

Prelude 18.

J. S. Bach

The Creative Development of Johann Sebastian Bach

VOLUME II: 1717–1750

Music to Delight the Spirit

RICHARD D. P. JONES

OXFORD

The Creative Development
of Johann Sebastian Bach

Volume II: 1717–1750

This page intentionally left blank

The Creative Development of Johann Sebastian Bach

VOLUME II: 1717–1750

Music to Delight the Spirit

RICHARD D. P. JONES

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

OXFORD

UNIVERSITY PRESS

Great Clarendon Street, Oxford, OX2 6DB,
United Kingdom

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship,
and education by publishing worldwide. Oxford is a registered trade mark of
Oxford University Press in the UK and in certain other countries

© Richard D. P. Jones 2013

The moral rights of the author have been asserted

First Edition published in 2013

Impression: 1

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in
a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the
prior permission in writing of Oxford University Press, or as expressly permitted
by law, by licence or under terms agreed with the appropriate reprographics
rights organization. Enquiries concerning reproduction outside the scope of the
above should be sent to the Rights Department, Oxford University Press, at the
address above

You must not circulate this work in any other form
and you must impose this same condition on any acquirer

Published in the United States of America by Oxford University Press
198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016, United States of America

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
Data available

Library of Congress Control Number: 2013948106

ISBN 978-0-19-969628-4

Printed in Great Britain by
CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon, CR0 4YY

Links to third party websites are provided by Oxford in good faith and
for information only. Oxford disclaims any responsibility for the materials
contained in any third party website referenced in this work.

For my wife
Anne Paul Jones

This page intentionally left blank

Preface

This is the second volume of a two-volume study of the music of Johann Sebastian Bach. An analytical and (as far as possible) chronological approach is adopted with the object of gaining a clearer picture of the composer's creative development. Whereas the first volume dealt with the music of Bach's early and Weimar periods (c. 1695–1708 and 1708–17 respectively), the second volume is concerned with the Cöthen and Leipzig periods (1717–23 and 1723–50). The book is designed for music lovers in general, not just for students or scholars.

The thirty-three years of Bach's high maturity are subdivided as follows—Part I: 1717–29; Part II: 1729–39; and Part III: 1739–50. The first part bridges Bach's move from Cöthen to Leipzig, mainly due to the very pronounced continuity in the sphere of keyboard and instrumental music. 1729 was deemed an appropriate date for the division between Parts I and II: it apparently marks the end of Bach's regular composition of sacred cantatas, but at the same time it marks the beginning of his directorship of the Leipzig Collegium musicum, together with the intensified interest in secular music (both vocal and instrumental) that this entailed. Around 1739, the starting date of Part III, Bach began work on *The Well-Tempered Clavier* II and the Eighteen Chorales—collections whose retrospective character forms a significant feature of this last decade. Within each of the three parts a brief introduction sets the scene in terms of biographical details and compositional activity; three major chapters then deal with keyboard, instrumental, and vocal music in turn; and finally a brief conclusion attempts to draw all the strands together.

Problems that hamper an enterprise of this kind are less acute than in Bach's early works, but nonetheless considerable. Firstly, losses are very extensive. Two of Bach's five church-year cycles of sacred cantatas—over 100 compositions—are lost, as are some twenty-three secular cantatas (as against nineteen extant and seven incomplete). The greatest single loss of all is the St Mark Passion of 1731, for there is no reason to suppose that it would have been inferior to the St John or St Matthew Passions. In addition, the Bach Obituary, after listing the works we know, mentions 'a mass of other instrumental pieces of all sorts and for all kinds of instruments', which can no longer be identified today and must therefore be presumed lost. Secondly, although dating problems have been to a considerable extent resolved, thanks to the work of Alfred Dürr, Georg von Dadelsen, and Yoshitake Kobayashi, problems remain in cases where no original source material survives (notably BWV 80, 209, 542 no. 1, 547, 590, 736, 903, 904, 918, 933–8, 1029, 1042, and 1044). Thirdly, there are still some problems of authenticity. Legitimate doubts, with which the present writer concurs, have been

expressed in relation to the following compositions: BWV 50, 230, 534, 546 no. 2, 1023, 1031, and 1033. For this reason they are excluded from the present study.

In addition to the chronological studies mentioned above, the present writer is greatly indebted to the following:

- Kirsten Beißwenger: *J. S. Bachs Notenbibliothek*
 Werner Breig: numerous studies of the organ music and harpsichord concertos
 Gregory Butler: studies of *Clavierübung* III and the *Canonic Variations*
 Alfred Dürr: studies of the cantatas, oratorios, and Passions
 Martin Geck: editor of the invaluable series of Dortmund conference reports
 David Ledbetter: studies of *The Well-Tempered Clavier* and the unaccompanied solos
 Yo Tomita: editor of *Understanding the B-minor Mass*, conference report, Belfast, 2007
 Peter Williams: *The Organ Music of J. S. Bach*
 Christoph Wolff: biography, numerous essays, *Der Stile antico in der Musik J. S. Bachs*

Further details, alongside other studies that have played a vital role in the preparation of this book, may be found in the footnotes and bibliography.

The writer is greatly indebted to Martin Holmes and the other music staff of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, where much of the work involved in preparing this book was carried out, and to Jeanne Roberts for her expert setting of the music examples.

Richard D. P. Jones

Contents

<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xi
------------------------------	----

Part I: The Cöthen and early Leipzig years: 1717–1729

1. Introduction	3
2. <i>The Well-Tempered Clavier</i> I and other keyboard works	12
Fantasia: BWV 903, 542/1	12
Prelude, fugue, and invention: <i>Clavierbüchlein</i> for W. F. Bach, <i>Das Wohltemperierte Clavier</i> I, <i>Aufrichtige Anleitung</i> (Inventions and Sinfonias)	15
Suite: English Suites, French Suites and BWV 818–19, <i>Clavierübung</i> I	36
Prelude, fantasia, and fugue for organ: BWV 544, 548, 546/1, 537, 562/1, 540/2	58
3. The Brandenburg Concertos and other instrumental works	65
Concertos and <i>ouvertures</i> : Brandenburg Concertos; BWV 1046–51, 1042, 1066, 1069	65
Violin, cello, and flute solos: <i>Sei Solo a violino senza basso</i> ; Six Suites for solo cello; BWV 1013	86
Sonatas with obbligato harpsichord or continuo: <i>Sei Sonate a Cembalo certato e Violino solo</i> (BWV 1014–19), BWV 1034, 1039, 1021	97
4. Sacred and secular: the vocal works	106
Secular cantatas: BWV 134a, 173a, 249a, 36c, 205, 207, 198, 204, 210a	106
Sacred cantatas: Leipzig Cycle I	115
Magnificat and Passion: Magnificat in Eb (BWV 243a), St John Passion, Version I	132
Leipzig Cycle II: chorale cantatas	142
St John Passion, Version II	157
Leipzig Cycle II: non-chorale cantatas	162
Leipzig Cycle III	168
St Matthew Passion	181
Cantatas of 1727–1728 and the Picander Cycle (1728–1729)	192
The motets: BWV 225–9	198
5. Conclusion	206

Part II: The middle Leipzig years: 1729–1739

1. Introduction	221
2. <i>Clavierübung</i> II–III and other harpsichord, organ, and lute works	228
<i>Clavierübung</i> II–III	228
Miscellaneous keyboard works: BWV 904, 906, 918, 933–8	238
Two lute works: BWV 997–8	243
Miscellaneous organ works: BWV 590, 547, 736	244

3. The harpsichord concertos and other instrumental works	248
Two <i>ouvertures</i> : BWV 1068, 1067	248
Two violin concertos: BWV 1041, 1043	251
Concertos for three or four harpsichords: BWV 1063–5	252
Concertos for two harpsichords: BWV 1060–2	254
Concertos for solo harpsichord: BWV 1052–9	257
Sonatas in concerto style: Six Organ Sonatas (BWV 525–30), BWV 1029–30, 1032	261
4. Sacred and secular: vocal works II	271
Secular cantatas: BWV 201, 213–15, 206, 211, 209, 30a	271
Sacred cantatas: BWV 117, 192, 51, 112, 29, 140, 36, 177, 97, 100, 14, 80, 9, 197, 30	279
Passion and motet: St Mark Passion (BWV 247), BWV 118	284
Magnificat and Missa: Magnificat in D (BWV 243), Missa in B minor (BWV 232 ¹), Missae (BWV 233–6), Kyrie-Christe (BWV 233a)	287
Oratorio: <i>Weihnachts-Oratorium</i> , <i>Himmelfahrts-Oratorium</i> , <i>Oster-Oratorium</i>	307
5. Conclusion	316

Part III: The late Leipzig years: 1739–1750

1. Introduction	327
2. <i>The Well-Tempered Clavier</i> II and other keyboard/organ works	333
Eighteen Chorales (BWV 651–68)	333
<i>Das Wohltemperierte Clavier</i> II	335
<i>Aria mit verschiedenen Veränderungen</i> (Goldberg Variations)	346
<i>Verschiedene Canones</i> (Fourteen Canons)	350
<i>Die Kunst der Fuge</i>	352
<i>Canonische Veränderungen (Vom Himmel hoch)</i>	360
<i>Sechs Choräle von verschiedener Art</i> (Schübler Chorales)	361
3. <i>The Musical Offering</i> and other instrumental works	363
Sonatas BWV 1035, 1027–8	363
Concerto BWV 1044	365
<i>Musicalisches Opfer</i> BWV 1079	366
4. The B minor Mass and other vocal works	374
<i>Cantate burlesque</i> (Peasant Cantata) (BWV 212)	374
<i>Tilge, Höchster, meine Sünden</i> (BWV 1083)	376
Mass in B minor (BWV 232)	378
5. Conclusion	393
<i>Bibliography</i>	402
<i>Index of Bach's works</i>	423
<i>General Index</i>	432

List of Abbreviations

ABRSM	Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, London
Bach	Journal of the Riemenschneider Bach Institute, Baldwin-Wallace College, Berea, Ohio (Berea, 1970–)
BD I	Bach-Dokumente I: <i>Schriftstücke von der Hand Johann Sebastian Bachs</i> , ed. W. Neumann and H.-J. Schulze (Kassel and Leipzig, 1963)
BD II	Bach-Dokumente II: <i>Fremdschriftliche und gedruckte Dokumente zur Lebensgeschichte Johann Sebastian Bachs 1685–1750</i> , ed. W. Neumann and H.-J. Schulze (Kassel and Leipzig, 1969)
BD III	Bach-Dokumente III: <i>Dokumente zum Nachwirken Johann Sebastian Bachs 1750–1800</i> , ed. H.-J. Schulze (Kassel and Leipzig, 1972)
BD V	Bach-Dokumente V: <i>Dokumente zu Leben, Werk und Nachwirken Johann Sebastian Bachs 1685–1800</i> , ed. H.-J. Schulze and A. Glöckner (Kassel, 2007)
BD VII	Bach-Dokumente VII: <i>Johann Nikolaus Forkel, Ueber Johann Sebastian Bachs Leben, Kunst und Kunstwerke (Leipzig, 1802)</i> , ed. C. Wolff and M. Maul (Kassel, 2008)
Berlin	Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz
Bethlehem	Bach Choir, Bethlehem, Pa.
BJ	<i>Bach-Jahrbuch</i> (Leipzig, 1904–)
Brussels	Bibliothèque du Conservatoire Royal de Musique, Brussels
BWV	<i>Bach-Werke-Verzeichnis: Thematisch-systematisches Verzeichnis der musikalischen Werke von Johann Sebastian Bach</i> , ed. Wolfgang Schmieder (Leipzig, 1950; 2nd rev. and enlarged edn, Wiesbaden, 1990); <i>Kleine Ausgabe</i> , ed. A. Dürr and Y. Kobayashi (Wiesbaden, 1998)
C/c	C major/C minor etc.
Cambridge FM	Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge
Darmstadt	Hessische Landes- und Hochschulbibliothek, Darmstadt
Dresden	Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Dresden
DTB	Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Bayern
Dürr Chr 2	Alfred Dürr, ‘Zur Chronologie der Leipziger Vokalwerke J. S. Bachs’, 2nd rev. edn (Kassel, 1976); orig. pub. in <i>Bach-Jahrbuch</i> 44 (1957), pp. 5–162
Halle	Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Sachsen-Anhalt, Halle

- Kobayashi Chr** Yoshitake Kobayashi, 'Zur Chronologie der Spätwerke J. S. Bachs: Kompositions- und Aufführungstätigkeit von 1736 bis 1750', *Bach-Jahrbuch* 74 (1988), pp. 7–72
- Kraków** Biblioteka Jagiellońska, Kraków, Poland
- Leipzig BA** Bach-Archiv, Leipzig
- Leipzig Go.S.** Gorke Sammlung, Leipzig
- Leipzig MB** Musikbibliothek der Stadt Leipzig
- Leipzig TS** Thomasschule, Leipzig (MSS formerly owned by the school, now in safe keeping of Bach-Archiv, Leipzig)
- Leipzig UL** Universitätsbibliothek, Leipzig
- London BL** British Library, London
- NBA** *Neue Bach-Ausgabe*: J. S. Bach, *Neue Ausgabe sämtlicher Werke*, ed. Johann-Sebastian-Bach-Institut, Göttingen and Bach-Archiv, Leipzig (Kassel and Leipzig, 1954–)
- NBR** *The New Bach Reader: A Life of J. S. Bach in Letters and Documents*, rev. and enlarged edn by Christoph Wolff (New York and London, 1998) of documentary biography by Hans T. David and Arthur Mendel (London, 1945)
- New York PL** Public Library, New York
- New York PML** Pierpont Morgan Library, New York
- P** *Partitur* (score), as in shelfmark Berlin, Mus. ms. Bach P 42 etc.
- Paris BN** Bibliothèque nationale, Paris
- RV** Peter Ryom, *Verzeichnis der Werke Antonio Vivaldis: kleine Ausgabe* (Leipzig, 1974; 2nd edn 1979)
- SATB** soprano, alto, tenor, bass
- Spitta I, II** Philipp Spitta, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 2 vols (Leipzig, 1873 and 1880); Eng. trans. by C. Bell and J. A. Fuller-Maitland, 3 vols (London, 1884–5; repr. 1952)
- St** *Stimmen* (parts), as in shelfmark Berlin, Mus. ms. Bach St 132 etc.
- Stuttgart** Internationale Bachakademie Stuttgart
- Tokyo** Ueno Gakuen College, Tokyo
- VBN** Verzeichnis der Werke in J. S. Bachs Notenbibliothek, in Kirsten Beißwenger, *Johann Sebastian Bachs Notenbibliothek* (Kassel, 1992), pp. 223–400
- Vienna** Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna
- Washington** The Library of Congress, Washington

PART I

The Cöthen and early Leipzig years: 1717–1729

This page intentionally left blank

Introduction

In Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen Bach seems to have found in many ways the ideal patron. The prince was not only a good bass singer but also played the violin, viola da gamba, and harpsichord. And in 1713, after his return from a grand tour during which he acquired published copies of much French and Italian music, he took advantage of the dissolution of the Berlin court *Capelle* under Friedrich Wilhelm I by employing six musicians (and later a seventh) who had been made redundant. By late 1717, when Bach took up his appointment as Capellmeister, Leopold had increased the number of musicians at the Cöthen court to sixteen, of whom about half were players of the front rank.

There were disadvantages for Bach at Cöthen, however. Since it was a Calvinist court, there was no opera—such an enterprise, had it existed, could hardly fail to have attracted Bach's interest. Furthermore, the Calvinism of the ruling prince meant that there was no regular opportunity for Bach to compose and perform church music, though he did so at least once for the prince's birthday¹ and might have done occasionally at the Lutheran Agnuskirche, which Bach and his family attended.² As for secular vocal music, one of Bach's regular duties was to perform a cantata every year for the prince's birthday and another for New Year's Day, though very few of these works survive.³

In the field of instrumental music Bach's situation was considerably more advantageous. In moving from Weimar to Cöthen he had risen from the second-rank post of Concertmeister to the top-rank post of Capellmeister. And as such he directed an instrumental ensemble that few German courts could rival. In addition, the reigning prince was clearly passionate about music and no doubt gave his brilliant Capellmeister all the support he needed. In this favourable atmosphere Bach was able to compose some of his greatest keyboard and instrumental music, much of it never to be exceeded in later years:

¹ The lost church cantata *Lobet den Herrn, alle seine Heerscharen*, BWV Anh. I 5, performed on 10 Dec. 1718.

² Certain Weimar cantatas were evidently revived during the Cöthen years, including *Erschallet, ihr Lieder*, BWV 172, *Mein Herze schwimmt im Blut*, BWV 199, and *Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis*, BWV 21.

³ Only the New Year cantata *Die Zeit, die Tag und Jahre macht*, BWV 134a, and the birthday serenata *Durchlauchtster Leopold*, BWV 173a, survive complete.

<i>Title</i>	<i>Place of composition</i>	<i>Completion date</i>
English Suites	Weimar and Cöthen	c. 1720
Cello Suites	Cöthen	c. 1720
Violin Solos	Cöthen	1720
Brandenburg Concertos	Cöthen	1721
<i>Well-Tempered Clavier</i> I	Cöthen	1722
Inventions and Sinfonias	Cöthen	1723
Sonatas for Violin and Harpsichord	Cöthen and Leipzig	1725
<i>Clavierbüchlein</i> for W. F. Bach, 1720	Cöthen and Leipzig	c. 1725
<i>Clavierbüchlein</i> for A. M. Bach, 1722	Cöthen and Leipzig	1725
French Suites	Cöthen and Leipzig	c. 1725

The place of composition shows that there were overlaps at both ends of the Cöthen period. Only the first of the English Suites can be securely dated within the Weimar period; the remainder most likely originated during the early Cöthen years. The small manuscript books Bach dedicated to his eldest son Wilhelm Friedemann and his second wife Anna Magdalena, though begun in Cöthen, continued to be filled in after the move to Leipzig in 1723. And two of Bach's most important collections, the Violin and Harpsichord Sonatas and the French Suites, were left finished when he moved away from Cöthen in 1723, with the result that he had to return to them in the early Leipzig years.

The keyboard collections were partly designed for teaching purposes. Tuition, which comprehended keyboard playing and composition alike, began in Bach's own family circle and then spread outwards towards the private instruction of individual students. Thus the *Clavierbüchlein* of 1720 and 1722, representing the domestic phase, included drafts of preludes destined for *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, of the Inventions and Sinfonias (then called 'praeambula' and 'fantasias'), and of the French Suites. Later, fair copies were made of the first two of these collections, representing the public phase, and, like the *Orgelbüchlein*, revived from the Weimar years, they were furnished with title pages that clarified their didactic purpose. These title pages reveal the holistic nature of Bach's musical philosophy: he is concerned not only with education but with pure delectation. Thus *The Well-Tempered Clavier* and the *Aufrichtige Anleitung*, as the fair copy of the Inventions and Sinfonias is entitled, are written not only for 'those desirous of learning' ('denen Lehrbegierigen') but for 'those already skilled' ('als auch derer in diesem *studio* schon *habil* seyenden besonderem ZeitVertreib') and for 'lovers of the clavier' ('denen Liebhabern des *Clavires*'). In addition, these title pages are concerned with issues of playing and composition alike. The *Orgelbüchlein* gives 'instruction in developing a chorale in many different ways' ('Anleitung gegeben wird, auff allerhand Arth einen *Choral* durchzuführen'),

but also 'in acquiring facility in the study of the pedal' ('anbey auch sich im *Pedal studio* zu *habilitiren*'). And the *Aufrichtige Anleitung* on the one hand shows how 'to play clearly in two [and three] voices' ('mit 2 Stimmen reine spielen zu lernen, sondern auch . . . mit dreyen *obligaten Partien* richtig und wohl zu verfahren') and how 'to arrive at a singing style of playing' ('eine *cantable* Art im Spielen zu erlangen'), but, on the other hand, how 'to have good ideas [and] develop them well' ('gute *inventiones* nicht alleine zu bekommen, sondern auch selbige wohl durchzuführen') and how 'to acquire a strong foretaste of composition' ('einen starcken Vorschmack von der *Composition* zu überkommen').⁴

In 1720 Bach suffered the heavy blow of the sudden death of his first wife Maria Barbara. It might have been partly for this reason that in November of that year he sought a new start in different surroundings, travelling to Hamburg as a candidate for the post of organist at the Jacobikirche. During the same visit, perhaps, Bach's obituary (by C. P. E. Bach and J. F. Agricola) informs us that

ließ sich daselbst, vor dem Magistrate, und vielen andern Vornehmen der Stadt, auf der schönen Catharinenkirchen Orgel, mit allgemeiner Verwunderung mehr als 2 Stunden lang, hören. Der alte Organist an dieser Kirche, Johann Adam Reinken, der damals bey nahe hundert Jahre alt war, hörte ihm mit besondern Vergnügen zu, und machte ihm, absonderlich über den Choral: An Wasserflüssen Babylon, welchen unser Bach, auf Verlangen der Anwesenden, aus dem Stegreife, sehr weitläufig, fast eine halbe Stunde lang, auf verschiedene Art, so wie es ehemals die braven unter den Hamburgischen Organisten in den Sonnabends Vespers gewohnt gewesen waren, ausführende, folgendes Compliment: Ich dachte, diese Kunst wäre gestorben, ich sehe aber, daß sie in Ihnen noch lebet.

(he was heard for more than two hours on the fine organ of St. Catherine's before the magistrate and many other distinguished persons of the town, to their general astonishment. The aged organist of this church, Johann Adam Reinken, who at that time was nearly a hundred years old, listened to him with particular pleasure. Bach, at the request of those present, performed extempore the chorale *An Wasserflüssen Babylon* at great length (for almost half an hour) and in different ways, just as the better organists of Hamburg in the past had been used to do at the Saturday vespers. Particularly on this Reinken made Bach the following compliment: 'I thought this art was dead, but I see that in you it still lives.')

In the event Bach decided not to take the Hamburg post; and circumstances at Cöthen in any case soon changed for the better. Bach hired the young soprano Anna Magdalena Wilcke for the court in the summer of 1721, and he and she were married later in the same year (on 3 December). Only about a week after the wedding Prince Leopold also married. His bride, Friederica Henrietta of Bernburg, was unfortunately quite uninterested in music. Bach described the situation nearly ten years later in a letter to his former school friend Georg Erdmann:

⁴ The quotations are drawn from Bach's title pages for *The Well-Tempered Clavier* I, the Inventions and Sinfonias, and the *Orgelbüchlein*; see BD I, Nos. 152, 153, and 148; and *NBR*, Nos. 90, 92, and 69.

⁵ Bach obituary, 1750 (pub. 1754); BD III, No. 666; *NBR*, No. 306.

die *mutation*, so mich als Capellmeister nach Cöthen zohe. Dasselbst hatte einen gnädigen und *Music* so wohl liebenden als kennenden Fürsten; bey welchem auch vermeinete meine Lebenszeit zu beschließen. Es muste sich aber fügen, daß erwehnter *Serenissimus* sich mit einer Berenburghischen Princeßin vermählete, da es den das Ansehen gewinnen wolte, als ob die *musicalische Inclination* bey besagtem Fürsten in etwas laulicht werden wolte, zumahl da die neüe Fürstin schiene eine *amusa* zu seyn

([a] change in my fortunes . . . took me to Cöthen as Capellmeister. There I had a gracious prince, who both knew and loved music, and in his service I intended to spend the rest of my life. It must happen, however, that the said *serenissimus* should marry a princess of Berenburg, and that then the impression should arise that the musical interests of the said prince had become somewhat lukewarm, especially as the new princess seemed to be unmusical)⁶

For this and other reasons Bach sought the post of Cantor and Music Director at Leipzig, which had become vacant upon the death of Johann Kuhnau on 5 June 1722. Telemann and Graupner in turn were both chosen to fill the post by the Leipzig authorities, but neither could gain release from their current employment. Meanwhile, Bach performed his audition cantatas *Du wahrer Gott und Davids Sohn* (BWV 23) and *Jesus nahm zu sich die Zwölfe* (BWV 22) in the Thomaskirche on Quinquagesima (Estomihi) Sunday, 7 February 1723. According to the local press, Bach's music was 'amply praised . . . by all knowledgeable persons'.⁷ After Graupner had declined the post, it was offered to Bach, who was elected on 22 April 1723. Bach and his family moved to Leipzig on 22 May, and his official duties began on the First Sunday after Trinity (30 May), when he performed his inaugural cantata before the Leipzig public, *Die Elenden sollen essen*, BWV 75. According to a Leipzig chronicle,⁸ its performance was regarded as a 'great success'.

Leipzig, the second city of Saxony after the capital Dresden, had long been renowned for its trade and commerce, for its fairs, which took place three times a year, at New Year, Easter, and Michaelmas, and for its university, which had been founded in 1409. At this lively, thriving city Bach had a prominent post as 'Cantor et Director Musices'—above all, he was responsible for music at the four main Leipzig churches. The pupils at the Thomasschule, where Bach taught, were divided into four cantorates, which provided the music at the four churches. At those with modest musical provision, the Neue Kirche and the Peterskirche, the two less able cantorates sang, and Bach was able to delegate their direction to others. The two leading cantorates, however, alternated on Sundays between the two principal churches, the Thomaskirche and the Nicolaikirche. The second cantorate had to sing relatively simple cantatas by composers other than Bach. The first cantorate, on the other hand, which had long been celebrated throughout Lutheran Germany—Schütz's *Geistliche Chormusik* had been dedicated to it—was given the task by Bach of

⁶ BD I, No. 23; *NBR*, No. 152.

⁷ BD II, No. 124; *NBR*, No. 95.

⁸ The university chronicle *Acta Lipsiensium Academica*, 1723; BD II, No. 139; *NBR*, No. 103.

performing only his own exceptionally demanding compositions (this was not in his contract—compositions by others would have sufficed). As a result, during much of his first three or four years in Leipzig, while he was engaged in building up a new repertoire of church music, Bach composed a new cantata virtually every week, not to mention the task of having the performing parts copied and undertaking the necessary rehearsal. Only occasionally did the revival of an older composition from the Weimar years give him some respite. The reward for such diligence was the regular performance of his church works on Sundays and feast days at the Thomaskirche or the Nicolaikirche before a congregation of well over 2,000 people.⁹ The services concerned were without question the biggest musical events in Leipzig at the time.

Like his predecessors Schelle and Kuhnau, Bach was also responsible for the Old Service at the Paulinerkirche, the university church, which involved performing a cantata on the three High Feasts—Christmas, Easter, and Whit—as well as at the Reformation Festival (31 October). On these occasions Bach gave a repeat performance of the cantata that had already been performed that day in the Thomaskirche or the Nicolaikirche.

The *Kirchenstück*, or cantata, as cultivated by Bach, was usually based on a biblical dictum or chorale text (most often from the Reformation period), whose theme, related to the Gospel or Epistle of the day, was then expounded in free verse. Generally, Bach would set the biblical or chorale text as an opening chorus of large dimensions, whereas the free verse would be set, in accordance with Neumeister's reforms,¹⁰ as alternating recitative and arias. This 'modern' Italianate element, derived from opera and secular cantata, was thus wedded to the old German ecclesiastical element of dictum and chorale. The latter provided a foundation of sermon-like authority, whereas the more subjective, free-verse element allowed individual members of the congregation to relate the overall theme, or aspects thereof, to their own personal experience. Bach's setting of the ecclesiastical texts would no doubt appeal to the church authorities; to what extent his pseudo-operatic treatment of the free verse did is a moot point,¹¹ though it is interesting to note that on the occasion of his election, one of the councillors, Dr Steger, while voting for Bach, added that 'he should make compositions that were not theatrical'.¹² Furthermore, it was a condition of Bach's appointment that in church he should 'die *Music* dergestalt einrichten, daß... sie nicht *opernhafftig* herauskommen, sondern die Zuhörer vielmehr zur Andacht aufmuntere' ('so design the music that it should not create an operatic impression, but rather incite the listeners to devotion').¹³

⁹ See Tanya Kevorkian, *Baroque Piety: Religion, Society, and Music in Leipzig, 1650–1750* (Aldershot, 2007), p. 30.

¹⁰ See Vol. I of this study, p. 243.

¹¹ On the other hand, it is very likely that Bach's librettists were not infrequently drawn from the ranks of the clergy.

¹² BD II, No. 129; *NBR*, No. 98.

¹³ BD I, No. 92; *NBR*, No. 100.

According to the obituary by C. P. E. Bach and Agricola,¹⁴ Bach wrote five cycles of cantatas for the whole church year, each of which would have numbered some fifty-nine compositions. Only three cycles survive in a virtually complete state, however, and all three originated during Bach's first few years in Leipzig, when his enthusiasm for the project must have been at its height. They are:

- Cycle I, 1723–4: dictum cantatas (based primarily on a biblical text)
 Cycle II, 1724–5: chorale cantatas (based on a chorale text with its associated melody)
 Cycle III, 1725–7: cantatas with a large input of instrumental music

Cycle IV might have originated in 1727–8 (see Part I Ch. 4), but very few cantatas from this period have been transmitted. Of Cycle V (1728–9) only eight cantatas survive.¹⁵ The texts are drawn from a complete set for the whole church year by Bach's regular librettist Picander, who stated in his preface of 24 June 1728 that they were to be set to music by Bach. The fate of the remaining settings is not known. In general Bach's lost cantatas, which might have numbered over 100, were probably for the most part inherited by W. F. Bach, who according to Forkel¹⁶ later had to sell them off. Occasionally, for various reasons, Bach resorted to the performance of cantatas by respected contemporaries. In the period 1724–5 he performed Telemann's cantata *Der Herr ist König* (TVWV8:6); and in the early Trinity period of 1725 (Third to Sixth Sunday, 17 June to 8 July) a series of five Telemann cantatas might have been performed in the two main Leipzig churches, perhaps during Bach's absence.¹⁷ In the following year Bach's Meiningen cousin Johann Ludwig Bach provided him with a printed cycle of cantata texts, *Sonntags- und Fest-Andachten* (Meiningen, 1704) and with the scores of at least some of his own settings of these texts. Bach and assistants wrote out the parts and performed no fewer than eighteen of Johann Ludwig's settings between 2 February (Feast of the Purification) and 15 September (Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity).¹⁸ Bach seems to have been so impressed with the librettos (and perhaps with Johann Ludwig's settings) that he set seven of them himself during the latter half of this period, from Ascension Day, 30 May, onwards: BWV 43, 39, 88, 187, 45, 102, and 17.

On Good Friday of the same year, 19 April 1726, Bach revived an anonymous setting of the St Mark Passion (Hamburg, 1707) that he attributed, perhaps wrongly, to Reinhard Keiser. Bach had already performed this work in 1713, during his Weimar period. Its 1726 revival was the first of several Bach performances of Passions by other composers during the Leipzig years (see Part II Ch. 1 and Part III Ch. 1). Not long afterwards he might have performed Telemann's setting of the Brockes Passion, for a

¹⁴ See n. 5.

¹⁵ Plus a few bars of a ninth, BWV Anh. I 190.

¹⁶ BD VII, pp. 81–2; *NBR*, pp. 472–3.

¹⁷ *BJ* 59 (1973), pp. 5–32 (W. Hobohm) and *BJ* 78 (1992), pp. 73–6 (A. Glöckner).

¹⁸ *BJ* 46 (1959), 48 (1961), and 49 (1962) (W. H. Scheide); *BJ* 63 (1977), pp. 7–25 (W. Blankenburg); *BJ* 73 (1987), pp. 159–64 (K. Küster).

copy from the 1720s was apparently in the library of the Thomasschule, Leipzig till the end of the Second World War.¹⁹ As for his own settings, the obituary informs us that he wrote five Passions, but only two survive: the St John and the St Matthew (of the St Mark Passion, first performed in 1731, only Picander's libretto is extant). In Leipzig, according to J. C. Rost, sexton of the Thomaskirche, 'on Good Friday of the year 1721, in the Vespers service, the Passion was performed for the first time in concerted style,'²⁰ in a setting by Bach's predecessor Johann Kuhnau. Bach continued this practice, and in musical terms the performance became the biggest event in the entire church calendar. The St John Passion was first performed on 7 April 1724, in the context of Cycle I, and then revived in a modified form—significantly including several elaborate chorale arrangements—on 30 March 1725, during the chorale-cantata cycle (Cycle II). The St Matthew Passion was first performed at Good Friday Vespers (11 April) 1727 and revived in 1729, though it did not acquire its definitive form till 1736. There is much in Bach's two great oratorio-Passions—the seventeenth-century Lutheran genre to which he adhered—that could be described as dramatic or even theatrical, though we do not hear of objections raised by the clergy or members of the congregation. However, it is clear from the following account, published in Leipzig only a few years after the first performance of the St Matthew Passion, that strongly antagonistic feelings were raised by Passion music in an operatic style:

When in a large town [such] Passion music was done for the first time . . . many people were astonished and did not know what to make of it. In the church pew of a noble family, many ministers and noble ladies were present, who sang the first Passion chorale out of their books with great devotion. But when this theatrical music began, all these people were thrown into the greatest bewilderment, looked at each other, and said, 'What will come of this?' And an old widow of the nobility said, 'God save us, my children! It's just as if one were at an opera comedy!'²¹

The Leipzig opera had closed in 1720, before Bach's arrival in the city, but other forms of secular music were frequently heard, in some cases performed by the Collegium musicum (music society) that had been founded by Telemann in 1701. Bach took over the directorship of this organization in 1729, but it is not unlikely that he was able to avail himself of its resources even before then.²² At any rate during the 1720s he was already composing and performing a good deal of secular music that anticipates the Collegium musicum period: *drammi per musica* (the equivalent of one-act operas),

¹⁹ See Andreas Glöckner, 'Bach and the Passion Music of His Contemporaries', *Musical Times*, 116 (1975), pp. 613–16, and his 'J. S. Bachs Aufführungen zeitgenössischer Passionsmusiken', *BJ* 63 (1977), pp. 75–119 (esp. 76–89 and 99–101).

²⁰ BD II, No. 180; *NBR*, No. 114.

²¹ Christian Gerber, *Historie der Kirchen-Ceremonien in Sachsen* (Dresden and Leipzig, 1732), pp. 283–4; Eng. trans. in *NBR*, No. 324.

²² See Andreas Glöckner, 'Bachs Leipziger Collegium Musicum und seine Vorgeschichte', in C. Wolff (ed.), *Die Welt der Bach-Kantaten*, vol. ii (Stuttgart, 1997), pp. 105–17, and his 'Zur Vorgeschichte des "Bachischen" Collegium musicum', in M. Geck (ed.), *Bachs Orchesterwerke* (Witten, 1997), pp. 293–303 (esp. 299).

such as *Der zufriedengestellte Aeolus* (Aeolus Placated), BWV 205 (1725), *Vereinigte Zwietracht*, BWV 207 (1726), and *Die Feier des Genius* (The Celebration of Genius), BWV 249b (1726); the *Trauer-Ode* (Mourning Ode), or *Tombeau de S. M. la Reine de Pologne*, BWV 198 (1727); the solo cantata *Von der Vergnüsamkeit* (On Contentedness), BWV 204 (1727/8); and the wedding cantata *Vergnügte Pleißenstadt*, BWV 216 (1728). He also composed birthday cantatas for courts with which he had strong connections from of old: the pastoral cantata *Entfliehet, verschwindet, entweichet, ihr Sorgen*, BWV 249a, for Weißenfels (1725) and *Steigt freudig in die Luft*, BWV 36a, for Cöthen (1726).

During these early Leipzig years, despite the huge demands made upon him by church music, Bach also engaged in concert activities outside the church. This is clear from an account by Ernst Ludwig Gerber, who informs us that in 1724 his father Heinrich Nicolaus ‘hatte . . . manche vortreffliche Kirchenmusik und manches Concert unter Bachs Direktion mit angehört’ (‘had heard much excellent church music and many a concert under Bach’s direction’).²³ Music that he might have performed at this time includes the *ouverture-suites* in C and D, BWV 1066 and 1069, the Violin Concerto in E, BWV 1042, the Brandenburg Concertos, and perhaps the lost originals of some of the harpsichord concertos. At the same time Bach maintained contact with the court of Cöthen and the Saxon capital Dresden. He gave two extremely well-received organ recitals at the Sophienkirche, Dresden, in 1725. And in 1724, 1725, and 1728, alongside his second wife Anna Magdalena who was an able soprano, he gave guest performances in Cöthen in his capacity as Honorary Capellmeister. His first keyboard Partita (BWV 825) was dedicated to Prince Leopold’s newborn son in 1726; and finally he undertook the sad duty of composing and performing the prince’s funeral music in March 1729.

As we have seen, alongside his teaching duties at the Thomasschule, Bach undertook much private tuition in keyboard playing and composition—it is clear that he regarded the two as inseparable. For this purpose he made use of the two great collections that had been completed at Cöthen, *The Well-Tempered Clavier* I and the *Aufrichtige Anleitung* (the Inventions and Sinfonias). In addition, the French Suites were completed in the early Leipzig years and became popular among Bach’s pupils, and the English Suites now became available for teaching purposes. Prominent pupils, such as Bernhard Christian Kayser,²⁴ Heinrich Nicolaus Gerber, and Johann Caspar Vogler, made their own copies of these works or selections from them. The very act of copying might have given them insight into the compositional techniques involved in their creation, while they no doubt gained practical knowledge of the music by learning to play it at the keyboard from their own copies. According to E. L. Gerber,

²³ BD III, No. 950 (p. 476); *NBR*, No. 315.

²⁴ See BD V, No. B240a, and Andrew Talle, ‘Nürnberg, Darmstadt, Köthen—Neuerkenntnisse zur Bach-Überlieferung’, *BJ* 89 (2003), pp. 143–72.

his father Heinrich Nicolaus studied Bach's music under the composer in the order: Inventions, suites, *Well-Tempered Clavier*.²⁵

In 1725 Bach began a new *Clavierbüchlein* for his wife Anna Magdalena, entering two new keyboard suites at the start as a form of dedication. In revised versions these two compositions were later included in the set of six keyboard partitas that Bach published in separate instalments between 1726 and 1730, and then reissued in a collected edition as the First Part of the *Clavierübung* (Leipzig, 1731). These partitas return to the large scale and considerable technical demands of the English Suites; and, like them, they were not primarily intended for teaching purposes. Instead, they were composed, according to the title page, 'denen Liebhabern zur Gemüths Ergoetzung' ('for music lovers, to delight their spirit');²⁶ in other words, for the skilled amateur or connoisseur. By publishing these works one by one in the late 1720s, Bach made tentative steps towards one of the great projects of his later Leipzig years—the dissemination of his keyboard works in print in order to bring them to a far wider audience than he had hitherto been able to command.

²⁵ BD III, No. 950; *NBR*, No. 315.

²⁶ Hence the subtitle of the present book, 'Music to Delight the Spirit'.

The Well-Tempered Clavier I and other keyboard works

Fantasia

<i>Title</i>	<i>Earliest source/s</i>	<i>Scribe, date</i>
<i>Fantaisie chromatique</i> in D minor, BWV 903	Darmstadt, Mus. ms. 69	Anon., early 1730s
	Berlin, P 803	J. T. Krebs, post-1714
	Berlin, P 803	S. G. Heder, c. 1730?
	Berlin, P 421	Anon., 6 Dec. 1730
	Berlin, P 651	J. F. Agricola, 1738–41
Fantasia in G minor, BWV 542/1	Berlin, P 288/9	Anon., post-1750
	Berlin, Am.B.531	Anon., post-1750

These two works represent the summit of Bach's achievement in the free-fantasy style that he cultivated mainly in his earlier years. In the D minor composition, fugue might have been present from the outset; in the G minor, it was added at some later stage.¹ But in both cases the fantasy element forms the main content of the work and defines its character. While neither work can be securely dated, an origin in the Cöthen (D minor) and Leipzig years (G minor) seems most likely.²

The Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue in D minor, BWV 903, one of Bach's most extraordinary keyboard works, exists in three versions, though substantial changes are confined to the fantasia—the fugue seems to have remained largely unaltered. Notational and stylistic features of the early version, BWV 903a, suggest an origin in the Cöthen period, around 1720.³ An intermediate version, transmitted by J. T. Krebs and S. G. Heder, is of uncertain date. The final, definitive version, copied by Agricola while

¹ The two G minor compositions, fantasia and fugue, are rarely found in the same source. The earliest source of the fugue (P 803) probably dates from the late Weimar years (1714–17), whereas the fantasia is transmitted only in posthumous sources.

² Peter Williams (following Spitta) suggests a post-Weimar date for the G minor Fantasia; see his *The Organ Music of J. S. Bach* (rev. 2nd edn, Cambridge, 2003), p. 85. Certain features of the decorative writing, including the many multiple suspensions/appoggiaturas at phrase-ends, link it with *Clavierübung* I and hence suggest a date in the mid-to-late 1720s.

³ See George B. Stauffer, "This Fantasia . . . never had its like": On the Enigma and Chronology of Bach's Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue in D minor, BWV 903, in D. O. Franklin (ed.), *Bach Studies* [I] (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 160–82, esp. 175ff. The early version is transmitted only in Darmstadt, Mus. ms. 69.

he was a student of Bach's, perhaps dates from the 1730s. It has been observed that the work is not found in copies by Bach's early Leipzig pupils, which suggests that the composer might have kept it to himself at first and not used it regularly for teaching purposes till the 1730s; or else he might have returned to it then after a long interval.⁴ If so, a possible use of the work might have been as a virtuoso showpiece in Collegium musicum concerts.

In spite of its singular qualities, highlighted in Forkel's oft-quoted remark that 'this fantasia is unique and never had its like',⁵ the Chromatic Fantasia may be viewed as the culmination of Bach's writing in pseudo-improvisatory style for the harpsichord (according to the title pages of some of the chief sources,⁶ it is specifically written 'pour le clavecin'). Not only is it a brilliant, virtuoso showpiece, with which Bach must have dazzled his first audiences, but it is also a chromatic and enharmonic tour de force. It exhibits a fully chromatic command of the keyboard and of the resources of tonality, of the kind that Bach is said to have displayed in his improvised fantasies. 'When he played from his fancy,' Forkel informs us, 'all the 24 keys were in his power; he did with them what he pleased.'⁷

The chromatic element in the great fantasia is progressively intensified in the course of its three paragraphs and coda. The first paragraph is an extended *passaggio* that half-closes in the tonic at b. 20. The second (bb. 21–49) introduces *arpeggiando* chords in alternation with further *passaggi*. The third (bb. 49–74) modulates to the furthest reaches of the tonal system and back within the context of an instrumental recitative (so designated)—a style of writing that Bach had attempted before (in BWV 912a and 922) and would also have encountered in the slow movement of Vivaldi's 'Grosso Mogul' Concerto (RV 208), which he transcribed for organ (BWV 594). The modulations of the fantasia's recitative produce the effect of astounding, spontaneous strokes of genius, despite the careful tonal planning that clearly underlies the passage. We encounter here the contradiction that lies at the heart of the pseudo-improvisatory style from Frescobaldi to Bach—that great art has to be deployed in order to conjure up the *impression* of spontaneity. In the coda (b. 75), the treble descends chromatically through an octave, while the rich, full chords of the accompaniment simultaneously undergo their own fully chromatic descent—total chromaticism prevails. Yet the entire coda is underpinned by a tonic pedal. We thus meet the further contradiction here that, at the point in the fantasia where Bach's chromaticism is most explicit, it is also most firmly grounded in the home key.

By its very nature, the great fantasia is quite athenatic. In comparable earlier cases, however (BWV 912a, 922, etc.), Bach had often introduced music structured around a

⁴ See the preface to Ulrich Leisinger's edition *J. S. Bach: Chromatische Fantasie und Fuge BWV 903* (Vienna, 1999), and Uwe Wolf, 'Fassungsgeschichte und Überlieferung der chromatischen Fantasie BWV 903/1', in M. Geck (ed.), *Bachs Musik für Tasteninstrumente* (Dortmund, 2003), pp. 145–58 (esp. 154).

⁵ J. N. Forkel, *Ueber Johann Sebastian Bachs Leben, Kunst und Kunstwerke* (Leipzig, 1802); repr. in BD VII, pp. 9–89 (see p. 69); Eng. trans. in *NBR*, pp. 417–82 (see 468).

⁶ Including the first three of the sources listed here.

⁷ BD VII, p. 30; *NBR*, p. 436.

definite theme as a counterbalance to the improvisatory freedom that otherwise prevailed. This was no doubt the *raison d'être* for the fugue that follows the fantasia, whether or not it was part of the original conception—the different key signatures of fantasia and fugue (the one without flat, the other with) might be signs of separate origin. Certain aspects of the fugue seem to represent the opposite pole from free fantasy: the clearly articulated subject, with its sequential headmotive (a recurring feature of Bach's Weimar fugues) and its inversion halfway; the use of a well-defined, regular countersubject; the substantial element of reprise, an import from concerto form; and the clear division of the modulatory phase into sharp-side and flat-side zones (as in the fugues from BWV 542 and 894, etc.). On the other hand, certain other features of the fugue make it seem a perfectly natural and consistent outcome of the fantasia that precedes it. The most obvious of these is, of course, the chromatic nature of the sequential headmotive. No less significant, however, is the tonally unstable character of the subject, its refusal to settle into a clearly defined key till after the halfway point. To this we must add the bold, unprepared 7th that bursts upon the scene at the answering entry of the subject (b. 9) and the inexactness of that answer due to the dotted rhythm that opens it, which is later taken up in an episodic sequence (bb. 72–5). Finally, during an E minor subject entry (b. 90) the three-part fugal texture suddenly explodes into an eight-part dominant-9th chord (b. 94)—among the sharpest dissonances known to Bach—which recurs with climactic effect during the last stages of the fugue (bb. 135–9 and 158).

If the Chromatic Fantasia in D minor represents the *ne plus ultra* of Bach's free-fantasy works for harpsichord, the Fantasia in G minor (BWV 542 no. 1) occupies a similar position among his organ works. The two works differ, however, in the role played by fugue. Whereas that of the D minor composition was either present from the outset or else added at a very early stage, there is no incontrovertible evidence that the pairing of fantasia and fugue in the G minor work goes back to Bach at all.⁸ The G minor Fantasia is very clearly articulated into five paragraphs as follows:

	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Bars:</i>	1–9	9–14	14–25	25–31	31–49
<i>Material:</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>a'</i>	<i>b'</i>	<i>a''</i>
<i>Key:</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>c–g–d</i>	<i>–g</i>	<i>f–c–g</i>	<i>–g</i>

Unlike the Chromatic Fantasia, this composition incorporates a fully structured element within itself, namely the triple-counterpoint episodes *b* and *b'*, which alternate with writing in improvisatory style. The overall form is rondeau-like, not only in its contrasting episodes and (admittedly, very free) returns, *a'* and *a''*, but also in its key structure, returning repeatedly to the tonic. In addition, whereas the Chromatic

⁸ The two movements clearly originated independently of each other (see n. 1); whether they were subsequently united by Bach himself is not known. Dietrich Kilian doubted the authenticity of the two-movement version; see his *Krit. Bericht, NBA IV/5–6* (1978–9), p. 456.

Fantasia is entirely through-composed, this work incorporates significant elements of reprise, even within its free passages. Thus paragraph 5 recapitulates much of paragraph 3 in reverse order and in different keys (bb. 36–8 = 21–3; 44–6 = 15–17). To a far greater extent than in the Chromatic Fantasia, then, improvisatory freedom is here checked and modified by structural restraint, which would be consistent with a later dating for this composition.

The links that can be established with the harpsichord work are, however, no less obvious than the differences. Among them are the totally athematic character of the improvisatory-style passages, and the recurring ‘sigh’ figure, whether it takes the form of single appoggiaturas (D minor Fantasia) or multiple suspensions (G minor). Again, while only the harpsichord work is actually termed ‘chromatic’, the term might have been quite aptly applied to the organ work too: some of its most intense and mysterious passages of all are built on the basis of a chromatic ascent (pedals: bb. 20–3, 36–8; manuals: bb. 31–4). Among the most obvious resemblances between the two pieces are the startlingly abrupt, seemingly spontaneous modulations to unrelated keys, brought about by enharmonic change or by the changing tonal function of pivot notes. In stylistic terms the organ fantasia shares with its harpsichord counterpart two different species of improvisatory-style writing, namely *passaggio* (para. 1) and instrumental recitative (paras. 3 and 5). But the incorporation of these rhapsodic elements within the highly structured overall framework of the G minor Fantasia suggests, as has already been noted, a later date of origin than that of the D minor—perhaps Leipzig (1720s?) rather than Cöthen. Improvisatory freedom is now no longer possible except in conjunction with tight control.

Prelude, fugue, and invention

<i>Title</i>	<i>Earliest source/s</i>	<i>Scribe, date</i>
<i>Clavierbüchlein</i> for W. F. Bach, 1720	New Haven, Yale Univ.	J. S. and W. F. Bach, 1720–5/6
<i>Das Wohltemperierte Clavier</i> I BWV 846–69	Berlin, P 415	Autograph, 1722
<i>Aufrichtige Anleitung</i> (Inventions and Sinfonias), BWV 772–801	Berlin, P 610	Autograph, 1723

A new approach to keyboard music is clearly evident in Bach’s Cöthen and early Leipzig years. In their initial or early stages new compositions were often entered into small manuscript keyboard books called ‘Clavierbüchlein’ (equivalent, in name at least, to ‘Orgelbüchlein’), dedicated to Bach’s eldest son Wilhelm Friedemann or to his second wife Anna Magdalena. Family members were thus the first to benefit from Bach’s newest ideas. As his compositions developed, they would be copied by pupils from Bach’s immediate circle, such as Heinrich Nicolaus Gerber, who could then profit from them in their keyboard and composition studies. Finally, a definitive autograph fair copy would be produced, from which (at least indirectly) large

numbers of copies could be made, allowing dissemination of the work over a more extensive area. In its final form the work would consist of a standard set of six compositions, as in the suites or violin solos, or a multiple of six, as in the twenty-four Preludes and Fugues or the thirty Inventions and Sinfonias. Collecting together compositions in sets of six or more was, of course, customary at the time, but for Bach around 1720 it had a special significance: a new desire—no doubt linked to the arrival of full creative maturity—to be fully comprehensive and exhaustive in his approach to any keyboard form, whether it be dance suite, prelude and fugue, or the newly devised ‘invention’. The early exposure of family and pupils to these compositions is closely bound up with their very conception: they are designed not simply for pure delectation but as composition models and keyboard studies. These aims cannot be dissociated from each other: they are entirely integrated within the fabric of each composition.

Among the first items in the *Clavierbüchlein* for W. F. Bach are five preludia or praeambula, BWV 924, 926–8, and 930, all but one of which were entered by J. S. Bach in 1720,⁹ the year in which the book was dedicated to his son (the exception is BWV 927, which was entered by W. F. Bach in 1722/6). The first two preludes are numbered 1 and 2, and are in the keys of C major and D minor, which suggests that Bach might originally have planned a set of preludes in ascending key order. The five existing preludes, clearly designed specifically for the musical education of the young Wilhelm Friedemann, proceed from the simplest type, the arpeggiation of a chord sequence; hence the first two pieces, BWV 924 and 926, may be described as arpeggiated preludes.¹⁰ The other three preludes are also built on arpeggiated chords, but this material is now used thematically in sequence (BWV 927), motivically in imitation (BWV 930), or as the thematic material of a miniature ritornello design within an overall ABA¹ structure (BWV 928). The preludes thus offer an instructive course of progressively increasing difficulty. That it was partly intended as a composition course is suggested by the three preludia in the key order C, D, e (BWV 924a, 925, and 932) that W. F. Bach entered in the book in 1725/6 in imitation of his father. J. S. Bach’s preludes were clearly intended for keyboard instruction too, however, hence the ornamentation, which refers back to the ‘Explication’, a table of ornaments that Bach wrote out in imitation of D’Anglebert and Dieupart; hence, too, the four-bar cadenza in the D minor Prelude (BWV 926, bb. 39–42) and the fingering that Bach supplied throughout the G minor (BWV 930).

⁹ The chronology of the *Clavierbüchlein*, on which the dates given here are based, is the work of Wolfgang Plath; see his *Krit. Bericht*, NBA V/5 (1963), pp. 58–63.

¹⁰ A type cultivated not only by the middle-German composers Böhm, Kuhnau, and Zachow but also by the South German J. C. F. Fischer, who termed it ‘*praeludium harpegiato*’. Its historical development is traced by Dominik Sackmann in his ‘“A la recherche du Prélude perdu”: Die Präludien im Wohltemperierten Klavier I und ihre Stellung in der Geschichte der Gattung’, in S. Rampe (ed.), *Bach: Das Wohltemperierte Klavier I: Tradition, Entstehung, Funktion, Analyse* (Munich and Salzburg, 2002), pp. 161–80.

Some months later, probably in 1721, W. F. Bach, with the help of his father, started copying into the *Clavierbüchlein* a series of preludes that would eventually be incorporated in *The Well-Tempered Clavier* I (henceforth WTC I). A second series followed in 1722–3. The two series are as follows:

Series I

Praeludium no. 1 in C	WTC I, no. 1 in C	BWV 846a
Praeludium no. 2 in C minor	WTC I, no. 2 in C minor	BWV 847
Praeludium no. 3 in D minor	WTC I, no. 6 in D minor	BWV 851
Praeludium no. 4 in D	WTC I, no. 5 in D	BWV 850
Praeludium no. 5 in E minor	WTC I, no. 10 in E minor	BWV 855a
Praeludium no. 6 in E	WTC I, no. 9 in E	BWV 854
Praeludium no. 7 in F	WTC I, no. 11 in F	BWV 856

Series II

Praeludium no. [1] in C#	WTC I, no. 3 in C#	BWV 848
Praeludium no. [2] in C# minor	WTC I, no. 4 in C# minor	BWV 849
Praeludium no. [3] in Eb minor	WTC I, no. 8 in Eb minor	BWV 853
Praeludium no. [4] in F minor	WTC I, no. 12 in F minor	BWV 857

As shown, the keys of the first series are those of the diatonic tetrachord C–F, while those of the second series fill the chromatic gaps (except for Eb, which is missing). The versions of the first series are similar to those of the Forkel manuscripts, the chief sources of the early version of the WTC I, though slightly revised. The versions of the second series are similar to those of Bernhard Christian Kayser's copy of the WTC I (Berlin, Mus. ms. Bach P 401), made in 1722–3, which represents the stage immediately before the autograph fair copy.¹¹

The first series, like the five preludes of 1720, represent a progressive course of instruction in composition and keyboard technique. Again, Bach begins with the arpeggiated prelude, first in simple form (no. 1 in C), then with figured arpeggios (the so-called *arpègement figuré*; no. 2 in c); triplet arpeggios against a quaver bass (no. 3 in d); broken chords decorated by an ostinato motive in two-part texture with running treble and spaced-quaver bass (no. 4 in D), then the same with interchanged

¹¹ The Forkel MSS are the complete copy from the estate of Franz Konwitschny, Leipzig, and the selection in Berlin, P 212. Regarding the early stage represented by these MSS, see Alfred Dürr, 'Zur Frühgeschichte des Wohltemperierten Klaviers I von J. S. Bach', in *Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen*, i. *Philologisch-historische Klasse* (Göttingen, 1984), pp. 19ff. Anon. 5, the scribe of P 401, has recently been identified as the Bach pupil Bernhard Christian Kayser (1705–58). See Andrew Talle, 'Nürnberg, Darmstadt, Köthen—Neuerkenntnisse zur Bach-Überlieferung in der ersten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts', *BJ 89* (2003), pp. 143–72 (see esp. 155–72). See also BD V (2007), No. B240 a.

parts (no. 5 in e); thematic use of an arpeggio figure as the basis of a *cantabile* piece in three-part texture (no. 6 in E); and finally, motivic use of an arpeggio figure in exchanges between treble and bass (no. 7 in F). The first series of preludes, then, are not only numbered 1–7 and arranged in a logical key order, but they are also technically graded, both as keyboard and composition studies, and closely interrelated in style, theme, and motive. All this suggests that they might have been composed as a group. This is not to say that they were necessarily composed with W. F. Bach's musical education in mind, as the earlier set of preludes (BWV 924, 926–8, and 930) obviously were. It is more likely that, around 1720–1, Bach was working on the beginnings of the WTC I and simultaneously assisting his young son, and that there was a substantial overlap between the two tasks. The second series of WTC preludes were entered in the *Clavierbüchlein* at a later stage (1722–3), when the WTC I was nearing completion. Here the child would learn to play in double counterpoint, with perfect equality of the two hands (no. 1 in C♯), and in *cantabile* style within a *freistimmig* (free-voiced) texture (nos. 2–4). It is notable that three of the four preludes have tonics on the black keys, in accordance with Werckmeister's prediction that eventually musicians would be able to play equally 'aus dem c oder cis',¹² which was certainly part of Bach's achievement, if not part of his intention. In the end the *Clavierbüchlein* contained all twelve preludes from the first half of the WTC I, copied out by the son with his father's assistance, with the exception of no. 7 in E♭, which was no doubt felt to be excessively long and hard for the young Wilhelm Friedemann.

Alongside other manuscripts the *Clavierbüchlein* offers certain hints as to how the WTC I might have evolved in its early stages. The *Clavierbüchlein*, B. C. Kayser's copy (P 401), and J. G. Walther's copy (P 1074), taken together, suggest that Bach might have originally composed a series of preludes (and fugues?) in the diatonic key order C c, d D, e E, f F, g G, a A,¹³ subsequently filling in the gaps to create a fully chromatic series. This theory is supported by the later date of the second series of WTC preludes in the *Clavierbüchlein* and by the observation that there would have been room there for between seven and ten additional preludes.¹⁴ The early versions of Preludes 1–15 in the Forkel manuscripts, seven of which recur in the *Clavierbüchlein*, are mostly a good deal shorter than the definitive versions, whereas the earlier and later versions of the fugues differ only in matters of detail. It is possible, then, that the WTC I might have been compiled from a collection of preludes in the keys C–G (or C–a) and that, in the first place, the fugues might have formed a separate collection.¹⁵ Gaps might have been filled not only by composing new pieces ad hoc but by adapting existing pieces. There

¹² Quoted by David Ledbetter, *Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier* (New Haven and London, 2002), p. 156.

¹³ Klaus Hofmann posits an original series of eight arpeggiated preludes in the key series C–c–d–D–e–F–G–a; see his 'Die Klangflächenpräludien des "Wohltemperierten Klaviers" I: Überlegungen zur Frühgeschichte der Sammlung', in M. Staehelin (ed.), *Die Zeit, die Tag und Jahre macht: Zur Chronologie des Schaffens von J. S. Bach* (Göttingen, 2001), pp. 157–68 (esp. 159–60).

¹⁴ See Plath, *Krit. Bericht*, NBAV/5, pp. 60–1.

¹⁵ Hofmann also holds this view; see 'Die Klangflächenpräludien', p. 168.

is some evidence in the sources that the more remote keys might have been catered for by transposition. *Praeludium et Fuga* 8 in *eb/d#*, for example, might have been transposed from *e/d*, which would imply separate origin for prelude and fugue; no. 18 might have been transposed from *g* to *g#*, and no. 24 from *c* or *g* to *b*. There are signs in the sources that some preludes and fugues originally had the old modal key signatures (one flat or sharp fewer than today's signatures); for example, in Kayser's copy *Fuga* 2 in *C* minor has a key signature of two flats. In addition, among the early sources the title 'Prélude' is found, as well as 'Praeludium', and 'Fughetta' in place of 'Fuga'.

On the evidence of Kayser's copy the WTC I was probably compiled by collecting together separate bifolios, each of which would have contained a single prelude-and-fugue pair under its own title. These bifolios would have been combined to form a composite manuscript (now lost), within which folios could be inserted or replaced at will, serving as a vehicle for the compilation process in much the same way as the British Library autograph did for the WTC II about twenty years later. The existing autograph fair copy of Part I (P 415) was probably begun in late 1722, when the compilation process and the main revision of the text were complete. The object of this manuscript was clearly to bring the work into its definitive form. A further revision of the text was undertaken. The key order became fully chromatic, with major preceding minor throughout. Modern key signatures were invariably used. Individual titles throughout took the form 'Praeludium 1' or 'Fuga 1' and so on. The word 'fine' now occurs only at the end of the whole collection, not after each prelude-and-fugue pair, as it did originally. Finally, after 'fine' Bach writes 'SDG', *solī Deo gloria*, his customary sign of completion.

The elaborate ornamental title page of the autograph fair copy reads:

Das Wohltemperirte Clavier oder *Praeludia* und Fugen durch alle *Tone* und *Semitonia*, so wohl *tertiam majorem* oder *Ut Re Mi* anlangend, als auch *tertiam minorem* oder *Re Mi Fa* betreffend. Zum Nutzen und Gebrauch der Lehr-begierigen *Musicalischen* Jugend, als auch derer in diesem *studio* schon *habil* seyenden besonderem Zeit Vertreib aufgesetzt und verfertigt von Johann Sebastian Bach *p. t.* Hoch Fürstlich Anhalt-Cöthenischen Capellmeistern und *Directore* derer *Cammer Musiquen*. Anno 1722.

(*The Well-Tempered Clavier*, or Preludes and Fugues through all the tones and semitones, both as regards the *tertia major* or *Ut Re Mi* and as concerns the *tertia minor* or *Re Mi Fa*. For the use and profit of the musical youth desirous of learning, as well as for the pastime of those already skilled in this study, drawn up and written by Johann Sebastian Bach, *p. t.* Capellmeister to His Serene Highness the Prince of Anhalt-Cöthen and director of his chamber music. In the year 1722.)

Bach's circumlocutory terminology for the major and minor modes is borrowed from Kuhnau.¹⁶ 'Clavier' in this context most likely means simply 'keyboard', the

¹⁶ His *Neuer Clavier Übung*, Part I (1689) consists of seven partitas 'aus dem *Ut, Re, Mi, oder Tertia majore*'; Part II (1692), of seven partitas 'aus dem *Re, Mi, Fa, oder Tertia minore*'.

commonest meaning of the word at the time.¹⁷ In other words, Bach is deliberately non-prescriptive as to the type of instrument that should be used. This is in keeping with the restriction of the work to C–c³, the standard keyboard compass at the time, which made it as widely playable as possible on the instruments then in use. The epithet ‘wohltemperirte’ (well-tempered) was clearly borrowed from the leading contemporary authority Andreas Werckmeister, who frequently made use of it in his theoretical works. His treatise of 1691, for example, is entitled *Musicalische Temperatur, oder deutlich und warer mathematischer Unterricht, wie man . . . ein Clavier . . . wohl temperirt stimmen könne* (Musical Temperament, or clear and true mathematical instruction how to tune a keyboard well-tempered). Here, as elsewhere in Werckmeister’s writings, ‘wohl temperirt’ evidently means ‘appropriately tuned’. But in his later writings he increasingly advocated equal temperament on account of its unlimited possibilities of modulation, transposition, and enharmonic change.¹⁸ It is not necessary, however, to adopt entirely equal temperament in order to play in all keys. And many theorists of Bach’s day, such as Neidhardt, Mattheson, Sorge, Marpurg, and Kirnberger, advocated a slight deviation from absolute equality in order that the distinctive colourings of different keys could be maintained. It may well be that something approaching equal temperament, but subtly nuanced in this way, was what Bach had in mind.¹⁹ Or else he might have meant by ‘wohltemperirte’: use whatever temperament you find appropriate for playing music in all keys.

The didactic purpose of the work is clear from the words ‘for the use and profit of the musical youth desirous of learning’. And indeed for Bach’s pupils it became the prime vehicle for advanced study in both keyboard playing and composition. The work was also intended for pure delectation, however, as is clear from the words ‘as well as for the pastime of those already skilled in this study’.

By including a prelude and fugue in every one of the twenty-four major and minor keys, Bach gave a practical demonstration of the full range of the tonal system. There were at least partial precedents, of course, of which only the most prominent can be mentioned here. Since the traditional function of the prelude was to establish the mode of the work that followed, each prelude in sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century published collections tended to be in a different mode. By the late seventeenth century this procedure was applied to keys rather than modes. For example, the *Tabulatura 12 Praeambulorum . . . durch alle Claves und Tonos auff Clavichordien und Spinnetten zu gebrauchen* (Tablature of 12 Praeambula through all the keys and tones, to be used on clavichords and spinets) of 1682 by the Dresden court organist Johann

¹⁷ It could, however, refer to stringed keyboard instruments as opposed to the organ. Bach, for example, in recommending G. G. Wagner as cantor at Plauen, declared that ‘he plays the organ and clavier well’ (‘spiele er eine gute Orgel und Clavier’); see BD I, No. 15, and *NBR*, No. 124.

¹⁸ See Rudolf Rasch, ‘Does “Well-Tempered” Mean “Equal-Tempered”?’ in P. Williams (ed.), *Bach, Handel, Scarlatti: Tercentenary Essays* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 293–308.

¹⁹ See Ledbetter’s balanced discussion of these issues in his *Bach’s Well-Tempered Clavier*, pp. 30–50.

Heinrich Kittel²⁰ contains one prelude in each of the twelve most common major and minor keys, those with up to three sharps or flats. An even greater range of keys was occasionally in use at that time—for example, in the seventeen anonymous suites of 1683, formerly attributed to Pachelbel,²¹ whose keys include a major and/or a minor on every degree of the chromatic scale. By the turn of the century it was possible to list all twenty-four keys, with modern key signatures and in fully chromatic order, as did the organist T. B. Janovka in his influential treatise *Clavis ad thesaurum magnae artis musicae* (Prague, 1701).²² Since this work was known to Johann Bernhard Bach and Johann Gottfried Walther, it is quite possible that Bach was acquainted with it.

The nearest precedent to the WTC I²³ was published in the following year, 1702: *Ariadne musica*, a collection of twenty preludes and fugues in nineteen different keys by the South German composer Johann Caspar Ferdinand Fischer. Here only five remote keys are missing from the complete cycle of twenty-four: g♯, bb, eb, F♯, and C♯. Certain rather conservative, seventeenth-century features of the collection, however, distance it from the WTC I. Fischer's preludes and fugues are tiny miniatures, reflecting the South German verset tradition; and the frequent 'modal' key signatures²⁴ show that he was often thinking in terms of transposed modes rather than modern keys. Despite these antiquated features, there is no doubt that Bach was acquainted with the work and that it exerted a powerful influence upon the conception and composition of the WTC I. Although *Ariadne* first appeared in 1702, as already noted, it is known today only from a later edition (Augsburg, 1715). Bach, too, might have known only this 1715 edition. That would account for the absence of any trace of the influence of *Ariadne* on Bach's keyboard music prior to 1715. In addition, it would square with the likely date of the WTC's conception—some time within the period 1715–20. The overall structure of the two works is remarkably similar: a 'Praeludium et Fuga' in all the major and minor keys (or nearly all, in Fischer's case), chromatically ordered from C to b. Fischer places minor before major throughout, a relic of modal theory that recurs in the early stages of Bach's work on the WTC I. Later, we shall have occasion to notice how often even the substance of Fischer's preludes and fugues resonates in the later work.

During the period when Bach became acquainted with Fischer's *Ariadne musica*, he must have heard of the public, protracted, and heated dispute between Johann Mattheson of Hamburg and Johann Heinrich Buttstedt of Erfurt over the relative

²⁰ See 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. 649.

²¹ See M. Seiffert (ed.), *Johann Pachelbel: Klavierwerke*, DTB II.1 (1901).

²² See Ledbetter, *Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier*, pp. 110 and 357 n. 15.

²³ Thomas Synofzik lists further precedents in German prelude collections of 1639–1722, whose composers include C. Michael, J. E. Kindermann, W. Fabricius, G. E. Pestel, J. Krieger, and J. Pachelbel. The last-named composer's *Fugen und Praeambulen über die gewöhnlichsten tonos figuratos* of 1704 is unfortunately lost. See T. Synofzik, "Fili Ariadnaei": Entwicklungslinien zum Wohltemperierten Klavier, in Rampe (ed.), *Bach: Das Wohltemperierte Klavier I*, pp. 109–46.

²⁴ As already noted, traces of these are still found in the early developmental stages of the WTC I.

virtues of conservative and progressive approaches to music and its education. In his treatise *Das neu-Eröffnete Orchestre* (Hamburg, 1713) Mattheson dismissed the old system of solmization, based on modes and hexachords, in favour of the modern tonal system, with its twenty-four major and minor keys. Buttstedt replied in the treatise *Ut, mi, sol, re, fa, la: tota musica et harmonia aeterna* (Erfurt, 1715), in which he subscribed to the opposing, conservative viewpoint, advocating the continued validity of the old system. In the WTC I Bach makes a resounding statement in favour of the progressive approach, embracing the ‘modern’ tonal system in its totality, complete with chromatic key order and modern key signatures. To that extent he can be seen as siding with Mattheson in the dispute. On the other hand, in the title page he uses solmization syllables—‘Ut, re, mi’ and ‘Re, mi, fa’—for major and minor keys instead of the ‘dur’ and ‘moll’ that were already in widespread use. Moreover, in Mattheson’s *Orchestre* of 1713, fugue is regarded as an honourable but antiquated genre, of little interest to the ‘galant homme’. Bach, for his part, shows no inclination whatsoever to reject learned counterpoint—the very mainstay of his art—in favour of the *galant*, ‘natural’, singable, treble-dominated style that Mattheson advocated. As far as tonality is concerned, however, Mattheson and Bach were at that time thinking alike, as is clear from the Hamburg composer’s *Exemplarische Organisten-Probe* (Hamburg, 1719), the first publication to contain pieces in all twenty-four keys, even though they are only figured-bass exercises. Before that, in 1711, another prominent theorist-composer, Johann David Heinichen, had already given the first description and illustration of the circle of 5ths, showing the relationship between all keys, major and minor, in his *Neu erfundene Anweisung des General-Basses* (Hamburg, 1711).²⁵

In 1722, the very year in which the WTC I was completed, two highly relevant, though quite independent, publications appeared: the *Labyrinthus Musicus, bestehend in einer Fantasia durch alle Tonos, nehmlich durch 12 duros und 12 molles, zusammen 24 Tonos* by the Dresden composer Friedrich Suppig;²⁶ and Jean-Philippe Rameau’s *Traité de l’harmonie*, which for the first time gave a fully systematic account of the functional harmony that lies at the heart of the new tonal system. There is no question of direct influence here, but these works illustrate how an exhaustive approach to harmony and tonality was in the air at the time, as does *L’ABC musical* (lost; date unknown) by the Halle organist Gottfried Kirchhoff, which is said to have contained preludes and *partimento* fugues in all keys.²⁷

In the early version of the WTC I, as represented by the Konwitschny manuscript, there is an obvious mismatch between the short, relatively straightforward preludes—many of them used for the young Wilhelm Friedemann’s studies—and the extended, often complex fugues that follow. At the very beginning of the collection, for example, the elementary prelude in C is coupled with an advanced, difficult stretto fugue, and

²⁵ Subsequently reworked in his celebrated treatise *Der General-Bass in der Composition* (Dresden, 1728).

²⁶ Facsimile edn, ed. R. Rasch (Utrecht, 1990).

²⁷ It is described by F. W. Marpurg in his *Abhandlung von der Fuge*, vol. i (Berlin, 1753), pp. 149–50.

such discrepancies are frequent thereafter. Observations of this kind are one of the main arguments for the theory, broached earlier, that the preludes and fugues originated as independent collections. It might have been Bach's realization of their disproportionate size and weight that led to his expansion of the first fifteen preludes. Whether or not he also intended to expand the remaining nine preludes but ran out of time,²⁸ perhaps due to preparations for the move to Leipzig, we do not know. At any rate, Bach's objective seems to have been to bring the preludes into line with the fugues in terms of weight, substance, and dimensions. Historically, of course, the preparatory function of the prelude rendered it subsidiary to the movement that followed; and this is, to some extent, reflected in Bach's earlier keyboard works and in his initial conception of the WTC preludes. Moreover, in many cases the preludes had to be elementary enough to serve as studies for the young Wilhelm Friedemann. But when bringing the work into its definitive form, Bach was no longer guided by such constraints. What he sought now was something largely new: a substantial measure of equality between the relatively free preludial movement and the stricter, more rigorous fugal movement that followed.

Bach's mode of procedure in these prelude expansions is instructive. Typically, he inserts a new period shortly before the final cadence, often by interrupting an existing cadence (c♯, eb). In several cases the new period is a tonic or subdominant reprise of the main theme, rounding the movement off and thereby giving it a more finished shape (D, f). Often Bach incorporates into the prelude an entirely new, toccata-like mode of treatment, characterized by idiomatic figuration, sudden tempo changes to Adagio or Presto, rapid runs intermingled with spread chords, and so forth (c, C♯, e). In these cases Bach enhances the brilliant, virtuoso aspect of the preludes, raising them to the level of the fugues in terms of technical demands, as well as in weight and dimensions.

The preludes of the WTC I may be conveniently divided into three overall types: arpeggiated/figural, *cantabile*, and contrapuntal. The simplest and closest to improvisation are the arpeggiated (C, c) and figural preludes (D, d, e, G, B♭)—the latter may be viewed as a rather more elaborate derivative of the arpeggiated type. Both have been discussed, to some extent, in connection with the *Clavierbüchlein* for Wilhelm Friedemann Bach. The *cantabile* preludes (c♯, eb, f, g, bb) are pathos-laden pieces in minor keys, mostly with four to six sharps or flats. The first three were, as we have seen, used in the later stages of the young Wilhelm Friedemann's musical education. All five have in common a dense, free-voiced texture. Although the treble is the leading part, it often engages in dialogue with the tenor or bass, and occasionally even the alto takes the chief thematic role (bb, bb. 10–12). The texture is thus a highly flexible one, in which all parts contribute to the motivic/thematic development, as well as helping to provide harmonic support. Although all five preludes merit the

²⁸ See Alfred Dürr's discussion of this issue in *Krit. Bericht, NBAV/6.1* (1989), pp. 191–2, and in his *Johann Sebastian Bach: Das Wohltemperierte Klavier* (Kassel, 1998), p. 68.

epithet 'cantabile', only those in $c\sharp$ and $e\flat$ are truly melodic in the nature of their thematic material: in both cases, melodic phrases in a slow dance rhythm are built up into large melodic periods. The thematic material of the other three preludes is essentially harmonic. That in f might be viewed as a *cantabile* equivalent of the arpeggiated prelude: figured arpeggios of great beauty are treated motivically and furnish the decorative surface of the chord progressions. In the g prelude, chord sequences are decorated using the well-known diminution technique of filling in 3rds; and the sequential theme of the $b\flat$ prelude has the function, at each occurrence, of leading a richly dissonant series of harmonies.

Six of the preludes ($C\sharp$, F , $F\sharp$, $f\sharp$, Ab , a) are structured to a large extent in two-part counterpoint, though most of them contain a certain measure of free-voiced writing too. The shortest and simplest are those in F and a , which are throughout built out of a single half-bar or whole-bar motive. This dominant motive is worked into a theme, which is heard several times with interchanged parts and in different keys—I, vi, I (F , bb. 1, 6b, 16b) or i, v, III, i (a , bb. 1, 5, 13, 22). And the same motive forms the substance of recurring, modulatory episodes. The structure that arises—fixed-key thematic statements alternating with modulating episodes—is common to ritornello and fugue, and by this time had become second nature to Bach.

Double counterpoint, an essential technique of two-part writing, forms the mainstay of the much larger Praeludium in $C\sharp$. The main theme is repeatedly heard in double counterpoint (bb. 1–31, 47–62), as is the derived subsidiary theme (bb. 32–46). The toccata-style paragraph at bb. 63–98 was, as we have seen, interpolated at an intermediate stage of revision.²⁹ Its broken-chordal figuration, clearly derived from the original theme, reminds us that, for all the contrapuntal treatment of the theme, it is at root no more than a series of arpeggiated chords. No less elaborate contrapuntally is the Praeludium in $F\sharp$ minor, which takes the form of a miniature fugue. The brief, rolling subject is accompanied by three different counterpoints in turn (bb. 1, 2, and 4), each of which plays a prominent role later on. Bach's habitual thinking in terms of broad paragraphs, articulated by strongly marked cadences, can by this stage even break the continuities of fugue (cf. bb. 12–14 and 21b–24).

The remaining preludes in two-part texture, those in $F\sharp$ and Ab , owe more to ritornello form than to fugue. That in $F\sharp$ takes the form of a series of variations on the opening ritornello-like period, which consists of a broken-chordal headmotive, or *Vordersatz* (b. 1), a sequential continuation, or *Fortspinnung* (bb. 2–4), in continuous syncopation, and a charming, decorative cadential theme, or *Epilog* (bb. 5–6). The Praeludium in Ab is concerto-like in a rather different manner. The triadic opening theme, underpinned by a I–V–I progression, recalls those of two ritornello-based organ pieces from Bach's Weimar years, the Praeludium in G , BWV 541 no. 1, and the

²⁹ The MS copies of B. C. Kayser and H. N. Gerber indicate that the 36 new bars had already been added to the lost autograph draft.

Toccata in F, BWV 540 no. 1.³⁰ Accordingly, it functions like a ritornello, alternating with a modulATORY episode. The overall form could hardly be more lucid (Rit. = Ritornello):

Bars:	1–8	9–17	18–21	22–34	35–44
Section:	Rit.	Epis.	Rit.	Epis.	Rit.
Key:	I	I–V	V	V–IV–I	I

Five preludes are structured in three-part counterpoint (E, G♯, A, B, b), though only in one case (A) is a pure three-part texture maintained throughout. The Praeludium in E is monomotivic (like those in F and a), but here the dominant motive—b. 1, first six treble notes—forms the chief constituent of a *cantabile* theme in the rhythm of a pastorale. In keeping with its lyrical character, the movement falls into a tripartite reprise form (ABA¹) with subdominant reprise. In the figural Praeludium in B, the dominant motive already plays a sequential role within the main theme itself, which retains its integrity, recurring several times with interchanged parts (bb. 6 and 17). Again, the movement is articulated by clear cadences (in keys V, vi, and I at bb. 5–6, 10, and 14–15), the third rhyming with the first. No less monomotivic is the Praeludium in G♯ minor, whose prevailing motive opens the brief subject (b. 1). The term ‘subject’ is here used advisedly, since the structure of the piece is pseudo-fugal, with four expositions (bb. 1, 5, 13, 27) alternating with three episodes (bb. 3, 11, and 19). The expositions, however, open with imitation at the octave rather than at the 5th, which, strictly speaking, places them outside fugue. In the Praeludium in B minor, a specific point is made of the three-part texture. The parts are no longer equal but form two clearly distinct layers—a pair of contrapuntally interacting upper parts and a bass in continuous quavers. The analogy with the Corellian trio sonata is clear; and the prelude’s binary dance form with repeats (the only such case in the WTC I) suggests that Bach had in mind the *sonata da camera* rather than *da chiesa*.³¹ The various imitative points are all interrelated. The Praeludium in A is still closer to fugue than that in G♯ minor, since the subject is answered at the 5th (b. 4). Virtually the entire piece is constructed in triple counterpoint: the subject is combined with two regular countersubjects (bb. 1–3 a), and this combination is stated six times (bb. 1, 4, 8b, 12, 17b, 20) and in four of its six possible permutations.

If the Praeludium in A imitates fugue in miniature, that in E♭ does so on a massive scale, exceeding all other preludes in the collection in length and complexity, and threatening to overwhelm the concise fugue that follows—the balance between prelude and fugue that Bach sought elsewhere is here seriously undermined. The movement may be viewed as a late offshoot of the multi-sectional prelude that

³⁰ See Vol. I of the present study, p. 182, Ex. 1.

³¹ A possible model might have been the Preludio from Corelli’s *Sonate a tre*, Op. 4 No. 2 (Rome, 1694). The movement is quoted extensively in connection with Bach’s Praeludium in B minor by Ledbetter, *Bach’s Well-Tempered Clavier*, p. 230.

Bach cultivated in his youthful days under the influence of Buxtehude.³² This is not necessarily a sign of early date, however, for the Toccata in E minor of 1725 (BWV 830 no. 1) belongs to the same tradition. Bach takes a standard four-voice double-fugue scheme—exposition of S[ubject] I, exposition of S II, exposition of S I + II combined—and applies it with an informality appropriate to the prelude. Thus the texture, though essentially four-part, is often free-voiced. At the outset, the old preludial principle of building up from improvisatory beginnings to consolidated thematic statements is brought into play. The two opening paragraphs (bb. 1 and 10) are not fugal expositions but freely imitative passages, based on brief motives that will eventually form the chief constituents of the combined fugue subjects at b. 25. Despite the abundant use of contrapuntal devices after the initial exposition (bb. 25–34)—stretto (bb. 35–49a) and double counterpoint at the 10th and 12th (bb. 49b–70)—an unmistakable air of informality hangs over the entire movement. And the manner in which the opening semiquaver motive saturates the entire texture creates a monomotivic impression similar to that of numerous other preludes in the collection. Altogether, the movement represents a radical revaluation of the old multi-sectional praeludium and a new and remarkable fusion of the prelude and fugue genres.

The fugues of the WTC I are greatly varied in terms of the contrapuntal procedures employed: stretto fugue (C, bb), inversion fugue with stretto (d, d#, a); double counterpoint (Eb, E, e, Ab, b); the same with stretto (F, g), with inversion (f#, B), or with both stretto and inversion (G); triple counterpoint (c, C#, g#, Bb, F#); quadruple counterpoint (f); and finally double and triple fugue (A and c# respectively). Only the French overture-style Fuga in D is entirely devoid of such artifice. Although Bach's pupils must have learnt much from these various modes of fugal treatment, there is no sense in which the collection is designed as a fugal textbook. Each individual composition, in its finished form at least, is not a fugue or prelude but a 'Praeludium et Fuga'. Moreover, no attempt is made to grade the fugues technically (unlike the preludes); for example, as already noted, the first fugue (C) is a complex and difficult stretto fugue, and the second (c) a study in triple counterpoint. Unlike *The Art of Fugue*, the WTC I is completely unsystematic in its employment of contrapuntal devices. In all probability, Bach first invented the subject and counter-subjects for a fugue in a particular key. The nature of these themes would then determine which contrapuntal procedures were to be employed, as well as the overall character of the fugue. Thus contrapuntal artifice is not an end in itself but merely one aspect of the exhaustive treatment of a specific theme and its counter-themes.

Due to this strictly thematic quality, in conjunction with the contrapuntal procedures employed, all the fugues of the WTC I (with the possible exception of the relatively informal Fuga in D) qualify for inclusion in Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg's category of 'strict fugue'—a category that he particularly associates with Bach—as opposed to the

³² See Vol. I, pp. 51–4.

'free fugue' cultivated by Handel.³³ Strict fugue was by this time Bach's standard mode of thought in contrapuntal writing. For further elucidation in any particular case, we have to ask what implications of the subject are realized and what form that realization takes. In the Fuga in D, the second of the two paragraphs (b. 17) contains no further entries of the French-style subject, but rather much imitative and sequential play on its headmotive. Bach's overriding concern here seems to have been the recreation of a particular style—that of the French overture. Something similar might be said of the five-part fugues in c# and bb, both of which recreate the traditional *alla breve* style of the seventeenth century. But that style had long been associated with strict counterpoint, whereas in the French overture only the fast middle section was (freely) fugal. Bach, however, paradoxically invents a fugue subject in the style of the dotted-rhythm introduction, which was never fugal in the overtures of Lully or his followers.

The fugues in C and bb—significantly one from each half (Bach seems to have taken care to balance the two halves of the collection)—may be described as 'stretto fugues', since the device of stretto, or overlapping subject entries—one of the most potent tools in Bach's fugal armoury—is employed throughout. The seven strettos of the Fuga in C, which succeed one another without intervening episode (bb. 7, 10b, 14, 16, 19, 21, 24), render it the most densely thematic fugue in the entire collection. It is, however, articulated by clear cadences in different keys (V, vi, ii, I) between the stretto expositions. In the Fuga in Bb minor, the entries of the striking question-answer subject, with its pathos-filled minor 9th at the watershed, already overlap in stretto from the outset. After much modulation to related keys, the tonic return is marked by subject entries in three octaves (bb. 46–50). Finally, a half-bar stretto descending through all five parts (bb. 67–72), already adumbrated earlier (bb. 50–4), forms a magnificent peroration.

A third stretto fugue, that in d, is diversified by two additional features: inversion of the subject (from b. 12) and the use of a regular countersubject (treble, bb. 3–5). The overall form is bipartite, as in the fugues in C and bb, but on this occasion there is a strong element of reprise (A A¹; bb. 21–42 = 1–20): the second half is a varied repeat of the first with interchanged parts, tonally adjusted so as to remain in the tonic. It can hardly be mere chance that a similar reprise form—a strikingly novel and 'modern' way of handling fugue—occurs in the fugues in c and e. A possible explanation might be that one of Bach's first tasks in compiling the fugues of the WTC I was to compose a diatonically ordered series in the minor keys of c, d, and e.

The fugues in c and e belong to a series of compact fugues in which one or two regular countersubjects are combined with the subject in double or triple counterpoint: those in the keys of c, Eb, E, e, F#, Ab, Bb. In the Fuga in E minor, the only two-part fugue in the whole collection, the counterpoint of subject entries and episodes alike is inverted, so that the second half of the bipartite structure

³³ Marpurgh makes this fundamental distinction at the outset of his *Abhandlung von der Fuge*, vol. i; see BD III, No. 655 (p. 25), and *NBR*, No. 351.

inversion. Despite the great strength of the material, however, there is something pedantic—a fault from which Bach was not always entirely free—about the sheer thoroughness and exhaustiveness of the stretto expositions; and the reprise of an old stretto at bb. 73–5 (cf. bb. 53–5) seems redundant. As a result, the sense of impetus is sometimes lost—something that never happens in the sister-fugue in D♯ minor.

Each half of the work culminates in a large-format, four-part fugue—those in f and b—based on a chromatic subject. The chromaticism of the F minor subject is incomplete, as befits the halfway point; that of the B minor subject, containing all twelve semitones, is complete. It is quite possible that Bach intended these subjects to symbolize the chromatic key order of the whole collection. A different aspect of the F minor subject links it with that of the G♯ minor fugue. The subjects of both fugues are ‘interrupted’ in the middle by a rising semitone at a higher pitch, which has the effect of an interpolation from a different voice, breaking the otherwise even, stepwise flow of its surroundings (Ex. 3). The Fuga in G♯ minor, however, is in Bach’s most refined, up-to-date contrapuntal style—the unusually regular phrase structure is not the least ‘modern’ of its attributes—whereas the Fuga in F minor is characterized by relatively antiquated features: the severe *cantus firmus*-like *sogetto*, in the style of the seventeenth-century *ricercar* or *fantasia*, and the complementary semiquaver figures of the countersubjects, a common feature of the *partitas* of Bach’s predecessors. The grand, but intricately wrought Fuga in B minor possesses only one regular countersubject and no special contrapuntal device beyond invertible counterpoint. Yet it stands as one of the most richly inventive and powerfully expressive fugues in the entire collection. This is due partly to the fertile harmonic implications of the chromatic subject, but also to the exceptionally rich figure-work. This is derived from the sequential, semitonal figure of the subject and from two semiquaver figures, both extracted from the countersubject (bb. 4 and 6b). The second of these forms the chief material of the episodes, together with an unrelated, diatonic trio formulation (bb. 17–18)—an oasis of calm that recalls the trio-sonata texture of the preceding prelude.

The collection also includes three large-format fugues in a lighter tone, partly due to their three-part texture and major mode—those in C♯, G, and A. In the Fuga in C♯, which falls into an overall ABA¹ reprise form, it is the middle paragraph (bb. 23–42) that is chiefly responsible for the movement’s large dimensions. It consists, in the main, of a very long episode in concerto style, not dissimilar to some of the harpsichord writing in the first movement of Brandenburg Concerto No. 5. The triple counterpoint of the exposition belongs to a type that became classic for Bach: lively, figural subject; first countersubject in sequential semiquavers (derived from the turn figure of the subject); and second countersubject in long notes that form suspensions. The brilliant episodes of the Fuga in G, with their pseudo-cross-string figures, often combined with rising or falling scales, are still more reminiscent of the fifth Brandenburg Concerto. Both in terms of inventive profusion and fugal artifice, this is undoubtedly one of the most remarkable fugues in the collection. Like those in d♯

Ex. 3



opposite modes (except B) in the reverse order and inserts two commonly used flat keys: B \flat A g f E E \flat D c (key signatures of two to four sharps or flats).

In the early months of 1723, before the move to Leipzig that April, Bach made an autograph fair copy of the thirty pieces in which their titles, key order, and music text were all revised. The two-part pieces were now each entitled 'inventio'³⁸ and the three-part pieces 'sinfonia'. A new key order is established in which each set of fifteen pieces falls into a single ascending series, partly diatonic and partly chromatic, and alternating major and minor modes: C c D d E \flat E e F f G g A a B \flat b. In addition, the individual pieces are carefully revised to produce the definitive version of the text. The only subsequent changes of note are ornamentation schemes, partly recorded in pupils' copies. The informative title page of the fair copy reads:³⁹

Auffrichtige Anleitung, womit denen Liebhabern des *Clavires*, besonders aber denen Lehrberigeren, eine deutliche Art gezeigt wird, nicht alleine (1) mit 2 Stimmen reine spielen zu lernen, sondern auch bey weiteren *progrefsen* (2) mit dreyen *obligaten Partien* richtig und wohl zu verfahren, anbey auch zugleich gute *inventiones* nicht alleine zu bekommen, sondern auch selbige wohl durchzuführen, am allermeisten aber eine *cantable* Art im Spielen zu erlangen, und darneben einen starcken Vorschmack von der *Composition* zu überkommen. Verfertiget von Joh: Seb: Bach. Hochfürstlich Anhalt-Cöthenischen Capellmeister. Anno Christi 1723.

(Sincere Instruction, wherein lovers of the clavier, especially those desirous of learning, are shown a clear way not only 1. of learning to play clearly in two voices, but also, after further progress, 2. of dealing correctly and well with three *obligato* parts; furthermore, at the same time, not only to have good *inventions* but to develop them well, and above all to arrive at a singing style in playing and, at the same time, to acquire a strong foretaste of composition. Produced by Joh. Seb. Bach, Capellmeister to His Serene Highness, the Prince of Anhalt-Cöthen, in the Year of our Lord, 1723.)

It is clear, then, that in the intended use of this collection keyboard and composition studies are of equal importance. As far as keyboard playing is concerned, the pieces help to develop the art of realizing two- and three-part contrapuntal textures. In addition, they foster a *cantabile* style of playing. Not only would Bach have inherited such a style from Pachelbel via Johann Christoph Bach, Sebastian's elder brother, but the melodic style that Bach was developing in his keyboard music in the early 1720s has pronounced *cantabile* qualities and would therefore call for that style of execution. One further aspect of playing technique, furthered by the collection, is not mentioned in the title page but is nonetheless clear from the sources, namely the tasteful application and execution of ornaments. Inventions Nos. 3, 5, 7, and 9–12 and Sinfonia

³⁸ Bach might have borrowed the term 'inventio' from F. A. Bonporti's *Inventioni da camera*, Op. 10 (Bologna, 1712), for in 1723 he assisted his pupil B. C. Kayser in copying out four of these pieces; see Kirsten Beißwenger, *Johann Sebastian Bachs Notenbibliothek* (Kassel, 1992), VBN I/B/50. They were copied after Bach's move to Leipzig (see *Krit. Bericht*, NBAV/7, p. 189), whereas the Inventions were completed in Cöthen, but that does not preclude the possibility that Bach was already acquainted with them.

³⁹ BD I, No. 153; NBR, No. 92.