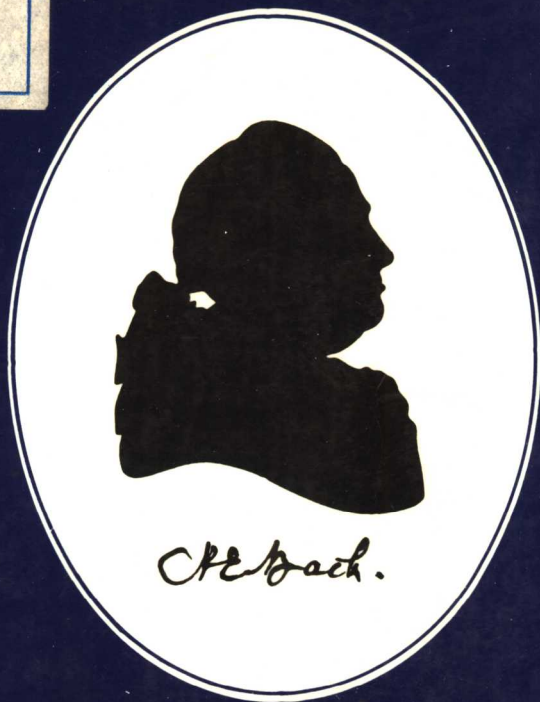


# C.P.E. BACH STUDIES

Engl  
303047



*Edited by*  
STEPHEN L. CLARK

P. E.)

CLARENDON



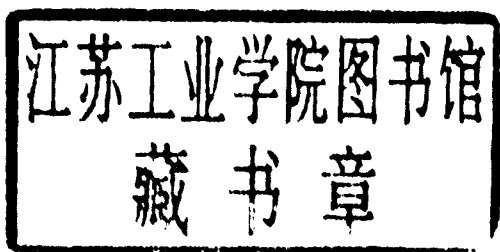
PAPERBACKS

# C. P. E. BACH STUDIES

---

Edited by

Stephen L. Clark



Clarendon Press · Oxford

Oxford University Press, Walton Street, Oxford OX2 6DP

Oxford New York Toronto  
Delhi Bombay Calcutta Madras Karachi  
Petaling Jaya Singapore Hong Kong Tokyo  
Nairobi Dar es Salaam Cape Town  
Melbourne Auckland

and associated companies in  
Berlin Ibadan

Oxford is a trade mark of Oxford University Press

© Oxford University Press 1988

First published in paperback 1991

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of Oxford University Press

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Clark, Stephen L./C. P. E. Bach studies

1. Composers—Germany—Biography

I. Title

780'.92'4 ML410 .B16

ISBN 0-19-316412-4

ISBN 0-19-816244-8 (pbk)

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

C. P. E. Bach studies/edited by Stephen L. Clark.

"C. P. E. Bach in literature":

Includes indexes.

1. Bach, Carl Philipp Emanuel, 1714-1788. 2. Bach, Carl Philipp Emanuel, 1714-1788—Criticism and interpretation. I. Clark, Stephen L. II. title: Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach studies.

ML410.B162C2 1988 780'.92'4—dc19 87-30786

ISBN 0-19-316412-4

ISBN 0-19-816244-8 (pbk)

Printed in Great Britain by  
Biddles Ltd, Guildford and King's Lynn

## Preface

---

RACHEL WADE and I came up with the idea for this volume of essays about C. P. E. Bach over a dinner at the 1984 annual meeting of the American Musicological Society in Philadelphia. We decided that the coincidence of the two-hundredth anniversary of the death of Bach on 14 December 1988 and E. Eugene Helm's sixtieth birthday on 23 January 1988, together with the burgeoning state of C. P. E. Bach research in the 1970s and 1980s, provided the appropriate circumstances for a book of articles by scholars active in the field to be published in 1988. Although I assumed the editorial responsibilities myself, I want to acknowledge Rachel's support and advice throughout the project.

There are two particular hallmarks of C. P. E. Bach scholarship over the last decade: Helm's thematic catalogue of Bach's works, and the inception of the edition of the composer's collected works under the direction of Helm and Wade at the University of Maryland. The latter project has been supported since 1983 by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and Oxford University Press will be publishing the first volumes in the near future. Virtually every article in this book depends on Helm's scholarship and, more importantly, on his generosity in sharing information from his catalogue before its publication. We, the authors, dedicate these essays to him.

The general guideline provided for contributors was simply that submissions were to relate to the life and works of C. P. E. Bach. The broad range of topics that resulted from this solicitation fall into some general categories. Two of the essays are thorough genre studies: Darrell Berg treats Bach's character pieces and Michelle Fillion his trios. Both studies consider questions of authenticity, chronology, and terminology as well as style.

The contributions of Pamela Fox and David Schulenberg continue the approach taken in their recent dissertations, which shed new light on the originality of C. P. E. Bach's style, considered on its own terms. Susan Wollenberg adopts a similar analytic viewpoint in her look at humour in some of Bach's works.

Concertos provide the focus for the articles by Shelley Davis and Jane Stevens; Davis examines recapitulatory tuttis and Stevens the 'piano climax'. Both studies place Bach's concertos in relation to those by his contemporaries.

The essays by Howard Serwer and myself are related by their use of Bach's correspondence to capture aspects of his personality and his dealings with publishers. We both relied on Ernst Suchalla's recent edition of Bach's letters to Breitkopf and Forkel, another significant contribution to the field.

Hans-Günter Ottenberg takes a close look at the relationship between Bach and Carl Friedrich Zelter, calling attention to a draft of a C. P. E. Bach biography that Zelter had planned. His article is complemented by Elias Kulukundis's survey of the sources of Bach's music formerly in the Berlin Singakademie, which Zelter directed from 1800 until 1832.

Etienne Darbellay uses Bach's treatise, *Versuch über die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen*, for some new insights into the composer's aesthetic. He identifies a paradox between the composer's precise notation and the role of the performer in interpreting Bach's works. Christopher Hogwood provides a translation of a treatise by Ernst Wilhelm Wolf that is in the tradition of Bach's *Versuch*. Wolf's debt to 'Vater Bach in Hamburg', as he phrases it, is obvious.

Douglas Lee makes a convincing case, using primarily calligraphic evidence, for Bach's authorship of a fantasia previously attributed to Christoph Nichelmann. Rachel Wade considers a number of editing problems stemming from the filiation of sources of Bach's works; her article grapples with issues that all critical editors must confront.

In addition to the contributors, several individuals and institutions were essential to the success of the book. Philip Whitmore translated the article by Ottenberg, and Richard Strawn was an enormous help with the translation of the Darbellay essay. Maxine Dreyer spent numerous patient hours photocopying various versions of the submissions, and Debbie Wagers assisted with the voluminous correspondence. A number of libraries were helpful in providing facsimiles and permission for their publication: the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, Berlin/DDR, Musikabteilung, for Facsimiles 1 and 2 in Berg's article and for both facsimiles in Lee's article; the Goethe- und Schiller Archiv, Weimar, for the facsimiles in Ottenberg's article; the Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin, Musikabteilung, for the facsimiles in Fillion's article and for Facsimile 2a in Wade's article; the British Library, London, for the facsimile in Serwer's article; the Library of Congress, Washington, DC, for the facsimile in Hogwood's article; Music Library, University of Michigan for Facsimiles 3-6 in Berg's article. Miami University, Mills College, the board of the Music Faculty, Oxford University, the Hilles Publication Fund of Yale University, and others were generous with subventions for the engraving of musical examples. Finally, Bruce Phillips, music books editor at Oxford University Press, encouraged the project from the beginning. He and his capable colleagues made the book a reality.

June, 1987

Stephen L. Clark

## Notes on Contributors

---

**Darrell Berg** is on the faculty of the St Louis Conservatory of Music. She received her Ph.D. in musicology from the State University of New York at Buffalo. She is the editor of *The Collected Works for Solo Keyboard by Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach* (New York, 1985).

**Stephen Clark** received his Ph.D. in musicology from Princeton University. He has done research on C. P. E. Bach's choral works and correspondence.

**Etienne Darbellay** is on the faculty of Geneva University. He received his Ph.D. in musicology from Fribourg University in Switzerland.

**Shelley Davis** is on the faculty of the University of Maryland. He received his Ph.D. in musicology from New York University.

**Michelle Fillion** is on the faculty of Mills College. She received her Ph.D. in musicology from Cornell University.

**Pamela Fox** is on the faculty of Miami University. She received her Ph.D. in musicology from the University of Cincinnati.

**Christopher Hogwood** is director of the Academy of Ancient Music.

**Elias N. Kulukundis** is an editor of concertos for the C. P. E. Bach Edition. He is also a collector of archival materials relating to C. P. E. Bach.

**Douglas Lee** is on the faculty of the Blair School of Music at Vanderbilt University. He received his Ph.D. in musicology from the University of Michigan. He has produced many writings on eighteenth-century composers, including thematic catalogues of the works of Franz Benda and Christoph Nichelmann.

**Hans-Günter Ottenberg** is on the faculty of the Technische Universität, Dresden. He received his Ph.D. in musicology from Humboldt University, Berlin. He has recently written a biography of C. P. E. Bach (Leipzig, 1982; English trans. Oxford, 1987).

**David Schulenberg** is on the faculty of Columbia University. He received his Ph.D. in musicology from the State University of New York at Stony Brook.

**Howard Serwer** is on the faculty of the University of Maryland, where he directs an annual Handel festival. He received his Ph.D. in musicology from Yale University.

**Jane Stevens** is on the faculty of Yale University, where she received her Ph.D. in music history.

**Rachel Wade** is General Editor of the C. P. E. Bach Edition at the University of Maryland. She received her Ph.D. in musicology from New York University. She is the editor of *The Catalog of Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach's Estate* (New York, 1981).

**Susan Wollenberg** is a lecturer on the Faculty of Music at Oxford University, where she received her D.Phil. in music.

# Abbreviations

---

<i>AfMw</i>	<i>Archiv für Musikwissenschaft</i>
<i>AlMz</i>	<i>Allgemeine Musik-Zeitung</i>
<i>AM</i>	<i>Acta Musicologica</i>
<i>AMZ</i>	<i>Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung</i>
<i>BJ</i>	<i>Bach-Jahrbuch</i>
<i>BWV</i>	Wolfgang Schmieder, <i>Thematisch-systematisches Verzeichnis der Werke Joh. Seb. Bachs</i> (Leipzig, 1950)
<i>CJ</i>	<i>The Choral Journal</i>
<i>CM</i>	<i>Current Musicology</i>
<i>CMS</i>	<i>College Music Symposium</i>
<i>Essay</i>	C. P. E. Bach, <i>Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments</i> , trans. and ed. William J. Mitchell [see item 7 in bibliography]
<i>Geiringer Festschrift</i>	<i>Studies in Eighteenth-Century Music. A Tribute to Karl Geiringer on His Seventieth Birthday</i> , ed. H. C. Robbins Landon and Roger E. Chapman (New York, 1970)
<i>H.</i>	E. Eugene Helm, <i>Thematic Catalogue of the Works of C. P. E. Bach</i> [see item 151 in bibliography]
<i>Helm/Grove</i>	E. Eugene Helm, 'Bach, Carl Philipp Emanuel', <i>New Grove</i> , vol. 1, 844-63
<i>JAMS</i>	<i>Journal of the American Musicological Society</i>
<i>JM</i>	<i>Journal of Musicology</i>
<i>JMT</i>	<i>Journal of Music Theory</i>
<i>Mf</i>	<i>Die Musikforschung</i>
<i>MG</i>	<i>Musik und Gesellschaft</i>
<i>MGG</i>	<i>Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart</i> (Kassel and Basel, 1949-68)
<i>MJ</i>	<i>Mozart-Jahrbuch</i>
<i>ML</i>	<i>Music and Letters</i>
<i>MM</i>	<i>Mens en Melodie</i>
<i>MMR</i>	<i>The Monthly Musical Record</i>
<i>MO</i>	<i>Musical Opinion</i>
<i>MQ</i>	<i>The Musical Quarterly</i>
<i>MR</i>	<i>The Music Review</i>
<i>MT</i>	<i>The Musical Times</i>
<i>MU</i>	<i>Musik im Unterricht</i>



NBA	<i>J. S. Bach: Neue Ausgabe sämtlicher Werke (Neue Bach-Ausgabe)</i> (Kassel and Basel, 1954- )
New Grove	<i>The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians</i> (London, 1980)
NMA	<i>W. A. Mozart: Neue Ausgabe sämtlicher Werke</i> (Kassel, 1955- )
Notes	<i>Music Library Association: Notes</i>
NRMI	<i>Nuova rivista musicale italiana</i>
NV	<i>Nachlass-Verzeichnis</i> [see item 345 in bibliography]
NZfM	<i>Neue Zeitschrift für Musik</i>
PQ	<i>Piano Quarterly</i>
PRMA	<i>Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association</i>
RBM	<i>Revue Belge de Musicologie</i>
RdM	<i>Revue de musicologie</i>
RISM	<i>Répertoire international des sources musicales</i>
RMI	<i>Rivista musicale italiana</i>
SIMG	<i>Sammelbände der Internationalen Musik-Gesellschaft</i>
Suchalla/Briefe	Ernst Suchalla, ed., <i>Briefe von Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach an Johann Gottlob Immanuel Breitkopf und Johann Nikolaus Forkel</i> (Tutzing, 1985) [see item 334 in bibliography]
Versuch	C. P. E. Bach, <i>Versuch über die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen</i> (Berlin, 1753, 1762) [see item 7 in bibliography]
W.	Alfred Wotquenne, <i>Catalogue thématique des oeuvres de Charles Philippe Emmanuel Bach (1714-1788)</i> (Leipzig, 1905) [see item 372 in bibliography]
ZfM	<i>Zeitschrift für Musik</i>
ZfMw	<i>Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft</i>
ZH	<i>Zeitschrift für Hausmusik</i>
ZIMG	<i>Zeitschrift der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft</i>

*Library Abbreviations*  
(following RISM)

A Wgm	Vienna, Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Wien
A Wn	Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek
B Bc	Brussels, Conservatoire Royal de Musique, Bibliothèque
D-brd B	Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz
D-brd Hs	Hamburg, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek
D-brd KIL	Kiel, Schleswig-Holsteinische Landesbibliothek
D-ddr Bds	Berlin/DDR, Deutsche Staatsbibliothek
D-ddr Dlb	Dresden, Sächsische Landesbibliothek
D-ddr LEm	Leipzig, Musikbibliothek der Stadt Leipzig
D-ddr WRgs	Weimar, Goethe- und Schiller-Archiv
DK Kmm	Copenhagen, Musikhistorisk Museum

*Abbreviations*

xv

DK Kv	Copenhagen, Københavus Universitets Musikvidenskabelige Institut
F Pn	Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale
GB Lbm	London, The British Library
US Wc	Washington, DC, The Library of Congress

# Contents

---

## Notes on Contributors

### Abbreviations

- C. P. E. Bach's Character Pieces and his Friendship Circle I  
*Darrell M. Berg*
- The Letters from C. P. E. Bach to K. W. Ramler 33  
*Stephen L. Clark*
- C. P. E. Bach's Aesthetic as Reflected in his Notation 43  
*Etienne Darbellay*
- C. P. E. Bach and the Early History of the Recapitulatory Tutti in North Germany 65  
*Shelley G. Davis*
- C. P. E. Bach and the Trio Old and New 83  
*Michelle Fillion*
- The Stylistic Anomalies of C. P. E. Bach's Nonconstancy 105  
*Pamela Fox*
- A Supplement to C. P. E. Bach's *Versuch*: E. W. Wolf's *Anleitung* of 1785 133  
*Christopher Hogwood*
- C. P. E. Bach in the Library of the Singakademie zu Berlin 159  
*Elias N. Kulukundis*
- C. P. E. Bach and the Free Fantasia for Keyboard: Deutsche Staatsbibliothek Mus. Ms. Nichelmann I N 177  
*Douglas A. Lee*

C. P. E. Bach and Carl Friedrich Zelter <i>Hans-Günter Ottenberg</i>	185
C. P. E. Bach through the 1740s: The Growth of a Style <i>David Schulenberg</i>	217
C. P. E. Bach, J. C. F. Rellstab, and the Sonatas with Varied Reprises <i>Howard Serwer</i>	233
The 'Piano Climax' in the Eighteenth- century Concerto: An Operatic Gesture? <i>Jane R. Stevens</i>	245
Filiation and the Editing of Revised and Alternate Versions: Implications for the C. P. E. Bach Edition <i>Rachel W. Wade</i>	277
A New Look at C. P. E. Bach's Musical Jokes <i>Susan Wollenberg</i>	295
C. P. E. Bach in Literature: A Bibliography <i>Stephen L. Clark</i>	315
Index to Bibliography	337
Index of Names	339
Index of Works by C. P. E. Bach	343

# C. P. E. Bach's Character Pieces and his Friendship Circle

Darrell M. Berg

---

ACCORDING to his *Nachlass-Verzeichniß* (NV), Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach composed twenty-four character pieces for solo keyboard between the years 1754 and 1757:<sup>1</sup>

1754	<i>La Gause</i>	H. 82/W. 117, 37
	<i>La Pott</i>	H. 80/W. 117, 18
	<i>La Borchward</i>	H. 79/W. 117, 17
	<i>La Boehmer</i>	H. 81/W. 117, 26
1755	<i>La Philippine</i>	H. 96/W. 117, 34
	<i>La Gabriel</i>	H. 97/W. 117, 35
	<i>La Caroline</i>	H. 98/W. 117, 39
	<i>La Prinzette</i>	H. 91/W. 117, 21
	<i>L'Aly Rupalich</i>	H. 95/W. 117, 27
	<i>La Gleim</i>	H. 89/W. 117, 19
	<i>La Stahl</i>	H. 94/W. 117, 25
	<i>La Bergius</i>	H. 90/W. 117, 20
	<i>La Buchholtz</i>	H. 93/W. 117, 24
<i>L'Herrmann</i>	H. 92/W. 117, 23	
1756	<i>La Capricieuse</i>	H. 113/W. 117, 33
	<i>La Complaisante</i>	H. 109/W. 117, 28
	<i>Les Langueurs tendres</i>	H. 110/W. 117, 30
	<i>La Journaliere</i>	H. 112/W. 117, 32
	<i>L'Irresoluë</i>	H. 111/W. 117, 31
<i>La Louise</i>	H. 114/W. 117, 36	
1757	<i>La Xenophon et la Sybille</i>	H. 123/W. 117, 29
	<i>La Sophie</i>	H. 125/W. 117, 40
	<i>L'Ernestine</i>	H. 124/W. 117, 38
	<i>L'Auguste</i>	H. 122/W. 117, 22

<sup>1</sup> The *Nachlass-Verzeichniß* (NV) was published by his widow a year and a half after his death. It is probable that Bach prepared this catalogue himself in his last years; see Ernst Suchalla, *Die Orchestersinfonien Carl Philipp Emanuel Bachs* (Augsburg, 1968), 153, and Darrell M. Berg, 'Towards a Catalogue of the Keyboard Sonatas of C. P. E. Bach', *JAMS*, 32 (1979), 280-5.

If the *NV* catalogue is correct, Bach's interest in character pieces, like his engagement with several other genres, was short-lived;<sup>2</sup> no character pieces are listed after 1757.<sup>3</sup> The pieces in this little repertory, playful, on the whole, and of slight difficulty, signal Bach's involvement with keyboard miniatures. It might be argued that Bach had been writing miniatures for keyboard from the start of his career—the character pieces may not at first glance seem very different in form and substance from some of the short whimsical movements in Bach's early sonatas—and that his reason for writing character pieces was much the same as his purpose in composing easy sonatas: to provide amateur keyboard players with lesson material. Yet between the character pieces and the light movements of earlier sonatas there are significant differences in style. The character pieces, moreover, mark the beginning of the spate of single-movement keyboard pieces that Bach composed between 1754 and 1767.<sup>4</sup> Doubtless the publication in 1753 of the first part of the *Versuch*, itself a didactic work, generated more didactic activity on Bach's part in the years that followed.

Why did Bach devote himself so intensely to composing character pieces in the mid-1750s? It is perhaps more than coincidence that a reference to French

<sup>2</sup> The seven fugues for keyboard H. 75.5, 76, 99–102/W. 119, 1–7, are dated 1754–5; the prelude and six sonatas for organ H. 84–7, 107, 133–5/W. 70, 1–7, 1755–8; the ensemble sonatinas with obbligato harpsichord H. 449–53, 455–64/W. 96–110, 1762–4. Several movements in the group of sonatinas are arrangements of character pieces, some of them transposed: in H. 451/W. 98, *L'Auguste* (to G major); in H. 453/W. 109, *La Gause, La Pott* (to D major); in H. 455/W. 100, *La Xenophon, L'Ernestine* (to E major); in H. 456/W. 102, *La Complaisante* (to D major), *La Louise*; in H. 457/W. 103, *La Phillippe* (to C major); in H. 459/W. 110, *La Bergius*.

<sup>3</sup> Eugene Helm's *Thematic Catalogue of the Works of Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach*, soon to be published by Yale University Press, lists a character piece titled *La Juliane*, H. 333, not found in *NV* or in the catalogue by Alfred Wotquenne, *Thematisches Verzeichnis der Werke von Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach* (Leipzig, 1905). Whether or not this piece is genuinely by C. P. E. Bach, no date can be assigned to it.

Two sonatas, H. 129/W. 52, 6, and H. 143/W. 65, 33, dated 1758 and 1759 respectively, have movements with titles in the style of character pieces. The second movement of H. 129 has the title *L'Einschnitt*, and there is no reason to doubt that Bach assigned this title. *Einschnitt* ('incision') describes the music itself: each phrase begins with the same three notes that end the preceding one. In the autograph of H. 143 in D-ddr WRgm, C. P. E. Bach assigns the title *La Guillelmine* to the second movement and *La Coorl* to the third movement (see the article by Hans-Günter Ottenberg in this volume). Two other sources of H. 143 assign titles to the second movement, *La Guillelmine* (found in both D-brd K11, Mb 50:10 and D-ddr Bds, Mus. ms. 30385) and to the third movement, *La Caroline* (Mb 50:10) and *La Coorl* (Mus. ms. 30385). According to Carl Friedrich Zelter, *Carl Friedrich Christian Fasch* (Berlin, 1801), 8, the title *La Coorl* refers to the nickname that the Austrian-born composer Karl Höckh (1707–73) gave to Fasch when the latter was a child: 'Monsieur Coorl'. Fasch (1736–1800) was C. P. E. Bach's colleague in Berlin, and it was with Fasch's family in Zerbst (where Höckh also lived) that Bach stayed when he and his family fled Berlin in 1758.

<sup>4</sup> These include the miniatures of the collections listed by Wotquenne as nos. 113 and 114, and the single pieces of W. 116 and W. 117. *NV* assigns to 59 of these miniatures (not including the 24 character pieces) dates between 1754 and 1767; to 7, the year 1775. 30 pieces in the W. 116 group (nos. 15, 29–57) are undated; the style of these (four of which have a length and structure similar to sonata movements, and hardly qualify as miniatures) suggests that they were composed in the 1750s or later.

character pieces appeared in an article in Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg's *Historisch-kritische Beyträge zur Aufnahme der Musik* in 1754, the year that *NV* assigns to Bach's first compositions in the genre:

Words have exercised more power over the singer and his performance than people believe. . . . With instrumental pieces, however, this Ariadnian guideline drops away, and players lose their way in the labyrinth of a more or less extravagant performance, according to whether they have many embellishments in their heads, their throats, or their hands, and according to whether they possess less or greater capability of comprehending the true sense of the piece. French character pieces largely preclude such [extravagant performance], and one would wish that it weren't considered sufficient, in all compositions in the new style, to set nothing more than the words 'allegro' or 'adagio' at the head of a piece without giving the player more explicit information about the inner nature and distinctiveness of this particular Adagio. . . . When, some years ago, a certain Wit among us made fun of the characters in French pieces, he surely had no other reason for it than that he wanted to sneer. And if some French composers have not always conveyed the character in the caption of a piece in all of its ramifications, we must ask whether other composers among them, and elsewhere, might not portray it more felicitously. But is it actually necessary that precisely everything belonging to this character always, and in all circumstances, be treated exhaustively? Wouldn't one thus fall into pedantry? And can't one, furthermore, name a piece a posteriori after something or other if [the piece] has only *some* resemblance to this or that thing? It is better to become aware of this Something than not to take note of it, and this Something can indeed, in such circumstances, be sufficient to guide the hand of the player. Let no one tell me that many of the characters in French pieces are quite absurd, or, at least, seem so. . . .

Whence do vocal pieces derive the advantage that they charm and move more than instrumental pieces? In truth, the text, the content, and the variety contribute perhaps most to this advantage. I do not believe that the mere empty sound of the human voice . . . satisfies the ear if not accompanied by words. Now if instrumental pieces do not have this advantage that vocal music has, is it not unfair to want deliberately to take away from them another advantage by means of which they might be able to compensate somewhat for their shortcoming? What could result then but, frequently, an empty harmonic-melodic noise? Why not make such a sound more effective? Why not give the listener the opportunity to think of something on hearing this sound, rather than of nothing? It must certainly give him more pleasure to recognize what has been done to engage his understanding than not to be acquainted with it in the least. If instrumental music that represents nothing, that means nothing, is in fact lacking in soul, why are people reluctant to prefix a character to that music which is intended to represent and mean something? An orator always takes pains to announce the content of his speech, and if, on one occasion, a certain Wag has held the speech in disdain, he too has served to advertise its intention. It seems to me that as long as one doesn't want to think about an instrumental piece, the purpose for which music is composed is not realized. The listener will never retain a full measure of satisfaction in his soul. He will go home and not know what he has heard.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> *Historisch-kritische Beyträge zur Aufnahme der Musik* (Berlin, 1754-7), vol. 1, 'Anmerkungen über vorhergehendes Schreiben', 32 ff.: 'Die Worte haben über den Sänger und seinen Vortrag

With this commentary on Christian Gottfried Krause's 'Lettre à Mr. le Marquis de B\*\*\* sur la différence entre la musique italienne et françois' (1748), Marpurg fired another salvo in the battle he was waging with Johann Friedrich Agricola over the relative merits of French and Italian music.<sup>6</sup> It was Agricola (the 'Wit' and 'Wag' of Marpurg's article) who wrote disparagingly of the

mehr Gewalt, als man glaubt, gesetzt . . . Bey den Instrumentalsachen aber fällt dieser Ariadnische Leitfaden weg, und die Spieler verirren sich im Labyrinth eines ausschweifenden Vortrages mehr oder weniger, nachdem sie viel Manieren im Kopfe, in der Kehle und in der Faust haben, und nachdem sie weniger oder mehr Fähigkeit besitzen, sich in den wahren Sinn des Stückes zu versetzen. Die französischen characterisierten Stücke bewahren sehr davor, und es wäre zu wünschen, daß man es auch nicht allezeit in allen Sachen nach dem neuen Geschmack bei uns genug sein liesse weiter nichts als die Wörter Allegro oder Adagio ec. über ein Stück zu setzen, ohne den Spieler von der inneren Beschaffenheit und dem Unterschiede dieses Adagio nähere Nachricht zu geben. . . . Wenn ein gewisser witziger Kopf bey uns sich vor einigen Jahren über die Characters in der französischen Musik etwas lustig machte: so hatte er wohl keinen andern Grund dazu, als daß er sich nur lustig machen wollte. Haben einige französische Tonkünstler nicht allezeit den über ein Stück gesetzten Character nach allen Prädicamenten durchgeführt, so ist die Frage, ob ihn andere Tonkünstler unter ihnen und anderswo nicht glücklicher durchführen können. Ist es aber nötig, daß just alles was nur zu diesem Character gehören kann, allezeit und bey aller Gelegenheit erschöpft werde? würde man nicht in etwas Pedantisches verfallen? und kann man ferner nicht ein Stück a potiori [sic], wenn es nur einige Aehnlichkeit mit der oder jener Sache hat, darnach benennen? Es ist besser etwas, als nichts wahrzunehmen, und dieses Etwas kann ja in diesen Umständen genug seyn, die Hand des Spielers zu leiten. Man sage mir nicht, daß viele Characters in den französischen Sachen sehr lächerlich sind, oder wenigstens so scheinen. . . .

Woher erhalten die Singsachen den Vortheil, daß sie mehr gefallen und rühren als Spielstücke? In Wahrheit, so viele Gewalt die menschliche Stimme über uns hat, so tragen vielleicht der Text, der Inhalt und die Verschiedenheit desselben das meiste zu diesem Beyfalle bey. Ich glaube nicht, daß dem Ohr durch blossle Klänge der menschlichen Stimme, die nicht mit Worten begleitet werden . . . alleine diese Genugthuung geschehen wird. Haben die Spielstücke nun diesen Vortheil der Vocalmusik nicht, ist es da nicht unbillig, einen anderen Vortheil, wodurch sie diesen Mangel einigermaßen ersetzen können ausdrücklich von ihnen entfernen zu wollen. Was kann daher anders als ein leeres harmonisch-melodisches Gethöse öfters entstehen? Warum will man aber solches Gethöse nicht tätiger machen? Warum will man dem Zuhörer nicht Gelegenheit geben, vielmehr etwas als nichts bey diesem Gethöse zu gedenken? Es muß ja diesem mehr Vergnügen geben, dasjenige zu kennen, was man zur Beschäftigung seines Verstandes unternimmt, als davon im geringsten nicht unterrichtet zu seyn. Fehlet in der That derjenigen Spielmusik die Seele, die nichts vorstellet, die nichts bedeutet: warum will man derjenigen, die etwas vorstellen und bedeuten soll den Charakter vorzusetzen, sich scheuen? Ein Redner trägt allezeit Sorge, den Inhalt seiner Rede anzukündigen, und wenn einstens ein gewisser muntre Kopf eine Rede von Nichts gehalten, so hat er auch dieses Vorhaben zuförderst angezeigt. Mich deucht, daß so lange man nicht bey einem Instrumentalstücke denken will, so lange auch der Endzweck, wozu die Musik eingesetzt ist, nicht erreicht werden wird. Dem Zuhörer wird niemahls eine Art völliger Beruhigung in seinem Gemüthe zurückbleiben. Er geht nach Hause, und weiß nicht, was er gehört hat. Der Spieler hat etwas vorgetragen und weiß nicht was es gewesen.'

<sup>6</sup> This controversy had flared up periodically since the seventeenth century. Krause's 'Lettre', translated by Marpurg in the *Historisch-Kritische Beyträge*, vol. 1, 1-23, as 'Schreiben an den Herrn Marquis von B. über den Unterschied zwischen der italiänischen und französischen Musik', seems to have reintroduced the subject to music aestheticians in Berlin. Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg and Johann Friedrich Agricola became embroiled in the controversy in 1749, the latter under the pseudonym Flavio Anicio Olibrio. The documents in this exchange, too numerous to itemize here, are listed most recently in Hans-Günter Ottenberg, *Der Critische Musicus an der Spree: Berliner Musikschriftum von 1748 bis 1799* (Leipzig, 1984), 55-9.



French character piece, singling out Marpurge's collection published in Paris in 1741 for particular jibes.<sup>7</sup> Embedded in this windy controversy were issues that would spread beyond the confines of French-Italian rivalry and continue to nag theories of aesthetics to the present day: the problem of music's capacity to represent non-musical ideas, and the question of whether purely musical relationships could, by themselves, possess aesthetic value.<sup>8</sup> To Marpurge, instrumental music was clearly in need of the verbal assistance that the French titled character piece could give. Whether Marpurge's remarks served as a catalyst to Bach's compositional efforts, or whether these remarks simply expressed thoughts that were already on Bach's mind and in his discourse, he accepted the challenge implicit in Marpurge's article: to compose effective character pieces.

Precedents for C. P. E. Bach's character pieces may be found among seventeenth-century lute and harpsichord pieces and movements of French ballets of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and in even earlier instrumental repertoires.<sup>9</sup> But, in fact, one need not look back beyond the *pièces de caractère* of François Couperin and his contemporaries for Bach's models.<sup>10</sup> David Fuller has described Couperin's engagement with the *pièce de*

<sup>7</sup> 'Schreiben an Herrn \*\*\* in welchem Flavio Anicio Olibrio, sein Schreiben an den kritischen Musikus an der Spree vertheidigt, und auf dessen Wiederlegung antwortet' (Berlin, 1749), 16-17, 23-7. Agricola examines Marpurge's collection of pieces in considerable detail, enumerating syntactical mistakes, disparaging Marpurge for his prosaic musical ideas, and ridiculing him for attempts to portray subjects that are unfit for musical treatment.

<sup>8</sup> Theories of aesthetics in the 18th century were generally concerned with the moral, as well as the entertaining, effects of art. See, for example, the beginning of the article 'Aesthetik' in Johann Georg Sulzer's *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste*, 2nd edn. (1792; fac. repr., Hildesheim, 1967), i. 47, where the author asserts that 'The main object of the fine arts is the awakening of a keen sense of the True and the Good . . .' ('Die Hauptabsicht der schönen Künste geht auf die Erwekung eines lebhaften Gefühls des Wahren und des Guten . . .')

<sup>9</sup> Martha Vidor, *Zur Begriffs-Bestimmung des musikalischen Charakterstück für Klavier*, (diss., Leipzig, 1924), 41-2, observes that in the ballet music of the 17th century, there are movements that resemble character pieces while retaining an 'independent' musical aspect.

<sup>10</sup> In his article 'Charakterstück' in *MGG*, vol. 2, cols. 1094-1100, Willi Kahl objects to the use of the term *Charakterstück* to refer to these pieces, primarily, it would appear, because their composers were too diffident to entrust the keyboard instrument with the expression of individual feelings. Thus Kahl's distinction between these pieces and the *Charakterstücke* of Schumann and his contemporaries seems to be one of sensibility, rather than of genre. Yet there is little reason *not* to accept the term 'character piece' as a designation for Couperin's *Pièces de clavecin*; his contemporaries referred to them as *pièces de caractère* and *pièces caractérisées* (see n. 11). Nor can distinctions of genre be made between French character pieces of the 18th century and their German counterparts on the basis of nationality. Not only does Marpurge (who might be discounted as a Francophile) refer to such pieces as *charakterisierte Stücke* (see n. 5), but the same term appears in Daniel Gottlob Türk's *Klavierschule* (1789), repr., ed. Erwin Jacobi, *Documenta Musicologica*, Series 1, vol. 23 (Kassel and Basel, 1962), 395, and the term *Charakterstück* occurs in Johann Friedrich Reichardt's *Musikalisches Kunstmagazin* (Berlin, 1782-96), no. 1, 25; no. 5, 38-9). The designation *Charakteristische Tonstücke* is used less approbatively in Heinrich Koch's *Versuch einer Anleitung zur Composition* (Leipzig, 1782-93, repr. Hildesheim, 1969), ii. 41-2; Koch, like Kahl after him, finds these pieces often lacking in the proper sensibility ('nicht Empfindung, sondern Spielwerk für den Verstand'). The article 'Mahlerey (Redende Künste: Musik)' in Sulzer's *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste*, iii. 356-7, discusses Couperin's and C. P. E. Bach's character pieces as examples of the same genre. The entries in Bach's *NV* (11-14) that refer to these works as 'Petites Pièces' indicate that to him, also, they were character pieces.