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hereby submit this work as part of the requirements for the degree of:

Master of Music

in:
CCM Division of Composition, Musicology and
Theory (Music History)

It is entitled:
The Reception of Franz Joseph Haydn in Austria and
Germany 1798-1830: Biography and Criticism

This work and its defense approved by:

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THE RECEPTION OF FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN IN AUSTRIA AND GERMANY
1798–1830: BIOGRAPHY AND CRITICISM

A thesis submitted to the
Division of Research and Advanced Studies
of the University of Cincinnati

in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF MUSIC

in the Division of Composition, Musicology, and Theory
of the College Conservatory of Music

2005

by
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B. M., Bob Jones University, 2001

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ABSTRACT

Haydn reception remains a vastly under explored area within Haydn research. Though Matthew Head and Leon Botstein have made recent contributions, there remains a need for a thorough examination of the period immediately surrounding Haydn’s death in 1809. With the gradual, but at the same time radical, shift in aesthetic thought that took place in the late eighteenth century and into the nineteenth century, Haydn’s reputation in German speaking lands changes as well. Whereas, in the 1790s, he routinely received the highest veneration as a composer of “inexhaustible genius,” by the 1810s and into the 20s the praise was quieter, with critics excepting his status primarily in connection with Mozart and especially Beethoven. Within the backdrop of the shift from the late eighteenth-century aesthetic to Romanticism, three important sources for Haydn reception demonstrate the shift in his status. Criticism of Haydn treated by himself, which was steady until shortly after his death, remains unequivocally positive of Haydn’s music and status. The earliest three biographies, which are very admiring of the composer, nonetheless through their discussion of his personality and music establish many of the stereotypes of Haydn that would persist. Finally, Beethoven criticism firmly widens the divide between the two composers seeing Haydn as the originator of many of the genres that Beethoven then perfected.
I wish to thank my committee members Dr. Stephen Cahn and Dr. Edward Nowacki for their insightful comments and helpful suggestions. A very special thanks goes to my thesis advisor, Dr. Mary Sue Morrow, who, apart from her expertise in both the subject matter and the art of advising, is one of the most patient, but motivating people I know. I’d like to thank my parents for their constant support of and interest in my higher education, but most of all, I wish to thank my lovely wife, Eva, whose love and devotion for me and my endeavors has exceeded anything I could have hoped for.
CONTENT

Introduction. 1.

Chapter 1. 5.

Chapter 2. 20.

Chapter 3. 36.

Chapter 4. 57.

Conclusion. 73.

Bibliography. 75.

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. 22-23.
Introduction

Reception history remains one of the unexplored areas in Haydn research. Though a few articles have appeared recently, most begin by noting and deploring the sparse treatment of the subject.¹ The author of the article on reception in the *Oxford Composer Companions: Haydn* (published in 2002) says emphatically, “It remains a fundamental weakness in Haydn scholarship that his popularity has not been fully chartered and evaluated. . . . The reception of his music, both in his life and posthumously, has been less thoroughly explored. . . . [The following] review of some aspects of his posthumous reception, can serve only as an introduction to the topic, and, by omission, an indication of what remains to be done.”² In the preface to *Haydn Studies*, the editor, Dean Sutcliffe, introduces the article by Leon Botstein on nineteenth-century Haydn reception by observing that Botstein, “treats a topic that has but rarely been touched on, and yet the image of Haydn today still has much to do with that created for him by the nineteenth century. Certainly compared with the extensive literature on the reception of Mozart and Beethoven during the Romantic era, Haydn has been scantily dealt with, this in itself proof of how tenacious the nineteenth century’s imagery and priorities have been.”³

¹ See, for example, Matthew Head’s discussion of recent articles in “Music with ‘No Past?’ Archaeologies of Joseph Haydn and *The Creation*,” *19th-Century Music* 28 (2000): 217.


Although Botstein’s essay gives an excellent overview and interpretation of Haydn’s posthumous reception, to date there has been no detailed and systematic study of the critical period of 1798–1830. These years saw at once Haydn’s greatest fame coupled with Beethoven’s rise and also the emergence of the Romantic style and aesthetic. In this thesis, I will examine Haydn’s reception in Germany and Austria from the perspective of this changing aesthetic and the emergence of Beethoven. I will begin by establishing the cultural context through a survey of aesthetic trends during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Then, using these trends as a guideline, I will discuss Haydn criticism found in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, Beethoven criticism where he is compared to Haydn, and the three earliest biographies of Haydn, by Griesinger, Dies, and Carpani.

With the gradual, but at the same time radical, shift in aesthetic thought that took place in the late eighteenth century and into the nineteenth century, Haydn’s reputation seems to change as well. Whereas, in the 1790s, he routinely received the highest veneration as a composer of “inexhaustible genius,” by the 1810s and into the 20s the praise was quieter, with critics believing that his “greatness, although uncontested, lay primarily in breaking the new ground in which Mozart and Beethoven could develop.” To critics at this time, he became the “creator” of many of the genres that Mozart and especially Beethoven would later “perfect.”

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Though Haydn had loyal supporters who maintained his iconic status, including the three important biographers, who sought to establish a picture of Haydn and also seemingly wanted to create enthusiasm for his memory and his music, many critics in the nineteenth century viewed Haydn’s music as childlike and held up Beethoven as the greatest composer of the age. The overall change in Haydn’s reception during this period is directly linked to the change in aesthetic values and the rise of Beethoven.
Chapter One

The eighteenth century saw the birth of a new and particular branch of philosophy, known as aesthetics, which dealt specifically with concerns of taste and beauty in art.¹ At the beginning of the century, the arts, including music, were categorized and judged by their function. But philosophers such as Alexander Baumgarten and Jean-Baptiste du Bos sought to make the study of the arts into a scientific endeavor. Baumgarten had coined the term aesthetics and established this “science” in his *Aesthetica* and *Metaphysica* (1739),² and du Bos had developed a system of criteria by which to judge the arts in his *Réflexions critiques sur la poësie et sur la peinture* (1719).³ Throughout the century several main trends shaped the aesthetic discussion: a search for criteria that could evaluate music as an autonomous art, a reconsideration of music’s purpose, and a reinterpretation of the means of fulfilling that purpose. These debates shaped Haydn’s own compositional aesthetic, and the early nineteenth-century criticism of him was shaped by its outcome.

¹ This is not to imply that aesthetics was a completely new concept; Carl Dalhaus explains that the “system of esthetics is its history” and traces this type of discussion about the function of music back to the ancient Greeks. See Carl Dahlhaus, *Esthetics of Music*, trans. William Austin (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 3.


The shift from the functional to the aesthetic viewpoint took place in several stages, for the concept of the functional purpose of the arts had been entrenched in Western culture for centuries. From the Middle Ages through the early part of the eighteenth century, the concept of *ars mechanica* reigned, so that “art was measured according to the purposes, religious or secular, that it aimed to serve.” Thus a *sonata da chiesa* would be judged successful if it facilitated the meditative atmosphere of the divine service. By the early eighteenth century, philosophers like Charles Batteux (1713–80) began to distinguish between the functional and the fine arts (i.e., music, poetry, painting, sculpture, and dance), arguing that the latter should be judged by different standards. Though the discussion about criteria was complicated and multi–faceted, I will focus on two aspects that were central to both the debate in general and to Haydn criticism in particular: the nature and role of expression in music and the role genius played in its creation.

Over the course of the eighteenth century, the definition of proper musical expression changed drastically. Earlier writers believed that mimesis, the idea that art should imitate nature, was the goal of all art including music. Although some authors maintained that vocal music was able to imitate nature, most accepted that music in general was not very effective in mimetic expression. James Harris, writing his *Three Treatises: the Second Concerning Music, Painting, and Poetry* (1744), admitted that music was not the art of imitation. In order to avoid this problem of musical imitation, theorists redefined imitation in music to focus on human passions.

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4 Dahlhaus, 14.

5 Morrow, 5.

6 James Harris, “*Three Treatises: The First Concerning Art, the Second Concerning Music, Painting and Poetry, the Third Concerning Happiness*” (London, 1744), in le Huray and Day, 28-29.
and feelings. At this point, these feelings were not the personal emotions of the composer, as would come to be the case in the Romantic period. Rather, “a composer was perceived more as an artist who paints someone else’s emotions than a person who exhibits his own.” An emotional remove was deemed necessary on the part of the composer. This perception explains what H. C. Robbins Landon describes as the divide between music and situation concerning the very joyous Salve Regina Haydn wrote for the woman who shunned his love and joined a nunnery.

As early as du Bos, theorists had no use for music that did not move the listener. Thus the idea that music should stir the soul and arouse the passions came to define music’s meaning. So began a very ambiguous and ill-defined notion that persisted throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. What exactly was the definition of soul-stirring music? Writers from Christoph Nichelmann (1717–62), a colleague of C. P. E. Bach, to Johann Georg Sulzer (1720–79) discussed this kind of expression without ever explaining how it was achieved. Although Sulzer does give a list of the tools a composer has at his disposal (including harmony,

7 Ibid., 8.

8 Dahlhaus, 20.


11 Dahlhaus, 16.
meter, modulations, etc.), in the end, it was left to musical taste to evaluate a composition’s expressive qualities.

By the end of the eighteenth century, the aesthetic discourse had moved away from mimesis toward the criteria of the beautiful and the sublime. Simply put, the beautiful and the sublime have the power to raise one above the everyday, mundane world. The beautiful was that which is perceived as pleasing, but according to Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), it “has nothing to do with being moved.” To Edmund Burke (1729–97), the sublime was that which causes astonishment. To Chevalier de Jaucourt (1704–79), it was that “which lifts us above ourselves.” As was the case with mimetic theory, philosophers described the results of this sensation rather than the recipe for achieving it. Perhaps Sulzer’s definition in his *Allgemeine Theorie der Schönen Künste* provides the best idea as to the nature of this concept:

In works of taste, apparently, the term sublime is generally applied to whatever in its way is much greater and more powerful than might have been expected; for this reason, the sublime arouses our astonishment and admiration. We enjoy those things which are simply good and beautiful in nature; they are pleasurable or edifying; they create an impression that is tranquil enough for us to enjoy without disturbance. The sublime, however, works on us with hammer-blows; it seizes us and irresistibly overwhelms us. This effect, however, is not confined to the initial impact of surprise; it persists. The longer the close contemplation of the sublime, the more intense its effect. The relationship between the tender gentleness of a

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13 Immanuel Kant, “Kritik der Urteilskraft” (Berlin/Libau, 1790), in le Huray and Day, 163.


Fidli and the raging passion of a Sappho, is similar to that between the beautiful and the sublime. The sublime is thus the highest thing that there is in art.\textsuperscript{16}

The sublime is the immeasurable, it catches us off guard, it disturbs us, it awes us, and above all it moves us. Moreover, this application of the beautiful and the sublime to musical expression freed musical meaning from the strictures of mimesis and opened the door to its glorification in the nineteenth century.

As the concept of expression shifted in meaning, so too did the concept of genius. In the mid-eighteenth century, critics like Friedrich Marpurg (1718–95) described composing as putting together rather than inventing.\textsuperscript{17} Thus the genius was not in the creating, but rather in the elevating of ideas, making the composer more of a craftsman than a creator.\textsuperscript{18} By the end of the century, writers on music emphasized the originality of the ideas themselves, and favored original genius over simple craftsmanship according to the rules of composition.\textsuperscript{19} Individuality was a key issue in this definition of genius, and became increasingly important throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

But even as the new field of aesthetics established criteria like expression and genius for evaluating art as art, it did not entirely abandon the functional idea that the arts should serve a moral purpose. Both Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712–88) and Sulzer, for example, thought that the arts should be vehicles for moral instruction, by which they meant it should promote that which was deemed good and upright. In the first part of the eighteenth century, the concept of morality was inseparable from that of mimesis. For Christian Gottfried Krause (1719–70), mimesis itself

\textsuperscript{16} Sulzer, in le Huray and Day, 113.

\textsuperscript{17} Morrow, 93.

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., 94.

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., 106.
produced the desired moral response.²⁰ Likewise, Du Bos, believed that nature was the moral agent and the artist’s duty was simply to replicate it so that its goal could be achieved; “He [the composer] imitates in short all the sounds that nature herself uses to express the feelings and passions.” Du Bos described an energy in nature that moves us and a truth that is inherent in nature but even more evident in art, which imitates nature.²¹

For many, it was not so simple; mere imitation of nature could not produce the desired moral effect on its own. First of all, an artist needed to have the insight to recognize the best things to imitate from a moral standpoint. In his discussion of eighteenth century aesthetics, M. H. Abrams uses the metaphor of the mirror (imitation) to describe mimesis and explains that Ben Johnson “held that on moral grounds, the mirror must be selective: it is necessary to ‘distinguish those parts of nature which are most proper for imitation,’ for it would ‘be as safe to turn the eye immediately on mankind, as upon a mirrour which shows all that presents itself without discrimination.’”²² For Johnson, the whole reason to imitate nature was to improve upon it.²³ In this sense, morality was a byproduct of proper imitation, although of the utmost importance, but not inherent in nature as Du Bos believed.

This moral effect could be intensified when combined with musical expressivity. Sir Phillip Sydney, in the sixteenth century, had argued that the poet has an advantage over the moral philosopher because apart from being attractive to reason and intellect, he or she also calls

²⁰ Ibid., 9.

²¹ Du Bos, in le Huray and Day, 18.


²³ Ibid.
into play the emotions. 24 Rousseau’s writings on music echoed Sydney’s views about poetry, and he saw music as a moral agent with the words working on the intellect and the music working over the emotions, 25 a position that obviously favors vocal music. Karl Phillip Moritz (1757–93) also proclaimed moral qualities as central to music’s value and maintained that appreciating beauty required or rather produced an active response.26 Haydn also intended for his music to move the listener to a higher moral goal.27

By the time Sulzer finished his *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste* of 1771, a shift had occurred away from the concept of moral function, as evidenced by Goethe’s and Moses Mendelssohn’s criticism of his viewpoint.28 Though traces of the concept remained, music began to free itself from these outside intrusions.29 By the time Anton Thibaut (1774–1840) wrote his *Über Reinheit der Tonkunst*, he could declare that music had either lost or had never held a moral affect on an individual.30

As concern for music’s moral purpose faded from the discourse, another issue, the search for a German Identity, took its place, accompanied with the same kind of rhetoric and imbued with much the same power. Anthony Smith maintains that the search for a national identity is

24 Ibid., 14-15.

25 Le Huray and Day, 67-68.

26 Karl Philipp Moritz, “Berlinische Monatsschrift” (Berlin, 1785), in le Huray and Day, 137-38.


28 Le Huray and Day, 95.

29 Dahlhaus, 14.

often the ideological force behind the development and production of the nation. He defines a nation as a “named community of history and culture, possessing a unified territory, economy, mass education system and common legal rights.” Further, he defines nationalism as an “ideological movement for attaining and maintaining the autonomy, unity and identity, of an existing or potential ‘nation.’”31 Music in the early nineteenth century became a crucial focal point for Germans increasingly seeking to establish a unified Germany. They believed music would improve the German people and help them achieve this goal, in the same way that earlier philosophers had believed in music’s moral function for the betterment of society.

The association of music and politics, however, has its roots in the late eighteenth century. Jean Jacques Barthélymy, in his *Entretiens sur l’état de la musique grecque a quatrième siecle* (1777), concluded that since music has an active effect on society it should be in the service of the state.32 Another Frenchman, Jean Baptiste Leclerc (1755–1826), who was involved in the politics of the French revolution, was even more adamant about the need for a French national music:

There comes an opportune moment for the establishment of an institution: once this is passed, that institution will prosper only with the greatest difficulty. The time is almost ripe, perhaps, for the establishment of a national music. The government has a duty to seize the opportunity. When our enemies are forced to sue for peace, when at last they let us enjoy the fruits of perseverance and victory, when national enthusiasm is roused again by the glory of the French name and the prospect of better fortune, all hearts will be receptive to similar feelings, and for a moment everyone will be swept up in a common ecstasy. Let a comprehensive plan be prepared, in order that this new access of feeling may profitably be


exploited. Let the government consolidate the achievements of this movement, and in some way or other establish moral unity throughout the Republic.\textsuperscript{33}

Leclerc saw music as a way to bring together all the people of France, or as he put it, to restore an “equilibrium between the townsfolk and the countryfolk.”\textsuperscript{34}

German writers, if perhaps a bit more subtle, were no less adamant about the role music should play in their society. David Gramit, in \textit{Cultivating Music}, describes the increasingly nationalistic cast of musical discourse in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. As he points out, German theorists believed strongly in the notion of human development and that German culture was the peak of that development.\textsuperscript{35} For example, though Johann Herder (1744–1803) praised the music of other cultures and societies, he maintained the superiority of German music; he likened the comparison to the relationship of a child to an adult.\textsuperscript{36} This “superiority complex” that the German nationalists assumed created a tenuous situation. On the one hand they viewed their culture as the most advanced—the epitome of the best in the world. On the other hand, these nationalists were evidently not happy with the intellectual progress of the masses, as demonstrated by their constant calling for the audiences to become better educated. To this end they established a canon of German composers they thought would achieve this goal, and named Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven as its constituent members.


\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., 181.


\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., 42.
The Germans’ “superiority complex” was also enhanced by the tendency to name the inferior examples—generally from another nation. Before 1775, for example, German critics set up an opposition against the fashionable Italian music. It was in this light that Italian composers (mediocre at best) were compared to German composers (the best even at their most mediocre). Morality came into this discussion in that German music was considered for the betterment of society and Italian music not. In the nineteenth century, German nationalists again positioned Italian composers as the enemy. Rossini and Spontini were considered invaders that needed to be rooted out, and Italian opera needed to be replaced with German symphonies. Though Rossini had German supporters, among them Hegel, for many, especially for A. B. Marx, Rossini was the antithesis of good music and an intrusion on the positive moral effects of German music.

Nonetheless, the majority of the concert-going audience continued to prefer the “pleasing” Italian operas of Rossini and his countrymen. German nationalists troubled by the situation urged the audiences as a national duty to better themselves with the German symphony. To do so, they created a canon of musical works to support their moral and political purposes. As Sanna Pederson argues, Marx in the 1820s was not really interested in contemporary German composers contributing to the genre; rather he was concerned with consolidating the works of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. Further, he saw Haydn and Mozart as

37 Smith, 123.
38 Morrow, 46-47.
39 Ibid., 53-54.
41 Ibid., 48-50.
a necessary step in the educational process that would bring the audience to the pinnacle of great music, Beethoven.\footnote{Ibid., 161-62.}

Even before Marx, German theorists had been calling for music education. In a parallel to Barthelemy and Leclerc, critics and theorists such as Carl Friedrich Zelter (1758–1832) urged the government to take an active role in integrating music into the Prussian Academy, citing its positive effect on the development of discipline.\footnote{Gramit, 104.} They also reveal a strong moral imperative. These calls to action fit in with what Smith describes as “bureaucratic incorporation.”\footnote{Smith, 113-14.} Christian Friedrich Michaelis (1770–1834) argued that including music in the elementary school curriculum would separate educated children from savages.\footnote{Gramit, 110.} Thus educational value coincides with moral value, and its importance was not underestimated in the early nineteenth century.

All of these educational, national, and aesthetic issues manifested themselves in the emerging field of music criticism, which together with early biographers, helped to establish Haydn’s reputation and create the portrait of him bequeathed to future generations. From its appearance in the early eighteenth century, music journalism was seen as a tool to “demystify the arcane art of musical composition and shape the taste of the musical dilettante.”\footnote{Morrow, 22.} Charles Burney and others in the later eighteenth century continued to maintain criticism’s educational value. In his \textit{Essay on Musical Criticism}, Burney acknowledged the need of instruction for “ignorant lovers of music,” but states that “criticism in this art would be better taught by
specimens of good composition and performance rather than by reasoning and speculation.”

For Burney, the ideal way to educate listeners was simply to expose them to the best performers performing the best music, such as Haydn’s string quartets. Dissatisfied with the lack of an educated and discerning music-going public in Britain, Burney called for critics who with open minds and good judgement might influence the public to better appreciate great music. Thus Burney did not tolerate all types of music and advocated that which was best for the listening public.

Critics in the late decades of the eighteenth century and into the nineteenth century helped to create the shift from the high status of vocal music to the high status of instrumental music. They seemed to agree about what type of music is most successful in educating audiences. Herder believed that even light music had some value, but that the music that has emancipated itself from words and become a self-sufficient art has the most power. Burney relied on instrumental music for educational purposes, as can be seen by his championing of Haydn’s string quartets and symphonies. For Archibald Alison (1757–1839), the listener who has achieved education will receive more meaning from instrumental music than from vocal music. E. T. A. Hoffman and A. B. Marx merely cemented instrumental music’s high status in the early nineteenth century. Thus, in his review of Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony, Hoffman rejected the

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48 Ibid., 144.


composer who writes music to depict something definite, and while he appreciated the power of vocal music, he set up instrumental music as the truly Romantic art.\textsuperscript{51}

Just as critics continued to believe the public needed education, they continued to distrust public taste. From the early eighteenth century until well into the nineteenth century, critics held that audiences needed guidance or they would listen only to “pleasing” music. Du Bos not only derided those who composed only to please, but like Schumann would do 120 years later, he also criticized audiences who only wished to be pleased.\textsuperscript{52} The concept of \textit{Philistines}, though not the term specifically, was a constant concern for critics and did not merely rise out of Romantic aesthetics. Although writers such as Kant idealistically held that an individual’s unique opinions should be debated publicly, realistically the public generally meant only a select few.\textsuperscript{53} For Sulzer, the critic’s role was to be a spokesman for public opinion, but the critic had the power to overrule this opinion when necessary.\textsuperscript{54} It was no wonder then that, as Morrow describes, there was a tendency for critical statements that were directed to a general audience to be more dogmatic.\textsuperscript{55}


\textsuperscript{52} Du Bos, in Le Huray and Day, 21.

\textsuperscript{53} Pederson, 54.

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., 59.

\textsuperscript{55} Morrow, 10-12.
Though A. B. Marx claimed that (by the 1820s) the critic no longer needed to reflect public opinion but to prepare it, as if it was his new idea, it had already been prominent throughout the eighteenth century. The goals of the critics Marpurg and Agricola were the same as those of Hoffman, Marx and Schumann: to guide and change where necessary both public opinion and therefore the artist’s output. Thus, German critics such as Agricola in the mid-eighteenth century trying to create a German voice by attacking foreign music, especially Italian is strikingly similar to Marx’s attempts to glorify the superiority of German symphonic music by attacking foreign opera, especially Italian. Rather than critics of the nineteenth century breaking away from their predecessors, they were in fact continuing the same critical ideals that had been around since the conception of the field of music criticism, though they were addressing a much larger, more inclusive public that had access to music.

The aesthetic changes that took place during the eighteenth century were heightened in the early nineteenth century. The progression from mimetic expression to a more subjective and personal one, accompanied with the emphasis on autonomous music was taken to an extreme. Further, the concept of genius, which had shifted from craftsmanship to original creativity, became even more deeply personal and idiosyncratic. The role of the critic, also, though not idealistically different than in the eighteenth century, exerted itself to a greater degree, exalting itself as the instigator of changes in musical thought and taste. During this period, Haydn, who in the 1790s was exalted as the greatest composer of his day, was appreciated much less as

56 Pederson, 72.
57 Morrow, 46-50.
Beethoven became more and more championed. In the next three chapters, I will demonstrate this shift through the criticism and early biographical writings on Haydn.
Chapter Two

In the midst of the aesthetic changes that took place during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (outlined in chapter one), Haydn’s reputation was firmly established. Three important types of sources helped to shape Haydn’s reception: criticism of his music, the earliest biographies (chapter three), and Beethoven criticism that compared Haydn to the latter composer (chapter four). This chapter will focus on criticism that specifically deals with Haydn’s music.

Because a complete survey of Haydn criticism during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is beyond the scope of this thesis, I have chosen to examine the reviews that appeared in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* (published in Leipzig by Breitkopf & Härtel), unquestionably the most important German music periodical of the early nineteenth century. This music journal, established in 1798 by Friedrich Rochlitz (1769-1842), became one of the most influential, widespread, and longest lasting journals of this time period. The *AmZ* contained a wide array of material aimed at musical intellectuals and aficionados of the increasing, educated middle class. Most of the semimonthly issues began with large essays, often broken up over several issues, on various musical topics. Contributors included many notable figures of the time, such as Carl Maria von Weber, J. A. Hiller, N. Forkel, H. C. Koch, C. F. Michaelis, Louis Spohr, D. G. Türk, and many others.¹ Although long and comprehensive reviews sometimes took the place of these essays, for the most part the reviews were relatively short and non-technical. A correspondence section told of music-making in cities all around Europe, while another section,

¹ Pederson, 64.
*Kurze Anziegen* (short notices), presented smaller reviews briefly describing and criticizing a work or performance. Finally, the *Intelligenz-Blatt*, which was more prominent earlier in the journal, contained paid journal space ranging from advertising of pieces or performances to personal points of view, which often could be much more polemical than anything else in the journal.\(^2\)

Most of the reviews in the *AmZ* deal with printed scores and concern themselves with technical details, such as layout and the correctness of the parts as well as the music itself. Many of them deal with arrangements and so discuss both the composer and the arranger. Table I lists the articles and reviews discussing Haydn that appeared in the first thirty years of the *AmZ*. I have arranged the material into four categories: reviews of instrumental music, reviews of vocal music, reviews of arrangements (that may be either instrumental or vocal), and other articles, including letters, poems, and material like the Griesinger biography of Haydn published in 1809. The table reveals that though the reviews of the instrumental music, including arrangements, were more numerous, the vocal music received the greater amount of space, with some of those reviews, e.g. the *Seasons*, stretching to over fifteen pages. As was typical of the eighteenth century, critics were interested in living composers, and so after Haydn’s death in 1809, they wrote about Haydn less and less. Further, the articles and reviews published after 1809 are usually much shorter and often simply reiterate the aesthetic opinions of previous reviews.

Criticism of Haydn in the first three decades of the nineteenth century presents a clear picture of the respect and admiration of his contemporaries. Though critics who compared him to Beethoven sometimes tempered their praise (see discussion in chapter four), those who discussed only Haydn accorded him the celebrity that he had achieved in the 1790s. Almost never negative

\(^2\) Ibid., 64-65.
Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VOLUME</th>
<th>INSTRUMENTAL</th>
<th>VOCAL</th>
<th>ARRANGEMENTS</th>
<th>OTHER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vol. 2</td>
<td>Sonata for Piano with Flute, etc. 727-9.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Correspondence, 281-2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vol. 6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mass (No.2), 1-10. The Seasons, 513-29. The Spirits Song, 595-60.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOLUME</td>
<td>INSTRUMENTAL</td>
<td>VOCAL</td>
<td>ARRANGEMENTS</td>
<td>OTHER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vol. 9</td>
<td>Orfeo &amp; Euridice, (piano score), 150-40.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sonata Arrangement, 644.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vol. 10</td>
<td>Mass (No.5), 465-75.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vol. 12</td>
<td>Motets, 740-3.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vol. 22</td>
<td></td>
<td>Three Quartets Op. 76 (No. 1, 2, 3), 59-60.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Vol. 23</td>
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<td>Sonatas for Piano w/ accompaniment., 443-4.</td>
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<td>Quartet arranged by Schmidt, 820.</td>
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toward Haydn, this criticism, like the biographies, helped to cement a picture securely set in the late eighteenth-century aesthetic. Indeed, the Creation, the one piece that received a fair share of negative criticism, had admirers every bit as adamant as its detractors. Haydn criticism at this time shows the lingering eighteenth-century aesthetic that was gradually giving way to a Romantic perspective in which Beethoven would be the embodiment of musical genius.

Several aspects of this criticism, together, reveal the response to Haydn’s music as very positive and enthusiastic, but as hanging on to a passing aesthetic. Four themes of this literature depict the respect and admiration of Haydn in his own right, and they will provide the background for Haydn’s status with regard to Beethoven, which will be discussed in chapter four. The critics’ overall conception of Haydn includes presenting him as—above all—original and as achieving a balance of refinement and simplicity; the murky concept of Haydn’s age (how old or young he is perceived to be in relation to his music); his perceived place in the history of music; and his status as a specifically German musician. All reveal deep appreciation for Haydn and an attachment on the part of the critics to the late eighteenth-century aesthetic.

If they could have chosen only one idea to define him, critics around the time of Haydn’s death would have probably settled on originality. They used other adjectives such as excellent, beautiful, enchanting, and delicate constantly, but almost always within the general context of Haydn’s originality. For example, one writer in a correspondence from Vienna says:

Haydn has again completed two entirely new symphonies, and they are remarkable. They are among his best, but are so dissimilar that one is amazed by the extraordinary powers of invention of the composer. The rondo theme begins in B-flat major, modulates to A major in the most natural way after a few measures, and closes just as naturally in B-flat soon thereafter. I describe this in detail, not only because it is curious and new, but because it is handled so delicately, purposefully, and enchantingly, even with the curiousness and newness. Long live good old Papa Haydn.3

This author speaks of Haydn’s compositional skills in handling themes “adorably” or “delicately,” and so on, but his main point is the newness of the symphonies. He sets up, like other authors do, the specifics of the symphony (modulations, etc.) within the context of an originality that never repeats itself.

As critics define Haydn’s music always within the context of originality, they often compare his new compositions to previous music. Because of his vast output and widespread celebrity, they are able to form a clearer idea of what it meant to be Haydn than they might have, had he not been so prolific and famous. Using those genres in which he was most esteemed, like the symphony and the string quartet, the critics create the context for his late works, which were primarily oratorios and masses. Rochlitz begins his review of the Missa in tempore belli:

Haydn, the inexhaustible, has written masses and as we are assured, many, and not only in his earlier but also later years; did he, who has given us masterpieces in so many different musical genres, provide us with models also in the so-called church style? Or does such a style no longer exist? And dare the opera and symphony composer approach such works without abandoning completely his usual style? Without new and special study?—The latter is hard to believe, and as for the first question: from a man such as Haydn, who is known by so many masterpieces in all Europe, it may be presumed that he would not place before the public anything that would be in the least inferior to his other works.4

schon wieder zwey ganz neue Sinfonien bey dem Grafen F. . . . auf, die sehr merkwürdig sind. Sie gehören zu seinen vorzüglichsten, sind sich aber so wenig ähnlich, daß man über die außerordentliche Erfindungskraft des Verfassers ganz in Staunen hingerissen wird. Ein besonderer Geniezug ist folgender. Das Rondothema der einen fängt sich in B dur an, modulirt auf das Natürlichste in A dur nach wenig Takten, und schließt gleich darauf wieder eben so natürlich in B. Ich führe Ihnen dies im einzelnen an—nicht etwa nur weil es sonderbar und neu, sondern weil es, bey dieser Sonderbarkeit und Neuheit, so delikat, so zweckmäßig, so hinreißend behandelt ist—Lebe doch noch recht lange, gutter alter Vater Haydn!”

A similar passage appears in the review of the *Creation*:

This basic spirit, here set forth, has informed almost all Haydn’s works up to now; and the result is that Haydn’s instrumental compositions are a brand new kind, created by him alone, of Romantic pictures for the ear, which may not be translated into words or concepts, just as our intellect and sensitivity cannot withstand their pleasant impressions.

With this spirit our master has now cultivated and harvested another field, as a result of which another new genre, quite different from the previous ones, had to be created; and it is, in its construction, just as out-of-the-ordinary as the elements themselves out of which it is constructed; and so the Oratorio *The Creation* came into being.\(^5\)

Both of these passages remark on Haydn’s originality and use his well-known ability in instrumental music to praise the late vocal music.

Haydn’s critics use the basic premise of originality to define his style more precisely as encompassing a balance between learned and simpler, freer styles. In a review of a sonata from June 1799, the reviewer says, “In the presto, one notices Haydn’s familiar learned manner, in which he sometimes sets the theme contrapuntally, sometimes in reverse, sometimes presents it with variations, and frequently also takes it through other keys.”\(^6\) The author points out a contrapuntal and academic style that he assumes his audience will recognize. However, the complete opposite is sometimes preferred, as in the case of the Six Lieder: “Judging from the title, one could expect Lieder of the lowest genre, except that they differ from the ordinary through a somewhat noble poetry and setting; and [they] have an artless, expressive melody that flows from a sensitive heart, with a piano accompaniment that is exquisite but not very

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\(^6\) “Sonate pour le Clavecin ou Pianoforte. Avec un Violon et Violoncelle, composée par Joseph Haydn.” *AmZ* 1 (June, 1799): 600; “In diesem Presto bemerkt man Haydn’s bekannte, gleleherte Manier, nach welcher er das Thema bald im Contrapunkt, der über das Subjekt gesezt ist, (dans le Contrepoint au dessus du Sujet), bald umgekehrt (all’ roverscio), bald mit Veränderungen vorbringt, und öfters auch durch andere Tonarten führt.”
difficult.”7 Thus, he praises Haydn for a completely different style. In an 1800 review of a
Sonata with Flute or Violin obbligato, we find a compromise:

The first movement of this excellent work has so simple a theme that it could
almost be considered inane. Only a Haydn could gradually enliven these simple
tones, so that interest increases with every moment . . . The last movement is a
worthy capstone for this excellent work. It is worked out with all the rules of
counterpoint, without appearing pedantic and stiff.8

Critics of Haydn’s music do not define him specifically in reference to one style, but they
tend to see in him a balance of styles: the right amount of serious and simple music.

What is interesting about this criticism is an almost total lack of references to
Haydn’s humor and comic writing style. We will see in the biographies (chapter three),
and in the Beethoven criticism (chapter four), much to-do made about humor, but here it
is all but absent. One exception can be found in the review of The Creation, where the
author speaks specifically of Haydn’s fourth-movement allegros or rondos in his
instrumental music:

The last allegros or rondos, for which Haydn employs all forms and
devices to preserve the rhythm, tempo and harmony, consist usually of
short, light movements. Through a very serious and diligent development,
they are often brought to the highest level of comedy, which concept can
never be so perfectly expressed in words as is here delivered and received
with the greatest speed. In the middle and towards the end they are full of

7 “Sechs Lieder beym Klavier zu singen, mit deutschem und englischem Texte,” *AmZ* 1
(March, 1799): 397; “Dem Titel zufolge könnte man hier Lieder von der niedrigsten Gattung
erwarten: allein sie unterscheiden sich von den gewöhnlichen durch eine etwas edlere Poesie und
Setzart, und haben einen unverkünstelten, ausdrucksvollen und aus einem fühlenden Herzen
geflossenen Gesang, mit einer nicht sehr schweren, aber ausgesuchten Klavierbegleitung.”

8 “Nouvelle Sonate pour le Clavecin ou Pianoforte avec accompagnement d’ une Flûte,
ou (d’ un) Violon obliged, composée par Joseph Hayd’n. Oeuvre 94,” *AmZ* 2 (July, 1800): 728-
29; “Der erste Satz dieses vortrefflichen Werks hat ein so einfaches Thema, daß es beynahe für
leer gelten könnte. Nur eain Hayd’n vermochte diese einfachen Töne nach und nach so zu
beleben, daß das Interesse mit jedem Augenblicke wächst . . . Der letzte Satz ist ein würdiger
Schlußstein zu diesem vortrefflichen Werkchen. Er ist nach allen kontrapunktischen Regeln
durchgearbeitet, ohne pedantisch und steif zu scheinen.”
life, intellect and spices, and possess a freedom, boldness and strength which enchant and uplift the most experienced ear. Every appearance of seriousness is only there to make the light-heartedness of the pleasant play of notes most surprising; and to tease us from all sides until we are tired of guessing what will come next, of hoping that what we want will come, of asking for what is obvious – so finally we submit to discretion and allow ourselves to be placed by the master in an intellectual mood of comfort and cheerful, beneficial spirit which could not be happier.9

The author speaks about what we now discuss as Haydn’s playing with expectations. He talks about Haydn’s comical teasing and light-heartedness, but he adds weight to it when he states that Haydn achieves it through “a very serious development and diligence.” For him, Haydn’s ability to be humorous while playing with expectations derives from his genius and is no laughing matter.

As the attributes and vocabulary the critics use help to define the persona of Haydn, so does the language that does not specifically refer to music. With Haydn criticism, age is always an issue, both in the sheer number of times that it is mentioned, and in the way in which the authors downplay his old age. One way in which the authors do this is by stating that Haydn is old but that his music has always evolved, and is still doing so. Thus they specifically applaud what they see as his persistent originality. In “Six Lieder for Voice and Piano with German and English Texts” from March 1799, the reviewer praises “Haydn, who, despite his advancing age, has always kept pace with the advances of art and taste.”10 Here, the author refutes, in the case of Haydn, the assumption that an aging mind would produce out-of-date music. Another reviewer in a May 1799 review of a Grand Sonata for piano remarks, “Haydn is inexhaustible and will


never become old.”11 For these reviewers, there is little separation between originality and someone whose music changes with the times, one who does not age with a bygone aesthetic, but changes with it.

Sometimes the reviewers compare Haydn’s mature pieces to his earlier pieces, reinforcing the continuity of Haydn’s style underlying his originality. Thus, the reviewer of “Three Sonatas for piano with violin accompaniment,” found in the Kurze Anzeigen section from June 1821, can assert that, this sonata “consists of an excellently devised, ingenious, and tender Andante cantabile, which is—as Haydn likes to do so often—freely varied, alternating between E minor and E major. This rather long movement does not show the slightest characteristic of a man of seventy years, and is as beautiful as those he produced in the middle of his manhood.”12 What excites this reviewer most is when he is reminded of Haydn’s earlier music; he couples the idea of originality with a personal style and is unable to separate the two. Then, by stating that this movement shows youthfulness even though written by an old man, he reaffirms the persistent dichotomy between an aged Haydn and the youthful music he produces.

Critics of Haydn’s music emphasize the perceived gap between Haydn’s age and music when they imbue the discussion with language of prowess and virility. Their depiction of an old man who writes youthful music becomes, in itself, a metaphor, where the old Haydn assumes the

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11 “Grande Sonate pour le Clav. ou Pianof., comp. et dédié à Madem. de Kurzbeck, par Joseph Haydn, Ouv. 82,” AmZ 1 (May, 1799): 520; “Haydn ist unerschöpflich und wird niemals alt.”

12 “Dernière Sonate pour le Pianoforte avec accomp. de Violon, comp. - - par Joseph Haydn,” AmZ 25 (June, 1821): 444; “Sie bestehet aus einem vortrefflich erfundenen, geist- und seelenvoll ausgeführten Andante cantabile, das wie das H. so oft und so gern machte, mehrmals frey variirt wird, und mit Es moll und Es dur wechselt. Dieser ziemlich lange Satz zeigt nicht das geringste Merkmal von siebenziger Jahren, und ist dem Schönsten, was H. in dieser Art in mittlern männlichen Jahren geliefert hat.”
strength and character of a young man. Thus, a December 1800 review of the piano score of the

*Creation* describes what amounts to a young man in an old man’s body:

> It is, in the actual sense of the word, a psychological phenomenon, that precisely
> that power of the soul, which in ordinary people becomes duller with old age,
> works that more powerfully with Haydn. In none of his earlier vocal
> compositions, like *Orlando Paladino*, *Isola disabitata* and others the reviewer
> knows, resides such a high, far reaching inventive genius and so much warm,
> blooming fantasy as in *Der Schöpfung*. Even the small blemishes that a timid
> critic might censure, are more the mistakes of the all-too-fiery young man than the
> deliberate old man. This truly conspicuous characteristic of this work can also
> partially explain the universally great acclaim of the entire musical world, and the
> warm interest of both connoisseurs and non-connoisseurs. It unites the study of
> the experienced, graying-in-art composer with the entrancing, all-consuming
> passion of youth. “Hail our German fatherland, which counts Haydn as one of its
> sons.” After taking this opportunity to study this masterpiece again, that is all that
> is left for the reviewer to say.13

This author goes much further than the other authors we have examined. He discusses Haydn’s

excesses as the product of a young rather than old man, and his allusion to fire reinforces and

heightens the picture of youth he associates with Haydn. Another review states:

> It is truly heartwarming to see how Papa Haydn’s musical genius never ages, but
> continually, with rejuvenated power, braids in new flowers into his wreath, which
> has long secured his immortality! Please excuse this proclamation, which arose

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13 “Joseph Haydn’s Oratorium: die Schöpfung. Im Klavierauszug von August Eberhard
Müller,” *AmZ* 3 (December, 1800): 181; “Es ist im eigentlichen Sinne des Worts ein
psychologisches Phänomen, dals gerade diejenigen Seelenkräfte, welche bey gewöhnlichen
Menschen mit dem höhern Alter stumpfer werden, bey Vater Haydn um desto kräftiger würken.
In keiner seiner früheren Singe-Kompositionen, als dem *Orlando Paladino*, der *Isola disabitata*
und anderer mehr, die Rec. bekannt sind, lebt ein solcher hoher, weitausgreifender
Erfindungsgeist, so viel warme, blühende Phantasie, als in der Schöpfung. Selbst die kleinen
Flecken, welche eine ängstliche Kritik darin rügen könnte, sind eher Fehler des allzufeurigen
jungen Mannes, als des bedachtsamen Greises. Aus dieser würklich auffallenden Eigenheit des
vor uns liegenden Werks läßt sich auch einigermaßen der überraschende Feuerfall der ganzen
musikalischen Welt, und der warme Antheil, welchen Kenner und Nichtkenner daran genommen
haben, erklaren. Es vereinigt das Studium des erfahrenen, in der Kunst grau gewordenen
Komponisten, mit dem hinreissenden, alles verzehrenden Feuer des Jünglings. “Heil unserm
deutschen Vaterlande welches einen Haydn zu seinen Söhnen zählt!” das ist das einzige, was
Recens. zu sagen übrig bleibt, nachdem er bey dieser Gelegenheit nochmals dieses Meisterstück
durchstudirt hat.”
spontaneously from the enthusiasm caused by Haydn’s new, valuable product. It is through and through the outpouring of a vigorous genius.\textsuperscript{14}

Again, the persona of Haydn as an old man writing music that is youthful is made more poignant by this language. With words such as rejuvenation, this critic enters into hyperbole. Not only does Haydn’s genius never age, it constantly makes itself young again. He then imbues this rejuvenated youthfulness with strength and vigor. Further, the metaphor of the new flowers poetically reinforces his point, which is youthfulness and originality.

When this author mentions that Haydn’s constant youthfulness and continually original compositions promise him “immortality,” he addresses the third recurring theme in this criticism. Haydn criticism in the \textit{AmZ} during its first three decades—for the most part—assumes the secure place of Haydn in the pantheon of great composers. For critics writing at this time, this idea is as crucial to understanding and appreciating Haydn as all of the adjectives used to described him and his eternal youth. His celebrity, his unprecedented stardom, was itself celebrated, and the critics did not foresee it diminishing. Indeed, critics often mention Haydn’s reputation in passing and generally take it for granted. One writer, reviewing quartets arranged for different instruments, says they “need no further recommendation, since the name of the great Haydn guarantees the excellence of the work.”\textsuperscript{15} Another critic begins a review of one of the late symphonies by stating: “The manner in which J. Haydn writes symphonies is so generally known

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\textsuperscript{14} “Nouvelle Sonate,” 728; “Wahraft, herzerfreuend zu sehen ist es, wie der musikalische Genius Vater Hayd’ns nie altert, sondern stets mit verjungter Kraft neue Blumen in den Kranz flicht, der ihm schon längst Unsterblichkeit zusicherte! Man verzeihe mir diese Ausrufung, welche mir unwillkührlich der Enthusiasmus auspreiste, mit welchem mich dieses neue schätzbare Produkt Hayd’ns erfüllte. Es ist durch und durch \textit{Ein Ergüß des kräftigsten Genies.”}

\textsuperscript{15} “Trois Quatuors de Haydn, pour Flûte, Violon, Alto et Basse. 4e Oeuv,” \textit{AmZ} 1 (February, 1799): 343; “Bedürfen weiter keiner Empfehlung, da schon der Name des großen Haydn für die Vortrefflichkeit der Arbeit bürgt.”

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and so generally appreciated as almost nothing else in the musical world. It would thus be absolutely unnecessary to say more about these symphonies written by the great master in London than that they are among the most excellent that he has written.”¹⁶ Neither author feels the need to make a case for Haydn’s position among composers, because to them his greatness and status are simply a matter of fact. However, they do mention it, thereby reaffirming their convictions of Haydn’s greatness.

Still, while critics generally take Haydn’s place for granted, an emphasis on certain genres over others appears, so that his output is not treated equally. The symphonies and strings quartets are indisputably considered to be his greatest achievements and acknowledged as the source of his fame and popularity as well as his standing. An article appearing in the AmZ entitled “Remarks concerning the Development of Music in Germany during the Eighteenth Century” has this to say about Haydn’s lasting effect:

But in which genre of music is Haydn at his greatest and most masterly? One must ask this question of almost any important composer of this third period [of the eighteenth century], for one requires of him not only that he writes much but is many-sided. Now it is obvious that a true artist arouses interest in every aspect of his muse to which he turns his attention, but it remains constant that even the greatest genius—especially at a time where the Art was growing from a small plant to a great tree of many branches—can work in only one, or in some sections, of his genre with really excellent results. And so I fear not, if I set up the following classification of Haydn’s works against the opinion of the majority of connoisseurs and critics.—The first place must be accorded, without any doubt, to his symphonies and quartets, wherein no one has yet surpassed him. The second goes to his piano works, but only because of their expression, gentleness and (for all their artistry) easily understood mastery; for in other respects—apart from Mozart—, several of the newer piano composers, especially Muzio Clementi with his fiery spirit (and perhaps later a Beethoven, if he calms his wild imaginings,

and others too, will usurp [Haydn’s] place. After that follows his church music and finally his theatrical pieces, so far as these latter are known. The proof for that remark may be found inter alia even in a work which has caused an exceptional sensation (almost as much as Mozart’s Magic Flute), to wit, The Creation. Of this work I dare to assert that it will neither subtract from, nor add to, Haydn’s true artistic reputation—that is to say, not that which is provided by a large audience.17

By establishing a hierarchy of genres, this critic actually opens the door to a decrease in Haydn’s status, a trend that became more apparent after his death. The author shows prescience in his prediction about Haydn’s piano music, but he does not foresee that Haydn would soon be totally replaced by Beethoven when he claims that Haydn’s symphonies and quartets are unsurpassed. He, like other critics, sees Haydn’s status as formidable: “Everything is combined in him [Haydn] to raise him up to being the greatest instrumental composer.”18 Nowhere is there a hint of Haydn’s position being threatened, but on the contrary, critics had noted that “So far [Haydn’s] considerable rank in the sphere of the greatest and most excellent composers has been steady.”19

Much of this enthusiasm for Haydn and for his position was expressed in terms of national pride.20 In the midst of his discussion of the old Haydn writing in a “fiery,” youthful manner, the reviewer of The Creation in piano score states: “Hail our German fatherland, which

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18 Ibid.

19 “Six Lieder,” 397; “Bisher seinen ansehnlichen Rang in der Sphäre der größten und trefflichsten Tonsetzer behauptet hat.”

20 It should be noted that the discourse as can be seen in the criticism on Haydn makes no distinction between Austria and Germany, and treats both the same on the basis of their language and heritage.
counts Haydn as one of its sons.”21 We can see more evidence of this national viewpoint in a review of Haydn’s Missa Sancti Bernardi, in which Friedrich Rochlitz shows the esteem he has for the composer by praising the publisher:

The publisher continues in his efforts to lay before the public the best compositions of the greatest German musicians, entirely complete, in score, well printed, and at the most economical price. If an undertaking may be judged by the probable effect or damage it exercises on the whole, this one cannot be too highly praised. For all the signs indicate a wide dissemination of the very best that German music has to offer—and precisely at a time when culture shows interest not only in the better kind of music as opposed to its lighter by-products, and finds many friends in its swift progress; just there, such a dissemination must be of rich and beneficial influence on artists and amateurs; even on the art itself. If the support of this undertaking—this much may be stated here—brings honour to the publisher, it also brings still more honour to the friends of art among the public which so generously support him and enable him to execute his plan.22

Not subtle in what he feels is the best music—German music—Rochlitz also clearly finds this ideal in the music of Haydn. Furthermore, Rochlitz not only presents Haydn’s status in lofty terms, but makes the case that his influence and status will become truly long-lasting because of the wide dissemination of the publications.

In all of this, Haydn’s position is unquestioned, for as Landon says, “At the end of the eighteenth century, . . . it must have seemed to Europe’s music-loving public [and certainly his critics] that never had any composer been so completely popular among all levels of society, so thoroughly understood by his contemporaries and so certain of a place in the history of music. If they could have seen Haydn’s position a hundred years later, they simply would have refused to

21 “Joseph Haydn’s Oratorium: die Schöpfung,” 18; “Heil unserm deutschen Vaterlande, welches einen Haydn zu seinen Söhnen zählt!”

believe their eyes.”23 Indeed, Haydn criticism, especially in the decade before his death, but even after it, maintains Haydn’s status and reputation. The critics hold Haydn in high esteem, and define him according to their admiration. This criticism itself does not contribute to the decline in Haydn’s status, but rather praises him while generally holding onto an aesthetic that is giving way to another—the aesthetic of Romanticism.

Chapter Three

In the second chapter, we saw that the majority of critics and commentators of Haydn were firmly rooted in the aesthetic principles of the late eighteenth century (seen in chapter one), and assessed Haydn’s music in those terms. In many ways, most of the qualities attributed given to Haydn had been completely cemented in the first few years following his death in 1809. It was in these years that three important biographies by Georg August Griesinger, Albert Christoph Dies and Giuseppe Carpani appeared, works on which all subsequent biographies would depend.

The biographies are of exceptional importance because all three authors had direct contact with Haydn and got much of their information from him. Later biographers such as Pohl were forced to draw from these three, thus perpetuating many of the stereotypes they developed. They were also well disseminated in their day. Though Dies’s was not reprinted during the nineteenth century, both Griesinger’s and Carpani’s appeared in multiple editions. Griesinger’s account first appeared as a serial in the Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung soon after Haydn’s death in 1809. It was then published in book form in 1810 and republished in 1819, and appeared in a Swedish translation. Carpani’s Le Haydine has the most interesting history. It was first published in 1812, revised in 1823, and republished in the revised edition in 1837. However, much of the dissemination was due to the plagiarized French version published in 1814 under the

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name of Bombet, the alias of Henri Beyle, known by the penname of Stendhal. This version was translated into English and printed in France in 1818. Although the Carpani was the least respected by the later biographers, it was the most widely circulated in its day.²

The distinguished Haydn Scholar Vernon Gotwals has published much about the early biographers, the two most important works being his translation of both Griesinger’s and Dies’s accounts and his lengthy article in the October, 1959 edition of the *Musical Quarterly*.³ In this article he compares the three and describes them in relative detail, giving background information on the authors that helps to explain their approaches and perspectives. Griesinger, for example, was a civil servant and so wrote in a very concentrated dry manner that befit his post. Gotwals concludes that the three biographies are invaluable for the “Haydn scholar who wishes to know his man or merely to date a minuet,” but that they are also enjoyable to read.⁴ Although Gotwals must admit that “from their separate accounts of Haydn, one learns very little about Griesinger, a great deal about Dies, and entirely too much about Carpani,”⁵ the three biographies are invaluable to us not only because they provide information about Haydn, but also because they reveal how Haydn’s champions helped to create the picture of him handed down to us.

There are many differences among Griesinger, Dies, and Carpani, and, as Gotwals argues, most of these stem from the background and personalities of the three biographers. In

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⁵ Ibid., 440.
fact, even though there are minor inconsistencies in their accounts of Haydn’s life, the real differences lie in their writing style and in their personal views about the essence of Haydn’s legacy. Griesinger, being a diplomat as well as a correspondent for Breiktopf & Härtel, does write the most concise as well as the most accurate account. He refuses to elaborate on the events, rather choosing to state them simply. Dies was a landscape painter who sets up his book as a “series of vignettes.” He describes episodes in the composer’s life and then gives commentary that more often than not betrays his own nationalistic outlook on the composer’s music and its place in the musical world. Carpani only uses the anecdotes as a springboard for his philosophical and political rants and often loses sight of Haydn altogether. As to the differences within their personal views, while all three applaud every bit of Haydn’s output, Carpani finds his instrumental music to be far superior to his vocal music.

Despite these differences, the biographies together present a very potent portrait of Haydn’s persona, music, and legacy. Their importance to later biographers is not in the differences, but precisely in those aspects on which they agree. Their significance in the history of Haydn reception lies in their affirmation of certain stereotypes, e.g., that of “Papa Haydn,” a label that recurs consistently in later Haydn criticism and in comparisons of Haydn and Beethoven. Out of these biographies comes a portrayal of Haydn as an old and in many ways a very ordinary man. Furthermore, out of these biographies comes a representation of Haydn’s music which in many ways mirrors his personal life, and which is set in the musical ideals of the late eighteenth century.

Haydn’s persona as it emerges from the biographies is very much antithetical to the heroic model employed by biographers throughout the nineteenth century and to the present. Rarely does the reader get the sense that Haydn is anything other than a normal, ordinary
individual: an everyman in the most routine and unphilosophical sense. At a time when the very
diverse, often contradictory, biographies of Mozart were consistently depicting him “as an artist
and personality distinctly outside the ‘norm,’” Haydn’s biographers, who agreed more than they
disagreed, were presenting Haydn as the very opposite. As in all biography, recognizing the
agenda of the biographer is crucial for interpreting the information provided. My point is not to
criticize Haydn’s biographers. I believe their agenda, whether conscious or not, was to try to
portray to the world the clearest picture of Haydn as they saw it. They do not try to create a
forgotten genius, nor a heaven-storming Titan, but through their choices of topics and style of
writing depict Haydn as a very typical human being.

The picture of Haydn bequeathed by the biographers is not of a young man exploring the
world and thriving, but of a venerated man who is both old and frail. All three men met Haydn in
the last decade of his life; thus the picture of him inevitably reflects the Haydn they knew
personally. However this circumstance was aided by writing styles that affirm this conception.
All three biographies begin their narratives at the end of Haydn’s life, or in the case of
Griesinger, his death, and both Dies and Carpani (with their diary and letter formats) continually
shift back and forth between the past and the present, constantly returning to Haydn as an old
man and his take on old stories. Totally disregarded is Haydn’s own complaint of being painted

6 Cliff Eisen and Stanley Sadie, “Mozart: Aftermath, Reception and scholarship,” Grove

7 One is reminded of the careful manner in which the Mendelsohns were portrayed by
Sebastian Hensel, worried about class consciousness and growing anti-Semitic sentiments in the
later 19th century. Marian Wilson Kimber, “The ‘Suppression’ of Fanny Mendelssohn:
as an old man, though Carpani quotes him as saying, “If I was Haydn, when I was forty, why would you transmit to posterity a Haydn of 78? Neither you nor I gain by the alteration.”

It is not only the circumstance of the authors meeting Haydn in his old age that contributes to this intense picture. The biographers themselves, with the style and language they choose, continually depict Haydn as old and frail. Dies claims in the introduction that he will present “no idealization” of the composer. This promise, coupled with the diary-like writing style, means that Dies makes the stronger case for weakness in old age. From the second sentence in his description of the first visit, Dies continually comments on Haydn’s ill health: “I thought I did not displease him, for [Haydn] came to meet me although he had been sick for a long time and his legs were swollen.” Indeed, seventeen of the thirty visits that he records refer to Haydn’s health and old age in the opening sentences. While visits eight, ten, nineteen, twenty-three, and twenty-five record Haydn being in good health, concern for his health never disappears. Dies even attributes one long period of no visits between visits ten and eleven to illness on the part of both Haydn and himself.

After the visits, as Dies is discussing Haydn’s death, he states: “I should give my readers no pleasure if I undertook to depict the sufferings of a dying man who is so dear to us. —I draw a curtain before the scene of sorrow. Three and a half days—and it was no more.” The concern both for Haydn and the reader might be a bit more convincing had Dies not spent the previous thirty visits “depict[ing] the suffering of a dying man.” From the nose polyp—he refused to have

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10 Ibid., 194.
it operated on—to the dizziness that caused the keyboard to be taken away, Dies describes Haydn’s ailments in detail.

If Dies is the biographer most concerned with Haydn’s every infirmity, Griesinger and Carpani are no less insistent in the imagery of frailty. For Griesinger, though Haydn was not “in any real sense ill, [he] nevertheless felt more every day that old age was an illness in itself and that nature was inexorably asserting her rights to his body.”\textsuperscript{11} Because Griesinger’s biography is the only chronological narrative, he does not have the same opportunity for commenting on Haydn’s old age; however, the large majority of that narrative concerns the last twenty years of Haydn’s life, beginning with Mozart’s warning to Haydn about traveling to London precisely because of his age, which the author reminds us was fifty-nine. Carpani writes about this period in similar fashion, saying that Haydn was not introduced to the great world till he was in the decline of his life, during his trips to London.”\textsuperscript{12}

Although the presentation of Haydn as an old man with failing health can be seen as largely inadvertent, the presentation of his personality and personal characteristics directly stem from the biographer’s apparent wish to avoid idealization and to present Haydn as a normal, ordinary person. Three themes run through their comments. They depict Haydn as an orderly, practical person, as revealed in his neatness, his routine and schedule, and his ability to make and manage money. Secondly, they describe him as a hard worker, and finally, they find him to be a happy and unassuming person, as revealed in his cheerful temperament, modesty, and quiet religious faith. These three characteristics contribute to a view of Haydn as an ordinary individual who has achieved greatness.

\textsuperscript{11} Griesinger, in Gotwals, \textit{Haydn}, 49.

\textsuperscript{12} Carpani, 138.
That Haydn was a clean and orderly person was crucial to the biographer’s picture of him. It is important to remember that the biographers considered this personality trait to be a virtue and would have not been impressed by the kind of ruffled-unkempt genius who cares not for his appearance. In fact, the biographers imply that Haydn’s neatness should be a model for young musicians. In a discussion of Haydn’s cleanliness and order, Dies goes into a diatribe about the absence of “Plain virtues that you very seldom meet in our young geniuses. How often they hate order, even when the lack of it spells abortion for artistic production. They do not understand the importance of order and taste.”

From Dies’s perspective, genius does not reveal itself in a troubled artist, but rather in a well-ordered mind. Haydn fits the latter precisely, for as Griesinger points out, “Haydn set great store by order and regularity in everything he did and in all his surroundings. His rooms were always clean and neat, everything stood in its place and even the papers and music on the pianoforte were not mixed up with each other.”

In addition to describing Haydn’s personal orderliness, the biographers concentrate on his everyday duties and habits. Both Griesinger and Dies detail Haydn’s daily routine, which reveals a man of habit governed by order. Furthermore, they imply that this routine directly contributed to his success. When describing the lengthy daily schedule, Dies admits that “distribution of hours and the resultant order might seem machine-like to some of my readers; but if you think of the many creative works that flowed from Haydn’s pen, you will admit he was merely employing his time wisely.” Thus the author attributes as much weight to the mechanical process as he does to the creative energy.

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The importance given to neatness and order coincides with the importance the biographers give to Haydn’s management of his personal finances. Though on occasion the authors feel the need to defend Haydn against charges of avarice and to highlight his generosity,\(^\text{16}\) they mostly emphasize his ability to make and manage money. Again, this shows Haydn as a normal human being, albeit one with great gifts, rather than the Romantic dreamer who cares for nothing but his art. Whether detailing Haydn’s intricate financial dealings on the eve of his London trips, discussing how he kept track of how much money his oratorios earned (for charity, of course), or reprinting Haydn’s will, the authors present a case for Haydn as a talented money manager.

The biographers also play up the difference between Haydn’s financial situation in his youth and that of his old age. While, according to the authors, he lived in direst poverty as he was beginning his career, through his ingenuity and good management he lived out his old age in financial security. And Haydn, for his part, seems very proud of the amount of money his compositions were able to make. He wrote in his diary about a benefit concert given in England: “The whole company was extremely pleased, and I too. I made this evening, four thousand gulden. One can do this only in England.”\(^\text{17}\) All in all, the constant remarks about money reinforce the normality of the man; someone who is concerned about “earthly treasures,” rather than the secluded artist whose only concern is his art.

\(^\text{16}\) Both Griesinger and Dies defend Haydn against accusations of avarice. Griesinger relates a story of Haydn sending a bill for 100 guineas to the Prince of Wales, which parliament then paid him. He says: “It was ill received and attributed to greed that Haydn presented his claim,” and he puts into perspective that the money was due Haydn. Later he and Dies both name Reichardt as accusing Haydn of miserliness and say that had Reichardt known him better he would have not made this claim.

\(^\text{17}\) Griesinger and Dies, in Gotwals, *Haydn*, 31, 173.
All three biographers describe Haydn as a hard worker. They continually refer to him as a genius, but portray him as a man who nonetheless worked hard to attain that status. Just as Dies explains Haydn’s monotonous routine as the basis for his creativity, on a grander scale he pictures Haydn’s talent in a similar way, that he progressed slowly and steadily. Carpani states that he received no unmerited advancements and mentions that Haydn practiced sixteen to eighteen hours a day on the keyboard. In a direct comparison with Mozart, Carpani maintains that Haydn did not have the same opportunities as Mozart and that he was forced to learn on his own. Perhaps Griesinger sums it up best: “Haydn’s life is . . . the story of a man who had to struggle under manifold pressures from without, and who solely by the strength of his talent and by tireless exertion happily worked up to the rank of the most important men in his field.”18 He draws a correlation between Haydn’s diligent hard work and his status as one of the greatest composers of his day that is always present. As Carpani puts it, “[Haydn] composed with perseverance, but with difficulty.”19 He was not implying a lack of ideas, but rather focusing on and applauding Haydn’s work habits.

Finally, the biographers depict Haydn as happy, content, and—above all—modest. They cite modesty as the characteristic that kept him from making a catalogue of his works and almost kept him from permitting himself to be interviewed by his biographers. Haydn is pictured in many instances as unaware of his genius. According to Griesinger, he was totally naive about the profitability of his early music when he stumbled upon publications of his works. In discussing Haydn’s Eszterhazy period, Carpani states “that our composer, who never left the small town belonging to his prince, was for a long time the only musical man in Europe who was ignorant of

18 Griesinger, in Gotwals, Haydn, 8.

19 Carpani, 179.
the celebrity of Joseph Haydn.”

For the biographers, Haydn’s naiveté in his earlier years gave way to a more general humility. Griesinger remarks, “In modesty, Haydn did not fail to perceive his own worth.” So Haydn has a general self-confidence, which reassures, but again, his biographers have set him apart from the perceived self-absorbed mentality of more Romantic figures, including both Mozart and Beethoven. Further, his biographers couple his modesty together with his religiosity, and Carpani claims that Haydn’s “talent was increased by his sincere faith in the truths of religion.”

In emphasizing his cheerfulness and humor, the biographers contribute to a view of Haydn that will be constantly reiterated up by Beethoven’s critics (seen in chapter four). Dies writes that “Haydn’s happy and naturally cheerful temperament always kept him from violent outbreaks of melancholy.” This comment comes as Dies is discussing Haydn’s bleak time of poverty, and he goes on to say, “If the rain of summer or the snow of winter drove through the chinks in his attic and he awoke soaked through or covered with snow, he found such things quite natural and made a cheerful joke of it all.” In all, Haydn’s cheerfulness was one of the most important of Haydn’s character traits to the biographers, and thus they never depict him as angry or complaining. They relate many anecdotes about his sense of humor. From Haydn (not recognized) telling musicians playing his own minuet that it is “pretty miserable stuff,” to the composer willing to conduct his own funeral in France when the rumor of his death had spread

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20 Carpani, 183.

21 Griesinger, in Gotwals, Haydn, 56.

22 Carpani, 315.

23 Dies, in Gotwals, Haydn, 91.

there four years prematurely, Haydn is shown to be a very funny individual. These anecdotes form a substantial part of the biographies, reinforcing the cheerful and humorous character they present.

In light of all of the personality traits illuminated in the biographies, the authors have presented what we would today describe as the “perfect guy.” He is typical and ordinary, but also perfect as both. He is neat and orderly, kind and modest, sincere in his faith, good-humored, and—of course—wealthy. However to romantic minds, these traits did not make the perfect artist, so that later writers did not find Haydn to be brooding or serious enough and devalued him for appearing to care more about everyday tasks of personal neatness, than he did about “greater” matters. By describing Haydn as happy and content with life, his biographers unwittingly rooted his legacy in the mundane.

Just as the three biographies helped to cement the picture of Haydn that persisted throughout the nineteenth century, they were equally important in establishing his place musically. The biographers are just as consistent in discussions of his music as they were with his personal life. They all blend his personality with his compositional output, associate him with the aesthetic of mimesis, and identify him as a genius in the late eighteenth-century definition of the term.

The biographers link Haydn’s life to what his music is supposed to be and what it is supposed to represent and vice versa. In all three, Haydn’s joking and teasing, his “harmless roguery,” as Griesinger puts it, is not only a part of his personality, but also a defining characteristic of his music. Indeed it seems difficult for Dies to separate the two when he says, “In character there was much cheerfulness, jest, and musical wit both popular and refined, but original to the highest degree. It has often been called humor, from which is rightly derived
Haydn’s bent for musical teasing.”\(^{25}\) Carpani spends all of letter eleven explaining Haydn’s musical wit, having already discussed how Haydn’s instrumental music was designed to produce laughter. He goes on to list the most comical of Haydn’s compositions, and he equates, as all the biographers do, this ability to achieve musical comedy with Haydn’s unequivocal and original genius. Griesinger even feels the need to defend Haydn against the criticism of being overly comic. However, as was mentioned in chapter two, the linking of humor in Haydn’s life was not extremely widespread at least in Haydn criticism. But for Griesinger, Dies, and Carpani, Haydn’s comic genius was not just important; it was the greatest strength of his style.

Also unusual at the time of these biographies was the nature of their discussion of Haydn’s use of mimesis. As we saw in chapter one, in the area of expression, the eighteenth-century concept of art imitating nature had for the most part eroded. Though all three biographies criticize descriptive/imitative music, surprisingly they find ways to excuse it in Haydn’s case. In speaking about the *Creation*, Griesinger claims that the instances of imitation were minor blemishes when compared with all the great aspects of the work. Carpani and Dies go further in defending Haydn. Carpani describes what he calls “physical imitation” as music representing something such as snoring or the babbling of a brook. “This direct imitation amuses for a moment but soon tires.”\(^{26}\) For Carpani, Haydn’s physical imitation was not direct, but simply indicative as was the manner of Gluck. He says that Haydn “has carried [this species of

\(^{25}\) Dies, in Gotwals, *Haydn*, 203. This comment comes within Dies’s discussion of Haydn’s general character traits. He makes a similar comment in the Eighteenth Visit: “Woven into Haydn’s character is a genial, witty, teasing strain, but with it always the innocence of a child.”

\(^{26}\) Carpani, 237-38.
imitation] to perfection,"²⁷ while speaking of the same passage in the *Creation* (Carpani says this is the most beautiful piece of picturesque music) where Griesinger had found those minor blemishes. Dies responded by blaming it on the poet: “Haydn was too much obliged by both texts (*Creation* and *Seasons*) to quit the sphere of music and to wander around in the region of painting.”²⁸ He allows for imitation, i.e., that which remains serious, or evokes the supernatural. However, in the end he remains wary of it but rebukes critics who blame the composer rather than the poet when the “[former]…has the misfortune to be shipwrecked on a bad text.”²⁹

The music that Carpani and Dies excuse in the *Creation* remained controversial (Berlioz, among others attacked it), but history has essentially made a mountain out of a molehill. It was one of very few works referred to by the biographers in the context of this mimetic discussion.³⁰ By their very discussion of a very limited aspect of Haydn’s overall oeuvre, they encouraged an image of Haydn as a mimetic composer in a period when mimesis was looked on with great scorn. Maybe they felt that they were helping the memory of Haydn by refuting criticism of the *Creation*, but they would have stayed closer to their original goal of accuracy had they not spent so much time and energy discussing something that was not a main musical attribute of Haydn.

Along with this problematic emphasis on mimesis, the biographers also view Haydn’s genius in a way reminiscent of an earlier aesthetic. They discuss Haydn not as a Romantic genius

²⁷ Ibid., 240; Carpani also states in this passage that Haydn used this kind of imitation in moderation both in the *Creation* and in the *Seasons*.


²⁹ Ibid., 176.

³⁰ As mentioned in a previous footnote, Carpani mentions the *Seasons* along with the *Creation* in a passage mostly given to the latter. Dies also defends *Seasons* in the same way he does the *Creation*, but this too is in passing. He does discuss the *Seven Last Words of Christ* in a previous passage, defending it against criticism. He says the critics aren’t taking into account the words. In all, these pieces mentioned in context of mimesis all have words.
breaking the rules, but rather, as a composer who is able to maintain the balance between a firm understanding of the rules of composition and the ability to compose a piece in a new and free manner. (Still this balance separated Haydn from Kirnberger, Albrechtsberger, his student Pleyel, and most of the other composers of his day.) Haydn’s genius showed itself in the way he used the rules. Though they claim that “Art is free” and that too many rules spoil the music, all three maintain a deep regard for the resulting order and structure and admire the balance between adherence to and freedom from the rules. For instance, even though Dies (as well as Haydn apparently) criticizes Kirnberger’s music for being too strict and confining, lacking a “free spirit,”31 and later argues, again quoting Haydn, that correctness may be sacrificed for beauty, his remark about education reveals that his true opinion was actually more balanced:

I am of the opinion that the more creative talent a youngster shows, the more he needs to learn that there is an intelligence that investigates the mathematical principles of which art is based and that a structure not erected according to these principles must soon fall to pieces.32

At first it seems that Griesinger’s response to the concept of rules differs from Dies. He defends Haydn against his critics, stating, “That a narrow adherence to the rules oftentimes yields works devoid of taste and feeling that many things had arbitrarily taken on the stamp of rules, and that in music only what offends a discriminating ear is absolutely forbidden.”33 Though the rules themselves are never fully defined, Griesinger makes clear that a genius like Haydn is allowed, or even supposed, to break them. In a discussion of Albrechtsberger, who apparently wanted to rid music of all parallel fourths, Griesinger quotes Haydn as saying, “Art is free, and will be limited by no pedestrian rules.” But, Griesinger, like Dies, does not totally

31 Ibid., 96.

32 Ibid., 87.

disregard rules, for in the very next paragraph, having shifted to Haydn’s composing habits, he tells the reader that when Haydn got a musical idea his “whole endeavor was to develop and sustain it in keeping with the rules of art.”\(^{34}\) Thus, for Griesinger, though art is not limited to the rules it must still rely on them.

Carpani echoes Griesinger in trying to have it both ways when it comes to rules. He relates a story of a nobleman who asked Haydn for composition lessons and then pulled out a Haydn quartet to list the “mistakes” he had found. Carpani ridicules this man in a sarcastic tone for being so insistent on the rules that he failed to recognize the beauty of the piece. Nevertheless, Carpani also maintains that “Discords must be employed with discretion.”\(^{35}\) He goes further to say that Mozart was too free in this regard. All in all, the three authors have maintained the very clear balance of the late eighteenth century, with regards to their interpretations of genius. It differs from the earlier view that had seen a genius as one who simply puts together a puzzle, but it also differs from the later view that would value a composer’s ingenuity, regardless of the rules, over this balance.

As these points concerning both Haydn in life and Haydn in his art have demonstrated, the biographers reflect the aesthetic thought of the late eighteenth century and as a result do not connect him with the trends associated with Beethoven and romanticism. Where Beethoven’s biographers emphasize the troubled artist, isolated from the world, and excessive in his habits, Haydn is presented as content and happy, worldly, and in all things moderate. Also in regards to genius, Beethoven’s genius reveals itself in breaking the rules and in extreme originality,

\(^{34}\) Ibid., 61.

\(^{35}\) Carpani, 93-94.
whereas Haydn’s biographers stress his ability to compose new and original music within the confines of the rules.

In conclusion, one final observation concerns the narrative structure of Griesinger’s biography, which also supports a non-Romantic ideal. For the historian Hayden White, the narrative will supply meaning in the historical account (story) based on the mode of emplotment, which is the “kind of story that has been told.”36 He distinguishes four basic emplotments: the Romantic, the Comic, the Tragic, and the Satirical. He explains the Romantic as “Fundamentally a drama of self-identification symbolized by the hero’s transcendence of the world of experience, his victory over it, and his final liberation from it.”37 In the Romantic mode, therefore, importance is placed on an individual concerning his struggles and his ultimate triumph over them. The idea of redemption is associated with this mode in that the hero has freed himself from the world and has thus made the world a better place. I see Beethoven’s biography fitting this mode especially as it concerns the Heiligenstadt Testament. In this document are the makings of a Romantic hero, for Beethoven, in a time of intense internal conflict, contemplates suicide but determines that he will persevere, saving himself only because of Art. Not only does Beethoven transcend over the struggles of his life (his deafness), he makes the world better through deeply individual music only he could compose. The Satirical mode is the complete antithesis of the

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36 Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 7; I use White cautiously, because he is speaking specifically of a nineteenth and twentieth-century phenomenon and is dealing with histories. Further, as Griesinger’s biography is the only one in a narrative, it will be the only one suitable for this discussion.

37 Ibid., 8.
Romantic: there is no redemption, and “man is ultimately a captive of the world rather than its master.”38

White couples the Comic mode with the Tragic because they both include partial liberation from the conditions of society, although they differ in terms of conclusion. In Tragedy, things are worse at the end than they were at the beginning, yet it ends with hope given not to the protagonist but to those around him who were influenced by him. As White says, “There has been a gain in consciousness for the spectators of the contest. And this gain is thought to consist in the epiphany of the law governing human existence which the protagonist’s exertions against the world have brought to pass.”39 Thus, a tragic reading of Mozart’s life would emphasize his hardships, both internal and external, his early demise, and his perceived failing to win success and notoriety, but in turn, would encourage and bring comfort to those who are touched by his life’s art. Unlike the Tragic and the Romantic modes, the Comic mode can be seen as basically a balanced form. An equilibrium exists, but goes temporarily out of balance and is then restored. White states: “In Comedy, hope is held out for the temporary triumph of man over his world by the prospect of occasional reconciliations of the forces at play in the social and natural worlds.”40 The key here is that the triumph and thus the hope is temporary. Further, “Such reconciliations are symbolized in the festive occasions which the comic writer traditionally uses to terminate his dramatic accounts of change and transformation.”41 Though the Comedy, like the Romance is

38 Ibid., 9.
39 Ibid.
40 Ibid.
41 Ibid.
seen as positive, it involves reconciliations of smaller consequence, rather than transcendence of the hero over the world. In the end, things are basically as they were in the beginning.

With these definitions of the different plots, it becomes evident that Griesinger’s biography fits neatly into the Comic emplotment, and that coupled with the nature of the biographer’s discussion of Haydn’s personality and music outlined in this chapter, it reinforces the basic presentation of Haydn, that of normality. Griesinger is interested in demonstrating the gradual development of Haydn’s genius through hard work and motivation, and the success in rank and position that accompanies it. His stated premise, quoted earlier, again, sums up what all the biographies make clear: “Haydn’s life is marked by no great event; but it is the story of a man who had to struggle under manifold pressures from without, and who solely by the strength of his talent and by tireless exertion happily worked up to the rank of the most important men.”42 He uses the word struggle but then tempers it with the idea of a continual and happy progression or development throughout Haydn’s career. By stating that “Haydn’s life is marked by no great event,” and demonstrating this point throughout his biography, he narrows the emplotment away from both the Romance and Tragedy. Haydn does not have a Heiligenstadt Testament type of time in his life where he defiantly raises himself over his difficulties and perseveres, nor does his life exhibit any degree of failure in terms of success and prosperity, as Griesinger points out, “Haydn has not outlived his fame.”43 This theme is very clear, and in it the biography ends where it began.

42 Griesinger, in Gotwals, Haydn, 8.

43 Ibid.
The Comic mode cannot be defined as a total lack of struggle, rather there exists smaller times of struggle, what White calls the “dramatic accounts of change and transformation,” and these need reconciliation. He says, “The reconciliations which occur at the end of Comedy are reconciliations of men with men, of men with their world and their society; the condition of society is represented as being purer, saner, and healthier as a result of the conflict among seemingly inalterably opposed elements in the world.” In Griesinger’s biography major changes in Haydn’s life and status always occur in a context of unbridled positivism. In the time of Haydn’s life where he lived in poverty and was even treated rather badly by Porpora before his appointment at the court of Count Morzin, Griesinger’s point is not the hardships as much as it is opportunities accessible to Haydn. He describes him living in the same building as Metastasio and his meeting the comic actor Bernadon Kurz. (Dies goes into much more detail concerning the poverty and state of living Haydn endured, although even he uses it as a chance to show Haydn’s good humor and high spirits.) In Griesinger, Haydn’s position with Count Morzin is seen as the much needed respite or reconciliation to his previous lifestyle as he says, “Here he enjoyed at last the good fortune of a care-free existence.” At another time of change in Haydn’s life, right before the London trips, again Griesinger points out the difficulty of the decision and Mozart’s objection because of Haydn’s age, but focuses on the positive effect of the trips. He starts by saying that “Haydn counted the days he spent in England among the happiest of his life,” and fills this section with many anecdotes of Haydn’s happy success.

44 White, 9.
45 Ibid.
46 Griesinger, 15.
47 Ibid., 23.
Even at the time of his death, Haydn’s life is seen in terms of the abundant contentment, joy, and success that he had achieved. Though Griesinger begins his biography saying, “Joseph Haydn has ended his glorious career. By his death Germany again suffers a national loss,” nowhere in the biography is there a mood of mournfulness, but on the contrary, it is an unapologetic rejoicing in Haydn’s life and career, and the renown that he brought to the German people. Further, just as White maintains that at the end of Comedy society is shown to be “purer, saner, and healthier as a result of the conflict,” at the end of Griesinger’s biography he highlights Haydn’s lofty character traits (many of these have been discussed in detail), especially his patriotism, religiosity, and his goodness to relatives and people less fortunate than he. Thus, for Griesinger’s biography the reconciliations have been made complete in Haydn’s death.

Along with the modes of emplotment, White describes two other aspects that contribute to the underlying nature of the narrative; they are the explanation by formal argument, which can be either Formist, Organicist, Mechanistic, or Contextualist, and explanation by ideological implication which includes Anarchism, Conservatism, Radicalism, and Liberalism. In Griesinger’s case the biography uses the Organicist mode of argument because the anecdotes and stories are interrelated in that they are presenting Haydn as a man who develops over time in compositional skill, in his genius and in his reputation and stature. All things in the biography are dependent on this basic underlying premise, and they build on what came before and look to what comes next. The ideological implication of Griesinger’s biography is Conservative. It is important to separate the ideological implication of a narrative such as Griesinger’s biography from the author’s personal political ideology. The Conservative nature of his biography is

48 Ibid., 7.

49 White, 9.
unequivocally evident in the author’s upholding of the late eighteenth-century aesthetic as we have seen in this chapter. Though written in 1809, Griesinger’s biography, both in his treatment of Haydn’s music and personality, lifestyle and character, holds to the traditions and aesthetic positions of the previous century rather than the emerging ones of this time. The language and topics used to describe and discuss Haydn and his music as well as the implicit Comic mode of emplotment, Organicist argument, and Conservative ideology, which together reflect and reinforce the language, add up to a strong picture of Haydn as a normal human being, indebted and continually a part of the late eighteenth-century aesthetic.
Chapter Four

Much has been written about the influence Beethoven’s music had on other composers, both his contemporaries and especially those who came after. Also important is the impact that Beethoven criticism and the general commentary on Beethoven had on the reception and perception of other composers, especially Haydn. In the last chapter, I argued that while Mozart’s biographers purposefully attempted to portray the composer as above the norm in every way, Haydn’s early biographers were intent on presenting him as a normal, everyday individual. The difference appears in even sharper relief in critical commentary that associates the three composers.

In this criticism, Haydn and Mozart are generally described with language normally used in discussing tangible human characteristics, e.g. witty, happy, serious, etc., no matter how different their musical personalities were perceived to be. Beethoven, however, called forth a radically different descriptive vocabulary from critics, one infused with metaphorical language. I will show the similarities and differences in the descriptions of the three composers in criticism from the first thirty years of the nineteenth century. Then I will discuss three important articles, which I believe greatly influenced other critical views of this time: E. T. A Hoffmann’s 1810 review of Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony, Amadeus Wendt’s 1815 essay on the music of the time, which deals especially with Beethoven, and A. B. Marx’s 1824 article on the symphony in the Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung. In my discussion, I will focus on the shift in perspective concerning the relationship between Haydn and Beethoven.
In this commentary, writers consistently compare Mozart and Haydn by using normal descriptive adjectives and standard aesthetic criteria, as can be seen in the 1816 AmZ article entitled “The Music Festival in Edinburgh”:

These three famous men are so utterly different in their style and manner, however, that perhaps an exact comparison of their particular merits can take place without appearing improper. One can, indeed, go so far as to say that Haydn and Mozart are equally noteworthy because of the purity and clarity of their style and the select arrangement of their musical sentences. The first appeared to be more distinguished because of his broad manner and knowledge of effect; the second because of his noble feeling and cultured expression.¹

The descriptions of Haydn and Mozart are clearly set in the normal musical language of their day. The terms, purity and clarity, are repeated often by commentators, though rarely defined, and the reference to feeling and expression is a mainstay of aesthetic vocabulary. By way of contrast, Beethoven evokes a more poetic language:

With an imagination less ordered and mature than Haydn’s and Mozart’s, Beethoven seems to possess just as much fire and vigor as both. There is a certain wildness and Herculean capturing of imagination that is characteristic of this excellent musician. It is his pleasure to wander about in the regions of darkness and magic and to make the heart shudder with sounds that appear to resound from the inhabitants of an undiscovered land and from whose borders no traveler returns.²

Interestingly, the sentence that mentions Haydn and Mozart begins with language that is typical of that used for those two composers: “less ordered and mature.” Immediately, however, the language changes. In describing Beethoven’s music and the effect that it has on a listener, the


² Ibid.
author is metaphorical; he describes a journey (wandering) that quickly leaves the normal, natural every-day for the realms of the supernatural.

This same type of differentiation between the language used for Haydn and Mozart and that used for Beethoven can be found in “Composers” by G. C. F. Lobedanz (1825). While he describes Haydn and Mozart with familiar descriptive adjectives, he speaks of Beethoven in metaphors, leaving out simple adjectives in favor of flowery language that often involves some sort of action, frequently taking place in a natural setting. To Mozart and Haydn he attributes their usual characteristics: gentleness and sublime genius for Mozart and simplicity, humor and merry fun for Haydn. Beethoven, by way of contrast, is “like a raging forest river storming down from the mountain rocks. [His] majestic spirit appears; even less great [he] you still would be beautiful.”

Far from simply declaring Beethoven majestic and grand, the writer describes natural action. There is power and momentum; there is an all-encompassing force in Beethoven’s music, but these words are not found in the description, but rather implied. Instead, Beethoven is likened to one of the most majestic aspects of nature, the river, coming out of another of the most majestic aspects of nature, the mountain. The adjective that then does describe river is raging; the verb phrase is “storming down.” These are words of majesty and grandeur and the effect of this metaphor is explicit in this, even if the actual words are not.

In another article by Lobedanz, “Comparisons of Great Poets with Great Composers,” (1820) similar results occur. He recounts a party of educated men and women discussing both poets and composers. Haydn is compared to Voß:

The idyllic character, as well as their naiveté . . . which inspires both is what particularly differentiates them from other masters. In this respect we find something similar only in Anacreon and Claudius. Voß and Joseph Haydn have achieved the highest clarity and correctness, and like Homer and Virgil will serve

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posterity as models. Both please equally because of eurythmy and the self-contained solidity of their works. However, only a thorough study of their unique characteristics will make it possible to explain the marvelous effects they bring forth.⁴

The language used here is similar to that of the last article. He uses words like clarity and correctness for Haydn’s music. He compares Mozart to Goethe in a similar fashion, calling him a “universal genius,” characterized by “fantasy, reason and feeling,” but also unity and clarity.⁵ Still, all of this language is educated but ordinary. In the comparison of Beethoven to Jean Paul, the language again changes drastically:

Jean Paul with Beethoven descend on a demonic bridge from the Elysian Fields into the Cocytus and manipulate the human heart like Arion did on the zither so that all the strings resounded. Their works are charming lakes, with swans gliding gently between glaciers and rocks accessible only to chamois. Their entire difference exists only in the fact that each uses a different medium, the latter notes, the former words, in order to express the highest things that more consummate human beings feel within themselves.⁶

This type of metaphoric language, heavily dependant on Greek mythology, was completely absent from the discussions of Haydn and Mozart. It is as if Beethoven’s music conjures up more than what can be expressed in ordinary words, and that descriptions of unity or clarity are not adequate for discussing his style. Further, these writers seem less to be describing his style than the effect of his music on a listener.

The degree to which these stereotypes permeated the general German discourse about music can be seen in concert reviews that assess the performers’ interpretations. A reviewer for the BamZ praises concertmaster Möser for his string quartet concerts, in which he had brought


⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.
out the humor and wit and caprice of the Haydn quartet. He also praises the players for expressing “Beethoven’s bold, often bizarre fantasy,” while warning that “Mozart may suit the fiery temperament of the players less.” The players are praised precisely when their performances match the stereotypes of the composers. Another review of a Möser quartet concert similarly links the three composers, and succinctly gives one stereotypical attribute for each composer within the praise for the performer. “Haydn’s humor, Mozart’s soul and Beethoven’s sublime genius are accurately perceived by this ingenious virtuoso and presented clearly to the listener.”

Thus one can see that it was not just the music being discussed in this way—Haydn is humorous, Mozart is serious, and Beethoven is sublime—performers were expected to be aware of these qualities and to express them, so that a successful performance was one that met the standards set forth by these simple characteristics.

Three articles, E. T. A. Hoffmann’s seminal 1810 review of Beethoven’s fifth symphony, Amadeus Wendt’s “Thoughts about Recent Musical Art, and van Beethoven’s music, specifically his Fidelio” from 1815, and A. B. Marx’s “A Few Words on the Symphony and Beethoven’s Achievements in this Field” from 1824 are seminal in that they established opinions about the three composers. The Hoffmann and Wendt predate the reviews I have just discussed, and their influence is very evident. These articles are specifically Beethoven criticism, and they do more than simply describe the three composers; they construct a relationship among them. This relationship of Haydn compared and contrasted to Mozart and Beethoven became a

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mainstay of Haydn reception, and he was subsequently viewed in the manner laid out by these authors.

Hoffmann’s review, probably the most familiar, is important to our discussion for many reasons, including simply the amount of space in a review of Beethoven’s music devoted to Haydn and Mozart. It was one of the earliest, at least on a grand scale, to set up Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven as the triumvirate of modern music. It is also notable for including Haydn and Mozart in the realm of Romanticism, which sets them apart from other composers and triflers (Hoffmann declares Dittersdorf as one of these). Hoffmann describes Haydn as childlike and simple, Mozart as serious, and Beethoven as close to the supernatural.

In contrast to many of the other comparisons, Hoffman describes all three composers in terms of metaphor, but with completely different results.

The expression of a childlike, happy soul dominates in Haydn’s compositions. His symphonies lead us into a vast, green meadow, into a joyous, colorful crowd of fortunate people. Youths and maidens glide by in round dances; laughing children, listening beneath trees, beneath rose bushes, teasingly throw flowers at each other. A life full of love, full of blessedness, as though before sin, in eternal youth; no suffering, no pain; only sweet, wistful yearning for the beloved form that hovers far away in the glow of the sunset, comes no nearer, and does not disappear; and as long as it is there, it will not become night, for it is itself the sunset, which illuminates the mountains and the woods.9

The story takes place in what seems like the Garden of Eden, but although there is action, it has no plot. Instead, it depicts an idyllic scene with dancing and playing, but no coming and going, and no sense of climax or purpose. Thus it is the action of people expressing themselves in pure joy for its own sake. Hoffmann even tells us that it will not become night; rather it will remain in a perpetual sunset.

In the description of Mozart the action becomes somewhat more personal. Though Haydn led us to the meadow, at that point we no longer took part in the action. It was all around but did not include us. According to Hoffmann, Mozart leads us into the spirit kingdom, but we do not stay and watch: “We follow along in inexpressible longing behind the beloved forms that beckon to us in their rows, flying through the clouds in the eternal dance.”\(^{10}\) Though action is happening all around, and we are even taking part in it, the story describes a journey with no particular destination.

Although both Haydn and Mozart are discussed in terms of metaphor, Hoffmann’s response to Beethoven becomes more specifically interior and metaphysical. The personal activity that represented Mozart’s music disappears, and the action now becomes interior rather than exterior. This very lack of action around us causes our extreme emotional response, as Hoffmann describes:

> Beethoven’s instrumental music also opens up to us the kingdom of the gigantic and the immeasurable. Glowing beams shoot throughout this kingdom’s deep night, and we become aware of gigantic shadows that surge up and down, enclosing us more and more narrowly and annihilating everything within us, leaving only the pain of that interminable longing, in which every pleasure that had quickly arisen with sounds of rejoicing sinks away and founders, and we live on, rapturously beholding the spirits themselves, only in this pain, which, consuming love, hope, and joy within itself, seeks to burst our breast asunder with a full-voiced consonance of all the passions.\(^{11}\)

This metaphysical description of Beethoven, so different from that of Haydn, implies by its nature a composer greater than Haydn. It is clear that Hoffmann greatly admired and venerated Haydn, but by defining him as simple and child-like he cements a perceived lack of emotional comprehensiveness in his music. Then, by describing Beethoven as the embodiment of pain and

\(^{10}\) Ibid., 97.

\(^{11}\) Ibid.
supernatural horror, he reaffirms a dichotomy between the two composers where Haydn is simple and Beethoven is complex.

Unlike some later commentators, Hoffmann clearly sees all three composers in a positive light. To him, they are all Romantic composers, though they achieve their romanticism in different ways:

Haydn treats that which is human in human life romantically; he is more in accordance with the majority. Mozart lays claim to that which is more than human, that which is wondrous, and dwells within the innermost spirit. Beethoven’s music moves the lever controlling horror, fear, dread, pain and awakens that interminable longing that is the essence of romanticism.  

Within the triumvirate, each of the three great modern composers has a definite role, but Hoffman never questions their established position in the triumvirate.

The articles by Wendt and Marx follow many of the ideas established by Hoffmann and show very clearly the perpetuation of his images of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven. Marx and Hoffmann both treat all three composers in terms of metaphor, and for Haydn draw on scenes of idyllic untroubled people dancing in pure joy. Wendt differs from the other two in this regard. He describes Haydn and Mozart with everyday common adjectives, and his descriptions are closer to the other reviews examined earlier. Further, like those other reviews, Wendt discusses Beethoven both in terms of metaphor as well as in the ordinary adjectives and musical terms of the day:

“[Beethoven] raises himself above the earth like a radiant bird and extends his boundaries into the clear ether of heaven.”  

Although more of a natural allusion than a supernatural, he, like Hoffmann, reveals Beethoven’s “depths of feelings,” that is the internalizing of expression.

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12 Ibid.

Wendt also differs from the other two in a particularly significant way; he willingly criticizes Beethoven. He describes fantasy without order as Beethoven’s “great mistakes.”¹⁴ His preference in music lies somewhere between the too-orderly Haydn and the too-unorderly Beethoven. Thus, he reaches the conclusion that Mozart is the greatest of the composers and leaves him untouched by negative criticism. Marx, on the other hand, unabashedly champions Beethoven and never finds fault with him. In any case, Wendt’s and Marx’s articles together reaffirm the ideas presented by Hoffmann and are more similar than they are different. Their articles not only affirm the picture Hofmann created, they document a change in the status of Haydn and a perception of an evolution of musical style.

Both authors treat the composers – especially Haydn – in terms that are by now commonplace, as is evident in Marx’s article:

It seems as if [Haydn’s] feeling, especially his childlike, untroubled joy, which so often unexpectedly bursts forth from him, sometimes seizes upon certain extrinsic objects and blends their representation into the expression of the emotion itself. Whoever listens with sensitivity to the scherzo of the Symphony in C Minor by Haydn must visualize at the same time (if not even before) the general expression of gaiety, a rustic scene, a rustic, merry dance to the village melody of the cello. Even the boisterous “hurrah!” is not forgotten by the violins.¹⁵

Marx thus alludes to a naïve joy unaccompanied by any knowledge of sorrow, while discussing a symphony in a minor key, which to him portrays everything but seriousness and deep sophisticated emotions. He relegates Haydn exclusively to the realm of fun and childlike expression. Wendt likewise concentrates on Haydn’s “childlike simplicity, naïveté, [and]
innocence,” although he makes it clear that this is Haydn’s strength, and as he puts it, Haydn’s “positive side.”

The authors treat Mozart as others had. For Marx, Mozart is more sophisticated than Haydn; he portrays many more emotions than Haydn. Ironically Haydn appears child-like in these reviews while Mozart is like an adult, capable of a passion and a depth of feeling that Haydn simply does not possess.

[Mozart’s] entire nature was dissolved in musical feelings. . . . Let us . . . refer to his G-Minor Symphony, which throughout demonstrates the expression of a restless, unsettled passion, of a struggling and fighting against a powerfully intruding agitation. Let us also recall his Symphony in E-flat Major (the so-called swan song), which is dominated not by the language of tears, nor that of disconsolate longing, but rather by the language of a gentle longing illuminated by many a heavenly beam of hope.

Here as elsewhere we see that Mozart’s music contains a struggle, but even more a longing, thus providing the antithesis to Haydn. Marx also describes Mozart’s music as lyrical, and imbues it with a seriousness both epic and religious.

If one asks about the intellectual meaning of these symphonies and the nature of the impressions they leave with us, we will have to ascribe a purely lyrical tendency to them. The same emotional impulse that becomes an ode when expressed by individuals and a hymn when expressed by a multitude takes the form of a sonata in the same way as the ode, and a symphony in the same way as the hymn.

Thus, Marx finds a solemnity and even deep restless fervor in the music of Mozart that he never hears in the music of Haydn.

Just as both of these articles reaffirm the common stereotypes, they also reveal a change in the status of Haydn during this period. Although he characterized the composers very


17 Marx, in Senner, Vol. 1, 63.

18 Ibid.
differently, Hoffmann always spoke about them in admiring and reverent terminology. In his review, Haydn’s place of somewhat lower status is purely implicit. Both Wendt and Marx do more to widen the differences in status within the relationship of the three composers. As discussed above, Wendt sees Haydn’s childlikeness along with “clarity, order, and comprehensibility” as his positive side. However, “uniformity, stiffness, methodical emptiness, and dryness are the negative side of Haydn’s musical art. Haydn himself . . . belongs to the period being described by virtue of his love of musical order, the methodical and systematic nature of his works, which—particularly the earlier ones—often even have the appearance of following a predetermined plan, and the childlike simplicity of his melodies.” 19 Marx too, never treats Mozart negatively but does so with Haydn: “However much in substance the . . . characteristics of Haydn’s symphonies resemble Mozart’s, we nevertheless still find in them an impurity that is entirely absent in Mozart,” 20 thus explicitly ranking Haydn as inferior to Mozart. Therefore these articles not only present Haydn’s music as child-like but as music that must give way to that of Mozart and Beethoven.

As Haydn’s status declines, the perception of an evolution of musical style increases. All of these authors, including Hoffmann, view the composers, especially Mozart and Beethoven, not as in a vacuum, but as dependent on what came before. Thus they imply that Haydn started something new and establish a progression from Haydn to Beethoven. Hoffmann separates the composers from what came before when he designates them as Romantics. Wendt too describes Haydn as creating a “more recent musical epoch.” Although Wendt prefers Mozart above the others and criticizes Beethoven – thinking that he goes too far in the realm of fantasy – he clearly


views the three composers as writing in a new progressive style that began with Haydn. Marx is even more adamant about the progression, seeing Beethoven as its culmination, which leads him to criticize other critics who do not recognize the progression:

As long as Beethoven followed Mozart he received their applause. But in that period whenever they suspected the distinctive qualities of his music that later became pronounced, it was considered to be an aberration or some kind of excess, and they hoped he would return to the Mozartian way. Those arbiters stayed where they were, but art didn’t, nor did Beethoven, in whose works the greatest progress in music after Mozart has become evident (mostly in his sonatas and symphonies).  

For Marx, Beethoven has progressed far past Mozart, as he says in no uncertain terms: “His more advanced development led to a higher cultivation of the sonata form.”

Not only are the composers seen as representing a “new romantic epoch” that distinguishes them from the past, but in this progression, Marx and Wendt view Beethoven specifically and personally developing from a combination of Mozart and Haydn. Wendt states: “[Beethoven] an instrumental virtuoso, endowed with bold fantasy and a deep knowledge of the soul of each instrument, touched by Haydn’s joking humor and Mozart’s deep seriousness, he developed his romantic world of notes in which fantasy, given over to feeling, is dominant throughout and determines the progression of the modulation.” Thus, those stereotypical differences between Haydn and Mozart, humor and seriousness, leave their indelible marks on Beethoven. Marx too sees a Beethoven that has been touched by Mozart and Haydn.

In the areas of the sonata and the symphony, Beethoven began at Mozart’s level, and his first outpourings can be called lyrical, even though the feeling in them was expressed more definitely and more intimately. Even if many a moment

21 Ibid., 64.

22 Ibid., 63.

shone forth more freshly and brightly than in the more gentle Mozart and echoed the Haydn school, and even if a greater, more deeply founded unity became manifest in Beethoven’s compositions, the basic idea was, nevertheless, the same as stated above.24

Even though for Marx, Beethoven progresses far beyond Haydn and Mozart, nevertheless, he is connected to them. He built on what they started and even perfected it.

All three of these critics use similar language for Haydn and Mozart and link the composers together. They differ, however, in their overall conclusion. Hoffmann presents an unrivaled triumvirate of romantic composers, with a progression more concerned with supernatural spirituality than with greatness. Wendt sees no real progression among the composers, rather an unrivaled triumvirate that has Mozart as its center and Haydn and Beethoven as opposite but useful extremes. For Marx, though, the progression is everything. Beethoven springs forth from Haydn and Mozart as the supreme conqueror. The very existence of the triumvirate is to document this progression.

Throughout the first three decades of the nineteenth century, in Beethoven criticism, a change in emphasis accompanied this description of a progression. In the first part of Beethoven’s career, critics evaluated him within the context of Mozart and Haydn. By the end of Beethoven’s life—and thereafter—the focus turned to setting up Mozart and Haydn within the context of Beethoven. Therefore, a complete shift occurs in the presentation of their relationship.

In Beethoven criticism, early reviewers often draw upon the stature of both Haydn and Mozart either to praise Beethoven or to rebuke him. One of the earliest published comments about Beethoven comes from the Jahrbuch der Tonkunst von Wien und Prag (1796):

“Convincing proof of [Beethoven’s] real love for art is that he has placed himself in the charge

24 Marx, in Senner, Vol. 1, 63.
of Haydn in order to become initiated in the holy secrets of composition.”  

25 The reviewer makes it clear that Beethoven is one to notice, because, not only is his music good, and his playing extraordinary, but his intentions are also worthy. He depicts Beethoven as a prodigy and a student of the most popular composer at the time. Wendt, in his 1815 article, offers a similar sentiment when he says that Beethoven’s “rich colossal spirit,” had been “kindled by Mozart and Haydn.” Later he gives context to “Beethoven’s genius” by stating that it was “under Haydn’s and Mozart’s direction.” Therefore Mozart and Haydn guided Beethoven in his achievements, and Beethoven became great not by avoiding the greatness that came before, but by embracing it fully.

In the first decade of the nineteenth century, several reviews link the three composers together, but only to place Beethoven within the realm of greatness enjoyed by Mozart and Haydn. An article, “Something on Sentimental and Naïve Music,” appearing in the Berlinische musikalische Zeitung (1805), actually lists Beethoven as one of the best composers of sentimental music, along with Haydn, Mozart, C. P. E. Bach, Reichardt, Zumsteeg, and Cherubini. Likewise a reviewer for the Historisches Taschenbuch: Mit besonderer Rücksicht auf die Österreichischen Staaten heaps much praise on Beethoven’s first symphony, saying that it “can justly be placed next to Haydn’s and Mozart’s.”


the beautiful works of Haydn and Mozart, then comments on a Beethoven work, which
“transported us, full of enchantment, beyond the time of the performance.”29 Again all of these
enhance the opinion of Beethoven by associating him with Haydn and Mozart.

Critics at this time also used Haydn and Mozart to challenge Beethoven. In “Details on
Concert Music in Berlin,” the correspondent, speaking of a concert in which Beethoven’s second
symphony was heard, declares: “In general, this symphony didn’t create such a sensation as
symphonies by Mozart and Haydn.”30 The symphony did not go without praise in this review,
but it came up short when compared with Haydn and Mozart. Critics subjected Beethoven’s
vocal music to this same type of comparison. A writer of “A Letter from Vienna to the Editor,”
published in 1806 by the Berlinische musikalische Zeitung, criticizes Beethoven’s cantata
[Christus am Ölberg] by comparing it to Haydn’s vocal music:

Here as well we were not satisfied, and surely with good reason, since most of the
pieces were far removed from that sublimity that is indispensable to this genre
and that predominates even in Haydn’s oratorio, though it is clothed with more
radiance by the romanticism of his creations than in older works of this kind. In
this oratorio, however, much is to be found that even borders on the frivolous.31

So, just as critics praise Beethoven because of Haydn and Mozart they also criticize him because
of Haydn and Mozart. They are defining Beethoven by the reputation of Haydn and Mozart.

By the 1820s the equation had reversed, with Mozart and Haydn defined by the
reputation of Beethoven. In Marx’s view, Beethoven began at Mozart’s level. Again, his focus
shows a progression in which Beethoven was the culmination, and Haydn and Mozart were the

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29 “From Leipzig,” Abendzeitung nebst Intelligenzblat für Literature und Kunst 1 (22

30 “Details on Concert Music in Berlin,” AmZ 7 (29 November 1804): 145-6, in Senner,
Vol. 1, 199.

31 “A Letter from Vienna to the Editor: 20 January 1806,” Berlinische musikalische
necessary predecessor to Beethoven. These sentiments were echoed in a later edition of the

_Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung_, in an article entitled, “Open Essays: On the

Relationship of Form to Content in Recent Music”:

Judicious men have long since viewed Haydn’s much-discussed tone-painting
(which has often been censured as ambiguous) less as an aberration than as a
naïve and awkward foreshadowing of what was to become known and actualized
only in instrumental music.32

The author views Haydn as an indispensable part in progression of music, and he agrees with
those that defend Haydn because Haydn was giving an indication of that which was to be
perfected by Beethoven. However he also names Mozart as the first romantic opera composer,
and Beethoven as the first romantic instrumental composer, dropping Haydn from Hoffmann’s
scheme.

In criticism of Beethoven and Haydn that compares the two we can clearly see a decline
in the status of Haydn. Where at first, Beethoven was judged by the measure of Haydn’s music
and found to succeed or fail accordingly, later the reverse occurred. Also, we see more subtle
ways in which critics found Haydn’s music less lofty. The constant suggestions of Haydn’s
youthfulness and simplicity distinguish him from the more serious composers, Mozart and
Beethoven. Haydn from this time forward would be linked with Beethoven, and his status would
be determined in relation to Beethoven.

Conclusion

In the last chapter we saw that many critics discussed what they saw as the triumvirate of modern music, which included Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. In this triumvirate we can see a paradox in Haydn’s position. On the one hand, Haydn’s inclusion into the group of composers with Mozart and Beethoven shows a continued respect for him. Indeed A. B. Marx, in the spirit of nationalism, consistently called for the German people to embrace the symphonies of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven and to reject Italian opera. He sought to establish a canon of works centered on these composers, because he felt that Germany with its symphony had progressed past the Italians and other composers.¹ On the other hand Haydn’s inclusion into this triumvirate further perpetuates the stereotype of his being a precursor to Mozart and especially Beethoven. Even in his canon, Marx felt that Haydn’s role was to prepare audiences for Beethoven.² Thus, Haydn was not included in the triumvirate for his own sake, but for the sake of Beethoven.

In the first three decades of the nineteenth century, Haydn’s reputation changed drastically. In this thesis, I have shown that in a time of shifting aesthetics, most critics and commentators, both those who did and those who did not praise Haydn, saw him as belonging to the former aesthetic. The criticism of Haydn by himself does not show a decline in his status. These critics saw him as the composer most in line with their conception of original genius. To them, Haydn combined the right amount of seriousness and humor; he could both properly use

¹ Pederson, 126-7, 160-2.
² Ibid., 162.
the rules and break them effectively, and he was a master of musical expression. Beethoven’s critics in the first decade of the nineteenth century treat Haydn in a similar fashion.

However, Haydn’s death in 1809 marks the turning point in the shift of his reputation. After his death, his status changes in two ways: First, Haydn criticism drops off sharply, which also shows a link to the previous aesthetic in the eighteenth century where dead composers are soon forgotten. When Beethoven died in 1827, his music never left the repertoire. Secondly, after Haydn’s death Beethoven’s critics begin to contrast the two composers, seeing Haydn as a precursor in the progression to Beethoven. His biographers, too, contribute to this decline, although trying to honor Haydn, by framing his reception with stereotypes associated with the aesthetic values of a bygone era, the late eighteenth century. This view of his personality and compositional traits continued well into the twentieth century.

Through the three biographers’ treatment of Haydn, and the general cooling of the positive reception seen in the Beethoven criticism, Haydn’s reception itself becomes a comedy (in the sense of the Comic emplotment). Haydn in his life achieved an immeasurable international status as a genius; he triumphed over the ordinary through his music, and he rose through the ranks of great men, leaving his society, especially his fellow countrymen, better than before. His death after a considerably long life was not seen by contemporaries as a tragedy, as was the case with Mozart, but rather as a time to celebrate the composer’s immense output and far reaching celebrity. But this passed and the temporary tone of celebration gave way to a respectful remembrance with little exuberance.
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