

Reading and Misreading: Schumann's Accompaniments to Bach's Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin*

By Joel Lester

A recurring narcissistic feature of music theory, if not all human endeavors, is that each historical era sees its own image in the past. Rameau chided Corelli for his ignorance of fundamental bass.¹ Riemann saw the history of theory as the gradual discovery of his own ideas.² And Schenker argued that the music of the masters must have been composed according to his theories.³

None of us is immune to imposing our attitudes on the past. When we do so, it is often the aspects of which we are unaware that are most pernicious. For instance, when we analyze music, we usually are aware that we interpret various features differently than former generations did—indeed, we usually advertise our new perspective. But we do not often question whether the very features that we deem inherent in a piece have always been considered thus. If only we could compare our ideas and analyses with those of the past. The problem is that musicians of earlier eras did not produce analyses addressing our agenda. We can only compare our notions with theirs if we find substitutes for the analyses they so inconsiderately failed to leave for us.

Reworkings of compositions provide one such substitute. An added accompaniment or other changes can be read like an analysis, in that additions or alterations to a piece necessarily interpret compositional elements. J. S. Bach's *C-major Prelude (Well-Tempered Clavier, I)* was a finished composition for him. For Charles Gounod, it became a mere background to *Ave Maria*. Textural, registral, and rhythmic features crucial in the pre-

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¹ Jean-Philippe Rameau, *Nouveau Système de musique théorique* (Paris: Ballard, 1726), Chap. 23, "Exemples des erreurs qui se trouvent dans les Chiffres du cinquième Oeuvre de Corelly." This chapter is translated in Joel Lester, *Compositional Theory in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992), 305–19.

² Hugo Riemann, *Geschichte der Musiktheorie im IX.–XIX. Jahrhundert* (Leipzig: Max Hesse, 1898), vi.

³ Heinrich Schenker, *Neue musikalische Theorien und Phantasien, Vol. 3, Der freie Satz* (Vienna: Universal-Edition, 1935), 2–3, *et passim*; English translation by Ernst Oster as *Free Composition* (New York: Longman, 1979), xxii.

lude recede to become insignificant details behind Gounod's added melody. Even notions of phrasing and form differ.⁴ We can learn from such reworkings how generations of musicians heard pieces differently, leading us to reconsider what we hear and how we hear it.

This study explores these issues as they arise in Bach's solo violin works—a particularly apt repertoire, for not only did Robert Schumann, a major composer situated midway between Bach and us, provide piano accompaniments, but Bach and other eighteenth-century musicians also reworked several movements. Whereas Bach's arrangements and those by his contemporaries always maintain an eighteenth-century sound, Schumann's versions have an unmistakable nineteenth-century flavor.⁵ This is remarkable: Schumann only wrote accompaniments, never touching a note in the violin part. The features of the violin part that musicians routinely deem crucial to the very identity of a piece—melodies, harmonies, rhythms, phrasing, motives, and form—remain unchanged. But his accompaniments transform each of these features. This is the focus of the present study: the ways in which Bach's violin solos and arrangements and Schumann's accompaniments affect the elements just listed, and the extent to which we, like Bach and Schumann, interpret those elements according to our stylistic biases.

Consider rhythm. Bach always creates a very active surface rhythm and links this local activity with larger metric units by articulating intermediate levels of the metric hierarchy. Schumann's accompaniments tend to flatten out the surface by emphasizing the swing of the meter. This is clearest in those movements with continuous sixteenth notes, such as the *Prelude* of the *E-major Partita*, BWV 1006, whose opening appears in example 1.

In Bach's violin part, the larger rhythms are regular. Measures are grouped in pairs by repeated or echoed patterns, as noted by the groupings over the score. Many measures feature a sarabande-like articulation of the second beat. For instance, in mm. 1 and 2, the eighths begin on beat 2. In m. 3 and elsewhere, the second beat is articulated because the moving melodic voice proceeds to a new chord member and stays there through the end of the measure. Indeed, stressed second beats characterize many later figures, including that in example 2.

Other rhythmic features spice up this regular meter and hypermeter. Because the first downbeat is empty, perception of the meter is delayed,

⁴ Joel Lester, *The Rhythms of Tonal Music* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1986), 139–44 *et passim*.

⁵ Robert Schumann, *Bach-Schumann, Klavierbegleitung zu den Sonaten für Violine solo* (New York: Edition Peters, n.d.). In musical examples below, the violin solo is also taken from this edition, which generally agrees with Bach's autograph (available in several facsimile editions), except that in his notation all notes in multiple stops are stemmed separately.

Example 1. Bach, *Partita No. 3 in E major, BWV 1006, Preludio*, mm. 1–17, with Schumann's accompaniment.

The musical score is presented in four systems, each with a treble and bass clef for the piano part and a grand staff for the accompaniment. The key signature is E major (three sharps) and the time signature is 3/4.

- System 1 (Measures 1-4):** The piano part begins with a treble clef. Measure 1 has an accent on the first note. Measures 2-4 are grouped by a slur labeled "2 (1 + 1)". The piano part has a forte (*f*) dynamic. The accompaniment has a forte (*f*) dynamic.
- System 2 (Measures 5-8):** Measure 5 is marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. Measures 6-8 are grouped by a slur labeled "2 (echo)". The piano part has a forte (*f*) dynamic. The accompaniment has a piano (*p*) dynamic. Measure 7 includes a *cresc.* marking.
- System 3 (Measures 9-12):** Measures 9-12 are grouped by a slur labeled "2 (echo)". The piano part has a piano (*p*) dynamic. The accompaniment has a piano (*p*) dynamic.
- System 4 (Measures 13-17):** Measures 13-17 are grouped by a slur labeled "2 (echo)". The piano part has a forte (*f*) dynamic. The accompaniment has a piano (*p*) dynamic. Measure 17 ends with a fermata and a right-pointing arrow.

Example 2. Bach, *Partita No. 3 in E major, Preludio*, mm. 29–31, with Schumann's accompaniment and a melodic reduction.

and what is heard is less symmetrical than the series of two-measure groups implies. Melodic high and low points, pattern beginnings, and other accentuations tend to occur off the beats. For instance, in m. 3, the top note of the moving voice occurs on a metrically-weak eighth. In example 2, each ascent begins on the second eighth of a beat and ends on the second sixteenth of a beat. The interaction of the metric grid with these accentuations creates the imaginative rhythmic complexity that enlivens motor rhythms in much of Bach's music.⁶

In Schumann's version, powerful downbeats overshadow these local accentuations. A strong chord marks nearly every downbeat in mm. 1–12. The sarabande rhythm is absent: in m. 3, for instance, instead of initiating eighths on the second beat, Schumann begins them after that beat. Here and in many later measures, Schumann seems to have envisioned the accompaniment joining the violin in midstream primarily to lead strongly to the next downbeat, not to articulate any particular beat. After m. 12, Schumann does articulate each second beat, but because of the established metric swing, the effect is like an *oom-pah-rest* without a strong downbeat.

In his orchestration of the *Preludio* in the sinfonia to the cantata *Wir danken dir Gott*, BWV 29, Bach places chords on each beat in m. 1 (example 3), not solely on the downbeat as Schumann did. With the ingenious timbral and registral antiphony between the falling string/oboe arpeggios and the rising trumpet arpeggios, Bach brings to the fore two organizations of the beats within the measure: *1-2-rest-1-2* and *1-rest-3-1-rest*. In mm. 9 and following, when Bach, like Schumann, doubles the moving part in thirds and sixths, Bach stresses the second beats.

⁶ On this aspect of Bach's rhythms, see Edward T. Cone, *Musical Form and Musical Performance* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1968), 59–72, and Lester, *Rhythms*, 127–45.

Example 3. Bach, Cantata *Wir danken dir Gott*, BWV 29, *Sinfonia*, mm. 1-12.

Presto

Tpts:

Obs, Vlms, Vlas:

Organ:

Timp in D:

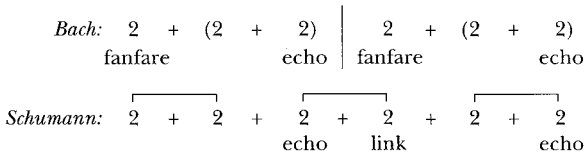
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These multiple emphases on individual beats and their groupings recreate in a new climate Bach's highly articulated rhythms. His accompaniment emphasizes several levels of the metric hierarchy, granting each its own integrity. Schumann's accompaniment primarily stresses the measure level, omitting the intermediate levels that in Bach's version link the measure-level and the more local rhythmic vitality.

Bach's and Schumann's accompaniments to these opening measures also differ in phrasing, as shown in example 4. For Bach, the timbral and registral antiphony in mm. 1–2 recurs in mm. 7–9, marking m. 7 as a new beginning parallel in function to m. 1, and articulating the opening measures as two groups of six: a two-measure fanfare, a repeated two-measure group, then the same again. In Schumann's accompaniment, mm. 7–8 simply fill the gap between mm. 5–6 and 9–12, promoting regular four-measure groups: four measures of music in mm. 1–4, a two-measure echo and a two-measure link in mm. 5–8 adding up to a second four-group, and then another group of four.

Example 4. Phrasing of Cantata *Wir danken dir Gott, Sinfonia*, mm. 1–12, and Schumann's accompaniment to Bach, *Partita No. 3 in E major, Preludio*, mm. 1–12.



These differences in the articulation of beats, measures, and phrases predispose one to perform Schumann's version as a nineteenth-century perpetual motion with a swift surface and a swinging accompaniment. It is probably no accident that the fastest recording of the *Preludio* I know is the oldest, made by Pablo Sarasate (1844–1908) shortly after 1900, possibly reflecting a nineteenth-century tradition of realizing this and similar movements.⁷

These rhythmic features characterize Bach's and Schumann's approaches to all textures and tempos. In the *Andante* from the A-minor Sonata, BWV 1003 (see example 5), Bach maintains an eighth-note pulse in the bass. The melody interacts with this pulsation in ever-varied ways, with patterns starting on different beats and beat-divisions and dissonances both on and off the beat. In an eighteenth-century arrangement of this work for key-

⁷ Sarasate recorded the *Preludio* on a flat disc; it was remastered on LP by the American Stereophonic Corporation around 1960.

board, which probably is by Bach (BWV 964), the only change in this passage is that the bass appears an octave lower to promote registral clarity. Schumann's accompaniment, with its syncopated quarters and new bass line, adds a lilt not present in any Bach version. The textural differences between the versions once again affect performance styles. Bach's intricate surface invites the performer to add more details by ornamenting the repeat. Such diminutions are unwelcome in Schumann's version, which focuses attention on the swing of the meter at the expense of local details.

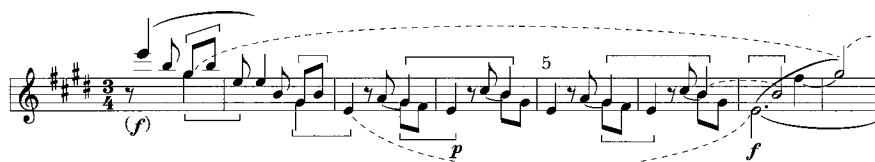
Example 5. Bach, *Sonata No. 2 in A minor*, BWV 1003, *Andante*, mm. 1–4, with Schumann's accompaniment.

The image shows a musical score for Example 5. It consists of three staves. The top staff is the original melody by Bach, marked 'Andante' and in 3/4 time. The bottom two staves are Schumann's piano accompaniment, also marked 'Andante' and in 3/4 time. The bass line is an octave lower than the original. The score shows the first four measures of the piece. The melody is a simple eighth-note pattern, and the accompaniment features syncopated quarter notes and a steady bass line.

The differences between Bach's and Schumann's views of local and larger rhythms suggest that features frequently deemed fixed in the score in fact depend on one's stylistic perspective, including even basics such as the nature of meter and the interaction of measure-level and surface activity. Consider Schenker's foreground sketch of this *Preludio* (example 6). Rhythmically, Schenker agrees with Schumann's accompaniment to mm. 3 and 5, but is quite at odds with Bach's accompaniment, creating a swing rather than Bach's highly articulated metric levels. However much Schenker challenged nineteenth-century harmonic and formal theories, he reveals his nineteenth-century roots in his conception of the rhythm here.⁸ This should warn us that we too carry our stylistic biases. If something as commonplace as the divisions of the notated meter depends on interpretation, unnotated aspects such as hypermeter and phrasing may be even more dependent on what we bring to the score than what exists there.

⁸ The violinist Fritz Kreisler, who breathed the same Viennese atmosphere as Schenker, likewise initiates eighth-notes in these measures after the second beat in his published piano accompaniment: *Prelude in E for Violin and Piano [by] J. S. Bach* (New York: Charles Foley, 1913).

Example 6. Heinrich Schenker, graph of Bach *Partita No. 3, Preludio*, mm. 1–8.⁹



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The remainder of this study explores such stylistic biases as they affect the hearing of harmony, tonality, and form by Bach, Schumann, and ourselves in the G-minor Sonata, BWV 1001. The primary focus is form. Essentially, I argue that whereas we often hear form in terms of sections that relate to one another, Bach, as an early eighteenth-century musician, heard music in terms of developmental processes, articulated by cadences and changes in design, but not broken into separate sections in the manner of later formal theories.

The last movement of the G-minor Sonata has two repeated sections—two “reprises,” as the eighteenth-century called them. As in many of Bach’s movements with two reprises, the second roughly follows the first thematically but is both longer and in many ways more developed. Early eighteenth-century theory discussed only the most superficial features of such binary forms, ignoring the marriage of tonal motion and thematic design that later ages concretize as theories of form or structure.¹⁰

But the music itself is not silent on these issues. A crucial structural determinant evident in many early eighteenth-century two-reprise compositions—especially those by Bach—is a perpetually increasing level of activity in numerous musical elements. In this movement, each of the parallel thematic elements is noticeably more active when it recurs in the second reprise. Appendix 1 aligns portions of the two reprises, between which bold-face numbers identify some parallel thematic elements. Number 1 in the first reprise is a descending tonic arpeggio, laying out the basic registral ambitus of the movement in a stable beginning. Underscoring this stability is a return to the sonata’s “motto” voicing of the G-minor triad: the four-voice chord that opens and concludes the *Adagio* as well as its first phrase (shown in Appendix IIa), and that concludes the second-movement fugue and the *Presto*. After the B \flat -major *Siciliano*, the *Presto* opens

⁹ Heinrich Schenker, *Das Meisterwerk in der Musik*, I (Munich: Drei Masken Verlag, 1925). Note that the first *p* belongs under m. 5.

¹⁰ For example, some articles on various dance types (allemande, gavotte, and minuet) in Johann Gottfried Walther’s *Musicalisches Lexicon* (Leipzig: Wolfgang Deer, 1732) recommend the most common number of measures found in the two reprises.

with each eighth in mm. 1–4 asserting one of the four pitches of the “motto” voicing for four measures, as shown in example 7. The parallel passage beginning the second reprise is anything but stable. The arpeggio now ascends, erupting into new registral territory. The chord is not tonic, but dominant.

Example 7. Bach, *Sonata No. 1 in G minor*, BWV 1001, *Presto*, mm. 1–5. Melodic deployment of the sonata’s “motto” voicing of the tonic chord.



Thematic element 2 in the first reprise expresses a harmonically-closed progression of tonic-dominant-tonic. A Rameauian theorist would have explained that a potential full cadence is avoided because the soprano rises to $\hat{3}$ in m. 9; a thoroughbass theorist would have argued similarly that the progression is cadential, but not in the form that would appear as a conclusion to a section or piece. In the second reprise, the two-measure units expand to four measures, the scales drive upwards, chordal ninths and changes in chord quality intensify the dissonance level, and the progression is an open-ended modulation to a new key.

The figuration of the sequences of thematic element number 3 is more intricate than earlier patterns, reflecting a crescendo of activity within each reprise as well as between them. In the first reprise, the sequence descends diatonically, and all bass pitches are on the beat. In the second reprise, the sequence is longer, its internal patterning more irregular, and its bass rises with some chromaticism through the diminished octave $E\sharp_4$ to $E\flat_4$. Likewise, thematic element number 4 begins as a dominant pedal in the first reprise but features a relentlessly rising bass in the second reprise.¹¹

How does Schumann address these matters? In element number 1, he follows the contour of the violin part with rhythms emphasizing the swing of the meter. In element number 2, he does not highlight the two-measure groups of the first reprise; instead, the missing downbeat on m. 7 tends to make one hear a four-measure group, simply continuing the fours of mm. 1–4. This, along with the dynamics, makes the parallel passage in the second reprise sound like it is expanded due to the insertion of a new four-measure unit, not because of the units’ increased length.

¹¹ To be sure, Bach could not have used a similarly rising bass in the register of the first reprise because it would have necessitated beginning below the G-string. But this simply confirms that Bach, like all accomplished composers, used the instrument’s limitations as a compositional resource, not as an excuse for the “inevitable.”

Schumann's recasting of the closing of each reprise diverges more sharply from Bach's conception. For element number 3 in the first reprise, Schumann does reflect the more active pattern by means of the staccato eighth-note harmonic rhythm; but changing the type of harmonic progression in each measure adds an unevenness that obscures the smoothness of the violin sequences. Whereas Bach composed the parallel passage in the second reprise to be more active, Schumann makes it less so: legato instead of staccato, a slower harmonic rhythm, and regular two-measure sequences. In element number 4, Schumann harmonizes Bach's dominant pedal in the first reprise with a moving bass, and replaces his driving bass ascent in the second reprise with a tonic pedal, again diminishing the growing climax within and between the two reprises of the original solo.

Bach's and Schumann's differences on the relationship between the two reprises also encompass their approaches to harmony and the expression of keys. Here too, Bach hears parallel reprises exploring materials in evermore complex ways. Consider how he uses conventional harmonic paradigms. The movement begins with the tonic chord in mm. 1–4, suggests an avoided cadence in mm. 5–8, and proceeds to a complete circle of fifths within the key. This continues past the change in pattern in m. 12 until a rising 5–6 sequence beginning in m. 17 leads towards B \flat major.

These harmonic paradigms are well-known to all early eighteenth-century theory. Arpeggios, cadences, circles of fifths, and 5–6 sequences are standard thoroughbass patterns. And cadences and circles of fifths are Rameau's basic harmonic paradigms. The 5–6 sequence is the very progression that inspired Rameau to invent double employment of the dissonance. Had Rameau seen this piece, he might have nodded in agreement at the series of events, with basic progressions followed by more advanced ones: the tonic chord, an avoided cadence, a circle of fifths, and then a sequence making explicit his notion of double employment. In many of Rameau's pieces, events unfold in a similar order.¹²

¹² For instance, in Rameau's charming "Danse du grand calumet de la paix" from *Les Indes galantes*, the first four measures contain only tonic and dominant chords expressing a perfect cadence (what we call "i V⁷ i"). The next four measures introduce the subdominant, which first alternates with the tonic (forming imperfect cadences, what we call "iv i iv-with-added-sixth i," in m. 6) and then moves, via double employment to the dominant ("iv-with-added-sixth = ii⁷ V" in m. 7). These four measures end on a half cadence ("i V" in m. 8). The next eight measures repeat all this but end on the tonic, completing the refrain of this *rondeau*. The following sixteen measures, the first episode of the *rondeau*, are in the relative major, introducing the tonic, dominant, and subdominant of that key in the same way before exploring more complex progressions. The second episode of the *rondeau* goes much farther afield, adding considerable chromaticism, such as an E-major chord moving to a D-minor triad within the overall key of G minor. See Jean-Philippe Rameau, *Les Indes galantes*, nouvelle entrée/vi; in *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris: Durand, 1902; reprint, New York: Broude, 1968), 363ff.

The music in B♭ forms a closed phrase (mm. 25–32). Thereafter, the music goes through the tonic key of G minor, changes to D minor via root progressions by fifth and then more complex sequences, and concludes with a formal cadence. From this quick overview, one can see why eighteenth-century musicians applied the term *modulation* to both harmonic motions within a key as well as those that change key.¹³ The same sorts of progressions—cadential motions, root progressions by fifth, and sequences—both establish keys and move between keys. Sometime in the nineteenth century, the term *modulation* came to refer only to key changes, in accord with the notion of musical form as a series of discrete sections.¹⁴

In both reprises, there are three principal tonal areas: G minor, B♭ major, and D minor in the first reprise; and G minor (now centered around the dominant), C minor, and G minor in the second reprise. Bach and Schumann differ most strikingly in their treatment of the middle key. In the first reprise, Bach presents music clearly beginning and cadencing in B♭ major—although unlike the opening music in G minor, the harmonic rhythm is more active and the progressions more varied. In the second reprise, Bach, writing a more complex passage, has the music in C minor begin away from the tonic. In summary, for Bach, the increasing complexity of harmonic progressions incorporates local motions, key changes, and even the treatment of keys in the two reprises.

Schumann, hearing this music according to the norms of nineteenth-century forms, treated the middle key of each reprise quite differently. For him, the first reprise seems to have been a kind of three-key exposition. When he gets to B♭, he adds a bass pedal to slow down the pacing, as if to make it a lyrical second theme. Schumann also suppresses the cadence on B♭ in m. 32 with a chromatic deceptive progression that reduces its independence as a key. In the second reprise, Schumann ends the music in C minor in mm. 81–82 with a clear cadence, strongly demarcated by the two *fortes* on successive eighths. Once again, for Bach, the two reprises are parallel in structure, with the second more complex; B♭ major and C minor

¹³ Lester, *Compositional Theory*, 2

¹⁴ The latest published usage I know of the term *modulation* referring to progressions within a key occurs in Gottfried Weber's *Versuch einer geordneten Theorie der Tonsetzkunst*, where he differentiates modulation within a key ("Tonart treue Modulation," p. 98) from modulation from one key to another ("ausweichende Modulation"). In contrast to eighteenth-century theorists, Weber uses the term *modulation* to denote chromatic progressions (e.g., what we call secondary dominants), not all progressions. See Gottfried Weber, *Versuch einer geordneten Theorie der Tonsetzkunst*, third edition, vol. 2 (Mainz: B. Schott's Söhne, 1830–32), 97ff. This terminology remains in the English translation by James Warner under the title *An Attempt at a Systematically Arranged Theory of Musical Composition* (Boston: J. H. Wilkins & R. B. Carter, 1842–46), 328ff. ("modulation in the key" vs. "modulation out of the key").

stand in parallel positions, but C is less stable than B \flat . For Schumann, the model for a large movement with two reprises is sonata form, in which the two reprises are not parallel: the first reprise exposit themes in two keys and includes transitions and other passagework, while the second reprise is a development (in which a foreign key may be established) and a recapitulation. Where Bach created progressive intensification within two parallel reprises, Schumann heard sections that corresponded to the musical forms of his age.

The same attitudes emerge just as strongly in Schumann's accompaniment to the first-movement *Adagio*, which functions as a prelude to the second-movement fugue. See Appendix IIa, which once again aligns parallel portions of the movement. Like many preludes, this *Adagio* features elaborate figurations over bass scales and cadences—the progressions that thoroughbass manuals suggest for improvising a prelude. Appendix IIb reduces the opening section to thoroughbass notation, making explicit the opening cadential progression, the descending bass scale, and the cadential progression in D minor.

Schumann generally follows Bach's bass line, but without the same degree of clarity (see Appendix IIa). For instance, in the descending bass scale in mm. 2–4, Schumann changes bass register twice; and he disrupts the descending bass scale in m. 7 by using A after the second beat to support an F chord, instead of Bach's C supporting a D-minor passing seventh. These are relatively minor details, but their quantity during the movement suggests that Schumann conceived of the bass more as a support for the harmony than as a generating force for the music.

Bach and Schumann differ most strongly in m. 14, the beginning of a figurally varied return of the opening measures transposed down a fifth. In m. 14 Schumann arrives on a cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ rather than on the tonic of C. Either he recognized that the thematic return begins in m. 14, and elided the sectional break, or (more unlikely) he failed to hear the return at all. Either possibility reveals a fundamental conceptual disagreement with Bach.

If Schumann intended to elide the return, he was following his practice in sonata-form movements like the first movement of the *Rhenish* Symphony, where the thematic recapitulation occurs over a cadential $\frac{6}{4}$. Such strategies view musical forms as standard constructions that original composers can alter.¹⁵ From this perspective, eliding the moment of recapitulation simply blurs what is in other respects a clear sectional boundary.

¹⁵ See, for example, Schumann's comment, "It is enough for second-class talents to master the received forms; those of the first rank are granted the right to enlarge them. Only the genius may range freely." Robert Schumann, "A Symphony by Berlioz," trans. Edward T. Cone in *Hector Berlioz Fantastic Symphony*, ed. idem (New York: W. W. Norton, 1971), 226.

But that attitude, applied to this prelude, denies the role of the bass as generator. From a thoroughbass perspective, eliding the thematic return by placing a cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ instead of a tonic under it is not a decoration or artistic touch—it removes the underpinning of the music.

It is conceivable that Schumann simply did not perceive a thematic return in m. 14. After all, instead of the multiple-stops of m. 1, measure 14 features a single line, and the figurative details differ. Ironically, this possibility leads to the same conclusion as if he had intentionally evaded that return. Of crucial importance is the role of the bass in generating the music. If the bass C initiates the music after that point (in Bach's conception), its omission removes the very rationale for the music.

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I have been spending much time on local issues. In doing so, I am following the point-to-point focus of almost all early-eighteenth-century thoroughbass, counterpoint, and harmonic theory. It is therefore not surprising that both Bach pupils who published analyses of his music—Christoph Nichelmann and Johann Kirnberger—concentrated on chord-to-chord progressions.¹⁶ Nichelmann in particular repeatedly stresses the affective criteria for chord-to-chord connections.

From this perspective, the changes Schumann made—eliding the return in the *Adagio*, changing harmonies, or evading the B \flat cadence in the *Presto*—alter the affect as well as the structure. Schumann, influenced by nineteenth-century formal theories, may well have been unaware of these affective details (despite the frequent criticism that he is a miniaturist). And we in the twentieth century, influenced by Schenker, also tend to interpret details in relation to the larger structure instead of the other way around. For instance, return to mm. 5–9 of the *Presto* of the G-minor Sonata (Appendix I). From a Schenkerian perspective, the rising soprano line from G to B \flat is an ascent to a structural goal (arguably the ascent to the beginning of the structural line), supported by the tonic-dominant-

¹⁶ Analyses of fugues from the *Well-Tempered Clavier* appear at the end of Johann Kirnberger's *Die wahren Grundsätze zum Gebrauch der Harmonie* (Berlin and Königsberg: Decker & Hartung, 1773); English translation by David Beach and Jürgen Thym in "The True Principles for the Practice of Harmony by Johann Philipp Kirnberger: A Translation," *Journal of Music Theory* 23 (1979): 163–225. The analyses may have been prepared by Kirnberger's pupil Johann Adam Peter Schultz. Christoph Nichelmann analyzes several Bach pieces in *Die Melodie nach ihrem Wesen sowohl, als nach ihren Eigenschaften* (Danzig: Johann Christian Schuster, 1755); English translation of his partial analysis of the Sarabande from the French Suite in E in Lester, *Compositional Theory*, 221–22.

tonic progression. From a thoroughbass or Rameauian perspective, the progression is an evaded cadence. Cause and effect are reversed (or, one might say, the cause of the affect is reversed): Schenkerians explain a span moving towards a goal; eighteenth-century theory explains an evasion of a cadential goal. We hear the affect in the overall progression; they heard the affect in the details.

I do not mean to imply by any of this that early-eighteenth-century musicians were unaware of larger structural issues. I have discussed elsewhere how notions of structural prolongation exist in all eighteenth-century theoretical traditions.¹⁷ Rather, I believe that musicians of the time viewed many large-scale issues in different terms, often invoking rhetorical concepts. I do not mean this in the narrow sense in which Mattheson pasted rhetorical labels onto musical constructions. Rather I mean the sense in which theorists applied concepts that are related more to rhetoric and oratory than to theories of musical form or Schenkerian ideas.

Thus even though Fux and Marpurg differ in their approaches to fugue, both argue for increasing variety in many ways while a fugue proceeds: early subject entries occur at simple harmonic relationships in adjacent voices, later entries at more distant relationships; literal repetitions should be avoided; and contrapuntal complexities should occur later.¹⁸ Indeed, these compositional principles were discussed mostly in terms of fugues. The result is the progressive intensification of many compositional elements in Bach's fugues. And as I have been arguing here, those procedures are the guiding light in all Bach's compositional genres.

Nineteenth-century composers certainly understood how to create climaxes. But notions of musical form drew their attention in different directions. Thematic returns and contrasting materials were often deemed blocks of music in a formal structure or narrative; they were not deemed primarily part of the continuing processes of an articulated movement. It should therefore not be surprising that the fugue of the G-minor Sonata is where the differences between Bach's and Schumann's perspectives are most prominent. We are fortunate in this movement to have not only Schumann's accompaniment, but also eighteenth-century realizations for organ (BWV 539) and for lute (BWV 1000) that may or may not be by Bach himself.

The fugue of the G-minor Sonata is long and complex. As in all Bach fugues, this complex structure carefully deploys compositional elements

¹⁷ Lester, *Compositional Theory*, 36–41, 63–68, 119–22, 218–24, 261–70, 285–93, *et passim*.

¹⁸ Johann Fux, *Gradus ad Parnassum* (Vienna: Joannis Petri van Ghelen, 1725); English translation of the portions on fugue in Alfred Mann, *The Study of Fugue* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1965), 75–138. Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg, *Abhandlung von der Fuge* (Berlin: Haude und Spener, 1753–54); abridged English translation in Mann, *Fugue*, 139–212.

so that each passage has something new to say in many ways, especially key and harmonic, contrapuntal, and violinistic complexity.¹⁹

Of the many passages in the fugue through which one can trace its increasing contrapuntal complexity, I will restrict my remarks to multiple subject entries, including fugal expositions and some imitative passages. The first exposition has entries of the subject starting on D and G (example 8a, mm. 1–14). There is a rudimentary countersubject. The next multiple entrances widen the pitch scope by an imitative circle-of-fifths sequence with subjects starting on D, G, C, and F (example 8a, mm. 14–18). The countersubject remains the same.

The subsequent multiple entrances constitute the fugal exposition following the first formal cadence on D minor (example 8b). The voices enter on D, G, and C. With three transpositional levels, the tonal range is wider than in the opening fugal exposition, recalling the preceding circle-of-fifths sequence, but now laid out as three voices. In addition, a new countersubject (the rising melodic-minor-scale tetrachord $\hat{5}-\hat{6}-\hat{7}-\hat{8}$) makes a conspicuous appearance.

The next exposition, after the formal cadence in C minor, also follows the circle-of-fifths idea, with entries on C and F leading to the *tutti* texture on B \flat (example 8c). Here the rising countersubject is present, but transposed during the second entry to new scale-step levels. The registral sweep is wider than in any earlier exposition.

The last two subject entries are back in G minor (example 8d). This passage includes ascending and descending chromatic scales that mimic and intensify the two countersubjects. Both entries are lengthened by sequences that extend the basic $\hat{5}-\hat{4}-\hat{3}$ motion of the original subject—with weak cadences on each of these scale steps in mm. 83–84.

One can sympathize with Schumann's daunting task in trying to figure out what to do with these passages. Quite simply, he is often at a loss. In the opening exposition, he keeps the piano silent for the first three subjects, and then enters with a bland reinforcement of the chords. The dynamic *piano* sufficiently indicates his unease.

By contrast, both of the eighteenth-century arrangements of the fugue have a lot to say about this exposition, now that the technical limitations of the violin are no longer an issue. For instance, in the violin exposition

¹⁹ In terms of violin technique, for instance, it is no accident that the final subject statement of each large section of the fugue is always the only subject statement below at least two other voices: mm. 20–21 before the cadence in D minor, m. 52 before the cadence in C minor, and mm. 82–83 before the cadence in G minor. Whatever bowing technique Bach envisioned for producing triple and quadruple stops, placing the subject in the lowest voice (or in the tenor of a four-part texture) is the most difficult.

Example 8. Bach, *Sonata No. 1 in G minor, Fuga*, with Schumann's accompaniment.

a.
Allegro

Allegro

5

8

11

p

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is presented in four systems. Each system consists of a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff with treble and bass clefs). The key signature is G minor (two flats). The tempo is 'Allegro'. The first system shows the beginning of the piece, with the piano accompaniment starting on the right-hand side of the grand staff. The second system begins at measure 5, the third at measure 8, and the fourth at measure 11. The piano accompaniment features a variety of textures, including block chords, moving lines, and arpeggiated figures. A dynamic marking of *p* (piano) is present in the first system.

Example 8a (cont.)

Musical score for Example 8a (cont.), measures 14-17 and 18-21. The score is in 2/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The upper staff (treble clef) features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, including slurs and ties. The lower staff (bass clef) provides harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes. A dynamic marking of *p* (piano) is present in measure 15. The score concludes with a fermata over the final note in measure 21.

Example 8b.

Musical score for Example 8b, measures 24-27. The score is in 2/4 time with a key signature of one flat. The upper staff (treble clef) contains a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, some marked with accents. The lower staff (bass clef) features a bass line with chords and single notes. Dynamic markings include *p* (piano) in measure 25 and *p marcit.* (piano marcato) in measure 27.

Example 8c.

Musical score for Example 8c, measures 55-58. The score is in 2/4 time with a key signature of one flat. The upper staff (treble clef) features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, including slurs and ties. The lower staff (bass clef) provides harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes. Dynamic markings include *p* (piano) in measure 55 and *f* (forte) in measure 57.

Example 8d.

80

83

86

it is hard to tell whether Bach intended a three-voice or a four-voice texture. The first three voices enter, beginning on D, low G, and high G, in mm. 1–3. But in the middle of m. 4 there is a fourth entry beginning on D. Is this a fourth voice, necessarily in this register because of the limitations of the violin? Or is this simply the top voice, which assumes its proper register at the end of m. 5 as the B \flat is transferred up an octave?

According to the organ exposition (example 9), the fourth entry properly belongs in the top register. The first four entries do not include the pedals, which leads to the bracketed fifth entry on the pedals, before the fugue resumes the course of the violin version. The lute transcription (example 10) adds a bass entry beginning on D in m. 3 and a brief stretto

before the top-voice entry beginning on D in m. 6. Because of these changes, the organ exposition is one measure longer than the violin version; the lute exposition two measures longer. It is clear that Schumann was not going to make such major alterations to the pieces; but that is the point. In eighteenth-century terms, a fugal exposition must be adapted to the performing forces; Schumann's is not.

Example 9. Bach (?), *Organ Fugue in D minor*, BWV 539, mm. 1–7, transposed here to G minor.

5
added entry

Example 10. Bach (?), *Lute Fugue in G minor*, BWV 1000, mm. 1–8.

5
stretto
added

More troubling than Schumann's failure to adapt the exposition to the performing forces is what he added elsewhere. For the imitative section in example 8a, mm. 14ff., he accompanies the first entry with Bach's rising countersubject. Bach saved this countersubject for the next large section of the fugue, the exposition after the first formal cadence. Bach would never introduce a new countersubject and then abandon it after one hearing. But that is what Schumann did. For Schumann, planting a new idea and then letting it flower later was a common thematic technique, as in his *Fantasy*, op. 17, where subtle hints at the *An die ferne Geliebte* theme precede its full statement at the end of the first movement.²⁰ In situations where the suggested theme later becomes quite prominent—very common in the mid and late nineteenth century—one has the feeling that it is familiar, even though it was barely noticed earlier. This thematic technique is predicated on narrative models underlying forms, or on imaginative tinkering with standard forms— notions not pertinent to Bach.

Schumann also introduces the fugue subject at inappropriate points. For instance, at the beginning of the extended sixteenth-note episode in example 11, Schumann adds the subject, partially doubling the violin part at the unison. To be sure, the subject is implicit in this figuration (hence, the unison doublings where the figuration most closely follows the subject). But Bach clearly uses these sixteenth-note episodes as sections of relief from both the subject and its rhythm, which appear several dozen times during the fugue. There are no such inappropriate additions in the eighteenth-century organ and lute arrangements of the fugue.²¹

Example 11. Bach, *Sonata No. 1 in G minor, Fuga*, mm. 42–44, with Schumann's accompaniment.

²⁰ Anthony Newcomb discusses such thematic evolutions in "Once More 'Between Absolute and Program Music': Schumann's Second Symphony," *19th-Century Music* 7 (1984): 233–50.

²¹ If an eighteenth-century musician other than Bach was the arranger of one or both of these versions, it strengthens the argument that the matters being discussed here are stylistic aspects common to the entire historical period, and not merely Bach's personal habits.

Likewise in his arrangement of the *Preludio* from the E-major Partita, Schumann places the opening motive in his accompaniment to the passage in example 2. Bach, in his orchestration, does not use the opening motive in this or similar passages. Bach's avoidance of the fugue subject in the episodes of the G-minor Fugue and his avoidance of the opening motive in the contrasting passages in the E-major *Preludio* remind one of the way contrasting thematic materials are displayed in *concerti grossi*. Schumann's persistent insertion of motives at these points shows how the essence of *concerti grossi* had faded from consciousness by his generation. Thus he also misses hints at *solo* and *tutti* writing in the fugue: after the relatively independent writing in mm. 1–10 of the first exposition, Bach brings the large section to a conclusion by hinting at a *tutti* chordal texture in mm. 11–12, just before the cadence in G. Schumann's accompaniment takes no notice of such hints.

* * *

If I have been rather hard on Schumann, I nevertheless do not intend my critique to be negative. My point is that Schumann read Bach in his own context, which is what often—if not always—happens when musicians read another age's creations. If time's arrow ran in reverse and Bach had arranged some of Schumann's compositions, Bach surely would have done so within his own context.

Furthermore, Schumann and his generation simply could not have known Bach's music the way we do. Whereas for us, Bach has been a central figure, and his solo violin works a standard part of violin pedagogy since time immemorial, the Bach revival began in earnest after Schumann's formative years, and violinists of his generation could not have known these pieces in that manner.²² Schumann probably did not hear many violinists dealing with these pieces much. His diaries indicate only that he heard the *Chaconne* and occasional other movements a few times over the years, and that he invited the concertmaster of the Düsseldorf orchestra to his quarters to play through each one of his accompaniments as he completed them.²³

²² The first publication of more than an isolated movement from the sonatas did not appear until 1802 in Bonn, and the first edition produced by a major violinist was that by Ferdinand David in Leipzig in 1843.

²³ For instance, Schumann reports hearing Ferdinand David play entire sonatas or partitas, or single movements in diary entries of 7 August and 20 September 1836, and then on 21 January 1841; see Robert Schumann, *Tagebücher II, 1836–1854*, ed. Gerd Nauhaus (Leipzig: VEB Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 1987), 23, 26, 142. And on 13 January and 13 February 1853, Schumann reports trying out some of his accompaniments with Ernst Carl Becker (1830–87, concertmaster of the orchestra in Düsseldorf in 1852–54); see Robert Schumann, *Haushaltbücher*, ed. Gerd Nauhaus (Leipzig: VEB Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 1982), 614, 617.

We should not, however, feel smug about our position in all this. As I suggested earlier about rhythm, meter, and affect, our attitudes towards harmony, tonality, and form also probably reflect Schumann's nineteenth-century attitudes more than Bach's eighteenth-century concepts. It is very hard to forget later musical forms in favor of Baroque compositional processes when we hear the *Presto* to the G-minor Sonata, or to remember that for Bach the tonal plans of the first and second reprises could not have been reminiscent of a sonata-form that was not to be formulated in words for nearly a century. Additionally, the very topic of a presentation like mine is predicated on historical investigative attitudes and procedures that both Bach and Schumann might well have found strange.

When I come to the end of the eighteenth century in my history of theory seminars, we explore hearing an eighteenth-century piece from the perspective of thoroughbass, counterpoint, and Rameauian harmony. A harpsichordist in this course once asked me if we would soon have to deal with historically informed analytic approaches, just as she dealt with historically informed performance styles. I don't think this is the necessary conclusion of the points I have been making here. Our era has its own interests in earlier music—interests that need not coincide with those of earlier ages. Furthermore, we have many sources of knowledge that the eighteenth century could not have known: we have historical perspective, and we have the advantage of knowing the work of two hundred years of musical thinkers unknown to the eighteenth century. At the same time, seeing the differences between the approaches of Bach and Schumann to this repertoire, and knowing that each was a major creator of his time, can only raise our own sensitivity insofar as we assume that features of the music we love are universal, when many of those features may well result from our own blend of reading and misreading.

ABSTRACT

The piano accompaniments Robert Schumann wrote for J. S. Bach's solo violin works can be read as a commentary by one major composer on another's works. These accompaniments misread Bach's intentions in obvious ways (e.g., that solo violin is not a viable performance vehicle), and interpret rhythmic, harmonic, thematic/motivic, and formal structures in a manner clearly at odds with early eighteenth-century conceptions. Comparing these works with Schumann's accompaniments, eighteenth-century arrangements of some movements (including some by Bach), and keeping in mind the theoretical frameworks of various eras allows us to gain insights into how our own stylistic biases affect what we hear in music of past eras.

Appendix I. Bach, *Sonata No. 1 in G minor, Presto* (excerpts), Bach's original with Schumann's accompaniment.

First reprise:
 Presto [G minor]

The first system of the score shows the first reprise of the first movement. It consists of three staves: a single treble staff for the original melody and a grand staff (treble and bass) for Schumann's accompaniment. The tempo is marked 'Presto' and the key signature is 'G minor'. The original melody begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic and features a series of sixteenth-note runs. The accompaniment starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic, using chords and single notes. A double bar line with repeat dots is placed after the first measure of the original melody. A bracket labeled '1' spans the first measure of the original melody and the first two measures of the accompaniment. A second bracket labeled '2' spans the remaining measures of the original melody and the corresponding accompaniment. Measure numbers 5 and 7 are indicated above the original melody staff.

Second reprise:

The second system of the score shows the second reprise of the first movement. It consists of three staves: a single treble staff for the original melody and a grand staff (treble and bass) for Schumann's accompaniment. The tempo is marked 'Presto' and the key signature is 'G minor'. The original melody begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic and features a series of sixteenth-note runs. The accompaniment starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic, using chords and single notes. A double bar line with repeat dots is placed after the first measure of the original melody. A bracket labeled '1' spans the first measure of the original melody and the first two measures of the accompaniment. A second bracket labeled '2' spans the remaining measures of the original melody and the corresponding accompaniment. Measure numbers 55 and 60 are indicated above the original melody staff.

Appendix I (cont.)

First reprise:

[modulating to B \flat]

9 15

p *f* *p*

Second reprise:

65 70

f *p*

Appendix I (cont.)

First reprise:

17 20 25 [B \flat major]

17 20 25 [B \flat major]

Second reprise:

75

75

Appendix I (cont.)

First reprise:

27 30

p

p

[D minor]

43

p

fp

Second reprise:

77 80

f

f

f

3

121

cresc.

Appendix I (cont.)

First reprise:

Musical score for the first reprise, measures 47-50. The score is written for three staves: a single treble clef staff at the top, and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) below. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). Measure 47 is marked with the number '47'. Measure 50 is marked with the number '50'. The piano part includes the instruction 'cresc.' (crescendo) starting in measure 48 and 'f' (forte) in measure 50. A repeat sign with a first ending bracket and a '4' below it is located below the grand staff.

Second reprise:

Musical score for the second reprise, measures 125-130. The score is written for three staves: a single treble clef staff at the top, and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) below. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). Measure 125 is marked with the number '125'. Measure 130 is marked with the number '130'. The piano part includes the instruction 'f' (forte) in measure 129. The score concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Appendix II. Bach, *Sonata No. 1 in G minor, Adagio*.
a. Bach's original with Schumann's accompaniment.

The image displays two systems of musical notation. The first system shows the beginning of the piece, with the tempo marking "Adagio" and dynamic markings *f ten.*, *f*, and *p*. The second system begins at measure 13, marked with a circled "13", and includes trill ornaments (*tr*) and dynamic markings *f* and *p*. The notation includes a single treble clef staff for the original melody and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) for the piano accompaniment.

Appendix II (cont.)

Musical score for Appendix II (cont.), consisting of two systems of music. Each system features a treble clef staff with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature (C). The first system begins at measure 3 and ends at measure 5. The second system begins at measure 16 and ends at measure 20. The score includes various musical notations such as eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *tr* (trills) and *p* (piano). The bass line is written in a grand staff format, with a treble clef for the right hand and a bass clef for the left hand. The right hand part is more melodic and complex, while the left hand part provides harmonic support with chords and bass lines.

