

**Gregory Butler. Bach's Clavier-Übung III: The Making of a Print. With a Companion Study of the Canonic Variations on "Vom Himmel Hoch," BWV 769.** Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1990. 139 pp.

When I read Gregory Butler's *Bach's Clavier-Übung III: The Making of a Print*, I could not help but think of a remark made by Arthur Mendel at the first meeting of the American Bach Society some twenty years ago. At the conclusion of a round table on post-World War II developments in Bach research, a long session in which the manuscript studies of Alfred Dürr, Georg von Dadelsen, and Robert Marshall were discussed in some detail, Mendel quipped, with a wry smile: "And if the original manuscripts have revealed a lot about Bach's working habits, wait until we take a closer look at the original prints!" The remark drew laughter, as Mendel intended, and struck one at the time as facetious, for how could the prints of Bach's works ever show as much about chronology and the compositional process as the manuscripts? The surviving manuscript materials, written by Bach and his copyists, display a wealth of information that can be unraveled through source-critical investigation: revisions, corrections, organizational second thoughts. The prints, by contrast, appear inscrutable. Uniform and definitive in appearance, made by engravers rather than Bach or his assistants, they seem to be closed books, telling little—if anything—about the genesis of the texts they contain.

In the earliest volumes of the *Neue Bach-Ausgabe* (*NBA*), the original prints were viewed in precisely that way. They were taken at face value, with no decipherable prehistory. In 1957, Hans Klotz dispatched the original print of the Canonic Variations on "Vom Himmel hoch," BWV 769, in two pages.<sup>1</sup> It was not long, however, until matters changed considerably, proving Mendel to be—as usual—quite correct. Since 1970, research has illuminated three critical aspects of the Bach prints.

First, as work on the *NBA* continued, it became clear that the individual copies of a given print are *not* all the same. Careful comparison of the texts reveals layers of corrections. In some cases, the corrections reflect changes made in the engraved copper plates after an initial "run." More common are changes entered by hand into copies of the print as they were dispensed to buyers. These seem to have been made by Bach himself.

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<sup>1</sup> J. S. Bach, *Neue Bach-Ausgabe* (hereafter *NBA*), vol. 4, no. 2, *Die Orgelchoräle aus der Leipziger Originalhandschrift*, ed. Hans Klotz (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1957).

In addition, close inspection of watermarks in the extant exemplars of a particular print sometimes reveals the use of different papers, pointing again to a number of different runs, or to the use of different presses for a single run. The Critical Report of *Dritter Teil der Klavierübung*, issued in 1974, includes a systematic list of correction strata.<sup>2</sup> The Critical Report of *Erster Teil der Klavierübung*, issued in 1978, notes both corrections and varying paper types.<sup>3</sup>

Second, as such investigatory work unfolded, it became evident that Bach often retained *Handexemplare*, or "personal copies," of his printed works, in which he notated corrections and revisions, either for his own use or possibly for incorporation into a second edition, should one materialize. This line of research reached a remarkable climax in the mid-1970s with the resurfacing of Bach's annotated copy of the Schübler chorales (known to the famous Bach biographer Philipp Spitta a hundred years earlier but inaccessible even then)<sup>4</sup> and, to an even greater extent, with the discovery of Bach's *Handexemplar* of the Goldberg Variations in Strasbourg. The Goldberg *Handexemplar* contains not only corrections in Bach's hand, written mainly in red ink, but also a previously unknown series of enigmatic canons, since dubbed the "Goldberg Canons" and assigned the BWV number 1087. In his report on the discovery, Christoph Wolff summarized the *Handexemplar* phenomenon for the first time and discussed the four personal copies that remain extant.<sup>5</sup>

Third, the engraving and printing procedures themselves were scrutinized with remarkable intensity. This approach was explored mainly by Butler, who, in a series of articles from the 1980s, examined Bach's Leipzig and Nuremberg engravers and outlined the sometimes disorderly manner in which the original prints were assembled and proofed.<sup>6</sup> In a number of instances, Butler was able to make out "footprints" in the printed texts—changes whose original readings, still discernible from traces left on the

<sup>2</sup> *NBA*, vol. 4, no. 4, *Dritter Teil der Klavierübung*, ed. Manfred Tessler (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1974).

<sup>3</sup> *NBA*, vol. 5, no. 1, *Erster Teil der Klavierübung*, ed. Richard Douglas Jones (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1978).

<sup>4</sup> See Christoph Wolff, "Bachs Handexemplar der Schübler-Choräle," *Bach-Jahrbuch* 63 (1977): 120–29.

<sup>5</sup> Christoph Wolff, "Bach's *Handexemplar* of the Goldberg Variations: A New Source," *The Journal of the American Musicological Society* 29 (1976): 224–41.

<sup>6</sup> Gregory Butler, "Leipziger Stecher in Bachs Originaldrucken," *Bach-Jahrbuch* 66 (1980): 9–26; idem, "J. S. Bach and the Schemelli Gesangbuch Revisited," *Studi musicali* 13 (1984): 241–57; idem, "The Engraving of J. S. Bach's *Six Partitas*," *Journal of Musicological Research* 7 (1987): 3–27; and idem, "Clavier-Übung II and a Nuremberg-Leipzig Engraving Connection," in *Essays in Honor of William Scheide*, ed. Paul Brainard (forthcoming).

engraved copper plates, illuminated in part the history of the *Stichvorlagen*, the manuscripts from which the plates were made. Butler demonstrated the full potential of this type of research in a remarkable essay on the print of *The Art of Fugue*, in which he showed that from detectable alterations in page numbering, one could reconstruct Bach's unfulfilled final concept of the work, in terms of both contents and order.<sup>7</sup> Butler's solution to the structure of *The Art of Fugue*—the collection would have contained a series of sixteen fugues, beginning with Contrapunctus 1 and ending with the quadruple fugue on BACH, followed by a series of four canons, beginning with the octave canon and ending with the augmentation canon—makes more sense than any other,<sup>8</sup> and made one wonder what other secrets the original prints might yield.

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*Bach's Clavier-Übung III: The Making of a Print* is Butler's attempt to reconstruct the history of one of the most challenging cases. *Clavierübung III* seems to have appeared out of the blue: no extant manuscripts hint at its prehistory, no event clearly explains its conception. The one source that might have clarified the origins of *Clavierübung III*, the handwritten copy owned by C. P. E. Bach in 1774 and described by him as "my late father's manuscript" ("des seeligen Mannes Manuscript"), disappeared in the eighteenth century. Eighty pages from cover to cover, *Clavierübung III* is Bach's largest printed collection and most probably presented the greatest challenge both in its composition and in its engraving. Contemporary documents reveal that there was a delay in the printing. Writing to a friend in January 1739, Johann Elias Bach (Sebastian's cousin and occasional secretary) described the *Clavierübung III* print in some detail (He knew how many pages it would contain) and mentioned that it would be ready for sale at the upcoming Easter Fair, which took place in April. The print did not appear until half a year later, however, in October, at the St. Michael's Fair.

The absence of early manuscripts and the printing delay have led scholars to believe that Bach composed the music of *Clavierübung III* in a relatively short stretch of time, immediately preceding the appearance of the print in 1739. Butler presents a very different view. In the opening chap-

<sup>7</sup> Gregory Butler, "Ordering Problems in J. S. Bach's *Art of Fugue* Resolved," *Musical Quarterly* 69 (1983): 44–61.

<sup>8</sup> Certainly more sense than the solution recently proposed by Ulrich Siegele, who calls for eight more pieces, to make a total of twenty-four fugues. See Ulrich Siegele, "Wie unvollständig ist Bachs 'Kunst der Fuge'?", in *Bericht über die Wissenschaftliche Konferenz zum V. internationalen Bachfest der DDR* (Leipzig: Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 1988): 219–25.

ter, "Genesis," he suggests that Bach worked on the music at a leisurely pace for four years, beginning soon after the publication of *Clavierübung* II in 1735. As evidence, he points to similarities between the Prelude and Fugue in E♭ Major ("St. Anne"), BWV 552, the framing work of *Clavierübung* III, and an overture (I) and fugue (IV) from the second part of Conrad Friedrich Hurlebusch's *Compositioni musicali*, for which Bach served as Leipzig agent in 1735. Moreover, Butler believes that the large "Allein Gott in der Höh' sei Ehr" trio, BWV 676, of *Clavierübung* III was inspired by Johann Gottfried Walther's chorale variations on the same text, which Bach submitted to a Leipzig engraver on behalf of his Weimar colleague, around 1735 as well. Also pointing to the mid-1730s, according to Butler, is the use of *stile antico* in the large Kyrie settings, BWV 669–671, and the *pedaliter* "Aus tiefer Not, schrei ich zu dir," BWV 686. The entire *Missa* layer, Butler states, might be linked with Bach's renewed appeal in 1736 for a position at the Dresden court and seen as a "keyboard pendant to the vocal *Missa*" that Bach had submitted three years earlier (p. 13). The *pedaliter* catechism chorales were composed next: in "Vater unser im Himmelreich," BWV 682, Butler sees the influence of the *Livres d'orgue* of Grigny and Du Mage, which Johann Abraham Birnbaum mentioned with regard to Bach in the Scheibe controversy of 1737–38. Most important, Butler feels that Bach's original conception of *Clavierübung* III included only the *Missa* settings (large and small) and the *pedaliter* catechism chorales. As the time for engraving approached, Bach decided to expand the collection, adding the already completed Prelude and Fugue in E♭, and the *manualiter* catechism chorales and the four duets, written at the very last minute.

As for the engraving, Butler detects the work of four hands. Balthasar Schmid of Nuremberg engraved the title page. The music text was entrusted to the Leipzig engraver Johann Gottfried Krügner, Sr. and his two assistants, whom Butler tentatively identifies as Krügner's wife Rosine Dorothee (née Boëtius, daughter of the Leipzig engraver Johann Theodor Boëtius and manager of his shop between 1722 and 1726) and Krügner's son Johann Gottfried, Jr. But this scheme ran amok when Krügner's workshop proved unable to handle the expanded collection. As proof that Bach changed his plans, Butler points to the title page, which fails to mention the Prelude and Fugue in E♭ and the four duets, but, more important, to altered page numbers—the same clue he utilized in his study of *The Art of Fugue*. In the *Clavierübung* III print, Butler perceives five page changes: page 13 was changed to page 22, and pages 31–34 were changed to pages 40–43. To judge from the closeup photographs of the page numbers included in the book, this observation is correct. Butler interprets the alterations to mean that Bach submitted *two* manuscripts to

the printer: the first, lacking the Prelude and Fugue in E $\flat$ , the small catechism settings, and the duets, contained forty-nine pages of music. The second consisted of inserts for the additional pieces and brought the musical text to seventy-seven pages. The expanded version included nine new pages inserted before page 22—hence the displacement by nine in the page numbering from page 22 onward. Page 22 is the last page of the first “Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr” setting, BWV 675, and one might assume, logically, that the nine pages added before it contained the Prelude in E $\flat$ . But since the Prelude encompasses *ten* pages, Butler looks for another source. In a discussion whose neopositivist complexity would make Joseph Kerman blanch, Butler settles on the idea that Bach not only added the Prelude but also wrote out a number of new pages for the *Missa* section, compressing the text here and there in order to accommodate the newly planned *manualiter* settings.

With the Easter Fair approaching, and only half the collection engraved, Bach turned for help to Schmid, who stepped in to engrave the revised *Missa* pages, the Prelude in E $\flat$ , the final twenty-one pages, plus a number of other pages. Schmid carried out part of his task while in Leipzig for the Easter Fair. These plates, according to Butler, remained in Leipzig, where they were united with those of Krügner. The remaining plates Schmid engraved back home in Nuremberg, where they stayed. As a consequence, part of *Clavierübung* III was printed in Leipzig, and part in Nuremberg (the existence of two different paper types of the extant corrected exemplars supports this idea). The pages were then united in Leipzig in time for the collection to be sold at the October St. Michael's Fair. Butler summarizes the distribution of engravers and papers in an elaborate, four-page chart (pp. 22–25).

The picture that emerges from Butler's study is somewhat unsettling. Rather than moving to press with music in hand, Bach initiates the engraving process before his ideas are fully formed. He plans to expand the collection beyond its *Missa* and large catechism settings, but he is slow to finish the additional music. It is not simply the engravers who hold up the completion of the print, but Bach himself, whose vision of the *manualiter* catechism chorales becomes more ambitious as the works take shape. The first settings are modest in size and can be squeezed into space left over from *pedaliter* settings: “Wir glauben all' an einen Gott,” BWV 681; “Vater unser im Himmelreich,” BWV 683; and “Christ unser Herr, zum Jordan kam,” BWV 685. But as Bach composes, he raises his sights. The *manualiter* settings become longer and more intricate, concluding with the “Fuga super Jesus Christus unser Heiland,” BWV 689, which occupies almost three full pages in the print and is more than three times as long as the initial three settings. Butler believes that the “Fuga super Jesus Christus

unser Heiland" and the four duets were not composed until after the Easter Fair, since they were engraved by Schmid and printed in Nuremberg. Bach appears, then, as an eccentric, even indecisive composer, whose irrepressible creative energies overshadow practical considerations. This is a remarkable portrait.

Remarkable, that is, if one believes it. Without question, Butler knows more about the *Clavierübung* III print than anyone else alive. Quite possibly, he knows even more about certain aspects than Bach, Schmid, and Krügner, who most certainly did not keep track of the watermarks of the papers used for the various exemplars. Butler presents his case in detail, and with conviction. But it is a case constructed largely on hypotheses, and the hypotheses are often presented with fewer counterarguments than one might expect. Moreover, during the course of the book, many hypotheses undergo a mysterious transmutation: they begin as theory and, without additional evidence, emerge as fact.

To return to the "Genesis" chapter, for instance: The linking of works by Hurlebusch, Walther, Grigny, and Du Mage with *Clavierübung* III is illuminating, but can it be used reliably as evidence for chronology? It is indeed likely that Bach saw the Hurlebusch and Walther pieces in 1735. But does that mean that he sat right down and wrote pieces styled after them? Surely Bach was familiar with J. C. F. Fischer's E-Major Fugue from *Ariadne musica*, printed in 1702, for quite some time before he crafted his own Fugue on the same subject and in the same key around 1740 for the second volume of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*. The Hurlebusch and Walther pieces are dilettantish compared to Bach's mature works, and Bach had mastered the techniques they display many years earlier, in Weimar. Such music might have stimulated him in 1710. But in 1735, after he had composed *Clavierübung* I and II? As it is well known, C. P. E. Bach stated that his father, in his last years, esteemed highly "Fux, Caldara, Handel, Kaiser, Hasse, both Grauns, Telemann, Zelenka, Benda, and in general everything that was worthy of esteem in Berlin and Dresden."<sup>9</sup> Walther and Hurlebusch are missing from the list, and with good reason. By 1735, Bach would have been lukewarm about their works, at best.

Or take the case of Grigny: Bach copied out Grigny's *Livre d'orgue* in Weimar, around 1712.<sup>10</sup> By the mid-1730s, the manuscript would have

<sup>9</sup> Hans-Joachim Schulze and Werner Neumann, ed. *Bach Dokumente 3* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1972), no. 803.

<sup>10</sup> There is little question about this, since both the watermarks and handwriting of Bach's manuscript (Frankfurt, Universitätsbibliothek, *Mus.Hs. 1538*) point in that direction. See Bach, *NBA*, vol. 9, no. 1, *Wasserzeichen-Katalog*, 43, and idem, *NBA*, vol. 9, no. 2, *Bachs Notenschrift*, 44-45.

been sitting on his shelf for more than two decades. It does not seem unreasonable to think that Bach might have drawn inspiration from Grigny, perhaps the most sophisticated and refined of the French Classical organists. One suspects that unlike Hurlebusch and Walther, Grigny was “Bach’s kind of composer,” even in 1735. But how can we possibly know if Bach pulled out Grigny’s collection in 1737 or 1738 or 1739? What Birnbaum said, around 1737, was this: “From among a mass of composers whom I could cite in this respect [the writing out of every ornament], I will mention only Grigny and Du Mage, who in their *Livres d’orgue* have used this very method.” It is likely that Birnbaum was mouthing Bach’s words. But the words imply no more than the fact that Bach was familiar with Grigny’s and Du Mage’s music. They do not suggest, at least to me, that Bach was mulling over the music at the very moment that Birnbaum was writing.

What is worrisome is not that Butler suggests that the music of Hurlebusch, Walther, Grigny, and Du Mage influenced aspects of *Clavierübung* III. He could well be right, and even if he isn’t, the comparisons draw attention to conventions that were in the air. What makes one apprehensive is that Butler tries to read more into the evidence than is there, and in his eagerness to do so, he sometimes misleads. How would the unwary reader interpret this sentence?:

Johann Abraham Birnbaum, Bach’s official spokesman in the Scheibe controversy, in his “Impartial Comments” (Dok 2:304) written toward the end of 1737 or early in 1738, cites in his refutation of Scheibe’s criticism . . . two French organ collections, Nicolas de Grigny’s *Premier livre d’orgue* (1699) and Pierre Du Mage’s *Premier livre d’orgue* (1708), so that Bach would seem to have been studying these works (he made a copy of the de Grigny print) at about this time (p. 19).

It seems to say that Bach made a copy of the de Grigny print “at about this time”—that is, toward the end of 1737 or early in 1738. That Bach actually made the copy in Weimar is not mentioned, even though it is common knowledge among Bach specialists.

The comparison of Hurlebusch’s Overture and Bach’s Prelude in E $\flat$  includes a musical example (p. 4), printed like this:

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is labeled "Hurlebusch" and the bottom staff is labeled "Bach". Both staves are in treble clef, 3/4 time, and E-flat major. The Hurlebusch staff shows a sequence of notes with a triplet of eighth notes marked "3". The Bach staff shows a similar sequence of notes with two fermatas marked with a star symbol.

If one looks at the pitches alone, the two themes do indeed seem to be extremely similar. But the rhythmic spacing of both has been distorted to make the notes line up. In m. 1, the third beat of the Bach is placed under the last quarter of beat 2 of the Hurlebusch. In m. 3, the trochaic rhythm of the first beat of the Bach has been given an iambic spacing to fit with the iambic syncopation of the Hurlebusch. In m. 4, the third beat of the Bach has been placed under the last quarter of the second beat of the Hurlebusch. The meter of the Bach, too, has been changed, without mention, from  $\phi$  to  $\mathcal{C}$ , to bring it into line with the Hurlebusch. The themes, as presented in this example, look closely related. But if one plays them with their correct rhythms, the kinship disappears.

Despite the understandably imprecise nature of the Hurlebusch-Walther-Grigny-Du Mage evidence, by the conclusion of the book, the long genesis of *Clavierübung* III, derived from the influence idea, is offered as fact: "The prepublication history, then, is a long, drawn-out affair stretching over almost four years" (p. 85). In addition, it is used as the basis for a comparison with *The Art of Fugue*: "Both collections had a protracted genesis" (p. 86). Such overstatements make one nervous about the conclusions that are drawn in the chapters on the engraving procedure, where the discussion is so intricate that it is difficult to know whether or not evidence has been weighed evenly. And there are others. For instance, could the *Missa* settings of *Clavierübung* III truly serve as a pendant to the *Missa* of the B-Minor Mass? The *Clavierübung* III settings are clearly Lutheran. Unlike the *Missa* of the B-Minor Mass, they are based on German texts and contain tropes outlawed by the Council of Trent. They would have been inappropriate for the Catholic rite practiced at the Dresden court.

A few red flags should be raised, at least: Butler sees the compression of works in the print—that is, the crowding of measures, especially toward the ends of pieces—as a sign that Bach changed his plans. Butler reasons that Bach at first calculated a more leisurely spacing. Then, to accommodate the *manualiter* catechism chorales, he redrafted certain pieces. In the large Kyrie settings, for instance, the spacing of "Kyrie Gott Vater in Ewigkeit" is much more gracious than that of "Christe aller Welt Trost" and "Kyrie Gott heiliger Geist" that follow it. The last shows marked compression on its last page (page 17 of the print). Butler appears to take for granted that Bach normally counted the measures of a piece in advance of writing out a fair copy and calculated a smooth, even spacing. But a look at *The Well-Tempered Clavier* or the French Suites does not confirm this. Bach occasionally miscalculated space and rectified the error by compressing the concluding measures or by adding another system at the bottom of the page with a smaller rastral. For the *Clavierübung* III print, where



appearance counted, Bach could not rely on smaller systems to bail himself out. Compression was the only answer.

Like a good detective, Butler seeks a logical reason for inconsistencies in the print. But one can never rule out happenstance. For instance, Butler sees as telling the fact that page 49 of the print was engraved by Krügner Assistant I and page 50 by Krügner Assistant II, and that the directs at the bottom of page 49 were added by Krügner himself:

What happened here is that Krügner Assistant I in Phase 2 came to the end of page 49 and stopped. She stopped without adding the directs at the end of the page, even though for once there was ample room, and without engraving the conclusion of BWV 684. She failed to include the directs not out of haste or carelessness but because she had no reference to the following page, page 50. There must have been a break of some duration between the engraving of page 49 and page 50. Otherwise, surely Krügner Assistant I would simply have gone on and completed page 50. She must have broken off work here for the simple reason that Bach had not yet prepared the *Stichvorlage* for page 50. I submit that the *Stichvorlage* for this particular page was not yet ready when Krügner Assistant I came to engrave it because Bach had not yet composed, or was in the middle of composing BWV 685 [the *manualiter* setting of "Christ unser Herr, zum Jordan kam," which begins on p. 50] (p. 62).

Maybe. But suppose Bach *had* already composed BWV 685, and Krügner, to save time, asked Assistant II to begin engraving page 50, since Assistant I was working meticulously but slowly. Assistant I would thus be working on page 49 as Assistant II worked on page 50. As Assistant I approached the bottom of page 49, the lunch bell sounded downstairs. She completed the page, but rather than walk across the room to get a reading on the directs from Assistant II's manuscript page or engraved plate, she—being quite hungry—went directly downstairs and had lunch. After lunch, she set to work on her next plate, forgetting to add the directs to the bottom of page 49. Krügner later discovered the omission as he proofed the page, and wrote in the directs. Is it being facetious to suggest such a scenario? Surely such things occur in life now and then.

Or: In the first measure of the *manualiter* setting of "Kyrie Gott heiliger Geist" there is a perceivable change: in the soprano voice, a *c''* has been covered by a dotted quarter-note rest. Noting the still visible staff lines underneath the title, Butler suggests that originally the title was omitted and the music started farther to the left (p. 52):



Butler interprets this to mean that Bach originally intended to link the *manualiter* Kyrie, Christe, and Kyrie together in one unbroken chain, and that the music that stood underneath the title was a passage organically joining the Christe with the final Kyrie. The fact that the Christe ends on the second half of the beat becomes a vital clue for Butler:

It is significant that of the three concluding cadences in this complex, that of BWV 673 [the Christe] is unique in that the resolution occurs on the second half of the measure rather than on the downbeat as in the other two cases. In its original version, this cadence would certainly have been organized in such a way that it resolved on the downbeat (pp. 53–54).

This sounds fairly convincing until one thinks about it a bit. The two Kyries are set in  $\frac{3}{4}$  and  $\frac{9}{8}$  time, respectively. In those meters, a Baroque composer had little choice but to end on the downbeat (unless the  $\frac{3}{4}$  represented a sarabande, which is not the case here). The Christe is in  $\frac{6}{8}$ , and in that meter, Bach commonly concluded pieces on the second half of the measure, as a quick glance at his works shows.

Is it not easier to suppose that the engraver mistakenly engraved, too far to the left, the first measure of the music just as we have it? The last note of that measure would be c''—precisely the note we see imperfectly eliminated. That would explain the mistake without conjuring up a vision of lost bridges. A glance at the end of the first Kyrie shows a normal, dotted half-note, closed ending, with no signs of second thoughts. Yet in this case, too, hypothesis becomes fact in the conclusion, and the *manualiter* *Missa* settings are likened to the three simple fugues of the manuscript version of *The Art of Fugue*: “In both groups of works, concluding cadences that in the original versions were open are closed in the final versions, thus rendering the pieces more conclusive” (p. 87).

It may be that Butler is right, that his more complicated explanations of events are correct. It *does* make sense that the *manualiter* catechism chorales were composed on an almost *ad hoc* basis, to judge from their unsystematic ordering and uneven quality. But that does not necessarily mean that Bach did not envision them in the collection from the beginning. If, as Butler proposes, Bach included *manualiter* settings for the Kyrie and Gloria from the start, that would mean that the composer intended to provide the modestly gifted organist—the *Liebhaber* mentioned on the title page, presumably—with material that was distinctly easier to play than the *pedaliter* settings. It would only make sense to plan such pieces for the catechism chorales, too. Otherwise, the collection would include only five short *manualiter* pieces for the *Liebhaber*—not much for the three-Taler price. It was not unusual for Bach to commit himself to the structure of a large project before composing the music: after all, during the first Leipzig years, the texts of many of his cantatas were printed weeks before the music was written. Bach could well have planned *Clavierübung* III in its full form without having all the music in hand. That would still explain, in a simpler way, the basic chain of events as Butler describes it.

The four duets *do* seem to be an insertion. Viewing the inclusion of the Prelude and Fugue in E $\flat$  as a second thought, however, is less convincing. The E $\flat$  key signature seems to imply a preconceived linkup with the *Clavierübung* III chorales. Would Bach have written such a large prelude and fugue, his first in ten years or so, in the unusual key of E $\flat$ , without the motivation of the *Clavierübung* III project? That it was inspired solely by Hurlbusch's music seems less plausible than the idea that Bach wrote the piece specifically for *Clavierübung* III as the time for publication approached. If he wrote out the Prelude and Fugue in a separate manuscript (free pieces were normally segregated from chorale preludes in manuscripts of the time), and if the Prelude initially encompassed nine pages rather than ten (which it would have if Bach had used a *del Segno* for the last ritornello, as he frequently did in other ritornello works), then the nine-page displacement of page numbers could be explained without a "first version-second version" theory of *Clavierübung* III. It could be explained by Bach's writing out the Prelude and Fugue in one manuscript and the chorale settings in another.

The precise scenario for the decisions surrounding the production of *Clavierübung* III is difficult to discern. Phrases such as "Bach must have" and "Krüger must have" abound in this book. One would be more comfortable if "may have" had been used instead. At the distance of over two hundred years, it is hard to reconstruct the motives of the participants.

That said, Butler deserves a great deal of credit for tackling such a project and handling it in such a remarkably diligent fashion. His study reopens the entire matter of how Bach's prints were produced. It puts to rest once and for all the more straightforward views of earlier writers such as Hans Klotz and Georg Kinsky.<sup>11</sup> It shows that the treatment of the prints in a number of *NBA* volumes is embarrassingly amateurish. It provides new insights into the engraving procedure and destroys the notion that Bach and his printers worked in an orderly, systematic manner. Toward the end of the discussion, Butler summarizes his investigation with a stemma of the sources that he perceives to have existed in the production of *Clavierübung* III. The stemma contains one extant source—the original print—and eleven hypothetical, missing manuscript sources. That makes for 8 percent fact and 92 percent hypothesis. Those are tough odds, even for Sherlock Holmes.

Whether or not all the details are correct, the general picture that emerges from *Bach's Clavier-Übung III: The Making of a Print* resembles to a remarkable degree the new portrait of the aging Bach that has been taking shape little by little in recent research.<sup>12</sup> Freed from the pressures of church-cantata production in the last twenty years of his life, Bach appears to have been able to give greater rein to his compositional ambitions. In *The Art of Fugue*, this resulted in a major revision and enlargement of the collection. In the B-Minor Mass, it resulted in significant alterations to the "Crucifixus" and "Et in unum Dominum" movements and in the last-minute composition and insertion of the "Et incarnatus." The Bach of the late Leipzig years appears to be different from the Bach of the early Leipzig years. The Bach of the early Leipzig years, drawn with a sure hand by Robert Marshall some twenty years ago,<sup>13</sup> composed quickly and decisively, rarely departing from his initial thoughts. Marshall contrasted that Bach with Beethoven, a composer given to constant changes. The Bach of the late Leipzig years appears to be, paradoxically, much like Beethoven, after all. In the 1730s and 1740s, with far fewer external deadlines, Bach

<sup>11</sup> See Hans Klotz, "Die 'Kanonischen Veränderungen' in Entwurf, Reinschrift und Druck," *Die Nürnberger Musikverleger und die Familie Bach*, ed. Willi Wärlthmüller (Zindorf: Bollmann, 1973), 11–15; Georg Kinsky, *Die Originalausgaben der Werke Johann Sebastian Bachs* (Vienna: Reichner Verlag, 1937).

<sup>12</sup> See especially the reappraisals of Christoph Wolff, "Die sonderbaren Vollkommenheiten des Herrn Hofcompositieurs": Versuch über die Eigenart der Bachschen Musik" in *Bachiana et alia musicologica*, ed. Wolfgang Rehm (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1983), 356–62; and Alfred Dürr, *Bachs Werk vom Einfall bis zur Drucklegung* (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1989).

<sup>13</sup> Robert Marshall, *The Compositional Process of J. S. Bach, I*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), 234–41.

altered and revised more freely, often reconsidering original designs in an almost indecisive way. Butler wishes to add *Clavierübung* III to *The Art of Fugue* and the Mass in B Minor, making it another product of the new, more temperamental Bach. Given the detours in the printing process, that seems to make sense. Butler sees *Clavierübung* III as another example of Bach's remarkable self-criticism—self-criticism that became so strong toward the end of the composer's life that it interfered with the smooth completion of works.

—George B. Stauffer