

The Music of Johann Rudolph Ahle:

Editorial and Performance Issues Surrounding the 1658 Neu-Gepflanzter Thüringischer Lustgarten

Thesis

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Early Music – Singing

3071456

February 11, 2018

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Presentation: March 27, 2018, 10:15 AM, Studio 1

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Introduction

Yes, but...why Ahle?!

In 2010, the music library at the University of British Columbia was a separate entity from the main library. Located on the fourth floor of the music building (built in the late 1960's), the library was divided into two sections - a main room with study tables and all the circulating books and music, and in a secret room behind the desk, which was technically open stacks, filled with all the collected works, and a long dated copy of Heyer's *Historical Sets, Collected Editions, and Monuments of Music* screwed into the wall. It was dark, dusty, and largely deserted; certainly no singers dared enter.

I however, did. I had discovered a love for early music, and had also discovered that this room held a wealth of music long forgotten, so in searching for repertoire to sing, I found myself paging through volumes of *Denkmäler deutscher Tonkunst* (DDT). Completely unaware of what a critical commentary was, let alone knowing how to evaluate it, I photocopied a small sacred concerto for bass and two violins from the collection, and performed it in my third year recital. As it happened, I had found the fifth volume of DDT; the one devoted to the works of Johann Rudolph Ahle, edited in 1901 by Johannes Wolf. I thought it was a fantastic piece. The next year, I went back to the same volume, but I found that the majority of pieces were in clefs I didn't know how to read, so I started looking harder for more Ahle. I was able to track down an edition of a small sacred concerto for bass and four trombones, edited by Howard Wiener. The edition was well-edited, clear, included facsimiles and parts - I successfully performed the piece on my senior recital in 2012.

The more time I spent in the world of Early Music, however, the more I

learned about editions, and how rare good editions such as Wiener's were. As I explored more music from the German baroque, I continued to come up against poor editions— either recently published but badly edited, or archaic editions of the same generation as DDT. I also discovered that I was able to find precious little on Ahle, and very few editions of his music. I tracked down a copy of Markus Rathey's 1999 tome on Ahle - *Johann Rudolph Ahle, 1625-1673: Lebensweg und Schaffen* - which contains a catalog of Ahle's works.¹ I discovered that both of the pieces I've performed came from his *Neugepflanzter thüringischer Lustgarten, ander theil* (Lustgarten II, 1658), one of four volumes which Ahle published between 1657 and 1665. Rathey also catalogued all the edited editions of Ahle's works (as of 1999), and while I could see there were several more works that would suit my voice and be interesting to perform, they weren't edited, or accessible.

After a few years being distracted by other projects, I came back to Ahle in 2015. I was able to get a facsimile edition of all the partbooks to Ahle's 1658 collection through inter-library loans, and I began to edit pieces from the collection. The wonderful thing about working with Ahle, I found, was that I had a totally clean slate to work with. Most of the works had never been edited, and most editions of his works that do exist were not worth emulating. I did a final edition of one of his solo pieces for voice and continuo, and sang it for my master's entrance exam at the Royal Conservatoire, and I proposed that my master's research be based on the editing of the entire collection. My stated objective, in addition to simply learning more about the music, was to find a way

¹ Markus Rathey, *Johann Rudolph Ahle, 1625-1673: Lebensweg und Schaffen* (Eisenach: Verlag der Musikalienhandlung Karl Dieter Wagner, 1999).

to create a critical edition that would satisfy both scholars and performers.

So I began to transcribe. Philip Brett writes: “editing has been regarded in some academic circles as a marginal activity, requiring ingenuity and patience but rarely engaging the full force of the intellect.”² I think in the beginning, I agreed with the members of the circles to which Brett referred. I had Sibelius, late seventeenth century moveable-type prints aren’t so hard to read, how hard can this be? In the summer of 2016, I used five of my editions of his larger scale pieces for a church service – directing a twenty-five member semi-professional church choir, professional soloists, and six professional instrumentalists, including trombonists. Perhaps the deck was stacked against me from the beginning – how do you prepare editions for a group of people with such diverse backgrounds?³ Fortunately for me, everyone was very patient, and I got feedback, particularly from those with a background in early music, on how to improve.

I began to establish my editorial parameters – trying to make my editions serviceable to as many constituencies as possible. Once the first drafts were done, it became clear that I would need to examine more sources – thus far I had relied on a facsimile edition of prints in the collection of the Biblioteka Jagiellońska in Kraków. In the spring of 2017, I visited two archives in Thuringia – the Marienbibliothek in Halle, and the Stadtarchiv in Mühlhausen. I studied the prints of Ahle’s collections, and saw the spaces that Ahle worked in and

² Philip Brett, “Text, Context, and the Early Music Editor” in *Authenticity and Early Music*, ed. Nicholas Kenyon (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 83.

³ This particular choir held singers ranging from people who only learned to read music from hymnals, to a member who studied singing with Max van Egmond, to a member who did a master’s degree in musicology on the works of Dufay in Bologna Q15.

presumably where the works were performed. Concurrently, I continued to explore Ahle's music as deeply as I could – investigating his use of texts, chorales, instruments, and discovering as much as I could about the musical climate he lived in. With more information, more sources, and more experience, I continued to adapt my editions, and prepared them for performances in Vancouver and Utrecht in the summer of 2017.

The results of these performances are far superior to the previous summers, and the feedback on the editions was much better as well. In that respect, I met my end goal. My editions were serviceable, and pleasing to a group of people ranging from some singers who had never sung early music before, to trombonists who studied with Bruce Dickey and Charles Toet – and one trombonist who is, in fact, a musicologist with scores published by A-R Editions.

But where did this get me? There were two questions to answer: firstly, did I arrive at Austrian editor Rudolf von Ficker's ideal place, "an edition that satisfies both needs, namely to be as close to possible to the objective realities of the original notation while retaining immediate legibility?"⁴ Secondly, what had I learned in the process, and how had my performance changed?

⁴ Rudolf von Ficker, "Probleme der Editionstechnik", cited in Andrea Lindmayr-Brandl, "Early Editions of Early Music," in *Early Music Editing*, ed. Theodor Dumitrescu et al. (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 98.

Part I: Ahle and Editing

Chapter 1

Ideas on Editing, 1985 – present:

When I began my transcriptions, I had the stated goal of creating an edition serviceable to performers and scholars. The place to begin, therefore, was the existing scholarship on editing. As it happens, the published literature on editing is limited enough to summarize here. Two general studies exist – James Grier’s 1996 wide ranging *The Critical Editing of Music*, and John Caldwell’s slightly narrower *Editing Early Music*, published in 1985, and revised ten years later.⁵ Philip Brett’s outstanding “Text, Context, and the Early Music Editor,” found in *Authenticity and Early Music*, is another important contribution to the field.⁶ The principles of editing early music remained largely un-discussed, until a 2008 conference held in Utrecht, which resulted in the 2013 collection of essays: *Early Music Editing: Principles, Historiography, Future Directions*, edited by Theodor Dumitrescu. Studies specific to composers appear in other volumes, of course, and the editorial principals published in most scholarly editions can also provide interesting reading – yet if one is looking for a manual on how to create an edition, these sources are where you must begin.

The universal opinion, returned to again and again in this body of literature, is that one edition *cannot* satisfy performers and scholars. As early as the 1920s, Rudolf von Ficker publishes both a “musical-artistic” edition and a “critical-scholarly” one.⁷ Almost eighty years later, Margaret Bent writes:

⁵ James Grier, *The Critical Editing of Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), and John Caldwell, *Editing Early Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985, 1995).

⁶ Philip Brett, “Text, Context, and the Early Music Editor,” in *Authenticity and Early Music*, ed. Nicholas Kenyon (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).

⁷ Rudolf Von Ficker, “Primäre Klangformen” translated and cited in Andrea Lindmayr-Brandl’s “Early Editions of Early Music,” in *Early Music Editing*, 95.

“Editions intended to serve both scholars and performers...have often resulted in compromises which satisfy neither constituency,”⁸ and offers plenty of examples of this. As a performer, I have come across many editions that are undeniably scholarly, and completely unsuitable for performance either through attempts to retain archaic notation, or through sheer size of the volumes.⁹ Why is this such a difficult task to achieve? Particularly in the early music community, where many of us have a professed attention to “historically informed performance,” and a fascination with primary source material, why should our performance edition not be able to include enough information to satisfy the scholar?

First we look to what the scholar desires. James Grier, in his introduction to *The critical editing of music* outlines a thoughtful and academic approach to editing – that “editing is critical in nature” and that “criticism, including editing, is based in historical inquiry.” He goes on to write, “the final arbiter in the critical evaluation of the musical text is the editor’s conception of musical style.”¹⁰ This places a tremendous amount of responsibility on the editor – both as scholar and transcriber - but also allows them the leeway to make choices according to their “conception.” Compare that to Caldwell’s opening statement:

*There are really only two fundamental requirements for an edition of music: clarity and consistency. In this respect there is no difference between a ‘scholarly’ and a ‘practical’ edition. The aim in both should be the same: to provide a musical text which can be trusted, and to do so in such a way that the music can be easily assimilated by the eye.*¹¹

⁸ Margaret Bent, “Early Music Editing, Forty Years On: Principles, Techniques, and Future Directions,” in *Early Music Editing*, 255.

⁹ The new *Opera Omnia* of Claudio Monteverdi, for instance, contains complete facsimiles of partbooks, and only has a few measures per page, resulting in massive volumes (25x35 cm) of 400 to 500 pages.

¹⁰ James Grier, *The Critical Editing of Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 8.

¹¹ John Caldwell, *Editing Early Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 1.

At face value, these two ideas do not conflict. Clarity and consistency can be provided as results of criticism and historical inquiry. But ultimately, Grier is advocating for an act of criticism, placing the editor *between* the text and the performer, and Caldwell is looking simply for a text in itself.

Caldwell and Grier do not agree on details, either. For example, Caldwell writes “baroque key signatures...are often archaic in the sense that they do not correspond to the modern conventions for indicating the minor or major key of the music for which they are being used...it is a great mistake to modernize these.”¹² Grier writes “in my experience, however, the addition of an editorial signature can simplify the presentation considerably,” and when discussing *musica ficta* goes on to suggest that Caldwell’s proposed solutions are “too complex.”¹³ Grier suggests not marking editorial changes in the score, and reserving them all for the critical report, while Caldwell writes, “not all editorial material need be confined to the critical commentary.”¹⁴ However, when writing the aforementioned critical commentary, Margaret Bent warns that scholars are “expected to provide and to use critical commentaries of often forbidding appearance and indigestible compression that, at worst, may be merely uncritical dumps of unmodulated data.”¹⁵

My personal quest (rooted in the music of Johann Rudolph Ahle) led me to editions of other music from the same time. Where did I find clarity and consistency, what was lacking in historical inquiry, which edition didn’t clearly identify the editor’s role in the musical criticism? I found myself suddenly much

¹² Caldwell, *Editing Early Music*, 73.

¹³ Grier, *The Critical Editing of Music*, 162-4.

¹⁴ Grier, 169, and Caldwell, 10.

¹⁵ Margaret Bent, “Editing Early Music: The Dilemma of Translation” in *Early Music* 22, No. 3 (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1994), 390.

more critical of published editions, but I also found myself answering questions about the smaller details Grier and Caldwell could not agree on. For instance, the edition of Samuel Scheidt's collected works quickly answered my questions about altering meters and note values.¹⁶ The biggest problem is that the note values in triple sections have been quartered, while the duple sections have been unaltered. This creates passages like this, in which the relation between the two sections is completely lost:



Figure 1 - Scheidt, "Angelus ad Pastores" mm. 96-102, from the 1622 print, and as rendered in the 1971 Scheidt Werke.

It is also no help that a signature that signifies tripla has been substituted for an original which represents sesquialtera. The discerning reader can find both an acknowledgement of the value adjustment and the original meter signature in the critical commentary at the back, but a similar situation in the following volume (the *Concertuum Sacrorum*, Scheidt's 1622 collection of twelve pieces, was split across two volumes edited by Hans Grüss in the Scheidt Werke, published in 1971 and 1976), where the triple values have once again been quartered and the signature changed from 3/2 to simply 3, goes without

¹⁶ Able to do a side-by-side comparison of print and edition, I examined the following volumes: Scheidt, Samuel, ed. Hans Grüss. 1971. *Samuel Scheidts Werke, Concertuum Sacrum Bd.XV, Bd.XVI*. Samuel Scheidts Werke. Leipzig: VEB Deutscher Verlag für Musik. 1971, 1976.

comment: inconsistent, unclear, failing to acknowledge alterations, and showing, in fact, a complete disregard for historical inquiry.

Just as I discovered these blunders, I also discovered well thought-out editions, which helped shape my editorial methods. Gregory Johnston's web-based edition (published by the Society for Seventeenth-Century Music) of a publication by Wolfgang Briegel (incidentally, an acquaintance of Ahle), presented a good solution to the question of spelling and punctuation in the texts of this music.¹⁷ The layout in the same edition is questionable, however, and the critical notes hold information that could be displayed much more simply and comprehensibly in prefatory staves.

Where does this leave us? Caldwell and Grier are unable to agree on specific notational issues, and while Bent proposes interesting solutions, her research focuses on music with a completely different set of parameters to Ahle's. Recent editions of seventeenth century German music each propose different solutions to different problems, but none seem to have found a flawless formula. Perhaps it is best to disregard any specific suggestions regarding notational practices (Grier's and Caldwell's, by 2018, are almost twenty-five years old, and collected editions begin to be replaced almost as soon as they are completed), and focus on the overall ideas presented in the literature. Caldwell, at least, believes that an edition could be of use to scholars and performers, and Grier does not say it cannot be.

As editor, these concepts place us on a quest for clarity, consistency, and

¹⁷ Gregory S. Johnston, ed., "Wolfgang Briegel: Zwölff Madrigalische Trost=Gesänge" in *Web Library of Seventeenth Century Music* (Society for Seventeenth Century Music, March 2016). Accessed October 28, 2016, <http://www.sscm-wlscm.org/main-catalogue/browse-by-composer/363-zwoelff-madrigalische-trost-gesaenge>.

historical inquiry, while we attempt to commit acts of criticism – and all four of these concepts are artificial constructs from the current ideas of musical society when any edition is published. Referring to text underlay, Thomas Schmidt-Beste writes:

*It remains the editor's responsibility to weigh the evidence critically and to present a well-reasoned solution...the admission that there might be more than one 'correct' solution...is difficult both to conceptualize and to represent on the printed page. But we owe it to the users of our editions and to ourselves as scholars to come to grips with this, rather than resorting to the pseudo-authenticity of presenting 'the original.'*¹⁸

These are the acts of criticism to which Grier refers, and this is the reason for investigating this literature in the first place. What becomes clear through trying to comprehend the (recent) history of critical editing, is that every solution has a possible problem, but every possible solution can be justified, so long as the editor clearly presents his involvement. There are those who will only be satisfied with a facsimile of an original source (in which cases Philip Brett suggests “the editor will be lucky to find employment running the copying machine and brewing the herbal tea.”¹⁹), but they cannot be the editor’s concern. Bent suggests that we must realize that “all transcription translates; that a transcribed and scored version is no longer the original text.”²⁰ And indeed, in the digital age, those seeking original sources can much more easily be satisfied, and can be removed from the potential audience for a critical edition. The editorial goal, then, according to this body of literature, is to present a **translation**, with any decisions made carefully documented, and all possible information from the source clearly and cleanly presented. This is the standard

¹⁸ Thomas Schmidt-Beste, “Editorial Text Underlay Revisited,” in *Early Music Editing*, 139.

¹⁹ Brett, “Text, Context, and the Early Music Editor,” 84.

²⁰ Bent, “Editing Early Music,” 390.

against which I judge previous editions of Ahle's music. And this is the standard which forms the basis of my editorial methods.

Chapter 2

Ahle's Editorial History:

After the initial publication of his works, Ahle's music seems to have faded into obscurity. While a few pieces survive in other handwritten collections (such as a few pieces in the Düben Collection or in a manuscript of unknown provenance at the Biblioteka Jagiellońska), his music never found its way into any published anthologies, and never received wide circulation throughout Europe. Ahle and his music, therefore, remained un(re)published until 1845.

Sydney Charles divides the history of musicological editing into three phases – 1750 – 1850, 1850 – 1950, and after 1950. While convenient numerically, it is also a logical division; a first phase of failed attempts at canonization, a second phase of successful attempts at canonization (beginning with Bach in 1851, and Händel and Palestrina close behind), and a post-war period of finding the composers our musicological forerunners left behind, and updating aging scholarship (beginning with the new Bach, in 1954).²¹ While Ahle has never been granted the privilege of a society being devoted to editing his complete works, he did manage to get included in two pre-World War I efforts at canonization – the first being Carl von Winterfeld's *Der evangelische Kirchengesang* (published from 1843-7), and the second being a volume of *Denkmäler deutscher Tonkunst*.

Winterfeld's *Der evangelische Kirchengesang* consists of three volumes, respectively corresponding to the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth

²¹ Sydney Robinson Charles, et al. "Editions, historical." in *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press, accessed November 2017, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/subscriber/article/grove/music/08552>.

centuries, to which is appended musical appendices, with Winterfeld's transcriptions. Ahle garners thirty-one full pages of discussion (while Schein is given only 10) – yet the vast majority of that is spent on Ahle's simple arias, while the Lustgarten series only gets brief mention in the beginning of the article. Winterfeld is eager to demonstrate what he calls the "decisive influence" of Hammerschmidt on Ahle, and to that end selects a four voice dialogue (which indeed is reminiscent of Hammerschmidt) as his only example from the series.²² Winterfeld's own motivations aside, this first "close" examination designated Ahle as a populist composer, and vastly inferior to Hammerschmidt.

Fortunately for Ahle, a young Johannes Wolf took interest in his music, ultimately resulting in a volume of *Denkmäler deutscher Tonkunst* devoted to Ahle, which was published in 1901. Providing a much more even approach to Ahle's output than Winterfeld, Wolf tries to give an overview of all Ahle's composition styles – though not without suggesting that the Lustgarten series is slightly more important, especially given Winterfeld's seeming preference for the arias.²³ In editing thirty-nine pieces for the volume, Wolf included fourteen pieces from the Lustgarten series, four of which come from the 1658 Lustgarten collection.

²² "Unverkennbar tritt in diesen vier Theilen - am Entschiedensten von dem zweiten an - der bedeutende Einfluß hervor, den Hammerschmidt auf Ahle." Winterfeld II, 299.

²³ "Sein Hauptwerk, der Thüringische Lust-Garten, hätte aber innerhalb der Denkmäler einen Umfang beansprucht, dem die Bedeutung des Meisters nicht entspricht, und hätte doch einen wesentlichen Zug seines Schaffens, die Liedkomposition, unberührt gelassen. Die Geistlichen Arien oder die liedmässigen Sonn- und Festtags-Andachten vollständig abzdrukken, empfahl sich wiederum nicht, weil sich Ahle nicht gerade reich an melodischer Erfindung zeigt und im übrigen eine ganze Reihe dieser kleinen Sätze bei K. v. Winterfeld veröffentlicht vorliegen. Eine Auswahl seiner Werke, die alle von ihm gepflegten Formen berücksichtigt, wird am ehesten vermögen, uns ein klares Bild von dem gesamten Schaffen des Meisters zu geben." (Wolf, Vorwort, v).

Let us consider these two sources together as the first generation of “modern” editions of Ahle’s music. Firstly, it is clear that despite Wolf’s best intentions, the Lustgarten series remained largely unedited, and unnoticed. Secondly, it is important to note that these editions are largely unusable for performance today. Winterfeld’s solitary piece from Lustgarten II is presented in old clefs, is poorly typeset, and there is no critical commentary to be found.

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Figure 2 – a passage from “Was werden wir essen” (No. 8, Lustgarten II), ed. C. v. Winterfeld, in *Der evangelische Kirchengesang und sein Verhältnis zur Kunst des Tonsatzes, Zweiter Theil* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1845).

Wolf, whose edition has the advantage of being fifty years later (and being part of a series with the financial backing of a nationalistic government), presents much cleaner and more legible scores (see example below), and does accompany his transcriptions with a brief critical commentary. There are three

Mei - ster bin zu hel - fen, und ein Mei - ster bin zu hel - fen, und ein Mei - ster
und ein Mei - ster bin zu hel - fen, und ein Meister bin zu hel - fen,
bin, ein Meister bin zu hel - fen, und ein Mei - ster bin zu hel - fen, und ein
Mei - ster bin zu hel - fen, und ein Mei - ster bin zu hel - fen, und ein
6 5 6 6 4 3 b b

problems with Wolf's edition, however. The first is simply the nature of DDT – each editor had to select a very limited number of pieces to feature. Consequently, the edition is incomplete – and some of the knowledge that can be gained from looking at the collection as a whole (for instance, Ahle's fascination with the personal spirituality, which I will discuss later) is lost. The second problem is merely that the collection is a product of the typesetting practice of the early twentieth century. Barlines are obtrusive, scored through the text of the vocal music, and the old soprano, alto, and tenor clefs are used. While these are seemingly minor problems, they still mean that many musicians will stay away from Ahle's music when it is presented in this form.

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that the “figuring is usually poor,” and that he has clarified where necessary.²⁴ By “clarified,” he means changed. And while his suggestions are often not incorrect, it is not the editors place to alter or “update” the continuo line. Ahle’s parts (which are typical of their time) do not indicate 6 vs. 6̇ or #6, which Wolf has silently adjusted throughout. In addition, he has frequently made additions to the figuring – such as adding 4-3 suspensions under Ahle’s written 7-6-5. He has also modernized the accidentals: #3 becomes ♯3 when written above a G, for instance. While Wolf is consistent in his alterations, he lacks clarity – nowhere does he identify what changes have been made. It is a step away from the original source, and an unnecessary one. Wolf’s editions do not have a realization of the figured bass; therefore, it can be assumed that the target user of the edition would be a keyboard player accustomed to realizing figured bass, who would certainly be able to understand the conventions needed for a successful rendering of this music – without Wolf’s interventions.

A similar approach is taken to the text. Throughout the collection, Wolf has taken the German written in the print, and adjusted it to suit modern conventions. This involves replacing “kk” with “ck” (gewikkelt/gewickelt) eliminating the occasional extra “h” (gebohren/geboren), and other small changes. Early Modern German contained contractions, such as “betrübstu” or “seistu,” which would today be written “betrübst du” or “seist du.” While the meaning remains clear, in singing the modern involves two consonants, while the historic involves only one. For example:

²⁴ “Seine Generalbass-Bezifferung ist meist dürftig; sie ist daher, wo es die Deutlichkeit forderte, ergänzt worden.” Wolf, DDT, VIII.



Figure 4 - "Fürchtet euch nicht" (No. 28, Lustgarten II), mm. 137-8. Original print, left, and Wolf's transcription (DDT 1901), right.

While Wolf's other linguistic adaptations might not have impacted the meaning, this adjustment drastically changes the pronunciation – the difference between [zaist du] and [zai stu]. Ultimately, Wolf's editions are a moderately useful introduction to the music of Johann Rudolph Ahle, but are dated and incomplete, and fail to acknowledge their acts of criticism.

Beyond Winterfeld and Wolf, Ahle's music has largely stayed out of scholarly attention, and out of publication. The "Johann Rudolph Ahle-Abend" concerts given annually between 1935 and 37 (with the sponsorship of the N.S. Kulturgemeinde) cite editions created for performance by William Mickel, but I have been unable to locate them, and they were clearly never published.²⁵ Aside from the occasional inclusion of one of his arias in anthologies (such as *Antiqua Chorbuch*, Mainz: Schott & Co., 1952), Ahle's music was largely unedited until editions of single pieces from the Lustgarten collections began to appear in the 1980s and 1990s. The list below updates and completes the catalog in Rathey's *Johann Rudolph Ahle* – some editions published after his printing, and some simply missed.

²⁵ This short-lived concert series is remembered through programs pasted into the back of the Ahle partbooks held at the Ratsarchiv in Mühlhausen.

Title	Collection	Publisher, Editor	Year
Magnificat (I – 24)	I – 1657	self, Martin Krämer	1995
Jesu dulcis memoria	I – 1657	Skarba-Verlag, Howard Weiner	1996
Merk auf mein Hertz*	I – 1657	Verlag Merseburger, Adam Adrio	1997
Zwingt die Seiten in Cithara*	I – 1657	GK-Edition, Wolfgang Stolze	1997
Meister, wir haben die ganze Nacht gearbeitet*	I – 1657	GK-Edition, W. Stolze	2000
Tröstet, tröstet mein Volk*	I – 1657	GK-Edition, W. Stolze	2000
Tröstet, tröstet mein Volk*	I – 1657	Edition Walhall, Konrad Ruhland	2004
Jesu dulcis memoria*	I – 1657	Garri Editions, Alejandro Garri	2005
Fürchtet euch nicht*	II – 1658	Carus-Verlag, Volker Kalisch	1981
Herr nun lässestu deinen Diener*	II – 1658	Parow'sche Musikalien, H. Weiner	1992
Ich hab's gewagt*	II – 1658	self, M. Krämer	1995
Ach mein herzliebes Jesulein*	II – 1658	GK-Edition, W. Stolze	1997
Unser Herr Jesus Christus*	II – 1658	GK-Edition, W. Stolze	2000
Ich will den Herren loben*	II – 1658	GK-Edition, W. Stolze	2000
Seht euch für	II – 1658	Edition Walhall, K. Ruhland	2004
Erschienen ist der Herrliche Tag	II – 1658	self, M. Krämer	2012
Der Herr ist mein Hirte*	III – 1665	GK-Edition, W. Stolze	1994
Höre Gott*	III – 1665	A-R Editions, Charlotte Leonard ²⁶	2003
Misericordias Domini*	III – 1665	Garri Editions, A. Garri	2006

Figure 5 - Published Editions of J. R. Ahle, 1981 - 2017. Asterisks denote editions I have examined.

Both Lustgarten I and II are well represented, and proportionately, Lustgarten III is equally well represented, given that the collection only contains ten pieces.

What this table demonstrates, however, is that there has been almost no editing work done in the past ten years. With the exception of Leonard's edition of "Höre Gott," none of the editions have been peer-reviewed, meaning standards for editing Ahle's music remain low.

It is worth discussing the independent editions – those published by smaller presses, but continually publishing works by Ahle edited by the same people (Howard Wiener, Konrad Ruhland, Wolfgang Stolze, Martin Krämer, and

²⁶ Included in Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque 131: Seventeenth-Century Lutheran Church Music with Trombones. Leonard's edition follows A-R's editorial principles, and is therefore complete with a detailed introduction and critical notes. Her dissertation ("The Role of the Trombone and its Affekt in the Lutheran Church Music of Seventeenth-Century Saxony and Thuringia," Duke University, 1997) contains editions of few more pieces by Ahle, not discussed here, as they remain commercially unpublished.

Alejandro Garri). Of these independent editions, those by Howard Weiner and Konrad Ruhland are the strongest. Weiner's 1992 edition of "Herr, nun läßt Du Deinen Diener" contains a detailed introduction, complete with an acknowledgement of sources (the part books in Wolfenbüttel) as well as an outline of editorial methods.²⁷ The edition includes complete parts, as well as a few facsimiles to orient the user as to the type of original source. However, in the opening line, Wiener modernizes the text in the same way Wolf did, altering the "lästu" in the print to "läßt Du" in his edition. He also fails to acknowledge two errors he has corrected from the print – both of which are obvious printing errors needing correction, but should be mentioned in a critical commentary.

Ruhland's 2003 edition of "Tröstet, tröstet mein Volk" lacks a facsimile, but again, acknowledges which sources his edition is based on (the part books in Kassel), and has a detailed introduction – including touting the Lustgarten collections as "a real treasure trove with pearls, or even jewels, of protestant church music – particularly with regard to text interpretation."²⁸ However, Ruhland has modernized the text, and more importantly, altered time signatures silently, without presenting the original, and halving note values in the triple section. In this case, he has altered a 3/1 section to 3/2 – implying a *sesquialtera* relationship, as opposed to a *tripla* relationship.

Wolfgang Stolze's editions are troubled. They are poorly typeset, with frequent "clashes" between text and notes and also lack any sort of critical commentary or introduction, or even a simple statement of the sources used.

²⁷ Howard Weiner, ed., "Herr, nun läßt Du Deinen Diener" (Gorxheim: Parow'sche Musikalien, 1992).

²⁸ Konrad Ruhland, ed., "Tröstet, tröstet mein Volk" (Magdeburg: Edition Walhall, 2003), preface.

The introduction that is included with *some* of his editions incorrectly states the publication dates of the Lustgarten Collection as between 1657 and 1663 – the final installment was published in 1665.²⁹ While the editorial policy is not stated anywhere, I would suggest Stolze did return to original sources, but was sloppy in his transcription and fails in consistency, and to acknowledge his acts of criticism.

For example, in “Ach mein herzliebes Jesulein” (Lustgarten II, XIII), the text presents a problem. Four of the six vocal parts are consistent – writing a portion of the text as “meines Herzen Schrein.” Of the remaining two, one consistently writes “meines Herzens Schrein,” and one writes the phrase both ways. Modern German would dictate the “s” is necessary, while many sixteenth and seventeenth century publications omit it (the text comes from the Luther chorale, Vom Himmel hoch). Caldwell suggests that baroque music gives little reason to change orthography,³⁰ and Grier, while not explicitly stating a preference, does warn, “editors should be prepared to defend their decisions on the basis of contemporary theoretical sources and the attendant secondary scholarship.”³¹ Stolze, then, has a choice (as do I in my edition of the same piece) – we can announce that we are modernizing the text to fit modern German practice, and render each word as “herzens.” We can copy directly what is in the print, and announce we have made no changes to the text. Alternatively, we can alter the two parts that have inconsistencies, and alter them to reflect both

²⁹ “Aus seinen zahlreichen Sammlungen, insbesondere den drei Teilen thür..mit einem Nebengang von 1657 - 1663 liegt nur außerordentlich wenig als Neuausgabe vor. Seine Kompositionsmittel waren mehr reizvolle Kombinationen alternierender Stimmgruppen als imitatorische Vielfalt.” Stolze, imprint found in four of the seven editions.

³⁰ Caldwell, 92.

³¹ Grier, *The Critical Editing of Music*, 166.

contemporary sources, and the other vocal parts, taking care to note these changes in our critical commentary. Stolze opts to do none of the above, and instead create underlay of unknown origin, with no explanation. Of course, one cannot tell whether this is a lack of scholarship or a series of typographical errors. The problem remains, though, that this edition is unclear, inconsistent, and fails to acknowledge the editor's "translation" of the text.



Figure 6 - Wolfgang Stolze's edition of "Ach mein herzliebes Jesulein" (No. 13, Lustgarten II), mm. 21-22 (GK-Edition, 1997) as compared with the underlay of the same parts from the 1658 print.

Finally, whether from the publishing house or the editor himself, there is a tolerance for misinformation: Stolze incorrectly states on the title page that "Meister, wir haben" comes from *Neue geistliche Chorstücke*, when it actually comes from Lustgarten I. He neglects to mention the collection which "Unser Herr Jesus Christus" is drawn (Lustgarten II), but does include a facsimile of the title page to *Neue geistliche Chorstücke*.³² While Stolze has published writings on Scheidt, as well as on the adjuvant choir culture of Thuringia and Saxony, his editions do not meet the requirements for scholarly critical editions, and are only adequate performance editions.

Martin Krämer's edition of "Ich hab's gewagt" acknowledges the collection from which the piece is drawn, but not which sources were used in the creation of the edition. The time signatures have been adjusted silently, but note

³² Ironically, this is the only facsimile found in any editions of his I have investigated.

values retained. The figured bass has been modernized with the same approach as Wolf in DDT. While accurate, the editions give little information, and are devoid of introductions or any indications to put the music in context. Alejandro Garri's two editions do possess introductions complete with a biographical sketch and interesting facts about the respective pieces, as well as details of the adaptations Garri has made for the edition, such as the introduction of tempo suggestions, and alterations of the key signature. A substantial failure, however, is that their only source is Wolf's 1901 volume of DDT – Garri has not investigated any of the original prints. As a result, Garri's editions include Wolf's "adjustments" to the figures (see example). In addition, Garri has inserted extensive dynamic markings found neither in DDT nor in the original print, and has neglected to mention that he has so done.

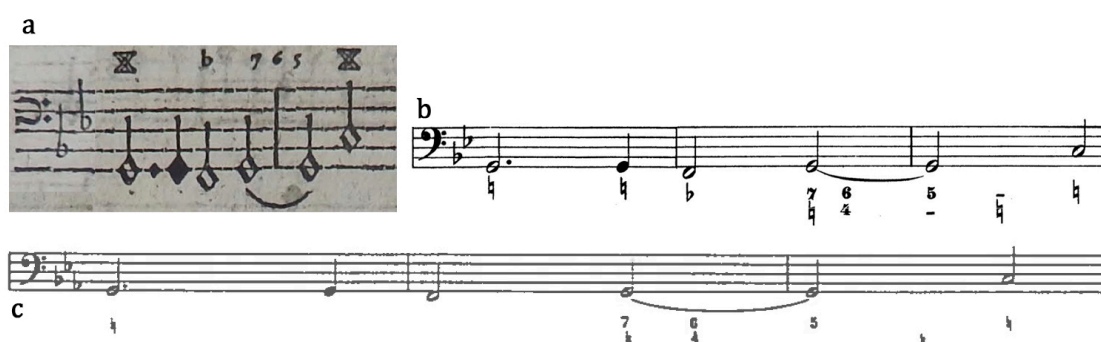


Figure 7 - "Jesu Dulcis Memoria" (No. 6, Lustgarten I) in three sources: the original print (a), Wolf's 1901 DDT edition (b), and Garri's 1996 edition (c).

Even the strongest of these editions have limited circulation – many are out of print, and are only available through interlibrary loans from various institutions in North America and Europe. The only Ahle that is easily accessible is that in DDT – held in most academic libraries in the world, and easily available online. In order to both study and perform this music, a new critical edition is needed – one that contains a complete collection, giving the scholar/performer

an opportunity to investigate the music in its context, and one that is up-to-date with modern critical editing practice.

Chapter 3

Choosing Editorial Methods

After evaluating the existing editions, it was time for me to begin to create my own. From the existing editorial scholarship, I knew the four points I was after – clarity, consistency, use of historical inquiry, and an acknowledgement of acts of criticism. Beyond that, when it came time for me to establish my editorial parameters, I had two principle considerations. Firstly, what was my intended audience? Secondly, how could I make the scores impart as much information from the original print as possible?

I wanted to create a versatile edition – one that could be used in amateur choirs, as well as by scholars in their study of Ahle's music. Ultimately, I came to the realization that those two groups are not so far apart in their need – while scholars might desire more information, they need to be able to access the music as clearly as a potential performer, no matter the level. To that end, the first decision I made was to retain original note values and meter signatures. From a perspective of historical inquiry, Praetorius is very clear about the differences between *tripla* and *sesquialtera*.³³ It would do the music a disservice to distort this. The only exception I made to this rule was the C 3 meter signature – which I rendered as 3/2, since they both designate *sesquialtera*. All original meter signatures, regardless of whether they were altered, were included in the prefatory staves.

For the modern singer, soprano (C1), mezzo-soprano (C2), alto (C3), and tenor clef (C4), present a major impediment. The knowledge of the original clef, however, is crucial for a scholar, and for performers at a higher level. To this

³³ Michael Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum III*, trans. and ed. Jeffery Kite-Powell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 72.

end, the prefatory staves of each piece include the original clefs. Also included are the distribution of the parts through the part books – as there are only nine part books, yet some pieces reach fifteen parts, it is important to be aware of which books hold multiple parts, and which parts those are. The scholar would find this fascinating, while the amateur may simply ignore it. This use of prefatory staves for so much information also allowed me to keep the critical commentary short – it fits neatly on one A4 page, so as not to appear daunting to the reader!

I have not provided an optional realization for the figured bass part – a well-realized figured bass line is crucial to the performance of this music, and that can only be created by a competent early keyboardist. To that end, the figures have been completely unaltered from the print, aside from obvious mistakes, which are corrected and noted in the critical report. Accidentals proved a challenge to me – like Grier, I view Caldwell’s system of four types of accidentals as impractical.³⁴ I therefore settled on a simple rule: any accidental printed in the staff is implied by the historical practice – meaning that while a natural may cancel a sharp in my edition, it may not appear in the print, since common practice was to simply assume the performer would only sharpen the note which the sharp was adjacent to, in the print. Any accidental printed above the staff is my suggestion, either through rule of *musica ficta*, or because of a figure that implies an alteration not present in a vocal or instrumental part.

I have retained the original spellings of the texts, both German and Latin.

³⁴ Caldwell proposes accidentals appearing in a modern edition in four ways – source accidentals, implied (but not stated) accidentals, editorial (*ficta*) accidentals, and cautionary accidentals. (Caldwell, *Editing Early Music*, 32-33). Grier writes that he finds the system “too complex for immediate comprehension in reading and performing.” Grier, *The Critical Editing of Music*, 164.

Particularly in the German texts, there were too many cases where modernization would impact pronunciation in a way that would change the music. In order to make sure I was presenting the most accurate version of the text possible, I consulted as many contemporary sources as I could for the texts – leading to me discovering previously unknown sources for some pieces. This route of historical inquiry helped me answer questions such as the possible “s” on “Herzens” discussed above, and any decisions like that which had to be made are clearly noted in the critical commentary. This consultation of contemporary sources also enabled me to add punctuation where there is none in the source – the German texts use the / as the only punctuation in the print.

To that end, I created a concise set of rules to be printed as my *Editorial*

Methods:

The transcriptions have endeavored to stay as true to the original prints as possible. To this end, original note values, meter signatures, and key signatures have been retained; only clefs have been adapted to conform to modern standards – these have been given at the beginning of each piece. Regular barlines have been inserted throughout, though they are few and far between in the prints. The final values of each section and piece have occasional discrepancies between parts – these have been silently modified to make all the parts match in the present edition.

The figured bass is exactly as it appears in the prints – no efforts have been made to modernize, except for the correction of obvious errors, which are noted below. Accidentals have been modernized within the parts, and these editions follow the modern conventions of accidentals – an accidental is good for an entire bar, even though it would have been re-printed in the original. Any accidental printed in the staff is indicated in the parts – either because it is actually printed, or through the rule that an accidental applies to all of the same pitch class in a row. Any accidentals above the staff are not indicated in the partbooks, but are the editor’s suggestions.

The textual punctuation and capitalization has been silently adjusted to create consistency between parts. As with most German prints of the seventeenth century, the German texted pieces use a forward slash (/) in place of almost all punctuation marks. The punctuation in German texted pieces has been drawn from the contemporary textual

sources, where possible. Archaic spellings have been retained, under the assumption that they may sometimes effect pronunciation in performance.

Ultimately, the goal has been stay as true to original prints as possible within the confines of a modern score. The present edition presents the music of Ahle in a way that is accessible to modern musicians, while giving as much information as possible from the original parts, hopefully aiding in the quest for an “authentic” performance.

Beyond these notes, I also felt it important to include a few pages of facsimile.

While it was impractical to print too many pages, a few pages are necessary for the scholar or performer to comprehend the source. The preface and dedication were translated and included as well.

Overall, when devising my editorial methods and creating the edition itself, I was clear in representing the original prints, and consistent in my handling of notation, text, and any other elements. Any changes I made were clearly acknowledged, and were only made after inquiry into the history of the music or text. The edition presented here should be serviceable to all interested users, and I believe a scholar examining it as a “translation,” as Bent suggests, would be satisfied.

Part II: Musical Research on Ahle

Chapter 4

Johann Rudolph Ahle: A portrait

The oft-overlooked Johann Rudolph Ahle was born in Muhlhausen on Christmas Eve, 1625. Little is known of his formative years, but Rathey suggests music lessons as early as the 1630s, presumably with one of the organists at either of the two main churches in town, Divi-Blasii or the Marienkirche. By 1643, Ahle was attending school in Göttingen, and two years later he was a student in Erfurt, with the position of cantor at the Andreas Kirche. He returned to Muhlhausen by 1650, and accepted the position of organist at Divi Blasii in 1654, the position he would hold until his death in 1673, when he was succeeded by his son, Johann Georg Ahle (who was in turn succeeded by a young Johann Sebastian Bach). From 1655 he was involved on city council, and held a variety of positions until he was elected mayor in the year of his death.³⁵

Throughout his time in Muhlhausen, Ahle published a number of collections of music. At the center of his output are his four *Lustgarten* collections, published in 1657, 1658, 1663, and 1665. While this study does not attempt to examine all four collections in detail, the four prefaces and the dedicatory poems provide valuable information about both Ahle and performance practice of his music.

In a series of articles on the publishing practice of German composers in the seventeenth century, Stephen Rice describes how composers would, for a variety of reasons, include various elements in addition to the music in their collections.³⁶ Dedications, dedicatory poems, and prefaces were all ways for

³⁵ Biographical information drawn from Rathey, *Johann Rudolph Ahle*, 101-138.

³⁶ Stephen Rice, "Music, Print and Presentation in Saxony During the Seventeenth Century," *Germany History* 23, no. 1 (2005): 1-19, "The Composer as Self-

composers to assuage their “anxiety of judgement” – particularly, as Rice notes, due to “the stylistic upheavals at the start of the seventeenth century [which] had caused uncertainty about how to judge compositional competence and led to angry disputes.”³⁷ Ahle was clearly no stranger to this controversy – he makes sure to include a special mention of the “concerto haters”³⁸ in the preface to his 1663 collection, and while he says Ambrosius Profe has dealt with them handily, he still makes sure to suggest in great detail that “those who don’t know, hate”³⁹ and perhaps it’s merely the result of poorly performed concertos, as opposed to poorly crafted pieces.⁴⁰

Perhaps in an effort to dispel such criticism, Ahle included, in each collection, a variety of dedicatory poems. The poems come from a variety of authors, such as other composers (Michael Jacobi and Christian Flor), his predecessor at Divi Blasii (Johann Vockerodt), hymn writers (such as Johann Rist, Frans-Joachim Burmeister, and Johann Starcke), as well as members of the clergy or educators in Mühlhausen. While these poems are extremely complimentary, perhaps to the point of exaggeration, they paint a picture of Ahle’s stature at the time, at least to his friends.

Publisher in Seventeenth-Century Germany,” in *Varia Musicologica: Dissemination of Music in Seventeenth-Century Europe: Celebrating the Düben Collection* (Berne, Peter Lang AG, Internationaler Verlag der Wissenschaften, 2011), 239-260, and “Publication and the Anxiety of Judgement in German Musical Life of the Seventeenth Century,” in *Music & Letters* 85, No. 1 (2004): 22-40.

³⁷ Rice, “Publication and the Anxiety of Judgement,” 23.

³⁸ “Nun hette ich Ursach mit den *Concerthassern* zu reden,” J. R. Ahle, preface to *Lustgarten Nebengang*, 1663.

³⁹ Ibid. “Qui non intelligit, odit.”

⁴⁰ In his 1663 preface, Ahle makes the joke that perhaps the problem is that his pieces are being performed by *non-certisten* as opposed to *concertisten*, so that not only the concertos, but also the composers are insulted.

In a poem written for Lustgarten I, for instance, Michael Jacobi writes:

Monteverdi, who is prominently displayed among those who shine forth, who has recently through his art achieved an immortal name, let him come...boldly daring to announce to Ahle that he was Monteverdi to the Germans.⁴¹

He goes on to write that Ahle attempts to exert himself to create music at the level of Schütz, Herbst, Selle, and Hammerschmidt. A similar sentiment is expressed in the first Lustgarten by Johannes Girbert, rector of the Mühlhausen Gymnasium:

As far as music is concerned, 'S' among the abc's (as is well known) has previously captured all the praise. Schütz, Schein, Scheidt, Schop, Schild, Schulze, Selle, and Scheidemann, eight they are all together, all begin with 'S.' I can't think of others who are equally to be praised – these, it seems to me, ought justifiably to swim above the rest. These are the best; they've stood out with well thought heavenly art – to these eight remains all praise and favour. Now 'A' breaks out – our councilman, our Ahle, our master of keyboards, after a long time brings forth his well screwed together little pieces.⁴²

Of course, these poems would not be printed if they said anything less laudatory towards Ahle. Yet that Ahle could find composers established across the country (Jacobi was based in Lüneberg, some 300 km north of Mühlhausen) willing to sing his praises, and he was clearly well regarded in his hometown.

The other fascinating element of Ahle's prefatory material are the prefaces he wrote to the performers of his music. In the preface to Lustgarten II, the

⁴¹ "Monteverd/ welcher nebst anderen pranget Unter den Welschen/ der leuchtet herfür/ Daß er auch längsten dach Kunst hat erlanget Einen unterblichen Namen alhier: Lasset ihn fahren/ Treter bei Paaren alle herbei: Kunlich es waget/ Ahlen ansaget/ Daß er der Teutschen ihr Monteverd sei."

⁴² "Es hat S im ABC was Music thut anbelangen/ Wie bekantlich ist/ bißher allen Preiß fast eingefangen: Schütze/ Schein/ Scheid/ Schop/ Schild/ Schulße/ Sell'/ und letztlich Scheidemann/ Achte sind ihr gleich beysammen: Alle vom S. fahen an. Anderer gedenk ich nicht/ die dergleichen sind zu loben: Diese/ diese/ deucht mich gantz/ solten füglich schwimmen oben. Diese sinds/ die hochherraben mit gedachter Himmels-kunst/ Diesen Achten allen bleibt diese Zeit der Preiß und Gunst. Itzo bricht das A. herfür. Unser Rahts-herr/ unser Ahle/ Unser Meister des Claviers gibt nach langer Zeit einmahle/ Seiner wolgeschraubten Stüklein Ersten Theil ans Tage-liecht/"

collection that is the focus of this study, he gives relatively little instruction – aside from suggesting that works can be performed both with and without the *capellen*, some works with and without the violins.⁴³ He states that some pieces can be performed without the basso continuo – these are the four to eight part vocal pieces in the older motet style.⁴⁴ Beyond these instructions, he directs the reader to the preface to his previous collection, *Lustgarten I*, published the year before.⁴⁵ The preface to *Lustgarten I* contains similar instructions regarding the use (or not) of various instruments and *capellen* but also contains this direction: “so one should use: throughout, a fine slow tactus.”⁴⁶ This direction is repeated again in the 1665 preface. Ahle’s *Lustgarten* collections were predominantly filled with sacred concertos – and perhaps he speculated the feared attacks of the “concerto-haters” were a result of improper tempos in performance.

While these excerpts do not give us as extensive a picture of performance practice as other contemporary sources, they can help us paint a picture of Ahle as a well-regarded local composer, and possibly one hearing reports of his music being performed with less-than-adequate forces. His detailing the flexibility for performance of music implies an (understandable) desire to have his music frequently performed – but also a desire to portray his skills as being able to write music that could be performed well in a variety of circumstances. At the close of his 1658 preface, he writes, “those who are left out, because these pieces

⁴³ “So sind die Violini im 1 und 4 *ad placitum* hinzu gethan/ und können/ wie auch die Capellen im gantzen Werkke/ gebraucht/ oder außgelassen werden.” *Lustgarten II*, preface.

⁴⁴ “Das 10, 13, 16, 24, 25 und 26 kan man mit und ohne Fundament/” *Lustgarten II*, preface.

⁴⁵ “Was über die Erinnerung/ so im Ersten Theile altberreit beschehen/” *Lustgarten II*, preface.

⁴⁶ “Allwege eines feinem langsamen Tacts.” *Lustgarten I*, preface.

would be somewhat too difficult for them, will also be served...various pieces are appended to this collection which can be done without particular effort.”⁴⁷ Ahle wished to serve as many as possible with his music – but never at the cost of appearing to be a poor composer.

⁴⁷ “denen jenigen so sich heraußgelassen daß ihnen diese Sachen was zu schwer weren/ gedienet werden/ wie den deßwegen diesem Theil unterschiedliche Stükke mit einverleibet/ so ohne sondere Mühe wol zu Musiciren.” Lustgarten II, preface.

Chapter 5

Instrumentation

Of the thirty pieces contained in the 1658 Lustgarten, eighteen have instrumental parts.⁴⁸ Ahle uses violins, trombones, recorders, bassoons, and low strings, and through his use of instruments, proves himself as a text-driven composer. In both his choices of instruments and how he writes for them, Ahle appears to mirror the text, and in some places, encourage a certain reading of it. He does this through three instrumental strategies - using instruments for punctuation, using sinfonias to set an affect for the piece, and adding or subtracting instruments for textural shifts. While he often uses a combination of these techniques in any given piece, the pieces discussed below offer the best representations of particular methods.

The most easily noticeable way in which Ahle uses instruments is as punctuation. Not unlike cadences in recitatives of Bach or Handel, Ahle often adds instrumental echoes of sung phrases, which mirror the rhythms of the text. The smallest scale this happens on is phrase by phrase, such as in “Unser Herr Jesus Christus” (No. 14). The piece is scored for five strings and alto, and every phrase sung is repeated back by the strings. Often, but not always, the top violin is repeating the melody just sung. By doing this, Ahle almost repeats the text twice, placing special emphasis on the gravity of the words (in this case, the Words of Institution – central to the communion liturgy, though rarely set to music).

⁴⁸ As previously discussed, in the preface to his 1658 collection, Ahle offers a variety of suggestions for performances with smaller forces – omitting sinfonias, violins, cappellas, or other instruments – but the parts were printed, presumably with the intention of being performed. I have therefore considered the pieces as they would be complete, with all parts being used.

Figure 8 - "Unser Herr Jesus Christus" (No. 14, Lustgarten II), mm. 29 - 35.

The same thing happens in "Seht euch für" (No. 21). While it is less constant, four recorders repeatedly interject through a passage from Matthew's depiction of the Sermon on the Mount. Ahle sets only a brief passage, Matthew 7:15-16 – "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits."⁴⁹ Each phrase begins with separate vocal entrances, which come together at the end of the phrase, and are then followed by instrumental interjections.

Figure 9 - "Seht euch für" (No. 21, Lustgarten II), mm. 75-85.

⁴⁹ Matthew 7:15-16, NRSV.

Once again, the recorders serve to highlight the lines of text just sung, one by one. In this way, Ahle systematically works through the text, giving gravity to each line of Jesus's words.

In "Ich wil den Herren loben" (No. 12), Ahle sets only one verse of Psalm 34: "I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth."⁵⁰ The piece is scored for three vocal soloists and two violins, but introduces trumpets and a cappella four times over the course of the piece, for large celebratory cadences.

The musical score for "Ich wil den Herren loben" (No. 12, Lustgarten II) measures 81-86. The score is written for Violins, Cantus Altus, Bassett., B.C., Trombetti, C. A., B., Capell., and B.C. The lyrics are in German and include: "sein lob soll im-mer, im-mer-dar, sein lob soll im-mer, im-mer-dar, in mei - nem", "lob soll im-mer, im-mer-dar, sein lob soll im-mer, im-mer-dar, in mei - nem Mun - de sein.", "Mun - de sein, sein lob soll im-mer, im-mer-dar, in mei - nem Mun - de sein.", "in mei - nem Mun - de sein.", and "Mun - de sein." The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and bar lines, as well as dynamic markings like "6" and "7".

Figure 10 - "Ich wil den Herren loben" (No. 12, Lustgarten II), mm. 81 - 86.

While this doesn't serve to highlight specific elements of the text, it portrays the jubilation with which the Lord should be praised – both the suddenness of the interjections and the choice of the brash trumpets serve the affect of the piece.

⁵⁰ Psalm 34:1, NRSV.

In his Magnificat for low voices and trombones (No. 22), Ahle does the same thing – while the trombones play occasional sinfonias, they are largely there to contribute to the closing measures (and sometimes the opening ones) of each verse. After (often florid) figural music for the majority of the verse, the trombones join for longer note values repeating the last sung phrase. While there is no mention of *capellen* for this piece anywhere, the trombone parts have text printed in these final passages, suggesting that the trombones could either be replaced or augmented with singers.

82

Alt. et san - - ctum no-men e - jus, et san - - ctum no-men, san - ctum no-men e -

Ten. san - ctum no-men e - jus, san-ctum no-men e - jus, et san - - ctum no-men e -

Bas. et san - - ctum no-men e - jus, et san - - ctum no-men e -

B.C. 6 6 7 6 6 5 3

86

Tbn. I et san - - ctum no - men, no - men

Tbn. II et san - - ctum no - men, sanc-tum no - men e - - jus

Tbn. III et san - - ctum no - men, sanc-tum no - men e - - jus

Tbn. IV et san - - ctum no - men, sanc-tum no - men e - - jus

A. jus, et san - - ctum, san - ctum no - men e - - jus.

T. jus, et san - - ctum no - men e - - jus.

B. jus, et san - - ctum no - men e - - jus.

B.C. 6 6 6 3

Figure 11 - "Magnificat" (No. 22, Lustgarten II), mm. 82 - 91.

The trombone is featured heavily in Ahle's 1658 collection – they appear in five of the eighteen pieces with instruments, second only to the appearance of violins. The prevalence of the trombone in German sacred music of the seventeenth century is well documented, and can partly be traced back to a mis-

translation – while most English versions of the Bible translate various Hebrew and Greek words to “Trumpet,” Luther translated some of them as “Posaune” – leading to composers featuring trombones in sacred concertos quite frequently.⁵¹ Charlotte Leonard, in both her dissertation and articles for the *Historic Brass Society Journal*, has discussed extensively the affect of the trombone in seventeenth century German sacred music, particularly that of Thuringia and Saxony.⁵² Leonard differentiates between places where the trombone is used for a joyful affect, or for majesty (results of Luther’s translation), and those in which it is used in a “low choir” situation, allowing for affects of depth, darkness, or sadness.

Ahle’s Magnificat (No. 22) takes full advantage of the royal connotations of the trombone – using the full compliment of brass and voices for “and the rich,” before using scattered voices for “he has sent away.” The passage continues with “empty,”⁵³ which is set three times – first with the full forces, then only the singers, and finally only one voice. This is designated “echo” in the continuo part, and the altus part has a “piano” marking.⁵⁴ While this is undeniably an attempt at word painting, the way in which Ahle writes also

⁵¹ David M. Guion, *Trombone, Its History and Music, 1697-1811* (New York: Gordon & Breach, 1988), 151-153.

⁵² Charlotte A. Leonard, “The role of the trombone and its *Affekt* in the Lutheran church music of seventeenth-century Saxony and Thuringia: The mid- and late seventeenth century,” in *Historic Brass Society Journal* 12 (New York: Historic Brass Society 2000), 161-209, and “The Role of the Trombone and Its Affekt in the Lutheran Church Music of the Seventeenth-century Saxony and Thuringia.” Dissertation, Duke University, 1997.

⁵³ The whole line reads: “Et divites dimisit inanes,” “and the rich he hath sent empty away.”

⁵⁴ This is only one of several examples in which Ahle uses an echo effect. The only dynamic markings in the parts are used for this technique.

punctuates the text and brings special attention to a certain element – the idea of the rich being sent away, and fading in the distance.

While this displays a detail-oriented focus on the text, Ahle's use of instruments was also interested in the larger picture. The second way in which Ahle regularly features instruments in *Lustgarten II* is to set an affect for a piece or a section. Leonard uses "Erschienen ist" (No. 29) as an example for this – "associations between timbre and text are used to highlight multiple textual contrasts within one piece, as well as for larger structural purposes."⁵⁵ In particular, she highlights the contrast between a trombone prelude with chains of suspensions and dissonances, which "emphasize death and despair," and the trombone accompaniment to the tenor solo, with warlike oscillating triads, which "help him celebrate Christ's victory over death."⁵⁶

I find the trombone used in a similar manner in "Herr nun lässestu deinen Diener" (No. 11), Ahle's setting of the Song of Simeon, in which he opts to write for bass and four trombones. The canticles text is a journey from darkness into light – so Ahle creates darkness by using a low choir of instruments, and the lowest singing voice. The piece opens with an ominous sinfonia, which makes use of long lines and slow moving harmonies.

⁵⁵ Leonard, Article, 180-183.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

The image displays a musical score for five instruments: Tbn. I, Tbn. II, Tbn. III, Tbn. IV, and B.C. (Bassoon/Contrabass). The score is written in 3/4 time and consists of two systems. The first system shows the initial measures with various musical notations, including notes, rests, and fingerings (e.g., 6, #, 5, 6, #, 6). The second system continues the piece, featuring more complex musical structures and fingerings (e.g., 7, 6, 5, 7, 6, 7, 6, 5, 4, #, #). The notation includes treble and bass clefs, key signatures, and various musical symbols such as beams, slurs, and accidentals.

Figure 12 - "Herr nun lässest du deinen Diener" (No. 11, Lustgarten II), mm. 1-17.

After setting this opening affect, the writing becomes more jubilant as the text becomes more optimistic. For the text "meine Augen/ my eyes," the singer begins to sing upward scales, which the trombones echo, representing the eyes beginning to open. This leads to a jubilant triple, celebrating the eyes having seen the salvation of the Lord, for all people. The trombones (and the voice) regain their regal nature for two statements of "ein licht/ a light," before returning to jaunty sixteenth note runs for "und zum Preiß deines Volkkes Israel/ and the glory of thy people Israel." Throughout the entire piece, Ahle uses the trombones to contrast light and dark, jubilation and majesty.

In some of his pieces, however, Ahle chose to use different combinations of instruments in different passages, to set different affects. The most striking examples of this can be found two of his Magnificat settings (Nos. 19 and 20). In No. 20, a setting of the text in German, Ahle has divided the piece into the eleven verses, each accompanied by instruments. Two violins accompany many of the verses, but four of them feature other instruments. For example, the second verse is accompanied by two violas: "*...for he hath regarded the low estate of his*

handmaiden: for behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.”⁵⁷

Aside from the obvious result of violas having a “lower” tessitura than violins, Ahle has represented God looking on his servant with favor by inverting the voices. Previously, the accompanying instruments had been above all the voices, yet now, as this verse is set as a soprano solo, the instruments are below the voice – exemplifying the holiness of the humble servant.

Figure 13 - "Meine Seele erhebet" (No. 20, Lustgarten II), mm. 31-36.

The fourth verse (*“And his mercy is on them that fear him: from generation to generation.”*) is preceded by a sinfonia for four trombones. As with previous examples, the trombones are used for an affect of darkness and fear, but with overtones of majesty. After an opening chain of 7-6 suspensions, the harmonies arrive optimistically on a B-Major chord – which turns out merely to be a stopping point on the way to F#-major. In this way, the shadow-like nature of the suspensions leads the way to more royal harmony – perhaps Ahle’s way of depicting a God merciful to the faithful.

Figure 14 - "Meine Seele erhebet" (No. 20, Lustgarten II), mm. 70-77.

⁵⁷ Translation of German Magnificat “Meine seele erhebet” drawn from *Luther’s Works* vol 53. ed. Ulrich S. Leupold (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965), 178-9.

The seventh verse of the Magnificat (*"He hath filled the hungry with good things: and the rich he hath sent empty away."*) makes for an interesting study in how instrumentation can affect our reading of the text. In No. 20, Ahle begins with a sinfonia for two recorders, which might almost be described as pastoral. This could be seen to represent the contented nature of the hungry who have been fed – and while this may seem like a simplistic analysis, Ahle has clearly opted not to represent the groaning hungry, as he has in No. 19, where the same verse is set with a pair of trombones. Their opening chain of 6-5 suspensions seems to represent a spiritual (or even literal) hunger. The stark contrasts in the setting of this text lead to drastically different hearings of the text.

The image displays two musical staves. The top staff, labeled 'Tbn.' and 'BC', shows a sequence of notes with a chain of 6-5 suspensions. The bottom staff, labeled 'Fl. 1', 'Fl. 2', and 'BC', also shows a sequence of notes with a chain of 6-5 suspensions. The notation includes various musical symbols such as clefs, time signatures, and accidentals.

Figure 15 – “Magn. I. Toni.” (No. 19, Lustgarten II), mm. 147-154 (above) and “Meine Seele erhebet” (No. 20, Lustgarten II), mm. 166-171 (below).

While the Magnificats display Ahle’s desire to set an affect, a much more literal narrative could be found in No. 28, “Fürchtet euch nicht.” Friedrich Blume writes on this piece: “his humorous scene depicting the proclamation to the shepherds, in which four bassoons represent the grumbling, tenderhearted,

jovial peasants, is a masterful realization, in spite of its narrow confines.”⁵⁸

Perhaps humorous, but worth a closer look – Ahle uses the bassoons for more than comic relief. The piece opens with a homophonic sinfonia, with little harmonic interest; setting the scene of the peaceful pasture from the passage of Luke that Ahle is about to bring to life. Following a soprano solo announcing the birth, the choir of upper voices joins to sing of peace on earth, after which the low voice choir enters singing, “Let us go to Bethlehem,”⁵⁹ and then the bassoons return. This time, their sinfonia is less homophonic – with nearly constant running quarters. Harmonically, it is also slightly less stable. More than merely representing shepherds, Ahle’s bassoons are depicting apprehensive shepherds in movement. Upon their arrival in Bethlehem, the low voice choir (the shepherds) burst into a rousing chorale, with the bassoons mostly *colla parte*. This brings the story to a close. It may be layering modern taste onto Ahle’s music to assign the sinfonias this much programmatic meaning, but Ahle was certainly setting affect in his instrumental writing in this piece, and possibly more.

The bassoons may be unique, but Ahle’s most frequently used instruments are (unsurprisingly) violins. Fourteen of the eighteen pieces include a pair of violins, and five of those include only violins in addition to the voices. Two of those pieces “Herr Gott, mein Heiland” (No. 4) and “Christ Lag in Todes Banden” (No. 15) demonstrate Ahle’s use of instruments for a textural shift in his smaller scale pieces. “Herr Gott” opens as a bass solo. The text (from Psalm 88) is penitential – the singer cries night and day for God, his soul is wretched, and

⁵⁸ Blume, 232.

⁵⁹ Lasset uns nun gehen gen Bethlehem.”

he lives in constant pain. The text shifts, however, to a verse from Psalm 86:

“Show me a sign of your favor, so that those who hate me may see it and be put to shame, because you, Lord, have helped me and comforted me.”⁶⁰ Ahle adds the two violins for this passage (and the remainder of the piece), which creates a textural juxtaposition between the pain of the first part and the trust and hope of the second. This juxtaposition is heightened by the shift from a harmonically ambiguous area (which leads to an E minor cadence) to a stable C major opening, with the violins.

Figure 16 - "Herr Gott mein Heiland" (No. 4, Lustgarten II), mm. 52-70.

In “Christ Lag in Todes Banden” Ahle does close to the same thing. For the first two lines of the piece (“Christ lay in the snares of death/ And has given Himself for our sins;”⁶¹) the four voices sing figural entrances of Luther’s melody for sixty bars before the violins enter. The violins enter with a four bar sinfonia, and the text continues through the rest of the verse:

*He is risen again, And has brought us Life;
For this we should be joyful, Praise God and be grateful to Him,
And sing ‘Alleluia’.
Alleluia!*

⁶⁰ Psalm 86:17, NRSV.

⁶¹ Translation: Richard Jones in Alfred Dürr, *The Cantatas of J.S. Bach* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

Ahle's addition of florid violin parts which lead the transition through this passage draws attention to the joy in the remainder of Luther's text, as opposed to the darkness of the opening lines. This is especially important in a chorale-based piece like "Christ Lag," as the music for the opening is repeated. Ahle needed to find a way to express the joy of Christ's resurrection, without changing the melodic structure of the chorale.

Returning to another chorale-based piece, "Erschienen ist der herrliche Tag" (No. 29) uses textural shifts to highlight the textual differences between verses in a chorale. While Leonard has identified the different affects set by the trombones, it's important to also notice that Ahle uses two violins and three trombones in opposition to each other. Each of the four vocal soloists sings a verse of Herman's chorale, accompanied or introduced by these instruments. The opening verse, in the Cantus part, is accompanied by spritely violins, which reflect the optimistic and celebratory nature of the text - "The glorious day has appeared/ When no one may rejoice enough..."⁶² This is followed by a trombone interjection, setting up the alto verse, which is filled with pain and suffering.⁶³ Part way through the verse, however, the violins reappear for the text describing Jesus's rising from the dead.⁶⁴ In this way, Ahle manages to easily portray a text with such quick shifts in emotion.

In "Ich hab's gewagt" (No. 27), Ahle uses different instrumentations to divide the text into two sections – one accompanied by strings, and one by recorders. The text itself doesn't call for a division – a cohesive poem about God

⁶² Trans. in Leonard, Article, 180.

⁶³ "Die sünd und Tod, die Hell, all Jammer, Angst und noht.."

⁶⁴ "Hat überwunden Jesus Christ, der heut vom Tod erstanden ist."

protecting a marriage – but with Ahle’s division and insertion of sinfonias, he sets apart the second half.

*I have dared and promised,
to live in marriage with her.
May God, by his grace,
give us happiness and blessings.*

*As we both, in love and sorrow,
faithfully together remain,
Letting dear God rule in what comes
to happen to us in marriage.*

The first half uses the same music, repeated twice, while the second half is through composed.⁶⁵ This already sets apart the second half – it breaks the predicted pattern established by the initial repeat. By the nature of using an ensemble of recorders, the second half is accompanied by an ensemble in a much higher in pitch range than the voices, and much higher than the preceding strings. This could be seen as representing the presence of God above all – the text refers to God’s constant presence in the marriage.⁶⁶ Throughout the piece, Ahle writes for the instruments in a similar punctuating manner as he used in “Unser Herr” (No. 14, discussed above). The strings seem to repeat the text “Ich, ich hab’s gewagt,” but in the second part, the recorders seem to repeat “in Lieb und Leid,” which brings focus to the emotional context of the piece. By setting apart this half of the text, and specifically by using recorders, Ahle enables the listener to pay special attention on what one could see as the crux of the text: marriage is not about our actions, or our happiness, but God’s plan.

Ahle demonstrates throughout his collection that the instruments are used to serve the text. His choice of instruments considers the text, as does his treatment. In many cases, whether he intended or not, his instrumental writing seems to suggest a certain reading of the text – perhaps his reading, perhaps by chance. Either way, a deeper understanding of his use of instruments and more

⁶⁵ Hassler sets the text in the same way in his 1601 Lustgarten.

⁶⁶ “Was im Ehstand uns kömtzu hand, den lieb’n Gott lassen walten.”

detailed study of their parts uncovers a sort of logic to his choices, which is invaluable in performance.

Chapter 6

Ahle's Selection and Use of Texts

Having identified the importance that Ahle seems to place on the texts, we must examine the texts themselves. Ahle uses a variety of sources in Lustgarten II collection, ranging from the most frequently set chorale texts, to rarely set portions of the liturgy.

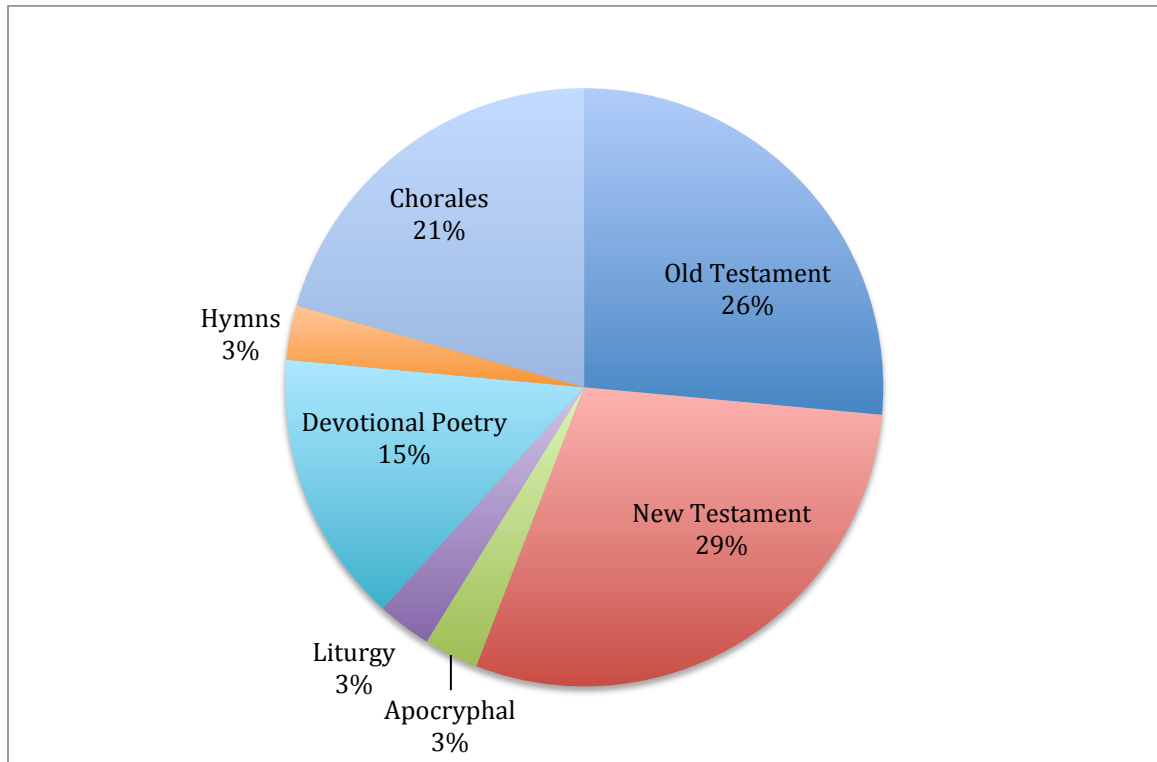


Figure 17 – A visual representation of Ahle's Text Sources in the 1658 Lustgarten Collection.

Just over half of the pieces contain texts drawn from the Bible. These are largely German, with the exception of two of the four Magnificat settings, which are in Latin. The chorale settings are entirely in German, while the singular Hymn setting is in Latin. The settings of devotional poetry are an even mix of German and Latin, and the single setting of part of the Eucharistic Liturgy is in German. That gives us twenty-three pieces in German, and seven in Latin.

While this is simply raw data, when we look in detail at the 30 texts, we find Ahle often setting texts of a highly personal nature. The first three biblical texts in the collection, for instance, are all sacred concertos for one voice and instruments, and all have a first person focus:

- 1. **Mein** Freund ich thue dir nicht unrecht (Matthew 20)
Friend, I am doing you no wrong
- 4. Herr Gott **mein** Heiland (Psalm 88)
*Lord, God of **my** salvation*
- 6. **Ich** freue **mich** im Herren (Isaiah 61:10)
I will greatly rejoice in the Lord

These three pieces of personal devotion begin a theme, which runs throughout the texts of the collection – a focus on the personal relationship with God and Christ. While a variety of Bible and chorale texts can be selected and shaped to fit this idea, it is when looking at the less predictable texts in Ahle’s collection, that we find the strongest displays of personalized devotion. In particular, five pieces in the 1658 collection stand out. While the five pieces do not share a common text source, they do all come from the category of devotional poetry. They are also the five that Rathey marks as “author unknown,”⁶⁷ in his catalog of pieces and their text sources.

- 3. Cupio dissolvi
- 5. Ach meiner wo bin ich
- 7. O Herr Jesu mein Heiland
- 10. O Domine Jesu Christe
- 27. Ich habs gewagt und zugesagt

The pieces contain a variety of phrases which are more personal and mystical than I expected to find in Lutheran German music of the seventeenth century – these texts seemed much more at home in the Catholic canon. For example:

⁶⁷ Rathey, 574-576 “Autor unbekannt.”

Where my love will never fall into tepidity, my joy will never be decreased, groans will not be heard, pain will not be felt, sadness will not be seen, joy will always be there. There is the highest and most proper security, security in the calm, calm in the delight, the delights of happiness. (Cupio Dissolvi, mm. 32-51)

Lord Jesus Christ, thou most sweetest Saviour, I come to thee, I confess all my misconduct, and I do not conceal my sin. (O Herr Jesu mein Heiland, mm. 99 – 115)

O Lord Jesus Christ, we worship you, wounded on the cross...I pray and ask that your wounds are the healing of my soul. (O Domine Jesu Christe)

Musicologist Mary Frandsen, however, discusses the trend of German protestants using these texts – they start showing up in collections as early as the 1620s.⁶⁸ Frandsen writes: “the prominence of devotional texts in the Lutheran Repertoire of the latter half of the seventeenth century...reflects the integration of two separate worlds, those of private, individual devotion and of public, corporate worship.”⁶⁹ This is what we see in Ahle’s 1658 *Lustgarten* collection – a set of thirty pieces for both private devotional use, and liturgical worship. Frandsen describes this phase as “new piety” – writers drawing inspiration from Medieval Latin devotional poetry (meaning these writings are descended from Catholic theology), occasionally adapting it to suit Lutheran Theology, and sometimes simply translating it to German.⁷⁰ Composers then took these texts, sometimes combining or truncating them, and wrote music for educated Lutherans of the later seventeenth century that contained a “mystically influenced, personalized devotion to Christ.”⁷¹

⁶⁸ Mary Frandsen, *Crossing Confessional Boundaries: The Patronage of Italian Sacred Music in Seventeenth Century Dresden* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 117.

⁶⁹ Ibid, 118.

⁷⁰ Ibid, 120.

⁷¹ Ibid, 171.

In a way, the five of Ahle's pieces mentioned above exhibit various ideas in Frandsen's analysis. "O Domine Jesu Christe" is a setting of one of the so-called Seven Prayers of St. Gregory. The popular story involves them being gradually developed between St. Gregory, who died in 604, and Pope Paul II, who died in 1471. Bonnie Blackburn cites more recent scholarship, suggesting that the prayers were around as early as the ninth century⁷² - but regardless, they would be ancient prayers by 1658, and clearly historically linked to the Catholic Church. But the personal nature of the prayer would have made it appealing to Lutherans searching for extreme acts of devotion.

Johann Gerhard (1582-1637) published a popular book in 1606, *Meditationes Sacrae*, which, according to Frandsen, draws on the medieval works of Augustine of Hippo (d. 430), Anselm of Canterbury (d. 1109), and Bernard of Clairvaux (d. 1153).⁷³ Ahle uses sections of this text in "Cupio dissolvi," an extremely personal devotional song, for only voice and continuo, which begins "I want to be dissolved and be with you, my Jesus, I want to see the place in which the Lord has prepared our eternal home."⁷⁴ Philip Kegel (d. 1611) published his devotional texts in German in 1593 (*Zwölf geistliche Andachten*), and this popular book was continually reprinted, as late as 1693.⁷⁵ Ahle adapted Kegel's texts twice – most successfully in a dialogue between soprano and bass, where the soprano sings Kegel's text searching for the Lord, and the bass responds with verses from Jeremiah and Isaiah, personifying Jesus.

⁷² Bonnie Blackburn, "For Whom do the Singers Sing?" in *Early Music* Volume 25, No. 4 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997) 593-609.

⁷³ Frandsen, 133.

⁷⁴ Cupio dissolvi, mm. 1-6 – "Cupio dissolvi, et esse tecum Jesu mi, desidero videre locum illum Domine, in quo aeternam mihi praeparasti mansionem."

⁷⁵ Libraries hold copies from 23 different printing years between 1593 and 1693.

Figure 18 - "Ach meiner wo bin ich" (No. 5, Lustgarten II), mm. 31 – 48.

Cantus:

Ach meiner, O Jesu!

Will du den immerdar über mich zürnen?

Laß dich doch versöhnen. Sei mir doch
gnädig und erbare dich meiner, O Jesu!

O mine, O Jesus!

Will you be forever angry with me?

*Let me repent. Be merciful with me,
and have mercy on me, O Jesus.*

(Kegel, 1593)

Bassus:

Ich bin barmherzig.

Ich will nicht ewiglich zürnen.

Allein erkenne deine Missethat.

I am merciful.

I will not forever be angry.

Only acknowledge your guilt.

(Jeremiah 3:12-13)

The last use of devotional poetry is slightly more unusual. The text "Ich hab's gewagt" first appears in 1601, as the third piece in Hassler's *Lustgarten neuer deutscher Gesäng*, published in Nürnberg.⁷⁶ While the authorship of the

⁷⁶ Hans Leo Hassler, *Lustgarten Neuer Teutscher Gesäng* (Nürnberg: Paul Kauffmann, 1601), no. 3.

texts in the Lustgarten is unknown, Kerala Snyder suggests that we can presume Hassler wrote them himself, as he did with his previous (1596) collection, *Neue teutsche Gesang*.⁷⁷

Ich hab's gewagt und zugesagt / ehlich mit ihr zu leben / Der lieb Gott woll durch seine Gnad / uns Glück und Segen geben.	<i>I have dared and promised, to live in marriage with her; May dear God, by his grace, give us happiness and blessings.</i>
Auf dass wir beid in Lieb und Leid treulich beisammen halten / was im Ehestand uns kommt zu Hand den lieb'n Gott lassen walten.	<i>As we in both love and sorrow, remain faithfully together, what in marriage comes to happen to us, let dear God rule.</i> ⁷⁸

While the text is not as mystically devotional as some of the other texts we've seen, it's still quite personal – seemingly composed more for a marriage ceremony than a Eucharistic or Vespers service. It still maintains ties to the personal – the text is not about blessing a marriage, it's about blessing **my** marriage.

When placed beside these five, and after the opening first person texts, more and more of the collection is placed in new context. The most atypical example of this is “Unser Herr Jesus Christus” (No. 15), which warrants discussion here. A setting of the Words of Institution, the piece is an anomaly⁷⁹ – a text which, while necessary for the Eucharist, would never be sung, and especially not with figural music. Perhaps this is the most extreme example of Ahle writing music for personal use, the piece would never be used liturgically, but uses a text central enough to the Lutheran (and Christian) doctrine to be

⁷⁷ Kerala J. Snyder, “Text and Tone in Hassler’s German Songs,” in *Musical Humanism and Its Legacy* (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1992), 253-278.

⁷⁸ I am indebted to Dr. David Gramit for his help here, and elsewhere, with the translations of seventeenth century German.

⁷⁹ RISM only lists three other settings of this text before the 1660’s - Schütz, Petri, and Scandello.

included in Luther's *Kleine Katechismus*. What this exhibits, then, is that the purpose of Ahle's collection was twofold – certainly it was a collection of music for use in liturgical worship, but also contained pieces which one would sing for their own expression of personal piety.

In order to heighten the personal aspects of his pieces, Ahle frequently combines texts in dialog form (as in "Ach meiner," above). Ahle's four part dialogue, "Was werden wir essen" (No. 8) is a particularly effective example. The tenor begins with questions from Matthew 6:31⁸⁰:

What will we drink, what will we eat, what will we wear?

The alto and bass join with verses from Psalm 37, in a seeming attempt to sooth a rather frantic, questioning tenor:

*Trust in the Lord, and do good (vs. 3)
I have been young, and now am old, yet I have not seen the righteous
forsaken, or the children begging bread (vs. 25)*

Finally, Ahle uses the chorale text (and melody) of "Warum betrübst du dich mein Herz" in the cantus part, to assist the straying spirits in finding their faith. The four parts close with a largely homophonic rendering of the chorale.

Even in larger scale pieces, Ahle selects passages from the Song of Solomon and the Book of Lamentations filled with strong imagery, and sets them in ways that pay more attention to the overall affect of the verses, than the specific words of the individual texts. Again, these display an interest in the personal – while not set in a monodic fashion, the texts speak of individual devotion:

⁸⁰ While this passage in Matthew 6 is Jesus teaching his disciples *not* to ask these questions, Ahle has set them in the tenor as a demonstration of a misguided soul.

“Surge propera amica mea” (No. 26)

*Arise, my love, my fair one,
and come away;
for now the winter is past,
the rain is over and gone.
The flowers appear on the earth;
the time of singing has come,
Arise, my love, my fair one,
and come away.
O my dove, in the clefts of the rock,
in the covert of the cliff,
let me see your face,
let me hear your voice;
for your voice is sweet,
and your face is lovely.*

(Song of Solomon 2: 10b-12a, 13b-14)

“Tota pulchra es” (No. 18)

*You are altogether beautiful, my love;
there is no flaw in you.
You have ravished my heart, my sister,
my bride,
you have ravished my heart with a
glance of your eyes,
with one jewel of your necklace.
How beautiful you are, my love,
how very beautiful!
Your eyes are doves, your hair is like a
flock of goats, your teeth are like a flock
of shorn ewes,
Your lips are like a crimson thread,
and your mouth is lovely.
Your cheeks are like halves of a
pomegranate, your neck is like the
tower of David.*

(Song of Solomon 4: 1-4, 7, 9, alt.)⁸¹

In “Surge propera,” for example, he sets “sonet vox tua in auribus meis/let me hear your voice” three times, each with growing intensity, creating a rhetorical approach to the text, as opposed to a more literal text painting approach. The next phrase, repeated four times, continually moves the harmony further and further from where it began on the text “vox enim tua dulcis/for your voice is sweet.” Another rhetorical approach is found in “Tota pulchra es” – similar to the techniques Isabella van Elferen identifies in the Schütz motet “O quam tu pulchra es” (SWV 265).⁸² Though less frequently than Schütz, Ahle repeats the opening phrase as a refrain four times throughout the piece, which van Elferen

⁸¹ Translations drawn from NRSV.

⁸² Isabella van Elferen, *Mystical Love in the German Baroque* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2009), 234-6.

suggests, “intensifies the rhetorical effect of the biblical enumeration of the physical attributes of the beloved.”⁸³

The other question that arises when examining these biblical texts is that of language. While it may be unsurprising that Ahle sets so many texts from Luther’s Bible, the appearance of seven Latin texts (including the two above) in a collection from the heart of Thuringia might seem odd. However, we must look at the context for this music before deciding what language might be “appropriate.” Musicologist Robin Leaver traces the use of music in Lutheran services in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by studying church orders and service descriptions published as early as 1523 to as late as 1682.⁸⁴ While Luther did have the professed goal of a mass entirely in German, he also believed it important that the young boys were well versed in the Latin Bible – a vespers service in the school would have included psalms, hymns, and a Latin Magnificat.⁸⁵ Leaver works through time, pointing out Lucas Lossius’ 1553 *Psalmodia*, published in Nuremburg, a collection of Lutheran Latin chants, which had multiple reprints.⁸⁶

In particular, a copy of this hymnal survives in the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin (originally in use in Halle, at the end of the sixteenth century), complete with a handwritten description of current practices. Leaver draws attention to multiple places in this service order which involve the choir replacing previous elements with motets, or chorale-based motets and speculates Schütz’s *Psalmen*

⁸³ Ibid, 235.

⁸⁴ Robin Leaver, “Lutheran Vespers as a Context for Music,” in *Church, Stage, and Studio: Music and Its Contexts in Seventeenth-Century Germany*, ed. Paul Walker (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1990), 143-161.

⁸⁵ Leaver, 147. Leaver has drawn this idea from Luther’s 1526 *Deutsche Messe*.

⁸⁶ As I will discuss below, this hymnal is likely the source for both text and melody of Ahle’s “O Lux Beata Trinitas.”

Davids (1619) and Hammerschmidt's *Musicalische Andachten* (1639-53) as being composed for this purpose, as well as chorale settings by Hassler, Franck, Praetorius, and Schein.⁸⁷ I would propose that Ahle's Lustgarten series falls into the same category – containing both figural motets as well as chorale settings using familiar melodies, in a mix of Latin and German. Certainly the four Magnificat settings, part of the liturgy that Leaver indicates was sung in Latin as late as 1682⁸⁸, would be liturgically appropriate.

And while the canticle settings may be easy to place in the liturgy, where do they fit in the collection? Ahle has clearly placed an emphasis on the Magnificat – four settings appear in the collection of only thirty pieces – and no other texts are duplicated within. These settings are the pinnacles of personal devotion, though – the Song of Mary, exclaiming her devotion to Elizabeth. In this way, they are a perfect centerpiece to the collection – a liturgical moment of personal spirituality.

⁸⁷ Leaver, 154.

⁸⁸ Ibid, 156.

Chapter 7

Ahle's Use of Chorales

In his comprehensive (albeit slightly outdated) study *Der evangelischen Kirchengesang*, Carl von Winterfeld outlines the influence of chorales in Ahle's 1658 *Lustgarten* collection.⁸⁹ Winterfeld states that Ahle uses fewer chorales in this collection than the 1657 *Lustgarten* (only seven in thirty pieces, as opposed to eight in twenty-six), and lists them as follows:

- Was werden wir essen (No. 8)
- Ach mein hertzliebes Jesulein (No. 13)
- Christ lag in Todesbanden (No. 15)
- O Lux beata Trinitas (No. 16)
- O Heiliger Geist du göttlichs feur (No. 23)
- Ich hab's gewagt (No. 27)
- Erschienen ist der herrliche Tag (No. 29)

When examining the music, we find that "Ich hab's gewagt," while based on a pre-existing text found in Hassler's *Lustgarten*,⁹⁰ does not contain any musical material borrowed from the source. The same holds true for "Ach mein hertzliebes Jesulein;" The text is the thirteenth verse from Martin Luther's "Vom Himmel hoch." Rathey discusses that this particular verse became common to set in isolation from the rest of the text, and also notes that in this setting Ahle does not use the associated melody.⁹¹ Theoretically, this leaves five pieces in the 1658 *Lustgarten* that have a basis on, or at least use pre-existing musical material. However, Winterfeld neglects a few pieces that are worth noting: Rathey indicates "Fürchtet euch nicht (No. 28)" features elements of the chorale "Gelobet seist du, Jesus Christ," and that "Wer ist der, so von Edom kömmet (No. 24)" ends in two verses of an unidentified chorale. Finally, it's worth noting that

⁸⁹ Winterfeld, *Der evangelischen Kirchengesang im siebzehnten Jahrhunderte*, 298.

⁹⁰ Hans Leo Hassler, *Lustgarten Neuer Teutscher Gesäng* (Nürnberg: Paul Kauffmann, 1601), no. 3.

⁹¹ Rathey, *Johann Rudolph Ahle*, 273-275.

“Was ist der Mensch (No. 2)” is based, musically and textually, on “Ich hab mein Sach Gott heimgestellt.”⁹² This leaves us with eight pieces seemingly based on both a pre-existing text and melody, with all but one with a clear source.

The two largest scale pieces are “Fürchtet euch nicht” and “O Heiliger Geist.” Both use the chorale melodies differently, but both are fairly conservative in their use of the melodies. The most strict is “O Heiliger Geist.” Scored for three soloists (cantus, altus, and bassus), a five voice cappella, and featuring sinfonias for four strings and four *flauti*, the piece goes through four verses of “O heiliger Geist, du göttlich feur” by Melchior Vulpus, which first appeared in *Ein schön geistlich Gesangbuch*, his 1609 hymnal:⁹³

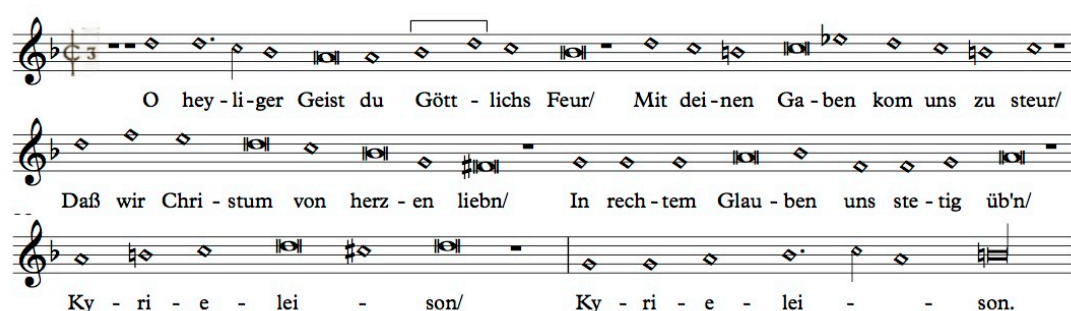


Figure 19 – “O heyli-ger Geist,” from *Vulpus: Gesangbuch* (1609), p. 204.

Ahle’s piece is divided into two large sections, each with two verses to the same music. The first begins with a string sinfonia, and following that the soloists sing the opening motive of the chorale repeatedly, echoed by the strings, and overlapping with each other. While the first note is occasionally altered, the

⁹² Rathey discusses “Wer ist der” on pg. 308, and mentions the use of the chorale melody and text for “Fürchtet euch nicht” in his index of Ahle’s works. While he mentions the text of “Was ist der Mensch” is based on Johan Leon’s “Ich hab mein Sach” he does not mention or discuss the musical elements of this chorale found in Ahle’s music.

⁹³ Melchior Vulpus, *Ein schön geistlich Gesangbuch* (Jena, J. Weidner, 1609). The majority of the tunes discussed here can be found in this hymnal, which I came across after consulting Johannes Zahn’s *Melodien der deutschen evangelischen Kirchenlieder*. I think it is reasonable to suggest Ahle would have had access to this widely circulated and immensely popular book.

falling third on “heiliger” remains the same, and the three voices eventually unite to complete the opening line. Directly following that, the strings, chorus, and soloists join together in a complete statement of the first line of the chorale:

The musical score is divided into three systems. The first system includes Cantus, Altus, Bassus, and Continuo parts. The second system includes C. A. B. and B.C. parts. The third system includes Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., Cappella, and B.C. parts. The lyrics are in German and include the words "O Heiliger Geist, du göttlicher Feuer, du göttlicher Geist". The score is written in 3/4 time and features a key signature of one flat (B-flat).

Figure 20 - J. R. Ahle, “O Heiliger Geist” (No. 23, Lustgarten II, 1658), mm. 28 - 40.

The piece continues in much the same vain – the three soloists sing brief segments of the melody, with occasional insignificant note changes, and then the

choir and instruments join together for complete statements of the complete line. For the final Kyrie's, however, Ahle sets aside the melody given by Vulpius. While he still uses an ascending fourth, the lines terminate differently, and the tutti statement that closes the first part has no melodic relation to what Vulpius wrote.

The second part of the piece is even more rigid with the original melody. After a sinfonia for four *flauti*, there is a tutti statement of the first motive of the melody (this time on the text for the third and fourth verses). The three soloists and the strings echo this statement, and the phrase ends with the strings echoing the last two chords. Throughout the section, Ahle includes dynamic markings – *forte* for the first utterance, *mezzo piano* for the second, and *pianissimo* for the echo of the two chords.

The musical score for "O Heiliger Geist" (No. 23, Lustgarten II, 1658), mm. 145-150, is presented in four staves. The Flauti staff (top) shows a melodic line with dynamics *f*, *mp*, and *pp*. The Cantus Altus Bassus staff (second) shows the vocal line with lyrics "O Her - zen - trö - ster, O Her - zen - trö - ster," and dynamics *f* and *mp*. The Cappella staff (third) shows the choir line with the same lyrics and dynamics. The Continuo staff (bottom) shows the basso continuo line with dynamics *f*, *mp*, and *p*, and includes figured bass notation: #, b, #, b.

Figure 21 - "O Heiliger Geist" (No. 23, Lustgarten II, 1658), mm. 145-150.

This formula is used for the remainder of the piece; Ahle applies this echo effect to each line of the melody. Once again, Ahle uses only his material for the Kyrie's – still a rising fourth motive, but not the material given by Vulpius. In the end, "O heiliger Geist" comes across as an elaborate setting of the original chorale. There

is little new musical material, with the exception of the sinfonias, and the chorale melody is easily recognizable throughout.

“Fürchtet euch nicht,” scored for two choirs - the angels (three sopranos and baritone) and the shepherds (alto, two tenors, and a bass) – and four *fagotti* buries the chorale melody a bit deeper, and uses it for a different purpose. After the opening sinfonia, a solo soprano sings the common text from Luke 2:10-15 (“Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people...”). The rest of the angel choir soon joins, singing “Glory to God, and Peace on Earth,” and the shepherds then sing a brief chorus announcing their intent to travel to Bethlehem. After a second sinfonia, the chorus of shepherds sings a response to the verses from Luke, in the form of the chorale “Gelobet seistu Jesu Christ.”

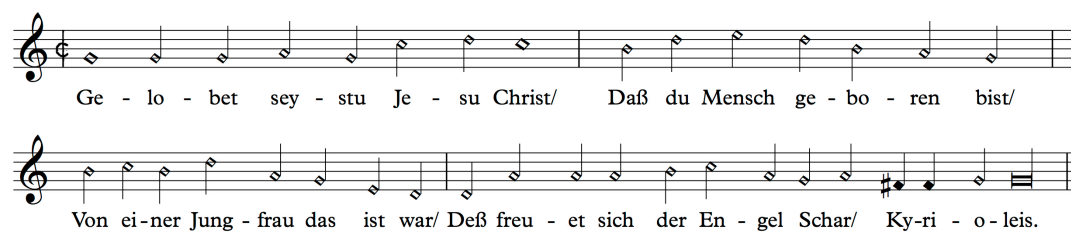


Figure 22 – “Gelobet seistu Jesu Christ” from Vulpius: Gesangbuch (1609), p. 44.⁹⁴

⁹⁴ While the authorship of the text to this chorale is easily attributed to Martin Luther, the music is less easy to identify – Johannes Zahn attributes it Walter, whose hymnal it first appeared in, in 1524.

This is one of the few occasions where Ahle moves the chorale between voices; it begins in the top voice, is barely noticeable for “Jesu Christ,” before ending up in the first tenor voice. In his effort to differentiate the roles of the choruses, he has the upper (angel) choir sing “der Engelschaar,” repeatedly, until the shepherd chorus finally completes the melody, now in the second tenor voice.

Chori Past. Ge-lo-bet seis - tu, Ge-lo-bet seis-tu Je - - su Christ, das du Mensch ge -

Chori Past. boh-ren bist, von ei-ner Jung frau das ist war, des freu - et sich, des freu - et sich, des

Chori Angelici Der En-gel-schaar, der En-gel schaar, der

Chori Past. freu - et sich, des freu - et sich, des freu - et sich, des freu - et sich, des freu - et sich,

Chori Angelici En - - - gel - schaar,

Chori Past. des freu - et sich der En - gel schaar, Ky-ri - e - leiß.

Figure 23 - “Fürchtet euch nicht” (No. 28, Lustgarten II), mm. 137-162.

After the first verse, Ahle skips directly to the seventh verse of the chorale.

While the upper and lower choirs begin to alternate in larger pieces, the chorale phrases continue to move between parts until the last line, which is not sung by any part. In lieu of the “Kyrieleis,” Ahle concludes with a rousing Amen, more suitable for a joyous Christmas piece. Even Blume can admit the piece is “a masterful realization in spite of its narrow confines.”⁹⁵

One of the finest pieces in the collection, “Erschienen ist der Herrliche Tag” is a perfect example of the seventeenth-century German *chorale concerto*. Ahle reworks the melody through instrumental sinfonias, vocal solos, and choruses, in the piece scored for violins, trombones, soloists, and chorus. The piece uses the familiar Herman text, but with a lesser known tune:⁹⁶



Figure 24 – “Erschienen ist der herrliche Tag,” from *Geistliche Lieder und Psalmen* (Erfurt: Martin Spagenberg, 1634), XLI.

Already in the opening sinfonia, Ahle brings out the most noticeable elements of the melody – the characteristic upward leap of a fourth, resolving to the major third. Ahle chooses to set five of the fourteen verses, and the first four follow the same pattern: a vocal solo, with or without instruments, followed by a conservative rendering of the triple meter section. The first verse, and the most faithful to the melody, is the solo soprano with two violins. While the melody has light embellishments, the chorale is basically unaltered aside from occasional repetitions.

⁹⁵ Blume, *Protestant Church Music*, 232.

⁹⁶ Rathey identifies this tune as the melodic source in his index to Ahle’s works.

Cantus, mm. 22 - 30

Er-schie-nen ist der herr - li-che Tag, dran sich nie-mand genug freu - en mag,

Altus, mm. 67 - 75

Die al - te Schlang, die Sünd und Tod, die hell, all Jam - mer, Angst und noht, die sünd und Tod,

Figure 25 –Cantus and Altus solos from “Erschienen ist der herrliche Tag,” (No. 29, Lustgarten II)

On the second verse (sung by an Alto soloist), Ahle maintains the key notes of the chorale, so the melody is still recognizable, but reflects more of the text. A dissonance is added on “sünd,” and the descending figure from the original melody is used in a different way, to depict a descent into hell and pain. The following verse is sung by the tenor, and Ahle chooses to skip to the ninth verse of the chorale – where life triumphs over death (a nice contrast to the preceding verse, where death seemed strong). Continuing to stray further from the original melody, this verse contains a large amount of original material, even though it begins with the ascending fourth, which falls to the major third. Ahle pays particular attention in this section to the image of war – using the trombones and the voice to depict fanfares, as well as florid passages for the singer.

Tenor, mm. 90 - 99

Sein Raub der Tod must fah-ren lahn, must fah-ren lahn, sein Raub der Tod must fah - -

- - ren lahn, das Le-ben siegt, das le-ben siegt, das le-ben siegt, und g'wan ihm an,

Bassus, mm. 129 - 136

Die Sonn, die Sonn, die Sonn, die Erd, die Sonn, die Erd, all Cre - a-tur, die Sonn, die Erd,

Figure 26 - Tenor and Bassus solos from “Erschienen ist der herrliche Tag,” (No. 29, Lustgarten II)

The bass verse (the thirteenth) has the least melodic material tied to the chorale. While it opens with the rising fourth, it does not fall to the third, and the rest of

the vocal line bears very little resemblance to the familiar melody, outside of some similarities in the harmonic structure. The vocal line never strays far from the continuo part, but this allows the three trombones above to weave a beautiful texture. When the triple returns at the end of this verse, it is once again a clear rendering of the chorale, except that in this case, it moves between the alto and tenor soloists.

For the final verse (the fourteenth), Ahle changes the first part of the melody to fit into a triple meter, and introduces the cappella. He creates a similar echo effect to that which he used in “O heiliger Geist” – the choir sings a phrase, it’s echoed by all the instruments, and then the final two chords are echoed by simply the violins. When the melody moves to what was originally in triple meter, Ahle abandons the echo effect, and repeats the passage twice, culminating and a grand duple final “alleluja!”

While “Christ Lag in Todes Banden” (No. 15) begins in the same vain as “O heiliger Geist,” (fragments of the melody overlapping, before uniting the voices and instruments in communal statements of the chorale), it can also be assigned to the category of *chorale concerto*, but on a much smaller scale than “Erschienen ist.” The piece uses Luther’s common text and tune.



Figure 27 - "Christ lag in Todes Banden," from Vulpius: Gesangbuch (1609), p. 164.

The composition opens with four independent statements of the opening line of the chorale, first in the Bassus, then followed quickly by the Altus, Cantus, and finally the Tenor. The voices repeat the text “in Todes Banden,” in pairs (still

Cantus
Altus

für un-ser Sün - de ge - ge - ben, für

für un-ser Sünd, für un-ser Sünd, für un-ser Sün - de ge - ge - ben, für

Tenor
Bassus

für un-ser Sünd, für un-ser Sün - de ge - ge - ben, für un-ser Sün - de ge - ge - ben, für un-ser Sün - de ge - ge - ben.

C.
A.

un-ser Sün - de ge - ge - ben, für un-ser Sün - de ge - ge - ben.

für un-ser Sünd ge - ge - ben, für un-ser Sünd, für un-ser Sünd ge - ge - ben.

T.
B.

für un-ser Sün-de ge - ge - ben, für un-ser Sün - de ge - ge - ben.

After a brief violin interjection, Ahle begins the third line of the text, which traditionally returns to the opening music. Instead, there is a new melody – which eliminates the characteristic opening material, but terminates in the same way as the old melody. This is the only statement in the piece where the traditional melody is so completely disregarded, and also the only one that is not given a tutti treatment. Ahle seems to use this passage as a transitional moment – from the painstakingly wrought statements around death and sin – to the brighter thoughts of Christ arising, and finding new life. The next phrase returns to the treatment pattern of the opening phrases – overlapping individual

statements (this time in a triple meter) are concluded with a corporate homophonic statement (back in the duple meter).

In the second part of the text, Ahle begins to pay more attention to the text, as he did in “Erschienen ist.” The original melody is never far from the surface, though, as can be seen in the examples below.

The figure displays six pairs of musical staves, each comparing an original chorale melody (top staff) with Ahle's embellished version (bottom staff). The lyrics are: "des wir sol-len frö-lich sein, Gott lo-ben, und dank-bar sein, und sin-gen, Al-le-lu-ja, Al-le-lu-ja." The Ahle versions show various rhythmic changes, including halving note values (marked with a star) and adding melismas.

* in examples marked with a star, the note values of the chorale have been halved.

Figure 29 - Ahle's embellishments on the original chorale melody.

He begins conservatively, simply adding a dotted figure in the many utterances of “frölich sein,” which gives the text motion and excitement. The music soon becomes more elaborate, such as in the depiction of “Gott loben” and “singen,” both with melismas. “Und dankbar sein” is consistently rendered (perhaps representing the unending praise) in long and deliberate note values, while the Alleluia’s are consistently florid and joyful.

Moving away from the world of the chorale concerto, we come to one of only a few motets in Ahle’s 1658 *Lustgarten*. The only chorale-based piece in the

collection to have a Latin text, “O Lux Beata Trinitas” draws musical influence from a version of the hymn printed in Lukas Lossius’s 1553 hymnal.⁹⁷



Figure 30 - "O lux beata trinitas" from *Psalmodia, Cantica Sacra Veteris Ecclesiae*, Norbergae, 1553.

Ahle sets all three of the verses in a six voice motet. The first part has the strongest links to the chorale melody – almost every entry in the first fifteen bars of the piece bears a close resemblance to the chorale. As in “Christ lag” and “O heiliger Geist,” all parts repeat the first line of the chorale individually, until they all come together for a corporate statement. Ahle does the same thing, but to a lesser extent, with the second half of the first verse. For the second verse, the chorale melody is largely abandoned, in favor of an almost polychoral homophonic texture – Ahle alternates the higher and lower voices to depict the difference between the morning song and evening prayer being sung (*Te mane laudum carmine, te deprecemur vespere*). However, upon arrival at “Te nostra supplex gloria,” Ahle does something new. The second Cantus sings the chorale melody in minims, while the other five parts move largely in semi-minims around it. The faux-cantus firmus lasts only a few bars, but appropriately reappears in the third verse, for the text “et nunc et in perpetuum.” Here it is the Altus, and then the Bassus holding the chorale melody, while the other parts dance around in passages of eighth notes.

⁹⁷ Unable to consult this hymnal, I have relied on the version provided by Johannes Zahn in his *Melodien der deutschen evangelischen Kirchenlieder*.

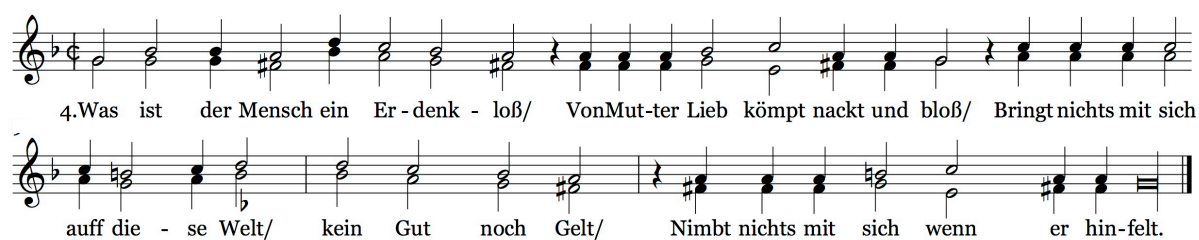


Figure 32 - "Ich hab mein sach Gott heimgestellt," Verse 4, Cantus and Altus, from Vulpius: *Gesangbuch* (1609), p. 508.

Thankfully, Ahle only sets six of the eighteen verses Vulpius provides, beginning with the fourth verse.

Figure 33 - "Was ist der Mensch" (No. 2, Lustgarten II), mm. 1-21.

From the beginning, it is clear Ahle has built his music on this Altus part – he opens with the figure of the semitone descent, and then repeats the semitone descent figure again, a third higher. In the first and second verse (Vulpius four and ten), the only place where the music deviates from the general melodic

structure of the chorale is on “Bringt nichts mit sich auff diese Welt,” where Ahle instead uses some more inventive musical material. The next verse is much freer, with only a few motives noticeably drawn from the chorale. Ahle’s fourth verse, however, is a straight copy of the Vulpius alto part, treated as a cantus firmus. These twenty bars are unique in the collection – not only because this is the only place where Ahle is so strict with his use of pre-existing material, but also as this is the only place where he provides two lines in the continuo part – one above the other, with the inscription “oder also.”

Altus

Mein lie - ben Gott von An - ge -

B.C.

Oder also:

Alt.

sicht, werd ich an - schau, dran

B.C.

Alt.

zweiffl ich nicht, in ew - ger Freud und

B.C.

Figure 34 - "Was ist der Mensch" (No. 2, Lustgarten II), mm. 56 – 75.

After this excitement, Ahle returns to the methods he used for the first verses. There is still attention to text setting, such as rests interrupting the repetitions of "Ach," and for the final verse, "Amen, mein lieber frommer Gott!," Ahle opts for a jaunty triple meter (but continues to retain the melodic material of the chorale).

The final piece based on a discernable chorale⁹⁸ is the eighth piece in the collection, "Was werden wir essen." Scored for only four solo voices and continuo, the piece creates a dialog between the four voices, using a variety of bible passages, and the chorale "Warum betrübst du dich mein Hertz." The tenor repeatedly sings a passage from Matthew 6:31, asking what we will eat, drink, and wear, while the bass and the alto alternate with their responses from Psalm 37: hope will keep us modest and fed. Above it all, the soprano sings the chorale text, to the melody by Seth Calvisius, as if to comfort those questioning below:

*Why do you grieve, my heart?
Trouble and pain, just for temporary good?
Trust your Lord God, who created all things.*

⁹⁸ As previously mentioned, No. 24 "Wer ist der, so von Edom kömmet" concludes (as Rathey mentions) with a double choir homophonic passage that seems to be a chorale, but is as of yet unidentified.



Figure 35 - "Warumb betrübstu dich mein Herz," from Vulpius: Gesangbuch (1609).

The first soprano entrance comes after the tenor introduction, and the alto response. The soprano sings the entire melody, almost exactly as written in Vulpius,⁹⁹ alone for the first line, but quickly joined by the tenor asking questions once again. The soprano begins the chorale melody again (still on the first verse), but never gets past the first two lines. As the other parts begin to enter in, Ahle becomes less strict with his use of the melody, and the soprano sings some material unrelated to the chorale. After all four parts compete for attention for several bars, they all join together in a rendition of the chorale to finish the piece – a striking moment, after being so independent for the rest of the piece.

Figure 36 - "Was werden wir essen" (No. 8, Lustgarten II), mm. 83 – 94.

⁹⁹ Once again, the chorale as written in Vulpius is closer (in terms of rhythm and accidentals) to what Ahle writes than any of the other several versions which Zahn provides, making it seem likely Ahle was using this hymnal as a source.

Just as in “Fürchtet euch nicht,” Ahle uses the chorale to musically draw the previously separated voices together, and textually as a way to give an appropriate response to the biblical texts.

In a general sense, each of these examples from Ahle’s 1658 *Lustgarten* seem to use chorales to give the listener a moment to cling to something familiar. They are never so obscured as to be unrecognizable – and would allow a 17th century listener to hear something they were accustomed to singing – and this is where the fascination with personal spirituality re-enters the discussion. His approach to using the chorale varied from piece to piece; while some pieces were based exclusively on chorales, others simply used them as a footnote to Ahle’s original material. They were always used to create unity in the music; “Was werden wir essen” and “Fürchtet euch nicht” used chorales to create a theological unity, suggesting a response to the passages just heard, using chorales as the basis for larger pieces, such as “Erschienen ist” and “O heiliger Geist,” Ahle found a way to create new, exciting music, but still with rousing, familiar chorale elements; his clever re-workings of the melodic elements in “O lux beata trinitas” and “Christ lag in Todes Banden,” allowed him to create more intimate music that was unified by the repetitive use of opening motives. More than unity, though, the use of familiar chorales would have created a connection the listener (or performer) was able to make, allowing them to feel part of the liturgy or of the music. This personal connection is the thread that connects Ahle’s use of texts and chorales, and his use of instruments to highlight the texts – and should shape our conception of the collection.

Part III – Conclusions

Chapter 8

Conclusions

My professed goal, at the beginning of this research, was to investigate editorial methods, and how they would shape and adapt my performance. In the end, while I found the editorial research both enlightening and important, it was through the process of editing that I learned the most about the music, and the performance ramifications of editing are strongly linked to the degree of research necessary for the creation of a strong edition. Ultimately, when returning to my original question – “How can creating a critical-performance edition of the music of Johann Rudolph Ahle impact my performance of his music?” – I think there are a few observations that can be made.

First and foremost, from the practical standpoint of editing, I would suggest I have succeeded in creating an edition that would please both performers and scholars. It has been tested and continues to be tested by both performers and scholars (as well as combinations of the two) with satisfactory results. In addition to the isolated success with this edition, as an editor I’ve developed my skills to the point of editing being a marketable skill for me, and I’ve begun to see income from it. Lastly, in my performance of other edited music, I’ve learned to identify decisions that would have been made, both in scholarly editions that strive to make clear every critical act, as well as in what Alexander Silbiger terms “uncritical editions” – those of unknown origin that appear on the internet with alarming frequency.¹⁰⁰

The process of focusing so intently on Ahle and his collection has shaped my performance of his music, of course. By examining the 1658 Lustgarten in

¹⁰⁰ Alexander Silbiger, “The Promises and Pitfalls of Online Scholarly Music Publishing,” in *Early Music Editing* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 198.

such detail, I identified a possible approach in his collection of texts and composition styles to these texts. The performance implications are extensive. By realizing the patterns of personal devotion, it becomes clear that a sterile performance is completely unsuitable. This music must have the drama that comes as a result of a personal investment in the text – and that investment must be found in the instrumentation, the harmony, the rhetoric, and any other musical elements that Ahle had at his disposal. What's more, this trend of personal devotion, according to Frandsen, can be found in music throughout Germany in the seventeenth century – meaning this idea of heightened expression in sacred music should apply not only to Ahle, but to Schütz, Schein, Scheidt, and whomever else comes across my path.

Finally, by focusing so specifically, and by virtue of researching in the internet age, I was able to update the existing scholarship on Ahle – finding text sources which had been previously unknown. These sources have been crucial to realizing the extent of Ahle's fascination with personal spirituality – which I believe is in turn crucial to a convincing performance of his music. While I hesitate to announce to the world that Ahle is indeed the "German Monteverdi" – I certainly find his music of the highest quality, and I can only hope that through continued examination, more find his music equally stimulating.

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