

Michael Altenburg, the Trumpet Choir, and Sacred Music-making in the Towns and Villages of Early Seventeenth-century Saxony and Thuringia

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The contribution of the pastor and composer Michael Altenburg (1584–1640) to the introduction of the trumpet and timpani in composed music during the second decade of the seventeenth century has been long-recognized yet little studied.¹ Inspired by Michael Prætorius, Altenburg and his better known contemporaries, Scheidt, Schein, and Schütz, explored what their mentor called “the First Style”: the polychoral “Latin- and German-language sacred Church-songs and Concerted-songs” with *ad placitum* parts for trumpets and timpani that represented one facet of the “splendid and princely *music*” that Prætorius had been advocating since 1614.² Altenburg’s contribution has not been given the examination it deserves. Of the two previously identified prints, the collection *Gaudium Christianum* (Jena: Johann Weidner, 1617) figured until recently among the “lost, presumed destroyed” musical casualties of World War II and knowledge of it relied on secondary sources of variable integrity, while the *Hochzeitliche Musicalische Frewde* (Erfurt: Johann Röhbock, 1620) has been treated as complete although without any evidence of the use of the trumpets mentioned on its title page. In the late 1970s I identified a previously unrecognized, incomplete print of *Gaudium Christianum* in the Sächsische Landesbibliothek—Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek in Dresden (D-DI Mus 1-C-2)—and attempted a reconstruction of much of the collection, including rudimentary trumpet and timpani parts, which enabled the conclusion that the *Hochzeitliche Musicalische Frewde* was missing three trumpet parts and one voice part.³ The more recent recovery of important music collections (often in new geographical locations) and cataloguing of peripheral music collections have improved the situation dramatically and enabled Altenburg’s contribution to the early *musical* history of the trumpet and timpani to be reconsidered. The present article discusses that engagement and its impact on the Lutheran heartland of Saxony and Thuringia in the early seventeenth century.

Michael Altenburg was born in the village of Alach, near Erfurt. Following theological studies at Erfurt University that led to a bachelor’s degree in 1601 and a master’s degree in 1602, he served in Erfurt as a schoolteacher from 1600 and as Kantor at the St. Andreaskirche from 1601, before being appointed as pastor to the parishes of Ilversgehofen and Marpach in 1609. From 1610 until 1621 he ministered at the St. Bonifatiuskirche in Tröchtelborn where most of his music was composed, disseminated in manuscript, and circulated in print. His transfer to Sömmerda coincided with the entanglement of Saxony and Thuringia in the Thirty Years’ War

and brought suffering and deprivation to his parish and his own family. He fled to Erfurt in 1637 and ministered again at the St. Andreaskirche until his death in 1640.

While his contemporaries Prætorius and Schütz served at leading noble courts, and Schein and Scheidt were employed at major churches of important trading cities, Altenburg's musical environment was confined to small villages with limited musical resources. This relative isolation influenced his composing activity that was "offered and dedicated equally to parish communities in the towns as well as to those in the villages."⁴ This helps to explain some of the features of his musical style, a combination of the modern polychoral approach of Prætorius and others with the older polyphonic practices of the Hassler generation. Backward-looking features include his refusal to double parts, which results in angular part-writing and, at polychoral tuttis, in bass parts that may underpin their own choir with second-inversion harmonies.⁵ Moreover, when an organ was to be used to replace an entire choir's contribution, the organist had to play an intabulation of that choir's music.

Forward-looking aspects reflect the reality of his musical milieu. Many churches lacked an organ at this time and instrumentalists as well as singers were included in the parish choirs, the *Kantorei* or *Adjuwanten*. Altenburg therefore composed pieces for various groupings of singers and instrumentalists. Recognizing that "even the smallest village, particularly in Thuringia, has a flourishing and well-organized *vocal* and *instrumental* music. If there is no organ, the *vocal music* is ornamented and embellished by at least five or six string players, which formerly could only be done in the towns,"⁶ he excluded *basso continuo* parts from his works, an unfortunate decision since many of his works survive incompletely and trumpet parts feature strongly among the losses.⁷ Many works (among them two with trumpets) also feature a soprano part—the *Choral Stimme*—that contains either simple chorale melodies or folksong-like sacred songs (many of them by Altenburg himself).⁸ The *Choral Stimme* was intended to be sung by school children and is often supported by strings, although in *Gaudium Christianum* it is accompanied by a trumpet choir.⁹ These choices exemplify Altenburg's concern to promote vibrant, musically engaged parish and school communities wherever he ministered. He was considered the "Orlando [di Lasso] of Thuringia" and the "most vigilant pastor and most celebrated musician in the land." His "singular musical talent" is also seen in his progressive employment of trumpets and timpani, the sheer inventiveness of which makes equivalent contemporary works by Prætorius, Schein, Schütz, and others appear cautious and uncertain by comparison.¹⁰

The works with trumpet choir

Gaudium Christianum, Altenburg's first collection to include trumpets and timpani, is a pivotal work in the musical history of the instruments. It is the earliest dated collection of polychoral music for which specific trumpet and timpani parts were composed.¹¹ Written for the centenary of the Reformation from 31 October to 2 November 1617 and prepared for printing in 1617, its publication was delayed

until early 1618. Three pieces include an optional choir of *drey Trompeten vnd zwo Paucken* (indicated in the parts as *Erste Stimm/Vox Prima*, *ander Stimm*, *dritte Stimm* and *zwo Paucken*, respectively), which is given its own music and then complements the different musical discourse found in the other choirs. *Die Prophezeihung von Luthero* and *Die Engelische Schlacht* set apocalyptic texts, the first beginning “Und ich sahe einen Engel fliegen mitten durch dem Himmel” (Revelation 14:6–12) and the second, “Es erhuh sich ein Streit in Himmel” (Revelation 12:7–12); *Das Lutherische Schloß* sets Luther’s hymn *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott*. The 1620 wedding publication *Hochzeitliche Musicalische Frewde* sets the text beginning “Wie ein lieber Buhle einen Buhlen lieb hat” (Isaiah 62:5), superimposes on it a *Choral Stimme* singing a modified version of the chorale *Dies sind die heil’gen zehen Gebot*,¹² and adds a complementary, optional choir of 2. *Clareten vnd 1. Trombet* parts. The 1622 collection *Dritter Theil Musicalischer Fest Zierde* concludes with a setting of Psalm 150 for two choirs supplemented by both a *Choral Stimme*, which sings Becker’s versification of the psalm “Musiken klang, lieblicher G’sang” to a melody by Altenburg, and also a five-part instrumental *capella* of, alternately, strings and *Trombeten*.

Altenburg employs three different trumpet configurations, including timpani in *Gaudium Christianum*, all of which will be indicated as “trumpet choir” in the following discussion. The trumpet choir is always optional and the different pieces are performable without it. However, since its musical contribution is always independent of the rest—a feature unique to Altenburg’s music at this earliest stage—there is considerable loss when it is omitted. Table 1 summarizes the key information. It is satisfying to note that the pioneering *Gaudium Christianum* is finally complete.¹³ The two other prints are incomplete, possibly due to a practice used in *Gaudium Christianum*, where the music for the trumpet choir is found on separate folios of a partbook entitled *Chorus Quartus*, loss of which would incur the total loss of the trumpet choir’s music.¹⁴ *Hochzeitliche Musicalische Frewde* is missing its printed *Choral Stimme* and [Choir 3] trumpet choir partbooks, although manuscript sources supply all but one trumpet part, which may be reconstructed after the example of *Gaudium Christianum*.¹⁵ *Dritter Theil Musicalischer Fest Zierde* is missing its printed *Choral Stimme* and *Capella* choir partbooks and manuscripts supply the voice part and the third and fourth *Capella* choir parts (and a derivative *basso seguente*) for the piece. While complete reconstruction of *Psalm 150* is not possible,¹⁶ the fact that the trumpet choir features only in four short tuttis where it combines with the two SATB choirs enables its missing parts to be sketched. The manuscript *basso seguente* quotes from its lowest part in mm. 131–32 as a part for *Trombet.*; rather than timpani, and this also helps in the reconstruction.¹⁷ Once this lowest part has been reconstructed, the musical content of the three lower trumpet choir parts when combined with that for the two SATB choirs at the four tuttis enables the two missing upper trumpet choir parts to be outlined.¹⁸

Table 1**Michael Altenburg's compositions with parts for trumpet choir**

Library sigla (in order of their appearance): D-MLHr = Mühlhausen, Stadtarchiv; Pl-Kj = Krakow, Biblioteka Jagiellońska; D-Bds = Berlin, Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, Musikabteilung; D-DI = Dresden, Sächsische Landesbibliothek—Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek; GB-Lbl = London, British Library; D-WRha = Weimar, Hochschule für Musik Franz Liszt, Hochschularchiv; D-W = Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek; D-Ngm = Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum.

Collection and Status	<i>Gaudium Christianum (Jena, 1617)</i> Complete	
Sources consulted	Print: D-MLHr/StAM 10/ E6 n.32 Pl-Kj (<i>olim</i> D-Bds) Mus. Ant. Pract. A305 D-DI Mus. 1-C-2 Manuscript: D-DI 1-E-750, 11e	
Title, Text(s) and Number of Parts	Part Disposition	
<i>Die Prophezeihung von Luthero</i> , “Und ich sahe einen Engel fliegen mitten durch dem Himmel” (Revelation 14:6–12) and the song “Der Bapst der hat den Schlüssel verlorn” <i>Mit 12. Oder 16. Stimmen</i>	Choir 1: S1, S2, A, T Choir 2: S, A, T, B Choir 3: A, T1, T2, B <i>ad libitum</i> Choir 4: S*, 3 <i>Trompeten</i> , timpani	
<i>Das Lutherische Schloß</i> “Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott” (Martin Luther, based on Psalm 46) <i>Mit 5. 15. Oder 19. Stimmen</i>	Choir 1: S1, S2, A, T, B Choir 2: S1, S2, A, T, B Choir 3: S, A, T1, T2, B <i>ad libitum</i> Choir 4: 3 <i>Trompeten</i> , timpani	
<i>Die Engelische Schlacht</i> “Es erhob sich ein Streit in Himmel” (Revelation 12:7–12) <i>Mit 12. Oder 16. Stimmen</i>	Choir 1: S1, S2, A, T Choir 2: S, A, T, B Choir 3: A, T1, T2, B <i>ad libitum</i> Choir 4: 3 <i>Trompeten</i> , timpani	
Collection and Status	<i>Hochzeitliche Musicalische Frewde (Erfurt, 1620)</i> Incomplete, missing the second Claret trumpet part	
Sources consulted	Print: GB-Lbl C29a Manuscript: D-DI Mus 1-E-750, 11b and Mus 1-E-750, 11h D-WRha Udestedt 1a and Udestedt 1b	
Title, Text(s) and Number of Parts	Part Disposition	
“Wie ein lieber Buhle einen Buhlen lieb hat” (Isaiah 62:5) and the chorale “Dies sind die heil’gen zehen Gebot” (stanzas 7 and 12) 9. <i>vel 12. Voc.</i>	Choir 1: S1, S2, A, B Choir 2: A, T1, T2, B Choral Stimme: S <i>ad libitum</i> [Choir 3:] 2 <i>Claretten</i> , 1 <i>Trombet</i>	

*This children’s voice part is not counted in the part numbering as it doubles the first trumpet until the *clausula finalis*, from where the trumpet alone continues (See Example 1).

Collection and Status	Dritter Theil Musicalischer Fest Zierde (Erfurt, 1622) Incomplete, missing Capella Choir Vox 1, Vox 2 and Vox 5	
Sources consulted	Print: D-W 20.1-8 Musica Manuscript: D-Dl Mus. 1-E-750, 11f D-WRha Udestedt 1b [D-Ngm Ms 138036 not available for consultation]	
Title, Text(s) and Number of Parts	Part Disposition	
<i>Psalm 150</i>] “Lobet den Herrn in seinem Heiligtum” and the chorale “Musiken klang, lieblicher G’sang” <i>à 14 voc.</i>	Choir 1: S, A, T, B Choir 2: S, A, T, B Choral Stimme: S Capella Choir: 5 <i>Geigen</i> alternating with 5 <i>Trombeten</i> (?)	

The employment of the trumpet choir

Michael Altenburg writes for a trumpet choir of variously three, four, or five parts and shows both a familiarity with the instruments and an adventurous engagement. The *Trombeten* are treated as pitched in C (see below) and the kettledrums are tuned to *c* and *G*. The trumpet choir is used in situations typified by tutti passages in a predominantly C-major harmony that is relieved by I–IV–I and I–V–I progressions, an approach shared with Prætorius and Schütz, for example.¹⁹ However, whereas they allow the constant tonic harmony of the trumpet choir to clash harshly with the changing harmonies given to the rest, Altenburg crafts his trumpet choir parts so that they either rest artfully at the F-major and G-major chords or engage throughout the I–V and I–V–I progressions. In the latter case he carefully selects pitches for the *Trombeten* so that they fit the harmonies established by the other choirs (Example 1, mm. 77–78). He also likes to include the trumpet choir in sustained submediant harmony from as early as *Das Lutherische Schloß*, an advanced feature in which the pitches are again chosen in a masterly manner so that they blend with the A-minor music of the rest (Example 2, mm. 184–85). In *Wie ein lieber Buhle* he also includes the trumpet choir in I–II–VI progressions, inserting strategic rests for the trumpet choir only at the appearances of the supertonic.²⁰ The opening tuttis in *Das Lutherische Schloß* even feature a melodic canon between the three upper trumpet choir parts, initially at the unison and then at the octave. The printed timpani parts in *Gaudium Christianum*, the earliest known parts for the instrument, also include some unprecedented content.²¹ While the timpani mainly underpin the music given to the rest of the trumpet choir, on two occasions in *Das Lutherische Schloß* in which movement to sustained G-major harmony causes the three Trompeten to rest, Altenburg gives the timpanist a simple (but progressive) solo for *Trummel allein*, as it is described in the *Bassus 1. Chori* part (Example 2, mm. 182–83).

Altenburg’s trumpet choir, then, engages in tuttis where it presents complementary musical content in an assured and harmonically aware manner. Its parts are untexted,

(130)

Die Erste Stimm/
Vox Prima

ander Stimm

Die dritte
Stimme

Die zwei Paucken

Choir 1

Choir 2

Choir 3

Example 2 (cont.): *Das Lutherische Schloß*: “Ein feste’ Burg,” mm. 180–90.

apart from *Die Prophezeihung von Luthero*, in which the *Vox Prima/Erste Stimm* part is provided with textual underlay to enable children simultaneously to sing its melody as a *Choral Stimme*. The individual trumpet choir parts contain some short phrases that reappear in different works. These are best exemplified by *Wie ein lieber Buhle*, in which the celebratory trumpet choir interjections met at the ends of tuttis include two particular motives, one based on the alternation of the pitches g^2 and e^2 and another on the sequence $c^2-e^2-c^2-g^2$ (Example 3, m. 6). Variations of the former motive are met as interjections in *Die Engelische Schlacht* and in the concluding trumpet choir *Intrada* (Altenburg never uses the term) to *Das Lutherische Schloß*. The latter motive reappears in *Die Engelische Schlacht* and in the *Intrada* endings that ornament the concluding C-major chord sustained by the rest in *Die Prophezeihung von Luthero*, *Das Lutherische Schloß*, and, at different octave levels, *Das Lutherische Schloß*, *Die Engelische Schlacht*, and Psalm 150 (Example 4, mm. 60–62). The recurrence of these gestures argues for an origin in an early seventeenth-century celebratory trumpet style remote from the privileged world of the courts that was very familiar—even second nature—to Michael Altenburg. This, taken together with the fluency of Altenburg’s writing for trumpet choir, reinforces Arno Werner’s suggestion that the early seventeenth-century pastor from Alach had a familial connection with a trumpet-playing dynasty that peaked with the eighteenth-century trumpeters Johann Caspar

1. Claret

[2. Claret]

Die Trombet

Choir 1

Choir 2

en, freu

en.

freu - en

en.

en.

freu - en.

en.

1. Claret

[2. Claret]

Die Trombet

Choir 1

Choir 2

Example 4: “Wie ein lieber Buhle einen Buhlen Lieb hat,” mm. 58–64.

Altenburg (also from Alach) and Johann Ernst Altenburg, who wrote the *Versuch einer Anleitung zur heroisch-musikalischen Trompeter- und Pauker-Kunst* (1795).²²

The individual trumpet choir parts

Altenburg's trumpet choir music is characterized by careful, sympathetic employment of the constituent parts. There are always two high-register melodic parts that are notated in G2 clef. They are described as *Erste Stimm/Vox Prima* and *ander Stimm* in 1617 and are defined more accurately (if archaically) as *Claret* parts in 1620.²³ The *Claret* parts are confined to the natural harmonic pitches g^1 , c^2 , d^2 , e^2 , f^2 , and g^2 , together with the non-harmonic b^1 as an unaccented lower auxiliary to c^2 . They are suitable for performance on natural trumpets in C. Both parts share equal importance so that, whether acting canonically or homophonically, the second *Claret* may sound above the first or act independently of it, a manner of employment that later resulted in its description as a *Gegenclarin*, or counter-clarino, trumpet part.

Beneath the two *Claret* parts are found either one or two parts that are written in C3 clef and use the span $g-g^1$. The single C3-clef part is described as *dritte Stimme* in 1617 and as *Trombet* in 1620, while the two C3-clef parts in the 1622 work are both primarily described as for *Trombet*. All of these parts are unusual on three counts. First, while the standard trumpet ensemble (one each of *Clarino*, *Principal*, *AlterBass*, *Volgan*, and *Grob* trumpet parts, with timpani) used by Schütz and modified by Pratorius (who allows for the almost obsolete sixth *Fladdergröb* trumpet part and adds an optional second *Clarino* part) and others is based on the presence of a leading *Principal* trumpet part using the C1 clef and with the normal range c^1 , e^1 , g^1 , and c^2 , such a part is avoided by Altenburg, possibly to preclude incurring the wrath of court trumpeters, of whom



Figure 1: Michael Altenburg, *Die Prophezeiung von Luthero*, *Die dritte Stimme*, showing “normal” phrases with natural harmonics juxtaposed with “unusual” phrases that include non-harmonics. D-MLHr Stadtarchiv Mühlhausen 10/ E6 n.32, fol. 78r.

the Saxon court trumpeters were the most litigious at this time. Instead, he locates his *Trombet*: part(s) in the lower *AlterBass* range and uses its C3-clef notation practice and devises novel trumpet choir groupings in the process.

Second, while the *AlterBass* part in the standard trumpet ensemble is subservient and normally shadows the *Principal* part from one natural harmonic below, Altenburg's single *Trombet* in 1617 and 1620 is often of equal importance to the *Claret* parts, particularly when it engages in canon at the octave, while elsewhere it underpins them in a manner that tends to produce unstable first- or second-inversion harmonies. Moreover, his inclusion of two C3-clef parts in *Psalm 150* encourages him to make them interact with each other as equals with contrary motion, part exchange, and canon, all of which adds to the plasticity of his trumpet choir.

Third, all of the C3-clef *Trombet* parts supplement the natural harmonics g , c^1 , e^1 , and g^1 with non-harmonic pitches: d^1 and f^1 are met as short-duration, unaccented passing notes between their adjacent natural harmonic pitches, while b and f^1 act as unaccented lower auxiliary notes to c^1 and g^1 respectively (Figure 1). In the pieces with one C3-clef *Trombet* part these are often found when the *Trombet* engages in canon at the octave with one or both *Claret* parts and they are also found in other musical contexts in *Psalm 150*, including the inter-*Trombet* voice exchanges. All of these passages are elaborations of ur-phrases that require natural harmonics alone. While Altenburg's published music suffers from low-quality music printing, the fact that these *Trombet* parts consistently juxtapose "normal" phrases in which only natural harmonics are employed with "unusual" phrases that include non-harmonic passing and lower auxiliary notes, together with their very visible—but never canceled—presence in all of the prints and manuscripts, must mean that their inclusion was intentional.²⁴ A similar problem applies to the third *Trombet* part in *Psalm 150* which is notated in F4 clef and apparently employs the pitches c and G .²⁵

None of the *Trombet* parts are suitable for natural trumpets. The two surviving C3-clef *Trombet* parts in *Psalm 150* are obviously transcriptions from now-lost printed parts and are indicated for *Trombet: oder Posaun* (the two last words were entered by a second scribe) and were essentially conceived for performance in a trumpet-like manner on trombones. This explains the use of the *AlterBass* register for the C3-clef *Trombet* parts, since both the clef and range are common in designated tenor trombone parts in other works by Altenburg. The solution also justifies Prætorius's inclusion of *Trombetta* as an alternative name for the tenor trombone and supplies musical evidence of the usage that soon led court trumpeters to complain about the use of trombones in a trumpet-like manner.²⁶

It is, of course, possible that village trumpeters may have played these *Trombet* parts on natural trumpets and ignored the non-harmonic pitches, yet this would raise the question as to why Altenburg deliberately included the non-harmonics in the "unusual" phrases and juxtaposed them with "normal" passages from which the same pitches are absent. It might even be proposed that natural trumpet players were feigning non-harmonic pitches notes as early as 1617, but this would flout

seins glei chen/ seins glei chen/ auff
Erd ist nicht seins gleichen/ ij seins
glei chen/ auff Erd ist nicht seins gleichen/ ij
glei chen.

ij ij ij
frölich Amen/ der helff vns ij der helff vns frö lich Amen.
der helff vns ij frö lich Amen. der helff vns ij ij
frö lich Amen/der helff vns: A men/A men,

Figure 2: Trombet-like tutti passages in the *Altus 3. Chori* part in *Das Lutherische Schloß*:

a) Verse 1 (mm. 63–77) passage with non-harmonic passing notes, and

b) Verse 5 (mm. 68–82) equivalent passage with many non-harmonic pitches omitted.

The arrows indicate where the passages concerned begin.

D-MLHr StAM10/ E6 n.32, fols. 47v and 48v, respectively.

contemporary musical evidence, of which the most important is Girolamo Fantini's innovative—and independently verified—use of them in the 1630s. Moreover, since it happens that other vocal/instrumental parts written using C3 clef in the *Gaudium Christianum* pieces are given similar passages at trumpet choir-accompanied tuttis, including the same passing and lower auxiliary notes, and that some of these return in simplified *ur*-forms without the decorations, there is a clear conceptual connection between these voices/instruments, on the one hand, and the instruments intended for the *Trombet* parts in the trumpet choir, on the other (Figure 2).

Psalm 150 includes a novel trumpet choir comprising two *Claret* parts (played on natural trumpets) and three *Trombet* parts (designed for trombones), a particular ensemble that was probably invented by Altenburg. The same ensemble reappears in Andreas Rauch's *Currus Triumphalis Musici* from 1648, which has similar anomalies in its three lower *Tuba* parts.²⁷ Its influence can be witnessed much later when sufficient trumpet players were available in the towns and villages and composers had ceased to



Figure 3: *Die Prophezeiung von Luthero*, timpani part, showing manuscript verification of the simultaneous sounding of both kettledrums at intermediate *clausula* (systems 3 and 4) and the *clausula finalis* (system 5). D-MLHr StAM10/ E6 n.32, fol. 80r.

include non-harmonic pitches in the lower parts, for example in Hammerschmidt's 1652 *Lob- und Danck Lied aus dem 84. Psalm*, the *Herr Gott dich loben wir*, once attributed to Schütz (SWV 472), and some pieces in the manuscript collections D-DI Mus Löb 53 and D-DI Mus Pi 50.²⁸

The timpani parts in *Gaudium Christianum*²⁹ are written in F4 clef and supply the foundation for the trumpet choir, although one that may conclude C-major harmony phrases with the *G* kettledrum as often as with the expected *c* kettledrum. They include short motives that are embellished by diminution upon repetition. Two recurring motives are based on the eighth-note progressions *c-G-c-G* and *c-c-c-G*, or some variant (Examples 1 and 2). While the entire trumpet choir usually ends phrases together, the timpani part occasionally contains short linking solos between the phrases given to the others. Errors and omissions abound in the printed timpani parts, including the absence of the entire music for verse 5 of *Das Lutherische Schloß!*³⁰ Drum rolls are absent from the ends of tuttis and concluding *Intradas*. Here, Altenburg often indicates the simultaneous sounding of both kettledrums as pairs of whole notes or longas, which are crowned with a pause sign at *clausula finalis*. Such note-pairs are difficult to indicate using single-impression movable music type. Altenburg's printer placed them as closely adjacent as possible and this was clarified by a scribe who in *Die Prophezeihung von Luthero*, for example, canceled the second of each pair of printed notes and then re-entered it directly under the first to confirm the simultaneous sounding (Figure 3). The ranges of the trumpet choir parts are summarized in Table 2.

Conclusion

Michael Altenburg was actively engaged in the early drive to incorporate trumpets and timpani in concerted music, a powerful movement in the German-speaking lands—whether Catholic, Lutheran, or other—that brought these potent symbols of noble and aristocratic splendor and power into the musical mainstream by implementing quite literally the invitation of Psalm 150: to praise the godhead with every musical instrument and every living being. While his contemporaries at the courts and in the cities found resistance and conservatism from the trumpeting fraternity, he was faced with small numbers of trumpeters who were keen to contribute equally with other instrumentalists in the *Adjuvanten* and *Kantorei*. He employed the trumpet choir more adventurously from the start and, unlike his peers, fully acknowledged the harmonic framework within which it was allowed to make its contribution.

Michael Altenburg developed a new and distinctive mixed-instrument trumpet choir ensemble and set a pair of melodic high-register trumpets above one to three trombones that imitated the lower range natural trumpet parts and occasionally added non-harmonic pitches to enable greater musical engagement in the individual pieces; in 1617 he was also able to include timpani. His trumpet choir music incorporated musical quotations from, and topical references to, the use of that mixed-instrument group in the towns and villages of Saxony and Thuringia. The result is an innovative

Table 2
The ranges of the trumpet choir parts in Michael Altenburg's compositions

Composition	Part	Clef	Range
<i>Die Prophezeihung von Luthero</i>	Erste Stimm	G2	g ¹ , b ¹ , c ² , d ² , e ² , f ² , g ²
	ander Stimm	G2	g ¹ , c ² , d ² , e ² , f ² , g ²
	dritte Stimm	C3	g, c ¹ , d ¹ , e ¹ , g ¹
	zwo Paucken	F4	G, c
<i>Das Lutherische Schloß</i>	Vox Prima	G2	g ¹ , b ¹ , c ² , d ² , e ² , f ² , g ²
	ander Stimme	G2	g ¹ , b ¹ , c ² , d ² , e ² , f ² , g ²
	dritte Stimme	C3	g, b, c ¹ , d ¹ , e ¹ , f ¹ , g ¹
	Zwo Paucken	F4	G, c
<i>Die Engelische Schlacht</i>	Vox Prima	G2	c ² , d ² , e ² , f ² , g ²
	ander Stimm	G2	g ¹ , c ² , d ² , e ² , f ² , g ²
	dritte Stimm	C3	g, c ¹ , d ¹ , e ¹ , g ¹
	Zwo Paucken	F4	G, c
"Wie ein lieber Buhle einen Buhlen lieb hat"	1. Claret	G2	g ¹ , b ¹ , c ² , d ² , e ² , f ² , g ²
	[vox 2. Claret]	[G2]	[g ¹ , b ¹ , c ² , d ² , e ² , f ² , g ²]
	Die Trombet	C3	g, c ¹ , d ¹ , e ¹ , f ¹ , g ¹
[Psalm 150] "Lobet den Herrn in seinem Heiligum" / "Musiken klang, lieblicher G'sang"	[vox 1. Claret]	[G2]	[g ¹ , b ¹ , c ² , d ² , e ² , f ² , g ²]
	[vox 2. Claret]	[G2]	[g ¹ , b ¹ , c ² , d ² , e ² , f ² , g ²]
	vox 3. Trombet: oder Posaun	C3	g, c ¹ , d ¹ , e ¹ , f ¹ , g ¹
	vox 4. Trombet: oder Posaun	C3	g, c ¹ , d ¹ , e ¹ , f ¹ , g ¹
	vox 5. Trombet: oder Posaun	[F4]	[G, c]

body of work that acts as a valuable antidote to a general picture characterized by the musical compromises forced upon Prætorius, Schütz, and others by a fiercely protective lobby, the soon-to-be privileged trumpeters and kettledrummers of the Holy Roman Empire.

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Notes

¹ The principal articles on Michael Altenburg are Adolf Auberlen, “Michael Altenburg, Biographie und Verzeichnis seiner Werke,” *Monatshefte für Musik-Geschichte* 11 (1879): 185–96; Ludwig Meinecke, “Michael Altenburg. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der evangelischen Kirchenmusik,” *Sammelbände der Internationalen Musik-Gesellschaft* 5 (1903–04): 1–45; Arno Werner, “Die thüringer Musikerfamilie Altenburg,” *Sammelbände der Internationalen Musik-Gesellschaft* 7 (1905–06): 119–24; and Markus Rathey, “Gaudium christianum—Michael Altenburg und das Reformationsjubiläum 1617,” *Schütz-Jahrbuch* 20 (1998): 107–22. Many of his works are considered contextually in Friedrich Blume, *Protestant Church Music—A History* (London: Gollancz, 1975), 147, 187, 224, 226, and 238.

² The major component of “Der Ersten Art,” comprising “Lateinische vnd Teutsche Geistliche Kirchen-Lieder vnd Concert-Gesänge,” is described in *Syntagma musicum* III (Wolfenbüttel: Holwein, 1619; rpt., Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2001), 169–72. The style is described as belonging to the “prachtigen vnd Fürstlichen Music” in a note printed at the end of the *Bassus 3. Chori* part of the *Epithalamium* of 1614 (Wolfenbüttel: Fürstliche Druckerey); modern edn. as *Michael Pratorius: Gesamtausgabe der musikalischen Werke*, vol. 20 (Wolfenbüttel: Mösseler, 1936).

³ The two prints are considered in my dissertation, “The Trumpet and its Role in Music of the Late Renaissance and Early Baroque,” 3 vols. (Ph.D. diss., The Queen’s University of Belfast, 1983), 1:133–34 and 2:25–37, and the reconstructions (which have now been superseded) are found in 3:1–71. A reconstruction of *Die Prophezeiung von Luthero* from the 1617 collection was performed in concert by the Cappella Novocastrensis in November 1990.

⁴ The phrase “so wol den Gemeinen in den Städten / alß auff den Dörffen zu offeriren vnd dediciren” is found on the title page of the *Erster Theil Christlicher/ Lieblicher Vnd Andechtiger/ Newer Kirchen vnd Hauß Gesänge* (Erfurt: Johann Röhbock, 1620).

⁵ There are occasional lapses in the prints in short passages in which two parts (generally tenor parts) are given the same music. However, these often result from printer’s errors rather than Altenburg’s intentions.

⁶ According to Meinecke (“Michael Altenburg,” 37), the foreword to the *Erster Theil newer lieblicher vnd zierlicher Intradan* (Erfurt: Johann Röhbock, 1620) includes the statement that “ist doch bald kein Dörfflein / bevorrauß in Thüringen darinnen Musica beydes Vocalis und Instrumentalis ... den Oerten nach / sollte floriren und wohlbestellet sein. Hat man ja kein Orgelwerk / so ist doch die Vocalis Musica zum wenigsten mit 5 oder 6 Geigen orniet und geziert, welches man vorzeiten kaum in den Stätten hat haben können.” Altenburg employs two particular instrumental groups in the sacred intradas, either string instruments or cornetts and trombones (both groups are employed in a pair of two-choir pieces), in addition to which a single vocal part contributes an extra part in the form of a simple chorale melody “that anybody can sing along with” (“von Jedermann kan mitsingen werden”), as it states on the title page.

⁷ At this time, composers often included scoring details in the *basso continuo* parts in the form of prefatory information about part designations and scoring options that was placed before the music, and as indications of voice/choir entries that were placed either above or below the staves of the part. When there was no *basso continuo* part there was also nowhere to place this useful information.

⁸ The part is identified variously in the different prints with the titles *Cantum generalem*, *General Discant*, *Jumpffer*, or *Jumpffern G[e]sang*.

⁹ Altenburg’s realism and attention to detail is shown by the alternatives he offered when there were no string players available: their parts could be given textual underlay and then sung *submisse* by a choir of adults; or, if an organ was available, the organist could play an intabulation of the string

parts, the bass part of which would also be sung. See Meinecke (“Michael Altenburg,” 32–33 and 35), with reference to the preface to Altenburg’s *Musikalische Weynacht- und Newjahrs-Zierde* (Erfurt: Philip Wittel, 1621).

¹⁰ The three phrases are found in *Erster Theil Christlicher / Lieblicher Vnd Andechtiger / Newer Kirchen vnd Hauß Gesänge*. Altenburg’s “singulare talentum musicum” is mentioned in the preface and the second and third laudatory poems are respectively addressed “Ad Dn. M. Michaellem Aldenbergium Thuringiae Orlandum” and “Ad Reverendum & Clariss[im]um, Virum, Dn. M. Michaellem Aldenbergium, patriae Pastorem vigilantiss[im]um Musicum celeberrimum.”

¹¹ The only previous print of trumpet music is Monteverdi’s “Toccata” to *l’Orfeo* (published in 1609), but this short piece is scored for the traditional five-part trumpet ensemble; its five parts are doubled by other instruments on its repetitions. Prætorius’s *Epithalamium* of 1614, a setting of the chorale *Nun lob mein Seel’ den Herren*, was issued without its optional trumpet parts. About this work, see “The Trumpet and its Role in Music,” 2:83–92.

¹² Stanzas 7 and 12 only of the chorale are sung.

¹³ The discovery of the Mühlhausen set is announced in Rathey, “Gaudium christianum,” 108–09. The individual partbooks were rearranged according to voice range at some point in time and, unfortunately, were reassembled in a disordered manner. Although the first printed partbook is wanting from this set, it can be supplied from the other, incomplete sources.

¹⁴ In other contemporary collections, such as Prætorius’s *Polyhymnia caduceatrix et panegyrica* (1619), the trumpet part(s) are distributed among partbooks that also contain vocal/instrumental parts to other pieces. Loss of a single partbook only results in the loss of one or two trumpet parts.

¹⁵ It is unclear whether the independent *Choral Stimme* was printed separately from the rest or was included in the partbook containing the trumpet parts. The latter is the case in *Gaudium Christianum*, but this may be because the voice and first trumpet uncharacteristically (for Altenburg) share the same music where they are both employed: the simple addition of textual underlay to the trumpet part allows both vocal and instrumental performance without additional expense.

¹⁶ The manuscript containing the *Choral Stimme* suffers from severe ink corrosion and cannot be consulted according to a communication received from the Library of the Germanisches Nationalmuseum on 23 September 2011. It is unclear whether the printed *Choral Stimme* was located with the *Capella* choir parts or was published separately (see also note 15).

¹⁷ It is also noteworthy that, while the *basso seguente* includes copious manuscript indications for *Trombet[en]* throughout—the cue *Trombet:* for measures 131–32 is only one example, if a particularly significant one—there is not one reference to timpani. The surviving fragment (and any reconstruction of the rest) varies stylistically from the timpani parts printed in *Gaudium Christianum*, which further indicates that the part is more likely to have been for a brass instrument.

¹⁸ *Psalm 150* is unusual in many other respects. It is a polytextual work. The two fully texted SATB choirs mainly sing Luther’s translation of the psalm “Lobet den Herrn in seinem Heiligtum” while the *Choral Stimme* contributes Cornelius Becker’s versification of the same psalm, “Musiken klang, lieblicher G’sang” to a melody composed by Altenburg. The five untexted *Capella* choir parts alternate passages for a five-part trumpet choir—which combines with the SATB choirs in the thirteen-part *tuttis* only—with sections for a five-part choir of strings—which always supports the *Choral Stimme* in a separate six-part ensemble. The SATB choirs sing *plena voce* in the four *tuttis* where they are joined by the trumpet choir, in other passages where they engage with each other in typical motet style, and in three sets of equal-voice, canonic duets. Elsewhere, they sing *submissa voce* when they alternate with the string-accompanied *Choral Stimme*, at which points they also share Becker’s versification of the psalm.

¹⁹ Although Altenburg and his contemporaries would have thought in terms of modes, it is easier

in the present context to discuss these C-major-mode events using the standard tonal language of a later period.

²⁰ Employment of trumpets pitched in C in musical passages governed by A minor otherwise only began to feature in the late 1630s and was mainly considered by composers of the next generation.

²¹ The next inclusion of timpani parts in Christoph Straus's *Missae* of 1631—actually mainly a rubric indicating that the timpanist should follow and adapt the music printed for the lowest natural trumpet part—is itself an isolated appearance.

²² Werner, “Die thüringer Musikerfamilie Altenburg,” 119. It must be noted that Michael Altenburg did not style himself “Johann Michael Altenburg,” as Werner seems to indicate to strengthen the connection with Johann Caspar Altenburg and Johann Ernst Altenburg. The source of the “Johann” apparently comes from attributions to him as ‘M. Jo[hann] A[ltenburg]’ in hymnals from 1638 and 1660: see Gottlieb Mohnike, *Hymnologische Forschungen*, 2 vols. (Stralsund: J. Strucks Wittwe, 1831–32), *Zweiter Theil*, 62–64. However, the 1739 issue of the 1660 hymnal (the *Coburgschen Gesangbuch*) correctly refers to him in his own preferred universal form as “M[agister] Michael Altenburg” and it is arguable that the 1660 edition did so too.

²³ The Munich head trumpeter, Cesare Bendinelli, describes the same high range as *Claretto* at the start of his trumpet method, admittedly with reference to a *trombetta Antiqua*. He subsequently employs the more usual term *C[h]larino* consistently with reference to the high, melodic trumpet part: see the facsimile edition *Cesare Bendinelli—Tutta l'arte della trombetta 1614* (Vuarmarens: Editions Bim, 2009), and compare fol. 1 with fols. 8, 9, 53r–v, 54v, 55, 56, and 57r–v.

²⁴ The terms “normal” and “unusual” are employed here in a non-pejorative sense and simply indicate that the former records the presence of pitches that would normally be expected for a natural trumpet in the part range $g-g^1$ and the latter records the addition of one or more pitches that are not expected for the same instrument in the same part range.

²⁵ It is, of course, possible that the lost instrumental part may have contained g one octave higher than the G given in the *basso seguente*, which would allow for performance on a natural trumpet. It should also be noted that the *basso seguente* was not issued in Altenburg's print but was written out for musical direction purposes some time later.

²⁶ *Syntagma musicum II: de Organographia* (Wolfenbüttel: Holwein, 1619; rpt. Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2001), 31. Prætorius also provides another term, *Tuba*; see n. 27 below.

²⁷ For more on this collection and on the performance of the parts indicated for *Tuba*, see my “A Possible Mid-Seventeenth-Century Source of Music for the Soprano Trombone,” *Historic Brass Society Journal* 16 (2004): 19–42.

²⁸ Altenburg's employment of the smaller trumpet choir grouping in *Die Lutherische Schloß* had a direct influence on Stephen Otto, whose own setting of Luther's *Ein feste Burg* chorale, entitled *Die Lutherische Burgk*, dates from 1632. Otto follows his model and sets his composition for three five-part vocal/instrumental choirs and a fourth trumpet choir for *Erste Clarin, Ander Clarin and alter Bass*, but without timpani. Most of the texture, whether in passages for a single choir or in the tutti, is in five real parts. The full ensemble is found only in a few passages that Otto copied either directly or almost directly from Altenburg's polychoral tutti, although it is clear that the set of parts that Otto had access to had already lost its *Chorus Quartus* trumpet choir parts. Otto's trumpet choir includes two high melodic-register *Clarin* parts and one part that is incorrectly designated as “*alter Bass*” since it is notated in C1 clef and sounds in the higher range that normally identifies the *Principal* part, mainly c^1-c^2 and with one excursion to g^2 . Moreover, while these parts mostly include “normal” phrases that include natural harmonic pitches only and are characteristic of the natural trumpet, there are occasions in which the second *Clarin* and, most particularly, the *alter Bass* suddenly change in character and include many unexpected non-harmonic pitches in very strange contexts (more extreme than in any

of Altenburg's "unusual" passages)—including accented and sustained non-harmonic pitches that may be approached by leap—so much so that it is unclear whether trumpets are actually intended.²⁹ The title-page reads "zwo Paucken/ die eine in das kleine *c*. Die ander in das grosse *G*. gestellet," and this tuning is reflected in the printed part.

³⁰ Luckily, verse 5 of *Ein feste Burg* basically repeats the music of verse 1 by making minor modifications to the vocal/instrumental parts of choirs 1–3 to accommodate the different text (which is not always achieved convincingly), and then supplementing it with the midpoint insertion of a new ten-measure polychoral tutti. The three *Trompeten* have the music for both verses 1 and 5 printed out in full. *Ein feste Burg* sets verse 1 for the full polychoral ensemble, including the trumpet choir. Verses 2–4 are single-choir, cantional settings in five parts, verse 2 for choir 1, verse 3 for choir 2, and verse 4 for choir 3. Verse 5 (the text of which was not penned by Luther but is a later addition) again engages the entire polychoral ensemble. Since the trumpet choir is not included in the verse 2–4 settings, its parts identify the verse 1 setting as the *Erster Theil* and the verse 5 setting as the *Ander Theil* of the work.