

Bach's Late Works

and The Central German Organ

G E O R G E B . S T A U F F E R

Now, however, the state of music is quite different from what it was, for our artistry has increased very much, and the taste has changed astonishingly, and accordingly the former style of music no longer seems to please our ears. Considerable help is therefore all the more needed to choose and appoint musicians who will satisfy the present musical taste, master the new kinds of music, and thus be in a position to do justice to the composer and his work.¹

WITH THIS OBSERVATION, JOHANN SEBASTIAN Bach set forth the case to the Leipzig Town Council in 1730 for hiring the additional musicians he deemed necessary to improve the state of church music there. Although his famous memo, "A Short But Necessary Draft for a Well-Appointed Church Music," focused primarily on the vocal and instrumental forces of his church ensemble, the underlying theme of his argument cannot be overlooked: it was not just the poor quality of Bach's musicians that was the issue, but also the fact that the state of music itself had changed greatly and the former style no longer pleased the ears.

Indeed, Bach was well aware that he lived in a period of stylistic transition, and the changes were apparent not only in vocal and instrumental music, but also in the progressive Central German organ, the instruments of Thuringia and Saxony that reflected the new musical trends. The organ builders of Central Germany sought to create instruments that were forward looking, experimental, utilitarian, and closely allied with chamber music. The organ builders of North Germany, meanwhile, appeared to be stuck in the seventeenth-century Arp Schnitger mold.

The organs that Bach played from 1725 to 1750 were very different from the organs he played from 1700 to 1725. So was the organ music he composed.

¹ Hans T. David, Arthur Mendel, and Christoph Wolff, eds., *The New Bach Reader* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1998), 149.

The Central German Organ

Let us begin with a brief review of the distinguishing characteristics of the Central German organ in the first half of the eighteenth century. By way of reference, the stoplists of three progressive instruments are given in the Appendix — organs in Altenburg, Bad Berka, and Naumburg that Bach played or designed in the 1730s and 1740s. Their main characteristics can be summarized as follows:

- 1) High-pitched reeds — 4' and 2' — are reduced in number. The builders focused instead on Trompete 8' and Vox humana 8' in the manuals and 16' Posaune in the Pedal. At the same time, they often retained a half-length 16' Fagot in the manuals for use *bey der Music* — that is, for use in a continuo bass line with concerted instrumental and vocal music.
- 2) The builders introduced undulating celeste stops, most notably Unda maris 8'.
- 3) The builders also exhibited a strong interest in tierce sound, as a solo stop (Sesquialtera or Sesquialtera combination) or within chorus mixtures.
- 4) Pedal divisions are limited to a few essential 16' and 8' stops. Additional voices were sometimes provided by duplexing stops from the manuals, via wind couplers, or transmissions.
- 5) Builders used progressive tunings that allowed the entire organ to be played in concerted music with voices and instruments.
- 6) One finds a new emphasis on an ensemble organ, an instrument in which divisions are commonly coupled together to produce special combinations and a unified plenum. The pipes are frequently contained in one large, deep case, without Rückpositiv or distinctive spatial separation of divisions. The unification of instruments is represented visually by the homogeneous façades of Gottfried Silbermann's organs.
- 7) Orchestral “toy stops” such as Bells, Zimbelsterns, Glockenspiels, and Drums became quite popular.
- 8) The organs display a new and significant emphasis on weight and gravity — *Gravität*, in the word of the builders. Upper-work and high-pitched mixtures are reduced, and 16' and 8' tone are stressed instead. The 32' Subbass and 32' Posaune stops are highly prized in the Pedal. Heinrich Gottfried Trost's two-manual organ for the Castle Church in Altenburg contained ten 8' flue stops in the manuals and five 16' flue stops and a 32' Posaune in the Pedal (See Appendix). The profusion of foundation stops was made possible by an increased number of bellows and improved winding systems. The result was an organ with a grand, deep, thick, majestic plenum, based on multiple 16'

and 8' stops with limited upper work. The inclusion of multiple 8' manual stops opened the door to exotic combinations of unison sounds, described by theorists of the time and seen especially in the registrations given in Georg Friedrich Kauffmann's *Harmonische Seelenlust*, issued in Leipzig between 1733 and 1736. For instance, Bach's student Johann Friedrich Agricola alluded to the marvelous sound produced by using four unison 8' flue stops, apparently on the Oberwerk of the Altenburg organ: "Our ancestors believed that two stops of different scale at the same pitch level would of necessity sound bad if they were drawn together. But if such stops are well constructed and purely voiced, then one can refute our ancestors any day merely by drawing such stops and using them together. I have heard a Lieblich Gedackt, Vugara, Quintadene, and Hohlflöte played together on a certain organ, all at 8' and without any other stop, which produced a beautiful and strange effect."² In *Harmonische Seelenlust* Kauffmann proposed using the Gemshorn 8' and Gedackt 8' for the accompanimental voice in "Herr Christ der einig Gottes Sohn" and Quintadena 8' and Flaut douce 8' for the accompanimental voice in "Vater unser im Himmelreich," to take but two examples.

- 9) New orchestral stops were introduced, deliberately patterned after the instruments themselves, and commonly linked with vocal and instrumental music-making. These stops were frequently cited as being especially useful *bey der Music*. Among the most important:

VIOL DI GAMBA 8'. From contemporary comments, it is clear that builders wished to construct gamba stops whose sound came as close as possible to the actual instrument. In his 1722 proposal for the organ of the Town Church in Waltershausen, Heinrich Gottfried Trost boasted that the instrument would include a Viol di gamba stop "that has the completely natural character of a viola da gamba."³ Similarly, he noted in his 1733 proposal for the Castle Church in Altenburg that the Viol di gamba would be "specially voiced to sound like the genuine instrument."⁴ Ten years later, in his proposal for the St. Wenzels Church in Naumburg (a commission that eventually went to Zacharias Hildebrandt)

² Johann Friedrich Agricola, review in *Historisch-Kritische Beyträge zur Aufnahme der Musik*, ed. Friedrich Wilhelm Marburg, 5 vols. (Berlin: Gottlieb August Lange, 1754-78; reprint Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1970), III/6 (1758), 503; translation from Quentin Faulkner, *The Registration of J.S. Bach's Organ Works* (Colfax, North Carolina: Wayne Leupold Editions, 2008), 63.

³ Felix Friedrich, *Der Orgelbauer Heinrich Gottfried Trost* (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1989), 157.

⁴ Hans Löffler, "Gottfried Heinrich Trost und die Altenburger Schloßorgel," *Musik und Kirche* 4 (1932): 174.

Trost noted: “If the Viol di Gamba remains in the organ, it is at present in name only, and to judge from its tone it is of no value. Since this otherwise beautiful stop has recently become much beloved, the present stop must be fashioned after the present taste. If that can’t be done, the old should be corrected as much as possible.”⁵

When Agricola heard the organ Trost built for the Castle Church in Altenburg in 1739, he remarked that when the 16' Querflöte and 8' Gamba were played in rapid runs and arpeggios, “the combination produces a very beautiful effect, and the pleasant keenness that is found in these stops comes as close to the attack of a bowstroke on a stringed bass as is possible to achieve with pipes.”⁶ Gottfried Heinrich Stölzel agreed, stating that “the Viola da Gamba, which goes well with the Violon-Bass, comes so close to a gamba tone that one thinks it is a string instrument played with a bow.”⁷

VIOLONE 16'. Here, too, Central German builders wanted to construct a string stop that sounded as much like an actual violone as possible. The organ expert Jacob Adlung noted that the Violone stop “is especially useful in the Pedal division, and when it is exactly right, it buzzes like a violone or stringed bass.”⁸ In his Naumburg proposal of 1743, Trost remarked: “Because the [existing] 32' Untersatz is of no value, and its tone and effect are hardly worth one *Reichstaler*, since it makes nothing but a stupid rustling of wind, and robs wind from other ranks of pipes, it would be useful to put into its place a new Violon-Bass 16', since this stop is acceptable and gives the entire division a special strength and gravity. It is also very useful in concerted music (*bey der Music*) and sounds quickly and clearly.”⁹

FLAUTO TRAVERSO 16', 8' OR 4'. The transverse flute was new and fashionable in Central Germany in the 1720s and 1730s, an instrument cherished for its sensitive, breathy tone. Central German organ builders strove to capture its attractive qualities. In a 1726 description of Joachim Wagner's organ in the Garnisonkirche in Potsdam, Johann Friedrich Walther stated that the Flüte

⁵ Friedrich, *Der Orgelbauer Heinrich Gottfried Trost*, 170.

⁶ Agricola, *Historische-Kritische Beyträge zur Aufnahme der Music*, III/6 (1758): 497.

⁷ Friedrich, *Der Orgelbauer Heinrich Gottfried Trost*, 94, n. 270.

⁸ Jacob Adlung, *Musica mechanica organoedi* 2 vols. (Berlin: Birnstiel, 1768), I: 153, § 205.

⁹ Friedrich, *Der Orgelbauer Heinrich Gottfried Trost*, 169-170. When Zacharias Hildebrandt constructed the organ in 1746, he built the 16' Violon Bass recommended by Trost. He also discarded the 32' Untersatz but retained its register knob, obviously in the hope that a new and more effective set of pipes would one day be added to the instrument.

traversière stop sounded “very much like a real transverse flute, especially in the middle octaves.”¹⁰ A visitor to the new Johann Scheibe organ in the University Church in Leipzig, an instrument inspected by Bach in 1717, described the Flute Allemande register as “narrow-scaled open wood, somewhat sharply voiced, imitating the traverso.”¹¹ And when Johann Georg Scholber inspected Trost’s newly finished Altenburg organ in October 1739, one month after Bach inaugurated the instrument, he remarked “The Flaute Traverse [16’] is also a beautiful and well-sounding stop. In the bass, however, it has more the nature of a violon than a flute”¹² — an observation that parallels Agricola’s comment on the combined sound of the Flaute Traverse 16’ and Viol di Gamba 8’, cited earlier.

HAUTOBOIS 8’. Trost, in his 1733 proposal for the Altenburg organ, stated that the Hautbois would be “a completely special stop — very similar to the natural oboe and also capable of being employed usefully in music-making when it is not available.”¹³

Proposals and reports such as these indicate a concern with “real” orchestral sounds and a desire to create stops that can be used in ensemble music. It is no surprise that Central Germany became the land of the organ transcription.

What caused the shift to an orchestral-type organ? Without question, the change in musical taste noted by Bach in his 1730 memo and the sharp rise of instrumental music from the second decade of the eighteenth century onward spurred organ builders to construct instruments that would keep pace with new fashions. In addition, the strong ties between court and church musicians in Central Germany resulted in close connections between chamber and church music. It is reasonable to assume that court musicians wished to perform fashionable instrumental repertory in church, with the organ taking part as a continuo or solo instrument (as seen in Bach’s cantatas with obbligato organ parts from the late 1720s and ‘30s).

Finally, in the petty courts and poor churches of Thuringia and Saxony, the ability of the organ to substitute for instrumental players presented financial advantages. Bach’s memo of 1730 concerned the need for additional honoraria to pay for instrumental players. At the same moment, his cantatas with

¹⁰ Johann Friedrich Walther, *Die in der königl. Garnisonkirche zu Berlin befindliche neue Orgel* (Berlin, 1727), quoted in Quentin Faulkner, *The Registration of J.S. Bach’s Organ Works*, 38.

¹¹ Paul Smets, ed., *Orgeldispositionen: Ein Handschrift aus dem XVIII. Jahrhundert* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1931), 43.

¹² Friedrich, *Der Orgelbauer Heinrich Gottfried Trost*, 175.

¹³ Löffler, “Gottfried Heinrich Trost und die Altenburger Schloßorgel,” 174.

obligato organ parts circumvented the shortage of skilled instrumental players by assigning the solo part to the right hand of the organist. Surely this explains in part why Central German organ builders were so eager to promote the new instrumental stops in their proposals.

Bach's Leipzig Organ Music: The Obligato Cantata and Passion Movements

The Table below lists in chronological order the organ music that Bach wrote during his tenure in Leipzig — that is, between 1723 and 1750. Sometimes overlooked in this repertory are the numerous cantata and passion movements with obligato organ that he composed during his first decade as Cantor of St. Thomas, especially.¹⁴ The obligato movements represent a large body of music — thirty-five movements in all when both cantatas and passions are taken into account. Thirty-three of these were written in Leipzig, twenty-four between 1726 and 1731 (See Table). The bulk date from 1726 to 1728 and were composed as part of Bach's adventurous third cantata cycle. Bach wrote these movements at the precise moment that the Central German organ was coming into its own. The genre was clearly popular not just in Leipzig but in surrounding areas as well: Matthew Cron has identified approximately 150 works by more than fifteen Central German composers that use obligato organ within concerted vocal or instrumental works.¹⁵ The most prominent,

¹⁴ Hermann Keller gave the obligato organ movements a passing nod in his survey of Bach's organ music, *The Organ Works of Bach*, trans. Helen Hewitt (New York: C.F. Peters, 1967), 163-7, Chapter 15, "Compositions for Organ with Orchestra"; Peter Williams omitted them altogether in his more encompassing study of the repertory, *The Organ Music of J. S. Bach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980-1984, 3 vols.; second edition 2003); and Michael Kube and Werner Breig failed to mention them in "Die Orgelmusik," in the *Bach Handbuch*, ed. Konrad Küster (Kassel: Bärenreiter, and Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 1999), 536-712. Matthew Cron has investigated the topic in great detail in his 817-page study "The Obligato Organ Cantatas of J.S. Bach in the Context of 18th-Century Practice" (PhD diss., Brandeis University, 2004), and I have attempted to reopen the issue within Bach research in George B. Stauffer, "Die Sinfonien," in *Die Welt der Bach Kantaten*, ed. Christoph Wolff (Kassel: Metzler/Bärenreiter, 1998), vol. 3, 157-175, and "Bach's Cantata and Passion Movements with Obligato Organ," in *Festschrift Ewald Kooiman*, ed. Hans Fidom, Jan R. Luth, and Christoph Wolff (Veenhuizen, Netherlands: Boejenga Music Publications, 2008), 19-41. For a detailed discussion of cantata movements featuring obligato organ from the years 1726-29, see Gregory Butler's essay "Instrumente Mangel: Leipzig Cantata Movements with Obligato Organ as a Reflection of Bach's Performing Forces" in the present volume, pp. 131-46.

¹⁵ Cron, *The Obligato Organ Cantatas*, 14-114 (Chapter 1 – The Use of the Obligato Keyboard in 18th-Century Sacred Vocal Music: An Overview). Butler, in "Instrumente Mangel," argues on the basis of manuscript evidence that Bach often used obligato organ when a particular

aside from Bach, is Gottfried Heinrich Stölzel, whose organ obligato cantata movements for major church festivals rival those of Bach and also date from the late 1720s onward. This represents yet another Bach-Stölzel connection,¹⁶ and it is difficult to say exactly which composer was the first to develop this new type of piece. What is clear is that Bach, Stölzel, and others sought in the late 1720s to expand the role of the Central German organ in cantata-making, in just the fashion described by the organ builders.

What happens in Bach's obligato movements?

First, the large Central German organ is integrated into the instrumental band and choir — and it is clear from Bach's instructions that the pieces were not intended for portatives, or trunk organs, which lacked Sesquialteras, two manuals, and other resources that he requested.¹⁷ Much has been made of the dual nature of the organ in Bach's obligato movements: the left hand largely fulfills the traditional role of keyboard continuo by doubling the bass line, while the right hand carries out a new role as melodic soloist.¹⁸

In some cases Bach later recycled specific pieces as harpsichord-concerto movements, writing a new left-hand part for the keyboard and freeing it fully from the continuo. This process can be observed in Bach's transformation of

instrumental soloist for whom the part was written was no longer available. This would help to explain Bach's practice in a number of cases, but the simultaneous appearance of obligato organ parts in works written in many locations in Central Germany suggests that a larger trend was afoot, one reflecting a broad musical interest in the use of organ as a solo voice in concerted music. The developments in instrument building discussed above would have facilitated the practical substitutions mentioned by Butler and at the same encouraged the use of obligato organ in instrumental ensembles.

¹⁶ In addition to the appearance of Stölzel's "Bist du bei mir" in the *Clavier-Büchlein* for Anna Magdalena Bach of 1725 and *Partita in G Minor* for harpsichord in the *Clavier-Büchlein* for Wilhelm Friedemann Bach of 1720, recent evidence confirms a strong connection between Bach and the Gotha court, where Stölzel worked from 1719 until his death in 1749, as well as Bach's performance of a series of Stölzel's cantatas in Leipzig in the 1730s. See Christian Ahrens, "Neue Quellen zu J.S. Bachs Beziehungen nach Gotha," *Bach-Jahrbuch* 93 (2007): 45-60; Marc-Roderich Pfau, "Ein unbekanntes Leipziger Kantatentextheft aus dem Jahr 1735 – Neues zum Thema Bach und Stölzel," *Bach-Jahrbuch* 94 (2008): 99-122; and Andreas Glöckner, "Ein weiterer Kantatenjahrgang Gottfried Heinrich Stölzels in Bachs Aufführungsrepertoire?," *Bach-Jahrbuch* 95 (2009): 95-115.

¹⁷ See Stauffer, "Bach's Cantata and Passion Movements with Obligato Organ," 24-26.

¹⁸ The fourth movement of *Geist und Seele wird verwirret*, BWV 35, discussed by Butler in this volume, provides an interesting counter-example. The dual role of the organ is discussed in detail in Laurence Dreyfus, "The Metaphorical Soloist: Concerted Organ Parts in Bach's Cantatas," in *J. S. Bach as Organist*, ed. George Stauffer and Ernest May (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1986), 172-89.

Bach: Newly Composed Leipzig Organ Works

Cantata and Passion movements with obligato organ: 1723-c.1740
 BWV 70/3; 194/3,7; 128/4; 146/1,2,3; 170/3,5; (most: 1726-1731)
 35/1,2,4,5,7; 47/2; 169/1,3,5; 49/1,2,6; 244/1; 188/1,4;
 120a/4; 63/3; 29/1,7; 172/5; 245/19; 73/1; 27/3; 80/1
 (original performance materials)

Six Trio Sonatas, BWV 525-530 1727-1732
 (autograph manuscript)

Prelude and Fugue in B Minor, BWV 544 1727-1732
 (autograph manuscript)

Prelude and Fugue in E Minor (“Wedge”), BWV 548 1727-1732
 (autograph manuscript)

Prelude in C Minor, BWV 546/1 (manuscript copy) 1730s?

Fantasia and Fugue in C Minor, BWV 537 1730s?
 (manuscript copy)

Clavier-Übung III, BWV 552, 669-689, 802-805 1739
 (original print)

Fantasia and Fugue in C Minor, BWV 562 (autograph manuscript) 1740s

Six Schübler Chorales, BWV 645-650 (original print) c.1747

Canonic Variations on “Vom Himmel hoch,” c.1747-1748
 BWV 769 (original print and autograph manuscript)

the Sinfonia to Cantata 169, *Gott soll allein mein Herze haben*, of 1726, into the first movement of the Harpsichord Concerto in E Major, BWV 1053 (Example 1). Some Central German contemporaries such as Stölzel liberated the left hand directly within the cantata movements, in pieces such as the duet “Verherrlichet mit tausend Chören” from Stölzel’s cantata *Ich freue mich des, das mir geredt ist* (Example 2). But there is something to be said for Bach’s integration of the organ

Example 3 Cantata 49: Aria “Ich geh und suche mit Verlangen”

Example 4 Cantata 170: Aria “Wie jammern mich doch die verkehrten Herzen”

and instrumental registers that were not available before (or that were more refined than their predecessors). For instance, Bach used a Sesquialtera to highlight a cantus firmus in both cantata and passion movements. The bold Central German Sesquialtera stop produced an effective solo sound; if one manufactured a Sesquialtera through a tertia-stop combination (a practice Bach noted in his recommendations for rebuilding the organ of the St. Blasius Church in Mühlhausen in 1708),¹⁹ it would have produced a yet more natural sound, since it would not have had the breaks of a mixture.

The obligato movements display a literal exchange of musical lines, from violin, oboe, horn, and even lute to organ, in the case of movements borrowed from instrumental pieces, and from organ to violin, oboe, transverse flute, and even voice (in Cantata 161), in the case of movements that were performed again at a later point with altered instrumentation.²⁰ In the exchange process, Bach must have started thinking even more deeply about using the Central German organ in instrumental ways — that is, as a chamber instrument rather than just a keyboard instrument.

Third, in the obligato movements Bach used the organ as a partner in

¹⁹ Bach’s proposal is given in *The New Bach Reader*, 56.

²⁰ For details see Stauffer, “Bach’s Cantata and Passion Movements with Obligato Organ,” Table.

Example 5 a) *Violin Concerto in A minor, BWV 1041, movement 1;*

b) *Cantata 29: Arioso “Halleluja Stärk und Macht”;*

c) *Trio Sonata 6, BWV 530, movement 1*

new, fashionable trio and quartet textures. The aria “Ich geh und suche mit Verlangen” from Cantata 49 of the same name features a light, *galant* dance texture in 3/8 meter that closely resembles that of the finales of the D-Minor and E-Minor Trio Sonatas for organ, BWV 527 and 528 (Example 3). Similarly, the aria “Wie jammern mich doch die verkehrten Herzen” from Cantata 170, *Vergnügte Ruh, beliebte Seelenlust* (1726), with its sophisticated use of two organ manuals (Example 4), foreshadows the complex quartet and quintet structures of the chorale preludes of *Clavier-Übung* III.

Fourth, in the obbligato movements Bach began to treat organ lines in a new, “instrumental” manner, calling for greater sensitivity of articulation. One can see the transfer of delicate violin articulation from violin to obbligato organ movement to solo organ work by comparing passages from the Violin Concerto in A Minor, BWV 1041, the Arioso “Halleluia Stärk und Macht” from Cantata 29, *Wir danken dir, Gott, wir danken dir*, and Trio Sonata 6 for Organ, BWV 530 (Example 5). The articulation — a detached note followed by three slurred notes — is tailor-made for violin. But a similar effect could be achieved on the chamber-music oriented Central German organ as well.




It is likely that more organ articulation would have been expected than we see on the page. For instance, the elaborate organ obbligato part for the aria “Mir ekelt mehr zu leben” from *Vergnügte Ruh, beliebte Seelenlust*, BWV 170 (1726), contains no articulation marks. Approximately twenty years later, Bach assigned the line to transverse flute for a reperformance of the work. This time

he marked the articulation very meticulously, giving a better impression of the nuance with which the line should be played (Example 6). It is probable that he performed the organ part himself in 1726, and thus did not have to take the time to write out the appropriate articulation.²¹

The possibilities of exchange and articulation explored in such obligato movements inevitably revealed new possibilities for solo organ composition: possibilities made feasible by the sounds available on the progressive Central German organ.

Bach's Leipzig Organ Music: The Solo Works

It is not altogether surprising, then, that Bach's first encompassing venture into solo organ composition in Leipzig was the Six Trio Sonatas. As unabashed chamber music, the Sonatas form a logical sequence following — or perhaps even simultaneous with — the obligato cantata and passion movements. The six works may have been written for the training of Bach's oldest son Wilhelm Friedemann Bach, as the early biographer Johann Nicolaus Forkel claimed.²² Whatever their purpose, however, they represent Bach's new interest in treating the organ as a chamber-music instrument, with all the nuance and instrumental possibilities allowed by the Central German organ.²³ Would Bach have composed these pieces if he had been living in North Germany, amidst Schnitger-type instruments? Perhaps, but clearly the chamber-music qualities of the Central German organ were a catalyst for the experimentation seen in the works.

²¹ "Kommst du nun, Jesu, vom Himmel herunter." BWV 650, from the Schübler Chorales of c. 1748, also reflects the difference between organ and instrumental articulation. In the cantata aria from which the transcription is drawn, "Lobe den Herren, der alles so herrlich regieret" from Cantata 137, *Lobe den Herren, den mächtigen König der Ehren* of 1725, the solo violin line is marked  (in the original score, to judge from C. F. Penzel's surviving copy) and  (in the original performance parts) in the initial measures. When fashioning the Schübler transcription, Bach transferred the line to the organ without any articulation marks whatsoever: . This suggests either that the performance standards were different for organ and instrumental music, or that Bach expected organists to provide an appropriate articulation for the transcription as a matter of course.

²² *The New Bach Reader*, 472.

²³ That the Six Trio Sonatas were intended for the organ and not the pedal clavichord, as later claimed by Friedrich Conrad Griepenkerl in the Peters Edition of 1846, is verified by Bach's obituary of 1750, written principally by his son Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, in which the Sonatas are listed as "Sechs Trio für die Orgel mit dem obligaten Pedale." See Hans-Joachim Schulze, ed., *Dokumente zum Nachwirken Johann Sebastian Bachs 1750-1800* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1972), 86. The autograph manuscript of the Trio Sonatas (D-Bsb Mus. ms. Bach P 271) states only "à 2 Clavier et Pedal."

a)

Organo obbligato

b)

Flauto traverso

Example 6 Cantata 170: Aria “Mir ekelt mehr zu leben”:

a) Organ part from 1726;

b) Flute part from c. 1746-1747

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Example 7 Trio Sonata 6 for Organ, BWV 530, Lente (movement 2)

Two movements of the Trio Sonatas are drawn directly from the instrumental repertoire: the “Adagio e dolce” of Sonata 3 from a lost instrumental trio, and the Adagio-Vivace of Sonata 4 from the Sinfonia that opens the second half of Cantata 76, *Die Himmel erzählen die Ehre Gottes*. They and the other movements display the textures and techniques of Italian trio-sonata writing merged with concerto and da-capo forms. Equally impressive, however, is the sensitive articulation of the individual lines, which draws the pieces closest to instrumental writing. The Lente of Sonata 6 (Example 7), for instance, has the same type of refined violin articulations implied in the obbligato organ line of “Mir ekelt mehr zu leben” (Example 6, above).

In addition, the Sonatas show the new formal clarity of Italian chamber music, with clear-cut reprises of principal sections and themes. The move toward simplified structures in Bach’s organ works begins with the Trio Sonatas.

These qualities also carry over into the preludes and fugues from this period, most notably in the more “flexible” melodic material and the transparent concerto and da capo forms that appear in the Prelude and Fugue in B Minor, BWV 544, and Prelude and Fugue in E Minor (“Wedge”), BWV 548. The thematic material of the B-Minor Prelude (Example 8) more closely resembles certain obbligato organ pieces from the cantatas and trio sonata middle movements than the angular writing of Weimar free works such as the “Dorian” Toccata,



Example 8 Prelude in B minor, BWV 544/1

BWV 538/1, or the Prelude in G Major, BWV 541/1. In the B-Minor Prelude one also finds finely nuanced articulation indicated through dots. John Butt has observed that Bach's Leipzig organ scores show much more articulation — dots, slashes, wedges, and slurs — than those of earlier works.²⁴ This may reflect the composer's growing concern for detail. But it surely mirrors, too, a turn to instrumental style and the chamber-music-oriented stops of the Central German organ.

These trends come to full fruition in the *Clavier-Übung* III collection of 1739. One of the most striking features of this music is the remarkably detailed articulation that appears in a number of instrumental-style pieces — articulation that was notated with extraordinary care by Bach in the original print. Both looking back to Nicolas de Grigny and looking forward to Bach's sons Wilhelm Friedemann and Carl Philipp Emanuel is the *pedaliter* "Vater unser im Himmelreich" setting BWV 682, which calls for a continuo bass (realized appropriately on the 16' and 8' pedal stops of the Central German organ) and two highly articulated pairs of lines that might be played more easily by a quartet of violins and transverse flutes than an organ (Example 9). The dotted figures point not to the *notes inégales* of French organ music but to the Lombardic rhythm of instrumental music that was then all the rage in Dresden.

The extraordinary mix of meters in the *Clavier-Übung* III collection is also telling. There are pieces in Renaissance vocal style in *alla breve* time, to be sure. But there are also other works in a host of meters more commonly associated with instrumental music and the *stile moderno*: 2/4, 3/4, 6/4, 3/8, 6/8, 9/8, and 12/8. This forms a sharp contrast with the *Orgelbüchlein*, with its overabundance of old-fashioned 3/2 and 4/4 meters. The metrical mix reflects the development of new organ idioms drawn from instrumental practice.

²⁴ John Butt, *Bach Interpretation: Articulation Marks in Primary Sources of J.S. Bach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 177-9.



Example 9 “Vater unser im Himmelreich,” BWV 682, from *Clavier-Übung III*

The extremely thick textures of the *pedaliter* settings of “Kyrie, Gott heiliger Geist” (five parts), BWV 671, and “Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir” (six parts), BWV 686, are significant as well. Bach’s student Johann Philipp Kirnberger said that works in 2/2 or 4/2 are to be played in a serious and emphatic manner, in which the notes are closely connected and given their full value.²⁵ The vocal motets of *Clavier-Übung III* fit into this category and seem to be a perfect match with the *Gravität* of the Central German organ, with its emphasis on 16’ and 8’ foundation tones. The Prelude and Fugue in E-flat major (“St. Anne”), BWV 552, is five-part, too, apparently taking advantage of the type of plenum one would find on the Trost instrument in Altenburg or the Hildebrandt instrument in Naumburg.

Finally, there is the issue of the four Duets. What are these pieces doing in *Clavier-Übung III*? They don’t fit in with the Mass and Catechism chorales, and they seem to have been added almost as an afterthought, possibly to spur sales.²⁶ Perhaps they are inventions or *essercizi* for the organ or harpsichord, like the Two-Part Inventions, BWV 772-786, or several two-part preludes in volume 2 of the Well-Tempered Clavier (the Preludes in E-flat minor, E minor, F-sharp major, A minor, and B minor). But they may be what their title implies, duets, like Telemann’s *Sei duetti*, TWV 40:130-135, of c.1740, for two treble instruments (violin, flute, or oboe). Bach’s Weimar colleague Johann Gottfried Walther, writing in his *Musicalisches Lexicon* of 1732, described two categories under the *Duetto* heading:

²⁵ Johann Philipp Kirnberger, *Die Kunst des reinen Satzes in der Musik* (Berlin: Christian Friedrich Voß, 1771-1777; facs. repr. Hildesheim: Olms, 1968), II, 1: 118.

²⁶ In the original edition of *Clavier-Übung III* the Duetti appear to have been engraved very late in the printing process, lending weight to the idea that they were added after the rest of the collection was complete. See Gregory G. Butler, *Bach’s Clavier-Übung III: The Making of a Print* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1990), 19, 77.

1) a short song for two singing voices (without taking into account the continuo-bass that goes with them), and 2) a similar *Piece* for two instrumental parts (NB: in this instance the bass part is assimilated within the two voices).²⁷

Bach's duets reflect the instrumental tradition described in Walther's second category. The Italian title, *galant* style, reprise forms, and carefully marked articulation link them with fashionable chamber music.

Thus Bach's *Duetti* may have been intended as a type of keyboard transcription, like the Italian Concerto and French Overture of *Clavier-Übung* II. These progressive pieces would have reflected the change in taste Bach mentioned in his 1730 memo to the Leipzig Town Council. In addition, they were tailor-made to be played on the violin, flute, and oboe stops of the Central German organ, registers "specifically voiced," as Trost put it, "to sound like the genuine instrument."

²⁷ Johann Gottfried Walther, *Musicalisches Lexicon* (Leipzig: Wolfgang Deer, 1732; facs. repr. Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1953), 218-19.

Appendix

Altenburg: Castle Church of St. George

Heinrich Gottfried Trost, 1739

| Hauptwerk | | Oberwerk | | Pedal | |
|----------------------------------|-------|---------------------------------------|------|--------------------------|-------|
| * Groß-Quintadena | 16' | Geigenprincipal | 8' | Principalbaß | 16' |
| * Flaute traverse | 16' | Lieblich Gedackt | 8' | Violonbaß | 16' |
| Principal | 8' | Vugara | 8' | Subbaß | 16' |
| * Bordun | 8' | Quintadena | 8' | Gro-Quintadena (T) | 16' |
| Spitzflöte | 8' | Hohlflöte | 8' | Flute traverse (T) | 16' |
| Viol di Gamba | 8' | Gemshorn | 4' | Octavenbaß | 8' |
| Rohrflöte | 8' | Flaute douce II | 4' | Bordun (T) | 8' |
| * Octave | 4' | Nasat | 3' | Octave (T) | 4' |
| Kleingedackt | 4' | Octave | 2' | Mixtur (T) | VI-IX |
| Quinte | 3' | Waldflöte | 2' | Posaune | 32' |
| Superoctave | 2' | Superoctava | 1' | Posaune | 16' |
| Blockflöte | 2' | Cornet | V | Trompete | 8' |
| Sesquialtera | II | Mixtur | IV-V | Hauptwerk/Oberwerk | |
| * Mixtur | VI-IX | Vox humana | 8' | Hauptwerk/Pedal | |
| Trompete | 8' | Tremulant | | Compass: | |
| Glockenspiel (c-c ³) | | | | Manual: C→c ³ | |
| Tremulant | | *Wind coupler (Pedal transmission) | | Pedal: C→c ¹ | |

Bad Berka: Church of St. Mary

Disposition by J.S. Bach, c.1742

| Hauptwerk | | Brustwerk | | Pedal ("Bäße") | |
|-------------|--------|-------------------|--------|---------------------|-----|
| Quintadena | 16' | Quintadena | 8' | Suppaß | 16' |
| Principal | 8' | Gedackt | 8' | Principal | 8' |
| Flöte | 8' | Principal | 4' | Hohlflöte | 4' |
| Gedackt | 8' | Nachthorn | 4' | Posaun Baß | 16' |
| Gemshorn | 8' | Quinte | 2 3/5' | Trompete | 8' |
| Octave | 4' | Octave | 2' | Cornett | 4' |
| Gedackt | 4' | Waldflöte | 2' | Brustwerk/Hauptwerk | |
| Quinta | 2 3/5' | Terz ("Tritonus") | 1 3/5' | Hauptwerk/Pedal | |
| Naßat | 2 3/5' | Cimpel | III | | |
| Octave | 2' | | | | |
| Seßquialter | II | | | | |
| Mixtur | V | | | | |
| Trompete | 8' | | | | |

Naumburg: Church of St. Wenzel

Zacharias Hildebrandt, 1746

| Hauptwerk | | Oberwerk | | Rückpositiv | | Pedal | |
|--------------|------|------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|-----|-----------------|------|
| Principal | 16' | Bordun | 16' | Principal | 8' | [Untersatz | 32'] |
| Quintathen | 16' | Principal | 8' | Quintadehn | 8' | Principal | 16' |
| Octava | 8' | Hollflött | 8' | Rohr Floete | 8' | Violon | 16' |
| Spitzflöte | 8' | Unda maris | 8' | Viol de Gamba | 8' | Subbaß | 16' |
| Gedackt | 8' | Praestant | 4' | Praestanta | 4' | Octav | 8' |
| Octav | 4' | Gemshorn | 4' | Vagara | 4' | Violon | 8' |
| Spitzflöte | 4' | Quinta | 3' | Rohrflött | 4' | Octav | 4' |
| Sesquialtera | II | Octav | 2' | Nasat | 3' | Octava | 2' |
| Quinta | 3' | Waldflöte | 2' | Octava | 2' | Mixtur | VII |
| Weit Pfeiffe | 2' | Tertia | 1 ³ / ₅ ' | Rausch Pfeife | II | Posaune | 32' |
| Octav | 2' | Quinta | 1 ¹ / ₂ ' | Mixtur | V | Posaune | 16' |
| Cornett | IV | Sif-Floete | 1' | Fagott | 16' | Trompet-Bass | 8' |
| Mixtur | VIII | Scharff | V | Tremulant | | Clarin-Bass | 4' |
| Bombart | 16' | Vox humana | 8' | | | | |
| Trompet | 8' | | | | | | |
| | | | | Compass: | | Rückpositiv/ | |
| | | | | Manual: CD→c ³ | | Hauptwerk | |
| | | | | Pedal: CD→d ¹ | | Oberwerk/ | |
| | | | | | | Hauptwerk | |
| | | | | | | Hauptwerk/Pedal | |