



Hermeneutik zu Johann Sebastian Bach



Diese Übersetzung wurde mittels DeepL-Translator erstellt.

Sollten Ihnen Fehler auffallen, so sind wir für Hinweise dankbar.

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Hermeneutics of Bach

Research and research results by Christoph Bossert

Feature 2

Are the 36 chorales in the Neumeister collection really by Johann
Sebastian Bach?

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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Feature 2

The question of authorship: do the 36 chorales attributed to Bach originate from the Neumeister collection actually by Bach?

I don't want to go into this topic systematically now, when and how this collection, which we call the Neumeister collection, was passed on from Rinck's estate to Yale University; how it is that we can then divide this collection of Neumeister chorales from this estate into different sections, take individual pieces signed J. S. Bach out of a library, as it were, and arrive at a further 36, mostly unknown pieces - if we separate two little organ books of chorales. I would now have to discuss all of this in detail. However, this is the subject of other explanations.¹

The Well-Tempered Clavier I: Praeludium in B flat major BWV 866 and the Choral Prelude No. 32 All men must die BWV 1117

In this short feature, I would like to show how Bach's authorship of what I call the "36 chorales" can be established quite beyond doubt. I know many colleagues who have doubts about this. In fact, stylistically we hardly know any other pieces by Bach that point so clearly to the 17th century and, as in the case of what I now want to show, some peculiarities are not really considered typical of Bach. For example, it is not dignified to play three

sounds in a regression:



How can this come from Bach's pen? In a compound sentence:

KB 1:

Musical notation for a section of a piece. It starts with a treble clef and a bass clef. The tempo is marked 'Adagio.' and the measure number is 25. The notation shows a complex rhythmic pattern with many beamed notes and rests. A pedaling instruction '(Ped. ad lib.)' is written below the bass line. The piece ends with a double bar line.

It is precisely here, where there is doubt as to whether Bach could actually be the author, that I would like to establish that Bach must be the author. How can I claim that?

In the same key in the much later work, the *Well-Tempered Clavier I*, a Praeludium speaks the same language. I would like to show this in this feature.

1 See the features on "36 chorales".

So first a brief impression of the Praeludium in B flat major from the *Well-Tempered Clavier*, Part I by
Bach h.² **KB 2a:**

You may have noticed that it is the same kind of triadic retrograde - albeit broken up into *arpeggios* with a *passagio* in between in the scale manner - so that the retrograde B flat major / C major / D minor is concealed. This in turn is no coincidence and can be seen within the B flat major prelude in the blatant cut to the second half of the piece with a *D-C-B* or - to be precise - *D-C-b'*

KB 2b:

Now I look at this figure in particular:

² Johann Sebastian BACH, *The Well-Tempered Clavier Part I* (HN 1014) - Urtext, G. Henle Verlag, Munich 1997.

A constant alternation is heard through chords, passages and homophonic chordal structure. It is precisely this figure, followed by chords, that we have in the chorale prelude *Alle Menschen müssen sterben*, the 32nd piece from the Neumeister collection:

KB 3:

So now one thing leads to another: Even the note pattern is almost identical. The movement in the Neumeister movement is resolved: **KB 4a:**

In Bach's later Well-Tempered *Clavier* I: **KB 4b:**

From m. 9 onwards - if we follow it closely - the melody line in the descant sounds: b'-a'-a'-g'-g'-f'-f'-e'-f/F and sighing figures are heard.

In the epilogue of the 36 chorales of *Alle Menschen müssen sterben* we hear:

KB 4b = KB 1:

adagio

Here, too, the descant of characterised by sighing figures. Finally, the upper voice of the second part of the Praeludium in B flat major from bar 11 shows that this Praeludium really does refer back to this chorale prelude, namely by means of the descant line f'-e-flat"-d"/des"-c"-b"-a° with a final A-B in the bass. **KB 4b:**

It is nothing other than the melodic silhouette of the epilogue just heard from the Neumeister collection - or as I say, the "36 Chorales" by Johann Sebastian Bach - in No. 32, *Alle Menschen müssen sterben*.

KB 5:

11

14

15

20

Sheet music examples used

Johann Sebastian BACH, *The Well-Tempered Clavier Part I*, Urtext (HN 1014), G. Henle Verlag, Munich 1997.

Tobi's sheet music archive

< <https://tobis-notenarchiv.de/wp/bach-archiv/> >

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