

A Document from the Early History of the Fourth Symphony

Earlier this year, Benjamin Korstvedt identified a manuscript in the Archive of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde as a noteworthy document from the early history of the 1880 version of the Fourth Symphony.

The manuscript, which is entitled *A. Bruckner / 4. Symphonie, Es-Dur / I., II., III. Satz / f[ür] Klavier, 4 h[än]d[ig] / Ms* (shelfmark: GdMf VII 45466), consists of a four-hand piano arrangement of the first three movements of the symphony in a clean, professional copy, preserved in very good condition. Bruckner himself made a few corrections and final adjustments in pencil. Who exactly prepared the transcription is not indicated.

With one significant exception, the text of each movement is essentially similar to its final version in the 1880 *Fassung*. The significant difference is that in this score the Andante still contains a passage of twenty bars following m. 190 that was permanently cut only during orchestral rehearsals for the first performance in February 1881 under Hans Richter (as can be seen from Bruckner autograph score, as well as the copy of the score used by Richter). The inclusion of this passage indicates that this piano score must have made sometime in 1879 or early in 1880. This dating also explains the absence of the Finale, which was not completed until late in 1880. Furthermore, this piano score contains earlier readings of a few passages that were revised before or immediately after the 1881 performance. It also lacks a many of the tempo and other performance markings that the score gained in during the process of finalization and performance (for example, the Scherzo is marked *Bewegt* with no subsequent tempo changes and the Trio is simply marked *Nicht zu Schnell*).

It seems very likely that this piano score stems from the performance of these three movements at *interne Abende* of the Wiener akademischer Wagner Verein in 1880. On 4 February 1880 Felix Mottl and Hans Paumgartner performed the second and third movements, and on 7 October they played the first movement.¹ The score does not bear any markings (such as fingerings or added dynamic and phrase markings) that indicate it was used in rehearsals and performance; perhaps this copy was prepared as an exemplar to be used in the preparation of

¹ See Andrea Harrandt, "Bruckner-Rezeption im Wiener Akademischen Wagner-Verein" in *Bruckner-Jahrbuch 1994/95/96* (Linz 1997), p. 225

additional copies. The copy now in the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde was signed with the name *Standhartner*. This must be Dr. Josef Standhartner, a leading physician, a member of the board of directors of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, friend of Richard Wagner, stepfather of the Viennese critic Gustav Schönaich, and honorary member of the Wiener akademischer Wagner Verein. According to reports from the time, Standhartner was present at the 7. Oct. 1880 concert.²

As well as being a record of the first public performance of these three movements of the symphony, this score offers a clear picture of a moment in time in the textual evolution of the Fourth and thus is further confirmation of the sequence of certain revisions made to the work in 1880 and 1881.

² He was mentioned in a report on this concert in the *Musiker-Courier*, 18 Oct. 1880. See Franz Scheder's *Anton Bruckner Chronologie Datenbank*, http://www.abil.at/Datenbank_Scheder/Bruckner_Chronologie.php?we_objectID=14689&pid=408 (accessed 22 Nov. 2015)