

Introduction

Among the treasures in the library of the Conservatorio di Musica “Giuseppe Verdi” in Milan is the collection “Nosedada.” It bears witness to the efforts of the music enthusiast Peter Lichtenthal to acquaint his environment, his contemporaries in Milan with the musical works of the Classical period, above all with the compositions of Mozart.

Lichtenthal (1780-1853) came from Bratislava. He studied medicine in Vienna, worked as a physician, and continued to pursue the musical training that he had begun already at an early age; he played viola.

He did not encounter Mozart, with whose music he was so taken, in Vienna – he had died in December 1791. Lichtenthal therefore sought the acquaintance of Mozart’s widow, Constanze, and undoubtedly also became friends with Mozart’s two sons, Karl and Wolfgang Amadeus the younger. In 1810 he went to Italy, and was active in Milan as a civil servant in the Royal Lombardic-Venetian government. It was there that – besides his own compositions and musicographical works (for example, the *Dizionario e Bibliografica della Musica*, 1826) – a series of arrangements of Classical works for various chamber music formations came into being, including a recasting of Mozart’s *Requiem* for string quartet,¹ and the present arrangement of the Symphony in G Minor, K. 550, for string quintet, an instrumentation very appropriate for Mozart (cf. his creations K. 174, 406, 515, 516, 593, and 614).

The reduction of the *Requiem* had placed high demands on the “Übersetzung” [literally “translation,” but a contemporary term for such an arrangement in the sense of “adaptation”], since it was necessary to transfer the musical substance of the score to the four instruments of the string quartet – while having to do without the vocal parts, and thus also without the text transported by the music. The arrangement of the Symphony, too, constituted a considerable task in which the wind instruments characteristic of Mozart’s orchestral writing had to be integrated in a sensitive manner into the string scoring. Nevertheless, a vivid image of the work came into being in these “adaptations,” opening up to an epoch, in which music was only there when it was being made (sound-recording media of any type – excepting mechanical instruments – were inconceivable), a first doorway to musical treasures that, on the other hand, attained and attain a particular intensity through one’s own participation – in contrast to passive listening.

1788: The Symphony in G Minor, K. 550, numbers among the fruits of this year, a very busy year for Mozart, a year in which a series of rather diverse works came into being. Besides the Viennese first performance of *Don Giovanni* (as is generally known, the triumphal premiere took place a year earlier in Prague), besides an impressive number of chamber music works – including the three Piano Trios K. 542, 548, and 564 – the composer completed the three large symphonies K. 543, 550, and 551. Moreover, in this year he also made a sort of “adaptation” of one of his own compositions: he produced a version for strings (K. 546) of the Fugue for two pianos K. 426.

In the nineteenth century, there were many arrangements of Classical works for a great variety of formations. Only a very few appeared in print (such as Mozart’s *Funeral Music* for a mechanical musical instrument in the mausoleum of General von Laudon, for example, which had been commissioned by the owner of the “Müllersche Kunstgalerie” [“Müller’s Art Gallery”], and that a decade later was offered by a Viennese publishing house in a four-hand “adaptation” as well as in a version for string quartet). Thus, the present editions of chamber-music adaptations of Mozart’s works cast a special light after two hundred years on the musical practice of that time, above all, however, on the early reception of Mozart’s works.

Reichenberg, January 2007
Frohmut Dangel-Hofmann

Our Edition

The manuscript that served as the source for this edition is found under the call number **Nosedada L.20.24** in the **Bibliotheca del Conservatorio di Musica “Giuseppe Verdi”** in Milan. It is a score in Lichtenthal’s hand with the title *Gran Sinfonia in sol minore, di Mozart, ridotta per Quintetto a 2 Violini, 2 Viole e Violoncello da Pietro Lichtenthal*.

The manuscript is well thought-out and relatively error-free – however, the copy we had at our disposal was not always easily legible. A comparison with Mozart’s original, for which we took recourse to the New Mozart Edition (NMA),² shows several discrepancies. In as far as these divergences, in our opinion, are the result of copying errors, or appear not

¹ W.A. Mozart, *Requiem – Contemporary arrangement for string quartet by Peter Lichtenthal*, ed. Marc Strümper (Heidelberg: Güntersberg 2006).

² W.A. Mozart, *Symphony in G minor “No. 40”, KV 550, Second Version with Clarinets*, Urtext of the New Mozart Edition, ed. H.C. Robbins Landon (Kassel: Bärenreiter 1958).

to be justifiable for other reasons, we have corrected them (see our Critical Report). Lichtenthal's phrasings and dynamic indications are in many cases more sparse than or differ from Mozart's. We assume that this was intentional, and have complemented or completed these indications only when it seemed necessary for the practical use of our edition (cf. Critical Report).

Lichtenthal's version of the second movement displays two anomalous passages, each containing four measures more than the original. This unusual circumstance can be explained as follows: In Mozart's autograph of the symphony there is an additional sheet of music paper on which two groups of four measures are notated. These "additions" were intended to *replace* measures 29-32 and 100-103, respectively. The copyists, however, misunderstood the instructions, and *inserted* these measures, creating awkward musical breaks. This "lengthened" version even found its way into the first printed editions. Only in 1841 did Robert Schumann call attention to the error.¹ Obviously, Lichtenthal, too, worked from such a corrupt exemplar. In our edition, we have corrected these passages and, as far as necessary, Lichtenthal's voice leading over the two breaks.

We would like to thank Frohmut Dangel-Hofmann for the preface and for proofreading the score, the quartet StringFizz, Vienna, and members of the Philharmonisches Orchester Heidelberg, for playing through the finished edition, and Howard Weiner for the translation of this preface.

Heidelberg, April 2007
Günter von Zadow
Translation by Howard Weiner

¹ See the Preface by H.C. Robbins Landon in *ibid.*