

KLORMAN, Edward. *Mozart's Music of Friends*, Cambridge-New York, Cambridge University Press, 2016, pp. xxxiv+326, ISBN 978-1-107-09365-2, £ 74.99.

It is seldom that a Ph.D. thesis can attract as much interest as this one certainly does, on account of its artistic intensity. Here we encounter a spotless historical treatment of the topic as well as much entertaining reading, at least as a German reader is able to judge.

The concept of chamber music – more precisely, Mozart's chamber music – as an activity among friends arises from Goethe's well-known words describing a string quartet as a conversation among four intelligent people as well as from the musical experiences of the author himself. Klorman is a violist. He highlights the superficial playing of chamber music in the time of its origin and depicts the members of a society diverting, entertaining and challenging themselves by playing chamber music more or less *prima vista*. In contrast to Jones, *A Treatise...* (1784), we think of making chamber music in the drawing room. Since conversation is primarily a verbal phenomenon, Klorman parallels the notion of rhetoric through two articles about the sonata by Sulzer (*Theorie der Schönen Künste*, 1774) and Koch (*Musikalisches Lexikon*, 1802), with the only difference between them being that Sulzer thinks of two, Koch rather of four voices. The consequences for understanding Koch's terminology of *concertirenden Stimmen*,

Hauptstimmen, *Hauptmelodie* and the *Galantem Bass* in regard to the conversation topos are notable. Reicha, Carpani, Baillot and Momigny also are all considered in answering the question how the topos of conversational (chamber) music comes to life in their treatises. Klorman's conclusion: «All of these authors [...] invoke to some degree anthropomorphic rationales to describe instrumental 'behavior' – some to a great degree – including descriptions of instrumental personas endowed with such human attributes as consciousness, volition, emotion, and even hierarchical rank and gender» (p. 71). The focus on the merely *prima vista* or improvised character of making chamber music leads Klorman to attempt to delineate the edges of the artistic (musical) work from the perspective of improvisation. Klorman adds that «the tonal form requires the achievement of various tasks», while meanwhile verbal conversation can «easily be interrupted midstream [...]». This distinction exposes the problem of applying the term 'conversation' to music making. In a similar way, Klorman tests the demarcation between composition and interpretation – perhaps not convincing all of his readers, but nevertheless fruitful, intelligent and stimulating.

The second part of the book deals with analyses from within the music: «What is needed, it would seem, is to develop extensions to existing musical theories inspired by the culture of the late-eighteenth-century drawing room [...] Part II of this book aims to do just that [...] marrying style criticism and close reading» (p. 111). As long as we are not ready to accept universally that music is *not* language, the topos of conversation offers many pitfalls to those who would interpret music. Klorman does not fall into their trap. He refers to the largely Anglo-American discussion around this point, in which some authors deplore that only the smaller part of the assembly, the quartet players, 'talks' while the much bigger part, the audience, has to remain silent during the process. Such

theories don't seem particularly fruitful in understanding chamber music, and perhaps require no further consideration.

In this second part of the book Klorman introduces his key word for every analytical approach: «[...] the notion of multiple personas engaged in discourse that are understood to act autonomously and to possess the consciousness and volition necessary to determine their own statements and actions. I therefore propose the term *multiple agency* to designate this concept. The term captures the notion that a chamber music score is, above all, something to be *played*, an encoded musical exchange in which each player assumes an individual character, similar in many respects to a theatrical script» (p. 144). So the concept of multiple agency is born out of the active situation of music making. I would not limit the understanding of *making* music as playing music – a more comprehensive notion could be *performing* music in the sense of *executing* music («vollziehen» in German). Musical execution in this sense is expected not only by the player, but also by the listener (whose aim is to 'follow' the musical texture as well as it is the aim of the musician; therefore, both share one musical activity that is guided by the composition itself). In short, we could bind active playing and active listening together as one musical behavior¹. Hence the concept of conversation might be transformed into something really musical. In this sense, the chamber music score and the conversation (however performed) would neither have in common any kind of content/argument nor rules of 'discussion behavior', but rather a kind of common consideration (i.e. of the musical problems disposed in the performed composition). Klorman perhaps would agree.

He elaborates his concept of multiple agency in two ways, the first of which is *multiple agency and sonata form*. Instead of the «Invisible Hand of the Composer» (p. 157) might we not substitute the structure of "choices as being made by the multiple

agents within the composition”)? As a scientific granddaughter of Thrasylbulos Georgiades I am content that Georgiades’ speech of the «Selbsttätigkeit des Wiener klassischen Satzes» as well as the «agierende musikalische Wirklichkeit»² finally come into scientific life. Klorman draws in this chapter on the research of Hepokoski and Darcy, whose thesis might be a little inflexible, if precise in terminology. For example, the description of the exposition of K 304/1 presents a vivid conflict between the piano and violin, the violin not being aware of the already established new tonic 26 measures before the exposition’s ending. Surprisingly, Klorman’s quite sensitive musical analysis fails to mention the last eight measures before the double bar and therefore does not connect the weakening of the recently reached new tonic in the last measures with the musical events of some 12 measures earlier. As almost every compositional element in Mozart’s music is capable of influencing the texture it is admittedly not easy to choose particular aspects on which to focus. For this chapter Klorman selects the work for its cadential and thematic disposition, and for what Klorman himself calls «critical junctures» (p. 196 *et passim*), a rather delicate but intelligent selection that is representative, but of course not exhaustive. Here his method offers another advantage: every reader of the book will be encouraged to add his own experiences with other works of Mozart, and by doing so will understand still better the aim of Klorman’s dissertation.

The second way in which the author elaborates multiple agency is through *multiple agency and meter*, perhaps still more fascinating and integral to Mozart’s composition than sonata form. Unfortunately this chapter starts by assembling enemies who really no longer exist. It is hard to conceive after Georgiades, Feil, Bockholdt, Kunze and Seidel, to name just a few German scholars, that anyone should still believe in the «symmetry» and «balance» of Mozart’s compositions. That

said, Klorman addresses the question with great musicality and instinctive feeling. In this chapter he draws upon the research of Lerdahl and Jackendorff, who established a series of eleven «metrical preference rules» («MPR»). The aim of this list is to orient the enormous variety of metrical phenomena in tonal music toward generative interpretations. The chapter begins with a discussion of «Decentering meter»: «each instrumentalist might have a unique metrical experience» (p. 205). This approach circumscribes much more than an experience – it describes perfectly the metrical state of any Viennese classical score, including its metrical tensions and the specific type of metrical contradiction between two voices or groups of voices, which we use to call *Gerüstbau* in German. Klorman also scrutinizes many questions arising around hypermetrical constructions. As all these problems are discussed in terms of the experiences of an active player, they take on a greater significance: the vitality of Mozart’s music fills the reader’s ears, even if (s)he is not opening each sound tracks accessible by internet. (Here I would not have interposed a Brahms example, for the musical (stylistic) context of Brahms’ notion of meter might be so different from Mozart’s that we cannot really profit from the juxtaposition (pp. 215–221). One might perhaps hesitate to accept the concept of multiple agency in the context of cadential processes, but it seems inevitable to me to use it in the context of metrical processes – and of metrical processes of all Viennese classical composition.

The book closes with three analyses: the Minuet of the so-called ‘Dissonance’ Quartet K 465, the second movement of the Sonata for Piano and Violin K 379, and the second movement of the so called ‘Kegelstatt’ Trio K 498. From the foregoing it should now be self-evident that the reader will profit considerably from reading Klorman, an experience one might liken to reading-as-if-listening-or-even-playing the movements. I am delighted to announce one of the most

vivid and engaging books about Mozart's music in recent years.

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¹. BOCKHOLDT, Rudolf. 'Acercar de la consumación musical', in: *La realidad musical*, edited by Juan Cruz Cruz, Pamplona, Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, 1998, pp. 39-52.

². GEORGIADIS, Thrasybulos G. 'Aus der Musiksprache des Mozart-Theaters', in: *Kleine Schriften* (MVM 26), Tutzing, Schneider, 1977 (Münchener Veröffentlichungen zur Musikgeschichte, 26), p. 14 (first published in *Mozart-Jahrbuch* 1950, pp. 76-98).
