

Aria Violino Solo e l'Alto.

The Creative Development of Johann Sebastian Bach

VOLUME I: 1695–1717

Music to Delight the Spirit

RICHARD D. P. JONES

OXFORD

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For my wife
Anne Paul Jones

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Preface

This book, whose subtitle was suggested by a phrase from some of Bach's own title pages ('zur Gemüths Ergötzung'), represents the first volume of a projected two-volume study of the music of Bach. As far as possible, his compositions are covered chronologically: this volume deals with the first twenty years or so of his composing career—the early and Weimar periods (c. 1695–1708 and 1708–17 respectively)—while the second volume will cover the Cöthen and Leipzig periods (1717–23 and 1723–50).

Many fine studies of individual repertoires are already in existence—notably Alfred Dürr on the cantatas (now available in English translation), David Schulenberg on the keyboard music, and Peter Williams on the organ music—but none so far in English that attempts to draw all the strands together. This book is intended to fill that gap, so it aims to be fairly comprehensive as far as coverage of Bach's music is concerned. Although the various genres are considered one at a time, many cross-references are made between them, and they are all brought together in the concluding chapter of each part of the book.

It must be emphasized that this book deals with the music only. Gone are the days when such a scholar as Philipp Spitta could cover Bach's life and works in equal detail and in comparable depth. Since 1950 Bach studies have proliferated to such an extent that a more up-to-date book of similar scope might well be beyond the powers of any individual Bach scholar. In the present book a small concession is made to biography: the circumstances in which Bach's music was composed are briefly sketched in an introductory chapter to each part. But issues that surround the music, such as textual criticism and performance practice, are deliberately left out of account. From the unrelenting focus on the music itself—on its forms, style, and technique—it follows that much of the discussion is necessarily analytical. For this reason it is advisable for the reader to have scores at hand (and perhaps recordings too).

Volume I is divided into two parts, which cover Bach's early works and his mature Weimar compositions respectively. Each chapter deals with a number of work-groups in turn. The structure of 'Fugue and Fantasy I' (Part I, Chapter 3), for example, is indicated by the subtitles 'Prelude and Fugue', 'Fugue', and 'Fantasia and Prelude'. Each subtitle is followed by a list of the works to be considered, with their original titles, BWV (Bach catalogue) numbers, and their earliest source or sources, plus scribe and date if known. (The order of the works listed in general corresponds with the order in which they are discussed.) It is hoped that this structure will render the study usable as a handbook on Bach's music as well as a connected study of his creative development. That would answer the author's purpose in writing a book that, it is hoped, might be of interest not only to music students and Bach scholars but to performers of Bach, whether amateur or professional, and music lovers in general.

The primary object of the book is to build up a coherent picture of Bach's development as a composer. This seems to me to be a very necessary task, despite the almost insuperable obstacles that stand in its way. The chief of these are substantial losses (no Weimar concertos by Bach exist, for example, even though it is inconceivable that he did not compose any at that time) and highly problematic issues of dating and authenticity, which are particularly acute in the early and Weimar periods. Surviving autographs from those periods are few, and contemporary manuscript copies give only a very rough idea of when the music they contain might have been composed. In many cases we are compelled to rely on internal, stylistic criteria alone in the attempt to date a composition. This means that the kinds of analytical studies that lead to observations on Bach's stylistic development must also be used to try to establish approximate composition dates in the first place. The scope for circular argument is obvious, and the whole situation is intellectually unsatisfying. And yet, in the interests of such a worthwhile undertaking as furthering our understanding of one of the supreme creative artists of human history, the attempt has to be made. Here the time-honoured method is used of orienting the study of the more problematic pieces around works that survive in autograph manuscripts (isolated early pieces, the *Orgelbüchlein*, many of the Weimar cantatas) or in reliable, if only approximately datable, sources (such as the Möller Manuscript or the Andreas Bach Book). In addition, an attempt is made to establish inner connections between seemingly unrelated compositions, which might reflect a particular stylistic or technical preoccupation at a certain stage of Bach's composing career. Through such interconnections, an overall view of the composer's *oeuvre* and creativity emerges, and it is left to future generations to determine the extent of its truth or falsity.

No less thorny is the issue of authenticity. Valid statements about Bach's creative development cannot rest on the basis of works by other composers that are misattributed to him. Therefore the works considered here are overwhelmingly those whose authenticity is generally accepted on solid grounds. There are inevitably borderline cases, however, and in this area the author has had to make up his own mind as to which compositions merit inclusion and which do not. The method employed is essentially the same as that used to establish dating: forming internal connections (or, in the case of spurious compositions, failing to form connections) with reliably transmitted works, which persuasively point to Bach's authorship. On this basis BWV 150, 536 no. 2, 707, 821, 955, and 947 (as well as the Neumeister Chorales) have been accepted, but BWV 143, 565 (the popular Toccata and Fugue in D minor), and 568—to name only a few prominent examples—are rejected.

One issue, closely connected with dating problems, that needs to be mentioned here is the difficulty of deciding on the divisions between the two volumes, and between the two parts of Volume I. The decision to conclude the first volume at the end of the Weimar period (1717) might be viewed as arbitrary. For Bach was then already at the height of his powers, and the mature style he had cultivated in Weimar continued to be valid in Cöthen. And yet in certain respects the move marked a genuine change in

the nature of his creative work. Above all, his move to the Calvinist court of Cöthen marked an end (albeit temporary) to his work for the Lutheran Church. Thus the sacred cantata retreats in favour of the secular, and organ music in favour of harpsichord music. Equally striking is the almost total absence of instrumental music from the Weimar period (the one exception being a violin piece, BWV 1026) as against the proliferation of instrumental music in Cöthen—the Brandenburg Concertos, the solo violin Sonatas and Partitas, the cello Suites, and so on—though this impression no doubt arises partly from substantial Weimar losses and is unlikely to reflect the true state of affairs. Finally, to the Cöthen period belong the first major works (apart from the *Orgelbüchlein*) conceived in sets and, in the case of keyboard compositions, written with a didactic purpose in mind: *The Well-Tempered Clavier* I, the Inventions and Sinfonias, the Brandenburg Concertos, and so forth. For all these reasons it seemed appropriate to divide the two volumes of this study at the move from Weimar to Cöthen in 1717. A more difficult decision was where exactly to place the division between the two parts of Volume I, ‘Formative Years’ and ‘First Maturity’. Bach’s move from Mühlhausen to Weimar in 1708 might seem an obvious choice, were it not for the difficulty of determining in many cases whether pieces were composed before or after that date. In addition, it seems most unlikely that Bach’s music underwent a sudden stylistic transformation upon his arrival at Weimar; a gradual transition from the early to the mature style is much more probable. Therefore the date of c. 1709 has been given as a dividing line. But it must be stressed that this does nothing more than solve a problem of convenience: we still know far too little about the transformation of Bach’s style that took place around that time, or when and how it was accomplished. And controversy will inevitably arise over borderline cases that have been placed on one side of the divide when, according to the informed reader, they should have been placed on the other (BWV 4, 196, 532, 574, 910, 914, 915, 768, and 989 may be most problematic in this regard). The author takes comfort from the thought that, since the division is a matter of convenience only, the matter is not crucially significant. Moreover, Part II was conceived as a direct continuation of Part I, reflecting the essential continuity of Bach’s style beneath the changes, and its gradual admission of those novel elements that were in time to transform it.

It would be impossible to draw this preface to a close without acknowledging my immense debt to the many Bach scholars of the last 50 years or so who have striven, against all the odds, to make sense of Bach’s early stylistic development. I want to mention here in particular Werner Breig (on the organ fugues), Alfred Dürr (the early cantatas), Hartwig Eichberg (the early keyboard works), Robert Hill (the Möller Manuscript and the Andreas Bach Book), Elke Krüger (the early fugues), Siegbert Rampe and Dominik Sackmann (the early concertante works), George Stauffer (the organ preludes), Russell Stinson (the Kellner Manuscripts and the *Orgelbüchlein*), Christoph Wolff (the North German School and the Neumeister Chorales), and Jean-Claude Zehnder (Bach and Böhm, Bach and Torelli). Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to Andrew Parrott, Michael Lowe, and Hugh Griffiths for

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Richard D. P. Jones
Abingdon, Oxon.
January 2006

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Abbreviations

ABB	Andreas Bach Book (Musikbibliothek der Stadt Leipzig, III.8.4)
Bach	Journal of the Riemenschneider Bach Institute, Baldwin-Wallace College, Berea, Ohio (Berea, 1970–)
BD I, II, III	Bach-Dokumente I: <i>Schriftstücke von der Hand J. S. Bachs</i> , ed. W. Neumann and H.-J. Schulze (Kassel and Leipzig, 1963) II: <i>Fremdschriftliche und gedruckte Dokumente zur Lebensgeschichte J. S. Bachs 1685–1750</i> , ed. W. Neumann and H.-J. Schulze (Kassel and Leipzig, 1969) III: <i>Dokumente zum Nachwirken J. S. Bachs 1750–1800</i> , ed. H.-J. Schulze (Kassel and Leipzig, 1972)
Berlin	Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz
Berlin, HdK	Hochschule der Künste, Berlin
BJ	<i>Bach-Jahrbuch</i> (Leipzig, 1904–)
Brussels	Bibliothèque du Conservatoire Royal de Musique, Brussels
BuxWV	Georg Karstädt, <i>Thematisch-systematisches Verzeichnis der musikalischen Werke von Dietrich Buxtehude: Buxtehude-Werke-Verzeichnis (BuxWV)</i> (Wiesbaden, 1974; 2nd edn 1985)
BWV	W. Schmieder, <i>Thematisch-systematisches Verzeichnis der musikalischen Werke von J. S. Bach: Bach-Werke-Verzeichnis (BWV)</i> (Leipzig, 1950; 2nd edn, rev. and enlarged, Wiesbaden, 1990); concise edn, ed. A. Dürr and Y. Kobayashi, Wiesbaden, 1998
BzBF	Beiträge zur Bachforschung (Leipzig, 1982–)
C/c	C major/C minor
Carpentras	Bibliothèque Inguimbertaine, Carpentras, France
Copenhagen	Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Copenhagen
Darmstadt	Hessische Landes- und Hochschulbibliothek, Darmstadt
DTB	Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Bayern
DTÖ	Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Österreich
Dürr <i>Studien</i>	Alfred Dürr, <i>Studien über die frühen Kantaten J. S. Bachs</i> (Leipzig, 1951; 2nd edn, rev. and enlarged, Wiesbaden, 1977)
Durham	Library of Durham Cathedral
<i>Frühwerk, Das</i>	K. Heller and H.-J. Schulze, eds., <i>Das Frühwerk J. S. Bachs</i> [conference report, Rostock, 1990] (Cologne, 1995)
Göttingen	Johann-Sebastian-Bach-Institute, Göttingen
Hague, The	Dienst voor Schone Kunsten der Gemeente's-Gravenhage

Hill diss.	Robert S. Hill, <i>The Möller Manuscript and the Andreas Bach Book: Two Keyboard Anthologies from the Circle of the Young J. S. Bach</i> , dissertation, Harvard University (Cambridge, MA, 1987)
Königsberg	Universitätsbibliothek, Sammlung Gotthold
Kraków	Biblioteka Jagiellońska, Kraków, Poland
Krüger diss.	Elke Krüger, <i>Stilistische Untersuchungen zu ausgewählten frühen Klavierfugen J. S. Bachs</i> , dissertation, University of Hamburg, 1969 (Hamburg, 1970)
Leipzig	Musikbibliothek der Stadt Leipzig
MM	Möller Manuscript (Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Mus.ms.40644)
NBA	J. S. Bach: <i>Neue Ausgabe sämtlicher Werke (Neue Bach-Ausgabe)</i> , ed. Johann-Sebastian-Bach-Institut, Göttingen and Bach-Archiv, Leipzig (Kassel and Leipzig, 1954–)
NBR	Hans T. David and Arthur Mendel, <i>The New Bach Reader: A Life of J. S. Bach in Letters and Documents</i> ; rev. and enlarged edn by C. Wolff of a documentary biography first pub. London, 1945 (New York and London, 1998)
P	Abbreviated form of the Berlin shelfmark Mus.ms.Bach P ... (P = <i>Partitur</i> , score)
RV	Peter Ryom, <i>Verzeichnis der Werke Antonio Vivaldis: kleine Ausgabe</i> (Leipzig, 1974; 2nd edn 1979)
Spitta I, II	Philipp Spitta, <i>Johann Sebastian Bach</i> , 2 vols (Leipzig, 1873 and 1880); Eng. trans. by C. Bell and J. A. Fuller-Maitland, 3 vols (London, 1884–5; repr. 1952)
St	Abbreviated form of the Berlin shelfmark Mus.ms.Bach St ... (St = <i>Stimmen</i> , parts)
Stuttgart	Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Stuttgart
TWV	Martin Ruhnke, <i>Georg Philipp Telemann: Thematisch-systematisches Verzeichnis seiner Werke (Telemann-Werkverzeichnis)</i> (Kassel, 1984)
VBN	‘Verzeichnis der Werke in J. S. Bachs Notenbibliothek’, in Kirsten Beißwenger, <i>J.S. Bachs Notenbibliothek</i> (Kassel, 1992), pp. 223–400
Wolff <i>Essays</i>	Christoph Wolff, <i>Bach: Essays on his Life and Music</i> (Cambridge, MA and London, 1991)
Wolff JSB	Christoph Wolff, <i>Johann Sebastian Bach: The Learned Musician</i> (Oxford and New York, 2000)
Yale	Library of the School of Music, Yale University, New Haven, CT

PART I

Formative years (c. 1695–c. 1709)

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Introduction

If anyone might be said to have had music in his blood, it is Johann Sebastian Bach. In the central German region of Thuringia where he was born, the Bachs were known as musicians, and had been for generations, in the same way that other families might be known as bakers or shoemakers. Sebastian's father Johann Ambrosius was a professional musician—director of the *Stadtpfeifer*, or town musicians, at Eisenach—and the family home must have been a veritable beehive of musical activity, filled with the sound of practising, tuning, instrumental repair work, and music-making of all kinds. Great versatility was expected of the *Stadtpfeifer*: despite their name (literally 'town pipers'), they were expected to master string, wind, and brass instruments alike. This cannot have escaped the notice of the child Bach, who might even have learned the rudiments of a variety of instruments himself. In any case, it is likely that he learned the violin, which he is said to have played as a youth 'cleanly and penetratingly',¹ from his father, who was first and foremost a violinist.

Bach's childhood musical experience was by no means restricted to instrumental playing, however. As a member of the *chorus musicus* at Eisenach (presumably),² Ohrdruf, and Lüneburg, he would have taken part in elaborate polyphonic and concerted music at church services, thereby gaining experience that would prove invaluable in later years. And in view of his natural musical talent and 'uncommonly fine soprano voice',³ he was no doubt at some stage assigned the role of concertist (soloist). The repertoire of the *chorus musicus* at Eisenach included fifteenth- and sixteenth-century *a cappella* music by Walter, Senfl, Josquin, Obrecht, and others, as well as seventeenth-century German music by Michael Praetorius, Schein, Schütz, Hammerschmidt, and Johann Christoph Bach.⁴ Still greater riches were available to the Michaelisschule, which Bach attended in Lüneburg. Its great choir library is lost, but according to an inventory of 1695⁵ it contained over a thousand pieces drawn from

¹ According to C. P. E. Bach's letter to J. N. Forkel of December 1774 (BD III, No. 801; *NBR*, No. 394). Forkel, in his Bach biography *Über J. S. Bachs Leben, Kunst und Kunstwerke* (Leipzig, 1802; Eng. trans., London, 1820, reprinted in *NBR*, pp. 415–82), states that Bach was engaged as a violinist at Weimar in 1703 (*NBR*, p. 426).

² Claus Oefner, 'Eisenach zur Zeit des jungen Bach', *BJ* 1985, pp. 43–54 (esp. 44).

³ See the obituary by C. P. E. Bach and J. F. Agricola, BD III, No. 666, and *NBR*, No. 306 (p. 299).

⁴ This was the repertoire of the Eisenach *Cantional*; see, most conveniently, Wolff JSB, p. 25.

⁵ Published by Max Seiffert, 'Die Chorbibliothek der St. Michaelisschule in Lüneburg zu Seb. Bach's Zeit', *Sammelbände der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft*, 9 (1907–8), pp. 593–621.

seventeenth-century Germany and Italy. Composers represented include Schütz, Hammerschmidt, Buxtehude, Rosenmüller, Krieger, Strunck, Weckmann, Monteverdi, and Carissimi. Since the *Mettenchor* (Matins choir) of which Bach was a member drew its repertory from this library, he must have become familiar with a vast amount of music both ancient and modern, from a *cappella* motets in the polyphonic style of the sixteenth century to relatively up-to-date concerted music for voices and instruments.

It is against this background of constant vocal and instrumental activity that we must view the young Bach's decision to specialize in the organ and harpsichord. This should not be regarded as a sign of narrowing interest, but rather as the emergence of a specific focus amid ongoing wide-ranging musical experience. Between the ages of ten and fifteen (1695–1700) he received a thorough training in the playing of keyboard instruments in Ohrdruf from his elder brother Johann Christoph,⁶ who had studied with the family friend Johann Pachelbel in Erfurt and might be supposed to have passed on what he had learnt. The younger Bach seems to have made astonishing progress: 'In a short time he had fully mastered all the pieces his brother had willingly given him to learn';⁷ and in 1702, at the age of seventeen and only a couple of years after leaving Ohrdruf, he was unanimously elected to the post of organist at the Jacobikirche, Sangerhausen (an alternative candidate was, however, imposed by the reigning duke).⁸ In the following year he gave the inaugural recital at the new Wender organ in the Neuekirche, Arnstadt, and so impressed the local citizens that he was offered the post of organist there.⁹ Before the recital, he had been invited to examine the new organ—a testimony to the reputation he had already established, at the age of eighteen, as an organ expert. The question arises how he had acquired that knowledge when so young. The organ at the Georgenkirche, Eisenach, which his uncle Johann Christoph played, and the two organs at the Michaeliskirche, Ohrdruf, played by his elder brother (also Johann Christoph) were in constant need of repair; and the child Bach no doubt learnt much from discussing the problems with his relatives (and perhaps with organ builders called in to carry out repairs) and from assisting them with routine maintenance work. Later on, at least by 1708, this direct, 'hands-on' knowledge would be backed up by detailed study of Werckmeister's *Orgelprobe* of 1681,¹⁰ the best-known authority on the organ of the time, covering organ building, renovation, testing, tuning methods, and the duties of the organist.

⁶ According to the obituary (see n. 3 above) and J. G. Walther's *Musicalisches Lexicon* (Leipzig, 1732); see BD II, No. 323, and *NBR*, No. 304; also Hans-Joachim Schulze, 'Johann Christoph Bach (1671 bis 1721), "Organist und Schul Collega in Ohrdruf"', *J. S. Bachs erster Lehrer*, *BJ* 1985, pp. 55–81.

⁷ According to the obituary (n. 3).

⁸ The events are recalled in Bach's letter to the Sangerhausen town council of 18 November 1736; see BD I, No. 38, and *NBR*, No. 189. The issue is discussed in Wolff JSB, pp. 67–8.

⁹ See Wolff JSB, p. 77.

¹⁰ In its expanded and improved version of 1698; see Peter Williams, 'J. S. Bach: Orgelsachverständiger unter dem Einfluß Andreas Werckmeisters?', *BJ* 1982, pp. 131–42.

It is not at all clear when Bach began to compose, or to study composition, nor what form that study took. It seems reasonable to pinpoint the period of formal keyboard tuition in Ohrdruf,¹¹ but there is no evidence that his teacher-brother Johann Christoph was a composer; and C. P. E. Bach told Forkel that ‘the instruction [he] received . . . in Ohrdruf may well have been designed for an organist and nothing more’.¹² It has even been suggested¹³ that the young Bach might have sought primarily a virtuoso organist’s career rather than that of a composer. On the other hand, he might have been inspired to pursue keyboard playing and composition in tandem by the example of two illustrious relatives of his father’s generation, the brothers Johann Christoph and Johann Michael Bach. Johann Christoph was not only church organist and court harpsichordist at Eisenach, where the child Bach, before the age of ten, would have come into close contact with him, but a ‘profound’, ‘great and expressive’ composer. Johann Michael, whose daughter Bach later married, was both church organist at Gehren and an ‘able composer’ of sacred vocal music and organ chorales.¹⁴ A still more illustrious model for the young organist-composer was Bach’s brother’s teacher Johann Pachelbel, organist at Erfurt and Gotha during Bach’s childhood. Furthermore, during the first five or six years of the eighteenth century Bach would encounter three highly significant role models in the North German towns of Lüneburg, Hamburg and Lübeck: Georg Böhm, Jan Adam Reincken and Dieterich Buxtehude. Reincken and Buxtehude, in particular, were versatile musicians of great professional expertise—at once virtuoso organists and erudite, technically accomplished composers. Bach could hardly fail to observe that, unlike his Thuringian relatives—who earned their living simply as humble servants of town, church or court—these two North-German masters commanded considerable status and independence as artistic personalities in their own right.¹⁵ Nor, incidentally, could he have remained unimpressed by the rich musical life of the Hanseatic trading cities in which they dwelt, Hamburg and Lübeck. Hamburg, which Bach visited several times in 1700–2, was not only a great centre for organ and church music but home to the first German civic opera house, founded in the Gänsemarkt in 1678. Lübeck was the scene of Buxtehude’s *Abendmusiken*, events in which sacred works on the scale of oratorios were performed publicly in an extra-liturgical context on five successive Sundays each autumn.¹⁶ On 2 and 3 December 1705 Bach must have heard, and possibly taken part in, two such performances: Buxtehude’s funeral music for Kaiser

¹¹ As does Wolff in ‘Pachelbel, Buxtehude und die weitere Einfluß-Sphäre des jungen Bach’, *Das Frühwerk*, pp. 21–32 (see esp. 22), and in his *Krit. Bericht*, NBA IV/9 (Kassel and Leipzig, 2003), p. 60.

¹² Letter of 13 January 1775; BD III, No. 803; NBR, No. 395.

¹³ By H.-J. Schulze, ‘Johann Sebastian Bach’, in H. Goldschmidt, G. Knepler, and K. Niemann (eds.), *Komponisten, auf Werk und Leben befragt* [conference report] (Leipzig, 1985), pp. 13–30 (esp. 16).

¹⁴ According to the genealogy, nos. 13 (J. C. Bach) and 14 (J. M. Bach); BD I, No. 184; NBR, No. 303.

¹⁵ This aspect of the North-German influence on the young Bach has been emphasized by Karl Heller, ‘Norddeutsche Musikkultur als Traditionsraum des jungen Bach’, *BJ* 1989, pp. 7–19 (esp. 12).

¹⁶ See Kerala J. Snyder’s description in *Dieterich Buxtehude: Organist in Lübeck* (New York and London, 1987), pp. 56–72.

Leopold I, *Castrum doloris* (BuxWV 134), and his homage music for Kaiser Joseph I, *Templum honoris* (BuxWV 135).¹⁷

As for the study of composition, there is no evidence in Bach's case of formal tuition such as Handel received from Zachow; and C. P. E. Bach may well be stating no more than the truth when he declares that his father 'learned chiefly by the observation of the works of the most famous and proficient composers of his day and by the fruits of his own reflection upon them'.¹⁸ His insatiable curiosity, which he attempted to satisfy by the time-honoured method of copying music by hand, is illustrated by the well-known story of his copying out by moonlight a book of keyboard pieces by the South-German composers Froberger, Kerll and Pachelbel—a book that belonged to his teacher-brother Johann Christoph and that for some reason had been withheld from him.¹⁹ The book presumably reflected something of the repertoire that Pachelbel taught his pupils, for all three composers are also represented in a tablature manuscript belonging to another pupil, Johann Valentin Eckelt.²⁰

In Lüneburg, at the very beginning of the eighteenth century (1700–2), Bach must have encountered the music of Georg Böhm, organist at the Johanniskirche; and in a letter C. P. E. Bach at first described him as his father's 'teacher' before crossing the word out and replacing it with 'the Lüneburg organist'.²¹ C. P. E. Bach can hardly have conjured the word out of thin air, and it might perhaps hint that Böhm occupied some kind of informal supervisory role. In any case, it is clear from Bach's early music how much he must have learnt from Böhm, as well as from the other North-German composers he encountered around the same time, in particular Reincken, Buxtehude, and Bruhns. Many of their keyboard works are included alongside the early works of Bach himself in two manuscript volumes compiled by his Ohrdruf brother Johann Christoph between about 1704 and 1713, namely the Möller Manuscript and the Andreas Bach Book.²² It is more than likely that the young Bach was himself responsible for bringing these works south to Thuringia upon his return from Lüneburg in 1702, and again, perhaps, after his Lübeck visit in the winter of 1705–6. In addition to North-German works, the two volumes include music from other parts of Germany, notably by Kuhnau, Zachow, Telemann, Pachelbel, and J. C. F. Fischer, as well as a certain amount of French and Italian music. Again, much of this music might

¹⁷ In neither case does the music survive, but we possess the librettos: see Snyder, *Dieterich Buxtehude*, pp. 69–70 and 105, and Wolff, 'Buxtehude, Bach, and Seventeenth-century Music in Retrospect', in Wolff *Essays*, pp. 41–55 (esp. 47–51).

¹⁸ Quoted from the obituary (n. 3).

¹⁹ A plausible explanation is given in Wolff JSB, p. 45.

²⁰ See Robert Hill, '“Der Himmel weiss, wo diese Sachen hingekommen sind”: Reconstructing the Lost Keyboard Notebooks of the Young Bach and Handel', in P. Williams (ed.), *Bach, Handel, Scarlatti: Tercenary Essays* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 161–72; and C. Wolff, 'Johann Valentin Eckelt's Tabulaturbuch von 1692', in K.-J. Sachs (ed.), *Festschrift Martin Ruhnke zum 65. Geburtstag* (Stuttgart, 1986), pp. 374–86.

²¹ C. P. E. Bach to Forkel (n. 12).

²² See H.-J. Schulze, *Studien zur Bach-Überlieferung im 18. Jahrhundert* (Leipzig and Dresden, 1984), pp. 30–56, and Hill diss.

have been made available to Johann Christoph by his younger brother, who seems to have had a voracious appetite for acquainting himself with music written in as many different styles and genres as possible. The presence of Albinoni trio sonatas in the Möller Manuscript ties in with the youthful Bach's study of Albinoni, Corelli, and Legrenzi, to which his works of the time bear witness. The French ensemble works in the two volumes, by Lully and Marais, are no doubt similar in style to the music Bach heard at Lüneburg Castle, played by the French orchestra kept by the Duke of Celle. From this experience the young Bach is said to have 'acquired a thorough grounding in the French taste'.²³ Moreover, in works by him, Böhm, and Telemann in the Andreas Bach Book we encounter the contemporary German vogue for transferring the Lullian style to the keyboard. At the same time, works by Lebègue and Marchand in Johann Christoph's volumes show the youthful Bach making the acquaintance of original French keyboard music. All these works, whether French, Italian, or German, contributed to the formation of Bach's style and technique; and their gradual assimilation helps to explain the extraordinary richness and density of his mature music in all its manifestations.

Describing Bach's first attempts at composition, his first biographer Johann Nikolaus Forkel talks of his tendency 'to run or leap up and down the instrument, to take both hands as full as all the five fingers will allow, and to proceed in this wild manner till he by chance finds a resting place'.²⁴ Despite the obvious element of caricature (like many later writers, Forkel tended to denigrate Bach's early works, comparing them unfavourably with his mature masterpieces), one can recognize here a certain type within Bach's early music: that which has its roots in his own developing virtuosity as a player and improviser. But contrary to Forkel's implication, these works seldom degenerate into empty passage-work. For the young Bach, as for other player-composers, ideas emerged from the very possibilities of his instrument, and from his own skill at exploiting them. Thereby he made contact with a rich vein of fantasy that, *pace* Forkel again, imparts ideas of genuine value to the early keyboard works. There is an obvious affinity here with the so-called *stylus phantasticus*, or fantastic style, as exemplified by Buxtehude's prelude. Here again, the composer's own free fantasy, called forth on the spur of the moment by direct contact with his instrument, is the decisive factor. North-German prelude of this kind no doubt made a powerful impact on the youth from Thuringia; but free fantasy is too spontaneous to be easily imitated, and the rhapsodic effusions of the D major Toccata, BWV 912, for example, are highly personal, which perhaps explains why they sound so romantic to our ears.

It is easy to see how this 'most free and unrestrained manner of composing'²⁵ might have emerged of its own accord out of Bach's training as an organist under Johann Christoph at Ohrdruf, particularly as improvisation would have been involved as an

²³ According to the obituary (n. 3).

²⁴ See n. 1; *NBR*, p. 441.

²⁵ The *stylus phantasticus* is so described by Athanasius Kircher, *Musurgia universalis* (Rome, 1650), as quoted by Snyder, *Dieterich Buxtehude*, p. 251.

essential prerequisite for an organist's career. But his aspirations to be a composer also have another, quite different source. At an early stage he seems to have shown a remarkable aptitude for fugal and contrapuntal writing—though it must be confessed that we find nothing in early Bach to approach the contrapuntal achievements of the 25-year-old Frescobaldi in his *Il primo libro delle fantasie* of 1608, or of the 21-year-old Purcell in his ensemble fantasias of 1680. And although subject-based music, such as fugues and chorale arrangements, were often improvised at the time, their advanced pursuit in the long run required tuition or, at the very least, a careful, patient study of models. This the youth willingly undertook, according to C. P. E. Bach: 'Through his own study and reflection alone he became, even in his youth, a pure and strong fugue writer'.²⁶ Here we catch a glimpse of the studious Bach who, rather than using his fingers to call forth fantasy, set his mind to the art of construction in sound. From an early age he seems to have been drawn towards the learned, academic side of music—never for its own sake, however, but in the service of a strong, expressive content, for, as we are told by his son, he was 'no lover of dry, mathematical stuff'.²⁷ The development of the mind plays a key role here, and the young Bach showed exceptional intellectual ability, his school work repeatedly outperforming that of his older fellow students at the schools in Eisenach, Ohrdruf, and Lüneburg where he was educated.²⁸

The two opposing elements of intellectual control and spontaneous fantasy tend to jostle for the upper hand in Bach's early music. In time, however, the intellect would increasingly predominate to the extent that the composer's reliance on his own instrument for inspiration gradually diminished. No weakening of fantasy was involved in this process, but that element no longer arose primarily from the interaction between player and instrument; instead, it emerged from within. Even the player-composer of Bach's early years, however, must have composed according to his own inner lights, so it is worth asking what personal resources he could call upon beyond agile hands and feet and a fine intellect. Already we find some evidence of the personal characteristics that we tend to associate with Bach in his maturity. Considerable independence and single-mindedness are shown by the long, arduous journeys he undertook in pursuit of his educational and musical goals. Leaving his native Thuringia, home of the Bach family of musicians, in March 1700, just before his fifteenth birthday, he travelled over 200 miles north to Lüneburg in order to complete his education. On several occasions during his stay there he traversed the 30 miles from Lüneburg to Hamburg in order to hear Reincken play the great four-manual organ of the Catherinenkirche.²⁹ And later on, after his return to Thuringia, he journeyed over 250 miles on foot from Arnstadt to Lübeck in order to hear Dieterich Buxtehude, organist of the Marienkirche, and his famous *Abendmusiken*, lingering

²⁶ Letter to Forkel (n. 12).

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ See, most conveniently, Wolff JSB, pp. 26–7 and 38–9.

²⁹ According to the obituary (n. 3); for the specifications of Reincken's organ, see *NBR*, No. 12.

there for about three months ‘in order to comprehend one thing and another about his art’ despite having been granted only one month’s leave of absence.³⁰ We encounter here a single-minded determination to further his personal aims as a musician, even at the expense of his public obligations.

The other side of this purposefulness, however, is an obstinacy and truculence, a tendency to take offence, which makes itself felt much later in Leipzig, but is already evident in his first post at Arnstadt (1703–7) in difficulties with students and the church authorities: he ‘had a reputation for not getting on with the students’, and even got involved in a brawl with one of them; and he fell foul of the local consistory for refusing to perform concerted music with the students, and for outlandish chorale playing (by local standards) during services. We are told that he played for too long, but after being reproved by the superintendent, ‘had at once fallen into the other extreme and made it too short’.³¹ Again, in Bach’s letter of resignation from his second organist’s post, at Mühlhausen (1707–8), he complains of the ‘hindrance’ and ‘vexation’ he had experienced during his year there³²—words that bring to mind his endless disputes with the Leipzig town council in later years. Although it may be right to impute Bach’s sense of annoying impediments at least partially to a municipality that ‘clung to old fashions and customs’,³³ it seems most unlikely, in view of what we know of his failure to get on with the authorities elsewhere, that he was entirely blameless in the matter. And it seems natural to suppose that this stubborn, pugnacious side of Bach’s personality—his fighting spirit, to put it in a more positive light—was to some extent sublimated into the immense energy of his music.

As a child Bach was no stranger to sorrow. When only six years old, he had to come to terms with the death of his eighteen-year-old brother Johann Balthazar, whom he must have looked up to as an apprentice of his father’s; and only three years later, at the age of nine, he had to confront an even greater calamity when he lost both parents within the space of about nine months (May 1694—February 1695). It is reasonable to assume that the deeply moving expressions of grief and meditations on death in his music, from the early *Actus tragicus* cantata (*Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit*, BWV 106, c. 1707) onwards, had their roots in these devastating childhood experiences. They may also have contributed to that ‘serious temperament’ that ‘drew him by preference to music that was serious, elaborate and profound’.³⁴ Bach’s capacity for serious thought and feeling must have fostered the spiritual depth that we recognize in his mature music, but which is already apparent in some of the early cantatas, especially the funeral cantata No. 106, mentioned above, and the Easter cantata No. 4, as well as

³⁰ Proceedings of the Arnstadt consistory, 21 February 1706; BD II, No. 16; *NBR*, No. 20.

³¹ BD II, Nos. 14 and 16; *NBR*, Nos. 19–20.

³² BD I, No. 1; *NBR*, No. 32.

³³ Spitta I, p. 353 (Eng. trans., I, p. 357); quoted by Malcolm Boyd, *Bach* (London and Melbourne, 1983; 3rd edn Oxford, 2000), pp. 25–6.

³⁴ According to the obituary (n. 3).

in certain early organ chorales, notably *Ach Gott, vom Himmel sieh darein*, BWV 741. This deeply spiritual side of Bach's nature was, of course, channelled into the Lutheran Church, with which he was intimately associated from his earliest years and almost continually throughout his life. He would have gained early familiarity with the liturgy of the main service, the *Hauptgottesdienst*, structured around the Mass Ordinary (including German paraphrases such as 'Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr' and 'Wir glauben all an einen Gott'), with the words of the Lutheran Bible, and with the rhythm of the church year. And he would have become aware that the church, whether in words or music or in both combined, was capable of giving expression to our deepest feelings, either on occasions of great sorrow, such as the family funerals he had to attend, or of great joy, such as the wedding of his elder brother Johann Christoph in October 1694. The church, whether in Eisenach, Ohrdruf, Lüneburg, Arnstadt, or Mühlhausen, was beyond question his spiritual home, and it is in this light that we should understand his almost continuous involvement in church music from Eisenach onwards. The divorcing of Bach's sacred music from its liturgical context and even from the meaning of its words is a modern, secular phenomenon that bears no relation to its true origins. The very depth of response, which cannot be overlooked in his church music, testifies to the intimacy of his involvement with the texts and with what they signify. From early childhood he must have dwelt on the meaning of the increasingly familiar biblical words he heard in church, begun to evaluate and compare different musical settings of them, and in time noticed that, in the context of the whole church year, they covered the entire gamut of states of the soul in relation to the divinity. We approach here one of the most profound sources of Bach's life as a creative artist. Through regular and intimate involvement with the church and its music, he must have learnt by experience that music, linked to appropriate words, could reach the very depths of our being and thereby offer fulfilment to the soul.

In the various churches where Bach was active in the 1690s and 1700s, he would have encountered a vast quantity of music, whether for organ, congregation, *a cappella* choir, or combined vocal and instrumental ensemble. At the heart of this music lay the Lutheran chorale, the German congregational hymn, with which he would have been acquainted from a very early age, having grown up with the Eisenach hymnal of 1673, the *Neues vollständiges Eisenachisches Gesangbuch*, which contained no fewer than 612 chorales.³⁵ Hymnals of this kind formed the staple diet of Lutheran church music, and the child Bach must have been struck by the association of the old familiar melodies with sacred verse that constantly echoed the Bible and tied in with the specific occasion, the readings, and the sermon. Much of the more elaborate church music that he heard or participated in, either for organ or for choir, would have been based on a chorale cantus firmus, employing time-honoured techniques of deriving a new composition from an existing melody. The most popular chorales were employed in

³⁵ See Martin Petzoldt, ' "Ut probus & doctus reddar": zum Anteil der Theologie bei der Schulausbildung J. S. Bachs in Eisenach, Ohrdruf und Lüneburg', *BJ* 1985, pp. 7–42 (esp. 31–6).

this way countless times by various composers, and at a very young age Bach must have learnt to evaluate and compare the different versions. This would no doubt act as a spur to his own creativity, for he must have been filled with a desire to emulate the best composers and their work. An organist's duties typically included not only accompanying the congregational singing of chorales but introducing them with an improvised or pre-composed piece of music based on them. Bach would have learnt this art of 'preluding' from his elder brother Johann Christoph in Ohrdruf; some of his very earliest compositions, such as the organ chorales attributed to him from the Neumeister Collection, might have been written with this function in mind.

Organists also had to play preludes, fantasias, fugues and the like at the beginning and end of the service, and some of Bach's early non-chorale-based organ music must have been designed to serve this purpose. Not all of it, however, for some of the preludes and fugues, alongside the suites, sonatas, capriccios, and toccatas, must have been written for performance in the home. It is impossible to draw clear dividing lines here, either in the function served by the music or in the instrument for which it was written. The sources, rather than naming a specific instrument, merely describe the work concerned as 'manualiter' or 'pedaliter'—that is, playable on manuals only, or requiring a pedalboard.³⁶ Thus Bach, like his older contemporaries, was in many cases not writing with a particular keyboard instrument in mind, but for whichever instrument the player had to hand, either in church or in the home. All the composer had to do was to stipulate whether or not pedals were required; the player could then choose whether to perform the music on church organ, house organ, pedal-harpsichord, manuals-only harpsichord, spinet, or clavichord.

The elaborate vocal music in which Bach participated at Eisenach, Ohrdruf, and Lüneburg was of two kinds: on the one hand, a *cappella* motets in a traditional polyphonic style; and on the other, concerted vocal and instrumental music (sacred concertos, cantatas and so on) in a much more up-to-date idiom. Motet style and the closely related *stile antico*³⁷ clearly made a deep impression on him, for he would return to it for certain movements of his church works throughout his career. But it soon became clear that his aspirations as a composer lay primarily within the field of concerted vocal and instrumental music. Opportunities for this were limited in Arnstadt and Mühlhausen, mainly because, as elsewhere, concerted music was primarily the responsibility of the local cantor, while the organist, by contrast, was normally able to perform it only at weddings, funerals, or other special occasions. However, there were also local difficulties. At Arnstadt Bach found the student choir unruly and hard to get along with, and he consequently failed to perform concerted

³⁶ The matter is discussed in full by Robert L. Marshall, 'Organ or "Klavier"? Instrumental Prescriptions in the Sources of the Keyboard Works', in G. Stauffer and E. May (eds.), *J. S. Bach as Organist* (London, 1986), pp. 193–211; reprinted in R. L. Marshall, *The Music of J. S. Bach: the Sources, the Style, the Significance* (New York, 1989), pp. 271–93.

³⁷ The term is used here in its wider sense of the consciously retrospective revival of Renaissance polyphony in the later seventeenth century.

music with them—an omission for which he was repeatedly taken to task by the church authorities. He may have done so, however, towards the end of his tenure: the two cantatas he would have had to submit for his Mühlhausen application³⁸ might have been drawn from a stock he was building up in Arnstadt, rather than newly composed for the purpose. At Mühlhausen, Bach not only composed and performed occasional cantatas himself (among them, BWV 71, 106, and 131); he also ‘acquired from far and wide, not without cost, a good store of the choicest church compositions’ by other composers,³⁹ for use not only in his own town church, the Blasiuskirche, but in local village churches too. Here in Mühlhausen, as later in Weimar and Leipzig, his central goal was, in his own words, the provision of ‘a well-regulated church music to the glory of God’.⁴⁰ It is obstacles to that goal that he cites, without going into details, as the grounds for his resignation after only one year.

³⁸ Letter from J. G. Walther to Mattheson of 28.12.1739; see K. Beckmann and H.-J. Schulze (eds.), *Johann Gottfried Walther: Briefe* (Leipzig, 1987), pp. 219f.; quoted in Wolff JSB, p. 102.

³⁹ Letter of resignation from Mühlhausen; BD I, No. 1; *NBR*, No. 32.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

The sonata and other genres

There is no clearer sign of Bach's youthful ambition as a composer than his early preoccupation with certain large-scale multisectional genres inherited from the seventeenth century: the suite, sonata, capriccio, and toccata. These genres made considerable demands on the young composer and gave ample scope for his inventiveness in a range of contrasting moods and textures. The suite and sonata were to remain of fundamental importance to Bach in his subsequent composing career. Not so the other two genres: no more capriccios were written after his early years, and the latest toccatas date from the Weimar period (1708–17).¹ This restriction to Bach's earlier years is a stylistic issue: the style of writing traditionally associated with the capriccio and the toccata was at variance with the new, more up-to-date style that he had forged by the end of the Weimar period.

In all these genres the native German style with which Bach grew up naturally forms the foundation of his writing, but the suite and sonata were also the vehicles for his first major encounter with contemporary French and Italian styles. Here his older compatriots acted as intermediaries—Kuhnau, for example, in the Italian sonata, and J. C. F. Fischer or Böhm in the French suite—but he also came into direct contact with French and Italian music itself, above all with that of the most influential exponents of those national styles in the late seventeenth century, Lully and Corelli respectively.

The sonata was, of course, primarily an ensemble genre, and even the suite belonged as much to the realm of ensemble music as to the keyboard. But in adopting these genres and their associated styles, the young Bach is unlikely to have viewed the keyboard medium as in any way restrictive. He was writing at a time when Kuhnau, Fischer, and Böhm had recently been—or were still—enriching their keyboard styles with features of Italian or French ensemble music, and it is clear from his own surviving works of the time that he shared this preoccupation. For him, as for his older contemporaries, the keyboard was a microcosm, capable of absorbing the most diverse styles and genres from anywhere within the known world of music. Seated at his organ or harpsichord, the young Bach must have felt as if, potentially at least, he had the entire musical universe at his fingertips.

¹ Bach later revived the terms 'capriccio' and 'toccata' for the last movement of Partita No. 2 and the first of No. 6 from *Clavierübung* I (1726–31), but these are fanciful titles (in the case of 'toccata', added subsequently) and do not denote a true return to the seventeenth-century genre.

Of course, the significance of the suite and the sonata within Bach's early music differs widely, and this is more than simply a reflection of the different national styles with which they were associated. Bach's early suites may be viewed as the first stage in a long process of development that eventually led to the French Suites or the Partitas. Alongside the closely related process leading up to the French Overture, BWV 831, or the four ensemble Overtures (Orchestral Suites), BWV 1066–69, this may be identified as the main channel of French influence in his music. By comparison, the impact of the French *clavécinistes* on his keyboard style in general is a secondary issue. The sonata, on the other hand, is important at this early stage not so much for Bach's own contributions to it—he wrote no ensemble sonatas in this period and only two keyboard sonatas, virtually unrelated to his mature essays in the genre—as for the impact it made on the formation of his musical style and technique. Such is the significance of the Corellian sonata in this regard that one writer, in the context of a discussion of Bach's fugues based on themes from Italian sonatas, speaks of a 'sonata phase' in Bach's compositional development, which preceded the 'concerto phase' by at least five years.² Although this may be accepted as a useful way of describing successive waves of Italian influence, it is of course an over-simplification, for already during the sonata phase we find the young Bach beginning to learn from the early Italian concerto.

Suite

<i>Title</i>	<i>Earliest source</i>	<i>Scribe, date</i>
Partita in F, BWV 833	MM 44	J. C. Bach, c. 1704–7
Suite in B♭, BWV 821	Berlin, P 804/24	Anon., eighteenth century
Suite in A, BWV 832	MM 38	J. C. Bach, c. 1704–7
	Brussels, Ms.II. 4093	Anon., c. 1750
Overture in F, BWV 820	ABB 13	Anon. and J. C. Bach, c. 1707/8–13
Overture in g, BWV 822	Leipzig, Ms. 8/1	Anon., 1743

Despite their different names, these five early works attributed to Bach all qualify for inclusion within the suite genre. Since three of them (BWV 820, 832, and 833) were copied into the Möller Manuscript (MM) or the Andreas Bach Book (ABB) by Bach's elder brother Johann Christoph of Ohrdruf and his assistants, there can be no doubt about their authenticity.³ The Suite in B♭, BWV 821, was excluded from the *Neue Bach-Ausgabe* (where it would otherwise have appeared in series V, vol. 10) due to

² Christoph Wolff, 'Bach und die italienische Musik', in G. Wagner (ed.), *Bachtage Berlin: Vorträge 1970 bis 1981* (Stuttgart, 1985), pp. 225–33. Bach's gains from his encounter with the Italian sonata are enumerated in the same author's 'Johann Adam Reincken und Johann Sebastian Bach', *BJ* 1985, pp. 99–118; Eng. trans. as 'Bach and Johann Adam Reincken: a Context for the Early Works', in Wolff *Essays*, pp. 56–71 (see esp. 66ff.).

³ See Hill diss., esp. pp. 336–42 and 410–20.

uncertainty about its style and the reliability of its only source,⁴ but more recently striking affinities have been pointed out with some of the Neumeister chorales attributed to Bach:⁵ if they are accepted as genuine, then the suite should be too. The theory that the Overture in G minor, BWV 822, is a composition by someone else with interpolations by Bach⁶ is not only pure conjecture but seems a far-fetched way of explaining the work's idiosyncrasies. It certainly 'bears the hallmarks of the young Bach' and is stylistically close enough to the F major Overture, BWV 820, to suggest common authorship.⁷ The source of BWV 832 and 833, in conjunction with the manifestly early style shared by all five works, suggests that they might have originated not long after 1700.

These five compositions belong to two distinct but overlapping traditions: the partita and the two suites to the older 'classical' suite tradition, and the two overtures to the newer ballet suite tradition. As far as German keyboard music is concerned, the classical suite, conceived as a musical unit made up of three or four constituent dances (often interrelated thematically or harmonically), has roots in the mid-seventeenth century works of Froberger and Kindermann. But it was not until about 1680, with the first publication of German keyboard suites—Benedict Schultheiss's *Muth- und Geist-ermuntrender Clavier-Lust* (Nuremberg, 1679 and 1680)—that the movement order we now regard as classical, namely Allemande–Courante–Sarabande–Gigue, became standard. This order applies not only to most of the North-German suites (those by Buxtehude, Böhm, Reincken, and Ritter) but also to the majority of those by Middle-German composers, such as Kuhnau, Krieger, and Pachelbel. Indeed Froberger's suites were posthumously adapted to fall in line with this by-then standard order.⁸ The classical suite might or might not be introduced by a prelude. This introductory movement is a standard item in some notable published collections of the late seventeenth century—such as the first part of Schultheiss's publication (1679), Kuhnau's *Neuer Clavier Übung* (1689 and 1692) and J. C. F. Fischer's *Pièces de clavessin* (1696)—but the majority of unpublished German suites continued to lack a prelude.⁹

In his early suites, then, the young Bach was contributing to an already-rich native tradition of classical suite composition. So successfully had the genre been naturalized even before his time that it is more accurate to speak of the 'German suite' than the

⁴ See Hartwig Eichberg, 'Unechtes unter J. S. Bachs Klavierwerken', *BJ* 1975, pp. 8–49 (esp. 47ff.), and the same author's *Krit. Bericht*, NBA V/10 (Kassel and Leipzig, 1982), p. 14.

⁵ See Russell Stinson, *The Bach Manuscripts of Johann Peter Kellner and his Circle* (Durham and London, 1989), pp. 123–4. David Schulenberg, *The Keyboard Music of J. S. Bach* (London, 1993), pp. 39–40, also gives grounds for viewing it as an authentic Bach composition.

⁶ Put forward by Eichberg, *Krit. Bericht*, NBA V/10, pp. 78–85.

⁷ As pointed out by Schulenberg, *The Keyboard Music*, p. 33.

⁸ Around 1697 10 *Suites de clavessin* . . . *mis en meilleur ordre* (a reprint of a lost earlier edition) were issued by Mortier of Amsterdam. The same suites were shortly afterwards reissued by Estienne Roger.

⁹ Notable exceptions are three suites from MM, all of Lüneburg provenance: Suites in d and C (MM 26 and 31) by Christian Flor, Böhm's predecessor as organist at the Johanniskirche; and Böhm's own Suite in G (MM 9).

'French suite', especially since the concept of a self-contained work comprising four often interrelated dance movements (with or without prelude) was purely Germanic and quite alien to French practice. On the other hand, the most influential German composer of keyboard suites throughout the late seventeenth century, Johann Jakob Froberger, owed much to Chambonnières and to Denis Gaultier and the French lutenists; and thereafter, waves of French influence, in which the *style brisé* derived from lute idioms and the French style of ornamentation were imported, repeatedly informed the German suite and contributed to its colour and vitality.

The young Bach's partita and suites exhibit the following order of movements (P = Praeludium; A = Allemande; C = Courante; S = Sarabande; G = Gigue):

Partita in F, BWV 833: P–A–C–S+*double*–Air

Suite in B♭, BWV 821: [P]–A–C–S–Echo

Suite in A, BWV 832: A–Air pour les trompettes–S–Bourrée–G

With certain modifications, then (which will be scrutinized in due course), all three works essentially accord with the classical design outlined above. Bach would have learned from his older German contemporaries how to characterize the traditional dances, and on the whole he does so convincingly. Yet the standard of writing in these dances is in no way remarkable by comparison with his likely models, and there are as yet few signs of the mastery to come. The Allemande from the F major Partita, for example, with its repeated-semiquaver figures (a mannerism of the young Bach) and its short-winded phrases, is far removed from anything that we would now describe as Bachian; and the second strain betrays the youthful composer's inexperience by repeatedly retracing its steps harmonically (cf. bb. 10 and 14, 11, and 13). These faults are corrected in the Courante, a variant based on the same overall harmonic scheme; but the Sarabande, with its pronounced two-bar phrases, sounds much like a first effort. The Allemande and Courante from the B♭ Suite show some harmonic adventurousness in ending their first strain in the submediant and mediant respectively, rather than in the more usual dominant—a rare occurrence in German keyboard music of the time.¹⁰ But this is offset by the series of unconnected events in the second strain of the Allemande (chromaticism—static harmony—written-out trill—duet codetta—six-part chord); and the six-bar phrase that begins the second strain of the Courante ends harmonically where it began—on the dominant of G minor—despite the seemingly purposeful modulation in the interim. The Suite in A, perhaps the latest of the three, is on a somewhat higher level, with smooth *cantabile* writing in the Allemande—in a style more redolent of Handel than of Bach's later music—massive, pungently dissonant chords in the Sarabande, exploiting the fullest possible harpsichord sonorities, and a flowing Gigue whose seemingly insignificant left-hand

¹⁰ Isolated examples of mediant closes occur in the Sarabande from Böhm's Suite in E♭ (ABB 16) and in the Sarabande from No. 15 of the 17 anonymous suites of 1683, formerly attributed to Pachelbel and published in DTB II.1 (1901), ed. M. Seiffert.

accompaniment figure (bb. 1–3) is treated in double counterpoint (cf. bb. 9–10) within a clear, purposeful harmonic framework.¹¹

The greatest interest of these suites, however, lies outside the traditional dances. The preludes are well-constructed contrapuntal pieces that are markedly superior to the dances that follow. In fact, so great is the inequality in the F major Partita that we are led to wonder whether the prelude was composed at a later date and then pasted onto the beginning of the already existing partita. This suspicion is fuelled by the strangely worded title of the work in the sole surviving source, with its odd mixture of Latin and Italian: ‘Praeludium et Partita del tuono terzo di JSB’. It is also possible, however, that the more accomplished workmanship of the prelude is simply an indication that Bach matured earlier in contrapuntal writing of this kind, which is hardly to be wondered at in view of the special nature of his gifts.

It is interesting to note that in all three suites one of the traditional dances is replaced by an extraneous movement: the gigue by an Air in the F major Partita; the gigue by an ‘Echo’ in the B♭ major Suite; and the courante by an Air in the A major Suite. Substitution of this kind is not uncommon in German classical suites of the time, particularly in relation to the gigue, the last of the traditional dances to join the classical suite and never quite as permanent a member as the others. Examples of such substitution may be found in five of the fourteen suites from Kuhnau’s *Neuer Clavier Übung*, as well as in suites that Bach is likely to have known from the Möller Manuscript by Flor, Böhm and Zachow.¹² While the idea of substitution—presumably designed to inject new life into an old genre—probably derives from such German sources, the inspiration for the replacements in Bach’s suites appears to be, at least in part, French. This is clear from the full title of the Air from the A major Suite: ‘Air pour les trompettes’. Pieces of this name occur in several of Lully’s *tragédies lyriques*, and were reproduced in the various collections of his *Ouvertures avec tous les airs* published from 1697 onwards by Estienne Roger of Amsterdam, editions that were widely disseminated in Germany.¹³ There is also an ‘Air de trompette’, which Bach must have known, among the dances included in the Möller Manuscript from the opera *Alcide* (1693) by Lully’s pupil Marin Marais.¹⁴ Bach’s Air, however, is quite different in character from those of Lully and Marais, despite a certain superficial thematic resemblance with the Marais piece.¹⁵ The title seems to have released a personal vein of invention that is not apparent elsewhere in the suite—a genial, playful quality not uncommon among Bach’s early works. Not only this air, but the

¹¹ The movement foreshadows various mature cases in which an accompaniment figure takes on thematic significance, e.g. Sinfonia No. 12 in A, BWV 798, or Praeludium No. 18, BWV 887 no. 1.

¹² In Flor’s Suite in C (MM 31), the allemande is replaced by an Aria; in Böhm’s Suite in f (MM 7), the gigue by a Ciaccona; and in Zachow’s Suite in b (MM 45), the gigue by a ‘Fuga finalis’.

¹³ See H. Schneider, ‘The Amsterdam Editions of Lully’s Orchestral Suites’, in J. H. Heyer (ed.), *Jean-Baptiste Lully and the Music of the French Baroque: Essays in Honour of James R. Anthony* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 113–30.

¹⁴ A *tragédie en musique* composed in collaboration with Lully’s son Louis.

¹⁵ To which Eichberg drew attention in *Krit. Bericht*, NBA V/10, p. 71.

replacement pieces in the other two suites, are clearly keyboard imitations of ensemble music. The Air from the F major Partita imitates the *air à chanter*—in this case, a vocal solo with continuo accompaniment, complete with figured-bass ritornellos at the beginning, middle, and end. The Echo from the B $\flat$ major Suite equally belongs to the French operatic tradition. As an essential constituent of the pastorale, echo scenes are a recurring feature of Lully's operas; and the eighth suite from J. C. F. Fischer's Lullian *Journal du printemps* of 1695 contains an Echo movement in which brief *forte* phrases are repeated *piano* in much the same way as in Bach's suite.¹⁶ Both the *tutti* indication and the figured bass in the coda (as in the F major Air) underline the pseudo-ensemble character of the music.¹⁷

The A major Suite, the most French of the three early Bach suites, also includes an additional dance, a Bourrée, inserted between the Sarabande and the Gigue. In the late seventeenth century such additions were rare in the classical suites of North- and Middle-German composers: of Kuhnau's fourteen suites, for example, only the last includes an extra dance (a Gavotte inserted between Sarabande and Gigue).¹⁸ But French keyboard suites of the time, such as those of Lebègue and Marchand (presumably known to the young Bach, since they are present in the Möller Manuscript and the Andreas Bach Book), as well as suites by Frenchified South Germans such as Fux and J. C. F. Fischer, typically contain a variety of additional dances at the end of the suite, before and/or after the gigue, if present. The most frequently recurring movement types among these additions are the gavotte, bourrée, menuet, air, and chaconne. It is no accident that these are also the most common types among the instrumental pieces in Lully's operas and ballets. In the countless ensemble suites that were assembled from these works, a French overture would be followed by a divertissement of dances (often prefaced by an entrée). Lullian overture-suites of this kind were frequently transcribed for keyboard, notably the aforementioned suite from Marais's *Alcide* and that from the opera *Briseide* attributed to Steffani (Hanover, 1696), both of which are present in the Möller Manuscript. And in Germany, at first particularly among composers who had been closely associated with Lully himself,¹⁹ such suites inspired the composition of original ensemble overture-suites for concert performance, hence J. S. Kusser's *Composition de musique suivant la méthode française contenant six ouvertures de théâtre accompagnées de plusieurs airs* (Stuttgart, 1682), Georg Muffat's *Florilegium primum/secundum* (Augsburg, 1695; Passau, 1698), and the Fischer collection mentioned above (*Le Journal du printemps*), to name only the

¹⁶ This seems more relevant than the use of echo in German and Dutch organ music, to which Schulenberg refers (*The Keyboard Music*, pp. 39f.).

¹⁷ Figured bass is also found in other early keyboard works (BWV 967 and 992). Stinson, *The Kellner Bach Manuscripts*, pp. 123–4, points out the close resemblance between the Adagio coda of the Echo and that of the Neumeister chorale *Alle Menschen müssen sterben*, BWV 1117, which is in the same key.

¹⁸ However, most of the anonymous suites cited above in n. 10 include an additional dance—either gavotte, aria, bourrée or ballett—usually placed between courante and sarabande.

¹⁹ For about six years in the 1660s and 70s both Georg Muffat and J. S. Kusser studied with Lully in Paris.

most prominent examples.²⁰ The most prolific composer of such ensemble suites (the genre to which Bach's four Overtures, or Orchestral Suites, belong) in the early eighteenth century was Georg Philipp Telemann; a keyboard transcription (TWV Anh. 32:1) of his Overture in E $\flat$ (TWV 55:Es:4; the term 'Overture' was customarily used as a designation for the whole suite) is present in the Andreas Bach Book (ABB 7). By about 1700 Lullian suites were not only transcribed but composed directly for keyboard. Thus Fischer followed up his Opus 1, the ensemble suites of *Le Journal du printemps*, with *Les pièces de clavessin*, Op. 2 (Schlackenwerth, 1696; reissued as *Musicalisches Blumen-Büschlein*, Augsburg, 1699), in which two classical suites, Nos. 1 and 6 (which include additional dances), are intermingled with Lullian ballet suites (Nos. 2–4 and 7).²¹ The Andreas Bach Book strikingly reflects the contemporary German vogue for such ballet suites: the aforementioned Telemann Overture is immediately followed by Georg Böhm's Overture in D; and, juxtaposed with Gottfried Ernst Pestel's *Partie* in D, a ballet suite without overture, is the Overture in F, BWV 820, by the young Bach.

The movement order of the four ballet suites from the Andreas Bach Book and of the Overture in G minor, BWV 822 (preserved elsewhere), is as follows (O = Overture; E = Entrée; M = Menuet; B = Bourrée; G = Gigue):

Telemann:	O–E–M I + II–Loure–G–B I + II–Polonaise–Aria–Passepied
Böhm:	O–Air–Rigaudon + Trio–Rondeau–M–Chaconne
Pestel:	E–M–B–Passepied–Gavotte–Sarabande
Bach, BWV 820:	O–E–M + Trio–B–G
Bach, BWV 822:	O–Aria–Gavotte en rondeau–[Bourrée anglaise]–M I to III–[G]

It is clear from this comparison that, unlike in the classical suite, there are no conventions governing the order or number of movements, beyond the usual, though not invariable, practice of opening with an overture and of prefacing the divertissement of dances with an entrée. In terms of sheer quality of invention, and imaginative recreation of the French style, the two Bach Overtures cannot compete with the Telemann or Böhm works. Nevertheless, they contain much of interest as witnesses to Bach's intensive engagement with French music at the time. The overtures that introduce the ballet suites might well be Bach's first essays in the Lullian French-overture form, to which he was to return many times in later years. The defining characteristics are already in place: a grand opening in dotted rhythms, prefacing a quick, dance-like, imitative movement—in both cases in 3/8 time and based on subjects made up of a simple tonic–dominant oscillation. The counter-subject of the F major fugato (bb. 18–21, treble) makes rather weak harmony and works better in inverted or otherwise adapted forms (bb. 27–9, 30–3), but the texture is

²⁰ It is very likely that Bach knew the ensemble suites (one with overture, the other without) by J. A. Coberg and J. C. Pez that appear in MM (Nos. 1 and 4).

²¹ Fischer's suites, however, open with a prelude rather than an overture.

admirably light and flexible. The principal motive of the G minor fugato is overworked, serving equally for thematic statements and episodes, and recurring in virtually every bar. Such a monotonous, repetitious effect is often felt in Bach's early keyboard works, particularly in those written under the influence of Kuhnau. The range of modulation in this fugato, however (g–B♭–F–d–B♭–E♭–G♭–a♭–E♭–g), is undeniably impressive, bearing witness to the youthful Bach's boldness in exploring keys at the furthest possible distance from the tonic.

The Entrée, Menuet and Bourrée from the F major Overture are all creditable imitations of specific seventeenth-century French movement types. The march-like dotted-crotchet rhythms of the Entrée recall the most common type of entrée in Lully's stage works, recreated in Fischer's *Journal du printemps*. The three-bar phrases of the Menuet sound most unusual to our ears, but a similar phrase structure may be found in some of Lully's minuets and also in the *menuet de Poitou*, a localized type, of which examples occur in Louis Couperin and D'Anglebert.²² The melodious Bourrée, like that of the A major Suite, already shows Bach characterizing the dance type in a distinctive fashion that clearly foreshadows the bourrées from the English Suites. Among the dances of the G minor Overture, the most impeccable recreation of the French style occurs in the attractive Gavotte and the *canarie*-like Gigue (a close relative to the Gigue from Böhm's C minor Suite)—the two most polished movements in the whole work. The fourth movement is unnamed in the source, but its dance rhythm is remarkably similar to that of the Bourrée anglaise from Bach's later Partita in A minor for solo flute, BWV 1013. For the second movement Bach uses the Italian title 'Aria' rather than the French 'Air' (assuming that the copyist correctly reproduced the original title). There may be no special significance in this, since German composers of the time often seem to have used the two forms interchangeably. Yet the demisemiquaver divisions, otherwise rare in Bach's earliest music, do point to the Italian style rather than the French.²³ Perhaps this should serve as a reminder that the young Bach was writing at a time when older compatriots such as Kuhnau and Böhm were already freely intermingling the French and Italian styles in their keyboard music. In Menuets I and II and the Gigue we encounter a further element in this stylistic mix, namely Germanic counterpoint: the second minuet is derived from the first by double-counterpoint inversion; and both strains of the Böhm-like gigue open in two-part canon at the octave between treble and bass. Bach's natural flair for contrapuntal writing is here brought to bear on French dance forms.

Two essential formal principles of French music are employed by Bach in these Overtures, presumably for the first time: the *alternativement* pair and the *rondeau*. That the Menuet and Trio from the F major Overture should be played *alternativement*—that is, with the minuet repeated after the trio—seems obvious to us

²² The Menuet from the overture-suite by Coberg cited above (n. 20) is also notable for its three-bar phrases.

²³ As noted by Schulenberg (n. 5), p. 33.

today. Yet not many years before, when J. C. F. Fischer included a minuet and trio in the seventh suite from his *Pièces de clavessin* (1696), this method of performance was so far from obvious that he had to refer to the minuet as a dance ‘qui se joue alternativement avec le trio’.²⁴ The three-part texture of both Fischer’s Trio and Bach’s, with duet treble parts over a walking-quaver bass, clearly derives from the Lullian trio scored for two oboes and bassoon. The only movement within these Overtures in which the term *rondeau* is actually used is the Gavotte en rondeau from the G minor work, whose dance rhythm and alternation between the refrain and two *couplets* in contrasting keys (ABACA) can be matched in suites by Marchand and Fischer.²⁵ However, each of the Overtures includes towards the end three dances in ternary form (ABA) rather than the more usual binary (in the F major work, the Trio, Bourrée, and Gigue; in the G minor, the Menuets I and II, and the Gigue). In each case the first strain closes in the tonic (and is then repeated); the second strain closes in the dominant or relative major; and finally there is a da capo of the first strain. And it is clear from French sources (for example, Marchand’s *Livre second* of 1702, where a minuet so structured is entitled ‘Menuet [en] rondeau’) that the form was regarded as the simplest type of rondeau, with the refrain (A) played before and after a single *couplet* (B). Other examples of the form that must have been known to the young Bach are found in the gigue that forms the third movement of the overture-suite from *Briseide*, attributed to Steffani (MM 36), and in movements from suites by Fischer and Pestel.²⁶

Keyboard sonata and capriccio

Title	Earliest source	Scribe, date
Sonata in D, BWV 963	Berlin, P 804/10	J. N. Mempel, 1730s
Sonata in a, BWV 967	MM 33	Anon and J. C. Bach, c. 1704–7
Capriccio in Bb, BWV 992	MM 35	J. C. Bach, c. 1704–7
Capriccio in E, BWV 993	Berlin, P 804/7	J. P. Kellner, 1725

The close proximity of the A minor Sonata and the Bb Capriccio in the Möller Manuscript suggests that they might have originated around the same time—presumably in the earliest years of the eighteenth century.²⁷ The first movement of

²⁴ The same wording is found in the bourrée from the second of the ensemble suites in *Le Journal du Printemps*.

²⁵ Marchand’s Gavotte [en] Rondeau from Suite in d, *Pièces de clavecin, Livre premier*, Paris, 1699 (ABB 39); and Fischer’s Rondeau from Suite No. 2 in F, *Les pièces de clavessin*, Op. 2.

²⁶ The Bourrée from Fischer’s Suite No. 4 in C; and the Entrée and Menuet from G. E. Pestel’s Partie in D, the ballet suite placed next to Bach’s Overture in F in ABB (No. 12). The possible influence on Bach of Pestel’s use of this simple rondeau form has been suggested in Hill diss., pp. 416–18.

²⁷ The copy of BWV 992 in MM is thought to date from c. 1704/5; see Hill diss., pp. 123–7, where the author also discusses in full the supposed programmatic link with Bach’s brother Johann Jakob.

the D major Sonata is close enough to the A minor in style and structure to point to a common period of origin,²⁸ as is the E major Capriccio to the last movement of that in B♭.²⁹ Moreover, the full title of the E major piece reads: 'Capriccio in honorem Johann Christoph Bachii Ohrdrufiensis'; in other words, it was dedicated to the very same brother who copied the A minor Sonata and the B♭ Capriccio into the Möller Manuscript—as an expression of gratitude, perhaps, for housing and teaching Johann Sebastian for about five years (1695–1700) following the death of their parents.

In view of the number, range, and variety of suites by older German and French composers that it now seems were in all probability known to the young Bach, it is quite possible that the importance of Kuhnau's example in this genre has in the past been exaggerated. Yet the same cannot be said of the keyboard sonata. Here Kuhnau's pioneering sonatas were almost certainly the only models available to the young composer, being the earliest and—at that time—the only keyboard sonatas published in Germany.³⁰ In 1692 Kuhnau had taken the momentous step of concluding his second book of suites, the *Neuer Clavier Übung, Andrer Theil*, with a 'Sonata aus dem B' (Sonata in B♭). Encouraged by the success of this edition, he proceeded to publish a collection of seven sonatas under the title *Frische Clavier Früchte* (Dresden and Leipzig, 1696). Like the B♭ Sonata, these are four- or five-movement works in which slow and fast movements alternate, their types including sonata-allegros, fugues, adagio links, and borrowings from the suite such as chaconnes, arias and giges. Bach's D major Sonata is, in its overall movement structure, particularly close to Kuhnau's second and third sonatas, as the following comparison shows (original headings are in bold type):

Kuhnau: Sonata No. 2 in D:

<i>Movement:</i>	Allegro	Molto Adagio	Gigue	Adagio	Imitatio
<i>Key:</i>	D	b–D	D	G–e	e–D

Kuhnau: Sonata No. 3 in F:

<i>Movement:</i>	Allegro	Aria	Fugue	Aria	Gigue
<i>Key:</i>	F	F	F	d	F

Bach: Sonata in D, BWV 963:

<i>Movement:</i>	Allegro	Adagio	Fugue	Adagio	Gigue-fugue
<i>Key:</i>	D	b (½-close)	b	A–D	D

All three works, then, open with a substantial Sonata-Allegro (using the term to denote type rather than tempo) and place Adagios or Arias in second and fourth place, and fugal or gigue-like movements in the middle and at the end. In both of the D major Sonatas, the second and fourth movements are merely brief modulatory

²⁸ Moreover, Krüger diss., pp. 111–12, places the fugal movements of BWV 963 within the same early period as those of BWV 992.

²⁹ As noted in Krüger diss., pp. 117–18.

³⁰ One Dutch and a few Italian keyboard sonatas before Kuhnau are noted by William S. Newman in 'A Checklist of the Earliest Keyboard Sonatas (1641–1738)', *Notes*, 11 (1953–4), pp. 201–11.

links, rather than self-contained movements in their own right. The symmetry of the overall scheme in all three cases raises the possibility that Kuhnau's sonatas might have furnished one model for Bach's symmetrically structured works of later years.

Above all, however, Kuhnau's sonatas equipped Bach with models for the non-fugal allegro, an alternative to fugue for the fast movements of his large-scale keyboard works. Such sonata-allegros (not necessarily marked 'Allegro')³¹—those of the works considered here and later of the toccatas—are the true precursors of Bach's concerto-allegros from the Weimar period. This is all the more true in view of the formal and stylistic elements of the early concerto that are manifestly present in Kuhnau's sonatas,³² and hence in the Bach sonata-allegros modelled on them. It is difficult to say exactly what Kuhnau's sources were for this early concerto style,³³ but one possibility might be the late seventeenth-century practice of performing chamber sonatas with several players per part and with tutti/solo differentiation, as for instance in Georg Muffat's *Armonico tributo* of 1682. Another possibility—too late for Kuhnau's B♭ Sonata, but possibly relevant to the *Frische Clavier Früchte*—might be the six concertos of Torelli's *Sinfonie a tre e concerti a quattro*, Op. 5 of 1692, where we encounter the alternation of a 'soloistic' motive in semiquavers with a tutti motive in quavers, which finds close analogies among Kuhnau's fast movements.

Whether or not Torelli's example played a part, a dual motivic or thematic structure of this kind is characteristic of Kuhnau and may be found—albeit without contrast of note-values—in the opening movement of his Sonata No. 3 in F, which very likely furnished the direct model for the equivalent movement of Bach's Sonata in D. The opening themes of the two works, juxtaposed in Ex. 1, both comprise two constituent motives: an initial gesture *a* and a sequential consequent *b*, often used independently in the later course of the movement. The whole theme acts as a rudimentary form of ritornello, recurring regularly in related keys. Whereas Kuhnau uses sequential motive *b* to bring about modulation, Bach uses either motive or both, creating insufficient contrast with his full thematic statements. Nevertheless, he has learnt from Kuhnau how to think in terms of substantial melodic periods set off by clear cadences, and to use the *closed* period (one that ends in the same key as that in which it began) to establish firmly the intermediate tonal areas that have been brought about by previous *open* or modulatory periods. Bach imitates the melodious conjunct-crotchet movement in triple time that is so characteristic of Kuhnau, and is clearly beguiled by his mellifluous 3rds and 6ths (as later was Handel, who borrowed the movement for his Concerto grosso in A, Op. 6 No. 11). As often in Kuhnau, however, a small amount

³¹ Karl Heller discusses three of them (BWV 916 no. 1, 564 no. 1, and 912 no. 2) and their likely antecedents in 'Die freien Allegrosätze in der frühen Tastenmusik J. S. Bachs', in *J. S. Bach: Schaffenskonzeption, Werkidee, Textbezug* [conference report, Leipzig, 1989], BzBF 9/10 (Leipzig, 1991), pp. 173–85.

³² As Jochen Arbogast has demonstrated: see his *Stilkritische Untersuchungen zum Klavierwerk des Thomaskantors Johann Kuhnau* (Regensburg, 1983), esp. pp. 150–69.

³³ Arbogast merely lists some possible names: Corelli, Torelli, Muffat, Pasquini, and Stradella.

of material is made to go a long way—perhaps too far—and Bach’s imitation is not free of the same fault.³⁴

Ex. 1



a) Kuhnau: Suonata terza, *Frische Clavier Früchte*, 1st movement, bb. 1–9 (treble only)



b) Bach: Sonata in D, BWV 963, 1st movement, bb. 1–7 (treble only)

The motivic writing in the two Adagio links of Bach’s D major Sonata (movements 2 and 4) also owes much to Kuhnau; but the central B minor fugue is closer to Johann Caspar Kerll’s style of fugal writing than to Kuhnau’s;³⁵ and the ‘Thema all’ Imitatio Gallina Cuccu’ (theme in imitation of the hen and the cuckoo) of the fugal finale might have been suggested by Poglietti’s *Canzon über dass Henner und Hannereschrey*, or possibly by onomatopoeic violin music by J. J. Walther, J. H. Schmelzer, or Marco Uccellini, who, like Bach, combines the hen and the cuckoo in counterpoint.³⁶

Comparable to the first movement of the D major Sonata, but somewhat more advanced in its ritornello structure, is the single-movement Sonata in A minor, BWV 967.³⁷ Here, the rhetorical rests at the end of phrases (to ‘apostrophize’ them, as it were), and the frequent (all too frequent) phrase repetitions belong to the idioms of the early Italian concertos of Torelli, Albinoni, and others. But this style was also cultivated by Kuhnau, notably in the opening movement of his Sonata No. 4 in

³⁴ Handel, on the other hand, recognized the need for contrast and introduced a new theme at b. 26.

³⁵ Kerll was one of the three composers represented in the keyboard book that the child Bach copied out by moonlight in Ohrdruf. See *NBR*, No. 306 (p. 299).

³⁶ See Wolfgang Osthoff, ‘Imitatio, Allegorie, Symbol: Erwägungen zum Schlußsatz der Sonate BWV 963 und zu ähnlichen Soggetti von J. S. Bach’, in F. Heidlberger, W. Osthoff and R. Wiesend (eds.), *Von Isaac bis Bach: Festschrift Martin Just* (Kassel, 1991), pp. 273–85.

³⁷ There is no indication in the source as to whether or not other movements might have been composed and are now lost.

C minor,³⁸ where we also find a similar oscillation between parallel 6–3 chords (Ex. 2). The rests after every cadence in the first 24 bars of the Bach movement impair the sense of continuity, while any feeling of harmonic purposefulness is vitiated by the effect of four consecutive dominant cadences within twelve bars (bb. 17–28). Nevertheless, the structure of the piece is of great interest in relation to Bach's future development. The closed first period (bb. 1–14) possesses the character of an initial tutti-ritornello, with chords in massed handfuls in its antecedent phrase (bb. 1–5), followed by the shorthand of figured bass (as in other pseudo-ensemble movements already mentioned, BWV 821 no. 5 and 833 no. 5)³⁹ to indicate that the same should apply to the consequent phrase.

Ex. 2



a) Kuhnau: Suonata quarta, *Frische Clavier Früchte*, 1st movement



b) Bach: Sonata in A minor, BWV 967, bb. 14b–15a

This ritornello is longer and more complex than those of Kuhnau, and its clear antecedent–consequent structure, with internal subdivisions, is closely paralleled by the opening ritornello of the Concerto No. 1 in F from Albinoni's *Sinfonie e concerti a cinque*, Op. 2 of 1700 (Ex. 3).⁴⁰ Each of the following periods in the Bach movement opens with a brief citation, more or less varied, of material from the 'tutti' ritornello before proceeding with episodic material of a more 'soloistic' character—moving in running semiquavers by contrast with the quavers of the 'tutti' passages. A clear analogy may be drawn here with the 'motto' technique that Albinoni developed in his Op. 2 concertos.⁴¹ Bach's key

³⁸ The striking resemblance between the Bach and Kuhnau movements has been pointed out in Hill diss., pp. 448ff.

³⁹ Hermann Keller's theory that the A minor Sonata represents a transcription of a real ensemble piece has been convincingly refuted in Hill diss.

⁴⁰ As has been pointed out by Siegbert Rampe and Dominik Sackmann, *Bachs Orchestermusik: Entstehung, Klangwelt, Interpretation* (Kassel, 2000), pp. 179–82.

⁴¹ Described by Michael Talbot, 'The Concerto Allegro in the Early Eighteenth Century', *Music & Letters*, 52 (1971), pp. 8–18 and 159–72; see also the same author's *Tomaso Albinoni: The Venetian Composer and his World* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 101ff.

structure differs from Albinoni's, however: on the whole, modulation takes place during the episodic passages, which in Albinoni tend to be tonally static due to their key-confirming function; and of Bach's 'tutti' returns, all but two are confined to the tonic, whereas Albinoni's introduce new keys. Thus, while many elements of Bach's later concerto-allegro structure are here already in place, to a certain extent the relevant analogy is with rondo (or rondeau) rather than ritornello form.

Ex. 3



a) Albinoni: Concerto in F, Op. 2 No. 1, 1st movement, bb. 1–11 (unison vlms only)



b) Bach: Sonata in A minor, BWV 967, bb. 1–14 (treble only)

If Bach's two early sonatas are partly inspired by Kuhnau's *Frische Clavier Früchte*, the *Capriccio sopra la lontananza del fratro diletissimo* (Capriccio on the Absence⁴² of the Most Beloved Brother), BWV 992, has strong links with the Saxon composer's later collection of keyboard sonatas, the programmatic *Musicalische Vorstellung einiger*

⁴² Not 'departure', as usually translated; see Malcolm Boyd, *Bach* (London, 1983; 3rd edn, Oxford, 2000), p. 28.

Biblischer Historien (Musical Representation of Several Biblical Stories; Leipzig, 1700).⁴³ The finale, 'Fuga all' imitatione di Posta', like the similarly titled fugal finale of the D major Sonata ('Thema all' Imitatio Gallina Cuccu'), belongs to the seventeenth-century Italian–South-German tradition of the onomatopoeic capriccio imitating birds, bells, cannon, and so on, hence Bach's use of the term 'capriccio' for the work as a whole. Yet the overall programmatic conception and multi-movement (or perhaps rather multisectional) structure are manifestly dependent on Kuhnau's Biblical Sonatas. In particular, whereas the last two of Bach's six movements are both onomatopoeic, imitating the sound of the post-horn,⁴⁴ the first four share Kuhnau's stated aim of musical representation by analogy, requiring verbal description as an intermediary between musical and programmatic content,⁴⁵ as the following list of movement headings illustrates (note that detailed glosses are no longer deemed necessary for the straightforwardly onomatopoeic aria and fugue, nos. 5 and 6):

1. Arioso. Adagio. Ist eine Schmeichelung der Freunde, um denselben von seiner Reise abzuhalten [Is a coaxing by his friends to deter him from his journey].
2. [Fugato] Ist eine Vorstellung unterschiedlicher Casuum, die ihm in der Fremde könnten vorfallen [Is an envisaging of various calamities that could befall him in foreign parts].
3. [Lamento] Adagissimo. Ist ein allgemeines Lamento der Freunde [Is a general lament of his friends].
4. [Accompagnato] Allhier kommen die Freunde (weil sie doch sehen, daß es anders nicht sein kann) und nehmen Abschied [Here come the friends—since they see that it cannot be otherwise—and take their leave of him].
5. Aria di Postiglione [Air of the postillion]. Allegro poco.
6. Fuga all' imitatione di Posta [Fugue in imitation of the post-horn].

Nevertheless, Bach's use of the term 'capriccio' betokens a certain distance from Kuhnau. It was a boldly imaginative stroke to apply the older composer's biblical programmatic conception to a contemporary domestic scene, whether real or imagined. And it is not without good reason that the Capriccio has become one of the most celebrated of Bach's early works, even though to a large extent its fame rests on the wholly conjectural identification of the 'fratro diletissimo' with Bach's real brother Johann Jakob⁴⁶ rather

⁴³ The Biblical Sonatas (all but No. 4) form the first five items in ABB.

⁴⁴ Other examples of post-horn imitations from the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries are given in R. Krause, 'Zu den Posthornmotiven in J. S. Bachs B-dur Capriccio BWV 992', *BJ* 1976, pp. 73–8.

⁴⁵ Kuhnau clearly distinguishes between the two types in his preface; the relevant passages are quoted by Willi Apel, *Geschichte der Orgel- und Klaviermusik bis 1700* (Kassel, 1967); trans. and rev. by H. Tischler as *The History of Keyboard Music to 1700* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1972), p. 671 (references henceforth are to the English edition).

⁴⁶ Until recently Spitta's hypothesis was accepted without reservation, but Christoph Wolff has pointed out that 'fratro' could refer to a close friend, such as Georg Erdmann. See his 'The Identity of the "Fratro diletissimo" in the Capriccio B-flat major and other Problems of J. S. Bach's Early Harpsichord Works', in P. Dirksen (ed.), *The Harpsichord and its Repertoire: Proceedings of the International Harpsichord Symposium, Utrecht 1990* (Utrecht, 1992), pp. 145–56.

than on any intrinsic qualities of its own. Admittedly, the work displays all the shortcomings of Bach's early music,⁴⁷ and yet its imaginative conception demands that it be taken seriously as a work of art. On the analogy with rhetoric, it has been analysed in terms of a purely musical art of persuasion, and it has been shown how Bach uses key and modulation to articulate the overall programmatic structure:⁴⁸ the beloved 'brother' is coaxed by his friends in the tonic B♭; the envisaging of travel in foreign parts entails a descent into ever flatter, darker regions of key (g–c–f–bb–Eb–Ab–f); the friends lament in the ultra-flat key of F minor; a re-ascent from dark regions (Eb/Ab–g–d–F) coincides with the friends' recognition of the inevitability of the brother's journey; and the tonic B♭ returns for the actual departure of the stagecoach in the concluding Aria and Fuga.

In the opening movement, Bach applies to the keyboard the vocal form of arioso, a particularly apt vehicle for the gesture of coaxing, which may be identified, above all, with the anticipatory-note figure that occurs throughout the movement, either in downbeat (bb. 1–8) or upbeat forms (bb. 8–17; Ex. 4). The upbeat version also occurs in the first movement of Albinoni's Trio Sonata in B♭, Op. 1 No. 12,⁴⁹ a piece that Bach must have known, since, during this same early period, he borrowed the theme of the finale for his Fuga in C, BWV 946. This comparison is all the more relevant in view of the mainly trio-sonata-like texture of Bach's movement, which employs twinned treble parts over a supporting bass. The anticipatory-note figure is found occasionally not only in Albinoni but in Corelli, and also, significantly, in Kuhnau and other Middle-German composers, such as Zachow. For the young Bach, however, it became so pervasive a mannerism that its presence often functions as one of the hallmarks of his early style. His dwelling on this figure in the Capriccio movement can easily be found excessive—a fault the young composer inherited from Kuhnau—and the short-breathed phrases and too-early return to the tonic (at b. 9 out of 17 bb.) bespeak an early date (around 1704 or possibly earlier still). Nevertheless, as a musical representation of coaxing, the movement may be accounted a success: throughout the Capriccio, the young composer exhibits a flair for the musical description of events, objects, and feelings that will stand him in good stead when it comes to writing vocal music. This applies in the second movement to the modulatory descent through the circle of 5ths that represents the trouble that might lie ahead for the beloved brother as he travels in foreign parts. The falling minor 6th of the fugato subject itself clearly has the same intent. The fugal procedure employed, however (four-part exposition with subdominant answers, stated thrice, each time transposed down a tone) is carried out with a mechanical regularity that Bach would never have countenanced in later years.

⁴⁷ As far as the fugal movements are concerned (Nos. 2 and 6), these are outlined in Krüger diss., *passim*.

⁴⁸ The rhetorical and modulatory structure of the work are analysed by Rolf Dammann, 'Bachs Capriccio B-dur: Nachahmung um 1700', in W. Breig, R. Brinkmann, and E. Budde (eds.), *Analysen: Beiträge zu einer Problemgeschichte des Komponierens: Festschrift für H. H. Eggebrecht* (Stuttgart, 1984), pp. 158–79.

⁴⁹ As David Schulenberg points out (*The Keyboard Music*, p. 66).

F major, the overall dominant, as the friends adjust to the unalterable reality of the beloved brother's departure. The tonic B $\flat$ returns for the Aria, No. 5, a simple folk-song-like melody sung (or whistled?) by the postillion, who after each phrase blows his post-horn. This post-horn motive then recurs in the fugal finale as regular countersubject to the subject itself (see below, Ex. 5a)—a well-crafted theme of the canzona type (hence the note repetitions), which was as common in Bach's early keyboard music as in that of his older contemporaries. The use of a regular counter-subject was fundamental to Kuhnau's fugal technique;⁵⁴ and given the significance of the Biblical Sonatas as models for the B $\flat$ Capriccio, it is safe to assume that the older composer's fine fugues, praised by his contemporaries,⁵⁵ acted as exemplars for Bach in this mode of fugal writing.⁵⁶

Fine though the basic subject combination is, the overall structure of the fugue leaves much to be desired by Bach's later standards. The first 41 bars of the 58-bar movement contain eight successive *dux* and *comes* entries of the subject (accompanied by its regular countersubject), all in the tonic key of B $\flat$ and diversified only by a few short episodes. A mere 17 bars are left (bb. 42–58)—too little time to give adequate scope for modulation to contrasting keys and for the full re-establishment of the tonic at the close. Nevertheless, the fugue suddenly takes on a new dimension at b. 42: the repeats of the post-horn motive coalesce into continuity in a fine, boldly modulating episode, which issues in the only minor-mode subject entry in the whole movement, the tenor entry of b. 49 (anticipated by the alto in false stretto). Despite the structural inadequacy, there is an unmistakable hint here of the genius that will emerge.

Bach's two early Capriccios are so radically different in conception—the B $\flat$ multi-movement and programmatic; the E major, BWV 993, an abstract single unit—that the question inevitably arises why they are identically named. The answer presumably lies in the fugal character of the capriccio in the Frescobaldi-Froberger tradition, for the longest movement of the B $\flat$ Capriccio, the finale, and the whole of the E major work are fugues—and are built, moreover, on strikingly similar subjects (Ex. 5a and b; note in both themes the canzona-style repeated quavers, the dactyl figure, the motivic repetition, and the dominant close). In view of these interconnections, can it really be pure coincidence that both capriccios mention brothers in their titles or subtitles? Whatever the role of Johann Jakob, the eldest brother Johann Christoph acted as both scribe of the B $\flat$ Capriccio and dedicatee of the E major, which, as we have seen, might have been conceived as a token of gratitude for tuition received in Ohrdruf.

⁵⁴ In the prefaces to his publications of 1692 and 1696, Kuhnau expressly draws attention to such 'Contra Subjecta' and the possibility that thereby arises for double counterpoint.

⁵⁵ Notably Johann Mattheson: see his *Der vollkommene Capellmeister* (Hamburg, 1739); facsimile edn, ed. M. Reimann (Kassel and Basel, 1954), p. 43; Eng. trans. by E. C. Harriss (Ann Arbor, 1981), p. 790.

⁵⁶ See Paul Walker, 'Zur Geschichte des Kontrasubjekts und zu seinem Gebrauch in den frühesten Klavier- und Orgelfugen J. S. Bachs', *Das Frühwerk*, pp. 48–69, esp. 60–3.

Ex. 5

a) Capriccio in B $\flat$, BWV 992, finale, fugue subject

b) Capriccio in E, BWV 993, fugue subject

At this point, however, the two capriccios part company even where they have most in common—in their fugues. Whereas the B $\flat$ major is a ‘formal fugue’,⁵⁷ built on a double-counterpoint combination, the E major is written in free style and marked by unexpected turns of events that have little to do with the subject, or even with counterpoint. The young Bach would almost certainly have known single-unit fugal capriccios (as opposed to the more common sectional type) in strict counterpoint by Nicolaus Adam Strunck, and in free style by Carlo Francesco Pollaro.⁵⁸ In view of Bach’s adoption of these diametrically opposite fugal types in his two capriccios, it is hard to resist the notion that they might have been conceived in deliberate antithesis, in which case the tritone relationship between their tonics might have been designed to reinforce the point (as in the Italian Concerto and French Overture from the *Clavierübung* II). The contrast between them extends beyond their fugal type. The B $\flat$ major is primarily a work of construction, of the contrapuntal manipulation of materials—and as a consequence is often awkward to play. The E major, on the other hand, seems to have been composed primarily with the player in mind: it not only falls more easily under the hands but incorporates toccata-style episodes and a brilliant concluding cadenza. We are reminded here of C. P. E. Bach’s distinction between those of his father’s works that were ‘composed without instrument, but later tried out on one’ and ‘those for which he took the material from improvisations at the keyboard’.⁵⁹ For a decidedly improvisatory air clings to much of the E major Capriccio. The texture is *freistimmig*; the non-thematic parts are such as could easily have been

⁵⁷ To use the term employed by Kuhnau in the preface to his *Frische Clavier Früchte* (Leipzig, 1696).

⁵⁸ Strunck is mentioned by C. P. E. Bach in a letter to Forkel of 13 January 1775 as one of the composers whose music the young Bach heard and studied; see BD III, No. 803, and *NBR*, No. 395. Two capriccios by (or attributed to) Pollaro are present in ABB (Nos. 10 and 44). Schulenberg (*The Keyboard Music*, p. 49) notes a resemblance between ABB 10 and BWV 993 in their style of episodic writing.

⁵⁹ C. P. E. Bach to Forkel (n. 58).

found by the player-composer's fingers; and many of the episodes roam freely, some at inordinate length. Nevertheless, a clear structural plan informs the work as a whole. A double exposition (bb. 1–38) leads to four lengthy excursions from the tonic into a wide range of related keys (starting at bb. 38, 50, 77, and 102 respectively). After each excursion, the return to the tonic coincides with a subject entry or, more often, with a treble/bass pair of entries (at bb. 47, 71, 97, and 112). This produces a rondeau-like structure directly comparable with that already encountered in the A minor Sonata. The most successful excursions are those that consistently manipulate a single figure (bb. 40, 51) or use modulating subject entries to reach remote keys, such as bars 55–71, which travel through the circle of 5ths to D $\sharp$ minor before returning via the same route to the tonic, bringing to mind the modulation to G $\flat$ major, already noted, in the G minor Overture. The least successful excursions are those that, lacking clear tonal or thematic focus, degenerate into something not far removed from empty note-spinning (for example, bb. 81–9). And this brings us to the shortcomings of the piece as a whole. It is a fugue of exceptionally large dimensions for its time, demonstrating the formidable ambition of the youthful composer, but due to the absence of thematic material in the accompanimental parts, and in the lengthy episodes, it hangs together but loosely, and even the admirable rondeau scheme cannot rescue it from the impression of rather aimless rambling.

Sonata-fugue

Bach employed thematic material from certain trio sonatas by Albinoni and Corelli to fashion the following keyboard fugues:

<i>Title</i>	<i>Earliest source/s</i>	<i>Scribe, date</i>
Fuga in C, BWV 946	Leipzig, Ms. 1/11	J. A. G. Wechmar, c. 1750
Fuga in A, BWV 950	Berlin, P 804/51	J. P. Kellner, before 1725?
	Berlin, P 595/3	J. Ringk, after 1730?
Fuga in b, BWV 951a	Leipzig, Poel. mus. Ms. 9	J. C. Bach, c. 1704–7?
	Durham, Ms. Mus. E 24	R. Fawcett, 1720s
	Leipzig, Ms. R. 16/8	W. N. Mey, after 1727
Fuga in b, BWV 579	Berlin, P 804/10	J. N. Mempel, 1730s

The Italian originals are as follows:⁶⁰

BWV 946: Albinoni, Op. 1 No. 12, 4th movement, Presto

BWV 950: Albinoni, Op. 1 No. 3, 2nd movement, Allegro

BWV 951a: Albinoni, Op. 1 No. 8, 2nd movement, Allegro

BWV 579: Corelli, Op. 3 No. 4, 2nd movement, Vivace

⁶⁰ For full details see Kirsten Beißwenger, *J. S. Bachs Notenbibliothek* (Kassel, 1992), VBN II/A/1–3 and II/C/1. Concerning the relationship between Albinoni's Op. 1 No. 12 and BWV 946, see Michael Talbot, 'A Further Borrowing from Albinoni: the C major Fugue, BWV 946', *Das Frühwerk*, pp. 142–61. Hill's theory that the subject of BWV 949 is based on Albinoni's Op. 1 No. 7 (Hill diss., pp. 444–7) has not met with general acceptance.

All four fugues seem to have been composed during Bach's early period—probably before about 1707. The earliest source of the B minor Albinoni Fugue is in the hand of Bach's eldest brother, Johann Christoph Bach of Ohrdruf, who also copied the first two sonatas from Albinoni's Op. 1 into the Möller Manuscript around 1704–7. This date (or even earlier still) would accord with the early style of all three Albinoni fugues, with the B minor perhaps the last to have been composed.⁶¹ In the case of the Corelli fugue, it is perhaps at least suggestive that the earliest source also contains the D major Sonata, BWV 963, for the fugal procedure in both works is anomalous. While the central fugue of the sonata employs variant intervallic forms of the subject (beyond the customary tonal answer), the Corelli fugue opens with two *dux* (leading) entries rather than the orthodox *dux-comes* (subject-answer) pair, and lacks a treble entry in its opening exposition. The restriction of all subject entries to the tonic or dominant, and the occurrence of the anticipatory-note mannerism in bb. 53 and 82, likewise point to an early date.⁶²

Although the young Bach had no doubt already encountered the Italian sonata style indirectly via such German intermediaries as Kuhnau, Böhm, and Buxtehude, it is safe to assume that exposure to Albinoni's Op. 1 and Corelli's Op. 3 brought with it new insights and a fuller opportunity to assimilate the style into his own creative work. In his adaptations of their music, as in the overtures (BWV 820 and 822) and sonatas (BWV 963 and 967), he was engaged in creating keyboard music out of ensemble genres. In this case, however, he employed the actual thematic material of the Italian composers' ensemble works. While this material is not restricted to the fugue subject (and hence the modern formulation 'Fugue on a Theme of Albinoni/Corelli' is inaccurate), the subject must have been by far the most important factor in Bach's choice. Consequently, it is worth asking what, if anything, these subjects have in common that might have especially appealed to the young composer. As it happens, they are all characterized by a well-balanced arch shape, a rise (by step or by leap) from the tonic through a 6th octave or 10th, which is then countered by a corresponding stepwise fall through the same interval back to the tonic (Ex. 6a–d, below). Bach was beginning to develop a strong feeling for line around this time, and several fugue subjects of his own invention (those of BWV 551, bb. 39ff., and BWV 588, for instance) suggest that he might have been predisposed to take an interest in such satisfying arch-shaped themes.

Ex. 6



a) Fugue on a Theme of Albinoni, BWV 946, subject

⁶¹ On internal stylistic grounds Krüger diss., pp. 109–11 and 117–19, dates all three fugues within the same general period as BWV 992 and 535a, while noting that BWV 946 might be earlier still.

⁶² Werner Breig suggests that BWV 579 might be one of Bach's earliest fugues with obligato pedal, possibly dating from the Mühlhausen period (1707–8); see his 'Versuch eine Theorie der Bachschen Orgelfuge', *Die Musikforschung*, 48 (1995), pp. 14–52. Jean-Claude Zehnder, 'Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung in der Mühlhäuser und Weimarer Zeit', *Das Frühwerk*, pp. 311–38, reaches similar conclusions.

counterpoints to the subject are closer to the norm, hence the reproduction of these characteristics in many of Bach's early fugues. The alacrity with which Bach seizes upon Albinoni's motives and tries to outdo him in their extensive and variegated use suggests that this might have been one of the key factors in prompting him to make creative use of the Venetian composer's music.⁶⁴ The most impressive instance of this motivic technique relates to the chromatic descent of the subject in the B minor fugue (see Ex. 6c above). Whereas Bach had to tease out a motive in the A major fugue from its inconspicuous position in his model (bb. 8–9, 36–7) for productive further treatment (bb. 24–7, 43–6), Albinoni himself recognizes and acts upon the potential of his similarly inconspicuous link bar (b. 20) in the B minor fugue. Here the chromatic motive of the subject is detached from its context and combined with a syncopated diatonic descent, a derivative of the countersubject, to create a sequence of 7ths. Nothing further is heard of the idea till b. 32, where it recurs to herald the final climax of the fugue: the chromatic motive is here inverted to form a chromatic ascent, in which the second violin is imitated by the first, leading directly to a tonic full-close. And such is the rhetorical power of the passage that it bears immediate and exact repetition. Bach takes Albinoni's ideas in relation to the chromatic motive further, making frequent use of it, whether direct, inverted or diminished, in episodes (see bb. 10, 15, 34, 40, and 50), extending the subject to form a full-octave chromatic descent (combined with the syncopated diatonic descent in a sequence of 9th chords; see bb. 58–9), and building a fine concluding climax out of the latter's inversion, a chromatic ascent. Significantly, Bach retained this last idea, albeit in a modified form, when some years later he rewrote the piece in Weimar (BWV 951).

In general terms, however, the young Bach is—surprisingly perhaps—far less disciplined than Albinoni in his use of the material. The natural exuberance of the youthful composer finds expression in a profusion of invention that resists limitation to a few derived motives. For at this stage he is unable to operate on a large scale without exerting the freedom to expand at will, to the detriment of the tight control of his material. As a result, any early attempt at thematic or motivic concentration tends to be relaxed in the later stages of a work (this is also true of some of Bach's older contemporaries, such as Buxtehude or Böhm). Episodes often turn into a series of unrelated events, with one new figure being worked for a few bars before being followed by another. And any sense of purposeful movement from one juncture to the next tends to be lost, being recovered only towards the end, where a particular rhetorical stroke—such as the chromatic work in the B minor Fugue, or the pseudo-stretto on the dominant over four octaves in the A major (bb. 75–9)—creates

⁶⁴ Note Bach's use of the semiquaver motive from the subject in BWV 946, bb. 8, 20, 23, 26, 31, 34, and 42, and of its inversion in bb. 27–30; both motive and inversion are employed in Albinoni's countersubjects. In BWV 950, a motive extracted from the first seven notes of the fugue subject governs many of Bach's episodes during the first half of the fugue, as it did most of Albinoni's. Bach also makes extensive episodic use of a syncopated variant of notes 4–7 of the subject, which is heard only twice in Albinoni—as an insignificant link figure in bb. 8–9 and 36–7.

a clear feeling of culmination. Nor at this time does Bach make extensive use of modulation or intermediate key zones for structural purposes. The C major Fugue, perhaps the earliest of the three,⁶⁵ is, like many of Bach's early fugues (or those of his compatriots) restricted throughout to subject entries on the tonic or dominant. Unprompted by Albinoni, the A major and B minor Fugues each contain a subject-answer pair of entries in the opposite mode—a major step forward in admitting the element of contrast as a component of the structure. But these are isolated moments of illumination in lengthy fugues that otherwise remain for the most part tonally undifferentiated. Only at a later stage, in Weimar, will Bach learn to make consistent use of tonal and thematic means hand in hand to effect the architectural design of a fugue. The radical revision of the B minor Fugue that took place there may have been designed specifically to take these new insights into account.

Judging by the relative maturity of Bach's Corelli fugue compared to those based on Albinoni, it might have been some time after his encounter with Albinoni's Op. 1 that he became acquainted with Corelli's *Sonate a tre*, Op. 3 (Rome, 1689) and employed one of its movements as the basis of his Fugue in B minor, BWV 579. The impact of Corelli was, in the long run, at least as great as that of Albinoni, and Bach must have immediately recognized an instrumental style of classic status and authority. In very general terms, like other composers of his day, he inevitably participated in that transformation in the harmonic language of European music during the early eighteenth century that was greatly indebted to Corelli and his theorist Gasparini.⁶⁶ More specifically, clear traces of the Corellian style are often evident in instrumental and vocal works by Bach that presumably originated after the B minor Fugue. Comparison of this piece with its Corelli model sheds light on those aspects of the Italian composer's style that so captivated the young German composer.

The Vivace on which Bach based his fugue is one of Corelli's stricter fugal movements, a stretto fugue whose subject is from the outset combined with a regular countersubject. The two subjects are inverted in double counterpoint at the octave as early as b. 9. Moreover, the principal subject is treated in two different stretti: at one bar and the upper octave (bb. 6, 26, and 30), and at the half-bar and lower 4th (b. 16). At the end (b. 35), the two stretti are united to form a single culminating stretto involving all three parts (though only in the bass does the subject preserve its original form beyond the first four notes). The contrapuntal artifice of this scheme must have been for Bach one of the main sources of the movement's attraction; and indeed he proceeds to develop some of Corelli's devices to a further degree. The double counterpoint at the octave (b. 6) is subsequently re-inverted at the 10th (b. 69), after which this combination is in turn inverted at the 12th (b. 75). Not only the subject but the countersubject too is treated in stretto (bb. 55 and 93). And Corelli's climactic

⁶⁵ As Schulenberg implies (*The Keyboard Music*, p. 53); this is also Krüger's view (see n. 61).

⁶⁶ See Peter Allsop, *Arcangelo Corelli: New Orpheus of our Times* (Oxford, 1999), p. 89.

three-part stretto is expanded, at the corresponding juncture in Bach's fugue, to form a four-part stretto in which the subject is carried through in all four voices (b. 90). Bach's structure, however, unlike Corelli's, is not a stretto fugue: the only significant use of stretto occurs at the impressive final climax just noted, where both subjects and all parts are involved. Before that, moreover, leaving aside double counterpoint (which is standard in any fugue with a regular countersubject), contrapuntal devices are used unobtrusively and restricted to the latter half of the work.⁶⁷ The central focus of Bach's interest seems to lie elsewhere: in line and sequence.

Beauty and purposefulness of line, in conjunction with clear, goal-directed harmony, are one of the great strengths of Corelli's music; and in the movement under consideration they are by no means restricted to the elegant convergence in contrary motion of subject and countersubject (bb. 3–4; see above, Ex. 6d). A slow treble descent, for example, mostly decorated, governs the course of the first episode (bb. 10–16), traversing the interval of a 13th and directing the modulation from tonic to relative major. Bach, for his part, uses the slow stepwise descent of the subject itself to underpin his sequences: combined with its syncopated variant, for example, it forms a suspension chain against a walking-quaver bass (b. 45), a typically Corellian texture (though absent from Bach's immediate model) which later recurs expanded to four voices (b. 58) and with interchanged parts (b. 79). Corelli's example appears to reinforce for Bach not only the value of purposeful line in leading the contrapuntal texture and harmonic movement alike towards a cadence, but conversely the power of the harmonic sequence itself as a logical framework for the counterpoint, and as a determinant of its constituent lines. The perfect balance between the vertical and horizontal (harmonic and polyphonic) dimensions of texture in mature Bach might well owe much, directly or indirectly, to Corelli's example.

Bach's Corelli fugue, however, is still a far cry from mature Bach. What we miss most of all, perhaps, is stylistic consistency—one of Corelli's cardinal virtues. The Germanic semiquaver figuration of bars 25–30 and 65–72 sits rather awkwardly with its Corellian surroundings and creates a somewhat diffuse impression, as does the largely homophonic and athematic episode at bars 82–90. Corelli's original, on the other hand, is all of a piece. And it is hard to disagree with a recent commentator who finds the Italian composer's 'compact, tightly constructed thematic design . . . a model of economy and precision'.⁶⁸ The comparison is perhaps not altogether fair, however, for while Corelli's Op. 3 reveals a great master at the height of his powers, Bach's Corelli fugue is, relatively speaking, the work of a novice.

⁶⁷ More detailed comparisons between BWV 579 and its Corelli model than can be given here are to be found in Hartmut Braun, 'Eine Gegenüberstellung von Original und Bearbeitung, dargestellt an der Entlehnung eines Corellischen Fugenthemas durch J. S. Bach', *BJ* 1972, pp. 5–11, and in G. Beechey, 'Bach's B-minor Fugue, BWV 579—Corelli's B-minor Sonata, Op. 3 No. 4', *The American Organist*, 19 (1985), pp. 126–7.

⁶⁸ See Allsop, *Arcangelo Corelli*, pp. 96–7.

Toccatà

<i>Title</i>	<i>Earliest Source</i>	<i>Scribe, date</i>
Toccatà in D, BWV 912a	MM 28	J. C. Bach, c. 1704–7
Toccatà in d, BWV 913	Berlin, P 281	Anon., Weimar, c. 1712–14
Toccatà in e, BWV 914	MS in private collection	H. N. Gerber, c. 1725
Toccatà in g, BWV 915	Berlin, P 1082	J. G. Preller, 1740s

These four works appear to be the earliest of the seven keyboard toccatas (without pedals) that Bach wrote during the pre-Weimar and Weimar periods (1700–17; the three others will be considered in a subsequent chapter). The Toccatas in D major and D minor both probably originated before 1707. In the case of the D major, this dating is established by its entry in the Möller Manuscript (in the hand of Bach's elder brother, Johann Christoph of Ohrdruf). But the D minor Toccata may be older still: in the earliest source, perhaps in the hand of one of Bach's Weimar pupils, it is entitled 'Toccatà prima', and this is already a revised version; the early version, BWV 913a (preserved only in a posthumous edition), like the E major Capriccio, was written 'In honorem delectissimi fratris [Johann] Christ[oph] B[ach] Ohrdruffensis'.⁶⁹ The oldest sources of the E minor and G minor Toccatas date from Bach's Leipzig period (after 1723), but the internal stylistic evidence is strong for dating them not long after the D major and D minor works.⁷⁰

Both the Kuhnau-style keyboard sonata and the Italian trio sonata, whose styles the young Bach had explored in his early sonatas, capriccios, and fugues, were vital ingredients in his conception of the toccata.⁷¹ Yet the very choice of genre betokens a decisive shift in favour of a virtuoso, pseudo-improvisatory style. The adoption of this style must have been intimately associated with Bach's arrival at genuine virtuosity as a keyboard player, and with the desire to compose music that would act as an appropriate vehicle for it. For, of all keyboard genres, the toccata is the player-composer's genre par excellence. It demonstrates at once the possibilities of his instrument and his own skill in exploiting them. At the same time, it is closely allied to improvisation, for it creates the impression that the artist's imagination acts directly upon his fingertips. In all these respects, Bach's toccatas belong to a tradition that goes back to Frescobaldi.⁷² Their style, however, is very much that of his own day. Counterpoint could be written in an old style, but not music that is meant to sound 'off the cuff'—no one would dream of improvising in an outdated style. Thus, while

⁶⁹ For full details of the sources, see Peter Wollny, *Krit. Bericht, NBA V/9.1* (Kassel and Leipzig, 1999).

⁷⁰ Zehnder, 'Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung', p. 330, places them in the vicinity of the Mülhausen cantatas, i.e. around 1707–8. Krüger diss., pp. 120–1, points to riper features in BWV 914 that might suggest that it was the latest of the four toccatas.

⁷¹ On grounds of style, it is safe to assume that the toccatas originated somewhat later than the sonatas and capriccios.

⁷² See Lucy Hallman Russell, 'Bach's Clavier Toccatas in Light of the Frescobaldi Tradition', in W. Osthoff and R. Wiesend (eds.), *Bach und die Italienische Musik* [conference report, Venice, 1985] (Venice, 1987), pp. 43–59.

Bach may well have known the toccatas of Frescobaldi and Froberger,⁷³ there are no obvious recollections of their music in his own toccatas, whereas the living tradition of the North-German school is audibly evident within them.⁷⁴ Buxtehude's preludia are often considered to be toccatas in all but name, but the prelude, with its normal resource of obbligato pedal, is less relevant in this context than the related but distinct toccata *manualiter*, which was also cultivated to some extent by North-German composers of the late seventeenth century; two such works by Buxtehude are preserved, three by Reincken, and one by Heidorn.⁷⁵ The relative scarcity of models, however, emphasizes the extent to which Bach in his own toccatas was not simply relying on the example of his older contemporaries, but rather forging his own first major synthesis between different styles and genres. He builds on the perceived interrelations between toccata and sonata⁷⁶ to create a new entity in which elements of the two genres and their associated styles are indissolubly merged (later we shall notice a third factor in this stylistic synthesis: some elements of the French style). What the toccata and the sonata have most obviously in common is a fairly regular alternation between fugal and less highly structured modes of discourse. In other respects, however, the two genres differ sharply. The character of the North-German toccata, like that of the prelude, is determined by the rhapsodic freedoms of the *stylus phantasticus*,⁷⁷ a style that derives its rhetoric from the (real or contrived) spontaneous gestures of improvisation. In this light, the fugal sections might be viewed as a form of textural or thematic consolidation, such as might well be achieved during the course of an actual improvisation. In the Corellian sonata, on the other hand, not only in the fugal movements but even in those that are not subject-based, the element of formal composition—the balanced control of line, rhythm and texture—remains paramount. Bach's toccatas owe their distinctive character in no

⁷³ Evidently he did not become acquainted with Frescobaldi's *Fiori musicali* till 1714 (see Beißwenger, *J. S. Bachs Notenbibliothek*, VBN I/F/2); we do not know whether he encountered the toccatas of 1615 or 1627 before that date. He is known to have copied out Froberger's music as a child (see BD III, No. 666, and *NBR*, No. 306), and C. P. E. Bach talked of music by Froberger among his father's possessions (letter of 20 September 1775; see BD III, No. 807), but in neither case is it known whether the toccata genre was represented.

⁷⁴ Among other things, reminiscences of Reincken's *Hortus musicus* in BWV 912 and in the finale of BWV 915 have been pointed out by Pieter Dirksen and Peter Wollny respectively. See P. Dirksen, 'Zur Frage des Autors der A-dur-Toccata BWV Anh. 178', *BJ* 1998, pp. 121–35, and P. Wollny, 'Traditionen des phantastischen Stils in J. S. Bachs Toccaten BWV 910–916', in W. Sandberger (ed.), *Bach, Lübeck und die norddeutsche Musiktradition* [conference report, Lübeck, 2000] (Kassel, 2002), pp. 245–55 (esp. 252–4).

⁷⁵ Buxtehude: two Toccatas in G, BuxWV 164 and 165; Reincken: Toccata in G, G minor, and A; Heidorn: Toccata in C. The A major Toccata, falsely attributed to Rossi, Purcell, and Bach in various MS sources, has been attributed to Reincken by Dirksen, *BJ* 1998.

⁷⁶ As Buxtehude had done before him in his organ preludia: see C. Wolff, 'Präludium (Toccata) und Sonata: Formbildung und Gattungstradition in der Orgelmusik Buxtehudes und seines Kreises', in C. Wolff (ed.), *Orgel, Orgelmusik und Orgelspiel: Festschrift Michael Schneider zum 75. Geburtstag* (Kassel, 1985), pp. 55–64.

⁷⁷ For a useful discussion of the *stylus phantasticus*, revealing how it was understood by contemporary theorists, see Kerala J. Snyder, *Dieterich Buxtehude: Organist in Lübeck* (New York and London, 1987), pp. 248–53.

small measure to the tension and attempted reconciliation between these opposing principles.

Bach's overall structure may be construed as a four-movement scheme that is neither identical with the typical North-German five-fold sequence (prelude–fugue–interlude–fugue–postlude) nor with the classic Corellian four-movement design (slow movement–fugue–slow movement–finale, often freely fugal), though it has obvious affinities with both:

	1	2	3	4
BWV 912a:	[Prelude]	Allegro	Adagio	[Fuga, Allegro]
BWV 913:	[Prelude]	[Fuga, Allegro]	Adagio	Fuga, Allegro
BWV 914:	[Prelude]	[Fuga], Un poco Allegro	Adagio	Fuga, Allegro
BWV 915:	[Prelude]	Allegro	Adagio	Fuga, [Allegro]

While this overall structure is reasonably clear, it is perhaps more accurate to speak of a sectional rather than a movement-based form; for some movements are themselves composite, being made up of several distinct sections (BWV 912a no. 3, 913 no. 1, and 915 no. 1), while others are not complete in themselves but continue straight into the following movement (BWV 912a nos. 1–2 and 3–4; 913 nos. 3–4; 915 nos. 1–2–3).

The rhapsodic postlude that brings many North-German praeludia and toccatas to their final climax is either represented by no more than a brief coda to the fugue or else (in BWV 913) altogether absent. To a considerable extent, however, Bach's preludes and adagios directly reflect the pseudo-improvisatory character of their North-German counterparts. In the preludes this style is manifest in the opening *passaggio*, which defines the toccata character of the work as a whole, in the ostinatos, and in the sudden disjunctions—for example, the unexpected interruption of the flow by the note G $\sharp$ (the tritone interval from the tonic) in both the preludes in D major (b. 8) and D minor (b. 12). No less in keeping with the style is the sudden change in the preludes in D minor (b. 15b) and G minor (b. 5) to a contrasting texture of full harmony at a relatively slow tempo. Here, we might imagine that the typical sequence of an improvisation—opening *passaggio*, more consolidated passage, conclusion (which might involve a return to the style of the opening)—informs the shaping of the introduction as well as that of the toccata as a whole. Throughout these introductory movements, however, we detect a greater underlying element of control on the part of the composer than is usual in the North-German style.⁷⁸ A significant role is taken by motivic work (in the Toccata in E minor) or pattern play (that in D major), which to some extent diminishes the impromptu character of the music.

Composition on the basis of a fixed pattern is characteristic not just of the toccatas but of Bach's early style in general;⁷⁹ and the slow, sustained passages from the

⁷⁸ As pointed out by Friedhelm Krummacher, 'Bach und die norddeutsche Orgeltoccata: Fragen und Überlegungen', *BJ* 1985, pp. 119–34 (esp. 124–5).

⁷⁹ Zehnder, 'Georg Böhm und J. S. Bach: zur Chronologie der Bachschen Stilentwicklung', *BJ* 1988, pp. 73–110 (esp. 90–6), sees it as a technique that Bach picked up from Böhm, but it is also found elsewhere, notably in Kuhnau and in the early Italian concertists.

D minor and G minor introductions are both structured in this way, the one featuring richly harmonized, decorated suspension chains, and the other chord sequences in sarabande rhythm, lavishly embellished in the French style. In both cases Bach returns to a similar style in the Adagio third movement. In the D minor Adagio, the fixed pattern is an elaborated chord progression (Ex. 7) that forms the basis of meditative sequences throughout the entire movement. Reincken had employed the same technique in the equivalent movement of his Toccata in G; parallels may also be found in works by Werckmeister, Böhm, Kuhnau and Zachow.⁸⁰ The charm of Bach's D minor Adagio lies not just in the inherent beauty of the material itself and its meditative reiteration, often with interchanged parts, but also in the ever-shifting tonal perspective afforded by far-reaching modulation. The key scheme is as follows:

g-(f)-c-f-bb-e♭-bb-f-c-g (... a... d)

The movement thus modulates via the circle of 5ths from the temporary tonic G minor to E♭ minor, then in palindromic fashion back via the same sequence of keys in reverse. At the end, interrupted cadences (shown by the dots above)—the first quite magical, almost Schubertian—provide a link with the finale that follows by bringing about a return to the overall tonic D minor.

Ex. 7



Toccata in D minor, BWV 913, Adagio (3rd movement), b. 124

The D major and E minor Adagios are not pattern-based in the same way, but each incorporates a fixed element as a counterbalance to the rhapsodic freedom that otherwise prevails. In the E minor Adagio, the fixed element is a chord elaborated in *style brisé*, which recurs nine times on different degrees of the scale as a clear point of reference amid the impromptu-style musings. In the D major Adagio, the fixed element is a fugato in the mediant key of F# minor, which emerges as an aria-like central focus within a quasi-recitative that modulates away from and back to the tonic D. This fugato is prepared not only tonally but motivically, for the cadential falling-4ths figure at the end of the introductory recitative forms the basis of its detailed figure-work. Having coalesced into firm structure in the fugato, the same figure dissolves once again into dreamy meditation at the return of the recitative, which is to be played 'con discrezione'.⁸¹ These keyboard recitatives—a phenomenon that Bach

⁸⁰ See Apel, *The History of Keyboard Music*, p. 627.

⁸¹ Russell ('Bach's Clavier Toccatas', pp. 51–2) points out that the same performance indication occurs in Froberger and Buxtehude.

would have encountered close at hand in Kuhnau as well as in the North-German school—belong among the youthful Bach's most extravagant and romantic utterances. He later subjected them to detailed revision (in BWV 912); and the later version sounds, if anything, more spontaneous than the earlier, which draws attention to the curious paradox inherent in the 'fantastic' style to which Bach was heir in such music: that considerable art has to be employed to create the *impression* of spontaneity.⁸²

The fast second and fourth movements, the most substantial and highly structured portions of each toccata, take their cue not just from the North-German tradition but from Kuhnau's keyboard sonatas, Corelli's ensemble sonatas, and apparently other Italian sources too. Most of them are fugal, though the degree of formality with which fugue is handled varies considerably. Not all of them would have met with the approval of Mattheson, who, writing of the *stylus phantasticus* to which the toccata properly belongs, complained that 'those composers who work out formal fugues in their fantasias or toccatas do not maintain the integrity of this style, for nothing is so very contrary to it as order and constraint'.⁸³ Bach avoids formality in the Allegro second movements of the D major and G minor toccatas by merely hinting at fugue in the opening bars, after which a different structural principle holds sway. The two pieces turn out to be successors to Bach's early sonata movements (BWV 963 no. 1 and 967), which were in turn modelled partly on the sonatas of Kuhnau's *Frische Clavier Früchte*. Like Bach's early sonata movements, those of the toccatas exhibit a mode of structuring that appears to have close links with the early concerto. In the D major Allegro, the entry of the genial subject in a quasi-fugal alternation between dominant and tonic—itself a recurring feature of Torelli's concerto movements—prompts the idea of its statement in different keys in quick succession (bb. 15–17: b–A–G). This idea is then taken up at the start of each new paragraph (bb. 24, 39, and 53), the last key in each case becoming the new temporary tonic. The subject thus functions very much like the motto theme (an antecedent of the ritornello) in Torelli's *Concerti musicali*, Op. 6 (1698) or in the concertos from Albinoni's *Sinfonie e Concerti a 5*, Op. 2 (1700). Bach differs from the early concertists, however, in that the intermediate paragraphs both begin (at bb. 24 and 39) in the tonic, which suggests an analogy with rondeau form, as in the A minor Sonata, BWV 967. With its chordal accompaniment, the exposition of the principal subject sounds like a tutti, by contrast with the second subject (b. 17, last crotchet), whose sequential semiquavers lend it a relatively 'soloistic' character. Both themes are subject to *Stimmtausch*, or the exchange of parts, which, alongside pattern play, functions as one of the basic structural tools of Bach's early style. And both themes fall into single-bar phrases, giving rise to a squareness and monotony of phrase structure that recalls Kuhnau, and remains unrelieved until the arrival of a more continuous subsidiary theme (b. 32, fourth crotchet).

⁸² Mattheson asserted that the toccata is 'intended to make the *impression* of being played impromptu' (my italics).

⁸³ See Mattheson, *Der vollkommene Capellmeister* (n. 55), p. 88; Eng. trans., p. 217.

The Allegro from the G minor Toccata is still more concerto-like than that of the D major. Its opening two-voice theme is marked by the 'kinetic recurrence' that has been observed as characteristic of concerto themes.⁸⁴ Again it is subject to *Stimm-tausch* and quasi-fugal treatment, and again it opens every period as a motto theme after the manner of Torelli and Albinoni. The 'solo-tutti' contrast is handled differently, however: the first eleven bars form a 'solo' exposition for two voices only, after which the remainder of the movement is essentially 'tutti'—that is, harmonized in a full four voices. Moreover, the two themes (the second enters at b. 33) have clearly distinct tonal and structural functions. Whereas the main theme acts as a point of departure, opening each period in the tonic or a subsidiary key, the second theme, which builds up from 'solo' to 'tutti', has a concluding, cadential function, confirming first the arrival at the dominant key (b. 33), then the return of the tonic (b. 41), and finally reconfirming the tonic at the end (b. 64). This coordinated approach to key, theme, and structure marks a major advance in Bach's compositional thinking, and paves the way for the true ritornello form of later years.

Both in form and texture, the two Allegros of the D minor Toccata are a good deal closer to fugue, though neither may be considered a formal fugue: their expositions lack the answer at the 5th, which perhaps counts as the chief defining element of fugal technique. The two movements are linked by the principle of thematic transformation, derived from the variation canzona: the second Allegro is based on the same theme as the first, but in a triple-time variant. It is no surprise, then, that both 'Thema' (so designated in the source) and variant seem to be rooted in the concise, epigrammatic, canzona type of theme that Bach inherited from Froberger, Kerll, and Pachelbel, as a comparison with the subject of Froberger's third Capriccio of 1658 illustrates (Ex. 8). However, Bach's combination of a terse subject of this kind with a suspension figure also recalls a standard opening in Corelli's fugal movements; and the extension of both subject and countersubject in the first Allegro to form prolonged sequences built on suspension chains is thoroughly Corellian. Even the device of thematic transformation occurs once among Corelli's sonatas (in Op. 1 No. 10).

Ex. 8



a) Froberger: Capriccio No. 3 (1658), subject



b) Bach: Toccata in D minor, BWV 913, 'Thema' (2nd movement), bb. 33-4 (left hand only)

⁸⁴ By Arthur Hutchings, *The Baroque Concerto* (London, 1959; 3rd edn 1973), pp. 43-4.

In other respects, however, the two Allegros are far from Corellian: the attempt to build two large movements out of a single brief theme (for even the episodes are largely based on the main figure of the subject) creates an obsessively monothematic impression that recalls, rather, certain movements from the sonatas of Kuhnau. For all Bach's attempts to introduce variety—by introducing new counterpoints in the first Allegro and diversifying the episodes of the second—the rhythm of the subject, unrelieved by adequate contrast, often becomes tiresomely repetitive. Thematic coherence is achieved, but at the expense of the profusion of invention that we encounter in, say, the E major Capriccio, BWV 993. At this early stage, Bach often seems to oscillate between one extreme and the other.

The intermediate fugues of the D major and E minor Toccatas (where they form the third and second movements respectively) are brief, comprising no more than a double exposition plus intervening episodes. However, they are stricter and more densely written than the D minor Allegros; and both are based on a double subject (subject and countersubject combined *ab initio*), which necessarily results in double counterpoint. The combined themes of the E minor fugue at root consist of no more than a decorated pair of suspensions with an exchange of parts midway. Such thematic combinations are to be found not only in Corelli but in much seventeenth-century Italian instrumental music. It is no mere coincidence, then, that the initial subject–countersubject combination of Bach's Legrenzi Fugue, BWV 574b, disregarding the repeated-note head-motive, is virtually identical with that of the E minor Fugue (Ex. 9). In the fugue in F# minor from the third movement of the D major Toccata, the two subjects, after their initial combined statement, are joined by a further regular countersubject in triple counterpoint. And similar contrapuntal rigour is reflected in the first two episodes (bb. 83 and 86), in which a chromatic descent is combined with complementary figures derived from the two main subjects. Bach would surely have been castigated by Mattheson for the inclusion of this fugue, had the Hamburg theorist focused his critical attention upon the work. It seems likely, however, that Bach had a particular end in view: since the fugue emerges from instrumental recitative, and dissolves back into the same at the end, he might well have conceived the movement as the most extreme imaginable juxtaposition of strict and free styles of composition.

Ex. 9



a) Toccata in E minor, BWV 914, *Un poco allegro* (2nd movement), subject and countersubject



b) Fugue on a Theme of Legrenzi, BWV 574b, subject (without headmotive) and countersubject (bb. 5–6)

The substantial fugue that forms the finale of the E minor Toccata, on the other hand, belongs to a type that was at home in the toccata form and its ‘fantastic style’, namely the *Spiefuge*,⁸⁵ a type that lays special emphasis on manual dexterity, which it typically demonstrates by the use of continuous running semiquavers. Bach’s ample subject comprises a stair-figure, broken-chordal figures, and violinistic pseudo-cross-string (*bariolage*) figures, all of which may be found in *Spiefuge* subjects from the manual toccatas of Reincken, Heidorn, and Buxtehude.⁸⁶ Bach’s subject, however,⁸⁷ is enriched by harmonic and polyphonic implications: its central sequential component implies both the traditional chromatic descent through the interval of a 4th and a counterpoint that produces a series of suspended 7ths. As in other *Spiefugen*, counterpoint is limited—subsidiary parts attending the subject, though regular, merely accompany and add harmony notes—and fugal treatment is restricted to well-spaced entries of the subject. The extended episodes, however (largely based on the stair and cross-string figures) add spice to the fugue, not only by drawing out the ostinato implications of the subject, but by anticipating its headmotive, which both gives rhetorical point to the entries and helps to stitch them into the surrounding texture.

The finales of the D major and G minor Toccatas are both gigue-like fugues, a common form of ending not only in North-German praeludia and toccatas but also in Corelli’s sonatas. The two movements share their dancing trochaic-against-triplet

⁸⁵ A term employed by Stefan Kunze, ‘Gattungen der Fuge in Bachs Wohltemperiertem Klavier’, in M. Geck (ed.), *Bach-Interpretationen* (Göttingen, 1969), pp. 74–93 (esp. 90–1), and since taken up by (among others) George Stauffer, ‘Fugue Types in Bach’s Free Organ Works’, in G. Stauffer and E. May (eds.), *J. S. Bach as Organist* (London, 1986), pp. 133–56 (esp. 134–8).

⁸⁶ All three figures occur in the A major Toccata ascribed to Reincken; the stair figure also occurs in BuxWV 165, and the *bariolage* figure both here and in Heidorn’s Toccata in C.

⁸⁷ Assuming it is Bach’s: a variant of the fugue is, by implication, ascribed to Benedetto Marcello in an Italian MS dated 1726; see Giorgio Pestelli, ‘Un’altra rielaborazione Bachiana: la fuga delle Toccata BWV 914’, *Rivista italiana di musicologica*, 16 (1981), pp. 36–44. Wollny, however (*Krit. Bericht, NBA V/9.1*, pp. 97–8), concludes that the Bach original most likely served as the *Vorlage* (model) for the Italian version, rather than vice versa. This casts doubt on Pestelli’s theory that the contemporary Italian toccata might have formed one of Bach’s stylistic sources (see his ‘Bach, Handel, D. Scarlatti and the Toccata of the Late Baroque’, in P. Williams (ed.), *Bach, Handel, Scarlatti: Tercentenary Essays* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 277–91), which rests on an Italian origin for the finale of BWV 914. There is no evidence that Bach knew the toccatas of Stradella, Alessandro Scarlatti, Durante, and so on.

rhythms⁸⁸ and their relentless drive, but little else. As fugues, they belong to opposite ends of the spectrum: while the G minor employs strict fugal procedures, the D major is a freely fugal fantasia such as we have already encountered in the E major Capriccio, BWV 993. Contrapuntal treatment here extends no further than the simple *Stimm-tausch* of the trivial subject and its counterpoint, which is usually doubled in 3rds or 6ths. And an exhilarating *perpetuum mobile* is built up out of the constant repetition of these combined themes on different scale-degrees, immediately juxtaposed so as to cause abrupt changes of key. Sequences of this kind are often found in the keyboard works of Georg Böhm, who might have picked up the idea from Corelli.⁸⁹ The first of them in the Bach movement (bb. 150–61, D–e–G) is, in an extended form, subject to reprise (bb. 164–83, A–b–D), which is normally foreign to fugue and underlines the free-fantasia character of the piece. The second sequence of this type turns into a protracted excursion into distant tonal regions and back. After modest beginnings (bb. 197–209, A–e–G–b), it continues with a circle-of-5ths scheme (bb. 209–27, b–f♯–c♯–g♯; cf. BWV 993, bb. 55–71), finally reaching G♯ minor, which stands at the furthest possible remove from the tonic. The tonal direction is then reversed in the mainly episodic passage that follows (bb. 228–64). In sum, then, the ample dimensions of this youthful, exuberant piece, in conjunction with its bold, abrupt changes of key and its breathless *perpetuum mobile*, lend it an almost Schubertian character.

The character of the G minor finale is determined by its subject and counter-subject, which dominate the entire texture throughout. The subject (Ex. 10) is divided into question and answer, as it were, by a central rest, as in the structurally related Fugue in A, BWV 949, and in a number of fugues by Buxtehude (for example, BuxWV 136 and 157). A falling diminished 7th, divorced from its customary affective context, bridges the gap at the central watershed. The theme is then grounded on the tonic note and, at the same time, animated by an ostinato reiteration of its tail-figure. Such figural reiteration is common among the ‘motoric’ themes of the North-German school.⁹⁰ But Bach’s subject is strikingly bold in the use it makes of such traditional features, even though both the thematic combination and the fugal structure might have been prompted by a gigue-fugue from Reincken’s *Hortus musicus*.⁹¹ The headmotive, a sequence of rising 4ths, is combined with a chromatic ascent through a 4th. In ascending and descending forms, both of which occur here (the inversion is first heard in bb. 99–100), this is a traditional combination that goes back to Sweelinck’s *Fantasia chromatica* and beyond. And it

⁸⁸ The dotted-quaver rhythms of the G minor finale should presumably be assimilated to the triplets. Giges in C time are common in German sources from Froberger onwards.

⁸⁹ Zehnder, ‘Georg Böhm und J. S. Bach’, pp. 90–1, assumes that Bach’s use of this technique is indebted to Böhm. He does note, however, that its origins are probably Italian, and that many comparable passages may be found in Corelli’s Opp. 3 and 4 (e.g. Op. 3 No. 4, finale, bb. 13ff.).

⁹⁰ Willi Apel, who coined the adjective ‘motoric’, quotes examples of such fugue subjects by Weckmann, Reincken, Heidorn, and Werckmeister; see his *The History of Keyboard Music*, pp. 602, 607, 624, and 627.

⁹¹ See Wollny, ‘Traditionen des phantastischen Stils’, pp. 252–4.

can hardly be coincidental that in four cases of its use by composers known to have influenced the young Bach—Froberger, Kerll, Pachelbel and Kuhnau⁹²—it forms the basis of a fugal structure on similar lines to that of Bach's G minor finale, in which the combined themes are subject to both melodic and contrapuntal inversion. In this case, however, the chromatic movement through a 4th is detached from its traditional affective association with pathos; and Bach wears his contrapuntal learning lightly: once the fugal parameters are established, he does little more than repeat his thematic combination in its various permutations, diversifying it somewhat in texture and key.

Ex. 10



Toccatte in G minor, BWV 915, Fuga (finale), subject

The first half of the movement proceeds in the manner we expect of Bach's early fugues: that is, with an unrelieved series of subject entries in the tonic and dominant. But this is followed by a modulatory phase that includes three entries in the subdominant C minor (bb. 133–44) and two in its relative major E $\flat$ (bb. 146–57), a welcome relief in a fugue otherwise restricted throughout to the minor mode. Even the ultra-subdominant key of F minor (bass entry, b. 160) is reached via a chromatic modulation (bb. 158–9), from which point a series of entries ascends through the circle of 5ths back to the tonic (bb. 160–75; f–c–g), reversing the descent that opened the modulatory phase (bb. 125–36; d–g–c). Only one aspect of this key scheme invites reproach: after the return to the tonic (b. 174), Bach introduces a further treble entry in the dominant D minor (b. 180), leaving too little time for the full re-establishment of the tonic key at the close. In general, however, the key scheme not only contributes to the architecture of the fugue but adds colour to a movement notably lacking in other forms of contrast. This absence is surely purposeful: the combined subjects are repeated, direct or inverted—each of them serving in turn as treble to the other's bass—at such great length and with so little intermission (episodes are few, brief, and unimportant) that the overall impression is of the inexorable drive of a wildly intoxicating dance.

⁹² The works concerned are Froberger's Capriccio No. 2 (1656), section 3; Kerll's Canzona No. 1, section 2; Pachelbel's Ricercar in C minor; and Kuhnau's Praeludium from Part II No. 2, *Neuer Clavier Übung, Andreä Theil* (1692). Kuhnau's piece appears to be modelled on Kerll's.

Fugue—central to Bach’s creative work from the very outset of his composing career—has been considered here largely within the context of large-scale multi-sectional works (sonatas, capriccios, and toccatas), in which its inherent thematicism and contrapuntal texture act as a foil to the quasi-extempore freedom of its surroundings. In the next chapter, however, we consider not only free-standing fugues and fantasias (or preludes) but also the partnership of the two types in the two-movement form of prelude and fugue, which was eventually to become standard for the mature Bach.

Fugue and fantasy I

Bach's name is more readily associated with fugue than with any other mode of composition. Even his earliest works show a preoccupation with fugal writing, and the skill they already exhibit supports his son's observation that 'he became even in his youth a pure and strong fugue writer'.¹ C. P. E. Bach here stresses the studious application of the young self-taught genius, who learnt to write fugues 'through his own study and reflection alone'; and he implies that the young Bach's favourite composers, 'all strong fugue writers', were in this field the main objects of his study: Frescobaldi in Italy; 'some old and good Frenchmen' (presumably Raison, Boyvin, and de Grigny); Froberger, Kerll, J. C. F. Fischer, and N. A. Strunck in South Germany; Pachelbel (and, he might have added, Kuhnau) in Central Germany; and Reincken, Buxtehude, Bruhns, and Böhm in North Germany.² We do not know how much (if any) of Frescobaldi's music Bach was acquainted with before he copied out his *Fiori musicali* in 1714, nor whether he knew any de Grigny before he wrote out his *Premier livre d'orgue* sometime between 1709 and 1712.³ He might have learnt how to use strict fugal procedures from the capriccios, canzonas, ricercars, and fantasias of Froberger, Kerll, and Strunck. The study of Pachelbel might have shown him how to write effective fugues for the keyboard without resorting to special artifice. And from the North Germans he would learn how to incorporate fugue in a large-scale format (such as the prelude or toccata), designed to exhibit both player and instrument to their best advantage.

Many of Bach's early fugues are free-standing, lacking an introductory prelude.⁴ They are sometimes regarded as deviations from the norm of the prelude-and-fugue, and presumed to have been written for study purposes only. However, this is to view Bach's early music from the vantage point of his later development. It would be truer to say that at this stage there was no norm, only a multitude of different formal possibilities. Nor is it possible to determine which compositions were written purely for study purposes and which had functions related to the young Bach's church or court employment.

¹ C. P. E. Bach, letter to Forkel of 13 January 1775; BD III, No. 803; NBR, No. 395. The following quotations are drawn from the same source.

² Reference is made here to Strunck's period of residence in Vienna, Dresden, and Leipzig; to Pachelbel's in Eisenach, Erfurt, and Gotha; and to Böhm's in Hamburg and Lüneburg.

³ See Kirsten Beißwenger, *Johann Sebastian Bachs Notenbibliothek* (Kassel, 1992), VBN I/F/2 and I/G/3.

⁴ Leaving aside doubtful works, these are BWV 574b, 575, 578, 579, 588, 589, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951a, 951, 955, and, in their original form, 532 no. 2 and 542 no. 2.

Most significantly, the free-standing fugue was the norm (and the prelude-and-fugue very much the exception) in the Central-German tradition of Pachelbel and others within which Bach grew up. Many composers in all parts of Germany, however, sought to achieve some kind of accommodation between fugue and fantasy, or 'freye Fantaisie', as Mattheson termed it⁵—that mode of composition in which the composer's imagination is given free rein. The products of fantasy themselves could, of course, be independent in the form of free-standing preludes and fantasias, in which pseudo-improvisatory and structured elements variously interact; and, as we shall see, a prominent series of early Bach pieces belongs to this tradition.⁶ Alternatively, fantasy elements could be incorporated into free-standing fugues, in the form of toccata-style codas or episodes; and this applies to the majority of Bach's early independent fugues.⁷ But the more ambitious composers also sought to give fugue and fantasy roughly equal weight within a large-scale dual or multiple format, thereby achieving some sort of conjunction of opposites. For the distinction between fugue and fantasy is fundamentally that between music constructed on the basis of a subject, whether given or invented, and that which flows directly from the imagination, as set in motion by improvisation. The direct juxtaposition of the two types in Frescobaldi, Froberger, Buxtehude, and others—and hence in early Bach too—has the deliberate effect of highlighting their differences. Fugue in this context may be regarded as a regulative background for the unfolding of the preludial or toccata elements written in the *stylus phantasticus*.⁸ For Bach himself, fugue and fantasy might be regarded as manifestations of two sides of his musical personality that seem to have been equally strong in his earlier years. These might be termed the active and reflective modes: on the one hand, the virtuoso organist and harpsichordist producing music by exploring the possibilities of his instrument; and on the other, the musical thinker creating structures by realizing the potential of a theme or themes, usually in terms of counterpoint. There is an obvious correlation here with C. P. E. Bach's division of his father's works into 'those for which he took the material from improvisations at the keyboard' and those that were 'composed without instrument, but later tried out on one'.⁹ In Bach's early music the dichotomy between the two types is far more pronounced than at any later stage in his career. This is connected with the improvisatory roots of a significant element of his early style. In time this factor gradually diminishes as he develops new and effective means of structuring his non-fugal forms.

We have already considered one form of interaction between fugue and fantasy in early Bach: the large-scale multisectional or multi-movement structure of the sonata, capriccio, and toccata (in relation to BWV 912–15, 963 and 992). Alongside these forms, however, he was already developing the dual prelude-and-fugue structure that would eventually become optimum and paramount. There were precedents, of course. Of

⁵ In his *Exemplarische Organisten-Probe* (Hamburg, 1719), Part II, p. 225.

⁶ Namely, BWV 563, 569, 570, 572, 917, 921, 922, 1121, and, in their original form, 532 no. 1 and 542 no. 1.

⁷ The only exceptions are BWV 542 no. 2, 578, 579, 588, 589, 951a, and 951.

⁸ See Friedhelm Krummacher, 'Bach und die norddeutsche Orgeltocatta: Fragen und Überlegungen', *BJ* 1985, 119–34 (esp. 123).

⁹ Letter to Forkel (n. 1).

Pachelbel's many fugues, a few are preceded by a prelude; and in one case a Praeludium in D minor appears to have been later revised, transposed, and joined to a fugue to form a Praeludium and Fuga in E minor.¹⁰ Bach's uncle Johann Christoph of Eisenach left a *Praeludium und Fuga ex Dis* (that is, in Eb), whose two movements are not only well balanced but unified by a return to the free style of the prelude in a substantial coda at the end of the fugue. The highly variable North-German prelude and toccata on occasion took the form of prelude–fugue–postlude (for example, in Böhm's well-known Praeludium in G minor from the Andreas Bach Book, in Buxtehude's Praeludium in D, BuxWV 139, or in his Toccatas in F and G, BuxWV 157 and 164). Furthermore, both composers from time to time compressed the prelude genre still further, thereby generating the prelude–fugue pair, though usually with a free coda at the end of the fugue, a reduced version of the postlude (see, for example, Böhm's Praeludia in C major and A minor, and BuxWV 138, 144, 145, and 147). In South Germany J. C. F. Fischer established the prelude-and-fugue format as a personal norm, albeit on the small scale of the indigenous verset, publishing a collection of twenty preludes and fugues in different keys under the title *Ariadne musica* in 1702. Bach, however, may have known only the 1715 reprint: there is no unmistakable sign of its influence before *The Well-Tempered Clavier* (dated 1722 but begun some years earlier). For Bach the prelude-and-fugue format, peripheral for his older contemporaries (except Fischer), developed to the point at which it eventually supplanted the old multisectional forms to become the pre-eminent type of freely invented keyboard music, unequalled in dimensions and sophistication. The beginnings of this process may already be observed in some of his earliest keyboard music.

Prelude and fugue

Title	Earliest source/s	Scribe, date
Praeludium con Fuga in a, BWV 551	Berlin, P 595/7 Leipzig, Ms. 7	J. Ringk, after 1730? J. N. Mempel, 1730s
Praeludium et Fuga in E, BWV 566	Berlin, P 803 Berlin, P 286/3	J. T. Krebs, after 1714 J. P. Kellner, 1726/7
Praeludium et Fuga in C, BWV 531	MM 32	J. C. Bach, c. 1704–7
Praeludium et Fuga in d, BWV 549a	MM 42	J. C. Bach, c. 1704–7
Praeludium et Fuga in g, BWV 535a	MM 23	Autograph, c. 1706/7
Praeludium et Fuga in e, BWV 533a	Leipzig, Ms. 7	J. G. Preller, 1740s
Praeludium cum Fuga in a, BWV 895	Yale, LM 4982	J. C. Bach of Gehren, before 1715? ¹¹
Praeludium [et Fuga] in A, BWV 896	Berlin, P 804/9 MM 34	Anon., 1726/7 J. C. Bach, c. 1704–7

¹⁰ See Johann Pachelbel, *Toccaten, Fantasien, Praeludien, Fugen, Ricercare und Ciaconen*, ed. Anne M. Gurgel, 2 vols (Leipzig, 1982), ii, No. 16.

¹¹ See Yoshitake Kobayashi, 'Der Gehrner Kantor Johann Christoph Bach (1673–1727) und seine Sammelbände mit Musik für Tasteninstrumente', in W. Rehm (ed.), *Bachiana et alia musicologica: Festschrift Alfred Dürr* (Kassel, 1983), pp. 168–77 (esp. 173–4).

The first two works listed survive only in later sources, but the internal evidence for a pre-1707 dating is overwhelming: above all, the wholehearted adoption of the North-German style, which must belong to the early period of its maximal influence.¹² All the other preludes and fugues are preserved in the same pre-1707 source, the Möller Manuscript, with the exception of the small E minor and A minor compositions (BWV 533a and 895), whose style, however, unambiguously points to the same period.¹³

To a large extent these works reflect the vivid impression made on the young Bach by the North-German *stylus phantasticus* (fantastic style)—‘the most free and unrestrained manner of composing’¹⁴—as represented above all by the preludia of Dieterich Buxtehude. It is now known that Bach’s acquaintance with these preludia to some extent antedates his winter sojourn in Buxtehude’s home town of Lübeck in 1705–6. For his elder brother Johann Christoph, possibly with the young Bach’s help, copied out the Praeludium in G minor, BuxWV 148, during the period 1695–1700 when Johann Sebastian resided in his Ohrdruf home.¹⁵ Bach’s own early Praeludia in A minor, BWV 551, and E major, BWV 566 are clearly attempts to emulate the Lübeck master’s style. Despite their full titles, which imply the prelude–fugue duality that later became standard for Bach, both works exhibit the alternating sectional form prelude–fugue–interlude–fugue–postlude, and thus represent the nearest approach Bach ever made to the most characteristic form of the North-German preludium and toccata. It has already been noticed how Bach adapted elements of that form and its associated style for his own purposes in the manual toccatas. The A minor and E major Praeludia, however, apparently belong to a somewhat earlier stage, when the young composer was much more reliant on his models and intent on imitating them to the best of his ability.¹⁶ Furthermore, they belong to a different, though related, tradition: that of the preludium with obbligato pedals rather than the toccata *manualiter*. Thus Bach must have had the full resources of the North-German organ in mind when he wrote them.¹⁷

The two works, however, explore quite different facets of that tradition. The A minor Praeludium is a good deal closer to the true spirit of the *stylus phantasticus*. The emphasis here is on continuity: there is no question of division into self-contained movements, but rather into relatively brief sections that follow one another without a break, like the

¹² Jean-Claude Zehnder, ‘Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung in der Mühlhäuser und Weimarer Zeit’, *Das Frühwerk*, pp. 311–38, esp. 331, gives plausible grounds for including BWV 566 among a group of works centred on c. 1707–8, the earliest of which may go back to about 1705. BWV 551 seems still less mature.

¹³ Zehnder (n. 12) places BWV 895 within the same work group as BWV 566.

¹⁴ Athanasius Kircher, *Musurgia universalis* (Rome, 1650); quoted by Kerala J. Snyder, *Dieterich Buxtehude: Organist in Lübeck* (New York and London, 1987), p. 251.

¹⁵ See Hans-Joachim Schulze, ‘Bach und Buxtehude: eine wenig beachtete Quelle in der Carnegie Library zu Pittsburgh/PA’, *BJ* 1991, pp. 177–81; and Donald O. Franklin, ‘The Carnegie Manuscript and J. S. Bach’, *Bach*, 22 (1991), pp. 5–15.

¹⁶ In the light of the Bach-Buxtehude MS cited above (n. 15), one can no longer confidently link the E major Praeludium with Bach’s Lübeck visit of 1705–6, as is often done.

¹⁷ Bach would have heard Reincken play the great four-manual organ of the Catherinenkirche, Hamburg, during his visits to that city from Lüneburg in 1700–2; see the obituary, BD III, No. 666; *NBR*, No. 306 (p. 300).

spontaneous thoughts of an improviser. The first fugue, in particular, is so brief and incomplete-sounding—ending in the relative major, C¹⁸—and its counterpoint so rudimentary,¹⁹ that it functions as no more than a transient stage in the unfolding of the composer's fantasy. The second fugue (beginning at b. 39), however, is an altogether weightier affair: being founded on a double subject (that is, subject and counter-subject combined *ab initio*),²⁰ it necessarily involves invertible counterpoint. But after a modulation to the relative major C, as at the end of the first fugue, it breaks into an entirely new and unexpected development (b. 63): a stretto on a variant of the double subject, which returns to the tonic via the circle of 5ths (c–g–d–a). As sometimes happens in Buxtehude's praeludia, the postlude (b. 75) is designed harmonically as a single, massive plagal cadence. It exhibits all the trappings of the North-German 'fantastic style': running semiquavers in both hands, pedal solos, pedal points, tremolo in 6ths, and the Buxtehudian sharpened 4th in the final bar.²¹ Even the pair of figures in *Stimmtausch* (exchange of parts) that forms the motivic kernel of the whole composition has a clear counterpart in Buxtehude (Ex. 1). But the ingenuity with which it generates all subsequent themes through subtle application of the traditional device of thematic transformation is new, and by far the most interesting feature of the work as a whole.

Ex. 1



a) Buxtehude: Fugue in B $\flat$, BuxWV 176, bb. 31–2



b) Bach: Praeludium in A minor, BWV 551, b. 54

As far as overall structure is concerned, the E major Praeludium goes to the opposite extreme. With the exception of the interlude (bb. 123–33), a brief connecting link between the two fugues, the individual sections (prelude, first fugue, and second fugue, into which the postlude is fully integrated) are tonally closed and so ample

¹⁸ Fugues ending in keys other than the tonic are found occasionally among Buxtehude's praeludia: see BuxWV 136, section 4; 155, sections 2 and 3; and 156, section 2.

¹⁹ Though any judgements on the piece must take into account the highly erroneous source. Various emendations have been suggested by Hugh J. McLean, 'BWV 551: a Bachian Orphan', *Bach*, 24 (1993), pp. 35–42.

²⁰ A procedure quite common in Buxtehude and early Bach; see, for example, BuxWV 136, 151, and 155; and BWV 579, 912a no. 3, and 914 no. 2.

²¹ Which, according to Peter Williams, 'prepares acceptance of a tonic when the ear has become accustomed to its subdominant'; see his *The Organ Music of J. S. Bach*, i (Cambridge, 1980), p. 183. This explanation has been omitted from the 2nd edn (Cambridge, 2003), p. 133.

and self-sufficient that they are able to function as separate movements in their own right. The introduction and the fugal movement that follows form a prelude-and-fugue pair indistinguishable in structure from those the young Bach designed as such (apart from the absence of a free coda to the fugue, unnecessary in a work that was incomplete at this point); and indeed some sources contain only these two movements.²² Thematic transformation is far more circumscribed and straightforward than in the A minor Praeludium: only the canzona-style headmotive of the first fugue is subject to a triple-time variant in the second fugue, not the leisurely sequence that follows. The most impressive feature of all is the rhetoric of the second fugue and, in particular, of the postlude into which it seamlessly flows—Bach's own recreation of the exalted rhetoric of the North Germans. Exposition, counter-exposition, and final section (bb. 134, 151, and 182) all open with a subject entry in the tenor voice, which asserts the dominant note *b* by insistent repetition. Despite the abandonment of contrapuntal texture in the postlude (b. 204), the subject in this very form maintains its assertive power (bb. 206–9, 213–14), introducing twelve bars built on a dominant pedal (bb. 213–24), which feature a pedal solo, double pedal-point, and manual toccata figuration. At last the dominant note of the subject is resolved on to the tonic in a concluding cadence of massive seven-part chords (bb. 225–7). In a final stroke of irony, however, the chords of the brief coda that follows lead up to the dominant note *b*.²³ What chiefly distinguishes this postlude from its North-German equivalents is its essential thematicism: whereas Buxtehude's toccata-style passages tend to roam free of all thematic constraint, Bach's rhetoric here takes its cue from the very headmotive of the subject itself, so that the postlude remains thematic to the very end—an early instance of the tight control that Bach will increasingly exercise over his material.²⁴

It is curious that, at the time when he was writing multisectional preludia, Bach had already begun to develop the dual prelude-and-fugue form; or at least, so we gather from the significantly greater maturity of the E major Praeludium compared with the Preludes and Fugues in C major and D minor, BWV 531 and 549a, both in fugal structure and in the use of obbligato pedal. Our surprise, however, is conditioned by our knowledge of Bach's future development. It is more than likely that in those early years he had not yet settled on the dual structure as the way forward, but was content to explore a variety of different formal structures. Nor can the form of his early preludes and fugues, in any case, be accurately described as 'dual': those that require pedals (BWV 531, 549a, and 535a), all preserved in the Möller Manuscript and thus dating from before about 1707, tend to reflect the tripartite

²² Including four of the six MS sources of the E major version (one of which is lost) and two of the nine sources of the C major version; see Dietrich Kilian, *Krit. Bericht, NBA IV/5–6* (Kassel and Leipzig, 1978–9), p. 523.

²³ cf. the codettas that close BWV 820 no. 1, 992 no. 6, and 1102.

²⁴ Krummacher, 'Bach und die norddeutsche Orgeltoccatà', p. 126, also stresses the thematic nature of the postlude in his discussion of BWV 566.

form—a North-German option, as we have seen—in their return to the free-fantasy style of the prelude in a substantial coda or postlude at the end of the fugue. As a result, the fugue is framed by writing in a pseudo-improvisatory style, as if the composition as a whole, like a typical improvisation, coalesces into structured form at its centre only to dissolve once again into rhapsodic freedom at the close.

The Preludes and Fugues in C major and D minor, which have much in common,²⁵ apparently reflect a somewhat earlier stage in Bach's development than the pair in G minor (BWV 535a). This is most clearly evident in the rudimentary use made of the pedalboard in their fugues: it is used as an occasional resource for calculated effect,²⁶ not as an ongoing, integral part of the texture. Thus, in the C major fugue, the pedals make no entry till the end of the counter-exposition (b. 23), and then they enter not with the subject itself but with a free part—unthinkable in Bach's mature organ fugues. They are then silent again till the postlude, in which they play little more than pedal points. In the D minor fugue, the pedals take no part at all until the very last subject entry (b. 40), which is assigned to them. At this point, however, contrapuntal texture is abandoned in favour of an accompaniment of massive chords for rapidly alternating hands; and the pedal subject entry flows directly into an alternate-foot pedal solo, introducing the spacious rhetoric of the postlude. Inextricably linked with pedal use is the nature of the contrapuntal texture: the Fugues in C major and D minor are loosely constructed as regards the number and disposition of parts. The bass part is mostly in the manuals rather than the pedals; and although there are nominally four parts (in accordance with the four subject entries in the opening exposition), the texture at any one point is almost always in two or three parts—no real four-part writing occurs at any time. Restricted pedal use and relatively loose part-writing go hand in hand with another clear sign of immaturity: the subject invariably enters on the tonic or dominant, so that modulation to other keys occurs only during the digressive episodes. In other words, modulation has not yet become a central factor in Bach's structural thinking. At this stage it is used merely to provide variety and local colour in the episodes, and as an incidental means of 'colouring' some of the later tonic or dominant subject entries.²⁷ If all expositions contain nothing but tonic and dominant entries, it is very hard to impart to a fugue a clear sense of beginning, middle, and end. Consequently, the structure of these early fugues—the attempt to give them an aurally meaningful overall shape—gives the impression of having been improvised on an ad hoc basis.

²⁵ A detailed comparison is made by Williams, *The Organ Music* (2nd edn), pp. 125–6.

²⁶ As Werner Breig points out in his 'Formprobleme in Bachs frühen Orgelfugen', *BJ* 1992, pp. 7–21 (esp. 11–13); Eng. trans. as 'Form Problems in Bach's Early Organ Fugues', in P. Brainard and R. Robinson (eds.), *A Bach Tribute: Essays in Honor of William H. Scheide* (Kassel and Chapel Hill, 1993), pp. 45–56 (esp. 48).

²⁷ The tonic entry in b. 41 of the C major Fugue, for example, is at first briefly 'coloured' by the minor keys of e and d. Such incidental key colour during subject entries is common in German fugues of the late seventeenth century.

In all these respects, the G minor fugue represents a decisive step forward: the essential parameters of Bach's mature organ fugues are here already in place. The pedalboard is fully active from the outset as the bass of a contrapuntal texture of four obbligato parts²⁸—a sine qua non of the composer's large-scale organ fugues thereafter. And the four-phase structure that would later become standard—exposition, counter-exposition, modulatory phase, and conclusion—is already in operation here, perhaps for the first time in his works.²⁹ The counter-exposition (b. 25) is clearly differentiated from the exposition by its purely *manualiter* execution (which necessarily involves a restriction to three voices and three subject entries), its more spacious episodes, and its tonally open character: whereas the exposition full-closes in the tonic (b. 24), the counter-exposition merges directly into the modulatory phase (b. 43). This phase is marked by the return of the pedals and by the happy contrast of a subject entry in the opposite mode (B $\flat$ major). In the conclusion (b. 64), the return of the tonic key coincides exactly with the climactic final subject entry in the pedals. Thus key and theme here become fully coordinated elements of structure. As in the D minor fugue, the concluding pedal entry leads directly into the postlude,³⁰ with its North-German-style rhetoric: tremolo figure, pedal solo, sharp harmonic juxtaposition (Neapolitan bII with dominant 6–4–2 chord), treble cadenza, and chromatic descent against a pedal point.

The preludes that introduce these three fugues all exhibit the pseudo-improvisatory style and threefold structure—introduction, development, conclusion—that have been identified³¹ as typical of Bach's early preludes. Pieces of this kind tend to unfold in the manner of an actual or imaginary improvisation. They are introduced by a *passaggio*—a brilliant, rhythmically free passage, usually made up of a single line of very rapid notes divided between the hands, or for alternate-foot pedalling. This introductory passage has the harmonic function of establishing the tonic key, from which brief excursions might be made into related keys in the 'development' that follows. This central passage, usually the most significant in size and content, is typically marked by a consolidation into fuller texture, stricter rhythm, and motivic writing, which might refer back to the material of the introductory *passaggio*. Finally, the conclusion re-establishes the tonic key and might involve a return to the free style of the opening.

²⁸ This is true also of BWV 566, which suggests that it might have been nearer in date to BWV 535a than to BWV 531 or 549a.

²⁹ This structure has been identified by W. Breig, 'Formprobleme'; see also his 'Versuch einer Theorie der Bachschen Orgelfuge', *Die Musikforschung*, 48 (1995), pp. 14–52, and his 'Freie Orgelwerke', in K. Küster (ed.), *Bach-Handbuch* (Kassel and Stuttgart, 1999), pp. 614–712.

³⁰ This account assumes that the postlude of the original version, BWV 535a, which is lost, was similar to that of the revised version, BWV 535. This seems likely, since the changes made to the fugue elsewhere are not structural.

³¹ By George B. Stauffer, *The Organ Preludes of J. S. Bach* (Ann Arbor, 1980), pp. 37–42. Stauffer's term for this prelude structure, 'through-composed sectional form', is avoided here, since most of the preludes concerned cannot really be described as sectional.

The introductory passage of the Preludes in C major and D minor consists of an extended pedal solo, whose chief motive is then taken up by the manuals in the central 'development'. In both cases, this middle passage is clearly organized in harmonic terms, being founded upon long-range progressions of the primary chords (I, IV, and V) and their associated keys. The free conclusion of the C major prelude is marked by massive seven-part chords in a sudden acceleration of the harmonic rhythm, from which the treble extracts itself for a prolonged cadenza in demisemiquavers. The equivalent passage of the D minor Prelude is built over a massive plagal cadence (bb. 25–9), as redolent of the North-German style as the abrupt, capricious changes of texture (imitation—repeated chords—*style brisé*—repeated chords) that precede it. It is paradoxical, in view of the manifestly greater maturity of its fugue, that the G minor composition opens, by contrast, with the most primitive prelude, perhaps no more than a written-down improvisation.³² Significantly, Bach later undertook a radical revision of the prelude, more than doubling its length, in order to render it a more worthy companion to the following fugue (see below, Part II Ch. 3). The original prelude lacks modulation, and its middle passage (bb. 7–15a) is restricted to two figures, a dotted rhythm and a broken chord, related neither to each other nor to the introductory *passaggio* (which is here so labelled). Textural consolidation is delayed until the conclusion (b. 15b), a climactic 'tutti' in full five-part harmony, led by a sustained treble descent through a 9th from high supertonic to low tonic (a^2 – g^1). This passage alone Bach thought worthy of preservation when he undertook the revised version.

Whereas these preludes and fugues *pedaliter* inaugurated a long and distinguished line of development, the three early preludes and fugues for manuals only (BWV 533a, 895, and 896) seem to have remained isolated within Bach's *oeuvre*. They were not, as far as we know, followed up in Weimar (the big A minor compositions, BWV 944 and 894, belong to a quite different tradition); and for Bach the manual prelude and fugue does not seem to have been established as a distinct entity until *The Well-Tempered Clavier* of 1722. The young Bach might have found models in his own local provinces of Thuringia and Saxony (in the works of Johann Christoph Bach, Pachelbel, Buttstedt, or Witt, for example), but instead the northern influence is predominant, and the Preludes and Fugues in E minor, BWV 533a, and A minor, BWV 895³³ are virtually indistinguishable in style from those with pedals, save for their smaller scale. They show a similar mix of fugue and fantasy, apart from the absence of a return to fantasy after the E minor fugue. This may be a direct consequence of the specific conception of this work: since the substantial prelude roughly equals the fugue in length, the two movements

³² As has been suggested by Stauffer, *The Organ Preludes*, p. 97.

³³ BWV 533a is preserved only in a MS copy of J. G. Preller's from the 1740s. Kilian, *Krit. Bericht* IV/5–6, p. 581, concludes on the basis of source studies that it is an early version of BWV 533: the earliest source of that work (P 425, Johannes Ringk) contains a series of variants that correspond with BWV 533a. In addition, Preller is now known to be a more reliable scribe than was formerly thought—see Uwe Wolf, *Krit. Bericht*, NBAV/9.2 (Kassel and Leipzig, 2000), p. 63. The whole question is discussed in detail by Breig, 'Freie Orgelwerke', pp. 702–3, who also concludes that BWV 533a is an early version. Concerning BWV 895, see Russell Stinson, *The Bach Manuscripts of Johann Peter Kellner and his Circle* (Durham and London, 1989), pp. 125–6.

form equal partners; and since the fantasy element is already fully explored in the prelude, a return to it after the fugue might have been felt to upset the balance.

The Prelude and Fugue in A, BWV 896³⁴ is radically different in conception. Free fantasy would have seemed quite irrelevant as an introduction or coda to this essay in strict fugal procedures, so it is eschewed in the prelude in favour of a keyboard aria in the style of Kuhnau.³⁵ The piece is written in a simple, song-like style, regular in phrase structure and concluding with a *petite reprise*. Though slight and unimportant in itself, it possesses some significance as an early attempt to diversify the style of the manuals-only prelude, an attempt that will ultimately bear fruit in the inexhaustible riches of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*. The Preludes in E minor and A minor, on the other hand, differ little in style or structure from the preludes *pedaliter* already considered. While the A minor Prelude exemplifies the standard three-phase structure in miniature, the E minor brings to it greater breadth and substance. Opening *passaggio* (bb. 1–5 and 6–13a) and central phase (bb. 13b–19 and 20–24) are each subdivided into two distinct periods; and the conclusion (bb. 25–34) derives its rhetoric of cadential delay in part from repeated returns to the central material. The main, central passage, written in a fully consolidated five-part texture, employs one of the standard procedures of Bach's early music, already noticed in the toccatas: the fixed pattern, varied only by exchange of parts, and employed as a vehicle for harmonic sequences. Here Bach employs two such patterns, of which the first very clearly anticipates the main idea of the following fugue.

The Fugues (except the A major), like the Preludes, differ from their *pedaliter* counterparts only in their smaller scale. The E minor Fugue is restricted to a double exposition only, a structure Bach normally employs only where a fugue acts as part of a larger composition.³⁶ In comparison with the exposition, the counter-exposition (b. 19) is heightened by virtue of its considerably denser texture. The most significant idea of the whole work, already anticipated in the prelude (bb. 13b–19), is the hocketing to and fro between subject and countersubject of the rest-quaver-crotchet figure, which vividly recalls the fugue from Buxtehude's *Praeludium in D*, BuxWV 139 (Ex. 2). Most impressive are the first and last entries of the counter-exposition (bb. 19 and 33b), where the insistent dominant note of the subject in *dux* form (see Part I Ch. 2, p. 33) is pitted against chords in massed handfolds. The A minor Fugue, though roughly the same length, nonetheless manages to fit a third exposition (b. 17)—including subdominant entry (b. 24)—and conclusion (b. 26b) into its modest extent. The final climax is partly built up by fugal means, rather than relying solely on the return of the free fantasy of the prelude: an octave stretto between the outer parts (bb. 26b/27b) leads up to the highest

³⁴ Both text and style of the work are discussed at some length in Hill diss., pp. 343–4 and 435–9.

³⁵ Kuhnau wrote a prelude in a similar style (entitled 'Sonatina') for Part II No. 4 in F from his *Neuer Clavier Übung, Erster Theil* (Leipzig, 1689). The first Aria in *Suonata terza* from his *Frische Clavier Früchte* (Leipzig, 1696) moves in continuous dotted rhythms like BWV 896 no. 1. The dotted-against-even quavers of this prelude may also be found in pieces by Buxtehude and Böhm.

³⁶ As in the first fugue of BWV 551 and 588, or the third movement of BWV 912a.

chord of the movement (b. 29, second crotchet), from which point a cadenza falls through nearly four octaves ($b^2 - D^\sharp$) in preparation for the final cadence.

Ex. 2



a) Buxtehude: Praeludium in D, BuxWV 139, subject and countersubject (bb. 23–5)



b) Bach: Fugue in E minor, BWV 533a no. 2, subject and countersubject (bb. 10–11; bass omitted)

In the majority of these early fugues, it is obvious that Bach is more concerned with their effectiveness in performance as organ or harpsichord music than with contrapuntal procedures, which are restricted to the minimum requirements of fugal technique. That he was already keenly interested in the devices of strict counterpoint, however, is clear from the A major Fugue, a brilliant display of contrapuntal skill on the part of the youthful composer. It is possible that he developed this skill primarily through the study of fugal works within the South-German tradition of Froberger, Kerll, and Pachelbel—composers whose music he had first become acquainted with during his teenage years in Ohrdruf (1695–1700). The A major Fugue takes the form of a stretto-cum-inversion fugue, a combination for which precedents may be found within this tradition, notably the first section of Kerll's *Canzona No. 4*, Pachelbel's *Fuga chromatica in E minor*, and N. A. Strunck's *Ricercar sopra la morte della mia carissima madre* (Venice, 1685). A forerunner of Bach's mature stretto fugues (such as the *Alla Breve*, BWV 589, or the Fugue in C from *The Well-Tempered Clavier I*, BWV 846 no. 2), the A major Fugue introduces as many as five different strettos (that of b. 28 being simply a double-counterpoint inversion of b. 24b), involving both direct and inverted forms of the subject, as follows:

Bar	Exposition	Form of subject	Interval	Distance
24b	II	rectus	upper 5th	½-bar
28	II	rectus	lower 4th	½-bar
34	III	rectus	lower 4th	1 bar
48	IV	rectus/inversus	upper 4th	½-bar
60b	V	inversus	lower 5th	1 bar
66	V	rectus/inversus	lower 4th	1 bar

Thus inversion is not used throughout but enters in the last two expositions (nos. IV and V) as a further means of variation, and as a culminating device. Bach wears his learning lightly in this fugue. Though presumably one of his first essays in strict counterpoint, it is not written in the *stile antico*—the pseudo-vocal style ultimately derived from Renaissance polyphony and traditionally associated with contrapuntal artifice—but rather in a light dance style and in the rhythm of a gigue. Gigue-fugues are found among the versets of Kerll's *Modulatio organica* (1686) and among the dance movements from Reincken's *Hortus musicus* (1687); and these are perhaps the likeliest models for Bach's youthful exercise in strict fugue with a charming countenance.³⁷

Fugue

Title	Earliest source/s	Scribe, date
Canzona in d, BWV 588	MM 27 Leipzig, Ms. 7	J. C. Bach, c. 1704–7 J. G. Preller, 1740s
Fuga in c, BWV 575	Berlin, P 247/3 Leipzig, Go.S.310	Anon., c. 1730 Anon., c. 1740
Fuga in a, BWV 947	[not extant]	—
Fuga in A, BWV 949	ABB 19	J. C. Bach, c. 1707–13
Fuga in B♭, BWV 955	Berlin, P 425/2 Berlin, P 247/3 Berlin, P 595/9	Anon., 1726/7 Anon., c. 1730 J. Ringk, after 1730?

A full account of Bach's early fugues without prelude would include those based on themes by Corelli and Albinoni (BWV 579, 946, 950, and 951a) that were considered in the previous chapter. The above list brings together a motley assortment of fugues that bear little obvious relation to one another. For each of them, however, clear counterparts may be found elsewhere among Bach's early compositions; and these support the authenticity of fugues often considered doubtful (such as BWV 947 and 955) and the assignment to them of an early date.

Bach's authorship of the Canzona and of the Fugue in A is assured by the identity of the scribe in their principal source. In the case of the Canzona, the source itself points to a date of origin before 1707. The Andreas Bach Book allows for a later dating of the A major Fugue, but various stylistic and structural similarities with Bach's other early fugues suggest that it is unlikely to have originated after about 1707.³⁸ These include the free coda, in which the pedalboard is required for the first and only time;³⁹

³⁷ The possibility that Reincken's gigue-fugues might have served as Bach's models has been suggested by David Schulenberg, *The Keyboard Music of J. S. Bach* (London, 1993), p. 47.

³⁸ Krüger diss., pp. 109–11, even places it chronologically before BWV 992 and 535a—thus before about 1704.

³⁹ cf. BWV 575, 946, 950, and 993.

the restricted use of subsidiary keys for subject entries; and the close structural links with the other A major Fugue discussed above (BWV 896 no. 2). The authenticity of the C minor Fugue is not in dispute: its two principal sources date from Bach's lifetime, and the later of the two is thought to have originated within his circle of pupils.⁴⁰ The dating of the work within his early period⁴¹ rests on internal, stylistic factors only; these are, however, unambiguous (see below). In the absence of sources,⁴² Bach's authorship of the Fugue in A minor, BWV 947 can neither be established nor refuted by external means. Despite doubts voiced by commentators, however,⁴³ close inner connections with the less formal of Bach's early fugues⁴⁴ form a compelling argument for the work's authenticity. It has been demonstrated how Bach's authorship of the Fugue in B $\flat$, BWV 955, can be established by source-critical methods, despite a conflicting attribution in one of the sources.⁴⁵ And the narrow tonal range (with only one subject entry outside the tonic or dominant), the incidental use of pedals, and the free conclusion with cadenza all point clearly to Bach's early (pre-1707) period.⁴⁶

These fugues testify to the diverse styles of fugal writing that Bach was interested in exploring during his early years. They range from informal, freely composed fugues (BWV 575, 947) to relatively strict, formal pieces (BWV 588, 949), with the B $\flat$ major (BWV 955) occupying the middle ground. The Fugue in C minor, BWV 575, has in common with the early organ fugues in C major and D minor (BWV 531 no. 2 and 549a no. 2) its restricted use of pedal and key, and its loose approach to part-writing. Despite the four-entry exposition, the texture is predominantly in three parts, and there is no further bass subject entry after the fourth entry of the exposition. The subject enters in no key other than tonic or dominant; and the entire fugue is playable on manuals only—the pedals enter only for the free coda. This amounts to a full-scale free-fantasy postlude in North-German style, complete with manual ostinatos over moving pedal parts, cadenza, and pedal solo. The fugue subject (Ex. 3) belongs to the *Spiefuge* type in continuous semiquavers (see Part I Ch. 2, p. 45), common in Buxtehude's canzonas and canzonettas as well as in North-German toccatas. The violinistic 'cross-string' figure recalls the fugal finale of the E minor Toccata, BWV 914, as does the imitative anticipation of the headmotive, which gives dramatic point to

⁴⁰ See Kilian, *Krit. Bericht* IV/5–6, p. 141 (Source B 144: Leipzig, Go.S.310).

⁴¹ Zehnder, 'Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung', p. 330, places it within a group of works centred on c. 1707–8, some of which might go back to as early as 1705.

⁴² Two MS copies from Forkel's estate, one of which was in the hand of J. P. Kellner, were available to Grienpenkerl for his Peters edition (Leipzig, 1847), but have since disappeared.

⁴³ See Schulenberg, *The Keyboard Music*, p. 50. On the grounds of doubtful authenticity, Uwe Wolf omitted the work from *NBAV*/9.2.

⁴⁴ BWV 993, 551 (4th section), 531 no. 2, and, above all, 912a (finale).

⁴⁵ See Karl Heller, 'Die Klavierfuge BWV 955: zur Frage ihres Autors und ihrer verschiedenen Fassungen', *Das Frühwerk*, pp. 130–41.

⁴⁶ Zehnder, 'Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung', p. 331, places it within the same work group as BWV 575 (see above, n. 41).

two of the later subject entries (bb. 47 and 57).⁴⁷ The capricious, volatile manner in which the subject is twice abruptly broken off by rests is one of the clearest signs of Bach's early allegiance to the 'fantastic style'.⁴⁸

Ex. 3



Fugue in C minor, BWV 575, subject

If the C minor Fugue breathes the air of the *stylus phantasticus*, that in A minor, BWV 947, while no less freely constructed, is far more Italianate and indebted to Corelli and Böhm. In the later stages of the fugue, the subject is treated in a form of modulatory sequence common in the works of both composers: abrupt tonal shifts upwards by a 3rd and then a 2nd (bb. 48b–53: a–C–d; bb. 54–8: d–F–g). This passage is virtually identical in structure with part of the finale from the Toccata in D (BWV 912a, bb. 50–83). The A minor subject, however, is extended by inner repetition (already an integral feature of the D major subject)—a speciality of Georg Böhm,⁴⁹ who likewise unites it with abrupt tonal shifts in the closing bars of the fugue from his Praeludium in G minor (bb. 50 ff.: c–Bb–g). Elsewhere in the A minor fugue, the standard technique of fugal entries a 5th apart is applied to an entire modulating exposition governed by the circle of 5ths (bb. 33–40: C–G–d–a). Again, a similar scheme is encountered in the finale of the D major Toccata (bb. 209–27: b–f#–c#–g#);⁵⁰ but the closest parallel is the stretto passage from the A minor Praeludium (BWV 551, bb. 63–74), where the key scheme is identical (relative major C to tonic A minor). In the last twenty bars of the A minor fugue, the suspension chain is used effectively as a framework for a recurring episodic formulation: two figures extracted from the subject are accompanied by a chain of suspensions in a three-part texture (bb. 60–2). This sequence is subsequently repeated twice with interchanged parts, now accompanied by full chords in a rich five-part texture (bb. 73–5, 77–9). Here the suspension chain provides the means of incorporating motivic sequences within a large, powerful harmonic framework, the whole of which may be varied by exchange of parts. The presence of such structures in the early Corelli fugue (BWV 579, bb. 45, 58, and 79) and

⁴⁷ Links between the two works are noted by Williams, *The Organ Music*, p. 175.

⁴⁸ A comparable case is Bruhns's larger Praeludium in E minor, second fugue, whose subject is quoted by Willi Apel, *The History of Keyboard Music to 1700* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1972), p. 638.

⁴⁹ See J.-C. Zehnder, 'Georg Böhm und J. S. Bach: zur Chronologie der Bachschen Stilentwicklung', *BJ* 1988, pp. 73–110 (esp. 95).

⁵⁰ Other examples are BWV 993, bb. 55–71, and BuxWV 139, section 2, bb. 45–50.

in the Corelli sonata on which it was based, suggests that in this area it was the Italian composer who was the decisive influence.

The chief interest of the B $\flat$ major Fugue, BWV 955 lies in a very different kind of recurring episodic formulation. First heard in b. 24, it exemplifies the mode of construction on the basis of a fixed pattern that has been noted as characteristic of Bach's early music. The very distinctive pattern in this case involves internal repetition, 'question and answer' in responsorial style, and tonic-dominant oscillation (a style of pattern play frequently encountered among the works of Georg Böhm). Bach's formulation, varied by transposition and by *Stimmtausch* (exchange of parts), recurs in all but one of the episodes that follow its initial statement in a rondeau-like alternation with the subject entries.⁵¹ Already, it appears, Bach is showing dissatisfaction with the loose, rambling episodes that tend to characterize his early fugues (for example, those of the first fugue from the E major Praeludium, BWV 566), and seeking new, more binding methods of structuring them. This particular method—varied recurrence, contrast with the subject—will in Weimar bear fruit in the great fugue from the D minor Toccata, BWV 538.

The two pieces from Johann Christoph Bach's collections—the Canzona in D minor, BWV 588, and the Fugue in A, BWV 949—are both strict fugues of one kind or another. In the highly retrospective D minor piece, Bach adopts the variation canzona form that he would have encountered in the works of Frescobaldi, Froberger, Kerll, and Buxtehude. It consists of two fugues, the second of which is based on triple-time variants of the original subject and countersubject. These themes are handled quite formally: the first section is largely devoted to their strict double counterpoint, while the second is a double fugue, the two subjects being combined *ab initio*. Accordingly, the work adheres strictly to four-part texture throughout, and the fantasy element that enters into so many of Bach's early fugues is altogether absent. In another strict fugue (BWV 896 no. 2) we found Bach following Kerll's or Reincken's example in uniting contrapuntal artifice with a light dance style. Not so here, however: the counterpoint is written in a traditional, pseudo-vocal style such as Bach would have known from the polyphonic keyboard works of (among others) Johann Jakob Froberger—works written in a strict four parts and notated in four-stave open score in the original manuscripts. In keeping with this formal style, Bach's Canzona employs the traditional thematic combination of the chromatic descent through a 4th in counterpoint with a sequential pattern of falling 4ths, a combination that we encounter in the canzonas and capriccios of Froberger, Kerll and Strunck.⁵² Elsewhere (in Part I Ch. 2) we have

⁵¹ This fugue is not alone among Bach's early works in its consistent, clearly differentiated episodes. All but one of the episodes in the second fugue from BWV 551 are based on two combined figures drawn from the first fugue, worked in *Stimmtausch*. The episodes throughout the first half of BWV 947 derive sequential *Stimmtausch* formations from the tail-figure of the subject, both in plain form and decorated by idiomatic keyboard figuration.

⁵² Froberger: Capriccio No. 2, section 3 (1656); Kerll: Canzona No. 1, section 2; Strunck: Capriccio in F (1683).

noted Bach’s application of this time-honoured subject combination, in variant form, to a radically different style in the finale of the G minor Toccata, BWV 915.

Like that movement, the Fugue in A, BWV 949, is essentially a play on direct and inverted forms of its subject. Melodic inversion is here used not as an extra form of variation, as in the other early A major Fugue, BWV 896 no. 2, but as the primary device, so that we are justified in speaking of an inversion fugue. Subject inversion determines the entire structure, which is divisible into three: exposition of the direct subject; exposition of the inverted subject; and exposition of the direct and inverted subject together. A similar basic scheme may be found in fugal works by Buxtehude (Fuga in G, BuxWV 175), Reincken (Toccata in G, fourth section), and Pachelbel (Ricercar in C minor). Already in Bach’s middle section, however, the *inversus* is at one point answered by the *rectus* (bb. 47–9); and this formulation then twice forms a climax in the final section (lower parts of bb. 65–7 and 74b–77), on the last occasion in the reverse order. Keys other than tonic and dominant play a very limited role in this structure, which is in this respect closer to the other A major Fugue than to the G minor Toccata (which may, of course, have a bearing on relative chronology).⁵³ However, telling use is made of the opposite mode. The first two entries of the inverted subject, placed in the outer parts for special emphasis, are highlighted by a change of key to the relative minor, F $\sharp$, forming a clear *dux–comes* (subject–answer) pair in that key. Here it is possible that Bach was following the precedent of Nikolaus Adam Strunck, who marked the first two inverted subject entries in exactly the same way (using the relative major, C) in his Capriccio in A minor of 1681. The countersubject is of minor importance, but nonetheless regular, with the result that contrapuntal inversion plays a certain role alongside melodic inversion, though the two do not go hand in hand to the extent that they do in the finale of the G minor Toccata.

Fantasia and prelude

Title	Earliest source/s	Scribe, date
Fantasia in C, BWV 570	ABB 45	J. C. Bach, c. 1707–13
Fantasia in b, BWV 563	ABB 52	J. C. Bach, c. 1707–13
Fantasia in c, BWV 1121	ABB 33	Autograph, c. 1707
Fantasia in g, BWV 917	MM 52	J. C. Bach, c. 1704–7
Praeludium in c, BWV 921	ABB 32	J. C. and J. S. Bach, c. 1707
	Berlin, P 222	J. C. Schmidt, 1713
Praeludium in a, BWV 569	Berlin, P 801	J. G. Walther, before 1717
Fantasia in a, BWV 922	Berlin, P 803	J. T. Krebs, c. 1710–14
Praeludium in D, BWV 532 no. 1	Stuttgart, II.288	L. Sichert, 1740

⁵³ Hill diss., p. 447, concludes on grounds of style that BWV 949 is the later of the two A major fugues.

The first five pieces listed are present in the collections of Bach's elder brother, Johann Christoph of Ohrdruf, which might imply a certain preoccupation with the fantasia⁵⁴ on the part of Johann Sebastian around the time when (or perhaps a little before) these collections were assembled. The pieces range from a wholly improvisatory style (BWV 570 and 921) to a fully structured texture akin to fugue (BWV 917), while the other two (BWV 563 and 1121) lie between these two extremes, uniting free and structured modes of composition. Traditionally, one type of fantasia gives the impression of flowing spontaneously from the player's imagination, hence the pieces that sound as if they might have developed out of actual improvisation at the keyboard (BWV 570, 921, and 563 no. 1). By contrast with the toccatas or preludes that precede fugues, however, keyboard brilliance here retreats in favour of free, meditative exploration within a largely non-thematic setting. A second traditional type of fantasia, evolving from the composer's technical preoccupations and mental abstractions, is represented historically by the learned polyphonic fantasias of Frescobaldi and Sweelinck, and was later cultivated by Froberger and others. To this rather more esoteric type Bach's Fantasia in G minor, BWV 917, belongs.

The first three fantasias in the above list form a closely interrelated series. All three were entered into the Andreas Bach Book; they all make only incidental, rudimentary use of the pedalboard; and stylistic similarities between them are strong enough to suggest that they might have originated within a fairly confined time-span. The most primitive of the three, and hence possibly the earliest, is the C major: essentially a quasi-improvised series of chord progressions, constantly elaborated by the dactylic 'figura corta'. In accordance with this free-fantasy style, there is neither theme nor consistent motive. The dactyl never settles into a fixed melodic form, but rather takes many different forms, some of which recur now and then, seemingly at random. The harmony is constantly enriched by suspensions in the *durezza e ligature* (dissonances and suspensions) style of the seventeenth century, a style to which Pachelbel resorted in his Fantasia in G minor, which also shares the dactylic rhythm of Bach's piece.⁵⁵

Both style and rhythm recur in the introductory section of the Fantasia in B minor. Free and structured elements in this fantasia form the separate components of a bipartite structure akin to prelude-and-fugue. The work cannot be considered a proto-prelude and fugue, however, for not only does the title 'fantasia' have to be taken seriously, as well as the close links with the other fantasias, but the style of writing differs markedly from that of the preludes and fugues Bach was composing around that time. In the introduction, as in the C major Fantasia, a stock rhythmic figure furnishes the raw material upon which the player-composer's imagination roams at will. The freely fugal 'Imitatio' recalls Kuhnau in its smooth, stepwise

⁵⁴ BWV 921 is entitled 'praeludium', but that title and 'fantasia' often seem to have been used interchangeably, e.g. in the case of BWV 549a and 922.

⁵⁵ The resemblance is noted in Hill diss., pp. 425–6.

crotchet motion in triple time.⁵⁶ The four periods (plus coda), clearly articulated by prominent cadences (at bb. 19, 47, 69, and 99), each begin with imitation of the subject, which in the inner periods involves stretto by inversion, but thereafter exact references to the subject are few. Instead, derivatives that preserve its smooth crotchet flow are worked into an increasingly regular phrase structure. The aria-like *cantabile* style that results is very different from Bach's normal manner of fugal writing at this period, but clear precedents may be found in a number of imitative movements by Kuhnau.⁵⁷

The closest parallel to the style of the *Imitatio* within Bach's own *oeuvre* is the *Fantasia* in C minor,⁵⁸ presumably written around the same time—perhaps a little later, since it applies the same concepts in a rather more subtle fashion. It gradually coalesces into aria-like symmetries, only to dissolve again into pseudo-improvisatory freedom in the concluding period (b. 43), written in *durezza e ligature* style. The preceding three periods (bb. 1, 18, and 32) all start imitatively but consolidate into clear-cut phrases, marked off by distinctive dotted-rhythm cadences (bb. 17, 21, 25, 31, and 42). The piece is less thematic than the *Imitatio*: there is no subject, only a series of imitative points, some of which are motivically interrelated. Sufficient correspondance between phrases may be heard, however, to lend the whole piece a coherent shape.⁵⁹ It is subtler than the *Imitatio* in its use of key: whereas that piece was restricted to tonic and relative major, this one places strong emphasis on the flat supertonic B♭—already anticipated in the opening bars (bb. 2–4 and 10–11)—which forms the chief counterpoise to the tonic in the inner periods.⁶⁰ This may be one of the earliest cases in Bach's music in which a sense of drama is consistently generated by the tension that arises between two keys.

The *Fantasia* in G minor has already been cited as a late descendant of the strictly contrapuntal *fantasia* of Frescobaldi and Sweelinck. Dating from before 1707 (according to its source), it must represent one of Bach's earliest studies in permutation technique, a fugal mode of writing in which three or more subjects are combined in different vertical orderings according to the rules of invertible

⁵⁶ cf., for instance, the opening movement of *Suonata terza* from Kuhnau's *Frische Clavier Früchte*, a resemblance also noted by Breig, 'Freie Orgelwerke', p. 630.

⁵⁷ For example, the finales of *Suonata seconda* and *quarta* from *Frische Clavier Früchte*.

⁵⁸ The tablature copy of this piece (formerly BWV Anh. I 205), ABB 33, was authenticated as a Bach autograph by Kilian, 'Zu einem Bachschen Tabulaturautograph', in W. Rehm (ed.), *Bachiana et alia musicologica: Festschrift Alfred Dürr* (Kassel, 1983), pp. 161–7; and by H.-J. Schulze, *Studien zur Bach-Überlieferung im 18. Jahrhundert* (Leipzig and Dresden, 1984), p. 50. See also Hill diss., pp. 376–7.

⁵⁹ The initial falling-5th point, answered in stretto by inversion, recurs in dominant counterstatement at b. 13 (treble), now imitated in the bass at the lower 5th. The smooth crotchet figure of bb. 2–4, reminiscent of the *Imitatio*, recurs at the cadence of the first period (bb. 16–17) and often thereafter. The repeated-crotchet point of bb. 22–3 (perhaps derived from the sequence of bb. 7–8) generates each of the succeeding points (bb. 26, 32, and 35), including the Kuhnau-like trio for the lower voices (bb. 32–4).

⁶⁰ This key relationship determines the tonal course of the phrases at bb. 18–21 (c–B♭), 26–31 (B♭–c, including a direct juxtaposition of their tonic chords in b. 30), and 35–42 (B♭–c). In addition, the low trio phrase at bb. 32–4 contrasts with the preceding high 'tutti' not just in pitch and texture but in returning to B♭ major after a strong C minor cadence.

counterpoint. Permutation fugue, which would soon begin to play a central role in Bach's vocal works, was not his own invention, as was formerly thought, but had been developed by a group of musicians centred in Hamburg in the 1660s and 1670s—Weckmann, Reincken, Bernhard, Buxtehude, and Theile—under the influence of the translation by Sweelinck of Zarlino's seminal treatise *Le istitutioni harmoniche* of 1558.⁶¹ In particular, the theoretical works of Johann Theile, including his *Musicalisches Kunstbuch*, which gives specific examples of permutation fugue, became widely known in central Germany around and after 1700, and Bach very likely became familiar with them at this time.⁶² Perhaps no less relevant in the present context, however, are the studies in triple counterpoint that he would have encountered in the works of Strunck, Buxtehude, and Albinoni.⁶³

Bach's G minor Fantasia announces its three subjects simultaneously, as Frescobaldi often does. This procedure may also be found among the works of Bach's older contemporaries: for example, in the third section of Buxtehude's Toccata in D minor, BuxWV 155, and in Pachelbel's Fantasia in D minor, which is similar enough to Bach's fantasia to raise the possibility that he might have had it in the back of his mind during composition. In a gesture towards free fantasy, Bach opens with a brief *passaggio* and closes with a little flourish at the final cadence. Although not strictly speaking a fugue, the piece is closely related to fugue, hence the occurrence of the subject in *dux* and *comes* forms (see Part I Ch. 2, p. 33) and the tonal answers (bb. 19, 37, and 56). Like the D minor Canzona, it is written in the Renaissance-inspired pseudo-vocal style that was traditionally associated with strict counterpoint. And the traditional chromatic descent through a 4th, which formed the regular countersubject in the canzona, here becomes the principal subject. It is combined in triple counterpoint with two countersubjects, hence the title 'Fantasia duobus subjectis' in the Möller Manuscript.⁶⁴ These combined subjects are stated seven times, each statement being separated by substantial episodes (which would be largely eliminated from the vocal permutation fugue) and with some variety of key: in the tonic (three times; *dux* twice, then *comes*), subdominant, dominant (*comes*), relative major, and tonic (*comes*). Of the six possible permutations of the three-subject combination, only one remains unused.

If the G minor Fantasia furnishes evidence of one type of writing that was to be important to Bach in later years, the Praeludium in C minor testifies to another. It is the earliest recorded arpeggiated prelude among his compositions, and as such a direct forerunner of the arpeggiated preludes that he would later use for teaching purposes in the *Clavierbüchlein* for Wilhelm Friedemann Bach of 1720 and in

⁶¹ See Paul Walker, 'Die Entstehung der Permutationsfuge', *BJ* 1989, pp. 21–41; Eng. trans. as 'The Origin of the Permutation Fugue', in *The Creative Process, Studies in the History of Music*, 3 (New York, 1993), pp. 51–91.

⁶² Walker, *BJ* 1989, pp. 37–8.

⁶³ Strunck: *Ricercar* (1683), *Ricercar sopra la Morte* (1685), *Capriccio in F* (1683), and *Capriccio sopra il Corale Ich dank dir* (1684); Buxtehude: BuxWV 136 (section 3), 140 (section 2), and 170 (section 3); Albinoni: Op. 1 Nos. 1 (2nd and 4th movements), 6 (2nd movement), and 12 (2nd movement).

⁶⁴ Strunck similarly combines a subject based on a chromatically spanned 4th with two countersubjects in his F major Capriccio, as does Buxtehude in his D minor Praeludium, BuxWV 140.

The Well-Tempered Clavier I and II. It is easy to see how such pieces could arise from improvisation, since they consist of nothing but elaborated chord sequences. From the eighth bar Bach imposes his own patterns on the chords, following the example of the Middle-German composers Kuhnau and Zachow in their own arpeggiated preludes.⁶⁵ But for the first seven bars (and again in bb. 75–6) he writes minim or crotchet chords only, marking them ‘arpeggiando’—a conventional shorthand notation widely used at the time, notably by Alessandro Scarlatti and Handel.⁶⁶ The prelude is clearly organized in distinct periods marked by changes of metre and figuration: a brief arpeggiando prologue, three central periods (bb. 8, 27, and 69), and a brief prestissimo epilogue in 24/16 time, marked ‘pedale’. Many of the salient characteristics of Bach’s early style are here evident: fixed-pattern technique; Corellian/Böhmian modulation by abrupt sequential shifts (bb. 45–68: c–Bb–g); tonic–dominant oscillation (another Böhmian trait; bb. 27ff.); and the restriction of pedal use to the coda. So far removed is the piece from Bach’s mature style (never again did he change metre so frequently, for example) that its authenticity used to be considered questionable. However, the part-autograph copy in the Andreas Bach Book, coupled with the attribution to Bach in a manuscript copy made by J. C. Schmidt in 1713, place its authorship beyond serious doubt.

The Praeludium and Fantasia in A minor, BWV 569 and 922, are both preserved in the Walther–Krebs collections, which might at first suggest that they originated in Weimar (1708–17). On the other hand, they might be earlier pieces (pre-1708) that were still in use in Weimar; and this possibility accords better with their style—in particular, their wholehearted adoption of fixed-pattern technique. The chief source of the Praeludium in D, BWV 532 no. 1, gives no indication of its date of origin, but it is so closely related to the two A minor pieces, both in form and style, that it must have been written around the same period.⁶⁷

The three works offer interrelated solutions to the problem of uniting free and structured forms of writing without recourse to fugue. Only in one case (BWV 532 no. 1) was a fugue subsequently appended.⁶⁸ The main, central content in all three cases is a fixed pattern that is treated at great length and with enormous resource. In the Praeludium in A minor, all else is excluded, save for a brief flourish at the beginning and end. In the other two pieces, however, Bach adopts the tripartite design prelude—main section—postlude, so that passages in free-fantasy style form a frame around a central, highly structured but non-fugal section. It is possible to view this form as an expanded and more sectional variant of his standard early prelude form (introduction—main

⁶⁵ Four arpeggiated preludes are included among the introductory movements to the suites of Kuhnau’s *Neuer Clavier Übung* (Leipzig, 1689 and 1692).

⁶⁶ Bach would later return to this form of notation in BWV 903, 923, 944, and in certain movements from the French Suites and *The Well-Tempered Clavier* (not to mention in string music, such as the Chaconne from the Partita No. 2 in D minor for solo violin, BWV 1004).

⁶⁷ Zehnder, ‘Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung’, p. 329, places both BWV 532a and 569 within a work group centred on c. 1707–8, but probably stretching back to about 1705.

⁶⁸ For the evidence that prelude and fugue originated independently, see Kilian, *Krit. Bericht* IV/5–6, pp. 342–3.

section—conclusion).⁶⁹ Alternatively, it might be viewed as a variant of the North-German praeludium in its tripartite manifestation, without the fugal element.

The A minor Praeludium, BWV 569, like the D major, uses the suspension chain as an essential component of its principal thematic material; this configuration is in both cases constantly subject to exchange of parts, which forms the chief contrapuntal mode of variation. Both A minor pieces are characterized by a fixed rhythmic pattern throughout—a phenomenon already noted in several of the manual toccatas—which lends the music a poetic, contemplative quality, though it is hard to avoid the impression of monotony; a small amount of material is made to go a very long way, as often in Kuhnau. The two A minor works may both be viewed as continuous variations on a stepwise descending pattern of notes: diatonic in the praeludium, chromatic in the fantasia. The underlying thematic basis of the variations in the praeludium is a stepwise descent through a 4th, hence the presence of this figure in the introductory flourish. It also occurs in various abridged or extended forms; and subsidiary stepwise descents are often present in the other parts. Only at the end does the theme occur in its original form, shorn of all its accoutrements, and now it is accompanied by the chaconne bass *A–G–F–E*, as if the ostinato character of the whole work is at last fully revealed.

The introductory ‘prelude’ of the A minor Fantasia recalls the manual toccatas in its twofold design—*passaggio* leading to chord sequences—and in some of its material.⁷⁰ Certain ideas return in modified form in the postlude, which is written in a similarly free-fantasy style.⁷¹ The main section, just like the first and last sections of the F# minor Toccata, BWV 910, builds its theme out of repeated notes in conjunction with the traditional chromatic descent through a 4th. In this instance, however, the melodic elements are bound together by a repeated dactylic rhythm (two quavers plus crotchet), whose all-pervading presence creates a meditative atmosphere akin to that of the A minor praeludium. Chromatic line and repeated notes are also vertically combined, giving rise to sequential 2nd, 7th, and 9th dissonances within an exceedingly rich harmonic texture. The music is organized into three large paragraphs, each opening and closing in the tonic:

<i>Paragraph:</i>	1	2	3
<i>Bars:</i>	34–58	58–74	74–87
<i>Keys:</i>	A–e–b–f#–a	a–d–g–(e)–a	a–C–a

⁶⁹ Stauffer, *The Organ Preludes*, pp. 37–42 (esp. 42) uses the term ‘through-composed, sectional form’ for both types, adding, however, that BWV 532 no. 1 represents a later stage of development (along with BWV 572).

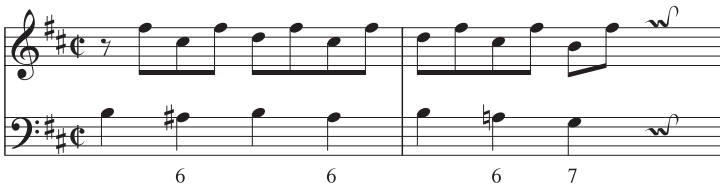
⁷⁰ For instance, the repeated chords in complementary dotted rhythms, or the motive $e^1-f\sharp^1-g^1-d\sharp^1-e^1$ (cf. BWV 914 no. 3).

⁷¹ Here, the recitative-like writing of bb. 96ff. recalls the Adagio third movement of BWV 912a, which is likewise structured in the form free–strict–free.

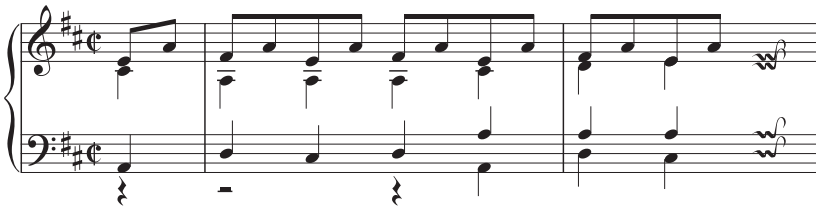
The first and second paragraphs thus modulate by 5ths in opposite directions: the first into sharp, dominant regions; and the second into flat, subdominant regions. Within each paragraph contrapuntal methods of construction are employed. The first is built on stretto or canonic imitation of the chromatic subject at various distances and intervals, often accompanied by the repeated-note counterpoint. The second paragraph opens with quasi-fugal stretto imitation of this counterpoint, plus its new chromatic tail-figure; and the third returns to canonic imitation of the main theme. Despite its many features characteristic of an early date, this piece points forward to Bach's maturity in its extremely intensive cultivation, simultaneously, of both vertical and horizontal dimensions of the texture.

The frame ('prelude' and 'postlude') of the Praeludium in D likewise belongs to the fantasy world of the toccatas. The striking similarity between the opening and that of the D major Toccata, BWV 912a, has often been commented upon; and the pedal points, the tremolo, the rhetorical pauses, and the use of hiatus in place of transition all boldly proclaim the 'fantastic style', which is then peremptorily brushed aside in the central *alla breve* section. The cadence at the end of the *alla breve* is interrupted by a return to pure fantasy, which now, however, takes a different form: an elaborated full-chordal adagio postlude, mostly in five parts with double pedal, richly dissonant, and twice enhanced by the Neapolitan flat supertonic. The *alla breve* itself is built on the principle of the alternation of two contrasting themes, which, though motivically linked, nonetheless preserve their own distinct identity. A similar structure may be observed in the Allegro second movement of the D major Toccata, which also exhibits the same rondeau-like periodic return to the tonic. The sequential themes of the two pieces have in common their pattern of falling 3rds, combined with a figuration in halved note values. And in both cases the contrasting theme is constantly shifted to different keys without transition. In the *alla breve*, although the phrase-lengths are short, care is taken to build them into continuities of varying extent, thereby avoiding the short-winded effect of the rather Kuhnau-like toccata-allegro. The mentor figure one hears behind the *alla breve* is not so much Kuhnau as Corelli. Not only are his ubiquitous suspension chains and their fertile possibilities of variation heard in the main theme and its treatment, but the subsidiary theme closely resembles the subject of the Presto finale from his Sonata in B minor, Op. 3 No. 4 (Ex. 4), whose Vivace supplied Bach with the material for his B minor Fugue, BWV 579. This close connection applies not only to the single-bar theme itself but to its repeat with different scoring and to the abrupt key shifts to which it is subjected (cf. Corelli, bb. 13–21, and Bach, bb. 54–62). The resemblance even extends to its juxtaposition with a theme based on suspension chains.

Ex. 4



a) Corelli: Sonata in B minor, Op. 3 No. 4, Presto (finale), opening



b) Bach: Prelude in D, BWV 532 no. 1, alla breve, bb. 52–3

This is not the first time it has been noticed in the course of this study that, when assimilating a foreign style or technique, Bach did indeed learn all he could from a fellow German intermediary, such as Kuhnau, Böhm, Fischer, or Froberger, but, not content with the second-hand only, he invariably ended up tapping the source itself—Palestrina, Frescobaldi, Corelli, or Albinoni.

The Neumeister Collection and other organ chorales

From the Reformation onwards, the chorale—the German Protestant hymn—occupied a central place in Lutheran worship. It was an effective means of congregational participation—an essential feature of Luther's reforms—and its simple texts, strophic, metrical, and vernacular, helped to bring home the Christian message by paraphrasing biblical or liturgical words and reinforcing the theological doctrine derived from the Gospel and expounded in the sermon. Gradual hymns, sung between the Epistle and Gospel at the eucharistic 'principal divine service', the *Hauptgottesdienst*, were closely related to the Gospel reading for a particular Sunday or feast-day in the church year. At the same morning service, chorales that paraphrased in German the Latin words of the Ordinary of the Mass were sung alongside or in place of the Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei. And at Vespers on Sunday afternoons, chorales were sung in conjunction with the teachings of the Lutheran catechism—the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, Baptism, Repentance, and the Eucharist. The straightforward, easily retained melodies, often adapted from the same sources as the texts—Gregorian hymns, the psalter, German sacred songs, and so forth—served as an indispensable aid to the congregation in committing the texts to memory.

Such was the centrality of the chorale in Protestant Germany that a substantial part of the training and activity of the organist and the composer traditionally revolved around it. The skills required were not just in harmonizing chorales but in improvising or composing more elaborate music, such as chorale preludes, on their basis. Pachelbel's contract at Erfurt, dated 19 June 1678, stipulated that he was to 'play thematic preludes in advance [of the singing of the chorale]'.¹ And as late as 1750, the preface to Georg Andreas Sorge's *Erster Theil der Vorspiele* stated that: 'Next to the knowledge of figured bass . . . nothing is more important to the organist than that he be adroit in preluding to the various chorales, according to their particular content, so that the congregation will be stimulated to sing the subsequent chorale with appropriate devotion.'² The progression from figured bass to chorales accords with

¹ 'Vorhero thematice praeambulando zu tractiren'; see *DTÖ* 17, p. vii.

² 'Nebst der Wissenschaft des General-Baßes . . . ist einem Organisten wohl nichts nothwendiger, als daß er auf die Choral-Lieder nach Beschaffenheit ihres mancherley Inhalts geschicklich praeludiren könne, damit eine Kirch-Versammlung aufgemuntert werde, das folgende Lied mit behöriger Andacht zu singen.' Quoted in Wolff *Essays*, p. 115.

Bach's own teaching methods, according to his son Carl Philipp Emanuel,³ and it may well be that the 'instruction . . . designed for an organist' that he received from his elder brother Johann Christoph in Ohrdruf (1695–1700) proceeded along similar lines. At any rate, it would undoubtedly have included chorales; and since Johann Christoph had been a pupil of Pachelbel's in Erfurt (from 1685 to 1688), it is reasonable to assume that he passed on his teacher's style of chorale treatment. If, however, Bach's appetite for acquainting himself with music in the most diverse styles imaginable at the time was already as voracious as it later became, it is hard to imagine his remaining content with this restricted diet for long. Certainly, not long after 1700, while at school in Lüneburg, he must have become acquainted with chorale arrangements by Georg Böhm, Jan Adam Reincken, and possibly other members of the North German school. Moreover, it is impossible to believe that Bach played organ chorales by other composers at this period without attempting to write some of his own. None can be definitely assigned to the period 1695–1705, when he presumably started his composing career, but likely candidates (assuming they are genuine) are the following 36 organ chorales attributed to Bach in a manuscript owned and probably written by the German organist Johann Gottfried Neumeister in the 1790s.⁴

The Neumeister chorales

<i>Title</i>	<i>Chief Source/s</i>	<i>Scribe, date</i>
31 organ chorales, BWV 1090–1120 <i>Ach, Gott und Herr</i> , BWV 714	Yale, LM 4708 Berlin, P 802 Königsberg, 15839 Yale, LM 4708	J. G. Neumeister, 1790s J. T. Krebs, after 1710 J. G. Walther, after 1717 J. G. Neumeister, 1790s
<i>Der Tag, der ist so freudenreich</i> , BWV 719	Berlin, HdK, 6639	Anon., early 18th century
<i>Vater unser im Himmelreich</i> , BWV 737	Yale, LM 4708 The Hague, 4.G.14	J. G. Neumeister, 1790s J. G. Walther, after 1717
<i>Ach Herr, mich armen Sünder</i> , BWV 742	Yale, LM 4708 Berlin, Mus.ms.40037	J. G. Neumeister, 1790s J. C. Sasse, before 1794
<i>Machs mit mir, Gott</i> , BWV 957	Yale, LM 4708 Göttingen Yale, LM 4708	J. G. Neumeister, 1790s L. Scholz, after 1750 J. G. Neumeister, 1790s

³ Letter to Forkel of 13 January 1775; see BD III, No. 803, and *NBR*, No. 395. The following quotation is drawn from the same source.

⁴ Discovered in 1984 and published as *Orgelchoräle der Neumeister-Sammlung*, ed. C. Wolff (New Haven and Kassel, 1985); facsimile edn: *The Neumeister Collection of Chorale Preludes from the Bach Circle*, ed. C. Wolff (New Haven, 1986). For a full account of the MS (Yale, LM 4708), see Wolff *Essays*, pp. 107–27, and the same author's *Krit. Bericht*, NBA IV/9 (Kassel and Leipzig, 2003).

The claim to authenticity of these chorales, and the likelihood of their early date, rest primarily on the presence within the same manuscript of twenty-five organ chorales by Bach's father-in-law, the Gehren organist Johann Michael Bach, as well as three by one J. C. Bach—possibly Johann Christoph of Eisenach. Thus if, as appears likely, the manuscript was copied from a single source,⁵ that source might well have been a Bach family collection of chorales compiled during Johann Sebastian's youth.⁶ Certainly, the immature style and technique of the chorales attributed to J. S. Bach are clear signs of juvenilia: they must have been written many years before the *Orgelbüchlein*, and even before the fantasia on *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern*, BWV 739, whose autograph manuscript dates from 1705 or earlier.⁷ Their almost complete absence from the Walther–Krebs manuscripts, the main sources of Bach's Weimar organ chorales, might indicate that he came to regard them as outmoded products of his youth, unsuitable for passing on to colleagues or pupils. Thirty-one of the chorales attributed to Bach are, in fact, *unica* (that is to say, they are present in no other source), which suggests a very limited circulation indeed. Where concordances do exist, either among the J. S. Bach chorales or among those of other composers, they generally support the attributions of the Neumeister manuscript, though there are a few cases of conflicting attributions, one of which involves J. S. Bach (*Christe, der du bist Tag und Licht*, BWV 1096, attributed elsewhere to Pachelbel).⁸ For this reason it cannot be assumed that the manuscript is trustworthy in every case, even if one accepts the general theory of its ultimate derivation from a Bach family original. In questions of authenticity, stylistic arguments are never conclusive, and this line of approach is, in any case, largely thwarted by the absence of material for comparison: no fully authenticated Bach organ chorales can be dated within the very early period (before or around 1700) when the Neumeister chorales, if genuine, must have been written. Two observations are at least suggestive, however. Firstly, it has been pointed out that the miniature chorale fantasia, well represented among the Neumeister chorales ascribed to Bach, seems to be unknown in Middle Germany outside his *oeuvre*.⁹ Yet three examples by Bach are preserved outside the Neumeister Collection (BWV 718, 720, and 739), all no doubt of later origin and on a larger scale, though in this respect still falling far short of their North German equivalents.¹⁰ Secondly, it has

⁵ As argued in Wolff *Essays*, p. 111, and by Dominik Sackmann, 'Der "Yaler" Bach: Beobachtungen zur Handschrift US-NH (Yale) LM 4708 und deren Umfeld', *BzBF* 9/10 (1991), pp. 165–72 (esp. 168).

⁶ The likelihood that it originated as such, and its general credibility as a reliable source, are supported by the observations of Sackmann, 'Der "Yaler" Bach', and of Wolff, 'Zum Quellenwert der Neumeister-Sammlung: Bachs Orgelchoral "Der Tag der ist so freudenreich" BWV 719', *BJ* 1997, pp. 155–67. The origin, context, and authenticity of the Neumeister repertoire are discussed by Wolff in *Krit. Bericht*, NBA IV/9, pp. 37–47; the origin and authorship of the compositions ascribed to Bach on pp. 56–62.

⁷ See Russell Stinson, 'Bach's Earliest Autograph', *Musical Quarterly*, 71 (1985), pp. 235–63.

⁸ See Günter Hartmann, 'Authentisches Bach-Elbel: Marginalie zu einem der angeblichen Bach-Choräle der Neumeister-Sammlung', *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, 147 (1986), pp. 4–6.

⁹ See R. Stinson, 'Some Thoughts on Bach's Neumeister Chorales', *Journal of Musicology*, 11 (1993), pp. 455–77 (esp. 458–9).

¹⁰ It is worth noting, however, that Buxtehude also wrote two miniature chorale fantasias, BuxWV 196 and 212.

been shown that a particular type of cadence—characterized by the dissonance of a diminished 7th on the leading-note against an inverted tonic pedal—which is found in several Neumeister chorales (for example, BWV 1097 and 1105), is a common mannerism in early Bach: it occurs, for example, at the final cadence of two presumably somewhat later organ chorales whose authorship is undisputed (BWV 721 and 727).¹¹ Beyond these observations, it is hard to draw any firm conclusions from the style of the Neumeister pieces. No marked individuality emerges that might be linked to the style of Bach's early music in other genres, though this would, in any case, be too much to expect of juvenilia. By the same token, it would be mistaken to look for the technical expertise to which we are accustomed in Bach's later music. We know far too little about his early development as a composer to justify throwing up our hands in horror when we encounter consecutive 5ths or octaves and other technical shortcomings.¹² Lapses of this kind certainly cannot be used as an argument against Bach's authorship. Instead of adopting such fruitless lines of approach, the Neumeister chorales are considered here both on their own account and in relation to organ chorales that Bach presumably composed not long after 1700, in order to establish what they can tell us (assuming they are authentic) about his earliest years as a composer and the very first stages in the gradual maturing of his style.

One is immediately struck by the immense variety of chorale treatment in the Neumeister works attributed to J. S. Bach. The youthful composer must have been absorbing impressions from a wide range of sources, presumably over a period of some years. For the purposes of study, however, this diversity of treatment may be reduced to three principles, which are by no means mutually exclusive: cantus firmus, counterpoint, and variation.

In the first line of approach, the chorale is simply stated line by line as a cantus firmus in the treble, accompanied by the lower parts. The four-part version of this type may be viewed as nothing more than an elaborate chorale harmonization. For during the cantus firmus passages, the accompanying parts on the whole remain unthematic, and the composer's task is largely restricted to devising pleasing and appropriate harmony, or rather harmony-counterpoint. Preparation of the chorale lines, however, distinguishes this type from the simple chorale harmonization: the first line is often prepared by a brief fugal exposition, whose subject is the line itself or else its headmotive; the following lines are often introduced by imitation, based on the line concerned and often in a metrically diminished form—hence the term *Vorimitation* or fore-imitation. This type¹³ is well represented among the organ chorales of Johann

¹¹ See Peter Williams's review of J. S. Bach, *Orgelchoräle der Neumeister-Sammlung* in *Early Music*, 15 (1987), pp. 93–6. Stinson expands upon Williams's observation in 'Some Thoughts on Bach's Neumeister Chorales', pp. 464–7. See also P. Williams, *The Organ Music of J. S. Bach* (2nd edn, Cambridge, 2003), p. 543.

¹² Alfred Dürr gives a list of such lapses in 'Kein Meister fällt vom Himmel: zu J. S. Bachs Orgelchorälen der Neumeister-Sammlung', *Musica*, 40 (1986), pp. 309–12.

¹³ Described by Jean-Claude Zehnder, '“Des seeligen Unterricht in Ohrdruf mag wohl einen Organisten zum Vorwurf gehabt haben . . .”: Zum musikalischen Umfeld Bachs in Ohrdruf, insbesondere auf dem Gebiet des Orgelchorals', in M. Geck and K. Hofmann (eds.), *Bach und die Stile* [conference report, Dortmund, 1998] (Dortmund, 1999), pp. 169–95; see 175–7 (para. 1.2.2).

Pachelbel and Johann Michael Bach: a fine example is Pachelbel's arrangement of *Vater unser im Himmelreich*, No. 4 of his *Acht Choräle zum Praeambulieren*.¹⁴ Seven examples of the four-part cantus firmus chorale are attributed to Bach in the Neumeister Collection (BWV 737, 1091, 1093–5, 1104, and 1112) and all deviate in some respects from Pachelbel's classic design. The opening fugal exposition is present only in BWV 737 and 1112; otherwise the chorale cantus firmus enters at the outset, except in BWV 1104, which opens with a brief free introduction.¹⁵ Interludes between chorale lines are largely free (that is, not chorale-based), save for the occasional anticipation of a chorale line in one of the lower parts (BWV 1091, 1094, and 1112); full Pachelbelian fore-imitation is rare (BWV 1094; preparation for line 4, bb. 12b–14b). It may be that the young composer was encouraged to concentrate purely on chorale harmonization, rather than complicating the task with thematic introductions and interludes. Or it may be that he heard or saw (on paper) models of which we know nothing today. However that may be, the chorales also differ from the norm in the note-values of the cantus firmus. Whereas Pachelbel and J. M. Bach invariably present the chorale in augmented note-values (usually minims), these Neumeister chorales do so in only three cases (BWV 1093, 1104, and 1112). Standard note-values are employed in BWV 1095; standard changing to augmented in BWV 737; and in BWV 1091 and 1094, irregular note-values that correspond with those of the original chorale melody. Whether or not this spells youthful independence is a question we cannot answer without knowing the full range of the composer's possible models. Occasionally some attempt is made to unify the accompaniment by means of brief recurring figures (BWV 737, 1091, and 1112), and there is some motivic work during the interludes (BWV 1095, 1104) or even during the cantus firmus (BWV 1104). But the main interest of these chorales lies in their varied, resourceful, and expressive harmony-counterpoint (Ex. 1). This, coupled with the absence of the solecisms found elsewhere, renders them the most mature of the Neumeister chorales. Were they composed later than the others? Or did the composer perhaps mature earlier in this type of writing? In any case, it is not altogether impossible to imagine how their composer might have gone on to write the *Orgelbüchlein* or the Seventeen Chorales.¹⁶ The relative sophistication of the harmonic-contrapuntal writing, however, consorts oddly with the dearth of thematic introductions and interludes. Perhaps specific influences or circumstances were at work here (for example, the requirements of a particular church) about which no information survives today.

¹⁴ The first edition, which no longer survives, must have appeared during Pachelbel's Erfurt period (1678–90). A modern edition has appeared, ed. J.-C. Zehnder (Winterthur, 1992).

¹⁵ As in some of Johann Michael Bach's chorales: see J. M. Bach, *Sämtliche Orgelchoräle*, ed. C. Wolff (Stuttgart, 1987), Nos. 12, 20, 21, and 30. Günter Hartmann ('Authentischer Bach-Elbel') and Dominik Sackmann ('Der "Yaler" Bach', p. 165, n. 3), on the other hand, take the view that BWV 1104 is probably a fragment, in which case the 'introduction' would be a connecting link from a lost, presumably fugal, opening section.

¹⁶ This title is used here in preference to the more usual 'Eighteen Chorales' for reasons explained in Part II Ch. 4, p. 225 and n. 35.

Ex. 1

*Vater unser im Himmelreich*, BWV 737, bb. 25–8

Direct musical reference to the text is not, in general, a primary requirement of the four-part cantus firmus chorale: the main event is rather an ‘objective’ presentation of the chorale melody, suitably accompanied. But in the Passion chorale *Herzliebster Jesu, was hast du verbrochen*, BWV 1093, the guiltless suffering of Christ seems to be represented by the traditional chromatic descent through a 4th, long associated with the lament.¹⁷ This figure, anticipated in the imitation of the opening bars, later acts as fore-imitation to the last line of the chorale (bb. 29–31), which is varied by an inversion of the same chromatic figure, accompanied by curiously archaic harmony and figuration, reminiscent of Sweelinck or Scheidt.

In the three-part cantus firmus chorale, the melody is accompanied by two figural, imitative parts. The reduction to three parts allows the freedom for rapid movement in the accompaniment, which distances the type still further from the simple chorale harmonization. This advantage was known and fully exploited by J. M. Bach and Pachelbel, whose *Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ*, the first of the *Acht Choräle*, is a classic example of the type.¹⁸ Three representatives of it are attributed to Bach in the Neumeister Collection: BWV 1100, 1110, and 1119. All three open with the customary fugal entries (canonic in BWV 1119) based on the first line of the chorale, yet no longer plain but paraphrased in continuous semiquavers (BWV 1100) or triplet quavers (BWV 1110), or else lightly varied (BWV 1119). Techniques at home in chorale variations or partitas are thus here brought to bear upon the cantus firmus chorale. In *Allein zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ*, BWV 1100, the running semiquavers of the chorale paraphrase—so like those of an arrangement by the Erfurt organist Andreas Armsdorff, whose music Bach is likely to have known in Ohrdruf¹⁹ (Ex. 2)—proceed to form a lively two-part

¹⁷ See Werner Breig, ‘Textbezug und Werkidee in J. S. Bachs frühen Orgelchorälen’, in P. Peterson (ed.), *Musikkulturgeschichte: Festschrift für Constantin Floros zum 60. Geburtstag* (Wiesbaden, 1990), pp. 167–82 (esp. 171–2); reprinted in *BzBF* 9/10 (1991), pp. 293–303.

¹⁸ Described by Zehnder, ‘Des seeligen Unterricht’, p. 177 (para. 1.2.3).

¹⁹ See Zehnder, ‘Des seeligen Unterricht’, p. 170.

accompaniment to the cantus firmus throughout, developing distinct motives in the later stages. Similarly, the triplet quavers of the chorale paraphrase that opens *O Herre Gott, dein göttlich Wort*, BWV 1110, establish the running quaver motion of the *Stollen* (the A sections of the A–A–B *Bar* form), to which smaller note values are added in a two-stage cumulative process in the *Abgesang* (the B section). However laudable the gradual build-up of rhythmic motion (which also happens in the four-part BWV 1093 considered above), the rather stiff, mechanical counterpoint produced by the combined rhythmic figures, in conjunction with the repeated bare 5ths in lines 5–6 (bb. 29–34),²⁰ suggests that this might have been one of the composer's earliest efforts. In the opening canonic imitation of *Wie nach einer Wasserquelle*, BWV 1119, the first line of the chorale is lightly varied by means of a dactylic figure, which then not only proceeds to decorate the fore-imitation of all subsequent lines, but also permeates the chorale accompaniment throughout, creating an admirably unified texture. At the end, the same figure generates a coda (bb. 32–6), built largely over a subdominant pedal, which brings the piece to a fine climax.

Ex. 2 Chorale *Allein zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ*



a) Plain chorale melody, 1st line



b) As paraphrased by A. Armsdorff



c) As paraphrased by Bach, BWV 1100

It is natural that the young Bach, with his special predilection for counterpoint, should have been drawn to the various contrapuntal modes of chorale treatment. These take three distinct forms: chorale canon, chorale fugue (or fughetta), and chorale motet (or *ricercar*). In them the chorale itself is subjected to contrapuntal treatment. This is, of course, true of the introduction and interludes in the cantus firmus chorale, but here these passages are secondary to the presentation of the chorale melody itself. In the chorale canon, fugue, and motet, on the other hand, contrapuntal treatment of the chorale melody is of primary importance.

²⁰ Pointed out by Dürr, 'Kein Meister fällt vom Himmel', p. 311.

There is only one chorale canon among the Neumeister chorales attributed to Bach—*Ach, Gott und Herr*, BWV 714²¹—but it is significant as an apparent precursor of the chorales belonging to this type that he was later to include in the *Orgelbüchlein*. The chorale canon was especially cultivated by Andreas Armsdorff, and it might have been his example that led the youth to try his hand at writing one. Bach does not confine himself to canon, however: a 37-bar introduction in pseudo-improvisatory style acts as a prelude to the chorale, which is then stated in canon at the octave between treble and tenor. Free and strict modes of writing are thus juxtaposed. They are linked, however, by scale patterns derived from the chorale lines. The Weimar sources significantly lack the introduction: the piece was taken up, presumably on account of its canonic chorale, by Johann Gottfried Walther, who made a speciality of the genre and to whom the free introduction must have seemed superfluous (unless, of course, it was excised in a later revision by the composer himself). By the time of the *Orgelbüchlein* Bach would be able to find ingenious solutions for those chorale lines that stubbornly resist canonic treatment, rather than leaving the imitating part merely approximate, as he does here in two instances (lines 4 and 5, bb. 49–55).

The chorale fugue or fughetta, a popular type in late seventeenth-century Thuringia,²² employs the first line of the chorale as its subject, and is often restricted to that line, though reference may be made to the second line also. Four such pieces are attributed to Bach in the Neumeister Collection (BWV 719, 1098, 1111, and 1103). Of these only *Erhalt uns, Herr, bei deinem Wort*, BWV 1103, corresponds with the standard Pachelbel type: a double exposition in *cantabile* counterpoint, culminating in a low bass entry against smooth upper parts.²³ Merely the reference to the *last* line of the chorale in the treble of the final three bars differs from Pachelbel's practice.²⁴ The other three chorale fugues, however, depart radically from Pachelbel, and it is uncertain what models they had, if any. In BWV 719 and 1098, each fugal exposition, built on the first or second chorale line, culminates in a subject entry so prominent that it stands out as *cantus firmus*. Various methods are used to highlight it: placement in the outer parts, doubling of the note-values, alteration of the rhythm, or metrical augmentation. Fugal exposition leading to *cantus firmus* is essentially the technique of the chorale motet; but there it is applied to every line of the chorale, whereas these two chorale fugues are restricted to the first two lines only. In the Christmas chorale *Der Tag, der ist so freudenreich*, BWV 719, the second line is accorded its own exposition in diminished note-values, clearly separated from the first line by a tonic full-close and cadenza. As often in the Neumeister chorales, the shortened note-values help to produce a sense of gradual enhancement or intensification. In *Wir glauben all einen Gott*, BWV 1098 (the text is Luther's German version of the Credo), there is no separate exposition for the second line, but episodic

²¹ It is also preserved independently in one of the Walther–Krebs MSS (P 802).

²² See Zehnder, 'Des seeligen Unterrichts', pp. 170ff.

²³ The Pachelbel style of chorale fugue is described by Zehnder, 'Des seeligen Unterrichts', pp. 171–2.

²⁴ See the analytical account by Williams, *The Organ Music*, p. 557.

references to it are numerous, and it acts as a continuation to the first line in both cantus firmus statements. The second of these (b. 52) is particularly well highlighted: it follows a very pronounced tonic full-close, is largely augmented, imitated by the bass, and accompanied by an obbligato tenor line in continuous quavers. The funeral chorale *Nun laßt uns den Leib begraben*, BWV 1111, dispenses with any form of cantus firmus treatment, and instead presents a separate fugal exposition on every line (except the last). Moreover, the first two lines are each accompanied by a regular countersubject, of which the second is livelier in rhythmic movement, anticipating the change from common to triple time for the third and fourth chorale lines. These lines are presented in quaver diminution and semiquaver paraphrase respectively, the whole process presumably signifying the re-animation of the buried body, whose resurrection is then depicted in the ascent of bars 37–9.²⁵

In three cases (BWV 957, 1096, and 1101) a chorale fugue acts as prelude to a cantus firmus statement of the entire chorale. This so-called combination form is particularly associated with Pachelbel, though it was also cultivated by other Middle-German composers, notably Johann Michael Bach. Of the three combination-form chorales attributed to Bach in the Neumeister Collection, only *Christe, der du bist Tag und Licht*, BWV 1096, accords fully with the Pachelbel type: a double exposition on the plain first line in standard note-values, prefacing a full cantus firmus statement of the chorale in augmentation, with or without fore-imitation in the interludes (in this case they are free). The fugue, transmitted alone, is in fact attributed to Pachelbel in two manuscripts,²⁶ but the possibility that the cantus firmus arrangement was added by the young Bach in Pachelbel's style cannot be excluded.²⁷ The other two combination-form chorales differ radically from the Pachelbel model. The loosely structured fugue that opens *Machs mit mir, Gott, nach deiner Güt*, BWV 957 (based on a funeral hymn by Johann Hermann Schein), takes as its subject a partita-style paraphrase of the first line, with the chorale notes on the main beats, as in the three-part cantus firmus chorales already considered (BWV 1100 and 1110). What follows is not an elaborate cantus firmus setting but a plain four-part chorale harmonization, albeit amply decorated by passing notes and with the last line in canon at the lower 5th. It may not be entirely wrong to hear in this piece a few intimations of the mature style of chorale harmonization for which Bach was later justly celebrated. In the introductory fugue of *Durch Adams Fall ist ganz verderbt*, BWV 1101, the first chorale line, which acts as the subject, is lightly varied (as in BWV 1119) and accompanied at each entry by a regular countersubject. The complete chorale that follows is presented in standard note-values—as in most of the Neumeister cantus firmus chorales—rather than in the augmentation favoured by Pachelbel and J. M. Bach; and each line is prepared by

²⁵ As observed by Dürr, 'Kein Meister fällt vom Himmel', p. 312. The text of the chorale, verse 1, is given in Williams, *The Organ Music*, p. 564.

²⁶ For details see Reinmar Emans, *J. S. Bach: Orgelchoräle zweifelhafter Echtheit: Thematischer Katalog* (Göttingen, 1997), No. 43.

²⁷ See Williams, *The Organ Music*, p. 550.

fore-imitation, that of the second line (bb. 15–17) being chromatic, in keeping with the penitential text. What impresses one here is the vitality of the chorale accompaniment, which, despite its nominal and sometimes real four parts, preserves the figural character and semiquaver motion more usual in three-part textures (for example, BWV 1100). By comparison with other Middle-German cantus firmus accompaniments, it is exceptionally rich in motives (including the repeated-semiquaver motive of bb. 25–6, a mannerism of early Bach that also occurs in BWV 1100, bb. 15–19), some derived from the chorale, others freely invented.

Among the Neumeister pieces attributed to Bach are three chorale arrangements in four parts that have certain affinities with the chorale motet: BWV 1097, 1109, and 1116. They are admittedly far removed from the thoroughgoing type of chorale motet cultivated by Böhm and Zachow, in which each chorale line in turn acts as the subject of a fugal exposition that culminates in a ‘definitive’ cantus firmus statement of the line concerned. In the Neumeister pieces, this description applies only to the first line; the other lines are generally preceded by fore-imitation only, as in a standard four-part cantus firmus setting. The analogy with combination form cannot escape notice. However, at the point where the cantus firmus begins there is neither a change of texture nor of the note-values in which the chorale is presented: these chorales remain all of a piece throughout. Furthermore, chorale citations in the lower parts are often identical in form with those of the treble: the cantus firmus is differentiated only by its position at the top of the texture. The chorale melody, in fact, often seems to permeate the entire texture, and it is this, above all, that confers upon these pieces their motet-like character. The Passion chorale *Ehre sei dir, Christe, der du leidest Not*, BWV 1097, not only includes stretto expositions in the middle parts, but each of its chorale lines (except the first) is exactly anticipated by the bass at the lower octave (in one case, in canonic overlap: see b. 31), a procedure for which Bach might have found precedents in J. M. Bach’s *Wenn mein Stündlein vorhanden ist* or Buxtehude’s *Nun lob, mein Seel, den Herren*, BuxWV 214. The *Stollen* of the penitential chorale *Ach Gott, tu dich erbarmen*, BWV 1109, teem with thematic entries in all parts, a saturated kind of texture familiar from the organ chorales of Samuel Scheidt, who included the same triple-time version of the melody in his *Görlitzer Tabulaturbuch* of 1650. In the *Stollen* of *Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan*, BWV 1116, the first line is imitated in all parts, with the result that the cantus firmus is completely integrated within a quasi-fugal texture.

The remaining ‘J. S. Bach’ Neumeister chorales are governed primarily by the principle of variation. Several different means of variation are often crammed into one and the same chorale arrangement, as if the composer were consciously attempting the utmost diversity of treatment. In some cases, it is almost as if several chorale variations or partitas have been telescoped into one. Elsewhere, the composer seems to be aping the massive North-German chorale fantasia, albeit on a miniature scale and without full obbligato use of the pedalboard. It seems doubtful, however, whether so youthful a composer would yet have developed the creative independence single-handedly to adapt the variation techniques of the North-German fantasia to the far

more modest scale of the Middle-German organ chorale. While some of these 'variation' chorales, so to speak, apparently reflect North-German influence, it is also possible that Bach—assuming that the pieces concerned are correctly attributed to him—was to some extent responding to a local tradition of variegated chorale treatment inherited from the Mühlhausen organist Johann Rudolf Ahle via J. M. Bach and the 44 *Choräle zum Praeambulieren* ascribed to his brother Johann Christoph Bach of Eisenach.²⁸ Nor can we discount the possibility, given the improvisatory nature of the style, that the young Bach was responding not just to existing models but to chorale-based music that he heard improvised on the organs of Thuringia, or possibly farther afield in Lüneburg or Hamburg.

The Christmas chorale *Wir Christenleut*, BWV 1090, after a unified partita-style setting of its first four lines, employs changes of time and rhythmic movement to diversify the remaining lines. Much the same happens in *Herzlich lieb hab ich dich, o Herr*, BWV 1115, except that here the chorale itself is subject to different modes of treatment: plain notes, augmentation, and various kinds of paraphrase. Of all the Neumeister chorales, this most obviously merits the description 'miniature chorale fantasia',²⁹ and accordingly it abounds in Buxtehudian features: the ostinato figure that accompanies the *Stollen*, the upbeat prefaces to the cantus firmus, the chorale paraphrase in 12/8 time, and the accompaniment of chords spaced by rests. A Buxtehudian 12/8 passage—this time a chorale-derived fugato—also features in the *Abgesang* of *Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir*, BWV 1099, alongside a cuckoo-like chorale paraphrase and a free adagio coda, whose sigh motive perhaps illustrates the 'deep distress' of the text. The contrast with the *Stollen* could hardly be greater: there, after an initial four-part harmonization of line 1, which is given simultaneously direct and inverted in the outer parts, lines 1 and 2 are subjected to different modes of canonic treatment. There seem to be affinities here with stretto formations that arise in the setting of the same chorale in J. C. Bach's 44 *Choräle*.

In seven of the 'J. S. Bach' Neumeister chorales (BWV 1105–8, 1117–18, and 1120), the cantus firmus is not confined to the treble but migrates to the other parts, a procedure for which models are perhaps more likely to have been found in Böhm, Buxtehude, and other North Germans rather than in Thuringia, though the technique was occasionally employed by J. M. Bach.³⁰ In every case the migrant cantus is associated with other forms of variation. In *Jesu, meine Freude*, BWV 1105, and *Jesu, meines Lebens Leben*, BWV 1107, not only does the cantus descend through the parts during the *Stollen* but each line is accompanied by a contrasting figuration. The cantus of

²⁸ See Zehnder, 'Des seeligen Unterricht', pp. 183–4 (para. 1.7). Concerning J. R. Ahle's organ chorales, see also Willi Apel, *Geschichte der Orgel- und Klaviermusik bis 1700* (Kassel, 1967); Eng. trans. by H. Tischler as *The History of Keyboard Music to 1700* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1972), pp. 642–4. Concerning the J. C. Bach collection, see Wolff, 'Zum Quellenwert der Neumeister-Sammlung', and Rainer Kaiser, 'Johann Christoph Bachs "Choräle zum Präambulieren": Anmerkungen zu Echtheit und Überlieferung', *BJ* 2001, pp. 185–9.

²⁹ Russell Stinson's term: see his 'Some Thoughts on Bach's Neumeister Chorales', p. 458.

³⁰ See his *Sämtliche Orgelchoräle*, Nos. 24 and 30.

Jesu, meines Lebens Leben is transferred to the pedal for the last two lines, with special climactic effect: the pedal entry is set in the context of a Buxtehudian gigue-fugato in 12/8 time, perhaps to illustrate the words 'Tausend, tausendmal sey dir, liebster Jesu, dank dafür' ('A thousand, thousand times, dearest Jesus, may you be thanked for it'). The cantus firmus is similarly transferred to the pedal at the end of *Als Jesus Christus in der Nacht*, BWV 1108, and *Christ, der du bist der helle Tag*, BWV 1120, but in these cases the migration is accompanied not by a change of time but by an alteration of the cantus itself from standard to augmented note values. In the first case (the second chorale statement, entitled 'Variatio'), standard notes in the treble for lines 1 and 3 alternate with augmented notes in the alto and bass for lines 2 and 4. In the second case, the pedal augmentation of the last two lines is perhaps designed to give special emphasis to the repeated description of Christ as 'des Lichtes Prediger' ('preacher of light'). On occasion, the repeat of lines 1 and 2 in the *Stollen* is taken as an opportunity for the cantus firmus to migrate, in conjunction with some other form of variation. The first two lines of *Gott ist mein Heil*, BWV 1106, and *Alle Menschen müssen Sterben*, BWV 1117, are first presented plain in the tenor, then decorated in the treble. The reverse applies to *Werde munter, mein Gemüte*, BWV 1118: the opening lines are first assigned to the treble in a four-part texture in common time, then repeated by the tenor in a three-part texture in 12/8 time. Further migration takes place in the *Abgesang*: the fifth line in the tenor is answered by the sixth, a sequential repeat, in the treble; and the last two lines are marked by change of key as well as voice, occurring first in the alto (dominant), then in the treble (tonic). The conclusion of *Gott ist mein Heil* is no less diversified. The last line is presented no fewer than four times in succession: twice lightly varied in treble and alto (bb. 19 and 22), the second time in dominant transposition; the third time thoroughly disguised in the same two parts (b. 25); and finally plain in the tenor (b. 27). The line-repeats and dominant transposition, both here and in *Werde munter*, recall Georg Böhm's style of chorale arrangement,³¹ as do the echo repeats of short phrases, either at the unison or at the octave, in the preceding portion of the *Abgesang* to *Gott ist mein Heil* (bb. 12–18).

Echo and fragmentation are among the hallmarks of Böhm's chorale technique. In four of the 'J. S. Bach' Neumeister chorales (BWV 1092, 1105, 1113, and 1120), these devices are used to animate the plainly harmonized lines that alternate with those accompanied in a more elaborate figural or polyphonic manner. At the beginning of *Herr Gott, nun schleuß den Himmel auf*, BWV 1092, for example, the first two notes of the chorale are detached, then echoed at the lower octave, before they preface the first line as a whole. The passage may be imagined as a threefold declamation of the opening words 'Herr Gott'. Writing of this kind, including the rhetorical use of rests (by analogy with the figure of speech *tnesis*, in which a word is inserted between the syllables of another word), is of course widespread in seventeenth-century vocal

³¹ See J.-C. Zehnder, 'Georg Böhm und J. S. Bach: zur Chronologie der Bachschen Stilentwicklung', *BJ* 1988, pp. 73–110, esp. 94.

music: compare the opening of this organ chorale with an extract from an aria by J. M. Bach³² (Ex. 3). But it might have been Böhm's example that led the young Bach to apply this essentially vocal device to the organ chorale. In *Ich hab mein Sach Gott heimgestellt*, BWV 1113, every line of the chorale in turn is subject to a cadential echo repeat. Again, such writing is common currency in the vocal music of the time; and applied to the *Oberwerk* and *Rückpositiv* divisions of the organ, it became a hallmark of the North-German chorale fantasia. In *Nun lob, mein Seel, den Herren*, BuxWV 212, Buxtehude employed the technique within a small format comparable to that of the Middle-German organ chorale; and it might have been in such pieces, and no doubt in improvised chorale playing, that Bach found his models.

Ex. 3



a) J. S. Bach: *Herr Gott, nun schließ den Himmel auf*, BWV 1092, bb. 1–4 (treble only)



b) J. M. Bach: *Ach, wie sehnlich wart ich der Zeit*, bb. 30–3 (soprano only)

Finally, there are three 'J. S. Bach' Neumeister chorales in which the melody itself is throughout subject to elaboration (BWV 742, 1102, and 1114). In *Du Friedefürst, Herr Jesu Christ*, BWV 1102, and *Herr Jesu Christ, du höchstes Gut*, BWV 1114, the melody is treated like an elaborate solo part in a vocal aria, a style habitually adopted by Böhm in his chorale variations. In *Du Friedefürst*, the context is a *bicinium* (a two-voice composition) with basso quasi ostinato (freely treated ground bass), as, for example, in verse 3 of Böhm's *Auf meinen lieben Gott*. This is followed by an allegro variation, in which the chorale is paraphrased in a traditional partita-style figuration. The *Stollen* of *Herr Jesu Christ* are set as an expressively ornamented aria, complete with motto (the initial vocal gesture, separated by a brief instrumental episode from the vocal entry proper), over twinned supporting parts, a texture employed by Böhm in the opening verse of his *Vater unser* and *Auf meinen lieben Gott*. After a contrasting, figural-imitative texture in the *Abgesang*, the expressive, pseudo-vocal style returns for the last line, with its reference to 'mich armen Sünder' ('me, poor sinner'). Throughout, Böhmian details abound: the two slightly different chorale variants in the initial fore-imitation; the rhetorical gesture at the beginning of line 2; the

³² Sackmann, 'Der "Yaler" Bach', p. 170, notes the possible influence on the Bach Neumeister chorales of vocal music by older members of the Bach family, particularly J. M. and J. C. Bach.

integration of the chorale within the imitative texture of the *Abgesang*; the pseudo-imitation within a single part (for example, bb. 16–17); the octave transposition of line 4 (bb. 20–4); the free upward expansion in the middle of line 5; and even the concluding broken-chordal flourish in the bass. The style of chorale elaboration in *Ach Herr, mich armen Sünder*, BWV 742, on the other hand, is related neither to the Böhman aria type nor to the ornamented-treble chorale of Scheidemann, Buxtehude, and others. Indeed, Buxtehude's discreet, quasi-vocal style of chorale ornamentation finds no obvious resonance anywhere within the Neumeister chorales. *Ach Herr* instead exhibits a mode of chorale paraphrase habitually employed by Middle-German composers in their chorale partitas and occasionally in chorale preludes. The monotony of the sequential four-note scale figures, and the barely disguised consecutive 5ths (bb. 9–10),³³ suggest that, assuming the piece really is by Bach, it might be among the very earliest of his chorale arrangements.

The Neumeister chorales, if genuine, are of inestimable value for the insight they give into the early years in which Bach learned his craft. What, then, might we gather from them about the very young composer (roughly between the ages of ten and twenty, perhaps), his acquisition of style and technique, and his developing musical personality? We learn of one who was extremely receptive to the large quantity of chorale-based music in all manner of styles with which he must have become acquainted, and of one who was versatile and eclectic enough to want to reflect this diversity in his own chorale-based compositions. We find a certain bold independence of spirit, perhaps, in the refusal to be bound by Bach family traditions or by the Pachelbel school in the treatment of the cantus firmus chorale or the chorale fugue.³⁴ We note an early preoccupation with fugal and canonic modes of chorale treatment, coupled with a quite undogmatic approach to the forms in which they are contained. We encounter a youthful exuberance and love of experiment in the miniature chorale fantasia—a genre within which the highly inventive young composer seems determined to apply every resource at his disposal to the task of varying a chorale. Above all, he is apparently bent on following the dictates of an abundantly rich and fertile imagination, even at the expense of other aspects of his craft. For it cannot be denied that these chorales are often disjointed and ill-disciplined, the work of a youth deficient in technique and, so it seems, lacking adequate supervision. The traditional view of Bach as largely self-taught seems to receive some confirmation from these chorales, for what teacher would have left so many glaring technical faults uncorrected?³⁵ Systematic instruction, had it been available, would surely have imposed greater formal restraint upon the young composer's unbridled flow of disconnected ideas.

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³³ These defects have been pointed out by Hermann Keller, 'Unechte Orgelwerke Bachs', *BJ* 1937, p. 75 (No. 16), and by Dürr, 'Kein Meister fällt vom Himmel', p. 310.

³⁴ Williams, *The Organ Music*, p. 543, finds touches of 'wild originality' and suggests that the 'air of experimentation' might be rooted in 'a young composer's reaction against the anodyne style of Pachelbel'.

³⁵ For full details of these faults, see Dürr, 'Kein Meister fällt vom Himmel'.

An immense gulf separates the juvenilia of the Neumeister Collection from the assured mastery of the *Orgelbüchlein* chorales, which were begun some time in the early-to-middle Weimar years (say, 1708–13). In the interim it may be supposed that Bach wrote many organ chorales in connection with his duties as organist successively at Arnstadt, Mühlhausen, and Weimar. Though none can be firmly dated, numerous miscellaneous chorales survive that might have originated during this period—no longer juvenilia, but still a long way short of the maturity of the *Orgelbüchlein* or the best of the Seventeen Chorales. They include many types anticipated in Neumeister: harmonized, canonic, and ornamented chorales; chorale motets, fantasias, and partitas. Bach is often found working on a larger scale than in Neumeister, yet with many of the same technical and stylistic preoccupations that have already been noted there.

Miscellaneous organ chorales

Title	Chief source/s	Scribe, date
<i>Vom Himmel hoch</i> , BWV 700	Leipzig, Mus.ms.3	Anon., 1725–50
<i>Erbarm dich mein</i> , BWV 721	Berlin, P 802	J. G. Walther, pre-1717
<i>Gott, durch deine Güte</i> , BWV 724	ABB 30	J. C. Bach, c. 1707–13
<i>Herzlich tut mich verlangen</i> , BWV 727	Berlin, P 802	J. T. Krebs, post-1710
	The Hague, 4.G.14	J. G. Walther, post-1717
<i>O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig</i> , BWV 1085	Berlin, P 802	J. G. Walther, pre-1717
	Yale, LM 4983	J. C. Bach, ³⁶ pre-1727

All five of these chorales are transmitted in reliable sources from Bach's lifetime, though none of the sources offers much help in pinpointing the date of composition. For this we have to turn to internal, stylistic considerations. It is worth noting, however, that three of the chorales are preserved in the Walther–Krebs manuscript P 802, which suggests that, however early their origin, they (unlike the Neumeister chorales) remained current in Weimar.

We seem to witness in these chorales the same boldly independent spirit, ever ready to experiment with new ideas and methods, that has already been noted in the Neumeister group. For in no case do they simply conform unreservedly with accepted norms of chorale treatment. At a first encounter, *Vom Himmel hoch, da komm ich her*, BWV 700, appears to be a straightforward four-part cantus firmus setting, with opening fugue on line 1, chorale in the pedal, and fore-imitation prefacing lines 2–4.

³⁶ Not Bach's brother but J. C. Bach of Gehren; see Yoshitake Kobayashi, 'Der Gehrrener Kantor Johann Christoph Bach (1673–1727) und seine Sammelbände mit Musik für Tasteninstrumente', in W. Rehm (ed.), *Bachiana et alia musicologica: Festschrift Alfred Dürr* (Kassel, 1983), pp. 168–77 (esp. 174).

The cantus, however, is cast in standard note-values rather than the augmented notes characteristic of Middle-German settings around 1700. And the fugal writing is unprecedented in its thoroughness: double four-part exposition on line 1, complete with regular countersubject and with entry of every part in both *dux* and *comes* forms (see Part I Ch. 2, p. 33); and fore-imitation for lines 2–4 amounting to a full fugal exposition for all four manual parts in each case. In the fore-imitation, the chorale lines are not just diminished but varied by syncopation, decorative figures, and changes of note-values (including augmentation at the line-ends), accompanied by suspension chains. Finally, the diminished first chorale line forms a bridge that unites the opening fugue and the cantus firmus setting: extended by sequence, it forms a constant accompaniment to line 2 (bb. 23–31), then recurs at the end in a tonic-pedal coda, so that the piece ends as it began. In very general terms, there are pieces in Neumeister that are roughly comparable in style of chorale treatment (BWV 1097, 1101, 1109, and 1116). And several features point unmistakably to an early date: for example, the octave doubling of the cantus firmus in the manner of J. M. Bach and Pachelbel; the presence of both manual and pedal bass; the occasional harmonic roughness; and the massive chords that come out of the blue in the last three bars. None of the Neumeister chorales consistently employs pedal cantus firmus, however; and the extreme thoroughness of the fugal writing, not to mention the subtle unifying effect of the first chorale line, are beyond anything we encounter in Neumeister and anticipate salient characteristics of Bach's mature style.

Erbarm dich mein, o Herre Gott, BWV 721, could hardly be more different. Though in essence nothing more than a chorale harmonization, it takes a form unparalleled either in Neumeister or in Bach's later chorales. Beneath the plain treble cantus firmus in long notes, chords are repeated on every quaver throughout to create a tremolo effect that is singular in Bach's organ music. Though precedents have been found in Scheidt, Kuhnau, and Busbetzky (a Buxtehude pupil),³⁷ it remains a most unusual, romantic conception, not far removed in spirit from the *Orgelbüchlein* chorale *Ich ruf zu dir*, BWV 639. The harmony is highly expressive, having much recourse to dissonance and chromaticism. Nevertheless, the style of the homophony clearly points to a date prior to the establishment of Bach's mature style in Weimar.

Gott, durch deine Güte, BWV 724, was probably entered in the Andreas Bach Book some time after about 1707,³⁸ but its style suggests a considerably earlier date of origin: note, for example, the entry of the bass with a free part (b. 9) and the looseness of the canonic writing, a far cry from the perfected canonic technique of the *Orgelbüchlein* setting of the same chorale (BWV 600), which it resembles as a sketch does the finished product. In essence it is a cantus firmus chorale with introductory fore-imitation and interludes; but each chorale line is imitated at the lower octave (at the 10th in line 4) by the tenor (line 1) or bass (all the others except line 3, which is instead anticipated by the bass). This freely canonic writing recalls the Neumeister canon

³⁷ See Williams, *The Organ Music*, p. 464.

³⁸ See Hill diss., esp. pp. 330–2.

BWV 714 or, perhaps even more, the treble–bass canons in BWV 1097 and 1099. The assured harmony distances it from these very early pieces, however, and it may have been harmonic considerations that discouraged any attempt at tighter imitation. Not until the *Orgelbüchlein* would refined harmony and strict canon go hand in hand.

With *Herzlich tut mich verlangen*, BWV 727, we encounter for the first time within Bach's known *oeuvre* the vocally inspired, often sparing style of chorale ornamentation associated in the seventeenth century with Scheidemann and Buxtehude. The absence of introduction and interludes, however, anticipates the *Orgelbüchlein*, which includes several well-known ornamented chorales (BWV 614, 622, and 641). While it approaches them in strength of feeling and consistency of tone, its compositional technique is relatively unsophisticated: it exhibits neither individually shaped melodic elaboration nor thoroughgoing motivic accompaniment. Like Buxtehude's setting of the same melody (as *Ach Herr, mich armen Sünder*, BuxWV 178), it is very sparingly ornamented: some lines are left plain, or else decorated only at the cadence; and a single figure predominates—the *suspirans* (sighing motive), which, though conventional, is undeniably effective as a musical correlative for the 'longing' ('*verlangen*') of the text.

O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig, BWV 1085, in fact comprises two settings:³⁹ a three-part cantus firmus chorale and a (mainly) four-part harmonization, both enriched by ornamentation of the chorale melody, which is more abundant than in *Herzlich tut mich verlangen*, but still far from the lavishness of the ornamented *Orgelbüchlein* chorales. Both settings employ the triple-time version of the Passiontide chorale, as do the Neumeister and 'Seventeen' versions (BWV 1095 and 656 respectively);⁴⁰ they also have the key of F major and 3/2 time in common with the Neumeister version. In the three-part setting, the treble, with its 'coloured' (i.e. decorated) cantus firmus, and the lower parts, with their fore-imitations in fairly strict stretto, are not sharply differentiated, and clearly warrant performance on the same manual: value is evidently attached to integration of the texture. The rising interpolation in the second line of both settings (no. 1, b. 14; no. 2, b. 7) is a notably Böhmian feature, as is the dissolving of their final line in figuration.⁴¹ The style of coloration in the four-part setting is similar to that of the three-part, which suggests that they might have been conceived as a complementary pair. Certain details in the four-part setting recall some of the early cantatas, which might have a bearing on date: the initial motive of lines 1 and 6 resembles that of the chorale finale from the *Actus tragicus*, BWV 106; and the falling-5th anticipatory-note figure that opens line 2 recalls the first vocal entry in the chaconne finale of *Nach dir, Herr, verlanget mich*, BWV 150. In both settings, the most expressively treated line is the sixth, 'sonst müßten wir verzagen' ('otherwise we should have had to despair'), which yields a falling chromatic bass with poignant harmony in the three-part version, and a sequence of sigh figures in the four-part.

³⁹ Only the second is included in the BWV. Here the same BWV number is used for both.

⁴⁰ The *Orgelbüchlein* version (BWV 618), on the other hand, is in square time.

⁴¹ See Williams, *The Organ Music*, p. 539.

Chorale motets

<i>Title</i>	<i>Chief source/s</i>	<i>Scribe, date</i>
<i>Ich hab mein Sach Gott heimgestellt</i> , BWV 707	Berlin, Am.B.72a	Anon., 1764–77
<i>In dich hab ich gehoffet, Herr</i> , BWV 712	Brussels, Ms.II.3919	Anon., 1725–50
<i>Valet will ich dir geben</i> , BWV 735a	Plauen Organ Book The Hague, 4.G.14	J. A. Lorbeer, pre-1710 J. G. Walther, post-1717
<i>Ach Gott vom Himmel sieh darein</i> , BWV 741	Brussels, Ms.II.3919	Anon., 1725–50

Of these four chorales, only BWV 735a is transmitted in a source nearly contemporary with its composition. The other three belonged to the collection of the Leipzig publisher Breitkopf,⁴² whose manuscripts seem to have been of mixed provenance: BWV 712 and 741 are transmitted in a reliable source from Bach's lifetime, whereas the source of BWV 707 in no way guarantees its authenticity. We shall find within this work, however, strong internal pointers towards Bach's authorship. The absence of all four works from the Walther–Krebs manuscripts suggests that they originated before 1708 and were no longer current during Bach's Weimar years; and this appears to be confirmed by stylistic evidence, which points to a likely date within the period 1700–8.

During the first decade of the eighteenth century, the chorale motet seems to have become something of a speciality of Bach's. Foreshadowed in certain Neumeister chorales (BWV 1097, 1109, and 1116), it is still found in some of the earlier pieces among the Seventeen Chorales (BWV 652a, 665a, and 666a). In the fully developed form represented by the four chorales here under consideration, each line is subjected to a complete four-part fugal exposition, whose culmination (the fourth entry) takes the form of a 'definitive' cantus firmus statement in treble or bass. Thus fugal and cantus firmus modes of chorale treatment are here fully integrated. Bach's adoption of this structure reflects the tendency towards extreme fugal thoroughness that we have already noted in *Vom Himmel hoch*. In addition, it is not unlikely that the example of several older contemporaries played a part: Georg Böhm, whose music Bach must have known since his Lüneburg days (1700–2), and the Halle organist Friedrich Wilhelm Zachow (Handel's teacher), a strict contrapuntist and a specialist in the chorale fugue and chorale motet.

There is a deep-seated affinity between *Ich hab mein Sach Gott heimgestellt*, BWV 707, and *Ach Gott vom Himmel sieh darein*, BWV 741, which strongly suggests that they emanated from the same composer. In both cases, the canonic technique that we have observed being applied loosely in certain early chorales (BWV 714, 724, and 1099) becomes strict, being set in a fugal context and assimilated to stretto. Not only do the

⁴² See Ernest May, 'Eine neue Quelle für J. S. Bachs einzeln überlieferte Orgelchoräle', *BJ* 1974, pp. 98–103; and his 'Connections between Breitkopf and J. S. Bach', in G. B. Stauffer, ed., *Bach Perspectives 2: J. S. Bach, the Breitkopfs and the 18th-century Music Trade* (Lincoln and London, 1996), pp. 11–26.

preparatory fugal expositions often involve stretto, but the cantus firmus statements that follow are mostly in close canon (by augmentation in BWV 707).⁴³ The strictness of the stretto/canon in both cases results in ‘difficult’ intervals of a 4th, 7th, or 9th, whose satisfactory resolution demands exceptional harmonic ingenuity. Moreover, the association of the text with death (BWV 707) or abandonment by God (BWV 741) leads to the use of rising or falling chromatic lines or continuously syncopated lines as counterpoints to the chorale. Recurring intervals or chords, used for expressive purposes, recur almost obsessively: in *Ich hab mein Sach*, the diminished 7th, harmonizing the leading-note $g\sharp$; and in *Ach Gott vom Himmel*, bare 5ths and dissonant 7ths or 9ths, which create an appropriate sense of desolation. In both cases, two chorale lines are counterpointed against each other, as they were in *Vom Himmel hoch*. *Ach Gott vom Himmel* is much the more massive of the two, requiring double pedal (the simultaneous playing of two pedal parts; whereas *Ich hab mein Sach* is playable *manualiter*) and repeatedly building up to a full five-part texture. At the great five-part, double-pedal climaxes to the last two lines (bb. 45 and 56), the device of chorale canon gives rise to music of great intensity, aptly reflecting Luther’s text in which he begs God for pity on poor godless humanity and summarizes their plight in the words ‘verlassen sind wir Armen’ (‘abandoned are we wretches’). It has been suggested⁴⁴ that this work, in its disregard for many of the rules of dissonance, might reflect the difficult life circumstances of an orphaned young man. Whether or not this is true, it is undoubtedly the most harshly dissonant of all Bach’s early works, and perhaps most nearly approaches the borders of the possible in technique and expression. As such, it gives insight into the young composer’s development, witnessing to a stage (well beyond that reached in the Neumeister works) at which a deliberately restricted range of compositional resources can be brought to bear upon a work in order to impress upon it a unique character of its own. This kind of musical thinking—in its more advanced form, beyond all but the greatest composers—may be identified as one of the essential prerequisites of Bach’s mature style.

In dich hab ich gehoffet, Herr, BWV 712, and *Valet will ich dir geben*, BWV 735a,⁴⁵ are no less strictly contrapuntal in the fugal or imitative writing that introduces their cantus firmus entries, but they lack the canonic element (except at the first line of BWV 712, which is in octave canon between the outer parts). Moreover, while BWV 707 and 741 are relatively plain and devoid of ornament, in keeping with their sombre texts, *In dich hab ich gehoffet* and *Valet will ich dir geben* are both written in an elaborate figural style, emphasizing the more hopeful, positive element in their texts:

⁴³ There seems to have been something of a Middle-German tradition of stretto or canonic treatment of *Ach Gott vom Himmel*, witness the settings of J. C. Bach, Pachelbel, and Zachow.

⁴⁴ By J.-C. Zehnder, ‘Auf der Suche nach chronologischen Argumenten in Bachs Frühwerk (vor etwa 1707)’, in M. Staehelin (ed.), *Die Zeit, die Tag und Jahre macht: zur Chronologie des Schaffens von J. S. Bach* [conference report, Göttingen, 1998] (Göttingen, 2001), pp. 143–56 (esp. 156). We cannot exclude the possibility that some of the many dissonances result from faulty transmission, but others are undoubtedly intentional.

⁴⁵ The later version BWV 735 is not indisputably authentic; see Williams, *The Organ Music*, pp. 478–80.

the *Te Deum* reference in the one and the hope of heaven in the other. However, they differ fundamentally in disposition. The florid writing of *Valet will ich dir geben* is largely restricted to the accompanying parts, the chorale lines themselves remaining plain. In *In dich hab ich gehoffet*, on the other hand, the chorale lines are decorated, both during the fore-imitations and in the cantus firmus statements. This is not the only novel element in a highly inventive piece of writing. Chorale and accompaniment are more than usually integrated by sharing the same decorative form; and the first five lines are united by the same figures, which are then subjected to division in line 6. Here, climax is achieved by progressive increase in rhythmic motion, employment of two countersubjects in the fore-imitation, and plain, unadorned cantus firmus in the bass. Most remarkably, each line-section ends with a brief coda that cadences (in most cases) in a different key from the chorale line itself: the six line-sections end in the keys $f\sharp$, $c\sharp$, E, $f\sharp$, D, and A (vi, iii, V, vi, IV, I), whereas the chorale lines themselves cadence in A, E, A (half-close), A, D, and A (I, V, I, I, IV, I). *Valet will ich dir geben*, while possessing great merits of its own, is less independent and therefore perhaps earlier in origin: it appears to owe much to Georg Böhm, who was responsible for enriching the chorale motet with North-German variation techniques.⁴⁶ The closest parallel in Böhm is verse 2 of his *Vater unser im Himmelreich*, which resembles Bach's piece in overall structure, style of elaboration, the use of a different, sharply characterized figure as counterpoint to each line, the fantasia-like fragmentation of the penultimate line, and even some specific figures and their treatment. The Bach piece differs from the Böhm, however, in its more consistently florid contrapuntal lines and in its more unified figure-work—traits that forge a link with *In dich hab ich gehoffet* and help to define the young composer's developing musical personality.

Chorale fantasias

Title	Chief source/s	Scribe, date
<i>Christ lag in Todes Banden</i> , BWV 718	Berlin, Mus.ms.J.L.Krebs	J. L. Krebs, c. 1750
<i>Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott</i> , BWV 720	Plauen Organ Book	J. A. Lorbeer, pre-1710
	Berlin, P 802	J. T. Krebs, post-1710
	The Hague, 4.G.14	J. G. Walther, post-1717
<i>Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern</i> , BWV 739	Berlin, P 488	Autograph, c. 1705
	MM 43	J. C. Bach, c. 1705–7
	Plauen Organ Book	J. A. Lorbeer, pre-1710

⁴⁶ See Zehnder's account of the chorale motet as cultivated by the two composers, 'Georg Böhm und J. S. Bach', pp. 100–2.

While on a larger scale than the miniature chorale fantasias of the Neumeister Collection, these pieces still fall far short of the massive North-German type. However, they continue the trend, established in the Neumeister works, of intermingling diverse variation techniques, many of which appear to be North German in origin, and this perhaps justifies the use of the term 'chorale fantasia'. All three compositions, in different ways, might be viewed as a natural outcome of the style and technique of their Neumeister equivalents. Indeed, it has been suggested that BWV 720 and 739 could be seen 'as expanded versions of BWV 1115, 1117 or 1120 rather than as contracted versions of long northern fantasias'.⁴⁷

Christ lag in Todes Banden, BWV 718, cannot be dated on the basis of its source, but the wholesale adoption of the fantasia style, and the figure of Georg Böhm as mentor—alongside *Valet will ich dir geben*, it is quite the most Böhmian of Bach's organ chorales—strongly suggest that it originated within the period 1700–8. The *Stollen* are set in the aria style familiar from Böhm's chorale variations and already encountered in several Neumeister chorales (such as BWV 1102 and 1114): first as a *bicinium* with basso quasi ostinato, derived from the opening ritornello (cf. especially the first verse of Böhm's *Vater unser*); then as a trio for florid treble and two supporting parts, the higher of which anticipates the chorale lines. Within the decoration of the chorale we hear a wealth of expressive detail—including eloquent Böhmian line expansions—which conveys a sensitive response to the words 'Christ lag in Todes Banden, für unsre Sünd gegeben' ('Christ lay in the snares of death, given for our sins'). A complete contrast ensues in the *Abgesang*, where a faster tempo, a change to gigue time, echo effects, fragmentation of the chorale lines, and sharp changes of texture (all standard variation techniques in fantasia style) convey the mood of joy, praise, and thanksgiving appropriate to the second half of the text. Lines 5–7, in which a bar (or a half-bar) of the chorale is extracted for sequential repetition, form a classic example of the pattern play that has been noted⁴⁸ as a link between Bach and Böhm and a hallmark of the younger composer's early compositional technique.

In *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott*, BWV 720, and *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern*, BWV 739, the figure of Böhm recedes in favour of a judicious mixture of Middle- and North-German styles. The two chorales have much in common, which suggests that they might have originated around the same time—perhaps about 1705, when Bach was organist at Arnstadt.⁴⁹ They are more unified in texture and more consistent in figuration and rhythmic movement than *Christ lag*, already showing a sure hand at the

⁴⁷ Quoted from Williams, *The Organ Music*, p. 573.

⁴⁸ By Zehnder, 'Georg Böhm und J. S. Bach', pp. 91–3. Matthias Schneider, on the other hand, emphasizes the work's connection with the chorale-fantasia techniques of the older generation of North-German composers, such as Tunder, Scheidemann, and Buxtehude. See his 'J. S. Bach und der Fantasiestil: zur Choralbearbeitung BWV 718 *Christ lag in Todesbanden*', in M. Geck and K. Hofmann (eds.), *Bach und die Stile* [conference report, Dortmund, 1998] (Dortmund, 1999), pp. 205–17.

⁴⁹ The autograph of BWV 739 dates from about that time; see R. Stinson, 'Bach's Earliest Autograph', p. 239. The date formerly proposed for BWV 720—1709—is surely too late; see Williams, *The Organ Music*, p. 461.

integration of diverse styles. Both adopt Pachelbel's three-part cantus firmus style to a considerable extent, and yet they also find room for brilliant North-German toccata-style diminution figures over augmented pedal notes (BWV 720, bb. 31, 57; BWV 739, b. 42). Where the two chorales converge most obviously is in their treatment of the last line: both state it twice (the second time in enriched texture), and both prepare its strong, slow scale descent with a swift single line running up to a relative-minor chord (BWV 720, bb. 49–50; BWV 739, bb. 55–6). At this point in *Ein feste Burg*, the augmented cantus firmus in the alto, complementary semiquaver figures in treble and tenor, and walking-quaver bass are combined in a texture whose clear differentiation of parts, both in function and in note values, will become a hallmark of Bach's mature style. At the corresponding point in *Wie schön leuchtet*, contrary motion of the outer parts brings the bass cantus firmus down to the low concluding tonic pedal and, at the same time, the treble up to the highest note of the manual, *c*³, a clear reference to Christ's being 'highly and most splendidly exalted' ('hoch und sehr prächtig erhaben'). Several times the treble returns to this note with ecstatic fervour before dissolving into the glittering broken-chords of the last three bars.

Chorale partitas

Title	Chief source/s	Scribe, date
<i>Ach, was soll ich Sünder machen</i> , BWV 770	Berlin, P 802	J. G. Walther, pre-1710?
<i>O Gott, du frommer Gott</i> , BWV 767	Berlin, P 802	J. T. Krebs, post-1710
<i>Christ, der du bist der helle Tag</i> , BWV 766	Darmstadt, Mus.ms.73	Anon., early 18th century
<i>Sei gegrüßet, Jesu gütig</i> , BWV 768a	Berlin, P 802	J. T. Krebs, post-1710

As the above table shows, all but one of the chorale partitas (including BWV 768 in its much shorter original version) are transmitted in one of the Walther–Krebs manuscripts, the chief Weimar sources of Bach's early organ music. The exception is BWV 766, which, however, has so much in common with the other partitas that it must have originated during the same period. The sources of these four compositions might suggest an origin in the Weimar years, but internal evidence points rather to the pre-Weimar period (before 1708), which accords with Forkel's statement that 'Bach began already when he was at Arnstadt [1703–7] to compose [chorale-based] pieces, with variations, under the title *Partite diverse*'.⁵⁰ Detailed stylistic comparison suggests that BWV 770 might have been composed first, then BWV 767 and 766 (perhaps in that order) somewhat later and quite close together. BWV 768a was almost certainly

⁵⁰ J. N. Forkel, *Über J. S. Bachs Leben, Kunst und Kunstwerke* (Leipzig, 1802); Eng. trans. (London, 1820) repr. in *NBR*, pp. 415–82; see p. 471.

the last to be composed, and a revision that hugely expanded this work seems to have taken place during the Weimar period (see below, Part II Ch. 4).

The framework of the chorale partita, a species of chorale variations, gave Bach the opportunity of assembling a wealth of different styles and techniques—Middle German, North German, often specifically Böhman—and unifying them within each composition through their application to a single chorale melody. The free-voiced, largely five-part texture of the opening chorale harmonization in each case (except BWV 768a) has close parallels in Böhm;⁵¹ only *Sei gegrüßet* opens with the purely four-part type of harmonization, amply stocked with passing-notes, that we now view as quintessentially Bachian—one of the many factors that point to its later date. In every set but BWV 770, which is believed to be the earliest, the variations proper begin with a *bicinium* in which the decorated chorale melody assumes the character of the solo soprano part in a continuo aria, complete with motto, accompanied by basso quasi ostinato. This formula, already observed in two Neu-meister chorales (BWV 1102 and 1114) and in *Christ lag in Todes Banden*, BWV 718, was a speciality of Böhm's, who might have adopted it from vocal music heard at the Hamburg opera in the 1690s and imitated in his Elmenhorst Lieder of 1700.⁵² Bach's 'continuo' ritornellos, however—the foundation of the whole structure—represent an advance on Böhm's, which tend to be made up of sequences on a single figure plus a cadence. The ritornello of *O Gott, du frommer Gott* comprises two sequential figures, one rising and the other falling, giving it a satisfying arch shape. That of *Christ, der du bist der helle Tag* anticipates the *multum in parvo* themes of Bach's maturity, at once melodically pleasing and rich in harmonic or polyphonic implications, while that of *Sei gegrüßet* (see Part I Ch. 6, Ex. 2) already exhibits the tripartite structure of headmotive, sequence (in three steps), and cadential tail-figure that was to become the classic form of the baroque ritornello, whether in the vocal aria or the instrumental concerto. In the 'solo soprano' part of these ritornello movements, the chorale melody is subjected to all the usual devices familiar from Böhm: echo, fragmentation, repetition of sub-phrases, line expansion, and the interpolation of rests for rhetorical effect. In *Christ, der du bist*, bb. 15–21, for example, the first half of line 4 is extracted and repeated at different pitches, causing abrupt changes of key: f–A♭–bb (cf. Verse 2 of Böhm's *Christe, der du bist Tag und Licht*). Bach was clearly enamoured of this idea, for he returned to it in two later variations from the same set (Partita 5, bb. 10–15, and Partita 7, bb. 10–17). The equivalent movement of *Sei gegrüßet* (Variation 1) is particularly notable for its eloquent line expansions, which are rich in the demisemiquaver divisions that eventually came to characterize Bach's mature style of chorale ornamentation—another pointer towards the relatively late date of this variation set.⁵³

⁵¹ cf. his *Ach wie nichtig, ach wie flüchtig* and *Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ*.

⁵² See Zehnder, 'Georg Böhm und J. S. Bach', pp. 96–7.

⁵³ See also Zehnder's discussion of the date of this set, 'Georg Böhm und J. S. Bach', pp. 94 and 97.

The inner variations of the chorale partitas on the whole conform with Middle-German norms: right-hand chords against left-hand semiquavers, or vice versa; the compound-time partita; variations based on complementary semiquaver figures; the *bicinium* with semiquavers against quavers; the chromatic variation; the variation with the chorale in the tenor; or the one employing diminution figures. The inner variations of *Ach, was soll ich Sünder machen*, simpler and more homophonic than those of the other sets, closely resemble Böhm's 'partite' on *Ach wie nichtig, ach wie flüchtig*—the kind of work in which Böhm most clearly reveals his Middle-German origin. The inner variations of the other sets are more complex and varied in texture, with a more thoroughgoing imitative and/or motivic interplay of parts. This trend culminates in the second variation of *Sei gegrüßet*, whose distinctive motive is shared among the parts (even the cantus partakes of it), recurring in almost every half-bar—direct or inverted, or even both simultaneously—and in metrically displaced forms. With its cogent motivic structure, together with richly expressive harmony, this movement represents one of the clearest anticipations of the *Orgelbüchlein* among Bach's early works.

Bach concurs with Böhm in concluding each set with a freer, more expansive variation: either a fantasia (BWV 770 no. 10, 767 no. 9) or a cantus firmus movement (BWV 766 no. 7, 768a no. 4 [= 768 no. 10]). The fantasias exhibit the dazzling profusion of variation techniques that has already been encountered in some of the Neumeister chorales and in three larger works, of presumably somewhat later origin, that have already been discussed (BWV 718, 720, and 739). A kaleidoscopic variety results from constant changes of time or tempo and from alterations in the voice, note-values, and kind or degree of elaboration in which the chorale melody is presented. The strikingly similar openings of the two fantasias both modulate to the relative major, at which point their rather naively insistent repeated cadences recall Kuhnau. In both cases the pattern play, with its abrupt tonal shifts (BWV 770 no. 10, bb. 40–6; BWV 767 no. 9, bb. 11–15), is thoroughly Böhmian. Elsewhere, however, the figure of Buxtehude looms large: for example, in line 5 (bb. 38–9) of the finale from *Ach, was soll ich Sünder machen*, which is apostrophized, as it were, by the initial rests in the accompaniment and the closing bass flourish. The finale of *O Gott, du frommer Gott* shows greater independence in its Presto setting of line 6, in which a triple-counterpoint phrase is subjected to fourfold permutation, a device whose currency in Bach's early music has been noted elsewhere. The cantus-firmus-based finales of *Christ, der du bist der helle Tag* and *Sei gegrüßet* remain much more unified and in keeping with the preceding variations. Furthermore, Bach's emerging personal style is here more clearly evident. Both finales tighten the unity of the set by referring back in different ways to the first variation, the aria-style *bicinium*. In *Christ, der du bist* the voices of the *bicinium* are inverted: the cantus is shifted from treble to bass ('con pedale se piace'), and the accompanying voices deliver an equivalent to the ritornello theme, whose rich harmonic implications are, however, spelt out in full by converting a single line of semiquavers into complementary dotted rhythms in four parts. The resulting

texture has a harmonic density and expressiveness that we are more inclined to associate with Bach's maturity than with his early works. The finale of *Sei gegrüßet* (in its earlier, four-variation form; in the definitive version it forms Variation 10) is a complex, multi-layered piece that unites cantus firmus setting with chorale aria (hence the link with the first variation) in a sarabande-like triple time reminiscent of Partita 9 from *Ach, was soll ich Sünder machen* and of many of Böhm's partitas and variations (this mode of rhythmic movement is later prominent among the Seventeen Chorales). Each line of the chorale is heard twice, first in an aria-style paraphrase and then as a plain treble cantus firmus in long notes. Despite their derivation from the chorale, the brief aria phrases, set off by rests and highlighted above the rest of the texture, possess their own highly distinctive melodic and rhythmic character. The inner parts furnish not only a full accompaniment, but brief interludes that both respond to the aria phrases and prepare for the cantus. The bass completes the texture by taking up the headmotive of the 'aria' as basso quasi ostinato. In its purposeful, multi-layered complexity, this movement, possessed of charm and depth in equal measure, is unequalled in Bach's early music, except perhaps by the central fugue from the *Actus tragicus* ('Es ist der alte Bund', BWV 106 no. 5).

The early cantatas

Martin Luther affirmed that ‘next to the Word of God, music deserves the highest praise’.¹ As a result of this highly favourable attitude towards music on the part of the founder of the Lutheran Church, the art flourished within it, leading to the great traditions of chorale, motet, and sacred concerto that arose in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Among the most significant types of church composition were the setting of biblical words to music in the dictum motet (a polyphonic composition based on the words of Jesus, or other aphoristic passages, from the Gospel or Epistle reading for the day), and the polyphonic setting of vernacular hymns—with the melody as *cantus firmus*—in the chorale motet. These two traditions were united in the seventeenth-century sacred concerto of Schütz, Scheidt, and others, which in turn leads in a direct line to Bach’s early cantatas. As a result, biblical words and chorales form the textual basis of these cantatas, though free strophic verse in the form of ‘arias’ had been incorporated in the cantata since the late seventeenth century. At this early stage in Bach’s career, perhaps due to the conservative views of his church superiors at Arnstadt and Mühlhausen, he makes no use of the ‘reform’ cantata libretto introduced in 1700 by Erdmann Neumeister, with its free, madrigalian poetic texts designed to be set as operatic recitative and *da capo* arias. The musical style Bach employs in his early cantatas is correspondingly rooted in Lutheran tradition, though he takes full advantage of the immense range of formal and technical procedures available to Lutheran composers around 1700 and, as we shall see, shows himself to be alive to ‘modern’ trends imported from Italy. There is no doubt that he must have learnt much from the sacred works of his predecessors and older contemporaries, such as Hammerschmidt, Rosenmüller, Buxtehude, Pachelbel, Schelle, and Kuhnau, as well as from prominent members of his own family, such as Johann Michael and Johann Christoph Bach.

It is not known exactly when Bach began to compose cantatas, but it is unlikely that any of his surviving ones date from before about 1706, by which time he was already an experienced composer—hence the difficulty of attributing his vocal style to specific models, for he was already capable of considerable independence in his handling of

¹ Preface to Georg Rhau, *Symphoniae iucundae* (Wittenberg, 1538); quoted by Robin A. Leaver, ‘Music and Lutheranism’, in J. Butt (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Bach* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 35–45 (esp. 40).

received methods.² At no stage during the first ten years of his career (1703–13), when he was employed as an organist successively at Arnstadt, Mühlhausen, and Weimar, did the composition and performance of cantatas for church services belong among his regular duties. Yet even at Arnstadt (1703–7)—and certainly at Mühlhausen (1707–8) and Weimar (from 1708 onwards)—he was expected to perform occasional works in the genre for specific occasions. This is clear from the critical comment of the Arnstadt consistory on 21 February 1706 to the effect that ‘so far no concerted music [i.e. cantatas] at all has been performed’ (‘bissher gar nichts musiciert worden’).³ As a candidate for the organist’s post at Mühlhausen, Bach would have had to direct the performance of a cantata of his own composition, and among his duties in that city was the composition and performance of a cantata for the annual town-council elections. However, his express wish to set up a ‘well-regulated church music’ in Mühlhausen,⁴ which implies the regular performance of cantatas on Sundays and feast days, was evidently thwarted, hence his resignation after only one year.

The occasional nature of the young Bach’s church duties in the field of concerted music is reflected in the paucity of the surviving early cantatas and in the variety of the functions for which they were written, which include a funeral (BWV 106), a council-election service (BWV 71), and Easter Sunday (BWV 4). The occasions of the other extant works are unknown, though they might include services of penance (BWV 150 and 131). Nevertheless, the total number of Bach’s early cantatas must have been somewhat larger than the six that have survived. Indeed, we possess documentary evidence of two others that once existed: the Mühlhausen council-election cantata for 1709, and *Meine Seele soll Gott loben*, BWV 223, which was probably also written for Mühlhausen.⁵ Another possible candidate is the doubtful New Year cantata *Lobe den Herrn, meine Seele*, BWV 143, whose style is such that, if authentic, it could only have originated within the early period under consideration.⁶ Still other cantatas may be lost without trace: since at a later date Bach very likely came to regard these early works as outmoded—perhaps representing that ‘former style of music’ which ‘no longer seems to please our ears’⁷—he seems to have made no attempt to preserve them, with the result that the few that survive do so by accident. Only the chorale cantata *Christ lag in Todes Banden*, BWV 4, despite its relatively antiquated style, could be revived without difficulty within the Leipzig cycle of chorale cantatas.

² As Friedhelm Krummacher points out in ‘Bachs frühe Kantaten im Kontext der Tradition’, *Die Musikforschung*, 44 (1991), pp. 9–32 (esp. 13–14).

³ BD II, No. 16; *NBR*, No. 20.

⁴ BD I, No. 1; *NBR*, No. 32.

⁵ Like its predecessor, Cantata 71 of 1708, the 1709 council-election cantata BWV Anh. I 192 was published; see Ernst Brinkmann, ‘Neues über J. S. Bach in Mühlhausen’, *Mühlhäuser Geschichtsblätter*, 31 (1932), pp. 294–9, and Christine Fröde, *Krit. Bericht*, *NBA* I/32.1 (Kassel and Leipzig, 1992), pp. 85–7. Concerning *Meine Seele soll Gott loben*, BWV 223, see Spitta I, pp. 339–40; Eng. trans., i, pp. 343f.; and Ryuichi Higuchi, *Krit. Bericht*, *NBA* I/34 (Kassel and Leipzig, 1990), p. 58.

⁶ See Klaus Hofmann, ‘Perfidia und Fanfare: zur Echtheit der Bach-Kantate “Lobe den Herrn, meine Seele” BWV 143’, in B. Mohn and H. Ryschawy, eds., *Cari amici: Festschrift 25 Jahre Carus-Verlag* (Stuttgart, 1997), pp. 34–43. See also the same author’s remarks in *BJ* 1997, pp. 177–9.

⁷ BD I, No. 22; *NBR*, No. 151 (p. 149).

The six surviving early cantatas are as follows:

Title	Earliest source/s	Scribe, date
<i>Nach dir, Herr, verlangst mich</i> , BWV 150	Berlin, P 1044	C. F. Penzel, 1755
<i>Aus der Tiefen rufe ich, Herr, zu dir</i> , BWV 131	New York, private collection	Autograph, 1707/8
<i>Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit</i> , BWV 106	Berlin, P 1018	Anon., 1768
<i>Gott ist mein König</i> , BWV 71	Berlin, Am.B.43/3 Berlin, P 45 Berlin, St 377 Original edition, 1708	Anon., late 18th cent. Autograph, 1708 Part-autograph, 1708 —
<i>Der Herr denkt an uns</i> , BWV 196	Berlin, Am.B.103	J. L. Dietel, c. 1731/2
<i>Christ lag in Todes Banden</i> , BWV 4	Leipzig, Bach-Archiv	C. G. Meißner, 1724/5

Cantatas 131 and 71 are known to have been composed and performed during the year Bach spent as organist at the Blasiuskirche, Mühlhausen (1707–8); and it was formerly assumed that the other four cantatas all originated during that same period. More recently, however, scholars have become open to the possibility that the actual period of composition might have been more extensive, perhaps reaching back to the Arnstadt period (1703–7) and forward to the first Weimar years (1708–10 or even later). This theory accords better with the considerable variation in style, technique, and level of maturity that we encounter in the surviving works. While resemblances may be found between all six compositions, only Cantatas 131 and 106 are close enough in style and structure to suggest that they might have been composed within the same year (Mühlhausen, 1707?). The evident inexperience of the composer of Cantata 150 by comparison with the assured mastery of Cantata 4 implies a considerable intervening period of time.

The loss of all original sources of *Nach dir, Herr, verlangst mich*, BWV 150, has left ample scope for commentators to voice doubts over its authenticity. Yet it possesses all the stylistic attributes that one would expect of Bach's early cantatas, and for that reason it has been accepted as genuine.⁸ It was dated, however, in the early Weimar years due to the inclusion of freely versified text, solo aria, and permutation fugue. But the immature, even primitive style of writing found in parts of the work points to a considerably earlier date, and it has recently been proposed that it might be dated within the Arnstadt period, around 1706.⁹ This is not ruled out by biographical evidence,¹⁰ and it makes better sense of the work's stylistic peculiarities.

The cantata betrays the inexperience of the youthful composer, hence the crudities often mentioned by commentators. Yet this would be entirely explicable if it were to be

⁸ See Dürr *Studien*, pp. 195–9.

⁹ See Andreas Glöckner, 'Zur Echtheit und Datierung der Kantate BWV 150 "Nach dir, Herr, verlangst mich"', *BJ* 1988, pp. 195–203.

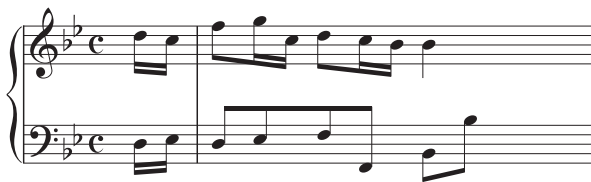
¹⁰ See A. Glöckner, 'Bachs vor-Leipziger Kantaten: zwei Exkurse', in M. Staehelin (ed.), *Die Zeit, die Tag und Jahre macht: zur Chronologie des Schaffens von J. S. Bach* [conference report, Göttingen, 1998] (Göttingen, 2001), pp. 47–57 (esp. 55–6).

regarded as Bach's earliest surviving work for vocal and instrumental ensemble. In that case the extreme brevity of the aria, no. 3, might be explained by its origin as his first attempt at the form. Whereas the motet-style choruses are full of varied and striking ideas, the aria and the terzetto, no. 5, seem relatively weak in invention and lacking melodic interest. In the forms to which Bach devoted his earliest compositional efforts, however—overwhelmingly organ or harpsichord works—there is little scope for sustained melodic writing, and it is probable that his experience in this area was slight. Certainly, he seems to have developed first in harmonic and contrapuntal modes of writing, and only later as a melodist. Even in the aria, however, we hear characteristic turns of phrase that echo other early works: for example, the enhanced cadential repeat in bar 9 that calls to mind a cadence from BWV 767 (Ex. 1) or the cadential extension in bar 20 that evokes a similar passage in BWV 4 (Ex. 2). Similarly, the initial vocal entry of the chaconne, no. 7, is graced by an anticipatory-note figure, a recurring mannerism in the melodic lines of Bach's early works.

Ex. 1



a) *Nach dir, Herr, verlangst mich*, BWV 150, 3rd movement, b. 9, soprano and continuo (unison vlms omitted)



b) *O Gott, du frommer Gott*, BWV 767, Partita II, b. 14

Ex. 2



a) *Nach dir, Herr, verlangst mich*, BWV 150, 3rd movement, b. 20

— Kreu - - zes, des Kreu - zes Stamm

b) *Christ lag in Todes Banden*, BWV 4, 6th movement (Versus 5), bb. 27–9

Detailed comparison with Cantata 131, otherwise the earliest of Bach's known cantatas (Mühlhausen, probably 1707), lends further credibility to an early dating of *Nach dir, Herr, verlanget mich*. Both are psalm-cantatas: the main body of their text is drawn in each case from a single psalm (BWV 150: Psalm 25; BWV 131: Psalm 130), supplemented by free verse in Cantata 150 and by chorale verses in Cantata 131. Disregarding its chaconne-finale, Cantata 150 exhibits a 'pillar' structure that closely corresponds with that of Cantata 131:

150:	<i>Sinfonia-chorus</i> Ps. 25: 1–2	<i>Aria</i> free verse	<i>Chorus</i> Ps. 25: 5	<i>Aria</i> free verse	<i>Chorus</i> Ps. 25: 15
131:	<i>Sinfonia-chorus</i> Ps. 130: 1–2	<i>Aria + chorale</i> Ps. 130: 3–4, chorale verse	<i>Chorus</i> Ps. 130: 5	<i>Aria + chorale</i> Ps. 130: 6, chorale verse	<i>Chorus</i> Ps. 130: 7–8

Thus in both cases tutti psalm choruses form pillars around arias for a small group of soloists. In both cases, too, the instrumental ensemble is essentially that of a trio sonata (disregarding possible doublings): two violins and continuo in Cantata 150; violin, oboe, and continuo in Cantata 131, with the harmony filled out by two violas. Additionally, both works make use of an obbligato bassoon. The choruses of both works are analogous in design to the instrumental form of prelude-and-fugue, and in several cases they fall into a mosaic pattern of brief sections that contrast in tempo and texture, in accordance with the import of the text—a clear inheritance from the motet and the sacred concerto. The clearest parallel occurs at the opening of the two works, where an adagio sinfonia is built into the ensuing chorus, furnishing its themes and setting its solemn tone, until rising hopes change the tempo to allegro or vivace.

The trio-sonata texture of the instrumental writing in *Nach dir, Herr, verlanget mich*, in conjunction with the use of permutation technique (see Part I Ch. 3, p. 66) and the traditional chromatic descent through a 4th in the opening sinfonia and chorus, might possibly be connected with Bach's early interest in Albinoni's Opus 1, from

which he extracted themes for fugues before 1707.¹¹ For several of Albinoni's fugues exploit the permutation of a subject with two regular countersubjects,¹² and he periodically made use of the chromatic descent through a 4th in combination with other themes, notably in the second Grave from Op. 1 No. 3.¹³ In the context of the cantata, this chromatic descent, associated with 'longing' for the Lord, acts as a leitmotiv: not only does it bind together the opening sinfonia and chorus, but, inverted and extended, it returns in the bass of the adagio that concludes the middle section of the second movement (bb. 29–31), one of several harmonic purple patches that add lustre to this work (cf. no. 6, bb. 17b–20a, 38–41, and 41–4). The leitmotiv then forms the subject of the concluding fugue of the second movement; not alone, however, but linked to variants of the other two themes from the opening permutation scheme. Not only are the sinfonia and following chorus linked by a common motive, but so too are the aria and chorus nos. 3 and 4—a vigorous rising motive of cheerfulness and confidence.

The contrapuntal principles explored in the first two movements, largely in instrumental terms (the vocal entries are restricted to the chromatic theme), are taken further in the allegro of no. 6, possibly Bach's earliest vocal permutation fugue, which might perhaps explain its extreme brevity (two tiny expositions plus coda). The dazzling chromatic harmony of the coda draws to a culmination the chromaticism that has been a recurring feature of the work. The fugue subject of this movement complements that of the first chorus: it incorporates the same elements of stepwise motion and repeated quavers, but now—in view of the soul's new-found confidence in the Lord's succour—it is diatonic not chromatic, rising rather than falling, and triple not duple in its metrical subdivisions. Not only may this subject be heard to echo the 'confidence' motive of movements 3–4, but it clearly anticipates the chaconne theme of the finale, no. 7: in both cases, the diatonic rise serves as an 'optimistic' inversion of the chromatic fall we heard in the first two movements. The employment of chaconne form here, heralded by the basso quasi ostinato (see Part I Ch. 4, p. 84) of the terzetto, no. 5, ties in with Bach's early preoccupation with ostinato structures;¹⁴ and it parallels the prelude-and-fugue as an instrumental form taken over into vocal music.

Of the many features that encourage acceptance of this cantata among Bach's early works, two may be singled out: the strongly instrumental foundation of the writing, not only in the forms adopted but in technique (permutation is at first restricted to the instrumental ensemble); and, above all, the compensation made for the small-scale sectional disposition of the choruses by long-range thematic or motivic links between

¹¹ The fugues are BWV 946, 950, and 951a; see above, Part I Ch. 2. The first two sonatas from Albinoni's Opus 1 were copied into the MM by Johann Christoph Bach (Nos. 2–3). According to Hill diss., p. 278, it is highly likely that his *Vorlagen* were made available through his younger brother Johann Sebastian.

¹² For example, Sonata 1 nos. 2 and 4, 6 no. 2, 8 no. 2, and 12 nos. 2 and 4.

¹³ Quoted in full by Michael Talbot, *Tomaso Albinoni: the Venetian Composer and his World* (Oxford, 1990), p. 88.

¹⁴ cf., for example, BWV 992 no. 3, 569, 582, and 12 no. 2. Examples of basso quasi continuo are legion.

sections or movements. We encounter here such a strong, personal characteristic of Bach's early cantatas, witnessing so clearly to a powerful mind at work, that it is difficult to believe that any other composer could have been responsible.

Resemblances have already been noted between this work and another psalm-cantata, *Aus der Tiefen rufe ich, Herr, zu dir*, BWV 131, which, according to an autograph inscription in the original score,¹⁵ originated during the Mühlhausen period (June 1707 to June 1708). *Aus der Tiefen*, however, is in some respects still more closely related to the funeral cantata *Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit*, BWV 106, also known as the *Actus tragicus*. Of this latter work no original sources survive, only manuscript copies from the second half of the eighteenth century. However, peculiarities of notation, the old style of text (without recitatives or da capo arias), and the musical convergence with Bach's early style point unequivocally to the first decade of the century, and the particularly close links with *Aus der Tiefen* establish Mühlhausen in 1707–8 as by far the likeliest place and period of composition. Of the two works, *Gottes Zeit* seems the more mature, and therefore might perhaps have originated a little later than *Aus der Tiefen*.

The two cantatas are linked, above all, by the common musical language that Bach had built up during his early years, with its short phrases and frequent cadencing, its reliance on stock figures and on certain mannerisms (such as the aforementioned anticipatory-note figure, the echo effects, and diminuendo endings). Both works are based on a mixture of biblical and chorale texts, though with a far more diverse selection of the two types in *Gottes Zeit*. Both are symmetrical in overall structure, alternating choruses and solos (or duets), and grouping them around a central axis:¹⁶

BWV 131

Movement	Key	Text
1. Sinfonia + chorus	g	Ps. 130: 1–2
2. Bass solo + chorale	g	Ps. 130: 3–4; <i>Herr Jesu Christ</i> , v. 2
3. Chorus	E♭–f–g	Ps. 130: 5
4. Tenor solo + chorale	c	Ps. 130: 6; <i>Herr Jesu Christ</i> , v. 5
5. Chorus	g	Ps. 130: 7–8

In addition, there are numerous correspondences among the individual movements. The last chorus of *Aus der Tiefen* and the first of *Gottes Zeit* both exhibit the mosaic form that has already been encountered in Cantata 150. The central fugues of the two

¹⁵ 'Auff Begehren Tit: Herrn D: Georg Christ: Eilmars in die Music gebracht von Joh. Seb. Bach Org. Molhusino' ('At the request of Dr Georg Christian Eilmars set to music by Johann Sebastian Bach, Organist at Mühlhausen').

¹⁶ The chorales whose names are abbreviated here are: *Herr Jesu Christ, du höchstes Gut* (B. Ringwaldt, 1588); *Ich hab mein Sach Gott heimgestellt* (J. Leon, 1589); *Mit Fried und Freud ich fahr dahin* (M. Luther, 1524); and *In dich hab ich gehoffet, Herr* (A. Reusner, 1533).

BWV 106

Movement	Key	Text
1. Sinfonia	E♭	
2. Chorus	E♭–c	free verse; Acts 17: 28
3. Tenor solo	c	Ps. 90: 12
4. Bass solo	c–f	Is. 38: 1
5. Chorus + soprano solo + chorale	f	Eccl. 14: 17; Rev. 22: 20; <i>Ich hab mein Sach</i>
6. Alto solo	b♭	Ps. 31: 5
7. Bass solo + chorale	A♭–f–c	Luke 23: 43; <i>Mit Fried und Freud</i>
8. Chorus (chorale)	E♭	<i>In dich hab ich gehoffet</i>

works are based on similar themes, derived from earlier movements. Both cantatas feature chorale-arias in which a long-note cantus firmus in one voice is offset by a florid solo in another. And in both cases the fugal finales are built on double subjects in which plain crotchets are pitted against decorative semiquavers.

Despite their sectional form, the two cantatas are built up into large structures by running one movement into another and by making frequent thematic cross-references. Accordingly, the first movement of *Aus der Tiefen* cadences into the second, with the result that the adagio sinfonia and chorus, the vivace choral fugue, and the andante chorale-aria together form a single great complex. The two chorale-arias act as the strongest unifying factors in the work, since they are based on different verses of the same chorale, Ringwaldt's *Herr Jesu Christ, du höchstes Gut* (1588). But certain recurring motives also have a unifying function: the rising chromatic bass in the first movement (bb. 39–41), over which dissonant 2nds are piled up to illustrate the anguished calling 'out of the depths', anticipates the fugue subject of the finale; the bass part of the first chorale-aria (bb. 54–6) foreshadows the fugue subject of the following movement; and in the finale, the sequential rising 4ths on 'Erlösung' ('redemption'; bb. 21–7) are decorated in the following fugue on 'erlösen' ('redeem'). In *Gottes Zeit*, movements 2–5 cadence successively one into the next in order to preserve continuity, as do movements 6–7. On several occasions within this work Bach associates a particular verbal phrase with a musical 'motto' of great eloquence: for example, 'Heute, heute wirst du mit mir' ('Today you shall be with me') and 'im Paradies' ('in paradise'), both in no. 7. Several of these mottos are interlinked: the 'Gottes Zeit' theme (no. 2) generates the headmotives of three subsequent solo movements (nos. 3, 4, and 6), contributing to the cohesion of the work as a whole.

In these early cantatas, Bach is already found exploiting the distinctive tone-colour of certain instruments for particular expressive purposes. In the finale of *Aus der Tiefen*, for example, the 'grace' ('Gnade') of the Lord calls forth a florid oboe obbligato of great beauty, foreshadowing Bach's masterly treatment of the oboe in the Weimar cantatas (BWV 12, 21, and so on). In *Gottes Zeit*, a muted atmosphere, appropriate for mourning, is created by an ensemble of two recorders, two violas da gamba, and

continuo. On the other hand, the lively, idiomatic recorder writing of 'Bestelle dein Haus' ('Put your house in order'; no. 4) illustrates the word 'lebendig' ('living'), which is, however, simultaneously negated in the text ('du wirst . . . nicht lebendig bleiben'; 'you shall . . . not remain living')—perverse word-painting to our ears, but nonetheless in keeping with contemporary aesthetics.

The melodic writing of the solo vocal parts in *Aus der Tiefen* marks a considerable advance on that of *Nach dir, Herr, verlangst mich*, not so much in the first chorale-aria (no. 2), where the bass is constrained by the style of psalm-tone recitation that Bach adopts, but rather in the second (no. 4), where the solo tenor ranges widely and freely. This more lyrical style is carried further in the eloquent solo melodic lines of *Gottes Zeit*, particularly in the alto solo 'In deine Hände' ('Into your hands') and in the bass's 'Heute, heute wirst du mit mir' ('Today you shall be with me'; nos. 6 and 7). A new fund of lyricism comes into its own in this cantata, pervading all movements, choruses included, and this contributes greatly to the work's exceptional charm.

The first movement of *Aus der Tiefen* is remarkable for the flexibility of its vocal texture. The voices are heard singly and in pairs as well as all together, as often in Handel's style of choral writing. A similarly relaxed attitude informs the fugues. All kinds of freedoms are taken in the interests of effective fugal rhetoric. In the first movement (bb. 57ff.), the subject is twice presented alone, in alternation with block-chordal writing, before its imitative treatment gets under way. The fugue subjects of the first and third movements are altered in interval to permit greater freedom of modulation. And in both outer movements, the subject is treated as a series of detachable components. In the central fugue of *Gottes Zeit* (no. 5), the subject itself remains unaltered, but the countersubject undergoes manifold transformations, culminating in its assimilation to the soprano arioso melody, with its apparent quotation from the chorale *Herzlich tut mich verlangen* (bb. 146–7).¹⁷ Bach's early interest in permutation technique is little in evidence in these two Mühlhausen cantatas. The first fugue from *Aus der Tiefen* (no. 1, bb. 57ff.) might be described as a free stretto fugue; nor does either of the other two fugal movements (no. 3, bb. 6b ff., and no. 5, bb. 27b ff.) qualify as a strict permutation fugue. In each case, however, a number of constant thematic or motivic components are repeatedly interchanged, creating a free and variable effect of permutation. In the finale, no. 5, this effect results from the interchange of the subject with two regular countersubjects; and, as in the first chorus from *Nach dir, Herr, verlangst mich* (no. 2), the underlying basis of this combination is the chromatic tetrachord, harmonized by a series of sequential 4ths—a configuration widely used in the seventeenth century and encountered frequently among Bach's early works.¹⁸

¹⁷ See Alfred Dürr's detailed account of this process in *Die Kantaten von J. S. Bach* (Kassel, 1971; 6th edn 1995), pp. 836–7; Eng. trans. by R. D. P. Jones as *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 761–3.

¹⁸ Seventeenth-century examples occur in Sweelinck's *Fantasia chromatica*, Froberger's *Capriccio 2* (1656), Kerll's *Canzona 1*, Strunck's *Capriccio in F* (1683), Pachelbel's *Ricercar in C minor*, and the *Praeludium to Partie II* from Kuhnau's *Neuer Clavier Übung, Andrer Theil* (Leipzig, 1692). For examples in early Bach, see BWV 150 no. 1–2, 131 nos. 5, 588, 914 no. 4, 915 no. 4, and 910 no. 4.

The chorale in *Aus der Tiefen* not only exercises a valuable unifying function; it also brings to bear upon the psalm text a highly significant New Testament gloss: 'You have atoned for [my sin] on the tree with the pains of death' ('Dieweil du sie gebüßet hast / Am Holz mit Todesschmerzen'). This two-layered approach, derived from the late seventeenth-century motet, gives way to a far more complex and original three-layered conception in the central movement (no. 5) of *Gottes Zeit*. The Old Testament Apocrypha words (Ecclesiasticus 14: 17) are set as a fugue for alto, tenor, and bass; the New Testament words (Revelation 22: 20) as an arioso for soprano. At the same time, the Christian standpoint on death is reinforced by an instrumental rendition of the chorale *Ich hab mein Sach Gott heimgestellt*. If, as seems likely, the text that Bach had in mind can be identified as verse 17 of the chorale,¹⁹ then the underlying train of thought would run: the Old Covenant, in which death is the wages of sin, is now replaced by the New Covenant, with its message of redemption through Jesus Christ.

The next two movements of *Gottes Zeit* (6–7), though more conventional in form—a continuo aria with basso quasi ostinato followed by a chorale-aria, not dissimilar in essentials to those of *Aus der Tiefen* (2 and 4)—are united to form a complex hardly less compelling in its effect on the listener than the central movement. This might justifiably be regarded as Bach's first great 'Dialogue between Jesus and the Faithful Soul', even though the vocal parts are not so designated.²⁰ The Soul, sung by the alto, sings the psalm words 'Into your hands I commit my spirit' ('In deine Hände befehl ich meinen Geist'; Psalm 31: 5), an acceptance of death in the light of the New Covenant, as revealed in the previous movement. To this, the *vox Christi*, the bass, replies in the words of Luke 23: 43: 'Today you shall be with me in paradise' ('Heute wirst du mit mir im Paradies sein'), which in turn prompts the Soul to join in with Luther's Nunc dimittis paraphrase, 'With peace and joy I go to that place' (the chorale *Mit Fried und Freud ich fahr dahin*). The alto and bass lines throughout are moving and passionate, fully equal to the demands of Bach's profound conception. The vivid illustration of the chorale words 'sanft und stille' ('meek and quiet', bb. 54–6) and 'mein Schlaf' ('my sleep', bb. 65–6) finds no parallel in the chorale movements of *Aus der Tiefen*, but rather recalls the pictorial mode of chorale treatment found in Cantata 4.

The service marking the election of a new town council at Mühlhausen on 4 February 1708 may well have been the first big public occasion for which the young

¹⁹ As proposed by Martin Petzoldt, 'Hat Gott Zeit, hat der Mensch Ewigkeit? Zur Kantate BWV 106 von J. S. Bach', *Musik und Kirche*, 66 (1996), pp. 212–20 (esp. 217–18). The verse runs thus:

O Jesu Christe, Gottes Sohn,	O Jesus Christ, God's Son,
Der du für uns hast gnug getan,	You who have done enough for us,
Ach schließ mich in die Wunden dein,	Ah, enclose me in your wounds;
Du bist allein	You alone are
Der einge Trost und Helfer mein.	My only comfort and helper.

²⁰ The movement is mentioned neither by Friedhelm Krummacher, 'Gespräch und Struktur: über Bachs geistliche Dialoge', *BzBF* 9–10 (1991), pp. 45–59, nor by Michael Märker, 'Die Tradition des Jesus–Seele–Dialoges und ihr Einfluß auf das Werk Bachs', *ibid.*, pp. 235–41. Märker, however, gives a useful account of the seventeenth-century background to the Jesus–Soul dialogue.

Bach was called upon to compose and perform a cantata. Accordingly, he put forth his greatest powers in the composition of *Gott is mein König*, BWV 71. In setting the anonymous text—an assemblage of biblical words (including three quotations from the same psalm, no. 74), free verse, and chorale—he employs the time-honoured polychoral principle inherited from Praetorius, Schütz, and others. Thus the twenty-two vocal and instrumental participants are divided into six choirs, spatially separated from each other,²¹ plus continuo, as follows:

1. Three trumpets and drums
2. Two recorders and cello
3. Two oboes and bassoon
4. Two violins, viola, and violone
5. Four solo voices (SATB)
6. Optionally four *ripieno* voices (SATB)

This grand conception might have been inspired by Buxtehude's great oratorios *Castrum doloris* and *Templum honoris* (BuxWV 134–5), which Bach would have heard, and possibly even participated in, during his visit to Lübeck in December 1705: the performances involved several instrumental and vocal choirs stationed in various galleries around the Marienkirche.²² Employing similar means, Bach creates effects of imposing antiphony, as well as colourful exchanges between instrumental groups and attractive quasi-chamber-music textures. The style of the vocal and instrumental writing often accords with that widely associated with polychoral technique in the seventeenth century: for example, the texture in which a long-held note in one voice underpins elaborate exchanges in the other voices and instruments, as in the setting of 'von altersher' ('from of old') in the first movement (bb. 8ff.) or of 'ganz beständig sei vorhanden' ('there remains quite constantly') in the finale (bb. 90ff.).²³

The seven movements are as follows:

<i>Movement</i>	<i>Text</i>
1. Chorus	Ps. 74: 12
2. Tenor solo + chorale	2. Sam. 19: 35, 37; <i>O Gott, du frommer Gott</i> , v. 6
3. Chorus	Deut. 33: 25; Gen. 21: 22
4. Bass solo	Ps. 74: 16–17
5. Alto solo	Free verse
6. Chorus	Ps. 74: 19
7. Chorus	Free verse

²¹ According to the evidence of the original performing parts; see Christine Fröde, preface to *NBA I/32.1* (Kassel and Leipzig, 1992), p. vi.

²² See Christoph Wolff, 'Buxtehude, Bach, and Seventeenth-century Music in Retrospect', in *Wolff Essays*, pp. 41–55 (esp. 47–51). See also Wolff JSB, p. 98.

²³ cf. Cantata 150 no. 4, bb. 19ff.

The mosaic structure already observed in the other early cantatas is not only present here in the framing choruses (1 and 7), but also strongly influences the conception of the solo movements (4 and 5). In all four of these movements, however, the element of reprise is used to bind the sections together into a larger form.²⁴ In the opening chorus, a rondeau-like structure, a–b–a¹–c–a, is created by the threefold return of the ‘motto’ theme ‘Gott ist mein König’. In the bass arioso, no. 4, two sections that contrast in almost every respect are held together by a da capo of the first, producing an entity quite unlike the Italianate da capo form that Bach would later cultivate in Weimar. The following alto aria, no. 5, is similarly structured (A–B–A¹), except that the contributions of the obbligato trumpet choir create a rondeau pattern (a–b–a¹–b¹–a²) not unlike that of the opening movement. The two strophes of the finale, no. 7, are each set in four sections that differ in tempo, key, metre, and texture; but a certain musical correspondence can be felt between the equivalent sections of the two strophes, and each strophe is rounded off by returning to its original words and music. As in the other early cantatas, the fugue (the second section of strophe 2) possesses considerably greater weight, length, and continuity than the other sections, serving to counteract the small-scale, sectional structure of its surroundings.

Both of the fugues in this work, no. 3 and no. 7 bb. 40ff., are strict permutation structures, similar in type to the penultimate movement of *Nach dir, Herr, verlangst mich*, though on a considerably larger scale. The absence of permutation fugue in Cantatas 106 and 131 need not necessarily have a bearing on the relative chronology of the early cantatas. It is equally possible that, as in the sphere of the keyboard fugue, Bach was exploring the possibilities of free and highly structured forms of choral fugue simultaneously around 1707–8. The third movement of *Gott ist mein König*, a motet for four voices and organ continuo, succumbs to an inherent danger of the permutation fugue in that it becomes tiresomely square and repetitive. It is relieved only by the central and concluding episodes, in which a thematic melisma on ‘allem’ (‘all’) receives more extended sequential treatment. In the much larger permutation fugue of the finale (no. 7, bb. 40ff.), the danger of monotony is offset by the grandly cumulative effect of the phased entries of concertists, ripienists, and instruments, culminating in the trumpet choir.

At the opposite end of the spectrum lies the deeply affecting homophonic chorus ‘Du wollest dem Feinde nicht geben’ (‘We ask that you would not give the enemy’; no. 6). This represents a new departure within Bach’s vocal works, being without parallel in the other early cantatas. In his early music in general, it is rare for him to achieve large form outside fugue; but here he builds a substantial movement out of four large melodic paragraphs, all based on the same two phrases and skilfully varied by means of modulatory sequences. The hauntingly lyrical writing of this movement recalls parts of the *Actus Tragicus*. The coda, on the other hand, with its strongly subdominant-

²⁴ A similar mode of formal thinking has already been observed in the first two movements of Cantata 150.

inclined harmony, its flattened supertonic, and its psalm-tone recitation, has close parallels in *Aus der Tiefen*.

The second movement, like the fourth, is built on the principle of basso quasi ostinato, a type of structuring already encountered elsewhere (in BWV 106 no. 6, 131 no. 4, and 150 no. 5) and one that will continue to form the basis of continuo arias in the Weimar period and beyond. This movement takes the form of an 'Aria con corale', along similar lines to the chorale-arias of Cantatas 131 (nos. 2 and 4) and 106 (no. 7), but considerably more elaborate. The young Bach seems to be aiming to lavish all his art on this piece. Unlike its equivalents in the other Mühlhausen cantatas, the chorale melody in the soprano part is decorated, partaking to a considerable extent of the arioso character of the tenor part. Thus the two voices sing together on roughly equal terms, though on the basis of different material. This texture may have its origin in the text: whereas the chorale-arias of Cantata 131 are divided into Old and New Testament sources, and that of Cantata 106 into a dialogue of Jesus and the Soul, in this case there is no such division—the old councillor talks in the first person, whether in the words of the chorale or in those of 2 Samuel 19: 35 and 37. A further enriching feature of the movement is the obbligato organ part, which, during the first half (introduction and *Stollen*, bb. 1–30) echoes the tenor arioso or the soprano chorale, often in an elaborated form, whereas in the second half (*Abgesang*,²⁵ bb. 30ff.) it is more continuous and independent. Closely related to the echo effects of this movement is the built-in diminuendo that occurs at the end of both framing choruses, which in turn clearly parallels the conclusion of other Mühlhausen choruses (BWV 131 no. 1 and 106 nos. 5 and 8).

Der Herr denkt an uns, BWV 196, is an altogether smaller affair than Cantata 71, and its ensemble is confined to a single four-part choir and a single body of instruments (strings) plus continuo. The theory that it was written for a wedding is based on extremely tenuous evidence extracted from the text, and cannot stand up to serious scrutiny.²⁶ Although it survives only in a later manuscript copy, its origin among the early cantatas may be inferred from the text (selected psalm verses only, without any free madrigalian verse) and from its musical forms: there is no recitative, and the aria, duet, and choruses are all very brief. The movements are as follows:

<i>Movement</i>	<i>Text</i>
1. Sinfonia	
2. Chorus	Ps. 115: 12
3. Aria	Ps. 115: 13
4. Duet	Ps. 115: 14
5. Chorus	Ps. 115: 15

²⁵ See Part I Ch. 4, p. 78.

²⁶ See Konrad Küster, "‘Der Herr denkt an uns’ BWV 196: eine frühe Bach-Kantate und ihr Kontext," *Musik und Kirche*, 66 (1996), pp. 84–96.

Much of the work, like Cantata 71, still breathes the air of the seventeenth century, particularly the duet, with its formal imitative writing in white notation. And the concertato style of that period, often evident in Cantata 71 also, lies behind passages such as the opening of the chorus, no. 2, whose duet phrases are repeatedly answered by tutti voices and instruments at the cadences. The work also has a number of other features in common with the Mühlhausen cantatas: the echo or diminuendo endings of the last two movements, for example, or the various motivic interconnections between movements (the headmotives of nos. 1–4 are all derived from the same upbeat figure; compare the duet passages in nos. 1 and 5; and so forth). On the other hand, as we shall see, certain novel, forward-looking elements raise the question whether this work might have originated somewhat later than the Mühlhausen cantatas: Weimar, c. 1708–9 has been put forward as a possible place and date of origin.²⁷

As in several other early cantatas, the design of both choruses is analogous to the instrumental prelude-and-fugue form with which Bach was then preoccupied in his organ music. The 'preludes', however, are more sophisticated in structure than those of equivalent movements elsewhere (such as BWV 150 no. 6 and 131 no. 3): in both cases they take the form A–A¹–B, where A is the antecedent vocal phrase, A¹ a dominant counterstatement thereof, and B the consequent phrase. In the second of the two choruses (no. 5), A briefly returns after B by way of coda to round off the 'prelude'; in the first (no. 2), A returns after the fugue to round off the whole movement. As in Cantata 71, then, long-range planning involving reprise takes precedence over motet-style patchwork or mosaic. The work also recalls Cantata 150, another psalm-cantata, in its employment of both strict and free types of choral fugue: the second movement concludes with a strict permutation fugue, but the fifth closes with a much freer double-fugue structure, as in the finales of Cantatas 131 and 106. In the permutation fugue, instrumental entries are used to bridge the join between the vocal expositions, as elsewhere, but here they amount to a full instrumental exposition in themselves, enabling the composer to preserve a full four-part thematic texture without intermission. Joins are subtly concealed: the fourth instrumental entry doubles with the first entry of the second vocal exposition, the subject being stated by viola and alto voice simultaneously. Both fugues build up from voices, via instruments, to tutti, like the fugue from the finale of Cantata 71; and in the concluding 'Amen' chorus, this sequence takes place twice.

The presence of Italian operatic and concerto forms in the *sinfonia* and arias from this cantata (nos. 1, 3, and 4) raises the question whether the work is exceptional in this regard, or whether comparable forms may be observed in the other early cantatas. That Bach was already familiar with the continuo aria is clear from its amalgamation with the Lutheran hymn in the second movement of the chorale partitas BWV 766–8,

²⁷ By Küster, 'Der Herr denkt an uns', p. 93.

and in certain early organ chorales.²⁸ It is possible that he became acquainted with the form through indirect contact with the Hamburg opera during his Lüneburg years (1700–2), perhaps in part via the Lüneburg organist Georg Böhm.²⁹ In the second and fourth movements of *Aus der Tiefen*, chorale is again amalgamated with aria, with the important difference that the solo part is no longer the decorated chorale melody, played on an organ stop, but an independent voice part (bass or tenor), which forms a counterpoint to the plain chorale cantus firmus, sung by a higher voice (soprano or alto). The whole structure is underpinned by the basso quasi ostinato of the continuo part. The ultimate derivation of these two movements (and of similar movements elsewhere in the early cantatas) from the few-voiced chorale concerto of the seventeenth century, as cultivated by Schein and Schütz, is beyond dispute. Yet certain features stand out as being more ‘modern’ and operatic: in ‘So du willst’ (‘If you wish’; BWV 131 no. 2), the obbligato part for solo oboe; and in ‘Meine Seele wartet’ (‘My soul waits’; BWV 131 no. 4), the clear ritornello structure and the vocal ‘motto’ (bb. 4–5; see Part I Ch. 4, p. 84) that overlaps with a return of the ritornello.

It has also been remarked that the tenor solo ‘Ach Herr, lehre uns bedenken’ (‘Ah, Lord, teach us to remember’) from *Gottes Zeit*, and the following bass solo *Bestelle dein Haus* (BWV 106 nos. 3 and 4) recall the ‘motto’ aria characteristic of Italian opera in around 1700 in their treatment and presentation of the text and in their ritornello structure.³⁰ ‘Ach Herr’ in fact counts as one of Bach’s simplest, and presumably earliest, aria-ritornello designs: the very brief Lied-style ritornello (2 bb., 1 + 1) accompanies the first three solo episodes in quasi-ostinato fashion; the first ritornello and solo episode are together immediately repeated without change; and all ritornellos and episodes but the last are restricted to the tonic and dominant keys—only towards the end (bb. 64–70) does the music expand and modulate a little (v–III–i). The exceptional features of ‘Bestelle dein Haus’—the absence of an opening ritornello and the conclusion in the subdominant key—clearly result from the necessity of tailoring it into its context; but the opening and closing vocal ‘mottos’ (bb. 71–7 and 112–13) are thoroughly operatic, and the recorder ritornellos grow progressively longer and more tonally adventurous (b. 73: 3 bb., key i; b. 84: 5 bb., keys VI–iv; b. 113: 18 bb., keys iv–VI–iv). The fourth movement of *Gott ist mein König*, the bass solo ‘Tag und Nacht’ (‘Day and Night’), recalls ‘Ach Herr’ in its simple, Lied-like ritornello, made up of open antecedent and closed consequent phrases (8 bb., 4 + 4), but it is built over a chaconne bass, and its structure is even more rudimentary: ritornello—solo episode—ritornello (8 + 8 + 8 bb.), without any modulation, the solo being

²⁸ BWV 718, 1102, and 1114.

²⁹ See Jean-Claude Zehnder, ‘Georg Böhm und J. S. Bach: zur Chronologie der Bachschen Stilentwicklung’, *BJ* 1988, pp. 73–110 (esp. 96–7).

³⁰ See Peter Wollny, ‘Arias and Recitatives’, in C. Wolff (ed.), *J. S. Bach’s Early Sacred Cantatas* (The World of the Bach Cantatas, vol. 1) (New York and London, 1997), pp. 171–83 (esp. 174).

a simple variant of the ritornello with the voice part built in. A da capo structure arises from the reprise of the opening 24 bars after a central B section, which, however, is entirely independent, differing from the A section in metre, theme, scoring, and structure—it lacks ritornellos and is underpinned by a basso quasi ostinato.

In this context, the Italianate ritornello forms of *Der Herr denkt an uns* (movements 1, 3, and 4) appear less novel than was formerly thought,³¹ though this might be the first occasion on which Bach employed concerto-ritornello and aria-ritornello forms within the same work.³² His indebtedness to the early concertists Torelli and Albinoni for the ritornello forms of certain early keyboard pieces has already been noted,³³ but in the sinfonia to this cantata he applies a related ritornello form, perhaps for the first time within his surviving works and accordingly on a miniature scale, to an instrumental ensemble (strings and continuo). A four-bar, C major ritornello in continuous dotted rhythms, which acts as an outer frame, is reduced to three and two bars for the inner ritornellos (in keys vi and iii; bb. 7–9 and 12–13). The intervening modulatory episodes are equally brief—two, two, and three bars (bb. 5–6, 10–11, and 14–16)—and, on the whole, they contrast with the ritornellos neither in texture nor in material; only in the second episode (bb. 10–11) is there a modicum of ‘soloistic’ writing for first violin. The emphasis on the submediant and mediant keys; the abrupt, unprepared change of key in bar 13; and the modest use of ‘soloistic’ writing for decorative rather than structural purposes, are all characteristic of Albinoni’s *Sinfonie e concerti a cinque*, Op. 2 (1700), Bach’s likeliest model.³⁴

Aria-ritornello form is employed in both of the solo movements from the cantata; but in the duet (no. 4) it is applied to a rather antiquated, imitative style, whereas the soprano solo (no. 3) is quite the most up-to-date aria so far among Bach’s extant cantatas, assuming the chronology outlined in this chapter. It is in every respect a true Italianate da capo aria, albeit on an extremely small scale—the contrasting middle section is only three bars long. The ritornello (Ex. 3) is of the threefold *Fortspinnung* type that would eventually predominate in Bach’s arias, though here in its most elementary form: roughly equal duration of its three components, the headmotive A, central sequence B, and cadential tail-figure C.³⁵ A vocal ‘motto’, answered by an abridged and varied reprise of the ritornello, anticipates the vocal entry proper, whose

³¹ This section owes much to Siegbert Rampe, who gives a full account of the ritornello forms of Bach’s early cantatas in ‘“Monatlich neue Stücke”: zu den musikalischen Voraussetzungen von Bachs Weimarer Konzertmeisteramt’, *BJ* 2002, pp. 61–104 (esp. 73–91).

³² Though interrelated, the two types of ritornello form are nonetheless clearly distinct; see Rampe, ‘Monatlich neue Stücke’, pp. 92–3, and John E. Solie, ‘Aria Structure and Ritornello Form in the Music of Albinoni’, *Musical Quarterly*, 63 (1977), pp. 31–47 (esp. 42ff.).

³³ See the discussion of BWV 963 no. 1, 967, 912a no. 2, and 915 no. 2 in Part I Ch. 2.

³⁴ Bach copied out the continuo part of Concerto No. 2 in E minor around 1709; see Kirsten Beißwenger, *Johann Sebastian Bachs Notenbibliothek* (Kassel, 1992), VBN I/A/1.

³⁵ See Hio-Ihm Lee, *Die Form der Ritornelle bei J. S. Bach* (Pfaffenweiler, 1993), p. 170.

continuation (bb. 9–10) is built into a further ritornello reprise according to the technique of ‘vocal insertion’ (*Vokaleinbau*). This passage reaches a full-close in the relative major C, where a transposed instrumental ritornello might have intervened in a more highly developed ritornello form. At this early stage, however, Bach merely returns without further ado to the tonic A minor for the final vocal phrase and ritornello. The central B section of this da capo structure, though very brief, is no longer independent, as it was in the bass solo from *Gott ist mein König* (BWV 71 no. 4), but unified with the A section by virtue of its motivic violin accompaniment, a clear derivative of the ritornello.

Ex. 3



Der Herr denkt an uns, BWV 196, 3rd movement, bb. 1–4, unison vlns (continuo omitted)

It is clear, then, that Bach was already beginning to use operatic aria-ritornello forms in his early cantatas during the years 1707–9. The texts of the arias concerned are still biblical, however: Bach's employment of the ‘modern’ Italian forms of ritornello and da capo aria evidently preceded by some years his adoption of the free madrigalian texts of the Neumeister type that were specifically geared to aria form. It has been suggested that Bach's first aria forms were modelled on Venetian opera, particularly that of Albinoni, whose *Zenobia* was first performed in Venice in 1694.³⁶ Stylistic links with Venice in Bach's early cantatas are, however, harder to detect than formal ones, which may indicate that some part was played by German intermediaries, as is so often the case in his instrumental music.

The Lutheran chorale, which played a significant role in the Mühlhausen cantatas (BWV 131, 106, and 71), is altogether absent from the two psalm-cantatas BWV 150 and 196. In *Christ lag in Todes Banden*, BWV 4, on the other hand, it pervades every movement and indeed almost every bar. The surviving sources of this work go back only as far as Leipzig performances of 1724/5, but there is evidence that these performing parts were copied from a pre-1715 score: sharps are often cancelled by flats rather than naturals, a practice that became obsolete in Bach's original manuscripts around 1714.³⁷ Neither the text of the work nor its musical forms can

³⁶ See Rampe, ‘Monatlich neue Stücke’, pp. 93–9.

³⁷ See A. Dürr, *Krit. Bericht*, NBA I/14 (Kassel and Leipzig, 1963), p. 106, n. 18; and the same author's *Krit. Bericht*, NBA I/35 (Kassel and Leipzig, 1964), pp. 40–1.

be taken as evidence of a connection with the Mühlhausen cantatas, since the absence of free, madrigalian verse, of recitative, and of da capo arias are determined by its overall form as a chorale cantata. Theoretically, therefore, it might have originated at any time between about 1707 and 1714. The years 1713–14 are unlikely, however, because Bach was then preoccupied with the newer cantata forms. Stylistic comparisons with other works are inconclusive. The *sinfonia* is briefer and formally less sophisticated than the concerto-influenced *sinfonias* of c. 1709–14 (BWV 196, 182, 12, 21); in its simple unitary form it more closely resembles those of c. 1707 (BWV 150, 131, 106). The Böhman technique of chorale fragmentation—the detaching of the chorale's first two notes in the *sinfonia* and in the duet no. 3—creates a bond with the chorale partitas BWV 766 and 767, which might have originated during Bach's year at Mühlhausen (1707–8) or thereabouts. The complementary semiquaver figures that accompany the first chorus (no. 2) recall the penultimate movement of *Gottes Zeit* (no. 7), another chorale arrangement with long-note cantus firmus; but Bach periodically revived this conventional figuration later on (for example, in BWV 910 or 582). The structuring of a chorale duet on the basis of a basso quasi ostinato in nos. 3 and 7 is roughly paralleled in the Mühlhausen cantatas (BWV 131 nos. 2 and 4; BWV 71 no. 2), though only in Cantata 4 does the chorale furnish the material for both vocal parts. It is also possible to point to a few links with a considerably later work, Cantata 182 of 1714: the close canonic writing of the central chorus of Cantata 4 (no. 5, bb. 30–4) resembles that of the middle section of the first chorus of Cantata 182 (no. 2, bb. 28–32);³⁸ and the motet-style chorale arrangement of Cantata 4, no. 2, with its thorough fore-imitation for every line and its long-note cantus firmus, finds a clear parallel in the penultimate movement of Cantata 182 (no. 7). In sum, then, Cantata 4 cannot be dated with any precision, but, taking everything into account, an origin in the Mühlhausen or early Weimar years (c. 1707–9) seems most plausible.

Christ lag in Todes Banden represents the apotheosis of the seventeenth-century chorale concerto *per omnes versus* (the chorale melody being retained through all verses) as cultivated by Scheidt, Pachelbel, Johann Schelle (Thomascantor at Leipzig from 1677 to 1701), and others. And it is not unlikely that, when he wrote it, Bach had in the back of his mind Pachelbel's chorale concerto based on the same hymn, which, however, retains the chorale melody in only three of its seven movements. Bach's setting, by contrast, is a complete set of chorale variations, a vocal equivalent of the chorale partitas he had written, or was still writing at that time, for organ or harpsichord. The textual and musical structure of the work is thus quite different from that of the Mühlhausen cantatas; but it nonetheless resembles two of them (Nos. 131 and 106) in the symmetry of its movement structure:

³⁸ See Dürr *Studien*, p. 168.

<i>Movement</i>	<i>Scoring</i>	<i>Chorale verse</i>	<i>C.F. voice</i>
1. Sinfonia	Strings, bc	—	—
2. Chorus	SATB, strings, bc	1	S
3. Duet	SA, bc	2	S
4. Solo	T, violins, bc	3	T
5. Chorus	SATB, bc	4	A
6. Solo	B, strings, bc	5	B, violin I
7. Duet	ST, bc	6	ST
8. Chorus	SATB, strings, bc	7	S

The motivic interrelations between movements provide another obvious link with the Mühlhausen cantatas: the first two or three notes of the chorale form a motto throughout, occurring in many different manifestations. As a function of the overall variation structure, however, the procedure is here carried out in a far more systematic fashion.

As for the chorale forms employed in the individual movements, Bach already had considerable experience in using analogous forms in his chorale-based organ works. One example is the cantus firmus setting with long-note chorale melody in which each line is prepared by fore-imitation: the second and fifth movements probably represent the earliest use of this form among the surviving vocal works. The continuo movement over basso quasi ostinato (nos. 3 and 7) also occurs early on among the Böhm-related organ works.³⁹ The most forward-looking type is that of the fourth movement, where the chorale, sung by the tenor, is embedded within independent (though motivically linked) surroundings: an idiomatic unison violin part furnishes introduction, accompaniment, episodes, and conclusion. The opening theme (bb. 1–4) acts like the ‘motto’ of a concerto movement by Torelli or Albinoni—the forerunner of the Vivaldian ritornello.⁴⁰ This type, too, occurs among the chorale-based organ works, though perhaps not before the Weimar period.

Christ lag in Todes Banden owes its status as the most celebrated of Bach’s early cantatas (alongside the *Actus tragicus*) partly to its unrivalled demonstration of contrapuntal skill, the mainstay of his craft, though here in relation to a cantus firmus rather than a freely invented fugue subject. The work demonstrates clearly that by the early Weimar years at the latest, Bach had already developed supreme skill in this sphere, hardly to be exceeded in later years. The sheer rigour and thoroughness of the counterpoint creates an impression of immense strength and solidity. The fore-imitation (see above, Part I Ch. 4, p. 75), for instance, is often governed by strict permutation (no. 2, bb. 13–18; no. 5, bb. 1–4), stretto (no. 2, bb. 24–30, 38–42), or canonic schemes (no. 5, bb. 18–21, 29–34); and several of the ‘Alleluias’ are strictly canonic (no. 6, bb. 85–91; no. 7, bb. 34–41). Furthermore, in

³⁹ For example, in BWV 1102, 1114, 718, 766 no. 2, 767 no. 2, and 768 no. 1.

⁴⁰ See M. Talbot, ‘The Concerto Allegro in the Early Eighteenth Century’, *Music & Letters*, 52 (1971), pp. 8–18, 159–72 (esp. 162), and his *Tomaso Albinoni*, pp. 101–2.

the penultimate movement (no. 7), long-range *Stimmtausch* (exchange of parts) or double counterpoint is used to diversify the two *Stollen* (bb. 2–8 and 9–15; see Part I Ch. 4, p. 78). It is a revealing sign of the extent to which fugal modes of thinking pervaded Bach's compositional technique that in the sixth and seventh movements the first chorale-line is immediately followed by an answer at the 5th.

In its vividly imaginative response to the text, this cantata is equalled, among the early vocal works, only by the *Actus tragicus*. Text illustration in relation to a chorale, already noted in the penultimate movement of that work, here becomes one of the most prominent features of the entire cantata. Indeed, the character of the middle movements, nos. 4–6, is very largely determined by it. In the tenor solo, no. 4, we are told that Christ, by blotting out our sin, has taken away the power of death, so that nothing remains but its form. Death's power is represented by multiple stops on unison violins (Ex. 4), which exercise power over the continuo semiquavers, as it were, pushing them downwards (bb. 24–6). Then all parts suddenly break off (b. 26) to signify that 'nothing remains...'; the following re-entry (bb. 27–8) takes the form of a ghostly adagio passage on '...but death's form'.

Ex. 4

The musical score for Ex. 4 consists of three systems of three staves each. The first system is in G major (one sharp) and common time (C). The second system is also in G major and common time, with the middle staff (alto clef) containing the lyrics 'da' and 'adagio' above it. The third system is also in G major and common time, with the middle staff (alto clef) containing the lyrics 'blei - bet nichts denn Tods - - - ge - stalt,'. The music features complex rhythmic patterns and rests, illustrating the 'ghostly adagio' passage.

Christ lag in Todes Banden, BWV 4, 4th movement (Versus 3), bb. 24b–28a

No. 5, a motet-style chorus, describes the war waged between life and death. Particularly noteworthy here is the close three-part canonic imitation that graphically illustrates 'How one death devoured another' ('Wie ein Tod den andern fraß'; bb. 29–34), and the tangibly spiteful setting of 'Ein Spott' ('a mockery [has been made of death]'; bb. 35–6). The bass solo, no. 6, the most pathos-laden movement, is

concerned with the 'true Easter Lamb' ('das rechte Osterlamm') who was sacrificed for our sins, hence the chromatic *lamento* bass that introduces each of the two *Stollen* (bb. 1–2 and 19–20), and the warm, rich texture of the accompanying five-part strings. Some exceptionally bold word-painting follows in the *Abgesang*: the bass suddenly drops down a 12th (*b–E#*) to the bottom of his register for a diminished-7th chord on 'dem Tode' ('to death'), then no less swiftly ascends to the top of his register (*d'*) for 'der Würger' ('the murderer'; that is, death, which can no longer harm us). Bach clearly found in Luther's text a richly abundant source of inspiration; and it may well have been this consideration, alongside the chorale-cantata form and the sturdy quality of the contrapuntal writing, that led him to believe that it alone among the early cantatas was worth reviving during the early Leipzig years.

Conclusion

As an aspiring organist, and employed in that capacity from 1703 onwards, the young Bach composed primarily for keyboard (with or without pedalboard). The works he produced increasingly explore the nature of the keyboard instruments he used and reflect his personal skill in exploiting them. Much of the preliminary work must have been carried out in an extempore manner, and we can safely assume that he was already developing the improvisatory skills that later became legendary. One of the most obvious distinguishing marks of his early work is its frequently improvisatory character: at this period a greater proportion of his output appears to have roots in improvisation than at any later stage in his career.

This might help to explain some of the peculiarities of the chorale-based compositions that perhaps go back to Bach's teenage years in Ohrdruf (1695–1700). For the Lutheran organist's activity in relation to the chorale was primarily an art of improvisation, and only secondarily involved composition, perhaps in many cases as a later stage of crystallization. Considered in this light, the technical faults that abound in the very early organ chorales from the Neumeister Collection might be due not only to lack of tuition but also to their possible origin as written-down improvisations. The free introductions (as seen, for instance, in BWV 714, 742), cadenzas (BWV 719, 1092), and codas (BWV 1099) point in this direction, as do the miniature chorale fantasias (for example, BWV 1090, 1099, 1115, and 1120), with their kaleidoscopic variety of chorale treatment. The more polished and carefully thought-out texture of the four-part cantus firmus chorales (BWV 737, 1091, 1093–5, 1104, and 1112), well balanced in its vertical and horizontal dimensions, might have arisen as a later refinement on paper of initially simpler chorale harmonizations conceived at the organ.

Already at this early stage, however, the thought processes that generate strict contrapuntal writing are beginning to emerge as an opposite pole to improvisatory freedom. This is particularly clear from a number of pieces that show the youthful Bach learning to apply fugal and canonic modes of treatment to the chorale. For example, the device of chorale canon is handled with considerable skill in BWV 714, 1097, and 1099; and in several cases one or more chorale lines, employed as fugue subjects, are combined with a countersubject in invertible counterpoint (BWV 1101, 1111). In *Ach Gott und Herr*, BWV 714, construction and improvisation are deliberately placed side

by side: a free introduction that might have been improvised at the organ prefaces a chorale canon at the octave between the treble and tenor of a four-part texture.

In the larger works that followed, Bach's special predilection for counterpoint is increasingly evident. The inexact canonic technique of BWV 714, 724, and 1099 becomes strict in the chorale motets BWV 707 and 741, which (alongside BWV 700, 712, and 735a) exhibit an almost pedantic rigour and thoroughness of contrapuntal writing comparable with that of the early chorale cantata *Christ lag in Todes Banden*, BWV 4. Around the same time as these explorations of canon, we find Bach exploring the artifices of strict fugal counterpoint: stretto fugue (BWV 896 no. 2), inversion or counter-fugue (BWV 896 no. 2, 949, and 915 no. 4), and the various types that make a special feature of invertible counterpoint. The minimum requirement for invertible counterpoint is a regular countersubject, which even at this early stage is found in many of Bach's fugues. For this he might have found models in the music of Reincken and Buxtehude, who, stimulated by Zarlino's preference for double counterpoint, required the use of a regular countersubject in many different kinds of fugue.¹ Other likely models are the fugues of Johann Kuhnau and fugal movements from the trio sonatas of Corelli and Albinoni.

A special type that occurs frequently in Bach's early music, but rarely thereafter, is that in which the two themes are combined from the outset as a 'double subject'. This occurs in the closing fugue of the highly Buxtehudian Praeludium in A minor, BWV 551, which is hardly surprising in view of the technique's presence in several of Buxtehude's own preludia (BuxWV 136, 151, and 155). It also occurs in the Corelli fugue upon which Bach's Fugue in B minor, BWV 579, is based (the second movement of Op. 3 No. 4); and similarly Italianate double subjects are found in several fugal movements from the toccatas (BWV 912a no. 3, 913 no. 4, and 914 no. 2). Bach also employs the double subject as a means of climax in the fugal finale of three early cantatas, BWV 131, 106, and 196.

As well as the regular countersubject, the permutation fugue was also established in Bach's early works; it was to become his pre-eminent form of choral fugue during the Weimar years and beyond. Examples in Johann Theile's *Musicalisches Kunstbuch* might have instructed him in this technique,² which involves the combination of three or more subjects in different permutations according to the rules of invertible counterpoint. Theile belonged to a Hamburg circle of musicians (which included Weckmann, Reincken, Buxtehude, and Bernhard) who developed the technique in the 1660s and 1670s under the influence of Zarlino's *Le istituzioni harmoniche* (1558) as translated by Sweelinck.³ Bach's very earliest studies in permutation technique—the

¹ See Paul Walker, 'Zur Geschichte des Kontrasubjekts und zu seinem Gebrauch in den frühesten Klavier- und Orgelfugen J. S. Bachs', in *Das Frühwerk*, pp. 48–69 (esp. 56–60).

² See Paul Walker, 'Die Entstehung der Permutationsfuge', *BJ* 1989, pp. 21–41 (esp. 37–8); Eng. trans. as 'The Origin of the Permutation Fugue' in *The Creative Process*, Studies in the History of Music, 3 (New York, 1993), pp. 51–91.

³ See Walker, *BJ* 1989, p. 24.

Fantasia in G minor, BWV 917, and the Sinfonia to *Nach dir, Herr, verlanget mich*, BWV 150—are purely instrumental. The fantasia might have been inspired by studies in triple counterpoint by Strunck, Buxtehude, or Pachelbel.⁴ The combined themes of the sinfonia are presented in a trio-sonata texture of two violins and continuo, and subsequently taken over into the instrumental episodes of the following chorus. It has been shown in this study (Part I Ch. 5) that the likeliest models here are certain movements from Albinoni's *Suonate a tre*, Op. 1 of 1694.⁵ In the sixth movement of the same cantata, permutation technique is applied to the vocal ensemble, perhaps (in view of the extreme brevity of the fugue) for the first time in Bach's *oeuvre*. This vocal type of permutation fugue, in which three or four subjects enter strictly in order in every part, without intervening episodes, is expanded and developed further in *Gott ist mein König*, BWV 71 (nos. 3 and 7) and *Der Herr denkt an uns*, BWV 196 (no. 2).

While he was exploring permutation technique around 1706–9, Bach was also capable of free, experimental fugal writing of a highly imaginative kind. During his single year at Mühlhausen (1707–8), for example, he wrote not only the strict permutation fugues of *Gott ist mein König* but also some of his freest, most Handelian fugues in *Aus der Tiefen*, BWV 131. A similar range is found in his keyboard fugues of that time. Taking his cue from Reincken and Kerll, Bach often associates strict fugal procedures with a light dance style (BWV 896 no. 2, 915 no. 4) rather than with the traditional pseudo-vocal polyphonic style of the seventeenth century. That 'academic' style of keyboard polyphony occurs among the early works only in the aforementioned Fantasia in G minor, BWV 917 and in the Canzona in D minor, BWV 588, a decidedly retrospective composition. As far as the relative strictness or freedom of the counterpoint is concerned, the future for Bach lay primarily with an intermediate species that might be described as formal fugue—strict as regards part-writing and tightly constructed around its subject, but with little special contrapuntal artifice beyond the combination of the subject and a regular counter-subject in double counterpoint. This type is fully established before 1707 in the Fugue in G minor, BWV 535a no. 2.

No less common at this early stage, however, is free fugue, in which the part-writing is relatively loose—a set number of parts is not necessarily maintained—and the composer's main concern seems to be the effectiveness of the composition as organ or harpsichord music rather than strict contrapuntal procedure. Certain fugues of this kind (such as BWV 531 no. 2, 551 no. 4, 566 no. 4, 912a no. 4, 947, and 993) might be described as freely fugal fantasias. They are marked by a huge expansion of the portion that follows the opening exposition (or double exposition), which is handled like a free fantasia only loosely based on the original subject, as often in the fugues of Buxtehude, Böhm, and others. At this stage of the composition, the subject is often no longer stated in full but merely alluded to or presented in a curtailed form. The

⁴ See Part I Ch. 3, p. 67 and n. 64.

⁵ See Part I Ch. 5, pp. 101–2 and n. 12.

texture is often no longer contrapuntal but toccata-like, comprising 'solo' and accompaniment, broken-chordal writing, full chords, and so forth. It is significant that three of these fugal fantasias (those from BWV 551, 566, and 912a) form the finales of large-scale multisectional preludia or toccatas, for the character of the fugues is strongly influenced by the toccata style of their surroundings. In the North-German preludia and toccatas that form the background to Bach's works in these genres, pseudo-improvisatory and more highly structured modes of writing alternate, giving rise to the sectional form prelude–fugue–postlude or prelude–fugue–interlude–fugue–postlude. The tripartite scheme prelude–fugue–postlude forms an accurate description of the majority of Bach's early preludes and fugues. The fugues in these pairings cannot be considered fully independent movements, since they culminate in a substantial coda or postlude that returns to the free-fantasy style of the prelude. Even the free-standing early fugues usually end with a coda or postlude in toccata style.

Bach's early keyboard forms, then, whether sonatas, capriccios, toccatas or preludes and fugues, tend to be sectional rather than movement-based, in accordance with their seventeenth-century background. The larger fugues, such as the finales of the E minor and G minor Toccatas, BWV 914 and 915, often have the character of set pieces, but even these refer back to earlier sections at the close. Much the same applies to the early cantatas. In keeping with the origin of their forms in the seventeenth-century motet and sacred concerto, these works tend to be organized in sections that run into one another to form large complexes. In Cantatas 150 and 131, for example, the *sinfonia* and first chorus are integrated thematically and form an opening complex culminating in a fugue (in Cantata 131 the fugue even cadences into the following chorale-aria). And in Cantata 106, sections 2–5 (chorus–aria–aria–chorus) all cadence into one another, creating a continuity that compensates for the small-scale sectional structure.

Kleingliedrigkeit (small-scale sectional structure) operates on a local level too. Bach gives each portion of text its own appropriate setting in the manner of a motet, which results in frequent changes of tempo, texture, and thematic material. In the finale of *Gott ist mein König*, BWV 71, for example, the two strophes of the poem (numbered 1 and 2) are each set in four sections (a–d), differing in tempo, key, metre, texture, and thematic material, as follows:

1a	Das neue Regiment	C	[Andante]
1b	Auf jeglichen Wegen...	3/2	Allegro
1c	Friede, Ruh und Wohlergehen...	C	Andante
1d	Dem neuen Regiment	C	Andante
2a	Glück, Heil und großer Sieg	C	Vivace
2b	Muß täglich von neuen...	3/2	Allegro
2c	Daß an allen Ort und Landen...	C	[Andante]
2d	Glück, Heil und großer Sieg!	C	[Vivace]

Characteristically, Bach attempts to counteract the *kleingliedrig* effect in two ways: first, by setting one of the sections (2b) as a large-scale permutation fugue, which lends greater weight and substance to the setting of these words; and second, by introducing an element of reprise to bind the sections together—the first and last lines of each strophe correspond both in words and music (1a = 1d; 2a = 2d).

This form of *Kleingliedrigkeit* coexists in the young Bach's compositional technique with another: the fabric of his early music is to a considerable extent made up of a series of sequential patterns within which certain motives are 'locked'—they often have no validity outside the sequential pattern in which they occur—with the result that the pattern lacks a clear motivic connection with its surroundings. Since the motives Bach employs are often tied to a particular pattern, they are constantly changing as one sequence gives way to the next. And since the sequential patterns are not yet sufficiently moulded into their context by linear means either, the seams at the joins are all too evident, which contributes greatly to the *kleingliedrig* impression so often conveyed by Bach's early music.⁶ In Ex. 1 from the G minor Fugue (BWV 535a no. 2), no linear connection is established between the last bar of the subject (b. 59) and the following episode, whose repeated-note motive comes out of the blue and is no less abruptly replaced by a different pattern in the middle of the next bar (b. 61). Here, as often elsewhere in Bach's early works, motives may possess little more than local validity, being in many cases tied to the particular sequential pattern in which they occur. Length and diversity are achieved by introducing a plethora of such patterns with their constituent motives, rather than, as Bach later came to do, by varying the treatment of a single pregnant motive.

Ex. 1



Fugue in G minor, BWV 535a no. 2, bb. 59–62

Even at this early stage, however, Bach shows considerable interest in thematic and motivic processes, profiting from his study of the motivic consistency of Albinoni's

⁶ See Krüger diss., pp. 66ff.

Op. 1 (in BWV 946, 950, and 951a), handling the traditional device of thematic transformation in subtle ways that operate at a motivic level (BWV 551), and employing motivic cross-reference as a significant unifying factor in the early cantatas. Towards the end of the early period, he would write chorale motets (BWV 712 and 735a) and chorale partitas (BWV 766 and 768a) notable for their richly characterful and well unified figure-work—an important step towards the ‘motivicity’ of the *Orgelbüchlein*. In variation 2 from *Sei gegrüßet, Jesu gütig*, BWV 768a, for example, a single highly expressive and distinctive motive penetrates all parts, even the chorale-bearing treble, and lends the movement a unique character of its own.

On a somewhat larger scale, the structure of Bach’s early music is often dictated by fixed patterns—a technique that he presumably inherited from his older German and Italian contemporaries, Kuhnau, Böhm, Corelli, Torelli, and others.⁷ He is capable of composing an extended section or even a whole movement on the basis of a fixed pattern, which often takes the form of a sequence of chords, perhaps led by a suspension chain, tied to a very pronounced rhythm, and varied by *Stimmtausch* (the exchange of parts), one of his basic structural tools (examples are BWV 913 no. 3 and 533a no. 1, bb. 13b ff.; in BWV 569 and 922 the technique is used in conjunction with ostinato). In many cases Bach transposes a fixed pattern of this kind repeatedly to other scale-degrees, causing abrupt changes of key. This procedure had been adopted by Corelli, whose tonic–dominant oscillations and abrupt tonal shifts in the Presto finale of his Op. 3 No. 4 might have prompted Bach to do something similar in the alla breve section of his Prelude in D, BWV 532 no. 1. Elsewhere, in the Praeludium in C minor, BWV 921 (bb. 45–68), Bach applies the technique to the arpeggiated prelude. And in several of the toccatas (BWV 912a no. 4, 913 no. 3) he builds virtually an entire movement out of it, achieving far-reaching modulation as a result. Bach often employs pattern play of this kind in similar contexts to Georg Böhm: applied to a fugue subject expanded by inner repetition (BWV 947, bb. 48b–58; cf. Böhm’s Praeludium in G minor, bb. 50ff.); or in conjunction with the fragmentation and echo techniques of the North German chorale fantasia (BWV 718, bb. 43ff.; 766 nos. 2, 5, and 7; 767 no. 9, bb. 11ff.; 770 no. 10, bb. 40ff.; cf. Böhm’s *Auf meinen lieben Gott*, v. 1, bb. 19ff.).⁸ And in several of the early cantatas Bach applies the procedure to a texture reminiscent of the seventeenth-century sacred concerto, in which an inverted pedal in one vocal part is set in opposition to quickly moving notes in the other voices (BWV 150 no. 4, bb. 19ff.; 71 no. 1, bb. 8–13; 71 no. 7, bb. 90–6).

One of the clearest distinguishing features of Bach’s early fugues, by comparison with those of his maturity, is their restricted use of modulation and of keys other than tonic and dominant. Entries of the subject in the later stages of a fugue, instead of being presented in contrasting keys, are still largely confined to the tonic and

⁷ See Jean-Claude Zehnder, ‘Georg Böhm und J. S. Bach: Zur Chronologie der Bachschen Stilentwicklung,’ *BJ* 1988, pp. 73–110 (esp. 90ff.), and Karl Heller, ‘Die freien Allegrosätze in der frühen Tastenmusik J. S. Bachs,’ *BzBF* 9/10 (1991), pp. 173–85 (esp. 182–5).

⁸ See Zehnder, ‘Georg Böhm und J. S. Bach,’ pp. 91–6.

dominant of the opening exposition and at best occasionally ‘coloured’ by hints of other keys.⁹ This limitation, inherited from Bach’s older German contemporaries (Pachelbel, Böhm, Buxtehude, and others), results in a lack of tonal–harmonic tension and of a clearly discernible overall shape. Instead, the dominant acts as a mere satellite to the tonic, and no other tonal centres are established as an opposing force to the tonic or as the goal of a purposeful modulatory process. Keys other than tonic and dominant are often merely hinted at, without real modulation taking place; they tend to be used merely to impart variety, to create temporary local colour, rather than for functional purposes. Thus accidentals often possess only brief validity; keys are visited for a short duration only—and just as rapidly quitted—since the modulatory process is itself swift and elementary.¹⁰ Long-range modulation, articulated in a series of clearly defined steps, is an achievement that belongs to later years.

Already in the pre-Weimar period, however, Bach is beginning to use subsidiary keys to a limited extent for the subject entries of his fugues. In a number of early fugues, the subject makes just one entry (usually towards the end) in a key other than tonic or dominant—most often the subdominant or relative major/minor.¹¹ The latter key relationship is particularly significant, since the element of contrast introduced by presenting the subject in the opposite mode has the force of a major event. This element of an audible ‘happening’ grows even stronger in cases where the contrasting key is represented not just by a single subject entry but by a *dux–comes* (subject–answer) pair of entries a 5th apart (as in BWV 588 no. 2, 949, 950, and 951a). In the Canzona, BWV 588, the subdominant is merely preparatory to the final pair of entries in the tonic, but in the A major Fugue, BWV 949, the relative minor is coordinated—to rhetorical effect—with the first two entries of the inverted subject, while in two of the fugues on Albinoni themes (BWV 950 and 951a) the contrasting pair of entries forms a distinct key zone in the opposite mode.

Bach was also capable, during this early period, of writing an entire exposition in which the subject enters each time in a different key, with the modulation governed by the circle of 5ths (BWV 551 no. 4, 912a no. 4, 947, and 993). But in every case the context is one of those freely fugal fantasias already described, in which the modulatory exposition possesses the character of a diversion, an adventurous series of incidents, rather than a major structural event in opposition to the tonic. The individual modulatory steps are very brief, for no key is well established enough to require careful preparation; each new key is quitted almost as soon as it has arrived. Rapid key change of this kind creates a kaleidoscopic impression far removed from the long-range tonal planning of later years. Indeed, in two cases (BWV 912a no. 4 and 993) the expositions concerned are ‘purple patches’ in which rapid modulation takes

⁹ This is true of BWV 531 no. 2, 533a no. 2, 549a no. 2, 551 no. 2, 575, 579, 588 no. 1, 914 no. 4, and 946.

¹⁰ See Krüger diss., pp. 25ff.; examples are BWV 531 no. 2, bb. 11–13 and 28–35, and BWV 993, bb. 7a, 13, and 23.

¹¹ A subdominant entry occurs in BWV 895 no. 2, 896 no. 2, 914 no. 2, 955, and 963 no. 3; and a relative minor/major entry in BWV 535a no. 2, 566 no. 2, 566 no. 4, 912a no. 3, and 917; BWV 992 no. 6 contains a mediant entry.

place to keys extremely remote from the tonic (a comparable case is the G minor Overture, BWV 822 no. 1). Closer to Bach's later structural use of key is the finale of the G minor Toccata, BWV 915. Although it opens with no fewer than twelve tonic/dominant entries and closes with a further four, a penultimate 'zone' comprises seven entries in contrasting keys. This zone is approached and quitted by two series of entries based on the circle of 5ths (d–g–c and f–c–g); between them we hear a trio of subdominant entries and a pair in its relative major (the overall submediant). This creates some tonal stability, but the rapid modulation before and after, with each key lasting only as long as the statement of the subject, calls to mind another gigue-fugue finale, that of the D major Toccata movement already mentioned (BWV 912a no. 4).

The giddy, intoxicated key change of these toccata movements is a far cry from Bach's later long-range approach to modulation, in which the full establishment of a new key as an opposite pole to the tonic requires careful preparation in the form of substantial, graded modulatory steps. That kind of tonal thinking, with its genuinely structural use of key, would eventually emerge from Bach's preoccupation with the *ritornello* form of the Italian concerto. Even at this early stage, however, the impact of the early concerto is evident in certain movements from the sonatas (BWV 963 no. 1 and 967) and toccatas (BWV 912a no. 2 and 915 no. 2). In these, extracts from the opening *ritornello* act as points of departure at the start of each new period, after the manner of the 'motto' theme of Torelli or Albinoni.¹² Yet many of these returns are in the tonic key; as in the early fugues, Bach finds it hard to free himself from the tonic, thereby betraying his inexperience in handling key relationships. Perhaps the earliest true concerto-*ritornello* form among his surviving works occurs in the Sinfonia to the cantata *Der Herr denkt an uns*, BWV 196, where, apparently for the first time, modulatory episodes and key-confirming *ritornellos* are marked off from each other by clear cadences. There are in this piece, moreover, no intermediate returns to the tonic; the inner *ritornellos* are in the submediant and mediant keys. The movement is primitive by Bach's later standards, however—the inner *ritornellos* and episodes are only two or three bars long, and almost no real contrast is created between episodes and *ritornellos*. The forward-looking aspect of the *sinfonia* lies in its clear structural differentiation between open and closed periods (already found to some extent in the aforementioned sonata and toccata movements), which correspond to modulatory episodes and fixed-key *ritornellos* respectively. Thus the use of key and modulation is already coordinated with the periodic and thematic structure of the movement; and this is undoubtedly where the way forward lay for Bach in the long-range structuring of large movements, whether fugal or otherwise.

A property of Bach's mature music that we tend to take for granted is the beauty and logic of line, especially treble line, and its capacity to bridge over the joins between

¹² See Michael Talbot, 'The Concerto Allegro in the Early Eighteenth Century', *Music & Letters*, 52 (1971), pp. 8–18 and 159–72 (esp. 162), and his *Tomaso Albinoni: The Venetian Composer and his World* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 101–2.

phrases or sequences and to direct the movement of the whole texture towards the main cadences. During the early period, this virtue is not yet in evidence to any marked degree, although Bach encountered something similar in Corelli's Op. 3, and profited from his example in the B minor Fugue, BWV 579. Thereafter it begins to occur more conspicuously in Bach's own music, notably in the E minor Toccata, BWV 914. Lyrical beauty, found so often in his mature music, is largely absent at this early stage, since the forms in which it chiefly occurs—the 'modern' operatic aria and the concerto slow movement—were as yet cultivated by him rarely or not at all, though melodic lines of great eloquence were already occurring in arioso passages: for example, 'In deine Hände' from the *Actus tragicus* (BWV 106 no. 6). Still to come, too, is the 'florid expression', to use Scheibe's term,¹³ that results from elaborating melodic lines for expressive rather than merely decorative purposes. One form of this melodic expression is the 'colouring' or ornamenting of chorale melodies with demisemiquaver divisions and other forms of embellishment, of which an early example occurs in variation 1 from *Sei gegrüßet, Jesu gütig*, BWV 768a. And one of the richest veins in the melodic style of the mature Bach—the melodic line with strong harmonic and/or contrapuntal implications—makes an early appearance in the florid ostinato bass from partita II of *Christ, der du bist der helle Tag*, BWV 766.

Primarily through the medium of the keyboard, the young Bach was engaged in building the foundations of a style that would in future serve for all forms of vocal and instrumental music. It is in this light that we should view his adaptations to the keyboard of French and Italian ensemble genres. The music of such composers as Georg Böhm and J. C. F. Fischer might have served as examples for him of the assimilation of 'modern' French music, whether for keyboard or ensemble, into a native German style. Like them, in writing Lullian overture-suites (BWV 820 and 822) he contributed to the latest wave of French influence, learning in the process to compose French overtures, to characterize the standard ballet dances (gavotte, bourrée, menuet, and so on), and to handle such forms as *rondeau* and *alternativement* pairings. Two decorative features of Bach's textures, imported from French music during these early years, became permanent adornments of his style in later years. One is French ornamentation: Bach must have been acquainted with the *tables des agréments* by Dieupart and Lebègue, which are reproduced in the Möller Manuscript,¹⁴ and he was accustomed to use French ornament signs from his earliest autographs onwards. The adagio passage in the introduction to the G minor Toccata, BWV 915, must be one of the earliest of many cases in Bach in which the French style is evident not only in the employment of a specific dance rhythm—here that of the sarabande—but also in the profuse embellishment of the texture, whether written out in full or in the form of ornament signs.¹⁵ The second form of French textural adornment found

¹³ See *NBR*, No. 332.

¹⁴ *MM* 22 and 51.

¹⁵ Though it is uncertain how far the scribe J. G. Preller was reproducing the ornamentation of the autograph MS; see Peter Wollny, *Krit. Bericht*, NBA V/9.1 (Kassel and Leipzig, 1999), p. 103.

in early Bach is the *style luthé* (nowadays often known as *style brisé*), a lute-style keyboard texture common in Böhlm, Fischer, and other French-influenced German composers. Again the young Bach employed it in his toccatas (in particular, in the third movement of BWV 912a and 914), which represent his earliest major synthesis of national styles, French, Italian, and German.

The vital role played by the early concerto in the young Bach's musical development has already been mentioned, but no less significant among Italian genres are the operatic aria and the Corellian trio sonata. In the last-named form Bach encountered a texture in which pure instrumental counterpoint rests upon a very powerful tonal-harmonic basis. This species of harmony-counterpoint, so widely influential that it might have been largely mediated by other composers' music, was to form one of the foundations of Bach's mature style: his fugal counterpoint, initially rooted in the Pachelbel school, was ultimately to be transformed by it.¹⁶ Aspects of the Corellian style, with its powerful chord sequences governed by the circle of 5ths, its terse themes, lucid counterpoint, and firm basis in tonality, are frequently in evidence in Bach's early fugues: for example, the brief suspension-based subjects in certain toccata movements (BWV 913 nos. 2 and 4, 914 no. 2) or the episodic sequences of the A minor Fugue, BWV 947. Here, as in the Corelli fugue (BWV 579), suspension chains, so characteristic of Corelli's instrumental textures, drive the harmonic movement powerfully down towards the cadence. Bach's gains from the Italian sonata style include not only sequential writing of this kind but the ability to write well-defined subjects with a clear rhythmic shape, the formation of lucid contrapuntal textures with consistent motivic treatment, and the regular use of invertible counterpoint.¹⁷

It would be mistaken to assume that the forms of Italian opera entered Bach's vocal music only after he had begun to set operatic, post-Neumeister texts in Weimar. Admittedly, recitative is absent from the early cantatas, presumably because Bach would then have considered it an inappropriate means of setting biblical or chorale texts. Yet he was quite willing to turn to the operatic aria as a vehicle for these sacred texts, and he employed similar aria forms in his chorale-based organ music. The style is familiar from late seventeenth-century Italian opera: the aria opens with a ritornello of the ostinato type, made up of a sequence ($a + a^1 + a^2$) plus cadence; the sequential motive then acts as basso quasi ostinato (see Part I Ch. 4, p. 84), controlling the sung portion of the aria. The instrumental theme thus has priority, extracts from it being constantly repeated in the parts that accompany the voice. The main vocal section is often prefaced by a vocal 'motto', an opening melodic gesture, which is answered by an instrumental ritornello return prior to the vocal entry proper. Thereafter, the voice part is often very free and composed entirely in accordance with the text, for the

¹⁶ Thus far I concur with Christoph Wolff, 'Bach and Johann Adam Reincken: A Context for the Early Works', in Wolff *Essays*, pp. 56–71 (esp. 67), differing from him only in the relevance of Reincken: internal evidence strongly suggests that Bach's Reincken arrangements do not belong to the early period.

¹⁷ See Wolff, *Essays*, pp. 67–8.

thematic underpinning of the texture by means of the basso quasi ostinato leaves the voice free for expressive text declamation.¹⁸

During the early period in his composing career Bach applied this aria form to the organ chorale, presumably following the example of Georg Böhm, who probably became acquainted with it at the Hamburg opera in the 1690s and later pioneered its application to chorale-based organ music.¹⁹ The earliest-known examples in Bach's *oeuvre*, two of the Neumeister chorales (BWV 1102 and 1114), might go back to his Lüneburg years (1700–2), when it must be supposed that he came into close contact with Böhm. Later examples are the very Böhmian organ chorale *Christ lag in Todes Banden*, BWV 718, and the first variation proper from three of the chorale partitas (BWV 766 no. 2, 767 no. 2, and 768a no. 1). These movements mostly take the form of *bicinia*—equivalent in texture to continuo arias—in which the ritornellos and ostinato accompaniment are played by the left hand, while the chorale melody in the right hand takes the place of the voice part. The chorale is, however, assimilated to the style of an aria melody: not only does it usually open with a motto, but it is decorated in pseudo-vocal style, and some chorale lines are adorned by eloquent free expansions at the cadences, rather like vocal cadenzas. In *Sei gegrüßet, Jesu gütig*, BWV 768a no. 1, these interpolations take the form of expressive demisemiquaver divisions, otherwise unknown in Bach's early music, a clear indication of relatively late date and a pointer towards things to come. The ritornellos on the whole follow the pattern of sequence plus cadence, which, however, is interestingly varied in the chorale partitas. The basic pattern presumably represents an earlier stage in the development of the late baroque ritornello of the *Fortspinnung* type, lacking only the head-motive.²⁰ In *Sei gegrüßet* the headmotive is present; and this ritornello (Ex. 2), with its threefold division into headmotive *a*, sequence *b*, and cadence figure *c* (*Vordersatz*, *Fortspinnung*, and *Epilog*), probably represents one of the earliest examples in Bach of the *Fortspinnung* type that was to become standard in Bach's mature arias, concerto movements, and ritornello-based organ chorales.

Ex. 2



Sei gegrüßet, Jesu gütig, BWV 768a, variation 1, opening bars

Bach united the chorale with the aria not only in his early organ music but in certain movements from the early cantatas (BWV 131 nos. 2 and 4, 106 no. 7, 71 no. 2,

¹⁸ See Dürr *Studien*, pp. 122–3.

¹⁹ See Zehnder, 'Georg Böhm und J. S. Bach', pp. 96–7.

²⁰ Ibid. The classic *Fortspinnung* type of ritornello was first described by Wilhelm Fischer, 'Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte des Wiener klassischen Stils', *Studien zur Musikwissenschaft*, 3 (1915), pp. 24–84.

and 4 nos. 4 and 6). Most of these movements have a greater affinity with the seventeenth-century sacred concerto with chorale cantus firmus than they do with the operatic aria. The fourth movement of *Aus der Tiefen*, BWV 131, 'Meine Seele wartet auf den Herrn', however, is designed on similar lines to the organ chorale-arias: it is a continuo aria with sequential ritornello, quasi-ostinato accompaniment, and vocal motto. The essential difference is that the voice part here has its own independent melody, which is combined in counterpoint with the plain chorale melody in another voice part. Among the chorale-free, biblical-text arias from the early cantatas, those of Cantata 150—possibly the earliest arias in Bach's entire vocal music—are not yet constructed in ritornello form; but the *Actus tragicus*, BWV 106, includes two successive arias (nos. 3 and 4) with elementary ritornello schemes and instrumental accompaniment (for recorders, gambas, and continuo), the second of which is furnished with both opening and closing mottos in true operatic style. Cantatas 71 and 196 include Bach's earliest-known da capo arias ('Tag und Nacht', BWV 71 no. 4, and 'Er segnet, die den Herrn fürchten', BWV 196 no. 3), both of which benefit from a certain degree of concertante treatment of the ritornello theme in the vocal section (a varied ritornello return accompanies the vocal melody), as would later become the norm in Bach's arias. The ritornello of 'Tag und Nacht' belongs to the Lied type, derived from popular song and dance ($a + a^1$),²¹ whereas that of 'Er segnet, die den Herrn fürchten' (see Part I Ch. 5, Ex. 3) illustrates, for the first time in the surviving vocal works, the threefold *Fortspinnung* type that we have already encountered in the first variation of *Sei gegrüßet, Jesu gütig*. Other 'modern' features in this movement are the *obbligato* part for unison violins and the clear thematic linkage between the A and B sections of the da capo structure. All in all, it is clear that the young Bach, learning partly from the Hamburg opera via Böhm and partly from Venetian opera,²² perhaps via unknown German intermediaries, gained considerable experience of aria composition in operatic style and in ritornello form, whether for voice and instruments or as adapted to the organ. And by 1709, at the latest, the essential formal and stylistic parameters of his mature arias were already in place.

In sum, then, certain features of Bach's early style, derived from German music of the late seventeenth century, differentiate it clearly from that of the mature Bach with which we are more familiar. The music tends to be articulated into relatively short phrases, with the result that cadences are of frequent occurrence; and since little attempt is made as yet to bridge over the cadences in the interests of continuity, an over-articulated effect of constant stopping and starting is produced (conspicuous examples are BWV 533a no. 1, 912a no. 2, and 967). Short phrases are often immediately repeated, with or without echo effects; and a feeling of monotony often results from the naive repetitiveness of the music and its overworking of themes—both apparent consequences of Kuhnau's

²¹ See Dürr *Studien*, pp. 121–2, and Hio-Ihm Lee, *Die Form der Ritornelle bei J. S. Bach*, diss., Univ. of Tübingen, 1992 (Pfaffenweiler, 1993).

²² According to Siegbert Rampe, '“Monatlich neue Stücke”: zu den musikalischen Voraussetzungen von Bachs Weimarer Konzertmeisteramt', *BJ* 2002, pp. 61–104 (esp. 93ff.).

influence—together with its persistent reliance on fixed patterns, though these can also give rise to effects of meditative beauty (for example, in BWV 569, 913 no. 3 or 922). Accompanying and episodic textures often tend to rely on stock figures, such as the complementary semiquavers often found in organ or harpsichord partitas at the time. Harmonic movement is quite often arrested by oscillation between tonic and dominant, reminiscent of Georg Böhm. And certain melodic mannerisms are too widespread to be missed. One of the most striking is the anticipatory note. In the chorale-aria that forms the second movement of *Gott ist mein König*, BWV 71, the falling-5th figure in the obbligato organ part from bar 9 onwards, plain in the score, is decorated by an anticipatory note in the part (Ex. 3).²³ This form of melodic decoration, applied to any falling interval, is occasionally found in contemporary Italian and German music—Corelli, Albinoni, Kuhnau, Zachow, and others—but in early Bach it is so common as to stand out as a clear fingerprint of his early style.²⁴

Ex. 3 *Gott ist mein König*, BWV 71, 2nd movement, bb. 9b–10, organ, RH



a) Original score



b) Original part

Another obvious fingerprint is note repetition, which is of frequent occurrence both in themes and in figure-work. Fugue subjects with repeated notes in canzona style are widespread in the works of Bach's older German contemporaries, hence their currency in his early music.²⁵ In the G minor Fugue, BWV 535a no. 2, the repeated quavers of the subject are twice diminished in the episodes (bb. 37–8 and 60–1) to form repeated-semiquaver figures (see above, Ex. 1), and such figures are also common elsewhere in early Bach.²⁶ Frequent note repetitions were also a popular feature of seventeenth-century recitative style, hence Bach's use of them in the early cantatas

²³ See Dürr *Studien*, p. 181.

²⁴ The cases are too numerous to list exhaustively here. The figure occurs throughout much of BWV 71 no. 2, 106 no. 1, 963 no. 1, 967, and 992 no. 1; it graces the first vocal entry of BWV 150 no. 7; and it acts as a cadence figure in BWV 533a no. 2, b. 14; 720, bb. 45–6; 770 no. 9, bb. 23, 27, and 61; 820 no. 4, bb. 7 and 23; 821 no. 2, b. 9; and 1111, b. 34.

²⁵ For instance, BWV 533a no. 2, 535a no. 2, 566 nos. 2 and 4, 895 no. 2, 896 no. 2, 947, 949, 963 nos. 3 and 5, 992 no. 6, and 993.

²⁶ For example, in BWV 532a no. 1, bb. 87–8; 535a no. 2, bb. 37–8, 51, and 60–1; 832 no. 1, b. 15; 833 no. 2, *passim*; 993, bb. 14–15 and 20; 1100, bb. 15–19; and 1101, bb. 25–6.

in the interests of effective declamation.²⁷ In view of the fundamental part played by basso ostinato techniques in early Bach, it is hardly surprising that standard *lamento* and chaconne basses—the descending chromatic and diatonic tetrachord and so forth—are often found.²⁸

There is no doubt that certain general characteristics of Bach's early music, notably the preponderance of pattern play and the North-German rhetoric of the *stylus phantasticus*, distance it considerably from his mature style. And conversely, characteristics that we expect to hear in his later works, such as the continuous motion of short note-values, caused by the expressive elaboration of all parts,²⁹ have not yet become fully established. Yet in several crucial ways the Bach we know so well from the great masterpieces of later years is already to some extent recognizable in the early works. His remarkable flair for vivid text illustration in musical terms is evident even in the early cantatas, particularly in the two finest of them, the *Actus tragicus*, BWV 106, and *Christ lag in Todes Banden*, BWV 4. We already sense a powerful mind at work behind the notes in the motivic unity of the early cantatas, in the use of reprise to bind their mosaic forms together, and in the sheer rigour and solidity of the contrapuntal writing in some of the organ chorales (such as BWV 700, 707, and 741) and in the chorale-based Cantata 4. Bach's lifelong propensity for penetrative harmonic investigations³⁰ is already evident in the far-distant modulations and harmonic 'purple patches' of certain early works. And the expressive range and depth of the music is already considerable: from the genial, playful quality of pieces like the C major Fugue, BWV 531 no. 2, or the D major Toccata, BWV 912a, to the profound musical expression, in the early cantatas, of the human soul in its relation to the divinity. Bach gives a moving account of the state of affliction and consciousness of sin, in which the soul longs for God, in Cantatas 150 and 131, an incomparable depiction of Old and New Testament attitudes to death in the *Actus tragicus*, and a powerful musical representation of Luther's theology of the Atonement in *Christ lag in Todes Banden*. These works mark the auspicious beginning of Bach's life's work of composing music 'to the glory of God',³¹ and of thereby creating what has fittingly been described³² as 'the language of the soul'.

²⁷ See Dürr *Studien*, pp. 179–80.

²⁸ As in BWV 4 no. 6, 131 no. 5, 150 nos. 1–2, 569, 588, 914 no. 4, 915 no. 4, 917, 922, and 992 no. 3.

²⁹ This characteristic has been described by, among others, Hans T. David and Arthur Mendel, *NBR*, p. 14.

³⁰ Gustav Leonhardt recently drew attention to this characteristic in a pre-concert talk in the Holywell Music Room, Oxford. Examples occur in BWV 551, 822 no. 1, 912a no. 4, and 993.

³¹ Mühlhausen resignation letter, BD I, No. 1, and *NBR*, No. 32.

³² By Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau.

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PART II

First maturity (c. 1709–1717)

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Introduction

It was in Weimar (1708–17) that Bach first reached full maturity as a composer. This cannot have been achieved instantaneously, and we may safely assume that it was preceded by a transitional period of some years—perhaps c. 1708–12. But the approach and eventual arrival of complete mastery in the handling of a mature style that we recognize instantly as ‘Bachian’ must have been in no small measure facilitated by the favourable conditions Bach experienced at the Weimar court. His skills as organist and harpsichordist, improviser and composer, were greatly appreciated by the reigning dukes, especially by Duke Ernst August, who ‘particularly loved him and rewarded him accordingly.’¹ The high esteem in which he was held there is reflected in his eventual promotion to Concertmaster and in a series of salary increases that in time led to his status as the best-paid—and thus presumably the most highly valued—musician at court, not excluding the Capellmeister and his deputy.² As performing musicians themselves, Duke Ernst August and his younger brother Johann Ernst had a vested interest in furthering the music-making at court, hence the duke’s acquisition of an extensive music library, and the performance there of ‘much fine Italian and French music’, including concertos and overtures.³ As a result, Bach must have encountered a great deal of music that was new to him, in a variety of forms and styles. What this music was in detail we do not now know, but it inevitably contributed to the shaping of his mature style.

Bach continued to be employed primarily as an organist, as he had been at Arnstadt and Mühlhausen, but the change from town church to court setting and the advantages of ducal patronage should not be underestimated: we are told in Bach’s obituary that ‘The pleasure His Grace took in his playing fired him with the desire to try every possible artistry in his treatment of the organ.’⁴ Chapel services would have offered the young organist limited scope for demonstrating his virtuosity, and it seems likely that recitals of some sort took place from time to time,⁵ perhaps chiefly devoted to improvisation. However, the obituary also informs us that in Weimar, Bach ‘wrote

¹ Letter from C. P. E. Bach to Forkel, 13 January 1775; BD III, No. 803; *NBR*, No. 395.

² See Wolff JSB, p. 175.

³ According to Bach’s pupil Philipp David Kräuter; BD III, No. 53b (p. 649); *NBR*, No. 312c.

⁴ BD III, No. 666; *NBR*, No. 306.

⁵ As surmised in Wolff JSB, pp. 124–5.

most of his organ works'; and certainly two of his three major collections of organ chorales, the *Orgelbüchlein* and the 'Seventeen', originated largely in Weimar, as did the pedal toccatas and many (perhaps most) of the preludes and fugues. In the sources of Bach's pre-Weimar music, keyboard works had been differentiated only according to whether or not a pedalboard was required—*manualiter* or *pedaliter*⁶—but now organ and harpsichord music is increasingly labelled as such, the latter through the use of the terms 'clavessin' or 'clavicembalo'. The virtuoso nature of certain harpsichord pieces presumably composed at Weimar—in particular, BWV 894, 911, and 944—suggests that Bach might have given solo recitals on the harpsichord as well as the organ. In them he would no doubt have played the concertos which, possibly at the instigation of the young Prince Johann Ernst,⁷ he had transcribed from ensemble originals by Vivaldi, Torelli, the Marcello brothers, Telemann, and the prince himself. Bach's court audience must have been enthralled by the ease with which he encompassed the parts of an entire orchestra within his two hands (plus feet in the case of the organ transcriptions). Furthermore, they cannot have failed to be struck by the novelty of the style, particularly in the concertos from Vivaldi's *L'Estro armonico*, Op. 3. This celebrated set of concertos had only recently been published (Amsterdam, 1711) when Bach became acquainted with it, perhaps via Johann Ernst, who might have brought it back with him from Holland on his return to Weimar in mid-1713.⁸ Bach must have immediately recognized the huge leap forward it represented by comparison with the earlier Italian concertos of Torelli and Albinoni. We have only to note the impact it made on his music from about 1715 onwards to realize how wholeheartedly he must have responded to its bright primary colours, its driving rhythms, its strongly characterized, triadic tutti themes, its brilliantly idiomatic violin writing, its clear ritornello structure, and above all its freedom from constraint and schematism, which allows the uninhibited exercise of the composer's imagination and thus, for players and listeners alike, brings a sense of involvement in a thrillingly unpredictable drama.

It seems most unlikely that Bach's involvement with these and other concertos was restricted to the task of transcribing and performing them on solo harpsichord or organ. Until 1714 he was employed not only as Court Organist but as *Cammermusicus*, which would have involved participating in the performances of the court *Capelle* as violinist, viola player or harpsichordist. In that year he was promoted to the newly created post of Concertmaster, a role that traditionally involved leading and directing

⁶ These terms are used throughout MM and ABB. See also Robert L. Marshall, 'Organ or "Klavier"? Instrumental Prescriptions in the Sources of Bach's Keyboard Works', in G. B. Stauffer and E. May (eds.), *J. S. Bach as Organist* (London, 1986), pp. 212–39; repr. in R. L. Marshall, *The Music of Johann Sebastian Bach: The Sources, the Style, the Significance* (New York, 1989), pp. 271–93.

⁷ See Hans-Joachim Schulze, 'J. S. Bachs Konzertbearbeitungen nach Vivaldi und anderen: Studien- oder Auftragswerke?', *Deutsches Jahrbuch der Musikwissenschaft für 1973–1977* (Leipzig, 1978), pp. 80–100; partial Eng. trans. as 'J. S. Bach's Concerto Arrangements for Organ: Studies or Commissioned Works?', *The Organ Yearbook*, 3 (1972), pp. 4–13.

⁸ See Schulze, 'J. S. Bachs Konzertbearbeitungen', p. 88; 'J. S. Bach's Concerto Arrangements', p. 8.

the orchestra as first or solo violinist.⁹ Thus he would have experienced much contemporary Italian and French instrumental music—concertos, overtures, and the like—from the inside, as it were. Did he also write his own ensemble music at Weimar in emulation of the French and Italian composers whose music he played? Nothing of the sort survives from the period, but there must be very substantial losses;¹⁰ and in 1713 Bach's pupil Philipp David Kräuter talked of hearing 'much fine Italian and French music' that would prove 'particularly profitable to me in composing concertos and overtures'.¹¹ If the pupil composed in these genres, it goes without saying that his master must have done so too. Traces of lost concertos are scanty, but it is possible that the original versions of some of the harpsichord concertos might have originated in Weimar. For example, the lost violin concerto that was later adapted to form the Harpsichord Concerto in D minor, BWV 1052, often thought to be one of Bach's earliest concertos,¹² might be a possible candidate. Nor can we exclude the possibility, despite the absence of firm evidence, that at least some of the Brandenburg Concertos (BWV 1046–51) might have originated in Weimar,¹³ particularly as clear anticipations of their style repeatedly turn up among the cantatas of this period (notably in the introductory sinfonias to BWV 18 and 31, and in the third movement of BWV 63).

The Vivaldian concerto possessed the merit of novelty, and must have especially captivated Bach at the time. Yet it is unlikely that in Weimar he neglected the chief French instrumental genre, the *ouverture* (a French overture followed by a suite of dances). His four surviving *ouvertures* cannot be dated,¹⁴ but others might not have survived. Certainly, his early familiarity with the genre, as attested by the keyboard overture-suites BWV 820 and 822,¹⁵ would have rendered him well equipped to compose instrumental *ouvertures* in Weimar. And in December 1714, perhaps prompted by the arrival of new music at the court in the previous year,¹⁶ he amalgamated *ouverture* and chorale in the opening movement of the Advent cantata

⁹ C. P. E. Bach informs us that 'In his youth . . . he played the violin cleanly and penetratingly, and thus kept the orchestra in better order than he could have done with the harpsichord'; see letter to Forkel of December 1774; BD III, No. 801; *NBR*, No. 394.

¹⁰ See Wolff JSB, pp. 134 and 166–7.

¹¹ See above, n. 3.

¹² See Werner Breig, 'Bachs Violinkonzert d-moll: Studien zu seiner Gestalt und seiner Entstehungsgeschichte', *BJ* 1976, pp. 7–34.

¹³ Malcolm Boyd summarizes the conjectural links with Weimar in *Bach: the Brandenburg Concertos* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 11–15; see also Wolff JSB, pp. 232–3. For a full list of original versions of the Bach concertos that might have originated in Weimar, see Siegbert Rampe and Dominik Sackmann, *Bachs Orchestermusik: Entstehung, Klangwelt, Interpretation* (Kassel, 2000), pp. 241–2.

¹⁴ The surviving sources date from the Leipzig years, but an earlier origin is quite possible. Rampe and Sackmann, *Bachs Orchestermusik*, p. 276, place No. 4 (BWV 1069a) in Weimar, c. 1716, and Nos. 1–3 in the Cöthen period.

¹⁵ In addition, Bach knew ensemble *ouvertures* by Marais, Steffani, and probably Lully himself. He was also acquainted with German imitations by Böhm, Fischer, and Telemann, and perhaps also by Kusser and Muffat. See above, Part I Ch. 2.

¹⁶ Bach's pupil P. D. Kräuter, writing in April 1713 to request an extension of his study period in Weimar, foresaw Prince Johann Ernst's return from Holland after Easter with 'much fine Italian and French music', including concertos and overtures (see above, n. 3).

Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland, BWV 61. On the scale of chamber music, only one piece survives from the period, though others may be lost. The survivor, the Fugue in G minor for violin and continuo, BWV 1026, anticipates the style of the solo violin sonatas and partitas (BWV 1001–6; Cöthen, 1720) in its virtuoso string writing and in the pseudo-polyphony conjured up from the use of multiple stops. Perhaps we also possess here a pointer to Bach's own skill as a violinist.

During Bach's first six years at Weimar (1708–14), he was only occasionally called upon to compose and perform sacred cantatas, since this task did not belong among his regular duties as Court Organist. Surviving cantatas that might have originated then are consequently few: possibly BWV 4 and 196; in 1713, perhaps BWV 21 and 199. But the post of Concertmaster, conferred upon Bach on 2 March 1714, entailed the duty of composing and performing new works monthly ('monatlich neue Stücke'). This may well refer partly to instrumental ensemble music,¹⁷ but we are told in the obituary that the duties connected with the post consisted 'mainly in composing church pieces and performing them'.¹⁸ Bach might have viewed this as a partial and belated fulfilment of his goal, expressed in 1708, of creating a 'well-regulated church music to the glory of God'.¹⁹ The twenty-odd surviving cantatas composed between 1714 and 1717 sufficiently demonstrate his mastery of the relatively new 'operatic' style of church cantata, with its madrigalian verse and its recitative and aria forms transferred from opera and from the secular cantata. Characteristically, he tended to gravitate towards texts that intermingled the old and the new: on the one hand, modern, imported, secular forms, and on the other, traditional biblical and chorale texts. In view of the secular origins of the modern cantata forms, it is hardly surprising that Bach's earliest-surviving full-blown essay in them is a secular cantata, the so-called 'Hunt' Cantata *Was mir behagt, ist nur die muntre Jagd*, BWV 208, written for the birthday of Duke Christian of Saxe-Weissenfels in February 1713.²⁰ Three years later, this cantata was revived in Weimar for the birthday of Duke Ernst August, and it is not unlikely that Bach wrote other secular cantatas at this period for weddings, birthdays, and other special occasions—the enchanting wedding cantata *Weichet nur, betrübte Schatten*, BWV 202, is a possible candidate.

The vast majority of Bach's early works had been for keyboard (with or without pedals) and were closely bound up with his skills as a virtuoso player and a brilliant improviser—many pieces give the impression that they might have arisen out of improvisation. In Weimar, although the organ and harpsichord continued to occupy a central place in Bach's creative work, we detect a gradual move away from composition on an improvisatory basis towards that which originated purely in

¹⁷ See Siegbert Rampe, "'Monatlich neue Stücke': zu den musikalischen Voraussetzungen von Bachs Weimarer Konzertmeisteramt', *BJ* 2002, pp. 61–104 (esp. 65ff.).

¹⁸ BD III, No. 666; *NBR*, No. 306 (p. 300).

¹⁹ BD I, No. 1; *NBR*, No. 32.

²⁰ This work is so assured that it seems unlikely to represent Bach's first thoroughgoing essay in the operatic style. The ritornello and da capo forms of the Italian operatic aria are already present in some of the early cantatas (see Part I Ch. 5), but other forerunners of Cantata 208 may well be lost.

thought processes. This results in music of a greater density and logical consistency of texture. The new style occurs fully fledged for the first time in the *Orgelbüchlein*, which remains its classic embodiment. In a technique that has been termed 'motivcity',²¹ a highly distinctive motive pervades the entire contrapuntal texture, with the result that the whole composition is stamped with an individual character.

Around the same time, vocal and instrumental music begin to assume greater importance in Bach's musical activities, and hence in his creative life. Although his early works show that he was already familiar with the operatic aria and with concerto-ritornello form before his arrival in Weimar in 1708, as *Cammermusicus* and later Concertmaster at the Weimar court he must have greatly expanded his knowledge of these genres, gradually assimilating them into his own style, and thereby bringing it up to date. One consequence for Bach was that virtuosity was no longer restricted to the keyboard: the newly assimilated forms and styles encouraged and indeed demanded virtuoso writing for voices and instruments too. All these elements were in place by 1714 at the latest, which can thus be taken as a rough date for the establishment of Bach's mature style. The earlier Weimar years, 1708–13, are comparatively hazy (we possess virtually no composition dates or autographs from them), but are probably best understood as a period of gradual assimilation. The Weimar years that followed his appointment as Concertmaster, 1714–17, may then be considered a period of consolidation, by the end of which Bach had achieved considerable fame, both as player and composer: it is probably no mere coincidence that 1717 saw not only the earliest reference to him in print (Mattheson's *Das beschützte Orchestre*),²² praising his compositions, but also the Bach–Marchand contest in Dresden in which he was invited to test his supremacy as a keyboard player.²³

Two important features of Bach's later career are already anticipated in Weimar. First, he was in increasing demand as a teacher: about a dozen students of his are known by name from this period, including Schubart and Vogler, both of whom had moved with him from Mühlhausen. There is as yet no evidence that keyboard works were composed with tuition in mind, as was often the case in Cöthen and Leipzig, but existing works were undoubtedly employed for this purpose: Bach's student Kräuter, writing in 1712, said that Bach 'shares with me all the music I ask for' and that 'I am at liberty to look through all of his pieces'.²⁴ Secondly, the conception of systematic cycles, which will play such a central role in Bach's creative work from the Cöthen period onwards, is already anticipated in Weimar: both the *Orgelbüchlein* and the series of monthly cantatas composed during 1714–16 were regulated according to the church year, reflecting its seasonal character and potentially covering it from beginning to end.

²¹ By David Schulenberg, 'Composition as Variation: Inquiries into the Compositional Procedures of the Bach Circle of Composers', *Current Musicology*, 33 (1982), pp. 57–87 (esp. 77).

²² BD II, No. 200; *NBR*, No. 318.

²³ See J. A. Birnbaum's account of 1739 (BD II, No. 441; *NBR*, No. 67) and that of the obituary (BD III, No. 666; *NBR*, No. 306).

²⁴ BD III, No. 53a (p. 649); *NBR*, No. 312b.

II.2

The concerto and other genres

The various stylistic and formal elements that Bach assimilated from the Italian concerto were to become key factors in the development of his mature style, distinguishing it quite clearly from much of his earlier music. The seeds of this process, however, lie within that early music itself. For, as we have seen in Part I,¹ several Allegro movements from Bach's early sonatas (BWV 963 no. 1 and 967) and toccatas (BWV 912a no. 2 and 915 no. 2) presuppose some knowledge of the early concerto, as do certain movements from the early cantatas (BWV 4 no. 4 and 196 no. 1). While to some extent Johann Kuhnau seems to have acted as an intermediary, internal evidence leaves little doubt that Bach must have had access to at least some of the concertos from the earlier collections of Torelli (*Sinfonie a tre e concerti a quattro*, Op. 5, 1692; *Concerti musicali*, Op. 6, 1698) and Albinoni (*Sinfonie e concerti a 5*, Op. 2, 1700; *Concerti a cinque*, Op. 5, 1707). And since two of the early concerto-related Bach pieces (BWV 967 and 912a) are transmitted in the Möller Manuscript, his acquaintance with these early concertos most likely pre-dates his move from Arnstadt to Mühlhausen in 1707. Torelli had been *maestro di concerto* to the Margrave of Brandenburg in Ansbach in the late 1690s, so his concertos might have reached Bach from South Germany. And Bach might have come to know Albinoni's Op. 2 concertos through Roger's 1702 edition, for the Amsterdam editions of Estienne Roger were widely disseminated in Germany at the time. Around 1709 documentary hints of Bach's engagement with the concerto begin to proliferate. It was then that he wrote out the continuo part for the second of Albinoni's Op. 2 concertos,² perhaps for a performance at the Weimar court. And in March 1709 the brilliant young German violinist Johann Georg Pisendel, who had been a pupil of Torelli's, called at Weimar on his way to Leipzig and became acquainted with Bach,³ who as a result might have furthered his knowledge of Torelli's concertos and possibly those of other Italian composers. Many of the concertos of Georg Philipp Telemann date from his period of employment at the court of Eisenach, 1708–12, when Bach was evidently in close contact with him; and around 1709 Bach wrote out a complete set of parts (later owned

¹ Part I Ch. 2, pp. 22–6 and 42–3.

² See Hans-Joachim Schulze, 'Die Bach Überlieferung: Plädoyer für ein notwendiges Buch', *Beiträge zur Musikwissenschaft*, 17 (1975), pp. 45–57 (esp. 55); and Kirsten Beißwenger, *Johann Sebastian Bachs Notenbibliothek* (Kassel, 1992), VBN I/A/1.

³ BD III, No. 735.

and copied by Pisendel) for Telemann's Concerto in G for two violins, strings, and continuo, TWV 52:G 2.⁴ When Bach moved to Weimar in 1708, the ducal music library no doubt already contained numerous concertos, some of which might have been brought back from Italy by Vice-Capellmeister Johann Wilhelm Drese following his study tour of that country in 1702–3.⁵ Other concertos might have reached Weimar from Amsterdam, particularly in July 1713 on the return of the young Prince Johann Ernst, brother of Duke Ernst August, from a two-year period of study in Holland.⁶ The music he brought back with him might have included some of the latest concertos imported from Italy, particularly Vivaldi's *L'estro armonico*, Op. 3, which had been published by Roger in Amsterdam only two years earlier, in 1711. The prince's devotion to the concerto form, clear from his own contributions to it as an enthusiastic young composer, must have been a major factor in a court environment so obviously conducive to Bach's cultivation of the genre.

That cultivation, to a considerable extent, must have taken the form of performance as well as composition. For the virtuoso demands made by the concertos that Bach transcribed for harpsichord (BWV 972–87 and 592a) or organ (BWV 592–6) at Weimar leave little doubt that they were intended for his own performance before a court audience.⁷ And as Weimar Concertmaster from 1714 to 1717 he would presumably have directed concertos from the violin in accordance with the traditional role of concertmasters. How many of those concertos were of his own composition it is impossible to estimate, but the possibility cannot be dismissed that his stipulated duty as concertmaster of composing a new work every month applied to instrumental ensemble works as well as cantatas.⁸ No concertos of Bach's own survive from the Weimar period, but in some cases the lost original versions of works that were adapted in Cöthen or Leipzig might go back to the Weimar years: according to a recent study,⁹ the likeliest candidates are Brandenburg Concertos Nos. 1 and 3, BWV 1046a and 1048, the harpsichord concertos BWV 1052, 1061, and 1063, and the Concerto in A minor for flute, violin, and harpsichord, BWV 1044. In the absence of the original versions of these works, however, the most concrete evidence of Bach's engagement with the Italian concerto at Weimar is to be found in his transcriptions of concertos by other composers.

⁴ See H.-J. Schulze, 'Telemann—Pisendel—Bach: zu einem unbekannten Bach-Autograph', in *Die Bedeutung Georg Philipp Telemanns für die Entwicklung der europäischen Musikkultur im 18. Jahrhundert* [conference report, Magdeburg, 1981] (Magdeburg, 1983), pp. 73–7; and K. Beißwenger, *Johann Sebastian Bachs Notenbibliothek*, VBN I/T/5.

⁵ See Konrad Küster, *Der junge Bach* (Stuttgart, 1996), pp. 190–1.

⁶ See H.-J. Schulze, 'J. S. Bachs Konzertbearbeitungen nach Vivaldi und anderen: Studien- oder Auftragswerke?', *Deutsches Jahrbuch der Musikwissenschaft für 1973–1977* (Leipzig, 1978), pp. 80–100 (esp. 87–9); partial Eng. trans. as 'J. S. Bach's Concerto Arrangements for Organ: Studies or Commissioned Works?', *The Organ Yearbook*, 3 (1972), pp. 4–13 (esp. 7–9).

⁷ See Karl Heller, *Krit. Bericht, NBA IV/8* (Kassel and Leipzig, 1980), p. 15.

⁸ As Siegbert Rampe shows: see his "'Monatlich neue Stücke": zu den musikalischen Voraussetzungen von Bachs Weimarer Konzertmeisteramt', *BJ* 2002, pp. 61–104 (esp. 65ff.).

⁹ Siegbert Rampe and Dominik Sackmann, *Bachs Orchestermusik: Entstehung, Klangwelt, Interpretation* (Kassel, 2000); see esp. pp. 241–2.

Concerto transcriptions

<i>Title</i>	<i>Earliest source/s</i>	<i>Scribe, date</i>
Concerto in D, BWV 972 (after Vivaldi, Op. 3 No. 9)	Berlin, P 280	J. B. Bach, 1715–30
	Brussels	J. A. Kuhnau, c. 1725
	Berlin, P 804/55	Anon., 1727 or later
Concerto in G, BWV 973 (after Vivaldi, Op. 7 No. 8)	Berlin, P 280	J. B. Bach, 1715–30
	Berlin, P 804/54	Anon., 1727
Concerto in D minor, BWV 974 (after A. Marcello, D 935)	Berlin, P 280	J. B. Bach, 1715–30
	Berlin, P 804/4	Anon., 1726/7
	Darmstadt, Mus.ms.66	Anon., c. 1731/2
Concerto in G minor, BWV 975 (after Vivaldi, RV 316)	Berlin, P 280	J. B. Bach, 1715–30
Concerto in C, BWV 976 (after Vivaldi, Op. 3 No. 12)	Berlin, P 280	J. B. Bach, 1715–30
	Berlin, P 804/15	J. P. Kellner, pre-1725?
Concerto in C, BWV 977 (after unknown original)	Berlin, P 280	J. B. Bach, 1715–30
	Berlin, P 804/56	W. N. Mey, 1727 or later
Concerto in F, BWV 978 (after Vivaldi, Op. 3 No. 3)	Berlin, P 280	J. B. Bach, 1715–30
Concerto in B minor, BWV 979 (after Torelli, Concerto in D minor)	Berlin, P 280	J. B. Bach, 1715–30
Concerto in G, BWV 980 (after Vivaldi, RV 381)	Berlin, P 280	J. B. Bach, 1715–30
Concerto in C minor, BWV 981 (after B. Marcello, Op. 1 No. 2, C 788)	Berlin, P 280	J. B. Bach, 1715–30
	Berlin, P 801	J. G. Walther, pre-1717
	Leipzig, Ms. 8	Anon., early 18th century
	Brussels	J. A. Scheibe, c. 1730
Concerto in B♭, BWV 982 (after Johann Ernst, Op. 1 No. 1)	Berlin, P 280	J. B. Bach, 1715–30
Concerto in G minor, BWV 983 (after unknown original)	Berlin, P 804/35	W. N. Mey, after 1727
Concerto in C, BWV 984 (after Johann Ernst)	Berlin, P 804/52	J. Ringk, after 1730?
Concerto in G minor, BWV 985 (after Telemann, TWV 51:81)	Berlin, P 804/28	W. N. Mey, post-1727
Concerto in G, BWV 986 (after unknown original)	Berlin, P 804/46	W. N. Mey, post-1727
Concerto in D minor, BWV 987 (after Johann Ernst, Op. 1 No. 4)	Berlin, P 804/34	W. N. Mey, pre-1726
Concerto in G, BWV 592a (after Johann Ernst)	Leipzig, Ms. 29	Anon., late 18th century
Concerto in G, BWV 592 (after Johann Ernst)	Berlin, P 280	J. B. Bach, 1715–30
	Leipzig, Ms. 11	Anon., 1739
	Berlin, P 804/31	J. P. Kellner, pre-1725?

<i>Title</i>	<i>Earliest source/s</i>	<i>Scribe, date</i>
Concerto in A minor, BWV 593 (after Vivaldi, Op. 3 No. 8)	Berlin, P 400b	J. F. Agricola, c. 1738/9
Concerto in C, BWV 594 (after Vivaldi, RV 208)	Leipzig Univ.	J. P. Kellner, 1725
	Leipzig Univ.	W. F. Bach, c. 1727
Concerto in C, BWV 595 (after Johann Ernst)	Berlin, P 400c	J. F. Agricola, c. 1738/9
	Berlin, P 286	Anon., late 18th century
Concerto in D minor, BWV 596 (after Vivaldi, Op. 3 No. 11)	Berlin, P 330	Autograph, 1714–17

According to an attractive and widely accepted theory,¹⁰ the transcriptions were commissioned by Prince Johann Ernst, who during his Dutch tour might have heard Jan Jacob de Graaf, the blind organist of the Nieuwe Kerk, Amsterdam, playing the latest Italian concertos on the organ. Johann Ernst was expected to return to Weimar ‘with much fine Italian and French music’,¹¹ which might have included the originals of the concertos that Bach transcribed. On this account the transcriptions are most likely to have originated during the year from July 1713 to July 1714—that is, after the prince’s return from Holland but before his departure from Weimar to seek a cure for illness. The sources themselves, however, do not preclude a considerably larger time-scale for Bach’s engagement with these concertos. His five surviving transcriptions from Vivaldi’s *L’estro armonico* must have originated after 1711, since they appear to be based on the original edition, which might well have been brought by the prince from Amsterdam to Weimar. Four of Bach’s Vivaldi arrangements, however (BWV 973, 975, 980, and 594), are based on manuscript sources, which might have become available to him before, or indeed after, the year 1713–14.¹² The only extant autograph among these works, that of the Organ Concerto in D minor, BWV 596 (after Vivaldi’s Op. 3 No. 11), dates from the period 1714–17; and renovation of the court organ, which began in June 1712, presumably precluded its use for the performance of concertos till September 1714.¹³ The Torelli Concerto in D minor, the original of BWV 979, might have been introduced to Bach by Pisendel in 1709. Telemann’s Concerto in G minor, TWV 51:81, transcribed as BWV 985, might have come directly from the composer at any time during his Eisenach period (1708–12). The date of the Benedetto Marcello arrangement, BWV 981, is bounded only by the publication date of the original concerto (1708); and the concerto after Alessandro Marcello, BWV 974, is apparently based on a lost manuscript version, so presumably originated when the original was

¹⁰ Expounded by H.-J. Schulze, ‘J. S. Bachs Konzertbearbeitungen’/‘J. S. Bach’s Concerto Arrangements’.

¹¹ According to Bach’s pupil Philipp David Kräuter; see BD III, No. 58a (p. 649) and *NBR*, No. 312c.

¹² The concertos transcribed as BWV 973, 975, and 980 were later published in different versions within Vivaldi’s Opp. 4 and 7.

¹³ As pointed out by Rampe and Sackmann, *Bachs Orchestermusik*, p. 67.

still circulating in manuscript—that is, some time before its publication in 1717.¹⁴ We cannot exclude the possibility, therefore, that Bach was transcribing and performing Italian concertos, as well as German concertos written in Italian style, not only in 1713–14 but throughout much of his time at Weimar (1708–17).

Although the number of concertos with which Bach became acquainted in Weimar must have been far greater than we can possibly know today, the transcriptions, alongside the early concerto-based works and the Albinoni and Telemann concertos copied out around 1709, provide the best evidence we have of his first major encounter with the genre. It is therefore worth comparing the transcriptions with the original concertos on which they are based in order to determine what he might have learnt from them about the form and style of the Italian concerto. Prince Johann Ernst's concertos can naturally be excluded from the investigation: they are the work of a seventeen-year-old student who quite clearly would have sought to learn from Bach rather than the other way round. The range of forms and styles that Bach would have encountered among the concertos of the Italian masters Torelli, Albinoni, the Marcello brothers, and Vivaldi (not to mention Bach's older compatriot Telemann) is legion, and perhaps helps to explain the huge diversity of treatment we find in the concertos that he himself wrote not long afterwards. Old styles jostle with new, and Bach characteristically seems to show equal interest in them, being prepared to let them coexist within the works that he himself wrote under their influence.

One of the chief formal elements of the older concerto style is the 'motto' theme—a predecessor of the Vivaldian ritornello—which Bach would have known through Albinoni's Op. 2 and perhaps Torelli's Op. 6. The opening theme, or its headmotive, returns as a motto at the start of each new period, usually transposed into a related key (except in the first and last periods, where it is, of course, in the tonic). As a tutti return, this is comparable with the ritornello, though it is not a clearly defined unit in its own right but merely the point of departure for new musical events on each occasion.¹⁵ Bach had already adopted this motto procedure, perhaps under the mediating influence of Johann Kuhnau, in the Allegros from his Toccatas in D major and G minor, BWV 912a and 915. In Weimar he would encounter it again in the first movement of Telemann's Concerto in G minor (TWV 51:g1; transcribed as BWV 985), where, after its initial statement (bb. 1–7), the tutti motto theme is prefaced at the start of each period by a broken-chordal flourish from the solo violin. At one point (bb. 46–62), the motto is presented twice in succession in different keys (G minor and B $\flat$ major), an abrupt form of modulation particularly associated with Torelli and Albinoni.¹⁶ Again, Bach had

¹⁴ For details of the Marcello concertos, see Eleanor Selfridge-Field, *The Music of Benedetto and Alessandro Marcello: A Thematic Catalogue* (Oxford, 1990), C 788 and D 935 (pp. 358 and 379).

¹⁵ This mode of construction is described by Michael Talbot, 'The Concerto Allegro in the Early Eighteenth Century', *Music & Letters*, 52 (1971), pp. 8–18 and 159–72 (see 162), and in his *Tomaso Albinoni: The Venetian Composer and His World* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 101–2.

¹⁶ See Talbot, *Tomaso Albinoni*, p. 105.

already done something similar in the aforementioned Allegro from his D major Toccata. But it must have been of special interest to him to find the most forward-looking of the Italian concertists, Antonio Vivaldi, applying the same device to the headmotive of the ritornello in the first movement of his Concerto in E, Op. 3 No. 12 (transcribed as BWV 976), as well as in both outer movements of the Concerto in G, Op. 3 No. 3 (BWV 978; in bb. 45b–51a of the first movement, the motto is heard in three keys, b, D, and G). It is worth noting in this context that Vivaldi's Op. 3 collection, *L'estro armonico*, might have been assembled out of concertos composed well before its publication date, 1711, and thus still strongly influenced by the older generation of Italian concertists. The motto procedure employed by them renders an analysis in terms of an alternation of ritornellos and episodes problematic. For the motto or headmotive merely acts as the opening gesture of a substantial period that is continued by *Fortspinnung* (spinning-out) in the form of sequences, phrase repetitions, and so forth.¹⁷ Any distinction between tutti writing and that of a more 'soloistic' character is merely incidental to this periodic structure, whose main event is the movement towards the cadence in a new key at the end of a period, and the subsequent thematic return in that key at the start of the next period. It is possible to recognize in this description certain aspects of Bach's own concerto structures, which shows how deeply rooted they are in the formal procedures of the early concerto. In the first movements of Albinoni's Op. 2 concertos, while the intermediate periods explore subsidiary keys, the outer ones form identical framing ritornellos in the tonic, another formal procedure that became characteristic of Bach himself. He may also have derived from Albinoni one of the defining features of his own concertos, namely the motivic or thematic development in intermediate periods of material first stated in the opening ritornello.

In the concertos of Torelli's Op. 8 (which must have been known at Weimar, since several of them were transcribed by Johann Gottfried Walther), the opening theme of a movement is often treated fugally, both at first and upon each of its subsequent returns, even though the overall construction of the movement is not fugal.¹⁸ Similarly, in the Telemann concerto whose parts Bach wrote out around 1709 (TWV 52:G2), the ritornello of the second movement (Allegro) consists in the main of a fugal exposition on two subjects combined. This, coupled with the four-movement, slow-fast-slow-fast design of the whole, and the imitative style of the Grave and Largo, points to a type of concerto still not far removed in some respects from the trio sonata, and hence akin to Corelli's Op. 6. In certain movements he transcribed by Telemann, Vivaldi, and Benedetto Marcello (Ex. 1), Bach would find further evidence that this older style was perfectly capable of coexisting with newer elements in the context of the concerto. In each case, a single-bar theme in counterpoint with a suspension, highly characteristic of the Corellian trio sonata (and already employed by Bach in the

¹⁷ See Talbot, 'The Concerto Allegro'.

¹⁸ Examples are the 2nd and 3rd movements of Op. 8 No. 2 and the finale of Op. 8 No. 8.

fast movements of the Toccata in D minor, BWV 913), forms the basis of a fugal or imitative ritornello. As far as fugal treatment is concerned, the most thoroughgoing of these movements is that of Vivaldi, which might be described as a species of free permutation fugue on three subjects, only briefly punctuated by solo episodes (which are, in any case, largely based on the same themes). The amalgamation of fugue and ritornello form that Bach attempted so successfully in later years may well have its roots in these early Weimar encounters.

Ex. 1



a) Telemann: Concerto in G minor, TWV 51:g1, as transcribed by Bach (BWV 985), 3rd movement (Allegro), opening



b) Vivaldi: Concerto in D minor, Op. 3 No. 11, as transcribed by Bach (BWV 596), 3rd movement (Fuga), b. 9



c) B. Marcello: Concerto in C minor, Op. 1 No. 2, as transcribed by Bach (BWV 981), 2nd movement (Vivace), b. 2

Since the Italian concertists also composed operas and cantatas, it is hardly surprising that close formal analogies may be observed between aria and concerto. Bach must have been aware of these links, particularly since in the early Weimar years, when exploring the style and technique of the concerto, he was also beginning to write his first 'modern' arias in da capo form. It is unlikely to be mere coincidence, therefore, that the cantata *Der Herr denket an uns*, BWV 196, which might have been composed around 1709, contains not only an early essay in concerto-ritornello form (the introductory sinfonia) but also one of Bach's earliest attempts at da capo form (the soprano aria, no. 3). The affinity between the two forms is not confined to obvious common factors, such as tutti returns (ritornellos) or the interaction between solo and ripieno. In both forms it is common for the soloist to enter with a brief initial gesture, which is followed by an abridged ritornello return before that gesture is

expanded into a full solo episode. This so-called motto (not to be confused with the motto theme of the early concertists as described above) apostrophizes the solo, as it were, while the brief ritornello return engages solo and tutti in an initial dialogue. As noted above in Part I, Bach had already adopted this procedure in certain early arias and chorale-arias. Among the concertos he transcribed, he would have encountered it in the Alessandro Marcello piece (D 935, BWV 974) and in certain Vivaldi concertos (for example, Op. 3 No. 8 and Op. 7 No. 8; BWV 593 and 973); and it is imitated in the lost concerto—perhaps by Prince Johann Ernst?—transcribed as BWV 986. Another aria-like element is found in many of the Vivaldi concertos transcribed by Bach.¹⁹ An opening tutti-solo complex (more than just a ritornello), often including a modulation to the dominant, recurs in modified form at the close of the movement, now entirely in the tonic. Thus an overall ABA¹ structure, akin to a modified da capo form, is superimposed on the ritornello scheme. Bach's own later propensity for uniting da capo and ritornello form in his concertos and concertante vocal works may well owe much to Vivaldi's example.

One of the more perplexing features of Bach's concertante movements from the Weimar period becomes more explicable in the light of these transcribed concertos, namely the vast discrepancy in dimensions and complexity between the ritornellos of different movements, which seems to give them the character of quite different entities.²⁰ Ritornellos of all shapes and sizes may be found among the concertos Bach transcribed, ranging from simple structures that announce a single theme to complex edifices that present up to four themes or motives. Single-theme ritornellos may be spun out at considerable length, as in the finale of Vivaldi's 'Grosso Mogul' concerto (RV 208/BWV 594); but they may also amount to no more than one brief, concise thematic statement, as in the three-bar *unisono* theme of Alessandro Marcello's Oboe Concerto in D minor (D 935/BWV 974). At the opposite extreme is a ritornello such as that which opens Vivaldi's Concerto in A minor, Op. 3 No. 8 (BWV 593): trenchant opening theme *a*; short-trill figure *b*, then converted into long-trill figure *c* in sequence; quaver figure *d* over dominant pedal, leading to tonic full-close; varied repeat of *d* as codetta with repeated cadence (Ex. 2). Between these two extremes lies the threefold pattern of headmotive, sequential theme, and tail figure, which represents not only the standard period structure but the classic ritornello design of the late baroque.²¹ Among these concertos, it is found most obviously in the finale of Torelli's Violin Concerto in D minor (BWV 979) and in the first movement of Vivaldi's Concerto in G, Op. 7 No. 8 (BWV 973).

¹⁹ BWV 972, 976, 978, and 593.

²⁰ Compare, for example, the ritornello from the Sinfonia of *Der Herr denkt an uns*, BWV 196, with that of the F major Toccata, BWV 540 no. 1.

²¹ See Wilhelm Fischer, 'Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte des Wiener klassischen Stils', *Studien zur Musikwissenschaft*, 3 (1915), pp. 24–84.

Ex. 2

Allegro

Vivaldi: Concerto in A minor, Op. 3 No. 8, 1st movement, bb. 1–16 (vln I only)

Crucial to the structuring of a ritornello movement is the manner in which the opening ritornello returns in the subsequent course of the movement. Literal returns in intermediate periods are relatively rare, though they occur in both main movements of the Torelli concerto: the finale and the Allegro No. 3, whose ritornello scheme is as follows:

Structure:	<i>Rit.</i>	<i>Epis.</i>	<i>Rit.</i>	<i>Epis.</i>	<i>Rit.</i>	<i>Epis.</i>	<i>Coda</i>
Material:	A	B	A	C	A	D	—
Key:	b	b–f $\sharp$	f $\sharp$	f $\sharp$ –b	b	b	b
Bars:	8	13	8	12	8	16	2

Thus outer, framing ritornellos in the tonic, and an inner one in the dominant, all identical (except for key), are joined by modulatory episodes. The symmetry and logic of this simple scheme must have struck a chord within Bach’s own creative thinking, even though he was wont to work on a level of far greater formal complexity. Vivaldi, for his part, was more inclined to bring back only extracts from his opening ritornello. In the Concerto in G minor (RV 316/BWV 975), for example, only the last two phrases (*c* and *d*) of the compound ritornello (*aabcd*) feature in the central ritornello return in the relative major (bb. 88–96). Alternatively, in his intermediate tuttis, Vivaldi might introduce material that is either only loosely related to his initial ritornello, or altogether new, as in the outer movements of Op. 3 Nos. 8 and 9 (BWV 593 and 972). Such tuttis become germane to the discourse by causing a

reaction in the surrounding solo episodes. The first movement of the Concerto in D (Op. 3 No. 9/BWV 972), for example, is marked by a subtle interplay of solo and tutti, far removed from any standardized ritornello-episode alternation. The second tutti (b. 16) generates the following solo episode, to which the third tutti (b. 25) acts as a cadence, immediately repeated by the soloist.

Bach certainly seems to have profited from the example of the Italian concertists in the long-range use of key relationships for structural purposes. However, the scheme associated with Vivaldi's later concertos, in which tutti ritornellos in the form of closed periods (those that begin and end in the same key) alternate with solo episodes in the form of open periods (those that modulate to a new key), was relatively uncommon in the concertos Bach transcribed. In those cases where a clear distinction can be made between ritornellos and episodes, it is not unusual to find ritornellos that modulate, or solo episodes that begin and end in the same key. In the first movement of Vivaldi's Concerto in G, Op. 3 No. 3 (BWV 978), for example, we find an exact reversal of the stock procedure: the solos each affirm a single key—that reached at the end of the preceding tutti—whereas all the tuttis modulate, save the last (much the same procedure applies in the finale). This is a clear survival from the early concerto, recalling Torelli's Op. 6 and Albinoni's Op. 2, in which the motto, being stated in several keys, is responsible for modulation, whereas the following *Fortspinnung* (spinning out) merely confirms the new key.

Key relationships have to be heard in terms of the larger structure. For neither ritornellos nor episodes are the largest building blocks in these concertos: groups of them are often united to form large complexes, set off from each other by the chief cadences of the movement. In the first movement of Vivaldi's Concerto in G, Op. 7 No. 8 (BWV 973), for example, the sequence tutti–solo–tutti–solo of the first 69 bars comprises a large opening tonic–dominant complex, full-closing in the tonic G. There follows a sudden switch to the relative minor for a middle complex, comprising tutti, solo, and a modulatory passage in which the two interact. Finally, the tonic returns for a concluding complex, tutti–solo–tutti, forming an expanded ritornello return. In Vivaldian structures of this kind, key and theme often go hand in hand. In particular, the tonic return in the latter half of a movement is often coordinated with the reprise of an important theme. In the first movement of the Concerto in A minor, Op. 3 No. 8 (BWV 593), for example, as soon as a prominent cadence announces the return of the tonic (b. 65) a distinctive melodic idea returns from the first two solos (bb. 16 and 25), heralding the expanded ritornello return, with its interpolated solos, that forms the concluding complex.

Bach would have had lessons to learn not only from structural procedures of this kind but from elements of concerto style, some of which he might have encountered here for the first time. These would be assimilated swiftly into his own personal style, regardless of genre. The transcribed concertos owe their surface appeal in large measure to the ritornello themes, with their elemental scale- and broken-chord-figures (often *unisono*), their driving rhythms, and the bright, clear primary colours of their plain tonic–dominant harmony. Internal repetition, or 'kinetic recurrence' as it has been

termed,²² helps to impel the music forwards. And phrases are often suddenly broken off by rests to create the effect of a forceful dramatic gesture. Many of these characteristics are not just the property of Vivaldi but common to the Italian concertists from Torelli onwards—hence the frequency of thematic resemblances between concertos by different composers (Ex. 3; see also Ex. 1). The style is built on the principle of extreme contrast—between the tutti themes described above and the brilliant, virtuoso solo figuration, or between the plain tonic–dominant harmony of the main thematic statements and the shifting harmonic colour of the long, powerful sequences. A specific mode of writing is no longer valid for a whole movement, as it would be in an aria or fugue; instead, it may be broken off all of a sudden and replaced by something quite different and unexpected. This might easily lead to incoherence, were it not for the overriding principle of *return*, which is applied not only to ritornellos (or extracts therefrom) but to solo episodes too.

Ex. 3



a) Torelli: Concerto in D minor (transposed to B minor) as transcribed by Bach (BWV 979), 3rd movement (Allegro), opening



b) Vivaldi: Concerto in G minor, Op. 3 No. 2, 2nd movement [Allegro], opening (unison vlms only)

To these characteristics Vivaldi adds an unpredictable element, a refusal to be bound by what is expected. This may take the form of an opening theme that fails to return in the course of the movement (as in the outer movements of Op. 3 No. 9/BWV 972) or a coda that apparently bears no relation whatever to the material that precedes it (third movement of Op. 3 No. 3/BWV 978). But most often it imparts an air of the unexpected, a dramatic sense of ‘what next?’ to the musical discourse. In the finale of the Concerto in A minor, Op. 3 No. 8 (BWV 593), for example, the dominant-key tutti (b. 51) not only introduces entirely new material but modulates twice down a tone (e–d–C), then returns to the tonic before cadencing in the dominant. This capricious key sequence derives legitimacy, as it were, from its immediate recurrence in the ensuing episode, though it now stops short on the tonic for a central rondo-like tonic ritornello. In the next solo episode, only one of the two solo violins reproduces the brilliant figuration of previous episodes; the other introduces, quite out of the blue, a passionate cantabile melody of

²² By Arthur Hutchings, *The Baroque Concerto* (London, 1959; 3rd rev. edn 1973), pp. 43–4.

considerable extent (twice the length of any other episode) and ranging widely in key. It is possible that Bach was fascinated by such irrational conduct on Vivaldi's part precisely because it was so different from his own logical, well-ordered creative mentality.

Up to a point, Bach's response to these concertos may be gauged by the nature and extent of his interventions during the act of transcription for keyboard. These indicate the degree to which he was prepared to impose his own personality on the music. Radical intervention, which is frequently in evidence, cannot be taken as a recognition of deficiencies in the original. On the contrary, we have plentiful evidence that Bach was full of admiration for the chief composer concerned, Antonio Vivaldi. Bach's alterations and additions are better viewed as appreciative, as signs of his full creative engagement with Vivaldi's music. Naturally, changes of substance often reflect the change of medium. But it is impossible to draw a strict dividing line between these practical matters and more probing interventions, for in one way or another, all of Bach's alterations are designed to render the music effective in performance on the organ or harpsichord. But he did consistently go well beyond the minimum intervention required for practical expediency, and this is where our interest must be focused.

Bach adapts the music from solo and tutti strings to a medium without such differentiation: both hands are capable of taking on the role of soloists, either singly or together. Consequently, Vivaldi's usually plain supporting bass part becomes a good deal livelier and more independent, often moving in flowing semiquavers rather than in crotchets or quavers (compare, for example, Op. 3 No. 9 and BWV 972, first movement, especially bb. 26b ff.). In ritornellos and episodes alike, the newly 'soloistic' bass is often tailored into the texture by imitating the treble part. In the first-movement ritornellos of Op. 3 No. 3, for example, the headmotive is, in Bach's version (BWV 978), imitated by the bass at every occurrence. On occasion—for example, in the finale of the same concerto—Bach will transfer some material of Vivaldi's to a new context and rework it in the left hand, so that what used to be a merely supporting bass becomes truly thematic. On other occasions, he will invent his own thematic material and combine it with Vivaldi's, not only in the initial ritornello but in each of its recurrences. This material often takes the form of semiquaver figures brilliantly spiced with demisemiquavers, adding a certain *éclat* to the texture.²³ Demisemiquaver divisions are found not only in such newly added themes but in Bach's further elaboration of Vivaldi's solo violin lines: for example, Bach's additions to, and elaborations of, Vivaldi (the one in the left hand, the other in the right) echo each other in the finale of BWV 972 (Op. 3 No. 9). The melodies of the slow movements, especially in BWV 973–5 (after concertos by Vivaldi and Alessandro Marcello), are subjected by Bach to the most profuse elaboration, often involving florid demisemiquaver figures (Ex. 4). This mode of decoration, with its avoidance of literal repetition, its highly flexible rhythm, and its sensitivity towards the harmonic and phrase structure of the original, was apparently inspired by the printed *agréments* in the 1710 edition of Corelli's Op. 5

²³ For example, compare the 1st movement of RV 381/BWV 980, the finale of Op. 3 No. 9/BWV 972, and the finale of Op. 3 No. 11/BWV 596.

violin sonatas (nos. 1–6), published by Roger of Amsterdam.²⁴ It is a style that Bach was to make completely his own during the Weimar years and beyond.

Ex. 4

a) **Largo**

b) **Largo**

a) Vivaldi: Concerto in G minor, RV 316, 2nd movement, bb. 1–4

b) Bach: Concerto in G minor, BWV 975, 2nd movement, bb. 1–4

Predictably enough, Bach is concerned in these transcriptions not just with decorative writing and keyboard brilliance but with counterpoint. By its very nature, the texture of the keyboard versions, with its combined ‘solos’ for treble and bass, often on equal terms, is more contrapuntal than the originals. And this impression is heightened in cases where Bach’s bass engages in close imitation with Vivaldi’s treble.²⁵

²⁴ Dominik Sackmann presents a convincing case for this Corelli–Bach link in his *Bach und Corelli: Studien zu Bachs Rezeption von Corellis Violinsonaten Op. 5* (Munich and Salzburg, 2000); see esp. pp. 127–34.

²⁵ Compare, for instance, Op. 7 No. 8/BWV 973, 1st movement, b. 91; and RV 381/BWV 980, 1st movement, b. 59.

Elsewhere—for example, in the second and third movements of BWV 593/Op. 3 No. 8—Bach diversifies Vivaldi's repeated phrases by means of *Stimmtausch*, or interchanged parts, a contrapuntal technique known to Bach from his youth but now increasingly employed on a more expansive scale. All in all, Bach shows in these transcriptions a *compositional* engagement with the concerto genre: several key traits of the Bach concertos with which we are familiar—such as the contrapuntal and motivic enrichment of texture, and the use of thematic material to forge links between periods or to raise the quality of episodic writing beyond the level of mere figuration—are evident in his interventions, which suggests that already at this stage he might have been occupied with the composition of his own concertos.²⁶ Inevitably, there is loss as well as gain in the transcriptions. Some losses are consequent upon the altered medium: the not-even feigned, but rather totally obliterated, distinction between tutti and solo in the outer movements of the Alessandro Marcello concerto, for example; or the sheer impossibility of even approximating to Vivaldi's richly interwoven string texture in a movement such as the finale of the Concerto in G minor, RV 316 (BWV 975). More avoidable are cases in which Vivaldi's attractive, melodious violin lines are dissolved into figuration—for example, in the first movement of BWV 973 (Op. 7 No. 8), bars 60–9. Here, we can only regret Bach's decision to let keyboard brilliance take precedence over genuine melodic and rhythmic charm.

Toccatà

<i>Title</i>	<i>Earliest source/s</i>	<i>Scribe, date</i>
Toccatà in F# minor, BWV 910	ABB 20 Berlin, P 801	J. C. Bach, c. 1708–13 J. G. Walther, 1714–17
Toccatà in C minor, BWV 911	ABB 25	J. C. Bach, c. 1708–13
Toccatà in G, BWV 916	ABB 27 Berlin, P 281	J. C. Bach, c. 1708–13 Anon., c. 1712–14
Toccatà in C, BWV 564	Berlin, P 803 Berlin, P 286/5	S. G. Heder, c. 1726–9 J. P. Kellner etc., 1726/7
Toccatà in F, BWV 540 no. 1	Berlin, P 803	J. T. Krebs, pre-1717
Toccatà in D minor, BWV 538	Berlin, P 803	J. G. Walther, 1714–17

Aspects of the concerto deeply influenced Bach's writing in most genres from about 1709 onwards, becoming an integral part of his mature style. Of the multi-movement (or, in some cases, multisectional) genres cultivated during the Weimar years (1708–17)—toccata, sonata, and suite—only the suite seems to have remained at

²⁶ Klaus Hofmann reaches such conclusions in his 'Zum Bearbeitungsverfahren in Bachs Weimarer Concerti nach Vivaldis "Estro Armonico" Op. 3, *Das Frühwerk*, pp. 176–202.

first immune to concerto influence.²⁷ The toccatas that probably belong to this period are listed above. Among the three for manuals only (harpsichord or organ without pedals), BWV 910, 911, and 916, which might have originated around 1710,²⁸ only the F# minor shows no unmistakable traces of concerto style, which suggests that it might be the earliest of the three. Another clear pointer towards a relatively early date is its multisectional structure—a direct legacy of the seventeenth century—which, alone among the three works, it shares with Bach's earlier essays in the genre (BWV 912–15), and can be summarized as follows:

1.[Prelude: Allegro-Adagio]—2.[Fuga:] Presto—3.[Adagio]—4.[Fuga: Allegro]
(Dashes denote continuity between movements or sections.)

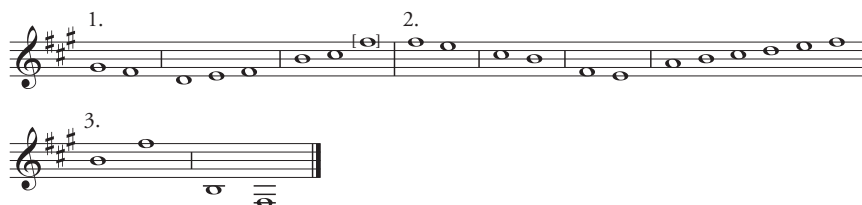
As in the G minor Toccata, BWV 915, though on a considerably larger scale, the 'prelude' is bipartite: an introductory *passaggio*, which only gradually takes on motivic shape (as often in the organ preludes), leading to a richly harmonized Adagio in 3/2 time, embellished in the French style. This Adagio, however, unlike its G minor equivalent, is further enriched by a contrapuntal dimension. And the repeated notes and chromatic descent of its imitative point return in the subject of the fugal finale, now extended to the full chromatic span of a 4th, which has already been anticipated in the bass of the link passage at bars 45–8. Again the French style is in evidence, for the rhythm, foreshadowed in the Adagio, is that of a chaconne.²⁹ The richly chordal style of the Adagio returns in the interlude, no. 3, which, like that of the D minor Toccata, BWV 913, is based on a fixed pattern: a single-bar elaborated chord progression of great beauty, which forms the subject of modulatory sequences that shift key at every restatement. Modulation is largely up or down by step (Ex. 5), with occasional light and shade provided by the major mode, absent from the equivalent movement in BWV 913. The overall rhetorical shape is clearer too: descent to a low-pitched major key (D in phase 1; E in phase 2), followed by an ascent to a high-pitched, climactic tonic. Inversion of parts is also used to rhetorical ends: taking place rarely, it becomes an event of considerable moment, coinciding with the high tonic that inaugurates the middle phase and, in the form of a re-inversion, imparting a reprise-like aspect to the subdominant that opens the final phase.

²⁷ Only the first of the six English Suites—BWV 806a, the only one free of concerto influence—survives in a source that dates from the Weimar period.

²⁸ All three are present in ABB (c. 1707/8–13). Jean-Claude Zehnder, 'Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung in der Mühlhäuser und Weimarer Zeit', *Das Frühwerk*, pp. 311–38 (see 333), includes BWV 910 and 911 within a group of works centred on c. 1709–11 on account of the wide-ranging modulation in their fugues. He dates BWV 916 to c. 1709/10 due to its concerto influence: see his 'Giuseppe Torelli und J. S. Bach: zu Bachs Weimarer Konzertform', *BJ* 1991, pp. 33–95 (esp. 94), and 'Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung', p. 336.

²⁹ As pointed out by David Schulenberg, *The Keyboard Music of J. S. Bach* (London, 1993), p. 79. The chaconne theme is virtually identical with that of *Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen*, BWV 12 (2nd movement), of 1714.

Ex. 5



Modulatory scheme of the Toccata in F# minor, BWV 910, 3rd movement (bb. 108–34). Keynotes are shown as semibreves.

Of the two fugues, the first is lightweight (literally so, being marked ‘Presto e staccato’), its light tone perhaps being conceived as a necessary counterbalance to the heavy-textured surrounding slow movements. As a three-part fugue in F# minor, it recalls the central fugato from the interlude of the D major Toccata, BWV 912a; and its swift sharp-side modulation through the circle of 5ths into ultra-dominant regions and back has a precedent in the finale of the same toccata. On its own terms, however, it is chiefly remarkable for its deft figure-work, mostly involving derivatives of the somewhat skittish subject and countersubject. These combined themes are inverted immediately after their initial statement, which sets the scene for the play on inversion that follows in most of the episodes. Even the complementary semiquaver figures of the second and fourth episodes (bb. 57 and 67), which seem merely conventional, are in fact derived by inversion from the countersubject. The strictly derived figure-work of this fugue raises it above the level of the earlier toccata fugues in episodic treatment, and foreshadows the ‘motivicity’ of Bach’s later Weimar years, whose *locus classicus*, of course, the *Orgelbüchlein*.

The fugal finale returns not just to the impassioned tone of the Adagio (second movement of the whole work) but to its chromatic theme, now extended to a full chromatic-4th descent in chaconne rhythm. Bach had used this traditional chromatic line, either ascending or descending, in the finales of two other toccatas (BWV 914 and 915), but divorced from its usual associations. Here, on the other hand, one immediately thinks of its widespread seventeenth-century use as a *lamento* bass, or of its fervent association with longing (‘Verlangen’) in the first two movements of the early cantata *Nach dir, Herr, verlanget mich*, BWV 150.³⁰ This highly evocative subject is combined with two regular countersubjects in triple counterpoint, a quasi-permutation scheme such as Strunck had applied to a similar chromatic subject in his F major Capriccio of 1683, or Buxtehude in his Praeludium in D minor, BuxWV 140. Bach himself had already done something similar in the G minor Fantasia, BWV 917, as well as in the aforementioned cantata. In the F# minor Toccata, however, a third

³⁰ The thematic resemblance between BWV 150 nos. 1–2 and 910 no. 4 was noted in Spitta I, pp. 440 and 642 (Eng. trans., I, pp. 444–5, and II, p. 31); but the two compositions are respectively among the least and most mature from Bach’s earlier years.

countersubject soon enters (b. 144), and all four themes are combined to form a totally thematic texture in the second half of the fugue (bb. 176–7). The chromatic subject itself is here in stretto—the second of three stretto entries at strategic points in the course of the fugue (bb. 154, 175b, and 186). To this wealth of contrapuntal detail Bach adds a carefully thought-out key scheme. A dominant full-close roughly halfway is followed by a rapid episodic shift down to the relative major A in preparation for a bass entry in that key, which forms a central watershed marked by a pause chord, a brief cadenza, and an emphatic cadence. As often in Mozart, the effect of the major mode is poignant, casting a startlingly fresh light on the chromatic theme. A curtailed treble entry in the same major key now inaugurates a gradual return to the tonic via the circle of 5ths, A–E–b–f♯, in which the last two keys (subdominant and tonic) are highlighted by stretto entries between the outer parts, first at the lower 5th and then at the upper octave. All in all, this finely crafted fugue forms a fitting conclusion to a toccata that, for all its forward-looking aspects, is nonetheless best regarded as the culmination of the multisectional genre that Bach had inherited from the seventeenth century.

That old form may still be discerned in outline in the Toccata in C minor, BWV 911, perhaps the next to be written:³¹

1.[Prelude: Allegro-]Adagio—2.[Fuga: Allegro]—3.[Interlude]—4.[Fuga: Allegro]

The associated ‘fantastic’ style is also still very much in evidence: opening *passaggio*, giving way to a richly sonorous, imitative Adagio (as in the F♯ minor Toccata); cadenza and elaborate Adagio cadence in the brief central interlude; ostinato figures against pedal points and extremes of tempo (Adagio, Presto) in the postlude that follows the fugal finale. However, the interlude, which is only five bars long, connects two fugues based on the same subject, or, perhaps better expressed, the first and second parts of a single gigantic fugue. To a considerable extent, therefore, the old multisectional design is here assimilated to the bipartite prelude-and-fugue structure—the arena in which the future lay for Bach’s keyboard music.

A third factor, absent from the F♯ minor Toccata but prominent from the C minor onwards, makes itself felt in the latter’s fugue, namely concerto style. The clearly articulated tripartite design of the fugue subject (Part II Ch. 3, Ex. 3a), with its sharply profiled headmotive, sequential consequent, and tail-figure, has obvious affinities with the ‘classic’ shape of the concerto-ritornello, *Vordersatz–Fortspinnung–Epilog*.³² In addition, the triadic headmotive is subject to ‘kinetic recurrence’³³ and is abruptly cut off by a rest, giving it the force of a rhetorical gesture in the manner of typical concerto themes (it is compared with the opening theme of Vivaldi’s Concerto in E, Op. 3 No. 12, in Ex. 6). Furthermore, there are signs in the fugue of that equation between fugal entry/

³¹ Stylistically the work seems to represent an intermediate stage between BWV 910 on the one hand and BWV 916 and 564 on the other.

³² As described by Wilhelm Fischer (see above, n. 21).

³³ Arthur Hutchings’s term (see above, n. 22).

exposition and concerto-ritornello, or between fugal episode and concerto episode, which was to prove so fruitful in Bach's mature music, vocal and instrumental alike. The relative-major subject entries, for example—particularly the second, with its prolonged cadential extension—have the effect of consolidated plateaux in the opposite mode from the tonic, rather like inner ritornellos, to and from which modulatory episodes lead. The episodes, particularly those of the second fugue (bb. 109, 127, 146, and 157), often possess the length and brilliance of concerto episodes, as well as their modulatory function. As often in concertos, they are based on a recurring motivic/thematic formulation: two figures combined, one of which spices the rhythm with demisemiquavers. The florid style that results, alongside the frequent reduction to two parts, imparts to these episodes a 'soloistic' quality that clearly distinguishes them from the 'tutti' subject entries.

Ex. 6



a) Vivaldi: Concerto in E, Op. 3 No. 12, headmotive of opening theme (unison vlms only)



b) Bach: Toccata in C minor, BWV 911, headmotive of fugue subject (bb. 33b–35a)

Other aspects of this mighty fugue are familiar from the earlier manual toccatas. The key scheme is remarkably similar to that of the fugal finale from the F# minor Toccata, which may indicate that the two works were quite close in date of composition. In both cases, the relative major acts as the chief secondary key, casting a fresh light on the subject; and in both cases, the return from that key to the tonic takes the form of an ultra-subdominant approach via the circle of 5ths (here Eb–Bb–f–c).

Two rhetorical devices often found in Bach's early music are here used to particularly fine effect. One is ostinato: the subject itself incorporates a form of ostinato, namely the concerto-like 'kinetic recurrence' of the headmotive. Whereas this subject alone holds sway during the first fugue, in the second it is combined with a regular countersubject, which, taking its cue from the subject, applies ostinato with such compelling force to running semiquavers that the device comes to dominate the thematic material and to a large extent governs the overall character of the fugue. (The two treatments of the same subject, incidentally—the second with regular countersubject—are reminiscent of two other works in the same key of C minor and from roughly the same period: the Passacaglia, BWV 582, and the Legrenzi Fugue,

BWV 574b. The parallel with the Passacaglia is particularly close, for in neither case is there a prior exposition of the countersubject on its own, and in both cases this countersubject is built out of an ostinato figure.)

The second characteristic rhetorical device that we encounter in the C minor Toccata is the piling up of thematic entries or other motives in three or four octaves, which has a powerful cumulative effect. This may be regarded as a variant of ostinato, for its occurrences in the first fugue prefigure the ostinato figure of the countersubject (bb. 69 and 80), and those of the second fugue (bb. 115 and 122) are simply octave displacements of that figure within the countersubject itself. From all the disparate but well-integrated elements described here—some old, others new—Bach creates a tour de force, perhaps his most formidable and ambitious fugue to date, in which fluid counterpoint is constantly placed at the service of keyboard brilliance and powerful rhetoric.

If the C minor Toccata represents a partial departure from the norms established in Bach's earlier contributions to the genre, the Toccata in G, BWV 916, perhaps the last of the manual toccatas, represents—on the surface, at least—a total departure. The old multisectional structure is here abandoned altogether in favour of the three-movement fast–slow–fast design of the Italian concerto:

1. Allegro 2. Adagio—3. [Fuga:] Allegro e presto

Bach significantly retains the name 'toccata', however: as often elsewhere, he attempts a synthesis of two genres by drawing legitimate analogies between them, hence the title 'Toccata seu Concerto' in a lost contemporary copy by Bach's pupil H. N. Gerber. Thus, if we disregard the toccata-style introductions of the Toccatas in D major and G minor, BWV 912a and 915, their movement structure is not dissimilar to that shown above. The second-movement Allegros of those earlier works were, as we have seen, already concerto-related; and, as here, they were followed by an Adagio and a quick finale in the form of a gigue-fugue. The crucial difference is this: in those works the brilliant toccata element preceded the Allegro and took the form of a clearly defined prelude, but here it is ingeniously subsumed into the Allegro itself. The opening bars function like the old *passaggio*; and the fixed broken-chordal pattern of bars 39b–48 is a virtuoso piece of writing such as would have been at home in any of the earlier toccatas. Both of these passages may be construed differently, however: the element of return, fundamental to the concerto, gives the opening bars a thematic function; and the broken-chordal passage may be heard as the 'solo' cadenza, or *perfidia*, in an instrumental concerto. Once the music is approached in this way, the subsidiary theme of bars 5–6 might be heard as an accompanied violin solo, as it were, and the preceding chordal theme as a tutti. It is not that the forum of instrumental virtuosity is transferred from toccata to concerto (though that will come to pass in future years), but rather that the element of display native to the toccata is now fully identified with that of the concerto soloist.

In the first movement, Bach seems to be building on the concerto-related achievements of the earlier toccatas. In particular, it exhibits close structural links with the Allegro second movement of the G minor Toccata, BWV 915. The two movements share an almost identical key structure and contain six periods each, which fall into three large paragraphs: a tonic–dominant exposition, a central modulatory phase, and an abridged tonic reprise. In other words, the overall structure is ABA¹, as often in Vivaldi's concerto movements. Both of the Bach movements are, however, closer in design to the earlier concertists, Torelli and Albinoni, than to Vivaldi.³⁴ In particular, the main theme (bb. 1–4, 'solo' plus answering 'tutti') functions as a motto, as in the early concerto, opening each new period in a different key. During the G major movement, Bach has constant recourse to the same two or three themes, with very little material to spare. This is close to Torelli's method of working, and confirms the impression, already derived from the three-movement structure, that unlike in the G minor Toccata, Bach was here deliberately transferring the concerto to the keyboard. It may have been his first attempt to do so, hence the rather mechanical aspect of this movement, with its short-winded phrasing, frequent cadences, and somewhat over-rigid adherence to set themes. The short ritornellos, largely unchanging at each recurrence, and the *perfidia*-like cadenza point to Torelli's *Concerti grossi*, Op. 8 (1709) as Bach's likeliest models:³⁵ it is clear that they were known at the Weimar court from the transcriptions of the seventh and eighth concertos by Bach's colleague and distant cousin Johann Gottfried Walther.

The Adagio is a good deal more structured than the pseudo-improvisatory Adagios of the earlier toccatas. Unlike them, it is no mere interlude but a full-blown slow movement in its own right, befitting its situation at the centre of a concerto-like entity. In the structure of the movement, traces of the ritornello–solo–ritornello design common in concerto slow movements may be observed. The first five bars, richly chordal and treble-dominated, together with their free reprise in the last five (though now without headmotive), act rather like a ritornello frame. Within it a single motive (first heard in the alto of b. 5, though derived from b. 1) is repeatedly exchanged among a group of four solo instruments, as it were—a texture to which Bach would later return in the slow movements of Brandenburg Concertos Nos. 2 and 5.

As a gigue-fugue, a type equally at home as last movement of a toccata or of a concerto, the finale contributes to the reconciliation between the two genres. Genial and untroubled, the movement owes its brilliant effect to much neat figure-work, coupled with some deft handling of stretto. Three pregnant motives occur within the subject itself and, once detached from it, proceed to determine most of the subsequent figure-work. Imitation and stretto on the basis of them pervades entries and episodes alike: there is a seemingly deliberate lack of differentiation between them. The strettos, all at the octave and half-bar, help to articulate the fugal and tonal structure by

³⁴ As Hans-Günter Klein notes in relation to BWV 916: see his *Der Einfluß der Vivaldischen Konzertform im Instrumentalwerk J. S. Bachs* (Strasbourg and Baden-Baden, 1970), pp. 35–8.

³⁵ See Zehnder, 'Giuseppe Torelli und J. S. Bach', esp. pp. 36–45 and 79ff.

highlighting the subject, and in particular its headmotive, at cardinal points in the discourse. At bar 149 not only is the dotted-rhythm headmotive subjected to three-part stretto, but so too is the descending scale figure of the subject, while the middle part is carried through, adding the third subject figure to form a complete entry. With parts interchanged, the same formulation brings the entire fugue (and thus the toccata as a whole) to a happy conclusion.

The wholehearted adoption of certain elements of concerto style and form that we have noted in the G major Toccata is also encountered in the three toccatas with obbligato pedal (BWV 564, 540 no. 1, and 538), which may therefore date from around the same time, or possibly a little later—the sources point to the mid-to-late Weimar years, c. 1710–17.³⁶ The C major Toccata, BWV 564, closely resembles the G major in some respects and the F major in others, and consequently might have originated between those two works. Whereas the G major Toccata was cast in the three-movement concerto design, incorporating toccata elements within it, the C major gives free rein to the toccata principle in a prelude and interlude devoted to it:

1. toccata prelude—concerto Allegro; 2. concerto Adagio—toccata interlude;
3. fugal finale.

The prelude is made up of two elements thoroughly at home in the toccata, namely manual *passaggio* and pedal solo, after which manuals and pedal unite in the Allegro that follows. Viewed in another light, however, the manual and pedal passages might be regarded as concerto ‘solos’, whose protagonists then come together in the following ‘tutti’ Allegro. Even here, then, the two genres are merged rather than merely juxtaposed. Solo and tutti are further linked motivically: the pedal solo acts as a cradle for the themes of the following Allegro. This concerto Allegro is clearly set off from the concerto Adagio (in the relative minor) that follows, a quasi-violin solo in the dotted rhythms characteristic of many concerto slow movements, accompanied by an ostinato pedal bass. And just as the toccata prelude flowed directly into the concerto Allegro, so now the Adagio flows into a toccata interlude, a ten-bar Grave in

³⁶ Zehnder, ‘Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung’, dates BWV 564 and 540 c. 1714 and 1712 respectively due to their hybrid concerto-toccata form. The same author, in ‘Die Weimarer Orgelmusik J. S. Bachs im Spiegel seiner Kantaten’, *Musik und Gottesdienst*, 41 (1987), pp. 149–62 (see p. 161), gives the date c. 1716 for BWV 538. Left out of account here is a fourth organ toccata with obbligato pedal, the D minor BWV 565, which, if authentic, must be considerably earlier than the others. However, the doubts over Bach’s authorship raised by various writers cannot be easily dismissed—see R. Bullivant, *Fugue* (London, 1971), p. 161; P. Williams, *The Organ Music of J. S. Bach*, 3 vols (Cambridge, 1980–4), i, pp. 214–21; rev. 2nd edn, single vol. (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 155–9; id., ‘BWV 565: a Toccata in D minor for Organ by J. S. Bach?’, *Early Music*, 9 (1981), pp. 330–7; id., ‘More on the Question, Is there a “Toccata and Fugue in D minor for Organ” by J. S. Bach?’, *The Organ Yearbook*, 33 (2004), pp. 139–43; D. Humphreys, ‘The D minor Toccata BWV 565’, *Early Music*, 10 (1982), pp. 216–17; and R. D. Claus, *Zur Echtheit von Toccata und Fuge d-moll, BWV 565* (Cologne, 1995). On the other hand, the work’s authenticity has found a recent advocate in Christoph Wolff, ‘Zum norddeutschen Kontext der Orgelmusik des jugendlichen Bach: das Scheinproblem der Toccata d-moll BWV 565’, in W. Sandberger (ed.), *Bach, Lübeck und die norddeutsche Musiktradition* [conference report, Lübeck, 2000] (Kassel, 2002), pp. 220–30.

pseudo-improvisatory style, which returns to the tonic via a circuitous route. The largely seven-part harmony of this Grave identifies it as a 'tutti' after the accompanied solo of the Adagio; but the join between them is ingenious: the 'violinist's' tonic note in bar 22 at once ends the cantabile melody of the Adagio and begins a brief unaccompanied cadenza, which leads into the 'tutti' chords of the Grave. As in the G major Toccata, concerto and toccata elements achieve a happy final reconciliation in the concluding gigue-fugue.

As a pseudo-concerto movement, the Allegro is remarkably similar in design to the corresponding (first) movement of the G major Toccata. Now, however, for the first time among Bach's concerto-related movements we find a clear alternation between open and closed periods, later to become one of the hallmarks of ritornello form in its ripest manifestation.³⁷ Thus the closed periods (in G, a, e, and C; bb. 38, 50, 61, and 77) may be viewed as ritornellos, and the intervening open periods (bb. 44, 58, and 67) as modulatory episodes. This period structure is coordinated with the thematic structure of the movement: the ritornellos are led by the main theme *a*, and the episodes by the subsidiary theme *b* (a derivative by inversion), though it should be noted that *b* also functions as a continuation or conclusion to the ritornellos. The rondo-like alternation between the two themes might have been modelled on certain concerto movements by Torelli, whose Op. 8 concertos (particularly the second movement of Op. 8 No. 1) have been thought to lie behind the short, fixed ritornellos of this Allegro, the melodic style of the Adagio, and the hybrid-concerto form of the work as a whole.³⁸ Thematic alternation such as we encounter in the Allegro is also often found in Kuhnau, however, and in a number of early Bach pieces that display his influence.³⁹ The phrase structure is extremely regular: 4 (2 + 2) + 2 in periods made up of themes *a* + *b*. Perhaps due to Bach's relative inexperience with concerto form at that time, the frequent perfect cadences have the effect of chopping the music up into short phrases (as in the first movement of the G major Toccata), and contribute to a *Kleingliedrigkeit*, a small-scale articulation, more characteristic of his early works than of those written in the Weimar period.

The subject of the gigue-fugue finale has something in common with its G major counterpart (BWV 916 no. 3): both traverse an octave in their antecedent phrase and then modulate to the dominant in their consequent. The C major subject is far more expansive, however: its headmotive is stated in three sequential steps, separated by long rests, which enables it to be 'scored', as it were, with the subject being answered by the countersubject as if in an interplay between instrumental groups. The analogy may be extended further: the semiquaver figuration of the consequent phrase (bb. 7–8) has the character of a violin solo, and is later (bb. 25–6, etc.) accorded a homophonic,

³⁷ See Talbot, 'The Concerto Allegro', pp. 12–14.

³⁸ See Zehnder, 'Giuseppe Torelli und J. S. Bach', pp. 45–56 and 79ff., and Robert Hill, 'J. S. Bach's Toccata in G major, BWV 916 no. 1: A Reception of Giuseppe Torelli's Ritornello Concerto Form', in *Das Frühwerk*, pp. 162–75.

³⁹ Notably the 2nd movement of the Toccata in D, BWV 912a.

'ripieno' accompaniment, counterpoint being a secondary consideration. Moreover, the recurring episodic formulation of bar 37 (cf. bb. 72 and 109) sounds not unlike an accompanied violin part. As in the G major gigue-fugue, the modulating property of the subject is put to good use: both fugues, after their double expositions, introduce a contrasting *dux-comes* (subject-answer) pair of entries in identical minor keys, e-b and b-e; and both employ modulating entries to bring about the final tonic return. The minor-mode zone of the C major fugue (bb. 78-96) is clearly set off from its surroundings not just by key but by its manual-only texture, which, regardless of the subject entries and the settled tonality, suggests the analogy of an extended, discrete concerto episode.

The correspondence in overall structure between the C major Toccata (particularly its opening complex, toccata prelude—pedal solo—concerto Allegro) and the Toccata in F, BWV 540 no. 1 (which evidently originated independently of the fugue nowadays associated with it)⁴⁰ is so marked as to suggest that the two works might have been composed in close temporal proximity. The F major piece, however, is more complex, more assured, and on a vastly expanded scale, leaving little doubt that it was the later of the two works. In place of a manual *passaggio*, it opens with a pedal toccata in the style of Pachelbel—tonic pedal underpinning twinned manual parts in short note-values—except that the manual parts, purely figurative in Pachelbel, are here strictly canonic. Moreover, both this preludial passage and the big pedal solo that follows—which between them amount to 82 bars (54 + 28)—are immediately afterwards subjected to a dominant counterstatement. From these long, unbroken stretches of tonic and dominant, it is already clear that this is going to be a very spacious composition indeed, perhaps the longest continuous piece Bach had yet written. The opening theme, which is destined to play a key role in the 'concerto Allegro' (bb. 176ff.), is a broken-chordal figure in sequence, combined with a suspension figure (Part II Ch. 3, Ex. 1b). It thus belongs to a type that Bach might have found among Vivaldi's Op. 3 concertos, though its true home lies further back in time, in the Corellian trio sonata.⁴¹

The close structural resemblance between the two pedal toccatas—the C major on a miniature scale, the F major vast—extends to their 'concerto Allegros', raising the possibility that Bach might have used the smaller work as a model for the larger. In both cases, a rondo-like alternation of two themes, derived from the manual- and pedal-toccata introductions, is coordinated with a concerto-style alternation of open and closed periods. In the F major Toccata, however, the open periods have often been thought to correspond to concerto-ritornellos, and the closed periods to concerto episodes—the normal procedure in reverse, which has been traced back to the first movement of Torelli's Op. 8 No. 2,⁴² though it is in fact common in the early concerto (particularly in Torelli's Op. 6 and Albinoni's Opp. 2 and 5) and survives into Vivaldi's

⁴⁰ See Dietrich Kilian, *Krit. Bericht*, NBA IV/5-6 (Kassel and Leipzig, 1979), pp. 403-4.

⁴¹ Examples may be found in Corelli's Op. 1, in the 2nd movements of Sonatas 3, 5, 9, and 10, to look no further than his first publication.

⁴² By Zehnder, 'Giuseppe Torelli und J. S. Bach', pp. 90-1.

Op. 3 No. 3, transcribed by Bach as BWV 978. This view of the F major Toccata has not gone unchallenged, however: it has been pointed out that the closed periods, far from sounding episodic, are heard as being of central significance due to their richly imitative texture and their clear thematic reference to the opening of the work.⁴³ It is true that, according to this account, Bach increases the texture for his episodes and reduces it for the ritornellos, but then so did Albinoni in his Op. 2 concertos.

It must have been from the Italian concertists, too, that Bach learnt the long-range tonal planning that made this movement possible, with its coordinated approach to key, theme, and texture—though the scale of application here vastly exceeds anything in the contemporary concerto. The immense tonal stasis of the first 176 bars, entirely grounded on tonic and dominant by pedal points, suddenly gives way to its opposite: the extreme tonal dynamism of the episode, with its rapid changes of key. The episodic theme itself has, by comparison with what precedes it, a more dynamic, upwardly thrusting profile. Tonal stasis briefly returns, however, in the intervening ritornellos, which are oases of calm—tonally stable and quiescent, lacking any hint of modulation. Significantly, they invariably involve a return to the main theme of the first 176 bars, already established as an agent of tonal stability. Changes of texture also make a significant contribution. The tonally quiescent theme is, at the outset of the work, in strict canon between two ‘soloists’ (manuals, RH and LH), and later, during the inner ritornellos, in imitative counterpoint, producing a three-part ‘concertino’. The dynamic theme of the episode also involves imitation, but it is that of ripieno instruments building up to, or interacting within, a great tutti.

Most impressive of all is Bach’s treatment of the ‘tutti’ cadence figure that concludes the first pedal solo (bb. 81–2), with its sharp off-beat chords. Upon its return after the second pedal solo (b. 169), it is extended from 2 to 8 bars, giving it the status of an important subsidiary theme in its own right.⁴⁴ Being an extended cadence, it has a key-affirming function, reinforced by the dominant pedal that underpins it. The minor mode of its first extended statement, after the solid major of the first 168 bars, injects a new note of high seriousness into the drama. The specific function of the theme within the ‘concerto-Allegro’ that follows is to affirm the key reached at the end of the tonally far-flung episode. This it does until the very last moment, when the long-anticipated cadence is interrupted by a chromatic side-shift to the Neapolitan flat supertonic, foiling all our expectations—one of the boldest strokes of genius in all Bach. Inspired by the Italian concerto, Bach here achieves a new freedom and resource in the handling of tonality, coordinating it with thematic and textural antitheses in order to build a musical drama of great power. The result is a triumph, and one of the finest achievements of the Weimar years.

⁴³ See D. Sackmann, ‘Toccata F-dur (BWV 540): eine analytische Studie’, in W. Hoffmann and A. Schneiderheinze (eds.), *Bericht über die wissenschaftliche Konferenz zum V. internationalen Bachfest der DDR* [conference report, Leipzig, 1985] (Leipzig, 1988), pp. 351–60 (esp. 353).

⁴⁴ Compare it with the coda from the finale of Vivaldi’s Op. 3 No. 3.

In the Toccata in D minor, BWV 538, perhaps the last of the Weimar toccatas, the genre is fully assimilated to the form of prelude and fugue. An earlier stage of partial assimilation has already been noted in the C minor Toccata, BWV 911, where the old multisectional form was still clearly evident. Here, on the other hand, the toccata and the fugue that follows are quite distinct entities, and in contrasting styles. In the toccata, the North-German style with which Bach had been acquainted for many years is fused with the Italian concerto-allegro.⁴⁵ The figure of Buxtehude seems to loom large behind the opening motive, which dominates the monothematic structure of the whole movement, behind the sequence of bars 7b–11, of a type that Bach had already employed elsewhere (see Part II Ch. 3, Ex. 8),⁴⁶ and behind the brilliant alternate-foot pedalling and the *Oberwerk/Rückpositiv* manual changes. On the other hand, we hear Vivaldi in the ‘tutti’ sequence of bars 21–4, with its 7th-chords on the main beats, in the episodic sequence of single-bar steps (later half-bar steps) moving through the circle of 5ths (bb. 37–46), and in various aspects of the overall form. By now Bach was perfectly capable of integrating these disparate elements into his own personal style.

The D minor Toccata is not so lucid in overall structure as those in C and F, and lacks the high drama of the latter, but it possesses other qualities of its own, not least the persuasive cogency that arises from unremitting concentration on a single theme and its variants. As a result of this monothematicism, there is no rondo-like alternation of themes such as we have observed in the other pedal toccatas. Nor do we find the regular alternation of open and closed periods that distinguishes those works, except in the opening exposition (bb. 1–46): the middle section contains nothing but open periods, and the concluding section nothing but closed periods. Nevertheless, the toccata’s affinity with the style and form of the concerto-allegro is clear. The use of two contrasting manuals, in conjunction with the entry or resting of the pedals, acts as an organ equivalent to the tutti–solo interchanges of a concerto.⁴⁷ And, as often in Bach’s (and Vivaldi’s) concerto movements, the periods fall into three large complexes: tonic–dominant exposition (bb. 1–36); a middle section in various subsidiary keys (bb. 37–77); and a concluding section in the tonic (bb. 78–99). Within this overall form, it has been argued⁴⁸ that the episodic principle of the concerto is operative, but not the ritornello principle. Yet episodes cannot exist without ritornellos, and vice versa. The first 13 bars, in which the initial theme is treated in three different ways, may be regarded as the opening ritornello: they constitute a closed period in the tonic, are played on the *Oberwerk*, are in five-part texture (after four introductory bars) and thus ‘tutti’, and they recur with interchanged parts as a

⁴⁵ See Werner Breig’s analysis, ‘Bachs freie Orgelmusik unter dem Einfluß der italienischen Konzertform’, in R. Szeskus (ed.), *J. S. Bachs Traditionsraum*, Bach-Studien, 9 (Leipzig, 1986), pp. 29–43 (esp. 32–5).

⁴⁶ In the Fugue in D, BWV 532a no. 2, bb. 8ff.; cf. BuxWV 172.

⁴⁷ As pointed out by Breig, ‘Bachs freie Orgelmusik’, p. 33.

⁴⁸ By Breig, ‘J. S. Bachs Orgeltoccata BWV 538 und ihre Entstehungsgeschichte’, in W. Hirschmann *et al.* (eds.), *Festschrift Martin Ruhnke* (Stuttgart, 1986), pp. 56–67.

dominant ritornello in bb. 25–36. The passage that intervenes between the tonic and dominant ritornellos (bb. 13–24) is episode-like in modulating between those two keys and in being played (at first) on *Rückpositiv* rather than *Oberwerk*. Its material, however, is drawn almost literally from the opening ritornello, except for the Vivaldian sequence (b. 21b) that leads directly to the dominant key. What follows the dominant ritornello (bb. 37–46) is genuinely episodic in character: it modulates to a subsidiary key, inaugurating the central modulatory complex; its material is quite distinct from that of the ritornello (despite ultimate derivation from the same motivic root); the regularly shifting harmonies of its sequences are just what one might expect to hear in a concerto episode; and, like many concerto episodes, it recurs later in a different tonal context (at bb. 66–77). By comparison with this episode, the subdominant passage to which it leads (bb. 47–53) has the force of a ritornello: episodic motives give way to the headmotive of the original ritornello, unsettled harmony to stable tonality, and manual changes to *Oberwerk* only. Moreover, after a brief episode, this inner ritornello returns in an expanded form (bb. 57b–66a), only to be followed by a reprise of the principal episodic formulation. At the start of the final complex, marked by a dominant pedal (bb. 78–9), further episodic writing re-establishes the tonic key in preparation for the concluding ritornello, which is clearly set off from its surroundings, being bounded by two tonic full-closes (bb. 85b and 94a). Only an expectation of exact returns would deny the name ritornello to the passages here so called. For they are fully in line with Bach's tendency, encouraged by the example of Albinoni, to subject the thematic or motivic material of his opening ritornello to probing development in the course of subsequent ritornellos.

Ritornello form also seems to influence the structure of the following fugue,⁴⁹ as it did to some extent in that of the C minor Toccata, BWV 911. This fugue is designed in terms of an alternation between two tight thematic constructs: on the one hand, the long, arch-shaped alla breve subject, which is at first combined with two regular countersubjects and later (from b. 101) treated in stretto; and, on the other, the recurring episodic formulation, in which a single motive (derived from the first countersubject) is subjected to close invertible canonic imitation. The clear distinction between these two entities and their regular recurrence in alternation—recalling the rondo-like structure of the concerto-allegros from the Toccatas in C and F—creates an effect analogous to the ritornello–episode contrasts of the concerto, especially in view of their different tonal functions: the canonic episodes serve to modulate between the subject entries, whereas the entries themselves are tonally stable, being grounded in a different key at each return in the manner of a concerto-ritornello.

⁴⁹ Breig, 'Bachs freie Orgelmusik', pp. 34–5, also hears a concerto element here.

Sonata

Title	Earliest source/s	Scribe, date
Sonata in A minor, BWV 965	Berlin, P 803 Berlin, P 804/20	J. G. Walther, pre-1717 J. P. Kellner, 1726/7
Sonata in C, BWV 966	Berlin, P 803 Berlin, P 804/33 Leipzig, Ms. 8	J. G. Walther, pre-1717 J. P. Kellner, 1726/7 J. A. Lorbeer, early 18th century
Fuga in B $\flat$, BWV 954	Berlin, P 804/14	Anon., c. 1730

All three works are arrangements of selections from Johann Adam Reincken's *Hortus musicus* (Hamburg, 1687), a collection of six trio sonatas, each made up of a *sonata da chiesa* (four abstract movements in the order slow–fast–slow–fast) followed by a *sonata da camera* (four dance movements: Allemande, Courante, Sarabande, Gigue). The Bach arrangements that have survived, which may not be all that once existed, comprise all eight movements of Sonata No. 1 in A minor (BWV 965) but only the first five of No. 3 in C (BWV 966) and only the fugal second movement from No. 2 in B $\flat$ (BWV 954). The Reincken originals are scored for two violins, viola da gamba, and continuo. The gamba mostly doubles the continuo, but at times gives a more elaborate version of the same part.

Bach's Reincken arrangements have been linked with his early fugues after trio-sonata models by Corelli and Albinoni, and consequently have been dated within the same early period.⁵⁰ J. G. Walther's copies, however, probably date from 1714–17,⁵¹ which suggests that the arrangements might have been made during the Weimar period (1708–17). And this dating is supported by the relative maturity of the fugal movements:⁵² they are the ripest manuals-only fugues before the Cöthen period, clearly anticipating the fugal style and technique of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*. Formally, they are the first manual fugues fully to adopt the mature four-phase structure of the Weimar organ fugues.⁵³ Like many of the Weimar fugues, they are notable for their tight motivic structure. The range of key employed for the subject entries during the modulatory phase of the fugues (ii, iii, IV, vi) is characteristic of the Weimar period, but not of earlier works. The use of two regular countersubjects (BWV 965 no. 2 and 954) becomes a standard feature of many

⁵⁰ By Christoph Wolff, 'Bach and Johann Adam Reincken: A Context for the Early Works,' Wolff *Essays*, pp. 56–71.

⁵¹ According to K. Beißwenger, 'Zur Chronologie der Notenhandschriften Johann Gottfried Walthers,' in Johann-Sebastian-Bach-Institut, Göttingen (eds.), *Acht kleine Präludien und Studien über Bach: Festschrift für Georg von Dadelsen* (Wiesbaden, 1992), pp. 11–39 (esp. 27).

⁵² Krüger diss., p. 97, links them with the style of Bach's mature keyboard works (BWV 894, 899, 903, 944, and 846–69) rather than with that of his pre-Weimar music. Karl Heller dates them in the mid-Weimar years due to their concerto-style episodes, which are paralleled in the fugues of that period (BWV 542 no. 2, 951, and 944). See his 'Überlegungen zur Datierung der "Reincken-Fugen" J. S. Bachs,' in *Bach, Lübeck und die norddeutsche Musiktradition*, pp. 231–44.

⁵³ As identified by Breig: see the articles cited in Part I Ch. 3, n. 29.

Weimar fugues. Finally, the highly sophisticated handling of the episodes apparently owes much to Bach's encounter with the concerto. In the A minor fugue, BWV 965 no. 2, a substantial episode (13 bars; bb. 58–71) follows the double exposition and itself constitutes the modulatory phase of the fugue, despite its absence of subject entries. It is characterized by swift modulation, largely fresh material, and a trebled, often free-voiced texture, all of which create a striking contrast with the preceding double exposition. Moreover, the slow harmonic rhythm and insistent repeated quavers of the sequence beginning at bar 64 belong unmistakably to the idioms of the concerto. As a whole, then, the passage may be construed as a central concerto episode with the function of introducing diversion and modulation, distinguished from its surroundings by its length, style, material, texture, and range of key. The C major fugue, BWV 966 no. 2, contains an important recurring episodic formulation (first heard in bb. 16–22), derived motivically from the exposition but nonetheless with its own distinctive character and independence. The sharp contrast between the two-part invention texture of these episodes and the largely three-part texture of the subject entries, as well as the recurrence of the two in alternation, creates an effect analogous to that of the solo-episode/tutti-ritornello contrast of the concerto. Stimulated by his encounter with the concerto, Bach is now thinking in terms of large tonal areas, and the episodes here have the function of consolidating the key of the preceding subject entry or exposition and, in some cases, of preparing the key of the following entry.

The slow first and third movements of the Reincken sonatas, relatively plain in the original version, are in the hands of Bach subjected to the most lavish melodic decoration, involving a profusion of demisemiquaver melismas. The style is familiar to us from the slow movements of the Weimar concerto transcriptions, but is unknown in Bach's pre-Weimar music—another pointer to the relatively late origin of the Reincken arrangements. Some Vivaldi slow movements, already highly embellished by the composer, were left largely unchanged by Bach. Others, in which Vivaldi presumably left the decoration to the performer, were rendered extremely florid by Bach in the act of transcription, as was the slow movement of Alessandro Marcello's Oboe Concerto in D minor, D 935 (transcribed as BWV 974). Bach applies to the Reincken slow movements this same decorative style, apparently inspired, as in the Vivaldi and Marcello transcriptions, by the *agréments* in the 1710 edition of Corelli's Op. 5 violin sonatas⁵⁴—a style of great beauty, often imbued with deep feeling, and soon to become a permanent, highly personal fixture within Bach's mature music.

⁵⁴ According to Sackmann (above, n. 24).

Suite

Title	Earliest source/s	Scribe, date
Suite in E minor, BWV 996	Berlin, P 801	J. G. Walther, pre-1717
Suite in A, BWV 806a	Berlin, P 803	J. G. Walther, pre-1717

The manuscript copies of these suites, made most probably between 1714 and 1717 by Bach's Weimar colleague and distant relative Johann Gottfried Walther, strongly suggest that the works concerned originated during the Weimar period (1708–17). Which, or how many, other keyboard suites Bach wrote in Weimar is unclear:⁵⁵ English Suites Nos. 2–6 are obvious possibilities, but their sources date from later years. The two compositions listed above are considerably more mature than Bach's early suites and show a more intensive preoccupation with the French style than is apparent at any other stage in Bach's career. His early suites (BWV 821, 832, and 833) had for the most part employed a native German style, with French elements entering mainly outside the standard dances of the classical suite. Here, on the other hand, every movement is deeply infused with the French style. Paradoxically, one forms the impression that the very strength of Bach's absorption with the Italian concerto might have led him to pursue the rival French style with equal vigour at around the same time. Or perhaps his preoccupations simply reflect the arrival of new music in the French style (as well as in the Italian) at the Weimar court, to which his pupil P. D. Kräuter bears witness.⁵⁶ At a later stage—in English Suites Nos. 2–6, for example—the two styles would be united; but for the present, his suite writing seems to have been guided chiefly by French keyboard music composed both before and after 1700. Contemporary sources do not leave us completely in the dark as to who the composers of that music might be. Bach's elder brother Johann Christoph, with whom Johann Sebastian seems to have shared his musical discoveries, copied the *Pièces de clavecin*, Book I (1677) by Nicolas Antoine Lebègue into the Möller Manuscript, and Louis Marchand's Suite in D minor (*Pièces de clavecin, Livre premier*, Paris, 1699) into the Andreas Bach Book.⁵⁷ And Marchand's Suite in G minor (*Pièces de clavecin, Livre second*, Paris, 1702) was copied out by J. G. Walther during the period before 1717 when he and Bach were closely associated in Weimar. Jakob Adlung⁵⁸ gave an account of Bach's performance of the suites of Marchand 'in his own manner: that is, very lightly and with much art'. Bach himself wrote out the *Six suites de clavessin* (Amsterdam, 1701) by

⁵⁵ The Suite in F minor, BWV 823, was formerly dated in the early Weimar years, but Pieter Dirksen has recently proposed that, as a harpsichord work imitating French lute style, it should be placed alongside the lute or lute-inspired works of c. 1740, BWV 997 and 998. See his 'Überlegungen zu Bachs Suite f-moll BWV 823', in M. Geck (ed.), *Bachs Musik für Tasteninstrumente* [conference report, Dortmund, 2002] (Dortmund, 2003), pp. 119–31.

⁵⁶ See above, n. 11.

⁵⁷ Lebègue: MM 46–51; Marchand: ABB 39. See Hill diss., pp. 148–9, 271–2, and 275.

⁵⁸ In his *Anleitung zur musikalischen Gelahrtheit* (Erfurt, 1758); quoted by H. T. David and A. Mendel, *The Bach Reader* (London, 1945), p. 445.

Charles (or François) Dieupart during the period 1709–16; and he was presumably familiar with the *Pièces de clavecin* (Paris, 1689) by Jean-Henri d'Anglebert, since he wrote out its ornament table around 1709–12.⁵⁹ Finally, Suite No. 7 from Gaspard Le Roux's *Pièces de clavecin* of 1705 was copied out by J. G. Walther some time before 1717.⁶⁰

The two Weimar suites by Bach are alike in movement order, save for the additional Courantes in BWV 806a:

BWV 996: Praeludio, Allemande, Courante, Sarabande, Bourrée, Gigue

BWV 806a: Prélude, Allemande, Courante 1, Courante 2, Courante precedent avec la basse simple, Sarabande, Bourrée, Gigue

Two or more courantes within the same key group, often accompanied by *doubles* (variations), were common in seventeenth-century French keyboard music and may be found in Lebègue, d'Anglebert, and Marchand (to name only composers listed above). Otherwise, the design of the two Bach suites is close to what was to become his standard movement order. The ballet dance in penultimate place might be a minuet, gavotte, passepied, and so on, in place of a bourrée; and a second ballet dance was later added in accordance with the pattern established by Dieupart.

Two different traditions come together in the Bach suites: the florid surface detail and intricate texture of the French style, and the thorough motivic and contrapuntal patterning of his own native German tradition. The E minor Suite, BWV 996, was evidently written for lute and could be played 'aufs Lautenwerck' (on lute-clavier),⁶¹ hence the abundant use made of the *style brisé*, or broken style, in the standard dances (except the Gigue), especially in the Allemande. This texture, also known as the *style luthé*, was idiomatic to French lute music of the seventeenth century and had been transferred to the harpsichord by Chambonnières, d'Anglebert, and others. Its keyboard use is widespread, but not indiscriminate: Le Roux, for example, specifically labels the movement that ends his first suite 'Courante luthée', implying that the texture is not employed elsewhere. For Bach, it seems to have been the lute itself—perhaps alongside its keyboard equivalent, the lute-clavier—that inspired what might be the earliest truly thoroughgoing application of this characteristically French texture to his music.

The inner movements of the E minor Suite are among the most purely French in style of all Bach's dances. The Allemande, despite its recurring motives (the rising broken-chord and falling scale of b. 1), captures the essentially irregular, indeterminate quality of the French Allemande. The Courante exhibits the typically French oscillation between 3/2 and 6/4 for which Bach was later praised by Kirnberger.⁶² And its material is largely free of recurring theme or motive—an absence that one

⁵⁹ See K. Beißwenger, *J. S. Bachs Notenbibliothek*, pp. 193–5 and VBN I/A/3.

⁶⁰ During the same period Walther copied out suites by d'Anglebert, Dandrieu, and de Neufville; see Beißwenger, 'Zur Chronologie', pp. 27–8.

⁶¹ According to an inscription in an unidentified hand in Walther's copy; see Thomas Kohlhasse, 'Kompositionen für Lauteninstrumente', *Krit. Bericht*, NBA V/10 (Kassel and Leipzig, 1982), pp. 115–24 (esp. 121).

⁶² In *Die Kunst des reinen Satzes in der Musik*, ii (Königsberg, 1774), pp. 127–8.

imagines might have gone against the grain for the deep-thinking German composer. Another kind of typically French rhythmic oscillation is heard in the Sarabande—between bars with standard triple-time stress and those in which the accent is shifted to the second beat. The Bourrée, with its duple metre, simple two-part texture, and pervasive dactylic rhythm, is written in the attractively melodious style that had already been established in Bach's early suites (BWV 820 and 832) and might have been derived ultimately from Lully's stage works.⁶³

The outer movements, on the other hand, provide a more Germanic frame for this highly Frenchified suite of dances. The Italian headings of the prelude—'Praeludio', 'passaggio', and 'Presto'—themselves differentiate it clearly from the French dances that follow. Its bipartite structure is that of the prelude and fugue, and the pseudo-improvisatory style of the introduction, with its opening *passaggio* and its freely alternating runs and chords, is thoroughly familiar from Bach's early preludes. Yet even here a French overlay can hardly escape notice. The bipartite slow-fast form, articulated by a tonic half-close, the dotted rhythms and demisemiquaver upbeat figures of the introduction, and the light, nimble style and texture of the triple-time Presto fugato, with its stretto entries even at the outset: all these things belong to the idioms of the French Overture, with which Bach was already well familiar.⁶⁴ Thus two genres, one French and the other German, are fused in the introductory movement of this work. After a series of French dances, the German style has the last word in the Gigue finale, with its imitative counterpoint in continuous semiquaver motion, its strictly motivic use of two figures (the falling scale and broken-chord of b. 1; cf. b. 1 of the Allemande), and its conventional thematic inversion at the halfway point.

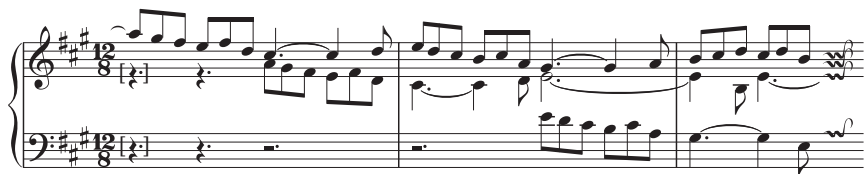
In the A major Suite, BWV 806a, which in a revised version was later to become the first of the English Suites, the *style luthé*, explored in the E minor lute Suite, is applied to the harpsichord with Bach's characteristic thoroughness. The Allemande, in particular, is richer in this broken texture than almost any of Bach's later allemandes. Yet it is revealing to observe how he makes a theme out of what would be mere figuration for the French *clavicinistes*—the turn figure and descending broken chord of bars 1b–2a, which recurs, in one form or another, in virtually every bar. Much the same applies to the first Courante, whose opening rhythm (b. 1, treble) takes on thematic significance by force of repetition, regardless of its changing melodic form. We encounter here a Germanic reinterpretation of the French style, which applies in different ways to every movement. The Prélude, like that of the lute suite, is introduced by a *passaggio*—a survival from Bach's early preludial style—but on this occasion it leads not to a French Overture but to an imitative piece in the style and rhythm of a French gigue: as Ex. 7 shows, the thematic material is strikingly close to that of the giges in the same key by Dieupart (Suite No. 1) and Le Roux (Suite No. 4). On the other hand, with its strictly

⁶³ Many examples of this style may be found in Herbert Schneider, *Chronologisch-thematisches Verzeichnis sämtlicher Werke von Jean-Baptiste Lully* (Tutzing, 1981); see, for instance, pp. 47, 106, 131, 172, and 367.

⁶⁴ Witness BWV 820 and 822; see Part I Ch. 2.

motivic use of the initial seven-note figure, both direct and inverted, the piece is thoroughly mature and Bachian, and would hardly be out of place among the ‘pastoral’ preludes of *The Well-Tempered Clavier* (such as BWV 854 no. 1 and 888 no. 1).

Ex. 7

a) F. Dieupart: Suite No. 1, *Six suites de clavecin*, Gigue, opening barsb) G. Le Roux: Suite No. 4, *Pièces de clavecin*, Gigue, opening bars

c) Bach: Suite in A, BWV 806a, Prélude, bb. 3–5

The second Courante is followed by a variant, according to French custom; but, in a curious reversal of the normal order, the 'double de la basse' is placed first and 'la basse simple' second.⁶⁵ The Sarabande introduces possibly the earliest use in the composer's work of a figure that in future years was to become quintessentially Bachian (Ex. 8). In this context it is not just episodic but fully thematic, recurring frequently throughout and even engaging in imitation in the closing eight-bar period.

Ex. 8



Suite in A, BWV 806a, Sarabande, headmotive (treble only)

The Bourrée lacks the dactylic rhythm of Bach's earlier bourrées, but it resembles them in other respects, and the slurring of the quavers in pairs gives it a pronounced Gallic flavour. The concluding Gigue recalls that of the lute suite in its imitative texture, running-semiquaver scale figures, and thematic inversion after the double bar. In this case, however, it has a clear structural significance as the *double*, as it were, of the opening gigue-prélude, rounding off the whole work as it began.

The mention of structure brings us to the issue of the formal control exercised by the composer over his material. The dimensions of each dance in this harpsichord suite are generally larger than those of the lute suite, which entails a greater need for clear formal articulation. To this end Bach not only employs clear intermediate cadences, but also makes ample use of reprise and rhyming close. In the Allemande, for example, the whole of the opening pedal-based theme (bb. 1–3) returns in the dominant to close the first strain (bb. 13–15). And although the second strain introduces a new disjunct figure (b. 17b), the original theme returns in the last four bars as a rhyming close (bb. 29–32; cf. 13–16). This represents a marked advance on the structure of the lute suite, surely the earlier of the two works: in the Bourrée from that work, for example, there was no melodic unity between the two strains, only a rhythmic unity. In the first Courante from the harpsichord suite, the rhyming close takes up more than half of each strain (bb. 5–10 and 15–20); and in the Gigue, the rhyming close follows a full-close and acts as a coda, being further differentiated by its *piano* dynamic. In the second strain of the Sarabande, after an intermediate cadence in the supertonic (bb. 15–16), the tonic return coincides with the return of the theme in its original form and position. Such a coordinated approach to key and theme—already noted elsewhere in relation to Bach's concerto-style music—will become a major structural element in his later music.

⁶⁵ The normal order is encountered in Gaspard Le Roux's Suite No. 5 in F: Menuet, Double du Menuet, and Double de la Basse.

Variations

Title	Earliest source/s	Scribe, date
Aria variata, BWV 989	ABB 36 Berlin, P 801 Berlin, P 804/21	J. C. Bach, c. 1708–13 J. T. Krebs, 1710–17 J. P. Kellner, pre-1725
Passacaglia, BWV 582	ABB 24 Berlin, P 803 Berlin, P 274	J. C. Bach, c. 1708–13 J. T. Krebs, post-1714? Anon., 1708–17

Although the principles of variation and ostinato were of central importance to Bach in his early composing career, only two works survive from this period (leaving aside the chorale partitas) in which those principles govern an entire structure: a set of variations on a secular melody of unknown origin (BWV 989); and continuous variations on a ground bass, culminating in fugue (BWV 582).

Bach is known to have written four variation sets on the basis of chorale melodies during his early period (the so-called chorale partitas, BWV 766–8 and 770), but the *Aria variata* is the only surviving set based on a secular tune. Its earliest source, the Andreas Bach Book, also contains two secular variation sets by Jan Adam Reincken—based on a ‘Ballet’ in E minor and on the aria ‘Schweiget mir von Weiber nehmen’. And Bach was very likely acquainted with the six variation sets of Pachelbel’s *Hexachordum Apollinis*, which had been published not many years before (1699). Five of Pachelbel’s six sets are apparently based on ‘arias’ of his own composition, and it is not unlikely that Bach followed him in this respect. The attempt that has been made⁶⁶ to construe the original full title of Bach’s set (*Aria variata all man. Italiana*) as referring to a pre-existing Italian aria seems somewhat far-fetched. Moreover, the rather stiff, wooden sequential steps of bars 5–7 and 9–10 seem contrived, as if designed to introduce key colour (III, iv, and v) as an effective harmonic basis for the variations that follow.⁶⁷ Bach’s variations, like those of Reincken and Pachelbel, not only preserve the harmonic framework of the theme but to a considerable extent retain its melodic outline too.⁶⁸ The contour of the Aria is largely maintained in Variations 1–3, 6–7, and 10, and frequent reminiscences of it occur elsewhere.

⁶⁶ Notably by Hartwig Eichberg, *Krit. Bericht*, NBAV/10, pp. 40–52. According to J. T. Krebs (P 801), ‘man.’ is an abbreviation for ‘manual’, which suggests that the work might have been written for a special keyboard instrument of Italian origin. This is also the view of Jean-Claude Zehnder, who links the work with the Aria and 15 variations in A minor by Bach’s uncle Johann Christoph of Eisenach (Zurich, Zentralbibliothek, Ms.Q.914). Zehnder fancifully suggests that the *Aria variata* might have been composed ‘in memoriam Johann Christoph Bachii Isenacii’ following his death in 1703. See his ‘Auf der Suche nach chronologischen Argumenten in Bachs Frühwerk (vor etwa 1707)’, in M. Staehelin (ed.), *Die Zeit, die Tag und Jahre macht: zur Chronologie des Schaffens von J. S. Bach* [conference report, Göttingen, 1998] (Göttingen, 2001), pp. 143–56 (esp. 150–1).

⁶⁷ Other points that suggest Bach’s authorship of the theme are made by Schulenberg, *The Keyboard Music*, pp. 72–3.

⁶⁸ Contrary to Schulenberg’s view (loc. cit.).

Bach's variations, however, are marked by numerous subtleties of structure that raise them above the common run of variations sets of the time. The so-called *figura corta* (dactyl figure) that occurs occasionally in the Aria forms the basis of Variation 1, and is then subjected to diminution in Variation 2, whose triplet figures in turn survive sporadically in Variation 3. The occasional dotted rhythms of Variation 5 lead to a study in increasingly elaborate dotted rhythms in Variation 6, to which Variation 7 acts as a *double*, and so on. The variations are also linked by the special treatment invariably accorded to bar 7 of each one: a right-hand ostinato over a moving bass in North-German style. As might be expected, counterpoint repeatedly adds depth and substance to the texture. Variation 3 combines a motive from bars 9–10 of the Aria with a diminution of the original headmotive. This combination is then freely inverted in Variation 4, with the addition of syncopation as a fresh diversifying factor. The continuous running semiquavers in both hands simultaneously in Variation 9 provide a climax of movement and virtuosity (to which Variations 6–8 gradually lead up), as in the third and fifth sets from Pachelbel's *Hexachordum*. But after the first two bars, Bach further enriches the variation by virtue of the brilliantly effective irregular lengths and off-beat starts to the motivic scale figures, treated in canonic imitation at the distance of a half-beat (bb. 3–8), a whole beat (bb. 9–10), and then two beats (b. 11). The original Aria melody, whose shape is already apparent in the overtly melodic Variations 6 and 7, returns still more explicitly in the final Variation—where it is only lightly veiled by a rising scale motive—together with its original full harmony, so that the outer movements provide a richly sonorous frame to a series of largely two-part variations.

Bach's elder brother Johann Christoph entered both the *Aria variata* and the Passacaglia in the Andreas Bach Book, which might point to an origin in both cases in the early-to-mid Weimar years (1708–13). In the case of the *Aria variata*, stylistic considerations do not preclude an earlier date, but a Weimar origin for the Passacaglia seems to be borne out by its mature style.⁶⁹ In certain instrumental forms, including the passacaglia, Bach reached the *ne plus ultra* in a single work and therefore might have considered any further cultivation of that form to be superfluous. The *Aria variata*, on the other hand, would eventually be greatly surpassed by the Goldberg Variations. The Passacaglia, one of Bach's greatest achievements, may be considered in relation to a number of early movements based on ground-bass or ostinato techniques: the Lamento from the B♭ Capriccio, BWV 992 no. 3, the A minor Praeludium, BWV 569, and the chaconnes from Cantatas 150 and 12, though in each case the parallel hardly extends beyond the basic mode of structuring. There are, of course, clear antecedents to the Passacaglia in late seventeenth-century Germany—by Buxtehude, Pachelbel, Georg Muffat, and others⁷⁰—but none of them remotely

⁶⁹ Pace Kilian, *Krit. Bericht, NBA IV/7* (Kassel and Leipzig, 1988), pp. 127–8, who on dubious grounds placed its origin before 1707.

⁷⁰ See Willi Apel, *The History of Keyboard Music to 1700* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1972), esp. pp. 564, 582, 611–13, and 659. Buxtehude's Passacaglia in D minor, BuxWV 161, is present in ABB (No.

approaches it in scale or power. One obvious factor that raises it above the level of its predecessors is the eight-bar extent of its theme: four-bar themes were previously the norm,⁷¹ and Bach appears to have borrowed a four-bar theme from a *passacaille* by André Raison for the antecedent phrase of his subject.⁷² Another crucial factor is Bach's crowning of the ostinato variations with fugue, for which there appears to be no real precedent. On several occasions Buxtehude wrote a chaconne as culmination of a multisectional structure: prelude–fugue (or two fugues)–chaconne (BuxWV 137, 148, and 165). In Bach's case, however, the passacaglia itself acts as prelude to the fugue, inviting comparison with other cases in which an otherwise distinct genre is laid out according to the prelude-and-fugue format (toccata in BWV 538 and 911; fantasia in BWV 903). The parallel with prelude and fugue cannot be taken very far, however, for not only are the two movements based on the same theme, but the main weight of the work lies in the passacaglia (168 bars), to which the fugue, following without a break, acts as a prolonged culmination (124 bars). More illuminating, perhaps, is a comparison with two roughly contemporary works in the same key of C minor, which likewise accord two contrasting treatments to one subject, of which the second involves its combination with a regular countersubject: the Legrenzi Fugue, BWV 574b, and the C minor Toccata, BWV 911. The Legrenzi Fugue differs in granting the countersubject its own independent exposition before the two subjects are combined. In both toccata and passacaglia, on the other hand, the countersubject has no separate validity, being constructed out of an ostinato figure whose sole purpose is to contribute to the forceful delivery of the all-pervading subject itself.

It is in these two works, perhaps, that the art of musical rhetoric Bach had acquired chiefly from the North-German school of Buxtehude, Reincken, and others—the art of treating a given theme with the utmost persuasive power—reaches its fullest fruition. To this end, the ostinato variations of the Passacaglia are carefully regulated in terms of gradually increasing or diminishing tension. This is clear from their grouping, as the following analysis illustrates (semi. = semiquaver; man. = manuals only; ped. = with pedals):⁷³

51)—alongside ciaconas by him (BuxWV 159 and 160) and Pachelbel—and might well have served for Bach as a specific model.

⁷¹ As pointed out by Apel, *The History of Keyboard Music*, p. 613.

⁷² As identified by Guilmant and Pirro, *Archives des Maîtres de l'Orgue*, ii (1899). The theme forms the ostinato bass of Raison's *Christe: Trio en passacaille* from his 2nd organ Mass, *Premier livre d'orgue* (Paris, 1688). It is quoted in Apel, *The History of Keyboard Music*, p. 732, and in Williams, *The Organ Music of J. S. Bach*, 2nd edn, p. 184.

⁷³ Other groupings are, of course, possible: see, in particular, C. Wolff, 'Zur Architektur von Bachs Passacaglia', *Acta organologica*, 3 (1969), pp. 183–94; Eng. trans. as 'The Architecture of the Passacaglia', in Wolff *Essays*, pp. 306–16; S. Vogelsänger, 'Zur Architektur der Passacaglia J. S. Bachs', *Die Musikforschung*, 25 (1972), pp. 40–50; G. Stauffer, *The Organ Preludes of J. S. Bach* (Ann Arbor, 1980), pp. 34–7; and Y. Kobayashi, 'The Variation Principle in J. S. Bach's Passacaglia in C minor, BWV 582', in D. R. Melamed (ed.), *Bach Studies 2* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 62–9.

	<i>Bar</i>	<i>Var.</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Accompaniment</i>	<i>Texture</i>
1	9	1	bass, original	syncopation, suspensions	4-pt, ped.
	17	2	bass, original	syncopation, suspensions	4-pt, ped.
	24	3	bass, original	quaver motive	4-pt, ped.
	32	4	bass, original	dactyl motive, conjunct	4-pt, ped.
2	40	5	bass, variant	dactyl motive, disjunct	4-pt, ped.
	48	6	bass, original	semi. scale fig., direct	4-pt, ped.
	56	7	bass, original	semi. scale fig., inverted	4-pt, ped.
	65	8	bass, original	semi scale fig., dir. + inv.	4-pt, ped.
3	72	9	bass, variant	semi. broken-chord fig.	4-pt, ped.
	80	10	bass, variant	semi. scale fig.	4-pt, ped.
	89	11	treble, orig.	semi. scale fig.	2-pt, man.
	97	12	treble, orig.	semi. stair fig.	4-pt, ped.
4	105	13	alto, variant	4-note semi. motive	3-pt, man.
	113	14	man., variant	broken-chordal fig.	free-voiced, man.
	120	15	man., variant	broken-chordal fig.	free-voiced, man.
5	129	16	bass, original	syncopation, suspensions	free-voiced, ped.
	137	17	bass, original	triplet semi. fig.	3-pt, ped.
	145	18	bass, variant	syncopation, suspensions	4-pt, ped.
	153	19	bass, original	ostinatos, cross-rhythm	4-pt, ped.
	161	20	bass, original	ostinatos, cross-rhythm	5-pt, ped.

The 20 variations may thus be grouped into five phases, each of which (with the exception of the fourth) builds up to a climax. Some variations, usually the last in a group, are overtly climactic in character (nos. 8, 12, and 19–20); others provide very necessary light relief (nos. 9, 11, and 13–15); while the remainder build the tension that leads from the one to the other. To this end the texture, the accompanying material, and the subject itself all undergo some kind of variation (see the above columns). So many variations feature the subject in its original form in the pedals (11 out of 20) that it is a momentous event when something different takes place: in Variations 5, 9, and 10, the bass is divided up by rests and shares the manual figuration, lightening the atmosphere; in Variations 14–15, the subject is even disguised within the manual figuration while the pedals remain silent, creating further light relief; and in Variations 11–13, the subject migrates to the treble (twice) and alto in varied textures, with or without pedals. As in the treatment of the subject, so in texture: four-part writing with pedals is so much the norm (13 out of 20 variations) that any deviations from it stand out boldly. When the parts of Variation 10 are inverted in no. 11, the texture is reduced to two manual parts as a temporary form of release. Phase 4 (Variations 13–15) is a light episode—a lull before the storm—for manuals only, with the texture progressively reduced from three via two to one part. Here the momentum of the work, its building up of tension, temporarily goes into reverse. The pedals re-enter for the concluding phase 5, first in a free-voiced texture (Variation 16), then in three, four, and at last five parts (Variations 17, 18–19, and 20 respectively). The accompanying material contributes to the build-up within each phase by showing a progressive increase in rhythmic motion and continuity. Phases 1–2, for example, progress from dotted

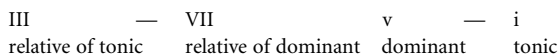
rhythms interspersed with rests (Variations 1–2), via even quavers (no. 3) and dactyl figures (nos. 4–5), to continuous semiquavers (nos. 6–8). Within the larger groups, smaller sub-groups of variations are formed by sharing accompanying material (nos. 1–2, 4–5, 6–8, 10–11, 14–15, 16 and 18, and 19–20), and each of these generates its own internal process of progressively increased or reduced tension.

Overall, a clear rhetorical shape can be traced through the five phases. The first (Variations 1–4) builds up progressively in note-values and continuity; the second (nos. 5–8), beginning where the first ended (with dactyl figures), continues the same process up to the first major climax of the piece, in Variation 8, with its exceptionally rich manual texture. The third phase (Variations 9–12) begins the process of reduction, with its generally lighter and somewhat simplified texture; and this process is completed in the episodic, manuals-only fourth phase (nos. 13–15), an oasis of calm before the final onslaught. The fifth and final phase (Variations 16–20) not only brings the passacaglia to its final climax, but also incorporates elements of reprise as a form of rounding off. The subject returns to its original form in the pedals (though with sharpened rhythm in Variation 18); and the accompanying parts reintroduce the sustained harmony, with its syncopation and suspensions, of Variations 1 and 2, as well as the dactylic rhythm of nos. 4 and 5. At the same time, this final phase introduces the shortest note-values in the entire work: the triplet semiquavers of the trio variation no. 17. The most powerful weapon in Bach's armoury, however, and the very structural basis of the movement as a whole, is ostinato, which in the last two variations (nos. 19 and 20) is wielded in the upper parts too with devastating effect. Anticipated in earlier variations (nos. 3, 9, and 16), it here takes the form of alternating ostinatos in cross-rhythm in a four-part texture, which is then enhanced to five parts as both ostinatos are doubled in 6ths and 10ths.

After this overwhelming peroration, we form the impression (as Bach surely intends) that he can go no further in this vein but is compelled to resort to a quite different mode of discourse. The fugue, which follows without a break, is felt to be a fitting outcome, perhaps even the only possible outcome. The ground-bass theme, or, to be more precise, its first half, is retained in its original form as fugue subject, but it is often transposed, and its entries spaced by episodes, allowing a measure of freedom after the relentless tonic reiterations of the passacaglia. Significantly, too, the idea of ostinato accompaniment is taken over from the last two variations of the passacaglia into the fugue, whose regular countersubject, an indispensable companion to the subject throughout, is itself made up of an ostinato figure. In the coda, the last three notes of this countersubject figure are extracted to form a final ostinato, first over an inverted dominant pedal (bb. 281–4) and then—after an astonishing Neapolitan-6th pause chord and a tonic full-close—over an inverted tonic pedal (bb. 287–9). Thus ostinato, though no longer the structural basis of the music as it was before, nonetheless continues to be a prime source of power to the very end of the fugue. Interlinked with it throughout is another strictly thematic mode of structuring, namely permutation (see Part I Ch. 3, p. 66). For after their initial statement, the ground-bass

subject and its ostinato countersubject are invariably combined with a second countersubject (made up partly of trill figures) to form a regular triple-counterpoint combination, which is heard in five of its six possible permutations. Similar triple-counterpoint schemes may be found in several roughly contemporary fugues (BWV 578 and 948; finale of BWV 910), but the Passacaglia fugue is closer to Bach's strict vocal permutation fugues, being the only one in which the three subjects enter strictly in order, in all parts, during much of the fugue. Like BWV 578 and 948, it is notable for its very clear rhythmic differentiation between the three subjects (crotchets and minims/quavers/semiquavers), a hallmark of Bach's mature triple counterpoint. The rationality of this texture spills over into the eight substantial episodes, all of which combine the figures of the two countersubjects to form sequences. The most advanced of these sequences, in terms of Bach's creative development, is the last (no. 8), whose three strands are no less clearly differentiated than those of the basic subject combination: semiquavers in the pedals; quavers in the left hand; and suspension chain in long notes in the right hand. Similar motivic sequences based on suspension chains are to be found in two other fugues, BWV 578 and 948, which have been shown to be related to the Passacaglia by virtue of their permutation schemes.

The connection between these three fugues goes further still. All three (and, in addition, the Fugue in A minor, BWV 543 no. 2) share an overall three-phase structure—as opposed to the more usual four-phase scheme that Bach had already established—marked by a single exposition, a modulatory middle section, including a pair of entries in the opposite mode, and a conclusion in which the subject enters in subdominant and tonic. The middle section of the Passacaglia fugue includes two contrasting pairs of subject entries, the first pair in the major and the second pair in the minor, linked tonally thus:



The two pairs are further differentiated in texture: the major-mode pair and its surrounding episodes are for manuals only (like the tonally related middle section of the A minor Fugue), which gives them something of the effect of a concerto episode. The second, minor-mode pair is marked by the re-entry of the pedals; but after the first entry, the treble rests for 21 bars, once again reducing the texture to three parts. The final phase of the fugue is then inaugurated by the re-entry of the treble, with the subject, in bar 245. The compact, three-phase structure contributes to the power of the fugue; and the contrasting middle section in reduced texture creates a temporary lull before the mighty conclusion, as effective as that already noted in the preceding ground-bass movement.

Fugue and fantasy II

At Weimar, the two-movement structure of prelude and fugue, already prominent in Bach's early music, became fully established along the lines of a blueprint: the Prelude and Fugue in G minor, BWV 535a, the most advanced of the early works of this kind. As reflected in the revision of that work, however, the prelude is expanded and consolidated so that it becomes a more equal partner to the following fugue. This development applies specifically to organ music; only sporadic works survive in this dual form for harpsichord, and there is no evidence that the prelude and fugue for manuals only was established in any consistent fashion before *The Well-Tempered Clavier* (Cöthen, 1722). Such is the centrality of the prelude-and-fugue form within Bach's *oeuvre* that other genres are now assimilated to it: the toccata (BWV 911 and 538; later 540), fantasia (BWV 944), and passacaglia (BWV 582). Moreover, both partners in the form are often enriched by absorbing elements of the Italian concerto (in particular, BWV 541, 894, 944, and 1026). Free-standing preludes, fantasias, and fugues are still composed, but in some cases they owe their origin to special factors—a theme borrowed from Legrenzi (BWV 574b), a study in *alla breve* style (BWV 589), a concertante show-piece for the violin (BWV 1026)—and in other cases they were subsequently joined in prelude–fugue partnerships (BWV 532, 542). Bach's mature fantasias were, however, perfectly capable of standing alone: he had already developed a form with a highly structured, consolidated, though non-fugal middle section, to which music in pseudo-improvisatory style acted as introduction and postlude (BWV 922, 532 no. 1, 572). At this stage in Bach's career, irrational freedom, formerly ascendant, had to be counterbalanced by rational order—hence the form of these fantasias and hence, too, the prelude-and-fugue form that became his speciality.

Prelude and fugue

Title	Earliest source/s	Scribe, date
Praeludium et Fuga in G minor, BWV 535	Leipzig, III.8.7	Anon., c. 1740–50
Praeludium et Fuga in A minor, BWV 543a	Berlin, P 288/13	J. P. Kellner, 1726/7
	Berlin, P 803	Anon., pre-1750

(cont.)

(cont.)

<i>Title</i>	<i>Earliest source/s</i>	<i>Scribe, date</i>
Praeludium et Fuga in A, BWV 536	Berlin, P 804/30	J. P. Kellner etc., 1726/7
Praeludium et Fuga in G, BWV 550	Berlin, P 1210	Anon., pre-1750
Praeludium et Fuga in G, BWV 541	Berlin, P 288/8	J. P. Kellner, 1726/7
	Berlin, N. Mus. 378	Autograph, c. 1733
Praeludium et Fuga in C, BWV 545a	Leipzig, Poel. 12	Anon., post-1750
	Berlin, P 290	Anon., post-1750
Fantasia [et Fuga] in A minor, BWV 944	ABB 56	J. C. Bach, c. 1708–13
Praeludium et Fuga in A minor, BWV 894	Berlin, P 801	J. T. Krebs, 1710–17?
	Leipzig, Ms.R.9	J. B. Bach, 1715–30
	Berlin, P 804/29	J. P. Kellner, 1725

Of the six organ preludes and fugues (the first six items in the above list), none is datable from its surviving sources alone, but internal stylistic findings strongly support the view that they represent a second stage in Bach's cultivation of the form, originating in all probability in the early-to-mid Weimar years (1708–13).¹ Generally speaking, by comparison with the first group of organ preludes and fugues, the free-fantasy element is somewhat reduced in favour of more structured writing. Thus only the A minor Prelude and Fugue, BWV 543a, possibly the earliest, returns to free style at the end of its fugue. The other works reach their final climax by means that grow out of the fugue itself. In addition, the preludes gain in weight and dimensions, increasingly becoming structured entities in their own right, rather than mere introductions to the following fugue.

Significantly, Bach radically revised the Prelude in G minor, BWV 535 no. 1, more than doubling its length (from 21 to 43 bars) and greatly improving its substance in order to render it a worthier companion to the fine fugue, already a major achievement of his early years (see above, Part I Ch. 3). The original conception of the prelude—two periods in free style, leading to a firmer and fuller conclusion—remains unaltered, but each section is greatly expanded and modified. The middle period is now made up of a brilliant solo cadenza, which descends chromatically through a 10th in a modulating sequence of diminished 7th and 6–5 chords.² In compelling rhetoric,

¹ Jean-Claude Zehnder, 'Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung in der Mühlhäuser und Weimarer Zeit', *Das Frühwerk*, pp. 311–38 (see 333–8), dates BWV 535, 543a, and 550 c. 1709–11, BWV 545a c. 1711–13, and BWV 541 c. 1712–14. With regard to BWV 535, see Werner Breig, ' "... das Fehlerhafte gut, das Gute besser und das Bessere zum Allerbesten zu machen": zum Umarbeitungsprozeß in einigen Orgelkompositionen Bachs (BWV 535, 572 und 543)', in M. Staehelin (ed.), *Die Zeit, die Tag und Jahre macht: zur Chronologie des Schaffens von J. S. Bach* [conference report, Göttingen, 1998] (Göttingen, 2001), pp. 121–41 (esp. 122, n.3). Breig argues that, since an intermediate version of the prelude in the hand of J. P. Kellner and W. N. Mey dates from 1727 at the earliest (see R. Stinson, *The Bach Manuscripts of J. P. Kellner and his Circle*, Durham and London, 1989, p. 24), the final version cannot then have existed, 'denn Bach hätte kaum eine für ihn bereits überholte Werkfassung zum Abschreiben zur Verfügung gestellt'. However, experience of Bach MSS (e.g. the sources of *The Well-Tempered Clavier* I and II) suggests that this is precisely what Bach did on a number of occasions. Breig (pp. 128–30) uses the same dubious argument for dating the revised version of the A minor Prelude, BWV 543 no. 1, to the Leipzig period.

² Similar passages are found in the codas to BWV 572 and 948.

this slow descent is then countered by a diatonic rise of over two octaves, leading to the very top of Bach's keyboard, at which point the original conclusion, now greatly elaborated, outlines a diatonic descent through an 11th (high c^3 to low tonic g^1). Brilliant demisemiquaver motion, formerly restricted to a single bar (BWV 535a no. 1, bb. 5b–6a), now pervades the fabric of much of this prelude—in the run-up to the chromatic sequence, in that sequence itself, in the ascent over a dominant pedal, and even in the first bar-and-a-half of the final 'tutti' passage.

The overall rhetorical shape of this prelude, the sense of a gradual build-up from extempore gestures, as it were, to a full-textured conclusion, recurs in the other preludes of this period. But the individual phases within this process tend to be more extended, more highly organized, and more closely interlinked. And a decisive shift in emphasis is apparent from free-fantasy style to more structured writing. Thus, although the A minor Prelude, BWV 543a no. 1, opens with the traditional preludial elements of manual *passaggio*, pedal point, and pedal solo, its middle paragraph eventually coalesces into a more structured discourse on the basis of the initial motive, and this style is then valid throughout the third and last paragraph, where new motives are generated by the initial one. This process is accompanied by a gradual increase in texture from one to four parts, and in rhythmic movement from semi-quavers, via triplet semi-quavers, to demisemiquavers. In the A major Prelude, BWV 536 no. 1, the process of consolidation takes place in three stages: brief opening *passaggio*, with three gestures separated by rests; figural treble with accompaniment over pedal points (first tonic, then dominant); and finally, contrapuntal texture in three parts (bb. 14b–18) then four (bb. 19ff.). The third, fully consolidated phase is longer than the other two put together ($18\frac{1}{2}$ bb. as against 4 and $9\frac{1}{2}$ bb.), and all three are closely interlinked, with one motive constantly generating another. Whereas the A minor and A major Preludes are threefold in form, the G major (BWV 550 no. 1) falls into two large paragraphs of roughly equal dimensions, the first exploratory in the customary preludial manner, the second firmly established. A gradual build-up takes place during the first paragraph from manuals only (increasing from one to three parts, then from one to four), via pedal solo, to manuals over pedal-point, culminating in full texture in preparation for the second paragraph (b. 31), which remains 'tutti' throughout. As far as thematic material is concerned, the two paragraphs remain indivisible and strictly motivic, exhibiting a process of motivic generation similar to that already observed in the other preludes.

In the Preludes in G and C, BWV 541 no. 1 and 545a no. 1, Bach brings elements of the concerto-allegro to bear upon the organ prelude. Like the preludes already considered, the G major Prelude begins with a *passaggio* and then proceeds to structured writing in a full texture; like them, it weaves figures from the *passaggio* into the full-textured phrases (for example, at bb. 13 and 15, and 24–6); and its abridged dominant counterstatement of the *passaggio* at the outset of the second paragraph (b. 29) recalls the A minor Prelude. For these reasons, it would be mistaken to consider the G major Prelude as belonging to a fundamentally different type from the

others.³ What chiefly distinguishes it is that fluid and firm, free and bound formal elements are united in a new way, by means of overarching formal procedures derived from the concerto. Within each of the four paragraphs, which are clearly articulated by cadences in keys V, iii, and I (bb. 28–9, 45–6, and 58–9), *passaggio* and full texture are intimately interwoven like the solo and tutti of a concerto-allegro. Bach seems to act here on the basis of a fruitful analogy between the bravura of an organist and that of a solo violinist—hence, perhaps, the string-like figuration of bb. 18ff. At the opening of each paragraph, the ‘tutti’ theme is prefaced by the ‘solo’ *passaggio* (either as a whole or in part), which strongly recalls Telemann’s procedure in the Concerto in G minor (TWV 51:g1) that Bach transcribed for keyboard (BWV 985). Once the ‘tutti’ (five-part texture) enters at b. 12, the first paragraph reproduces many of the characteristic features of a period from a standard concerto-allegro: triadic headmotive, or *Vordersatz*, underpinned by a I–V–I progression (bb. 12–15; a formulation, incidentally, strongly reminiscent of the theme of the F major Toccata, BWV 540 no. 1; Ex. 1);⁴ sequential continuation, or *Fortspinnung*, made up of string-like figures combined with ‘orchestral’ repeated-quaver chords (bb. 16–23); and cadential phrase, or *Epilog* (bb. 24–9).

Ex. 1



a) Prelude in G, BWV 541 no. 1, bb. 12–15 (pedal part only)



b) Toccata in F, BWV 540 no. 1, opening theme

The other paragraphs take a similar course, though in an expanded and varied form: the movement as a whole has been described⁵ as ‘a strophe-like succession of four versions of a ritornello-like period’. Each paragraph has a different tonal function: the first, to establish the tonic and modulate to the dominant; the second, to modulate farther afield, taking in the minor mode (vi and iii); the third, to modulate back to the tonic (iii–ii–I); and the fourth, to re-establish the tonic. The concluding paragraph embodies a large element of reprise: its first two bars (59–60), which allude to the I–V–I progression of the *Vordersatz*, lead to a varied and extended reprise of the *Fortspinnung* and *Epilog* from the first paragraph (bb. 61–79; cf. 16–29), which confers

³ As does George Stauffer, *The Organ Preludes of J. S. Bach* (Ann Arbor, 1980), pp. 42–55 (esp. 51–55).

⁴ Both works date from c. 1712–14, according to Zehnder, ‘Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung’, p. 337. The terms *Vordersatz*, *Fortspinnung*, and *Epilog* are drawn from Wilhelm Fischer, ‘Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte des Wiener klassischen Stils’, *Studien zur Musikwissenschaft*, 3 (1915), pp. 24–84.

⁵ By Werner Breig, ‘Bachs freie Orgelmusik unter dem Einfluß der italienischen Konzertform’, in R. Szeskus (ed.), *J. S. Bachs Traditionsraum*, Bach-Studien, 9 (Leipzig, 1986), pp. 29–43 (see 36).

upon it the character of a framing ritornello (albeit one subject to tonal adjustment, since having modulated from I to V, it now remains firmly anchored in the tonic).⁶ Furthermore, the codetta from the end of the second paragraph (bb. 43–6) returns at the end of the whole movement, transposed to the tonic, creating an effect of rhyming close. Overall, then, as often in Bach's and Vivaldi's concerto movements, an element of arch form (ABA¹) is superimposed on the period structure in order to produce a clear sense of rounding-off. As a whole, the piece represents a masterly fusion of genres and one of the subtlest concertante movements of the Weimar period.

With the C major Prelude, BWV 545a no. 1, the development we have observed away from free-fantasy style towards a more structured mode of discourse has reached a stage at which Bach dispenses with the *passaggio* introduction altogether and writes a prelude that is fully structured and thematic throughout. The only traditional preludial element that still remains is the pedal point. The piece thus anticipates the fully structured late organ preludes, not to mention *The Well-Tempered Clavier*. The overall structure is a concerto-like alternation of open and closed periods, as in the 'concerto-allegro' from the C major Toccata, BWV 564, though on an even smaller scale. The contrast between the tonal stasis of the closed periods—all three are built upon pedal-points—and the tonal dynamism of the open periods lends them a ritornello-like and episodic character respectively. And this is so despite the absence of thematic contrast: both open and closed periods are built upon the same theme (Ex. 2a), a brief but highly pregnant 'invention' such as Bach used as the thematic foundation of the F major Toccata, BWV 540 no. 1 (Ex. 1b), and of the organ chorale *Komm, heiliger Geist*, BWV 651a (Ex. 2b)—a type that would become quintessentially Bachian in later years (in the Inventions, *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, and so on). This theme is employed in the 'ritornellos' as the subject of a fugal exposition. Thus ritornello and fugal procedures are here united to create a new species of prelude that would prove highly fruitful in the Cöthen and Leipzig years.

Ex. 2



a) Prelude in C, BWV 545a, opening theme



b) *Komm, heiliger Geist*, BWV 651a, opening theme

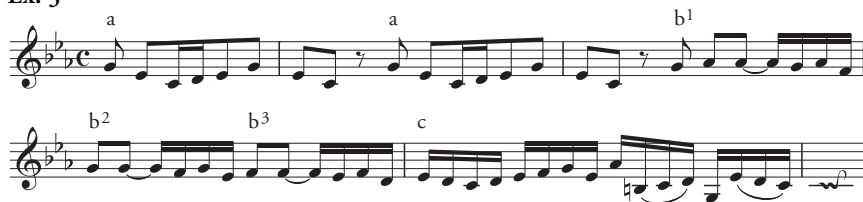
⁶ This procedure is discussed in relation to Torelli's Op. 6 by Michael Talbot in 'The Concerto Allegro in the Early Eighteenth Century', *Music & Letters*, 52 (1971), pp. 8–18 and 159–72 (see 162). Bach had already employed it in the 2nd movement of BWV 915.

The crucial preludial element that is lacking, of course, by comparison with Bach's other organ preludes of the Weimar period, is rhetoric. And this element Bach introduced very successfully when, at an unknown later date, he revised the piece (to form BWV 545 no. 1). The new outer frame, with its exchange of motives between manual and pedals, and its sustained harmony over a tonic pedal, may be heard as a concession to the traditional preludial style. Top c^3 and bottom C establish the outer bounds of the instrument at the very outset in a most arresting fashion; and the initial entry of the subject in this later version (b. 4, RH) completes a slow treble descent through an octave (c^3 to c^2). In all these ways, the revision moves forcefully in the direction of heightened rhetoric.

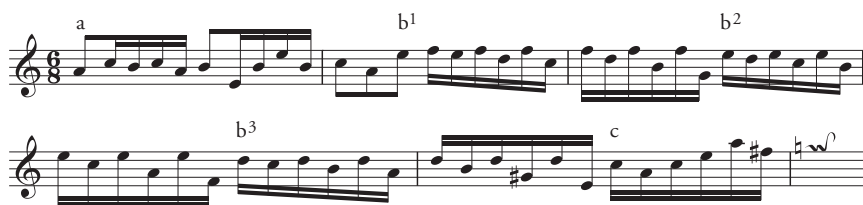
With one exception (BWV 543a no. 2), the fugues that accompany these preludes develop further the 'classic' four-phase structure that Bach had already established fully in his early Fugue in G minor, BWV 535a no. 2. One obvious advance is a considerable expansion in the range of keys explored in the modulatory phase of the fugue. For its subject entries the G minor Fugue had employed only one key other than tonic or dominant, namely the mediant (Bb). These later fugues, on the other hand, employ three or even four subsidiary keys (ii, IV, vi, and possibly iii in a major key; III, iv, and $bVII$ in a minor), of which all but one are in the opposite mode from the tonic—an invaluable source of diversification in the later stages of a fugue. Subsidiary keys tend to be deployed in major- or minor-mode pairs a 5th apart by analogy with the tonic and dominant of the standard *dux-comes* (subject-answer) pair; for example, $f\sharp-b$ (vi-ii) and D-A (IV-I) in the A major Fugue, BWV 536 no. 2. Or else they form longer chains of 5ths that exercise a useful function in relation to the tonal architecture of the fugue as a whole; for example, the sequence of entries in C-G-d in the A minor Fugue, BWV 543a no. 2—marked off from its surroundings by *manualiter* execution—which is finally extended by another 5th to produce the tonic return (b. 95b), coinciding with the re-entry of the pedals. A notable peculiarity of the key scheme in the C major Fugue, BWV 545a no. 2, which is shared by a number of other Weimar fugues, is its central rondo-like return to the tonic in the midst of the modulatory phase: a dominant-tonic pair of entries, G-C, is inserted between pairs in a-e (vi-iii) and F-d (IV-ii).

The impact of the Italian concerto is no less evident in some of these fugues than in their preludes. The very subject of the A minor Fugue, BWV 543a no. 2, traces the course of a typical concerto-ritornello—headmotive, sequential consequent, and tail-figure—and closely resembles the similarly ritornello-like subject from the C minor Toccata, BWV 911, in its harmonic, melodic, and sequential structure (cf. also the fugue subject from BWV 944; see Ex. 3).

Ex. 3



a) Toccata in C minor, BWV 911, fugue subject (bb. 33b-37)



b) Fugue in A minor, BWV 543 no. 2, subject



c) Fugue in A minor, BWV 944 no. 2, subject

A comparison has been drawn⁷ with the opening ritornello of Vivaldi's Concerto in A minor, Op. 3 No. 8 (transcribed by Bach as BWV 593; see above Part II Ch. 2, Ex. 2), and certainly the central *Fortspinnung* (spinning out) of that ritornello is similar to Bach's, with its measured descent by step from the sixth to the third degree, accompanied by a sequence of 7th chords. The entire modulatory paragraph of Bach's A minor Fugue (bb. 51b–95a) is set off from its surroundings by manuals-only performance, which achieves an effect of contrast analogous to that of the concertino in relation to the ripieno of a concerto movement. An essential novelty of the new Italian concerto style in the early eighteenth century, particularly as cultivated by Antonio Vivaldi, was the bright primary colours of tonics and dominants extended through long stretches of music. This characteristic seems to be reflected in some of the episodes of this fugue, which, having fulfilled their modulatory function in only a few bars, then purposefully dwell on the tonic or dominant and their primary chords.⁸ The force of the analogy is all the greater in view of the cross-string figuration, as it were, that not only clothes the central sequence of the subject but also recurs frequently in the episodes.⁹ For all the effectiveness of these concerto idioms, however, Bach has not forgotten the powerful rhetoric of his early fugues, or the means employed to achieve it. In the concluding paragraph (from b. 95b), the tonic and dominant keys acquire special emphasis from the device of mock subject entries in several octaves.¹⁰ And after one further subject entry (b. 131, tenor), the fugue concludes with a postlude in North-German style, complete with dominant pedal, pedal solo, and demisemiquaver cadenza with ostinato figures.

⁷ By Werner Breig, 'Freie Orgelwerke', in K. Küster (ed.), *Bach-Handbuch* (Kassel and Stuttgart, 1999), pp. 614–712 (see 660).

⁸ See bb. 35–43, 87b–95a, 101–3, and 125–30.

⁹ In bb. 75b–78a, 87b–95a, 101–3, and 119b–123a.

¹⁰ Bar 95b: bass, tenor; b. 113: alto, treble, tenor, with continuation in the alto.

The ‘fantastic’ style here forms a frame around the fugue, informing both prelude and postlude. In the Prelude and Fugue in G, BWV 541, on the other hand, the indebtedness of the prelude to concerto style is then carried over into the following fugue. Bach’s old native German organ style is still present, of course, but now in a subservient role. The subject, like that of the first chorus from *Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis*, BWV 21 (1713/14), appears to have roots in the finale of Vivaldi’s Concerto in D minor, Op. 3 No. 11, which Bach transcribed for organ as BWV 596 (Ex. 4).¹¹ And this apparent link with the concerto is confirmed in the long episode (bb. 38b–52a) that binds together the two central pairs of subject entries, those in G and e (I, vi) on the one hand and in D and a (V, ii) on the other.

Ex. 4



a) Vivaldi: Concerto in D minor, Op. 3 No. 11, finale (Allegro), opening bars

Ich hat - te viel Be - küm - mer - nis, ich hat - te viel Be -
 Ich hat - te viel Be - küm - mer - nis, ich
 - küm - mer - nis in mei - nem Her-[zen]
 hat - te viel Be - küm - mer - nis in mei-[nem]

b) Bach: *Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis*, BWV 21, 2nd movement, bb. 2b–4, soprano and tenor (continuo omitted)



c) Bach: Fugue in G, BWV 541 no. 2, subject

¹¹ See Dürr *Studien*, p. 186.

Like the concerto-episode of the A minor Fugue, it is differentiated from its surroundings by manual execution, producing the effect of a concertino episode between tutti. What is more, it is genuinely episodic in the fresh, unthematic nature of its material, and its big, bold sequences belong among the idioms of the concerto. These sequences issue in what sounds like an accompanied solo cadenza or *perfidia*, with its characteristic repeated figuration, which eventually settles into dominant preparation for the ensuing D major subject entry (the *perfidia* typically functions as a form of solo build-up towards a ritornello). Having eschewed free style in its prelude, the G major Prelude and Fugue avoids it in its conclusion too. Unlike the A minor work, it remains fully thematic to the very end, employing stretto and pedal-points to build up towards a magnificent peroration. During this concluding phase, the subject is first heard in stretto between bass and alto at the upper 9th, then between treble and alto at the lower 5th/4th. It is curious that the first stretto is the only occasion in this fugue when the possibilities of piling up pungent 2nd, 7th, or 9th dissonances—so richly exploited elsewhere in similar themes by Vivaldi (Op. 3 No. 11) and Bach (BWV 21 no. 2)—are realized. The second stretto, which necessitates an intervallic adjustment and remains unrelievedly consonant, sounds tame by comparison.

The subjects of the two G major Fugues (BWV 541 and 550) and of that in A (BWV 536; see Ex. 4c–6a) have in common the two-step sequence of their headmotive, which produces the effect of a miniature *Bar* form, $a-a^1-b$, a frequently recurring type among Bach's Weimar fugues (see Ex. 5 especially).¹²

Ex. 5



Fugue in G, BWV 550, subject

They differ widely, however, in the manner in which the subject is treated. In the G major Fugue BWV 541 no. 2, the main figure of the subject, with its characteristic repeated notes, is employed frequently in the episodes, usually in the form it takes at the second step of the sequence (bb. 2b–3).¹³ The subject of the A major Fugue, which has an obvious affinity with that of the Sinfonia from *Tritt auf die Glaubensbahn*, BWV 152 (1714), often noted by commentators¹⁴ (Ex. 6), is used effectively in mock

¹² Other examples are the fugue subjects of BWV 564 and 542.

¹³ cf. bb. 19b and 30b, 22b and 56a, and 63.

¹⁴ See Spitta I, p. 553 (Eng. trans., I, 561).

at the climax of the counter-exposition (b. 45), where the subject, low in the pedals, is set against the countersubject at the very top of the manual. The countersubject also proves fruitful in the episodes, where it is again combined with the ascent of the subject in contrary motion (b. 20) and also with a sequential four-quaver figure, with which it forms a recurrent episodic formulation.¹⁶ The detailed figure-work is based on this and three other four-quaver figures that enter one by one in the course of the fugue, either in episodes or as counterpoints to the subject entries, and then achieve the status of motives through recurrent use. The most significant of these figures is the fourth, a jubilant bell-like motive that becomes increasingly prominent after the second entry of the counter-exposition (b. 35), reaching the treble in b. 62, decorating the episode that leads down to the climactic bass-pedal entry (bb. 96–9),¹⁷ and accompanying that entry itself (note that the countersubject is here inverted, so that, in relation to the subject, it now produces the effect of close stretto at the lower 5th).

Bach had not yet arrived at a consistent form or style in the prelude and fugue for manuals only: that would come only at a later stage with *The Well-Tempered Clavier*. Consequently, the two A minor compositions for harpsichord, BWV 944 and 894, both of which were most likely composed at Weimar (according to their sources), represent quite different approaches to the bipartite structure with fugue. In the one case (BWV 944), a concertante fugue of nearly 200 bars is prefaced by a series of arpeggiando chords—an introduction so brief and insignificant that at an early stage it appears to have been either lost or abandoned (it is present in the earliest source, the Andreas Bach Book, but absent from many later manuscript copies).¹⁸ In the other case (BWV 894), a gigue-fugue, itself very substantial, is preceded by a massive concerto-allegro, with the result that the balance between prelude and fugue, normally weighted in favour of the latter, is reversed. Both works owe their distinctive character in large part to Bach's own personal reinterpretation of the style and form of the Italian concerto. As in the concerto transcriptions, the entire dazzling multiplicity of the concerto idiom is here placed in the hands of a single player. And on this occasion the instrument is specifically the harpsichord: assuming the scribes have correctly interpreted Bach's intentions, the Fantasia is intended 'pour le Clavecin' (Johann Christoph Bach) and the Prelude and Fugue 'pro Clavicimbalo' (Johann Bernhard Bach), perhaps the earliest instances of precise instrumental designation in Bach's works for manuals only.

The brief 'fantasia' introduction to BWV 944, probably no more than a written-down improvisation, may have been designed as an attempt to place the following concerto movement—for that is what the fugue amounts to—in the context of idiomatic harpsichord music. Perhaps it became redundant once the performance

¹⁶ See bb. 8, 49, 70, and 92.

¹⁷ At a later stage Bach filled in the 3rds of this figure in the episode, increasing the elaboration but disguising the motivic consistency.

¹⁸ See Uwe Wolf, *Krit. Bericht, NBA V/9.2* (Kassel and Leipzig, 2000), p. 271.

of concertos, or similar pieces, on solo harpsichord became a common occurrence at the Weimar court. The following massive fast movement is among the earliest and most successful of Bach's confections of fugue and ritornello form. The very subject itself (Ex. 3c) is concerto-like in its threefold division into headmotive, sequential continuation, and tail-figure, equivalent to the *Vordersatz*, *Fortspinnung*, and *Epilog* of the typical concerto-ritornello.¹⁹ Indeed, it reads like a triple-time variant of the similarly structured compound-duple subject of the A minor organ Fugue, BWV 543a no. 2 (Ex. 3b), which, in turn, is closely related to the fugue subject from the C minor Toccata, BWV 911 (Ex. 3a). In all three cases, the central sequence descends in three steps from the sixth to the third degree. The Fantasia subject alone runs in flowing semiquavers throughout, even in its headmotive. A precedent for this may be found in the third movement of the Torelli concerto transcribed by Bach (BWV 979), and it confers upon the movement as a whole the character of a brilliant *perpetuum mobile*.

Bach assimilates fugue to ritornello form principally by extending certain expositions and subject entries episodically to form large ritornello-like periods, each in a different key and each 'closed' by cadencing in that key: tonic (bb. 1–33), subdominant (72–81), mediant (93–109), and tonic (177–98). All but the last of these periods conclude with the same cadential phrase, or a variant thereof (bb. 27–33, 77–81, 102–9), reinforcing the sense of return. The overall form may be summarized as follows (A represents the fugal expositions or subject entries; B, C, and D, the intervening episodes):

Bar	1	33	59	72	81	93	109	122	143	157	177
Key	a	a-e	e-d	d	d-C	C	C-e	e-a	a-g	g-a	a
Theme	A	A ¹	B	A ²	C	A ³	D	A ⁴	B ¹	D ¹	A ⁵

The settled tonality of the 'ritornellos' (A and its variants) contrasts with the swift modulation of the recurring episodes that link them together (B etc.). The two main episodic formulations, B and D, are particularly rich and bold in harmonic terms. Both modulate upwards in a sequence of rising steps: the first, by chromatic movement of the inner part, with each chromatic step acting as a pivot (tonic in one key, leading-note in the next); the second, through a sequence of augmented 4ths (or diminished 5ths) in the bass, with the chromatically altered second note in each case becoming the leading-note of the new key. Sequences of this kind would have been unthinkable in Bach's early music, for they manifest a highly sophisticated sense of purposeful, functional, tonally directed harmony²⁰—one of the fruits of his preoccupation with the concerto, and a major achievement of the Weimar period.

¹⁹ See the article by W. Fischer (n. 4).

²⁰ Krüger diss., pp. 29ff., rightly identifies this as one of the fundamental differences between Bach's early and mature styles.

Two rhetorical devices are used to 'dramatize' junctures of special significance in terms of key or theme. One is the reiteration of the headmotive to the subject in two or three octaves prior to a complete entry, which strongly emphasizes the tonic subject entries in bars 33 and 136 (the first marks the beginning of the counter-exposition; the second, the tonic return after the modulatory middle section).²¹ The second form of rhetoric, equally potent, is a species of solo cadenza featuring *perfidia* in the form of a persistently repeated figure over a dominant pedal. As a form of dominant preparation, this device dramatizes the approach to the last two ritornellos (bb. 117–22 and 172–7). In the final and most extended passage of this kind (bb. 182–91), the falling line of the previous instances is inverted to form a rise through three octaves, and the dominant pedal is no longer held but forms the bass of punctuating chords in a purely homophonic texture. This passage acts as a 'trope' within a final modified subject entry, begun at bar 177 but continued only 14 bars later, at bar 192. Altogether, subject entry, trope, and cadence (bb. 177–98) function as the concluding tonic ritornello, the diversion being a concertante device for the dramatic and forceful re-establishment of the tonic via its dominant.

Both this A minor Fantasia and the Prelude and Fugue in the same key (BWV 894) are highly effective showpieces for solo harpsichord. In the one case, the instrument is entrusted with what is, in effect, an original (rather than transcribed) concerto movement with brief arpeggiando introduction; in the other, it acts as the vehicle for an entire original concerto, albeit without the central slow movement. It may not be entirely fortuitous, then, that the chief scribe of the Weimar concerto transcriptions, Johann Bernhard Bach, was also responsible for one of the principal early sources of this work. The titles of the two movements, 'Praeludium' and 'Fuga', should not be overlooked, however. As in the case of the toccata genre (BWV 916, 564, etc.), Bach here takes an established native type and greatly amplifies and enriches it by acting upon analogies that can be drawn with the form and style of the Italian concerto. In this case, the analogy is taken to the extent of far-reaching identification: the conflation of prelude with concerto-allegro, and of fugue with concerto-finale, is so comprehensive that an adaptation from keyboard prelude and fugue to instrumental concerto was not only possible but actually carried out: with a slow movement inserted (BWV 527 no. 2), the work was adapted at an unknown date to form the Concerto in A minor, BWV 1044, for flute, violin, harpsichord, strings, and continuo.²²

The Prelude is among the most elaborate and mature of Bach's concerto-allegros from the period under consideration, and its structure, shown schematically below

²¹ Compare this with the similar treatment of the headmotive in the A minor Fugue, BWV 543a no. 2, bb. 95 and 113.

²² BWV 1044, formerly considered a late work, has recently been allocated to the late Weimar or early Cöthen years (1715–18) by Siegbert Rampe and Dominik Sackmann, *Bachs Orchestermusik: Entstehung, Klangwelt, Interpretation* (Kassel, 2000), pp. 241–2.

(‘dev.’ = development of ritornello material), represents the closest approach of all to fully-fledged ritornello form in the Vivaldian sense.

Bar	1	18	27	40	55	65	86
Key	a-e-a	a-C	C-e	e-d	a-e-G	G-a	a
Theme	<i>a-a-b-c-d</i>	dev.	<i>a-c-d</i>	dev.	<i>a-a-a</i>	dev.	<i>a-b-c-d</i>
Function	rit.	epis.	rit.	epis.	rit.	epis.	rit.

The movement begins with a closed period of 17 bars, made up of five phrases, *a-a-b-c-d*, of which the second is a dominant counterstatement of the first. This structure, already complex in itself, constitutes the ritornello. Its opening phrase *a* (bb. 1-4) incorporates within itself the standard elements of the concerto ritornello: head-motive or motto, sequential continuation (bb. 2-3), and tail-figure (b. 4). But this phrase merely forms a subdivision within a larger, composite entity of similar structure: motto theme *a*, repeated (bb. 1-4, 5-8); sequential consequent, *b + c*; and cadential phrase *d*. Thus Bach achieves large form by the superimposition of major structures upon minor ones. Compound structuring of this kind will become characteristic of his large-scale concerto-related movements in the Leipzig years. In this instance, the ritornello returns only three times, and its second statement is an open period that modulates from mediant to dominant. The manner in which it is abridged—by comprising only three of the initial five phrases: *a*, *c*, and *d*—is characteristic of Bach’s ritornello procedure as inherited from the Italian concertists. The concluding tonic ritornello is fuller (*a-b-c-d*) lacking only the counterstatement of the opening phrase. Bach shows characteristic freedom in omitting the expected subdominant ritornello after the cadence in that key at the end of the fourth paragraph (b. 53). Instead, the headmotive *a* returns briefly in three different keys, a, e, and G, in a passage that vividly recalls the motto-theme procedure of Torelli and Albinoni. Unexpectedly, it inaugurates a further excursion away from the tonic in order to allow further episodic development. The thwarting of expectation in this manner is a major weapon in Bach’s concerto-style armoury.

The distinction between ritornellos and episodes in this movement is subtler than a mere imitation of solo-tutti contrasts would yield. The opening phrases of the piece recur in the ritornellos with relatively minor alteration, whereas the episodes, though based on the same material, subject it to a considerable degree of variation or development. Furthermore, peculiar to the ritornellos are the massive 7th chords that, whether in the form of repeated quavers (*b*) or dotted rhythms (*c*), lend the music an imperious splendour suggestive of tutti scoring. By contrast, the episodic second and fourth paragraphs both open with a reduction to a single part at low pitch for the entry of the motto theme, then build up progressively to three parts in fugal fashion. The fifth period, which functions as a ritornello, is also introduced by a single

part, however, which now takes the form of a brief ‘solo’ cadenza. Three such cadenzas link the motto-theme quotations in different keys (a, e, and G) mentioned above; and a more extended solo cadenza in the form of *perfidia* (see above, Part II Ch. 3, p. 205) builds up to the concluding tonic ritornello.

As in the Toccatas BWV 916 and 564, the ‘concerto finale’ takes the form of a gigue-fugue. The swiftly flowing subject is structured like a miniature ritornello:²³ $a, b^1 + b^2 + b^3, c$, where a is the headmotive, built on chords I and V, b the central threefold sequence, with its melodic descent 6–5–4–3, and c the tail-figure (Ex. 7; cf. the similarly structured themes shown in Ex. 3).

Ex. 7



Fugue in A minor, BWV 894 no. 2, subject

Expositions of this subject are built into large paragraphs, carefully organized in terms of key:

Paragraph:	1	2	3	4	5	coda
Bars:	1–31	31–54	54–90	90–117	118–42	143–53
Keys:	a–e–a	a–d–a	a–e–b–e–a–C	C–a–d–g–d–F	F–d–a	a

Thus a number of excursions are made from the tonic to related keys and back, with sharp and flat keys explored in alternation. Paragraph 3 goes further in the dominant (sharp) direction of paragraph 1, and paragraph 4 further in the subdominant (flat) direction of paragraph 2—in this case, the later paragraph is, for the most part, a transposed and varied reprise of the earlier one. This kind of long-range tonal thinking owes a good deal to Bach’s experience of the Italian concerto, which by this time must have been considerable. In the present case, it is not allied to ritornello form, but the coordinated approach to key and theme characteristic of ritornello form is evident in Bach’s treatment of the headmotive of the fugue subject. In paragraphs 1, 3, and 4, subject entries in the dominant, tonic, and subdominant respectively (bb. 24b, 78, and 97) are highlighted by the episodic play on the headmotive that introduces them. In each case, this episodic play culminates in a fine stroke of rhetoric: imitation of the headmotive in three octaves, the third entry continuing

²³ See the fugue subjects of BWV 543, 911, 944, and 948 for comparison (Exx. 3 and 9a).

with the full subject, producing a simultaneous emphasis on theme and key that we have already encountered in other Bach fugues of the period (notably BWV 944 and 543a no. 2). Paragraph 5 and the coda contain no more full subject entries, but similar rhetorical treatment of the headmotive is heard in both: in the subdominant and its relative major (bb. 118–20) and finally in the tonic (bb. 145–6, 149–50).

Fugue

<i>Title</i>	<i>Earliest source/s</i>	<i>Scribe, date</i>
Fuga in D, BWV 532a no. 2	[lost MS] ²⁴	—
Fuga in c, BWV 574b ²⁵	Berlin, P 805 ABB 50	J. G. Walther, pre-1710? J. C. Bach, c. 1708–13
Alla breve in D, BWV 589	Berlin, P 1106	J. G. Meng, 1740s?
Fuga in d, BWV 948	Berlin, N.Mus.ms.10580	Anon., c. 1726/7
Fuga in g, BWV 578	ABB 28	J. C. Bach, c. 1708–13
Fuga in b, BWV 951	Berlin, P 801	J. G. Walther, c. 1714–17
Fuga in g, BWV 542 no. 2	Berlin, P 803	J. T. Krebs, c. 1714
Fuga in g, BWV 1026	Berlin, P 801	J. G. Walther, c. 1714–17

All the fugues of this heterogeneous group seem to have originated as independent compositions—even those that are nowadays invariably preceded by a prelude or fantasia (BWV 532 and 542). In five cases (BWV 574b, 578, 951, 542 no. 2, and 1026) an origin during the Weimar period (1708–17) is suggested by the probable date of the earliest sources, though in the case of the Legrenzi Fugue (BWV 574b) an earlier origin cannot be excluded.²⁶ In the other three cases (BWV 532a no. 2, 589, and 948), the sources provide little or no assistance over dating,²⁷ but, as we shall see, close connections can be established with other fugal works of this period. Most of the fugues develop the three- or four-phase structure that became standard for Bach at this time, expanding the modulatory phase to include large stretches in subsidiary keys. The only exceptions, apart from the Fugue on a Theme by Albinoni, BWV 951 (a revision of an early work), are the Legrenzi Fugue and the *Allabreve*, BWV 589, whose formal structures are dictated by the strict fugal procedures employed (double fugue and stretto fugue respectively).

²⁴ This MS formed the source of the first edition by Grienperkerl & Roitzsch, *J. S. Bachs Compositionen für die Orgel*, iv (1846).

²⁵ BWV 574b represents the early version; BWV 574, a later revision. BWV 574a is probably spurious: James A. Brokaw assembles formidable evidence against its authenticity in 'The Perfectability of J. S. Bach, or did Bach compose the Fugue on a Theme by Legrenzi, BWV 574a', in R. Stinson (ed.), *Bach Perspectives I* (Lincoln, 1995), pp. 163–80.

²⁶ Zehnder, 'Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung', pp. 330–1, places it within a group of works that might date from c. 1707–8.

²⁷ Zehnder, 'Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung', pp. 329 and 332–3, dates BWV 532a c. 1707/8 and BWV 948 c. 1709–11.

In all probability, the Fugue in D, BWV 532a no. 2, represents the original version of a piece that began life independently and only later, in a revised form, was coupled with the Praeludium in D, BWV 532 no. 1, to form a prelude and fugue.²⁸ Internal, stylistic factors point to a relatively early date. The piece is structured according to the four-phase scheme characteristic of Bach's keyboard fugues from around 1707 (BWV 535a) to the end of the Weimar period (1717). The modulatory third phase, however, is relatively circumscribed, containing only two entries in secondary keys: a *dux-comes* (subject-answer) pair a 5th apart and in the opposite mode, b–f $\sharp$ (vi–iii). A contrasting pair of entries in the major mode, A–D (V–I), follows in the concluding fourth phase of the fugue. When the composition was revised at some unknown later date,²⁹ both pairs were expanded by an additional entry to form a circle-of-5ths rise through minor keys (b–f $\sharp$ –c $\sharp$) countered by a corresponding fall through majors (E–A–D). The fugue subject itself also seems to point to a comparatively early origin for this piece. In design it resembles the threefold 'ritornello' type, but the material is closer to North-German organ style than to Italian instrumental music (Ex. 8a). An ostinato-like figural reiteration such as we encounter in the headmotive is common in the 'motoric' themes of various North Germans (Weckmann, Buxtehude, Reincken, Heidorn, and so on); and the answering sequence has a clear precedent—perhaps close enough to imply direct borrowing—in Buxtehude's Canzonetta in G, BuxWV 172 (Ex. 8b).³⁰ The consciously trivial headmotive is answered by an even more absurd little trill figure in the countersubject (Ex. 8c); and this dialogue, together with the long Buxtehudian sequence, forms the material of a highly engaging comedy.

Ex. 8



a) Bach: Fugue in D, BWV 532a no. 2, subject

²⁸ Breig concludes that BWV 532a no. 2 constitutes an early version of the fugue; see his 'Formprobleme in Bachs frühen Orgelfugen', *BJ* 1992, pp. 7–21 (esp. 19–21); Eng. trans. as 'Form Problems in Bach's Early Organ Fugues' in *A Bach Tribute: Essays in Honor of William H. Scheide*, ed. P. Brainard and R. Robinson (Kassel, 1993), pp. 45–56 (esp. 55–6).

²⁹ Breig, 'Freie Orgelwerke', p. 658, tentatively dates the revised version in the early Leipzig period.

³⁰ Kirsten Beißwenger, *J. S. Bachs Notenbibliothek* (Kassel, 1992), pp. 50–2, allows that the Buxtehude piece might have served as a model but denies the oft-mentioned connection with Pachelbel's Fugue in D.



b) Buxtehude: Canzonetta in G, BuxWV 172, subject



c) Bach: Fugue in D, BWV 532a no. 2, headmotive of countersubject (b. 15)

In each of the two subject entries within the minor-mode third phase of the fugue, the central sequence is broken off and continued in another part, creating an effect of playful exchange within the texture (bb. 53–73). The second of these two entries takes the joke further, interrupting the exchange with an interlude on the ridiculous trill-like counter-subject figure. Towards the end of the fugue (bb. 81–6), the ostinato headmotive, in an antiphonal dialogue between manuals and pedal, acts as dominant preparation for the final tonic entry of the subject. Even the very last bars are jocular, as subject and countersubject figures vie with each other as to which is to have the last word.

The Fugue on a Theme of Legrenzi, BWV 574b, is in all probability the earliest of a trio of pieces in C minor that apply two exhaustive treatments to a single subject, first on its own and then combined with a regular countersubject (the others being the Toccata BWV 911 and the Passacaglia). There is a further audible link with the fugue from the C minor Toccata: both open with a triadic headmotive that is immediately reiterated in ostinato fashion. Whereas the toccata subject has obvious affinities with concerto style, however, that of the Legrenzi Fugue is, as its parenthood might suggest, closely linked with the Italian sonata: its continuation, from the second entry onwards, forms a decorated suspension chain similar to that which Bach employed as a double subject in the second movement of the E minor Toccata, BWV 914. Simply remove the decoration, and we are left with a formula that might occur in any Italian or Italianate trio sonata (see above, Part I Ch. 2, Ex. 9). The larger structural context, however, is quite unrelated to the trio sonata: the subject, together with a secondary theme, forms the basis of a double fugue in which each theme is first worked independently in a full double exposition before the two are combined in a further exposition (the overall form is thus A, B, A + B). In the double fugues of Bach's predecessors, treatment of the second subject alone tended to be confined to a single statement (BuxWV 138, 150, and 169), a pair of entries (Kerll, Canzona No. 4), or a brief exposition (Pachelbel, Ricercar in f#). However, a precedent for the exhaustive treatment of the second subject prior to its combination with the first may be found in Peter Heidorn's Fugue in G minor, which might even have served as a model for Bach, since it was copied by his brother Johann

Christoph into the Möller Manuscript (MM 18).³¹ It has also been suggested³² that Bach might have been stimulated to make use of a theme of Legrenzi's by the example of Heidorn's fugues on themes by Kerll and Reincken. As far as the double-fugue structure is concerned, Bach might have found further models in Luigi Battiferri's *Ricercari a quattro, a cinque e a sei*, Op. 3 (Bologna, 1669), which contains three double fugues in three sections (Ricercars 4–6) along the same lines as the Legrenzi fugue.³³ This piece remains the only double fugue of its type among Bach's earlier works, but in later years he would return to its form in *The Well-Tempered Clavier* and elsewhere.³⁴ Like the C minor Toccata, the Legrenzi Fugue ends with a rhapsodic postlude in North-German style. The freedoms of the 'fantastic' style here form the sharpest possible contrast with the strictness of the preceding double fugue, structured 'thinking' music of the most uncompromising kind. Indeed, after the unremitting concentration of the 104-bar fugue, the brilliance of the postlude might well be felt as a necessary form of release.

The *Allabreve*, BWV 589, represents a different type of double fugue—common among Bach's early works³⁵ but disused thereafter—in which subject and counter-subject are combined from the outset: together they form a double subject and constitute the primary 'invention'. After the initial exposition, stretto takes over as the chief determining principle of the contrapuntal structure, but the countersubject continues to be used creatively: as a continuation of the subject (bb. 101, 103, and 138, a formulation already anticipated at the second entry in b. 9); combined with the subject in double counterpoint at the 13th (b. 108); in episodic sequence, leading to a complete entry without subject (bb. 119–27); and in a new position against the subject (bb. 135 and 154). The subject itself, as in other alla breve fugues from the Weimar period (BWV 538 no. 2 and 545a no. 2), is a neutral *soggetto*, a single phrase in a clear arch shape. In seventeenth-century Germany and Italy, the rather antiquated style associated with alla breve metre was often employed together with strict contrapuntal writing;³⁶ and it is no mere coincidence that the fugue from the D minor Toccata, BWV 538, and the *Allabreve* are both strict fugues with certain structural features in common. Both begin by combining their subject with a regular countersubject, and in both cases it is only later that stretto becomes the main structural element. The stretto treatment in the *Allabreve*, however, is far more complex and far-reaching—so much so that the piece may legitimately be described as a 'stretto fugue'. Only the opening exposition (39 bb. out of 197) is free of stretto, and thereafter it dominates the entire structure, as the following summary of its use illustrates:

³¹ See Hill diss., p. 21. ³² In Hill diss., p. 229.

³³ See W. Breig, 'Das "Thema Legrenzianum elaboratum per Joan. Seb. Bach" und die Frühgeschichte der Doppelfuge', *BJ* 2001, pp. 141–50 (esp. 144–5).

³⁴ For example, in BWV 540 no. 2, 887 no. 2, and 1080 no. 10.

³⁵ Such as BWV 551 no. 4, 579, 582 no. 2, 588 no. 2, 912 no. 3, 913 no. 4, 914 no. 2, and 917.

³⁶ See Friedrich Wilhelm Riedel, *Quellenkundliche Beiträge zur Geschichte der Musik für Tasteninstrumente in der zweiten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Kassel, 1960; 2nd edn Munich and Salzburg, 1990), esp. pp. 25–6 and 82.

	<i>Bar</i>	<i>Stretto</i>	<i>Voice</i>	<i>Distance</i>	<i>Interval</i>
1	40	1a	A/B	3 bb.	lower 8ve
	43	2a	B/T	2 bb.	upper 4th
	55	3a	A/S	1 b.	upper 5th
2	97	2b	T/B	2 bb.	lower 5th
	134	2a	B/S	2 bb.	upper 4th
3	150	1b	T/B	3 bb.	lower 10th
	174	3b	T/B	1 b.	lower 4th
	185	2a	T/S	2 bb.	upper 4th

The stretto portion of the fugue thus falls into three phases, the first of which comprises three different strettos at progressively shorter distances (3, 2, and 1 bb.) and all at different intervals. In the last phase, all three strettos are recapitulated in a different order, inverted and varied in interval. The middle phase comprises direct and inverted forms of one and the same stretto. As an exhaustive study in all the possibilities of the contrapuntal combination of a theme with itself at various intervals and distances—all invertible—this fugue is rivalled only by the episodes of the fugue from the D minor Toccata. As in that fugue, though to a lesser extent, the episodes of the *Allabreve* tend to reflect the contrapuntal rigour of the stretto expositions. Canon is a close relative of stretto, and the first stretto of the middle phase (b. 97) is both preceded and followed by episodes in canonic imitation, the first in two parts (b. 90; half-bar, lower 5th) and the second in three (b. 112; 2 bb., upper 4th/lower 5th). As in the D minor Toccata again, a new chromatic theme enters midway, acting as a foil to the pure diatonicism that has hitherto prevailed. Foreshadowed in an early episode (treble, bb. 48–53), it begins to make its mark as a theme only in a later episode (b. 144), where it is heard in threefold treble sequence. It then decorates the accompaniment to two successive strettos (bb. 150 and 174) before leading, from the bass upwards, an elaborately chromatic harmonization of the treble subject entry that moves straight into the final cadence (b. 180). Finally, it is alluded to briefly in an inner part over the concluding tonic pedal.

Although the Fugue in D minor, BWV 948, cannot be dated on the basis of its sources, it has so many internal features in common with the Fugue in G minor, BWV 578, that it was in all probability written around the same time—most likely in the early-to-mid Weimar years.³⁷ Above all, the two fugues share the compact three-phase structure that Bach employed in a number of fugues of that period (other examples, already noted, are the Passacaglia, BWV 582, and the Fugue in A minor, BWV 543 no. 2): single exposition; central modulatory phase including a pair of entries (a 5th apart or on the same temporary tonic) in the opposite mode; and closing section including a subdominant–tonic pair of entries.³⁸ The subject of the D minor Fugue (Ex. 9a) belongs to the ‘ritornello’ type, with clearly defined headmotive, *Fortspinnung*

³⁷ Zehnder, ‘Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung’, pp. 332–5, dates BWV 948 c. 1709–11 and BWV 578 c. 1711–13.

³⁸ As far as its key structure is concerned, BWV 911 is also related to this group of fugues.

(in three sequential steps, falling from 6th to 3rd degree), and tail-figure—a type already noted in other fugues of the period (BWV 911, 543a no. 2, 944, and 894 no. 2). The G minor subject (Ex. 9b) is similarly articulated, except that its central component falls into two steps only, of which the second is a varied repeat of the first. As in Bach's early G minor Fugue, BWV 535a no. 2, the rhythmic movement progressively increases from bar to bar (crotchets—quavers—quaver plus two semiquavers—all semiquavers).

Ex. 9



a) Fugue in D minor, BWV 948, subject



b) Fugue in G minor, BWV 578, subject

Bach's treatment of both D minor and G minor subjects is closely related to permutation technique (see Part I Ch. 3, p. 66): each entry is combined in a different way with two regular countersubjects to form a permutation of a basic triple-counterpoint combination.³⁹ The rhythmic subject of the G minor Fugue is set against running semiquavers and a trilled long note—effectively a trio texture comprising three distinct modes of rhythmic movement in a manner that would become highly typical of mature Bachian counterpoint. Much the same applies to the D minor Fugue: semiquavers (subject) are combined with quavers (first countersubject), and the triple counterpoint is completed either by broken figures (quaver rest—quaver—crotchet) or by long-note suspensions. At the climax of the piece in bars 57–8, all four counterpoints are combined, as in the finale of the F# minor Toccata, BWV 910. No less mature are those episodes in both fugues in which a motive drawn from the subject or countersubject is spun out sequentially against a decorated suspension chain in the other parts.⁴⁰ Such ripe motivic sequences based on suspension chains are

³⁹ Comparable permutation structures may be found in BWV 582 no. 2 and 910 no. 4.

⁴⁰ BWV 948, bb. 36b–38; BWV 578, bb. 22–3 and 45b–48a.

found in the episodes of all the three-phase fugues.⁴¹ In both D minor and G minor fugues, the headmotive itself proves to be a valuable source of rhetoric in the run-up to certain full subject entries. The conclusion of the exposition from the G minor Fugue (bb. 25–30) is enhanced by the device of mock entry: the headmotive enters in the tenor, accompanied by the decorated head of the countersubject, but is then unexpectedly transferred to the treble, subtly disguised at first by borrowing the countersubject's decoration, but then proving to be a complete subject entry. A different form of dramatic deception in the D minor Fugue involves a sophisticated handling of key. The structure of the exposition leads one to expect a dominant answer in bar 17, and this is indeed begun, but expectations are foiled by its breaking off after the headmotive, which is stated thrice in falling sequence, in the keys a–g–F, the last being that of the complete entry.⁴² Different means are employed in the two fugues to bring the music to its final climax. In the G minor Fugue, Bach uses the powerful cumulative effect of piling up subject entries in several octaves: the decorated head of the subject is heard in three octaves (bb. 58–61), combined with a simple tonic–dominant counterpoint, continuing in rising sequence so that the whole passage rises from low G to top *bb*² (directly comparable are bb. 113–15 of the A minor Fugue, BWV 543a no. 2). A powerful sequence then leads directly to the concluding subject entry on the pedals, which in turn leads into the final cadence. Even at the close, then, this fugue is quite devoid of any free-fantasy element, making it a harbinger of things to come. The D minor Fugue, on the other hand, still partly inhabits the old world in which fugue and fantasy are intermingled. Thus a rhetorical pause and a cadenza interrupt the fugal discourse, as in the C minor Toccata and the finale of the F# minor Toccata, BWV 911 and 910. In the present case, these fantasy elements act as a bridge between the middle and concluding sections. The latter is marked by an increase in texture from three to four parts, but after only about 10 bars it breaks off in favour of another cadenza (much more extensive than the first), which ascends through the entire circle of 5ths in a series of twelve chromatic steps. A clear parallel may be drawn here with the chromatic descent through twelve steps in the cadenza-like middle section of the revised Prelude in G minor, BWV 535 no. 1, which might have been composed within the same period.⁴³ The time has already arrived when in his fantasy Bach is intent on exploring the entire harmonic space of the tonal system.⁴⁴

Nothing reveals more clearly the essential difference between Bach's early (pre-Weimar) and mature Weimar styles than a comparison between the two versions of the Fugue in B minor on a theme by Albinoni, BWV 951a and 951 respectively.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Clear examples may be found in BWV 543a no. 2 and 582 no. 2.

⁴² cf. also bb. 31–2 and 43–5.

⁴³ The link has already been observed by Zehnder, 'Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung', pp. 322–3.

⁴⁴ This calls to mind Forkel's remark that 'When he played from his fancy, all the 24 keys were in his power: he did with them what he pleased' (see *NBR*, p. 436).

⁴⁵ This is amply illustrated in Krüger diss., *passim*, to which some of the following remarks on motivic treatment and modulation are indebted.

J. G. Walther's copy of the revised version (according to which, incidentally, the piece should be played on 'clavicembalo', or harpsichord) probably dates from 1714–17,⁴⁶ which cannot be very much later than the revision itself, judging by the maturity of the music. Revision takes the form of expansion (from 88 to 112 bars), further elaboration, improvement of detail, and changes that reflect Bach's new stylistic perceptions. Much of the repetitiveness and non-contrapuntal writing of BWV 951a is removed. Structurally, the new version remains fairly close to the old until bar 68, but thereafter it largely pursues its own path: from this point the number of bars is doubled (from 23 to 46), as is the number of subject entries (from three to six), and two new keys are introduced for two of those entries (iv and VI). Only at the end do the two versions converge once more: the main substance of the original coda—the inverted chromatic line from the subject and its climactic reiteration in three octaves—is retained. But the conclusion as a whole is doubled in length (now starting at b. 97b) and greatly strengthened by incorporating the chromatic descent in augmentation (bb. 99–101), two dominant pedals, a final tonic entry of the subject in the bass (bb. 106b–108a), and a direct mirror-imaging of the falling and rising forms of the chromatic line (bb. 107–8, bass). In the earlier stages of the fugue, this chromatic motive is subjected to more intense harmonic treatment than in the older version, whether in subject entries or in episodes (see, for example, bb. 8b and 79b–81).

In the interests of a continuous flow, Bach's ever-fruitful principle of the incessant, unbroken motion of small note-values (in this case semiquavers) is here fully established. At one point (b. 71) the treble line even breaks into demisemiquaver divisions, recalling the C minor Toccata, BWV 911—a profusion of elaboration that inevitably sets a certain limit on the tempo. The semiquaver flow that otherwise prevails is intimately connected with the motivic structure of the piece. The 'motivicity' that Bach was to develop in the *Orgelbüchlein* bears fruit here in the logical consistency of the texture. The tightly motivic nature of the contrapuntal parts lends them greater significance than those of the early version, and Bach's general reliance on just a few distinctive motives imparts greater individuality to the piece as a whole. Motives often possess a bridging function, concealing the joins at cadences, between episodes and subject entries, and at the major articulation points in the structure. Consider, for example, Bach's use of the four-note descending figure from the original countersubject (b. 3), partly extended to eight notes, in the episode–entry–episode–entry sequence at bars 48–54.

No less evident are gains in the handling of key and modulation. In place of the abrupt key changes of the early version, modulation is now carefully prepared in a series of sequential steps, each of which represents a specific stage in a purposeful, goal-directed process of harmonic movement (see, for example, bb. 41–6 or 50–4). In addition, more harmonic light and shade is apparent than before: the episodes at bars

⁴⁶ According to Kirsten Beißwenger, 'Zur Chronologie der Notenhandschriften Johann Gottfried Walthers', in Johann-Sebastian-Bach-Institut, Göttingen (eds.), *Acht kleine Präludien und Studien über Bach* (Göttingen, 1988), pp. 11–39 (esp. 27).

34–8, 43–6, and 69–72 are largely triadic and in the major mode, contrasting with their surroundings in the manner of concerto episodes. Indeed, this piece belongs stylistically alongside the concertante manual fugues of the mid-Weimar years (BWV 944, 894 no. 2, and the Reincken fugues BWV 954, 965 no. 2, and 966 no. 2). Judging by the large number of surviving manuscript copies, BWV 951 was already recognized in the eighteenth century as an important achievement.

The G minor Fugues for organ, BWV 542 no. 2, and for violin and continuo, BWV 1026, may be placed alongside the fugal second movement of the D minor Toccata, BWV 538, among those late Weimar fugues of the four-phase type that explore the full range of subsidiary keys in their modulatory phase (III, iv, VI, and $\flat$ VII/vii). Both fugues also exhibit full maturity in their contrapuntal structuring and in their effortless appropriation of concerto elements. Like many of the Weimar fugues, the G minor organ Fugue adds two regular countersubjects—a suspension chain in long notes and a rhythmic pattern in sequence—to its Dutch-song subject⁴⁷ to form a triple-counterpoint combination that acts as the chief form of contrapuntal structuring throughout, occurring in all six possible permutations.⁴⁸ The element of reprise—not native to fugue, but borrowed from the concerto—plays a vital role in the structure, in close alliance with key relationships. Thus the last subject entry of the counter-exposition and its ensuing episode, which begin the modulatory process (g-B $\flat$; bb. 29b–36), are recapitulated in the tonic in the concluding fourth phase (bb. 103b–110a), as are the dominant-key entries in double counterpoint from the third phase, together with their intervening episode (bb. 44–53 = 94–103). Both this passage and its tonic reprise in phase 4 are in two-part texture for manuals only, which lends them the contrasting character of a concerto episode. The handling of key relationships exhibits much the same degree of sophistication and purposefulness that we have already observed in the A minor Fugue, BWV 894 no. 2. The first half of the modulatory third phase is oriented around the dominant (subject entries in B $\flat$, d, d, and F), while the second half, after an intermediate return to the tonic (itself a recurring feature of the late Weimar fugues),⁴⁹ centres on the subdominant (entries in g, c, and E $\flat$). Furthermore, both the excursion away from the tonic at the beginning of the modulatory phase and the return to the tonic at its end are carried out by a process of modulation in rising 3rds: g–B $\flat$ –d–F and c–E $\flat$ –g. After the dominant-inclined first half of phase 3, a recurring episodic formulation injects a vital new thematic element into the fugue (see bb. 57b, 68, 82b, and 89b). Tonally, it has the function of modulating up or down through the circle of 5ths. In terms of fugal architecture, the rhetoric of ostinato (repetition of the chief semiquaver motive from the subject) is here united with that of reiteration in several octaves (the new quaver figure) to contribute to the powerful cumulative effect that we experience in the second half of the fugue.

⁴⁷ A simpler version had been published in an Amsterdam songbook in 1700 (see BD I, p. 219).

⁴⁸ One of the six is heard at bb. 10, 15, 29, and 55; the others (once each) at bb. 22, 25, 37, 72, and 103.

⁴⁹ Compare, for instance, BWV 545a no. 2, 589, 894 no. 2, and 916 no. 3.

Ex. 10

Fugue in G minor for violin and continuo, BWV 1026, opening bars

It is a sign of things to come that the mature Weimar fugues include Bach's earliest surviving piece for chamber ensemble, the Fugue in G minor, BWV 1026, for violin and continuo.⁵⁰ Not surprisingly, in view of its scoring, the piece has roots in the Italian sonata idiom: the subject-countersubject combination with which it opens is essentially an elaborated suspension chain, as in the E minor Toccata, BWV 914 (second movement) or the Legrenzi Fugue (Ex. 10; cf. Part I Ch. 2, Ex. 9). The violin carries the leading part, the decorated suspension chain, while the continuo provides a supporting bass.

Paradoxically, however, the chief rhythmic and melodic interest lies in this decorated bass part, the countersubject. What is more, the subject itself fails to maintain its integrity after the double exposition: thereafter it merely acts as a harmonic scaffold on which to hang variation and figuration. The countersubject, however, despite its melodic and rhythmic interest, is heard sparingly. The explanation for this relative neglect of a promising theme is presumably that the listener's interest is to be focused throughout on virtuoso figuration and on variations built upon the basic harmonic progressions of the subject, after the characteristic manner of contemporary variation sets. This would explain the absence of the subject at bars 30, 45, 71, and 175. From this point of view, the piece might be described as a set of fugal variations. Its most striking aspect, however, is the virtuoso character of the solo violin part, whose multiple stops and pseudo-polyphonic writing represent a late offshoot of the seventeenth-century South-German violin tradition of J. J. Walther, Schmeltzer, Biber, and others, in turn anticipating Bach's own solo violin Sonatas and Partitas of the Cöthen period (1720). The most concerto-like features of the piece are the two substantial solo cadenzas: the first, unaccompanied, built on a repeated figure, or *perfidia* (see Part II Ch. 3, p. 205),⁵¹ and settling into dominant preparation for the return of the tonic key

⁵⁰ Zehnder, 'Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung', p. 338, dates it c. 1712–14.

⁵¹ Compare the *perfidia*-like passages already noted in BWV 541 no. 2 and 944.

at bar 131; the second, accompanied by a dominant pedal and somewhat freer in figuration, but again crystallizing into *perfidia* in anticipation of the last subject entry of all—a triple-stop variant with countersubject in the bass.

Fantasia

Title	Earliest source	Scribe, date
Pièce d'orgue in G, BWV 572	Berlin, P 801	J. G. Walther, pre-1717

As a tripartite fantasia, the *Pièce d'orgue* is closely related to the Fantasia in A minor, BWV 922, and the Praeludium in D, BWV 532a no. 1 (also called *Pièce d'orgue* in one manuscript; see above, Part I Ch. 3), presenting a similar solution to the problem of uniting free and structured modes of writing without recourse to fugue. Only in the case of the D major Praeludium was a fugue subsequently appended. Of the three pieces, the *Pièce d'orgue* is much the most mature and the only one that is likely to have originated in the mid-to-late Weimar years. The French title and tempo marks—‘très vistement’, ‘gravement’ (originally ‘gayement’), and ‘lentement’—suggest a possible link with French organ music, and a likely model for the principal (central) section has been identified: the *Grand plein jeu continu* that opens Jacques Boyvin’s *Premier Livre d’Orgue* (Paris, 1689), a collection that was copied out in full by Bach’s pupil Johann Caspar Vogler around 1710–15.⁵² The affinity between the two pieces can hardly be overlooked: they have in common their alla breve metre, white notation, sustained five-part texture, and rich harmony–counterpoint, with much recourse to 7th and 9th chords and to contrary motion. In its original version, preserved by J. G. Walther, the central alla breve of Bach’s composition was designed for *manualiter* execution, save for its concluding dominant pedal (bb. 176ff.)—another link with the Boyvin piece. In view of the low B_1 in the bass of bar 94, a note below the range of German organs of the time, it has been suggested⁵³ that the *Pièce d'orgue*, despite its name, might have been conceived initially for pedal clavichord, the instrument on which German organists practised daily and on which organ tuition took place. According to this account, the note B_1 was later taken over mistakenly into the definitive version with full obbligato pedal.

The overall design of the *Pièce d'orgue*, with its toccata introduction, alla breve main section, and slow conclusion, resembles that of the D major Praeludium, BWV 532a

⁵² See George Stauffer, ‘Boyvin, Grigny, d’Anglebert, and Bach’s Assimilation of French Classical Organ Music’, *Early Music*, 21 (1993), pp. 83–96 (the Boyvin piece is quoted in full on p. 87). The MS copy (Berlin, Mus. Ms. 2329) was first linked to Bach by Victoria Horn; see her ‘French Influence in Bach’s Organ Works’, in G. Stauffer and E. May (eds.), *J. S. Bach as Organist* (London, 1986), pp. 256–73, esp. 259–60.

⁵³ By Siegbert Rampe, ‘Kompositionen für Saitenclaviere mit obligatem Pedal unter Johann Sebastian Bachs Clavier- und Orgelwerken’, *Cöthener Bach-Hefte*, 8 (Köthen, 1998), pp. 143–85 (see 169–71).

no. 1. But the style of the outer frame is no longer of North-German vintage.⁵⁴ The introduction is a 28-bar *passaggio*, a single line divided between the hands, for manuals only. Its style is smoother and more Italianate than Bach's 'organistic' *passaggi* of old, however, and it might derive from the *perfidia* of the Torellian concerto (solo or duo passage-work notable for its persistent repetition, whether varied or unvaried, of one or two basic motives) perhaps via Pachelbel's pedal toccatas, which employ the same device.⁵⁵ The concluding cadenza comprises a different form of *perfidia*: the *arpège figuré*, or broken chord with dissonant passing notes. With its chromatic bass descent through an octave and its alternation of 7th and 6–4–2 chords, it recalls the similarly chromatic cadenzas of the G minor Praeludium, BWV 535 no. 1, and the D minor Fugue, BWV 948. From these three cadenzas it is clear that by the mid-Weimar years Bach was already intent on exploring the outermost reaches of the tonal system. In the *Pièce d'orgue*, a dramatic point is made of the joins between the three sections: the high $f\sharp^2$ at the end of the *passaggio* resolves on to the high g^2 at the beginning of the *alla breve*; and the final cadence of the latter, long prepared, is unexpectedly interrupted by a dramatic diminished-7th chord, as at the equivalent point in the D major Praeludium (the cadence of the A minor Fantasia is likewise interrupted, but the effect is less dramatic), so that the final tonal resolution of the *alla breve* takes place only at the end of the postlude.

The *alla breve* of the *Pièce d'orgue* and that of the D major Praeludium might both be described as studies in suspension technique. The suspensions of the prelude, however, form Corellian chains and are incorporated within a framework of invertible counterpoint; those of the *Pièce d'orgue* are a direct product of the themes themselves, which throughout are worked in imitative counterpoint. The combination of exceedingly rich and full harmony—here in five parts—with thoroughgoing imitative treatment of the themes recalls the A minor Fantasia, BWV 922, and represents the fullest possible realization of Bach's search for equal complexity and elaboration in both vertical and horizontal dimensions of the texture simultaneously. A clear link can also be established with the *Allabreve*, BWV 589: in addition to their shared *alla breve* metre, both works feature diatonic themes that range through the interval of a 4th, worked in imitation or stretto; and both are consistently motivic throughout in keeping with Bach's mature Weimar style. The principal subject of the *alla breve* from the *Pièce d'orgue* is the hexachord—the slow scale ascent in whole notes from G to *e* in the bass at the outset of the movement—and hence, quite apart from its French connection, the piece belongs to the great tradition of hexachord fantasias from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, to which, among others, Byrd, Bull,

⁵⁴ Zehnder, 'Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung', p. 318, notes the retreat of the North-German style in favour of Italianate writing in Bach's organ and harpsichord works of c. 1709–11 onwards.

⁵⁵ As pointed out by S. Rampe in 'Bachs *Pièce d'Orgue* G-dur BWV 572: Gedanken zu ihrer Konzeption', in M. Geck (ed.), *Bachs Musik für Tasteninstrumente* [conference report, Dortmund, 2002] (Dortmund, 2003), pp. 333–69 (esp. 342–5).

Sweelinck, and Froberger contributed.⁵⁶ Bach handles this neutral *soggetto* freely, however: it is often reduced to a mere 3rd or 4th (see, for example, bb. 49 and 59) or else extended to a 7th or octave (for example, in bb. 76 and 177). In a glorious climax towards the end, it is extended to sixteen notes, a rise of just over two octaves (bb. 157–72);⁵⁷ and it is finally heard in 3rds in the two lowest manual parts over a dominant pedal (bb. 176–82). The hexachord *soggetto* is combined in contrary motion throughout with a fixed counterpoint in the form of a scale descent in crotchets interspersed with tied notes (Ex. 11),⁵⁸ whose interaction with the hexachord or its variants creates richly dissonant suspensions.

Ex. 11



Pièce d'orgue, BWV 572, alla breve, bb. 29–32 (tenor and bass omitted)

The contrapuntal working out of the combined themes takes place within a very clear period structure, articulated by aurally significant cadences. All periods are open: each modulates to, and full-closes in, a new key, which then begins the next period. The range of modulation is fully comprehensive, encompassing the keys on every degree of the hexachord—that is, all the keys directly related to the tonic G major (V, iii, I, ii, vi, IV, ii, v, I).⁵⁹ Each period opens with a varied reprise of the initial thematic combination, except in two cases where only one theme is stated: the hexachord, transferred to the treble and reduced to a 4th at bar 95; and the countersubject, pervading all five parts at bar 105. Three times the counterpoint of the two themes is inverted: at the brief tonic return in bar 68, at the great minor-mode climax of bars 131–42, and at the final tonic return (where bb. 142–5a are inverted in bb. 145b–8). The first two periods are joined by the interrupted cadence at bar 41 to form a substantial 21-bar tonic–dominant paragraph; and at the end three periods are joined by two interrupted cadences (bb. 158 and 172) to form an even longer, 44-bar concluding paragraph in the tonic. Much of the intense pathos of the piece derives from the contrast between the pure, unclouded major mode of these framing paragraphs and

⁵⁶ The significance of this tradition in relation to BWV 572 is emphasized by Rampe, 'Bachs *Pièce d'Orgue*', pp. 345–56.

⁵⁷ This rise includes the hexachord in its original form, starting at b. 167.

⁵⁸ Rampe, 'Bachs *Pièce d'Orgue*', pp. 344–5, shows that this counterpoint corresponds exactly with J. G. Walther's conception of a *contrapunto di perfidia*, an obstinate, persistent counterpoint that remains the same throughout a composition.

⁵⁹ Bars 49, 59, 68, 76, 95, 105, 118, 131, and 142–5.

the bold harmonic exploration of the central minor-mode periods, which are often characteristically spiced with chromaticism. In the concluding paragraph, the great bass ascent (from b. 157b), over which the manuals engage in constant imitation of the countersubject, leads imperceptibly into a varied reprise of the first ten bars (bb. 167–74; the rising bass scale from *D* to *f*♯ may be heard as preparatory to the return of the hexachord *soggetto* at bar 167) in order to provide an element of rounding off before the concluding dominant pedal and (interrupted) cadence.

It has been conjectured⁶⁰ that the *Pièce d'orgue* might represent Bach's response to the musico-theoretical dispute between Johann Mattheson and J. H. Buttstedt that took place in the second decade of the eighteenth century. In Mattheson's first book, *Das Neu-Eröffnete Orchestre* (Hamburg, 1713), he had roundly dismissed the old system of solmization based on mode and hexachord in favour of the modern system of tonality, with its 24 major and minor keys. Buttstedt's reply took the form of a treatise *Ut, mi, sol, re, fa, la: tota musica et harmonia aeterna* (Erfurt, 1715), in which he subscribes to the opposing, conservative viewpoint, advocating the continued validity of the old system. Bach's *Pièce d'orgue*, according to this hypothesis, was designed to support Mattheson's progressive position, being a satirical composition in which the rules of the old system, applied in conjunction with the means of the new, lead *ad absurdum*. It seems equally possible, however, that Bach, whether or not he had the Mattheson-Buttstedt dispute in mind, was attempting a reconciliation between ancient and modern. Certainly, at no stage in his career is his reverence for tradition any less evident than his willingness to embrace new ideas, and both characteristics seem to inform the *Pièce d'orgue*. On the one hand, he comprehensively embraces the modern tonal system in the use of all keys directly related to G major and in the fully chromatic postlude, makes use of advanced dissonance treatment in the suspensions of the *alla breve* and in the passing *acciaccaturas* of the *cadenza*, and adopts the clear period and key structure, as well as the solo *perfidia*, of the 'modern' concerto. On the other hand, however, he pays his respects to the past in the *alla breve* style of the central movement, in its *durezze e ligature* (dissonances and suspensions) texture—a prominent seventeenth-century tradition—and in the time-honoured hexachord *soggetto*. As an amalgam not only of old and new but of three national styles—French, Italian, and German—the *Pièce d'orgue* surely counts as one of the most remarkable feats of integration of the Weimar period.

⁶⁰ By Rampe, 'Bachs *Pièce d'Orgue*', pp. 357–63.

II.4

The Orgelbüchlein and other chorales

The gulf in style and quality between Bach's early chorales (see above, Part I Ch. 4) and the *Orgelbüchlein* or the best of the 'Seventeen' is so immense that it is difficult to account for it in terms of a continuous process of development. In the case of the 'Seventeen', some of the earlier pieces (BWV 652a, 665a, and 666a) still adhere to the chorale motet form that played such a major role among Bach's early organ chorales (as in BWV 707, 712, 735a, and 741, as well as several Neumeister chorales). But new modes of structuring soon begin to emerge in the 'Seventeen' which are unthinkable without assuming the influence of concerto forms, and hence beyond anything we encounter in the early works. The distinctive type of chorale setting that Bach developed in the *Orgelbüchlein* is virtually without precedent among his early works: one thinks only of isolated pieces, such as *Ach Gott und Herr*, BWV 714, with its canonic mode of chorale treatment, or *Herzlich tut mich verlangen*, BWV 727, with its compact form (lacking introduction and interludes) and its lightly decorated chorale melody. In the following six organ chorales, however, we seem to witness Bach in the process of evolving certain key features of the *Orgelbüchlein* chorale.

Passaggio organ chorales²

Title	Source/s	Scribe, date
<i>Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr</i> , BWV 715	Berlin, P 804/42	J. P. Kellner, 1727–
<i>Herr Jesu Christ, dich zu uns wend</i> , BWV 726	Berlin, P 804/42	J. P. Kellner, 1727–
<i>Vier Weynachts Choräle</i> , BWV 722, 738, 729, 732	Berlin, P 802	J. T. Krebs, post-1710
	Leipzig, Ms. 7	J. G. Preller, 1740s

¹ This title is used here in preference to the more usual 'Eighteen Chorales' for reasons explained below, p. 225.

² So called by Dominik Sackmann, *Bach und Corelli: Studien zu Bachs Rezeption von Corellis Violinsonaten Op. 5, unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der 'Passaggio-Orgelchoräle' und der langsamen Konzertsätze* (Munich and Salzburg, 2000).

The curious style of these pieces formerly led to the name 'Arnstadt congregational chorales'³ due to their supposed association with the proceedings of the Arnstadt consistory on 21 February 1706, in which Bach, then organist of the Neue Kirche, was reproved 'for having hitherto made many curious *variationes* in the chorale, and mingled many strange notes in it, and for the fact that the congregation has been confused by it'.⁴ Certainly, the strange harmony of some of these chorales might have raised eyebrows in Arnstadt, had they been heard there. But according to the sources, the Four Christmas Chorales⁵ might have originated during the Weimar period (after 1708),⁶ though an earlier origin cannot be excluded; and the pair of chorales transmitted by Johann Peter Kellner are so similar to them in style that a common date may be assumed.

All six pieces take the form of free-voiced chorale harmonizations with inter-line episodes in the form of *passaggi*. These are smoother and more Italianate than the North-German-style *passaggi* of Bach's early organ preludes, and it has been suggested that they might belong to the popular wave of solo cadenzas and *passaggi* that followed the publication of Corelli's Op. 5 violin sonatas in their embellished version (Roger, Amsterdam, 1710).⁷ If the *passaggio* chorales were designed to function as accompaniments to congregational singing,⁸ complaints such as those of the Arnstadt consistory would be understandable. For the Kellner pair of chorales (BWV 715 and 726) have in common with the first of the Christmas chorales (BWV 722) some extremely bold, tonally colourful harmony, full of chromatically altered notes and constantly enriched by passing notes and decorated by semiquaver figures. This impulse towards harmonic extremes would issue in the boldly original and endlessly resourceful, but less outlandish, harmony of the *Orgelbüchlein*.

Of the Four Christmas Chorales, only the first shows the harmonic audacity of the Kellner pair; the interest of the other three (BWV 738, 729, and 732) is primarily figural rather than harmonic. Here the figures of the inter-line *passaggi* are often pressed into service in the accompaniment of the chorale lines. The result, particularly in *Vom Himmel hoch*, BWV 738, might be viewed as a forerunner of the *Orgelbüchlein* type, though the Christmas chorales do not adhere to a fixed number of obbligato voices, nor are they motivically unified to the same extent as the *Orgelbüchlein* chorales.

³ 'Arnstädter Gemeindechoräle'; see Hermann Keller, *Die Orgelwerke Bachs: ein Beitrag zu ihrer Geschichte, Form, Deutung und Wiedergabe* (Leipzig, 1948), pp. 141–3. The link with Arnstadt, disputed by many scholars since Keller, has recently been upheld by Matthias Schneider, 'Bachs "Arnstädter Choräle": komponiert in Weimar?', in M. Geck (ed.), *Bachs Musik für Tasteninstrumente* [conference report, Dortmund, 2002] (Dortmund, 2003), pp. 287–308.

⁴ BD II, No. 16; NBR, No. 20.

⁵ *Vier Weynachts Choräle*; so called only in the Preller MS, but the much earlier Krebs MS contains the same four chorales in the same order.

⁶ According to Hans Klotz, *Krit. Bericht, NBA IV/3* (Kassel and Leipzig, 1962), p. 11.

⁷ See Sackmann, *Bach und Corelli*, pp. 88–95 (esp. 94–5). The link with Corelli is tenuous, however, and has been disputed by Schneider, 'Bachs "Arnstädter Choräle"', p. 298.

⁸ This possibility has been dismissed by Sackmann, *Bach und Corelli*, pp. 46–8, but Schneider thinks it likely ('Bachs "Arnstädter Choräle"', p. 290).

The elaborate style that results from the infiltration of figures from the inter-line *passaggi* into the chorale accompaniment is well illustrated in the best-known of the Christmas chorales, *In dulci jubilo*, BWV 729. Writing of this kind apparently represents a late stage in the evolution of these chorales, as represented by J. G. Preller's manuscript. At an earlier stage, witnessed by the manuscript of J. T. Krebs, they were notated in the shorthand form of chorale melody plus figured bass with interludes.⁹ It is possible that what we encounter here is evidence for an organ chorale in the making. What might have begun as an improvisation was then sketched out with figured bass and interludes. At a later stage, the harmony was realized in full, including decoration with passing-notes, while the inter-line figuration is developed into a full motivic accompaniment.

The *Orgelbüchlein*

Title	Earliest source/s	Scribe, date
<i>Orgelbüchlein</i> , BWV 599–644	Berlin, P 283	Autograph, 1708–17
<i>Christus, der uns selig macht</i> , BWV 620a	Berlin, P 283 (<i>ante corr.</i>)	Autograph, 1708–17
<i>Komm, Gott Schöpfer, Heiliger Geist</i> , BWV 631a	Berlin, P 283 (<i>ante corr.</i>)	Autograph, 1708–17
<i>Heut triumphieret Gottes Sohn</i> , BWV 630a	Berlin, 22541/3	J. G. Walther, post-1736
<i>Es ist das Heil uns kommen her</i> , BWV 638a	Berlin, P 801	J. T. Krebs, post-1710
	Berlin, P 802	J. G. Walther, pre-1717

The *Orgelbüchlein*, though never completed—only 46 of the projected 164 chorales were actually composed—undoubtedly ranks as one of the most important achievements of the Weimar period. Whatever the origin of its forms in either the cantional style of chorale setting or in the chorale partita,¹⁰ it introduced a new and distinctive type, marked by exceptionally concentrated treatment of the chorale and an exceedingly high degree of expressivity in relation to the chorale text. To this end the chief musical requirement was the invention of a highly individual motive, characterful in relation to the sought-after affect, which would then be worked exhaustively and with great ingenuity throughout all the accompanying parts of a dense contrapuntal texture. The motivic technique that Bach developed here would have ramifications far beyond the sphere of chorale-based organ music, and would come to form a central component of what we now consider to be the 'Bach style'.

⁹ Schneider rightly concludes that the figured versions are sketches; see his "... daß die Gemeinde drüber confundiret worden." Zu Bachs "Arnstädter Chorälen" für Orgel', in M. Schneider (ed.), *Bach in Greifswald: zur Geschichte der Greifswalder Bachwoche 1946–1996* (Frankfurt am Main, 1996), pp. 111–25.

¹⁰ This background is conveniently summed up in Russell Stinson, *Bach: The Orgelbüchlein* (New York and Oxford, 1999), pp. 62–75.

The *Orgelbüchlein* cannot be precisely dated. The orthodox view that it originated during the years 1713–16,¹¹ based on studies of the composer's handwriting, has since been challenged. It has been pointed out¹² that no firm source evidence precludes the possibility that the beginnings of the collection go back to 1708. On the other hand, in terms of Bach's stylistic development, an origin before about 1712 seems unlikely: the works in other sources that are known, or thought with good reason, to date from 1707–8 still display his early style and are far removed from the maturity of the *Orgelbüchlein*. Whatever its exact date of origin, however, we are here concerned with the work in its original Weimar form: the title-page, including the very name 'Orgelbüchlein' and the statement of a didactic purpose, was added subsequently in Cöthen (1717–23);¹³ the chorale *Helpf mir Gotts Güte preisen*, BWV 613, and the sketch for *O Traurigkeit, o Herzeleid*, BWV Anh. I 200, were added to the collection in Leipzig (1723–50), where Bach also produced the definitive versions of *Christus, der uns selig macht*, BWV 620, and *Komm, Gott Schöpfer, Heiliger Geist*, BWV 631. Those two chorales will therefore be considered here in their earlier, Weimar versions, BWV 620 a and 631a (see the above list). In the case of *Heut triumphieret Gottes Sohn*, BWV 630, and *Es ist das Heil uns kommen her*, BWV 638, two versions each will be taken into consideration, since the early versions, BWV 630a and 638a (see the above list), antedate those of the Weimar autograph. *Liebster Jesu, wir sind hier*, BWV 634, is taken here for what it is: an early version of the other chorale of that name, BWV 633.

The significance of the *Orgelbüchlein* in the context of Bach's creative development cannot be overestimated. It was the first of his major collections of keyboard music, all of which performed an educational function—it is doubtful whether the lateness of Bach's addition of a title-page, with its statement of intent, is significant in this regard, since in all probability the work was already used for teaching purposes in

¹¹ Advanced by Georg von Dadelsen, *Beiträge zur Chronologie der Werke J. S. Bachs*, Tübinger Bach-Studien, 4/5 (Trossingen, 1958), p. 80; see also the same author's 'Zur Entstehung des Bachschen Orgelbüchleins', in A. A. Abert and W. Pfannkuch (eds.), *Festschrift Friedrich Blume zum 70. Geburtstag* (Kassel, 1963), pp. 74–9. Dadelsen's dating was essentially followed by Heinz-Harald Löhlein: see his preface to the facsimile edition (Leipzig, 1981) and his *Krit. Bericht, NBA IV/1* (Kassel and Leipzig, 1987), pp. 85ff.

¹² By Christoph Wolff, 'Zur Problematik der Chronologie und Stilentwicklung des Bachschen Frühwerkes, insbesondere zur musikalischen Vorgeschichte des Orgelbüchleins', in W. Hoffmann and A. Schneiderheinze (eds.), *Bericht über die Wissenschaftliche Konferenz zum V. Internationalen Bachfest der DDR* [conference report, Leipzig, 1985] (Leipzig, 1988), pp. 449–55; Eng. trans. as 'Chronology and Style in the Early Works: a Background for the Orgelbüchlein', *Wolff Essays*, pp. 297–305. Wolff's remarks have been followed up by R. Stinson, 'The Compositional History of Bach's Orgelbüchlein Reconsidered', in R. Stinson (ed.), *Bach Perspectives I* (Lincoln, 1995), pp. 43–78.

¹³ The title-page reads: 'Orgel-Büchlein / Worinne einem anfangenden Organisten / Anleitung gegeben wird, auff allerhand / Arth einen Choral durchzuführen, an- / bey auch sich im Pedal studio zu habi- / litiren, indem in solchen darinne / befindlichen Choralen das Pedal / ganz obligat tractiret wird' ('Little Organ Book, in which a beginner at the organ is given instruction in developing a chorale in many diverse ways, and at the same time in acquiring facility in the study of the pedal, since in the chorales contained therein the pedal is treated as wholly obbligato'). After Bach's signature, he gives as his position Capellmeister to the Prince of Anhalt-Cöthen; see BD I, No. 148; *NBR*, No. 69.

Weimar.¹⁴ It is also the first of his major cycles of music intended for the entire church year. In this respect it is equivalent to the Weimar cycle of church cantatas that began in the year 1714. The two projects might be seen as a joint fulfilment of Bach's stated goal, sought in Weimar upon leaving Mühlhausen, of creating a 'well-regulated church music to the glory of God'.¹⁵ In compositional terms, the *Orgelbüchlein* apparently represents the first case in which Bach deliberately built up a collection of pieces on the basis of certain pre-determined, self-imposed restrictions, as he would later in *The Well-Tempered Clavier* and elsewhere. This self-limitation seems to have acted as a spur to his creativity. Here it involves a small-scale format, generally restricted to the duration of a single statement of the chorale, without introduction, interludes, or postlude. The chorale is presented in standard note-values, normally in the treble of a four-part texture that includes obbligato pedal. Within these intentional constraints, the *Orgelbüchlein* marks the arrival of a mature style that is instantly recognizable as Bachian. Other features of Bach's maturity as a composer depend upon the assimilation of operatic and concerto forms, together with their associated styles. Here, on the other hand, the crucial feature might be described as 'motivicity',¹⁶ which will henceforth be an essential hallmark of Bach's personal style. The parts that accompany the chorale are governed throughout by one or two invented motives, which have a distinct life and character of their own, in keeping with the import of the chorale text concerned. The contrapuntal working out of these motives in the three chorale-free parts (and they occasionally spill over into the chorale part itself) creates a very densely motivic texture in which every note is meaningful in relation to the whole.

In view of Bach's self-imposed restrictions and the 'motivicity' of the texture, it is possible to speak of a distinct *Orgelbüchlein* type of chorale prelude. Within it, however, significant variations in mode of chorale treatment may be differentiated. In many cases, the chorale melody, situated in the treble, is supported by a more or less unified substructure in the three lower parts. In *Vater unser im Himmelreich*, BWV 636, from the earliest stage of the collection,¹⁷ for example, inner parts and pedal are alike stuffed full of the opening four-note motive and of the inversion with which it is immediately answered. The same kind of two-layered texture—chorale against substructure—is found in two somewhat later, consecutive Easter chorales, *Christ lag in Todes Banden*, BWV 625, and *Jesus Christus, unser Heiland*, BWV 626. In the first of these, the opening four-note motive, often extended to eight notes and later in augmented note-values (pedal, bb. 10–12), occurs throughout in all three accompanying parts. In line 6, 'Gott loben und dankbar sein' ('Praise God and

¹⁴ Hence the numerous copies of *Orgelbüchlein* chorales made by J. T. Krebs.

¹⁵ BD I, No. 1; NBR, No. 32.

¹⁶ A term coined by David Schulenberg, 'Composition as Variation: Inquiries into the Compositional Procedures of the Bach Circle of Composers', *Current Musicology*, 33 (1982), pp. 57–87 (esp. 77).

¹⁷ According to the chronology established by Stinson, *Bach: The Orgelbüchlein* (New York and Oxford, 1999), esp. pp. 15–17, upon which all relative datings are henceforth based.

be thankful'), it even enters the treble, decorating the chorale melody itself, which suggests that these are the key words it is designed to illustrate. In *Jesus Christus*, the syncopated motive introduced at the outset occurs in virtually every half-bar in one or more parts, often in 3rds or 6ths. The syncopated notes are often treated as sharply dissonant suspensions, over which the chorale melody holds firm, perhaps symbolizing Christ's dominance over sin and death ('Jesus Christus... der den Tod überwand... die Sünd hat er gefangen').

The bass line is, of course, already differentiated by its rendering on the pedals, but it is further highlighted in cases where it takes the form of a basso ostinato (BWV 601, 610, 640, 643, and 623¹⁸). The motivic linkage between manual and pedals invariably remains so intimate, however, that the impression of a unified substructure is only partially modified. In *Alle Menschen müssen sterben*, BWV 643, manual and pedals exchange the dominant motive on a complementary basis: the basso ostinato overlaps with the same figure in the inner parts in serenely euphonious 3rds and 6ths. A rhythmically identical pedal ostinato in *Herr Christ, der ein'ge Gottessohn*, BWV 601, and a similar one in *In dich hab ich gehoffet, Herr*, BWV 640, are each reduced by one note in the lower manual parts to form the pervading motive of the inner texture. In *Herr Christ* (an Advent chorale), the dazzling texture thus built up perhaps represents the twinkling of the 'morning star' ('Er ist der Morgensterne'). In *Jesu, meine Freude*, BWV 610, and *Wir danken dir, Herr Jesu Christ*, BWV 623, a tiny mordent figure is extracted from the bass ostinato to form the chief material of the inner parts. It is possible that the florid figure-work of *Jesu, meine Freude* and, in particular, its mordent figure, illustrate the words 'Jesus, my ornament' ('Jesu, meine Zier'), just as the largo tempo and the harmonic intensity of the texture suggest longing for Jesus ('Und verlangt nach dir'). The mordent figure of the Passiontide chorale *Wir danken dir* occurs in both direct and inverted forms, and its rhythm is ubiquitous, regardless of melodic form. The emphasis here seems to rest on the positive aspects of the Passion, namely thanksgiving and justification before God.

Still more numerous than these two-layered chorales are those that exhibit a three-layered texture. Here the inner parts are largely independent of the pedals, giving rise to an accompanying texture of two separate strands. This is clearest in two consecutive Christmas chorales from the early phase of the *Orgelbüchlein*, both specifically written 'à 2 Clav. et Ped.' (for two manuals and pedal), namely *Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ*, BWV 604, and *Der Tag, der ist so freudenreich*, BWV 605. In *Gelobet seist du*, the twinned inner parts are written in *style brisé*, or broken texture, whereas the bass has its own angular motive made out of a falling octave and a rising 7th. The two strands are, however, united by common derivation from the dotted rhythms of the chorale line. In *Der Tag*, the division of the texture into two separate strands is still clearer: manual I (the chorale melody itself) moves largely in crotchets, manual II

¹⁸ These examples come from the Early (BWV 601), Middle I (BWV 610, 640, and 643), and Late groups (BWV 623).

in semiquavers (plus demisemiquavers), and the pedals in quavers. The pedal part functions as a simple supporting bass, unmotivic but unified to some extent by the opening scale descent and its inversion. The twinned inner parts are again written in *style brisé*, but their motive is more clearly defined and regularly treated than in *Gelobet seist du*, recurring at every half-bar, each time decorated by a mordent-like 'joy' figure that evidently illustrates the first line of text (the title), 'The day is so rich in joy'.

Three other chorales, all likewise from the early phase of compilation of the *Orgelbüchlein*, are designed along the same lines as *Der Tag*, each being furnished with a walking-quaver bass in a purely supporting role: *Es ist das Heil*, BWV 638, and the two Christmas chorales *Vom Himmel hoch*, BWV 606, and *Lobt Gott, ihr Christen*, BWV 609. Whereas the bass of *Es ist das Heil* is entirely unmotivic, that of *Lobt Gott* is partly unified by scale figures, as in *Der Tag*, while the pedal part of *Vom Himmel hoch* makes free use of the angular opening four-note figure and its inversion throughout. In all three cases, a deliberate contrast is made between the pedal quavers and the inner manual parts, which run in continuous semiquavers, being constructed out of four- and eight-note motives. The contrast is sharpened in *Vom Himmel hoch* by the disjunct character of the pedal quavers, which are set against conjunct manual semiquavers. The crotchets of the chorale melody in the treble give rise to a further contrast in rhythmic movement, although in general Bach refuses to be dogmatic in this respect, distancing himself from Pachelbel's model of strict differentiation. Hence, particularly in *Vom Himmel hoch*, the inner-part figuration quite often spills over into the chorale-bearing treble part, binding the texture together. The lower parts are bound together in a similar fashion in *Wer nur den lieben Gott läßt walten*, BWV 642 (among the earlier of the middle group of chorales). The pedals here play largely a supporting quaver-bass part, as in the three chorales just mentioned, but quite often they become more lively and participate in the inner-part figuration, which is built from an elaborate demisemiquaver motive, often enriched by doubling in 3rds, 6ths, or 10ths.

In various other cases, the pedal bass is not a mere supporting part but has a motivic life of its own, independent of the inner parts, even though there may be some subtle interconnection. For example, in the Passiontide chorale *Da Jesus an dem Kreuze stund*, BWV 621, from the early compilation phase, the pedals play syncopated notes throughout, forming suspension chains against the chorale notes in the treble. In relation to the pedals, the inner parts are complementary, often moving in parallel 3rds. The sharply dissonant harmony produced by the suspensions presumably illustrates the words 'Und ihm sein Leichnam war verwundet so gar mit bitteren Schmerzen' ('And His Body was wounded with so much bitter pain'). The pedal part of the somewhat later Christmas chorale *Vom Himmel kam der Engel Schar*, BWV 607 (from the middle group) is made up of descending and ascending scale figures in treading crotchets, which are simultaneously given in double diminution (semiquavers) in the tenor part, no doubt depicting the brilliance of the angels

(the alto shares the scale figures of the tenor and provides harmonic support). A rather similar relationship between pedal bass and inner parts is found in the Candlemas chorale *Mit Fried und Freud ich fahr dahin*, BWV 616 (one of the later chorales from the middle group): the pedals give the basic form of the dominant motive—in sequential rising 3rds, later inverted—while the inner parts, and occasionally the treble too, subject it to demisemiquaver divisions. The restrained elaboration of this *Nunc dimittis* paraphrase presumably illustrates Simeon's 'quiet peace and joy' as he departs from this life, having seen the Saviour (Luke 2: 29–32).

There are numerous cases in which the pedal bass, in asserting its own independent character (regardless of possible motivic links with the inner parts), takes the rhythmic form of a basso ostinato, as often in the two-layered chorales. In the early Christmas chorale *Puer natus in Bethlehem*, BWV 603, the hymn melody, stated in long notes (minims and semibreves) in the treble, is accompanied by a syncopated ostinato bass in intermediate note-values (minims and crotchets) and an inner texture, led by the tenor, in short note-values (quavers), with its own motive, whose 'shaking' figure presumably signifies 'rejoicing' ('Unde gaudet Jerusalem'). Similar means produce very different results in the Whit chorale *Komm, Gott Schöpfer, Heiliger Geist*, BWV 631a (an earlier middle-group chorale): treble chorale melody largely in plain crotchets; offbeat quavers in the bass, perhaps signifying the heartbeat of mankind ('Besuch das Herz der Menschen dein'); and elaborate inner parts in mixed quavers and semiquavers, based on two motives that perhaps represent the grace with which our hearts are filled at Pentecost ('Mit Gnaden sie füll'). In the Advent chorale *Lob sei dem allmächtigen Gott*, BWV 602, from the same middle phase of the collection, the distinct motives of the pedal bass and the inner parts no longer run concurrently but in alternation. The inner parts, meanwhile, not only possess their own motive (with its demisemiquaver figure) but also frequently double the shaking motive of the bass. The pedals present three large sequential descents based on this motive, progressively reduced in length (from 4 via 3 to 2 bars) but enlarged in interval (from octave via 9th to 10th), perhaps signifying the ever-closer approach of Christ's descent to earth.¹⁹

In several cases an ostinato motive forms the chief component of a substantial ground-bass theme. Somewhat varied melodically, but fixed in rhythm, this theme acts as the bass of every chorale line. The early Easter chorale *Heut triumphieret Gottes Sohn*, BWV 630, is accompanied by a four-bar ground bass that itself incorporates a four-note ostinato motive and its free inversion, together with a diminution-like tail figure (Ex. 1a). The twinned middle parts are chiefly based on a four-note rising scale figure in quavers and its inversion, often heard in 3rds, 6ths, or 10ths. The key words 'Mit grosser Pracht und Herrlichkeit' ('With great splendour and glory') provide ample justification for the majesty of the ground bass and the exuberance of the inner parts. The penitential chorale *Durch Adams Fall ist ganz verderbt*, BWV 637, from the

¹⁹ As suggested by H. Keller, *Die Orgelwerke Bachs*, p. 152.

same early phase, is similar in structure but at the opposite extreme in sentiment. Its two-bar ground-bass theme comprises a threefold descending sequence based on an ostinato motive, a falling diminished 7th, which is clearly intended to represent Adam's Fall (Ex. 1b). The twinned inner parts are based primarily on a chromatic-alteration motive which occurs only in upright form in the *Stollen* (the A section of the A–A–B *Bar* form) but both upright and inverted in the *Abgesang* (the B section). The initial form perhaps represents 'verderbt' and 'Gift' ('corruption' and 'poison'); the inverted form, 'Gottes Trost, der uns erlöst' ('God's comfort' and our 'redemption'). With its exceedingly angular lines and tortured chromatic harmony, this chorale goes far beyond anything else in the collection, presenting a startlingly vivid musical portrayal of the sinful nature of fallen humanity.

Ex. 1

a) *Heut triumphieret Gottes Sohn*, BWV 630, bb. 1–4 (pedals only)b) *Durch Adams Fall ist ganz verderbt*, BWV 637, bb. 1–2 (pedals only)

In some cases the basso ostinato seems to generate the motive of the inner parts by a process of division, a relationship between the two accompanying layers that recalls *Mit Fried und Freud ich fahr dahin*. In the Christmas chorale *Wir Christenleut*, BWV 612 (from the Middle I group), the falling 4th of the basso ostinato motive, when filled in with semiquavers, forms the motive for the inner parts, which no doubt expresses the Christmas 'Freud' ('joy') of the text. Similarly, the rising 4th or 5th of the two-note pedal ostinato and its inversion in the Easter chorale *Erstanden ist der heilige Christ*, BWV 628 (from the same middle phase of compilation), when filled with joyous quavers, forms the dominant motive of the inner parts. In *Ach wie nichtig, ach wie flüchtig*, BWV 644 (likewise from the middle phase), the quaver motive that moves by leap (in octaves) in the ostinato bass becomes a semiquaver scale motive moving by step in the inner parts. Both motives are no doubt designed to represent the 'fleeting' quality of life on earth.

A number of chorales possess such individual features of design that they can no longer be said to belong fully to the standard *Orgelbüchlein* type. The Advent chorale *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*, BWV 599 (from the Middle I group), while mainly in four parts, abandons strict part-writing altogether at the beginning (b. 1a), at cadences (bb. 5a and 7a), and throughout line 4 (bb. 7b–10) in favour of a free texture in *style brisé*. Inner parts and pedal bass possess their own distinct motives, but they also work

The Candlemas chorale *Herr Gott, nun schleuß den Himmel auf*, BWV 617 (from the Middle II phase) is likewise a trio in effect, despite its four parts, since the alto has no real independence but collaborates throughout with the treble in the presentation of the chorale melody.²³ These twinned chorale-bearing parts are braced together in the autograph to indicate the use of a separate manual; thus ‘2 Clav. et Ped.’ are presumably required, even though there is no explicit instruction to that effect. The very clearly differentiated, three-tiered texture corresponds closely with that of *Ich ruf zu dir*: chorale melody (treble and alto) largely in common-time crotchets; tenor in continuous 24/16 semiquavers; and bass-pedal part in 12/8 quavers. In this case, however, the bass part is motivic rather than merely functional: it is based on two related motives, one of which serves as a quasi-ostinato throughout. The tenor also possesses two distinct motives, a decorated broken-chord and a rising scale figure, both of which perhaps signify ‘sehr freuet’ (‘great rejoicing’).

Two late pieces that might have been written within a short time of each other, the Christmas chorale *Christum wir sollen loben schon*, BWV 611, and the New Year chorale *In dir ist Freude*, BWV 615, represent a still more radical departure from the standard *Orgelbüchlein* type. *Christum wir sollen*, uniquely for this collection, presents the chorale melody in the alto rather than in the treble. The three accompanying parts are built around two scale motives and their inversions: a syncopated figure in the bass (and occasionally in the upper parts) and a more flowing figure in the treble and tenor. The contrapuntal web that results is intricate and at times strictly wrought, especially in line 4 (bb. 11–12), where the chorale is temporarily stated in canon between alto and bass against accompanying parts that are likewise canonic. The rich tapestry of this chorale is no less compelling in its vertical dimension, since the logic of the part-writing produces many poignant passing dissonances. A sense of hushed awe runs through the piece, which is felt to be most apt for a chorale that deals with the mystery of the Incarnation. *In dir ist Freude* is still further removed from the norm of the *Orgelbüchlein*. It takes the form of a miniature chorale fantasia, a type that has been encountered repeatedly among Bach’s early chorales. Uniquely for the *Orgelbüchlein*, the texture is made up of five parts, of which three are often taken up with the chorale melody itself in a kind of chordal thickening that recalls *Herr Gott, nun schleuß den Himmel auf*, while the manual bass has a figural part in running quavers, and the pedal bass a lively, rhythmic ostinato. A summary of this kind fails to do justice to the piece’s variety of chorale treatment, however: the melody migrates to the lower parts, is temporarily dispersed among several parts, decorated, repeated, doubled in sixths, or imitated by the lower parts. An introduction of eight bars, based on the headmotive of the chorale combined with the ostinato figure, precedes both *Stollen*, which together amount to a leisurely 39 bars. Curiously, the *Abgesang*, which comprises five chorale lines, amounts to only 12 bars (marked for repeat), which seriously mars

²³ According to Peter Williams, *The Organ Music of J. S. Bach* (2nd edn, Cambridge, 2003), p. 270, ‘It is possible that Bach gave the cantus firmus . . . a unique two-voice form because the original melody itself only “emerges” from two crossed parts’ of a five-part setting published in 1620.

the overall proportions of the piece, and is all the more regrettable since modulation to subsidiary keys is almost entirely restricted to the *Abgesang*. Notwithstanding this defect, the immense vitality of the setting vividly expresses the 'Freude' and 'Halleluja' (the 'joyful alleluia') of the text.

In three chorales from the *Orgelbüchlein* (BWV 622, 614, and 641), the chorale melody itself is profusely ornamented. Although this mode of treatment is anticipated in a simpler form in certain early chorales (BWV 727 and 1085), there is no precedent for the extreme elaboration of the three *Orgelbüchlein* chorale melodies, which is paralleled during the Weimar years only in a few of the 'Seventeen', in the florid decoration added to the slow movements of some transcribed concertos, and in certain cantata sinfonias.²⁴ In all these cases the most likely source of inspiration for Bach appears to have been the highly embellished versions of the slow movements from the first six of Corelli's Op. 5 violin sonatas, as printed in the 1710 Roger edition.²⁵ These *agréments* have already been noted in connection with the *passaggi* in the Four Christmas Chorales and related pieces, but in the *Orgelbüchlein* chorales their example is no longer followed as a source of cadenza-like interludes but rather as a means of decorating the chorale melodies themselves. Of course, the ornamented chorale already had its own rich history in the North-German tradition of Scheidemann and Buxtehude, and Bach would no doubt have considered himself to be their successor in this regard. But in assimilating Italianate embellishment, not to mention French-style ornamentation, he made a highly individual contribution to the genre. He seems always to have been sparing in his application of this ornamental style to chorales, but in the early phase of his work on the *Orgelbüchlein* he adopted it for what has become one of his most celebrated organ chorales, *O Mensch, beweine deine Sünde groß*, BWV 622, for Passiontide. Here Bach's personal style of chorale ornamentation, perhaps inspired above all by Corelli, is revealed at its most profoundly expressive: 'an irrepressible exfoliation under the direct influence of deep emotion, not a plastered-on ornament according to a conventional formula' (Ex. 3).²⁶ The individual figures and ornaments with which the chorale is decorated can all be more or less matched in Corelli and elsewhere, but Bach makes them entirely his own, moulding them into something highly personal and therefore capable of conveying the deep feeling that the text inspires. It might be thought that the profuse elaboration would obscure the chorale melody, but this problem arises only for those who are unacquainted with it. In Bach's day any Lutheran would have recognized it through the florid decoration, particularly as Bach on the whole places its notes on the main beats.²⁷ In the context of the texture as a whole, the chorale melody is highlighted not only by virtue of its elaboration but through its execution on a separate manual.

²⁴ BWV 659a, 660a, 662a, 663a; 973–5; 21 no. 1 and 12 no. 1.

²⁵ See Sackmann, *Bach und Corelli*, pp. 105–34.

²⁶ In the words of Ralph Vaughan Williams, *National Music and Other Essays* (London, 1963), p. 87.

²⁷ Exceptions arise mainly at cadences and repeats; for instance, the last notes of *Stollen II* in b. 11, 4th crotchet, and b. 12a.

Ex. 3 Chorale *O Mensch, beweine dein Sünde groß*

a) Plain chorale melody, 1st line



b) Ornamented version, BWV 622 (treble only)

The accompanying manual and pedals, to a greater extent than in the standard *Orgelbüchlein* type, play a subsidiary role. On the whole, the pedals are accorded a mere supporting part in quavers—a true Corellian walking-bass—and the twinned inner parts are non-motivic during *Stollen* I, though they are thereafter largely based on imitation of a four-note motive and its inversion. In lines 10 and 12—‘dass er für uns geopfert würd’ (‘that He should be sacrificed for us’) and ‘wohl an dem Kreuze lange’ (‘long on the Cross’)—the chorale melody is temporarily plain, and the focus of interest shifts to the lower parts: close sequential imitation in alto and tenor over a rising chromatic line in the bass, producing densely affecting harmony. The word ‘long’ from ‘long on the Cross’ is illustrated by an ‘adagissimo’ coda in which the preceding chromatic rise in the bass is turned downwards in the treble, accompanied by a wholly unexpected and deeply moving flat submediant (Cb) chord.

The other two ornamented chorales in the *Orgelbüchlein*, both from the middle phase of its compilation, *Das alte Jahr vergangen ist*, BWV 614, and *Wenn wir in höchsten Nöten sein*, BWV 641, differ from *O Mensch, beweine* in their more highly organized substructure for manual II and pedals. The three lower parts of *Das alte Jahr* together form a unified motivic texture based on imitation of chromatic lines, chiefly the chromatic ascent through a 4th and its inversion (Ex. 4). Despite the long tradition that already lay behind the chromatic 4th,²⁸ it is here used afresh for immediate expressive purposes, which are rather enhanced than otherwise by the ‘objective’ strictness of its contrapuntal treatment. For this gives rise to some exceedingly rich, expressive harmony, presumably designed to illustrate ‘in so grosser Gefahr’ (‘in such great danger’) or the sins committed in the past year (verse 4). The ornamented chorale and its substructure of chromatic counterpoint constitute two distinct layers of equal expressive weight; but, in characteristic *Orgelbüchlein* fashion, they are not entirely independent of one another: treble and alto several times interact imitatively

²⁸ See P. Williams, *The Chromatic Fourth during Four Centuries of Music* (Oxford, 1997), pp. 7–76.

(bb. 7b–8a and 9); and at one point the chorale melody itself is decorated by the rising chromatic-4th motive of the lower parts (bb. 4b–5), which helps to integrate the whole texture. In *Wenn wir in höchsten Nöten sein*, Bach pursues a middle course between his procedures in the other two ornamented chorales. Although manual II and pedals play a background, supporting role, as in *O Mensch, bewein*, they nonetheless form a unified motivic substructure, as in *Das alte Jahr*: their counterpoint is strictly based throughout on a motive derived from the first four notes of the chorale and its inversion.²⁹

Ex. 4



Das alte Jahr vergangen ist, BWV 614, bb. 1–2 (without treble)

One more significant class of organ chorale represented in the *Orgelbüchlein* merits separate consideration, namely the chorale canon. This type, pioneered by the short-lived late-seventeenth-century Thuringian composer Andreas Armsdorff and taken up with enthusiasm by Johann Gottfried Walther, is rarely found among Bach's extant early chorales, but the *Orgelbüchlein* contains no fewer than eight examples. One can well imagine that the form would satisfy Bach's predilection for strict counterpoint; and he must have relished the opportunity to demonstrate his ingenuity in subduing the recalcitrant melodies into canonic form, and in accompanying the resulting canon with strictly motivic subsidiary parts. This effort generates some of the most remarkable chorales in the entire collection. *Gott, durch deine Güte*, BWV 600 (Middle I phase) and *In dulci jubilo*, BWV 608 (Early phase), the one for Advent and the other for Christmas, alike present the chorale melody in canon at the octave between the top manual part and the pedals. Since the pedal part lies above the manual bass and is to be played at 8-foot pitch, it constitutes the tenor line. The two chorales differ radically, however, in the treatment of their subsidiary parts, the alto and bass. In *Gott, durch deine Güte*, these parts are made to contrast in mode of rhythmic movement: continuous quavers in the alto (based on the opening single-bar motive and presumably intended to express the joyful anticipation of Advent) against walking crotchets in the bass (only intermittently motivic). The subsidiary parts of *In dulci jubilo*, on the other hand, are fully united: throughout the first six lines of the chorale (bb. 1–24) they are in strict canon, just like the chorale melody itself, giving rise to a

²⁹ At an unknown later date Bach adapted this piece to form the celebrated 'death-bed chorale' *Vor deinen Thron tret ich*, BWV 668.

double canon at the octave. The secondary canon is built on two figures: a single-bar 'joy' motive in triplet quavers, and a repeated-crotchet motive (echoing the repeated minims that open the chorale), which, it has been suggested,³⁰ might imitate the bagpipe drone, a pastoral effect common in Christmas music.

In two cases—*Erschienen ist der herrliche Tag*, BWV 629 (Middle I) for Easter and *Christus, der uns selig macht*, BWV 620a (Late) for Passiontide—the chorale is stated in octave canon between treble and bass (pedals), creating an outer frame within which the inner parts develop a shared motive. The canonic treatment of the first-named chorale might have been suggested by the words 'All sein Feind er gefangen führt' ('All His enemies He leads captive').³¹ According to Bach's instruction 'à 2 Clav. et Ped. In Canone', the inner parts are to be played on a separate manual, creating a clear division between the chorale canon and the motivic strand of the texture. Alto and tenor are based on a three-note rising motive and its inversion, much used in parallel 3rds and 6ths. At the beginning of lines 1 and 3 it enters in canonic imitation, aping the chorale canon of the outer parts. The twinned inner parts of *Christus, der uns selig macht* are based on two figures: a diatonic motive that appears to be derived from some of the chorale lines, and a descending chromatic motive. Again the inner parts, like the outer chorale-bearing frame, enter in canonic imitation. The tortured chromaticism and dissonant harmony of the piece seem to illustrate the horror of the violence perpetrated against Christ.

Two consecutive Passiontide chorales, *O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig*, BWV 618, and *Christe, du Lamm Gottes*, BWV 619, inaugurate a series of relatively late chorale canons at intervals other than an octave. In *O Lamm Gottes*, the texture of BWV 629 and 620a is turned inside out: the chorale, in 'Canon alla Quinta' (canon at the 5th), is allotted to the inner parts, tenor on 8-foot pedals and alto, while the outer parts, treble and manual bass, share the accompanying motivic structure. The slurred pairs of semiquavers of the dominant motive, with repeated notes between each pair, were to become something of a fingerprint of Bach's, as a comparison with two other works from this period shows (Ex. 5). Often associated with grief, this figure accords well with the character of the text, a paraphrase of the Agnus Dei, with its recognition of human guilt and its plea for divine mercy. As a German translation of the Agnus Dei, *Christe, du Lamm Gottes* is closely related to *O Lamm Gottes*, and this bond is reflected in its musical setting. The chorale melody is presented 'in Canone alla Duodecima', or canon at the 12th, which, being a compound 5th, amounts to the same interval as in *O Lamm Gottes*. And the accompanying motive is, in essence, similar, though shorn of its elaboration. Its treatment—opening canonic imitation, direct and inverted forms, similar and contrary motion—also recalls the sister chorale. *Christe, du Lamm Gottes*, however, is in five parts, with the chorale canon in the outer manual parts, leaving three parts (inner manual parts and pedals) free for the motivic accompaniment. The contrapuntal

³⁰ By Williams, *The Organ Music*, p. 254.

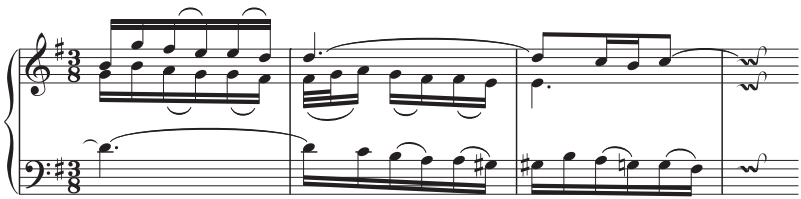
³¹ As Keller points out, *Die Orgelwerke Bachs*, p. 162.

interweavings of the dominant scale motive produce sharply dissonant clashes that might be designed to illustrate 'die Sünd der Welt' ('the sins of the world').

Ex. 5



a) *O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig*, BWV 618, bb. 1–2 (without tenor)



b) *Jesu, meine Freude*, BWV 713, bb. 56–8



c) *Komm, du süße Todesstunde*, BWV 161, 1st movement, opening (recorders; continuo omitted)

Like these Agnus Dei chorales, the late (and possibly consecutive) settings *Hilf, Gott, daß mir's gelinge* (BWV 624) for Passiontide and *Liebster Jesu, wir sind hier* (BWV 634/633) for Pentecost might be regarded as sister chorales, and for similar reasons. Both present the chorale in the top two parts, soprano and alto, in canon at the lower 4th or 5th, leaving the lower manual part/s and pedals free for motivic work. Both are expressly designated 'à 2 Clav. et Ped.', so that the chorale-bearing parts are to be played on a separate manual. And, as a miniature five-part chorale, *Liebster Jesu* stands in the same relation to its larger and more elaborate four-part companion *Hilf, Gott* as does *Christe, du Lamm Gottes* to *O Lamm Gottes*. Alike though they are in structure, *Hilf, Gott* and *Liebster Jesu* differ radically in expressive character—a curious phenomenon that we have noted elsewhere in related pairs of *Orgelbüchlein* chorales. The two subsidiary parts of *Hilf, Gott*, like those of the Advent chorale *Gott, durch deine Güte*, adhere to contrasting modes of rhythmic movement: the bass in quavers, regularly hindered by syncopated suspension figures that might signify effort (line 3: 'zwingen' / 'compel'); and the tenor in triplet semiquavers, which form

a continuous background flow (line 5: 'fröhlich' / 'joyfully'), like the quavers of the Advent chorale. Bach might have taken the text of verse 1 as a prayer for divine assistance in composition. The poet prays: 'Hilf, Gott, daß mir's gelinge, du edler Schöpfer mein, die Silben reimweis zwingen, zu Lob und Ehren dein' ('Help me, God, that I may succeed, Thou noble Creator of mine, in composing verse to Your praise and honour'). If Bach mentally substituted 'music' for 'verse', he might have wanted to give a particularly compelling demonstration of his compositional art, hence perhaps the special ingenuities of this chorale. A still more specific connection between text and music has been conjectured:³² if the third line, 'die Silben reimweis zwingen', were to be taken literally—'force these syllables into rhyme'—it might explain why Bach has taken a chorale melody not obviously susceptible to canonic treatment and 'forced' it into canon. No such personal matters can be attached to *Liebster Jesu*, but it has been suggested³³ that the canon in this quiet, intimate setting, with its unified texture of three lower parts—built around a four-note quaver motive, both direct and inverted—might have been suggested by the prayer 'daß die Herzen von der Erden ganz zu dir gezogen werden' ('that our hearts be drawn from earth wholly towards You').

The Seventeen Chorales

Title	Earliest source/s	Scribe, date
<i>Komm, heiliger Geist</i> , BWV 651a	Berlin, P 802	J. T. Krebs, post-1710
<i>Komm, heiliger Geist</i> , BWV 652a	Berlin, P 802	J. T. Krebs, post-1710
<i>An wasserflüssen Babylon</i> , BWV 653a ³⁴	Berlin, P 802	J. G. Walther, pre-1717
<i>Schmücke dich, o liebe Seele</i> , BWV 654a	Berlin, P 802	J. T. Krebs, post-1710
<i>Herr Jesu Christ, dich zu uns wend</i> , BWV 655a	Berlin, P 802	J. T. Krebs, post-1710
<i>O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig</i> , BWV 656a	Berlin, P 802	J. T. Krebs, post-1710
<i>Nun danket alle Gott</i> , BWV 657	Berlin, P 802	J. T. Krebs, post-1710
<i>Von Gott will ich nicht lassen</i> , BWV 658a	Berlin, P 802	J. T. Krebs, post-1710
<i>Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland</i> , BWV 659a	Berlin, P 802	J. T. Krebs, post-1710
<i>Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland</i> , BWV 660a	Berlin, P 271	Autograph, 1714–17
	Berlin, P 802	J. T. Krebs, post-1710
<i>Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland</i> , BWV 661a	Berlin, P 802	J. T. Krebs, post-1710
<i>Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr</i> , BWV 662a	Berlin, P 802	J. T. Krebs, post-1710

³² By Keller, *Die Orgelwerke Bachs*, p. 160.

³³ By Williams, *The Organ Music*, p. 299.

³⁴ The double-pedal version BWV 653b is possibly spurious (by J. G. Walther?); see R. Stinson, *J. S. Bach's Great Eighteen Chorales* (Oxford, 2001), pp. 49–50.

Title	Earliest source/s	Scribe, date
<i>Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr</i> , BWV 663a	Berlin, P 802	J. T. Krebs, post-1710
	Berlin, P 803	J. T. Krebs, post-1710
<i>Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr</i> , BWV 664a	Berlin, P 801	J. T. Krebs, post-1710
<i>Jesus Christus, unser Heiland</i> , BWV 665a	Berlin, P 802	J. G. Walther, pre-1717
<i>Jesus Christus, unser Heiland</i> , BWV 666a	Berlin, P 802	J. G. Walther, pre-1717
<i>Komm, Gott, Schöpfer, Heiliger Geist</i> , BWV 667a	Berlin, 22541/3	J. G. Walther, post-1736
<i>Komm, Gott, Schöpfer, Heiliger Geist</i> , BWV 667b	Berlin, P 802	J. G. Walther, pre-1717
	Berlin, P 801	J. T. Krebs, post-1710

The above list includes all but one of the celebrated Eighteen Chorales. The exception is *Vor deinen Thron tret ich*, BWV 668, which will not be considered here since there is no evidence of its existence before the late Leipzig years. In this study, therefore, this group of compositions is named collectively the ‘Seventeen Chorales’.³⁵ Whereas in the *Orgelbüchlein* Bach proved himself to be a master of the miniature, here, in works that must have been roughly contemporary with that collection, he shows equal mastery of the large-format chorale, with its substantial introduction before the entry of the chorale and its interludes between the chorale lines. These chorales evidently originated as separate pieces rather than as the contents of a collection (though they were later collected together by the composer himself) and were probably composed over a lengthy period—perhaps up to ten years (c. 1707–17)—with the result that they are stylistically more mixed and uneven than the *Orgelbüchlein* chorales. One of the seventeen, *Komm, Gott, Schöpfer, Heiliger Geist*, BWV 667a/b, in fact originated as an expansion of an *Orgelbüchlein* chorale (BWV 631a). Just as the chorales of the *Orgelbüchlein* might be viewed as successors to certain early small-format chorales, such as *Ach Gott und Herr*, BWV 714, or *Herzlich tut mich verlangen*, BWV 727, so the Seventeen may be regarded as successors to some of the early large-format chorales, particularly the chorale motets, such as *In dich hab ich gehoffet, Herr*, BWV 712.

As the above list shows, the Seventeen Chorales all survive in manuscripts that originated, in all probability, during the period of their composition, but only one (BWV 660a) in an autograph manuscript. Another fascicle of this manuscript (P 271) contains autographs of fifteen of the chorales, but all are late Leipzig revisions, dating from about 1739 onwards. A pupil, J. C. Altnickol, added revised versions of two more chorales (BWV 666–7) to this manuscript. The sources listed above for the original versions of the Seventeen Chorales suggest that they were composed during the Weimar period (1708–17), but we cannot exclude the possibility that the earliest of them go back to the pre-Weimar years. In this study, stylistic analysis is used to determine which are the likeliest candidates for such an early dating.

³⁵ Following the example of Hans Klotz, *Krit. Bericht*, NBA IV/2 (Kassel and Leipzig, 1957), p. 13, but for somewhat different reasons.

Among the earliest of the Seventeen Chorales are probably three closely interrelated pieces that might be described as chorale motets: the two-manual version of *Komm, heiliger Geist* (BWV 652a) and both versions of *Jesus Christus, unser Heiland* (BWV 665a and 666a).³⁶ Not only do we find incidental stylistic pointers to an early date in all three chorales, but the very form of the chorale motet points in that direction due to its specific association with Bach's early years. By far the least systematic and thoroughgoing in its treatment of this form is the *alio modo* setting of the Communion chorale *Jesus Christus, unser Heiland*, BWV 666a. This piece might be described as a cantus firmus chorale that develops into a chorale motet. The first chorale line is preceded by three-part fore-imitation based on a variant of the headmotive; the second and third lines, by a virtually exact anticipation of the line concerned in the tenor (bb. 11–13 and 18–20). Only the fourth line receives the full four-part fugal treatment characteristic of the chorale motet (b. 24, 4th dotted crotchet, to b. 34). Though restricted to the fourth line, this fugal treatment is thorough and comprehensive, involving all four voices and the accompaniment of each fugal entry by two regular countersubjects. This fugal exposition forms the climax of a gradual build-up in complexity during the course of the chorale, which as a whole is notable for its purposefully cumulative effect. This applies not only to the treatment of the chorale but to the accompanying parts: the imitative motives (or, in line 4, countersubjects) that accompany the chorale lines increase progressively in rhythmic movement. The disunity of motive points to a relatively early date (before the *Orgelbüchlein*): as one commentator has remarked,³⁷ it is almost as if the material of four chorale partitas had been crammed into a single chorale. On the other hand, the motives to some extent grow out of each other; and those of line 2 (from b. 11) and line 3 (from b. 18b), with their direct and inverted forms, at times simultaneous, are handled as strictly as the countersubjects of line 4. The closest parallel amongst Bach's early chorales is *In dich hab ich gehoffet, Herr* (BWV 712). Both chorales are essentially for manuals only (in *Jesus Christus* the pedalboard is required only for the concluding tonic bass note, a restricted use that is itself indicative of an early date); both are in 12/8 time and intermingle cantus firmus and chorale-motet procedures; and, finally, both show a cumulative increase in rhythmic movement and culminate in an unexpectedly extensive fugal treatment of their last line.

It can hardly be accidental that the very same fugal treatment accorded to the last line of *Jesus Christus*, BWV 666a, is applied to every line of *Komm, heiliger Geist*, BWV 652a, and *Jesus Christus*, BWV 665a: a regular four-part fugal exposition on the chorale line concerned (plain or slightly varied), with the voices always entering in the same order—tenor, alto, bass, soprano—of which the soprano entry constitutes

³⁶ Jean-Claude Zehnder dates them c. 1707–8; see his 'Georg Böhm und J. S. Bach', *BJ* 1988, pp. 73–110 (esp. 100–2), and 'Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung in der Mühlhäuser und Weimarer Zeit', *Das Frühwerk*, pp. 311–38 (esp. 329–32).

³⁷ P. Williams, *The Organ Music*, p. 379.

the 'definitive' cantus firmus statement. This identity of structure strongly suggests that at least BWV 652a and 665a, and possibly also BWV 666a, were composed within a short time of each other. The Whit chorale *Komm, heiliger Geist*, at 193 bars, is the longest of all Bach's organ chorales (excepting only the Te Deum setting BWV 725); and it might be thought that there was something rigid and pedantic about its reproduction of an identical fugal scheme for every one of its nine chorale lines. On the other hand, the lines are attractively presented, being clothed in a sarabande-like triple time with dotted rhythms, syncopations, and hemiolas (Ex. 6).³⁸ The graceful lyricism that results might have been prompted by the words of verse 3: 'Du heilige Brunst, süßer Trost, nun hilf uns, fröhlich und getrost in deinen Dienst beständig bleiben, die Trübsal uns nicht abtreiben' ('O holy ardour, sweet comfort, help us to remain joyful and confident in Your service, and do not let tribulations drive us away').³⁹ The dance style of each chorale line is preserved identically in all four voices, but the culminating treble statement is highlighted not only by its execution on a different manual but by French-style ornamentation. What betrays a relatively early date, in a vestige of reliance on the North-German school, is the conclusion, a 13-bar coda in diminished note-values. Even though it might have been designed to illustrate the word 'Alleluia' at the end of each chorale verse,⁴⁰ this ending seems irrelevant and merely stuck on, rather than emerging consequentially out of what precedes it.

Ex. 6



Komm, heiliger Geist, BWV 652a, bb. 16–20 (treble only)

The Communion chorale *Jesus Christus, unser Heiland*, BWV 665a, despite its identical fugal structure, is more successful in avoiding the impression of monotony: the chorale consists of four lines only, and its melody is kept virtually plain in all four parts, which leaves ample scope for varying the accompaniment. The treble cantus firmus statements, unlike those of *Komm, heiliger Geist*, are set off from their surroundings neither by contrasting manual (the source is marked 'in organo pleno') nor by added ornament: full integration of the texture is paramount. Furthermore, strict contrapuntal treatment here extends to the chorale-free voices: each chorale line is accompanied by one (line 1) or two (lines 2–4) regular countersubjects, as in the last line of the companion setting of the same chorale (BWV 666a). Each of these countersubjects possesses a strong and distinct character of its own, lending a

³⁸ Zehnder, 'Georg Böhm und J. S. Bach', pp. 97–9 and 103, suggests that the example of Böhm might lie behind Bach's application of French dance rhythms and ornamentation to the organ chorale.

³⁹ As Peter Williams suggests (*The Organ Music*, p. 345).

⁴⁰ According to Stinson, *J. S. Bach's Great Eighteen*, p. 77.

contrasting profile to each of the four line-sections, which are in any case clearly marked off from each other by a coda and cadence. In all but the first line, the character of the countersubjects seems to be derived from the text: the large leaps of line 2 (from b. 14: 6th, 7th, and octave) perhaps reflect 'Gottes Zorn' ('God's anger'); the chromatic scale figures of line 3 (from b. 27), 'das bitter Leiden sein' ('His bitter suffering'); and the dotted rhythms and demisemiquaver upbeat figures of line 4 (from b. 38), 'der Höllen Pein' ('the torment of Hell'). The chorale has in common with the *alio modo* setting (BWV 666a) not only the accompaniment of each line with a different theme or motive but also the restricted use of pedals: here manual bass and pedal bass alternate, as in some of Bach's early organ fugues.

There are among the Seventeen Chorales two other possible candidates for a pre-Weimar dating, *Nun danket alle Gott*, BWV 657, and *O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig*, BWV 656a.⁴¹ *Nun danket* already seems to have reached its final, definitive form in Weimar, which suggests that what survives might be the revised version of a lost original.⁴² This view is supported by its formal characteristics: in essence, it is a four-part cantus firmus setting of the standard Pachelbelian type, with the chorale in augmented note-values in the treble and with each line preceded by fore-imitation in shorter note-values. The thoroughness of this fore-imitation, however, recalls the chorale motet: in each case, it takes the form of a full fugal exposition for the three lower parts, based on a plain, or only lightly varied, version of the chorale line in standard note-values, often involving stretto. The chorale accompaniments are in mixed quavers and semiquavers, as in Pachelbel's style, and their detailed figure-work is largely free—or if it consolidates into motivic writing, the motive concerned is short-lived. Thus the setting appears to antedate the unified motivic writing of the *Orgelbüchlein*. A pre-Weimar origin for this piece would link it with Bach's early essays in the Middle-German four-part cantus firmus chorale, which is here brought to its highest point of development. The Passiontide chorale *O Lamm Gottes* is difficult to place in relation to Bach's other organ chorales of the period. Like *Christ ist erstanden*, BWV 627, from the *Orgelbüchlein*, it is a setting of all three verses; and the absence of interludes within either *Stollen* or *Abgesang* recalls that collection rather than the other large-format chorales. On the other hand, there is a substantial introduction (with fore-imitation) before verse 1, an interlude between the *Stollen* of verse 2, and another before the *Abgesang* of verse 3, so that the overall dimensions accord well with the other chorales of this group. The figure-work of verses 1 and 2—trios for manuals only with cantus firmus in soprano and alto respectively—is strictly motivic in accordance with the *Orgelbüchlein* style, as is the *Stollen* of verse 3, where the pedals enter with the cantus. But the three lines of the *Abgesang* in verse 3 are each set in a manner quite different from each other and from the *Stollen*, which recalls the motet-like style of

⁴¹ Zehnder, 'Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung', p. 329, places BWV 656a alongside BWV 652a, 665a, and 666a within a group of works hypothetically dated c. 1707–8.

⁴² See Klotz, *Krit. Bericht*, NBA IV/2, p. 73.

setting in the two versions of *Jesus Christus*: line 5 (from b. 116) is introduced and accompanied by a 9/8 quaver figure with repeated notes, comparable with the chief motive of *In dich hab ich gehoffet, Herr*, BWV 712; line 6 (from b. 127), by 3/2 crotchets in chromatic descent, presumably prompted by the words 'Sonst müßten wir verzagen' ('Otherwise we should have had to despair');⁴³ and line 7 (from b. 133, 3rd minim), by a quaver scale figure, imitated by inversion in every bar and ending with the retrograde inversion. Such motet-style composing 'along to' the text is characteristic of the youthful Bach rather than of his maturity, as is the free approach to part-writing at the beginning (the introduction is a trio for alto, tenor, and bass, but the tenor fails to contribute to the fore-imitation and drops out at the point when the soprano enters with the cantus firmus). In sum, then, *O Lamm Gottes* points backwards—towards Bach's earlier settings of the same chorale, particularly BWV 1085, with which it has a clear affinity—and forwards simultaneously, and may, in fact, occupy an intermediate position between the earlier large-format chorales already discussed and the more mature ones that remain to be considered.

Two chorales—*Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*, BWV 659a, and *Komm, Gott, Schöpfer, Heiliger Geist*, BWV 667a/b—while no doubt of relatively late date,⁴⁴ bear little relation to the type that Bach established in the other mature large-format chorales. The Advent chorale *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*, like *O Mensch, beweine*, BWV 622, from the *Orgelbüchlein*, may be viewed as an enlargement and perfecting of a time-honoured type, namely the ornamented chorale of Scheidemann and Buxtehude,⁴⁵ standing in the same relation to it as *Nun danket* does to the Pachelbelian cantus firmus chorale. Other ornamented chorales among the Seventeen, such as the first two versions of *Allein Gott* (BWV 662a and 663a), unite this mode of treatment with a highly developed substructure in the lower parts, but *Nun komm* presents the type in its purest form: here the accompanying parts, though very finely drawn, are entirely subordinate to the ornamented chorale in the treble.⁴⁶ As in *O Mensch, beweine*, the exceptionally beautiful embellishments to the chorale melody, together with the walking-quaver bass, appear to owe much to the slow movements of Corelli's Op. 5 violin sonatas in the ornamented versions of the 1710 Roger edition.⁴⁷ The free upward expansions of the chorale lines (Ex. 7) are more far-reaching than anything in Böhm, an obvious model in this style of writing. In effect, they remove Bach's mode of treatment beyond the realm of chorale paraphrase altogether, and into that of free, seemingly spontaneous melodic meditation upon the chorale. Each chorale line merely

⁴³ As pointed out by Williams, *The Organ Music*, pp. 357–8.

⁴⁴ BWV 659a is dated c. 1711–13 by Zehnder, 'Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung', p. 336; BWV 667 presumably post-dates the *Orgelbüchlein* chorale (BWV 631a) upon which it is apparently based.

⁴⁵ The tonic-pedal coda of Bach's setting appears to be indebted to that of Buxtehude (BuxWV 211); the two passages are placed side-by-side for ease of comparison in Stinson, *J. S. Bach's Great Eighteen*, p. 12.

⁴⁶ Among the *Orgelbüchlein* chorales, the analogy is thus with BWV 622 rather than with BWV 614 or 641.

⁴⁷ Stinson, *J. S. Bach's Great Eighteen*, p. 13, here anticipates Sackmann's work on Bach and Corelli: 'Both the soprano and bass figuration of Bach's work seem especially close to the ornamental slow movements of Corelli's Opus 5 violin sonatas.'

acts as the starting-point for Bach's own freely invented, highly florid and deeply felt phrases. One of the most celebrated of all Bach's organ chorales, *Nun komm* possesses an indefinable but highly distinctive tone, presumably connected with the mystery of the Incarnation, but also perhaps expressing an ardent longing for the coming of the Saviour.

Ex. 7 Chorale *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*

a)



b)



a) Plain chorale melody, 1st line

b) Ornamented version, BWV 659a (treble only)

The very different Whit chorale *Komm, Gott, Schöpfer, Heiliger Geist*, BWV 667a/b,⁴⁸ seems to have originated as an expansion of the *Orgelbüchlein* chorale of the same name (BWV 631a). Two statements of the chorale cantus firmus are presented: the first in the treble—a setting identical with the *Orgelbüchlein* chorale—and the second in the pedals, with an entirely different accompaniment. The first verse of the chorale invokes the Holy Spirit to come and ‘besuch das Herz der Menschen dein’ (‘visit the hearts of Your mankind’), perhaps inspiring the heartbeat-like syncopated quavers in the pedals. Increased semiquaver motion towards the end of this first setting (bb. 6–8) anticipates the continuous semiquavers of the second, which thus represents an enhancement in rhythmic movement as well as in the allocation of the cantus firmus to the pedals. Here, perhaps, the Holy Spirit responds to the invocation of the first setting: the torrential flow of the manual parts has been interpreted⁴⁹ as a reference to the coming of the Holy Spirit as recorded in Acts 2: 2 (‘And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a mighty rushing wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting’). The *Orgelbüchlein* chorale is expanded in this piece not only by the addition of a second cantus firmus statement but by the introduction and inter-line episodes that

⁴⁸ BWV 667b appears to be a sketch for the ‘definitive’ Weimar version BWV 667a.

⁴⁹ By Williams, *The Organ Music of J. S. Bach*, ii (Cambridge, 1980), p. 168, following C. S. Terry.

articulate it, which bring the piece as a whole more into line with the other large-format chorales.

In ten of the Seventeen Chorales (all that have not so far been considered), the *Orgelbüchlein* conception—of a highly individual invention that, whether or not ultimately derived from the chorale melody, has a strong and distinct life of its own in the chorale-free parts—is extended from accompanying motives to apply to the entire accompanying structure, including introduction, chorale accompaniment, and inter-line episodes. This independent structure ‘concertizes’ with the chorale melody in a manner analogous to the interaction between the ripieno and the solo part in a concerto (or indeed between the instrumentalists and solo singer in an aria).⁵⁰ The generating force behind the *Orgelbüchlein* chorales was the invented motive; but in the concertante chorales among the Seventeen, motive becomes theme, worked out in substantial phrases or periods; and where an initial phrase or period of this kind recurs in later portions of the setting, ritornello elements of structuring come into play. In *Von Gott will ich nicht lassen*, BWV 658a, and *Komm, heiliger Geist*, BWV 651a,⁵¹ two contrasting elements are combined: the plain chorale cantus firmus in the pedals, and a unified, elaborate superstructure in the manuals. The florid principal motive of *Von Gott will ich nicht lassen*—highly distinctive in its rhythmic and melodic shape (Ex. 8)—together with a derivative, is worked throughout in imitation and sequence.⁵² Its treatment in the interludes varies, however: there is no true reprise of the introduction,⁵³ though the bars that precede line 6 come fairly close to it (bb. 27–9; transposed to the relative major A♭). In introduction and interludes alike, the treble part, while sharing the rest of the manuals’ material, also anticipates the pedal cantus firmus entries, either exactly (b. 1) or disguised by chorale paraphrase (bb. 23–4 and 26–9), so that, despite the clear contrast between them, pedals and manuals are nonetheless united.

Ex. 8



Von Gott will ich nicht lassen, BWV 658a, opening motive, tenor (treble omitted)

The structure of the great Whit chorale *Komm, heiliger Geist* is similar, except that the remarkably unified and independent superstructure in the manual parts is here entirely generated by a quasi-fugal exposition—the contents of the seven-bar introduction over

⁵⁰ See the illuminating description by Henry J. Eickhoff in ‘Bach’s Chorale Ritornello Forms’, *Music Review*, 28 (1967), pp. 257–76 (esp. 257).

⁵¹ BWV 651a is dated c. 1711–13 by Zehnder, ‘Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung’, p. 334.

⁵² Bach’s invention is here motivic rather than thematic, which ties in with the *Orgelbüchlein* and might perhaps represent a slightly earlier stage in the development of the concertante organ chorale.

⁵³ Therefore one cannot really speak of ritornello form, *pace* Eickhoff, ‘Bach’s Chorale Ritornello Forms’, p. 275, and Stinson, *J. S. Bach’s Great Eighteen*, p. 19.

tonic pedal—based on an invention-like subject (see Part II Ch. 3, Ex. 2b, a type that Bach was beginning to introduce in the mid-to-late Weimar years, notably in the F major Toccata, BWV 540 no. 1), combined with a fruitful regular countersubject. Further expositions and entries of this thematic combination, occurring during chorale lines and interludes, differ from each other; the only literal return is the abridged dominant counterstatement that precedes line 2 (bb. 13–16). Thus the analogy with concerto-ritornello form is slight.⁵⁴ Yet line 3 is preceded by a substantial episode (bb. 21b–30)—in reduced texture (manuals only) and with contrasting sequences that lighten the tone—whose resemblance to a concertino episode in a concerto-allegro is unmistakable.⁵⁵ There are no anticipations of the chorale lines in the manual parts, but the very subject itself is a thinly veiled paraphrase of the first five notes of the chorale melody. The great fluency and seamless texture of the counterpoint signal Bach's arrival at full maturity. In addition, the liberal, florid profusion of notes reflects the festive spirit appropriate at Pentecost, one of the Lutheran High Feasts, and perhaps also symbolizes the Holy Spirit filling the heart, spirit, and mind of the faithful ('Erfüll... deiner Gläubigen Herz, Mut und Sinn').

In the much-loved Communion chorale *Schmücke dich, o liebe Seele* (BWV 654a)⁵⁶ we encounter a rather more subtle relationship between chorale and accompaniment. The chorale cantus firmus in the treble is clearly marked off from the lower parts by its execution in long notes and on a separate manual. Yet it is linked to them by virtue of its lightly ornamented character, for the decorative figures that adorn the chorale are often shared with the lower parts. The chief material of this sarabande-like substructure (comparable in this respect with that of BWV 652a), stated in the ten-bar imitative introduction, is itself a paraphrase of the first chorale line (Ex. 9). It returns as a matter of course to preface the *Stollen* repeat, but then not till towards the end (bb. 112–19) as a preface to the last chorale line.⁵⁷ This return is all the more necessary as a means of binding the whole setting together in view of the conduct of the lower parts in the *Abgesang*: the identical lines 5 and 6 are preceded not by the initial theme but by their paraphrase in canonic imitation (bb. 69–75); and two smooth quaver motives form the main accompanying and episodic material thereafter. The quietly meditative tone of this chorale is in keeping with the mystical quality of Johann Franck's Communion hymn: the Lord '...will jetzt Herberg in dir halten' ('would now make His dwelling within you'). In addition, the hymn's opening words, 'Adorn yourself, O dear soul' are perhaps

⁵⁴ Again I disagree with Eickhoff, 'Bach's Chorale Ritornello Forms', p. 275, and Stinson, *J. S. Bach's Great Eighteen*, p. 18, for this reason.

⁵⁵ As Werner Breig points out: see his 'Bachs Orgelchoral und die italienische Instrumentalmusik', in W. Osthoff and R. Wiesend (eds.), *Bach und die italienische Musik* (Venice, 1987), pp. 91–108 (esp. 96–7).

⁵⁶ Dated c. 1712–14 by Zehnder, 'Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung', p. 338.

⁵⁷ For this reason I would again dispute an analysis in terms of ritornello form (Eickhoff, 'Bach's Chorale Ritornello Forms', p. 274; Stinson, *J. S. Bach's Great Eighteen*, p. 13).

illustrated by the ornamental aspect of the initial paraphrase theme and by the adornments of the chorale cantus firmus.

Ex. 9 Chorale *Schmücke dich, o liebe Seele*



a) Plain chorale melody, 1st line



b) As paraphrased by Bach, BWV 654a

In two versions of the German Gloria, *Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr*, BWV 662a and 663a, whose close structural affinity suggests that they might have been composed around the same time,⁵⁸ melodic ornamentation becomes the primary mode of chorale treatment. It is not highlighted, however, by the recession of the other parts into a purely background role, as was the case in *Nun komm* (BWV 659a) or *O Mensch, bewein* (*Orgelbüchlein*). On the contrary, the non-chorale-bearing parts exhibit their own complex structure, which forms a richly inventive setting for the ornamented cantus firmus—a duality already encountered on a smaller scale in two *Orgelbüchlein* chorales, BWV 614 and 641. The relationship between the two elements is analogous to that between a solo singer or violinist and an instrumental ensemble. Indeed, the first setting of *Allein Gott* appears to be no less indebted than *Nun komm* to the Corellian style of melodic embellishment.⁵⁹ It is, however, far more clearly defined as a direct chorale paraphrase than *Nun komm*, despite being the most profusely ornamented of all Bach's organ chorales. In the second setting of *Allein Gott*, on the other hand, the ornamented chorale, now located in the tenor part, is very long-drawn-out, with luxurious free upward expansions towards the end of each line. While in both settings the 'solo' part is set off from the accompaniment by performance on a different manual, the 'solo' tenor of the second setting is less clearly differentiated in character from its surroundings than the 'solo' treble of the first: it shares the same note-values (essentially quavers in 3/2 time), and in the last line (bb. 105ff.) is even assimilated motivically to the surrounding parts. As in certain roughly contemporary vocal works, such as the chorale-aria 'Komm, laß mich nicht länger warten' from Cantata 172 (1714), the profuse ornamentation of the chorale cantus firmus, particularly in the

⁵⁸ Zehnder, 'Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung', p. 335, dates BWV 662a c. 1711–13.

⁵⁹ Stinson, *J. S. Bach's Great Eighteen*, p. 9, talks of runs 'much in the style of contemporary Italian violin music'.

first setting, inspires the adoption of a florid style in the accompanying parts. In both settings, the introductory fugal exposition, based on a paraphrase of the first chorale line, provides the material for the chorale accompaniment and interludes throughout. But this material is constantly reworked, as in a fugue: the only true element of return is merely occasioned by the *Stollen* repeat.⁶⁰ Certain anticipations of the chorale, particularly in the pedals, may be viewed as concessions to traditional cantus firmus methods: in the introductory fugal exposition of the second setting, the paraphrase of the first chorale line is, at the bass-pedal entry (b. 9), replaced by a plain, unadorned statement of that line, no doubt partly for practical reasons: the paraphrase is unsuitable for pedal execution. And in both settings the first two lines of the *Abgesang* (lines 5–6; BWV 662a, bb. 33–5; BWV 663a, bb. 69–72) are anticipated in plain pedal notes—in the second case, in octave canon with one of the upper parts.

In the last five of the Seventeen Chorales to be considered here (BWV 653a, 655a, 664a, 660a, and 661a), the element of return plays such a prominent part that it is reasonable to speak of ritornello form, albeit in conjunction with more traditional methods of structuring an organ chorale. In *An Wasserflüssen Babylon*, BWV 653a, it is the time-honoured form of the chorale motet that is united with the ritornello principle. The cantus firmus is assigned to the tenor part, as in the second setting of *Allein Gott*, but on this occasion it is only lightly decorated and, like the chorales of BWV 652a and 654a (Exx. 6 and 9, above), it is presented in the rhythm of a sarabande (Ex. 10). The fugal structure of the surrounding parts is based not on a chorale paraphrase but on the first two chorale lines themselves—in the same lightly decorated form as the cantus, which is thus differentiated only by its execution on a different manual. The opening eight bars, a fugal exposition on the basis of line 1, with line 2 as countersubject, form a closed period (cadencing in the tonic) which acts as a ritornello, recurring in full five times altogether (bb. 13, 33, 44, 58, and 66), and invariably overlapping with cantus entries. It thus provides an accompaniment to the chorale as well as interludes. Between the ritornellos, further imitative entries of lines 1 and 2 (or parts of them) occur, so that the entire texture is permeated by these two themes.

Ex. 10



An Wasserflüssen Babylon, BWV 653a, tenor, bb. 7–15

⁶⁰ Thus neither setting seems to me to be cast in ritornello form, though analysed as such by Eickhoff, 'Bach's Chorale Ritornello Forms', pp. 271–2 and 275.

In sum, then, the chorale melody is much more integrated into the surrounding texture than is usual in cantus firmus chorales—hence the affinity with the chorale motet—but it is still highlighted through the use of a different manual, as in a cantus firmus setting. The confinement of the surrounding parts to the first two chorale lines also differentiates the piece from the standard chorale motet. This homogeneous texture is in keeping with the character of the piece as a unified meditation on the chorale, rather than the type of setting that picks out details of the text for special musical attention.

In the second and third versions of the Advent chorale *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*, BWV 660a and 661a, the ritornello principle is united with other forms of chorale structuring. The second version, a trio for two manuals and pedal, pits the ornamented chorale in the treble against a ritornello-based substructure for twinned manual and pedal basses, a fascinating and unusual combination whose nearest parallel lies in a roughly contemporary vocal work, the aria 'Laß mein Herz die Münze sein' for solo voice and two obbligato cellos from Cantata 163 of 1715 (Ex. 11). The chorale melody shows clearly through the elaboration, which is far less inclined to roam without restraint than in the first version of *Nun komm*. The opening ritornello of 6½ bars, which consists in the main of canonic imitation on a paraphrase of the first chorale line, forms a closed period in the tonic and occurs altogether five times in various keys, overlapping with chorale entries. It belongs to the threefold *Fortspinnung* type (headmotive–sequence–tail-figure) that became standard in Bach's Weimar vocal music. Indeed, the peculiarities of this setting—not least of which is the short arpeggiated chord in bars 15 and 42—have led to the conjecture that it might have originated as a chorale-aria for soprano, viola da gamba, and continuo.⁶¹

Ex. 11



a) *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*, BWV 660a, bb. 1–3

⁶¹ See Roswitha Bruggaier, 'Das Urbild von J. S. Bachs Choralbearbeitung "Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland" (BWV 660): eine Komposition mit Viola da gamba?', *BJ* 1987, pp. 165–8.



b) *Nur jedem das Seine*, BWV 163, 3rd movement, bb. 1–3 (2 cellos; continuo omitted)

By contrast, the third version of *Nun komm*, BWV 661a,⁶² is like a tutti instrumental movement, whose thematic material lends it a certain rugged massiveness. As in *Komm, heiliger Geist*, BWV 651a, the chorale cantus firmus is presented in plain notes in the pedals against a unified and independent superstructure in the manuals. Here, however, the whole of the introduction (bb. 1–12a) may be construed as a ritornello, which is stated altogether five times in different keys. Each ritornello begins either halfway through a chorale line (such as line 1 at b. 13b) or on the concluding pedal note thereof (lines 2–4 at bb. 21b, 30b, and 43), so that, as in the trio version of the same chorale (BWV 660a), very little room is left for episodes between the ritornello returns. The ritornello is fugal, like that of *An Wasserflüssen Babylon*: a three-part fugal exposition on a paraphrase of the first chorale line, combined with a regular counter-subject whose figures form the material of the meagre episodes. In the third and fourth ritornellos (bb. 21b and 30b), both subject and countersubject are melodically inverted, but the inversion is handled differently each time and never proves entirely satisfactory. The fifth ritornello (b. 43), together with its anticipation during the fourth chorale line (bb. 41–2), provides a final climax of fugal treatment in which direct and inverted forms of the subject are combined in stretto.

In two cases—*Herr Jesu Christ, dich zu uns wend*, BWV 655a, and the third setting of *Allein Gott*, BWV 664a⁶³—ritornello and cantus firmus modes of treatment are not fused but juxtaposed: a climactic statement of the chorale melody in the pedals forms the culmination of a trio in ritornello form for two manuals and pedal. What binds the two elements together is the derivation of the ritornello from the first line of the chorale and the continued use of this same ritornello material above the pedal cantus firmus. A certain parallel may be drawn with Pachelbel's so-called 'combination form'—fugue on the first chorale line, followed by cantus firmus setting of the whole chorale—except that the proportions are very different: Pachelbel's fugue is a mere introduction, whereas Bach's ritornello movement forms the main substance of the work, to which the cantus firmus setting is appended as a postlude, albeit one that embodies the final climax. Bach's two examples of this hybrid form differ appreciably in dimensions: the third version of *Allein Gott* is on a far grander scale than *Herr Jesu Christ*, standing in a similar relation to it as the F major Toccata (BWV 540 no. 1) does to that in C major (BWV 564). In *Herr Jesu Christ*, a short ritornello of only three

⁶² Dated c. 1711–13 by Zehnder, 'Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung', p. 334.

⁶³ Both dated c. 1712–14 by Zehnder, 'Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung', pp. 336–7.

bars, based on the first four notes of the chorale—decorated in the manuals, plain in the pedals—opens each period, leading to different continuations in the form of sequential, modulatory episodes. This species of ritornello form is related not so much to Vivaldi as to the ‘motto’ technique of the earlier concertists, Torelli and Albinoni.⁶⁴ *Allein Gott* (BWV 664a), on the other hand, opens with a substantial twelve-bar ritornello in the form of a fugal exposition on a paraphrase of the first chorale line. Thus ritornello and fugue are here united, as in *An Wasserflüssen Babylon* and the third version of *Nun komm* (BWV 661a). The manner in which the regular countersubject answers the subject recalls the first version of *Allein Gott* (BWV 662a), as well as numerous earlier examples by such composers as Corelli and Buxtehude. Between ritornello and cantus firmus sections a subtle join and overlap intervenes, which is lacking in *Herr Jesu Christ*: Bach takes advantage of the simplified pedal entry in the opening ritornello, which in the concluding ritornello (b. 80) is replaced by an even simpler one—the first chorale line itself in plain notes, inaugurating the cantus firmus statement (b. 85b). The middle section of the ritornello movement (b. 35) is marked by the introduction of new material: broken-chordal figures in the style of string instruments playing in a concerto-allegro. The large element of reprise in this work also recalls concerto style: the second half of the middle section is a virtually exact reprise of the first half, transposed down a 5th and with interchanged parts. As a whole, the composition seems to express the great joy of the Angelic Hymn *Gloria in excelsis* upon which the chorale is based.

Miscellaneous organ chorales

Title	Earliest source/s	Scribe, date
<i>Wer nur den lieben Gott läßt walten</i> , BWV 690	Brussels, Ms.II.3919	Anon., 1725–50
<i>Liebster Jesu, wir sind hier</i> , BWV 706	Berlin, P 801	J. T. Krebs, post-1710
<i>Herr Jesu Christ, dich zu uns wend</i> , BWV 709	Berlin, Am.B.72a	Anon., 1764–88
<i>Liebster Jesu, wir sind hier</i> , BWV 731	Leipzig, Poel. 39	J. C. Kittel, c. 1780
<i>Christ lag in Todes Banden</i> , BWV 695	Berlin, Am.B.72a	Anon., 1764–88
<i>Jesu, meine Freude</i> , BWV 713	Brussels, Ms.II.3919	Anon., 1725–50
<i>Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr</i> , BWV 717	Berlin, P 802	J. T. Krebs, post-1710

(cont.)

⁶⁴ Zehnder argues persuasively for the influence of Torelli's Op. 8 concertos; see his 'Giuseppe Torelli und J. S. Bach', *BJ* 1991, pp. 33–95 (esp. 56–66 and 79ff.)

(cont.)

Title	Earliest source/s	Scribe, date
<i>Nun freut euch, lieben Christen,</i> BWV 734	Berlin, P 1117	J. L. Krebs, early eighteenth c.
<i>Wo soll ich fliehen hin,</i> BWV 694	Brussels, Ms.II.3919	Anon., 1725–50
<i>Wir Christenleut,</i> BWV 710	Berlin, 12012/6 Berlin, Am.B.72a	J. L. Krebs, early eighteenth c. Anon., 1764–88
<i>Sei gegrüßet, Jesu gütig,</i> BWV 768	Carpentras, 1086 (1)	Anon., 1708–17
<i>Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr,</i> BWV 711	Berlin, Am.B.72a	Anon., 1764–88
<i>Meine Seele erhebt den Herren,</i> BWV 733	Berlin, 12014/3 and 7	J. L. Krebs, early eighteenth c.

The first four chorales listed (BWV 690, 706, 709, and 731) may be considered as a group, since in various ways they all show a certain affinity with the *Orgelbüchlein* chorales. The authenticity of the first two is assured by the sources (the Brussels manuscript being a reliable source from Bach's lifetime); not so that of the third and fourth, yet internal stylistic considerations lead to the conclusion that both are unquestionably by Bach. Since they display Bach's mature style, they cannot have been composed before the Weimar period (1708–17); this is also the likeliest period of origin for BWV 706, in view of its source, and for BWV 690 in view of its stylistic connection with the *Orgelbüchlein*.

Wer nur den lieben Gott, BWV 690, has many features in common with the standard *Orgelbüchlein* type: above all, its small format and motivic technique. The extent of the piece coincides precisely with that of the chorale melody—there is neither introduction nor interlude—and the accompaniment is entirely derived from the opening upbeat scale figure of four notes and its inversion, which immediately follows. This motive is often extended into longer scale figures or else doubled in 3rds or 6ths; and as in the *Orgelbüchlein*, the chorale melody in the treble is frequently varied by taking on some of the accompanying figuration. The setting differs from the *Orgelbüchlein* type, however, in its *manualiter* and *freistimmig* character (that is, it has no pedal part and does not maintain a set number of parts), which results in a relatively uniform texture, as opposed to the more differentiated two- or three-tier texture characteristic of the *Orgelbüchlein*.

Liebster Jesu, BWV 706, comprises two relatively plain four-part harmonizations of the chorale, presumably written for accompanying purposes. In the chief sources, these are grouped together with the *Orgelbüchlein* settings of the same chorale (BWV 633 and 634); it has also been conjectured that those settings might have developed out of the simpler harmonizations.⁶⁵ It is also possible, however, that the four pieces were grouped together simply for practical reasons. But the comparison does at least

⁶⁵ The issue is discussed by Williams, *The Organ Music of J. S. Bach*, ii, pp. 243–4.

illustrate how a simple four-part harmonization could grow into an elaborate setting in *Orgelbüchlein* style by regulating the lower parts in accordance with a unifying motive and, in this case, by adding a canonic answer to the chorale melody. The second miscellaneous version of *Liebster Jesu*, BWV 731, on the other hand, might almost have been at home in the *Orgelbüchlein* as it stands. Like *O Mensch, bewein*, BWV 622, it is a compact four-part chorale 'à 2 Clav. et Ped.', with ornamented chorale in the treble (manual I), twinned inner parts that often move in semiquavers (manual II), and a supporting bass, largely in quavers (pedals). The setting also resembles *O Mensch, bewein* in the material of the inner parts (which is largely unmotivic, apart from the frequent exchange of a four-note scale figure and its inversion) and in the Böhmanian free upward expansions in the ornamented treble immediately before the cadence of both *Stollen* and *Abgesang*. *Herr Jesu Christ*, BWV 709, while of identical type, lacks such free expansions, adhering closely to the chorale melody (despite the profuse elaboration to which it is subjected) by alternating long chorale notes with decorative figures and by regularly placing chorale notes on the main beats. The melody is more extended than usual: quite exceptionally among Bach's ornamented chorales, the underlying melodic framework of the chorale is in long notes (semibreves and minims). In other respects the setting recalls two ornamented chorales from the *Orgelbüchlein*: *Das alte Jahr vergangen ist* (BWV 614) and *Wenn wir in höchsten Nöten sein* (BWV 641). Like them, it presents a unified motivic texture in the three lower parts (manual II and pedals), which are essentially built around a single rhythmic figure and its more elaborate variant. As often in the *Orgelbüchlein*, and for obvious practical reasons, the simpler form is used as a quasi-ostinato in the pedals, whereas the more florid version is restricted to the manual parts—including the treble, for the chorale decoration often borrows from the principal motive, another phenomenon often encountered in the *Orgelbüchlein*.

The miscellaneous chorales include four trios for manuals only (BWV 695, 713, 717, and 734) which in technique of chorale treatment resemble the Seventeen Chorales rather than the *Orgelbüchlein*. Except in one case, their authenticity is assured by the sources; but both style and technique of the exception (BWV 695) are so closely related to those of the other manual trios that there can be little doubt about Bach's authorship. The earliest source of one of the trios, BWV 717, points to a Weimar origin, and by extension this might apply to the other trios too, though a later origin cannot be excluded. The four chorales resemble the Seventeen not only in their large format (embracing introduction, interludes, and postlude), but also in the unified, independent structure of their accompanying parts, which are in each case built on a paraphrase of the first chorale line. Over and above these common factors, each of the four trios, like any mature Bach chorale arrangement, possesses strongly individual characteristics of its own. The 3/8 dance rhythm of *Christ lag in Todes Banden*, BWV 695, seems to express the Easter joy of the text, with the neat rhyming cadences of the *Stollen* (and again at the end of the whole composition) accentuating the dance character of the music. After the highly unified *Stollen*, the *Abgesang* is introduced

and accompanied by a new theme—a paraphrase of chorale line 5, first heard fugally (with chromatic countersubject) in bars 67–72—but the piece is rounded off by a return to the original theme after the last chorale line (b. 134). The *Stollen* of *Jesu, meine Freude*, BWV 713, are set in a similar style: chorale cantus firmus in long notes and fugal structure in the accompanying parts. But here the opening two-part fugal exposition returns in the manner of a ritornello between each chorale line. Moreover, whereas the cantus of *Christ lag* remained in the alto part throughout, that of *Jesu, meine Freude* migrates, visiting each part in turn, which permits the structuring of *Stollen II* as a free contrapuntal inversion of *Stollen I*. The following *Abgesang* contrasts utterly in style: the cantus firmus is replaced by a free paraphrase of the chorale lines in a dance-like, 3/8 movement, marked ‘dolce’, with rhyming cadences (as in *Christ lag*, which is also in 3/8). One of the two dominant motives, the anticipatory-note figure in slurred pairs of semiquavers, became one of Bach’s most personal fingerprints during the Weimar period (Ex. 5, above). Here it seems to be associated with the innocent ‘Lamb of God’ (line 7), as in the *Orgelbüchlein* chorale *O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig*, BWV 618.

In the German Gloria *Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr*, BWV 717, the theme that prefaces the treble cantus firmus, a characterful 12/8 paraphrase of the first chorale line, recurs in full only twice after the initial two-part fugal exposition. The exposition that prefaces the *Abgesang* (b. 35), however, is based on a variant of it, redesigned so as to open with the first four notes of line 5; and the chief figure of the paraphrase theme proves to be extremely fertile, generating all subsequent material, including inversions, partial inversions, and bold variants involving leaps of a 7th. The Advent chorale *Nun freut euch, lieben Christen gmein* BWV 734, while resembling the other manual trios in most respects, differs from them in that the structure of the outer parts (the cantus firmus is located in the tenor part) is no longer fugal. The three parts are very clearly differentiated: tenor chorale largely in minims; purely supporting bass in walking quavers; and thematic treble in running semiquavers, based on a paraphrase of the first chorale line, a sparkling treble line that seems to convey the joyful anticipation of the Advent season. The return of the paraphrase theme in other keys during the *Abgesang* lends it the character of a ritornello, though it is heard just as much in the accompaniment of the chorale lines as during the interludes. A long descending sequence based on its main figure forms a highly effective rhyming close to *Stollen* and *Abgesang* (bb. 11–15 and 48b–52).

Wo soll ich fliehen hin, BWV 694 and *Wir Christenleut*, BWV 710, have much in common: both are trios ‘à 2 Clav. et Ped.’, with the chorale cantus firmus in the pedals and twinned upper parts on separate manuals. Both, moreover, employ mature formal and contrapuntal techniques that link them with the Seventeen Chorales and preclude a date of origin before the Weimar period (1708–17). The accompanying parts of the penitential chorale *Wo soll ich fliehen hin* are ritornello-based: the opening closed period of eight bars, tightly constructed around the initial *Stimmtausch* (parts-exchange) combination, acts as a ritornello, which occurs four times in various

keys between the chorale lines. The almost obsessional concentration on the leading semiquaver motive perhaps signifies the burden of sinfulness from which there is no apparent deliverance ('ich beschweret bin mit viel und großen Sünden'). The accompanying parts of the Christmas chorale *Wir Christenleut*, on the other hand, are not ritornello-based but fugal: chorale lines 1, 2, and 4 are each prefaced by a stretto exposition (bb. 1, 5, and 23) whose subject is a highly distinctive paraphrase of the first line. Its upbeat semiquaver motive, used both direct and inverted throughout, seems to crystallize in musical terms the 'Freud' ('joy') of the Christmas text. The repeats of the chorale melody (line 3 = 6 and 4 = 5) allow the opportunity for Bach to employ the technique of invertible counterpoint over a longer range than in *Wo soll ich fliehen hin*: in each case, the music is largely repeated but with the upper parts interchanged (bb. 17–20 = 38–41 and 28b–31 = 32b–35). The long-range use of this technique, both here and, as already noted, in the manual trio *Jesu, meine Freude*, is an achievement of Bach's maturity.

In general, the chorale partitas are more readily associated with Bach's early chorales than with the *Orgelbüchlein* or the Seventeen. But *Sei gegrüßet, Jesu gütig*, BWV 768, the most sophisticated of them and almost certainly the last to be composed, evidently underwent a far-reaching process of expansion during the Weimar period. The original version (see above, Part I Ch. 4), transmitted by Bach's Weimar pupil Johann Tobias Krebs, contained only the plain chorale harmonization and four variations (which correspond in the later version to nos. 1, 2, 4, and 10). This version was copied by an anonymous Weimar pupil into the Carpentras manuscript, but the same pupil subsequently added to his copy seven more variations (nos. 3, 5–9, and 11), no doubt copying from the composer's draft soon after they were composed.⁶⁶ Whatever the immediate, circumstantial causes of the expansion, one factor must have been Bach's recognition of the special worth of the original work and his desire to raise it to a still higher level. Accordingly, he incorporates textures not so far represented: the *bicinium* (no. 3), the trio 'à 2 Clav. et Ped.' with plain chorale in the pedals (nos. 7 and 9), and the five-part setting 'in Organo pleno' (no. 11). The upper parts of the trios are written in the contrapuntally sophisticated 'two-part invention' style associated with the same texture in *Wo soll ich fliehen hin*, BWV 694, and *Wir Christenleut*, BWV 710. Above all, however, Bach may have wished to increase the expressive and textural density of the composition by writing further in the strictly motivic *Orgelbüchlein* style already applied to variation 2. Some of the invented motives in these later variations are not only highly characterful and distinctive but also extremely elaborate: for example, the demisemiquaver figure and its falling-7th counterpoint in dotted rhythm that form a constant accompaniment to the plain chorale in variation 7.

The last two chorales to be considered here—*Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr*, BWV 711, and *Meine Seele erhebt den Herren*, BWV 733,—are singular pieces, utterly

⁶⁶ See Löhlein, *Krit. Bericht*, NBA IV/1, pp. 200–4.

different from each other, and do not easily fit within any of the established categories. In neither case is their authenticity assured by the sources, which has left scope for speculation that they might have been written by other composers.⁶⁷ Yet the inner musical evidence for Bach's authorship is compelling. *Allein Gott* is a *bicinium* for manuals only with plain chorale cantus firmus in the treble. *Bicinia* occur repeatedly among Bach's chorale partitas, but this is the only independent *bicinium* with a strong claim to authenticity among the miscellaneous chorales. It displays a mature ritornello technique that links it with the Seventeen Chorales. The chorale lines are accompanied by an independent thematic part for bass (including introduction, interludes, and conclusion) cast in ritornello form. The ritornello, based as usual on a paraphrase of the first chorale line, assumes the character of a cello part, and occurs five times in different keys between the chorale lines. But, as often in concerto movements, it is not the only recurring element: the episodic sequences that accompany the chorale lines also recur at frequent intervals. Bach's setting of the German Magnificat *Meine Seele erhebt den Herren* represents the apotheosis of the Pachelbelian combination-form chorale (fugue plus cantus firmus setting) in the same way that *Nun danket alle Gott*, BWV 657, brings to final perfection his four-part cantus firmus chorale. A long fugal section in four parts (SATB) for manuals only, whose subject is the unadorned first chorale line, precedes a cantus firmus setting in five parts (SATB plus pedal bass; from b. 98), in which the first two chorale lines are augmented in the pedals. The plain fugue subject is accompanied by a lively regular countersubject, whose headmotive generates the free parts throughout. So tight is the motivic writing that the piece can hardly have been written before the period of the *Orgelbüchlein*.⁶⁸ Like *Nun danket*, it bears witness to Bach's continued interest, even in his maturity, in carrying the forms of an earlier master through to a stage of development beyond his predecessor's wildest imaginings.

⁶⁷ BWV 711 has often been ascribed to Johann Bernhard Bach (see Klotz, *Krit. Bericht*, NBA IV/3, p. 41); BWV 733 is sometimes ascribed to its scribe in two MS sources, J. L. Krebs.

⁶⁸ Zehnder, 'Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung', p. 335, dates it c. 1711–13.

II.5

The Weimar cantatas

Between Bach's surviving early cantatas and those composed during the mid-to-late Weimar years, a period of only three or four years (c. 1709–12) intervened. But within it a remarkable transformation must have taken place. No newly composed vocal music that might have shown us how this major change was brought about can be ascribed with certainty to the interim period. We can safely assume, however, that Bach was exposed to much new Italian music at the Weimar court, guiding his own creativity in new directions. And his encounter with the new operatic style of libretto for the sacred cantata was clearly a decisive factor. This type had been introduced by the Lutheran pastor Erdmann Neumeister in his *Geistliche Cantaten statt einer Kirchen-Music* (Spiritual Cantatas in Place of Church Music) of 1700. Whereas the old type of cantata text, still used in Bach's early cantatas, consisted largely of biblical words and chorales, the new type was at first made up exclusively of madrigalian verse, designed to be set in an alternation of recitative and arias. In his preface Neumeister described the new cantata as 'nothing other than a piece from an opera, assembled from recitative style and arias' ('nicht anders... als ein Stück aus einer Opera, von Stylo Recitativo und Arien zusammengesetzt'). Not long afterwards, however, the new type of libretto was modified by reintroducing biblical words and chorales alongside the madrigalian verse, thereby creating an element of continuity with past traditions. This mixed type, already employed in 1704 at the Meiningen court,¹ was adopted by Neumeister himself in his third (1711) and fourth (1714) cycles of cantata librettos for the church year. It is also the type most relevant to Bach's Weimar period, for it was employed by Salomo Franck, resident poet at the Weimar court, during the years (1713–16) in which he collaborated closely with the composer. The mixed type of cantata text must have appealed at once both to Bach's progressive and conservative instincts, allowing him to achieve a fruitful and satisfying accommodation between past and present, between the traditional forms of Lutheran church music and the up-to-date forms of Italian opera. The musical genres associated in Bach's early cantatas with biblical and chorale texts—motet-style choruses, vocal fugues, and chorale arrangements—could be retained in the Weimar cantatas. But the recitative and aria texts that formed the main content of the librettos created an overall structure quite different from the patchwork of contrasting sections characteristic of

¹ See Konrad Küster, 'Meiningen Kantatentexte um Johann Ludwig Bach', *BJ* 1987, pp. 159–64.

the older cantata. Recitative was for Bach a new ingredient. Aria-ritornello forms were, as we have seen (Part I Ch. 5), beginning to be used to some extent in the early cantatas, occasionally within the context of an overall da capo structure. But the ritornellos that generated the thematic material of those arias generally belonged to simple song or ostinato types. Only in the soprano aria (no. 3) from *Der Herr denkt an uns*, BWV 196, which might have been composed around 1709, do we encounter the more sophisticated threefold *Fortspinnung* type of ritornello (headmotive–sequence–tail-figure) that was current in the arias of contemporary Venetian opera² and would eventually become standard for Bach.

Bach's acceptance of the modern forms, albeit alongside the older ones, had enormous repercussions. In them music was no longer merely a servant of the words, as it had to be when biblical texts were set, nor was it dependent on an existing melody, as when setting chorale texts. Instead, both poet and composer were free to pursue their own individual invention at will, leading to a more pronounced element of subjectivity and expressiveness. The polarity of recitative and aria encouraged the composer to give free rein to his imagination in the aria, for if the words that had to be clearly understood were declaimed in recitative, the aria was free to function, by contrast, as the musical expression of a state of feeling. In Bach's case this involved writing in an increasingly elaborate style, since his music tends to be at its most expressive when it is most florid. A key property of the newer type of aria was its capacity to act as a show-piece for the performers—chiefly, of course, the solo singer, whose display of virtuosity aped that of the soloists in contemporary Italian opera, but also the obbligato instrumentalist, to whom Bach often gave a part that taxed his skills to the utmost. The composer exercised control over his material through the medium of ritornello and da capo forms of structuring, which in Bach's hands were thoroughly diversified and handled with endless resource. Finally, whereas the older type of cantata was essentially a musical contemplation on an ecclesiastical text, the newer type, in accordance with its secular derivation, was potentially dramatic. The recitatives further some kind of action—if only that which takes place within the individual soul—to which the arias act as staging posts, depicting in musical terms a specific scene in the inner drama or a particular state of the soul in its relation to the divinity.

1713/14

<i>Title, occasion</i>	<i>Earliest source/s</i>	<i>Scribe, date</i>
<i>Was mir behagt, ist nur die muntre Jagd</i> , ('Hunt' Cantata), BWV 208	Berlin, P 42	Autograph, 1713

² See Siegbert Rampe, "'Monatlich neue Stücke': zu den musikalischen Voraussetzungen von Bachs Weimarer Konzertmeisteramt", *BJ* 2002, pp. 61–104 (esp. 95).

<i>Title, occasion</i>	<i>Earliest source/s</i>	<i>Scribe, date</i>
<i>Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis</i> , BWV 21 (3 Trin.; any occasion)	Berlin, St 354	Part-autograph, 1714-*
<i>Mein Herz schwimmt im Blut</i> , BWV 199 (11 Trin.)	Copenhagen cl 615	Autograph, 1713/14
	Berlin, St 459	Part-autograph, 1713/14-

* Open-ended date spans in this column and in the equivalent column in later tables indicates a set of parts some of which date from the (later) Leipzig years, but some at least of which were copied during Bach's years at Weimar, beginning at the date shown.

The 'Hunt' Cantata, first performed on 23 February 1713,³ represents a milestone in Bach's creative development. It is the first datable work in which he fully adopts the 'modern' Italian operatic style, with its regular alternation of recitatives and arias—a step as significant, in its own way, as his assimilation of the Italian concerto. It is, of course, a secular cantata, in keeping with the secular origin of the vocal forms concerned. The question arises what Italian vocal music Bach encountered in the early Weimar years (1708–12) and whether he tried out these 'modern' forms first in more elementary works that are now (with the exception of Cantata 196) lost.⁴ For if not, the 'Hunt' Cantata seems like a pure miracle from out of the blue—the whole modern cantata style suddenly manifest in full, executed to perfection,⁵ and graced with a charmingly youthful freshness of invention. The occasion for which the work was written must be taken into account: it was composed to celebrate the birthday of Duke Christian of Weißenfels, a town some 50 kilometres (30 miles) distant where a local opera was then flourishing. It might have been this favourable environment that encouraged the young composer to write in an operatic style. And indeed the libretto, written by Bach's regular Weimar librettist Salomo Franck, takes the form of a miniature drama. The Duke's passion for hunting is reflected in the simple plot, and in a broader sense the work may be considered a pastoral play set to music, like countless operas and cantatas of the period. Time and again, Bach evokes this pastoral element in his musical setting. The hunt, associated with Diana, is represented by horn calls at the beginning, middle, and end of the work (nos. 2, 11, and 15). A choir of three oboes accompanies Pan, god of flocks and shepherds, in his aria (no. 7), whose dotted rhythms and triplets also contribute to the bucolic scene. Other pastoral wind instruments enter in the next aria (no. 9), namely two recorders to accompany Pales, a rustic spirit also associated with flocks and shepherds—hence the echo effects and the pedal notes in imitation of drones. The text here is a flattering metaphor for Duke

³ According to Hans-Joachim Schulze, 'Wann entstand J. S. Bachs "Jagdkantate"?', *BJ* 2000, pp. 301–5.

⁴ Unfortunately we have no definite information on the first point. As for the second, the occasional use of aria-ritornello form in the early cantatas would not in itself be adequate preparation.

⁵ Miriam Whaples, 'Bach's Earliest Arias', *Bach*, 20 (1989), pp. 31–54 (esp. 45), concludes that 'Unless we hypothesize (without evidence) that Bach acquired the art of *secco* recitative and aria gradually over these four years [1709–13] in a series of lost vocal works, we must accept BWV 208 as an astonishing achievement, a virtuoso display of the widest possible array of forms mastered for the occasion'.

Christian's good governance: 'Sheep may safely graze where a good shepherd keeps watch' ('Schafe können sicher weiden, wo ein guter Hirte wacht!').

It can be no accident that the four characters in this little drama—Diana, Pales, Endymion, and Pan—are sung by two sopranos, a tenor, and a bass, for those four voices were precisely the regular vocal members of the ducal chapel at Weißenfels when the work was first performed.⁶ That the four solo singers also formed the chorus is clear from the vocal scoring of the choral movements without an alto part (SI–SII–T–B). Bach seems to differentiate consciously between the relatively elaborate, sophisticated music he writes for the lovers Diana and Endymion, and the simpler music written for the pastoral gods Pan and Pales. The lovers' music makes considerably greater demands on the singers: Bach seems to have relished the opportunity to write for able musicians who were accustomed to sing in an operatic style. By contrast, the music for Pan and Pales often has a rustic tone, hence the Lied-like simplicity of the vocal themes in their arias (nos. 7, 9, and 13), which remain independent of the more elaborate instrumental ritornello themes of the same movements.

Although Bach may have been virtually new to the composition of recitative when this cantata was written, his handling of it is remarkably assured.⁷ The first three recitatives (nos. 1, 3, and 5) all start as *secco* and graduate to *arioso*, a dual structure that will become characteristic of Bach's recitatives during the Weimar and Cöthen years. The change to *arioso* invariably occurs at the point when the matter being discussed by the protagonists begins to require more expansive treatment: when Diana warms to the subject of hunting and gives a graphic description of it (no. 1); when Endymion identifies Diana's hunting as an obstacle to love (no. 3); or when the lovers unite in their desire to celebrate the Duke's birthday (no. 5). The *arioso* conclusion of Diana's first recitative (no. 1) is exceptionally descriptive: we hear, in turn, the swift flight of her arrow in a semiquaver melisma, her taking stock of the situation in an *adagio* bar, and finally the chase in a *presto* conclusion with running semiquavers in the continuo.

As might be expected, *da capo* form is predominant among the non-recitative movements: it is used not only in three of the arias (nos. 4, 9, and 14) but also in both choruses (nos. 11 and 15)—an important innovation of Bach's that would continue to bear fruit in the following years. The middle section of the A–B–A *da capo* structure is now far more extended than it was in the *da capo* aria from Cantata 196, amounting to

⁶ See Eva-Maria Ranft, 'Zum Personalbestand der Weißenfelser Hofkapelle', BzBF 6 (Leipzig, 1987), pp. 5–36 (esp. 34); and Joshua Rifkin, 'From Weimar to Leipzig: Concertists and Ripienists in Bach's *Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis*', *Early Music*, 24 (1996), pp. 583–603 (esp. 593).

⁷ He might have gathered hints on recitative writing from the setting of the St Mark Passion of which he copied the parts c. 1710–12. See Andreas Glöckner, 'Bachs frühe Kantaten und die Markus-Passion von Reinhard Keiser', *Das Frühwerk* (Cologne, 1995), pp. 257–66 (esp. 260). Formerly attributed to Keiser, this St Mark Passion is now thought to have been composed by Friedrich Nicolaus Brauns, Director of Music at Hamburg Cathedral. See Daniel R. Melamed and Reginald Sanders, 'Zum Text und Kontext der "Keiser"-Markuspassion', *BJ* 1999, pp. 35–50.

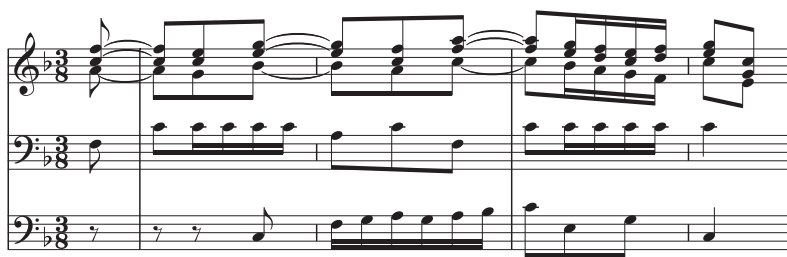
at least two-thirds of the length of the main section. Consequently, it gives scope for freer treatment of the otherwise rather strictly treated ground bass in Endymion's aria (no. 4), for the use of contrasting minor keys in the arias of Pales and Pan (nos. 9 and 14), and even for the entry of a striking new vocal theme to the words 'Es lebe der Herzog' ('Long live the Duke!') in Pan's aria (no. 14). Where no da capo is present, simpler forms are encountered: a single unit with framing ritornello in Pales's continuo aria (no. 13); or a binary structure (A–A') in Diana's hunting aria (no. 2). The duet for the two lovers (no. 12), however, introduces a form that will prove highly fruitful in later years: a tripartite reprise structure (A–B–A'), analogous to da capo form—particularly in view of the modulatory character of section B—but with A tonally adjusted, first time modulating to the dominant and second time remaining in the tonic. The movement belongs to the homophonic French type of duet—the voices move together, illustrating the unanimity of the lovers—which is less common in Bach than the imitative Italian type (represented here by the lovers' earlier duet, 'Wir tragen unsre Flammen', no. 5, bb. 16ff.). The most complex of the non-da capo arias is Pan's aria in C (no. 7), accompanied by a rustic choir of oboes. Here, the analogy is not with da capo form—this is a through-composed movement, albeit of considerable extent—but rather with concerto-ritornello form. The movement comprises a single vocal solo, framed by ritornellos, in which the main keys visited by the bass soloist are then confirmed in intermediate ritornellos, within which the continuing vocal part is inserted. Thus extensive use is made here of the technique of 'vocal insertion',⁸ first encountered in a small way in the aforementioned da capo aria from Cantata 196, and in Bach's later work to be of major importance in the structuring of vocal music. In Pan's aria, according to the analogy with concerto-ritornello form, modulatory vocal phrases accompanied by continuo act as 'episodes' between the closed periods represented by the instrumental ritornellos (in the keys I, V, vi, iii, and I). A similar concerto-ritornello scheme, though on a considerably smaller scale, may be observed in the trio for oboe, violin, and continuo (BWV 1040), built on the theme of Pales's aria (no. 13), which is found in the original score of the cantata (though its intended location and function in the work are uncertain). Here, however, the episodes are differentiated only in substance, not in texture. In view of the miniature ritornello scheme of this movement, it may legitimately be considered a successor to the Sinfonia of Cantata 196; and it is surely no mere coincidence that in both cantatas 'modern' Italian forms derived from concerto and opera are employed in juxtaposition. For Bach the two genres go hand in hand, as of course they did for the Italian concertists themselves.

As already noted above, both of the choruses (nos. 11 and 15) are cast in da capo form. In the first of the two, 'Lebe, Sonne dieser Erden', that form is united with fugue,

⁸ *Vokaleinbau*: the insertion of vocal writing within a reprise of the instrumental ritornello. The term *Choreinbau* was coined by Werner Neumann, *J. S. Bachs Chorfüge: ein Beitrag zur Kompositionstechnik Bachs* (Leipzig, 1938; 3rd edn 1953), pp. 53ff.; but since the technique is used in arias as well as choruses, Alfred Dürr introduced the more general term *Vokaleinbau* (see Dürr *Studien*, p. 133, n. 85).

a fusion that will often occur in Bach's future vocal works. The A section is made up of two fugal treatments of the same theme: a miniature permutation fugue (see Part I Ch. 3, p. 66) for tutti voices with doubling instruments, followed by a purely instrumental stretto fugue. The use of permutation fugue here furnishes a clear link with Bach's early cantatas—an important one, since that form of structuring would continue to be paramount in Bach's vocal fugues throughout the Weimar period and beyond. The finale (the second da capo chorus) is perhaps the most richly inventive movement in the whole work. The substantial 20-bar instrumental ritornello, with its threefold structure of headmotive (played twice), 4-bar sequence, and cadential phrase, illustrates Bach's mature *Fortspinnung* type. The headmotive itself combines in layers three quite independent and distinctive themes: a syncopated figure, a horn call, and a lively continuo motive (Ex. 1). All three are ingeniously combined in new ways during the rest of the ritornello, culminating in close canonic imitation of the syncopated theme (on- and off-beat forms being played simultaneously) against the horn call, now played on bass instruments. Both outer and middle sections of the homophonic chorus that follows are composed along the lines of an operatic motto aria:⁹ the voices enter with the initial gesture or 'motto' (bb. 21–4 and 59–62) and are answered by the instruments playing the headmotive of the ritornello before the vocal section proper, which is again punctuated by the headmotive and concludes with vocal insertion within the canonic phrase of the ritornello. Section B is almost as long as A and follows a similar course in different keys (the headmotive returns now being in keys vi and V) until bar 92, where a passage of great power illustrates the vanquishing of sorrow ('Was Trauren besieget'): four-part canonic imitation in the voices is combined with the canonic phrase from the ritornello (syncopated theme against horn call), which occurs four times in sequence, ascending through the circle of 5ths at each step: C–G–d–a.

Ex. 1



Was mir behagt, ist nur die muntre Jagd, BWV 208, finale, opening bars (oboes, horns, continuo)

The uniting of this movement through the judicious use of ritornello material represents something new for Bach and goes far beyond anything encountered in the

⁹ In the preceding movement (no. 14) too, sections A and B both open with mottos.

early cantatas. A certain continuity with those works, however, may be discerned not only in the use of permutation fugue (no. 11) but also in the form of the continuo arias (nos. 4, 13, and 14). Vocal solos, duets or trios with continuo accompaniment in the early cantatas were usually held together by a basso quasi ostinato (see Part I Ch. 4, p. 84). Often two or three statements of the continuo ritornello opened the movement as a ground bass (the voice entering after the first statement) before freer treatment of its figures ensued. In the continuo arias from the 'Hunt' Cantata, the ritornello recurs frequently enough to be considered a ground bass throughout. The ritornello theme that accompanies the lovesick Endymion in no. 4, though finely wrought, belongs to the purely sequential type characteristic of the earlier continuo arias. Those that accompany the pastoral gods Pales and Pan in nos. 13 and 14 are more melodically structured. In Pan's aria (no. 14), the opening 6-bar continuo theme is immediately taken up by Pan himself (sung by the bass). It is thus fully interchangeable between voice and continuo, unlike earlier examples. The continuo theme of Pales's aria (no. 13), on the other hand, is far more purely instrumental in character—hence its use in the aforementioned trio—but none the less captivatingly melodious for all that. Against it Pales (soprano) sings of the 'wool-rich flocks' ('die wollenreichen Herden') with a contrasting melody in the style of a simple Lied—the same style as that already adopted for the sheep that 'may safely graze' ('Schafe können sicher weiden') in her previous aria (no. 9), there set against a no less attractively melodious instrumental accompaniment for two recorders and continuo.

We do not know exactly when Bach first applied this newer, more operatic style in a similarly thoroughgoing fashion to sacred music, but Cantatas 21 and 199 are likely to have been among the first works in which he did so. According to the autograph handwriting in the original sources, *Mein Herze schwimmt im Blut*, BWV 199, was probably written for the Eleventh Sunday after Trinity (27 August) 1713¹⁰—thus only six months after the first performance of the 'Hunt' Cantata. According to an autograph inscription on the title-page, *Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis*, BWV 21, was performed in Weimar on the Third Sunday after Trinity 1714, but the original oboe parts, in combination with other textual and musical factors, reveal evidence of earlier performances.¹¹ A smaller version—presumably the original one—containing only the first nine movements, might have been written for the same Sunday in 1713 (2 July). And an expanded version, containing all eleven movements and intended 'per ogni tempo' ('for any time'), was presumably written for a special occasion, possibly for performance at Halle in December 1713.¹² It was this version that received a repeat performance in Weimar on 17 June 1714. If this analysis is correct, the original versions

¹⁰ According to Yoshitake Kobayashi, 'Quellenkundliche Überlegungen zur Chronologie der Weimarer Vokalwerke Bachs', *Das Frühwerk*, pp. 290–310 (see p. 304).

¹¹ As Paul Brainard has shown; see his 'Cantata 21 Revisited', in R. L. Marshall (ed.), *Studies in Renaissance and Baroque Music in Honor of Arthur Mendel* (Kassel and Hackensack, NJ, 1974), pp. 231–42, and *Krit. Bericht*, NBA I/16 (Kassel and Leipzig, 1984), pp. 137–9.

¹² This possibility has been much discussed; see, in particular, A. Dürr, 'Zu J. S. Bachs Hallenser Probstück von 1713', *BJ* 1995, pp. 183–4.

of Cantatas 21 and 199 might have been performed eight weeks apart in 1713 (2 July and 27 August); and this close temporal proximity would accord with the remarkable inner relationship between the two works, to which we shall return shortly.

In the richly diverse structure of *Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis*, three chief elements are amalgamated: a monologue of the soul (nos. 3–5), closely related to that of Cantata 199; a dialogue between Christ and the Soul (nos. 7–8),¹³ which might be viewed as a successor to that of the *Actus tragicus*, BWV 106, nos. 6–7; and selected psalm verses, sung in motet-style choruses (nos. 2, 6, and 9) that form supporting pillars to the structure as a whole, just like the psalm-choruses of two early works, Cantatas 150 (nos. 2, 4, and 6) and 131 (nos. 1, 3, and 5). Thus the relatively new (in the context of church music) Italianate forms of recitative and da capo aria are here united with traditional German-Lutheran elements already explored in the early cantatas. Not long after the first performance, an aria and chorus (nos. 10–11) seem to have been added, bringing about a final resolution to the inner drama of the soul, which thereby attains the opposite archetypal state from the sorrow that has hitherto prevailed: the state of jubilation. The component parts of the work are clearly differentiated in key as follows (ps. v. = psalm verse):

1	2	3–5	6	7–8	9	10–11
sinfonia	ps. v.	monologue	ps. v.	dialogue	ps. v.	resolution
c	c	c–f	f–c	E♭–B♭–E♭	g	F–C

Thus the sinfonia, psalm choruses, and monologue are all centred on the tonic C minor, making use also of its dominant and subdominant (G minor and F minor). The dialogue is clearly set off from its surroundings by its orientation around the relative major, E flat. And the resolution returns to the tonic–subdominant relation of the monologue and following psalm chorus (nos. 3–6), but now altered to the major mode in accordance with the inner transformation from sorrow to joy.

The Sinfonia, which takes the form of a florid and deeply expressive duet for oboe and first violin, with supporting strings and continuo, sets the tone of grief and sorrow that prevails during the first part of the cantata. The highly decorative writing for oboe and violin, accompanied by a walking-quaver bass (Ex. 2), seems to be inspired by the beautiful embellishments to the slow movements of Corelli's violin sonatas in the 1710 Roger edition.¹⁴ With its miniature ritornello scheme, the movement is comparable with the sinfonia to Cantata 196 and the trio (BWV 1040) from the 'Hunt' Cantata. The opening theme, repeated with interchanged parts, functions as a mini-ritornello (recurring at bb. 8 and 17b), alternating with episodes in the form of decorated suspension chains. This sinfonia introduces the first of the three psalm choruses (nos. 2, 6, and 9), which, as already noted, are essentially written

¹³ See Michael Märker, 'Die Tradition des Jesus-Seele-Dialoges und ihr Einfluß auf das Werk Bachs', BzBF 9/10 (Leipzig, 1991), pp. 235–41 (esp. 241).

¹⁴ See Dominik Sackmann, *Bach und Corelli: Studien zu Bachs Rezeption von Corellis Violinsonaten Op. 5* (Munich and Salzburg, 2000), pp. 119–26.

in a traditional motet style. In the first two choruses, this style involves composing ‘along to’ the words, which results in a sectional form with frequent changes of texture and tempo, as in the psalm choruses of the early cantatas. The tempo of the first chorus, ‘Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis’ (no. 2), changes as follows: [andante]–adagio–vivace–andante. The adagio, however, amounts to no more than a single link-bar—a block-chordal setting of the word ‘aber’, comparable to that of ‘mein Gott’ in the equivalent movement of Cantata 150 (no. 2), or of ‘von altersher’ in the opening chorus of Cantata 71—and the concluding andante is a mere four-bar coda to the vivace. Essentially, then, the movement is bipartite in accordance with its text, which summarizes the fundamental antithesis of the whole work:

A [andante]: ‘Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis’ (‘I had much grief in my heart’)

B vivace: ‘Aber deine Tröstungen erquickten’ (‘But your consolations revive my soul’)

Ex. 2

Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis, BWV 21, Sinfonia, opening bars (oboe, vln I and continuo; vln II and vla omitted)

The likely derivation of the opening theme (as well as the subject of the organ Fugue in G, BWV 541 no. 2) from the finale of Vivaldi’s *Concerto in D minor*, Op. 3 No. 11, transcribed by Bach as BWV 596, was pointed out long ago¹⁵ (see Part II Ch. 3, Ex. 4). No less evident, however, is the cantata movement’s link with the past: we hear the concertato style of the seventeenth century in the opening duet with tutti cadence, followed by dominant counterstatement, also with tutti cadence—strikingly similar to the opening of the likewise psalm-based first chorus of the early Cantata 196. The present psalm chorus is by no means strictly fugal, but its subject is worked imitatively in a number of stretto-like expositions, as in the first chorus of the early Cantatas 150 and 131 (bb. 68ff.). In the course of the movement Bach increases the intensity by enlarging the opening interval of the subject and by progressively raising the pitch of the 7th or 2nd dissonances between the imitative voices (note especially bb. 30–3).

The second chorus, ‘Was betrübst du dich’ (no. 6), culminates in fugue, like comparable psalm choruses in motet style from some of the early cantatas (BWV 150 no. 2 and 131 no. 5). The block chords in dotted rhythm of the introductory adagio, ‘Was

¹⁵ In *Dürr Studien*, p. 186.

betrübst du dich, meine Seele' ('Why are you cast down, O my soul?'), likewise recall similar passages in those early psalm-based works. In the following passage, marked 'spirituoso', to the words 'Und bist so unruhig in mir?' ('And why are you so disquieted within me?'), the feeling of spiritual unrest is conveyed by close canonic imitation against an underlying harmonic descent through the entire circle of 5ths. After an adagio setting of 'Harre auf Gott' ('Wait upon God'), reminiscent of 'Denn du bist der Gott' from the fourth movement of Cantata 150, the movement concludes with a strict permutation fugue to the words 'Daß er meines Angesichtes Hilfe und mein Gott ist' ('That He is the help of my countenance and my God'). Enhancement and diversification is achieved by scoring the four expositions differently: voices and continuo; instrumental ensemble; ascent of the principal subject through the voices (from bass to soprano) with instrumental doubling; and full texture with crowning entries in the outer parts.

The third chorus, 'Sei nun wieder zufrieden, meine Seele' ('Now be content once more, my soul'; no. 9), being a chorale arrangement in motet style, is comparable with the second and fifth movements of Cantata 4. Whereas those movements were integrated in texture on account of their single text, however, this movement is double-texted—a combination of biblical words and chorale in accordance with seventeenth-century tradition—which results in a clear musical distinction between the chorale and the surrounding parts. During the singing of the first verse of the chorale as a plain cantus firmus in the tenor, the words of Psalm 116: 7 are sung by the other three voices to their own freely invented imitative point. The second chorale verse is enhanced in three ways: by doubling the vocal parts on instruments (they had previously been accompanied only by continuo), by moving the cantus upwards from tenor to soprano, and by introducing a new, livelier motive for the psalm words 'Denn der Herr tut dir Guts' ('For the Lord does you good').

The monologue that unveils the inner drama of the soul occupies three movements—aria, recitative, and aria (nos. 3–5)—all of which were evidently at first intended for the soprano voice; only afterwards did Bach allocate two of them (nos. 4–5) to the tenor. The use of a single voice for all three movements is clearly better suited to the text, with its account of the anguished soul seeking God's succour to no avail. In the instrumental introduction to the soprano aria 'Seufzer, Tränen, Kummer, Not' ('Sighs, tears, grief, distress'; no. 3)—an exceptionally sophisticated example of the Lied type of ritornello¹⁶—a deeply expressive obbligato oboe part conveys the state of affliction which is then put into words by the soprano. The movement¹⁷ is an object lesson in the imaginative use of convention: the 'sighs' of the text are represented, as usual, by appoggiatura figures, which, however, are worked into a melodic line that possesses true individuality. This ritornello melody is made up of five component

¹⁶ See Dürr *Studien*, p. 122, and Hio-Ihm Lee, *Die Form der Ritornelle bei J. S. Bach* (Pfaffenweiler, 1993), p. 217.

¹⁷ Quoted in full in A. Dürr, *Die Kantaten von J. S. Bach* (Kassel, 1971; 6th edn 1995), pp. 95–7; Eng. trans. by R. D. P. Jones as *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 69–71.

phrases that subsequently generate the vocal solo, for this is essentially nothing more than an expansion of the ritornello. The following recitative is set *secco*, which results in a succinct, syllabic setting of the long text, but the sense of abandonment by God is conveyed by the agonized harmony, heightened by its clothing in a full four-part string accompaniment. The aria 'Bäche von gesalzenen Zähren' ('Streams of salty tears'; no. 5) portrays the individual in a state of bitter grief. This portrayal is built into the very substance of the A section of this A–B–A da capo structure, determining the character of its ritornello material, and it necessitates changing from *largo* to *allegro* and to utterly different material in the B section for the words 'Sturm und Wellen mich versehren' ('Storm and waves destroy me'). Such sharp changes of tempo or metre, no doubt a legacy of the old motet principle of composing along to the words, are of quite frequent occurrence among Bach's Weimar arias.

The dialogue between Jesus and the Soul in the *Actus tragicus*, BWV 106 nos. 6–7, had taken place within the older forms of arioso and chorale arrangement; here, on the other hand, it occupies the operatic forms of dialogue-recitative and love duet, which are now transferred to the sacred realm. Both forms had occurred within the 'Hunt' Cantata, BWV 208, nos. 5 and 12, so that Jesus and the Soul may be imagined as taking the place of Diana and Endymion—an illuminating convergence of sacred and secular. The recitative is similar in type to the monologue-recitative (no. 4), namely *secco*, but with the harmony fully realized in a four-part string accompaniment. The soul's transformation is seen as a turning from darkness to light, hence the slow rising scale of B♭ in the first violin part, which no doubt represents the soul seeking the light of Christ's presence. This harks back, with obvious intent, to the smaller first-violin rising scale in the previous recitative, accompanying the words 'mit Bund und Treu verwandt' ('linked [to Christ] by covenant and faithfulness'). A drop of a 12th in the violin and a falling 7th in the voice to the words 'lauter Nacht' ('pure night') signify the soul's descent once more into gloom, but the 7th is inverted as Christ assures the Soul of His watchfulness 'auch in Dunkeln' ('even in darkness'). The movement ends with florid arioso as Jesus speaks of the 'sweet refreshment' ('süßes Labsal') that lies ahead as a reward for withstanding earthly affliction. In the duet 'Komm, mein Jesu, und erquicke' ('Come, my Jesus, and replenish me'; no. 8), the Soul first holds back in doubt, but finally embraces the succour offered by Jesus, at which point the metre changes from common time to a dance-like 3/8 with dotted rhythms. In the A sections of this reprise structure (A–B–A'), the opening theme recurs in a more or less varied form at the beginning of most of the periods, as does a rhyming cadential phrase at the end of them, furnishing clear points of reference, but otherwise Bach composes along to the words in motet style. The subtle construction of the B section belies its simple, dance-like exterior: after their initial phrases, the voices move in canonic imitation, representing their new-found unity; and for the last 20 bars the continuo takes over the leading thematic role, perhaps symbolizing the new firm foundation for the life of the Soul. The unity of the voices here contrasts starkly with their manifest disunity in the A section, where they contradicted each other and pulled in opposite directions.

The transformation of the soul from darkness to light, from sorrow to joy, is affirmed in the two added movements (nos. 10–11) that represent the final resolution of this inner drama of the soul. The dance-like 3/8 rhythms of the continuo aria 'Erfreue dich, Seele, erfreue dich, Herze' ('Rejoice, O soul; rejoice, O heart') clearly hark back to the middle section of the duet (no. 8), in which Jesus and the Soul expressed their unity. In the final chorus of praise (no. 11), two consecutive verses from Revelation ch. 5 (vv. 12 and 13) receive contrasting treatment, giving rise to the bipartite prelude-and-fugue structure that has been encountered repeatedly among the biblical-text choruses of the early cantatas. Verse 12, 'Das Lamm, das erwürget ist...' ('The Lamb that was slain...'), is set as a block-chordal introduction with antiphonal instrumental groups, including trumpet choir, reminiscent of the opening of *Gott ist mein König*, BWV 71 (the two pieces share the same trumpet motive). Verse 13, however, is set as a permutation fugue, built on a principal subject of great elemental power (Ex. 3) for the words 'Lob und Ehre und Preis und Gewalt' ('Glory and honour and praise and power'). The subsidiary subjects, for the words 'Amen' and 'Alleluia', are no less strongly characterized. A gradual process of enhancement takes place in four expositions and an intervening episode: an opening exposition for the voices in rising order, accompanied only by continuo; a counter-exposition, also in rising order but now accompanied by the entire instrumental ensemble; a powerful sequence of modulatory entries (trumpet choir—strings plus woodwind—voices) passing through the circle of 5ths (C–G–d–a), strikingly similar to the canonic sequence in the finale of the 'Hunt' Cantata (bb. 92ff.), probably composed not long before; a blazing Amen episode based on the 'Amen' and 'Alleluia' subjects and returning swiftly through the circle of 5ths (a–D–G–C–F); and finally a series of three crowning subject entries for full choir (with chordal thickening), tutti basses, and celestial trumpet choir. The movement shows Bach at his most sublime and remains unsurpassed, even in Leipzig. As for the cantata as a whole, it is marred somewhat by the palpable disjunction between the first nine movements and the last two: the unexpectedly lightweight aria no. 10 sounds strangely manic after the deeply moving calls for contentment of the soul in the profound chorale-psalm chorus no. 9. For sheer grandeur of conception, however, the work is unequalled among the pre-Leipzig cantatas. And it is hard to think of any work of Bach's other than the B minor Mass that conjures up the two opposite states of the soul, joy and sorrow, with such sustained intensity.

Ex. 3

Lob und Eh - re, und Preis, und Ge - walt sei

un - serm Gott von E - wig - keit zu E - wig - keit

Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis, BWV 21, finale, fugue subject (bb. 12–15; bass and continuo)

In *Mein Herze schwimmt im Blut*, BWV 199, possibly first performed only eight weeks later, the monologue of the soul, which in Cantata 21 was restricted to three movements (nos. 3–5), occupies the entire work, hence its conception as a solo cantata (for soprano, accompanied by oboe, strings, and continuo). Among the most inward and personal of Bach's Weimar cantatas, it deals with the drama of sin and repentance that takes place within the individual soul. The recitatives (nos. 1, 3, and 7), which introduce the three arias, are all accompanied by strings, which not only heightens the expression but creates a background continuity of constant instrumental colour to characterize the inner world of the soul. These recitatives are identical in type with those of Cantata 21 (nos. 4 and 7)—a highly expressive *secco* in which the harmony is fully realized by the strings—and at one point the two works reach near identity (Ex. 4).

Ex. 4

in mei - ner Furcht und Zag - en,

6 b 4+ 2 6

a) *Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis*, BWV 21, 4th movement, b. 3, tenor and continuo (strings omitted)

in Reu und Leid zer - schla - ge

6 b 4+ 2 6

b) *Mein Herze schwimmt im Blut*, BWV 199, 3rd movement, b. 6, soprano and continuo (strings omitted)

In the opening recitative, Bach shows extreme sensitivity to the words, expressing in musical terms the utter turmoil of the soul as it faces up to its sinful nature. Again, there is a very close parallel in *Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis* (Ex. 5). The text of the second recitative (no. 3) centres on a quotation from the Sunday Gospel (Luke 18: 13), 'Gott sei mir Sünder gnädig' ('God be gracious to me, a sinner'), which is highlighted by measured delivery in a triadic descent. The significance of this prayer for forgiveness as the turning-point in the inner drama of the soul is underlined by the recurrence of its triadic descent, altered to the major mode, as the headmotive both of the following aria (no. 4) and of the chorale arrangement (no. 6).

Ex. 5

p

Wie hast du dich, mein Gott, in mei - ner Not, in

p

5 3 7 4 5 6 b

2

tr

mei - ner Furcht und Zag - en, denn ganz von mir ge - wandt?

6 b 4 6 #

2

a) *Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis*, BWV 21, 4th movement, bb. 1–4 (strings, tenor and continuo)

p

Mein Her - ze schwimmt im Blut, weil mich der

p

7 8 6 b

4 4 5 3

2

Sün - den Brut in Got - tes heil - gen Aug - en zum Un - ge - heu - er macht

4 6 6 4

2 3 4 b 2

b) *Mein Herze schwimmt im Blut*, BWV 199, 1st movement, bb. 1–5 (strings, soprano and continuo)

Like the third movement of Cantata 21, the aria 'Stumme Seufzer, stille Klagen' ('Silent sighs, quiet laments'; no. 2) expresses the soul in a state of affliction, and similar means are employed to depict that state. Both are trios in C minor that take the form of an elaborate interplay between obbligato oboe and solo soprano, supported by continuo. Particularly poignant in 'Stumme Seufzer' is the alteration of the major-mode second phrase of the ritornello (relative major Eb) to the minor mode (tonic C minor) in bars 9–10 and 20–1. The A section of this da capo aria is an early example of the large-scale deployment of vocal insertion: apart from the motto and coda, the entire vocal solo is built into a reprise of the ritornello. The other two arias (nos. 4 and 8) are notable for their dance rhythms, which reflect the returning equanimity of the soul. 'Tief gebückt und voller Reue' ('Bent low and full of remorse'; no. 4), is cast in a slow, sarabande-like triple time, which allows the remorse of the sinner to be expressed in music of Handelian breadth and dignity. The vocal melody is written in the simple Lied style that Bach had employed in the 'Hunt' Cantata (nos. 7, 9, and 13), though on this occasion the melody of voice and instruments is essentially the same. A quick, gigue-like 12/8 is introduced in 'Wie freudig ist mein Herz' ('How joyful is my heart'; no. 8) to describe the joy of the repentant sinner upon reconciliation with God. Despite its straightforward dance style, the 'freudig' ritornello is unobtrusively contrapuntal in structure: the headmotive enters in three-part octave imitation, which is then continued canonically for five bars in the upper parts (oboe and first violin).

Even the chorale, 'Ich, dein betrübtes Kind' ('I, your distressed child'; no. 6), is sung as a soprano solo (with viola obbligato and continuo) rather than by four-part choir, a decision that was presumably influenced by the monologue character of the cantata as a whole and, more specifically, by the use of the first person in the text, as in the surrounding movements: the 'distressed child' of the hymn verse is none other than the repentant sinner, who now hears 'words of comfort' (no. 5), the authoritative words of the chorale,¹⁸ which speak of the salvation to be found in Christ's 'deep wounds'. In overall conception this chorale arrangement is not unlike the fourth movement of Cantata 4: both are trios for solo voice (plain chorale, essentially in crotchets), string obbligato (largely in flowing semiquavers), and continuo (in continuous quavers); and in both cases the string obbligato functions as a ritornello, furnishing prelude, interludes, and postlude as well as material for the accompaniment. However, while the ritornello from Cantata 4 is purely sequential and instrumental in character, that of 'Ich, dein betrübtes Kind' is not only a full *Fortspinnung* ritornello (motto–sequence–cadence figure), with an attractively melodious headmotive (a diminution of the first chorale line), but it constitutes a complete chorale paraphrase.¹⁹

¹⁸ Verse 3 of Johann Heermann's *Wo soll ich fliehen hin* (1630).

¹⁹ As shown in Dürr *Studien*, pp. 164–5.

Easter season, 1714

<i>Title, occasion</i>	<i>Earliest source/s</i>	<i>Scribe, date</i>
<i>Himmelskönig, sei willkommen</i> , BWV 182 (Palm Sunday)	Berlin, P 103	Autograph, 1714
<i>Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen</i> , BWV 12 (3. Easter)	Berlin, St 47 Berlin, P 44/6	Part-autograph, 1714– Autograph, 1714
<i>Erschallet, ihr Lieder</i> , BWV 172 (Whit Sunday)	Berlin, St 109 Berlin, St 23	Part-autograph, 1714– Part-autograph, 1714–

On 2 March 1714, the Duke of Weimar promoted Bach from Court Organist to Concertmaster, which entailed the duty of composing and performing a new composition every month. The cantatas listed here²⁰ are the first three works with which he fulfilled this obligation. He must have viewed the official nature and regularity of the commission, in so far as it concerned sacred works, as a realization of the wish he had expressed six years earlier, upon his departure from Mühlhausen, to create ‘a well-regulated church music to the glory of God.’²¹ The texts, which on internal evidence are thought to be by Bach’s usual Weimar librettist Salomo Franck,²² are identical in form, which results in a remarkable uniformity in the overall movement structure of their musical settings. With minor deviations, all three adhere to the following scheme:

Sinfonia—da capo chorus—biblical recitative—three arias—chorale—da capo chorus (Cantata 172 lacks an independent sinfonia; the third aria is combined with a chorale in all but Cantata 182; Cantata 12 lacks the concluding da capo chorus.)

As far as the secularization of the church cantata is concerned, this scheme clearly amounts to something of a retreat, for the typically operatic prefacing of the arias with freely versified recitative does not take place at all. On the other hand, the pervasive secular da capo form is employed not only for many of the arias but for all of the choruses; and the pseudo-dramatic style that Bach cultivated so successfully in the ‘Hunt’ Cantata, and (with sacred subject matter) in Cantatas 21 and 199, is no less evident here. Judging by the impressive use he made in the latter two cantatas of the traditional elements of biblical and chorale texts, it seems likely that their presence in the librettos of Cantatas 182, 12, and 172 would have strongly appealed to him.

Himmelskönig, sei willkommen, BWV 182, is more extrovert than the inward-looking, soul-searching Cantatas 21 and 199, expressing the genial, sunny side of Bach’s artistic personality in music of great melodic charm, freshness, and vitality. Even this work possesses its dark side, however: the tenor aria and chorale-chorus

²⁰ Composed for performance on 25 March, 22 April, and 20 May 1714 respectively; see Dürr *Studien*, p. 64.
²¹ BD I, No. 1; NBR, No. 32. ²² See Dürr *Studien*, p. 63.

(nos. 6–7) deal with the approaching Passion in music of corresponding depth and solemnity. The five preceding movements and the finale (no. 8) are chiefly concerned with the main event of Palm Sunday, Jesus's entry into Jerusalem, which is reinterpreted spiritually in terms of His entry into our hearts. The ceremonial dotted rhythms of the introductory sinfonia (here entitled 'Sonata') set the scene. Essentially a trio for recorder, violin, and continuo, it shares a miniature ritornello scheme with the Trio (BWV 1040) from the 'Hunt' Cantata and the sinfonias to Cantatas 196 and 21 (as well as certain contemporary instrumental works, BWV 564, 655a, and 916).²³ The heavenly King is welcomed and Christians are exhorted to accompany Him in matching G major choruses at the beginning and end of the work (nos. 2 and 8). Not only are both laid out in da capo form, like the choruses of the 'Hunt' Cantata, but both employ permutation fugue, alongside less strict modes of structuring, in their A sections; and in both cases the main component of the B section is a canonic complex over a pedal point, presented twice in different keys.

The three arias are introduced by a biblical-text recitative, no. 3, whose Old Testament words (Psalm 40: 8–9) are reinterpreted from a New Testament, Christian perspective. The speaker is thus identified as Christ, the heavenly King, hence Bach's setting for the traditional *vox Christi* of Passion music, the bass voice. This recitative exhibits the typical Weimar *secco*-arioso structure already noted in the 'Hunt' Cantata. In the arioso section a freely moving voice part is controlled, as it were, by a motivic-sequential continuo part. In the aria 'Starkes Lieben' ('Strong love'; no. 4), which, like no. 6, is cast in the reprise form (A–B–A¹) that Bach found a fruitful alternative to pure da capo form, the central image is of the 'great Son of God' ('großer Gottessohn') enthroned in heavenly glory, hence the use once more of the bass voice. Yet this grandeur is belied by the gently decorative violin accompaniment, whose semiquavers slurred in pairs, typical of Bach's Weimar style, perhaps already allude to Christ's self-giving, the subject of the middle section. With the alto aria (no. 5) the mode changes to minor for the earliest known of Bach's great florid, pathos-filled flute solos. Text illustration is built into the very substance of the ritornello: the descending sequence of bars 3b–5a, each step of which spans the interval of a 13th, clearly represents the gesture of 'laying oneself down before the Saviour' ('Leget euch dem Heiland unter'). The movement is cast in standard da capo form, but with a contrasting tempo for the middle section (largo giving way to andante), as in 'Bäche von gesalzenen Zähren' (no. 5) from Cantata 21, and numerous other arias from the Weimar period.

The minor mode and slow tempo of the alto aria might be heard as a preface to the portion of the work concerned with the Passion, nos. 6–7. In the aria (no. 6), the tenor sings in impassioned tones of his desire to stay by Jesus's side 'through weal and woe'

²³ See Jean-Claude Zehnder, 'Die Weimarer Orgelmusik J. S. Bachs im Spiegel seiner Kantaten', *Musik und Gottesdienst* 41 (1987), pp. 149–62, and the same author's 'Giuseppe Torelli und J. S. Bach: zu Bachs Weimarer Konzertform', *BJ* 1991, pp. 33–95 (esp. 66–72).

(‘durch Wohl und Weh’). The voice is granted free rein to roam at will by virtue of the strict control exercised by the continuo part: the purely sequential ritornello, a common feature of continuo arias, is exactly repeated twice during the A section of this A–B–A¹ reprise structure, then recurs in variant forms throughout section B as a basso quasi ostinato (see Part I Ch. 4, p. 84). ‘Jesu, deine Passion’, no. 7, a motet-style chorale arrangement along similar lines to those of Cantata 4 (nos. 2 and 5), is without doubt the weightiest movement in the whole cantata and the one most specifically centred around the Passion. In a traditional style of chorale setting, each melodic line in turn, in standard note-values and at most lightly varied, is first worked fugally in the three lower voice parts with doubling instruments, and then presented as a long-note cantus firmus in the soprano, doubled by violin and (at the upper octave) recorder. Rich text-illustrative detail is made possible by the use of a freely invented counter-subject within each fugal exposition. The semiquavers of these countersubjects—for example, the melismas on ‘Freude’ (‘joy’; line 2) or ‘Weide’ (‘pasture’; line 4)—greatly invigorate the counterpoint, not only during the fugal expositions but during the cantus firmus statements themselves.

Bach’s second cantata as Weimar Concertmaster, *Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen*, BWV 12, differs little from the first in overall movement structure, but the music could hardly be more different, drawing attention to the vast range of expression that now lay at the composer’s command. The text is based on Jesus’s words from the Gospel reading for the Third Sunday after Easter (John 16: 16–23): ‘Your sorrow shall be turned into joy’. The transition from the one to the other seems to be symbolized by the key relationships: the ending of the work in a major key (B♭) not directly related to the minor key (f) in which it opened; and the key sequence from minor tonic to relative major in two consecutive pairs of movements (nos. 4–5: c–E♭; nos. 6–7: g–B♭). Motivic relationships appear to be directed towards the same end. The rising bass at the opening of the Sinfonia acts as a leitmotiv: inverted and rendered chromatic in the bass of the following chorus, when sorrow is at its height, it is then re-inverted and restored to diatonic form in the recitative (no. 3) to represent entry into the Kingdom of God.²⁴ In the bass aria (no. 5), the same scale figure, prefaced by the leap of a 4th, is worked in close imitation to illustrate the words ‘Ich folge Christo nach’ (‘I follow after Christ’); and in this form it clearly anticipates the concluding chorale, ‘Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan’ (‘Whatever God deals is dealt bountifully’).²⁵ The work incorporates two forms of chorale treatment that were to become typical of the Weimar cantatas thereafter: the wordless, instrumental quotation of a complete chorale melody within an aria (no. 6); and the concluding four-part chorale heightened by instrumental descant (no. 7).

²⁴ Compare with the scale ascent in the 1st violin, as well as that of BWV 21 nos. 4 and 7, where the rising scale is present in the vocal part too.

²⁵ These motivic interconnections have been pointed out in Dürr *Studien*, p. 183, and are described in the same author’s *Die Kantaten von J. S. Bach*, p. 351 (Eng. trans., p. 308).

Bach was unsurpassed in the musical depiction of sorrow, and no finer example could be found than the first two movements of this cantata. The Sinfonia (Ex. 6), which sets the tone of grief, is akin to the slow movement of a concerto in character, and in both respects it recalls the Sinfonia to Cantata 21. In the Corellian florid elaboration of the solo oboe part we encounter Bach at his most personal (having fully assimilated the Italian composer's ornamental style) and intensely expressive. The rich accompanying five-part string texture exhibits the rhythmic differentiation of parts that was to become a classic feature of his mature style: paired semiquavers (violin I and II), paired quavers (viola I and II), and spaced crotchets (continuo).

Ex. 6

Adagio assai

Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen, BWV 12, Sinfonia, bb. 1–2 (oboe, strings and continuo)

The following chorus, 'Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen' ('Weeping, lamenting, grieving, trembling'; no. 2), is a great lament whose words amplify those of Christ from the Sunday Gospel (John 16: 20): 'You shall weep and lament'. Bach returns here to the time-honoured chaconne form that he had already employed in the finale of Cantata 150. Now, however, it is incorporated within an overall da capo structure, so that traditional and newly imported forms are amalgamated. The chaconne, restricted to the A section of the A–B–A scheme, is built upon the traditional *lamento* bass that descends chromatically through a 4th—a theme type of common

occurrence in Bach's early instrumental music. This powerful instrumental substructure permits great freedom in the vocal parts: such is the continuity of the instrumental music that the voices can exchange very brief phrases in a highly imaginative form of vocal scoring, conjuring up the image of a group of Christians giving broken utterance to their intense grief. The chaconne structure seems to characterize a *cycle* of sorrow from which no escape can be found. Motet style is present not only in the complete change of manner and tempo (from *lento* to *un poco allegro*) for the B section, but also in the internal character of this section itself. The voices (presumably to be doubled by instruments), referring to Christians as 'They who bear the mark of Jesus' ('Die das Zeichen Jesu tragen'), oscillate between free polyphony and homophony: the middle voices are subordinate to the outer ones, which often move in free or strict canonic imitation.

The arias are introduced by a brief accompanied recitative, in which a quotation from Acts 14: 22 places the sorrow of the first two movements within the context of the Christian life: 'Through much tribulation we must enter into the Kingdom of God' ('Wir müssen durch viel Trübsal in das Reich Gottes eingehen'). The arias then reflect upon that affliction, and the attitude we should adopt towards it: the inseparability of suffering and reward (no. 4), the imitation of Christ (no. 5), and the necessity to remain faithful to the end (no. 6). It might have been the initial word 'Kreuz' ('Cross') that determined the character of the first aria ('Kreuz und Kronen sind verbunden', no. 4), for it has much in common with the first aria in Cantatas 21 and 199: all three are concerned with the suffering of the Christian, and all three are trios in C minor for oboe, voice, and continuo, in which a highly florid and expressive obbligato part interacts on equal terms with the solo singer. In the bass aria 'Ich folge Christo nach' ('I follow after Christ'; no. 5), close imitation of the headmotive, symbolizing the *imitatio Christi*, results in a ritornello constructed in pure three-part counterpoint. All but the last of its returns are free, involving further inventive contrapuntal working of its themes. The headmotive recurs throughout in the continuo, as if to underline the point that the imitation of Christ forms the foundation of the Christian life. The tenor aria 'Sei getreu' ('Be faithful'; no. 6), a fusion of continuo aria and chorale arrangement, is perhaps the most innovative movement in the cantata. There are three clearly differentiated strands of texture: the chorale melody, lightly ornamented in the trumpet; the ostinato-based continuo part; and, between them, an exceedingly florid and free-ranging tenor solo. The trumpet and continuo provide the fixed elements against which the impassioned tenor can roam free of all thematic ties. Finally, in the authoritative words of the chorale 'Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan' ('Whatever God deals is dealt bountifully'; no. 7), the Christian accepts suffering in the knowledge that he or she is protected by divine providence.

Bach's third cantata as Weimar Concertmaster, *Erschallet, ihr Lieder*, BWV 172, was to become the first of three cantatas with festive scoring written for successive Lutheran High Feasts: Whit 1714 (Cantata 172), Christmas 1714 (Cantata 63), and Easter 1715 (Cantata 31). Like Cantata 182, however, it is by no means exclusively extrovert in character: inner and outer aspects of faith are held in a judicious balance throughout.

The opening chorus and its repeat at the end of the whole work provide a festive frame, but even here the middle section refers to the mystical aspect of the inner life: 'God would prepare our souls to be His temples' ('Gott will sich die Seelen zu Tempeln bereiten'). This notion is then supported by biblical authority in the recitative that introduces the solo portion of the work, a quotation from the Gospel for the day (John 14: 23). Even the festively scored bass aria (no. 3) pleads with God in its middle section to 'come into the tabernacles of our hearts' ('Komm doch in die Herzenshütten'). The following tenor aria (no. 4) calls upon the soul to prepare for the coming of the Holy Spirit, whose arrival is then graphically enacted in the fifth movement, a dialogue between the Soul and the Holy Spirit, which ends with the mystical words of love: 'Ich bin dein und du bist mein!' ('I am yours and you are mine!').

The framing chorus is cast in da capo form, but its real affinity is not with the da capo choruses of the two preceding cantatas (BWV 182 and 12) but rather with those of the 'Hunt' Cantata, particularly its finale. The style that these movements have in common, featuring a 3/8 dance rhythm, homophonic texture, and regular phrase-structure, was to become highly characteristic of Bach's secular cantatas.²⁶ The framing chorus of Cantata 172 thus represents the earliest known of many occasions on which Bach would employ an overtly secular style in his sacred music. Yet a total contrast of key, style, and texture ensues for the middle section of the movement, in accordance with the change from a festive to a mystical text. And this very contrast, alongside the freely fugal writing and doubling instruments of the middle section, belongs to the traditional motet style, so that sacred and secular styles are here juxtaposed.

In the second movement, Jesus's words 'Wer mich liebet, der wird mein Wort halten' ('Whoever loves me will keep my Word') are sung by the bass voice, the traditional *vox Christi*, to *secco* recitative, which, however, soon gives way to arioso in Bach's customary Weimar manner. The bass aria 'Heiligste Dreieinigkeit' ('Most Holy Trinity'; no. 3), is accompanied by three trumpets and drums as well as continuo, no doubt as a symbol of divine kingship—the second line of text reads 'Großer Gott der Ehren' ('Great God of honour'). The elaborate coloraturas of the first trumpet are most striking: this aria is the first of many in which Bach assigns to the trumpet a florid virtuoso part of this kind, here presumably designed to depict the trappings of sovereignty. The utterly different obbligato for unison strings in the tenor aria 'O Seelenparadies' ('O souls' paradise'; no. 4), portrays the Holy Spirit wafting through the soul—the second line speaks of the soul 'that God's Spirit wafts through' ('Das Gottes Geist durchwehet'). The duet 'Komm, laß mich nicht länger warten' ('Come, let me wait no longer'; no. 5), musically the richest and most intimate movement in the whole cantata, unites two disparate elements: a dialogue between the Soul and the Holy Spirit,²⁷ comparable with the Soul-Jesus dialogues of Cantatas 106 and 21, and a wordless, instrumental chorale quotation, as in the equivalent

²⁶ Dürr *Studien*, pp. 26 and 73, discusses the possibility that the chorus from BWV 172 might represent a sacred parody of a secular composition, a setting of Franck's *Erschallet nun wieder*.

²⁷ See the article cited above, n. 13 (esp. p. 241), and Friedhelm Krummacher, 'Gespräch und Struktur: über Bachs geistliche Dialoge', *BzBF* 9/10 (Leipzig, 1991), pp. 45–59.

movement of Cantata 12. The texture is made up of three strands: the chorale, profusely ornamented, in the oboe part; the soprano–alto duet, with its florid melodic lines that are thematically free and largely independent of each other; and the ritornello for obbligato cello, which also functions as a ground bass. As in the related movement from Cantata 12 (no. 6), the oboe and cello parts provide a fixed structure within which the voices are able to exert great freedom. The elaboration, affecting instrumental chorale and voice parts alike, might be considered excessive, but the texture, restricted to two voices and two instruments, is lucid; and the chorale, ‘Komm, heiliger Geist, Herre Gott’ (‘Come, Holy Spirit, Lord God’), was so well known in Bach’s day that it would have been instantly recognized even through all the embellishment. The Soul (soprano) and the Holy Spirit (alto) engage in a mystical love duet. Their growing relationship is enacted musically in the course of the three verses of text. In the first, in which the Soul calls upon the Holy Spirit to come and the latter offers refreshment, the two protagonists are assigned different music. In the second verse, where their love is sealed by the ‘kiss of grace’ (‘den Gnadenkuß’), they come together in parallel 3rds and 6ths. Finally, the two voices increasingly move together or imitate each other in the third verse, where the Soul says, ‘Du hast mir das Herz genommen’ (‘You have ravished my heart’), to which the Holy Spirit replies, ‘Ich bin dein und du bist mein’ (‘I am yours and you are mine’). The concluding four-part chorale sums up the Whitsun message of the whole cantata—‘Von Gott kömmt mir ein Freudenschein’ (‘From God a light of joy comes to me’)—to the melody ‘Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern’, which, like the concluding chorale of Cantata 12, is adorned by an instrumental descant, here for first violin.

Christmas season, 1714

<i>Title, occasion</i>	<i>Earliest source</i>	<i>Scribe, date</i>
<i>Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland</i> , BWV 61 (1. Advent)	Berlin, P 45/5	Autograph, 1714
<i>Christen, ätzt diesen Tag</i> , BWV 63 (Christmas Day)	Berlin, St 9	Part-autograph, 1714–
<i>Tritt auf die Glaubensbahn</i> , BWV 152 (Sun. after Christmas)	Berlin, P 45/2	Autograph, 1714

Although these three cantatas were first performed within a month of each other (on 2, 25, and 30 December 1714),²⁸ they have little in common, partly because their texts were all written by different librettists. Advent and Christmas texts by Salomo Franck, Bach’s usual Weimar librettist, were for some reason presumably not available to him

²⁸ Dates of the Weimar cantatas are henceforth drawn from Dürr *Studien*, pp. 59–74, and from Kobayashi, ‘Quellenkundliche Überlegungen’, whose handwriting and watermark studies mostly confirm Dürr’s findings. Certain modifications have been proposed by Andreas Glöckner, ‘Zur Chronologie der Weimarer Kantaten J. S. Bachs’, *BJ* 1985, pp. 159–64, and by Klaus Hofmann, ‘Neue Überlegungen zu Bachs Weimarer Kantaten-Kalender’, *BJ* 1993, pp. 9–29.

in 1714; consequently he drew from Neumeister's 1714 collection for Cantata 61 and from the work of an unknown librettist for Cantata 63.²⁹ Cantata 152, however, introduces a long series of cantatas based on Franck's collection *Evangelisches Andachts-Opffer*, published in 1715.

In *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*, BWV 61, a central place is occupied by one of Luther's best-known chorales—an Advent equivalent of the Easter chorale upon which Cantata 4 is based—though on this occasion its use is restricted to the opening movement. Like the earlier 1714 cantatas, the work explores two opposite dimensions of its theme: the first half (nos. 1–3) is chiefly concerned with the external aspect of Advent, the second half (nos. 4–6) with the internal. For the Saviour not only comes down to earth, He also enters into the soul of the individual Christian. It may be significant that a similar key sequence is employed in each half of the work, namely a–C (nos. 1–3) and e–G (nos. 4–6).³⁰ The opening chorale calls for the coming of the Saviour; the great benefits of His Advent are enumerated in the recitative (no. 2); and He is then entreated to come to His Church in the tenor aria (no. 3). In the accompanied recitative (no. 4) He comes and knocks at the door of the soul; and this door is opened in the soprano aria (no. 5), so that the two movements together might be viewed as a kind of miniature Jesus–Soul dialogue. This mystical element continues into the finale—the *Abgesang* only (see Part II Ch. 4, p. 216) of Philipp Nicolai's 'Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern'³¹—with its use of the first person and its ecstatic longing for the coming of the Saviour.

In the opening movement, Luther's chorale is embedded within an independent instrumental texture, an extremely fruitful principle that was already informing Bach's large-scale organ chorales and would later form the basis of his Leipzig chorale-choruses. The instrumental music that surrounds the chorale, written in the style of a French Overture with majestic dotted rhythms, is clearly symbolic, marking at once the beginning of the new church year and the coming of the Saviour (in the same way that ceremonial dotted rhythms heralded His entry into Jerusalem in the Sinfonia to Cantata 182). Two distinct modes of chorale treatment are employed: lines 1, 2, and 4 are sung as a *cantus firmus* in long notes in the outer sections of this A–B–A¹ structure; and a variant of line 3 forms the subject of a motet-style stretto fugue with *colla parte* instruments in the middle section, in which we hear how 'all the world marvels' ('des sich wundert alle Welt') at the Saviour's forthcoming birth. The tenor recitative (no. 2) takes the standard Weimar form of *secco*-arioso, but the arioso is now handled in a rather more sophisticated manner than in earlier examples: in place of the underpinning of the voice with continuo sequences, a genuinely imitative interaction takes place between voice and continuo. In the tenor aria (no. 3) Bach compensates for the rather dry text by inventing music of much lyrical charm. Particularly impressive is the considerable extent and compound structure of the

²⁹ There is no firm evidence to link the libretto with the Halle pastor J. M. Heineccius, as has often been done in the past.

³⁰ Compare BWV 12, nos. 4–5 and 6–7.

³¹ Only about 6 months earlier Bach had set the 4th verse of the same chorale as the finale of BWV 172.

opening ritornello, which takes the form a–b–b¹ (4 + 6 + 6 bars) and touches on the keys of G, a, and F before closing in the tonic C.

The biblical-text recitative (no. 4) is conceived as an *accompagnato* with a clearly defined illustrative motive in the instrumental parts, a type that will prove extremely fertile in Bach's later vocal music. The instrumental motive here takes the form of pizzicato chords to represent Jesus' knocking at the door. Since the words (Revelation 3: 20) are those of Jesus Himself, Bach uses the bass voice, the traditional *vox Christi*. The soprano replies to Jesus's words in an aria (no. 5), whose continuo ritornello, though sequential, opens with a brief gesture that turns into the vocal motto for the key words 'Öffne dich' ('Open'). As in many Weimar arias, there is a change of time (from 3/4 to common) and tempo (to adagio) for the middle section of this da capo aria, whose last 6 bars, a setting of the words 'O wie selig werd ich sein!' ('Oh, how blessed I shall be!'), conjure up a timeless, beatific atmosphere often later associated in Bach with the present key of G major. The finale is not simply a plain four-part chorale, but a figural, freely polyphonic setting, which may be connected with the ceremonial occasion—the start of the new church year—as well as, perhaps, the desire to balance the first movement with another elaborate chorale setting. Unfortunately, however, the concluding chorale is too short to provide a satisfactory counterweight to the opening chorus.

The same cannot be said of the Christmas cantata *Christen, ätzt diesen Tag*, BWV 63, where very substantial da capo choruses in the same key act as an outer frame around the solo and duet movements, as in Cantatas 182 and 172. Written for an unusually large ensemble—four trumpets, drums, three oboes, bassoon, strings, four voices, and continuo—it was the second of Bach's three festive cantatas for consecutive High Feasts in 1714–15 (the others being the Whit cantata No. 172 and the Easter cantata No. 31). The highly symmetrical movement structure recalls Bach's early cantatas (BWV 131, 106, and 4):

D.C. chor.—accomp. recit.—duet—secco recit.—duet—accomp. recit.—D.C. chor.

Just as the choruses form a related but contrasting pair, so also do the duets, complementing each other in key (one minor, the other major) and in voice types (one for soprano and bass, the other for alto and tenor).

With its 3/8 dance rhythm, regular phrase structure, and homophonic texture, the opening chorus is written in the secular dance style that Bach had employed in the equivalent movement of Cantata 172 (as well as in the finale of the 'Hunt' Cantata). The opening ritornello is so extended that it acts as an instrumental introduction to the whole work, hence the absence of a separate *sinfonia*. It is more complex and sophisticated than the opening ritornello of Cantata 172—despite obvious similarities, such as the triadic shape of the main theme—deploying its principal motives in antiphonal exchanges between the various instrumental groups. After the entry of the voices, regular homophonic periods in dance style are answered by long irregular periods in motet style with doubling instruments and canonic imitation between the outer voices. These disparate elements are held together, as far as possible, by the instrumental ritornello,

which acts as an outer frame in the A section of the da capo structure, and provides periodic points of repose in related minor keys in the B section. Thus the traditional polyphonic style of the motet is incorporated into the framework of a da capo-ritornello structure, with its strong secular associations. The same is true of the finale (no. 7), though here the two styles consort less easily with one another. In both the A and B sections of this da capo movement, the ritornello and the regular homophonic vocal phrases associated with it act as an outer frame to vast permutation-fugue structures, each built on its own themes and entirely independent of its surroundings. It is not difficult to see the *raison d'être* of these huge structures: they represent the more inward, devotional side of the festive occasion, as explored in the accompanied recitatives (nos. 2 and 6) and in the first duet (no. 3). The first permutation structure, built on two subjects, entreats the 'Most High' to 'look with grace upon these souls stooped in ardour' ('Höchster, schau in Gnaden an diese Glut gebückter Seelen!'); the second, on three subjects, one of which is the traditional chromatic 4th used so often in Bach's early works, prays for deliverance from evil ('But never let it happen that Satan might torment us' / 'Aber niemals nicht geschehn, daß uns Satan möge quälen!'). Like the permutation fugue from the finale of Cantata 71, these structures build up from voices alone, via voices with instrumental doubling, to a radiant climactic trumpet entry. Magnificent music in themselves, they are problematic solely on account of their context, threatening to burst the bounds of Bach's formal restraints. The ritornello itself is written in Bach's most brilliant festive style, marked by showers of demisemiquavers, a style foreshadowed in the trumpet aria from Cantata 172 (no. 3) and later familiar, above all, from the opening movement of the *Christmas Oratorio* (BWV 248¹ No. 1).

Within this massive choral frame, the solo content of the work is represented by the three recitatives that alternate with the two duets. All three, in accordance with Bach's customary Weimar method, change from *secco* to *arioso* for increased expressiveness in the later stages. The highly expressive alto recitative (no. 2), accompanied by strings, is concerned with the mystery of the Incarnation—'O inconceivable yet blessed disposition!' ('O unbegreifliches, doch seliges Verfügen!')—setting the tone for the florid and deeply felt adagio duet (no. 3) that follows. The permutation principle that governs the imitative inner sections of the finale also influences the A section of this duet (Ex. 7). Two ritornello themes, one of which is identical with the countersubject (violin, bb. 3–5) from the Andante of Brandenburg Concerto No. 2, BWV 1047, join with two vocal themes to produce a four-subject combination that is heard in three different permutations (at bb. 8, 9, and 13). The alliance of rigorous structure with the most delicate tracery yields one of the most impressive of Bach's Weimar duets. The second duet, 'Ruft und fleht den Himmel an' ('Call and beseech heaven'; no. 5), returns to the festive mood of the opening chorus, not only in style, metre (3/8), and presumably tempo, but even in thematic material, for the triadic opening theme is clearly a variant of that which opened the whole cantata. The words 'Ihr sollt...erfreuen' ('You shall rejoice') dictate the joyous tone of the movement, and 'Kommt zum Reihen' ('Come to the dance') its pronounced dance rhythm.

Ex. 7

The musical score for Ex. 7 is presented in two systems. The first system includes a vocal line (soprano/bass) and a continuo line. The vocal line has lyrics: "Gott, du hast es wohl ge - fü - get, - was uns it - zo - wi - der -". The continuo line has figured bass notation: 6 4, 5 #, 6, 6 4, 6 5, 6 6 4, 6 9, 8 6, 6 5. The second system continues the vocal line with lyrics: "- fährt, Gott, du hast es wohl ge - fü - get, -" and the continuo line with figured bass notation: 9 8, 5 3, 9 5, 8 6, 6 5. The score includes various musical notations such as clefs, time signatures, and dynamic markings like *piano*.

Christen, ätzet diesen Tag, BWV 63, 3rd movement, bb. 7–10 (oboe, soprano, bass and continuo)

Although first performed less than a week later, *Tritt auf die Glaubensbahn*, BWV 152, represents the opposite pole as far as scoring is concerned. It is a small-scale 'chamber' cantata written for a highly select ensemble comprising paired voices (soprano and bass), winds (recorder and oboe), and strings (viola d'amore and viola da gamba) with organ continuo. Although the work culminates in a Jesus–Soul dialogue, and the same two voices are involved throughout, the bass solos (nos. 2, 3, and 5) do not feature the words of Jesus. Yet they possess biblical authority, being concerned with the metaphor of Jesus as a stone or stumbling-block (Isaiah 8: 14–15, Psalm 118: 22; the third movement quotes the related words of Simeon from Luke 2: 34). The soprano aria (no. 4), on the other hand, represents the prayer of the individual soul to Jesus, and thus paves the way for the concluding dialogue.

The Sinfonia represents a new departure for Bach's cantatas, being constructed in the form of a prelude and fugue. The prelude is a highly florid adagio trio for recorder, oboe, and viola d'amore with supporting bass, somewhat akin to a concerto slow movement. The permutation principle, which informed chorus and duet in Cantata 63, is here applied to instrumental music: the fugue, for all its dance rhythms, is a full-scale permutation fugue on four subjects, which are heard in five different permutations. The principal subject (see Part II Ch. 3, Ex. 6b, p. 188), like the theme of the following aria, has a stepping character that presumably represents 'walking on the path of faith'. In both bass and soprano arias (nos. 2 and 4) the last line of text is a repeat of the first, acting as a motto, which Bach sets to a musical motto theme: 'Tritt auf die Glaubensbahn' ('Walk on the path of faith') in no. 2 to the stepping quavers of the headmotive, and 'Stein, der über alle Schätze' ('Stone above all treasures') in no. 4 to an inverted dominant pedal, held above the florid main theme. The reference here is to Christ as the cornerstone of faith, the 'noble stone' upon which the 'wicked world' wounds itself. The melodic style of this aria, with its slurred semiquaver pairs and its feminine phrase endings, is characteristic of Bach's Weimar years (Ex. 8). The tone of the movement, set by the word 'Seligkeit' (salvation, but also beatitude, eternal bliss), recalls the setting of 'O wie selig' from Cantata 61 (no. 5), performed only four weeks earlier.

Ex. 8



Tritt auf die Glaubensbahn, BWV 152, 4th movement, opening theme (viola d'amore; recorder and continuo omitted)

In the first bass recitative (no. 3), which takes the customary Weimar form *secco*-arioso, the arioso section shows interaction between voice and continuo, as in Cantata 61 (no. 2), with the voice imitating the continuo at the upper 5th in the repeated-quaver theme. The vocal imitation of the continuo presumably represents the 'chosen Christian' laying the 'foundation of his faith' on the cornerstone of the continuo part. The second bass recitative (no. 5) is written in pure *secco*, but nonetheless possesses its own special interest: in the last four bars the music twice modulates up a step to a quite unrelated key (e-f#, f#-g) in order to give a musical representation of blindness, for the text informs us that reason, that 'blind leader... seduces the spiritually blind' ('Die blinde Leiterin verführt die geistlich Blinden'). This disposal of reason paves the way for the illustration of true faith in the duet-finale, a dialogue between Jesus (bass) and the Faithful Soul (soprano),³² and thus a successor to the dialogue portions of Cantatas 106 (nos. 6-7), 21 (nos. 7-8), and 172 no. 5 (where the Holy Spirit takes the place of Jesus). Having employed dance rhythm in the sinfonia, Bach now introduces the 6/4 dotted rhythms of the *loure*,

³² See the articles cited above, nn. 13 and 27.

creating a dance-style frame for the cantata as a whole. The 16-bar ritornello is dance-like not only in its rhythms but also in its very regular phrase structure. The manner in which the dialogue partners interact is highly symbolic: each exchange is set first as a separate appeal and response, and then as a duet in canonic imitation as the Soul takes full cognizance of Jesus' reply. The musical form is novel: within each exchange between the dialogue partners, one phrase of the ritornello is quoted on unison instruments. As a quasi-cantus firmus, it has the effect of binding together the four separate exchanges of the dialogue.

C. 1715

<i>Title, occasion</i>	<i>Earliest source</i>	<i>Scribe, date</i>
<i>Gleichwie der Regen und Schnee</i> , BWV 18 (Sexagesima)	Berlin, St 34	Part-autograph, 1713–15
<i>Widerstehe doch der Sünde</i> , BWV 54 (3. Lent)	Brussels, II.4196	Walther/Krebs, pre-1717
<i>Weichet nur, betrübte Schatten</i> , BWV 202 (wedding)	Leipzig, Ms.R8	J. Ringk, 1730

These three cantatas have little in common beyond the uncertainty that persists over their date of origin and the possibility that they might have originated in early 1715. In the case of Cantata 18, an origin as early as 1713 is not excluded by the original performing parts, but the sophisticated structure of the aria and its ritornello (no. 4) casts doubt on that date—the aria has been described as Bach's most modern aria so far³³—for the first performance would then have preceded that of the 'Hunt' Cantata, whose ritornellos are more elementary, by about ten days.³⁴ In form and style the Sinfonia, with its Vivaldian *unisono* theme, has much in common with that of Cantata 31 (first performed on 21 April 1715), which might perhaps point to an origin in early 1715. Since the text of Cantata 54 is drawn from the same collection as that of Cantata 199 (Lehms's 1711 cycle), it has been assumed that it originated in the same year, 1713. But there are no obvious inner links between Cantatas 54 and 199 of the kind that have been established here between Cantatas 199 and 21; and the Third Sunday in Lent (24 March) 1715 has recently been suggested as a possible date of origin.³⁵ Cantata 202 has often been thought to date from Bach's Cöthen period (1717–23), but this is pure conjecture, and a number of factors point to a Weimar origin. The source adheres almost throughout to the old usage of cancelling sharps by flats rather than naturals, which had vanished from Bach's original scores by about 1715.³⁶ In addition, it has been conjectured that the

³³ By Siegbert Rampe and Dominik Sackmann, *Bachs Orchestermusik: Entstehung, Klangwelt, Interpretation* (Kassel, 2000), p. 192.

³⁴ As Miriam Whaples points out ('Bach's Earliest Arias', p. 45). According to her, the aria-ritornello belongs to the 'compound *Fortspinnung*' type (two central sequences, articulated by a clear dominant cadence).

³⁵ By Hofmann, 'Neue Überlegungen', pp. 17–18, 21, and 27.

³⁶ According to A. Dürr, *Krit. Bericht, NBA I/14* (Kassel and Leipzig, 1963), p. 106, n. 18; see also the same author's *Krit. Bericht, NBA I/35* (1964), pp. 40–1.

text might have been written by Bach's regular Weimar librettist Salomo Franck.³⁷ It must be admitted that the extended arias (nos. 3 and 5) are far in advance of the relatively simple, small-scale forms of the 'Hunt' Cantata, an obvious comparison to make since both are secular compositions. But Cantata 202 might have originated two years later, perhaps in February or March 1715. A number of stylistic features have been pointed out³⁸ that suggest an origin around this time: the brevity and arioso endings of the recitatives; the sinuous oboe line and slow-fast-slow design of the opening aria, frequently paralleled in arias written around then but rare thereafter; and the specific mode of combining voice and obbligato instrument in the aria no. 7, which finds no real counterpart in Bach's vocal works after about 1715.

The text of *Gleichwie der Regen und Schnee vom Himmel fällt*, BWV 18, drawn from Neumeister's third collection of 1711, is made up of the familiar mix of newly composed verse, biblical words, and chorale that Bach had found fruitful in the first Weimar cantatas. Other aspects of the work are most unusual, however, notably the dark scoring for four violas and continuo (recorders were not added till the Leipzig period) and the central place accorded to the troped litany. The exceptionally beautiful Sinfonia is designed along the lines of a concerto movement (it would hardly be out of place in one of the Brandenburg Concertos): the opening *unisono* theme functions as a ritornello within an overall da capo structure; and the four violas function as both ripieno and (particularly violas I and II) concertino. In addition, however, the *unisono* theme acts as the ground bass of a free chaconne, and it may not be entirely fanciful to view this as a reference to the biblical text that follows: the ground bass might represent the earth that is made 'fruitful and fertile' so that it produces good things, as illustrated by the florid viola music above. The biblical words themselves (Isaiah 55: 10–11) are then sung by the bass, accompanied by continuo, in the usual Weimar alternation of *secco* and arioso. The speaker, the Lord Himself, refers to 'the Word that goes out of my mouth'; hence it is doubly significant that Bach uses the traditional *vox Christi* (the bass), for Isaiah's Lord is here identified as Christ, the Word made flesh.

In the central movement, Neumeister's trope of the German translation of the litany by Martin Luther (1528) prompts Bach to produce one of his earliest large-scale hybrid forms, a great chorale-recitative complex. Quotations from the litany are four times sung in responsorial fashion by the soprano and answering four-part choir. Each quotation is preceded by freely versified recitative, sung by tenor and bass in alternation to the accompaniment of the violas as well as continuo. This recitative oscillates flexibly between *secco*, *accompagnato*, and arioso. Key words, such as 'berauben' ('rob'; allegro) or 'mit aller Seligkeit' ('with all salvation'; adagio) are highlighted by especially colourful treatment in both voices and instruments. And the vocal coloratura on 'Verfolgung' ('persecution'), for example, shows the extent to which Bach now brings the operatic style to bear on his sacred vocal music for illustrative

³⁷ See Harald Streck, *Die Verskunst in den poetischen Texten zu den Kantaten J. S. Bachs* (Hamburg, 1971), pp. 165–7.

³⁸ By Joshua Rifkin in the notes that accompany his L'Oiseau Lyre recording.

purposes (Ex. 9). The aria (no. 4) now makes the Word of God—the subject of the two preceding movements—into the concern of the individual Christian in its motto phrase ‘Mein Seelenschatz ist Gottes Wort’ (‘My soul’s treasure is God’s Word’), hence the warm, intimate tone of the music, a trio for unison violas, soprano, and continuo. The work ends with a plain four-part chorale, which was not yet the norm for Bach, as it would later become in Leipzig.

Ex. 9



Gleichwie der Regen und Schnee vom Himmel fällt, BWV 18, 3rd movement, bb. 42–5 (tenor; continuo omitted)

Widerstehe doch der Sünde, BWV 54, whose text belongs to Neumeister’s original operatic type, with its absence of biblical words and chorale, has certain basic features in common with Cantata 199: both are solo cantatas to librettos from Lehms’s 1711 collection, and in both cases the texts are concerned with sin. However, whereas Cantata 199 takes the form of a personal, subjective confession of the sinful soul, *Widerstehe doch* presents an objective discourse on the nature of sin and a sermon-like call to withstand its temptations. The opening movement shows Bach working detailed text illustration into the very substance of an aria. The startling dissonance with which the work opens, and the biting sequential 2nds between the two violin parts, no doubt represent ‘Widerstehe’ (‘resistance’). In the tenor aria (no. 4) from the ‘Hunt’ Cantata, an interrupted or ‘deceptive’ cadence illustrated the traps laid by Cupid to deceive lovers. Here, even more remarkable interrupted cadences in the middle section illustrate the deception of Satan, which causes the soul to be ‘stricken by a curse that is deadly’ (‘Trifft ein Fluch, der tödlich ist’). By this stage in his career, Bach was employing the technique of vocal insertion on a large scale: the second period of the initial vocal solo (bb. 18–25) is built into a full instrumental reprise of the main 8-bar period of the ritornello, transposed to the dominant B♭. The central recitative of this three-movement work is no less graphic in its portrayal of the nature of sin, demonstrating once again the illustrative possibilities of the *secco*-arioso type. At the words ‘ein leerer Schatten und übertünchtes Grab’ (‘empty shadow and whited sepulchre’), the expected B♭ minor cadence is foiled by a diminished 7th on E, whereupon the continuo moves up a diminished 3rd from E to G♭ (Ex. 10). The

recitative changes to arioso, with rushing upward scale figures in the continuo, for the image of sin as 'ein scharfes Schwert' (a 'sharp sword') that pierces body and soul.

Ex. 10

So zeigt sich nur ein lee - rer

Schat - ten und ü - ber - tünch - tes Grab.

6 5

7_b 4

Widerstehe doch der Sünde, BWV 54, 2nd movement, bb. 9–11 (alto and continuo)

The entire discourse on sin is summed up in the biblical statement that opens the concluding aria, 'Wer Sünde tut, der ist vom Teufel' ('He who commits sin is of the devil'), a quotation from 1 John 3: 8. In order to underline the special authority of the biblical words, reprise aria form (A–B–A¹) is here united with a species of permutation fugue: the part-chromatic, part-syncopated theme is treated fugally in combination with two regular countersubjects, the first in quavers and the second in semiquavers. Significantly, the non-biblical words of the B section, in which resistance to sin is advocated, are no longer set fugally in voice and continuo, though the violins and violas continue to remind us of biblical authority in entries of the fugue subject, sometimes in turn and at other times overlapping in stretto.

Weichet nur, betrübte Schatten, BWV 202, is a secular wedding cantata whose specific occasion is unknown; it is scored for solo soprano, obbligato oboe, strings, and continuo. Among the most delightful of Bach's solo cantatas, it celebrates the end of winter and the coming of spring, which is here associated with the dawning of amorous feelings. These associations gradually lead to the subject of the betrothed pair. Like the pastoral music of the 'Hunt' Cantata, the music called forth by the seasonal imagery of the text is full of youthful freshness, vitality, and melodic charm. The opening Adagio, the weightiest of all the movements, is akin to the slow movement of an instrumental concerto, but with an added vocal part. Over a fixed broken-chordal string motive, which depicts the vanishing of wintry shadows, the oboe enters with a long-held dominant note and then breaks into ornamental notes and demisemiquaver festoons in a style typical of Bach's concerto slow movements and related pieces (for example, the sinfonias to Cantatas 21

and 12), evoking an atmosphere of peace and contentment as the frost and wind 'go to rest' and spring approaches. The soprano and oboe then weave a florid duet over the continuing string accompaniment, several times overshadowed by the darker harmonies of the minor mode to represent the disturbances of winter that still now and again make themselves felt. In some respects this Adagio is closer to arioso than aria: the soprano and oboe duet parts are motivic rather than thematic, and the repeated motive of the strings would have been at home in an *accompagnato* recitative. As so often in Bach's Weimar arias, a change of tempo (to andante) ensues for the B section of this da capo design, in which quite new melodic material conveys the joyful sense of good fortune brought by Flora, goddess of flowers.

The brief recitatives (nos. 2, 4, 6, and 8) all take the usual Weimar form of *secco* with arioso ending. The fourth movement ends with a solemn five-bar arioso in which soprano and continuo interact, marking the key moment at which 'ardent hearts' become the focus of interest. In the arias, the very ritornello themes are illustrative. In 'Phoebus eilt mit schnellen Pferden' ('Phoebus hurries with swift horses'; no. 3) the quaver figure of the continuo ritornello no doubt signifies the trotting of Phoebus' horses, and the running semiquavers their swiftness. The extent of their journey 'durch die neugeborne Welt' ('through the newborn world') is represented by the continued presence of this theme as basso quasi ostinato throughout. In 'Wenn die Frühlingslüfte streichen' ('When the spring breezes blow'; no. 5), the obbligato violin part illustrates the spring breezes that 'stroke and waft through the motley fields' ('streichen und durch bunte Felder wehn'). And the playful tone of 'Sich üben im Lieben' ('To become adept in love'; no. 7) is surely prompted by the second line of text, 'In Scherzen sich Herzen' ('To embrace in jest'). The neatly interacting oboe and soprano melodies are conceived in a popular folk-dance style, which has already been anticipated by the beguiling melodic repetitions of the soprano part in the preceding aria (no. 5); and these in turn recall the central andante of the opening movement. In this context it was natural to end with a real dance, the charming Gavotte (no. 9), which might have adorned an instrumental dance suite but for the contribution of the soprano soloist, who presents a vocal variant of the melody between its two instrumental statements. The first and last movements of this cantata are in certain respects complementary: the one extended and weighty, the other brief and light in tone; the one Italian in its stylistic roots, the other French. They have in common, however, the relation between voice and instruments: the soprano in no way dominates the stage but acts as *primus inter pares* in what is essentially a piece of instrumental music that is fully formed and complete in itself.

Lent–Easter, 1715

Title, occasion	Earliest source	Scribe, date
<i>Alles, was von Gott geboren</i> , BWV 80a (3. Lent)	[lost]	—
<i>Der Himmel lacht</i> , BWV 31 (Easter Sunday)	Kraków, St 14	Part-autograph, 1715–

The texts of both these cantatas are drawn from Salomo Franck's 1715 collection *Evangelisches Andachts-Opffer*. The original sources of Cantata 80a are lost, but the work can be reconstructed in essentials from the expanded Leipzig version *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott*, BWV 80. The Weimar version is thought to have been written for performance on 24 March 1715, though an alternative date has also been put forward: 15 March 1716.³⁹ No such uncertainty surrounds the origin of the Easter cantata No. 31: on the basis of the original parts it must have been composed for performance on 21 April 1715.

As far as one can tell, the Weimar cantata *Alles, was von Gott geboren*, BWV 80a, unlike its Leipzig adaptation, seems to have been a modest affair in terms of scoring: none of the movements requires a full four- or five-part string ensemble, and the four voices sing together only in the concluding chorale. The first movement includes a wordless, instrumental chorale (also a feature of Cantatas 106, 12, and 172), but in a significant step forward, the chorale melody quoted is now identical with that which concludes the work,⁴⁰ furnishing it with a unified frame (it was clearly this factor that later stimulated Bach to remodel it as a chorale cantata). The opening chorale-aria (which would later become the second movement of BWV 80) is conceived as a quartet texture of four clearly differentiated strands: obbligato for unison strings; decorated chorale cantus firmus, probably for oboe; elaborate bass solo, full of melismas; and supporting continuo bass. As in the chorale-arias from Cantatas 71 and 172, both solo vocal part and instrumental chorale are extremely florid, with the result that Bach has to rely strongly on his listeners' aural recognition of the chorale. The solo voice is allowed to roam freely, for the string ritornello and the instrumental chorale quotation provide structural constants that ensure thematic cohesion. The energetic ritornello theme for unison strings clearly represents a 'victory' motive, for the first two lines of text, repeated as a motto at the end, read: 'Alles, was von Gott geboren, ist zum Siegen auserkoren' ('Whatsoever is born of God is elected for victory'); and in line 5 we are told that the baptized 'Siegt in Christo für und für' (is 'victorious in Christ for ever and ever').

The recitatives nos. 2 and 4 (corresponding to nos. 3 and 6 in BWV 80) both represent the standard Weimar type of *secco* with arioso ending; and, as in Cantatas 61 (no. 2) and 152 (no. 3), the arioso is interactive between voice and continuo. In the second movement, the interaction is symbolic, a musical equivalent of the unity between Christ and the individual Christian, who is enjoined to bewail his guilt in order 'that the spirit of Christ may be firmly united with you' ('daß Christi Geist mit dir sich fest verbinde'). This introduces the inner, mystical element that prevails in the lyrical movements nos. 3 and 5, by contrast with the combative tone that is predominant elsewhere due to the presence of Luther's chorale *Ein feste Burg* in the outer movements. The third movement (BWV 80 no. 4) is concerned with the union

³⁹ The 1715 date was proposed by Dürr *Studien*, pp. 64 and 171–2; the 1716 alternative (already admitted by Dürr as a possibility) by Hofmann, 'Neue Überlegungen', pp. 21 and 28.

⁴⁰ The concluding chorale of BWV 80a was not taken over into BWV 80, but Franck's libretto gives at this point the 2nd verse of *Ein feste Burg*, whose melody is quoted by Bach in the 1st movement.

between Christ and the soul: 'Come into my heart's house, Lord Jesus, my desire!' ('Komm in mein Herzenshaus, Herr Jesu, mein Verlangen!'). This piece represents a more advanced type of continuo aria than we have encountered before: the continuo ritornello is still sequential, but it comprises a melodic formulation (stated twice in different octaves) that can then be taken over unchanged into the voice part. Since it functions as vocal theme as well as ritornello, it is no longer employed in a quasi-ostinato fashion in the continuo. The mystical tone of this aria recurs in the duet (no. 5; BWV 80 no. 7), 'Wie selig ist der Leib', whose second line reads 'Yet more blessed is the heart that bears You in faith' ('Doch selger ist das Herz, das sich im Glauben trägt'). In polyphonic terms this piece ranks as quite the richest and most dense movement of the whole cantata: a quintet for paired voices (alto and tenor) and instruments (presumably violin and viola) with continuo, in which both pairs engage in strict canonic imitation. The vocal motto (bb. 17–21 and 39–43), on the other hand, is homophonic: the headmotive of the principal theme is presented in beatific 3rds (answered by 6ths in the strings) in the key of G major, to the words 'wie selig' ('how blessed'), a characteristic constellation that recalls the soprano aria from Cantata 61 (no. 5, B section). A quite different theme, a 'victory' motive akin to that of the first movement, follows for the third line: the heart that bears Christ 'remains unvanquished and can strike its enemies' ('Es bleibet unbesiegt und kann die Feinde schlagen'). In this most complex and rewarding movement, then, the antithetical combative and mystical elements of the work at last come together.

The Easter cantata *Der Himmel lacht! Die Erde jubilieret*, BWV 31, is the third of Bach's festive Weimar cantatas for three consecutive High Feasts (the previous ones being BWV 172 and 63), all written for his large feast-day ensemble with its indispensable choir of trumpets and drums. The opening sinfonia-plus-chorus and the concluding chorale form a fully scored frame around the solo movements, which comprise three recitative-aria pairs, for bass, tenor, and soprano in turn. As in Cantata 80a, a retreat from pure da capo form is apparent in the structure of the sinfonia, chorus, and arias. The penultimate movement includes a wordless instrumental chorale, whose melody is identical with that of the chorale-finale—another link with Cantata 80a, which perhaps supports the conjectured dating of their first performances within a month of each other.

The Sonata, as the sinfonia is entitled, is one of the most imposing concerto-ritornello movements from Bach's Weimar years, and has much in common with the equivalent movement from Cantata 18, which might have been performed only a couple of months before: both employ a Vivaldian *unisono* theme as ritornello within an overall reprise structure. In Cantata 18, however, the ritornello theme also serves as a ground bass, whereas that of Cantata 31 is coupled with a second ritornello theme of equal importance, creating a dual thematic structure. It may not be altogether fanciful to hear the two themes as illustrative of the opening words of the cantata: the low, elemental *unisono* theme might represent the 'earth rejoicing'; and the high, glittering, imitative theme, played on trumpets or violins, 'heaven laughing' (Ex. 11). In the

course of the ritornello, the two themes are first heard independently and then combined (a, b, a + b). In the varied reprise at the end, this order is reversed (b, a + b, a) in order to create an overall arch shape in which the impressive *unisono* theme acts as an outer frame.

Ex. 11 *Der Himmel lacht! Die Erde jubiliert*, BWV 31, Sonata

a) **Allegro**



b)



a) Main theme (b. 1; unison instrumental ensemble)

b) Subsidiary theme (b. 7; trumpet I only; other instruments omitted)

The following chorus, like the outer movements of Cantata 63, represents an attempt to unite 'modern' concertante formal principles with the traditional motet technique of composing along to the text. Again, the result is something of an uneasy compromise. The overall form corresponds with the *Bar* form of the text, essentially A–A–B–a (the reprise-*Bar*). The reprise at the end is purely instrumental and drastically abridged, an unavoidable necessity in view of the fact that the main section A has already been heard in full twice over, albeit to different words. It comprises a vivacious fugue, whose subject ('Der Himmel lacht') consists of a trumpet flourish plus 'laughing' motive, while the countersubject ('Die Erde jubiliert') is made up of a syncopated figure plus a 'joy' motive. The two subjects are carried through consistently in each voice in canonic stretto, giving rise to a dual-subject permutation structure comparable with that in the finale of Cantata 63. Motet style intervenes in the B section, which itself takes the overall form of vocal prelude-and-fugue (*adagio*–*allegro*) with *colla parte* instruments, a form common in the earlier cantatas. The *adagio* prelude turns to the minor mode and a grandly homophonic texture for the words 'Der sich das Grab zur Ruh erlesen, der Heiligste kann nicht verwesen' ('He who chose the grave for rest, the Holiest, will be unable to see corruption'). The texture is more than simply homophonic, however: as often in Bach's motet style, the outer voices are freely canonic, while the inner ones move together with the bass. The *allegro* fugue that follows is unorthodox: the subject is answered at the 5th below throughout and the imitation carried through consistently in canonic stretto. Fine as this music is, neither it nor the preceding *adagio* bears any obvious relation to the main A section of the movement, either in style or in thematic material, with the consequence that the brief instrumental reprise of A at the end sounds artificially tagged on rather than inevitable. The laudable attempt to unite motet and concertante styles here creates an unwieldy overall form whose constituent parts are barely held together.

Of the three recitatives, only the second (no. 5) is written in pure *secco*; the others mix *secco* with *arioso* in the usual Weimar manner. The first of them (no. 3), which deals with the life–death antithesis, changes from *secco* to *arioso* four times and includes frequent

tempo changes. The arioso passages involve interaction between voice and continuo, which takes on a symbolic significance in the andante passage at bar 15: 'If our Head lives, His members live too' ('Lebt unser Haupt, so leben auch die Glieder'). The theme of life is pursued further in the bass aria that follows (no. 4), whose first line reads 'Prince of life! Strong champion' ('Fürst des Lebens! Starker Streiter'), hence the dotted rhythms and majestic tone of the continuo ritornello. The solo bass moves freely over a strict continuo part, for the ritornello acts as a ground bass, recurring in all seven times (only 3 bars are free). With the tenor recitative and aria (nos. 5–6) the subject matter turns inwards to consider the resurrection of the spirit. In the aria 'Adam muß in uns verwesen' ('Adam must in us decay'; no. 6), the tenor is assigned his own theme in vocal style, for the ritornello is purely instrumental in character, with its idiomatic writing for first violin. The other strings merely fill in the harmony, so that the texture is essentially that of a trio for first violin, tenor, and continuo. The soprano recitative and aria (nos. 7–8) move on to the concept of the personal resurrection of the Christian after death: 'After this time, I shall rise up again with Christ' ('So werd ich auch nach dieser Zeit mit Christo wieder auferstehen'). The aria expresses the mystical longing of the soul for union with Christ in death: 'Last hour, break forth and close my eyes' ('Letzte Stunde, brich herein, mir die Augen zuzudrücken'). The participants in this quartet are identical with those Bach is thought to have required in the opening movement of Cantata 80a: oboe, unison strings, solo voice, and supporting continuo. The roles of the oboe and strings are reversed, however: here the oboe is entrusted with the obbligato part and unison strings with the chorale cantus firmus. Furthermore, the chorale is now plain rather than embellished, and the voice part is no longer independent but shares the ritornello material with the obbligato oboe. The translucent texture of the music creates an atmosphere of glowing serenity. The concluding chorale, which again deals with the afterlife, attaches words (the fifth verse of 'Wenn mein Stündlein vorhanden ist') to the chorale melody that was quoted by unison strings in the soprano aria, forging another link with Cantata 80a. Like the finales of many of the Weimar cantatas, it includes an instrumental descant, very high and radiant on unison violin and trumpet, conjuring up the lofty regions of heaven and 'ewgen Leben' (the 'life everlasting').

Trinity season, 1715

<i>Title, occasion</i>	<i>Earliest source/s</i>	<i>Scribe, date</i>
<i>O heilges Geist- und Wasserbad</i> , BWV 165 (Trinity Sunday)	Berlin, Am.B.105	J. C. Köpping, 1724?
<i>Barmherziges Herze der Ewigen Liebe</i> , BWV 185 (4. Trinity)	Berlin, P 59	Part-autograph, 1715
	Berlin, St 4	Part-autograph, 1715–

In the case of Cantata 185, the date of origin is secure, since the autograph score is dated 1715. The earliest surviving source of Cantata 165, on the other hand, is a manuscript copy made for a Leipzig revival in 1724. Yet various arguments point quite conclusively to a Weimar origin and a first performance on 16 June 1715.⁴¹ In both cases the texts are drawn from Franck's 1715 collection, *Evangelisches Andachts-Opffer*, and both works are conceived on a small scale, without elaborate choruses: as in Cantata 80a, the four voices sing together only in the concluding chorale.

O heilges Geist- und Wasserbad, BWV 165, opens with a weighty aria for soprano, strings, and continuo, whose subject is rebirth in the spirit through baptism.⁴² As in the finale of Cantata 54, aria-ritornello form is united with fugue, and the two movements correspond closely in structure (which, incidentally, supports the view that Cantata 54 might have originated in 1715): in both cases the ritornello comprises a fugal exposition, and a strict permutation scheme is employed, here based on two subjects. The first subject is subsequently inverted (b. 18) and treated in stretto (b. 25), while the second later receives its own independent exposition (b. 29) and is itself inverted (b. 36). The employment of strict fugal techniques in the context of an aria confers a certain solemnity upon the music, which in Cantata 54 was felt to be appropriate for an important biblical quotation but here relates to the sacrament of baptism.

For the remainder of the work, alto and tenor arias alternate with bass recitatives, and a plain four-part chorale acts as the finale. Only the second bass recitative (no. 4) approaches the exalted level of the opening movement. Here Bach gives telling musical expression to the remorse of the Christian at his breaking of the 'baptismal covenant' ('den Taufbund ... gebrochen') and to the prayer 'Help me to choose You in faith' ('Hilf! daß ich gläubig dich erwähle'). Each of the three sections of the movement consists in the main of *secco*, accompanied by strings for heightened effect, but culminates in a few densely wrought bars of *arioso*. The alto and tenor arias are relatively lightweight. The aria 'Jesu, der aus großer Liebe' ('Jesus, who by your great love'; no. 3), for alto and continuo only, a prayer for permanent renewal of the 'covenant of grace' ('den Gnadenbund'), opens with a purely sequential ritornello which, as in the soprano aria from Cantata 80a, also acts as the vocal headmotive. In this case, however, the theme recurs not only between the vocal solos but during them, in the form of a basso quasi ostinato or pseudo-ground bass. In the aria 'Jesu, meines Todes Tod' ('Jesus, death of my death'; no. 5), a trio for unison violins, tenor, and continuo, text illustration is built into the character of the ritornello, whose paired semiquavers in sequential falling 4ths or rising 3rds are evidently intended to represent the coiling or uncoiling of a serpent, for Jesus is referred to as 'my serpent of salvation' ('mein Heilschlänglein'). Since this instrumental theme is unsuitable for the voice, the tenor enters with a new (though related) theme fashioned in Bach's characteristic Weimar melodic style. The technique of vocal insertion is employed strictly throughout, a sign of full maturity.

⁴¹ See Dürr *Studien*, pp. 64, 67, and 172.

⁴² The Gospel reading for Trinity Sunday included Jesus's words: 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit' (John 3: 5).

Barmherziges Herze der ewigen Liebe, BWV 185, closely resembles Cantata 80a in structure. In both cases a six-movement design is rounded off not merely by returning to the opening key in the finale but by employing the same chorale in the outer movements, at first in a wordless instrumental form but at the end in a plain four-part setting. As in Cantata 165, the most profound and significant movement is the first, a prayer that Jesus's compassionate heart may move that of the Christian to show mercy and goodness. While this prayer is sung as a soprano–tenor duet, the oboe plays a chorale melody of similar import, 'Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ'. The *loure* rhythm of the movement, with its dotted crotchets in 6/4 time, is identical with that of the finale of Cantata 152, whose texture likewise comprises a quartet for two voices, obbligato part, and continuo. The vocal parts, imitative and at times even canonic, are built closely around the initial dotted-rhythm theme, and the inversion with which it is accompanied at the outset in contrary motion (perhaps signifying the conversion of the heart),⁴³ as well as around the subsidiary theme at the words 'erreg, bewege' ('arouse, move'), with its sequential appoggiatura figures. Only the first three lines of the *Abgesang* (see Part II Ch. 4, p. 216) deviate significantly from this thematic material, and the last two lines return to it. The continuo part, with its constantly moving quavers, knits together the duet partners with the oboe cantus firmus, but it also presents the dance-like main theme as an instrumental ritornello at the start of each *Stollen* (see Part II Ch. 4, p. 216) and again at the end of the whole movement.

The alto recitative and aria (nos. 2–3) take the form of a musical sermon: soften your hearts, show mercy, forgive so that you too may be forgiven, and so on. The extended recitative falls into four sections, of which the first three are written in *secco* style, accompanied by strings (with arioso conclusion to the first), and the fourth as arioso. The imitative interaction in this arioso between voice and continuo (the strings are now silent) is text-engendered and exceptionally strict in accordance with the precise measurement of which the text speaks—'For the way you measure will be measured to you again' ('Denn wie ihr meßt, wird man euch wieder messen!'). It takes the form of a canon at the half-bar and lower 7th between alto and continuo, repeated (with melodic inversion) first at the lower 7th, then at the lower 6th. In the aria 'Sei bemüht in dieser Zeit' ('Make every effort in this life'; no. 3), the richly florid style of the thematic material, with its recurring diminution figures, seems designed to illustrate the words 'reichlich auszustreuen' ('scatter abundantly' here on earth), 'soll die Ernte dich erfreuen in der reichen Ewigkeit' ('so that the harvest may make you rejoice in the abundance of eternity'). Another sermon on Christian ethics is contained in the bass recitative and aria (nos. 4–5). Its content is summed up under the motto 'This is the art of the Christian' ('Das ist der Christen Kunst'), which forms the first and last line of the aria. This line is set to a musical motto with a very pronounced rhythmic profile that dominates the entire movement, introducing not only the continuo ritornellos but also each of the vocal solos. The plain four-part concluding chorale—that of

⁴³ As suggested by Dürr, *Die Kantaten von J. S. Bach*, p. 470 (Eng. trans., p. 418).

the first movement with its text now added—is expanded to five parts, as often in the Weimar cantatas, by the addition of an elaborate descant for the first violin.

Trinity season, 1715/16

<i>Title, occasion</i>	<i>Earliest source/s</i>	<i>Scribe, date</i>
<i>Komm, du süße Todesstunde</i> , BWV 161 (16. Trinity)	Berlin, P 124	Anon., pre-1750
<i>Ach! ich sehe, itzt, da ich zur Hochzeit gehe</i> , BWV 162 (20. Trinity)	Berlin, St 469 Berlin, St 1	Anon., post-1750 Autograph, 1715/16

All the original sources of Cantata 161 are lost, but there are strong arguments for dating the origin of the work in the year 1715 (for performance on 6 October) or, at the latest, 1716 (for 27 September).⁴⁴ The origin of the companion cantata No. 162 in 1715 or 1716 can be established on the basis of the original parts. It is possible that both works were originally written in 1715 but that their first performance was delayed till the following year due to the public mourning that had been decreed in Weimar following the death of Prince Johann Ernst. On the other hand, according to a recent study,⁴⁵ technical novelties in both compositions speak for an origin in autumn 1716.

Komm, du süße Todesstunde, BWV 161, is justly celebrated, being one of the most richly inspired of all Bach's Weimar cantatas. The sources of its inspiration appear to be twofold: on the one hand, the mystical longing for union with Christ expressed in the text; and, on the other, the chorale 'Herzlich tut mich verlangen', whose melody has become widely known through its use in the *St Matthew Passion* to the text 'O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden'. Like the chorales of Cantatas 80a and 185, this melody is heard both in a wordless instrumental form in the opening movement, and with text as a plain four-part chorale in the finale, thereby imparting a satisfying arch shape to the composition as a whole. In the opening chorale-aria, the plain chorale cantus firmus, played on the organ, contrasts strikingly with the rich elaboration of the surrounding parts: the chorale seems to represent the objective element of church authority, as opposed to the subjective display of personal feeling in the solo alto part. The vocal theme is drawn from the opening ritornello, in which two obbligato treble recorders, moving in sweet parallel 3rds and 6ths, dwell on the paired semiquaver motive that was already becoming a Bachian fingerprint (see Part II Ch. 4, Ex. 5). In *O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig*, BWV 618 from the *Orgelbüchlein* it was associated with the Passion; here, on the other hand, it expresses a longing for the afterlife—'Come, you sweet hour of death'. The participation of the solo alto and, to some extent, the

⁴⁴ 1715 is the date given in Dürr *Studien*, pp. 65, 68, and 172–3; 1716, the revised date of Glöckner, *BJ* 1985, p. 164.

⁴⁵ Rampe and Sackmann, *Bachs Orchestermusik*, p. 195.

continuo in the thematic material of the obbligato recorders creates a unified texture surrounding the plain chorale cantus firmus. In the finale, the same chorale melody is sung in a four-part harmonization to the fourth verse of 'Herzlich tut mich verlangen'. Again a decorative element accompanies the plain chorale: as often in Bach's Weimar cantatas, a florid instrumental descant is added, here played on unison recorders, which form ornamented 7th suspensions with the chorale and presumably illustrate the radiance of the transfigured body as described in the text.

The two recitatives both change from *secco* to *arioso* where the text requires special emphasis. In the tenor recitative (no. 2), the *arioso* occurs at the point where Franck's text takes on greater formality, turning into a rhyming couplet based on Philippians 1: 23: 'Ich habe Lust, bei Christo bald zu weiden / Ich habe Lust, von dieser Welt zu scheiden' ('I have a desire to pasture soon with Christ / I have a desire to depart from this world'). A pastoral atmosphere, prompted by the word 'weiden' ('pasture'), is created by the cello ostinato, with its tonic pedal, over which the voice declaims freely. The accompanied alto recitative 'Der Schluß ist schon gemacht' ('The end has already come'; no. 4), is a masterpiece of text illustration unsurpassed elsewhere among the Weimar vocal works. The key words 'er ist mein sanfter Schlaf' ('[Death] is my sweet sleep'; bb. 7–11) are sung in an *arioso* fully interactive between voice and instruments, with four-part imitation of a 'sleep' motive in falling quaver pairs against held string chords. At 'So schlage doch' ('then strike'), on the other hand (bb. 23–8), voice and instruments are assigned different motives: a sequential 'striking' motive for the alto in anapaest rhythm, and the earliest known of Bach's many imitations of death-bells, for recorders, pizzicato open strings, and continuo.

The same exceptionally high standard is maintained in the lyrical movements that surround this outstanding recitative. The tenor aria 'Mein Verlangen' ('My longing'; no. 3), with its warm string accompaniment, breathes a tender atmosphere of almost aching longing in accordance with its text, 'My longing is to embrace the Saviour and soon to be with Christ!' ('Mein Verlangen ist, den Heiland zu umfassen und bei Christo bald zu sein!'). The words 'Mein Verlangen' are sung to the appoggiatura sigh figure that opens the ritornello and, together with the imitative falling-scale figure that follows, pervades both vocal and instrumental parts throughout. 'Wenn es meines Gottes Wille' ('If it is my God's will'; no. 5), though often referred to as a chorus, was designated an aria by Franck and is perhaps best considered an aria for a quartet of voices, being composed in standard aria-ritornello form. Coming from such a great master of counterpoint, it is touching in its very simplicity. The melody, which remains essentially the same for ritornello and vocal entry, is like a simple Lied, whose lilting 3/8 rhythm lends it the character of a lullaby. The text invites us to hear in this melody 'des Leibes Last' ('the burden of the body'), and in its decorative accompaniment for treble recorders 'der Geist, des Leibes Gast' ('the spirit, the body's guest') hovering and fluttering above.

Ach! ich sehe, itzt, da ich zur Hochzeit gehe, BWV 162, shows nothing like the same engagement with the text on the part of the composer. The complex structure of the weightiest movements, the bass aria (no. 1) and the duet (no. 5), is not dependent on

the text but arises out of purely musical considerations. In the opening aria for bass, strings, and continuo, the ritornello, which generates all the subsequent vocal music, is written in strict canonic imitation. Yet no attempt is made to represent musically the opposite extremes of the text, 'weal and woe' ('Wohl und Wehe'), salvation and damnation.

The exceptionally fine duet for alto, tenor, and continuo (no. 5), is designed according to a highly elaborate ritornello structure, rather than the simpler scheme that would have sufficed for the text:

<i>Bar</i>	1	13	35	50	58	73	81	94	97	113	121	136
<i>Form</i>	Rit.	A	B	Rit.	B'	Rit.	C	Rit.	A'	Rit.	C'	Rit.
<i>Text-line</i>	—	1	2–5	—	2–5	1	6–8	—	1	1	6–8	—
<i>Key</i>	C	C	C–a–e	e	e–G–C–g–d	d	d–a–e–a	a	a–F–C–G	G	G–d–C	C

Vocal sections A, B, and C, each of which returns once, deliver separate portions of text: A, the opening line 'In meinem Gott bin ich erfreut' ('I rejoice in my God'); B, the middle lines, dealing with 'Die Kleider der Gerechtigkeit' (the 'garments of righteousness'); and C the closing lines, concerned with 'Der Ehren weißes Kleid' ('the white robe of glory'). This structure is held together not only by the regular recurrence of the continuo ritornello: the sequential figure from the second half of the ritornello (from b. 5)—a 'joy' motive, perhaps—which sounds so idiomatic to the cello, also recurs fairly consistently as a continuo ostinato throughout the movement. And, in a striking formal novelty, duet writing (to the words of the first line) is twice built into intermediate ritornellos (those in d and G in the above outline; bb. 73–81 and 113–21). By this means, the first line, whose subject is rejoicing—the only portion of text clearly illustrated in musical terms (note the vocal melismas on 'erfreut', bb. 20–2 and elsewhere)—takes on something of the character of a musical and textual motto, recurring at regular intervals between vocal sections concerned with dress metaphors (B and C). Throughout the movement, the vocal duet parts oscillate with ease between imitative writing and homophonic textures of parallel 3rds and 6ths.

The recitatives (nos. 2 and 4) are *secco*, with Franck's visionary words left to speak for themselves: text illustration is minimal, and no attempt is made to heighten the expression in the usual Weimar manner by introducing passages of *arioso* or *accompagnato*. Similarly, the concluding chorale is no more than a plain four-part harmonization—even the words 'Now I shall be beautifully adorned in the white robe of heaven' ('Itzund werd ich schön geschmücket mit dem weißen Himmelskleid') are overlooked as an invitation to adorn the chorale with a florid instrumental descant such as we encounter frequently elsewhere in the Weimar cantatas. The soprano aria 'Jesu, Brunquell aller Gnaden' ('Jesus, source of all mercies'; no. 3) is difficult to assess fully in the absence of the instrumental obbligato part (for oboe?), which is missing from the original set of parts that are our only source. The continuo part of the first 8 bars, however, makes it fairly clear that the vocal melody also formed the ritornello theme, hence the reconstruction (by the present author) given here (Ex. 12). In music of a gentle, pastoral character, the soprano prays to Jesus for refreshment of the soul.

As in the secular cantata BWV 202 (no. 1, middle section, and no. 5), charming internal melodic repeats (bb. 15, 40, and 43) link the style of the movement with folk music.

Ex. 12

The image displays a musical score for a figured bass part, consisting of four systems. Each system has a treble staff and a bass staff. The bass staff includes figured bass notation (fingerings and accidentals) below the notes. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 12/8. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and accidentals, with some notes beamed together. The figured bass notation includes numbers 6, 7, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, and accidentals like # and b.

Ach! Ich sehe, itzt, da ich zur Hochzeit gehe, BWV 162, 3rd movement, bb. 1–8 (figured bass with reconstructed oboe part)

Trinity–Epiphany, 1715–16

<i>Title, occasion</i>	<i>Earliest source</i>	<i>Scribe, date</i>
<i>Nur jedem das Seine</i> , BWV 163 (23. Trinity)	Berlin, P 137	Autograph, 1715
<i>Bereitet die Wege, bereitet die Bahn</i> , BWV 132 (4. Advent)	Berlin, P 60	Autograph, 1715
<i>Mein Gott, wie lang, ach lange</i> , BWV 155 (2. Epiphany)	Berlin, P 129	Autograph, 1716

These cantatas must have received their first performance in three consecutive months, for the dates of their original performances are assured (24 November 1715, 22 December 1715, and 19 January 1716 respectively). Cantata 132 is dated 1715 in Bach's own hand; and in the other two cases there are conclusive arguments for the dates given.⁴⁶ The texts of all three cantatas are drawn from Franck's 1715 collection *Evangelisches Andachts-Opffer*, and like most of Bach's previous settings from this collection they follow a standard six-movement design: no choruses; three arias alternating with two recitatives plus concluding chorale (only Cantata 155 is an exception, with five movements, lacking an opening aria). The opening aria of Cantatas 163 and 132 (like that of BWV 165 and 162) involves the whole instrumental ensemble, as if to compensate for the absence of a chorus.

In *Nur jedem das Seine*, BWV 163, a coin metaphor derived from the Gospel reading for the day (Matthew 22: 15–22) is handled with considerable maturity: a material illustration is used as a guide to the intangible regions of the spirit. In the opening aria, Franck summarizes Jesus's words (Matthew 22: 21) under the motto 'Nur jedem das Seine' ('Only to each his own'), which forms the sole text for the A section of this da capo aria. For these words Bach invents a motto theme with a very clear rhythmic profile, just as he did for the phrase 'Das ist der Christen Kunst' in the bass aria (no. 5) from Cantata 185. In *Nur jedem das Seine*, each phrase of the ritornello opens with imitation of the motto theme, and it dominates both the vocal part and the string accompaniment thereafter. The bass, in recitative and aria (nos. 2–3), offers Jesus the heart as coin paid in tribute, but, noticing that His image is damaged on it, begs Jesus to restore it. The aria 'Laß mein Herz die Münze sein' ('Let my heart be the coin'; no. 3) is cast as a quartet in which, quite exceptionally, all participants are in the bass register: two obbligato cellos, bass voice, and continuo. The ritornello (see Part II Ch. 4, Ex. 11b) is an imitative duet for the two cellos, with much idiomatic string writing, from which the bass singer extracts the quaver headmotive as his own theme. The link between the unique texture and the words, if any, is obscure, and it is possible that the aria should be considered a purely musical invention without a specific text reference.⁴⁷

However that may be, the tendency to musical experimentation that we notice here is no less evident in the following movement, which takes the form of a duet recitative, a phenomenon otherwise unknown in the Weimar sacred cantatas,⁴⁸ though there is a precedent in the fifth movement of the 'Hunt' Cantata (in which the last two lines are sung by both voices). Again, the impulse seems to be purely musical, since there is nothing in the text that calls for two singers: on the contrary, the text is in the first person throughout. The texture is made up of canonic imitation, either between soprano and alto only or else involving the continuo too. The recitative is an arioso structured in six sections according to the text, of which the last and most extended section is fugal. The mode of construction thus recalls the seventeenth-century sacred

⁴⁶ See Dürr *Studien*, pp. 64–5, 68, and 172.

⁴⁷ Compare with what has been said about the roughly contemporary BWV 162.

⁴⁸ BWV 21 no. 7 is a dialogue-recitative, not a duet-recitative, since the voices sing in alternation rather than simultaneously.

concerto for few voices and continuo. For all its contrapuntal elaboration, this duet recitative is, strictly speaking, no more than an introduction to the duet aria that follows, the weightiest movement in the cantata, in which the trio texture of the recitative is expanded to a quartet by the addition of unison strings, which deliver the chorale 'Meinen Jesum laß ich nicht' as a plain cantus firmus. The movement is thus directly comparable with two earlier Weimar duet-arias with instrumental chorale: the fifth movement of Cantata 172 and the opening movement of Cantata 185. The voice parts are held together by recurring themes, chiefly the headmotive of bars 1–4 and the cadential figure of bar 5. As in the preceding recitative, they are imitative, often to the extent of strict canonic imitation; the exceedingly close relationship between them seems to mirror the unity of Christ and the soul for which the (identical) first and last lines of the text pray: 'Take me from myself and give me to You' ('Nimm mich mir, und gib mich dir'). In the finale chorale 'in semplici stylo' (the continuo part only is given in the source) the melody differs from that quoted in the duet.

In the opening aria of the Advent cantata *Bereitet die Wege, bereitet die Bahn*, BWV 132, Bach adopts a tone of celebration for the coming of the Messiah. This is manifest in the concertante writing for obbligato oboe and strings, in the dance style of the thematic material (with its 6/8 dotted rhythms and regular phrase structure), and in the virtuoso, operatic style of the soprano part, with its splendid melismas on the word 'Bahn' ('path'). The tenor recitative (no. 2) turns from outer to inner preparations for the coming of the Saviour: 'My heart, prepare this very day the path of faith for the Lord' ('Mein Herz, bereite noch heute dem Herrn die Glaubensbahn'). *Secco* style alternates with *arioso* of the interactive type: the first *arioso* passage is written in strict canon at the half-bar and lower 4th between tenor and continuo, a symbol of the *imitatio Christi*; and in the second, the continuo takes up the 'roll' figure of the voice as an ostinato: 'Roll away the heavy stones of sin' ('Wälz ab die schweren Sündensteine'). Voice and continuo finally come together in semiquavers, partly in unison, to the words 'So that He may be united with you in faith' ('Daß er mit dir im Glauben sich vereine!'). The following bass aria with cello obbligato, which partly doubles and partly embellishes the continuo bass, appeals to the Christian to examine his conscience in the words 'Wer bist du?' ('Who are you?'), which recur as a verbal motto and, like the words 'Nur jedem das Seine' in Cantata 163, are consequently set to a musical motto theme with a very distinct rhythmic profile. This motto is presented both in a simple vocal form and in a slightly more elaborate instrumental form that recurs throughout as an ostinato in the cello and continuo parts. The simpler vocal form, always to the repeated question 'Wer bist du?', opens each of the first two vocal solos; the third, on the other hand, provides the uncomfortable answer 'A child of wrath in Satan's net' ('Ein Kind des Zorns in Satans Netze'), and is consequently set in a quite different manner, involving minor mode, chromaticism, melismas, and syncopation, though cello and continuo nonetheless persist with their motto ostinato.

In the alto recitative and aria (nos. 4 and 5) the Christian first confesses a breach of faith—'The baptismal covenant is broken' ('der Taufbund ist gebrochen')—where-

upon Christians are exhorted to consider the untold wealth that follows from baptism. It is curious that Bach uses the same voice for both this movement and the fine alto aria, 'Christi Glieder, ach bedenket' ('Christ's members, ah, consider'; no. 5) that follows, as if inviting us to view as a pair two movements with such different viewpoints: the one in the first person, representing the soul-searching and confessions of the individual Christian; the other, addressing Christians in general, and sermon-like in its doctrinal stance—albeit couched in poetic terms, which is perhaps what inspired Bach. The good that arises from baptism is summed up under the metaphor of clothes: 'Christ gave you as new garments scarlet-purple, white silk—these are the Christians' splendour' ('Christus gab zum neuen Kleide Roten Purpur, weiße Seide, diese sind der Christen Staat'). And it is this 'splendour' that seems to have inspired the lovely decorative figuration of the obbligato violin part (Ex. 13), the first of many violin obbligatos from the Bach cantatas couched in this vein. The concluding chorale is missing from Bach's score but may be supplied from information in Franck's libretto.

Ex. 13

The musical score for Ex. 13 consists of eight staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The notation includes various musical symbols such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings. The first staff is marked with 'a' and features a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. The second staff is marked with 'b' and shows a more complex rhythmic pattern. The third staff continues the melodic line with slurs. The fourth staff is marked with 'a1' and includes a trill. The fifth staff is marked with 'a2' and features a series of eighth notes. The sixth staff is marked with 'b1' and shows a series of eighth notes. The seventh staff continues the melodic line with slurs. The eighth staff concludes the passage with a final note.

Bereitet die Wege, bereitet die Bahn, BWV 132, 5th movement, bb. 1–8 (solo violin; continuo omitted)

Like Cantatas 21 and 199, *Mein Gott, wie lang, ach lange*, BWV 155, reveals the soul in a state of acute distress, here brought about by God's apparent absence. On this basis, a dramatic scene is enacted: the soprano represents the suffering Christian (opening recitative) to whom the alto and tenor advocate faith and hope in a duet, backed up by the bass in recitative; thereupon the soprano, in an aria, is able to 'lay the yoke of cares... upon the shoulders of [God's] grace' ('Lege deiner Sorgen Joch... auf die Achseln seiner Gnaden'). Finally, all four voices unite in a chorale to reinforce the more positive, hopeful attitude to God's invisibility.

The opening accompanied recitative, with its measured declamation and clearly defined vocal motive, over a throbbing tonic pedal accompanied by string chords, shows Bach writing in a style that would eventually lead to the accompanied recitatives of the great Passions. The 'cup of tears' ('Das Tränenmaß'; D minor, quavers against crotchet chords) affects us all the more by contrast with the 'wine of joy' ('Der Freudenwein'; B♭ major, demisemiquaver melisma against semiquaver broken chords), which, however well described in the music, is absent. The answering duet for alto and tenor unusually employs an obbligato bassoon, and it is hard to imagine a greater contrast than between the angular bassoon ritornello, full of large leaps in both directions, and the smooth vocal theme, with its beatific, Italianate parallel 3rds and 6ths. It is possible that in the bassoon part we are to hear the continuing anguish of the seemingly abandoned Christian, to whom the alto and tenor bring a message of hope. The vocal parts are far from bland, however: their opening theme is later treated in close canon at the lower 7th, creating poignant 7th dissonances between the voices (bb. 13–15, 27–30, and 35–7); but on each occasion they eventually coalesce once more into parallel 3rds or 6ths. The duet thus moves easily between homophonic and polyphonic writing. After a bass recitative, with the usual Weimar mixture of *secco* and *arioso* writing, the formerly afflicted soul (soprano) proves the extent of her recovery in an aria in the relative major F (no. 4), whose dotted rhythms and intervallic leaps perhaps reflect the gesture of the text: 'Wirf, mein Herze, wirf dich noch in des Höchsten Liebesarme' ('Cast yourself, my heart, into the loving arms of the Most High'). It is also possible to hear the upward and downward leaps of the theme as a transformed version of the bassoon theme from the second movement: minor turns to major, and the leaps are reduced in extent and made to dance by the dotted rhythms, expressing the transformation from sorrow to joy.

Advent 1716

Title, occasion	Earliest source	Scribe, date
<i>Wachet! betet! betet! wachet!</i> BWV 70a (2. Advent)	Berlin, St 95	Part-autograph, 1716–
<i>Ärgre dich, o Seele, nicht,</i> BWV 186a (3. Advent)	[lost]	—
<i>Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben,</i> BWV 147a (4. Advent)	Berlin, P 102	Autograph, 1716–

All three cantatas survive only in later, expanded versions (BWV 70, 186, and 147), adapted in Leipzig for different occasions in the church year (since no cantatas were performed there between the First Sunday in Advent and Christmas) and performed in 1723, Bach's first year in Leipzig. However, three of the original parts of Cantata 70 contain Weimar watermarks, furnishing conclusive evidence that Bach set Franck's text in Weimar. No Weimar sources of Cantata 186a survive, but the basis of the text in Franck indicates that it goes back to a Weimar Advent cantata; and traces of the original version of the aria no. 3 can be detected beneath the revision. In the case of Cantata 147, the first four folios of the score exhibit Weimar watermarks.⁴⁹

The original versions of the cantatas were composed for three successive Sundays in late 1716 (6, 13, and 20 December), which places them among Bach's last major compositions in Weimar. The texts of all three works are drawn from Franck's collection *Evangelische Sonn- und Festtages-Andachten* (Weimar and Jena, 1717). Consequently, their movement order is identical: chorus—four arias—chorale. The total absence of recitatives is decidedly retrospective, and the insertion of newly composed recitatives was Bach's main task when he revised the cantatas in Leipzig. The occurrence of four arias in succession recalls the three successive arias in the first three cantatas Bach wrote as Weimar Concertmaster, BWV 182, 12, and 172, whose texts are probably also by Franck. The provision in the librettos for an opening chorus enabled Bach to revert to writing on a large scale and for a considerable vocal and instrumental ensemble after the chamber-music scale of all but one of the settings from Franck's 1715 collection (the exception being the Easter cantata, No. 31).

Wachet! betet! betet! wachet!, BWV 70a, is based on the Gospel reading for the Second Sunday in Advent (Luke 21: 25–36), which is concerned with the Second Coming: 'Watch and pray, that you may escape all that shall come to pass and stand before the Son of Man'. The injunction to 'watch and pray' occupies the main part of the opening chorus, where 'wachet' is set to an alert quaver figure and 'betet' to long-held chords, emphasizing the contrasting nature of the two activities. These vocal motives, though prominent, are secondary to the instrumental themes as set forth in the integral sinfonia (bb. 1–16). And the movement represents a major advance on the earlier Weimar choruses in its provision of a powerful instrumental framework for the vocal music: the sinfonia is incorporated within the structure of the movement as its ritornello, and 'choral insertion', the building of vocal parts into thematic instrumental music (see above, n. 8), is used on a large scale for the first time as a means of binding the vocal and instrumental elements together.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ For the Weimar versions of all three cantatas, see Dürr *Studien*, pp. 37–40, 50–1, 65, 68, and 173; and A. Dürr and W. Neumann, *Krit. Bericht, NBA I/1* (Kassel and Leipzig, 1955), pp. 86–97 and 110–12. BWV 70a is further discussed in J. Rifkin, 'Zur Bearbeitungsgeschichte der Kantate "Wachet! betet! betet! wachet!" (BWV 70)', *BJ* 1999, pp. 127–32; and BWV 147a in U. Wolf, 'Eine "neue" Bach-Kantate zum 4. Advent: zur Rekonstruktion der Weimarer Adventskantate "Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben" BWV 147a', *Musik und Kirche*, 66 (1996), pp. 351–5. Wolf's reconstruction has been published (Stuttgart, 1996).

⁵⁰ See Dürr *Studien*, p. 173.

the voice parts are twice built into a reprise of the instrumental ritornello.⁵¹ This sinfonia-ritornello, which generates the rest of the movement, is written in concerto-allegro style: triadic tutti theme *a*; soloistic theme *b* with *perfidia* (see Part II Ch. 3, p. 205) in the first violin; and then brief return of tutti theme *a*. The ritornello structure built on it is incorporated within an overall reprise form (A–B–A¹) as shown:

Section	Sinfonia	A (line 1)			B (lines 2–5)	A ¹ (line 1)
Bar	1	17	23	28	44	63
Form	Rit.	Motto	Epis.	Rit. + choir	Epis.	Rit. + choir
Motive	<i>aba</i> ¹	<i>a</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>aba</i> ¹	<i>dd</i> ¹	<i>aba</i> ¹
Key	C	C	C–G	G	G–C–a–e	C

The central, solo portion of the cantata comprises an aria for each voice: alto, soprano, tenor, and bass. Their instrumentation—assuming that it was similar to that of Cantata 70⁵²—was clearly designed to elicit the maximum possible diversity of texture: duo for alto and continuo only (no. 2); trio for unison strings, soprano, and continuo (no. 3); trio for first violin, tenor, and continuo, with the harmony filled out by middle strings (no. 4); and, finally, duo for bass and continuo, with a middle section for bass with strings and continuo in unison (no. 5). In the second aria, ‘Laßt der Spötter Zungen schmähen’ (‘Let the mockers’ tongues utter abuse’; no. 3), phrases played by unison strings often prompt varied echoes for first violin only, which presumably reflects the mimicry of the ‘mockers’ tongues’. In the third aria, ‘Hebt euer Haupt empor’ (‘Lift up your heads’; no. 4), Christians are exhorted to take heart and lift up their heads, hence the rising profile of the fine theme, common to both instrumental ritornello and vocal part. The sequential continuation of the theme within the concertante ritornello has much in common with the opening theme of the whole cantata, as if to confirm that the warning and words of comfort refer to the same situation. Outstanding among the four arias is the last, ‘Seligster Erquickungstag’ (‘Most blessed day of refreshment’; no. 5). As often in the Weimar cantatas, the components of this A–B–A¹ reprise structure contrast sharply in tempo: adagio–presto–adagio. These tempo changes reflect the extreme contrasts of the text—A: ‘Most blessed day of refreshment’; B: ‘Sound, crack, last stroke!’ (‘Schalle, knalle, letzter Schlag’); and A¹: ‘Jesus leads me to tranquillity’ (‘Jesus führet mich zur Stille’). The outer sections, ‘molt’adagio’, are written in a simple Lied style, in which a most eloquent vocal melody is accompanied only by continuo. In the presto middle section, on the other hand, the apocalyptic singing of the bass is accompanied by a unison theme, marked ‘furioso’, for tutti strings and continuo, whose triadic semiquavers and repeated notes strongly recall the headmotive of the opening chorus. The concluding chorale (no. 6) is adorned not only by the customary Weimar instrumental descant—

⁵¹ In my view, the opening chorus of Cantatas 70a, 186a, and 147a should be understood as examples of ritornello form, due to the fundamental importance of *return* in the structure, even though the returns often have built-in vocal parts. The form of these movements is clearly foreshadowed by the fine, complex duet from BWV 162 (no. 5), which might have been composed only a couple of months earlier.

⁵² Rifkin, ‘Zur Bearbeitungsgeschichte’, concludes that trumpet and oboe were added for the Leipzig version.

here perhaps reflecting the words 'Jesum wünsch ich und sein Licht' ('I desire Jesus and His light')—but by three independent parts (for violin I, violin II, and viola), creating a rich seven-part texture that is weighty enough to tilt the overall balance of the cantata finally in a positive direction: for the individual who holds fast to Christ, hope will win out in the end over fear and dread.

The text of *Ärgre dich, o Seele, nicht*, BWV 186a, is based on the Gospel reading for the Third Sunday in Advent (Matthew 11: 2–10), in which John the Baptist asks Jesus, 'Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?', to which Jesus replies, 'The blind receive their sight' and so forth, followed by the words paraphrased in the first line of this cantata: 'Blessed is he that shall not be offended in me'. That Christ Himself should have caused offence seems to have been found peculiarly poignant by Bach, for it calls forth counterpoint in his deepest, most soul-searching vein. As in the opening chorus of the preceding cantata, the principal thematic material is given out in the instrumental ritornello, in which the vocal ensemble subsequently participates, for their parts are built into the ritornello returns. This shared material is fugal, a deeply expressive two-subject combination (Ex. 14), and whenever the voices are involved one subject is played by the strings, while the other is sung to the first line of text ('Do not be offended...').

Ex. 14

The image displays a musical score for a fugal texture, labeled 'Ex. 14'. It consists of two systems, each with four staves. The first system includes first and second endings, marked 'a' and 'b' respectively. The second system continues the fugal texture. Fingerings and bowings are indicated below the staves.

System 1:

- Staff 1 (Violin I): First ending 'a' (measures 1-4), Second ending 'b' (measures 5-8).
- Staff 2 (Violin II): First ending 'a' (measures 1-4), Second ending 'b' (measures 5-8).
- Staff 3 (Viola): First ending 'b' (measures 1-4), Second ending 'a' (measures 5-8).
- Staff 4 (Cello/Double Bass): First ending 'b' (measures 1-4), Second ending 'a' (measures 5-8).

System 2:

- Staff 1: Continuation of the fugal texture.
- Staff 2: Continuation of the fugal texture.
- Staff 3: Continuation of the fugal texture.
- Staff 4: Continuation of the fugal texture.

Fingerings and bowings are indicated below the staves:

- Staff 1: 7, 9, 7, #, 6, 5, 6, 5, 7, #
- Staff 2: 7, 7, 7, 7, #, 6, #, 5
- Staff 3: 7, 7, 7, 7, #, 6, #, 5
- Staff 4: 7, 7, 7, 7, #, 6, #, 5

Ärgre dich, o Seele, nicht, BWV 186a, 1st movement, bb. 1–4 (strings and continuo; reconstructed from BWV 186 no. 1)

Ritornellos alternate with episodes within an overall compound reprise form thus:

Section	A (line 1)			B (2–4)		A ¹ (5=1)		B ¹ (2–4)		A ² (5=1)
<i>Bar</i>	1	9	14	22	27	29	31	39	44	
<i>Form</i>	Rit.	Epis.	Rit.	Epis.	Rit.	Epis.	Rit.	Epis.	Rit.	
<i>Motive</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>a</i>	
<i>Key</i>	g	g	g–d	B♭–c	c	c	c	B♭–d	d–g	

The ritornellos that open sections A and A¹ are purely instrumental, whereas all the others involve voices too. Between the ritornellos, an alternation takes place between two episodic formulations, *b* and *c*—largely homophonic, motet-style passages for *a cappella* voices with continuo (*a cappella* today denotes unaccompanied vocal music, but in the eighteenth century the vocal parts were often doubled by instruments and/or accompanied by continuo). The first, *b*, forms a brief but arresting prelude to the fugal entries of the voices and sets the same words, the motto line referring to ‘offence’ that both opens and closes Franck’s text for the first movement. The four voices enter one at a time in descending order, creating sharp dissonances to illustrate the key word ‘offended’. The second episode, *c*, sets the remaining lines of Franck’s text (lines 2–4) in a characteristically Bachian motet style: that is, largely in homophony, but with imitation between the outer voices, and with the inner parts mostly moving note-against-note with the bass.

The first aria (no. 2)—identical in time and rhythm with the first aria of Cantata 70a (3/4 with dotted rhythms and triplets)—asks the same question of Jesus as John the Baptist does in the Gospel reading: ‘Is it you who should come... [or] should I await another?’ (‘Bist du, der da kommen soll... [oder] soll ich eines andern warten?’). The major mode and dancing rhythms express confidence in Jesus’ reply, though doubts creep in now and then in the form of tortuous melismas on ‘zweifelsvoll’ (‘full of doubt’) and ‘verstricken’ (‘to ensnare’). The second aria (no. 3), a trio for tenor, possibly obbligato viola, and continuo, paraphrases Jesus’s answer: ‘The Messiah lets Himself be known through His deeds of grace’ (‘Messias läßt sich merken aus seinen Gnadenwerken’). The contrast between the two phrases of the ritornello could hardly be more extreme: a plain antecedent, accompanied by a suspension, in Italian trio-sonata style, answered by the continuo in fugal fashion; then a highly decorative consequent made up of mordent figures in short note-values. Since this consequent phrase is unsuitable for vocal delivery, only the antecedent (in various different forms) is taken up by the voice. It is possible that the stark contrast between the two phrases is intended to illustrate disclosure: Jesus’s true nature as the Messiah at first remains hidden (antecedent), but is revealed in His deeds of grace (consequent).

The third aria, ‘Die Armen will der Herr umarmen’ (‘The Lord will embrace the poor’; no. 4), elaborates upon Jesus’s reference to the poor in His reply. The deeply

expressive writing in the tonic key of G minor recalls the opening chorus, but certain features are specific to this context: the various forms of chromatic line might represent the compassion with which Jesus embraces the poor; and the sequential 6ths perhaps signify the actual gesture of embrace. The fourth aria (no. 5), a duet for soprano and alto accompanied by strings and continuo, is cast in a dance-like 3/8 time enlivened by the dotted rhythms of the *canarie*. The dance time and style were clearly motivated by the metre and rhyme scheme of Franck's text: 'Laß, Seele, kein Leiden / Von Jesu dich scheiden' ('Let, O soul, no suffering separate you from Jesus'). But presumably the import of the text played a part too: the mention of suffering might have suggested the minor mode; and the dancing rhythms might represent the Christian's refusal to be separated from Jesus. The opening instrumental ritornello, a complete 32-bar dance in itself, generates the following vocal duet, which falls into an overall *Bar* scheme (A—A¹—B). The vocal writing, like that of the duet from the 'Hunt' Cantata, BWV 208 (no. 12) illustrates the French homophonic type of duet. Thus all phrases derived from the ritornello are essentially homophonic, with the voices moving in joyous parallel 3rds or 6ths. For the sake of variety, however, two episodes are written in canonic imitation, and these are recapitulated together at the end of the last vocal passage.

The text of *Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben*, BWV 147a, draws a moral from the Gospel reading for the Fourth Sunday in Advent (John 1: 19–28): we 'must bear witness to Christ' ('muß von Christo Zeugnis geben'), just as John the Baptist did before Jesus embarked upon His ministry. This injunction, which might be thought rather intractable material for the composer, nonetheless forms the substance of the large, powerful concertante chorus that opens the work. As in Cantata 70a, the voice parts are largely governed by the instrumental music as set forth in the opening integral sinfonia. A triadic trumpet theme in a spacious 6/4 metre is answered responsorially by the strings; trumpet and first violin engage in an imitative dialogue; and then all instruments participate equally in the cadential phrase. In style and form alike this structure resembles a concerto-ritornello, and it is henceforth employed as such, recurring identically at the end, as well as three times in the middle in variant forms. As in Cantata 70a, this ritornello structure is incorporated within an overall A—B—A¹ reprise form as follows:

Section	Sinfonia	A		B		A ¹		Sinfonia	
<i>Bar</i>	1	9	17	23	27	34	43	50	56
<i>Form</i>	Rit.	Fug.	Rit.	Epis.	Rit.	Epis.	Fug.	Rit.	Epis.
<i>Motive</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>e</i>
<i>Key</i>	C	C	C	a	a	d—F	F—C	C	C

Whereas the framing ritornellos are purely instrumental, the three inner ones are all enriched by inbuilt vocal parts, another feature the movement has in common with its equivalent in Cantata 70a. This cantata goes beyond its predecessor, however, in

incorporating significant elements of fugue and motet style within its ritornello-reprise structure, and in this respect the closest parallel is with the opening movement of Cantata 186a. The fugal writing with which the voices enter, both at first and in the reprise, is clearly generated by the ritornello: the fugue subject is a simplified vocal version of the trumpet theme from the ritornello, and the regular countersubject—a long semiquaver melisma on the word 'Leben' ('life', one of the few opportunities in this movement for word-painting)—shares the character of the imitative and cadential phrases from the ritornello. The episodes (*c*, *d*, and *e*), however, differ radically from both ritornellos and fugal expositions: they alone set the last two lines of the text, and the trumpet and strings are temporarily silent so that the words of revelation may be clearly heard, sung in a motet-like homophonic, *a cappella* style: 'That He is God and Saviour' ('Daß er Gott und Heiland sei'). This great chorus, then, in uniting the outstanding features of the choruses from the two preceding cantatas, surpasses them both.

The four arias alternate between major and minor mode to produce a rich and varied meditation on the theme of bearing witness to Christ and on related issues associated with John the Baptist. The notion that one might be 'ashamed' of acknowledging the Saviour calls forth music of considerable expressive depth in 'Schäme dich, o Seele, nicht' ('Do not be ashamed, O soul'; no. 2), a trio in A minor for alto, possibly viola, and continuo. The constant cross-rhythms and systematic use of hemiola in the thematic material seem to have been prompted by the *a cappella* episodes of the opening chorus. The key changes to F major for the tenor's prayer 'Hilf, Jesu, hilf, daß ich auch dich bekenne' ('Help, Jesus, help, that I too may confess You'; no. 3), a continuo aria on similar lines to the second movement of Cantatas 70a and 186a. As elsewhere in the Weimar cantatas, a verbal motto, 'Hilf, Jesu, hilf', generates a musical motto in a clearly defined rhythm. The fourth movement returns to the minor mode (D minor) for the most inward-looking of the four solo movements. The soprano, participating in a trio with obbligato violin and continuo, sings 'Bereite... die Bahn' ('Prepare the way'), echoing John the Baptist (who in turn echoes Isaiah), though referring here not to Jesus's literal advent but to His entry into the heart and soul of the Christian. This interpretation calls forth two different responses from Bach. In the obbligato violin part, the distinctive headmotive is answered by an outstandingly beautiful decorative figuration (Ex. 15), as it was in the violin obbligato from 'Christi Glieder, ach bedenket' (BWV 132 no. 5), composed for the same Sunday in the previous year (Ex. 13). The extended ritornellos of the two movements are remarkably similar in structure, being made up of two phrases, each comprising headmotive *a* and sequential continuation *b*, but differing in tonal function: the first modulates to the relative major, whereas the second returns to the tonic. The solo soprano part of the later movement is generated by the headmotive of the ritornello, whose rhythm corresponds with the dactylic metre of the text. The preponderance of this rhythm, coupled with the generally syllabic delivery of the text, imparts a popular-song character to the vocal part, which

contrasts sharply with the profuse elaboration of the violin part. Particularly charming in the soprano solo are the internal repeats of certain phrases (bb. 18b, 28b, 33b, and 37b), which recall some earlier Weimar arias written in a relatively popular style.⁵³

The fourth and last aria (no. 5) returns to the major mode (C major) for the words ‘Laß mich der Rufe Stimme hören’ (‘Let me hear the caller’s voice’), alluding to John the Baptist, who once again quotes from Isaiah: ‘I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness’. The ‘caller’s voice’ is assigned to the obbligato trumpet; and not only in key but in its brilliant concertante writing for trumpet, strings, and continuo, this aria very clearly harks back to the opening chorus.

Ex. 15



Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben, BWV 147a, 4th movement, bb. 1–11 (solo violin; continuo omitted; reconstructed from BWV 147 no. 5)

In these three late Weimar cantatas for Advent, BWV 70a, 186a, and 147a (assuming that the lost originals were not very different from what survives), Bach had in all essentials established the style that he would cultivate on his return to the regular composition of church music in Leipzig about six years later. Hence it is hardly surprising that all three were revived—suitably adapted for different occasions—during Bach’s first year in his Leipzig post. Admittedly, the absence of recitative in

⁵³ Compare, for example, BWV 202 no. 1 (middle section), 202 no. 5, and 162 no. 3.

Franck's librettos had to be rectified in order to bring them into line with the other texts of Bach's first church-year cycle of cantatas. But the great concertante choruses of the Weimar Advent cantatas, in which motet style and fugal texture are fully integrated, and the operatic arias, with their subtle reprise forms and complex ritornellos, foreshadow Bach's Leipzig church music in the clearest possible way.

Conclusion

Bach did not arrive at full maturity as a composer overnight. It is safe to assume that a substantial period of transition must have intervened between the youthful works composed at Ohrdruf, Lüneburg, Arnstadt, and Mühlhausen (1695–1708) and the fully mature works of the later Weimar years (1713–17). Indeed, it is otherwise impossible to explain the extraordinary transformation in Bach's style and technique that is clearly apparent when the products of the earlier period are compared with those of the later. The youthful composer, whose emerging individuality is not always obvious amid the myriad of external influences to which he was subjected, turns into the mature master, for whom an untold wealth of varied forms, styles, and techniques is assimilated by sheer force of personality into a style immediately recognizable as his own. The crucial period during which this major transformation is most likely to have taken place is the early Weimar period, c. 1709–13.¹ Unfortunately, we possess very few autographs and no definite composition dates from those years, with the result that, in trying to reconstruct the developmental process that led to full maturity, a large part has to be played by conjecture. Nevertheless, certain clear signs help us to pinpoint this as the likeliest transitional period. The Mühlhausen cantatas (1707–8) may without reservation be classed as representatives of Bach's early style—this applies even to the latest of them, *Gott ist mein König*, BWV 71, which was composed for performance in February 1708, less than six months before Bach's move to Weimar. Almost exactly five years later, in February 1713, Bach performed a new composition in which his mature style of vocal-and-instrumental music emerges fully formed, namely the 'Hunt' Cantata, BWV 208. The secular nature of this work does not detract from the argument, since not long afterwards Bach was applying the same new style to sacred compositions (Cantatas 21, 199, and so forth). Between February 1708 and February 1713, then, Bach's style of writing for vocal and instrumental ensemble changed almost beyond recognition. Yet we have very little inkling as to how this transformation was accomplished: among the surviving cantatas, the only feasible candidates for composition in the period 1708–13 are Cantatas 4 and 196, from which limited

¹ According to Krüger diss., we must assume that Bach's personal style was essentially formed between 1708 and 1714. Jean-Claude Zehnder, in 'Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung in der Mühlhäuser und Weimarer Zeit', *Das Frühwerk*, pp. 311–38 (esp. 325), concludes that the years c. 1709–10 form a clear watershed between Bach's early works and the first products of true mastery.

conclusions can be drawn. It seems probable that substantial losses prevent us from fully understanding how Bach's vocal-and-instrumental style developed during the early Weimar years (when he left Weimar in 1717, many of his works must have remained in the court music library, which was destroyed in a fire—along with the entire ducal palace, the Wilhelmsburg—in 1774).

In the field of instrumental and keyboard music we are hardly better informed. The earliest documentary evidence of Bach's acquaintance with the Italian concerto, the decisive factor in the transformation of his style, dates from around 1709,² and the concerto transcriptions for organ or harpsichord apparently originated between 1709 and 1717.³ During that period one has to assume a continuous preoccupation with the genre on the part of the composer. Yet we are largely in the dark as to how he advanced from his original encounter with Torelli, Albinoni, and Vivaldi to his own highly imaginative reinterpretation of concerto-ritornello form in the Weimar toccatas, preludes and fugues, and organ chorales, not to mention the cantatas. It is more than likely that a major intermediate step remains unaccounted for, presumably due to extensive losses, namely his own first attempts at composing concertos after the Italian model. With regard to the organ chorale, the oldest among the 'Seventeen' may belong to the early or transitional periods, the remainder presumably to the same period as the *Orgelbüchlein*, which itself signals Bach's arrival at full maturity. In terms of his creative development, if it is right to posit 1709–13 as a period of transition, then the *Orgelbüchlein* is perhaps more likely to have originated from 1713 onwards than—as has recently been suggested—as early as 1708.

While remarking the stylistic transformation in Bach's music that took place during the early Weimar years, it is important not to overlook the essential continuity that is nonetheless evident in many respects between his pre-Weimar and Weimar compositions, a continuity that often renders it impossible to assign a particular piece with certainty to one period or the other. The genres of toccata and prelude-and-fugue, already fully established in Bach's early keyboard music, remain central to his creative work during the Weimar period. In the case of the toccata, those in F# minor and C minor (BWV 910 and 911) appear to occupy a transitional place between the early toccatas (BWV 912–15), still so clearly rooted in the seventeenth century, and the later toccatas (BWV 916, 564, 540 no. 1, and 538), with their substantial input from concerto-ritornello form. In the case of the prelude and fugue, that in G minor, BWV 535a (c. 1706), the most advanced of Bach's early contributions to the genre, initiates a continuous process of development that encompasses all those that presumably originated in the Weimar period (BWV 543a, 536, 550, 541, and 545a), among which the A minor, BWV 543a, in certain respects seems to occupy a transitional role. The fugal component of this two-movement form was already

² Though internal evidence of Bach's grappling with concerto style and form may be found in a number of instrumental pieces from before that date (BWV 912a no. 2, 915 no. 2, 963, and 967); see above, Part I Ch. 2.

³ They cannot all be allocated to the year July 1713–July 1714, as was formerly thought (see above, Part II Ch. 2).

fully developed in the early Prelude and Fugue in G minor: later developments took the form of extending the range and structural role of subsidiary keys and reducing or even abolishing the role played by free fantasy. A corresponding development took place in the prelude: the pseudo-improvisatory style was increasingly marginalized or even replaced by highly structured modes of discourse, with the result that the prelude took on a size, weight, and substance more nearly equivalent to that of the following fugue. Such was the abiding centrality of the dual prelude-and-fugue structure during the Weimar years that other genres, such as toccata and passacaglia, were repeatedly assimilated to it.

Even though free fantasy—which to a considerable extent determined the character of Bach's early music—was marginalized in the later prelude-and-fugue and toccata, it continues to blossom in the *Pièce d'orgue*, BWV 572, a ripe successor to the early fantasia and praeludium BWV 922 and 532 no. 1, and the last and finest representative of its type. Similarly, various other seventeenth-century forms of organ music are brought to their final fruition in the Weimar years: the passacaglia (in BWV 582), the pedal toccata (BWV 540 no. 1), the four-part cantus firmus chorale (BWV 657), and the combination-form chorale (BWV 733). Such continuity with the past is no less apparent in the sphere of the sacred cantata. Types of choral writing that Bach had employed in the early cantatas continue to be valid in Weimar, hence the motet-style choruses of *Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis*, BWV 21, and the traditional modes of chorale setting (BWV 21 no. 9 and 182 no. 7) that so clearly hark back to those of *Christ lag in Todes Banden*, BWV 4. Permutation fugue, already well established in the early cantatas, is likewise carried forward and handled with great resource and imagination in the 'Hunt' Cantata and in the church cantatas that followed.

One secret of the extraordinary richness and diversity of Bach's mature style is that, far from rejecting old forms, styles, and techniques when embracing new methods, he kept them alive, seeking a fruitful interaction between tradition and innovation. His inclination at Weimar was to amalgamate concerto-ritornello form with the structures he had been cultivating since his earliest composing years, in order to create new, freshly thought-out approaches to composition. Since he never acted according to preconceived formulas, but to a considerable extent worked on an ad-hoc basis, he produced a different solution each time, and it is this, together with the sheer quality of the invention, that helps to explain why each composition possesses its own unique individuality. In the choruses of certain Weimar cantatas, for example (BWV 172, 63, and 31), he makes an ambitious attempt to unite the 'modern' concertante formal structure—and its usual stylistic attributes—with the traditional motet style that he had already cultivated in the early cantatas. This meets with only partial success, however, until the formal technique of 'vocal insertion'—the building of vocal parts into the instrumental ritornellos—is at last transferred from aria to chorus at the end of the Weimar period (BWV 70a, 186a, and 147a). A similar fusion of forms, styles, and genres takes place in the organ and harpsichord music. In BWV 911 and 538, toccata is assimilated to prelude-and-fugue in such a manner that

concertante elements come into play. Toccata and prelude-and-fugue are overtly conflated with concerto in BWV 916 and 894 respectively. And in BWV 545a and 541, the prelude is designed along ritornello lines, as is the fugue in BWV 944. Similarly, in some of the more advanced chorales among the 'Seventeen', ritornello modes of structuring are united with traditional methods of chorale treatment, such as the chorale motet (in BWV 653a), the ornamented chorale (BWV 660a) or the cantus firmus chorale (BWV 661a). Bach's tendency to interlink formerly separate genres also results in large-scale hybrid forms,⁴ in which two different formal elements, though juxtaposed and thematically interrelated within an overall composite structure, nonetheless retain their own distinct identities. This can be seen in combinations of ritornello form and cantus firmus chorale (in BWV 655a and 664a), toccata and concerto (BWV 564 and 540 no. 1), and passacaglia and fugue (BWV 582). The procedure gives rise to two of the most massive and monumental continuous structures that Bach ever created: the Passacaglia and the F major Toccata.

Our information about Bach's first encounter with the Italian concerto is sketchy, but it seems clear from certain early sonata and toccata movements (see n. 2) that he was familiar with Albinoni's Op. 2 concertos by about 1707—several years before he copied out the continuo part from the Concerto No. 2 in E minor. Albinoni's example continued to be important to Bach during the Weimar years, as did that of Torelli, whose concertos he might have come to know through Pisendel in 1709. At a somewhat later stage, perhaps in 1713, Bach might have become acquainted with the earliest set of concertos by Vivaldi, his *L'estro armonico*, Op. 3, published in 1711, which perhaps led to the apparent Vivaldi quotation in the first chorus of *Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis*, BWV 21 no. 2 (1713/14), though his influence on Bach's Weimar cantatas is not otherwise clearly perceptible until 1715. In view of the immense quantity and diversity of music in concerto style to which Bach must have been exposed at this stage of his career, it is hardly surprising to find that he cultivated several quite different species of ritornello form. One of the most prominent in the middle Weimar years is a highly compact form with short ritornellos that recur with little change in about five different keys. This type, which occurs in toccatas (such as BWV 916 and 564), in an organ chorale (BWV 655a), and in instrumental pieces from several cantatas (BWV 1040 and 182 no. 1), was apparently modelled on Torelli.⁵ Closest to Vivaldi's later concerto form—with its fixed-key ritornellos and modulating episodes—but nonetheless quite independent of it, is the ritornello scheme that Bach adopts in the prelude BWV 545a no. 1 and in the toccatas BWV 564 and 540 no. 1, which is made up of an alternation of open and closed periods, corresponding to episodes and ritornellos respectively. The most characteristic ritornello form employed by Bach in Weimar, however—anticipated in the early sonata and toccata

⁴ The term 'hybrid concerto form' was introduced by George Stauffer, *The Organ Preludes of J. S. Bach* (Ann Arbor, 1980), pp. 42ff.

⁵ According to J.-C. Zehnder, 'Giuseppe Torelli und J. S. Bach: zu Bachs Weimarer Konzertform', *BJ* 1991, pp. 33–95. Short ritornellos are also found in the sinfonias to BWV 196 and 21.

movements mentioned above—owes more to the procedures of the early concertists Albinoni and Torelli than to Vivaldi. The first period, which may or may not be repeated in full at the end, constitutes a complete ritornello in the tonic (or I–V), made up of headmotive, *Fortspinnung* (sequential ‘spinning out’), and cadential phrase. Intermediate periods each start with the headmotive of the ritornello but then continue with a new or varied *Fortspinnung* before cadencing in a new key. That cadence, together with the thematic return that follows, is the crucial event at each stage of the musical ‘drama’—an apt word to describe the manner in which the composition unfolds. A fine example of this species of ritornello form is the Prelude in G, BWV 541 no. 1, which has been described as a ‘strophe-like succession of several versions of a ritornello-like period.’⁶ This gives a clearer idea of the structure than any account based on a Vivaldian ritornello–episode alternation.

This manner of structuring a large movement became so natural to Bach that he even employed it in works that otherwise bear little apparent relation to the concerto. The central alla breve of the *Pièce d’orgue*, BWV 572, for example, is organized according to a clear period structure, articulated by important cadences, in which each period opens with a varied thematic return and cadences in a new key. Over and above this period structure, Bach often thinks in terms of large paragraphs that together form some kind of reprise structure, laid out in accordance with the overall key scheme. If the first of three paragraphs closes in the tonic, an A–B–A da capo structure might arise; if it closes in the dominant, an A–B–A¹ scheme is more likely, since the return of paragraph A will require modification in order to close in the tonic. Whether or not a reprise and/or ritornello scheme is operative, the overriding principle of *return*, derived from the concerto, plays an essential part in much of Bach’s mature Weimar music. Typically, substantial portions of a piece return at a later stage, though varied by transposition and interchange of parts. This applies not only to ritornellos but to episodes (for example, those of the D minor Toccata, BWV 538 no. 1); and it even occurs during the later Weimar years in fugue (notably in the G minor Fugue, BWV 542 no. 2)—a formal procedure not normally associated with the principle of return. For Bach, however, fugue is no less susceptible than any other formal procedure to the pervasive influence of the concerto. Following the example of Torelli’s Op. 8 concertos, perhaps, he often constructs a ritornello in the form of a fugal exposition (in the Prelude in C, BWV 545a no. 1, for example, or in the organ chorales BWV 653a, 661a, and 664a). But he goes further than Torelli, incorporating fugue within an overall ritornello–reprise form, as in the opening movement of the late Weimar cantatas BWV 186a and 147a, or else making a thoroughgoing conflation of fugue with ritornello form (BWV 944). Inevitably, whether in fugues or elsewhere, the idioms of the concerto become part of Bach’s musical language. For example, whereas the *passaggi* of his free (not chorale-based) organ works formerly breathed the air of

⁶ By Werner Breig, ‘Bachs freie Orgelmusik unter dem Einfluß der italienischen Konzertform’, in R. Szeskus (ed.), *J. S. Bachs Traditionsraum*, Bach-Studien, 9 (Leipzig, 1986), pp. 29–43 (see p. 36).

the North-German *stylus phantasticus*, now, in such works as BWV 541 no. 1, 564, and 572, they tend to be smoother, more Italianate, and more 'violinistic' in style.⁷ Equally idiomatic to the violin, though transferred by Bach to organ or harpsichord, are those cadenzas of the *perfidia* variety—built on persistent repetition of a single figure—which, under the influence of Torelli, he employs as a dramatic form of preparation for an important thematic entry or ritornello, often the last one in a movement.⁸

At a more fundamental level, Bach is indebted to the concerto for a hugely expanded conception of the resources of tonality. The increased range of key available to him in Weimar is clear from the fugues. Whereas those of the early period are largely restricted to the tonic and dominant, the three- or four-phase Weimar fugues, in accordance with the new concertante style, tend to modulate in order to permit entries of the subject in three or more subsidiary keys. The presence of tonal centres other than the tonic allows clearly articulated modulatory steps to be organized around them. Changes of key are thus better prepared and more purposeful than the abrupt modulations of the early works. Not only the process of modulation but the period of dwelling in a new key are now greatly extended, with the result that a stronger sense of long-range harmonic tension and resolution is achieved.⁹ By the mid-Weimar years, Bach was making fully comprehensive use of the modern tonal system, hence the range of modulation in the *Pièce d'orgue*, BWV 572, which encompasses all keys directly related to the tonic, and the fully chromatic cadenza in that work, comparable with those of BWV 535 no. 1 and 948. Bach's early exploration of remote keys—in such works as the Capriccio in E, the Toccata in D or the Overture in G minor (BWV 993, 912a, and 822), for example—is here extended to embrace the complete chromatic scale, permitting exploration of the farthest reaches of the tonal system. These passages, like Bach's improvised fantasias, according to Forkel, demonstrate that 'all the 24 keys were in his power: he did with them what he pleased'.¹⁰ It is but a logical step from here to the fully chromatic key system of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*. Experience of concerto-ritornello form taught Bach the long-range structural use of key in co-ordination with theme and texture, and it was this realization that led to the great triumph of the F major Toccata, BWV 540 no. 1.

Despite obvious similarities, the ritornello form of the concerto is quite distinct from that of the operatic aria,¹¹ and yet a fruitful process of cross-fertilization seems to have taken place between them. Whereas in Italy the aria influenced the form of the concerto-allegro, for Bach the converse relationship seems to apply.¹² his cultivation of concerto-ritornello form apparently yielded ideas that could be put to good use in

⁷ As Zehnder has observed, 'Zu Bachs Stilentwicklung', p. 318.

⁸ Examples occur in BWV 541 no. 2, 572, 894 no. 1, 916 no. 1, 944 no. 2, and 1026.

⁹ This is one of the most important insights of Krüger diss. (see pp. 29ff.).

¹⁰ *NBR*, p. 436.

¹¹ This is emphasized by John E. Solie, 'Aria Structure and Ritornello Form in the Music of Albinoni', *Musical Quarterly*, 63 (1977), pp. 31–47 (esp. 42ff.), and by Siegbert Rampe, "'Monatlich neue Stücke': zu den musikalischen Voraussetzungen von Bachs Weimarer Konzertmeisteramt", *BJ* 2002, pp. 61–104 (esp. 92–3).

¹² As observed in Dürr *Studien*, p. 170.

the composition of his cantatas. This applies not only to the concertante form and style of his sinfonias and choruses, but also to many arias, particularly those in which the ritornello is transposed to a variety of related keys, like that of a concerto movement. In BWV 208 no. 7 and 182 no. 4 alike, for example, the ritornello is stated in keys I, V, vi, iii, and I. Bach's Weimar aria-ritornellos, which tend to dictate the character of the movements they introduce, fall into four different types.¹³ Simplest and least common is the Lied type, already used in Mühlhausen (in BWV 71 no. 4, for example), in which a single period is made up of complementary antecedent and consequent phrases. More frequent is the ostinato type, common in the early cantatas, in which a brief figure, treated in sequence, then serves to accompany the voice as a basso quasi ostinato (see Part I Ch. 4, p. 84). Even in continuo arias, however—the natural home of this type—it recedes in the cantatas of Franck's 1715 cycle in favour of more lyrical modes of structuring. Common in Weimar, but rare thereafter, is the imitative type of ritornello. Just as Bach was inclined to construct the ritornellos of his concertante works as fugal expositions, so he sometimes designed those of his Weimar arias in two- or three-part imitative counterpoint (such as in BWV 12 no. 5 and 54 no. 1), in strict canonic imitation (BWV 80a no. 5 and 162 no. 1), or as fugal expositions with regular countersubjects (BWV 54 no. 3 and 165 no. 1). Most prominent of all, however, is the *Fortspinnung* type of ritornello, with its threefold division into head-motive, sequential continuation, and cadential conclusion—one of the clearest links between aria and concerto. This type, anticipated in the soprano aria from *Der Herr denkt an uns*, BWV 196 no. 3 (c. 1709), was gradually developed by Bach from relatively simple beginnings in the cantatas of 1713–14 (for example, BWV 182 no. 4) to increasingly complex variants in the cantatas of Franck's 1715 and 1717 cycles. In the arias with obbligato violin from Cantatas 132 (no. 5; December 1715) and 147a (no. 4; December 1716), for example, the threefold *Fortspinnung* design is presented twice in succession: the ritornello consists of two periods, the first modulating to the relative major, and the second opening with a varied and transposed reprise of the headmotive before it returns to the tonic (see Part II Ch. 5, Exx. 13 and 15).

From 1713 onwards (as well as in the early cantata BWV 196, no. 3) Bach's arias are held together not only by ritornello returns but by the concertante treatment of ritornello themes during the vocal portions of the movement. Above all, this takes the form of *Vokaleinbau*—the insertion of a vocal line into whole, partial or varied instrumental returns of the ritornello. The arias thus constructed tend to fall into some kind of overall reprise form. Pure da capo form (A–B–A) is common in the arias and choruses of 1713–14, but a retreat from it is apparent in the cantatas of Franck's 1715 cycle (notably in BWV 80a and 31), and it is avoided in the three late Advent cantatas of Franck's 1717 cycle (BWV 70a, 186a, and 147a).¹⁴ Bach's favoured alternative

¹³ All four are described in detail in Dürr *Studien*, pp. 120–8, and Hio-Ihm Lee, *Die Form der Ritornelle bei J. S. Bach* (Pfaffenweiler, 1993).

¹⁴ See Dürr *Studien*, p. 173.

is the subtler tripartite reprise scheme A–B–A¹, which he had already employed in the duet from the ‘Hunt’ Cantata, BWV 208 (no. 12). His use of da capo form for choruses as well as arias in 1713–14 was no doubt an important innovation, but it is worth pointing out that, once he had started employing operatic forms regularly, he probably saw a less clear dividing line between the two movement types than we do today. It is significant in this regard that the choruses of the ‘Hunt’ Cantata were simply ensembles of the four solo protagonists, and that the choral finale of the same work is set in the form of an operatic motto-aria (see above, Part II Ch. 5). Moreover, two movements that Franck in his 1715 cycle designated ‘aria’ were nonetheless set by Bach as choruses (BWV 31 no. 2 and 161 no. 5). On the other hand, two modes of composition that are peculiar to choruses in the early cantatas continue to be valid in Weimar: permutation fugue (see Part I Ch. 3, p. 66), which becomes Bach’s standard form of vocal fugue, though it is even applied to a duet (in BWV 63 no. 3) and a sinfonia (in BWV 152 no. 1); and motet style, which survives in the great psalm choruses of *Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis*, BWV 21. Thereafter, Bach’s inclination was not to abandon this relatively old-fashioned style, which had abundantly proved its worth as a means of conveying the text vividly in musical terms, but rather to amalgamate it with the new concertante forms. This he did with indifferent success (such as in BWV 63 nos. 1 and 7, and 31 no. 2) until the technique of *Choreinbau* (see Part II Ch. 5, p. 247, n. 8),¹⁵ anticipated in the duet from Cantata 162 (no. 5), enabled him to build the vocal parts into the ritornello returns in the opening choruses of the Advent cantatas from Franck’s 1717 cycle (BWV 70a, 186a, and 147a), thereby creating a powerfully unified structure that incorporates fugal and motet-style elements without difficulty. These late Weimar cantatas exhibit a breadth of form and an expansiveness of phrase and sequence that show how far Bach had traversed in only three or four years since the first ‘operatic’ cantatas of 1713–14.¹⁶ The relatively short-winded themes of Cantatas 208 and 182, for example—comparable with those of early Weimar instrumental works, such as the toccatas BWV 916 and 564—are a far cry from the broadly conceived themes of *Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben*, BWV 147a. And the sequences of the earlier Weimar cantatas, with their comparatively brief steps, yield from 1715 onwards to spacious, Vivaldian falling-5th sequences, both in the late Weimar cantatas (for example, BWV 162 no. 1, b. 1, and 147a no. 1, b. 3) and in roughly contemporaneous instrumental works, such as the G minor Fugue, BWV 542 no. 2, or the D minor Toccata, BWV 538 no. 1.¹⁷

The importance of the Lutheran chorale for Bach, already considerable in the early cantatas, remains undiminished in the Weimar period, despite the prevalence of

¹⁵ The term is drawn from Werner Neumann, *J. S. Bachs Chorfolge: ein Beitrag zur Kompositionstechnik Bachs* (Leipzig, 1938; 3rd edn 1953), pp. 53ff.

¹⁶ This observation from Dürr *Studien*, p. 173, has recently been supported by J.-C. Zehnder, ‘Zum späten Weimarer Stil J. S. Bachs’, in M. Geck and W. Breig (eds.), *Bachs Orchesterwerke* (Witten, 1997), pp. 89–124 (esp. 94–5).

¹⁷ See Zehnder, ‘Zum späten Weimarer Stil’, pp. 89–92, and the same author’s ‘Die Weimarer Orgelmusik J. S. Bachs im Spiegel seiner Kantaten’, *Musik und Gottesdienst*, 41 (1987), pp. 149–62.

operatic forms in the cantatas of 1713 onwards. The traditional motet style of chorale arrangement, familiar from *Christ lag in Todes Banden*, BWV 4, is restricted to the earlier Weimar cantatas (BWV 21 no. 9 and 182 no. 7); while the fusion of chorale with French overture in the opening movement of *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*, BWV 61 (December 1714) finds no parallel elsewhere at this period. But the four-part chorale with which the Weimar cantatas (anticipating those of the Leipzig period) often end is frequently accorded extra significance by its adornment with an instrumental descant.¹⁸ In addition, Bach often fuses the Italian operatic and German church traditions by enriching many arias and duets with a complete instrumental chorale quotation. In earlier cases the chorale thus quoted differs from that of the finale,¹⁹ but in later works the same chorale melody is employed in both first and last movements, lending the cantata coherence by furnishing it with an aurally meaningful outer frame.²⁰

Bach's characteristic type of chorale-chorus of the Leipzig years is not yet found among the surviving Weimar vocal works. The opening movement of Cantata 61, mentioned above, resembles those mature chorale-choruses in its independent instrumental texture, but its mode of chorale treatment is quite different. And the theory that 'O Mensch, bewein dein Sünde groß', one of the greatest of all Bach's chorale-choruses, might have been composed for a lost Weimar Passion before it was transferred to the second version of the *St John Passion* in 1725 and found its definitive place in the *St Matthew Passion* in 1736, has not yet been conclusively proved.²¹ The essential principle of such movements, however—the provision of a unified, independent structure in the parts that accompany the chorale, usually built on a paraphrase of the first chorale line—is already realized in the Seventeen Chorales and related pieces (such as the manual trios BWV 695, 713, 717, and 734). Where clear elements of return are present, one can speak of ritornello form, which, in keeping with Bach's familiar mix of old and new, is employed in conjunction with traditional modes of Lutheran hymn treatment, such as chorale motet, ornamented chorale or cantus firmus chorale. The concertante chorale, as it might be termed, undoubtedly represents Bach's foremost innovation in the field of the organ chorale alongside the small-format *Orgelbüchlein* type. The essential principle of the latter type is not dissimilar: the embedding of the chorale melody within an independent (though often motivically related) substructure. But the primary element of the accompanying structure is in this case not a theme or ritornello but rather a highly distinctive motive—often a musical correlative to a key image in the chorale text—which pervades the texture with such intensity that a unique miniature sound picture is built up. This 'motivicity',

¹⁸ As in BWV 12 no. 7, 172 no. 6, 31 no. 9, 161 no. 6, and 70a no. 6.

¹⁹ This is the case in BWV 12 no. 6, 172 no. 5, and 163 no. 5.

²⁰ As in the 1st movement and finale of BWV 80a, 185, and 161. In BWV 31 the chorale melody is common to the last two movements (nos. 8 and 9).

²¹ For a convenient summary of the evidence, see Alfred Dürr, *Die Johannes-Passion von J. S. Bach: Entstehung, Überlieferung, Werkeinführung* (Munich and Kassel, 1988), pp. 13–20; Eng. trans. by A. Clayton as *J. S. Bach's St John Passion: Genesis, Transmission, and Meaning* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 1–7.

as it has been termed, has enormous repercussions beyond the organ chorale. Bach's part-writing in general is transformed by it, since his contrapuntal lines and their interaction are thereby invested with far greater density, meaning, and significance. Each motive is treated as a fully independent building block that may be used in many different contexts within the movement concerned, rather than being tied to its original surroundings, as tended to be the case in Bach's early works.²² And the consistent use of a characterful motive lends the movements thus constructed greater individuality. Very often it is not easy to determine whether the success of a major work from the Weimar years rests primarily on the sheer quality of the invention or else on the *Orgelbüchlein* technique that enables a pregnant motive to stamp its individuality upon an entire composition.

As in the early period, fugal counterpoint remained the foundation of Bach's compositional technique, notwithstanding the remarkable development that had taken place in the interim. And in such ripe Weimar works as *Komm, Heiliger Geist*, BWV 651a, or *Ärgre dich, o Seele, nicht*, BWV 186a (see Part II Ch. 5, Ex. 14), we encounter a style of contrapuntal writing that is unmistakably recognizable as Bachian: a finely wrought web of elaborate polyphonic lines built upon a strong bass, highly expressive not only in their individual shaping and mutual interaction but also in their exceedingly rich harmonic implications. For time and again Bach seeks equal expressive power in both vertical and horizontal dimensions of the texture simultaneously, notably in the late *Orgelbüchlein* chorale *Christum wir sollen loben schon*, BWV 611, or in the alla breve from the *Pièce d'orgue*, BWV 572. Formal fugue during this period becomes the norm: the artifices of strict counterpoint, such as stretto, canonic imitation, subject inversion, and invertible counterpoint, are employed regularly, and the triple counterpoint of a subject with two regular counter-subjects becomes standard. The three themes that make up this triple counterpoint typically possess their own rhythmic characteristics, and when combined they form a texture of clearly differentiated strands such as would later become one of the classic features of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*.

One crucial factor that distinguishes the music of Bach's first maturity at Weimar from that of his early years is the increased decoration of the melodic lines. The characteristic semiquaver flow of mature Bachian counterpoint is itself a form of elaboration, which is not to imply that the composer necessarily began with a simpler underlying scaffolding. Decoration of simple melodic lines, often regarded at the time as the province of the performer rather than the composer, is taken to extremes in the slow movements of some of the Weimar concerto transcriptions, in which—presumably inspired by the 1710 embellished versions of Corelli's Op. 5 violin sonatas—a basic cantabile theme is subject to the most profuse elaboration in the form of diminution figures and demisemiquaver melismas. Bach soon made this florid style his own and

²² This is another important insight of Elke Krüger's (see Krüger diss., pp. 66ff.), well illustrated by her comparison of the two versions of BWV 535 and 951.

poured into it some of his most personal and deeply felt utterances. In the music of the Weimar years, we encounter it not only in the concerto transcriptions (in particular, BWV 973–5) but in the slow movements of the sonata arrangements after Reincken (BWV 965 and 966), in the sinfonias of Cantatas 21 and 12, and—allied to a different tradition—in the ornamented chorales from the *Orgelbüchlein* and the ‘Seventeen’. Bach’s florid style is not restricted to slow movements but extends to decorative writing in any suitable context: for example, the anticipatory-note figure in slurred pairs of semiquavers, which is familiar to us chiefly from the chorale ‘O Mensch, bewein dein Sünde groß’ from the *St Matthew Passion*, but which already occurs in the Weimar organ chorales *O Lamm Gottes unschuldig*, BWV 618, and *Jesu, meine Freude*, BWV 713, where it is associated with the innocent Lamb of God, and in the Weimar cantata *Komm, du süße Todesstunde*, BWV 161, where it expresses longing for the afterlife (see Part II Ch. 4, Ex. 5). Slurred pairs of semiquavers are also a recurring feature of a characteristic melodic style in the arias from the Weimar cantatas. Here they are joined together in short phrases, often spiced with demisemiquavers, and ending with a florid cadential formula (see Part II Ch. 5, Ex. 8). In another context, the continuously flowing semiquavers of Bach’s mature Weimar counterpoint are often built up from short, pregnant themes—perhaps a single bar of semiquavers in common time, or two bars in 3/8—that anticipate the themes of the Inventions and the *Well-Tempered Clavier*, not only in their melodic style and rhythmic flow but in the logical consistency of their functional use as the building blocks of the structure. Such are the opening themes of the C major Prelude, BWV 545a no. 1, the F major Toccata, BWV 540 no. 1, and the chorale *Komm, Heiliger Geist*, BWV 651a (see Part II Ch. 3, Exx. 1b and 2).

Despite the absence of original concertos, overtures, and chamber music (except for BWV 1026), let alone operas, from Bach’s surviving music of the Weimar period, we already sense a certain inclusiveness. Every conceivable style, form or technique seems to be within his reach, albeit to a considerable extent channelled through the medium of the keyboard. Virtuosity, formerly the exclusive province of the organist-composer himself, is now extended to embrace able singers and instrumentalists familiar with the demands of operatic and concerto-style music. This we gather from the exacting parts for Diana and Endymion in the ‘Hunt’ Cantata, from the virtuoso vocal parts in the solo cantatas BWV 54, 199, and 202, and from the brilliant obbligato parts for oboe in Cantatas 12, 21, and 202, or for violin in Cantatas 132 (no. 5) and 147a (no. 4). National styles are often united: for example, the German fantasia, the French *plein jeu*, and the Italian alla breve in the *Pièce d’orgue*, BWV 572; or the German organ chorale, French ornamentation and dance rhythms, and Italian ritornello form in some of the concertante chorales among the ‘Seventeen’ (such as BWV 652a, 653a, and 654a). In addition, we find in Bach’s Weimar music an integration of opposing principles. Ever since his earliest years as a composer, fugue and fantasy, whether consciously or not, had stood for the opposite poles of rational order and irrational freedom. But now the latter element is somewhat marginalized in prelude-and-fugue

and toccata, as the powerful intellect of the composer takes increasing command over his material. This control is exercised in large measure through the new rational ordering principle of the ritornello. Vivaldi, however, whom Bach so obviously admired, handled ritornello form in his Op. 3 *L'Estro Armonico* concertos in such a manner as to admit a significant measure of the irrational and unpredictable. Judging by the extreme freedom and endless resource with which Bach himself handled the ritornello principle in his concertante music for keyboard or for voices and instruments, he must have learned much from the great Italian composer in this regard. However, the highly imaginative fusion or juxtaposition of the ritornello with other forms, styles, and techniques in his toccatas, preludes and fugues, organ chorales, and cantatas must be regarded as a major achievement of his own.

Opposites are also united in Bach's approach to the chorale and to his cantata texts. His settings of free madrigalian texts provide a subjective gloss or commentary on the 'objective' biblical and chorale settings alongside which they are placed in the Weimar cantatas. The expressiveness of his settings of Franck's words, in particular, testifies to the depth of his response to their subjectivity, their emphasis on strong personal feeling, and their tendency towards mysticism. In many cases, however, Bach provides his own additional 'objective' counterweight in the form of a wordless instrumental chorale quotation. But only where the chorale cantus firmus is kept plain, as in the opening movement of *Komm, du süße Todesstunde*, BWV 161, does the dichotomy between the two elements remain sharply defined. Elsewhere, as in Cantatas 12 (no. 6), 172 (no. 5), or 80a (no. 1), the chorale melody is more or less decorated and thus to some extent partakes of the 'subjective' florid elaboration of the solo or duet vocal parts. Nevertheless, the chorale cantus firmus, whether ornamented or not, collaborates with the ritornello, ground bass or basso quasi ostinato (see Part I Ch. 4, p. 84) in providing a firm element of control against which the vocal parts can move with great expressive freedom. The relationship between chorale and freely invented parts is thus not dissimilar to that which prevails in the *Orgelbüchlein*. Here, the chorale melody is inevitably associated with ecclesiastical authority, and the freely invented parts (whether or not ultimately derived from the chorale) with subjective response. And yet the two elements are deliberately blurred: the accompanying parts often echo the chorale in some fashion, and the chorale-bearing part often partakes to some degree in the freely invented motive that belongs to the accompaniment. Here then, as in the cantatas, Bach seeks a wholeness that lies beyond the subjective-objective dichotomy. This is also true of his approach to the subject matter of the Weimar vocal works. In many cases, the changing emphasis of the cantata text offers him the scope to focus on both external and internal aspects of one and the same theme. In the Advent cantata *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*, BWV 61, for example, outer and inner aspects of Advent are both considered in musical terms: the Saviour's coming down to earth, and His entry into the soul of the Christian. It may have been partly the inner search for wholeness, too, and not merely external conditions, that led to the convergence of sacred and secular that distinguishes Bach's Weimar vocal music so clearly

from that of his early period. The operatic forms of dialogue-recitative and love duet, employed for Diana and Endymion in the 'Hunt' Cantata, BWV 208 (nos. 5 and 12), are soon afterwards transferred to Jesus and the Soul in *Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis*, BWV 21 (nos. 7 and 8). The light dance style of the finale of the 'Hunt' Cantata, with its strong secular associations, is later transferred to the opening chorus of the Whit cantata *Erschallet, ihr Lieder*, BWV 172, or to that of the Christmas cantata *Christen, ätzt diesen Tag*, BWV 63. And the operatic vocal style, with its extended melismas and brilliant coloratura, is frequently brought to bear upon Bach's Weimar sacred music, particularly where the requirements of text illustration afford a favourable opportunity: for example, in the opening soprano aria from *Bereitet die Wege, bereitet die Bahn*, BWV 132 (no. 1), or in the litany-recitative from *Gleichwie der Regen und Schnee vom Himmel fällt*, BWV 18 (no. 3), an extreme instance of the interplay between sacred and secular styles (see Part II Ch. 5, Ex. 9).

Bach's arrival at full maturity by about the middle of the Weimar period (around 1713) is attested by the stylistic and technical assurance, and the consistently high standard, of his writing at that time, both for keyboard and for vocal and instrumental ensemble—a major advance over the early (pre-1708) period, when he was still finding his feet as a composer (his early progress as a performer might have been swifter) and standards were consequently more variable. During the mid-to-late Weimar years (1713–17), he produced some of his greatest masterpieces, never to be eclipsed by anything he composed in later years at Cöthen or Leipzig: the *Orgelbüchlein* and the finest of the Seventeen Chorales (such as BWV 651a, 654a, or 659a); the Passacaglia, BWV 582, the F major Toccata, BWV 540 no. 1, and the *Pièce d'orgue*, BWV 572; and among the vocal-and-instrumental works, *Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis*, BWV 21, and *Komm, du süße Todesstunde*, BWV 161. In the case of the passacaglia, the toccata, and the incomparable organ chorale *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*, BWV 659a, old forms and styles are brought to a final stage of perfection: no more representatives of their types would follow, since the *ne plus ultra* had already been attained. In the case of *Komm, Heiliger Geist*, BWV 651a, *Schmücke dich*, BWV 654a, and the cantatas, new methods were so swiftly mastered and perfected that, though many works along similar lines were composed in later years (such as the *Clavierübung* III and the vast body of vocal-and-instrumental music from the Leipzig period), these compositions remain unsurpassed.

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