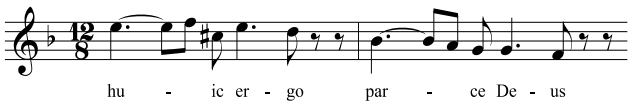
Chapter 12

Lacrymosa

As is well known, in the *Lacrymosa* Mozart's autograph breaks off at the end of bar 8, after a two-bar introduction for violins and viola and six bars of chorus with unfigured orchestral bass. In this movement, the nature of the task of completing the Requiem changed exponentially: now actual composing was required to finish the choral parts before the instrumentation could even be contemplated. That at least seems to have been the opinion of Eybler as he approached this movement, left so frighteningly blank, and his trepidation at undertaking the task is revealed by the fact that he gave up completely after attempting to continue Mozart's choral parts with two measures of his own soprano melody, without any supporting alto, tenor or bass:



At this point, exactly when we do not know, Eybler gave up his work, and returned the manuscript to Constanze.[1] Two things seem clear from his abandoning the task: any conversations he had had with Mozart as he cared for him during his final illness[2] did not include sufficient, if any, instructions on how to finish this movement; and secondly, if there were any sketches among the 'Zettelchen' for the *Lacrymosa*, Eybler was either not aware of them, or did not have access to them. Since he was the first 'master' to be offered the project, this seems unlikely. It must be admitted, however, that the possibility that sketches did indeed exist, but Süssmayr kept them from Eybler for reasons unknown (but not hard to speculate about) cannot be ruled out: it would explain both why Süssmayr was able to complete the movement while Eybler—whose talents as a composer exceeded Süssmayr's in Mozart's opinion[3]—felt unequal to the task; and why, as in so many other places in Süssmayr's completion, the quality of the melodic materials often seems of a different level than their realisation and instrumentation. It would not be the only occasion on which Süssmayr tried to pass off Mozart's music as his own, and the level of intermingling of their manuscripts is both a matter of record and a subject for speculation.[4]

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[1] it is interesting to note that, like Süssmayr, Eybler's continuation starts with an A major chord, not the D minor chord that Maunder considered to be 'the most likely' (Maunder, p. 171)

[2] In his autobiography Eybler wrote 'I had the good fortune to keep his [Mozart's] friendship unalloyed until his death, so that even in his painful last illness I was at hand to lift him, lay him down, and help wait on him' (*Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 28, no. 21 (1826) as translated in Wolff, p.25 note 70)

[3] On May 30th, 1790 Mozart wrote a highly complimentary letter of reference for Eybler which includes the description of him as 'a young musician about whom one's only regret can be that there are so few like him'

[4] see the discussion of the confusion of Süssmayr's and Mozart's manuscripts in general, and Süssmayr's version of the Rondo in D for horn K. 514 in particular in Chapter 3 above and in Wolff (p. 44–51)

If Mozart's thinking had been sufficiently advanced to have worked out even the next eight bars in detail, he would surely have written them into the score: it is hard to imagine that as gifted a melodist as Mozart didn't know how to follow these opening bars, however sublime. It would seem therefore that the root of his indecision lay later in the movement. It must have been a major quandary, enough for him to put the movement aside and continue with the *Domine Jesu* and *Hostias*, with their intricate, yet fully worked-out *Quam olim Abrahae* fugues, on a fresh folio.[5]

What could have caused such an uncharacteristic case of writer's block? Was it a problem of how to end this particular movement, or was his uncertainty more global, to do with the structure of the work as a whole? The *Lacrymosa* does come, after all, at a structurally significant point in the work, the end of the long Sequenz movement that had begun with the *Dies irae.* It must be remembered that Mozart's commission was for a liturgical work in which it was understood that prayers—either spoken, intoned to plainchant or probably both—would separate the movements he composed. Did he take that into consideration when planning the grand dramatic sweep of the work, or was the source of his indecision the possibility of future purely concert performances, which, removed from liturgical considerations and contexts, could have different proportions? It must be remembered that, as Black has pointed out,[6] the work he was creating was probably the first requiem written in Vienna since 1781, so not only did he have no recent models to follow or improve upon, he must have been aware that, in spite of its secret commissioning, his requiem would be precedent-setting. His application letter for the position of Adjunct Kapellmeister at St. Stephen's Cathedral of April 1791 talks of his 'international reputation' and that he was 'better fitted than many [for the position] in view of the knowledge of church music he had cultivated', which implies very strongly that Mozart had a sense that any liturgical music he produced would be in the public eye.[7]

So, did he pause here, as Wolff suggests, to take stock of the big picture, to 'assess the nature of the [musical] correspondences' [8] of a large-scale structure in its own right, or as a master of stage-craft to decide what would be best in the context of a religious service? The six sections of the Sequenz form the longest continuous music in the Requiem, almost forty percent of the whole (in the traditional version) and more than twice as long as any other concerted

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[5] fols. 35r–45v (89r – 99v). It is also interesting to note that folio 32v (86v) between the end of the *Confutatis* and the opening of the *Lacrymosa* is blank, implying that the opening of the *Lacrymosa* was already written down when Mozart was completing the *Confutatis*, or he would have continued to the *Lacrymosa* in the same folio.
See Chapter 4 for a discussion of Mozart's working methods

[6] Black, *Mozart and the Practice of Sacred Music*, p. 357

[7] Indeed, after his death, it was this work that helped establish the tradition of concert performances of requiems

[8] Wolff, p. 30

movement, so how to end it without overshadowing, or undercutting, the rest of the work needed careful thought.

Sadly, the only data point we have, other than Mozart's indecision, is Süssmayr's completion of the movement, and we don't know whether his solution is entirely of his own invention, the result of a conversation he may have had with Mozart—of a kind to which Eybler was apparently not privy—or a hint in the form of a sketch. We don't, of course, know how Süssmayr approached the completion of the work, whether he worked chronologically movement by movement, completing the composition required in the *Lacrymosa* before continuing to orchestrate the *Domine Jesu* etc. Or did he too pause at this point, to consider his options? What could he have known of Mozart's intentions for later in the work?

The only clue we have is the following comment by Constanze in a letter to Breitkopf & Härtel dated March 27th, 1799: 'When he saw that death was upon him, he spoke to Herr Süssmayr … and asked him, if he actually died without finishing [the Requiem], to repeat the fugue at the end—as is usual in any case—and told him further how to realize the ending …' [9] If this story is true, it would seem that Mozart had indeed thought about the later architecture of the piece and discussed it with Constanze, at least. There is a potential problem with this story, however: it is difficult to ascertain the source of Constanze's certainty that it was 'usual' to repeat material from the opening at the end of the Requiem, since her training was as a singer, not as a composer or historian. As noted above, owing to the restrictions on church music initiated by Emperor Joseph, very few, if any, large-scale church works with orchestra had been composed in Vienna since 1783,[10] so opportunities for her to have heard an elaborate Requiem would have been few and far between.[11] However, her husband did know Michael Haydn's C minor Requiem, composed in Salzburg in 1771, since he and his father took part in a performance of the work in 1772. In this work Haydn does indeed recall material from the opening, among other motifs the phrase 'et lux perpetua', set in an identical rhythm and similar chord structure to Mozart's use of the phrase. If this work is the source of Constanze's comment—and given the correspondences between it and her husband's music it would seem likely—then just about the only way she could have acquired this knowledge was from her husband in the context of his own Requiem. Far from casting doubt on her veracity, this would seem to confirm her assertion that Mozart did indeed discuss the architecture of the work with her. Why would she not pass such information on to Süssmayr?

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[9] as translated in Wolff, Doc 16A, p.139

[10] see Wolff, p. 86-87; see also Black, *Mozart and the practice of sacred music,* PhD thesis, Harvard, 2007, p. 50–84 and p. 357 "I have been unable to identify any other setting dating from 1781 – 91." (see n 6 above)

[11] see also O'Keefe: 'At the time of his death Mozart had (half) completed possibly the first Viennese musical setting of the Requiem Mass in over a decade' in *Mozart's Requiem: Reception, Work, Completion,* Cambridge, (2012), p.171 and his note 55

It seems possible then that Süssmayr might have had an idea of Mozart's intentions for the end of the work, either directly from the composer himself, or second hand via Constanze. What is impossible to ascertain from Constanze's story is whether this was only Mozart's 'Plan B', as it were—how to complete the work in the event that he was unable to—or his actual intention.

Or is it? There are two parts to the anecdote in Constanze's letter, the plan for the end of the Requiem and the idea that Mozart had premonitions of his death while composing it. It is surely relevant, given the effective marketing campaign that Mozart's widow mounted after the death of her husband, that the only source of information about his state of mind is Constanze and her circle. The stories surrounding Mozart's death grew so quickly in the telling that myth and reality soon became inextricably intertwined. Sophie Haibl's story about Mozart mouthing the sound of the timpani on his deathbed is well-known, but one of the first of these stories, which appeared as early as 1792, was how Mozart became convinced while he was composing it that he was writing the Requiem for himself. However, the truth would seem to be that, while there are reports of his feeling tired and ill on returning from Prague, Mozart was used to occasional illnesses, and the mood swings that accompanied them, so when he took to his bed on November 20th there was no reason for him to believe that he would never leave it. He was unconcerned enough about his health in early November to stop working on the Requiem and take time to compose the *Freymaurer-Kantate* K. 623, entered into his Verzeichnis on November 15th, which is not the action of someone who feared he would not finish his own memorial, or that death was about to take him. He was well enough to conduct the cantata on the 18th. By the time he became so unwell that the possibility this latest illness would be his last reared its ugly head, he was likely in no position to think too clearly about musical architecture.

Among all the gothic and romantic inventions that grew like mushrooms, the account of Mozart's son Karl Thomas about his father's deathbed has the ring of truth about it:

> Especially worthy of mention in my opinion are the circumstances that a couple of days before death a general swelling set in, to such an extent as to make the smallest movement impossible…'[12]

Although he was only seven in 1791, this has the air of a vivid memory—and a terrifying one from a young child's standpoint—but one that is not swayed by the romantic exaggerations of his elders. These accounts variously have Mozart lucid, talking and even participating in a rehearsal within hours of his death. While this is no place for a lengthy discussion of Mozart's final illness,[13] add to Mozart's obvious extreme discomfort the course of 'bloodletting by

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[12] see William Stafford, *The Mozart Myths* (Stanford, 1991) p. 41 (see also Stafford's n. 14)

[13] see Carl Bär, *Mozart: Krankheit—Tod—Begräbnis* (Salzburg, 1967 & 1972) and P.J. Davies *Mozart's illnesses and Death,* Musical Times, CXXV, 1984.

venesections'[14] prescribed by his physician,[15] the combination would surely have left Mozart too weak to think coherently.

If Mozart were unable to think about the Requiem for about two or three days before his death, what of the slightly less than two weeks between November 20th and the beginning of December? The early symptoms of Mozart's illness were a painful swelling of the joints in the hands and feet, which surely would have precluded holding a pen. Eybler states quite clearly that for some of this time he cared for Mozart: 'I had the luck to retain his friendship undamaged up to his death, so that I could help him during his painful last illness, lifting him, laying him down and waiting on him'.[16] Clearly, here is a patient who was quite disabled, in pain, and probably considerably weakened by being bled frequently,[17] scarcely the ideal conditions for musical conversation. *Conspicuously absent from Eybler's account is the mention of any instruction given to him by Mozart during this period*. After Mozart's death, Constanze's circle were at great pains to stress Mozart's authorship and de-emphasise the contributions of the 'masters' to the Requiem, so surely he would have reported any conversation he had had with Mozart on the subject? H. C. Robbins Landon must therefore be incorrect when he suggests that Mozart may actually have dictated the passages of instrumentation in Eybler's hand during this period.[18] It is also hard to imagine Süssmayr ignoring what he knew to be Mozart's thoughts when the score passed to him, even if they were in another man's handwriting. It seems the most plausible, therefore, that conversations between Mozart and anyone in what became the team of Requiem completers never happened.

To summarise, it is more likely that any conversation Wolfgang and Constanze may have had in relation to the ending of the Requiem took place before his final illness than during it, and were made in the context of his general thoughts rather than in the form of a musical last will and testament. While that part of the story was probably an embellishment, Constanze's story may have a kernel of truth in it, namely that to 'repeat the fugue at the end' probably was Mozart's plan on November 20th, and he had no idea that he would not live to implement it.

If this is the case, we have a different perspective on why Mozart interrupted the *Lacrymosa* but continued to compose the *Domine Jesu* and the *Hostias* that follow it. Once he

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[14] Stafford, ibid, p. 66

[15] Thomas Closset (1754–1813)

[16] see H. C. Robbins Landon, *Mozart's Last Year*, Thames and Hudson, (1988) p. 161

[17] see Lucien Karhausen, *The Bleeding of Mozart,* Xlibris, (2011) p. 298

[18] Landon, p. 161

had composed those movements with their repeated weighty fugues[19] and formulated the plan to finish up the entire work with the repeat of another complex fugal movement—one of the greatest choral fugues ever written—the end of the *Lacrymosa* needed very careful balancing so that the dramatic impact of the movements that followed would not be lessened.

Pertinent at this point is the famous sketch for an *Amen* fugue found on the one page of sketches related to the Requiem that has been discovered. Since there was a detailed discussion of the *Skizzenblatt* in Chapter 4, I will mention only the directly salient points of that argument here.

The single leaf contains four sketches, written at different times and with varying levels of haste and legibility. Only one of these sketches can with certainty be attached to the Requiem, the fourth, situated at the bottom of the page and therefore presumably the last to be added. Although it is un-texted, the melodic material shows it to be a rejected sketch—or perhaps, more accurately, a 'work-in-progress' sketch—for four bars of the *Rex tremendae.* The third sketch on the page, directly above the sketch for the *Rex tremendae,* is the famous 'Amen' sketch. Its location on the page can only mean that it was written at an earlier date, before the *Rex tremendae*. Music paper was expensive, and the layout of the first two sketches, which were written at different times but share the same line, suggests that Mozart used sketch paper as efficiently as possible: it simply would not make sense to fill the top two staves with ideas for two different pieces only to leave blank space and start the next sketch four staves lower, at the bottom of the page. The *Amen* sketch must already have been there when he went searching for a piece of paper to sketch the passage from *Rex tremendae*. This presents a problem for those who propose it is with a fugue on this subject that Mozart 'intended' to finish the *Lacrymosa*, because that movement comes after the *Rex tremendae*, not before it. While it is true that Mozart sketched the Requiem out of order in the sense that he often worked on more than one movement at a time during the planning phase, especially during the second half of 1791 when his work load was extreme, there is also ample scholarship showing that Mozart's working sketches rarely represent his final thoughts. Statistically speaking, the 'Amen' sketch is, like the *Rex tremendae* sketch below it, in all likelihood just a 'work-in-progress' sketch.

Indeed, the only connection between it and the Requiem is the key of D minor and the fact that its one word of text fills part of a gap in the autograph score. Some commentators, in support of their contention that it was Mozart's plan to conclude the Sequence with a fugue on the theme in the sketch[20] have emphasised the thematic relationships between it and the main theme of the *Requiem aeternam*. There is no denying that startling similarities do indeed exist. However, it is equally true that step-wise motion is hardly unique in contrapuntal music, which makes thematic

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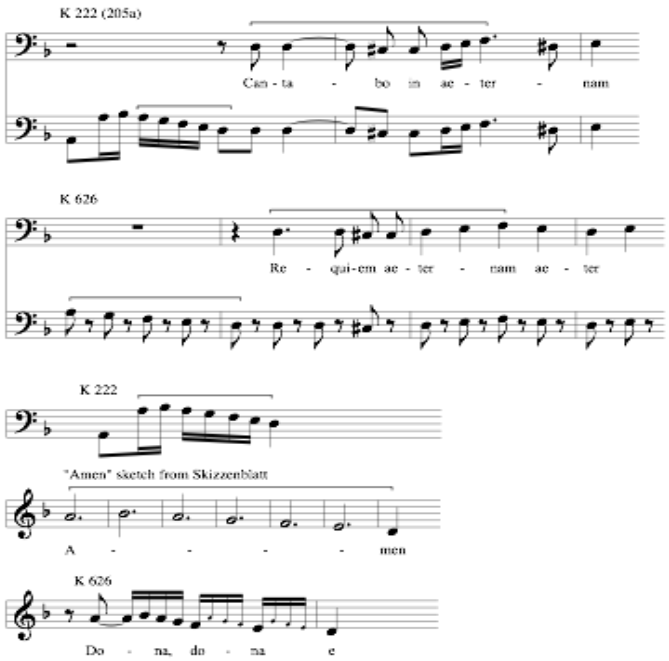
[19] also modeled on the Michael Haydn Requiem in C minor, where the *Quam olim Abrahae* sections are fugal, melodically similar, in G minor, and repeated after the *Hostias*

[20] for example see Wolff, p. 31

correspondences fairly easy to find. For example, as was also discussed in Chapter 4, there is another Mozart work in D minor with thematic material which provides almost identical relationships, the Offertorium *Misericordias Domini* K. 222 (205a), which may well have been on Mozart's mind in the late summer of 1791. As H.C. Robbins Landon has noted, this piece was among the works by Mozart that Salieri took with him to perform during the various religious ceremonies attached to the coronation festivities for Leopold II.[21] Strangely enough, the *Misericordias Domini* was also among the works of Mozart owned by St. Michael's church where Mozart's funeral service took place on December 10th: Black even suggests that the score in St. Michael's possession may even have been made in May 1791.[22] Since Salieri was also asked to provide a list of the names of the musicians he would be taking with him to Prague in May,[23] and would therefore have to know the repertoire he intended to perform, this timeline is consistent with the Offertorium being at the front of Mozart's musical consciousness at the time the sketches were entered on to the *Skizzenblatt*.

To save the reader from turning back to Chapter 4, the musical example is repeated here: as can be seen, the correspondences between K. 222 (205a) and the *Amen* fugue subject could even be considered to be stronger than those with the *Requiem aeternam*:



[21] H. C. Robbins Landon, *1791: Mozart's Last Year*, Thames and Hudson, 1998, p.111-2, citing Karl Pfannhauser's 'Mozarts *Krönungsmesse'*, Mitteilungen der Internationalen Stiftung Mozarteum, 11, Salzburg, 1963 p. 3-11

[22] Even more strangely, they also owned a set of parts for Michael Haydn's C minor Requiem, a work not without significance in the genesis of Mozart's final composition (Black, p. 389)

[23] Landon, p. 103

One should be wary of jumping to the conclusion that Mozart intended to end the *Lacrymosa* with a fugue on that subject on the basis of thematic resemblances alone. The unequivocal statements such as those made by both Wolff himself—'Mozart intended to conclude the *Lacrymosa* with an "Amen" fugue according to the sketch'[24]—and Maunder—'There can be no doubt that Mozart's sixteen-bar "Amen" fugue sketch was intended to form the final section of the Sequence'[25]—do not stand on as strong a foundation as their authors claim. It is an interesting hypothesis, and it is even possible that Mozart himself once considered it, but it is equally possible that he if he did, he rejected the idea. Indeed, one could easily come to this conclusion on the basis that the sketch suggests that Mozart seems to have been unable to come up with a soprano part that pleased him: as can be seen the soprano part has been extensively re-written in the fifth and sixth bars, stops for four bars and then is completely illegible at the end of the line (even in the NMA these measures are marked 'Text unklar'):[26]

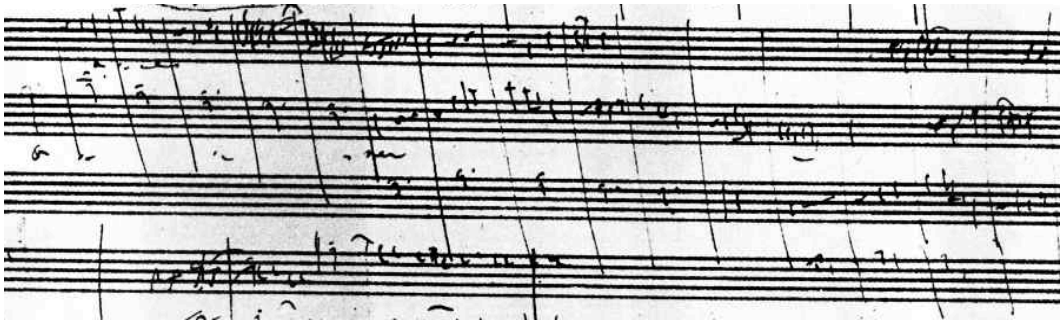


Fig. 1
Facsimile excerpt of Berlin Skizzenblatt.
(The fourth system is the top (soprano) staff of the *Rex tremendae* sketch)

To add an Amen fugue to the *Lacrymosa* based on such a slender theory represents an unwarranted and radical alteration to the architecture of a historical artefact which should not be undertaken so lightly. If Mozart had indeed decided to do so, while he might not have had time to work out the details of the fugue itself, would he not have completed the *Lacrymosa* to the point where the fugue began, and written it into the autograph score? *The fact that he didn't suggests very strongly that he had made no such decision, that he remained undecided about the ending of the Lacrymosa.* Therefore the 'Amen' sketch should remain just that, a sketch, one possible stage

[24] Wolff, p. 30–1 (his statement cited in note 13 notwithstanding!)

[25] Maunder, p. 173

[26] NMA I/1/Abt.2/1: Requiem: Fragment, Score, (1965) p. 60 and 61, facsimile and transcription

in Mozart's creative process, which, if it were once considered for the Requiem, like the sketch for the *Rex tremendae* was later superseded.

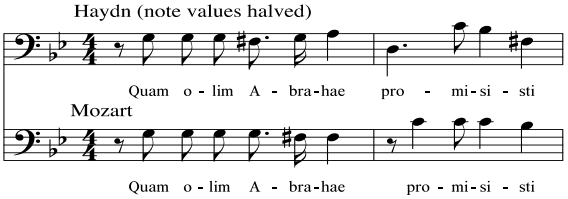
Mozart's final thoughts may in fact be suggested by an analysis of the structure of the Sequenz, the kind of music he chose for each of its the movements. This relationship reveals, after the *Dies irae*—which could hardly be set any other way—a carefully balanced alternation of *moderno* and *antico* styles:

Tuba mirum	*moderno*
Rex tremendae	*antico*
Recordare	*moderno*
Confutatis	*antico*
Lacrymosa	*moderno*

As can be readily seen, according to this model, the last movement was conceived as a *moderno* section—as is borne out by the tragic opening bars—and this would surely preclude a fugal component.

As far as Süssmayr is concerned, the man who ultimately had to complete the movement, there is no evidence that he even knew of the *Amen* sketch. It seems unlikely, since it still survives where any others to which he may have had access have either been lost, or worse, destroyed. He was faced with the end of the longest movement in the work, followed by the *Domine Jesu* and *Hostias,* which contained two fugues and the whole work to be rounded off with a repeat of the *Kyrie,* a fugue of intimidating complexity. Süssmayr's contrapuntal abilities are amply demonstrated in the *Sanctus* and *Benedictus* fugues: who can blame him if he steered his thinking towards a simple plagal *Amen* to conclude the Sequenz?

One final tantalising possibility before we turn to a consideration of Süssmayr's completion and scoring of this movement. Its final plagal cadence is the same ending that Michael Haydn used at the end of this *Lacrymosa* in the C minor Requiem, the work that was one of Mozart's models.[27] Is this a coincidence? Given the fugal nature of Haydn's setting of the text 'Quam olim Abrahae' in the next two movements—the key and melody of which are so similar to Mozart's—a very strong case can be made that it is not:



[27] The counterargument could, of course, be made that the Haydn has a fairly extended *Amen* chorus preceding this Plagal cadence, which could support the case for a similar setting in the Mozart work. But while it is imitative it is not fugal, and this whole section functions almost as a recapitulation (Haydn sets the Sequenz as a single movement), going back and forth between the soloists and chorus, and even re-introducing earlier text.

Since it would seem that Haydn's *Quam olim fugues* were a model for Mozart's,[28] it is but a short step to propose that in finishing Mozart's *Lacrymosa* in a manner very similar to the Haydn, a simple plagal cadence, Süssmayr got it exactly right. That his version follows a known model for Mozart—whether Süssmayr knew the work or not—lends it an authority and historicity which no modern re-working of other material can match. To dismiss Süssmayr's ending out of hand is to run the risk of throwing out the baby with the bathwater and losing whatever vestiges of Mozart's thought processes may be present in it. To include an *Amen* fugue at the end of the *Lacrymosa* may well be a case of falling into the trap described (and ascribed to Süssmayr!) by Wolff "…of composing something new on the basis of unfinished materials, left out of order and sometimes not intended to belong together." [29]

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Süssmayr's working score, if he made one, is no longer extant. We will probably never know whether it is simply lost, or if he destroyed it so there would be no evidence of his contribution should the anonymous commissioner—who knew from newspaper reports that Mozart's death had left the Requiem incomplete—appear to ask awkward questions. Similarly, if Constanze's 'Zettelchen' story is true, other than the one containing the *Amen* exposition and the *Rex tremendae* fragment, any that may have existed for the subsequent movements are also either lost or destroyed. Mozart's sketches for other works would suggest that any sketch to which Süssmayr might have had access for the *Lacrymosa* would not have been extensive, probably no more than the melody line and perhaps the basso continuo (which would explain the awkwardness of some of the voice leading in the inner parts). While there are undoubtedly faults in some of the details of its execution, let us first consider the strengths of Süssmayr's completion.

Bars 9–14:

- form an antecedent-consequent phrase with 3–8
- have a strong rising line in the bass which echoes the rising soprano line of 3–8, uses word-painting ('qua resurget') and comes, also like 3–8, to a cadence at its high point which occurs at the end of the sentence
- feature a level of chromaticism consistent with Mozart's opening phrase
- maintain Mozart's use of suspensions

[28] It is not the only close resemblance: see the syncopated violin figure in the opening movement of the Haydn, similar to the same passage in the same place in the Mozart

[29] Wolff, p. 50

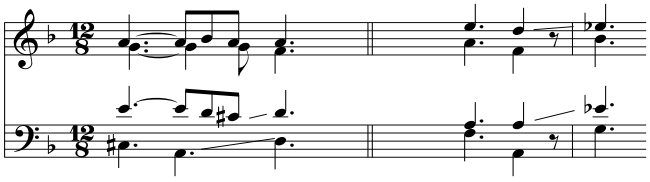
Bars 15–21:

- change the texture with the next line of text (‘huic ergo’)
- provide a modulation to the relative major as the text changes from bemoaning the day of judgment to the contemplation of ‘gentle Lord Jesus’
- vary the texture by giving the choir almost three bars of rest and feature the first basset horn in a solo line
- recall bar 7 of the *Requiem aeternam* in the trombone chords in bar 21 as the text returns to ‘dona eis requiem’

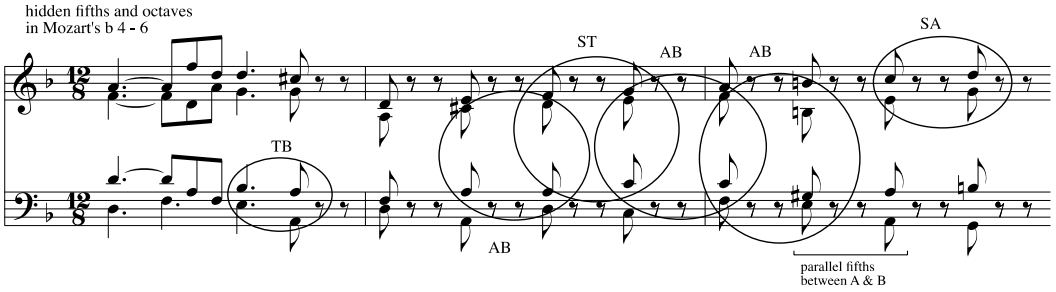
Bars 22–end:

- provide a brief recapitulation
- attempt an imitative coda

These structural strengths—many of which follow Mozartian practice—should not be ignored, whatever their source. In fact, the flaws in the realisation of this structure confirm the opinion of many commentators, perhaps best summed up in Wolff’s observation that so much of Süssmayr’s work is ‘a unique and curious mixture of amazingly good ideas and the less successful execution or development of those ideas.’[30] Maunder goes out of his way to emphasise ‘the less successful execution’, dismissing Süssmayr’s continuation on the grounds of ‘breaches of Mozart’s grammatical rules.’[31] He quite correctly notes the hidden octave between the tenor and bass from beat two to beat three of bar 9, and the hidden octave between soprano and tenor from bar 10 to 11:



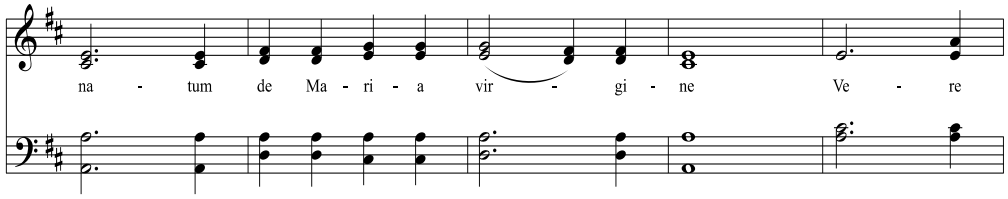
However, by those criteria, the competence of Mozart’s bars 4–6 should also be questioned:



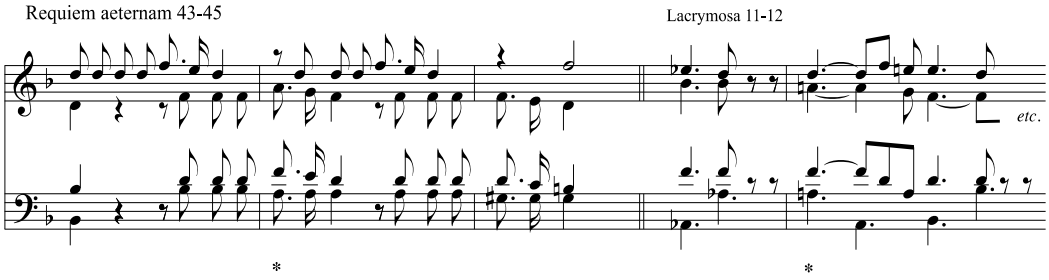
[30] Wolff, p. 42

[31] Maunder, p. 33

Maunder also criticises Süssmayr for starting bar 9 on 'just another dominant chord,'[32] while ignoring the fact that there are many instances of Mozart doing the same thing, such as this example from the motet *Ave verum corpus* K. 618, where the first phrase similarly ends on the dominant while the second continues on the same chord:[33]



While many of Maunder's observations are correct, many are not, such as analysing the chord on the third beat of bar 10 into a 'poorly spaced seventh chord (with a doubled third)' rather than what it is, a first inversion tonic with a correctly prepared and resolved suspension in the soprano. His criticism of the following fourth beat as second inversion chord 'that does not itself resolve' ignores the fact that it is a passing chord used in a very similar fashion to the tonic second inversion in bar 44–6 of the *Requiem aeternam*:



Maunder's quotation of these two passages[34] obscures this relationship by starting his *Requiem aeternam* example in bar 44, thus excluding the bass B flat in bar 43, and his *Lacrymosa* example in bar 12, excluding the bass A flats in bar 11, thereby hiding their passing quality. Note how the voicing of both second inversion chords is identical and both bass parts move both on to it and from it by a semitone: indeed, if one allows the enharmonic equivalence of G sharp and A flat, the bass parts are in a retrograde relationship. Maunder criticises the chord on the downbeat of bar 11 as a "misuse of the Neapolitan 6th chord"[35] (citing Hess and Marguerre to bolster his opinion) without explaining why it is a 'misuse'. On the contrary, Süssmayr's bass part moves perfectly rationally by rising half step, and the Neapolitan chord is surely appropriate to the 'pathetic'

[32] Maunder, p. 34

[33] see also bar 40 of the *Dies irae,* and, as noted above, the implied harmony of Eybler's continuation

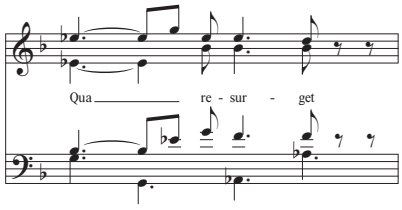
[34] Examples 3.5 and 3.6 on page 28

[35] Maunder, p. 34

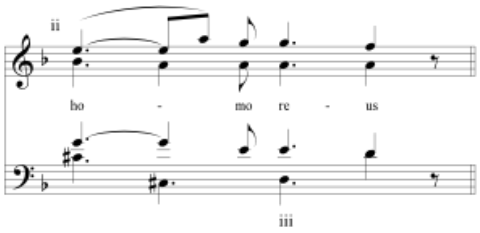
nature of the music. It is true, as he observes, that the more traditional resolution of the Neapolitan sixth in bar 11 would result in a G sharp rather than A flat, but only if proceeding to a diminished seventh chord before the necessary dominant resolution, which is not the progression that Süssmayr chose. It would also have resulted in a truly astonishing G sharp—F—B flat—E flat, an unlovely spelling that would please no-one. One cannot help wonder whether Maunder's comments here are intended as analysis, or as a reason to exclude Süssmayr in favour of his own version. The fact that there are precedents for this passage not only in the *Ave verum corpus* but elsewhere in the Requiem itself should lead us to take the passage seriously, not reject it. It should also be pointed out that if there were a "Zettelchen" containing material for the *Lacrymosa*, it would certainly have contained the bass line.

However it came about, Süssmayr's completion of the movement is structurally sound and proportionately appropriate, but is obviously not without significant blemishes. The 'breaches of Mozart's grammatical rules' are quite easily remedied:

i a simple re-voicing of the alto and tenor voices in bar 11:

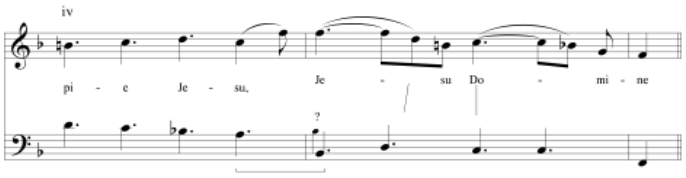


ii, iii there is no reason[36] not to allow bar 14 to follow the implied rising sequence and maintain the high A in the soprano rather than an octave lower in the alto, and why do the chorus basses not follow the orchestral bassi in bar 14 (is this evidence of miscopying from a sketch?);

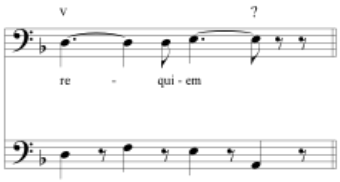


[36] unless one is trying to stay within the range of the basset horn, but this would surely be to put the cart before the horse

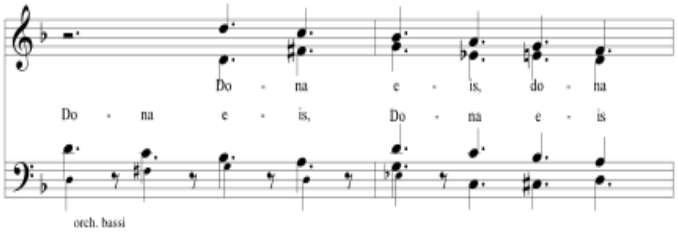
iv the sudden major seventh drop in both choral and orchestral basses from bar 17–18 is very strange: was he worried about a hidden fifth with the sopranos if the part had gone up to the B flat? (If so, he wasn't troubled by the parallel octave between bass and soprano later in bar 18!)



v even more puzzling is the tied E quaver in the choral basses on the last beat of bar 23 (is this too a miscopying?) which should clearly be an A

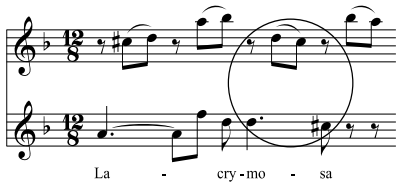


vi the imitation of 'dona eis requiem' is easily improved by having the altos take Süssmayr's tenor entry and reserving the tenor entry until the downbeat of bar 25, on a D so that they can imitate the basses and sopranos, which also has the added bonus of improving Süssmayr's awkward alto line in bars 25–26:



Süssmayr is however to be commended for his avoidance of a third on the downbeat of bar 28, the final cadence before the Amen, which recalls the final chord of the *Kyrie, Dies irae* and *Cum sanctis* movements.

Sadly, as we have seen elsewhere, he was less successful in his orchestration. Mozart's plangent, sighing violin figure is hard to imitate and continue, and this motif proved very problematic for Süssmayr. Too often his first violin part anticipates the soprano's resolution of dissonances:



This error occurs as early as bar 3 (shown above), the first bar of instrumentation that needed to be composed—the corrections in bars 3 and 4 of his autograph to the 1st violin part show how much he struggled with this motif—and it is repeated in bars 4, 21, 22, and 23; on the second beat of bar 10 his viola A anticipates the tenor resolution of the B flat; there is a parallel octave between the first and second violins on beats three and four of bar 14; the first violins' C on the last quaver before the 'Amen' could be a definition of bathos. All these errors are easily removed in a local sense, but it is challenging to fashion a convincing first violin line that follows Mozart's hints more convincingly.

What of the basset horns and bassoons? Here again Süssmayr is a little predictable in his automatic doubling of the voice parts with one instrument each. What is the point of marking the organ part *tasto solo* when the chorus enters, only to double the singers with a similar timbre? The texture is so wonderfully spare that the chorus needs no support: if the winds are silent here, the violins' sighing figure would have much greater prominence.[37] It would be better to reserve the winds until Mozart's crescendo in bar 7, where their weight is beneficial. Süssmayr does have the good sense to drop the winds out of the piano 'huic ergo parce Deus' in bars 15–17, but he brings them back in inexplicably in the middle of the word 'Jesu' in bar 18, and surely the first basset horn would appreciate playing alone in bars 19–21? Obviously both basset horns and bassoons are required in the *forte* recapitulation, but smoothed out rather than merely doubling to maintain their independence.

Süssmayr was quite correct that the trombones are not needed in the delicate texture of the choral entrance, but his dotted crotchets in bars 5 and 6 completely obscure Mozart's carefully written quavers in the choral parts: matching quavers would have been better here, but it would be better still for the trombones to wait, like the basset horns and bassoons, to support Mozart's *crescendo* in bar 7. There seems to be no textual reason for his three-part trombone accompaniment in bars 19–21: again, why mark *tasto solo* in the organ, only to fill in the texture with a sustaining instrument? Their exciting *forte* entrance on the second beat of bar 21—one of Süssmayr's best moments—is even more effective if they have been silent beforehand.

One can imagine Süssmayr's sense of relief when he was done with this movement, since in the next two movements he only had to provide instrumentation. In a sense, the *Lacrymosa* was

[37] Süssmayr got this correct in bar 9, where he additionally marked the chorus 'sotto voce'

his most difficult task: continuing someone else's idea in their unique language is harder than creating *ex nihilo* from your own imagination, especially when that other person is Mozart. Grafting your own additions to an existing start is a more thankless task than just orchestrating, because any lapse will be all the more noticeable. Modern scholars and conductors may focus on, even cavil at, Süssmayr's lapses, but audiences have appreciated his efforts for over two hundred years. We should never lose sight of the fact that without Süssmayr, any performance of what we have come to know, albeit inaccurately, as Mozart's Requiem, would have to stop, like Bach's *Art of Fugue,* at the point where the manuscript breaks off.

Score: https://www.simonwandrews.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/7-Lacrymosa.22.pdf