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**Busoni's 'Beiträge zu einer Hochschule des Clavierspiels'
and the Performance of Bach on the Modern Piano**

Jasper Maarten van der Klis

Doctor of Music
Guildhall School of Music & Drama, London
Research/Keyboard Department
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Abstract

Ferruccio Busoni (1866-1924) was one of the leading figures of his time in the fields of piano performance, editing, and composition. He was an influential teacher and advocate for young performers and composers, and he left an indelible mark on twentieth-century musical life.

This thesis provides the first detailed account of Busoni's editing and performance of Bach. Through an in-depth analysis of his Bach editions and related sources, including essays, archival material, recordings, and transcriptions, I show how Busoni's contributions to the understanding and performance of Bach's keyboard music are particularly rich and thought-provoking.

Recently published material discussed in Chapter 1 (*Why Busoni?*) reveals Busoni to have been a conscientious editor whose role in his interpretative editions was that of a mentor rather than a stern teacher. Contextual evidence demonstrates that his work was influential for many of his peers and successors, which further consolidates Busoni's position in the history of Bach piano playing.

Special attention is given in Chapter 2 (*Reading Busoni*) to Busoni's early interpretative editions of Bach for Breitkopf & Härtel: the Inventions and Sinfonias were intended as a 'preparatory school', while Busoni regarded his edition of the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier as his 'testament' for pianists. These editions constitute part of what Busoni referred to as his 'Beiträge zu einer Hochschule des Clavierspiels' ('Contributions to an Advanced School of Piano Playing'). Close reading of the musical indications and annotations in Busoni's editions reveals how his playing emphasised the compositional structure of the music through a variety of means including subtle use of tempo flexibility. Examples will be given of peers and successors taking inspiration from Busoni and developing aspects found in his editions.

Busoni's attitude towards the early acoustic recording process, as revealed in correspondence with his English management agency, provides the context for an analysis of the playing style captured on his only surviving acoustic recording of Bach in Chapter 3 (*Listening to Busoni*).

This analytical work forms the basis for an auto-ethnographical exploration of my past and present approaches to the piano performance of Bach and how Busoni's output is informing aspects of my continuing practice in Chapter 4 (*Playing with Busoni*). This process is documented in annotated musical scores. I will discuss my Doctoral recital and additional recordings in Chapter 5 (*Recital and Recordings*).

The outcomes of this research constitute both a report of Busoni's editorial approach to Bach placed within a broader historical and musicological context, and an account of the development of my own interpretation of Bach's keyboard music after consulting Busoni's editions. Finally, the accompanying recordings aim to bring to life those subtleties of musical notation discussed in this thesis.

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is entirely my own work, except where clear reference has been made to the work of others. I grant powers of discretion to the School Librarian to allow the thesis to be copied in whole or in part without further reference to the author.

Jasper van der Klis, November 2022

1. Why Busoni?

Technological advances have given us direct access to a wealth of information on piano playing. We are able to listen to practically any recording that has ever been commercially issued. Yet recordings can only take us so far back in time: recording techniques were in their infancy in the early twentieth century, which means a real barrier exists that obscures many fine details of piano playing from before this time. Recent research has begun to break through this barrier by convincingly showing that further clues may be found in interpretative editions: music editions in which the editor, usually a renowned performer, attempted to capture their interpretation for future generations. However, fully understanding some of this notation requires a knowledge of musical indications and prevailing performance aesthetics of the time with which I was largely unfamiliar.

During my training as a performing pianist I had the privilege to attend concerts, lessons, and masterclasses by many great performers and teachers. What was most fascinating to me was how the greatest musical minds distinguished themselves by their expert reading of the musical score and their ability to translate what is marked in the score into sound. Through contact with these artists I became aware of a significant gap in my understanding of musical notation. I was only taught how to read musical indications during my studies: I hardly ever practised how to write them myself.¹ I was not able to glean as much from a musical score as I wished to.

My fascination with early keyboard music led me to take the Baroque Studies elective offered at Guildhall. I was looking for fresh ideas and inspiration on how to play this music, especially that by J. S. Bach, more convincingly on my modern instrument. I was also curious about how piano performance traditions of this repertoire developed over time and who the important figures in this development were. It is during these classes that I began to explore musical indications and notation more thoroughly through three presentations I gave: the first on early keyboard fingering, the second on slurs in the unmeasured prelude, and the third on a comparison of transcriptions by J. S. Bach and Ferruccio Busoni. Although I touched on the idea of why music may be notated the way it is and what we may learn from this, it was still a mostly passive engagement with the musical score.

¹ By ‘musical indications’, I refer to any marking that one may encounter while reading a musical score, such as slurs, articulation, fingering, dynamic markings, etc. ‘Annotation’ refers to explanatory notes, footnotes, or diagrams in or below the score, while ‘notation’ refers to the whole musical score.

During my second Postgraduate year at Guildhall, my teacher Peter Bithell urged me to mark my own performance choices on my scores more frequently.² It was my experience then that the act of writing down these decisions either solidified them or caused me to think more deeply about what I wanted to achieve musically and how to capture this. Many of the subtleties of high-level piano playing may be ‘too ethereal for expression by written signs’.³ However, my own efforts at marking my ideas had proven to be worthwhile, and in order to improve my playing of Bach’s music on the piano I wished to further explore musical notation. The seed was planted for the analytical and practical work I will present in this thesis.

In our lessons on Bach, Peter regularly spoke of his teacher Guido Agosti, who studied with Busoni. Agosti revered Busoni as an almost mystical being who could never be wrong: certainly not in his approach to Bach. Busoni was one of the few great pianists of his time who extensively engaged with Bach performance on the piano. I of course knew Busoni’s monumental transcriptions but was only cursorily familiar with his Bach editions. These editions constitute part of the first complete interpretative edition of Bach’s keyboard works: the *Busoni-Ausgabe* (1892-1923) for Breitkopf & Härtel.⁴ It is unquestionable that Busoni was an important figure in Bach piano performance; I was eager to find out how big his influence on his contemporaries and successors actually was. Furthermore, was he really as infallible as Agosti claimed?

A major obstacle stood in the way: only one acoustic recording of an original Bach work by Busoni was ever issued. This four-minute recording could hardly convey the playing style of one of the greatest interpreters of his time. However, Busoni left many clues about his approach to the piano performance of Bach and other composers in his sizeable legacy. One of the most well-connected pianist-composers of his time, the impact of Busoni’s playing and teaching was commented on by many of his peers. He was the central figure of an immense European network of artists and thinkers. Busoni was a prolific essayist and wrote extensively about music, aesthetics, and performance. Correspondence between Busoni and many luminaries of his time is largely available today. His editions are scholarly and analytical: while they do not always stand up to modern scrutiny, they are evidence of a conscientious approach.

² My professors Sebastián Colombo and Alan Weiss at the Utrecht Conservatoire also encouraged me to mark my scores thoroughly (as will be seen in Chapter 4 of this thesis). However, my scores from my first Postgraduate year at Guildhall show a distinct lack of my own musical indications, which to me suggests a less systematic approach to studying and performing during this time.

³ Ferruccio Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord by Johann Sebastian Bach. Revised, Annotated, and Provided with Parallel Examples and Suggestions for the Study of Modern Pianoforte-Technique by Ferruccio B. Busoni* (New York: G. Schirmer, 1894–97), p. 30.

⁴ The *Busoni-Ausgabe* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel) is a 25-volume collection of editions of Bach’s keyboard works published over 30 years edited by Ferruccio Busoni, Egon Petri, and Bruno Mugellini.

Busoni's interpretative editions were widely admired in their time and are still in print to some extent today. Recent considerations of Busoni's editions may be found in Kenneth Hamilton's *After the Golden Age: Romantic Pianism and Modern Performance* (2008) and Chiara Bertoglio's *Instructive Editions of Bach's Wohltemperirtes Klavier: An Italian Perspective* (PhD thesis, 2012). Other important works which focus more on Busoni's life and compositions include Edward J. Dent's *Ferruccio Busoni* (1933), Hans Heinz Stuckenschmidt's *Ferruccio Busoni: Chronicle of a European* (1970), Antony Beaumont's *Busoni the Composer* (1985) and *Ferruccio Busoni – Selected Letters* (1987), and Marc-André Roberge's *Ferruccio Busoni: A Bio-Bibliography* (1991). Erinn E. Knyt 'offers the first comprehensive account of Busoni's work concept' in her 2010 PhD thesis *Ferruccio Busoni and the Ontology of the Musical Work: Permutations and Possibilities*.⁵ Knyt further writes about Busoni and some of his professional relationships in *Ferruccio Busoni and His Legacy* (2017).

Larry Sitsky's *Busoni and the Piano* (1986) comments on most of Busoni's piano compositions, including his *Klavierübung*, and provides detailed information on how the so-called *Busoni-Ausgabe* came to be.⁶ The 1964 book *Busoni as Pianist* by Russian pianist Grigory Kogan (which was first translated into English in 2010 by Svetlana Belsky) remains 'the first and only study to concentrate exclusively on Busoni's contributions to the world of the piano'.⁷ Knyt comments in a 2011 review that 'Kogan's short but provocative chapters offer plenty of new insights, many of which could be profitably expanded upon and further investigated'.⁸

Approaches to Bach performance in various critical and interpretative editions are explored and compared in Brian James Dykstra's *The Interpretation of Bach's Well-tempered Clavier, Book One: A Study in Diversity* (DMA thesis, 1969) and Chiara Bertoglio's *Instructive Editions of Bach's Wohltemperirtes Klavier: An Italian Perspective* (PhD thesis, 2012).

Early acoustic recording techniques and piano performance styles in early recordings, including Busoni's, are discussed in Robert Philip's *Performing Music in the Age of Recording* (2004), Kenneth Hamilton's *After the Golden Age: Romantic Pianism and Modern*

⁵ Erinn Elizabeth Knyt, 'Ferruccio Busoni and the Ontology of the Musical Work: Permutations and Possibilities' (PhD thesis, Stanford University, 2010), p. iv.

⁶ Larry Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1986), pp. 177–95. The title of the *Klavierübung* is likely inspired by Bach's *Clavier-Übung*.

⁷ Grigory Kogan, *Busoni as Pianist*, trans. and ann. by Svetlana Belsky (Rochester, New York: University of Rochester Press, 2010), cover notes.

⁸ Erinn E. Knyt, review of Grigory Kogan, trans. and ann. by Svetlana Belsky, *Busoni as Pianist* (2010), *Notes*, 67 (2011), 553–55 (p. 555).

Performance (2008), and Neal Peres Da Costa's *Off the Record: Performing Practices in Romantic Piano Playing* (2012).

Letters in Eva Hanau's two-volume collection *Ferruccio Busoni im Briefwechsel mit seinem Verlag Breitkopf & Härtel 1883-1924* (2012), as well as archival material from the *Nachlass Ferruccio Busoni* in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, give fascinating and new insights into Busoni's editorial process.

Though they are certainly referenced in the above sources, in none of these works do Busoni's interpretative editions play a definitive central role. Discussion is often limited to Busoni's prose and some of his technical variants. Errors in translation and occasional misinterpretations have led to the propagation of misconceptions of Busoni's style. In my view, not enough attention has been paid to the finer details of Busoni's editions which shed light on a style of playing that has not been fully preserved on acoustic recordings. Close readings of Busoni's musical indications suggest insights into how these markings may have been realised at the piano, some of which are interesting and relevant to modern pianists. Occasional reactionary annotations tell us more about the established piano performance of Bach in Busoni's time. The unparalleled amount of material provides clues about Busoni's Bach performance and its influence on his contemporaries and successors which is more substantial than previously assumed. Through the synthesis of these secondary sources and a new look at primary sources this thesis provides the first detailed account of Busoni's editing and performance of Bach.

1.1. Research objectives and design

The main research questions my thesis seeks to address are the following:

1. How can the study of Busoni's musical indications in his early interpretative editions of J. S. Bach lead to a greater understanding of his style of performance?
2. Where and how does Busoni's Bach performance and editing fit in a wider historical context?
3. How may these findings be relevant to and challenge the performance practice of a twenty-first-century pianist?

Methodologically, this thesis is divided into two parts: the first part consists of the chapters *Why Busoni?*, *Reading Busoni*, and *Listening to Busoni*. This part is an empirical analysis of the data relevant to this project. The second part, consisting of chapters *Playing with Busoni* and *Recital and Recordings*, is an auto-ethnographical account of the development of

my own interpretations through the practice of the analytical findings at the piano. The empirical approach in the first part prepares the ground for the more auto-ethnographical approach in the second: in order to learn from what Busoni has written down, I have to have an understanding of how he uses musical indications, what they may mean, and why he uses them in that way; at the same time, if my interpretation of Busoni's markings proves unsatisfactory during my practical study at the keyboard, it likely means that my interpretation is based on a misunderstanding, which means I have to reconsider my analysis. A deeper understanding of Busoni's musical indications and my own approach to performance is created through this iterative process.

My research may be of interest to Busoni scholars as well as those interested in wider Bach piano performance and editing traditions from c. 1890-1950. Other performer-researchers interested in modern approaches to historical evidence may also benefit from the approach taken in this thesis: the process of analysis and practical experience gives clear and direct feedback and allows one to convincingly link musical indications to an overall style of playing.

It is important to point out what this thesis is not and what it does not do. It is not an exhaustive study of Bach piano playing throughout the centuries: while I provide material to contextualise Busoni, it focuses primarily on Busoni as a central figure. Though I will make occasional reference to early keyboard instruments and their techniques I do not debate whether or not the modern piano is a suitable instrument for Bach's music. This thesis is not a critique of the status quo of music editions. Finally, technological advances in instrument building, such as the inclusion of an iron frame and cross-stringing from the 1860s onwards, are to my knowledge never commented upon by Busoni, and as such their influence on the piano sound will not be discussed.⁹

The aim of the first part of this thesis is to add to the existing knowledge of Busoni's editorial and performance practice through a systematic analysis of his Bach editions, focusing primarily on his early editions of the Inventions, Sinfonias, and First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier. I have chosen these editions for the following reasons: first of all, there is hardly any discussion of the Inventions and Sinfonias in any of the secondary sources; secondly, when the edition of the Well-tempered Clavier is discussed, the focus is mainly on Busoni's aesthetic ideas about Bach performance rather than how his indications may be read or interpreted; finally, these editions are among the richest examples of Busoni's editorial practice in works that feature a significant and explicit pedagogical approach as part of his 'Beiträge zu einer

⁹ The only development in instrument building that Busoni discusses is the *sostenuto* (Steinway or middle) pedal. This will be discussed in section 2.5 on pedal use.

Hochschule des Clavierspiels' ('Contributions to an Advanced School of Piano Playing').¹⁰ I define Busoni's role in his editions in light of his pedagogical activities and establish his editions as part of a trend in interpretative editing that inspired contemporaries and successors. Besides a discussion of Busoni's editions and their influence I have included a summary of the most important features of Busoni's editing style and musical indications in section 2.8. Aspects of his playing style in his acoustic recording of Bach supplement the analytical findings.

For the reader's convenience, the examples presented in this thesis mainly come from the English translations of the Inventions, Sinfonias, and the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier. Some differences exist between these translations and the original German editions for Breitkopf & Härtel; however, I have found no major discrepancies between the original German editions and the English translations beyond some linguistic mistakes. Any important differences which may cause Busoni to be misinterpreted are mentioned in the footnotes of this thesis. I consider these differences to have had no consequences for the results presented in this research.

One point of concern in the data collection was to discover whether or not Busoni's editing was consistent. On rare occasions I have noticed points where Busoni differs from his usual approach. Sometimes, it is not clear whether this is due to his own inconsistency or due to a misprint, as these mistakes are present in the original German editions (Breitkopf & Härtel) as well as in the English translations I consulted (Associated Music Publishers, Theodore Presser, and G. Schirmer).¹¹ I have found that generally it is possible to argue in Busoni's favour through referring to the vast number of examples where his approach is in fact consistent.

In the second part of this thesis I will engage with my analysis of Busoni's performance markings and discuss how it informs my own playing. Through a personal account I argue that successful incorporation of these aspects may lead to fresh insights into how to perform Bach on the modern piano. I will write from three separate points of view: pre-research, mid-research, and post-research. The pre-research, wherever possible, is represented by my old (Urtext) study

¹⁰ This is often translated as 'Contribution[s] to a High School of Piano[forte] Playing' (Christian Schaper and Ullrich Scheideler, eds., *Johann Sebastian Bach – Ferruccio Busoni, Toccata in D minor for Organ BWV 565* (München: G. Henle Verlag, 2020), p. IX). The word *Schule* was often used to designate general pedagogical works that assume minimal expertise such as Czerny's *Pianoforte-Schule*. *Hohe Schule* was used to indicate more advanced pedagogical works such as Popper's *Hohe Schule des Violoncello-Spiels*. Busoni's use of the word *Hochschule* indicates that he perhaps considered his contributions to be even more advanced and in my opinion this may therefore be more accurately translated as Advanced School. The form of this School will be discussed in section 1.3 (Figures 1.3.1–2).

¹¹ The *Nachlass Ferruccio Busoni* in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin contains proofs of Busoni's edition of the Inventions and Sinfonias. A few red crosses marked by Busoni indicate some minor corrections to be made. These include missing slurs, ties, accidentals, incorrect note values, and fingerings, most (but not all) of which are corrected in the final published edition. I will document some of these corrections in section 1.3.

scores; the mid-research is indicated mostly by Busoni's editions and my commentary during the studying process; the post-research is represented by my own musical indications and annotations, as well as additional recordings and commentaries. Though written from my personal position, I aim simultaneously to be of benefit to myself, as well as to the reader, who may find my approach useful in their own practice.

In the following sections of this chapter, I will first explore Busoni's professional networks and his engagement with Bach's music. I will then discuss the role Busoni assumed in his editions before briefly considering some of Busoni's aesthetic views regarding transcription and performance. Some of Busoni's important interpretative forerunners, peers, and successors will be highlighted. I will conclude by discussing music editions, the importance of the interpretative aspect, and recent research in this field.

1.2. Busoni's professional networks

During his lifetime Busoni was universally regarded as one of the greatest pianists alive.¹² His association with Bach was so well-known that his wife was once introduced as Mrs. Bach-Busoni.¹³ In Busoni's first full recital in 1876, the noted critic Hanslick commented on his compositions being full of 'lively figurations and combinatorial contrivances [which testify to] a loving study of Bach'.¹⁴ According to Beaumont, Hanslick's meeting with Busoni was partly thanks to Brahms, whom Busoni was close to in his youth; Brahms reportedly said 'I will do for Busoni what Schumann did for me'.¹⁵ Busoni later wrote about his 'mania' with Bach during his childhood, and the inclusion of at least one *fugato* passage in each of his young compositions.¹⁶

Busoni was also a serious editor of music: Kogan notes that Busoni wrote transcriptions of Mozart and Mendelssohn symphonies as well as fantasies on compositions that are now

¹² Kogan, *Busoni as Pianist*, pp. 17–18.

¹³ Kogan, *Busoni as Pianist*, p. 88. Several versions of this story exist; it was often told in this form by Egon Petri (Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, p. 177).

¹⁴ Kogan, *Busoni as Pianist*, p. 9. The Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin contains a catalogue made in 1928 by Friedrich Schnapp (Mus.Nachl. F. Busoni R, 16/17) of Busoni's compositions in the *Nachlass Ferruccio Busoni*: these include a *Fuga a due voce in stile libero* (23 August 1875), *Fuga a tre voci* (2 September 1875), and a *Studio contrappuntato* (14 October 1875), among many other early works. <<https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN83533869X>> [accessed 13 August 2021].

¹⁵ Antony Beaumont, *Busoni the Composer* (London: Faber and Faber, 1985), p. 22. Peter Clive doubts whether Brahms ever felt this level of admiration for Busoni; Clive notes that this quote first appears in Friedrich Schnapp's collection of Busoni's letters to his wife (1935). Brahms did however recommend Busoni to study with Nottebohm and Reinecke; Busoni later dedicated several works to Brahms and was also the soloist in a performance dedicated to Brahms on the day of Brahms's funeral (Peter Clive, *Brahms and His World: A Biographical Dictionary* (Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2006), pp. 79–80).

¹⁶ Ferruccio Busoni, *The Essence of Music and Other Papers*, trans. by Rosamond Ley (London: Rockliff, 1957), p. 48.

virtually unknown.¹⁷ Breitkopf & Härtel, Busoni's main publisher, also engaged him for arrangements. One of their letters, dated 23 March 1888, reads as follows:

Dear sir!

We are asked to provide a second piano part to the accompanying original work *Novelletten* for pianoforte, violin, and cello, Op. 29, by [Niels] Gade. We would like you to check whether this work lends itself to an arrangement in this form. If this is the case, we kindly ask you to arrange the second piano part in such a way that the violin and cello part are transcribed, while the original parts serve as a full score.

If the whole piece can be transcribed in this way, please do so as soon as possible.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

Breitkopf & Härtel¹⁸

During his stay in Leipzig Busoni became acquainted with violinist Henri Petri and his family.¹⁹ After visiting a local organ concert, Kathi Petri suggested that Busoni should transcribe a J. S. Bach organ work for the piano (the D major Prelude and Fugue, BWV 532).²⁰ This transcription was the first of Busoni's twenty-seven arrangements, transcriptions, and editions of Bach's music (catalogued *Busoni-Verzeichnis Bearbeitung* (BV B) 20-46).²¹

Throughout his career Busoni also taught extensively, primarily in masterclass settings, and promoted the careers of a great number of his younger colleagues such as Bartók and Schönberg; he was also close to Sibelius and Varèse, among others.²² Busoni's piano students included Egon Petri and Guido Agosti, who themselves taught many of the leading pianists of the twentieth century.²³ Young pianists enjoy tracing back their pianistic lineage to Liszt, Beethoven and other great figures, but many of them, like myself, might have even closer links to Busoni.²⁴

¹⁷ Kogan, *Busoni as Pianist*, p. 11.

¹⁸ Eva Hanau, *Ferruccio Busoni im Briefwechsel mit seinem Verlag Breitkopf & Härtel* (Band I (1883–1914)) (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 2012), pp. 7–9, letter 8 (23 March 1888). I am indebted to Mara Scholl for her assistance with the translation and interpretation of the letters in this chapter.

¹⁹ Henri Petri (1856–1914), who studied with Joseph Joachim, was the concertmaster of the Gewandhausorchester at the time of his meeting with Busoni.

²⁰ Edward J. Dent, *Ferruccio Busoni: A Biography* (London: Oxford University Press, 1933; reprint, London: Eulenburg, 1974), p. 82.

²¹ These arrangements and editions will be discussed later in this chapter (section 1.3; see also Table 1.3.1).

²² Erinn E. Knyt, *Ferruccio Busoni and His Legacy* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2017), p. 3.

²³ My piano professor at Guildhall, Peter Bithell, first studied with Gordon Green (a Petri pupil) at the Royal Academy of Music in London before studying with Guido Agosti in Siena, Italy. Other students of Petri and/or Agosti include Earl Wild, John Ogdon, Gunnar Johansen, Maria Tipo, Leslie Howard, Yonty Solomon, Hamish Milne, and many others.

²⁴ As Kenneth Hamilton writes: 'The slightly later realization that I could also trace my music teaching to Busoni (through Ronald Stevenson) added to the warm glow of belonging. Now, even if I were playing badly, I would be playing badly with authority.' (Kenneth Hamilton, *After the Golden Age: Romantic Pianism and Modern Performance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 16).

While Busoni was very highly regarded during his life, his influence on following generations is sometimes forgotten. Charles Rosen describes Busoni's editions of Bach as 'extraordinary and influential' but does not explicitly say why he thought so.²⁵ Hamilton writes that '[Busoni's] editions show a quite astonishing fertility of invention that is impressive and admirable on its own terms, even if it produces a result that has as much to do with Busoni as Bach [...] Busoni thought of himself as a translator who needed to change the literal meaning of the words in order to make the general meaning of the work as a whole clear to a new generation'.²⁶

While much Bach-Busoni is still played and recorded, interest in his interpretative editions has dwindled over the years: though they are still in print to some extent, they were never revised by later editors unlike the editions by Casella and Bartók, the latter of which was revised as recently as 2019.²⁷

1.3. Busoni's 'Beiträge zu einer Hochschule des Clavierspiels'

A large part of Busoni's legacy lies in his writings and interpretative editions.²⁸ Busoni's interpretative Bach editions would later become part of the *Busoni-Ausgabe* published by Breitkopf & Härtel in the 1910s.²⁹ Busoni edited only nine out of the twenty-five volumes that made up this *Ausgabe*; Egon Petri and Bruno Mugellini edited the remaining volumes.

Busoni's edition of the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier (BV B 25, Part I) originally spanned four parts (*Hefte*): the first three parts each contain eight Preludes and Fugues while the last part contains an Appendix which includes an essay on the transcription of Bach's organ works for the modern piano.³⁰ The first *Heft* was published by Breitkopf &

²⁵ Charles Rosen, *Critical Entertainments: Music Old and New* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2000), p. 247.

²⁶ Hamilton, *After the Golden Age*, pp. 215–17.

²⁷ According to a survey in Chiara Bertoglio's 2012 PhD thesis on the use of instructive editions of Bach in Busoni's native Italy, Busoni's edition was used less frequently than those by Casella/Piccioli or Mugellini (Chiara Bertoglio, 'Instructive Editions of Bach's *Wohltemperirtes Klavier*: An Italian Perspective' (PhD thesis, University of Birmingham, 2012), pp. 299–300). This despite the fact that both of the latter editions were likely inspired by Busoni's edition, a point I will support in this thesis (Bertoglio, 'Instructive Editions of Bach's *Wohltemperirtes Klavier*', pp. 263, 280). The Bartók Performing Editions of the Well-tempered Clavier were revised by László Somfai for Editio Musica Budapest (2019).

²⁸ Near the end of his life many of Busoni's writings were collected in Ferruccio Busoni, *Von der Einheit der Musik. Verstreute Aufzeichnungen von Ferruccio Busoni* (Berlin: Max Hesses Verlag, 1922).

²⁹ Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, pp. 178–79; some of the volumes of the *Busoni-Ausgabe* were reprints from the 1890s.

³⁰ Other contents of this Appendix are Busoni's transcription of Bach's Organ Prelude and Fugue in E minor (BWV 533/BV B 26), an analysis of the Fugue from Beethoven's Piano Sonata in B-flat major, op. 106 (*Hammerklavier*), and a Prelude (BWV 902a) that precedes the Fughetta in G major (BWV 902b) in J. P. Kellner's copy.

Härtel in 1894; the next three parts were likely published over the following three years.³¹ The edition was translated into English and published by G. Schirmer (New York).

In the complete *Busoni-Ausgabe*, the edition of the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier was published as the first volume; however, Busoni did in fact complete an interpretative edition of the Inventions and Sinfonias earlier in Moscow (BV B 23, 1891; first published in 1892). As part of the *Busoni-Ausgabe*, the Inventions and Sinfonias were reprinted as volumes IV and V.³²

Breitkopf & Härtel were enthusiastic about the prospect of Busoni's interpretative edition of the Inventions and Sinfonias. A letter to Busoni in Moscow, dated 5 December 1890, reads as follows:

We are honoured to inform you that we would like to try publishing your adaptation of Bach's 30 Inventionen [15 Inventions and 15 Sinfonias]. So that there may be complete clarity in the publishing matter, we ask you kindly to indicate your conditions soon, which, we hope, do not go significantly beyond the usual adaptation fees.³³

In a follow-up letter, dated 21 April 1892, Busoni is asked to make any outstanding corrections to the prepared edition as soon as possible.³⁴ Busoni's corrections of the proofs of the Inventions and Sinfonias survive in the *Nachlass Ferruccio Busoni* in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.³⁵ These proofs are particularly telling of Busoni's attention to detail in his editorial practice during the 1890s and how subtle musical indications carried a significant amount of weight. While most of Busoni's corrections are reproduced in the published edition, some (such as those marked in Examples 1.3.2–3 below) were overlooked even during later revisions.

³¹ EB 4301a–d.

³² EB 4304–5. Throughout this thesis, I will refer to Busoni's edition (singular) of the Inventions and Sinfonias (Busoni's title for the edition is *Zwei- und Dreistimmige Inventionen*; in the Preface to his edition, Busoni refers to these works collectively as 'Bachschen Inventionen'), as well as his edition (singular) of the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier. Editions (plural) is generally used to refer to Busoni's editions of the Inventions, Sinfonias, and the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier.

³³ Hanau, *Ferruccio Busoni im Briefwechsel* (Band I), p. 14, letter 18 (5 December 1890). The original German reads as follows: 'Wir beehren uns, Ihnen mitzutheilen, daß wir gern bereit sind, mit Ihrer Bearbeitung von Bach's 30 Inventionen einen Versuch zu machen. Damit in der Verlagsangelegenheit völlige Klarheit herrsche, bitten wir Sie um gefl. Angabe Ihrer Bedingungen, die, wie wir hoffen, über das gewöhnliche Bearbeitungshonorar nicht wesentlich hinausgehen'.

³⁴ Hanau, *Ferruccio Busoni im Briefwechsel* (Band I), p. 16, letter 22 (21 April 1892).

³⁵ These proofs can be accessed here:

Two-Part Inventions (Mus.Nachl. F. Busoni A, 365,2a): <<https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN823356620>>

Three-Part Sinfonias (Mus.Nachl. F. Busoni A, 365,2b): <<https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN823356728>> [both accessed 12 August 2021].

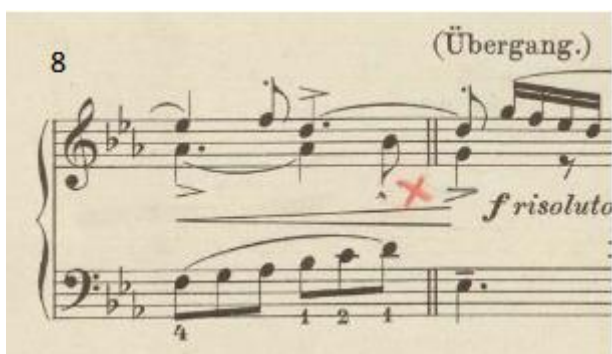
Though Busoni does give some editorial corrections in the second part of the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier (after the Prelude and Fugue in G minor), it is unclear whether he was aware of the other inconsistencies in print. Some of these occurrences are documented in this thesis.



Example 1.3.1. Missing slur in Invention no. 1 in C major, bars 9-11



Example 1.3.2. Suggested courtesy accidental in Invention no. 4 in D minor, bars 33-36



Example 1.3.3. Added staccato and accent marks in Sinfonia no. 2 in C minor, bar 8

Further evidence that Busoni was a conscientious editor can be found in a letter exchange in late 1894. On 18 December 1894, Breitkopf & Härtel wrote to Busoni with the request ‘to include, in addition to Bach and Beethoven, also Händel in your field of work [...] we would like to suggest an instructive edition of Händel’s keyboard works, if you believe that, in comparison to Reinecke’s edition by another publisher, an independent and unique adaptation would be possible’.³⁶

Though Busoni was honoured by this request, his pianistic activities as well as his work on his edition of the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier forced him to decline this

³⁶ Hanau, *Ferruccio Busoni im Briefwechsel* (Band I), p. 30, letter 38 (18 December 1894).

opportunity. He did consider an interpretative Händel edition to be an interesting endeavour, especially if it included the analytical commentary so typical of his Bach editions; however, Busoni felt that the commentary and the revisions would take a significant amount of time and that this task would take him at least a full year, which he regretfully did not think was possible.

Firstly, allow me to tell you that I feel very honoured by your suggestion regarding an adaptation of Händel's keyboard works and that this task for me is very tempting and has a feel of certain significance, and that the idea of such a new creation attracts me very much.

That in addition to Reinecke's edition an independent, unique edition is possible (about which you asked my opinion) is already evident when one compares, for example, Reinecke's edition of the famous Variations in E major ["The Harmonious Blacksmith"] with Bülow's. If one were to choose a specific form of publication wherein there would be an analytical aspect in form of a commentary, this edition would absolutely distinguish itself.

Although I take notice of this idea with pleasure and would like to carry it out some day, I must tell you that in this moment I am not ready to undertake this work of nearly 250 printed pages; my edition of the Well-tempered Clavier is far from finished and my piano-playing activities occupy a lot of my time. – According to my system, I would have to arrange and partly recompose almost the entire score. The commentary requires mature reflection and both necessary corrective revisions consume a considerable amount of time. Accordingly, I would have to devote a year exclusively to this task, which unfortunately is not possible for me at this time.

Please accept my deepest appreciation for the great trust that you have once again shown in me and be assured of the highest regards with which I remain

Yours sincerely
F Busoni³⁷

Breitkopf & Härtel, in their reply dated 24 December 1894, assured Busoni that the Händel edition was not an immediate matter, and that if Busoni felt that he would like to arrange a small piece by Händel in the meantime, to please let them know.³⁸

On 28 October 1895 Breitkopf & Härtel sent Busoni two volumes of their *Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe* (Jahrgang 15 and 38, which both consist of organ works); he was also sent a complete list of all volumes that made up this collection to this point, and was asked to indicate which of these he would like to be sent for review.³⁹ It appears that Breitkopf & Härtel had asked Busoni for the arrangement of some organ pieces, which he was not able to deliver, as most of his time was still taken up by his work as pianist and composer; simultaneously, his

³⁷ Hanau, *Ferruccio Busoni im Briefwechsel* (Band I), p. 31, letter 39 (20 December 1894).

³⁸ Hanau, *Ferruccio Busoni im Briefwechsel* (Band I), p. 32, letter 40 (24 December 1894). On 24 November 1897 Breitkopf & Härtel again proposed the idea of an interpretative edition of Händel's keyboard pieces; however, Busoni declined the opportunity (Hanau, *Ferruccio Busoni im Briefwechsel* (Band I), pp. 66–67, letters 93–94).

³⁹ Hanau, *Ferruccio Busoni im Briefwechsel* (Band I), p. 35, letter 44 (28 October 1895).

editing of the third *Heft* of the Well-tempered Clavier proved to be time-consuming, as he had only just started this task in July 1896.⁴⁰ As far as I am aware, any further correspondence regarding the completion of this edition may no longer exist (if it ever existed), as it is not included in Eva Hanau's *Ferruccio Busoni im Briefwechsel mit seinem Verlag Breitkopf & Härtel* (2012).⁴¹ Considering that G. Schirmer copyrighted the complete four-part (English) edition in 1897, it is likely that Busoni finished his work on the edition in that year.⁴²

As Busoni expanded his editions and transcriptions of Bach over the years, his plan for the 'Beiträge zu einer Hochschule des Clavierspiels' developed; that Busoni struggled with the ordering of such a progressive school can be seen in Figure 1.3.1 below from an edition of the *Organ Chorale Preludes* (1898).⁴³ Busoni's notes below his preface reveal that the order of the material was not exactly settled at this point.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Hanau, *Ferruccio Busoni im Briefwechsel* (Band I), p. 38, letter 50 (12 July 1896).

⁴¹ This work (in two volumes) contains over 1.500 letters exchanged between Busoni and Breitkopf & Härtel.

⁴² This copyright date is found at the bottom of the Appendix in the G. Schirmer translation; it is also referenced in Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, p. 181.

⁴³ Ferruccio Busoni, ed., *Orgelchoralvorspiele von Johann Sebastian Bach* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1898). This edition can be found in the *Nachlass Ferruccio Busoni* in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (Mus.Nachl. F. Busoni A, 365,4a): <<https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN825492041>> [accessed 21 August 2021].

⁴⁴ The Roman numbering on the left shows the order in which the pieces were transcribed, arranged, or edited by Busoni. The attached note on the bottom that mentions the Second Book of the Well-tempered Clavier covers some earlier handwriting that sets out an Appendix to his 'Beiträge': this Appendix was to include two cadenzas (BV B 1, 1890) to Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto and a transcription (BV B 95, 1892) of Ottokar Nováček's Scherzo (from his String Quartet No. 1 in E minor). Busoni's edition (BV B 71) of Liszt's *Reminiscences de Don Juan* was completed in 1917 (first published 1918), so this attached note may be from a later point in time.

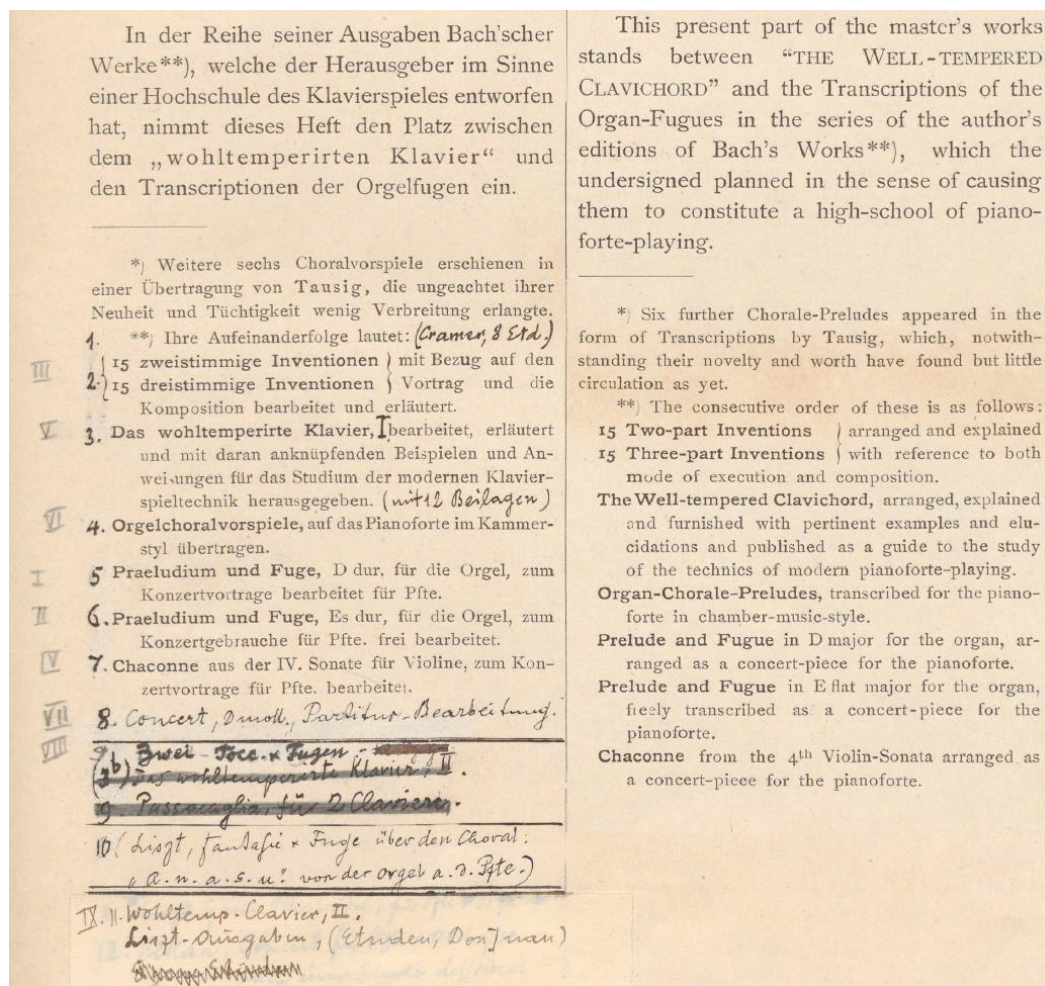


Figure 1.3.1. Busoni's handwritten notes in his personal edition of the *Organ Chorale Preludes* (c. 1898)⁴⁵

The educational side of Busoni's editions was of great commercial interest to Breitkopf & Härtel, who were pleased with the idea of Busoni's editions being part of a 'Hochschule des Klavierspiels'.⁴⁶ Another arrangement of the *Hochschule* is included in the handwritten preface to Busoni's transcription of two of Bach's Organ Toccatas (Figure 1.3.2, 1899).⁴⁷ Though the ordering is slightly different in Figure 1.3.2, the overall form of the 'Advanced School of Piano Playing' is similar: Busoni's editions of the Inventions, Sinfonias, and the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier were the starting point of the pianist's study of Bach.

⁴⁵ These notes in the *Organ Chorale Preludes* can be found in the *Nachlass Ferruccio Busoni* in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (Mus.Nachl. F. Busoni A, 365,4a): <<https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht/?PPN=PPN825492041>> [accessed 21 August 2021].

⁴⁶ Hanau, *Ferruccio Busoni im Briefwechsel* (Band I), p. 75, letter 109 (16 July 1898): 'Sympathisch ist es uns, daß Sie Ihre instruktiven Bearbeitungen im Sinne einer Hochschule des Klavierspiels auffassen und ausbauen.' (We are pleased to hear that you consider and develop your instructive adaptations in the sense of an Advanced School of Piano Playing). While Busoni spells 'Clavier' consistently with a C, Breitkopf & Härtel favour the spelling with a K ('Klavier').

⁴⁷ These transcriptions were dedicated to Busoni's friend Robert Freund (1852-1936), who studied with Moscheles, Tausig, and Liszt. Freund recommended his sister Etelka (who had studied with Brahms) to study with Busoni at his masterclasses. Etelka later introduced Busoni to her friend Béla Bartók.

Mit der Veröffentlichung dieser "Toccata" bezeichne ich vorläufig eine Reihe ähnlicher u. verwandter Arbeiten; ~~die vorliegenden~~ ^{die vorliegenden} ~~beziehe ich~~ ^{beziehe ich} zu meinen Leisten der Art, ~~u. so mögen sie, auf dem ersten Blatte, der Namen desjenigen~~ ^{u. so mögen sie, auf dem ersten Blatte, der Namen desjenigen} ~~verehrten Kollegen tragen, dankend, die ungewissenheit, den Zeichen seiner Kunst, zu verzeihen.~~ ^{verehrten Kollegen tragen, dankend, die ungewissenheit, den Zeichen seiner Kunst, zu verzeihen.} ~~Erst einzeln und auf zufällige Anregung entstanden, je nach dem Maße~~ ^{Erst einzeln und auf zufällige Anregung entstanden, je nach dem Maße} ~~in dem die Werke, welche mich jeweilig beschäftigten, zur Bearbeitung anfielen,~~ ^{in dem die Werke, welche mich jeweilig beschäftigten, zur Bearbeitung anfielen,} ~~haben sie sich~~ ^{haben sie sich} ~~allmählig systematischer gruppiert; die so sich bildende~~ ^{allmählig systematischer gruppiert; die so sich bildende} ~~Ordnung~~ ^{Ordnung} ~~erweckt den Gedanken eines geordneten Planes und nach einem~~ ^{erweckt den Gedanken eines geordneten Planes und nach einem} ~~solchen ist nun einer jeden dieser Bearbeitungen eine Stufe in der aufsteigenden~~ ^{solchen ist nun einer jeden dieser Bearbeitungen eine Stufe in der aufsteigenden} ~~Reihe des Gesamtwerkes anzuweisen. Es sind Beiträge zu einer Hochschule~~ ^{Reihe des Gesamtwerkes anzuweisen. Es sind Beiträge zu einer Hochschule} ~~des Clavierspiels. Sie gestalten sich~~ ^{des Clavierspiels. Sie gestalten sich} ~~in ihrem Zusammenhange gestalten sie sich~~ ^{in ihrem Zusammenhange gestalten sie sich} ~~gleichsam zu einem Lehrgebäude, welches - vorzugsweise auf Grund Bach'scher~~ ^{gleichsam zu einem Lehrgebäude, welches - vorzugsweise auf Grund Bach'scher} ~~Musik aufgeführt~~ ^{Musik aufgeführt} ~~sich, nach der Höhe zu Modernität verjüngt und fähig~~ ^{sich, nach der Höhe zu Modernität verjüngt und fähig} ~~erscheint auch in der Folge weitere und jüngere bauliche Aufsätze zu tragen:~~ ^{erscheint auch in der Folge weitere und jüngere bauliche Aufsätze zu tragen:} ~~gleich einer alten, kühnen stämmigen Wurzel, die - selbst immerwährend~~ ^{gleich einer alten, kühnen stämmigen Wurzel, die - selbst immerwährend} ~~alternd, zugleich immerwährend jugendlich, fort~~ ^{alternd, zugleich immerwährend jugendlich, fort} ~~bevorsteht.~~ ^{bevorsteht.} ~~Die folgenden~~ ^{Die folgenden} ~~Arbeiten bezeichne ich~~ ^{Arbeiten bezeichne ich} ~~folgenden:~~ ^{folgenden:}

Also zu dem Staine gehörige Arbeiten:

1. Cramer, acht Etuden in 2 Heften (Schule des Legato "Schule des Staccato").
2. Bach, 15 zweistimmige Inventionen } mit Bezug auf den Vortrag und die Composition bearbeitet und erläutert.
3. - 15 dreistimmige Inventionen }
4. - Das wohltemperirte Clavier, (erster Theil) bearbeitet, erläutert und mit dazu ankniepfenden Beispielen und Anweisungen für das Studium der modernen Clavierspieltechnik herausgegeben.
5. - Concert, D moll, Partiturbearbeitung.
6. - 10 Orgelchoralvorspiele, auf das Pianoforte im Kammerstyl übertragen.
7. - Praeludium u. Fuge, D dur, für die Orgel; zum Concertvortrag für Pfte.
8. - Praeludium u. Fuge, Es dur, " " " , zum Concertgebrauch für Pfte. frei bearbeitet.
9. - Quaconne aus der IV. Violinsonate, zum Concertvortrag f. Pfte. bearbtt.
10. - Zwei Orgeltoccaten, auf das Pianoforte übertragen.
11. Liszt, Fantasie und Fuge über den Choral "Ad nos, ad salutarem undam", von der Orgel auf das Pianoforte frei übertragen.

Dem sollte ^{freilich} nach meiner Absicht in Überzeugung, eine kritisch-leshafte Ausgabe
der bedeutendsten ~~erhaltenen~~ ^{klassischen} Clavierschöpfungen Franz Liszt's Vals Thurnbach
aufgesetzt werden; bei der ~~Verstreutheit der hiesigen Ausgaben~~ ^{bedarft es} daß
jedoch ~~erst~~ ^{erst} ~~umständlicher~~ ^{umständlicher} ~~Verhandlung~~ ^{Verhandlung} ~~der~~ ^{der} ~~galt~~ ^{galt} ~~es~~ ^{es} ~~zu~~ ^{zu} ~~erlangen~~ ^{erlangen} ~~war~~ ^{war}
hingegen wird mit der Herausgabe von des wohltemperirten Claviers
zweitem Theile (der 12. Nummer der Reihe) welcher, seiner Anlage nach,
die denkende Seite des Spielers gründlich aufzuheben soll, nicht mehr
lange gefürchtet werden.

Ferruccio Busoni.

V (welche immer noch) und selbst bei Pirin, kein dem
Missverständnisse begegnen, -)

⁴⁸ This handwritten Preface can be found in the *Nachlass Ferruccio Busoni* in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (Mus.Nachl. F. Busoni A, 226): <<https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN824435532>> [accessed 21 August 2021].

The final paragraph of the above Preface (Figure 1.3.2) shows that Busoni had already decided on the analytical-compositional focus of his edition of the Second Book: ‘On the other hand, the publication of the Second Book of the Well-tempered Clavier (number 12 of the School), which, according to its design, is intended to thoroughly stir up the ‘thinking’ side of the player, will not be delayed much longer’.⁴⁹ In a letter to Egon Petri (dated 16 August 1909) Busoni mentions that he ‘rummaged and found the long-lost first pages of the Well-temp Cl. *part two* [...] I think – this was my intention – that I shall not further enlarge on matters of piano technique in the 2nd [part]. It should rather immerse itself in the mechanisms of *composition* and bring all manner of dazzling things to the surface’.⁵⁰ Beaumont writes that Busoni’s diary contains the following entry on 20 September 1912: ‘Bach’s “well-tempered”, Part [1] for pianists, Part 2 for composers: my testament’.⁵¹

Busoni’s first letter to Breitkopf & Härtel in which he mentions his own edition of the Second Book of the Well-tempered Clavier is dated 14 April 1914.⁵² Busoni seems to have completed the work on this edition by 12 April 1915.⁵³ In his preface to the Second Book, Busoni writes that ‘Bach allowed twenty years to elapse between the publication of the first and second part of the Well-tempered Clavier, and it has been about twenty years since I began to write down my reflections about the work. An intelligent reader will expect that the treatment of the second part shows a different physiognomy from that of the earlier one; he must himself comprehend this volume with different assumptions and with a mature preparation’.⁵⁴

Sitsky comments that ‘[a]lthough [in Book II] purely pianistic suggestions still abound (Busoni was too much the performer for this to be ignored), they are sparser than in Book I; in a sense simpler and less drastic. The performing and editing instructions, also, are thinner, less

⁴⁹ Translation mine. The original German reads as follows: ‘Hingegen wird mit der Herausgabe von des Wohltemperirten Clavieres Zweitem Theile (der 12. Nummer der Reihe) welcher, seiner Anlage nach, die “denkende” Seite des Spielers gründlich aufwühlen soll, nicht [lange mehr] gesäumt werden’.

⁵⁰ Ferruccio Busoni, *Selected Letters*, trans. and ed. by Antony Beaumont (London: Faber and Faber, 1987), p. 98, letter 73 (16 August 1909). Letters 83 (p. 108, 12 July 1910), 129 (pp. 153–54, 14 September 1912), and 163 (p. 189, 8 November 1914), which are all addressed to Petri, further discuss matters related to this edition.

⁵¹ Beaumont, *Busoni the Composer*, p. 270.

⁵² Hanau, *Ferruccio Busoni im Briefwechsel* (Band I), pp. 633–34, letter 844 (14 April 1914).

⁵³ Busoni, *Selected Letters*, p. 196, letter 171 (12 April 1915): ‘I have finished with my concerts and the 2nd Well-t. Clavier’. The letter to Breitkopf & Härtel can be found in Eva Hanau, *Ferruccio Busoni im Briefwechsel mit seinem Verlag Breitkopf & Härtel* (Band II (1915–1924)) (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 2012), pp. 11–12, letter 987 (18 April 1915).

⁵⁴ Ferruccio Busoni, ed., *Johann Sebastian Bach, Klavierwerke (Busoni-Ausgabe Band II: Das Wohltemperierte Klavier, Zweiter Teil)* (Leipzig/Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1915/1982), Preface. Translation mine. The original German reads as follows: ‘Zwanzig Jahre hat Bach zwischen der Herausgabe des ersten und des zweiten Teils des wohltemperierten Klaviers verstreichen lassen, und es sind ungefähr an die zwanzig Jahre, seit ich selbst die Niederschrift meiner Betrachtungen über das Werk begann. Darum hat ein vernünftiger Leser zu erwarten, daß die Bearbeitung des zweiten Teils eine andere Physiognomie zeige als die des früheren; er muß selbst mit anderen Voraussetzungen und mit reiferer Vorbereitung diesen Band ergreifen’.

specific. Some of the pieces look like an *Urtext* publication'.⁵⁵ The First Book as edited by Busoni indeed concerns itself much more with pianistic issues. Not only does Busoni provide exercises for the pianist to conquer technical difficulties, but he also offers ideas for transcription and the occasional virtuoso study on the original Bach Preludes.⁵⁶ One such example is a variant to the D major Prelude and Fugue: Busoni's study combines both themes from the Prelude and the Fugue at the same time.⁵⁷

Busoni's editions are remarkable for their depth of scholarship. Knyt notes that 'as an editor, Busoni strove after accuracy; he studied autograph manuscripts and first editions, whenever possible, compared multiple contemporary editions and cited variant versions in footnotes'.⁵⁸ For this reason, 'Busoni's editions were thus simultaneously scholarly and interpretive [...] This unusual position can perhaps be attributed to Busoni's respect of a composer's *Einfälle*, and simultaneous belief that they could be realized in more than one version'.⁵⁹ Though Busoni may have studied manuscripts later in his life, it seems unlikely that he did so for the preparation of his edition of the Inventions and Sinfonias: in a letter dated 27 December 1890 Breitkopf & Härtel informed Busoni that 'we have not erased some of the pencil corrections in the first Invention by another musician, you may disregard what seems unsuitable to you'.⁶⁰ This letter implies that Breitkopf & Härtel had already prepared a score for the occasion.⁶¹ Furthermore, a close comparison between Anna Magdalena Bach's and J. S. Bach's manuscripts and Busoni's edition of the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier reveals subtle differences that are not always documented.⁶² The inclusion of various source material

⁵⁵ Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, p. 185.

⁵⁶ There are elaborated technical variants and exercises for the following Preludes: C major, C minor, C-sharp major, D major, D minor, G major, A-flat major, and B-flat major (Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, p. 184; Sitsky mistakenly writes that the octave study is for the Prelude in E minor, but it is actually for the Fugue). In some other cases, Busoni proposes techniques such as octave doublings. The Fugue in G major (originally in the Second Book) is arranged for two pianos; in the Appendix to the Fugue in E minor, Busoni proposes a study in double octaves. In this Appendix to the Fugue in E minor Busoni also discusses his idea of technical phrasing (the mental subdivision of larger phrases into short chunks), especially with regard to octave playing, including illustrations of where one should position the thumb.

⁵⁷ While Busoni did not finish the transcription of this variant in the edition (only five bars are given), he did in fact publish the complete transcription in 1909 as part of his collection *An die Jugend*, BV 254 (*Preludio, Fuga e Fuga figurata (Studie nach Bach)*).

⁵⁸ Knyt, 'Ferruccio Busoni and the Ontology of the Musical Work', p. 126.

⁵⁹ Knyt, 'Ferruccio Busoni and the Ontology of the Musical Work', p. 127. The term *Einfall* refers to the musical conception of an abstract idea.

⁶⁰ Hanau, *Ferruccio Busoni im Briefwechsel* (Band I), pp. 14–15, letter 19 (27 December 1890). The original German reads as follows: 'Einige von einem anderen Musiker herrührende Bleistiftcorrecturen in der 1. Invention haben wir nicht weggewischt, mögen Sie unberücksichtigt lassen, was Ihnen unzweckmäßig erscheint'.

⁶¹ Or indeed, for an earlier occasion.

⁶² A full account of the inconsistencies in Busoni's editions is outside the scope of this thesis; some examples of differences in slurs are documented in Table 2.1.2. Most other inconsistencies relate to differences between the manuscripts which represent different stages of the Well-tempered Clavier: for instance, Busoni gives an earlier

is more explicit in the edition of the Second Book of the Well-tempered Clavier, where much attention is given to ‘subtle discoveries, probings into the cellular and generative shapes that occur over and over in Bach’s music, clarification of decorations superimposed on primary contrapuntal shapes, earlier versions of some of the pieces quoted in full, and suggested performance alternatives by Busoni himself’.⁶³

In his editions Busoni includes lengthy footnotes in which he talks about matters he considers essential to either the performance or the study of a piece. These commentaries range from technical, compositional, and musical suggestions to critical commentary concerning earlier editions such as those by Czerny. Busoni also has a penchant for using Italian terms outside the common musical lexicon, and in the style of Beethoven gives tempo and character markings of significant length. His musical indications are both thorough and consistent.

Busoni’s editions are generally accurate in terms of pitches and note lengths; however, Busoni does not always clearly indicate whether a musical indication on the score is his own or Bach’s original marking.⁶⁴ Textual changes however are almost always notated as an *ossia* (i.e., as a variant over or under the staves). Major decisions, such as exchanging the E-flat major and G major Fugues of the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier with those of the Second Book, are accompanied by a thorough explanation.

Busoni’s years of arranging original Bach works for the modern piano can be roughly divided into two periods: an early period from 1888-1902 and a later period from 1914-1921. Table 1.3.1 below includes all published editions of original Bach works by Busoni. I have left out the following unpublished material: an arrangement of the *Chorale Prelude* ‘Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir’, BWV 686 (BV B 21, c. 1888-9); an arrangement of the *Chaconne* for orchestra (BV B 45, n. d.); an arrangement of two *Chorale Preludes* (BV B 46, n. d.). Of the latter two works, only sketches remain; the *Chorale Prelude* ‘Aus tiefer Not’ exists in manuscript version and was only recently published by Henle as part of their Bach-Busoni series (HN 1293, 2016).⁶⁵

version of the Prelude in C-sharp minor while simultaneously providing readings from a later version in the Fugue in C-sharp minor.

⁶³ Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, p. 185.

⁶⁴ For example, the tempo changes in bars 28, 34, and 36 of the Prelude in C minor from the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier.

⁶⁵ Henle’s article on this work can be accessed here:

<<https://www.henle.de/blog/en/2016/05/16/%E2%80%9C9C%E2%80%A6-more-or-less-at-the-most-extreme-limit-of-what-can-be-achieved-on-the-piano%E2%80%9D-busoni-arranges-bach/>> [accessed 28 June 2022].

Table 1.3.1. Busoni's arrangements and editions of original Bach works⁶⁶

Early period (1888-1902)	Catalogue number⁶⁷
Prelude and Fugue in D major, BWV 532	BV B 20 (1888)
Prelude and Fugue in E-flat major, BWV 552	BV B 22 (c. 1890)
Inventions and Sinfonias, BWV 772-801	BV B 23 (1891, 1914)
<i>Chaconne</i> in D minor, BWV 1004	BV B 24 (1893)
Well-tempered Clavier, Book I, BWV 846-869	BV B 25 (1894-97)
Prelude and Fugue in E minor, BWV 533	BV B 26 (1897?)
Ten <i>Organ Chorale Preludes</i>	BV B 27 (1898)
Concerto no. 1 in D minor, BWV 1052	BV B 28 (1899)
Concerto no. 1 in D minor, version for two pianos	BV B 30 (1900)
Two Toccatas and Fugues, BWV 564 & 565	BV B 29 (1899)
<i>Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue</i> , BWV 903	BV B 31 (1902)
Late period (1914-1921)	Catalogue number
Little Preludes, Duets, Fughetta (<i>Busoni-Ausgabe</i> Band III)	BV B 32/33 (1914)
<i>Capriccio on the departure of a beloved brother</i> , BWV 992	BV B 34 (1914)
<i>Goldberg Variations</i> , BWV 988	BV B 35 (1914)
Prelude, Fugue and Allegro in E-flat major, BWV 998	BV B 36 (1914)
Well-tempered Clavier, Book II, BWV 870-893	BV B 25 (1915)
Fantasia, Adagio e Fuga, BWV 906/968	BV B 37 (1915)
<i>Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue</i> , BWV 903, for cello and piano	BV B 38 (1915)
Three Toccatas, BWV 914-916	BV B 39 (1916)
Variations and Fugue from <i>The Musical Offering</i> , BWV 1079	BV B 40 (1916)
<i>Fantasy and Fugue</i> in A minor, BWV 904	BV B 41 (1917)
Fantasie, Fugue, Andante und Scherzo, BWV 905/969/844	BV B 42 (1917)
Sarabande con Partite in C major, BWV 990	BV B 43 (1921)
<i>Aria variata alla maniera italiana</i> , BWV 989	BV B 44 (1921)

⁶⁶ The data in Table 1.3.1 mostly come from Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, pp. 177–95, 300–13, and Roberge, *Ferruccio Busoni*, pp. 49–53. Some discrepancies exist about dates: in these cases, I have adhered mostly to Roberge's 'at the latest' dates of composition (Roberge, *Ferruccio Busoni*, p. xix). Sitsky mostly prints dates of first publication. However, in the case of the Well-tempered Clavier, the correspondence with Breitkopf & Härtel reveals that the Appendix was only completed around 1897; as such, the completion of the Prelude and Fugue in E minor (BWV 533), which only appears in this *Heft*, is likely from this year and not 1894. Additionally, Busoni was only sent a copy of this work in the edition for the *Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe* in October 1895 (Hanau, *Ferruccio Busoni im Briefwechsel* (Band I), p. 35, letter 44 (28 October 1895)).

⁶⁷ The letters BV B stand for *Busoni-Verzeichnis Bearbeitung* (Busoni-Catalogue Adaptation).

A more up-to-date order of Busoni's *Hochschule*, which includes more works from his late period of Bach editing, was never made, though even the earliest versions of the *Hochschule* included the edition of the Second Book of the Well-tempered Clavier which was only completed fifteen years later.

A middle period (1902-1913) may further be defined by Busoni's own compositions which were inspired by Bach, such as the *Fantasia nach Johann Sebastian Bach* (BV 253, 1909), the *Preludio, Fuga e Fuga figurata* (BV 254, 1909), and the *Fantasia Contrappuntistica* (BV 256, 1910). Sitsky writes that during this time Busoni 'had changed from a mere virtuoso to a philosopher; and, as he said to Petri on many occasions, had he the time, he would have gone back and re-done some of his earlier Bach editions'.⁶⁸ While some of the earlier transcriptions and arrangements were altered slightly for their inclusion in the *Bach-Busoni Gesammelte Ausgabe* in 1916 (a complete collection of Busoni's adaptations, transcriptions, studies, and compositions after Bach), most of the editions of Bach's keyboard works (such as the Inventions and Sinfonias) were published in their original versions as part of the *Busoni-Ausgabe*.

The late period, as Sitsky puts it, is marked by a noticeable 'simplicity that at the same time was full of that sort of subtlety that is impossible to notate editorially'.⁶⁹ In these later editions Busoni focuses more on compositional technique and aesthetic questions, some relating to performance matters: in the *Capriccio* (BWV 992), Busoni provides a new realisation of the *Adagissimo*, while in the *Goldberg Variations* Busoni suggests a 'concert version' which consists of merely twenty variations in three separate groups.

Despite Busoni considering his editions of the Well-tempered Clavier to be his 'testament' for pianists (Book I) and composers (Book II), does their study actually provide a complete image of Busoni as a piano and composition teacher? And what was Busoni's role in his editions: does he teach or show? To answer these questions we must first consider Busoni as a teacher.

1.4. Busoni as teacher, 1888-1902

Conventional one-to-one tuition in conservatoires did not suit Busoni: though he did teach at several renowned institutions, this was always short-lived for various reasons. At his first position at the Helsinki Institute of Music the 22-year-old Busoni's teaching methods were very

⁶⁸ Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, p. 184.

⁶⁹ Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, p. 185.

different from the ‘rigid and pedantic style of the other instructors’; his instruction and knowledge were considered inspiring and left a ‘life-long impression on all those who had been able to profit from it’ such as his friends Adolf Paul and Jean Sibelius.⁷⁰ However, in a letter to his friends Henri and Kathi Petri, Busoni complained about his students as well as the workload in Helsinki.⁷¹ He soon left this role after participating and winning prizes in the Rubinstein competition for pianists and composers in Moscow (a second prize in piano and first prize in composition), which led to his appointment as a professor at the Moscow conservatoire.⁷² Here, career advancement was difficult for the young Busoni: the Russian audiences were not receptive to Busoni’s pianism, and the director of the Conservatoire, Safonov, negatively remarked on Busoni’s style of playing behind his back.⁷³

His third traditional teaching appointment was at the New England Conservatory in Boston. Knyt notes that he only stayed at the New England Conservatory for four semesters, from September 1891 to July 1892; in a letter to his father, the young Busoni writes that he was tempted by the substantial salary, William Steinway’s support, as well as the presence of his old friend Arthur Nikisch, who ‘will certainly give me the opportunity for publicity and financial gain’.⁷⁴ Yet here Busoni was faced with the reality of institutionalised piano teaching of the late nineteenth century: not only did he have to give four separate lessons per hour, the new director of the Conservatory often assigned the most talented students to his own class, leaving Busoni’s studio filled with ‘poor-quality students’.⁷⁵

After these experiences Busoni would mainly teach in masterclass settings, which appears to have suited his style of teaching more. Of the 1900 Weimar masterclasses, Leo Kestenberg wrote that after each performance by one of the students ‘there would be a general discussion; and this was the form of teaching – very different from correcting petty technical details [...] The work of art would be analysed mainly from the point of view of spiritual content; and each pianist had the feeling, that the observations Busoni made were meant specifically for him’.⁷⁶ The flautist Hermann Wilhelm Draber describes Busoni as ‘a magician who, quite outside the sphere of conventional piano teaching, and without the slightest hint of pedantry, made young people see music as a boundless kingdom of Heaven, remote from the

⁷⁰ Roberto Wis, ‘Ferruccio Busoni and Finland’, *Acta Musicologica*, 49 (1977), 250–269 (pp. 255–56).

⁷¹ Busoni, *Selected Letters*, p. 35, letter 24 (25 September 1888).

⁷² Kogan, *Busoni as Pianist*, pp. 13–15.

⁷³ Kogan, *Busoni as Pianist*, p. 15.

⁷⁴ Erinn E. Knyt, ‘Ferruccio Busoni and the New England Conservatory’, *American Music*, 31 (2013), 277–313 (p. 283). The letter is printed in Busoni, *Selected Letters*, pp. 46–47, letter 28 (6/18 May 1891).

⁷⁵ Knyt, ‘Ferruccio Busoni and the New England Conservatory’, pp. 284–87.

⁷⁶ H. H. Stuckenschmidt, *Ferruccio Busoni: Chronicle of a European*, trans. by Sandra Morris (London: Calder and Boyars, 1970), p. 184.

everyday world, his own life testifying to the fact, that first you must be a human being and an artist, then everything else will come right'.⁷⁷

According to Draber, though technical details were rarely discussed, Busoni was open to expressing his views outside teaching hours; during the lessons, however, it was 'almost always the piece as a whole and its organization that came under discussion'.⁷⁸

To Busoni it was impossible to separate the pianist from the composer, or indeed from all artistic and cultural pursuits. Stuckenschmidt himself comments on Busoni's teaching as it related to his concept of art:

Just as he himself compared musical and architectural forms, involved himself in both literary and musical composition, found stimulus in reading literature of every period and visiting museums and exhibitions, so he transmitted this attitude to the people with whom he associated. The sense of unity, which is characteristic of his attitude to music, has therefore simply to be extended to his artistic and intellectual outlook. In order to be and to remain Busoni's pupil, it was not enough to play the piano exceptionally well or be technically good at composition. One had to become an artist in his sense of the word, or else preferably drop the whole thing altogether.⁷⁹

Sitsky comments that Busoni 'was not, by nature, a teacher [...] [the effect of his masterclasses] upon the pupils was undeniable, but if by teaching we mean individual, painstaking tuition, with much probing and elucidation of technique and its problems – the sort of thing that Petri was so famous for – then Busoni was not a teacher. Asked about this in a radio interview, Petri admitted as much and added: "He was really more interested in the effect his playing had on us, rather than in our own playing."'⁸⁰

Busoni considered Petri to be his 'most genuine' student.⁸¹ Petri knew Busoni since his childhood; though he was greatly inspired by him, he was perhaps less spellbound by him than his fellow students. Petri himself admits that he absorbed much of what Busoni had taught him, going so far as to admit that 'sometimes I do not know what is Busoni and what is Petri'; at the same time, he apparently 'was always underlining the fact that only the general concepts came from Busoni, the details were his own'.⁸² In a 1940 interview with Petri for *The Etude* titled 'How Ferruccio Busoni Taught', Petri confirms much of what was said by others about

⁷⁷ Stuckenschmidt, *Ferruccio Busoni*, p. 185.

⁷⁸ Stuckenschmidt, *Ferruccio Busoni*, p. 186.

⁷⁹ Stuckenschmidt, *Ferruccio Busoni*, p. 186.

⁸⁰ Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, pp. 172–73.

⁸¹ Letter from Ferruccio Busoni to Hans Huber, 6 June 1907: 'Endlich ist noch Egon Petri zu nennen (jetzt Professor in Manchester), mein „echtester“ Schüler.' My translation: 'Finally I should mention Egon Petri (currently professor in Manchester), my "most genuine" student'.

<<https://busoni-nachlass.org/de/Korrespondenz/E010002/D0100189.html>> [accessed 23 March 2022].

⁸² Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, p. 347.

Busoni's teaching: in his teaching, Busoni always focused on a 'consummate understanding of art, and the need for cultural and spiritual completion'; in his masterclasses, '[Busoni] never taught technic. Pupils who came with such problems were recommended to his assistants'.⁸³ Later in the article, Petri notes that he 'could not come to Busoni with a "how do you play this?" attitude. You had to find out for yourself, come already prepared, or get it from others [...] my own basic pianistic equipment is essentially a mixture of native resources, [Theodor] Szanto's teaching and what was learned from studying and analyzing the Busoni editions'.⁸⁴

1.5. Busoni as teacher, 1914-1924

Though Busoni focused mainly on teaching composition in the final decade of his life, he did still receive talented piano students free of charge at his homes in Zürich (during the First World War) and Berlin. Among his piano students, Stuckenschmidt mentions Edward Weiss, Theophil Demetriescu, and Dimitri Mitropoulos: the former two were champions of Busoni's original compositions, and received his counsel in their preparation of his works, while Mitropoulos was interested in perfecting his piano playing.⁸⁵ Weiss described the mature Busoni as an 'exceptionally conscientious teacher', with the basis of his teaching grounded in 'physical relaxation combined with mental tension. [Busoni] used to say, that playing the piano was like the work of ants. Outwardly absolutely calm, not a single unnecessary movement that might distract the audience'; Demetriescu details how in his studies with Busoni a lot of attention was given to what the composer had written, but also how Busoni concentrated on specific technical devices (such as wrist-octaves) and how best to approach the piano in a physical sense.⁸⁶

After the war, Busoni returned to Berlin in 1920 to teach composition at the Academy of Arts: his former student Kestenberg, now an advisor on musical affairs in the Weimar government's Ministry, 'resolved to reestablish Berlin as a cosmopolitan musical center by single-handedly bringing the best musicians from all over Europe to work there. He committed himself to bringing back to the German capital his teacher, mentor, and friend, Ferruccio

⁸³ Friede F. Rothe, 'How Ferruccio Busoni Taught: An Interview with the Distinguished Dutch Pianist Egon Petri', *The Etude*, 58 (1940), 657/710 (p. 657).

⁸⁴ Rothe, 'How Ferruccio Busoni Taught', p. 710. The Hungarian pianist Theodor Szántó (1877-1934) also studied with Busoni at the Weimar masterclasses.

⁸⁵ Stuckenschmidt, *Ferruccio Busoni*, pp. 196-97. According to Tamara Levitz, Busoni was bothered by Weiss's later claims of him having been a student of his, remarking that Weiss and some other young musicians 'visited him only to further their own careers' (Tamara Levitz, 'Ferruccio Busoni and his European Circle in Berlin in the Early Weimar Republic', *Revista de Musicología*, 16 (1993), 3705-3721 [103-119] (pp. 109-110)).

⁸⁶ Stuckenschmidt, *Ferruccio Busoni*, p. 197.

Busoni'; however, Busoni barely resembled 'the flamboyant pianist and daring composer Kestenberberg and others remembered'.⁸⁷

The composer Vladimir Vogel has written much about Busoni's teaching in Berlin during the 1920s. In a short lecture celebrating Busoni's centenary, which has since been published as an article, he poses the following question: 'Was Busoni a teacher in the usual pedagogic sense, a man who sought to teach his pupils how to compose, to instill into them a method and a technique?' Vogel answers the question himself by stating that Busoni was 'not in the least authoritarian; although of superior caliber, he scarcely ever displayed his superiority over the young. This was an attitude he adopted out of respect for what was germinating and taking shape in the individual [...] Busoni's teaching was not based on any fixed system or method; one was free from every preconceived notion [...] Although there was no Busoni system, he did insist that there should be a new form or even a new language for each work'.⁸⁸

Stuckenschmidt writes that despite there being no Busoni system, a common exercise he used was to take 'sixty-four bars of a good piano arrangement of Mozart, and orchestrate them without looking at the Mozart score beforehand. Then compare your instrumentation with that of Mozart'; this method was employed also by Busoni at the Academy of Arts in Berlin.⁸⁹ Another composition student, Robert Blum, shares a story of Busoni being dissatisfied with a passage written by a fellow composer; Busoni then 'took the score and disappeared into his study [...] reappearing after a short while with an entirely new passage already orchestrated'.⁹⁰ This aspect of Busoni's practice is quite similar to his approach in the Well-tempered Clavier: take a short passage, make a start at arranging it differently or orchestrating it for other instruments, and let the student then work out the rest.⁹¹

Levitz writes that during his final years in Berlin, Busoni's former piano students played a far greater role in his life than his composition students, centring his 'intellectual and emotional life around his three favorite piano pupils, Gottfried Galston, Michael von Zadora, and, most particularly, Egon Petri'; Busoni was insistent that Petri took on a piano teaching job at the Hochschule für Musik, a position Busoni himself had declined.⁹² Young piano students

⁸⁷ Levitz, 'Ferruccio Busoni and his European Circle', pp. 103–04.

⁸⁸ Vladimir Vogel, 'Impressions of Ferruccio Busoni', *Perspectives of New Music*, 6 (1968), 167–173 (pp. 168–69).

⁸⁹ Stuckenschmidt, *Ferruccio Busoni*, p. 194.

⁹⁰ Stuckenschmidt, *Ferruccio Busoni*, pp. 200–01.

⁹¹ For example: the combination of themes from the Prelude and Fugue in D major (Book I), which Busoni later completed himself as *Preludio, Fuga e Fuga figurata* (BV 254), or his setting for two pianos of the Fugue in G major (originally Book II). In Book II, Busoni gives part of an organ version of the Fugue in A-flat major, suggesting organ players to 'arrange certain keyboard fugues by Bach for their instrument' (Busoni, ed., *Das Wohltemperierte Klavier, Zweiter Teil (Band III)*, pp. 42–43).

⁹² Levitz, 'Ferruccio Busoni and his European Circle', pp. 107–08.

who sought Busoni's counsel were often sent to Petri instead; Busoni however maintained contact with many renowned pianists around Europe, many of whom taught piano themselves, such as Isidore Philipp, José Vianna da Motta, and Gino Tagliapietra. With them, he 'exchanged ideas on piano repertoire, discussed piano technique and planned concert tours and visits'; he further 'sent them his essays and piano compositions, welcomed their students in Berlin, and discussed with them his *Klavierübung*, a pedagogical work for piano which occupied the last four years of his life'.⁹³

The contents of the ten volumes of the second edition of the *Klavierübung* (published posthumously in 1925) are rarely discussed by secondary sources: Sitsky gives a description of the contents of this collection, including Busoni's foreword to the sixth volume *Lo staccato*.⁹⁴ In this foreword Busoni remarks that the *Klavierübung* is 'based on an all-embracing plan, but the plan is not presented in conformity with rigid pedagogic principles; it is, at any rate, not without gaps; furthermore, insofar as it is within the author's power, this *Klavierübung* achieves a comparative completeness only by the inclusion of his own works on Bach and Liszt'.⁹⁵ Though Sitsky writes that the *Klavierübung* could never be used as a general pedagogical aid, as it is beyond the reach of most students, its contents however 'can be stimulating and most useful in opening up new technical horizons' for the exceptionally gifted pianist; '[it] is not so much a method as a record by Busoni of his approach to the keyboard: his fingerings, tricks, shortcuts, improvisations'.⁹⁶

1.6. Busoni's role in his *Hochschule*

To obtain a complete image of Busoni as a piano and composition teacher, the study of the material in the *Hochschule* appears at first glance not to be enough: it consists almost entirely of work from Busoni's early period (1888-1902), with the only work representing the late period being his edition of the Second Book of the Well-tempered Clavier. Yet I would argue that many aspects of Busoni's later style can already be found in these early works.

In his editions Busoni presents himself as more of a mentor than a teacher. Occasionally, he takes on the sterner role of a lecturer, when he feels he has to set right some approaches to phrasing or performance which he considers amateurish or questionable. Oftentimes, an appeal to authority is made on these occasions. Regular reference is made, for instance, to C. P. E.

⁹³ Levitz, 'Ferruccio Busoni and his European Circle', p. 110.

⁹⁴ Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, pp. 163–74.

⁹⁵ Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, p. 169.

⁹⁶ Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, p. 173.

Bach's *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments* (1753); however, these references are not comprehensive and often cherry-picked to support Busoni's arguments.

In a wider context Busoni's referencing of C. P. E. Bach was rather unique for its time. It appears the *Essay* was not considered useful to answer questions about the piano performance of Bach's music. In an article on Hans von Bülow's editions of C. P. E. Bach's music (1860s), which feature heavy alterations of the original text, Katalin Komlós notes that 'in Bülow's reasoning, one instrument (clavichord) required a certain idiom, another instrument (pianoforte) another one, and the performer's rational task was to adjust to this'.⁹⁷ While Bülow referred to the *Essay* in his later masterclasses (1884-87) to promote the proper execution of ornamentation, no reference is made to the *Essay* for the plethora of aesthetic questions.⁹⁸ In the Bach editions by many of Busoni's peers and successors known to me, hardly ever do the annotations refer to the *Essay*: only in the editions by Heinrich Schenker (1909) and Petri (1910s) a few explicit references are made. Schenker valued C. P. E. Bach more highly than many of his peers and forerunners, and considered him a musical genius.⁹⁹ Perhaps Petri's references suggest that in Busoni's direct circle the *Essay* may likewise have held more relevance than it did elsewhere. Still, Busoni does not comment on how C. P. E. Bach's aesthetics may have differed from those of J. S. Bach or on the time and musical climate in which the *Essay* was written. This reveals either historical ignorance on Busoni's part or a tactic to dismiss other viewpoints by earlier editors or his contemporaries.

For the most part Busoni suggests a version of the work as he might have played it himself, which is not always set in stone but may be subject to further interpretation by the student. An explicit pedagogical role is assumed in the Appendix to the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier, where Busoni writes on the transcription of organ works for the modern piano: 100 examples are provided, of which the majority come from Bach's organ works, but also included are Beethoven's Fourth Symphony, two Bach-inspired works by Liszt, as well as thirteen original examples.¹⁰⁰ Here, a distinction is sometimes made between a successful

⁹⁷ Katarin Komlós, 'Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach through the Glasses of Hans von Bülow', *Studia Musicologica*, 54 (2013), 257–288 (pp. 257, 263).

⁹⁸ Richard Louis Zimdars, trans. and ed., *The piano masterclasses of Hans von Bülow: two participants' accounts* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), pp. 21, 122.

⁹⁹ 'For Schenker, Carl Philipp Emanuel was the only J. S. Bach son worthy of serious study; he was also the only composer whom the theorist elevated to a higher rank than posterity had previously accorded him, admitting him into his highly selective circle of musical geniuses.' William Drabkin, 'Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach', *Schenker Documents Online*, internet article <<https://schenkerdocumentsonline.org/profiles/person/entity-000025.html>> [accessed 16 March 2022].

¹⁰⁰ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 190.

transcription and one that is ‘not so good’; in some cases, a ‘correct transcription’ is accompanied by a ‘free transcription’ which is more pianistic in approach.¹⁰¹

Certainly in Busoni’s edition of the Inventions and Sinfonias there are more instances of specific technical advice for the less proficient pianist than in his editions of the Well-tempered Clavier, where the pianistic suggestions on the whole concern more advanced technical devices. However, even in the Inventions and Sinfonias a large part of the annotations are on musical and compositional matters which aim to develop ‘the student’s musical sensitivity’ and to ‘awaken the pupil to an understanding of the real meaning of these works of Bach’.¹⁰² Busoni’s aims appear rather grand, yet he himself admits in his edition of the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier that ‘this comprehensive course of study in Bach’s piano-music forms but a *part* of that which is necessary to make a thorough pianist of a person naturally gifted’.¹⁰³ Indeed, in the prefatory material to the Second Book of the Well-tempered Clavier, Busoni writes that though in the previous five volumes of his Bach studies the pianistic side was discussed at length, this will not be the case in the Second Book, where the ‘mysteries of the musical structure’ are to be discovered.¹⁰⁴

Throughout his editions Busoni presents an image of himself as a generally flexible musician. In most cases, he admits that there is no one true way of playing Bach’s music on the modern instrument: in the 1914 revision of the Inventions and Sinfonias Busoni warns us not to follow his ‘interpretation too literally [...] My conception may stand like a useful guidepost, which one need not necessarily follow if he knows of another good way himself’.¹⁰⁵ Yet this approach by the mature Busoni is already traceable to his edition of the First Book (1894-97): in the Prelude in E-flat minor, for instance, Busoni provides detailed pedal markings, only to mark in the footnote that they serve merely as a point of departure for individual application.¹⁰⁶

To be sure, there are occasions where Busoni is less flexible: in the closing bar of the Prelude in E minor (Book I), he suggests two possible renderings, but writes in the footnote that no compromise is permissible.¹⁰⁷ In an early version of the transcription of the Prelude and Fugue in E-flat major, BWV 552, the young Busoni is even more obstinate: if the player has to break the opening chord by arpeggiation, it is preferred that they do not play the piece at all;

¹⁰¹ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, pp. 154–190. This can be seen in Examples 6, 12-14, 29, 31, 65, and 91-93 of Busoni’s Appendix.

¹⁰² Busoni, ed., *Fifteen Three-Part Inventions*, Preface.

¹⁰³ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, Preface.

¹⁰⁴ Busoni, ed., *Das Wohltemperierte Klavier, Zweiter Teil*, Preface.

¹⁰⁵ Busoni, ed., *Fifteen Three-Part Inventions*, Preface.

¹⁰⁶ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 49.

¹⁰⁷ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 61.

however, the mature Busoni, in the revision for the *Bach-Busoni Gesammelte Ausgabe*, omitted this remark.¹⁰⁸

In his editions Busoni thus generally shows his interpretation through the use of musical indications, and uses annotations under the text to teach where necessary. These commentaries range from small-scale technical suggestions to large-scale structural issues and how best to render the expression of a particular piece. As evidenced from the accounts of his masterclasses, little time is spent discussing basic technical matters: occasionally, space is made for advanced technical discussion but this is usually done in the footnotes or in an appendix to a piece. As in his teaching, in his editions Busoni focuses on a consummate understanding of the musical form, and often uses architectonic illustrations to further clarify the musical structure. Like the style of his teaching commented on by his students in Helsinki, the style of the editions is not rigid but inspiring and impressive. Thorough study of his interpretative Bach editions could lead not only to a greater understanding of Bach's music as it might have been performed on the piano but also of Busoni as a teacher of piano and composition.

1.7. Busoni on transcription and performance

As mentioned in section 1.2, Busoni was well-known for his transcriptions and arrangements. In the nineteenth century many composers had no qualms about transcribing work by earlier or contemporary composers. However, towards the end of the century, transcriptions of any kind were often shunned in favour of the composer being presented more faithfully:

The Board of the society for which I am playing is very highly esteemed. The Directors are very conscientious (so they say), and permit no transcriptions in their programme. I was obliged, therefore, to withdraw the Tannhäuser Overture. But when I said that the Bach organ fugue was also a transcription they said it would be better not to mention that in the programme.¹⁰⁹

Stephen Davies argues that 'artistic transcriptions' can '[enrich] our understanding and appreciation of the merits (and demerits)' of a work.¹¹⁰ Busoni believed that his arrangement of Bach's *Chaconne* showed new sides to the work, and similarly to Bach's own organ

¹⁰⁸ Ferruccio Busoni, transcr., *Praeludium und Fuge Es dur für Orgel von Johann Sebastian Bach* (Hamburg: D. Rahter, n.d.), p. 3. As I will mention in section 2.3, Hamilton (*After the Golden Age*, p. 167) has noted that Busoni's own copy of this piece in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin contains a suggested alteration of the opening chord which replaces the major tenth in the left hand by a minor tenth in the right hand.

¹⁰⁹ Ferruccio Busoni and Gerda Busoni, *Letters to His Wife*, trans. by Rosamond Ley (New York: Da Capo Press, 1975), p. 12.

¹¹⁰ Quoted in Paul Thom, 'Toward a Broad Understanding of Musical Interpretation', *Revue internationale de philosophie*, 238 (2006), 437–452 (p. 442).

arrangement of the Fugue from the G minor Sonata for Violin (BWV 1001), first imagined an organ version and then transcribed it for solo piano.¹¹¹

Transcribing Bach organ works for the piano was not an original idea: Liszt, in whose footsteps Busoni followed, had arranged some of Bach's organ works for the piano in the 1840s; C. F. Peters published these transcriptions in 1852.¹¹² Carl Tausig, a Liszt pupil, also wrote an arrangement of the Toccata and Fugue in D minor (BWV 565) around 1862, which was first published in Berlin by Schlesinger; this transcription forms an interesting study alongside Busoni's version.¹¹³

Busoni strove for a larger organ sonority on the piano and considered the transcription of organ works a special study for the pianist. Busoni used different words to describe various types of transcriptions. Knyt makes the following distinctions between these terms:

Transkription (or *Übertragung*): 'the transferring of a piece from one instrumental medium to another [...] but also to the transferring of an abstract musical conception into notation during composition, or from notation into aural sound during performance'.¹¹⁴

Arrangement: the organising of pitches and the working out of the transcribed musical perception, the 'choosing [of] the specific configuration and combination of notes and structures, the instrumentation and register, the phrasing and form, the large-scale development and structure'.¹¹⁵

Bearbeitung: 'often feature more extensive revisions, and in most cases are written for the same instrument. Since his arrangements were frequently of piano compositions that he performed, he sometimes called them "interpretations" as well'.¹¹⁶

Nachdichtung: works that 'hover somewhere between new compositions and arrangements as extensive quotation is interwoven with new material'.¹¹⁷

Should Busoni's edition of the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier be classified as a *Transkription*, or as a *Bearbeitung*? Busoni was not always consistent in his own use of these terms. He referred to his organ arrangements as *Übertragungen* (or *Transkriptionen*); however,

¹¹¹ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 167.

¹¹² Franz Liszt, transcr., *Sechs Praeludien und Fugen für die Orgel Pedal und Manual von Johann Sebastian Bach für das Pianoforte zu zwei Händen gesetzt von Franz Liszt* (Leipzig: C. F. Peters, 1852).

¹¹³ The catalogue number of Busoni's transcription is BV B 29 (1899). Henle Urtext recently published this arrangement in 2020 as part of their Bach-Busoni series (HN 1479), edited by Ullrich Scheideler and Christian Schaper (fingering by Marc-André Hamelin). The dynamic plan of the versions by Tausig and Busoni will be explored in section 2.4.

¹¹⁴ Knyt, 'Ferruccio Busoni and the Ontology of the Musical Work', p. 111.

¹¹⁵ Knyt, 'Ferruccio Busoni and the Ontology of the Musical Work', p. 112.

¹¹⁶ Knyt, 'Ferruccio Busoni and the Ontology of the Musical Work', p. 153.

¹¹⁷ Knyt, 'Ferruccio Busoni and the Ontology of the Musical Work', p. 188.

he also used this term to refer to his piano arrangements of Liszt's *Paganini études* (which were already for piano) which might more aptly be called *Bearbeitungen*. Knyt notes that it is no surprise that the various biographers and bibliographers of Busoni do not always agree on how to classify these arrangements.¹¹⁸ Breitkopf & Härtel repeatedly refer to Busoni's edition of the Inventions and Sinfonias as 'Ihrer Bearbeitung' in their 1890 letters, and in a 1914 letter discussing the form of the *Busoni-Ausgabe* still write 'Ihre Bach-Bearbeitungen'.¹¹⁹

According to Sitsky, 'Busoni's works that have some relationship with Bach can be classified into four broad types'.¹²⁰ These types are:

1. Transcriptions that are generally faithful to the original, changes being governed by the sonorities and techniques of the medium; nevertheless, small musical alterations occur from time to time.
2. Editions intended as a record of Busoni's own interpretation, and/or a pedagogical guide. Although these are the most faithful of the Bach-Busoni output, it does not necessarily follow that Busoni did not introduce elements of (1) into them. Various pianistic adaptations are constantly employed. Sometimes alternate versions, cuts, and additions are also provided; Busoni usually admits liability for these.
3. Original compositions based on a piece or a fragment of Bach. These depart from the original to an extent governed only by Busoni's own imagination; Bach is used as a thematic foundation or departure point; sometimes the original is viewed from an unfamiliar standpoint.
4. There is one major opus by Busoni that incorporates all three of the above elements: the *Fantasia Contrappuntistica*.¹²¹

In this thesis, I will concern myself mainly with this second type, with occasional reference to the first type.

In his essay *Sketch of a New Aesthetic of Music* (1907), Busoni writes that '[e]very notation is, in itself, the transcription of an abstract idea [...] Again, the performance of a work is also a transcription, and still, whatever liberties it may take, it can never annihilate the original'.¹²² If we follow Busoni's argument that the performance of a work is also a transcription, then all piano performances of Bach's music are in essence transcriptions. By 'the original', Busoni refers to the first form of an abstract idea not yet committed to paper: the very

¹¹⁸ Knyt, 'Ferruccio Busoni and the Ontology of the Musical Work', p. 138.

¹¹⁹ Hanau, *Ferruccio Busoni im Briefwechsel* (Band I), pp. 13–14, letters 17–19 (25 November 1890, 5 December 1890, 27 December 1890); p. 666, letter 888 (17 July 1914).

¹²⁰ Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, p. 181.

¹²¹ Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, p. 181.

¹²² Ferruccio Busoni, *Sketch of a New Aesthetic of Music*, trans. by Theodore Baker (New York: G. Schirmer, 1911), pp. 17–18. The original German title of this work is *Entwurf einer neuen Ästhetik der Tonkunst*.

act of notation causes this idea to lose its original form.¹²³ Knyt notes that Busoni ‘regarded scores as pale and imperfect copies of the original abstract ideas of the composer’.¹²⁴ However, Busoni believed that the performance of a work could ‘raise [a work] and reëndow it with its primordial essence’.¹²⁵ In his essay, Busoni continues along this line:

But the lawgivers require the interpreter to reproduce the rigidity of the signs; they consider his reproduction the nearer to perfection, the more closely it clings to the signs.—

What the composer’s inspiration *necessarily* loses through notation, the performer should restore by his own.

To the lawgivers, the signs themselves are the most important matter and are continually growing in their estimation; the new art of music is derived from the old signs—and *these now stand for the art itself*.

If the lawgivers had their way, any given composition would always be reproduced in precisely the same tempo, whensoever, by whomsoever and under whatsoever conditions it might be performed.

But, it *is* not possible; the buoyant, expansive nature of the divine child rebels—it demands the opposite. Each day begins differently from the preceding, yet always with the flush of dawn.—

Great artists play their own works differently at each repetition, remodel them on the spur of the moment, accelerate and retard, in a way which they could not indicate by signs—and always according to the given conditions of that “eternal harmony.”

And then the lawgiver chafes and refers the creator to his own handwriting. As matters stand to-day, the lawgiver has the best of the argument.¹²⁶

The act of interpretation or performance is meant to release the musical work from its ‘earthliness’, to ‘*resolve the rigidity of the signs into the primitive emotion*’.¹²⁷ The performer thus plays a central role in Busoni’s conception of the work. It is his role to restore the composer’s inspiration, but not in a rigid manner: ‘[r]outine transforms the temple of art into a factory. It destroys creativeness. For creation means, the bringing [into] form out of the void; whereas routine flourishes on imitation’.¹²⁸

By ‘lawgivers’, Busoni likely refers to those who ‘supported the more prevalent *Werktreue* conception of the time and who viewed scores as unalterable and sacrosanct reflections of inspired composers’ ideas’.¹²⁹ Busoni does concede a crucial point to the

¹²³ Busoni referred to the musical form of these Platonic abstract ideas (*Ideen*) as ‘*Einfälle*’ (Knyt, ‘Ferruccio Busoni and the Ontology of the Musical Work’, pp. 116–17): an *Idee* could thus lead to a musical *Einfall* [or conception].

¹²⁴ Knyt, ‘Ferruccio Busoni and the Ontology of the Musical Work’, p. 227.

¹²⁵ Busoni, *Sketch of a New Esthetic*, p. 15.

¹²⁶ Busoni, *Sketch of a New Esthetic*, pp. 15–17.

¹²⁷ Busoni, *Sketch of a New Esthetic*, p. 15.

¹²⁸ Busoni, *Sketch of a New Esthetic*, p. 42.

¹²⁹ Knyt, ‘Ferruccio Busoni and the Ontology of the Musical Work’, p. 277.

‘lawgiver’: if one has attempted to capture an original abstract musical idea to one’s best ability through notation, then why does the performance have to depart from the musical score? As Lydia Goehr notes, the lawgivers would likely support interpretations that ‘present the work as it truly is with regard to both its structural and expressive aspects’; however, ‘[r]oom was to be left for multiple interpretations, but not so much room that interpretation would or could ever be freed of its obligation to disclose the real meaning of the work’.¹³⁰

Did Busoni truly take too much liberty in his interpretations? His insistence on the clarity of the musical structure is very apparent throughout his editions and was an integral aspect of his performance style. Knyt comments that Busoni did not equate ‘the work with a set score’ but rather that he ‘viewed the score as a record of imperfectly captured musical ideas developed into structural wholes. He believed the wholes to be fairly unalterable representations of the entire structure of a piece. But, he considered the smaller units of music to be only imperfectly recorded and thus in need of a performer’s insight. A performer could better portray fluidity of rhythm representative of music’s essentially free nature and the abstract freedom of the *Idee*’.¹³¹ Indeed, as Busoni wrote such artistic freedom is hard if not impossible to notate.

One might find that Busoni’s own meticulous annotation in his editions is at odds with his attitude towards performance, which suggests that the artist is to take certain liberties when restoring the original form of a notated (musical) idea. Yet in his editions Busoni rarely takes a hard stance on interpretative matters, leaving much up to the performer. He does not consider his version to be definitive in any shape or form as evidenced by his own comments and references to interpretations by other authors: in many cases, it is merely a suggestion or a point of departure. In his edition of Liszt’s *Réminiscences de Don Juan* for example, Busoni gives both Liszt’s unaltered text as well as his own concert arrangement in many places, accompanied by an editorial commentary and analysis of the original work by Mozart. By doing so, Busoni notes, ‘[I] wished to give an instance of how one can and should arrange a setting for oneself without distorting the sense, content and effect’.¹³²

Knyt remarks that ‘Busoni’s writings remain vague about exactly how a performer might free the notated musical ideas, thereby raising many questions that could ultimately further illuminate his understanding of the nature of the musical work. Specific techniques for “reinvigorating” the score remain only cursorily explained in Busoni’s aesthetic writings and

¹³⁰ Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy in Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 232.

¹³¹ Knyt, ‘Ferruccio Busoni and the Ontology of the Musical Work’, p. 278.

¹³² Quoted in Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, p. 228.

have been neglected in scholarly discourse [...] Because Busoni's prose tends to be suggestive, it is difficult to conclude from his aesthetic writings alone what aspects of the musical work he felt were adequately portrayed in scores and which needed to be supplied by performers'.¹³³ Certainly, notation captured the musical structure adequately, but as I will show in this thesis the performance of this structure is often left implicit by Busoni in his editions. Furthermore, the aspect of tempo flexibility, which was integral not only to Busoni's style but to that of the majority of performers of his time, was considered almost impossible to record through musical notation.

1.8. Busoni's forerunners, contemporaries, and successors

A large number of publications in the nineteenth century were edited by leading performers of the day who offered their suggestions on how the music ought to be performed. Such editions can have varying names: performance editions, interpretative editions, instructive or practical editions, among others.¹³⁴ An early example of this kind of nineteenth-century editor is Czerny, who as a student of Beethoven's was believed to be a reliable source on how his music was to be performed; Czerny also edited an edition of Bach's *Well-tempered Clavier* (1837) in which the interpretation marked is occasionally 'according to the well-remembered impression made on me by Beethoven's rendering of a great number of these fugues'.¹³⁵ Perhaps it was thought that Czerny's connection to Beethoven added extra value to his edition of the *Well-tempered Clavier*.¹³⁶

Czerny was one of the first pianists and pedagogues to edit Bach extensively, and Busoni makes regular reference to his work throughout his editions. However, these references are not always positive: in the Introduction to his edition of the *Well-tempered Clavier* Busoni wrote that neither '[Czerny's] conception nor his method of notation can pass unchallenged at the

¹³³ Knyt, 'Ferruccio Busoni and the Ontology of the Musical Work', pp. 230–31.

¹³⁴ James Grier, *The Critical Editing of Music: History, Method, and Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 151; Paulo de Assis, 'Beyond Urtext: A Dynamic Conception of Musical Editing', *Dynamics of Constraints: Essays on Notation, Editing and Performance* (2009), 1–9 (p. 4) <<https://orpheusinstituut.be/en/publications/beyond-urtext>> [accessed 16 December 2018]; Bertoglio, 'Instructive Editions of Bach's *Wohltemperirtes Klavier*', pp. 1, 154.

¹³⁵ Carl Czerny, ed., *Johann Sebastian Bach, The Well-tempered Clavichord* (New York: G. Schirmer, 1893 (reprint)), Preface.

¹³⁶ Beethoven's teacher Christian Gottlob Neefe (1748-1798) was an acquaintance of C. P. E. Bach's, which in that time may have been an important factor. Letters from C. P. E. Bach to Johann Gottlob Immanuel Breitkopf (the son of the founder of the publishing house) survive in which he asks Breitkopf to 'Please deliver the small package to Herr Neefe' (2 December 1772); a letter dated 9 August 1777 reads 'If you see Herr Neefe, give him my regards' (C. P. E. Bach, *The Letters of C. P. E. Bach*, trans. and ed. by Stephen L. Clark (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), pp. 32, 112–13).

present time'.¹³⁷ There are marked differences between Czerny's and Busoni's aesthetic concept of Bach: for example, while Czerny favours a general legato approach, this was not the case for Busoni. Busoni further aimed to rid Bach performance of what he considered 'effeminacies', such as excessive arpeggiation or slowing down at endings, or "'elegant" phrasing [...] which is in such vogue, and for which Czerny is probably responsible'.¹³⁸ Bertoglio comments that though 'Busoni and Czerny share the concept of a public rendition of the WTK [...] their opinions differ on how to realise an enhancement of Bach's effect in public performance [...] Busoni's main editing concept is different from both Czerny's and Bülow's'.¹³⁹ In my view, the most striking common element between their editions is the inclusion of additional octaves in the bass; however, even this aspect is surprisingly tempered by Busoni, who considers added octaves appropriate only where this addition 'cannot be considered a violation of Bach's style'.¹⁴⁰

After Czerny's death in 1857 Bach editing continued to develop in various directions. In this section I will briefly consider some other forerunners of Busoni's (editions published before 1888, when Busoni's first Bach transcription was published), his contemporaries (editions published 1888-1921, Busoni's years of Bach activity), and his successors (editions published after 1921). I will focus here mainly on those editors that Busoni seriously engaged with or who seriously engaged with his work.

Busoni's forerunners

One of Busoni's most important forerunners was Hans von Bülow (1830-1894), the celebrated Liszt pupil and conductor. Renowned for his 'exact and scholarly' style of playing, Bülow edited a large amount of music; though his editions 'do not meet today's standards of scholarship', many of them 'contain wonderful interpretative suggestions'.¹⁴¹ Bülow did not edit many of Bach's works: among his contributions are editions of the *Italian Concerto*, the *Fantasy* in C minor, and various movements from the *English Suites* (including the complete *English Suite* no. 4 in F major); his most important Bach edition is probably that of the *Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue* (completed around 1859).¹⁴² Busoni considered this edition 'masterly' and one of the first to attain 'fully satisfactory results'.¹⁴³

¹³⁷ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, Introduction.

¹³⁸ Busoni, ed., *Two and Three Part Inventions*, p. 3; Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 69.

¹³⁹ Bertoglio, 'Instructive Editions of Bach's *Wohltemperirtes Klavier*', p. 219.

¹⁴⁰ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 13.

¹⁴¹ Zimdars, *The piano masterclasses of Hans von Bülow*, p. 2.

¹⁴² Zimdars, *The piano masterclasses of Hans von Bülow*, pp. 164–65.

¹⁴³ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, Introduction.

Bülow's edition of the *Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue* set itself apart through the provision of a critically revised text, a 'practical fingering' which was subordinated to 'the exact punctuation of the sentences and logical rhythmic phrasing' and 'consequent organic regulations about the quality of touch and quantity of movement and timing'.¹⁴⁴ While musical indications are abundant in Bülow's edition, notable are the omission of metronome markings; furthermore, beyond the preface Bülow does not expand upon certain aspects of his edition such as the addition of extra bars in the *Fantasy* or the octave doublings throughout. No footnotes are given in this edition.

Influential critical editions of the Well-tempered Clavier that preceded Busoni's own were edited by Franz Kroll (1820-1877) for the *Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe* (Breitkopf & Härtel, 1866) and by Hans Bischoff (1852-1889) for Steingräber Verlag (1883). Kroll's edition was used by many later editors, such as Bartók and Casella, as base text for their own editions. Bischoff's edition was the first variorum edition of the Well-tempered Clavier.¹⁴⁵ Busoni consulted Kroll's and Bischoff's editions for his own interpretative edition; he considered their efforts 'praiseworthy' yet mentions that they 'were confined for the most part to a critical textual revision'.¹⁴⁶ Busoni may have made more use of Bischoff's edition than he is willing to admit: in a 1909 letter to Petri, part of which discusses the preparation of Busoni's edition of the Second Book of the Well-tempered Clavier, he asks Petri to see whether he would like to help him with the preparation of the musical text. For this purpose Petri would need 'two copies of the Steingräber edition for cutting and excavating'.¹⁴⁷ In a letter to Breitkopf & Härtel which discusses the *Busoni-Ausgabe* Busoni writes that Bischoff's edition is the 'best effort that has been achieved', yet it 'is not complete and does not offer a unified or coherent picture'.¹⁴⁸

While Kroll did not leave any musical indications in the text except for Bach's own, Bischoff's edition does include certain editorial musical indications such as tempo and character markings (including metronome markings), fingering, dynamic signs, and phrase marks; furthermore, lengthy footnotes comment on earlier versions as well as variant readings which is not unlike Busoni's own edition. In terms of page layout, Bischoff's edition of the Well-

¹⁴⁴ Hans von Bülow, ed., *Joh. Seb. Bach, Chromatische Fantasie und Fuge* (Berlin: Ed. Bote & G. Bock, 1859?), Preface. Translation mine.

¹⁴⁵ Christopher Fifield, 'Bischoff, Hans', *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root <<https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.03138>> [accessed 21 July 2022].

¹⁴⁶ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, Introduction.

¹⁴⁷ Busoni, *Selected Letters*, pp. 98–99, letter 73 (16 August 1909).

¹⁴⁸ Hanau, *Ferruccio Busoni im Briefwechsel* (Band I), p. 362, letter 501 (5 October 1909). Translation mine. The original German reads as follows: 'Diese Ausgabe ist sehr wünschenswerth, und das Beste, das darin geleistet wurde – (die Bischoff'sche Arbeit in Steingräber's Verlag) – ist nicht vollständig und bietet kein einheitliches oder zusammenhängendes Bild'.

tempered Clavier strongly resembles the editions of Chopin (1880-85) by his teacher Theodor Kullak (1818-1882) for Schlesinger, which were likely also a source of inspiration for Busoni himself.

A final important forerunner was Carl Tausig (1841-1871), a Liszt pupil who edited a selection of Preludes and Fugues (1869). Busoni valued Tausig's contributions highly, writing that '[m]uch will be met with, in the course of this work, which substantially agrees with Tausig; but identical passages are rare'.¹⁴⁹ However, Tausig's edition was not complete, leaving 'the *greater half* of the work untouched'; furthermore, he 'reproduced certain incorrect readings of the Czerny text'.¹⁵⁰ Bülow also condemned the Tausig edition for this reason, further stating that Czerny's edition was 'an adulteration of spiritual nourishment'.¹⁵¹

Busoni's contemporaries

Hugo Riemann (1849-1919) was one of the leading music theorists of his time. Riemann was undoubtedly influential in Busoni's life, recommending him to take on his first teaching position in Helsinki.¹⁵² The director of the Music Institute in Helsinki, Martin Wegelius, then suggested that Busoni might use Bach's Inventions as a starting point for his curriculum, which eventually led to the edition of the Inventions and Sinfonias.¹⁵³ Besides his well-known theoretical works such as the *Musik-Lexikon*, Riemann wrote an analysis of the complete Well-tempered Clavier as well as an accompanying edition, both of which were translated into English in 1895.¹⁵⁴ Though Riemann also edited C. P. E. Bach's works, no reference is made to the *Essay* in his analysis of the Well-tempered Clavier. According to Busoni, the chief aim of this edition was Riemann's concept of 'analytical phrasing and anatomization'.¹⁵⁵ Throughout Busoni's edition of the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier Riemann's character and tempo markings as well as analyses are referenced, though occasionally Busoni gives his own views which differ slightly from those proposed by Riemann.

Like Riemann, Heinrich Schenker (1868-1935) was one of the most important music theorists of his time. Schenker initially sought recognition as a composer, and became acquainted with Busoni in 1897. Though Busoni advocated for Schenker's music and included

¹⁴⁹ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, Introduction.

¹⁵⁰ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, Introduction.

¹⁵¹ Zimdars, *The piano masterclasses of Hans von Bülow*, p. 10.

¹⁵² A letter from Riemann to Busoni (26 March 1888) survives in which Riemann recommends Busoni to take on this position: <<https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN743959213>> [accessed 21 July 2022].

¹⁵³ Busoni, *Selected Letters*, p. 34, letter 23 (mid-September 1888).

¹⁵⁴ The analysis and edition were published by Augener & Co., London.

¹⁵⁵ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, Introduction.

it in his concert series, Schenker was later critical of Busoni's *Sketch of a New Esthetic of Music*; around this time (1910) the two men reportedly drifted apart.¹⁵⁶

Correspondence survives in which Schenker discusses Busoni's editorial work. Emil Hertzka, the director of Universal Edition in Vienna, personally asked Schenker to edit the Second Book of the Well-tempered Clavier as if it were a 'continuation' of Busoni's version of the First Book, which was held in high regard by the director of the Vienna Conservatoire.¹⁵⁷ Though Schenker respected Busoni's editing efforts ('Busoni's edition towers above those of Czerny, Röntgen, and others'), going as far as to say that he himself used to recommend it in the absence of a better edition (Schenker later deleted this sentence), he now believed that not much could be gleaned from these editions by the aspiring pianist or composer; furthermore, Busoni 'was still a young man, and under the spell of Riemann, when he sought to do this publication (sadly, to be sure, he does not know much better today)'.¹⁵⁸

Later letters to Hertzka reveal Schenker as critical of Busoni and other editors; for instance, in a proposal for a flyer advertising his edition of Bach's *Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue* (1909) Schenker explicitly states that it is 'imperative for me by these means at long last to eradicate existing preconceptions that have unfortunately been propagated even by such musicians as, e.g., Bülow, Reinecke, Busoni, etc.; hence the musical world will surely greet the present work with interest'.¹⁵⁹

Of interest is a diary entry by Schenker dated 14 October 1928, in which he mentions listening to a performance of Bach's Keyboard Concerto in D minor played by Harold Samuel: Schenker notes that Samuel was 'not using Busoni's arrangement, but the original score'.¹⁶⁰ For Schenker to explicitly state this it must have been a rather exceptional occurrence.

Though Schenker alludes to having edited more works by Bach in his correspondence, only his edition of the *Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue* was ever published. According to Schenker, very little editorial intervention was needed for 'understanding a work's structure

¹⁵⁶ 'Ferruccio Busoni', *Schenker Documents Online*

<<https://schenkerdocumentsonline.org/profiles/person/entity-000116.html>> [accessed 16 March 2022].

¹⁵⁷ Emil Hertzka to Heinrich Schenker, 18 December 1908.

<<https://schenkerdocumentsonline.org/documents/correspondence/OC-52-399-401.html>> [accessed 16 March 2022]. The transcription and translation of these letters is by Ian Bent.

¹⁵⁸ Heinrich Schenker to Emil Hertzka, 22 December 1908.

<<https://schenkerdocumentsonline.org/documents/correspondence/WSLB-31.html>> [accessed 16 March 2022].

¹⁵⁹ Heinrich Schenker to Emil Hertzka, 1 November 1910.

<<https://schenkerdocumentsonline.org/documents/correspondence/WSLB-69-71.html>> [accessed 16 March 2022].

¹⁶⁰ Heinrich Schenker, diary entry, 14 October 1928. Translated by William Drabkin.

<https://schenkerdocumentsonline.org/documents/diaries/OJ-04-02_1928-10/r0014.html> [accessed 16 March 2022].

and performing it according to [the composer's] wishes'.¹⁶¹ Schenker's edition of this work contains extensive fingering suggestions and dynamic indications; further supplied are a significant bar-by-bar analysis as well as other commentary on performance issues.¹⁶²

Bruno Mugellini (1871-1912) was a celebrated pianist and an acquaintance of Busoni's.¹⁶³ Besides his work as teacher (and later director) at the Bologna Conservatoire, Mugellini edited many of Bach's keyboard works; his instructive editions later became the 'official textbooks' at the Venice Conservatoire.¹⁶⁴ Mugellini's edition of the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier was published in 1908 by Breitkopf & Härtel, with the Second Book following a year later; Bertoglio notes that besides Czerny and Tausig's editions and the various manuscript sources, Mugellini likely also consulted Kroll, Bischoff, and Busoni.¹⁶⁵

Mugellini's approach in his editions is similar to Busoni's: Mugellini not only marks many musical indications but also provides footnotes and appendices in which he discusses technical and structural matters. Various references to Busoni's work can be found throughout, such as in the footnote to the Invention in E major.¹⁶⁶ As in Busoni's editions, the ornamentation is written out; unlike Busoni, Mugellini gives the ornament symbol on every occasion. Mugellini's tempo markings are also accompanied by metronome markings. In his editions for the *Busoni-Ausgabe*, Mugellini's footnotes and appendices are shorter than before; however, it must be remembered that his six volumes for the *Busoni-Ausgabe* were published posthumously which may explain their different features.

Egon Petri (1881-1962) contributed ten volumes to the *Busoni-Ausgabe* during the 1910s and 1920s; he further arranged some of Busoni's original compositions. According to Sitsky, 'Petri had expected that Busoni would supervise his and Mugellini's efforts [for the *Busoni-Ausgabe*] and so took great care and endless trouble to emulate the master; much to his surprise however, Busoni did not seem particularly interested in reading Petri's and Mugellini's

¹⁶¹ Ian Bent and William Drabkin, 'Die letzten fünf Sonaten von Beethoven (Erläuterungsausgabe)', *Schenker Documents Online* <<https://schenkerdocumentsonline.org/profiles/work/entity-001733.html>> [accessed 16 March 2022].

¹⁶² Ian Bent writes that Schenker referred to his commentary as 'elucidations' (*Erläuterungen*) for the first time in this edition; it could thus be considered 'the first in his envisioned series of *Erläuterungsausgaben* ("elucidatory editions") [...] of which the *Erläuterungsausgabe* of the late piano sonatas of Beethoven (1913-20) was to prove the final and prime exemplar' (Ian Bent, 'Chromatische Fantasie und Fuge', *Schenker Documents Online* <<https://schenkerdocumentsonline.org/profiles/work/entity-001730.html>> [accessed 16 March 2022]).

¹⁶³ Knyt refers to Mugellini as one of Busoni's 'prized students' (Knyt, 'Ferruccio Busoni and the Ontology of the Musical Work', p. 127); Mugellini was however never a student of Busoni's: he studied with Tofano, Busi, and Martucci at the Bologna Conservatoire (Emiliano Giannetti, 'Il Clavicembalo ben temperato (I) nella revisione di Bruno Mugellini' (Dissertation, University of Rome 'Tor Vergata', 2005), p. 10).

¹⁶⁴ Bertoglio, 'Instructive Editions of Bach's *Wohltemperirtes Klavier*', pp. 211-14.

¹⁶⁵ Bertoglio, 'Instructive Editions of Bach's *Wohltemperirtes Klavier*', p. 214.

¹⁶⁶ Bruno Mugellini, ed., *Invenzioni a due voci* (Milan: G. Ricordi, c. 1900s/1983), p. 18.

proofs'.¹⁶⁷ Sitsky found that both Mugellini and Petri often did not achieve 'the same clarity of result or beauty of sound' that Busoni managed to obtain in his editorial work.¹⁶⁸

While the editions of all three editors appear to be similar on the surface, they are in fact very distinct from one another. In my opinion, Petri's editions are by far the most thorough and interventionist: compared to Busoni's editions, there is a remarkable density of musical indications, with especially the pedal indicated with great precision. In his edition of the *French Suites* for the *Busoni-Ausgabe* Petri included not only a preface that sets out his editorial principles but also an appendix with 94 separate comments on performance issues, older versions, discussion of other editions, and structural analyses.¹⁶⁹ Petri, like Mugellini, consistently gives metronome markings, whereas Busoni only very rarely does so.

Busoni was introduced to the young Béla Bartók (1881-1945) by his piano student Etelka Freund.¹⁷⁰ Besides his work as a composer, Bartók was commissioned early on in his career as a professor at the Hungarian Royal Music Academy to prepare a Hungarian edition of the Well-tempered Clavier by the publisher Rozsnyai and the Music Academy.¹⁷¹ Somfai notes that Bartók's work on the Well-tempered Clavier coincided with a 'crisis in his private life' which 'prompted him to escape into work'; during this period, he also performed at Busoni's masterclasses in Vienna.¹⁷² It is not known whether Bartók spoke with Busoni about his editorial work; furthermore, Somfai writes that little is known about Bartók's work on the Well-tempered Clavier: all that appears to have survived is a letter in which Bartók mentions reading proofs in France in August 1908.¹⁷³

From Bartók's own preface we know that he based his edition on the text of the *Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe* (Kroll), which he found to be 'the most accurate possible'; Bartók makes no mention of other editions, though Somfai finds it 'difficult to assume that he would not have used during his work the editions by Tausig, d'Albert and Busoni'.¹⁷⁴ Bartók's aim was very much pedagogical: he explicitly states that his edition 'desires to provide orientation also to

¹⁶⁷ Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, p. 178.

¹⁶⁸ Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, p. 204.

¹⁶⁹ Egon Petri, ed., *J. S. Bach, Klavierwerke* (Busoni-Ausgabe Band VI: Französische Suiten), trans. by Mevanwy Roberts (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1918).

¹⁷⁰ Allan Evans, 'Etelka Freund (1879–1977)', internet article, 1996 <<https://arbiterrrecords.org/music-resource-center/etelka-freund/>> [accessed 22 July 2022].

¹⁷¹ Béla Bartók, ed., *The Well-Tempered Clavier (Vols. I-II) with fingering, performance markings and notes by BARTÓK Béla and afterword by László Somfai* (Budapest: Editio Musica Budapest, 1908/1913/2019), p. 143. Bartók's edition was originally divided into four volumes of 12 Preludes and Fugues each.

¹⁷² Bartók, ed., *The Well-Tempered Clavier (Vols. I-II)*, p. 143. After playing for Busoni privately, Bartók was invited to play his *14 Bagatelles*, op. 6 for Busoni's masterclass students in Vienna. (Busoni, *Selected Letters*, trans. and ed. by Beaumont, pp. 91–92, letter 67 (13 July 1908)).

¹⁷³ Bartók, ed., *The Well-Tempered Clavier (Vols. I-II)*, pp. 143–44.

¹⁷⁴ Bartók, ed., *The Well-Tempered Clavier (Vols. I-II)*, p. 144.

pupils who have no opportunity to learn with proper guidance. This is why many, otherwise seemingly superfluous, markings have been put into it'.¹⁷⁵ Furthermore, Bartók introduced a different ordering 'for pedagogical reasons' which was based on 'degree of difficulty'; the order is likely based on contrapuntal difficulty rather than piano-technical difficulty, seeing as the most intricate Fugues can be found in the last volume.¹⁷⁶ To encourage students to come up with their own 'phrasing and performance', Bartók left eight Preludes and Fugues without any editorial markings other than fingerings; an 'explanatory guide' was provided in the Appendix, in which Bartók provides some guidelines for playing Bach on the piano.¹⁷⁷

Though first published in 1908, Bartók later revised the first two volumes in 1913, possibly because he or his colleagues considered the indications in some pieces 'not detailed enough'; it may also have been the result of the 'unmistakable development and refinement that occurred in Bartók's piano notation during his work'.¹⁷⁸ This development can be seen for example in Bartók's experimental use of 'braced' pedal markings; Somfai notes these markings 'may have been inspired by Busoni's edition'.¹⁷⁹ Bartók's edition resembles other interpretative editions of its time: the density of musical indications is very similar to that found in Busoni's editions. Occasionally, Bartók prescribes added octaves to bass parts where this is considered appropriate. Bartók's overall conception is more grounded in legato touch, which is different from Busoni's conception. Bartók also includes metronome markings, but not the exact timings he occasionally gave in his original compositions.¹⁸⁰ Finally, Bartók clarifies technical and musical matters in footnotes.

Busoni's successors

Edwin Fischer (1886-1960) was an ardent admirer and personal acquaintance of Busoni's. Fischer was the first to make an integral recording of the Well-tempered Clavier for HMV in the 1930s; a review of this recording made by Alec Robertson, one of HMV's employees who was from 'within Fischer's circles', comments that Fischer followed 'the Busoni edition on

¹⁷⁵ Bartók, ed., *The Well-Tempered Clavier (Vols. I-II)*, p. 145.

¹⁷⁶ Bartók, ed., *The Well-Tempered Clavier (Vols. I-II)*, Preface.

¹⁷⁷ Bartók, ed., *The Well-Tempered Clavier (Vols. I-II)*, pp. 63, 133-34.

¹⁷⁸ Bartók, ed., *The Well-Tempered Clavier (Vols. I-II)*, p. 146.

¹⁷⁹ Bartók, ed., *The Well-Tempered Clavier (Vols. I-II)*, p. 146.

¹⁸⁰ John Vinton writes that '[o]ne of [Bartók's] major innovations was the inclusion of duration timings; at first they came only at the ends of pieces or movements, but later they were used at all interior articulations as well. He began the practice in 1930'. A letter from Bartók to Universal Edition dated 30 May 1930 shows that Bartók believed this 'should prevent misunderstandings' (John Vinton, 'Hints to the Printers from Bartók', *Music & Letters*, 49 (July 1968), 224-230 (pp. 227-28)).

many points, [but retained] a refreshing independence of view'.¹⁸¹ Fischer was engaged by Artur Schnabel (on behalf of Ullstein Verlag) to edit almost all of Bach's solo keyboard works for a collection known as the *Tonmeister-Ausgabe*; though the proposed number of volumes ranged from thirty-seven to forty-seven, only fourteen volumes in total survive, most of which were originally published from 1924-26.¹⁸² Among these are editions of the Inventions and Sinfonias, the *Italian Concerto*, and the *Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue*.

Undoubtedly familiar with Busoni's edition of the same pieces, in Fischer's edition of the Sinfonias he writes that 'correct phrasing is more essential for the rendering than a multitude of fortes and pianos'; furthermore, it is to be borne in mind by the student that these pieces are not merely 'exercise[s], but genuine works of art'.¹⁸³ Bradley Brookshire notes it is likely that Fischer 'worked directly from Busoni's editions, adapting them to conform with performance attitudes that Busoni [and Fischer himself] evolved after 1916 [...] By looking closely at Fischer's adaptation of Busoni's editions, one can see Fischer's editions both as autonomous structures and within an historical progression'.¹⁸⁴ The musical text in Fischer's editions is remarkably similar to that of an Urtext edition: no editorial markings are given other than fingerings and occasional (original) phrase markings, while any tempo markings (without metronome markings) and other interpretational suggestions are given solely in footnotes. In these footnotes, Fischer reveals a 'general penchant for paraphrasing Busoni's prose'.¹⁸⁵

Alfredo Casella (1883-1947) was a well-connected pianist and composer and great admirer of Busoni's.¹⁸⁶ He was an important figure in Italy during the first half of the twentieth century, and undertook much of his editing activity towards the end of his career.¹⁸⁷ Casella edited music by a number of composers such as Mozart, Beethoven, and Chopin; his most important Bach edition is that of the complete Well-tempered Clavier for Edizioni Curci (1946), which was revised after his death by his student Giuseppe Piccioli in 1955.¹⁸⁸ Like the edition

¹⁸¹ Bradley Vincent Brookshire, 'Edwin Fischer and Bach Performance Practice of the Weimar Republic' (PhD thesis, City University of New York, 2016), p. 249.

¹⁸² Brookshire, 'Edwin Fischer and Bach Performance Practice of the Weimar Republic', pp. 60–71. Of these fourteen volumes, four are of keyboard concerti, with one volume being a collection of the four concerti (Copenhagen: Wilhelm Hansen, 1965).

¹⁸³ Edwin Fischer, ed., *Johann Sebastian Bach, Dreistimmige Inventionen* (Copenhagen: Wilhelm Hansen, 1924/1955), Preface.

¹⁸⁴ Brookshire, 'Edwin Fischer and Bach Performance Practice of the Weimar Republic', p. 213.

¹⁸⁵ Brookshire, 'Edwin Fischer and Bach Performance Practice of the Weimar Republic', p. 213.

¹⁸⁶ Casella dedicates five pages to Busoni in his book *Il Pianoforte*; by far the most in his chapter on the greatest pianists in history (Alfredo Casella, *Il Pianoforte* (Milan: Ricordi, 1936/1954), pp. 83–88).

¹⁸⁷ Bertoglio, 'Instructive Editions of Bach's *Wohltemperirtes Klavier*', p. 223.

¹⁸⁸ Alfredo Casella and Giuseppe Piccioli, eds., *G. S. Bach: Il clavicembalo ben temperato, Volume I* (Milan: Edizioni Curci, 1946/1955/1974). The date of 1955 is given in Bertoglio, 'Instructive Editions of Bach's *Wohltemperirtes Klavier*', p. 223 (footnote 124).

by Bartók, Casella's edition of the Well-tempered Clavier was based on the *Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe* (Kroll).

According to Casella, his edition was principally addressed to 'young people' which is why he aimed 'to supply pupils with a text that is perfect regarding authenticity [...] I can therefore guarantee that – at any rate in this respect – the present edition may be considered above reproach'; Casella justifies the inclusion of his musical indications by stating that it is 'insufficient to the ends of a practical edition to present the student with a mere text [...] Hence the necessity for equipping the original text with all that is indispensable for a [pupil's] studies'.¹⁸⁹ The inspiration Casella took from Busoni's edition is explicit, as he states that most of his fingering 'is similar to Busoni's' which he deemed to be perfect to obtain an 'organ-like « legato »'; throughout the footnotes found in this edition, extensive reference is made to Busoni's analysis and prose.¹⁹⁰ Octaves are occasionally added to bass parts. Casella's tempo indications and character markings 'coincide with those of Riemann and Busoni'; while Casella did not provide any metronome markings, Piccioli later added them 'following the best German tradition'.¹⁹¹

In his writing, Casella is fresh in his approach to ornamentation: he is convinced that these are best considered on a case-by-case basis 'according to one's own taste and historical and stylistic conscience'.¹⁹² Perhaps this would have been considered too difficult for most students: like Busoni, Casella in fact writes out many examples of ornamentation in footnotes or directly above the musical text.

Other successors: pianists and harpsichordists

One important editor who did not have a direct connection to Busoni was Donald Francis Tovey (1875-1940). Tovey edited the Well-tempered Clavier for the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) in 1924.¹⁹³ In Tovey's edition each Prelude and Fugue is prefaced by a short introduction which deals with various matters, such as issues of performance, structural analysis, tempo and rhythmical questions, etc.; editorial markings in the text are limited to fingerings (by Harold Samuel), with tempo markings (without metronome markings) given in square brackets. Though Tovey's comments are sensitive and valuable, Michael

¹⁸⁹ Casella and Piccioli, eds., *Il clavicembalo ben temperato*, Preface.

¹⁹⁰ Casella and Piccioli, eds., *Il clavicembalo ben temperato*, Preface. One example includes the suppression of *arpeggiandi* found in the Prelude in C-sharp minor, in which Casella followed 'Kroll's and Busoni's example' (p. 28).

¹⁹¹ Casella and Piccioli, eds., *Il clavicembalo ben temperato*, Preface.

¹⁹² Casella and Piccioli, eds., *Il clavicembalo ben temperato*, Preface.

¹⁹³ This edition was revised by Eric Wen for Dover Publications in 2014.

Tilmouth notes that his ‘approach to textual problems was often unsatisfactory and he placed too much reliance on the work of others’.¹⁹⁴

In Busoni’s native Italy, other renowned pianists and teachers went on to edit their own Bach editions, though these did not remain as successful there as those by Mugellini, Casella, or even Busoni.¹⁹⁵ Numerous editions of the Well-tempered Clavier were commissioned by Ricordi (Milan), who engaged Alessandro Longo (1864-1945), Gino Tagliapietra (1887-1954), and Pietro Montani (1895-1967).

Longo’s edition of the Well-tempered Clavier (1923) was primarily based on the *Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe* and Czerny editions, both of which ‘best served at spreading this work during the 19th century’.¹⁹⁶ This edition contains the expected musical indications: phrasing slurs, fingerings, tempo markings (without metronome markings). It further suggests occasional octave doublings and pedal markings, though does not contain any footnotes or commentary on individual pieces.

Tagliapietra, who studied with Busoni, was known for his piano performance of Bach, which was marked by a ‘post-Busonian approach to Bach interpretation’.¹⁹⁷ Tagliapietra’s edition (1928-29) was also based on the *Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe*. Like Busoni’s edition, it contains explanatory footnotes and the expected musical indications (no metronome markings are given) and is primarily aimed at piano students.

The musical indications in Montani’s edition (1952) are a synthesis of Montani’s correspondence with eminent Bach interpreters of his time: the edition is more sober, containing primarily fingerings, phrasing marks, and tempo indications (including metronome markings). However, though Montani aimed to provide a ‘neutral’ edition, his text is actually ‘very unreliable’, with his additions considered ‘not interesting enough to justify their presence’.¹⁹⁸

Contact with Arnold Dolmetsch (1858-1940) roused Busoni’s interest in the harpsichord. Busoni was so impressed by Dolmetsch’s instruments that Chickering sent him one of their latest harpsichords as a gift.¹⁹⁹ Busoni later took some harpsichord lessons from Dolmetsch himself, and included the harpsichord as part of the orchestra in his opera *Die Brautwahl*.²⁰⁰ It is unsure how much Dolmetsch managed to teach Busoni: a letter dated 30

¹⁹⁴ Michael Tilmouth, ‘Tovey, Sir Donald (Francis), *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root <<https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.28234>> [accessed 22 July 2022].

¹⁹⁵ Bertoglio, ‘Instructive Editions of Bach’s *Wohltemperirtes Klavier*’, pp. 299–300.

¹⁹⁶ Bertoglio, ‘Instructive Editions of Bach’s *Wohltemperirtes Klavier*’, p. 204.

¹⁹⁷ Bertoglio, ‘Instructive Editions of Bach’s *Wohltemperirtes Klavier*’, pp. 227–28.

¹⁹⁸ Quoted in Bertoglio, ‘Instructive Editions of Bach’s *Wohltemperirtes Klavier*’, pp. 228–29.

¹⁹⁹ Larry Palmer, *Harpsichord in America: A Twentieth-Century Revival* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), pp. 20, 25.

²⁰⁰ Palmer, *Harpsichord in America*, p. 25.

April 1910 from Dolmetsch to his wife talks of Busoni's lessons which were 'good' but that 'he needs to have more lessons'; though Busoni wrote to his wife that the 'Clavecin (the English harpsichord) is magnificent' it is unlikely that this instrument had much influence on his Bach performance practice.²⁰¹

Busoni appears to have had an adversarial relationship with Wanda Landowska (1879-1959), who was critical of his interpretations and analyses on many occasions.²⁰² Ralph Kirkpatrick (1911-1984), one of Landowska's students, respected Busoni's musicianship greatly, commenting that 'Busoni's editions are the work of an extraordinary musical mind. There is nothing in Busoni's edition of the *WTC*, whether one agrees with it or not, that has not passed through a keen ear and an alert musical sense. Its suggestions for performance and many of its basic attitudes may now be obsolete – I am not sure that we can adopt very many of them – but they do arouse in me a profound sympathy and respect'.²⁰³ Kirkpatrick was less flattering about other editions, finding it 'utterly impossible to take the Czerny edition seriously'; the Bartók edition, which Kirkpatrick suggests belongs to the 'conservatory tradition of Bach keyboard playing', is considered 'as difficult to understand as that of Czerny'.²⁰⁴ After Busoni's death, his Chickering harpsichord was eventually acquired by Kirkpatrick, who used it in his early concerts and recordings.²⁰⁵

Kirkpatrick's own edition of the *Goldberg Variations* for Schirmer (1938) contains prose that would not be out of place in a Busoni essay: '[a]ny thorough examination of the character of the harpsichord is enough, it would seem, to show that Bach, with however much approval he might have regarded the modern piano, would have composed for it altogether differently. By this time it should be universally realized that the keyboard music of Bach is not piano music, and that on the piano it must be regarded as transcription'.²⁰⁶ Kirkpatrick further provides a thorough exploration of various performance issues.

An important contribution to the interpretation of Bach's keyboard works comes from Erwin Bodky (1896-1958), one of Busoni's students during the 1920s. Bodky's monumental book *The Interpretation of Bach's Keyboard Works* (published posthumously in 1960) discusses many musical problems in Bach interpretation; in the appendix Bodky further gives

²⁰¹ Palmer, *Harpsichord in America*, pp. 25–26.

²⁰² Wojciech M. Marchwica, 'The virtuosity and aesthetic beliefs of Wanda Landowska', in *Affetti musicologici*, ed. Piotr Poźniak (Kraków: Musica Iagellonica, 1999), pp. 441–452 (pp. 448–49).

²⁰³ Ralph Kirkpatrick, *Interpreting Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier: A Performer's Discourse of Method* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1984), p. 19.

²⁰⁴ Kirkpatrick, *Interpreting Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier*, pp. 18, 20.

²⁰⁵ Palmer, *Harpsichord in America*, p. 98, 175 (note 43).

²⁰⁶ Ralph Kirkpatrick, ed., *J. S. Bach, Goldberg Variations* (New York: G. Schirmer, 1938), p. ix.

performance suggestions for nearly all of Bach's keyboard works.²⁰⁷ Though he does not always agree with Busoni's interpretations, Bodky makes numerous references to Busoni's editions which are always positive in nature: Busoni's completion of the final fugue of the *Capriccio*, BWV 992, for instance, is a 'master demonstration of "how to correct a pupil's fugue"', and Busoni's transcription of the *Chaconne* is equally described as 'masterful'.²⁰⁸ Though Bodky specialised in early keyboard performance, a concert programme from 1948 survives where the first piece in Bodky's piano recital was in fact Busoni's transcription of the Prelude and Fugue in E-flat major, BWV 552.²⁰⁹

Discussion

In the second chapter of this thesis, *Reading Busoni*, I will analyse Busoni's approach to various musical indications. In order not to present an isolated view of these indications, I will make reference to many of the aforementioned editions to provide a clear image of how Busoni's editions fit in their time and how his successors may have found inspiration in his work. In this context, most of the attention will be given to the editions by Béla Bartók and Alfredo Casella: besides their illustrious careers as pianists, both Bartók and Casella were well-known composers and shared this pianist-composer duality with Busoni. They were both acquaintances of Busoni's, yet unlike Petri or Mugellini were never his students or collaborators. I was curious to see to what degree their interpretative editions differ from Busoni's editions; furthermore, Casella's edition was published fifty years after Busoni's edition of the First Book: had a significant shift of Bach performance aesthetics taken place or did Casella's editions still reflect many Busonian ideas?

As this is a thesis that discusses the piano performance of Bach's music, I will not consider the (mostly literary) work of Kirkpatrick, Bodky, and other writers at length: while undoubtedly interesting and worth studying, they are reflective of a movement with which Busoni was largely unfamiliar (despite his contact with figures such as Dolmetsch and his interest in the harpsichord) and which developed significantly after his death.

²⁰⁷ Erwin Bodky, *The Interpretation of Bach's Keyboard Works* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1960), pp. 265–341. Written with early keyboard instruments in mind, Bodky suggests many intricate registrations for performance.

²⁰⁸ Bodky, *The Interpretation of Bach's Keyboard Works*, pp. 335–36.

²⁰⁹ Erwin Bodky, concert programme for 10 July 1948 piano recital at Black Mountain College, North Carolina. <<https://digital.ncdcr.gov/digital/collection/p249901coll44/id/589>> [accessed 25 July 2022].

1.9. Music editions and the importance of the interpretative aspect

As established from the letters exchanged between Busoni and Breitkopf & Härtel, as well as those exchanged between Schenker and Universal Edition, the interpretative aspect of editions like those by Busoni was of great commercial interest. A critical appraisal of the worth of these interpretative editions was not unthinkable even in the mid-nineteenth century: for example, Brahms compared Scarlatti manuscripts available to him with Czerny's edition and noted many 'improvements' he 'did not always agree with'; despite this, Brahms did seem to value Czerny's collection as the sonatas were 'as admirably selected as edited'.²¹⁰

However, the mentioned change in attitude towards transcriptions also affected music editions, with interpretative editions gradually falling out of favour. Paulo de Assis notes that '[t]he first musical editions carrying the label Urtext date back to 1895, when the Königlische Akademie der Künste Berlin published its Urtext-Ausgaben Classischer Musikwerke'.²¹¹ The German term and concept of Urtext comes from the literary world and was first employed in the middle of the nineteenth century.²¹² In the modern musical world, the use of Urtext scores, by publishers such as G. Henle, Wiener, and others, is widely expected. Competitors throughout the world are commonly recommended to choose Urtext scores as their go-to study scores, while students studying at leading conservatoires such as the Guildhall School are instructed to use Urtext scores.²¹³

Hamilton suggests that '[t]he idea that the composer's urtext is the ultimate arbiter of performance decisions is a useful one for conservatories, whose examination systems are keen to find any means possible to make evaluation of performance more objective'.²¹⁴ Yet in the early twentieth century it appears that conservatoires were even more interested in interpretative editions made by leading performers of the day who were sometimes part of the teaching staff,

²¹⁰ Elizabeth McKay, 'Brahms and Scarlatti', *The Musical Times*, 130 (1989), 586–588 (p. 586).

²¹¹ De Assis, 'Beyond Urtext', p. 2.

²¹² One such example is the book *Alexander: Gedicht des zwölften Jahrhunderts, Urtext und Uebersetzung*, a translation of the Urtext version of a text about Alexander the Great (dated around 1150), translated by Dr Heinrich Weismann and published in 1850.

²¹³ From the rulebook for the Chopin Competition in Warsaw (2015): 'While it is permitted to use the texts contained in all available editions of Chopin's works, contestants are recommended to use the urtext in The National Edition of the Works of Fryderyk Chopin edited by prof. Jan Ekier'.

<<http://chopincompetition2015.com/pages/regulations>> [accessed 17 November 2018]

From the rulebook for the 12th International Mozart Competition in Salzburg (2016): 'Generally, we recommend using original "Urtext" editions'. <https://www.uni-mozarteum.at/en/kunst/mowe/piano_bed.php> [accessed 17 November 2018]

From the Guildhall School of Music & Drama Keyboard Department handbook, 2018-2019 (p. 12): 'Urtext editions should be used'.

²¹⁴ Hamilton, *After the Golden Age*, p. 197.

such as Mugellini or Bartók; it appears that this institutional change lagged behind the development of Urtext itself.

According to publishing house G. Henle, Urtexts ‘provide the undistorted, reliable and authoritative musical text’.²¹⁵ However, distortion is one of the first issues that is bound to happen in an Urtext edition simply because only one main text can be printed when multiple sources can differ.²¹⁶ Thus, one can question whether the term Urtext in music means what the term seems to imply in German as well as in literary terms.²¹⁷

De Assis argues that ‘editing is a critical activity. Therefore, editions constitute “interpretative” endeavours, and cannot claim to be definitive. According to this, no edition — existing, projected or future — can pretend to be definitive. Different editors, working on the same basic materials will unavoidably produce different editions; the same editor, working at different times will also achieve different texts’.²¹⁸ The editors of G. Henle seem to support this argument, stating that ‘[t]here is no such thing as the one valid Urtext version of a musical composition, because – as said before – the Urtext edition is not the same as a composer’s manuscript’; however, they maintain that their editions contain ‘a musical text which reflects the composer’s intentions’.²¹⁹

One result of the modern obsession with literal-mindedness is the risk of completely missing a composer’s intentions by following exactly what is written down in the score: Bruce Haynes refers to this as ‘text fetishism’.²²⁰ Flautist and recorder player Barthold Kuijken is wary of Urtext editions, writing that ‘well-edited and clearly printed modern edition[s look] dangerously definitive and trustworthy; it seems to leave no room for doubt [...] In the case of Urtext editions, an expert editor, usually a musicologist rather than a performing musician, has “solved” the problems, and the performer is expected to believe him’.²²¹

In the second half of the twentieth century Olivier Messiaen commented that ‘the performer’s job was to infer meaning and “character” from what was written in the score’.²²²

²¹⁵ ‘G. Henle Publishers | What Is ‘Urtext’?’ <<https://www.henle.de/en/about-us/what-is-urtext/>> [accessed 17 November 2018].

²¹⁶ G. Henle unironically write that their editors are sometimes ‘required to make [decisions]’.
<<https://www.henle.de/en/about-us/what-is-urtext/>> [accessed 17 November 2018].

²¹⁷ David Schulenberg, *The Keyboard Music of J. S. Bach* (New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 7.

²¹⁸ De Assis, ‘Beyond Urtext’, p. 4.

²¹⁹ ‘G. Henle Publishers | What Is ‘Urtext’?’ <<https://www.henle.de/en/about-us/what-is-urtext/>> [accessed 17 November 2018].

²²⁰ Bruce Haynes, *The End of Early Music: A Period Performer’s History of Music for the 21st Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 68.

²²¹ Barthold Kuijken, *The Notation Is Not the Music: Reflections on Early Music Practice and Performance* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2013), p. 93.

²²² Peter Hill, ‘From Score to Sound’, in *Musical Performance: A Guide to Understanding*, ed. by John Rink (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 129–143 (p. 132).

Rosen also notes that ‘it is worth emphasizing that notation only preserves very limited aspects of the music: many parameters are not written down at all’.²²³ For example, by closely complying with Anton Webern’s original markings in his *Variations* for piano, opus 27 (1936), the opposite of Webern’s intentions are actually achieved: performers ‘ignore the change in approach to notation between Webern’s early and later works’.²²⁴ The performance score for this piece, published by Universal Edition in 1979, prints not only the first edition but also the musical text with annotations by Peter Stadlen, who received these indications from Webern himself in preparation for the world première.²²⁵ Without studying this edition one could never come close to Webern’s intentions, or, more accurately: an interpretation of Webern’s intentions.

It appears to me that this interpretative aspect in music editions is slowly regaining traction. Research in this field, in combination with the evidence heard on early recordings, has led publishing houses such as Bärenreiter and Edition Peters to publish critical editions. Critical editions combine a well-sourced, well-presented musical text with expert opinions offered in prefaces and appendices. These range from professional musicians suggesting performance ideas based on the composer’s recordings to comments from the composer’s closest colleagues relating to fingering, dynamics, tempo, and other aspects of performance.²²⁶ In the words of Edition Peters, the critical edition ‘has provided today’s pianists with the tools to make their own well-informed performance choices’.²²⁷

According to Bertoglio, ‘[critical editions] can be considered as developments and partially as products of the Urtext-mentality, and although there is not a totally straightforward approach to the problematic balance between completeness of information and practicality of use, Critical Editions represent, in my opinion, the proper editorial expression of today’s musical world, with both its positive and negative issues [...] A Critical Edition offering its readers as complete a range of information as possible about source evaluations, variants and problems is an edition that poses more questions than it answers’.²²⁸

²²³ Charles Rosen, *Freedom and the Arts: Essays on Music and Literature* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2012), p. 29.

²²⁴ Hill, ‘From Score to Sound’, in *Musical Performance*, ed. John Rink, pp. 129–143 (p. 132).

²²⁵ Anton Webern, *Variations op. 27: Weberns Interpretationsvorstellungen erstmals erläutert von Peter Stadlen anhand des Faksimiles seines Arbeitsexemplares mit Anweisungen Weberns für die Uraufführung* (Vienna: Universal Edition, 1979).

²²⁶ For example, Roy Howat’s edition of Fauré’s *Nocturnes* and Roger Nichols’s editions of Ravel for Peters, both of whom extensively quote performers such as Marguerite Long and Vlado Perlemuter.

²²⁷ See for example <<http://www.editionpeters.com/product/gaspard-de-la-nuit/ep7378>> [accessed 12 December 2017].

²²⁸ Bertoglio, ‘Instructive Editions of Bach’s *Wohltemperirtes Klavier*’, p. 35.

To me, the importance of the interpretative aspect in music editions cannot be overstated. Current-day critical opinions on interpretative editions are summarised by De Assis, who observes that ‘this type of [edition] will probably always exist, since they record in written form significant aspects of the performing style of a given era [...] such interpretative editions could very well regain a certain importance — particularly among young students and performative colleagues’.²²⁹

Over the last twenty years, performance research based on historical evidence such as recordings and interpretative editions has suggested that there may still be much to learn from this material. In his book *Off the Record: Performing Practices in Romantic Piano Playing* (2012) Neal Peres Da Costa states that ‘a willingness to push the boundaries of accepted taste, coupled with guidance from historical sources, will undoubtedly lead to fresh, insightful, and inspired interpretations’.²³⁰ Kate Bennett Wadsworth writes that ‘[t]he field of 19th-century performing practice has developed a range of lively and creative approaches to studying early recordings, which complement (and often challenge) the more traditional research method of examining treatises and other verbal accounts of historical music making’.²³¹ She mentions notable research by Philip (1992, 2004), Milsom (2003), Peres Da Costa (2012), and Scott (2014), among others.²³² Bennett Wadsworth goes on to write that a ‘much smaller subset of scholars have turned their attention to the detailed information found in performing editions’.²³³

The recent PhD theses by Bennett Wadsworth (2017) and Job ter Haar (2019) are relevant to this research: Bennett Wadsworth explores the ‘performance practice implications’ of the ‘much-maligned performing editions of the cellist, Friedrich Grützmacher’, while Ter Haar’s work ‘presents and analyses the sources [existing literature, concert reviews and other period accounts, writings, and performance indications] of Piatti’s playing style that were collected in the course of this project [...] [t]he outcomes of this project include a knowledge

²²⁹ De Assis, ‘Beyond Urtext’, p. 5.

²³⁰ Neal Peres Da Costa, *Off the Record: Performing Practices in Romantic Piano Playing* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 310.

²³¹ Kate Bennett Wadsworth, “‘Precisely marked in the tradition of the composer’: the performing editions of Friedrich Grützmacher” (PhD thesis, University of Leeds, 2017), p. 3.

²³² Bennett Wadsworth, “‘Precisely marked in the tradition of the composer’”, pp. 3–5. Bennett Wadsworth’s thesis contains a well-organised list of footnotes detailing the full titles and dates of the research projects mentioned. Bennett Wadsworth’s thesis can be accessed here: <<https://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/19561/>> [accessed 15 August 2021].

²³³ Bennett Wadsworth, “‘Precisely marked in the tradition of the composer’”, p. 6.

base that summarises the research findings, and a recording [...] that reflects the artistic process of the writer, who internalised the knowledge base'.²³⁴

My research combines the analysis of Busoni's interpretative editions, focusing mainly on the Inventions, Sinfonias, and the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier, with other source material, including letters, essays, archival material, transcriptions, and recordings. Contextual material is provided to assess the importance of Busoni's Bach editions within the nineteenth and twentieth-century traditions of Bach editing and performance. The results of this analysis are presented in the following two chapters, *Reading Busoni* and *Listening to Busoni*. In the fourth chapter of this thesis, *Playing with Busoni*, I will provide my own musical indications for five Bach keyboard works and analyse the development of my performance of Bach through the work done in this thesis. Finally, a fifth chapter will discuss my Doctoral recital as well as two additional recordings of the Prelude and Fugue in A-flat major from the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier: one in a performance style reflective of Busoni's edition, and one recording which assimilates Busonian elements into a personal interpretation.

Over 100 letters between Busoni and his main publishing house Breitkopf & Härtel discuss the planning and form of the complete *Busoni-Ausgabe*.²³⁵ From the letters discussed thus far, we can see that the editing task was a serious and conscientious effort for Busoni, who later in life still valued these editions highly. I believe that anyone who has attempted to mark their interpretations in their own scores will attest to the level of concentration and effort this task takes. The looming reality of the public dissemination of their musical thoughts must have added tremendous pressure for editors like Busoni. It seems to me that rather than dismiss these carefully prepared editions as relics of the past, their contents are very much worth studying.

²³⁴ Bennett Wadsworth, "Precisely marked in the tradition of the composer", pp. iv–v. Job ter Haar, 'The Playing Style of Alfredo Piatti: Learning from a Nineteenth-Century Virtuoso Cellist' (PhD thesis, Royal Academy of Music London, 2019), p. 4.

²³⁵ Hanau, *Ferruccio Busoni im Briefwechsel* (Band II), p. 819.

2. Reading Busoni

Busoni's editions had an important pedagogical aim: in the Preface to the *Inventions* and *Sinfonias* Busoni writes that in his view little is done by teachers to 'awaken in the pupil an [understanding] and appreciation of the deeper significance of these creations by Bach'.²³⁶ In the Introduction to his edition of the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier Busoni adds that the 'need of an edition as complete and correct in form as possible has induced the editor, in this attempt to furnish such an [*sic*] one, to bestow upon his work the most painstaking and conscientious attention, reinforced by more than ten years' study of this particular subject. The present edition, however, also aims in a certain sense at re-founding, as it were, this inexhaustible material into an advanced method, on broad lines, of pianoforte-playing [...] The present work is also intended as a connecting link between the editor's earlier edition (publ. by Breitkopf and Härtel) of Bach's *Inventions*, forming on the one hand a **preparatory school**, and his concert-editions of Bach's *Organ-Fugues* in D and Eb, and of the *Violin-Chaconne*, which will serve, on the other hand, as a **close** to the course herein proposed'.²³⁷

Busoni's editions of the *Inventions*, *Sinfonias*, and the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier are richly annotated: they are full of musical indications, exercises, and short essays on matters related to piano playing and music in general. Furthermore, the edition of the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier contains four Appendices, one of which details Busoni's approach to the transcription of organ works for the modern piano.

In his editions Busoni brings together many aspects of musicianship, focusing not only on technical matters: 'a great pianist must first be a great technician, but technique, which is only a part of the pianist's art, does not consist of fingers, wrists, strength, and endurance alone. Technique in the broader sense of the word is concentrated in the mind: it is composed of geometry, the estimation of distances, and clever coordination. But even that is only a beginning, for touch and especially the use of the pedals also belong to true technique'.²³⁸

²³⁶ Ferruccio Busoni, ed., *Joh. Seb. Bach: Two and Three Part Inventions for the Pianoforte with reference to the Execution and the Composition analyzed by Ferruccio B. Busoni*, trans. by Louis C. Elson (New York: Associated Music Publishers, 1892/1917), Preface.

²³⁷ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, Introduction. The emphasis in the main text is Busoni's own.

²³⁸ Ferruccio Busoni, 'Über die Anforderungen an den Pianisten' in *Von der Einheit der Musik*, pp. 137–38 (p. 137). Translation mine. The original German reads as follows: 'Dennoch muß ein großer Pianist zunächst ein großer Techniker sein, aber Technik, die ja nur einen Teil von der Kunst des Pianisten ausmacht, liegt nicht bloß in Fingern und Handgelenken, oder in Kraft und Ausdauer. Die größere Technik hat ihren Sitz im Gehirn, sie setzt sich aus Geometrie, Abschätzung der Distanzen und weiser Anordnung zusammen. Aber auch damit ist nur erst ein Anfang gemacht, denn zur wirklichen Technik gehört auch der Anschlag und ganz besonders der Gebrauch der Pedale'.

In a personal conversation with James Francis Cooke, Busoni noted that ‘[f]ine phrasing depends first upon a knowledge of music which enables one to define the limitations of the phrase and then upon a knowledge of pianoforte playing which enables one to execute it properly. Phrasing is closely allied to the subject of accentuation and both subjects are intimately connected with that of fingering. Without the proper fingers it is often impossible to execute certain phrases correctly’. Cooke further relates that Busoni considered Bach’s music to be of great value to the aspiring pianist: he found that it had ‘never been equalled in refinement, color, breadth and general beauty [...] his works are so constructed that they compel one to study these details [...] Bach forces the student to think’.²³⁹

Chapter aims and design

The aim of this chapter is to answer my first two research questions:

1. How can the study of Busoni’s musical indications in his early interpretative editions of J. S. Bach lead to a greater understanding of his style of performance?
2. Where and how does Busoni’s Bach performance and editing fit in a wider historical context?

In this chapter I will consider not only what Busoni has marked with his musical indications but also why he may have chosen to do it in this way and what his markings may mean. Simultaneously, I will provide insight into how influential Busoni’s editions may have been by comparing some of his markings to those by his forerunners, peers, and successors. While editions by many different editors will be referenced, most attention will be given to the editions by Bartók (1908-13) and Casella (1946): similarly to Busoni, Bartók and Casella were both excellent pianists and composers; moreover, they taught extensively, and their editions are also aimed at developing the pianist’s insight into Bach’s music.

This chapter is divided into sections where I will analyse the following musical indications:

- Slurring and articulation
- Fingering
- Ornamentation and embellishment
- Dynamics
- Pedal use
- Tempo, mood, and expression

²³⁹ James Francis Cooke, *Great Pianists on Piano Playing* (Philadelphia: Theodore Presser, 1917), pp. 97–105.

This analysis will prepare the ground for the interpretative work in the seventh section, titled Interdependence of performance directions and tempo flexibility, where I will further explore the idea of Busoni's suggested connection between musical indications. After discussing Busoni's explicit indications relating to tempo flexibility, I will argue that the interpretation of other markings, as well as Busoni's conception of the musical form, may also suggest unwritten tempo flexibility.

After briefly reflecting on Busoni's influence on his peers and successors, section 2.8 will focus primarily on Busoni. Job ter Haar uses the term 'knowledge base' to describe his 'schematic summary of the main results of the literature review and the analyses of the performance markings' in his PhD thesis on the playing style of Alfredo Piatti.²⁴⁰ As in Ter Haar's thesis, the knowledge base in section 2.8 (Reflections on *Reading Busoni*) is a summary of the findings from the second chapter.

In section 2.6 reference will be made to the Appendix of this chapter, where additional material may be found (tempo markings in Busoni's editions) which is not essential to the understanding of the main text.

Sources

In this chapter I will make reference to examples from Busoni's Bach editions as well as several (interpretative) Bach editions by other editors. Sources which are referenced frequently in this chapter are included in the following two tables:

Table 2.0.1. Bach editions by Busoni²⁴¹

Ferruccio Busoni, ed., <i>Joh. Seb. Bach: Two and Three Part Inventions for the Pianoforte with reference to the Execution and the Composition analyzed by Ferruccio B. Busoni</i> , trans. by Louis C. Elson (New York: Associated Music Publishers, 1892/1917)
Ferruccio Busoni, ed., <i>Fifteen Three-Voice Inventions for Piano by Johann Sebastian Bach</i> , trans. by Lois & Guy Maier (Philadelphia: Theodore Presser, 1937)
Ferruccio Busoni, ed., <i>Johann Sebastian Bach, Klavierwerke</i> (Busoni-Ausgabe Band I: Das Wohltemperierte Klavier, Erster Teil) (Leipzig/Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1894/1982)
Ferruccio Busoni, ed., <i>Johann Sebastian Bach, Klavierwerke</i> (Busoni-Ausgabe Band II: Das Wohltemperierte Klavier, Zweiter Teil) (Leipzig/Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1894/1982)

²⁴⁰ Ter Haar, 'The Playing Style of Alfredo Piatti', pp. 4, 261.

²⁴¹ For ease of reading, I will present Busoni's annotated texts from the English translations; any significant differences between these translations and the original German are documented throughout this thesis.

Ferruccio Busoni, ed., <i>Johann Sebastian Bach, Klavierwerke</i> (Busoni-Ausgabe Band III: 18 kleine Präludien, Fughetta, 4 Duette) (Leipzig/Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1916/1985)
Ferruccio Busoni, ed., <i>Johann Sebastian Bach, Klavierwerke</i> (Busoni-Ausgabe Band IV: Zweistimmige Inventionen) (Leipzig/Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1914/1982)
Ferruccio Busoni, ed., <i>Johann Sebastian Bach, Klavierwerke</i> (Busoni-Ausgabe Band V: Dreistimmige Inventionen) (Leipzig/Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1914/1982)
Ferruccio Busoni, ed., <i>Johann Sebastian Bach, Klavierwerke</i> (Busoni-Ausgabe Band XIV: Mehrsätzliche Vortragsstücke) (Leipzig/Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1915/1982)
Ferruccio Busoni, ed., <i>Johann Sebastian Bach, Klavierwerke</i> (Busoni-Ausgabe Band XV: Aria mit 30 Veränderungen (Goldberg-Variationen)) (Leipzig/Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1915/1988)
Ferruccio Busoni, ed., <i>The Well-tempered Clavichord by Johann Sebastian Bach. Revised, Annotated, and Provided with Parallel Examples and Suggestions for the Study of Modern Pianoforte-Technique by Ferruccio B. Busoni</i> , trans. by G. Schirmer (New York: G. Schirmer, 1894–97)

Table 2.0.2. Bach editions by other editors

Béla Bartók, ed., <i>The Well-Tempered Clavier (Vols. I-II) with fingering, performance markings and notes by BARTÓK Béla and afterword by László Somfai</i> (Budapest: Editio Musica Budapest, 1908/1913/2019)
Béla Bartók, ed., <i>The Well-Tempered Clavier (Vols. III-IV) with fingering, performance markings and notes by BARTÓK Béla and afterword by László Somfai</i> (Budapest: Editio Musica Budapest, 1913/2019)
Carl Ferdinand Becker, ed., <i>Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe, Band 3: Clavierwerke</i> (Inventionen, Sinfonien) (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1853)
Hans Bischoff, ed., <i>Johann Sebastian Bach, The Well-tempered Clavier, Volume I</i> (Van Nuys, California: Alfred Music (Kalmus Edition, 1985/1999 (reprint))
Alfredo Casella and Giuseppe Piccioli, eds., <i>G. S. Bach: Il clavicembalo ben temperato, Volume I</i> (Milan: Edizioni Curci, 1946/1955/1974)
Alfredo Casella, ed., <i>G. S. Bach: 15 Invenzioni a due voci</i> (Milan: Edizioni Curci, 1946)
Alfredo Casella, ed., <i>G. S. Bach: 15 Invenzioni a tre voci</i> (Milan: Edizioni Curci, 1946)
Carl Czerny, ed., <i>Compositions pour le Pianoforte, Livre 7 (Inventions & Sinfonias)</i> (Leipzig: C. F. Peters, n.d. (c. 1840))
Carl Czerny, ed., <i>Johann Sebastian Bach, The Well-tempered Clavichord, Volume I</i> (New York: G. Schirmer, 1893 (reprint))
Edwin Fischer, ed., <i>Johann Sebastian Bach, Dreistimmige Inventionen</i> (Copenhagen: Wilhelm Hansen, 1955 (reprint of the 1924 edition for Ullstein Verlag))
Edwin Fischer, ed., <i>Johann Sebastian Bach, Chromatische Fantasie und Fuge</i> (Berlin: Ullstein Verlag, 1928)
Ernst-Günter Heinemann, ed., <i>J. S. Bach, Das Wohltemperierte Klavier, Teil I</i> , fingering by András Schiff (Munich: G. Henle Verlag, 2007)

Franz Kroll, ed., <i>Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe, Band 14: Das Wohltemperierte Clavier, Erster Theil</i> (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1866)
Alessandro Longo, ed., <i>Bach, Il clavicembalo ben temperato, Volume primo</i> (Milan: G. Ricordi, n.d. (1923?))
Pietro Montani, ed., <i>Bach: Il clavicembalo ben temperato, Vol. I</i> (Milan: G. Ricordi, 1952/1976)
Bruno Mugellini, ed., <i>Invenzioni a due voci</i> (Milan: G. Ricordi, c. 1900s/1983)
Bruno Mugellini, ed., <i>Invenzioni a tre voci</i> (Milan: G. Ricordi, c. 1900s/1973)
Bruno Mugellini, ed., <i>The Well-tempered Clavier</i> (Leipzig/Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1908/1951)
Egon Petri, ed., <i>Johann Sebastian Bach, Klavierwerke</i> (Busoni-Ausgabe Band VI: Französische Suiten), trans. by Mevanwy Roberts (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1918)
Egon Petri, ed., <i>Johann Sebastian Bach, Klavierwerke</i> (Busoni-Ausgabe Band IX: Partiten Nr. I-III), trans. by Mevanwy Roberts (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1918)
Heinrich Schenker, ed., <i>J. S. Bach's Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue, Critical Edition with Commentary</i> , trans. and ed. by Hedi Siegel (New York: Longman Inc., 1984)
Donald Francis Tovey and Eric Wen, eds., <i>The Well-tempered Clavier</i> (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1924/2014)

For the preparation of this chapter I also studied some manuscripts: the manuscripts of Bach's own works are included in Table 2.0.3 below. Where reference is made to other manuscripts (such as those of original works by Busoni) these will be introduced and referenced at the appropriate points in the main text of this chapter. The manuscripts will be referred to by the name of their copyist(s): e.g., J. S. Bach's manuscript refers to D-B Mus.ms Bach P 415.

Table 2.0.3. Manuscripts of Bach's works

Bach-Archiv Leipzig D-LEb Go. S. 7
Johann Friedrich Gräbner (1714-1794), includes Inventions < https://www.bach-digital.de/receive/BachDigitalSource_source_00003140 >
Bach-Archiv Leipzig D-LEb Rara Ib, 128
Leonhard Scholz (1720-1798), three Inventions and one Sinfonia < https://www.bach-digital.de/receive/BachDigitalSource_source_00003215 >
D-B Mus.ms. Bach P 202
Bach, Johann Sebastian, <i>Das Wohltemperierte Klavier</i> (C. H. E. Müller, A. M. Bach, J. F. Agricola, with occasional corrections by J. S. Bach, c. 1733-1775) < https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht/?PPN=PPN863339743 >

D-B Mus.ms. Bach P 219
Bach, Johann Sebastian, <i>30 Stücke für Cembalo (Inventionen und Sinfonien)</i> (Bernhard Christian Kayser (1705-1758), c. 1724) <https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN79687395X>
D-B Mus.ms. Bach P 415
Bach, Johann Sebastian, <i>Das Wohltemperierte Klavier (Teil I)</i> (Johann Sebastian Bach's 1722 manuscript) <https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht/?PPN=PPN813072077>
D-B Mus.ms. Bach P 567
Bach, Johann Sebastian, <i>16 Stücke für Tasteninstrument</i> (Johann Friedrich Doles (1715-1797), 1751) <https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN770514707>
D-B Mus.ms. Bach P 610
Bach, Johann Sebastian, <i>15 Inventionen und 15 Sinfonien</i> (Johann Sebastian Bach's 1723 manuscript) <https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN816856265>
D-B Mus.ms. Bach P 804, Faszikel 41
<i>111 Instrumentalstücke</i> (Johann Peter Kellner (1705-1772), n.d.) <https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN779693876>

2.1. Slurring and articulation

In *The Oxford Dictionary of Music* (Sixth Edition, 2013), the slur is defined as a '[c]urved line in musical notation to group together notes. Most common indication is that notes concerned are to be played or sung smoothly (*legato*)'.²⁴² During Busoni's life, Theodore Baker's *A Dictionary of Musical Terms* (1904) describes the slur as a 'sweeping curve drawn over or under 2 or more notes, signifying that they are to be executed *legato*'.²⁴³ Karl W. Gehrkens, in *Musical Notation and Terminology* (1921), writes that '[t]he slur is used in so many different ways that it is impossible to give a general definition [...] Some of the more common uses of the slur are: A. To indicate *legato* (sustained or connected) tones [...] B. As a phrase-mark [...] This is a matter of such diverse usage that it is difficult to generalize regarding it. The tendency seems at present to be in the direction of using the slur (*in instrumental music*) as a phrase-mark exclusively, it being understood that unless there is some direction to the contrary, the tones are to be performed in a connected manner'.²⁴⁴

Alberto Jonás, a contemporary of Busoni's, remarks in 1929 that '[t]he sign for the *legato*, the sign for the *tie* (connecting two notes or chords of the same pitch, the second of which is not to be played), the sign for the *slur* (connecting two notes or chords of different pitch, the second of which is to be played with the hand lifted from the keyboard), and finally the sign for *phrasing* --- all four are identical: a curved line drawn over the notes. It is easy to understand how much confusion there has always been and continues to be created by using one and the same sign for the *legato* and for *phrasing*'.²⁴⁵

In Busoni's editions slurs are generally used as a tool to make the form or construction of a phrase or theme clear to the reader, i.e., as phrase markings. In most cases, Busoni uses the common curved line for this purpose; sometimes, Busoni uses square brackets to mark theme lengths, groups, or phrases. Occasionally, the desired touch or articulation is indicated by an additional written marking, while the slur is used to clarify the phrasing, rather than the touch:

²⁴² *The Oxford Dictionary of Music* (Sixth Edition), ed. by Michael Kennedy, Joyce Bourne Kennedy, and Tim Rutherford-Johnson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 793.

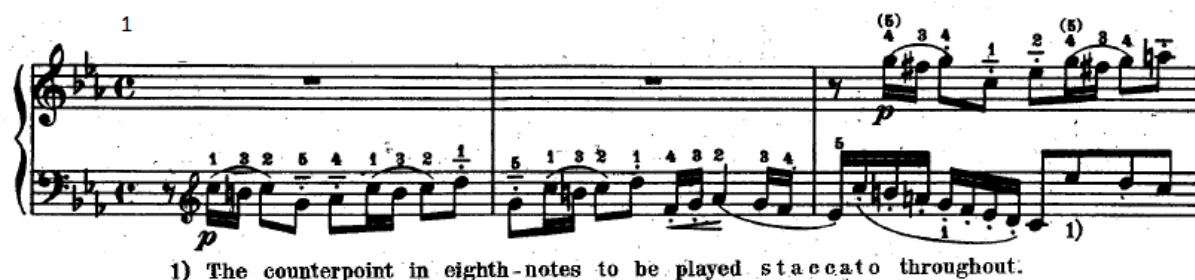
²⁴³ Theodore Baker, *A Dictionary of Musical Terms* (Eighth Edition) (New York: G. Schirmer, 1904), p. 181.

²⁴⁴ Karl W. Gehrkens, *Musical Notation and Terminology* (New York/Chicago: The A. S. Barnes Company, 1921), p. 18. The italics are Gehrkens's.

²⁴⁵ Alberto Jonás, *Master School of Modern Piano Playing and Virtuosity* (Book VII) (New York: Carl Fischer, 1929), p. 11. The italics are Jonás's.



Example 2.1.1. Invention no. 14 in B-flat major, bars 1-3²⁴⁶



Example 2.1.2. Fugue no. 2 in C minor, bars 1-3

However, at times slurs may imply a more connected touch. In the Fugue in C minor (Example 2.1.2) the separation of the thematic quavers is marked with dashes and staccato dots. The second part of the theme (starting on the f', bar 2) is marked with staccato dots and a hairpin. Busoni does not slur the counterpoint which he writes is 'to be played staccato throughout'. On the other hand, both the semiquaver pattern of c"-b'-c" as well as the slur at the end of the second part of the theme are consistently slurred, which suggests a legato touch.

Busoni is consistent in his slurring, which makes it possible for the attentive reader to notice and correct potential misprints.²⁴⁷ Despite this consistency, it is only natural that approaches to phrasing may change over a long time. While revising his edition of the Inventions and Sinfonias in 1914, over twenty years since their first publication, Busoni writes that he would 'in the case of some [Inventions and Sinfonias] [...] differ from my former conviction'; despite changing his mind on some matters, Busoni decided 'to reprint [the editions] without alteration'.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁶ In this Invention Busoni has doubled the note values to aid the 'clearness and intelligibility' of the score. This affects the bar numbering. I have adhered to Busoni's bar numbering.

²⁴⁷ One example of a misprint may be found in the Invention in G minor, where Busoni groups the first countersubject in the left hand in two different slurs, yet later consistently marks the entire countersubject under one slur. It seems unlikely that Busoni intended the printed separation between the slurs, which may imply a different phrasing altogether.

²⁴⁸ Busoni, ed., *Fifteen Three-Voice Inventions*, Preface. See Example 2.1.11 for one of Busoni's suggestions for a different phrasing of the Sinfonia in B minor, which was later included in the editions by Fischer and Casella.

In his editions Busoni indicates ten distinct types of large-scale touches; he further gives seven small-scale articulation markings. Different types of articulation are occasionally prescribed in separate voices; additionally, Busoni uses small-scale articulation to point out lines of interest.

Table 2.1.1. Touch and articulation indications in Busoni's editions²⁴⁹

Touch	Articulation
<i>Staccatissimo</i>	<i>Staccatissimo</i> wedges (')
Staccato	Staccato dots
Quasi staccato	<i>Marcato</i> wedges (^)
Non legato	Tenuto dashes
<i>Portamento</i>	Common accents (>)
Poco legato	<i>Forzando</i> (fz) and <i>sforzato</i> (sfz)
(Ben) tenuto	'Long accents' ²⁵⁰
(Tutto/sempré) legato	
<i>Legatissimo</i>	
<i>Tenuto, quasi effetto di pedale</i>	

As Busoni uses slurring and articulation in a highly interdependent manner, more than any other combination of two independently discussed indications in Busoni's editions, I have chosen to explore these markings in one overarching section. I will first analyse the variety of ways in which Busoni uses slurs and brackets before discussing Busoni's touch and articulation markings.

Busoni's preference for the non legato touch is well-known; however, he was not entirely against the legato touch that was favoured by many of his peers and successors. One influential performer was innovative in his use of the non legato touch: Busoni's son considered the artistic style of this pianist to closely resemble that of his father.

²⁴⁹ A combination of any of the above may be used at the same time: for example, simultaneous use of both staccato dots and tenuto dashes, as seen in Example 2.1.2.

²⁵⁰ According to John Rink, long accents, which resemble closing hairpins, are employed by Chopin for a range of purposes: 'to indicate dynamic reinforcement, expressive stress and proportional prolongation for notes of long rhythmic value; to convey a sense of "leaning", that is, directional impulse, to appoggiaturas, suspensions and syncopations; to emphasize groups of two, three or four notes; and to prolong a stress over tied notes.' (John Rink, 'The Line of Argument in Chopin's E Minor Prelude', *Early Music*, 29 (2001), 435–444 (p. 438)). It appears to me that Busoni uses long accents for similar purposes.

While phrasing slurs were still commonly used by editors influenced by Busoni, Schenker argued against their use in his article *Weg mit dem Phrasierungsbogen* ('Abolish the phrasing slurs', 1925).²⁵¹ Examples will be given of some new signs for breathing pauses or divisions in phrases and sections found in interpretative editions.

Formal tools: slurs and brackets



Example 2.1.3. Prelude no. 12 in F minor, bars 1-4

That the slur functions as a formal tool, especially to group certain material together, may be seen in Busoni's treatment of written-out ornamentation which on most occasions is given its own separate slur.²⁵² In the Prelude in F minor (Example 2.1.3) Busoni indicates slurs over the written-out trills, while the rest of the text is markedly not slurred. No clue is given to the expected touch, but as this piece is marked *largamente, espressivo* one may expect a legato touch to be the preferred one.

In Example 2.1.4 Busoni uses multiple slurs at the same time: firstly, Busoni marks a large encompassing slur over the whole phrase; secondly, consistent slurs are given over groups of four semiquavers, from the second semiquaver to the first semiquaver of the next beat (this semiquaver is also marked with a staccato dot, which suggests a slight tapering off); thirdly, the additional slurs above and below the right-hand semiquavers in bars 2-4 show another sub-

²⁵¹ Heinrich Schenker, *The Masterwork in Music, Volume I – 1925*, ed. by William Drabkin (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 2014), pp. 20–30.

²⁵² A notable exception can be found in the Sinfonia in E-flat major, where Busoni has not marked additional slurs (beyond a grouping slur) over separate ornamentation.

phrase. Yet despite the many slurs marked in this example, the *leggiero*, *granulato* marking, combined with the *Allegro con spirito* tempo, may suggest a more detached touch to be appropriate here.



Example 2.1.4. Prelude no. 5 in D major, bars 1-4



"N.B. Despite its careful polyphonic working-out, this fugue belongs to the pleasing and less exacting class. As the exponent of a type of character it is not the peer of the *E*-minor Fugue, although the latter commands only comparatively modest resources of expression. The Editor felt obliged to suppress the "elegant"

phrasing of the first 5 eighth-notes  which is in such vogue, and for which Czerny is probably responsible, in favor of a more justifiable mode of execution.

Example 2.1.5. Fugue no. 11 in F major, bars 1-6

To communicate the form of the piece clearly, in the Fugue in F major (Example 2.1.5) Busoni has opted for square brackets to clarify the length of the theme as well as to show where the countersubject starts. Additionally, the separation in the beaming of the semiquavers in bar 4 makes the division between theme and countersubject clearer. Slurs are missing, and the theme is marked with tenuto dashes. Busoni prefers a more sustained, detached touch for the theme, feeling 'obliged to suppress the "elegant phrasing" [...] which is in such vogue', marking the quavers with dashes instead of staccato dots.²⁵³

²⁵³ Casella notes that 'Busoni protests – and how rightly – against the following too diffused interpretation of the theme, which we owe to Czerny [...] [t]his is undoubtedly in very bad taste and is to be mercilessly excluded' (Casella and Piccioli, eds., *Il clavicembalo ben temperato*, p. 74); Casella's phrasing is identical to Busoni's.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a piano piece. The top system covers bars 1 through 6, and the bottom system covers bars 14 through 17. The music is written for piano, with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is G minor (three flats). The time signature is common time (C). The notation includes various musical symbols such as slurs, trills (tr), and dynamic markings. The first system (bars 1-6) includes the marking 'egualmente mezza voce' and 'oder. or:'. The second system (bars 14-17) includes the marking 'piu pieno e espressivo'. The third system (bars 16-17) includes the markings 'crescendo' and 'largamente'.

Example 2.1.6. Prelude no. 16 in G minor, bars 1-6 (top) and 14-17 (bottom)

Busoni proposes two different phrasings in Example 2.1.6 (bar 2), each marked by individual slurs: one phrasing takes the high g" as the last note of the group, while the other slur indicates the high note as the start. The two different approaches may have been considered equally valid by Busoni: while the main text in bar 2 starts the phrase from the high note, in bars 15-16 the opposite is the case. Busoni thus leaves room for the performer's own judgment in this piece. I find this phrasing in bars 15-16, with the high note closing the phrase, to be more natural; this same phrasing also suits the inversion of the motif in bar 6, which Busoni has left unmarked.

Touch and articulation by Busoni

Busoni generally marks touch and articulation with written indications. Busoni sets out his arguments in favour of the non legato touch in a lengthy footnote to the Prelude in D minor, which is commonly misrepresented in secondary sources most likely due to a mistranslation in Schirmer's English reprint. My own translation of this footnote is as follows: '[in the non legato touch]', Busoni writes, 'is to be sought, for example, the secret of the so-called "pearly" touch, which is based on the same preconditions of separation, softness, and evenness. The *legato* touch favoured by the earlier school is, in fact, not completely attainable on the piano, even if – in some cases – a deception can be achieved which comes close to the legato effect [...] [the characteristic effects], therefore, are to be nourished in order to make full use of the innate character of the instrument'.²⁵⁴ Another justification of this touch is found in the footnote to the Fugue in E minor, where Busoni quotes C. P. E. Bach: '[t]he vivacity of the *Allegro* is commonly expressed by detached notes'.²⁵⁵

Although Busoni favours a non legato touch 'as the style in closest sympathy with the nature of the pianoforte', he is not wholly opposed to legato; on occasion, such as in the Prelude in C major (Example 2.1.7), he even prescribes overholding, a type of super-legato touch, where the keys are held down in a pedal-like effect.²⁵⁶ This passage is marked *tenuto, quasi effetto di pedale*; Busoni additionally extends the note values by adding extra beams:

²⁵⁴ Busoni, ed., *Das Wohltemperierte Klavier*, pp. 34–35. The English translation in the G. Schirmer edition misrepresents what Busoni writes in German on one crucial point:

Original German: 'Das von der älteren Schule bevorzugte *Legato*-Spiel ist auf dem Clavier **thatsächlich nicht vollkommen erreichbar**'.

English translation in G. Schirmer's edition, which is most often referenced in secondary sources: 'The *legato* touch favored by the earlier school **is, in point of fact, non-attainable** on the pianoforte'.

My translation: 'The *legato* touch favoured by the earlier school is, **in fact, not completely attainable** on the piano'.

There is a distinct difference between 'non-attainable' and 'not perfectly attainable'. Other significant discrepancies between this edition and the original German edition are documented throughout this thesis.

²⁵⁵ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 62.

²⁵⁶ For the Busoni quote, see the footnote to the Prelude in D minor (Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 34).



Example 2.1.7. Prelude no. 1 in C major, bars 20-25

Throughout his editions, Busoni indicates a wide variety of touches and articulations that are to be employed concurrently. For instance, in the footnote that accompanies the E major Fugue (Example 2.1.8), Busoni explicitly asks for three different kinds of touches: the *scorrevole* (flowing) semiquavers ‘in pearly fluency’, the quaver counterpoint ‘light and detached’, and the middle part ‘as sustainedly as possible’. The additional markings in the text, including the slurs, show the differences in touch Busoni asks for. Though the *scorrevole* right hand is slurred, the pearly touch may in fact be performed with a non legato touch.²⁵⁷



8) The different types of character exemplified by the three parts, should be brought out here by the employment of different kinds of touch; the figures in 16th-notes in pearly fluency; the counterpoint in eighth-notes, light and detached; the middle part as sustainedly as possible, and not without expression. The same holds good – noting the exchange of their rôles – for the parallel passage in the third part, measures 4–7.

Example 2.1.8. Fugue no. 9 in E major, bars 13-15

Similarly to the common staccato dots at the end of slurs, which suggest a dynamic tapering off, Busoni sometimes marks a staccato dot on the second (held) note of a tie, which may indicate that this note must be released earlier. There is both a musical and physical element

²⁵⁷ ‘[in the non legato touch] is to be sought, for example, the secret of the so-called “pearly” touch’ (Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 34).

to this notation: the earlier lifting of the tied note will create a short break between the tied note and what follows; additionally, it may free up the finger that was used to hold the tied note to continue the next phrase. That this may be more than an instructive indication to lift the tied note can be seen from Busoni's use of this marking in one of his later compositions, the *Elegie* no. 2 (*All'Italia!*) (Example 2.1.9), which was first published in 1908.



Example 2.1.9. Busoni, *Elegie* no. 2 (*All'Italia!*), bars 24-27²⁵⁸



Example 2.1.10. Invention no. 13 in A minor, bars 3-7

Example 2.1.10 shows not only the familiar staccato notes at the end of slurs but also multiple accented tied notes in both hands which are clearly not meant to be repeated. The tied notes are consistently played with the fifth finger, before this fifth finger is used again for the following note. In the left hand in bar 6 (after the double bar), Busoni re-uses the fifth finger for the statement of the theme in C major: this causes a break in sound that closely matches the written articulation.

²⁵⁸ Ferruccio Busoni, *Elegien* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1908–09), p. 7.

Touch and articulation by other editors and performers

One editor who also favoured a non legato touch was Schenker, who in his edition of the *Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue* (1909) recommended the general use of non legato touch in the playing of early works which ‘automatically results in a more moderate tempo’.²⁵⁹ However, despite Busoni’s influence, most other editors suggest a more legato approach to Bach’s music, which may find its origin in Czerny’s editions with their plethora of legato indications; Casella for instance writes that the legato style ‘always predominates in Bach’.²⁶⁰ In actuality however, in many cases Casella’s indications of touch and articulation bear a significant resemblance to those marked by Busoni. In Bartók’s edition, the Prelude in D minor is notably marked *molto legato, quasi legatissimo*, in contrast to Busoni’s *quasi staccato*.²⁶¹ Throughout his edition, Bartók marks non legato or poco legato with less frequency than Busoni does. Brookshire comments on Fischer’s ‘softening’ of Busoni’s articulation marks ‘by moving virtually every indication of articulation one degree closer to legato’; Brookshire considers this approach to possibly be a ‘response to the strong criticisms of the “Busoni staccato,” a misnomer spread by Busoni’s adversaries’.²⁶²

It appears thus that Busoni’s preference for the non legato touch in Bach was tempered by most later editors. However, this was not the case for some renowned Bach specialists in the twentieth century. Brian James Dykstra comments that the most interesting articulation can be heard on recordings by Rosalyn Tureck (1913-2003) and Glenn Gould (1932-1982): while Tureck’s ‘inventiveness manifested in the ways in which she combines staccato or non-legato touch with short slurs’, Gould’s ‘innovation usually involves the use of much non-legato articulation in pieces which were previously thought [by editors and performers] to call primarily for legato touch’.²⁶³ Gould himself noted that he was not inspired by ‘Casals and Landowska and Fischer [...] the one [who really influenced me] was [Rosalyn] Tureck’.²⁶⁴ Though no mention of Busoni’s influence is made by either Tureck or Gould, we know that Tureck was familiar with Busoni’s transcriptions: she considered his transcription of the *Chaconne* to be her ‘warhorse’ as a young pianist, and despite not playing transcriptions for

²⁵⁹ Schenker, ed., *Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue, Critical Edition with Commentary*, trans. and ed. by Hedi Siegel, p. 63.

²⁶⁰ Casella and Piccioli, eds., *Il clavicembalo ben temperato*, Preface.

²⁶¹ Bartók, ed., *The Well-Tempered Clavier, Vol I-II*, p. 8.

²⁶² Brookshire, ‘Edwin Fischer and Bach Performance Practice of the Weimar Republic’, pp. 228–29.

²⁶³ Brian James Dykstra, ‘The Interpretation of Bach’s Well-tempered Clavier, Book One: A Study in Diversity’ (DMA thesis, Eastman School of Music, Rochester, 1969), pp. 464, 462.

²⁶⁴ Jonathan Cott, *Conversations with Glenn Gould* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1984), pp. 62–65.

many years, began programming this piece again in her concerts later during the height of her career.²⁶⁵

Stuckenschmidt (who knew Busoni personally) commented that Gould's 'fluency in both hands, dynamic versatility, and range of tone colours represent a degree of mastery that, in my view, has not been seen since the time of Busoni'.²⁶⁶ Busoni's son Raffaello Busoni (1900-1962) wrote a personal letter to Gould in which he remarks that '[A]lthough your style differs, it is closest to the one of my father [...] [in] its mental or spiritual approach'.²⁶⁷ Unfortunately it is not clear how this 'mental or spiritual approach' is defined; however, I still find it striking that Gould's idiosyncratic style was considered closest to Busoni's by his son. In his response to this letter Gould writes that he has 'never before been so honored and delighted by kind words about my work. It is of the greatest satisfaction that this compliment should take the form of a comparison to the vast artistry and accomplishment of your father'.²⁶⁸

Contemporary and new phrasing indications

In his 1925 essay 'Abolish the phrasing slur' (*Weg mit dem Phrasierungsbogen*), Schenker is critical of editors who 'introduce mistakes into the texts of the masters all too often [...] editors felt compelled to provide a companion for [the legato slur] in the form of a second type of slur, the so-called *phrasing slur*. This slur is the very symbol of that internal confusion that the editor introduces into the masterwork [...] which falsifies both the legato slur and the musical form'.²⁶⁹ Schenker provides numerous examples, mainly from Mozart's music, where the editor changed the form of Mozart's short legato slurs into longer phrasing slurs; later on, he speaks about the confusion that may exist between a composer's notation and their intended execution by referring to an exchange between Brahms and Joachim.²⁷⁰ I believe that many editors of

²⁶⁵ Rosalyn Tureck, 'Instruments and I', in the *Rosalyn Tureck Collection*, online article.

<<https://www.interlochen.org/music/fennell-music-library/tureck-bach-research-institute/documents/instruments-and-i>> [accessed 17 August 2022].

²⁶⁶ Kevin Bazzana, *Wondrous Strange: The Life and Art of Glenn Gould* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 173.

²⁶⁷ This letter is preserved in the Glenn Gould Archive, item no. 33 22 22. The online database notes that the letter was written c. 1959; Gould's response however is dated 27 May 1958, so Raffaello Busoni's letter must be from before this date. <<https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/glenngould/001086-110.01-e.php?PHPSESSID=nh72hbs3ksahgrqtsqmacfq4m9acj2p42u8dn7nuhdpfhhgpr7r0&q1=busoni%2C+rafaello&c1=&b2=AND&q2=&c2=&q3=&interval=20>> [accessed 9 August 2022].

²⁶⁸ Glenn Gould to Raffaello Busoni, 27 May 1958. This letter was sold in a 2019 auction by Swann Galleries, Inc., in New York. A photograph of this letter may be accessed here: <<https://catalogue.swanngalleries.com/Lots/auction-lot/GOULD-GLENN-Autograph-Letter-Signed-to-the-son-of-composer-F?saleno=2502&lotNo=183&refNo=756360>> [accessed 9 August 2022].

²⁶⁹ Schenker, *The Masterwork in Music, Volume I – 1925*, pp. 20–21.

²⁷⁰ Schenker, *The Masterwork in Music, Volume I – 1925*, pp. 27–28.

instructive editions, as well as performers, would have indeed found themselves on Joachim's side, who argues for a style of notation which makes clear not only the bowing but mainly the intended articulation or effect of the passage, while deviating from Brahms's original notation (but, as is clear from the exchange, not its intended sounding result). Despite Schenker's undeniable influence, many interpretative editors sought not the abolishing of the phrasing slur but in fact created new signs to accompany its use: examples include indications for breathing pauses, phrase lengths, and localised articulation.

Editors hardly ever comment on how Bach's original slurs are to be performed. Furthermore, the slurs found in Bach's manuscripts are not always fully reproduced. Occasionally, many editorial (phrasing) slurs are added without indicating which marking is original and which is not.²⁷¹ I believe it to be unlikely that Busoni was familiar with Bach's manuscripts: generally speaking, Busoni reproduces Bach's slurs as found in critical editions such as those by Kroll for the *Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe* or by Bischoff, but may supplement his own phrasing slurs alongside without clarifying which is the original marking.²⁷² In Table 2.1.2 I have compared the treatment of the original Bach slurs in the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier by Busoni, Bartók, and Casella; though all three are remarkably faithful, Bartók provides a text which is closest to the Bach manuscript or the *Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe*.²⁷³

²⁷¹ A list of manuscript sources can be found in Table 2.0.3 in the introduction to this chapter. The original source referred to here is D-B Mus.ms. Bach P 415 (Johann Sebastian Bach's 1722 manuscript).

²⁷² When referring to Kroll's edition or that by Bischoff, Busoni refers to them by name but may also refer to 'the autograph composition' (Busoni, ed., *Two and Three Part Inventions*, p. 25).

²⁷³ It must be said, however, that my copies of Bartók's and Casella's editions are later reprints where second editors have corrected previous mistakes, some of which may include fixes to slurs. This has not (yet) happened in Busoni's case.

Table 2.1.2. Treatment of original Bach slurs by later editors

Piece and bar	Busoni (1894-97)	Bartók (1908-13)	Casella (1946)
Prelude in C# minor, bar 36	unaltered	unaltered	unaltered
Fugue in D minor, bar 2	unaltered, phrasing slur added	unaltered, phrasing slur added; mentions slurs are Bach original	missing, substituted by phrasing slur
Prelude in E minor, bar 3	missing	unaltered; mentions slurs are Bach original	first slur missing, rest unaltered
Prelude in G# minor, bar 7	unaltered	unaltered	unaltered
Fugue in B minor, bar 1-2	unaltered; mentions slurs are Bach original	unaltered, phrasing slur added	unaltered; mentions slurs are Bach original

As can be seen from the above table, the phrasing slur did not get abolished after Schenker's article: Casella, who was heavily influenced by Busoni, still made extensive use of phrasing slurs twenty years later in his editions of Bach.²⁷⁴ One example may be found in his 1946 edition of the Sinfonias, where Casella reprints Busoni's revised phrasing for the Sinfonia in B minor:

²⁷⁴ Another Italian editor who continued to use phrasing slurs well into the 1960s is Pietro Montani, who edited multiple volumes of Bach's music for G. Ricordi (Milan).



Example 2.1.11. Sinfonia no. 15 in B minor, bars 1-4 (Casella)²⁷⁵

Though his editions bear a lot of resemblance to Busoni's, Casella does mark original phrasing and articulation at times; for instance, he directly comments on his departure from Busoni's suggested phrasing in the Fugue in F-sharp minor, where Casella's phrasing is linked to 'the expression of sorrow' from the final chorus of the *Matthäus-Passion*.²⁷⁶ Another distinct feature of Casella's editions compared to those by Busoni and Bartók is the inclusion of much longer phrasing slurs, some spanning multiple bars, while Busoni and Bartók often subdivide these long phrases with additional slurs. Casella furthermore does not use multiple phrasing slurs at once in the same phrase.

In his editions for the *Busoni-Ausgabe*, in which Busoni's influence is clearly felt, Petri endeavoured to follow Busoni's own style as closely as possible.²⁷⁷ The following example from the *Partita* no. 1 (*Allemande*) shows multiple phrasing slurs used at once, the staccato dot at the end of slurs, and written indications of touch:

²⁷⁵ Busoni's revised phrasing may be found in the Preface to the 1914 reprint of the edition of the Inventions and Sinfonias, where Busoni writes that he would 'in the case of some [Inventions and Sinfonias] [...] differ from my former conviction' (Busoni, ed., *Fifteen Three-Voice Inventions*, Preface). In the original German edition, this revised phrasing is printed as follows:



The swell in the phrase is misrepresented in the English reprint by Theodore Presser: the hairpins are not only the wrong size but are also in the wrong place:



²⁷⁶ Casella and Piccioli, eds., *Il clavicembalo ben temperato*, p. 89.

²⁷⁷ Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, p. 178.



Example 2.1.12. Allemande from the *Partita* no. 1 in B-flat major, bars 7-10 (Petri)

In Tovey's edition (1924), musical markings (except for tempo markings and fingerings) are generally omitted in the main text; a few phrasing suggestions are given in prefaces using short legato slurs. Despite Busoni's strong influence, Fischer's edition of the *Sinfonias* (1924) is similar to Tovey's: most musical indications (except fingerings) are omitted from the main text. Fischer instead marks his suggestions for tempo, phrasing, and articulation in footnotes. Some of them are closely related to Busoni's indications: for instance, Fischer's phrasing of the *Sinfonia* in G minor is similar to that by Busoni, and in the *Sinfonia* in B minor Fischer remarks that Busoni's revised phrasing is 'very beautiful'.²⁷⁸

In the Preface to his edition of the *Sinfonias*, Fischer writes that '[for] the comprehension of the organic structure of the music the editor will apply the sign |'.²⁷⁹ The introduction of a breathing sign is not unlike Busoni's own use of the comma or the disconnected bar-line (or double slash) which indicates a period or end to a phrase:

Close of any Part:	Division in a Part:	Sections or Periods important to indicate:	or:	Close, or End:
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Example 2.1.13. Busoni's markings of divisions in the musical form, Appendix to Part Two (nos. 9-16) of the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier²⁸⁰

In the Appendix to his edition of the *Well-tempered Clavier* (1908-13) Bartók briefly comments on his use of both phrasing and legato slurs and how these may be interpreted in

²⁷⁸ Fischer, ed., *Dreistimmige Inventionen*, pp. 26, 34.

²⁷⁹ Fischer, ed., *Dreistimmige Inventionen*, Preface.

²⁸⁰ As mentioned in the Introduction (section 1.3), Busoni's edition was originally published in four separate parts (Preludes and Fugues 1-8/9-16/17-24/Appendices). Busoni further uses the comma; this may be found, among other places, in the *Invention* in A minor or the *Prelude* in B minor.

various situations.²⁸¹ Their interpretation does not differ significantly from what a modern reader might expect. In his edition, slurs and articulation markings are used with regularity. He further uses a breathing sign similar to that by Fischer (for where ‘strong separation is absolutely necessary’), as well as a double vertical bar to indicate ‘the meeting points of the individual sections’.²⁸² This double vertical bar is similar to the double bar indication used by Busoni marked above; Petri however uses this symbol with much more regularity than Busoni does.²⁸³

Outside of the realm of Bach editions, another noteworthy development in signifying phrase lengths is the use of Roman numerals by Schnabel in his editions of the Beethoven Sonatas (1920s, Ullstein Verlag). In the following example (Example 2.1.14) the I indicates the first bar (bar 9/15) of the phrase, while the VI marks the end of the phrase (sixth bar, bar 14/20). Schnabel also uses accent markings to point out particular chord voicings: in bars 7-8 and 16-18, small accent marks are printed in brackets next to the bottom part of the chords.

Example 2.1.14. Beethoven, Sonata op. 2 no. 1, bars 5-20 (Schnabel)²⁸⁴

²⁸¹ Bartók, ed., *The Well-Tempered Clavier (Vols. I–II)*, pp. 133–34.

²⁸² Bartók, ed., *The Well-Tempered Clavier (Vols. I–II)*, pp. 133–34.

²⁸³ In the editions by Busoni and Petri this sign often has a diagonal slant.

²⁸⁴ Artur Schnabel, ed., *Beethoven, 32 Sonate per pianoforte* (Milan: Edizioni Curci (reprint), 1949), p. 7.

2.2. Fingering

Fingering is an essential aspect of keyboard technique: no treatise or interpretative edition would be complete without recommending guidelines or providing examples of good fingering technique. Busoni incorporated fingering techniques from great pianists who came before him, such as Chopin and Liszt, and some of his advanced fingerings build on their earlier work. Certain fingerings by Busoni may be traced back to eighteenth-century treatises. I will first examine some of those influences, before discussing the fingerings found in Busoni's interpretative editions. Finally, some examples are given of Busoni's individuality and his influence on later editors.

In this section, when I refer to conventional aspects of a fingering technique, I mean those aspects that would not be out of place in a nineteenth-century or modern edition. These editions generally contain fingerings with which one may easily achieve a legato touch: consistent use of thumb-crossings, avoiding shorter fingers on the black keys, and many finger substitutions. Though Busoni also considered economy of movement important when choosing his fingerings, he tends to avoid the crossing of the thumb, preferring unconventional crossings of the longer fingers; furthermore, Busoni's fingerings may have a particular musical or physical importance.²⁸⁵

Busoni's fingering system

Busoni's fingerings cannot be correctly understood and evaluated without an understanding of his principle of *non legato* playing, and of the gestures and motions typical of Busoni and his school. The softly rounded "arcs" of the Romantic pianists, the bouncing wrist of Leschetitzky is replaced with a focused gathering together of the physical apparatus, particularly vertical and horizontal movements of the arm used as a whole, with an unbending, stable wrist.²⁸⁶

Busoni gives some initial clues about his own systematic approach to fingering in the Preface to his edition of the Inventions and Sinfonias. He considered '[one of] the principal features of [my] edition' to be:

'[c]hoice of the appropriate fingering (especially, the employment of the thumb and fifth finger on the black keys, the fingering for diatonic figures with stationary thumb; a) ascending with 343 – 454 – 4534 – 4523 etc. b) descending with 545 – 434 – 4354 –

²⁸⁵ Cooke, *Great Pianists on Piano Playing*, p. 104.

²⁸⁶ Kogan, *Busoni as Pianist*, p. 80.

3254 etc. Employment of the “parallel” fingering 13 – 24 – 35, 31 – 42 – 53 in diatonic progressions and trills. Avoidance of change of fingers on sustained notes)’.²⁸⁷

In the Preface to the reprint of this edition Busoni adds that ‘[a]t present I make little or no use of finger-changes on repeated notes [...] and more and more I avoid the passing-under of the thumb’.²⁸⁸

Busoni’s fingering technique was influenced by Chopin, who attached great value to the individuality of the fingers: ‘[f]or a long time we have been acting against nature by training our fingers to be all equally powerful. As each finger is differently formed, it’s better not to attempt to destroy the particular charm of each one’s touch but on the contrary to develop it’.²⁸⁹ This attitude is brilliantly illustrated by the following example from Chopin’s *Nocturne* in E-flat major, op. 9 no. 2 (Example 2.2.1). Chopin’s fingering may have been the inspiration for Busoni’s fingering and articulation of the following phrase of the Prelude in E major (Example 2.2.2), of which he writes that ‘the given fingering is the natural one for the style of touch required here’.



Example 2.2.1. Chopin, *Nocturne* in E-flat major, op. 9 no. 2, bars 15-16²⁹⁰



2) The “poco ritenuto” before the cadences in *B*-major and *E*-major must be treated with the utmost taste and discretion; the given fingering is the natural one for the style of touch required here.

Example 2.2.2. Prelude no. 9 in E major, bars 5-8

²⁸⁷ Busoni, ed., *Two and Three Part Inventions*, Preface.

²⁸⁸ Busoni, ed., *Fifteen Three-Voice Inventions*, Preface.

²⁸⁹ Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, Roy Howat, and Naomi Shohet, *Chopin: Pianist and Teacher as Seen by His Pupils* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 32. The practice of equalising the perceived strength of every finger is, sadly, still commonly taught today.

²⁹⁰ Jan Ekier and Paweł Kamiński, eds., *Chopin: Nocturnes* (Warsaw: Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne, 1995), p. 19.

67

dim.

cresc.

1
Allegretto maestoso

The first system of the musical score for 'Allegretto maestoso' is shown. It consists of a treble and a bass staff. The treble staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and a 3/4 time signature. The first measure contains a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note G4, and then a half note G4. The second measure contains a quarter note G4, a quarter note F4, and a half note E4. The third measure contains a quarter note D4, a quarter note C4, and a half note B3. The fourth measure contains a quarter note A3, a quarter note G3, and a half note F3. The fifth measure contains a quarter note E3, a quarter note D3, and a half note C3. The sixth measure contains a quarter note B2, a quarter note A2, and a half note G2. The seventh measure contains a quarter note F2, a quarter note E2, and a half note D2. The eighth measure contains a quarter note C2, a quarter note B1, and a half note A1. The bass staff begins with a bass clef, a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and a 3/4 time signature. The first measure contains a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note G2, and then a half note G2. The second measure contains a quarter note G2, a quarter note F2, and a half note E2. The third measure contains a quarter note D2, a quarter note C2, and a half note B1. The fourth measure contains a quarter note A1, a quarter note G1, and a half note F1. The fifth measure contains a quarter note E1, a quarter note D1, and a half note C1. The sixth measure contains a quarter note B0, a quarter note A0, and a half note G0. The seventh measure contains a quarter note F0, a quarter note E0, and a half note D0. The eighth measure contains a quarter note C0, a quarter note B0, and a half note A0. The tempo marking 'Allegretto maestoso' is written above the treble staff. The performance instruction 'sostenuto ma deliberatamente' is written below the bass staff.

sostenuto ma deliberatamente

Liszt also greatly inspired Busoni. Alan Walker writes that Liszt's regimen of scales was all-encompassing, as '[e]very scale was practised with the fingering of every other scale (using, say, C-major fingering for F-sharp major, and D-flat major fingering for C major). No pianist can afford to neglect Liszt's fingering'.²⁹³ Busoni was very fond of these kinds of pianistic feats which he collected in his own *Klavierübung* (1917-24). The first volume of the *Klavierübung* concerns scales and scale-like passages, and opens with the following exercise:

²⁹³ Alan Walker, *Franz Liszt, Volume One: The Virtuoso Years, 1811-47* (London: Faber & Faber, 1983), p. 297.



Example 2.2.5. Fingering for a C major scale by Busoni in *Klavierübung*, Book I²⁹⁴

Eventually, this exercise is taken to different keys in Lisztian style, at first in the form of an exercise in A-flat major with the same fingering:



Example 2.2.6. Exercise in A-flat major in *Klavierübung*, Book I

Liszt took fingering to further heights when he wrote technical problems such as the following passage from the *Rhapsodie espagnole*, S. 254 (1858), where a scale is written in groupings of five fingers (Example 2.2.7). In Busoni's *Elegie* no. 4 (*Turandots Frauengemach*, Example 2.2.8) we find a fragment that is likely inspired by the *Rhapsodie espagnole*.²⁹⁵

²⁹⁴ Ferruccio Busoni, *Klavierübung in 10 Büchern* (Buch 1: Tonleitern) (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1918/1925), p. 1.

²⁹⁵ Busoni also transcribed the *Rhapsodie espagnole* for piano and orchestra (1894, BV B 58); a version for two pianos exists as well.

The consistency of fingering for this passage, which does require some additional positional changes, makes it so that the player does not have to think about the fingering much but may completely focus their efforts on the intended effect; by doing so, Busoni turns a finger-twisting passage into one that is more manageable.

Finally, while I could not always discover a direct line from earlier keyboard treatises to Busoni, and though it is impossible to know whether Busoni was aware of the existence of some of these treatises, I did find that some of the fingerings found in these sources are part of his hybrid modern technique. Examples include the crossing of the longer fingers in scales which can be traced back to treatises such as François Couperin's *L'Art de toucher le clavecin* (1716); Busoni also uses the repeated 2-4 fingering for consecutive thirds (referred to as 'old fingering') in some places.



Example 2.2.10. Examples of fingering technique in Couperin's *L'Art de toucher le clavecin* (1716)²⁹⁹

²⁹⁹ These examples can be found in François Couperin, *L'Art de toucher le clavecin* (Paris: Chez l'Auteur, le Sieur Foucaut, 1716), p. 29. For the Busoni example, see Example 2.2.19 in this section.

Quentin Faulkner has stated that it ‘does not appear to be the case that [J. S. Bach], as his style matured and became more technically complex and diverse, abandoned earlier fingering practices learned in his youth. He rather expanded upon them, adding new techniques while at the same time retaining the old’.³⁰⁰ The inclusion of older fingering techniques by Busoni could thus be seen as an inverse of Bach’s own approach. Rather than the treatises by Couperin and others, which may have been the original sources for these fingerings, it is more likely that Busoni encountered these older fingerings in C. P. E. Bach’s *Essay*.³⁰¹ According to Faulkner,

C. P. E. Bach was quite correct in implying that the fingering concepts explained in the *Essay* represent his father’s fingering practices. They represent, however, only one portion, one facet of those practices [the fingering of *galant* pieces, i.e. scalar passages and ornamental figures]. He did not transmit to his readers the method of fingering his father’s dense contrapuntal works. This method was gradually abandoned and forgotten, first because it resists systematization and is therefore difficult to explain in words, and second, because the contrapuntal works were by then old-fashioned and no longer performed.³⁰²

These are just a few aspects of Busoni’s fingering technique: more may be gleaned from carefully studying Busoni’s editions. The primary aspects of Busoni’s fingering technique, both in a technical as well as a musical sense, are the following:

- Efficiency of movement: hand movement must be as streamlined as possible, and this is achieved primarily by avoiding the passing under of the thumb, especially when melodic material only encompasses five neighbouring notes: whenever possible, Busoni crosses the longer fingers over each other, or employs the thumb or fifth fingers on the black keys to avoid having to pass the thumb under.
- Fingering and its influence on phrasing and articulation: if a break in phrasing or a particular articulation is called for, Busoni prescribes a fingering that makes this clear, such as by repeating fingers or using a fingering which implies a break would naturally occur.

³⁰⁰ Quentin Faulkner, ‘J. S. Bach’s Keyboard Fingering: New Evidence’, in *University of Nebraska Faculty Publications: School of Music*, 22 (1980), 1–6 (p. 3) <<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/musicfacpub/22/>> [accessed 3 March 2020].

³⁰¹ See C. P. E. Bach, *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, trans. by William J. Mitchell (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1948), pp. 46–77. Finger crossings are often given in the examples in this chapter. For the 2-4 fingering for consecutive thirds, see Figure 42g (p. 61).

³⁰² Faulkner, ‘J. S. Bach’s Keyboard Fingering: New Evidence’, p. 3.

These primary aspects are supported by the following secondary aspects:

- Fingering is assigned according to the idea that every finger has its particular quality and strength: for instance, declamatory passages can be played strictly with one finger (see Example 2.2.4). Consistency of fingering in similar phrases (e.g., repeats of thematic statements or countersubjects) is aimed for (Example 2.2.11).



Example 2.2.11. Fugue no. 3 in C-sharp major, bars 16-18

- Busoni considers economy of hand movement important: for instance, he uses all five fingers consecutively to minimise the crossing of longer fingers over the thumb or the crossing under of the thumb (Examples 2.2.12–13). A more natural hand position on the keyboard is achieved by also using the longer fingers on black keys in (broken) chords. Busoni also uses the thumb and the fifth finger on black keys.

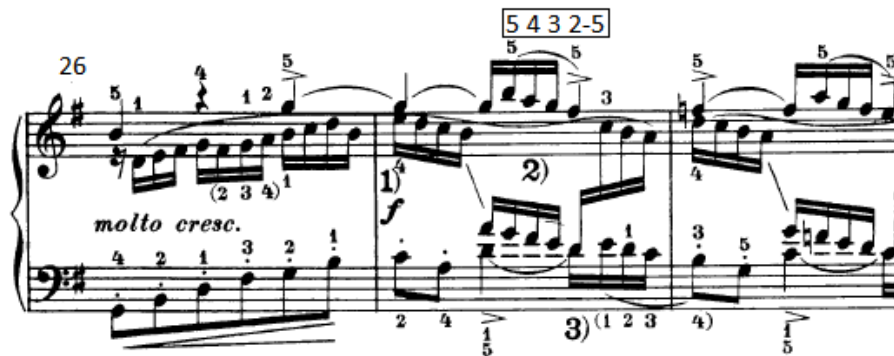


Example 2.2.12. Prelude no. 5 in D major, bars 29-32



Example 2.2.13. Invention no. 3 in D major, bars 50-52

- Finger substitutions, where a note is played with one finger and then held with a different one, are generally avoided by crossing to the finger directly, thereby skipping the substitution process. I have marked this conventional substitution process above the staff in Example 2.2.14.



Example 2.2.14. Sinfonia no. 10 in G major, bars 26-28

- Particular unconventional fingerings for lighter passagework allow for effortless execution through minimal movement. In Example 2.2.15, a swiping motion of the fingertips may be used to achieve the light articulation with Busoni's fingering; furthermore, the second finger on the *f* causes the separation between this note and the following thirds.



Example 2.2.15. Fugue no. 2 in C minor, bar 7

Finally, the tertiary aspects of Busoni's fingering are the following:

- What Busoni refers to as 'parallel fingering': trills and diatonic progressions (such as thirds) are played, where possible, with fingers that are not next to each other: for example, a trill could be played with 1-3, 2-4 or 3-5, rather than a combination of neighbouring fingers such as 4-5, 3-4, etc.

- The consecutive use of the same finger on black and white keys. In Example 2.2.16 below Busoni marks what appears to be a slide from the f♯' onto the g'. However, a slide would imply legato touch, whereas this particular passage is explicitly marked non legato by Busoni.



Example 2.2.16. Fugue no. 20 in A minor, bars 12-13

- New systematic solutions for fingerings:
 - Busoni provides alternative fingerings for passages in thirds as well as a fingering that allows for the greatest possible legato (Example 2.2.17).



Example 2.2.17. Fugue no. 1 in C major, bars 12-13

- As an exercise in the Appendix to Busoni's edition of the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier, chromatic scales are fingered with 1) the three lowest fingers; 2) the three highest fingers; 3) with the four lowest fingers; 4) with the four highest fingers; and 5) with all five fingers. Busoni also provides fingerings for all possible chromatic double note passages, from double seconds to sevenths.

It is important to mention that Busoni does not always adhere to the rules mentioned above. He does still prescribe conventional solutions, even when a more unconventional one has been given at the same time or prior: however, the occasions where he does follow the system set out above far outnumber the occasions where he does not, so any differences may be explained by a number of reasons. For example, even after my analysis, I cannot say with absolute certainty

what value Busoni attached to each of the criteria; furthermore, I do not know how much time Busoni spent on the fingerings and their revision: any performing musician will occasionally think of a good fingering only to change it in a later practice session.³⁰³

Busoni's individuality and influence

In the Preface to his edition of the Well-tempered Clavier, Casella writes that the 'fingering system here is complete and such as to make a perfect organ-like « legato ». Most of this fingering is similar to Busoni's, nor, quite apart from the fact that it is also my own personal fingering, the result of years of experience, could one have used any different system in an edition which aims at solving this fundamental problem in the most up-to-date manner'.³⁰⁴ What this 'organ-like' legato may sound like is left up to the reader's imagination. Despite Busoni's and Casella's preference for a different touch, their fingerings are remarkably similar, even in special cases such as the following example from the Invention in A minor:



Example 2.2.18. Invention no. 13 in A minor, bars 17-19

The commas indicated by Busoni at the start of bar 19 (Example 2.2.18) are evidently written into the fingering. When using the indicated fingering one cannot avoid a brief break at this point, which makes the phrasing as well as the form of this Invention clearer. Nearly all available editions of the Inventions that include fingerings provide a more common fingering here for both hands (such as 2-3-5 in the right hand); Casella however copies Busoni's right-hand fingering as the main text while marking a conventional fingering for the left hand.

Where fingering differs between Busoni's editions and those by his successors, Busoni's fingerings are often idiosyncratic. While Busoni sometimes prescribes conventional legato fingering, it is in non legato and highly articulated passages where his fingerings are most

³⁰³ As mentioned, Busoni did change some of his approaches to fingering over time: '[a]t present I make little or no use of finger-changes on repeated notes [...] and more and more I avoid the passing-under of the thumb' (Busoni, ed., *Fifteen Three-Voice Inventions*, Preface).

³⁰⁴ Casella and Piccioli, eds., *Il clavicembalo ben temperato*, Preface.

interesting. Unsurprisingly, in this aspect his closest follower is his student Petri. Like Busoni, Petri often avoids finger substitutions and changes which he writes were ‘introduced by Bülow’.³⁰⁵ Both Bartók as well as Casella regularly include finger substitutions in their editions.



1) Considerable stress should be laid on the first motive in the counter-theme:  which runs through the entire fugue.

Example 2.2.19. Prelude no. 20 in A minor, bars 7-12

Busoni’s idea of ‘[c]onsiderable stress’, which he mentions in the footnote in Example 2.2.19, is reflected in the fingering: the physical movement required by the finger repetition marks these notes slightly, and especially in this thin texture Busoni could have easily prescribed another fingering to achieve a different effect altogether. Despite articulating this passage similarly to Busoni, Bartók and Casella each mark their own legato fingerings.

A similar application of Busoni’s fingering in bar 11 (Example 2.2.19 above) may be found in Petri’s edition of the *Sinfonia* from the *Partita* no. 2 in C minor. Marked *breit und schwer* (broad and heavy), Petri consistently fingers the double thirds with a 2-4 fingering, which is linked to a more declamatory style appropriate for this section:

³⁰⁵ Petri, ed., *Französische Suiten*, p. X. Petri is mistaken here: finger substitutions are in fact already given in Czerny’s editions which were published before Bülow’s editions.



Example 2.2.20. *Sinfonia* from *Partita* no. 2 in C minor (Petri), bars 1-5³⁰⁶



Example 2.2.21. Prelude no. 20 in A minor, bars 19-21

Other editors generally avoid the riskier fingerings Busoni prescribes. The implied gap that is necessary for the leap from the a' to the g#" in Example 2.2.21 (bar 20-21) is indicated by the fingering: to play accurately, one has to take time to strike the g#" with the third finger; this may also reinforce the slight emphasis on the start of the theme in the left hand, which is marked with a long accent. This sense of timing is almost always avoided by using the thumb on the a' in bar 20.³⁰⁷

³⁰⁶ Petri, ed., *Partiten*, p. 16.

³⁰⁷ Such is the case in the editions by Bartók, Casella, Czerny, Longo, Montani, and Mugellini.



Example 2.2.22. Prelude no. 2 in C minor, bars 36-38

Finally, the crossing of the second finger over the thumb in the final bar in Example 2.2.22 is unnecessary as the passage can easily be played with an efficient fingering like the one I have marked.³⁰⁸ Perhaps Busoni's fingering is linked to a more declamatory style of playing, which would be suitable for this closing bar: to my mind, its physicality differs greatly from the alternative fingering. Casella is the only editor to mark the same fingering as Busoni here. The lack of fingerings in most other editions suggests that the editors would use a conventional fingering.

In the preface to his 1932 edition of the Keyboard Concerto in D minor, Fischer writes that fingering 'is a matter for the individual to decide upon; however, it should be conceived such that it more or less compels the desired musical outcome'.³⁰⁹ Brookshire notes that in Fischer's edition of the Sinfonias (1924) only slight changes were made to Busoni's fingerings: for example, in the Sinfonia in C major, only 28 of 241 fingerings contradict Busoni's, likely 'in the interest of simplifying technical procedures or facilitating greater legato'.³¹⁰

³⁰⁸ This fingering is found, among others, in the editions by Mugellini and Montani.

³⁰⁹ Quoted in Brookshire, 'Edwin Fischer and Bach Performance Practice of the Weimar Republic', p. 155.

³¹⁰ Brookshire, 'Edwin Fischer and Bach Performance Practice of the Weimar Republic', pp. 215–17.

2.3. Ornamentation and embellishment

In this section, I will consider Busoni's execution of trills, mordents, turns, and the *arpeggiando*. Throughout this section, the focus is on Busoni's own views on ornamentation and how he has presented embellishment in his musical text.

Generally, Busoni writes out his ornamentation fully, which allows us to study it in a precise way. To my knowledge, exceptions to this rule can only be found in the pieces presented in Table 2.3.1 below; in every other case, Busoni's ornamentation is fully written out in the main text.

Table 2.3.1. Ornamentation indications in Busoni's editions

None of the ornamentation written out (ornamentation signs given)	Preludes 13, 24 Fugues 14, 23
Some of the ornamentation written out	Preludes 14, 17 Fugues 15, 19, 20
Ornamentation written out only in small notes over the main text or in footnote	Preludes 2, 11, 18, 21 Fugues 11, 12
Ornamentation to be repeated as presented (* Presentation given in footnote)	Inventions 4, 7, 10 Sinfonia 8* Preludes 6*, 16, 24 Fugue 13
Form of ornamentation generally clear from Busoni's fingering³¹¹	Prelude 8

However, Busoni's omission of the original ornamentation sign found in manuscript sources makes it difficult to ascertain their correctness without comparing and studying these sources. Busoni departs from the expected execution of ornamentation most often in his early edition of the Inventions; I will briefly discuss a possible origin of these differences before mentioning some other editors whose ornamentation practices are similar to Busoni's.

Busoni's consistent application of thematic trills appears to be based on his stylistic knowledge or aesthetic ideas rather than modelling it after source material, which regularly

³¹¹ In the Sinfonia in F major Busoni has given a fingering for the trills as well. In the Fugue in F-sharp major (Examples 2.3.3) Busoni explicitly writes that the thematic trill must be repeated throughout. In the main text, this is presented both by his fingering as well as by small notes over the main text.

omits repeats of ornamentation. As we will notice throughout this section, a considerable weakness of his editions is that Busoni rarely comments on possible musical reasons for the inclusion of ornamentation and embellishment; on top of this, the written form and execution of the ornamentation in most cases appears to be rather rigid and different from the expressive execution on his acoustic recordings. It appears as if Busoni did not quite understand some of the roles of ornamentation and arpeggiation in keyboard playing which leads to a sometimes incomprehensible approach.³¹²

Busoni refers to the *arpeggiando* as an effeminacy in the Invention in C major, which is against the ‘manly style of the piece’.³¹³ In the Appendix to the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier, Busoni writes that in organ-style piano playing ‘[a]rpeggios, or the hasty anticipation of the bass, are of very doubtful taste’ as they are ‘contrary to the character of the organ; secondly, they produce the effect of over-exertion’.³¹⁴ While this may be interpreted to mean that Busoni is opposed to all forms of this embellishment, I believe this to be a misconception; Busoni does in fact mark most of the *arpeggiando* signs found in other sources, and on occasion even gives a special execution for this embellishment.

Busoni’s ornamentation: a possible source

A close comparison of their editions of the Inventions reveals the possibility that Busoni modelled his ornamentation after Czerny’s earlier edition (c. 1840): for instance, in the Invention in C major, Bach’s original trill in the theme is consistently replaced by a mordent in Busoni’s edition. Willard A. Palmer writes that ‘ALL manuscripts show a TRILL here. The mordent on this note, which appears in the *Busoni* edition, the *Czerny* edition and the *Mason* edition, is without foundation’.³¹⁵ This is also the case in the Inventions in G major and G minor, where Busoni’s execution of the ornaments, while consistent throughout, is at odds with other sources: in all cases Busoni’s version matches Czerny’s edition. Though Palmer does not mention this, both Casella and Mugellini give mostly the same ornamentation as Busoni in the Inventions; in Casella’s case, the ornamentation is also consistently written out just as in

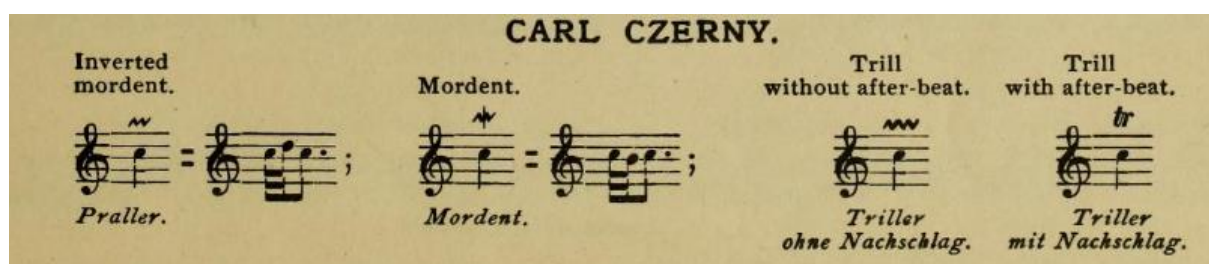
³¹² David Ledbetter comments that ‘Musicians of Bach’s time were very sensitive to the affective value of all musical ingredients [...] ornaments have affective weight, an important point since Bach [...] Various eighteenth-century writers discuss ornaments in terms of their affective value.’ (David Ledbetter, *Bach’s Well-tempered Clavier: The 48 Preludes and Fugues* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), p. 81).

³¹³ Busoni, ed., *Two and Three Part Inventions*, p. 3. See also Example 2.3.4, where this *arpeggiando* will be discussed.

³¹⁴ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 181.

³¹⁵ Willard A. Palmer, ed., *J. S. Bach, Inventions and Sinfonias* (Van Nuys, California: Alfred Publishing, 1991), p. 18. The Mason edition (c. 1894) was edited by William Mason (1829-1908), who studied with Moscheles and Liszt.

Busoni's editions. Czerny's edition of the Well-tempered Clavier also contains the following ornament table which may have led future editors astray:



Example 2.3.1. Execution of ornamentation in the Preface to Czerny's edition of the Well-tempered Clavier³¹⁶

Though Busoni's trills marked 'tr' are often given an afterbeat, this is not always the case; also, trills marked with the wavy line are occasionally played with an afterbeat.³¹⁷ Despite similarities in the Inventions, Busoni clearly differs from Czerny in his treatment of the ornamentation in the Sinfonias: for instance, in the Sinfonia in E-flat major, Czerny does not give a single turn in his edition, while Busoni marks the mordents and turns (with a few exceptions) as found in J. S. Bach's manuscript.³¹⁸ Throughout the Sinfonias, the ornamentation in the editions by Fischer and Casella is mostly identical to Busoni, while Mugellini in most cases follows the manuscript ornamentation more precisely.

As mentioned in the first chapter of this thesis, from the correspondence between Busoni and Breitkopf & Härtel we know that a working edition of the Inventions and Sinfonias was already prepared by a different editor, and Busoni may not have spent as much time on proofreading this edition as he did later on for the edition of the Well-tempered Clavier.³¹⁹ This may explain certain similarities with Czerny's edition. In the preparation of his edition of the Well-tempered Clavier he would have undoubtedly followed more closely the texts in the *Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe* and Bischoff's edition: curiously, Bischoff specifically comments on the

³¹⁶ Czerny, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, Preface.

³¹⁷ This is the usual notation of this 'wavy line':  (see Example 2.3.1). In the Prelude in F-sharp major it is unclear how the 'tr' would be played (with or without afterbeat): while Busoni marks these trills in brackets, he advises the player not to play them (Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 77). In the Prelude in F major, wavy line trills are given with afterbeat (Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, pp. 66–67).

³¹⁸ The *Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe* and Bischoff's edition also consistently mark these turns.

³¹⁹ Hanau, *Ferruccio Busoni im Briefwechsel* (Band I), pp. 14–15, letter 19 (27 December 1890): 'Einige von einem anderen Musiker herrührende Bleistiftcorrecturen in der 1. Invention haben wir nicht weggewischt, mögen Sie unberücksichtigt lassen, was Ihnen unzweckmäßig erscheint'. My translation: 'We have not erased some of the pencil corrections in the first Invention by another musician, you may disregard what seems unsuitable to you'.

execution of ornamentation in his editions ('the trill [...] generally begins on the auxiliary note'), yet Busoni does not consistently adopt these forms.³²⁰

Trills

In an appendix to the Prelude in F major, Busoni notes that trills should always contain a '*determinate number of notes*, and should be rhythmically grouped'; however, from his recordings we learn that his actual performance of trills was anything but determinate, and varied depending on other circumstances such as pulse and form.³²¹ Both 'tr' as well as the wavy line can be short (one shake) or long (multiple shakes).

While trills start on the main note on most occasions, Busoni sometimes gives them from the upper auxiliary. Busoni is less consistent when the trill is preceded by ascending movement: in these cases his trills usually begin on the upper auxiliary, but there are occasions where Busoni repeats the main note.³²² In downward leaps, trills are given from both the main note as well as the upper auxiliary.³²³ Though long trills (some spanning multiple bars) usually start on the main note, a few exceptions can be found in the second half of the Well-tempered Clavier.³²⁴

Busoni's trills are always played on the beat, as can be seen in Example 2.3.2:

³²⁰ Bischoff, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavier*, Table of Embellishments (*Verzierungstabelle* in the original German edition).

³²¹ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 68. This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3 (*Listening to Busoni*).

³²² The thematic trill in the Invention in C minor starts on the upper auxiliary; a similar trill in the Fugue in A minor (bars 51-52) also starts on the upper auxiliary; however, in the Sinfonia in B-flat major (bar 2, left hand) Busoni starts a similar trill on the main note.

³²³ In the Sinfonia in F minor (bar 12) and the Prelude in E-flat minor (bars 3-4) the trill after a leap starts on the main note; in the Fugue in F major (bar 45) and the Prelude in G-sharp minor (bar 13) the trill after a leap starts on the upper auxiliary.

³²⁴ One notable example is the thematic trill in the Fugue in B minor, which starts on the upper auxiliary.



1) In this passage, and analogous ones, the sign tr was written over the note. The writing-out in small notes shows how the sign is to be understood. The unfortunate necessity for such pedantic minuteness was recognized by Bülow, and still earlier by C. Ph. Em. Bach, from whose "Essay on the true method of playing the Clavier" (1787) we quote, in this connection, the following remarks, which are quite as applicable to our own time: "All embellishments indicated by small notes belong to the following note; consequently, the preceding note must never be robbed of any portion of its time-value, and the following note loses only so much as the small notes call for. This observation is the more pertinent, the more generally the rule is disregarded.... From this rule it follows, that these small notes, and not the following principal note, are to be struck together with the bass or the other parts. Through them we glide ("slide") into the following note; this, too, is far too often neglected.... However superfluous it may seem to insist that the other parts, together with the bass, should be struck with the first note of any embellishment, it is, nevertheless, a rule which is very often disregarded" (Part I, Chap. 2, §§ 23 and 24.)

Example 2.3.2. Prelude no. 9 in E major, bars 1-4

Though reference is made to C. P. E. Bach's *Essay* in the footnote to this Prelude, Busoni does not mention paragraph 5 on the trill in which C. P. E. Bach states that '[t]he normal trill has the sign of an *m* [...] it always begins on the tone above the principal note' (emphasis mine).³²⁵ The same sign is written out in Example 2.3.2 as a trill starting on the main note, interpreted as if it were an inverted mordent.³²⁶



1) Where the trill is a constituent element of the theme, no variants are permissible in its repetitions, for such would be an alteration of the theme itself. Consequently, that form of the trill should be chosen which can be most faithfully retained even in the most intricate combinations. Perhaps the most plastic example of this kind is to be found in the concluding fugue of Beethoven's Sonata Op. 106:



Example 2.3.3. Fugue no. 13 in F-sharp major, bars 1-3

In the footnote to the Fugue in F-sharp major (Example 2.3.3) Busoni remarks that when trills are part of the theme 'no variants are permissible in its repetitions, for such would be an alteration of the theme itself'. The trill here is taken from the main note (it is preceded by the upper auxiliary), with Busoni explaining that this form of the trill 'can be most faithfully retained even in the most intricate combinations'. Even when trills are not marked in any source

³²⁵ C. P. E. Bach, *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, p. 100.

³²⁶ See Example 2.3.1 above from the preface to Czerny's edition.

material that was likely known to Busoni, he does indicate the form of the thematic trill he has chosen throughout his editions, except if it is impossible or difficult to physically perform them.³²⁷

Mordents and turns

While mordents are common in the Inventions (they are part of the theme in the Inventions in E-flat major and A major, and thus consistently repeated throughout the piece in Busoni's edition), they appear less often in the Sinfonias and the Well-tempered Clavier.³²⁸

Busoni's mordents are always consistent: they start on the main note, with a swift shake to the lower auxiliary before the main note is repeated and sustained. Similarly to Busoni's trills, mordents are played on the beat.

Busoni's turns are inconsistent: though they are also played on the beat, Busoni's written execution does not always match what is expected when compared to various sources; for instance, in the Sinfonia in E-flat major, Busoni inverts the turns in bars 16-17.³²⁹ Busoni never marks the sign for the turn in his early editions.

Arpeggiando

In the footnote to an early edition of his transcription of the Prelude and Fugue in E-flat major for organ (BWV 552) Busoni writes that 'those who cannot [play the opening chord of the piece without arpeggiation] should leave the piece unplayed; since every restriction of the piano setting is contrary to the intention of the editor'.³³⁰ Any arpeggiation was seen as opposed to the nature of the organ and was not to be used as a technical device in the piano performance of these transcriptions. This part of the footnote was excised in a later reprint; as Hamilton notes, Busoni even entertained a version which eliminates the opening major tenth

³²⁷ Only in the Fugue in B major does Busoni omit trills in the thematic statements towards the end of the piece where they would otherwise be expected.

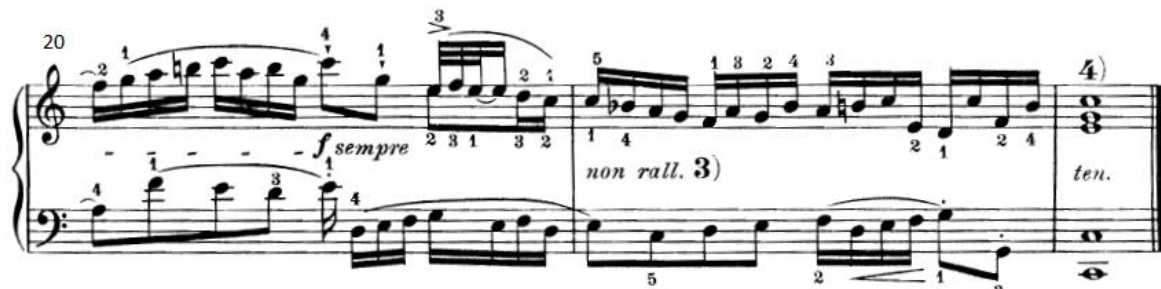
³²⁸ The Inventions contain around seventy mordents in Busoni's edition (some are optional for technical reasons), while both the Sinfonias and First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier contain far fewer mordents: around ten in total.

³²⁹ To my knowledge, only Casella and Fischer model their ornamentation in these bars after Busoni.

³³⁰ Busoni, transcr., *Praeludium und Fuge Es dur*, p. 3. Translation mine. The original German reads as follows: 'Um die Wirkung des Orgelklanges auf dem Pianoforte annähernd zu erzielen, ist es unerlässlich, dass die Accorde, selbst in weitester (Decimen) Spannung, in allen Tönen zugleich, ohne arpeggieren, angeschlagen werden. Wer das nicht vermag, der lasse das Stück ungespielt; da jede Einschränkung des Claviersatzes der absicht des Herausgebers entgegensteht'.

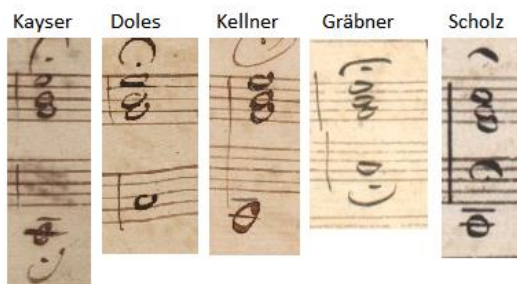
in a copy which can be found in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, though this was never given as an official variant.³³¹

However, Busoni is not wholly opposed to the breaking of chords in Bach's keyboard music if it aligns with his conception of a piece. His written execution of arpeggiation follows modern performance conventions, except for two occasions in the Preludes in E-flat minor and B-flat major, where he proposes a special solution. In the rest of his editions, Busoni does not comment on the *arpeggiando* sign or why Bach may have marked it.



⁴⁾The incomprehensible *Arpeggiando* sign, which one finds before this chord in many editions, is contrary to the manly style of the piece, and may be classed in Bach's phraseology as "styleless." Against such effeminacies in this and in analogous cases, the student is especially warned.

21, manuscript J. S. Bach



Example 2.3.4. Invention no. 1 in C major, bars 20-22 (scribes second line from left to right: J. S. Bach, B. C. Kayser, J. F. Doles, J. P. Kellner, J. F. Gräbner, L. Scholz)³³²

While Busoni is repulsed by the 'incomprehensible *Arpeggiando* sign [...] [which] is contrary to the manly style of the piece', on very close inspection of J. S. Bach's manuscript (bottom left, Example 2.3.4) one can see that Bach has in fact marked an *arpeggiando* in front of the final chord of the piece. This *arpeggiando* is also given by other editors such as Czerny and Kroll (*Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe*). It is important to note, however, that various other copies by scribes were passed down to us in which this *arpeggiando* sign is also lacking. While Casella

³³¹ Hamilton, *After the Golden Age*, p. 167. A digital scan of Busoni's copy of the D. Rahter edition of this work may be found here: <<https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN823403122>> [accessed 26 August 2021].

³³² These manuscript sources, including links for digital access, are all listed in the introduction to this chapter (Table 2.0.3).

omits the *arpeggiando*, Mugellini makes special note of it in his edition: ‘the *arpeggiando* of this chord is intended by Bach, who marked it in the manuscript’.³³³

Either way, as seen in the treatment of trills and mordents, Busoni does not hesitate to alter the material slightly to fit his conception of a piece and may have changed this *arpeggiando* regardless of it being a Bach original. Rather than writing the mordent out in the main text in Example 2.3.5, Busoni simply marks the ornament; it is written out in his footnote, where he explains how the tempo of the Adagio relates to the previous Allegro. Busoni also gives the *arpeggiando* indications which are present in Bach’s manuscript, which are played as expected. To Busoni, this arpeggiation may have augmented the *drammatico* nature of the recitative.³³⁴



8) The tempo to be taken here is four times as slow as that of the preceding movement, so that a quarter of the Adagio corresponds to an entire measure of the Presto. Supposing it to be played without a change in time-signature, the following reading would yield a rhythmically correct execution:



The difference between the 32d-notes and 64th-notes is apt to be overlooked by pupils, who thus find themselves entangled in most extraordinary measures; the above simplified notation will aid them in finding the right way. The character of this episode is that of a broad “recitative-style”

Example 2.3.5. Prelude no. 2 in C minor, bar 34



Example 2.3.6. Prelude no. 21 in B-flat major, bars 17-18

³³³ Mugellini, ed., *Invenzioni a due voci*, p. 2. English translation mine. The original Italian reads as follows: ‘L’arpeggio di questo accordo è voluto da Bach che lo ha notato nel manoscritto’.

³³⁴ The breaking of chords is of course an essential technique for harpsichordists; Busoni does not explicitly comment on the function of this technique as a potential rhetorical or dramatic device, especially in passages with a certain *recitando* quality.

The execution of the *arpeggiando* by Busoni in Example 2.3.6 is contrary to expectations: usually, when an *arpeggiando* sign is connected from bottom-to-top as presented, it is played in a single motion from the lowest to the highest note. The first execution given by Busoni suggests that he plays the *arpeggiando* as if it were not connected. The second variant mostly follows the manner described, except for Busoni placing the c' in the chord before the rest of the chord is broken as expected, presumably to point out the voice leading of the inner alto line.

Busoni marks every arpeggiation in the Prelude in E-flat minor (Example 2.3.7). Busoni's suggestion for the execution of the *arpeggiando* in bar 13 deserves special attention: he overholds the eb' in the left hand, while it is only marked as a crotchet (in the right hand) in the main text.³³⁵ Curiously, this *arpeggiando* sign is not connected to the right-hand notes in many sources. However, this *arpeggiando* is connected in Bischoff's edition as well as in the *Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe* and editions based on it, such as Casella's and Bartók's; in Czerny's edition, the eb' is omitted.

13

4) *mf*

ten.

meno f

4)

Vorschläge zur Ausführung:
Suggestions for the execution:

532

Example 2.3.7. Prelude no. 8 in E-flat minor, bars 13-15

Other editors and ornamentation

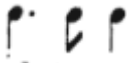
In the Preface to his edition, Casella's ideas on ornamentation are remarkably fresh: he writes that '[l]ittle by little I have grown convinced that the right method – as far as the *ornaments* are concerned – is to solve each problem, case by case, according to one's own taste and historical

³³⁵ Busoni also marks overholding in the Prelude in C major, bar 20 (*quasi effetto di pedale*) and in the Prelude in D minor, bars 6-12, among other places. This same technique is also used by harpsichordists such as Gustav Leonhardt: in his recently published transcriptions of Bach works for non-keyboard instruments (Bärenreiter BA 11820) '[editor Siebe] Henstra also retained "the beaming of notes in Leonhardt's manuscripts...as it sometimes indicate [*sic*] certain phrasings or articulations," as well as his notation for "over-legato," although "it has in some cases been combined into a single voice with the notes under a single stem and ties"'.
<<https://www.earlymusicamerica.org/web-articles/keyboards-will-cherish-leonhardt-bach-transcriptions/>>

[accessed 17 December 2018].

and stylistic conscience'. A commendable attitude to be sure; on the next page, however, Casella writes that 'the other ornaments [excluding short trills and shakes], whose interpretation might be problematic, have been indicated in full – in the present edition – both in the text and in the comment so that the student need never have any uncertainty'.³³⁶ In actuality, Casella commonly follows Busoni in his treatment of ornamentation: not only does he regularly provide written-out ornamentation similar to Busoni, the execution of the ornamentation often matches Busoni's.³³⁷ Occasionally, Busoni's execution is explicitly referenced, such as in the Prelude in E-flat minor; furthermore, Busoni's consistent treatment of the thematic trill, as seen in the Fugue in F-sharp major (Example 2.3.3), is also applied by Casella.³³⁸

In the Prelude in C-sharp minor Casella notes that he finds it 'advisable, however, to follow Kroll's [*Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe*] and Busoni's example and to suppress outright all such ornaments [*arpeggiandi*] as [these] are no longer any use on the modern piano and which, sometimes, even spoil the pure beauty of the melodic line'.³³⁹ Czerny, Bartók, and Montani appear to either (implicitly) share this opinion or were simply unaware of the ornamented version which survives in Bach's hand.³⁴⁰ In this particular piece, Tovey comments that the 'ornaments all show that no pupil of Bach doubted that this was a slow movement. The rhythmic

figure  determines, on the other hand, that it shall not be too slow'; in his edition, the embellishments are included either as main text or as options (i.e., bracketed).³⁴¹ This is characteristic of Tovey's overall treatment of ornamentation in his edition.

In contrast to Busoni and Casella, Bartók only rarely writes out ornamentation without marking the original sign. In most cases, an example execution is given in the footnotes, but occasionally the suggested execution is printed above the stave in small text. In his Afterword

³³⁶ Casella and Piccioli, eds., *Il clavicembalo ben temperato*, Preface.

³³⁷ On occasion, such as in the Prelude in E major, the ornamentation in the main text is the same as in Busoni's edition, yet in the footnote Casella writes that '[f]or those who may wish to play the mordents [*sic*] in the beginning perfectly in obedience with the rules of Bach's times, let me mention that they should be played thus: [example from the upper auxiliary] This execution, however, although very beautiful from the standpoint of melody, is not advisable for pupils as it is rather difficult' (Casella and Piccioli, eds., *Il clavicembalo ben temperato*, p. 62).

³³⁸ Prelude in E-flat minor: Casella and Piccioli, eds., *Il clavicembalo ben temperato*, p. 55; Fugue in F-sharp major: Casella and Piccioli, eds., *Il clavicembalo ben temperato*, p. 84.

³³⁹ Casella and Piccioli, eds., *Il clavicembalo ben temperato*, p. 28.

³⁴⁰ In terms of ornamentation, Montani's 1952 edition of the Well-tempered Clavier was undoubtedly influenced by either Busoni or Casella, or both; the Preface to this edition opens with 'La revisione di questa nuova edizione del « Clavicembalo ben temperato » è frutto di esperienze dirette e di consultazioni con i più noti conoscitori dell'immortale opera bachiana' (my translation: 'The revision of this new edition of the 'Well-tempered Clavier' is the result of direct experience and consultations with the most renowned connoisseurs of Bach's immortal work') (Montani, *Il clavicembalo ben temperato*, Preface). The ornamented version of the Prelude in C-sharp minor in Bach's hand can be found in J. S. Bach's 1722 manuscript (see Table 2.0.3).

³⁴¹ Tovey and Wen, eds., *The Well-tempered Clavier*, p. 40.

to the revised edition Somfai notes that we ‘cannot tell whether Bartók’s revision [in 1913] of some of the ornament solutions suggested in the first edition was prompted by his colleagues’ advice or his recent familiarity with a book or a *WTC* edition’; changes made by Bartók include starting some trills on the upper auxiliary rather than the main note, though sometimes without changing the fingering in analogous passages (which was corrected in the revision by Somfai).³⁴² His written execution also tends to be freer and may be more reflective of his actual practice: for instance, in the Prelude in E minor, Bartók’s trills gradually accelerate, while the trills in the editions by Busoni and Casella of this piece are marked as constant demisemiquavers (or triplets).

Similarly to Bartók, of Petri we have recorded evidence of a change in execution of ornamentation: in his well-known transcription of *Sheep may safely graze* from the *Hunting Cantata* (BWV 208), Petri marks the trill in the soprano part as starting on the main note; in later recordings, Petri plays this trill starting from the upper auxiliary.³⁴³ In Petri’s editions for the *Busoni-Ausgabe* the ornamentation is generally written out in small print; however, contrary to Busoni’s earlier practice (yet more reflective of his later practice), the original ornamentation sign is also provided in every case.

Later in life, Busoni tended to write out ornamentation less often; in his edition of the *Goldberg Variations*, while the Aria is completely written out, in some variations he only marks the ornamentation sign without giving a written-out example.³⁴⁴ In his edition of the *Capriccio sopra la lontananza del suo fratello dilettissimo* (BWV 992) from the same year, ornamentation is only rarely written out, with many of the original signs retained in the main text.³⁴⁵ It is possible that Busoni considered his earlier approach to be too fastidious; this is certainly reflected in the preface he wrote a year earlier to the reprint of the *Invention and Sinfonias* (1914), in which he writes that ‘since the general expression of a face seems to me of more significance than the cut of its separate features, I am less and less inclined to dwell on fussy details’.³⁴⁶

³⁴² Bartók, ed., *The Well-Tempered Clavier* (Vols. I–II), p. 147.

³⁴³ Multiple recordings of this piece by Petri exist; one such example from 1958 has been uploaded to YouTube by user ‘pianopera’: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RA-EJBrK0>> [accessed 7 June 2022].

³⁴⁴ Such as in Variation no. 10 (Busoni, ed., *Aria mit 30 Veränderungen* (*Goldberg-Variationen*), p. 19).

³⁴⁵ Busoni, ed., *Klavierwerke Band XIV: Mehrsätziges Vortragsstücke*, pp. 31–42.

³⁴⁶ Busoni, ed., *Fifteen Three-Voice Inventions*, Preface.

2.4. Dynamics

The piano allows for a wide range of dynamic shading and nuances that one could use to interpret Bach's music: for instance, the dynamic balancing of different parts and the use of dynamic drops for structural purposes are both important aspects of Busoni's conception of Bach's keyboard music.

This section will firstly discuss Busoni's explicit commentary on dynamics and their application, which can be found in his edition of the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier.

Secondly, I will consider Busoni's dynamic markings. I will look at the overall dynamic range Busoni prescribes, and how within this dynamic range Busoni balances themes and countersubjects.

I will then explore the hairpin and the myriad of functions it may have.³⁴⁷ Reference will be made here to Roberto Poli's *The Secret Life of Musical Notation: Defying Interpretive Traditions* (2010), as well as work on the meaning of the hairpin in Brahms's circle, before discussing Busoni's treatment of hairpins.

Finally, brief consideration will be given to the dynamic treatment in editions by Busoni's peers as well as those who were influenced by him.

Busoni on dynamics

In a footnote to the Prelude in C-sharp minor Busoni proposes that his 'marks of expressions and shading' are to be interpreted 'merely as suggestions, and not as absolute directions'.³⁴⁸ This sentiment is also echoed by Busoni in the Preface to the reprint of the Inventions and Sinfonias.³⁴⁹ Besides a short footnote to the Sinfonia in F minor, it is only in the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier that Busoni provides some commentary on dynamics and dynamic choices which will be discussed below.³⁵⁰ Additional input on interpretation is given in the Appendix to the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier.

While Busoni mainly discusses the performance of his organ transcriptions in this Appendix, parts of the commentary contained within the Appendix may also be applied to the performance of Bach's keyboard music. The concept of good taste is of great importance to

³⁴⁷ The opening hairpin (<), the closing hairpin (> as will be discussed in this section, this indication resembles the long accent), as well as the paired hairpin (<>).

³⁴⁸ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 24.

³⁴⁹ 'The student is warned against following my "interpretation" too literally. In this field the individual and the spur of the moment have their own rights. My conception may stand like a useful guidepost, which one need not necessarily follow if he knows of another good way himself' (Busoni, ed., *Fifteen Three-Voice Inventions*, Preface).

³⁵⁰ In the footnotes to the D major, E-flat minor, and E minor Preludes.

Busoni not only in terms of tempo flexibility but also in the management of dynamics. The advantage of the piano to ‘render prominent (accent) one tone above the general level’ is to be applied wherever it is ‘musically justifiable’.³⁵¹

In the organ transcriptions, Busoni demands a ‘dull and rigid monotony of tone’ in the soft registers, while also demanding ‘great variety of shading’; Busoni further writes that evenness of tone in all dynamic gradations is important.³⁵² In a footnote to the Prelude in E-flat minor, Busoni notes that the ‘infinite diversity in the minute shadings of the tones [...] is not applicable [in the organ transcriptions] [...] The successive shades should follow each other in a more abrupt and unprepared fashion, like changes in registration’.³⁵³ In Bach’s keyboard music, such as the Inventions, Sinfonias, and the Well-tempered Clavier, a more gradual increase in dynamic range is prescribed through the use crescendo and diminuendo at appropriate moments.

Example 2.4.1. Prelude in E minor, bars 20-24

In the Prelude in E minor (Example 2.4.1) Busoni urges the player to abstain from what he refers to in the Appendix as ‘a sentimental swell of the phrases’ through a ‘carefully worked up [Accelerando] before an important formal change, in this case the sudden change to the Presto

³⁵¹ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 181.

³⁵² The original German reads as follows: ‘Besonders in den sanften Registern (die eine grosse Varietät von **Stufen** verlangen) ist eine glanzlos – starre Gleichartigkeit der Töne gefordert’ (Busoni, ed., *Das Wohltemperierte Klavier, Erster Teil*, p. 181; emphasis mine). Busoni most likely refers to the variety of levels (shades) of piano in the softer registers rather than a variety of tone colour.

³⁵³ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 49.

at bar 23: ‘he ought rather to retain the first tranquil tempo until immediately before the *Presto*’.³⁵⁴

Referring again to C. P. E. Bach in the footnotes to this Prelude, Busoni greatly values the understanding of the expression of each piece, and the ‘passions that moved the composer when penning the composition’.³⁵⁵

In the Prelude in D major Busoni further explores the idea of feeling the rise and fall of the music: he remarks that the ‘rising and falling of the figuration [...] should be accompanied by a corresponding swell and subsidence’; Busoni however considers this ‘swell and subsidence [...] too ethereal for expression by written signs’.³⁵⁶ Perhaps he is echoing C. P. E. Bach here: Busoni suggests that these dynamic changes are to be felt internally rather than audibly expressed. Indicating these subtle changes may have been considered too pedantic; Busoni may also have felt that this might move the pianist to exaggerate the intended effect.

In a footnote to the Prelude in E-flat minor Busoni makes reference to Thalberg’s treatise *L’art du chant appliqué au piano* (1853), where he finds external approval for his assertions regarding flexibility of technique and the avoidance of arpeggiation or bass anticipation of the melody.³⁵⁷ According to Busoni, the connection between two successive, sustained tones is possible only when the second note is ‘struck with a softness precisely corresponding to the natural decrease in tone of the first ($f > p$)’; logically, in extended melodies this would quickly lead to a continuous decline in dynamic level.³⁵⁸ Busoni writes that the piano naturally gains in power as one descends the keyboard, and that the opposite is true in ascending scales and higher pitches; to circumvent this, one is to increase the power of tone when ascending.³⁵⁹

³⁵⁴ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 58. Curiously, instead of the ‘Accelerando’ in the original German footnote, the English translation (G. Schirmer) marks ‘crescendo’.

³⁵⁵ See also section 1.7 where this concept was discussed.

³⁵⁶ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 30. Bartók in fact uses hairpins to indicate this rise and fall in his edition.

³⁵⁷ Similarly to Busoni’s references to C. P. E. Bach, where he cherry-picked those parts that were relevant to his conception, Busoni is also rather selective in his quoting from Thalberg, who did in fact state that arpeggiation may be used in an effective way. Hamilton comments that Thalberg was not at all opposed to arpeggiation and asynchronisation, but ‘condemned – as did so many others – only its inept employment’ (Hamilton, *After the Golden Age*, pp. 165–66).

³⁵⁸ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 48.

³⁵⁹ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 48.

Busoni's dynamic indications

The general dynamic range in Busoni's editions is pianissimo (pp) to fortissimo (ff).³⁶⁰ Within this range, Busoni marks the following levels of dynamics, from quietest to loudest:

Pianissimo (pp)

Piano (p)

Mezzo-piano (mp)

Mezzo-forte (mf)

Forte (f)

Fortissimo (ff)

Busoni also gives the following markings with regularity (on more than five occasions).³⁶¹ Their varying application throughout Busoni's editions makes it impossible to pinpoint an accurate definition for these markings. The prefix is an important part to these dynamic indications, which are context-dependent and highly suggestive, and are to be interpreted by the pianist; for instance, *più piano* is sometimes explicitly louder than piano and sometimes explicitly quieter than piano. These dynamic markings are:

Più piano

Più forte

Meno forte

Poco forte

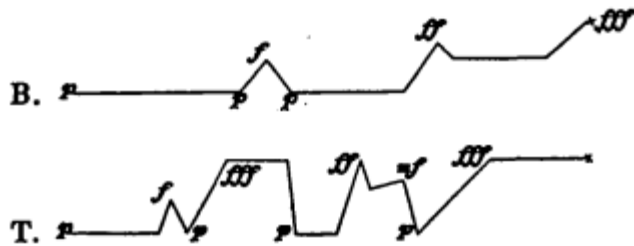
Quasi forte

Busoni's dynamic indications are invariably linked to his conception of the musical form and the most convincing way to realise the rise and fall in a dynamic sense. Hugo Leichtentritt highlights this in his 1917 article on Busoni as a composer by directly comparing Tausig's and Busoni's transcriptions of the Toccata and Fugue in D minor (BWV 565); Leichtentritt notes that Busoni's 'building of the climaxes, is more monumental, in simple lines, more thoughtful and much more effective than Tausig's. The line of intensity in Busoni's interpretation is much more convincing than Tausig's somewhat arbitrary rise and fall'.³⁶²

³⁶⁰ A single indication of pianississimo is found in the Prelude in E-flat minor (bar 37), where Busoni gives ppp for the left-hand chords (marked *una corda*). While Busoni does not go beyond fortissimo in the Inventions, Sinfonias, and the Well-tempered Clavier, he does do so in some of his Bach transcriptions: for instance, in the Fugue in E-flat major, BWV 552 (originally for organ), Busoni gives fff in bar 114 (left hand).

³⁶¹ *Meno piano* is marked only twice by Busoni (Invention no. 6 and Fugue no. 18) and is therefore left out of consideration.

³⁶² Hugo Leichtentritt, 'Ferruccio Busoni as a Composer', *Musical Quarterly*, 3 (1917), 69–97 (p. 89).



Example 2.4.2. Leichtentritt's comparison of dynamics by Busoni and Tausig in their transcriptions of BWV 565

Busoni's dynamic balancing

A prominent feature of Busoni's editions is the marking of dynamics as belonging to a particular part rather than an overall dynamic level for the whole passage or piece. Even if a singular dynamic indication would have sufficed, Busoni has sometimes explicitly given the same dynamic level for different parts. This is done, for instance, when one part is starting a new section while the other part is yet to finish (at a division), or when the first and following statements of the theme are both expected to be played at the same dynamic level and explicit notation may make this clearer.

More commonly, Busoni marks different dynamics for concurrent parts with different functions. The thematic statement is usually marked one or two dynamic levels higher than the countersubjects that are played at the same time (e.g., a theme marked mezzo-forte accompanied by countersubjects marked mezzo-piano). While this happens especially often in the Sinfonias, it also occurs in the Fugues in the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier. Busoni never marks a theme more than two dynamic levels higher than its surrounding parts; this balancing still allows for the subsidiary parts to be heard as part of a whole. An integral aspect of his performance style, Sitsky mentions that Petri was always struck by Busoni's dynamic balancing and the 'absolute clarity with which the melody stood out from the surrounding web of accompaniment and filigree'.³⁶³

The placement of the dynamics as well as Busoni's clarification on which dynamic marking belongs to which part makes Example 2.4.3 below a very clear demonstration of the skill in dynamic balancing Busoni expects from the player. After the G-major chord on the downbeat of bar 47, a dynamic drop follows to indicate the structural significance; the alto part

³⁶³ Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, p. 329.

is marked piano and the theme in the soprano is marked mezzo-forte (with tenuto dashes). Though not an explicit dynamic indication, the tenor part is marked *dolce*.



Example 2.4.3. Fugue no. 12 in F minor, bars 46-47



Example 2.4.4. Sinfonia no. 9 in F minor, bars 1-6

There is one notable supplement to the Sinfonia in F minor in which Busoni details his solution to the problem of bringing out three concurrent thematic parts. The difficulty of bringing out the themes in one hand in this Sinfonia is mainly related to holding down sustained tones while the other voice moves freely in faster note values; in a different footnote to the first Sinfonia in C major, Busoni writes how ‘[practice] is necessary for a “Bach-player” to be able to play two voices with one hand in different degrees of strength’.³⁶⁴

From Example 2.4.4. we can discern the qualities of the three themes of this Sinfonia:

- Theme I, a *portamento* descending chromatic line in crotchets.

³⁶⁴ Busoni, ed., *Fifteen Three-Voice Inventions*, p. 2.

- Theme II, in quavers, marked with hairpins; a sigh-motif (*seufzer*) preceded by a minor third ascending skip, before an emphasised high note in the second half of the theme.
- Theme III, primarily in semiquavers and demisemiquavers; a sigh-motif like theme II, decorated with suspensions.

Of these themes, Busoni writes that whichever voice appears in the soprano ‘will sing out anyway’ and does not need to be further emphasised; the same goes for theme III, with its ‘striking rhythmic figure’, which can be heard clearly regardless of its position owing to its rhythmical features.³⁶⁵ Busoni’s approach shows that he is conscious of many different factors when deciding what to bring out especially when there are multiple themes at play. Summarised into a clear set of rules to apply throughout, we obtain the following guidelines:

- 1) Whichever voice is in the soprano does not need to be emphasised.
- 2) Theme III does not need to be emphasised.
- 3) Consequently, the other voice that is not the soprano or theme III is to be emphasised, while of the other two voices, only their characteristic features need to be emphasised.
- 4) If theme III appears in the soprano, theme II is to be emphasised, as due to its longer note values, the chromatic line of theme I stands out clearly.

Hairpins

Besides their dynamic purpose, Roberto Poli alludes to a possible agogic interpretation of hairpins in his book *The Secret Life of Musical Notation: Defying Interpretive Traditions* (2010).³⁶⁶ Despite the wealth of examples which support his argument from music by Chopin, Beethoven, Haydn, and Schubert, Poli writes that in treatises from the nineteenth century by eminent pianists such as Hummel, hairpins serve a purely dynamic purpose.³⁶⁷ David Hyun-Su Kim suggests that ‘instead of “growing louder/quieter”, hairpins are better understood as “becoming more/less”’; agogic inflection may be one of many ways to achieve this.³⁶⁸

At the turn of the century, Riemann points to the use of hairpins as an agogic as well as dynamic device in his treatise *Die Elemente der musikalischen Ästhetik* (1900), while also noting that speed of execution should be directly proportional to dynamics – as the volume of

³⁶⁵ Busoni, ed., *Fifteen Three-Voice Inventions*, p. 25.

³⁶⁶ Roberto Poli, *The Secret Life of Musical Notation: Defying Interpretive Traditions* (Milwaukee: Amadeus Press, 2010), p. 9.

³⁶⁷ Poli, *The Secret Life of Musical Notation*, p. 65.

³⁶⁸ David Hyun-Su Kim, ‘The Brahmsian Hairpin’, *19th-Century Music*, 36 (2012), 46–57 (p. 56).

a passage increases, the tempo is also supposed to quicken, and vice versa.³⁶⁹ Riemann's ideas as well as his analysis of the Well-tempered Clavier are mentioned frequently throughout Busoni's edition of the same work; it is however unclear how closely Busoni's performance aesthetics aligned with Riemann's ideas in practice.

Max Reger, a Riemann pupil and acquaintance of Busoni's, suggests that while hairpins can have both dynamic and agogic purposes, one could apply a *stringendo* where the hairpin opens and a *ritardando* where it closes:³⁷⁰

*** Das Zeichen $\wedge$ bedeutet eine gelinde Dehnung der Note oder Pause, über der es steht; $\llcorner$ u. $\lrcorner$ haben „dynamische“ (Schweller) und „agogische“ Bedeutung.**
*** The sign $\wedge$ denotes a slight lingering on the note or rest, over which it is placed; $\llcorner$ & $\lrcorner$ have “dynamic” (swell) and “agogic” meaning.**

Example 2.4.5. Footnote to Reger's *Vorspiel über “Komm süßer Tod”*, WoO IV/3 (1894)³⁷¹

* Die $\llcorner$ $\lrcorner$ beziehen sich auf den Gebrauch des Jalousieschwellers; doch kann man auch bei $\llcorner$ das Tempo etwas beschleunigen (*stringendo*) und bei $\lrcorner$ etwas beruhigen (*ritardando*) (*Tempo rubato*). / The $\llcorner$ $\lrcorner$ apply to the swell-box; however, one can also accelerate the tempo a little at $\llcorner$ (*stringendo*), and slow it down at $\lrcorner$ (*ritardando*) (*Tempo rubato*).

Example 2.4.6. Footnote to Reger's *Choralfantasie über “Freu dich sehr, o meine Seele”*, op. 30 (1898)³⁷²

Brahms, another influence in Busoni's early life, also appears to have used hairpins for various purposes. In Brahms's circle, and according to accounts of Brahms's own playing, the agogic interpretation of the hairpin was widespread.³⁷³

There is thus evidence that suggests that in Busoni's direct environment the hairpin took on various meanings. That Busoni himself used long accents, which resemble closing hairpins, in a suggestive manner can be seen in some of his early works in his own hand. In the Piano Sonata in F minor (BV 204 (1883), Example 2.4.7) Busoni marks seemingly superfluous closing hairpins, which are actually long accents, which may have a gestural significance:

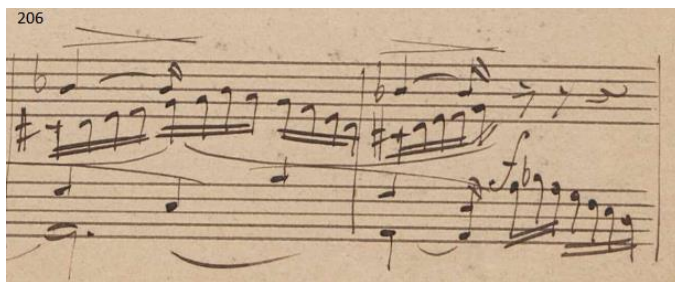
³⁶⁹ Quoted in Poli, *The Secret Life of Musical Notation*, p. 66.

³⁷⁰ Quoted in Poli, *The Secret Life of Musical Notation*, p. 240.

³⁷¹ Max Reger, *Vorspiel über “Komm süßer Tod”* (Mainz: B. Schott's Söhne, 1911).

³⁷² Max Reger, *Sämtliche Orgelwerke, Band 6* (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1989), p. 33. I encountered this example in David W. Adams, “‘Modern’ Organ Style in Karl Straube's Reger Editions” (PhD thesis, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 2007), p. 136.

³⁷³ Cheong Yew Choong, ‘Decoding Idiosyncratic Hairpins: Dynamic Changes or “Notated” Rubato?’, *Mahidol Music Journal*, 2 (2019), 4–20 (p. 12).



Example 2.4.7. Busoni's Piano Sonata in F minor (1883, BV 204): third movement, bars 206-207³⁷⁴

However, there is also evidence that Busoni may have used the hairpin purely in a dynamic or colouristic sense. When giving feedback on Schönberg's *Drei Klavierstücke*, op. 11, Busoni remarks that Schönberg's paired hairpin $< >$ over a chord is unrealisable on the piano.³⁷⁵ In his response to Busoni, Schönberg writes that he does not expect the player to be able to swell the chord, but that he uses this paired hairpin in a more suggestive manner, similar to a *marcato* or *forzato*; Schönberg also remarks that he took this indication from Brahms, though he also notes that it appears that Brahms does not use it in the same way he does.³⁷⁶

Busoni refers to another paired hairpin over a passage in a footnote to the Sinfonia in G minor as 'that popular swelling and subsiding of the sound ($< >$)'.³⁷⁷ Furthermore, in Busoni's 1918 edition of Liszt's *Réminiscences de Don Juan*, S. 418, at an opening hairpin in a fortissimo passage Busoni remarks that 'a **crescendo-sign**, that follows a fortissimo, cannot be performed in any other way than through a lighter start of the crescendo, which then leads back to fortissimo' (emphasis mine).³⁷⁸

³⁷⁴ This score (Mus.Nachl. F. Busoni A, 187) can be accessed at <<https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN1669094057>> [accessed 20 August 2021].

³⁷⁵ This correspondence is referenced in Kim, 'The Brahmsian Hairpin', p. 46. The (mostly) full exchange (38 total letters from 1903-1919) between Busoni and Schönberg can be found in Busoni, *Selected Letters*, pp. 381–423; the referenced letters are letters 8-9, pp. 386–87. The original letters, including photographs, can be found on the website of the *Busoni Nachlass* project: <<https://busoni-nachlass.org/en/Correspondence/E010001/D0100011.html>> [accessed 31 July 2021].

Busoni to Schönberg, 2 August 1909: 'Wenn Sie auf vierstimmige gehaltene Akkorde – in ungünstiger Lage – das Zeichen $< >$ setzen, so bedeutet das eine Absicht, die in der Setzung nicht verwirklicht ist. Das ist nicht Pianistenvorurteil, sondern unwiderlegbar'.

³⁷⁶ Schönberg to Busoni, probably August 13, 1909 (translation in main text mine) <<https://busoni-nachlass.org/en/Correspondence/E010001/D0100012.html>> [accessed 31 July 2021].

³⁷⁷ Busoni, ed., *Klavierwerke Band V: Dreistimmige Inventionen*, p. 31. Translation mine. The original German reads as follows: 'das beliebte kurze An- und Abschwollen des Klanges'. In the English translation by Lois and Guy Maier for Theodore Presser, this is translated as 'short crescendos and decrescendos so commonly employed'; the indication $< >$ is omitted.

³⁷⁸ Ferruccio Busoni, ed., *Liszt, Réminiscences de Don Juan, Konzert-Fantasie für Klavier* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1918), p. 2. Translation mine. The original German reads as follows: 'Ein Crescendo-Zeichen, das auf ein ff folgt, kann nicht anders ausgeführt werden, als durch ein leiseres Ansetzen von dem Crescendo, das wieder zum ff führt'.

In polyphonic material Busoni primarily links dynamics to parts; hairpins are treated in the same way. From this follows that agogic flexibility is most likely not linked to Busoni's hairpins: on occasion, Busoni marks both opening and closing hairpins at the same time, which would indicate two opposing kinds of tempo flexibility at once. The result of this would be the asynchronisation of the hands: this is irreconcilable with the fact that, unlike many of his peers, Busoni generally did not employ this pianistic device in his playing.³⁷⁹

In Busoni's acoustic recordings we hear a varied use of tempo flexibility and agogic shaping, but my impression is that the role of the hairpin is unclear in these cases; rather, this flexibility is dictated more by the overall form of the piece:

17

19

calmando

dolce

cresc.

A B C

a b c

conformably to which we have

A = Exposition, 6 measures

B = Development, 17 measures

a = 7 measures = Stretto
b = 5 measures = continually narrowing Stretto (climax)
c = 5 measures = simple Stretto again, and return to rest.

C = Coda, 4 measures = Organ-point on the tonic.

Example 2.4.8. Fugue no. 1 in C major, bars 17-20, and footnote on the structure of the Fugue

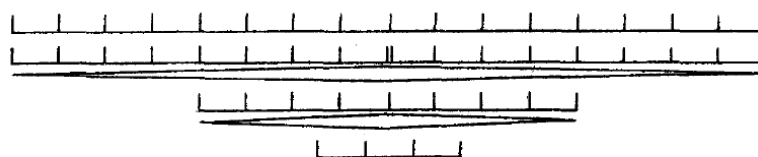
The hairpins used in the first bar of Example 2.4.8 show that various levels of shading can be employed at the same time between voices, further supporting Busoni's earlier notion of the advantage the piano has over the organ: the ability to render prominent one voice over another.

³⁷⁹ Peres Da Costa, *Off the Record*, p. 90.

In this case, Busoni increases the intensity of the tenor part while the alto decreases in strength. If these hairpins implied any sense of tempo flexibility, this would lead to asynchronisation between the hands; in Busoni's recording, there is no asynchronisation at this point.³⁸⁰

The hairpin over the tenor voice in the second line (bar 19) is a point where Busoni slows down significantly; however, if one consults the footnote in Example 2.4.8, this point in the piece is also an important structural moment, as here the transition from the 'continually narrowing Stretto (climax)' to the 'simple Stretto again, and return to rest' occurs. That in this context a hairpin may accompany a relaxation of the pulse is not surprising.

This unpretentious prelude is very beautifully constructed. With the help of a few chords and only two keys it proceeds in a series of long-drawn harmonic phrases passing in order like the links of a chain. The perfect symmetry of its repose, rise and fall is clearly indicated in the appended diagram.



(The vertical lines signify bar-lines.)

Example 2.4.9. Footnote to Busoni's edition of the Prelude in C minor, BWV 999³⁸¹

The footnote in Example 2.4.9, taken from Busoni's edition of the Prelude in C minor, BWV 999, shows Busoni's diagram of the supposed rise and fall of the piece. Busoni explicitly marks crescendo and diminuendo at those points that coincide with the paired hairpins marked in the diagram: the crescendo in bar 17 (Example 2.4.10) aligns exactly with the start of the opening hairpin in the diagram; the same goes for the diminuendo (bar 25) aligning with the closing hairpin.

³⁸⁰ This will be discussed in Chapter 3, *Listening to Busoni* (see Example 3.2.14).

³⁸¹ Busoni, ed., *Klavierwerke Band III: 18 kleine Präludien, Fughetta, 4 Duette*, pp. 4–5.



Example 2.4.10. Prelude in C minor, BWV 999, bars 16-27

Dynamic treatment by Busoni's peers and successors

Petri's dynamic shaping is most clearly modelled after Busoni's: he goes as far as to say that in his opinion, all editions except those by Busoni suffer from a 'certain lack of regular [dynamic] plan' and that the dynamics in most editions appear to have 'originated at the writing-desk', suggesting that the dynamics were misrepresenting the 'grandeur' and 'architectural character' of Bach's style.³⁸² In Petri's dynamic concept, just as for Busoni, the organ is the model, with all possibilities of our modern instrument 'necessary, but of secondary importance'.³⁸³

Casella does not offer much insight into his dynamic choices, except that they are marked with 'extreme parsimony', and that just like for Busoni and Petri, it is the 'architecture which determines the « coloriti »'; editions where forte and piano 'alternate continually and as if at random, are anti-stylistic and blameworthy'.³⁸⁴

While Bartók is in agreement that while writing the Well-tempered Clavier Bach surely would have had the 'far superior organ in mind [over the harpsichord]', he argues that the claim by 'overzealous fans that the genius Bach "foresaw" the modern piano in all its perfection is nothing more than a fantasy. This is why it is best to treat Bach's piano compositions as having been written for the organ [...] and to use this as a guide when deciding on the mode of

³⁸² Petri, ed., *Französische Suiten*, p. X.

³⁸³ Petri, ed., *Französische Suiten*, p. X.

³⁸⁴ Casella and Piccioli, eds., *Il clavicembalo ben temperato*, Preface.

playing’.³⁸⁵ However, in terms of dynamic treatment, Bartók adheres to a much more pianistic realisation. He suggests that ascending passages are played crescendo while descending passages are played diminuendo, and further introduces a thick hairpin which applies to all voices while thin (common) hairpins only apply colour to one voice.³⁸⁶ Some notes are marked with special accents (*sforzando*, *marcato*, and normal accents) to denote they have to be played somewhat more forcefully.³⁸⁷

Dykstra comments on the ‘great deal of disagreement between editors and modern pianists over dynamic levels’.³⁸⁸ According to Dykstra, the editions by Riemann and Bartók are the most detailed in terms of dynamics; while Riemann’s edition is ‘deluged with marks of shading’, Bartók’s edition contains both the widest dynamic range (ppp – fff) as well as an ‘arsenal of editorial markings’.³⁸⁹ While editors like Busoni and Casella use only a ‘moderate amount of dynamic indications’, Czerny’s edition contains ‘quite a number of exaggerated dynamic contrasts’ which ‘rarely appear in any [other] edition’.³⁹⁰

Dykstra includes tables which compare dynamic levels at important moments of each piece in the First Book; though not exhaustive, certain similarities as well as differences may be discovered between Busoni and later editors who were certainly inspired by his work. For instance, in larger pieces such as the Fugue in E-flat minor, Casella closely follows the dynamic treatment by Busoni, differing only fundamentally at the end of the piece where Busoni prescribes fortissimo compared to Casella’s forte. After a gradual crescendo throughout almost the entire piece starting from a pianissimo opening, Bartók reaches his fortissimo at bar 77 before dropping down to forte for the final bars; all other editors mark the opening of the piece piano.³⁹¹

In pieces where Busoni left a lot of the dynamic choices up to the pianist, Casella is generally much more prescriptive by filling in the blanks; this can be seen in Dykstra’s comparison of dynamics in the Fugue in B minor. In this piece, Bartók is markedly individual in his dynamic treatment by placing the climax of the piece 18 bars before the end (Casella marks poco forte – piano). Bartók marks the end of the piece mezzo-forte, while Busoni and Casella indicate fortissimo.³⁹²

³⁸⁵ Bartók, ed., *The Well-Tempered Clavier (Vols. I–II)*, p. 133.

³⁸⁶ Bartók, ed., *The Well-Tempered Clavier (Vols. I–II)*, pp. 133–34.

³⁸⁷ Bartók, ed., *The Well-Tempered Clavier (Vols. I–II)*, p. 134.

³⁸⁸ Dykstra, ‘The Interpretation of Bach’s Well-tempered Clavier’, p. 465.

³⁸⁹ Dykstra, ‘The Interpretation of Bach’s Well-tempered Clavier’, pp. 465–66.

³⁹⁰ Dykstra, ‘The Interpretation of Bach’s Well-tempered Clavier’, p. 466.

³⁹¹ Dykstra, ‘The Interpretation of Bach’s Well-tempered Clavier’, p. 187.

³⁹² Dykstra, ‘The Interpretation of Bach’s Well-tempered Clavier’, p. 451.

Bartók's wider dynamic range is clearly seen in the Fugue in A minor, where Busoni's overall dynamic range does not dip below mezzo-forte (excluding the *meno pesante* marked at the first division in bar 18). Casella marks piano just twice (in bars 18 and 64), while for Bartók nearly half the piece is marked piano – mezzo-piano with the final coda played fortissimo (forte for Busoni).³⁹³ These variances in dynamic treatment suggest a difference in understanding of the form or expression of a piece between the editors.

In an essay from 1949 Fischer notes that around 1920 'I scarcely heard a forte from [the mature Busoni]; he found this sufficient, for it was for him a question of the balance of tone, no longer of strength in itself'.³⁹⁴ Brookshire notes that Fischer's edition of the Sinfonias suppressed almost '75% of Busoni's dynamic inflections, along the way softening many of those that remained'; Fischer never exceeds forte as the top dynamic, while both general as well as local dynamic markings are streamlined.³⁹⁵ The development of instrument building technique in the twentieth century undoubtedly led to a larger range of dynamics that could be produced on the modern piano. With this in mind, perhaps some of Bartók's loudest dynamic levels in his 1913 editions would not surpass the fortissimo of today. It may thus be necessary for us to apply Fischer's dynamic tempering also in the editions by Busoni and Bartók to approximate a more likely level of sound and balance.

The inclusion of more detailed and consistent dynamic markings in the editions by Bartók and Casella was likely the result of the pronounced pedagogical aim of their editions. In Busoni's editions a clear trend is seen: while the Inventions and Sinfonias feature extensive dynamic markings they are less profuse in the Well-tempered Clavier. In more difficult works such as the *Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue* Busoni's indications are even sparser. This suggests that Busoni perhaps expected this aspect of performance to be filled in mostly by the accomplished pianist based on examples given in other works.

³⁹³ Dykstra, 'The Interpretation of Bach's Well-tempered Clavier', pp. 387–88.

³⁹⁴ Edwin Fischer, *Reflections on Music* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1951), p. 21.

³⁹⁵ Brookshire, 'Edwin Fischer and Bach Performance Practice in the Weimar Republic', pp. 217–21.

2.5. Pedal use

[T]he pianoforte has one possession wholly peculiar to itself, an imitable device, a photograph of the sky, a ray of moonlight – the Pedal. The effects of the pedal are unexhausted, because they have remained even to this day the drudges of a narrow-souled and senseless harmonic theory; the treatment accorded them is like trying to mould air or water into geometric forms. Beethoven, who incontestably achieved the greatest progress on and for the pianoforte, divined the mysteries of the pedal, and to him we owe the first liberties. The pedal is in ill-repute. For this, absurd irregularities must bear the blame. Let us experiment with *sensible* irregularities.³⁹⁶

Our modern grand piano is generally equipped with three pedals; the damper pedal (sustaining, right, or loud pedal), the *una corda* pedal (soft, left, or *sordino* pedal), and the *sostenuto* pedal (Steinway or middle pedal).³⁹⁷ According to Kogan, pedaling ‘occupied an important place in Busoni’s technique; he owed to it the richness and variety of colors in his playing [...] to characterize Busoni’s manner of pedaling, to discover the “secrets” of his unusually artful pedal technique, all of these subtle, almost imperceptible “half-pedals,” “quarter-pedals,” “pedal tremolos,” and so on is extremely difficult’.³⁹⁸ Joseph Banowetz writes that ‘Busoni was a pianist of genius whose ideas on pedaling are startlingly original for his time and in some respects have not been surpassed’.³⁹⁹

In this section I will look at how Busoni uses these pedals in his editions. Generally, pedal indications are very sparse, which may be because Busoni considered pedaling to be a highly personal technical matter: in a footnote to the Prelude in E-flat minor Busoni writes that his pedal markings are ‘not absolutely binding, [but they] will serve as a point d’appui for individual applications’.⁴⁰⁰

I will discuss the possible simultaneous use of the *sostenuto* and damper pedals as demonstrated by Busoni and give an example of my own application of the *sostenuto* pedal in the Fugue in A minor, for which Busoni, Bartók, and Casella recommend a redistribution accompanied by pedal use instead.

The use of the pedals changes depending on ‘tempo, dynamics, tone, articulation, balance of parts, the style and period of a work, the hall, the instrument, and even the very mood

³⁹⁶ Busoni, *Sketch of a New Esthetic*, p. 44.

³⁹⁷ Joseph Banowetz, *The Pianist’s Guide to Pedaling* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1985), pp. 9, 90, 110.

³⁹⁸ Kogan, *Busoni as Pianist*, p. 81.

³⁹⁹ Banowetz, *The Pianist’s Guide to Pedaling*, p. 135. All examples in Banowetz’s chapter on pedal use in Bach that are not his own suggestions are solely by Busoni.

⁴⁰⁰ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 49.

of the performer'.⁴⁰¹ Certainly such ideas would have been at the front of the mind of Busoni and his peers; I will compare some of their pedal markings as well as innovations in this subsection.

The damper (right) pedal

In the section on pedal use in the Appendix to the Well-tempered Clavier Busoni claims that 'a manner of treatment by which no specific pedal-effect is brought out' is one of the proper uses of the pedal; however, it is almost impossible to use the pedal, no matter how briefly it is used for, without immediately noticing its use.⁴⁰² Busoni also prescribes it on occasion specifically for the very particular pedal-effects of overtones and softening of chords.

In his editions, Busoni marks the pedal with the following indications:

- A written *Ped.* under the system, followed by an asterisk to show the lifting of the foot. This is sometimes accompanied by a dotted line to show the exact moment of lifting.
- The written indication *con pedale*.
- Horizontal, vertical, and oblique lines, for a more specific pedal, which may also tell the performer more about the speed with which to use the pedal.

Busoni prescribes the following three types of pedal use in his editions:

- 1) The pedal may be used as a 'substitute for a missing finger': firstly, to hold down notes which are otherwise impossible to sustain physically; secondly, to allow two consecutive (and/or repeated) notes to be played legato.
- 2) Pedal is occasionally marked at broken-chord figurations to allow overtones to ring through, which creates a more full-bodied sound on the piano.
- 3) Busoni marks short touches of pedal to soften the sound or to connect chords in a smoother way.

Additionally, as can be seen in the Appendix to the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier, in his transcriptions of organ works Busoni employs the damper pedal in the following ways:

- 4) 'Full organ'-imitations are marked with heavy pedal use.

⁴⁰¹ Banowetz, *The Pianist's Guide to Pedaling*, p. 9.

⁴⁰² Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 176. I am taking Busoni very literally here; the impression I get from his text, however, is that it was written as a reactionary piece. The English translation again misrepresents Busoni's statements here: the German word 'oft' (often) is left out of the sentence 'True, in the piano-works the inaudible use of the pedal is [often] the only proper one'.

- 5) Thinner passages that contain dense polyphony have very specific pedal-indications.⁴⁰³
- 6) On rare occasions, during long pedals, Busoni marks the silent retaking of certain keys while simultaneously releasing the pedal: the effect of this is that only the strings connected to those keys that are held down will continue to vibrate. In Example 2.5.1, the small minims marked in bar 16 are to be silently taken while the pedal is held down; the pedal should then be released while the keys are held down.



Example 2.5.1. Prelude in D major for organ (BWV 532, Busoni transcription), bars 15-16⁴⁰⁴

Busoni later experiments more with these muted effects outside of organ transcriptions in his edition of the *Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue* (BWV 903, 1902); Fischer's edition of this piece (1928) is clearly inspired by Busoni's edition in its similar treatment of silently-played chords in pedal:

⁴⁰³ While these specific pedal-indications are given in Busoni's Appendix, they are generally omitted in any published edition of the transcriptions, leaving many performers who are unaware of the existence of this Appendix to figure out their own pedaling. This is unfortunate, as Busoni's clear pedaling aids the clarity of the polyphony (see Example 2.5.17).

⁴⁰⁴ Ferruccio Busoni, transr., *Tocatta and Fugue in D minor and the Other Bach Transcriptions for Solo Piano* (New York: Dover Publications, 1996) p. 2. Where organ transcriptions by Busoni are referenced in this chapter, these are either taken from the Appendix to the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier or from the Dover edition.

32

riten.

stumm
(insensibile)

33 *b) ossia*

f *m.s.* *dim.* *rit.* *ten.*

arpeggio

b) „Ossia“ rendering of the Editor's.
c) This chord to be struck silently.

Example 2.5.2. *Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue* (BWV 903), bars 32-33 (top: Busoni, bottom: Fischer)

1

weich, zart

dolcissimo, una corda

1) *Rechtes Pedal*
Damper-pedal

poco espress.

5

etwas voller armonioso

pp

voller

dim.

1) The right foot should hold the pedal down for the time marked by the horizontal line, releasing and depressing it as marked by the vertical and oblique lines.
The method of marking the (indispensable) pedal which we have adopted for this piece is not absolutely binding, but will serve as a point d'appui for individual applications.

Example 2.5.3. *Prelude no. 8 in E-flat minor*, bars 1-9

The pedal use marked in the Prelude in E-flat minor (Example 2.5.3) is exceptionally rich. Busoni indicates the pedal in a particular way which he does not use again elsewhere in the editions, and here and in other examples from this piece we see what Kogan meant when he referred to Busoni's 'unusually artful pedal technique'.⁴⁰⁵ It may be that Busoni felt he could

⁴⁰⁵ Kogan, *Busoni as Pianist*, p. 81.

make a point in this particular piece regarding skilful pedal use and expected that these techniques would then be applied by the pianist elsewhere, with good taste of course always guiding the use of the pedal. The pedal here is mainly used to soften the sound and allows the pianist to connect the arpeggiated chords in a smoother way. The pedal is lifted at the end of this example, where its use may cause the sound to become too hazy and distorted, which is a sound that is undesirable in Busoni's Bach conception.⁴⁰⁶

In the Preface to his edition of the French Suites, Petri claims that this way of marking the pedal 'owes its origin to Busoni, and illustrates the movement of the foot'.⁴⁰⁷ However, Jonás writes that this marking in fact appears in Lavignac's *L'Ecole de la Pédale* (1889), and that it was taught by Le Couppey at the Paris Conservatoire.⁴⁰⁸ Petri's claim that Busoni invented this notation is thus unlikely: Jonás writes that '[the Lavignac-Le Couppey system] is used in Germany by several music publishing firms'.⁴⁰⁹ It is more likely that Busoni came across this notation or that it was suggested to him by someone else.

In Example 2.5.4 from the same piece we can see the various speeds with which Busoni presses and releases the pedal; the indications he used can be quite specific in this way, unlike the more common indications of *Ped.* or *con pedale*, which tell the performer nothing about the speed with which to use the pedal. Perhaps this aspect of the notation was a personal innovation by Busoni:

⁴⁰⁶ From Section 4 of the Appendix to the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier: 'True, in the piano-works the inaudible use of the pedal is [often] the only proper one. By this we mean the employment of the pedal for binding two successive single tones or chords, for emphasizing a suspension; for sustaining a single part, etc.; a manner of treatment by which no specific pedal-effect is brought out' (Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 176).

⁴⁰⁷ Petri, ed., *Französische Suiten*, p. X.

⁴⁰⁸ Alberto Jonás, *Master School of Piano Playing and Virtuosity* (Book VI) (New York: Carl Fischer, 1929), p. 133. See also David Rowland, *A History of Pianoforte Pedalling* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 116–17, and Hamilton, *After the Golden Age*, p. 172, where Lavignac's system is discussed as well.

⁴⁰⁹ Jonás, *Master School of Piano Playing* (Book VI), p. 134.



Example 2.5.4. Prelude no. 8 in E-flat minor, bars 13-19

The part marked *senza Pedale* in Example 2.5.5 (bars 21-22) is also marked forte and non legato; use of the pedal would spoil the effect of the sudden non legato. Busoni's pedal indications in the rest of the piece are less specific than in the previous examples, with Busoni simply indicating 'Ped. (as above)' in bars 23-24. He clearly expects the pianist to continue the pedal application set out earlier in the piece.



Example 2.5.5. Prelude no. 8 in E-flat minor, bars 21-24

The *una corda* pedal

Touching the soft, or left, pedal (marked “*una corda*” or “u.c.”) let us say at the outset, that it may be used not only for the last gradations of “*pianissimo*”, but also in “*mezzo forte*” and all the intermediate dynamic shadings. The case may even occur, that some passages are played more softly without the soft pedal than others with it. The effect intended here is not softness of tone, but the peculiar quality of tone obtained. (Compare “Registration”.) [...]

The entrance of the organ-pedal-part in the exposition of a fugue may, as a rule, be advantageously supported by the soft pedal. The exposition as a whole, and also the episodes, are usually benefitted by the soft pedal. (Comp. the Fugue in Eb.) The editor plays, for instance, the repetition of the secondary theme (beginning in F minor) in the G minor Fantasia, with soft pedal and in the evenest “*piano*” up to the semicadence in G minor (i.e., 6 full measures).

Example 2.5.6. Section 4 of the Appendix to the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier⁴¹⁰

Una corda (and *tre corde*) indications are very rarely given in the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier, and this pedal is never marked in the Inventions and Sinfonias. Busoni uses the following markings to indicate the use of this pedal:

- *Una corda* (and *tre corde* where it is lifted).
- *Verschiebg.* (short for *Verschiebungspedal*, the German term for the *una corda* pedal), sometimes accompanied with a dotted line to indicate the length it is held for.
- II. Ped. (or u. c.), marked similarly to the damper pedal.
- *Con/mit sord(ino)*.

Busoni writes that the *una corda* pedal may be used effectively in dynamic shadings up to mezzo-forte (Example 2.5.6 above): the ‘peculiar quality of tone obtained’ may also help with suggesting different registrations.

Una corda is first marked in brackets in Busoni’s editions in the first bar of the Prelude in C-sharp major. At the recapitulation of this Prelude, it is no longer marked; a *tre corde* indication is never given, so it is unclear where Busoni would expect the left pedal to be lifted. Busoni also explicitly marks the damper pedal only in the first bar; again, he is unclear about its use throughout the rest of the theme, but Busoni does mark specific use of the damper pedal at the end of the piece for a richer sound. It is briefly marked again in the Prelude in E-flat minor, where Busoni suggests it may be used effectively for a colour change at a passage

⁴¹⁰ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 177.

marked *misterioso*; a similar colour change is suggested in the closing bars of the Prelude in F-sharp major, where Busoni asks for a piano *subito*.



Example 2.5.7. Chaconne in D minor (BWV 1004, Busoni transcription), bars 17-25⁴¹¹

In Busoni's transcription of the *Chaconne*, BWV 1004 (Example 2.5.7), at first a 'full' version is marked piano (*senza Pedale*); the *una corda* is indicated in the pianissimo repeat. In Busoni's transcription of the Organ Prelude in D major, BWV 532 (Example 2.5.8), the *una corda* is similarly used to aid the terraced dynamics as well as to suggest a change in registration.



Example 2.5.8. Prelude in D major (BWV 532, Busoni transcription), bars 37-42

The *sostenuto* pedal

Many modern instruments are furnished with a pedal, by the aid of which single tones may be sustained (their dampers lifted from the strings) while all the rest of the keyboard is playing "*senza pedale*". [...]

Real organ-effects can be obtained only by the combined action of the three pedals.

As might be supposed, the editor has not succeeded in discovering all the hidden possibilities of the sustaining-pedal; the following illustrations will show the results of his investigations hitherto.

Example 2.5.9. Section 4 of the Appendix to the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier⁴¹²

⁴¹¹ Examples 2.5.7–8 are printed in the Appendix to the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier (Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 177).

⁴¹² Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 178.

The *sostenuto* pedal is not marked at all in the main text of Busoni's editions of the Inventions, Sinfonias and the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier.⁴¹³ Busoni marks it in some niche cases in his transcriptions of Bach's organ works; however, even in these cases the indications are omitted from the revised editions of these works and can only be found in Busoni's Appendix or early versions.⁴¹⁴ As seen in the above text, Busoni had 'not succeeded in discovering all the hidden possibilities of the sustaining-pedal', and perhaps he did not feel confident enough to share most of his 'investigations' outside of the Appendix. In 1923, the year before his death, Busoni included a study in his *Klavierübung*, Book 9, which specifically explores the use of this pedal:

7.

Mit Anwendung des III. Pedals
(Steinway & Sons Sustaining-Pedal.)

Andantino tranquillo.

Haupt-Stimme.

sord. mit dem I. Fuß

p legato

Liegende Töne.
(durch das III. Pedal zu halten)

rechter Fuß

Example 2.5.10. Busoni's *Klavierübung* (Buch 9: Sieben kurze Stücke zur Pflege des polyphonen Spiels)⁴¹⁵

Though Busoni advocated the use of the *sostenuto* pedal, I find it difficult to believe that it was a thoroughly integrated aspect of his playing. It is unlikely that Busoni had regular access to instruments that had this pedal: during the 1920s, and likely before that, the two grand pianos

⁴¹³ It is given as an alternative in the footnote to the Prelude in C minor, bar 28: 'the same left-hand G may be transformed, by adding the lower octave and employing the Steinway third pedal (pedale de prolongement, or sustaining-pedal), into an effective 6-measure organ-point' (Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 10).

⁴¹⁴ Hamilton (*After the Golden Age*, p. 177) points out that Busoni marks the *sostenuto* pedal in an original coda to his arrangement of the Prelude in E-flat major for organ, BWV 552 (Busoni, transcr., *Praeludium und Fuge Es dur*). This marking is not included in a later revision of the work (for the *Bach-Busoni Gesammelte Ausgabe*). Example 85 in Busoni's Appendix also shows this marking (Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 179).

⁴¹⁵ Ferruccio Busoni, *Klavierübung in 10 Büchern* (Buch 9: Sieben kurze Stücke zur Pflege des polyphonen Spiels) (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1925), p. 197. I discussed some examples from Book 1 in the section on fingering (Examples 2.2.5–6). Though I was familiar with the exercises in the *Klavierübung*, I first learnt about this piece in Hamilton, *After the Golden Age*, p. 177; Sitsky also discusses it in Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, pp. 171–72.

in his music room in his Berlin home only had two pedals.⁴¹⁶ A document shared with me by Bechstein confirms that *sostenuto* pedals were added to instruments before 1950 ‘on demand only’, with the first Bechstein model with a standard *sostenuto* pedal probably being the Model E (around 1950).⁴¹⁷ Banowetz further notes that many European pianos did not have a third pedal even in 1984.⁴¹⁸ That Busoni did not request this pedal to be installed on his pianos might imply that either he did not consider it essential or that he came across it so rarely in concert that he saw little reason to thoroughly practise its application.⁴¹⁹ Busoni’s early experimentation with the *sostenuto* pedal was likely easier during his time in the United States where he had more regular access to Steinway grand pianos.⁴²⁰

The *sostenuto* pedal is usually used in conjunction with either of the other two pedals, but Banowetz writes that Busoni ‘never mentions the possibility of working both the left and middle pedals simultaneously with the left foot’.⁴²¹ This could be done by, for instance, pressing down on the left pedal with the ball of the left foot while using the heel of the same foot to operate the *sostenuto* pedal.

Combining the *sostenuto* and damper pedals

Examples 2.5.11–12 below show two different approaches to the same problem. In the top example, Busoni marks a *sostenuto* pedal which is held for five bars; in the bottom example, Busoni gives one long pedal which is held from bar 12 onwards. The advantage of the *sostenuto* pedal is that it allows the player to retake the damper pedal on every chord in bar 14; this is not

⁴¹⁶ The *Nachlass Ferruccio Busoni* at the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin contains pictures of Busoni’s music room in his Berlin house (c. 1920). One of the pictures shows a C. Bechstein grand piano with two pedals sitting alongside another closed grand piano (presumably also a Bechstein).

<<https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN86188115X>> [accessed 25 July 2022].

⁴¹⁷ *Chronologie der C. Bechstein Modelle*, version of 12 August 2021, private correspondence. A Bechstein representative responded to my questions about Busoni’s pianos that unless the serial numbers of Busoni’s pianos were recorded it is unlikely that details about the pianos may become known.

⁴¹⁸ Banowetz, *The Pianist’s Guide to Pedaling*, p. 92

⁴¹⁹ While these instruments were rare in Europe, Busoni did occasionally play Steinway grands in concerts, though it is difficult (if not impossible) to know how often. A flyer advertising three piano recitals in the Beethoven-Saal in Berlin, January/February 1900, tells us that the piano for these concerts was a Steinway grand (Pauline Shaw Bayne, *The Gottfried Galston Music Collection and the Galston-Busoni Archive* (Knoxville, Tennessee: The University of Tennessee Library, 1978), p. 40). It is likely that these pianos had a *sostenuto* pedal.

⁴²⁰ This explains the exploration of its use in the Appendix: the transcriptions in which Busoni explores the pedal were written just prior to his stay in the United States, where he may have experienced extensively with the *sostenuto* pedal in these pieces. The first editions as well as the revisions of these transcriptions were mainly written when Busoni was in Europe.

⁴²¹ Banowetz, *The Pianist’s Guide to Pedaling*, p. 134.

possible in the bottom example, which results in what Busoni refers to as ‘tone-blendings’ in the final bars.⁴²²

Although these bars are to be interpreted in ‘full organ style’, the top solution is in my opinion more elegant and suitable for the occasion. In the final published edition, Busoni simply marks ‘*Ped.*’ at the start of bar 12, omitting entirely this effective use of the *sostenuto* pedal.⁴²³

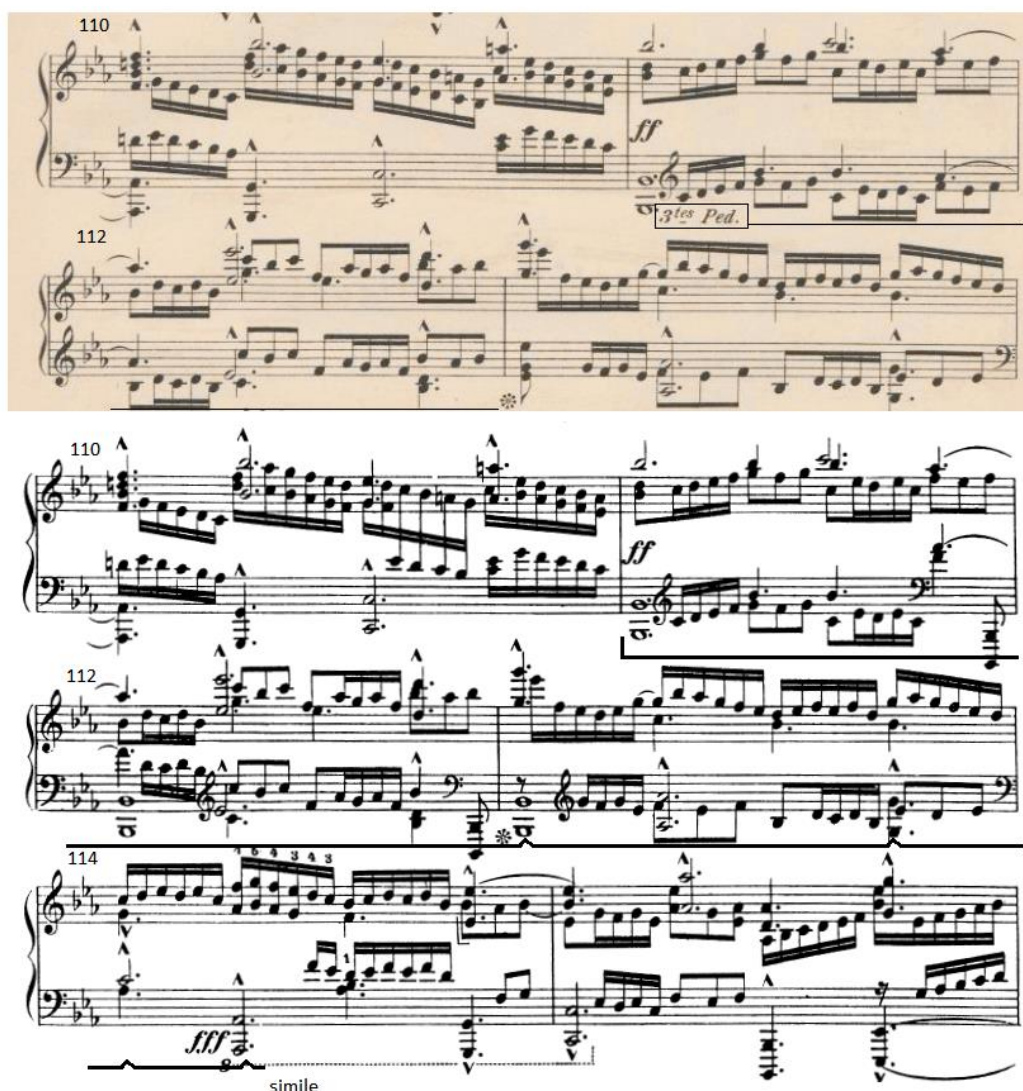
Example 2.5.11. Prelude in D major for organ (BWV 532, Busoni transcription), bars 10-15⁴²⁴

Example 2.5.12. Prelude in D major for organ (BWV 532, Busoni transcription), bars 12-14

⁴²² Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 176.

⁴²³ Henle's recent edition of this piece (eds. Christian Schaper and Ullrich Scheideler, HN 1376, 2019) also omits these *sostenuto* pedals, which is disappointing, as the editors do refer to some of Busoni's comments in his Appendix to the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier.

⁴²⁴ Examples 2.5.11–12 are printed in the Appendix to the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier (Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, pp. 176 (Example 2.5.12) and 179 (Example 2.5.11)).



Example 2.5.13. Fugue in E-flat major for organ (BWV 552, Busoni transcription), bars 110-115⁴²⁵

In the earlier version (top example) of Busoni's transcription of the Prelude and Fugue in E-flat major for organ (BWV 552), published by D. Rahter in Hamburg (c. 1890), a *sostenuto* pedal is marked on the final page below the B $\flat$, – B $\flat$ octave in bar 111. The indication of the *sostenuto*

⁴²⁵ I am aware of two different versions of this piece: the conventional version in the bottom example (as printed in the Dover reprint of an 'unidentified authoritative edition, n.d.') and an earlier version found in the *Nachlass Ferruccio Busoni* in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, which was published by D. Rahter in Hamburg (Mus.Nachl. F. Busoni A, 365,6). This score, which contains certain corrections by Busoni, can be found here: <https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN823403122> [accessed 26 August 2021]

Dover edition: Ferruccio Busoni, *Tocatta in D minor and the Other Bach Transcriptions for Solo Piano* (New York: Dover Publications, 1996).

pedal given in this version is (partly) missing in the Dover edition (bottom example), where the asterisk for the lifting of the pedal is given but the pedal itself is not marked.

It is possible that at a later stage Busoni found the *sostenuto* pedal unnecessary, as a solution for these bars is to take only the damper pedal from the first fortissimo octave (bar 111, at the same point where Busoni originally marked the *sostenuto* pedal). This damper pedal can be held throughout, only changing it quickly at the places indicated. This allows for a richer sound that approaches the full organ sound that Busoni is after in his transcriptions, and I find this to be the best way to produce the climactic effect required for this concluding passage.

79 *allarg.* Resolution and Coda
Resolution und Coda

82 *sostenuto* *ten.* *sempre forte* *e robustamente*

85 *Piu largo*

* A in sostenuto pedal (Banowetz)

Modernere Ausführung des Orgelpunktes:
Modern rendering of the organ-point:

Example 2.5.14. Fugue no. 20 in A minor, bars 79-87

Busoni's '[m]odern rendering' of the coda of the A minor Fugue requires quite a bit of rewriting that the pianist may not agree with, including the consistent replaying of the A in the bass.

Banowetz suggests silently taking the A on the rest after the fermata in bar 80 (marked by the asterisk), and to hold this A in the *sostenuto* pedal until the end of the piece.⁴²⁶ I would instead propose the use of the *sostenuto* pedal in bar 83 (marked by the bracket), just after playing the a; on pianos with a fast decay playing the (tied) A in bar 86 ensures it will sound until the end of the Fugue.⁴²⁷

While Banowetz's solution as marked in Example 2.5.14 achieves the same musical effect as my proposed pedal, the setup for the effect during a silence is something that the pianist may disagree with.⁴²⁸ The use of the *sostenuto* pedal in bar 83 marks the pedal point in the same manner without disturbing the visual effect of the performance as much and without having to rewrite the passage as Busoni has done.⁴²⁹

Pedal indications by Busoni's peers

Petri considered the pedals to be indispensable in the interpretation of Bach's works on the modern instrument, arguing that the *una corda* finds its origin in the harpsichord's buff stop. He further writes that his pedal indications can be no more than suggestions; the 'delicate sensibility of the ear can be the only judge'.⁴³⁰ Petri makes no mention of the *sostenuto* pedal in his preface.⁴³¹ Throughout his editions, the pedals are richly marked in a variety of ways; they are certainly marked with a much greater regularity than Busoni ever did, and are likely more indicative of Petri's own taste regarding pedal use.

Casella writes that the pedal 'in many cases [...] when used with great skill and ease may be extremely useful, especially in the case of preludes'.⁴³² He further mentions that the pedal is however the 'worst enemy of polyphony' and must be used with extreme caution in the Fugues.⁴³³ Casella finally observes that it 'has not been possible for me to give useful

⁴²⁶ Banowetz, *The Pianist's Guide to Pedaling*, p. 129.

⁴²⁷ As an alternative Banowetz suggests using the *sostenuto* pedal on the a on the fourth beat of bar 83 (i.e., just before where I mark it); however, this leads to an octave pedal point in the bass rather than a single-note pedal point (Banowetz, *The Pianist's Guide to Pedaling*, p. 129–30). I do not find this *sostenuto* use as effective as this a is repeated quite often and overpowers the counterpoint; slightly delaying Banowetz's alternative pedal, as marked in Example 2.5.14, is in my opinion a better solution.

⁴²⁸ Not only in a visual sense; the act of silently depressing keys on an unfamiliar piano has the added risk of causing accidental sounding notes, which would certainly spoil this moment.

⁴²⁹ Bartók and Casella also rewrite this passage; in Bartók's case, pedal is marked, while in Casella's case it is unmarked, though I believe its use is implied.

⁴³⁰ Petri, ed., *Französische Suiten*, p. X.

⁴³¹ Even in England, where Petri taught in Manchester, he would have had limited access to pianos with three pedals: 'it is to be deplored that in this country we seldom find [the middle pedal], except on the Steinway Grands [...] I wish it were a usual fitting' (York Bowen, *Pedalling the Modern Pianoforte* (London: Oxford University Press, 1936), p. 28).

⁴³² Casella and Piccioli, eds. *Il clavicembalo ben temperato*, Preface.

⁴³³ Casella and Piccioli, eds., *Il clavicembalo ben temperato*, Preface.

indications regarding the use of the pedal and I have left every initiative in this field to the teacher and to the pupil'.⁴³⁴ Indeed, he speaks of pedal use very rarely in his edition of the Well-tempered Clavier. An exception is found in the Fugue in B major, where Casella writes that the pedal, 'used very carefully and delicately, will be of great use'.⁴³⁵ The *una corda* or *sostenuto* pedals are, to my knowledge, never marked by Casella.

Like Petri, Bartók marked damper pedal use in his edition with great precision; his markings are similar to Busoni's and Petri's. Occasionally, Bartók adds a longer stem to the pedal brace; Somfai notes that this may be inspired by Busoni's edition of the Prelude in C major.⁴³⁶ While prevalent in some of the earlier pieces in his edition, pedal markings become notably more sporadic later on; in the Appendix, Bartók notes that 'only the more important pedal actions can be notated in the music text; the pedal work for the *molto legato*, and the use of the pedal for linking, is at the performer's discretion'.⁴³⁷ A remarkable difference in Bartók's conception compared to that by Busoni and Casella may be found in the Prelude in D minor, which is heavily pedalled by Bartók, while Busoni only marks it sporadically for short stretches; both Busoni and Casella mark the piece (*quasi*) *staccato*, while Bartók's marking is *molto legato*, *quasi legatissimo*. Again, the *una corda* or *sostenuto* pedals are, to my knowledge, not marked by Bartók.

This section would be incomplete without briefly mentioning the advances in pedal markings by Percy Grainger (1882-1961), who studied with Busoni for a short time. An article by Knyt shows pedal markings in Grainger's copy of the Bach-Busoni *Organ Chorale Preludes* which Grainger studied with Busoni himself in Berlin in 1903.⁴³⁸ It is possible that these markings reflect Busoni's own practice in pedaling this piece:

⁴³⁴ Casella and Piccioli, eds. *Il clavicembalo ben temperato*, Preface.

⁴³⁵ Casella and Piccioli, eds. *Il clavicembalo ben temperato*, p. 136.

⁴³⁶ Bartók, ed., *The Well-Tempered Clavier (Vols. I–II)*, p. 146. In this piece Busoni specifies exactly where to lift the pedal by drawing a dotted line at the asterisk, while Bartók's braced markings clearly mark the point where the pedal is to be taken (see also Example 2.5.17 of Busoni's practice).

⁴³⁷ Bartók, ed., *The Well-Tempered Clavier (Vols. I–II)*, p. 134.

⁴³⁸ Erinn E. Knyt, 'From Bach-Busoni to Bach-Grainger: Adaptation as Composition', *Musicology Australia*, 39 (2017), 29-45 (p. 34).



Example 2.5.15. Pedal indications by Grainger in Bach-Busoni *Organ Chorale Prelude* ‘Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme’⁴³⁹

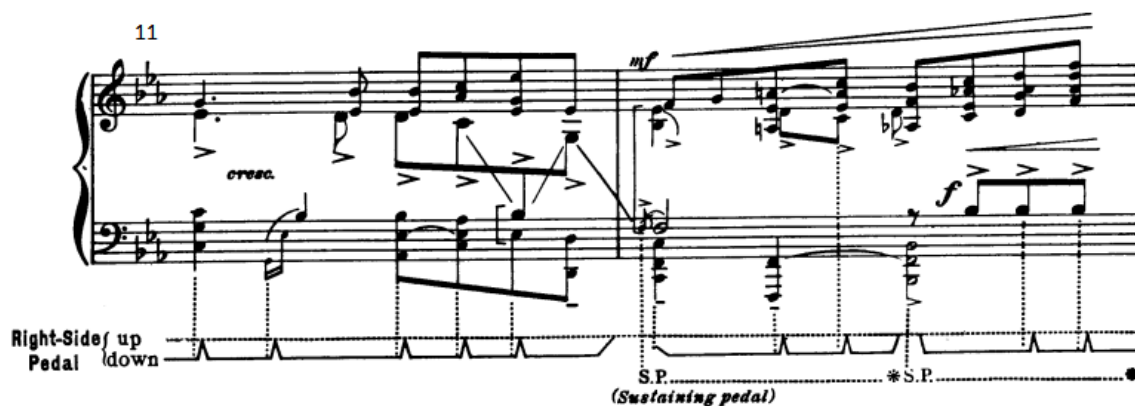
It is clear from Example 2.5.15 that the pedal is used in a discreet way to avoid including the passing notes and suspensions in the pedal.

Grainger developed a style of notation which is incredibly detailed: musical indications, including pedal use, are consistently marked with great precision. An example of his pedal notation may be found in his *Irish Tune from County Derry* (1911) which shows a vertical dotted line clarifying exactly where to take and release the pedals.⁴⁴⁰ Note also how the *legatissimo* pedaling is marked exactly as it would be done physically: the pedal is changed after the notes are played rather than with the notes.⁴⁴¹ The additional horizontal line above the pedal markings indicates the resting position of the pedal, and could thus simultaneously be used to show instances of half-pedaling:

⁴³⁹ Knyt, ‘From Bach-Busoni to Bach-Grainger’, p. 34.

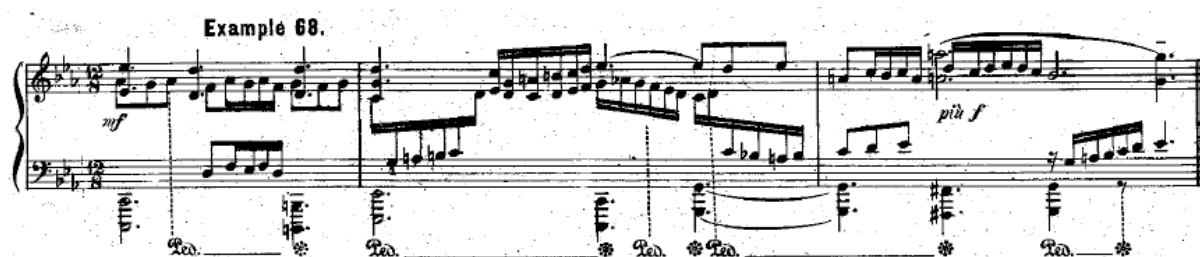
⁴⁴⁰ Compare these dotted lines with the vertical lines in Example 2.5.15 which may have stemmed from Busoni.

⁴⁴¹ Banowetz, *The Pianist’s Guide to Pedaling*, pp. 17–18.



Example 2.5.16. *Sostenuto* and damper pedal markings in Grainger's *Irish Tune from County Derry*⁴⁴²

It is very possible that Grainger adapted this notation from Busoni's own examples in the *Well-tempered Clavier*. Besides the pedal markings in the C major Prelude that may have inspired Bartók, in the Appendix Busoni gives this following example of pedaling in the transcription of the Prelude and Fugue in E-flat major, BWV 552. Similar to Example 2.5.15 from the Bach-Busoni *Organ Chorale Prelude*, in Example 2.5.17 Busoni clearly avoids the inclusion of passing notes in the pedal, thereby deftly navigating the dense polyphony:



Example 2.5.17. Example of Busoni's detailed pedal markings in the Appendix to the *Well-tempered Clavier*⁴⁴³

⁴⁴² Percy Grainger, *Irish Tune from County Derry*, in *Percy Grainger Centennial Album* (New York: G. Schirmer, 1982), p. 113.

⁴⁴³ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 176.

2.6. Tempo, mood, and expression

In this chapter I will comment on some of Busoni's tempi, the lack of metronome markings in his editions, and how his tempo indications function as part of his musical conception. Brief consideration will be given to similar approaches in Bach editions by Busoni's peers and successors.

Although Busoni's footnotes are in German, throughout the musical text most of his indications are in his native Italian. Some of these markings are quite evocative and require proper interpretation as they may give clues to understanding Busoni's conception of a section or a complete piece.

Tempo markings by Busoni and other editors

3. Markings of Tempo. NB. The Italian and English terms are not intended to supplant, but rather to supplement and complete each other, since the Italian expression are frequently formal and conventional and therefore not sufficient to represent subtleties of shading, the English ones,—on the other hand,—not sufficiently definite to convey a fixed and certain meaning, as for example, *Allegro*, *Andante* etc.

Example 2.6.1. Preface to Busoni's edition of the Inventions and Sinfonias

In Tables 2.6.1–3 in the Appendix to this section I have collected all of Busoni's primary tempo indications as well as secondary indications (descriptions or footnotes that accompany the primary indications). Busoni's tempo indications are generally on the faster side (*Allegro* or faster) in the Inventions; tempo markings are more balanced in the Sinfonias and the Well-tempered Clavier.⁴⁴⁴

In his edition of the Inventions and Sinfonias Busoni keeps to general musical tradition: tempo markings are all in Italian, with secondary German indications (English is given in the Schirmer translation) intended to supplement the 'formal and conventional [Italian]'. In this regard they are similar to Beethoven's later tempo indications, for example those found in the Piano Sonata op. 101.⁴⁴⁵

Though Busoni still uses German markings in the Inventions and Sinfonias, in the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier his musical indications are mainly in Italian: only in the

⁴⁴⁴ In the Inventions, only two pieces are marked *Moderato*; in the Sinfonias, nine are slower than *Allegretto*; in the Well-tempered Clavier, 25 pieces are given a slower marking than *Allegretto*.

⁴⁴⁵ Tempo markings of Beethoven's Piano Sonata op. 101:

Etwas lebhaft und mit der innigsten Empfindung (*Allegretto ma non troppo*)

Lebhaft. Marschmäßig (*Vivace alla marcia*)

Langsam und sehnsuchtsvoll (*Adagio, ma non troppo, con affetto*)

Geschwind, doch nicht zu sehr, und mit Entschlossenheit (*Allegro*)

Preludes and Fugues in A-flat major, A minor, and B-flat major does Busoni occasionally use German instead of Italian.⁴⁴⁶

A notable feature of Busoni's editions is the complete lack of any metronome markings: to my knowledge, the only metronome marking by Busoni in an original Bach piece is found in the *recitativo* of the *Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue* (BWV 903) where Busoni marks an approximate tempo marking of quaver = 72:



Example 2.6.2. Metronome marking in Busoni's edition of the *Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue* (BWV 903)

It is rather remarkable that Busoni chose not to give any metronome markings in almost his entire output despite the profuse detail included in his editions.⁴⁴⁷ Clues as to why they are omitted may be found in the Preface to Petri's edition of the French Suites (emphasis mine):

[T]he determination of the tempo is essentially a matter of musical feeling, and the opinions as to the time in which a piece should be played, will differ according to the temperament, the mood of the moment, the manner of playing, and so on. **Metronome indications have therefore little value; the Editor has nevertheless made use of them, for the simple reason that no other method of mutual understanding exists.** They are to be considered only as guides, approximate time-measurements; an exact performance, a mathematically precise playing of a piece according to the metronome indications is not intended. Tempo should never be a strait-jacket into which Music is forced, but rather a garment which yields to her form and contours, leaving her every freedom of movement and expression.⁴⁴⁸

⁴⁴⁶ These are all part of the third *Heft* (Part). The footnotes throughout the Well-tempered Clavier are in German.

⁴⁴⁷ This is not limited to just his editions: one of the only metronome markings by Busoni in his own original works can be found in the *Giga, Bolero e Variazione* from the *An die Jugend* collection (BV 254, 1909). I have not come across any secondary sources which discuss Busoni's lack of metronome markings, so it is very much possible that Busoni left more metronome markings than I am aware of.

⁴⁴⁸ Petri, ed., *Französische Suiten*, p. IX.

Busoni's own Appendix to the Well-tempered Clavier includes the following remark on the interpretation of his transcriptions of organ works: 'a certain elasticity of tempo, when applied on a large scale, lends to the interpretation that trait of freedom which characterizes every artistic performance;— for instance, Bach's organ-fantasias ought not to be played from beginning to end with stiff metronomic precision'.⁴⁴⁹ Perhaps for these reasons Busoni preferred matters of tempo to remain slightly ambiguous and indeed interpretable.⁴⁵⁰

Dykstra's study shows that of fourteen selected editions, only six used metronome markings.⁴⁵¹ He further notes that the tempo range for a 'given prelude and fugue is nearly always narrow [less than 16 MM difference between the slowest and fastest tempi] or moderate [16-30 MM difference between the slowest and fastest tempi]'.⁴⁵² Thus it may be said that similar tempo markings between interpretative editions are not too surprising. Occasionally, the selected editions even mark the same mood: in the Prelude in E major, five out of fourteen editions studied by Dykstra mark the piece *pastorale*.⁴⁵³

Busoni's use of tempo and mood indications influenced Casella, whose own markings and commentaries are similar to Busoni's on several occasions: '[t]he « tempos » of this edition nearly always coincide with those of Riemann and Busoni'.⁴⁵⁴ In Casella's case, a separate editor (his student Piccioli) later added metronome markings to supplement the original Italian tempo markings. Bartók's metronome markings were only slightly changed or corrected between the first edition and its revision: furthermore, Somfai notes that Bartók may have realised that 'small variations of tempo, which he found natural, had to be written out for the pupils'.⁴⁵⁵ None of Bartók's unique time duration markings may be found in his edition of the Well-tempered Clavier as these were a later development by Bartók.⁴⁵⁶

Busoni and other editors most certainly meant their tempo indications to evoke a particular feeling in the player, whose responsibility it is to capture this in their performance.

⁴⁴⁹ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 181.

⁴⁵⁰ We now know that composers who Busoni was close to, such as Brahms, later retracted their metronome markings; Brahms reportedly said that in his *German Requiem* (and in 'all other music') the 'metronome is of no value' (Bernard D. Sherman, 'Tempos and proportions in Brahms: period evidence', *Early Music*, XXV:3 (1997), 463–478 (p. 463)).

⁴⁵¹ Dykstra, 'The Interpretation of Bach's Well-tempered Clavier', p. iv. Metronome markings are given in the editions by Czerny (1837), Bischoff (c. 1880-8), Röntgen (c. 1900), Mugellini (1908), Bartók (1908-13), and Hughes (1924).

⁴⁵² Dykstra, 'The Interpretation of Bach's Well-tempered Clavier', p. 457.

⁴⁵³ Dykstra, 'The Interpretation of Bach's Well-tempered Clavier', p. 191. Besides Busoni's edition, *pastorale* is marked in editions by Bartók, Casella, d'Albert, and Risler; Mugellini and Bischoff mark *piacevole*.

⁴⁵⁴ Casella, *Il clavicembalo ben temperato*, Preface. Perhaps the most striking similarity may be found in the Prelude in G minor where Busoni marks *senza troppo espressione*; Casella also maintains that this Prelude is to be played 'almost inexpressively' (Dykstra, 'The Interpretation of Bach's Well-tempered Clavier', pp. 310–11).

⁴⁵⁵ Bartók, ed., *The Well-Tempered Clavier (Vols. I–II)*, p. 147.

⁴⁵⁶ Vinton, 'Hints to the Printers from Bartók', pp. 227–28.

In the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier, Busoni includes more descriptive words that he considers to be relevant to the conception of the pieces: examples of these are the *severo* of the Fugue in F-sharp minor or the *religioso* of the Prelude in B minor. In the Fugue in F-sharp major (marked Allegretto *piacevole e scherzoso*) Busoni marks how the *piacevole* and *scherzoso* markings are ‘divided, in their application to the Exposition and the first episode; but are united, from the second part onward, in a continuous contrasting play’.⁴⁵⁷ In the Fugue in F-sharp minor (marked *Sostenuto e severo, ma piuttosto Andante*), Busoni writes in a footnote how ‘*Sostenuto* (sustained) refers to the tempo; *severo* (severe, rigorous), to the expression; *piuttosto Andante* indicates, that the movement must by no means drag’.⁴⁵⁸ To describe the expression of the Andantino of the Prelude in G-sharp minor, Busoni uses the word *lusingando* (coaxing).

This use of such descriptive words is also a feature of the editions by Bartók and Casella. The editors often find themselves in agreement on the character of pieces throughout the First Book: for instance, the Prelude in C minor is marked *impetuoso* (Busoni marks *con fuoco*); the Fugue in C-sharp major is marked *grazioso* (Busoni does not give a descriptive marking); the Fugue in E-flat major is marked *grazioso* by Busoni and Bartók, while Casella marks *con grazia*.⁴⁵⁹ Fischer generally sticks to more traditional tempo markings, though occasionally indicates character as well with (German) terms such as ‘ruhig, ernst’ (calm, earnest) or ‘pastorale’.⁴⁶⁰ Petri too occasionally gives (elaborate) character markings in Busoni’s style as subtext to his Italian tempo markings, most commonly in German (with Italian translations).

⁴⁵⁷ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 79.

⁴⁵⁸ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 83.

⁴⁵⁹ Busoni edition of the E-flat major Fugue was included in his edition of the Second Book as he exchanged these Fugues. Busoni’s descriptive marking thus dates from after Bartók’s own edition.

⁴⁶⁰ Fischer, ed., *Dreistimmige Inventionen*, pp. 12, 16.

Expression markings

Though the instructive parts of Busoni's editions (footnotes, technical exercises, etc.) are in German, the musical indications are largely in Italian. I have included a few of the more interesting indications by Busoni in the examples below; I have also attempted to clarify some of these markings and how their understanding may help the reader to attain the sound or execution Busoni is looking for.⁴⁶¹



Example 2.6.3. Sinfonia no. 14 in B-flat major, bars 22-24

Incalzando (urging, pressing), here paired with the *più crescendo* marking, would mean that the pianist must play this passage in a pressing manner, similar to a *stringendo*; it may possibly even refer to a pressing interplay of the two parts in the right hand in bar 22.



Example 2.6.4. Prelude no. 5 in D major, bars 1-4

The indication *scorrevole* (flowing) also appears in other places as *scorrevolmente* or *scorrendo*.⁴⁶² *Granulato* (granular, grainy) is associated with the expected non legato touch in this Prelude; the separated notes representing not the smoothness of overly legato piano-playing, but rather a grittier surface.

⁴⁶¹ I am thankful to my Italian friends and colleagues at Guildhall for their help with the translation of Busoni's markings. I am also indebted to Alessandro Timossi for his assistance with the interpretation of these indications.

⁴⁶² *Scorrevolmente* appears in the Fugue in A major, bars 23 and 26; *scorrendo* in the Prelude in B major, bar 1; *scorrevole* in the Fugue in E major, bar 13.



Example 2.6.5. Fugue no. 13 in F-sharp major, bars 10-12

Piccanteria (spiciness) refers to the countersubject played by the left hand; it may be expressed through playing the left-hand part in a marked, lively manner, with its features (especially the semiquavers marked with staccato dots as well as dashes) pronounced; this element of *con gusto* is in contrast to the *dolce* in the right hand.



Example 2.6.6. Prelude no. 22 in B-flat minor, bars 1-2

Raccoglimento may be interpreted as introspective (in a concentrated sense, focusing on oneself); *flebile* means faint. These markings may be performed through the use of an intense, concentrated piano sound; the *mistico* in the tempo marking may be further reflected in the *flebile*, which might urge the player to play in a manner that is not too pronounced.



Example 2.6.7. Prelude no. 22 in B-flat minor, bars 19-20

Velato (veiled) could imply that the contours are less pronounced, or that the sound is to be slightly subdued. Perhaps this indication could warrant the use of the *una corda* pedal, which would give this passage the ‘peculiar quality of tone’ Busoni associated with this pedal.⁴⁶³

Modelled after Busoni’s editorial style, it is unsurprising that similar expression markings can be found regularly in the editions by Petri. Less original than his teacher, Petri marks such indications as *amabile* (tender, gentle) and *umoristico* of which it is unclear whether they suggest a different expression than their synonyms *dolce* and *scherzoso*. On the other hand, Bartók and Casella are markedly less adventurous in their use of expression markings: most are part of the common musical lexicon which makes their interpretation more obvious and accessible. Perhaps the most suggestive expression markings by Casella are *incolore* and *misterioso* relating to tone colour and mood.⁴⁶⁴

⁴⁶³ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 177.

⁴⁶⁴ Among other places in Casella’s editions, *incolore* is marked in the Fugue in E-flat minor while *misterioso* is marked in the Prelude in C-sharp minor and the Fugue in B-flat minor.

2.7. Interdependence of performance directions and tempo flexibility

In Busoni's conception of Bach, performance directions are interdependent: for example, depending on the tempo of a particular piece or phrase, as the overall dynamic increases, Busoni may increase the separation between the notes or prescribe a heavier touch. The belief that every finger has a particular quality, as well as how groups of fingers may work together to achieve a special kind of touch, finds continuous application throughout Busoni's editions. In some cases, by studying Busoni's special fingerings, some of which are difficult to use at a faster tempo, one may be able to find an appropriate tempo. As Busoni almost never gives metronome markings, this may be one of the best ways to approximate a possible range for Busoni's tempi.

Now that indications have been discussed separately at length, this section will aim to further clarify some connections where these may have seemed out of place before. In the first subsection, I will reinforce the idea that musical indications are indeed connected through the analysis of some examples from the Well-tempered Clavier. In these examples I will highlight the explicit interdependence of dynamics and articulation.

One consistent and ubiquitous aspect of Busoni's editions is the use of tempo flexibility at formal divisions and cadences. Various examples where Busoni marks explicit slowing down or speeding up will be analysed in this part; on top of that, I will discuss some examples where Busoni urges the player not to adjust the tempo at all. Sometimes, tempo manipulation may be suggested by any musical indication, such as a repeated fingering or a change in articulation: in the final subsection I will consider some examples of possible tempo flexibility that may be implied not only by the formal divisions but also by other contextual indications. While it is possible that in Busoni's time any musical indication or transition between divisions could suggest a sense of tempo flexibility, as we can also see such occasions marked and commented on by Bartók, the knowledge gained in the previous sections allows me to link various performance directions together to approach a convincing interpretation of Busoni's markings.

I repeat here the Appendix given by Busoni after the Prelude and Fugue in G minor, which is important to understand Busoni's markings of divisions in the musical form seen in this section:

Finally, we omitted to remark, that the different forms of Bars used to mark divisions in the form have the following significations:

Close of any Part:	Division in a Part:	Sections or Periods important to indicate:	or:	Close, or End:
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Example 2.7.1. Appendix to Part Two (nos. 9-16) of the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier⁴⁶⁵

- A close of any (formal) part is marked by an extended double bar.
- A further division in form (for example, between the first *stretto* and a narrower second *stretto*) is marked by a double bar line that is not extended between systems.
- Sections or periods that are otherwise important to indicate are marked with a single bar line that is not extended between systems, or a double bar line that stops halfway through a system (this may also appear slanted instead of straight).
- The end of the piece is always marked with the conventional double bar line that is extended between systems.

⁴⁶⁵ As mentioned in section 1.3, this edition was originally published in four separate parts (Preludes and Fugues 1-8/9-16/17-24/Appendices).

Interdependence of dynamics and articulation



Example 2.7.2. Prelude no. 20 in A minor, bars 16-21

The link between dynamics and touch is evident in Example 2.7.2. In the *più piano* bars, as the dynamic level increases (as indicated by the hairpins), the repeated notes in the left hand become more detached.

The opening of the Prelude in F-sharp minor (Example 2.7.3 below), an *Allegro con spirito*, is marked *decisamente*, *poco legato*. The theme is marked with accents and staccato dots over the first semiquaver. In the second line (bar 4), the semiquaver figuration is marked with *staccatissimo* wedges on the first note of each group of four. The detached articulation can also be seen in the left-hand fingering, where Busoni marks the repetition of the thumb in bar 5. At the first division (bar 12) Busoni marks *meno forte*: not only are the accents and staccato dots over the theme omitted, but the semiquaver figure is also marked with tenuto dashes rather than *staccatissimo* wedges, which suggests a slightly less detached articulation in this quieter dynamic.

1

fdecisamente, poco legato ¹⁾

4

10

meno *f*

13

poco

1) In contradistinction to “un poco legato” (somewhat connected), this “poco legato” is to be conceived negatively, in the sense of “slightly (hardly) connected”. Play, therefore, a trifle more smoothly than an absolute “non legato”.

Example 2.7.3. Prelude no. 14 in F-sharp minor, bars 1-6 (top) and 10-15 (bottom)

1

non f

quasi stacc.

quasi stacc. 1)

poco legato

quasi f

pesante

fz

largamente fs

f pesante

37

Example 2.7.4. Fugue no. 18 in G-sharp minor, bars 1-4 (top) and 37-41 (bottom)

The theme in Example 2.7.4 initially contains both a short slur as well as a quasi staccato indication over the last five quavers in a non forte dynamic. In the final bars of the piece, where a (quasi) forte dynamic is reached, the short slur is omitted. Furthermore, it appears the *pesante* is expressed by the heavier tenuto dashes which replace the quasi staccato slurs and staccato dots.

1

*Wichtig, sehr gehalten,
Pesante e ben tenuto, ma non legato*

f

24

30

meno f e più legato

T ten.

36

dim.

41

*dolce,
tranquillo e tutto legato*

Example 2.7.5. Fugue no. 7 in E-flat major, bars 1-7 (top), 24-34 (middle), and 41-49 (bottom)

This Fugue (Example 2.7.5) opens forte, *pesante e ben tenuto, ma non legato*; at the first division Busoni (bars 29-30) marks *meno forte e più legato*. At the next division, marked by the double bar in the bottom example (bar 40), Busoni marks diminuendo before *dolce, tranquillo e tutto legato* is given. The continuous decrease in dynamics is clearly accompanied by a constant increase in legato touch.

Tempo flexibility

“Elegant” nuances, such as a sentimental swell of the phrases, a coquettish hastening and retarding, excessively light staccato, over-flexible legato, over-employment of the pedal, and the like, are bad habits wherever they occur; in Bach-playing, they are offensive mistakes. On the other hand, a certain elasticity in the tempo, when applied on a large scale, lends to the interpretation that trait of freedom which characterizes every artistic performance;— for instance, Bach’s organ-fantasias ought not to be played from beginning to end with stiff metronomic precision.

Example 2.7.6. Section 5 on Interpretation from the Appendix to the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier⁴⁶⁶

Before discussing tempo flexibility at divisions in the musical form, I will look at Busoni’s explicit tempo indications at the endings of pieces. Busoni gives these markings in approximately a third of the pieces in his editions. In slightly more than half of these cases, he urges the player not to slow down in the final bars, believing it to be unnecessary or out of place. The same is the case in Bartók’s edition, where ‘[a]t the end of a few of the preludes and fugues, especially the less grandiose ones, no *ritardando* should be played because it would be inappropriate’.⁴⁶⁷ This is generally indicated in the following ways:

Non rallentare

Non ritenuto

In tempo

Deciso

(Più) risoluto

On occasions where Busoni advises the player to (gradually) slow down towards the closing bar, it is usually marked in one of the following ways:

Sostenuto

Ritenuto

Rallentando

Slentando

Allargando

Più lento

Largamente

Dykstra notes that performers (including Tureck, Gould, Kirkpatrick, Landowska, and Demus) ‘nearly always observe at least a slight ritard’ even when this ritard is unmarked in any of the studied editions; however, the performers also generally start their *ritardando* later than

⁴⁶⁶ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 181.

⁴⁶⁷ Bartók, ed., *The Well-Tempered Clavier (Vols. I–II)*, p. 134.

indicated in most editions.⁴⁶⁸ What sets Busoni apart from most other editors is that he occasionally explicitly marks no slowing down where others may simply not mark anything: this occurs, for instance, in the final bars of the Prelude in C-sharp major and the Fugue in E major. In both cases, only Bartók and Casella mark the ending similarly to Busoni, with Casella in the former case writing that in ‘many of Bach’s « *allegros* » [...] the drawing out of the last cadence is unsuitable’.⁴⁶⁹ Busoni further marks *non rallentare* in the Invention in C major, arguing that the ‘key is so firmly established in the third measure before the end that a retarding of the tempo in the penultimate measure – wherein the directly-following end is clearly foreshadowed – is made unnecessary’.⁴⁷⁰ Casella’s silent copying of this indication in his edition of the Inventions appears to be more than a coincidence.

20

5) The editor recommends to push on towards the end energetically, without any retarding of tempo. Those players who are not able to help themselves without recourse to the old-fashioned Bach *Allargando* may, according to their taste, use these embellishments from the autograph composition.

allargando

Example 2.7.7. Invention no. 12 in A major, bars 20-21

Two interesting endings may be found in the Invention in A major (Example 2.7.7 above) and the Prelude in E minor (Example 2.7.8 below). The suggestion that an *allargando* at the end of a lively piece such as this Invention is ‘old-fashioned’ perhaps explains in part why Busoni does not often mark slowing down at the final bars.⁴⁷¹ Casella simply marks *senza ritardando* in his edition.

⁴⁶⁸ Dykstra, ‘The Interpretation of Bach’s Well-tempered Clavier’, p. 460.

⁴⁶⁹ Casella and Piccioli, eds., *Il clavicembalo ben temperato*, p. 21.

⁴⁷⁰ Busoni, ed., *Two and Three Part Inventions*, p. 3.

⁴⁷¹ Busoni, ed., *Two and Three Part Inventions*, p. 25. Busoni likely encountered these embellishments in Bischoff’s edition for Steingraber (c. 1880). They are not marked in Bach’s own manuscript or in the *Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe*. Bischoff must have encountered the ornamentation in the manuscript by Bernhard Christian Kayser, which can be found in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (D-B Mus.ms. Bach P 219); to my knowledge, this is the only source that prints the turn and trill.

In the Prelude in E minor Busoni recommends that the player either plays the final bar strictly in time, or that the pianist doubles the note values to ‘possibly gain not inconsiderably in firmness’; slowing down ‘in the shape of an indefinite “Allargando”’ is heavily discouraged.⁴⁷² Casella marks *senza rall.*, with his *deciso* marked in bar 40 instead; Bartók marks *non rit.*

“ 5) By a doubling of the note-values in the closing measure, the Cadence would lose nothing in energy, and might possibly gain not inconsiderably in firmness:

let the player decide, whether this form is not more congenial to his rhythmico-symmetric sense, than the original one, and choose accordingly. No compromise (in the shape of an indefinite “Allargando”) is permissible. In either case, the tempo must be strictly observed.

Example 2.7.8. Prelude no. 10 in E minor, bars 39-41

Examples of (un)written tempo flexibility by Busoni and successors

As we will discover in Chapter 3, Busoni tends to slow down at significant formal moments such as divisions in a *stretto*. While this does not happen at all formal divisions, and while it is not always explicitly marked, it is sometimes apparent in other pieces that Busoni expects the player to perform these tempo changes. Bartók agrees with Busoni in this regard, writing in the Appendix to his edition that ‘[a]t the end of the individual sections there is often a very emphatic cadence. At most times, these should be accented with a moderate, sometimes barely perceptible degree of *ritardando*’.⁴⁷³ Brookshire has commented that while Fischer ‘should probably be counted as among the Bach-pianists who most severely restricted tempo rubato in performances of Bach by comparison with the practice of other Bach performers of the early twentieth century’, Fischer’s recording of the Well-tempered Clavier (1930s) still features ‘occasional shifts in tempo in order to set up an entire segment of a piece apart from that which surrounds it [...] Fischer does shift tempo significantly for the sake of structural elucidation’.⁴⁷⁴ Though such flexibility is not commented on explicitly by Casella, expression markings at structural moments suggest that it was still an aspect of his playing, perhaps in a milder form.

⁴⁷² Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 61.

⁴⁷³ Bartók, ed., *The Well-Tempered Clavier (Vols. I–II)*, p. 134.

⁴⁷⁴ Brookshire, ‘Edwin Fischer and Bach Performance Practice of the Weimar Republic’, pp. 244–45.

This type of flexibility is so ubiquitous in Busoni's editions that it may be suggested that unless Busoni explicitly marks otherwise a degree of flexibility may be expected at certain cadences and other divisions in the form. Busoni marks it in the following ways:

(Poco) ritenuto/rallentando – a tempo

Sostenuto/slentando/allargando – a tempo

Sometimes, the a tempo indication is replaced by Tempo I (primo); on other occasions, a reference to an earlier tempo may be omitted, but appears to be implied by the bars that mark the division in parts.⁴⁷⁵

Examples of (un)written tempo flexibility also exist. I have included some examples below where I believe Busoni has either marked tempo flexibility in a slightly obscure way, or contextual information leads me to think that Busoni may have expected the player to manipulate the tempo.



Example 2.7.9. Prelude no. 13 in F-sharp major, bars 20-23

At this cadential point in Example 2.7.9 Busoni repeats the same finger for both the d#" as well as f#" (bar 23); a slight *ritenuto* – a tempo may be effectively used here where the closing hairpin is marked over the trill in bar 22. In these bars, Bartók marks *poco rit.* coinciding with the trill in bar 22 with the *a tempo* on the thematic figure in the top voice in bar 23; Casella does not mark anything beyond a *meno forte* in bar 23.

⁴⁷⁵ See Example 2.7.1.



Example 2.7.10. Prelude no. 18 in G-sharp minor, bars 22-29

It appears that a slight slowing of the tempo is written into the articulation of the semiquavers of the right hand on the first line of Example 2.7.10 (bar 25); the next bar is marked *largo e forte*. Perhaps after the division, where Busoni marks *meno forte*, the tempo may be retaken on the thematic statement in the left hand, before slowing down over the quavers of the inverted theme in the penultimate bar, as indicated by the *poco ritenuto*. A slight breath may be taken before the inverted statement of the theme in the penultimate bar as indicated by the comma at the end of bar 27.

11

più pieno e sostenuto

or: (execution) oder: (Ausführung)

13

p dolce

aumentando, ma sempre sostenuto

or: (execution) oder: (Ausführung)

16

poco a poco

diminuendo

19

più dim.

pp

velato

21

di nuovo cresc.

slargando

f (weich/pieno e tenero) voll u.

23

(Coda) ten.

brev!

largam.

sempre dim.

What now follows is, in a certain sense, a development with the motives of the theme; it continues through 7 measures, reaching its climax exactly in the middle of the fourth. From that point the line again falls, and is arrested before an organ-point on F, upon which the theme for the last time begins to ascend. Fermata, resolution, and coda are most intimately related with the G# minor Prelude... It is the extremely difficult task of the player, to hit the golden mean between severity and resignation in expression, and to invest this latter with the twilight of an unmaterial tone-color.

Example 2.7.11. Prelude no. 22 in B-flat minor, bars 11-25

This rich example from the Prelude in B-flat minor (Example 2.7.11) is full of possibilities for tempo flexibility. While *sostenuto* is marked before the first division in this example (bar 12), Busoni does not mark the expected *a tempo* after the division in bar 13. In bar 15, the indication *aumentando, ma sempre sostenuto* is given, before a *poco diminuendo*, followed by a *più diminuendo* before the *pianissimo* at the next division. According to Dykstra, though no *ritard* is marked in any edition he studied, performers (including Tureck, Landowska, and Gould) tend to slow down in this bar.⁴⁷⁶ Busoni's additional pedal marked at the *pianissimo* (bar 19) may indicate a slight resting point that should not be rushed over; I would slow down at the *più diminuendo* in bar 19, and use the *una corda* pedal at the *velato* marking.⁴⁷⁷

Di nuovo crescendo is marked in the next line at bar 21, before a *slargando* marking that prepares the chord marked with a fermata; I gradually release the *una corda* during this crescendo. Busoni marks *largamente* at the following cadence into the coda (in B-flat minor). No further slowing down is marked explicitly in the two bars of the coda, but a *sempre diminuendo* is given; in most other editions, a final *ritard* is explicitly marked, and Dykstra notes that performers do indeed slow down here.⁴⁷⁸

In the footnote, Busoni gives an analysis of the piece; he remarks on the 'extremely difficult task of the player, to hit the golden mean between severity and resignation in expression, and to invest this latter with the twilight of an unmaterial tone-color'. It appears to me that this resignation can convincingly be expressed by a certain flexibility in tempo, especially at the moments discussed above. Busoni additionally refers to the G-sharp minor Prelude, which was analysed in Example 2.7.10, where a similar flexibility in tempo was expected.

Suggestions for flexibility are much sparser in other editions. Of this piece, Casella writes that the 'interpretation of a masterpiece such as this can certainly not be illustrated in words'; besides a *poco allargando* leading to the fermata in bar 22, there are hardly any expressive markings found in his edition that may suggest tempo flexibility other than two *espressivo* indications in bars 10 and 12.⁴⁷⁹ Bartók marks *calando* in bar 12 (where Busoni marked *sostenuto*); *espressivo* is marked in bars 15 and 17, but his *allargando* is marked only after the fermata. The ending of the piece is marked *più largo* and an additional *ritard* is given in the final bar.

⁴⁷⁶ Dykstra, 'The Interpretation of Bach's Well-tempered Clavier', p. 412.

⁴⁷⁷ See Example 2.6.7 in the previous section on tempo, mood, and expression.

⁴⁷⁸ Dykstra, 'The Interpretation of Bach's Well-tempered Clavier', p. 412.

⁴⁷⁹ Casella, *Il clavicembalo ben temperato*, p. 130.

2.8. Reflections on *Reading Busoni*

Busoni's editions stimulated many editors of interpretative and critical editions until at least the 1950s. Interpretative editions by Busoni and editors that were inspired by him or close to him, such as Bartók, Casella, and Mugellini, were recommended or commissioned by important music institutions. As such, they had a profound impact on the establishment and development of piano performance traditions of these works in the twentieth century, both directly and indirectly. Busoni's influence on future generations was further propagated by his students from all over the world who went on to teach many of the greatest pianists and teachers of the twentieth century.

In *Reading Busoni* I have analysed Busoni's musical indications relating to slurring and articulation, fingering, ornamentation and embellishment, dynamics, pedal use, tempo, mood, and expression, and finally, tempo flexibility. Throughout this chapter, I placed Busoni's indications side-by-side with those by his peers and later editors. Busoni's inspiration is most clearly felt in the editions by fellow Italians, such as Casella and Mugellini, and his closest colleagues and students, such as Fischer and Petri. While this inspiration is often referenced explicitly, occasional examples show direct copying of indications or other musical ideas without reference to Busoni's editions. Petri and Fischer appear to have been influenced primarily by Busoni's teaching and performances though show vastly different approaches in their editorial style: while Petri is more interventionist, basing his style on Busoni's early editions, Fischer's editions are more sober and reflective of Busoni's mature editing style.

Pianist-composers Bartók and Grainger further developed some of the notational devices found in Busoni's editions, aiming for greater clarity in the transmission of their ideas and the understanding of the musical structure. Despite their personal associations with Busoni they adopted a more individual approach to conveying their musical ideas. Though similarities in approaches exist between their editions, and despite it being highly likely that Bartók consulted Busoni's editions and may even have discussed Bach with Busoni in their meetings, explicit reference to Busoni is not made in Bartók's edition.

The most explicit aesthetic similarity between the editions by Busoni, Bartók, and Casella is the idea of Bach's keyboard works being somehow organ-like in character or conception. While Busoni makes certain distinctions between the organ and keyboard style in his Appendix to the Well-tempered Clavier, especially in terms of a dynamic approach, Casella speaks of a universal 'organ-like « legato »' in his Preface; Bartók considers it 'best to treat Bach's piano compositions as having been written for the organ [...] and to use this as a guide

when deciding on the mode of playing'.⁴⁸⁰ This partly led to the style presented in these editions: the addition of bass octaves at appropriate moments, use of varied articulations, eschewing of un-pianistic ornamentation and embellishments, augmented dynamic levels, use of the pedals, colouristic changes, and tempo flexibility. Though modelled after an imagined organ style or sound, their approaches are clearly pianistic in nature and bear certain similarities to earlier performance styles as well as those recorded during their lifetimes.

A consistent feature in Busoni's editions is the presence and use of footnotes and appendices. As mentioned in Chapter 1 of this thesis, this is not an original concept and can be traced back to, for example, the editions of Chopin (1880-85) by Kullak. While editors such as Bischoff used footnotes mainly to speak about variant readings and earlier versions of pieces, Busoni and his successors provide expansive footnotes and appendices in which they speak about important musical matters. Many of the annotations in these editions serve a specific pedagogical purpose. Some editors, such as Casella, Petri, and Fischer, use prose that is obviously inspired by Busoni or based on some of the aesthetic concepts explored in either his editions or his essays.

Many performers in Busoni's time used tempo flexibility in their playing. Like Busoni, the use of tempo flexibility for structural reasons is found in the editions and recordings by Bartók and Fischer. Though Casella does not comment explicitly on its use, his expressive markings at structural moments suggest that tempo flexibility was still an aspect of his playing style.

Busoni is most different from other performers and editors in his explicit preference for the non legato touch. In this regard he makes a significant departure from the almost universal legato style in Czerny's editions. Even in the editions by his closest colleagues, such as Petri and Fischer, non legato touch appears less frequently or is often tempered. While Casella writes that the legato touch 'predominates' in Bach, his touch and articulation indications closely match Busoni's on many occasions, though sometimes it is clear that he has slightly softened Busoni's touch or deviated from some of Busoni's characteristic associations between dynamics and touch.⁴⁸¹ Bartók's overall concept is generally based on a more legato style and is more similar to Czerny's edition in this matter.

Perhaps these differences between the editions by Busoni and his successors are reflective of a change in the accepted piano performance practice of Bach at specific times in

⁴⁸⁰ Casella and Piccioli, eds., *Il clavicembalo ben temperato*, Preface; Bartók, ed., *The Well-Tempered Clavier* (Vols. I-II), p. 133.

⁴⁸¹ Casella and Piccioli, eds. *Il clavicembalo ben temperato*, Preface.

the twentieth century. However, even if such shifts in aesthetics had taken place, as I have shown in this chapter many (tempered) Busonian ideas can in fact still be found in Casella's 1946 edition of the Well-tempered Clavier.

Knowledge base

In the following summary (or 'knowledge base'), all aspects of Busoni's aesthetics are presented in an unbiased way, without referring to other editors, making it useful not only to myself but also to readers who may then form their own opinions.⁴⁸² Where one aspect of Busoni's musical indications may be connected to another, I have tried to avoid mentioning it twice by listing it under the heading where it best fits. In this section, I have refrained from presenting examples; through sticking to the same ordering as in the second chapter, the reader may easily find application of the found aspects in the corresponding section.

Slurring and articulation

- The main use for slurs in Busoni's editions is to group material together. For this purpose, Busoni uses both the common curved line, as well as square brackets. Depending on the context in which it appears, it may be argued that the slur is also used to indicate a more legato touch. At times Busoni uses up to three slurs to indicate the main phrase and further sub-phrases.
 - In semiquaver passages, Busoni often groups semiquavers together in groups of four notes, placing the slur from the second semiquaver to the first semiquaver of the next beat.
 - Ornamentation, which is in most cases written out in Busoni's editions, is usually grouped under its own slur.
 - Later in a piece, after initially marking slurs, Busoni sometimes omits them, but may still indicate grouping by beaming certain notes differently from what is conventionally expected.
 - Busoni makes no difference between his own editorial slurs and those found in the manuscripts by J. S. Bach or those close to him.
 - Busoni is consistent in his phrasing. Where this is not the case, it is a marked difference from the norm. It is possible that some misprints are present in

⁴⁸² Job ter Haar uses the term 'knowledge base' to describe his 'schematic summary of the main results of the literature review and the analyses of the performance markings' in his PhD thesis on the playing style of Alfredo Piatti (Ter Haar, 'The Playing Style of Alfredo Piatti', pp. 4, 261).

Busoni's editions; in these cases, the slurring Busoni normally favours appears to be more convincing.

- Busoni considers the non legato touch to be 'in closest sympathy with the nature of the pianoforte'. In his editions, touch indications range from *staccatissimo* to overholding (*tenuto, quasi effetto di pedale*). Busoni often explicitly marks the required touch with written indications.
 - Busoni favours a legato touch for slower pieces, while preferring non legato and more detached touches for faster pieces.
 - Where the dynamic level of a passage increases, the touch generally changes, depending on the tempo of the piece or phrase. Following this, the style of touch (also in thematic statements) does not necessarily stay consistent throughout a piece.
- Small-scale articulation is marked with conventional indications: Busoni uses *staccatissimo* wedges, staccato dots, *marcato* wedges, tenuto dashes, common accents, *forzando* and *sforzato*, and long accents. These may be used in any combination (e.g., simultaneous staccato dots and tenuto dashes).
 - Busoni sometimes uses staccato dots to mark lines of importance.
 - Where short slurs are to be played with a detached touch, Busoni gives staccato dots over both notes grouped under the slur.
 - Staccato dots may be marked at the end of slurs to mark a clear start of a new phrase; in ties, the second note is sometimes marked staccato which may imply the physicality of an earlier release of the held note.

Fingering

- Busoni's fingerings are closely linked to his articulation and phrasing. The solutions to fingering problems in Busoni's editions are either technical or musical. Busoni's fingering further incorporates techniques by Chopin and Liszt as well as older techniques such as finger crossings.
 - Technically, Busoni's fingerings are efficient in terms of the movement of the hand and wrist. Parallel passages are usually given a consistent fingering. Occasionally, the passing under of the thumb and finger substitutions are avoided, while finger crossings and slides are recommended instead. Busoni sometimes uses the thumb or fifth finger on black keys where this may be considered unconventional. Busoni also proposes new systematic fingerings

for common musical elements such as trills, scales, repeated notes, and double notes.

- Musically, Busoni's fingerings are often related to phrasing and articulation. Passages may be played by a single finger, and certain fingerings may be associated with a particular touch. At times, Busoni's unconventional (repeated) fingerings may cause a break in phrasing that Busoni simultaneously asks for with slurs and articulation.

Ornamentation and embellishment

- In Busoni's editions, ornamentation is usually completely written out. While this gives a clear idea of how Busoni expected the embellishments to be played, it takes away certain artistic liberties from the player. Busoni rarely explicitly comments on the musical or expressive aspect of ornamentation and embellishment. The original notation of the ornament (in the form of a sign) is in most cases not given by Busoni. Busoni makes no difference between the marking of 'tr' and the wavy line in terms of starting note or number of shakes.
 - Whatever the chosen execution, Busoni considered it essential that the application of ornamentation is consistent throughout the piece, wherever possible. He urges the player to choose 'that form of the trill [...] which can be most faithfully retained even in the most intricate combinations'.⁴⁸³ Ornamentation may be omitted if it is problematic to perform, or if it blurs the musical line.
 - In diatonic descending lines, trills are always taken from the main note. After a downward leap or when the trill is approached in an ascending manner, trills may be marked from the upper auxiliary or the main note. Longer trills are usually started on the main note, but there are notable exceptions in the Fugues in G minor and B minor.
 - Busoni's mordents are consistent: starting on the main note, with a short shake to the lower auxiliary, before restriking the main note. At times, Busoni appears to have exchanged trills for mordents and vice versa.

⁴⁸³ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 79.

- Arpeggiation, while avoided in faster pieces, is marked by Busoni in slower pieces. Occasionally, arpeggiation is written out in a way that is different from what is conventionally expected.

Dynamics

- Busoni mostly links dynamic indications to individual parts. The theme is always brought out over countersubjects, but the difference between the two never exceeds two dynamic levels (for example, a piano countersubject and mezzo-forte theme).
 - Sudden dynamic shifts are commonplace in the Inventions and Sinfonias but occur less often in the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier. These dynamic shifts happen most commonly at formal divisions. In Busoni's transcriptions of organ works, *subito* dynamics may effectively imitate changes in registration.
 - Busoni uses a conventional range of dynamics in his editions (pianissimo to fortissimo). At times, Busoni uses suggestive dynamic markings such as *più piano* or *quasi forte*; their meaning depends on the context in which they are given.
- Like dynamic markings, hairpins are often linked to individual parts, and may be used as a gestural device to show the natural shape or phrasing of a part. Opening and closing hairpins may be marked at the same time as crescendo or diminuendo markings. Long accents, which resemble hairpins, are used to show important notes or voices. No conclusive evidence has been found that indicates that Busoni's hairpins may represent tempo flexibility; that tempo flexibility may occur at some of these moments is in line with Busoni's idea that 'a certain elasticity in the tempo, when applied on a large scale, lends to the interpretation that trait of freedom which characterizes every artistic performance'.⁴⁸⁴

Pedal use

- Busoni suggests the use of the damper pedal (right pedal) in the following situations:
 - If the pianist cannot physically sustain a note, the pedal may function as a 'substitute for a missing finger'.⁴⁸⁵

⁴⁸⁴ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 181.

⁴⁸⁵ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 176.

- The pedal may be used to allow overtones to ring through (especially in broken-chord figurations) for a richer sound. Additionally, the pedal may soften the sound or smooth over connections, especially in arpeggiated chords.
- In his transcriptions of organ works, Busoni further uses the pedal in the following ways:
- To imitate the sound of a ‘full organ’, the pedal is held through conventional dissonances.
 - The pedal may be used to help navigate dense polyphony.
 - The pedal can be used to prolong notes through the silent retaking of certain keys.
- The left pedal (*una corda*) may be used to obtain a ‘peculiar quality of tone’ and finds use in passages ranging from pianissimo to mezzo-forte; furthermore, Busoni writes that ‘the entrance of the organ-pedal-part in the exposition of a fugue may, as a rule, be advantageously supported by the soft pedal. The exposition as a whole, and also the episodes, are usually benefitted by the soft pedal’.⁴⁸⁶
 - The *sostenuto* pedal (middle pedal) is generally reserved for Organ works, but no indications are given outside of the Appendix to the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier. Busoni admits that he had not fully explored ‘all the hidden possibilities of the sustaining-pedal’ but does write that ‘[r]eal organ-effects can be obtained only by the combined action of the three pedals’.⁴⁸⁷ It is likely that Busoni had limited access to this pedal during most of his life, so this statement is perhaps of little value: his own Bechstein pianos in the 1920s did not have this pedal, and it was generally only found on Steinway pianos.

Tempo markings, mood, and expression

- Tempo indications are mainly given in Italian. In the Preface to the Inventions and Sinfonias, Busoni writes that ‘the Italian expression[s] [of Andante, Allegro, etc.] are frequently formal and conventional and therefore not suffic[i]ent to represent subtleties of shading’.⁴⁸⁸ Especially in the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier, a secondary indication is often used to describe the mood and expression of a piece.

While Busoni occasionally uses German for his markings in the Inventions and Sinfonias, colourful use of the Italian language is favoured in the First Book of the

⁴⁸⁶ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 177.

⁴⁸⁷ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 178.

⁴⁸⁸ Busoni, ed., *Two and Three Part Inventions*, Preface.

Well-tempered Clavier; their sensitive interpretation may aid the pianist's performance. Busoni generally does not provide metronome markings throughout his editions.⁴⁸⁹

Tempo flexibility

Tempo flexibility is one of the most striking features of Busoni's recordings and tempo changes are present throughout his editions. These happen at points of importance, such as formal divisions, transitions, climaxes, cadences, and other endings. Tempo manipulation may be marked explicitly, with Busoni urging the player to either slow down, speed up, or refrain from doing either (where it otherwise may conventionally be expected). Furthermore, some musical indications may suggest the use of tempo flexibility.

⁴⁸⁹ As mentioned in section 2.6, the only exception to this rule I have managed to find is in the *recitativo* of the *Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue* (BWV 903).

3. *Listening to Busoni*

Though Busoni recorded prolifically for several piano roll companies, he did not leave many acoustic recordings: he only participated in two recording sessions (in 1919 and 1922) at Columbia Studios in London.⁴⁹⁰ While the 1919 session was deemed unsatisfactory, most of the 1922 recordings were publicly released; however, the original matrices of the recordings appear to have been lost in a fire during the 1920s.⁴⁹¹

In this chapter I will take a closer look at these recording sessions and the surrounding circumstances which made recording such an ordeal in the early twentieth century. Acoustic recordings were limited: only a few minutes could be recorded at one time. Busoni, however, was known for his performance of large-scale pieces and collections; while the shorter pieces Busoni recorded at Columbia Studios were in his active concert repertoire, they captured, if anything, only a part of this architectonic aspect of his playing.

I will then consider the contents of the correspondence between Busoni and his London management Ibbs and Tillett ahead of the recording session on 27 February 1922. Not only do these letters explicitly reveal Busoni's attitude towards the recording process, but they also indicate his financial difficulties in the 1920s. Furthermore, in later correspondence Busoni mentions arrangements for a third recording session which never took place due to Busoni's poor health.

Finally, I will compare Busoni's playing in his recording to what is indicated in his edition of the Prelude and Fugue in C major. Almost thirty years separate Busoni's edition and his only acoustic recording of an original Bach keyboard work: though this single performance gives merely a glimpse into his performance aesthetic, to me it is an inspiring and highly valuable document that reveals several ways in which Busoni convincingly used tempo flexibility in his playing to underline the musical structure.

⁴⁹⁰ Busoni recorded for several piano roll companies: Welte-Mignon, Duo-Art, Ampico, Hupfeld, Artech, and DUCA. The music on these rolls is mostly by Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, and Liszt; there are also some four-hand recordings with his student Michael von Zadora (Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, pp. 330–33).

⁴⁹¹ Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, p. 327.

3.1. Busoni in recital versus Busoni in recording

In his book *Off the Record* (2012) Neal Peres Da Costa details the development of not only acoustic recording techniques but also electrical recording and (editable) piano rolls.⁴⁹² The limitations of early acoustic recordings for pianists were numerous: when accompanying singers or violinists, pianists were often positioned high above their partners while being instructed to play ‘without dynamic shading because such subtleties would not be picked up’.⁴⁹³ The pianos used in early recordings were often of dubious quality: in 1909, the renowned pianist Mark Hambourg likened his recording instrument to an ‘old tin kettle of a piano’, yet noted that the instrument ‘produced by far the best results’.⁴⁹⁴ Though pedaling was supposedly difficult to record Peres Da Costa notes that ‘there are many examples in which pianists appear to have pedaled fairly normally’; he further notes that it was likely that the piano used for acoustic recordings in the 1920s was ‘relatively free from modification’ due to ‘improvements in record manufacturing’.⁴⁹⁵ Busoni however still had to contend with the four minutes time constraint during his recording sessions.⁴⁹⁶

Busoni was renowned for his performance of large-scale works which would have been impossible to fully capture within this time limit. Busoni’s playing, which was often criticised for ‘inadequacy of emotion’, emphasised structure and the long line.⁴⁹⁷ Busoni was critical of the notion of ‘playing with emotion’ on a small scale, feeling that his manner of playing was misunderstood:

It must be underlined so that no one can miss seeing and hearing it [...] What the amateur or mediocre artist is concerned about is only feeling on a small scale, in detail, for short stretches. Feeling on a large scale is mistaken by the amateur, the semi-artist, and the public (and unfortunately the critic also) for want of feeling; because they have not the power to hear large stretches as parts of a still larger whole.⁴⁹⁸

In the article *Ferruccio Busoni in the United States* Marc-André Roberge provides examples of four Busoni programmes from the early twentieth century which indeed consist mainly of large-scale works or collections. Included in these programmes are Beethoven’s late

⁴⁹² Peres Da Costa, *Off the Record*, pp. 3–23.

⁴⁹³ Peres Da Costa, *Off the Record*, p. 15.

⁴⁹⁴ Quoted in Peres Da Costa, *Off the Record*, p. 16.

⁴⁹⁵ Peres Da Costa, *Off the Record*, p. 17.

⁴⁹⁶ Peres Da Costa, *Off the Record*, p. 18.

⁴⁹⁷ Kogan, *Busoni as Pianist*, p. 38.

⁴⁹⁸ Quoted in Kogan, *Busoni as Pianist*, p. 39. One may find this excerpt in the original German in Busoni, *Von der Einheit der Musik*, pp. 99–101.

Piano Sonatas, Chopin's complete *Etudes* op. 25, various transcriptions by Liszt, and other cornerstones of the piano repertoire:

Mar. 9, 1904, Music Hall (Chicago)

Toccata, Adagio, and Fugue in C Major, BWV 564 (Bach-Busoni)
Sonata No. 30 in E Major, op. 109 (Beethoven)
Twelve Etudes, op. 25 (Chopin)
Variations on a Theme by Paganini (Brahms)

Jan. 25, 1910, Carnegie Hall (New York)

Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue, BWV 903 (J. S. Bach)
"In dir ist Freude," BWV 615 (Bach-Busoni)
"Nun freut euch lieben Christen [gmein]," BWV 734 (Bach-Busoni)
Sonata No. 32 in C Minor, op. 111 (Beethoven)
Sonata No. 2 in B-flat Minor, op. 35 (Chopin)
Mephisto Waltz (Liszt-Busoni)
Wedding March and Dance of the Elves (Mendelssohn-Liszt)
Waltz from Faust (Gounod-Liszt)

Feb. 28, 1911, New England Conservatory of Music (Boston)

Four Ballads (Chopin)
"Mazeppa," "Feux follets," and Etude No. 10 in F Minor from the Transcendental Studies (Liszt)
Two Legends (Liszt)
Reminiscences de "Don Juan" (Liszt)

Mar. 7, 1915, Carnegie Hall (New York)

Prelude and Fugue in E-flat Major, BWV 552 (Bach-Busoni)
Capriccio in B-flat Major on the Departure of His Beloved Brother, BWV 992 (Bach-Busoni)
Sonata No. 32 in C Minor, op. 111 (Beethoven)
Phantasiestücke, op. 12 (Schumann)
Studies after Paganini (Liszt)
Hungarian Rhapsody No. 19 (Liszt)⁴⁹⁹

Busoni's correspondence with the Swiss composer and pianist Hans Huber (1852-1921) includes discussions about several programmes for recitals Busoni was to give at the Allgemeinen Musikschule Basel (now the Musik-Akademie Basel) during the 1910s.⁵⁰⁰ Huber, the director of the school at the time, regularly invited Busoni to play for the students; of these engagements, I will highlight suggested programmes for four recital evenings in three parts which took place in January/February 1916 (Table 3.1.1 below). Huber replied that he found

⁴⁹⁹ Roberge, 'Ferruccio Busoni in the United States', p. 304. Roberge's sources for these programmes are newspaper advertisements, articles (among others in the *New York Times*), and programme notes.

⁵⁰⁰ This correspondence can be found on the website of the *Busoni Nachlass* project: <<https://busoni-nachlass.org/de/Personen/E0300125.html?q=hans%20huber>> [accessed 16 August 2022].

the programmes magnificent; he preferred Chopin's op. 10 *Etudes* and Liszt's *Norma Fantasy*, which would be a premiere for Basel.⁵⁰¹ In a letter from December 1915, Busoni suggests cutting the Fugues of the Well-tempered Clavier; it is unclear whether he also omitted the Preludes in the concert, nor does he specify in the letters which Preludes would be played.⁵⁰² The programme notes which he mentions appear to have been lost.

Table 3.1.1. Suggested recital programmes for four concerts by Busoni in Basel, January/February 1916⁵⁰³

<i>Bach</i> Prelude and Fugue in E-flat major, BWV 552 3 Chorale Preludes 2 Preludes and Fugues (WTC) <i>Capriccio on the departure of a beloved brother</i> , BWV 992 <i>Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue</i> , BWV 903 <i>Goldberg Variations</i>	<i>Chopin</i> 12 <i>Etudes</i> (op. 10 or op. 25) 24 <i>Preludes</i> , op. 28 <i>Ballade</i> no. 4 in F minor <i>Scherzo</i> no. 3 in C-sharp minor <i>Polonaise</i> op. 53 in A-flat major
<i>Beethoven</i> <i>Eroica</i> Variations, op. 35 Sonata op. 109 Bagatelles op. 126 Sonata op. 106 (<i>Hammerklavier</i>)	<i>Liszt</i> Sonata in B minor <i>Années de pèlerinage. Première année: Suisse</i> 2 <i>Legends</i> or 6 <i>Paganini Etudes</i> or <i>Réminiscences de Norma</i>

⁵⁰¹ Huber to Busoni, c. 2 November 1915:

<<https://busoni-nachlass.org/de/Korrespondenz/E010002/D0100230.html>> [accessed 20 June 2022].

⁵⁰² Busoni to Huber, 15 December 1915:

<<https://busoni-nachlass.org/de/Korrespondenz/E010002/D0100113.html>> [accessed 20 June 2022]. Some of Busoni's concert programmes from 1890-1903 can be found in the Galston-Busoni Archive at the University of Tennessee: <https://scout.lib.utk.edu/repositories/2/archival_objects/180594> [accessed 21 March 2022].

⁵⁰³ Busoni to Huber, 31 October 1915:

<<https://busoni-nachlass.org/de/Korrespondenz/E010002/D0100110.html>> [accessed 20 June 2022].

Of Busoni's surviving acoustic recordings, only one is of a Bach original: the Prelude and Fugue in C major (BWV 846) from the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier. As they are so few, his recordings are hardly representative of his full capabilities as a pianist.⁵⁰⁴ Christopher Dymant compiled the data of Busoni's recording sessions in 1978; I have reproduced his findings in Tables 3.1.2–3.⁵⁰⁵

Table 3.1.2. Busoni's recording session on 18/19 November 1919, Columbia Studios, London

Composer and Work	Matrix/Take
Bach: Prelude and Fugue no. 1 in C major (Well-tempered Clavier, Book 1)	76699 – 1 2
Mozart: Concerto for piano and orchestra No. 9 in E-flat: Andantino (excerpt) ⁵⁰⁶	76700 – 1 2
Gounod-Liszt: <i>Valse de l'opéra Faust</i> , S. 407	76701 – 1 2
Bach-Busoni: <i>Organ Chorale Prelude</i> 'Nun freut euch...' Beethoven-Busoni: <i>Ecossaise</i> in E-flat	76702 – 1 2
Chopin: <i>Nocturne</i> in F-sharp major, op. 15 no. 2	76703 – 1 2
Liszt: <i>Hungarian Rhapsody</i> no. 13 in A minor, S. 244/13, Part 1	76704 – 1 2
Liszt: <i>Hungarian Rhapsody</i> no. 13 in A minor, S. 244/13, Part 2	76705 – 1 2
Liszt: <i>Années de pèlerinage, deuxième année: Italie: Sonetto 123 del Petrarca</i> , S. 161/6	76706 – 1 2
Liszt: <i>Valse oubliée</i> , S. 215 ⁵⁰⁷	76707 – 1 2
Liszt: <i>Etudes d'exécution transcendente d'après Paganini: La Chasse</i> , S. 140/5	76708 – 1 2
Chopin: <i>Etude</i> in E minor, op. 25 no. 5	76709 – 1 2
Weber: Piano Sonata no. 1 in C major, op. 24: Finale, Presto (Rondo, <i>Perpetuum mobile</i>)	76710 – 1 2 3

⁵⁰⁴ Robert Philip, *Performing Music in the Age of Recording* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2004), p. 34; Knyt, 'Ferruccio Busoni and the Ontology of the Musical Work', p. 249.

⁵⁰⁵ Christopher Dymant, 'Ferruccio Busoni: His Phonograph Recordings', *ARSC Journal*, 10 (1978), 185–187.

⁵⁰⁶ Most likely K. 271; Busoni arranged the Andantino of this work (BV B 84; Breitkopf & Härtel, 1914).

⁵⁰⁷ Dymant notes that it is '[a]lmost certainly No. 1, though unidentified on the matrix card'. Dymant, 'Ferruccio Busoni: His Phonograph Recordings', p. 187. Further references to Dymant's work are all from this source.

Table 3.1.3. Busoni's recording session on 27 February 1922, Columbia Studios, London

Composer and Work	Issue	Matrix/Take
Bach: Prelude and Fugue no. 1 in C major (Well-tempered Clavier, Book 1)	L 1445	76699 – 3 4
Bach-Busoni: <i>Organ Chorale Prelude</i> 'Nun freut euch...' Beethoven-Busoni: <i>Ecossaise</i> in E-flat	L 1470	76702 – 3
Chopin: <i>Nocturne</i> in F-sharp major, op. 15 no. 2	L 1432	76703 – 3 4
Liszt: <i>Hungarian Rhapsody</i> no. 13 in A minor, S. 244/13, Part 1 (abbreviated)	L 1456	76704 – 3 4
Liszt: <i>Hungarian Rhapsody</i> no. 13 in A minor, S. 244/13, Part 2 (abbreviated)	L 1456	76705 – 3 4
Liszt: <i>Années de pèlerinage, deuxième année: Italie: Sonetto 123 del Petrarca</i> , S. 161/6		76706 – 3 ⁵⁰⁸ 4
Chopin: <i>Etude</i> in E minor, op. 25 no. 5	L 1445	76709 – 3 4
Weber: Piano Sonata no. 1 in C major, op. 24: Finale, Presto (Rondo, <i>Perpetuum mobile</i>)		76710 – 4 ⁵⁰⁹ 5
Beethoven: <i>Ecossaise</i> ⁵¹⁰ Bach: Prelude to Chorale		75058 – 1
Chopin: <i>Etude</i> in G-flat major, op. 10 no. 5	L 1432	75059 – 1 2
Chopin: <i>Prelude</i> in A major, op. 28 no. 7 Chopin: <i>Etude</i> in G-flat major, op. 10 no. 5	L 1470	75060 – 1 2

Many pianists in the early twentieth century complained about the recording process: Leopold Godowsky (1870-1938), an acquaintance of Busoni's, commented that the more sensitive the artist was, the more dreadful his experience of the recording process would be.⁵¹¹ Busoni seemed highly dissatisfied with the first recording session in 1919 as can be seen from the following letter to his London management Ibbs and Tillett:

The conditions are most unfavourable. The room, the piano, the chair not inviting, I have to start like a racehorse and to the end before four minutes have elapsed. I have to manage the touch and the pedal differently from how I do it usually. What in Heaven's name can be the result of it? Not my own playing, take it for granted! Please consider

⁵⁰⁸ Dymant notes that this recording was '[r]ejected because of "rough surfaces"'.
⁵⁰⁹ Dymant notes that 'Take 4 was accepted for issue but not published'.

⁵¹⁰ Dymant notes that this is '[n]ot further identified, but presumably the same content as matrix 76702; rejected because of extraneous noises'.

⁵¹¹ Quoted in Robert Rimm, *The Composer-Pianists: Hamelin and the Eight* (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 2002), p. 67.

the objections seriously and put them before Mr. Brooks (I think this is the name of the “recording Manager”) It is a good rule of the Englishman “not to make a fool of himself”. I assure you that we “continentals” have not less pride and dignity, although we are considered to be only “paid artists”. But I hope you think better of me. (1 February 1922)⁵¹²

However, though Busoni may not have liked the recording process, from other letters it becomes clear that he was desperate for money in the 1920s.⁵¹³ In these letters, Busoni appears anxious about the prospective recording session. His management were unresponsive to his complaints, as they were interested in proceeding with what Busoni refers to as ‘that attractive experiment’:

I am afraid I need money again. In fact I am not only afraid, but positively sure about it. Will you help me? Many thanks in advance. (8 February 1921) [...]

Please help me out of that inconvenience. As much as I remember this is not yet the date contracted for the repetition of that attractive experiment [...] And I need cash! Please let me know. (received 31 January 1922)

I received the 25 pounds and I thank you for your kindness. Now please do not “over-read” the following. Of course if the grammophon people insist on repeating the records, I will have to do it sometime. But. The one time I did the thing first, I tried my very best; played some of the pieces four times; of some we made two records, on my own suggestion, and altogether I worked with the best conscience and interest. I do not see the probability that the records should improve by repeating; the new ones may prove just as little “satisfactory” as the original ones. And then? Had we to begin over again a third time? [This section prefaces the earlier letter from 1 February 1922] [...]

I am so sorry to worry you again but really I do not feel like playing for Mr Brooks [the recording manager for Columbia Studios] on Monday. I am tired and not well since ten days or more. The new records, under these circumstances, would be a failure again! I have not counted on the possibility of playing for the Columbia when I came to England

⁵¹² Quoted in Christopher Fifield, *Ibbs and Tillet: The Rise and Fall of a Musical Empire* (Aldershot, Hants; Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate, 2005), p. 115.

⁵¹³ Busoni reportedly rejected major tours offered to him earlier as he apparently did not like travelling much, despite being offered serious sums of money. Apparently, towards the end of his life, Busoni’s financial management was not great. Guido Agosti relayed this anecdote to Peter Bithell, my professor at the Guildhall School. In a letter to his wife, dated 12 March 1903, Busoni writes of his suffering from ‘*Reisefieber*’, i.e., travel anxiety/nervosity, which is probably to be conceived negatively.
<<https://www.rodoni.ch/busoni/bibliotechina/lettere/gerdaEN/gerdaEN1.html>> [accessed 3 August 2021].

Marc-André Roberge notes that ‘Busoni harbored a very negative memory of his visits to the United States [...] Busoni’s interest in America appeared to be in the financial reward that he could reap from concert tours. Frequent performances and constant travel undoubtedly took precious time from his composing schedule, which might help to explain the negative comments that he made about the United States, its people, and the state of music-making in this country. Extended periods of absence from the cultural ambience of Europe, where he had been raised, was painful for him, as were the countless receptions that he attended with well-meaning amateurs, as well as the constant pressure for publicity by his agent and, above all, the cultural differences between Europe and America.’ (Roberge, ‘Ferruccio Busoni in the United States’, p. 315).

this time, as I know that April was the date fixed on the paper for that ordeal. The list of pieces (which Mr Brooks insists on having repeated literally) is not ready in my mind and in my hands, and I do not have even the music here to recollect them. I wished Mr Brooks would show you that paper; not because I do not trust him, but in view of the human possibility of a mistake of memory on his side or mine. (c. 10 February 1922)

I wish you would read my letters. In the preceding one I took the liberty of writing to you that I felt

- tired
- ill
- unprepared!
- and was deprived of the music for the records.
- That under these circumstances the records would surely prove a repeated failure.

Certainly I could not do anything this Monday. Meanwhile have the kindness of communicating with Mr Brooks and let me know the result of your communication (based on my objections). If I had not the conscience of having tried my best the first time (with no success), I should not feel so hopeless now. (19 February 1922)⁵¹⁴

From these letters it becomes clear that Busoni, in a state of financial crisis, was pushed by his English management to enter the recording studio again while Busoni was probably, like any artist in his time, looking for more concert engagements. The prospect of recording again three years after his last attempt obviously did not appeal to Busoni; already in his first letter mentioning the recording engagement (dated 31 January 1922) he asks for help ‘out of that inconvenience [the recording process]’. In a letter to his former student Kestenberg (dated 3 March 1922, which was shortly after the second recording session), Busoni refers to the phonograph as a ‘devilish invention which *lacks the demonic nuance*’.⁵¹⁵

Though none of Busoni’s 1919 recordings were ever commercially issued, the 1922 session (Table 3.1.3) seems to have been a bigger success. Furthermore, we have to keep in mind that Busoni’s letters to Ibbs and Tillett quoted above were written *before* the second recording process took place on 27 February 1922, so there is a chance that this occasion was more comfortable for Busoni than that in 1919 (perhaps due to new developments in recording techniques), or that he considered the resulting recordings good enough. Whatever the case, more correspondence exists between Ibbs and Tillett and Busoni that alludes to another possible planned recording session a year later:

⁵¹⁴ All quoted in Fifield, *Ibbs and Tillett*, p. 115. As these letters are fairly unknown, I have chosen to present them here in full.

⁵¹⁵ Busoni, *Selected Letters*, pp. 349–50, letter 321 (3 March 1922): ‘Unfortunately, the gramophone companies are now seeing to it that later generations can also criticize the virtuoso: I recently exposed myself to this situation by playing for a phonograph recording! A devilish invention which *lacks the demonic nuance*’.

[...] Neither will I be able to finish the Grammophon Records [due to illness]. I beg you to explain the situation to the Grammophon Co. [...] (14 February 1923)

[...] For the instant I must refuse Mr Brooks' offer. The proposed fee is not satisfactory anyhow. The conditions were in the first case £1000 for 12 records. The desire of renewing the "operations" made me rather expect an increasing of the terms, instead of a reduction in price. [...] (17 March 1923)⁵¹⁶

Egon Petri told his student Daniell Revenaugh that Busoni's acoustic recording of Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsody* no. 13 represented Busoni's style of interpretation 'fairly accurately'.⁵¹⁷ Perhaps Busoni was indeed able to exhibit some of his grand self in the recording studio on this occasion.

3.2. Busoni's recording of the Prelude and Fugue in C major

Almost three decades separate Busoni's edition (1894) and his recording of the Prelude and Fugue in C major (1922). While Busoni does not follow his own edition exactly as one might expect, it is possible that Busoni simply changed his mind from his earlier thoughts, or that these departures from the score were indeed integral to his style: Kogan mentions that '[t]here is also a fascinating amount of improvisation, great rhythmic freedom, and a certain lack of adherence to the printed page [in these recordings] that a contemporary listener might find shocking'.⁵¹⁸

However, one aspect that is consistent between his earlier editions and his recording is Busoni's use of tempo flexibility to clearly outline the overall structure of the music. While this is explicitly indicated in the score on one occasion, to the unfamiliar listener this is not obviously the case for the rest of the tempo manipulation that occurs, which ranges from subtle rhythmic alteration to very apparent slowing down. As tempo flexibility in Busoni's playing is connected to the musical structure, this aspect of performance would presumably have been set in stone for Busoni at an early stage. As shown in section 2.7, Busoni commonly slows down

⁵¹⁶ Both letters quoted in Fifield, *Ibbs and Tillett*, p. 116. This planned session never took place due to Busoni's poor health.

⁵¹⁷ Knyt, 'Ferruccio Busoni and the Ontology of the Musical Work', p. 249. According to Sitsky, Petri was horrified by Busoni's piano roll recordings (Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, p. 329). Daniell Revenaugh later founded the Busoni Society.

⁵¹⁸ Kogan, *Busoni as Pianist*, p. 115. Busoni and his peers exhibited this kind of interpretative freedom often: the Peters edition of the Bach-Busoni *Chaconne* (edited by Paul Banks) includes an editorial commentary (by Yukiko Kishinami) on the variant readings found in Busoni's piano roll recording of the *Chaconne* (Paul Banks, ed., *Bach-Busoni Chaconne in D minor* (London: Edition Peters, 1997)).

at cadences and formal divisions; in his recording, this is especially noticeable in the Fugue, where most cadences are emphasised through the use of slight tempo flexibility.⁵¹⁹

The recording of the Prelude and Fugue is unaffected by the four minutes time constraint of early recordings: even with the significant slowing down employed at the end of both Prelude and Fugue there is no worry felt in the performance of having to hit a timing deadline, and the piece is performed with remarkable accuracy. Throughout the Fugue, the thematic entries are clearly brought out against the counterpoint, with all parts expertly balanced.

In this subsection I have marked the examples not only with bar numbers but also with timestamps which allow the reader to easily reference a digitisation of Busoni's recording.⁵²⁰ The timestamps mark the beginning of the bar. Digital transfers are also accessible on YouTube:

- Busoni plays Bach Das WTK I Prelude & Fugue in C major (uploader: pianopera)
<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrF1OQL4ZtQ>> [accessed 30 August 2021].
- Busoni plays Bach (1922) (uploader: micheldvorsky)
<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G3P8WUGIYuw>> [accessed 30 August 2021].

Timestamped links to the recording uploaded to YouTube by user 'pianopera' (i.e., the first listed recording) are also included in the footnotes to the examples in this subsection.

Examples 3.2.2–8 will show Busoni's recorded treatment of some of his musical indications and Examples 3.2.9–15 will demonstrate Busoni's use of tempo flexibility. Some of the tempo flexibility used in the Fugue closely aligns to those places indicated by Busoni in his illustration of the form in a footnote found on page 7 of the edition (Example 3.2.1 below): in section B (development), Busoni emphasises every transition between sections a, b, and c by slowing down on the cadence before retaking the tempo on the next part.

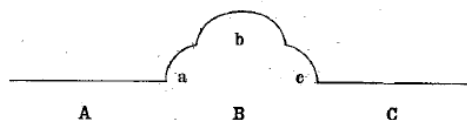
⁵¹⁹ In the Appendix to his edition of the Well-tempered Clavier, Busoni mentions that 'a certain elasticity of tempo, when applied on a large scale, lends to the interpretation that trait of freedom which characterizes every artistic performance' (Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 181). In his edition of the Well-tempered Clavier, Bartók also suggests these 'emphatic cadences' at the end of individual sections should at 'most times [...] be accented with a moderate, sometimes barely perceptible degree of *ritardando*' (Bartók, ed., *The Well-Tempered Clavier (Vols. I–II)*, p. 134).

⁵²⁰ My timestamps are based on Busoni's recording on the following Naxos CD: Busoni, Ferruccio, and others, *Busoni and his Pupils (1922–1952)* (Naxos, 8.110777, 2004).
<https://www.naxos.com/catalogue/item.asp?item_code=8.110777> [accessed 30 August 2021].

B. A fugue so architectonically perfect in construction as this will be met with, in the course of Part I, in possibly one other case – that of the notable *E♭*-minor fugue, whose “architectural style” is, to be sure, entirely different. Here the culminating effect is massed in the middle; whereas in the *E♭*-minor fugue the insatiable upward striving presses onward to the very last measure.

The exposition (the successive appearance of the theme in each of the four parts, with alternation between the tonic and dominant keys) embraces 6 measures, and may be represented graphically by a straight line. The development then follows in three sections, the middle one being that most replete with contrapuntal devices, while the third development-section gradually leads back into the “straight line” (Coda).

Retaining our architectonic comparison, we feel tempted to illustrate the scheme of this fugue by means of the annexed figure:



conformably to which we have

A = Exposition, 6 measures

B = Development, 17 measures

{ a = 7 measures = Stretto
b = 5 measures = continually narrowing Stretto (climax)
c = 5 measures = simple Stretto again, and return to rest.

C = Coda, 4 measures = Organ-point on the tonic.

Example 3.2.1. Busoni's illustration of the form of the Fugue no. 1 in C major

Busoni's treatment of musical indications

2) The Editor recommends abstention from the use of the pedal up to the 5th measure of the 3^d section, and the strict holding-down of the left-hand notes instead, which very nearly gives the effect of the pedal.

Example 3.2.2. Prelude no. 1 in C major, bars 1 (top left, 00:00), 20 (top right, 00:52), 24 (bottom left, 01:05), and 33 (bottom right, 01:30)⁵²¹

The Prelude contains a number of different types of slurring and touch indications. Throughout the piece, one slur is given over each elaborated harmony, starting from the bass note, with

⁵²¹ Top left, bar 1 (Prelude): <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrF1OQL4ZtQ>>.

Top right, bar 20 (Prelude, 00:52): <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrF1OQL4ZtQ&t=52s>>.

Bottom left, bar 24 (Prelude, 01:05): <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrF1OQL4ZtQ&t=65s>>.

Bottom right, bar 33 (Prelude, 01:30): <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrF1OQL4ZtQ&t=90s>>.

most slurs except for those in the final bars consistently following this pattern. Busoni asks for the left-hand notes to be held down (*ben tenuto*) which ‘very nearly gives the effect of the pedal’, suggesting that the pedal be taken only from bar 24 onwards; however, Busoni occasionally uses the pedal where he does not mark it.⁵²²

In the top right example (bar 20) we see Busoni ask for a pedal-effect by overholding the right-hand notes, after which in bar 24 (bottom left) he prescribes *meno tenuto* and overholding is no longer marked. In the bottom right example (bar 33), at the end of the piece, the same arpeggiated harmony is grouped under one long slur.

NB. I. For the attainment of a perfect legato, practice the figure first in *andantino* tempo, with a somewhat firm touch, and in such a way that each tone in the right hand is successively held down through the true duration of the next, thus assuming the time-value of an eighth-note;



II. Then try to obtain the effect of the original notation by playing the figure thus:



Example 3.2.3. Footnote to Prelude no. 1 in C major

Busoni prescribes two exercises in Example 3.2.3 for the ‘attainment of a perfect legato’; Exercise I features overholding, while in Exercise II the player should aim to ‘obtain the effect of the original notation’ by playing the main text with alternating hands. Two further exercises are given on the next page of the edition, both in staccato, where the emphasis is on the smooth transition between the hands.⁵²³ In the recording, we can hear that Busoni’s touch is indeed closer to the legato these two exercises aim for: smooth, but not overheld, except for where it is explicitly indicated.

⁵²² I will comment on this pedal use in Examples 3.2.9–11.

⁵²³ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 3.

29
(ossia: *fs sempre forte* - - - - -)

32
(ossia: *ff* - - - - - *molto largamente ed armonioso* - - - - - *allarg.* - - - - - *ff*)

p *dolce* *p 4*

4) The Editor desires to caution against an over-valuation, or possible under-valuation, of this piece. To quote from Riemann, it is simply a "portal" to the entire work; forming, however, in its euphony and structural finish, a highly satisfactory musical introduction.

Example 3.2.4. Prelude no. 1 in C major, bars 29-35 (01:18)⁵²⁴

In the Prelude (Example 3.2.4) Busoni marks an *ossia* where the ending is played fortissimo; in his recording, he follows the main text, where a piano dynamic is kept throughout. I find that Busoni's dynamic plan in his recording works better than what he has marked in the *ossia* in his edition, as I feel that a strong ending to either Prelude or Fugue is out of place.

⁵²⁴ Bars 29-35 (Prelude, 01:18): <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrF1OQL4ZtQ&t=78s>>.



Example 3.2.5. Fugue no. 1 in C major, bars 1-3 (top, 01:43) and 5-7 (bottom, 02:01)⁵²⁵



Example 3.2.6. Fugue no. 1 in C major, fingering for thematic entries (top, left to right: bars 1-2, 2-3; bottom, left to right: bars 4, 10-11)

The theme in the Fugue (Example 3.2.5) is initially slurred with a long slur connecting the c' to the staccato d', but later this slur is omitted during the first episode (bar 7, soprano and tenor entry) in the slightly louder dynamic of quasi forte. In the rest of the Fugue, the theme is slurred similarly to these entries in bar 7, with tenuto dashes occasionally marked over the first three quavers. As can be seen in Example 3.2.6, Busoni gives a consistent, yet slightly unconventional fingering: first given in brackets, the third finger crosses over a longer finger, whereas in bars 10-11 the repeated third finger is given as the main-text suggestion. In bar 7 (Example 3.2.5, bottom right, tenor) Busoni repeats the thumb, yet marks a finger substitution on the c'.

In Busoni's recording, there is no obvious separation between the two slurs of the theme; rather, the theme is played in one continuous phrase from the first c' until the semiquaver e' on

⁵²⁵ Top, bars 1-3 (Fugue, 01:43): <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrF1OQL4ZtQ&t=103s>>. Bottom, bars 5-7 (Fugue, 02:01): <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrF1OQL4ZtQ&t=121s>>.

the third beat of the second bar.⁵²⁶ Busoni's generally connected touch suggests that the staccato dot on the d' at the end of the first phrase is not to be played with the degree of separation one may expect; perhaps this staccato dot merely indicates the weak point of the phrase. The following note (g'), which is marked with a tenuto dash, is clearly brought out on two occasions (02:24 and 02:47) in the bass.⁵²⁷



Example 3.2.7. Fugue no. 1 in C major, bars 14-16 (02:39)⁵²⁸

In the second *stretto* (Example 3.2.7, 02:39), Busoni's touch is less legato (he marks *meno legato ma sempre molto tenuto*); at the same time, dashes and other articulation marks are generally omitted from the score. Busoni marks various hairpins over the entries of the theme, though these do not appear to be interpreted in a special way. Each successive entry is distinctly heard as expected. The only slurs present in this part of the piece are those over the dotted quaver-double demisemiquaver pattern; this marking is consistent throughout the Fugue. Despite the slur, this pattern is not always played with a legato touch: for instance, Busoni varies the touch of the demisemiquavers at 03:11.⁵²⁹

⁵²⁶ Busoni notes that the theme is 'equal in length to 6 quarter-notes, or 1½ measures in 4/4 time' (Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 5).

⁵²⁷ Fugue (02:24): <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrF1OQL4ZtQ&t=144s>>.

Fugue (02:47): <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrF1OQL4ZtQ&t=167s>>.

⁵²⁸ Bars 14-16 (Fugue, 02:39): <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrF1OQL4ZtQ&t=159s>>.

⁵²⁹ Fugue (03:11): <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrF1OQL4ZtQ&t=191s>>.

21

23

26

cresc.

T

f

(sf)

sostenuto

(p)

Example 3.2.8. Fugue no. 1 in C major, bars 21-27 (03:09)⁵³⁰

Though Busoni generally follows his own dynamic markings, the crescendo marked in bar 22 is substituted by a diminuendo instead. Instead of the opening hairpin in bar 23, a paired hairpin would more accurately reflect what is heard, as Busoni clearly brings out the alto/tenor part in this bar. The dynamic in bar 24 is a shade quieter than the opening dynamic of mezzo-forte and may be accurately captured by a mezzo-piano marking rather than the indicated forte. From this point onwards, Busoni only becomes quieter; the indicated *sforzato* in bar 25 is not noticeable in Busoni's recording. Though Busoni still slightly phrases the scales, a continuous diminuendo is heard in the *sostenuto*; the final chord is played pianissimo.

The tied c is possibly replayed in the final bar (03:42), where it sounds like Busoni plays a fourth of c – f in the left hand rather than the octave that is written.⁵³¹ The semiquavers f' and d'' are played an octave lower than written, with Busoni additionally playing a g' as well as an f' together with the b''. On the final chord, it appears Busoni also plays the bottom C as given between brackets, though the quality of the recording makes this difficult to hear.

⁵³⁰ Bars 21-27 (Fugue, 03:09): <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrF1OQL4ZtQ&t=189s>>.

⁵³¹ This f may also have been played on the third beat of bar 26.

Busoni's use of tempo flexibility

In the following examples, which demonstrate tempo flexibility, forward movement is indicated by an arrow while (slight) lingering is marked by a wavy line.

Example 3.2.9. Prelude no. 1 in C major, bars 3-14 (00:07)⁵³²

In bars 5 and 7 in Example 3.2.9, at the *poco rinforzando*, Busoni momentarily raises the dynamic level and uses the right pedal; furthermore, a very slight quickening of the pulse can be felt. It makes musical sense to emphasise this transition from the tonic chord of C major to that of A minor in first inversion: up to this point, the highest note had been the f", whereas the highest point in bar 5 is an a" up from an e" in the previous bar. As we can see on the rest of this page, movement of the separate chord-tones is generally stepwise, with the other notable exception being the left-hand part in bar 10, where the bass note jumps down from a to d.

⁵³² Bars 3-14 (Prelude, 00:07): <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrF1OQL4ZtQ&t=7s>>.

In the third line, at the division, the second part of bar 11 (0:28) is played at a faster tempo going into bar 12.⁵³³ This same sense of agitation is less pronounced, yet still slightly felt, in bars 13-14. Busoni uses another touch of pedal on the opening hairpins in bars 12 and 14.



Example 3.2.10. Prelude no. 1 in C major, bars 15-19 (00:40)⁵³⁴

A slight speeding up is felt from bar 16 until the second half of bar 19 (Example 3.2.10), where Busoni very subtly, almost inaudibly, holds back the tempo before the division. At the start of the opening hairpin, Busoni uses the pedal until the end of the closing hairpin, presumably changing with every bass note (though pedal changes cannot be clearly heard).

⁵³³ Prelude (0:28): <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrF1OQL4ZtQ&t=28s>>.

⁵³⁴ Bars 15-19 (Prelude, 00:40): <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrF1OQL4ZtQ&t=40s>>.



Example 3.2.11. Prelude no. 1 in C major, bars 20-25 (00:52)⁵³⁵

There is a significant but sudden change in tone colour at this new section marked *tenuto, quasi effetto di pedale* at the dominant seventh chord on c (Example 3.2.11, 0:52). Despite this difference in colour, there is no noticeable change in tempo; indeed, a slight sense of pushing towards the diminished harmonies of bars 22-23 may be felt. Again, the pedal is used in bars 21-22, with Busoni changing the pedal on every bass note. Though both bass notes in bars 22 and 23 are marked with the same long accents, only the second one is truly performed: Busoni takes a slight agogic pause before the A $\flat$, which receives extra emphasis. This bar, which is the only bar in the piece in which a passing note is part of the right-hand figuration, is played significantly out of time before the earlier pulse is retaken in bar 24, from which point Busoni builds up towards the end of the piece.

⁵³⁵ Bars 20-25 (Prelude, 00:52): <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrF1OQL4ZtQ&t=52s>>.

Example 3.2.12. Prelude no. 1 in C major, bars 26-35 (01:10)⁵³⁶

Throughout the crescendo which starts in bar 25 a quickening of the pulse can be felt, especially from bar 27 onwards (Example 3.2.12, 01:10); the return to C major in the first half of bar 29, at the *forzando*, is stretched slightly by Busoni. A subtle break can also be heard at the transition to the coda as indicated by the double bar (I have further marked it with a comma); there is also a noticeable change in tone colour in bar 32. This change is similar to that in bar 20 (Example 3.2.11, 00:52); of course, the harmony in these bars is the same, with the only difference being the arrangement of the dominant seventh chord.

Busoni's touch is markedly non legato in bar 33 (01:30). While this coda is played in a steady manner, at a similar tempo to before, in the penultimate bar Busoni surprises the listener by a slight disruption to the established pulse through delaying the right-hand g' and b'; Busoni slows down on the final four semiquavers, which is also indicated in his *ossia* (*allargando*).

⁵³⁶ Bars 26-35 (Prelude, 01:10): <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrF1OQL4ZtQ&t=70s>>.



Example 3.2.13. Fugue no. 1 in C major, bars 12-16 (02:27)⁵³⁷

The development (three *stretti*) and coda of the Fugue are all marked by a noticeable use of tempo flexibility. While there are occasions of subtle (unmarked) tempo flexibility in the first *stretto* leading up to the above example (especially at 2:08-2:23, where Busoni effectively stretches the time in the moments of harmonic tension, before retaking the pulse at the cadence into G major), the slowing down at the *poco espressivo* marking is significantly more noticeable, and the *pochissimo ritenuto* (as well as the trill) is stretched to take up approximately twice the written duration.⁵³⁸ Through this marked flexibility in tempo Busoni makes the transition from the first *stretto* into the second *stretto*, which starts in bar 14, very clear to the listener. Busoni retakes the earlier pulse on the alto entry in bar 14.

⁵³⁷ Bars 12-16 (Fugue, 02:27): <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrF1OQL4ZtQ&t=147s>>.

⁵³⁸ This is the transition from section a to b of the Development (see Example 3.2.1 of Busoni's illustration of the form of this Fugue).

Example 3.2.14. Fugue no. 1 in C major, bars 17-20 (02:51)⁵³⁹

Busoni marks this second *stretto* as the climax of the piece. In bars 17-20 (Example 3.2.14, 02:51) Busoni pushes the tempo in bar 17 before holding back at the end of bar 18, where both trills are slightly extended until the harmony of D major is reached on the third beat of bar 19.⁵⁴⁰ Though Busoni marks the double bar at the end of the first line (which is where the division in the formal structure occurs), the soprano and bass close at the later cadential point in the middle of bar 19. This is where Busoni retakes the tempo on the quaver g' (third quaver of the alto entry, start of third *stretto*).

⁵³⁹ Bars 17-20 (Fugue, 02:51): <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrF1OQL4ZtQ&t=171s>>.

⁵⁴⁰ This is the transition from section b to c of the Development. As I mentioned when discussing Example 2.4.8, there is no asynchronisation of the hands in bar 17.

Example 3.2.15. Fugue no. 1 in C major, bars 21-27 (03:09)⁵⁴¹

In this third *stretto* (Example 3.2.15, 03:09) a slight stretching of the tempo can be heard at the closing of the bass and soprano parts at the hairpin over the soprano (bar 21), which coincides with a cadence in G major. A similar stretch follows at the closing of the tenor part at the end of the first line, while Busoni significantly slows down in the bar before the coda. As I mentioned when I discussed the hairpin in this bar (Example 3.2.8), in bar 23 (03:20) Busoni brings out the alto/tenor line d' – e' – f' – e' – d' beautifully.

There is a very short pause on the first quaver of the coda, after which Busoni resumes in tempo from the accented second quaver onwards. This quaver c of the tenor entry, which slightly anticipates the beat, disrupts the pulse Busoni established in the *ritenuto* in bar 23 at the close of the third *stretto*. Busoni slows down at the *sostenuto* marking as expected, stretching the final bar significantly.

⁵⁴¹ Bars 21-27 (Fugue, 03:09): <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrF1OQL4ZtQ&t=189s>>.

3.3. Conclusions on *Listening to Busoni*

Though Busoni complained about the prospect of recording, perhaps his financial difficulties left him with no choice; either way, his management did not budge on the matter, and on 27 February 1922 Busoni recorded almost 26 minutes of repertoire at Columbia Studios in London, including the Prelude and Fugue in C major from the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier.

According to Sitsky, ‘Busoni had offered Columbia the rights to record the complete 48 *Preludes and Fugues*, but this was rejected’.⁵⁴² A single recording of course does not give us more than a mere glimpse into how Busoni may have played: it is important that what is heard is given appropriate consideration, especially when considering the date of the recording compared to when Busoni’s edition was published. Nevertheless, I feel that Busoni’s recorded tempo flexibility not only supports the findings from the second chapter but I also believe that it provides further insight into how divisions in form may be highlighted. As the use of tempo flexibility depends on the understanding of the musical form and structure I assume that this aspect of Busoni’s playing was largely consistent throughout his life.

In the Prelude, Busoni uses tempo flexibility at special moments, such as at the melodic climaxes of the first half of the piece; at the section marked *tenuto, quasi effetto di pedale* Busoni lingers on the diminished harmony before retaking the pulse from the next bar. In the Fugue, Busoni uses tempo flexibility to emphasise the (pre-)cadential points in the *stretto*; at the first division in the developmental section, the *pochissimo ritenuto* on the cadential trill is stretched significantly. At the climax of the piece, the tension of the narrow *stretto* is released through a controlled slowing down on the cadential point. This last developmental section, which according to Busoni marks a ‘return to rest’, is beautifully shaped. The coda is played in a tranquil manner, with Busoni slightly augmenting the written score.

With the knowledge gained in the first part of this thesis (Chapters 1 to 3) I have been able to approach Busoni’s performance style from a more informed position. I have further shown how Busoni influenced peers and successors and how this manifested in their editions and performances. For my own practice Busoni’s editions and colourful recording have also been a source of inspiration. This will become clearer in the second part of this thesis, Chapters 4 and 5, where I will discuss the development of my approach to Bach. Though I will consider all aspects discussed in the second chapter, special attention will be given to the interpretation of the musical structure through the application of tempo flexibility within my performance of Bach on the modern piano.

⁵⁴² Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, p. 327.

4. *Playing with Busoni*

According to Busoni, '[t]echnical systems are best when they are individual'.⁵⁴³ In this part of the thesis I will seek to answer my third research question: how may these findings be relevant to and challenge the performance practice of a twenty-first-century pianist?

To answer this question, I will focus on my own engagement with Bach's music on the modern piano. This chapter consists of three sections:

Busoni's *Hochschule*: a comprehensive approach

Five case studies

Invention no. 6 in E major, BWV 777

Sinfonia no. 3 in D major, BWV 789

Prelude and Fugue no. 13 in F-sharp major, BWV 858

Prelude and Fugue no. 17 in A-flat major, BWV 862

Toccata in D major, BWV 912

Conclusions on *Playing with Busoni*

The first section discusses my approach to Busoni's editions. As the material in the *Hochschule* does not follow a strictly logical pedagogical path, an all-encompassing approach appears necessary for personal study.

I will take on a more auto-ethnographical approach in the second section, where I will consider Busoni's comprehensive approach and my response to it, focusing on the idea of a complete technical system where musical indications are interdependent. This is done through analysing my interpretation of five pieces from three different perspectives: pre-research, mid-research, and post-research.⁵⁴⁴

The third section of this chapter is a summary of my current thoughts on my performance of Bach on the modern piano. While my approach will of course develop in the future, the thoughts collected here are a snapshot of years of engagement with Bach's music.

⁵⁴³ Cooke, *Great Pianists on Piano Playing*, p. 101.

⁵⁴⁴ All five pieces analysed in this chapter are part of my Doctoral recital. A video recording of this recital accompanies this thesis. This recital will be discussed in Chapter 5.

4.1. Busoni's *Hochschule*: a comprehensive approach

Besides a general order of the *Hochschule*, Busoni did not leave any specific suggestions on how to use this material in personal study. In contrast to Bartók's instructive edition, which orders the Well-tempered Clavier in progressive (contrapuntal) difficulty, to work through Busoni's editions chronologically leads to certain issues which then have to be solved retrospectively.

For instance, Busoni's observation that the *non legato* touch is 'in closest sympathy with the nature of the pianoforte' is first stated in the footnote to the Prelude in D minor, which is a quarter of the way through the Well-tempered Clavier.⁵⁴⁵ Similarly, though Busoni writes that thematic trills should be consistent in the Fugue in D minor, Busoni's aesthetic reason for this consistency is only explained in the Fugue in F-sharp major.⁵⁴⁶ Essential information to understand Busoni's indication of divisions in form is relegated to an editorial note after the Fugue in G minor, where he admits that he omitted to remark the meaning of these notational devices.⁵⁴⁷ Finally, one of the most striking aspects of nineteenth-century piano playing, tempo flexibility, is hardly touched upon except for a short note in the Appendix on interpretation.⁵⁴⁸ Perhaps it was assumed that such issues of taste would be up to the gifted pianist or their teachers: either way, for the modern student, such evidence must be collected through the arduous process of piecing together information found in the complete Busoni editions.

In other places, Busoni wrote at length about the integral aspect of his performance aesthetic, arguing that performance is a creative act of translating notation into the '*spiritual language of the individual performer*' (emphasis Kogan).⁵⁴⁹ As mentioned in the first chapter of this thesis, Busoni's edition of Liszt's *Réminiscences de Don Juan* is explicit in this aim: Busoni gives both Liszt's unaltered text as well as his own arrangement in many places. By doing so, Busoni notes, '[I] wished to give an instance of how one can and should arrange a setting for oneself without distorting the sense, content and effect'.⁵⁵⁰

My approach to using Busoni's editions for personal study follows this idea. I was interested foremost in rendering Bach, not Busoni; the aim was thus always to arrange (i.e., edit) Bach in a way for myself on the modern piano without distorting what I felt to be the 'sense, content and effect' of the pieces. I looked to Busoni in the hopes of being provided with

⁵⁴⁵ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 34.

⁵⁴⁶ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, pp. 37, 79.

⁵⁴⁷ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 98.

⁵⁴⁸ Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 181.

⁵⁴⁹ Kogan, *Busoni as Pianist*, p. 35.

⁵⁵⁰ Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, p. 228.

a consistent model to follow and adapt: his playing of Bach was highly regarded in its time, and my analysis has shown that it influenced contemporary and later editors in their approaches. As such, I believed his editions may have followed a certain pedagogical plan or set of ideas, and I was curious to see what made the editions special and whether the information could be useful in my own practice. Due to the limited number of recordings available, my process has been to cast a wide net to uncover as many (written) details and accounts as possible to approach Busoni's Bach. The most important findings of this process were described in Chapters 1, 2, and 3 of this thesis.

A secondary gain from doing this exercise with Busoni's editions is that it provided me with an imagined teacher as well as sparring partner: had I gone back to the manuscript sources and their variant readings, I would not have been provided this luxury to such an extent. Busoni's knowledge of the possibilities of the piano of his time, and his ideas on how to render effectively even the most difficult passages offer insights that are rarely found in other interpretative editions. Furthermore, Busoni's expertise as a composer revealed certain aspects of composition and structure that someone who was primarily a pianist might not have been able to provide. What I gained from this is not only many possible pianistic and structural approaches but also a clear model to work off. If necessary, due to Busoni's scholarly approach, I was able to consult the source material he used myself to examine his writings and decide whether these were based on solid evidence or more shaky foundations.

In this chapter I will provide a condensed report of my own journey through the early stages of Busoni's 'Hochschule des Clavierspiels', focusing on the Inventions, Sinfonias, and the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier; this study culminates in a discussion of my performance of Bach's *Toccata* in D major, BWV 912. I have annotated this piece not as an imagined Busoni edition; my most recent annotations to this piece may be considered to constitute my own interpretative edition. I have taken inspiration from Busoni's own approach elsewhere, yet my interpretation is based on a more hybrid style which incorporates my own modern pianistic training. In this sense, my approach mirrors Casella's: Casella himself admitted his large debt to Busoni, however still managed to put his own distinctive stamp on his interpretative editions of Bach.

4.2. Five case studies

The present work is also intended as a connecting link between the editor's earlier edition (publ. by Breitkopf and Härtel) of Bach's *Inventions*, forming on the one hand a **preparatory school**, and his concert-
editions of Bach's *Organ-fugues* in *D* and *E♭*, and of the *Violin-Chaconne*, which will serve, on the other
hand, as a **close** to the course herein proposed.

Example 4.2.1. Preface to the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier

The aim of this section is to trace Busoni's idea of a 'Hochschule des Clavierspiels' constituted of Bach's keyboard works, starting from the *Inventions* and *Sinfonias* as a 'preparatory school', the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier as the 'connecting link', and finally, as a step up from the Well-tempered Clavier, J. S. Bach's Toccata in D major (BWV 912).⁵⁵¹ As it is unfeasible to detail in this section my complete artistic journey through this progressive school, I have decided to focus here on four selections from the *Inventions*, *Sinfonias*, and the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier:

Invention no. 6 in E major, BWV 777

Sinfonia no. 3 in D major, BWV 789

Prelude and Fugue no. 13 in F-sharp major, BWV 858

Prelude and Fugue no. 17 in A-flat major, BWV 862

Both the Invention and Sinfonia I first learnt in 2009. The Preludes and Fugues in F-sharp major and A-flat major are pieces I first studied while working on this thesis. The Invention and Sinfonia were studied from a G. Henle Urtext edition, while I learnt the Preludes and Fugues exclusively from the Busoni edition.⁵⁵²

The Toccata in D major (BWV 912) is a piece I am intimately familiar with: it was part of my audition programme for Guildhall's Postgraduate degree in December 2014, and I also played it in my final Undergraduate recital in Utrecht in June 2015. It was one of the first pieces I played for my teacher Peter Bithell at Guildhall in July 2015, who then recommended some fingerings I still use to this day. It is in the analysis of my performance of this piece that my personal artistic vision and growth, informed by the work done in this thesis, is most present.

Busoni never actually edited the Toccata in D major, leaving this work to Petri: 'Busoni either got bored or was taken up with some new idea; in any case, he had already taken the prize plums out of the Bach pudding – the works he really *wanted* to edit himself. He then passed the project on to me. I proceeded to edit the works *I* was interested in, and so poor Mugellini was

⁵⁵¹ The designations of the individual works come from Busoni, ed., *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, Introduction.

⁵⁵² Rudolf Steglich, ed., *J. S. Bach, Inventionen und Sinfonien* (München: G. Henle Verlag, 1979).

landed with the cast-offs'.⁵⁵³ That Busoni was familiar with the Toccata can be deduced from his footnote to the Prelude in F-sharp major:

1) With this Prelude begins a little series of "elementary" review-studies, with which the two following fugues may also be classed. After these we would recommend, as a closing exercise, the 6-16 Fugue in Bach's *D*-major Toccata (Bischoff's edition, Vol. 1, N^o 6), which affords a decidedly difficult task in "repeated notes".— The 16th-note before the quarter-note must not be detached, for that would give too great weight to this "lightest syllable"; it ought rather to be struck very gently, and slurred over, as it were, to the succeeding note, which can be effected without trouble by employing the given fingering.

Example 4.2.2. Footnote to Prelude no. 13 in F-sharp major

Considered by Busoni to be 'decidedly difficult', it seems to me appropriate to place the D major Toccata as the next step after the Well-tempered Clavier in Busoni's progressive school.⁵⁵⁴ An original work for keyboard, it aptly bridges the gap between the Well-tempered Clavier and Busoni's virtuoso transcriptions.

Tracing my own pianistic development through studying my old scores, which contain both my own markings as well as those by my former teachers, has been an interesting and exciting process. I have tried to capture here in writing some of the thoughts behind those earlier markings, as well as how I now perform the pieces. This is done through a systematic process in which I go through the elements of performance that are outlined in Chapter 2 of this thesis:

Slurring and articulation

Fingering

Ornamentation and embellishment

Dynamics

Pedal use

Tempo markings, mood, and expression

Tempo flexibility

As Busoni argues, it is impossible to see these performance indications as separate from one another. For this reason, I will present all musical indications and how they affect my interpretation in an integrated way by discussing all of them at once.

In this section, I will be working from three different perspectives, to make clear to the reader my development through my work on this thesis:

⁵⁵³ Petri relayed this anecdote to Sitsky, which is quoted in Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*, p. 178.

⁵⁵⁴ Busoni's *Hochschule* only consisted of works he had edited himself.

Young Jasper (2009-17): the pianist before this thesis, mostly unacquainted with Busoni, at times wayward, guided by my teachers and recordings. This perspective will be represented mostly by my own scores.

Reverential Jasper (2017-19): the pianist during the early stages of this thesis, fully inspired by Busoni, following his markings to the minutest detail. This perspective will be represented by Busoni's interpretative editions and my (earlier) commentary on it.

Autonomous Jasper (2020-22): the pianist during the later stages of this thesis and beyond, informed by the work done, who is stronger at making his own performance choices. This perspective will be represented either by additions or changes to Busoni's editions or my own scores. It is further represented by the recordings which will be discussed at greater length in Chapter 5.

The findings of the final perspective will then form the basis for my own considerations of the seven performance elements in the conclusion of this section.

I have found it unnecessary in this section to analyse every piece in depth, believing that it would lead to repetition. Unless I explicitly state otherwise, it can be assumed that a solution provided for a technical or musical problem is to be repeated similarly throughout the rest of a piece.

Invention no. 6 in E major, BWV 777

My old notebooks detail that the first time I played this piece in lessons was on 24 February 2009, and the last time I played it was on 17 March 2009, for a total of four weekly lessons. My teacher and I usually spent three to four weeks on one Invention; the same goes for the Inventions I studied before the E major Invention:

No. 8 in F major

No. 14 in B-flat major

No. 1 in C major

No. 4 in D minor

No. 10 in G major

No. 13 in A minor

I was thus not entirely new to the concept of the Inventions and their style. I only studied one more Invention after the E major (no. 9 in F minor) with my first teacher, before moving on to the Sinfonias. Later, during my Undergraduate studies at the Utrecht Conservatoire, inspired by Heinrich Neuhaus's ideas for technical practice in his book *The Art of Piano Playing*, I routinely practised all the Inventions in double octaves.⁵⁵⁵

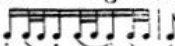
I learnt the Inventions and Sinfonias from the G. Henle revised edition edited by Rudolf Steglich, with fingering by Hans-Martin Theopold (München: G. Henle Verlag, 1979). Score fragments presented in this part which are not from the Busoni edition will be from this edition instead.⁵⁵⁶ The additional markings are either my own or made by my first teacher. Beyond the basic fingering in the left-hand part in the third bar, there are no own fingerings in my copy from when I first studied this piece. Given the stage of my training at that point, I would have likely used the fingering given by the editor, and in this case will use those as representing my younger self.

In the following examples, I will firstly discuss the large-scale interpretation of the piece, before focusing on some small-scale aspects such as embellishment and pedal use.

⁵⁵⁵ Heinrich Neuhaus, *The Art of Piano Playing*, trans. by Barrie & Jenkins Ltd. (London: Kahn & Averill, 1993), p. 126.

⁵⁵⁶ In the examples, I will explicitly refer to which edition is presented: Henle or Busoni. Where my current interpretation (post-research) is indicated, this is clearly signposted.



1) This figure, according to the editor's view, should be made strongly rhythmic, not to legato, and should be free from that modern elegance which is most of all unsuited to the Bach style. The old fashioned phrasing:  by which the two 32nd notes are generally hurried in tempo, is therefore to be discarded.



2) Only through the prescribed use of the pedal is the legato of the upper voice to be attained.

Example 4.2.3. Invention no. 6 in E major, bars 1-7 (top two examples: Henle/Busoni) and 21-24 (bottom: Busoni)

My teacher recommended me to play the quavers in both hands with a legato touch, indicated here by the slur. In her hand, the slur not only indicated grouping, but generally also a legato touch. In Busoni's edition, the left hand is to be played legato (which Busoni clarifies in the second footnote), while the right hand is marked with staccato dots under a slur. The rest of the slurs in Busoni's edition over this thematic element are as they appear in the left hand in bars 5-7 (see bottom example).

I now play the theme slightly more detached than the left hand, which is more like Busoni's notation. I find this detachment helps to bring out the difference between the theme and its accompanying countersubject; playing both parts legato, as I did when I first learnt this piece, does not create enough of a difference for me and does not allow the theme to stand out sufficiently. Furthermore, it seems to me rather flat in expression compared to my current mix of touches.

While the fingering for the theme in the Henle edition requires fewer changes of position, I find Busoni's fingering for the right hand to be much more comfortable for the type of touch required. Busoni's fingering allows for a more compact hand, which gives me more control in touch than the alternative in Henle's edition. However, in the demisemiquavers, throughout the entire piece I find the changes of fingers in Busoni's edition too fussy, and myself adopt a fingering which, except for the 3-2 or 2-1 combination, relies more on what Busoni calls 'parallel fingerings'.⁵⁵⁷

In the past, I played these demisemiquaver figures marked with slurs strictly in time, and not hurried in tempo, as Busoni writes would have been the '[old]-fashioned phrasing'. They would have been played with a legato touch, which is different from Busoni's view of a 'strongly rhythmic, not to[o] legato' touch which is 'free from that modern elegance'. As these figures are still part of the theme, I now articulate them similarly, though slightly more detached (non legato), while adhering to the break between the semiquavers and demisemiquavers my teacher indicated.

In the right-hand legato line, starting in bar 5, Busoni has given a standard legato fingering for the E-major scale; I now skip the crossing-under of the thumb by crossing over the fifth finger with my third finger instead. To my mind, this allows both left and right-hand countersubjects to have the same grouping of five and three notes.

⁵⁵⁷ For example, 5-3, 4-2, or 3-1 (Busoni, ed., *Two and Three Part Inventions*, Preface).



Example 4.2.4. Invention no. 6 in E major, bars 1-10 (Henle, with current interpretation)

In terms of dynamics, my teacher marked *dynamiek* (dynamics) in quotation marks; she further marked the words *timing* and *zeggingskracht* (expressiveness).⁵⁵⁸ In the musical text, she indicated *veel klank* (sonorous, with full sound). While I remember that she was not too fond of a wide range of dynamics in Bach, a distinction was always made between the more expressive theme and the accompanying countersubjects. Busoni has marked a similar piano *espressivo* for the right-hand theme and gives an additional opening hairpin under the left-hand countersubject, which is repeated for the right hand in bar 6. I now play the opening theme mezzo-piano, with piano for the left hand: the theme is thus given slightly more emphasis, which I feel is important due to the proximity of the hands in the middle of the keyboard. Without this dynamic difference, both parts would be too similar, which would negatively affect the expression of the polyphony. At the closing of the thematic phrase (at the demisemiquavers), I slightly decrease the dynamic level in the right hand to get to the required piano for the countersubject in bar 5.

My first teacher never gave metronome marks or abstract tempo markings in Bach; only once (in the Prelude and Fugue in C-sharp major) did she mark a *ritenuto* towards the end of the piece. I recall that in this Invention my tempo would not be too fast (MM around quaver = 88-92). Busoni marks *Allegretto piacevole, quasi Andantino*; I believe the proposed metronome

⁵⁵⁸ The Dutch word *zeggingskracht* is hard to translate: while expressiveness is a close translation, one uses this compound word to describe the eloquence of particularly good narrators who effectively use the power (*kracht*) of the words they use (*zegging*).

marking to match this indication quite well as a lower range, though I now play this piece slightly faster (*Allegretto*) with more flexibility in tempo for expressive purposes.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for J.S. Bach's Invention No. 6 in E major, comparing Henle's and Busoni's editions. The top system (bars 6-17) is Henle's edition, and the bottom system (bars 8-15) is Busoni's edition. The Henle edition includes a handwritten note 'net non legato' in the left hand. The Busoni edition includes dynamic markings (p, mf, f) and articulation markings (dim., legg., ptranquillo).

Example 4.2.5. Invention no. 6 in E major, bars 6-20 (top: Henle, bottom: Busoni)

The break my teacher marked between the quavers in the right hand in bar 8 (top example) suggests a similar articulation to that in Busoni's edition. In the left hand from bar 11 onwards, my teacher wrote '*net non legato*' (almost non legato) – this touch would be closer to legato than the staccato indicated by Busoni in bar 12 but would have been the same throughout, which is different from Busoni's phrasing; Busoni instead gives slurs over the first three quavers. The

break before the demisemiquavers in both hands as marked in my score in bar 16 may be quite like Busoni's staccato semiquavers in the left hand, although I would have played these semiquavers with a more legato touch.

I now use an articulation that more closely matches Busoni's: the right-hand part is clearly more important than the accompanying left-hand voice, which is why I play the right hand slightly detached. While I agree with my teacher that the continuation of the left-hand part should be played detached, I would not mark this with staccato as Busoni has done; instead, I mark dashes, which to me indicate less separation. I do use a more legato touch over the first three quavers that accompany the short thematic motifs, which Busoni appears to suggest with his slur. The semiquavers in the left hand in bar 16 of this example I play detached, but not staccato, as this touch best matches the non legato of the demisemiquavers.

Busoni's *subito mezzo-forte* in bar 9 I find too sudden a change from the piano; I play mezzo-piano, while keeping the opening hairpin for the left-hand slurred quavers. Additionally, I take back the dynamic slightly on the descending broken-chord figuration in the right hand and keep the accompanying left hand quiet.

While I agree with the opening hairpin that implies a gradual crescendo on the third statement of this motif, I instead extend the crescendo until the first beat of bar 16, reaching a mezzo-forte which I keep until bar 18, where I then choose to diminuendo towards the double bar. I find this crescendo to be more decisive in direction than Busoni's markings: the early diminuendo in his edition to me feels slightly lacking in expression. The hairpins I add in bar 18-20 in the right-hand part additionally show a slight opening-closing of the phrase, while the left hand gradually diminishes to piano:



Example 4.2.6. Invention no. 6 in E major, bars 6-20 (Henle, with current interpretation)

The hairpins I have marked in bars 9-10 are accompanied by a slight tempo flexibility: I increase the pulse towards the middle of the phrase, before releasing the tension over the non legato figure. In the crescendo in bars 13-15 I also slightly move forward, before relaxing at the demisemiquavers in bar 16. Before the first division, I do not slow down (Busoni does not mark *ritenuto* either) as I find the demisemiquavers in bars 18-19 otherwise lose in expression.

The fingering I use on the last demisemiquavers in bar 8 (5-3-5) may be substituted by a stronger combination (such as 2-3-2), but this would cause an unnecessary shift of the hand, which to my mind suggests a different musical gesture: my consistent position of the hand, through the use of the given fingering, mentally groups the demisemiquavers into one phrase.

The transition from the fifth finger to the fourth finger in the left hand in bar 9 causes a natural break in phrasing, which is repeated in the next four bars. In the right hand, no fingering is given in either edition; I use either 5-3-2 or 5-4-2 on these figures, depending on the notes, which allows me to use flatter fingers on the black keys; for the demisemiquavers in bars 10 and 12 I use a technically more secure parallel fingering (4-2-4 or 5-3-5) instead of Busoni's 4-3-5.



Example 4.2.7. Invention no. 6 in E major, bars 11-12 (Henle, with current interpretation)

As there is no embellishment present in either edition, there is no need to discuss different possibilities of interpretation here. An example of idiomatic embellishment that I use (which could be adopted for a repeat, or in general) is the basic mordent on a longer note, which imitates Bach's figures in demisemiquavers. The filling-up of thirds, such as in the above example, is similar to J. S. Bach's own embellishment in a later version of the Invention in C major:



Example 4.2.8. Invention no. 1 in C major, bars 1-2 (J. S. Bach)⁵⁵⁹



2) Only through the prescribed use of the pedal is the legato of the upper voice to be attained.

Example 4.2.9. Invention no. 6 in E major, bars 21-24 (Busoni)

When I studied this Invention, I would have certainly not used any pedal, either damper or *una corda*; any indication of either pedal is missing in my score. I now use the pedal proposed by Busoni (Example 4.2.9); this pedal use functions as a substitute for a missing finger.⁵⁶⁰ I now

⁵⁵⁹ D-B Mus.ms. Bach P 610 (see Table 2.0.3).

⁵⁶⁰ Or rather, a missing keyboard.

pedal any case where the same note must be repeated in quick succession in this way to aid the clarity of the voices.



The two-part song—perhaps an intermezzo for flute and violincello in a Pastoral - Cantata—

Example 4.2.10. Invention no. 6 in E major, bars 39-43 (Busoni)

I do not use the second pedal indicated by Busoni in bar 42. If interpreted as an ‘intermezzo for flute and violincello [*sic*]’, the pedal seems to me out of place: I would not expect a cellist to sustain the G# quaver through the semiquaver rest, which would be the sounding result of the pedal.

Example 4.2.11. Invention no. 6 in E major, bars 33-44 (Busoni)

As the part presented in Example 4.2.11 is the climactic part of the B-section of the piece, I choose to push the tempo slightly at the opening hairpin starting in bar 37 leading to the forte *energico* on the Neapolitan chord. I then slow down on the closing hairpin before the recapitulation at the transition back into the A-section of the bipartite form.



Example 4.2.12. Invention no. 6 in E major, bars 51-62 (Busoni, with current interpretation)

Whether Busoni imagined there to be a slowing down on the *molto espressivo* (bar 55) in this phrase or not is not otherwise indicated; in any case, I perform the extra emphasis on the *forzando* $f^{\#}$ in the right hand (bar 58) by pushing the tempo towards this note and slowing down slightly through Busoni's closing hairpin. I do not add a significant *ritenuto* in the final bars: I find additional slowing down in these bars not convincing as I feel a *ritenuto* diminishes the playful character of the demisemiquavers.

While the *una corda* pedal is not indicated at all by Busoni, I use it in the final few bars of the piece in the repeat, at the same point where Busoni changes the left-hand articulation from a slurred legato to staccato semiquavers. This pedal is a welcome change of colour on the staccato notes after the more connected touch throughout this section.

Sinfonia no. 3 in D major, BWV 789

analyse — harmonische → Codensparten
— vorm

SINFONIA 3

expositive Thema in D, start op tert (F#)

BWV 789

start op tert (C#) in A

work Thema middenstem (mt 2-3)

Example 4.2.13. Sinfonia no. 3 in D major, bars 1-3 and surrounding notes (Henle)

The Sinfonia in D major is the first Sinfonia I studied. I first brought it to a lesson on 12 May 2009 and appear to have had my last lesson on it on 26 May 2009. The next two pieces I studied were the G minor and E minor Sinfonias, after which I moved on to the Prelude and Fugue in C-sharp major from the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier.

As we moved on to more difficult pieces, my teacher placed more importance on harmonic and formal analysis. The markings on the score (Example 4.2.13), which discuss the harmony, aspects of the theme, and formal points in Dutch, are my own. These show that I was aware of the basic form of the piece; on top of that, it appears my teacher and I worked out a general phrasing of the theme together. I also added some of my own fingerings which will be analysed below. Dynamic markings, embellishments, and pedal markings are missing from my score; suggestions for these will be given from my current perspective.

Example 4.2.14. Sinfonia no. 3 in D major, bars 1-3 (top two examples: Henle/Busoni) and 6-7 (bottom: Henle)

My former phrasing of the theme is similar to Busoni's: while both have short slurs over the intervals of the second, Busoni additionally gives staccato dots on these quavers. I would have certainly played these short slurs legato with a strong-weak articulation. The two semiquavers followed by the quaver at the start of the theme are not slurred at first in my copy, but as can be seen in the bottom example, later in the left-hand statement in bars 6-7 my teacher has appended this slur as well and has further marked a break in phrasing for the downward leap of a sixth.

Where Busoni has marked staccato dots on the quavers, I would have played these non legato, abiding by the idea that any note of longer duration than a semiquaver would be played in a detached manner.⁵⁶¹

Today I play this theme as Busoni marked it, without playing the short slurs legato (adding a staccato dot to each quaver); furthermore, I play the quavers in the left hand more

⁵⁶¹ It appears I first encountered this idea during my study of the Invention in A minor, where my teacher wrote 'all quavers to be played non legato'.

staccato than I would previously. I feel this adds to the light and joyful character of the piece: I now associate my earlier short slurs over the quavers, which were played with a legato touch, with a heavier character.

Busoni's opening dynamic is mezzo-forte; presumably, the right hand is played slightly louder, but this is not made explicit in the text. The countersubject in semiquavers, which enters in bar 3, is marked piano, while the theme in the alto voice is marked mezzo-forte. I now play the left hand in the first three bars mezzo-piano, placing slightly more emphasis on the right-hand part (mezzo-forte) as it is the more prominent material.

The tempo marking Busoni gives is *Allegretto*; in my youth, I would have played this piece at the approximate metronome marking of crotchet = 76. I believe that a much faster tempo than this makes some of the intended articulation difficult to play and causes the character of the piece to be more *agitato* than *giocoso*.

Example 4.2.15. Sinfonia no. 3 in D major, bars 1-5 (Henle)

As I have indicated some of my own fingerings in my score, it is interesting to analyse them now to discover what may have been my reasoning behind them. It appears that I wanted the theme to have a consistent fingering, choosing to model mine after the editor's proposed 3-4-5 for the upward third; at the end of bar 3, I disagreed with the editor's proposed second finger on the c#", and use my middle finger instead to keep a consistent fingering: this does however imply an earlier release of the high A, as I cannot stretch my fourth finger to play the following d" without releasing the a" just after the c#. Busoni, in his edition, suggests 2-4-5 for this rising third, which suits smaller hands as well. In bar 4, I again cross out the editor's suggestions, adhering to my own consistent fingering. I now stick mostly to my old fingerings, though I

change my left-hand fingering in bar 3 and my right-hand fingering in bar 5 (third beat) as I have discovered more comfortable fingerings through the work done in this thesis; these will be discussed in Example 4.2.17 below.



Example 4.2.16. Sinfonia no. 3 in D major, bars 4-7 (Busoni)

I believe the slurs in bar 4 to be a misprint and uncharacteristic for Busoni: firstly, in the Inventions and Sinfonias Busoni never adds a staccato at the beginning of a slur (unless all notes are given a staccato dot); generally, Busoni marks staccato dots at the end of a slur.⁵⁶² Secondly, where appropriate, Busoni generally slurs semiquavers from the second semiquaver and not from the first.⁵⁶³ Thirdly, the slurs throughout this piece are inconsistent: Busoni normally marks consistent slurring throughout.

When the main theme appears in the left hand in bar 6 it is again marked mezzo-forte. An exact dynamic of the countersubject in the right hand is omitted, but it is assumed this would be played piano.

⁵⁶² See the first note of bar 5 that ends the slur.

⁵⁶³ See the first slur in bar 6, and the last two slurs in bar 7.



Example 4.2.17. Sinfonia no. 3 in D major, bars 1-5 (Henle, with current interpretation)

A more likely consistent slurring would be as I have given in the above example, and this is also how I phrase it now: from the second semiquaver to the first or third beat of the bar, with a slight break between phrases.⁵⁶⁴

In the right hand in bar 5 I have marked a third finger on the c#" in the alto part; I remember practising this passage with a variety of fingerings before settling on this one, and I almost certainly did not follow the editor's suggestion of 1-2-1-3 following this third finger, choosing 3-2-1-2-3 instead.

In the left hand in bar 3 I use a fingering that avoids the weak 3-4-3 I used earlier: crossing the middle finger over the fourth finger seems more convenient to me now. Additionally, I use the fifth finger on the A in bar 5, which is a more Busonian fingering that creates a natural break between the quavers and semiquavers; this fingering to me also gives more momentum to this left-hand phrase which prepares us for the statement of the theme in the left hand in the next bar (see Example 4.2.18).

⁵⁶⁴ Indicated in bars 4-5 with the staccato dot on the final note under the slur.

The image displays three musical examples for piano, arranged vertically. The top example shows bars 6-7 of the first movement of Beethoven's Symphony No. 3 in D major, with Busoni's fingering. The middle example shows the same bars with a current interpretation's fingering. The bottom example shows bars 35-38 of the first movement of Beethoven's Fugue No. 4 in C-sharp minor, with Busoni's fingering. The bottom example includes the text 'Contrasubject I. Counter-subject I.', 'ruhig.', 'sempre mezza voce', and 'A.II.'.

Example 4.2.18. Sinfonia no. 3 in D major, bars 6-7 (top and middle examples: Busoni and Henle, with current interpretation) and Fugue no. 4 in C-sharp minor, bars 35-38 (bottom: Busoni)

I find Busoni's fingering in these bars (Example 4.2.18, top example) to be less comfortable than my own suggestion: Busoni's fingering is less efficient in movement and requires special wrist movement to aid the crossing of the fingers. In my solution (middle example) I incorporate two slides of the fourth finger from black to white keys, which makes the fingering more consistent; in my alternative fingering, just the final slide is necessary. I personally use both slides as I find it more convenient than the crossing-over of the fourth finger onto the $f\sharp$. Between slurs, I repeat the second finger which creates a natural break in phrasing, which is similar to Busoni's own fingering for the Fugue in C-sharp minor (bottom example), where the third finger is repeated between phrases.



3) Through this interweaving of two voices the theme can be clearly detected.



The playing of the passage must follow this idea.

Example 4.2.19. Sinfonia no. 3 in D major, bars 10-14 (Busoni)

The theme in these bars (Example 4.2.19), which is pointed out by Busoni, went unnoticed when I studied this piece. Busoni urges that the ‘playing of the passage must follow this idea’, i.e., the player must have in mind that the theme is to be brought out. This is reflected by the slurring indicated at 3) at the end of bar 12; additionally, earlier in the left hand in bar 11 we can see that Busoni changed the grouping of the semiquavers to fit the snippet of the theme.

I make no changes to the phrasing of this passage as indicated by Busoni, as I feel it to be more convincing than how I would previously have played it.⁵⁶⁵ On top of this, I slightly emphasise the thematic notes in the alto part over the surrounding semiquavers. I find it important, in any case, not to underplay the alto part here, as the ‘interweaving of two voices’ can very easily be lost.

Busoni’s articulation for the left-hand quavers changes as well from a straight staccato to a slurred staccato, most likely because of the *dolce* indication in the quieter dynamic of piano; in the forte at the end of this example, this slur is omitted. I find Busoni’s indication of *dolce* to be appropriate, but I lower the dynamic level for the theme here, finding the implied mezzo-forte a touch too strong.

⁵⁶⁵ I would make hardly any distinction between what is thematic material and what is not, especially in the soprano line, which led to both semiquaver parts in the right hand not having any particular direction.



Example 4.2.20. Sinfonia no. 3 in D major, bars 8-15 (Busoni)

Busoni marks several opening hairpins over the phrase starting in bar 8 (Example 4.2.20, left hand), which are indicated three more times before the double bar; though piano is then indicated for the countersubject and *dolce* is given for the theme, in the final line we can see that shortly after the forte on the F-sharp minor the theme is marked mezzo-forte in the left hand.

Instead of Busoni's crescendo, I opt here for a gradual diminuendo, playing the F-sharp minor cadence not forte but piano. My reasoning for this is twofold; firstly, up to this point the piece has been modulating through major keys in a mezzo-forte dynamic, and I believe a piano dynamic adds more colour to the first appearance of the minor; secondly, as we are now descending to the lowest point in both soprano and alto parts in the entire piece, a more subdued dynamic seems more appropriate to me.

Although not indicated by Busoni, before the first division, I very slightly move the phrase forward where Busoni marks the opening hairpins, before retaking a steady pulse after the division in bar 10.



Example 4.2.21. Sinfonia no. 3 in D major, bars 16-20 (Busoni)

At the end of the *stretto* in bar 18 (Example 4.2.21) I stretch the final two beats before continuing *a tempo* on the thematic statement in the left hand in bar 19. I opt for the same crescendo that Busoni has given, reaching a forte on the pedal point in the bass. The countersubject here could also be played slightly louder (mezzo-piano) to accompany the forte in the theme.

Busoni does not mark pedal use in this piece; likewise, I do not see any place where I need to use pedal. Furthermore, the general detached touch may not benefit much from even small touches of pedal. If deemed necessary, the pedal may aid the bringing out of voices, for example in the *stretto* in bars 14-18, but unlike in the more intricate Fugues (such as the Fugue in A-flat major, which will be discussed below), this can easily be achieved by the fingers alone.

No ornamentation is given in either the Henle or Busoni edition. Reference is made in the Henle edition to ornamentation found in a copy of one of Bach's students: Wilhelm Friedemann Bach later came into possession of this manuscript (which was copied by Bernhard Christian Kayser).⁵⁶⁶ The common ornaments include the mordent on the f# in the theme as well as the trill on the c# in the quavers in the left hand (Example 4.2.22). Whether the small, curved lines indicate multiple *appoggiature* is unclear, and their true meaning is not known to me.

⁵⁶⁶ D-B Mus.ms. Bach P 219 (see Table 2.0.3). To my knowledge, no added ornaments appear in any other copy, and it is not known whether Kayser added them after a lesson with J. S. Bach. At the very least, they give an idea of what may have been conventionally acceptable ornamentation in this piece.



Example 4.2.22. Sinfonia no. 3 in D major, bars 1-3 (left, B. C. Kayser) and parts of Bach's 'Explication' table (right)⁵⁶⁷

Besides a common mordent on the fourth beat of bar 8 (not pictured) on the a in the left hand, Kayser gives two turns in the right hand: one on the c#" in bar 16 and one on the f#" in bar 20 (Example 4.2.23):



Example 4.2.23. Sinfonia no. 3 in D major, bars 16 (top) and 20-21 (bottom) (Henle, B. C. Kayser)

If one were to repeat the ornamentation of the theme (Example 4.2.22) in a Busonian manner throughout the piece, I believe this makes the theme overly fussy, which is why I refrain from doing so; it also creates additional fingering problems, especially in the denser parts of the piece. The turn in bar 20 (Example 4.2.23) I do use in my own performance, but I am not so sure about the turn in bar 16, as I feel it obscures the entrance of the theme that follows by drawing too much attention to the ending of the soprano phrase.

⁵⁶⁷ Alfred Dörffel, ed., *Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe* (Band 45.1: Instrumentalwerke, Ergänzung) (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1897), p. 214.

Prelude and Fugue no. 13 in F-sharp major, BWV 858

I started studying this Prelude and Fugue during the spring of 2019 while I was working on the section on dynamics. I was familiar with the piece, having heard it regularly in the classroom of my former teacher at the Utrecht Conservatoire. I learnt it completely from the Busoni edition without consulting any other source material, attempting to follow his indications to the best of my ability. I felt that this piece would be a great exploration of the variety of touches Busoni marks.⁵⁶⁸

During the learning of this piece I tried to incorporate as much as possible Busoni's technique of crossing longer fingers over each other to avoid the thumb crossing under. Furthermore, the change of fingers to achieve the articulation that Busoni indicates has sometimes led me to choose fingerings that I would not have adopted had I not done this research.

Prelude XIII.
Andantino tranquillo ma scorrevole ($\frac{4}{8}$).

The image shows a musical score for the Prelude XIII, BWV 858, in F-sharp major, 12/16 time. The score is for the first 16 measures. It includes fingerings (1-5), dynamics (p, p subito), and articulation (sempre p, delicatamente e legato, poco). There are also handwritten annotations like 'N.B. NB' and '8) (tr)'. The score is written for piano and includes a treble and bass staff.

1) With this Prelude begins a little series of "elementary" review-studies, with which the two following fugues may also be classed. After these we would recommend, as a closing exercise, the 6-16 Fugue in Bach's *D*-major Toccata (Bischoff's edition, Vol. 1, N^o 6), which affords a decidedly difficult task in "repeated notes".— The 16th-note before the quarter-note must not be detached, for that would give too great weight to this "lightest syllable"; it ought rather to be struck very gently, and slurred over, as it were, to the succeeding note, which can be effected without trouble by employing the given fingering.

Example 4.2.24. Prelude no. 13 in F-sharp major, bars 1-7

⁵⁶⁸ In this subsection, as well as the following subsection on the Prelude and Fugue in A-flat major, all examples are from the Busoni edition; additionally, all examples contain my own indications from when I learnt this piece. Occasionally, I have marked some changes to my earlier decisions, which will be discussed in the main text.

Busoni's tempo marking of the Prelude is *Andantino tranquillo ma scorrevole*. Busoni further gives the indication of 4/8 (though the piece is in 12/16), perhaps urging the player to feel the piece in quavers subdivided into semiquaver triplets. A metronome mark of quaver (dotted quaver) = 66 is a good approximation of my own tempo for this piece, though of course my tempo is not perfectly steady throughout.

In the footnote in Example 4.2.24 Busoni writes that the semiquaver before the crotchet is best played with the given fingering to avoid undue stress on the semiquaver. It is hard to argue against the ease with which this finger change achieves the intended result more consistently than a finger repetition, which is why I use the finger change on this figure.

Busoni further marks *sempre piano, delicatamente e legato*, yet beyond the slur that groups certain motifs (including the theme) together, there is no further indication that may give a clue to the degree of legato required by Busoni. I believe that playing the entire piece from start to finish with a legato touch is rather flat in expression: while it suits the slurred motifs, I find the semiquaver-quaver figures sound more appealing when played with a slightly non legato touch throughout.

Example 4.2.25. Prelude no. 13 in F-sharp major, bars 8-15

An example of my new fingering approach is the crossing of the second finger over the fourth in the left hand in bar 9 (Example 4.2.25). This long line towards the D-sharp minor of bar 12 (second line) is reflected by the minimal use of thumb-crossings, as the use of the thumb in bar 9 to my mind subdivides the phrase. The unconventional fingering inspired by Busoni (fourth finger on B followed by the crossing over of the second finger) now feels more natural to me. Later in bar 11, all five fingers can be used consecutively to minimise the hand movement required.

Example 4.2.26. Prelude no. 13 in F-sharp major, bars 4-7

Though I would normally stick to the ornamentation that is given in any Urtext edition, while learning this piece I followed Busoni's reasoning and did not play any of the trills. On the modern piano, the natural decay of any given tone is of course much slower than on an instrument known to Bach, and if one of the functions of the trill was to prolong the sounding note, this is of course unnecessary on my instrument. Busoni's omission of trills also aids the flowing character (*scorrevole*) he ascribes to this piece. As I grew used to Busoni's version, I now prefer this piece without any ornamentation on the piano; if I were to reintroduce the ornamentation, the trills would be played with a very gentle touch (*dolcissimo*).

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Example 4.2.27. Prelude no. 13 in F-sharp major, bars 8-23

In the Prelude, the general dynamic level is rather quiet (Busoni marks *delicatamente*); the loudest dynamic is a quasi forte at the climax of the second part in bar 20. The opening dynamic is sempre piano, with Busoni marking two further *subito* pianos; throughout, there are a multitude of paired hairpins that generally follow the phrasing. The longest hairpin spans two bars in the coda of the piece before a *subito* piano is marked.

Busoni marks a closing hairpin at the transition into the second part of the Prelude (bar 11). A slight holding back of the tempo here would not be out of place; as we know, Busoni often manipulates the tempo at these cadential points, especially at formal divisions. Following then are two further increases in tension, on which I push and pull slightly; the main pushing of the tempo is saved for the lead-up to the quasi forte, which is the actual climax of this section (bar 20). After this climax, I slow down on the closing hairpin: as I have built up tension through a continuous pushing of the tempo, this release is necessary; furthermore, it allows for a smooth continuation in the *tranquillo* character of the Prelude.

Fuga XIII, a 3.
1 **Allegretto piacevole e scherzoso.** ^{NB)}
N.B.

N.B. The terms "piacevole" and "scherzoso" are divided, in their application to the Exposition and the first episode; but are united, from the second part onward, in a continuous contrasting play.

Example 4.2.28. Fugue no. 13 in F-sharp major, bars 1-6 (top) and 13-14 (bottom)

In the Fugue Busoni marks one grouping slur over the first half of the theme (Example 4.2.28) and gives two further slurs for the first four quavers of the theme as well as the trill and its resolution (the two semiquavers connecting these parts are not slurred except for the grouping slur over the phrase); the second half of the theme is marked with tenuto dashes. The theme is slurred in the same way throughout the piece. My first thought was to play the first four quavers with a legato touch, before playing the two semiquavers non legato, and taking the trill again with a quieter legato touch.

In the development of the piece (see bars 13-14, bottom example) the fragment of the theme that is played in quick succession (the first four quavers) is marked consistently with staccato dots under a slur: a more detached touch. Whether this has a bearing on the execution of the theme is the question; in my opinion, using the legato touch in the thematic statements as an exceptional touch (including the two semiquavers that precede the trill) throughout the piece works very well. Much of the rest of the piece can be played with a more detached touch,

which achieves the division between the *piacevole* and *scherzoso* that Busoni marks in the tempo indication and the accompanying footnote.

In the Fugue, an opening dynamic is not given (the expression *dolce* is marked), with the first dynamic marking being the mezzo-forte in the first episode in bar 7. This appears to be the basic dynamic in Busoni's edition of the piece, with the countersubjects marked piano in the coda; the loudest indications are a *più forte* in the development as well as a *forte* in the final bars. I play the opening theme piano; with every following thematic statement, I increase the dynamic level slightly to arrive at the marked mezzo-forte in the first episode.

As a tempo marking, Busoni gives *Allegretto piacevole e scherzoso*. In my performance, the tempo is approximately crotchet = 60; as in the Prelude, I feel that a faster pulse does not give the player enough time to explore the various shadings in this piece.



1) Where the trill is a constituent element of the theme, no variants are permissible in its repetitions, for such would be an alteration of the theme itself. Consequently, that form of the trill should be chosen which can be most faithfully retained even in the most intricate combinations. Perhaps the most plastic example of this kind is to be found in the concluding fugue of Beethoven's Sonata Op. 106:



Example 4.2.29. Fugue no. 13 in F-sharp major, bars 1-2

When preceded by a descending line, Busoni always trills from the main note. In the section on ornamentation, I already commented on Busoni's reasoning for the form of the trill as detailed in his footnote; not only is the written-out trill consistently retainable throughout the piece, I believe it also sounds better in this form than the repetition of the d#" upper auxiliary as starting note of the trill. I have chosen, in my own interpretation, Busoni's presentation of the thematic trill here.

7 episode

2) *quasi staccato*

mf leggiermente

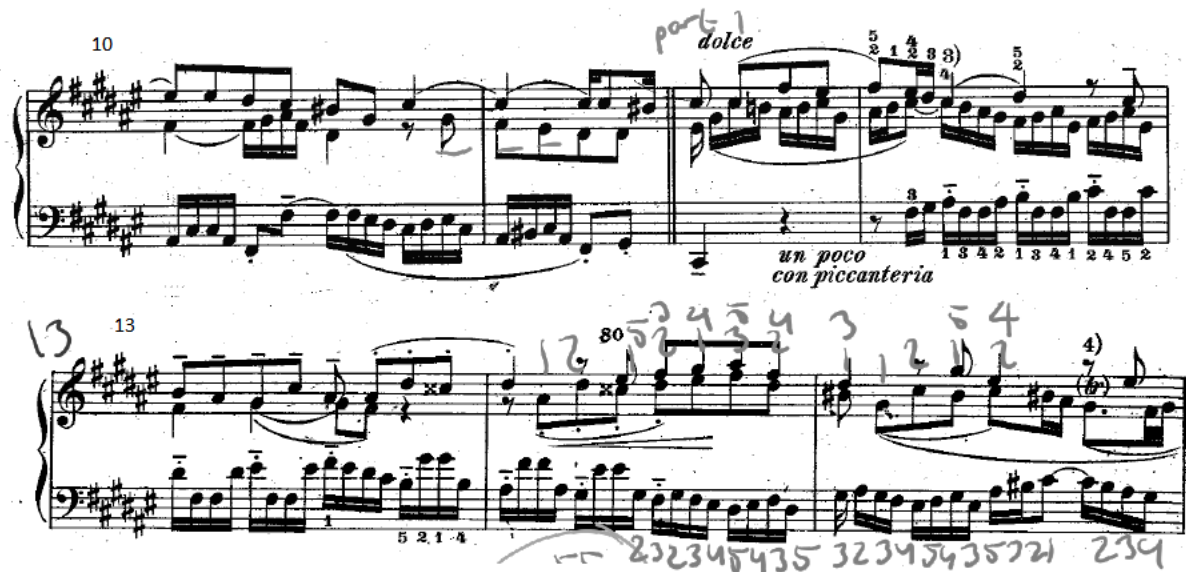
quasi staccato

2) Take special care not to yield to the temptation to phrase "trochaically" ; the proper phrasing here is "iambic" (syncopated);

Example 4.2.30. Fugue no. 13 in F-sharp major, bars 7-9

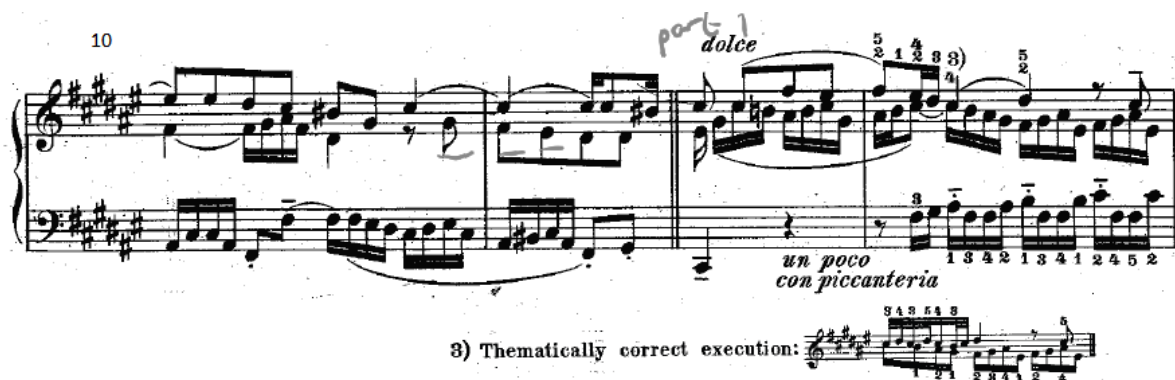
This *scherzoso* episode is to be played in a more detached manner as indicated by the numerous indications of *quasi staccato*; Busoni warns against the 'temptation' to phrase the semiquavers with short slurs. Throughout, I find that these semiquavers can be further grouped with slurs as indicated in the final bar of this example (by harmonic function), while keeping intact the detached touch marked by Busoni. I play the slurred soprano line in bar 8 with a more legato touch to clearly distinguish it from the alto line which is played *quasi staccato*.

Busoni's insistence on changing the fingering for repeated notes here, as evidenced by the left-hand fingering in bar 9, necessitates the unnatural fingering for the right hand in bar 8. Of course, Busoni could not use the fourth finger for the $d\sharp$ in his fingering, as the changing of the fingers for the repeated $f\sharp$ means the 2-4 stretch from $f\sharp$ to $d\sharp$ would be too large for most hands. My own fingering is simpler and allows for both the legato touch I use for the top line as well as the *quasi staccato* touch for the alto part.



Example 4.2.31. Fugue no. 13 in F-sharp major, bars 10-15

In the development (which starts after the double bar in bar 11) a variation on the *scherzoso* motif sometimes acts as an accompanying countersubject to the theme; Busoni marks it '*un poco con piccanteria*' (with spiciness) and further points out the ascending and descending line with staccato dots and tenuto dashes. Extra emphasis is required, at least on the marked notes; I also slightly mark the notes that precede the articulated semiquavers, and I increase the dynamic level as the motif rises while getting quieter as the motif descends. I find that this adds to the playfulness of this developmental section.



Example 4.2.32. Fugue no. 13 in F-sharp major, bars 10-12

Without the trill, this statement feels rather bare; following Busoni's reasoning, in my performance I include the trill as given in the footnote.



Example 4.2.33. Fugue no. 13 in F-sharp major, bars 13-19

The fingering I devised for the left hand in bars 14-16 completely avoids the crossing of the thumb; the only change I make now is to play the first $a\sharp$ in the left hand in bar 16 with the thumb instead of the second finger. To my mind this fingering causes the phrase to feel less fragmented: I phrase it in two parts, with the division of the phrase on the first beat of bar 15 (where the beaming of the semiquavers changes). At first I tried to mirror Busoni's own indication of 5-5 on the cadence at the end of bar 16 in my right-hand fingering in bar 17; though I keep the implied articulation, I now instead cross my third finger over the fourth, which gives me greater technical security. For the detached effect at the end of bar 17, I play the $b\sharp$ with a second finger and repeat this second finger for the $c\sharp$ in the next bar.



Example 4.2.34. Fugue no. 13 in F-sharp major, bars 20-23

The detachment between the closing of the phrase on the $d\sharp$ and the continuation of the thematic motif in the final bar of this example is perfectly captured by Busoni's repeated second finger. To accommodate the right-hand leap from $c\sharp$ to b I use a short touch of pedal here (bar 22) as a substitute for holding down the $c\sharp$ with my second finger, as my hands span is not

large enough to accomplish this stretch without letting go of the c×" or the a#" too early. This pedal also allows me to move my left-hand fourth finger to the e# (as the pedal holds the G# in the bass), to play the cadential figure with the given fingering.

The trill marked on the f#" in bar 22, judging by Busoni's indicated fingering, is given from the main note; I instead play this starting on the upper auxiliary (g#") to fill out the descending line from b" down to d#".

The image shows a handwritten musical score for Fugue no. 13 in F-sharp major, bars 20-35. The score is written on four systems of staves. The first system (bars 20-23) is marked 'part 2' and 'un poco pesante'. The second system (bars 24-27) is marked 'poco a poco dim.'. The third system (bars 28-31) is marked 'coda' and 'dolce'. The fourth system (bars 32-35) is marked 'più risoluto'. There are many fingering numbers and dynamic markings throughout the score.

Example 4.2.35. Fugue no. 13 in F-sharp major, bars 20-35

I slightly push towards the cadential trill in bar 22 (Example 4.2.35) before retaking the tempo: this tempo flexibility is inspired by Busoni's own recorded playing in the Fugue in C major, where in the middle of the *stretto* he slows down significantly on a cadential trill. Similarly, before the coda, I now slow down on the diminuendo before the double bar (bar 27), and then retake the tempo in bar 28. I play the ending of the Fugue, which is marked *più risoluto*, in a straight manner without slowing down, with only a slight break to accommodate the proper placement of the final chord which is implied by Busoni's repeat of the fifth finger from e#" to f#".

Prelude and Fugue no. 17 in A-flat major, BWV 862

I studied this Prelude and Fugue at the same time as the Prelude and Fugue in F-sharp major, learning both pieces solely from the Busoni edition. While studying this piece, I was struck how in Busoni's conception different performance qualities work together to create a whole. For example, the fingering in the Prelude combined with the articulation of staccato notes under short slurs to me shows the level of separation required; in the climax of the Fugue, as Busoni increases the dynamic level, the notes become more detached and articulated.

In a way, the study of this piece inspired the approach to data collection in this thesis: initially, I was looking at how indications functioned on their own and how they may be interpreted; however, in this piece I noticed what seemed to me the interdependency between musical indications that Busoni mentioned, which prompted my search for these connections in other pieces as well.

1

quasi f

ten.

6

3

after Hoffmeister: (I.H.)

9

10

13

gradual?

piu p cresc.

14

2

Example 4.2.36. Prelude no. 17 in A-flat major, bars 1-17

The great variety of touches required for Busoni's conception of this Prelude (Example 4.2.36) is immediately apparent from the opening part:

- Tenuto chords in both hands (first with the written indication *ten.*, later with dashes), which are not arpeggiated.
- The thematic statement, which is marked with staccato dots and slurred under one grouping slur.
- Short slurs over notes articulated with staccato dots. The fingering on the thirds in bars 3-4 shows that these are not played in a legato manner.
- Though the right hand is not articulated in bars 6 and 8, its articulation would presumably be the same as previously indicated; the same goes for the left hand from bar 11 onwards.
- The right hand is slurred in bar 9 against the thematic statement in the left hand; later, the interval of the second is marked with tenuto dashes, which are to be performed by additional leaning on the *ab'* in bar 11 and the *g'* in bar 12.
- From the *f'* in the right hand in bar 13, Busoni uses staccato dots to point out the bottom voice in the right hand.
- Two further grouping slurs are given in bars 16-17: a shorter slur over the ascending third in the right hand, followed by a longer slur that stops before the leap down onto the trill.

The fingering given by Busoni for the right hand in bars 3-4 is the basis for my own articulation for the rest of this Prelude: as the repeated third finger cannot be played with a legato touch, this to me indicates that any combination of notes articulated similarly should not be played with a legato touch either. Following this, the theme is played in a detached manner, wherever it appears, and all short slurs (where staccato dots are given) are played in a detached manner as well.

A straight legato touch in the right hand in bar 9 I find too flat in expression; in my own performance, I use a more legato touch for the ascending fourth (slightly phrasing towards the top note), before playing the broken-chord figuration in a non legato manner. The slur is thus interpreted here as a grouping tool with minimal bearing on the touch.

Busoni's tempo marking for the Prelude is *Allegretto, un poco maestoso*. The playfulness of the figuration in semiquavers would be lost when played at a tempo that is slightly too slow, and at the same time it would feel unnatural to play the opening in a broad,

majestic manner, to then speed up in the semiquavers. An estimation of my pulse is around the metronome mark crotchet = 96-100.

The image displays a musical score for a piano prelude. It consists of two systems of music. The first system, labeled with a '1' at the beginning, covers bars 1 through 5. The right hand plays a series of eighth-note patterns, while the left hand has a 'ten.' (tenth) marking. The second system, labeled with a '6' at the beginning, covers bars 6 through 9. It includes a '3' marking, a 'after Hoffmeister' annotation, and a '(9)' marking. Below the second system, there are two square boxes, likely indicating pedal use.

Example 4.2.37. Prelude no. 17 in A-flat major, bars 1-9

Initially, when learning this Prelude, I used the damper pedal as indicated as I was uncomfortable with the breaks in the right hand created by the movement required to play the next thematic motif. An unfortunate side effect of this type of pedaling however is the added emphasis on the downbeat, which I now avoid (despite the dashes on the alto parts), as I believe that the end of the left-hand thematic phrase should not be stressed. Furthermore, now that I have become more accustomed to a more detached style of playing, I have learnt to enjoy these natural breaks in phrasing and feel less pressured to cover these up with unnecessary pedal use.

Example 4.2.38. Prelude no. 17 in A-flat major, bars 10-21

Except for a single *più piano* in bar 13 of the Prelude Busoni's lowest explicit dynamic indication for both Prelude and Fugue is *mezzo-forte*. Starting *quasi forte*, most of the Prelude is marked *forte*; the Fugue starts *mezzo-forte* and ends *fortissimo*. There is however plenty of room in both Prelude and Fugue to explore quieter dynamics, which I believe add extra colour to the interpretation.

Firstly, I gradually diminish from the opening *quasi forte* towards the *più piano* as the sequence descends. The lowest point then is the *più piano* in bar 13, with the long crescendo culminating in the *forte* marked in bar 18. I then drop to *mezzo-forte* after the E-flat major chord in bar 20 as the texture becomes less dense.⁵⁷⁰

Busoni's fingering for the trill in bar 17 suggests that it starts on the main note rather than the upper auxiliary. As seen in the section on ornamentation, Busoni is not always consistent in taking a trill after a downward leap from the main note; I play this trill starting on the upper auxiliary (g'), trilling with the strong 3-2 finger pairing.

⁵⁷⁰ I will explore another reason for this dynamic drop in Example 4.2.39.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a piano prelude. The top system, marked with a handwritten '10' above the first measure, covers bars 18-25. It begins with a forte (f) dynamic in the left hand and mezzo-forte (mf) in the right hand. The bottom system, marked with a handwritten '22' above the first measure, covers bars 35-44. It features a variety of dynamics including forte (f), forte energico (f energico), and tenuto. Articulations such as 'poco legato' and 'più robusto' are used throughout. Fingerings are indicated with numbers 1 through 4. The score is written in A-flat major (three flats) and 3/4 time.

Example 4.2.39. Prelude no. 17 in A-flat major, bars 18-25 (top) and 35-44 (bottom)

I believe a difference should exist between the left-hand figure in bars 20-22 and the similar figure appearing at the end of the piece in bars 41-43; at first given with a slur, it is later marked *forte energico* without a slur and with an explicit *non legato* indication. In bars 20-22, I play this figure mezzo-forte (see Example 4.2.38) with a slightly more connected touch and phrased towards the $b\flat$ and $e\flat$; in bars 41-43, I play it with a non legato touch.

In bars 22-25, Busoni's indications of *più robusto* and *poco legato* to me mean that the theme should always be in the foreground, played forte, with the descending semiquavers played in a more connected manner, though not too legato, in the background. When the roles reverse, the left hand is brought out instead.

Busoni points out the descending lines in bars 39-40 in both hands with staccato dots; a separation between the c'' in bar 43 and the chords that follow is immediately apparent from

Busoni's fingering, which implies a repeated fifth finger on the first two quavers in bar 43. I do not use this fingering as I find it too risky due to the positional change; I instead use 1-2-4 though do adhere to the articulation of these chords as suggested by Busoni's fingering.

In a way, there is something beautiful about Busoni's omission of the trill in bar 38; in most editions, however, a trill is marked here, and would be expected as it mirrors the previous trill in bar 36. The omission of the trill however freshens up the listening experience and I believe is more striking as a result, which is why I also do not play a trill here. For the short trills in bars 41-42 I disagree with Busoni's interpretation from the main note. On the modern piano, I feel the best compromise is a crushed upper auxiliary *acciaccatura*; if the mechanism allows for sufficiently light playing, a full four-note demisemiquaver trill would be another solution, but this is difficult to accomplish while maintaining the *energico* feeling.

As Busoni marks *forte energico* for the final bars, I do not find it appropriate to slow down too much at the end and instead play bars 41-42 in a strict tempo.



Example 4.2.40. Prelude no. 17 in A-flat major, bars 26-29

My fingering for the left hand in Example 4.2.40 is a result of studying Busoni's own consistent fingerings; the figure of 4-3-2-1-2-3/4-2 is used at the end of every bar, leaving only the rotating semiquaver figure with a different fingering. This fingering also naturally creates a break in phrasing between the slurs, allowing for both the emphasis required on the articulated notes at the start of every bar as well as the break between the staccato semiquaver and the next slurred group. A more conventional fingering here would require a lot of finger-crossing to navigate the black keys, which to my mind leads to a more fragmented phrase.

In my interpretation, this diminuendo leads to a piano in bar 30 (I start bar 26 mezzo-forte), with the crescendo in bar 30 taking the dynamic level back to forte; I find this larger range of dynamics to be more convincing.

In bar 3, Busoni marks *più legato* in the left hand, despite no further slurring (this figure becomes more prominent later in the development, where it does appear slurred as well as articulated with tenuto dashes); the quavers are however beamed to show grouping. The longer slur in bars 4-5 shows how the countersubject moves between both hands. Another countersubject, which first appears in the bass in bars 5-6, plays ‘an *obbligato* rôle’ according to Busoni; the hairpins show the phrasing of this figure, which ‘should be brought out distinctly, even rather obtrusively’. In the left hand in bar 7 and in the right hand in bar 8 we see the familiar staccato dot to show the early release of the tied-over crotchet.

Finding the proper balance between themes and countersubjects is not an easy task as seen from the density in this example. In my interpretation, the theme always takes on the most prominent role; the countersubject in semiquavers should be second; other subsidiary material is subordinated to both these figures.

For the Fugue, the tempo marking is *Moderato*, and Busoni further writes ‘With deliberation, but not draggingly’.⁵⁷¹ I find this an appropriate tempo marking, and my own tempo is around metronome mark crotchet = 54-60; the pulse is more flowing in the semiquavers. The Fugue is gentle in expression throughout, as hinted at by Busoni’s multiple indications of *dolce*, with the third part being a strong conclusion that allows for slightly rougher edges as reflected by the articulation.

⁵⁷¹ The original German reads ‘bedächtig, doch nicht schleppend’. English translation by G. Schirmer.

Example 4.2.43. Fugue no. 17 in A-flat major, bars 4-9

In the left hand in bar 6 (Example 4.2.43) I initially preferred a slide from the db to the c with my fourth finger over the crossing Busoni prescribes. However, the first slide felt hard to control musically and technically due to the fifth finger having to play the bb . Busoni's more conventional fingering avoids this issue entirely. As this phrase is important to bring out, I do not want to risk an uncontrolled note in the middle of the line. I also do not use the slide given by Busoni as alternative in the right hand in bar 7, as I prefer his main fingering, which places the thumb on a white key rather than a black key.

In the left hand, I use Busoni's marked slide in bar 8 (in this case, the fifth finger after the slide is on a white key, which is easier to control), as well as a finger substitution to be able to play this left-hand countersubject with a more connected touch. I believe that if Busoni wanted this figure to be played without a connected touch, he would not have chosen to divide it between the hands in the previous bar; a finger substitution is thus important to avoid a potential break between the ab and bb in the bass line on the third beat of the bar. In the final bar of this example, I avoid the crossing of the thumb by using the thumb on the eb rather than the earlier c , crossing over this thumb with my second finger.

Example 4.2.44. Fugue no. 17 in A-flat major, bars 10-19

In the second part of this Fugue (Example 4.2.44), Busoni indicates a gentler expression (*dolce*), which warrants a quieter dynamic than the earlier mezzo-forte. To prepare the *poco marcato* in the alto theme in bar 13, I crescendo at the end of bar 12, before diminishing again in bar 14 at the division to piano, which is accompanied by a slight slowing down. At this point, I use the *una corda* pedal for a change in tone colour. At the next *marcato* in the tenor, I crescendo again to mezzo-piano in bar 18-19. I perform the long accent on the alto part in bar 19 through a slight lingering on the first part of this bar, which adds emphasis both to the cadence in B-flat minor as well as to the continuation of the phrase.

Example 4.2.45. Fugue no. 17 in A-flat major, bars 24-27

I devised the fingering in bar 24 (Example 4.2.45) when first studying this piece; playing it now, I find the fifth finger on the bb in the left hand to be uncomfortable in this louder dynamic and instead prefer the conventional thumb on the c'. This also allows me to use the thumb as a pivot point for the remainder of this semiquaver figure in the left hand which leads to a more consistent fingering for the rest of the passage; the musical result of this comfort is a stronger impetus on each separate left-hand phrase that easily matches the consistent build-up towards the concluding section of the piece.

Example 4.2.46. Fugue no. 17 in A-flat major, bars 28-35

The third part of this piece is marked forte, with a crescendo in bar 31 accompanied by a slight quickening of the pulse (*un poco affrettando*); furthermore, the right-hand articulation becomes more detached and marked as indicated by the accents and *staccatissimo* wedges. A *subito piano* in the bar preceding this crescendo brings some much-needed calm before the fortissimo that closes the piece, as otherwise I feel the interpretation runs the risk of being too monotonous dynamically.

In these bars I initially preferred the use of the whole hand over a conventional fingering which would primarily use the first three fingers. This fingering results in fewer crossings of the thumb; in bar 32, the fifth finger is used on the c, which allows the third finger to cross over to the following Bb, while in bar 34, the fifth finger is used on the Ab after the fourth plays the Bb. In bar 32, which is the climax of this phrase, I now use the conventional thumb on the c as indicated, despite the idea of fragmentation of the phrase, as I feel this more reliable fingering gives better support for the quicker pulse with which I play this build-up to fortissimo.

As in Busoni's own recording of the Fugue in C major, I find there to be space for subtle tempo flexibility especially at the divisions in the second part of the Fugue, and at the transition back into the third part (bar 27); this flexibility aids the listener's comprehension of the musical form.

Toccata in D major, BWV 912

According to Peter Wollny in the Preface to the Bärenreiter edition of the J. S. Bach Toccatas (1999), '[t]here is some evidence to suggest that BWV 912 [in D major] and BWV 913 [in D minor] are among Bach's earliest contributions to the toccata genre'; Wollny further informs us that the Toccatas are early works, written between roughly 1705-1714, and that none of the works 'has survived in Bach's handwriting or a copy bearing his authorization'.⁵⁷² Bärenreiter's edition contains two versions of the Toccata in D major: an early version (BWV 912a) and a later version (BWV 912). Examples included in this subsection are solely from this later version. Two copies will be used, which represent two perspectives: my 2014 studying copy full of musical indications by myself and my former teachers, as well as a cleaner 2021 copy.⁵⁷³

Having studied this piece with many teachers throughout the years, my score is heavily marked with phrasing, examples of ornamentation, fingering, and ideas for dynamics and pedaling. In this subsection, I will present my old score side-by-side with my current-day markings to show how some of my ideas or ways of playing have changed.

The Toccata is in five distinct sections: a short introduction; an Allegro dialogue between both hands, in a form that resembles a rondo; thirdly, a recitativo marked Adagio followed by a three-part Fugue in F-sharp minor; then, an improvisatory section marked *con discrezione*, which gradually moves into the fifth and final part: a gigue-like Fugue in 6/16.

Petri edited this piece for the *Busoni-Ausgabe*. Relevant as Petri's edition may be to those interested in Busoni and his circle, I have decided against including it for analysis, considering it outside the scope of this subsection, as the focus is on my personal development through critical engagement with my own scores after the study of Busoni's editions.

⁵⁷² Peter Wollny, ed., *J. S. Bach, Toccatas* (Kassel: Bärenreiter-Verlag, 1999), Preface (p. VI).

⁵⁷³ The examples will be marked clearly throughout this chapter to prevent confusion (old copy (pre-research) or new copy (post-research, current interpretation)).

Introduction

The image displays two musical staves. The top staff is a handwritten manuscript for the Toccata in D major, BWV 912, showing the first six bars. The bottom staff is a printed transcription by Ferruccio Busoni for the Prelude and Fugue in D major for organ, BWV 532, showing the first four bars. The transcription is titled 'Präludium Moderato' and includes the instruction 'forte, liberamente' and 'gut gehalten'. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Example 4.2.47. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 1-6 (top, old copy) and Busoni's transcription of the Prelude and Fugue in D major for organ (BWV 532), bars 1-4 (bottom)⁵⁷⁴

The similarity between the Introduction to the Toccata in D major and the Introduction to the Prelude and Fugue in D major (Example 4.2.47) is striking; though we do not have a Busoni edition of the Toccata in D major, it is still possible to learn something from his transcription of the Organ Prelude, while keeping in mind that the original of this piece was written for a different instrument.

⁵⁷⁴ Ferruccio Busoni, transcr., *Toccata and Fugue in D minor and the Other Bach Transcriptions for Solo Piano* (New York: Dover Publications, 1996).

Busoni's doubling of the bass line means that the tempo cannot have been too fast (Moderato); he indicates *gut gehalten* (*sostenuto*) below the bass line, with *forte, liberamente* (strong and freely) as further markings. The pedaling for the repeated chords, intended to imitate the full sonority of the organ, would lead to a slight increase in dynamics; Busoni does not mark the damper pedal for the scale.

In the Toccata, which is less dense than the transcription, it is possible to play at a faster tempo; furthermore, it is not necessary to use the damper pedal to sustain any notes due to a lack of available fingers, or to imitate an organ sonority. The faster tempo at which I play also warrants a slightly more detached touch.

The gradual filling in of the chordal harmonies at the end of every scale would lead to a natural crescendo which on the piano can be further augmented by the player. I start the ascending scale with a quieter touch and gradually increase the dynamic until the top note, before dropping the dynamic slightly to allow for a repeated increase in dynamic. A short pedal indication on each full chord can be seen in my old score; I now prefer a drier sound and do not use this pedal.

As the motif repeats itself four times, I introduce some variety by playing every second statement with a slightly quieter touch. This means the motif alternates in the following manner: strong – weak – strong – weak – strong. In the final iteration, I further slow down through the building of the chord to clearly show the transition into the three-octave scale.

I divide the ascending scales between the hands, playing the first four notes with the left hand and the next four notes with the right hand; I then alternate the hands as well for the building of the chord by playing the semiquavers with my left hand and the added chord note with the right hand. I place slight emphasis on the bottom note of each new chord. The division of the hands makes this musical effect easy to accomplish.

Toccata D-Dur
Spätere Fassung
BWV 912

Example 4.2.48. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 1-11 (new copy)

After the chord in bar 6, I play the ascending scale with a gradual acceleration and crescendo (as indicated); the G# in the bass in bar 8 is emphasised which captures the shock of this sudden leading note to A major. I then extend the short rest before the upward scale into the tremolo as indicated by the *fermata* and place a further *fermata* on the final note of the tremolo, which I do not play exactly as written, preferring to speed up the tremolo instead.

The final phrase is then played in one gesture, with a *poco legato* touch. My earlier marking for this passage was *non legato*, and I used to play it with a more declamatory touch; now I prefer a more subdued finish, which is why I use a slightly more connected touch. I slow down at the indicated *ritenuto*; I also extend the final chord and make a distinct break between the Introduction and the following Allegro, which aids the listener's comprehension of the form.

As I play this entire Introduction with considerable freedom, in an improvised fashion, I find it futile to give a metronome marking. I therefore mark this Introduction, as Busoni has done in his transcription, with the expressive indication *liberamente*.

Allegro



Example 4.2.49. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 9-17 (old copy)

In my early interpretation, the quavers of the theme in the Allegro were played staccato, with a gradual crescendo over the next three entries, reaching the highest dynamic level in bars 13-14. I then diminuendo through the next three entries back to piano in bar 17. Between each repeat of the theme, my teacher wanted me to make a short break, as indicated by the diagonal lines. In my current interpretation, I still follow this same dynamic scheme, feeling that it is a musically convincing approach to this passage. A short example pedal marking can also be seen in bar 11; I no longer use this pedal, as I now prefer a drier sound.

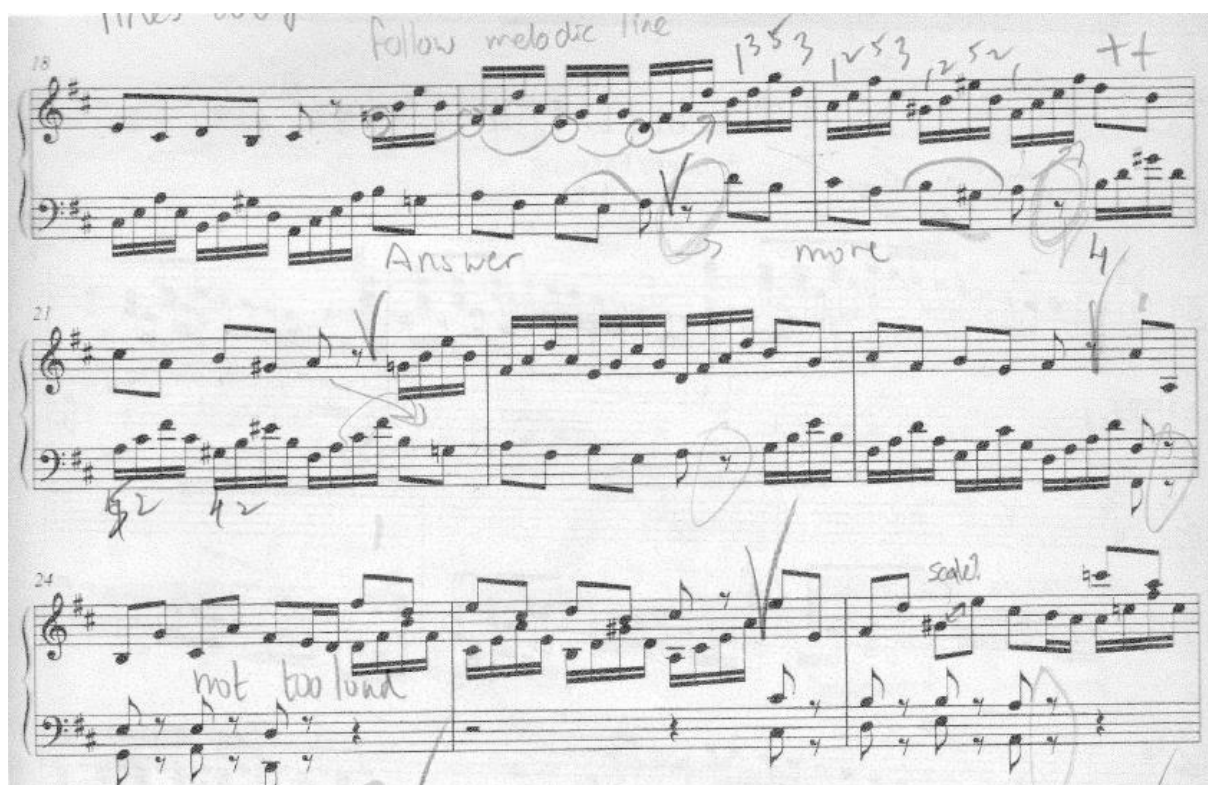
I still play all chords in this example without arpeggiating. I pay special attention to their release; as Busoni writes in the Fugue in G-sharp minor, I believe these chords ‘should be struck very solidly, and not too short’.⁵⁷⁵ Though the bouncy theme is more important, the accompanying chords, as well as the single-note accompaniment in the left hand at the start of

⁵⁷⁵ Busoni, *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, p. 107.

the Allegro, must be played with care. The slur marked in bar 17 likely indicates that the a is an embellishment of the chord tone g and probably does not affect the execution of this figure.⁵⁷⁶ In any case, I play this entire Allegro with a generally detached touch, using a more legato touch only at the special moments discussed below in Examples 4.2.52–53.

Technically, this passage requires the hand to shift for every new entry of the thematic material. As the theme is played in a detached manner, I make use of several finger repetitions, such as the repeating of the thumb for the consecutive seconds of the theme in the right hand. In the playing of the right-hand chords, I minimise the movement of the thumb by using the second finger for the bottom-note of the chords more than I would have done in the past.

My old tempo marking of crotchet = 96 seems to me an appropriate basic tempo, although I am now quite flexible in my pulse, sometimes preferring to move slightly faster or slower depending on the direction of the phrase.



Example 4.2.50. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 18-26 (old copy)

I now abstain from pointing out the descending melodic line through overholding in bars 18-19: while I may use some form of pointing out when the harmony remains consistent, either

⁵⁷⁶ Schulenberg, *The Keyboard Music of J. S. Bach*, p. 22.

through overholding or slightly marking the changing note, in this case the function of the semiquavers is to fill out a constantly moving harmony and overholding to me feels out of place.

As indicated by my written ‘scale?’ in bar 26 (Example 4.2.50), the idea of embellishment in this section was suggested to me by one of my teachers; one example of basic ornamentation I implement here is to fill out the thirds in the second subject by adding a passing note between the third and fourth quavers of each statement, such as marked in bars 22-23 in Example 4.2.51:

The image shows a handwritten musical score for Example 4.2.51, Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 18-29. The score is written in treble and bass staves. It includes various musical notations such as slurs, dynamics (p, mp, mf, f, Sub. P), and performance instructions like 'non legato' and 'u.c.'. Fingering numbers are also present.

Example 4.2.51. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 18-29 (new copy)

The semiquavers are divided into sets of four, played with a non legato touch, and phrased as marked by the slurs.⁵⁷⁷ Dynamically, the motif in quavers is played slightly more prominently, one dynamic level above the semiquavers; the reiterations of the first theme in bars 23-26 are

⁵⁷⁷ As these are broken chords, they are to be phrased differently from scales going towards the downbeat.

played forte, with sudden dynamic changes to mezzo-forte and *subito* mezzo-piano (accompanied by the *una corda* pedal, which is used for an additional change in tone colour), respectively.

I used to use touches of the damper pedal here on the thematic statements in bars 23-26 to augment the forte and to cover up the breaks caused by the required movement of the hands. As I alluded to in Example 4.2.37 (Prelude in A-flat major) I now omit the pedal as I feel this break should not be covered up.



Example 4.2.52. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 30-38 (old copy)

At the end of bar 32, my teacher wrote the expressive marking ‘solemn’: it is here that I use a slightly more legato touch, but differently from the short slurs that are marked in my score. I still separate the octave leaps, but keep a more uniform legato touch for the expressive stepwise bass line, as seen in Example 4.2.53:

Example 4.2.53. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 30-38 (new copy)

Towards the cadence in D major, I slightly detach the bass as indicated, and make sure that the D major chord is not played with a strong touch: as this melodic phrase is repeated in the right hand, to me it feels out of place to emphasise the closing of the left-hand phrase.

I find the light-hearted answer in the right hand sounds better with a more detached touch in the stronger dynamic of mezzo-forte. The marked cadential trill is played from the upper note $f\sharp$ (as recommended by my teacher), as I prefer the dissonance between the g and the $f\sharp$, although Busoni would have most likely recommended the player to play it from the e; this way of playing is supported by the preceding semiquaver pattern.



Example 4.2.54. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 52-58 (old copy)

Whereas Busoni would use staccato dots here to point out the moving lines against the consistent semiquavers in bars 52 and 56-58, it appears that I used to take a more rigorous approach by overholding the first semiquaver of each group, judging by the notation of the extra stems in bar 58. The indication ‘dir.’ in bar 57 relates to the direction of the phrase.

In an earlier version of this piece (BWV 912a), an *arpeggiando* sign can be found before the A major chord on the fourth beat of bar 54; consequently, I used to apply this arpeggio throughout this bar, offsetting it in a jubilant way against the darker statement of the theme in bar 53, which I played piano. Further ornamentation is marked here as suggestions made by various teachers; as seen in the following example, I do not use this ornamentation now except for the trill on the $f\sharp$ in bar 55, feeling that the texture otherwise becomes too busy.

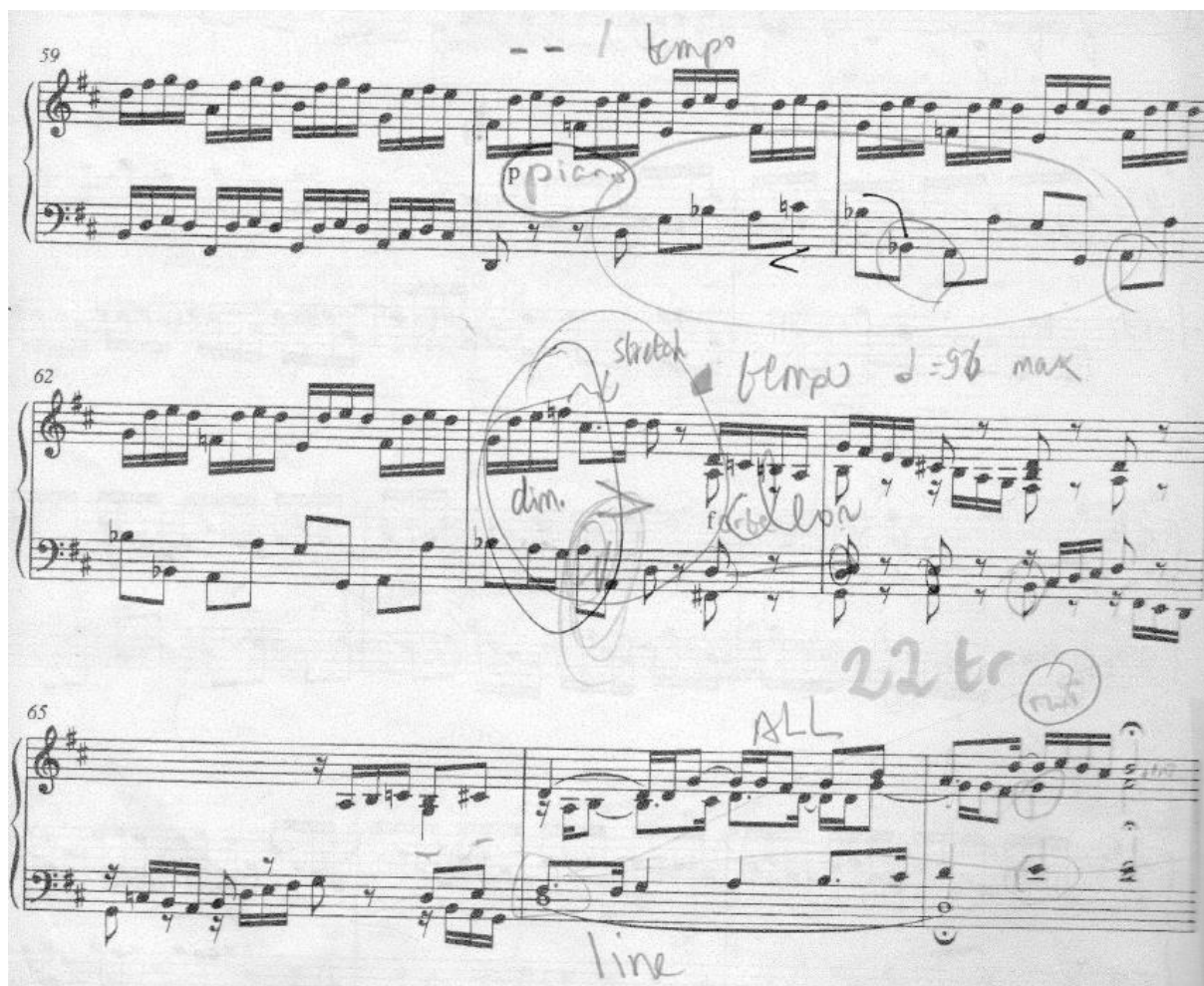


Example 4.2.55. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 52-58 (new copy)

Nowadays, I notate the pointing out of the moving lines as Busoni would, with staccato dots under a grouping slur. I incorporate the proposed *arpeggiando* technique in a conventional manner: I break the chords from bottom to top, and use the momentum of this fast sweeping motion to accentuate the theme to make it stand out from the harmony. Where convenient, as on the fourth beat of bar 54, I take the chord notes in my left hand instead.

Of course, on the modern piano it is possible to play these chords in a quieter dynamic to allow the theme to stand out; however, I find the *arpeggiando* more appropriate for the grand statement of the theme here, as the breaking of the chords allows for additional expression and emphasis of the return to the home key. The added ornamentation on the final D major chord on the first beat of bar 55 further emphasises this strong part of the bar.

In bars 56-58, I stress the moving line in the left hand, as indicated by the tenuto dashes; in bar 58, both moving lines are considered equal, and I have given the same indication to both parts.



Example 4.2.56. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 59-67 (old copy)

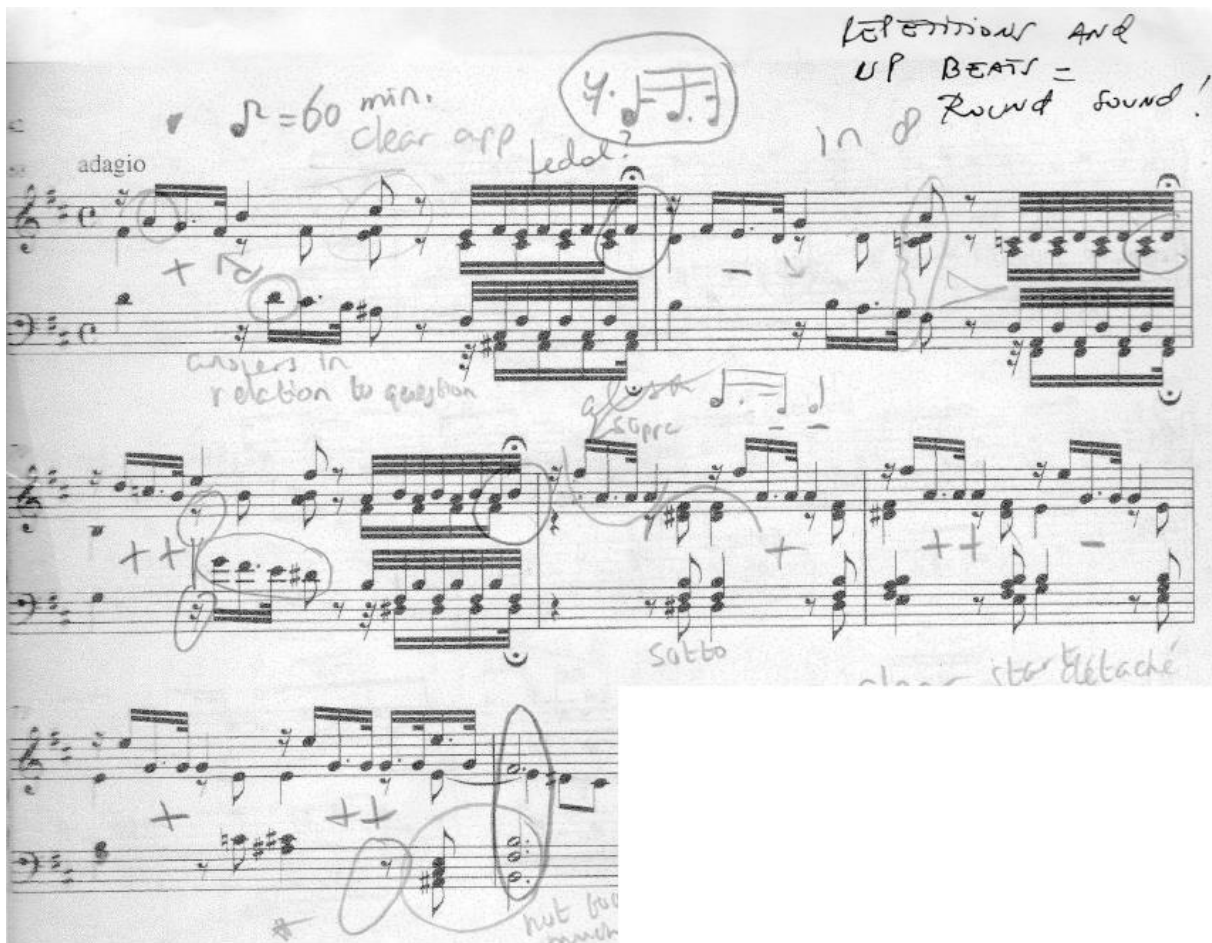
In bars 61-62, I used to slur the broken octaves in the left hand together with short slurs. This was a suggestion by one of my teachers to make the passage more interesting through a varied touch; I assume that I would have otherwise played a strict staccato from bar 60 until the middle of bar 63. In bar 63, I played a trill (from the upper auxiliary) on the c#", which would have been stretched beyond the note's written duration.

In the forte, I tended to rush (my tempo indication here is the same as the opening of the Allegro, but I would have played much faster); at the end of the section, I would slow down gradually on the second beat of the bar and decorated the D major chord under the *fermata* with an extended mordent. Nowadays, I play these bars as seen in Example 4.2.57:

Example 4.2.57. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 59-67 (new copy)

In bar 60 I slightly delay the marked piano to the second beat instead and use the *una corda* pedal here for the special colour. Furthermore, I play the left hand with a consistent quasi staccato touch, without any short slurs, which sets it apart better from the right hand. In bar 63, I make a break in phrasing as indicated by the slur over the three semiquavers and stretch the following trill. The *subito forte* is played without the left pedal, and I phrase the groups of semiquavers from the second semiquaver to the downbeat each time as marked. While I keep my earlier *ritenuto* in the final bar of the section, I skip the mordent on the closing chord in my old copy. Bach marks a similar mordent at the very end of the Toccata; I find that repeating the mordent here would make these two endings a little too similar.

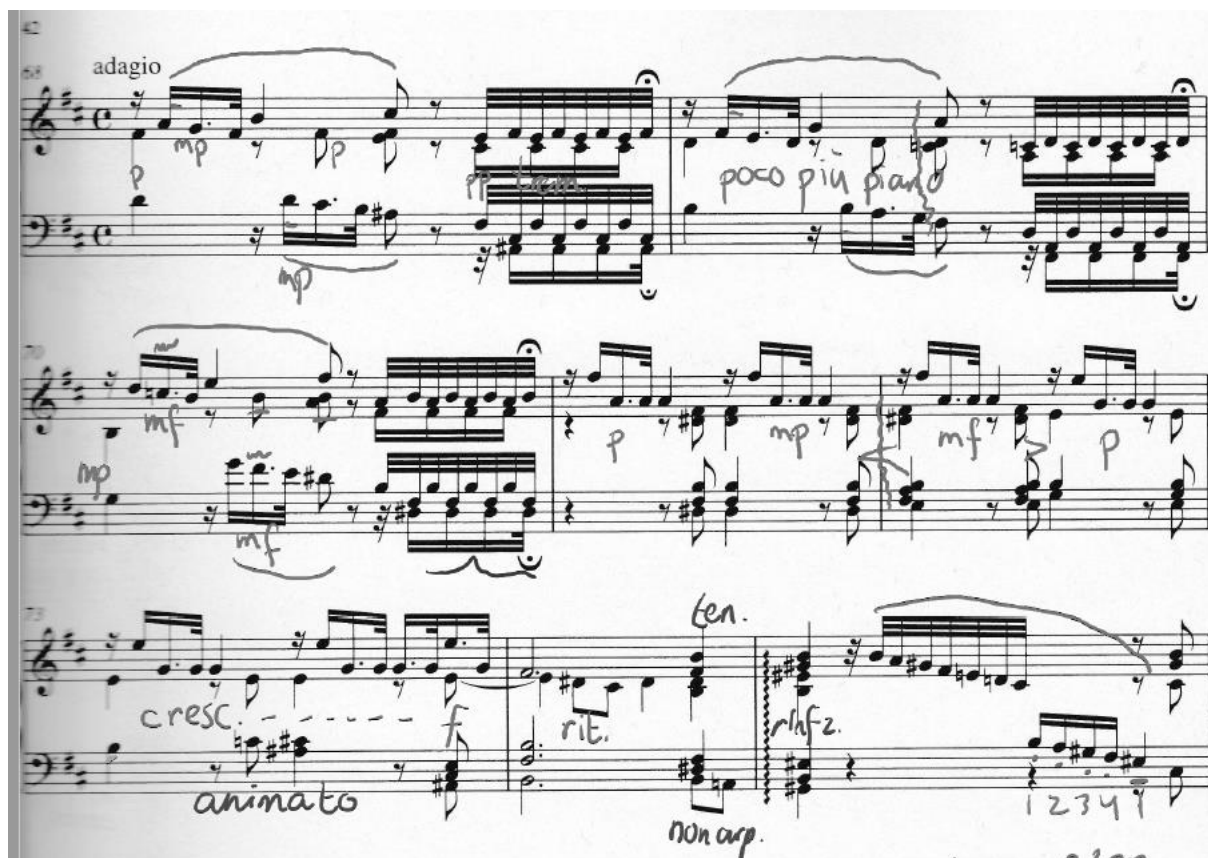
Adagio



Example 4.2.58. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 68-74 (old copy)

The large number of markings in this Adagio (a *recitativo secco*) shows that its interpretation was difficult for my younger self. The metronome mark of quaver = 60 seems to me absurdly fast now; in fact, I believe that marking a set tempo for this section in general would be a mistake. I find the recitativo should be played in an almost improvisatory style, with the chordal accompaniment and tremolo also played in a free manner. The pauses should be dramatic, and the pedal should only be used, if necessary, to soften the hushed sound of the tremolo. The dotted rhythm should apply also to the semiquaver following the rest, but should not be played too strictly; otherwise, I feel it may impact the expressivity of the vocal lines.

The overall dynamic scheme, indicated here by pluses and minuses, indicates both harmonic tension as well as the line of the recitative.



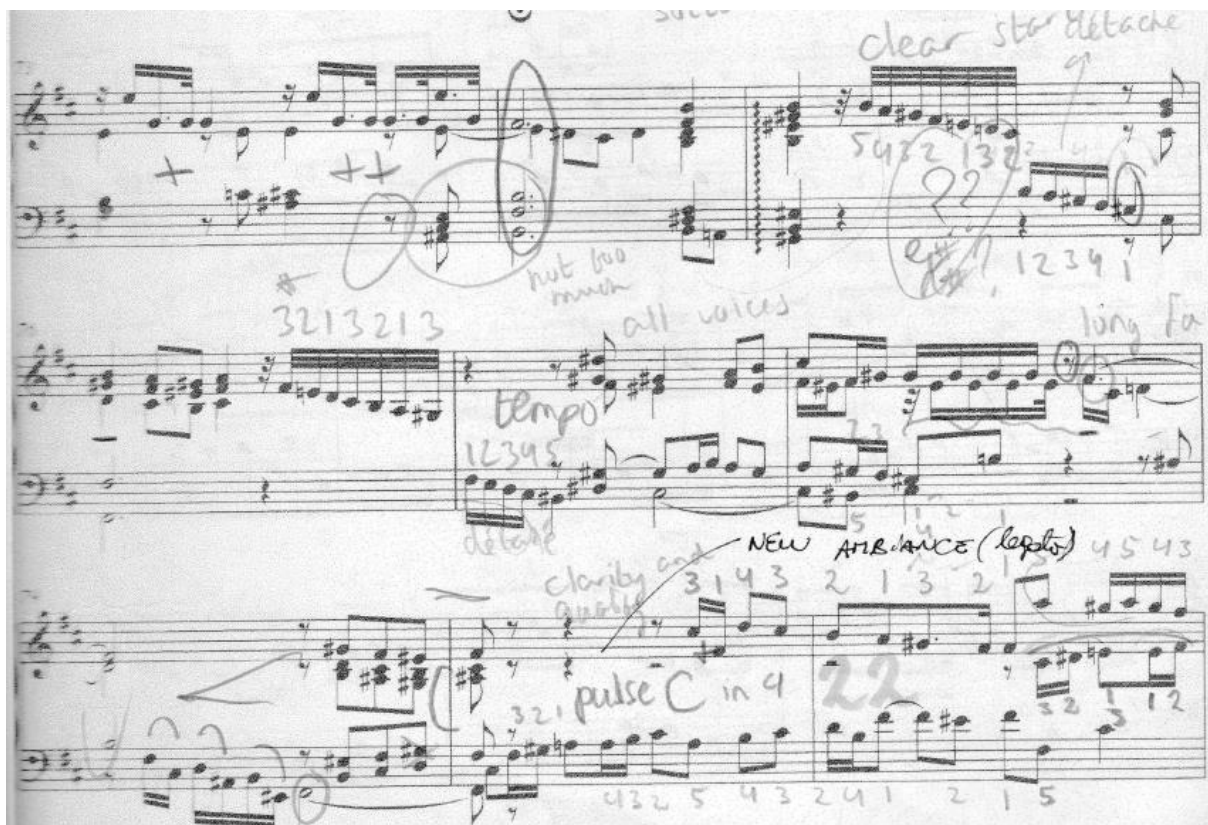
Example 4.2.59. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 68-75 (new copy)

It is important for the two vocal lines to be brought out over the accompaniment; I have marked them mezzo-piano. Throughout this passage, the accompaniment is to be played at a lower dynamic level. I play the tremolos with a very soft touch, as pianissimo as possible, except for the final tremolo, which is played slightly louder, with a touch of the damper pedal for added resonance. Rhythmically, I play this section as written: single-dotted with the semiquaver after the rest interpreted as a demisemiquaver instead.

A short trill, from the upper auxiliary, is given on the vocal lines in bar 70; this ornament adds a slight trembling to the vocal lines, which to me sound almost desperate in this third statement. The ornamentation also allows me to stress the sudden upward leap of the parts. I slightly animate the pulse in bar 73 towards the diminished harmony, before slowing down over the resolution of the suspension in bar 74.

In most of the recitativo, the resting points are dominant (seventh) chords. Bach marks the arpeggiation of the surprising diminished chord in bar 75, which occurs at a dramatic point within the narrative of the recitativo: I believe the *arpeggiando* may have been marked to further

stress the tension at this point.⁵⁷⁸ I apply the same type of arpeggiation to emphasise the striking dissonance of the dominant-seventh chord over the pedal point in bar 72; the insistence of the soprano part (which, similarly to bars 68-70, repeats the same motif twice) also benefits from this more solid support by the imagined continuo part. On the other hand, in the *poco più piano* of bar 69 (which is a calmer point in terms of tension), my breaking of the chord reflects the more tranquil nature of the dominant harmony (of D) in G major.



Example 4.2.60. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 73-81 (old copy)

Already in my younger years I paid attention to the expressivity of the rests here, as evidenced by my written marking 'clear start' and the later circling of the rest in bar 78. The semiquavers in bars 75 and 77 were to be played in a detached manner, which I still do now. I do however change the fingering of the left hand slightly in bar 77-78 for a more detached sound, by repeating the fifth finger in the bass and removing the substitution on the $e\sharp$ (see Example 4.2.61 below).

⁵⁷⁸ In the Prelude in C minor, Busoni retains Bach's *arpeggiando* indications in a section he marks *recitando*, *drammatico* (see Example 2.3.5).

The short slurs in bar 79 appear to me less expressive than a non legato is.⁵⁷⁹ I follow the hairpins here, which indicate a slight increase in dynamics and direction over the bass line before a release of dynamic tension on the resolution.

Example 4.2.61. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 73-81 (new copy)

After the repeat of the chord of B major (which is a continuation from the previous resting point) the listener may expect the tonic chord of E minor (in first inversion). Bach instead gives a diminished chord of E-sharp (in first inversion), which is a much more dramatic harmonic turn. To increase the impact of this chord sequence, I do not arpeggiate the B major chord in bar 74 but do arpeggiate the next diminished chord as indicated (marked *rinforzando*); the release of this second chord, which should sound as a shock to the listener, is quick but controlled. Again, the short rest before the scale is clearly emphasised for its expressive effect.

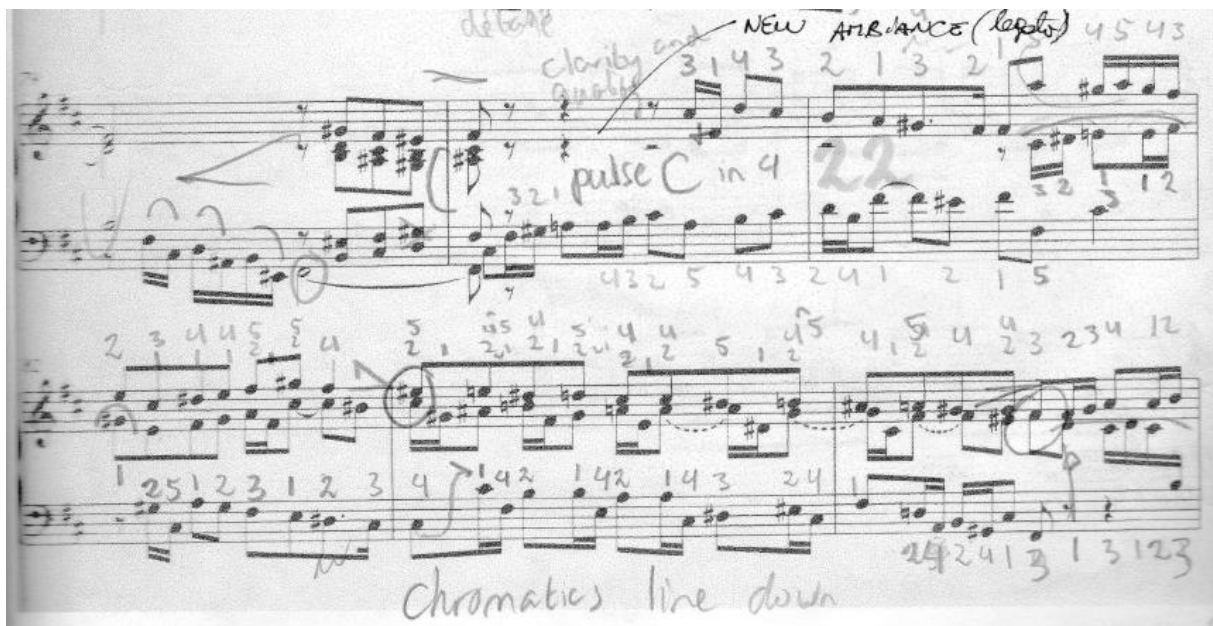
The second scale (in bar 76) is played *subito mezzo-forte* (rather than forte): as this scale is located in a less tense point of the recitative, I find a forte here to be too drastic a change from the piano resolution on the F-sharp minor. I increase the dynamic level through a crescendo in

⁵⁷⁹ Though this figure forms the basis for the *con discrezione* section, where it is marked with the same short slurs by Bach (see Example 4.2.69), I give it a different phrasing here due to the difference in position and character.

bars 77-78; the tremolo is to be stretched slightly, and the following rest is marked with a *fermata* to create the necessary space before the *subito* mezzo-piano. The f♯, marked tenuto, is to be struck with considerable depth of sound; the same goes for the F♯ in the bass in bar 79.

Though the Fugue follows directly from this Adagio, I slightly slow down (*sostenuto*) over the closing chords of the recitativo: this is done to create a sense of separation between the subsections.

Fugue



Example 4.2.62. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 79-84 (old copy)

My teacher rightly marked that a new ambience is required here, in the form of a (more) legato touch, which I still use and find appropriate in most places in the Fugue. I further find it important to create the correct dynamic balance here between the theme and countersubject(s), which are presented simultaneously from the beginning (see Example 4.2.63).



Example 4.2.63. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 79-84 (new copy)

My tempo marking for the Fugue is Adagio; I further appended *lamentoso*, due to the prevalence of the descending chromatic line (a device which expresses lamentation) throughout the piece.⁵⁸⁰ I mostly stick to the same fingering that I used when first studying this piece, though I make some small changes, as indicated in Example 4.2.63, mainly to avoid finger substitutions. The result is a slightly more *ben tenuto* sound in the descending chromatic line, and not a true legato as can be achieved with finger substitutions; I find this touch to be more expressive than a true legato on the piano. I further add a trill on the dotted quaver in every appearance of the countersubject, as is marked in bar 92 (see Example 4.2.64).

The interplay between the alto and the bass parts in bars 83-84 should be slightly quieter than the chromatic line, and both lines should be phrased similarly as indicated. At the end of the descending chromatic line, I diminuendo down to pianissimo for the countersubject, with the theme played piano. At the same time, I slightly slow down, before retaking the earlier pulse.

⁵⁸⁰ Its first appearance can be seen in bars 83-84 in the soprano part.



Example 4.2.65. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 96-105 (old copy)

I still use the phrasing marked in bars 96-97 (top line, Example 4.2.65) today, although I add a quasi staccato marking to the bass line to separate it more clearly from the more connected touch I use for the right-hand parts. The difference in phrasing between the alto and soprano lines here needs to be carefully articulated by the player. Furthermore, I feel a sense of intensification towards the cadence in the implied E major in bar 100 (Bach leaves out the third) is appropriate and now include a crescendo. On top of that, I gradually increase the separation between notes in both hands.

Example 4.2.66. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 96-105 (new copy)

I accompany the crescendo towards the cadence in bars 99-100 with a *stringendo*, and gradually slow down on the cadence to clearly mark the formal division. In the next bar, the registration should change completely; I play the bottom line legato, while the top line is played quasi staccato. Another sudden shift in character occurs in the next bar, where I play the left-hand part *espressivo* and legato, while the short slurs in the right hand, which to me feel like gasps of breath, are played with the typical strong-weak articulation.

In bar 102 I use the *una corda* pedal for the special change in colour and mark this passage *misterioso*, which was a suggestion by one of my teachers. The same interjection in bar 103 is played mezzo-forte throughout, with no lapses in power before the final eight bars of the Fugue.



Example 4.2.67. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 103-111 (old copy)

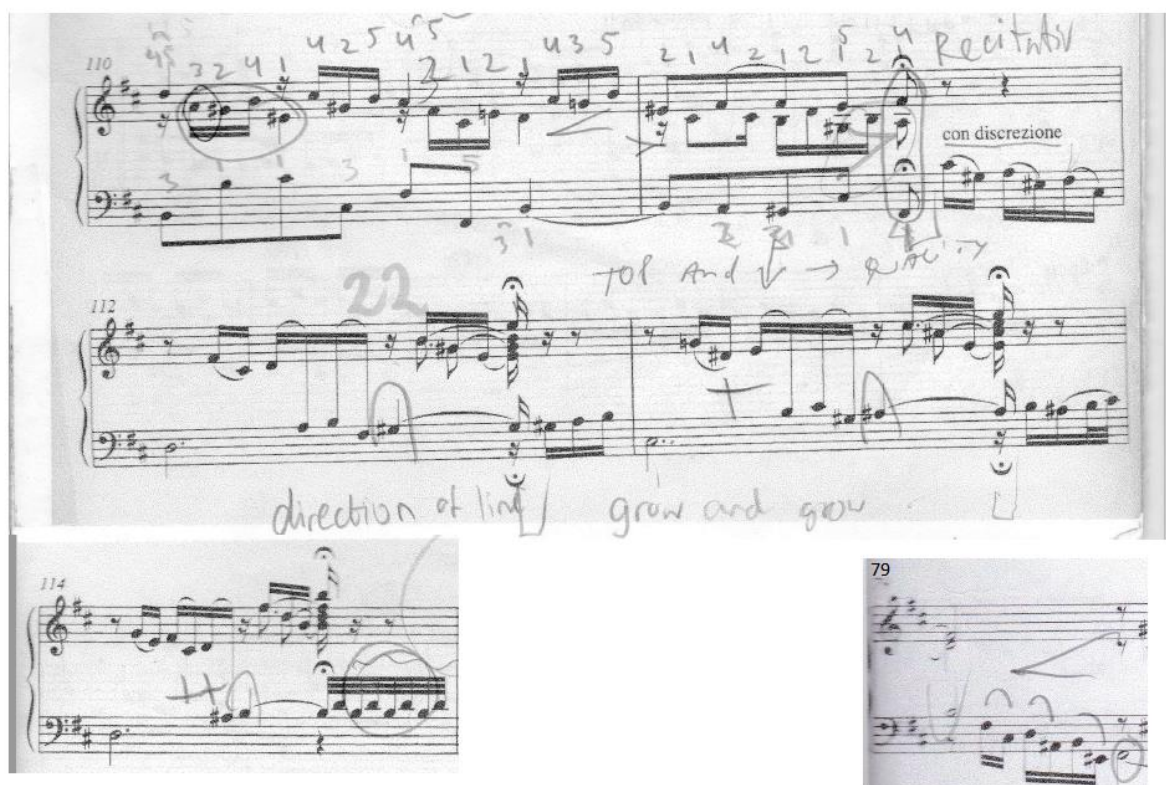
The opening piano dynamic for the final part of the Fugue (bar 104) I now change to a mezzo-forte; I believe another drop to a quiet dynamic, as I used to do, diminishes the momentum built up from the previous bar. While I mostly keep to the consistent fingering in the right hand, I now play these parts with a stronger dynamic: as a result, my touch is less legato, which does not require the substitution I decided on previously. Instead, I repeat the fifth finger for two consecutive notes to create a natural break as I have done in some of the left hand by repeating the thumb. Furthermore, I add some phrasing and dynamic shaping to the whole section which I feel is missing in my old copy.

The touch of pedal indicated by my teacher on the final F-sharp minor chord may be helpful in a dry acoustic.

Example 4.2.68. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 103-111 (new copy)

From bar 106 to bar 108, I gradually lower the dynamic level from forte down to piano, before starting the final crescendo up to the middle of bar 109, where I have marked *forte con grand'espressione*. The diminuendo is accompanied by a very slight *ritenuto*, while the crescendo should start in tempo and build up in momentum until the forte. I have marked a long accent over the Neapolitan harmony of G major at the end of bar 110, where I express the shock of this harmony by placing additional stress on the bass and tenor notes through the stretching of time; the closing beats are then played with a gradual slowing down as well as a diminuendo to mezzo-piano.

Con discrezione



Example 4.2.69. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 110-114 and bar 79 (bottom right) (old copy)

This improvisatory section, marked *con discrezione*, is built upon the same material that closes the Adagio introduction to the Fugue earlier (see bottom right example of bar 79). The earlier bar does not have any slurs; why they appear now cannot be stated with absolute certainty, as it is unclear whether they may indicate either the conventional strong-weak phrasing or perhaps some form of overholding. I interpret them as short slurs, played legato, but with the indicated paired phrasing audible.⁵⁸²

Bach's early version of this piece (BWV 912a) is less elaborate than this later version, which contains several written-out extemporisations. As such, not much has to be added to this later version to give a convincing account of this section; my own score contains fewer indications here than anywhere else in the piece.

⁵⁸² In bar 79 (Examples 4.2.60–61), I played this figure non legato, as I preferred a more detached touch. Here, where the character is more improvisatory, and the semiquavers are played in a quieter dynamic in a higher register, I feel a more legato touch is appropriate.



Example 4.2.70. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 110-118 (new copy)

As a tempo marking, I stick to the *Adagio* from the recitativo; I also play this section in a very free manner. The longer notes, such as the dotted minims in the bass, as well as the final notes of the chords under the *fermate*, are played with sufficient pressure. There is a gradual crescendo through the three statements of the falling motif, culminating in a mezzo-forte in bar 114. The tremolo is to be played freely, as are the flourishes which I mark *recitativo*. At this quiet moment, I play the accompanying chords at a lower dynamic level and with some degree of arpeggiation; the E minor chord in bar 116 is broken in a slow manner, while the right-hand trill follows as a natural response to the breaking of the chord. The imagined continuo and right-hand soprano are in a constant dialogue here.

The next two slurred semiquavers at the end of bar 116, which resemble the dotted theme in the recitativo, are played as an upbeat to the flourish in bar 117, which is more intense in expression, leading to a forte on the trill. The G major chord is broken slowly (with each note

roughly taking up a demisemiquaver), after which a diminuendo and *ritenuto* take the dynamic level down to a piano on the C major chord.

Example 4.2.71. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 117-126 (new copy)

The Presto should sound as a sudden outburst: I play it with a slightly detached touch, as a legato touch would limit my speed here. I slow down on the final breaking of the C major chord, with the final C held slightly beyond its written duration. The right-hand flourish should decrease in dynamic level, as should the suspension on the B-major chord in bar 120.

As the arpeggiation of the F major chord (the Neapolitan harmony in the current key of E minor) should come as a shock to the listener, I play this broken chord with a quick and energetic motion.⁵⁸³ The release of the chord here is particularly important, as it should be

⁵⁸³ In bar 75 (Example 4.2.61), following the B major chord, Bach arpeggiated the diminished chord on E-sharp; here, Bach arpeggiates the (Neapolitan) chord on F, which is the same note enharmonically.

equally swift as the sweep of the arpeggio. In the following running figure in triplets, which is a foreshadowing of the rhythm of the final Gigue, it is tempting to play too quickly; the slurs I have given here are meant to hold me back slightly on the descending thirds, to then play the broken-chord figuration in one motion. At the end of this flourish, I slightly articulate the broken A major chord as indicated.

The trill on the final chord of bar 124 is taken from Bach's earlier version of the piece (BWV 912a); I play it from the upper auxiliary, which emphasises the dissonance of the minor ninth from the left-hand $c\sharp'$ to the right-hand d'' , with an ascending afterbeat to the d'' . I add a further original trill on the cadence at the end of bar 126 on the $c\sharp'$; this trill and the trill in bar 125 are also played from the upper auxiliary. This ornamentation accompanies a considerable stretch of the final beats of bar 126 which clearly shows the transition into the Fugue 'alla Giga'.

Fugue 'alla Giga'

The image shows a handwritten musical score for the Fugue 'alla Giga' from the Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 127-146. The score is written in treble and bass staves. Bar 127 is marked 'Tempo d. = 60-62' and '2 bar phrase'. Bar 133 is marked 'down'. Bar 140 is marked 'f'. The score includes numerous handwritten fingering numbers and slurs.

Example 4.2.72. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 127-146 (old copy)

My earlier tempo indication for this Fugue (dotted crotchet = 60-62) seems to me on the fast side, as the texture in the piece grows in complexity towards the middle, where Bach modulates to the very remote key of G-sharp minor; also, on the modern piano, the execution of the dotted rhythm of the countersubject together with the straight semiquavers of the theme becomes extremely difficult when they appear in the same hand from bar 176 onwards (in bar 139, the dotted rhythm on the bottom system is taken with the right hand).⁵⁸⁴ The complexity of the figuration, in my view, cannot be articulated properly in too fast a tempo: a slightly slower tempo seems to me more appropriate, with additional time taken at the divisions in form to aid the listener's comprehension of the piece.

I play the theme of the Gigue with a mixed legato touch, as a full legato does not convey the light, bouncy character so typical of the Gigue.⁵⁸⁵ I slur over the first semiquaver to the second of each group of three semiquavers, while playing the second and third semiquavers with a more detached touch. The countersubject, which is in dotted rhythm, is played with a poco legato touch which makes it stand out slightly from the theme. When both countersubject and theme are played by the same hand, the wrist movement as well as the fingering required for the dotted rhythm directly informs my phrasing and touch for both motifs. I now use a different left-hand fingering in bars 135-138, as I no longer change fingers on repeated notes when the articulation required does not make it necessary to do so. For the theme I also find finger changes potentially confusing, preferring to use the wrist to articulate the notes while keeping the fingering consistent. This will result in additional breaks where the hand must change position, for example at the transition between bars 130-131.

⁵⁸⁴ The third semiquaver is always played together with the semiquaver of the dotted rhythm.

⁵⁸⁵ See also Busoni's commentary on the Sinfonia in E major:



2) This chord figure so typical of the Gigue should not sound too legato (this would spoil its leap-ing movement), and although it moves through three separate voices should retain as far as possible the character of a single contrapuntal voice.



Example 4.2.73. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 127-146 (new copy)

I am not sure about either of my earlier dynamic indications in the opening bars of the Fugue: a steady crescendo through two bars as well as the alternative proposal of one strong bar followed by a weak bar both seem unsatisfactory to me. I now play these bars with a drier expression, with only the slightest fluctuation in dynamics that matches the phrasing.

The countersubject, though marked piano in bar 139 (below the mezzo-piano for the theme), should still increase in strength to the top of the phrase, and because of its interesting features, is treated as an equal partner to the theme.



Example 4.2.74. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 176-198 (old copy)

In bar 176 we see the first occurrence of the theme and countersubject both played by the right hand, which informs my phrasing for the entire Gigue. My former teacher marked *sostenuto* in bar 184: this was intended to help point out the transition to a new episode, where we are free of both theme and countersubject for a short period; both however quickly return to the fore, at first in an adapted form, but from bar 197 onwards in their original form.



Example 4.2.75. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 176-198 (new copy)

The right-hand fingering for the alto part in bars 176-178 shows not only the wrist movement required but also the touch, as there is a limit on how legato this figure can be played with this fingering. This limit does not exist in bars 184-186, which I play with a very legato touch and fingering, as a welcome relief from the continuous detached touch that was used until this point. I now abstain from the *sostenuto* my teacher marked, preferring to continue in the same pulse; the *sostenuto* here seems to me too disruptive. I include just one of the trills marked on my old score, in bar 194, as I feel the dotted rhythm becomes slightly unclear if both trills are played. This trill is taken from the upper auxiliary.

Much of the rest of the Gigue is played according to my performance indications set out above, as hardly any new material is introduced; the harmony, as well as the setting of the voices, informs most of the decisions in terms of dynamics and articulation.



Example 4.2.76. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 260-277 (old copy)

The concluding passage of the Toccata can be very troublesome if it is played with an inefficient right-hand fingering; as I learnt in my first lesson with my teacher Peter Bithell, heavy incorporation of the thumb is essential to keep the wrist flexible and the articulation of the demisemiquavers clear. The combination of articulation and fingering will help the player control the tempo in this otherwise risky passage.



Example 4.2.77. Toccata in D major, BWV 912, bars 265-277 (new copy)

The dotted rhythm of the countersubject, which is the basis for the left hand, can be brought out by either a slight overholding (which I currently prefer) or by following the articulation set out for the theme in the opening bars of the Gigue. In the right hand, every group of six demisemiquavers ends on a thumb, except where this note is a black key. Dynamically, the player is limited due to the velocity required in the right-hand which does not allow us to depress the keys with enough pressure to produce more than a mezzo-forte at the climax, which means that most of the dynamic shaping here must be done by the left hand. I now omit the pedal on the long trill in bars 272-273 as it distorts the clarity of the harmonic progression over the pedal point.

After the double bar, in the closing two bars, I omit the trill on the $f\sharp'$ in the right hand, preferring the unornamented scale as it is presented in the opening of the Toccata. The final bar is played with a considerable *ritenuto*.

4.3. Conclusions on *Playing with Busoni*

As Busoni rightly says, each individual should strive to create their own technical system, and indeed, their own musical system.⁵⁸⁶ It has been shown throughout this thesis how different aspects of piano playing are interdependent in Busoni's editions, and how Busoni's editions influenced some of his peers and successors. Within the last chapter I explored this influence on my own playing and how the work done in this thesis is relevant to and challenges my performance practice.

It was only after finishing the work on the second and third chapters of this thesis that some (implicit) performance indications began to really make sense in a wider context; at the same time, my work at the piano directly informed my ongoing analysis of Busoni's musical indications. Occasionally, I was mistaken in my approach to some markings: for example, for a long time I was convinced that hairpins may have also suggested agogic manipulation for Busoni as they did for Riemann. Work done on other sections cleared up what I now believe to be a misconception. Connections in Busoni's editions, as well as in the development of my own technical system, also became clearer during this iterative process.

While Busoni always provides a valid pianistic approach, the main issue for me in the editions stems from the interpretation of important source material. For instance, Busoni's aesthetic thoughts on ornamentation and embellishment are incomplete and, judging by his recording, unreliable: though Busoni references earlier writers on this subject, a close reading of this material reveals that his presentation of the sources was not exactly all-encompassing. I believe Busoni must have been aware of Bach's own embellishments (for example, his *agréments* to various works, such as the Sarabande of the English Suite no. 2 in A minor): it is disappointing that a closer study of this aspect of Bach's own writing is not present in Busoni's editions. Though Busoni's trills are quite expressive and played with a sense of variety in his recordings, in his editions the ornamentation is very rigid in both form and application: furthermore, no detailed mention is made of the functional role of ornamentation or arpeggiation. It must be said that my process of inquiry led to a greater familiarity with this source material which diverted the course of this research slightly over time: while still inspired by Busoni, I was able to 'stand up' to Busoni and develop my own stronger views on several aspects of piano playing.

No matter how insufficient a written indication may be compared to a few minutes of recorded evidence, the sensitive player may be able to learn a lot from even the smallest dot on

⁵⁸⁶ Cooke, *Great Pianists on Piano Playing*, p. 101.

the page. Some of these dots have had an impact on the development of my personal approach to the piano. In this concluding subsection, I will respond to my earlier summary of Busoni's performance markings, and what my current personal views are.

Slurring and articulation

Before the work done in this thesis, I took slurs in keyboard literature to indicate not only grouping or phrasing but, importantly, a legato touch as well. This was also the approach I took when first studying Busoni's interpretative editions.

Upon discovering that Busoni's preferred articulation is non legato, I experimented with the idea of a basic non legato touch except otherwise indicated. While this worked for faster pieces, to me it seemed less convincing in slower or more expressive pieces where Busoni sometimes omits indications of touch. Throughout Busoni's editions I have found that touch tends to be more detached when the dynamic level is louder or the pulse is faster; the inverse may then also be true, where the touch may be more connected when the dynamic level is softer and the pulse is slower. The idea of a fluid touch and articulation both depending on other performance metrics is now a more conscious part of my playing. As a basic approach, my touch has become less legato than it was before, but as in Busoni's conception, the legato touch is still used at appropriate places.

Though the act of overholding is a common technical device in keyboard playing, I have found myself not always convinced by what seems to me excessive overholding on the modern piano. I am more in favour of Busoni's practice of marking lines of interest with staccato dots (with or without slurs), which to me is a lighter form of bringing attention to these lines. On the other hand, I found Busoni's indication of underholding ties (the marking of the second note of a tie with a staccato dot) confusing at first, as to a modern reader it may imply a repeated striking of the tied note; I now appreciate the effect it has on the clarity of phrasing through its implied physicality, though I would perhaps try to find a different and clearer way of marking it.⁵⁸⁷

I find a great range of touch and articulation to be essential to the performance of Bach's keyboard music on the modern piano. In my opinion, Busoni is very successful in conveying the wide array of colours required, while still leaving much up to the performer's imagination. Using the slur to indicate mainly grouping or phrasing rather than any type of touch or articulation is an aspect of Busoni's notation that I have also adopted in my own practice. The constant phrasing towards the downbeat in groups of semiquavers, which I did not apply as

⁵⁸⁷ For example, an arrow which signifies the earlier release, similar to the pedal markings by Busoni (which were later adopted and developed by Bartók and Grainger); see Examples 2.5.15–17.

consistently before, has proven to be especially useful in difficult passages, as the rethinking of a phrase in the mind may sometimes aid its execution. Finally, I find myself to be more critical of the meaning of slurs in the works of other composers and editors.

Fingering

For a long time I believed that a good pianist should be able to play any passage, no matter the touch required, with any fingering. My choice of an appropriate fingering was often based mainly on comfort and convenience. Though I did not fully ignore the musical effect that a composer or editor may wish for, the fingerings I used when I was younger were mainly technical in nature.

Busoni's fingerings, which are generally more musical in approach, and serve the articulation and phrasing at hand, have made me challenge my earlier convictions regarding the most comfortable solutions for common musical devices such as scales and trills. The idea of linking fingerings to particular musical expressions was not completely foreign to my own technical system, as I had done so myself in the past in the works of other composers. Busoni's inclination to include fingerings for musical devices by composers such as Chopin in his Bach editions may seem sacrilegious to some, but I have begun to appreciate more the approach of linking phrasing and articulation to fingering or vice versa. Similarly, I may now repeat the same finger for two separate notes if it helps to mark a natural break in phrasing or musical form.

Busoni occasionally incorporated fingering techniques that may be traced back to earlier keyboard treatises. I found some of these techniques, such as the crossing of longer fingers over each other to avoid the use of the thumb, to be very comfortable and natural and have sought to apply them more consistently in my own approach to Bach. This occasionally leads to interesting articulations and these fingerings may thus also have a musical significance.

Busoni's unconventional slides have made their way into my own fingering system, and I now use finger substitutions less often (though still more often than Busoni does) because my overall touch is less legato than it used to be.

Wherever possible, I do try to decrease the number of positional changes required by incorporating the fourth and fifth fingers more than I used to; however, Busoni's use of the fifth finger on black keys is something I am not fully comfortable with myself, especially in faster passages. For fortissimo passages I prefer the use of stronger fingers over a more efficient fingering which may require less movement of the wrist.

Ornamentation and embellishment

Busoni's writing out of almost every ornament in his editions serves a purely pedagogical aim and is intended to clarify the execution of the original written sign. For the researcher, this writing out is valuable as it explicitly demonstrates Busoni's approach to most ornamentation. However, Busoni is inconsistent in his writing out of trills and other ornamentation, seeming to have cherry-picked his evidence from C. P. E. Bach and other writers. On occasion, he reproduces earlier misconceptions by editors such as Czerny. As I have noted in the section on ornamentation and embellishment, it is impossible to set hard rules for Busoni's trills; the only ornament in Busoni's editions that is truly consistent in form is the mordent.

This is an area of performance in which I am mostly in disagreement with Busoni's approach. While Busoni's argument that a trill that is a constituent element of the theme should be repeated similarly throughout a given piece (wherever it is feasible to do so) is convincing, I believe that the general writing out of ornamentation limits interpretative possibilities. Furthermore, Busoni's own performance clearly differs from his written-down indications, both in number of shakes, length of trills, and speed of execution. In my opinion, to the (professional) pianist the ornament sign may in fact be more useful; in Busoni's defence, he does sometimes choose to give the sign rather than his own elaboration of it and appears to have changed his mind in this regard later in life.

In accordance with performance traditions, I add occasional ornamentation or arpeggiation in my own playing of Bach on the modern piano. Used sparingly, I believe that these embellishments add dramatic tension to important moments, similar to how Busoni's slight variations in touch add freshness to a repeated statement of a theme. As mentioned, Busoni hardly discusses this musical or expressive effect of ornamentation and embellishment in his editions.

On the modern piano, the execution of trills and other ornamentation may sometimes be difficult for a variety of reasons. Busoni is generally sensitive to these issues and provides agreeable solutions or alternatives. Though Busoni considers it important to choose a set number of shakes for longer trills, for me the most important consideration in a long trill is how expressively it is played; as such, a certain variance in the speed and touch of the trill, as suggested by editors such as Bartók, is of great importance. Rigidity in form, expression, and execution of ornamentation and embellishment is in my view undesirable.

Dynamics

The piano is of course excellently suited to the task of varying dynamics between different parts. Busoni's insistence on keeping a theme within two dynamic levels of the other parts is now an aspect that is important to my dynamic balancing of separate voices.

As seen in the section on dynamics, Busoni generally prefers louder dynamics in his editions. I feel that Busoni's dynamics on the whole are too loud: the dynamic of fortissimo, especially in Bach, should in my view be a rare occurrence, while in Busoni's editions this is a relatively common marking. I prefer to explore more variety of colour in the quieter dynamics and would often find myself in disagreement with many of Busoni's crescendo markings: as I mentioned in Chapter 2, perhaps my attitude is more in line with the mature Busoni, who according to Fischer 'scarcely [played] a forte' and was preoccupied more with the balance of tone and dynamics.⁵⁸⁸ However, I must concede here that we have do not know how Busoni's pianos were voiced: it is likely that my modern piano is capable of a much larger dynamic range, which impacts dynamic balancing significantly, and may explain my reservations.

While Busoni seems to gradually move away from explicit sudden dynamic shifts, they are still an important dynamic device in his editions. In my own performance I find dynamic shifts especially useful as a signposting tool, which is in accordance with Busoni's general use of *subito* dynamics at formal divisions.

The use of hairpins as a gestural device to show the natural phrasing of a part was a new idea to me, as I considered them a solely dynamic device before this thesis. The knowledge of various approaches to this sign is helpful in adding variety of expression in my own playing.

Where a passage increases in dynamic strength, I now generally play it with a more detached touch; vice versa, when a passage diminishes to a piano or pianissimo dynamic, I play it with a more legato touch. In slower tempi, I find that the touch should never be too detached, even in the loudest fortissimo. Articulation, such as staccato, should generally be stronger and sharper in louder dynamics, while softer and more subtle in quieter dynamics.

⁵⁸⁸ Fischer, *Reflections on Music*, p. 21.

Pedal use

My use of the pedal in Bach used to be more widespread and less specific than it has become after studying Busoni's pedaling. As I became used to the more detached touch I was experimenting with, I noticed that many places where I would have used pedal in the past I now preferred to play without pedal; for example, when I had to move my hands from one place on the keyboard to the next, I would use the pedal to cover up the natural break that occurred. Today I use the pedal mostly as a substitute for a missing finger: I may use it to navigate dense polyphony, or when the same key has to be retaken in quick succession by the other hand. These pedals are often quick and short, rather than the long and generous pedals I used to use.

I would already use the *una corda* pedal for its special tone quality rather than as a crutch for dynamic shading in the softer registers. After my experimentation with touch and articulation, I now reserve the use of this pedal for rare occasions, preferring to create subtle distinctions with the fingers instead. In contrast to Busoni's few indications of this pedal, I do occasionally incorporate longer stretches of pedaled sound in my interpretations: like Petri, I find justification for this approach in the various stops found on several earlier keyboard instruments which may have been employed for similar effects.

Though I became more familiar with the use of the *sostenuto* pedal through the work done on Busoni's pedaling, I still do not find a real use for this pedal in the keyboard works of J. S. Bach (except in the coda to the Fugue in A minor). I have found that this pedal finds more use in my study of Busoni's transcriptions of Bach's organ works: it may be used successfully in complex Fugues, such as the third section of Bach's E-flat major Fugue, BWV 552, where three separate themes are played at once. In this Fugue the *sostenuto* pedal may be used to prolong notes that are originally written for the foot pedals of the organ, as regular use of the damper pedal could obscure the polyphony in these dense passages.

Tempo markings, mood, and expression

Though I have used metronome markings in the past, as evidenced by my older scores, I now abstain from their use; instead, I prefer Busoni's more interpretable tempo markings.⁵⁸⁹ Busoni's colourful use of the Italian language, which at times perfectly captures the mood of a piece, has definitely enriched my musical vocabulary. I have noticed in my practice that I respond more to language that evokes a certain tonal quality in my imagination, which allows me to then translate this sound into a physical approach to the instrument.

Tempo flexibility

Busoni's tempo flexibility is the most striking aspect of his playing in his recording of the Prelude and Fugue in C major. In my first explorations of this musical device, I was keen to apply it wherever possible: at the end of phrases, at formal divisions, at crescendi, diminuendi and all types of hairpins, or whenever Busoni gave an expressive marking.

Through the work done on his editions in this thesis I am now more confident about where tempo flexibility can be a convincing quality in a musical performance: I believe this expressive tool can be very helpful in elucidating the musical structure. I have narrowed down my use of tempo manipulation to those places where it is actually appropriate to do so in a Busonian sense, especially where it may aid the listener's comprehension of the piece as a whole. This will be explored in the additional recordings of the Prelude and Fugue in A-flat major in Chapter 5. Still, this remains difficult to me, as I feel this freedom is the most foreign aspect to a modern performance style; more practice and experience, especially in concert, is necessary to achieve a greater level of comfort and mastery.

⁵⁸⁹ I must concede that metronome markings are the only indication through which, according to Petri, 'mutual understanding' may be possible between the editor and the reader (Petri, ed., *Französische Suiten*, p. IX). Therefore, I used them in the previous section to give the reader a clearer idea about my approximate tempo, which is otherwise nearly impossible to convey through text.

5. Recital and Recordings

5.1. Recital

My Doctoral recital took place on 7 February 2022 at Milton Court Concert Hall in London.⁵⁹⁰ Besides the works discussed in Chapter 4 of this thesis, the recital included several of Busoni's transcriptions of Bach's music:

Doctoral recital programme

Monday 7 February 2022
5pm, Milton Court Concert Hall

J. S. Bach *Two-Part Inventions*

No. 6 in E major

No. 13 in A minor

J. S. Bach *Three-Part Sinfonias*

No. 3 in D major

No. 11 in G minor

J. S. Bach *The Well-tempered Clavier, Book I*

Prelude and Fugue No. 1 in C major

Prelude and Fugue No. 13 in F-sharp major

Prelude and Fugue No. 17 in A-flat major

F. Busoni *An die Jugend, BV 254*

Preludio, Fuga e Fuga figurata (after the Prelude and Fugue No. 5 in D major, Book I)

J. S. Bach/F. Busoni *Organ Chorale Prelude Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland (BWV 659)*

J. S. Bach *Toccatà in D major, BWV 912*

J. S. Bach/F. Busoni *Prelude and Fugue in E-flat major, BWV 552 ('St. Anne')*

⁵⁹⁰ A video recording of this recital accompanies this thesis.

During the work on this thesis I played an earlier form of this programme on Monday 4 November 2019 at St Martin-in-the-Fields in London. Due to time constraints, the programme for this recital was shorter and the order was slightly different: I began with the Toccata in D major, followed by three *Organ Chorale Preludes*, and finished with the transcription of the Prelude and Fugue in E-flat major.

As the thesis began to take on its current shape, the programme of the Doctoral recital was organised according to the order of Busoni's 'Hochschule des Clavierspiels'. The two outliers are Busoni's *Preludio, Fuga e Fuga figurata* and the Toccata in D major. The former is a direct study on the Prelude and Fugue in D major from Book I, culminating in the Prelude and Fugue being played simultaneously; as such, it is definitely more difficult than the original version. As mentioned in Chapter 4, though Busoni did not edit the Toccata, he was familiar with this work, and considered it to be a step up from the Well-tempered Clavier: for this reason I decided to place it between the Organ Chorale Prelude and the transcription of the Prelude and Fugue in E-flat major.

The principal aim of my recital was to apply both small-scale and large-scale tempo flexibility in a modern performance aesthetic. As discussed in Chapter 2, small-scale tempo flexibility may be achieved by the application of fingering choices or the adherence to a particular phrasing while large-scale tempo flexibility was applied based on the musical structure. Where this was possible, I followed Busoni's (illustrated) analyses of the pieces to decide where this flexibility was appropriate in a Busonian sense; in the absence of Busoni's analysis this was based on my own understanding of the musical form. For most of the programme my current interpretation is detailed in Chapter 4 (section 4.2). In the other works I followed the approach set out in section 4.3.

The performance of the E major invention was shaky: the flexibility employed feels forced and unnatural especially in the B section of the piece. In the A minor Invention small-scale tempo flexibility was convincing in bars 8-13 where Busoni's hairpins and accents were emphasised by a slight pushing and lingering. I believe the two applications of Busoni's fingering in bars 6 and 19, which I discussed in section 2.2, could have benefited from more small-scale tempo flexibility as they mark the start of new phrases. They would have then received more impetus which would have led to a clearer delineation of the musical form.

In the D major Sinfonia the episode in bars 14-18 suffered from a lack of direction which led to an unconvincing cadence at the recapitulation. I am happy with the performance of the G minor Sinfonia: the slight tempo flexibility employed at the cadences clearly marks the phrases

in a natural manner and the dynamic balancing is good overall. My playing here sounds unforced and musical.

My performance of the C major Prelude and Fugue is heavily inspired by Busoni's recording of this work as discussed in Chapter 3: having listened to it many times during my research the recording has left a clear mark on my interpretation. The tempo in the Fugue however was too slow which resulted in a lack of direction in the second and third *stretti*; the flexibility here felt unnatural which impacted the clarity of the structure.

While the F-sharp major Prelude was played with a good sense of direction and balancing, the Fugue suffered from a lack of joviality. Especially the bouncy countersubject in semiquavers in the first episode was played rather severely; in the *stretti*, the flexibility employed seemed rather to suggest a lack of control than a sense of the musical structure, rendering the performance largely unsuccessful. The thematic trills were played in a pedantic manner, following the findings set out in section 2.3, and could benefit from a more *brillante* touch or perhaps some other variation for a fresher listening experience.

Though the A-flat major Prelude starts off strong with a great sense of direction, this momentum is lost due to some of the flexibility employed which also results in a loss of the crisp articulation with which I began the performance. In the Fugue the tempo never really settles until the coda; therefore, the planned approach to this piece completely failed to materialise.

The *Preludio* and *Fuga* are almost identical to the original Prelude and Fugue in D major; the biggest differences can be found in the *Fuga* where Busoni added some additional statements of the theme. The way the piece is written shows Busoni believed there to be an explicit tempo relationship between the Prelude and Fugue: the note values in both pieces are the same, while in the original version the Fugue is written in note values that are half the length. The *Fuga figurata* that follows is occasionally too complex to play at too fast a tempo, which thus informs the tempo of the other two parts of the piece. Though I feel I successfully kept a rather steady tempo throughout, clarity is occasionally lost in the more complex parts of the *Fuga figurata*. In terms of flexibility, at some of the cadences in the Fugue I employed too broad a *ritardando* which led to a lack of direction. I believe a stricter performance of the Fugue would have set me up for a stronger start of the *Fuga figurata* which may have helped maintain the connection between the pieces.

In the *Organ Chorale Prelude*, the treatment of the cadence points at the transitions between sections could have been handled better, especially towards the recapitulation on the

final page. The playing itself was rather cold and calculated and did not convey much expression.

The Toccata was played with a good sense of character, though there could have been more diversity in the shaping of the thematic statements in the opening Allegro; in the recital there was a continuous slight lingering (a misguided application of small-scale flexibility) on the first two quavers which became slightly repetitive. The playing in the Adagio and Fugue was sensitive, with the flexibility and timing employed coming across as natural and musical. In the *con discrezione* and the transition before the final Fugue ‘alla Giga’, the direction of the phrase towards the downbeat should have been stronger and was halted mainly by the elaborate ornamentation which I would now choose to omit from this part to maintain a greater sense of connection between the individual sections. The final Fugue was played with a great sense of character; occasionally, I could have given more attention to the cadences, some of which were a little rushed.

The performance of the Prelude and Fugue in E-flat major (‘St. Anne’) was of mixed success. The Prelude is commonly seen as having three separate parts: a French part (dotted rhythm), Italian part (lyrical), and German part (polyphonic); these parts alternate throughout the Prelude. In my playing, the rhythmic clarity of the French part was sometimes not too precise which led to the dynamic balance being slightly off. I now feel that these parts would benefit from a more straightforward, steady rhythm: this would definitely help the direction of these parts. The Italian sections were mixed: while the first was played with sensitivity, the second was less successful. The German parts were played with a good sense of character, direction, and balancing; the second German part before the recapitulation especially came across very well in my view, though the ending could have been played with a greater sense of urgency (forward motion) rather than a holding back of the momentum. In the Fugue I wanted to maintain the tempo relationship marked by Busoni between the three separate parts of the triple Fugue; however, my tempo in the second part was far too slow which resulted in a hesitant and unconvincing performance. The first part of the Fugue was well played, though there is still room for more expression. The lingering employed at the cadence points in the second part did not work at all due to the slow tempo and instead of marking the musical structure it rather halted the direction completely, with the transition into the third part played with a lack of determination. This negatively affected the first page of the third part significantly; however, the playing in this part did eventually get better. The ending of the Fugue was played with conviction.

I consider my recital to have had limited success in achieving its principal aim. In some cases I believe the flexibility employed was convincing and helped convey the musical structure clearly; in other cases I find my playing to be hesitant. While this may be the result of a lack of experience with applying these new principles in my playing I think many of these moments would benefit from a stronger sense of direction throughout the complete musical phrase. A secondary reason for the lack of a convincing musical flow may be my mental subdivision of large musical phrases into too many subphrases; in those pieces where I imagined longer phrases the flexibility came more naturally and occurred solely at important structural points.

In my view, the best parts of the performance were the Invention in A minor, the Sinfonia in G minor, and the Toccata in D major; in most other pieces, the choice of a too slow tempo usually limited possibilities of flexibility, especially at cadence points, which sometimes led to the music coming to a perceived stop altogether. In any case, more experience in concert applying these techniques should lead to better results in the future.

5.2. Recordings

The two additional audio recordings of the A-flat major Prelude and Fugue from Book I of the Well-tempered Clavier represent two different styles of interpretation: Version A is reflective of the imagined style and approach in the Busoni edition, while Version B reflects my own approach to Bach's score while assimilating some Busonian elements.⁵⁹¹

Differences are subtle in the Prelude; they are more pronounced in the Fugue, which I believe lends itself better to the use of flexibility. The Fugue also contains more structural divisions where this flexibility may be appropriate. In Version B I tried to maintain a strong sense of direction through subdividing the music into larger phrases. Flexibility is only employed where this benefits the musical structure, rather than where I believe it to be suggested in Busoni's edition, leading to a clearer delineation of the form. In terms of articulation, dynamics, and ornamentation, I aimed for a more diverse approach as set out in section 4.3: dynamic drops are used to further signify divisions in form, while more lively articulation and ornamentation leads to a fresher and more characterful listening experience.

The recordings were captured in one take per piece (no splicing) using a Tascam DR-2d portable digital recorder; the piano used for the recordings is a 2011 Yamaha C3. Slight reverberation was added in post-processing.

⁵⁹¹ See also the discussion of this piece in section 4.2.

Prelude in A-flat major

The opening eight bars between the two versions are similar as I derive my ideas on articulation of this piece mostly from Busoni's edition. In bars 9-17 the thematic material in the left hand is played more prominently in Version A. This is based on Busoni's ideas of dynamic balancing discussed in section 2.4: a theme should be played more prominently than other material. The break in slurring in bar 16 is interpreted rather literally by a slight pause before the third beat of the bar; the cadential trill that follows is played as written. No dynamic drop is made following the cadence in E-flat major in bar 19, as no such indication is given by Busoni. After the diminuendo in bars 26-29, I push the tempo through the crescendo in bars 30-34, altering the rhythm of the trill (played from the main note) slightly to stress the cadence. The trill in bar 36 is again played from the main note. In bar 38 I linger briefly before retaking the tempo suddenly in bar 39, slightly accelerating at the opening hairpins. This slight sense of *affrettando* is based on Busoni's own rushing in climactic material in his acoustic recordings. The *forte energico* bars are played strictly in time, reflecting the findings of section 2.7, with the ornamentation performed as marked. I take a slight break before the final chord which is often indicated by Busoni elsewhere in his editions.

As mentioned in section 4.2, in Version B I give more attention to the articulation and shaping of the right hand in bars 9-12 and the same material in the left hand in bars 26-29 which alters the dynamic balance. I play the crescendo from bar 13-18 as one large idea, slightly pushing towards the cadential trill, which I stretch: this idea is taken from Busoni's acoustic recording of the C major Fugue. Though terraced dynamics are consistently marked in Busoni's editions, they do not appear in bar 20: here I take a short break for an original dynamic drop following the cadence after which I continue mezzo-forte. The passage in bars 26-34 is played as one big phrase; I again stretch the cadential trill. The ending is played similarly to Version A: the difference lies in the execution of the ornaments which are played not as inverted mordents but as *acciaccature*.

Fugue in A-flat major

More significant differences exist between the versions of the Fugue, especially relating to the use of tempo flexibility to signify the musical structure. This is best illustrated by the following figure:

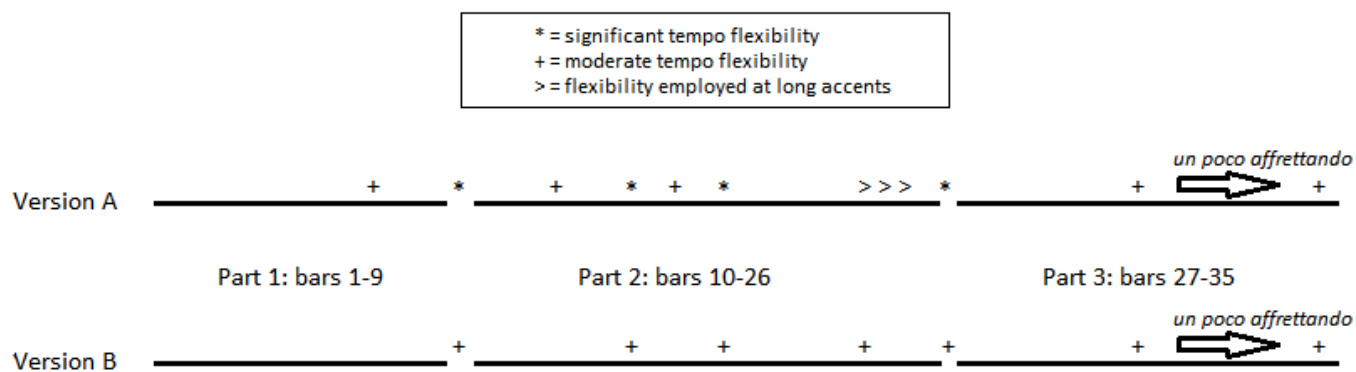


Figure 5.2.1. Graphical representation of flexibility employed in recordings of the Fugue in A-flat major

In Version A I significantly stretch almost all the divisions between parts, as well as internal divisions, as illustrated by Busoni in the footnote to this piece: this occurs in bars 9-10, 15-16, 18-19, and 26-27. The use of such tempo flexibility is based on the findings presented in section 2.7. Minor tempo flexibility is used at certain other points: at the coda of the first part for expressive purposes (bar 7), at the sequence in bars 11-13, at the high note of the long phrase in bar 17, before the *un poco affrettando* marked by Busoni in the third part, and in the final bar. Finally, the sequence of long accents in bars 24-26 are all given additional stress through a slight stretching of the tempo which we can hear in Busoni's own acoustic recording of the Prelude in C major.

In Version B almost all of these instances are tempered to suit a more modern performance aesthetic. The music is grouped into larger structural units, with internal divisions between parts only slightly stressed; in the second part I only emphasise the cadential points in bars 15-16 and 18-19, and only accent the first of the series of long accents. The flexibility in the sequence in the third part is retained in a similar form though is less agitated in Version B.

While Version A strictly follows Busoni's slurring and articulation, I take more liberties in Version B, creating more diversity at different dynamic levels. This is especially noticeable in the second part. Throughout Version A I differentiated the flow between phrases, making a clear distinction between passages marked *dolce* and *marcato* by Busoni, whereas the approach in Version B is more consistent. Dynamically, Version B is slightly tempered, especially in the third part; in Version A, I interpret the *un poco affrettando* and *sempre più crescendo* very literally, augmenting the score further with the suggested lower octaves and additional pedal use.

6. Conclusions

My thesis set out to answer the following research questions:

1. How can the study of Busoni's musical indications in his early interpretative editions of J. S. Bach lead to a greater understanding of his style of performance?
2. Where and how does Busoni's Bach performance and editing fit in a wider historical context?
3. How may these findings be relevant to and challenge the performance practice of a twenty-first-century pianist?

My methodological approach to the first two questions was an empirical analysis of the data relevant to this thesis, while my approach to the third question was auto-ethnographical. Throughout the work done on this thesis, my own practice at the keyboard directly informed the analytical process: I often came to new insights while studying my findings in practice sessions, which allowed me to constantly refine the research.

In the first chapter, *Why Busoni?*, I analysed the recently-published correspondence between Busoni and his main publisher Breitkopf & Härtel. Available only in German, this material reveals Busoni as a conscientious editor who took his craft seriously. I further explored Busoni's role in his editions based on witness accounts of his teaching, and showed how his editorial style is grounded in an approach to teaching and sharing knowledge that was consistent throughout his life. Busoni thought that the musical score was an imperfect representation of the composer's original inspiration: he believed that pianists should seek to restore this inspiration in performance. Though his editions generally record his own interpretations, I believe Busoni's main aim was to give aspiring performers the tools to produce better settings of their own rather than to enforce his own interpretation as the only possibility. This approach nurtures the artist's individuality that Busoni was so keen to maintain.

In the second chapter, *Reading Busoni*, I found that a purely modern way of reading the score was unsuited to the questions I sought to answer. The consideration of earlier work in this field, which challenged my understanding of performance markings, allowed me to interpret Busoni's indications from a more informed position. As Busoni's editions were never revised by later editors, unlike those by Bartók and Casella, they suffer from certain inconsistencies, mistranslations, and other errors, which led to misconceptions about his style. I have pointed out and corrected some of these errors in this thesis. The analytical findings suggest explicit connections between Busoni's musical indications. This knowledge may lead to a greater

understanding of Busoni's style of performance of Bach's music, especially with regard to both small-scale and large-scale tempo flexibility as an interpretative tool.

Busoni's editions were well-regarded into the second half of the twentieth century by performers and musicologists alike. I have identified some of Busoni's own influences and traced possible models for his interpretative editions. I have shown how Busoni's editions and Bach performance influenced some of his peers and successors who went on to reference Busoni extensively in their own work. Some of these editors and performers, such as Casella, Petri, and Fischer, even assimilated much of Busoni's style and aesthetics into their own approaches to Bach. Others, such as Bartók, aimed for even greater clarity in their editions, adding new indications largely related to the understanding and interpretation of the musical form which may have been inspired by Busoni.

Busoni's attitude towards the acoustic recording process was analysed in the third chapter, *Listening to Busoni*. Correspondence with Ibbs and Tillett, Busoni's English management agency, reveals that Busoni felt he had to comply with his agency's demands to produce acoustic recordings. In the recording of the C major Prelude and Fugue we heard Busoni employ tempo flexibility at important structural moments, especially at (pre-)cadential points in the *stretti* of the Fugue. I suggested that, though these moments might appear unmarked in the score, Busoni's use of tempo flexibility is supported by and contributes to the findings from the second chapter.

In the fourth chapter of this thesis, *Playing with Busoni*, I set out to trace Busoni's 'Beiträge zu einer Hochschule des Clavierspiels'. I approached my own performance of five original keyboard works by J. S. Bach from three different points of view. This work, which was inspired by the analysis done in the second and third chapters of this thesis, has influenced the development of my interpretation of Bach on the modern piano. The process of writing down my own interpretative decisions led firstly to more reflection about what I wanted to achieve musically and secondly to how I could best capture my interpretation through musical indications.

In the fifth chapter I commented on the artistic outcomes of this research: my Doctoral recital and two additional recordings of the A-flat major Prelude and Fugue from Book I of the Well-tempered Clavier. These recordings and their discussion show the practical integration of the findings of my research. In the recital and recordings I focused especially on the use of tempo flexibility to elucidate the musical structure. As yet I have achieved mixed results: I believe that more experience on stage will allow me to develop a more convincing original style.

This thesis contributes to the knowledge of Busoni as a pianist and editor through the study of Busoni's early interpretative editions of Bach's keyboard music for Breitkopf & Härtel. It further reinforces the importance of Busoni as an important figure in the development of a Bach piano performance practice in the twentieth century. I have endeavoured to provide a fair and critical consideration of Busoni's editions as well as those by his forerunners, peers, and successors. My research may be of benefit not only to performer-researchers who are embarking on their own research project in this field but also to musicians interested in Bach piano performance and editing from c. 1890-1950.

During the work on this thesis, I encountered several limitations. Firstly, my relatively weak grasp of the Italian language meant that my access to some Italian source material was limited as I had to rely on this material mainly in translation or in citations found in other sources. Secondly, my access to some other sources proved extremely difficult with publishing houses either not responding to correspondence or simply having ceased to exist. While I do not believe this has had much impact on the findings of my research I acknowledge that there may be material that as yet has been overlooked in these sources.

A future study of Busoni's editing of Bach may include a deeper consideration of the remaining volumes he edited for the *Busoni-Ausgabe*. A study that considers Busoni's general style of playing may focus more on some of his Liszt editions, in which Busoni occasionally includes an extra system where he details how he himself played these scores, or on the *Klavierübung*, which Busoni worked on until shortly before his death. These projects may effectively build upon the data collected in this thesis, and may further improve or refine the findings.

In the Introduction I wrote how Agosti considered Busoni to be an almost mystical being who could never be wrong. Though I can no longer share this opinion, Agosti's conviction was partly why I embarked on this research project. I naively believed that Busoni's editions would lead to answers to my own interpretative questions. While this has not always been the case, I find that the research process has had a liberating effect on my playing. My performance decisions are based on a deeper consideration of various musical aspects and as such I feel more confident and freer when playing. The consultation of many other editions and sources has made me come to terms more with the fact that there is no definitive answer to an interpretative question.

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Appendix

Appendix to 2.6. Tempo, mood, and expression

Table 2.6.1. Tempo markings in the Inventions

Invention number and key	Primary tempo indication	Secondary indication
No. 1 in C major	Allegro	Lebhaft und bestimmt <i>Lively and decisive</i>
No. 2 in C minor	Moderato	Ausdrucksvoll, nicht schleppend <i>Expressive, but not dragging</i>
No. 3 in D major	Vivace, quasi Allegro	Lebhaft und kräftig <i>Lively and strong</i>
No. 4 in D minor	Allegro deciso	Rasch und kräftig <i>Rapid and strong</i>
No. 5 in E-flat major	Allegro risoluto	Schnell, kräftig und feurig <i>Quick, strong and fiery</i>
No. 6 in E major	Allegretto piacevole, quasi Andantino	Anmutig bewegt, nicht schnell <i>With graceful movement, not rapid</i>
No. 7 in E minor	Allegro moderato ma deciso	Recht lebhaft und bestimmt <i>Quite lively and resolutely</i>
No. 8 in F major	Presto e leggiero possible	So schnell und leicht als möglich <i>As quick and light as possible</i>
No. 9 in F minor	Allegro non troppo, ma con spirito	Nicht zu lebhaft, doch schwungvoll <i>Not too lively, yet with dashing style</i>
No. 10 in G major	Tempo di Gigue. Vivacissimo e leggiero	Sehr lebhaft, mit springendem Anschlag <i>Very lively, with springing touch</i>
No. 11 in G minor	Moderato espressivo (il tocco dolce, ma pieno)	Ruhig bewegt und ausdrucksvoll (mit weichem doch vollem Anschlag vorzutragen) <i>Slowly moving and expressive (with gentle but full touch)</i> ⁵⁹²
No. 12 in A major	Allegro vivace e brioso	Sehr lebhaft und schwungvoll <i>Very lively and dashing</i>
No. 13 in A minor	Allegro giusto	Lebhaft, mit festem Rhythmus <i>Lively, with firm rhythm</i>
No. 14 in B-flat major	Allegretto piacevole	Nicht zu rasch, in unmuthiger und gleichmässiger Bewegung <i>Not too quickly, in graceful and even movement</i>
No. 15 in B minor	Moderato ma con spirito	Mässig, doch frisch bewegt <i>Moderately, yet briskly</i>

⁵⁹² The Schirmer English translation has this marking printed only in the original German; I have provided my own translation.

Table 2.6.2. Tempo markings in the Sinfonias

Sinfonia number and key	Primary tempo indication	Secondary indication
No. 1 in C major	Allegro deciso	Schnell und fliessend <i>Fleet and flowing</i>
No. 2 in C minor	Moderato con moto	Nicht allzumässig bewegt <i>Not too slow</i>
No. 3 in D major	Allegretto	Frisch bewegt <i>Briskly moving</i>
No. 4 in D minor	Andante con moto	Ziemlich langsam und getragen <i>Rather slow and sustained</i>
No. 5 in E-flat major	Andante espressivo	Langsam und ausdrucksvoll <i>Slow and expressive</i>
No. 6 in E major	Allegro “alla Gigue”	Leicht fliessend und gebunden <i>Lightly flowing and smooth</i>
No. 7 in E minor	Andante con moto	Ausdrucksvoll, ruhig bewegt <i>Expressive, calmly moving</i>
No. 8 in F major	Allegretto vivace	Leicht und anmutig <i>Light and graceful</i>
No. 9 in F minor	Largo espressivo	Ernst, mit breitem Ausdruck <i>With breadth and dignity</i>
No. 10 in G major	Allegro deciso	Schnell und bestimmt <i>In strict, rapid tempo</i>
No. 11 in G minor	Andantino con moto	Mässig geschwind, mit rhythmischem Akzent <i>Moderately fast, with rhythmic accent</i>
No. 12 in A major	Allegro giusto	Recht schnell, doch gemessen <i>Brisk but rhythmic</i>
No. 13 in A minor	Andante	Ruhig und ernst <i>Calm and serious</i>
No. 14 in B-flat major	Moderato	Mässig bewegt und klar phrasiert <i>Always moving and clearly phrased</i>
No. 15 in B minor	Moderato, non troppo	Nicht zu mässig bewegt <i>Not too slow</i>

Table 2.6.3. Tempo markings in the First Book of the Well-tempered Clavier

Prelude and Fugue number and key	Primary tempo indication	Secondary indication
Prelude no. 1 in C major	Moderato	
Fugue no. 1 in C major	Moderato, quasi Andante	
Prelude no. 2 in C minor	Allegro con fuoco	Presto (poco più vivo) – Adagio (poco a piacere) – Allegro (Tempo I, poi allargando)
Fugue no. 2 in C minor	Allegretto, vivacemente	
Prelude no. 3 in C# major	Veloce e leggiero	
Fugue no. 3 in C# major	Allegro moderato	
Prelude no. 4 in C# minor	Andante serioso, non troppo sostenuto ed espressivo	
Fugue no. 4 in C# minor	Gravemente e sostenuto, ma non troppo	
Prelude no. 5 in D major	Allegro con spirito e molto scorrevole	Quasi “alla breve”
Fugue no. 5 in D major	Allegro moderato ed eroico, piuttosto Andante	
Prelude no. 6 in D minor	Un poco agitato, non allegro	
Fugue no. 6 in D minor	Andante espressivo	
Prelude no. 7 in E-flat major	Allegro deciso	Poco Andante – Tempo I
Fugue no. 7 in E-flat major	Tempo giusto	
Prelude no. 8 in E-flat minor	Lento	
Fugue no. 8 in E-flat minor	Andante pensieroso, non troppo accentato	
Prelude no. 9 in E major	Allegretto, in modo pastorale	
Fugue no. 9 in E major	Allegro giusto	
Prelude no. 10 in E minor	Sostenuto, quasi Andante	Presto
Fugue no. 10 in E minor	Allegro deciso	
Prelude no. 11 in F major	Allegro giocoso	Con spirito
Fugue no. 11 in F major	Allegretto	Ben misurato, con semplicità

Prelude no. 12 in F minor	Andante	Tranquillo, espressivo, mesto, appassionato
Fugue no. 12 in F minor	Molto sostenuto	Ma fermo in tempo e carattere
Prelude no. 13 in F-sharp major	Andantino tranquillo ma scorrevole	“N. B. The terms “piacevole” and “scherzoso” are divided, in their application to the Exposition and the first episode; but are united, from the second part onward, in a continuous contrasting play.”
Fugue no. 13 in F-sharp major	Allegretto piacevole e scherzoso	
Prelude no. 14 in F-sharp minor	Allegro con spirito	“ <i>Sostenuto</i> (sustained) refers to the tempo; <i>severo</i> (severe, rigorous), to the expression; <i>piuttosto Andante</i> indicates, that the movement must by no means drag.” (Footnote 1)
Fugue no. 14 in F-sharp minor	Sostenuto e severo, ma piuttosto Andante	
Prelude no. 15 in G major	Allegro	
Fugue no. 15 in G major	Allegretto scherzoso	
Prelude no. 16 in G minor	Larghetto, senza troppa espressione	“N. B. Though the direction “without special expression” may at first appear singular, or, to many, even distasteful, we wrote it down with a full consciousness of its import. Enough music is spoiled by too much “feeling”, especially in cases where real expression is wanting. Consequently, it seems a duty, at times, to guard against rampant exhibitions of sentimentality.”
Fugue no. 16 in G minor	Andante con moto	

Prelude no. 17 in A-flat major	Allegretto, un poco maestoso	Mit einer gewissen Feierlichkeit <i>With a certain solemnity</i>
Fugue no. 17 in A-flat major	Moderato	Bedächtig, doch nicht schleppend <i>With deliberation, but not draggingly</i>
Prelude no. 18 in G-sharp minor	Andantino, lusingando	
Fugue no. 18 in G-sharp minor	Andante (non troppo) con un certo sentimento severo	
Prelude no. 19 in A major	Allegretto sereno e spiritoso	
Fugue no. 19 in A major	Tranquillo e piacevole	
Prelude no. 20 in A minor	Allegro (impetuoso)	Mit ungestümem Schwung <i>With sweeping impetuosity</i>
Fugue no. 20 in A minor	Moderato deciso, con fermezza e gravità	Mässig-schnell, doch bestimmt; mit Festigkeit und Würde <i>Moderately fast, but determined; with firmness and dignity</i> ⁵⁹³
Prelude no. 21 in B-flat major	Allegro volante	
Fugue no. 21 in B-flat major	Allegretto semplice	Mit harmloser Heiterkeit <i>With harmless glee</i> ⁵⁹⁴
Prelude no. 22 in B-flat minor	Andante mistico	Molto sostenuto e con raccoglimento
Fugue no. 22 in B-flat minor	Andante pensoso e sostenuto	
Prelude no. 23 in B major	Andante idillico	Tranquillo e scorrendo
Fugue no. 23 in B major	Poco Andante	Dolce, ma serio
Prelude no. 24 in B minor	Andante (religioso) ⁵⁹⁵	
Fugue no. 24 in B minor	Largo ⁵⁹⁶	Andante grave e solenne

⁵⁹³ The Schirmer English translation does not give this marking; it appears only in the original German edition (Breitkopf & Härtel). I have provided my own translation.

⁵⁹⁴ The Schirmer English translation does not give this marking; it appears only in the original German edition (Breitkopf & Härtel). I have provided my own translation.

⁵⁹⁵ The Andante indication is given by J. S. Bach; the *religioso* is added by Busoni.

⁵⁹⁶ The Largo indication is given by J. S. Bach; the Andante *grave e solenne* by Busoni.