

# How the Composer's Worldview Shapes Musical Meaning: Haydn's *Creation* and the Enlightenment

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Haydn's *Creation*, composed in 1798, is one of the most successful oratorios of all time. This is demonstrated not only by its positive reception, but by its longevity in performance even to the present day, including performances in theologically orthodox churches, universities, and seminaries. Interestingly during the eighteenth century, European society saw dramatic changes in musical style and culture, as well as religious and philosophical thought. These changes were fueled by (1) the acceptance of natural theology, a theology based entirely upon rationalism that denied tenets of revealed truth as was commonly held by proponents of the Christian Church; and (2) the shift in musical patronage from that of the aristocracy and the Church to that which was created primarily for the growing middle class. In this new structure, the influences of a middle-class, consumer-driven system of musical economics increased the desire for music as a form of expression that was accessible to all.

Haydn's *Creation* represents a musical response to, or outworking of, certain tenets of Enlightenment thought, reflective of the aforementioned cultural shifts. In this light, Haydn's *Creation* may be said to represent a considerably different set of compositional goals and musical values from those of earlier major choral works with biblically based libretti, most notably oratorios by George Frederic Handel. The libretto of *The Creation* clearly drifts away from the Christian apologetic perspective of Handelian oratorio<sup>2</sup> and towards a deistic representation of truth through its revision of the biblical account of creation.<sup>3</sup> Accompanying this shift away from orthodoxy in the libretto, *The Creation* changes musically from the contrapuntal emphasis of the oratorios of the Baroque to the use of a multiplicity of styles, including “the past's enlightened classicism—in its double fugues, extended arias, Baroque musical rhetoric, and sonata aspects—and the future's Romanticism.”<sup>4</sup> These two shifts run parallel to each other in their representation of naturalism: the former is a manifestation of naturalist theology, the latter a move toward natural expression of emotions as sought by Haydn and his contemporaries.

This article examines and seeks to document the influences of an eighteenth-century orthodox Christian worldview, the natural theology and deist worldview popular during the

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<sup>2</sup> Calvin Stapert, *Handel's Messiah: Comfort for God's People* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 76.

<sup>3</sup> Bruce C. MacIntyre, *Haydn, The Creation*, *Monuments of Western Music* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1998), x.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 280.

period, and the literary models of Milton and others in the shaping of the libretto and the music of Haydn's *The Creation*. The author will (1) discuss the theological, philosophical, and literary background relevant to the composition of *The Creation*; (2) discuss the musical background including relevant philosophies of music; (3) provide analysis of the libretto and music of *The Creation* within the aforementioned context with emphasis upon the architectural framework of the music; and (4) make conclusions based upon a synthesis of this material.

### **Governing Worldviews and Source Material: Theological, Philosophical, and Literary Background**

For the purposes of this study the importance of worldview cannot be overestimated. "Worldview" is defined by James H. Olthuis as

a framework or set of fundamental beliefs through which we view the world and our calling and future in it. This vision need not be fully articulated: it may be so internalized that it goes largely unquestioned; . . . it may be greatly refined through cultural-historical development.<sup>5</sup>

As Olthuis's definition implies, worldview is fundamentally shaped by a person's understanding of reality or truth. Thus worldview powerfully affects one's thoughts and actions in every arena. The pursuit of truth shifted during the Enlightenment from agreements between theology and philosophy (representing the historic Christian worldview) toward a scientific derivation of truth—that which was solely understood through reason (rationalism) and experience (empiricism). Since God's revelation through both Scripture and creation was held as objective truth by most in Western society until the Enlightenment, Andrew Hoffercker is correct that this change in the pursuit of truth represented a subjective turn—a turn from God-centered thinking (*theocentrism*) toward man-centered thinking (*anthropocentrism*).<sup>6</sup> Hence, in order to understand the robust meaning of Haydn's *Creation*, it is vital to understand certain tenets of orthodox Christian theology, eighteenth-century naturalist philosophy, and the worldviews of Haydn and his librettist. Although the original librettist is unknown, the oratorio's libretto is purported to have been written in mid-eighteenth century England, where the principles of natural religion were conceived. These principles eventually reached Haydn's Austria under the reign of Joseph II (1780–90), just prior to the composition of *The Creation*.

### **Orthodox versus Deist Worldview**

The two target audiences for Haydn's *Creation* were England and Austria, which were

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<sup>5</sup> James H. Olthuis, "On Worldviews," *Christian Scholar's Review* 14 (1985): 155.

<sup>6</sup> W. Andrew Hoffercker, *Revolutions in Worldview: Understanding the Flow of Western Thought* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishers, 2007), 240–41.

respectively Anglican and Roman Catholic. A study of the historic Thirty-Nine Articles<sup>7</sup> of the Anglican Church and historic documents of the Roman Catholic Church, including those of The Council of Trent<sup>8</sup> and its catechism,<sup>9</sup> yield an understanding of the eighteenth-century orthodox Anglican and Roman Catholic worldviews. As pertains to the purview of this paper, these have been determined to be very similar. Representatives from each would see all matters of existence in this life and the next as a function of dependence upon God. God is creator and preserver, working in all things at all times. Furthermore, this dependence includes the dependence upon Christ for salvation—enabling a restoration of the moral capabilities of man present before the stain of original sin.

Study of the core philosophies of the leaders of the English Enlightenment reveals a stark contrast with the orthodox Christian worldview. Matthew Tindal's *Christianity as Old as the Creation* was the highest expression of English deism and so was nicknamed "the deists' Bible." "He changed the nature of the religious apriority from glorifying God to doing good: 'to do all the good we can, and thereby render ourselves acceptable to God in answering the end of our creation.'"<sup>10</sup> The English Enlightenment philosophers moved away from the aforementioned orthodox beliefs toward the belief that God is essentially a cosmic watchmaker. In their view God created the universe with natural laws in place and then stepped back to allow everything to operate by these laws.<sup>11</sup> Tindal believed that since the natural order and laws that God set up "always and exclusively determine the events in nature neither mystery nor miracles exist,"<sup>12</sup> hence the title of his book. Thus man's use of reason exercised in doing good—rather than faith in and dependence upon Christ to make man good—was the essential measure by which all men would be held accountable. The reader should note that for the scope of this study, the terms "deism" and "naturalism" and their derivative forms serve as theological synonyms with regard to naturalism in its eighteenth-century context.

## Franz Joseph Haydn's and Baron Gottfried van Swieten's Worldviews

Joseph Haydn (1732–1809) collaborated closely with Viennese impresario Gottfried van Swieten (1734–1803) in the composition of *The Creation*. Swieten's role in working with the libretto was primarily to fit the original English libretto to work in both German and

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<sup>7</sup> "Worship-Book of Common Prayer-Articles" [on-line]; accessed January 12, 2012; available from <http://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-worship/worship/book-of-common-prayer/articles-of-religion.aspx#VII>; Internet.

<sup>8</sup> J. Waterworth, trans., *The Council of Trent, The Fifth Session: The Canons and Decrees of the Sacred and Oecumenical Council of Trent* (London: Dolman, 1848), 21–29; scanned by Hanover College Students in 1995 [on-line]; accessed January 25, 2012; available from <http://history.hanover.edu/texts/trent/ct05.html>; Internet.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Hoffecker, *Revolutions in Worldview*, 248. Hoffecker notes here that Tindal's statement stands in direct opposition to the Westminster Shorter Catechism's first question and answer: "What is the chief end of man? . . . to glorify God and enjoy him forever."

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 247.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 248.

English versions of the score.<sup>13</sup> However, he was also involved in the entire compositional process of *The Creation*—as evidenced by the libretto manuscript at the Esterházy archives at the National Library in Budapest—confirming that he made musical suggestions regarding text setting in the margins to Haydn, many of which Haydn employed.<sup>14</sup> Haydn's and Swieten's operating worldviews can be determined through their words and actions—indicating where they stood in relation to the spectrum of orthodox Christian theology and deistic natural theology of the period.

Haydn by many accounts was a devout Roman Catholic;<sup>15</sup> however, Maria Hörwarthner's groundbreaking 1979 dissertation<sup>16</sup> notes that Haydn's library as recorded in his estate documents of 1809 shortly after his death contained no Catholic devotional literature. She therefore questions what other influences worked upon the composer. She concludes that the secularizing influences of the Enlightenment bore heavily upon him:

[W]e know that between 1782 and 1796 he produced hardly any religious compositions; this suggests that Haydn did not shy away from the secularizing tendencies of the Enlightenment in the age of Joseph II, but rather that the intellectual spirit of the Enlightenment—as seen in the Masonic circles around Imperial Councillor Greiner—greatly influenced his mode of living and his musical creativity.<sup>17</sup>

Haydn himself was a Mason signifying his identification with Enlightenment ideology, including concepts of religious tolerance and innate moral ability. Haydn's lodge, *Zur Wahren Eintracht* (For True Harmony), intersected heavily with the literati of the day and was distinguished among all others in Vienna regarding its connection to Enlightenment political and social ambitions.<sup>18</sup> However, there is no better indication of literature that influenced Haydn's thinking than the 1809 list of books in his library. Among this literature were volumes by Anthony Ashley Cooper, the third Earl of Shaftesbury (1671–1713), and Christian Gellert (1715–1769).<sup>19</sup> According to David Schroeder, these writers likely influenced Haydn

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<sup>13</sup> Edward Olleson, "The Origin and Libretto of Haydn's *Creation*," *The Haydn Yearbook* 4 (January 1968): 160.

<sup>14</sup> MacIntyre, *Haydn*, 49.

<sup>15</sup> Shawn Eaton, "Haydn's *Creation* as a Musical Response to the Enlightenment" (D. M. A. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2012), 40–42. For the online version of this source, follow this link: <http://digital.library.sbts.edu/handle/10392/4111>. It was amid a world of religious and philosophical controversy that Haydn was to create his monumental oratorio, *The Creation*. Although Haydn, by many accounts, was a devout Roman Catholic, he was also undeniably a child of the Enlightenment. As both of these aspects of his worldview influenced his composition of *The Creation*, each is examined here.

<sup>16</sup> Maria Hörwarthner, "Joseph Haydn's Library: An Attempt at a Literary-Historical Reconstruction," in *Joseph Haydn und die Literatur seiner Zeit*, ed. Herbert Zeman, *Jahrbuch für Österreichische Kulturgeschichte* 6 (1976): 157–207, in *Haydn and His World*, ed. Elaine Sisman, trans. Kathrine Talbot (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 446–50.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> David P. Schroeder, *Haydn and the Enlightenment: The Late Symphonies and their Audience* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 32, 35–37. Schroeder relates considerable information about Haydn's lodge. Even more importantly, Schroeder's book contains the most comprehensive and thoughtful analysis that this author has seen regarding contemporaneous literature that influenced Haydn's operating worldview as it pertains to his compositional efforts.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 420–21. Also, see Hörwarthner, "Joseph Haydn's Library," 395–462. Among the 1809 list of books in Haydn's library was Shaftesbury's *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions and Times*, several works by Gellert, including *C. F. Gellerts sämtliche Schriften* (C. F. Gellert's collected works), Adam Smith's

to embrace ethical, intellectual, and religious tolerance<sup>20</sup> toward the acceptance of Enlightenment morality—morality based upon the belief that harmony, or goodness, “is the state towards which the universe in all respects gravitates.”<sup>21</sup> As I will outline, this belief was key to Shaftesburian “moral aesthetics.”<sup>22</sup>

Of foremost concern for Shaftesbury was support for the wondrous and perfect system of order that the universe displayed—a system that necessitated belief in God. Man’s chief responsibility in this order was virtuous behavior. Shaftesbury ascribed to natural religion.<sup>23</sup> Followers included Georg Sulzer (*Allgemeine Theorie der schöne Kunstwerk*, 1771–74), who strongly influenced Gottfried van Swieten,<sup>24</sup> and believed that through virtue, individuals, but most importantly society as a whole could achieve a blissful state—a foretaste of heaven.<sup>25</sup> This state would come as the result of “identify[ing] completely with the universal system of which we are a part.”<sup>26</sup> This was the ultimate end of naturalistic (scientific) man. However, this state would not be reached without pairing the rationalist goal of virtue with a motivating or actuating means. Art, especially textured music, was believed to be the means. Music’s beauty and emotion were seen as the keys to wooing man’s sentiments to nobility of heart and action. For Shaftesburian Neoplatonists, goodness, truth, and beauty were one and the same. Thus to be trained by beauty in art was akin to being trained in morality and thus true religion.<sup>27</sup> Historic Christianity also stressed the importance of goodness, truth, and beauty, but the means to their completion in man was Christ, and their end was the glory of God.

Shaftesbury’s method for carrying out his didactic role for the arts was a rhetorical process with “new potential for intelligibility which, when taken up by a composer like Haydn [even] in instrumental music, has far reaching implications.” Through this rhetorical

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essays on morality including *A Theory of Moral Sentiments, or an Essay towards an Analysis of the Principles by which Men Naturally Judge Concerning the Conduct and Character, First of Their Neighbours and Afterwards of Themselves*, and Edmund Burke’s *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful. With an Introductory Discourse Concerning Taste and Several Other Additions*.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 9–26, 32. Although Gellert and Shaftesbury may be seen as primary representatives of the various literary influences upon Haydn’s worldview, especially as it pertained to the composition of music, Schroeder also cites others worthy of mention, including Johann Mattheson, Gotthold Lessing, Franz Sales von Greiner, Gottfried van Swieten, Aloys Blumauer, Johann Baptist von Alxinger, and Joseph von Sonnenfels. Schroeder’s extensive study demonstrates that there were multiple similarities in the literary styles of those who influenced Haydn. These include the common bond between writer and audience based upon the desire for an improved social order. Morality was considered the means to achieve this, taught primarily through the betterment of taste.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 18–20.

<sup>22</sup> Ernst Wangermann, “By and By We Shall Have an Enlightened Populace: Moral Optimism and the Fine Arts in Late-Eighteenth-Century Austria,” in *The Evolution of Dramatic and Musical Theater in Austria and Central Europe*, ed. Michael Cherlin, Halina Filipowicz, Richard L. Rudolph (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003), 21–23. “Moral aesthetics” is Wangermann’s term.

<sup>23</sup> Michael B. Gill, “Lord Shaftesbury [Anthony Ashley Cooper, 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury]”, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2011 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, accessed August 11, 2016; available from <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2011/entries/shaftesbury/>; Internet.

<sup>24</sup> Wiebke Thormählen, “Playing with Art: Musical Arrangements as Educational Tools in van Swieten’s Vienna,” *The Journal of Musicology: A Quarterly Review of Music History, Criticism, Analysis, and Performance Practice* 27, no. 3 (2010): 346–47.

<sup>25</sup> Wangermann, “By and By We Shall Have an Enlightened Populace,” 21–24.

<sup>26</sup> Gill, “Lord Shaftesbury.”

<sup>27</sup> Wangermann, “By and By We Shall Have an Enlightened Populace,” 21–24.

process, various modes of persuasion were used, such as humor, surprise, and the juxtaposition and resolution of forces. Humor strengthened the author's rapport with the audience.<sup>28</sup> Poets thus would strive to "recommend wisdom and virtue . . . in a way of pleasantry and mirth."<sup>29</sup> Surprise, or "manipulation of audience expectation," was linked to humor, and involved the irony of lightly handling weighty subjects, or the use of paradox. The juxtaposition and resolution of opposing forces such as good (represented by "beauty," "proportion," and "harmony") and evil (represented by "deformity," "disproportion," and "dissonance") could provide a backdrop for the larger harmony of moral optimism. Again, good was equivalent with harmony, which was "the state towards which the universe in all respects gravitates." For example, Haydn's Symphony No. 103 presents an amalgamation of "opposing forces" that permits the listener to receive these as a new whole. As Schroeder notes, "It is in this way, consistent with the thinking of Shaftesbury, that he [the listener] is able to embrace morality in the sense of the Enlightenment."<sup>30</sup> Later Schroeder asserts,

Tolerance, that key manifestation of enlightened morality, had for over a century been official policy in England as a result of the Toleration Act of 1689. Shaftesbury had argued for intellectual as well as religious tolerance, and subsequent thought in England reinforced this view.<sup>31</sup>

"Shaftesbury's connection with Ignaz von Born and the Freemasons as well as his influence upon the contemporaneously popular Christian Gellert, were very likely the greatest vehicles for his impact upon Haydn."<sup>32</sup> Haydn imitated Gellert's populist approach to literature with his approach to music.<sup>33</sup> According to Swedish diplomat Fredrik Samuel Silverstolpe, a personal friend of Haydn, among his collection of Germany's finest poetry, "it seemed Gellert was his hero."<sup>34</sup> In 1766, it was published in the *Wiener Diarium* that "in short, Hayden [*sic*] is that in the music which Gellert is in poetry."<sup>35</sup> Gellert often used Shaftesburian terms such as "moral sense" and likened this sense with beauty. As Schroeder states,

In Gellert's scheme of things a special relationship existed between the writer and his reading public or audience. Gellert believed that literature should educate, entertain,

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<sup>28</sup> Schroeder, *Haydn and the Enlightenment*, 18.

<sup>29</sup> Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, 1:134, quoted in Schroeder, *Haydn and the Enlightenment*, 18.

<sup>30</sup> Schroeder, *Haydn and the Enlightenment*, 18–20.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 98.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 10–11. Ignaz von Born was the leader of Haydn's Masonic lodge, *Zur Wahren Eintracht* (For True Harmony), which under Born's direction sought to foster "the goals of the Enlightenment in all areas of endeavour" (10). German writer Johann Georg Schlosser wrote a book on Anthony Ashley Cooper, the third Earl of Shaftesbury, which he cast in the form of a letter to Born. The sending of this book, *Ueber Shaftsbury*, to Born was "a recognition that the ideas of the Enlightenment which Born espoused and practised were fundamentally similar to Shaftesbury's thought" (11).

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 9–26.

<sup>34</sup> H. C. Robbins Landon, *Haydn: The Years of "The Creation," 1796–1800*, vol. 4 of *Haydn: Chronicle and Works* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977), 256.

<sup>35</sup> H. C. Robbins Landon, *Haydn at Esterháza, 1766–1790*, vol. 2 of *Haydn: Chronicle and Works* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978), 128, 130.

and improve society in matters of morals, taste, and intellect, all of which were intimately bound together.<sup>36</sup>

Gellert strove to be attractive to those in society “whose morals and intellect he believed to be exemplary, and the audience had its morals, intellect, and sense of taste reinforced by the writer’s literary characters, situations, and moral writings.”<sup>37</sup> As a populist, this direction spawned new literary genres, such as the novel and the sentimental comedy, which Gellert helped create. These were fused with a natural manner of expression stemming from the middle class, as well as an enduring sense of moral values. Within these were plots in which moral characters faced ethically unsolvable situations. For example, in Gellert’s novel, *Leben der Schwedischen Gräfin* (1746), resolution to the drama demands that characters are forced to make concessions to evil actions regardless of which way they turn. Thus, similar to Shaftesbury, these fostered a proliferation of a certain level of tolerance in regard to ethics.<sup>38</sup>

How does all of the above in Gellert’s writing relate to taste? In the twenty-first-century West, taste (especially in regard to art) is regarded as almost entirely subjective. In the eighteenth century, however, taste was a much more substantive concept than it is today, enveloping “reason, feeling, virtue, and morals, and consequently was the cornerstone of social relevance.”<sup>39</sup> Taste was to Gellert, “‘eine richtige, geschwinde Empfindung, vom Verstande gebildet’ (a genuine, immediate feeling, shaped by intellect).”<sup>40</sup> Taste worked in individuals to achieve balance between feeling and thinking, between impulse and adherence to conventions or rules. According to Schroeder, Gellert believed

that the creation of great works of art precedes the rules, and hence, the rules are derived from the works themselves. While a knowledge of the rules was essential to the artistic process, an assiduous following of them would probably yield nothing more than a dull, insipid work.<sup>41</sup>

Although Gellert was very devout in his faith, his Christian goals became interwoven with that of the Enlightenment, yielding their “most convincing expression in secular forms.” Similarly, “In devising a musical language to achieve his goals, . . . [j]ust as Gellert developed a more natural language in his writing, Haydn gradually drew more heavily on musical source material which could appeal to a broad social spectrum.”<sup>42</sup> Haydn’s “populist” style is confirmed in a letter to William Forester regarding his *Seven Last Words*: “Each Sonata, or rather each setting of the text, is expressed only by instrumental music, but in such a way

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<sup>36</sup> Schroeder, *Haydn and the Enlightenment*, 22.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* Also regarding natural expression, see Eric Blackall, *The Emergence of German as a Literary Language, 1700–1775* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 204.

<sup>39</sup> Schroeder, *Haydn and the Enlightenment*, 23.

<sup>40</sup> C. F. Gellert, “Wie weit sich der Nutzen der Regeln in der Beredsamkeit und Poesie erstecke,” in *Sämmtliche Schriften*, V (Leipzig, 1769, 174, cited and trans. in Schroeder, *Haydn and the Enlightenment*, 23–24.

<sup>41</sup> Heidrun Arnason, “Christian Fürchtegott Gellert’s Literary-Critical Ideas” (Ph.D. thesis, University of Waterloo, 1976), 44–45, 48, 55, cited in Schroeder, *Haydn and the Enlightenment*, 24.

<sup>42</sup> Schroeder, *Haydn and the Enlightenment*, 24–25.

that it creates the most profound impression even on the most inexperienced listener."<sup>43</sup> The above leads to some unavoidable conclusions.

The influence upon Haydn of a wide social structure infused with Enlightenment concepts encouraged him to compose in a universally appealing way. In this, Haydn was clearly a product of his culture. However, Christianity, though universally applicable to mankind, stands upon non-negotiable truths, which may not be reasoned to fit theological trends or tastes built upon man-centered principles, no matter how intellectually refined these tastes may be. As will be demonstrated, Haydn's violation of this principle in his composition of *The Creation* indicates that his worldview consisted more of an Enlightenment brand of Christianity than an orthodox one.

Now I examine the worldview of Haydn's collaborator in the composition of *The Creation*. Early in his career Baron Gottfried van Swieten was an Austrian diplomat (1755 to 1777), when he was often abroad. He served in Brussels (1755–57), Paris (1760–63), Warsaw (1763–64), and England (1769). In the 1780s, during Joseph II's reign, he was President of the Court Commission on Education and Censorship, working to implement the emperor's liberal platform.<sup>44</sup> He visited Voltaire in 1768, and in 1770 was likely rejected as a proposed imperial ambassador to Rome.<sup>45</sup> Visconti, the papal nuncio, noted Swieten's intellect but remarked disapprovingly that it was filled with "modern filosofismo."<sup>46</sup> Swieten therefore was sent to Berlin on what would be his longest appointment, from 1770–77, to negotiate with Frederick the Great, a quintessential Enlightenment ruler. In addition to being a career politician, Swieten was an accomplished composer and patron of music.<sup>47</sup> His political reputation for the endorsement of Enlightenment philosophy was matched by his educational reforms and musical activities.

During the 1780s, Swieten made the writings of Shaftesbury and Sulzer mandatory holdings in the libraries of the Austrian university system. His educational reforms made philosophical studies in aesthetics and the arts compulsory before studies in law, theology, or medicine. He then put staff in place to chair departments for these subjects.<sup>48</sup> But Swieten's influence in the musical realm, including his role in the composition of Haydn's *Creation*, saw his greatest impact as an Enlightenment reformer, as the philosophy that he promoted was directly applied.

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid. See also H. C. Robbins Landon, *The Collected Correspondence and London Notebooks of Joseph Haydn* (London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1959), 60.

<sup>44</sup> Edward Olleson. "Swieten, Gottfried Baron van," *Grove Music Online*; accessed May 23, 2012; available from <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/27216>; Internet.

<sup>45</sup> Mark Berry, "Haydn's *Creation* and Enlightenment Theology," *Austrian History Yearbook* 39 (April 2008): 27. Voltaire was one of the primary French philosophers of the Enlightenment. Regarding Swieten, Berry states, "The policies he propounded and followed were consistently enlightened and frequently came into conflict with the emperor's often more utilitarian objectives. Swieten allied himself unambiguously with the religious reformers who aimed to propagate religious conviction, rather than obedience, as the only sound basis for faith. The affinity Swieten felt between revealed and natural religion is illustrated by the importance he attributed to a thorough grounding for 'future instructors of the people' in natural theology and 'philosophical ethics.'" Berry cites Ernst Wangermann, *Aufklärung und staatsbürgerliche Erziehung: Gottfried van Swieten als Reformator des österreichischen Unterrichtswesens 1781–1791* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1978), 9–10.

<sup>46</sup> Wangermann, *Gottfried van Swieten als Reformator*, 9–10.

<sup>47</sup> Berry, "Haydn's *Creation* and Enlightenment Theology," 27.

<sup>48</sup> Wangermann, "By and By We Shall Have an Enlightened Populace," 25.



Swieten affirmed the eighteenth-century understanding that reason, morality, and thoughtful taste are highly connected. Wiebke Thormählen's article<sup>49</sup> lends valuable insight into Swieten's musical influence. Swieten encouraged the use of small-scale arrangements of Handel's oratorios in performance in his Viennese salons and at the Imperial Library. These arrangements served to give singers and players an opportunity to thoughtfully and physically engage with the beauty and goodness of the works and thus develop their rational and moral sentiments as they related to taste.<sup>50</sup> In the eighteenth century, the emotions or passions were understood to be housed in the body, rather than the mind. Music affected the passions as it stimulated nerves in the body. Similarly, Swieten encouraged the performance of music based upon the understanding that "as taste and moral sentiment were understood to be based in physical sensation, an actual physical engagement with art would enhance their effect."<sup>51</sup>

In the eighteenth century, moral education through music was tied to texted music, since the text provided clear moral concepts.<sup>52</sup> Concern was expressed that music not well correlated to the text or "concerted instrumental music" could arouse harmful emotions.<sup>53</sup> However, Swieten contributed to a shift in understanding in this regard, believing that taste for morality could be trained by instrumental music. Swieten's understanding was that reason and moral sensitivity should be trained through the use of inner senses. He correlated the outer senses of "hearing and seeing" with the related inner senses of "taste and the imagination." Therefore, Swieten and other theorists like him wanted to train moral sense independent of the precision of the text.<sup>54</sup> Thormählen explains the significance of this:

As long as this moral education remained dogmatically tied to precise concepts conveyed in words—ultimately the virtues of Scripture—and as long as these words and concepts were to present reason with a means to control the innate passions, instrumental music's effects could be considered on a scale from meaningless to pernicious. If, however, such moral concepts became brittle and questionable values, then instrumental music would take on new significance by virtue of its immediate appeal to the inner sentiments, guided by the individual's innate sense of taste.<sup>55</sup>

Although arrangements for smaller ensembles described above provided a variety of opportunities for direct engagement with the archaic larger-scale works that Swieten deemed appropriate for his educational plans, by 1786, Swieten formed the *Gesellschaft der Associierten Cavaliere* with members of the upper class of Vienna. The concerts sponsored by

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<sup>49</sup> Wiebke Thormählen, "Playing with Art: Musical Arrangements as Educational Tools in van Swieten's Vienna," *The Journal of Musicology: A Quarterly Review of Music History, Criticism, Analysis, and Performance Practice* 27, no. 3 (2010): 342–76.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 361–63. Thormählen relates that Mozart played the piano while groups of singers performed with him in the salons. Also Swieten "commissioned Mozart and other regular attendees to prepare transcriptions of Bach's keyboard fugues for string trio and string quartet so as to play them together in these new guises."

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 347–48.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 346–47.

<sup>53</sup> Ruth Smith, *Handel's Oratorios and Eighteenth-Century Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 81–82.

<sup>54</sup> Thormählen, "Playing with Art," 346–48, 361, 371–72.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 375.

this organization were the large-scale versions of Handel's oratorios then popular in England, including Mozart's version of *Messiah*. Similarly, for the *The Creation* Swieten sought to use older musical models to create a new "classic." Taking full advantage of Haydn's prowess as an instrumental composer, he incorporated Haydn's genius into the form of Handel's oratorios which was already proven to spark the imagination. This approach ensured the audience's anticipation of a work in which the message of the music superseded the message of the text. According to Thormählen, by the late eighteenth century, formerly preeminent vocal models employing instrumentation were becoming "subsumed into the compositional material as large-scale topics; within a musical language that was highly conventionalized, each gesture had acquired emotive meanings that no longer needed textual clarification." Thus Haydn's *Creation* was a work that served as an "intermediate step between the early eighteenth-century desire for the cognitive content of the words and the Romantic abandonment of conceptuality in favor of music as the artistic companion to man's unstable soul."<sup>56</sup>

If Swieten had merely created a German translation of the original libretto of *The Creation*, the importance of his worldview for this discussion might be of limited interest. However, he was integrally involved in the entire compositional process of *The Creation*, as the musical suggestions regarding text setting that he made to Haydn in the libretto manuscript at the Esterházy archives at the National Library in Budapest confirm. What, one might ask, is the significance of this? Swieten's Enlightenment reforms encouraging reliance upon aesthetic taste to develop morality independent of scriptural concepts resonated with deism's adherence to the sufficiency of mankind's innate moral ability. Although historic Christianity also tied together the good, true, and beautiful, these concepts were always defined by Scripture.

## Primary Libretto Sources

While the theological, philosophical, and literary background above is essential in understanding the cultural environment and worldviews that influenced Haydn and his librettist, the libretto's primary sources are also key to this study. The main sources for *The Creation* libretto were the creation story in Genesis 1:1–2:3 from the Authorized King James Version of the Bible, 1611; the adaptation of this story in John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1674 edition); Psalms, particularly Psalm 19:1–5 and Psalm 104:27–30;<sup>57</sup> and excerpts from Thomson's *The Seasons*.<sup>58</sup> In order to limit discussion of these sources, rudimentary familiarity with the biblical account of creation is often assumed, while aspects of Milton's *Paradise Lost* that outline essential theological or philosophical elements are discussed. While several elements from Milton's epic are brought to light in the following analysis of the libretto and music of Haydn's *Creation*, a central point should be addressed here. An examination of *Paradise Lost* in conjunction with the study of Milton's summary of theology, *De Doctrina Chris-*

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 352, 364–66.

<sup>57</sup> Joseph Haydn, *The Creation: An Oratorio for Solo Voices, Chorus, and Orchestra*, Urtext ed., ed. Nicholas Temperley (London: Edition Peters, 1988), 20.

<sup>58</sup> Neil Jenkins, "Haydn: The Libretto of *The Creation*, New Sources and a Possible Librettist" [on-line]; accessed July 17, 2012; available from <http://www.neiljenkins.info/scholarship>; Internet.

*tiana*, clearly and interestingly reveals that his epic rests on a Pelagian, rather than Augustinian,<sup>59</sup> view of original sin and the Fall—in that it holds to man’s moral goodness in his ability to choose salvation.<sup>60</sup> Moving an even greater step away from post-Reformation traditions, *The Creation* libretto’s omission of the Fall altogether—which contrastingly is included in both the Genesis account as well as the *Paradise Lost* version of the creation story (which, indeed, emphasizes it by its very title)—results in a libretto with much greater resemblance to natural theology than orthodox theology of either England or Austria.<sup>61</sup> This point will be more fully discussed in the following analysis of the oratorio.

## Musical Background

As has been discussed, the transformation in worldview that took place during the Enlightenment was expressed not only through shifts in theology, philosophy, and literature, but also through changes in approaches to music. Of great importance to this study, therefore, are shifts in musical meaning and the values at play in the compositional process that supported these shifts. Both relate to changes in musical style and rhetoric. During the Classical period, older styles were still performed alongside the new and combined with them in interesting ways. Amid this period of great change, Haydn composed *The Creation*. Although he was greatly inspired by Handel’s oratorio, the influence of the shifting musical philosophy—as evidenced by Haydn’s own approach to style, aesthetics and musical rhetoric—is equally clear.

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<sup>59</sup> Benjamin Myers, *Milton’s Theology of Freedom* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2006), 16–18. Augustine of Hippo (354–430) and Pelagius (354–420) disagreed on their understanding of the Genesis Fall. Augustine believed Adam and Eve were created with the ability to choose to obey God’s commands or to disobey, or sin. Along with this ability came “gifts of immortality and integrity.” They were holy in the sight of God until they disobeyed and ate of the forbidden fruit. At this point they entered into a sinful state and were stripped of the gifts of immortality and integrity, “their wills being inclined to concupiscence, and enslaved to evil.” Furthermore, Augustine argued that a certain number of elect are chosen by God to be saved from condemnation for their sin and, along with grace, are given faith. The initial faith that enables grace to be bestowed upon the person is also a gift of God to the elect, operative only through prevenient grace. The result is that those enslaved in a sinful state are now freed to “good dispositions,” “enabling the will spontaneously to choose the good,” thus the redeemed are “free to obey.”

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 48–49, 77–78, 83.

<sup>61</sup> In his book on Haydn’s *Creation*, MacIntyre comments on the proper translation of No. 33, “O Happy Pair, and Ever Happy Still.” In this recitative, the angel Uriel voices a brief warning to Adam and Eve. The literal English translation of the German as corrected by MacIntyre is “O happy couple, and happy forever and ever, if false fancy (Wahn) does not lead you astray to wish for more than you have and to know more than you should” (MacIntyre, *Haydn, The Creation*, 213). This warning is the only hint of the Fall in the libretto. However, the event never occurs. Standing on its own, the warning can be interpreted in the light of deistic moralism.

## A Shift in Musical Meaning

Of particular interest to this study is a shift in musical meaning associated with style mixture in the classical symphony, as revealed in Melanie Lowe's recent studies of the Mozartean symphony.<sup>62</sup> In regard to established conventions, in the Classical era the accessibility of aesthetic meaning begins to break down due to greater subjective desires and uses for music. The minuet in what has been described as Mozart's "Great G-minor symphony," K. 550 serves as a prime example. In Mozart's time, the minuet was heavily associated with the aristocracy, in this case the Austrian Empire, while the use of the learned style of canon usually symbolized the Catholic Church. With these two styles of composition, Mozart did something that never would have happened in the Baroque. He combined the sacred learned style of canon with the aristocratic social dance of the minuet in such a way that it provided a "clashing . . . of musical symbols." Lowe contends that contemporaneous audiences would have disassociated the meaning of these two conventions as they were heard in this movement. In citing other similar instances of style mixture such as those in Haydn's symphonies, she asserts that "new and distinct meanings" were implied by the composer.<sup>63</sup>

## A Shift in Values in the Composition of Music

A marked contrast can be seen between values in music making that existed in the Baroque and previous historic periods compared with those that developed in the Classical period. This contrast is corroborated by the primary eighteenth-century musical treatises and featured a move away from polyphonic styles—generally categorized to be mathematical, rational, and objective in meaning—towards the development of homophonic styles, which were more emotional and subjective in meaning.<sup>64</sup> Clearly Plato's philosophy regarding music relates to this, whereas he essentially reduced music to two types: "one, the true music, rationally based and logically developed, exemplifies the structural principles of all reality, including the human mind; [while] the other music, impressionistic and fantastical, merely imitates the sounds of nature and the passing show of temporary feelings." Secondly, a correlation may also be drawn between Plato's two types of music and the early Christian understanding of (1) an "exalted, intellectual, vocal, sacred music" and (2) a "low, sensual, instrumental, secular music."<sup>65</sup> The homophonic styles of the Classical period demonstrated a shift from music that encouraged a particular emotional state in man, "conceived as rationalized, discrete, and relatively static states,"<sup>66</sup> toward that which was more individualistic, utilizing a "progressive view of human psychology based on recent English

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<sup>62</sup> Melanie Lowe, *Pleasure and Meaning in the Classical Symphony* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), 112–24.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> Peter A. Hoyt, "Rhetoric and Music: II. After 1750," *Grove Music Online*; accessed July 30, 2012; available from <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/43166>; Internet.

<sup>65</sup> F. E. Sparshott and Lydia Goehr, "Philosophy of Music, II: Historical Survey, Antiquity–1750," *Grove Music Online*; accessed October 26, 2011; available from <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/52965>; Internet.

<sup>66</sup> Don Michael Randel, ed., *The New Harvard Dictionary of Music* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1986), s.v. "affections (affects), doctrine of."

philosophy.”<sup>67</sup> Eighteenth-century musicologist Johann Nikolaus Forkel expressed this latter view and “regarded the affections not as remaining constant until acted on but as inherently mobile and subject to an infinite number of modifications.”<sup>68</sup> Thus, music shifted from the Baroque practice of using every musical means available (i.e., established figures and conventions) to portray the meaning of the text, towards affects in the Classical period that were “considered entirely subjective and highly personal.” Hence, “each piece reflect[ed] the inner character of its composer.”<sup>69</sup>

This shift demonstrated a significant change in musical rhetoric that was worked out in the compositional process. The polyphony of the Baroque period utilized an often rich harmonic texture produced from the interweaving of two or more melodic voices that could sustain one emotion (or affection) and the interest of the listener for extended amounts of time—in part because the “working out” of the melody in its entrances in various voices at various pitch levels takes more time. Therefore, Classical composers including Haydn would use polyphony when they wanted to prolong or sustain more serious and profound emotions. However, their use of homophonic styles required them to change keys and introduce other melodic patterns to keep the music interesting, maintaining a sense of forward motion.<sup>70</sup> To elaborate, because of homophony’s relative simplicity in its basic structure—as a chord-accompanied melody—and its often slow rate of harmonic rhythm common in the Classical period, it required continual innovation, exciting frequent changes in the emotions of the listener. Again, due to rising middle-class influence, music was being crafted increasingly in light of its popular reception by the general public. Interestingly, these changes in composition very likely continued the shift, begun in the Renaissance,<sup>71</sup> away from correlations of ratios found in musical intervals to those observed in the orbits of heavenly bodies, which for centuries cast polyphony (emphasizing harmony) with cosmic significance.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Hoyt, “Rhetoric and Music: II. After 1750.” Hoyt states, “The writings of J. N. Forkel offer the final 18th-century attempt to develop a rhetoric of music. Although this founder of modern musicology is often characterized as a conservative, even reactionary, figure, his thoughts on rhetoric incorporated a progressive view of human psychology based on recent English philosophy. Forkel regarded the affections not as remaining constant until acted on but as inherently mobile and subject to an infinite number of modifications. Accordingly, the discussion of [musical] figures in the first volume of his *Allgemeine Geschichte der Musik* (1788) emphasizes concepts relating to the connection of musical ideas. Figures used to illustrate a text – a principal subject of previous musical rhetorics – are virtually ignored. Rather than being rationally quantifiable, as in Baroque music, affects are now considered entirely subjective and highly personal. Each piece reflects the inner character of its composer. . . . Despite the importance of rhetoric in his thought, Forkel clearly regarded music as a true universal language superseding speech, which is merely conventional and therefore arbitrary. This accords with the views of authors such as Schiller, who regarded the arts as having ‘an absolute immunity from human arbitrariness.’ Forkel’s faith in the pre-eminence of music became common in the Romantic period.”

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Thomas Bolton, email correspondence with chair of the author’s dissertation committee, July 19, 2014. See also Eaton, “Haydn’s *Creation* as a Musical Response to the Enlightenment.”

<sup>71</sup> Sparshott and Goehr, “Philosophy of Music, II.” This note refers to “begun in the Renaissance.”

<sup>72</sup> Quentin Faulkner, *Wiser than Despair: The Evolution of Ideas in the Relationship of Music and the Christian Church* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996), 95, 118–19. Faulkner argues, “Because musical speculation had established that the Pythagorean perfect intervals, the intervals with the simplest, ‘purest’ ratios—the *diapason* (octave: 2:1), *diapente* (fifth: 3:2), and *diatesseron* (fourth: 4:3)—were those that most accurately reflected cosmic harmony, those intervals had already become for practicing musicians the consonant intervals, helping to determine pivotal notes in the developing modal system. With the rise of

Furthermore, one of the prominent features of the Classical period was the development of the symphony orchestra and symphonic forms, with Haydn as one of the most influential proponents. This can be interpreted in two ways. Although an increase in the size of the orchestra was necessary to fill the need for more volume in the large public concert halls built during the period, the development of the symphony also could be seen as a means to boost the entertainment value of the orchestra. All of this history points heavily to the conclusion that music was moving away from that which was more profoundly functional toward that which was designed for greater entertainment—hence market—value.

## The Influence of Handelian Oratorio: The Sublime

While the secular genre of symphony unmistakably influenced Haydn's *Creation*, the influence of Handelian oratorio is equally clear, particularly in its marked emphasis upon the musical sublime as a result of its borrowings from *opera seria*. The anonymous eighteenth-century treatise *On the Sublime* (incorrectly attributed to Longinus) describes the sublime (as excerpted by Ruth Smith) as

'Boldness and Grandeur in the Thoughts'; 'the Pathetic, or the Power of raising the Passions to a violent and even enthusiastic degree'; 'a skilful Application of Figures, which are two-fold, of Sentiment and Language'; 'a noble and graceful manner of Expression . . . not only to chuse out significant and elegant Words, but also to adorn and embellish the Stile, by the Assistance of Tropes'; and 'the Structure and Composition of all the Periods, in all possible Dignity and Grandeur.'<sup>73</sup>

Handel's sublime included both biblical and musical aspects. In the eighteenth century, biblical prose and poetry were considered among the most sublime examples of literature. *On the Sublime* supported this belief and "profoundly influenced English literature and criticism."<sup>74</sup> It is important to note that the audience of Handel's oratorios would have recognized a strong connection between music and text representing the sublime. For examples of these text-music relationships we may listen to the polyphonic choruses of Handel's *Messiah*, such as the "Hallelujah" chorus, and "For unto Us a Child Is Born."

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polyphony, however, this element of speculation entered into a much closer relationship with practice. The function that the Pythagorean 'pure' intervals assumed in the twelfth-century polyphonic developments associated with the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris is among the earliest unambiguous indications that musical speculation had a decisive influence on early polyphony." Faulkner maintains that the "traditional cosmic worldview" (Classical/Christian)—of which the "music of the spheres" was a part—may seem to have progressively diminished beginning with the Renaissance due to the fact that it was challenged; however, it continued to influence composition in some measure, ceasing only during the Enlightenment. One can see how the ancient theory of the "music of the spheres" would have carried spiritual significance for the church in light of such passages as Psalm 19 ("The heavens are telling the glory of God") or Job 38:7.

<sup>73</sup> William Smith, ed. and trans., *Dionysius Longinus on the Sublime: Trans. from the Greek, with Notes and Observations*, 1743, 2nd ed., 3, 14, 16, 18, 22, 78–81, 86, 87, cited in Smith, *Handel's Oratorios and Eighteenth-Century Thought*, 108.

<sup>74</sup> Smith, *Handel's Oratorios and Eighteenth-Century Thought*, 108–9.

## Haydn's Pastoral Style, Aesthetics, and Rhetoric

An important contrast to the sublime in Haydn's *Creation* is his pastoral style. Historically a pastorella is "a work of literature or music that represents or evokes life in the country-side, especially that of shepherds."<sup>75</sup> As James Webster<sup>76</sup> and Herman Danuser<sup>77</sup> attest, the lightness and lower style of the beautiful or "idyllic" in *Creation* as represented by Haydn's pastoral style contrasts the weight and profundity of the sublime polyphonic choruses. In the case of *The Creation*, the pastoral takes the shape of idealistic images or "illustrations" that Webster terms as "plastic, in the best sense: vivid, *Gestalten*, of . . . directness and immediacy."<sup>78</sup> The use of the idyllic in Haydn's pastoral is symbolic in the larger architectural form of *The Creation*. It is important to understand "the word-paintings' role in articulating the optimistic deism of *The Creation*" since they draw us to connect with nature in a manner that reflects the innocence and bliss of its original unfallen state.<sup>79</sup>

Study of Haydn's approach to aesthetics<sup>80</sup> and rhetoric<sup>81</sup> reveals that he effectively mixed rational and emotional content in his musical language, with the use of many extra-musical associations, including text-painting and imagery of the Baroque. Yifat Shohat's excellent dissertation reveals that Haydn also used "digression from [musical] conventions" as a rhetorical device. As one of Shohat's concluding chapters asserts, "the wealth of Haydn's digressions surveyed in the course of this study—from his rich Ciceronian-like expressions to humorous aspects, topical mixture, and deflections from overall patterns—may all be viewed as *refutatio* of stylistic norms."<sup>82</sup> Thus Haydn's use of refutation resembles Cicero's definition:<sup>83</sup> "that part of an oration in which arguments are used to impair, disprove, or weaken the confirmation or proof in our opponents' speech."<sup>84</sup> Aspects of Haydn's rhetoric worked to convince the listener concerning previously stated material that "the assumption is correct, yet the final conclusion is not." Thus Shohat states, "the basic 'assumptions'—or regulated musical procedures—are being referred to, yet the 'conclusion'—or commentary

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<sup>75</sup> Randel, s.v. "pastorella."

<sup>76</sup> James Webster, "The Sublime and the Pastoral in *The Creation* and *The Seasons*," in *The Cambridge Companion to Haydn*, ed. Caryl Clark (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 153–56.

<sup>77</sup> Hermann Danuser, "Mishmash or Synthesis? On the Psychagogic Form of *The Creation*," trans. Nicholas Betson in *The Century of Bach and Mozart: Perspectives on Historiography, Composition, Theory, and Performance—In Honor of Christoph Wolff*, ed. Sean Gallagher and Thomas Forrest Kelly (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 52–67.

<sup>78</sup> Webster, "The Sublime and the Pastoral in *The Creation* and *The Seasons*," 153–56. Also see Hörwarthner, "Joseph Haydn's Library," 421. The 1809 list of Haydn's library from his estate includes Edmund Burke's study, *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origins of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*, 1792. Hörwarthner states, "Burke's (1729–1797) aesthetics divides the concept of the sublime and the beautiful into two separate spheres, each with autonomous value. This work, first published in 1756, exerted a lasting influence on German aesthetics and poetry in the second half of the eighteenth century."

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> James Webster, "Haydn's Aesthetics," in *The Cambridge Companion to Haydn*, ed. Caryl Clark (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 30–44.

<sup>81</sup> Yifat Shohat, "Haydn's Musical Rhetoric: Compositional Strategy, Audience Reception, and Connection with Classical Oratory" (PhD diss., Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 2006).

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 137.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 136–37.

<sup>84</sup> Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De Inventione*, trans. H. M. Hubbell (1949; reprint, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960), 1.78.

on specific procedures—produces a different result than expected.”<sup>85</sup> Knowledge of these aspects of Haydn's approach to musical style, aesthetics, and rhetoric are essential in understanding the full meaning of *The Creation*.

### **Analysis of the Libretto and Music of *The Creation* in its Theological, Philosophical, Literary, and Musical Context**

Building upon the background provided in the previous sections, I will establish the degree to which Enlightenment culture, including philosophy, theology, literature, and musical influences, directly impacted Haydn and Baron van Swieten in their work with the libretto and music of *The Creation*. This analysis therefore is not comprehensive, but designed according to the scope of this article. First will be a discussion of the purpose of *The Creation*, as evidenced in Haydn's own words; second will be an analysis of the libretto, specifically in regard to revisions in theology from that of both Scripture and *Paradise Lost*; and third will be an analysis of the music, focusing upon the significance of the structural framework regarding Haydn's use of multiple styles and text-music relationships. The robust message of the oratorio will be revealed at the end of this process. Final conclusions will relate how this message developed as a function of the operative worldview of Haydn and Swieten. Before proceeding, we should be reminded of James Olthuis's definition of worldview as stated in the opening paragraphs of this article:

a framework or set of fundamental beliefs through which we view the world and our calling and future in it. This vision need not be fully articulated: it may be so internalized that it goes largely unquestioned; . . . it may be greatly refined through cultural-historical development.<sup>86</sup>

### **The Purpose of Haydn's *Creation*: An Oratorio for the Virtuous Man**

Martin Stern gives evidence that the purpose of the work, according to Haydn, was the “pleasure” and “happiness” of others.<sup>87</sup> While these might seem very innocuous aims for his work, contrasting this purpose with that of Milton's *Paradise Lost*—“to justify the ways of God to men”<sup>88</sup>—or the Christian apologetic nature of Handel's oratorios reveals its ring with the Age of Reason. As mentioned previously, the two principal audiences that Haydn intended for the work were England and Austria. Eighteenth-century English culture—held

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<sup>85</sup> Shohat, “Haydn's Musical Rhetoric,” 136–37.

<sup>86</sup> Olthuis, “On Worldviews,” 155.

<sup>87</sup> Martin Stern, “Haydn's *Schöpfung*, Geist und Herkunft des van Swietenschen Librettos: Ein Beitrag zum Thema ‘Säkularisation’ in Zeitalter der Aufklärung,” *Haydn-Studien* 1 (October 1966): 191–92. Stern summarizes Haydn's words regarding the purpose (“desired effect”) of the composition of *The Creation*: “The very thought of occasionally being a source of ‘pleasure’ and ‘happiness’ for others seemed exhilarating to him.” See also “Joseph Haydn an den Musik vereinsleiter Jean Philipp Krüger in Bergen Insel Rügen, am 22. September 1802,” in *Gesammelte Briefe* No. 315, p. 410f., cited in Stern, “Haydn's *Schöpfung*, Geist und Herkunft des van Swietenschen Librettos,” 191–92.

<sup>88</sup> John Milton, “Paradise Lost: The Poem,” I, 26 [online]; accessed on August 13, 2012; available from <http://www.paradiselost.org/>; Internet.



in esteem by representatives of the Enlightenment everywhere—placed a high value upon pleasure and happiness,<sup>89</sup> and according to Shaftesbury's aesthetic moralism, society's happiness would ultimately be gained through moral virtue. Joseph A. Gall, whom Swieten recruited to teach Enlightenment reforms, taught that the very purpose of God's relationship with mankind was the latter's happiness. Gall's *Liebriche Anstalten und Ordnung Gottes die Menschen gut und glücklich zu machen* (God's Loving Arrangements and Order to Make Men Virtuous and Happy) teaches:

Let us look at our earth, and see how God has made it into a beautiful and well-appointed dwelling; how the sun lights it up and warms it; how the air, the fertile rains, the springs, brooks and rivers cool and moisten it; how the plants in infinite variety, beauty and fertility grow out of the earth. These conditions make it possible for countless creatures to live on land, in the water and in the air. They find food and, as we can see, they enjoy their existence. But we human beings have cause to take special delight in our existence, since of all living creatures on earth we enjoy most of the good things. For this was God's chief purpose with us human beings, to make us his noblest creatures on earth and to make us exceedingly happy. God is our most *benevolent* father.<sup>90</sup>

In reference to Haydn's *Creation*, Austrian historian Ernst Wangermann comments, "If we were looking for a brief summary of Swieten's text, I do not think we could do better than to take this passage of Joseph Anton Gall."<sup>91</sup> With the arrival of Part 3 of the oratorio, Wangermann's statement rings true. In No. 30, "By Thee with Bliss, O Bounteous Lord," the story turns from the wonders of God's creation to the happy couple and the delights they share in paradise. The arc of the work contextualizes this turn. Parts 1 and 2 of the work chronicle God's creative acts from days one through six and praise Him in light of these wondrous works. Part 3 represents a focus upon the life of Adam and Eve in paradise and God's praise in light of this blissful state.<sup>92</sup>

Related to Gall's teaching is a quotation from Haydn that reveals another part of the purpose of his oratorio. This excerpt is from a defense of the work written in an 1801 letter to his friend Charles Ockl, the rector at a parish church in the village of St. Johann:

The story of the creation has always been regarded as most sublime, and as one which inspires the utmost awe in mankind. To accompany this great occurrence with suitable music could certainly produce no other effect than to heighten these sacred emotions in the heart of the listener, and to put him in a frame of mind where he is most

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<sup>89</sup> Roy Porter, "The Enlightenment in England," in *The Enlightenment in National Context*, ed. Roy Porter and Mikuláš Teich (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 1–18.

<sup>90</sup> Joseph Anton Gall, *Liebriche Anstalten und Ordnung Gottes die Menschen gut und glücklich zu machen* (Vienna, 1787), 18–19, cited in Ernst Wangermann, "By and By We Shall Have an Enlightened Populace," 27. Again, this purpose directly contrasts that of the Westminster Confession, "to glorify God and enjoy Him forever."

<sup>91</sup> Wangermann, "By and By We Shall Have an Enlightened Populace," 27.

<sup>92</sup> Danuser, "Mishmash or Synthesis?" 41–78. Danuser presents numerous ramifications of this turn. He states on page 69, "Whereas God's Word had previously called his works into existence step-by-step, this is assumed at the outset of Part 3. The world of *The Creation* is viewed no longer as 'existing for itself' but rather for mankind—a central change in perspective."

susceptible to the kindness and omnipotence of the Creator. And this exaltation of the most sacred emotions is supposed to constitute desecration of a church? . . . No church has ever been desecrated by my *Creation*; on the contrary: the adoration and worship of the Creator, which it inspires, can be more ardently and intimately felt by playing it in such a sacred edifice.<sup>93</sup>

This statement serves as a personal acknowledgement from Haydn of the influence of the Enlightenment upon himself.<sup>94</sup> Haydn emphasizes the reception of “kindness and omnipotence of the Creator” and the “exaltation of the most sacred *emotions*.” It is not hard to see the resonance of these two statements to Gall’s and Shaftesbury’s thinking.

Haydn’s purposes for *The Creation* reveal a shift in worldview and musical values in sacred music as displayed in the genre of oratorio. While Handel’s oratorios (and the cantatas of J. S. Bach) linked rational thought and emotion (affection) regarding the sublime truths of orthodoxy, Haydn’s *Creation* relied upon Shaftesburian aesthetic moralism to lead listeners to contemplate Enlightenment ideals. Baroque sacred music appealed to the fear of God as rooted in God’s holiness and justice—the revelation of God in Scripture. Scriptural revelation—*special* revelation—was artistically and rhetorically presented *through* the beauty and order of general revelation via cultivated music. In the Baroque, the doctrine of affections was appropriated to complement the revelation of absolute truth as represented in Christian orthodoxy. Conversely, employing an array of musical tools, Haydn’s *Creation* focused upon the topic of general revelation—revelation through nature—while employing Scripture, also affording an ideal opportunity to proliferate aesthetic moralism, a message clearly resonating with deistic naturalism and fulfilling artistic purposes of Gottfried van Swieten.<sup>95</sup> Gall emphasized moving the mind to the praise of God (a moral action) based upon rational appraisal of his benevolence to mankind through the delights of creation. Similarly, Shaftesburian aesthetic moralism stressed the importance of moving the soul with beautiful art and training moral discretion through the development of musical taste. Each were part of Enlightenment reform that relied upon the discernment of beauty as tied to the good and true (God’s brilliant designs in nature) as the means to a better society.

Furthermore, Wangermann’s studies of Austrian Enlightenment Reform Catholicism reveal that during the 1780s the benevolence of God was emphasized at the expense of the fear of God. A rational derivative of Gall’s instruction was the deterioration of the doctrine of original sin in the minds of many young students. God’s benevolent purposes for man glowed so brightly that hereditary sin was becoming unthinkable.<sup>96</sup> Also, deistic moralism taught that special revelation was unnecessary for man to fulfill his created purpose. Hence the

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<sup>93</sup> H. C. Robbins Landon, *The Collected Correspondence and London Notebooks of Joseph Haydn* (London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1959), 187.

<sup>94</sup> Carsten Hatting, “The Enlightenment and Haydn,” in *Haydn Studies: Report of the International Haydn Conference, Washington, D.C., 1975*, ed. Jens Peter Larsen, Howard Serwer, and James Webster (New York: W. W. Norton, 1980), 440.

<sup>95</sup> Matthew Tindal’s *Christianity as Old as the Creation* (1730), was the highest expression of English deism, known as the “deist’s bible.” The impact of this message of moralism may very well have lingered in the minds of deists in the audience at early performances of Haydn’s *Creation*.

<sup>96</sup> Ernst Wangermann, “Reform Catholicism and Political Radicalism in the Austrian Enlightenment,” in *The Enlightenment in National Context*, ed. Roy Porter and Mikuláš Teich (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 132–33. This is another statement that is in direct contrast with the Westminster Confession’s chief end of man.

story of creation was ideally suited to inspire the worship of God based not upon his holiness or justice, but upon a rational appraisal of his power at work in loving actions toward mankind through the created order.

## Textual Analysis: Revisionist Handling of Orthodox Theology and *Paradise Lost*

The evidence of revisionist theology in the text of *The Creation* begins with the opening symphonic movement, the “Representation of Chaos.” This movement’s tonal ambiguity, resolution, and musical meaning are all significant. Indeed, it was an immense musical achievement and work of originality—a milestone in music history. Chaos in Milton’s *Paradise Lost* refers to the space between heaven and hell, a great expanse in which God the Son created the universe out of “formless matter”<sup>97</sup> and marked off its boundaries. Book I contains the first reference:

Sing Heav'nly Muse, that on the secret top  
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire  
That Shepherd, who first taught the chosen Seed,  
In the Beginning how the Heav'ns and Earth  
Rose out of Chaos.<sup>98</sup>

Milton borrowed the theme of chaos before creation from classical literature, e.g., Hesiod’s *Theogony*, Plato’s *Timeus*,<sup>99</sup> and Ovid’s *Metamorphosis*.<sup>100</sup> However, Orthodox Christian doctrine clearly states that God created the world *ex nihilo* (out of nothing). Although the term *chaos* does not appear in the Authorized King James Version of the Bible in relation to the creation narrative, Genesis 1:1–2 gives a key to Milton’s heterodox position. The passage states,

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<sup>97</sup> Merritt Y. Hughes, ed., *John Milton: Complete Poems and Major Prose* (New York: The Odyssey Press, 1957), 225. In the note for line 543, Hughes states, “Reign of Chaos: the realm of Chaos. Cf. II, 895 and 907, where Chaos is used to signify both the region of disorganized matter between hell and heaven and the ruler of that realm.” Also see page 351. In his note regarding line 233, Hughes states, “The formless matter of Plato’s account of the beginning of the universe (Tm. 50, E) harmonizes both with Milton’s conception in V, 469–74, and with the description of the earth as ‘without form and void,’ with darkness spreading over the face of the deep, in Genesis, i.2.”

<sup>98</sup> Milton, “Paradise Lost,” I, 6–10.

<sup>99</sup> Thomas H. Luxon, ed., “Paradise Lost,” *The John Milton Reading Room*; accessed on February 9, 2016; available from [http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading\\_room/pl/book\\_1/text.shtml](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/pl/book_1/text.shtml); Internet. See notes for “out of Chaos,” then additional links for “Calvin’s commentary,” “Hesiod,” and “Timeus 53b.”

<sup>100</sup> Hughes, *John Milton*, 253. In his notes for lines 895–903 Hughes states, “The conception of Chaos stems both from Hesiod’s mythological account and Ovid’s rationalized treatment of the primeval chaotic mass of ‘warring seeds of things’ before the world began (*Met.* I, 5–20). The conception influenced Renaissance thought so deeply that the orthodox du Bartas imagined Chaos as corresponding to the formless ‘void’ of Genesis I, 2, and described its ‘brawling Elements’ as lying ‘jumbled all together. . . .’” Also see “Garth’s *Metamorphoses*: A Modernized Online Edition of the 1717 Text with Facsimile Preface and Credits”; accessed February 9, 2016; available from <http://ovid.lib.virginia.edu/garth.html>; Internet, I: 1–39. This is an eighteenth-century paraphrase of Ovid’s Latin text.

In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

Milton and other theologians influenced by classical (Greco-Roman) studies worked to harmonize stories of the origins of the universe from classical cosmology with Scripture. This tradition harmonizes the words “without form and void” in Genesis 1:2 with classical cosmology’s “formless matter” or *chaos*. Haydn’s “Representation of Chaos” seems to align with this eclectic tradition, positioning it at the outset as a more Universalist representation of creation. However, Tovey’s<sup>101</sup> and Kramer’s<sup>102</sup> musical analysis of the movement also suggests that it represents an evolutionary process more akin to naturalism.<sup>103</sup>

*The Creation’s* revisionist theology is most evident, however, in its lack of portraying Adam’s Fall in the libretto and its restriction of the powers of darkness from their work in the world. In the second aria, “Now Vanish before the Holy Beams,” the shadows of hell’s spirits are cast into the deep abyss by the creation of light. According to University of London Lecturer Mark Berry in his excellent article, “Haydn’s *Creation* and Enlightenment Theology,” this aria is a metaphor for the eradication of the “supernatural from nature.” Thus man was “rescued [via the light of rationalism] from the clutches of Satan and the Fall”—which were

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<sup>101</sup> Donald Francis Tovey, *Vocal Music*, vol. 5 of *Essays in Musical Analysis* (London: Oxford University Press, 1935), 114–15. Regarding chaos Tovey states, “He [Haydn] has a remarkably consistent notion of it, which harmonizes well enough with the Biblical account of the Creation; not less well with the classical notions of Chaos, whether in Hesiod or Ovid; but most closely with the Nebular Hypothesis of Kant and Laplace, which almost certainly attracted Haydn’s attention.” Kant’s Nebular Hypothesis was an evolutionary theory. In Haydn’s *Creation* chaos refers not only to the expanse between heaven and hell out of which God created the universe, but also to hell itself. In relation to the above, Tovey states, “His librettist, the Baron van Swieten, did not give him Milton’s phrase ‘loud misrule of Chaos’, and this is just as well, for the work has nothing to do with the fiery ocean into which the rebel angels fell, and Haydn’s symphonic nebular hypothesis is much more musical, as well as more universal.”

<sup>102</sup> Lawrence Kramer, “Music and Representation: The Instance of Haydn’s *Creation*,” in *Music and Text: Critical Inquiries*, ed. Steven P. Scher (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 144–45. Kramer builds on the evolutionary and Christian interpretations of Tovey, asserting that there are musical references to Boethius’s *harmonia mundi* in Haydn’s development from chaos to light. Opening on unison C (see Example 7), Kramer cites Haydn’s *Urklang* (first sound) as a sound “not yet intelligible, not yet even music.” Kramer continues his explanation of the opening measures: “Measure 2 quietly begins motion in tempo by adding tone to tone, assembling the raw materials of harmony. The middle C at the core of the *Urklang* reappears as a bass, first of a minor interval, (c<sup>1</sup>–e<sup>b1</sup>), then of a major chord (c<sup>1</sup>–e<sup>b1</sup>–a<sup>b1</sup>). Neither tonic nor dominant nor in root position, this first—call it the chaos chord—is a model of instability. It progresses to dissonant polyphony around the dominant of C minor in measure 3, which in turn leads to a linear unison statement in measure 4. The unison rather grimly echoes the texture of the *Urklang*, but it also consolidates the dominant of C minor. The next measure will bring disruption—a new orchestral thrust that fades into the chaos chord—but a horizon of consonance has been traced, a cadence promised. Tonal harmony has evolved from unharmonized tone. With this gesture, Haydn forms the nucleus of everything to follow. He at once invokes the Classical/Christian metaphor of *harmonia mundi* and makes that metaphor evolutionary, scientific, modern, by deferring its realization in a cadence, projecting the cadence forward as the outcome of a more comprehensive process.”

<sup>103</sup> The concept of a rational cosmos was universally accepted as expressed in natural religion, natural law, and evolutionism as espoused by, among others, Erasmus Darwin, Charles Darwin’s grandfather; see Porter, “The Enlightenment in England,” 15–17.

increasingly seen as ridiculous notions of the past.<sup>104</sup> It should be noted that the neglect to portray the Fall and the eradication of Satan and demons from the world contrasts not only with Scripture but *Paradise Lost* as well.<sup>105</sup> In aligning *The Creation* with Enlightenment thought based entirely upon rationalism, the need for Christ's atoning work is also eradicated, which according to eighteenth-century orthodox belief was essential in reestablishing both man's moral ability and right standing with God. Although some may look to musical symbolism in the tonal structure of Haydn's *Creation* as a representation of the Fall, thorough examination of the key structure assisted by the work of several authors leads to other conclusions.

Prominent scholars disagree as to whether the overall key scheme of the oratorio moving from C to B-flat has symbolic significance, and those that assign it significance disagree regarding its meaning. Due to the prevalence of symbolism related to key in the eighteenth century it is likely that this progression carries some importance. Although H. C. Robbins Landon<sup>106</sup> and Siegmund Levarie<sup>107</sup> stated that the key structure contains a symbolic representation of the Fall, more recent scholarship brings new interpretation of this tonal progression. Georg Feder's book on Haydn's *Creation* notes that the same keys that Landon and Levarie claimed symbolize the Fall in Part 3 (B-flat and E-flat) are keys already used in Parts 1 and 2. Contrastingly, Feder believes that C major and B-flat major make up "two tonal poles," in which C major is "Creation's joyful approachable key, and B-flat major is a key that—at least in the choruses—piously approaches the creator."<sup>108</sup> B-flat is the key of the two statements of "Achieved Is the Glorious Work" in Part II, as well as the final chorus in Part III. Berry's recent assessment also resonates with this, identifying the key of B-flat in the final number as symbolic of man as the lower part of the divine-human hierarchy.<sup>109</sup> Also, it

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<sup>104</sup> Mark Berry, "Haydn's *Creation* and Enlightenment Theology," *Austrian History Yearbook* 39 (April 2008): 35–36.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 35. Also see Georg Feder, *Joseph Haydn: "Die Schöpfung"* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1999), 16. Feder comments, "It would have been a disadvantage for the work's general acceptance to keep the role of Satan and to depict Adam and Eve as the first sinners, as had been done for centuries in the adaptations [of the Biblical creation narrative] which pointed to the redemption through Jesus Christ, namely the greatest of these, John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (completed in 1663 and published in a definitive edition in 1674 in twelve 'books') . . . . In its fundamental orientation, Haydn's oratorio follows more a new direction of creation poems that are no longer interested in original sin and redemption, but rather in the dignity, beauty, and purposefulness of the creation, poems that connect their marveling observation with praise about the greatness and graciousness of God, if not actual (scientific-theological) proof of his existence. After mid-century, such poems took on a sentimental hue [*emfindsamer Färbung*]; several were set to music."

<sup>106</sup> H. C. Robbins Landon, *Haydn: The Years of "The Creation," 1796–1800*, 400–401. See also Siegmund Levarie, "The Closing Numbers of *Die Schöpfung*," in *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Music: A Tribute to Karl Geiringer on His Seventieth Birthday*, ed. H. C. Robbins Landon and Roger E. Chapman (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 400–402.

<sup>107</sup> Levarie, "The Closing Numbers of *Die Schöpfung*," 320.

<sup>108</sup> Feder, *Joseph Haydn*, 26.

<sup>109</sup> Berry, "Haydn's *Creation* and Enlightenment Theology," 40–41. Berry states, "From what we know of Haydn's religious beliefs, he was hardly someone obsessed with original sin; for music that is preoccupied with such matters, one should turn to the sacred oeuvre of Bach. More plausible is a moderate theological interpretation. The central issue here is not original sin, but man's distance from God. . . . The Heavenly Host has definitely left the scene by the end of the Hymn. The final chorus of praise is sung by mortals, a point made clear by the fact that the soloists are not the three archangels, but merely soprano, tenor, and bass, joined for the first and last time by an equally anonymous alto. I do not claim that Haydn entertained a casuistic preoccupation with the precise status of angels and archangels within the cosmic hierarchy, but the

is noteworthy that of the six final masses of Haydn, four are in B-flat. Webster suggests a simply practical reason for this key of the final number, noting that the frequency of Haydn's use of it may have been because B-flat was commonly the highest pitch he wrote for soprano choral parts.<sup>110</sup>

Landon argued, "the tonal construction of *The Creation* is of great intricacy, and is inextricably connected with the symbolic nature of Swieten's text and, even more, Haydn's music."<sup>111</sup> Although this may be true, it should be reiterated that extensive research by this author has revealed no statements of corroboration by Haydn in relation to a musical representation of the Fall. At any rate, if intended it would be a subtle reference for such a cataclysmic event as the Fall. It seems much more plausible that Feder's and Berry's interpretation of the key scheme is correct—yielding an understanding that is clearly congruent with the rational goals and environment of Austrian Enlightenment Catholicism—aspects of the contemporaneous culture that Swieten himself was instrumental in establishing.

## Architectural Framework of the Music

Danuser, in his 2008 article "Mishmash or Synthesis? On the Psychagogic Form of *The Creation*," seeks to "explore how and in what ways the spiritual effect . . . of Haydn's music, confirmed by the work's rich and diverse reception history . . . may be said to be based upon a structural foundation."<sup>112</sup> Georg Feder observes that *The Creation* contains a mixture of literary styles including epic, dramatic, hymnic, poetic, as well as biblical texts.<sup>113</sup> In 1801 Karl Friedrich Triest wrote that *The Creation* includes a mixture of "sacred and theatre styles," likely referring to the distinction between counterpoint and operatic styles.<sup>114</sup> These various combinations are what have led some to see it as a "mishmash" of style.<sup>115</sup> However, this mixture of styles carries significant meaning when one understands the architectural framework of the oratorio. Examination of four scholars' writings—James Webster<sup>116</sup> (Haydn scholar and Cornell professor), Hermann Danuser<sup>117</sup> (Professor Emeritus of Histor-

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evidence suggests that *The Creation* ends as it does in order to emphasize, as had Pope and Kant in somewhat different fashion, the gulf that still lies between the human and the divine. This is the lesson not—at least, not in this case—of the Fall, but of the second biblical account of man's creation (Genesis 2.2–8): God rested from his works and created man that they might be perpetuated. Yet though man might continue to create, the Creation would remain a unique event."

<sup>110</sup> James Webster and Georg Feder, "Haydn, Joseph, Sacred Vocal Music," *Grove Music Online*; accessed August 4, 2012; available from <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/44593>; Internet.

<sup>111</sup> Landon, *Haydn: The Years of "The Creation," 1796–1800*, 402–3.

<sup>112</sup> Danuser, "Mishmash or Synthesis?" 43.

<sup>113</sup> Feder, *Joseph Haydn: "Die Schöpfung,"* 19–23.

<sup>114</sup> Johann Karl Friedrich Triest, "Remarks on the Development of the Art of Music in Germany in the Eighteenth Century," trans. Susan Gillespie, in *Haydn and His World*, ed. Elaine Sisman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 373–74. Also see Danuser, "Mishmash or Synthesis?" 42.

<sup>115</sup> Danuser, "Mishmash or Synthesis?" 42.

<sup>116</sup> Webster, "The Sublime and the Pastoral in *The Creation* and *The Seasons*," 150–56.

<sup>117</sup> Danuser, "Mishmash or Synthesis?" 41–78.

ical Musicology at the *Berlin Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften*), Siegmund Levarie<sup>118</sup> (musicology pioneer), and Lawrence Kramer<sup>119</sup> (Distinguished Professor at Fordham University)—serves to demonstrate the foundational understanding of the architectural framework of Haydn's *Creation*.

The architectural framework of the music is of primary importance to this study on several structural levels. It is important on a simple level regarding the pattern of arias, recitatives, and choruses and the types of texts and music sung in each. The framework is important on a more complex level in regard to an alternation of style between what Webster refers to as Haydn's "sublime and pastoral"<sup>120</sup> or what Danuser refers to as the "sublime and idyllic."<sup>121</sup> These structural features of *The Creation* are integrally valuable to the overall message of the oratorio.<sup>122</sup> Text-music relationships result in many representational aspects in the music of Haydn's oratorio. These aspects are of course related to their respective individual numbers and to the larger structure and its respective content. In this section, I will: (1) further define these aspects of the structural framework and how they provide an aesthetic foundation for a robust interpretation of the oratorio;<sup>123</sup> (2) provide musical examples illustrating the "sublime-idyllic" effect of stylistic contrasts within the structural framework; and (3) provide summative statements regarding the significance of the structural framework as a whole.

Webster states, "In Parts I and II, although there are many variations and the First Day is altogether different, each remaining Day (or pair of Days) is based on the following ideal sequence:"

- A. Prose narrative from Genesis (recitative), leading to . . .
- B. Commentary in verse (aria or ensemble), [followed by . . .]
- C. Narrative (recitative), leading to . . .
- D. Chorus of praise.<sup>124</sup>

Here we see the typical eighteenth-century pattern of recitative-aria, or recitative-chorus. Also each day progresses to a sublime chorus in praise of God for his creation. Thirdly, the most prominent choruses of the entire work appear at the end of Parts 1 and 2. However, the placement of the sublime instrumental opening of the oratorio, the "Representation of Chaos," is an exception to this pattern. As mentioned above, the musical sublime has particular symbolic significance in this oratorio. It is a representation of that which shocks or startles us with its immensity—bringing us a sense of awe and wonder at the greatness and majesty of God and his works.<sup>125</sup> As explained in the preceding background, in the eighteenth

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<sup>118</sup> Levarie, "The Closing Numbers of *Die Schöpfung*," 315–22.

<sup>119</sup> Lawrence Kramer, "Recalling the Sublime: The Logic of Creation in Haydn's *Creation*," *Eighteenth-Century Music* 6, no. 1 (March 1, 2009): 41–57.

<sup>120</sup> Webster, "The Sublime and the Pastoral in *The Creation* and *The Seasons*," 153.

<sup>121</sup> Danuser, "Mishmash or Synthesis?" 52.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, 52, 70–71.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 41–78.

<sup>124</sup> Webster, "The Sublime and the Pastoral in *The Creation* and *The Seasons*," 153.

<sup>125</sup> James Webster, "The *Creation*, Haydn's Late Vocal Music, and the Musical Sublime," in *Haydn and His World*, ed. Elaine Sisman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).

century, developments in literature often paralleled or inspired developments in music. Similarly, in *The Creation*, a majestic text based upon Scripture—considered among the most sublime of literature in the eighteenth century—correlates with sublime expressions of music forming the choruses of praise.<sup>126</sup> For example, this occurs in No. 13, “The Heavens Are Telling the Glory of God,” with text from Psalm 19. However, the sublime is represented with instrumental music as well. According to Webster, Haydn's *Creation*, along with *The Seasons* and his late masses, are located precisely in the center of a progression in music history as part of Kant's “dynamic sublime,” a contrast to the usual eighteenth-century sublime, which also included “Mozart's and Haydn's late symphonies, *Don Giovanni* and *Die Zauberflöte*, and Beethoven's third and fifth symphonies.”<sup>127</sup> Webster identifies Haydn's chaos “not literally chaotic,” but paradoxical. It is chaos depicted through the disrupted order of music,<sup>128</sup> which finally “resolves an unstable C minor into the radiant purity of C major.”<sup>129</sup> The presentation of the sublime climaxes at the words from Genesis, “and there was light,” as part of a

progression across three separate movements (overture, recitative, chorus), from paradoxical disorder to triumphant order; it offers a perceptible and memorable experience of that which is unfathomable, unthinkable: the origins of the universe and of history. The remainder of Part I takes place as it were during the reverberation of this event.<sup>130</sup>

Secondly, as previously mentioned, choruses emphasizing the sublime generally alternate with solo numbers in Haydn's pastoral style, resulting in a powerful contrast in mood and aesthetic. Here Haydn's pastoral (his lower, more natural musical style) is characterized by orchestral pictorializations, which serve to “idealize nature.”<sup>131</sup> Webster comments:

These effects soon become anathema to “absolute” musicians. But it is famously a characteristic of pastoral that its naivety is only apparent; those sweetly mourning shepherds know more than they can say. And it was notoriously the fate of pastoral that from the mid-eighteenth century to the mid-twentieth, critics by and large marginalized it as a “conventional” or “artificial” genre (parallel to the traditional denigration of comedy in comparison to tragedy). Formerly considered naïve, or merely humorous, in fact they reveal profound compositional shaping and even psychological insight.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Jenkins, “Haydn: The Libretto of *The Creation*,” 8. Jenkins states, “*The Creation* is very dependent on the Book of Psalms as a source. Nearly every chorus is based on words taken from the Psalms. Sometimes there is no more than a phrase or two cleverly selected to sum up the prevailing mood, such as ‘The Lord is great and great his might’; sometimes longer passages derived from several verses are used, as in ‘The Heavens are telling.’ Psalms 19 & 104 are the ones most frequently chosen, and they also contribute to the text of arias and recitatives (nos. 12 and 25a for example).”

<sup>127</sup> Webster, “The Sublime and the Pastoral in *The Creation* and *The Seasons*,” 153–54.

<sup>128</sup> MacIntyre, *Haydn*, 73.

<sup>129</sup> Webster, “The Sublime and the Pastoral in *The Creation* and *The Seasons*,” 155.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, 154–55.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, 156.



As Webster states, “Equally important, however, is the word-painting’s role in articulating the optimistic deism of *The Creation* because they induce us to identify with nature while it is still the original ‘Arcadia.’”<sup>133</sup>

Danuser has provided a most straightforward and comprehensive structural analysis of Haydn’s *Creation* regarding this mixture of styles. He terms the sublime as “‘Model I’ [which] drives—rhetorically—toward a climax,” identifying this with contrapuntal choruses. Secondly, he terms the “Idyllic” or pastoral as “‘Model II’ [which] moves away—anti-rhetorically or lyrically—from climax,” identifying this with the arias and recitatives. He explains that the “antagonistic” concepts of the “sublime” and the “beautiful” (idyllic, or pastoral) were pervasive in the philosophy of aesthetics around the time of the composition of Haydn’s *Creation*.<sup>134</sup> Both Webster and Danuser associate the pastoral with Haydn’s images, although Danuser also believes there exist “higher order images” (which are still subsumed into the idyllic) which are a lower order of the sublime than the choruses.<sup>135</sup> Music-aesthetician Christian Friedrich Michaelis (1770–1834) asserted:

The sublime moves us profoundly, touches our inner being, unsettles us, defeats us, so as to bestow upon us the joy of manly aspiration and self-ennoblement. In contrast, the beautiful moves us more easily and gently, touches us more on the surface than within, enlivens us without unsettling us, and holds us in harmonious balance and sweet calm of the spirit.<sup>136</sup>

While Model I tends to dominate in Parts 1 and 2, in Part 3 Model II is emphasized. Thus, “Parts 1 and 2 are analogous to the sublime, and the whole of Part 3 is analogous to the idyllic.” Danuser clarifies the shift in the emphasis, asserting that in Part 3, “the spheres of sublime and idyllic have been changed into the human, and the paradisiacal is elevated to a prolonged moment.”<sup>137</sup> One may note again that this “moment” excludes the Fall, as omitted by the librettist from Milton’s epic. Danuser continues:

On the one hand, [here] the models are individualized, “humanized”; on the other hand, they are raised yet another step higher. Model II becomes retrospectively basal and gains a certain importance with respect to content through the complementary gender opposition of husband and wife.<sup>138</sup>

The chart in Figure 1 below demonstrates the alternating stylistic pattern between Danuser’s Model I and Model II movements as they appear throughout the oratorio. Furthermore, related to this larger level contrast between the sublime and idyllic,<sup>139</sup> Levarie earlier asserted that the length of Part 3, several times curtailed in performance as advocated by

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<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> Danuser, “Mishmas or Synthesis?” 51–52.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., 54–55.

<sup>136</sup> Christian Friedrich Michaelis, “Ueber das Erhabene in der Musik,” in *Ueber den Geist der Tonkunst und andere Schriften*, ed. Lothar Schmidt (Chemnitz: G. Schröder, 1997), 168, cited in Danuser, “Mishmas or Synthesis?” 51–52.

<sup>137</sup> Danuser, “Mishmas or Synthesis?” 70–71.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Danuser, “Mishmas or Synthesis?” 67.

Tovey,<sup>140</sup> was created by Haydn to accomplish a roundness of form, presenting both aspects of man's nature.<sup>141</sup>

Figure 1.<sup>142</sup> Danuser's "schematic overview" contrasting the sublime (Model I) and idyllic (Model II).

First Part

II	3. Recitative		6. Aria		12. Recitative	
I		4. Solo and Chorus		10. Chorus		13. Chorus

Second Part

II	15. Aria		21. Recitative	24. Aria			
I		19. Chorus			26. Chorus	27. (Trio)	28. Chorus

Third Part

II	29. Recitative	30. Duet and Chorus <sup>143</sup>	31. Dialogue and Recitative <sup>144</sup>	32. Duet	
I					34. Chorus

In reference to the hymn of No. 30 and the duet of No. 32, he states:

To Haydn, man was the crown of all creation. Man, therefore, has to be shown in both his aspects as partaking of divinity and succumbing to worldly pleasures. . . . He is heroic but also pathetic. He is the protagonist but also his parody. The two halves of Part III demonstrate the point in clear musical terms. . . . The first and second halves of Part III follow and illuminate each other like main and secondary plots in a play. They necessarily supplement each other. The heroic action is immediately repeated but in parody. To Haydn and the audience, which first heard *Die Schöpfung*, this technique was standard. It answered well-established expectations. The *commedia*

<sup>140</sup> Tovey, *Vocal Music*, 124.

<sup>141</sup> Levarie, "The Closing Numbers of *Die Schöpfung*," 315–16.

<sup>142</sup> Danuser, "Mishmash or Synthesis?" 67.

<sup>143</sup> Considering the writings of Levarie, Tovey, Danuser, and Kramer that were consulted for this article, this number would seem controversial regarding its classification on the chart. Due to its Model I and Model II aspects it seems it could be classified either way. It may be considered a Model I duet and chorus due to the following: (1) its sublime choral fugal finale; Tovey wrote of No. 30 as "the sublimest number since the Representation of Chaos;" and (2) Levarie's description of Haydn's use of parody technique, as borrowed from comic opera, emphasizing a contrast between "high" and "low" styles in Nos. 30 and 32 respectively. However, its Model II idyllic sections (heard especially in the duet), and its textual emphasis upon the praise of God in light of his blessings upon mankind, position it as key in what Danuser describes as the "anthropological turn" of Part 3, emphasizing the idyllic portrayal of mankind in paradise. Also, see below for Kramer's description of the "higher-order image" that is solidified in this number as a turn away from the sublime.

<sup>144</sup> It seems that this number was originally misnamed and misclassified on the chart by Danuser, and that it should be a Model II dialogue and recitative, as seen above. While it emphasizes the idyllic, a shift can be heard within the dialogue from Model I as sung by Adam to Model II as sung by Eve. This reflects Danuser's typical analysis of Model II arias and recitatives.

*dell'arte* abounds in situations in which the fate of the serious lovers is comically mirrored by that of the 'lower' couple. *Opera buffa*, by origin and definition a kind of parody of *opera seria*, used the double plot as a stock device. Haydn showed his affinity to the Neapolitan style by choosing librettos by Goldoni for three of his operas.<sup>145</sup>

Levarie also cites Haydn's opera, *Le Pescatrici* (1769) (on a libretto by Goldoni), where Haydn demonstrated this "stock device" in his musical writing. Albeit, Levarie admits, *Die Zauberflöte* seems to be "the closest model for much of the general attitude of *Die Schöpfung*."<sup>146</sup> As *Die Zauberflöte* is noted for many Masonic connections, a thorough comparison with *The Creation* would prove interesting. Scholars such as Chailley,<sup>147</sup> Landon,<sup>148</sup> and Schroeder,<sup>149</sup> it seems, have only begun such study.

Again, the stock device of parody is related to the larger-level contrast between the sublime and the beautiful (or idyllic). In *Die Zauberflöte*, Pamina and Tamino represent the "higher" couple, whereas Papageno and Papagena represent the "lower." As Danuser noted, in *The Creation* one sees a shift from a sublime emphasis in Parts 1 and 2 upon God and his creative actions to an idyllic emphasis upon Adam and Eve in Part 3. Therefore this contrast in emphasis may also be seen as a sort of parody. However, due to its *comical* shift, the most notable example may be *within* Part 3, as Levarie noted, where the contrast between "higher" and "lower" styles is presented between duets, Nos. 30 and 32. This contrast is seen foundationally in the text of each, as he notes, "The first duet in Part III addresses itself to God and praises His creation":

Heaven and earth are full of Thy goodness, O Lord.  
This great wonderful world is Thy work.  
All creation worships Thee eternally.<sup>150</sup>

The second duet is focused upon the joys of human love and earthly delights:

Dearest spouse, at your side every moment is bliss. Precious husband, near you my heart swims in joy. What would be fruit, flowers morning dew, evening breezes without your company? You make me enjoy everything double.<sup>151</sup>

As Levarie explains, the music compounds this contrast exhaustively. The first duet uses the chorus (heavenly choir) while the second does not. The brass choir is subtracted in the second duet and key structure is simplified, not to mention that the "slow lyrical section, oriented toward triple metre [of the first], leads to a faster joyous section in duple time [in the second]." Also the second "display is very characteristic of the Vienna popular song of the

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<sup>145</sup> Levarie, "The Closing Numbers of *Die Schöpfung*," 316.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, 316–17.

<sup>147</sup> Jaques Chailley, "Joseph Haydn and the Freemasons," in *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Music: A Tribute to Karl Geiringer on His Seventieth Birthday*, ed. H. C. Robbins Landon and Roger E. Chapman (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 117–24.

<sup>148</sup> H. C. Robbins Landon, *Haydn: The Late Years, 1801–1809*, vol. 5 of *Haydn: Chronicle and Works* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977).

<sup>149</sup> Schroeder, *Haydn and the Enlightenment*.

<sup>150</sup> Levarie, "The Closing Numbers of *Die Schöpfung*," 317.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*

time." The phrasing of the second is square (four bars) while that of the first includes "six, seven and more complex numbered measures. The second includes country dance styles including the *écossaise* rhythms."<sup>152</sup> Also Levarie claims there were several musical devices that the Vienna audiences associated with *opera buffa* and *Singspiel* rather than oratorio:

The reversal of the reiterated 'ohne dich, ohne dich' to 'mit dir, mit dir' (cf. the duet of Susanna and the Count); the playful breaking up of a phrase by rests (bars 138 f.; cf. 'Silberglöckchen, Zauberflöten' of the Three Ladies); the jocular imitation of a short phrase (bars 148 ff.; cf. Papageno-Papagena); the sentimental preparation of the final cadence of each strophe (cf. similar tempo changes in the quartet from *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*); the effusive accents on an inarticulate exclamation (bars 78, 86, 180, 188; cf. Fiordiligi and Dorabella at the beginning of the first finale in *Così fan tutte*); and so forth.<sup>153</sup>

One can clearly hear how this second duet is an expression of musical naturalism in the Neapolitan style. Webster argues convincingly that these are not "worldly pleasures" as in the sense of *sinful* sexuality, however, because sexual union in Eden's paradise was holy. As Webster states, "Swieten and Haydn portrayed Adam and Eve as human in both senses: as created in the image of God, and as our parents; but they did not portray them as subject to the fall, certainly not in this love-duet."<sup>154</sup>

As a general commentary on Haydn's use of contrasting high and low devices in this oratorio, Webster states:

*The Creation* too is not an oratorio in either primary sense: a religious drama entailing characters and a storyline; or a lyric, cantata-like work intended for performance in divine service. The dominant modes in both are narrative, contemplation, and celebration. . . . Both works [*The Creation* and *The Seasons*] reflected and revalorized the enlightened-conservative sensibility of the Viennese elite at the turn of the nineteenth century. Both are essentially deistic in outlook; both "speak" of high *and* low, sacred *and* secular, in a way that only Haydn's "popularizing artistry" or "artful popularity" could articulate. Most importantly, both are organized in terms of a mixture of two aesthetic modes ordinarily thought of as contrasting: the sublime and the pastoral. (Beethoven aptly characterized both librettos as *Lehrgedichte*, "didactic poems," a characterization that Swieten would surely have endorsed.)<sup>155</sup>

So we must ask, what exactly is the full message of Haydn's *Creation*? What indeed is it teaching, as Beethoven suggested? Key to this discussion is Kramer's article, "Recalling the Sublime: The Logic of Creation in Haydn's *Creation*," asserting that proceeding from the most sublime point of the oratorio, the creation of light, the sublime is "rescinded." He claims that "the sublime in the *Creation* is incendiary, but it burns out fast. . . . What really matters about it are its embers."<sup>156</sup> Further he asserts:

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., 318.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid., 319.

<sup>154</sup> Webster, "The Sublime and the Pastoral in *The Creation* and *The Seasons*," 157–58.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., 153.

<sup>156</sup> Kramer, "Recalling the Sublime," 41.

The withdrawal of the sublime gradually becomes coextensive with the creation itself and the place of humanity in the order of creation, reflecting (and refashioning) a historically specific understanding not only of the sublime but also, and more weightily, of the conditions of possibility for knowing the world and defining the human.<sup>157</sup>

These thoughts relate to the shifting worldview of the eighteenth century. Kramer states, “The withdrawal of the sublime is the precondition for a creation narrative from which the Fall, too, has been withdrawn—the first chapter of what in Haydn’s day would have been called a universal history, the last chapter of which had yet to be written.”<sup>158</sup> He defines three steps in which the “recalling” takes place, explaining that “the work as a whole, like the divine work it describes, unfolds on a principle of cosmos as analogy”:

First the withdrawal of the sublime reveals a logic of essence disclosed in the activity of Adamic naming. The medium of that logic is the image, in its primary or primordial form. Subsequently, the withdrawal of the primary image reveals the same logic of essence as a property of music. Music fills the void left by the departed image just as the image has filled the void left by the departed sublime. The result is the emergence of a higher-order image that visualizes—musically depicts—a portion of the order of creation that cannot otherwise be seen.<sup>159</sup>

In developing the steps above, Kramer explains that part of “Adamic naming” in this case is the musical creation of “transparent” images. This musical characterization of animals via text-music relationships creates a concreteness or “transparency” through images, which tear down the presentation of the sublime that precedes them. Secondly, Kramer explains that in Part 2 of the oratorio musical expression essentially replaces the images of Part 1, but with the same type of transparent “essence” as the images evoked.<sup>160</sup> An exception to this step would certainly be Raphael’s recitative, “Straight opening her fertile womb,” where the images of Part 1 return. In Part 3, the “higher-order image” is then materialized in No. 30. Here the emphasis turns toward the human, as Kramer states:

Where the sublime is withdrawn, the human appears. And the form in which it appears is the prototype of community, or that which was rapidly becoming this prototype in the nascent bourgeois order of Haydn’s Europe, namely the domestic couple, realized musically in forms of reciprocity that exclude the disruptive otherness of the sublime, including that of human sexuality.<sup>161</sup>

The rescinding of the sublime may be correlated on some level with the aforementioned parody technique as introduced by Levarie, and especially with the contrast between the “sublime” and the “idyllic” as provided by Webster and Danuser. The trend of these analyses demonstrate significance in the move from the “higher” to the “lower.” Similar to Webster’s interpretation, Kramer asserts that with the images, “there is an effect of miniaturization, as

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<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, 41–52.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

if we were hearing the musical equivalent of a bestiary, or of Milton's own pseudo-bestiary, a series of illustrations, as for a children's book or an illuminated Bible."<sup>162</sup> He argues that everything occurring after the sublimity of chaos and light are representations of a rescinding of the sublime.<sup>163</sup> Finally, Danuser and Kramer both note the emphasis upon mankind in paradise in Part 3. Thus, the rescinding of the sublime represents the overall picture expressed by a combined understanding of these authors' studies. All of this relates to a deistic representation of creation as will be discussed further.<sup>164</sup>

Although clarification regarding Danuser's and Kramer's above observations on the sublime in *The Creation* will be discussed, a notable difference and introductory conclusions are presented here. Although Kramer does not remark on the sublimity of the contrapuntal choruses, he does observe the more sublime nature of the depiction of the sun in No. 12 and its contrast with the pastoral nature of the depiction of the moon in the same number.<sup>165</sup> As previously mentioned, Danuser observes these type of stylistic contrasts between "higher" and "lower" images within numbers, which are subsumed into the "idyllic." The rescinding of the sublime is thus observable on three levels: (1) on the larger level, especially between Parts 2 and 3; (2) between individual numbers—as Levarie noted between numbers 30 and 32—and as seen in Danuser's chart on page 42; and (3) within particular numbers, such as No. 6 (see below).

## Illustrations of the "Sublime-Idyllic" Effect

It is important to recognize that there are two very different types of musical sublime present in the oratorio: (1) the sustained sublime of the choruses, and (2) the sublime represented by imitative images in the arias and recitatives.<sup>166</sup> The analysis of the following represents the movement from sublime to idyllic or pastoral as it is most apparent within individual numbers in the *The Creation*. Model II (A: sublime—B: idyllic) in Parts 1 and 2 is represented by Nos. 3, 6, 12, 15, 21, and 24.<sup>167</sup> The opening stanzas of "Rolling in Foaming Billows," No. 6, are as follows:

Rolling in foaming billows  
Uplifted roars the boist'rous sea.  
Mountains and rocks now emerge  
Their tops into the clouds ascend,

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<sup>162</sup> Ibid., 51.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., 41.

<sup>164</sup> Kramer, "Recalling the Sublime," 57. Kramer states, "The world of *The Creation* presents itself as God's handiwork, but its plenitude is robustly secular; its narrative is more deist than Christian. I can imagine Haydn being appalled by that statement, but human handiwork has a funny way of confounding the hand that made it." Also see Webster, "The Sublime and the Pastoral in *The Creation* and *The Seasons*," 157–58. Webster states, "*The Creation* originated in a conservative but optimistic context of belief in rational understanding and human progress, in which the dominant religious sense was deistic rather than dogmatic. . . . It was one of the last visions of Enlightenment, beside which can be set only *Die Zauberflöte* and (in a later Utopian mode) Beethoven's Ninth Symphony."

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., 48ff.

<sup>166</sup> Danuser, "Mishmash or Synthesis?" 50–59.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid., 54–59.

Thro' th'open plains outstretching wide  
in serpent error rivers flow.  
Softly purling glides on  
thro' silent vales the limpid brook.<sup>168</sup>

In this aria, the sublime or “epic” is clearly represented by lines 1–6 of the poetry and the corresponding music as seen in the excerpt in Example 1. As Danuser explains:

The sublime topics are consistently foregrounded in three successive phrases: the music for lines 1–2 which includes the orchestra introduction paints the storm-ravaged sea (D minor, mm. 1–12, 13–26); in lines 3–4 “the peak of the mountain” [*der Berge Gipfel*] is illustrated by upward striving (F major, mm. 27–49); and the musical setting of lines 5–6 represents the flow of the broad river with sculpted melodic figures (F major modulating back to D minor, mm. 50–72).<sup>169</sup>

Conversely, the music and the text of lines 7–8 are a representation of the pastoral, or idyllic:

When the dominant imperfect-cadence resolves into the parallel key of D major, the music is led to the final lines (7–8) of the aria, in which the return to the D tonality opens a new realm to the listener: the sphere of the idyll. A simple exchange between tonic and dominant harmonies serves as the harmonic background as a steady step-wise melody sets a repeat of the opening setting (mm. 73–93, 93–113), corresponding to the aesthetic topic of the text (D major, mm. 73–121).<sup>170</sup>

Thus, beginning with the D section (Example 2), we see an example of a Model II aria with musical structure moving from sublime to idyllic, which corresponds with the textual pattern proceeding from epic to lyric.<sup>171</sup> No. 24, the aria “In Native Worth and Honor Clad,” also proceeds in this pattern as the text exhibits below:

In native worth and honour clad,  
With beauty, courage, strength adorn'd  
To heav'n erect and tall, he stands a man,  
The Lord and King of nature all.

The large and arched front sublime  
Of wisdom deep declares the seat,  
And in his eyes with brightness shines the soul,  
The breath and image of his God.

With fondness leans upon his breast  
The partner for him formed,

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<sup>168</sup> Joseph Haydn, *Die Schöpfung, Oratorium 1798*, Urtext ed., ed. Annette Oppermann (Munich: G. Henle Verlag, 2009), 68–83.

<sup>169</sup> Danuser, “Mishmash or Synthesis?” 54–55.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, 52–55.

A woman, fair and graceful spouse,  
Her softly smiling virgin looks,  
Of flow'ry spring the mirror,  
Bespeak him, love, and joy, and bliss.<sup>172</sup>

As seen below, Haydn's text-music relationships here correlate with the vivid change between the first and second parts of the aria, varying from the description of man to the description of woman. Although the melodic material of this section is at first the same as that which accompanies the creation of man (Example 3), by measure 60 the music is transformed from the sublime to the beautiful (Example 4).<sup>173</sup>

In summary, the significance of the structural framework in *The Creation's* grand design is that: (1) it demonstrates that Haydn's oratorio was not a "mishmash" of styles as Schiller wrote, but that it was done in line with Haydn's idiosyncratic tendencies to compose works of "artful popularity"; (2) it demonstrates how *The Creation* was influenced by *opera buffa*, and thus how Haydn's composition of sacred music was influenced by contemporaneous techniques that represented an increase in the communication of values at play in the "lower," naturalistic, emotional, and subjective side of secular entertainment; and (3) it demonstrates what Kramer calls a "rescinding of the sublime"<sup>174</sup>—further substantiated in the writings of Webster and Danuser regarding Haydn's use of alternating styles in the oratorio.

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<sup>172</sup> Joseph Haydn, *Die Schöpfung*.

<sup>173</sup> Danuser, "Mishmash or Synthesis?" 59.

<sup>174</sup> Kramer, "Recalling the Sublime," 41–57.



Example 1.<sup>175</sup> Haydn, *The Creation*, No. 6, “Rolling in Foaming Billows,” excerpt from introduction and A section: measures 7–18, voice and orchestra (piano reduction).

The image displays a piano reduction of the musical score for the oratorio *The Creation*, No. 6, "Rolling in Foaming Billows." The score is divided into three systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The first system (measures 7-9) features a piano introduction with a treble clef staff containing a continuous sixteenth-note pattern and a bass clef staff with chords and occasional eighth notes. Dynamics range from *p* to *f*. The second system (measures 10-12) continues the piano introduction with similar textures. The third system (measures 13-18) introduces the vocal part, labeled "A Raphael" in measure 13. The vocal line is in a bass clef, and the piano accompaniment continues with the sixteenth-note pattern. The lyrics are: "Roll - ing in foam - ing bil - lows Up - lift - ed roars the boist' - rous sea." Dynamics include *p*, *f*, and *p* again.

<sup>175</sup> Examples are from Joseph Haydn, *The Creation: An Oratorio for Solo Voices, Chorus, and Orchestra*, Urtext ed., ed. Nicholas Temperley (London: Edition Peters, 1988).

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Example 2. Haydn, *The Creation*, No. 6, "Rolling in Foaming Billows," excerpt from D section, measures 73–85, voice and orchestra (piano reduction).

The image displays a piano reduction of a vocal excerpt from Haydn's *The Creation*, No. 6, "Rolling in Foaming Billows." The score is presented in three systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is D major (two sharps) and the time signature is common time (C). The first system, starting at measure 73, features a vocal line with lyrics "Soft - ly purl - ing - gli - deth" and a piano accompaniment with a *p* dynamic and triplet patterns. The second system, starting at measure 78, has lyrics "on Through si - lent vales the lim - pid" and continues the piano accompaniment. The third system, starting at measure 82, includes lyrics "brook. Soft - ly purl - ing" and concludes the excerpt. The piano accompaniment consists of a right-hand melodic line and a left-hand bass line with chords and rhythmic accompaniment.

Example 3. Haydn, *The Creation*, No. 24, "In Native Worth and Honor Clad," measures 10–24, tenor and orchestra (piano reduction).

The image displays a piano reduction of a tenor vocal line from Haydn's *The Creation*, No. 24. The score is presented in three systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The first system (measures 10-13) features the lyrics "In na - tive worth and ho - nour clad, With". The piano accompaniment includes a *p* dynamic marking. The second system (measures 14-18) begins with a boxed measure number "14" and contains the lyrics "beau - ty, cou - rage, strength a - dorned, To heav'n e - rect\_ and\_ tall he stands A". The piano accompaniment is marked with *f*. The third system (measures 19-24) starts with a boxed measure number "19" and has the lyrics "man, The lord and king of na - ture all." The piano accompaniment includes markings for *cresc.*, *f*, *p*, and *f*.



Example 4. Haydn, *The Creation*, No. 24, "In Native Worth and Honor Clad," measures 53–68, tenor and orchestra (piano reduction).

The image displays a piano reduction of a tenor and orchestra passage from Haydn's *The Creation*, No. 24. The score is organized into four systems, each corresponding to a specific measure number in a box at the beginning of the system: 53, 56, 60, and 64. Each system consists of a vocal line (tenor) and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line includes lyrics, and the piano part features various textures, including arpeggiated figures and block chords. Dynamics such as *p* and *pp* are indicated throughout the score.

53

With

56

fond - ness leans u - pon his breast The part - ner for him\_ formed, A

60

wo - man, fair\_ and\_ grace - ful spouse, a wo - man, fair\_ and\_ grace - ful

64

spouse. Her soft - ly\_ smil - ing\_ vir - gin looks, Of

## The Meaning of Haydn's *Creation*

Mark Berry helps to frame concluding thoughts regarding the above analysis and the complete meaning of Haydn's *Creation*:

Alongside *The Seasons*, Haydn's *Creation* stands as one of the final monuments to Enlightened Catholicism. *The Creation* is the product of an environment very different from that in which Bach assembled the Mass in B minor, but also quite distinct from that in which Beethoven composed the Mass in D. . . . Throughout Swieten's libretto, deistic thoughts inspired by contemplation of nature are converted into direct prayers of thanksgiving and praise to the living God. . . . It is not the theology of the later Hegel or of romantic Christianity, but the moralism of the later eighteenth century: one can imagine those who dwelled beneath the heavenly canopy praying, after a fashion similar to the subjects of Hegel's Kantian kingdom, that all rational creatures should have no law other than that of their moral conscience.<sup>176</sup>

An understanding of the message of *The Creation* may be based upon knowledge of (1) the purpose of the work according to Haydn; (2) its revisionist theology; (3) its use of a mixture of musical styles resulting essentially in what Kramer calls a rescinding of the sublime; and (4) the weight of text-music relationships. From the author's studies, all seem to position it as a work in which both text and music were thoroughly influenced by the Enlightenment.

The influence of humanistic moral optimism, a component of natural theology, is the primary element of this Enlightenment influence. According to Haydn, the purposes of the work were essentially (1) the "pleasure" and "happiness" of others; and (2) "to heighten . . . sacred emotions in the heart of the listener, and to put him in a frame of mind where he is most susceptible to the kindness and omnipotence of the Creator." Historical studies of English Enlightenment culture place pleasure and happiness at the center of importance, and according to Wangemann, Austrian Enlightenment Reform Catholicism emphasized the benevolence of God at the expense of the fear of God. The de-emphasis of God's just nature is expressed in *The Creation* primarily by its lack of mention of the Fall and the promised punishment incurred by mankind. Its leaning toward natural theology is also expressed by the libretto's great restriction of the influence of Satan and demons in the world, when compared with their depiction in both *Paradise Lost* and the Bible.

An emphasis upon naturalism, or what Kramer calls "rescinding the sublime," can also be seen in the work's musical display as presented in its mixture of musical styles. Kramer associates the musical sublime with the orchestral expression of chaos and the appearance of light, while Danuser associates the sublime with Haydn's use of contrapuntal choruses. Webster affirms both of these associations. These sublime musical expressions may be associated with the biblical sublime. Thus a parallel may be seen between an expression of the biblical sublime (representing Christian orthodoxy) and the musical sublime, and a contrasting parallel between the natural theology expressed in the libretto (restriction of Satan's influence in the world, and the representation of man in paradise and apart from the Fall) and the naturalistic expression of music through images that "idealize nature" and *opera buffa* (style *ga-*

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<sup>176</sup> Berry, "Haydn's *Creation* and Enlightenment Theology," 44.

lant) solo sections in Part 3. As Webster asserts, "the word-paintings [have a] role in articulating the optimistic deism of *The Creation* because they induce us to identify with nature while it is still the original 'Arcadia.'"<sup>177</sup> When these are seen in the context of "recalling" or "rescinding" the sublime, the ultimate message of the oratorio is more closely oriented with natural theology.

A clarification should be made here between Danuser's and Kramer's thinking. According to Danuser, each successive chorus in Parts 1 and 2 intensifies the amplification of the sublime.<sup>178</sup> On one level this would seem to contrast Kramer's assertion of continual rescinding of the sublime, as Kramer makes no mention of the choruses (after the creation of light) as being part of the sublime. However, considering (1) the humanistic shift of emphases, postulated by Danuser between Part 2 and Part 3; and (2) the lack of presentation of the Fall, the cumulative "spiritual effect" would seem to be one of Enlightenment optimistic theology. This effect is created by a counterpoint between (1) rescinding of the sublime through the celebration of earthly images peaking with an emphasis upon mankind and his life in the beauty of the created world; and (2) a magnification or celebration of God through the use of sublime choruses as the one who has initiated these great wonders—especially at the close of Part 3, as mankind remains in paradise. In this sense, the use of the sublime assumes an Enlightenment cast in its celebration of a humanistic vision.<sup>179</sup> This was, after all, the intended purpose of Swieten's moralizing artistry.

## Conclusion

A synthesis of the above material leads to additional conclusions regarding the meaning and importance of the work. As aforementioned, Haydn's *Creation* was one of the most successful oratorios of all time. This is demonstrated not only by its positive reception, but by its longevity in performance from the time of its premiere until the present day. Its ultimate message of Enlightenment optimism was the result of both its religious tolerance and musical inclusivity.<sup>180</sup> The message of religious tolerance is plainly seen through the libretto's omission of the Fall, yielding a more universal account of creation. Its message of musical inclusivity can be seen in its mixture of styles that crossed the boundaries of normative standards for the setting of sacred texts. When evaluated together, both text and music point to deism, as the sublime is recalled or rescinded<sup>181</sup> into the beautiful or "idyllic" in what

<sup>177</sup> Webster, "The Sublime and the Pastoral in *The Creation* and *The Seasons*," 156.

<sup>178</sup> Danuser, "Mishmash or Synthesis?" 64.

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*, 74–75.

<sup>180</sup> Haydn's "popularizing artistry" is what likely drove his musical inclusivity. See Philip G. Downs, *Classical Music: The Era of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1992), 474. Downs states, "All aspects of the composition of *The Creation*, whether accompanied recitative, unaccompanied recitative, aria or chorus, all receive the blessing of Haydn's inspired and imaginative intellect, and in the all embracing miracle of the oratorio, that goes beyond any one religion in speaking to all mankind, childlike naiveté and mature intellect are united much as in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*. And as with *Die Zauberflöte*, Haydn's *Creation* met with popular and widespread success, again demonstrating that the ideals of eighteenth-century music were not exclusive but inclusive, and they reached over boundaries of class, nationality, and religion to embrace all thinking and feeling people. Haydn's achievement places him beside Mozart and Beethoven as one of the great humanists of music."

<sup>181</sup> Kramer, "Recalling the Sublime."

Webster terms the “pastoral” in reference to Haydn.<sup>182</sup> Understanding patterns in Haydn’s musical rhetoric makes this even more evident. Haydn’s approach to composition can be seen, according to Shohat, as a “refutation of stylistic norms,” allowing him “commentary on specific procedures—produc[ing] a different result than expected.”<sup>183</sup> Secondly, according to Lowe, Haydn likely mixed sacred and secular styles such as canon and minuet to produce “new and distinct meanings,” albeit intended for “attentive, knowledgeable and reflective listeners.”<sup>184</sup> It is easy to see how *Creation* could be interpreted as a refutation not only of theological norms, but also of music as a partner to sacred text. It would seem that Swieten’s “moralizing artistry” was the perfect match for this unique vision, as it was based upon the concept that taste for instrumental music could form taste for morality. It is vital to make a distinction between moralism within the context of orthodox Christianity and moralism as a tenet of natural theology in regard to Haydn’s *Creation*. *Creation*’s implied moralism falls short of orthodoxy in its failure to articulate the Fall and in its leaving man in a state of paradise. These qualities of the libretto and of the oratorio as a whole demonstrated via text-music relationships and the alternation of “high” and “low” styles signify a leaning toward the belief that humankind is sufficient in and of itself to make good moral choices. This belief is squarely in line with natural theology. Therefore theology, morality, and music were becoming more important with respect to fellow man than with respect toward God and His Word, since God was, after all, “benevolent.”

Regarding Haydn’s compositional efforts in *The Creation*, it is important to recognize the difference between his Roman Catholicism and his operative worldview. Although Haydn was by several accounts a devout Roman Catholic, at least in his composition of *Creation*, his operative worldview evidenced that his Christianity was more an enlightened brand than an orthodox one. Again, worldview serves as our construct of reality through which we think, form values, and act. Again, related to this, Olthuis stated that worldview is

a framework or set of fundamental beliefs through which we view the world and our calling and future in it. This vision need not be fully articulated: it may be so internalized that it goes largely unquestioned; . . . it may be greatly refined through cultural-historical development.<sup>185</sup>

Haydn was undoubtedly influenced by several factors in his composition of *Creation*. One of these was almost certainly Gottfried van Swieten, whose worldview was unquestionably enlightened. Swieten’s political reputation for the endorsement of Enlightenment philosophy was matched by his educational reforms and musical activities. He formed the *Gesellschaft der Associierten* to proliferate taste in art and morality, believing that these were sufficient to form an ideal society. In fact, his *Gesellschaft der Associierten*, commissioned Haydn to compose *The Creation*.<sup>186</sup> Certainly he may have influenced Haydn to produce meaning in the work of which Haydn was not fully aware. However as Schroeder convincingly argues, Haydn was also significantly influenced by the writings of Shaftesbury and Gellert held in his own library. Together these influences prompted Haydn to demonstrate an operative

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<sup>182</sup> Webster, “The Sublime and the Pastoral in *The Creation* and *The Seasons*.”

<sup>183</sup> Yifat Shohat, *Haydn’s Musical Rhetoric*, 137.

<sup>184</sup> Lowe, *Pleasure and Meaning in the Classical Symphony*, 112.

<sup>185</sup> Sire, *The Universe Next Door*, 18.

<sup>186</sup> Temperley, *Haydn*, 2.

worldview that created the deistic message above in at least three ways: (1) It created Haydn's purpose for *The Creation*, as derived from his own words—which was a departure from the apologetic purposes of Handelian oratorio and resonant with deism and aesthetic moralism; (2) It prompted him to use a libretto that accommodated the “Representation of Chaos,” an aspect of creation that was universalist rather than orthodox in nature—and neglected to portray the event of the Fall; and (3) It prompted his use of a mixture of musical styles and text music relationships that idealize nature and portray a rescinding of the sublime as demonstrated from the combined studies of Danuser, Kramer, Webster, and Levarie. Although many studies including this one note the significant impact of the Enlightenment upon Haydn's compositional activity, his love for God was also clear. His contemporaneous biographer wrote, “All his larger scores begin with the words *In nomine Domini*, and end with *Laus Deo* or *Soli Deo Gloria* [In the name of the Lord, Praise to God, To God alone the glory].”<sup>187</sup> However, these two aspects of his personality were certainly compatible with enlightened Catholicism.

Besides being a landmark in the history of western art music, Haydn's *Creation* was part of a massive shift in musical meaning and the transformation of relationships between text and music as exemplified within the genre of oratorio. Other religious vocal works, such as Stillingfleet and Smith's *Paradise Lost* (1760),<sup>188</sup> C. P. E. Bach's *Auferstehung und Himmelfahrt Jesu* (1777–78),<sup>189</sup> and Benedict Kraus's *Creation* (before 1790)<sup>190</sup> also contributed to this transition.

The transformation did not end with Haydn. As the succeeding Romantic era unfolded, it would ultimately, in Yifat Shohat's words, effect the “replacement of the mechanistic model [based upon cause and effect] with idealist. . . Idealism sets music apart from its previous rhetorical ties since it avoids any particular messages that are targeted directly at an attentive listener.”<sup>191</sup> Haydn's *Creation* is positioned in the crossroads between a formalist approach to music in which musical meaning—especially in texted music—is tied to rhetoric, and the idealist approach in works composed to be “absolute and autonomous,”<sup>192</sup> in which meaning ultimately would be received subjectively by the listener. *The Creation's* seeming refutation of normative standards regarding music as a partner to sacred text places it squarely at this juncture.

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<sup>187</sup> G. A. Griesinger, *Biographische Notizen über Joseph Haydn*, in Vernon Gotwals, trans., *Joseph Haydn: Eighteenth-Century Gentleman and Genius* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 53, 54.

<sup>188</sup> Kay Gilliland Stevenson and Margaret Seares, *Paradise Lost in Short: Smith, Stillingfleet, and the Transformation of Epic* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Press, 1998), 48, 116–18.

<sup>189</sup> Richard Will, “Reason and Revelation in C. P. E. Bach's Resurrection Oratorio,” in *C. P. E. Bach Studies*, ed. Annette Richards (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 85–86, 115.

<sup>190</sup> Georg Feder, “Ein ‘Schöpfung’ vor Haydn,” in *Musikalische Quellen: Quellen zur Musikgeschichte—Festschrift für Martin Staehelin zum 65. Geburtstag* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002), 329–39. Sometime before 1790 Benedict Kraus composed a cantata with libretto by Johann Christian Hohnbaum (1747–1825) on the subject of creation. Here are briefly mentioned a few of the parallels which, according to Feder, Kraus's and Haydn's versions of the creation share. Hohnbaum's text covers only Genesis 1:31 and Genesis 2:1–4a “like Adolf Schlegel's poem ‘Creation’ (1748), and therefore avoids the second creation narrative (Gen. 2, 4b–25 and Gen. 3) about the Fall.” Thus, both Kraus's and Haydn's settings are limited to six days of creation. Feder also observes that Hohnbaum's libretto is similar to Swieten's in its humanistic treatment of the creation of man, although it differs in that Hohnbaum's also offers praise to God in the same number.

<sup>191</sup> Shohat, *Haydn's Musical Rhetoric*, 158–59.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, 162.



Haydn's *Creation* clearly demonstrates that the manner in which a composer combines sacred text and music is a function of his or her operating worldview, and that the composer's approach to text-music relationships sends a theological message. Thus, it would seem sacred music cannot be viewed as autonomous—as held by Romantic composers and some ancient Greek thinkers—as taking place in a “self-contained world of sound,” but rather must be viewed as that which is “rationally based and logically developed, exemplif[ying] the structural principles of all reality, including the human mind.”<sup>193</sup> Hence, the comprehensive dynamics of theology, philosophy, science, literature, history, music, and aesthetics—the entire cultural environment—must ultimately be taken into consideration in the creation of sacred music, in order to ensure orthodox integrity in the robust meaning, i.e., the functional theology, of a given work. It would seem that for those concerned with functional theology—the true devotional impact of sacred music—that the timeless principles of Scripture must be applied in the consideration of these complex dynamics, as it is these dynamics that influence the music's ultimate effect upon the listener. It is hoped that the present study will have implications for composers as well as scholars, and that contemporary writers of sacred music will seek to exemplify scriptural worldview and values in their works and circumspectly avoid cultural influences and values that may distort an otherwise orthodox Christian perspective and message.

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<sup>193</sup> Sparshott and Goehr, “Philosophy of Music, II.”