



Hermeneutik zu Johann Sebastian Bach



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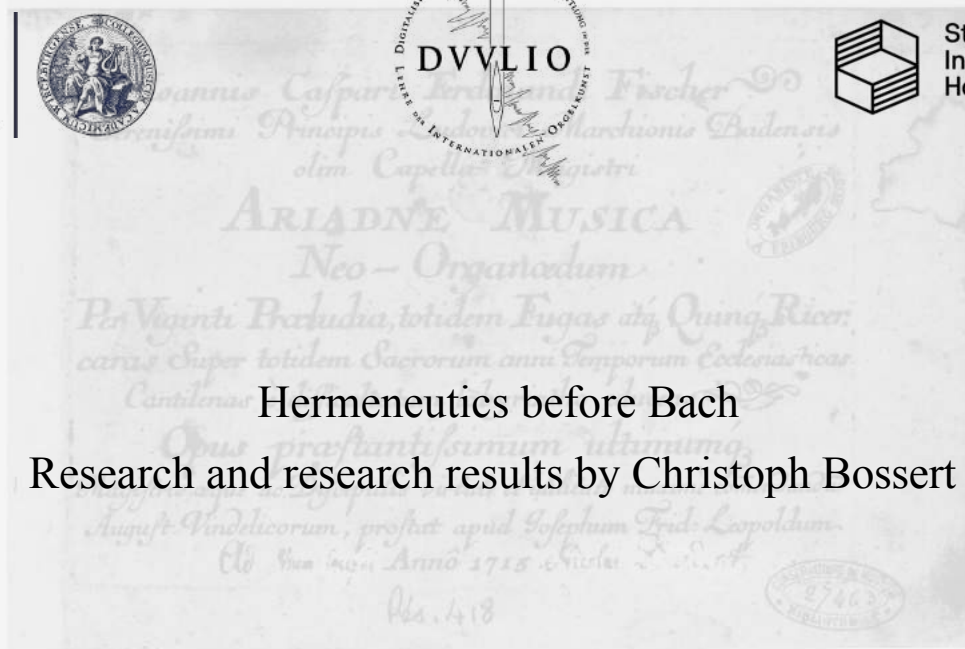
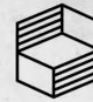
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Hermeneutics before Bach

Research and research results by Christoph Bossert

Feature 10

Aria - The 'Cantabile Nuremberg Typesetting'

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

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Project objective: Development of a digital organ teaching library.

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Feature 10

Aria - the 'Cantabile Nuremberg setting'

I would like to title the following feature 'Aria or the 'Cantabile Art of Playing' or 'Cantabile Nuremberg Setting'.¹ The focus will now be on Johann Pachelbel, who published his work *Hexachordum appolinis* in 1699. The dedicatees are a southern German composer named Tobias Richter on the one hand and Dietrich Buxtehude on the other. Based on this major work by Pachelbel, I would like to offer five perspectives with a J. S. Bach connotation.

(1) The keyword '*cantability*', which always characterises an *aria*, returns in Bach's preface to his two-part inventions and three-part symphonies. He states that the player can attain the '*cantabile manner of playing*' in them. His father Johann Sebastian Bach first notated these two-part and also the three-part pieces in the *music booklet for Wilhelm Friedemann*, which was written in Köthen around 1721 and 1722. Bach wrote the preface to the later inventions and symphonies as follows:

"Sincere instructions for lovers
of the *Clavire*,
but especially to those who are eager to learn, a
decent way is shown, not alone (1) with 2 *verses*
to learn to play purely, but also to learn to play (2) correctly
with three *obbligato games* in further *programmes*.
and to proceed well, and at the same time not only to obtain
good *inventions*, but also to carry them out well, but above
all to achieve a *cantabile*
to acquire the art of playing, and also to get a strong
flavour of the *composition*."

Bach's statement that one should '*attain the cantabile manner in playing*' is in direct relation to Pachelbel, for with him the *aria* is always the starting point for variations in the *Hexachordum Apollinis*; [A supplement to this: Johann Heinrich Buttstett writes: "Are good but nevertheless very old rules / e.g. that one should set *cantabile*. I have now received this rule for almost 40 years from my teacher the famous *Pachelbeln*, and he from his teacher Weckern in Nuremberg / and always immediately one from the other."]²

(2) Pachelbel, in turn, was the teacher of Johann Christoph Bach; Johann Christoph Bach, for his part, became the teacher of his brother Johann Sebastian Bach in Ohrdruf. This is reflected - and this would be the second reference to Bach - in *ClavierÜbung* IV as the culmination of *ClavierÜbung* I-IV: the *Aria* with 30 variations, which the music world knows as the 'Goldberg Variations'.


Teacher / student: Johann Pachelbel / Johann Christoph Bach / Johann Sebastian Bach But also: J. C. Kerll was a pupil of G. Frescobaldi, Pachelbel and Kerll met in Vienna from 1673 onwards

¹ At the same time, according to features 6 and 7 of Frescobaldi's 'Rätsel-Ricercar', the link back to his instruction applies: *Recercar Con obbligo Cantare la Quinta parte senza Tocarla*.

² Johann Heinrich BUTTSTETT, *UT MI SOL, RE FA LA tota Musica et Harmonia Aeterna*, Erfurt 1716/17, ad Cap. I, Partis secundae compositoriae, fol. 102. in *Orchestre*, p. 58 §5.

(3) I would now like to show how Pachelbel, for his part, unfolds a puzzle on the keyword *hexachord*. He calls his *aria* with variations *Hexachordum Apollinis* and builds up six sequences of variations over one *aria* each.

The sequence of fundamental tones is now astonishing:  . We expect something different in the hexachord. To the at

Steigleder organises his *Ricercari*, which he published as tablature in 1624, as follows:  . He supplies the sixth note, the actual starting note, as it were, because this sequence is a hexachord:




 . So we actually expect after this five-note sequence  and  the key would be C major. And if we take this further, we arrive at [c-f-a], for example.



Fig. 1: Johann Pachelbel, *Hexachordum Apollinis*, Aria Sexta - Aria Sebaldina.

C major is the fifth degree of F minor. My interpretation would be that the sixth *aria* actually does justice to the idea of the *Hexachordum Apollinis*, since the fifth degree of this last fundamental key of F minor is the key of C major. I would describe this as mysticism. We encountered such enigmatic connections everywhere in the 17th century with Frescobaldi, Steigleder and Fischer.

Compare also the conception in J. S. Bach:
The Well-Tempered Clavier
 Part I like part II:
 Two work halves each of
 C major to F minor vs. F sharp major to B minor
 V I V I

(4) The fourth point I would like to mention with regard to Bach is the following: Pachelbel's pupil Johann Heinrich Buttstett (1666-1727) - who worked as Pachelbel's successor at the Predigerkirche in Erfurt - is related to the Bach family through Bach's mother, née Lämmerhirt. Buttstett published the treatise *Ut Mi Sol Re Fa La, tota Musica et Harmonia Æterna* in 1716. It is a response to Mathesson's treatise *Das Neu-Eröffnete Orchestre* [Hamburg 1713] and then leads to a controversy that is certainly polemical. Buttstett now shows the following figure on the title page of his work:

[see next page]

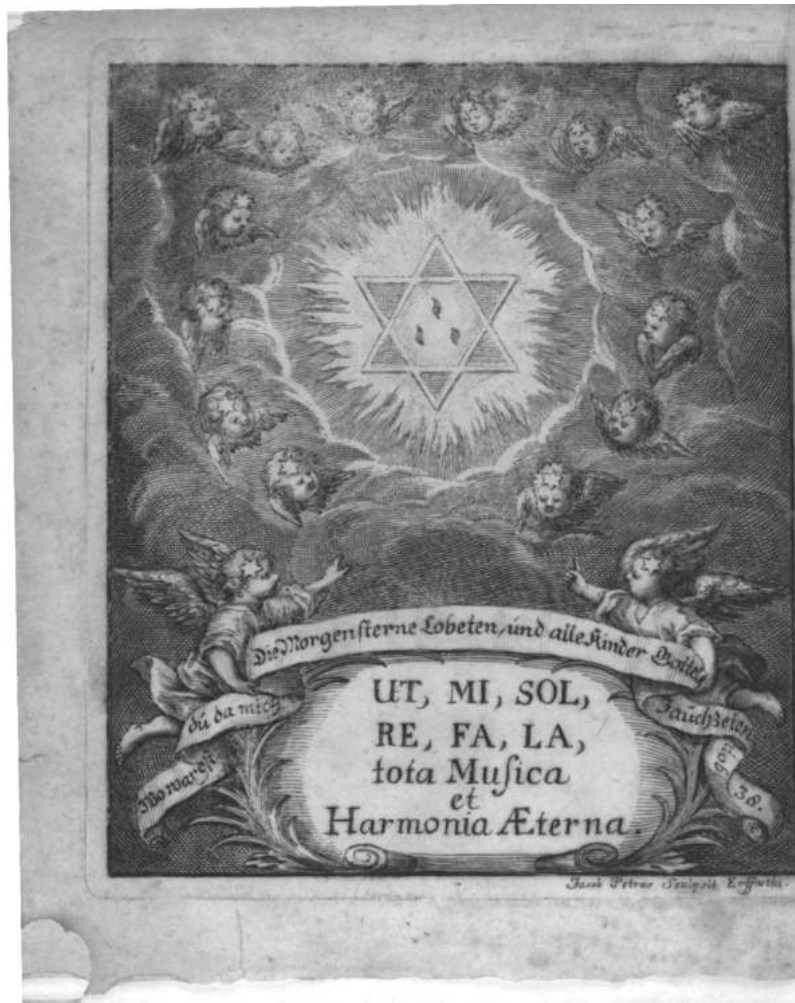


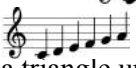


Fig. 2: Johann Heinrich Buttstett, *Ut Mi Sol Re Fa La, tota Musica et Harmonia Aeterna*, Leipzig, Erfurt 1716/1717, digital copy: Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, MDZ-Digitale Bibliothek (VD18 14647281-001), shelfmark: 4 Mus.th.249, permalink: <<https://mdz-nbn-resolving.de/details:bsb10527090>>.

Here we see the title *Ut Mi Sol Re Fa La, tota Musica et Harmonia Aeterna*; we hear the six notes of the hexachord, as it were, and see six corners of a star.

Now I've already given it away, I see this - or Buttstett sees it - as the six notes of the hexachord, namely Ut Mi Sol  and Re Fa La . Because the notes of the hexachord - the solmisation steps - are: . It is probably obvious that Buttstett sees this Star of David as a triangle pointing downwards and a triangle upwards, symbolising the hexachord as the two natures in Christ in the *one person of Christ*.³ So much for the connection of the hexachord in a spiritual world, related to Christ, and *Ut Mi Sol Re Fa La* in turn as the basis of the *Hexachordum Apollinis*.

(5) A fifth pointer opens up in the view of the *Kabbalah*. It is quite astonishing what Pachelbel adds to his *Hexachordum Apollinis* in the preface:⁴

³ See: Leonhard HUTTER, *Compendium locorum theologicorum* 1610; see also: Walter BLANKENBURG, *Einführung in Bachs Mass in B minor*, Bärenreiter Kassel and others 1974, pp. 55-57.

⁴ As can be read, this congratulation in the form of a dedication to Pachelbel comes from his "from childhood onwards always faithfully beloved friend of the heart" Johannes Bähr, at that time concertmaster to the Prince of Saxony-Weissenfels. The same form of a cabalistic dedication was written in the same year in Ohrdruf on the occasion of the death of Count Heinrich Friedrich von Hohenlohe-Langenburg for his funeral publication. Cf. Andrea DUBRAUSZKY, *Johann Sebastian Bachs Ohrdruffer Schulzeit (1695-1700) in Dokumenten des Hohenlohe-Zentralarchivs Neuenstein. On the question of Bach's influence during this period and its effect on his compositional work*. (Publication of the publication at the end of 2023).



Fig. 3: Johann Pachelbel, *Hexachordum Apollinis*, Preface. Dedication to Pachelbel by Johannes Bähr.
URL: <https://s9.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/3/36/IMSLP316680-PMLP11617-pachelbel_hexachordum_apollinis.pdf>.

Here you can see how the work begins: *Aria prima* and here the Kabbalah: "JOHANNES PACHELBELIUS ORGANISTA NORIBERGENSIUM."⁵ Each letter is given a number and each word a sum. All the sums add up to the number 1699. These four words lead to the year 1699. And so a mystical connection is revealed by means of number mysticism or number symbolism. We have encountered such number symbolism in Steigleder's work, namely the unique position of *Variatio 39* in three-part metre, the number 39 as the sum of the numbers 26 and 13 in the meaning of YHWH ECHAD, *God Most High*. Or also with the numbers 40-41-42, or with the opposite of the numbers 3 and 4, or 3 and 2, or with the special position of the numbers 26 and 27 in Steigleder's tablature book on *Our Father in the Kingdom of Heaven*. These two variations 26 and 27 alone - and only these - have a continuous thirty-second motion, i.e. the fastest motion par excellence. Notational symbolism is added, the score is black, as it were. According to my interpretation, the text assignment is:

*To the left and to the right hand help us do strong resistance.
Firm and well-armoured in faith and by the comfort of the Holy Spirit.*

Such considerations open up the field of biblical numbers, as well as - in the example of Pachelbel in the Kabbalah of his *Hexachordum Apollinis* - the field of personal numbers with reference to the Hebrew, Greek, Latin or even German alphabet and their respective counting systems. The Greek counting system is completely different from the counting systems of the Latin, German or Hebrew languages. These are the five pointers that we can take from Pachelbel and his work and thinking to Bach in order to see a further foundation on which Bach's training in Ohrdruf with his eldest brother was based and how Johann Sebastian Bach then continued in his own thinking and composing.⁶

⁵ Author's trans.: Johann Pachelbel Organist at Nuremberg.
⁶ In the funeral *epitaph* for Count Heinrich Friedrich von Hohenlohe-Langenburg †1699 (see glossary), a year is also interwoven in an Ohrdruf *epitaphium* by choosing suitable numerical letters with an indication of the numerical alphabet used; cf. Andrea DUBRAUSZKY, *Johann Sebastian Bach's Ohrdruf school days (1695-1700) in documents of the Hohenlohe Central Archives Neuenstein*. (Publication end of 2023).

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