The Foundations of Mozart Scholarship

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What are the foundations of Mozart scholarship? The "facts"—there are many of them, and we are always learning more—of a remarkable composer's short life? Or the meanings we read in that life, and the meanings we experience in the music Mozart left behind? The composer's present jubilee year offers a chance to reflect on these questions. My reflections begin with a polemical call for change in Mozart scholarship proposed more than forty years ago by a young music historian to the skeptical audience of a round-table discussion at an international conference. The young scholar, Wolfgang Plath, had just assumed the editorship of the largest Mozart project of his day (and of ours), the *Neue Mozart-Ausgabe.* The tone of his argument interests me as well as its contents: it was a polemic, designed as much to discredit the position of his opponents as to strengthen his own position. Plath's "straw man" was the school of German historiography that dominated writing in history and the history of the arts for more than a century, a school that sought, above all else, to discern meaning in history's ebb and flow. His critique, as we shall see, was as controversial as it was effective; I will argue here that specialist Mozart scholarship today has been shaped in no small part by it. Indeed, the issues Plath raised in making his argument have implications that extend far beyond the narrow confines of Mozart studies.

Today the *NMA* is winding up its work after fifty years, more than thirty of those under Plath's direction. The occasion of the recent tenth anniversary of Plath's untimely death in 1995, the caesura brought about by pending completion of the *NMA*, and Mozart's own 250th birthday invite a reexamination of the contours, contexts, and consequences of Plath's intervention. I will begin by summarizing Plath's densely written polemic, which has never been translated into English. I will then illuminate what I believe were two of his most important sources of inspiration: first, a nostalgia for a strictly source-critical brand of nineteenth-century musicology that he saw as a corrective to the vagaries of "interpretation," and second, his enthusiasm for a new "empirical" approach to music history gaining momentum at that time in the United States. Next, I will examine the replies of Plath's critics, scholars like Friedrich Blume who, suspicious of Plath's empiricism, defiantly proclaimed the "difference" of humanistic inquiry. For these critics, "understanding" Mozart's *Geist* always took precedence over dissecting the material remains of his works. This insistence, I will argue, links conservatives like Blume with many of the protagonists of the North

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American "new musicology," who took to the field some years later with similar attacks on "positivism." Finally, I will suggest how reflection on the Plath controversy can help us to orient ourselves as students of Mozart in a world that has changed so much in the last forty years.

Sacrificing the Luxury of Interpretation: Plath's Polemic

At a round-table discussion at the ninth congress of the International Musicological Society in Salzburg in 1964, the young German musicologist Wolfgang Plath rose to defend two theses about the state of Mozart scholarship, which he had circulated in advance. In the first he claimed, "Mozart research, because of its unclear sense of its own identity, has fallen into a crisis, whose proximate cause is neglect of fundamentals," and in the second, "Basic research is the methodological and systematic study of sources. Only in this manner, at present, can progress in the treatment of fundamental problems of Mozart research be expected" (Plath [1964] 1991:78).[1] These claims were to become the stuff of intense controversy, as the discussion at the round-table that day in Salzburg and subsequent articles would show. For all of the resistance Plath was to engender, however, I will argue that his departure from interpretation and proposed return to "factual" or "positivist" scholarship was to set the agenda in much of Mozart studies for years to come.

Plath began his Salzburg position paper by observing that Mozart studies was dominated by interpretive methods known broadly as *Geistesgeschichte* and associated with the thinking of the philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey (1833–1911). This orientation had lead Mozart scholars to concentrate on "understanding" the composer and his works.[2] For Plath, successful interpretations depended on more than what he saw as just a vague notion. Rather, they required a secure factual foundation, and for him, the idea that Mozart scholarship enjoyed this security was an illusion. The interpretation of the "spiritual and cultural phenomenon Mozart" (geistiges Phänomen Mozart)[3] ought to remain the "most important goal" of Mozart research, but only as a "formal" goal that at most could be considered "abstract." The way to reach this goal was through concrete research—research that must orient itself towards the "actual demands of the material at hand."

Plath's concrete research depended "in no way . . . on the spiritual and cultural phenomenon Mozart," but only on the "Mozart materials handed down by history." Ideally, the "formal goal" of Mozart research would be interpretation and understanding, but the "object of study itself" demanded that "the primary goal of Mozart scholarship should be the critical attention to and study of these materials." Plath's final point was clear: "The positively

secured facts, and nothing else, which are won from a process that develops continuously in its methods, are the foundations of research upon which all other intellectual and scientific activities are to build."

Positively secured facts, Plath continued, are the materials upon which one might base acts of interpretation and understanding. But such acts are the *final* step in a process; they require the basis of factual evidence gathered in earlier steps. This final step makes the "spiritual and cultural phenomenon Mozart available," not as the "sum of the facts, but as the integral meaning contained by the factual." This shows, Plath claimed, just how important "positivism" is to the human sciences. He defined positivism as the "turning toward the facts," that is, the "differentiation between factually secured knowledge and hypothesis, mere supposition, or even uncontrollable fantasy." In the final analysis, "positivism is that which makes the human sciences scientific." It is nothing more than the "rigorous application of the historical critical method." This method is the "methodologically aware undertaking to win, in any way conceivable, as much trustworthy information (facts) as possible from the materials being researched" but without stipulating that these facts "are the only possible final goals for research."

Plath goes on to explain that Mozart scholars seemed to have thought, or at least acted, otherwise ([1964] 1991:79). This was "astounding enough," if one considered that both Otto Jahn and Ludwig von Köchel, "the two men to whom Mozart scholarship, in the final analysis, owes everything," were "positivists" in the sense that Plath used the word. How could Mozart scholarship have lost its inner orientation and strayed so far from the work of Jahn and Köchel? His answer was drastic: "Perhaps because it has never actually been near them."

For Plath, the history of Mozart scholarship was a history of lost opportunity. The contributions of Jahn and Köchel in the nineteenth century, Plath claimed, were "accepted with astonishment" by those interested in Mozart. But instead of seeing their accomplishments as a foundation upon which to build, later Mozartians simply assumed that the two fathers of Mozart scholarship had answered all of the important questions, especially those relating to material sources; indeed, the necessity for further research along these lines was "neither acknowledged nor even imagined."[4] The "frighteningly" small amount of progress beyond the work of Jahn and Köchel in the first Mozart complete works edition (1877–83) was a symptom of this failure of imagination. "Without having realized it," Plath continued, "[Mozart scholarship relinquished its] potential leading role among the various specialties of the modern discipline of music history" to Bach scholarship, whose founders, the philologists Philipp Spitta and Wilhelm Rust, were Otto Jahn's true "spiritual heirs."

The vacuum left by a lack of interest in what Plath called the "learned-scientific" tendency in Mozart studies was filled by the "artistic" tendency and scholars who approached the "object of research naively and without scruples as to method." In their work, "unfocused and subjective" concepts like "artistic sensibility" and "musicality" took the place of "rational argumentation." It is of no wonder, he remarked, that those who did this kind of work on Mozart found the efforts of their "learned-scientific" predecessors to be "repellently cold, inartistic, and unmusical." The "learned-scientific" project in Mozart biography was sustained only by Hermann Abert (1871–1927); for the rest of Mozart studies it remained "an isolated phenomenon" without "any influence worth mentioning" ([1964] 1991:80).

The situation only worsened in the early twentieth century, Plath continued, as the strategies known collectively as *Geistesgeschichte* (to which we will return below) emerged as powerful influences in German intellectual life. Here, at least in theory, a chance to re-unite the two competing models was lost. Instead, Plath claimed, exactly the opposite happened: the "artistic" tendency saw itself "confirmed in its uniqueness" due to the "many points of contact between" it and the theories of philosophers like Dilthey. The previous "antipathy to positivism on the part of the artistic-research tendency" expanded to include the "odious charge of *Ungeistigkeit.*"

Nevertheless, in Plath's view, leading Mozart scholars remained "mild and moderate" in their criticisms of the two figures "revered as founding fathers of scholarly-scientific Mozart research," without noticing that their own scholarship had long since ceased to follow the examples set by Jahn and Köchel. Alfred Einstein's remarks on the two scholars in his introduction to the third edition of the Köchel catalogue "demonstrated how secure *geisteswissenschaftliche Mozartforschung* thought its position to be." Both were, in Einstein's words, "too much scholars and too little musicians." For Plath, Einstein's opinion is dangerously arrogant, since first, there is no such thing as a "musical" method of historical research, and therefore accusing a historian of being "unmusical" is a meaningless charge, and second, the methods of the human sciences, should they claim to be scientific, demand that all historical arguments be made on the basis of historical sources. The evaluation of these sources is the work of the philologist, "who must also be a positivist, if he is to produce useful results."

Plath then explained what he believed the neglect of positivism had done to Mozart studies ([1964] 1991:80). "The . . . blind prejudice against positivism" had had severe consequences: the discourse of the field had become "muddled, because the process of paying careful attention to the difference between secure knowledge and contingent hypothesis had become less and less important." In its present state, Mozart studies had "no secure foundations, and . . . any sense of security was an illusion."

Then Plath stated his second thesis: "Basic research is the methodological and systematic study of sources. Only in this manner, at present, can progress in the treatment of fundamental problems of Mozart research be expected" ([1964] 1991:81). This basic research would have two components. The first is what he calls "extensive" *Quellenforschung*, that is, the reclamation of lost source materials and the accumulation of hitherto unknown sources. Here, he claims, "the difficulties will be mostly those of organization." The second is "intensive" *Quellenforschung*, or the "organization, evaluation, and classification" of all Mozart sources (not just the newly discovered ones), in order to "analyze the complete spectrum of the concrete information" these sources contain. Here the main difficulty is that "adequate methods have yet to be developed and tested."

In the balance of his paper ([1964] 1991:81–85), Plath proposed an impressively prescient program for Mozart studies, one both biographical and works-based. Almost all of the projects he outlined—studies of sketches, copyists, paper, handwriting, first editions, and other philological issues—have now, forty years on, been attempted and have yielded important results.[5] Indeed, it seems almost as if Plath's position paper, which is little known beyond a small circle of specialists, has been used as some kind of master plan by many of those involved in institutionalized Mozart research over the last four decades. However it came about, the realization of Plath's program is evidence of the victory of his paradigm. Indeed, Mozart studies now enjoys a philological basis that is the envy of the discipline.[6] Just as Plath had predicted, the projects he called for have become the basis upon which important Mozart projects of our time, including the *NMA* and the *New Köchel*, have been built.[7]

As a whole, Plath's polemic was built on two pillars. One was nineteenth-century Bach scholarship's strictly source-critical approach, as exemplified by the work of Philipp Spitta, who believed, as Plath did, that there was no difference between documents of music history and documents of any other kind. The other model—never directly acknowledged—was the "positivism" popularized by the Austro-British philosopher Karl Popper. This double perspective, I believe, forced Plath to misrepresent Otto Jahn, his paragon of Mozart scholarship, as a positivist. I would argue that this misrepresentation was an inevitable consequence of Plath's polemical approach. By concentrating on the weaknesses of his opponent's positions—that is, on methods of approaching Mozart based on "understanding" him—he built an unstable position of his own. Our task in the next sections will be to explore the background of his polemic.

Historicism and Mozart Studies

In order to understand the contexts of Plath's critique and its polemical force, we must begin with a revolution in historical thinking that emerged in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries among philosophers and historians in Germany like Johann Gottfried Herder, Wilhelm von Humboldt, and Leopold von Ranke. These thinkers and their followers, known loosely as the "historical school," imagined history less as a chronicle of events and more as a flowing process. One of the key achievements of the historical revolution was a rethinking of the movement of time itself, and with it the realization that the historian is enclosed in history's stream and thus cannot observe it objectively. Thus, crucially, the telling of history—in contrast to the reporting of observations about the natural world—is a narrative like any other story one might tell about what humans do. Although human freedom makes history unpredictable and allows the historian his or her own perspective on this story, the historian is at the same time obligated to suppress this perspective in the search for deeper historical knowledge. The school of historical writing engendered by this historical revolution has come to be known as "historicism." A true historicist can—and must—claim to be both subjective and objective simultaneously. The disciplines of music history as we know them emerged in historicism's shadow.[8]

The term "historicism," however, is often used to mean several different things. For our purposes, we can stipulate that historicism has three main elements, all of which articulate the reactions of German thinkers to tensions already inherent in Enlightenment philosophy and historiography, and which reflect a practice of writing history that took shape in the first decades of the nineteenth century.

First, the historicist believes in the individuality of the past, and rejects thinking in normative terms about it. This is rooted in the "anthropological turn" of the eighteenth-century—the realization that the world is filled with fundamentally different cultures, each with its own history. Herder, for instance, claimed that peoples, languages, and societies, both past and present, should be seen as individuals, growing organically from their pasts toward their futures. Herder's influential proposition that individuality can apply to whole peoples has always been a source of instability for historicism, for it can easily be used to make value judgments that privilege one people over another.[9] Yet the rejection of normative thinking does not absolve the historian from the obligation of telling a story or constructing a narrative. On the contrary: if every story is to be judged on its own terms, then it is the historian's special role to tell history's stories in order that they may be judged, and to acknowledge her own position while doing so, even if this means she must make a conscious attempt to remove herself from the act

of historical narration. In this sense of its definition, writing history is like a performance.[10]

A second element, which serves to control the first, is the critical skepticism of all that history hands down to us. Historicism developed the critical-historical method, a method of searching for facts in the materials of the past, in order to make this regulation possible. Many of the main actors of the historical revolution were also practitioners of the techniques of recovering old texts known as "philology," which gained considerable prestige in late eighteenth-century Germany. These practices were not new. The ancient Greeks and Romans had valued skepticism in the writing of history, but it was the rediscovery of the ancient world during the Renaissance that fostered the emergence of a canon of techniques for distinguishing truth from error in historical texts. The scholarly disputes that accompanied the Reformation and the Counter Reformation provided an impetus for the development of methods meant to search for truth in historical documents, and the extension of historical skepticism in the eighteenth century to the text of the Bible itself—the redefinition of Christianity's central text as a historical document—provided another impulse for the creation of the modern disciplines of philology. Finally, the expansion of philological interest to German texts in the early nineteenth century institutionalized methods of historical criticism in Germany, particularly at the young universities that would eventually become the models for the university as we know it today, at least in Germany and in English-speaking countries. The importance of this institutionalization to the emergence of the historical profession cannot be underestimated. The critical-historical method, sometimes referred to in philology as "lower" criticism, is the aspect of historicism closest to the empiricist pole on the wider spectrum of historical methods, and it is a source of many misunderstandings about what historicism means to accomplish.[11] Only later, and then mostly in non-German reception of historicism, were these critical methods associated with the word "positivism."

A third facet is the interpretation of the world *as* history. All the works of humanity, whether they are individual artifacts, nation-states, or operas, are best understood historically, and all of human creation is part of a stream of history that flows from the past through the present to the future. Historical events—and historical works of art—must be placed in context, for it is "contextualization" that makes historical narrative possible. When we speak of *historicizing* something, we are referring to this practice and acknowledging our place (as well as the place of the events we are attempting to describe and understand) in history's stream. For Hegel, therefore, the flow of this stream expressed the meeting of Mind and Spirit; the meaning of historical events depended on their place in this most grand of contexts. Hegel's thought played a critical role in the consolidation of the historicist

world view, even if founders of the historical school like Leopold von Ranke, to whom we will return in a moment, had little patience for Hegelian metaphysics.[12] A consequence of this image of history "unfolding" is the tendency of many historicist thinkers to argue, or at least to presume in their arguments, that history is moving forward, that it can therefore be told as a narrative of progress, and that this narrative is backed up by unimpeachable facts won by the critical-historical method.[13] As we shall see, this short circuit between narrative and fact was the element that most disturbed historicism's preeminent twentieth-century critic, Karl Popper.[14] A majority of the accounts of music history that rely in their narratives on successions of styles are based on historicism's mixture of Hegelian confidence in the "rightness" of the present and a sense that the path history has taken to the present was inevitable.

Many present critiques of historicism concentrate on only one of these elements without accounting for all of them together.[15] Yet all three worked together to define the *practice* of historicism, which dominated German historiography and, thanks to the influence of German thought in Great Britain and the United States, also dominated historiography in English from the 1820s until after the Second World War.[16]

The Prussian historian Leopold von Ranke (1795–1886) is often remembered as one of the founders of the "historical school." Ranke, who taught for decades at the University of Berlin, established the training of historians as we know it in seminars based on detailed discussions of individual documents. Yet most of what he wrote was clearly informed, if not regulated, by his political conservatism and his Lutheran identity. The tensions in his work between the ideals of narrative and the imperatives of the factual are symptomatic of historicism's own two-facedness.[17] His famous dictum that historians should "bloß sagen, wie es eigentlich gewesen" (just say how it really was) is often understood to mean that the historian should concentrate only on the empirical. Indeed, Ranke's work is often held up as a kind of paradigm of positivism. What Ranke meant, however, is more complicated.[18] To be sure, there is no doubt that Ranke meant to give the sober assessment of documents a primary role in the historian's work. Yet English-speaking readers often misunderstand the word "eigentlich" in Ranke's motto, which during the nineteenth century meant more than just "actually." "Eigentlich" can also mean "in a specific character"; one might just as well translate Ranke's motto as "just say what it was that was special and characteristic [or perhaps essential] about the past." Ranke believed historical events should be understood in their own contexts and released from a grand chronicle of history. In a restatement of Goethe's motto, *individuum est ineffabile*, Ranke famously claimed that every historical age should be able to claim "immediacy to God."[19] Thus, for Ranke it was the

historian's duty to find out what gave each age and each historical situation its own special character.[20]

Otto Jahn

The work of the classical philologist Otto Jahn (1813–68), whose training was in Berlin (although not with Ranke), exemplifies many of historicism's contradictions. His four-volume Mozart biography, based in part on extensive work with Mozart's compositional materials, was the first biography of the composer to attempt a rigorous survey of both life and works (Jahn 1856–59).[21] Indeed, it was one of the first texts on any composer produced by the discipline that would later come to call itself "Musikwissenschaft." Jahn's goal, I will argue here, was to give the story of Mozart's life and creations a narrative shape by contextualizing them.

Jahn's Mozart biography fits within the "historical school" in many respects. To begin with, Jahn himself claimed that it was only his sense of distance from Mozart's era that allowed him to write a biography that would do justice to Mozart's "classicism." Jahn's original intention had been to write about Beethoven, but he apparently felt that easy access to living witnesses impaired his ability to write objectively; perhaps as an archaeologist this disturbed him. Yet the kind of objectivity he sought was not of the facts-and-figures kind. The final pages of volume 1, on Mozart's artistic nature, might serve as an example of what he had in mind:

> In the course of the development of those peoples who have given rise by themselves to their own forms of art, we can observe how they, sometimes helped and sometimes hindered by external conditions, strive and struggle for centuries until they have, in various attempts . . . learned to regard the depiction of the beautiful as the highest duty that art can perform. This wonderful and inspiring vision of the organic development of the nature of a gifted artist, apparently undisturbed by external factors, which, indeed, by serving all that surrounds it, and dispensing with all that serves only a temporary purpose, thereby grows all the stronger—this is the vision that Mozart's own course of development provides us. (Jahn 1856–59, 1:619–20)[22]

What is most striking about this passage is its Herderian tone, its focus on the organic relation of part and whole, and its bold comparison of Mozart's progress as a composer with the progress of art in a healthy society. It is a sterling example of the historicist imperative to place historical actors within the "flow" of larger processes, and to see—in proper dialectic style—the general (the cultural progress of societies) as an model for the particular (Mozart's biography).

Jahn's goal was the description of Mozart's works on their own terms. Thus his biographical narrative operates primarily via deep contextualization of both Mozart's life and of individual works. In order to do this, he was compelled, as we shall see, to provide the reader with background information about musical practice in the eighteenth century. And it goes without saying that Jahn, who is still regarded as the founder of archeology as an academic discipline in Germany, pursued his work on Mozart according to only the highest standards of historical criticism. Yet, like Ranke's writings, Jahn's biography displays all of the tensions of narrative historiography. Despite Jahn's claims to objectivity—we should recall his decision *not* to write about Beethoven—in all four volumes Jahn's musical present is never far from the surface. A friend of Mendelssohn and an admirer of Schumann, Jahn was an active critical opponent of Richard Wagner, and once one has read, for instance, his fundamental rejection of *Lohengrin* in the context of his paeans to *Don Giovanni*—to keep to examples from opera—parts of the biography take on a certain loaded quality.[23] It was Jahn's rejection of Wagner, perhaps, that led to his later reputation as a dusty and unmusical pedant, and which seems to have provoked a series of brutal attacks from his most famous former student, Friedrich Nietzsche.[24]

Jahn began his academic career as a scholar of classical antiquity. *Altertumswissenschaft* (the blanket German term for the study of antiquity) did not end for him with the collection and ordering of sources, as his later critics were to claim. For Jahn, in keeping with the theories of the historical school, the study of history was always a two-dimensional process. The wide expanses of the factual constitute one dimension, the depth provided by interpretation the other. Hayden White has described this realization as "an awareness of the gap between historical events and the language used to represent them" (in Koselleck 2002:xii).[25] Thus the language we use to tell the stories of history determines how these stories are told. In Jahn's case this took place on two levels: he wanted to explain the works of the ancients, but at the same time he sought to learn *their* language in order that they might explain themselves, and in turn that he might understand the context in which these works emerged.

The methods Jahn used in non-Mozartian investigations illustrate this approach. After being dismissed from his chair in Leipzig for political reasons in the aftermath of the 1848 revolution, Jahn kept himself busy—and afloat financially—with "occasional" projects. One of these was his Mozart biography and another was a detailed catalogue of ancient Greek vases in the collection of King Ludwig I of Bavaria. He published excerpts from this catalogue as articles. If we examine a portion of one of these (Jahn 1861:736–44), we can achieve a sense of how Jahn approached the study of historical artifacts and the cultures surrounding them.[26]

Figure 1: Greek vase discussed in Jahn (1861).

The vase in question is pictured in figure 1. Jahn begins with a vivid description of the figures on it: he uses phrases like "mit grosser Lebhaftigkeit" (with great liveliness) and "eine gewisse ernste Tüchtigkeit" (a certain earnest virtuousness, 1861:736). Jahn's description aims to capture a sense of the vase both as a specific work of art and as a relic of a wider cultural context; that is, the "facts" are used to place the object in what Jahn sees as history's flowing stream. The harp-player, "Kydias," for example, elicits a footnote directing the reader to a long list of other such figures on vases and the literature about them. The Kydias depicted, Jahn surmises, may have been the poet Kydias of Hermione referred to by Plato, Aristophanes, and later Plutarch. The "may have been" is important: Jahn qualifies this reference with critical reflection on the dangers of associating names on vases with specific historical personages, warning against the temptation of taking this vase for a portrait of the actual poet Kydias in the absence of further evidence (1861:739–40). Jahn then elaborates his critical description with

an appraisal of the vase's meaning. The vase represents the ideal, he writes, of a scene taken from "daily life": the "enthusiasm of drunken revelers after a joyous celebration." The object calls into question the role of the singer-poet in Greek society and thus illuminates this role in a wider narrative. Jahn continues:

> Such depictions are found on vases extremely often, and, if one can follow the change that attends stylistic development in the small details of behavior and clothing, then one can use such vases to portray a small portion of Greek cultural history completely and effectively. (Jahn 1861:737–38)[27]

Jahn's alternation here between the specific and the general, between historical criticism and ideal conclusions, between facts and narratives, is at the heart of his method.

The treatment of *Don Giovanni* in his Mozart biography exemplifies a similar approach (Jahn 1856–59, 4:296–449). It runs to over 150 pages, combining documentary biography (excerpts from Mozart's own *Verzeichnüß* are supplied in footnotes as running commentary), contexts (the operas of Mozart's contemporaries and a lengthy discussion of other settings of the drama), text criticism (based on Jahn's examination of the autograph, the first such study by any scholar), reception history, discussion of performance practices, and a review of Da Ponte's libretto. One also finds lengthy passages of description of both plot and music that today would be recognized as criticism and analysis.[28] The discussion of the opera is, in short, a multivalent treatment that combines social and cultural history, criticism, analysis, performance practice, and hermeneutics. Jahn's Mozart shines in the midst of it all, a unique figure, shaped by the contingencies of his time, defined by the immanent "facts" of the historical record, and who nonetheless embodies transcendent ideals.

The archaeologist Jan Bažant chose these words to end his essay on Otto Jahn's legacy for archaeology:

> It was an appeal to modernize classical archeology without losing sight of its original purpose, namely that it should be a study of ancient Greece and Rome because of and through its culture. This Winckelmannian ideal of the inseparableness of art and society is, however, difficult to attain. All subsequent synthetic treatments are either histories of ancient civilization, or descriptions of its artistic production as conceived as a succession of styles and imageries. The result is either a HISTORY of art, or a history of ART . . . Today, as in the time of Otto Jahn, a HISTORY of ART of ancient Greece is a desideratum. (Bažant 1991:27, capitalization in original)

This distinction between a "HISTORY of art" and a "history of ART" might sound familiar to musicologists. It is crucial to Carl Dahlhaus's influential

plea for a mode of writing history that is somehow faithful to music's special aesthetic status. Dahlhaus (and Bažant as well, presumably) borrowed the turn of phrase from the literary scholars René Wellek and Austin Warren via the German reception theorist Hans Robert Jauss.[29]

It is exactly this that separates Jahn from Plath. What is at stake in Plath's polemic is the isolation of art from history. When he claims that there is no such thing as "musical" music history, Plath reveals that he what he seeks is a HISTORY of art. Otto Jahn thought otherwise: he knew that he could not separate subject and subject matter. Indeed there is always an element of openness and interpretation in writing like Jahn's; this makes his work an odd choice to serve as an example of positivism. Consider, as a final example, his discussion of Beethoven's *Fidelio*:

> One is astounded by this constant experimentation. It is difficult to understand how an organic whole can emerge from such a collection of musical flotsam and jetsam. If, however, one compares the finished work of art with the chaos of the sketches, one will always be filled with admiration for the creative spirit that recognizes the idea inherent in its task so clearly, and sees the foundations and structures of the compositional process with such security, in such a way that beneath all the searching and experimentation of the particular the general reveals a whole that grows and develops organically and naturally out of its roots. (Jahn 1867:259)[30]

This is hardly the kind of writing Plath would have called "objective."

German historical writing from Herder onwards presumes a constant tug-of-war between transcendent ideals and critical examination of history; those who choose to ignore this will risk collapsing a dialectic.[31] Jahn's friend Johann Gustav Droysen (1808–84), an influential historian of the post-Ranke generation, helped to theorize this dialectic. For Droysen, the past was also of the present: for the past to become real it must be reinterpreted again and again. Echoing Ranke, he saw only one "historische Frage" (historical question): "Ist das nun wirklich so gewesen, wie ich es gelernt und mir gedacht habe?" (Was it really so, as I have learned and imagined it? Droysen 1967:33). This question, and the specific manner in which it is asked, determines the quality of a historian's work. Reflection on the complicated "flux" of history and the constant re-combination of history's "facts" in ever-changing constellations serves to help the historian discern the progress of the ideals "behind" history.[32]

Droysen illustrates this problem with a metaphor from art:

> The hundreds of paintings in a museum—each has its own unique mode of existence, each offers the friend of art, the aesthete, the budding artist, etc., another facet to observe. Art history puts them together in a relation that, taken by themselves, they do not have, for which they were not painted, a

> relation that results in an order, a continuity under the influence of which the painters of these pictures stood without having been aware of it. Only this order allows us to distinguish in time among the confusions of the various eras and nations, the choices of object, the manners of composition, and even the techniques of drawing. (Droysen 1967:35)[33]

A mass of detail, a "buntes Vielerlei" that only time can help to sort out, is received by a mass of interpreters, each with their own perspective. History assembles the details into narratives of which history's actors are unaware. Yet by pointing out the contingency of history's narrative, Droysen reveals his ambivalence about history's "absolute" truth.

In 1845, early in his career, Jahn wrote the following about the study of historical works of art:

> My goal is, more than anything, always to consider and observe the work of art as a work of art, and through careful comparisons of monuments (made as completely as possible), to penetrate and understand the special language that works of art speak. Knowledge of this language is as important and irreplaceable a necessity to the student of art as knowledge of language is to the student of the written word. (Jahn 1845, quoted in Bažant 1991:26)[34]

So it should come as no surprise that in the introduction to his *Mozart* he speaks of similar ambitions:

> I have, in addition to that which directly concerns Mozart, attempted to depict the times in which and the conditions under which he lived, and the people with whom he came into contact more clearly, in as far as these influences were important for his development . . . I have, not without some effort, attempted to bring together that which seemed useful to me in making the whole picture more lively and easier to understand. (Jahn 1856–59, 1:xxix)[35]

Jahn's commitment is to the three ideals of historicism I outlined above: the individuality of the past, the critical-historical method, and the idea that all culture is "historical." His project was the union of philology, archaeology, and history together into a historical practice constructed around "understanding" the relics of the past. This understanding takes as a given that histories are stories told in language and not merely chronicles of facts. In other words, he is sensitive to the language historical artifacts speak. And in the end, he reveals an ideal, and therefore idealized, Mozart. Those who have criticized Jahn's *Mozart-Bild* on this point are correct to identify this quality. They are incorrect, however, to ascribe the transcendental qualities of Jahn's *Mozart* only to Jahn's prejudices. What is left for Jahn in the shards

of a Greek vase is the Spirit of classical Greece; in the score of *Don Giovanni* he finds the transcendental ideal of Mozart's portrayal of human nature in music. Yet both remnants are contingent on their time and place; the individual source and the ideals it represents exist together in a state of flux. For positivists, of whom I will soon speak in more detail, there is nothing left after the subtraction of causation. For Jahn, however, there is something left in the artifacts of human practice: the ideals of human creativity.

Empirical Music History

In the late nineteenth century, the young discipline of music history took a turn towards the empirical.[36] As Plath reminded his audience in 1964, Mozart scholarship had remained mostly unaffected; it was Bach scholars like Philipp Spitta who led the way. Spitta—unlike Jahn—contributed several essays devoted specifically to the practice of writing music history. In an essay for the widely circulated magazine *Die Grenzboten*, Spitta introduced the first volume of the *Denkmäler Deutsche Tonkunst* and wrote,

> The main sources of [music history] are and remain works of art. Nonetheless, one of the most important elements of progress in recent times is that it is now perfectly clear that works of art are to be approached as documents, and that they are to be read and interpreted correctly without any recourse to aesthetic enjoyment. (Spitta 1893:25–26)[37]

It would be a mistake to regard this sentiment as a dramatic departure from the tenets of the historical school. It represents, instead, an emphasis on the critical-historical method *within the historical school*—on the kind of work with documents that focuses on their physical makeup (handwriting and paper types, for instance) and their provenance or authenticity. Yet by ruling the "aesthetic" out of bounds, Spitta suggests that matters of interpretation are not the province of the music historian. Spitta's position is echoed in Plath's contention that there is no such thing as "musical" historical research as well as in his critique of "artistic" Mozart scholarship, although Plath refrains from citing this passage directly. There can be little doubt, however, given Plath's choice of words and his general admiration for Spitta, that Spitta's thinking was an inspiration for Plath, who had begun his career as a Bach scholar.

The connection becomes clearer in another essay, "Kulturwissenschaft und Kunst," published in 1892, in which Spitta warned of the dangers art presents for science:

> The artistic monuments of the past are the most important sources for art history. The condition in which they are passed down to us requires a

> process of cleansing, evaluation, organization, and often even completion. The sciences of the study of antiquity have, in the course of their history, acquired certain fixed methods of study. These working tools, so to speak, are to be used in the treatment of ancient monuments, and, depending on how well they are used, they can be an important guarantee for the success of our work. But this skill can only be acquired through long practice on the basis of a certain kind of positive knowledge. An artist can acquire such knowledge, if he is not shy to enter the school of science. But with artistic sensibility alone, regardless of its quality or the respect it earns, he is not prepared for this activity, not even when it comes to the completion of fragments or the critical choice between competing variants. An energetic and well-developed individuality is always in danger of unintentionally projecting itself into the work of art. (Spitta 1892:7)[38]

This view of the objects and methods of cultural history could hardly differ more from Otto Jahn's aestheticist position just three decades earlier ("my goal is . . . to consider the work of art as a work of art"). The division between *Kunstwissenschaft* and *Kunst* reflects the general turn towards "science" in late nineteenth-century society, and, perhaps, a young discipline's yearning for a place in the modern "scientific" university.[39] In our context it is a harbinger of the "positivism" that would be the bone of contention in late twentieth-century musicological debates.[40]

The question remains: why did Plath devote so much attention to Jahn when the real model for the empirical, even positivist revolution he was proclaiming was Spitta? If he had taken the trouble to read much of Jahn's writings on method, he would have found him an unsuitable witness for "positivist" methods. Yet for polemical reasons Plath needed an ancestral *Mozart* scholar to make his point, and his point was sharpened by the currency of the notion that Jahn was "unmusical" and "outdated." Familiar with Spitta's writings from his own training as a Bach scholar, Plath simply chose to blur the distinctions between the two figures. He put Spitta's words, as it were, in Jahn's mouth. Even if, from our point of view, this may have weakened his argument, it seems to have gone unnoticed by his audience: no one in the extensive discussion generated by Plath's position paper criticized him for this slippage.

Spitta's legacy seems to have been in the air in the early 1960s. Carl Dahlhaus, for instance, devotes an entire chapter of his *Musikästhetik* (1967) to Spitta's claim that works of art are "documents." He follows the tension back to an older model of the union of the aesthetic and the historical, especially as approached by Herder. As we have seen, Herder's doctrines proclaiming the absolute individuality of the historical event, and therefore the union of personal expression and history, were constitutive of early historicist thinking. Historicism never resolved this tension between indi-

viduality, expression, source criticism, and narrative. Neither did Dahlhaus, although he returned to it often, especially in his propaedeutic *Foundations of Music History* (1983). Finally, Joseph Kerman, reacting to Dahlhaus's treatment of Spitta's *Grenzboten* article in *Musikästhetik*, returned to the subject in his influential 1985 book *Contemplating Music.* I will return to Kerman's contribution later in this essay.

Wilhelm Dilthey

The works of Jahn and Spitta represented Plath's idea of the right way to write music history. Wilhelm Dilthey's philosophy stood for what was wrong. If Mozart studies was not much affected by Spitta's theories, it was (like almost of the German "human sciences") influenced profoundly by Dilthey's. For Dilthey, the human sciences were what the natural sciences were not. The former, in Dilthey's philosophy, are practices of *Erleben* and *Verstehen* (experience and understanding): they concern themselves with the "insides" of historical experience, with what history "means." For Dilthey, who began his scholarly career as a biographer of Friedrich Schleiermacher, the founder of nineteenth-century hermeneutics, the main goal of history was to understand what history says.[41] The natural sciences, in Dilthey's view, are sciences of description: they concern themselves with the "outsides" of experience, yet they "say" nothing.

Applied to the study of cultural history, Dilthey's thinking can be read as an attempt to reconcile the empiricist and interpretive poles of historicism. He first formulated his program for the human sciences in the 1860s as a reaction to what he saw as a tendency towards the naive kind of empiricism brought about by the increasing influence of the natural sciences, of which Spitta's empirical language, for instance, could be seen as one example. Empiricism like Spitta's was a challenge to historicist thinking, because it insisted on normative descriptions of historical events. Dilthey answered the challenge by appealing to a higher kind of experience:

> The fundamental idea of my philosophy is that no one, so far, has based his philosophizing on the un-mutilated whole of experience, and so, on the whole fullness of reality. Speculation is certainly abstract . . . but empiricism is no less so. It bases itself on mutilated experience, distorted from the outset by an atomistic theoretical view of mental life . . . No complete human being can be confined within this experience. (1932:175, translated in Rickman 1988:133)

If historicist writing, then, had tended toward "abstract speculation," the "atomistic" and descriptive methods of the natural sciences were not an

adequate substitute. Both prevented thinking in "wholes." For Dilthey, the study of human artifice required thinking in "wholes."

It is the meeting between the historian and the source that is at stake. Thus many of Dilthey's theories are theories about the role of historical *consciousness* in the interpretation of documents. For Dilthey, historical documents, and especially historical works of art (documents of *Geist*), have an outside and an inside. The outside is the document's physical remains. The inside is what the artwork "means." The outsides are accessible to historians via the empirical elements of the historical methods (those so important to Spitta, for instance). But for Dilthey *understanding* the past was the most important thing: for him the "insides" of the historical object were neither as irrelevant nor as inaccessible as Spitta had suggested. In Dilthey's thought, these "insides" are accessible because human beings share a special ability to feel history, to know intuitively what a historical artwork is saying, because "life" binds us together with those who have gone before us. Historical artworks, in other words, can overcome the restraints of time and speak directly to us across the ages. And it is historical consciousness, our awareness of our place in history's stream, that makes this possible.[42]

Dilthey's thought was an important and influential development in the German historical tradition, and it had important consequences for the young discipline of musicology. As Hans Georg Gadamer, one of Dilthey's most influential critics, has argued, Dilthey was the thinker who drew together the various streams of historicism as described above. From Kant, Gadamer explains, Dilthey took the need for a critique of historical reason; from Hegel he took the notion of a transcendental Spirit that guides history. Dilthey, however, dispensed with Hegel's dialectic, resolving it with the force he called "life." Life is nothing more and nothing less than our shared humanity, a quality that joins us to history. In Dilthey's philosophy of history this shared sense of humanity overcomes the separation between the present and the past, between "them" and "us."

In Gadamer's telling, Dilthey went one better than Hegel (for whom only philosophy was timeless) by claiming we could speak directly to history, from "us" to "them," because we are inside history ourselves. The "sameness" of historical subject and object guarantees the truth-content of historical knowledge (1960:226). Specific historical situations, then, can be described in *all* of their detail, in a kind of snapshot. As Gadamer's student Reinhart Koselleck has put it,

> Through the medium of understanding we are able to get a grip on every individual situation, and thus even the strangeness and remote alterity of the past, through the act of letting oneself accept it and feel sympathy with it, becomes understandable, translatable, and thus recognizable. (1979:177)[43]

History is like a mirror: we look into it and see more than just documents and sources—we can even enter into some kind of conversation with it. What we then experience is life itself, its complete Gestalt. The tension between historical subject/object and historian-as-subject, which for thinkers like Droysen had been a matter for reflection, is thus resolved.[44] All of this is an attractive solution to the problem of historical knowledge since it allows for continued allegiance to the critical methods of history while at the same time opening a space for nearly unlimited interpretive speculation. Once we are in a conversation with history we can hardly err if we just report what it says to us. Thus Dilthey replaced the conventional notion of history as the process of understanding documents and material things with the more powerful and seductive idea that the act of getting beyond the "outsides" of things can take us to "life itself" (Gadamer 1960:233–34). Because he held this "conversation" to be completely secure, Dilthey maintained that while the details of the "outsides" of history might be matters of dispute or error, the truth spoken by the "insides" simply cannot be called into question.

Geistesgeschichte and Mozart Studies

The Dilthey paradigm, known to its followers as *Geistesgeschichte*, resonated powerfully in the Mozart scholarship of the early 1920s. In the introduction to his reworking of Jahn's biography, Hermann Abert wrote:

> Today we have escaped from the spirit of Romanticism; we have crossed over from idealistic, constructive thinking to empirical and realistic thinking and therefore have become much stricter in our critique and use of source material. We are not satisfied with a selection; we strive for totality. We have another attitude to the artistic personality per se. Here we strive via empiricism towards spiritual content [*Vergeistigung*], we approach problems psychologically and seek to solve them by the most exact attention possible to the very most personal, to the details of style. (1923:vi)[45]

Despite claims of strict critique when it comes to source material, Abert argues here for the same "total" historical method that was so important to Dilthey, that is, for the assimilation of empirical research with the lofty goal of *Vergeistigung* and the infusion of the material with the spiritual. The goal of such scholarship is a conversation—or indeed, a kind of communion—with the spiritual content, or *Geist*, of historical documents. In addition, Abert shifts our attention away from Jahn's focus on sources and their contexts to the grander register of style, which better sustains narrative. Indeed, in Abert's day, style history, in Mozart scholarship and in musicology as a whole, moved to the top of the discipline's priorities.[46]

Although Dilthey's work had grown out of the historical tradition of which Otto Jahn had been such an important part, the Dilthey paradigm severely damaged Jahn's reputation. Abert, who reworked the biography for a new edition in 1923, declared then that "the house [that] Jahn had built had collapsed" and that it "was time to build a new one" (Abert 1923:16). Abert charged that Jahn was "too unmusical" to appreciate Mozart's genius and that he was too much a prisoner of his own personal prejudices: even today, such views of Jahn's work continue to be repeated without much reflection in the secondary literature.[47] Abert and other critics of Jahn judged him hopelessly insensitive to Mozart's real musical genius, and thus they frequently dismissed the Jahn biography as "unmusical." What is the root of this charge? The grounds can only be summarized here: they included Jahn's spirited defense of composers like Schumann in the face of opposition from the proponents of Richard Wagner, and his alleged need to compensate for his own personal suffering by idealizing his object of study.[48] Abert, at least, had enough respect for Jahn to leave the older scholar's name on the title page of the biography, despite the considerable revisions he made to it. It is clear, though, that he considered Jahn methodologically outdated. To serve his own polemical purposes, Abert recast Jahn as a mere purveyor of facts, despite Jahn's obvious concern with context and narrative.

For Abert, Jahn's work did not penetrate far enough into the "meanings" of Mozart's works. In Dilthey's terms, Jahn lacked a vital connection to the "insides" of Mozart's work, the "life" in his music. This quality of Abert's polemic is what allowed Plath to cast Jahn as a purely factual scholar, something he clearly was not. Thus, Plath set out in his position paper to demolish the sense among Mozart scholars—fostered by Abert and others—that the "outsides" of Mozart scholarship had already been dealt with and that the "insides" were now of primary importance. And when Plath went looking for a theoretical hook upon which he could hang this critique, he found an option that was up until then out of bounds for the historical school: positivism.

Positivism, Bach, Science, Progress

In the four and a half pages of his essay devoted to theories of history, Plath used the word "positivism" nine times. It would take us too far afield here to follow the term to its historical origins in early nineteenth-century French thought.[49] What is important is that the word was only rarely used in German historiographical discourse before 1945 and then primarily as a pejorative. Plath associated "positivism" with the "gelehrt-wissenschaftliche Tendenz" in Mozart studies that he claimed was represented best by Otto Jahn and Ludwig von Köchel, a tendency that, in his opinion, had lost the

battle with the "artistic" techniques of Dilthey and his followers. His advice for his colleagues was to concentrate on the "scientific" end of the methodological spectrum. To underscore this point he returns often to words like "foundation," "basis," and "scientificness" (*Wissenschaftlichkeit*).

The point of unfavorable comparison in Plath's polemic is Bach studies, both during the nineteenth century as represented by Philipp Spitta, but also as it was practiced in the mid-twentieth century. Plath had a direct connection to Bach research in the 1950s, having taken his doctorate in Tübingen, one of the centers of the postwar "philological revolution" in Bach research. (The other two centers were Göttingen and Princeton). This "revolution" was carried out by teams of younger scholars—including Wolfgang Plath—and led by Alfred Dürr, Georg von Dadelsen, and the American Arthur Mendel, working mostly on source problems like paper types and scribal hands. Their work was a minor sensation, for they succeeded in overturning the traditional chronology (proposed by Spitta) of Bach's Leipzig church music.[50] This chronology was thought to have been established conclusively by the Bach scholars of the late nineteenth century—strict paragons of the historical-critical method like Spitta and Wilhelm Rust, whom Plath somewhat disingenuously labels as "Jahn's methodological heirs."

Plath neglected to mention the latest developments in Bach research, but everyone present at the round-table discussion of his theses would have been well aware of them and of Plath's own participation in them as a doctoral student. His point was that the revolution in Bach studies had only been made possible by the existence of a corpus of philological research dating back to Spitta and Rust, which researchers like Dürr, von Dadelsen, and Mendel had been able to *falsify*. Indeed, this is the heart of his argument: in Mozart studies there was little or no previous research to falsify, because researchers since Jahn had turned their attention to "interpretation," to "insides," and to *Geistesgeschichte* in the style of Dilthey. Thus, in Plath's view there was an urgent need for a massive expansion of "basic research," or in other words, concentration on "outsides." With this in mind, Plath and his colleague Wolfgang Rehm had circulated a three-page catalogue of "Zu bearbeitende Themen aus der Mozart-Forschung" (Deficits in Mozart Research) to their colleagues in Germany and abroad in 1963 which, in Plath's words at the round table, was "meant to replace missing foundations."[51] (See appendix 1 for a facsimile and translation of this memo.) This list of desiderata contains twenty-six points. Sixteen are concerned with sources or compositional process, five with cultural context (for instance, point 17: "Mozart's letters and documents as sources for music history"—note that even here the focus is on the letters as "sources"), three with style criticism, and two with performance practice. I would argue that one of the purposes of

this document, and of Plath's position paper and appearance at the congress, was to stimulate new avenues of Mozart research concentrated on primary sources, so that the weakened foundations of Mozart scholarship might be repaired as quickly as possible through falsification of previous research.

"Falsification" is a key component of Karl Popper's theories of scientific discovery (Popper [1935] 2002). Several threads in Popper's work are of interest here. One important aspect is his bitter opposition to historicism.[52] Popper's historicism was the kind that linked history to "progress" and was implicated, he argued, in the political ideologies of both the right and the left that had brought so much suffering in the twentieth century. His critique drew much of its force from his denial of the historicist (and Diltheyian) notion that human facts were somehow fundamentally different from natural facts. For Popper, a fact was a fact, and although facts (of any kind) could not be proven positively, they could be validated if subject to falsification.[53] Popper's thinking seems central to Plath's argument that there is no such thing as "musical" music history, and that the "facts" to be sought in Mozart studies can be established only through a *continuously developing* process of falsification through cooperative research, a process for which the foundations, from his point of view in 1964, were missing. The shopping list of desiderata that he and Rehm had circulated was meant, then, to reinforce or even to rebuild these foundations.

It was the Princeton musicologist Arthur Mendel who had set out the theoretical foundations for the new Bach philology, both in his Bach research and in his well-known address to the International Musicological Society's New York congress in 1961 entitled "Evidence and Explanation" (Mendel 1962).[54] In his writings on Bach, Mendel related how separate groups of researchers (Plath was a member of one of them as a graduate student in Tübingen) had worked in parallel on various problems before comparing their results: "Different investigators working with these data [the sources of the St. John Passion] came to the same results, so that the likelihood of error in the sorting out process is small" (Mendel 1960:297). Even if such a congruence of positive results is, strictly speaking, meaningless in a Popperian sense, it was research like this that lead to the spectacular falsification of Spitta's chronology of the Leipzig cantatas.

For Mendel, following Popper, process trumped product. The best research yields only temporary results:

> Why should we not recognize our reconstructions of chronology for what they are—hypotheses? And why should music historians, any more than physicists or mathematicians, feel embarrassed at having to replace hypotheses that have outlived their usefulness? That's what hypotheses are for. (Mendel 1960:300)

Mendel's call for music historians to be more like physicists and mathematicians points to the heart of the differences between the Dilthey and Popper paradigms. While Dilthey had stipulated that the natural and human sciences should be strictly separated, this separation was, for Popper, the root cause of historicism's poverty. And for Plath, the collapse of this separation had the added bonus of freeing Jahn from the charge of being "unmusical," since "musicality," in the Popper paradigm, would be a meaningless criterion by which to judge historical research.

In "Evidence and Explanation," Mendel had argued (at times somewhat confusedly) for a method of writing music history built around the assembly of positive facts and the rigorous induction of the relations between them.[55] One of Mendel's important models, cited often in "Evidence and Explanation," was his Princeton colleague Carl Gustav Hempel, a "neopositivist" philosopher of science whose main project was to bring scientific precision to disciplines like history. Both Hempel and Popper were widely read in postwar American academia. Like Spitta's attempt to bring the respectability of empiricism to the young discipline of *Musikwissenschaft*, Mendel's intervention seemed calculated to boost musicology's claim as a "hard" discipline which, ironically, rendered an important part of Spitta's research redundant.

Both in his position paper and in his remarks at the round-table, Plath was frustratingly vague about the foundations of his methodological position. Although he never mentioned Popper, Hempel, or even Mendel directly, it seems unlikely that Plath could have been unaware of this kind of "positivism."[56] Thus Plath's theses amount to a call for the appropriation of the Mendel-Hempel-Popper program, or perhaps the "Princeton program" of Bach research, in Mozart scholarship. By claiming that there was no such thing as a "musical" fact, and by harping so much on the word "positivism," Plath issued a strong challenge to a methodological consensus (historicism) that had been shared by musicologists since the inception of the discipline. Despite lip service to the "abstract" goal of illuminating the "spiritual and cultural" Mozart, Plath argued for far more than a mere readjustment of the relation between "interior" and "exterior" historical methods. His audience at the round-table discussion in Salzburg knew that this historicist consensus was at stake, and they were not amused.

The Mandarins Strike Back

Thirty-seven years ago, the American historian Fritz K. Ringer published a study of an influential group of opinion-makers: the German professoriate. Ringer described how their influence on state and society, which despite

their small numbers was considerable, was guaranteed by a complex web of interdependence that bound them to whatever political leadership was then in power (Ringer 1969).[57] Ringer called them the "German Mandarins," a reflection of their own self-image as a kind of intellectual and even spiritual aristocracy. Part of Ringer's conception of *Mandarinentum* depends on the idea that in order to become a Mandarin, German academics had to subscribe to a canon of shared philosophical and methodological positions.

The tone of German musicology in the 1950s and early 1960s was determined by a historicist consensus, which included the uneasy coexistence (made somewhat easier by Dilthey's thinking about *Geistesgeschichte*) of the "critical-historical method" and the imperative to interpret. In this respect Plath's polemical intervention was very clever. By using a cherished predecessor (Philipp Spitta) as an example of *good* historical practice, which he then contrasted with what he saw as the *bad* practice of *Geistesgeschichte*, he caught his opponents off balance. And by suggesting, in defiance of Dilthey, that "positivism was that which can make the human sciences scientific" he combined two terms—the "human sciences" or *Geisteswissenschaften* and "positivism"—that his audience considered incompatible.

This audience still shared most of the historicist positions discussed above, especially the idea that the study of musical sources was not and should not be an end in itself; "positivism," for German scholars trained before 1945, was shorthand for empty and perhaps even immoral rationality. As Hans Engel put it in response to Plath, music and the experience of music history were a phenomena of *Gestalt* and *Geist* that could not be reduced to watermarks and handwriting (Engel 1964:43). To be a "Mandarin" in this context, one had to share this position. Positivism had never belonged to the Mandarin's canon of shared beliefs.[58] Plath's polemic, then, could well have been interpreted by his audience as an attack on this consensus, and therefore an attack on their positions as officially sanctioned interpreters of Mozart. To much of his audience Plath's use of the word must have seemed like a conscious provocation, especially since it was delivered by a scholar under forty who did not hold a university position.[59] In this audience's view, the study of historical sources (in Plath's sense, "facts") was always only a prelude to *understanding* the music in them. To be sure, Plath had paid lip service to this notion earlier in his paper, only to undermine his statement immediately by calling interpretation "an abstract goal" ([1964] 1991:78). If Ringer's descriptions of German academia are accurate, then the suggestion that *understanding* history is merely an "abstract" goal would have been anathema to the Mandarins. Plath's suggestion that Mozart scholars' insistence on the primacy of interpretation actually harmed the enterprise must have come as an affront to his audience.

The uncanny unanimity of their responses at the meeting in Salzburg is a striking confirmation of Ringer's thesis.[60] Regardless of affiliation or personal history, all of those who spoke out against Plath were driven to do so by their opposition to anything that smacked too much of positivism. Figures such as Hans Engel, who had risen to some prominence in the musicological establishment of the Third Reich through his studies of music and "Volk," found themselves agreeing wholeheartedly with émigrés like the Marxists Georg Knepler and Harry Goldschmidt.[61] Key tenets of the historical school—that writing history is always interpretation, and history always reveals a narrative—were under attack. Engel followed his ad hoc comments in Salzburg with a lengthy written rebuttal in the *Mozart-Jahrbuch* of the following year. His main argument was that Mozart studies "is *Musikwissenschaft* and not *Notenwissenschaft*" (Engel 1964:43).

Plath's most eminent critic, Friedrich Blume, waited several years before delivering a reply. In a keynote address given to the 1967 International Musicological Congress in Ljubljana, after having mentioned Plath by name, he continued in Engel's vein:

> The over-breeding of specialization and neo-positivism open up threatening consequences for musicology: the isolation of researchers and disciplines from one another, the decline of international cooperation, and the increasing lack of understanding on the part of wide groups of the general public for musicological research . . . The hunger to understand music cannot be stilled with the recipes of secret alchemical kitchens . . . There are in fact studies that concern themselves exclusively with paper types, rasterology and the like, and if this continues, in the year 2000 music history won't be about composers and theorists, but about copyists, and not about masses and symphonies, but about watermarks and rasters. (1973:40–41)[62]

Things did not quite turn out as Blume had feared they would.

Epilogue: The New Musicology and the Future of Mozart Scholarship

Seen at the distance of four decades, the controversy Plath provoked seems eerily like the controversies over the "new musicology" that shook English-speaking musical scholarship in the 1990s, only in reverse. For the "new musicology" was, in many of its programmatic statements, an attempt to free the discipline from an ideology its proponents called "positivism." It seems from an American perspective like an irritating quirk of history that Plath, the "revolutionary" in *our* narrative, the upstart who challenged the Mandarins, did so by proclaiming theories we now consider to be conserva-

tive. It is a fascinating role-reversal. On the one side, we see Plath speaking in sympathy with a strictly empirical American musicology and appearing to suggest application of the newest theories from Princeton; on the other, we find the imperious Mandarins of *Musikwissenschaft*, including some of dubious political pedigree, whose arguments overlap with the claims of some "new musicologists."[63] For Mandarins and "new musicologists" alike, positivism is the polemical Other and skepticism about empiricism is a reflex position.[64] Coming to terms with this tableau is a real historiographical challenge.[65] I will conclude this essay by reflecting on this irony and will then sketch the possible moral our story might yield for Mozart scholarship.

To begin with the most obvious irony, Blume's position resonates with Joseph Kerman's famous diagnosis of the state of the discipline in Great Britain and North America in the mid-1980s. For Kerman, as for Blume, musicology had fallen into the hands of an ideology called positivism ("the presentation of the texts of early music and of facts and figures about it," Kerman 1985:42). One of his main predictions in *Contemplating Music* was that the tool to combat this ideology would be something he called "criticism."[66] Kerman, anxious to strike a balance between "lower" and "higher" activities in the writing of music history, reserved pride of place for criticism, that is, real aesthetic engagement with music. His treatment of Spitta's contention that there is no difference between musical and any other kind of historical documents—received via Carl Dahlhaus's quotation of it—showed that he was ready to equate the historical-critical method's (i.e., "lower" criticism's) American forms with positivism. Plath had made the same point in reverse: that only critical study of documents can offer Mozart scholarship a firm foundation. Nonetheless, one is left with the impression that in the end both are trying to answer the same question: is the history of music the history of music's documentary traces (a HISTORY of music), or is it something more (a history of MUSIC)?[67]

Clear thinking about the relation of factual research to interpretation can help us locate our scholarly practice in relation to the practices of those who have gone before us. The dispute over positivism that Plath provoked in Mozart studies can help us as well, because, for one thing, it clarifies points made by some of the "new musicology's" more astute observers. To begin with, Leo Treitler's critique of Kerman for treating "positivism" and "criticism" as rigid opposites (and which Treitler built to some degree on a discussion of Droysen and Dilthey) can just as well be applied to Plath's polemical distinction between "positivism" and *Geistesgeschichte* (Treitler 1990).[68] From the other side of the new musicological debate, Margaret Bent, in sympathy with Karl Popper, has voiced a similar criticism of Kerman's "split" (Bent 1986). Both underscore what I have tried to demonstrate here: first, that historicism is more than just its critical-historical methods, and

second, that positivism's Others—call them interpretation or criticism—were not invented by the "new musicology."[69] Richard Taruskin, especially, has argued that the opposition between "positivism" and "historicism" is misleading. In *Text and Act*, for instance, that is how he is able to claim that when confronted with the "moral confusion" of Leo Treitler's Dilthey-influenced approach, he'll "take bourgeois, democratic positivism any day" (1995:27), while asserting a few pages later that Mendel had launched "what became a virtual era of documentary fetishism" and a "reign of scientistic intellectual terror" (1995:42). Taruskin, whose recent writings have returned to these issues, is skeptical of both polemical positions, even if in the end he, like Plath, prefers a sober "realism" to the dangers of historicist "romanticism" (2005a; 2005b).

It was Plath's "realism," his readiness to approach the confusion of the historical record without historicist blinders, that proved to be his most valuable contribution. It was a contribution that has become the foundation of substantial parts of the canon of recent Mozart research. Gertraut Haberkamp's catalogue of first editions (1986), Alan Tyson's studies of Mozart's paper types (1987), Plath's own work on handwriting (1991), Cliff Eisen's investigations of the Mozart family's Salzburg copyists (1991a), Ulrich Konrad's sketch research (1992), and Dexter Edge's dissertation on Mozart's Viennese copyists (2001), to name just a few studies, seem to have emerged directly from, or at least in sympathy with, Plath's 1964 position paper. It is hard to believe that none of this work had been done by 1964, in an era when many scholars believed that all "basic" Mozart research had already been completed.

There is still much work to be done in this "realist" direction. For instance, Dexter Edge's 2001 dissertation on Mozart's Viennese copyists (incidentally, item 7 on Plath and Rehm's 1963 "shopping list" of desiderata in Mozart research) runs to over 2500 pages, and takes nothing for granted. His discovery of the original orchestral material used at the Court Theater in Vienna for *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Così fan tutte*, and *Don Giovanni* is at once a piece of bravura philology and, in the best Popperian sense, a starting point for further questions, especially about the exact relation of text to performance in Mozart's creative process (2001:1416–1960). The implications of his research run far beyond the editorial. Edge's study can, for example, help interrogate the "work concept" itself, a critical constituent of historicist musicology that recent critics have argued is highly ideological (Goehr 1992). Work like Edge's suggests that Mozart—obsessed with performance, constantly revising—worked more often than not *against* what nineteenth-century scholarship thought of as "the work," or at least that he was not always subject to "the work's" regulating power. Thus an ideology critique like Goehr's can be supported by concrete historical evidence—in

this case, real documents Mozart once held in his hand—and thus gain explanatory power.

Nonetheless, Plath's intervention must be considered a failure as historiography. It was a polemic, and thus aimed more at the weaknesses of his opponents than at the construction of a coherent position of his own. The two pillars of his argument, the legacy of nineteenth-century critical historiography and the intellectual tools of twentieth-century "value-free" positivism, are too contradictory and too ideological to bear the weight he meant them to. As Jahn and Droysen knew, the dialectic between empiricism and narrative, between the particular and the general, between historicism and positivism cannot be collapsed. We need to recognize the difficulty of using isolated historical "facts"—acquired through wise but not blind application of the historical-critical method and pursued collectively by a community of scholars—while writing about an individual artist whose life remains a powerful narrative paradigm of originality and artistic wonder. We will never write the Mozart *story* out of Mozart's *history*; it's hard to think of anyone, even the most skeptical critic, who would like to see "Mozart" reduced to a compendium of empirically verified facts.

So what *can* a forty-year-old controversy about methods mean to us today? Much has changed in Mozart scholarship during the intervening decades. Indeed, it is worth asking if there is such a thing, any more, as Mozart scholarship at all. There is no unified community of scholars working on problems related to Mozart and his music in the way that both Plath and Blume, however different their perspectives, dreamed then that there could be. Plath's Popperian dream of such a community, its members working in concert to falsify each other's research, *did* come true partially, at least to the extent that so many projects seem to have been (at least indirectly) inspired by his pleas. But just as Blume predicted, work today in the "alchemical kitchens" of "hard" source-studies does not attract much more than the attention of experts, and since the "new musicology" has robbed—rightly or wrongly—source studies of a good portion of its cachet, projects like those of which Plath dreamed are viewed with suspicion by many of today's music historians. Blume—a conservative if there ever was one—didn't care for such research, and the "new musicology," at least in the English-speaking world, has relegated "philology" to the margins of the discipline.

Yet Blume's dream of a unified, interpretive Mozart studies is equally lost. This dream depended on the consensus that Mozart was a pillar (if not the center) of a canon of Western composer-geniuses, and that his works were canonical masterpieces. In this model, Mozart scholars are priests whose role is ultimately to "interpret" the holy writ that is now the twenty-thousand-odd pages of the *NMA*. It would be pointless to argue that this consensus, laid down by Otto Jahn, still binds us. Today, the foundations of

Mozart scholarship, as both Plath and his opponents would have understood them, are too unstable to support much of anything.

The contradiction inherent in historicism as a practice brought both models down: the tensions between reporting facts and spinning a narrative and between the "objective" historical record and the imperatives of historical interpretation. These will accompany our work as long as we tell the stories of music history. And they are all the more particular to Mozart, about whom we know (or think we know) so much, and whose creative legacy remains the paragon of "great music," however prone to overuse the epithet might be. As scholars and teachers we need to encourage our readers and our students to face this contradiction honestly. We need to admit that the imperatives of factual scholarship and the romance of history can enjoy at best an uneasy coexistence, and yet that our own work as historians is made richer by engaging with both.

Finally, there might still much to be learned from Otto Jahn. All of the questions Jahn asked—What does art do? Where does it belong? To whom does it belong? What does it say? How does it say it?—are questions we could ask today in the contexts of the most "progressive" musicology.[70] In Mozart studies, only a minority of recent scholars have asked such questions, notably Susan McClary (1986), Neal Zaslaw (1989), Rose Rosengard Subotnik (1991), Joseph Kerman (1994), and, most recently, Simon Keefe (2001) and Jessica Waldoff (2006). Perhaps for Mozart scholars Jahn's opinion of the authenticity of this or that source is not as important as his place as a co-founder of nineteenth-century cultural studies. His approach, once we account for the very different conditions in which it was conceived, might be ours again.

If Jahn's work was the foundation of an older scholarly tradition, then Plath established a newer one that has been of great importance to Mozart studies in the past forty years. We can embrace the best of both. Let there be more basic research *and* more interpretation. If we go looking for "facts" about Mozart with the kind of discipline and imagination Plath called for in his polemic we will surely be rewarded, all the more so if we remember, as Plath himself said, that Mozart will always be more than the sum of the facts we have collected about him.

Appendix 1. Memorandum on deficits in Mozart research, with translation on facing pages (Plath and Rehm 1963).

ZU BEARBEITENDE THEMEN AUS DER MOZART-FORSCHUNG

zusammengestellt von W. Plath und W. Rehm

ca. 1963

1. Zur Bedeutung und Ausführung der von Mozart verwendeten Ornamentzeichen, insbesondere der Vorschläge.

2. Echtheitsfragen. Kritik der Mozart zugeschriebenen zweifelhaften Werke.

   Anmerkung: Sichtung des bei der Editionsleitung gesammelten Materials unter Berücksichtigung der nicht identifizierbaren Mozart-Incipits in den thematischen Katalogen.

   Ziel: a) "Catalogue raisonné" des Zweifelhaften und Unechten;

   b) Erarbeitung grundlegender Gesichtspunkte und Methoden der allgemeinen Echtheitskritik;

   c) dasselbe speziell für die Stilkritik.

3. Die zeitgenössische Musik-Theorie und sonstige Überlieferung als Quelle für die Aufführungspraxis der Werke Mozarts.

   Anmerkung: Deckt sich nicht mit Thema 1. Hier wäre vor allem etwa zu erörtern:

   a) Besetzungsfragen; insbesondere der Begriff des "Basso" in der Kirchen-, aber auch Instrumentalmusik; ferner die Frage der "selbstverständlich" col Basso oder colla parte "ad libitum" mitgeführten Instrumente (z.B. Posaunen, Fagotte, Vc., Va.).

   b) Frage nach Umfang und Art der Generalbaßmitwirkung in gewissen Gattungen der Instrumentalmusik.

   c) Artikulation: Hier eventuell wieder Aufnahme des Problems Strich (Keil)/Punkt etc.

4. Die Mozart-Quellen der ehemaligen Preußischen Staatsbibliothek Berlin.

5. Die Mozart-Quellen der österreichischen Bibliotheken, Klosterarchive etc.

6. Die Mozart-Quellen der Salzburger Archive.

7. Studien zur handschriftlichen Mozart-Überlieferung.

   Anmerkung: Die für Mozart arbeitenden Kopistenhände; Wiener u.a. Kopiaturkanzleien (Lausch, Sukowaty etc.); Versuch einer Charakterisierung der verschiedenen Überlieferungszentren (Salzburg, Wien, Prag usw.).

8. Der Schülerkreis Mozarts oder: Mozart als Lehrer und Theoretiker.

9. Süßmayr und das Requiem, ein stilkritischer Vergleich.

   Anmerkung: Hier ginge es um eine systematische Durcharbeitung der erhaltenen Kirchenkompositionen Süßmayrs, um auf diesem Wege u.U. die Frage zu entscheiden, ob Süßmayr die Ergänzung des Requiems aus eigenem zugetraut werden könne.

Deficits in Mozart Research, collected by W. Plath and W. Rehm [ca. 1963]

1. The meaning and performance of Mozart's ornament signs, in particular of appoggiaturas.
2. Questions of authenticity. Investigation and critique of doubtful works attributed to Mozart.
   N.B.: Review of material now in possession of the *NMA* with special attention to unidentified incipits in thematic catalogues.
   Goals: a) "Catalogue raisoneé" of the doubtful and spurious;
   b) Establishment of general principles and methods for the establishment of authenticity in general;
   c) The same for style criticism in particular.
3. Contemporary music theory and related literature as a source of information about the performance practice of Mozart's works.
   N.B.: Not the same as point 1 above. In this case the following should be considered most of all:
   a) Questions of instrumentation, especially the term "Basso" in church and instrumental music; further the question of "obviously" included "ad libitum" bass instruments *col basso* or *colla parte* (e.g. trombone, bassoon, vc., va.).
   b) The question of the extent of figured bass participation in selected instrumental genres.
   c) Articulation: here perhaps a reappraisal of the problem stroke ("Keil")/ staccato dot etc.
4. The Mozart sources of the former Prussian State Library in Berlin.
5. The Mozart sources in Austrian libraries, cloister archives, etc.
6. The Mozart sources in Salzburg archives.
7. Studies of manuscript transmission of Mozart's music.
   N.B.: Hands of copyists who worked for Mozart; Viennese and other copying bureaus (Lausch, Sukowaty, etc.); Attempt to characterize the various centers of transmission (Salzburg, Vienna, Prague, etc.).
8. Mozart's circle of students, or: Mozart as teacher and theorist.
9. Süßmayr and the Requiem, a style-critical comparison.
   N.B.: Here the goal would be a systematic consideration of Süßmayr's surviving church music, in order, under certain circumstances, to determine if Süßmayr alone can be trusted with the completion of the Requiem.

10. Mozart als Bearbeiter eigener und fremder Werke.

11. Mozart als Kopist fremder Werke.

    Anmerkung: Die Abgrenzung zu Thema 10 wäre noch zu erarbeiten.

12. Die Salzburger Mozart-Fragmente.

    Anmerkung: Die (überholte) Dissertation von Mena Blaschitz wäre praktisch neu zu schreiben. Wichtig wäre hier, am Beispiel der Salzburger Fragmente das methodische Problem der Einordnung nicht sicher datierbarer bzw. zuweisbarer Fragmente etc. exemplarisch zu durchdenken. Zugleich Kritik der bisherigen Versuche der Mozart-Forschung, insbesondere Einsteins Methode in KV^3.

13. Das Problem der Ergänzung bei den Torsi Requiem und c-moll-Messe.

14. Der auftragsgebundene Schaffensrhythmus Mozarts.

    Anmerkung: Das Thema taugt möglicherweise nur zu einem kleinen Aufsatz. Es ist hier an eine Untersuchung der periodisch wiederkehrenden Verpflichtungen, Auftragschancen, "Gelegenheiten" etc. gedacht; in Salzburg etwa die offiziellen Kirchen- und Hoffeste (z.B. das "Festum Pallii"), die Universitätsfestlichkeiten (Finalmusiken), die Namenstage (Serenaden, Divertimenti etc.); für Wien wäre z.B. die "Saison" darzustellen, die Fastenkonzerte und -akademien usw. Auf dem Hintergrund all dieser "Gegebenheiten", Gelegenheiten und auch Zufälle ließe sich das "gebundene" und "freie" Schaffen Mozarts viel plastischer als bisher darstellen.

15. Mozarts Schaffensweise (demonstriert an ...).

    Anmerkung: Ist wohl noch nicht aktuell. Zur Zeit genügen vermutlich die Aufsätze von Einstein und Hertzmann. Erst gegen Ende der NMA könnte man daran gehen, die bis dahin zutage geförderten Skizzen, Entwürfe etc. in geschlossener Darstellung im Hinblick auf den Schaffensprozeß auszuwerten.

16. Padre Martini und Mozart.

    Anmerkung: Da die Zeugnisse eines Contrapunkt-Unterrichts bei Leopold Mozart sämtlich als Fehlinterpretationen entfallen, kommt der Begegnung mit Padre Martini neue Bedeutung zu. Es wären die Studien bei Martini (vgl. Hess in Mozart-Jahrbuch 1956) zu sichten und interpretieren. Darüber hinaus wären auch die sonstigen Contrapunkt-Studienblätter Mozarts zu berücksichtigen. Das Thema könnte daher auch etwa heißen: Mozarts kontrapunktische Studien.

17. Mozarts Briefe und Aufzeichnungen als musikgeschichtliche Quelle.

    Anmerkung: Eine Gesamtinterpretation des musikwissenschaftlich (nicht biographisch) interessanten Gehalts wäre wichtig.

18. Das Problem der "Fassungen" in den Opern Mozarts.

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10. Mozart as arranger of his own works and the works of others.
11. Mozart as a copyist of the works of others.
    N.B. The border to point number 10 would have to be worked out.
12. The Salzburg Mozart fragments.
    N.B. Mena Blaschitz's (outdated) dissertation would have to be practically rewritten. It would be important to use the Salzburg fragments as an exemplary case to think through the methodological problems associated with non-datable and non-attributable fragments in general. At the same time a critique of previous attempts by Mozart scholarship, in particular Einstein's approach in K^3.
13. The problem of completing the Requiem and the C Minor Mass.
14. Mozart's compositional rhythm and its relation to patronage.
    N.B. Possibly only justifies a smaller essay. What we imagine here is an investigation of Mozart's periodically returning duties, commissions, "opportunities," etc.; in Salzburg these would be, for instance, official church and court festivals (e.g., the "Festum Pallii"), university ceremonies ("Finalmusiken"), name days (serenades, divertimenti, etc.); in Vienna one could describe the "season" with its Lenten concerts and academies, etc. The actual relation between Mozart's "free" and "bound" compositions could be described much more flexibly against this background.
15. Mozart's Compositional Process.
    N.B. The time is probably not yet ripe. At the moment Einstein's and Hertzmann's essays are enough. Only towards the end of the *NMA* could one approach the problem, by analyzing the sketches and drafts that will have cropped up by then in a unified study.
16. Padre Martini and Mozart.
    N.B.: Since sources claiming to witness counterpoint instruction with Leopold have all been exposed as false interpretations, Mozart's encounter with Padre Martini takes on a new importance. The Martini studies (cf. Hess in *Mozart-Jahrbuch* 1956) would have to be examined and interpreted. In addition, one should consider all of Mozart's other counterpoint exercises. The study would have the approximate title: *Mozart's Counterpoint Studies.*
17. Mozart's letters and notes as a music-historical source.
    N.B. A complete interpretation of the musicologically relevant (i.e., non-biographical) contents would be important.
18. The problem of the "versions" of Mozart's operas.

Anmerkung: Es kann nicht gesagt werden, wie weit das bisherige Schrifttum schon diese Fragen ausgeschöpft hat.

19. Mozart-Kataloge.

Anmerkung: Darstellung der diversen Spezialkataloge, ihrer Geschichte und (evtl.) Abhängigkeit, Konkordanzen.

20. (nicht auf Mozart beschränkt): Thematische Kataloge, Inventare etc. des süddeutsch-habsburgischen Raums.

Anmerkung: Allgemeine Aufarbeitung, Verzettelung, Konkordanz-Register. Hier wären evtl. auch noch die gedruckten Breitkopf-Kataloge mit zu berücksichtigen.

21. Die Textquellen der Konzert-Arien Mozarts.

Anmerkung: Für einen großen Teil der Arien hat sich bis jetzt der Dichter nicht nachweisen lassen. Hier könnte man evtl. mit den Methoden der Germanistik und Romanistik zum Ziel kommen.

22. Die undatierten Werke Mozarts als methodisches Problem.

Anmerkung: Vgl. Thema 12. Das hier umfassender formulierte Thema setzt die Behandlung des Themas 12 voraus.

23. Die zeitgenössischen Bearbeitungen Mozartscher Werke als Ausdruck der Zeitmode.

24. Mozarts Instrumentation und Instrumentenbehandlung.

Anmerkung: Nebengedanke: Was kann die Kenntnis "typisch" Mozartscher Instrumentationseigentümlichkeiten zur Echtheitskritik beitragen ?

25. Dynamik bei Mozart.

26. Leopold Mozarts Leben und Werk. *)

*) Aus diesem Themenkomplex ist neuerdings im Rahmen einer Tübinger Dissertation das Teilthema "Leopold Mozart in seinen Vokal-Kompositionen" vergeben worden.

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N.B. It is impossible to say to what degree previous research has dealt with this problem.

19. Mozart Catalogues.

 N.B.: A survey of the various special catalogues, their history, and (perhaps) their connections, concordances.

20. (Not limited to Mozart): South German thematic catalogues and inventories, etc.

 N.B. A general listing with an index of concordances. The printed Breitkopf catalogue might also be considered.

21. The text sources of Mozart's concert arias.

 N.B.: For most of the arias it has been impossible to identify a librettist. Perhaps one could approach this problem with the techniques of literary criticism.

22. Mozart's undated works as methodological problem.

 N.B. See point 12. A study of this broader theme would require treatment of point 12.

23. Contemporary arrangements of Mozart's works as an expression of contemporary taste.

24. Mozart's orchestration and treatment of instruments.

 N.B.: An associated thought: What can knowledge of "typical" characteristics of Mozart's orchestration contribute to establishment of authenticity?

25. Mozart's use of dynamics.

26. Leopold Mozart's life and work.*

* A part of this thematic complex, "Leopold Mozart in his vocal compositions," has recently been assigned as a dissertation in Tübingen.

Notes

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1. Plath's position paper was originally published in the conference report, along with a transcription of the discussion about it; see Giegling (1966). The 1991 publication is a reprint within a collection of Plath's essays on Mozart (Plath 1991). To aid the reader, I will refer to page numbers in the latter publication, and will state page numbers only when they change. Since the quotations from Plath are so extensive and the original German text is widely available, the original will not, in departure from usual practice, be given here.

2. The word Plath uses is "Verstehen," which, as we will see, was crucial to Dilthey's conception of the "human sciences" (*Geisteswissenschaften*) as sciences of *Verstehen*, as opposed to the natural sciences, the sciences of "explanation" (*Erklären*).

3. "Geist" is a difficult word to translate. Translators often choose "Spirit," which I find unsatisfying; in what follows here I will use both "Spirit," as in "Mozart's *Geist*," and "intellectual," as in *Geistesgeschichte*.

4. Neal Zaslaw reported in a personal communication of 2004 that Paul Henry Lang, his teacher at Columbia University in the early 1960s, believed similarly that most Mozart questions had already been answered. See also Senici (1994).

5. Plath himself worked on handwriting; see various essays in Plath (1991). See also Haberkamp (1986), Tyson (1987), Eisen (1991a), Konrad (1992), and Edge (2001).

6. See Wolff (1989–90).

7. This was not always the case. As Cliff Eisen (1991b) has argued, the *NMA* has often relied (or been forced to rely) on the texts of the earlier complete edition. On the *New Köchel* see Zaslaw (2000).

8. I mean to draw a distinction here between historicism as a mode of writing history and historicism as a style of writing music. For introductions to the latter see Dahlhaus and Krummacher (1994) and Garratt (2002).

9. On Herder, see Meinecke (1965:355–444). See also Taruskin (2005a, 3:21) for the music-historical implications of this position.

10. See Butt (1996) and Cook (2001) on the idea that writing about music can be "like a performance."

11. On the distinction between "lower" and "higher" criticism, see Grier (1996:14–24).

12. See Taylor (1975).

13. For an account of shifting senses of history's movement from the late Enlightenment onwards, see Koselleck (2003:150–76).

14. As it turns out, Popper's crusade against historicism seems to have begun with his rejection of teleological narratives of music history. See Taruskin (2005a, 3:413n2) and Popper (1982:93–99).

15. See, for instance, Leech-Wilkinson (2002), who focuses his criticism on "factual" arguments in traditional accounts of instrumental performance of medieval music. He calls such arguments "historicism" without, in my opinion, engaging sufficiently with historicism's other components. I pursue the matter in more detail in Irvine (2004).

16. See Meinecke (1965:1–28) and Nipperdey (1983:498). It is unclear to me whether there is a significant difference between what Dahlhaus and Krummacher (1994) call "Denkweise" (mode of thinking) and "Praxis" (practice); they use the first term to describe what historicist historians do.

17. See Krieger (1977:1–20) and also White (1973:163–90).

18. For a collection of Ranke's texts in English and an illuminating introduction to them, see Ranke (1973). For more on Ranke's dictum, which he borrowed from Thucydides, see Repgen (1982). For an interesting discussion by a distinguished music historian on how the phrase might be misunderstood, see Treitler (1989:37, 310n36).

19. On relativist implications of Ranke's programmatic statement, see Hindrichs (2002).

20. See Iggers and Moltke (in Ranke 1973:ix–x). Walter Benjamin's well known critique of historicism, which included his call to "brush history against the grain" engages with this aspect. For Benjamin, historians who "[blot out] everything they know about the later course of history" practice a kind of false empathy for historical actors that is really a *disguised* empathy "with the victor" (1968:256). For a recent discussion of the consequences of this position for music historians, see Deathridge (2000).

21. The following discussion is indebted to the recent literature on Jahn, especially Walther (2000) and the essays in Calder, Cancik, and Kytzler (1991). Schramm (1998) offers many useful biographical details but steers clear of wider judgments about Jahn's *Mozart-Bild.* Demuth (1997) devotes considerable attention to Jahn, mainly from a philosophical perspective. The only treatment in English is King (1955:66–77). For the sake of simplicity I will bypass a discussion of the methods of musical biography per se; for a recent treatment, see Pekacz (2004).

22. "Im Entwicklungsgang der Völker, welche eine Kunst selbstständig erzeugt und ausgebildet haben, tritt uns die Erscheinung entgegen, daß sie, bald begünstigt bald gehemmt von aüßeren Verhältnissen, Jahrhunderte lang ringen und streben, bis sie in verschiedenen Ansätzen . . . in der Darstellung des Schönen die höchste Aufgabe der Kunst zu lösen vermag. Diesen wunderbar herrlichen Anblick der organischen Entwicklung einer begabten Künstlernatur, welche durch keine scheinbare Störung gehemmt wird, der vielmehr Alles zum Besten dient, die, indem sie abwirft was nur vorübergehenden Zwecken diente, um so kräftiger emporwächst—diesen Anblick gewährt uns der Entwicklungsgang Mozarts" (Jahn 1856–59, 1:619–20). For a discussion of these issues, with special reference to Hegel, see Garratt (2002:9–35).

23. On Jahn's polemics against Wagner, see Eichhorn (1991) and von Reibnitz (1991).

24. See von Reibnitz (1991) and Irvine (2005:32–35).

25. Haydn White's introduction to Reinhart Koselleck's *The Practice of Conceptual History* (2002) clarifies many important points for the non-German-speaking reader. My explanation here is indebted to his sketch of historicism. The following sums this sketch up well: "The history of historiography, in Koselleck's view, is a history of the evolution of the language of historians, a language that is ever more conceptually self-conscious, ever more aware of the difficulty of grasping the experience of others in terms adequate to its reality. In this respect, Koselleck's work converges with that of Barthes, Foucault, and Derrida, all of whom have stressed the status of historiography as discourse rather than as discipline and featured the constitutive nature of historical discourse against its claims to literal truthfulness" (in Koselleck 2002:xiii–xiv).

26. On the continuing importance of Jahn's vase descriptions, see Bažant (1991).

27. "Dergleichen Darstellungen sind auf Vasenbildern ungemein häufig und man kann, wenn man den mit der stilistischen Entwicklung Schritt haltenden Wechsel in dem kleinen Detail der Sitte und Mode verfolgt, einen kleinen Abschnitt der griechischen Culturgeschichte vollständig und anschaulich aus diesen Vasenbildern darlegen" (Jahn 1861:737–38).

28. See Konrad (1999).

29. This comment from Dahlhaus is typical of his approach: "Music history fails either as history by being a collection of structural analyses of separate works, or as a history of art by reverting from musical works to occurrences in social or intellectual history cobbled together in order to impart cohesion to an historical narrative" (1983:19–20). See also Hepokoski (1991:234–35). Richard Taruskin has returned, very recently, to Dahlhaus's use of the distinction; Taruskin calls it a "veritable slogan for musicology," the "great Either/Or," and "the great bane of contemporary musical scholarship" (2006:319).

30. "Man staunt über diese unaufhörliches Versuchen und begreift nicht, wie aus solchem musikalischen Bröckelwerk ein organisches Ganze werden könne. Vergleicht man aber das fertige Kunstwerk mit dem Chaos der Entwürfe, so wird man immer wieder von der Tiefen Bewunderung vor dem schöpferischen Geist ergriffen, der die Idee seiner Aufgabe so klar angeschaut, Grundlage und Umriß der Ausführung so fest und sicher gefaßt hat, daß unter alle dem Suchen und Versuchen im Einzelnen doch das Ganze aus seiner Wurzel naturgemäß herauswächst und sich entwickelt" (Jahn 1867:259). On the organic metaphor, see Solie (1980) and Kerman (1980).

31. I borrow this phrase from the title of Reinhard Strohm's essay, "Collapsing the Dialectic: The Enlightenment Tradition in Music and Its Critics" (2000).

32. See Iggers (1983:104–15). On Dahlhaus and Droysen, see Hepokoski (1991:233). For a sampling of Dahlhaus's approach to Droysen, see Dahlhaus (1982:34–43).

33. "Die Hunderte von Bildern einer Pinakothek,—sie haben jedes für sich ihr Sein, bieten jedes für sich dem Kunstfreund, dem Ästheten, dem lernenden Künstler usw. andere und andere Seiten der Betrachtung. Die Kunstgeschichte stellt sie in einem Zusammenhang, den sie an sich nicht haben, für den sie nicht gemalt sind und aus dem sich doch eine Reihenfolge, eine Kontinuität ergibt, unter deren Einfluß die Maler dieser Bilder standen, ohne daß sie sich dessen Bewußt waren, und die in der Wahl der Gegenstände, in der Art der Komposition, selbst in dem Techniken der Zeichnung und Farbe dies bunte Vielerlei unter verschiedene Zeiten und Länder uns erst zeitlich scheiden läßt" (Droysen 1967:35).

34. "Ich meine hauptsächlich das Bestreben, stets das Kunstwerk als solches aufzufassen und zu betrachten, und durch sorgsame und möglichst umfassende Vergleichung der Monumente Einsicht und Verständnis der eigentümlichen Sprache zu gewinnen, welche die Kunstwerke reden. Kenntnis dieser monumentalen Sprache ist dem Kunsterklärer so sehr ernstes und unerlässliches Erfordernis, wie dem Erklärer von Schriftwerken die Kunde der Sprache" (Jahn 1845, quoted in Bažant 1991:26).

35. "Ich habe aber außer dem was Mozart unmittelbar angeht auch eine Zeit, die Verhältnisse unter denen er lebte, und die Personen, mit denen er in Berührung kam, bestimmter darzustellen versucht, soweit es eben für seine Entwicklung in Betracht kommt . . . Ich habe dann nicht ohne Eifer zusammenzubringen gesucht was mir dienlich schien, das Bild lebendiger und anschaulicher zu machen" (Jahn 1856–59, 1:xxix).

36. John Butt has made the interesting suggestion that this empirical turn can be read as a "seconda prattica" following a more idealistic "prima prattica" (2002:1–24).

37. "Die Hauptquellen aber sind und bleiben die Kunstwerke selbst; daß hierüber jetzt völlige Klarheit herrscht, daß man die Kunstwerke als Urkunden auffaßt und mit allen Mitteln bestrebt sein will, sie ohne Rücksicht auf ästhetischen Genuß sie richtig zu lesen und zu deuten, darin sehe ich einen der wichtigsten Fortschritte der jüngsten Zeit" (Spitta 1893:25–26).

38. "Zu den vornehmen Quellen der Kunstgeschichte gehören die Kunstdenkmale vergangener Zeiten. Der Zustand, in welchem sie auf uns gekommen sind, fordert eine reinigende, erläuternde, einordnende, und nicht selten auch eine ergänzende Tätigkeit. Die antiquarische Wissenschaft hat sich im Laufe der Zeiten eine feste Methode der Untersuchung

genommen. Diese, gewißermassen ein Arbeitsinstrument, wird sie auch bei der Behandlung der Kunstdenkmäler in Anwendung bringen, und je sicherer es gehandhabt wird, desto sicherer eine Bürgschaft für das Gelingen der Arbeit ist gegeben. Aber diese Geschicklichkeit wird nur durch langdauernde Übung auf grund eines bestimmten positiven Wissens erworben. Auch ein Künstler kann sie erwerben, wenn er die Schmiede der Wissenschaft durchzumachen sich nicht scheut. Nur aber durch seine Künstlerschaft alleine, und sei sie noch hoch und respektsgebietend, ist er zu dieser Thätigkeit nicht geeignet, selbst nicht immer im Falle der Ergänzung oder der kritischen Auswahl zwischen verschiedene Möglichkeiten. Eine energisch ausgeprägte Individualität wird stets in Gefahr sein, sich selbst unbewußt einen fremden Zug in das vorhandene Kunstwerk hineinzugeben" (Spitta 1892:7). Note the almost exact echo in Plath's position paper ("organization, evaluation, classification"). For more on Spitta's use of this distinction, see Garratt (2002:13).

39. On Spitta's intellectual background, see Schilling (1994).

40. Spitta's positivism, however, had a false bottom. It turns out that he was equally implicated in narrative strategies, including nationalist paeans to Germany's "special mission." See Schilling (1994), Kerman (1985:50–55), and Taruskin (1995:42–43).

41. For an introduction in English to Dilthey's thought, see Rickman (1988).

42. Dilthey's "insides/outsides" division, like the previous separation of "higher" and "lower" criticism, is an example of "two stage" strategies in historical writing. On the implications of the split for musicology, see Treitler (1989:379–81 and passim); Treitler's analysis is subjected to a strong critique by Taruskin (1995:24–32).

43. "Im Medium des Verstehens läßt sich jede einmalige Situation nachvollziehen, auch die fremde und die ferne, andersartige Vergangenheit wird durch das Sich-Einlassen, Sich-Einfühlen nachvollziehbar, übersetzbar und somit erkennbar" (Koselleck 1979:177).

44. The idea of conversing with history was taken up again more critically by Gadamer (1960).

45. "Die heutige Zeit sucht von der Romantik loszukommen; sie ist von idealistischen, konstruktiven Denken längst zum empirischen, realistischen übergegangen und damit auch in der Kritik und Benutzung der Quellen weit strenger geworden. Sie begnügt sich nicht mehr mit einer Auswahl, sondern strebt nach dem Ganzen. Aber auch der Künstlerpersönlichkeit als solcher tritt sie anders gegenüber. Sie drängt auch hier auf dem Weg der Empirie nach Vergeistigung, faßt das Problem vor allem von der psychologischen Seite und sucht es durch möglichts feine Zergleiderung des Stils, als des Allerpersönlichsten, zu lösen" (Abert 1923:vi).

46. Style history came to Mozart studies through Teodor de Wyzewa and Georges de Saint-Foix (1937) in their attempt to sort Mozart's works according to stylistic principles. Guido Adler brought style history to musicology at large. See Adler (1919). On Adler's historiographical context, see Boisits (1998).

47. See Abert's introduction to his revision of Jahn's biography in Abert (1923:iii–xxv). See also Einstein (1923), Sievers (in Köchel [1862] 1964:xxv–lii), and Gruber (1994).

48. Jahn bore a series of hardships, including his wife's debilitating mental illness, political misfortune, an illegitimate child, academic squabbling, and finally severe illness of his own. See Gruber (1991).

49. For a good general definition of positivism, see Kolakowski (1971:9–19).

50. See Mendel (1960). Both Kerman (1985:50–52) and Taruskin (1995:42–43) see the overturning of Spitta's chronology as an important turning point in postwar musicology.

51. Plath described the memo in the discussion of his paper in Salzburg this way: "Die Versendung des Themenplans erfolgte aus einer Notlage: wir sahen uns vor Probleme gestellt, zu deren Bearbeitungen wesentliche Voraussetzungen fehlen" (Giegling 1966:91).

52. One of Popper's most famous books was *The Poverty of Historicism* (1957).

53. There is some disagreement among historians about who was the first, Popper or Carl Gustav Hempel, to propose such theories of evidence. For Hempel's theories, see Hempel ([1942] 1965). A discussion of Karl Popper's approach to "covering law theories" can be found in Popper (1962, 2:363–64), where he outlines his claim to having originally proposed this approach. For an explication and critique of Hempel's theories, see Danto (1968). Danto refers to the historians who follow Hempel as an "avant-garde" (1968:214).

54. Unlike Plath, Mendel attempted in his programmatic essay to reconcile positivist and historicist approaches, for instance by often citing the twentieth-century British historicist R. G. Collingwood in defense of his positivist position. See Treitler (1990) for a discussion of the confusion this caused.

55. See Treitler (1990) and Taruskin (1995).

56. Dietrich Berke, in recent reminiscences of Plath, makes a direct connection. See Berke (2001:1 and passim.)

57. Although Ringer's study ends in 1933, I think it fair to extend many of his observations to the postwar period, as for instance Pamela Potter does in her study of German musicology before and after 1945 (1998:33).

58. Ringer's survey of the history of the negative connotations of the word "positivism" among German academics is particularly convincing (1969:294–304).

59. Dietrich Berke recently asked: "Should Plath not have been fully aware of the pejorative character that had grown around the concept of positivism? That is hard to imagine in a man of such universal learning . . . No, Plath used the word clearly as a provocation, and provoke he did" (2001:9).

60. For a transcription of the discussion, see Giegling (1966).

61. For Engel's activities as a musicology professor in the Third Reich and after, see Potter, (1998:157, 160, and passim). On Knepler's ideas about the writing of music history, see Shreffler (2003:502–6).

62. "Die Überzuchtung des Spezialistentums und der Neo-Positivismus eröffnen für die Musikwissenschaft bedrohliche Konzequenzen: die Isolierung der Forscher untereinander und der Stoffgebiete gegeneinander, den Zerfall der internationalen Zusammenarbeit, das zunehmende Unverständnis breiter Bildungs- und Liebhaberschichten für die musikgeschichtliche Forschung . . . Der Hunger nach dem Verstehen von Musik kann nicht mit den Rezepten alchimistischer Geheimküchen gestillt werden . . . Es gibt tatsächlich Abhandlungen, die sich so gut wie ausschließlich mit Papieren, Tinten, Rastern u. dgl. beschäftigen, und wenn es so weitergeht, dann wird im Jahre 2000 eine Musikgeschichte nicht mehr von Komponisten und Theoretikern, sondern von Schreibern und Kopisten, nicht mehr von Messen und Sinfonien, sondern von Wasserzeichen handeln" (Blume 1973:40–41).

63. Walter Benjamin's dark warnings about historicism's narrative strategies seem, unfortunately, to have been confirmed by German and Austrian Mozart scholarship's ugly cooperation with the Nazi regime in 1933–45 (Potter 1998:154–55 and passim). On such "false continuities," see also Hoeckner (2004:512). Plath's objections to their work must also be read against this background. It seems ironic that although to us nothing seems further from Benjamin than Plath's "value-free" positivism, his arguments dealt a blow to a shared opponent.

64. On positivism as the "new musicology's" Other, see Fink (1998).

65. Tim Carter also sees similarities between *Geistesgeschichte* and the "new musicology" (2002:276). Albrecht Riethmüller suggests something similar when he compares the "new musicology's" Beethoven reception with the interpretations of Jacques Handschin (Riethmüller 2001:96). This ebb and flow of interpretation as a concern in philology is not limited to musicology; see Gumbrecht (2003) for a wider treatment.

66. For a recent overview of Kerman's influence on the "new musicology," see Williams (2001:2–7).

67. We have already encountered this question, which Taruskin has called "the great Either/Or of modern musicology" (2006:319), in our discussion of Otto Jahn's legacy.

68. John Deathridge's contention that Treitler's work is "post-historicism" seems somewhat questionable in this context (2000:238).

69. Interestingly, Plath's own work took a turn for the "interpretive" later in his career. For a short treatment in English, see my review of a conference devoted to his legacy (Irvine 2006).

70. See Taruskin's recent intervention: "Now that the cold war in Europe has joined Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms in history, we should be able to recognize that the essential task of the art historian is not to choose between mutually exclusive alternatives [between the great Either/Or], but to attempt their integration within a narrative that describes the mutually influential and mutually accommodating—in short the truly dialectical—interaction of powerful agents and mediating factors: institutions and their gatekeepers, governments, ideologies, patterns of consumption and dissemination involving patrons, audiences, publishers and publicists, critics, chroniclers, commentators, censors, and so on practically indefinitely until one chooses to draw the line. Where to draw it will be forever a matter of debate—but such debate should be open, explicit, and free" (2006:319).

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