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The Music of Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach
Supplement 6.4. More on Bach's First Concertos

Unlike the Berlin versions of W. 2 and W. 3, preserved in Bach's autograph scores of the 1740s, the renovated version of W. 1 survives only in manuscript parts, including a set prepared jointly by Emanuel and Sebastian. This situation resembles that of Friedemann's concerto for two keyboard instruments (without accompaniment), whose revised version survives in a copy by J. S. Bach.¹ Presumably Sebastian was involved in performances of both works, and even if he refrained from making substantial alterations to either of them, he is likely to have suggested improvements and to have made small alterations while copying parts.²

Sebastian's parts for W. 1 have been dated 1745–47³—after Emanuel's renovation, which they presumably reflect. Emanuel later made small changes in his father's copies of the violin and keyboard parts, also completing the viola part and adding a basso part (probably around the period 1760–65). Together with a copy of W. 6 that seems also to have been made at Leipzig during the mid-1740s,⁴ Sebastian's parts raise the possibility of an ongoing exchange of music, perhaps including public performances or visits to Leipzig by Emanuel during the 1740s. More pressing is the question of whether Sebastian had anything significant to do with the revision of this work—and of Emanuel's other early compositions during the period. Particularly striking, apart from the musical content, is that Sebastian's copy gives the parts in a format identical to that used in Schmidt's print of W. 11, produced during the same period. In the ritornellos, the upper staff of the keyboard part contains rests, not a doubling of the first violin part. The bass line includes figures, indicating that the soloist served as continuo player—following Berlin practice, rather than that of Sebastian's own keyboard concertos.

Several features of W. 1 suggest a close relationship to what may be Friedemann's earliest surviving concerto, F. 45. Both works are in A minor with slow movement in F. Moreover, W. 1 shares with F. 45 certain types of solo figuration hardly ever used in Emanuel's subsequent music.

¹ F. 10B, preserved in St 176, was copied by J. S. Bach about 1740.

² Wollny mentions a note in a copy of the early version of W. 1, made by Sebastian's pupil Agricola around 1740, “according to which J. S. Bach entered revisions in his own hand on the string parts” (CPEBCW 3/9.1:xii); the parts in question are lost.

³ CPEBCW 3/9.1:160. Wollny, the editor, believes that the version preserved in Agricola's manuscript score of 1739 or 1740 (B Bc 26537) was not “substantially” different from the “original version of 1733.” All six manuscript sources giving early readings “show an unusually high number of small divergencies among each other” (p. 167), but the variants listed in CPEBCW 3/9.1:167–71, mostly involving missing ties, ornaments, and the like, are similar in number and type to those in other concertos that are preserved in comparable numbers of copies, such as W. 6 and 24.

⁴ GB Lbl Add. 31679; see CPEBCW 3/9.2:198–99.

These include varieties of what Rameau called *batteries*,⁵ a type of passagework involving rapid alternation of the two hands to play a single line of sequential or arpeggiated figuration. In W. 1, the second solo passage opens with such figuration, which also occurs prominently in F. 45 (online example 6.15). Another passage in W. 1 reminiscent of both J. S. and W. F. Bach, but not of Emanuel's own later music, requires crossing hands. The counter-intuitive division of the passage between the two hands must reflect the same sort of technical experimentation also evident in Emanuel's early hand-crossing minuet W. 111 (in the same key); chromatic neighbor tones add a distinctly Bachian touch of dissonance (online example 6.16). At the formal level, each movement of W. 1 originally had a short ritornello that was repeated in full at the end of the movement. Except in the third movement, however, very little of the material introduced within the solo episodes was subsequently recapitulated. Both features recall Friedemann's concertos (and indeed most early solo concertos).

[Example 6.15. \(a\) Concerto in A Minor, W. 1, movement 1, mm. 31b–33; \(b\) W. F. Bach, Concerto in A Minor, F. 45, movement 3, mm. 205–9. Both keyboard only \(strings omitted\)](#)

The image displays two musical excerpts. Excerpt (a) is from the Concerto in A Minor, W. 1, movement 1, measures 31b–33. It is written for keyboard in common time (C) and A minor. The right hand plays a complex, rapid sequence of chords and arpeggios, while the left hand provides a steady accompaniment. Excerpt (b) is from W. F. Bach's Concerto in A Minor, F. 45, movement 3, measures 205–9. It is written for keyboard in 2/4 time and A minor. The right hand features a series of arpeggiated chords, and the left hand plays a rhythmic accompaniment.

⁵ In the preface to his *Pièces de clavecin* (Paris, 1724).

Example 6.16. Concerto in A Minor, W. 1, movement 1, mm. 72–3 (keyboard only)

Friedemann's concerto is a more mature composition, yet despite the presence of parallels between the two works, it is striking how distinct were the styles of the two brothers already in these first essays within the same genre. Friedemann's concerto reveals his interest in canonic imitation and his fluency in composing four independent parts for the strings. His keyboard writing is more challenging technically than Emanuel's, but although he shows some of the same interest in chromatic harmony, he lacks Emanuel's genuine inventiveness in that sphere (already evident in both W. 1 and the early cantata). Although Emanuel's textures are simpler than Friedemann's, they are not simplistic. As in his early cantata, the string parts alternate between doubling of the soloist and free counterpoint; also recalling the cantata is the juxtaposition within the string parts of unison (or rather octave) passages with writing in parallel six-chords (online example 6.17).⁶ Alternations of these sorts, rather than imitative counterpoint, would be typical of Bach's writing for strings at Berlin. Hence, despite commonalities suggesting that the two brothers knew one another's first concertos, their styles were probably already distinct before Emanuel left Leipzig. Even in two movements that share similar openings, Friedemann writes in four parts, whereas Emanuel composes in three and tends toward a more homogeneous texture (without rests in the lower parts). This yields a simpler but more direct effect (online example 6.18).

⁶ The parallel 6/3-chords involve the same pitch classes in the early cantata (cf. [online example 4.17b](#)).

Example 6.17. Concerto in A Minor, W. 1, movement 3, mm. 13–16

vn. 1
vn. 2
va.
b.c.

p *f* *p* *f*

p *f* *p* *f*

f

f

6 # 6 #

Example 6.18. (a) W. F. Bach, Concerto in F, F. 44, movement 3, mm. 1–6; (b) Concerto in G, W. 4, movement 3, mm. 1–8

(a) Presto (b) Presto

vn. 1
vn. 2
va.
b.c.

p *f* *p* *f*

p *f* *p* *f*

f

f

6 # 6 #

2

6 7 6 7 6 6 6 6

[Example 6.19a. Concerto in A Minor, W. 1, movement 3, later version, mm. 1–14 \(mm. 5–12 were a later insertion\)](#)

Allegro assai

The score is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 1-4) features four string staves (vn. 1, vn. 2, va., b.c.) and a piano accompaniment. The strings play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents. The piano accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note bass line and a more active treble line. The second system (measures 5-8) continues the string and piano parts. The third system (measures 9-14) shows the strings and piano parts with dynamic markings of *p* and *f*. The piano part includes a sharp sign at the end of the system.

vn. 1
vn. 2
va.
b.c.
unis.

6
7
7
7
10
p
f
p
f
unis.

Example 6.19b. Concerto in A Minor, W. 1, movement 3, early version, mm. 45–52 (keyboard only; this passage was later eliminated)

Emanuel's next two concertos, W. 2 and 3, reveal few signs of the older style that was only incompletely excised from W. 1. By contrast to both W. 1 and the subsequent Berlin concertos, they seem fairly unremarkable works, at least in their extant forms. Both survive only in their revised versions, but these are found in quite a few sources, suggesting that Bach's renovation succeeded in making them attractive to his intended audience. The G-Major Concerto W. 3, whose renovation took place two years later than that of W. 2,⁷ is more clearly a Berlin work as renovated, although it also possesses a stronger contrapuntal element, with little imitations in the first movement that spread through all four string parts, as in Friedemann's concertos (online example 6.20). Imitation occurs in other Berlin concertos by Emanuel, but it tends to be confined to ritornellos and to involve only two or three real parts.⁸

⁷ NV places the renovation of W. 3 in 1745, not 1743, and this is reflected in the different handwriting of the two autographs, which probably date from those years; only for W. 2 do distinct versions survive, although the variants are minor.

⁸ A rare instance of four-part imitation in the strings accompanying a solo passage (a texture typical of Friedemann's concertos) occurs in W. 10, movement 1, at measures 151ff. But the long and entirely regular circle-of-fifths sequence that follows, for no fewer than twenty-four measures, is not something characteristic of Friedemann.

Example 6.20. (a) W. F. Bach, Concerto in D, F. 41, movement 1, mm. 1–5; (b) Concerto in G, W. 3, movement 1, mm. 31–35

(a) **Allegro**

vn. 1
vn. 2
va.
kb.
bs.

31 (b)

p *f*
p *f*
p *f*
p *f*

What makes the imitation notable in W. 3 is that it involves a ritornello theme that is initially stated *unisono*, as in a so-called rage aria (although the major mode here suggests a different affect). The second movement of W. 3 likewise opens with a unison ritornello theme that is later combined contrapuntally with solo passages. In the first movement, however, the ritornello has the complex phraseology typical of other Berlin concertos, returning to unison writing for the final phrase; one wonders whether some of the intervening phrases were inserted for the renovated version.⁹ The Adagio has a short ritornello unified by dotted rhythm; otherwise it is reminiscent of the ritornello in the second movement of Sebastian's D-Minor Concerto (BWV 1052). The latter is effectively a chaconne, with the ritornello theme serving as an ostinato bass (a type borrowed from Vivaldi). Emanuel knew this concerto well, having made his own copy of the early version, presumably for his own performance.¹⁰ The identity of key, technique, and general mood makes it clear that Emanuel took his inspiration from his father's work. Indeed, the Adagio in W. 3 is arguably the richer, more varied composition, even if its formal design is the standard sonata-ritornello form of any other concerto movement, unaffected by its material. Emanuel's ritornello is certainly more dramatic than Sebastian's, resembling the orchestral introduction to an agitated accompanied recitative rather than a lyrical rhapsody (online example 6.21).

⁹ Ritornellos in other concertos grew through the addition of internal phrases; in W. 5 the ritornello of the final movement was expanded from fourteen to sixteen and then to nineteen measures (see CPEBCW 3/9.2:187; the early and late versions can be compared in an [online synoptic score](#), and the distinctive readings of the intermediate versions can be viewed in an [online critical commentary](#), at p. 28).

¹⁰ Emanuel's string parts in St 350 are dated to about 1734; see NBA 7/4, KB, 210 (citing Glöckner, "Neuerkenntnisse zu Johann Sebastian Bachs Aufführungskalender," 56). The handwriting in Emanuel's keyboard part is close to that of the autographs of W. 2 and 3 from the mid-1740s.

Sebastian too wrote relatively lengthy ritornellos in his later arias and, especially, in the choral chorale fantasias of his Leipzig church works. But the ritornellos of Emanuel's Berlin concertos tend to be even longer, incorporating entire phrase-groups that present contrasting thematic material. These make the ritornello more than a mere frame, anticipating the so-called double exposition of many Classical concerto movements. Such ritornellos surely came from opera seria, where by the 1740s Hasse and Graun were routinely composing similar ritornellos in their arias, as was Quantz in his flute concertos.¹¹ It is not impossible that W. 3 already followed this scheme in its original 1737 version; if so, its renovation would have involved less substantial alteration than that of W. 1. Certainly its string writing is more virtuosic, presupposing a more capable band, and the keyboard writing is also more varied, ranging from passagework still reminiscent of Sebastian's to something like the fantasia style of the sonatas W. 65/16 and 17 from 1745–46.¹²

W. 2 as renovated retains more of Sebastian's style, reflecting its earlier origin at Leipzig. Alterations in the autograph score suggest that the passages allowing for cadenzas in the outer movements were added only at the time of the renovation, as in W. 1.¹³ Echoes of Sebastian remain, however, in long series of broken chords within the last two solo episodes of the first movement. These recall episodes in works such as the Fifth Brandenburg Concerto, with their counterintuitive, sometimes chromatic, progressions; one passage uses a transposed variant of the B-A-C-H progression (online example 6.22).¹⁴ Yet the overall style is more *galant* than that of W. 1, and although some of the work's *galant* quality must reflect the renovations of 1743, it probably was already closer to Dresden style in the lost original version of 1734.

¹¹ See, e.g., the opening ritornello of Quantz's D-Minor Concerto QV5:81, which has been edited by David Lasocki (London: Musica Rara, 1972) and recorded by Mary Oleskiewicz with Concerto Armonico Budapest, directed by Miklós Spányi (Naxos no. 8.573120, 2013).

¹² E.g., in the passage leading up to the fermata at measure 104 in the first movement.

¹³ The preparation for the first-movement cadenza in W. 2 now includes, as in W. 1, a one-bar tutti passage (m. 86 in W. 1, m. 178 in W. 2). In W. 2, however, the soloist afterward continues alone to the cadenza proper, in a passage that Bach renoted to dictate a substantial slowing of the tempo (compare the original reading of the autograph in CPEBCW 3/9.1:175).

¹⁴ The progression recurs in the ritornellos of the second and third movement, using the same pitch classes (movement 2: db'-c', m. 5, and eb'-d, m. 7; mvt. 3: db"-c", m. 22, and eb"-d", m. 23); the motive is also alluded to in movement 3, measures 6–7 (in retrograde inversion).

Example 6.22a. Concerto in E-flat, W. 2, movement 1, mm. 156–63

156

vn. 1

f *p*

vn. 2

f *p*

va.

f *p*

kb.

f *p*

bs.

160

f *p*

f *p*

f *p*

f *p*

Example 6.22b. J. S. Bach, Brandenburg Concerto no. 5 in D, BWV 1050, movement 1, mm. 71–74

The image displays a musical score for measures 71 through 74 of the first movement of J.S. Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 5 in D major, BWV 1050. The score is arranged in two systems. The first system covers measures 71 and 72, and the second system covers measures 73 and 74. The instrumentation includes Flute (fl.), Violin (vn.), Violin Ripieno (vn. rip.), Viola (va.), Keyboard (kb.), and Violoncello/Violone (vc./ve.). The key signature is D major (two sharps) and the time signature is common time (C). The flute part begins with a *pp* dynamic. The violin parts also feature *pp* dynamics. The keyboard part is marked with *pp* in the right hand and *p* in the left hand. The score shows intricate melodic lines for the flute and violin, with the keyboard providing a rhythmic and harmonic accompaniment. The measures are divided into two systems, with measure numbers 71, 73, and 74 clearly indicated at the beginning of their respective staves.

The original drafts of both W. 1 and 2 were made at Leipzig during Sebastian's heaviest involvement with the musical style of the Saxon court, as witness the the B-Minor *Missa* BWV 232a and the three secular cantatas BWV 213, 214, and 215. Yet nothing in these works is as *galant* as W. 2 in its extant renovated form. Alongside the lingering echoes of Sebastian Bach, one hears countless operatic parallels, as in a near-quotation from the overture to Hasse's *Cleofide* that opens the final movement (online example 6.23). The soloist enters with a lyrical riposte to the ritornello's *unisono* texture (online example 6.24); the resulting confrontation between soloist and orchestra represents a dialog rather than a single line divided between keyboard and strings.

[Example 6.23. \(a\) Hasse, overture from *Cleofide*, movement 1, mm. 1–5 \(strings only\); \(b\) Concerto in E-flat, W. 2, movement 3, mm. 1–4](#)

(a) **Allegro assai**

vn. 1
vn. 2
va.
bs.

(b) **Allegro assai**

tr
tr
tr
tr
unis.

Example 6.24. Concerto in E-flat, W. 2, movement 3, mm. 38–47 (strings omitted)

Example 6.25. Concerto in E-flat, W. 2, movement 3, mm. 114–23 (strings omitted)

This soloist's lyrical entry in W. 3 is another example of the type of “second theme” found in Bach's trios and concertos of the period (discussed in chapter 5). In the final movement of W. 2, however, the idea of dialog between keyboard and tutti finds a more organic development; indeed, the second solo episode, leading to an explosive ritornello in C minor, is one of the most dramatic in Bach's early works. The passage opens by exaggerating the already established idea of contrast, as the soloist reenters with slow arpeggiation that contrasts strongly with the ritornello (online example 6.25; cf. online example 6.24).¹⁵ This second solo episode as a whole involves not only an acceleration of surface motion, leading to the usual rapid passagework, but also of the *rate* at which keyboard and strings alternate (online example 6.26).

¹⁵ The passage shown in example 6.25 is repeated in sequence; a comparable passage occurs in the first movement of W. 7 from 1740.

Example 6.26. Concerto in E-flat, W. 2, movement 3, mm. 142–50

How many of these refinements were present in the original Leipzig version of W. 2 is impossible to say. The autograph score of the 1740s reveals that Bach was then making at least small adjustments to the keyboard part and adding the string accompaniment in portions of the passage shown in example 6.26. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine his conceiving the basic idea of the passage prior to having composed the equally dramatic retransition passage in the first movement of W. 6, written in 1740.¹⁶ The almost complete rewriting of the second movement in W. 1, and

¹⁶ For the changes in the autograph score of W. 2 (movement 3, mm. 146 and 154ff.), see CPEBCW 3/9.1, plate 8 and the list of readings on p. 178. The retransition in W. 6, movement 1

probably also of much of the D-Minor Trio W. 145, show how extensively Bach revised earlier works to produce his renovations. In W. 2, it is possible that the entire second solo episode of the final movement was new in 1743. The changes of pacing found here occur in Friedemann's concertos as well,¹⁷ but there could be no mistaking W. 2 as we have it for the work of anyone else, or even for an early composition by Emanuel Bach.

(mm. 212–54) would have been on Bach's mind when he renovated W. 2, as both relevant passages employ dotted rhythm within quick 3/4 time.

¹⁷ See, e.g., the discussion of the Concerto F. 44 in my *Music of W. F. Bach*, 167 and 181.