

Formal Deviations in the First Kyrie of the B minor Mass*

GERGELY FAZEKAS

For György and Márta Kurtág

In 1937, describing the formal structure of the opening Kyrie of J. S. Bach's B minor Mass, Donald Francis Tovey used the following analogy:

If you are bathing in the sea you will not have much success in analysing the corrugations of the wavefronts that break over your eyes. But if you are looking down on Brodick Bay from the shoulder of Goatfell you will be able to see all the interlockings of waves from wind, tide, steamers, down to the circles radiating from the diving-bird.¹

Tovey points out that, looked at from afar, the apparently complex structure of this movement from one of Bach's longest and densest works appears clear-cut:

The first Kyrie of the B minor Mass is so vast that it seems as if nothing could control its bulk; yet the listener needs no analysis to confirm his instinctive impression that it reaches its last note with astronomical punctuality. The foundation of this impression is that the form is such as will seem ridiculously simple when it is correctly described.²

Bach's taste for merging different genres and compositional techniques is well known, but Tovey was the first to discover that the structure of this Kyrie, though at first hearing seemingly a grandiose vocal fugue with instrumental introduction and interlude, is best described as ritornello form (derived from the concertos and arias of the era).

Full references to standard Bach literature, and abbreviations used in *Understanding Bach 12*, (2017) can be found at bachnetwork.co.uk/ub12/ub12-abbr.pdf.

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¹ Donald Francis Tovey, 'Bach: B minor Mass', in *Essays in Musical Analysis, Vol. 5: Vocal Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 25.

² Ibid.

Bach scholars are not known for being especially interested in questions of form, and while the literature on this movement is no exception, the majority of those who discuss the form of the Kyrie follow Tovey's lead.³ However, no one mentions the fact that 'astronomical punctuality' is disturbed twice during the movement.⁴ In this article I will try to account for these odd formal deviations.

Joshua Rifkin claims that the opening Kyrie of the B minor Mass is a parody of a lost original. Based on a handful of upper auxiliary note corrections in the autograph, he assumes that the original was in C minor.⁵ Rifkin thinks that, in its original form, the movement was not preceded by the present slow introduction: according to his theory, the four-bar Adagio was written in 1733 for the B minor version that was dedicated to the new Saxon Elector, Frederick Augustus II. If my analysis is correct, the four-bar introduction always belonged to the movement. I will return to this at the end of the article.

Hidden ritornello or trio sonata

Let us first take a closer look at the formal structure of the Kyrie.⁶ After the four-bar slow introduction, the movement proper starts with richly scored, seven-part instrumental music that sounds at first hearing like a fugue: first oboe d'amore and first flute play the subject in unison (b. 5), and the conventional answer follows immediately in the second oboe d'amore and second flute (b. 7), in the tonality of the upper fifth, namely the dominant F# minor. The two parts are supported by the independent bass line, and the entries of the subject are accompanied by a 'beautiful harmonic halo'⁷ played by the strings. Unusually for a fugue, the third part enters much later than the first two entries, occurring in the bass after twelve long bars (b. 22), just before the end of the first formal section which arrives with a full cadence in the tonic B minor (b. 29).

A new fugal exposition starts at that moment, using the same subject, but now with five vocal parts: the first entry comes in the tenor, the answer in the alto

³ Scholars who do not mention the ritornello principle: Wilfrid Mellers, *Bach and the Dance of God* (London: Faber and Faber, 1980), 164–70; George Stauffer, *Bach: The Mass in B Minor* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 56; Christoph Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach – Messe in h-moll* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2009), 57–9. Those who analyse the movement according to the ritornello principle are: Werner Neumann, *J. S. Bachs Chorfüge: Ein Beitrag zur Kompositionstechnik Bachs* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1953), 67; Roger Bullivant, *Fugue* (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1971), 157; George J. Buelow, 'Symbol and Structure in the Kyrie of Bach's B minor Mass', in Robert L. Weaver (ed.), *Essays on the Music of J. S. Bach and Other Divers Subjects: A Tribute to Gerhard Herz* (New York: Pendragon Press, 1981), 38–9; John Butt, *Bach: Mass in B Minor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 61; Richard D. P. Jones, *The Creative Development of Johann Sebastian Bach*, Vol. 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 291–2.

⁴ As far as I know, Buelow is the only scholar who mentions these deviations: he interprets the phenomena from the point of view of number symbolism. Buelow, 'Symbol and Structure', 26.

⁵ Joshua Rifkin, 'The B-minor Mass and its Performance' (Liner notes), *J. S. Bach: Mass in B Minor*, Bach Ensemble (Nonesuch Records 79036, 1982). See Rifkin's review of the facsimile edition of the B minor Mass: *Notes*, 44/4 (1988), 787–98.

⁶ It is recommended that this article is read with a full score at hand. Several reliable new editions of the B minor Mass are available (for the present purpose even the *Bach-Gesellschaft-Ausgabe*, the Eulenburg score, or Friedrich Smend's old *Neue Bach-Ausgabe* edition is sufficient).

⁷ Tovey, 'Bach: B minor Mass', 26.

(bb. 30 and 32), the third entry in soprano 1, its answer in soprano 2 (bb. 37 and 39); the statements always start from B, the answers from F#. In a conventional five-part fugue, the exposition would have ended with the entry of the subject in the part that was resting so far, namely the bass. But in this case, the B minor entry in the bass (b. 45) is followed by a sixth, F# entry in soprano 2 (b. 48). And the fugal entries do not stop here: the subject comes again in soprano 1 (b. 50), but now from C#, which means that it is the answer of the answer, two fifths above the B minor tonic. Tovey was the first to show that the sixth, F# entry, is actually not (only) an answer but the beginning of a new formal section. From this moment on, the whole instrumental introduction is repeated, albeit not in B minor but in the dominant F# minor, with the choir superimposed. This means, then, that after the C# minor answer in soprano 1, the next entry will come only later, in the bass (b. 65), as happened in the instrumental introduction.

Tovey labels the instrumental introduction a 'ritornello'. John Butt, for good reason, prefers the term 'hidden ritornello'.⁸ The F# minor repetition of the instrumental opening section with added vocal parts is not at all obvious to the listener. What is more, Bach's scoring intentionally hides the formal border between the five-part vocal fugue and the recapitulation of the ritornello. Strings and flutes remain silent during the first four entries of the five-part vocal fugue complex; the entries are supported by an independent continuo line, and the two oboes add free counterpoint to the thematic fabric. The fifth entry in the bass, however, is doubled by continuo, viola and bassoon;⁹ the two oboes start doubling sopranos 1 and 2 slightly later (from the end of b. 46), and the violins also join in soon after. Bach might be suggesting, with this scoring, that the bass entry starts a new section in the overall form, so that the F# minor entry in soprano 2 is heard as a dominant answer to the tonic B minor entry of the bass. At any rate, this is what listeners might feel – if they could orientate themselves at all in the ever-denser texture. But this sixth entry in soprano 2 is not only an answer; it serves also as the beginning of the recapitulation of the ritornello, transposed to the dominant F# minor.

Before seeing what happens after the F# minor recapitulation of the ritornello, it is worth considering the music of the ritornello itself. From the perspective of the overall form, it is correct and useful to call it a ritornello (albeit hidden), but if we take its texture into consideration, it would be equally appropriate to call it a 'trio sonata', and again hidden. As we have seen, the fugue subject occurs in the opening instrumental ritornello only three times: first in the two upper parts (oboes and flutes), then a while later in the bass (in the continuo). If we strip from the musical fabric all the doubling parts and those in which the fugue subject is not present, we arrive at a perfect trio sonata texture which is complete in itself (Ex. 1). So the free counterpoint of the strings – Tovey's 'beautiful harmonic halo' – is just ornamentation, fill-out material; nothing other than an artfully elaborated continuo realisation.

⁸ Butt, *Bach: Mass in B Minor*, 68.

⁹ There is no bassoon part in the autograph full score, but the 1733 set of parts presented for the Saxon elector contains one (see D-Dl, Mus.2405-D-21 at digital.slub-dresden.de/werkansicht/df/11361/1/). The bassoon doubles the continuo in the introductory ritornello (bb. 5–30), falls silent in the five-part vocal fugue complex (even though the continuo carries on), then comes back at the fifth entry, doubling the vocal bass part.

18

9# 8 6 7 6 5 8 7 6 6 7 8 7 7# 8 7 7#

2 4# 2

21

5 5# 7 7 7 9 8 7 7 4 5 6 6# 6 5 7 5

3

24

7 6 7 9 6 9 6 7 6 7 9 3 7 6 6 4

3

27

6 6 6 6 6# 6 6 6 5 6 4 5 6 4 7 6 4 5 8 2 8 7# 5

4# 2# 4 5 4 4# 4 4# 3 6 3 2 3

Example 1 continued

Three features indicate that the opening instrumental ritornello is essentially a trio sonata in texture:

- 1) the strange fact that in this seven-part music there are only three entries of the fugue subject;
- 2) the scoring of bars 19–21, where the trio sonata ensemble of two wind parts and continuo has a chordal accompaniment in the strings (this is the moment at which Bach's instrumentation gets closest to the three-plus-four-part texture of the Corellian concerto grosso, which grew out of the trio sonata); and
- 3) after the opening ritornello, at the beginning of the five-part vocal fugue complex (bb. 30–45), flutes and strings subside into silence, and only three instrumental parts remain: two oboes and continuo (that is, the trio sonata ensemble).

Thus, while from a formal viewpoint the movement can be described as a compound of ritornello form and fugue, from a scoring angle it is a mixture of five-part writing (in the fugal sections) and trio writing (disguised as seven-part instrumental music in the opening ritornello and as five-part vocal music in the returns of the ritornello). It is remarkable that the most conventional texture of German music of the era – that is, four-part writing – is not present.

The secret of the sixth entry

Let us now return to the overall form of the movement: after the opening ritornello (or 'trio sonata'), a five-part vocal fugue begins, which after the fifth entry flows imperceptibly into the F# minor recapitulation of the ritornello, with the voices superimposed. Next, an eight-bar instrumental interlude follows (bb. 72–80) in which the subject occurs twice: first in F# minor in the second oboe (forming a trio sonata texture with first oboe and continuo), then in A major in the strings (where the violas add a fourth part to the texture). Now the five-part vocal fugue complex restarts (b. 81). The only difference between it and the first complex, is the sequence of entries: the first entry is heard now in the bass, the answer in the tenor (bb. 81 and 83), then comes the alto with the subject and soprano 1 with the answer (bb. 88 and 90). The critical moment, the fifth entry, comes logically in soprano 2 (b. 97), though surprisingly not in the tonic B minor but in the subdominant E minor. As John Butt puts it:

The fifth entry ... is in the subdominant (E minor, b. 97). This automatically generates a further entry in the tonic (soprano 1, b. 102), which instigates the second repetition of the ritornello, to close the movement.¹⁰

To sum up the whole movement's formal structure: the ritornello is heard three times, first in the tonic B minor in the instrumental ensemble, then in the dominant F# minor with voices, and at the end back in B minor, but again with the vocal parts superimposed. In addition, there are two five-part fugal complexes, the second one introduced by a short instrumental interlude (Fig. 1).

¹⁰ Butt, *Bach: Mass in B Minor*, 69.

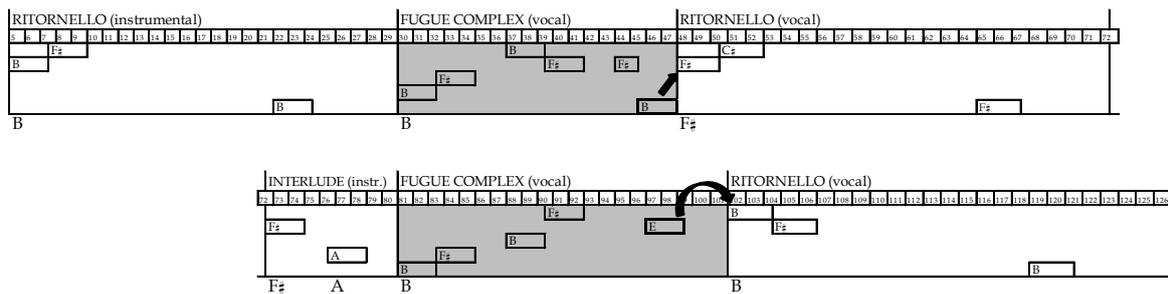


Figure 1: The formal structure of the B minor Kyrie (BWV 232^I/1)

Seen from afar – ‘from the shoulders of Goatfell’ – the movement’s form seems indeed ‘ridiculously simple’. However, in the ‘astronomical punctuality’ of the structure there are two small deviations. The first is trifling and can be easily explained, but initially the second seems mysterious. To understand these deviations, we must compare the building blocks of the movement: the three ritornellos and the two five-part fugal complexes.

The three occurrences of the ritornello differ only in terms of scoring, and the second is different in terms of tonality; but the musical material is essentially the same bar-to-bar, so that all three are precisely twenty-four bars long. Comparison of the two vocal fugue complexes, however, shows immediately that the second is three bars longer than the first. To understand this difference, we must examine the short episodes, the so-called ‘codettas’ between the fugal entries (Exx. 2–3).

In both fugal complexes, a shorter codetta connects the second and third entries (bb. 35–6, Ex. 2a; bb. 86–7, Ex. 3a); and a longer one, the fourth and fifth entries (bb. 42–5, Ex. 2b; bb. 93–6, Ex. 3b). Three of the codettas stand between a dominant F# entry and a tonic B minor entry; all use some type of sequence and a motif derived from the countersubject of the theme, though the F#–C tritone leap at the beginning of codettas 1 and 2 is extended to an F#–D sixth leap in codettas 3 and 4 (compare the first bar of the codettas with the upper part of the fourth bar of the ritornello: Ex. 1, b. 7).

As shown in Examples 2–3, in both fugal complexes the second codetta ‘rhymes’ with the first: the first bar of codetta 1 (b. 35) is a more ornate four-part replica of the first bar of codetta 2 (b. 42); and the first bar of codetta 3 (b. 86) relates in a similar way to codetta 4 (b. 93). But the system of kinship does not end here: codetta 1 relates not only to codetta 2 but also to codetta 3, as codetta 2 does to codetta 4. What is more, these relationships are more important in the context of musical form.

Though codettas 1 and 3 use different types of sequence (codetta 1 modulates to the subdominant E minor for a moment before turning back to the tonic, whereas codetta 3 modulates to G major through the circle of fifths),¹¹ and their

¹¹ Note the stroke of genius that governs the sequential manipulations in codetta 1 (Ex. 2a). At the first beat of b. 36 the listener is tempted to think that the harmonic plan of the sequence will follow the usual descending pattern through the circle of fifths: the modulation leads from F# minor to E minor through a B major dominant seventh chord (with a flattened ninth). If b. 36 repeated b. 35 literally a major second lower—as one might expect—the c#’ of b. 35 in the alto would appear as b’ and the modulation would lead further to D minor. The pitch of b’ is indeed there in b. 36, but as its enharmonic equivalent, a#, so that the music can lead back to the tonic B minor. And this a# is also derived from b. 35: the voices are exchanged, so it is the tenor’s d# that

a)

b)

Example 3: a) The first codetta of the second fugal complex, bb. 86-8; b) The second codetta of the second fugal complex, bb. 93-6

The half-bar difference between the lengths of codettas 2 and 4 is related to the different strategies with which Bach introduces the fifth entry in each fugal complex. Codetta 2 goes through the circle of fifths with the most conventional descending sequential pattern: bar 42 starts in F# minor, and with every bar the music modulates one step lower, first to E minor, then further down to D major, where soprano 2 starts a false entry. It is 'false' in two respects: its first interval is a minor second instead of a major second, and the entry is incomplete—it is interrupted after one-and-a-half bars by the climactic real fifth entry in the bass. The fifth entry is reached here with a sense of arrival: in bar 45 the *B* occurs after an F# dominant seventh chord and, as we have already seen, the theme is doubled by the instruments. Codetta 4, by contrast, lasts for four bars and its phrase structure is more regular: after two bars of an ascending sequence, a new type of descending sequence starts in bar 95, with the melodic material of soprano 1 now in the bass. The subdominant E minor entry is heard as a continuation, without

the sense of an emphatic arrival (note that the E minor cadence comes only in bar 98, midway through the theme). The rhetorical device of the false entry just before the fifth one is missing from the second complex, but there is a wonderful compensation for that.

At first sight it seems odd that between the fifth and the sixth entries of the second fugue complex, there is a two-and-a-half bar extra codetta (bb. 99–101; see Ex. 4a). In the first fugal complex, the fifth entry is followed straight away by the sixth (bb. 45–50), and it would have been logical to transpose the fifth entry to the subdominant in the second complex and connect the tonic return of the ritornello automatically to it (which is fairly easy to achieve – see Ex. 4b), but, *pace* Butt, this is not the case. Why did Bach insert a two-and-a-half bar codetta here? Why did he compromise the meticulously structured order of the overall form?

Tovey writes the following about this very moment:

Notice that though this form is so absurdly simple, it is so poised that no human ear can detect the moment when recapitulation begins. One fugue entry is exactly like another, and, even when marked by the support of the orchestra, the sixth entry does not immediately give away its secret.¹³

Tovey correctly observes that the beginning of the ritornello is well-nigh imperceptible, and it is obvious that the sixth entry seems to be guarding its secret. This secret though is loaded with another one: the mystery of the extra two-and-a-half bar codetta. The key for the latter is to be found in the bass line.

In bar 99 – that is, in the last bar of the E minor entry – the bass line starts a grandiose melodic arc: this four-bar phrase rises an octave from *B* before descending back to *f*[♯]. Because the beginning of this bass line coincides with the last bar of the fifth entry, and the sixth entry begins in its last bar, the phrase connects the second vocal fugue complex with the return of the tonic ritornello. Even if it ‘does not immediately give away its secret’, closer scrutiny reveals that this four-bar bass line is nothing other than a variant of the bass line from the slow introduction of the whole movement (Ex. 5).¹⁴ That is to say, Bach evokes the *Adagio* introduction at this important formal juncture, just before the sixth entry that opens the recapitulation of the tonic ritornello.

¹³ Tovey, ‘Bach: B minor Mass’, 28.

¹⁴ The melodic content of this extra codetta is the same as that of codetta 4 (compare sop. 1 from b. 93 and sop. 2 from the second half of b. 99). Even the basic *d''-e''-f''* melodic outline of the introduction’s sop. 1 part is there in bb. 99–101 – see the peak notes of every bar in sop. 2 (on every last beat). As Christoph Wolff has shown, this line refers to an ancient and well-known melody, Luther’s Kyrie from the *Deutsche Messe*; see Christoph Wolff, ‘Origins of the Kyrie of the B minor Mass’, in *Bach: Essays on his Life and Music* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 147–8.

The image shows a musical score for two staves in G major (one sharp). The top staff is a treble clef and the bottom staff is a bass clef. The music is in 4/4 time. The score consists of two systems of four measures each. The first system (measures 1-4) and the second system (measures 99-102) are connected by lines, indicating a relationship between them. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 below the notes. There are also some articulation marks like accents and slurs.

Example 5: The relationship between the bass line of bb. 1–4 and that of bb. 99–102

Fair copy or composing score?

Although it is commonly acknowledged by Bach scholars that the autograph full score of the Kyrie is a fair copy, Robert L. Marshall and Joshua Rifkin hold slightly different opinions. They agree that the fugue is a revision copy, but Rifkin thinks that the introduction is 'a typical composing score, with fluid, almost hasty script and a relative abundance of corrections'.¹⁵ He claims that the movement was copied and transposed by Bach from a C minor original, and that the four-bar *Adagio* was newly composed in 1733. Since formal analysis suggests that this introduction always belonged to the movement, it is worth examining the autograph to see if it supports Rifkin's hypothesis.

It is not only the lucid handwriting that suggests that the autograph of the introduction is not a composing score but also the ruling of the staves on the paper (Ex. 6). Robert Marshall distinguishes two stave-ruling principles in the Bach autographs.¹⁶ Bach followed the 'non-calligraphic principle' when, without any preconception, he ruled as many staves on the paper as there was space for, and he usually started composition on this type of manuscript paper. The 'calligraphic principle', on the other hand, tailors the disposition of the staves on the paper according to the given composition, so that the layout of the score system would fit the page perfectly and economically. The autograph full score of the first Kyrie of the B minor Mass belongs to the latter category, as is clear right from the very first page. As Marshall puts it:

Bach left only three staves to represent the resting choir in mm. 6–10 of Kyrie I, with a pair of rests each in the soprano and alto staves to represent Sopranos I and II, and Alto and Tenor. As in the D major Magnificat, Bach was able to combine a degree of economy in the use of paper with calligraphic neatness and legibility of layout.¹⁷

¹⁵ Rifkin, *The B minor Mass*, quoted by Alfred Dürr, 'Zur Parodiefrage in Bachs h-moll-Messe: Eine Bestandsaufnahme', *Die Musikforschung*, 45/2 (1992), 119. Marshall was the first to argue that the introduction was added later to the movement: see Robert L. Marshall, 'Beobachtungen am Autograph der h-moll-Messe. Zum Kompositionsprozess', *Musik und Kirche*, 50/3 (1980), 231; Eng. trans.: 'The Mass in B Minor: the autograph scores and the compositional process', in *The Music of Johann Sebastian Bach: the Sources, the Style, the Significance* (New York: Schirmer, 1989), 175.

¹⁶ Robert L. Marshall, *The Compositional Process of J. S. Bach: A Study of the Autograph Scores of the Vocal Works* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), 43.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 57.

Handwritten autograph score for the first page of the B minor Kyrie (BWV 232/1). The page is titled "Kyrie" and "à 5. Voc. & Strumenti & Continuo". It features staves for various instruments: Flauto, Clarinetto, Violino, Viola, Contrabbasso, and Continuo. The score includes vocal parts with lyrics such as "Kyrie eleison" and "Kyrie eleison". The handwriting is in brown ink on aged paper. A red circular stamp is visible near the bottom center of the page.

Example 6: First page of the autograph score of the B minor Kyrie (BWV 232/1); D-B (Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Musikabteilung mit Mendelssohn-Archiv), Mus. ms. Bach P 180 (www.bach-digital.de/receive/BachDigitalSource_source_00001048)

It is beyond doubt that Bach was capable of working out the full vocal and instrumental pomp of the four-bar introductory music in his head. But the calligraphic layout of the score and the nature of the corrections in the first four bars of the autograph suggest that even this slow introduction was copied from the lost C minor original.

According to John Butt, the instrumental and vocal parts in the autograph of the slow introduction represent different types of handwriting: while there are more corrections in the vocal parts, the instrumental parts are more lucid; the former type represents a composing score, the latter a fair copy. He adds:

Perhaps, then, the introduction was originally for instruments alone. Conversely this passage might reflect the addition of a fifth voice to a four-voice original, thus accounting for the alterations in the tenor and viola parts.¹⁸

Without further evidence, it is hard to rule out Butt's theory, though it is worth considering that only one correction can be found in the tenor part, and it seems to be a transposition error (see below). Furthermore, the corrections in the viola part can be interpreted in a different way.

The fact that in these four bars on eleven staves – forty-four bars in all – there are only seven corrections hardly supports Rifkin's exaggerated claim that this slow introduction is a composing score. According to Alfred Dürr, 'the richness of the corrections is not at all convincing, and the contrast with the following bars is not at all obvious'.¹⁹

The seven corrections fall into three categories:

- 1) new pitches (viola, bb. 2-3);
- 2) ornamented, melodically more complex lines (viola, b. 4; sop. 1, b. 4; sop. 2, b. 3; alto, b. 4);
- 3) upper auxiliary note correction (ten., b. 2).

The pitch changes in bars 2-3 of the viola part at first sight seem to be the result of compositional revisions: in bar 2 Bach changes the *b-e'* fourth leap into an upward *b-b'* octave leap; and the *c#'* repetition in bar 3 is also changed into an upward octave leap (the original viola line can be seen in Ex. 7). Both corrections generate an upward change of register in the string chords (the first also eliminates parallel octaves), which probably signifies that these corrections have more to do with the transposition from C minor to B minor than with the compositional work, since in the original the continuo would have sounded an octave lower.²⁰

¹⁸ Butt, *Bach: Mass in B Minor*, 44.

¹⁹ '...der Korrekturenreichtum ist keineswegs so überzeugend, der Kontrast zu den folgenden Takten keineswegs so offensichtlich'; Dürr, 'Zur Parodiefrage in Bachs h-moll-Messe', 120.

²⁰ Konrad Klek, 'Die Missa von 1733 BWV 232', in Reinmar Emans and Sven Hiemke (eds.), *Bachs Lateinische Kirchenmusik: Das Handbuch* (Laaber: Laaber-Verlag, 2007), 224.

The only correction in the B minor introduction that belongs to the third category can be found in the tenor part. The second note in bar 2 was written at first erroneously a tone above the intended note: into the space above the middle line, instead of on the middle line. Bach then enlarged the note-head so that it would cover mainly the middle line. It is exactly this type of upper auxiliary note correction that serves as the basis for Rifkin's assumption that there was a C minor original for the movement (in the fugue there are some twenty transposition errors like this). Were this correction in the slow introduction indeed a transposition error, then the first four bars would have had to be part of the C minor version—a conclusion drawn also from the formal analysis of the movement.

But even if it is a compositional change, it does not contradict the assumption that the introduction always belonged to the movement. An alternative reading of this change in the tenor part could be connected with soprano 2: when Bach was composing, he could well have entered the tenor before the soprano *c♯*′′, the resulting dissonance forcing him to eliminate the original tenor *b*.²¹ But does it actually prove that the introduction was newly composed? Several Kyrie movements of the era have a slow introduction lasting several bars, although they are usually chordal, declaiming the text without using any complex counterpoint.²² The intricacy of the three middle vocal parts of Bach's introduction is quite unusual, even in Bach's output (note the melodiousness and wide range of soprano 2, alto and tenor), while the melody in soprano 1 and the bass line are both very simple. Bach might have composed the present introduction in a simpler form for the original C minor version (the relationship between bars 99–102 and the introduction is based only on the bass and in some degree on the melody), and he might have made the inner texture denser only for the 1733 B minor version, hence the greater number of corrections in the introduction's middle parts.

Without further evidence, it is not possible to answer the question posed above once and for all, but formal analysis of the movement and examination of the manuscript point in the same direction: the slow introduction was always part of the movement. And all this can be read as a case study to show that the disciplines of musical analysis and source studies are complimentary—we gain much by treating them as close allies.

²¹ I am grateful to Joshua Rifkin for pointing this out to me.

²² The following masses of Zelenka have a slow introduction before the first Kyrie: ZWV 1, 3, 4, 14, 20, 23.