



The Bruckner Journal

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Sir John Barbirolli: postage stamp
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PREFACE by ROBERT SIMPSON

BRUCKNER could be said to typify the pacific strain in humankind, in default of which the race is now certainly doomed. His art could have, and perhaps already has, a special appeal in our time to our urgent need for calm and sanity, for a sense of deep stability in the world, whatever our beliefs, religious or other. He may be said to be a peace movement in himself.

The disquiet we sometimes find in him, especially in his profoundly disturbed Ninth Symphony, may be more than just a reflection of his own personal problems; it is powerful enough to reach across a hundred years to our own fears and hopes. We speak of the prophetic nature of art; it is commonplace to remark and analyse the highly conscious forebodings of a Mahler or a Strindberg. But Bruckner, despite innate and serious nervous difficulties, carried out a patient, sometimes aberrant, instinctive search for inner and outer peace (Beethoven's phrase!), a peace felt to be somehow attainable, in his case through faith. The slow, almost unwitting discovery of how his music should grow was also the discovery of his own nature, so that when his art does reveal disturbances they are of a distinct kind, potently innocent, immense, naive, and the more minatory for not being the result of articulate self-disputation.

We can never suppose him to be dramatizing himself, or the world. He speaks what is for him the simple truth, whether or no he can tell or even suspect what it may come to mean.

[Extract from the revised edition of *The Essence of Bruckner* (1992, now out of print), quoted by permission of Victor Gollancz Ltd, The Cassell Group. See page 15 for an obituary of Robert Simpson.]

FROM THE INSIDE

by Elizabeth Neville

The European Union Youth Orchestra, with around 150 members, is known for its large-scale programmes, and last summer was no exception. Bruckner's Seventh Symphony was among the pieces we prepared for a tour around Europe, Moscow and England.

Rehearsals began in Luxembourg and took the form of "sectionals", followed by the whole orchestra. Lutz Köhler, the Director of Studies, conducted the orchestra initially, and then we were once again honoured to have Bernard Haitink joining us. As we had concentrated mainly on our first programme, which included Shostakovich's Fourth, we had to get used to a different type of playing needed for Bruckner's lyrical, rich music. The Shostakovich had, however, prepared the string players' bowing arms for all the vigorous tremolo (my right arm muscle certainly grew during the summer!), and four of the French horn players quickly became familiar with the Wagner tubas bought especially for this programme.

In my opinion the first two movements of Bruckner's Seventh Symphony are the most grand and emotional. I had many arguments with other members of the orchestra over this, some agreeing with me and pointing out that the length of these movements put together equals two thirds of the piece, but others feeling that too much of the music builds up to nothing, laboriously saving the climaxes until later. Whatever the feeling, the few members not playing in the Bruckner, who were leaving half-way through the

course, shed a tear or two during the Adagio of our first performance.

As a cellist in a section of fourteen I know that we all felt slightly apprehensive and rather alone at the beginning of this symphony, which begins moderately quietly with a shapely cello melody. Since we had often travelled during the day, with very little rehearsal time, it was quite an effort to appear calm and collected in an unfamiliar hall. Bruckner did, however, give us the luxury of some beautifully cantabile cello melodies (although why do composers insist on writing in the treble clef rather than the tenor?). As for the lack of rests for the string players in this 70-minute symphony, it was exhausting! Perhaps it was simply that on a long tour we were all running out of energy (and having to stock up on energy tablets during the intervals), when in fact we should be used to the physical demands of Romantic composers like Bruckner.

Visiting the different countries, we were always welcomed with a warm reception. I was particularly touched by the many flowers, huge bouquets as well as single roses, given to Haitink by the audience in Moscow, some of whom were also keen to shake his hand. For the majority of the EUYO, however, the promenade concert in the Albert Hall in London was the best performance by far.

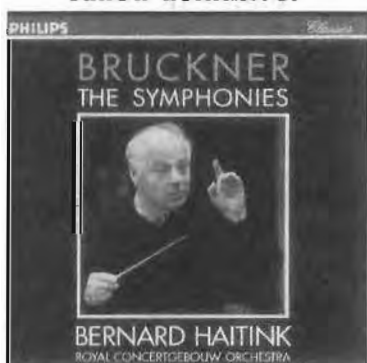
When young musicians come together from all over Europe (and several Russians also joined us last summer) to spend a month rehearsing or performing in concerts every day, working with inspiring tutors and conductors, travelling to great cities, and not forgetting the social part of these tours, the concluding concert is always a very emotional occasion. For some members like myself, it was the final youth orchestra concert that we would play in, after many years of training for the profession. For others who had made great friends from abroad, it was the last time they would be together until Easter and the next EUYO course. Although there are limitations on the number of members allowed from each country, there is always a large percentage of British, so that there were many friends and relatives in the Albert Hall.

There is a wonderful atmosphere at the proms. It is always incredible to see a full hall – even if the keen promenaders, who seem to get closer every year, can probably read your music. Unfortunately there is little room for a large orchestra on stage and feeling squashed in the heat is not so comfortable. However, the Bruckner last year went particularly well, with each player seeming to enjoy the symphony immensely, especially as Haitink was even more energetic and inspiring than usual. I think we all felt that the evening would be one to remember for many years.

Elizabeth Neville read music at the University of Nottingham and studied the cello with David Strange. She now plays in the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra. Vassily Sinaisky will conduct Bruckner's Eighth Symphony in the current BBC Philharmonic season at the Bridgewater Hall, Manchester, on 23 May.

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Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra

Bernard Haitink
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Philips Classics Productions

EUROPEAN UNION YOUTH ORCHESTRA/ BERNARD HAITINK

City Hall, Sheffield, 7 September 1997

In a concert which included a fine performance of Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4 (with an excellent rapport between the orchestra and the soloist, Emanuel Ax), Bruckner's Symphony No. 7 was played with an astonishing maturity and sensitive grasp of detail. Haitink had obviously instilled in these players an awareness of the architecture of each movement, and they responded magnificently. Particularly impressive was the attention paid to both the 'short-term' (sensitive shaping of phrases) and 'long-term' (overall structure, with well judged climax building). In the first movement there were moments of supreme lyricism (some exquisite woodwind and string playing), great rhythmical vitality (the third subject) and subtle textural variety (the bars preceding the E major coda and the coda itself). As the concert

was dedicated to the memory of the Princess of Wales, there was additional poignancy to the closing pages of the slow movement. Again the music was well paced, and the great C major catharsis had a sense of inevitability and nobility. Memorable too were the hushed solo flute echoes of the second-subject material. Both Scherzo and Trio drew impassioned playing. Perhaps the most striking feature of the performance, however, was Haitink's conception of the Finale. The magnificent sweep of the movement and the long journey towards the blazing E major apotheosis of the first-movement main theme were negotiated with a confidence and skill which belied the youthfulness of the players.

Crawford Howie



Royal Albert Hall, London, 9 September 1997

The cream of Europe's young musicians have done Bruckner proud down the years. Back in 1979, in only the EU Youth Orchestra's second season, Claudio Abbado conducted it in the Seventh Symphony, and he did so again in 1981. In 1984 James Judd coupled Bruckner's Ninth with the Berg Violin Concerto (soloist, Nigel Kennedy). And the Eighth Symphony was given in 1989 under the baton of Bernard Haitink. Last summer Haitink and the orchestra toured with two programmes, one comprising Mahler and Shostakovich, the other – which was played in Moscow, Berlin and Toulouse as well as Sheffield and London – devoted to Beethoven and Bruckner. Aged between 14-23, the players were described by

Haitink as capable of doing absolutely anything he asked. The BBC Prom concert which rounded off the tour bore him out. Not even the intrusion of a mobile phone could detract from the orchestra's magical ethereality in Bruckner's Seventh. As Hilary Finch remarked in *The Times*, the performance was never for one moment ponderous or bombastic. Did it, perhaps, contain *too* much sky-blue, as it were, in relation to earthier colours on Bruckner's palette? The thought crossed my mind during the earlier stages, only to be blown away eventually by the incisiveness of the brass. Nor was there any holding back by the cymbal player at the slow movement's opening up of the pearly gates. Grandeur without bombast: quintessential Bruckner.

Peter Palmer

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COMPACT DISCS

Bruckner: Symphony No. 7 (Nowak Edition)
 City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra/
 Simon Rattle
 EMI Classics 7243 5 56425 2 3
 by Elizabeth Thompson

Immense is the word for Sir Simon Rattle's vision of the radiant Seventh Symphony. With sound as rich and weighty as an antique tapestry, this Symphony Hall recording should have been a glorious listening experience in every respect. Yet something unyielding about the solemnly monastic reading may limit its appeal. Brucknerians crave not just one dimension but the full picture.

Slowly, even reverentially paced, Rattle's handling of the arching opening theme holds clues to the shape of things to come. The long span of melody is boldly drawn with scrupulous attention to each lingering phrase, each dynamic gradation. Despite beautiful full-bodied playing from the cellos and a rich response from all sections as the music intensifies, the effect is of sober meditation rather than aspiring ecstasy.

Climaxes are prepared impressively, weighted judiciously and realised awesomely with the CBSO giving of their finest. What is missing is the free-flowing, song-like approach; the Austrian warmth permeating and personalising the grand design. Weighed down by an extremely slow pace, the tuba-laden gravity of the Adagio calls to mind the impersonal progress of a great glacier.

In keeping with his overview, Rattle sees the lance-tilting Scherzo as a dark gallop, and in its sombre way it thrills. Similarly, no darts of mischief are allowed to lighten the finale, but the movement is built superbly with Rattle holding

back in a huge cliff-hanging pause before unifying the main themes in an overwhelming close.

Reservations apart, it is encouraging to see Sir Simon turning his attention to Bruckner. It will be interesting to see how his interpretation develops. Like all great art, Bruckner's music can encompass many viewpoints.

MUSICGRAM SOLUTION

The solution to the puzzle in our last issue is:

W	A	L	T	O	N
B	R	A	H	M	S
H	E	R	O	L	D
K	A	L	M	A	N
M	O	Z	A	R	T
E	N	E	S	C	U
K	O	D	A	L	Y
D	V	O	R	A	K
G	L	I	N	K	A
R	A	M	E	A	U

The first three correct answers drawn were from Tom Corfield, Michael Heenan and Howard Jones, who each receive a prize of two Belart CDs.

Bruckner: Symphony No. 8
 Hallé Orchestra/John Barbirolli
 BBC Radio Classics
 15656 91922 (from
 Carlton Home
 Entertainment, mid-price)
 by Elizabeth Thompson



Ignore the occasional fluff in the brass department; the odd audience cough or thump from the podium. Simply revel in Barbirolli and the Hallé in a fiery and mesmeric Eighth.

Sir John's name may not be indelibly linked with Bruckner in collectors' minds. He committed none of the symphonies to disc in the studio. Nevertheless the Fourth, Seventh, Eighth and Ninth were in his repertoire, and there is a video in which he rehearses the scherzo of the Seventh with great insistence on getting the rhythm exactly right.

In May 1970, after programming the Eighth in Hallé concerts in Manchester and Sheffield, he took the orchestra to London for this Royal Festival Hall performance, captured live by the BBC. It was his last London engagement: barely eight weeks later he died.

Bruckner lovers will rejoice that this recording from the BBC Sound Archive has been issued for the first time. Barbirolli's Italian side comes to the fore in a passionate reading.

With the accent on *allegro* rather than *moderato*, the colossal first movement sweeps along with a mettlesome energy. Vibrantly alive with swiftish tempos, the performance (favouring the 1892 "final" version) has a natural forward momentum, neither driven nor forced. Yet, characteristically, in the more inward music Barbirolli lingers expressively, finding seraphic calm in the eye of the storm.

Dance-like with joyous, carolling brass, the mighty Scherzo fizzes with energy. By contrast the trio is tenderly beguiling, almost gauche in its country-dance charm. Barbirolli keeps the brooding Adagio flowing and supple, sensitive to fleeting tugs of emotion. Unstoppable as an elemental force, the finale careers into action at a tremendous rate. As Barbirolli binds the thematic threads exultantly and delivers the crashing final bars, one wants to join in the applause.

The finely detailed recording captures the atmosphere of a memorable occasion.

Bruckner: Symphony No. 4 (organ transcription)

Thomas Schmögner at the organ of La Madeleine, Paris

Edition Lade EL CD 009

by Crawford Howie

Although Bruckner was a fine organist and established an international reputation as a result of his visits to France and London in 1869 and 1871 respectively, he wrote very little for the instrument. There are many accounts of his improvisational powers, his ability to take a given theme or a theme from one of his own works and to construct an imposing edifice of sound which invariably culminated in an elaborate contrapuntal apotheosis. But an organ transcription of one of his own symphonies? He may have entertained the idea, but it was an idea which certainly remained *in statu pupillari*. In any case the organ recital was not nearly so popular as the piano recital at the time, and Bruckner's main concern was to have his works performed. If the performance of a piano arrangement was the necessary stepping stone to an orchestral performance, so be it!

In his liner notes, Thomas Schmögner reminds us that Bruckner's "treatment of groups of instruments as separate blocks" has often been compared to the change of manuals in the organ and the orchestral "terrace-like dynamics" to the organist's "drawing on or pushing off stops or families of stops". He also does well to point out that Bruckner did not consider the organ as a substitute for the orchestra, but rather as a kind of "important intermediary stage between the short score and the full score" during the compositional process. Schmögner's justification for writing this intriguing transcription is that it is "probably as close as the listeners of our time can get to experiencing Bruckner the organist". The fact that he has recorded it on a make of instrument with which the composer would have been familiar – a Cavallé-Coll instrument – is all the more interesting because, of all nineteenth-century organs, this one is the best equipped to produce symphonic sounds.

This disc provoked some marked differences of opinion between the editors and reader Robert Wardell, who first brought it to our notice but subsequently confessed to disappointment.

Robert Wardell:

I like transcriptions. The Liszt transcriptions of the Beethoven symphonies for piano, the two-piano versions of the Brahms symphonies and the stunning Schoenberg orchestration of the Brahms G minor Piano Quartet are among my favourite records. Why, then, did I find the organ transcription of Bruckner's Fourth so unsatisfying? What I noticed first was the lack of colour: all the magical touches of instrumentation had, for me, been "ironed out". The skilful way in which Bruckner moves great blocks of orchestral sound around came over as just a loud noise. Some felicitous touches like those which come mid-way through the first movement, the flute weaving an arabesque over tremolo strings and the soft horn call, seemed to be played either with little imagination or on an organ incapable of suggesting what this should sound like. The scherzo did fizz along at quite an exciting pace, but overall I found the disc unrewarding.

Raymond Cox:

As far as I know, this is the only recording of a complete Bruckner symphony transcribed for organ. At first one might wonder whether the "Romantic" Symphony would be the most suitable, being one of the least ecclesiastical. Yet it seems to work amazingly well. Of course, there are features which the organ cannot provide as easily as the orchestra, for instance the shimmering, impressionistic opening sound, so mystical in feeling in the orchestral version. Clarity is often missing in loud

1st movement

Inevitably not all the original detail comes through in the transcription (but then that is true of many orchestral recordings!) The most successful features are the "voicing" of the different presentations of the theme at the beginning of the movement and the beginning of the recapitulation, the careful attention to contrasts (for instance, before and after the chorale theme in the development section), and, in general, the judicious build-up to climaxes and an awareness of the acoustics of the church (I imagine that the sound engineer had something to do with this!). The least successful feature is the apparent lack of balance in the transition section to the second subject in the recapitulation.

2nd movement

My only quibble here is the choice of registration at letter E (development of first idea), which produces a kind of "barrel organ" effect! Otherwise very sensitively transcribed.

3rd movement

The least successful (apart from the charmingly played *Ländler* Trio), perhaps because the quick shifts of registration don't quite come off – or because this movement doesn't really lend itself to transcription. It really needs an orchestra!

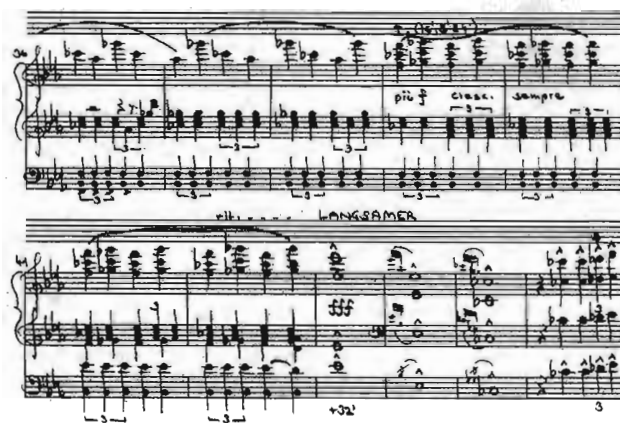
4th movement

Same general comments as for first movement – excellent "voicing", good handling of contrasts, well-conceived climax-building. I found the opening, the quiet passage at the end of the developmental section, and the coda particularly impressive.

passages, but that is the nature of the instrument. However, the scherzo goes well. For anyone who not only loves the organ but would like to get near to Bruckner as a symphonic organist, this recording could be a fascinating experience.

Peter Palmer:

The organ played in this recording is a marvel of its kind, but I would have preferred a German Romantic instrument for Bruckner, or indeed a 20th-century Klais organ such as Erwin Horn used for his 1990 Novalis recording. That said, I found the effect of the very opening of the symphony more magical than I would have ever expected.



Organ version of finale, bars 36-46

Bruckner: Mass in E minor WAB 27; Te Deum WAB 45; Psalm 150 WAB 38
Soloists, Gächinger Kantorei Stuttgart, Bach-Collegium Stuttgart/Helmuth Rilling
Hänssler Classic CD 98.119 (from Select)

Bruckner: Mass in F minor WAB 28 (coupled with Puccini: Mottetto per San Paolino)
Soloists, Gächinger Kantorei Stuttgart, Radio-Sinfonieorchester Stuttgart/Helmuth Rilling
Hänssler Classic CD 98.983 (from Select)

by Crawford Howie

Readers will recall Richard Roddis's review of a recent recording of these works (the Corydon Singers and Orchestra/Matthew Best) in our second issue (July 1997). The earlier Jochum recordings were quite correctly held up as "benchmark" performances and, while they remain unsurpassed in some respects, more recent recordings of these works are often superior in sound quality, even if they do not always match Jochum in musical perception (apart from Best and the Corydon singers, there are CDs of (a) the E minor Mass by Herreweghe, with the Ghent Collegium Vocale and the Musique Oblique Ensemble [Harmonia Mundi], and Bernius, with the German Philharmonic Wind Ensemble and the Stuttgart Chamber Choir [Sony]; (b) the F minor Mass by Welser-Möst, with the LPO and the Linz Mozart Choir [EMI]; (c) the Te Deum by Haitink, with the VPO and the Bavarian Radio Chorus [Philips] and Welser-Möst, with the LPO and the Linz Mozart Choir [EMI]; and (d) Psalm 150 by Daniel Barenboim, with the Chicago SO and Chorus [DGG]).

But now we have performances which stand alongside those of Jochum in interpretative insight and grandeur of conception. Rilling brings to these four Bruckner works the same awareness of small-scale detail and large-scale architecture which has already won him a reputation as one of the finest Bach conductors of his generation. He is ably assisted by infinitely malleable and responsive choral and orchestral forces and a fine group of soloists.

It was instructive to compare the performance of the E minor Mass with a much earlier Rilling recording (made in the early 1970s, on the "Three Centuries of Musick" label). In the latter, recorded in the Stuttgart *Stiftskirche*, Rilling used the massed voices of three choirs – the *Gächinger Kantorei*, the *Figuralchor der Gedächtniskirche* and the *Spandauer Kantorei* – and the wind instruments of the *Stuttgart Bach Kollegium*. The spaciousness of this earlier recording, no doubt due to the acoustical properties of a large church, was probably not far removed from the sound of the first performance of the work in Linz, conducted outdoors by Bruckner on 29 September 1869. Another interesting parallel – Bruckner used the combined *Frohsinn*, *Sängerbund* and *Musikverein* choirs, accompanied by instrumentalists from the military band of one of the regiments stationed in Linz.

Over twenty years later Rilling has clearly made

some changes in his interpretation of the work, but several of the striking characteristics of the newer recording are already present in the older. Indeed, there is often very little to choose between the two. In the *Kyrie*, the first tenors' ascent to a high b' at the end of the "Christe" section is thrilling in both performances; but there is a more "immediate" sound in the later recording (recorded in the concert hall) and an even greater attention to detail and tonal contrast not only in this movement but throughout the Mass. This is most striking in the *Credo* and *Sanctus* movements where Rilling inspires splendid singing and playing from his performers. In the *Credo*, the mystery of the incarnation, the bleakness of the crucifixion and the joy of the resurrection are all eloquently conveyed. In the *Sanctus*, the highlights are the striking entry of horns and trumpets at "Dominus Deus Sabaoth" and the glorious unfolding of the choral polyphony. Although Rilling takes almost a minute longer over the *Benedictus* in the earlier recording, there is no lack of awareness of the architecture of the whole movement in either performance. The seamless transition to the joyous "Hosanna in excelsis" is handled well in both, but the interplay of voices and wind instruments has a much greater clarity in the more recent performance. Rilling builds up impressively to two searing climaxes ("miserere nobis"), in the *Agnus Dei*, and the final "dona nobis pacem", with its recall of the earlier *Kyrie* material in the woodwind, is a moving valediction sung and played with great sensitivity.

Shortly after the performance of the F Minor Mass in the *Augustinerkirche*, Vienna, on 16 June 1872, Bruckner wrote to his friend J.B. Schiedermayer, the dean of Linz Cathedral, describing it as "the most difficult of all Masses . . . written in praise of the Highest." One of the most searching passages in performance is the sudden change from full accompaniment to unaccompanied singing in the coda of the *Kyrie*. This is fearlessly negotiated in Rilling's account and the closing bars, in which the chorus sing "Kyrie eleison" for the last time in a hushed unison while the orchestral strings repeat the falling fourth motive from the opening, are impressively performed. The *Gloria* and *Credo* are movements of great contrast. The affirmatory words, which meant so much to Bruckner, are clothed in music which explores a wide variety of choral textures (antiphonal, unison, imitative, fugal) and solo writing. One of the

undoubted highlights is the slow middle section of the *Credo* in two linked sections – “Et incarnatus est”, in which the mystery of the incarnation is movingly conveyed by solo tenor (sung most expressively here by Uwe Heilmann), accompanied by the ethereal strains of a solo violin and solo viola and pulsating high woodwind chords; and “Crucifixus”, in which tutti strings continue the syncopated figuration, while solo baritone (sung with great sensitivity by Matthias Görne) and chorus portray the death of Christ in moving terms. There is great attention to detail in the *Benedictus*, with exemplary shaping of phrases by both soloists and chorus, not to mention the cellos’ playing of the opening theme. The sudden brightening of key (from A flat to G major) shortly after the beginning of the recapitulation is eagerly embraced by the chorus. Rilling’s awareness of the intricacy of detail in the *Agnus Dei* is another outstanding feature of this recording. The return of material from the earlier movements, a cyclical *tour de force* on Bruckner’s part, is made to sound extremely convincing. The *fortissimo* choral unison re-statement of the *Gloria* fugue subject is electrifying and the oboe’s “dying fall” at the end (*Kyrie* motive) is left to hang in the air most beautifully.

The cardinal qualities of both the *Te Deum* and *Psalm 150* – the almost “primitive” strength of expression and the grandeur of choral sound – are

precisely those which make a striking impact in Rilling’s interpretation of the works. These qualities are thrown into even greater relief, of course, when passages of tremendous power alternate with sections of great lyrical beauty. A good example is the “*Salvum fac*” section in the *Te Deum* which begins with a re-statement of the earlier “*Te ergo*” material (four vocal soloists, chorus, solo violin obbligato), cadences very quietly (unaccompanied chorus), and then erupts with a full orchestral and choral tutti (“*Per singulos dies*”). Even those contemporary critics who were normally well-disposed towards Bruckner took him to task for his “ungrateful” vocal writing. However, Rilling’s choir copes admirably with the often very taxing high passages. The sopranos take the notoriously exposed “non confundar” entry at the end of the fugue in their stride and float effortlessly above the other voices. Also in *Psalm 150* the high vocal tessituras seem to hold no terrors for the choir. The top C for sopranos which Bruckner reserves until nine bars from the end is thrilling. The fugal “*Alles, was Odem hat*” is perhaps a little on the fast side, but the contrapuntal intricacies are not obscured and there is a well-judged balance between the voices and the instruments. The slower middle section, with its chromatically decorative parts for solo violin and solo soprano together with supporting chorus, has great breadth.

Bruckner: Seven Motets (coupled with Reger: Geistliche Gesänge, Op. 138)

The Netherlands Chamber Choir/Uwe Gronostay

Globe GLO 5160 (48 minutes 48 seconds)

by Peter Palmer

In a BBC Radio 3 *Private Passions* programme, the novelist A.N. Wilson drew attention recently to the vibrant beauty of Bruckner’s motets. The *a cappella* pieces on this recording span more than thirty years, from the exquisite and heartfelt *Ave Maria* of 1861 to the Passiontide *Vexilla regis* of 1892. The majority are written for four-part chorus, but the *Ave Maria* is seven-part, while the quasi-archaic Lydian setting of *Os justi* made for St Florian (1879) ranges from four-part to eight-part texture. The booklet does not say where in Amsterdam the music was recorded, but the ambience seems just right. The Netherlands Chamber Choir is a professional group of mixed voices funded by the Dutch government. It is not only the intonation, the tonal evenness and the balance that are (except in moments of extreme pressure) outstanding. Dynamics are judged with care, and these gripping performances bring out both the subtlety and the majesty of Bruckner’s writing.

If you also want those motets which are accompanied by trombones and/or organ, then there are British options: the Corydon Singers at full price on Hyperion and the Choir of St Bride’s, Fleet Street,

on a Naxos bargain disc. But Uwe Gronostay offers an interesting contract to Bruckner with the last unaccompanied choruses of Max Reger. Like Bruckner, Reger was a devotee of Wagner and once described himself as a Catholic to his fingertips. Yet of these eight “*Spiritual Songs*”, only the fourth has a Catholic flavour, while Wagnerian chromaticism is almost entirely absent. They are settings of German texts, mainly from between the 14th-16th centuries, and the choir is fully alive to the expressive marriage of words and notes. The CD booklet includes texts and translations for both composers.

Review copies of the CDs by Thomas Schmögner and by The Netherlands Chamber Choir were supplied by:

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Any CD reviewed in this issue can be ordered from Cathedral Classical, post free in the UK.

BOOK REVIEW

by Tom Corfield

Bruckner Studies edited by Timothy L. Jackson and Paul Hawkshaw.

Cambridge University Press. ISBN 0 521 57014 X (hardback), 285pp. £40 (US: \$59.95)



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The publishers call this 'the most important English-language book on the composer since Robert Simpson's *The Essence of Bruckner*'. That is a bold claim, especially as the two books are quite different in structure and purpose. *Bruckner Studies* is not, like Simpson's pioneering book, a comprehensive survey of the composer's music but a miscellany of articles on historical and analytical topics, united only by the fact that all originated as papers in a symposium at Connecticut College in 1994. The American provenance (and the preponderance of Americans among the authors) explains the use of American terms and spelling. The book reflects not only the latest research on Bruckner but also some of the current concerns of musicology in general. There is a strong emphasis on the reception of Bruckner's music, particularly during the Third Reich, while the analytical articles illustrate the shift during the past thirty years from an essentially literary and descriptive approach to something much more technical. Nobody should be deterred, however, for although this is an academic book, it contains much that will interest the general reader.

It is one of the two editors, **Paul Hawkshaw**, who opens the book. His article traces the story of the F minor Mass from its composition in 1867-68 through various authentic revisions to the mutilated first edition of 1894. Certain significant facts emerge. Revisions coincided with performances and concerned mainly the orchestra. The vocal parts formed, in Hawkshaw's words, a 'structural skeleton which remained intact regardless of what Bruckner did to the rest of the body of the score'. Early revisions tended to make the work easier to play and sing, whereas later ones sprang from more esoteric considerations of phrase length and part-writing prompted by the composer's study of Beethoven and Mozart. Hawkshaw wants us to see the logic behind all these alterations; he wants to clear Bruckner of the charge of pointless tinkering. 'Each alteration', he writes, 'demonstrates the work of a professional composer confronting a specific performance or analytical issue'. A sceptic might here point out that few other composers have found so many issues to confront over such a long period in the case of so many works. Bruckner's urge to revise may not have been as irrational and obsessive as is sometimes claimed, but his working method was, to say the least, highly unusual. Haas's edition of the Mass takes the work as it was in 1881 (with two exceptions) and the Eulenburg score follows this; Nowak incorporates later changes.

The story has an unfortunate sequel, namely the reorchestration of the Mass by Josef Schalk which led to publication in 1894. Much information on this can be found in Hans Redlich's introduction to the Eulenburg score. As a phenomenon of its time it makes an intriguing study, though sadly it caused Bruckner some distress. Hawkshaw's article is musicology at its finest: painstaking research leading to clearly presented conclusions, with significance that goes beyond one particular work and contributes to our understanding of Bruckner as a whole. Not the least of the chapter's virtues are the photographs of manuscripts which enable us to follow the process of revision for ourselves.

The next two chapters are biographical. **Elisabeth Maier** is preparing a complete edition of Bruckner's diaries and offers the reader a taste of what can be found there. We are dealing here not with journals like those of Pepys but with engagement diaries never intended for others to see, of which twenty-three survive. Predictably, much of the content is mundane. There are details of teaching duties and of bills that have been paid; there are addresses Bruckner wants to remember. But alongside such everyday matters we find entries of real significance which are all the more touching for their brevity. On 11th November 1860, for example, he wrote simply, 'Mother died'. Blank pages are used for notes of a different kind, such as the analyses of Beethoven and Mozart to which Hawkshaw referred, quotations, and gloomy reflections on a series of disappointments. There are also prayer lists where Bruckner noted down what prayers he had said and how many times he had repeated them. One approaches this material rather diffidently. What right have we to pore over the personal jottings of this most private man? In fact there are no great revelations here and the light that these diaries shed on Bruckner's inner world is (as Maier freely admits) quite small. But they do enable us to come a little closer to the man and to understand better his daily routine, his hopes, pleasures and regrets. Clearly in Maier, who is director of the Anton Bruckner Institute, he has a most sympathetic researcher.

Margaret Notley investigates the links between Bruckner and the Viennese Wagnerites who championed his music. The relationship between Bruckner and Wagner himself was extraordinarily one-sided. The anecdotes are familiar, particularly the story of the dedication to Wagner of the Third Symphony, but there is no evidence that Wagner ever made any effort to help Bruckner, either practically or in his writings. Indeed in an essay of 1879 he condemned contemporary symphonies as largely worthless and though Bruckner is not named, he is included by implication. The sleight of hand which enabled Göllicher a mere five years later to call Bruckner 'that second Beethoven longed for by Wagner' would be comical if its implications for the composer and his music had not been so serious and ultimately unhelpful. The focus of Wagnerian

enthusiasm in Vienna was the *Wiener akademischer Wagner-Verein* which offered Bruckner much support and made him an honorary member in 1885. Notley shows how readily Bruckner fitted the cloak of Wagnerian ideology and phraseology in which the Wagnerites wrapped him. Unhappily, that ideology had its sinister side. In 1890 several members of the *Wagner-Verein* broke away to form a rival organisation whose aims were more political and whose anti-semitism was now quite explicit. They strove to free German art from adulteration and Jewish influence, and Göllicherich was a leading member. It is salutary to reflect on how much of our knowledge of Bruckner comes from this Wagnerian extremist, who was barred from delivering a speech at the celebrations marking Bruckner's honorary doctorate because the University found his anti-semitism unacceptable. It says much about Bruckner's character that he was able to retain the respect and honour of the extremists without associating, or being associated, with their more extreme views.

Some of the same themes return in **Bryan Gilliam's** article, where he relates how the Nazis adopted Bruckner as a cultural idol. His strength of character and natural detachment were now powerless to protect him and his biography was shamelessly rewritten. Much was made of his humble background and racial purity, and, as increasingly the authorities came to see the Church as an enemy of their cause, they reduced his Christian devotion to the level of *Gottgläubigkeit*, the mere belief in God which they themselves espoused. He was portrayed as a victim of vicious Jewish musical criticism and the chains binding him to Wagner were pulled tighter than ever. It was, they said, his encounter with Wagner that had freed him from the thrall of church music to become the greatest symphonist of his time. A photograph of Hitler standing reverentially before the bust of Bruckner in the Valhalla shrine at Regensburg epitomises this appropriation of the composer. Happily, plans for a Brucknerian Bayreuth at St Florian were never realised. It is fortunate too that after the war Bruckner emerged with his reputation little tainted. Unlike Wagner, he had expressed no views which could possibly associate him with any of the nastier ideas of the Nazis. He was clearly (as in part he had been during his life) the innocent victim of the machinations of others.

Ultimately then, was no harm done to the Bruckner cause? **Benjamin Marcus Korstvedt** suggests that it was, in as much as the philosophy of the first Bruckner *Gesamtausgabe* was infused with the thinking of the regime which offered it moral and financial support. The *Gesamtausgabe* was produced on the assumption that the first printed scores of Bruckner were false to his intentions and that a reliable edition needed to go back to his manuscripts. Sometimes this was true (as we have seen in the case of the F minor Mass), but often Bruckner participated in the process of publication and approved of the results. This was explained psychologically in terms of his susceptibility to outside influences. It is easy to see how musicology could become overlaid with political ideology. Bruckner needed rescuing from malign foreign influence (Löwe had been Jewish and the Schalk brothers were sometimes wrongly portrayed as such), while on an

abstract level the search for a pure text was analogous to the struggle for racial purification. The considerable debate which should have accompanied work on the *Gesamtausgabe* was stifled and opposition to its methods was silenced. The shadow that remains, Korstvedt argues, is the questionable assumption that only Bruckner's autograph scores count. Most of us have been brought up on the belief that, in Deryck Cooke's words, 'the first editions . . . have been utterly discredited'. Korstvedt wants the case reopened and hints in his conclusion that the whole notion of *Urtext* (generally and not just with Bruckner) is becoming obsolete. He believes that it needs replacing with a more complex study of sources in which the collaborative element in publication is given due weight.

Stephen McClatchie deals with the same period, this time showing how political dogma influenced writing on Bruckner. He takes three authors, all Bayreuthians (by which he means Wagnerians for whom the composer's cultural and political views were as compelling as his music) and all members of the Nazi party. One of the names is well known. Alfred Lorenz devised a system of analysis which he applied to Wagner in a monumental study with the imposing title *Das Geheimnis der Form* (the secret of form) *bei Richard Wagner*. McClatchie shows how readily that system in itself could be linked with the ideas of National Socialism. Lorenz wrote on Bruckner as well as Wagner, making the by now compulsory connections between the two: 'Wagner was, and remains, the rouser of Bruckner's sublime genius'. He did not, however, apply his analytical techniques to Bruckner. That was left to Hans Alfred Grunsky who made a study of the composer's symphonies from a Lorenzian standpoint. One of his analyses is included here, betraying its origins in its distinctive vocabulary of 'Bar' and 'Bogen'. Grunsky's father, Karl, was also a writer on music and published three studies of Bruckner. Dated respectively 1908, 1922 and 1936, they illustrate vividly the political infiltration of musicology as Bruckner is presented in increasingly nationalistic terms and his Wagnerian links become an ever more pressing concern.

It seems that when Josef Schalk was not reorchestrating Bruckner's music he was developing a theory of harmony, based on Bruckner's teaching (which in turn derived from Sechter) but going further in addressing the question of chromaticism. He published articles in *Bayreuther Blätter*, but it is with his unpublished and uncompleted *Aufsatz über die Chromatik* that **Robert Wason**, a specialist in Viennese harmonic theory, is concerned. Schalk's starting point was the diatonic scale of C. In so far as any sharp or flat added colour to this, all deviations from that scale were in a sense chromatic. From this sprang a very keen awareness of key colour which depended, he believed, on temperaments in which differences between keys were preserved. Schalk hated both the notion and the practice of equal temperament. In fact, Wason shows that this was much more spoken about than used in the nineteenth century, and the likelihood is that Bruckner was brought up on unequally tempered organs (though not, of course, mean-toned ones on which much of his music would be simply unplayable). Wason speculates that if this were so, such 'idiosyncrasies would have

become part of his tonal imagination' and influenced his conception of different keys. That is an intriguing thought and the matter deserves investigation, though it has to be said that by the middle of the nineteenth century key association of various kinds was more likely to affect a composer's tonal imagination than niceties of tuning.

History now gives way to analysis. In an immense and very erudite article the book's other editor, **Timothy Jackson**, investigates the reversed recapitulation, in which the subjects of a sonata-form movement reappear in a different order. He discusses a number of examples from Haydn to Brahms, using Schenkerian graphs to show how, in such instances, the structural tonic is often delayed until the eventual arrival of the first subject, so that the recapitulated second group occurs over what is, in terms of Schenker's underlying tonal structure, the prolongation of some other harmony. When finally Jackson reaches Bruckner (and his devotion to context may leave you wondering whether he ever will), his analysis leads to some engaging theories about the programme of the Seventh Symphony. Bruckner himself linked the *Adagio* with Wagner's death, but Jackson goes further. Spurred on by his conviction that the reversed recapitulation has tragic connotations and by what he sees as a series of quotations from *The Ring*, he views the whole symphony as a kind of *Eroica*, a celebration of Wagner's heroic life and death. The quotations are of the allusive rather than the conclusive sort and not everyone will share Jackson's astonishment that they have not been noticed before. Nor will every reader want to follow him in some of his great imaginative leaps, but that does not matter. We can applaud this article for its wealth of stimulating ideas.

Given the current interest in Schenker, it was inevitable that sooner or later his techniques would be applied to Bruckner. There was in fact a personal link between the two, for Schenker was a pupil of Bruckner between 1887 and 1889. It is well known that Schenker's tastes in music were conservative, so it is no surprise to learn that, while he admired his teacher as a man, he found him wanting as a symphonist. 'The often really considerable beauty of individual moments', he commented, 'does not compensate for the lack of the organic'. To **Edward Laufer** that remark is a challenge and he sets out to convince Schenker, as it were, using the great theorist's own methods. To this end, he selects two movements from the Ninth Symphony (strictly, one and a half, for he ignores the trio section of the scherzo). Whether Schenker would have been convinced is hard to say, but Laufer's work is enormously impressive in its detail and scope, and if the motivic analysis does sometimes seem a little contrived, any weakness there is eclipsed by the insights given into the structure and coherence of Bruckner's music. Schenkerian analysis does not work well for all music of this period, but plainly it has much to offer in the case of Bruckner, not as the only valid approach, certainly, but as one among several. By delving below the surface and enabling us better to understand the harmonic processes at work underneath, it can help answer some of the most profound questions raised by his music. Laufer's article will reward readers who are prepared to give it the close attention it requires. It is a pity that the layout is sometimes awkward. To the intellectual challenge of the

analysis is added the purely physical one of reading commentary on one side of a page while at the same time following complex diagrams printed sideways on the reverse.

Warren Darcy addresses Bruckner's use of sonata form. Simpson tried to distance the composer from that concept, having seen what misunderstandings could arise from trying to fit the music into rigid sonata-form patterns. Darcy's approach is different. He believes that in the nineteenth century, as the dialectic of the sonata principle, born as it was of Enlightenment ideals, seemed less and less relevant, a number of 'deformations' of sonata form became current. These he lists, explaining in each case their relevance to Bruckner. He is fond of coining labels and these are not always elegant. His is a world of 'non-congruent triple rotation variants' and 'teleological structural genesis'. But hidden behind the jargon are some interesting ideas. One is the concept of rotational form, where a procession of themes (typically for Bruckner, three) returns once or twice in ways that may coincide with the sections of the sonata form, but may not, since development and recapitulation often together form a return of those themes. Also useful is his examination of those second subjects which, by beginning in unexpected keys, suggest a visionary realm isolated from the main symphonic discourse. As for codas, Darcy sees them as standing outside the sonata form, achieving (especially in the case of finales) the 'redemption' that the recapitulation has failed to achieve.

In a concluding article **Joseph Kraus** examines the irregular and subtle phrase lengths that are such a compelling feature of Bruckner's early scherzos. Particularly valuable is his comparison of the scherzo from the First Symphony in the Linz and Vienna versions. He uncovers what he calls a musical plot in the conflict between duple and triple hypermeasures (groups of bars which function as metrical units) and he shows how this is weakened in the revision where phrase lengths are made more regular. Schenker surfaces again in this chapter (almost as if no analysis could be complete without him) and deflects Kraus from the main purpose of his article, though the graphs do yield some insight into differences of pacing in the scherzos of the first three numbered symphonies. One detail is strange: the first sixteen bars in the scherzo of the Third Symphony seem to be forgotten. Readers should also be aware of the wrong key signatures in the final musical example.

Bruckner Studies should be read by everyone with a serious interest in the composer. It inspires, intrigues, challenges and provokes by turns, stirring out of our complacency those of us whose ideas about Bruckner have become comfortably settled. In the main, the production is excellent. Aside from a few misprints and the matter of layout referred to in connection with Laufer's article, there is only one cause for regret and that is the index, which ignores the footnotes. A scholarly book of such scope and quality deserves the most thorough indexing.

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BRUCKNER IN LINZ

The following memoir of Bruckner in Linz was written by the district archivist, Ferdinand Krackowizer. Early in 1868 Bruckner resumed the conductorship of the "Frohsinn" male voice choir, with whom he gave the closing chorus of Wagner's *The Mastersingers* in advance of the opera's first stage production. The accident on the Danube described in the memoir was still the talk of the town when Bruckner conducted an *ad hoc* orchestra in the premiere of his First Symphony.



Bruckner, then a well-built man in his forties, was as fit as a fiddle. On the powerful, well-nourished body there rested an intelligent round head with close-cropped brown hair. The friendly face, with its healthy colouring, had a warm smile for everyone. The alert eyes gazed out on the world with unconcealed pleasure. Bruckner's suit of black cloth, broad, comfortable and full of folds, must have been made by a very modest tailor. The slender neck was surrounded by a very wide shirt-collar around which a black silk kerchief was loosely wound. A delicately curved nose gave the face a dignified look. Smooth shaven except for the upper lip, which wore a little moustache trimmed in the English fashion. When his biographers speak of the head of an emperor, they are right insofar as they are depicting the *elderly* Bruckner. But at that time the kind, amiable chap did not look in the least like a Caesar. He was a pure embodiment of the cheerful, honest, sincere Upper Austrian. Yet in spite of his unassuming appearance, nobody could fail to sense the force of his personality.

The whole of Linz knew Bruckner, and they all gladly stopped to watch when he stepped briskly through the streets. He made copious use of a snuff-box, while an exceptionally large blue handkerchief formed a bulge in his coat pocket. He enjoyed a cigar and a glass – or several glasses – of wine in the company of friends of an evening. On Fridays he made tracks for the "Bayrischer Hof", where he would pay no attention to the salutations of his loyal supporters, going straight up to the waiter and asking anxiously: "Is there any crayfish soup, Josef?" If the obliging Ganymede said there was, Bruckner would call to him: "Quick, Josef, bring me three helpings!" He invariably wanted three helpings of his favourite

dishes, which were lamb lights with dumplings and mutton with turnips.

After a meal the master of the organ and I would sometimes look out of the window, and on one occasion some comely wenches were obviously eyeing us with amusement from the tavern opposite. Bruckner was very eager to find out who these "ladies" were. But when, to his alarm, he discovered that they were girls of very easy virtue, known as *Flitscherln* in Linz, he indignantly stepped back from the window.

A thriving restaurant at the time was "Zum Roten Krebs", whose terrace offered a fine view of the rushing waters of the Danube and the gentle slopes of the Mühlviertel. So in seasonable weather the terrace would be packed with people laughing and carousing. On 5 May 1868 I was lunching there happily with a jolly fellow from Steyr, the owner of a cavernous singing voice and guardian of two charming young ladies. Bruckner, a close friend of the basso profundo, had seated himself at our table and was in animated conversation with the lovely Johanna. For apart from his note-heads, Master Anton also took a special delight in the heads of pretty women, and there is no denying that he was vulnerable to Cupid's arrows. Suddenly the diners all noticed a great concourse and tumult of people flocking towards the bridge. The high waves of the Danube were beating against the wooden Jochbrücke, which was in danger after being struck by heavy barges which a steamboat was trying to tow up the river. All of a sudden several pillars collapsed like playing cards, hurling a number of unfortunates into the water. Terrified by this alarming spectacle, Johanna fell into the arms of Bruckner, who was standing beside her, and was tenderly comforted by him. For a long time after this episode the dotting musician assiduously courted the young woman from Steyr and frequently asked me: "You do think Johanna likes me, don't you?" But Bruckner often changed the object of his adoring allegiance.

The post of director of the "Frohsinn" male voice choir cost Bruckner a great deal of effort. [...]

Our affection for our conductor is shown by the way we persevered over a period of weeks in learning his extremely difficult Mass [in E minor], which was sung at the inauguration of the new cathedral's votive chapel. During the dog-days of August the men and their female counterparts patiently endured what must have been more than twenty rehearsals in the muggy hall, with Bruckner conducting in his shirt sleeves.

From Max Auer, *Anton Bruckner: Sein Leben und Werk*, Zurich/Leipzig/Vienna ⁵1947.

LUX IN TENEBRIS: Bruckner and the Dialectic of Darkness and Light

by Derek Scott

In music historiography, Bruckner emerges as that rare phenomenon among nineteenth-century composers – the ‘pure’ musician.¹ The reception of his music today is undoubtedly affected by this abstract view of his compositions. His music certainly poses problems for the marketing divisions of record companies: no Bruckner appears on the EMI *Classical Moods* albums, which include *Passion, Melancholy, Dreams, Celebration, Spiritual, Tranquillity, Romance, and Power*. Bruckner is not seen as a typical ‘classical’ composer – he does not appear on any of EMI’s four double-albums entitled *The Classic Experience*; nor is he seen as a popular figure (Castle Communications’s five-CD set *100 Popular Classics* contains no Bruckner). In fact, searching for a compilation album that does include Bruckner is a fruitless exercise.*

This article is an attempt to further critical insight into the meaning of Bruckner’s music. The strategy I am adopting is: (1) To establish the sacred character of Bruckner’s music and show how he inherits religious signifiers for darkness and light; (2) To show how he uses these signifiers; (3) To explore the appropriateness of the darkness/light trope, with all the connotations that would have for a deeply religious composer, and (4) To suggest a

‘transfiguration of themes’ in Bruckner, as distinct from Liszt’s transformations.

The sacred character of Bruckner’s music and the formative influences on his language

Bruckner’s deeply religious character and submissive attitude to authority has been explained by “the entrenchment of Catholicism in the rural districts of Austria during the *Vormärz* (the period preceding the revolution of 1848).”² He was born in Ansfelden, near Linz, in an area of peasant farming land during “a period of deepest reaction and intolerance” when the “iron grip of the State was reinforced by the authority of the Roman Catholic Church.”³ Between the ages of 21 and 31 he lived in the seclusion of the Abbey of St Florian, one of Austria’s “most majestic edifices in pure baroque style – ‘Jesuit style’.”⁴ Any freedoms gained by the revolution were short-lived; thus, when he left, in 1855, he may not even have been aware of any change. That year he began his studies with the conservative and exacting Simon Sechter; it was also the year of the *Concordat* which “in effect handed over the whole educational system . . . to the representatives of Rome.”⁵ The narrowness of his intellectual curiosity is indicated by his personal library: but for two books, it reputedly consisted entirely of music and religious works.⁶

The formative influence on Bruckner was Austrian church music and the works of the Viennese classical composers. He became familiar with Mozart’s Masses and Haydn’s *Creation* during the year (1835–6) spent with his relation and Godfather Johann Baptist Weiss, organist at Hörsching.⁷ His *Missa Solemnis* (1854) is indebted to Mozart and Haydn, reminiscences of whom are also occasionally found in his early symphonies. Robert Simpson, for example, points out that the continuation of the opening of the slow movement of the Third Symphony recalls in texture and mood the introduction to Haydn’s *Seven Last Words*.⁸ This movement also contains a *Marienkadenz* at bar 13, a feature common in Viennese sacred music which appears in some of Bruckner’s choral music, for instance, the seven-part Ave Maria of 1861.⁹ Still earlier sacred musical influences are in evidence, the *Sanctus* of his E minor Mass builds on a theme from Palestrina’s *Missa Brevis*.¹⁰ Several of his motets are written in the old church modes: *Pange Lingua* (1868) is Phrygian; *Os Justi* (1879) is Lydian.¹¹

More generally, his compositions rely on our knowledge of a sacred music paradigm, so that we recognize, say, the use of a chorale-like theme, or other signs established within the discursive code he uses (such as the connotations of major and minor). In Hans-Hubert Schönzeler’s opinion, Bruckner achieves “moments of utter sublimity” with his chorale themes; they can be climactic on brass or pianissimo on strings, “providing moments of repose,



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of peace and meditation.”¹² Deryck Cooke remarks, “the liturgical character of some of the chorale themes in the symphonies arises out of their simultaneous melodic and harmonic reliance on the archaic church progression from tonic to subdominant and back.”¹³ Cooke cites as examples the chorale in the *Finale* of the Fifth and the second theme of the second group in the *Adagio* of the Eighth.

Sometimes, Bruckner makes his sacred intentions clear, as with his characteristic expression mark *Feierlich* (meaning ‘solemn’), and by planning to dedicate the Ninth ‘*An meinen lieben Gott*’. Elsewhere, we are left to make the appropriate connections; for example, bare 4ths, 5ths and octaves may be associated with organum, hence the sacred character of the opening of the *Te Deum*. Liszt’s *Missa Solemnis* (1855) plays with the same associations, opening with the sound of a bare fifth. Providing further evidence of a larger sacred paradigm, the vision of an angelic choir is easily conjured up at such moments as the conclusion to *Psalm 150*.¹⁴ This image may also be evoked by the symphonies: compare the Hallelujah conclusion to *Psalm 150* with the end of the Eighth, where there is much in common – even a similarity in violin figuration. Compare, likewise, the conclusions of the *Te Deum* and the Third (though the latter is in D major, not C major).

Bruckner’s move from Mass to symphony was made, perhaps, in order to explore additional sacred possibilities in music. Explaining why Bruckner wrote no more Masses after 1868, Schönzeler remarks, “he was able to sing his *Gloria*, his *Credo* and his *Benedictus* in the wordless, all-embracing, absolute music of his gigantic symphonic movements.”¹⁵ The opening notes of the Second Symphony, for example, make up a characteristic Brucknerian phrase for ‘*Benedictus*’ (cf. the *Benedictus* of his E minor Mass). Symphonic form, however, offered fresh opportunities, especially that of a massive affirmative ending not suited to the Mass because of its concluding humble prayer. Bruckner was more aware of liturgical propriety than most: Crawford Howie comments that the first and last movements of Bruckner’s D minor, E minor, and F minor Masses “in contrast to those of the Classical composers, were inspired by the penitential tone of the text.”¹⁶ Cooke suggests that the theme of the third movement of the Ninth “is too full of a peculiarly personal anguish for Bruckner to have used in a liturgical context”¹⁷ and that the polka/chorale of the Third presents related liturgical problems. However, Dika Newlin asserts, “the spiritual content of his works deepened but remained essentially the same.”¹⁸

Bruckner’s inclination towards self-quotation is evident in his earliest symphonies: for example, the *Andante* of *Die Nullte* (No. ‘0’) contains two quotations from the *Qui Tollis* of his E minor Mass, while the *Finale* quotes the *Osanna* from his Requiem (letter A) and his seven-part *Ave Maria* at the junction of the development and recapitulation. The slow movement of the Second Symphony quotes (at bar 137 and following) the *Benedictus* from his F minor

Mass in the correct key; at bar 180 it returns following a key change that again enables it to appear in its original key, disposing us to attribute talismanic significance to this tonality.

Let us explore possible meanings of some of Bruckner’s borrowings and self-quotation with reference to the Third Symphony. In the first movement, bars 262-5 of the 1873 version, the *miserere* of his D minor Mass is quoted (see the *Gloria*, bars 100-103). This sacred quotation at the end of the exposition may remind us of the *Kyrie* quotation (from the F minor Mass) at a similar point in the *Finale* of the Second Symphony. The close of an exposition is obviously felt to be an appropriate place for piety, whereas sin, in the shape of Venusberg references introduced in the revision of 1877, appears just before the recapitulation. Bruckner clearly added these references for a purpose; he had known *Tannhäuser* for years,¹⁹ so there is no reason why they could not have appeared in the 1873 version. Perhaps, in a transitional work like this, Bruckner was attempting to bring a moral and religious character to sonata principle, before realizing that the sonata structure he had inherited was itself capable of accommodating his musical vision. The coda contains an ostinato pattern that shows the lingering influence of Beethoven’s Ninth (cf. the codas to the first movement of *Die Nullte* and the *Finale* of the Second). Another Wagner quotation in this Symphony is the sleep motive from *Die Walküre* just before recapitulation of the first movement (and in the coda of the second movement). Again, I would suggest that Bruckner finds the approach to a recapitulation a suitable point to present a darker side. Sleep is associated with darkness and death, because it eclipses conscious thought.²⁰ Bruckner has removed all traces of magic and phantasmagoria from the Wagner, strengthening the darker connotations.²¹

The urge to self-quote continues to the end of his symphonic career, and therefore functions as a means of asserting a unitary sacred paradigm for his compositions. In bars 181-4 of the *Adagio* of the Ninth, he again quotes the *miserere* of his D minor Mass. The second theme of the *Adagio* begins with an inversion of this motive (bar 45) and the rocking viola accompaniment resembles that part of the *Benedictus* in the F minor Mass (bars 23-4, sopranos and altos; bars 98-9, tenors). The movement opens with an approximate inversion of the fugue subject of the *Finale* of the Fifth and, later, contains more specific references to the Seventh and Eighth Symphonies. Bruckner’s sketches reveal, too, that the string figure from the opening of the *Te Deum* was to return in the *Finale* of the Ninth.²²

Having argued that these are religious symphonies, it is important to examine religious signifiers in music of a similar stylistic code. Before Bruckner, the minor triad and key had changed in its signification. In the early Baroque, minor tonality (as distinct from the modal) was too recent to have acquired the conventional character of the signifier. The affective code for grief in the seventeenth century is shown by the chromaticism, angular intervals and dissonance of

'When I Am Laid in Earth' from Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. Contrast this with Purcell's use of the minor key in the marriage hymn in *The Fairy Queen* and 'Ah! Happy Are We' from *The Indian Queen*. Minor could still signify happiness (in the sense of contentment) as late as 1742 (see the aria 'Happy Is the Land' from Bach's *Peasant Cantata*). Major gradually became an opposition to minor in the Baroque. 'The People That Walked in Darkness' from Handel's *Messiah* shows the use of unison, minor key and angular chromatic melody for darkness, and thickened harmony, major key and diatonic melody (given added stability and predictability by containing a repeated phrase) for light. 'Total Eclipse' from Handel's *Samson* is quoted in Deryck Cooke's *The Language of Music*, where he remarks upon the use of minor for "all dark" and major for "the blaze of noon."²³ The chorus 'O First-Created Beam' from the same oratorio anticipates Haydn's famous chorus in *The Creation*, moving from low pitch and minor to loud C major after the words 'Let there be light!'

Turning to representations of darkness, in 'He Sent a Thick Darkness' from Handel's *Israel in Egypt* we

find unpredictable and ambiguous tonal movement, and so are led to equate the lack of tonal clarity with darkness. A minor key, chromaticism and angular intervals (especially the tritone) are heard during the opening of Act II of Beethoven's *Fidelio*, before Florestan's first words, "Gott! welch' Dunkel hier!" The key then changes to major as he puts his trust in God. Patricia Howard, discussing representations of light in Enlightenment music, comments upon a fascination with sunrise: "There is nothing mysterious or fortuitous about the fact that composers in the age of Enlightenment were fascinated by the phenomenon of sunrise. Their musical style and the conventions of their drama led them to write music which tended always to represent movement from the more subdued (soft, minor, low) to the brighter (loud, major, high)."²⁴ Bruckner inherited their language while rejecting Enlightenment scepticism and *sapere aude*.

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¹ Received opinion is summed up by Paul Driver's remark, "It is perfectly abstract music," in 'Master Builders of Symphonic Form', *The Sunday Times, The Culture*, Section 9 (p. 27), 7 April 1996. This supposed musical autonomy did not prevent the misappropriation of Bruckner by the German National Socialist Party, as shown by newly released documents in the Austrian National Library. In this regard the outcome of research by Christa Brüstle, Thomas Leibnitz and Morten Solvik will be interesting.

* Or very nearly. Bruckner does figure in EMI's 1996 "Spiritus" series "Passage to Paradise", comprising 10 sets of 2 CDs and a "Spiritus Sampler" (2 CDs) with 33 "highlights" of the series. – Ed.

² Dika Newlin, *Bruckner – Mahler – Schoenberg* (rev. edn), London 1979, 3.

³ Derek Watson, *Bruckner* (rev. edn), Oxford 1996, 1.

⁴ Newlin, *Bruckner – Mahler – Schoenberg*, 3.

⁵ Newlin, *Bruckner – Mahler – Schoenberg*, 21. For more information on Bruckner's formative social and musical experiences see A. Crawford Howie, 'Traditional and Novel Elements in Bruckner's Sacred Music' *The Musical Quarterly*, 67 (1981), 544-50.

⁶ Hans-Hubert Schönzeler, *Bruckner* (rev. edn.), London 1978, 124; the exceptions were a book on the Mexican war and one on an Austrian expedition to the North Pole.

⁷ Watson, *Bruckner*, 3.

⁸ Robert Simpson, *The Essence of Bruckner*, (rev. edn), London 1992, 74.

⁹ See Watson, *Bruckner*, 83.

¹⁰ Deryck Cooke, 'Bruckner', *The New Grove Late Romantic Masters*, London 1985, 41.

¹¹ On the influence of Haydn, Beethoven and Schubert's Masses see Howie, 'Traditional and Novel Elements in Bruckner's Sacred Music', 563-7; on the influence of earlier sacred music see 556-60.

¹² Schönzeler, *Bruckner*, 167.

¹³ Cooke, 'Bruckner', 42.

¹⁴ "The choir of angels was a very common image in eighteenth-century writings about church music." Alexander H. Shapiro, "Drama of an Infinitely Superior Nature": Handel's Early English Oratorios and the Religious Sublime', *Music & Letters*, 74 (1993), 230.

¹⁵ Schönzeler, *Bruckner*, 48.

¹⁶ Howie, 'Traditional and Novel Elements in Bruckner's Sacred Music', 551.

¹⁷ Cooke, 'Bruckner', 45.

¹⁸ Newlin, *Bruckner – Mahler – Schoenberg*, 81. On the sacred character of Bruckner's music see R.W.S. Mendl, *The Divine Quest in Music*, London 1957, 136-8.

¹⁹ Bruckner studied Wagner's *Tannhäuser* with Otto Kitzler, who gave the first Linz performance in 1863.

²⁰ Ernst Kurth describes the 'sleep motive' from *Walküre* as symbolizing "a dreamlike suspension of the senses". *Romantische Harmonik und ihre Krise in Wagner's "Tristan"*, Berne 1920, 225; in *Ernst Kurth: Selected Writings*, ed and trans. Lee A. Rothfarb, Cambridge 1991, 133.

²¹ Theodor W. Adorno uses the term 'phantasmagoria' in his Wagner criticism to describe what he sees as a magic delusion related to commodity fetishism. He interprets the last 60 bars of *Walküre* as a trope for magic fire (for him, the dominant phantasmagoria of Wagner's *Ring*). See Adorno, *In Search of Wagner*, trans. Rodney Livingstone, London 1991, 89. The ending of Bruckner's Seventh has certain resemblances to these bars from *Walküre*, such as the almost-added sixth to the E major triad; but notice how here, too, Bruckner has no interest in Wagner's six harps, glockenspiel and two piccolos.

²² See Hans F. Redlich, 'Foreword', *Bruckner Symphony No. 9*, Eulenburg score, London 1963, xviii-xx.

²³ Deryck Cooke, *The Language of Music*, Oxford 1959, 108.

²⁴ Other examples include the first movement of Haydn's Symphony No. 6, *Le Matin*, and dawn from *The Creation*. Patricia Howard, 'Music and the Enlightenment and Haydn's *Creation*', *A206 The Enlightenment, Studies*, I, eds. M. Bartholomew, D. Hall and A. Lentin (Open University), Milton Keynes 1992, 193.

ROBERT SIMPSON:

2 March 1921 – 21 November 1997

by Brian Duke

Robert Simpson was a scholar, a communicator with the common touch, a composer and above all an attitude. His research into Beethoven, Bruckner and Nielsen led to books. His articles and reviews in so many other subjects musical went further; his work as a BBC producer had its public face in his broadcasts, the most familiar being the INNOCENT EAR programmes, the most hidden resulting from his research in the BBC music library, looking for lost or neglected figures. The most significant of these was Havergal Brian.

Robert Simpson was not, therefore, able to be as prolific a composer as some: earning his living elsewhere took a great deal of his time and energy. However, the media of radio and recording played their part in making the man. "Keep music alive!" – indeed, but for exploring the musical universe widely and in depth, the electronic carriers, used well, are invaluable. Scores help, of course, and Robert Simpson's own are exemplars of clarity. He must have been one of the best score readers of his time. Yet "we must look with our ears," he would insist. This attitude informed his judgement at all times. Not everyone shared his likes and dislikes; nonetheless he could always back up his opinion with rational argument.

His own music could be approached at any level. There was "something for everybody" and it did not matter if "you couldn't tell a perfect fifth from a rissole". At another level, he was talking about his Fifth Symphony and someone asked what key it was in. "I dunno . . . A flat?"

His doctoral thesis must be one of the most widely disseminated outside academe. It is his First Symphony, recorded twice already.* Its felicity and "allure" (to quote Edmund Rubbra's review of the 1957 Boult recording) belie the long writer's block which hampered its completion.

The outward facts of his life are straightforward. The family had already the distinguished Scots obstetrician James Young Simpson (1811-1870) of Edinburgh, a pioneer in the use of anaesthetics; and a mother half Welsh and half Dutch ensured hybrid vigour. Robert Simpson's moral stance as a pacifist in the Second World War was total, and characteristic. Rescuing Bessie Frazer in the London Blitz led to a marriage which ended only with her death at the age of 79. He then married Angela Musgrave, who had long been his secretary at the BBC, and who survives him.

*Symphony No. 1: LPO/Boult, HMV BLP 1092, reissue HMV HQM 1010; RPO/Handley, Hyperion CDA 66890 (1996)

Letters

Robert Wardell (Thornton-le-Dale, North Yorks)

No doubt you will be paying tribute to Robert Simpson, probably the Briton who did most to champion Bruckner to British audiences in recent years. I met him only twice. The first time was in the early 1960s when he was a BBC music producer. I accompanied my cousin (John Carol Case) to Manchester where he was broadcasting a programme of Nielsen, with R.S. producing. In conversation he came over as being down-to-earth, practical and very approachable. Clearly he was enthusiastic about the music of Nielsen and he certainly inspired me to explore more of it.

The second time was at a pre-concert lecture he gave in the Waterloo Room of the Royal Festival Hall, prior to a performance of Bruckner's Fifth. I remember his discussion of the finale, and enunciating the first appearance of the perky theme on clarinet as "Stick-It . . . Up Your Jum-per . . ." I never hear it now without muttering those irreverent words under my breath. Clearly he admired and respected Bruckner without being sycophantic. Robert Simpson was musically-honest and will be sorely missed by all Brucknerians.

Howard Jones (Dronfield Woodhouse, South Yorkshire)

1) *Celibidache's Bruckner*

The situation is slightly better than John C. Wright or you allow (*TBJ* July 1997, pages 14/15). All the symphonies from No. 3 to No. 9 plus Mass No. 3 have been issued. Stuttgart RSO or Munich PO recordings of Nos. 3, 4, 5, 8, 9 and Mass No. 3 are (or were) available on four Exclusive issues: EX 93T59 (No. 3), EX 92T23/24 (Nos. 4 & 9), EX 92T44/46 (Nos. 5 & 8) and EX 92T37/38 (Mass No. 3). This recording of No. 4 is also on CDG I 7511 and Arlecchino ARL 175 (but given quite different recording dates!). The RAI SO (Rome) recording (18 March 1960) of No. 9 is on Concerto CON 37. There is a (not very good) Munich PO recording of No. 6 on Artists Live FED 063 and a Stuttgart RSO recording of No. 7 on Arcadia AKI 763.1 (3 June 1971). There is a Radio Turin SO recording (2 May 1969) of No. 9 on Fonit Cetra 9075-042. There was a 1981 two-LP set of Mass No. 3 with RAI Orch. & Chorus Rome (1958) on Melodram 214, coupled with a Klemperer performance (London) of the Te Deum on side 4.

2) *Cuts in the Coda of the Finale of Symphony No. 2*

You ask if anyone else makes the cuts (Haas edition, bars 540 to 561 and bars 590 to 652) made by Giulini in his celebrated VSO recording. I have identified an unboxed CD which makes the same cuts in the Finale. This is a recording by the ORF SO under Carl Melles which first appeared on Classical Excellence (CE 11003), LP and cassette, and reappeared on CD in 1994 on Classical Gold CLG 079. The same performance has been issued on ZYX CLS 4122 (and coupled with No. 4 on CLS 4809, a two-CD set) accredited to 'Philharmonia Slavonica' under 'Henry Adolph', both evidently pseudonyms.

My guess is that this is an Austrian Radio performance, probably pirated in the case of the ZYX issue at least. The sleeve of CE 11003 implies a performance date between 1969 and 1973.

FESTIVAL PREVIEWS: LINZ AND LUCERNE

The 25th International Bruckner Festival in Linz takes place between 11 September and 4 October 1998. Herbert Blomstedt will conduct the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra (13 September) in Honegger's "Liturgical" Symphony and the 1873 version of Bruckner's Third. The latter work will be transmitted to the Danube Park in this year's classical *Klangwolke*. On 16 September the 1874 version of Bruckner's Fourth Symphony will be given by Sir Roger Norrington and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, which has merged with the London Classical Players. The same forces are to record Bruckner's Fourth.

Sir Colin Davis and the LSO will visit the Abbey Church at St Florian (18 September) with Bruckner's Sixth Symphony and Davis's arrangement for string orchestra of Beethoven's Quartet in E flat, opus 127. Bruckner's Seventh Symphony will be played at St Florian (3 October) by the Bamberg SO under Gerd Albrecht. Also in the Abbey Church, German organist Christoph Bossert offers a programme of Mozart, Liszt, Bruckner and Reger (29 September). Bruckner's *Adagio* for string quintet can be heard in a concert (23 September) by Harmonices mundi in Wilhering Collegiate Church.

Back at the Brucknerhaus Linz, Jordi Savall conducts Le Concert des Nations (1 October) in Bruckner's Symphony "No. 0" and Beethoven's *Eroica*. Other attractions include a concert performance of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* with the Linz Bruckner Orchestra under Martin Sieghart (20 September) and a recital of Schumann and Hugo Wolf by pianist Bruno Canino and the Anton Bruckner Quartet (22 September).

Festival brochures are available from the Brucknerhaus Linz, Untere Donaulände 7, A-4010 Linz. For hotel information, contact Tourist information Linz, Hauptplatz 1, A-4020 Linz.



Four Bruckner symphonies will be performed in the 60th Lucerne Music Festival (19 August-16 September). The Fifth Symphony will be given by the Berlin Philharmonic under Claudio Abbado on 21 August, and the Seventh Symphony by the Vienna Philharmonic under Lorin Maazel on 14 September. Esa-Pekka Salonen conducts the Los Angeles Philharmonic in Bruckner's Fourth and in Strauss Lieder with Gundula Janowitz (4 September). There is also a chance to hear the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra's pairing of the Third Symphonies of Bruckner and Honegger (8 September).

The festival sees the opening of Lucerne's new 1,840-seater concert hall. Tickets for individual concerts are available from 12 March, along with an English brochure. Contact the IMF Luzern, Hirschemattstrasse 13, CH-6002 Lucerne.

JOTTINGS

The editors would like to thank the numerous readers who have made encouraging comments about our first issues. We also acknowledge the support of our advertisers and of those who have displayed leaflets.

This publication can now be visited on the Internet! Note that two strokes are missing from the details given on our 1998 leaflet. The web site is at:

<http://home.aol.com/Crawfhowie>

Updates and late changes to events will be entered as they occur.

Over sixty readers plan to attend the meeting we are hosting in Birmingham at 2.15pm on Saturday, April 18. Those who have expressed interest should receive directions with this issue. If you are a new subscriber and wish to attend, please notify Raymond Cox, 4 Lulworth Close, Halesowen B63 2UJ, tel. 01384 566383.

Music by Bruckner was heard at the wedding last autumn of William Hague, Leader of the Conservative Party, to Ffion Jenkins. The register was signed to the strains of Mozart's "*Laudate Dominum*", Dilys Elwyn Edwards' "*Gwisgoedd Nef*" and Bruckner's "*Christus factus est*".

Bruckner's "Te Deum" provided the finale to the inaugural concert at Chicago's new Symphony Center last October. The performance was conducted by Daniel Barenboim.

Writing on the Brahms centenary in the *Independent* last year, Bayan Northcott quoted Hugo Wolf as saying: "One cymbal clash by Bruckner is worth all the four symphonies of Brahms, with the serenades thrown in." Is there any foundation for this oft-repeated statement? For in a newspaper article dated 27 April 1884, Hugo Wolf actually wrote that a cymbal clash in a work of *Liszt's* was worth more than the Brahms symphonies (of which there were then only three), with the serenades thrown in . . .

All Bruckner's symphonies from No. 3 onwards were performed in Tokyo during 1997. The performers included the NHK Symphony Orchestra under Hiroshi Wakasugi and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra under Claus Peter Flor. The Tokyo Schola Cantorum sang the very early "Windhaag" Mass in C.

In Würzburg last year, Erwin Horn played his transcriptions for organ of the Andante from Bruckner's Second Symphony and the Adagio of the Sixth. He also played a paraphrase on themes by Bruckner and Richard Strauss at Marienkron Abbey in the Austrian Burgenland. Further north Olle Cervin, principal organist of St Peter's Church, Malmö, performed his own transcription of the opening movement of Bruckner's Fifth. (*From the International Bruckner Society*)