1555, reprinted 1562 and 1573) by Gioseffo Zarlino (1517-1590), Master of the Chapel at St. Mark's in Venice, assumed a preeminent place. As the title suggests, the work was dedicated to the age-old ideals of symmetry and proportion, the "harmony of all parts in relation to the whole," as described by the writers of antiquity. In his thorough discussion of the correlation of tones and melodies, Zarlino--like the early authors on perspective--saw himself obliged to create a

completely new terminology. His concern with measurement and the concepts of division and inversion lends his work an authority extending to the fine arts as much as to music, and the numerous ornamental illustrations accompanying his text go far beyond the traditional embellishment of enhanced initial letters. They render scientific design that represents a true counterpart to the decorative music printing of the era.

The work is divided into four parts which the author joins in two larger sections. The first pair deals with the conceptual and physical properties of the musical sound, and the second with the technique of composition. What Zarlino recognizes and, in fact, reconciles, is the time-honored distinction between *musica speculativa* and *musica activa*--theory and practice. In a rather robust way, Guido had referred to the two domains with the well-known verse:



One of the typical illustrations from *L'Istitutioni Harmoniche*, linking the octave (diapason) and its divisions into fifth (diapente) and fourth (diatessaron) to the astrological signs for the days of the week and the names of the Muses. (The interval names appear at the bottom, printed upside-down.)

Musicorum et cantorum magna est distantia

Isti dicunt, illi sciunt, quae componit musica

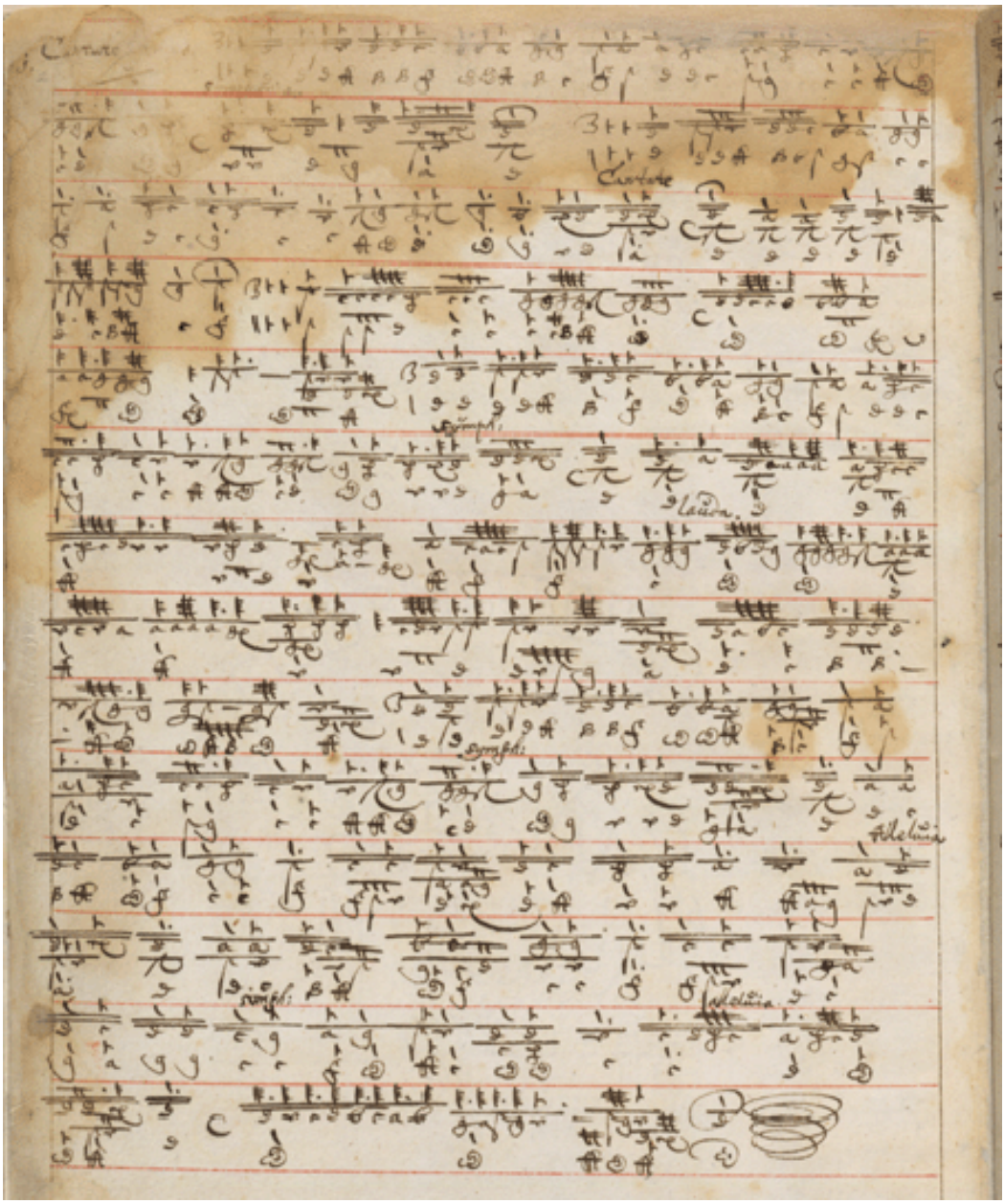
Between musicians and singers exists a wide gulf
The latter perform, the former know, the substance of music

His dichotomy led Guido into a bit of polemic comment on "those who do what they not know" which has remained alive through the centuries, though amply misconstrued. While Zarlino links an introductory chapter on the division of music into speculative and practical branches to "the difference between musician and singer," he significantly redefines the ideas and terms involved, because he speaks of the *musico* as the artist able to judge not only the sound but also the "reason contained in this science," whereas the *prattico* is considered, in his text, on equal terms with a "composer, singer, or player." He states categorically that "practical music is the art of counterpoint," and that the domains of theory and practice are, as in other arts, complementary rather than opposed.

What is of special interest is that he refers to the practice of playing as well as singing, for the rise of instrumental music had posed a fresh challenge to polyphony and to its notation. Zarlino's music examples are still arranged according to the old choir book notation in which the separate voices appear side by side; and the audition requirements for early sixteenth-century organists, which have been preserved, call for the ability to play a motet from the given number of individual part books. Such an astounding grasp of polyphonic texture, however, gradually became a rare achievement. A historic exception was Mozart's encounter with the choral music of Bach, kept in the library of St. Thomas's church in Leipzig only in separate parts. The account of an eyewitness reads: "and then it was for the silent observer a joy to see how eagerly Mozart sat himself down, with the parts all around him--in both hands, on his knees, and on the chairs next to him--and, forgetting everything else, did not get up again until he had looked through everything."[2] The sixteenth-century organist, faced with the task of rendering all parts of a polyphonic composition on a single instrument, soon felt the need to tabulate them in a form in which their simultaneous sound could be readily recognized. The "tabulations" that resulted characterize the appearance of the early keyboard literature and herald the notation of the modern keyboard score.

Score arrangements were actually known as early as the *ars antiqua*, for the works of the Notre Dame school appear in parts written one under the other, though not necessarily in careful alignment. Older, too, was the device of intabulation itself, but it covered a wide range of notation applied to instrumental music of various kinds. In fact, the device of tablature goes back to the ancient world in the notation of music for instruments such as the flute or zither in systems that lived on in the lute tablatures of the Renaissance. Here, however, it was not a series of pitches that was tabulated, but rather the relative position of fingers or strings to be used in order to produce them, and the tradition has survived in examples of modern notation. Conversely, the tablatures of polyphonic keyboard music retained a

The floral arabesque cover design (seventeenth to eighteenth century, possibly Turkish) was created through a process known as paper marbling, an ancient art whose origins remain unclear. Many marble papers were collected by travelers to the East and used in "Alba Amicorum" (early autograph albums) or as wrappers for ephemeral documents. A systematic study of prevalent paper samples shows this particular piece to be exceedingly rare.



Excerpt from a manuscript written in German organ tablature. It is a keyboard score whose two voices display in their letter notation the flourishes that indicate sharping of a given tone. Apparent is its connection with a vocal work, whose sections are marked either by "Symphonia" (instrumental introduction or interlude), text beginning ("Cantate," "lauda," "Alleluia") or metric indication (C or 3/1).

direct connection with the early scores rendering vocal music, and they appeared on a number of staves representing the different voices of the composition, or merely on two staves, showing how these voices were to be combined in the right and left hands of the player.

A certain exception was the tablature notation used by German organists, in which the tones were not identified by notes but by the letters designating them. Since this was done in Gothic script, German organ tablature presents a particularly difficult picture, and this picture becomes doubly bewildering through the use of a number of special symbols. Nevertheless, the notation is precise. Measures and individual parts are neatly grouped; the rhythm is marked by strokes, dots, and flags; and the register is indicated by horizontal lines as well as by a distinction between the use of capital and small letters (among which, according to German custom, b stands for b-flat and h for b-natural).

Above all, the manuscripts in German organ tablature impress again upon the modern reader the fact that the scribe approached his task as an art. Perhaps the most conspicuous feature on a page of German organ tablature is the occasional elongation of a letter by which, for instance, "f" is changed to "fis" (the German note name for f-sharp). What was an abbreviation of the suffix "is" became a flourish, a very characteristic expression of the art of musical notation. In its particular form of German organ tablature this art was ultimately glorified in isolated cases appearing in the autographs of Handel and Bach.

[1] Guido's text is given in vol. II of the series *Scriptores Ecclesiastici de Musica*, published in 1784 by the Benedictine scholar Martin Gerbert.

The Rise of Music Drama

We speak of the intellectual life of the Renaissance as Humanism--the study of man--and the first writer to use the term Renaissance, the French historian Jules Michelet, referred to the reawakening or "rebirth" of ancient culture as both *la découverte du monde* and *la découverte de l'homme*--the discovery of the world and the discovery of man. It is indicative of the era that several documents in this collection, preserved from the waning sixteenth century, bear personal signatures. In documentary history the signature moves into focus, as the portrait moves into the focus of pictorial history. Western music had for centuries evolved primarily in the sacred service, but a new age of the art began to be oriented not by the relation of man to God so much as by his relation to man. Its prime expression was no longer the liturgy but human drama.

It is well known that a learned academy met in one of the Florentine palaces for discussions devoted to a revival of the dramatic art of antiquity and that these discussions led to the inception of music drama. The name Camerata, by which the group is remembered, signaled the fact that decisive developments in music had passed from the church to the *camera*, the princely chamber. Yet the scholars and artists of the Camerata were by no means the originators of dramatic music, nor did the influence of sacred music practice decline due to the evolution of dramatic music. The two great Venetians of the period, Gioseffo Zarlino and Giovanni Gabrieli, who in this collection are represented by autograph signatures, were church musicians; they both served at St. Mark's. But the work of Gabrieli, whose fame outshone that of all other musicians of his era, announces a new age, a new style of music that is totally dramatic.

Unlike Palestrina's music, written for the Papal Chapel and borne by ideas of retrospection, the music of Gabrieli was of a progressive, in fact, revolutionary nature. It favored the dramatic contrasts of the "concerted" style, in which several choirs vied with one another in the unfolding of resonant splendor, and in which a "choir" of instruments began to assume an independent role. It is especially interesting that we find Gabrieli's signature paired with that of Heinrich Julius, Duke of Brunswick, one of the most eminent musical patrons of the new era and himself well trained as a musician. The names of Antonio Goretti, Giovanni Battista Buonamente, and Luigi Battiferri, however, lead us to a generation of church musicians already fully versed in the secular dramatic style, the greatest of whom was Claudio Monteverdi.

Here we encounter one of those towering figures whose work shaped an epoch in music history. Born in 1567 at Cremona, the city of the famed violin makers, Monteverdi was trained in the old contrapuntal art by Marco Antonio Ingegneri, the eminent master of the Cathedral Chapel, but it was as a violinist that in young years he was appointed to the ducal court of Mantua. Soon he was also to earn the more highly regarded title of *cantore*, and in time he took over the direction of all instrumental and vocal music at the court. By the turn of the century he had become the leading exponent of what in the works of one of his contemporaries, the Florentine lutenist and singer Giulio Caccini, was designated as "*nuove musiche*" and "*nuova maniera di scriverla*" ("new music" and "the new manner of writing it"), but what was attacked by another contemporary, the Bolognese theorist Giovanni Maria Artusi, as "*imperfettioni della moderna musica*" ("imperfections of modern music"). Monteverdi answered the latter charge with a famous statement in which he boldly asserted that the alleged imperfections were in

reality perfections; that what was involved was a novel style with its own legitimacy; and that it represented a "Second Practice," postulated by the requirements of dramatic music, to which the principles of the "First Practice"--those codified by Zarlino--no longer applied. Just as the fourteenth century had declared an
ars nova in music, the rising seventeenth century thus established a new style period that, in fact, figures as the beginning of many to follow.

In 1607 Monteverdi received a court commission to write a "musical fable," characteristically based on the legend of Orpheus, the mythical singer whose art moved the forces of nature and conquered the supernatural spirits. *Orfeo* became Monteverdi's most celebrated work. In it he drew on the wealth of musical expression the Renaissance had produced, placing it in the service of drama. It is indicative of a new age that in *Orfeo* it is no longer the voice alone that serves dramatic means but the instrument as well--an example is the expressive use of the violin, Monteverdi's own instrument, in introducing the climactic song of Orpheus. Monteverdi's achievement went beyond a fulfillment of the aims of the Camerata. It was music itself that triumphed through his work in the rebirth of ancient drama.

Yet the "new music" of the theater was immediately blended with the music of the church. In 1613, a year after Gabrieli had died, Monteverdi was appointed Master of the Chapel at St. Mark's Cathedral. The "sacred concerto" now took its place next to mass and motet; and from it was to arise the Protestant church cantata, for the greatest of the German church composers of the time, Heinrich Schütz, who had studied with both Gabrieli and Monteverdi, brought the new forms to the north.

Giovanni Battista Buonamente, less well known as one of the Monteverdi followers, may have shared with Schütz the latter's role as initiator of dramatic music beyond the Alps. Like Monteverdi, active at the court of the Gonzagas in Mantua as a violinist, he wrote works in which the element of instrumental virtuosity begins to come to the fore. They are characteristic of the rapidity with which the dramatic style had entered all aspects of musical practice. It found expression in the sonata which now arose in distinction to the cantata as the piece that was "sounded" rather than sung, and it led eventually to the instrumental concerto in which one or several soloists are singled out from the orchestra. But on a broader scale it continued to serve the music for the stage. At the occasion of the wedding of Princess Eleanora Gonzaga to the Emperor Ferdinand II, Buonamente took up service at the Viennese court. His preserved letters to Prince Cesare Gonzaga give a vivid account of the Imperial court music, and his description of a *Pastoral Comedia* suggests that it was he who composed the instrumental music for the dances in the work.

The term *Comedia* did not carry the connotation of the later "comic" play--rather, in accordance with the Greek origin of the word, it designated a festive entertainment that was presented through song. In his letter written in Parma on February 28, 1628, Antonio Goretti, a distinguished patron of music and friend of Monteverdi's, mentions his ardent wish ("*mi moro di voglia*"--"I die with desire") to return from Parma to Ferrara in order to attend the forthcoming Comedia there. The letter was apparently addressed to the Marchesa Bentivoglio who represented one of the aristocratic families of Ferrara and

with whom Monteverdi and Goretti were visiting at the time.

Ever since his early years in the employ at the court of Mantua, Monteverdi had been connected in various ways with the neighboring court of Ferrara. Musical life in Ferrara, which flourished at the court, in churches, and in theaters, had received a particular impetus from various academies, learned and philanthropic societies which often maintained their own musical establishments. To one of them, the Accademia degli Intrepidi, Monteverdi had dedicated his Fourth Book of Madrigals, the earliest of the works that had touched off the controversy with Artusi. The most famous of the academies was the Accademia della Morte (originally a monastic order to aid those condemned to death), and among its eminent music directors was Luigi Battiferri, who, as late as the time of Bach, was praised as a master of the contrapuntal art.[1]

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The Renaissance was an essentially Italian movement, though its roots stretched throughout Europe. In the north it was paralleled by the Reformation which was to lead the northern world into a war that lasted for an entire generation--the Thirty Years War. It profoundly affected all cultural life, and the work of such a composer as Schütz gives eloquent witness to the adversity of the age. In the highly interesting statements with which he prefaced the prints of his works, he referred to "the wretched times our dear homeland is still undergoing" and he gave suggestions to the performer as to how his compositions might be executed with more modest means than called for in the printed form.

Nevertheless, the early seventeenth century saw a significant turn to German texts in manuscripts and published editions of music. German had become an established literary language with Luther's Bible translation, and whereas in the documents of this collection we have dealt so far only with Latin and Italian, we now have before us an immense body of works in which texts in the northern languages predominate. The rise of music drama spread beyond the Alps, and it found its strongest expression in the Protestant liturgy.

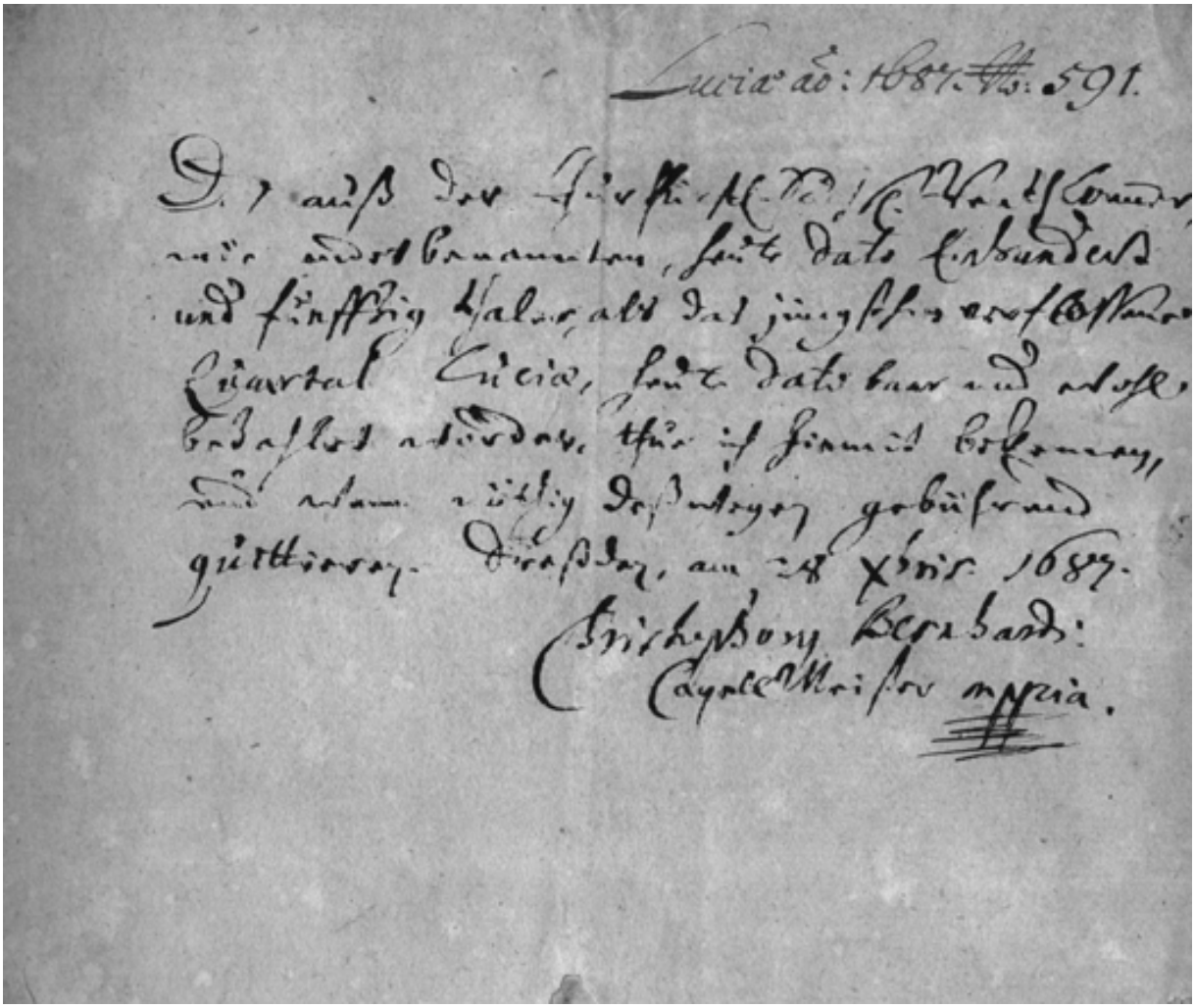
The oldest piece of Protestant church music represented here introduces a little-known name, Johannes Wanning. One of the numerous musicians who had migrated from the Netherlands to Germany, this fertile and imaginative composer is a true representative of a well-developed art with which the new church had begun to assimilate the influences of music drama. Though Latin texts still prevail in his music, it suggests a genuinely northern style. He spent the major part of his life in Danzig, one of the Hanseatic seaports, whose new organ at St. Mary's Church had "caused a sensation in all of Europe."[2]

The Reformation had divided the continent into a Catholic south and a Protestant north. A dividing line was never sharply drawn, nor did it remain without various enclaves north and south. But there is no question that this division initiated a certain shift of weight. Padre Giambattista Martini, teacher of the young Mozart, was to open his famous treatise on counterpoint with the statement that in the art of music, the sixteenth century had made Italy "the mistress of the other nations." This hegemony gradually declined in subsequent centuries, though not without leaving an Italian legacy to the world. The Italian language became international in musical terminology. It was within the lands where the German language was spoken, however, that a certain dividing line between Catholic and Protestant music became recognizable. The works of Christoph Demantius and Christoph Bernhard mark the generations of German Protestantism before and after Schütz, whereas the name of Wolfgang Ebner reminds us of a different school of composers whose works initiated the style that was to become of enduring influence at the Catholic imperial court of Vienna.

The style element that characterized the rise of dramatic music everywhere was the *bassus generalis* or *basso continuo*, the thoroughbass that accompanied the vocal melody with harmonic support of keyboard or other chordal instruments as well as various bass instruments. As its designation implies, it ran through the entire composition; being executed by the conductor himself at the keyboard, with the support of bass instruments, it provided a sure foundation for a musical fabric largely dominated by the dramatic expression of the vocal or instrumental solo. Its rule arose in phases, and it is typical of the church music of Demantius that its polyphonic texture, though tending toward a polarity of the outer voices, is maintained without continuo accompaniment. His orientation was conservative, though in his most significant work, a St. John Passion for six-part choir, he heralded the form in which Protestant church music was to culminate.

Christoph Bernhard, foremost student of Schütz, was born in Danzig, the city where Wanning had been active, but he was trained in Italy as well as in Germany. In his important theoretical writings he acted as the catalyst who interpreted the old art of polyphony to a new generation. Through Schütz's tutelage he was thoroughly schooled in the a cappella style, the "Palestrinian manner," but in his sacred concertos, which again adopted the model of Schütz, the modern continuo style was firmly established. His works were of direct influence upon Dietrich Buxtehude, the mentor of the young Bach, into whose era the life of Bernhard was to extend.

The work of Ebner, while itself overshadowed by that of his greater contemporary Johann Jakob Froberger, guides us to the Viennese keyboard art of the seventeenth century. The dance suite, one of the oldest forms of instrumental ensemble music, now appears as a form of courtly keyboard music, merging French, German, and English style elements with genuine Viennese influences. Ebner's keyboard music remained in high esteem, as is shown by the fact that his own name is joined in the



Christoph Bernhard, a receipt

copy of the composition here preserved to those of Alessandro Poglietti and Giuseppe Antonio Paganelli, noted Italian keyboard composers, both of whose careers developed on German soil. Ebner served, together with Froberger, as imperial court organist, though during the latter's extensive travels, he often carried out the duties of this assignment alone. Eventually he combined his court position with that of Master of the Chapel at St. Stephen's Cathedral, where in later years Johann Pachelbel served for some time as organist.

It was Pachelbel who carried the South German keyboard style into the Protestant orbit, and it is indicative of his influence that the sample of his work contained in this collection, and as yet unpublished, has come down to us in a copy by Heinrich Nikolaus Gerber, one of Bach's pupils. The generations overlap. Pachelbel had moved to Eisenach, Bach's birthplace, where for a brief period he held the position of court organist, and he became a friend of Bach's father who was in charge of the town music. Bach's eldest brother, Johann Christoph, to whose household Bach moved when he lost his parents at an early age, was Pachelbel's student, and it was through him that the young Bach was introduced to the organist's profession.

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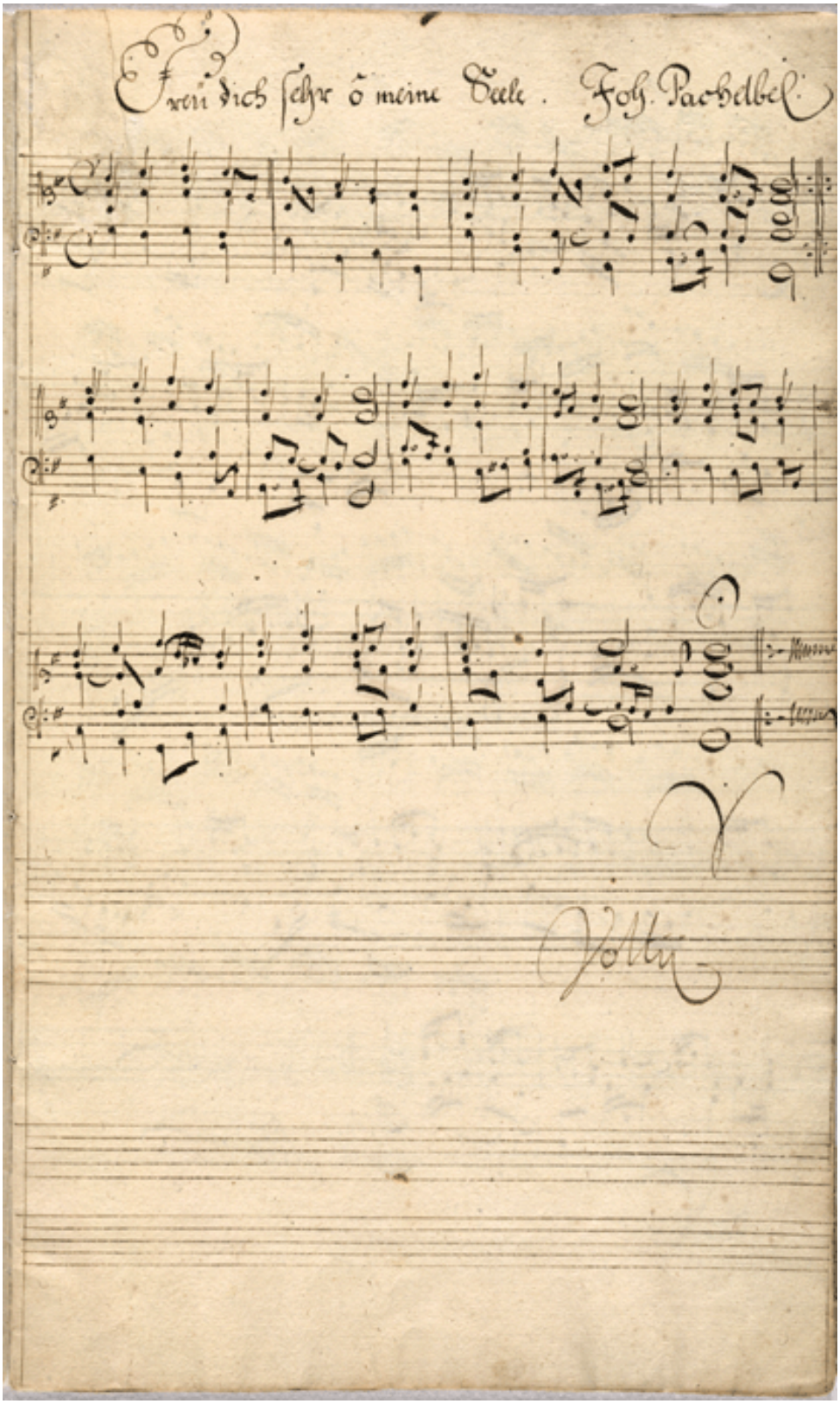
As we approach the era of Bach and Handel, we enter into two realms of music that during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries may seem to have grown far apart in purpose and style, though in reality they remained innately related to one another. It is more difficult to honor the height of an era than to trace its beginnings. Music history has borrowed the term *Baroque*, now commonly accepted, from the history of art, in order to describe characteristics that works of music from the seventeenth century and the first half of the eighteenth century have in common. Such epoch designations are always problematic because an afterglow of the past invariably merges with developments that foreshadow the future. As an alternate, more precise designation of what has come to be recognized as a particular era of music, historians formed the term *basso continuo* age. Though more cumbersome, it represents a more direct understanding of the style involved, for the technical criterion of thoroughbass accompaniment is by its very function inseparably connected with the emergence of the dramatic art forms that dominated the music of this era and that found their fulfillment in the works of Bach and Handel.

The names of the two great composers, both of whom were born in 1685, have been linked customarily, as have been those of Palestrina and Orlando di Lasso, who both died in 1594. But the attempt to derive a certain periodization from these dates remains in its ramifications inaccurate, as does the attempt to see any obvious parallel in the composers' artistic bequest and mission.

Bach and Handel were born in Saxon towns less than a hundred miles apart, and they entered their profession in the environment of the Protestant church. The legacy of Protestant church music, however, was imparted in diverse ways to the lives of the two masters. Bach, born into a family of town and church musicians, was heir to a tradition which, ranging over more than a century before his time and extending for generations after his own, stands for a unique hereditary history. Handel appears in a genealogy of more than two centuries as the only musician. His was a well-to-do bourgeois family in which artistic and intellectual tendencies were represented rather through the goldsmith's trade and the ministry. His father, a court physician, had not looked with favor upon the son's studies for the musical profession.

This may help to explain the divergent course of the two careers. Bach was committed to an overwhelming artistic inheritance; Handel, throughout his life, was an artist of absolute independence. Bach's work unfolded entirely on German soil, whereas Handel's extended through Europe, became Italianized and eventually Anglicized to the astounding degree that English music became thoroughly shaped by the Handelian style. But in Bach's German church cantatas and Passion settings, and in Handel's English oratorios, the music drama of what we have come to call the age of the Baroque reached its final form.



Johann Pachelbel, from a keyboard partita on a chorale

Copied by the Bach student, Heinrich Nikolaus Gerber

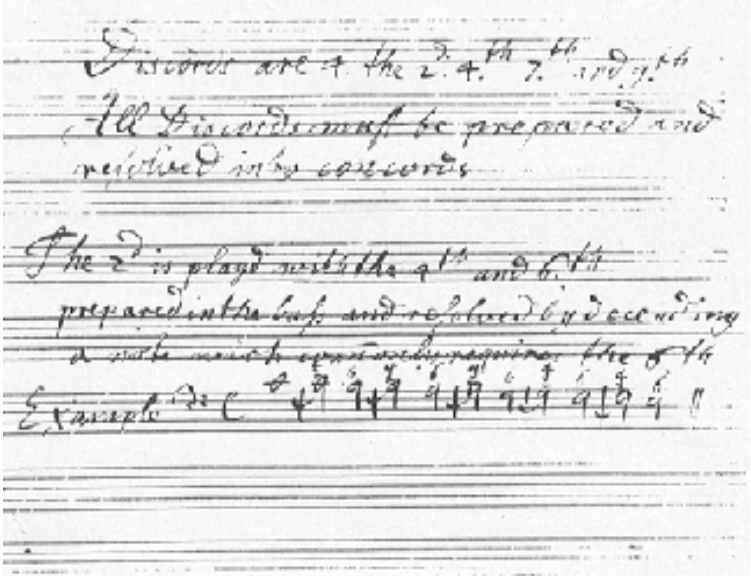
It is also a final phase of the composers' lives with which the documents before us are concerned. Though merely provided as a formality, Bach's signatures are of particular historical significance because they are the last we have from his hand--the signature bearing the latest date had, in fact, to be supplied by his son Johann Christian because of the master's increasing blindness. And they verify the fact that Bach's duties had remained those of a church musician and official. Handel's autograph happens to be likewise written within a short period before the onset of blindness. But he was to resist the decline of his powers for yet another decade, in which his work remained devoted to English oratorio, the form which was his most original creation.

Opera, which all but absorbed musical life in Italy, had experienced a different fate in the countries north of the Alps. In France, it had risen to prime importance at the court through the work of an Italian, Giovanni Battista Lulli, who, as Jean Baptiste Lully, gave opera its French guise and strengthened its nature by imparting to it a salient feature, the overture, which in turn came to be combined with operatic ballets to form the orchestral suite. In Germany, devastated by the war that raged in the first half of the seventeenth century, opera gained its place in society with much delay, and for a long time it survived essentially as an Italian import. In England, removed from the source of opera by a continent and the sea, it was considered totally alien--in the words of the satirist Samuel Johnson, "an exotic and irrational entertainment." Whereas in Germany music drama had found its way into the Protestant cantata and dramatic setting of the Gospel story, England had essentially resisted these developments. The very term *opera* appeared in English music first in the *The Beggar's Opera* (1728), written in open defiance of Handel's introduction of Italian opera to London audiences.

Handel's opera enterprise, desired and supported by the English aristocracy and a primary challenge of absorbing fascination to the composer, eventually failed. Relying on Italian singers whose fame and virtuosity was its principal attraction, opera was undeniably foreign to the wider English audience. Its Italian texts, dealing with intrigues from unfamiliar history, had no meaning for its listeners. And from a protracted struggle between the composer and his public emerged, as a solution, English oratorio, a new form in which English texts, chosen predominantly (though by no means exclusively) from the Old Testament, were presented by English singers (or foreign artists who had adapted their performance to the English language). It was the form that eventually raised the composer to the level of a national hero.

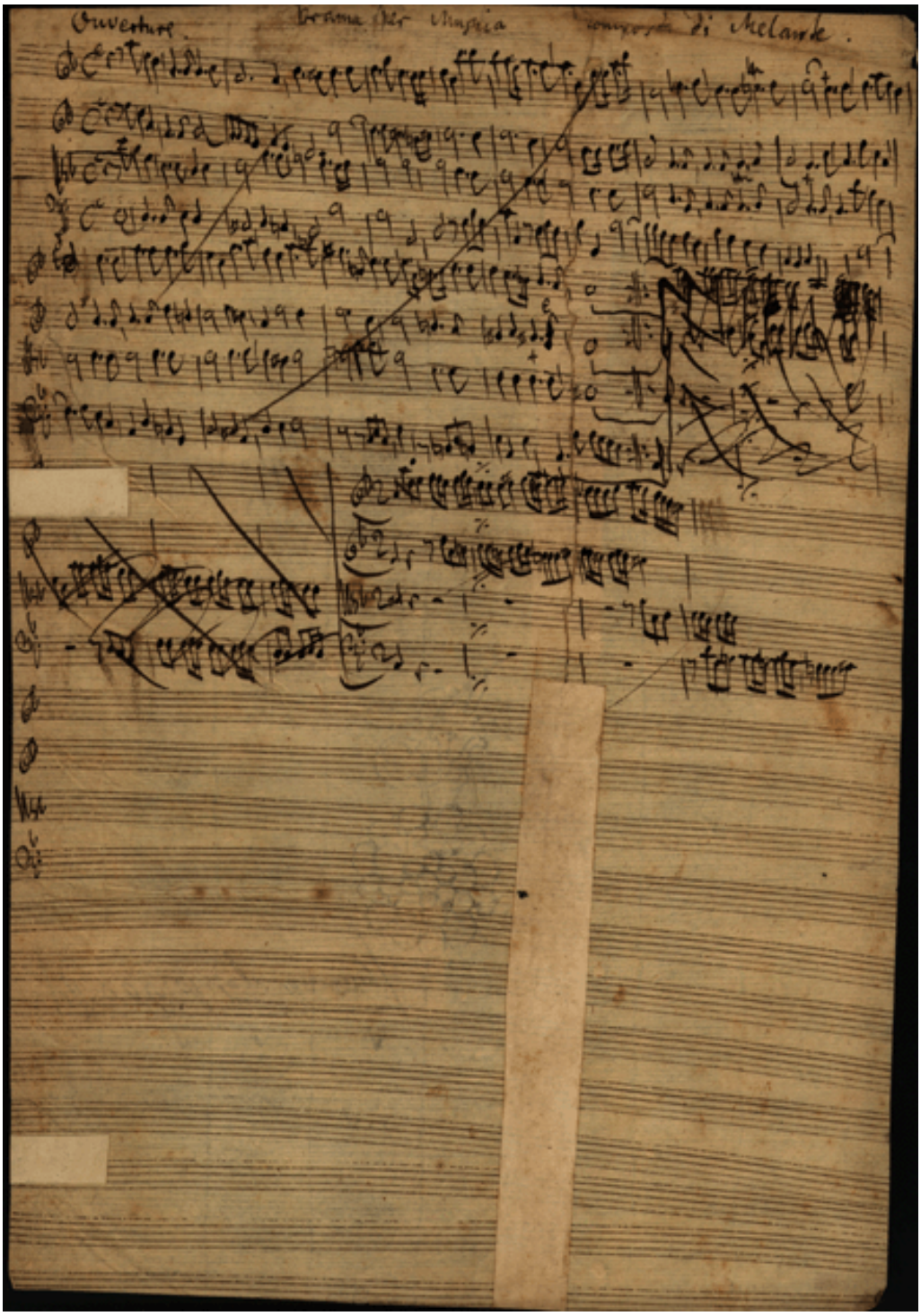
The Reformation had created a Church of the State in England; yet the Anglican rite, despite all violent reactions to "popish" tendencies, stayed closer to the Roman rite than German Protestantism. Henry Purcell, "true genius of the Restoration,"[3] was one of the first openly to embrace the new dramatic forms in England, and in his sacred and secular works English seventeenth-century music found its finest expression. It was through the tragically early death of Purcell that John Blow, an able composer, though of minor stature, emerged as the leading English musician of the waning seventeenth century. He was a teacher and predecessor of Purcell as court composer and Master of the Chapel Royal, but in the end also his successor. In his anthems and odes we encounter what had become the predominant forms of English music, forms that were to contribute decisively to the genesis of English oratorio.

Unlike Bach, Handel was surrounded by musicians who, like himself, were immigrants and had sought their fortune in a country representing "a parliamentary state with free institutions alongside a Europe ruled by absolutism."[4] German musicians took a significant part in the Royal Band that, after 1714, served a German prince as ruler, and to German musicians was entrusted the musical instruction of the nobility. Handel's official court appointment was that of Royal Music Master, and his course of instruction for Anne, the eldest of the daughters of George I, is preserved.[5] A counterpart to this extraordinary didactic document is a theoretical discourse by John Christopher (Johann Christoph) Pepusch. Apparently written for the daughter of a prominent English official, and still unpublished, it reflects the authority this German musician enjoyed as a theorist and teacher. He was one of the founders of the Academy of Ancient Music, a Fellow of the Royal Society, and a widely respected composer. Handel had entrusted his own student John Christopher Smith (later his assistant and successor as Royal Music Master) to the tutelage of Pepusch, and he was at times closely associated with Pepusch in his work, though the fact that Pepusch had composed music for *The Beggar's Opera* finally led to an estrangement.



John Christopher Pepusch, didactic manuscript

As if to summarize the large chapter of music history we have considered in this section, the sequence of the collection's documents leads finally to the title most universally applied in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries to dramatic works of secular as well as sacred nature--*dramma per musica*. It appears in a work by Georg Philipp Telemann (who rearranged the letters of his name in his often preferred pseudonym Melante), Bach's and Handel's most celebrated and prolific contemporary. Telemann was originally given preference to Bach as a candidate for the office of Cantor at St. Thomas's in Leipzig, but he declined the position in favor of the musical directorship at the churches of the North German metropolis of Hamburg, a position in which he was to be succeeded by his godson, C. P. E. Bach. In fact, a lifelong friendship connected him with Bach and Handel, both of whom he outlived, though his name was ultimately overshadowed by theirs.



Georg Philipp Telemann, sketch for an overture

The composer's signature in the upper right-hand corner shows his pseudonym "Melante." Though crossed out, the customary pattern of a French overture, with its dotted rhythm of an opening section and a subsequent fugue in livelier rhythmic motion, can be recognized clearly. The theme for the latter, revised at the end of the last four staves, appears there in a more marked melodic contour than in the earlier version above.

History is the most partial of the sciences. When it becomes enamored of a man, it loves him jealously; it will not even hear of others. Since the day when the greatness of Johann Sebastian Bach was admitted, all that was great in his lifetime has become less than nothing. The world has hardly been able to forgive Handel for the impertinence of having had as great a genius as Bach's and a much greater success. The rest have fallen into dust; and there is no dust so dry as that of Telemann, whom posterity has forced to pay for the insolent victory which he won over Bach in his lifetime.

These words by Romain Rolland, the French writer and music historian, were somewhat superseded in years closer to our time, and they characterize the varying approach posterity has taken to the climax of an epoch.[6] Telemann's greatest dramatic works were written at the time Mozart composed his first sonatas and symphonies, and whatever judgment is accorded his stature, he was the last illustrious master of the musical Baroque.

[1] Samples from his works are quoted in Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg's *Abhandlung von der Fuge* (Berlin: A. Haide, and J. C. Spener, 1753/1754), a work intended to summarize the principles of Bach's fugal style.

[2] Hermann Rauschning, *Geschichte der Musik und Musikpflege in Danzig* (Danzig, 1931), p. 50.

[3] See Manfred F. Bukofzer, *Music in the Baroque Era* (New York: Norton, 1947), pp. 203ff.

[4] Paul Henry Lang, *George Frideric Handel* (New York: Norton, 1966), p. 112.

[5] *Hallische Händel-Ausgabe*, suppl., vol. I (Kassel and Leipzig, 1978).

[6] "The Autobiography of a Forgotten Master: Telemann," in *A Musical Tour Through the Land of the Past* (New York: Holt&Co., 1922), pp. 97-144.

Classicism and Romanticism

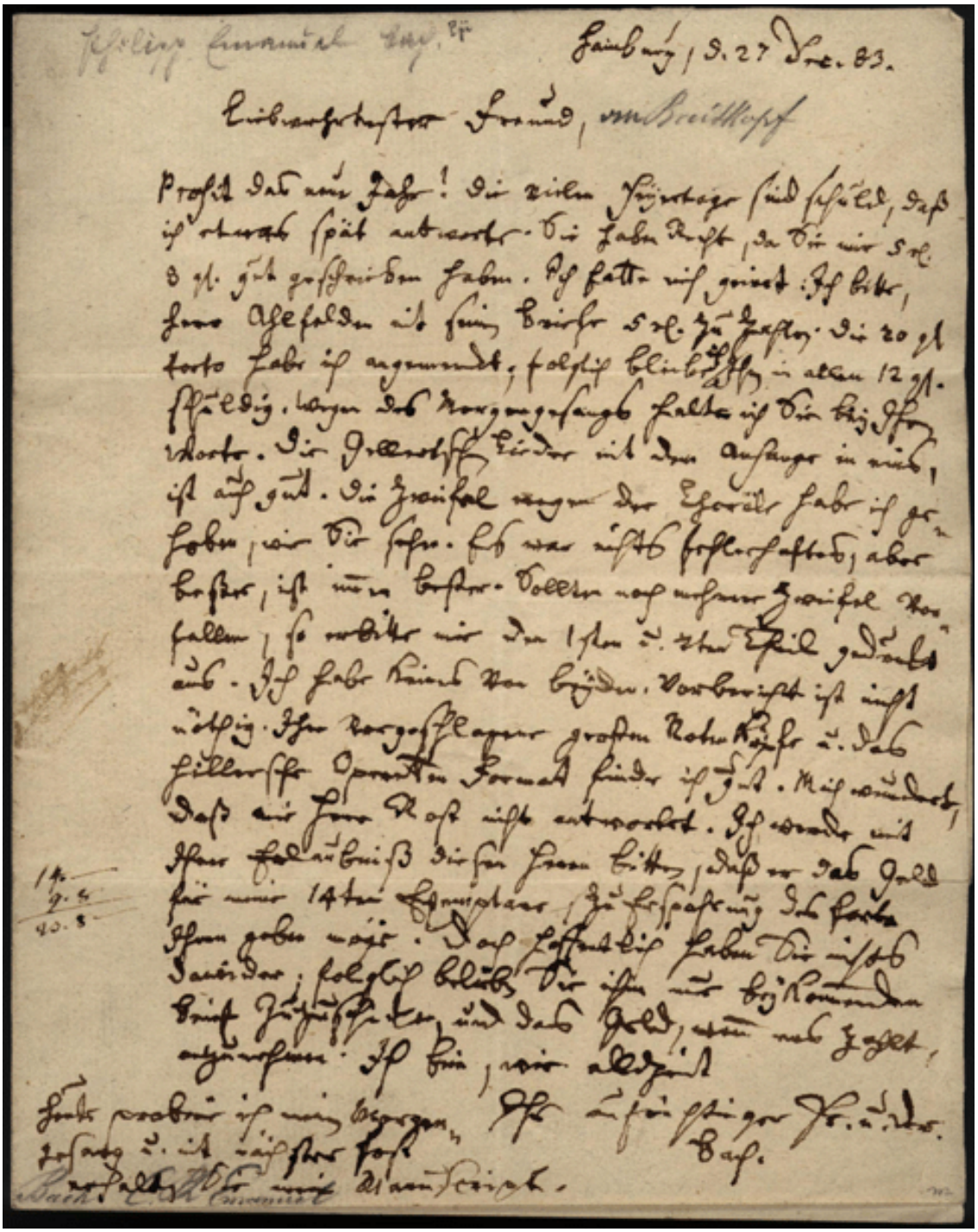
In a penetrating essay, Friedrich Blume, the eminent music encyclopedist of the twentieth century, has convincingly argued that Classicism and Romanticism were not opposed but rather collateral and complementary tendencies which have guided the arts since the eighteenth century.[1] Both meant a certain return to the ideals of the past. The word classic, which ever since the days of the Roman Empire applied to that which was in a "class" by itself, and hence exemplary, was now applied to the art of antiquity as such, whereas the word romantic harkens back to the "roman," the medieval epic, and thus to a more recent past that had developed a folklore and art born from the mist of northern climates rather than the southern sun. In distinction to classic clarity, equilibrium, and remoteness, its spirit is that of varying immediacy, of emotional changes of mood, of that which is not deliberately measured but passionate and fantastic, dreamlike and mysterious--"romantic."

The juxtaposition of heterogeneous elements might be seen as the rightful bequest of dramatic art, and in ever new ways music was ruled by drama. Opera itself had developed into two contrasting forms: serious opera, *opera seria*, and comic opera, *opera buffa*. The latter had evolved especially in the south of Italy, in Naples, at the hands of Alessandro Scarlatti and his followers Leonardo Leo and Giovanni Battista Pergolesi. It dealt with contemporary types and situations, rather than subjects of history and mythology, and it contributed an enlivening element to opera: ensemble. That which in spoken drama is not possible, the simultaneous expression of different personages and moods, now gave polyphony a novel function which, as we shall see, also greatly influenced instrumental music.

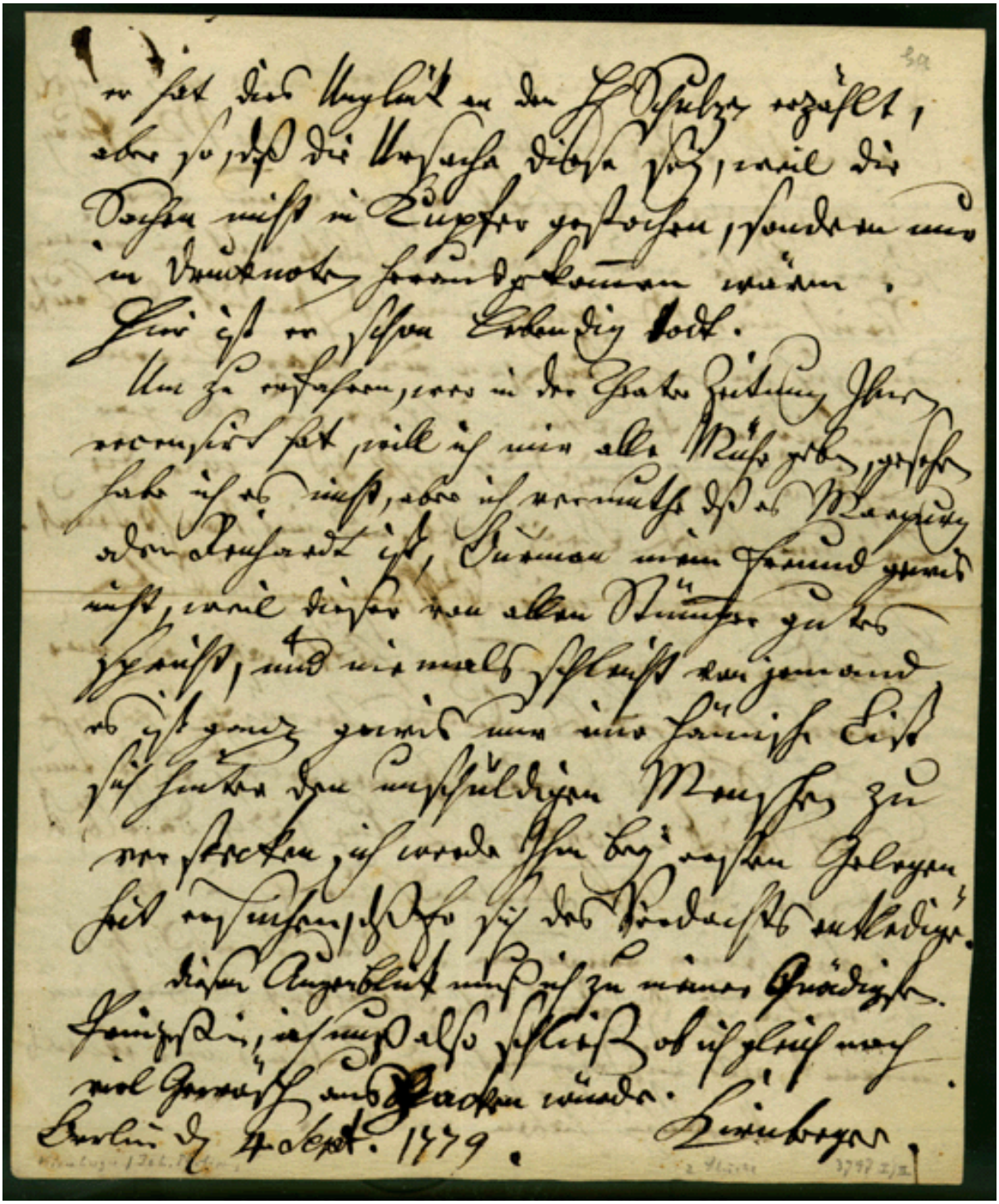
Opera seria was dominated for a long time by its famed librettist, Pietro Metastasio, himself a gifted musician. But the vitality of the traditional form gradually declined, and Romain Rolland has shown that Metastasio's influence heralded much of the impending reform of opera.[2] As we know, it was brought about--in part through the encounter with the aged Handel--by the epochal works of Christoph Willibald von Gluck, whose first reform opera significantly returned to the subject of *Orfeo*.

The key figure in the rise of opera buffa was Pergolesi, who in his short life veritably changed operatic history. His famous miniature, *La Serva Padrona* (The Servant as Mistress), was designed, in the prevalent manner of early opera buffa, as intermezzo scenes to be presented between the acts of an opera seria. But its title was symbolic; the young subsidiary form was destined to assume a ruling role. We sense here the dawn of the Age of Revolution. And it was similarly reflected in another fundamental development of eighteenth-century music. The concerto which, in the works of such Italian masters as Arcangelo Corelli and Antonio Vivaldi as well as in the works of Bach and Handel, had risen to leadership in instrumental music, began to share this leadership with a new genre. Alessandro Scarlatti transformed the old opera overture of Lullian style, with its ceremoniously slow-paced beginning (often resumed for the ending), reversing its slow and fast sections. His overtures, for which he adopted the age-old term *sinfonia*, opened and closed in a lively (allegro) tempo, and the new form eventually gained independence in the Classical symphony. Its independence became complete.

What the small introduction had assimilated from the drama acted out by the singers took on a new dramatic guise. It rose from the orchestra pit (or its equivalent) and conquered the stage. Its hero and heroine were themes and instrumental timbres, and, aided by the operatic ensemble technique, a new and purely instrumental form arose that dominated musical life for the era to come.



C. P. E. Bach, autograph letter



Johann Philipp Kirnberger, page from an autograph letter

One of the first important symphonists was C. P. E. Bach, and in the legacy of J. S. Bach's work we recognize again the oscillating roles of classic and romantic orientation. Though Bach had close to a hundred students, his posthumous recognition grew slowly, but to those who recognized and understood his greatness, his work assumed the stature of an ideal model described in words that are born of the spirit of Classicism. Johann Philipp Kirnberger, court conductor in Berlin who had been Bach's foremost disciple in later years, published a two-volume treatise, *The Art of Composition* (*Die Kunst des reinen Satzes*, 1774/1779)--an art to be obtained by reducing, as he said, "the method of the late J. S. Bach to principles." And Kirnberger's Berlin colleague, Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg,

prompted by the appearance of Bach's *Art of Fugue* to issue a *Manual of Fugue* (*Abhandlung von der Fuge*, 1753/54), speaks of "principles of an art" in dedicating his work to Bach's two oldest sons.

Johann Friedrich Reichardt, Berlin court conductor in later years, extolled Bach's chorales as "the highest achievement of German art" and referred to Bach as "the greatest harmonist of all times and nations." This statement is all the more interesting because it came from one of the principal representatives of the modern form of singspiel, the German counterpart to opera buffa. But the new and old worlds of music met and crossed in many ways; Johann Adam Hiller, also active in Berlin as a singspiel composer, became one of the successors to Bach's Leipzig office.

Thus we are dealing with a greatly widened array of musical personalities and trends, and it is a characteristic phenomenon of eighteenth-century music that it produced the first music historians offering an overview of the development of different styles. The learned Padre Giambattista Martini, author of a three-volume history of the music of antiquity and teacher of Bach's youngest son, Johann Christian, and of Mozart, spoke again of "the world famous Bach." The English historian Charles Burney, whose *History of Music* (1776-1789) stands out among the similar works of the period, failed to deal with Bach's work, but his praise of Bach was reported by a contemporary. Samuel Wesley, the eminent organist who was the first to make Bach's works known in England and who in veneration of the Leipzig master had named his son Sebastian, related in a letter to a colleague that, in conversation, Burney "evinced the most cordial veneration for our Sacred Musician."

In the end, the Romantics claimed Bach as their own and made his works known to the whole world. We know of Mendelssohn's epochal revival of the St. Matthew Passion, aided by his teacher Karl Friedrich Zelter who had revived Bach's motets with his Berlin *Singakademie*, and it was also Mendelssohn who gave the first recital entirely devoted to Bach's organ works. His influence brought about a decisive change, for while the name Bach had remained known to everyone throughout the eighteenth century, it had referred generally to one or the other of Bach's famous sons, and to works which were quite removed from the sphere of Johann Sebastian Bach. When Mozart said in a letter to his father from Paris in 1778 "Kapellmeister Bach is about to arrive . . . as you know, I love and revere him with all my heart," he spoke of Johann Christian Bach; and when Haydn acknowledged his great debt to Bach, he referred to Philipp Emanuel.

It was the domain of the sonata, the string quartet, and the symphony--the last amply paying back to its parent form what debt of origin it owed--that had taken over the music of the later eighteenth century. In the narrower sense, the classic era of music is understood to mean Viennese Classicism, the style that arose in the works of Haydn and Mozart. Yet the critical phase in the evolution of Haydn's symphonic work has become known as the "Romantic crisis" in his creative career.

* * *

Haydn's long life extended from the first third of the eighteenth to the beginning of the nineteenth century. He wrote his greatest compositions in old age. One might say that the secret of his art was his remarkable power of rejuvenation. One of the strongest influences upon his work was the encounter with Mozart who, in turn, was profoundly influenced by Haydn, almost a quarter of a century his senior. The work of both masters embraced all genres. While Haydn virtually created the string quartet, his church music goes back to strong roots of the Baroque, and his indebtedness in the oratorio unequivocally to Handel. In his operas he followed such Italian composers as Giovanni Paisiello and Domenico Cimarosa; in his piano works he was the disciple of C. P. E. Bach; but in his symphonies, taking their point of departure from such works as those by the Imperial court composer Georg Christoph Wagenseil, he was at his most Viennese. All of these forms he led to consummate heights. Yet posterity has almost forgotten that, like Bach's, Haydn's name held a dual meaning in its time. It is in the a cappella music of Michael Haydn, who served with Mozart at the court of Salzburg, and whose work has been overshadowed by that of his older brother, that the Classic image was most truly revealed to the young Schubert. As a student, Schubert noted after a vocal trio (preserved only in fragmentary form) "written in the manner of Haydn"--by which he meant the style of Michael Haydn--and in a letter he wrote in later years to his brother, Schubert described his thoughts in visiting a monument erected to Michael Haydn: "May your calm, clear spirit be imparted to me, cherished Haydn; though I can never be so calm and clear, no one on earth reveres you as dearly as I."

A similar sense of affection, absent from documents of earlier periods, is expressed in the letter of dedication to Joseph Haydn that accompanied the collection of Mozart's six string quartets subsequently published as Opus X, his masterwork in the genre. The wide range of Mozartiana in this collection attests to an equally wide range of close personal attachments. Mozart biography has given honored places to Leopold Mozart, the composer's father who provided the child prodigy with a uniquely rich education and who remained an important figure in later phases of his professional life; to his sister Maria Anna ("Nannerl") who shared his appearances in the early travels throughout Europe with their father; to Franz Xaver Süssmayr, Mozart's pupil who is believed to have finished his teacher's last work, the Requiem; and to Thomas Attwood, whose course of studies under Mozart represents the most extraordinary didactic document from the waning eighteenth century. It is indicative of these associations that Mozart's handwriting has been confused with his father's, with Süssmayer's, and with Attwood's, and that it has taken scholars a long time to establish clear texts in the instances concerned.

Elation and tragedy were intermingled in Mozart's short life--less than half the span of Haydn's. It has been difficult for posterity to understand fully that the ingratiating, romanticized rococo idol grew to a heroic figure, the classic master, in very young years, and that, in fact, utter seriousness permeated the life of the playful artist at all times. The Age of the Revolution here, too, cast its shadow over the career of the composer who failed to obtain the traditional supportive court or church position, and who was less suited to take on the lot of an independent position in society than Handel before and Beethoven after him.

Whereas he was the student of Haydn in his string quartets, his symphonies influenced the work of the older master, and the latter clearly admitted Mozart's superiority in the genre of opera. Yet the encounter with Haydn remained the turning point in his artistic orientation; it guided him to a new exploration of polyphony and an assimilation of styles of the past with which he became acquainted through the eminent music collection of Haydn's later oratorio librettist, the imperial court librarian Gottfried van Swieten.

Mozart's blending of Italian melody and German counterpoint, his power of synthesis and miraculously fertile imagination, and in particular his power of characterization raised opera buffa to a dramatic form that spoke to the audience in earnest. Mozart had the good fortune to find an accomplished librettist in the Vienna court poet Lorenzo da Ponte, who provided him with his most important opera buffa texts. With *Figaro*, the work in which Pergolesi's theme of the superiority of the servant is carried to new heights through the text of Beaumarchais that da Ponte adapted, opera buffa became a truly human drama, though this drama never denies the parentage of comic opera. The demonic story of Don Giovanni was entitled *dramma giocoso*. With the *The Magic Flute*, written for a lowly suburban theater of Vienna, Mozart transformed the buffoonery of the German singspiel to what became the foundation of German grand opera.

The three generations of the masters of Viennese Classicism overlap in striking manner. By the time Haydn wrote his last symphonies and quartets and Mozart wrote his last operas, the young Beethoven had journeyed to Vienna in order to study with Mozart. His early works had already reached the international market, but he still felt the need for a concentrated course of study. This fact, which found a parallel in Schubert's career, is indicative of the greatly widened perspective from which a modern generation of composers viewed the craft. Beethoven was called back to his hometown, Bonn, where he was in service at the Electoral court. When he was able to return to Vienna, several years later, Mozart had died; Beethoven turned to Haydn for instruction, and his studies have been preserved.

Impatient about his progress, he secretly supplemented his lessons in consultation with the Viennese singspiel composer Johann Schenk, a student of Wagenseil. But once again, the facts were romanticized by posterity. The document that combines the handwriting of Beethoven with that of Haydn shows a very deliberate survey of the technique of strict counterpoint. The exchange of the aged master and his student was anything but superficial or--as has often been asserted--a failure, and it is characteristic of the situation that when Haydn left on his second journey for engagements in England (a journey on which Beethoven originally was to accompany him), Beethoven embarked on further contrapuntal study with Haydn's friend Johann Georg Albrechtsberger, Master of the Cathedral Chapel in Vienna; at the same time he took up studies in the Italian vocal style with the Viennese court composer Antonio Salieri.

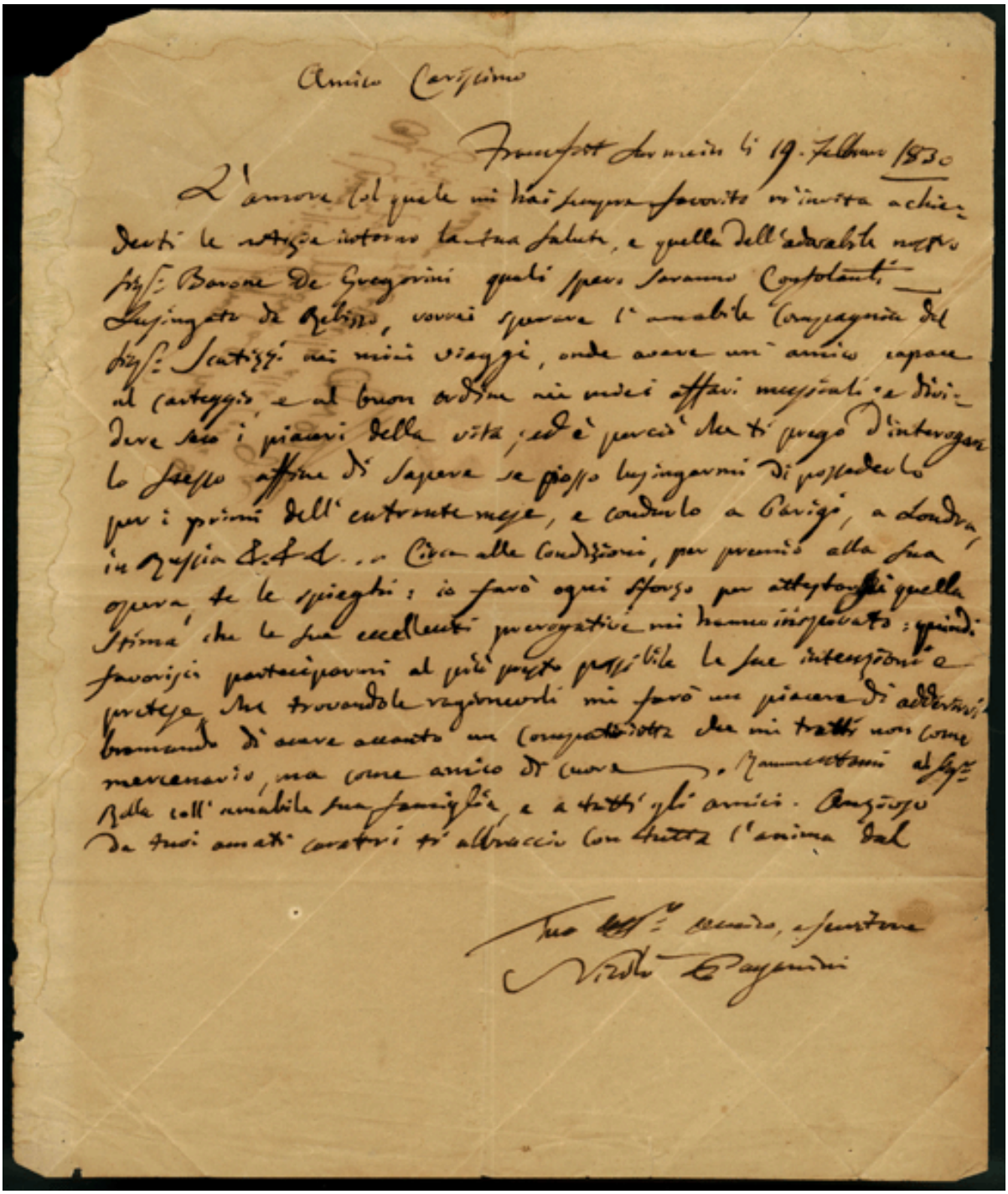
The enlarged scope of didactic commitment reflects the musical crosscurrents at the turn of the century. Salieri, whose role in music history has come down mainly (and unjustly) as that of Mozart's antagonist, represented a tradition that remained of great importance to a generation no longer readily

conversant with it--Italian opera. His eminent pedagogical influence is reflected in the fact that it led from his training of the choirboys as Master of the Imperial Chapel to the establishment of the Vienna Conservatory. He was the teacher of the young Schubert and, in later years, of Meyerbeer and Liszt. Several of his contemporaries are remembered principally through their teaching manuals and collections of methodical studies. In the case of Stanislao Mattei, the student of Padre Martini, and that of Luigi Cherubini, *Inspecteur* and subsequently director of the Paris Conservatory, it was the contrapuntal legacy that was handed down in their works; in those of Ignaz Pleyel, Muzio Clementi, and Karl Czerny, it was the new pianistic art; and in Rodolphe Kreutzer's famous *Etudes*, that of classical violin virtuosity.

We tend to forget that these preceptors of compositional and instrumental technique were composers in their own right and of deserved recognition. Kreutzer's operas, though relegated to oblivion, were not without influence upon the works of later generations, and Cherubini's sacred and dramatic works were highly regarded by Beethoven (who also honored Kreutzer with the dedication of his Sonata Opus 47). Clementi was ranked next to Mozart in his time; Pleyel next to Haydn (whose devoted student he was). But the fame of Czerny, whom Beethoven had singled out as a piano pupil and whose guidance as a teacher became decisive upon the young Liszt, rested solely, as it does now, on his genius of piano pedagogy.

A new situation arose in music history by which the domains of creative and interpretive arts were beginning to be separated. Nor did performance remain limited to interpretation; more than ever before, it now took on a role of its own. It is epitomized in the thoroughly Romantic figure of the travelling virtuoso, for which Niccolò Paganini, the demonic violinist, stands as a symbol for all times. And it extended into all spheres of performance. A particularly arresting example is the career of Domenico Dragonetti, the "Paganini of the double bass," whose stupendous proficiency on his instrument evidently influenced the design of passages in the fifth and ninth symphonies of Beethoven, with whom he was on friendly terms.

A counterpart to the specialized performer became the specialized teacher. The theorists of past ages, such as Zarlino, Artusi, or Kirnberger, were active and appreciated as composers and performers in the first place. But Simon Sechter, the leading Viennese theorist in the first half of the nineteenth century, to whom Schubert still turned for advice in his last days, represented a new profession, that of "Professor of Thoroughbass and Composition," at the Vienna Conservatory, while his allegedly more than 8,000 compositions remained unknown. But the pervading influence he exerted in his time is characterized by the fact that toward the end of his long tenure he became the trusted mentor of Anton Bruckner who, in fact, succeeded him in his professorship at the Conservatory. Whereas Sechter is remembered as a famous teacher, the memory of the English composer Thomas Attwood lives on as that of a famous student. Son of a British court musician, the gifted young member of the Chapel Royal had received a stipend from the Prince of Wales to take up studies in Italy. Though pursued under two noted Neapolitan *maestri*, they proved in the end not satisfactory, and Attwood, "perceiving the decline



Amico Carissimo

Francfort sur mein li 19. Febbraio 1830

L'amore col quale mi hai sempre favorito m'invita a chiederti le notizie intorno la tua salute, e quella dell'adorabile nostro Sig.r Barone De Gregorini quali spero saranno Confortanti — Lusingato da Rebizzo, vorrei sperare l'amabile Compagnia del Sig.r Scutizzi nei miei viaggi, onde avere un amico capace al carteggio, e al buon ordine nei miei affari mercantili e dividere seco i piaceri della vita, ed è perciò che ti prego d'interrogarlo stesso affine di sapere se posso lusingarmi di possederlo per i primi dell'entrante mese, e condurlo a Parigi, a Londra, in Russia &c &c. . . Circa alle Condizioni, per premio alla sua opera, te le spieghi: io farò ogni sforzo per attestargli quella stima che le sue eccellenti prerogative mi hanno inspirato: quindi favorisci parteciparmi al più presto possibile le sue intenzioni e pretese. Se trovandole ragionevoli mi sarò un piacere di assicurarlo bramando di avere accanto un Compatriotta che mi tratti non come mercenario, ma come amico di cuore. Rammentami al Sig.r Bella coll'amabile sua famiglia, e a tutti gli amici. Anzioso da tuoi amati caratteri ti abbraccio con tutta l'anima dal

Tuo Aff.mo Amico, e servitore
Nicolò Paganini

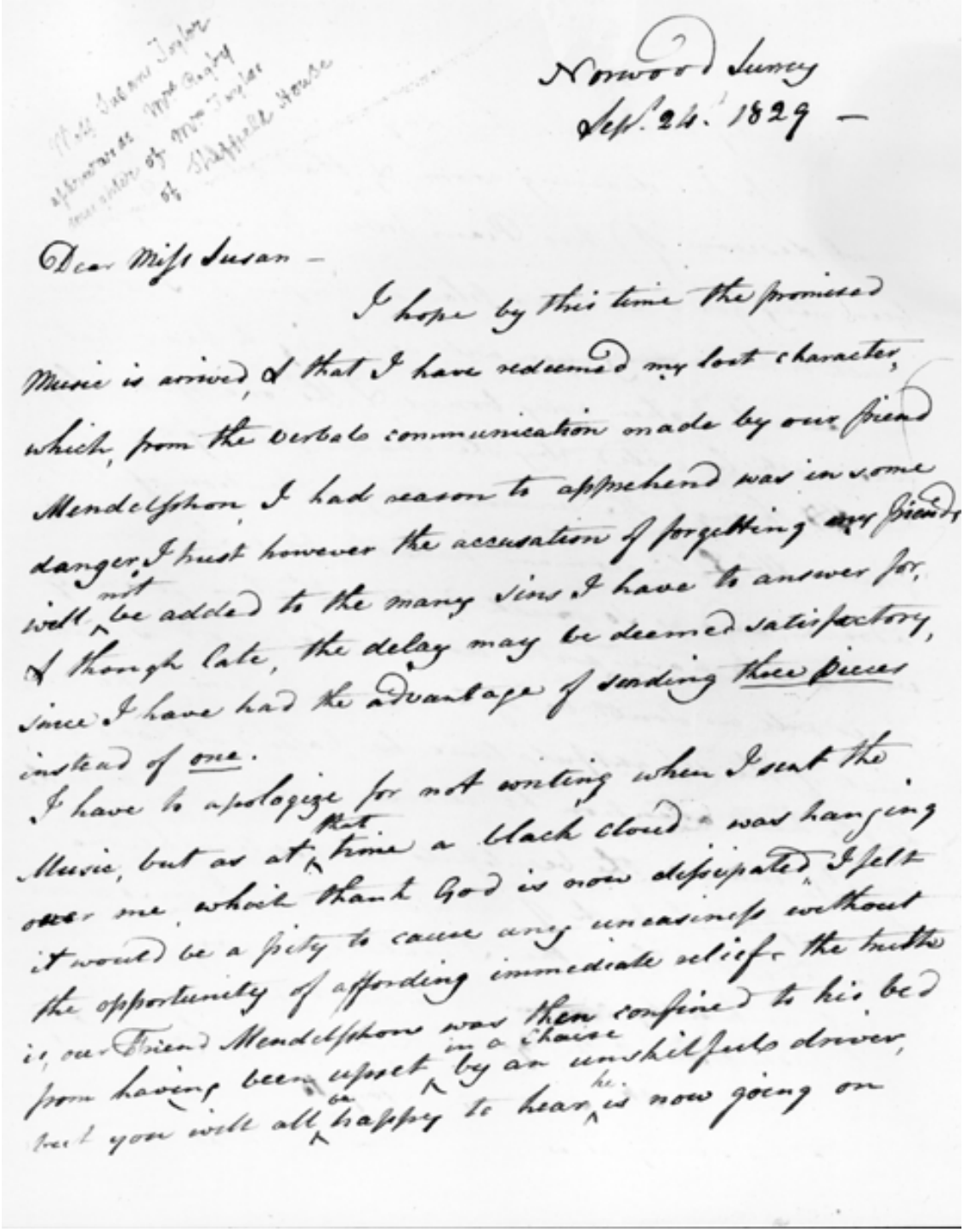
Letter from Niccolò Paganini to Francesco Morlacchi, Kapellmeister in Dresden, February 19, 1830

of the Italian school and foreseeing the ascendancy of that of Germany . . . proceeded to Vienna and immediately became a pupil of Mozart."[3]

We owe it to the association with Attwood that Mozart's work as a teacher is fully documented. The course of studies he designed for the student, who became a close friend, covered the better part of two years; the manuscript was carefully preserved by Attwood and has been published.[4] Attwood, in later years organist at St. Paul's and composer-in-ordinary of the Chapel Royal, became the guardian of the legacy of Viennese Classicism. It was he who was principally responsible for introducing Mozart's and Beethoven's symphonic work in England. But in equal measure he became the advocate of the young German Romantics and of the nineteenth-century Bach renaissance. The year in which Mendelssohn gave his epochal performance of Bach's St. Matthew Passion also marked his first journey to England, on which he was warmly welcomed by the sixty-four-year-old Attwood. The two composers, though of unequal stature, found themselves devoted to some of the same ideals. Britain, as we know, became Mendelssohn's second homeland, and a remarkable association developed between the representatives of the old and young generations--of what we have to come to call the Classic and Romantic ages of music.

Nowhere are Classic form and Romantic expression more powerfully blended than in the work of Beethoven. Popular appellations have somewhat superficially attached the defiance of fate to his Fifth Symphony and the serene tranquillity of moonlight to his Piano Sonata op. 27, No. 2. But the designation *Grande Sonate Pathétique* for his Piano Sonata op. 13, written before his first quartets, concertos and symphonies, and that of *Sinfonia Eroica* for his Third Symphony, are his own. One of his biographers called Beethoven the "man who freed music," a dictum which is again of flimsy nature. Yet Beethoven was totally a son of the Revolutionary Age. He tore up the dedication of his Third Symphony to Napoleon when Bonaparte declared himself emperor. He was devoted to the revolutionary ideas of *liberté* and *egalité*; and the ideal of *fraternité* is glorified in the ode that concludes his Ninth Symphony. It is the rebellion of the artist that placed Beethoven in his era. He wrote to Count Lichnowsky, soon after dedicating the *Sonate Pathétique* to him, "Prince, what you are you are by the accident of birth; what I am, I am of myself." But no artist ever wrestled more intensely with law and order, with classical discipline, than Beethoven. Whereas the Romantics were to claim him as theirs, his life work proceeded along the lines of the Classic forms. It is no mere accident that the Beethoveniana of this collection include, with samples from his sketches--his ubiquitous detailed working material--his copy from one of Mozart's works. Beyond the classical genres of sonata, quartet and symphony, he even turned to opera, though it represented a world essentially foreign to him, and his vocal works attest to some of the greatest triumphs of his symphonic language.

When Beethoven undertook the composition of *Fidelio* (originally *Leonore*), the genre of opera had undergone wide proliferation. We have seen that the two prototypes, opera seria and opera buffa, were interrelated from the beginning: the latter arose in intermezzo performances from the former. By and large, it was to opera buffa that the future belonged. But its original subject matter, the antagonism of master and servant, had lost its significance, or rather, the human and social implications had widened to the point where comic elements were intermingled with genuine drama and tragedy. Nevertheless, in



Miss Susanna Taylor
afterwards Mrs Bailey
mother of Mrs Taylor
of Sheffield House

Norwood Surrey
Sept. 24. 1829 —

Dear Miss Susan —

I hope by this time the promised Music is arrived, & that I have redeemed my lost character, which, from the verbale communication made by our friend Mendelsohn, I had reason to apprehend was in some danger. I trust however the accusation of forgetting my friends will not be added to the many sins I have to answer for. & though late, the delay may be deemed satisfactory, since I have had the advantage of sending three pieces instead of one.

I have to apologize for not writing when I sent the Music, but as at that time a black cloud was hanging over me, which thank God is now dissipated, I felt it would be a pity to cause any uneasiness without the opportunity of affording immediate relief. the truth is, our friend Mendelsohn was then confined to his bed from having been upset in a chaise by an unskilful driver, but you will all be happy to hear he is now going on

Thomas Attwood, page from an autograph letter

Gioacchino Rossini's *Barber of Seville*, whose story came from the same literary source as Mozart's

Figaro, the old opera buffa found a lasting monument whose quality remained unattained in any of the works by his contemporaries.

Opera seria was, one might say, buried with Mozart's last opera, *La Clemenza di Tito*, commissioned for the coronation of Emperor Leopold II. While the score contains some of Mozart's finest writing, the work has suffered, from the outset and in the reception of posterity, because the genre itself was beginning to be superseded by what became "*Grand Opéra*," the genre that, more than any other, reflected the Revolutionary Age. Thus we speak of "Heroic Opera" and the type of work based on the theme of liberation, "Rescue Opera," the latter owing its nature particularly to subjects favored in French literary models of the time. It was this type that caught Beethoven's interest. *Fidelio* is a genuine rescue opera, its text going back to a work by the French librettist Jean Nicolas Bouilly, but arranged for Beethoven by the Viennese opera manager Joseph von Sonnleithner, member of a prominent family to whose influence the development of Vienna's musical life in the activities of opera, concert stage, salon, and conservatory was indebted in many ways.

It is of significance that Beethoven's copy of portions from Mozart's *Don Giovanni* are adapted to German text. *Fidelio*, though of French origin, and though its plot is set in Spain, is a German opera, adhering even to the spoken dialogue of the singspiel tradition. After the delayed starts of its history, German opera developed rather slowly. The German-born Giacomo Meyerbeer experienced his first triumphs in Italy, where he became one of the foremost followers of Rossini. But his success carried him to France, and as a representative of *Grand Opéra*, he became the most celebrated French opera composer of his time. A national school of German opera found its beginning with the work of Carl Maria von Weber, a fellow student of Meyerbeer under Georg Joseph (Abbé) Vogler, court conductor in Darmstadt, whose adventuresome career developed under Italian and French, as well as German, influence.

* * *

Wagner was to call Weber "the most German of all musicians." In his masterpiece *Der Freischütz* (the title, difficult to translate, describes the figure of a marksman whose marksmanship is given free reign through a pact with the devil) Weber created what he himself called a "Romantic opera." The typical elements of German poetic Romanticism, the world of the German fairy tale, the folklore and superstitions of German forest country, the horn calls, peasant dances, village lyricism are all there, as well as demonic motifs of Romantic saga. They are merged into a musical language that was as fresh and sound in its dramatic originality as it was responsive to the trends of the time, and Weber's work had a large following. Heinrich Marschner, whose name is remembered, though his operas are all but forgotten, worked in close collaboration with Weber as conductor at the Dresden court opera. With Marschner, opera entered into a German middle class milieu characterized by the word *Biedermeier* (a type of honest but somewhat humdrum citizen). It represented a welcome reaction to the increasing shallowness and mannerism of heroic librettos. But the works it produced owed their place in history to popularity rather than vitality. Thus the slightly later operas by Albert Lortzing likewise remain mere

names. Yet in the work of Lortzing, who returned with his*Undine* to the field of grand opera, we also find the seeds of Wagnerian music drama.

The German-born Friedrich von Flotow, whose works have retained a somewhat uneasy place in the repertory, partly because of their sentimental appeal, transplanted the *Biedermeier* opera to France; it was left to a later German-born French opera composer, Jacques Offenbach, to produce some lasting works derived from the genre. With Offenbach, however, the opera of bourgeois society was transformed to the entertaining and satirical operetta, though his great lyrical and dramatic gifts are revealed in the work that took its point of departure from the stories of the poet-artist-musician who was the embodiment of the German Romantic--*Tales of Hoffmann*.

While the opera of German Romanticism had surrendered, in the end, to styles of French entertainment, the genre of operetta was to be glorified in the work of a Viennese composer, Johann Strauss. His popular operettas, above all *Die Fledermaus* (The Bat) were born of dance. Like his father, Johann Strauss the elder, he was the master of the waltz that dominated the imperial court of Vienna--and Europe--as its ancestral dance form, the minuet, had dominated the royal French court--and Europe--in the Age of Absolutism.

Italian opera, unlike German opera, always had solid traditions on which to draw; and they are evident in the works of the two principal opera composers Italy produced next to Rossini, neither, however, reaching his greatness--Gaetano Donizetti and Vincenzo Bellini. Donizetti's comic operas are the last fine examples of opera buffa, and they outshine his works in the serious vein, whereas Bellini's operas are entirely devoted to the glories of the human voice, though they do not measure up to the glories of the old bel canto. But both composers eventually forsook the Italian stage, turning to France. It was in Verdi's work that Italy finally recovered its leading role in operatic tradition, while Wagner's work established a totally new one in Germany.

* * *

Almost completely obscured by the great and lesser names of Classic and Romantic music is that of Johann Rudolf Zumsteeg, Swabian court conductor at the turn of the eighteenth century. Yet it deserves to be singled out, as it stands for a genre that, despite its own relative obscurity, marked a fresh departure of significance--the ballad. In its original meaning, the "dancing song," the ballad had a long and distinguished history, and the song as such is obviously the oldest of musical forms. But in the merging of musical Classicism and Romanticism, the term song--in its German version lied--acquired a new meaning. Greatly influenced by the poetry of Goethe and Schiller, Classical figures of German literature, the decisive phase in the history of the art song was heralded in works of such composers as Reichardt and Zelter (as well as in isolated examples by Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven).

In the development leading to the Romantic lied, the special form of the ballad assumed an important role. The dancing character of the ballad had early receded to the choral refrain with which the narrative of a solo singer was rounded out. This narrative, dealing predominantly with ancient and medieval sagas and valiant stories of feudal times, turned in the works of Classic German poetry more and more to folklike renditions of adventuresome, mysterious, and not infrequently gruesome scenes. The new form of solo song whose accompaniment was determined by the ascendancy of the modern keyboard instrument, the piano, lent itself especially well to the ballad. In its terse structure, it served the dramatic tendencies of the time more directly than the elaborate opera, and thus the ballad holds a key position in a transitional phase of vocal styles.

Zumsteeg, who had become a friend of Schiller's in school days, became the prime representative of the ballad, and the direct way in which his work influenced that of Schubert can be gathered from the fact that Schubert's first song, "Hagar's Lament" (*Hagars Klage*), was modeled on Zumsteeg's ballad bearing the same title. Schubert's ballad *Erlkönig*, on a poem by Goethe and published four years later as his Opus 1, opens the literature of the Romantic song, and Schubert's more than six hundred contributions to the genre remained the chief component of the nineteenth-century song literature. The ballad, however, retained its own life and reached a high point in the works of Karl Loewe, a student of Zelter's and strongly influenced by Reichardt. Through these two early lied composers, Loewe had become acquainted with the world of Goethe and Schiller, but it is most characteristic of his work that as his Opus 1 he published settings of *Erlkönig* and *Edward*, the latter on the text of an old Scottish ballad that had served Schubert for one of his last songs.

Schubert has always been seen as a Januslike figure, "at times called the classicist of romanticism, at others the romanticist of classicism."[5] While this observation, germane to our discussion, is so convincingly true to the facts of stylistic analysis, it does not provide a key to the understanding of Schubert's creative nature. The same duality (which we have observed earlier in connection with the work of Beethoven) can be and has been ascribed to Brahms. Yet the blending of stylistic bequests must in each case merely be understood as an element characterizing, in different ways, overwhelmingly individual artistic personalities. Similarly, the epithet "Father of the Song" is as unjustly applied to Schubert as it does an injustice to the genre itself: it is the individuality of the Schubertian lied that explains the inception of a new literature.

The house in which Schubert was born, unchanged over the centuries, offers the visitor a most touching impression--the tiny dwelling of a schoolmaster's family, in which Schubert grew up as one of nineteen children. Salieri discovered the talent of the boy and accepted him into the Imperial Chapel. But Schubert's existence moved with remarkable directness into circles far removed from his background. His deep sense of literary values determined his work from the beginning, and he spent his short life in the company of highly cultivated young artists and poets. In the immense wealth of his songs, he grew to maturity immediately. But though the form of the song remained his own until his last composition, one might say that he departed from it to an extent often not fully realized. His genius sought expression in the Classical forms of the symphony and string quartet, and while he labored consciously

and with unabating discipline under the shadow of Beethoven, he rose to equal the stature of the giant as did no later composer. His symphonies in B Minor (the "Unfinished") and C Major (the "Great"), his quartets in A and D Minor, and his last chamber music work, the String Quintet in C Major, mark the end of Classic instrumental literature. It is characteristic of Schubert's earnestness and modesty that toward the end of his life he became conscious of the fact that he had not mastered one particular form, the fugue. And it is well known that, two weeks before his death, he turned to Sechter for the discussion of some sketches of fugal compositions--the last music manuscript we have from his hand.

The forms of Classical chamber music and symphony remained the challenge for composers throughout the nineteenth century. Yet the Romantic song, as the century's most original creation, dominated the era to the extent that Mendelssohn wrote his famous "Songs without Words." Though they inaugurated the Romantic symphony, both Mendelssohn's and Schumann's best known major instrumental compositions are their concertos in which classic form was united with Romantic virtuosity. But the lives of these two masters, tragically short like Schubert's, produced a broad spectrum of highly original works. Schumann, barely in his twenties, also founded the first modern journal of music criticism that heralded the careers of Chopin and later Brahms. His many-sided work, guided by a wide vision of the Romantic scene, favors the fantastic element yet shows genuine lyrical strength. He was the greatest exponent of the German lied after Schubert. In his songs, the brilliance of the accompaniment often rises to leadership, and in extended postludes he tends to develop the poet's text to a level not reached by the voice but reflecting the finesse of his pianistic art and his power of interpretation.

There is something admirably sound about the gentle and refined figure of Mendelssohn. His work burst into maturity with his Overture for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* when he was seventeen, but he harnessed his great gift with elegant assuredness, and his amiable music exhibits true mastery. An intellectual by background and upbringing, he was always earnest, sincere, and wholly artistic in his work. More clearly devoted to the bequest of past generations than any other composer of his time, he yet remained entirely original. The Protestant chorale and the Handelian oratorio became all-important models for him, and though it was not given to his era to recover their original strength, this era was ennobled by Mendelssohn's historical orientation. Yet there is none of the historian in his brilliant violin concerto, his octet, or the *First Walpurgis Night*. Later ages, in turn, were unable to recover his finely controlled expression. He fully shared the problems of a post-Classical age, but he mastered them with the grace of his art.

Schubert, Schumann and Mendelssohn were composers for whom the range of Classic forms remained a natural working basis. But while their masterpieces were thus distributed over various genres, the emphasis of nineteenth-century music turned to composers devoted to a single form or medium--as if history were to acknowledge with a grand gesture that the opulence it had produced began to elude a comprehensive grasp. The career of the traveling virtuoso, writing works for his own appearances, was

Felix Mendelssohn, a sketch from his travels to Italy

an isolated phenomenon in the time of Vivaldi; in the nineteenth century, however, it tended to dominate the musical scene. The triumphs of Paganini were paralleled in the appearances of the young Liszt, who became the greatest pianist of all times, and Liszt's activities as a composer were determined at first by his international success on the concert stage.

The most typical representative of the composer whose creative work was so closely focused on his own performance medium was Frédéric Chopin, whom Liszt hailed as his equal. Chopin's piano works mirror the world of the Romantic virtuoso to the extent that his concertos for piano and orchestra were almost completely neglected--by the composer who gave them the most sparsely developed accompaniment, as well as by posterity which knows the composer merely by his finely wrought preludes, polonaises, mazurkas, impromptus, nocturnes and waltzes. These compositions combine frail detail and intensely poetic expression with a passionate virtuosity that makes them a unique achievement in the keyboard literature, and Chopin's life work, once again prematurely ended, raised soloistic composition to a level unattained ever after.

The violin literature fared differently; and though the nineteenth century is studded with spectacular violin concertos, we are dealing here by and large with mere show pieces. The exceptions came from composers committed to the symphonic rather than the soloistic ideal, and it is characteristic of the merging of Romantic virtuosity and Classic form that one of the most popular violin concertos of the era bears the title symphony--the *Symphonie Espagnole* by Edouard Lalo, a French composer of Spanish ancestry.

* * *

A gigantic rapprochement took place, more or less curiously brought about, by which the genres of opera, symphony and song met in new forms. In the case of Hector Berlioz, it was not the single instrument but their sum total--the vastly enlarged and technically perfected orchestra--that was the adopted "specialty." His *Grand Traité d'instrumentation et d'orchestration* (1844) became the classic of orchestration manuals, and in his works he explored the resources of the Romantic orchestra to their fullest. He called his symphonies, headed by the *Symphonie Fantastique*, "instrumental dramas," and in them he raised the concept of program music--purely instrumental music based on a literary source--to a new ideal. They embraced, once again, the genre of the concerto--the solo part in *Harold in Italie* was written with Paganini in mind. The monumental works of Berlioz include church music (his Requiem Mass and Te Deum), oratorios and operas, but in all of them he remained at heart the orchestrator. Despite their originality, his sacred works, in their grandiose sonority, negate the essence of the spiritual element, while staged drama negated, in fact, the artistic creed of program music.

Liszt, in the end dissatisfied with the career of the virtuoso and with compositions determined solely by the scope (albeit greatly widened) of his instrument, was inspired by the concept of program music in the work of Berlioz. At the height of his fame, he took up this new challenge and, turning now entirely to his creative work, arrived at a new symphonic form that became the model for a "New German School" whose influence actually extended well beyond Germany, the Tone Poem. His mastery of the Romantic orchestra was entirely beholden to symphonic principles of elaboration, and rather than following a "program," his works arose from a total conception that did not rely on descriptive details. In later years he wrote sacred oratorios and liturgical compositions, and just as his symphonic language stands in contrast to that of Berlioz by a thoroughly poetic approach, these choral works differ from those of Berlioz by a genuinely religious attitude. Liszt was a devoted Roman Catholic and, in later years, took minor orders as an abbé. His interests in all aspects of the music of his time developed on a wide scale throughout his life, and a host of students followed him to his centers of activity in Germany, Italy and Hungary.

Liszt was closely associated, both through his work and family ties, with Wagner (who married his daughter Cosima), and the extensive literary work of both composers provides revealing commentary on the ideals which they shared and which dominated the musical scene of the waning nineteenth century. Nevertheless, the two great exponents of the New German School were worlds apart. Whereas Liszt solved the challenges of over-ripe Romanticism by blending symphony and poem, Wagner announced that the time had come for a blending of all the arts and, in no way hesitant to suggest that the total artistic effort of past generations led to his own work, inaugurated a new concept, the *Gesamtkunstwerk* or Universal Art Work. That he could maintain such a claim is, in the end, due to his musical genius that triumphed over the problems posed by his complex artistic personality.

Wagner, in whose family the theater governed professional life, grew up under the influence of Weber and the early Romantic opera of Germany, but soon reached for the grand opera of France. A revolutionary to the core, he found himself fleeing from one country to another between successes and failures. It was in Switzerland that he wrote the text for his most towering work, the *Ring of the Nibelung*, and it bespeaks the magnitude of his planning that this work, originally designed as a single drama, grew into a cycle of four, as each text required the preface of a new one. The vastness of his conception becomes fully evident when we consider that, in setting the finished libretto to music, he stopped in the middle and, over a number of years, interspersed two of his most decisive, yet totally unlike dramatic works--*Tristan und Isolde* and *Die Meistersinger*--before completing the *Ring*. The

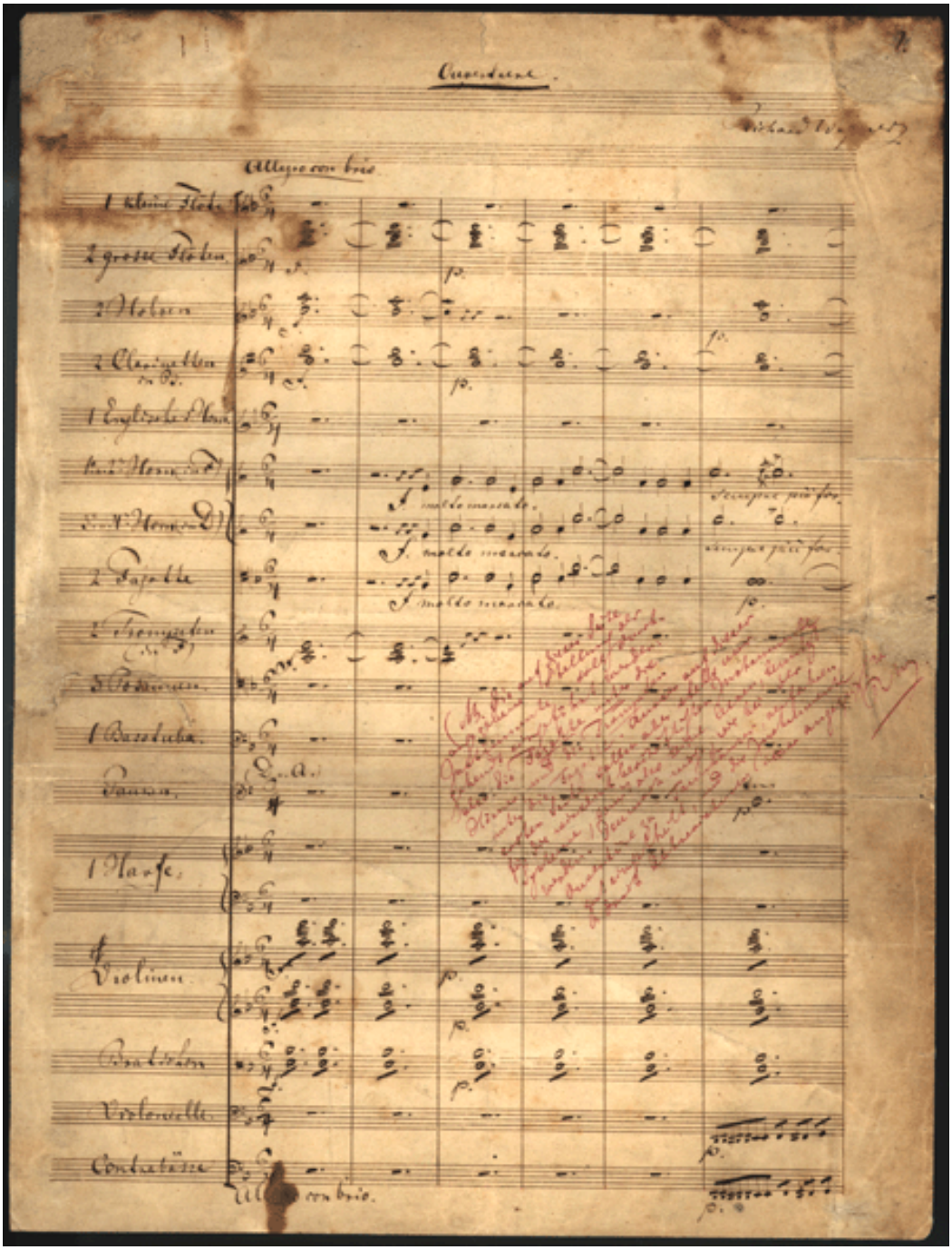
choice of his subject matter, ranging from romantic fairy tale and Nordic myth to the solid burgher milieu of the late medieval guild, was determined in different ways by a pervading idea of redemption, to which in his last work, *Parsifal*, he gave final form.

It is equally characteristic of Wagner's extraordinary career that he salvaged its perilously disintegrating fortunes by what had become an anachronism--princely subvention--and that this subvention came from a mentally ailing king, Ludwig II of Bavaria. The king, who built the fantastic castles in the Bavarian Alps, enabled Wagner to establish a shrine for the Universal Art Work--for what Wagner had termed the "Music of the Future"--in Bayreuth, formerly the residence of the rulers of a Franconian principality, and a place of pilgrimage for an international opera audience ever since.

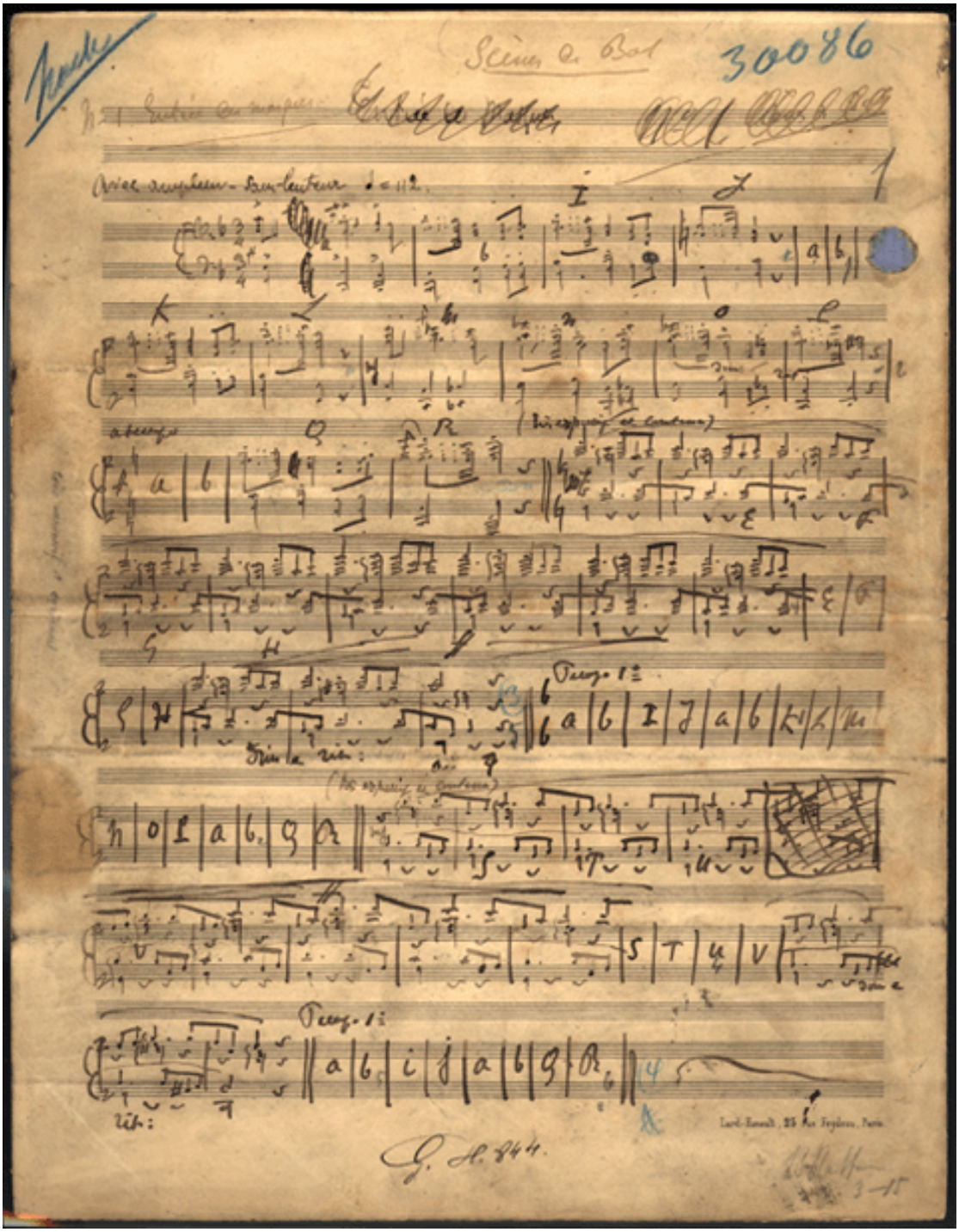
While Wagner appears as the most powerful figure of nineteenth-century music, he was destined to share this place with a composer whose work was the very antithesis of Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk*--Giuseppe Verdi. Born in the same year as Wagner, Verdi was, like Wagner, politically involved in his younger years, and his name became for a time the very symbol of the *risorgimento*, the rise of a free Italy. But unlike Wagner, he freed his own work in later years from national connotations. He became a national hero through the sheer power of his music, and the performance of *Aida*, commissioned to mark the historic opening of the Suez Canal, stands as the first truly international musical event.

It remains problematic to compare the two great representatives of nineteenth-century opera, the egocentric Wagner and the philanthropic Verdi: the creator of the new "music drama" who--mistakenly--considered himself first and foremost a literary figure, and the consummate master of traditional Italian opera which Wagner considered superseded. While the aims of their art were so diverse as virtually to defy comparison, their techniques show some surprising similarities. Wagner considered himself the heir of Beethoven, and the Beethovenian symphonic development of musical ideas assumed in Wagner's scores the role of the narrator who, like the ancient Greek chorus, interpreted dramatic continuity and meaning. His well-known orchestral device of using recurring and "guiding" melodies (leitmotives), however, was not his own invention. It appears in Verdi's works as well as those of other composers of the time. Yet while in Wagner's language the orchestral comment became the primary agent in conveying dramatic situations and philosophical concepts, in Verdi's works the human voice and human drama rule throughout. His roles eschew the supernatural and the saga; the brooding elements of Wagner's poetry and music were foreign to him. He was the supreme *operista*, and his last two works, *Otello* and *Falstaff*, written when the composer was at a very advanced age, are lasting monuments to the old opera seria and opera buffa.

There is only one nineteenth-century opera that has equaled the stature and popularity of Wagner's and Verdi's works: Bizet's *Carmen*; in fact, this work has become the most popular opera in history.



Richard Wagner, autograph note on the engraver's copy for Der fliegende Holländer



Georges Bizet, piano arrangement of Scènes de bal by Jules Massenet

Georges Bizet, a highly educated musician, was by no means what history made of him: the composer of a single work. But *Carmen* became a world success because here the composer's great gifts merged

with the tendencies of his time in a unique manner. The characterization of a heroine who is also the villain and murdered on stage in the final scene took unusual dramatic skill. It reflected the fin de siècle trend of Realism, a strong reaction to the gentleness of early Romanticism, and the choice of setting, drawing on Spanish and gypsy themes, was guided by another typical expression of the declining Romantic age, Exoticism. Bizet treated the subject with a surprisingly light hand, and his delicate and invariably interesting orchestration borders on the finesse of chamber music. He did not live to witness his triumph; the work was initially a failure that may have contributed to the composer's untimely death.

Bizet's *Carmen*, despite the enduring qualities of the work, signals a moribund epoch. Realism was met immediately with yet another reaction, Impressionism. The Romantic world withdrew into its most refined utterances, and in the last of the famous French operas, Claude Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*, music no longer presents, it merely suggests the drama. Its frailty has a wonderful strength of its own, and its miraculously enriched palette of subtle colors heralds a new century and a new age.

* * *

As in all phases of history, what appears as a deltalike disintegration of a major era actually carries the seeds of significant rejuvenation and integration. A final reconstruction of Romantic expression and Classic form entered the music of the declining nineteenth century in the work of several major symphonists who, like the symphonists of Viennese Classicism, contributed to a large array of musical genres while being especially committed to the instrumental idiom. Vienna again claimed its place as a European musical capital in the works of Johannes Brahms and Anton Bruckner--as in the twentieth century it was to see the rise of a "Second Viennese School." The concept of a "School," however, would in no way fit the work of the two composers who dominated the Viennese musical scene in the last decades of the nineteenth century, because of the radical difference in their styles and because of a renewed emergence of the symphony at the hands of such entirely heterogeneous composers as Tchaikovsky, Dvorák, and César Franck. But that the traditional symphonic structure was by no means exhausted was amply borne out by their work and their influence that lasted well into the twentieth century.

The personalities of Brahms, the pianist, and Bruckner, the organist, strongly exemplify the contrast of Northern Protestantism and Southern Catholicism. They found their way early to choral works inspired by the new role of choral music in society--both of them conducted various amateur choral organizations. In Bruckner's work, however, the choral medium remained closely tied to the service of worship, and religious mysticism was to be carried into his symphonic work. The symphonic bequest of Brahms, on the other hand, is entirely Beethovenian, and the model of Beethoven remained a fundamental challenge throughout his life. As he embarked upon the large form, he found himself immediately in a crisis; what was to be his first symphony turned into a piano concerto. But from the young composer's crisis arose works marked both by overwhelming beauty and a conscientious working procedure that produced abundant, though always highly integrated, proportions. Like

Beethoven, he returned to the piano concerto; but against Beethoven's five stand only two; against Beethoven's nine symphonies stand four. Like Beethoven, Brahms wrote one violin concerto that has remained a lasting work in the repertoire, as did Tchaikovsky (and as had Mendelssohn before him); and we might add to this list the G Minor Violin Concerto by Max Bruch, a composer close in orientation to Brahms, though he did not reach his stature.

Bruckner's symphonic work towers over the orchestral music of the late nineteenth century by its sheer monumentality. It is a monumentality seemingly inconsistent with the touching naiveté of a composer who dedicated one of his symphonies "to the dear Lord," and who pleaded with the emperor to call a halt to the bad reviews his works were receiving--but indeed only seemingly so. His simple soul was imbued with genius. His nine symphonies are related to one another in a vast cycle not unlike Wagner's tetralogy. Wagnerian is the language of his harmony and orchestration. But his work is the antithesis of Romantic music drama; it reaches back beyond the world of Schubertian lyricism to that of the great Catholic past, yet in epic dimensions that bring the history of the nineteenth-century symphony to a close.

The reconciliation of Romantic spirit and Classic tradition was a universal phenomenon that pervaded the music of Europe. When we speak of national "schools," in Russia, Bohemia and Scandinavia, we actually refer to individual expressions in the same process, although individuality defies such a generalization, as we are reminded in the cases of some bold innovations. Yet in a certain way even France, with its glorious legacy of music, developed a "school" that, on the whole departing from opera, reflected the age of Brahms and Bruckner. Like Bruckner, arriving at the symphonic form through his work as an organist, César Franck dealt in new ways with the old form. Like Brahms, Franck and his followers returned to a variety of classic genres which met with fresh interest and the support of a Societé Nationale de Musique established through the initiative of Camille Saint-Saëns, a composer versed and successful in veritably all musical forms. The most colorful of a group called the "Russian five," Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov was also the first Russian composer to write a symphony. Standing apart from this group, Tchaikovsky, the single nineteenth-century Russian composer of truly European training and orientation, was essentially a traditionalist, though of eminent stature. But in the last of the "five"--Modest Petrovitch Musorgsky--Russia gave to nineteenth-century music a totally original and overpowering figure. A number of nineteenth-century composers such as Bruch, Saint-Saëns, and his student Gabriél Fauré, saw the Classic-Romantic tradition into the new century--Dvorák, significantly, into the New World.

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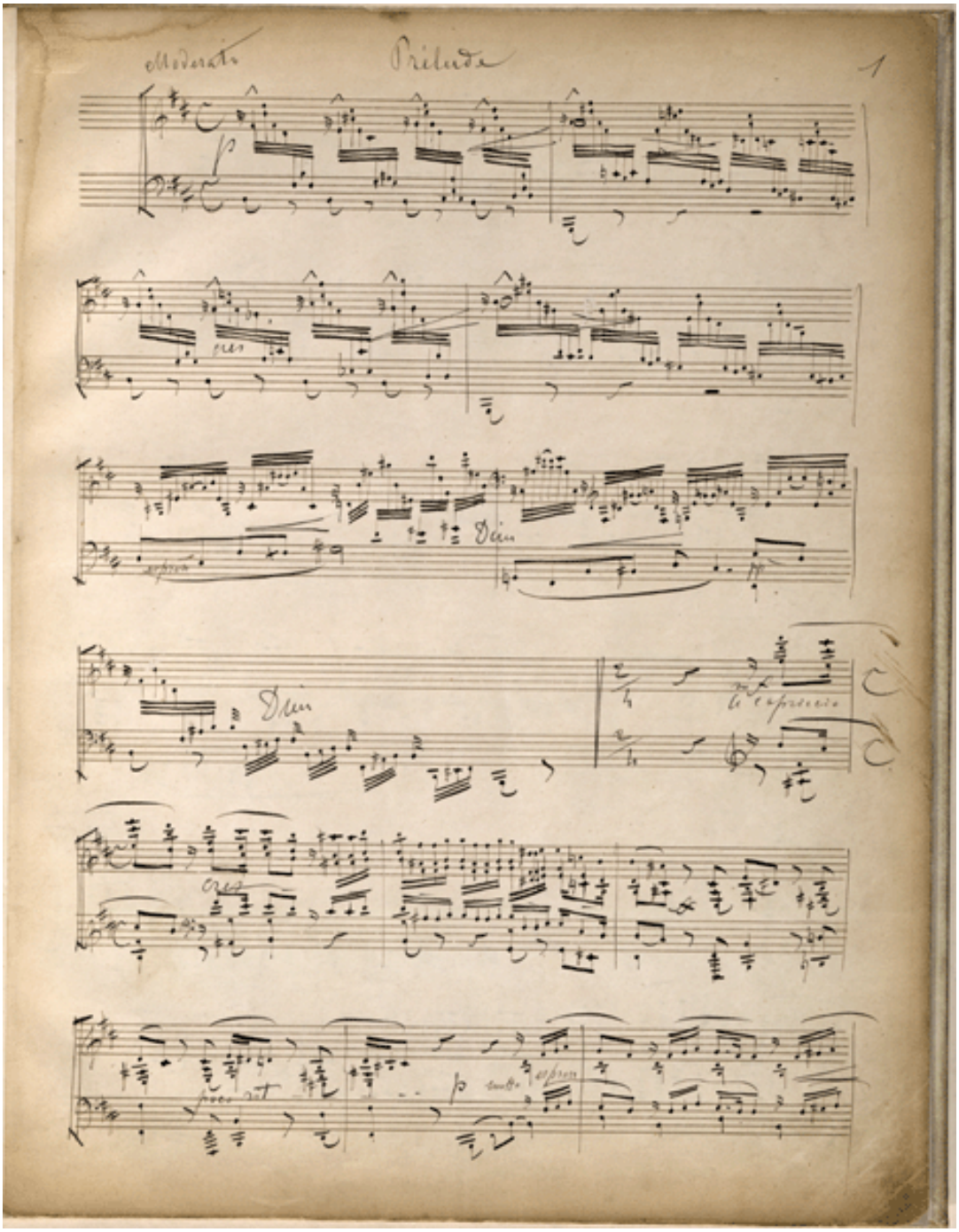


César Franck, opening page of Prélude, Chorale et Fugue, dedicated to Mademoiselle Marie Poitevin

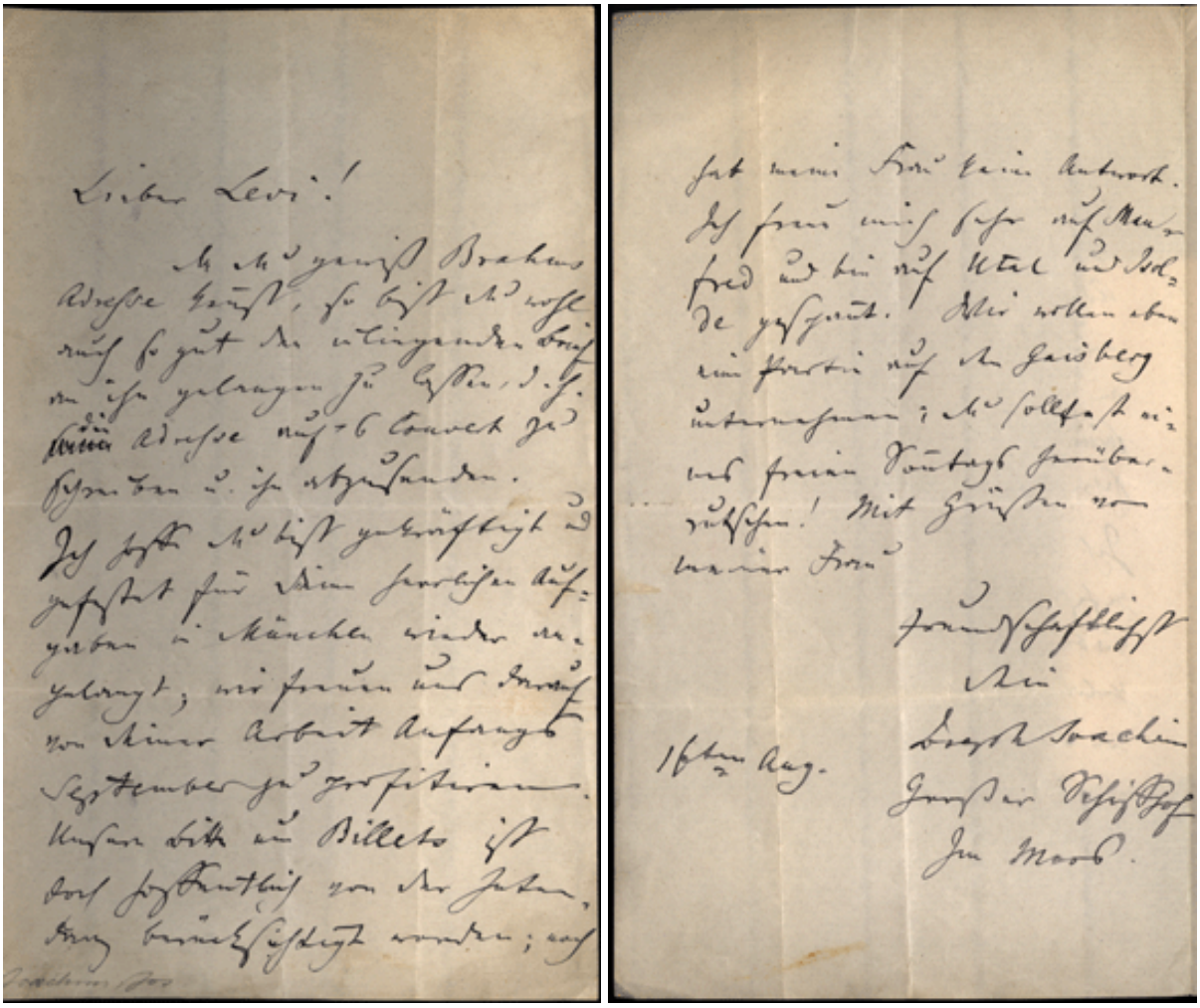
In concluding our survey of the epochs of musical Classicism and Romanticism, we must pay tribute once more to the role of the interpreter. As we have observed, composer and performer, creative and interpretive art, tended to claim individually defined domains at the rise of the nineteenth century. In the process, the role of the interpreter gained in originality and importance. A new key figure now took

command of the concert stage and the opera pit: the professional conductor. Liszt and Wagner, like earlier composers, were professional conductors in their own right--the premiere of Wagner's *Lohengrin* was conducted by Liszt. But the premiere performances of *Tristan* and *Die Meistersinger* were in the hands of an acknowledged specialist, Hans von Bülow. A student of Liszt, whose daughter Cosima was espoused to him in first marriage, von Bülow became the chief interpreter of Wagner's and later of Brahms's work. He set the model for the modern career of the orchestral disciplinarian and virtuoso conductor. Public attendance at civic concerts had grown considerably, and the works of the masters, interpreted by professional conductors, became subject to further interpretation through daily reviews in which the public was served by professional critics.

Eduard Hanslick, prototype of the powerful and domineering critic, is known for his relentless attacks upon Wagner's and Bruckner's work (it was he who prompted Bruckner's plea for the emperor's protection) as well as for his loyal support of the work of Brahms. But posterity has unjustly judged this knowledgeable guardian of classic principles a belligerent misanthrope. Though seemingly conservative, he was ahead of his time in sensing in its musical grandeur the dangers of a decline.

Hanslick was the first to be appointed to the faculty of the University of Vienna to represent music as an integral part of the academic curriculum, and chairs of music had meanwhile been established also at other universities. The professorship at the University of Berlin was held in Hanslick's time by Heinrich Bellermann, a scholar whose influence was of a more broadly didactic, rather than polemic, kind. Devoted to the a cappella ideal that had been reawakened in the early part of the nineteenth century, he freshly interpreted the roots of its pedagogy and issued the first modern textbook of counterpoint. It was of decisive influence on numerous subsequent courses of instruction in a period in which composer, performer, and audience alike began to obtain a more clearly defined view of past musical styles.

When Liszt gave the first performance of *Lohengrin*, the concertmaster of the orchestra was the nineteen-year-old Joseph Joachim. One of the finest interpreters of the era, Joachim was a musician of comprehensive command. It was he who called Schumann's attention to the young Brahms. His artistry inspired the violin concertos of Mendelssohn, Brahms, and Bruch. He was the first to free Bach's solo violin works from contemporaneous arrangements; and over a period of forty years, as director of the newly founded Berlin Academy of Music, he led the string quartet that established the classic works of chamber music in the modern concert repertoire. Like that from Liszt, a direct line of descent leads from Joachim to yesterday's and today's great performers on the concert stage.



Joseph Joachim, letter to Hermann Levi regarding a communication to Brahms

[1] Friedrich Blume, *Classic and Romantic Music*(New York: Norton, 1970).

[2] "Metastasio: The Forerunner of Gluck," op. cit., pp. 166ff.

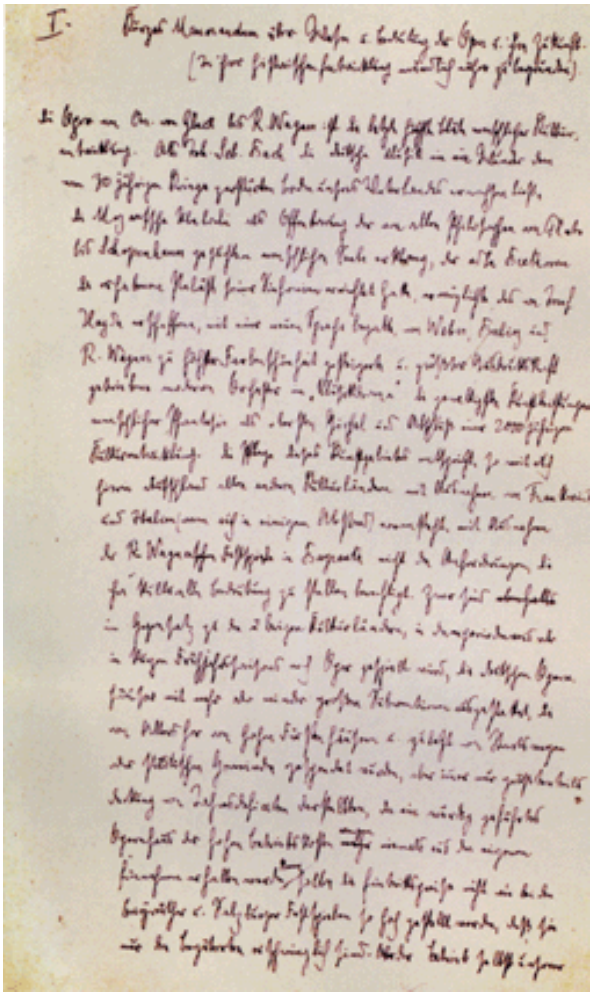
[3] Quoted from the obituary published by William Ayrton, Director of the London Philharmonic Society, in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (May 1838).

[4] *Neue-Mozart-Ausgabe*, X/30/1 (Kassel and Leipzig: Bärenreiter, 1955).

[5] See Paul Henry Lang, *Music in Western Civilization* (New York: Norton, 1941), p. 776. Lang speaks of Schubert's D-Minor Quartet as the triumph of the reconciliation of Classicism with Romanticism.

An Age of Personal Memory

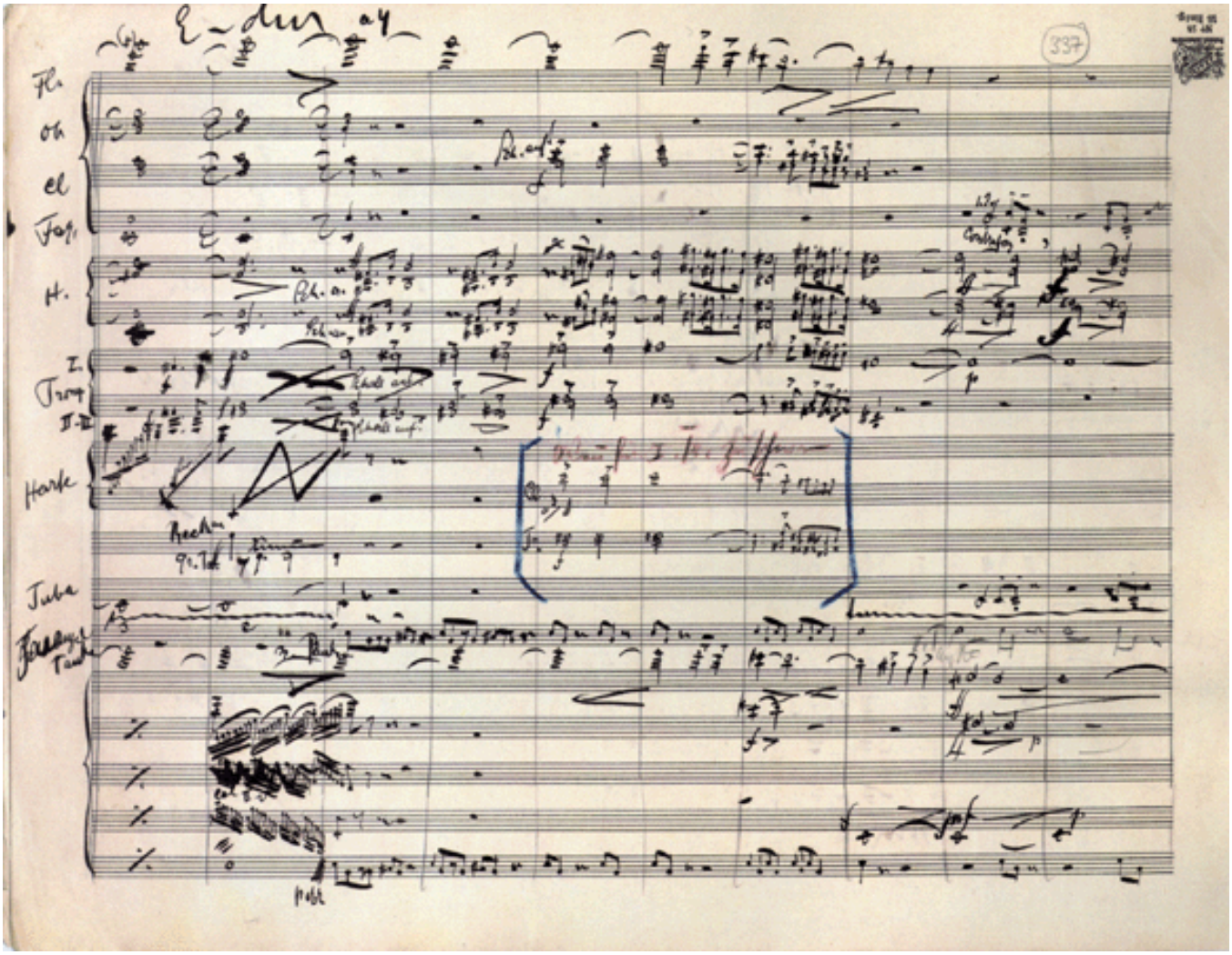
As the perspective of time diminishes and the historian becomes witness, the image of personages and events is apt to lose rather than gain in clarity. Figures and events that seem to "make history" may quickly fade; their significance is in danger of being blurred rather than being authoritatively defined. The heir apparent to the "New German" tradition of the era of Liszt and Wagner, Richard Strauss, wrote his last works as the new century that is now drawing to its close had reached the halfway mark. The past mingles with the present. It was with a shock of immediacy that the writer of these lines received, by curious circumstances, from the hand of the aged master what he had designated as his Artistic Testament, to be handed to the proper authorities in the turmoil of war. Yet the remarkable document, which now forms part of this collection, in the end gives witness only to the fact that the great symphonist and composer of dramatic works, while still in command of his extraordinary powers, began to outlive his own times. It deals with a future of opera that can no longer be realized.[1]



Richard Strauss, Artistic Testament

Opera, like symphony and art song, had lived into the twentieth century, continuing to glorify the spirit of the nineteenth century despite all the radical reactions of a new age. There is no opera composer who has remained in more general demand than Giacomo Puccini, whose often drastic style is undeniably derived from nineteenth-century Realism ("verismo") and its frequently favored Exoticism.

It is characteristic of our unvarying indebtedness to the past as well that Vienna never ceased to be the musical metropolis of immediate memory. It was in Vienna that Hugo Wolf, who barely lived into the twentieth century, spent his tragically brief life. The only song composer who could fully measure up to Schubert's stature, he gave the Romantic lied its final form. Yet it is no longer the song composed for the private and intimate setting that lives in his oeuvre, but the song for the modern concert hall, the work in which the "accompaniment," designed for the modern concert piano, dominates and penetrates the poetic meaning to an extent unknown to earlier composers of the genre.



Gustav Mahler, page from the autograph of Symphony No. 4, third movement

The powerful interpretation of Romantic lyricism proved to be more problematic in the Viennese symphony of the turn of the century. Gustav Mahler, the key figure in upholding the Bruckner tradition, introduced the song as an essential component into the symphony; in fact, he gave the designation "Symphonie" to his *Lied von der Erde*, a cycle of orchestral songs. It is the lyrical element that rules his symphonic work, yet its permeating influence stands in contrast to the grandiose gestures with which the symphonic genre overreached itself. Mahler's Eighth Symphony, the "Symphony of the Thousand," is the largest vocal work ever written.

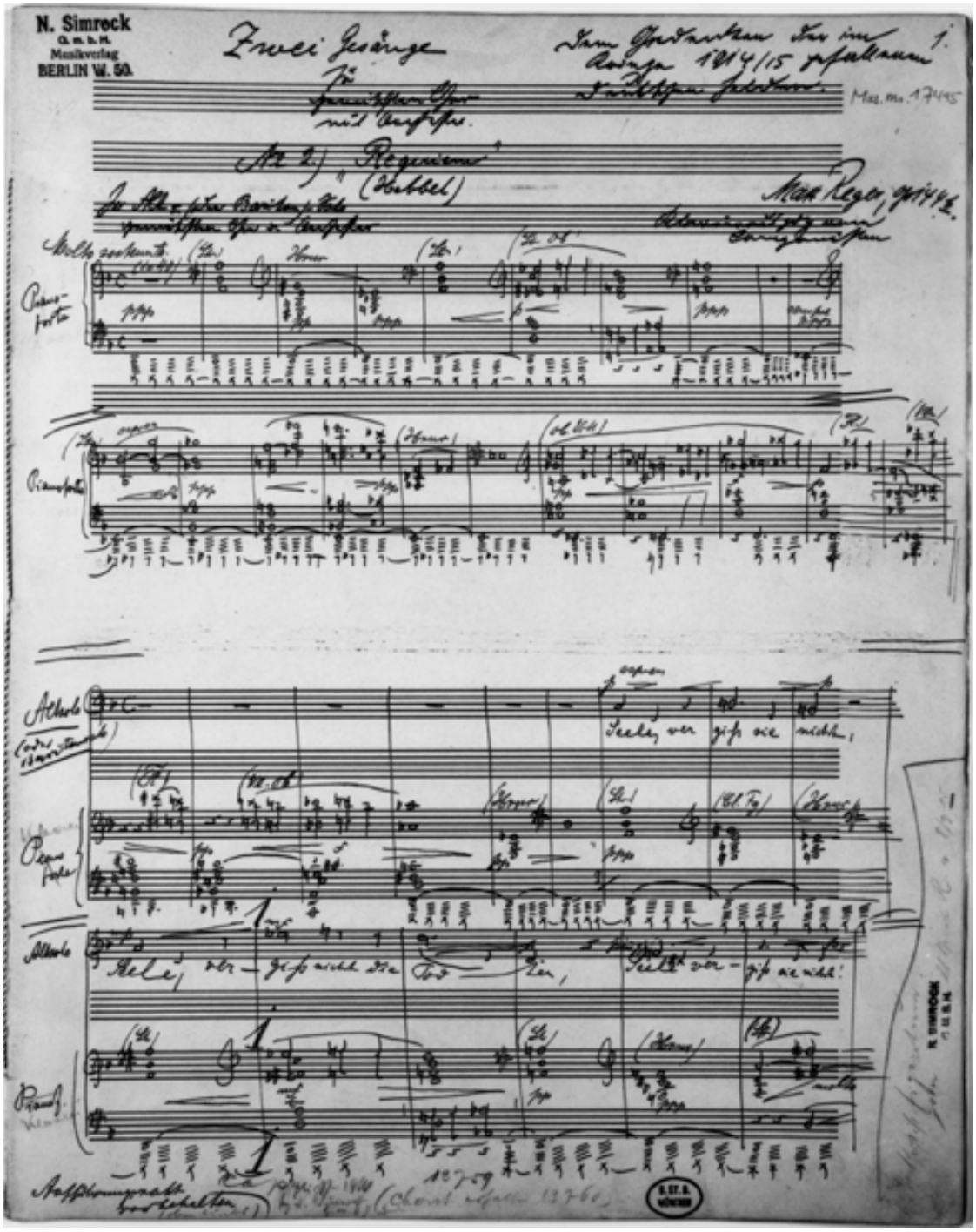
Nevertheless, paired with such abandon to post-Wagnerian dimensions, there is prophetic strength in the composer's work, and in his frequent returns to smaller forms he anticipated the rise of a "Second Viennese School." In later years he was closely connected with the work of Alexander von Zemlinsky and Zemlinsky's student and brother-in-law, Arnold Schoenberg. A new spirit of chamber music entered the orchestral world; but the most pronounced reaction to post-Romanticism became a new theory that renounced the fin de siècle language of overwrought chromaticism.

Schoenberg introduced the concept of twelve-tone music, a melodic idiom that dismissed all harmonic implications; and, constructed over predetermined series or rows, all tones of the chromatic scale were now declared as equals in musical importance. It was a theory of "atonality" which swept away all past traditions and to which the gifted followers of the Schoenberg school, Alban Berg and Anton von Webern, and in later years even the aged Igor Stravinsky, succumbed.

This revolutionary step has to be seen against the background of the dawn of an agitated century, and through the disasters of two global wars the new musical language experienced both setbacks and expansion. Leading twentieth-century composers, including Paul Hindemith and a host of others, distanced themselves from it; under political suppression it temporarily all but vanished, only to reawaken to a late bloom especially in postwar America; and it eventually gave way to more radical developments that changed, technologically expanded, and veritably obliterated the nature of musical sound. It gave way to aleatory tendencies, and to such extremes as the American John Cage's *4'33''*--a gesture that seems to raise the question: What is music?

* * *

The immediacy of events--remembered or known to have been witnessed--makes it problematic for the observer to chart a course through the music of our century. Hand in hand with the twentieth-century world conflicts went a new international understanding and interpenetration. Ever since the days of Dvorák and Tchaikovsky, European composers and performers spent a significant part of their



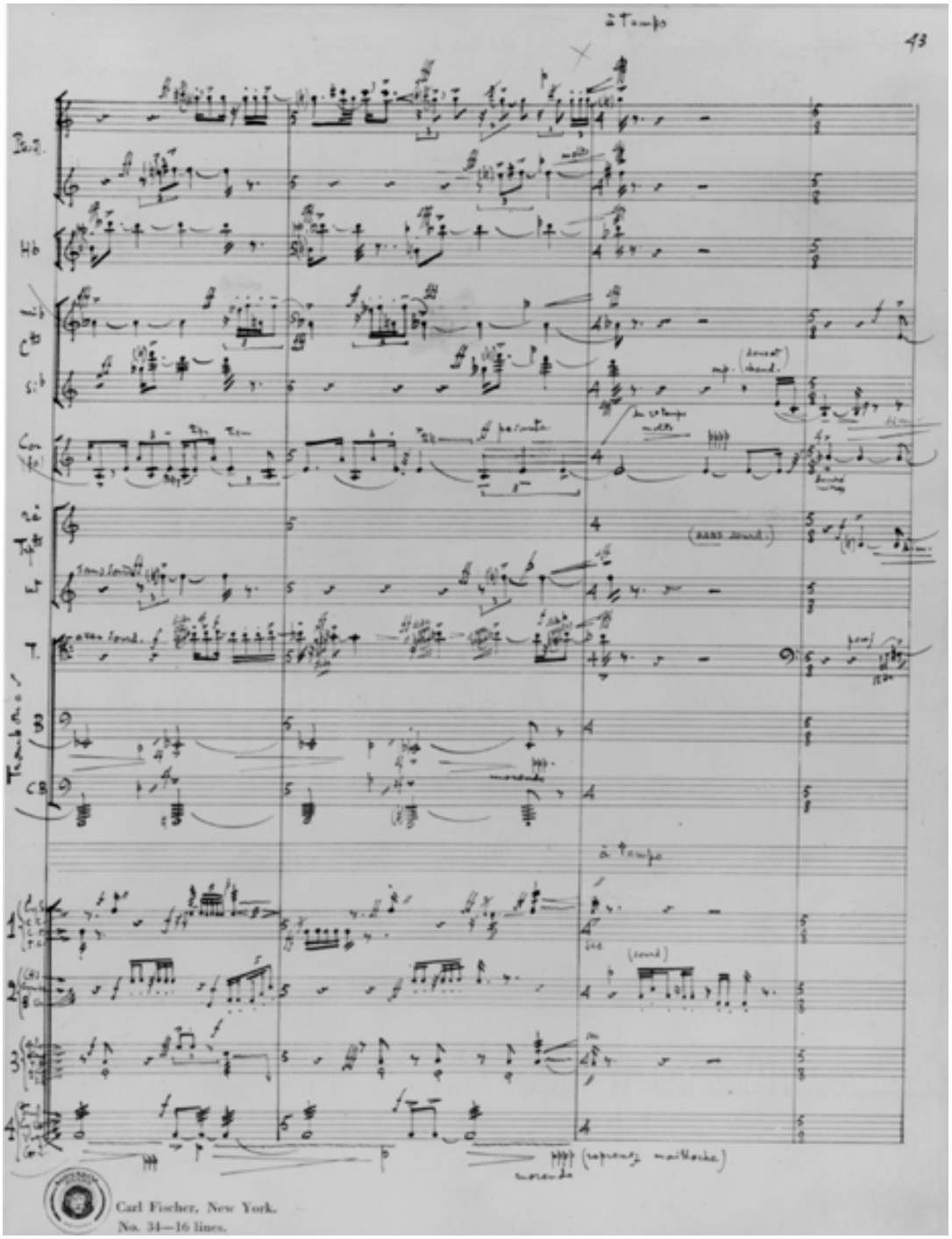
Opening page of Max Reger's piano-vocal score for Requiem, op. 144b on a text by Friedrich Hebbel.
At the upper right margin appears the composer's dedication of the piece to the German soldiers killed during the first year of World War I.

careers in America. In totally new dimensions, an international musical language took form, shaped by components from many cultures. The so-called domains of "popular" and "serious" music merged, while they continued to claim individual, growing and shrinking, territories. With George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, American jazz had obtained legitimacy on the international concert stage; yet for a young generation at the end of the twentieth century, the word "concert" has taken on a new meaning of vast demonstrations, often out-of-doors, of musical entertainment entirely oblivious to the old "concert repertoire."

Nevertheless, demarcation lines remain. During the First World War, a German composer died whose work, while of recognized stature, has been genuinely appreciated only in Germany--Max Reger. His role in this respect is not unlike that of his American contemporary, Edward MacDowell, and a "school" of American composers began to form whose most widely acclaimed exponent became Charles Ives. Universally admired, his originality and keen sense of independence have recently become a matter of dispute, because evidence has come to light to suggest that he consciously altered dates of his compositions, so that they would have preceded such revolutionary works as Stravinsky's *Sacre du Printemps*.[2] If so, he cast a tragic shadow over works that in no way would be in need of such defense--doubly tragic, for the situation would reflect the agonies of twentieth-century innovations of so-called serious music. The composer's ideal of freedom from the European heritage was doubtless served in his novel creations; yet the popular works of his contemporary, Cole Porter, steeped in the folklore of the Western Hemisphere, were recognized as being free of any other derivation--without argument or lack of ease.

Ironically, it was at the hands of the European-born that some of the most important developments in modern American experimentalism grew. An outstanding case is that of Edgar Varèse, a Parisian who was trained by some of the leading French composers of the early twentieth century, after having studied mathematics and sciences at the École Polytechnique. Having come to America during the First World War, he inspired generations of American composers with his novelties in sound and rhythm, novelties which remain "somewhat abstruse to those of us who have not studied in polytechnical schools."[3]

The impact of such influences, however, can be no more subject to question than their sincerity. At the same time, the traditional European influence has remained an integral part of the American musical scene. This is in part due to the fact that leading European composers, such as Schoenberg, Stravinsky, and Hindemith, who left Europe under the threat of the approaching Second World War, became the mentors of young Americans. A far-reaching didactic influence was exerted by Ernest Bloch, who had come to this country earlier. Yet the pedagogical role of the European composer in America varied. Bloch, a Swiss by birth, who with his widely recognized works served an independent ideal of establishing a new Jewish idiom in music, became, as director of the Cleveland Institute of Music and of the San Francisco Conservatory, the admired teacher of a host of American composers



Edgard Varèse, score of Intégrales, fair copy with corrections

who were to pursue their own independent paths of success. His somewhat younger contemporary, Ernst Krenek, a Viennese who had gained an international reputation early in life, received an appointment at an American college that dismissed him when he introduced twelve-tone music in his theory curriculum. A highly respected, though more or less intentionally isolated career was to carry his life almost to the end of the century at whose beginning he was born.

It is with dismay that the chronicler makes mention of the American phase that concluded the life of Béla Bartók, in the opinion of many destined to become the century's most enduring composer. Bartók gave new meaning to creative impulse guided by a commitment to national heritage. What achieved world fame in the work of this modest and withdrawn artist was due to the dual attributes of scrupulous scholarship and a most original gift. He had recognized early that the wealth of indigenous Slavic music was in danger of being forever lost, and in painstaking exploration he set out to uncover its roots. He was neither a folklorist nor a curator. But in exacting field work that would put many a social scientist to shame, he rescued treasures whose preservation would represent a life work in itself. From the achievement of the researcher, however, departed that of the composer, and while the culture of the land formed a nurturing element in his music, the style of his works became entirely his own. His last compositions were written in the United States, but the ailing composer remained a stranger in the country, and he died in relative obscurity and poverty.

In curious contrast to the fate of Bartók stands that of Kurt Weill. Like Krenek born with the century, this highly gifted and successful composer wrote music that, in the best sense of the word, was popular. As a young man he came to America, leaving Germany at the time the National Socialists came into power, but he did not remain a mere immigrant. More readily than any of the other Europeans who had crossed the Atlantic, he embraced the art of American twentieth-century music and, with an innate sense for its dramatic potential, added his own impulse to it. His posthumous fame, which has markedly grown toward the end of the century, attests to a singularly gratifying career.

* * *

Yet the survey of twentieth-century developments in music directs our attention to the fact that, in very different manners, the age that has seen an unparalleled widening and integration of the international scene remains, despite all fertile exchange, beholden to national domains.

Sergei Prokofieff, the greatest among the older generation of Russian twentieth-century composers, wrote after an extended stay abroad, "A foreign atmosphere does not provide me with any foreign inspiration, I am a Russian." The spell of their country's fate looms over the career of this eminent composer as well as over that of his younger contemporary Dimitri Shostakovitch. Unlike Prokofieff, the latter identified his work clearly with Soviet ideals. In contrasting ways, their art was committed to their homeland and its sad lot in twentieth-century history. In contrasting ways, too, it was committed

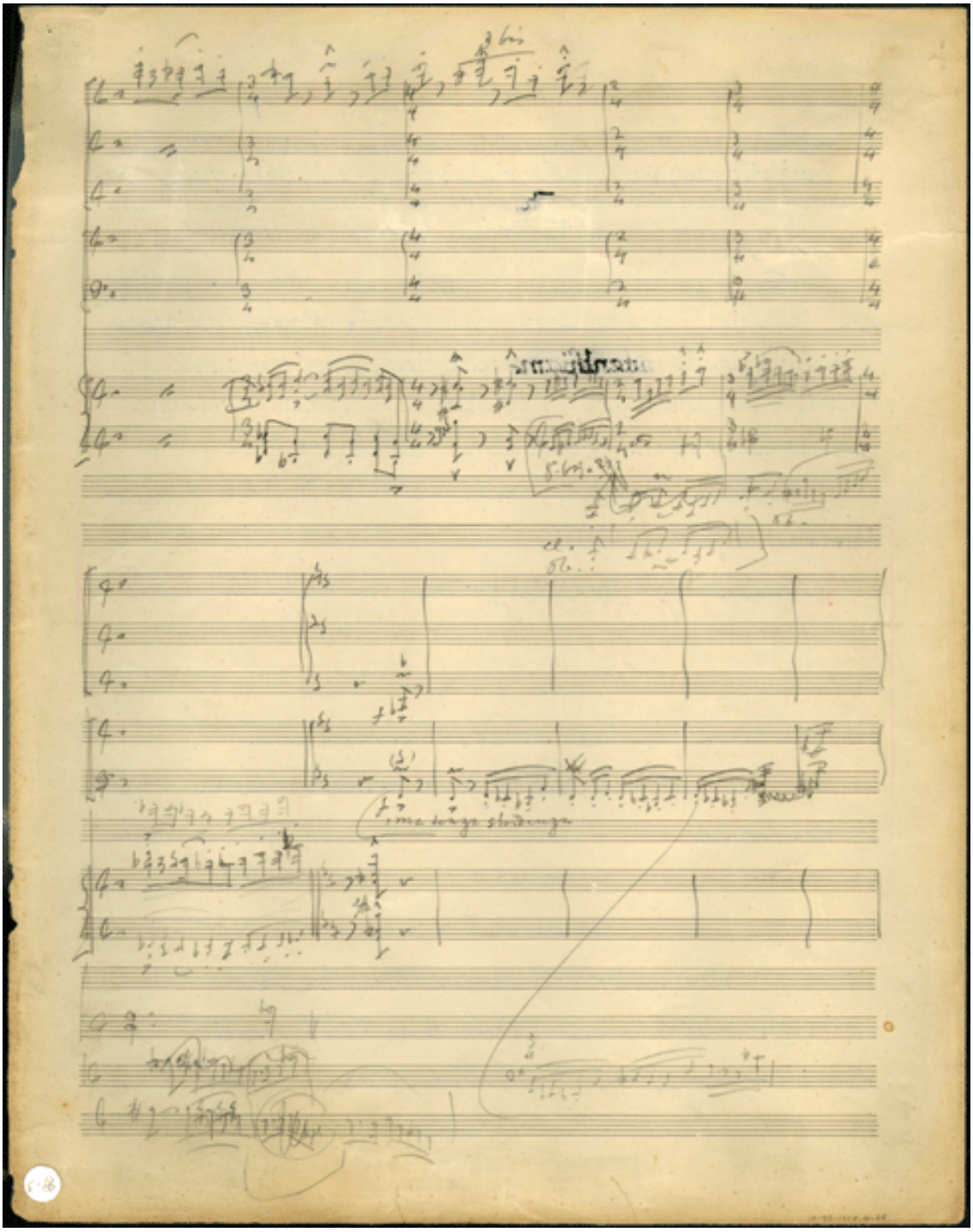
to the symphony and its Western heritage. Prokofieff approached the latter early in life with his famous "Classical Symphony," but his work was distributed over many genres, notably those of opera and ballet. In the oeuvre of Shostakovitch the symphony took on a central role, and especially in his later periods one senses the influence of Bruckner and Mahler.

What is totally absent from his work is the influence of French Impressionism, and this seems to suggest an enforced separation between the European East and West. Yet the palette of the twentieth century had grown too complex for categoric distinctions. While no twentieth-century composer seems more markedly French than Maurice Ravel, this foremost twentieth-century representative of the music of his country was drawn to the work of Mussorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, and Stravinsky (with whom he shares a penchant for articulate clarity), and his famous *Daphnis and Chloé*; was written for Sergei Diaghilev's Russian Ballet. Ravel was at heart an instrumental composer, inspired by the dance and apt to treat even the voice with instrumental precision. The style of his piano music, chamber music, and orchestral works may border on the brittle, but it never lacks a characteristic French grace.

The indebtedness to a national character comes to the fore even in the music of Arthur Honegger, although here we are dealing with composite nationality. This Swiss composer was born in France; he settled eventually in Paris, and a French orientation is predominant in his music. But it is the French orientation of an artist in whose home country French is one of several native languages. He received his early training in Zurich and returned to Switzerland throughout his life. The German-Swiss Alemanic heritage remained strongly present in his many-sided oeuvre. He is "one of the least dogmatic composers of the recent past, whose work is governed by synthesis rather than eclecticism."[4]

Like Honegger, Germaine Tailleferre, the composer of fine orchestral scores that are remembered, belonged to the group *Les Six*, whose work she propagated throughout Europe. Its members, however, were connected in friendly association rather than a set program of French modern music.

More directly felt is the national influence of the most prominent twentieth-century composers in Spain and Latin America, Manuel de Falla and the slightly younger Heitor Villa-Lobos. De Falla raised Spanish music, after a long period of relative obscurity, to international importance again. A friend of Debussy and Ravel, he spent his formative years in Paris, yet a fundamental direction to his creative work was given by Felipe Pedrell, Spain's most eminent music historian whose research in the treasures of indigenous music is comparable to Bartók's. The folk music of Andalusia, the region where he was born, gave de Falla's work inspiration--the work of a highly sensitive and disciplined artist whose historic role it was to deliver Spanish music from its Romantic stigma of Exoticism. In contrast with de Falla's work stands that of the lesser known Federico Mompou whose predominantly pianistic work is not without reference to folkloristic themes. But the style of this Spanish composer was more clearly guided by his interest in the group *Les Six* and his devotion to Debussy.



Manuel de Falla, detail from a draft for his Concerto for Harpsichord

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Page from Heitor Villa-Lobos, Estudio No. 7, for Guitar, with pencil fingerings entered by Segovia

MS Mus 230 (1318) Houghton Library, Harvard University

The music of Villa-Lobos is not so much indebted to scholarly discovery as to technical brilliance which, however, is obviously founded in the composer's interest in Brazilian folk traditions. Trained as a violoncellist, he turned to the study of the guitar and popular improvisations; and while his life work embraced the symphonic and dramatic genres, chamber and piano music, his most successful works were written for his own instruments. In later years he explored the classical heritage of music, largely in his role as his country's most acknowledged musical educator, and the pieces involving an ensemble of eight cellos in his *Bachianas Brasileiras* are among his best known.

The tendency to draw fresh strength from the roots of folk music might be understood in a larger sense as a reaction against the over-refined and intellectualized twentieth-century musical language. Nevertheless, the incentives varied. In Poland, as in Russia, it was the regime that urged composers to concern themselves with the national heritage, and this pressure obscured many an artist's life. Yet it was only until about a decade after the end of the Second World War that Polish music was virtually closed off from the West; by 1956, international music festivals were being held in that country. This may have been the reason why the folk element in the music of Witold Lutosławski, the foremost Polish composer in the first half of the century, was in evidence only in those years. But it was doubtless also prompted by genuine interest. Lutosławski's *Concerto for Orchestra*, possibly his most eminent work, was inspired by folk music, yet as a matter of course he would treat folk motifs with atonality. Thus his *Funeral Music* honoring the memory of Bartók, whose work was venerated in Poland, is based on a twelve-tone row.

Poland produced another internationally recognized composer who, in fact, stands out as the most vigorous and the most successful of the waning twentieth century. Freed from the nineteenth-century and twentieth-century commitment to folk music, Krysztof Penderecki rose to universal fame overnight with his *St. Luke Passion*. In full command of all the means of a new age, he has embraced the major orchestral and choral forms and has proved himself a master of the music drama. Trained as a violinist, he developed a keen sense for all colors of sound and harmony. In view of the complexity of his work, his mastery of the a cappella medium is remarkable, and in such works as his Agnus Dei for eight-part unaccompanied chorus, or his *Stabat Mater* for three unaccompanied choirs, the listener is immediately under the spell of his sense of form and expression.

Trends of twentieth-century music have curiously overlapped in the work of some of its central figures. Whereas the "Second Viennese School," led by Schoenberg, was unequivocal in its adherence to serialism, its post-Romantic heritage nevertheless was undeniable. It merged in Alban Berg's music with an individual interpretation of atonality, and even the bold language of *Wozzeck*, the opera that established his reputation, is beholden to Romantic ideals. But the sensitive art of Anton von Webern, whose posthumous recognition is decisively indebted to the collector of these source documents,[5] severed its Romantic roots with a radically new approach to form. He became the celebrated "miniaturist" of the twentieth century, an aspect of his creative career that by no means exhausts a characterization of his strikingly original oeuvre. In Stravinsky's work, Russian heritage met with a pervading Western orientation of the composer who settled in Paris and later in the United States, with "Neo-Classicism," and eventually with the undeniable influence of the Schoenberg circle, especially Anton von Webern. By contrast, Hindemith, who had dominated the scene of German music in the

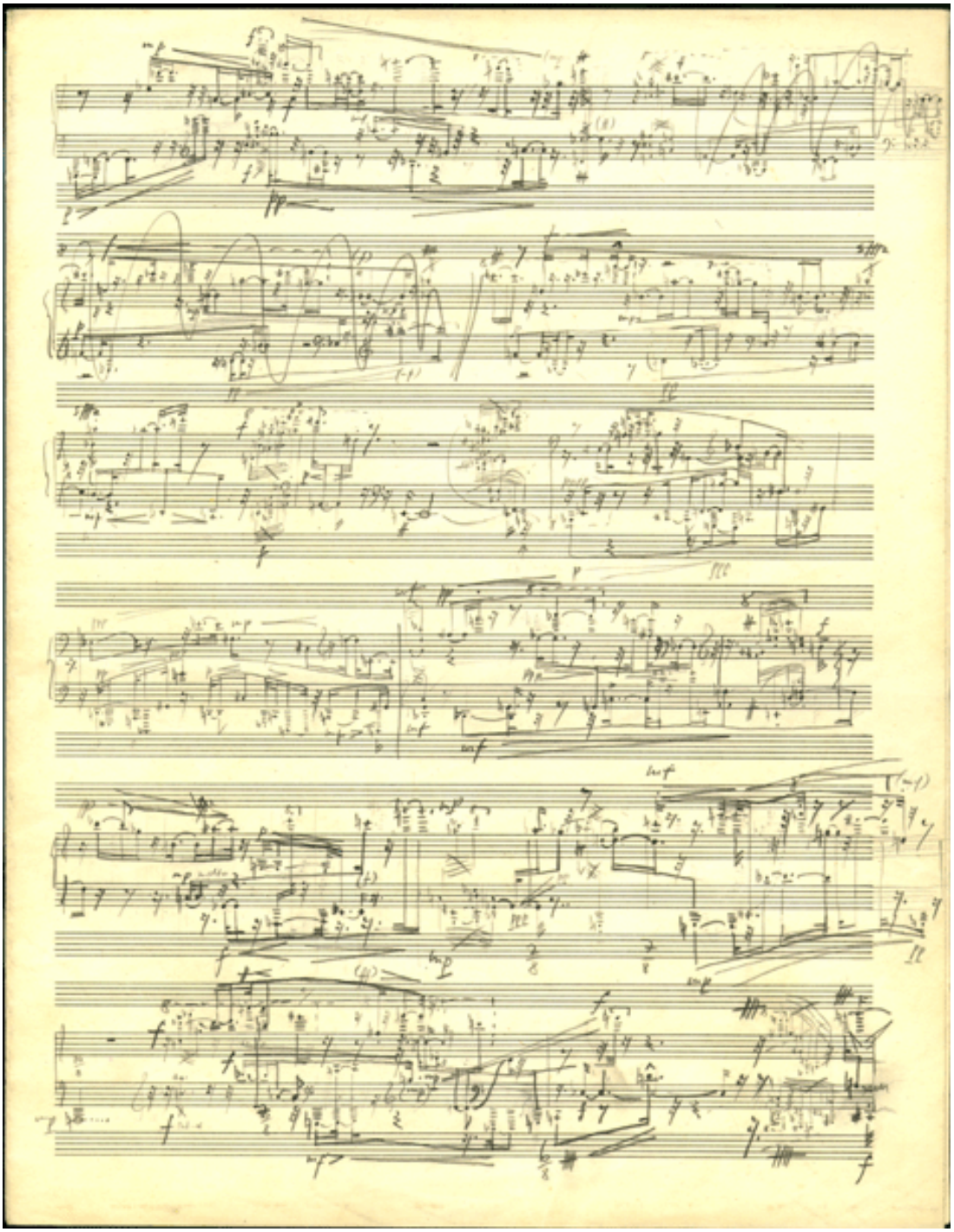
second and third decades of the century, remained inherently German. Having made America his home at the height of his creative powers, he returned to Europe in later years to take a professorship in Zurich. His innate gift of instrumental performance and a wide artistic perspective always guided his course; he was a traditional guild musician as well as a historian and mystic.

There is a further aspect of Hindemith's work which was to become an important bequest to the later German and international scene, that of organizer for the promotion of modern music. Under his leadership the gathering place for young composers developed in Donaueschingen, center of a former German principality, which after the Second World War found a parallel in the Darmstadt music festivals.

The countries freed from Fascism reawakened with a certain shock to contemporary music, and the prototype of the composer-performer found greatly varying new challenges in experimentation. While Luigi Dallapiccola, the Italian, remained indebted to the brilliant dualistic career of Ferruccio Busoni and later to Schoenberg and Alban Berg, the most conspicuous figure among the young Germans, Karlheinz Stockhausen, extended serialism in ways that relied upon the whim of the performer as much as upon the precision provided by the means of the electronic age. His work had received primary impulse from latter-day French music, and his partner at Darmstadt became the composer-conductor Pierre Boulez, one of the foremost avant-gardists. But throughout the twentieth century the avant-garde wrestled with the problem of becoming the old guard. A telling epithet for the music of the declining century has become "Post-modernism," and composers such as the American George Rochberg renounced the advances of technology and looked to past ages for inspiration.

The latter orientation has led to especially stimulating results in the music of Elliott Carter, one of the most highly honored American composers of the century. New interpretations of polyphony and the *concertante* element are determining factors in his far-flung oeuvre, in which what one might call the counterpoint of rhythm and meter has assumed a major role; and the classical genre of the string quartet has occupied a key position in his work.

The old and the ever new developed the greatest contrasts in the world of twentieth-century performance. The autonomous composer who became his own conductor with the aid of the synthesizer worked next to such a widely versed musician as Boulez who, for a time, was the conductor of the New York Philharmonic. But the image of the orchestral sovereign such as the erstwhile conductor of the Boston Symphony, Karl Muck, whose imposing career lasted well into the twentieth century, lives on. The era of the Romantic performer stayed with us in such supreme figures as Andrés Segovia and Pablo Casals, and the legacy of the nineteenth-century pedagogue remained alive in the famous twentieth-century violinists who studied with Leopold Auer, himself a student of Joachim.



Karlheinz Stockhausen, page from Klavierstücke VIII

* * *

Personal recollection rather than the detached sifting process granted by the passage of time increasingly influences the sorting out of names from the twentieth century, and while the collectors' views continue to be guided by critical observation, their numbers become legion. Hans Moldenhauer, himself an active musician, retained through direct encounters of his long life an unusually vivid impression of the unfolding European and American musical scene. As a friend, he witnessed the essentially tragic career of Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco whose great gift suffered in emigration--the young avant-gardist was destined to become a respected conservative. Moldenhauer's teacher in young years was the prominent conductor Hans Rosbaud, the early interpreter of Schoenberg who in later years became the champion of contemporary music in Donaueschingen. In America it was Rudolph Ganz, President of the Chicago Musical College, under whose guidance Moldenhauer continued and completed his formal education. He was connected, often in close association, with such heterogeneous musical personalities as Karl Amadeus Hartmann, proponent of avant-garde performance and eminent symphonist; Paul A. Pisk, Schoenberg student, able composer, critic, and scholar; Eduard Steuermann, student of Busoni and Schoenberg, to whom many of the latter's premiere performances were entrusted; Nicolas Slonimsky, pianist, conductor and spirited lexicographer; Aurelio de la Vega, Cuban-American composer and musicographer; and Wolfgang Fraenkel, whom the escape from Germany had driven to new educational challenges in China before he settled in the United States.

The documents brought together in this collection obviously vary in importance, and the record of history they offer remains in constant need of revision. Will continuing currency or growing obscurity be accorded to figures of the recent past? To what extent will a new century rearrange the phalanx of the old? History has its own ways of being selective, and a name seemingly lost may acquire a new ring after a good deal more than a century. At any given age, critical evaluation can do no more than attempt to point the way. The only reliable guide into the future will always be the primary source.

[1] See "The Artistic Testament of Richard Strauss," *The Musical Quarterly*, vol. XXXVI, no. 1 (January 1950).

[2] See Donal Henahan, "Did Ives Fiddle with the Truth?" *New York Times*, February 21, 1988.

[3] Adolfo Salazar, *Music in Our Time* (New York, 1946), p. 318.

[4] Wiley Tappolet in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*.

[5] See Hans Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern; Perspectives* and "A Webern Archive in America" (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1966).