

A History of Western Music, 10th Edition, Grout, et al.

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I. Contexts for Music

- A. 18th century, German-speaking Europe: hundreds of political entities
 1. Louis XIV's example: display power through patronage of the arts
 - a. Holy Roman Emperors, electors of Saxony, King Frederick II of Prussia
 2. city governments significant employers
 3. aristocratic musicians: performers, composers
 - a. Johann Ernst, prince of Weimar: violinist
 - b. Frederick the Great: flutist, composer
 - c. enthusiastic amateur performers, generous patrons
 4. English patrons
 - a. limited power and wealth of monarch
 - b. musicians earned outside official duties
 - c. growth of the public concert
 5. sale of compositions to publishers
 - a. set fee from publisher, full rights to a score
 - b. no notion of "composer" as a separate career
- B. Mixed taste: Georg Philipp Telemann
 1. German composers trained in more than one style
 - a. synthesis of traditions, music had broad appeal
 2. Georg Philipp Telemann (1681–1767): paragon of stylistic eclecticism
 - a. prolific, over 3,000 works; wrote in every genre
 - b. helped establish characteristic German style, preference for relative simplicity
 - c. *Paris Quartets* (1730 and 1738), Telemann's most popular and original works
 - i. viola da gamba part independent of continuo, role as soloist
 - d. style example: *Concerto primo* (First Concerto, NAWM 101)
 - i. mixture of French and Italian forms
 - ii. German counterpoint
 - e. pleased varied tastes: good amateur, middle-level professional
 - f. he was his own publisher in Hamburg
 - g. issued first music periodical in Germany, *Der getreue Music-Meister* (The True Music-Master, 1728–29)

II. Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

- A. Pinnacle of composers in the Western tradition
 1. virtuoso organist and keyboard player, skilled violinist
 2. prolific composer: embraced all major styles, forms, genres (except opera)
 3. born in Eisenach, Germany, came from large family of musicians
 4. first positions as church organist, Arnstadt, 1703; Mühlhausen, 1707
 5. married twice: Maria Barbara Bach, 7 children; Anna Magdalena Wilcke, 13 children
 6. 1708: court musician for duke of Weimar
 7. 1717: Kapellmeister at court of Prince Leopold of Anhalt in Cöthen
 8. Leipzig: cantor of the St. Thomas School, civic music director
 9. BWV for Bach-Werke-Verzeichnis (Bach Works Catalogue)
 10. major works: *St. Matthew Passion*, *St. John Passion*, Mass in B Minor, 200 church cantatas, 20 secular cantatas, 200 organ chorales and 70 other works for organ, *Brandenburg Concertos*, *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, *Clavier-übung*, *Musical Offering*, *The Art of Fugue*, numerous other keyboard, ensemble, orchestral, and sacred compositions
- B. Bach at work
 1. composed to fulfill needs of positions held:
 - a. church organist at Arnstadt, Mühlhausen: composed mostly for organ
 - b. court organist, then concertmaster at Weimar: cantatas
 - c. court music director at Cöthen: solo or ensemble music; some pedagogical works
 - d. Leipzig, four churches: cantatas and other church music
 - e. Leipzig collegium musicum: concertos and chamber works
 2. the position of musicians
 - a. not free agents, subject to their employers' wishes
 - b. position at Cöthen, Bach imprisoned by duke of Weimar
 - c. employee of the Leipzig town council: not to leave town without permission from the mayor
 3. conditions in Leipzig
 - a. council's third choice after Telemann and Christoph Graupner
 - b. Bach's position at St. Thomas's School:
 - i. teach Latin and music four hours a day
 - ii. compose, copy, and rehearse music for church services
 - iii. directed top choir, supervised other three
 - iv. trained best students on instruments; directed church instrumental ensemble
 - v. composed one major work for church each week
 - vi. provided music for town ceremonies and at the university
 - vii. composed for weddings, funerals, other special occasions
 4. the craft of composition
 - a. copied or arranged music of other composers
 - b. composed away from the keyboard
 - c. invented principal theme or subject, elaborated using established conventions

- d. working with text: wrote vocal melody first, fit accentuation and meaning of the words
- e. continually made small revisions
- f. frequently reworked his own existing pieces

C. Organ music

1. genres used in Lutheran services
 - a. chorale settings, toccatas, fantasias, preludes, fugues
 - b. acquainted with organ music by North Germans, southern Germans, Italians, and French
 - c. distinctive style: prolific imagination, mastery of counterpoint, virtuosity, extensive use of pedals
 - d. renowned as an improviser
2. Vivaldi's influence
 - a. Bach arranged several Vivaldi concertos for organ or harpsichord solo
 - b. concise themes, clarified harmonic scheme, developed subjects, ritornello
 - c. style example: Prelude and Fugue in A Minor, BWV 543 (NAWM 102)
 - i. violinistic figuration in the prelude
 - ii. fugue subject: rapid oscillation between repeated note and moving line
 - iii. form resembles concerto fast movement
 - iv. fugue subject functions like a ritornello
 - v. episodes, character of concerto solo sections
3. chorale settings
 - a. over 200 chorale settings, all known types
 - b. *Orgelbüchlein* (Little Organ Book): 45 short chorale preludes
 - i. introductions before congregation sang
 - ii. pedagogical aim, guidance to technique and improvisation
 - iii. settings vary greatly
 - c. *Durch Adams Fall* (Through Adam's Fall), BWV 637 (NAWM 103)
 - i. visual images through musical figurations
 - d. later organ chorales, grander proportions
 - i. more generalized emotion
 - ii. extensive musical development of ideas

D. Harpsichord music: masterpieces in every current genre

1. suites
 - a. three sets of six: *English Suites*, *French Suites*, *Partitas*
 - b. "French" and "English" not Bach's designation
 - c. standard four dance movements, additional short movements follow the sarabande
2. *The Well-Tempered Clavier* (1722 and ca. 1740)
 - a. each book consists of 24 prelude and fugue pairs in each major and minor key
 - b. arranged in rising chromatic order
 - c. demonstrate possibilities of playing in all keys, near-equal temperament
 - d. Prelude in E-flat Minor and Fugue in D-sharp Minor, Book I (NAWM 104)
 - i. most triads out of tune in mean-tone temperament
 - e. preludes: pedagogical aims
 - i. specific technical tasks, function as études
 - ii. various keyboard performance conventions, compositional practices
 - iii. style of toccata, concerto slow movement, concerto fast movement, trio sonata
 - f. fugues: 2-5 voices
 - i. from archaic *ricercare*, to up-to-date style
 - ii. Fugue No. 8 in D-sharp Minor, Book I (NAWM 104b): inversion, augmentation, stretto
3. *Goldberg Variations* (1741)
 - a. 30 variations, preserve bass and harmonic structure of the theme
 - b. every third variation is a canon
 - i. first at interval of unison, second at a 2nd, and so on
 - c. noncanonic variations: fugue, French overture, slow aria, bravura pieces
 - d. most technically demanding keyboard work composed before the 19th century
4. *Musical Offering*
 - a. 3- and 6-part *ricercare* for keyboard and 10 canons
 - b. theme proposed by Frederick the Great
 - c. added trio sonata for flute, violin, and continuo
 - d. set printed, dedicated to the king
5. *The Art of Fugue*
 - a. systematic, comprehensive approach
 - b. demonstrates all types of fugal writing
 - c. written in score, intended for keyboard performance
 - d. 18 canons and fugues in the strictest style
 - e. last fugue has four subjects; one spells Bach's name: B-flat-A-C-B

E. Chamber music

1. 15 sonatas for solo instruments and harpsichord
 - a. six each for violin and flute, 3 for viola da gamba
 - b. most have four movements: slow-fast-slow-fast
 - c. right hand harpsichord part in counterpoint with solo instrument
2. works for unaccompanied instruments
 - a. six sonatas and partitas for violin, six suites for cello, partita for solo flute
 - b. illusion of harmonic and contrapuntal texture

F. Orchestral music

1. *Brandenburg Concertos*, dedicated in 1721 to the Margrave of Brandenburg
 - a. from Italian concerto:
 - i. all but first in three-movement fast-slow-fast order
 - ii. triadic themes, steady driving rhythms, ritornello forms
 - b. expanded on Italian model
 - i. more ritornello material into the episodes
 - ii. dialogue between soloists and orchestra within episodes
 - iii. long cadenza for harpsichord in the fifth concerto
2. Collegium musicum, Leipzig 1730s
 - a. mostly university students; presented public concerts
 - b. one of first to write or arrange concertos for one or more harpsichord and orchestra

- c. four orchestral suites, balance of Italian and French influences

G. Cantatas

1. Erdmann Neumeister (1671–1756), new kind of sacred text, cantata
 - a. added poetic texts; intended as recitatives, arias, ariosos
 - b. traditions of the past: chorale, solo song, concertato
 - c. powerful elements of operatic recitative and aria
2. role in church services; two main churches in Leipzig: St. Nicholas, St. Thomas
 - a. cantata on alternate Sundays
 - b. soloist and two or three ripienists for each voice part
 - c. small orchestra: strings with continuo, two or three oboes, one or two bassoons
 - i. sometimes flutes
 - ii. trumpets and timpani on festive occasions
3. cantata cycles
 - a. 58 cantatas each year for the Leipzig churches
 - b. 1723–1729, Bach composed at least three complete annual cycles
 - c. approximately 200 church cantatas preserved
 - d. 20 secular cantatas from Weimar, Cöthen, Leipzig
4. *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*, BWV 62 (1724) (NAWM 105)
 - a. second cycle for Leipzig, cantatas based on chorales
 - b. mixture of secular and sacred models; old-style counterpoint and cantus firmus with modern Italianate style
 - c. opening chorus based on chorale melody
 - i. ingenious mixture of genres: concerto and chorale motet
 - ii. chorale as cantus firmus in the bass
 - iii. sprightly ritornello serves as frame, recurs three times shortened or transposed
 - iv. chorale in chorus, four phrases, cantus-firmus style
 - v. soprano melody long notes above imitative counterpoint, orchestra develops ritornello motives
 - vi. first and fourth phrases, fore-imitation
 - d. middle movements: recitatives and arias in operatic style for soloists
 - i. da capo aria for tenor, minuet style
 - ii. recitative and aria for bass, word-painting
 - iii. soprano and alto join in accompanied recitative
 - e. ends with 4-part harmonization of the chorale

H. Other church music

1. motets, Passions, and Latin service music
2. Passions: Vespers on Good Friday in Leipzig
 - a. *St. John Passion* (1724, later revised); *St. Matthew Passion* (1727, revised 1736)
 - b. recitatives, arias, ensembles, choruses, chorales sung by the chorus, orchestral accompaniment
 - c. elements of opera, cantata, oratorios
 - i. tenor narrates biblical story in recitative
 - ii. soloists play parts of Jesus and other figures
 - iii. chorus comments on events
 - iv. interpolated recitatives, ariosos, arias
3. *St. Matthew Passion* (NAWM 106, excerpt)
 - a. judgment of Jesus's guilt
 - i. ends with anger and violence: short, agitated choruses, rapid imitative entrances
 - ii. contemplative chorale expressing reactions of the congregation
 - b. disciple Peter's denials
 - i. simple narration to highly expressive recitative
 - ii. Peter's remorse: moving aria
 - iii. chorale expresses confidence of God's grace
4. Mass in B Minor (1747–1749)
 - a. drew from music he had composed earlier
 - b. adapted sections from cantata movements
 - c. newly composed sections: *stile antico* and modern styles
 - d. juxtaposed contrasting styles throughout the work

I. Bach's synthesis

1. all genres, styles, and forms of his time absorbed into his works
2. works have deep and lasting appeal
3. contemporaries preferred less complex, more tuneful music
4. music rediscovered, enormous popularity in the 19th century

III. George Frideric Handel [Georg Friederich Händel] (1685–1759)

A. Recognized since his time as one of the greatest composers of his era

1. born in Halle, Germany
2. education in organ, harpsichord, counterpoint, current German and Italian idioms
3. 1703–5: violinist in opera house orchestra, Hamburg opera house
4. 1706–1710: travel to Italy; recognition as composer
5. London: served aristocratic patrons, support of British royal family
6. major works: *Messiah*, *Saul*, *Samson*, *Israel in Egypt*, about 20 other oratorios, *Giulio Cesare* and 40 other Italian operas, about 100 Italian cantatas, 45 concertos, 20 trio sonatas, 20 solo sonatas, numerous keyboard pieces, *Water Music* and *Music for the Royal Fireworks*

B. Handel and his patrons

1. patrons determined compositions, support allowed freedom to write for the public
2. Italy, Marquis Francesco Ruspoli: Latin motets, cantatas
3. Hanover, court music director: established himself in London, Italian opera
4. British monarchs, Queen Anne: ceremonial choral works
 - a. sizable income, minimal responsibilities
 - b. honorary appointment, composer to the Chapel Royal, 1723
5. most activities were in the public sphere

C. Operas

1. international style: *Almira* (1705), premiered in Hamburg
 - a. arias in Italian, recitatives in German
 - b. overture and dance music, French models
 - c. arias in Italian manner, German counterpoint and orchestration
2. London operas

- a. *Rinaldo* (1711), first Italian opera composed in London
- b. 1710s, Handel opera staged every season
- c. 1718–19, Royal Academy of Music
 - i. joint stock company, produced Italian operas
 - ii. Handel engaged as music director
 - iii. 1720–28, some of Handel's best operas
- 3. recitative styles
 - a. *recitativo secco* (dry recitative): basso continuo, speechlike
 - b. *recitativo accompagnato* (accompanied recitative):
 - i. orchestral outbursts dramatize tense situations
 - ii. rapid changes of emotion, punctuated by orchestra
- 4. arias
 - a. solo da capo: single specific mood or affection
 - i. allocated by importance of cast members
 - ii. prima donna ("first lady"), leading soprano role, most and best arias
 - iii. Handel wrote for specific singers, showcased their abilities
 - b. wide variety of aria types
 - i. coloratura: brilliant displays, florid ornamentation
 - ii. sublimely expressive songs of pathos
 - iii. regal grandeur, rich contrapuntal and concertato accompaniments
- 5. instrumental sections
 - a. sinfonias mark key moments in plot
 - b. a few operas include ballets
 - c. fuller orchestra, more use of winds
 - d. choruses and larger vocal ensembles are rare
- 6. scene complexes
 - a. recitative freely combined with arias, ariosos, and orchestral passages
 - b. *Giulio Cesare*, Act II, Scenes 1–2 (NAWM 107)
 - i. opens with dialogue in simple recitative
 - ii. Cleopatra's da capo aria interwoven with other elements
 - iii. combination of national elements also present
- 7. Handel as impresario
 - a. Royal Academy dissolved in 1729
 - b. Handel and a partner took over the theater, formed new company
 - c. competing companies, divided the London public
- D. Oratorios
 - 1. English oratorio, 1730s new genre
 - a. Italian tradition: dialogue in recitative, lyrical verses in arias
 - b. elements foreign to Italian opera:
 - i. French classical drama
 - ii. ancient Greek tragedy
 - iii. German Passion
 - iv. English masque and anthem
 - c. oratorios featured in theaters
 - d. *Esther*, premiered at King's Theatre, 1732
 - 2. use of chorus
 - a. influenced by English choral tradition
 - b. variety of roles: participating in the action, narrating the story, commenting on events
 - c. emphasis on communal expression
 - d. simple style, fugal textures alternate with solid blocks of harmony
 - 3. *Saul* (1739)
 - a. libretto by Charles Jennens
 - b. closing scene of Act II (NAWM 108)
 - i. blending of genres
 - ii. accompanied recitative in martial style (NAWM 108a)
 - iii. dialogue, simple recitative (NAWM 108b)
 - iv. *O fatal consequence of rage* (NAWM 108c), 3 fugues, homorhythmic passages
 - v. rhetorical figures convey meaning of text
 - 4. *Messiah* (1741)
 - a. libretto by Charles Jennens
 - b. series of contemplations on Christian ideal of redemption
 - c. texts from the Bible: Old Testament prophecies through life of Christ to his resurrection
 - d. mixture of traditions in the music
 - i. French overture
 - ii. Italianate recitatives and da capo arias
 - iii. Germanic choral fugues
 - iv. English choral anthem style
 - 5. performance practice
 - a. Handel played organ during intermission
 - b. no staging or costumes, less expensive to produce, profitable
 - c. appealed to large middle-class public
 - 6. librettos
 - a. *Messiah* advertised as "sacred entertainment"
 - b. Handel's oratorios based on Old Testament and Apocryphal books, well known to middle-class
 - c. English audiences felt kinship with ancient Israelites
 - 7. borrowing and reworking
 - a. borrowing, transcribing, adapting, rearranging, parodying accepted practice
 - b. Handel borrowed from others or reused his own music
- E. Instrumental works
 - 1. much of his instrumental music was published in London
 - a. extra income, kept name before the public
 - b. two collections of harpsichord suites, 20 solo sonatas, trio sonatas for various instruments
 - c. works show Corelli's influence; harmonies reflect later Italian style
 - 2. ensemble suites: most popular instrumental works

- a. *Water Music* (1717)
 - i. three suites for winds and strings
 - ii. royal procession on river Thames
- b. *Music for the Royal Fireworks* (1749)
 - i. for winds, celebrated Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle
- 3. concertos: retrospective style
 - a. six Concerti Grossi, Op. 3 (published 1734)
 - i. feature woodwind and string soloists
 - b. invented concerto for organ and orchestra
 - i. performed during intermissions of his oratorios
 - ii. published in three sets (1738, 1740, and 1761)
 - c. Twelve Grand Concertos, Op. 6 (1739)
 - i. reflect traditions of Corelli
 - ii. full contrapuntal texture of Handel's earlier style

F. Handel's reputation

- 1. Handel became a British citizen, 1727
 - a. wrote all his major works for British audiences
 - b. buried with public honors in Westminster Abbey
- 2. broad, lasting appeal of oratorios
 - a. earliest pieces by any composer to enjoy unbroken tradition of performance to the present

IV. An Enduring Legacy

- A. Only a few of Bach's pieces published during his lifetime
 - 1. music known to core musicians and connoisseurs
 - 2. fuller discovery of Bach in the 19th century
 - 3. Mozart, Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Brahms emulated Bach
 - 4. enduring influence on modern composers
- B. Handel: first composer to attain permanent place in the performing repertory
 - 1. some of his oratorios have been performed continually since they were written
 - 2. late 18th and 19th centuries, amateur choral societies, Handel's oratorios core repertoire
 - 3. orchestral suites and concertos revived, gaining popularity

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