Introduction

Since Nottebohm’s pioneering edition of Beethoven’s studies in composition with Haydn, Albrechtsberger, and Salieri,¹ pedagogical and theoretical documents of prominent composers have generated increasing interest in scholarly circles. Attention has centered principally on several significant sources from the eighteenth century. While we know little about Bach’s method of instruction, we do have a series of exercises which Handel devised for Princess Anne.² Mozart’s tutelage of Barbara Ployer and Thomas Attwood is copiously recorded in manuscripts, in the latter case by a substantial volume transmitting a veritable compendium of exercises in figured bass, species counterpoint, and free composition. As for Haydn, three important sources have survived: the master’s annotated copy of Fux’s Gradus ad Parnassum (faithfully transcribed from the lost original by C. F. Pohl); a summary of Fuxian principles prepared by Haydn in 1789; and the young Beethoven’s exercises in species counterpoint with corrections in Haydn’s hand.³

Comparable materials from the nineteenth century are not as plentiful. Two manuscripts of César Franck’s contrapuntal exercises, prepared at the Paris Conservatoire for Antoine Reicha and Henri Berton, were described by Julien Tiersot in 1922; Bruckner’s harmony and counterpoint methods, designed for his lectures at the University of Vienna in the 1870s and summarizing his own training with Simon Sechter, appeared in 1950.⁴ More recently, Schubert’s exercises in species counterpoint and fugue for Salieri and Sechter have attracted attention; and Engelbert Humperdinck’s student exercises with Josef Rheinberger have appeared in a critical edition.⁵ But we know little about Schumann’s work with Heinrich Dorn in Leipzig, Berlioz’s or Liszt’s study with Reicha in Paris, Chopin’s lessons with Elsner in Warsaw, or Brahms’ student days in Hamburg. The training of these and other composers cannot be investigated thoroughly for want of suitable documentation.

1. Nottebohm, Beethoven’s Studien 1.
3. Lach, W. A. Mozart als Theoretiker; Mozart, Thomas Attwood’s Theorie- und Kompositionstudi en; Mann, ‘Haydn as Student and Critic of Fux’, ‘Haydn’s Elementarbuch’, and ‘Beethoven’s Contrapuntal Studies with Haydn’.

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Fortunately, this is not the case with Mendelssohn. A bound volume in the Margaret Deneke Mendelssohn Collection at the Bodleian Library, Oxford (shelfmark C. 43), preserves a substantial number of his composition exercises with Carl Friedrich Zelter. Comprising some seventy folios, the volume can be dated roughly from September, 1819, to January, 1821; it represents one of the composer's earliest surviving musical autographs. It is arranged in more or less distinct sections organized around thoroughbass, chorale, invertible counterpoint, and canon and fugue in two and three parts. The exercise book also includes several unknown compositions, including solo piano works and duets for violin and piano, which rank among Mendelssohn's earliest compositions. An inventory of the workbook and a transcription of its contents appear in Part II.

Mendelssohn's workbook is a significant new source of information about Zelter, whose composition method is revealed in detail by the arrangement of the manuscript – and by several colorful comments in the elder musician's gruff handwriting scattered throughout the exercises. Zelter's course of instruction, in turn, reflects a conservative theoretical tradition extending back to J. S. Bach. Zelter himself had been trained by Carl Friedrich Christian Fasch and Johann Philipp Kirnberger, two eighteenth-century Berlin musicians who were contemporaries of C. P. E. Bach. Kirnberger and C. P. E. Bach were both taught, of course, by Johann Sebastian. Kirnberger left what he considered to be a summary of the master's teaching in his magnum opus, Die Kunst des reinen Satzes in der Musik (1771-1779). A more or less direct pedagogical line, therefore, may be drawn from Bach through C. P. E. Bach, Kirnberger, and Fasch, to Zelter, and thence to Mendelssohn:

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J. S. Bach
(1685-1750)
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C. P. E. Bach
(1714-1788)  J. P. Kirnberger
(1721-1783)  C. F. C. Fasch
(1736-1800)
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C. F. Zelter
(1758-1832)
|
Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy
(1809-1847)
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The Deneke MS is thus a new source documenting part of the important theoretical tradition that stems from eighteenth-century Berlin. This tradition played a significant role in Mendelssohn's development – it instilled in him a respect for music of the past; and, if it encouraged in him a decidedly conservative tempera-
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Mendelssohn’s early and rapid rise to musical pre-eminence was by any reckoning astonishing. In September, 1835, at the age of twenty-six, he arrived in Leipzig to assume the directorship of the Gewandhaus Orchestra, an appointment which elicited warm applause from Robert Schumann, who promptly assigned him the honorary sobriquet ‘F. Meritis’. Schumann held his distinguished colleague in considerable awe, and with good reason. By the time of the appointment, Mendelssohn enjoyed an international reputation secured by several important works, including his first symphony for full orchestra, the Octet, two string quartets, several romantic concert overtures (A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Meeresstille und glückliche Fahrt, Die Hebriden, and Die schöne Melusine among them), and two sets of Lieder ohne Worte representing a novel type of piano miniature. Schumann, by contrast, had limited his serious composition almost exclusively to piano music; he was still several years away from the productive Liedjahr of 1840, and from the fruitful turn to symphonic and chamber works soon thereafter. As the new editor of the Neue Zeitschrift für Musik Schumann would have concurred, no doubt, with an earlier estimation of Mendelssohn, voiced by Berlioz in 1831, as one who possessed ‘une des capacités musicales les plus hautes de l’époque’. In 1835 Schumann could only publicly marvel at Mendelssohn’s creative versatility and privately envy his superior musical education.

This last issue emerged three years later in a letter Schumann wrote to Clara Wieck, in which he attributed Mendelssohn’s early musical maturation to his prosperous family circumstances. Though Schumann’s remark, perhaps, was prompted by resentment, it had some justification. As the grandson of the noted Enlightenment philosopher Moses Mendelssohn and the son of a well-to-do banker Abraham Mendelssohn Bartholdy, young Felix was exposed to outstanding literary and musical figures of the day. Relatives included on his father’s side Dorothea Veit, the wife of Friedrich von Schlegel, co-founder of the Jena school of romanticism; and on his mother’s side Sarah Levy, a patroness of C. P. E. Bach and former pupil of Wilhelm Friedemann Bach. His composition teacher, Carl Friedrich Zelter, was the musical adviser and confidant of Goethe. Moreover, Mendelssohn studied piano with several fashionable virtuosi, among them Marie Bigot (an acquaintance of Haydn and Beethoven), Ludwig Berger (a former pupil of Clementi), Hummel, and Moscheles, in addition to following an ambitious schedule of academic disciplines with private tutors. As an adolescent he attended lectures of Hegel, Humboldt, and others at the University of Berlin, newly founded by Frederick William III in 1810. Schumann’s student experiences, on

8. Mendelssohn’s notes for lectures of the geographer Karl Ritter are preserved at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, in two pamphlets entitled ‘Geographie von Europa von Carl Ritter’ and dated May-August, 1827. Several earlier, undated notebooks with outlines of English and European history, algebra, and trigonometry are also at Oxford.
the other hand, could not have been more dissimilar. Sent against his will to study
law in Leipzig, he was denied the opportunity to pursue composition systemati-
cally (Schumann was self-taught, apart from a few lessons in figured bass and
rudimentary counterpoint from Heinrich Dorn). One can well appreciate the
frustration he expressed to Clara in the letter of 1838.

Traces of Schumann's suspicions have surfaced in more recent times and have
conditioned modern evaluations of Mendelssohn's musical background. Often
Mendelssohn's mature music is viewed as an overly sentimental expression of
Restoration Germany. It is thought that the prosperous circumstances of Mendels-
sohn's youth prevented his developing the depth or artistic cogency of Beethoven or
Schumann. Mendelssohn's astonishing precocity and rapid development have
often been credited to his auspicious surroundings. It is not too difficult to dis-
cover why. Much of our knowledge about Mendelssohn's childhood and student
years in Berlin has been handed down to us by Hensel, Devrient, A. B. Marx,
Hiller, Moscheles, Droysen, Klingemann, and Schumann, whose accounts began
to accumulate after the composer's death in 1847. Without exception these
memorial tributes idolize Mendelssohn, and nowhere does their unabashed adula-
tion appear as fervently as in their discussion of Mendelssohn's youth, which is
depicted in glowing tones. Moreover, Mendelssohn's letters are often cited in these
accounts in an expurgated form, as if to remove indiscreet suggestions of personal
iniquity or artistic indisposition.

Not only are the early eulogies unreliable; the collected edition of Mendels-
sohn's music is alarmingly incomplete, notably in respect of his early years. The
composer once remarked to Schumann that he had published only one fifth of his
music; as we know today, the bulk of the unprinted work includes juvenilia and
student compositions that he passed over or deliberately rejected (among which
are several Singspiele, and various categories of instrumental and sacred choral
music). Clearly the unavailability of the student works has hampered a critical
assessment of Mendelssohn's early musical development. Indeed, the few student
works which Mendelssohn did release are largely responsible for the misconception
that the young composer, nurtured in rich cultural surroundings, emerged, much
like Pallas Athena, with intellectual instincts intact, and without a protracted or
intense study of composition: these works include the three piano quartets, Opp.
1-3, the Octet and the Midsummer Night's Dream overture.

This leads us to another area of misinformation: Mendelssohn's training under
Zelter. The image of this teacher-student relationship which has endured is one
largely dominated by Mendelssohn's precocity. A prime casualty of this view is
Zelter. He is generally accepted as an unbending, though simple-minded, task-
master - much like the wary Schulmeister Kinderschreck in Mendelssohn's Die

10. This gap is slowly narrowing with the appearance of the new Leipzig Mendelssohn edition: the string
sinfonie, the Singspiel Die beiden Pädagogen, the Te Deum of 1826, and several early concerti have been
issued.
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beiden Pädagogen\textsuperscript{11} for whom 'wo die Fuchtel nur regiert, da wird alles ausgeführt'. Zelter sometimes emerges as a bystander who observed his student's rapid development without seriously contributing to it or altering its course. According to a less charitable view, Zelter actually exerted a negative influence. Thus we read, somewhat out of context, about his disapproval of Mendelssohn's improvisations before Goethe in 1821; and, according to Devrient, his antipathy bordering on resistance to Mendelssohn's proposed revival of the St Matthew Passion in 1829.\textsuperscript{12} Finally, in 1824 Zelter admitted Mendelssohn to the pantheon of Bach, Mozart, and Haydn, as if to suggest that the Meisterschüler at the age of fifteen had already exhausted the teacher's resources. It is a primary aim of this study to re-examine Mendelssohn's musical education in the light of his student workbook and to discuss in more detail the course of his musical development from 1819 to 1821.

Berlin and the Bach tradition

Throughout his life Mendelssohn exploited any number of opportunities to champion the music of Bach. During his visit in 1825 to Paris, for example, he somewhat brazenly proselytized for German music, as we learn from the following anecdote recorded for his sister Fanny:

You say I should try and convert the people here, and teach Onslow and Reicha to love Beethoven and Sebastian Bach. That is just what I am endeavouring to do. But remember, my dear child, that these people do not know a single note of 'Fidelio', and believe Bach to be a mere old-fashioned wig stuffed with learning. The other day, at the request of Kalkbrenner, I played the organ preludes in E minor and A minor. My audience pronounced them both 'wonderfully pretty', and one of them remarked that the beginning of the prelude in A minor was very much like a favourite duet in an opera by Monsigny. Anybody might have knocked me down with a feather.\textsuperscript{13}

The view of Bach as an old pedant stuffed with too much learning was not due to Parisian ignorance alone, for it exemplified a commonly held opinion, widespread even in Germany. Already in Bach's lifetime a reaction had set in against the learned contrapuntal style, or \textit{hohe Schreibart}, which more and more was interpreted as overwrought and, consequently, ungainly; in its place, the new music of the galant age substituted melodic simplicity and harmonic clarity. Thus, Johann Adolph Scheibe, in his well-known attack on Bach published in 1737, had labeled that composer's music as confused, turgid, and even unnatural.\textsuperscript{14} Scheibe particularly found fault with Bach's precise and profuse notation of ornaments which cluttered (or worse, concealed) the essential melodic material.

Such sentiments, of course, were quickly countered by a knowledgeable sup-

\textsuperscript{11} Adapted from Scribe's delightful comedy of 1817, \textit{Les deux précepteurs, ou Asinus asinum fricat}.

\textsuperscript{12} Karl Mendelssohn Bartholdy, \textit{Goethe and Mendelssohn}, pp. 11-12; Devrient, \textit{Recollections}, pp. 45-55.

\textsuperscript{13} Hensel, \textit{The Mendelssohn Family} I, p. 127 (Hensel's faulty text has been corrected by a comparison with the original letter, now in NYPL). The two organ preludes were probably BWV 533 and 545; Mendelssohn himself copied the former on December 9, 1822 (MN II).

\textsuperscript{14} Scheibe, \textit{Critischer Musikus} VI, p. 62.
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porter of Bach, L. C. Mizler; but during that time of stylistic change Bach’s music for the most part was soon forgotten. Musical erudition was now less valued than musical enlightenment. No less a master than Joseph Haydn, after completing a complex, chromatic passage in the slow movement of his Symphony No. 42 of 1771, rejected it for a simpler solution, noting in the margin of the autograph: ‘This was written for ears too learned’. Musical learning was not, evidently, quite socially acceptable – it was to be seen, but not heard.

Mendelssohn’s tirade against the Parisian indifference to the music of Bach betrays, in some sense, a provincial attitude that could have been fostered only in a few musical centers. One was Berlin, a bastion of conservatism, where the music of the master was revered and cultivated. Berlin was the home for many years of C. P. E. Bach and W. F. Bach; there, also, Bach’s legacy as a teacher was perpetuated and his music preserved. At the Singakademie, an institution founded by Fasch in 1791 and directed after his death in 1800 by Zelter, new impetus was given to the rehearsal and performance of older music, especially Bach’s. Due to the zealous efforts of these men, a veritable storehouse of Bach’s music in autograph and manuscript sources quickly accumulated. Berlin was also a vibrant center of theoretical study and debate, to some extent more famous for its ‘preoccupation with words about music . . . than with music itself’.15 The acrimonious disputes between Kirnberger and Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg, both theorists in the thoroughbass tradition (the former reactionary in outlook, the latter favorably disposed toward the new theories of Rameau), impelled the first attempt to synthesize in theoretical language the nature of Bach’s teaching.

These two traditions in Berlin – one concerned with the performance of Bach’s music, the other the discussion of thorny theoretical issues – greatly affected the quality of musical life in Berlin, and strongly determined the course of Mendelssohn’s musical upbringing. It is in these traditions of Berlin, then, that the roots of Mendelssohn’s training lay.

In the Gedanken über die verschiedenen Leharten in der Komposition, als Vorbereitung zur Fugenkenntniss, a short pamphlet published in 1782, Kirnberger praised unconditionally the music of Bach, but noted: ‘It is regrettable that this great man never wrote any theoretical work about music, and that his teachings have come to posterity only through his pupils’.16 Though not entirely accurate (Bach did write down a few rudiments of figured bass), such a comment surely fortified Kirnberger’s enviable position as a pupil of Bach and lent considerable authority to his judgments as a music theorist.

One might well inquire, in view of Kirnberger’s statement, as to the nature of Bach’s theoretical teachings. Some evidence is afforded by C. P. E. Bach, who wrote a letter to Forkel entitled ‘In Answer to Questions about Bach’. In the ninth section of this frequently cited document he briefly described Bach’s teaching:

In composition he started his pupils right in with what was practical, and omitted all the

15. Helm, Music at the Court of Frederick the Great, p. 223.
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dry species of counterpoint that are given in Fux and others. His pupils had to begin their studies by learning pure four-part thorough bass. From this he went to chorales; first he added the basses to himself, and they had to invent the alto and tenor. Then he taught them to devise the basses themselves. He particularly insisted on the writing out of the thorough bass in parts. In teaching fugues, he began with two-part ones, and so on.\(^\text{17}\)

As one might expect, the general outline of this method, with its progression from figured bass to chorale and counterpoint, remained the standard approach to composition in Berlin during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It was appropriated by Kirnberger; it represented the essence of Zelter’s approach; and consequently it formed the core of Mendelssohn’s early training in 1819-1821.

C. P. E. Bach’s comments about his father’s teaching were incorporated into Forkel’s monograph Über Johann Sebastian Bachs Leben, Kunst, und Kunstwerke, which, published in 1802, was the first significant biographical study of the master. On several occasions during the previous year Forkel had consulted Zelter, for whom he provided a copy of the new essay. Zelter’s Handexemplar, now in the Houghton Rare Book Library of Harvard University,\(^\text{18}\) is extensively annotated with marginalia in his hand, illuminating Forkel’s text. In the chapter entitled ‘Bach als Lehrer’, for example, Forkel assimilated C. P. E. Bach’s comments cited above but added this observation about Bach’s chorale instruction, not to Zelter’s satisfaction: ‘He insisted on correct harmony and on each part having a real melodic line . . . The inner parts of his four-part Hymn-tunes are so smooth and melodiou[s] that often they might be taken for the melody.’\(^\text{19}\)

In his copy Zelter underlined selected words from this passage and, in his commentary, extended Forkel’s conception of the chorale with the question:

And is that something different than counterpoint? Above all Bach is to be esteemed and praised for the contrapuntal element, for Bach’s unique genius was expressed in counterpoint.

Forkel did not emphasize what was obvious to Zelter – that an exercise in four-part chorale is a contrapuntal as well as a harmonic exercise. The study of chorale, he maintained, should be regarded as a crucial discipline between thorough bass and fugue, a transitional stage in Bach’s teaching between the homophonic and the strict, contrapuntal styles.

A more systematic attempt to describe Bach’s teaching method was undertaken by Kirnberger, who aspired to produce a formal theoretical system illustrative of Bach’s teaching. At least, as noted earlier, this was the theorist’s announced intention; and his treatise Die Kunst des reinen Satzes in der Musik was widely accepted as having attained that goal. Forkel, for one, had this to say: ‘Those who would acquaint themselves with Bach’s method of teaching composition will find

\(^\text{17}\) Trans. in David and Mendel, eds., The Bach Reader, p. 279.

\(^\text{18}\) Described in Jacobi, ‘C. F. Zelter’s kritische Beleuchtung’.

\(^\text{19}\) Forkel, Johann Sebastian Bach, trans. Terry, pp. 95-6.
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it fully set forth in Kirnberger’s “Correct Art of Composition”.\(^{20}\) Fasch and Zelter also respected Kirnberger’s contribution. Fasch, in fact, referred the young Zelter to Kirnberger for instruction; years later, in his correspondence with Goethe, Zelter still mentioned Kirnberger with admiration. Zelter’s own teaching derived considerable strength from *Die Kunst des reinen Satzes*, and Mendelssohn’s workbook establishes clearly that the treatise was still held in high esteem in Berlin several decades after its first appearance in the 1770s.

What were the basic theoretical tenets of Kirnberger, this self-proclaimed interpreter of Bach? They can be best understood, perhaps, through a comparison with those of Rameau, which incited a serious polemic between Marpurg and Kirnberger in Berlin.\(^{21}\) Both Kirnberger and Marpurg counted themselves among the traditional group of figured-bass theorists; but Rameau’s new and radical concepts led to much confusion and disagreement amongst professional teachers. Rameau perceived chords as relatively independent, vertical sonorities having their basis in observable acoustical phenomena. Both Kirnberger and Marpurg were affected by this new, rationalistic approach to music theory. Though Marpurg came to be an avowed apologist for Rameau’s thought, Kirnberger managed to reconcile certain features of the Frenchman’s work with principles of voice leading favored by traditional practitioners of thoroughbass.

Kirnberger and Rameau proposed similar theoretical maxims but derived strangely different meanings. Common to the views of both theorists was the recognition of the triad and dominant-seventh chord as the basic tonal materials. Other harmonic complexes, such as the chords of the ninth or eleventh, could be produced, according to Rameau, from the dominant seventh by means of subposition or by the arbitrary addition of a third or fifth below the root. For Kirnberger, however, these dissonances were not independent entities but harmonic structures regulated by specific musical contexts. Rameau’s theory rested upon a scientific explanation for each chord; for Kirnberger, ‘musical rather than acoustical validation was the decisive factor in determining the meaning of a chord’.\(^{22}\) Kirnberger’s system constructed a hierarchy of tonal relationships dividing dissonances into several classes. The ‘essential’ dissonance, or seventh of the dominant-seventh chord, he termed *wesentlich*. Other dissonances he classified as passing tones and suspensions (grouped under *zufällige Dissonanzen*), or unauthentic sevenths, such as those of the diminished-seventh chords (*unwesentliche Dissonanzen*). These miscellaneous, inessential dissonances were construed to be ancillary to the consonant triad or the ‘essential’, dissonant dominant-seventh chord: that is, their ‘tonal meaning’ was inevitably usurped by one of these two sonorities.

Rameau had introduced as an important new analytic tool the fundamental bass (*basse fondamentale*), by means of which he claimed to discover the under-

\(^{21}\) Summarized in Mekel, ‘The Harmonic Theories of Kirnberger and Marpurg’.
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lying roots of successive harmonies. Kirnberger, too, adopted the fundamental bass (Grundbass) but subjected it to a series of practical rules more in keeping with his preferred explanations of harmonic events. In his hands, the fundamental bass became a highly efficient device with which one could readily reduce a passage, thereby revealing its primary harmonic components. To demonstrate the analytic utility of the Grundbass, Kirnberger tediously produced (with the aid of his pupil Johann Abraham Schulz) the fundamental basses of several works, including one of his own fugues and the Fugue in B minor from the first volume of the Well-Tempered Clavier.

Kirnberger’s theories, incorporating an admixture of conservative and innovative features, project one of the last imposing statements of the figured-bass tradition. With the exception of treatises by Daniel Gottlob Türk (Anweisung zum Generalbaßspielen, 1800) and Augustus Frederic Christopher Kollmann (A Practical Guide to Thorough-Bass, 1801), Kirnberger’s writings were not as influential internationally as one might expect. They did, however, enjoy a posthumous reputation in Berlin in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and, in particular, they found a sympathetic reader in Zelter. Even as late as 1819 and 1820, while Gottfried Weber was popularizing the Roman numeral as a novel aid for the identification of chords – an aid which eventually supplanted the fundamental bass – Zelter was still using the Kirnbergerian Grundbass in Mendelssohn’s exercises. From Kirnberger, Zelter borrowed the theoretical basis for much of Mendelssohn’s training in composition.

While Kirnberger was acclaimed more as a theorist than a composer, his associate at the court of Frederick the Great and principal teacher of Zelter, C. F. C. Fasch, was recognized in his day more as a composer. Today, most of Fasch’s music remains unknown. Indeed, our knowledge of this neglected figure is greatly indebted to a short biographical pamphlet prepared by Zelter, which, printed in 1801, is still the standard source for information about the musician. According to Zelter, Fasch praised Kirnberger’s theoretical work highly: ‘Moreover Fasch esteemed Kirnberger very much on account of his great service for the art of composition, the musical fundamental bass, and tuning’. Not surprisingly, Kirnberger exercised a profound influence on Fasch’s own teaching, described in some detail in Zelter’s autobiography:

At first he allowed me to compose according to my inclination. Then we pursued a systematic method, which I preferred more and more as the work became easier. For a long while I wrote four-part chorales before turning to five-part ones. We next progressed to counterpoint and canon, which gave me intense joy. Eventually we did three-part

23. Though in Vienna Beethoven was aware of them; see Kramer, ‘Notes to Beethoven’s Education’. Kollmann was active in England where he popularized Kirnberger’s theories.
24. Zelter, for one, protested in his copy of Forkel: ‘auch seine Compositionen sind keineswegs zu schelten. Wenn sie keine Originalien sind, so sind sie fließend, auch mutter, und geben einen hübschen Mittelstil zu erkennen’ (‘But one should certainly not reproach his compositions. Even if they do not display originality, they are still fluent and vigorous, and they represent a charming middle style’).
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composition . . . From here I turned to the so-called character piece and the French dances, and with that the method per se was finished and the fugue begun, which I postponed until I might be more prepared for it.26

Although Zelter failed to mention thoroughbass in his list of subjects, there can be little doubt that he was well tutored in it before he proceeded to the study of chorale. The main points of his description resemble on several counts the order of topics in Kirnberger's Kunst. The consideration of four-part chorale as the norm, and of five-part and three-part writing as special, deferred cases, is attributable to Kirnberger: a discussion of four-part chorale and then five- and even six-part writing occurs in Die Kunst. Kirnberger justified this kind of progression in this manner: 'It is best if one begins with four-part writing, since it is not really possible to set two or three parts completely until one can do it in four parts'.27 From what the evidence reveals, Fasch's treatment of counterpoint also bears comparison to Kirnberger's. In the second part of Die Kunst the theorist began with two-part invertible counterpoint followed by canon. Had he completed a Dritter Theil, he would have concluded most likely with fugue as the culmination of theory, as did Fasch. Zelter was to observe a very similar sequence of steps several decades later when he was teaching Mendelssohn.

Unlike Kirnberger, Fasch did not commit his didactic principles to paper. He is remembered today chiefly as a performer and collector of Bach's music. In this regard, his main achievement was the founding of the Berliner Singakademie. Beginning modestly in 1791 as 'eine Art von Chor',28 the society had rapidly expanded by the end of the century to a formidable force of 148 members. Fasch mainly devoted himself to the revival of the sacred music of the past and especially to that of J. S. Bach, which at that time was still widely unknown. Fasch first considered the most conservative of Bach's sacred works, the motets, and in 1794 thoroughly rehearsed Komm, Jesu, komm, Fürchte dich nicht, and Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied.29

Fasch's successor, Zelter, further explored the riches of Bach's music. For some time he continued to pore over the motets; even when Mendelssohn began his study of thoroughbass in 1819 with Zelter, these works were still being rehearsed and performed. But Zelter also undertook larger-scale projects, including parts of the B minor Mass and St John Passion; the latter, in fact, was rehearsed nearly fifteen years before Mendelssohn's celebrated revival of the St Matthew Passion in 1829.

Fasch had limited the repertoire of the Singakademie exclusively to sacred vocal music; Zelter eventually established in 1807 the Rapienschule, which provided an outlet for performances of older instrumental music. An active member of this organization was Sarah Levy, Mendelssohn's great-aunt. Levy eventually became