

INTRODUCTION

This ode is noted in Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach's estate catalogue (NV 1790, p. 55) as "Klopstocks Morgengesang am Schöpfungsfeste. H. 1783. Mit Flöten." The *Staats- und gelehrte Zeitung des Hamburgischen unpartheyischen Correspondenten* announced it first on Christmas day 1782: "with pleasure we present to the lovers of music the news that our Herr Kapellmeister Bach will compose a new, excellent poem from Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock, *Morgengesang am Schöpfungsfeste*, and release it in score, about which more is to come shortly." (Mit Vergnügen können wir den Liebhabern der Musik die Nachricht geben, daß unser Herr Kapellmeister Bach ein neues vortreffliches Gedicht von Klopstock, *Morgengesang am Schöpfungsfeste*, componiren, und in Partitur herausgeben werde, wovon künftig ein Mehrers.) Bach's friendship with Klopstock was probably formed shortly after the poet arrived in Hamburg in 1770, when the author—then in the last phase of publishing his epic *Messias*—had encouraged Bach to compose the oratorio *Die Israeliten in der Wüste* (Wq 238). Although Bach rarely had the opportunity to set Klopstock's often lengthy and intricate poetry to music, it is clear that they interacted frequently within Bach's social circle, in addition to Klopstock occasionally lecturing at the Johanneum on the subject of German poetry. Wq 239 was the result of their various intellectual discussions on text and music.

The correspondence between the composer and publisher concerning the genesis of this edition is extensive, beginning with Bach's promise on 26 November 1783 to deliver the manuscript for engraving: "Within fourteen days you will receive my manuscript; I ask you to do whatever you are able to with it." (Binnen 14 Tagen erhalten Sie mein Manuscript. Ich bitte, was Sie thun können, zu thun.) Johann Gottlieb Immanuel Breitkopf accepted the commission, promising to have it ready in time for Easter, which occurred at the end of April 1784. This schedule proved to be too optimistic, for it was not until 20 August 1784 that Bach sent off the final proofs. Bach was able to assemble a list of 252 subscribers to his self-published edition, which Breitkopf printed in October of 1784.

The first performance of the *Morgengesang* took place on 28 December 1783 as the annual benefit concert for the

medical institute for the poor at the home of Johann Georg Büsch, where the students of the Handlungsakademie were housed. (See appendix for a translation of the review in the *Kayserlich-priviligirte Hamburger Neue Zeitung*.) For two decades after its composition, Wq 239 was considered one of the masterpieces of German music, alongside Carl Heinrich Graun's *Der Tod Jesu*.

Bach's intent in the publication was to provide a source for performance by various groups, and at the same time include a complete text of Klopstock's ode separate from the score. This made it possible to read the text without the music, an occurrence that was not uncommon for social gatherings of the period. In keeping with some of his other printed works, Bach offered a preferred status to subscribers, who were then listed in the print. Bach was casting as wide a net as possible, both for the cognoscenti and for performers, publishing both the complete score and a keyboard reduction, making it possible for a wider variety of performances. Though not unknown for the eighteenth century, this dual method was not commonplace. (In CPEB: CW, VI/4, the score and keyboard reduction are published separately.)

At the end of the list of subscribers ("Verzeichniß der Pränumeranten," pp. 3–4), there is a short errata list ("Verbesserungen") that seems to have been added after the music was in proof stage, but before the work was published. This list includes Bach's corrections of various errors; but there are only four of them, meaning that Breitkopf's typesetters were quite skilled in their transcription. The corrections are:

Page 8, system I, measure 3, the last note in the upper voice should be D.

Page 23, system 7, measure 1, the first small note must be placed immediately above the large note.

Page 34, system II, measure 2, beneath the small notes, the most central note must be D.

Page 35, system II, measure 8, the lowest small note A must be omitted.

This compendium of text and dual-purpose score was one of Bach's innovative means of insuring that Wq 239 reached a wide audience, and therefore was a work to stand alongside his other printed music.

Acknowledgments

The exemplar reproduced here is from the Bach-Archiv Leipzig, Rara II. 300-D. Thanks to Kristina Funk-Kunath, director of the Bach-Archiv Bibliothek, for providing scans and granting permission to publish the facsimile.

Bertil Van Boer

APPENDIX

Review of Wq 239 in the *Kayserslisch-priviligirte Hamburger Neue Zeitung*

The friends of true music will be quite desirous of the news that our Kapellmeister Bach has set *Klopstocks Morgengesang am Schöpfungsfeste* [Wq 239]. We have had the great pleasure Sunday to hear this vocal work especially well performed by several women and a select orchestra in the concert that is given annually in the Handlungsakademie for the medical institute for the poor. Where everything is beautiful, touching, noble and full of sublime simplicity, it is difficult to separate these beauties from one another. Seldom have poetry and music been more fortuitously united as here. Every thought of the poet has been strengthened by the composer with the highest possible degree of beauty that is appropriate to both of the combined arts, nothing portrayed too much, everything with the same emotion that the poet sang in it, and thus both masters, who were in attendance, found that in this work they had been inspired by the same feeling. The beginning is an accompanied recitative, which effects sacred emotions, and simultaneously expresses the portrayal of the poet's painting so truthfully and precisely.

It still does not appear, the sun, God's messenger, . . .
A shower of perfume still lies
on the waiting Earth.

And then a quiet invocation in the arioso,

Holy, most exalted, first one!

This adoration appears more frequently throughout the entire piece until it becomes a hymn of praise. A duet:

Lord, Lord, God, gracious and merciful!
We, your children, we more than suns
must one day also set
and will also rise again!

that becomes a choir thereafter, and the magnificent thought: "We more than suns will also rise again," so powerfully and movingly is supported by the music.

Now follows a hymn of praise from two voices, at the sight of the rising sun.

Hallelujah! Do you see the radiant, divine one arriving?

No loud jubilation, no effort or busywork of art (that furthermore is not known at all in the entire work), but rather the first fiery exclamation is made by a captivated soul at its first brilliant sight, always growing, and the entirety becomes a portrait through a beautiful instrumental accompaniment, where no brushstroke is without effect. Through the following accompaniment

O of God's sun and such suns
as this one, which now shines upon us,
He commanded that there be, like the froth upon the
waves, a thousand times a thousand
in the oceans of the world!

the stronger outburst of emotion in the final chorus is prepared in the most beautiful manner. To perform such a poem and such music with feeling will not fail to have an effect on anyone other than the regretful [who] *has no music in himself*.

Kapellmeister Bach will shortly make this music better known by printing it.

The German text is published in Barbara Wiermann, *Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach. Dokumente zu Leben und Wirken aus der zeitgenössischen hamburgischen Presse (1767–1790)*, Leipziger Beiträge zur Bach-Forschung 4 (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 2000), 464–65. English translation by Bertil Van Boer, with excerpts from Wq 239 translated by Ruth B. Libbey.