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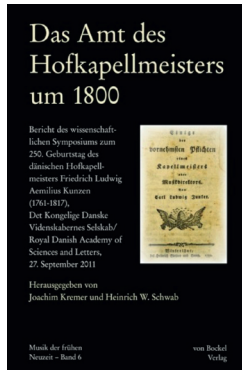
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Joachim Kremer & Heinrich W. Schwab (eds.)
Das Amt des Hofkapellmeisters um 1800. Bericht des wissenschaftlichen Symposiums zum 250. Geburtstag des dänischen Hofkapellmeisters Friedrich Ludwig Aemilius Kunzen (1761–1817), Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab/Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters, 27. September 2011
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The book is concerned with *The office of the master of the court chapel around 1800*. This important musical position, which has taken a prominent place in music historiography, is analysed broadly in a historical context. Seven articles contribute with individual views on the overall topic, which is described in the book's introduction: 'anhand ausgewählter Musikerkarrieren strukturbedingte Gemeinsamkeiten bzw. Unterschiede herauszuarbeiten und in ihrer vielseitigkeiten Verflechtungen kritisch zu diskutieren' (p. 8). The seven authors take on the task differently, partly in their emphasis on the subject's many facets, and partly because of for instance the geographical location of their individual cases. As a result, the topic is discussed from different perspectives, such as history of the institution of a court, local history and biography of individual figures.

The articles originate from a symposium held at the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters in Copenhagen 2011 on the occasion of the 250th anniversary of F. L. Ae. Kunzen, a musician and composer born in Lübeck, who was master of the chapel at the royal court in Copenhagen from 1795 until his death in 1817. The anthology takes its point of departure from Kunzen's role as a 'Grenzgänger' ('border crosser') in order to view the position of the *Hofkapellmeister* in an international perspective. Despite the starting point from an individual figure as Kunzen, the editors of the book emphasize that 'so weisen die hier vorgelegten Studien doch auf ein über die Person hinausgehendes internationales Phänomen der Ausgestaltung und Transformation eines zentralen Musikeramtes hin' (p. 9). Based on Kunzen's biography, a main concern of the book is to describe on the one hand the conflict between leading the musical activities within an institutional framework of the elite and, on the other, being performing artist and composer.

As head of a private chapel belonging to the political and economic apex of society, the master of a court chapel was expected to possess musical talent as well as organizational and social skills. The position was sought after and only few musicians succeeded in achieving it. Among court musicians, the *Hofkapellmeister* was situated at the highest rank. In a regulation from Schwerin in 1704, however, the office-holder was assigned only the sixteenth rank together with the prince's valet (p. 169). The position therefore did not necessarily belong to the personal circles of the ruler. The institutional framework, for example at the Imperial Court in Vienna, allowed only limited personal contact between the *Hofkapellmeister* and the emperor (pp. 106–7).

The *Hofkapellmeister* was the artistic director of the music accompanying the court's ecclesiastical celebrations and its representative activities in public. In addition, private chamber music was used as entertainment in connection with the court's inner representation. The musical venues were indoors, outdoors, in the church, in the theatre, at dinner and dance. On an everyday basis, the master of the chapel was expected to organize the music, select (or compose) suitable compositions, rehearse and perform the works. The skills as a composer, however, were not necessarily decisive for whether or not one could fulfil the functions as a *Hofkapellmeister*. Administrative tasks, for instance recruiting and dismissing musicians, acquiring appropriate works, copying music and repairing instruments, belonged to everyday routines as well. These diverse obligations were not always easy to fulfil on equal terms, which is evident from several of the book's articles, for instance the one by Frank Ziegler (pp. 119–58), who compares the conditions of court music in Eutin and Dresden, where Franz Anton von Weber respectively his son Carl Maria von Weber were *Hofkapellmeister*. Several of the book's contributions are concerned with characterizing the social-economic conditions that affected the ability of the *Hofkapellmeister* to fulfil their obligations. Other contributions look at how and to what extent the *Hofkapellmeister* was able to comply with his own personal artistic ambitions.

The conditions of a position as *Hofkapellmeister* varied from court to court depending on societal circumstances, the ruler's tastes and priorities. This is clearly illustrated in Christoph Henzel's article on Johann Friedrich Reichardt as *Hofkapellmeister* in Berlin (pp. 91–104). Here, the profiling of the office changed significantly in the period 1776–1807 as a result of the change of rulers. During the rule of Friedrich II, opera performances were limited to the carnival period, and Reichardt could devote himself to his own plans most of the year. With the successor Friedrich Wilhelm II a cultural-political shift took place in 1786. A rebuilding of the opera *Unter den Linden* was initiated, an Italian second master of the chapel was hired, and Reichardt's role as *Hofkapellmeister* was now primarily as a composer. Friedrich Wilhelm III, on the other hand, reduced the court music significantly in 1797. His highest priority was to cut the court's expenses.

The office of the *Hofkapellmeister* was in use in European context over several centuries. The book demonstrates that many of the tasks which the position covered around

1800 were not specific to that particular time. On the other hand, the years around 1800 are described as a time of crisis ('Umbruchzeit'): From being the highest artistic-social rank a musician could achieve, the office as *Hofkapellmeister* became a field of conflict. Particularly the conflict of how to fulfil personal artistic ambitions within the institutional structures of a court is discussed. Heinrich W. Schwab concludes that 'der zweifelsohne hochtalentierte Kunzen letztlich nicht für das sich selbst bestimmende, moderne Künstlertum entschieden, sondern ... für das pflichtgetreue Erfüllen von musikalischen Alltagsaufgaben' (p. 39). A contribution such as Frank Ziegler's article elaborates further on this topic from the musician's point of view and shows how meeting with the requirement for performing music as part of a court's ceremonies could conflict with the individual's artistic ambitions. The young violinist Louis Spohr uttered disparagingly about how his performances at the banquets were received, having experienced that his music 'von dem Geklapper der Teller akkompaniert sein würde' (p. 134). Other virtuosos had no concerns about the audience's use and abuse of the music, and Ziegler shows how the music at banquets was adapted to the menu under the direction of Carl Maria von Weber: An overture during soup and fish, a large aria for the appetizer, a short piano or violin piece of lighter character to accompany the vegetables, a quartet or quintet during the meat, a sentimental, small song during champagne and ice and a peaceful song for coffee. Ziegler points out that 'die Tafelmusik keineswegs ausschließlich zeremoniellen Charakter hatte, sondern ebenso der persönlichen Unterhaltung des Souveräns diente' (p. 135).

The anthology covers the period from approximately 1750 to 1820 with perspectives to the times before and after. In the introduction, the Baltic Sea Region ('Osteseeraum') and its residence cities serve as examples of locations that were the destinations of transnational mobility of musicians. As a result, the office of the *Hofkapellmeister* is considered an international phenomenon. The individual articles are not, however, limited to this area. They are concerned with courts in the cities of Copenhagen, Schwerin, Stockholm, Berlin, Vienna, Dresden and Eutin. The article on Stockholm (written by Ove Ander, pp. 59–90) is comparative in its approach, as it unrolls the activities of six chapel masters in the period 1792–1818. Ziegler's article on Eutin and Dresden also compares circumstances and opportunities across two generations. An overall assessment of the many individual examples, however, is mainly left to the reader to do, which would otherwise have been very fruitful to include in the volume. The conditions of the Imperial court in Vienna, described by the Volkmar Braunbehrens as one of the best-equipped and long-standing chapels (pp. 105–18), must be regarded as an exceptional example that can hardly be used as a measure of northern European princely courts. Therefore, the reader misses an overview of what other courts might have been taken into consideration. What were the musical conditions at smaller princely courts or at courts outside the German speaking area, for instance in London or St Petersburg? Such locations are mentioned from time to time throughout the book, and an index of place

names helps finding the references. There is unfortunately no explanation as to why the seven courts in the book have been selected and analysed thoroughly, and therefore it remains unclear to what extent the office of the *Hofkapellmeister* can be understood as a European phenomenon.

The book appears as an anthology with individual contributions. Reading the book from the beginning, one lacks a basic presentation of how the office of the *Hofkapellmeister* was defined in a historical context. Not until the fifth article, 'Das Amt des Hofkapellmeisters in Wien um 1800', does Volkmar Braunbehrens provide 'ein[e] strukturell[e] Funktionsbeschreibung der Hofkapelle innerhalb der Organisation des Hofes' (p. 105). Also the book's final article by Joachim Kremer must be mentioned in this regard for the interesting perspective analysing the professionalism of the office, which he traces in contemporary sources, both literary and musical ones (pp. 159–213). Although the reader might study each article individually and on its own terms, one must expect that the order of the articles and their interaction are taken into account by the editors. One cannot avoid being highly influenced by the emphasis on the *Kapellmeister/composer* conflict, which is presented in the first article. Throughout the book, it becomes clear that the task as composer was only one of many within the office of a *Hofkapellmeister*.

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