Haydn's *Creation* and Enlightenment Theology

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Haydn's two great oratorios, *The Creation* and *The Seasons* (*Die Schöpfung* and *Die Jahreszeiten*) stand as monuments—on either side of the year 1800—to the Enlightenment and to the Austrian Enlightenment in particular. This is not to claim that they have no connection with what would often be considered more "progressive"—broadly speaking, romantic—tendencies. However, like Haydn himself, they are works that, if a choice must be made, one would place firmly in the eighteenth century, "long" or otherwise. The age of musical classicism was far from dead by 1800, likewise the "Age of Enlightenment." It is quite true that one witnesses in both the emergence of distinct national, even "nationalist," tendencies.[1] Yet these intimately connected "ages" remain essentially cosmopolitan, especially in the sphere of intellectual history and "high" culture. Haydn's oratorios not only draw on Austrian tradition; equally important, they are also shaped by broader influence, especially the earlier English Enlightenment, in which the texts of both works have their origins. The following essay considers the theology of *The Creation* with reference to this background and, to a certain extent, also attempts the reverse, namely, to consider the Austrian Enlightenment in the light of a work more central to its concerns than might have been expected.

Composers have always been subject to intellectual influences from without the strictly musical realm, even if this is not an object of inquiry to which great attention has always been devoted. The most cursory comparison of, say, texts set by Bach and those by Haydn would note a difference in intellectual milieu. Music might be thought to present another story. Yet the sin-laden Lutheran world of Bach's music is so clearly distinct from the Catholic-Enlightenment optimism of Haydn's that no one could fail to notice the difference. However, it is often with such general observations that historians' consideration has come to a halt.[2] Norman Hampson, introducing his general history of the Enlightenment, displays refreshing candor in admitting that "whole subjects on which I do not consider myself competent to express an opinion, such as music, painting and architecture, have been excluded."[3] This is infinitely preferable to pretending that the problem does not exist.

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[1]See, e.g., T. C. W. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe 1660–1789* (Oxford, 2002), especially Part Three.

[2]For instance, Nicholas Till, in *Mozart and the Enlightenment: Truth, Virtue, and Beauty in Mozart's Operas* (London and Boston, 1992), has very little to say concerning the music.

[3]N. Hampson, *The Enlightenment: An Evaluation of Its Assumptions, Attitudes and Values* (Harmondsworth, UK, 1968), 11.

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Moreover, Haydn's oratorios *The Creation* and *The Seasons* have been neglected in this respect by comparison with many other eighteenth-century works. On Handel's oratorios, for example, there is Ruth Smith's important intellectual history.[4] A notable exception is the substantial article on the libretto to *The Creation* by Martin Stern.[5] However, while containing valuable insights, Stern's work suffers from two notable drawbacks. First, it is purely an examination of the text; Haydn's contribution is not considered at all. Moreover, Stern labors under the misapprehension that the libretto is largely the work of Gottfried van Swieten, rather than a generally faithful translation from an earlier text. This is no mere academic quibbling but, as we shall see, a factor of crucial importance.

Indeed, before addressing the oratorio as it stands today, it will be helpful to look at Swieten, Haydn, and their religious interests, and then at the somewhat vexed question of the libretto's origins. Its precise provenance remains, as we shall see, somewhat shrouded in mystery, although we can with reasonable confidence say that a first version of the text, most likely intended for Handel, was written during the first half of the eighteenth century in England. Swieten, more than a simple translator but less than a wholesale reviser, then provided a dual-language version for Haydn to set. We are therefore presented with a work whose text was written considerably earlier in the century, and was subsequently adapted and set to music at the very end of the century in the Habsburg monarchy. In itself, this may not seem especially unusual: translated and revised settings of biblical and classical texts occur throughout history. However, for our specific purposes, it is important how well the theology of the English Enlightenment earlier in the eighteenth century fits with that of the end-of-century Austrian Enlightenment and, more broadly, of the *Aufklärung*, a situation that may often be ascribed to direct influence. There are, moreover, numerous coincidences in outlook between the original writer and his intended public—that for Handel's London oratorios—and the Haydn-Swieten partnership and its intended public. Not least in terms of its dual-language publication, this was an Austrian work and a cosmopolitan work, a situation holding for conception and reception. The latter remains speculative in the case of the original text, since it was never set and therefore "publicized" at the time, but this was of course the intention.

The successful English reception of *The Creation* cautions us against easy assumptions that London was by now a public for whom "Enlightenment theology" would be hopelessly old-fashioned. Romanticism in any case sprang from the Enlightenment; that the former's self-definition often involved definition against the latter should not obscure how much the two movements had in common. Consideration of the relationship between *The Creation* and Enlightenment theology therefore leads us to the reading of a wide-ranging set of texts that would not otherwise necessarily be connected. This is of interest not only in terms of understanding a particular musical work, but also for what it tells us about the nature of national forms of Enlightenment and their periodization. The unity of the completed work is, as Haydn's sketches show, a product of considerable labor; it may also be held to symbolize, indeed to testify to, a fruitful historical relationship between related, yet in many ways distinct, intellectual traditions and their respective publics.[6]

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[4]R. Smith, *Handel's Oratorios and Eighteenth-Century Thought* (Cambridge, 1995).

[5]M. Stern, "Haydns 'Schöpfung': Geist und Herkunft des van Swietenschen Librettos. Ein Beitrag zur Thema 'Säkularisation' im Zeitalter der Aufklärung," *Haydn-Studien* 1 (1965–7): 121–89.

[6]On Haydn's sketches, see K. Geiringer and M. M. Marble, "Haydn's Sketches for 'The Creation,'" *The Musical Quarterly* 18 (1932):299–308.

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Gottfried van Swieten (1734–1803) spent the early years of his career in the Austrian diplomatic service. This took him to Brussels, Frankfurt, Paris, and Warsaw, but his period of service does not seem to have interfered with his literary and musical interests. He found time to compose operas and symphonies. His correspondence frequently mentions Voltaire; indeed, when *Candide* was published, Swieten immediately dispatched a copy to his former superior, Count Karl Cobenzl. Nor was Swieten's early interest in Voltaire solely a literary matter. He visited the great philosophe at Ferney in 1768, in sharp contrast to Joseph II's conspicuous refusal to do so nine years later. During the controversy over Jean-François Marmontel's *Bélisaire*, Swieten played a minor role on the side of the philosophes in their battle against religious orthodoxy. He wrote to the author, expressing his support and telling him of the approbation it had received in Vienna, despite—or perhaps on account of—its condemnation by the Sorbonne.[7] This is the very same book whose fifteenth chapter, on the subject of religious toleration, Voltaire declared the glory of France.[8]

Such actions could hardly fail to bolster Swieten's rising reputation as a man of the Enlightenment. This is illustrated by the horror with which Joseph II's proposal in 1770 to send him as imperial ambassador to Rome was received. Visconti, the papal nuncio in Vienna, writes approvingly of Swieten's intelligence but laments that it is employed in the succor of those unfortunate principles so prevalent in "*moderno filosofismo*."[9] Instead, Swieten was sent to Berlin, seat of the arch-enlightened absolutist, Frederick the Great. During this posting, he encountered Handel's oratorios and other *alte Musik* cultivated in Berlin circles. He also acted as unofficial procurer of forbidden literature for Prince Kaunitz, Maria Theresa's and subsequently Joseph II's chief minister, obtaining for him numerous works of French philosophie.

In 1777, Swieten became custodian of the Imperial Library, a position he would retain until his death. Although it would be an exaggeration to discern in his tenure a definite proselytizing drive, remarks such as those found in his justification for the acquisition of Miguel Servet's *Christianismi restitutio* are revealing of his enlightened abhorrence of religious persecution. Seeking after truth and philanthropy, he argued, would rid the world of "fanatical theology."[10] More important for us is the other post Swieten held during Joseph II's sole rule, the presidency of the Educational Commission. The policies he propounded and followed were consistently enlightened and frequently came into conflict with the emperor's often more utilitarian objectives. Swieten allied himself unambiguously with the religious reformers who aimed to propagate religious conviction, rather than obedience, as the only sound basis for faith. The affinity Swieten felt between revealed and natural religion is illustrated by the importance he attributed to a thorough grounding for "future instructors of the people" in natural theology and "philosophical ethics."[11] A notable success was his humanist project of engaging schoolchildren in one-to-one Socratic dialogue with their teachers. In this 1785 instruction, religious education was explicitly included, biblical stories being recommended for discussion that would help inculcate a sense of good and evil. This objective was to be attained not via the often counterproductive offices of authority—the church as rock of Saint Peter—but by virtue of an "exercise accompanied by constant thinking."[12]

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[7]E. Wangermann, *Aufklärung und staatsbürgerliche Erziehung. Gottfried van Swieten als Reformator des österreichischen Unterrichtswesens 1781–1791* (Munich, 1978), 9–10.

[8]Voltaire to Marmontel, 1 November 1769, in *Lettres choisies de Voltaire*, ed. R. Naves (Paris, 1963), 451.

[9]Wangermann, *Aufklärung und staatsbürgerliche Erziehung*, 10.

[10]Ibid., 12.

[11]Ibid., 37.

[12]E. Wangermann, "Reform Catholicism and Political Radicalism in the Austrian Enlightenment," in *The Enlightenment in National Context*, ed. R. Porter and M. Teich (Cambridge, 1981), 132.

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However, when Joseph II died in 1790, Swieten's days of political influence were numbered. He was too closely identified with the reforming regime that had brought the Habsburg lands to the edge of the abyss—in the case of Belgium, to open revolt against Vienna—to have any realistic likelihood of a long-term future, even if he had shown any inclination, which he did not, to mend his radically enlightened ways. Maximilian Francis, the elector-archbishop of Cologne, writes scathingly in a letter to his brother, the new emperor Leopold II, of "the despotism with which Swieten has sought to introduce into all state schools … the opinions (that were) the principal source of the Belgian revolution." And Leopold himself had six years previously, whilst Grand Duke of Tuscany, denounced "Baron Wanswicken" as a man who, though greatly talented, was proud and without religion and morals—a wrong-headed yet typical assessment of one so preoccupied with religion and morality.[13] Increasingly compelled to defend himself from incursions into his sphere of competence by Leopold's trusted antirevolutionaries, Swieten was eventually "relieved" of his duties "out of clemency" on 5 December 1791, and the Educational Commission was abolished.[14]

Henceforth, Swieten appears to have played little part in official life, save for his now rather inoffensive duties at the Imperial Library.[15] This provided all the more incentive to concentrate on his musical activities, which had continued throughout the 1780s, notably through his patronage of Mozart. In about 1785, he had founded the aristocratic Gesellschaft der Associierten, which sponsored private performances of oratorios, especially Handel's. This society commissioned *The Creation* and *The Seasons*; its patronage probably made Swieten's position as Haydn's librettist a fait accompli.

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Haydn's earliest—and probably his most reliable—biographer, Georg August Griesinger, provides a celebrated sketch of the composer's religious outlook:

> Haydn was very religiously inclined, and was loyally devoted to the faith in which he was raised. He was very strongly convinced in all his heart that all human destiny is under God's guiding hand, that God rewards the good and the evil, that all talents hail from above. All of his larger scores begin with the words *In nomine Domini*, and end with *Laus Deo* or *Soli Deo Gloria.* "If my composing is not proceeding so well," I heard him say, "I walk up and down the room with my rosary in my hand, say several *Aves*, and then ideas come to me once again …."
>
> In general, his devotion was not of the gloomy, always suffering sort, but rather cheerful and reconciled … (as reflected in) his church music … (and especially) in *The Creation* …. "I was never so devout as during the time that I was working on *The Creation*. Every day I fell to my knees and prayed to God to grant me the strength for a happy completion of this work.[16]

[13]D. E. D. Beales, "The Impact of Joseph II on Vienna," in *Europa im Zeitalter Mozarts*, ed. M. Czáky and W. Pass (Vienna, 1995), 302–4.

[14]Wangermann, *Aufklärung und staatsbürgerliche Erziehung*, 112–13.

[15]Constantin von Wurzbach's great biographical lexicon of the Habsburg Monarchy makes no reference to official acts after 1791. See von Wurzbach, *Biographisches Lexikon des Kaiserthums Oesterreich 1750–1850*, 60 vols. (Vienna, 1880), 41:50–53.

[16]A. Griesinger, "Biographische Notizen über Joseph Haydn," in *Joseph Haydn: Eighteenth-Century Gentleman and Genius*, ed. V. Gotwals (Madison, 1963), 53–55. On early biographical sources, see V. Gotwals, "The Earliest Biographies of Haydn," *The Musical Quarterly* 45 (1959): 439–59.

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Admittedly, the portrayal of an old man pacing up and down the room with his rosary, awaiting divine inspiration, jars with any conception of Enlightenment theology, and although there appears to be no secondary confirmation of this report, there is no reason to disbelieve it. Haydn provides a typical example of *pietas austriaca*, and there is nothing surprising about that. But many other aspects of Griesinger's account fit quite comfortably with an Enlightened approach toward religion. Here we see a portrayal of a strong, but hardly a God-fearing, faith. If many of the more radical French philosophes would have rejected Haydn's belief in the guiding hand of the Almighty, most *Aufklärer* would not. The true religious conservatives were those who declared "new" music—anything post-Palestrina—to be profane and offered their own derivation of the word "oratorio": *oratorio a non orando* ("a performance of prayerful music is so called because no one prays").[17]

This might all be dismissed as willful misinterpretation were it not for another, less frequently quoted, section of Griesinger's sketch: "This [Haydn's religiosity] does not indicate intolerant feelings. Haydn left every man to his own conviction and recognized all as brothers."[18] Such principles of religious tolerance, grounded not upon indifference but upon positive belief, typify the spectrum of Enlightened religious thought, issuing in large part from admiration for the achievements of toleration in England since the Glorious Revolution. Prussia, where Swieten had served, is another important example of flourishing religious toleration, as of course is Joseph II's Habsburg monarchy (unless one were a Bohemian deist).

This is not necessarily to claim that Haydn had thought about such matters profoundly, but he merits a place in the mainstream that some have sought to deny him. As we shall see, Rosemary Hughes's view, that Haydn was "the most unliterary of men," whose library consisted "largely of technical treatises on music" is, quite simply, incorrect.[19] It likewise ill behooves us to view with undue skepticism Haydn's frequenting Viennese salons of the 1780s, salons in which reading and discussion centered on early Enlightenment writers or on contemporaries with similar beliefs, such as Lessing, Jacobi, Johann Caspar Lavater, and Christian Fürchtegott Gellert. Haydn knew and corresponded with Lavater; and the composer not only set Gellert's verse to music but also called Gellert his hero.[20] Even if Haydn made little contribution to the discussions, he would have been unlikely to attend had he objected. Though hardly a philosophe, Haydn was an Enlightenment *honnête homme*.

Gellert had written an extremely popular volume of *Spiritual Odes and Songs* in praise of God's Creation; in this respect, he might be seen as an Addison or even a Luther for later eighteenth-century Germany.[21] Strongly influenced by, though by no means uncritical of, the third Earl of Shaftesbury's writings on aesthetics, Gellert tipped the Englishman's equilibrium toward the truth of the good and away from that of the beautiful. This adaptation of Shaftesbury, through the mediation of Scottish writers such as Francis Hutcheson and Adam Ferguson, was more consonant with Gellert's German piety and the needs of his Leipzig students, for whom he felt great moral, indeed pastoral, responsibility.[22] Gellert's view of literature, that it should not only entertain but also improve the taste and morals of

[17]W. O. Chadwick, *The Popes and European Revolution* (Oxford, 1981), 86.

[18]Griesinger, "Biographische Notizen," 54.

[19]R. Hughes, *Haydn* (London, 1962), 46.

[20]D. P. Schroeder, *Haydn and the Enlightenment: The Late Symphonies and Their Audience* (Oxford, 1990), 9–10; H. C. Robbins Landon, *Haydn: Chronicle and Works*, 5 vols. (London, 1976–80), 4:256.

[21]C. F. Gellert, *Geistliche Öden und Lieder* (Leipzig, 1844).

[22]M. B. Price and L. M. Price, *The Publication of English Humaniora in Germany in the Eighteenth Century* (Berkeley, 1955), xv–xvi.

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society, corresponds with Haydn's statement of belief that he had done his duty and had "been of use to the world through my works."[23] It perhaps sits less easily with the humor of Haydn's "absolute" music, but Haydn would doubtless have cheerfully reflected that wit must have something of the divine about it too, and Gellert's fables are not without moments of (earnest) amusement. *Not only* to entertain does not mean *not* to entertain.

Moreover, Haydn owned a copy of Shaftesbury's *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*.[24] It might seem odd that this book was in English, but less so if one recalls the composer's visits to London during the 1790s, visits from which *The Creation* derived.[25] Given Haydn's level of proficiency in English, it is perhaps doubtful whether he read Shaftesbury's book from cover to cover but, at the very least, the choice is significant. It is one more copy than he owned of devotional literature. Indeed, his library contained eight books placed on the Roman Catholic Church's Index of forbidden works.[26] Haydn's library included several works falling under the heading "Writings on Freemasonry and the Literature of Esoteric Lore," including Gerolamo Cardano's *Revelation of Nature* (in German). This sixteenth-century work stands not so distant from Enlightenment theology as one might suspect, equating "the light of the world soul with the eternally ruling principle of generation and motion."[27]

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The seeds of *The Creation* were sown during Haydn's visits to England in the early 1790s. Though acquainted through Swieten's Sunday-morning performances with a surprisingly large number of Handel's oratorios, nothing had prepared Haydn for the Handel Festival "by command and under the patronage of their Majesties" held at Westminster Abbey in 1791, which boasted over a thousand performers. According to an early if somewhat fanciful biographer, Giuseppe Carpani, Haydn "confessed … that when he heard the music of Hendl [sic] in London, he was struck as if he had been put back to the beginning of his studies … . He meditated on every note and drew from these most learned scores the essence of true musical grandeur."[28] It is likely that Haydn resolved to write a successor work at the first opportunity.

Swieten may now take up the story in a letter of December 1798 to the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung:*

> … now a few words on the poem that you choose to call *my* Creation. My part in the work, originally written in English, was certainly more than translation; but it was far from being … *my own* … . (The libretto) is by an unnamed author who had compiled it largely from Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and had intended it for Handel. What prevented the great man from making use of it is not known, but when Haydn was in London, it was sought out, and handed over to him with the request that he set it to music … . (Upon his return) he … showed it to me, and … I recognized immediately that so exalted a subject would allow Haydn the opportunity … to express the full power of his inexhaustible genius; I therefore encouraged him to take the work in hand, and … I resolved to clothe the

[23]Griesinger, "Biographische Notizen," 56.
[24]Schroeder, "Haydn and the Enlightenment," 12.
[25]See Maria Hörwarthner, "Joseph Haydn's Library: An Attempt at a Literary-Historical Reconstruction," trans. K. Talbot, in *Haydn and His World*, ed. Elaine Sisman (Princeton, 1997), 421.
[26]Ibid., 448; J. Hurwitz, "Haydn and the Freemasons," *The Haydn Yearbook* 16 (1985): 75.
[27]Horwärthner, "Joseph Haydn's Library," 400–401, 444.
[28]G. Carpani, *Le Haydine* (Milan, 1812), 162–63.

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> English poem in German garb …. I followed the plan of the original faithfully as a whole, but diverged from it in details as often as musical progress and expansion … seemed to require. Guided by these sentiments, I often judged it necessary that much should be shortened, or even omitted, … and … that much should be made more prominent.[29]

Griesinger generally confirms this account and does not contradict it. He also names Swieten's "unnamed author:" "The first idea of the oratorio: The Creation, belongs to an Englishman by the name of Lidley." Albert Christoph Dies, another contemporary source, confirms that it was "already an old text, in the English language," when the London impresario Johann Peter Salomon handed it to Haydn in 1795.[30]

Thus the evidence that the text was intended for Handel points to its origin in the first half of the eighteenth century. The latest date of writing would have been 1752, when it became clear that Handel's incapacity would prevent him from engaging in future composition. This brings us to the mysterious "Lidley." No candidate with such a name has been identified, but it may refer to Thomas Linley Sr. (1733–95), co-director of the Drury Lane oratorio concerts that took place during Haydn's visits to England. It fits—just—with Griesinger's claim that "Lidley was already dead."[31] As Sir Donald Tovey remarked, "Lidley is only Linley with a cold in his head," the source being an oral communication from Haydn to Griesinger.[32]

A further problem is presented by the fact that Linley is not known to have written any libretti, and he would also have been very young to have presented one to Handel. One plausible explanation is that he did not write the libretto but passed it on from the library of Drury Lane oratorios. This is lent credence by the fact that J. C. Smith Sr., father of Linley's predecessor, bequeathed to his son a number of "Musick Books and Pieces on Musick" left to him by Handel himself.[33] Given that the original English libretto and the original manuscript appear no longer to exist and, in Landon's view, are unlikely to be uncovered, it seems that this is as close as we shall get to the identity of the original librettist.[34]

It might, of course, still validly be argued that Swieten may have altered the libretto more radically than he claimed. This was Martin Stern's belief.[35] Swieten may well have had a motive to downplay his role since, as will be seen, some voices of religious orthodoxy were soon ranged against the work. However, an article by Edward Olleson appears to have proved beyond reasonable doubt that Swieten's account is truthful. Through analysis of the English and German texts, Olleson has shown the extent of the work's English derivation.[36] It could still plausibly be argued that Swieten worked from such English sources himself in producing a radically revised text. Such an argument is confuted by a comparison with the often bizarre texts of *The Seasons*, which were very much Swieten's own work. The English text cannot be Swieten's own work "simply because—of all the unlikely reasons—the English is too good."[37] It is easy to forestall one final objection, which Olleson does not anticipate but clearly could have done: that Swieten nonetheless could have employed a reasonable

[29]Landon, *Haydn: Chronicle and Works*, 4:116.

[30]Griesinger, "Biographische Notizen," 37; A. C. Dies, *Biographische Nachrichten von Jospeh Haydn*, ed. H. Seeger (1810; repr., Berlin, 1959), 174.

[31]Landon, *Haydn: Chronicle and Works*, 5:118; Griesinger, "Biographische Notizen," 37.

[32]D. F. Tovey, *Essays in Musical Analysis*, 6 vols. (London, 1935), 5:119.

[33]Landon, *Haydn: Chronicle and Works*, 4:118.

[34]Ibid., 119.

[35]Stern, "Haydns 'Schöpfung'," 133–34.

[36]E. Olleson, "The Origin and Libretto of Haydn's *Creation*," in *The Haydn Yearbook* 4 (1968): 148–68.

[37]Ibid., 159.

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passive command of English to draw on the original sources himself. The Bible and *Paradise Lost* were readily available in German. It seems inconceivable that, given a situation in which nobody appears to have doubted the veracity of his claim, Swieten would have gone to the lengths of using them in the original language and translating them into German simply to underplay his role.

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The "Representation of Chaos," with which *The Creation* opens, is justly the most celebrated number in the oratorio; and it is clear from the sketches that Haydn took unprecedented pains over its composition. Heinrich Schenker wrote of Haydn "stretching and straining" his musical means to recall "the mysteries of Chaos."[38] Without the aid—or constraint—of a text, the composer depicts the universe prior to the creative act whilst also prefiguring that act. This movement does not begin in C minor; it opens with an emphatic unison C, of indeterminate length and indeterminate tonality. As Hegel would point out in the second chapter of his *Logic*, an absolute—that is, a true beginning and basis for all subsequent determinations—cannot in itself be determinate.[39]

From the outset, Haydn evolves his tonality, but he does not immediately introduce a tonic chord of C minor. When the music first seems to be heading that way, he substitutes an interrupted cadence for the expected full close (bars 4–5). The cosmos does not evolve in a few seconds, even in Haydn's concentrated chronology. As the musical conception develops, so do intimations of life. The very slow, swirling mass of nothingness—"the earth was without form and void"—is breached first by a triplet figure (bar 6) and later by another sign of organized motion in chaos, a double dotted figure.[40] Lawrence Kramer writes that "from a scientific standpoint, the … structure effects a heroic reduction of chaos to lawlike, quasi-mathematical regularity."[41] Surging dynamic marking evokes the ebb and flow of the first tides, for it is from the oceans that the first life-forms will emerge. This was recognized in contemporary reviews, for example that in the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* of 21 January 1801: "… single notes come forth, spawning others in turn … Movement begins. Powerful masses grate against each other and begin to gestate … Unknown forces, swimming and surging, … bring tidings of order."[42] As the Spirit of God moveth upon the waters, the life figurations multiply and subdivide themselves; and the seeds of order are sown before we return to the void whilst awaiting the first words of this sacred drama. There had been some precedent for this in the germinal introductions to Haydn's *London* symphonies—at any rate, all but no. 95, which ironically is in C minor—but, harmonically rich though they be, this is an introduction of another magnitude, as befits an introduction preparing the way for the specific musical *and* verbal drama of Creation.

Tovey points out that the "Representation of Chaos" harmonizes well not only with the biblical account of Creation but also with the work of Pierre-Simon Laplace and

[38]H. Schenker, *Das Meisterwerk in Musik*, 3 vols. (Munich, 1925–30), 2:161.

[39]G. F. W. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, trans. A. V. Miller (London, 1969), 137–38.

[40]Schoenberg, it may be noted, would employ that most "organized" of classical forms, the fugue (or perhaps a fugato, depending on one's definition), in his *Genesis* Prelude, Op. 44, to depict the state of the cosmos prior to the Creation.

[41]L. Kramer, "Haydn's Chaos, Schenker's Order; or, Hermeneutics and Musical Analysis: Can They Mix?," in *19th Century Music* 16 (1992–93): 12.

[42]"Briefe an einen Freund über die Musik in Berlin," *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 8 January 1801, 291.

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Kant.[43] In his *Universal Natural History and Theory of the Heavens*, disseminated widely since the 1750s but even more widely during the 1790s, Kant had voiced the traditional Christian doctrine of Creation in space and time (whose validity would be both proven and denied in his subsequent critical philosophy). He had argued that "there is a God precisely because nature can proceed even in Chaos in no other way than regularly and orderly."[44] Haydn, Tovey remarks, "did a certain amount of dining out in fin-de-siècle London, [and] was as likely to have heard of the Nebular Hypothesis as a modern diner-out is likely to hear of Einstein and Relativity."[45]

This is supported by Haydn's visit to the astronomer (and amateur composer), Sir William Herschel, at his home in Slough on 15 June 1792. There Haydn was able to look through the telescopes of the man who, to all intents and purposes, added nebulae and the Milky Way to the scientific map and was the first person in modern times to discover a planet, Uranus. Unfortunately, Haydn's notebook tells us very little about what he actually saw, save for the length of "the great telescope," nor of what they said to each other.[46] But a visit to this site of scientific pilgrimage—the king of Poland sent Herschel his portrait, and Catherine the Great requested specifications of his telescopes—would perforce have made a great impression upon Haydn. Science and religion did not stand mutually opposed; indeed, their close relationship is a key feature of Enlightenment theology. Thus Joseph Addison could write in the early eighteenth century that "natural philosophy quickens this Taste of the Creation, and renders it not only pleasing to the Imagination, but to the Understanding .... It heightens the pleasures of the Eye, and raises such a rational Admiration in the Soul as is little inferior to Devotion."[47] Kant likewise emphasized the "harmony between my system and religion," which heightened his confidence in the veracity of his writings.[48] And Herschel himself, in a rare clue as to his religious sentiments, wrote in a letter in 1794: "It is certainly a laudable thing to receive instruction from the great Workmaster of nature, and for that reason all experimental philosophy is instituted."[49]

Nevertheless, God's image has not been explicitly evoked in the "Representation of Chaos." Its closing bars, therefore, mark a return to the mood of the opening, the pathos underlined by the descending flute solo and Neapolitan harmony. In a sense, then, the next section of the introduction renders explicit through words that which has gone before. The double-dotted figure is hinted at following Raphael's "In the beginning, God created the Heaven and the earth," and is soon stated most clearly (bars 69–71). But the explicit presence of God and his act of Creation make events take a different turn; this is not evolution in an eighteenth-century, let alone a Darwinian, sense. Haydn's outlook stands closer to that of Moses Mendelssohn's *Morning Hours, or Lectures on the Existence of God*, which we find in the composer's library.[50] This popular philosophy, derived to some extent from Leibniz's rationalistic deism, has at its heart the necessity of God's existence and rejection of Spinoza's —and Lessing's alleged—pantheism. An absolute, eternal mind is quite certain since the

[43]Tovey, *Essays*, 5:114.

[44]I. Kant, *Universal Natural History and Theory of the Heavens*, tans. and ed. S. L. Jaki (Edinburgh, 1981), 86, 154–55.

[45]Tovey, *Essays*, 5:114.

[46]Landon, *Haydn: Chronicle and Works*, 176–77.

[47]Joseph Addison and Richard Steele, *Spectator*, 8 vols. (London, 1712), 5:493.

[48]Kant, *Universal Natural History*, 82.

[49]A. M. Clerke, "Sir William Herschel," in *Dictionary of National Biography*, 63 vols., ed. L. Stephen (London, 1885–1900), 26:271.

[50]Hörwarthner, "Joseph Haydn's Library," 428–29.

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testimony of the senses to an external world would be unthinkable without a necessary, extraworldly being.[51]

A generation earlier, the Swiss esthetician, Johann Georg Sulzer, had written of the sublime (*Erhaben*) in his influential *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste*: "We are moved as little by the wholly inconceivable as if it never existed. If we are told that God created the world *ex nihilo* … we experience nothing at all, since this lies totally beyond our comprehension. But when Moses says, 'And God said: Let there be light; and there was light,' we are overcome with astonishment because we can at least form some idea of such greatness; we hear to some extent words of command and feel their power."[52] Though Sulzer's work was considered dated by some even at the time of publication (first edition, 1771–74), his is a typical view for eighteenth-century readers, writers, and listeners.[53] It illuminates the importance of the word in Haydn's *Creation* but also impresses upon us the magnitude of Haydn's achievement in the "Representation of Chaos." There, despite what many would have thought, he has shown that the apparently "inconceivable" can be conceived and received in the sublime manner. Nevertheless, the *sotto voce* chanting of the chorus ("And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters …") engenders a sense of expectation and tension, heightened following the words, "and God said: Let there be Light." Here, a generation before the choral finale to Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, we have impressed upon us the necessity of the word—and the Creator's primal, enlightening word at that, which confers retrospective meaning and direction on Haydn's preceding symphonic chaos.

Thus is the groundwork prepared for Haydn's greatest coup de théâtre, "… and there was Light." This conception of courageous simplicity, the famous fortissimo C major chord, is entirely Haydn's own: he ignored Swieten's advice that the darkness should "gradually disappear."[54] It is a passage whose stunning effectiveness has never palled. Of the London premiere (28 March 1800), Charles Burney observed that "the generality of the subscribers were unable to disentangle the studied confusion in delineating chaos." Yet "the composer's meaning was felt by the whole audience in this passage; there followed an instant interruption of rapturous applause."[55] Haydn's was a language that could speak across national boundaries. As late as the 1830s, when, as James Webster points out, Haydn's music was "rapidly becoming passé," the aesthetician Gustav Schilling would write: "there is still no music of greater sublimity than the passage 'And there was Light,' … in Haydn's *Creation*." This entailed connecting "the finite and phenomenal … with the infinite and divine."[56] Such connection is precisely what the act of Creation is.

Light was a symbol that few in Haydn's first audiences would have failed to recognize at some level; it was not simply or primarily a representation of the sublime, but was above all the quintessential symbol of Enlightenment. Swieten had written to Kaunitz in 1774 of the need

[51]M. Mendelssohn, *Morgenstunden, oder, Vorlesungen über das Daseyn Gottes* (Berlin, 1786).

[52]J. G. Sulzer cited in P. Le Huray and J. Day, ed., *Music and Aesthetics in the Eighteenth and Early-Nineteenth Centuries* (Cambridge, 1981), 138.

[53]For notable unfavorable reactions to Sulzer, see, for example, J. G. Herder, "Critical Forests, or Reflections on the Art and Science of the Beautiful: First Grove, Dedicated to Mr. Lessing's Laocoön," in *Selected Writings on Aesthetics*, trans. and ed. G. Moore (Princeton, 2006), 99; J. W. von Goethe, " 'Die schönen Künste in ihrem Ursprung, ihrer wahren Natur und besten Anwendung,' betrachtet von J. G. Sulzer," in *Goethes Werke. Hamburger Ausgabe in 14 Bänden*, 14 vols., ed. E. Trunz et al. (Hamburg, 1964), 12:15–20.

[54]Landon, *Haydn: Chronicle and Works*, 4:351.

[55]Charles Burney, *Morning Herald*, 29 March 1800, cited in ibid., 574.

[56]J. Webster, "The *Creation*, Haydn's Late Vocal Music, and the Musical Sublime," in *Haydn and His World*, ed. E. Sisman (Princeton, 1997), 65.

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for "light" in politics; a "blind" people could readily be put to bad use.[57] More generally, he had tirelessly urged the cause for a religious enlightenment of the people, that their faith might be grounded on rational conviction. Joseph Anton Gall, a colleague of Swieten's during the 1780s and subsequently Bishop of Linz, explained that the Redeemer had returned the world to a semiparadisiacal condition, that is, restored "light" to the world, since God in his goodness could not bear to leave man in his fallen state.[58] In Leibniz's *Monadology* (first published in German in 1720), monads are portrayed as simple, windowless entities, which, through the process of entelechy, strive toward greater and greater brightness until united with the brightest and most enlightened monad, God himself.[59] However it was interpreted, the symbol of light was always on the side of the angels so far as the Enlightenment—be it Protestant, Catholic, or deist—was concerned. Light had shone brightly from behind the dark clouds of superstition on the title page of the first major book written by Christian Wolff, *Rational Thoughts on God, the World, and the Soul of Man* (1720).[60] The revelatory dazzling brightness of Haydn's fin-de-siècle primeval light shines all the more clearly.

* * *

Such splendor, however, cedes to the warmth of radiant A major in the second number, "Now vanish before the holy beams." Lest this appear too subjective, contemporary and near-contemporary commentary on tonal significance is replete with such references, some even citing *The Creation*. William S. Porter, in *The Musical Cyclopedia* (1834), writes that A major is "golden, warm, and sunny. Its brilliant effect is shown in many passages of Haydn's *Creation*."[61] It is the text that lends importance to this signification. This is the world, as yet unpopulated, lit for the first time, as "the gloomy dismal shades of dark … vanish before the holy beams." Milton is not completely expelled from this new—or old—heaven, the central section plunging us back into distant, chaotic C minor, an abrupt wrench from three sharps to three flats, as hell's spirits sink into endless night.[62] But this is the sole reference made in the work to the fallen angels (very different from *Paradise Lost*), and the abiding memory is of the restitution of unsullied A major: "A new created world springs up at God's command." As the first section has foretold, disorder once again yields to fair "order." In Kramer's words, there runs throughout *The Creation* a tension, "which poses the spontaneous joys of paradise against the need to enforce [and not just in paradise] the regime of natural and social hierarchy."[63] The word "order" is stressed throughout and is a constant preoccupation of the Enlightenment—theologically, socially, and politically, these spheres in any case being inextricably interlinked. "Order is Heav'n's first law," wrote Alexander Pope, in *An Essay on Man*.[64]

The status of this number as the first aria is also important in itself: the first occasion, following orchestra, recitative, and chorus, of true song. Haydn ascribed great importance to vocal music, a conception so typical of the eighteenth century that it would not have warranted mention then,

[57]Wangermann, *Aufklärung und staatsbürgerliche Erziehung*, 15.

[58]Adam Wandruszka, "Diskussion," in *Katholische Aufklärung und Josephinismus*, ed. E. Kovács (Vienna, 1979), 344.

[59]G. W. Leibniz, *The Monadology and Other Philosophical Writings*, trans. and ed. R. Latta (London, 1971).

[60]Stern, "Haydns 'Schöpfung'," 163.

[61]R. Steblin, *A History of Key Characteristics in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries* (Epping, 1983), 291.

[62]Cf., "I fled and cri'd out *Death*/Hell trembl'd at the hideous Name, and sigh'd/ From all her Caves, and back resounded *Death*." in J. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ed. C. Ricks (Harmondsworth, UK, 1968), 49.

[63]Kramer, "Haydn's Chaos," 14.

[64]A. Pope, *An Essay on Man*, ed. M. Mack (London, 1950), 132.

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although it certainly does to a postromantic age, heir to the instrumental and orchestral music of Beethoven. Griesinger reports Haydn saying that, "instead of the many quartets, sonatas, and symphonies, he should have written more vocal music .... He might have become one of the leading opera composers."[65] Notwithstanding the sublimity of Haydn's orchestral chaos, melody remained for him most winningly expressed in the art of human song, which many musicians had to their detriment neglected to learn. "Singing," Haydn lamented, "must almost be counted among the lost arts, and instead of song, they let instruments dominate."[66] After the cosmic-elemental introduction to the work, we now realize that God created man, or rather at this stage the angels, in his own image. Glorification of God uplifts us rather than having us depressed by the vastness of the gulf between him and us. Despite the huge orchestra at Haydn's disposal, he would use it sparingly in this humanistic context.

"Now vanish before the holy beams" also symbolizes, consciously or otherwise, eighteenth-century banishment of the supernatural from nature—only, as Basil Willey put it, with Satan's exile on much harsher terms than that of his Divine Antagonist.[67] Science, or "natural philosophy," had to some extent "disenchanted" a world, as witnessed, for example, as early as Milton's *Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity*; the reenchantment of early romanticism was imminent but not yet immanent. Natural philosophy and even much religion were the study of God's works, rescued from the clutches of Satan and the Fall (rather embarrassing relics from past ages of "fanaticism"). When the Milton of *Paradise Lost* returns, it will be to evoke idyllic nature. This fits well with the dating of the libretto and provides a typically happy coincidence of theology between mid-century England—deist and orthodox—and later-century Austria.

It is description of nature that takes up the bulk of the narrative passages, as opposed to the choruses of praise, until the creation of man. This Enlightenment view of nature is expressed in a manner very close, at times almost identical, to the following words from Gall's book, *God's Loving Arrangements and Order for the Goodness and Happiness of Man:* "Let us look at our earth, and see how God has made it into a beautiful and well-appointed dwelling; how the sun lights it and warms it; how the air, the fertile rains, the springs, brooks, and rivers cool and moisten it; how the plants in infinite variety, beauty, and fertility grow out of the earth. These conditions make it possible for countless creatures to live on land, in the water, and in the air. They find food, and, as we can see, they enjoy their existence."[68]

Such thoughts must still have been prevalent at the turn of the century, for the dark clouds of reaction can hardly have obliterated all memories of the 1780s. Indeed, Josephinism, both political and religious, would prove remarkably tenacious, a tradition still discernible in the 1840s and beyond.[69] The loving care with which Haydn depicts the "limpid brook," the "healing plant," the sun in its "splendor bright," the "nightingale's delightful notes," and the "nimble stag," to name but a few examples, would have had a definite theological content for his audience. This naive tone-painting, so at odds with nineteenth-century sensibilities—it made Berlioz "want to murder somebody"—is emphatically not a crowd-pleasing extra.[70] Such naturalism is an

[65]Griesinger, "Biographische Notizen," 63.

[66]Ibid., 61.

[67]B. Willey, *The Eighteenth-Century Background: Studies on the Idea of Nature in the Thought of the Period* (London, 1940), 4.

[68]Wangermann, "Reform Catholicism and Political Radicalism," 132–33.

[69]See, for example, R. J. W. Evans, "Josephinism, 'Austrianness,' and the Revolution of 1848," in *The Austrian Enlightenment and Its Aftermath*, ed. R. Robertson and E. Timms (Edinburgh, 1991), 145–60; E. Sagarra, "Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach and the Tradition of the Catholic Enlightenment," in ibid., 117–31.

[70]Berlioz to Princess Carolyn von Sayn-Wittgenstein, 8 February 1859, in H. Berlioz, *Corréspondance générale*, 6 vols., ed. P. Citron, (Paris,1972–95), 5:654.

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integral part of the composition and its message: Haydn's audience, like Gellert's, is to be edified as well as entertained.

Without man, though, Creation would remain incomplete. For however heavily the Augustinian tradition might weigh down upon the church, it had never been able to deny Genesis 1:27 (no. 23), that "God created man in his own image." The scene is thus set for Uriel's aria (no. 24), "In native worth," in which God's quickening breath and man, the most astounding progeny of that breath, stand as almost equally worthy of praise and wonder: praise of and wonder in God's Creation. Librettist and composer present us with one of the supreme examples of Enlightenment religious humanism—so much so that it is worth quoting the first two stanzas in full (there are no significant variants between the German and the English):

> In native worth and honour clad,
> with beauty, courage, strength adorn'd
> to heav'n erect and tall, he stands a man,
> the Lord and King of nature all.
>
> The large and arched front sublime
> of wisdom deep declares the seat,
> and in his eyes with brightness shines the soul,
> the breath and image of his God.

We stand closer here to Renaissance humanism than to Augustine and his followers, whether Catholic or Protestant. The text resembles part of a 1746 poem entitled *The Creation*, by Johann Adolf Schlegel, a Protestant pastor and father of Friedrich. After fashioning dust to create "a Lord of the earth," the Creator "breathes upon him":

> He breathes; His breath was a soul.
> He moulds it, and it alone,
> that it should be made rational, and gives to it
> the features of His Divinity.[71]

Stern suggests this as an influence on the libretto.[72] Given the English origins of the text, we can be reasonably certain that this was not directly the case. Schlegel's poem may still, however, be seen as indicative of the climate in which the work was composed and received.

One feature of Haydn's setting is particularly noteworthy in this context. Nicholas Temperley remarks that it "contains the most extraordinary tonal surprise in the whole work—perhaps in all classical music.... No amount of rehearing of this amazing passage can make it sound ordinary."[73] Instead of returning conventionally from the dominant, G, as he had done the first time around, Haydn uses the chord upon the moment of God's "breath" as an augmented sixth pivot wondrously to modulate to the distant key of A flat. Yet Temperley "can think of no reason for it arising out of the text … and … must conclude that it is simply an example of Haydn's well-known love of tricking his audience."[74] However, the text, a celebration of the greatness of man, provides ample justification for the music. As the

[71]Schlegel cited in Stern, "Haydns 'Schöpfung'," 172.
[72]Ibid., 172.
[73]Nicholas Temperley, *Haydn: "The Creation"* (Cambridge, 1991), 74, 77.
[74]Ibid., 77.

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Almighty breathes upon man, an extraordinary act by any standards, the listener's breath is taken away. It will also be noticed that this number is in C, the key of light. Having employed this key extensively during the First Part, Haydn uses it here for the first and only time in the Second Part. It is highly unlikely that this should be without significance. The natural world receives secondary enlightenment when God creates man in his own image.

If German poetry was not a major influence on the text, English verse may well have been. The obvious candidate here is Pope's *An Essay on Man*. Written in 1733, it would have been freely available to the original librettist. Though the textual derivation from Milton ("Two of far nobler shape erect and tall,/Godlike erect, with native Honour clad,/In naked Majesty seem'd Lords of all") is clear enough, the general tone is closer to that of Pope's latitudinarian humanism.[75] Nor does the mood approximate to that of the newest ideas circulating in Germany at the time of the composition. Admiration of man at his best, rather than romantic wonder and mystery, is expressed: for the classical poet, such wonder and mystery exist in God rather than in his greatest creation. And Haydn's harmonic mystery follows suit; it accompanies the breath of God, not any human activity. Seen in this context, then, the previous stress upon order is all the more readily understood; this final stage of Creation marks the highest rung in the earthly ladder of living creatures.

* * *

The other side of the coin is the human duty to praise the Creator, the reason for which may be seen if we resume the quotation from Gall. The "countless creatures" may "enjoy their existence, but we human beings have cause to take special delight in our existence, since of all living creatures on earth, we enjoy most of the good things. For this was God's chief purpose with us human beings, to make us the noblest creatures on earth and to make us exceedingly happy. God is our most benevolent Father."[76] Thus Adam and Eve, having investigated the wonders of paradise, join with the Heavenly Host in the great Hymn (no. 30) to hail their "bounteous Lord," whose "word call'd forth this wond'rous frame," and to "praise thee now and ever more." Hardly surprisingly, the music has once again returned to the key of C. Interestingly, this third and final part of the oratorio no longer quotes from the Bible. This should not be seen as anti-Christian, or even anti-orthodox, but is nevertheless symptomatic of a more humanistic emphasis than has often been the case in orthodox Christianity. Humanism here involves not only paying attention to man but also praising God, Creator of this greatest wonder of all. The one will naturally lead us to the other.

Both text and music provide a perfect opportunity to put into practice Gall's archetypal Reform Catholic instruction to teachers that they should not constantly "threaten with the Devil," but glorify and kindle a true love for the Creator, based on rational understanding.[77] The argument for God's existence from design held just as much persuasive force in Austrian circles at this time as it had in England during the earlier eighteenth century, when Addison had declared the Creation to be "a perpetual Feast to the Mind of a good Man, every thing he sees cheers and delights him."[78] This should not be a surprise; Pope's *Essay* was hugely popular in Germany. It was translated into German as early as 1740 and received

[75]Milton, *Paradise Lost*, 86. Cf., "The gen'ral Order, since the whole began,/Is kept in Nature, and is kept in Man." in Pope, *Essay on Man*, 36.

[76]Wangermann, "Reform Catholicism and Political Radicalism," 132.

[77]Ibid., 133.

[78]Addison and Steele, *Spectator* 5:293, 492.

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more than twenty such translations during its first hundred years. The *Essay* was even translated twice into Hungarian, which suggests widespread knowledge in Austria.[79] And so there was; Haydn himself owned copies in English and German.[80] Count Philipp Cobenzl, one of Joseph II's closest friends but not a member of the intellectual vanguard, tells in his memoirs of the confusion into which he had been thrown upon reading the Scriptures and the church Fathers. The more he read, the more he found himself skeptical, ultimately falling into "the most perfect disbelief"—which left him desperate and inconsolable. Yet assistance was at hand, although the work that soothed his troubled brow was not from the stable of the "modern philosophers most in fashion." It was Pope's *Essay*.[81]

Interpretation of what follows the Hymn is perhaps more contentious. The Hymn's conclusion, when chanting obeisance cedes to rapturous acclamation, could belong only to the eighteenth century, harmonizing remarkably well with quite varied religious outlooks (a strength or weakness, depending on one's viewpoint of enlightened Catholicism). We stand close to the inhabitants of Voltaire's Eldorado, who "have nothing to ask of God," yet nevertheless "thank Him unceasingly" for everything he has given them, and "worship God from morning till night."[82] By the same token, we are not far from the mystical, Masonic world of *The Magic Flute*, which should caution us against easy categorizations of Enlightenment "rationalism" and romantic "irrationalism." Nor do we stand in any sense at a remove from Haydn's late Te Deum, also in the key of C major. All of these worlds and their concerns are focused on praise for the Creator and his Creation. For the final time, Haydn's long-range tonal plan has elevated the music to the key of light, having previously taken us as far away as possible, to G flat major, in order to stress the original tonic key when restored. But then the angels take their leave, and we are left with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. This second half of the Third Part has often elicited criticism for providing an anticlimax. Tovey advocated omission of the remainder of the oratorio, rightly declaring "the sublimest note"—at least, we might add, after the creative act itself—to have been struck in the Hymn.[83] The somewhat dampened tone is, however, an integral part of the drama.

The listener is immediately plunged back to earth—literally—with the only *recitativo secco* of any length in the entire work. There then follows a lengthy duet between the first couple: charming enough, but definitely a duet between mortals. To underline this, the music has fallen to the key of E flat. Siegmund Levarie makes a number of persuasive points relating to this duet. Noting that no. 30 addresses itself to God and praises his Creation, he depicts no. 32, devoted entirely to earthly pleasures, as a parody of the former. This is the world of commedia dell'arte—the action repeated, but in parody: the Singspiel counterpart to the preceding scene, the realm of Papageno and Papagena. The opening horn duo of the final allegro exchange between Adam and Eve exhibits almost every characteristic of contemporary Viennese popular song. Phrases are symmetrical groupings of four bars (in stark contrast to the more complex phrase structure of no. 30); horns and fiddling response provide the "atmosphere of a country dance"; the rhythm is that of the *écossaisse*, then at the height of its popularity in Vienna, and instantly recognizable to audiences of the time.[84] Following a brief

[79]M. B. and L. M. Price, *The Publication of English Literature in Germany in the Eighteenth Century* (Berkeley, 1934), 177; M. Mack, introduction to Pope, *Essay on Man*, xli.

[80]Hörwarthner, "Joseph Haydn's Library," 434.

[81]P. Cobenzl, "Souvenirs des différentes époques de ma vie," *Archiv für österreichische Geschichte* 67 (1886): 92.

[82]Voltaire, *Candide*, trans. and ed. J. Butt (Harmondsworth, UK, 1947), 79.

[83]Tovey, *Essays*, 5:145–46.

[84]S. Levarie, "The Closing Numbers of 'Die Schöpfung'," in *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Music: A Tribute to Karl Geiringer on His Seventieth Birthday*, ed. H. C. Robbins Landon and R. E. Chapman (London, 1970), 315, 317–18.

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recitative (to which we shall return), the oratorio concludes with a final chorus of praise in the key of B flat—"Noble, but less than C major," as André Grétry describes it in his *Mémoires* of 1797.[85] Whether or not this should *intrinsically* be the case, it seems apposite here. The question, then, is why Haydn elected to conclude *The Creation* as he did.

Levarie rightly draws a theological conclusion, but perhaps not the correct one, which I should argue is concerned not with original sin but with hierarchy within God's Creation. The oratorio, it seems to me, *does* have an overarching tonality of C, a view by no means universally accepted, not least of course because it does not end in the key in which it began.[86] It is certainly unusual if trumpets are to be employed, as they are here, to conclude in what is still an eighteenth-century dramatic work, if not an opera, in a key other than C, D, or E flat. This suggests a motivation less "absolutely" musical than theologico-dramatic for concluding in the audibly "flatter" tonality of B flat major.

Many, though by no means all, major eighteenth-century works are centered on a well-defined tonic key—including Handel's *Israel in Egypt* and *Saul* (both known to Haydn), Haydn's own early oratorio, *Il Ritorno di Tobia*, many of his masses, and the principal operas of Mozart.[87] More important is the internal evidence, the regular employment of the tonic key at the significant movements referred to above. Levarie explains the literal fall in key relationships as symbolizing "man's fall in grace." This claim would appear to be strengthened by Uriel's recitative (no. 33), in which the angel warns, "O happy pair, and always happy yet, if not misled by false conceit, ye strive at more, as granted is, and more to know, as know ye should." Levarie elucidates: "God has touched him [man] but the snake will get him."[88] This, however, exaggerates the importance of a seven-bar recitative. Its existence cannot be denied; but if the intention had been to propound the doctrine of original sin, it could have been done far more extensively and dramatically than is the case in this perfunctory passage. Human pride is simply not a central feature of the work, though it is fundamental to Milton and Pope. As Temperley points out, Levarie presumes that Haydn was personally preoccupied with the doctrine of original sin and was dissatisfied with a libretto that played down this aspect of the story.[89]

From what we know of Haydn's religious beliefs, he was hardly someone obsessed with original sin; for music that *is* preoccupied with such matters, one should turn to the sacred oeuvre of Bach. More plausible is a moderate theological interpretation. The central issue here is not original sin, but man's distance from God. Man may possess attributes of the divine, but he still falls far short of divinity; such is made clear in Pope's *Essay*. Overlord of nature he may be, but there remain numerous entities superior to man in the cosmic order:

> Vast chain of being, which from God began,
> Natures aethereal, human, angel, man,
> Beast, bird, fish, insect! What no eye can see,
> No glass can reach! From Infinite to thee,
> From thee to nothing![90]

[85]Steblin, *History of Key Characteristics*, 297.

[86]It is rejected, for example, in Temperley, *Haydn: The Creation*, 49–51.

[87]For contrasting views on the question of a unifying tonality to Mozart's operas, see S. Levarie, *Mozart's "Le nozze di Figaro": A Critical Analysis* (Chicago, 1952); J. Webster, "Mozart's Operas and the Myth of Musical Unity," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 2 (1990): 197–218.

[88]Levarie, "The Closing Numbers of 'Die Schöpfung'," 316, 320.

[89]Temperley, *Haydn: "The Creation,"* 17.

[90]Pope, *Essay on Man*, 44–45.

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Pope's popularity has already been noted. Kant quotes approvingly this very passage in his *Universal Natural History*, arguing that "the perfections of God … are not less majestic in the lower classes than in the higher."[91] The Heavenly Host has definitely left the scene by the end of the Hymn. The final chorus of praise is sung by mortals, a point made clear by the fact that the soloists are not the three archangels, but merely soprano, tenor, and bass, joined for the first and last time by an equally anonymous alto. I do not claim that Haydn entertained a casuistic preoccupation with the precise status of angels and archangels within the cosmic hierarchy, but the evidence suggests that *The Creation* ends as it does in order to emphasize, as had Pope and Kant in somewhat different fashion, the gulf that still lies between the human and the divine. This is the lesson not—at least, not in *this* case—of the Fall, but of the second biblical account of man's creation (Genesis 2.2–8): God rested from his works and created man that they might be perpetuated. Yet though man might continue to create, the Creation would remain a unique event.

* * *

Attention has been drawn on many occasions to the numerous coincidences of attitude in early-to-mid-century England and later eighteenth-century Austria. Thus Martin Stern's thesis of Enlightened influence is correct but for reasons different from those he presents. Indeed, he neglects to play the strongest card for "native" influence on *The Creation*. By confining himself to the libretto, he is unable to address the most genuinely Austrian aspect of the oratorio: namely, Haydn's music. William Kumber has argued that in *The Creation* the music, in Romantic fashion, "actively *models* the imagination."[92] This is often true, yet the modeled image remains a rather static picture, representing the cosmic Toryism of Addison, Pope, and Johnson: a universal social and political order extended to or descended from the hierarchy of the natural and even supernatural worlds. Order is not merely providential but is also conducive to virtue. In this respect, *The Creation* is very much of a piece with the time and place in which its libretto was written.

Swieten, of course, was no Voltaire. We do not find him—still less Haydn—asking, "Was there really a Moses?" or attributing the origin of this "unknown" figure to the pathetic attempts of a poor, ignorant people to imitate its Phoenician neighbors.[93] Yet at the same time, neither librettist nor composer is put in the position of having to state that there *did* exist such a figure, that the Israelites *were* the chosen people of a tribal, often vengeful God, who only subsequently extended his promises to the entirety of mankind. *The Creation* is rather different, then, from the majority of Handel's oratorios, which Ruth Smith has convincingly portrayed as being profoundly influenced by orthodox, that is, moderate Anglican, rebuttals of deist attacks on revelation.[94] *The Creation* rejects not prophecies, nor miracles, nor Mosaic law, but simply confines itself to matters long preceding Abraham's calling. It remains an expression not of deism but of Enlightened Christian theology. Nevertheless, at times, it could be seen as hovering dangerously over the precipice of natural religion. The more rigorously orthodox church hierarchy—for this was a church that

[91]Kant, *Universal Natural History*, 194.

[92]W. A. Kumber, "A 'New Quickening': Haydn's *The Creation*, Wordsworth, and the Pictorialist Imagination," *Studies in Romanticism* 30 (1993): 560.

[93]Voltaire, *Philosophical Dictionary*, trans. and ed. T. Besterman (Harmondsworth, UK, 1972), 317.

[94]R. Smith, "Intellectual Contexts of Handel's Oratorios," in *Music in Eighteenth-Century England: Essays in Memory of Charles Cudworth*, eds C. Hogwood and R. Luckett (Cambridge, 1983), 126–27.

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included Cardinal Migazzi, a former Jansenist, turned dedicated opponent of Swieten—certainly had its doubts and sometimes took steps to prohibit performances in church.[95]

Our consideration also helps illuminate attitudes toward sin. Generalizations regarding the Enlightenment as a whole are notoriously difficult, but it can safely be said that the doctrine of original sin played little part in its credo. Locke had argued that it was not even warranted by scripture, and he enjoyed an excellent reputation as a scriptural interpreter in eighteenth-century Germany.[96] Even when not explicitly denied, original sin was largely ignored. Despite that problematic final recitative, this is very much the case in *The Creation*. Ironically, one of the greatest modern expositions of the doctrine of original sin, *Paradise Lost*, heralded its demise (at least in intellectual circles), perhaps due to the clarity with which its terrible implications were set out. Some of the striking differences between *The Creation* and Milton's work have already been noted.

Yet the age-old theodicy problem, the problem of how to account for an evil that was not merely apparent, did not vanish. If anything, it became all the more hotly debated as the Augustinian account, so utterly concerned with original sin, took its bow—although, as the nineteenth century would attest, not its final bow. *Candide* admits a failure to square the circle that many, including Schopenhauer, would see as deeply pessimistic.[97] *Il faut cultiver notre jardin* tends to take one back to another Garden; all was not for the best in the best of all possible worlds. Although Voltaire's *Letters on England* consist largely of the writer extolling the freedom and tolerance he found in the land of his three-year exile, they conclude with an extended, apparently unconnected, confrontation on the problem of evil with Pascal.[98] Some later eighteenth-century thinkers, most notably Rousseau and Kant, would see the introduction of radical evil into the world as engendering the possibility, indeed the necessity, of ethical choice and thus of spiritual autonomy. The Fall itself is conspicuous by its virtual absence from *The Creation*, but *The Seasons* was yet to come; and even *The Creation*'s closing numbers indicate a less severe fall from the exalted level of God's Creation.

* * *

Alongside *The Seasons*, Haydn's *Creation* stands as one of the final monuments to Enlightened Catholicism. *The Creation* is the product of an environment very different from that in which Bach assembled the Mass in B minor, but also quite distinct from that in which Beethoven composed the Mass in D. God's existence and his benevolence are celebrated—not argued, nor fought for. *The Seasons*, however, would be slightly different. Austrian Reform Catholicism may have some common ground with English deism, but the two are by no means interchangeable, especially as passages in James Thomson's poem, here adapted more actively by Swieten, might readily be taken as entailing straightforward theological sins of omission and even commission. Throughout Swieten's libretto, deistic thoughts inspired by contemplation of nature are converted into direct prayers of thanksgiving and praise to the living God. As if to emphasize this, "Spring" ends with a traditional Christian expression of

[95]Landon, *Haydn: Chronicle and Works*, 5:71.

[96]J. Locke, "The First Treatise of Government," in *Political Writings*, ed. D. Wootton (Harmondsworth, UK, 1993), 243–44; Price and Price, *Publication of English Humaniora*, xvii–xviii.

[97]A. Schopenhauer, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, 2 vols., ed. W. Freiherr von Löhneysen (Stuttgart, 1960), 2:746, 750.

[98]Voltaire, *Letters on England*, trans. L. Tancock (Penguin, UK, 1980), 120–45.

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praise, reflected in its "traditional" fugal setting: "Honour, laud and praise to Thee, eternal, mighty, benevolent God." This tilt toward orthodoxy, far from a wholesale transformation but nevertheless perceptible, is especially present during the final part, "Winter," and is worth discussing briefly not only on its own account but also because it aids understanding of the direction in which *The Creation* is heading.

The introduction portrays the thick fog with which winter begins. Though the swirling chaos of such mists may be of an order different from that of the "Representation of Chaos"—the German *Nebel* refers to mist, fog, and nebula—the analogy is close enough for Haydn, consciously or no, to return to C minor. However, the mood is different: Landon writes of "the bleakest orchestral sound Haydn ever produced."[99] In Simon's aria, there is preoccupation with human mortality, lofty designs, hankerings after fame, days of luxury: all are gone now, "vanished as if a dream." Haydn's ethereal, dreamlike woodwind chords here bear an astonishing—and apparently unremarked—resemblance to those that announce Mendelssohn's Overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Swieten brings us back to earth, the *ottocento* earth, quoting directly from Thomson's "Virtue sole survives": "*Nur Tugend bleibt.*"[100] This is an austere message, but very much an Enlightened one. It is the message that lies at the very heart of Kant's philosophy, transcending the utilitarian calculus of pleasure and pain that had led—and would continue to lead—so many to pessimism.

The Seasons does not, however, end on quite so austere a note. A short recitative informs us that while virtue may stand alone, it also guides us to the highest goal. The trumpets sound: we are once again in the key of light, C major, for the final chorus. Simon informs us that this is the glorious morn, our awakening to new life. Thomson had said something similar, but for him the "glorious morn" had merely been the dawning of spring, whereas for Haydn and Swieten it is a unique event: we are witnesses to the resurrection of the dead, who from pain and death shall evermore be free. As the heavenly portals open, a holy mount crowned by a canopy appears; to music unmistakably reminiscent of *The Magic Flute*, we learn that peace and tranquility are here enthroned. Harking back to Handel's *Israel in Egypt*, Haydn employs a double chorus for what appears to be the first time in his oeuvre and is certainly the last.

Virtue here is the central point. The comparison with Rousseau and Kant is instructive, since it highlights the concomitant issue of sin. *Original* sin might have withered on the vine of liberal theology, but the idea of sin as such proved far more resilient. By the end of the century, the classical Enlightenment conception of private vice providentially leading to public virtue found itself increasingly under fire.[101] We might relate this to the shift from the Anglophilia of earlier thinkers towards a more Continental flavor, be it German or, as in Rousseau's case, Genevan, if hardly Calvinist. Of course, Swieten was hardly running a huge risk in promoting virtue, the corollary of placing a greater emphasis on sin, for virtue is a difficult cause to oppose. But to state that only virtue survives this world identifies him with more progressive currents than were in favor in turn-of-the-century Vienna, whilst remaining part of a theology that is definitely eighteenth-century in hue. It is similar to the theology of the young, Kantian Hegel, expressed in his *Life of Jesus* (1795), whose thesis is that Christ's teaching clearly signifies the internality of the law of man's being, in the shape of a "reason"

[99]Landon, *Haydn: Chronicle and Works*, 5:129–30.

[100]J. Thomson, "The Seasons," in *The Complete Poetical Works of James Thomson*, ed. J. L. Robertson (London, 1908), 224.

[101]On private vice and public virtue, see, for example, B. Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees*, ed. P. Harth (Harmondsworth, UK, 1989); A. O. Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests: Arguments for Capitalism before Its Triumph* (Princeton, 1997).

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whose rights and dominion must be recognized and affirmed.[102] It is not the theology of the later Hegel or of romantic Christianity, but the moralism of the later eighteenth century: one can imagine those who dwelled beneath the heavenly canopy praying, after a fashion similar to the subjects of Hegel's Kantian kingdom, that all rational creatures should have no law other than that of their moral conscience.

There remains, however, some way to go; the struggle for mastery of the path to salvation (and enlightenment) is symbolized by a fugue. The theology expressed therein is probably the most orthodox in the two oratorios, with souls beseeching God to lead them with his guiding hand, to grant them strength and courage. It is, nonetheless, a relatively measured expression of fear. There is none of the grandiose theatricality of Berlioz and Verdi, little of the anguish of John Henry Newman's and Edward Elgar's Gerontius; nor is there any sign of that angel of death who pervades so much of Mozart's protoromantic music.[103] Before long, the expected happy ending has come upon us. With the exception of that to the final movement of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony—another work travelling from the darkness of C minor to the light of C major—few codas can have insisted so emphatically on the latter key. Virtue has been rewarded with admission to the heavenly kingdom. As if to symbolize the melting pot of ideas that constituted Reform Catholicism, Haydn triumphantly reconciles the light first expressed in *The Creation* with the more traditional Austrian conception of C major, key par excellence of the *Missa solemnis figuraliter*, replete with trumpets and kettledrums.[104] Could there exist more eloquent testimony, not only to the compatibility between Enlightenment and religion, but also to the crucial, indeed central, role played by the Christian faith throughout the allegedly "secularizing" eighteenth century? The theological and tonal drama opened by the "Representation of Chaos" has been reprised and brought to its ultimate conclusion.

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[102]G. F. W. Hegel, "The Life of Jesus," in *Three Essays, 1793–1795*, trans. and ed. P. Fuss and J. Dobbins (Notre Dame, 1984), 104–65.

[103]It is nevertheless intriguing—if ultimately fruitless—to speculate as to the nature of Haydn's projected oratorio on the Last Judgment.

[104]More than half of the instrumental Masses composed in Austria between 1750 and 1800 were in the key of C major. Landon, *Haydn: Chronicle and Works*, 4:400–401.

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