



Hermeneutik zu Johann Sebastian Bach



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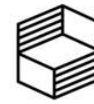
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Kontakt: dvvlio@innovation-orgellehre.digital

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Contact: dvvlio@innovation-orgellehre.digital



Bach and hermeneutics

Research and research results by Christoph Bossert

Feature 1 and 2

Hermeneutics before

Bach

Johann Ulrich Steigleder's 40 Variations on *Our Father in the Kingdom of Heaven*
(1627)

Hermeneutics

instructional video in 12

features

with

Prof. Dr h. c. Christoph Bossert

on the Klais organ (2016) in the Great Hall of the

Würzburg University of Music

Project objective: Development of a digital organ teaching library.

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Tablature Buch,

In fünf

Stücken

Composed for 3. and 4 voices, and

varied forty times

in each Variation

a special report.

All organs and all instruments

musicalis instrumentis

ordentlich zu

gebrauch.

Component

Major Johan Ulri Steigleder,

Organisation of the St. Michaelskirche in Stuttgart.

Dr. Ulri and relocated to Straßburg
bey Marx von der Heide am Körmar.

1627.

Choral im Bass

The image displays a musical score for a piece titled "Choral im Bass" by Johann Ulrich Steigleder, identified as Variatio 14. The score is written in a two-staff system, with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor), and the time signature is common time (C). The piece is divided into five systems of music, with measure numbers 9, 16, 22, and 27 indicated at the beginning of their respective systems. The notation includes various rhythmic values such as quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes, as well as rests and accidentals. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots at the end of the fifth system.

Fig. 1: Johann Ulrich Steigleder, *tablature book - Daß Vatter unser* (1627), Variatio 14.



Fig. 2: Johann Ulrich Steigleder, *tablature book - Daß Vatter unser* (1627), title page.

Feature 1

Johann Ulrich Steigleder (1593-1635) - *Tablature book* from 1627 - Methodology I - Questions

The *Our Father* is the Lord's prayer. Steigleder uses images to point to the *Crucified*. These images can be found in the preface of the *tablature book*. You have to imagine: To put a tablature book into print in the middle of the 30 Years' War is an extraordinary work. Steigleder invested his private money on the advice of good friends who were, among others, professors at the University of Tübingen.¹ This leads to the conclusion that Steigleder brought his composition - the forty variations on Luther's Lord's Prayer hymn - to these gentlemen and was then advised that it should definitely be printed.

1:17

The *Lord's Prayer* is divided into three petitions and four requests. Three petitions revolve around the word 'thine' - *thy name be hallowed, thy kingdom come, thy will be done* - and four petitions contain the word 'our' - *give us this day our daily bread, forgive us our trespasses, lead us not into temptation, deliver us from evil*. My analysis shows that the distinction between three and four - as an entity characterised by the *Our Father* - is later constitutive for the Forty Variations on *Our Father in the Kingdom of Heaven* by Johann Ulrich Steigleder.

Now we have a conflict. Luther's hymn on the *Lord's Prayer* contains an introduction, then seven petitions and then a conclusion, so there are nine stanzas in total. If we assume that Luther's hymn, on which Steigleder composed, should be memorised not only from stanza one, but from all nine stanzas, then it is difficult to relate this to the number of forty variations. The final variation has three parts, and the number 42 is also not divisible by nine. There can therefore be no straightforward division of the forty variations or forty-two parts according to the nine verses. There must be an irrational key - but where is it?² Variatio 14, which we have just heard, plays a significant role in this. This has not been answered satisfactorily to this day, but I think I was actually able to uncover and find the key to it about fifteen years ago.

To put it in a nutshell: How are nine verses with forty variations or forty-two parts compatible? What solution could be offered? An assignment of nine stanzas to 40 variations cannot be structured evenly, just as little as an assignment to 42 parts. Now we are looking for a different structure. Are there possibly groups of variations that necessarily belong together and that could provide an indication for a content-related categorisation?

My answer - that would be the next step - is: special caesuras, incisions and conspicuous dividing points show the way. Which bullet points come into question?

My thesis is: There are special indications that point to incisions between Variatio 9 and 10, between 13 and 14, between 16 and 17, between 19 and 20, then at 22, at 24, at 30 and 36.

I would like to suggest that you now concentrate on variations 10, 14, 17, 20, 22, 24, 30 and 36. If the viewer of the video has sheet music in front of him, he should now work on it independently in order to possibly find this solution himself. I therefore pose the following questions for everyone to consider for themselves:

- a) Can these cuts be justified?
- b) What order - what order - results precisely from this categorisation for the work as a whole?
- c) It should be checked and noted that Variatio 40 has three parts.

¹ See glossary.

² Christoph Bossert, *Das Paradoxon, 7 = 9 = 40 = 42. Key to Johann Ulrich Steigleder's variation on the "Vater unser im Himmelreich"*. In: *Musik und Kirche*, Jan./Feb. 2015-H.1, Verlag Bärenreiter, Kassel 2015, pp. 20-27.

d) Could there be a connection between the transition in triplet motion at the end of viatio 19 and the transition from viatio 38 to 39, since viatio 39 is the only variation in triple metre within a total of 40 variations?

e) What does point d) say about the temporal form of the work?

f) Where does a toccata usually sound and what could it mean that in our case the toccata is placed at the very end as Variatio 40?

These are six questions, which the viewer may now check for himself on the basis of the notes. [9:44]

9:52

Feature 2

Johann Ulrich Steigleder - *The tablature book from 1627* - Methodology II - Aids 1 and 2

Now I would like to offer seven answers to the questions mentioned in Feature 1:

10:25

Assistance 1 - Variation 1 to 9

The first nine variations show a clear division into 3 + 3 + 3 variations. How do I arrive at this statement?

Variations 1, 2 and 3 can be seen as a group, as they are three fugues: one long composed, two subsequent "*easy and short to beat*". The next group differs from this - variations 4, 5 and 6, where Steigleder states that *the cantus firmus can also be sung or played by an instrument* - a violin, for example. He specifies the treble for Variatio 4, the tenor for 5 and the bass for 6. A clear group of three variations can therefore also be recognised here. Variations 7, 8 and 9 are again characterised by the next criterion, namely a *cantus planus*, first in the descant, in the following eighth variation in the bass and then the bass is coloured in variation 9. This means that once again we have reason to see a group of three. As an aid, I suggest that a cut could now be intended, since in variation 10 a rest is notated in all four voices in the first part of bar 1

. If you imagine this in a score, it is very impressive: each part begins with a pause. That could be an indication of a first major cut.

Another criterion is that the group of 3 + 3 + 3 variations possibly stands for the first stanza and could represent the invocation *Our Father in the Kingdom of Heaven* - the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit - and thus the three-unity, the Trinity. It is therefore logical to divide this first verse into 3 + 3 + 3 variations.

Another criterion is added: the first variation is composed very expansively, variations 2 and 3 are shorter and the last variation of the block of nine is a colouring of the bass - a criterion that does not appear before.

In addition to the division into 3 + 3 + 3, we would also have an additional division of 1 + 2 + 3 + 2

+ This alone is a very impressive architecture - like an altar with ascending and descending steps. This is followed by Variatio 10 with the cut through the rest in the first half of the bar. If we take this pause as a very clear indication, then the number 4 is emphasised because four voices are silent. Previously, the number 3 was emphasised. This would also have a clear correlation to *Our Father* with its 3 + 4 petitions.

The fact that Steigleder operates with numbers is also made clear by another indication. He writes for the last variation *that it is a fingering with eight voices and then six voices*, as the score indicates:³

15:26

³ Title: *4th Vocum*. The 40th and last variation/ in the toccata manner. NB. At the beginning I am a full gri / with 8. and then with 6th fingers/ as indicated here by the *parti[t]ur*.



Fig. 3: Steigleder, *TB* - Variatio 40, Toccata, beginning [15:26].

I would like to point out that the assignment to the numbers 3 or 4, as well as 6 and 8, is explicitly shown as a grouping or as a number of votes in Steigleder.

Assistance 2 - Variatio 14

16:13

Choral im Bass

1 Fanfaren
Es komm der Herr zu die - ser Zeit und dann her - nach in

5
7 nachschlagend = hernach

9
11 absteigende Figur
13 die Bitte Clamatio
14 Perfectio
15 Analogie zu "hernach in Ewigkeit"

E - wig - keit, der Hei - lig Geist uns woh - ne bei

16
17
18
19
20
21

mit sei - nen Ga - ben man - cher - lei; des

22 *Stile concitato; dramatische Musik*
25 "Zerbrechen" stabiler Rhythmus
26 Fanfaren
"das Reich kommt wieder zu uns"

Sa - tans Zorn und groß' Ge - walt zer -

27
28
29
30
31
32 Ende: Perfectio

brich, vor ihm dein' Kirch er - halt

Fig. 4: Johann Ulrich Steigleder, *TB*, Variatio 14 [17:00] (all further NB of this section taken from here).

If we were to say the following: 3 + 3 + 3 variations are followed by 2 + 2 or: 3³ variations are followed by 2²; then the next cut would be between Variatio 13 and 14. What is present in Variatio 14? The whole variation is in three parts.

1 Fanfaren 5

Es komm dein Reich zu die - ser Zeit

The assignment would be to verse three:

*Thy kingdom come at this time and
thereafter for ever and ever.
May the Holy Spirit assist us
with his gifts in many ways.
Break Satan's wrath and great
violence, keep your church from
him.*

These are the six lines of this third verse and I would now like to show very briefly that these six chorale lines correlate exactly with the music of variation 14.

1. *Your kingdom is coming*: fanfares that would and should rise upwards to praise the ruler are now descending:

That would now be an indication that the kingdom is coming to us

18:25

2. *and thereafter in eternity*: the second line of verse is composed like this:

[und] dort her - nach in E - wig - keit

Instead of the synchronised sound, you hear trailing quavers. For me, that is a clear indication

for the word *after*.

3. *The Holy Spirit attend us*: again a descending figure, but now composed in quavers:

absteigende Figur

May the Holy Spirit dwell with us, that is a request.

This request is possibly expressed by

figure , i.e. a request that

this surprising *clamazione*, this


may the Holy Spirit dwell with us. The chorale line ends in the *perfectio*: in total

reads:


Der Hei - lig Geist uns woh - ne bei

4. The next line of verse reads: *With his gifts of many kinds.*

Descending movement is also predominant here. It is a reversal of



or from:



[und] dort her - nach in E - wig - keit

The second line *thereafter* read *in eternity*. Now it is said that the Holy Spirit may give us his gifts, so the diction of the second line of verse is reversed in this way:



bei mit sei - nen Ga - ben man - cher - lei

5. Now comes a very dramatic formulation: *Satan's wrath and great violence.*


Here we encounter the *stile concitato* of the 17th century, the dramatic style as a complete reinvention of musical means that did not exist in the 16th century is characterised by sudden rapid movements and dramatic music that is constituted in this way:



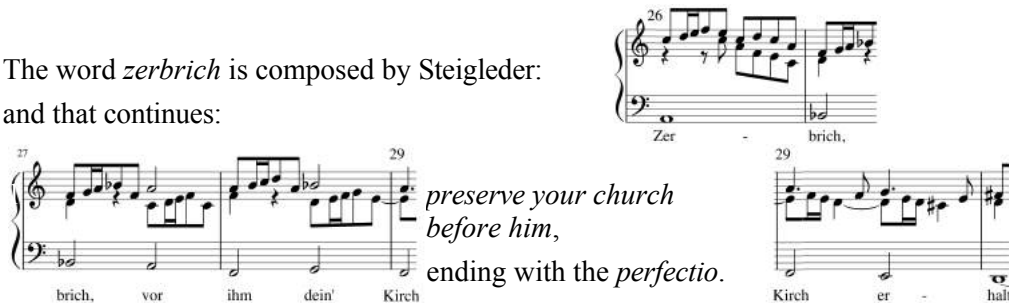
22 *Stile concitato; dramatische Musik* 25

Sa - tans Zorn und groß' Ge - walt

6. Break! *Satan's wrath and great power, break, keep your church from him.*

Suddenly a much more stable rhythm is heard with the word "breaking and the kingdom comes to us again: . Satan's wrath can be broken the kingdom of God coming to us.

The word *zerbrich* is composed by Steigleder: and that continues:



Zer - brich,

27 29

brich, vor ihm dein' Kirch *preserve your church before him, ending with the perfectio.*

Kirch er - halt

The assignment to verse 3 of the hymn to the Lord's Prayer thus succeeds eminently well in this Variatio 14.

In the next feature, I will present the auxiliary arrangements 3 to 7. [23:17]

Concept
Prof. Dr h. c. Christoph Bossert

Camera
Dr Jürgen Schöpf

Sound and editing:
Alexander Hainz

Coordination
Thilo Frank

Team DVVLIO
Prof. D. h.c. Christoph Bossert, Project
Management Thilo Frank, Overall Coordination

Alexander Hainz, sound engineer

Artistic and scientific collaboration: Dr
Jürgen Schöpf

Dr Helmut Völkl Andrea
Dubrauszky, MA

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