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THE TREATMENT OF THE CHORALE WIE SCHÖN LEUCHTET DER
MORGENSTERN IN ORGAN COMPOSITIONS FROM THE SEVEN-
TEENTH CENTURY TO THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

THESIS

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PREFACE

The chorale Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern was popular from its very outset in 1589. That it has retained its popularity down to the present day is evident by its continually appearing in hymnbooks and being used as a cantus in organ compositions as well as forming the basis for other media of musical composition.

The treatment of organ compositions based on this single chorale not only exemplifies the curiously novel attraction that this tune has held for composers, but also supplies a common denominator by which the history of the organ chorale can be generally stated.

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CHAPTER I

THE LUTHERAN CHORALE

The Development of the Chorale up to Bach

The German term choral encompasses both Catholic and Protestant connotations in its meaning. The chorals of pre-Reformation times were short vernacular hymns which were early admitted in the Roman office. The practice of congregational participation in the worship services through the use of these hymns was peculiar to the German churches. These chorals are identified by their refrain, "Kirleison," "Leisen," or "Leichen," and consisted of a stanza or stanzas prefixed to the Kyrie eleison or Christe eleison. The oldest dates from the end of the ninth century:

Unsar trohtin hat farsalt sancte Petre giwalt
Daz er mag ginerjan zeimo dingenten man.
Kyrie eleyson! Christe eleison.¹

This ancient vernacular hymn was the logical ancestor of the congregational hymn of the evangelical church. The transformation of the Roman choral which began with Luther continued until the nineteenth century² although the chorale reached its highest artistic standard in the chorale harmonizations

¹Charles Stanford Terry, "Choral," Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, I (New York, 1938), 636.

²Edwin Liemohn, The Chorale (Philadelphia, 1953), p. 5.

of J. S. Bach. The melodies and words of the chorales of the Reformation were obtained from four sources: the official Latin hymnody, pre-Reformation popular hymns, secular folk-songs, and melodies especially written for the Lutheran service.

Thus the Latin hymn Veni Creator Spiritus became Kom Gott Schopfer, Heilige Geist, while the pre-Reformation popular hymn Nun bitten wir den Heiligen Geist retained both words and music in the new church. The tune Innsbruck, ich muss dich lassen³ became O Welt, ich muss dich lassen. As can be seen by the title, the words as well as the music were derived from the original. The fourth source of Protestant chorales, original hymns, can first be seen in the hymns of Martin Luther and Johann Walther.

Many of the chorale tunes exhibit an interesting history.

The situation was remarkably, yet rather typically, complex in the case of the famous chorale O Haupt voll Blut und Wunder. The melody had its origin in Hassler's love song Mein G'müt ist mir verwirret from the Lustgarten (1601) and was soon spiritualized to the chorale Herzlich tut mich verlangen. The Catholics adopted the same tune in the Latin hymn Salve caput cruentatum, which in turn was translated and paraphrased by Paul Gerhardt and thus became O Haupt voll Blut und Wunder.⁴

³This tune is sometimes attributed to Heinrich Isaac (c. 1445-1517).

⁴Manfred Bukofzer, Music in the Baroque Era (New York, 1947), p. 80.

During the early Reformation neither the Catholic nor Lutheran churches used the organ to accompany the voices. The organ played between verses, or took the place of the choir, using the plainsong or tune and treating it polyphonically. In the Lutheran service the congregation sang in unison unsupported even by the choir. The trained singers, the Kantorei, would sing polyphonic arrangements of the chorale tunes, the melody being in the tenor.

The first Lutheran hymnal was published in 1524 at Wittenberg and was edited by Johann Walther (1496-1570), Luther's close associate and the first notable Lutheran composer. Etlich Christlich Lieder, known generally as the Achtliederbuch, contained four melodies set to four hymns by Luther, three by Paulus Seperatus (d. 1551), and one anonymous hymn. That same year a larger edition appeared at Erfurt, Enchiridion oder eyn Handbuchlein . . . geistlicher Gesenge, und Psalmer, recht schaffn und kunstlich vertheutsch, probably under the direction of Justus Jonas (d. 1555) and Johannes Lange.⁵

Including the eight hymns of the Achtliederbuch, this edition contained sixteen melodies set to twenty-five hymns. Both of these editions were small enchiridions, text editions usually with melodies for congregational and home use. The

⁵Terry, op. cit., p. 638.

Erfurter Enchiridion was the basic hymnal of the early Reformation.

About the same time as these first two enchiridions, the first great publication of the early Reformation appeared, Johann Walther's Geystliche gesangk Buchleyn. Included were thirty-five melodies set to thirty-two hymns, five of which had Latin texts. Polyphonic settings of five voices with the melody in the tenor were furnished for the Kantorei.

Five years after the publication of his first hymnal, Luther felt the need to restore his hymns to their original versions since many editors had already published their own versions of Luther's hymns. In 1529 Joseph Klug at Wittenberg published for Luther Geistliche Lieder. Auff's new gebessert zu Wittenberg. Only a later edition in 1535 has survived.

The last hymnbook published under Luther's supervision appeared in 1545. The Geystliche Lieder. Mitt einer neuen vorrhede D. Mart. Luth. was printed in two parts by Valentin Babst at Leipzig. Included were 120 hymns and 97 melodies. This was the authoritative hymnal for the remainder of the century.⁶

As is evident in these hymnals, the number of melodies grew less rapidly than the hymn texts. However, from 1524 to 1545 over 200 new tunes appeared in hymnbooks. The

⁶Liemohn, op. cit., p. 27.

conspicuousness of Latin texts in these early hymnbooks gives evidence to the gradual change which took place with the advent of Protestant church music. Even through the time of Bach, Protestant choirs continued to sing in Latin.

The end of the sixteenth century saw the weaning of the chorale from the traditional motet style which had been applied to versions for the Kantorei. Choir and congregation were now allowed to sing together with the choir acting as a support for the congregational singing. Lukas Osiander (1534-1604), minister and sometime organist at the Frauenkirck in Nürnberg, published in 1586 his Funfftig geistliche Lieder und Psalmen. The melody was moved from the tenor to the soprano to encourage the congregation to sing with the choir. Polyphony was replaced by four-part vertical chord structures. This innovation was repeated and continued by Eccard in Geistliche Lieder auff den Choral (1597), Gesius in Geistliche deutsche Lieder (1601), Hassler in Kirchen gesänge (1608), and Vulpius in Gesangbuch (1609).

The changes that took place in the chorale at the close of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth century were due to the stylistic change that occurred in music at this time.

The cultural focus point in Europe was beginning to shift away from the objective and worldly orientation of the Italian Renaissance and towards the North, where the rising tide of mysticism and subjectivity

was to arrive at its height of expression over a century later in the High Baroque of Germany.⁷

The placing of the melody in the soprano and the adaptation of a homophonic style in the chorales well illustrate the beginning of this change. With the introduction of figured bass and improvements of the organ, more changes were to come. Music now emphasized "the spectacular, the colorful, a direct expressiveness, and an overt emotional effect."⁸

"In German music, the first stage in the development of the new Baroque trend completes itself in the works of Praetorius."⁹ Michael Praetorius (1571-1621) commenced in 1601 the publication of his Musae Sioniae. This was a work in nine volumes of over 1,200 of his own settings of chorale melodies. Included were both polyphonic and homophonic settings: unaccompanied duets, four-part motets with continuo, simple harmonizations,¹⁰ and works for two, three, and four choirs.

Johann Herman Schein's Cantional (1627) contained melodies and figured bass for use by organists, instrumental players and lutenists. However, the decisive step in the replacement of the choir by the organ as a support for congregational singing took place in 1650 with the publication of

⁷Eric Blumefeld, "Preface," Syntagma Musicum, by Michael Praetorius (Yale University, 1949), pp. i-ii.

⁸Ibid., p. ii.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Included is a harmonization of Wie schön, see Appendix.

Samuel Scheidt's Tabulaturbuch G8rlitz which contained 112 organ accompaniments of 100 melodies.¹¹ These elaborate accompaniments contain "quasi-contrapuntal patterns and occasionally chromatic harmonies that are second only to Bach's in originality and beauty."¹²

In the seventeenth century some 450 hymnbooks were published. However, composers of this period were less successful in writing good melodies than in rearranging the tunes of the past. The most important publications were Johann Crüger's Newes vollk8mliches Gesangbuch (Berlin, 1640), his Praxis pietatis meliea (Berlin, 1648), his Runge hymnbook (Berlin, 1653), and Gottfried Vopelius' Neu Leipziger Gesangbuch (Leipzig, 1682).

The period of the Thirty Year's War (1618-1648) left Germany weak musically as well as politically.¹³ Relief was sought in a more subjective type of poetry in the Kreuz und Trostlieder (songs of the cross and of consolation) and the Erbauungslieder (songs of edification). The chorales of the Reformation in the sixteenth century had been of an objective type, hymns of praise and adoration and doctrinal songs of the Reformation. The principal hymn writer following

¹¹Included is a harmonization of Wie schön, see Appendix.

¹²Alec Harman and Anthony Milner, Late Renaissance and Baroque Music (London, 1959), p. 282.

¹³Liemohn, op. cit., p. 54.

the Thirty Year's War was Paul Gerhardt (1607-1676) whose talent was second only to Luther.¹⁴ His hymns are subjective, sincere, and devout.

The rise of Pietism in the second half of the seventeenth century saw the end of the creative spirit of the chorale. A hymnal published in Halle, Gesangbuch (1704) by Johann Freylinghausen, contained 700 hymns set to 174 melodies. Only 82 of the tunes were original while the older melodies were enlivened, and only 5 of these represented the sixteenth century tradition of Luther.

Pietism was led by Philipp Jacob Spener (1635-1705), pastor of St. Nicolai church in Berlin. The movement was mainly a reaction to the formalism of official Lutheranism. However, except in Bohemia and Moravia it never developed into an organized dissent. The chorale now adapted an Italian operatic type of melody, in triple meter. Fortunately only a few were accepted as liturgical chorales by the congregation.¹⁵ Music in the church lost its previous importance. However, as congregational singing diminished, the organ gained in importance.

By the time that Bach was in his prime church music was at a low ebb. It is highly characteristic of the times that

¹⁴Ibid., p. 47.

¹⁵Bukofzer, op. cit., p. 80.

Bach composed no chorales.¹⁶ The few melodies that Bach furnished for a hymnal of Schemelli's for home use are really sacred arias. Included in this group is the famous Kom süßser Tod.

The chorale of Luther's day had seen many transformations by the time of Bach. The change of musical style with the coming of the Baroque era caused the chorale to adapt the current homophonic style and the smooth rhythm in which each syllable received one beat, as we know it in Bach's harmonizations.¹⁷

The Chorale Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern

The text of Wie schön was written by Philip Nicolai, and the tune is generally attributed to him. Nicolai was born in Mengerlinghausen, August 10, 1556. He entered the University of Erfurt in 1575. At the University at Wittenberg he received his Doctor of Divinity degree in 1579. As a Lutheran minister he held posts at Herdecke (1583), Niederwildungen, near Waldeck (1587), and at Altwildungen (1588). While serving in Unna, in Westphalia (1596), Nicolai endured a terrible pestilence which devastated the town. The invasion of the Spanish in 1598 caused him to flee for his life. A year later he returned and in 1601 was made chief pastor at

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Bach's harmonization of Wie schön appears in the Appendix.

St. Katherine's church at Hamburg. He died there October 26, 1608.

During the pestilence at Unna where thirty interments took place a day,¹⁸ Nicolai wrote his Freudenspiegel des ewigen Lebens (Mirror of Joy), which was published in 1598. This religious treatise, written under the circumstances, was quite popular, and Philip Nicolai gained a reputation as a preacher and was called a "second Chrysotom."

Appended to the treatise were four hymns including Wachet Auf! ruft uns die Stimme and Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern.¹⁹ Both have remained popular down to the present day, the former being referred to as the "King of Chorales" and the latter, the "Queen of Chorales."²⁰

Wie schön had an immediate success. It was "reckoned indispensable at weddings, was often sung around death beds, etc."²¹ The churches in the town even arranged for their chimes to peal the tune.

¹⁸W. G. Pollock, The Handbook of the Lutheran Hymnal (Saint Louis, 1942), p. 555.

¹⁹The original version of Wie schön appears in the Appendix.

²⁰Pollock, op. cit.

²¹James Mearns, "Philip Nicolai," A Dictionary of Hymnology, edited by John Julian (London, 1925), p. 806.

The sub-title of the hymn reads:

A spiritual bridal song of the believing soul concerning Jesus Christ, her heavenly Bridegroom, founded on the 45th Psalm of the prophet David.²²

The text of the chorale characteristically displays "the transition from the objective churchly period to the more subjective and experimental period of German hymn writing and begins the long series of Hymns of Love to Christ as the Bridegroom of the Soul."²³

The initial letters of each of the seven stanzas form an acrostic referring to a former pupil of Nicolai's. The letters are W, E, G, U, H, Z, W, viz. Wilhelm Ernst Graf Und Herr Zu Waldeck.²⁴

An examination of the chorale melody itself will perhaps give some insight as to why composers have been attracted to this particular melody. Within the phrases of this chorale are motives which are easily adaptable for use in musical composition. The first phrase begins by outlining a major chord and ends on the dominant (Figure 1). The second phrase proceeds stepwise from the dominant up to the tonic and then back down to the dominant. The third phrase also moves stepwise, from the dominant down to the tonic. These first three phrases are then repeated.

²²Printed in ibid.

²³Ibid., p. 805.

²⁴The text of Wie schön appears in the Appendix.

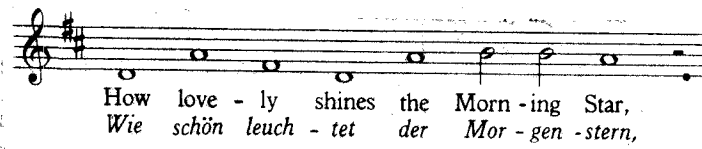


Fig. 1--Opening phrase of the chorale Wie schön

For convenience in discussing compositions based on this chorale, the motives appearing in Figure 2 will be

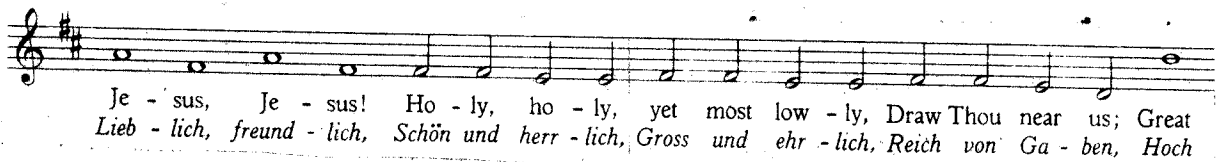


Fig. 2--Fourth phrase of Wie schön

called the fourth phrase. The beginning of this phrase presents a bell-like figure which is simply the moving of dominant down to mediant. This figure is given an echo effect by its being repeated. The possibilities of novel effects gained by composers in treating this motive are obvious. More repetition is heard in the remainder of the fourth phrase where a simple motive is heard three times. The last phrase, except for the second note which lies on the dominant, is a major scale progressing downward.

Chorale melodies, like folksongs, usually exist in many versions. Wie schön has appeared with the following variants: the breaking up of the scale-wise movement in the third phrase by replacing the beginning note (dominant) with the mediant; the reduction to only one repetition of the second motive in

the fourth phrase by varying its third appearance, or else the motive itself is altered for the sake of interest; and the last phrase is made to form a complete unbroken descending scale.

The compositions treated in this paper are based on versions of Wie schön which contain these variants as well as the original version of the chorale.

CHAPTER II

BEGINNINGS OF THE ORGAN-CHORALE

In the oldest printed German tablature of organ music, Tabulaturen etlicher Lobgesang und Liedlein uff die Orgeln und Lauten,¹ published in 1512, there appears a composition which uses as a cantus a hymn in the German vernacular, "Maria zart." In many respects this composition foreshadows that type of composition which was based on the Lutheran chorale and flourished in the Baroque era. The cantus appears in the soprano voice in clearly separated phrases and "is presented, not as a rigid structure of sustained tones, but as a flowing melody of great tenderness and beauty."²

The composer of this tablature was the blind organist in Heidelberg, Arnold Schlick (1460-c. 1517). The pieces in Schlick's tablature are all cantus firmus compositions, a type of composition which can be traced back to the twelfth century. Schlick's compositions are all based on Gregorian chants which appear in the tenor or bass. "Maria zart" is an exception; the vernacular melody appears in the soprano

¹Willi Apel, Masters of the Keyboard (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1947), p. 39.

²C. F. Abdy Williams, The Story of Organ Music (New York, 1905), p. 146.

voice, accompanied by two other voices which use thematic material from the cantus in imitation.

The Renaissance style of organ composition gradually evolved in England, Spain, Italy, and the Netherlands as well as in Germany. In organ compositions of this period a conflict between an instrumental and a vocal style is noticeable. The musician of the Renaissance wanted a display of virtuosity and a stirring of the emotions. Liturgical forms were still composed, but the new forms of the fantasia, canzona, toccata, and variation were also popular. "Dances, secular songs, and transcriptions became part of the organist's repertoire, and these were probably used even in church."³

The most conservative compositions of this time are those in which a plain-chant, psalm tune, chorale or secular song are employed as a basis, but whatever the derivation of the thematic material, the works fall into three categories according to the way in which the borrowed melody is handled. These categories are the cantus firmus style, the ornamented style, and the motet style.⁴

The cantus firmus style was treated in three ways: the uninterrupted pedal-point, the interrupted pedal-point, and the rhythmic cantus firmus.⁵ The uninterrupted pedal-point variety contained a cantus firmus in whole-, half-, or dotted half-notes, and the cantus firmus appeared throughout in any single voice.

³Robert L. Tusler, The Organ Music of Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (Bilthoven, 1958), p. 33.

⁴Ibid., p. 34.

⁵Ibid.

The interrupted pedal-point variety is characterized by a break in the cantus firmus caused by a rest, a melodic figure, a change of note values in one measure, the movement of the cantus to a different voice, or the absence of the cantus for an entire section.

The rhythmic cantus firmus contained distinctive rhythmic and melodic characteristics. Here the cantus generally was presented in the pedal and was clearly recognizable.

Vorimitation is commonly found. Each phrase is treated imitatively in short note values before the entrance of the cantus in long note values.

The ornamented style adorned the cantus firmus with ornamentation which added melodic and rhythmic life to the cantus. Ornamentation in the Renaissance involved short trills, mordents, inverted mordents, turns, slides, and also extended rapid passages, scale passages and similar material.⁶

In the third category, motet style, each phrase was treated in imitation. The cantus firmus is clearly recognized in this treatment. These compositions were written for two, three, and four voices. Also there existed the type in which the cantus firmus was not actively employed in the imitation. Rather material from the borrowed melody would be only passively used within a single voice. Another variant

⁶Ibid., p. 45.

of the motet style treated melodic figures obtained from the borrowed melody in imitation.

Cantus firmus technique in Renaissance keyboard music reached its climax in works of Jan P. Sweelinck (1562-1621). His variations on chorale melodies mark the beginning history of the organ-chorale.⁷ As organist at the Oude Kerk in Amsterdam, Sweelinck composed compositions for use in the Calvinist service where the German chorale was sung as well as the traditional psalms. The practice in the Reformed church of the day provided that the organist play a prelude and postlude for the singing of the chorales and psalms, a custom which seems to explain the chorale-variations by Sweelinck with only two settings and affording little contrast.⁸

Five distinct procedures are noted in Sweelinck's chorale treatment: the melody appears in a single voice as a part of the texture, the melody is in a single voice but separate from the texture, a motet style is used, the cantus is used as a basis of display sections, or it is used in echo passages.⁹

⁷Manfred Bukofzer, Music in the Baroque Era (New York, 1947), p. 75.

⁸Tusler, op. cit., p. 76.

⁹Ibid., p. 77.

Concerning Sweelinck's musical training it is noted that:

. . . contrary to the totally unsupported statements of many historians that he studied in Venice with Zarlino and Andrea Gabrieli, his training was guided by his father and later by Jan Willem Lossy, organist in Haarlem.¹⁰

However, it is true that Sweelinck was influenced by the Italian madrigals and the Venetian forms. His figuration technique was derived from Spanish influences and the English virginalists. That Sweelinck and the Englishman John Bull were familiar with each other's works is shown by the inclusion of a canon by Bull in Sweelinck's De Composition-Regeln and the composition of a fantasia based on a Sweelinck theme by Bull.¹¹ From Germany Sweelinck derived his instrumental coloration technique, and from his own native forefathers he gathered his contrapuntal devices and organ technique. Sweelinck's only trip outside the Netherlands was to purchase a harpsichord in Antwerp.

The increasing improvements in the organ were of no little influence in Sweelinck's compositional technique. The low wind pressure allowed a light action for the keyboards and a responsiveness to touch. The manuals were shallow with narrow keys, and wide leaps and rapid manual changes were possible. Technical displays were also possible.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 15.

¹¹Ibid., p. 75.

The pedal division was not as advanced as that of the Baroque organ but was adequate for playing a cantus firmus. The thin sound of the organ and the percussive effect of the heavy chuff in the speech of the pipes gave the ensemble a clarity which was ideal for polyphonic music.

Sweelinck had not only absorbed techniques from all over Europe but reciprocated these influences to their native countries by being the teacher of a great many composers of the next generation. No original manuscripts of his organ music have been found anywhere. However, copies have been found in England, Germany, France, Italy, Switzerland, Austria, Denmark, and Norway.

The only other composer of the time of Sweelinck who used the chorale as a basis for composition was Michael Praetorius (1571-1621), who beginning in 1604 was Kapellmeister at the chapel at Wolfenbüttel and at the court maintained by the Duke of Braunschweig.¹² Praetorius's works are mostly vocal, but the few chorale treatments exhibit an adaption of the Italian vocal coloration and the Italian toccata style in which scale passages are supported by chords. Here are represented the first German experiments in the Baroque forms.

The founder of the North German school and a composer of prime importance to the development of the organ chorale was

¹²Ibid., p. 80.

Samuel Scheidt (1587-1654), Sweelinck's most outstanding student. Scheidt combined the keyboard procedures of Sweelinck with the severity of the contrapuntal devices used in the chorale treatment in vocal music.

His most notable treatments of chorale melodies are in the third part of the Tabulatura Nova (1624). These chorale-variations served a liturgical purpose in that they could be performed in the "alternatim" practice of organ and congregation. Thus individual variations were labeled "versus" as opposed to the "variato" of the secular variations. Also Scheidt's Tabulatura Nova III served as a model for students in learning the technique of writing on chorale melodies. Organ playing "found in the Protestant chorale a motive and basis for development, than which it is impossible to imagine one more fit."¹³

Scheidt's chorale pieces have their basis in two procedures: the cantus firmus technique, in which the cantus appears in a single voice and one or more voices are added to it, and the fantasy technique, in which fragments or phrases of the borrowed melody are used in imitation and sequence in a continuous contrapuntal texture. In the latter technique the entire melody may not appear.

¹³Philipp Spitta, Johann Sebastian Bach, translated by Clara Bell and Fuller Maitland (New York, 1899), p. 97.

Scheidt's motivic work was either extracted from the cantus or freely composed. These figures are of the abstract style of the English virginalists and replaced the coloristic style which had almost taken the life out of German organ music. Some of Scheidt's motives can be classified according to their derivation: the German basic tradition, involving brief figures which outline a third and are used in sequence, stretto, and canon; the Italian canzona, with its characteristic rhythmic patterns, particularly $\downarrow \uparrow$; and English and Dutch keyboard music figuration with its parallel thirds and sixths.¹⁴

These motives normally change after each phrase of the cantus firmus.

The new figures are not abrupt but are developed melodically and rhythmically out of the preceding ones. This development is so plotted throughout a verse or variation as to lead to a building-up of dynamic energy to a climax corresponding to the climax of the melody upon which the piece is based, and its subsequent release.¹⁵

Scheidt's chorale-fantasy Ich ruf zu dir set the stage for the next developments in the organ-chorale. Although Scheidt's composition was very much like the chorale-motet, consisting of a chain of fugal expositions on successive phrases of the chorale melody in further developments in the

¹⁴Fritz Dietrich, Geschichte des Deutschen Orgelchorals im 17. Jahrhundert (Kassel, 1932), pp. 31-34.

¹⁵E. K. Dunham, "Samuel Scheidt," Organ Institute Quarterly, VI (Autumn, 1956), 11.

Baroque style, the fantasy was to become the rhapsodic composition which later musicians associate with the term.

Scheidt had not only provided a nucleus for the organ chorale in all its forms but had set a high standard for the emerging German Baroque organ composers.

Johann Ulrich Steigleder (1593-1653) was an immediate imitator of Scheidt in his Choraltabulaturbuch (1627). Steigleder completed the application of both secular variation treatment and sacred variation treatment to the chorale-variation so that the extreme characteristics of both types became taken over by their synthesis.¹⁶ Other contemporaries of Scheidt, who were also students of Sweelinck, were Melchior Schildt (1592-1667), Paul Siefert (1586-1666), and Jacob Praetorius (1586-1651).

Further developments in the organ-chorale were influenced by a religious change within the Lutheran church. To a certain extent mysticism and pietism replaced the orthodoxy of official Lutheranism. A subjective approach to the chorale text in settings for organ was one of the ultimate results connected with this change.

The generation following Scheidt was the golden age of the chorale-fantasy and begins with the choice of Tunder as the organist at the Marien Kirche in Lübeck.¹⁷ The chorale-fantasy still made use of the traditional contrapuntal devices,

¹⁶Dietrich, op. cit., p. 38.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 39.

and the old technique of coloration was used to good effect. However, the most characteristic treatment in fantasies of this period was the use of "echo."¹⁸ Here a phrase, motive, or simply a chord would be repeated on the Oberwerk after first being heard on the Rückpositiv. Examples of chorale-fantasies from the early Baroque era are by Franz Tunder (1614-1667); H. Scheideman (c. 1596-1654), the oldest member of the group; J. Reinken (1623-1722); and Matthias Weckmann (1621-1674), the last of the "Mathematiker des Orgelchorals."¹⁹

Some manuscript copies from the middle of the seventeenth century contain only single movements of chorale variations. These single settings were removed from their context from the variations found in Scheidt's Tabulatura Nova. This fact is significant in the changing conditions of the time.²⁰ Such procedure opens the history of the chorale-prelude proper, a composition which presents the chorale melody only once as in a single chorale variation.

The abstract cantus firmus variation was no longer in accord with the religious sentiment of the day. With the rise of the chorale-prelude, melodies were caused to reflect the meaning of the chorale text by means of ornamentation.²¹

¹⁸Ibid., p. 42.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 58.

²⁰Ibid., p. 42.

²¹H. J. Moser, Die Evangelische Kirchenmusik in Deutschland (Berlin, 1954), p. 28.

Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707) and his contemporary Johann Nicolaus Hanff (1630-1706) were the first composers of the genuine chorale-prelude.²²

In the middle Baroque period the organ chorale was still to adopt other forms of expression. But the many varieties of chorale treatment can be traced to these beginnings and ultimately back to Samuel Scheidt, the first composer to extensively treat the chorale in a varied manner.²³

²²Dietrich, op. cit., p. 43.

²³Spitta, op. cit., p. 97.

CHAPTER III

ORGAN CHORALS BASED ON WIE SCHÖN IN THE BAROQUE ERA

Samuel Scheidt

Scheidt has treated Wie schön in a set of seven variations. The work appeared in the Deutsche Orgeltabulatura (1646), but was written earlier and is a product of Scheidt's early years when he was under the influence of the colorists. The variations are prefaced by a simple chordal harmonization of the chorale.

The character of each variation is determined by the figuration used to accompany the cantus firmus, or in the case of the last two variations, the coloration given to the cantus firmus itself. The motion accelerates gradually through the set. This procedure is more like Sweelinck's secular variations than the sacred variation of Scheidt in his Tabulatura Nova III. Scheidt, like Sweelinck, treats the first variation in a movement slightly more animated than the chorale which precedes the variation set. The movement develops throughout the cycle until, by the last variation, rapid scale passages are used.

Scheidt occasionally uses brief imitation and stretto. However, figuration far exceeds the use of any contrapuntal

devices. The structure of each variation rests on a chordal framework to which melodic coloration and linear motion are added. The first four variations begin with Vorimitation which uses a motive derived from the cantus firmus.

Variation 1


The chorale melody appears continuous and unaltered in the soprano. There are four voices but occasionally one or more of them is not present. This variation is slightly more animated than the chorale harmonization. The first three phrases are accompanied by voices which imitate the chorale melody. The fourth phrase is accompanied by free material which includes the use of a cambiata figure, measures 21-23 (Figure 3). Imitation is again used in the accompaniment of the last phrase where it appears in the tenor.



Fig. 3--Scheidt's use of a cambiata figure, meas. 21-23

Variation 2

This variation is for two voices. The cantus firmus appears unaltered in the soprano. Several figurations are used to accompany the soprano voice: dotted rhythmic motives,

the rhythmic motive , sixteenth-note chordal outlines, triplet figures, and rapid scale figures. Ornamented cadences involving a trill on the leading tone closing with a turn appear at the close of the second phrase and the repeat of the third phrase and at the final cadence (Figure 4).

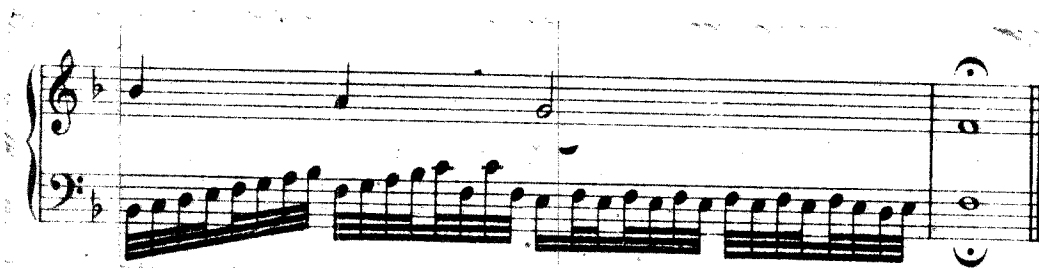


Fig. 4--Final cadence used by Scheidt in var. 2

Variation 3

The cantus firmus is presented in the tenor and played on a four-foot stop in the pedal. The other two voices above and below the tenor accompany in figurations, and occasionally make use of imitation. Sometimes the figuration alternates between hands as in measure 14 (Figure 5). Occasionally slurs of "imitatio violistica" appear. This was a favorite



Fig. 5--Alternation of figuration between the hands used by Scheidt in var. 3, meas. 14.

device of Scheidt's which was appropriated from his contemporary German violinists.

Variation 4

The cantus firmus is in the bass voice in quarter notes and appears unaltered and continuous. Two voices accompany with figurations and a little imitation at the beginning. Movement progressively quickens through the use of quarter-, eighth-, and sixteenth-notes. Figuration sometimes alternates between the accompanying voices and appears in parallel thirds and sixths in sixteenth-notes. "Hocket" figures, $\gamma \overline{\overline{\overline{\quad}}}$, appear against sixteenth-notes in measure 13 (Figure 6).

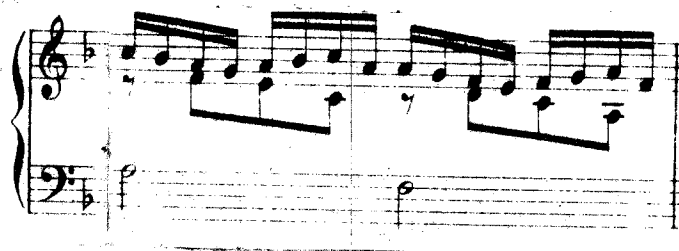


Fig. 6--"Hocket" figures used by Scheidt in var. 4, meas. 13.

Variation 5

Three voices are used, and the cantus firmus appears in the bass in quarter notes. There is much similar motion in eighth-, triplet, and sixteenth-note values. Broken intervals appear in measure 23 (Figure 7). The accompanying voices use figuration throughout the variation.



Fig. 7--Broken intervals used by Scheidt in var. 5, meas. 23.

Variation 6

The cantus firmus appears in the soprano and is imbedded in the technique of coloration (Figure 8). This

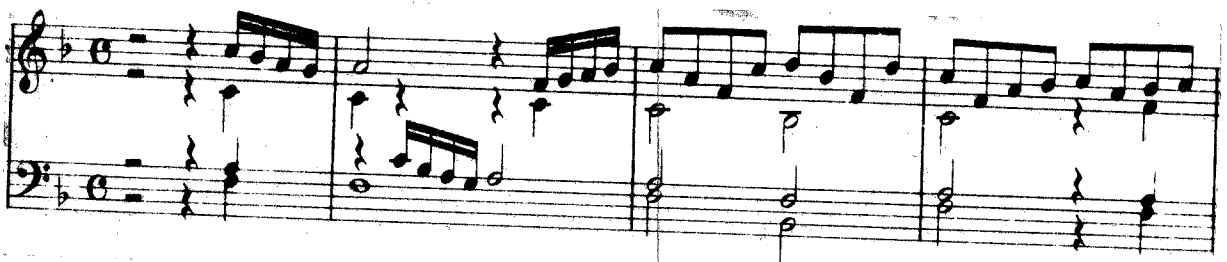







Fig. 8--Scheidt's use of coloration in var. 6, meas. 1-4.

coloration involves the following rhythms: , , ,  and . The accompaniment is chordal with a voice sometimes moving in similar motion with the cantus in the soprano.

Variation 7

The final variation is in four voices with the cantus firmus alternately appearing between the bass, where it is involved in coloration, and in the soprano, where it is in

half-notes and unaltered. Phrase four of the chorale melody is repeated to allow the cantus to appear both in the soprano and the bass. The bass part is continually involved in figurations. The upper voices move in vertical chord structures. The same techniques are applied in this variation as in the former ones: figuration, ornamented cadences, and "hocket" figures.

Dietrich Buxtehude

Buxtehude was born in 1637 in the then Danish city of Helsingborg. In 1668 he replaced Franz Tunder as organist at the MarienKirche in Lübeck. His Abendmusiken, which were hour-long Sunday afternoon concerts during the Advent season, brought him considerable fame. Bach's attendance of the Abendmusiken is a well-known incident. Buxtehude influenced all the North German composers of his time as well as J. S. Bach.

Howes draws an interesting comparison between Buxtehude's music and that of Bach:

In general, Buxtehude's music is much more naively romantic than Bach's, and at times it is more subtly expressive. While Bach constantly maintains an insistent, energetic (or otherwise) contrapuntal movement, and this develops a certain urgency and cumulative tension, Buxtehude offers more contemplative dalliana in less urgent, shorter, and at the same time more immediately enjoyable passages. In Bach the dramatic and climatic harmonic progressions are worked out and arrived at by the contrapuntal movement of the parts. In Buxtehude the contrapuntal movement seems to be added to an essential structure of chords more often than in Bach; Buxtehude even occasionally admits simple, unadorned chord progressions, quite candidly for the

sake of their own effect, and otherwise seems to take pleasure in the momentary sound of the music.¹

Buxtehude's composition on Wie schön is of the chorale-fantasy genre. The chorale-fantasy had undergone many changes since the time of Scheidt, but its beginnings can still be seen in Buxtehude's composition, especially in the last section in which each chorale phrase is treated in a fugal exposition.

Wie schön is given an extended treatment by Buxtehude, which can be divided into three sections (Figure 9). The

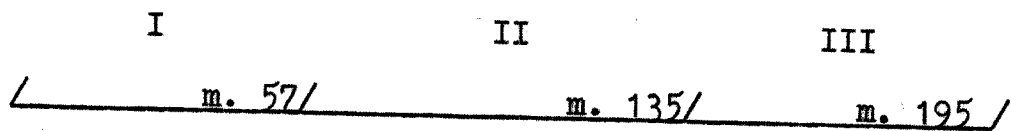


Fig. 9--Form of Buxtehude's Wie schön

first section is in 6/4 meter and treats the first three phrases of the chorale and their repetition in a three voice texture. The cantus appears in dotted whole-notes in the bass and then in the soprano. In measures 1-3 (Figure 10) a

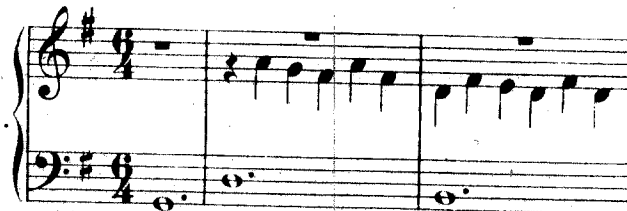


Fig. 10--Motive used by Buxtehude in section one, meas. 1-3.

¹Arthur Howes, "Buxtehude," Organ Institute Quarterly, V (Winter, 1955), 26.

single motive derived from the first few notes of the chorale is used in counterpoint against the cantus firmus. When the cantus moves to the soprano voice, this motive is used in its inversion (measures 31-33, Figure 11).

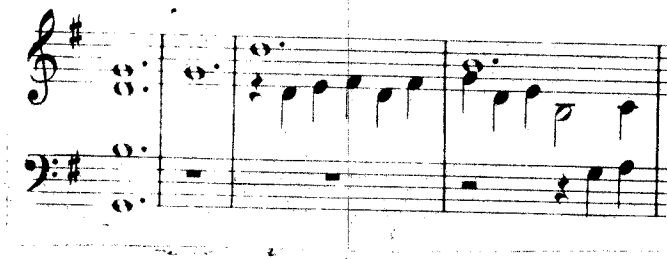


Fig. 11--Inversion of motive used by Buxtehude in section one, meas. 31-33.

The second section presents the remaining part of the chorale melody. However, only a phrase or a fragment of a phrase is presented at a time. Now the chorale melody is not the most important thing but is used as a structural device.

In the chorale, Buxtehude was unable to submit completely to the spirit of the chorale itself, as did Pachelbel and Böhm . . . sometimes the relationship to the chorale melody is academic and obscure.²

As mentioned earlier, the final section is more closely kin to the fantasies of the early seventeenth century in that a fugal treatment is given to each phrase. The subject of each four-voice fughetta is taken from the first few notes of the phrase. In Buxtehude's treatment there are actually two expositions presented for each phrase. The beginnings of

²Farley K. Hutchins, Dietrich Buxtehude (Paterson, New Jersey, 1955), p. 26.

the expositions based on the first phrase of the chorale will illustrate this procedure (measures 136-137, Figure 12 and

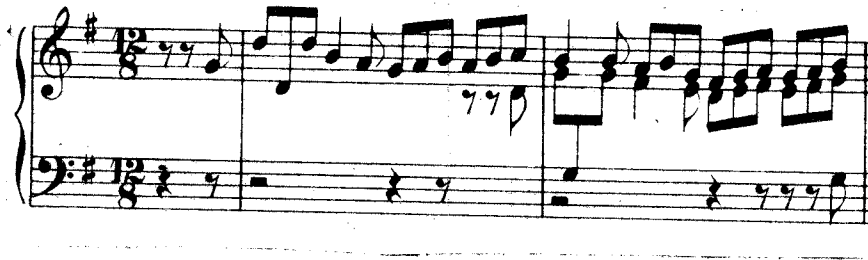


Fig. 12--Buxtehude's first fugal exposition on the first phrase of the chorale, meas. 136-137.

measures 141-142, Figure 13). As seen in Figure 13, the answer of the first exposition begins the second exposition



Fig. 13--Buxtehude's second fugal exposition on the first phrase of the chorale, meas. 141-142.

and is answered by the subject. Although in each exposition the four voices enter in a fugal manner, the tonic-dominant relationship is not always adhered to, the dominant being sometimes answered by the dominant and the same with the tonic.

The only phrase which does not receive a fugal treatment is the fourth, which is treated freely in an "echo" passage

(measures 169-171, Figure 14) which was a favorite device of Tunder and other early seventeenth century composers.

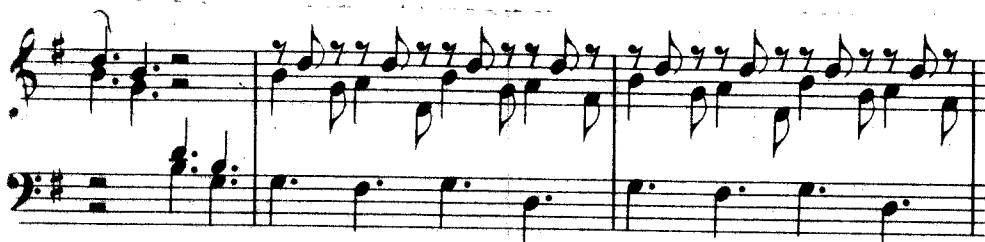


Fig. 14--Buxtehude's "echo" usage, meas. 169-171

Although the last phrase receives a fughetto treatment, it is presented in its entirety in the soprano voice to conclude the work.

Buxtehude's composition based on Wie schön is one of the most appealing compositions written on this chorale. Buxtehude is often cited as an important influence on Bach, but "nowhere in Bach's organ music is there to be found . . . the simple child-like joy of 'How Brightly Shines Yon Morning Star' . . ."³

Johann Christoph Bach

Johann Christoph Bach (1642-1703) belonged to the Middle German School and resided at Eisenach. The whole Bach family admired Johann Christoph and recognized him as one of the leading composers of the seventeenth century. It

³Howes, op. cit., pp. 26-27.

is known that J. S. Bach performed his uncle's cantata for double chorus and orchestra, Es erhub sich ein Streit.

Johann Christoph's fame has rested on his choral works. Although he did have imitators of his chorale-fugues, Bach's organ works are inferior to his cantatas and motets.⁴

His brief treatment of Wie schön is a fughetta which uses only the first phrase of the chorale melody. Although the piece is for four voices, there are never more than three present at the same time. The subject is virtually present in every measure, and there is neither contrapuntal nor harmonic interest. The chorale-fughetta served as a prelude to the singing of the chorale.

Johann Pachelbel

Pachelbel (1653-1706) was a member of the Middle German School at the same period as Johann Christoph Bach. But whereas Johann Christoph resisted Italian influences, Pachelbel carried these influences to the heart of Germany. He held posts at Eisenach, Erfurt, Stuttgart, Gotha, and at St. Sebald's in Nürnberg. Pachelbel's compositions, as well as the works of other composers of his school, are noted for a "modesty of means and simplicity of style."⁵

⁴Philipp Spitta, Johann Sebastian Bach, translated by Clara Bell and Fuller Maitland (New York, 1899), p. 105.

⁵Willi Apel, Masters of the Keyboard (Cambridge, 1947), p. 124.

Pachelbel's composition on Wie schön presents the chorale in the pedals in half-notes. Material from the cantus firmus is used in Vorimitation at the beginning and between the chorale phrases. However, the contrapuntal figures themselves are freely composed, "but one or only a few figures are adhered to, which proceed and react by reciprocal imitation"⁶ (see measures 35-37, Figure 15).



Fig. 15--Pachelbel's use of contrapuntal figures in meas. 35-37.

The Vorimitation at the beginning presents the entire phrase in imitation at the dominant. Another effective use of Vorimitation is in measure 28 where it appears in two-fold diminution (Figure 16).

Pachelbel's use of a limited number of contrapuntal figures gives his chorale-prelude a unity which the mere adoption of a cantus firmus does not guarantee. These contrapuntal figures are supported by a harmony which is always

⁶Spitta, op. cit., p. 114.



Fig. 16--Pachelbel's use of Vorimitation,
meas. 28-29.

interesting. Pachelbel possessed "a real sense of dignity of the organ and communicated it to his pupils. That was his greatest service."⁷

Johann Heinrich Buttstet

Johann Heinrich Buttstet (1666-1727) was a pupil of Pachelbel's and succeeded him at the Prediger Church at Erfurt. His compositions, like his teacher's and other composers' of the Middle German school, are marked by a remarkable simplicity.

Buttstet's composition on Wie schön is very much like Pachelbel's: the cantus firmus lies in the pedals and the contrapuntal figurations are similar to Pachelbel's. However, no thematic material is used in the upper voices, which are entirely free-composed. Except for a naive simplicity,

⁷Albert Schweitzer, J. S. Bach, translated by Ernest Newman (London, 1938), p. 43.

Buttstet's use of figurations differs in no way from Pachelbel's. The measures following the repeat of the first three phrases of the chorale melody well illustrate Buttstet's simplicity of style: the two upper voices move in continuous parallel thirds for six entire measures. This short chorale-prelude seems to be modeled after that of Buttstet's teacher, Pachelbel.

Andreas Armsdorf

Andreas Armsdorf (1679-1699) resided as did Pachelbel and Buttstet at Erfurt. In every respect his treatment of Wie schön is like Buttstet's except for some Vorimitation at the beginning. Armsdorf's work is evidently a parody of Buttstet's composition, several passages being reproduced note for note.

J. S. Bach

Concerning Bach's (1685-1750) composition on Wie schön Keller notes:

The genuineness of this chorale, which was first made known by Ritter in his Geschichte des Orgelspiels und der Orgelkomposition, is not authenticated with complete certainty. If it is by Bach, then it is from his Arnstadt period, since its idiom is completely that of a North German chorale-fantasy of ca. 1700.

An additional, apparently somewhat later, arrangement of the same chorale was left unfinished (23 measures, BG XL / Bach Gesellschaft XL7, p. 164; this is all the more regrettable since we otherwise possess no organ-chorale by Bach on this regal melody.⁸

⁸Hermann Keller, The Organ Works of Bach, translated from the German by Helen Hewitt (to be published by C. F. Peters, New York), pp. 315-316.

Keller's statement that the idiom of this version " is completely that of a North German chorale-fantasy" is not wholly true. Although separation of the phrases and other fantasy elements are introduced later in the work, the treatment of the first three phrases is very much like the Middle German Pachelbel's treatment of the same chorale: a three-voice texture is used; the cantus firmus lies in half-notes; Vorimitation is presented before the entrance of the cantus firmus and is used between phrases; and even a similar type of contrapuntal figuration is used.

The chorale melody is presented as a cantus firmus first in the soprano for three phrases. For the repetition of these phrases the cantus firmus moves to the bass where it remains for the remainder of the piece.

The Vorimitation at the beginning uses the first four notes of the first phrase and uses a tonal answer. Following this thematic material the voices take up free contrapuntal figuration, measures 1-2 (Figure 17).

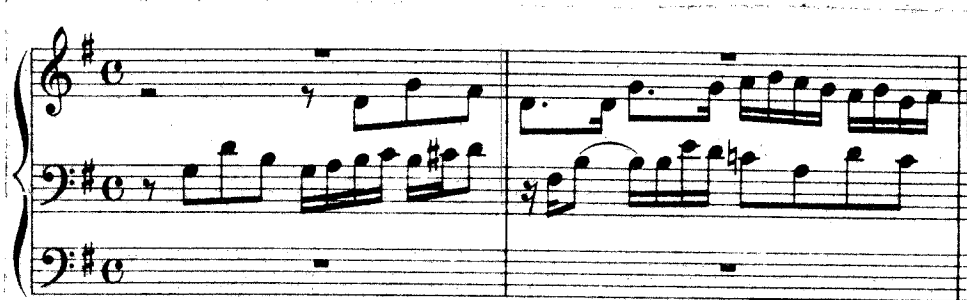


Fig. 17--Bach's use of Vorimitation and contrapuntal figuration in meas. 1-2.

After the repetition of the first three phrases of the cantus firmus, interludes of from four to ten measures in length are introduced between phrases. Strict contrapuntal writing is no longer adhered to. The previous three-voice counterpoint is sometimes replaced by free voicing (measures 36-37, Figure 18) and keyboard figurations (measure 42,



Fig. 18--Bach's free voicing in meas. 36-37

Figure 19). Although the writing is very free, thematic elements are still present through the use of Vorimitation in the interludes. The last phrase is used in its entirety

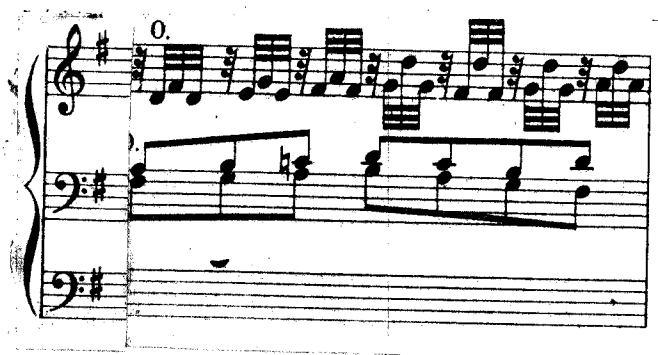


Fig. 19--Bach's keyboard figuration in meas. 42

in Vorimitation. A final flourish closes the work (Figure 20).



Fig. 20--Closing measures of Bach's version of Wie schön.

The composition as a whole is held together only by the use of a chorale melody. As stated previously, the piece begins in the conservative style of the Middle Germans but fantasie elements of the North Germans are introduced later. If Bach is the composer, this work is from his early years. Bach's synthesis of the North, Middle, and South German styles was to come in his mature works.

CHAPTER IV

ORGAN COMPOSITIONS BASED ON WIE SCHÖN AFTER BACH

After the time of Bach organ composition and playing suffered a decline. The new musical style was foreign to the nature of the organ. The statement made to Burney by C. P. E. Bach that he had not touched an organ pedal in years aptly describes the organ's status at the time.¹ Although Wie schön was not actively employed in organ composition of this period, its use in Mendelssohn's oratorio Christus, op. 97, testifies to the fact that it still retained its influence in musical composition.

Johann Christian Rinck

Rinck (1770-1846) was an organ and composition student of Johann Christian Kittel at Erfurt. Kittel was at that time the only living student of J. S. Bach. However, Rinck's compositions show little influence from the sublime art that was Bach's. Rinck is best known through his instruction book Organ School. Within this book there is a setting of Wie schön in which it is presented in a harmonization followed

¹Charles Burney, An Eighteenth-Century Musical Tour in Central Europe and the Netherlands, II, edited by Percy Scholes (New York, 1959), 221.

by a set of three variations. The movements, including the harmonization, are labeled "Soft Stops," "Loud Stops," "Soft Stops," and "Full Organ." The variations themselves are not much more complex than the simple chorale harmonization: the cantus firmus is always in the soprano while the accompanying voices make use of a few simple motives. The second variation is in reality only a chorale harmonization. This piece is intended only for teaching purposes.

Max Reger

With the works of Max Reger the decline of organ playing and literature which had been in effect since the end of the eighteenth century was at an end.² Reger was born in the Bavarian village of Brand in 1873. His formal training was mainly carried out under the exacting Hugo Riemann, who introduced Reger to the musical potentialities of the Protestant chorale. Although Reger was Catholic, he wrote much music for the Protestant church, including four chorale cantatas as well as many organ works based on chorales. While serving as Kapellmeister to the Grand Duke of Meiningen's famous orchestra, he conducted Debussy's L'Après-midi d'un Faune. Thus Reger was "one of the very few German composers who responded positively and immediately to the then 'new' French school."³

²Heinrich Fleischer, "Johann Nepomuk David," Diapason, VI (November, 1954), 6.

³Donald Mitchell, "Max Reger (1873-1916)," Music Review, XII (November, 1951), 284.

Reger was a real craftsman in his art and produced a prodigious amount of music, including not only works for orchestra, choir, piano, and organ, but also an amazing amount of chamber music. This is particularly noteworthy since he died at the age of forty-three (1916) and not only spent his time composing but also served as teacher, concert pianist, and orchestra conductor.

Reger's life-long friendship with Karl Straube (1873-1950), who was organist at the Leipzig St. Thomas' Church, proved to be a stimulus for Reger's composing for the organ. Straube introduced many of his friends' organ works, and many of Reger's works are dedicated to him.

In Reger's compositional technique can be seen a development toward modern-day concepts. Schönberg states:

A new technique had to be created, and in this development Max Reger, Gustav Mahler, and also I myself played a role.⁴

This "new technique" repudiated the old methods of composing--the use of "sequences and semi-sequences, that is, unvaried or slightly varied repetitions differing in nothing essential from first appearances, except that they are exactly transposed to other degree"--and adopted the new technique of "developing variation"--"the use of motives and other structural ingredients of themes only in varied forms."⁵

⁴Arnold Schönberg, Style and Idea (New York, 1950), p. 186.

⁵Ibid., p. 185.

To a certain extent this "developing variation" technique is applied in Reger's Fantasy on the Choral "Wie schön leucht uns der Morgenstern," op. 40, no. 1. In Reger's non-fugal counterpoint no particular motive is exploited. The counterpoint is always new, having evolved from what has been said previously. Thus repetition and strict imitation are almost non-existent. These characteristics are particularly noticeable in the second section of Wie schön where a process of continual growth is evident.

The form of Reger's fantasy, the most extended work treated in this paper, is cast in three parts, each of which treats the cantus firmus in a different way (see Figure 21). The form is as logical as that of Sonata Allegro form. The first section treats the entire chorale melody in two settings in which the chorale is distinctly heard in the tenor. The second section also uses the entire chorale melody in two settings, but this time it is completely obscured by its being made to serve as the frame-work for contrapuntal development. In the third section the chorale melody returns in a straightforward manner in which it is presented against the workings of a fugue. Thus the entire chorale melody is presented a total of five times.

A seventeen-measure introduction consisting of several short contrasting sections precedes the entrance of the

I	first two settings	II	second two settings	III	fifth setting (fugue)
/ m. 17/	m. 73/	m. 121/	m. 192/		

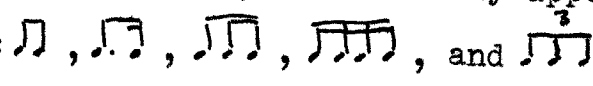

Fig. 21---Form of Reger's fantasy on Wie schön

chorale melody. The first measure illustrates Reger's characteristically thick texture (Figure 22).

Introduzione
Pesante

The musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is in treble clef, the middle staff is in bass clef and labeled 'I Org Pl *)', and the bottom staff is in bass clef and labeled 'Org Pl'. The music is in a key with four flats (B-flat major or D-flat minor) and common time. The texture is very dense, with many notes beamed together in chords and moving lines. The first measure shows a complex chordal structure with many notes, illustrating the 'thick texture' mentioned in the text.

Fig. 22--Texture in Reger's setting of *Wie schön*, mea. 1.

The first two settings of the chorale melody generally make use of strict, four-voice writing with the cantus appearing in the tenor. The remaining three voices weave contrapuntal lines around the chorale melody. The counterpoint gradually increases in its movement through the first setting and part of the second by successively appearing in the following rhythms: , and  (*piu andante*). During the second setting of the chorale the motion again subsides to eighth-note movement but only to run the gamut of these rhythms again. When the rhythm is in triplets the counterpoint assumes a homogeneous quality in which the voices

move together much of the time and also in parallel thirds and even parallel $\frac{6}{3}$ chords.

A fourteen measure codetta closes the first part. Fragments of the chorale melody are used, but the interest lies in the counterpoint which uses all the rhythmic figures found in the first part.

The second section begins by treating the chorale melody in such an ornamented fashion that it is virtually unrecognizable. In fact, the voice containing the notes of the chorale melody assumes the character of the other contrapuntal voices. Figure 23 shows the setting of the first two notes of the fourth phrase of the chorale melody. The location of the two notes is indicated by the German text.

The musical score for Figure 23 consists of three staves. The top staff is a vocal line in soprano clef, with lyrics "Nach dir" and "we". The middle staff is the right-hand piano accompaniment, and the bottom staff is the left-hand piano accompaniment. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The dynamic marking "meno pp" is written above the vocal line and below the piano accompaniment staves. A reference "(+ C. III.)" is written below the left-hand piano part.

Fig. 23--Reger's treatments of the chorale melody in meas. 86.

The "developing variation" technique is extensively used, and the motives grow one out of the other, making a

continuous stream of counterpoint. After the beginning adagio the tempo is constantly quickened until at measure ninety-five an allegro vivace is attained. A fifth voice is added to the previous four-voice texture, and the fourth setting is begun by the entrance of the chorale melody in broken octaves in the pedals (Figure 24).

94 *stringendo* I 8'4' **Allegro vivace** (I) *più f*

f II 16'8'4'2' *più f*

+K II +K I *più f*
4. Von

96 (II)

Gott kommt mir ein

Fig. 24--Beginning of the fourth setting in Reger's Wie schön, meas. 94-96.

In this second part only the last two phrases of the chorale melody in the fourth setting are easily distinguished. These two phrases are played in the pedal with sixteenth-note triplets heard in figuration in the manuals (Figure 25). A short transitional passage cadencing on a diminished seventh chord leads to the third part.

Vivace assai.

II. Man. *f*

I. Man. *f*

f (+ C. II, III.)

pi

pi

pi

Ei a Ei

Fig. 25--Reger's figuration in meas. 108

The exposition of a four-voice fugue begins the third part of the fantasy. The fugue subject (Figure 26) is not derived from the chorale melody but is constructed so that it can be later presented as a descant to the chorale melody.

f II. Man. (8;4;2;16')

III. Man. (8;4')

Fig. 26--Reger's fugue subject

After the entrance of the four voices, the subject is presented in stretto between the tenor and bass. A short development section follows in which the first four notes of the fugue subject are used. The entire subject then returns, but now as a descant to the first phrase of the chorale melody which appears in the bass voice and played by the pedals. The remaining chorale phrases are presented accompanied by motives from the fugue subject. Interludes which also use these motives appear between each phrase.

The second two phrases of the chorale melody are presented with only the head of the fugue subject. The repeat of the first three phrases of the chorale melody invert the previous procedure. Now the chorale melody appears in the soprano, and motives from the fugue subject accompany in the bass played by the pedals. The remaining phrases are presented as a succession of chords in the manuals. The head of the fugue subject and the second motive of the subject are heard in the pedals in conjunction with these last two phrases. A codetta which uses the first four notes of the chorale melody in sequence closes the work.

Reger's fantasy does not attempt to give a detailed portrayal of the text, but the spirit of the chorale is always present. A festive mood is effectively used at the word Jubilieret where double trills are introduced (Figure 27). In fact, the use of trills throughout the work, including

many in the pedals, contributes to the joyous spirit achieved by Reger in his setting.

180 ju - bi - lie - ret, tri

Org Pl *ffff*

Fig. 27--Reger's double trills, meas. 180

Considering the work as a whole, Reger's genius lies in his ability to unify contrasting elements. Each new idea is prepared for by the use of the "developing variation" technique and by the use of effective transitional passages. For example, the transitional passage between the introduction to this fantasy and the first entrance of the chorale melody not only dramatically prepares for the chorale, but slightly overlaps into the next section in a rhythmical way (Figure 28).

Another treatment of Wie schön by Reger is found in his Choralvorspiele, opus 67, which contains fifty-five short settings of chorale melodies. The setting of Wie schön is simple: the cantus appears in the soprano with a simple accompaniment which uses material taken from his earlier fantasy on the same chorale.

The musical score is written for three voices (I, II, III) and piano. It is in a minor key with a 4/4 time signature. The score is divided into two systems. The first system shows the introduction, with dynamics ranging from *pp* to *ppp*. The second system shows the entrance of the chorale melody, with lyrics in German: "schon leucht' uns der Mor". The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

sempre diminuendo
p
II. Man. *pp*
III. Man. *ppp* (8', 4')
II. Man. *ppp* (8')

1. Wie
ppp

sempre diminuendo
p
pp
ppp

schon leucht' uns der Mor
(8', 16')

Fig. 28--Reger's transition from the introduction to the entrance of the chorale melody, meas. 16-18.

Reger's use of "developing variation" and a chromatic harmony which involves remote dissonances, together with his Bachian counterpoint and "craftsman" attitude toward composition has made him a highly individualistic composer. His contrapuntal approach to composition as displayed in Wie schön gave new life to German organ music which has continued down to the present day.

Sigfrid Karg-Elert

Karg-Elert (1873-1933) succeeded Reger as Professor of Composition at the Leipzig Conservatorium in 1916. The year before his death he made a concert tour of the United States.

Karg-Elert's music, like Reger's, was influenced by the Baroque, but he also made free use of impressionistic devices, especially in regard to tone color. The elaborate registrations which are sometimes called for in his music make excessive demands on the performer. Most of Karg-Elert's music is written for the organ and the harmonium.

During the years 1908 to 1910 his Sixty-six Chorale Improvizations were published. Number 44 is a short piece based on Wie schön. It is in four to five voices, and the various phrases of the cantus firmus are distributed between the voices. The meter is $\frac{12}{16}$, and the chorale melody is obscured in contrapuntal lines which incorporate a steady flow of sixteenth-notes as shown in Figure 29. This figure also shows the cantus firmus presented in minor during the repeat

of the first phrase, which begins on the fourth beat of measure six.

The image shows a musical score for Karg-Elert's chorale, measures 6-7. The score is in G minor and 4/4 time. It features a cantus firmus in the upper voice, with piano accompaniment in the lower voices. The tempo is marked 'mp' (mezzo-piano). The score includes a dynamic marking 'mp' and a tempo marking '+ 16' dazu, etwas dunkler' (16 measures more, somewhat darker). The cantus firmus is labeled 'cantus'.

Fig. 29--Karg-Elert's use of the cantus firmus in minor, meas. 6-7.

The use of an impressionistic effect is seen in the closing measures where the last phrase of the chorale is treated in a flow of parallel fifths.

In Karg-Elert's treatment of Wie schön the cantus firmus becomes the ground-work for counterpoint and an exceedingly chromatic harmony. In fact, the harmony itself is one of the primary interests of this piece. Occasionally even notes of the chorale melody are altered to accommodate the harmony.

Heinrich Kaminsky

Kaminsky was born in 1886 at Tiengen, in the Black Forest, the son of an Old Catholic clergyman. Most of his life was spent in the Bavarian village of Ried where he

composed in relative isolation from his contemporary composers. He died in 1946.

Moser sees in Kaminsky's "perpetual rubato," e. g., the continuously varying tempo and mood within a single composition, an affinity with the style cultivated by Froberger, Frescobaldi, and the high Renaissance madrigal.⁶ This "perpetual rubato" is characteristic in his Toccata (1923) which is based on Wie schön.

Kaminsky's composition is a large work of an improvisatory nature and very sectional. Much of the toccata is based on fragments of the chorale melody which are generally so completely transformed as to make their relationship to the original chorale unrecognizable to the listener. When a complete phrase is presented, the technique is used in which the chorale melody is highly ornamented. In Kaminsky's use of this technique the phrase is also extended over many measures and as much as an entire section.

The work falls into three parts, each part distinguished by the method in which the chorale melody or fragments from the chorale melody is treated. A long pedal solo begins the first part. The only relationship of this passage to the chorale melody is the use of the beginning motive in the first phrase which outlines a major triad. However, Kaminsky presents

⁶Hans Joachim Moser, Die Evangelische Kirchenmusik in Deutschland (Berlin, 1954), p. 263.

the motive in minor. This figure is also used later in the first part where it is presented in both major and minor (Figure 30).

Fig. 30--Kaminsky's use of a motive which outlines a triad, meas. 15.

Another motive which is used in this first part is derived from the third chorale phrase. This motive not only appears in condensed note values and in a different rhythm, but also adds some ornamentation and appears in minor (Figure 31).

Fig. 31--Kaminsky's motive derived from the third phrase of Wie schön, meas. 24.

The second part which is in a contrasting adagio tempo makes use of entire phrases of the chorale. Whereas the first part is characterized by a display of short motives, this part contains long contrapuntal lines. A three-voice fugal exposition begins this part which uses the first phrase of the chorale in a minor key as a fugue subject (Figure 32).

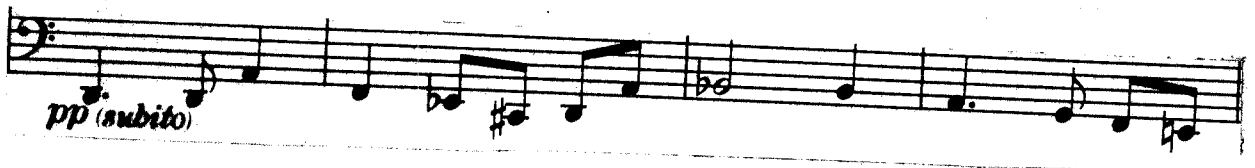


Fig. 32--Kaminsky's fugue subject based on Wie schön, meas. 53-56.

After this exposition the third voice which entered with the fugue subject continues with the second, third, and fourth phrases. However, the notes of the chorale are obscured and separated from one another by ornamentation. A free, rhapsodic section follows in which the material bears no resemblances to the chorale melody.

The third part presents the entire chorale melody phrase by phrase. But again the chorale is treated in such a way as to almost conceal it. The various chorale phrases are distributed between the bass, soprano, and inner voices. As in the second part the chorale phrases are ornamented and extended over many measures. The other contrapuntal voices assume an importance which equals the particular voice containing the cantus firmus.

Kaminsky's composition techniques are in many respects like Reger's: the use of contrapuntal lines, chromatic harmony, and thick textures. However, Kaminsky's treatment of the chorale melody differs considerably. While Reger used the chorale melody unaltered, at least for the larger part of his fantasy on Wie schön, Kaminsky always alters it. He uses the chorale entirely as a structural basis in which the chorale tune serves in the formation of potential motives and only as the contour of melodic lines.

Ernst Pepping

Ernst Pepping was born in 1901. His compositions are associated with the German Lutheran culture, and he has written many compositions for organ which are based on German chorales.

His partita on Wie schön (1933) consists of three movements in which the chorale melody is treated in the following ways: motives are derived from fragments of the chorale and used in contrapuntal lines; an entire phrase is used in long note values, but no melodic significance is attached to it; the chorale phrase is subjected to coloration; the chorale is presented in its entirety in the soprano in strict chorale-prelude fashion.

The first movement treats the chorale melody in the first two methods. The meter is $\frac{6}{4}$ and gives this movement a pastoral nature. The most prominent motives which are derived from the chorale first appear in measure one and measure

three (Figure 33). Both have their origins in the first phrase of the chorale.

Fig. 33--Pepping's use of two motives derived from the first phrase of the chorale, meas. 1-3.

The fifth phrase of the chorale, which consists of a descending D major scale, is also used at the beginning. It is presented in long note values in the middle voice (see Figure 33), after which it is repeated first in the bass and then again in the middle voice. However, it is of no melodic significance and forms an ostinato around which melodic motives are used. Both derived motives and originally composed motives are used in this first movement.

The second movement (Moderato) is in two sections. The first section treats the entire chorale melody in chorale-prelude fashion. The melody appears continuously and in the soprano while two voices are used in a simple accompaniment. The use of alternating meters, $\frac{4}{2}$, $\frac{5}{2}$, and $\frac{3}{2}$, gives an irregular

rhythm to the cantus. The second section (Allegro) is for manuals alone and in a three-voice contrapuntal texture. Most of the material in this section is free-composed. Only the first and last phrases are used, the former at the beginning and the latter at the end. They appear in the soprano voice but are not recognizable to the listener since they are ornamented and extended.

The third movement treats the chorale melody in the same manner as in the first movement. In fact, some of the same motives are used as well as new ones which are derived from the chorale melody and originally composed.

Pepping's compositional technique is based on a strict contrapuntal style. However, his inclusion of abstract figuration and his adaptation of a rather severe style give his counterpoint a similarity to that of Sweelinck and Scheidt rather than that of Bach.

Johann Nepomuk David

David was born in 1895 at the Austrian town Efferding. Like Reger, David is a Catholic who has produced a considerable amount of Protestant church music. In 1934 he held the chair of composition at the Leipzig Conservatory, which Reger had held twenty years earlier.

His Choralwerk appeared in twelve volumes from 1930 to 1954 (to be continued). Included are forty-one contrapuntal settings mostly of German chorales, but also included are some medieval spiritual folksongs. These works all use a

strict polyphonic texture in which all the contrapuntal devices are used: canons, double canons at various intervals, augmentation, diminution, inversion, and retrograde. "Never since the days of the Dutch masters Obrecht, Josquin and Compere has music showed such a concentrated homogeneous structure, save some works of the late Bach."⁷

Two settings of Wie schön by David appear in volumes four and seven of the Choralwerk. The setting in volume four is a chorale-prelude in three voices. The cantus firmus is in the pedal on a four-foot stop, causing it to sound as the middle voice. The accompanying voices present the entire chorale melody in a two-voice canon. In this canon the chorale is used in both unaltered and altered forms. In this setting there is not a single measure which does not contain thematic material.

In volume seven of the Choralwerk is a version of Wie schön which is titled "Chorale and Fugue." In the first movement the chorale phrases appear in long note values in the soprano. A free composed accompaniment is used which incorporates various rhythmical figurations. The tempo marking is Feierlich und sehr rhythmisch.

Beginning in measure nineteen is one of those passages about which Fleischer comments:

⁷Fleischer, op. cit.

His [David's] organ style is often quite unconventional. Like Buxtehude and Reger for the organ or Chopin for the piano, he seems to enjoy exploring all of the possibilities of expression which the organ can give.⁸

In this passage the hands cross, which is very unusual in organ compositions, and the chorale melody is heard in the left hand with an inverted pedal-point above it (Figure 34). The left hand makes use of a tremelo effect.



Fig. 34--David's use of an unconventional organ style, meas. 19.

The fugue makes use of a subject which contains three motives (Figure 35). The first two motives are free-composed

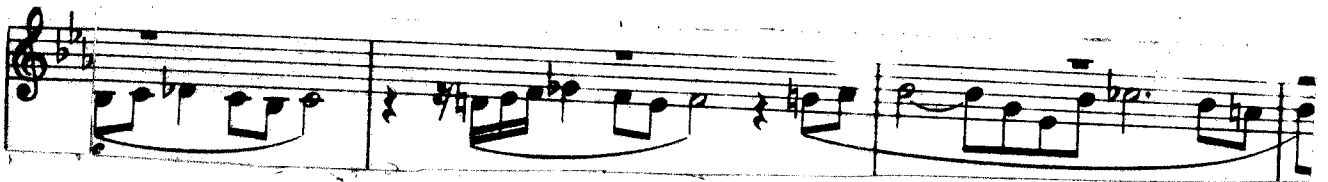


Fig. 35--David's fugue subject based on Wie schön

while the third is derived from the opening motive of the chorale. During the course of the fugue the subject is used in inversion and diminution. At the close of the fugue a

⁸Ibid., p. 7.

toccata section leads to a harmonization of the entire chorale melody. The toccata section makes use of keyboard techniques in which the hands cross and arpeggiated chords are used. The chorale harmonization is marked "Pleno organo" and concludes the work.

A balance between free material and material derived from the chorale seems to be David's goal in this work. The opening and closing sections allow the chorale to be clearly set forth. Although the fugue passively uses the chorale melody, it is mostly free-composed and presents a contrast to the other sections.

Flor Peeters and Garth Edmundson

The organ-chorale was originally a functional type of music in that it played a liturgical role in the Protestant church. With the examples by Bach and other composers it attained high artistic standards and existed on its own merits as a form in musical composition. Today many composers have retained the functional purpose of the organ-chorale and make use of currently popular hymns as well as the old German chorale tunes. Two such composers are Flor Peeters and Garth Edmundson.

Flor Peeters (b. 1903) is a Belgian and is famous as an improviser and concert-organist. His composition on Wie schön appears in his Ten Chorale Preludes for Organ (1950). In this piece Peeters adapts a procedure similar to Bach's treatment of chorale: the chorale is presented as the middle

voice of a trio and played in the pedals. The bass and soprano are played on the manuals and make use of material which is derived from the cantus as well as free material. These two voices are heard in interludes between phrases as well as serving as an accompaniment to the cantus firmus.

The treatment of Wie schön by the American Garth Edmundson is a toccata (1955). The chorale is presented in isolated phrases which are used both in the pedal and the manuals. Rapid figurations appear against the chorale and in interludes between the phrases.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

The numerous organ compositions based on Wie schön since Scheidt's early composition have used this chorale melody in a variety of ways. However, in the Baroque era four of these treatments, those of Pachelbel, Buttstet, Armsdorf, and the composition ascribed to Bach, are remarkable in their similarity. A comparison of the treatments given by these composers to the beginning of the third phrase of the chorale will illustrate this similarity. See Figures 36-39.

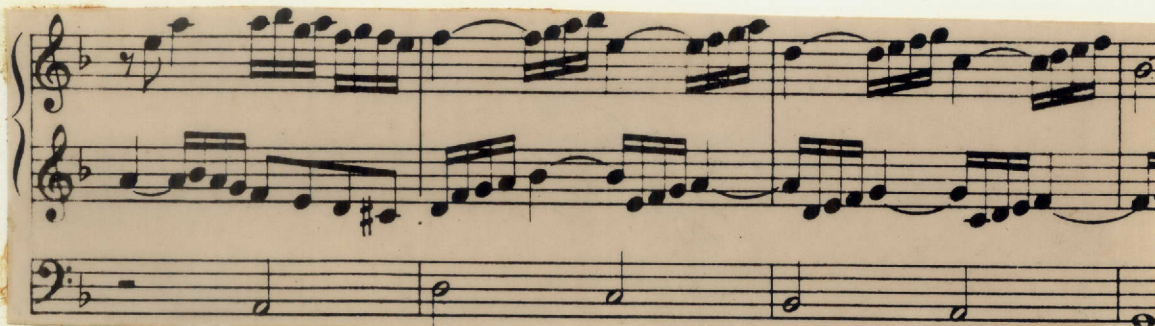


Fig. 36--Pachelbel's treatment of the third phrase of the chorale melody.



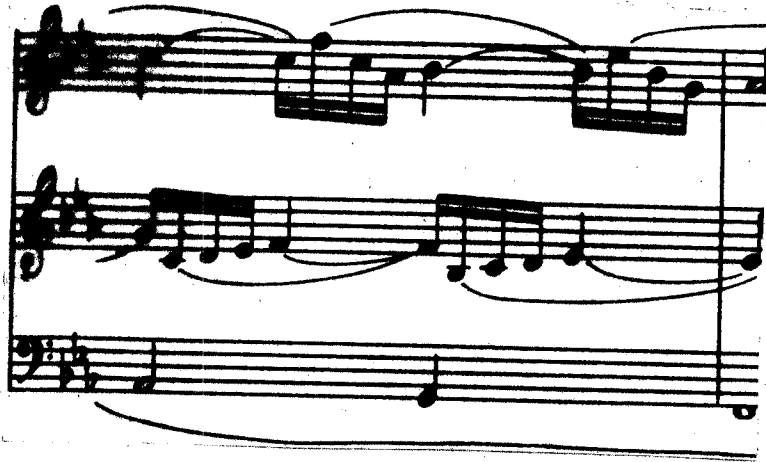


Fig. 37--Buttstet's treatment of the third phrase of the chorale melody.

A musical score for two staves. The top staff is in treble clef and contains a complex, multi-measure rest with a series of rhythmic markings above it. The bottom staff is in bass clef and contains a simple melodic line.

Fig. 38--Armsdorf's treatment of the third phrase of the chorale melody.

A musical score for three staves. The top staff is in treble clef, the middle in bass clef, and the bottom in bass clef. The music features a complex, multi-measure rest in the top staff and a melodic line in the bottom staff.

Fig. 39--Bach's treatment of the third phrase of the chorale melody.

Since Pachelbel's treatment of the chorale was the first version to be written of the four compositions, it is probably that Buttstet, Armsdorf, and Bach were influenced directly or indirectly by his setting.

While these four compositions are noted for their similarity, one version of Wie schön in the Baroque era is unique, that of Dietrich Buxtehude. The other Baroque composers generally restrict their treatments of the chorale melody to one method, but Buxtehude treats the chorale melody in three distinct ways: the chorale melody is presented in long notes with an accompaniment which uses a motive derived from the cantus; fragments of the chorale melody are used in a rhapsodic section; each phrase is used in a fugal exposition. Buxtehude is also the only Baroque composer who makes use of compound meter. Although his setting is sectional, his use of a continuous flow of triplets gives his composition vitality and unity.

In the Baroque treatments the chorale melody can readily be recognized, even in the chorale-fantasy of Buxtehude. However, after Bach the chorale melody per se was not always of primary interest to the composer. Rather it was only a means of attaining structural ideas. This procedure was used to a limited extent in the Baroque era, for example, Buxtehude's use of the chorale phrases in a chain of fughetas. But in the compositions by Reger, Karg-Elert, Kaminsky, Pepping, and David the chorale melody is used in passages or even in

the entire composition in such a way as to make it unrecognizable to the listener.

Although the foundation of the techniques by which a chorale melody can be treated was firmly laid in the Baroque era, composers have continually used these techniques in creating new and successful compositions. The organ-chorale has remained a valid form in musical composition, and the compositions based on the chorale Wie schön well illustrate this fact.

APPENDIX

ORIGINAL VERSION OF WIE SCHÖN

How love - ly shines the
Wie schön leuch - tet der
Morn - ing Star,
Mor - gen - stern,
With mer - cy beam - ing from a - far:
Voll Gnad und Wahr - heit von dem Herrn

O Right - eous Branch,
Du Sohn Da - vids aus
O Jes - se's Rod'
Ju - kobs Stamm,
Thou Son of Man and Son of God!
Mein Ke - nig und mein Bräu - ti - gam,

Je - sus! Ho - ly, ho - ly, yet most low - ly, Draw Thou near us; Great Em - man - uel, come and hear us!
Lieb - lich, freund - lich, Schön und herr - lich, Gross und ehr - lich, Reich von Ga - ben, Hoch und sehr prächt - tig, er - ha - ben.

The host of heav'n re - joic - es;
Du süs - se Wur - zel Jes - se!

We, too, will lift our voice - es:
Hast mir mein Herz be - ses - sen.

TEXT OF WIE SCHÖN

- 1 Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern
 Vol Gnad' und Wahrheit von den Herrn,
 Die süsse Wurzel Jesse!
 Du Sohn Davids aus Jakobs Stamm,
 Mein König und mein Bräutigam,
 Hast mir mein Harz besessen,
 Lieblich, freundlich,
 Schön und herrlich, gross und ehrlich,
 Reich von Gaben,
 Hoch und sehr prächtig erhaben!
- 2 Ei mein Perl', du werthe Kron',
 Wahr'r Gottes-und Marien Sohn,
 Ein hochgeborner König!
 Mein Herzheisst dich ein Lilium,
 Dein süsses Evangelium
 Ist lauter Milch und Honig.
 Ei ein Blümlein,
 Hosianna, himmlisch Manna,
 Das wir essen,
 Deiner kan ich nicht vergessen!
- 3 Geuss sehr tief in mein Herz hinein,
 Du heller Jaspis und Rubin,
 Die Flamme deiner Liebe
 Und erfreu' mich, dass ich doch bleib'
 An deinem auserwählten Leib
 Ein' leben dige Rippe
 Nach dir ist mir,
 Gratiiosa coeli rosa,
 Krank und glümmet
 Mein Herz, durch Liebe verwundet,
- 4 Von Gott kommt mir ein Freuden schein,
 Wenn du mit deinen Augenlein
 Mich freundlich tust anblicken.
 O Herr Jesu, mein trautes Gut,
 Dein Wort, dein Geist, dein Lieb und Blut
 Mich innerlich erquicken!
 Nimm mich freundlich
 In dein' Arme, das ich warme
 Werd' von Gnaden!
 Auf dein Wort komm ich geladen.
- 5 Herr Gott Vater, mein starken Held
 Du hast mich ewig vor der Welt
 In deinem Sohn geliebet.

Dein Sohn hat mich ihm selbst vertraut,
 Er ist mein Schatz, ich bein sein Braut,
 Sehr hoch in ihm erfreuet.

Eia, eia,
 Himmlisch Leben wird er geben
 Mir doch oben!
 Ewig soll mein Herz ihn loben.

6 Zwingt die Saiten in Zithara
 Und lasst die süsse Musika
 Ganz freundenreich erschallen,
 Das ich möge mit Jesulein,
 Dem wunderschönen Bräut 'gam mein,
 In steter Liebe Wallen!
 Singet, springet,
 Jubilieret, triumphieret,
 Dankt dem Herren!
 Gross ist der König der Ehren!

7 Wie bin ich doch so herzlich froh,
 Das mein Schatz ist dass A und O,
 Der Anfang und das Ende!
 Er wird mich doch zu seinen Preis
 Auf nehmen in das Paradeis,
 Des Klopff' ich in die Hände.
 Amen! Amen!
 Kom, du schöne Freudenkrone,
 Bleib nicht lange,
 Deiner wart' ich mit Verlangen!

HARMONIZATION OF M. PRAETORIUS

1. { Wie schön leuch-tet der Mor-gen-ster-n/
Du Sohn Da - vid/ aus Ja-kobsStamm/
voll Gnad und Wahrheit von demHerrn/
mein Kö-nig und meinBräu-ti-gam/
du sü - ße Wur - zel Jes - se/
hast mir mein Herz be - ses - sen/ }

4. { Wie schön leuch-tet der Mor-gen-ster-n/
Du Sohn Da - vid/ aus Ja-kobsStamm/
voll Gnad und Wahrheit von demHerrn/
mein Kö-nig und meinBräu-ti-gam/
du sü - ße Wur - zel Jes - se/
hast mir mein Herz be - ses - sen/ }

lieb-lich/ freund-lich/schön und herr-lich/groß und ehr-lich/reich von Ga - ben/ hoch und sehr präch - tig er - ha - ben.
lieb-lich/ freund-lich/schön und herr-lich/groß und ehr-lich/reich von Ga - ben/ hoch und sehr präch-tig er - ha-ben.

HARMONIZATION OF SCHEIDT

A handwritten musical score consisting of six systems of two staves each. The notation is in a historical style, likely for a lute or similar instrument. The first system shows a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with a harmonic accompaniment. The second system continues the piece with similar notation. The third system features a prominent triplet in the bass staff. The fourth system shows a melodic line with some rests and a bass staff with chords. The fifth system continues the melodic and harmonic development. The sixth system concludes the piece with a final cadence in the bass staff. The handwriting is clear and legible, with some annotations and markings throughout the score.

HARMONIZATION OF BACH

The first system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The music features a complex texture with many beamed eighth and sixteenth notes, creating a dense harmonic and rhythmic pattern.

The second system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. The key signature has two sharps. The music continues with a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, including some longer note values and rests.

The third system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. The key signature has two sharps. The music features a variety of note values, including eighth, sixteenth, and quarter notes, with some phrasing slurs.

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