

Chapter 13

Domine Jesu Christe

As if there aren't enough puzzles as far the instrumentation of the Requiem is concerned, the copy of the score of the Offertory in the handwriting of Maximillian Stadler (1748–1833) adds another name to the already somewhat crowded list of composers—now four¹—who contributed to the completion of the work. Whether this work can truly be called a collaboration, and whether they worked together, or at least at the same time and with each other's knowledge, may always remain, like so much else, in the realm of speculation. The correspondence does not hint at any such relationship, although, given the determination of the 'completion team' to protect Constanze by minimising their contributions to the score, this should not be surprising. It is a mystery why Stadler would make a copy of the Offertory—and only the Offertory—unless he were involved in the completion process from early on, and if so, why he withdrew. Did he work on the *Domine Jesu* while Eybler worked on the *Dies irae*? Further compounding the confusion is his comment in a letter to the publisher Johann Anton André of October 1st, 1826: 'I would have copied the "Lacrymosa" and "Domine" ... had the Widow Mozart still had those movements in her possession.' Clearly he did make such a copy of the *Domine Jesu* at least, the manuscript of which is in the Austrian National Library: is this then just a slip of the pen, or an incorrect memory of the events, written as it was some thirty-five years later, and at the age of seventy-eight?

Recently David Ian Black has raised the possibility that Stadler's score was made after 1791, and therefore cannot have affected Süssmayr's work.² Before that, the debate centered on whether Stadler's work *predated* Süssmayr's. Wolff suggests³ that, since the string writing of Süssmayr's orchestration is virtually identical to Stadler's while the trombone parts of Stadler's are incomplete, Süssmayr merely copied what Stadler had written and filled it out. Maunder rejects this argument as 'implausible' ⁴ based on Süssmayr's re-positioning of the *forte* for the first violins from the downbeat of bar 3 to the fourth beat of bar 2:⁵

¹ Depending on Freystadler's status (see Chapter 2 notes 4 and 5)

² see Mozart, *Requiem*, ed. Black, Introduction

³ see Wolff, p. 23

⁴ Maunder, review of Wolff, *Music & Letters* Vol 74, Issue 3 p. 438

⁵ He also tries to bolster his case that Stadler copied from Süssmayr with the statement 'Süssmayr must have copied his "Tutti" markings from Mozart not Stadler' without giving any explanation for how he arrived at that conclusion.

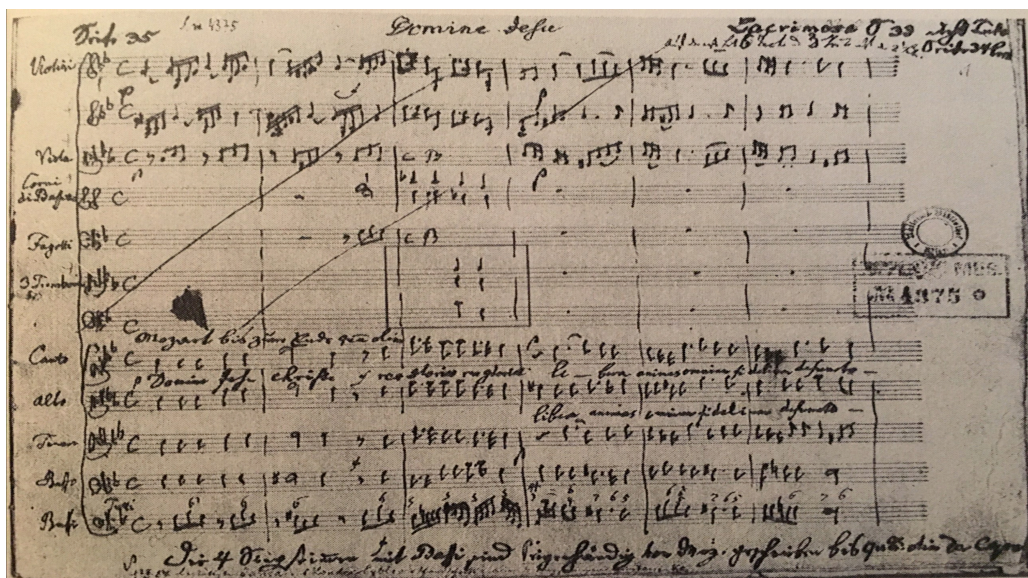


Fig. 1
Page 1 of Stadler's *Domine Jesu*, showing the *forte* in the first violins on beat 4 of bar 2

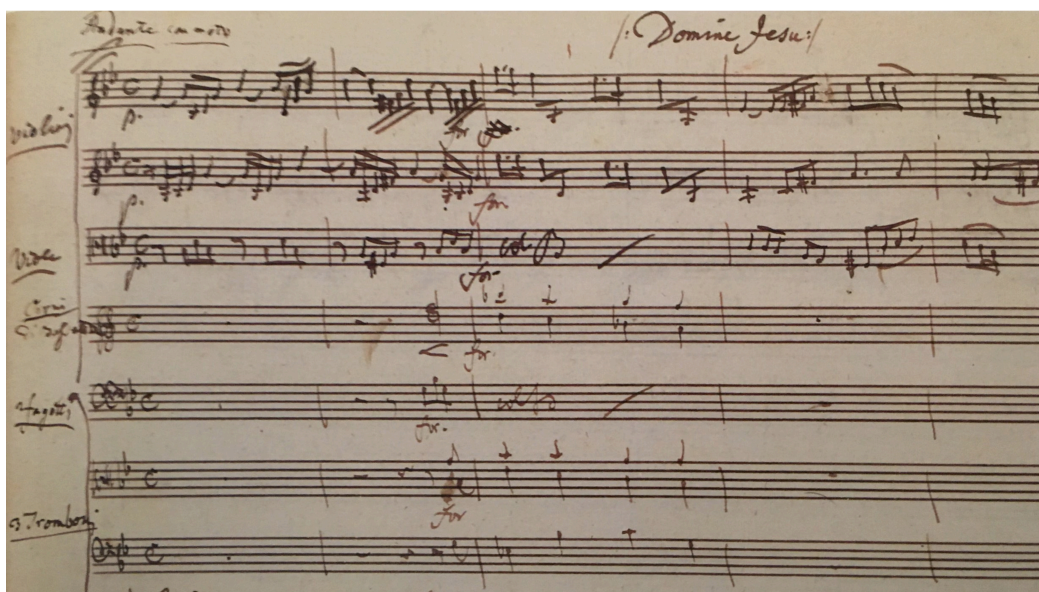


Fig. 2
Top 7 staves of Süssmayr's *Domine Jesu*, showing moved *forte* sign

As can clearly be seen in Fig.2, originally Süssmayr placed the forte for the first violins on the downbeat of bar three, but crossed it out and moved it to the last three semiquavers of bar 2 (but failed to move the second violins and viola dynamic):



However, the difference in ink colour and thickness of pen stroke would seem to imply that the first violin part of the first two bars was added at a different time, presumably later because he wouldn't have had to move the *forte* if it hadn't already been there. Unfortunately, when he was copying out Mozart's autograph, Süssmayr misplaced Mozart's *forte* marking in the bassi, which was clearly on the last quaver of the bar, not the sixth:

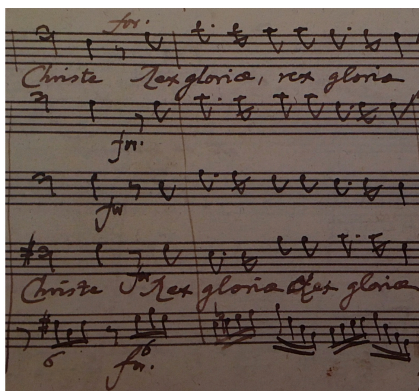


Fig. 3a
Süssmayr's autograph of the *Domine Jesu*
detail of choral parts and orchestral bassi

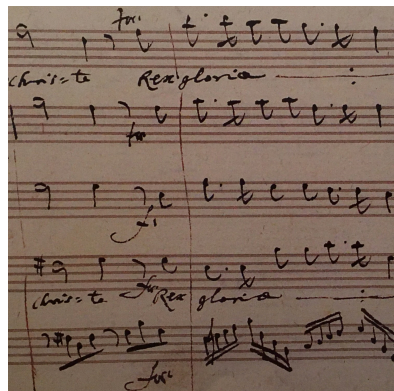


Fig. 3b
Mozart's autograph of the *Domine Jesu*,
detail of choral parts and orchestral bassi.

Since Stadler also had it on the last quaver (see Fig. 1), it would seem to follow that Stadler was not copying Süssmayr, but from Mozart's autograph. Indeed, the fact that Süssmayr moved it to the last three semiquavers of the previous bar, exactly where Stadler had it, would seem to confirm, or at least strongly imply, that he was copying from Stadler. In fact, if the difference in ink colour and stroke thickness are taken into account, it cannot be ruled out that Süssmayr's original version did not contain any music for violins at all in the first two bars (perhaps the choir sang unassisted?) and that he borrowed the opening string idea straight from Stadler (perhaps from memory, hence the corrections observable in the autograph).

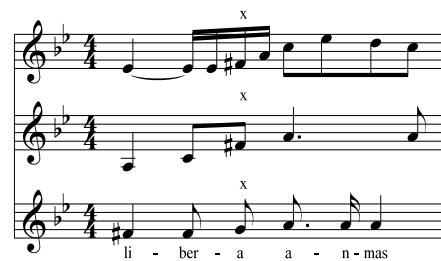
Süssmayr's bassoons double the orchestral bassi and the misplaced *forte* marking is copied with them, while the basset horns have a rather extraordinary *crescendo* marked over their entry on beat three (see Fig. 2). The problem is, of course, that the chorus is still singing on the third beat at a *piano* dynamic, so a *forte* entrance from the basset horns would be out of place: the question is raised therefore, why is the entrance there? It would have been very easy, and much better, to have them enter *forte* on the fourth beat, although it would still be a quaver earlier than Mozart's indication. It is also noteworthy that the first basset horn does not follow the soprano line but the tenor: Süssmayr's technique is usually to follow the upper vocal lines with the two basset horns. Are the basset horn parts also borrowed from Stadler?

Süssmayr would certainly have drawn comfort from having the work of another composer to draw on. Stadler was older than Mozart and was a well-respected musician in his own right; he had a greater knowledge of Mozart's music than either Eybler or Süssmayr, so

much so that Constanze called him in to help organise Mozart's papers, and he actually completed several of Mozart's other unfinished works with the view to having them published to aid the widow's finances. However, Süssmayr didn't copy Stadler note-for-note:⁶ as he did elsewhere with Eybler's orchestration, he adapted where he thought he could improve. For example, his violin parts are different from Stadler's in bar 4:



It is ironic that it was Süssmayr, whose first instinct was usually automatic doubling, that uses embellishment, not Stadler, and it is a shame that his attempt to do so should be unsuccessful, since not only is there a hidden unison when the violins meet on the F sharp on the second beat, that same note clashes quite badly with the altos G (the NMA uses Stadler's version):



Ultimately, of course, the issue of whose work came first may only be of interest to historians. As far as the opening bars of the *Domine Jesu* are concerned, for the modern editor-completer the fact that the violin and basset horn parts of the opening cause such problems simply suggests that it is the wrong accompaniment.

As in the other movements up to this point, all the vocal parts and orchestral bass for the *Domine Jesu* in the autograph are in Mozart's hand. Mozart designated the bottom line of the autograph just 'Bassi' not 'Organo e Bassi' (he was not always consistent in this regard), but the figures from bar 21–28 show that his intention was for the organ to participate, an assumption made by both Stadler and Süssmayr, who added their own figuring to the rest of the movement. In addition to the choral parts and basso, there are indications for the violin figuration in the following places:

- from the third beat of bar 43 to the downbeat of bar 46 (first violin)
- bar 67 to the downbeat of bar 71 (first and second violins)
- bar 71 third beat to the end (first violins)

⁶ Or, he was working from memory because, for an unknown reason, Stadler's score was no longer available to him

What can be gleaned from these motifs?

1) that Mozart planned a good deal of motivic unity in the accompaniment: note how the motif in bars 44–46 are in rhythmic imitation of the basso part at the half bar (this idea returns in bar 71 with the return of the text ‘quam olim Abrahæ’):



2) the duet between the first and second violins from bar 67–71 that accompanies the new choral idea ‘et semini ejus’ develops this motif (and also shows that Mozart was not opposed to the violins having substantial passages in thirds and sixths, a criticism frequently leveled at Eybler’s and Süssmayr’s instrumentation):



3) the violin ‘bridge’ figure in bar 43 between the solo quartet and the start of the ‘quam olim Abrahæ’ fugue can be re-used in bar 32 between the chorus cadence and the solo entries over the same bass line, which suggests that the same rhythmic figure should feature in the accompaniment to the soloists’ section.

4) that parallel and hidden fifths and octaves between outer voices is not necessarily proof of non-Mozartian provenance: the passage starting at bar 67 has no fewer than three parallel fifths, three parallel octaves and five hidden octaves, as well as what Maunder would have called a cross relation contrary to ‘Mozart’s normal treatment of “false relations”’,⁷ between the second violins’ B natural and the altos’ B flat in bar 67, the alto note also being an unprepared seventh:

⁷ Maunder, p. 122. See also 103-4, 137-8, 142, 146, 161 and 192-3

odds with the text,¹¹ and becomes quite strange when the second violin part is transposed literally and figuratively down into the violas in bar 14, where it is below the cellos. While both men thought that these passages needed more energy than a mere note for note doubling of the chorus in crotchets and quavers, their solution seems unsatisfactory, as it lacks the kind of motivic unity expected in Mozart. The music for violins in bar 3 is more successful: it doubles the voices convincingly, and the large jumps on beat 2 and 4 even perhaps prefigure the similar jumps in Mozart's accompaniment to the 'quam olim' fugue.¹²

However well-wrought the violin writing of 3 might be at first glance, Süssmayr's bassoon writing in this measure gives the clue to a different solution, one which follows Mozart's structure more carefully. This is really quite ironic, since it is in his use of the winds—which usually merely double the voice parts—that Süssmayr is usually at his *least* imaginative. In bar 3, instead of doubling the vocal lines, he follows a more Baroque model, the bassoons playing *a 2* in unison with the orchestral bassi.¹³ He does the same in bar 21,¹⁴ the 'ne absorbeat' fugue, where the all the strings play in unison. What would the effect be if bar 3 were orchestrated the same as bar 21, with all the strings in unison? The idea of strings in unison would then expand each time we hear it: first in bar 3, then 17 and 20 ('de ore leonis') and finally the more extended passage 21–30 ('ne absorbeat'). Not only that, but if Süssmayr and Stadler were right that the opening two bars do need more energy, combining the two violin parts into a single line of continuous semiquavers for the first violins would lead very naturally into the *forte* unison statement in bar 3, shaping the arpeggios to coincide with the soprano's melody on the downbeats:¹⁵



This process would work for all the similar passages, bar 14–16, and 18–19, and the odd-looking syncopated passages in bar 7 and 9, as well as the syncopated duets between the second violins and violas in 8 and 10, would also benefit from being continuous semiquaver movement.

¹¹ The syncopated figure in bars 7 and 9 seems similarly out of place and unconnected to the rest of the movement

¹² Is this a sign of Stadler's input, who knew Mozart's composing methods well and was trying to reproduce them?

¹³ a solution one wishes he had attempted elsewhere, such as in the *Rex tremendae*

¹⁴ sadly, only the second bassoon plays with the strings, rather than *a 2*

¹⁵ Levin also puts the strings in unison in b. 3 (Levin, p. 122), but retains the opening 2 bars of the traditional version

A few other details: surely the sopranos need no support on the second beat of bar 11?¹⁶ It would seem logical for the first violins also to observe Mozart's rest in the orchestral basses on that beat, as the violas and second violins do, and start their quavers with the rest of the ensemble on the third beat:

Süssmayr is to be commended for noticing that Mozart's transition motif from solo quartet to chorus entries in bar 43 also works very well as a transition from chorus into the solo quartet in bar 32, above the same bass, and gives a pleasing symmetry to the section.

While it seems sensible for the bassoons to double the orchestral basses from bars 2–3 and 21–30 (where they should surely be *a2?*), Süssmayr's placement of a crescendo over the basset horns' entrance in bar 2 seems a tacit admission that they shouldn't be playing there. One has to agree with him that the winds should be silent after their initial exhortation of the King of Glory in bar 3, where the chorus' dotted rhythm would be better for all the winds, until the depiction of the horror of the lion's mouth in bars 17 and 20. However, should they not lend their support to the modulating cadences in bar 7 (thus supporting the sopranos' momentary *forte*) and reinforce the modulation to A flat major in bars 14–15?

Sustained wind writing from bars 21–30 only undermines the strength of the unison strings and draws the ear away from the extraordinary angularity of the falling sevenths of the 'ne absorbeat' fugal entries.¹⁷ Süssmayr seems very confused here about the role of the bassoons: the second (correctly) doubles the orchestral basses, but the first wanders around aimlessly, trying to fill in the harmony of the basset horns. Mozart figured this passage carefully (the only passage to

¹⁶ Levin agrees (p. 124)

¹⁷ Levin merely slightly reorganises Süssmayr's voice leading

which he did add figures): any chords in the winds can only unnecessarily duplicate what the organ is already playing. Most effective for this passage would be strings and both bassoons in unison, *colla parte* trombones (which should copy the vocal rhythm exactly, not selectively as Süssmayr has it) and the basset horns *a2* doubling the sopranos, taking the necessary lower octave where the soprano part would take them above their range for two notes.

As mentioned above, Süssmayr did well to notice that Mozart's *aide-mémoire* from bar 43 leads well into the soloists' section in bar 32, but his simple quaver rest-three quaver accompaniment pattern, while it does imitate the bass pattern, seems somewhat bland, and doesn't attempt the level of thematic unity observed in the accompaniment patterns that Mozart indicated in the accompaniment patterns he did notate. Surely greater correspondences could have been made here: after all, from this point on, the two semiquaver-two quaver motif almost rises to the status of motto rhythm. The present edition fashions a new first violin part that uses this pattern,¹⁸ and re-writing the second violin and viola parts to complete the harmony, as shown in the example on p. 166 below, at the end of the chapter.

The 'Quam olim' fugue, as noted in the previous chapter, is modeled after the passage to the same text in Michael Haydn's C minor Requiem,¹⁹ but since Haydn's orchestra called for no winds (or violas) and, interestingly, only alto and tenor trombones, its instrumentation may not have influenced Mozart to any greater extent than it is one of many *antico* models. This is exemplified by the fact that while Haydn's violins double the soprano and alto voices, Mozart writes an intricate, motivically independent accompaniment for his. The resultant texture is extremely complex, the large number of notes perhaps portraying how numerous are the descendants of Abraham.²⁰ While Süssmayr's string writing regrettably shows some of his habitual carelessness, such as the nasty clash in bar 47 between the violas F sharp on the second half of the first beat against the tenor G and between the viola B-A natural against the bass C-B natural two beats later:

b. 47

si - sti, quam o - lim

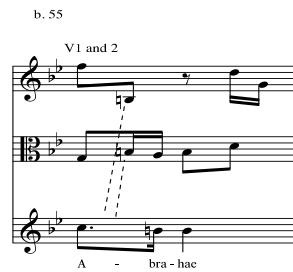
quam o - lim A - bra-hae

¹⁸ Levin simplifies the texture in this passage, using minims in the violins in an almost 'continuo' function

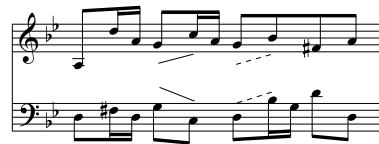
¹⁹ the similarities between the two settings of the phrase 'et de profundo lacu' are also striking

²⁰ as Bach had done in his *Magnificat* BWV 243, where the generations are represented by imitative entries

or the same type of clash between the (tripled!) B natural in the violins and violas on the in bar 55 against the alto C:



or the parallel octave followed quickly by a hidden octave between the second violins and bassi in bar 74:



These errors are fairly easily remedied, as the NMA did in bar 49.²¹ Beyer did so by re-writing the second violin and viola parts completely into a quaver-crotchet rhythm,²² which certainly removes the errors and clears out the texture, but reduces the second violins to a continuo function, which is surely unsatisfactory. In ‘fast and furious’ passages such as these, the seconds should go with the firsts in unison and the violas in unison (or at the octave) with the bassi: this would be a much more muscular sound, and would result in a clearer texture. As Maunder correctly notes,²³ ‘Since it would be almost impossible to contrive yet more independent parts for violin II and viola, there is no alternative but ... (to) put the violins in unison, and the violas as far as possible with the bass’.

Süssmayr didn’t always follow the Mozart’s clues in other details of voice leading. Mozart’s bar 45–46 shows that when there is a suspension in one of the choral parts, the violins more or less have to have the fifth or root of the chord if the suspension is a 4–3 (cf. the third beat of bar 45), and preferably the third if it is a 7–6 (cf. the downbeat of bar 46):

²¹ See NMA p. 94

²² see Beyer’s edition, p. 89 ff.

²³ Maunder, p. 186

Often Süssmayr's figures do not do this, instead picking out elements of individual voice parts rather than being truly independent (cf. tenor in bar 47, soprano in bar 51–53, tenors in bars 58–59), often causing technical problems such as non-resolving sevenths (see example above). His first figure in bar 56 doesn't follow Mozart's pattern at all. Furthermore, the circle of fifths progression is so strong in this passage that it is a shame Süssmayr didn't follow it and re-use the motifs accordingly.

Of greater concern is the over thickening of the texture by doubling the choral parts with four-part winds as well as trombones and chords in the organ, a weakness evident in every movement Süssmayr orchestrated. Much greater clarity would have been achieved by keeping an already complex texture as simple as possible. If one were to use a baroque model (as before in the *Rex tremendae* and the dotted semiquaver passages of the *Requiem aeternam*), rather than doubling the *colla parte* trombones, the bassoons would double the orchestral bassi, but that would actually result in more notes rather than fewer. Beyer was concerned about this too, and while his second and fourth beat crotchets—first in bassoon thirds and then with added basset horns—actually add another element to the texture rather than clarifying it, the idea of simpler, longer notes in the bassoons is a good one. Even simpler would have been for the bassoons to play *a2* on the first and third beats, thus giving more rhythmic impetus.²⁴ When the orchestral double basses hold the dominant pedal from bar 61–65 while the cellos play an internal part, the bassoons can supply extra support to the pedal note.

With the basses, tenors and altos supported by their respective trombones, only the sopranos need support. Since the range of the soprano part of the fugue does not exceed the range of the basset horn, this support can easily be provided by them *a2*.²⁵ This thinning out of Süssmayr's wind texture actually gives the basset horns more prominence, and the aural space so

²⁴ the present edition follows this technique

²⁵ It is true that the soprano's high A on 'Abrahae' in bar 72 is outside the range of the basset horn, but Mozart's first violin part covers the note very prominently as part of his accompaniment motif, so the basset horns can drop the octave for the first note of the phrase.

produced allows the heart of the work—the vocal lines, Mozart’s principal focus—to shine more brilliantly in all its adamant beauty.²⁶

For the brief solo passage ‘sed signifier Michael’ that immediately precedes the *Quam olim* fugue, Süssmayr eschews winds entirely. While this does provide a welcome respite between the breathless unison semiquavers under ‘ne absorbeat’ and before the energetic outburst of the upcoming fugue, one can’t help feeling that he missed the opportunity to feature their timbre in longer notes against the strings. The present edition fashions a string of minims that provide St. Michael with a sort of sonic ‘halo’, and re-writes Süssmayr’s first violin part to continue the rhythm of the countermotif:

Score: <https://www.simonwandrews.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/8-Domine-Jesu.22.pdf>

²⁶ There is also a high A in bar 25 which the basset horns have to play an octave lower, but the soprano entry is given such prominence by Mozart in terms of its register and the severity of the surrounding texture that it does not present a problem. In fact this passage too benefits from a more sparse texture.