

## Summary

During the nineteenth century political, economic, and social transformations were occurring. Those changes had a major impact on the cultural situation in the regions of current Thuringia, Saxony-Anhalt, and Saxony. Weimar, being the capital of culture, was quite important for writers, poets, and musicians. It was Weimar that was the center of the avant-garde at that time. In Erfurt and Leipzig, music publishing houses were created. Thanks to them, the new compositions could be distributed. Freedom of the press contributed to the development of music criticism through magazines such as *Euterpe*, *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, and *Urania*. The art of the nineteenth century is associated with the ideas of individualism, subjectivism, and personal artistic expression. These ideas, however, had to remain outside the church building, a place of performing and listening to organ music, or be combined with the achievements of earlier centuries that brought a huge variety of form. Organ music at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries was not popular or at least not as common as compositions for other instruments. But intense desire for the development of organ music appeared already in the 1820s.

The great role of culture and the activity of many involved artists contributed to the dynamic publication of not only newly created works but also theoretical writings like those of Johann Gottlob Töpfer. The creative atmosphere of the leading centers provided the musicians with much inspiration for development. In the nineteenth century, many collections of organ music were printed. The focus of these collections was the practical aspect. This resulted from the development of organ pedagogy, the creation of organ schools, and the structures of musical education. The practice of organ transcription became more and more important over time.

Central Germany is a region extremely rich in historical organs that stand as tributes to the organ-building art. Thuringia, with its rich history of political changes and the legacy of numerous small and large principalities, often with Baroque architecture, has many Baroque organs. These organs account for about 35% of all instruments in this federal state. In Saxony-Anhalt and Saxony, the works of Friedrich Ladegast, Adolf Reubke, the Rühlmann Company, and Wilhelm Sauer can be found. Many of them were restored and are now in their original state or close to it. One such example is the Rühlmann organ in the City Church of Querfurt, which was used for the CD recording.

Historical organs inspired composers to create works based on the Baroque tradition. Many of them extremely respected the music of Johann Sebastian Bach and were inspired by it.

This resulted in the development of new forms of musical expression in organ literature. At the same time, pieces in the Baroque style were written. Composers tried to express the Baroque ideas in their own contemporary ways. They also created a new and romantic face of Johann Sebastian Bach's music, which delighted the nineteenth-century music lover. The development of organ building supported it. Not without significance was the establishment of the Association of German Organ Builders.

In the mid-eighteenth century, the main element of the Lutheran service became the sermon. The role of music, and its rhetorical meaning, moved to the background. Since the element that binds the whole liturgy together was now mainly the Word of God, the melodic elements did not remain as important as they were in previous centuries. The centuries old practice of composing chorale preludes with melody in long rhythmic values was no longer an element of *sine qua non*. The composers began to write chorale preludes sometimes containing only elements of the melody of the hymn. As a result, a form of chorale prelude without a direct liturgical meaning was distinguished. This was expressing only the effect of a specific hymn which contributed to the creation of chorale preludes of a concert character.

The composers mentioned in the dissertation were active in the area of Central Germany. Herrmann Wehe and Herrmann Finzenhagen were organists in Magdeburg. Wehe was the organist of St. Peter's Church beginning in 1877. Then, from 1882 until his death in 1899, he was conductor of the Magdeburg Cathedral choir. Beginning in 1851, Finzenhagen was the organist of St. Jacob's Church. The more popular August Gottfried Ritter was an organist in Erfurt (1831-1844), in Merseburg (1844-1847), and in Magdeburg since 1847. While he was in Magdeburg, he was also responsible for overseeing the organ building projects. Johann Gottlob Töpfer had the same responsibilities of organ building oversight since 1830 while he was organist in the city church of St. Peter and Paul in Weimar. The piano virtuoso, Franz Liszt, who was quite popular within his own right, was active at the same time as Töpfer as he was the Royal Music Director in Weimar from 1842-1861. Both Töpfer and Liszt are wonderful representatives of the musical works in Thuringa. The cosmopolitan East German Max Reger – after studying under Hugo Riemann in Sondershausen – became Court Music Master in Meiningen, lived in Jena, and also taught in Leipzig since 1907. Gustav Merkel, starting in 1857, was organist in Court Church in Dresden and a teacher at the Royal Conservatory. Carl Piutti (organist at the St. Thomas Church, Leipzig since 1880) and Robert Schaab (organist at the St. John's Church, Leipzig since 1878) represent the area of Saxony.

Along with the progressive industrialization of all fields in the nineteenth century in Europe, the industrialization of organ-building also progressed. The evolution of the sound

ideals of organ builders and composers is an inseparable unity that corresponds to the spirit of the era and contributed to such diverse styles in Romantic music in Central Germany in the nineteenth century. It is significant that the master of polyphony, Johann Sebastian Bach, gained a "new face" at that time by performances according to romantic criteria, while at the same time the basis for the development of organ music of the nineteenth century. Johann Sebastian Bach's universality, with all its diversity, speaks in favor of the timelessness of this tradition. Johann Sebastian Bach was considered by many to be the greatest composer of all time. He was a devout student of the works of the masters preceding him. He became the object of study of nineteenth-century organists, an inspiration for exploration, and an element worthy of studying. His music, with a universal and timeless paradigm, was inscribed in the technical development of the organ. For some – as for Max Reger – Johann Sebastian Bach was even a musical alpha and omega. Johann Sebastian Bach's pedagogical activities and his works composed for students correspond to the teaching passions of the composers presented in this writing. Sensitive to the sound concept of the organ, Johann Gottlob Töpfer, considered by many to be the father of modern organ building, was a great lover of the Great Cantor from Leipzig's music and its well-known interpreter. Johann Sebastian Bach and Johann Gottlob Töpfer, although they could never meet in person, set a course of Romantic music in this region of Germany.

This tendency is also present today. Although contemporary performance practice is far more technique-oriented, the need and desire to express the essence of Johann Sebastian Bach's music in Central Germany is one very strong characteristic. Johann Sebastian Bach's music, both in the nineteenth century and today, is a universal language that is understood by both professional musicians, music lovers, and listeners who are used to popular music.