

The *Kyrie* Fugue

As stated in the previous chapter, while the choral parts and basso continuo of this movement are in Mozart's hand, until Nowak's discovery¹ it was thought that he had also orchestrated it. In spite of the fact that it is now accepted by the scholarly community that he didn't, all the various different modern completions of the Requiem share one thing in common: they accept the orchestration of the *Kyrie* fugue virtually unchallenged. Even Richard Maunder, at great pains (until the *Agnus Dei*) to excise as much Süssmayr as possible, makes only a few cosmetic changes. Why this is so, when the contributions of the 'masters' engaged by Constanze to complete her husband's work in every other movement have been examined in such detail and found wanting is somewhat puzzling.

The automatic doubling of the strings by four part winds is remarkably unquestioned in the literature. If the movement were prepared speedily for the service at St. Michael's, why did the orchestrator not use the traditional short-hand conventions such as "col violini"? One can perhaps understand writing out the basset horn parts in full, since it was an unusual instrument with which a copyist might not be familiar: indeed, the errors in transposition show that even the orchestrator was not fully conversant with the instrument. But since the second bassoon part merely doubles the bassi, why not write "col basso", or "col Tenore" for the first?

Traditionally, criticism of the *Kyrie* orchestration has chiefly been limited to three areas:

Trumpets and timpani:

- i) the seemingly pointless entry in bar 20: why does the timpani not have the same rhythm as the trumpets?
- ii) the unnecessary entry on the weak syllable for the soprano, alto and tenor in bar 38, which does not happen in the parallel place in the *Cum sanctis* fugue
- iii) the somewhat painful clash with the altos' B flat created with the dominant entry on the second half of the third beat of bar 42:

¹ 'Wer hat die Instrumental-stimmen in der Kyrie-Fuge des Requiem von W.A. Mozart geschrieben?' Mozart Jahrbuch (1973-74): 191-201

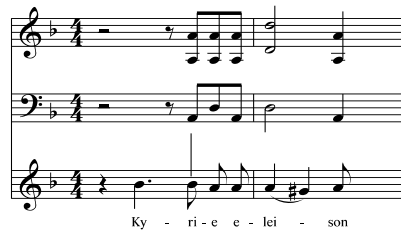


Fig.1

To these issues I would add:

i) The trumpet and timpani entry in bar 49 should be surely be delayed until the second quaver of the second beat so that its first note doesn't emphasise the unstressed syllable '-son' (soprano and basses), instead reinforcing the chorus' climactic 'eleison', the first instance of homophony in the movement (see Fig. 2a):

ii) Why do the trumpets and drums not play on the 4th beat of bar 50, at the Adagio, where a tonic D makes the diminished seventh even more dramatic by emphasising the augmented fourth with the bass (and avoiding emphasising the unstressed "-e" of "Kyrie")?

Süssmayr Adagio

Musical score for three voices (Soprano, Alto, Bass) in 4/4 time. The lyrics are "i - son, e - le - i - son" and "Ky - ri - e - le - i - son". The Soprano part has a whole note rest followed by a half note G4. The Alto part has a whole note rest followed by a half note F4. The Bass part has a whole note rest followed by a half note E4.

Fig. 2a

The present edition has it as follows:

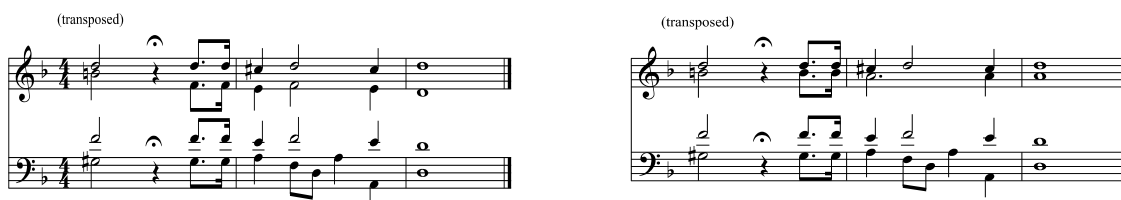
Adagio

Musical score for three voices (Soprano, Alto, Bass) in 4/4 time. The lyrics are "i - son, e - le - i - son" and "Ky - ri - e - le - i - son". The Soprano part has a whole note rest followed by a half note G4. The Alto part has a whole note rest followed by a half note F4. The Bass part has a whole note rest followed by a half note E4.

Fig. 2b

Basset horns

The discrepancy in the two Adagio sections at the end of the fugues has been often noted. In the *Kyrie*, the second basset horn doubles the first bassoon (a pairing Mozart himself used in No. 10 of *Die Zauberflöte*) which follows the choral tenors, whereas in the *Cum sanctis* it follows the choral altos, resulting in a four-part texture for the winds:



The sopranos and the first basset horn

In the *Kyrie* the first basset horn follows the sopranos up to the first group of semiquavers that contain the high A, but when it cannot follow it holds the concert G (its top note) for a beat and a half before falling by step: this not only creates a parallel octave with the tenors, but also makes the texture unnecessarily muddy against the sopranos' A and F semiquavers. In the *Cum sanctis*, however, a more drastic solution is attempted whereby the first basset horn stops doubling the sopranos altogether at the beginning of their phrase, following instead the altos and therefore suddenly playing in unison with the second basset horn and alto trombone, only to drop out and re-enter in the middle of the soprano phrase, in fact, in the middle of a word:

Chri - ste - e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son
cum sanc - tis tu - is in ae - ter - num, in ae - ter - num

Fig. 3

In the final phrase, where the sopranos again travel too high for automatic doubling, there is a similar divergence in the two movements:

Cum sanctis tuis (b. 76-80)

Kyrie (b. 46-50)

(tenors)

le - i - son num, Chri - ste - e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son num, in ae - ter - i - son num, Ky - ri - e, Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son cum san - ctis tu - is in ae - ter - i - son num, cum san - ctis tu - is in ae - ter - i - son num

Note that in the *Cum sanctis*, when the first basset horn drops out it again moves immediately to double the second, whereas in the *Kyrie* its line changes only when it can physically no longer follow the sopranos.² It is as if the instrumentation were done by two different people, each with a different view of the basset horn. This would seem to confirm that the orchestration of the *Kyrie* is not by Mozart, for not only would Mozart not have made the transposition errors, surely Süssmayr would have transferred the orchestration of the *Kyrie* note for note into the *Cum sanctis* if he had believed it to be by Mozart. More puzzling, given the short amount of time he had to complete the work, is why, when he was working on the *Cum sanctis*, he didn't simply copy what had been done in the earlier movement.

² Sadly, also creating parallel octaves with the tenors when by omitting the quaver D on the second half of beat three the parallel is very easily avoided

play in the first ten bars, and that the notes of the soprano parts of both fall within the range of the instrument. Ultimately, whatever weight is given to these four choices, they all support and give added weight to Nowak's theory that the wind parts of the *Kyrie* were indeed not by Mozart.

As was also noted in the previous chapter, Freystädler's participation in the completion project in preparation for the solemn mass for Mozart that took place in St. Michael's church on December 10th has recently come under critical scrutiny. Michael Lorenz questions the Freystädler attribution largely on the grounds of handwriting analysis.³ David Ian Black also calls this conclusion into question,⁴ noting that, since the music staff at St. Michael's did not include basset horn players,⁵ and since it is known that Emmanuel Schikaneder attended the service, perhaps the orchestra at the Theater auf der Wieden, where *Die Zauberflöte* was currently under production, provided both players and the orchestration.⁶ It is known that its members supplemented the St. Michael ensemble at the service,⁷ a common enough practice in Vienna, where such 'co-productions' were frequently necessary to assemble sufficient musical forces for more elaborate occasions. It would also explain why the costs for the Mozart's service were so relatively low: surely the theatre's players would either have offered their services free out of respect for the composer of the work that was keeping them so well employed, or perhaps they were even been paid by Schikaneder out of the theatre's coffers. Black's proposal also makes sense because one can very easily imagine Constanze stepping in to rescue Mozart's last score from clutches of Schikaneder and his troupe and asking Eybler, who (unlike Süssmayr) had no connections with the Theater auf der Wieden, to undertake its completion. However, it is impossible to corroborate this theory since handwriting samples from the members of Schikaneder's orchestra have yet to come to light for comparison.

There is a final quandary here: if, as asserted in the previous chapter, much of the orchestration of the *Requiem aeternam* is not by Mozart, why are there transposition errors in the *Kyrie* but not in the previous movement? That would suggest quite strongly that different people, some of whom were better acquainted with the basset horn, were working on the two movements at the same time, a likely scenario given the rush to get at least the first two movements swiftly into a performable state for the December 10th service.

³ Lorenz, *Freystädler's Supposed Copying in the autograph of K. 626: A Case of Mistaken Identity*, <http://michaelorenz.blogspot.com/2013/08/freystadtlers-supposed-copying-in.html>, dated August 21, 2013, accessed February 2016.

⁴ Black, *Mozart and the practice of sacred music, 1781-91*, PhD thesis, Harvard, 2007, pp. 403-08

⁵ none were listed on the roll of musicians at St. Michaels for this period and Joseph II had banned clarinets from the Hofkapelle in 1788 (Black, p. 357)

⁶ Black, p. 409. He also catalogues the musicians who were active at both St. Michaels and the theatre.

⁷ Black, p. 383

Whoever accomplished the task, the team that made the performing materials must have been focused on that event and that event only: it is not hard to imagine that the grieving widow took more than a few days to come up with the plan to have the work secretly finished and a score made to resemble as closely as possible the handwriting of her late husband. At this stage in the Requiem story they were not concerned with posterity, or of what might happen to the rest of the work: they were faced with empty staves and a service in honour of their friend to prepare for. With so little time to think clearly, let alone to rehearse instrumentalists and a choir, it is perfectly understandable that the most expedient course was also the quickest, namely to double the voices with as many instruments as possible to make sure that Mozart's remarkable counterpoint had the best chance of being heard. Ultimately though, for the modern editor-completer, the only relevant part of this whole discussion is that the orchestration of the *Kyrie* is not by Mozart.

The second stage of the completion had a different goal in mind, namely the presentation of a completed, unified score to hand to the commissioner. According to the contract he signed with Constanze, Eybler did not receive the score until after the service, on December 21st, and, since the staves up to that point were already filled in, he started his work with the *Dies irae*.⁸ Since he made no attempt to make his handwriting appear like Mozart's, either the plan to deceive the commissioner was not developed until after he gave up his attempt, or it was the plan at first to use Süssmayr only as a copyist. Süssmayr made so many changes to Eybler's work that it seems unlikely they worked at the same time: moreover, one can hardly imagine Eybler signing a contract to complete the work with another composer actively engaged in the same process. Although Constanze is not always the most reliable of sources, she was quite specific that the task was given to Süssmayr only after Eybler withdrew. One can easily imagine how the whole situation would have been perceived as a slight by the twenty-six year-old composer, who had also experienced the rough edge of Mozart's tongue on more than one occasion.

Count Walsegg's wife died on 14th February 1791, so it is very likely that Mozart had originally been given a date for the completion of the work that would allow a February 1792 performance, on the first anniversary of her death. This short period of time would account for why he worked on it so assiduously until he took to his sick bed on November 20th. With Mozart's well-publicised death, this timeline was obviously untenable. Eybler's contract stated that he would complete his work by the 'middle of the coming Lent',⁹ which, since Ash Wednesday fell on February 21st in 1792, would mean a completion towards the middle of March.

⁸ Although it cannot be ruled out that he started his work earlier than that and merely formalised his arrangement with Constanze on the 21st. (Is the comment in the contract that Mozart's autograph not be 'given into other hands than those of the ... widow' a veiled reference to Süssmayr, and a corroboration of her comment that she was 'for some reason, annoyed' at him?)

⁹ see Christoph Wolff, *Mozart's Requiem: Historical and Analytical Studies*, trans Mary Whittall, University of California Press, (1994) p. 121, Doc 6

However, Constanze presented a copy of Süssmayr's completed score to the Prussian ambassador for King Friedrich Wilhelm II on March 4th, so the work was completed by that time.¹⁰ It can be seen therefore, that Süssmayr had almost as little time to work on it as Mozart himself did. Since he must also have been working hard on an opera of his own for Emmanuel Schikaneder—*Moses oder der Auszug aus Ägypten*—which was to open on May 4th, who can blame him for taking the easiest path in a task for which, it must be remembered, he could expect to accrue no public acknowledgement? Neither is it known whether he received any financial compensation from Constanze: Eybler's contract is also silent on the subject of any fee for his work. Out of respect for a widow in financial distress it can easily be imagined that they might 'volunteer' their efforts, but both men had their own living to make, and would have been eager to return to their own projects.

All things therefore conspired to advocate for a speedy completion, not a careful consideration of whether the methods they were using were consistent with Mozart's best practices. Süssmayr himself, either out of false modesty or a true sense of the inevitable inadequacy of the 'completion team', doubted the worthiness of his efforts in his letter to Breitkopf & Härtel of 1800. For all the reasons stated in previous chapters, Mozart's conception of the work, however, must surely have been very different from whoever it was completed the *Kyrie* orchestration: he *was* thinking about posterity, of creating a new kind of church music out of many sources, of putting his best efforts into the work. In this context, the doubling of the voices by three timbres (in the case of the lower three voices) seems a virtual impossibility. Apart from being sonically very dull, it would run the risk of overbalancing the primary focus of a liturgical work, the chorus.

Unlike other areas of the Requiem where Mozartian models do shed some light, examples of fugal writing in the choral context in late Mozart do not exist, and the incomplete grand Mass in C minor K. 427, written some eight years earlier for the much larger Salzburg orchestra, and for a very different context, can scarcely serve as one. As Wolff points out, 'His conception ... may also have been influenced by the general conditions arising from the transition and renewal that sacred music went through following the death of Emperor Joseph II in 1790. The reforms initiated by Joseph¹¹ had imposed painful restrictions on concertante Latin church music in Austria, causing it to be in effect banned from 1783 on. For a time scarcely any new church music was written in Vienna; but after 1790 it was once again an attractive field for composers. The simplicity of the musical language and outward guise of the "Ave verum corpus" appears to some

¹⁰ For obvious reasons, there is no record of when Count Walsegg received his score, but since he did not perform it (with his own name as the composer) until February 14th, 1793, it can be assumed that it was after February 14th 1792

¹¹ the *Gottesdienstordnung*, introduced in 1783

extent to reflect the repudiation of a style of instrumentally lavish church music, but it also looks forward to a new style that was to flower in the Requiem.¹²

Recently, David Ian Black has suggested that the effect of these restrictions may not have been as severe as previously thought, since musical settings for Sundays were exempted in the *Gottesdienstordnung*.¹³ He cites as evidence Albrechtberger's over fifty church works with instrumental accompaniments written between 1783 and 1791, which included six masses.¹⁴ While his table 2.1 is a little confusing in that it also includes works composed before 1783, when the *Gottesdienstordnung* came into effect, it does serve to show that, while musical output was certainly curtailed, it did not cease altogether. The extent to which this may have been a disincentive to composers to be active in the field needs more research. Certainly, the effect on church music budgets was considerable, and there can be no doubt that 'the lives of Vienna's church musicians changed dramatically.'¹⁵

All this being said, the instrumental resources chosen by Mozart for the Requiem were small and unique. Whatever the cause for this stylistic reappraisal, and given that the orchestration of the *Kyrie* fugue is widely accepted not to have been undertaken by Mozart, the time would seem to be ripe to examine it quite carefully.

The Handel Orchestrations

Although examples of choral fugues in Mozart's own music from this period do not exist, the orchestrations of the four works by Handel undertaken at the behest of Gottfried van Swieten shed some interesting and relevant light on Mozart's technique of providing instrumentation for fugal writing, especially given the Handelian models used in the Requiem. While much of the wind writing in his Handel orchestrations was necessarily added by Mozart to replace the organ continuo that was not possible in van Swieten's salon,¹⁶ there are still many interesting observations to be made in those passages where the winds have a non-continuo function, especially where their participation pertains to Mozart's accompaniment of the kind of semiquaver passages we see in the *Kyrie* fugue. It could be objected that none of the Handel orchestrations that van Swieten commissioned—*Acis and Galatea* K. 566 (1788), *Messiah* K. 572

¹² Wolff, p. 86–87

¹³ Black: *Mozart and the Practice of Sacred Music 1781–91*, Harvard PhD thesis, 2007 p. 61 'Perhaps the most intriguing prospect in the post-1783 environment [in Vienna] is the possibility that the restrictions of the *Gottesdienstordnung* were simply ignored in practice.'

¹⁴ Black, *ibid*, Table 2.1 p. 65

¹⁵ Black, p. 50

¹⁶ The recitatives were accompanied by the harpsichord

(1789), Alexander's Feast K. 591 (1790), and Ode for St Cecilia's Day K. 592 (1790)—are church works and therefore irrelevant or even inappropriate to a discussion of the Requiem, but since Mozart's Handel models—*The Ways of Zion do mourn* HWV 264 and the chorus 'We shall rejoice' from the *Dettingen Anthem* HWV 265—are not church works either, yet were deemed worthy for the purpose by Mozart, this objection does not hold water. Mozart's adaptations were made for his modern audience, for the 'Kenner' that he so craved for his own music: throughout he showed the utmost respect for the Baroque master,¹⁷ leaving his string writing unchanged and adding winds judiciously according to the modern practice that he had helped establish. It makes sense that he would have approached the task of re-working Handel's music in the Requiem in a similar fashion.

Let us start with his instrumentation of *Messiah*, K. 572. The first chorus with extensive semiquaver melismas is 'And he shall purify' or 'Und er wird reinigen' in the German. Mozart opens with soloists instead of the full complement of singers (which numbered only 12), and reserved the winds (here two oboes and two bassoons) until just before the entrance of the tutti chorus in bar 20. The oboes do not double the chorus however; rather they have a simplified version of the violins, the first following the tenors an octave higher, the second the sopranos at unison—the bassoons double an octave lower:

The image displays a musical score for the first chorus of Mozart's *Messiah*, K. 572. The score is written for oboes, bassoons, voices, and violins. The oboes and bassoons are shown in the top two staves, with the oboes in the treble clef and bassoons in the bass clef. The voices are shown in the middle two staves, with the soprano and tenor parts in the treble clef and the bass part in the bass clef. The violins are shown in the bottom staff in the treble clef. The tempo is marked 'Andante' and the key signature is one flat (B-flat major). The score includes a 'trill' marking above the first vocal part. The lyrics are in German: 'Kin - der Le - vi da - mit sie bring - en, Herr - lich - er Dir, ein'. The violins play a continuous semiquaver pattern throughout the chorus.

Fig. 5

Most of the time, the bassoons either have what may be called this 'woodwind section' function, where they double the oboes an octave lower—a very familiar role in late Mozart—or they double the orchestral basses, not the choral basses. In this they follow the advice of Johann Georg Albrechtsberger in his *Anweisung zur Composition*: 'Die Fagotte müssen mit dem Violon, wenn sie nichts obligates haben, einhergehen.' (The bassoons should follow the double bass, if

¹⁷ Though not everyone appreciated his efforts: the musical scholar Moritz Hauptmann (1792–1868) described his additions to *Messiah* as 'stucco ornaments on a marble temple' (see William H. Cummings, *The Mutilation of a Masterpiece*, Proceedings of the Musical Association, (1903-4) p. 113-27.)

they do not have an obligato part).¹⁸ The one exception to these two functions is the following, from bars 42–47. As you will see, this is more a case of highlighting Handel’s counterpoint than doubling the choral basses for support (notice the invertible counterpoint with the oboes):

Ex. 2

oboes (with the altos) (simplified version of sopranos)

bassoons (simplified version of tenors) (with the basses)

er wird, er wird rei-ni-gen die Kin - der Le - vi die Kin-der, die Kin - der Le - vi

Fig. 6

Bars 52–55 are a good example of how the oboes support the choir rather than doubling it, generating their own lines within the harmonic and melodic parameters defined by the chorus, while Handel’s violins have their own semiquaver passage in thirds (not shown in the example). Note how the movement in sixths in the oboes creates notes and passing dissonances that are not in Handel’s original, showing Mozart’s intentionality in creating idiomatic writing rather than mere doubling:

Ex. 3

da - mit sie bring - en Herr - li - cher Dir, ein Op - fer der Ge-rech - tig - keit, der Ge - rech - tig - keit.

Fig. 7

A similar technique is used in the next chorus with a significant amount of semiquaver melismas, ‘Uns ist zum Heil ein Kind geboren’ (For unto us a son is born): once again the runs are given mostly to the solo singers while the tutti is reserved for the homophonic declamation ‘Wunderbar’ in bar 33. In this movement trumpets and drums, two horns and two oboes augment Handel’s strings—note no bassoons—and the accompanimental writing for the oboes provides a

¹⁸ Albrechtsberger, *Anweisung zur Composition*, Breitkopf, Leipzig, 1790, p. 379

supporting rather than doubling role, with movement in thirds and sixths, often with the first oboes taking the alto or tenor part an octave higher, or both having a simplified version in quavers of the violins' semiquaver runs.

While these movements do feature imitative melismas, neither are actual fugues. The first choral fugue proper in *Messiah* is in Part Two, No. 19¹⁹ 'Durch seine Wunden sind wir geheilet' (And with his stripes we are healed), which is, of course, the same fugue subject Mozart used for the 'Kyrie eleison' subject in his double fugue. In his *Messiah* orchestration of this subject (which does not of course have the semiquaver second subject) Mozart eschews woodwind altogether, using only strings, as in the Handel, but this may well be because this fugue is part of a triptych: Wahrlich—Durch seine Wunden—Wie Schafe geh'n—in which the outside movements feature the winds prominently, though never doubling the chorus semiquaver runs. However, this is not the case for the next fugue No. 22 'Er trauete Gott' (He trusted in God),²⁰ which is similarly scored for strings only. Only in the great final 'Amen' fugue do Mozart's winds play a doubling role, and then only in the opening section, where Handel's strings are silent and it would have been understood that the organ continuo would have filled in. Once the strings start playing with the chorus, it is the string parts the winds follow, not the chorus, the first flute, first oboe and first clarinet in A taking the first violin part, etc. The bassoons follow the cellos and basses, which switch, as would be expected, to the tenor part when the basses are silent.²¹ We see the same techniques in the final fugal chorus of the *Ode auf St. Caecilia* K. 592 'Was tot ist lebt', although there is a passage where the bassoons double the choral tenors rather than the cellos and basses.²² Elsewhere in the piece Mozart seemed more willing than he had been in *Messiah* to invent independent countermelodies for the winds where the chorus is homophonic.²³

What can be gleaned from these observations? The first is that the winds never slavishly follow the chorus: far more often they follow the strings, a simplified version of the strings, or extract their own independent lines that support rather than double. The second, arising from the first, is that their parts are always idiomatic rather than generic. The third is that, even when orchestrating the music of another composer, Mozart took great care to maintain the independence of all the different timbres of his ensembles: where there is doubling for a while,

¹⁹ No. 25 in most modern English scores

²⁰ No. 28 in most modern English scores

²¹ As Mozart does in the Requiem fugues. (The changes to Handel's trumpet parts would also make an interesting comparative study in the differences in playing technique between the 1740s and the 1790s.)

²² bars 17-24

²³ see, for example, bars 37 ff of the chorus 'Durch Harmonie', but we should perhaps not be too surprised at this in a work in praise of music, and at the word 'Harmonie' which can also mean 'wind band' in German.

the two parallel voices will soon diverge and then recombine to maintain their own individuality.²⁴ The orchestration of the *Kyrie* fugue runs contrary to all these observations.



However, Mozart's orchestrations of the Handel works would also seem to suggest equally strongly that the winds should *not* automatically double the chorus. This should especially be the case for the basset horns, since the ambit of the soprano line takes it above that instrument's range on two occasions. As discussed in Chapter 3, Mozart is very consistent in his allocations of roles to orchestral instruments and it is illogical to assign a role to an instrument that its very design dictates it can't fulfill consistently; the dangers of doing so are amply demonstrated in the two solutions to this problem illustrated above, whoever wrote them.

There is, however, a potential solution in the structure of the music. The ‘Kyrie’ subject is in two parts, a head motif that comprises one Handel borrowed melody, and its faster continuation, which functions as a harmonisation of the second ‘Christe’ subject, borrowed from the Dettingen anthem:

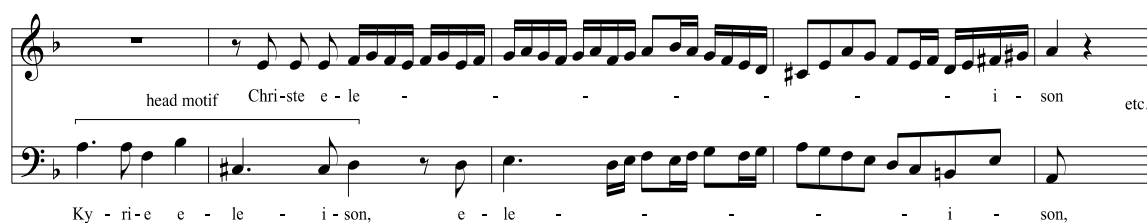


Fig. 9

If the basset horns were to highlight this head motif, in unison, each time it appears in the soprano part, and then leave the rest of the doubling to the first violins, not only would the musical technique be highlighted, but a much clearer texture would result. Such clarity is much needed in a complex musical fabric. Furthermore, since the head motif is always within the basset horn's range, not only would this new role remain consistent throughout the movement (unlike the automatic doubling of the soprano part), but independence from the other instruments would also be maintained, thus meeting two of the important criteria in Mozart's orchestration. If this technique is observed, the basset horns mirror the role of the trombones, for whom the constant semiquaver movement is best avoided (see below).

Second, the basset horns could fulfill another favourite Mozart woodwind technique, namely pointing cadences, or adding intensity at structurally significant moments. The trumpets and timpani already provide this function in bars 8 and 11 (where they emphasise the fugal entry of the main subject in the alto and tenor respectively),²⁶ so to add winds there seems redundant. The first place for a wind tutti would seem to be bar 42, right after the climax reached at the highest point of the soprano line in bar 41 and where all the voices come to a cadence on the dominant, declaiming the text together for the first time in the movement. This is a structurally significant moment and the orchestration should reflect that:

²⁶ As mentioned above, Süssmayr's entry in bar 20 is best avoided. Perhaps he gave the timpani only one note to avoid an implied second inversion chord on the third beat if they had played with the trumpets, but since we have now left the exposition and the keys of the other entries in the development section are such that the trumpets and timpani cannot participate, it would be strange to emphasise one entry only.

Another place where this technique could be used is the final cadence in bar 48, where the winds can reinforce the altos' and tenors' homophonic dotted quaver-semiquaver rhythm, again on the second beat.²⁷

The image shows a musical score for bar 48. It consists of three systems of staves. The top system has a treble and bass staff. The middle system has a treble staff with lyrics and a bass staff. The bottom system has a single bass staff. The lyrics are: 'le - i - son, e - le - i - son, son, Ky - ri - e, Ky - ri - e, e - le - i - son, le - i - son, e - le - i - son, i - son, e - le - i - son,'. The music features a dotted quaver-semiquaver rhythm on the second beat, which is highlighted by the text as a place where winds can reinforce the vocal parts.

The bassoons must, of course, join these woodwind *tuttis*, but what should their role be for the rest of the movement? Once again, Mozart's instrumentation of *Messiah* is instructive: almost nowhere in Mozart's *Messiah* orchestrations do the bassoons double the bass *and* tenor parts of the chorus, and on those rare occasions when they do it is for a few bars only, and only then because it makes sense within the context of what the other wind instruments are doing. Even in the tenor and bass duet sections of 'Machet das Tor' (Lift up your heads)—during the contrasting dialogue between the lower mens' voices and the three part women above—while the first bassoon follows the tenors, the second does not follow the basses, but rather its own additional inner part. As mentioned above, much of the added winds in Mozart's *Messiah* replace the missing organ continuo, and it is here that will be found the majority of the non *unisono* bassoon writing, often in alto and tenor range rather than bass. During chorus movements, most of the time the bassoons double the continuo line (in contrapuntal and homophonic passages alike), or move to double the tenors, *unisono*. It would be consistent then to expect that this would have been their function in the *Kyrie* fugue of the Requiem had Mozart orchestrated it himself.

²⁷ If the trumpet and timpani entrance in bar 49 is delayed until the second beat (more frequent in Mozart anyway) there is a very effective 'orchestration crescendo' of groups of instruments entering one after the other in the drive towards the cadence, which is much more effective than if only the trumpets and timpani can be added because all the other instruments have been playing all time. Delaying the trumpet entry by one beat has the additional advantage of not drowning out the sopranos' high A on the first beat.

This brings us to the trombones. It is often stated that, in Viennese church music of this period, inclusion of trombones to double the choral voices is to be understood: that was certainly the case with the first set of printed parts of the Requiem, on which the trombone parts of the NMA edition are based.²⁸ Having said that, as discussed in Chapter 2, there is much evidence that calls this ‘default setting’ into question. Rather than repeat the whole argument here, I will just mention two salient points: first, Albrechtsberger’s observation that the bass trombone was ‘selten mehr gebracht’²⁹ (seldom used any more), and that therefore most composers seem—certainly since the time of Fux—to have been writing for alto and tenor instruments only in support of the chorus;³⁰ this practice is corroborated by Monika Holl in her notes to Volume VI of the Series I (Sacred Vocal Music) of the NMA: ‘In der Salzburger Tradition waren drei Posaunen üblich (Alt, Tenor und Baß), in den Wiener Kirchen jedoch nur zwei.’³¹ (In Salzburg traditionally three trombones (alto, tenor and bass) were used, in Vienna however only two.) Secondly, we have Albrechtsberger’s other recommendation that the trombones ‘verlangen mehr langsame als geschwinde Noten’ (require slow rather than fast notes),³² also backed up by Guion’s observation that composers ‘did not hesitate to write sixteenth notes in slow movements’³³—the implication being that the practice of writing sixteenth notes did *not* extend to music in a fast tempo, into which category the *Kyrie* fugue certainly falls. There is an additional *caveat* in Albrechtsberger which is pertinent to the *Kyrie* fugue: he recommends that because C# and D are ‘difficult’ (‘schwer’), the alto trombone not be taken above C:³⁴ unfortunately, the alto part goes above C on three occasions—bar 15 and bar 32–33 and, worst of all, in bar 40–41 where it hits both D and C# one after the other in a highly conspicuous passage where a fluffed note would be embarrassing.³⁵

²⁸ NMA, Requiem, Vorwort p. XI

²⁹ Albrechtsberger, *Grundliche Anweisung zur Composition*, Breitkopf, 1790, p. 379

³⁰ cf David M. Guion, *The Trombone: Its History and Music 1679-1811*, Gordon and Breach, 1988, p. 128: ‘The pattern of alto, tenor and bass trombones doubling the alto, tenor and bass lines of the chorus...rarely occurs in Fux’s writing. Most of his choral music calls for only two.’

³¹ NMA I/1/Abt. 1/6: Masses vol. 6, p. XVIII (1990)

³² Albrechtsberger, *ibid*, p. 379

³³ David M Guion, *ibid*, p. 132

³⁴ Albrechtsberger, *ibid*, p. 440

³⁵ Othon Vandenbroek makes a similar observation even about the notes B and C a step and a step and a half lower in his *Traité général de tous les instrumens à vent à l’usage des compositeurs* (1794), that they ‘should only be approached by step’. (See Guion, *ibid*, p. 76-7: while Guion posits that this may represent the weakness of French trombone playing rather than anything inherent in the instrument itself, it is still indicative of the difficulties experienced in the extreme upper range.)

Sadly, Mozart's orchestration of *Messiah* is of little help in resolving this apparent contradiction of contemporary sources, since he notated trombones only in the Overture, and then only in the opening *Grave* section, not the faster moving fugue that follows. Since it is highly unlikely that he would cause three players to be engaged to play in only the first few measures, it would seem to follow that they must have played elsewhere during the performance. However, since it was customary for instrumentalists to be proficient on more than one instrument,³⁶ the possibility cannot be ruled out that the same players played trombone in the Overture and, say, horn elsewhere, and since Mozart gave no indication in the score after the Overture as to what the participation of the trombones should be,³⁷ it is impossible to say with any certainty what and when they should play.³⁸ In his completion of the Requiem Süssmayr himself seems to have been in two minds about whether trombone doubling of the chorus was automatic since he omitted them from the *Sanctus* fugue but included them in the fugue following the *Benedictus*.³⁹ Whether this represents a careless oversight or a considered, if somewhat perverse, choice is not clear, but if it is the latter, the implication would seem to be that the doubling of the choral lines in fugues by trombones was not necessarily a 'default setting'.

Be all this as it may, the Requiem is obviously not an orchestration of another composer's work—although the fugue subjects were of course borrowed from Handel—but a brand new creation, and one in which, in the words of Christoph Wolff, 'a new style...was to flower.'⁴⁰ Mozart had chosen his ensemble very carefully, and largely for the specific timbre of each instrument and its 'extra musical' connotations: to have three different instrumental groups playing the same thing constantly not only undermines those very choices but would be contrary to the great care he took in his other music to preserve instrumental colour and function. Even allowing for the gentler, smaller sound of the eighteenth century trombone—in many ways closer to the baroque sackbut than the modern trombone, which has a wider bore and much larger bell—to have three different timbres doubling the same lines for page after page, as the traditional version has, is contrary to Mozart's practice in every other work of this period where there are

³⁶ For example, in Leopold Mozart's 'Report on the Present State of the Musical Establishment at the Court of His Serene Highness the Archbishop of Salzburg in the Year 1757', nine of the twenty seven instrumentalists listed by name played an instrument of a different family than the one for which they were principally employed (i.e. string players playing horn or woodwinds): even the famous trombone player Thomas Gschlatt also played violin, cello and horn (Zaslaw, *Mozart's Symphonies*, Clarendon Press, (1989) pp 550 ff)

³⁷ The autographs of Parts I and II are lost, and much of the surviving Part III is in the hand of a copyist

³⁸ Monika Holl (see note 12 above) says that the chorus parts would 'most likely' have been copied and given to the trombonists, but that is still less than definitive.

³⁹ It is also interesting to note that the music he wrote for the trombones during the solo sections of the *Benedictus* he uses only the alto and tenor instruments even though the bass soloist is singing, reserving the lower instrument until the massive chords that recall the 'et lux perpetua' music of the *Requiem aeternam*, a corroboration of the Viennese practice of the time as reported by Albrechtsberger in his *Anweisung*.

⁴⁰ see note 2 above

instruments and voices together. As Levin notes ‘... the trombones were not meant to play the whole time ... Unfortunately, with few exceptions, Mozart did not write separate trombone parts into the scores of his church works; rather, he notated sparse indications for the trombones in the choral staves. From the shades of ink and the placement of these indications it is to be presumed that this labor was part of the final phase of the compositions notation.’⁴¹ Obviously, Mozart did not live to reach this stage of the process in the Requiem, but if there is anything to be gleaned from the surviving parts for the C minor mass, it is that Mozart did not expect the trombones to ‘play literally *colla parte*.’⁴² The best use for the trombones in the *Kyrie* fugue would seem to be to use them in the same way as the basset horns, namely reinforcing the head motif of the fugue subject, but following Albrechtberger’s advice and sitting out during the semiquaver runs. They should of course join the winds at the tuttis in bars 42 and 48 to the end.⁴³

The problems with the trumpet and timpani writing mentioned above mean they are obviously not by Mozart. While their entry in bar 20 could seem logical at first to reinforce the tenor entry in that bar, whoever did the orchestration gave the trumpet a different rhythm, and gave the timpani only one note (!), probably because he realised that to continue would have created the impression of a second inversion chord on the half bar. These notes can easily be removed. As noted above, the entry in bar 38 does not happen in the parallel place in the *Cum Sanctis* fugue, and here gives undue emphasis to an unstressed syllable in the soprano, alto and tenor parts. Furthermore, the repeated semiquavers in the timpani will surely interfere with the semiquaver run in the basses. These notes too should not stand. Bar 39 also seems to be an attempt to point the bass entrance, but while it was better handled in the *Cum Sanctis* (where it was two beats shorter), it seems actually to have the opposite effect of pulling focus from the fugal entry. Since the trumpets and timpani can play so relatively few notes it is often tempting to use them wherever they fit the harmony, irrespective of whether the moment is structurally significant, but it is often best to resist that temptation. This entry is best omitted. The clash between the trumpet A and altos’ B flat on the third beat of bar 42 is easily removed by omitting the first quaver, the resulting fourth beat entry reinforcing the cadence, as noted above. The trumpet and timpani entry in bar 49 would be much more effective if delayed until the second half of the second beat, again to emphasise exactly the moment where the voices declaim the text homophonically (cf. bar 42). Finally, as noted above, there is no good reason why they should not join the full tutti on the last beat of bar 50.

⁴¹ Levin, p. XXII

⁴² *ibid*

⁴³ Beyer takes half a step in this direction, citing the *Cum sancto spirito* fugue of K. 427 as a model, by suggesting that in the highly chromatic melismas (cf. bars 34-8) the trombones might play just the first note of each group of four semiquavers ‘slightly *marcato* as a crotchet’ [Franz Beyer, W. A. Mozart Requiem, Edition Kunzelmann, 1979 p. 16 (Forward) and 21-22 (Score)]

A final observation about the end of the movement: with an independent woodwind and brass entry in bar 48, which reinforces the alto and tenor rhythm, it seems redundant for the second violins and violas to continue to double the choral lines: this is the climax of a long and complex fugal argument, where the tension of the rising chromatic melismas (dominant to tonic in the basses and sopranos in bars 45 and 46, answered by supertonic to dominant in the altos and sopranos in bars 47 and 48) finally becomes unbearable and breaks the almost hypnotic cycle of imitation, drawing all the rhythmic threads together into a massive deceptive cadence in bar 50. The orchestration should surely reflect this and achieve a greater intensity. Frequently in Mozart we see how the doubling strings take the upper octave at structurally significant moments, and the orchestrator of the *Kyrie* missed an opportunity to do so at the end of this fugue: when the wind tutti enters in bar 48 the second violins can join the firsts in unison to give the sopranos more support, and then break the bonds of doubling by carrying the inexorably rising semiquavers *up* to the leading tone to form their own independent line, thereby soaring an octave higher than the sopranos:⁴⁴



The final *Adagio* should maintain this extra intensity by keeping the violins at the higher octave, but merely doubling the vocal parts, which the traditional version does, seems to miss the mark, since they are already doubled by the full wind tutti. Mozart often introduces double and triple stops in the violins at final cadences, and there is an opportunity to do so here if the strings play off-beat quavers. Not only is this a more dramatic gesture, but it recalls the opening rhythmic motif of the work, thus creating the kind of unity so often observed in the master orchestrator:

⁴⁴ the violas should join the continuo bass line



For the score of my edition of this movement, from which the musical examples of pages 90-5 are taken, see the end of Chapter 5 for the hyperlink to the score of the opening movement Introit/Kyrie, or click below:

<https://www.simonwandrews.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/1-Introitus-score.16.pdf>