

## BACH'S SONATA BWV 1035 AND THE *EMPFINDSAMER STIL*

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### ABSTRACT

This study deals with the characteristics of the *Empfindsamer Stil* in the Sonata BWV 1035 by Johann Sebastian Bach. First, we contextualize the various historical aspects that marked a turning point in Bach's musical thinking with regard to his openness to new styles. These styles are then pointed out in various works by Bach and in those of other composers of the time, drawing pertinent comparisons. We go on to corroborate that Bach moves beyond the style of the Late Baroque, assuming the new models while elaborating them with the same intensity as his Baroque counterpoint. Lastly, three aspects are postulated for the sonata's attribution to *Empfindsamer Stil*, the new style in vogue: 1) we analyse the musical aspects of the *Empfindsamer Stil* and the Galant style which are present in the sonata; 2) we comment on the aesthetics of the Potsdam court, where the sonata was composed and where the taste for the Galant and *Empfindsamer* styles predominated, and 3) we present treatises that highlight aspects which may be applied to Bach's sonata. We conclude by establishing that Bach went beyond the Late Baroque and that he was not alien to the fashionable styles of his times.

KEYWORDS: Johann Sebastian Bach, BWV 1035, transverse flute, sonata, Late Baroque, Galant style, *Empfindsamer Stil*.

### LA SONATA BWV 1035 DE BACH I L'*EMPFINDSAMER STIL*

### RESUM

El present estudi versa sobre les característiques de l'*empfindsamer Stil* ('estil sentimental') en la sonata BWV 1035 de Johann Sebastian Bach. Primer, contextualitzo els diversos aspectes històrics que marcaren un punt d'inflexió en el pensament musical de Bach respecte a la seva obertura als nous estils. Després, destaco aquests estils en diverses obres de Bach i en les d'altres compositors de l'època tot contrastant-les. Segueixo, corroborant que Bach va més enllà de l'estil del darrer Barroc i que assumeix els nous models tot elabo-

rant-los amb la mateixa intensitat que el contrapunt barroc. I, finalment, argumento amb tres aspectes la seva adscripció al nou estil en voga, l'*empfindsamer Stil*: 1) analitzo els aspectes musicals de l'*empfindsamer Stil* i de l'estil galant presents a la sonata; 2) comento l'estètica de la cort de Potsdam, lloc per al qual fou composta la sonata i on predominava el gust per l'estil galant i l'*empfindsamer Stil*, i 3) mostro tractadistes que aporten aspectes que es poden aplicar a la sonata de Bach. Concloc posant en relleu que Bach depassà el darrer Barroc, no essent aliè als estils de moda de la seva època.

PARAULES CLAU: Johann Sebastian Bach, BWV 1035, flauta travessera, sonata, darrer Barroc, estil galant, *empfindsamer Stil*.

Within the group of sonatas that Johann Sebastian Bach wrote for the transverse flute with *basso continuo* or harpsichord *obbligato*, Sonata BWV 1035 presents a unique profile that differentiates it from the others. There are two factors that give it this singularity: the first is that it was composed at a later date than the other sonatas,<sup>1</sup> in 1741; the second relates to specific characteristics of its first and third movements, which bear semblances of the *Empfindsamer Stil*.

Sonata BWV 1035 consists of four movements: Adagio ma non tanto, Allegro, Siciliano and Allegro assai. Eppstein<sup>2</sup> suggests that we should consider the structure of the sonata to be like that of the *sonata da camera*, as he compares the alternance of its slow-quick-slow-quick movements and its rhythmic and melodic designs with those of a prelude followed by three dances – *rigodon*, *siciliano* and *polonaise*. The second and fourth movements reveal evident virtuoso writing and a style belonging to the Late Baroque period with certain Galant style features. In contrast, the first and third movements are created with elements of great expressive sensitivity, typical of the *Empfindsamer Stil*.

The dating of the sonata poses a problem: problem of the lack of the last two digits of the year on the manuscript sources that have been conserved.<sup>3</sup> Even so, Wolff<sup>4</sup> has dated it to 1741, a date that can be supported using the argument of the publication of the *Goldberg Variations* BWV 988<sup>5</sup> in 1741, since this work pre-

1. *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 2, 2001. I take advantage of this note to mention that the present work was presented as a Flash Announcement session in the Bach Network: Ninth Johann Sebastian Bach Dialogue Meeting, which took place in Cambridge from 8th to 13th July 2019. I use this note to indicate that the translation has been done thanks to the resources of the Project PGC2018-094724-BI00 (for cataloguing and study of musical sources of Santa Maria del Pi, La Mercè, and Sants Just i Pastor (Barcelona) churches and the iconographic funds of both the MNAC and the Museu Marès).

2. Hans EPPSTEIN, "Über J.S. Bachs Flötensonaten mit Generalbaß", *Bach-Jahrbuch*, 58 (1972), p. 15.

3. Johann Sebastian BACH, *Neue Ausgabe Sämtlicher Werke*, VI Series, vol. 3: *Werke für Flöte*, 1963, pp. 22-23.

4. Christoph WOLFF, *Johann Sebastian Bach: El músico sabio*, vol. II, 2003, p. 208.

5. Johann Sebastian BACH, *Goldberg Variations* BWV 988, 2016, V; also, David SCHULENBERG, *The Keyboard Music of J.S. Bach*, 1993, p. 369.

sents several variations that could be qualified as using the postulates of the *Empfindsamer Stil* (e.g., the initial theme of the aria, and *Variations* 13 and 25). It is therefore probable that Bach would have composed the sonata with the aforementioned postulates in mind. Wolff also links the genesis of the sonata to the visits that Bach paid to the court of Potsdam:

[...] It is probably not just a coincidence that the last two datable chamber works by Bach, the Flute Sonata in E Major (1741) and the *Musical Offering* (1747), originated in connection with Bach's visiting a court as a distinguished guest performer: in both cases the court of Frederick the Great in Berlin.<sup>6</sup>

On the basis of this argument, there is evidence, considering both the year and the connection to the court of Frederick the Great, that Sonata BWV 1035 could reveal characteristic traits of the musical aesthetics of this court, namely its liking for the Galant style and the *Empfindsamer Stil*. The fact that the sonata was dedicated to Frederick's *Kammerdiener*, Michael Gabriel Fredersdorf, adds further weight to the argument for linking it to this aesthetic. We shall make further reference to these questions in the course of this study. In addition, it should be mentioned that the sonata was also performed at the Collegium Musicum in Leipzig.<sup>7</sup>

On the other hand, Stauffer<sup>8</sup> and others have already placed it within the context of the Galant style that was to the liking of the court. One of the first musicologists who explicitly mentions the *Empfindsamer Stil*, however, is Hans Vogt,<sup>9</sup> when in reference to the first movement, *Adagio ma non tanto*, he states: "[...] The movement seems to be an homage to the age of sensibility (*Empfindsamkeit*)", that is to say, to the *Empfindsamer Stil*. We may also mention Jones,<sup>10</sup> who more recently also refers to the Sonata BWV 1035 within the context of the chamber works which Bach composed during the 1740s and which were associated with the court at Potsdam. This study is focused on the Sonata BWV 1035. However, we shall first contextualize various historical aspects which marked a possible turning point in Bach's musical thinking, opening the way to the new styles. We will then examine these new styles in various of Bach's works and also in those of other composers of the time in order to contrast them. Just as Marshall

6. Christoph WOLFF, *Bach: Essays on His Life and Music*, 1991, p. 231.

7. Christoph WOLFF, *Johann Sebastian Bach: El músico sabio*, vol. II, 2003, p. 137.

8. George B. STAUFFER, "Bach and the Lure of the Big City", in *The Worlds of Johann Sebastian Bach*, 2009, pp. 253-254; David LEDBETTER, *Unaccompanied Bach: Performing the Solo Works*, 2009, p. 132; and Ronda MILLER, *An Investigation of the Articulations Found in the Primary Sources of the Flute Sonatas of Johann Sebastian Bach Resulting in a Composite for Analysis and Second Edition for Practical Performance*, 2003, p. 163.

9. Hans VOGT, *Johann Sebastian Bach's Chamber Music*, 1988, p. 219.

10. Richard D.P. JONES, *The Creative Development of Johann Sebastian Bach: Volume II: 1717-1750: Music to Delight the Spirit*, 2013, pp. 363-364.

and Wolff, amongst others, have stated,<sup>11</sup> we believe that Bach moves beyond the style of the Late Baroque period and takes up new models, working on them with the same intensity as the Baroque counterpoint.

From the letter that Bach sent to his friend Georg Erdmann in 1730,<sup>12</sup> it may be inferred that from that year, or around that time, Bach reached what was a turning point in his musical production, in the sense of opening himself up to new paths in order to offset the musical precariousness that he experienced in Leipzig. In fact, amongst other things, the letter clearly expresses his dissatisfaction with the Thomaskirche authorities, with the means that were available to him for making music for liturgical services, and with the atmosphere in the city of Leipzig.

The final reflections in the *Memorial* that Bach addressed to the municipal council of Leipzig entitled “Short but Most Necessary Draft for a Well-Appointed Church Music, with Certain Modest Reflections on the Decline of the Same”,<sup>13</sup> also reinforce the argument in favour of a turning point and the possibility of Bach developing a new musical strategy:

[...] The State of music is quite different from what it was, since our artistry has increased very much, and the gusto has changed astonishingly, and accordingly the former style of music no longer seems to please our ears [...]. It is, anyhow, somewhat strange that German musicians are expected to be capable of performing at once and ex tempore all kinds of music, whether it come from Italy or France, England or Poland [...]. To illustrate this statement with an example one need only go to Dresden and see how the musicians there are paid by his Royal Majesty; it cannot fail, since the musicians are relieved of all concern for their living, free from chagrin, and obliged each to master but a single instrument: it must be something choice and excellent to hear [...].

In the above text, it is important to underline that Bach was fully aware of the new taste, that is, of the new musical styles that were then in fashion. It is similarly relevant to highlight his mention of Dresden as a centre of great importance and prestige in terms of music.

At the end of March 1729, Bach took on the role of director of the Collegium Musicum in Leipzig, which carried with it the musical management of the Neukirche in that city. At the Collegium Musicum, amongst others, he was able to perform,<sup>14</sup> *i.e.*, instrumental works – sonatas, concertos and suites – as well as

11. Amongst other works: Robert L. MARSHALL, *The Music of Johann Sebastian Bach: The Sources, the Style, the Significance*, 1989; Christoph WOLFF, *Bach's Musical Universe: The Composer and His Work*, 2020; and, amongst others, we should also mention the various musicologists referred to through the present study in the corresponding footnotes.

12. *Les écrits de Jean-Sébastien Bach*, introduced and commented by Werner Neumann and Hans Joachim Schulze, 1976, pp. 54-55.

13. Mentioned by Robert L. MARSHALL, *The Music of Johann Sebastian Bach: The Sources, the Style, the Significance*, 1989, p. 25.

14. Christoph WOLFF, *Johann Sebastian Bach: El músico sabio*, vol. 2, 2003, p. 137.

secular cantatas. Some of these works revealed elements already present in the new styles and the new emerging fashion. The previously mentioned Sonata BWV 1035 itself and the *siciliana* from the Sonata BWV 1031, which evidences a clearly Galant style design, are both examples of these new styles. Furthermore, in the vocal genre, we propose the example of the Cantata BWV 201.<sup>15</sup> In the course of its fifteen parts, two arias clearly and explicitly reveal Bach's use of two styles that were in vogue at the time: the Late Baroque and the Galant style. The first one is clearly in the style of Bachian Late Baroque, interpreted by the bass I in the role of Phoebus (no. 5: "Mit Verlangen"), and the second, which is in a rustic yet Galant style, is played by the bass II in the role of Pan (no. 7: "Zu Tanze, zu Sprunge"). It is therefore evident that Bach worked with both styles and that he was consequently aware of their use in both instrumental and vocal works.

As far as the musical connection with the Neukirche in Leipzig is concerned, it should be noted that from the beginning of the eighteenth century, Bach benefited from the musical presence of Telemann, with whom he formed a series of networks, involving various musicians, which promoted the music of this church. The *Neue Gusto* was no stranger to the musical repertoire of the Neukirche. All of these circumstances have led Kevorkian<sup>16</sup> to conclude that:

It is no exaggeration to speak of Leipzig in the early decades of the 18th century as an incubator of the galant style.

At the moment when Bach took over the management, he was able to appoint his protégé, Carl Gotthelf Gerlach,<sup>17</sup> as organist. The Neukirche's repertoire featured music by various composers akin to the new styles: in addition to Telemann, we should also mention J.A. Scheibe.

Again, one finds evidence of a Galant substrate in the *Clavier Übung* (first part) BWV 825-830.<sup>18</sup> From 1726 to 1731, each of the six parts was published individually. Finally, in 1731, the collection of six parts was published as a single work. The original front cover bore the following title: *Preludien, Allemanden, Couranten, Sarabanden, Gigue, Menuetten, und andern Galanterien...* This denomination of *Galanterien*, which was associated with dances, could lead us to infer that their compositional construct could have served as a seed for the Galant style, as the phrasing favoured this. What is more, the Galant concept was already very much assimilated during the period in which Bach composed the *Clavier Übung*.

15. Robert L. MARSHALL, *The Music of Johann Sebastian Bach: The Sources, the Style, the Significance*, 1989, p. 35.

16. Tanya KEVORKIAN, *Baroque Piety: Religion, Society, and Music in Leipzig, 1650-1750*, 2007, p. 214.

17. Andreas GLÖCKNER, *Die Musikpflege an der Leipziger Neukirche zur Zeit Johann Sebastian Bachs*, 1990, pp. 88-138 and 153.

18. Johann Sebastian BACH, *Erster Teil der Klavierübung, Sämtliche Klavierwerke 2: The Complete Piano Works 2*, Richard Douglas, Herausgeber, 2000, pp. 18-19.

Lastly, we should mention the Cantata BWV 51 *Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen*, composed on 17th September, 1730. This sacred cantata for soprano, trumpet, strings and *basso continuo* exhibits some melodic designs in its first and final arias that are typical of Bach's unusual operatic coloratura. As Marshall points out, we are close to the Italian *flamboyant style*, so typical of A. Scarlatti.<sup>19</sup> This highlights a new stylistic element in the strategy of Bach's musical production, in this case, in his church music.

It is, therefore, after the two decades that run from approximately 1730 to 1750 that Bach opened himself up to new experiences after: 1) his management of the Collegium Musicum in Leipzig – where he took on the role of director at the end of March 1729,<sup>20</sup> a position which also implied his assumption of the management of the Neukirche in Leipzig; 2) his travels to, and work at, the court of Dresden, where, in 1736, he was given the position of *Hofcompositeur*; and 3) his trips to Berlin where, as already mentioned, he made contact with Michael Gabriel Fredersdorf in 1741 and later, in 1747, with the monarch himself. The result of this last contact was the work entitled *Musical Offering* BWV 1079.

The aforementioned experiences and, in particular, Bach's contacts with the great cities of Dresden – for opera – and Berlin – for chamber music – were very fruitful for him in terms of the assimilation, adaptation and development of the newly emerging styles – Galant and *Empfindsamer Stil* – which emerged from the new generations of composers who were based in these cities.

These events did not touch Bach's musical production in vain, just as is reflected in his adoption of the new influences that were incorporated into the major works that marked the last two decades of his life. These are above all, amongst others, parts of the Mass in B minor, some of the *Goldberg Variations*, the prelude to the *Second Book of the Well-Tempered Clavier* (*Das Wohltemperierte Klavier*), and parts of the *Musical Offering*.

We may begin by accepting Marshall's theses, according to which Bach was influenced by the musical fashions of his times and was able to assimilate them by juxtaposing and coordinating their various styles into the compositions of his later period. Along these lines, Marshall notes that:

Bach's assimilation of the "latest taste" (in Mizler's words) in the 1730s and '40s was actually one aspect of a second, larger and more complex synthesis in the composer's career, extending this time much further afield historically and culturally. It is almost as if the composer was attracted now to anything "exotic", that is, remote in time, place, or tradition, as it were, a Janus-like involvement with both the remote past and the newest trends, juxtaposing Palestrina and Pergolesi, the technical virtuosity of a Domenico Scarlatti or a Dresden opera star and the simple directness of the opera buffa, the high art of canon and the low art of the rowdy quodlibet,

19. Robert L. MARSHALL, *The Music of Johann Sebastian Bach: The Sources, the Style, the Significance*, 1989, p. 27.

20. Christoph WOLFF, *Johann Sebastian Bach: El músico sabio*, vol. II, 2003, p. 131.

not to mention the peasant idioms of German – and even Polish – folk music: all this, as the phenomena of the B-minor Mass and the *Goldberg Variations* reveal, in the ultimate service of a truly universal *réunion des goûts*.<sup>21</sup>

At the time of the composition of the sonata under study, the *Empfindsamer Stil* was still in the early stages of its development.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, the *Empfindsamer Stil* could be considered a dialect of the Galant style,<sup>23</sup> with this sonata being the first work to exhibit this. Indeed, both the Italian *opera buffa* and several pieces by French harpsichordists – and particularly by F. Couperin – were the main originators of and vectors for the Galant style. Periodic and structured short phrasing and a simple accompaniment based on *arpeggio* chords were the most prominent elements of this style, which was spreading across Europe at that time. Germany was also a recipient of this Galant style, with which, particularly from 1740 onwards, the musicians of the Berlin and Potsdam schools took the further step of creating elements of the melodic and harmonic outline that gave this style a significant weight of sensitive expressiveness, turning it into the *Empfindsamer Stil* as something different from the Galant style<sup>24</sup> in certain ways. In general, it could be said that the Galant style was used in works destined for the general public<sup>25</sup> – theatre music – while the *Empfindsamer Stil* was performed in smaller circles – as chamber music. It may be considered that the sensitive style proposed by the *Empfindsamer Stil*, although essentially based on the Galant style, freed itself from the latter to become a style of its own by incorporating, as previously mentioned, coordinated elements from the sensitive melodic declamation and more elements of dialogue offered by the contrapuntal texture. As a result, we are dealing with the creation of a new style, one with a typically North German stamp: that of the Berlin School.

It is possible to observe the reception of both styles in the work of Bach, with the Galant style being found in various works in his library.<sup>26</sup> The *Empfindsamer Stil*, for its part, is to be observed both in Bach's music and the music of his sons, especially that of C.P.E. Bach, and in the new winds that were blowing at the court in Berlin. In effect, by way of example, Giovanni Battista Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*<sup>27</sup> – which Bach turned into parody – and *Les Bergeries / Rondeau*

21. Robert L. MARSHALL, *The Music of Johann Sebastian Bach: The Sources, the Style, the Significance*, 1989, pp. 53-54.

22. Daniel HEARTZ, "Empfindsamkeit", in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 6, 1994, pp. 157-159; Wolfgang HIRSCHMANN, "Empfindsamkeit", in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, vol. 2, 1995, pp. 1766-1771.

23. Daniel HEARTZ, *Music in European Capitals: The Galant Style 1720-1780*, 2000; and Robert O. GJERDINGEN, *Music in the Galant Style*, 2007.

24. Philip G. DOWNS, *La música clásica*, 1998, pp. 68-70.

25. Philip G. DOWNS, *La música clásica*, 1998, p. 68.

26. Kirsten BEISSWENGER, *Johann Sebastian Bachs Notenbibliothek*, 1992.

27. Christoph WOLFF, *Johann Sebastian Bach: El músico sabio*, vol. II, 2003, pp. 110-111 and 168; also Francesco DEGRADA, "Lo *Stabat Mater* di Pergolesi e la parodia di Bach", in *Bach und die Italienische Musik: Bach e la Musica Italiana*, 1987, Series "Quaderni, 36", pp. 141-169.



from the *Second livre de pièces de clavecin, sixième ordre* (Second Book of Pieces for the Harpsichord, Sixth Order) by François Couperin,<sup>28</sup> were studied by Bach. They feature clearly evident elements of the Galant style, brief and periodic repetitive themed motifs, drum basses and/or the incipient scheme of Alberti's basses.

According to Wolff,<sup>29</sup> Bach's library even contained a remarkable collection of theoretical treatises. These included the musical treatise *Der Generalbass in der Composition*<sup>30</sup> by the chapel master of the court of Dresden, Johann David Heinichen. In this treatise, Heinichen made explicit a manifestly positive attitude towards the new taste and a critique of those who favoured counterpoint:

[The old ones] thought Reason could be put to no better use than the creation of supposedly learned and speculative artificialities of note writing. Therefore, they began on the one hand to measure out theoretically innocent notes according to mathematical scales and with the help of the proportioned yardstick, and on the other hand, to place these notes in musical practice on the staves (almost as if they were on a rack) and to pull and stretch them (or in the language of counterpoint, to augment them), to turn them upside down, to repeat and to change their positions, until finally from the latter resulted a practice with an overwhelming number of unnecessary instances of contrapuntal eye-music and from the former resulted a theory with amassed metaphysical contemplations of emotion and reason. Thus, one no longer had cause to ask if music sounded well or pleased the listener, but rather if it looked good on paper.

Later he states:

First, [counterpoint] serves students and beginners in composition. With counterpoint they learn to climb or to spell, and with these given and restricted themes and toilsome exercises they are forced to master skilful progressions or *Passus compositionies*... Second, counterpoint serves church music if it is mixed, according to the style of good church composers, with other techniques of good taste [Gout]. Here is really its place, and here the contrapuntist can best show his earned schooling.

And, in another section, he says that:

And how delighted is the ear if we perceive in a refined church composition or other music how a skilled virtuoso has attempted here and there to move the feelings of an audience though his *gallanterie* and other devices that express the text, and in this way to find successfully the true purpose of music.

28. Kirsten BEISSWENGER, *Johann Sebastian Bachs Notenbibliothek*, 1992, p. 279.

29. Christoph WOLFF, *Johann Sebastian Bach: El músico sabio*, vol. II, 2003, p. 111.

30. The three fragments selected from the treatise are mentioned by Christian AHRENS, "Johann Sebastian Bach and the 'New Gusto' in music around 1740", *Bach Journal*, vol. XXXIII, no. 1 (2002), pp. 75-77.



Lastly, it should be added that this treatise by Heinichen was announced in 1729 in order to promote its sale.<sup>31</sup> In Leipzig, Bach himself was the sales representative and distributor. This, together with the study of the treatise that he had in his library, presupposes the interest and appreciation that Bach must have had for it. Along these lines, it is not surprising that the new musical trends gradually took root in Bach's creative mind.

In the case of the *Empfindsamer Stil*, although no example of it has been found in Bach's library, we can refer to his own works in which it is possible to observe this style and which reveal a consonance with and knowledge of the new style changes that were ushered in by the new generation of composers, who included Bach's own sons. In this respect, as previously mentioned, we have the *Goldberg Variations* BWV 988 (ex. 1: m. 1-10),<sup>32</sup> of 1741; this work presents various aspects of the initial aria and of some of the variations that could be qualified amongst the postulates of the *Empfindsamer Stil*. As examples, we propose the initial theme of the aria and *Variatio* 25.

EXAMPLE 1. J.S. Bach, *Goldberg Variations* BWV 988: Aria, m. 1-10.

As may be observed, the melodic design of the aria exhibits a captivating display of expressive elements including *tierces coulées*, Lombard rhythms and ornamentation written in real notes.

31. Christoph WOLFF, *Johann Sebastian Bach: El músico sabio*, vol. II, 2003, p. 121.

32. Johann Sebastian BACH, *Zweiter Teil der Klavierübung BWV 971, 831, 831a, Viertel Teil der Klavierübung BWV 988, Vierzehn Kanons BWV 1087*, 1977, p. 69 and 104.

The *Variatio 25* also clearly exhibits this same style, with a slow tempo (*adagio*), a sarabande scheme, a design with expressive pauses, syncopes that lead to a clear fluctuation of the rhythm, chromaticisms, and unique interval jumps that make the sensitivity emanating from the fragment clearly explicit (ex. 2: m. 1-8).

The musical score for Example 2 is for J.S. Bach's *Goldberg Variations*, *Variatio 25* BWV 988, marked *Adagio*. It is written for Harpsichord (Hpschd.) in 3/4 time. The score consists of four systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The first system (measures 1-4) shows a sarabande scheme with expressive pauses and syncopes. The second system (measures 5-8) continues the piece with similar rhythmic and melodic patterns. The third system (measures 9-12) features more complex chromaticisms and interval jumps. The fourth system (measures 13-16) concludes the fragment with a final cadence. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, accidentals, and dynamic markings.

EXAMPLE 2. J.S. Bach, *Goldberg Variations*, *Variatio 25* BWV 988: *Adagio*, m. 1-8.

Three years later, in 1744, we find the Prelude BWV 881<sup>33</sup> from the second part of the *Well-Tempered Clavier* (*Das Wohltemperierte Klavier*), in which we can observe the expressive caesuras which begin in the two sharp parts – anticipating the third slow movement of the trio sonata from the *Musical Offering*<sup>34</sup> – and

33. Werner BREIG, “Johann Sebastian Bachs Leipziger Klaviermusik und das Prinzip *Empfindsamkeit*”, in *Aspekte der Musik des Barock. Aufführungspraxis und Stil: Bericht über die Symposien 2001 bis 2004*, 2006, pp. 295-298. Fragment source: J.S. BACH, *Das Wohltemperierte Klavier*, Teil II, Urtext, 1972, p. 60.

34. See Harry Halbreich's comments to the CD: J.S. Bach, *Das Wohltemperierte Klavier*, Band 2, BWV 870-893, p. 14 (French) or 27 (English).

which are expressed in a way that marks the two parts of the Prelude – being very present in the first and at the beginning of the second – in a similar way to a *continuum* stamped by the tone of F minor. We could say that with this thematic material, Bach introduced an element close to the *Empfindsamer Stil* (ex. 3: m. 1-12).



EXAMPLE 3. J.S. Bach, Prelude XII BWV 881: m. 1-12.

We also propose the example of a passage from the third movement, *andante*, of the trio sonata from the *Musical Offering* BWV 1079 (1747) (ex. 4: m. 1-7). In it, the use of expressive pauses, of unique interval jumps, chromaticisms and phrasing with a constant *piano-forte* intensity are also clearly noticeable. These features give the passage a momentum of evident musical sensitivity which is typical of the *Empfindsamer Stil*. We highlight Wolff's words in reference to Bach's stay in Berlin and, more specifically, to the trio sonata in the *Musical Offering*:

A character of homage manifests itself not only in clear references to the fashionable style of the Royal orchestra in Berlin. Gallant lines, phrased throughout, as well as sensitive declamation and dynamics characterize especially the slow movements.<sup>35</sup>

In his recent publication,<sup>36</sup> Wolff also ratifies and clearly expands upon these observations relating to the taste of the Berlin court and the trio sonata from the *Musical Offering*:

[...] The trio sonata was meant as a special contribution by the Saxon capellmeister to the chamber son and several former students. Particularly in the sonata's slow movements, Bach paid homage to the King's preferred style of delicate sensitivity (*Empfindsamkeit*), and he certainly demonstrated the suitability of the Royal theme for such mannerist treatment, even if in contrapuntal disguise.

35. Mentioned by Christian AHRENS, "Johann Sebastian Bach and the 'New Gusto' in music around 1740", *Bach Journal*, vol. XXXIII, no. 1 (2002), p. 81.

36. Christoph WOLFF, *Bach's Musical Universe: The Composer and His Work*, 2020, p. 309.

In light of an ever-decreasing interest all across of Europe in strict musical composition generally and in the art of counterpoint in particular, Bach seemed to be suggesting an alternative (notably in the sonata), demonstrating how a subject as baroque and knotty as the “Royal theme” could in fact be treated in an emphatically Galant and expressive manner. Regarding the prevailing musical aesthetics in Berlin, with which Carl Philipp Emanuel and the younger generation identified, his father allegedly once remarked “’s ist Berlinerblau! ’s *verschießt!*” (This Prussian blue! It fades!) Given that sceptical point of view, Bach’s steadfast adherence to traditional and “made-to-last” counterpoint might be understood as a program of contrast. He must certainly have been aware that the *Musical Offering*, widely available as a published work and further burnished by the dedication to the King of Prussia, provided him with a unique platform to make his case.

3. Andante

Flute

Violin

Basso continuo

Fl.

Vln.

Bc.

Fl.

Vln.

Bc.

EXAMPLE 4. J.S. Bach, *Musical Offering* BWV 1079: 3. Andante, m. 1-7.

With respect to Bach’s sons, it may be noted that both W.F. Bach and C.P.E. Bach were the first members of the family whose compositional practice strove to find stylistic innovations that were in keeping with the new times. In this sense, although not associated with the court at Berlin, W.F. Bach’s music for

the keyboard can shed light on the *Empfindsamer Stil*. In fact, if we examine the proposed fragment from Polonaise No. 2 in C Minor (c. 1765),<sup>37</sup> it is possible to note the versatility of this new style: initial *arpeggios*, expressive pauses and jumps with angular intervals create a surprising and, at the same time, melancholic atmosphere which, aided by certain chromaticisms, give the *Empfindsamer Stil* a new, consolidated aesthetic (ex. 5: m. 1-8).



EXAMPLE 5. W.F. Bach, Polonaise No. 2 in C Minor: m. 1-8.

C.P.E. Bach was, without a doubt, clearly a composer and exponent of both the Galant style and the *Empfindsamer Stil*. He was a musician in the service of Frederick the Great of Prussia. We propose the following examples of his work that clearly illustrate the *Empfindsamer Stil*. The first are excerpts from the Sonata for Flute and Continuo (Berlin, 1739) Wq. 127/554 (ex. 6: m. 17-20; and ex. 7: m. 23-25).<sup>38</sup>

EXAMPLE 6. C.P.E. Bach, Sonata in G Major Wq. 127: Adagio, m. 17-20.

37. "D-AAast Ms. 687 olim: Br 107 no. 10. BR-WFB", in *Bach-Digital: Aachen, Stadtbibliothek, Musikbibliothek Bach-Repertorium Wilhelm Friedemann Bach Fk / Falck-Verzeichnis BR-WFB A 27 - A 38 Fk 12. Polonaise 2 BR-WFB A 28* (online), <<https://www.bach-digital.de/content/index.xed>> (retrieved: 10 October 2022).

38. Carl Philipp Emanuel BACH, *Solo Sonatas*, 2008, p. 33.

EXAMPLE 7. C.P.E. Bach, Sonata in G Major Wq. 127: Adagio, m. 23-25.

It is important to highlight the first bars of the melodic outline for the flute, with significant pauses and modulated discourse, as well as the final bars of the dialogue with the *basso continuo*, which create an expressive tension with a final resolution in G major.

The second example, from C.P.E. Bach, shows the beginning of the Poco adagio movement from the Keyboard Sonata in A Major (Potsdam, 1765) Wq. 55/4 (ex. 8: m. 1-7),<sup>39</sup> which evidences a consolidated *Empfindsamer Stil*. In this way, it shows a series of elements of the aforementioned style that place special emphasis on the sensitivity emanated by the fragment, above all with the help of the F-sharp minor tone.

EXAMPLE 8. C.P.E. Bach, Sonata IV in A Major Wq. 55/4: Poco adagio, m. 1-7.

39. Carl Philipp Emanuel BACH, “*Kenner und Liebhaber*” *Collections I*, 2009, p. 28.

In the courts of Berlin and Potsdam, J. Benda also occupied a prominent position. In effect, the production of a series of six keyboard sonatas provided a clear example of the *Empfindsamer Stil*. The *larghetto* from the Sonata in B-flat Major (ex. 9: m. 1-8),<sup>40</sup> from 1757, shows a series of alterations, chromaticisms and expressive rhythms that become a compendium of this style.

The musical score is for a harpsichord (Hpschd.) and is in 3/4 time. It consists of three systems of music. The first system shows the beginning of the piece with a treble and bass staff. The second system starts at measure 3 and includes a triplet in the treble. The third system starts at measure 6 and includes a piano (p) dynamic marking in the treble.

EXAMPLE 9. J. Benda, Sonata in B-flat Major: Larghetto, m. 1-8.

The fragments from the works that have been highlighted above amply illustrate the atmosphere of a change of style and aesthetics that permeated the later period of J.S. Bach. Although we are now referencing works that extend beyond his life's journey, the radius of action and influence of the new aesthetics support a possible assumption of these new currents by J.S. Bach and his epigones. In any case, these new aesthetic currents show that these styles had been initiated during the time of J.S. Bach and that they had then become progressively consolidated. J.S. Bach evidently incorporated them based on his compositional work as a great contrapuntist. It is at this point that we observe how the new styles, and especially the *Empfindsamer Stil*, become particularly relevant in his creative idea and wrap themselves around the counterpoint fabric. The Sonata BWV 1035 is therefore circumscribed within the aforementioned context as a whole. If we ana-

40. Philip G. DOWNS (ed.), *Antología de la música clásica*, 2006, p. 34.



lyse<sup>41</sup> the first movement of the Adagio ma non tanto in greater detail, we may observe a profusion of characteristic traits of this style: the use of expressive pauses, or *soupirs*; precise ornamentation, *tierces coulées* (ex. 10: m. 1-3), which were particular favourites of the court of Berlin;<sup>42</sup> *acciaccature*; trills; descending one-seventh leaps (ex. 11: m. 5); and a melodic line of expressive sensitivity.

Adagio ma non tanto

Flute

Continuo

Fl.

Cont.

EXAMPLE 10. J.S. Bach, Sonata BWV 1035: Adagio ma non tanto, m. 1-3.

Fl.

EXAMPLE 11. J.S. Bach, Sonata BWV 1035: Adagio ma non tanto, m. 5.

The *basso continuo* simply provides accompaniment with a series of figurations – quavers, dotted quavers and two demisemiquavers and semiquavers – which are repeated throughout the course of the movement. The figured bass is very rich in dissonances which reinforce the expressivity of the melodic line of the flute. It is also appropriate to highlight the expressiveness of the short coda<sup>43</sup>

41. For the analysis and all the examples, we have based this study on: Johann Sebastian BACH, *Neue Ausgabe Sämtlicher Werke. Werke für Flöte: Partita a-Moll für Flauto traverso solo, BWV 1013; Zwei Sonaten für Flauto traverso und Continuo, BWV 1034 und 1035; Zwei Sonaten für Flauto traverso und Cembalo, BWV 1030 und 1032; Sonata G-Dur für zwei Flauti traversi und Continuo, BWV 1039*, 1963, pp. 23-30.

42. See Mary OLESKIEWICZ, “The Trio in Bach’s *Musical Offering*: A Salute to Frederick’s Tastes and Quantz’s Flutes?”, in *Bach Perspectives*, vol. 4, 1999, pp. 95-96.

43. See Hans EPPSTEIN, “Über J. S. Bachs Flötensonaten mit Generalbaß”, *Bach-Jahrbuch*, 58 (1972), p. 15.

(ex. 12: m. 18-20), which fleetingly transits through the minor key (B minor), giving the climax of greatest sensitivity to the preceding musical discourse.

This first movement therefore articulates a kaleidoscopic mosaic of themes with fantasy motifs of scales of demisemiquavers, triplets of semiquavers, unique interval leaps, sudden changes of key within small fragments, *soupir*-like pauses and precise ornamentation with the use of *tierces coulées*. In short, due to both the flute melody and the accompaniment of the *basso continuo*, it provides us with evident signs of Bach's *Empfindsamer Stil*.

EXAMPLE 12. J.S. Bach, Sonata BWV 1035: Adagio ma non tanto, m. 18-20.

Quantz's treatise<sup>44</sup> also notes how sensitivity must prevail in the interpretation of the *adagios*:

The Adagio ordinarily affords persons who are simple amateurs of music the least pleasure. There are even some professional musicians who, lacking the necessary feeling and insight, are gratified to see the end of the Adagio arrive. Yet a true musician may distinguish himself by the manner in which he plays the Adagio, may greatly please true connoisseurs and sensitive and feeling amateurs, and may demonstrate his skill to those who know composition. Since it does remain a stumbling-block, however, intelligent musicians will, without my advice, accommodate themselves to their listeners and to amateurs, not only to earn more easily the respect befitting their skill, but also to ingratiate themselves.

This indication provides us with a reference to the sensitivity that must be present in the expression of the *adagios*. This is an indication which is made very clearly evident, as has already been commented, in the first movement of the Sonata BWV 1035.

44. Johann Joachim QUANTZ, *On Playing the Flute*, 1966, p. 162.

The third movement, Siciliano, in C-sharp minor, presents two different contrasting elements: the melody of the *Empfindsamer Stil* and the Galant style canonic texture.

The *Empfindsamer Stil* is reflected in the melodic line of the canon, which is full of expressive sensitivity (ex. 13: m. 1-4); in the measure of the ornamentation; and in the use of *tierces coulées*, which are written as real notes (see m. 19 of ex. 14), *acciaccature* and trills. The flute begins the Siciliano with canonic episodes that imitate the octave with the line of *basso continuo*.

EXAMPLE 13. J.S. Bach, Sonata BWV 1035: Siciliano, m. 1-4.

The tonality of the movement in C-sharp minor and the modulation, amongst others, to F-sharp minor (ex. 14: m. 13-20) were rather unusual in works for the flute during that period.<sup>45</sup> However, the type of flute used at the court – with a double key – was that of Quantz. It could consequently have been well adapted to the previously mentioned tonality and have thereby contributed to the expressiveness of the *Empfindsamer Stil* that emanates from the tonalities of this movement. In his treatise *Das Neueröffnete Orchestre*, Johann Mattheson<sup>46</sup> qualifies the F-sharp minor key as “languid and amorous”. This qualification highlights the character of the expression that we can apply to the whole of the Siciliano and which is close to the *Empfindsamer Stil*:

23. F-sharp minor, although it leads directly to great sadness, is nevertheless itself more languid and amorous than lethal; moreover, this tonality possesses something of the abandoned, unique and misanthropic.

23. / Fis moll (16.) ob er gleich zu einer grossen Betrübniß leitet, ist dieselbe doch mehr languissant und verliebt als lethal; es hat sonst dieser Tohn etwas abandonirtes, singulieres und misanthropisches an sich.

45. Mary OLESKIEWICZ, “The Trio in Bach’s *Musical Offering*: A Salute to Frederick’s Tastes and Quantz’s Flutes?”, in *Bach Perspectives*, vol. 4, 1999, p. 96.

46. Johann MATTHESON, *Das Neu = Eröffnete Orchestre*, 1713. In chapter two of the third part of his treatise, Johann Mattheson gives various explanations of the character of each key, p. 251. For further commentary on the keys in various Bach works, see also: Rudolf WUSTMANN, “Tonarten-symbolik zu Bachs Zeit”, *Bach-Jahrbuch*, 8 (1911), pp. 60-74. On both the character of the keys and the assimilation of modality to tonality and the various period notations, see: Rita STEBLIN, *A History of Key Characteristics in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries*, 2002.

The image shows a musical score for J.S. Bach's Sonata BWV 1035, specifically the Siciliano movement, measures 13-20. The score is written for Flute and Continuo. The top system covers measures 13-16, and the bottom system covers measures 17-20. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 6/8. The Flute part is in the treble clef, and the Continuo part is in the bass clef. Fingerings and breath marks are indicated above the notes.

EXAMPLE 14. J.S. Bach, Sonata BWV 1035: Siciliano, m. 13-20.

Applying Butler's approach – using Marpurg's and Quantz's treatises – to the study of the Galant style in Bach's *Musical Offering*, has made it possible to highlight similar aspects in the canonic style of the Siciliano. Along these lines, the Galant canonic texture of the Siciliano is highlighted in the postulates of Marpurg when, in his treatise *Abhandlung von der Fuge* (1752-53), he proposes that "the canonic style of writing can be employed in the most pleasant manner in chamber sonatas", although he qualifies this style as "galant" when he speaks of "the galant canonic style of writing".<sup>47</sup> He explains the meaning of "Galant" when he speaks about the canon in the octave that "unaware of the constraint imposed by doubled canonic imitation one will find the most splendid harmony appropriate to the subject".<sup>48</sup> In other words, we may conclude that in order to perform a successful canon in the Galant style, it is necessary to avoid following the strict guidelines of the canonic counterpoint. Quantz similarly values the canon in the octave very positively when referring to it as a Galant element.<sup>49</sup> Both these aspects explained by Marpurg and Quantz concur quite well with the canon in the third movement in our sonata: the Siciliano.

Marpurg also recommends the canons in Bach's *Musical Offering* – which was dedicated to Frederick the Great – as good examples<sup>50</sup> of Galant canons. It should be added that Wolff<sup>51</sup> qualifies some of the movements in the trio sonata,

47. Cited by Gregory BUTLER, "The *Galant* Style in J.S. Bach's *Musical Offering*: Widening the Dimensions", *Bach Journal*, vol. XXXIII, no. 1 (2002), p. 59.

48. Cited by Gregory BUTLER, "The *Galant* Style in J.S. Bach's *Musical Offering*: Widening the Dimensions", *Bach Journal*, vol. XXXIII, no. 1 (2002), p. 60.

49. Gregory BUTLER, "The *Galant* Style in J.S. Bach's *Musical Offering*: Widening the Dimensions", *Bach Journal*, vol. XXXIII, no. 1 (2002), p. 60.

50. Gregory BUTLER, "The *Galant* Style in J.S. Bach's *Musical Offering*: Widening the Dimensions", *Bach Journal*, vol. XXXIII, no. 1. (2002), p. 58.

51. Christoph WOLFF, "New Research on Bach's *Musical Offering*", *The Musical Quarterly*, vol. 57, no. 3 (July 1971), pp. 401-403. See also Christoph WOLFF, *Bach: Essays on His Life and Music*, 1991, pp. 254-256.

as we have already indicated, and some of the *ricercare* in the *Musical Offering* as *Empfindsamer Stil* and Galant style. All of these elements position the Sonata BWV 1035 closer to the styles that were fashionable at the court of Potsdam.

Another argument that supports the *Empfindsamer Stil* of the sonata is the documentary reference to the aesthetics of the court of Potsdam, as has been previously mentioned, providing us with data relating to its musical life. In fact, the group of musicians around the figure of Frederick the Great – amongst whom C.P.E. Bach, J.J. Quantz and J. Benda should be highlighted – strove in their works to please the tastes of the monarch. The monarch himself was also a composer, an amateur flautist and an accomplished performer, particularly of *adagios*. This is explained by some documentary sources from Dresden, dating from 1745, and from Potsdam, after 1756, which allow us to extrapolate the year in which the sonata was composed:

[...] What was really notable is that His Majesty, in two or, at most, three parts of the transverse flute solo, played either what he himself had composed, or the originals by Herr Hasse, who, with much grace, accompanied him on the harpsichord, together with the whole Chapel, causing a great impression as a result of its magnificence, due to his music and due to the special interpretation of the Adagio [...].<sup>52</sup>

The second document highlights the use of the pianoforte and, once more, reiterates how well the monarch interpreted the *adagios*:

The young Fasch travelled to Potsdam and presented his services in the spring of 1756. This consisted of taking turns with Bach, each alternating four-week spells, to accompany the King on the pianoforte, in his concerts and flute solos, on a daily basis.

[...] the King only, and without exception, played the *Konzerte* and Solo that Quantz composed for him and, very often, his own Flute Solos [...].

[...] The King played the Adagios very well [...].<sup>53</sup>

As has been previously mentioned, the sonata in question was composed by Bach for the court of Potsdam's *Kammerdiener*, Michael Gabriel Fredersdorf, who was also a flautist, as is clearly shown by some sources of the work. It should also be remembered that the court had acquired various pianofortes, an instrument that adapted very well to the *Empfindsamer Stil*. It would not have been inappropriate for the sonata to have been accompanied by the pianoforte. In fact, some modern-day recordings<sup>54</sup> have demonstrated the good timbral adjustment

52. Hans-Joachim SCHULZE, "Das Flötenspiel des Preußenkönigs Friedrich II. und die Kunst des Accompanierens", *Bach-Jahrbuch*, 101 (2015), p. 355. Translated from German.

53. Hans-Joachim SCHULZE, "Das Flötenspiel des Preußenkönigs Friedrich II. und die Kunst des Accompanierens", *Bach-Jahrbuch*, 101 (2015), pp. 357-358. Translated from German.

54. For example, the recording of *Bach: The Flute Sonatas* by Wilbert HAZELZET, Jacques OGG and Jaap ter LINDEN, 2002. For references to the use of the pianoforte in Bach, see: Eva BADURA-SKODA, "Did J.S. Bach Compose 'Pianoforte Concertos'?", *Bach Journal*, vol. XXXI, no. 1 (2000), pp. 1-16.

of the sounds of the flute and the pianoforte in the Sonata BWV 1035. The flutes that the monarch played were also made by Quantz. They were flutes with a double<sup>55</sup> D-sharp and E-flat key. This helped to provide greater harmonic stability and a better level of tuning adjustment within the context of E major tonality, which is what corresponds to the Sonata BWV 1035. Furthermore, in the Siciliano – with canonic episodes in C-sharp minor – it modulates to F-sharp minor, which was something quite unusual, although Quantz's flute could quite successfully overcome this difficulty. It is thus highly probable that the sonata in question could have been interpreted by the King, or by *Kammerdiener* Fredersdorf, or by Quantz himself, on any of the flutes mentioned. Lastly, the research considers aspects from the treatises of the period – and especially from that of C.P.E. Bach – in order to contrast them with the significant elements of the sonata under study. Indeed, even a brief observation puts us on the trail of the fact that the flute writing in the sonata is consistent with various aspects of the treatise by C.P.E. Bach, the *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments* (1753-1762),<sup>56</sup> and with the tips for accompaniment with pianoforte and clavichord that are said to contribute to “the most elegant taste”:

6. The pianoforte and clavichord provide the best accompaniments in performances that require the most elegant taste.

26. Three – and fewer – voiced accompaniments are used in delicate works where the tastes, performance, or affect of a piece requires husbanding of harmonic resources. We shall see presently that such pieces often allow for delicate accompaniment only.

These latter points confirm the sensitive style of the sonata and the good suitability of the sonority of the pianoforte to that of the flute.

In conclusion, the arguments presented – the characteristics of the first and third movements of the sonata, the aesthetics of the court of Potsdam, and the treatises – make it much clearer that the style of the sonata moves away from that of the late Baroque period to fully embrace the new styles of the time. Furthermore, both the sonorities of the flute and the possible use of the pianoforte show a match in pitch that affords greater relevance to the *Empfindsamer Stil*. This is an aspect that largely concords with the customs and aesthetics of the court of Potsdam and with the style of the sonata. It has also been shown that the sonata can be explained from the perspective of the theoretical corpus of the treatises. These same sources have shed light on the technical, formal and aesthetic aspects which lend support to the presence of the *Empfindsam Stil* in the sonata.

The decades from 1730 to 1750 show a production of Bach's works in which it is possible to observe the use of the new styles that were in fashion at the time. In

55. Johann Joachim QUANTZ, *On Playing the Flute*, 1966, pp. 45-46.

56. Carl Philipp Emanuel BACH, *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, 1753-1762, p. 173 and 175. First published in Great Britain in 1949 by Cassell & Company Ltd.; this edition first published in 1974 by Ernst Eulenberg Ltd., London; reprinted in 1976, 1978, 1980.

consequence, Bach clearly transcended the Baroque style and became completely immersed in both the Galant style and, in the study of the sonata, in the *Empfindsamer Stil*. Accordingly, it is with these argumentative aspects – the comparison with various works by Bach and with those of other composers, the characteristics of the first and third movements of the sonata, the aesthetics of the Potsdam court, the treatises and the context of the times – that I hope to have confirmed the aesthetics of the *Empfindsamer Stil* which emanate from Bach's Sonata BWV 1035.

As a corollary, there is evidence of a Bach who is concomitant with and knowledgeable about the new aesthetics and styles that were emerging and becoming consolidated in the last decade of the first half of the eighteenth century, giving them greater prominence on the basis of the counterpoint texture. In short, all this amply supports the thesis that Bach incorporated these new styles into his own compositions in the final decades of his life.

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