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J.S. BACH

THE AUDITION OF GOD

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J.S. BACH:

THE AUDITION OF GOD

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ARC is a publication of the theological community of the Faculty of Religious Studies of McGill University, its affiliated Colleges (Anglican, Presbyterian and United Church) and the Montreal Institute for Ministry.

INTRODUCTION: J.S. BACH, THE AUDITION OF GOD

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The present issue of *ARC* is devoted to a selection of the papers given at the McGill Bach Symposium, 29 October-1 November 1985. The Symposium, held in commemoration of the three-hundredth anniversary of the birth of Johann Sebastian Bach, was sponsored by the Faculty of Religious Studies and the Faculty of Music of McGill University. Under the general heading "J.S. Bach, The Audition of God," the task of the Symposium was to explore the significance and legacy of Bach from the perspectives of theology, musicology, aesthetics, and the performance arts. As a result, the Symposium consisted of a combination of scholarly articles and concerts and recitals.

Unfortunately, the impressive performance aspect of the Symposium cannot be conveyed in this volume, though Dean Jack Behrens of the University of Western Ontario has provided a short summary of his recital-lecture. Those who attended the Symposium, however, will recall with pleasure this and the other performances. These included, in the same session as Dean Behrens' recital, a moving performance and discussion of Bach's Chaconne in D Minor for solo violin by Paul Kling, Director of the School of Music, University of Victoria; a concert by McGill's Collegium Musicum, playing baroque instruments, under the direction of Mary Cyr; a performance by John Grew of McGill's Faculty of Music of the greater movements of *Klavierübung III* on the French classical organ in Redpath Hall (this recital was recorded by the C.B.C. for later broadcast in their series "Organists in Recital"); and, on the same organ, a programme of Bach's music transcribed or completed by later composers given by Jan Overduin of Wilfrid Laurier University.

There were, altogether, nine papers presented at the Symposium, of which five are published in this volume. "The Theology of Bach's *St. John Passion*" by Eric Chafe of Brandeis University and "The Genesis of *Klavierübung III* (1739) and its

Implications for Bach Biography" by Gregory G. Butler of the University of British Columbia are being published elsewhere, while Jan Overduin's "J.S. Bach and Albrecht Goes" and Jeremy Walker's "Bach, Kierkegaard, and Glenn Gould: Music and Divine Ecstasy" are not at present available for publication. The five remaining papers allow, however, for a wide enough overview of the variety of topics and interests discussed.

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I should point out here, since the Bach Symposium was largely my brain-child, that a particular view of the relationship between religion and the arts determined the kind of approach taken to the organization of the Symposium and the encouragement given to the participants to develop and expound their own special interests. Lying behind this view is a feeling of unease that I have had for some time not only about the academic discipline that we call "Religion and the Arts," but also about the general lack of a cultivation of artistic creativity in religious institutions, notably within the Christian churches. While there are no doubt complex reasons for this situation, having to do, for instance, with the apologetic position within which organized religion finds itself at the end of the twentieth century, there is, and perhaps even as a consequence of its present defensiveness, a certain tendency for religion to assert its former prestige. Unhappily, this can result in either a dismissive or a condescending attitude to the kind of free creative activity we find in the arts. We might even be inclined to conclude that art seen from the perspective of religion presents a kind of threat. But it presents a threat only, I think, because of a fundamental affinity between the artistic and religious sensibilities and activities. The general problem may be no more than an after-effect of certain nineteenth-century aesthetic attitudes--the "religion of art." Such historically, as we know, has not always been the case: Bach stands as one of the supreme examples of the harmonious interaction of religion and art. But, still, it is a problem we face; and I can see little that is being done on the part of religion to open up a space for art within itself. One could, of course, say that the ideas of Paul Tillich on culture are an exception to my view; but even there the relation between religion and culture remains dialectical and tensional. The kind

of situation I have in mind, rather, is one in which the representatives of religion--the professors and the clergy--engage in a conscious withholding of the doctrinal message of religion in favour of a receptivity to artists and aesthetic theoreticians which would allow the latter complete freedom to do and say what they know best. There would be no appropriation of art for the ends of religion; art would instead be encouraged when it saw fit to express itself using religious images, texts, and themes, but not with these as the chief end in view. Art is going to do this anyway, but at present it does so often completely outside of and ignored by organized religion. There were earlier in this century, particularly in the Dominican-inspired *Art sacré* movement in France, significant gains made in the direction I am advocating; and these, I think need to be reconsidered and revived.[1]

The interpretation of Bach, it goes without saying, would provide a major test for this kind of approach. Indeed, the baroque synthesis of the sacred and the secular that comes to its highest point in the music of Bach can provide a continuing inspiration for those who wish to see religion and the arts coexist in harmony, without either field sacrificing its own integrity. In Bach's time, of course, there was ecclesiastical surveillance of the arts, but still the opportunity was provided for Bach to write the kind of music his artistic integrity dictated. Already by the second half of the eighteenth century the social and historical context had shifted enough that we can note in Mozart the paradox that it is most often precisely in his most secular works, the operas, that musically the profoundest spiritual depths are explored: one thinks of the sextet in Act III of *Le Nozze di Figaro* and of the overwhelming contrast in *Don Giovanni* between the banality of the story and the enormous range and insight of the musical ideas.

The shift in musico-religious sensibility between Bach and Mozart is one aspect of a much wider change that takes place in eighteenth century thought and which is sometimes characterized as a movement away from mimetic representation and towards expression.[2] Musically, this change can be heard most obviously, as Peggie Sampson points out in her article in this issue, in the replacement of complex polyphony by a single melody line with

harmonic accompaniment. Thus, for example, where older compositional methods are retained by Mozart one is likely still to hear patterns that were in Bach's time associated symbolically with a divinely ordered universe, though the significant point is that Mozart can, seemingly without any perturbation, use them in a completely secular context. An interesting work that awaits writing in the philosophy of music would be a comparison of Bach and Leibniz on the one hand and Mozart and Kant on the other. The point that I wish to make here, however, is that the sacred and secular in Mozart are allowed an often wild interchangeability, whereas in Bach there is still an audible retention of the musical mimesis of a hierarchical and symbolic cosmos in which the sacred rules over and determines the boundaries of the secular: this, notwithstanding that there are sometimes anticipations of later stylistic developments, especially in the arias and duets of the church cantatas (see for examples Florence Hayes's article in this issue).

I should like to take as instances of Bach's musical mimesis of the sacred order of creation two large-scale structural patterns, or motifs: first, what I shall call the motif of ascent and, secondly, the motif of transposition.[3] (I am using these terms in a metaphorical rather than a technical sense.) I hope in this way to suggest how theological reflection can complement the specialized musicological discussion contained in this volume's articles. In his article in this issue on the "Credo" of the B-Minor Mass, Ronald Bermingham offers a detailed structural and semiotic analysis of what may well be the controlling musical ideas of that immense work. To extend what Mr. Bermingham says, I would observe that owing to the verticality of the increasingly complex fugal writing, particularly in the choruses of the B-Minor Mass, a sense is created of the soul's rising up in faith towards God. This we can hear, for example, in the *Kyrie* as a whole, in the "Gratias agimus tibi" of the *Gloria*, and as the latter is musically reiterated at the end in the "Dona nobis pacem" of the *Agnus Dei*. The gratitude and peace that come from the soul's confession of faith in the one God in Trinity are progressively realized through the linear, "world-historical" progression of the Mass as a whole by the periodic occurrence of the vertical ascent motif in the contrapuntal writing. This is prefigured at the beginning in the *Kyrie* and

reaches its culmination and climax in the sounding of the trumpet of the Last Judgement high above the swirling contrapuntal clouds, planets, and stars in ever-ascending order at the end. Not only are the origin and destiny of the universe in God figured forth audibly in this most extraordinary work, but the mind's eye automatically, I think, images up the architecture and painting of baroque churches. Infinite complexity and riotous detail clothing and at least at first concealing internal forms of classical simplicity and order: such one might say was the human imagination's vision of the universe and its relation to God in the last of the centuries of faith.

But there is another aspect to the picture, for already by the beginning of the eighteenth century the unified Christian vision was giving way to the world of the modern scientific mind. Such great changes are, however, always gradual. In the sixteenth century, and indeed in the fourteenth and fifteenth, the primacy of the vision of God was yielding to the hearing of faith, natural theology to revelation, the confession of the Church to that of the individual believer. The contingencies and exigencies of the *saeculum* and the precarious destiny of the soul were emphasized by an increased inwardness. Salvation now became a matter of hearing and responding to the gospel. One might take the Saint Matthew Passion as perhaps the supreme expression of this "reformed" awareness. More specifically, I would point to a particular motif that signalizes the soul's decisive response of faith. This I shall call the motif of transposition.

Towards the end of the Matthew Passion, at that point in the Gospel (Matt. 27:54) when the centurion and "they that were with him" confess that the crucified Jesus truly is the Son of God, something musically and spiritually quite extraordinary happens. It is a mark of Bach's religious genius in perfect harmony with his musical genius that he gives this confession of faith to the full united chorus, representing as it were all of redeemed mankind. Moreover, there is a change in key from G minor to A flat major, the key predominantly associated with the Christus. Thus there is a union of Christ with all believers. And not only this, but Bach has numerologically signed his own surname in the fourteen pitches of the bass line.[4] Humankind's confession of faith becomes an intimately personal confession: "Wahrlich,

dieser ist Gottes Sohn gewesen." All these matters are formally explicable; what is far less comprehensible but nonetheless immediately felt by the sensitive hearer is the way in which the whole world of the Passion has changed. The burial narrative completes the work, but one senses that after the centurion's confession a kind of fissure has occurred in the structure of reality: nothing can ever be quite the same again. The hearer has been transposed onto another level where the world is both exactly as it was before and absolutely other. After this follow the simplicity, calm, and pure lyricism of the bass aria "Mache dich, mein Herze, rein," the magnificent and highly ironic fugal prefiguring of the resurrection in the chorus of the chief priest and Pharisees (another example of the ascent motif), and at the end the solemn lullaby of the closing recitative and chorus. In this last sequence of the Matthew Passion the whole of historical human existence has become a kind of perpetual Holy Saturday.

Much has been written about Bach as a composer who culminates a musical era, but I think we need to recognize Bach's great versatility, especially in works like the Matthew Passion which look forward to so many developments in nineteenth and twentieth century music and thought. The motif of transposition, as I call it, may well be a major defining element in European music and literature (the arts of hearing) from the Renaissance on. Certainly, something similar takes place in the closing scenes of Shakespeare's last plays and at the end of *Paradise Lost*, for example. Structurally, this transposition, transmutation, metamorphosis--whatever one wishes to call it--has analogues in Greek tragedy, but the ambiguous yet hopeful sense of "a world ransom'd, or one destroyed" (*The Winter's Tale* V.ii.13-14) seems to me a unique element in Renaissance Christianity and one which even today, no matter what the changes, can still speak directly to hearers. As an example of transposition in a contemporary work I would mention Ghandi's closing "aria" in Philip Glass's *Satyagraha*.

Part of Bach's significance as a *religious* thinker in music, then, is the way in which he has encapsulated audibly the whole pre-modern spiritual tradition of the soul's ascent towards and vision of God, along with and at the same time experiencing the age in which we now live more than ever--the time of the audition of God

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Such are some, I am afraid rather too impressionistic theological reflections that have occurred to me from listening to the musicological and aesthetic positions so expertly expounded in the papers in this issue of *ARC*. The papers contained herein are not presented in the order in which they were given at the Symposium but have been arranged thematically, so that the papers dealing directly with aspects of Bach's music come first and are followed by those papers that deal with wider historical and musicological questions. It is a great privilege to have contributions from three of Canada's most distinguished musicians and scholars: Peggie Sampson, Geoffrey Payzant, and Bengt Hambraeus. An equal but different pleasure are the papers from younger scholars: Ronald Bermingham and Florence Hayes. To them and to all the participants in the Symposium go very special thanks for their time, patience, and generosity.

Special thanks are also due to Professor Joseph C. McLelland, former dean of the Faculty of Religious Studies, and to Professor Paul Pedersen, former dean of the Faculty of Music, as well as to Professor Robert Culley, who was acting dean of Religious Studies during the 1985-86 academic year.

Thanks go to the following professors who acted as chairmen of the various sessions of the Symposium: Professor Paul Kling, Director of the School of Music, University of Victoria; and from McGill University: Professors Bo Alphonce and Paul Helmer of the Faculty of Music; Professor James McGilvray, Department of Philosophy; Professor Douglas J. Hall, Faculty of Religious Studies, and Professor N.T. Wright, formerly of the Faculty of Religious Studies, now of Worcester College, Oxford.

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NOTES

[1]See William Stanley Rubin, *Modern Sacred Art and the Church at Assy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961); and John Dillenberger, "Artists and Church Commissions: Rubin's *The Church at Assy* Revisted", in Diane Apostolos-Cappadona, ed., *Art, Creativity, and the Sacred* (New York: Crossroad, 1984): Dillenberger's article was originally published in *Art Criticism* I (Spring 1979), 72-82.

[2]See Tzvetan Todorov, *Théories du symbole* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1977), especially Chapters 5 and 6. (E.T.: Tzvetan Todorov, *Theories of the Symbol*, trans. Catherine Porter (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982).

[3]I am deliberately adopting the term "transposition" with its various connotations from C.S. Lewis's sermon "Transposition" in *They Asked for a Paper* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1962), pp. 166-82.

[4]Helmuth Rilling, *Johann Sebastian Bach: St. Matthew Passion*, trans. Kenneth Nafziger (Frankfurt, New York, London: Henry Litoff's Verlag/C.F. Peters, 1975/1976), p. 80.

THE "CREDO": TIME OF ETERNITY AND TIME OF SALVATION IN BACH'S B-MINOR MASS

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> ...music has a fundamental part in the relations between man and the sacred. In order to establish communication with transcendental truth symbols are needed to mediate the secular and the transcendental, and to create a connection between the present and the mythical past.
>
> Eero Tarasti--*Myth and Music*

PRELUDE

1.1 Music and the Measurement of Time

Time touches each human being intimately, and yet transcends humanity itself. It measures life, yet far outlasts it. It submits to the control of man, yet man must ultimately submit to time; man ends, time continues. As a common share in the Creator's scheme, time unites all mankind; as a scheme invented by man to measure duration, time distinguishes ideologically implicated human beings who must maintain the cadences imposed by the various "isms" that affect temporal measurement. For instance, how does man measure the time of "absolutism," of "realism," or of "idealism" and "subjectivism"?

Music can tell us much about such measurements for it has much to say about time. In fact, Igor Stravinsky defined music as the discourse of time, of "...*chronos*, of which the musical work merely gives us the functional realization" (Stravinsky: 30). The *Symbolum Nicaenum* of the *Mass in B minor* by Johann Sebastian Bach says "I believe," both in the infinite and absolute Creator, and in salvation, the *telos* of Christian finite existence. The "Credo" is the opening section of the *Symbolum Nicaenum*. We intend to show how its temporal structure, functioning as an independent system of communication, helps to

distinguish between the concepts of absolute and finite time, two "symbolic" poles that illustrate the universal opposition from which the *Symbolum Nicaenum* draws its meaning.

1.2 Music as Language

To describe music as a system of communication is to suggest tacitly that the language of music is indeed a fully constituted language in the linguistic sense, having both syntactic and semantic dimensions. Although few would argue about the syntactic dimension of music, many refuse to admit that syntactic groupings seem often to be semantically charged, conveying a meaning that can indeed be defined within a certain historical context. Among these, the names of Umberto Eco (88), Alfred Schutz (23-24), and Serge Martin (8) come immediately to mind. Schutz very nicely summarizes the opinion of those who believe music to be a syntactically structured language lacking a semantic dimension.

> Music is an instance of a meaningful context without reference to a conceptual scheme and, strictly speaking, without immediate reference to the objects of the world in which we live, without reference to the properties and functions of those objects. Music does not have a representative function ... Neither a piece of music, nor a single theme, has a semantic character. (Schutz: 23-24)

One could waste many words debating the rather sensitive issue of musical semantics; such is not the aim of this analysis. Let us say that the confusion about musical semantics has arisen from a reliance upon linguistic models whose arguments remain unconvincing. The inventors of these models have filled many a page trying to define the relationship between verbal sounds and the objects which these sounds supposedly evoke in our minds. By focusing briefly upon the word "object" as used by Schutz, we hope to clear away the confusion, and at the same time establish a methodological base for the analysis that follows.

We do not maintain that the rhythmic structure of the "Credo" "represents" any *object* of the "real" world, and

therefore agree in principle with Schutz. However, time is not an object; it is a conceptual scheme invented by man. As such, it has no ontological status, no objective qualities (other than the sounds and shapes of the objects which measure it!) which might be arbitrarily evoked by a given combination of sound events. Perhaps this is why many of us have a difficult time explaining time. Greater minds than ours have grappled with this problem: Saint Augustine threw up his hands in desperation, exclaiming, "I know what time is, but if someone asks me, I cannot tell him" (Landes: 1).

Stravinsky does not define time, but simply tells us that music is a conceptual scheme designed by man to give concrete form to an abstract idea (Stravinsky: 27). Having established this point, he then recalls the thoughts of his philosopher friend, Pierre Souvtchinsky, who reminds us that music is "an innate complex of intuitions and possibilities based primarily upon an exclusively musical experiencing of time" (Stravinsky: 30). We conclude that the conceptual scheme known as music relies exclusively on *time* and *sound*, two elements apart from which, maintains Stravinsky, such a (conceptual) scheme is inconceivable. While we still don't know what time is, we do know that it can be measured by music.

It is important to understand that an examination of the way music measures time tells us nothing about time; rather, it tells us a lot about the "conceptual schemes" of man. In fact, the "object" evoked by music is at best a *concept*, and not an object at all. Contemporary semioticans are fond of pointing out quite paradoxically that music evokes only itself. What is meant by this mystyfying statement is quite simply that music evokes its own structures. However, these same structures are born of conceptual schemes defined by the human psyche operating within an historically determined, ideological context. It is to this internal world of concepts that music refers; therefore, it is only by coincidence, or in accordance with culturally defined conventional codes that music can evoke "objects" of the external world.

The semantic dimension of music lies within the mind of the human being, locked deep within the ideological schemes he uses

to order the world. As Ernest Ansermet has said, the meaning of music lies in that which it reveals about man.[1] Our question might therefore be stated as follows: what does the rhythmic or temporal structure of the "Credo" reveal about the conceptual schemes that Bach used to underline a text dealing with the infinite or absolute time promised by salvation, and also with the profane time of Christian finite existence?

1.3 Methodology

The analytical model used in the following analysis draws heavily upon the article "*Génératif (parcours),*" or "*Generative Trajectory*"* of the *Dictionnaire raisonné de la théorie du langage* (Greimas/Courtès).[2] The "*parcours génératif*" seeks to define two types of fundamental syntactic and semantic structures: discursive structures and semio-narrative structures. Semio-narrative structures are further subdivided into surface-level structures and deep structures. According to this model, the semiotically constituted object, in our case the "Credo," is "generated" as abstract concepts are given the concrete surface-level forms that render them perceptible. Our "*parcours*" of the "Credo" considers first the discursive structure as manifested in the "Credo's" rhythmic schemes, next the surface-level narrative structures as manifested by modal (antique) and baroque (modern) stylistic constraints, and finally the deep semio-narrative structures that, in our view, generate the music. At each level of analysis we shall define the fundamental syntactic and semantic dimensions of the "Credo."[3]

FUGUE

2.1 Discursive structures: syntax

The "Credo's" discursive structure reveals a fundamental syntax that generates two kinds of movement, each of which is regulated by a different system of constraints. The first kind of movement is generated by a system of constraints which we shall refer to as the modern (baroque) style; the second by the system of constraints that will be called the antique style.

The first kind of movement, perceived at the harmonic level, results from the concatenation of modulating sequences. This movement is linear; it is projected in time across a series of modulations that ultimately return to a tonic harmony. The movement delineates a series of closed cells in which harmonic progression is limited by a tonic function continually seeking to re-establish itself. The movement occurs at both micro- and macro-harmonic levels, the macro structure doubling at an elongated pace the movement of the micro structure. The overall effect of this movement is that of harmonic repose (tonic function), continually disturbed and re-established throughout the temporal evolution of the "Credo".

See *Figure 1**- linear movement of the "micro" and "macro" harmonic structures

The second type of movement is generated by a musical style older than any belonging to the tonal era. This movement is articulated by the plain-song melodies interspersed throughout the "Credo."[4] It is generated by a purely mathematical syntax conceived in Antiquity by the mathematician/philosophers of ancient Babylonia. The movement is defined by a melodic line that oscillates in a pendulous fashion, stretching the distance of a perfect fourth in opposing directions around a tonal index.

See*Figure 2**- oscillatory movement of the plain-song melody

The "Credo's" discursive structure is a *Zeit-spiel-raum* in which the syntactic organization of the *chronoi* (constituent units of time) defines closure in two different ways: first in a linear manner resulting from the recurrence of a tonic function in the harmonic line, and then in an oscillating manner resulting from the attraction exerted by a tonal index upon plain-song sections of the melodic line.[5]

2.2 Discursive Structure: semantic

It is impossible to define a semantic dimension for the "Credo's" different types of movement without reference to the text. In the larger context, a comparison of text and discursive

* All figures are at the end of this article.

syntax reveals that Bach limits his use of oscillatory movement to those sections of the *Symbolum Nicaenum* dealing with the fundamental tenets of the Nicene Creed. Thus, the Gregorian melody accompanies the words "*Credo in unum Deum*" and "*Confiteor unum Baptisma in remissionem peccatorum.*" Usage assigns the meaning of the text to the oscillatory movement. Let us say that the oscillating movement of the Gregorian melody denotes its own text and connotes the immutability of the founding tenets of the Christian church: the belief in one God and the confession of one Baptism for the remission of sins.

Linear movement is reserved for other sections of the Nicene Creed. As we see in Figure 3, the distribution of oscillatory (antique style) and linear (modern style) movements is perfectly symmetrical.

See *Figure 3**- symmetrical distribution of modern and antique styles in the *Symbolum Nicaenum*[6]

At the discursive level of the "Credo" itself, we have identified utterances* whose syntactic organization generates two kinds of movement: one which is linear and the other oscillatory. The semantic charges of oscillatory and linear movements as defined in the larger context of the *Symbolum Nicaenum* remain unaltered in the smaller context of the "Credo" itself; here the intonation of the fundamental articles of faith of the Christian church remain linked to oscillatory movement through the use of Gregorian melody. Linear movement remains, by contrast, associated with a thematic content oriented toward the temporal dispensation of the Holy Spirit and the future hopes of man.

3.1 Semio-narrative structures: surface-level syntax

The surface-level narrative syntax which generates the "Credo's" two principle types of discursive movement consists of two different strategies: one defines the modal (antique) style and the other, the baroque (modern) style. In the "Credo," Bach has embedded the antique style in the baroque style, creating a kind of ambiguous stylistic blend.

* All figures are at the end of this article.

The effect produced by the antique style depends entirely upon the extent to which the modern style is allowed to dominate the structure of the "Credo." As we see in Figure 4, not one measure passes without the Gregorian theme being sounded somewhere in the "Credo." However, the listener is not aware that the theme is omnipresent. At certain moments, the plain-song melody disappears within the texture of an harmonic structure governed by a set of constraints belonging to a baroque, tonal style. It is the non-figured bass (continuo) that defines the harmonic structure as it sounds its notes against those of the first and second violins. In this structure, harmonic modulation is governed by the 5th, the interval defining the dominant-tonic (or secondary dominant-tonic) relationships that signal a modern tonal treatment of plain-song melody (see Figure 4*).[7] At those moments when the plain-song melody undergoes contrapuntal development controlled by a tonal system of constraints, its oscillating movement yields to a harmonic logic developing in a linear fashion. Stated quite simply, the sensation of oscillatory movement produced by the plain-song melody is perceived intermittently throughout the "Credo," imposing its movement upon the listener only at those moments when the modal treatment (antique style) is allowed to dominate what is essentially a piece of music conceived within the harmonic constraints of a tonal system.

In Figure 5,* we have attempted to represent one of the possible "hearings" of the "Credo." We have divided this hearing into four moments, following the interplay of modal and tonal treatments of the plain-song melody:

M1:

Entries 1-6 of the plain-song melody outline two perfectly symmetrical blocks of music, the first comprised of entries 1-3 echoing the second comprised of entries 4-6. In each case an entry in A major (entries 1 and 4) is followed by two entries in D major (entries 2-3 and 5-6). The relationship between the keys of A major and D major defines a plagal harmony of the type belonging to the modal system. During this moment of the piece, the listener's attention is fixed by the plain-song melody which functions as *cantus firmus*.[8]

*All figures are at the end of this article.

M2:

In entries 7-13, the plain-song melody is completely absorbed by the tonal texture of the "Credo's" harmonic structure. Here, the plain-song melody is hardly perceptible as the *cantus firmus* undergoes a series of modulations controlled by the dominant function of a tonal counterpoint in the modern (baroque) style.

M3:

At entry 14, the *cantus firmus* returns in augmentation. Although this entry is immediately perceived by the listener, it does not signal a return to the modal style because this time Bach treats the *cantus firmus* in augmentation in strict accordance with the constraints of the tonal style. Sounded simultaneously above the augmented *cantus firmus* and therefore pulled into its sphere of influence, entries 15-20 also lose their autonomy with respect to any modal function. Although this massive series of entries in the harmony of D major could theoretically be considered to establish a plagal relationship with a final in A Phrygian, Bach's tonal treatment of them destroys the pull of the Phrygian mode, permitting them to function autonomously with respect to it. In point of fact, these entreis can be heard as a tonic function in D major with respect to the dominant harmony (A major) that preceeds entry 14. (See Figure 4.)

M4:

Two hearings of the "Credo" are possible: one modal and the other tonal. These two syntactic systems are intertwined throughout the "Credo" in such a way that is is almost impossible to favour one over the other. The use of augmentation in the plain-song melody (entry 14) prolongs the duration of D major, allowing it to be perceived as a tonic rather than plagal function. The listener is thus prepared for a cadence in D major. However, by use of a technique belonging *only* to the tonal system, i.e. the introduction of a diminished 7th harmony, Bach destroys the tonic function of D major, wrenching us back into the Phrygian mode of A in which the "Credo" began.

In structuring his musical narrative, Bach has established an ambiguous harmonic context in which the contrapuntal treatment of the "Credo" evolves quite extraordinarily according to both modal and tonal syntactic rules.[9] Although the plain-song melody begins by defining a *modal* context for the "Credo," synchronic harmonic structures resulting from the coincidence of the plain-song melody and the walking bass, define a second *tonal* syntax.

> Der cantus firmus *Credo in unum Deum* diktiert die Akkordfolge, so dass die nach vorn gerichtete Streckung wirklich auch vom Harmonischen her fassbar wird. Die Basslaüfe bewegen sich mit ihren Durchgangs-und Wechsolnoten innerhalb der Akkorde. Ihre kontrapunktisch-lineare Wirkung übersteight die harmonische. (Wolff: 81)

Thus we find that Bach has structured the surface-level narrative syntax as a mixture of two very distinct polyphonic systems: the system of modal counterpoint (antique style), the rules of which were outlined by Palestrina and transmitted to the eighteenth century by Fux, and the system of tonal counterpoint (modern style), the rules of which were developed by Bach himself. Throughout the "Credo," Bach has mingled these two systems in such a way that all decisions for or against a modal or tonal syntax are only momentarily valid.

3.2 Semio-narrative structures: surface-level semantics

What semantic values* might we assign to the "Credo's" narrative syntax? To answer this question, let us return to Stravinsky's poetics, remembering that the meaning of music is to be found in the *chronos*.

The two narrative syntactic systems that this analysis has outlined are rooted in two very different epistemological concepts of time: "sacred time" and "secular time."[10] According to the Christian concept of *chronos*, time is cyclical in nature: *"c'est un temps non de la chronologie mais du calendrier, rythmé par les levers, les midis et les couchers ... qui se répètent sans trève* (Pomian: 40). From the thirteenth century on, we find that *aeternitas* is placed at the summit of all tradi-

tional concepts of *chronos*. We conceive *aeternitas* as having neither beginning nor end; it is a *chronos* that remains unchanged regardless of other transitory forces affecting the temporal environment; it is the *chronos* that may be equated with all forms of static temporal movement (Pomian: 42). It is the semantic value of *aeternitas* that we assign to the plain-song melody of the "Credo" at those moments when Bach is treating it as a *cantus firmus* according to the rules of modal counterpoint.

At the other end of the hierarchy, *tempus* defines secular time which unwinds in a strictly linear fashion: "... les cycles qui remplissent l'histoire profane se déroulent sur le fond des tendances linéaires" (Pomian: 40). This concept of *chronos* accounts for all temporal movement undergoing modification resulting from the human intervention in a statically defined temporal environment. Bach's tonal treatment of the plain-song melody forces an otherwise static movement to evolve harmonically, modifying the very movement that identifies it to the point where it is no longer perceptible as chant. Indeed, its function as *cantus firmus* is lost in a harmonic environment whose linear movement is governed by the relationship of the 5th. Dialectically opposed to *aeternitas*, *tempus* suggests the notion of finality (arrival at a tonic function) and rebirth (a new harmonic modulation) or salvation which, in Christian theology, are deemed to follow a succession of secular temporal events.

> Dans le Nouveau Testament, la notion de temps est rigoureusement linéaire et rectiligne; il conviendra de la délimiter par rapport à la notion cyclique du temps, telle qu'elle existe chez les Grecs ... dans la conception des premiers chrétiens, la révélation et le salut << s'opèrent >> réellement dans le cours du temps. (Emery: 46)

Thus, the double narrative syntax of the "Credo" transforms into movement two distinct temporal *valeurs*:

> 1) The *immutability* of sacred Christian institutions is the first semantic value; this value is assigned to the modal narrative syntax.

2) *Regeneration*, the cycle of generation-modification-destruction-rebirth in Christ as promised by the Christian doctrine of salvation, is the second semantic value; this value is assigned to the tonal narrative syntax.

3.3 Semio-narrative structures: deep syntactic structure

Finally, we must describe the deep fundamental syntactic system that accounts for the production and functioning of all syntagmatic structures of the "Credo," as well as for the means by which these structures are perceived and understood by the listener (Greimas: 380). What are the abstact systems that generate the surface-level narrative syntax that we have just described?

Mathematics provides us with one of the deep fundamental grammars that generate surface movement in the "Credo." By mathematics, we refer to the Ancient Pythagorean science of numbers and the use of mathematical proportion to organize not only the cosmos, but also the world of sound, image, and movement.

> All that has by nature with systematic method been arranged in the universe seems both in part and as a whole to have been determined and ordered in accordance with number, by the forethought and the mind of him that created all things; for the pattern was fixed like a preliminary sketch, by the domination of number preexistent in the mind of the world-creating God, number conceptual only and immaterial in every way, but at the same time the true and the eternal essence, so that with reference to it, as to an artistic plan, should be created all these things, time, motion, the heavens, the stars, all sorts of revolutions. (Nicomachus of Gerasa: 189)

In the *Republic* (522c), Plato calls for the study of arithmetic, identifying it as the science upon which all other arts are founded. In *Epinomis* (991a-b) he demonstrates the mathematical derivation of the Pythagorean octochord, a musical scale based upon the arithmetic and harmonic means of the first two prime

numbers (see Figure 6). According to the Ancients, proportions derived from the study of the mathematical means of numbers "1" and "2" held the key to unlocking the unknown structures of the universe. The musical scale, structured according to the cosmic model, used exactly the same mathematical proportions to organize sound and movement. The Pythagorean scales defined their sonic space around a central tone, the *mese*, and thence in two opposing directions to the distance of a perfect fourth.

See *Figure 6*- The "sonic space" of the Pythagorean scale

Thus, the fundamental syntax that generates the oscillatory movement of the plain-song melody is rooted in the mathematical epistemology of the Ancients. In the more recent tonal music of Western cultures, this kind of movement appears as a primal organizational scheme imposed upon the principles of *generation* and *limitation* that constitute many of the basic morphological structures of musical discourse.

> The chant of the Gregorian Kyrie is set off by an oscillation around the opening tone. ... The vital force here is the thrust upward from the given tonal level. This disturbance of the neutral condition ... comes in conflict with the tendency to restore it. The melody drops back to the original position, but inertia drives it beyond the goal, where the process and direction become reversed. (Levarie and Levy: 12)

The fundamental syntax that generates linear movement in the "Credo" is built upon completely different principles of generation and limitation. Although we must therefore trace its epistemological roots to a different historical era, nevertheless the problem remains unchanged: how to limit a sound continuum of infinite dimensions. As we have seen, the Ancients found mathematical solutions to this problem. The Moderns devised a different solution: the tonal system with a tonic function that harmonically resolved the virtually unlimited possibilities of sonic progression. While purely esoteric principles limit the sonic space defined by Pythagorean scales, the linearly moving harmonic progressions of tonal music are limited by a tonic All figures are at the end of this article.

function rooted in a purely exoteric, natural phenomenon: the acoustical properties (the overtone series) of a resonating body. Thus the modal system governing surface-level narrative syntax is generated by a deep mathematical syntax; the tonal system, by a deep acoustical syntax.

3.4 Semio-narrative structures: deep semantic structure

As we have seen, the two fundamental syntactic systems of the "Credo" are generated by historically specific epistemological assumptions concerning principles of limitation. It is these epistemological assumptions that must guide our interpretation of the "Credo's" meaning.[11] As systems conceived in order to attain the very practical goal of imposing boundaries upon an infinite sonic universe, the fundamental syntactic structures of the "Credo" suggest two concepts of limitation: the first in which limitation results from a *static process of closure*, the second in which it results from a *dynamic process of recurrence*. Both processes convey a sense of *stability* that is invested with meaning as we proceed through the "Credo's" hierarchical structure, moving from deeply rooted to surface-level phenomena. *Stability* as a deeply rooted semantic value is differentiated on a higher level by its association with specific temporal conceptual schemes. On yet a higher level, the text of the *Symbolum Nicaenum* invests these concepts with a thematic content; in the case of sacred time, stability is associated with the *immutability* of the articles of faith of Christian dogma; in the case of secular time, with the *recurrence* of the cycle "generation-modification-destruction-regeneration" that underlies the doctrine of salvation as defined by Christian ideology. The structure of the "Credo" reveals a brilliant textual and musical setting of a dialectically conceived discourse. It is a sonic confrontation of ancient and modern epistemological concepts and of the syntactic structures which these concepts generate. Here indeed word and music are most happily married.

> The *Symbolum Nicaenum* is a hard nut for a composer to crack. If ever there was a text put together without any idea of its being set to music it is this, in which the Greek theologians have laid down their correct and dry formulas for the conception of the

> godhead of Christ. In no Mass has the difficulty of writing music for the "Credo" been so completely overcome as in this of Bach's. He has taken the utmost possible advantage of any dramatic ideas in the text. (Schweitzer 1911: 317-318)

4.1 The Generative Trajectory of the "Credo"

In Figure 7 we have outlined the distribution of the "Credo's" syntactic and semantic components following the general diagram given by Greimas in the *Dictionnaire* (Greimas: 160).

See *Figure 7**- The "Generative Trajectory" of the "Credo"

CADENTIAL EXTENSION

The movement of the "Credo" is organized according to both static and dynamic principles, static in the sense that the oscillatory movement traced by the modal treatment of the plain-song melody can be linked to the immutability of the cosmos as conceived by the Ancients, dynamic because the destabilization of static stability resulting from the tonal treatment of the plain-song melody is restabilized by the recurring tonic function.[12]

Bach uses the internal logic of the tonal system with its recurring tonic function as a rhetorical device that figuratively renders the evolution of a Christian human life. The modal base of A Phrygian (the harmony of the Godhead) quickly takes on tonal function as the dominant of the key of D major (the harmony of man). The harmonic structure then wanders through a series of progressions that define different secondary tonal centers. The harmonies modulate by fifths, establishing a series of temporary tonic centers. Finally, the tonic key appears in augmentation introducing a standard cadential progression that promises a final cadence in D major; "from dust thou art to dust returneth." However, before this final cadence arrives, Bach introduces a diminished 7th chord, moving us quickly back into the mode of departure, A Phrygian. Born in Christ, man submits to a series of corporal and spiritual modifications that ultimately lead to death, thence to a rebirth in Christ through salvation.
All figures are at the end of this article.

Highlighting the conceptual schemes that underlie the "Credo," our generative trajectory demonstrates the semiotic nature of what is a multi-level, hierarchically structured musical discourse. Far from being without semantic depth, the "Credo's" structure conforms perfectly to the syntactic and semantic requirements of the language model. However, it should be emphasized that the relationship between thematic content and deep semantic structure is motivated entirely by the religious context of the "Credo." The intrinsic characteristics of these fundamental semantic structures in no way limit them to association with religious concepts. It is the context of the *Mass in B minor* and the text of the *Symbolum Nicaenum* that filter our perceptions of the various movements of the "Credo," transforming sound into religious symbol.*

Obviously, other transformations are possible. The "Credo's" deep semio-narrative structures are founded upon *abstract* mathematical and acoustical concepts. It is precisely due to their abstract nature that such fundamental structures can be analogically associated with a great variety of surface-level thematic trajectories. However, if the relationship between such trajectories and the deep structures is to contribute to the production of meaningful discourse, it is necessary that discursive structures coherently develop the fundamental concepts of the deep semio-narrative structures. When such is the case, we have a discourse that "makes sense."[13] When such is not the case, a rupture occurs between the discursive and semio-narrative semantic structures, producing a kind of noise* that inhibits effective communication. More simply stated, although thematic and musical discursive structures can be associated at will with a variety of deep semio-narrative conceptual schemes, such associations, if either arbitrary or outside socially shared conventions, will be entirely without consequence for the setting of text.

One might wonder what Bach knew of ancient and modern concepts of time and of their relationship with musical structure. The study of his compositions reveals other instances of ancient style mixed with the baroque contrapuntal style that became his signature, reminding us that Bach was a master in the theory and use of the many different styles that represented his musical

heritage. Christoph Wolff points out that Bach, along with most eighteenth century masters, was very much aware of the effects (*Affektentheorie*) attributed to each of these various styles

> "Majestätisch" und "gravitätisch" sind die Epitheta, die in jener Zeit am häufigsten für die Charakterisierung des expressiones des stile antico verwandt werden; *majestas* und *gravitas* umschreiben den Affektgehalt des stile antico. (Wolff: 135)

In choosing to use the antique style, Bach intentionally added an affective dimension to his musical discourse. However, the true stroke of genius was his affective mixing of the antique modal and modern tonal systems, each with its own particular stylistic constraints, by which the meaning of the *Symbolum Nicaenum* was woven inseparably into the rhythmic texture of the "Credo." In this instance text and music became one, delineating the relationship between man and creed, between secular institutions that must submit to time and sacred institutions that transcend it.

The "Credo" and *Confiteor* are the pillars of Christian dogma, and Bach did not fail to underline them within the larger context of the mass. Because of the ingenious link between text and music in the "Credo," "gleichzeitig bekommt der gesamte Messenteil ... den Nimbus einer betont liturgischen Figuralmusik" (Wolff: 136). Could chance alone have produced such an intimately successful marriage of word and music? To defend such a point of view would be tantamount to claiming that Bach ignored the power of the language of his Muse.

NOTES

1. " ... la valeur de la musique ... est d'ordre éthique et non d'ordre esthétique: elle tient à sa signification humaine ... sa vérité est ce qu'elle révèle de l'homme à son insu ... la force de vérité de la musique est celle que si l'on écoute bien, on s'en rend compte: la musique trahit le musicien" (Ansermet: I, 156).

2. An asterisk appearing after a word indicates that it is Greimas' English translation of a specific term defined in the *Dictionnaire*.

3. We realize that the use of literary terms such as "discursive" and "narrative" is perhaps fallacious in a musical context. However, Greimas' model is a language-based model. Its hierarchical structure is useful to our analytical approach, and thus we are bound to the terms of the model. By "discursive" we refer only to the logical processes structuring the movement of the "Credo"; by "narrative," to the interplay of the two stylistic systems that define this movement.

4. In his first work on Bach published in French in 1905, Albert Schweitzer gives special attention to Bach's usage of plain-song melody in the "Credo":

> Comme la Messe en si devait être une Messe catholique, Bach y introduisit des motifs du chant grégorien, ... par exemple ... l'introduction du Credo ... Comme le thème grégorien ne se prêtait pas à être traité en fugue, il dut choisir pour le Confiteor un thème libre; mais à partir de la soixante-troisième mesure, il amène le thème grégorien dans la basse, dans l'alto et finalement, en agrandissement, dans le ténor. (Schweitzer 1905: 195-196)

Our study attempts to demonstrate the close link between the modal and tonal settings of the Gregorian melody, and the dramatic ideas of the text.

5. Stravinsky introduces the neologism "chrononomy" to describe time as simultaneously measured in multiple syntagmatic and paradigmatic dimensions (Stravinsky: 28). Better yet, we should also define chrononomy as a measure of sonic space. In fact, music fuses time and space the moment that sound becomes tone, i.e. the moment that noise submits to a systemic organization; thereafter it is impossible to separate them. Heidegger refers to music as a *Zeit-speil-raum*, thus designating music as the imbrication of time in space and vice versa (Charles: 247).

6. "Das Symbolum Nicenum ist insgesamt chiastisch-zyklisch angelegt. Um die drei mittleren Chorsätze, die das christologische Zentrum des Werkes betonen, spannen sich symmetrisch zunächst zwei Solosätze (*Et in unum Dominum*, *Et in Spiritum sanctum*). Den grossen Rahmen bilden dann zwei Satzpaare (*Credo-Patrem* und *Confiteor-Et expecto*), von denen das erste Glied jeweils ein Plenosatz im stile antico, das zweite ein konzertanter Tuttisatz ist" (Wolff: 133).

7. According to Célestin Deliège, the interval of the 5th is the harmonic relationship that defines the tonal order.

> Cela revient à dire qu'essentiellement c'est un certain paysage harmonique qui engendre l'ordre tonal. Et il ne suffit pas, bien sûr, que l'accord parfait soit le fondement du système pour le rendre tonal, il faut, en outre, que les fondamentales de l'harmonie *s'organisent selon un ordre sériel hiérarchisé gouverné par le rapport de quinte.* (Deliège: 17)

8. The plagal relationship established by the various entries of the plain-song melody in A major and D major, signals the Phrygian mode of A in the antique style (Wolff: 81). All cadences other than plagal are forbidden in the Phrygian mode (Krenek: 4). Thus, the sub-dominant funtion (I-IV) takes precedence over the dominant (I-V) upon which the tonal system is built.

9. One should note that the syntactic structure of the "Credo" is built upon a traditional contrapuntal technique, the 3rd species of counterpoint, four quarters against a half (*quatuor semiminimae contra unam semibrevem*) as defined by Johann Fux in his *Gradus ad Parnassum*.

10. We borrow our terms from Krzysztof Pomian who speaks of *temps sacré* and *temps profane* in his book *L'ordre du temps*.

11. It seems absolutely necessary to place *all* analytical thought within the proper historical context. It is ludicrous to speak of musical structures as if syntax were not subject to historically determined conceptual schemes. Thus, we subscribe

totally to the views of Joseph-François Kremer who stresses the importance of diachronic considerations when speaking of the meaning of music:

> ...les << signes révélateurs >> en musique n'ont pour référence que sa propre histoire, celle d'où naît son évolution. Mémoire participante et mémoire communicante, la mémoire de l'auditeur est une mémoire universelle: notons que ce qui est ici universel se définit par la capacité de communiquer, et non par l'essence de la matière musicale elle-même, ni par une éthique précise de la réceptivité du public. Le cheminement du contenu que le musicien retransmet au public repose sur le pouvoir de communication, pouvoir reciproque partagé entre l'exécutant et l'auditeur; or, le dernier n'a d'autre préjugé que celui d'une mémoire en mouvement, nantie d'un *a priori* et d'un *a posteriori* qui évoluent eux-mêmes << de concert >> et continuellement. (Kremer: 8)

12. In his book *La musique grecque antique*, Jacques Chailley recalls the correspondance between the Pythagorean scale and the cosmic order (Chailley: 39):

Figure 8 - The Pythagorean scale and the cosmos

13. David Lidov has given a remarkable definition of "musical sense" that must be quoted almost in its entirety, for it illustrates the relationship between musical structure and extra musical realities:

> I take the position that musical sense is not confined to the designs that signs make with each other; that music engages an unlimited semantic field. ... Music articulates the continuum of experience into separate thought through the articulations of its various aspects: gesture, color, form, and so on. Musical reference may be extended through any of the relational principles common to signs in general but ... I (am) particularly concerned with a mode of

> resemblance which ... Nicolas Ruwet described as a homology between musical structure and the structures of other realities and experience (1972: 14) ... In the case of a minor composer, formal questions do slip into the background; form becomes the first aspect of musical expression to be automatized. With a philosophically oriented composer, formal considerations or considerations of technical procedure enter the foreground. This is the inevitable fact in Bach's music. ... With composers of the first rank, form and technique become homologous with forms of discourse or structures of belief. They involve music in issues of philosophic stature. (Lidov: 196)

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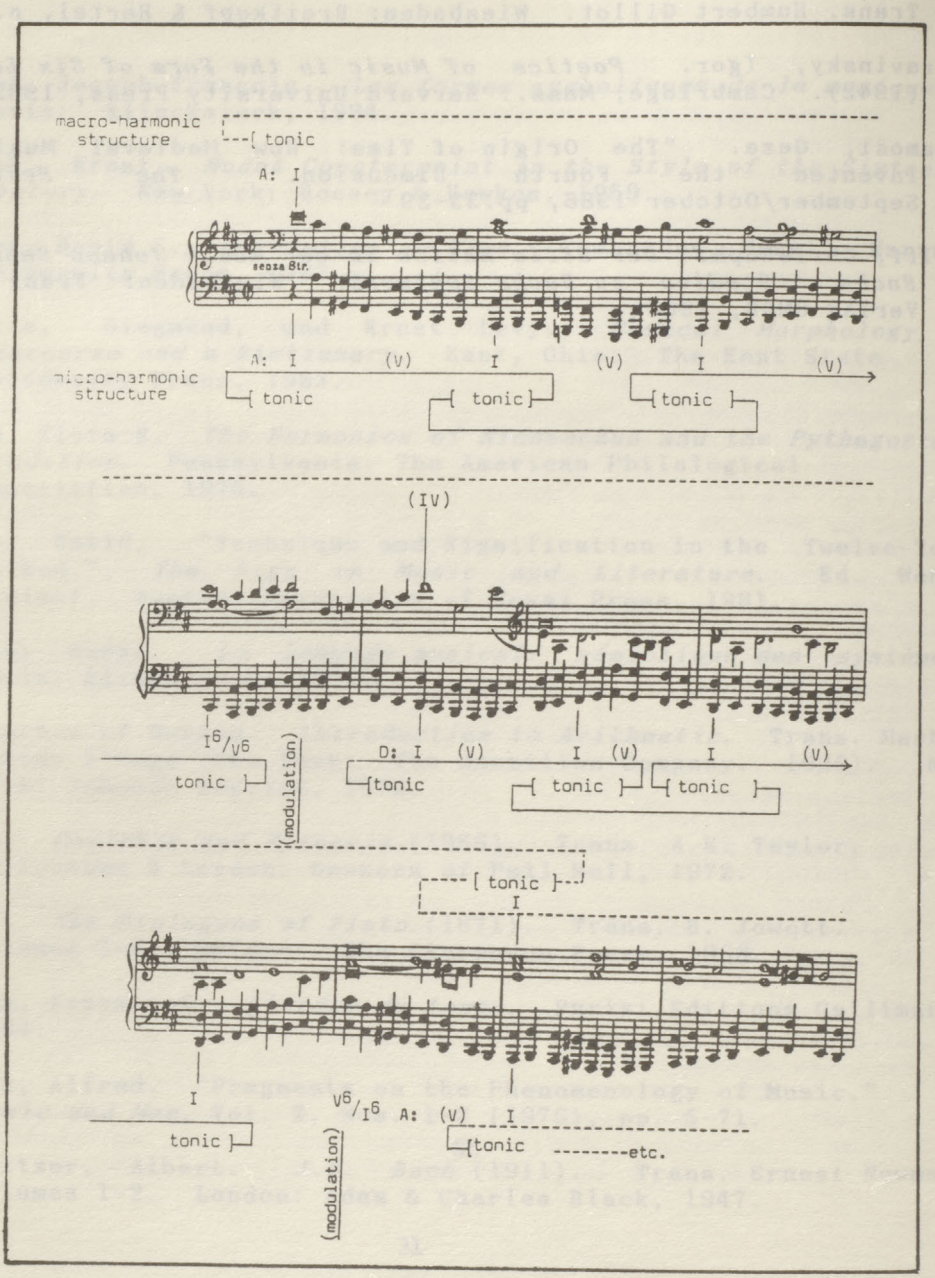


Figure 1 - linear movement of the "micro" and "macro" harmonic structures

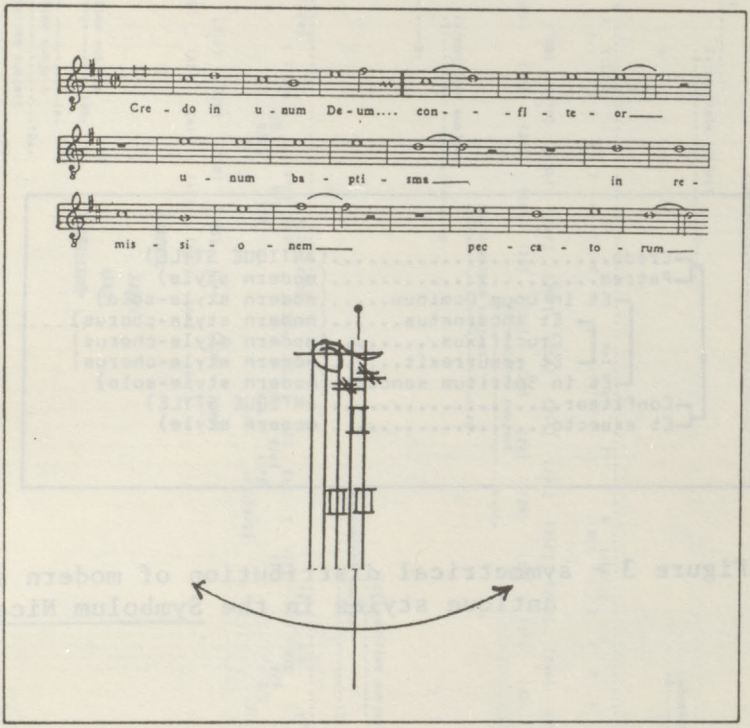


Figure 2 - oscillatory movement of the plain-song melody

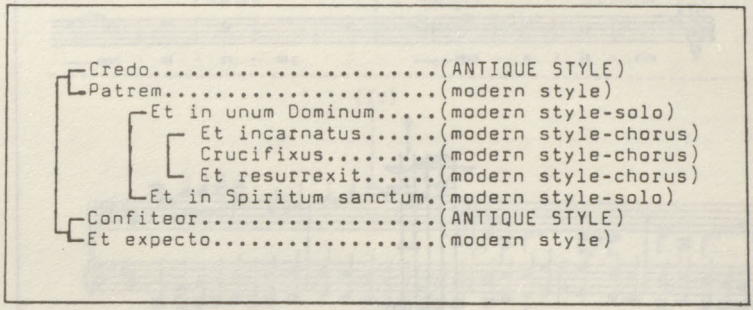
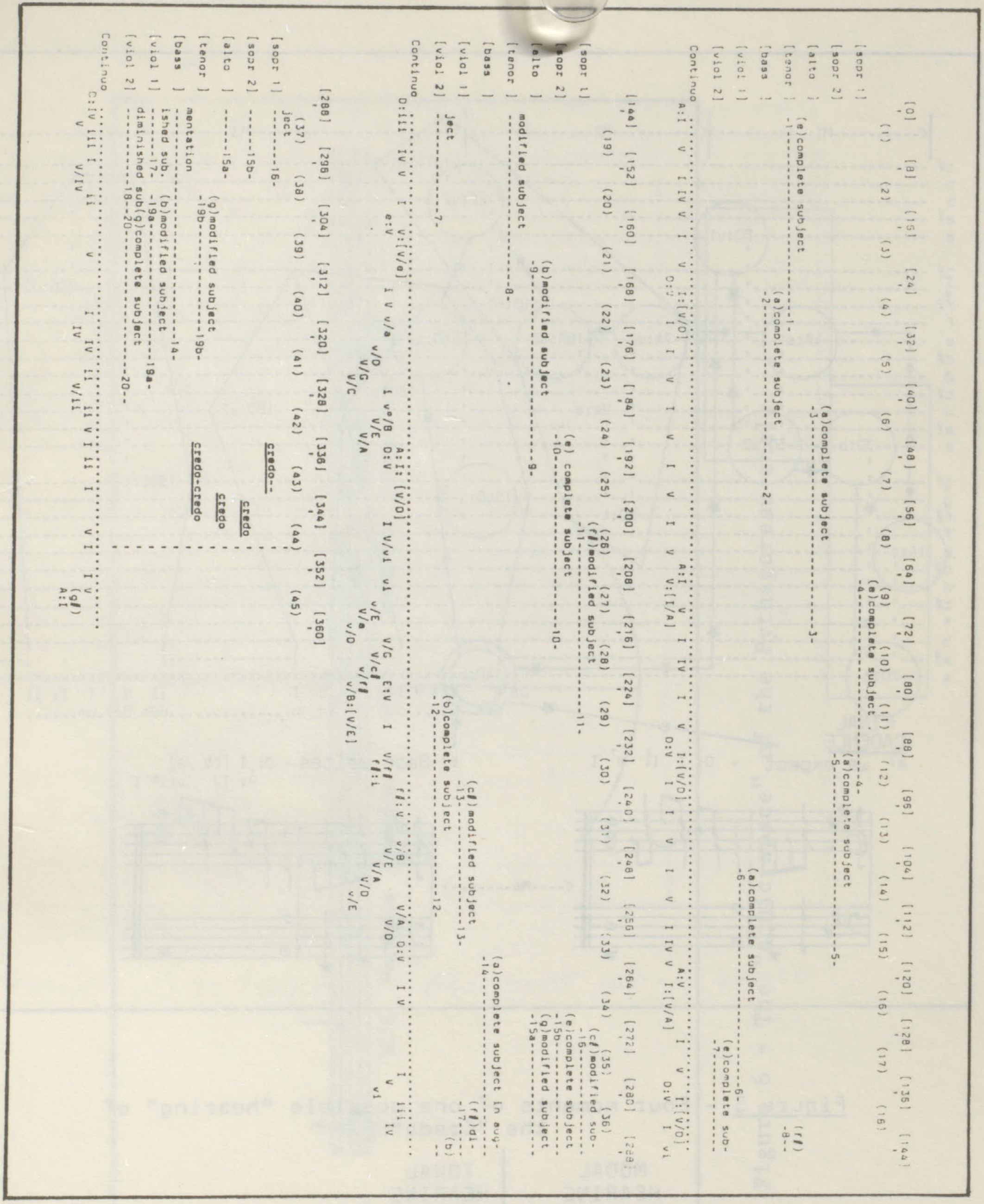


Figure 3 - symmetrical distribution of modern and antique styles in the Symbolum Nicaenum



[sopr 1]
[sopr 2]
[alto]
[tenor]
[bass]
[viol 1]
[viol 2]
Continuo
(e)complete subject
(a)complete subject
(e)complete subject
(a)complete subject
(e)complete subject
(a)complete subject
(e)complete subject
modified subject
(b)modified subject
(e) complete subject
(f#)modified subject
(b)complete subject
(c#)modified subject
(a)complete subject in augmentation
(g)modified subject
(e)complete subject
(c#)modified subject
diminished sub(g)complete subject
credo
credo--
credo-credo
Continuo

Figure 4

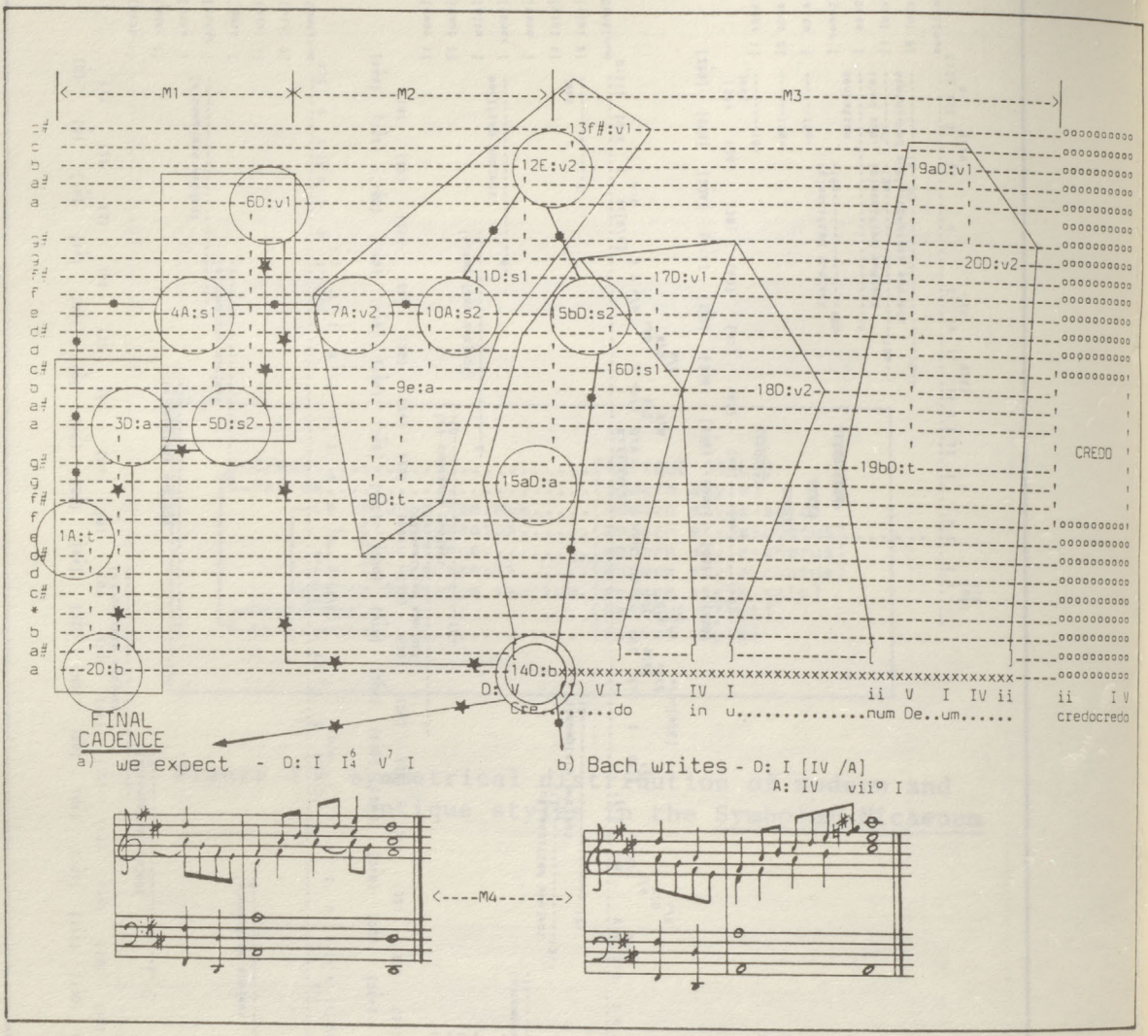


Figure 5 - Four moments of one possible "hearing" of the "Credo"

MODAL HEARING	TONAL HEARING
"A" phrygian	dominant
4th degree plagal	tonic

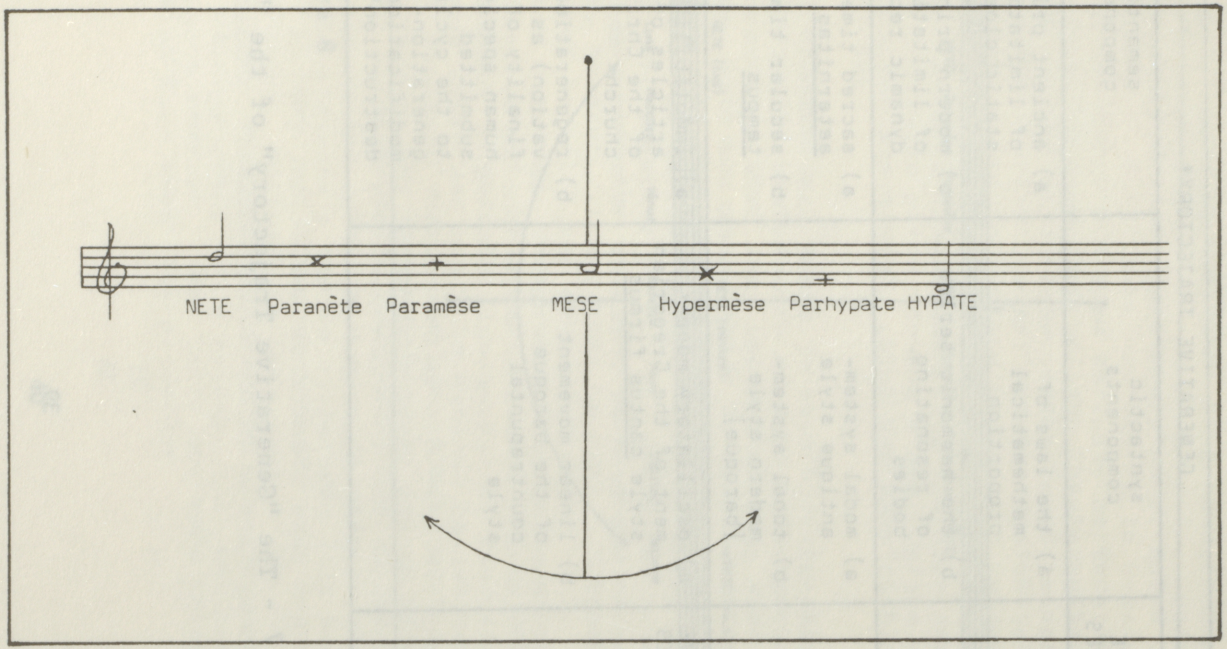


Figure 6 - The "sonic space" of the Pythagorean scale

GENERATIVE TRAJECTORY*		
SEMIO-NARRATIVE STRUCTURES	syntactic components	semantic components
deep level	a) the laws of mathematical proportion b) the harmonic series of resonating bodies	a) ancient principle of limitation-static closure b) modern principle of limitation-dynamic recurrence
surface level	a) modal system-antique style b) tonal system-modern style [baroque]	a) sacred time-aeternitas b) secular time-tempus
DISCURSIVE STRUCTURES	a) oscillatory movement of the Gregorian style cantus firmus b) linear movement of the baroque countrapuntal style	a) immutibility of the articles of faith of the Christian church b) regeneration (salvation) as the finality of a human species submitted to the cycle generation-modification-destruction"

Figure 7 - The "Generative Trajectory" of the "Credo"

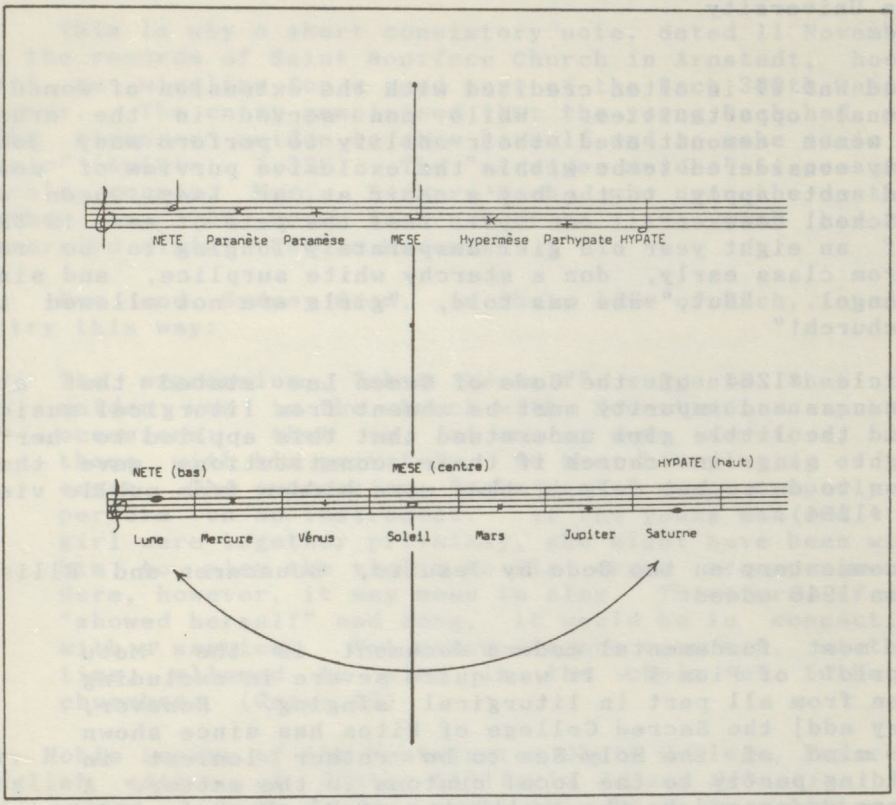

NETE
Paranète
Paramèse
MESE
Hypermèse
Parhypate
HYPATE
NETE (bas)
MESE (centre)
HYPATE (haut)
Lune
Mercure
Vénus
Soleil
Mars
Jupiter
Saturne

Figure 8

"THE STRANGER MAIDEN": WHY BACH PUT A WOMAN IN HIS CHOIR AND WHY HE COULDN'T KEEP HER THERE

Florence Perrella Hayes
Concordia University

World War II is often credited with the extension of women's professional opportunities. While men served in the armed forces, women demonstrated their ability to perform many jobs previously considered to be within the exclusive purview of men. This did not apply to the boy's choir at Our Lady Queen of Martyrs School however. I can still feel the pain of envy in the chest of an eight year old girl desperately longing to be released from class early, don a starchy white surplice, and sing like an angel. "But," she was told, "girls are not allowed to sing in church!"

Article #1264 of the Code of Canon Law stated that all lasciviousness and impurity must be absent from liturgical music. (How could the little girl understand that this applied to her?) Nuns might sing in church if their constitutions gave them permission to do so but only if they were hidden from public view (Pius X: #1264).

A commentary on the Code by Jesuits, Bouscaren and Ellis, written in 1946 added:

> The most fundamental modern document is the "Motu Proprio" of Pius X - It was quite severe in excluding women from all part in liturgical singing. However, [they add] the Sacred College of Rites has since shown the mind of the Holy See to be rather lenient in yielding partly to the local customs in the matter. A decree addressed to the Archbishop of New York in 1908 permits women to sing in church choirs, but requires that women and girl choristers occupy a separate place from the men and boys (Bouscaren and Ellis: 692).

In the eternal rhythm of the Roman Catholic Church, this

meant that we girls in 1943 were taught our punctums and neumes in Sister Clothilde's music class - we knew our Gregorian modes intellectually, but we could not sing them in church.

This is why a short consistory note, dated 11 November 1706, in the records of Saint Boniface Church in Arnstadt, hooked and kept me wiggling for a good part of the Bach 300th anniversary summer. The entry complained that the young Bach had permitted "the stranger maiden to show herself and to make music in the choir" (Spitta: I,326). The "stranger maiden" is presumed to be Bach's cousin, Maria Barbara Bach, who upon the death of her mother in 1704 moved to Arnstadt to live with her mother's unmarried sister, Regina Wademann.

Eva and Sydney Grew, in their life of Bach, analyse the entry this way:

> The expression, "show herself" suggests that the maiden was in the church with Sebastian on public occasions: that is, at one or more services; not there with him privately, to hear him playing on the organ. The expression, "make music" means properly to perform on an instrument. If the young man and the girl were together privately, she might have been with him to play the violin to his organ accompaniment. Here, however, it may mean to sing. Therefore, if she "showed herself" and sang, it would be in connection with a service. Yet women singers were not, at this time, allowed to sing in the choir of Lutheran churches. (Grew: 47)

Dr. Robin Leaver of the Westminster Choir College, Princeton, and English editor of Günter Stiller's *Johann Sebastian Bach and Liturgical Life in Leipzig* wrote this to me in a letter on the subject:

> 1) It is not clear what the brief report in the consistory *Actions* [refers to]. Was it during a service? Probably not because women did not perform in worship--only men's voices. It was more likely a practice session. But there are many things we would like to know about the situation.

2) The whole question of "men's voices only in the worship" has a long history and needs to be set in the context of worship life as a whole. Segregation of the sexes was part and parcel of congregational life--the men sat on one side and the women on the other--and each received communion separately--the men first, then the women.

St. Paul's advice, I Cor. 14:34, "Let your women keep silence in the churches," was understood to include singing in the choir. There seems to be a long tradition behind the inclusion of singing. Augustine was fearful of the sensuous aspect of music. Calvin also took a fearful and cautious view, warning against "voluptuous, effeminate or disorderly music" (*New Encyclopedia Britannica*: XII, 663).

Of course, women sang and composed around the liturgical hours in their own convents. My friend, mediaevalist Linda Spear, has warned me of the lack of uniformity of church practice in the Middle Ages. Women may have been singing in Celtic parishes, but at this point we don't know.

The mass first emerged as a musical form in the early fifteenth century. By the sixteenth century, the Papal Choir and Roman Catholic cathedrals and courts boasted "castrati" or "eunuchi" to sing their treble parts. These were boy sopranos castrated before their voices had time to change. They were celebrated for their vocal technique and for their beautiful "sexless" sound (Lang: 302).

In secular music, we know of female singers and string players in classical times (Lang: 35) and female troubadours in mediaeval times (Bogin: *passim*). There were numerous organizations in the Renaissance which were founded by women and devoted to the performance of music. Women conducted female orchestras and vocal groups. Some convents were quite famous for their sung religious services and drew large crowds to hear (if not to see) the nuns (Lang: 301-02). However, it is safe to say that until the advent of Italian opera in the early sixteenth century, women's music was performed among other women or in intimate court or household settings. (It would be interesting to determine if the strong, rich, female operatic voice did not directly affect the addition of castrati tenors to boys' choirs.)

Very likely, Bach had attended the opera on his two visits to Hamburg. If so, he had heard the voices of good female sopranos. Since the burghers of Hamburg could not suffer the Italian castrati on stage, the leading feminine roles were taken by market women and prostitutes. They appeared in their spare time as goddesses and heroines. Although they were well known for their beauty and their pleasant voices, they were often unable to read music and they learned their parts by ear, according to music historian Paul Henry Lang.

We know Bach was discouraged by the poor training and lack of discipline of the boys he was given to work with at St. Boniface. The consistory complaint about the "stranger maiden" was prefaced by another complaint that Bach "had refused to make music with the scholars" (David and Mendel: 53). Could Sebastian and Maria Barbara have set themselves up to shame the choir? Should we read this little note in Bach's history in the light of his exasperation with domineering consistories and unmusical choirs? Or was it a matter of romance? Did Maria Barbara also dream of singing in the choir, and was Johann Sebastian setting out to fulfil her dreams?

Bach was never humble before ecclesiastical boards, and it would not be beyond him, at the age of twenty one, to feature Maria in his choir. And, most certainly, there was a romantic attachment ... they would be married within a year. But I believe that Johann Sebastian Bach had, even at this early time, a sense of his own vocation, a seriousness which would undergird any decisions regarding church music. Within the month he would take a leave of absence and travel to Lübeck in order to hear the five Sunday evening programmes of music which St. Mary's celebrated organist Dietrich Buxtehude had prepared for the season of Advent. Bach felt drawn to set the Lutheran liturgy upon a sound musical base. In two years he would be able to state on paper that it was his intention "to persevere in working for my very end which consists in organizing church music well" (Schrade: 10).

Although Bach had been too poor to attend university, he had received sound musical and theological training at Ohrdruf and

Lüneberg. He knew that church music was engaged in the service of the Word; and it is my perception of him that neither romance nor professional pride could prompt him to defy an entrenched liturgical tradition, unless his own understanding of theology permitted it. It is my belief that Bach's theological intuition as well as his romantic predisposition and musical expertise prompted him to bring Maria Barbara into the choir at Arnstadt.

Bach was born in Eisenach in 1685 into the fourth generation of musical Bachs. The hill fortress of the Wartburg, which had sheltered Luther, could be seen from his bedroom windows. He was born into music and into Lutheranism but at a time when the middle class was temporally and spiritually impoverished after thirty years of war between the Catholic and Protestant princes. People had lost patience with religious polemic, yet preachers in the orthodox Lutheran churches continued to present their congregations with dry theological argument.

The Baroque was an age when people across Europe hungered for spiritual renewal, and in Germany that renewal came through the Pietists who urged Christians to discover a personal knowledge of Jesus. In 1675, ten years before the birth of Bach, Philipp Jakob Spener wrote *Pia Desideria* (Pious Desires). It advocated a renewed emphasis on Biblical preaching, conventicles or private prayer groups for the support of "born again" Christians, and a reform of pastoral training that would redirect one's efforts towards the devotional and moral life of parishoners (Erb: 5).

Music was to be as Luther had advised, simple, direct and an aid to piety. Religious poetry took on unheard of proportions. According to Paul Henry Lang, "Pietism invited lyric meditation, swelling the number of sacred songs to the astonishing figure of ten thousand by the time the eighteenth century dawned upon Germany. The musicians could not cope with the fertility of the poets and a great many of the pious songs were sung to old melodies" (Lang: 472).

So while Bach received the musical heritage of Praetorius, Schütz and Buxtehude, he also breathed the very air of Pietism in

his daily life. Ohrdruf, when Bach was attending Latin school there, was a stronghold of Pietism reputed to harbour Pietist extremists and seceders from the mainline Lutheran church. Every teacher at the school had to take an oath of allegiance to the orthodox church in order to ensure orthodox teaching. Yet, Bach was to accumulate in his library many books by Pietist theologians, including the five volume *Schola Pietatis* by Johann Gerhard (Schrade: 53).

Bach could never have been a thoroughgoing Pietist, disdaining complex religious music, and also remain true to his genius. Yet, at the same time, he could not help but sympathize with the evangelical call for a personal experience of God. It resonated within his own mystical core. His own most heightened experience was with him already.

Ironically, the happiest times of Bach's life occurred when he was employed by royalty and free from the watchful harassment of either side of the Pietist-Lutheran controversy. Upon his returning from his pilgrimage to the great Buxtehude, the Arnstadt consistory complained about the new complexities in his organ playing. He soon left this position for an appointment in a Pietist parish in Mühlhausen, a city already seeded with the rebel blood of Thomas Müntzer. There he also felt unable to improve the quality of church music, in his own words, "without vexatious relations" (Schrade: 9). His third professional move, however, to the court of Duke Wilhelm Ernst at Weimar, doubled his salary and gained him the freedom to compose without censorship.

During his nine years at Weimar, Bach composed some of his best works for organ and some extraordinarily beautiful church cantatas. They were written with the court librettist, Salomo Frank, a student of Erdman Neumeister, who was opposed to Pietist musical restrictions, yet his poetry bears the personal Pietist sound. Three cantatas attributed to this time contain duets between Christ and the soul. Bach's biographer Philipp Spitta complained that these duets are too personal for proper church music. Indeed, they are among the most beautiful love duets the world has heard. Bach scores the part of Christ for a bass baritone. He scores the part of the soul for soprano. They express the "Bride of Christ" symbolism which was so popular among the Pietists.

"Ring out ye Songs, Resound ye Strings", Cantata BWV 172, was written for Whitsunday in 1714, and Philipp Spitta attributes it to the librettist Salomo Frank although he suspects it might not have been performed until later when Bach was residing in Leipzig. The duet between Christ and the soul is based upon Luther's "Veni Creator Spiritus," and at its close, the soprano cries, "Highest Love come within! Thou hast from me the heart taken." The Holy Spirit replies, "I am thine and thou art mine."

An earlier cantata listed for that year is BWV 152, written for the Sunday after Christmas, "Walk in the Way of Faith." The duet is "How Shall I, Beloved of Souls, Embrace Thee?"

Cantata BWV 21, "I Had a Great Affliction in My Heart," for the third Sunday after Trinity, is dated 1723, Leipzig, by commentator Alec Robertson (Robertson: 196) but Spitta attributes the words to Frank and dates the composition 1714, Weimar (Spitta: I, 531). The duet begins with the soprano singing, "Come my Jesus and revive and rejoice with thy countenance," and the bass answering, "Yes, I come and revive thee with my mercy look." According to Robertson, the language isn't particularly Lutheran but sounds more like certain Catholic mystics such as Angela of Foligno. He notes that the form and tempo foreshadow the love duet between Don Giovanni and Zerlina in Act II of the Mozart operas (Robertson: 196).

Cantata 145, "If Thou Shalt Confess With Thy Mouth the Lord Jesus," is dated by Robertson 1729, Leipzig, with Picander as the librettist. In the duet, "I live My Heart for Thy Glorification," Robertson notes that "Bach departs from his invariable habit of allotting Jesus's words to a bass and gives the part to a tenor" (Robertson: 115). I believe this was done because the words are sung by the resurrected Christ rather than the man, Jesus.

The most beautiful of the love duets between Christ and the soul are found in Cantata BWV 140, "Wachet Auf," "Wake Up a Voice is Calling." It is dated 1731, Leipzig, and the chorale is based upon a hymn by Nicolai. The cantata was written for the twenty-seventh Sunday after Trinity, the last Sunday of the Church year, and because of the calendar, it was not sung every year. It was

written to accompany the Gospel reading of the Bridegroom. Spitta believes that with "Wachet Auf," Bach finally achieved the perfect cantata form. The three verses of the chorale, appearing at the beginning, middle, and end of the cnatata, unify it and carry forward its mystical tone. Words which serve a more personal or congregational emotion come in between the verses of the chorale, such as the two duets between Christ and the soul. (The music is not drawn from the chorale although the conceptual theme is.) In the second of the duets, both words and rhythm are quite similar to a poem by the radical Pietist theologian Gottfried Arnold. Arnold's poem, "The Soul Refreshes Itself in Jesus" concludes:

> He sings, she plays; he kisses, she rejoices;
> He teaches, she listens; he laughs, she jokes.
> He says, How eternally you are chosen for me!
> She calls: You are born for my joy!
> Both double the echo into one
> And cry: My friend is perfectly mine
> Echo: I mine! (Erb: 239)

Bach's second duet, set to a lilting and playful melody, begins "Mein Freund is Mein!" and the words are repeated, echoed again and again.

> Soprano: My friend is mine!
> Jesus: And I am thine.
> Both: True lovers ne'er are parted.
> Soprano: Now I with thee and thou with me.
> Both: In flow'ry fields we'll wander,
> in rapture united forever to be.
> (Harnoncourt: liner notes)

In these love duets, Bach exhibits not only a Pietist style but also glimpses of Pietist theology. Jacob Boehme was a strong influence upon Pietist thought. His conceptualization of the Holy Spirit as "Divine Sophia" places the feminine within the Holy Trinity. Pietist Count Zinzendorf spoke of the Trinity as Father, Mother and Son. Gottfried Arnold describes Sophia as the spirit of God dwelling within the human soul. In Bach's cantata BWV 172, for Whitsunday, the divine voice is written, not for a

bass but for an alto. The soul, still the "Bride of Christ" and a soprano, is in dialogue with the Holy Spirit, an alto, who is described as a voluptuous mother.

Soul: Come, don't let me wait anymore,
Come soft breeze from heaven,
Blow across the heart's garden!
Sophia: I comfort you my child.
Soul: Love so loved who is so soft,
Superabundance of all voluptuousness,
I perish when I lose you.
Sophia: Receive my kiss of grace. (Rilling: liner notes)

According to Spitta, "this duet is the most important movement of the cantata--the whole movement," he says, "is instinct with a fervency and an ecstasy which astonish us even in Bach" (Spitta: II, 398-99).

This strong female imagery, to which Bach obviously responded, is reflective of Pietist anthropology which honoured women and recognized their priesthood. In Phillip Jakob Spener's catechism, *The Spiritual Priesthood*, the questioner asks:

#60 But do women also share in these priestly offices?

And Spener answers:

> Yes indeed. Here is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female but all are one in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:28). In Christ, therefore, the difference between man and woman, in regard to what is spiritual, is abolished. Since God dignifies believing women also with his spiritual gifts (Joel 2:28, 29; Acts 21:9; I Cor. 11:5), the exercise of them in proper order cannot be forbidden. The Apostles themselves make mention of these godly women, who worked together with them and edified their fellow men; and far from censuring them for this, they accorded them love and praise for it (Acts 18:26; Rom. 16:1, 2, 12; Phillippians 4:2, 3; Titus 2: 3-5).

#61 But are women not forbidden to teach?
Yes, namely in the public congregation. But that it is permitted to them outside of the public congregation is clear from the passages and apostolic examples cited (I Cor. 14:34; I Tim. 2:11-12).
(Erb: 62)

Women's spiritual and social worth is affirmed by the Pietists, but short of overturning traditional public practice. If we are to assume that Bach was influenced by Pietist anthropology and female spiritual imagery, might not it have awakened his sense of social justice enough to invite Maria Barbara to sing in his choir?

Pietism, standing in tension with the Lutheran Church in Germany was, except for the radical conventicles, committed to spiritual renewal within the existing structures. They stood in contrast with the revolutionary Society of Friends in England, who lived in tension with an already class conscious Puritanism. The sacredness of the most lowly individual was a given, so for the Quakers, the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers meant the end of a professional, ordained priesthood. Without a paid clergy, the problem of women's freedom to speak in church seemed to be solved.

The Quakers are not known for the use of female symbols, and yet Margaret Fell's tract "Women's Speaking Justified by the Scriptures" was published in Holland in 1668, before the birth of Bach. Thirty-four years before Maria Barbara "showed herself" at St. Boniface Church in Arnstadt, Quaker women were circling the globe, preaching the "Good News!" In fact, the Puritans of New England, who preached fervent sermons in Bride of Christ language, used it to keep the Quaker preachers Elizabeth Hooten and Joan Broksapp from desembarking in Boston!

Christ may reveal himself as the Bridegroom, but what does it mean to be a bride? Cultures have the responsibility of interpreting sacred symbols and their interpretations are inclined to be self-serving.

Religions in their liminal, charismatic stages, such as early Quakerism or early Pietism, whether they express their revelation in the language of "Bride of Christ," "Sophia," or the "Holy Light" or "Divine Prodding," are good for women. New religion, yet to be enculturated, or mystical religion which circumvents the cultural church by seeking God directly, is good for women. The Holy Spirit seems to be democratic and inclusive. Pietism reaffirmed the value of the individual over the institution, and that was good for Maria Barbara. But more than that, I believe it was Bach's understanding of Pietist "Bride of Christ" theology which made it essential for a woman to sing in his choir.

Bach was a baroque composer and he adhered to its "Doctrine of Affections," a build-in musical symbolism. His church cantatas were interpretations of the Gospel texts meant to promote the listener's understanding by engaging his or her affections. He composed with symbolic expression in mind. The fact that he scored the words of Christ for bass baritone and the words of the soul for soprano had religious significance. What effect has the singing of boy sopranos on "Bride fo Christ" theology? One has only to listen. The clear "white" voice is sexless, virginal. We are, after all, listening to a child. In Roman Catholic theology, the "Bride of Christ" is a virgin. But Protestant theology, as a rule did not hold celibacy in high esteem. As described by anthropologist, Daniel Maltz,

> Virginity, like the initial state of grace in the Garden of Eden, is a status with which one is born but which is easy to lose. It is an unusual status in that it is gained by ascription but lost by achievement. To become a bride, in contrast, is to be able to begin again with a fresh start and a clean slate. Even a whore can regain the purity of a bride although she cannot become a virgin. As such, the bride metaphor is useful for expressing the availability of Christ to even the worst of sinners. (Maltz: 35-36)

The bride is sexual. The bridegroom fills her with his spirit and fructifies her life. It is not so much the innocence of the bride which makes her a Protestant metaphor for the soul as it is

her faithfulness. For the Pietist Count Zinzendorf, "the relationship between the married couple was the best analogy for understanding the relationship between Christ and the believer" (Erb: 21-22), and it is said that marriage was respected more among Zinzendorf's Moravian Pietists than anywhere else in the Protestant world. Zinzendorf was only a boy when Bach and Maria Barbara were courting--but the matrix for his theology was already in place. One has to ask if this kind of thinking did not resonate within the young Bach as he contemplated Maria Barbara, his bride-to-be. How could this new understanding of "Bride of Christ" theology be best expressed in music? For a boy or "castrato" to sing the part of the Bride had to rub against Bach's Protestant, baroque sensibilities. I would like to think that this, at least in the realm of intuition, freed Bach to invite his beloved Barbara into the choir and "show herself off." But why couldn't he keep her there?

Unfortunately, Pietist rejection of artistry left them with no cultural influence upon the singing of Bach cantatas. If in England Quaker women preached because the professional clergy was abolished, in Pietist Germany women sang because professional choirs gave way to congregational singing. The victory was won for democracy but not for Bach's life goal of "ordering church music well." When professional choirs were maintained by individual churches, they were filled by students trained in the schools. If the schools were closed to girls the choirs would be closed to girls as well...as would be the case with any career which required an education.

It had been a gargantuan task for Bach and he had taken it on with a sense of ministry, but it seemed to him as if the church had rejected his gift. Towards the end, it was other people's music he played at Saint Thomas Chruch, Leipzig. When he died, the consistory seemed relieved to be free of the crank and his old fashioned music. Except for "A Musical Offering" not one of his compositions was published between his death in 1750 and 1800.

In 1829, the *Saint Matthew Passion* was finally sung again in abbreviated form by the Berlin Singakademie under the direction of Felix Mendelssohn in a benefit performance for underprivileged

children. Mendelssohn and the bass baritone, Devrient, who wanted to sing the part of Christ, had fought strong opposition to have the work performed. Mendelssohn's biographer, Eric Werner, quotes him as having said, "To think that a comedian and Jew-boy must revive the greatest Christian music for the world" (Werner: 99). Thereafter the Passion belonged to the concert hall for some time before it and the cantatas returned to the churches with women finally able to sing the treble parts.

A letter from Professor Paul Helmer of the McGill Faculty of Music illuminates the situation a little more:

> ...regarding women in Lutheran church choirs. A preliminary answer to the question would be that there was probably no binding ordinance regarding their presence in Lutheran choirs. Typical 16th c. Protestant practice would be for the choir to alternate with the organ and the congregation in those churches that did maintain a trained professional choir. Certainly there would be many churches without a trained choir, and Luther gradually wished the congregation to participate in the services. The Musculus *Itinerarium* of 1536 mentions this alternatim style (Blume, *Geschichte der evangelische Kirchenmusik,* 57). Such churches as the St. Thomas in Leipzig maintained its boy and men choir through the Baroque period (Bach had his troubles with that) and even down to the present day this is not a mixed choir. If one were to look for an ordinance forbidding women to sing in that choir one would probably have to look in the statutes of the individual churches.

In conclusion, I would suggest that the reader conduct his/her own experiment by listening to two recent recordings of the above-mentioned duets from the cantata "Wachet Auf" (BWV 140) "Wann Kommst du, mein Heil?" is sung by bass and female soprano Agnes Giebel with the Gewandhaus Orchestra of Leipzig (Deutsche Grammophon 410571-4), while "Mein Fruend is Mein" is sung by bass and boy soprano Allan Bergius with the Concentus Musicus of Vienna under the direction of Nicolaus Harnoncourt (Teldec 2635653). It seems to me that the gender of the soprano does affect the theology of the piece, though both renditions are equally beautiful.

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POLYMELODY IN BACH'S UNACCOMPANIED SUITES AND OTHER WORKS

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"Bach's melodies are apt to combine in counterpoint so as to form masses of harmony" (Donald Francis Tovey: *Das Wohltemperirtes Klavier*, Introduction). In this simple sentence written by one of the century's most perceptive scholars a style of writing is described which I would like to examine not only at close range and in historical perspective, but with regard to poetic phenomena in literature.

To my mind, Bach's capacity to express in a single melodic line a wealth of contrapuntal and harmonic thought is responsible for the richness of his sound. If a single melody (Ex. 1: subject of Kyrie 1 from the B minor Mass)* can be so full-sounding, it is small wonder that a 5-part fugue on this theme is monumentally sonorous. Or take another melody from the same work (Ex. 2: Agnus Dei, with bass) which is accompanied only by a simple bass, and perceive how richly harmony and counterpoint are woven into this melody: only in the last half-bar is a realization of the bass essential. In the baroque period, great reliance was placed on the vitality of the bass. A serious composer took much trouble to write a firm and interesting bass-line and also shared an inheritance of "ground basses" which came to him from the Renaissance. Everyone knew the *Romanesca*, the *Folia*, *Ruggiero*. Instrumental technique was expanded largely on the firm support they gave. A chosen bass was repeated an infinite number of times while the instrumentalist extemporized (or played what a composer had written) above the bass, to the limit of his virtuosity. The worst of these compositions are the work of amateurs and not even grammatical (one is surprised they were published) but the best are superb. In Example 3 I have superimposed on the chaconne ground (one of the great favourites from the past) a handful of Bach's Variations, to show the growth of power and sophistication as his extraordinary work proceeds.

*All examples are reproduced at the end of this paper.

After Bach's death and even during his lifetime a new style was being evolved, one which was sketchy and theatrical and which sought to reflect sudden changes of mood in its textures and rhythms. The old craftsmanship was outdated and there was a hiatus before a coherent new craftsmanship was ready to take its place. To serve the new style, the new fortepiano was the only single instrument which had potential; the weaving of counterpoint into a single melody served no purpose. A cult of "pure melody" emerged which was floated on an accompaniment so subtle and unpretentious that the debt owed to it by the melody need never be acknowledged.

During the nineteenth century there was an immense rise of virtuosity. Not only did soloists (Paganini, Chopin, Liszt) dazzle, but composers shone through their orchestral writing. If they were fortunate enough to have the virtuoso gifts of a conductor also (Weber, Berlioz), they received in person the plaudits for their brilliant orchestral writing. However, my only examples from the nineteenth century are of another type, the folksong melody which is so complete in its conception as to make harmonic support almost or totally superfluous (Ex. 4,5,6). The twentieth century is typically unable to build on or draw inspiration from the nineteenth, but it has responded vigorously to the re-discovery of the baroque style. Even before the first World War, the question was around "How did Bach write all that stuff for violin alone?" and great works appear which explore polymelody in contemporary harmony (Ex. 7,8,9). Also, it is amazing how well Bach's solo suites for violin or cello have stood up to contemporary interpretation, although modern scholarship clearly reveals how far this is from Bach's own expectations.

Historically, it is interesting to work backwards from Bach's perfect achievement in polymelody. The musical pioneers of the seventeenth century learned the meaning of many things, but a sense of proportion is as rare in their work as it is, for instance, in an ancient geographical map. Small wonder that they loved the security of a self-repeating bass! In the Renaissance there were treatises on purely melodic ornamentation; in the seventeenth century, composers' attention passes to the ground

bass. One of the best of these is by Christopher Simpson. (Correction! I should quote, Roger L'Estrange who wrote a preface to the 1667 edition: "I cannot properly call it the *best*, as (indeed) *the only* treatise I find extant upon this argument.") The author was a man whose inclination and talents enabled him to lead a peaceful life during a very troubled time of English history. *The Division-Viol, or, the Art of Playing extempore upon Ground* is in three parts:

I. Of the viol itself, with instruction to play upon it
II. The use of the Concord, or a Compendium of Descant
III. The Method of ordering Division to a Ground

and two editions (1659 and 1667); the second appeared with the text in English and Latin "that it might be understood in Foreign Parts" - an eloquent proof of its great popularity.

Excellent as are Parts I and II, I will pass over them because the concern of this article is with Part III. In Simpson's words: "A Ground, Subject, or Bass, (call it what you will) is prick'd down in two several papers; One for him to play the ground upon an Organ, Harpsichord, or whatever other instrument may be apt for the purpose; the other, for him that plays upon the viol, who, having the said ground before his eyes, as his Theme or Subject, plays such variety of Descant or Division in Concordance thereto, as his skill and present invention do then suggest unto him. In this manner of play, which is the perfection of the viol, or any other instrument, if it be exactly performed, a man may show the excellency both of his hand and invention, to the delight and admiration of those that hear him." He has already straightened the record with "Mr. Thomas Morley our excellent countryman," who "reckoned his concords from the tenor voice," whereas Simpson proposes "for our present purpose, the bass, as the groundwork or foundation upon which all work is to be erected" (cf. Morley: *Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music*, 1597). Simpson thereby states in plain language the basic philosophy of music for the next two or three hundred years. The style is didactic; Simpson almost apologizes for telling his readers how this playing may be done without that invention which is the gift of nature. But, as his eminent contemporary and friend John Jenkins said, "Simpson's great work will teach the World to play" (op. cit. Introduction).

Starting with a single bass note he shows (Ex. 10) how it may be decorated modestly, somewhat more fully, or lavishly - the original text has a plethora of additional examples; (Ex. 11) how one bass note may be led to the next one; and later, one ornamental pattern may serve as generator for the whole phrase (Ex. 12). Example 12 is particularly interesting because one can see how the act of composition takes over: although the writer or improvising performer sets out to use Ex. 10 #2 in every bar, commonsense, intention, boredom if you will, takes over and reshapes the repeated figure into a sensitive musical phrase of eight bars (the Ground). In Ex. 13, a Prelude from the collection which ends the book, Simpson can be seen using a flexible melodic line, guided by a constantly falling bass, in exactly the same technique J.S. Bach used sixty years later. There is no doubt that Simpson succeeded admirably in what he set out to do. He wrote one of the world's most exemplary texts. The basses he composed are quite distinguished. There is no doubt, however, that even the best of his invention is somewhat prosaic. Deprived of a recurring bass, as he is in his 12 Three-part Fantasias named after the months of the year, his harmonic progression becomes extremely cautious and his love of fireworks from each and every instrument does not make up for his failure to say anything beyond platitudes in the harmony.

It is interesting to look at Simpson's contemporaries. Throughout his long life, the beloved John Jenkins wrote profusely what viols love to play. Now and then he rose to unsurpassed heights of sonority and expression. Matthew Locke, who wrote for small groups (2-4) of viols, has a lovely sense of line, intimate, moody or playful, but is not much concerned with large scale design. A longer piece, such as a Fantasy, is for him sectional as in Purcell: one sees the ultimate fate of the madrigal style. A poem was divided into its clauses and each one was set separately; only the unity of a small poem helped the design of the music to hold together. Deprived of the unifying presence of a poem and possessed of a larger range of tone, pitch and technique than a vocal ensemble, the viol consort easily went overboard in its desire to sound the heights and depths, in the fervour of seventeenth century temperament (Ex. 14 a-b). William Lawes, the brother of Henry Lawes, was greatly loved both as man and musician. As a composer he had great facility combined with

a touch of carelessness. He had wonderful ideas for sonority, contrast and proportion and a sense of architectural magnificence; his flooding warmth is equal to Brahms - one of the few early composers of whom this can be said. Ex. 15a shows two bold themes from a Fantasy for 6 viols and Ex. 15b an imitative opening with some exquisite dissonance, also for viols.

These composers, Locke the poet, Lawes the architect, Simpson the teacher, were Purcell's musical inheritance, but his interests coupled with fashion and necessity made him turn to French and Italian models and so, unfortunately, to undermine the continuity of English development.

Only a long article could deal adequately with the growth which took place between Simpson's groundwork and J.S. Bach's Suites and Sonatas for violin or cello alone, written at Cöthen about 1720. It would be a history of technical expansion in string playing and of growing security and daring in the use of harmony. It would leave England and travel from France to Italy and so north to Germany. It would involve small discoveries made by a large number of otherwise undistinguished composers; and contemplating the task, I am tempted to quote John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*:

> *Christian*: Why, are you weary with this discourse?
> *Hopeful*: No verily, but that I would know where we are.

The music of Johann Sebastian Bach can be heard on many different levels. At first, there is the rhythmic drive and the sense of an argument powerfully driven home. Then there are unforgettable turns of phrase and amazing harmonies. It seems his music reaches listeners on many levels; the more one can hear, the more there is to hear. This is true whether the structure is immensely complex, involving (as in the first chorus of the St. Matthew Passion) double choir, two orchestras, and ripieno chorus singing a chorale melody in a different key to the work as a whole, or when he reduces his imaginative powers to concentrate them all in the voice of a single violin or cello. Then, as his musical essence is reduced, his language moves from the explicable to the implicit. Both performer and listener must

lend more understanding to their task. Behind the visual .pa simplicity of this music, lies the implicit world of harmony and counterpoint, enriching the sound.

When a poet writes he enriches the sound with metaphor. Think of John Donne, "No man is an island," or Shakespeare's King Lear, in the storm

> You sulph'rous and thought-executing fires,
> Vaunt-couriers of oak-cleaving thunderbolts
> Singe my white head.

There are many similarities between music and poetic language. Music is set in time. So are words, coming one after the other in an order which differs from one language to another, but which has to be known to both speaker and listener before the language can be understood. Musical sounds are orderly but they have (in comparison with speech) the very enviable property of being able to group together in a variety of ways and so he heard simultaneously. Far from becoming unintelligible as words would be, the musical meaning is enhanced by these clusters or chords. All art defines its own boundaries and exists within them. If words are set to music they may be expected to help define the boundaries, but music has boundaries of its own and must define them also. (Herein lies the age-old problem of operatic libretti.)

Handel was aware of the power of great words. From Milton's *Samson Agonistes* he drew his own oratorio *Samson*; from Milton also he set "L'Allegro"; and many other texts, including the *Messiah*, come indirectly from the Bible. (Handel's principal literary associates were Newburgh Hamilton and Charles Jennens.) Before the late nineteenth century no composer ever thought of setting an entire epic or dramatic poem to music. Such a poem has too many words and not enough contrast. As Winton Dean expresses it (*Handel's Dramatic Oratorios and Masques*): "What Handel required from his words was simple concrete imagery and a clear expression of feeling." A great deal of pruning and rearranging had to be done, not all of which can be painless to a lover of poetry. To my mind, the climax of Milton's Samson's long monologue is "O Dark, dark, dark amidst the blaze of noon" but Handel's corresponding Samson aria opens with "Total Eclipse!

no sun, no moon" and there is no contrast to correspond to the "blaze of noon"; all in this unforgettable aria is deeply depressed. As in all baroque musical style, contrast, change of mood, can only come in the next movement which is a chorus. At the lines "O first created beam! and thou great work: Let there be Light!" there is an audible blaze of sound. Later in the same movement "dark" returns to stalk through the score in a closely imitative passage, the text of which does not come from this part of Milton's poem. Musical form in the eighteenth century interfered between a composer and his poet. Much later the barriers (which had been non-existent in the early seventeenth century) were removed, but only at the expense of coherent form in the music. Which is to say that music accompanies words only with difficulty, under conditions where the two arts can agree about their joint boundaries. As Paul Valéry (*Pièces sur l'Art*) writes: "C'est un sujet scabreux que celui-là. Tout ce qui touche à la poésie est difficile. Tous ceux qui s'en mêlent sont d'une exquise irritabilité." ("It's a tough subject. Everything to do with poetry is difficult. Everyone who is involved in it is exquisitely irritable.")

Poetry has rhythm and exists in time: so does music. Music has space and so does poetry, but less easily: music's space is enlarged by range of pitch and simultaneously sounding notes. Both have accepted syntax and battle with it to create tension and reverberant meanings and associations. Both have meaning though music's meaning is less problematic because it is abstract and denotes nothing: it is a pattern which must be developed and fulfilled. Music on its own has to create and define its own boundaries. The poet is dependent on words. Through this maze the poet leads his thought, in his own rhythm, until both the idea conveyed by the words and the rhythm have fulfilled their purpose and the poem can end. A musical design is easier to fulfil because the language is abstract and is accepted as it is without the burden of associations; in addition, a balance is easier to reach on what might be called architectural terms, because in music simple repetition is welcome as it never can be when words are the medium. Metaphor in poetic language brings disparate thoughts together in a momentary welding which (to use a vivid modern example) "blows the mind." Music's metaphor lies in the reduction of harmony and counterpoint into a single line.

Sometimes it is easy to follow (Ex. 16 a-b). At other times complex, making a host of promises for future clarification (Ex. 16 and 17) it sets up an argument in the mind of the hearer extremely similar to that in the mind which is balancing Shakespeare's words "sulph'rous," "thought-executing," "vaunt-couriers" as it waits for the resolution, "which singe my white head." Harmony and counterpoint together, bound by rhythm, make the plot of a piece - unique to this piece - and bring it in a sort of arc, up and eventually down to its fulfilment and conclusion.

In Example 18, this most extraordinary of Sarabandes by J.S. Bach, an apparently single line melody is totally taken over by harmony and counterpoint yielding a texture so loaded with implications and expectations and eventual fulfilments that the listener is grateful for the simplicity of its rhythmic structure. If one's memory for groups of pitches were receptive enough, this would be one of Bach's most dissonant creations, resolving into unity only at a small number of cadences. In Ex. 18 I have attempted some analysis of this Sarabande, but I certainly will not try to elucidate its mystery. What I hope to do is to draw your ears' attention to some of the stabilizing and also some of the most destabilizing features which combine to make it the intense experience it is. This piece is the story of its first five notes. The same can be said of the tranquil opening bar of the first suite (Ex. 19) which is used, varied and abandoned and used again in this prelude with the most consummate skill and ease. The same seems to me to be true of poems: in the first line one can tell how immense, or how tiny, they are destined to be. The composer's or poet's skill lies in uncovering the masterpiece to which his original thought can give rise.

Notes on the Sarabande in C minor from the Fifth Suite for Cello alone.

No typical ($\frac{3}{4}$ ♩𝆏) rhythm. No double stops.
Bass is played on the down-beat (bars 5,6,8; 13,14,16,20).
Bass is delayed till the third beat (bars 1,2,3,4;7;9,10,11,12; 17,18,19).

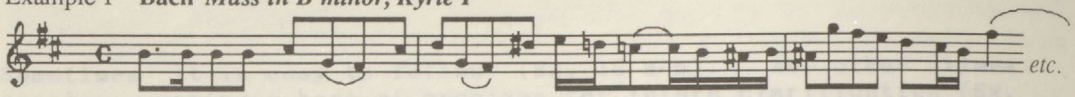
Bass never occurs on the second beat.
Harmonic analysis is extremely problematical (bars 1,2;9,10; 14,15).
Semitone appoggiatura, mainly upward-resolving, is typical of the melody.
A single appoggiatura poses no problem but where two coalesce, in a group of 4 eighth notes, analysis is often delicate.
The following 4-note groups occur:
(HN-harmony note; A-appogiatura; NN-double neighbour).

a. HN Ahn A Hn (bars 1,2,3,6, no tones; 9,10,13,14,17,18,20).
b. A HN A HN (bars 4,7,12,19 - all making cadences).
c. HN N N HN (Bars 5,14,15,16).

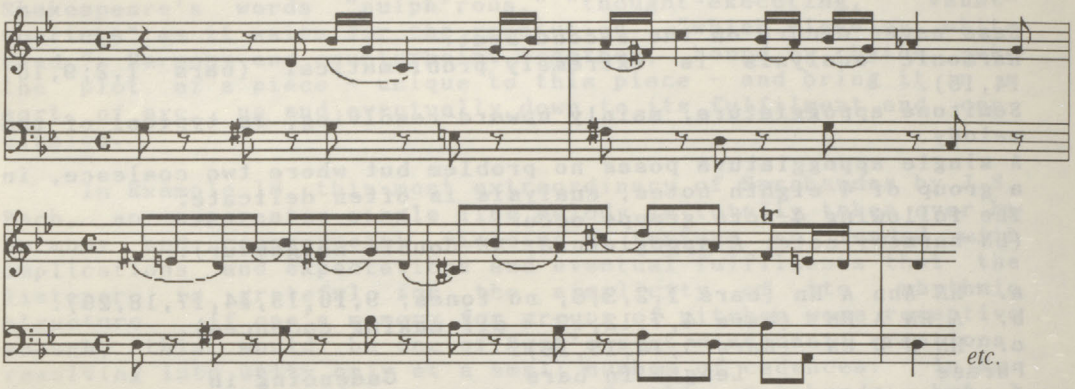
Phrase	Length in bars	Cadencing in
1	4	c minor
	repeated	
2	4	e flat major
3	4	f minor
	repeated	
4	8	c minor

Total range is slightly more than 2 octaves, deployed with the most freedom in the last and longest phrase.
The quasi-arpeggios curve up or down and make their clearest statements where the bass-note is heard on the downbeat.

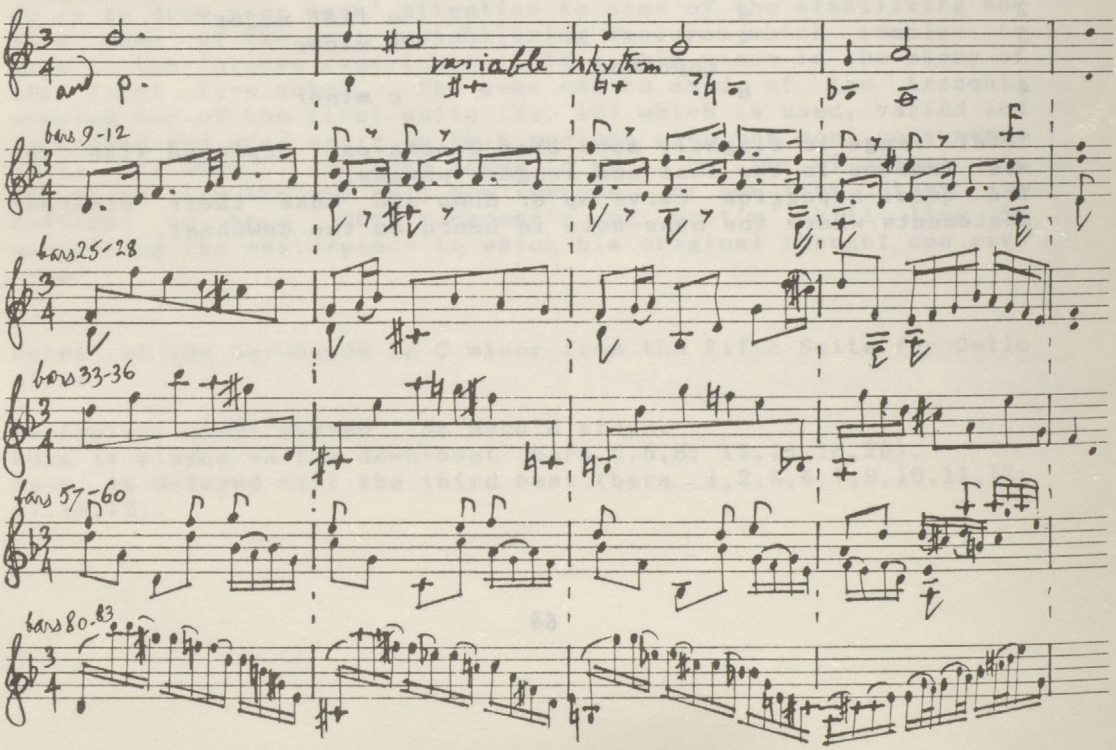
Example 1 **Bach** *Mass in B minor, Kyrie I*



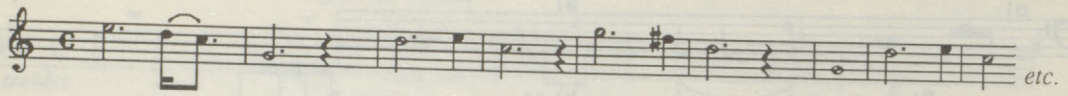
Example 2 **Bach** *Mass in B minor Agnus Dei*



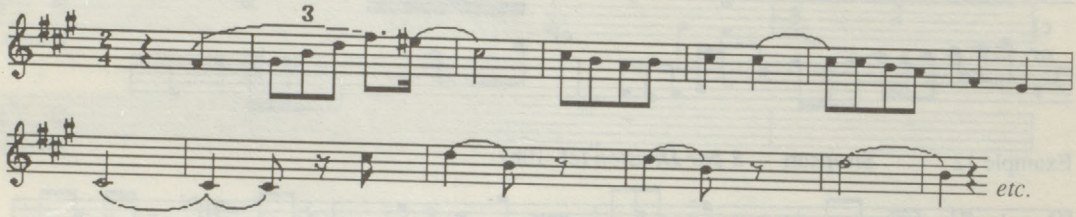
Example 3 ***Chaconne*** and some **Bach** violin "divisions"



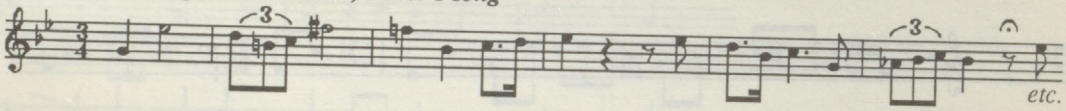
Example 4 **Brahms** ***First Symphony, Finale***



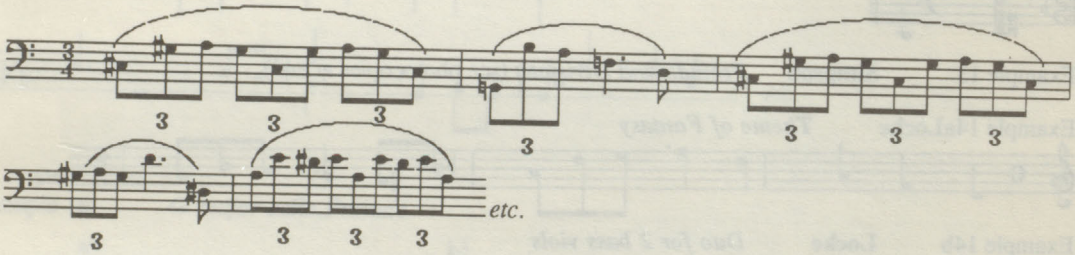
Example 5 **Verdi** ***Otello, Willow Song***



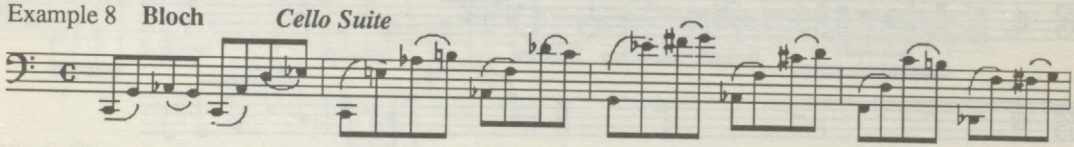
Example 6 **Wagner** ***Tristan, Sailor's song***



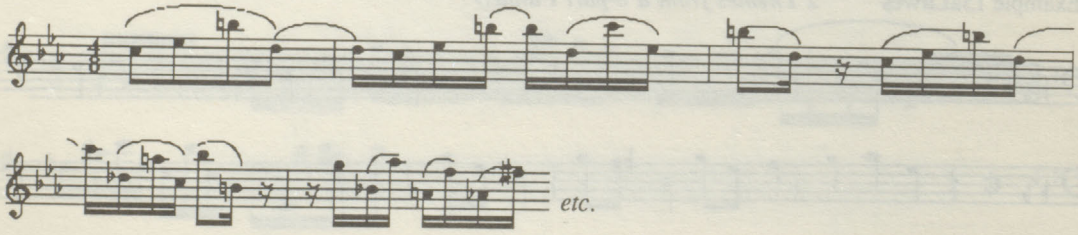
Example 7 **Hindemith** ***Cello Sonata, op. 25***



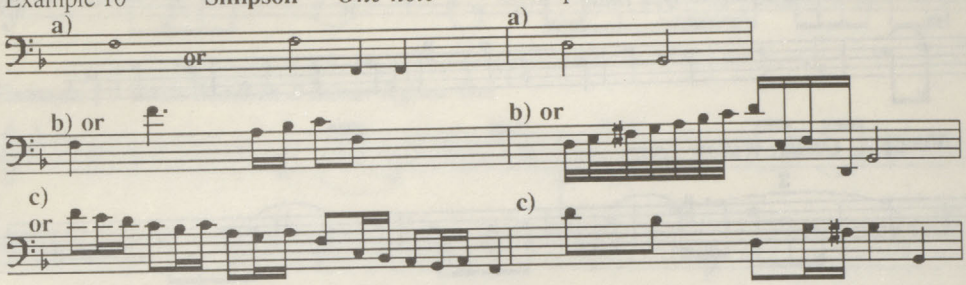
Example 8 **Bloch** ***Cello Suite***



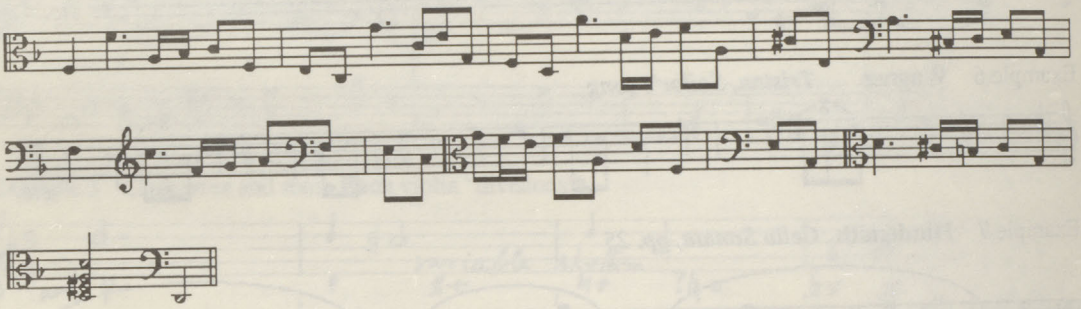
Example 9 **Stravinsky** ***Symphony of Psalms***



Example 10 **Simpson** ***One note*** Example 11 ***One note to another***

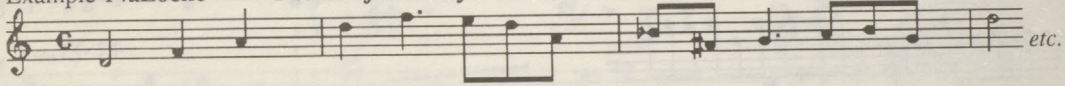


Example 12 **Simpson** ***8 bar Division*** (cf. 10b)

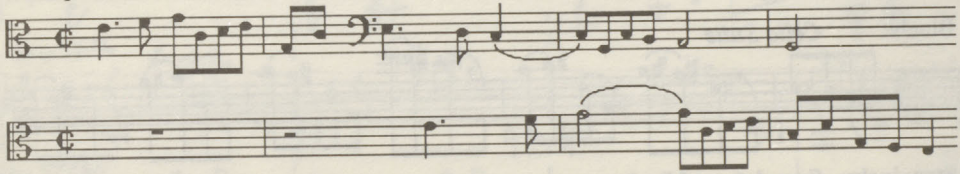


Example 13 **Simpson** ***Preludes and Divisions*** (see photocopies at end)

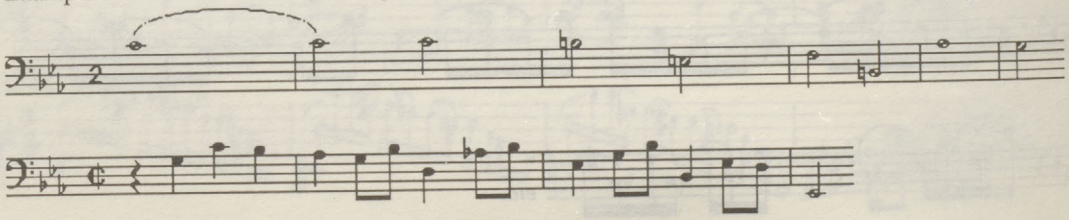
Example 14a **Locke** ***Theme of Fantasy***



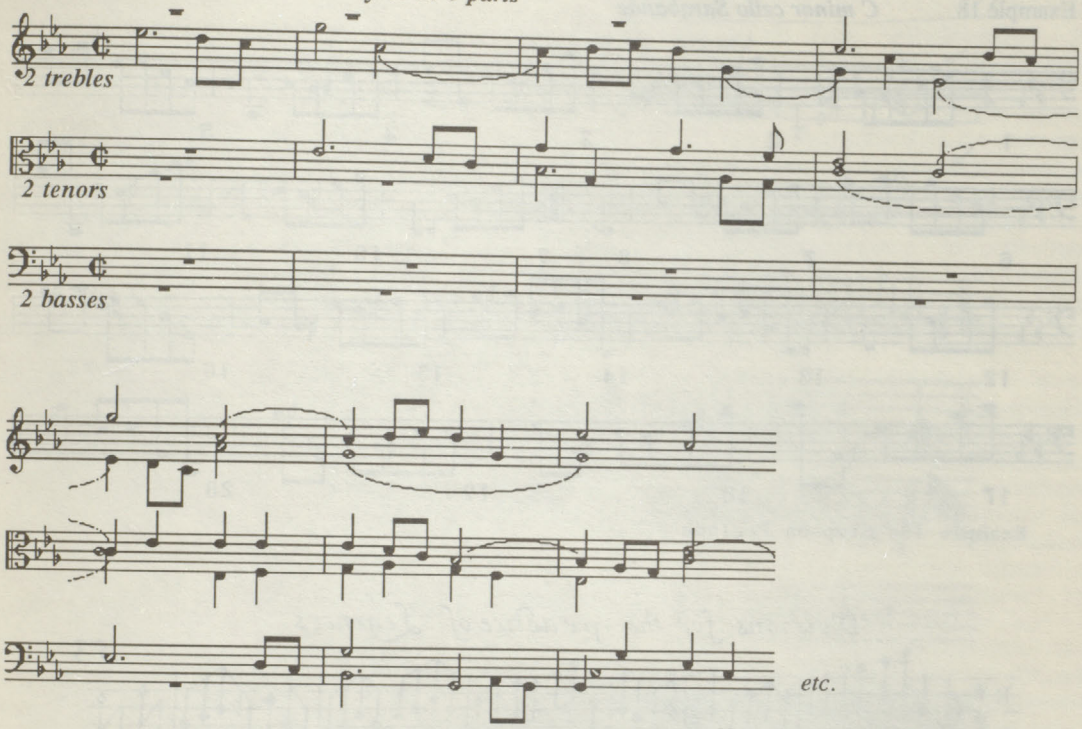
Example 14b **Locke** ***Duo for 2 bass viols***



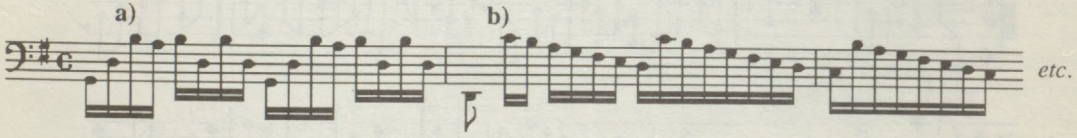
Example 15a **Lawes** ***2 Themes from a 6-part Fantasy***



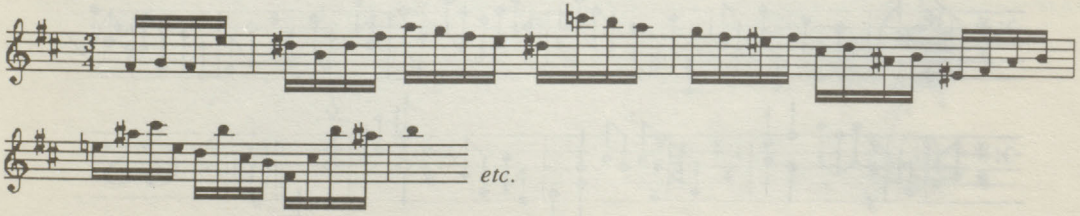
Example 15b **Lawes** ***Ayres in 6 parts***



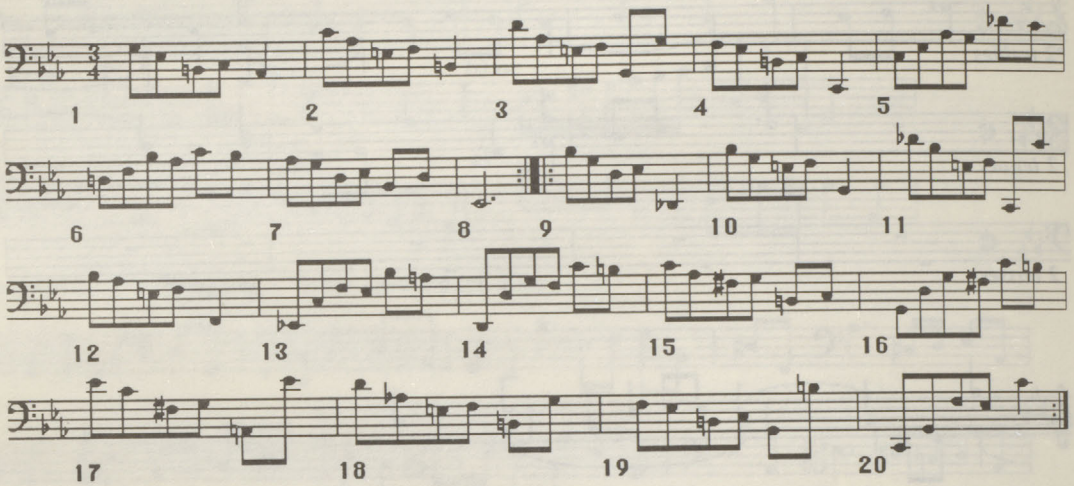
Example 16 ***G major cello Prelude***



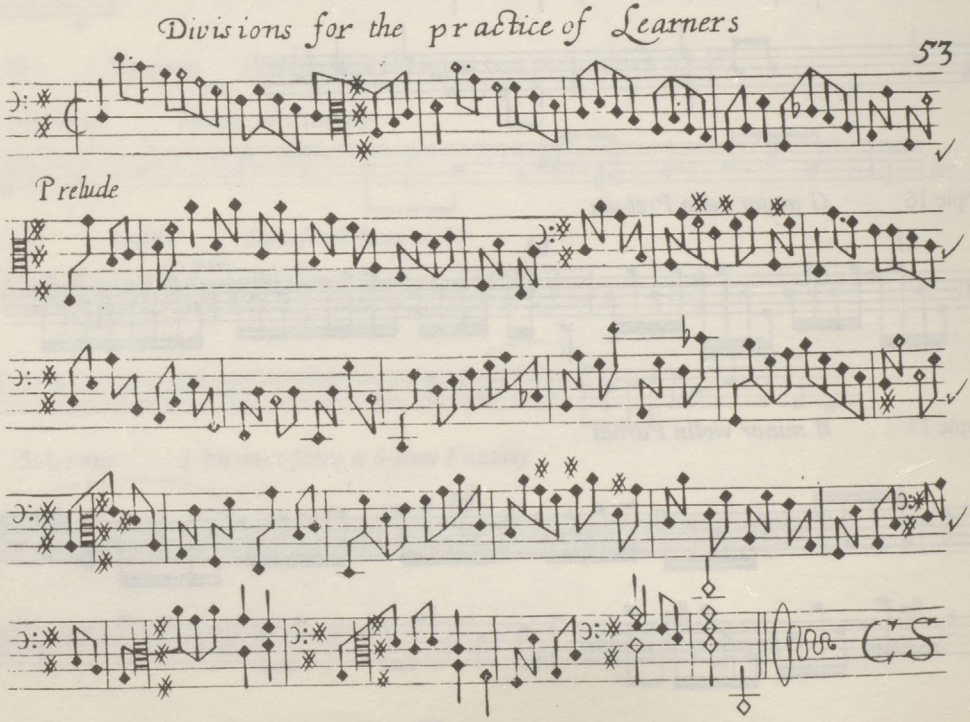
Example 17 ***B minor violin Partita***



Example 18 ***C minor cello Sarabande***

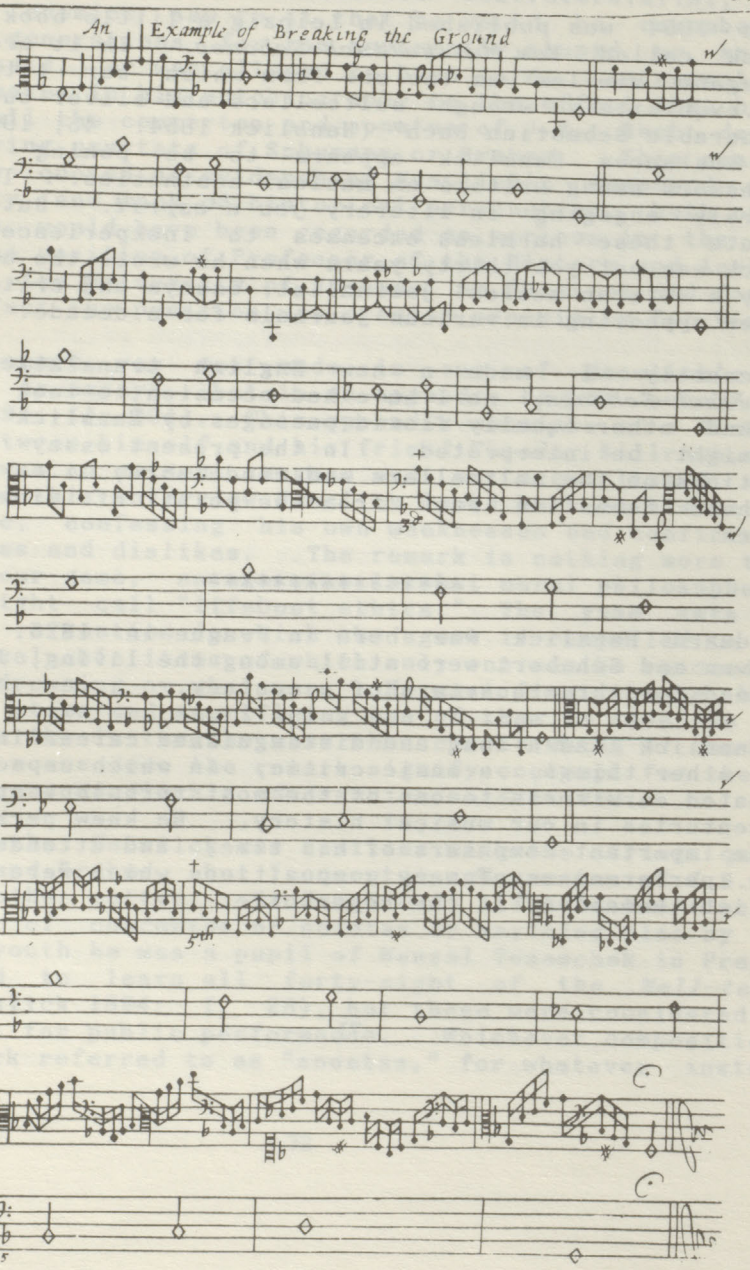


Example 13a Simpson Prelude



Example 13b Simpson Divisions

An Example of Breaking the Ground



SALTCELLARS AND CANDELABRA: HANSLICK ON BACH

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University of Toronto

In 1854 was published in Leipzig a little book by Eduard Hanslick called *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen.* In it are many such extravagant similes as the one from which our title derives: "the...exquisitely wrought saltcellars and silver caldelabra of the venerable Sebastian Bach" (Hanslick 1854: 46; 1986: 40). In some instances Hanslick appears to be poking fun at his predecessors among writers on musical aesthetics. In others he is merely engaging in literary *jeu d'esprit.* But we cannot attribute these harmless excesses to inexperience: although Hanslick was not yet thirty years when he wrote the book, he was already a veteran musical journalist; essays and critiques by him had been appearing in various journals for a decade.

Recently I made a new English translation of *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen*, so I have had occasion to look carefully at this and other equally florid passages by Hanslick to see how they might be interpreted. In the present essay I offer my reflections on the saltcellars and candelabra, i.e. on the music of Johann Sebastian Bach from the point of view of Eduard Hanslick.

****

Eduard Hanslick was born in Prague in 1825. That year Beethoven and Schubert were still among the living, J.S. Bach had been dead for three-quarters of a century.

Hanslick had a long and distinguished career in Vienna as, among other things, a music critic, in which capacity he was a fascinated earwitness to one of the most turbulent and productive half-centuries in our musical history. He knew personally most of the important composers of his time, and attended the first public performances of many compositions which were destined to establish themselves in the repertoire.

He was a vigorous and effective controversialist, so of course his enemies saw to it that he would be remembered by subsequent generations for the apparently stupid or malicious things he said, or was alleged to have said. An example is a remark he makes in his autobiography to the effect that he would rather see all the concertos and sonatas of J.S. Bach destroyed than the string quartets of Schumann or Brahms. This remark has been widely quoted as evidence of Hanslick's supposed musical insensitivity and lack of historical perspective, both of which deficiencies would have been regarded as serious in the person who held the position of Professor of the History and Aesthetics of Music at the University of Vienna, as Hanslick did for many years. In fact the position was created especially for him.

The remark was not made in one of Hanslick's many feuilletons or essays, but in an appendix to his autobiography (Hanslick 1894: II, 304). This appendix consists of a fictitious interview between himself and his friend Theodor Billroth, who in real life was an eminent surgeon and an accomplished musical amateur. In this interview Hanslick looks back on his career as music critic, confessing his own weaknesses and confiding his musical likes and dislikes. The remark is nothing more than a little parlour game, an exercise in what moral philosophers of our time might call "lifeboat ethics." The game sets up a hypothetical situation in which the agent is compelled to choose between two valuable items of which only one can be rescued from burning or drowning or whatever. He must first choose between losing both items and sacrificing one of them to save the other. If he chooses the latter, he must then choose which of the two to save. By no means does the remark signify contempt for the music of J.S. Bach, as Hanslick's adversaries said it did.

We know that Hanslick was familiar with the string quartets of Schumann and Brahms, but "concertos and sonatas of J.S. Bach" are quite another matter. In Hanslick's lifetime there were few performances of concertos or sonatas or anything else by Bach. When in his youth he was a pupil of Wenzel Tomaschek in Prague he was required to learn all forty-eight of the *Well-tempered Klavier* (Hanslick 1894: I, 28), but these were considered study pieces, not for public performance. Whichever compositions of Bach Hanslick referred to as "sonatas," for whatever instrument

or combination of instruments, they were played (if at all) not in the concert halls but at home or in the conservatories. Exceptions are rare: in his history of concert life in Vienna Hanslick mentions a performance in 1861 by Joseph Joachim of a few pieces from Bach's violin sonatas (Hanslick 1870: 238); of concertos by Bach he mentions a performance in the concert season 1852-1853 of the "Triple concerto" (presumably BMW 1044 for flute, violin, harpsichord and orchestra) (Hanslick 1870: 41), but not a single concerto by Bach in the familiar sense of a work for one solo instrument with orchestra. As professor of music he no doubt studied the many recent editions of works by Bach, most of them from Germany, but in making his remark he could not have expected many of his readers to be familiar with these. It cannot be overemphasized that to Hanslick and his contemporaries the music of J.S. Bach was not standard fare, at least by comparison with the music of Schumann and Brahms.

Felix Mendelssohn's famous performance of the *St. Matthew Passion*, the first since Bach's death, took place in Berlin in 1829, thus inaugurating what has come to be known as the "Bach Revival." The first public performance of the same work in Vienna was not until thirty-three years later, 1862; Hanslick was there and wrote a review of the event. Vienna has always been slow to accept any music not originating within its own walls, so the Bach Revival was a long time making its way to that city. Nobody in the nineteenth century, in Berlin or Vienna or anywhere else except perhaps Leipzig, had much of an idea of the performance tradition within which Bach composed. His choral works, for example, were usually presented in Hanslick's time (and subsequently) by excessively large choruses; and if there was accompaniment, it was by an orchestra of symphonic proportions with the score modified accordingly. Bach's accompanied solo and obbligato vocal pieces were usually performed without keyboard in the continuo, an omission which resulted in a thinness of texture about which Hanslick and other critics were quick to complain, erroneously blaming this effect on the composer.

We should keep all these circumstances in mind as we examine a few of Hanslick's critical writings about music by J.S. Bach. Compared to his writings about other composers, including some

whose names are all but unknown to most of us, Hanslick's writings about Bach are few in number and seem to us equivocal and ill-informed. I hope in the present essay to show that they could hardly have been otherwise; I believe that Hanslick reported honestly on the music of Bach as he heard it, but with a number of misconceptions common among music lovers of his time.

In 1860, two years before the first performance in Vienna of the *St. Matthew Passion*, there was a performance in that city of J.S. Bach's motet *Sing to the Lord a new song* (*Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied*). The chorus was the Vienna *Singakademie*, and the programme included a work for unaccompanied chorus by Palestrina and one by Lotti. The motet is composed for two four-part choruses, with very intricate contrapuntal texture in the two outside movements. I quote from Hanslick's review of this performance hoping the reader will try to imagine what this music must have sounded like with a chorus of perhaps two hundred singers, mostly volunteers, with no accompanying instruments, in particular with no 16-foot line in the bass to sort out the voice-leading.

> The effect of this motet is unrelated to the extraordinary effort the *Singakademie* had to put into it. The choir went bravely into action but soon became noticeably irresolute. As if life itself depended on it, they struggled through the first section all the way to the chorale, a resting place for which everyone longed, singers and hearers alike, there to replenish their exhausted air supply for the breathtakingly long solfeggios of the concluding section. Nobody can hold the singers responsible for the almost agonizing effect the motet produced in the first and last of its three parts; the best singers in the world would fall short in this assignment. To bring off such an unvocal and, what is worse, unchoral piece with precision would require musical singing machines of immense capacity. Upon studying this score we become lost in admiration for this sublimely conceived, ingeniously constructed edifice. Perhaps we could hear it to advantage in an arrangement just for organ and strings, but admiration eludes us if we have to look

> at a large number of singers panting their way up and down those towering contrapuntal ladders. Neither the poetical nor the musical point of these exertions becomes evident to the listener, because the choral parts are so instrumental rather than vocal in their figuration that it is impossible to follow the basic musical ideas, or even to make out a word of the text (Hanslick 1870: 209-210).

Towards an understanding of these astonishing comments I shall try to sketch some of the background.

This performance of *Sing to the Lord a new song* took place in 1860 when the reviewer was in his mid-thirties; it was perhaps only the second or third performance Hanslick had attended by that time of any choral work by J.S. Bach. As already mentioned, it occurred two years before the first public performance in Vienna of the *St. Matthew Passion*. Hanslick tells us that until the early 1860's "Sebastian Bach and all of German protestant church music were for Vienna still an unknown territory" (Hanslick 1869; 393), although he briefly mentions a performance of Bach's Cantata No. 106, *Gottes Zeit* during the concert season 1853-1854 (Hanslick 1870: 63). At any rate the performance of a motet by Bach for double chorus in 1860 would have been a novel and noteworthy event for which everyone was ill-prepared: singers, audience, and reviewers. Much of what rings false to us in Hanslick's review can be attributed to this circumstance. The difficulties he attributed to the manner in which the motet was composed were due rather to the inability of any large choral group to perform extremely florid counterpoint for many voices with the clarity it requires, hence his complaint that "it is impossible to follow the basic musical ideas."

At that time in Vienna, according to Hanslick, only two works from the oratorio repertoire were regularly to be heard in the concert halls, namely *The Creation* and *The Seasons* by Haydn (Hanslick 1870: 3-6). "Give us, at long last, some Bach and Handel!" he pleaded in the literary supplement to the *Wiener Zeitung* in 1854 (Hanslick 1870: 65). The expectations of audiences and performers alike were conditioned by the prevailing manner of performing Haydn's oratorios, a manner not in all

respects suitable for the performance of contrapuntal music by J.S. Bach. Prague, when Hanslick was growing up there, was musically more receptive and in some ways more advanced than Vienna, so the young Eduard Hanslick heard a greater variety of oratorios and other choral works than he would have done if he had been living in the latter city. At the age of nineteen he began his career as music critic by writing reviews for a journal named *Ost und West* in Prague. In December 1844 appeared his review of a performance of *The Fall of Babylon*, an oratorio in the grand manner by Ludwig Spohr. It was performed by a huge crowd of musicians including the *Tonkünstlergesellschaft*, the Prague Opera Chorus, the *Cäcilienverein*, the *Sophienakademie*, and the orchestra of the Prague Opera, a total of more than three hundred performers (Hanslick 1844: 836-37; 841-42). Hanslick's delight in the effect of this musical extravaganza was equalled a few weeks later when the same contingent was paraded to give Handel's *Samson* (Hanslick 1845: 178-79). The all-purpose monster choir survived well into the twentieth century in many countries, as needs hardly be said. Some readers may know at first hand what it was like to struggle panting up and down those contrapuntal ladders along with forty or fifty volunteer comrades in the same choral section, or what it was like as listeners trying to follow the inner voices of the music.

Hanslick's review of *Sing to the Lord a new song* continues:

> From the deeply felt but confused Gothic architecture of Bach's motet we entered Palestrina's "Stabat Mater" and Lotti's "Crucifixus" as one might enter a spacious Roman temple, upon whose clear-cut, smoothly articulated surfaces the unimpeded sunlight plays (Hanslick 1870: 210).

By many people of Hanslick's time the word *Gothic* was used ambiguously. In one sense it referred to those old churches left over from the Dark Ages, barbaric in design with sincere but naive profusion of detail both structural and ornamental. The thing to do with these edifices was to plaster them over, to "Barockize" them. So when Hanslick here compares Bach's motet to a Gothic structure, he does not intend to pay it a compliment; in his review the motet comes off second best to compositions by

Palestrina and Lotti which he compares to ancient Roman temples. On the other hand, two years later Hanslick wrote with approval that the *St. Matthew Passion* by Bach is like a Gothic cathedral, and that the contrapuntal double chorus with which it opens is like a majestic Gothic portal (Hanslick 1870: 244); this is clearly intended to be high praise.

Architectural similes can also be found in Hanslick's *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen*. For example, we are told that when a trained musician hears the first notes of an overture by Beethoven or Mendelssohn, he knows right away that he is standing at the gates of a palace full of treasures; but when it is an overture by Verdi or Rossini the musician knows that he is entering a sleazy tavern (Hanslick 1986: 82).

The language is extravagant in these similes, but the intent is not entirely figurative. According to Hanslick in *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen*, music is a constructive art, closer to sculpture and architecture than to the literary arts. Composing music is "a continuous shaping, a modelling in tonal relations" (Hanslick 1986: 45). For an explanation of this we turn to Hanslick's account of how a musical artwork comes into being.

He says that there are two stages in the process of composition. In the first stage a musical theme (motive) presents itself in the composer's imagination; in the second he elaborates it, develops it into the completed artwork. The theme is for Hanslick the ultimate and irreducible unit of musical creation. It is not itself constructed, and it cannot be called into being; its advent is spontaneous and wholly inexplicable. It coalesces like a crystal in the composer's imagination; by virtue of his taste and training he at once recognizes its possibilities for elaboration, and is ready to proceed with the second stage in the process, the constructive (i.e. architectonic) stage of combining, inverting, modulating, augmenting and diminishing (Hanslick 1986: 32, 35, 81). Hanslick describes the second stage:

> Initially the composer has only a vague notion of the outlines of a composition. It is chiselled, from the individual beats up to the distinctive shape of the

> completed work....This labour, proceeding step by step as it does, is so deliberate and complex that nobody can be expected to comprehend it who has not so much as tried his hand at it. Not just fugal or contrapuntal movements, in which in measured fashion we sustain note against note, but also the most smoothly flowing rondo and the most melodious aria demand in minutest detail a "working out" (as the saying so aptly goes). The composer's activity is in its own way plastic, and comparable to the visual artist's (Hanslick 1986: 46).

This brings us to our saltcellars and candelabra, since in Hanslick's text these are similes for the "architectonic" or "plastic" aspect of music as above described. The similes appear at a point in *Vom Musicalisch-Schönen* at which Hanslick, having set forth his doctrine of the musically beautiful, warns us against supposing that the architectonic aspect is the whole of music, or a condition to which all music must aspire.

> The rigid grandeur of superimposed towering figurations, the elaborate entwining of many voices of which none is free and independent because all of them are--these have their own ageless rightness. Yet those marvellously sombre vocal pyramids of the old Italians and Netherlanders are just one small part of the realm of the musically beautiful, just as are the many exquisitely wrought saltcellars and silver candelabra of the venerable Sebastian Bach (Hanslick 1986: 40).

There they are, the saltcellars and candelabra of Bach compared with the pyramids of Palestrina and Lassus. It was a commonplace of historical music criticism in the nineteenth century that Bach's later choral works were descended from the choral polyphony of the late sixteenth century, quaint masterworks in an obsolete and fussy style, primarily *architectonic* in the sense that they display intricate relations of their structural components and groups to each other and to the whole. This is Hanslick's sense of the word in the present context.

It would be reasonable to suppose that Hanslick meant to include the six motets of Bach among the saltcellars and candelabra, but with Hanslick nothing ever works out so neatly. The motets are models of "superimposed towering figurations, the elaborate entwining of many voices of which none is free and independent because all of them are." But they seem to be excluded by the following remarkable circumstance.

For forty years the saltcellars and candelabra stood unchanged through seven revisions in Hanslick's text. Then in 1896 for the ninth edition of *Vom Musicalisch-Schönen* the passage was altered. "The ... exquisitely wrought saltcellars and silver candelabra of the venerable Sebastian Bach" became "The exquisitely wrought forms in the suites and concertos of Sebastian Bach" (Hanslick 1896: 105). No longer is poor Bach venerable, but his music remains predominantly architectonic, as the locution "exquisitely wrought forms" suggests.

If this alteration was an attempt to clarify the text it failed; and we may doubt that Hanslick, when he was writing his original version back in the 1850s, was thinking of Bach's suites and concertos. Around that time hardly anyone knew enough about suites or concertos by Bach to write about them, figuratively or otherwise. Hanslick reports briefly on a performance during the concert season 1852-53 of the Triple Concerto by Bach (presumably BMW 1044 for flute, violin, harpsichord, and orchestra), which had been published in 1848; he wrote that this work "opened up to us the whole realm of an earlier epoch of virtuosity," and in the same sentence mentioned Mozart's Sinfonia concertante for violin, viola and orchestra K. 364 as "one of the most brilliant works of this subtlest of latter-day contrapuntalists," shrewdly implying that the Triple Concerto may be regarded as a precursor of the Sinfonia concertante.

On separate occasions in 1861 in Vienna were performed a "concerto" (in this case a concerto grosso) by J.S. Bach, and a suite. The suite was the earlier of the two in D major for orchestra; the "concerto" (as Hanslick calls it in his review, as indeed he called Mozart's Sinfonia concertante), was the *Third Brandenburg*. From the tone of his reviews it is hard to avoid the impression that Hanslick was reporting on his own first

hearing of these works. I quote from his review of the suite in D:

> The two main items were an orchestral suite in D major by Sebastian Bach and Schumann's Symphony in B-flat major. Certainly a very interesting juxtaposition of two artistic epochs which were so fundamentally different. Orchestral composition of the eighteenth and of the nineteenth centuries. The symphony in the budding stage (how else may we regard the orchestral suite?) and the symphony in its fullest flowering.
>
> Bach's characteristic and delightful suites are among those works of the old masters which a modern audience can take in with unaffected ease. A vigorous, youthful spirit is at work in these tightly wrought forms (which were previously thought to be moribund). The contrapuntal skill delights the expert ear without perplexing or tiring it; and, finally, colourful contrasts like the melting tenderness of the "Air" and the comical agility of the dance movements mutually enhance their effect (Hanslick 1870: 229).

From Hanslick's review of the *Third Brandenburg*:

> Of the greatest interest was a concerto for stringed instruments by Sebastian Bach. It is the third of the six....An extraordinarily vigorous, healthy impulse, though perhaps a bit inexorable, moves in these terse themes, which without contrast, indeed without the slightest interruption and yet lavishly developed, unfold before us. The main fascination is, of course, in the elaborate voice-leading, which is full of animation. For lack of contrast with wind instruments there is virtually no true orchestral effect, yet the way the theme in the first movement is thrown from the violins to the violas and cellos is altogether delightful (Hanslick 1870: 227-228).

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In Hanslick's collected writings are mentioned very few compositions by J.S. Bach apart from the examples we have been discussing. They include a handful of sacred choral works and of solo pieces, some for violin, some for piano, some for voice. The music of Bach was not fully accepted into the standard repertoire until the second half of the twentieth century; to Bach's own contemporaries as well as to Hanslick's this music seemed old-fashioned in ways it does not to us. Hanslick says that the motet *Sing to the Lord a new song* is "Gothic" in the pejorative sense, as we have seen; that the orchestral suites of Bach are merely an early stage in the development of the romantic symphony, rather than (as we might say) the culmination of quite another line of historical development.

Hanslick says that the motet is "sublimely conceived," and that "a vigorous spirit" is at work in both the Suite in D and the *Third Brandenburg*: he does not elucidate, so we can take these expressions as meaning pretty well anything we like.

The motet is "ingeniously constructed"; the archaic forms of the suite are "tightly wrought"; the themes of the *Brandenburg* are "lavishly developed": there can be no doubt concerning what Hanslick means here. He is referring to the second stage in the creative act of the composer as described in *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen* and outlined above, the constructive, architectonic stage, and he is saying that J.S. Bach is a consummate structural technician in musical sounds. With this many of his contemporaries would have agreed. But he is saying implicitly that Bach is nothing more than that, and with this also his contemporaries would have been in agreement. He is saying that in Bach's music an unidentified something is missing for which no amount of technical virtuosity on the composer's part can compensate. Music, according to Hanslick, is more than *architectonic* or *symmetry* (the two words are interchangeable in Hanslick's vocabulary). Following immediately after Hanslick's remark about Bach's saltcellars and candelabra are these lines:

> Many aestheticians consider that musical enjoyment can be adequately explained in terms of regularity and symmetry. But no beauty, least of all musical beauty, has ever consisted in these. The most insipid theme

can be constructed with perfect symmetry. *Symmetry* is merely a relational concept; it leaves open the question: What is it, then, that appears symmetrical? Orderly structure may be detected among the trivial, shabby fragments of even the most pathetic compositions (Hanslick 1986: 40).

Elsewhere in *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen* Hanslick says:

> In no way is the specifically musically beautiful to be understood as mere acoustical beauty or as symmetry of proportion...(Hanslick 1986: 30).

Of course Hanslick does not say that Bach's music is insipid, trivial, shabby, pathetic, unbeautiful. But he implies that in this music the architectonic aspect predominates almost to the exclusion of anything else including intelligibility; this at least is a possible interpretation of his comments on *Sing to the Lord a new song* and his remark about the inexorable impulse in the *Third Brandenburg*. There is unresolved tension here: on the one hand Hanslick's apparent admiration for Bach's technical virtuosity, a characteristic Hanslick describes with considerable precision; on the other hand his cautious acknowledgment of whatever it is in Bach's music he is trying to describe by means of such vague terms as "sublimely conceived" and "vigorous spirit." He is aware of a greatness which transcends technical perfection, but has no name for it. In this he is not alone among commentators on music generally, and on the music of J.S. Bach in particular.

I think it would be an impertinence for me to try to formulate it on Hanslick's behalf. Instead I shall close with a quotation from an essay on Brahms first published by Hanslick in 1862:

> Far surpassed by Schumann in wealth and beauty of melodic invention, Brahms frequently equals him in abundance of contrapuntal structure. Herein lies Brahms's greatest strength; the ingenious modernization of canon and fugue he derives from Schumann. But the common source from which both draw is Sebastian Bach (Hanslick 1870: 256).

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BACH-STOKOWSKI: A MATTER OF APPLIED RELIGION IN MUSICAL TRANSCRIPTIONS?

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In April 1943 a remarkable event took place on the Metropolitan Opera Stage in New York City. Its title was: "Miracle Play Based on Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* Music." The choreography was designed by Georges Balanchine, and among the performers was the well-known movie actress Lilian Gish in the role of Mary Magdalene. Jesus Christ was not represented by any actor, but only visualized by what was described as "a vertical shaft of amber-yellow light." The chorus was one of the best in America in those days, Robert Shaw's Collegiate Chorale, with some 200 superb singers; the musicians came from various student orchestras, especially from the Juilliard School of Music in New York.

But the whole idea behind this *Miracle Play* came from Leopold Stokowski, who also conducted the performance. It was based on his long acquaintance with Bach's music; the performance was eventually given for the benefit of the Quakers.

Stokowski was at that time sixty-one years old and had for many years been regarded as one of the world's most prominent conductors--controversial, provocative, admired, and sometimes despised. But without any doubt, he was certainly one of the most interesting musicians in our century. Not only was he a very personal conductor with his very own personal mind, he was also a pioneer in the area of recording technique. Together with leading experts on acoustics and engineering he was partly responsible for the ongoing improvement of sound recording since the early twenties. One may add here, that he made his last gramophone recordings in 1977, in England, when he was ninety-five years old, only a few months before his death.

One can also remember Stokowski's collaboration with Walt Disney, which resulted in the well known music movie *Fantasia*, which was premiered in New York in November 1940, and which is

generally regarded as an outstanding technical achievement for its time. Not merely because of all the animated cartoons which accompanied the chosen concert programme, but especially because of the really new multitrack sound, which was recorded on nine separate channels--a rather unique enterprise in those days!--and played back over more than one hundred loudspeakers which were arranged around the cinema audience. This absolutely new *Fantasound* gave a feeling of three dimensional space which almost no listener had ever heard before; one can actually see this as a harbinger of what became developed about 15-20 years later in the area of new composition principles and advanced recording technique--a development which is continuously improving still today.

One of the musical highlights in *Fantasia* was Bach's D-minor *Toccata and Fugue* for organ, in Stokowski's own orchestra transcription. For this particular piece there were no animated cartoons, but instead a flaming, nonfigurative pattern of moving colours which was triggered by the sound itself and projected on the movie screen. I will return to this matter later.

Stokowski's stage version of Bach in 1943, the "Miracle Play based on Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* Music," could be seen as a continuation of his earlier experiments and experience with multimedia technique. The visionary appearance of Christ, as a vertical light beam, is a good effect for the stage, apart from its symbolical and religious function. It can be remembered and discussed from many points of view. It is a well-known fact that Stokowski made almost any work which he conducted into a more or less dramatic or spectacular event. He appeared himself as an incomparable magician-conductor who created his own personal sound from any orchestra he was working with.

But the *Miracle Play* also represents perhaps the greatest of his numerous transcriptions and performances of Bach's music. It is therefore surprising that the *Miracle Play* seems to have been forgotten for almost forty years. Few people even remember its existence, and only as late as 1982 were some facts revived in Oliver Daniel's comprehensive monograph on Stokowski. But no documentary recording or film seems ever to have been made from this event.

At the time of his death, Stokowski was actually preparing a new orchestra transcription of a Bach fugue, thus continuing an enterprise he had begun about sixty-five years before. We do not know any exact details about his very last plans. But we know about 35-40 Bach transcriptions which were made mainly during the twenties and thirties; most of them have been released on commercial records.

One may observe the fact that among the nearly 200 transcriptions which Stokowski made of works by various composers, those of Bach by far outnumber any other. Generally speaking, Stokowski had a much broader repertoire than most other conductors, but he preferred to perform unusual and seldomly heard works instead of repeating the same standard repertoire which most conductors usually present to their audiences. He was also known for his continuous promoting of contemporary music, including controversial avant-garde works. But in any case, Bach's music remained as a permanent centre in his musical world.

I want to emphasize here that this paper will not deal with Bach's original music and its relation to religious aspects. Much of this is already well known and has been discussed for more than a century. Instead, I want to shed some light on how this music has been interpreted by Stokowski under the influence of another kind of religious spirit than that which might have been Bach's own. The name combination of Bach-Stokowski in this context represents a sort of new entity and it may be of some interest to look into the background. At the same time, Stokowski's transcriptions, as they are documented through his recordings, do indeed represent a unique example of a lost performance practice and an aesthetic approach to Bach which already in itself has a historic value from musicological, philosophical and sociological points of view.

Before I go any further into the specific topic for this presentation it may be necessary to give some information about the very beginning of Stokowski's career as a musician, before he in 1909, almost overnight, became a fashionable orchestra conductor.

He was born in London, England, in 1882. At the age of thirteen, in January 1896, he became the youngest student ever accepted at the Royal College of Music. At that time he had already played the organ for some years, and was also singing in the choir of St. Marylebone Church in London; he is listed there among the "Alto Cantoris" and a note next to his name describes him as excellent and "of great service to the Precentor." On 25 June 1898--when he had just turned sixteen--he became the youngest member of the British Royal College of Organists, where after two years he had advanced to the distinction of "Fellow." Two years later, when he was eighteen, he became the organist and choral director at St. Mary's Church on Charing Cross Road. One year later we find him in St. James's Church, Piccadilly, and it was there he was observed in the summer of 1905 when the rector of St. Bartholomew's Church in New York was visiting London to find the best organist and choirmaster for the ambitious music programme at his church. Everybody nominated Stokowski, and in the following year he had settled in New York to begin an ever-expanding career in America. As an organist he attracted large audiences because of his performance of Bach, and of his own organ transcriptions of various movements from opera, orchestra, and chamber literature.

After only three years, however, he became the conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra; by that time, he had already left his church-musical duties. In 1912 he became the artistic head of the Philadelphia Orchestra which he developed into one of the world's most prestigious orchestras. He stayed there for almost thirty years, after which he held different positions as a permanent or visiting conductor around the world until his death in England at the age of ninety-five in 1977, having been artistically active until his last day.

During his student years in England he met with several musicians who made him discover the music of Bach. One conductor whom he admired tremendously was the German, Hans Richter, whose performances of Wagner and other German classical composers seem to have inspired him to embark gradually on choral and, later, on orchestra conducting. Many of Stokowski's Bach transcriptions demonstrate a strong affinity to the style and aesthetics in continental performance practice around 1900. There are also

some interesting parallels between the Stokowski transcriptions and what we find in some practical editions of organ music by Bach and earlier composers which were published between 1904 and 1929 by the famous German organist and choral director Karl Straube. Without perhaps even knowing about each other at that time, both Stokowski and Straube seem to have been inspired by the same tradition and ideals, namely that kind of orchestra sound and performance practice which was represented by conductors like the afore-mentioned Hans Richter and, perhaps even more, Artur Nikisch. Straube must certainly have felt strong affinity to Bach's music because of the fact that he was for many years, from 1903 until his death in 1950, active as a church musician in Bach's own church (St. Thomas, Leipzig). The many remarks which he published in his editions about how to interpret and perform Bach's organ works could as well be descriptions of Stokowski's orchestra transcriptions. In both cases, the link between organ and orchestra is obvious. It is interesting that Stokowski seems to have appreciated especially Hans Richter's Wagner performances, which may have given him some idea about how to orchestrate Bach. This cultural confrontation between Bach and Wagner was perhaps not so strange at that time as it would seem today. Karl Straube's famous edition from 1913 of the second volume in the well-known Peters series of Bach's organ works (Peters 3331) has for many years been out of print and is deleted from the Peters catalogue. But there we read among other things:

> ...the performer of this particular Prelude and Fugue should try as much as possible to imitate on the organ the impressive glory and majesty of Wagner's *Meistersinger* orchestra.

We do not know very much about Stokowski's "official" attitude to religion, for example with regard to church going habits. He was baptized a Roman Catholic, but was also interested in Buddhism, Quakerism and ancient Christianity as well. During his last years in England he participated occasionally in the Anglican church community in his home village. His religious mind was certainly not of a narrowly provincial kind. As we will see later, one could perhaps best

define Stokowski's undeniable feeling for the religious spirit as a kind of non-dogmatic mysticism based on Christian faith. This seems also to have been the most important factor behind his Bach transcriptions.

In this context it is necessary to mention a book which Stokowski got to know during his student years in England. It is Philipp Spitta's monumental biography of Bach, the first really musicological study of this composer, which was published in German in 1873-80. The English translation--by Clara Bell and J.A. Fuller-Maitland, 1883-85--was regarded as one of the almost canonic books at the Royal College of Music. From there Stokowski had his appreciation of Bach's music, so to speak, enhanced with the ethics and spirit which prevail in Spitta's account of Bach. The book was of course also extremely important for German musicians like Karl Straube. Stokowski did actually refer directly to some of Spitta's statements in the programme notes which he wrote in 1943 for the "Miracle Play Based on Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* Music" (Daniel: 439).

The very title, "Miracle Play," seems to go back to the wording in the English translation of Spitta's work, when the author speaks about a certain German tradition of Protestant dramatic representations of the Passion in the sixteenth century (Spitta: II, 500). The English term, which is used for one of the mediaeval forerunners to this kind of performance, is *Passion miracle play*; the original German text speaks here of *Passions-schauspiele*, a word which refers more to a stage play in general and does not immediately imply the real character of the English *miracle play* (which according to English tradition is used as a synonym to "liturgical play"). Because Stokowski got substantial inspiration from the English translation of Spitta's Bach monograph, it may not be too far-fetched to see the title which he had chosen for his stage version of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, "miracle play," in connection with Spitta's description of the historic background to Bach's settings of the Passion history.

But one can also find some direct connections between Spitta's sometimes very poetic descriptions of certain Bach compositions and how Stokowski himself writes about music in his

book *Music for All of Us*, which was published in 1943, the same year as the *Miracle Play*. Take for example Spitta's interpretation of the mood in Bach's fourth Cantata, *Christ lag in Todesbanden*. It reads:

> A dim and mournful light, as of regions of the north, seems to shine upon it; it is gnarled and yet majestic, like the primeval oak of the forest. Such a product of art could never have matured under a southern sun ... a work in which the Spring festival of the Church, the joyful and hopeful Easter-tide, is celebrated in tones at once so grandiose and so gloomy. (Spitta: II, 397)

One obvious question after all this may be: Why did Stokowski do all these orchestral arrangements of Bach's music (from organ, chamber or choral works, chorale settings, etc.)? They form a most substantial part of his repertoire, especially in regard to the many new recordings which he made of the same pieces over the years. It must not have been only a question of enriching his repertoire: he could as easily have transcribed piano pieces by Mozart or Beethoven if he wanted to present arrangements of more familiar works with his orchestra. This would have been a rather easy solution from both the musical and technical points of view. Instead he chose pieces which were not at all well known at that time. Trained in Europe as an organist and as a church musician, he was familiar with a repertoire which was practically unknown to ordinary orchestra audiences in North America. Like a missionary or an evangelist he wanted to introduce this music to new listeners. Stokowski himself said about the origin of his orchestra transcriptions:

> I used to play the organ, and I always loved the music of Bach, but when I became a conductor I did not get much opportunity to play that music. Then I orchestrated the Passacaglia and Fugue in C-minor, and I wished to play it in rehearsal, just for the fun of hearing it. We never played it in public, but one day the players said it me: "Why don't we play that in public? We enjoy it, perhaps the public will enjoy it." So we did play it, and to our surprise and satisfaction the public did like it. (Opperby: 135)

Which Bach pieces did Stokowski arrange? There are some of the major organ works, like the D-minor *Toccata and Fugue*, and the just mentioned C-minor *Passacaglia and Fugue*. There are also movements from Bach's chamber music, including a quite remarkable transcription of the great D-minor *Chaconne* for solo violin, which Stokowski made in 1930. There are six transcriptions of cantata movements, including two from the *St. John* and the *St. Matthew* Passions, which are dated November 1914 and April 1937, respectively; like most of the others they were made during Stokowski's tenure with the Philadelphia Orchestra. But there are also many chorale preludes and also spiritual songs from Bach's settings in the Schemelli Hymn Book.

Looking through the chosen chorales one may find a certain pattern in terms of topics which is not related to musical elements only. It may be a coincidence, but the major part of the hymn texts are based on Christ, from Christmas in celebration of his birth to Holy Week and Easter in remembrance of his death and resurrection. At least three of the chosen cantata movements point in the same direction. Other texts are penitential hymns. Generally speaking, the eschatological aspect seems to be of certain importance, also in the interpretation of the Christocentric hymns.

Among Stokowski's transcriptions of other music than Bach's one finds also a few which are based on old Christian liturgy and renaissance Mass music. One is of Russian Orthodox Christmas music; another is called "Two Ancient Liturgical Melodies" and consists of the hymns *Veni Creator* and *Veni Emmanuel*. There is also one motet by Palestrina--*Adoramus te Christe*--and one by Tomas Luis Victoria--*Jesu dulcis memoria*. With the exception of the last mentioned, which Stokowski arranged in 1947, all the others have been released on commercial records. In the light of some previous observations one may find similar trends here as with the Bach chorale preludes, songs, and cantata movements, namely a certain focus on Christ, on Penance, on Eschatology and Apocalypse. It may not be a coincidence that among Gustav Mahler's ten symphonies, Stokowski seems to have recorded only the second and the eighth, the so-called *Resurrection Symphony* and the *Symphony of a Thousand* (the latter consisting of two gigantic settings for soloists, choir, and orchestra of the hymn

Veni Creator and the final scene in Goethe's *Faust*). The only work by the French composer Olivier Messiaen in Stokowski's repertoire was *L'Ascension*, the four symbolic poems on Christ's ascension to heaven.

But how really important Bach's music was for Stokowski is evident already from the fact that he made many different gramophone recordings of the same works on an almost regular basis between 1927 and 1972, to keep this repertoire active and alive for the record-buying public. There exist for example seven different recordings of the D-minor *Toccata and Fugue* and likewise seven of the C-minor *Passacaglia and Fugue*. Various pressings, and sometimes various catalogue numbers also existed for the same recording. There are as well at least three recordings each of most chorale prelude transcriptions: obviously they had all become part of a standing gramophone repertoire, with the double name Bach-Stokowski almost as a trade mark.

But this trademark, the entity Bach-Stokowski, was certainly not left unchallenged. The time is perhaps not over yet when many people still see these transcriptions as heresy and sacrilege, and when musicians and musicologists, who pretend to know everything about Bach, simply reject them as unworthy products. It is interesting, though, that the same persons mostly do not object to those Bach transcriptions which were made by, for example, Edward Elgar, Ottorino Respighi or Arnold Schoenberg, although, as a matter of fact, these are in no way better artistically than Stokowski's.

One thing remains clear however: the Stokowski Bach transcriptions had an enormous influence on the general discovery of Bach in North America fifty to sixty years ago. One fact may be evidence enough, namely that the very first commercial recording of the D-minor *Toccata and Fugue* became an immediate bestseller which was sold in millions of copies all over the world. At that time, few people had heard the original organ version. Between 1927 and 1972 Stokowski made, as mentioned before, seven different recordings of this work, one of them expecially for *Fantasia* which became available in the set of records which contain the complete soundtrack of that movie.

I mentioned earlier how Stokowski's attitude to religion could perhaps be best described as the expression of a non-dogmatic mysticism based on Christian faith. This would be visually apparent from the vertical light-beam which symbolized Christ in the *Miracle Play*. It may also coincide with the flaming colour patterns which accompanied the D-minor *Toccata and Fugue* in *Fantasia*. Even if Stokowski did not entirely invent this special effect himself, he was nevertheless closely involved together with Walt Disney and his staff in the creation of the whole *Fantasia* movie.

But perhaps even more revealing and evident are various statements and comments which Stokowski made about music as the expression of universal, cosmic and divine powers. The very quotation from a sentence in his book *Music for All of Us* which appears on his gravestone in the churchyard of St. Marylebone in London is an aphoristic expression of the transcendentalism which prevails throughout his whole life as a musician. It reads simply: "Music is the Voice of the All." In the book *Music for All of Us*, Stokowski reveals himself as somebody for whom music is not just a basic technique, an entertainment or a selfish *l'art pour l'art*, but in the deepest sense "the Voice of the All." He talks about Nature, how the "Supreme artist has created with never-ending variety marvels of form, colour, motion, sound, drama, poetry--never repeating--always creating new developments of basic motives. The unending variety of the design of flowers, the beauty of their form and colour, are some of the highest creations of the Supreme Artist. Mountains and arroyos ... are Nature's sculptures on a vast scale ... The mysterious light of the moon and the stars is pure poetry ... The great geological changes of the earth are like an immense drama, spread over centuries. Music is dynamic--ever evolving--flowing like a river but our inner voice tells us that in the greatest music we are vibrating in tune with beauty that is eternal. When we reach its ultimate essence, music is the Voice of the all--the divine melody--the cosmic rhythm--the universal harmony" (Quoted from Daniel: 920-21).

Stokowski published this in 1943. His words are not too far away from the language in Spitta's Bach book, from which

Stokowski quoted for his programme notes for the *Miracle Play* in the same year. Fifteen years earlier he had described how Bach's D-minor *Toccata* reminds us of a vast upheaval of Nature. "It gives the impression of great white thunder clouds--like those that float over the valley of the Seine--or the towering majesty of the Himalayas. The Fugue ... is one of Bach's supreme inspirations--the final cadence is like massive Doric columns of white marble" (Daniel: 441).

We may note here that he made this poetic description of Bach's D-minor *Toccata and Fugue* shortly after the first gramophone recording of his transcription had been released in 1927. His words are not in the first instance directed to musicologists or scholars, or even to trained musicians, but to lay audiences who had never heard that kind of music before. There are also accounts from ten years later, in the late thirties, of how he tried to explain to Walt Disney why the D-minor *Toccata* was such a great piece of music. At that time, Disney had not the slightest idea about Bach's music. Stokowski may have been the only musician at that time who was able to convince a smart movie tycoon that the Bach work is a most worthwhile piece of music and that it had absolutely to be included in *Fantasia* (cf. Chasins: 174). Perhaps Stokowski managed to convince both Disney and other people because he did not always use a strict music vocabulary, but instead some mixed spiritual esperanto, with reminiscences from both pantheistic views and buddhist philosophy, from the adoration of divine powers in old Central America or from early Christianity, from oriental religions and perhaps even some theosophical elements. This was one of his ways to appeal to his listeners. When he spoke in 1963 at Bryn Mawr College in the U.S.A., about "The Making of an Orchestra," some of his statements could as well have been taken from the 150th Psalm in the Old Testament, with its exuberant combination of musical joy and religious spirit (cf. Daniel: 441). Generally speaking, all Stokowski's talk on religion, and on divine powers, may be accepted from any side, regardless of denomination or sect. But behind all these statements one finds, like some hidden secret, the inspiration which Stokowski got from Philipp Spitta's book on Bach. One could even see the spatial arrangement of loudspeakers around the audience--like what happened at the *Fantasia* première in 1940--not only as a brilliant technical achievement, but also

as a symbol for space itself, for the cosmic and universal "Voice of the All" which was one of his synonyms for music. The idea behind the space-located sound came, by the way, from Stokowski himself; he had at the time been actively involved in acoustical research as an expert on music, together with leading experts at the Bell Laboratory in New Jersey. So-called *Fantasound* was realised by Bill Garity--technical head of Walt Disney--after recommendations of Disney himself and Stokowski (cf. Chasins: 172-175).

I would take the opportunity here to bring up another matter which has been debated now and then. There were rumours that many of the transcriptions which have been attributed to Stokowski were as a matter of fact not made by him but by some other musicians who would have been paid for their services (cf. Chasins: 261-68). But there seems to be little or no doubt that all the transcriptions were actually Stokowski's own and nobody else's. If at some point another person may have been involved, it had just to do with simple routines, like part copying etc. There is enough evidence that everything was planned in detail by Stokowski himself. The most convincing argument is certainly the fact that only an organist, with experience from reverberant church acoustics, would have been able to translate that special type of sound environment into a score (cf. an interesting statement by pianist Rosalyn Tureck in a conversation with Oliver Daniel in April 1979 [Daniel: 446]; also Opperby: 134 et seq.). Both the recordings and the now published scores of the D-minor *Toccata and Fugue* and the C-minor *Passacaglia* are revealing enough. Based on careful analysis of the criteria for reverberation time and the changing frequency response in sound decay, the Stokowski Bach transcriptions offer a unique approach to an important aspect of orchestration technique. But at the same time, the early recordings--until around 1940--reflect that genuine late nineteenth-century orchestra sound, especially in the string section, which only those people would have been able to achieve who had personal experience of Hans Richter's or Artur Nikisch's performance ideal.

Let me finish by referring to one of the transcriptions which Stokowski seems to have liked most. It must have been really important to him; as a matter of fact he made no less than

five different recordings of it between 1933 and 1974--the last when he was ninety-two years old. It is *Komm, süsser Tod* (Come, sweet Death) from Bach's four-part chorale setting in the Schemelli Gesangbuch of 1736. Stokowski's arrangement, which was first performed on 3 March 1933, could perhaps be regarded as a perfect example of mournful background music at a funeral. The tempo is slow; the dynamic development is most expressive.

But here again Stokowski reveals his background as a romantic organist, in full command of the timbres, dynamics and power in the late romantic organ from the period around 1900. It corresponds to a kind of performance practice which was normal about seventy-five to a hundred years ago, but which gradually disappeared during the twenties in Europe; around 1920, also, the above-mentioned Karl Straube turned his interest in other directions--his later editions of baroque music are far from the earlier ones, which are much more akin to Stokowski's ideal (with Spitta and Nikisch as a common denominator).

It is interesting that in 1939, when Stokowski had more or less left Philadelphia, an organist's convention was held there, and that one of the highlights was a commissioned arrangement based on Bach's *Komm, süsser Tod.* The organist who made this arrangement was the twenty-seven year old Virgil Fox, and the purpose was to demonstrate the enormous capacity of one of the world's largest organs, in the Grand Court of the John Wanamaker Store. This remarkable arrangement sounds almost like an organ transcription of Stokowski's orchestra arrangement of Bach's chorale setting (we may remember that Stokowski as an organist around 1900 was famous for his organ transcriptions of orchestra and opera repertoire). A recording was made by Fox on the same instrument in Philadelphia in 1964 (Command Classics CC 11025SD). According to Marshall Yaeger's notes for this album, the arrangement was actually directly inspired by Stokowski's orchestration.

Perhaps we can even see this as evidence how the new entity Bach-Stokowski had already by 1939 become history, and that former organist Stokowski's orchestra transcription in the following generation became a Bach-Stokowski-Fox organ transcription. We do not have to debate here how remote the spirit of Bach himself--or even of Schemelli--may be from these versions of

the 1930s. But the huge crowd, of allegedly thirteen thousand people which attended Virgil Fox's recital in 1939 must have perceived Bach through the various romantic filters. And finally, both Stokowski and Fox belong in any case to history and musicology today.

Sources

A. Phonograms.

Because of the outspoken acoustical character of Stokowski's orchestrations, and especially because of his own personal performance style, the existing gramophone recordings offer the most obvious evidence. For practical reasons it is impossible to list all relevant recordings; the same recording may also appear many times on different labels, and with different catalogue numbers, in Europe and North America. A comprehensive and detailed list is presented in Johnson: 87-114 (see below). Later releases are documented in Daniel and Opperby; the list given in Robinson is not always correct.

B. Music Examples.

Many of Stokowski's transcriptions have been published by Broude Brothers Ltd. The following works, which are mentioned in this article, appear under the names Bach-Stokowski and are individually presented as "symphonic transcription published from the library of Leopold Stokowski": *Komm süsser Tod* (copyright 1946); *Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor* (copyright 1951); *Toccata and Fugue in D minor* (copyright 1952). For further details, see Johnson:73-74.

C. Books.

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NOTES ON PIANO RECITAL-LECTURE AT THE 1985 MCGILL BACH SYMPOSIUM

Jack Behrens
University of Western Ontario

Johann Sebastian Bach, who himself arranged concertos of Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741) and others (including the fugue from his own violin sonata in G minor) for the harpsichord and the organ, has been transcribed and arranged (even deranged) in vast quantities. Indeed, the quality of some of these transcriptions, particularly by Franz Liszt (1811-1886), Ferruccio Busoni (1866-1924), Myra Hess (1890-1965) and Leopold Stokowski (1881-1977) obtained recognition from the general concert-going public for Bach's music. Furthermore, composers, including Robert Schumann (1877-1933), Liszt, Max Reger (1873-1916), Sigfrid Karg-Elert (1877-1933) and Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908), have employed Bach's name (in the German notation used by Bach himself in *The Art of Fugue*) as a point of departure.

Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring, the final movement of Bach's Cantata No. 147, *Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben* (composed in 1716 at Weimar) was "arranged" for piano in a "New and Revised Edition, December 1931" by Myra Hess; this cantata movement was also--it is interesting to note--transcribed for orchestra by Peter Schickele (see below) for Stokowski and his symphony orchestra.

The *Toccata and Fugue in D minor*, one of the two Bach organ toccatas arranged for piano by Busoni was included in a dozen volumes of works by Bach (9), Liszt (2) and Cramer (1) which were edited by Busoni as a "regulated course," a "Contribution to the High School of Pianoforte-Playing." "In their entirety they are similar to an educational building which--preferably with Bach-Music as its basis--seems capable of eventually bearing further and younger superstructures. ..." In their "position in the progression upwards of the collective work" the toccatas are grade 10, grades 11 and 12 being two transcriptions of Liszt.

Nach Bach (1966) of George Rockbert (b.1918), a "fantasy for harpsichord or piano" contrasts angular and chromatic post

Schoenbergian passages with sequential and diatonic Baroque figurations. This work was one of Rochberg's first after his abandonment of serialism; in *Music for the Magic Theater* (1965) Rochberg had begun quoting music of other composers or imitating their styles.

Fantasy on BACH (1985) of Jack Behrens (b.1935) was composed expressly for the 1985 McGill Bach Symposium. Using B-A-C-H (B flat-A-C-B natural) as a point of departure (these four pitches having been "prepared" both just below middle C and two octaves higher), and with rhythmic patterns frequently derived from B-A-C-H (2-1-3-8), towards the close the composition quotes from the first prelude of Bach's *Well Tempered Clavier*, Book I.

The *Notebook for Betty-Sue Bach* by P.D.Q. Bach (1807-1742)? "Gingerly Edited by Professor Peter Schickele" is a "loose collection of individual pieces" and is comprised of *Allemande Left*, *Oh! Courante*!, *Two-Part Contraption*, *Three-Part Contraption*, *André Gigue*, *Traumarei*, and *Capriccio Espagnole for Charles III: The Reign in Spain.*" As his editor frankly admits, P.D.Q. Bach "uses several extramusical devices which open up new vistas of programmatic identification while at the same time lowering artistic standards to a point very near Absolute Zero." Although the influence of J.S. Bach is more or less omnipresent, shades of Domenico Scarlatti are evoked and a Rachmaninoff *Prelude* is foreshadowed.

FROM THE DEAN'S DESK

Donna R. Runnalls

On inheriting the Desk what does a new Dean do with all the papers and all the routine that must be learned? The quiet time of the summer gave me some opportunity to study various facets of this new job, but since the beginning of September I have been running to keep up with the multiple concerns and interests of the Faculty.

The term got off to a good start with registration remaining high. Class enrolments are up and our classrooms are packed; Professor Gregory Baum had so many students register in his Arts class that it had to be moved to the auditorium of the Presbyterian College. While it is pleasant for all of us to know that students wish to study with us, the staff continues to carry an excessive work load.

The Birks Event this year was directly related to the International Calvin Symposium. Professors Fritz Buesser and Jane Dempsey Douglas presented the audience with interesting perspectives on Calvin's thought. The papers from the International Calvin Symposium will be published as an ARC Supplement and can be obtained by writing to the Faculty (see the advertisement in this issue for further details). For the second year those attending the Birks Event were invited to a buffet supper in the Birks Building and this seems to have created a good opportunity for graduates to renew old acquaintances and make new ones. If you have not attended the Birks Event recently, plan to do so next year when our lecturer will be Professor Willard Oxtoby and his topic will be related to inter-faith dialogue.

Tragedy has struck three members of our community this year. The Rev. Dr. Robert Osborne (B.D. '53, S.T.M. '54) died in February in Victoria, BC. Bob had retired in 1985 from a long career as a professor of New Testament at Emmanuel College and Carlton University. Thérèse Jolette, an S.T.M. student died after a long battle with cancer. Salwa Mehlem, B.Th. '85 lost

her father who was killed in a terrorist bombing in Beirut. Salwa is nursing in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Montreal; the support of your prayers for Salwa and her family would be appreciated.

Happier news about some other graduates. Dr. Mavoureen (Morny) Joy (Ph.D. '81) has returned to Montreal to become a director of the Thomas More Institute. Laurie McRobert (M.A. '79) and Ken McQueen (B.D. '70) have both completed their Ph.D. studies in Philosophy of Religion. The Rev. Anne Hall (B.Th. '74, S.T.M. '80) has been inducted as minister of Wesley United Church, Montreal.

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Ronald P. Bermingham received his A.B. in Psychology from Colgate University and his M.A. in French Literature from Arizona State University. He holds a Diplome Superieur from the Conservatoire royal de musique de Liege. At present he is completing doctoral studies in Semiology in Etudes litteraires at the Universite du Quebec a Montreal.

Richard Cooper is a doctoral candidate in Philosophy of Religion at the Faculty of Religious Studies, McGill University, and Managing Editor of ARC. He has taught in the English Department at Dawson College, Montreal, and at McGill.

Bengt Hambraeus was born in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1928. He studied organ with Alf Linder and at the Uppsala University, with an M.A. in Musicology, Religious Studies and History of Fine Arts, followed by a Ph.D. in Musicology. In 1972, he came to Canada where he has since been Professor of Composition, Theory and Musicology at the Faculty of Music, McGill University. As a composer he has been featured in most countries, with awards in Sweden, Denmark and Japan. He has published numerous articles and essays, especially on organ history and contemporary music. In 1986 he was awarded the coveted Royal Swedish medal *Litteris et Artibus*.

Florence Perrella Hayes, who holds an M.A. from McGill's Faculty of Religious Studies, is at present a doctoral candidate in the Department of Religion, Concordia University. She is pursuing research on women in religion.

Geoffrey Payzant is a professor of philosophy at the University of Toronto. His academic specialty is musical aesthetics. His translation of Eduard Hanslick's *On the Musically Beautiful* was

published in 1986 by Hackett Publishing Company, Indianapolis. He is also author of *Glenn Gould, Music and Mind* (1978; rev. ed. 1984).

Donna R. Runnalls is Dean of the Faculty of Religious Studies, McGill University, and Associate Professor of Old Testament and Judaism.

Peggie Sampson was born in Edinburgh, from whose University she holds the Bachelor of Music and Doctor of Music degrees. She was a pupil and teaching assistant of Donald Francis Tovey. She also studied in Paris with Diran Alexanian (cello) at the Ecole normale and privately with Nadia Boulanger (theory). She has had an extensive concert and recording career her speciality being the viola de gamba, and has taught, since she came to Canada in 1951, at the University of Manitoba, Wilfrid Laurier university, and York University, where she is now Emeritus Professor. She is also on the faculty of the Royal Conservatory of Toronto.

COVER DESIGN

The cover for this issue is based on a design incorporating the Bach monogram which was originally devised by Dominic Lopes for the official programme of the 1985 McGill Bach Symposium. Dominic Lopes received his B.A. in Philosophy from McGill in 1986 and is now pursuing post-graduate work at Oxford.

The present cover was designed and executed by Thomas Seniw, who is an M.A. student in the Faculty of Religious Studies.

ARC is an attempt to provide a means of maintaining the ties that exist between the academic community and its alumni/alumnae. To aid in this continuing theological education, we are publishing two issues per year which are distributed to almost 1000 graduates and friends of the Faculty of Religious Studies of McGill University, its affiliated Colleges (Anglican, Presbyterian and United Church) and the Montreal Institute for Ministry. We are asking for an annual contribution of $5.00 per person in order to offset costs of printing and distribution.

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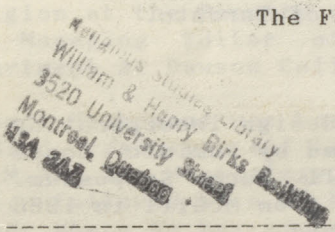

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