

An Introduction to C. P. E. Bach Scholarship **David Schulenberg**

The following essay, originally prepared for Ashgate Publishing's anthology of writings about C. P. E. Bach (published in 2015), is reproduced here as a guide to the literature on the composer and his music. References to "chapters" are to articles and essays that were reprinted in the anthology; these are identified in a list of the contents of that volume, preceding the general bibliography at the end of this file. Apart from minor corrections, this essay is identical to the introduction of the printed volume.

Second son of one of the supreme masters of what we call Baroque music, Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714–88) was an important composer, player, and writer on music in his own right, one of the most significant members of a generation of European musicians distinctly more modern than his father's. His earliest compositions, dating from his student years in Leipzig, clearly belong to the late Baroque of J. S. Bach. Yet they already reveal the influence of more *galant* older contemporaries, such as Telemann and Hasse. By 1738, when he moved to Berlin and was about to take his place in the court musical establishment of Prussian King Frederick II ('the Great'), he had begun to create a distinctive repertory of mostly instrumental works—especially keyboard sonatas and concertos, as well as smaller numbers of solo and trio sonatas with basso continuo. In these, over the next thirty years, emerged his personal version, today known as the *empfindsamer Stil*, of an approach to composition and performance shared with his court colleagues Quantz, the two Graun brothers, and the king himself. Then, during his last twenty years, he re-defined himself as a vocal composer, producing sacred and secular works of all sorts (except opera) after taking a position as cantor and music director at Hamburg. He continued, too, to compose innovative instrumental works, publishing collections of concertos, symphonies, and, in particular, six sets of keyboard pieces dedicated to 'connoisseurs and music-lovers' (*Kenner und Liebhaber*). It was this last above all that kept his name alive during the century after his death—plus his treatise on keyboard playing, known in English as well as German as the *Versuch* (1753–62), which remained almost continuously in print, though often in shortened or altered form.¹

For much of his lifetime Emanuel Bach was the best-known member of the family, at least in German-speaking Europe. He was also one of the earliest composers for whom we have not only substantial archival documentation (musical manuscripts, employment records, and the like) but also significant critical and literary accounts by contemporaries. Personally gregarious, he was a valued member of intellectual circles in Berlin and Hamburg, a friend of poets and philosophers, and he and his works received frequent mention in their letters, memoirs, reviews, and the like. Thus, alongside musical and biographical documents of the types that survive for members of his father's generation, we have for him a wealth of material that does not exist for earlier composers. So long as he was considered a minor or transitional figure, of primarily historical interest, much of this material lay unexplored. Recent decades, however, have seen growing interest in Emanuel Bach from listeners and musicians as well as scholars. One result has been a burgeoning list of publications about him and his music, including conference proceedings and collections of essays, as well as anthologies of documents comparable to the one edited by David and Mendel (1966 and 1998) for his father; these are listed below.

The present volume offers chiefly recent material, reprinting representative publications from several of the chief strands of current C. P. E. Bach research and interpretation. Because most readers are likely to have access to electronic article databases, the volume focuses on items that are not yet

1. Woodward (1995) surveys the work's publishing history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

available online. It also concentrates on relatively recent writings in English. These limitations may at first appear to constitute serious disadvantages. Yet much of the older literature is based on a spotty familiarity with the entire breadth of the composer's output and its sources, and older writing in German tends toward either general aesthetic considerations or detailed philological studies. Writing of both sorts can be of great value, yet older publications on aesthetics today are of chiefly historical value, especially when based on a narrow understanding of his works. Older text- and source-critical publications are rapidly being rendered obsolete by the critical commentaries included in a new complete edition of the composer's works; the editorial prefaces and introductions from volumes in this edition, all in English, are being made available online (at www.cpebach.org).

The bibliography that follows this introduction is selective, not comprehensive, listing significant publications that are not reproduced in the present volume.² As with other composers, there are whole categories of publications that, by their nature, cannot be reprinted or excerpted here. Among these are critical editions of the composer's music, which, apart from their scores, include verbal material that constitutes an essential resource; collections of letters and other documents, especially those assembled by Clark (1997), Suchalla (1985, 1993, and 1994), and Wiermann (2000); and entries in musical encyclopedias from the eighteenth century to the present (such as Gerber, 1790–92, and Leisinger, 2014). Also important, though hardly making for engaging reading, are catalogues of libraries and archives with significant C. P. E. Bach holdings; those published for collections in Berlin and Brussels include significant background material (see Kast, 2003; A. Fischer and Kornemann, 2009; and Leisinger and Wollny, 1997). Contemporary letters and memoirs are more readable, although one often must scan many pages to find relevant matter (see Berg, 2009, and especially Burney, 1772–73). The same is true of genre studies such as that of Newman (1972) on the sonata and Smither (1987) on the oratorio, not to mention works of criticism and analysis such as Rosen (1971). Naturally, recordings and other non-verbal publications cannot be incorporated into a printed volume, but the liner notes accompanying audio CDs contain sometimes original scholarship and interpretive criticism, and examples of these are included here. On the other hand, excluded from the present volume are original documents, including letters and writings by the composer himself, which have appeared in other compilations.³

During his lifetime, Bach (as he will be termed) was already an object of what we can recognize as proto-musicological interest, evident above all in several early efforts to list his numerous compositions in an orderly manner. The task was made difficult by the composer's frequent revision and re-use of many, perhaps most, of his works, which number roughly a thousand; scholars are still sorting out the details. Bach himself evidently maintained a list of his compositions, and this formed the basis for a catalogue of works—including dates and places of composition—published after his death within the printed catalogue of his estate (NV).⁴ At least one younger contemporary, J. J. H. Westphal,

2. More complete lists of older publications can be found in Clark (1988b, pp. 315–35) and Powers (2002); the Helm (1989) and BR thematic catalogues also cite relevant publications in the entries for individual works.

3. A selection of documents in English translation is in preparation.

4. For this and other abbreviations, see the list at the head of the bibliography. Also useful for tracing the history and provenance of individual works and sources is Bach's earlier manuscript catalogue of his keyboard music (1772), as well as later auction catalogues of his books and musicalia (1789, 1805), published in facsimile with commentary by Wolff (1999), Leisinger (1991), and Kulukundis (1995), respectively.

systematically assembled a nearly complete collection of Bach's works, most of them in manuscript copies obtained directly from the composer or his heirs. Westphal's collection wound up in the library of the Royal Conservatory in Brussels, where his manuscript list of its contents became the basis for the thematic catalogue by the Brussels librarian Wotquenne (1905). Despite its flaws and omissions, Wotquenne's numbering system remains in use, and Bach's works are now most frequently identified by 'W' (or 'Wq') numbers. Not until 1989 did E. Eugene Helm issue a catalogue intended to fill Wotquenne's many gaps, but although 'H' numbers were briefly employed for all Bach's works, their use now is largely confined to compositions missed by Wotquenne.⁵ A new multi-volume catalogue, part of the larger *Bach-Repertorium* (BR), has begun to appear, incorporating information about works and sources that were inaccessible to Helm.

The cataloguing of works, although indispensable, is merely preliminary to editing, performing, and interpreting them. Bach himself saw to the publication of a substantial portion of his output, yet for two centuries after his death his music came out only in occasional and often not very critical editions. For this reason, although inquisitive musicians and writers were already noting some of the distinctive features of Bach's music by the turn of the twentieth century, accounts of it tend to be anecdotal or unbalanced, focusing on idiosyncratic features of a small number of compositions. Good editions of selected keyboard works had already been included in Louise and Aristide Farrenc's *Trésor des pianistes* (Paris, 1861–72), and more followed from Carl Krebs (Leipzig, 1895), Heinrich Schenker (Vienna, 1902), and Rudolf Steglich (Hannover, 1927–28); in addition, Herman Roth and Otto Vrieslander published selections of lieder for voice and keyboard (Leipzig, 1921, and Munich, 1922). Additional works, chiefly keyboard and chamber music, continued to appear sporadically, especially after World War II. Yet scholarly attention to Bach proved intermittent, despite the publication of several still-useful books and dissertations, notably by Miesner (1929) and Busch (1957) on portions of his vocal output. The nineteenth-century biography by Bitter (1868) had no real successor prior to an effort by Ottenberg (1982), which, as his translator obliquely admitted in the English version (1990), was hampered by his working behind the Iron Curtain. It was only after 1989, following publication of the Helm catalogue, that Bach's works began to appear in a collected critical edition under the editorial leadership of Helm and Rachel W. Wade (the CPEBE). This effort had been preceded by a small burst of activity that produced dissertations on Bach by several American scholars (Berg, Clark, Fox, Stevens, Wade, and the present author); most were associated with the editorial project. Yet devastating reviews of the Helm catalogue (Wollny, 1991) and of volumes in the CPEBE (Leisinger, 1993) demonstrated systematic shortcomings in the latter, and the edition ceased after issuing just four volumes.

None of those involved could have known that the time was simply not quite ripe for such a project. The division of Europe after World War II had split the Berlin state library collection, containing the greatest number of Bach sources, between east and west. Other collections were essentially inaccessible, and, together with restrictions on travel and expression, these factors seriously hindered Bach scholarship. With the re-opening of eastern Europe in the 1990s, however, came the identification of the archive of the Berlin Sing-Akademie in Kyiv and its return to the reunified German capital. The collection, which included hundreds of C. P. E. Bach sources, had never been properly investigated, and after its disappearance during World War II most of the composer's vocal music, as well as many other works, had been assumed lost. Its recovery, described by Wolff (2001) and Grimsted (2003), was

5. One problem with the Helm catalogue was that a preliminary list of the composer's works, included in the entry on him in the first edition of the *New Grove* dictionary (1980), gave H numbers that differed from those in the published catalogue. Some publications from the 1980s identified works using numbers from the preliminary list.

one of a number of developments that made possible the establishment of a new editorial project led by Christoph Wolff and the late Christopher Hogwood under the auspices of the Packard Humanities Institute.⁶ Ten years after issuing its first volume (in 2005), at this writing the CPEBCW has published more than half of some 115 projected volumes. Although this project, too, has not gone without criticism (see Wollenberg, 2006 and 2011), it has contributed to a resurgence of C. P. E. Bach scholarship, and it has made possible the first modern performances and recordings of several major works.

The present volume includes writings by scholars associated with both editorial projects. Of course, many others have carried out valuable work on Bach and his music. Whereas contributors to the editions have often considered issues of musical philology—identifying manuscripts and their provenances, establishing textual filiation, and the like—a separate strand of C. P. E. Bach scholarship has concentrated on the related but distinct topic of compositional procedure. For Bach the latter included the arts of embellishment and variation, used by the composer and his contemporaries as both performing practices and means of revising existing compositions, even of creating new ones. Interest in this aspect of Bach's music goes back at least to Schenker, whose pupil Otto Vrieslander published a so-called interpretive edition (*Erläuterungsausgabe*) of Bach's pedagogic keyboard pieces with varied reprises (W. 113–14) as early as 1914.⁷ Described in Bach's *Versuch*, the provision of written-out embellishments for repeated passages recurs in many of Bach's other keyboard works and is closely related to improvisation over a bass line, the subject of the final chapter of the *Versuch*. Together with the chromatic harmony of Bach's late works (notably the pieces for *Kenner und Liebhaber*), Bach's embellishments and variations have been perennial topics for writers concerned with musical analysis and compositional procedure, including Berg (1983, 2010, and Chapter 6), Kramer (2008, especially pp. 47–70), and the present author (Schulenberg, 1995).

Whereas Schenker and those influenced by him have seen Bach as a composer of exquisitely fashioned variations on simple *schemata*, a much older view that developed by the mid-nineteenth century regarded him as a transitional figure in a history of musical form and style. In this teleological, evolutionary model of history, the music of Emanuel Bach, trained by Sebastian and admired by Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, became a link between the contrapuntal style of his father, focused on fugue, and what was taken (prior to Schenker) to be a more homophonic later approach to composition, centred on sonata form. Problems with this view of music history were evident to many by the time Newman published the second edition (1972) of his survey of the Classical sonata, including an extensive section on C. P. E. Bach. Yet this view is taken for granted in many earlier studies (including Barford, 1965, and Suchalla, 1968), and it is still detectable, even if as a foil for other approaches, in writings on Bach's instrumental music by Stevens (1965), Davis (1983 and 1988), and Petty (1995). More recently, as music historians have lost interest in analysis and sonata form, a number of music theorists have developed a 'new *Formenlehre*' or 'sonata theory', but those advocating this approach have yet to address Bach's work in any detail.

Another traditional area of interest for C. P. E. Bach scholars has been his documentation of eighteenth-century performance practices and aesthetics, explicitly in his *Versuch* and implicitly in certain of his compositions. Once viewed as a key to understanding the historical performance of his father's music, or that of Baroque music generally, the *Versuch* is now more accurately seen as codifying Emanuel Bach's own practices and those of mid-eighteenth-century Berlin. It nevertheless

6. The Bach holdings within the Sing-Akademie archive are catalogued in Enßlin (2006), the collection as a whole in Fischer and Kornemann (2009).

7. The pieces were re-edited by another Schenkerian, Oswald Jonas, in 1962 (Vienna: Universal).

continues to be cited as a source for historical performance generally—above all on the ornaments notated in his music and that of his Berlin court colleagues. By the same token, the treatise's second volume, primarily on figured bass realization, is no longer viewed as a guide to continuo playing in the music of Sebastian Bach, as tended to be assumed in older treatments of the subject that relied heavily on the *Versuch*, such as that of Arnold (1931). Even Bach's prescriptions for certain 'refinements' of continuo realisation in his own music tend to be neglected by specialists, despite studies by Staier (1995) and the present author (Schulenberg, 2003). These demonstrate that at Berlin, while developing a unique compositional style, Bach was simultaneously codifying a distinctive approach to keyboard accompaniment for music in the *galant* style.

In addition to considering fingering, ornaments, and figured bass realization in unprecedented detail, the *Versuch* also discusses more general aspects of performance, notably expression. Two of Bach's famous aphorisms have been taken as declarations of new aesthetic principles: 'a musician cannot move others unless he himself is moved'; and 'one must play from the soul and not like a trained bird'.⁸ The classical source of the first of these (Horace) was identified by Dahlhaus (1972), who argued that the second indeed represented something new, contradicting an older 'imitative' aesthetic characteristic of the Baroque. Earlier writers, such as Schering (Chapter 2), had already seen Bach's instrumental music as employing a new 'rhetorical' type of expression.⁹ Since then, Bach's relationship to the aestheticians of his day has been a favourite subject especially for Continental scholars, exploring in particular his connections to Moses Mendelssohn, ignored in Schering's Nazi-era article (see Grimm, 1999; Plebuch, 2006; and Muns, 2008). Bach's approach to musical expression is often regarded as anticipating that of later Classical and even Romantic composers. Schering repeatedly compared him to Beethoven, and Eggebrecht (1955) and Hoffmann-Erbrecht (1957) followed Schering in associating Bach's style with the so-called *Sturm und Drang* also detected in some of Haydn's early works. Many have likewise found an anticipation of Romanticism in Bach's *Empfindsamkeit* or hyper-expressive manner, although Berg (1975) criticised use of the latter term, preferring to describe the composer as a 'mannerist'. A programmatic trio sonata that Bach published in 1751 (W. 161/1), accompanied by a detailed verbal explanation of how the music represents a discussion or debate between two very different characters, was early taken as a precursor of Romantic program music (Mersmann, 1917). The fact that Bach never repeated the experiment has not discouraged fascination in this or in his equally brief involvement with little character pieces for the keyboard. Perhaps because they do raise interesting questions of musical meaning and aesthetics, both continue to be subjects of numerous recordings and writings (see Chapter 12).

Since the advent during the 1990s of what was called the new musicology, the traditional areas of musical research considered thus far have excited less interest among anglophone musicologists than interdisciplinary efforts to relate music to its social and cultural contexts. Composers themselves (and their works) have been downgraded as objects of investigation, rendering volumes such as the present one irrelevant to some approaches. Yet, at least within the tradition of 'classical' music, the individual creative musician remains a nexus that connects a society or a culture at large with specific compositions or performances. Gender studies made their first encroachment on Bach's music with Head (1995a, 1999), whose Yale dissertation on 'fantasy' in Bach's instrumental works (1995b) made

8. *Versuch*, vol. 1, chap. 3, paras. 13 and 7.

9. Since Schering's time it has become a fashionable among 'historically informed' performers to regard not Bach's but older Baroque instrumental music as peculiarly rhetorical; this may reflect the same confusion that continues to make Bach a 'Baroque' composer for many non-specialists and his *Versuch* a source for Baroque performance practices.

for an interesting complement to Petty's Schenkerian thesis from the same institution in the same year.¹⁰ But although Bach's songs (*lieder*) and other vocal works surely contain potential material for equally sexy topics, a massive, comprehensive book on Bach's songs by Youngren (2003), as well as Rathey's studies (2007, 2009) of the composer's oratorios and serenatas for the Hamburg militia—arguably political works—remains traditional in its interpretive methods. Of currently active scholars, Annette Richards has been the most persistent in examining 'fantasy' and other aspects of Bach's music from an interdisciplinary perspective (2001, 2006a, 2013, 2014, and Chapter 12).

The four parts of the present volume represent several of the main areas of present-day C. P. E. Bach studies. To introduce the composer, Part 1 opens with two general essays, one recent, one much older, on Bach's musical style. It continues with several recent selections of a primarily biographical nature. Two essays on Bach's compositional process serve as transition toward Part 2, containing writings on particular works. Part 3 focuses on the *Versuch* and analytic studies that have been inspired by it, concluding with an essay on another verbal publication attributed to Bach that casts light on the intellectual politics of his day. The volume closes with several selections devoted to the performance and reception of his music, chiefly the keyboard works for which he is now best known.

The composer and his style

Chapter 1 is a short essay by the distinguished early keyboard specialist Miklós Spányi on the problem of presenting Bach's music to the musical public today. Spányi has not only edited several volumes of Bach's keyboard music but since 1994 has been involved in a project, now nearly complete, to record all of the composer's solo keyboard works, keyboard concertos, and ensemble sonatinas on harpsichord, clavichord, and other historical keyboard instruments. Here he succinctly questions whether the 'variety of stylistic elements' so often heard in Bach's music is merely a misperception arising out of unfamiliarity with it. Barford (1965), Fox (1983 and 1988), and Rosen (1971, p. 44 and *passim*) are among many previous authors who addressed stylistic 'non-constancy' or 'incoherence' in his music. The present writer attempted to answer Bach's critics in his dissertation (Schulenberg, 1984), subsequently tracing the origin and early development of some of the commonly mentioned features of Bach's style (1988).

Chapter 2 offers an older view of the composer by Arnold Schering, an influential German musicologist of the early twentieth century. Having edited the extraordinary D-minor concerto W. 23 in 1907,¹¹ in this essay from near the end of his career (1938) he discovers what he calls the composer's 'rhetorical principle'.¹² Schering's assumptions about 'great' artists and their historical 'mission' now seem dated if not uncomfortably close to authoritarian philosophies of his time.¹³ His interest in musical symbolism, his distrust of the 'rationalistic' in favor of the intuitive, and his unsubstantiated assertions relating Bach's music to dance, acting, and the German Shakespeare revival all reflect long-

10. Wollenberg has also considered (2007) 'fantasia elements' in Bach's sonatas.

11. In *Denkmäler deutscher Tonkunst*, vols. 29–30 (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel).

12. I am grateful to my colleague Kathryn Buck in the Department of Modern Languages at Wagner College for many suggestions and corrections in my translation of Schering's difficult and sometimes obscure language.

13. Stanley (2013) presents a balanced view of Schering's position in the cultural politics of Nazi Germany, concluding that, like many of his contemporaries, Schering was a 'careerist' but not an ideologue.

abandoned styles of historical thought. Although he probably knew as much of Bach's music as anyone at the time, his opinions reflect limited acquaintance with the non-keyboard works (as witness his blinkered judgement on the extraordinary string symphonies). Yet Schering's views of music history in general and of Emanuel Bach in particular have been highly influential, and not only in Germany. The significance that he accords to musical rhetoric and gesture remains widely accepted, though now more typically ascribed to somewhat earlier music. He takes for granted the still-customary division of eighteenth-century music between earlier Baroque and later Classical styles, with Emanuel Bach representing a transitional type that incorporates distinct elements of both. Yet although he cites only a single specific composition and provides no musical examples, he articulates what remains a plausible vision of a composer animated by a desire to make instrumental music 'speak'—a wish that, for Schering, Bach shared with Beethoven.

The problem with such formulations is that the metaphor of music as speech or rhetoric means little apart from a detailed account of how specific musical figures or passages express or represent some particular element or elements of speech. Bach himself seems to have sensed this problem, and despite his concern for music to be expressive appears to have grown sceptical of the value of character pieces and other types of instrumental program music. Not much more can be said about his views on the matter. Yet the fact that we have any remarks at all from him, or from his contemporaries, on the subject is due to the survival of types of documentation that rarely exist for earlier musicians. The relevant literature on Bach begins with his autobiography (Bach, 1773) and continues in his letters and those of his contemporaries. Suchalla first edited Bach's letters to Forkel and to his publisher Breitkopf in a rather poorly produced volume (1985), then issued a more complete and more professionally prepared edition with extensive annotations (1994). Clark, who had already (1988c) discovered and published several additional letters with illuminating commentary, subsequently issued Bach's entire known correspondence in an elegant translation, with useful prefatory material (1997). Unfortunately, the great majority of these letters date from the last two decades of Bach's life, and most deal with mundane business matters, especially relating to Bach's publications. For deeper insights into Bach's thoughts and into how his music was perceived in his own time, one must scour the letters and memoirs of others, such as the poets Claudius, Gerstenberg, Gleim, and Lessing; the violinist and music director Reichardt; and above all the travel writings of Burney (1772–73), who devoted close to thirty pages to his visit to Bach in Hamburg. Bach's career coincided with the emergence of music journalism and criticism in the modern sense; concert reviews and reviews of published music therefore constitute another important source of information, again, however, chiefly from his last two decades. Examples are included in the collections edited by Suchalla (1993) and Wiermann (2000).

No biographer has yet sifted through all the available matter to produce a truly comprehensive study of Bach's life and works. The pioneering effort by Bitter (1868), whose account of the four Bach composer sons focuses overwhelmingly on Emanuel, remains impressive for its early date. Much slighter was the popular account by Vrieslander (1923), and even Ottenberg (1990) offered little that was new, although the English translation by Philip Whitmore was of an updated version of the German original of 1982. Two encyclopedia articles, both largely by Leisinger (1999 and 2014), remain the most recent authoritative biographical accounts. Rampe (2014) provides a massive but unreliable survey of the life and music; the present author's 'compositional biography' focuses on the works (Schulenberg, 2014, with extensive [online supplement](#)).

On specific issues and events in Bach's life there is a substantial literature. The investigation into Bach's uncatalogued early compositions by Leisinger and Wollny (1993) uncovered material relevant to his life and training during studies at Leipzig and Frankfurt (Oder). Wollny subsequently (1996) revealed evidence for the repertory of the collegium musicum directed by Emanuel at Frankfurt (Oder), and in 2010 he reported the sensational discovery of a previously unsuspected vocal work from the

same early period (Wollny, 2010b).¹⁴

Bach's three decades at Berlin, although documented by numerous autograph scores, manuscript copies, and published compositions, are represented by surprisingly few sources of other types. In Chapter 3, however, Oleskiewicz shows, using archival records neglected by previous researchers, that, far from being undervalued and underpaid by his royal employer, Bach was among the most favoured instrumentalists at Frederick's court.¹⁵ In further archival research (Oleskiewicz, 2011), she sheds light on the minor Hohenzollern courts, which also employed musicians and thus constituted another part of Bach's cultural environment at Berlin. The most prominent musical phenomenon there, however, and one that clearly influenced Bach's Berlin compositions, was the royal opera, which remains little studied. One must turn to a mid-nineteenth-century source for a systematic account (Schneider, 1852), although Henzel (1997) provides essential information for the crucial years 1740–56. Those without German will find relevant background in dissertations by Mangum (2002), Röder (2009), and Exner (2010).¹⁶

Bach's instrumental compositions from these years must have been heard often in the concert-giving musical 'academies' that proliferated at Berlin after 1740, but detailed information about their activities before the end of the century is hard to come by. Schwinger (2006) provides a massive compilation of data about several archives that probably incorporated music from the repertoires of these institutions, cataloguing manuscript copies of Bach's instrumental works alongside those of lesser contemporaries whose music formed a backdrop to his own. Other aspects of Bach's life at Berlin remain obscure; his teaching, for example, is scarcely documented, although Wollny (2005) has reconstructed a circle of pupils, or at least of younger musicians influenced by Bach in some way. The composer's Latin Magnificat, completed in 1749, remains a somewhat mysterious work, its exact date and purpose unclear, although Blanken (2006), in a major study, showed that it must have been performed at Leipzig and traced Bach's later revisions of most of its component movements.

In 1756 Bach composed an Easter cantata, his first German sacred work in nearly two decades. The purpose of this isolated effort, too, has long been unclear, but Wollny, in Chapter 4, makes a strong case for its biographical significance: with this work Bach deepened his personal relationship with his godfather Telemann and laid the groundwork for his eventual call to Hamburg eleven years later. With Bach's arrival there in 1768, documentation of his life improves considerably. Although his formal position changed from that of a part-time court musician to a full-time city cantor and music director, certain activities initiated at Berlin continued unabated. In Chapter 5, Clark discusses Bach as self-publisher of his own music, a role that he commenced at Berlin and maintained with greater intensity at Hamburg. Ottenberg (1993) and Daub (1996) consider the same topic, focusing on the late publications for *Kenner und Liebhaber*. Reviews and notices of Bach's publications and concert activity, the latter first reported selectively by Sittard (1890), are now collected in Wiermann (2000).

Bach's activities as cantor at Hamburg were the subject of a dissertation by Miesner (1929), which from 1945 to 2000 was practically the sole source of information on his annual Passions and other works preserved in the once-missing archive of the Sing-Akademie. Following the recovery of those sources, Hill (2015) has finally provided a thorough study of the Passions. But already shortly after the

14. Readers without German will find the salient information about this work, as for so many others, in the introduction to the relevant volume of the CPEBCW (vol. 5/5.2), online at www.cpebach.org.

15. Not cited in Chapter 3 is a letter, subsequently transcribed by Oleskiewicz, in which Crown Prince Frederick mentions auditioning a keyboard player named 'Back' (discussion in Pegah, 2008).

16. Helm's frequently cited study of music at Frederick's court (1960) is now seriously out of date.

War the Croatian-born musicologist Dragan Plamenac, best known for his work on early Renaissance music, published a perceptive study (1949) that pieced together bits of information from various sources to shed ‘new light’ on Bach’s circumstances at Hamburg. Plamenac’s attribution to Emanuel of an anonymous ‘Comparison’ of Sebastian Bach and Handel is still generally accepted,¹⁷ and he was also the first to discuss Emanuel seriously as a portrait collector.

Bach’s Passions and many other of his Hamburg sacred works are pastiches and parodies (*contrafacta*), representing a vocal counterpart to his work as a reviser and embellisher of existing instrumental music and employing techniques related to those that were part of his original compositional process. Chapters 6 and 7 provide an introduction to Bach’s methods of reworking his compositions. In Chapter 6, Darrell Berg demonstrates how Bach ‘renovated’ (*erneuert*) his early keyboard sonatas and revised later works. Readers without German can gain much from Berg’s examples alone; Berg’s own English version of the article, generously provided to the present writer, can be found on the latter’s website (<http://faculty.wagner.edu/david-schulenberg/c-p-e-bach-from-ashgate/>). Rachel Wade provided similar material in her study of Bach’s concertos (1981), which remains the most thorough published account of Bach’s compositional process, complementing the editions of individual concertos in the CPEBCW (especially vols. 3/9.1–15). In Chapter 7 she offers a concise account of Bach’s Hamburg reworkings of several earlier vocal works, including one of the most beautiful of the 1758 Gellert songs.¹⁸ Wade’s earlier essay on various philosophies and procedures for the scholarly editing of music (1988) remains instructive for anyone setting out to edit Bach’s music.

Individual compositions and their sources

In seeking up-to-date and reliable information about specific works, readers can turn to the introductions of the respective volumes of the CPEBCW, available online. Yet the prefatory matter for a critical edition usually avoids substantial analytical, critical, or interpretive commentary.¹⁹ Thus even older literature on individual compositions can prove worthwhile.

Chapter 8 comprises two very brief items on Bach’s organ sonatas and his so-called ‘Solfegietto’ (W. 117/2)—still probably his best-known keyboard piece, thanks to its continuing anthologization, typically in the inauthentic form described here.²⁰ These minuscule notices are typical of the somewhat casual yet often perceptive and somewhat pedagogic writing that was typical of British commentary on C. P. E. Bach during the twentieth century. Reflecting the tradition of Tovey, other examples include Barford (1965) on the keyboard sonatas and Cole (1970) on Bach’s modulating or ‘improper’ rondos. Helm, now known for his 1989 thematic catalogue, wrote in a similar vein; Chapter 9 is his classic essay on a famous literary ‘experiment’ that was applied to the final movement from Bach’s *Probestücke* of 1753, which is therefore known as the ‘Hamlet’ fantasia. Plebuch (2006) has updated

17. For an alternative view, see [online supplement 2.2](#) to the author’s 2014 study.

18. The choral arrangements that Bach made of his sacred songs for liturgical use at Hamburg are the subject of Leisinger (2006).

19. There are of course exceptions. Christopher Hogwood provides useful background to the works for *Kenner und Liebhaber* in the introductions to CPEBCW, vols. 1/4.1–2, and Darrell Berg offers similar matter on the songs as well as a translation of Bach’s preface to the Gellert Lieder (W. 194) in vol. 6/1.

20. Berg (1998) subsequently provided an in-depth discussion of the origins of Bach’s organ sonatas; her conclusions are ratified in the edition by Richards and David Yearsley in CPEBCW, vol. 1/9.

some of the underlying facts, yet Helm's humane and readable setting of one of Bach's most famous compositions in its cultural context has not been surpassed.

More 'scientific' study of Bach's music could not proceed, however, without careful attention to such details as the dating of his autograph manuscripts. Scholars of C. P. E. Bach's music were late in applying methods that have been used to sharpen the chronology of J. S. Bach sources since the 1950s. Among the first to do so was Pamela Fox, author of Chapter 10. Since its initial publication in 1998, those associated with the CPEBCW have amassed far more information on the subject, doubtless correcting some details. Fox's discussion nevertheless remains the most accessible introduction to the subject, with several well-chosen examples.²¹

Another scholar who applied the lessons of J. S. Bach studies to the music of C. P. E. Bach was Jane R. Stevens. Her book on Bach-family keyboard concertos (2001) capped a scholarly career that began with a dissertation on those of C. P. E. Bach (1965).²² Chapter 11 comprises programme notes for two CD recordings in which Stevens distills essential information on Bach's concertos and ensemble sonatas. The latter constitute a distinct genre, a sort of divertimento for keyboard and orchestra, which Bach invented during the 1760s.

The previous decade had already seen Bach branching out beyond the sonatas and concertos that he had been producing since his student years. His character pieces, which all date from 1754–57, are the subject of Chapter 12. Here Richards relates several of the most distinctive of these pieces to his collection of portraits on canvas and paper, whose importance she has delineated elsewhere.²³ Bach's emphasis on musical expression in his own writings has led to his being regarded as a uniformly serious composer; Rosen (1971, p. 115) asserted that 'his passion lacked wit'. Yet his humour, which emerges in the character pieces, also characterizes a great many of his other compositions; this is Susan Wollenberg's subject in Chapter 13. A prolific writer in the Toveyan tradition on Bach's keyboard music, here Wollenberg extends her purview to the equally witty sinfonias (symphonies) that Bach composed for public concerts during his later Berlin years and at Hamburg.

At Hamburg, where Bach turned to vocal music on a large scale, the annual Passion performances were among his most important responsibilities. In Chapter 14, Paul Corneilson, managing editor of the CPBECW, provides a detailed account of one of the most important of the many musicians who worked for Bach at Hamburg. Johann Heinrich Michel—long known only by his last name, as 'Herr Michel'—was not only a long-serving tenor, singing the Evangelist parts in Bach's Passions, but also the composer's principal copyist, continuing to produce manuscript copies of his works for purchasers such as J. J. H. Westphal after the composer's death. Corneilson provides not only a summary of Michel's career but also a general account of Bach's work as a composer and director of church music during his last two decades, drawing on earlier studies by Clark (1984 and 1988a) and Sanders (2001).

21. More extensive illustrations of Bach's handwriting are available in Berg's facsimile edition of his complete keyboard works (New York: Garland, 1989) and in several supplementary volumes to the CPEBCW. The autograph manuscripts mentioned by Fox on page 315 of the original publication have now been recovered as part of the Sing-Akademie archive.

22. For a somewhat different view of the 'invention' of the keyboard concerto, see the present author's 2010 study.

23. In addition to her catalogue reconstructing Bach's portrait collection (CPEBCW, vols. 8/4.1–2), see Richards (2013 and 2014). Further on these pieces in Berg (1988), Walden (2008), and the preface to the edition by Christopher Hogwood (Oxford, 1989). The pieces have subsequently been edited by Wollny in CPEBCW 1/8.2, with an introduction identifying the persons named in the titles of the pieces.

At Hamburg Bach continued to compose songs for voice and keyboard, revealing in the process his continuing interest in contemporary literature.²⁴ Chapter 15, by Christoph Wolff, provides insights into Bach's artistic relationship with one of his younger literary contemporaries, offering as well (alongside Chapter 7) further illustrations of his working methods. Wolff is best known for his work relating to J. S. Bach and Mozart, but he was instrumental in the return of the Sing-Akademie archive to Berlin, and he has edited C. P. E. Bach's later trio sonatas for the CPEBCW (vol. 2/2.2), of whose editorial board he was a founding member. Songs for voice and keyboard are the most numerous single category of Bach's works, and during his lifetime those which he published in four large collections (W. 194 and 196–98) were among his best-known works. Yet today they are relatively unfamiliar; here Wolff is concerned primarily with a previously unknown collection (published in CPEBCW, vol. 8/2).

In Bach's own eyes, the great works of his Hamburg years were several large vocal works intended chiefly for concert, not liturgical, use. One of these, his setting of Ramler's *Auferstehung und Himmelfahrt Christi*, is the subject of Chapter 16 by Richard Will. Aspects of the work's complicated genesis and generic status—cantata or oratorio?—have been addressed by Clark (1988c), Smither (1987 and 1990), Finscher (1990), Wiermann (1997), and Grant (2011 and 2013). Here Will, who previously (1997) considered the cultural context of the Program Trio (W. 161/1), addresses the meaning of Bach's self-proclaimed 'masterpiece' within the literary and theological currents of his time. Two of Bach's other major Hamburg vocal works have provoked comparable studies. Richards (2006a) considers the double-chorus *Heilig* as a representation of the 'sublime', an important category in late-eighteenth-century aesthetics.²⁵ The Litanies (W. 204), a pair of austere exercises in *récherché* harmony and restrained spiritual expressivity, are the topic of Marx-Weber (2000), who traces their origin, identifying the poet of the 'new' litany as Klopstock.

Despite their sacred character, Bach envisioned the Litanies as a pedagogic composition (see Ringhandt, 1993). Even the Resurrection Cantata was an exemplary concert piece, not a liturgical work. This may be one reason Emanuel's sacred music has not yet been the subject of the type of investigation (familiar from J. S. Bach studies) in which the theology inherent in a work's libretto is related to the composer and his music. Studies of Emanuel's sacred lieder, like those of his larger vocal works, have instead focused on the formal and literary features of the poetry and their translation in the music, as with Youngren (2003). Leisinger (2006), however, touches on what might be termed the popular piety expressed in some of Bach's choral arrangements of his songs for the Hamburg churches, and Hill (2015) considers the neology or rationalist theology embedded in the librettos of Bach's Passions.

The *Versuch* and other writings

Like his older contemporary Rameau, Bach has been noted almost as much for his writings on music as for his compositions. The *Versuch* is his counterpart to Rameau's *Traité de l'harmonie* (Paris, 1725)—to some degree probably even a response to it, although its immediate model, or rather spur, must have been Quantz's *Versuch* on the flute, published a year before the first volume of Bach's similarly titled book (1752). Thomas Christensen argues in Chapter 17 that, despite its fame, the *Versuch* was less influential and sold fewer copies than usually thought.²⁶ The work has nevertheless been an essential

24. On this subject see Berg's studies of his clavichord songs (2000a) and of his relationship to Anna Luisa Karsch (2000b), the leading female poet in German of his day.

25. On the *Heilig*, see also Chapter 19.

26. A note of explanation: Christensen's discussion on page 367 of the original refers to a chord on F

source not only on historical performance practice but on Bach's thinking about harmony—particularly since its English translation by William J. Mitchell in 1949. Over the years, various errors and misunderstandings in Mitchell's translation have become apparent, and a new translation is reportedly in the works. Yet Mitchell succeeded in finding elegant phrasings for Bach's lively but typically discursive eighteenth-century prose. His introduction to the work, first published separately (1947) and subsequently reprinted together with the translation, still provides useful bibliographic information. In Chapter 18, published more than two decades later (1970), Mitchell reflects on several issues of terminology relating to modulation—a word whose meaning has evolved substantially since Bach's time—demonstrating how essential it is for a translator of a historical treatise to understand the theoretical language of the author's day.

Modulation is also an important topic in Chapter 19. Here Richard Kramer relates Bach's writings on the subject to several late compositions (especially the double-chorus *Heilig*) which are notable for their chromatic modulations and counterintuitive harmony. Kramer subsequently (2008) has offered thought-provoking reflections on Bach's music and, especially, its relation to that of Beethoven.²⁷ More recently (2012) he has extended his long grappling with Bach's *Versuch* in a review article about its new edition in the CPEBCW (vols. 7/1–3). Kramer is also translator of Chapter 20 by the Austrian theorist Heinrich Schenker (1868–1935), whose reductive analytical technique was inspired in part by Bach's account, in the final chapter of the *Versuch*, of how to improvise a free fantasia.²⁸ Bach's account is probably less actual instruction than a way of analyzing or conceptualizing the composition of a written fantasia. By the same token, Schenker's essay on improvisation, first published in 1925, is more about Schenker's idealized understanding of tonal composition than actual eighteenth-century practice. Nevertheless, Schenker's essay remains an important document for both Bach reception and the history of music theory; Petty has continued to apply Schenkerian analysis to Bach's music in several publications (1995 and 1999) and subsequent conference presentations.

The *Versuch* was not Bach's only published writing. In addition to a number of reviews, notes, and the like, he is often regarded as the author of a work published under the pseudonym 'Caspar Dünkelfeind' (1755). Chapter 21, again by Christensen, treats the latter as well as the treatise by Christoph Nichelmann (1755) to which it was a reply. Nichelmann, demonstrating an exceptional lack of tact, had criticised the music of his most important colleagues at the Berlin court, above all Bach. Christensen not only identifies many of Nichelmann's musical examples but provides a good idea of the intellectual ferment and passionate discussion of music that characterized the Berlin of Emanuel Bach and King Frederick 'the Great' on the eve of the Seven Year's War. The debate was the equivalent for Emanuel Bach of the famous controversy provoked when Scheibe criticised the music of J. S. Bach. Once again, an uncomprehending advocate of what was claimed to be a more rational and expressive type of music merely revealed his prejudices, making himself seem even more ridiculous in this case by rewriting passages from the works of much better composers, among them a complete song by Emanuel ('Die Küsse', W. 199/4).²⁹

that is indicated only by the custodes ('directs') in example 5b.

27. The present author is obliged to mention, with gratitude, that Kramer was his dissertation adviser. A chapter in Kramer (2008) on the meaning of Bach's *Empfindungen* appeared in preliminary form in the anthology edited by Richards (2006b).

28. Omitted from Chapter 20 are the original pages 14–19 on several keyboard works by Handel.

29. See online [supplement 8.3](#) to my 2014 book for an argument against identifying 'Dünkelfeind' with Emanuel Bach.

Performance and reception

Whatever the merits of his argument, Nichelmann, like Scheibe, provided an example of the contemporary reception of the music of the Bach family. Other examples include reviews by Forkel and writings by Cramer, which have been examined by Kramer (2008 and Chapter 19). In Chapter 22, Christopher Hogwood takes a critical look at a cult of Emanuel Bach that began during his lifetime and continued well after his death.³⁰ Keyboard player and for many years director of the Academy of Ancient Music, Hogwood was also a prolific editor and writer on music and chaired the editorial board of the CPEBCW from its inception. One of Bach's most persistent advocates in recent times, he made some of the first recordings on period instruments of major works by Bach.³¹ Publications relevant to Emanuel Bach include his article on a keyboard treatise by Bach's younger contemporary Ernst Wilhelm Wolf (Hogwood, 1988) and editions of keyboard music by Bach's Berlin pupil Carl Fasch, his Berlin colleague Georg Benda, and others. Chapter 22 provides a wealth of detailed information relevant not only to the dissemination of Bach's music during the last decades of the eighteenth century but to its performance and Bach's legacy into the nineteenth.

Performance is arguably the most important type of reception, and studies of historical performance practice are therefore a closely related field. This writer's 1988 article raised a number of questions about C. P. E. Bach performance, such as the most appropriate type of keyboard instrument for it and several issues involving the realisation of ornament signs. This was followed up twenty-five years later with another article considering how scholars and performers had dealt with those questions in the interim (Schulenberg, 2013). It is nevertheless surprising that relatively few writings have specifically addressed performance issues in music by the author of the *Versuch*. Staier (1995) is one of the few who have discussed figured bass realisation in specific works, pointing out some of the distinctive ways in which Bach's actual practise differed from the theoretically correct approach illustrated in the earlier chapters of the treatise's second volume. This writer's contribution to the subject (Schulenberg, 2003) aimed to show that Bach's 'refinements' of a literal four-part realization were a creative response to aesthetic preferences at the Berlin court, like the compositional style that he developed there simultaneously.

Performance problems in Bach's vocal music have been particularly neglected, doubtless because of the rarity of performances until recently. Rifkin (1985) considered the vocal scoring of Bach's large sacred works from the point of view of the 1749 Magnificat and its later performances at Hamburg. His argument for essentially one-on-a-part vocal performance of Bach's 'choral' music has been largely confirmed by the subsequent recovery of the original performing parts for Bach's Passions and other Hamburg vocal works.³² Dellal (2014) offers perspectives on the songs by one of their most

30. Chapter 22 is the later, longer version of a paper first published in *De clavicordio IV: Proceedings of the International Clavichord Symposium, Magnano, 8–11 September 1999*, ed. Bernard Brauchli et al. (Magnano: Musica Antica a Magnano, 2000), reproduced without the detailed list of 'Bachists' that originally followed on pages 251–64. Another 'Bach cult' centered in Berlin is the subject of Wollny (2010a), earlier versions of which appeared in 1993 (English) and 1999 (German).

31. Notably the three quartets W. 93–95 (1976) and the *Probestücke* W. 63 (1980), as well as a number of the sinfonias (1977); his website (<http://www.hogwood.org>) continues to provide details.

32. See especially the critical commentaries in the volumes of CPEBCW, series 4. Sanders (2001) had previously gathered together the available information about Bach's musicians and performance

accomplished American performers, but crucial questions remain, such as whether the numerous ornament signs in the melodic lines were meant for the singer or only the doubling keyboard instrument.

Most work on C. P. E. Bach performance has focused, understandably, on the keyboard music, in particular the choice of keyboard instrument for particular works. Chapter 23, by the present author, examines the common assumption that the clavichord was the composer's favourite instrument. It followed on an earlier effort by Speerstra (1995) to identify the intended medium of various keyboard works.³³ Chapter 24 comprises four brief essays by Miklós Spányi on performance issues that arose during his superb complete recording of Bach's keyboard concertos. Like Chapter 11, these originally appeared within booklets accompanying the audio CDs; Spányi has also issued a second series of recordings of Bach's solo keyboard music, with equally informative notes. Each of these essays naturally refers to the specific works whose recordings it originally accompanied, but they are of broader relevance, documenting the process by which a distinguished musician has reached decisions about a fundamental aspect of performance.

What remains?

At this writing C. P. E. Bach studies continue to be dominated by source and textual criticism, if only because most of the scholars now engaged with the composer's music are also involved in editing it. Yet although the 'new musicology' has now become old, there remains much that could be said about the representation of women in Bach's songs or performative aspects of his concertos and other music for public concerts. Whether the new fields of experimental science, or new approaches to philosophy and theology, that were emerging during Bach's day had any significant effect on Bach or his music must also be worth considering. Surely sophisticated, culturally contextualized accounts could be made of the programmatic trio and keyboard pieces and their relationships to the musical aesthetics of the period. In a more traditional vein of musicology, the influence of composers such as Graun and Hasse (as opposed to J. S. Bach or even Telemann) on Emanuel's Berlin instrumental music and his later vocal works—a theme of my 2014 study—is open to refinement, as is the conventional view of eighteenth-century Berlin and Hamburg as closed, provincial places, as far as music was concerned. There is doubtless much to be discovered about intersections between Bach's music and his public with those of Gluck's, Haydn's, and Mozart's Vienna; Christian Bach's London; and the Paris of dozens of other composers.

Richards may have mined as much as can be extracted for the time being from Bach's portrait collection. But, for a composer so attuned to the literary and intellectual currents of his time—and one who had an artist son—there must be many further relationships to explore between his music and other media. The unsolved questions of performance raised by the present author are only a sampling of problems involving instrumentation, ornamentation, and embellishment, as well as more global aspects of performance, that arise in Bach's music—particularly in early works, and in early versions of

schedule in the Hamburg churches.

33. Two points in Chapter 23 require correction. First, only one of the six 'Prussian' Sonatas (W. 48) of 1742 contains more than two dynamic levels, with 'pp' occurring only in two bars of Sonata 2; in the 'Württemberg' Sonatas (W. 49) of two years later, only two works have 'pp', in addition to 'p' and 'f'. Secondly, the sonata for bowed clavier was probably written not for the instrument by Hohlfeld but a later example. The article mentioned in the last footnote eventually appeared in *The Harpsichord and Clavichord: An Encyclopedia* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

subsequently revised works, that predate his codification of his own principles in the *Versuch*. Research undertaken in conjunction with the new edition continues to produce surprises, such as the apparent destination of Bach's last published keyboard rondo (W. 61/6) for a hybrid instrument combining harpsichord and piano actions. Such findings raise further questions that should not go unasked, even if music editors cannot be expected to pursue them immediately.

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