

Cantors, Schoolmasters, and Directors of Music: New Research on Bach's Students

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The school and church of St Thomas's in Leipzig were the focal point for Johann Sebastian Bach's music in the 27 years from 1723 to 1750. Bach had to provide a cantata every Sunday. This involved the St Thomas School students, the *Thomaner*,¹ and the musical preparation for it was part of the normal school timetable. Bach also gave private instrumental and composition lessons to the most talented, and some of the boys even helped him by copying the instrumental or vocal parts for his newly-composed cantatas. Since the *Thomaner* were closer to the composer and his music than the majority of his contemporaries, their lives and experiences reveal some important facts about their great teacher.

To date, scholarship has concentrated on the *Thomaner*, who have been identified as copyists and scribes in extant original performing materials of Bach's church music.² Some of these musically talented students were assigned the role of prefect, which gave them responsibility for conducting one of the four choirs, or *Kantoreien*, or even substituting Bach during the main cantata performances on Sundays. We know too that some students were later employed in central German towns as cantors or organists, like Bach himself. On the whole, though, until recently very little was known about the later careers of the *Thomaner*, who attended St Thomas School during Bach's 27-year tenure as *Thomaskantor*. In a research project (January 2012–December 2014) entitled 'Bachs Thomaner', supported by the Gerda Henkel Stiftung, the Leipzig Bach-Archiv has systematically searched the archives for original documents and biographical information about the lives and later careers of Bach's 300 *Thomaner*.

The starting point for the project was the school's two entrance registers. The older register runs from the year 1627 and continues until 1729. Johann Matthias Gesner began the second register when he took up his duties as school rector in 1730, and it was used until the end of the eighteenth century. While the older

¹ The term 'Thomaner' only refers to the *alumni*, the boys who boarded at the school and formed the choir. Besides those there were day boys, the *externi*, who in general were less important in matters of music and therefore were excluded from the project.

² See NBA IX/3.

register was kept in its original place in the archive of the *Thomanerchor*,³ the new register was mislaid at some point, and some of its contents, such as a few basic dates, were known only from an article by Bernhard Friedrich Richter published in 1907.⁴ However, in 2011 Michael Maul rediscovered the ‘lost’ register in the Leipzig *Stadtarchiv*, which opened up many new possibilities for research into Bach’s students.⁵

The *Album Alumnorum Thomanorum*, as Gesner entitled the new entrance register in 1730, contains entries by most of the boarding boys who attended the school during Bach’s tenure. Every new student had to write in the book using a standardised formula in Latin. As they usually had to write this in their own hand, the volume provides an invaluable collection of identified and dated handwriting samples from Bach’s circle. The data transmitted includes the name of the boy, his date and place of birth, his father’s name and profession, the date he entered the school and a promise to stay for a certain number of years – this was in effect a legally-binding contract. When the boy left the St Thomas School, the rector usually noted the examination date and sometimes remarked on the boy’s behaviour or gave further biographical details.

Summarising all the data from these lists allows us to draw some general principles. Bach’s *Thomaner* came from the city of Leipzig and its localities, as well as from the entire region of central Germany. Most of the boys were aged between 13 and 15 when they came to Leipzig, and they arrived having learned basic skills in reading and writing, as well as in music. Records suggest that boys were sometimes sent to St Thomas School on the recommendation of a former *Thomaner*, who may have been a relative, teacher or clergyman in the boy’s home town. However, the boy needed to be reasonably skilled in music to pass the qualifying examination held by the rector and the cantor – at least in the early years of Bach’s tenure.⁶ The average stay of a boy at the school was six to seven years. During this time he went through a graded class system culminating in *prima*, which brought to the most talented leadership responsibilities, including the honour of being prefect.

Almost all of Bach’s choirboys went to university after leaving school, the majority attending Leipzig University, and some, universities in the neighbouring cities of Halle, Jena, or Wittenberg. In Leipzig they had the chance to sit at the feet of Germany’s leading theologians, philologists and lawyers, and to benefit from the city’s flourishing cultural and musical life. After several years at the university, Bach’s former students aimed to secure a public position. A common alternative while waiting for such a post was to work as a private tutor, or *Informator*, a teacher of the children of a wealthy citizen or nobleman. Some, it

³ Archiv des Thomanerchors Leipzig, Alumnematrikel der Thomasschule, no shelfmark.

⁴ Bernhard Friedrich Richter, ‘Stadtpeifer und Alumnem der Thomasschule in Leipzig zu Bachs Zeit’, *Bach-Jahrbuch*, 4 (1907), 32–78.

⁵ Stadtarchiv Leipzig (D-LEsa), Thomasschule Nr. 483; cf. Michael Maul, ‘“welche ieder Zeit aus den 8 besten Subjectis bestehen muss”: die erste “Cantorey” der Thomasschule – Organisation, Aufgaben, Fragen’, *Bach-Jahrbuch*, 99 (2013), 11–77, esp. 14–19.

⁶ For changes in the practice of reception see Michael Maul, ‘*Dero berühmter Chor*’: die Leipziger Thomasschule und ihre Kantoren 1212–1804 (Leipzig: Lehmstedt, 2012), 214–18.

seems, never found a formal profession and kept their status as a university member until their death. Samuel Gottlieb Lesche, for example, attended St Thomas School from 1725 till 1731, and died on 8 March 1754 in Leipzig at the age of 42 as a *studiosus theologiae*,⁷ leaving no clue to his activities after his university studies. On the other hand, many *Thomaner* were sooner or later appointed to positions in the church or at schools, and although they may have moved around several times, they usually kept their professions throughout their lives. In this respect the students can be divided into two groups, those who found employment in Leipzig or its regions—as the city was a local and international centre for trade, sciences, and arts it offered many employment possibilities and was highly attractive as a place to live—and those who returned to their home town where, typically, they acted as a substitute for a relative, until taking over the post permanently on the latter's demise. The wide dissemination of former *Thomaner* strongly suggests that St Thomas School served as a major educational centre, providing clergy and school teachers across central Germany.

It is difficult to give an exact figure for Bach's students, not least because of the overlap of common names, and because sometimes only partial information about a student is available. Nonetheless, we have collected biographical data for more than half of the students who attended St Thomas School from 1723 to 1750. Forty-eight of these were clergy in towns and villages. This was the largest professional group we identified, which may be due to the more thorough availability of historical sources and the present state of scholarship, with registers of clergy published for almost every German territory.⁸ The same is not true for musicians. There is a register of cantors and organists for Saxony (in its borders from 1815),⁹ but for all the other central German territories, the researcher is confronted with an overwhelming number of older studies for each city, if there are any at all. The analysis has so far revealed that 31 students were later employed as cantors, six became organists, and five court musicians. Another important group became teachers with no significant musical duties at Latin schools, although it is often hard to tell the degree to which a teacher was involved in singing services or church music. At present it is possible to say that about a third of the *Thomaner* from Bach's time followed the path of their teacher and became active as church musicians.

Christian Friedrich Müller may serve as an example of a teacher with extended musical duties. In 1725, Müller was appointed a *baccalaureus substitutus* in the town of Mügeln. Usually *baccalaureus* is a title for a teacher at the bottom of the hierarchy of a school's staff who taught only basic subjects such as reading, writing, and arithmetic. From this point of view, this profession in general is

⁷ D-LEsa, Ratsleichenbuch 1751–1759, fol. 120v.

⁸ Most relevant for our concerns are Reinhold Grünberg, *Sächsisches Pfarrerbuch: die Parochien und Pfarrer der Ev.- luth. Landeskirche Sachsens (1539–1939)* (Freiberg: Mauckisch, 1940), and various volumes of *Thüringer Pfarrerbuch* (Neustadt an der Aisch: Degener and Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1995f.).

⁹ Reinhard Vollhardt, *Geschichte der Cantoren und Organisten von den Städten im Königreich Sachsen* (Berlin: Issleib, 1899, repr. Leipzig: Peters, 1978).

scarcely interesting for musicology. However, extant documents for Müller show an unusual emphasis on music,¹⁰ his certificate of *confirmation* showing that he was not only contracted to teach music, but also to take care of figural music in the services.¹¹ This is surprising, as there was both a cantor and an organist already employed in Mügeln at this time. It is not clear how exactly the tasks were divided between the three musicians, but an overview of the rich extant music collection of the Mügeln *Kantoreiarchiv* shows that the main responsibility lay in the hands of the cantor and the organist.¹² Nevertheless, Müller may have played a specific role in view of his Leipzig connections; he was a student of the St Thomas School during the tenure of Johann Kuhnau from 1714 until about 1722.¹³ His name does not appear in any inscription register of central German universities, although he claimed to be a *studiosus theologiae* when applying for the post of a *baccalaureus* in 1725.¹⁴ Maybe Müller stayed in Leipzig for some more years, and maybe during that time he even have got to know the new Thomaskantor Bach. Müller died in Mügeln on 10 August 1767.¹⁵ Whether or not he kept in touch with Leipzig musicians during his years in Mügeln, extant documents show that he should be considered a church musician.

While cities like Mügeln employed several teachers at a school, villages in general employed only a single teacher with the title of *Schulmeister*. As well as teaching the basic subjects, this teacher usually also had to play the organ, and sometimes even performed figural music in the services with the help of schoolboys or other amateur musicians. One of the rare sources for this kind of musical milieu was discovered in Großstädteln, a village near Leipzig. The employment procedure for the post of a schoolmaster in 1747 included an examination service with a cantata performance, the text of which has been preserved in the historical records.¹⁶ The manuscript shows the common form of church music at that time, divided into two parts to be performed before and after the sermon. The music begins with a setting of a biblical text, a *dictum* setting, 'Wo euer Schatz ist, da ist auch euer Hertz', followed by an aria, a recitative, another aria, and a concluding chorale with two verses. The second

¹⁰ Sächsisches Staatsarchiv Leipzig (D-LEsta), Stadt Mügeln Nr. 997, fols. 18–19, *Vocation*, 18 September 1725: 'sonderl. aber die *Musicam* euch treulich anbefohlen seyn laßen'.

¹¹ D-LEsta, Stadt Mügeln Nr. 19, fols. 2–3, 25 July 1727: 'darneben die *Music* bey dem Gottesdienste behörig besorgen, in solcher die Jugend unterrichten'; cf. Ute Poetzsch, 'Kantorat und Kantoreigesellschaft in Mügeln', in Wolf Hobohm, Carsten Lange and Brit Reipsch (eds.), *Struktur, Funktion und Bedeutung des deutschen protestantischen Kantorats im 16. bis 18. Jahrhundert: Bericht über das Wissenschaftliche Kolloquium am 2. November 1991 in Magdeburg* (Oschersleben: Ziethen, 1997), 106–11, esp. 107.

¹² Peter Wollny, 'Anmerkungen zum Kantatenrepertoire der Mügeln Kantorei im 18. Jahrhundert', in Michael Heinemann and Peter Wollny (eds.), *Musik zwischen Leipzig und Dresden: Geschichte der Kantoreigesellschaft Mügeln 1571–1996*, Schriftenreihe zur Mitteldeutschen Musikgeschichte II/2 (Oschersleben: Ziethen, 1996), 131–40.

¹³ Archiv des Thomanerchors Leipzig, Alumnematrikel der Thomasschule, no shelfmark, entry dated 11 August 1714. Müller promised to stay for six years, and added another two years after that term.

¹⁴ D-LEsta, Stadt Mügeln Nr. 997, fols. 8–9, letter of application, Mügeln, 21 June 1725.

¹⁵ D-LEsta, Stadt Mügeln Nr. 19, fol. 20r.

¹⁶ D-LEsta, Rittergut Großstädteln Nr. 50, fols. 72–3.

part consists of a second *dictum* setting, 'Ich freue mich im Herrn', a recitative, and a two-stanza aria. Although no details about the music itself or its composer are available, it can be assumed that several musicians with developed skills were required for the performance.

Against this background it is no surprise to find that the names of several *Thomaner* appear among the competitors in 1738 for the post of a schoolmaster in Schönefeld, another village near Leipzig. The record contains the letters of application and testimonies of each of the fifteen competitors, including five former *Thomaner*.¹⁷ One of them, Johann Gottlob Haupt, has only recently been identified as one of the major scribes of Bach's music in the 1730s, including the Christmas Oratorio.¹⁸ In his 1738 letter of application, Haupt calls himself a *Katechet* in the neighbouring village of Mockau. In 1747 he appears again at the above-mentioned vacancy in Großstädteln, where he would have had to fulfil extensive musical tasks. On that occasion he is named as a *Katechet* in Gohlis.¹⁹ In the same year, Haupt also applied for the post of a *Conrector* in Eilenburg, mentioning Bach as his teacher.²⁰ He did not succeed to secure either job. That means that after his university studies, which he had begun in 1735,²¹ Haupt had to work as a teacher for children in the rural areas around Leipzig. He did not immediately achieve a better-paid position in a public post, and it is not known if he ever did, nor when or where he died.

Another competitor in Schönefeld was Johann Augustin Stein. Later he was appointed cantor in Taucha, where, in 1755, he performed part of J. S. Bach's cantata *Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen*, BWV 51.²² Before our research project, nothing was known about what he did in the seventeen years between 1731, when he was expelled from school after being accused of robbery,²³ and his employment in Taucha in 1748. Now we have discovered a letter dated 1738 in which Stein calls himself a *studiosus theologiae*,²⁴ and which also mentions that he served as a schoolmaster in Schönefeld during the time of vacancy at the predecessor's widow's request.²⁵ There is no evidence that Stein performed Bach's music in Schönefeld as he had in Taucha, yet his application shows how he tried to earn his living before finally achieving employment as a cantor.

¹⁷ D-LEsta, Rittergut Schönefeld Nr. 317.

¹⁸ Maul, 'welche ieder Zeit', 18–9.

¹⁹ D-LEsta, Rittergut Großstädteln Nr. 50, fols. 39–40, letter of application, Gohlis, 21 September 1747.

²⁰ Maul, 'welche ieder Zeit', 18.

²¹ Georg Erler, *Die iüngere Matrikel der Universität Leipzig 1559–1809, vol. 3: Die Immatrikulationen vom Wintersemester 1709 bis zum Sommersemester 1809* (Leipzig: Giesecke & Devrient, 1909), 142.

²² Michael Maul, 'Der 200. Jahrestag des Augsburger Religionsfriedens (1755) und die Leipziger Bach-Pflege in der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts', *Bach-Jahrbuch*, 86 (2000), 101–18, esp. 114–17.

²³ D-LEsa, Thomasschule Nr. 483, fol. 16r, note by rector Gesner: 'in furto deprehensus circa initia anni MDCCXXXI, contubernioque eiectus est.'

²⁴ An entry in the inscription registers of the university is missing; cf. Erler, *Die iüngere Matrikel der Universität Leipzig*.

²⁵ D-LEsta, Rittergut Schönefeld Nr. 317, fol. 66, Schönefeld, 16 November 1738: 'solchen [Dienst] bißhero, auf Ansuchen der Wittbe, verwaltet habe'.

The person who was eventually appointed schoolmaster of Schönefeld is Johann Christoph Lehmann. He was a student at St Thomas School from 1726 to 1731²⁶ and then studied at Leipzig University.²⁷ In 1732 he applied to Schönefeld for the first time, albeit unsuccessfully. In his letter of application Lehmann claimed to be qualified for the job, 'because I have studied humanities at St Thomas School in Leipzig for seven years, and have currently continued academic studies for a whole year'.²⁸ It is noticeable that Lehmann does not mention studies in music here but only studies in the humanities; he was the so-called multi-coloured or 'bunter Alumne' at *Thomasschule*, the only boy who was, to a large extent, excused from musical services.²⁹

By the time of his first application in Schönefeld, around 1732, Lehmann was a *substitutus* for his ageing father, Michael Lehmann, as a schoolmaster in Panitzsch.³⁰ Later, in 1738, he was appointed schoolmaster in Engelsdorf and Hirschfeld,³¹ but in that same year applied for the post in Schönefeld again and was accepted. Lehmann stayed in this village for the rest of his life. He was replaced in 1760 by his son-in-law and died nine years later.³²

Taking a look beyond the Leipzig area reveals many of Bach's students employed in various places. One of them is Johann Wilhelm Cunis, who was appointed cantor and *Musikdirektor* in Frankenhausen, a town about 100 kilometres west of Leipzig. Cunis attended St Thomas School in the last decade of Bach's life, from 1741 to 1747,³³ and then continued his studies at Leipzig University.³⁴ He must have had a quite close relationship with Bach, his music teacher, as he mentions him by name when applying for his first post as a cantor in Kölldeda in 1749: 'Yet in the art of music I have diligently been taught by the famous Bach.'³⁵ The year before, Bach supported Cunis with an autograph testimony for the *Stipendium Hammerianum*, a scholarship for his university studies, emphasising his role as a prefect.³⁶

Furthermore, there is evidence that Cunis even performed Bach's music in Frankenhausen, where he lived from 1757. An undated textbook, entitled *Texte*

²⁶ Archiv des Thomanerchors Leipzig, Alumnematrikel der Thomasschule, no shelfmark; D-LEsa, Thomasschule Nr. 483, fol. 11v.

²⁷ Erler, *Die iüngere Matrikel der Universität Leipzig*, 232.

²⁸ D-LEsta, Rittergut Schönefeld Nr. 317, fol. 20, Leipzig, 8 June 1730: 'weil ich 7 Jahr lang auf der Thomas Schule in Leipzig *Humaniora* tractiret, und nunmehr seint Jahr und Tag die *Academischen studia* getrieben'.

²⁹ Maul, 'welche ieder Zeit', 16.

³⁰ D-LEsta, Rittergut Schönefeld Nr. 317, fol. 20: 'zu geschweigen, daß ich meinen Vater in Panitzsch Michael Lehmann, Schulmeistern alda gar öffters bißanhero *subleviren* müßen'.

³¹ D-LEsta, Rittergut Belgershain Nr. 308.

³² D-LEsta, Rittergut Schönefeld Nr. 317. Lehmann's death was reported on 29 April 1769.

³³ D-LEsa, Thomasschule Nr. 483, fol. 77r.

³⁴ Erler, *Die iüngere Matrikel der Universität Leipzig*, 58.

³⁵ 'in arte autem musicam tam publice quam priuatim a celeberrimo Bachio sedulo eruditus sum', *BDok V*, no. B 593a.

³⁶ Andreas Glöckner, 'Johann Sebastian Bach und die Universität Leipzig', *Bach-Jahrbuch*, 94 (2008), 159–201, esp. 191.

zur *Passionsmusik*,³⁷ turns out to represent the pasticcio cantata 'Wer ist der, so von Edom kömmt'. Settings by Graun, Telemann, and Bach were combined with additional chorales and performed under Cunis' direction on successive Sundays in Lent. The only extant copy of the music was most probably written during the 1760s for a performance in a church or a concert in Leipzig.³⁸ Cunis might easily have kept in touch with musicians in Leipzig after he left and therefore would have had the chance to acquire several pieces from the musical centre.

It is not known whether Cunis possessed other works by Bach, although there are two extant textbooks for cantata cycles, which provide some information on the church music in Frankenhausen.³⁹ During Cunis' tenure, cantatas were performed regularly on every Sunday. Neither of the textbooks bears a date, but both mention a performance under the direction of Cunis. As it is not possible to date these prints from the sequence of Sundays and feast days, they may have been used for flexible performance dates unlimited to a specific year. The composer's name only appears in one case: 'Texts for the church music of Mr Gesselt's composition, which are to be performed here in Frankenhausen in the Lower Church by Johann Wilhelm Cunis, Cantor and Director of Music'.⁴⁰ The name Gesselt refers to the Gössel family, living in Upper Lusatia, to which a number of eighteenth-century musicians belonged. The most famous was Johann Heinrich Gössel, cantor in Bautzen from 1740 to 1770,⁴¹ which suggests that he may have been the composer of the cantatas. The title of the second textbook does not give any hint as to its composer: *Words of eternal life, on the basis of the Gospel readings for ordinary Sundays and Feast Days, gleaned from the writings of the prophets and apostles*.⁴² However, a comparison with corresponding sources shows that many of the cantatas performed in the morning services were in fact written by Johann Peter Kellner, cantor in the Thüringen village of Gräfenroda, or by his son, the Kassel organist Johann Christoph, while some of the cantatas for the afternoon services were composed by the organist of Frankenhausen, Johann

³⁷ Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Göttingen, Cod. ms. 8° Philos. 84e Graun 3.

³⁸ Peter Wollny, 'Tennstädt, Leipzig, Naumburg, Halle – Neuerkenntnisse zur Bach-Überlieferung in Mitteldeutschland', *Bach-Jahrbuch*, 88 (2002), 29–60, esp. 46; see also Peter Wollny and Andreas Glöckner (eds.), *Passionskantate 'Wer ist der, so von Edom kömmt' (Pasticcio)* [by C. H. Graun, G. P. Telemann, J. S. Bach, J. C. Altnickol (?), J. Kuhnau (?)], *Denkmäler mitteldeutscher Barockmusik II/1* (Leipzig: Hofmeister, 1997), esp. p. vii; Kirsten Beißwenger, *Johann Sebastian Bachs Notenbibliothek, Catalogus musicus 13* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1992), 89–100.

³⁹ A detailed study of Cunis' collection and musical performances can be found in my dissertation 'Bachs Thomaner als Kirchenmusiker' submitted to Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg in spring 2015.

⁴⁰ 'Texte zur Kirchen-Musik nach Herrn Gesselts Composition, welche allhier zu Frankenhausen in der Unterkirche aufgeführt werden sollen durch Johann Wilhelm Cunis, Cant. und Musikdir', *Historische Bibliothek Rudolstadt*, Ma XI Nr. 113.

⁴¹ Michael Maul, "'Kantatenreform" in Kamenz oder Kantor Gössel contra Pastor Feller: Dokumentation und Interpretation', in Wolfgang Hirschmann and Peter Wollny (eds.), *Wilhelm Friedemann Bach und die protestantische Kirchenkantate nach 1750*, *Forum Mitteldeutsche Barockmusik*, 1 (Beeskow: Ortus, 2012), 27–57, esp. 39.

⁴² 'Worte des ewigen Lebens, welche über die ordentliche Sonn- und Festtägliche Evangelien aus den Schrifften der Propheten und Apostel gesammelt', *Sächsische Landes- und Universitätsbibliothek Dresden, Hist. Sax. H 1040*.

Conrad Wagner and his son Johann Gottlieb. It transpires that for his double cantata cycle Cunis selected and performed compositions by composers from the immediate vicinity, as well as from further afield.⁴³

Besides church music, Johann Wilhelm Cunis played an important role in the public concert scene of Frankenhausen. The *Wöchentliches Frankenhäusisches Intelligenz-Blatt*, a local newspaper published since the 1760s, contains a number of announcements of a *collegium musicum*. These more or less regular concerts were organised by Cunis and the aforementioned Wagner organists. The repertoire contained sacred oratorios as well as instrumental pieces, arias, and *Singspiele*. Table 1 gives an overview of the works performed in those concerts.⁴⁴

Table 1: Works performed by the Frankenhausen *collegium musicum*

Year	Title	Authors
1765	Cantata for the birthday of Prince Johann Friedrich of Schwarzburg-Rudolstadt	m: Johann Conrad Wagner, t: Johann Ludwig Kolbenach
1765	<i>Der Friede Deutschlands</i> , ode	m: Johann Conrad Wagner, t: Johann Ludwig Kolbenach
1765	<i>Die verschenkten Waffen</i> , Singspiel	t: Johann Friedrich Hankel
1765	<i>Der Tod Jesu</i> , passion oratorio	m: Carl Heinrich Graun, t: Carl Wilhelm Ramler
1766	<i>Der Sieg des Landlebens</i>	m: Johann Conrad Wagner, t: Johann Friedrich Hankel
1766	<i>Der Tod Jesu</i> , passion oratorio	m: Carl Heinrich Graun, t: Carl Wilhelm Ramler
1767	passion oratorio	m: Johann Conrad Wagner, t: Balthasar Münter
1768	cantata for the birthday of Prince Friedrich Carl of Schwarzburg-Rudolstadt	m: Johann Conrad Wagner
1768	passion oratorio	m: Johann Conrad Wagner, t: Balthasar Münter
1769	cantata for the birthday of Princess Sophie Henriette of Schwarzburg-Rudolstadt	m: Johann Gottlieb Wagner
1769	<i>Der Tod Jesu</i> , passion oratorio	m: Carl Heinrich Graun, t: Carl Wilhelm Ramler
1777	<i>Die Liebe auf dem Lande</i> , Singspiel	m: Johann Adam Hiller, t: Christian Felix Weiße
1781	oratorio	m: Gottfried August Homilius, t: Ernst August Buschmann
1784	<i>Saul oder die Gewalt der Musik</i>	m: Johann Heinrich Rolle, t: Johann Samuel Patzke
1787	<i>Davids Sieg im Eichthale</i>	m: Johann Heinrich Rolle
1788	<i>Lazarus oder die Feyer der Auferstehung</i>	m: Johann Heinrich Rolle
1791	<i>Das Weltgericht</i>	m: Johann Christoph Kühnau

Note: m: music; t: text.

During the 1760s, the works were created by local poets and composers, especially by Johann Conrad Wagner. The poetry was mostly by Johann Ludwig Kolbenach, the so-called 'Regierungsakzisiert' of Frankenhausen, and Johann

⁴³ A 'double' cantata cycle here refers to a cantata cycle containing cantatas for both morning and afternoon Sunday services.

⁴⁴ After the analysis in Felicitas Marwinski, 'Musik, das edelste Vergnügen...': vom Collegium musicum zu Kantor Bischoffs Musikfesten; Musikkultur in Frankenhausen am Ende des 18. und zu Anfang des 19. Jahrhunderts (Weimar: Eigenverlag, 2010), 1–16.

Friedrich Hankel, the Deputy Headmaster, or *Conrector*, of the school. Together they created cantatas and other genres on secular topics, often relating to local subjects. The only, but remarkable, exception is Graun's *Der Tod Jesu*, which was performed three times. After the 1770s the repertoire of the *collegium musicum* changed fundamentally to established composers, such as Rolle, Homilius, Hiller, and Kühnau. Considering their spheres of activity—Magdeburg, Dresden, Leipzig, and Berlin—it becomes clear that the Frankenhausen concerts widened their geographic background and moved away from their provinciality.

Cunis himself may never have composed music; at least there is no evidence to prove it. It seems he contributed to the concerts as a *Musikdirektor* in the literal sense of the word, that is, he concentrated on conducting and organising. This might be important, because Cunis had been involved in the Leipzig concert scene during his student days. In 1746, still attending St Thomas School, his name appears among the orchestra of the *Großes Concert*, the later *Gewandhauskonzerte*.⁴⁵ It is not hard to imagine that Cunis kept in contact with musicians from Leipzig, and took advantage of them when it came to establishing his own concert series as a *Musikdirektor* in Frankenhausen.

A similar development of public concerts can be observed in Auerbach, a small town about 100 kilometres south of Leipzig. Here the former *Thomaner* Gabriel Gottlieb Tröger held the traditionally combined posts of rector and cantor. Tröger was Bach's student at the St Thomas School from 1733 to 1739,⁴⁶ when he enrolled at Leipzig University.⁴⁷ In 1750 he became the *substitutus* and eight years later the successor of his father in Auerbach.⁴⁸ When Tröger died in 1778, local authorities drew up an inventory that accurately lists his estate, including his library. Unfortunately, detailed information on his music is missing. Just four cantata cycles 'which cannot be valued at the moment' are mentioned without any hint of the composers.⁴⁹

However, there is a more detailed inventory from the town of Auerbach. The organist Christian August Faust died in 1794 and left a music collection of 155 items.⁵⁰ Surprisingly little of this music is either genuine church music or organ music. The sections 'Orgel-Bücher' and 'Kirchen-Stücke' contain only eleven items each, two of which are by J. S. Bach. Faust owned Bach's *Canonische Veränderungen über Vom Himmel hoch da komm ich her* (BWV 769), printed in 1748, and two volumes of 'Bachs Orgelstücke' in manuscript.⁵¹ We do not know how Faust acquired these pieces, nor where they went after his death, but the example shows that Bach's music was still held in high esteem at the end of the eighteenth century.

⁴⁵ Alfred Dörffel, *Geschichte der Gewandhausconcerte zu Leipzig vom 25. November 1781 bis 25. November 1881* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1884), 6.

⁴⁶ D-LEsa, Thomasschule Nr. 483, fol. 45v.

⁴⁷ Erler, *Die jüngere Matrikel der Universität Leipzig*, 100 ('Froeger').

⁴⁸ Pfarrarchiv Auerbach, Nr. 5.

⁴⁹ Pfarrarchiv Auerbach, Nr. 73, fols. 16–23, esp. fol. 21v: 'hierüber vier Jahr Gänge Kirchen-Musicalien, die zur Zeit nicht *taxiret* werden können.'

⁵⁰ Pfarrarchiv Auerbach, Nr. 85, fols. 33–42.

⁵¹ Pfarrarchiv Auerbach, Nr. 85, fol. 33v.

By far the largest part of Faust's collection is instrumental and ensemble music. The inventory includes ten entries containing keyboard concertos, sixteen entries of mixed chamber trios, fifteen entries of mixed quartets, and forty entries naming symphonies, not to mention music of other genres. The music of Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, Joseph Haydn, and Johann Baptist Vanhal dominates the repertoire. It seems unlikely that the main purpose of this music was for use in church services, although several single movements may well have been used there. The most common occasion for performing this symphonic and chamber repertoire was the public concert. The inventory therefore suggests that there may have been a *collegium musicum* that performed regularly in Auerbach, led by a professional musician such as the organist.⁵²

To date, the activities of a *collegium musicum* in Auerbach has escaped the notice of scholarship. While the repertoire here concentrated on instrumental music, the aforementioned concert series in Frankenhausen also included oratorios and larger-scale *Singspiele*. The examples of Auerbach and Frankenhausen provide an insight into the complex development of public concert life. They also show how the long-established posts of cantor and organist, little changed since the Reformation, widened their profiles over the course of the eighteenth century. Church musicians were no longer limited to church music, and made an active contribution to civil music. The research on Bach's students has led to rural areas, where they can be found as schoolmasters in villages, and yet may have continued to perform sophisticated music.

Following the lives of Bach's students, our project has provided a broad picture of German music life. The insights have created a more comprehensive understanding of a period, which was thought of having been in constant decline. The close study of the *Thomaner* has shed new light on this transformation process, with Bach's name cropping up here and there among the sources, sometimes when a student names his teacher in a letter of application in order to improve his chances, sometimes when Bach's music is mentioned. All these are important clues to Bach's influence as a teacher and to the reception of his music after his death. The *Thomaner* however is just one of many groups that deserve study. There are many more, including those who corresponded with Bach, met him in person, were instructed by him, or who took lessons on a private basis — some of these were particularly close to the master. Following their documentary trails may lead to new and unexpected clues about Bach and his music.

⁵² A discussion of the Auerbach repertoire will also be given in my dissertation (note 39 above).