

RESEARCH SYSTEM OF THE ORIGIN OF A MUSICAL WORK: CASE STUDY OF MOZART'S CLARINET CONCERTO K622

Mihael Paar*

Woodwind Department, Conservatory of Music *Ferdo Livadić*
Samobor, Croatia

Regular article

Received: 23. March 2012. Accepted: 30. May 2012.

ABSTRACT

Revealing the origin of a musical work represents a process of data gathering. Therefore, it requires a well-developed system of their acquisition, verification and synthesis. Based on and derived from the case study of Mozart's Clarinet Concerto K622, a research system of the origin of a musical work has been developed in this paper. By employing its structural elements it is possible to make a solid framework within which the comprehensive review of the origin of the work can be given. The system bears general features and it is applicable for any of the musical works. It proved to be efficient platform for the case study of Mozart's Concerto.

KEY WORDS

research system, origin of a musical work, case study, Mozart, basset clarinet

CLASSIFICATION

JEL: Z00

PACS: 51.40.+p

*Corresponding author, η : mihael.paar@zg.t-com.hr; +385 1 3363 855;
Conservatory of Music 'Ferdo Livadić', Trg matice hrvatske 3, HR – 10430 Samobor, Croatia

INTRODUCTION

Research in the field of origin of a musical composition represents the necessity for scholars and performers alike. Various reasons form the urge to explore the background of the respective piece: new insights into the composer himself, his style and the period of time he belonged to, better understanding of the music for performers and listeners, its reception at the time and today, valuable insights for music publishers and instrument builders. The research process should stretch from exploring the social-historical context in which the piece was made to its purely musical component. Every piece that has its background fully explained, fills one chapter in the musicology and provides its performer the background for more effective and concise interpretation. In contrast to non-performing arts which present themselves as such, music requires an intermediate – interpreter upon whose knowledge, besides his craftsmanship and talent, depends the credibility of staging that very piece. This knowledge comes as a result of research and it can prove critical in the performance practice.

For the musicology, i.e. historical musicology the research of a musical composition and its origin stands as one of the core interests aside with composers themselves, periods, music forms, performance practice, reception and criticism of music. Artistically most valuable works, as understandable, are in the main focus of musicologists. Some of them however, hide the origin that cannot be fully or even partially explained, thus putting them further into the focus; for many of them one has little background knowledge. This can go to the extent that neither the year of the work's birth, nor even its authorship can be established. For example, the authorship of some of Mozart's early works is still disputed. Famous H.J.Baermann's Adagio was long-time falsely attributed to great R.Wagner. Also, it is not uncommon, especially in the early time of music to find numerous pieces that have not been attributed to anyone and therefore signed as anonymous.

Mozart's Clarinet Concerto K622 falls into that very group of works whose rich, yet today mostly revealed background captivates the attention of scholars and clarinetists alike. Being at the same time one of the greatest masterpieces of the western music, its highly dynamic 'non-music' aspect gets on its value even more rapidly. Long-time debated issue of Concerto's authentic text and the corresponding instrument stands in the center of that topic. It is well known today that neither of these – the way we have been accepting them for more than a century and half – correspond to their originals to the extent that the meaning of work changes dramatically. Understanding of this seems logical today, but one should bear in mind that this is a progressive shift in the paradigm that was unfolding over several decades by the synthesis of the musicologists' individual researches and observations by the clarinetists themselves.

This paper aims to provide a system of research of the origin of a musical work based on the case study of the above mentioned Mozart's Clarinet Concerto. It also aims to point out the importance of joint roles of scholar and performer (in one person) to better understand the results of the research process and the piece itself as to get a comprehensive insight to the topic explored.

Following this introduction, the research system of the origin of the musical work will be presented. Afterwards, the case study of Mozart's Clarinet Concerto will display a concrete example, followed by the author's experience gained while conducting the study. Finally, the conclusion section will give the explanation of the paper results and recommendations to other scholars.

RESEARCH SYSTEM OF THE ORIGIN OF A MUSICAL WORK

There are several elements that form a circle in the system of research of the origin of a particular piece of music. The period of the work being born in, its form, scoring, its

dedication and authorship are the points around which the process of research should be conducted. Circumstances, which in turn can interweave around the work (e.g. lost manuscript, loss of the original instrument, wrong dating or authorship), may on the other hand aggravate the research. Furthermore, the data source is also determined by the development of technology. For example, the end of 19th century reached the technological level needed to create the audio recording, therefore performance of works recorded at the time, became an authentic sound recording document. This source provides a wealth of data, primarily in the area of performance practice of the time, as well as the ideas of the composer himself, who most probably supervised the performance itself, or even participated in it. On the other hand, one can read a lot about the virtuosity of Paganini or Mozart, but their performing craftsmanship will never be possible to experience audibly. The research of their music cannot for this reason include this point.

The first step always begins with a review of existing literature on a given piece. There is a major difference, however, in the extent of the literature regarding the large scale works and the smaller ones - in the form, scope and scoring, but not necessarily of lower value. Capital works of great masters are generally well researched and exhaustively covered with a number of studies, reviews, conference papers, and often with many literary titles. Mozart's Concerto for clarinet belongs to a group of capital works of great masters, but it is substantially different from other works in this group, because of its extremely intriguing history which has significantly complicated the task for musicology. This history was full of poor information, oversights and faulty traces, leaving the origin of the work in a kind of vacuum which has partially continued till today. The result of this is an extremely slow process of comprehending it, which started about 150 years after the work originated, i.e. during mid-20th century. Not having a comprehensive book study of this masterpiece until 1996, when Lawson's *Mozart: Clarinet Concerto* appeared, is an example of this slow process. Colin Lawson synthesized the existing knowledge, added his own observations and set everything in a well-developed frame. However, the book leaves number of questions open, primarily because the autograph of the Concerto is lost. In other circumstances this might not have been a problem, but in the case of Mozart's Clarinet Concerto it is a basic problem which will be discussed in detail in the following section – the case study of the Concerto. Lawson himself confirms the significance of the thought stated above, ending his book with the remark that “not even two hundred years after the disappearance of such a precious manuscript, it would be too premature to regard this loss as irrevocable” [1; p.78].

Reviewing the literature we will come across the two types of sources: publications that are thematically devoted exclusively to the work that we are interested in, and more often, publications of much broader themes which very scarcely and only in one of their segments extend to our area of interest. This second type includes the textbooks of the history of music, its different periods, styles and schools, analysis and history of musical forms and techniques, history of instruments and biographies of composers. The correspondence of composers, especially when it comes to Mozart, occupies a special place. Mozart, his family and friends developed extensive correspondence, numbering up to 1400 letters. There are many things we can learn only through these letters, starting with descriptions of everyday life through interpersonal relationships to the details of originating the works and directions for their performance.

Given that the research will mostly refer to works that are little or not at all covered by separate studies, or those with special problems such as Mozart's Concerto K622 which includes undergoing studies, most of the information we will have to derive and extract from the publications of much broader themes. This is a demanding process because it assumes extensive literature reviewing, but the final result is rewarding, for it ensures a comprehensive insight into the style, form, instrument and the author of the work, the origin

of which we are interested in. On the basis of this the researcher will be able to give his own insight inspired by the broad context gained reviewing the literature of the general topics, which he would be deprived of, had he been focused only on a narrow area of the respective work. Finally, a review of the literature devoted exclusively to the work itself would lead only to existing knowledge without having greater opportunities to discover new knowledge or make new conclusions.

The subspecies of literature that should be examined, which specifically applies to music, are most certainly prefaces of scores as well as liner notes of sound records of a respective work. These are usually short texts that can nevertheless, provide valuable information and insights. The editor of score editions will usually give a brief insight into the origin of the work, and then focus on the major points that led him when redacting the score. The liner notes also present a brief historical overview, often turning into essayistic tone in which the author gives his personal view of the work, possibly with some data about the recording itself. Often the performers themselves are the respective authors of liner notes. The program notes of concert performances represent a similar source. The contemporary program notes however, as well as possible prefaces and reviews of score editions may be seen as extremely valuable; they will particularly be critical in revealing the case of the Mozart's Concerto K622.

Investigating the origin of the work as a historian, the researcher must at the same time be the expert of the work as such – of its formal and harmonic structure and the associated instrumentation. To reach this capacity, he has to conduct the appropriate analysis which is fundamental for the understanding of the work itself, and thus setting the more appropriate and efficient research system. Following this, the researcher should study well the entire text of the score, starting with the analyse of the manuscript (if preserved), compare different printed editions, and ultimately, in the ideal case, be familiar with the work at the performer – artist level. The situation we are facing now is the idea of dualism scholar-performer, i.e. scientist-artist in one person as to feature the importance of combining scientific research with performing practice. An example of this is the above mentioned clarinetist and scholar Colin Lawson, whose artistic and scientific dualism ensures complementarity and inclusiveness in his access to a musical work that he explores. Certainly, when researching the works written for solo instruments, i.e. the work putting one instrument in the forefront, this is most often the case; practice shows that in these cases, leading researchers are being recruited directly from the field of active musicians. Experience that brings the ability to perform a musical work as well as the overall of performing art on the instrument for which the said work was written, certainly gives the researcher the competitive edge over the others.

Finally, as an additional, but uncommon source of information may prove to be the word of mouth, usually present through educational activities in the classes of eminent artists, an option that is more available to the already mentioned scholars who also serve as performers. Although, the data collected that way do not have a scientific background and may not always be verified, not to say that many of them are not even written down, we should, however, not hesitate using them, at least sporadically, as a small addition to our research. After all, they are often at the narrative level and of the anecdotal type.

Order for the sources to be used:

- 1) literature focused exclusively on work being explored,
- 2) broader themes in the literature where the work is sporadically mentioned in a wider context,
- 3) prefaces of score editions, liner notes and concert program notes,
- 4) correspondence of composers,
- 5) data gathered through the word of mouth.

Simultaneously, formal-harmonic analysis of the work and associated instrumentation should be carried out, as well as the study of the manuscript (if preserved) compared with different printed editions. The conclusions from the position of the interpreter (if the researcher is also interpreter) should be drawn out likewise.

CASE STUDY OF MOZART'S CLARINET CONCERTO K622

The following section represents a shortened version of the case study of Mozart's Clarinet Concerto presented within the master thesis "W.A.Mozarts Klarinettenkonzertes KV 622 in Geschichte und Gegenwart" by the same author (Mozarteum University Salzburg 2006, AC number: 05899386). The study explains the circumstances which led to creation of the Concerto, those that fold upon its creation and the unfolding process that began in the mid-20th century.

At the end of his life in 1791, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791) wrote the Clarinet Concerto as his only piece for the clarinet solo, his last instrumental work, as well as one of his last works altogether. He noted the piece in his own personal files written during the last ten years of his life, as penultimate, followed only by the Masonic Cantata K623.

In order to be able to follow the creation of the Concerto we must go back to the year 1784. It was then that Mozart met Anton Stadler for the first time (1753-1812), the clarinetist performing one of Mozart's serenades for wind instruments. Stadler's joining the Mason's lodge was the beginning of their friendship. In the meantime, around 1787 Mozart wrote a 199 bars long sketch of the Allegro in G–major K621b for a scarcely known instrument called a basset horn. For some reason, he did not write any more of this piece at that time. However, he returned to the sketch around mid-October 1791, but this time he gave up his idea of the Concerto for the basset horn. Instead of that, he transposed it into A–major, slightly modified the orchestra scoring and completed it as the first movement of the Concerto for a special type of the clarinet which will later be named as a basset clarinet. Prior to Concerto in 1789, Mozart wrote a Clarinet Quintet which was also conceived for the basset clarinet and dedicated to Stadler.

But, the existence of the basset clarinet and the fact that both, Concerto and the Quintet were originally written for the basset clarinet, so not for the normal clarinet, are the facts that have been unfolding only for the *last sixty years*. Until then the Concerto was being performed on a normal clarinet, and upon the moment there was little doubt that it shouldn't have been so. The basset horn, the instrument Mozart first intended his Concerto to, was a clarinet auxiliary instrument with a distinguished feature of descending to low C. It was not very handy to play on, and it was not flat like the clarinet, but curved. Only a few composers wrote for this instrument. Mozart being one of them, wrote some of the finest pieces for the basset horn, in particular, solos in the Magic Flute and in the famous Requiem.

On the other hand, there was a basset clarinet, a unique instrument which combined features, both of the clarinet and the basset horn. Anton Stadler was quite certainly involved in its construction by fitting the clarinet with extra keys which extended its compass downwards by four semitones all to the low C – a feature typical for the basset horn. It is to assume that the features of this new clarinet gave a boost to Mozart to write a Concerto for it, using the earlier mentioned sketch of the Allegro for the basset horn.

However, the basset clarinet as an extremely rare instrument, went out of fashion soon after Mozart's death, therefore when the publishers in 1801 first published the Concerto, they arranged it for the normal clarinet. Since Mozart's manuscript was in the meantime lost, the Concerto continued to be played in this arrangement long after. The same thing happened

with the Quintet which was arranged for the normal clarinet and the autograph of which cannot be traced to this date as well.

The arranger of the Concerto, whose identity still remains a mystery, had to change the clarinet part in many passages to compensate for the loss of the basset tones. So he had to modify or transpose an octave up those four lowest notes intended by Mozart for the basset clarinet, because they could not be played on the clarinet of a normal compass. Even though the arranger had done it quite skillfully, Mozart's original idea was not everywhere equally well concealed, therefore some phrases stood out because of their oddity and lack of melodic logic.

First doubts about this, i.e. the authenticity of the text appeared with Oscar Kroll, who analysed the Concerto in his book *The Clarinet* finished in 1944 but published only in 1965, and with George Dazely in his article *The original text of Mozart's Clarinet Concerto* dating back to 1948. Kroll stated with great certainty that Mozart had originally written his Concerto for a clarinet extended to low C, i.e. basset clarinet, displaying two of the most unusual phrases to support this [2; p.41].

Mozart's autograph of the Allegro's sketch in G-major that he applied for Clarinet Concerto, emerged in 1951 in the Swiss town of Winterthur, having become known as Winterthur Fragment. Since the Sketch is in its contents basically the same as the Concerto's first 199 bars, with the only difference being transposed into A-major, it proved to be a critical source that confirmed Kroll and Dazely's observations. It showed that the clarinet line indeed descended to low C on many of occasions, including the usage of chromatic notes C# and D#.

First contemporary performance of the Concerto in the text reconstructed by Czech clarinetist Jiří Kratochvíl took place in Prague in 1951, exactly 160 years after the birth of the work and presumable Stadler's premiere of it also in Prague. It was in Prague again, in June 1956 at the International Mozart Conference, on the occasion of Mozart's 200th birth anniversary, that the reconstructed version of the Quintet was performed for the first time. Kratochvíl, the author of several papers on this topic, was himself the performer this time. He coined the term *basset clarinet* which so well describes the nature of the instrument that connects the clarinet and the basset horn.

The year 1967 brought a final confirmation and closed the main question as whether the Concerto was written for the extended clarinet and congruently whether the text which had been in longtime use was inauthentic. In his article *The original form of Clarinet Concerto KV 622* which was published in *Mozart-Jahrbuch* that same year in Salzburg, scholar Ernst Hess presented a newly-found review of Bretikopf and Haertl edition of the Concerto from 1801. A review, published in March 1802 in the German-language periodical *AMZ* (*Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* – General Music Journal), points out in its last part that Mozart composed this Concerto for the extended clarinet, while the editor published only the modified version for the normal clarinet. The anonymous author of the review states eleven different places that have been changed, which leads to the conclusion that he had had a manuscript, or a copy of it, which enabled him to criticize the edition in detail. Thus the *AMZ*'s review from 1802 confirmed the studies of Kroll, Dazely and Kratochvíl and gave a powerful input for the further reconstruction of the text.

As for the instrument itself, doubts about its existence, though no model has survived, were not as large as the doubts about the text of the Concerto. Furthermore, it was easier to believe into the existence of the instrument, than to accept the fact that Mozart had written a Concerto intended for it. The reason for this lies in the sources of information in which the instrument is being mentioned as such. First of them dates from the concert program note of Stadler's concert back in 1788 at the Viennese court, followed by articles in the Backofen's

tutorial [3; p.35] and Gerber's lexicon [4]. The resource that also provides the insight into the design of the instrument and the connection with Mozart's Concerto has been discovered only recently. In 1992 scholar Pamela Poulin discovered the program note for Stadler's concert in Riga from 1794 where he performed Mozart's Concerto, which shows an engraving of his instrument. This engraving, known as the Riga drawing, contributed immensely in the reconstruction of Stadler's clarinet just as strengthening its links with Mozart's Concerto.

Today, on the basis of all documents found and the conclusions derived from the analysis of melodic shape, there is no doubt that Mozart wrote the Concerto for the basset clarinet. Many of the authorities were certain about this long time ago, including the British Jack Brymer [5; p.41]. The only dilemma refers to the reconstruction of the text which cannot be fully certain and reliable. However, the point in question are only a few phrases, which even if not reconstructed correctly, do not break the entirety and are reduced almost to a standard amount of dubiety found in a number of musical works, mostly occurring during the copying and printing process.

RESEARCHER'S EXPERIENCE IN CONDUCTING THE STUDY

Case study of Mozart's Concerto shows intricate problems, which stand out from the average background of other works in the repertoire. Accordingly, approach in its elaboration, demanded a detailed development of a suitable research system described in the second chapter of this paper. Dispersion of sources represented a major problem and only with the acquisition of all of them, and with research process ongoing simultaneously, writing a case study could have started. As a matter of course, in the process of elaborating it, new data and insights emerged and pointed out to other sources which have then been obtained along the way. Even after the completion of the study we have come across some more material. However, these were less important data whose oversight did not substantially or nearly at all affect its quality.

Meticulously studying the gathered literature, a general picture of the entire case was obtained, thus the process of synthesizing all relevant data and their generalization in the case study began. The problems in forming the case study are primarily related to its structure which is dominated by dense content in which chronological course could not have always been followed given the multilayered nature of actions (development of the clarinet, history of publishing the Concerto, tracing Stadler's movements), and primarily because of critical information discovery which had its own, parallel history in a different time frame. To say it otherwise, the case study, although basically a historical review of the Concerto's origin, was not quite suitable to be entirely presented in a sequence, which would have facilitated its writing, but in a way which meant combining the contents which was rarely not out of chronological flow.

The problem of data accuracy was also notable, as several descriptions of the same events from different sources which did not completely correspond to each other, have been come across. Given the imperfections and incompleteness of the authentic documents, such situations are conceivable. For example, we can come across the information saying that Stadler was the builder of the basset clarinet, or that it was Theodor Lotz, the court instrument builder at the time. The cooperation of both is also possible, but it cannot be inconclusively said who to and in what extent should the credit be assigned to. Furthermore, regarding the same issue, attributing the authorship for the name of the instrument meets a notable discrepancy. Collin Lawson attributes the authorship to Jiří Kratochvíl [1; p.25], whereas Ronald Woodley attributes it to the British Alan Hacker [6]. Although it is more likely that Kratochvíl is the author since he was involved in the instrument's revival earlier than Hacker, it is as much possible that Hacker himself did it, not knowing that Kratochvíl had already done it.

CONCLUSION

Research system of the origin of a musical work as proposed and described in the second section proved to be efficient platform for the case study of Mozart's Clarinet Concerto K622. By employing its structural elements it was possible to make a well-grounded framework within which the comprehensive review of the origin of the work was implemented. Combining roles of scholar and performer also proved to be one of the key elements of the system as witnessed by the author of this paper and the authors mentioned in it and referred to, the majority of whom being performing artists.

The mainstream literature represented the core research source, nonetheless did liner notes and concert programs, consequently providing an additional insight into the topic. One should be careful though, since those, as commercial material are not the subject to rigorous check and thus can contain some discrepancies or even errors. For that matter the same goes even more so with information gathered by the word of mouth.

Although based on and derived from the case study of Mozart's Concerto K622, the research system bears general features and can be employed for any of the musical works. However, the work being researched will, owing to its profile, determine the scope and eligibility of particular sources that are going to be used.

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SUSTAV ISTRAŽIVANJA PORIJEKLA GLAZBENOG DJELA: STUDIJA SLUČAJA MOZARTOVOG KONCERTA ZA KLARINET K622

M. Paar

Puhački odjel, Glazbena škola *Ferdo Livadić*
Samobor, Hrvatska

SAŽETAK

Istraživanje porijekla glazbenog djela predstavlja proces prikupljanja podataka. Tim slijedom nameće se potreba za dobro razrađenim sustavom njihova pribavljanja, verifikacije i sintetiziranja. Na temelju studije slučaja Mozartovog Koncerta za klarinet K622 u ovom je radu osmišljen sustav istraživanja porijekla glazbenog djela. Koristeći njegove strukturalne elemente moguće je stvoriti čvrst okvir i unutar njega dati sveobuhvatni pregled porijekla glazbenog djela. Sustav nosi opće odlike i primjenjiv je u istraživanju bilo kojeg glazbenog djela. Pokazao se učinkovitom platformom u izradi studije slučaja Mozartovog Koncerta.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI

sustav istraživanja, porijeklo glazbenog djela, studija slučaja, Mozart, basetni klarinet