

Commentary

This publication is the reprint of the first print of Bruckner's fifth symphony revised by Franz Schalk. The reviser, Franz Schalk (1863-1931), was born in Vienna, and was one of Bruckner's favorite pupils along with his brother Josef Schalk and Ferdinand Löwe (who revised the Fourth and Ninth symphonies). Bruckner's fifth symphony was substantially completed by 1878. Franz Schalk, a conductor for an opera house in Graz, did not decide to play this symphony until 1893. He made a number of revisions in Bruckner's original in order to perform it for a premiere in 1894. The Haas-Nowak edition which was published later was also based on the foregoing original, and is in wide use at present.

Let's talk about the organization of musical instruments in the fifth symphony. In the revised edition, a third flute (and a piccolo played by the player of the third flute) and a contra fagott are added to the wood instrument section. In the coda of the fourth movement, the separate choral-theme is splendidly played by another group of brass instruments (i.e, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, and one tuba) and metal percussion (one cymbal and one triangle).

The overall orchestration has been extensively varied. Further, designation for time and tempo have been also modified or added. Especially, what surprise us is that a total of one hundred or more bars have been boldly deleted from the fourth movement. Thus, some people consider that the recapitulation indispensable in the sonata-form is substantially ignored in the revised edition.

Bruckner died in 1896 two years after the premiere using the revised edition, and Schalk's revised edition was also published in 1896 in Vienna. The original edition under Haas's revision was first published in 1937. Schalk's revised edition has not been used except for by a few conductors (e.g. Knappertsbusch) since the publication of Haas original edition. At present, Schalk's revised edition is widely considered as being a result of the meddling of one of the composer's pupils.

However, this point of view seems rather incomprehensible to me. This is because I do not think that Schalk revised the composition poorly. Particularly, when I listened to the coda in the fourth movement, I thought that Schalk's revised edition was much better than the original edition. In the coda, the number of brass instruments is doubled compared with that in the original edition. This enables the chorales and the fine accompaniment motif to be equally emphasized in a tolerant manner. I was not satisfied with the original edition in which the foregoing elements were no more vivid or clearer than those in the revised edition. Thus, I had been frustrated until I heard the record based on the revised edition. According to Nowak, Bruckner himself agreed to Schalk's request to increase the number of brass instruments, which I think very reasonable. The fourth movement ends with continuous B-flat-major tonic sounds which are not in unison as in the original edition. I am so delighted with this that I want to shout "Schalk, you've done it!".

With respect to my foregoing opinion, those who are very enthusiastic about the original edition would contend that the revised edition is not Bruckner's but Schalk's. However, such insistence does not surprise me at all.

I wonder whether it is possible to prove that the original on which the Haas-Nowak original edition was based was actually completely finished by Bruckner alone. No one can prove that Bruckner finished it without being affected by the opinions of others. Further, there are more highly acclaimed composers whose compositions that have been arranged by other musicians are evaluated than their originals. Why is not this applicable to Bruckner?

I would like to insist that both the original edition and the revised edition be played and evaluated. This broad-minded view has not originated from a scholarly interest in searching for the purebloodedness of the original, but from the following two reasons.

One reason is the historical implication of Schalk's revised edition. It should be noted that Bruckner's fifth symphony based on only the revised edition was in circulation for about forty years prior to the publication of the original edition in the 1930's. The conductors who were active in the first half of the

twentieth century played the fifth symphony based on Schalk's revised edition and were influenced by this edition. This is a historical fact regardless of the quality of the revised edition. I cannot help but conclude that it is unreasonable and unnatural that at present, the fifth symphony is mainly being played based on the original edition.

The other reason is related to the musical importance of Schalk's revised edition. Reviewing the scores vertically, i.e. in view of sounds, the revised edition is not as strong as the original edition but is soft and elegant as a whole. This is because very careful consideration is given to balancing respective musical instruments. For instance, this is clearly proved by the strong sounds produced in the arpeggio in the introduction of the first movement. Linear brass instruments such as trumpets and trombones are moderate while wood instruments and strings are conspicuous. When the brass instruments are used, their number is reduced, or their dynamics are reduced compared with the other instruments. In the famous fugue of the fourth movement, the main voice is specified to be played forte while the other voices are specified to be played mezzo-forte. In Schalk's revised edition, brass instruments are added to the wood instruments so as to play a part which is played by either wood instruments or brass in the original edition (e.g. in the part where the choral main theme is first played in the fourth movement). Further, wood instruments accompany strings (e.g. at the beginning of the first movement). In other words, Schalk revised the original so as not to make the sounds monotonous.

When reviewing the composition horizontally, the following features are noted: instruments are deliberately changed in long phrases (e.g. the first theme in the second movement), and the combination of instruments is changed when repeating a motif. We can say that Schalk revised the original to make the composition more colorful than the original edition. It is new and fresh for the timpani to be played with a motif rhythm as well as with tremolo. Time and tempo are finely varied in accordance with the concept of the composition. For instance, in the second theme of the first movement, 2/2 time is changed to 4/4 time. At the beginning of the second movement in

place of 2/2 time, 4/6 time is used for strings, and 4/4 time is used for wind instruments. In the second theme, all the instruments are in 4/4 time so as to be at a slow tempo.

Schalk's revised edition is very interesting in view of the arrangement. It may be criticized in view of the essence of Bruckner's music as believed by a number of Bruckner enthusiasts, but it is very well organized in view of the orchestration. Some of Schalk's time and tempo requirements are frequently employed when the fifth symphony is played according to the original edition. This proves that Schalk's revision is justified in that respect.

In other words, Schalk's revised edition features a score which is made such that the symphony can be effectively played by orchestras. Therefore, I ask that you frankly listen to the revised edition without preconception and prejudice.

It is often said that the essence of Bruckner's sounds were deeply influenced by the sounds of organ. If so, it would be better to play his compositions using the organ. When an orchestra is intending to play the composition, a score which is thoroughly revised for the orchestra cannot be ignored. In this respect, we can consider that the revised edition improved it rather than changed it for the worse.

The extensive deletion of the fourth movement may be unacceptable to those who consider that the original edition is the ultimate standard. A number of researchers as well as Nowak have pointed out that the deletion of the recapitulation of the first and second themes has destroyed the sonata-form of the fourth movement.

However, it is also considered that since the appropriately arranged coda repeats the main themes (except for the second theme) a number of times, Schalk might have thought that the coda resembles the recapitulation. I myself do not think that the fourth movement in Schalk's revised edition is insufficient or poor in terms of form. In fact, I believe that the exposition, the development and the magnificent coda constitute an excellent three-part form. Whether or not it is in the sonata form, the fourth movement impresses us as if a number of rivulets gradually merge into one large river.

The foregoing comments are simply my personal views on Schalk's revised edition of Bruckner's fifth symphony. But it is certain that Schalk intended to revise Bruckner's original for his master's good. It is very difficult for me to believe that Schalk, who was musically and emotionally influenced by his master, would have dared to make meaningless revisions while his master had been alive. Perhaps we should ask ourselves whether or not we understand Bruckner better than Schalk at that time.

In any case, we should make efforts so that compositions are frequently played and reviewed on the basis of both of the original editions and the revised editions. This is not limited to Bruckner's fifth symphony. This publication is intended to promote thinking along those lines.

The Japanese first performance of the Bruckner's fifth symphony revised by Schalk was in July 1996 in Tokyo (Furtwängler Institute Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Takeo Noguchi), the live-recording CD of that day was produced (SEELENKLANG: SEK-1) and in 1998 Leon Botstein recorded this edition for CD with the London Philharmonic Orchestra (TELARC: 80599). I hope that these performances might be a symptom for the reevaluation of the Schalk's edition.

I owe this publication to many people. In particular I express my gratitude to Dr. Gunther Brosche and Mrs. Elisabeth Wagner of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Musiksammlung in Vienna, for supplying copies of the first edition (Doblinger Verlag, 1896) and for the permission to reprint this for the first time in Japan.

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