

INTRODUCTION

The present volume contains the following published collections of keyboard sonatas: the *Achtzehn Probestücke in sechs Sonaten*, Wq 63/1–6; the *Sechs leichte Clavier Sonaten*, Wq 53; the six *Sonates à l'usage des dames*, Wq 54 (also known as the *Damensonaten*); and the *Sechs neue Clavier-Stücke* (also called the *Neue Sonatinen* or *Sonatine nuove*), Wq 63/7–12. The *Neue Clavier-Stücke* were published as a sequel to the *Probestücke*, but they represent a distinct musical work—different in style, form, and date—and therefore are treated within this volume as a separate entity.

The four collections were published between 1753 and 1787. Each consists of six compositions for solo keyboard, but the individual works differ substantially in length, style, and the demands they make on players and listeners. Spanning the second half of the composer's long career—his later years at Berlin as well as his final period at Hamburg—they represent a significant portion of his keyboard music composed or selected specifically for publication. Among other keyboard works that Bach also composed and published during this period are the Sonatas with Varied Reprises (*Reprises-Sonaten*, Wq 50) and their two “continuations” (*Fortsetzungen*, Wq 51 and 52), and the six collections “für Kenner und Liebhaber,” Wq 55–59 and 61. Because these constitute distinct series of publications, they appear in other volumes of the present edition.

Of the works contained herein, Bach served as his own publisher for the *Probestücke*, and there is no reason to doubt that he was responsible for the selection and ordering of pieces in all four sets. The musical texts present few serious editorial problems, preserved as they are in printed collections assembled by the composer. However, as in other works of the period, numerous questions arise concerning the precise readings of slurs, ornaments, and other performance markings (specific instances are discussed in the respective commentaries). Moreover, the dissemination of these works in a large number of manuscripts and printed editions, many previously undocumented, raises hitherto unexplored issues about Bach's publication of these works and their subsequent reception not only in Germany but in England, France, and elsewhere in Europe.

All of the works in this volume except the *Neue Clavier-Stücke* are listed in a manuscript catalogue of Bach's key-

board music composed up to 1772 (CV 1772). Bach's estate catalogue (NV 1790) lists all four sets.¹ The latter dates the *Probestücke* to 1753 and the *Neue Clavier-Stücke* to 1786. The works contained in the *Leichte Sonaten* and the *Damensonaten* were composed during the period 1762–66. But whereas the *Leichte Sonaten* constituted one of Bach's last Berlin publications, appearing in 1766, the *Damensonaten* came out around 1770 and were Bach's first published sonata collection after his move to Hamburg. The titles of these last two publications suggest that they were aimed at the amateur market, which Bach was also addressing during the same period with the two volumes of *Kurze und leichte Clavierstücke* (Wq 113 and 114), published in 1766 and 1768. Individual movements in the sonata sets Wq 53 and 54 reflect fashionable trends, such as the use of brief or transitional slow movements. Although Bach's writing such music may have been a concession to public taste, in doing so he explored new types of design for both individual movements and the sonata cycle as a whole. Indeed, these works prefigure some features of the later and better-known sonatas “für Kenner und Liebhaber,” as in the rondo-like form of the first movement of Wq 54/6 and the enharmonic modulations in the brief transition that stands in place of a slow movement in Wq 54/1.

Probestücke

The *Probestücke* set was Bach's third published collection of keyboard pieces, following the “Prussian” and “Württemberg” Sonatas (Wq 48 and 49), which had appeared in 1742 and 1744, respectively. The distinctive features of the *Probestücke* reflect their publication as part of a musical supplement to the first volume of Bach's *Versuch über die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen* (henceforth *Versuch I*). Published in Berlin in 1753, the latter was followed by a second volume (*Versuch II*) that appeared in 1762.² Both

1. Each catalogue lists date and place of composition for each work, as well as indicating which works existed in printed form.

2. Because the musical supplement to *Versuch I* was published separately and its title page omits full publication details, its date of publication cannot be precisely determined. It has always been assumed that it

volumes subsequently underwent further printings during and after the author's lifetime, including a revised edition that Bach prepared during his last years.³

The term *Probestücke*, which appears on the title pages of both the *Versuch* and its musical supplement, means literally "demonstration (or test) pieces." It had been used previously by Johann Mattheson for the exercises in figured bass realization included in his *Grosse General-Bass-Schule* (Hamburg, 1731), a work that Bach undoubtedly knew. Bach also would have found a precedent in François Couperin's *L'art de toucher le clavecin* (Paris, 1716), which incorporated in one engraved volume a short treatise on keyboard playing and a graded set of eight preludes. Each of the latter is in a different key, a useful pedagogical device present as well in the work by Mattheson and in other sets of keyboard pieces (such as J. S. Bach's inventions). Also useful was the idea of incorporating movements in a range of genres, as in J. S. Bach's keyboard partitas.⁴ The eighteen movements of the *Probestücke* accordingly include such fashionable types as the siciliano, binary form with varied reprises, and the free fantasia. The use of a different key for each movement might raise the question whether the pieces indeed constitute sonatas. But the title "Sonata" heads each group of three movements, and Bach wrote several other sonatas that also begin and end in different keys, including Wq 53/5, edited in this volume.

Couperin's preludes included indications for fingering on practically every note, a feature of two of J. S. Bach's preludes (BWV 930 and 994) that C.P.E. Bach adopted in his *Probestücke* as well. A novelty in German music publishing, this had the disadvantage of cluttering the printed page, especially in conjunction with Bach's detailed marking of dynamics, articulation, and ornamentation. Hence the comprehensive indication of performance markings probably led to technical problems in the printing of the work. It may also have contributed to a lack of popularity, for Bach sold fewer copies of the *Probestücke* than of the text volume that they were designed to accompany.⁵ In

appeared in 1753 simultaneously with *Versuch* I itself, but see the critical report for further discussion.

3. See the introduction to CPEB: CW, VII/1 for a more complete publication history of the *Versuch*.

4. C.P.E. Bach also emulated his father's partita practice by printing the *Probestücke* from engraved copper plates that were kept in the composer's possession.

5. In a letter to Engelhardt Benjamin Schwickert dated 18 February 1783, Bach states that "many people wanted just the text and no *Probestücke*, since the latter were too difficult for them." CPEB-Briefe, 2:953–61; CPEB-Letters, 191.

addition, despite their pedagogical function, none of the *Probestücke* are really simple to play. Difficulties arise less from unusual technical demands than from the unorthodox musical style, which includes Bach's characteristically intricate melodic embellishment and sudden changes of affect. In addition, maintaining clarity and good tone quality is not easy in some of the more remote keys, especially on the clavichord.

Although the *Probestücke* were published in conjunction with *Versuch* I, the latter has surprisingly little to say about specific performance issues in these pieces. Only two passages from the *Probestücke* appear among the musical examples, and these may show early readings.⁶ Even general references to the *Probestücke* are fewer than might be expected. Many of these references are concerned with notation, especially the virtually unprecedented indication of so many details of performance. General references to the *Probestücke* in *Versuch* I are as follows:

Einleitung, § 13: the *Probestücke* are confined to four octaves for the benefit of those who lack instruments with a wider compass.

Einleitung, § 19: the *Probestücke* are to be played first on the clavichord, initially without ornaments; then interchangeably (abwechseln[d]) on the harpsichord.

Einleitung, § 22–23: the *Probestücke* are fully notated, the composer having played through them (durchgespielt) numerous times so that not even the most trivial detail has been overlooked. Triplets are marked with the figure "3," dots rather than strokes are used for detached notes (Abstossen der Noten), and abbreviations (such as *f* for forte) are mostly given without periods in order to avoid confusion with dots of articulation.

1. Hauptstück, § 24: the *Probestücke* provide "combined ideas of all types" of composition (verbundene Gedancken von allerley Art); this procedure serves the study of fingering better than disconnected examples.

1. Hauptstück, § 96: stem direction up or down sometimes indicates use of the right and left hands, respectively; "due to

6. Tab. III, Fig. LXIV reproduces Sonata I/iii, mm. 18b–19 (left hand only), and Sonata II/iii, mm. 22–23 (right hand only). In the first, the appoggiatura from m. 19 is given as a full-size 8th note (reflecting Bach's practice in the *Probestücke* of giving small notes in their actual values and not according to the rule in *Versuch* I:2.2, §11 for "variable" appoggiaturas). The second example is barred as if in 6/8, rather than in 12/8, and only the first half of m. 23 is given. Although it is possible that these small variants relate to earlier versions of the pieces, Bach, like Quantz in his *Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen* (Berlin, 1752), seems to have composed most examples anew rather than copying them from existing scores. If the rare quotations from actual compositions were cited from memory, this might explain the discrepancies each shows with the works themselves.

limited space," inner voices are sometimes notated without their own flags or beams (nicht besonders beschwänzt), and their note values must be determined from the context.

1. Hauptstück, § 99: the *Probestücke* show examples of all sorts of fingering.
2. Hauptstück, 1. Abt., § 22–23: small notes (kleine Nötgen) are given in their actual values throughout the *Probestücke*; each small note always takes its value from the following large note, even though the two notes are sometimes spaced further apart than the composer would have liked, due to the presence of fingerings, ornaments, and other markings.
3. Hauptstück, § 16–17: some of the *Probestücke* are headed by unusual tempo markings; some markings refer to one part alone, others to all parts. To avoid confusion with the fingering numeral "1," dots are used instead of strokes for detached (gestossen) notes.⁷
3. Hauptstück, § 29: on the harpsichord, only those dynamic markings that apply to entire passages in the score should be expressed by a change of manual.
3. Hauptstück, § 30: rhythm in the cadenzas should be treated freely; whole notes (weisse Noten) in these passages indicate momentary pauses (Stillehalten) between entries of different voices (in Sonatas IV/ii and VI/ii).

References to specific movements in the *Probestücke* and other works are as follows (in general, Bach cites movements by tonality, not number):

1. Hauptstück, § 89: use of the same finger for successive notes of a scale in Sonata IV/iii.
1. Hauptstück, § 93: crossing over the fifth finger (Sonata I/iii and II/iii, illustrated in Tab. II, fig. LXIV).
1. Hauptstück, § 96: notation of two voices played by different hands on one staff (in the unbarred codas of Sonatas IV/ii and VI/ii).
1. Hauptstück, § 97: use of crossing hands, indicated by changes of clef rather than by writing the crossing part on the other staff (Sonata VI/i).⁸

7. But in Tab. VI, Fig. 1, the intended strokes appear erroneously as figures "1." Bach's term "gestossen," customarily translated "staccato," seems to refer to detached, accented notes produced by pushing away from the key.

8. The notation by means of clefs was that used by J. S. Bach in the Prelude in B-flat from part 2 of the *Well-Tempered Clavier* (BWV 890/i). But J. S. Bach also employed the alternative way of notating hand-crossings in one of the two autographs of the C-minor fantasia BWV 906/i. The alternative method is also adopted in the late manuscript copy of Wq 63/6 labeled D 15 in the critical report. A copy of BWV 906/i (D-B, Mus. ms. 30196) alters J. S. Bach's notation to correspond with that employed in Sonata VI/i, perhaps under the influence of the *Versuch* (this is presumably among the alterations that Uwe Wolf suggests might be due to C.P.E. Bach's instruction; see NBA, V/9.2, *Kritischer Bericht*, 222).

2. Hauptstück, 1. Abt. § 29: the ornament table attached to Bach's "Württemberg" Sonatas (Wq 49) was added without his authorization by the publisher and is wrong.

3. Hauptstück, § 1: rapid passages occur in Sonata II/iii, VI/i, and VI/iii.
3. Hauptstück, § 4: broken chords in Sonata V/i are to be played as clearly as the rapid passages (this was added to the 1787 edition of *Versuch* I).
3. Hauptstück, § 15: Sonata VI/iii provides a short introduction (kleine Anleitung) to the free fantasia.
3. Hauptstück, § 18: a slur over a broken chord indicates holding out of the notes (Sonata III/iii); the same technique can be indicated in the manner that the French often use (the so-called *style brisé*), as in Sonata VI/ii.
3. Hauptstück, § 28: the tempo of a movement can be varied for expressive reasons, especially in Wq 49/6/i–ii.
3. Hauptstück, § 31: Sonata V/3 provides examples of written-out varied reprises.

The last of the *Probestücke*, the Fantasia in C Minor, Wq 63/6/iii, is famous for having been arranged as a work for voice and keyboard by the poet Heinrich Wilhelm von Gerstenberg.⁹ Gerstenberg added two vocal parts, with German texts, to the essentially unaltered original music. The texts, in recitative style, are Gerstenberg's versions of Hamlet's soliloquy and the dying monologue of Socrates.¹⁰ Although Bach's correspondence suggests a lack of enthusiasm for Gerstenberg's "experiment," the arrangement is a valuable document for the reception of Bach's music by his younger, pre-Romantic contemporaries. It also preserves evidence for contemporary performance practice. The arrangement has been previously reproduced in a diplomatic edition printed from type closely imitating that of the original publication, although in a different layout and introducing several small errors.¹¹

9. Published in *Flora. Erste Sammlung. Enthaltend: Compositionen für Gesang und Klavier, von Gräven, Gluck, Bach, Adolph Kunzen, F. L. Ae. Kunzen, Reichardt, Schwanenberger, herausgegeben von C. F. Cramer.* (Kiel and Hamburg 1787). A facsimile of the first page of Gerstenberg's arrangement is given in "Er ist original!": *Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach: Ausstellung zum 200. Todestag des Komponisten 14. Dezember 1988 bis 11. Februar 1989* (Wiesbaden: Riechert, 1988), no. 72.

10. The two texts are not intended to be performed simultaneously. A more detailed description of Gerstenberg's arrangement, along with the full German texts, can be found in Eugene Helm, "The 'Hamlet' Fantasy and the Literary Element in C.P.E. Bach's Music," *The Musical Quarterly* 58/2 (April 1972): 277–96.

11. In Friedrich Chrysander, "Eine Klavier-Phantasie von Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach mit nachträglich von Gerstenberg eingefügten Gesangsmelodien zu zwei verschiedenen Texten," *Vierteljahrsschrift für Musikwissenschaft* 7 (1891): 1–25, reprinted in facsimile in CPEB-Beiträge, 329–53.

“Leichte” Sonatas

The six sonatas of Wq 53, published in 1766, were the last of seven sonata collections that Bach issued while living in Berlin. They followed most recently the so-called *Reprisesonaten* (Wq 50) of 1760 and the two *Fortsetzungen* (Wq 51 and 52) of 1761 and 1763, respectively. The years 1765 and 1766 also saw the publication of the *Clavierstücke verschiedener Art* (Wq 112), which include one sonata, and the first set of *Kurze und leichte Clavierstücke* (Wq 113). But whereas the works in Wq 50 and 113 were composed in chronological proximity to one another, the works of the remaining collections (especially Wq 52) were composed over a wider period. Of the six sonatas in Wq 53, only nos. 2, 3, 4, and 6 form an unbroken sequence in CV 1772 and NV 1790, in the order 6, 3, 4, 2. Composed in Berlin in 1764, these followed by two years the sonatas published as nos. 1 and 5; the latter stand together in both catalogues, but in the order 5, 1.

Hence, unlike Wq 50 and 113, Wq 53 is comprised of works that were composed separately and may have been selected only later for inclusion in a specific publication. Published as “easy” sonatas, the six works in Wq 53 do perhaps show more frequent use of simple two-part textures than other works of the period (such as the sonatas of Wq 54). But they were not especially easy by the prevailing standards of the day. The last sonata, in particular, is far from simple, and it stands apart from the others in the through-composed form of its opening movement, which concludes with a direct transition to the second movement. This was a borrowing from the symphony as composed by Bach and his contemporaries (in turn a borrowing from the Italian opera overture). The same form appears in Wq 112/13, a keyboard arrangement of a symphony (Wq 180 of 1758) published in the *Clavierstücke verschiedener Art*. During the years 1762–64 Bach composed at least eight further keyboard sonatas; two were destined for Wq 52 and Wq 112, respectively, and one eventually appeared in the third collection of pieces “für Kenner und Liebhaber” (Wq 57/6). The latter, the famous sonata in F minor, is not easy, but several other sonatas of the period seem no more difficult than Wq 53/6 and might have been candidates for inclusion in a set of “leichte” sonatas. The last movement of Wq 65/37 in A major employs a continuous broken-chord accompaniment unique in Bach’s works and was possibly conceived with beginners in mind; the second movement of Wq 65/39 in E minor is a simple binary form, marked *Largo con tenerezza* and in this respect resembling the corresponding movement of Wq 53/1.

Further questions arise with Wq 53/1 and Wq 53/5. Listed in CV 1772 and NV 1790 as consecutive compositions of the year 1762, both are exceptional in terms of tonal design, and at least Wq 53/1, in C major, may have been assembled from separately composed movements. Its second movement is in the parallel minor of the dominant (G minor), an unusual choice, and the third movement survives in an earlier version in B-flat major. This version, which is preserved in an autograph manuscript, lacks mm. 17–20 as well as the central double bar and repeat signs. In addition, this version gives mm. 21–35 in a substantially different form, although following the same harmonic skeleton. Less substantial variants occur in the other sections of the movement as well. The expansion of a relatively simple *Clavierstück* into a regular sonata movement would have parallels elsewhere in Bach’s work.¹² The latter view of this movement is strengthened by the appearance of chromaticism in m. 5 only as a subsequent revision in the autograph; chromaticism is retained in the published version, in a third version of the passage. If the dating of the autograph to before 1760 is accurate, then the date of 1762 given in CV 1772 for the finished sonata may refer only to its compilation from existing pieces.

Similar suspicions are raised by Wq 53/5, whose first movement is in C major but whose last two movements are in A minor. Bach wrote two other sonatas that begin and end in different keys (Wq 58/2 and 65/50). In the present case the irregularity is alleviated by the close relationship between the outer-movement keys. In addition, the central section of the second movement (mm. 9–25) moves to C major and C minor, thus relating back to the tonality of the first movement; and it ends with a Phrygian cadence on the dominant of A minor, preparing the key of the finale. Nevertheless it is conceivable that this sonata also originated through the joining of isolated movements.

Wq 53/1 and Wq 53/5 are the only works from the set provided with varied readings in a partially autograph compilation of variations and embellishments for various sonata movements (Wq 68). Bach’s handwriting here may not be appreciably later than the original composition of these sonatas. But the varied readings for Wq 53/1/i ascend twice to f^{'''}—a note avoided in the printed text of Wq 53 and indeed in Bach’s keyboard music generally until 1765.¹³ Conceivably, Bach was concerned that manuscript copies

12. As in the elaboration of the simple *Clavierstück* Wq 116/25 into the first Duetto for two keyboard instruments, Wq 115/1; see further discussion in Schulenberg 1984, 87.

13. The note occurs in Wq 54/3 and Wq 112/1, both composed in 1765 according to CV 1772 and NV 1790.

of these two sonatas, composed prior to the rest of Wq 53, had entered circulation; he might have composed the embellishments to head off competition from unauthorized copies.¹⁴ However, no evidence survives that these sonatas ever circulated in copies independent of the prints. Alternatively, the embellishments for Wq 53/1 and 53/5 may be revisions for sonatas that Bach considered to be less perfect than others in the set, as a result of their origin as pastiches. These varied readings are printed separately (see below).

Bach's earliest surviving correspondence concerning Wq 53 dates from late 1765, when he was reading proofs for the publication one sheet at a time and returning his corrections to the publisher Breitkopf.¹⁵ This correspondence provides evidence for Breitkopf's production methods: he must have set up type for a few pages at a time (not necessarily in the order of the final publication), printed proof sheets, and then waited for Bach to correct the latter before completing the press run for those pages. He then must have broken up the forms and proceeded to the next group of pages. That Breitkopf was willing to follow this slow process, tying up his valuable fonts for significant periods, is a testament to his intention to print accurate texts, at least for this volume. Actually, Breitkopf's prints contain a significant number of musical errors, albeit involving chiefly the placement of slurs and dynamic indications. Errors are especially frequent in the last three sonatas—the very ones for which Bach's letters document his having marked the proofs. Perhaps Breitkopf never made changes requested by the composer—or needed to make so many that relatively minor errors were left to stand. Bach's correspondence makes no mention of separate treble- and soprano-clef editions, implying that he proofread only one version—the soprano-clef version is the more likely, as explained below—although this would not always be Bach's later practice.¹⁶

14. In Bach's letter of 23 July 1785 to Breitkopf he mentions his willingness to "undertake changes and expansions" for a second edition of the *Reprises-Sonaten* in order to combat the existence of a pirated edition by Rellstab; his house copy of the printed edition of this work contains extensive embellishments. *CPEB-Briefe* 2: 1083; *CPEB-Letters*, 230.

15. Bach's letter of 12 October 1765 accompanied proofreading corrections for sheet H (pp. 29–32, containing portions of Sonatas V and VI); see *CPEB-Briefe* 1: 75–77; *CPEB-Letters*, 6. Two and a half weeks later, on 30 October 1765, Bach sent corrections for sheet F (pp. 21–24, containing portions of Sonata IV); see *CPEB-Briefe* 1: 79–81; *CPEB-Letters*, 7. The final corrections followed after another week on 6 November 1765; see *CPEB-Briefe* 1: 81–87; *CPEB-Letters*, 7–8.

16. For example, in a letter of 19 July 1776 to Breitkopf, Bach indicates proofreading corrections in both issues of the accompanied sonatas Wq 90. *CPEB-Briefe* 1: 371–73; *CPEB-Letters*, 98.

In one letter, Bach discusses arrangements for the work's advertisement and sale in Berlin, suggesting that "superficial clavier players can be consoled that these sonatas are distinctly easier than others."¹⁷ This advice was somewhat disingenuous, for Bach does not specify the sonatas to which the present ones are to be compared—and, as noted above, they are not particularly easy to play. Perhaps it was only at this point (late 1765) that Bach, or Breitkopf, decided to publish the works as "easy" (leichte) sonatas. The decision evidently paid off, for Bach's surviving correspondence refers more frequently to requests for or queries about these pieces than others of the period (notably Wq 63 and 54). Thus Bach sent a copy to Georg Michael Telemann, perhaps in August 1768,¹⁸ and two letters to Breitkopf from 1772 refer to additional sales that left Bach holding only one copy.¹⁹ In October 1773 Bach wrote to Breitkopf to express the wish that the publisher J. C. Westphal in Hamburg should always have copies of Wq 53 for sale, as Bach does "not have time" to sell them himself.²⁰ Breitkopf must have responded promptly, for two months later Bach thanked him for twenty-four copies of Wq 53, to be sold by Westphal.²¹ The sonatas were apparently still on Bach's mind in July 1774, although by then he was suggesting to Breitkopf that the new "Cramer-Psalmen," Wq 196, would be easier to sell than twenty-four copies of "your sonatas."²² Perhaps by this date sales of Wq 53 were slowing down, or perhaps Bach was pushing Breitkopf to move more quickly in printing and selling the newer work. As late as 1785, Bach took care to correct a mistake concerning Wq 53 in a Breitkopf invoice.²³ By 1785 the pirated reprint by Longman and Lukey of London had been available for perhaps ten years, but there is no evidence that Bach was aware of it or that it circulated outside the English-speaking world.²⁴

17. Letter of 12 October 1765. *CPEB-Briefe* 1: 75–77; *CPEB-Letters*, 6.

18. Undated letter. *CPEB-Briefe* 1: 156–60; *CPEB-Letters*, 15.

19. Letters of 2 January and 9 April 1772. *CPEB-Briefe* 1: 250–53, 256–65; *CPEB-Letters*, 25, 26–27.

20. Letter of 4 October 1773 to Breitkopf. *CPEB-Briefe* 1: 330–32; *CPEB-Letters*, 37.

21. Letter of 3 December 1773. *CPEB-Briefe* 1: 346–48; *CPEB-Letters*, 43–44.

22. Letter of 18 July 1774. *CPEB-Briefe* 1: 399–403; *CPEB-Letters*, 59. Clark identifies "your sonatas" as the twenty-four mentioned in Bach's letter of 3 Dec. 1773 (see previous note).

23. Letters of 19 October and 30 November 1785 both concern a misunderstanding over how many copies of Wq 53 Breitkopf had sent Bach. *CPEB-Briefe* 2: 1115–17, 1124–26; *CPEB-Letters*, 237, 239–40.

24. RISM A/I lists no exemplars outside Great Britain and the United States.

That substantial sales of the work were anticipated is indicated by Breitkopf's publication of treble- and soprano-clef editions. Both bear the printed date 1766; Breitkopf evidently accepted the increased cost of issuing the work in two simultaneous editions in anticipation of increased sales. The nature of the business calculations involved is evident from two letters written ten years later, during planning for Breitkopf's printing of the accompanied sonatas Wq 90, which Bach himself published by subscription. Subscribers had requested 252 copies of the work using "keyboard clef" (soprano clef) and 189 using "violin clef" (treble clef); accordingly, Bach asks Breitkopf to print 700 of the former and 350 of the latter. He adds that he is sending a manuscript copy that uses treble clef, and that a second copy in soprano clef is not needed; that is, he leaves it to Breitkopf to set the version in soprano clef from the exemplar supplied.²⁵ We lack similar documentation for Wq 53, whose publication Breitkopf handled. Perhaps in this case Bach had supplied separate manuscript exemplars for the two issues, but if so the two manuscripts must have agreed closely, for the two issues of the print show virtually no differences. Most errors are common to both, and even ambiguous slurs appear in the same way in the two editions. The small number of existing exemplars examined here provides insufficient basis for estimating the proportion of exemplars printed in soprano and treble clefs respectively; for his last publications, Bach increased the proportion in favor of treble clef.²⁶ The total number of copies printed must have been sufficient to keep the work in print for the next twenty years, as documented by Bach's correspondence, for there is no evidence that the set ever was reprinted (as Wq 54 would be).

The brief incipits in CV 1772, copied by the Hamburg copyist known as Anon. 307,²⁷ all employ soprano clef, suggesting that this version was the original. CV 1772 gives incipits in treble clef for many other sonatas, especially those composed before 1744; the choice of clef in CV 1772 seems to reflect Bach's own changing preference, strength-

ening the supposition that the lost autograph material for Wq 53 employed soprano clef. Both issues may still have been available in 1785, for in that year Bach requested from Breitkopf two copies in "violin clef," or in "keyboard clef" if the former was not available.²⁸

"Damen" Sonatas

The years 1765 and 1766, when Bach composed all six sonatas of Wq 54, were busy ones for the composer. During this period he composed not only eleven other keyboard sonatas but also three concertos, the two sets of keyboard pieces Wq 113 and 114, and numerous other small vocal and instrumental compositions. He also published the collections Wq 53, 112, and 113, as well as individual compositions that appeared in anthologies. In addition, he obtained his appointment at Hamburg and his release from Prussian service. Thus it is not surprising that Bach was unable to publish Wq 54 until after moving to Hamburg in 1768. His surviving correspondence contains relatively few references to the set.

Nevertheless, the sonatas of Wq 54 were published three times in Bach's lifetime, once by Hummel in Amsterdam around 1770 and twice by Hartknoch in Riga, in 1773 and 1786. Although Hummel's edition was recognized by the composer, inaccuracies and imprecisions in its text suggest that Bach never proofread it. On the other hand, it is not known how, or whether, Bach was involved in the production of Hartknoch's editions.²⁹ After his move to Hamburg, Bach may have sought new commercial contacts in the hope of reaching a broader market. In addition to seeking buyers in France, England, and the Netherlands through Hummel, Bach might have viewed Hartknoch as a potentially valuable contact in the Baltic region, where Bach's later publications would find buyers (as indicated, for example, by the names of subscribers published in the collections "für Kenner und Liebhaber"). The publication

25. Letter of 2 May 1776. *CPEB-Briefe* 1: 568–74; *CPEB-Letters*, 94–96.

26. In a letter of 3 January 1787 Bach requests equal quantities of both issues for Wq 61, having previously set the numbers at 600 (soprano clef) and 450 (treble clef) for this same print. *CPEB-Briefe* 2: 1189–91, 1178–82; *CPEB-Letters*, 255–56, 252.

27. Christoph Wolff, "Carl Philipp Emanuel Bachs Verzeichnis seiner Clavierwerke von 1733 bis 1772," in *Über Leben, Kunst und Kunstwerke: Aspekte musikalischer Biographie. Johann Sebastian Bach in Zentrum*, edited by Christoph Wolff (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1999), 220, citing Peter Wollny.

28. Letter of 8 February 1785 to Breitkopf. *CPEB-Briefe* 2: 1168–69; *CPEB-Letters*, 224.

29. Bach's undated letter to Alexander Reinagle, which Clark dates to after October 1785, states: "No one has pirated anything from me here in Germany. I would indeed have publicly identified such a pirate as a swindler right away in the newspapers." *CPEB-Briefe* 2: 1131–33; *CPEB-Letters*, 241–42. Bach never did so with regard to Wq 54, although all of its editions were published outside of what was properly defined as "Germany." But Bach also failed to mention Hartknoch's reprint in a list of works published "with my knowledge and consent" (mit meinem Wissen und Willen); the list is part of the autobiographical sketch inserted into Bode and Ebeling's German translation of Burney's travel diaries. *Autobiography*, 203–7.

of the treble-clef edition by Hummel and the soprano-clef edition by Hartknoch presumably accorded with regional preferences, although in subsequent publications of solo keyboard music Breitkopf would again handle issues in both clefs, as he did for Wq 53. Only the keyboard trios of Wq 89 show a somewhat similar history of publication, having appeared in separate London and Berlin editions—the latter, perhaps not coincidentally, issued by Hummel, although in this case his was the later (and more eastern) edition.

The title of Wq 54 (“à l’usage des Dames” in Hummel’s print) also suggests Bach’s reaching for a new market, or at least new fashionability.³⁰ That the title was meant to suggest a reduced level of seriousness or difficulty is confirmed by the brief review that appeared in 1774 in Friedrich Nicolai’s *Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek*.³¹ But like the “easy” sonatas of Wq 53, these works are far from simple, and, as Nicolai noted, Bach’s style remains recognizable. The works are, however, characterized by short or merely transitional slow movements, a trend that would continue in the sonatas “für Kenner und Liebhaber,” and which Bach mentioned as a selling point in the sonata Wq 60.³²

Bach might not have decided on the contents of Wq 54 until shortly before preparing (or having prepared) a copy to send to Amsterdam. He composed only a single sonata during the years 1767–70.³³ But he brought to Hamburg a stock of more than a dozen unpublished keyboard sonatas composed during the 1760s alone, and several of these contain the short or simple slow movements that typify Wq 54. Still, if the dates and ordering of the works in CV

1772 and NV 1790 are accurate, Bach may have conceived at least four of the present sonatas as parts of a set: that is, nos. 1, 2, 4, and 6, all dating from 1766. These items were composed in reverse order, however, and alongside other sonatas, including a sonata in E major (Wq 65/46), another in G minor (Wq 62/23), and one in C minor (Wq 60).³⁴ The latter shares with Wq 54/1, its immediate predecessor in NV 1790, a very brief transitional slow movement. Thus it is possible that Bach initially intended to include Wq 60 in the present set.

Sechs neue Clavier-Stücke

The *Neue Clavier-Stücke* were written in 1786 and thus are among Bach’s last keyboard compositions. They were intended to provide an easy complement to the *Probestücke* and were published as an addition to the musical supplement of the *Versuch*, probably in conjunction with a new third edition of *Versuch I* issued by Schwickert of Leipzig in 1787. Unlike the *Probestücke*, these are one-movement works, closer to Bach’s small keyboard pieces (such as the *Clavierstücke* Wq 113 and 114) than to his sonatas.

The title *Sechs neue Clavier-Stücke* is taken from the revised title page of the musical supplement. The only other title explicitly applied to the group of six pieces in any primary source is the Italian “Sonatine nuove” at the head of the first piece, on page 21 of Schwickert’s print. This title might be understood in the archaic sense of “new little pieces” rather than as implying a generic connection to the sonata. On the other hand, NV 1790 lists the six pieces as constituting two three-movement works, confirming the information from Bach’s house copy that Bach and his heirs regarded them as falling into three-movement cycles (see plate 12).³⁵ There is no indication of this in Schwickert’s print, however, and therefore it is not shown in the edition. The German *Neue Sonatinen* occurs only in Westphal’s copy (designated D in the critical report); Bach described the six pieces as “sonatas” and “Probestücke” in his correspondence with Schwickert. It is possible that the decision to head the printed version with the Italian form of the title lay with Schwickert or his engraver.

The *Neue Clavier-Stücke* are notably simpler than Bach’s other late keyboard compositions, including the two sona-

30. A similar title appears in the *Sei breve sonate da cembalo masime all’uso delle Dame* by Bach’s Berlin court colleague Christoph Nichelmann (Nuremberg: Schmid, ca. 1745). The title may also have been influenced by Johann Friedrich Wilhelm Wenkel’s more recent *Clavierstücke für Frauenzimmer* (Leipzig: Breitkopf, 1768). Nicolai’s review of Wq 54, cited below, assumed that Bach’s publication also was intended for “Frauenzimmer.” Nichelmann’s set, unlike Bach’s, was distinctly simple in style and technical demands.

31. *Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek* 22 (Berlin and Stettin, 1774): 524. Nicolai’s review reads in full: “Feurig, fremd, wie mans an Hr. Bachens Arbeiten gewohnt ist. Doch aber auch sehr gefällig und angenehm, und dabey etwas leichter, als viele anderer seiner Clavierwerke. Das Frauenzimmer, dem zu Gefallen diese Sonaten eigentlich gesetzt sind, soll sich weder gar zu sehr drüber ermüden, noch auch in Harnisch gerathen, daß ihm der Verfasser gar zu wenig Fleiß und Lust zum musikalischen Studieren zugetrauet hätte.”

32. The work was published only in 1785. Bach describes it as “easy, short, and almost without an Adagio, since such a thing is no longer in fashion” in his letter of 23 September 1785 to Breitkopf. *CPEB-Letters*, 236; *CPEB-Briefe* 2: 1111–13.

33. Wq 62/24, composed in 1769 and published the following year in *Musikalisches Vielerley* (Hamburg: M. C. Bock).

34. The autograph of Wq 60 was begun in the 1760s; on its revision, see Pamela Fox, “C.P.E. Bach’s Compositional Proofreading,” *Musical Times* 129 (1988): 651–55.

35. In NV 1790, p. 25, the entries for nos. 203 and 204 both read “H. 1786, hat Schwickert gedruckt.”

tas also published in 1787 in the last collection of pieces “für Kenner und Liebhaber.” Unlike the *Probestücke*, the *Neue Clavier-Stücke* do not present a clear progression in difficulty or musical sophistication. But the revised ordering of the six pieces in the print vis-à-vis Bach’s house copy may reflect the fact that Wq 63/10–12 are slightly longer than the first three; in addition, Wq 63/12 differs from the others in being through-composed, instead of in binary form; this, together with its *prestissimo* tempo, may have made it seem appropriate as the concluding work in the set. That at least Wq 63/8 was originally conceived as part of a larger set of pieces is evident from its coda, which concludes on the dominant of a foreign key.³⁶

Apparently Schwickert had requested an additional set of six sonatas from Bach already in 1780, when the latter transferred to Schwickert his rights to the *Versuch*. Bach did not grant Schwickert’s wish, perhaps because the latter was unwilling to pay 150 talers for such a set of sonatas.³⁷ Nevertheless, Bach may have recognized a need for an easier musical supplement to his treatise, for three years later he admitted to Schwickert that the *Probestücke* “increase too fast in difficulty.” In the same letter, dated 18 February 1783, he offers to sell Schwickert “at the most 6 short and easy *Probestücke* with fingering in a clean copy,” delivered within eight days at the “trifling cost” (Spottgeld) of three talers each. He states further that he has already completed one new *Probestück*, adding that, if Schwickert has no interest in it, he will publish it on his own, incorporating it into a set of six sonatas.³⁸

It is not possible to identify the piece that Bach claimed to have already written in early 1783. If it is one of the *Neue Clavier-Stücke*, perhaps the best candidate is the fourth one—the first piece in Bach’s house copy of these pieces and the only one there furnished with fingerings—although this would contradict the date of 1786 given in NV 1790 for the composition of all six pieces.³⁹ In early 1786 Schwickert evidently approached Bach again for six

sonatas, and the composer replied on 27 January that full-length sonatas would “more deter than attract buyers,” offering to supply instead six one-movement sonatas.⁴⁰ Schwickert seems to have answered positively but was not prepared to accept delivery immediately, that is, within the three weeks specified by Bach. Some of the relevant correspondence has been lost, but by June Bach had composed the pieces and was having them copied for Schwickert.⁴¹

Composing the six short pieces cannot have cost Bach much effort. Whatever the effects of his age and infirmities, he would write far more lengthy and significant works during his remaining two and a half years. At the time of the *Neue Clavier-Stücke*, Bach was concerned with more substantial projects, notably the publication by Breitkopf of *Die Auferstehung und Himmelfahrt Jesu*, Wq 240. After sending the six sonatas to Schwickert, probably on 9 June 1786,⁴² Bach apparently took no further role in their publication, and this may explain the small errors in the printed text.

Performance Practice

Many of the issues that arise in the performance of the works in this volume—including the interpretation of signs for ornamentation and articulation—can be answered by referring to *Versuch* I. This, however, provides few hints with respect to the seemingly critical issue of keyboard medium. Despite Bach’s widely reported predilection for the clavichord, only two of these works contain unambiguous indications for the use of that instrument—a few instances of *Bebung* and *Tragen der Töne* in Wq 63/4/ii and 63/6/iii. Performance on harpsichord and, eventually, fortepiano must have been common and, at the very least, tolerated by the composer. Other instruments were available as well.⁴³ Only temperament and keyboard compass would have restricted eighteenth-century players in their

36. The half-step relationship between the end of Wq 63/8 (on the dominant of F-sharp minor) and the beginning of Wq 63/9 (in D major) has a precedent at m. 93 of the Rondo in G, Wq 59/2, where a statement of the theme in F major is preceded by an arrival on the dominant of A minor.

37. Breitkopf had paid this amount for the *Leichte Sonaten* (Wq 53), mentioned in Bach’s letter to Schwickert of 19 May 1780. *CPEB-Briefe* 1:840–42; *CPEB-Letters*, 162–64.

38. *CPEB-Briefe* 2:953–61; *CPEB-Letters*, 191.

39. The only sonata that Bach is known to have composed in 1782 or 1783 is Wq 65/48, the Sonata in G Major for Bogenclavier. Bach never published this work, and none of its three movements is likely to have originated as a simple *Probestück*.

40. Letter to Schwickert of 27 January 1786. *CPEB-Briefe* 2:1139–42; *CPEB-Letters*, 244–45.

41. Letter to Schwickert of 2 June 1786. *CPEB-Briefe* 2:1155–57; *CPEB-Letters*, 248.

42. A lost letter to Schwickert dated 9 June 1786 evidently accompanied the score; see *CPEB-Briefe* 2:1157; *CPEB-Letters*, 248.

43. E.g., the Bogenclavier, invented in the 1750s, for which Bach ostensibly wrote the sonata Wq 65/48 of 1783. On Bach’s choice of instrument, see David Schulenberg, “When Did the Clavichord Become C.P.E. Bach’s Favourite Instrument? An Inquiry into Expression, Style, and Medium in Eighteenth-Century Keyboard Music,” in *De clavicordio IV: Proceedings of the IV International Clavichord Symposium, Magnano, 8–11 September 1999*, ed. Bernard Brauchli et al. (Magnano: Musica Antica a Magnano, 2000), 37–53.

choice of instruments. The *Probestücke* are limited to the four-octave range C–c^{'''}, making them playable on virtually any eighteenth-century keyboard instrument. But their wide-ranging tonalities would have rendered performance problematical on fretted clavichords and on organs whose tuning was insufficiently well-tempered. The *Leichte Sonaten* ascend to e^{'''}, and the *Damensonaten* and *Neue Clavier-Stücke* reach f^{'''} (and FF in Wq 63/10). But the widening keyboard compass is more a reflection of date of composition than of choice of instrument.

Given the precise notation of so many details of performance in all four sets, it may seem doubtful whether any further ornamentation or embellishment by the player is warranted. Yet *Versuch* I provides guidance in the performance of varied reprises, for which the *Probestücke* provide one example (in Wq 63/5/iii). Bach himself left varied and embellished readings for three movements from the *Leichte Sonaten*. Unlike varied reprises, these embellishments, which occur in through-composed as well as in binary-form movements, were apparently intended as revisions or substitute readings to be inserted into the printed text. Although Bach left it up to players or copyists to enter the variations into the texts of these movements, integral “composite” texts for these movements have been editorially assembled according to Bach’s indications. These immediately follow the text of Wq 53 in the present edition.

Despite the numerous dynamic indications in the *Probestücke*, the precise dynamic level of individual notes is sometimes ambiguous, as when the resolution of an appoggiatura marked *p* in the upper voice sounds against an accompaniment lacking dynamic indications (as in Wq 63/2/i, m. 2). Although the default dynamic level, as at the outset of most pieces, was presumably *f*, players of clavichord and fortepiano would have been expected to adjust accompaniments accordingly and to interpret close-spaced *f* and *p* as a *decrescendo* (as in Wq 63/2/ii, mm. 7–8), *p* followed by *f* as a *crescendo*, and so forth.

The original notation of the *Probestücke* leaves rhythmic values ambiguous in certain passages, especially in Wq 63/4/ii. In these passages, indicated by asterisks in the edition, notes in the inner voices originally bore separate stems but no flags or beams to signify their precise note values. In some cases the note values of the inner voice are clearly meant to be assimilated to those of the upper voice, as in Wq 63/4/ii, mm. 8 and 9, beats 2 and 3. On the downbeats of these same measures, however, the apparent 16th notes in the inner voice should probably be read as 8th notes. Although Bach explicitly discusses this notation in his *Versuch*, he may not have recognized the ambigu-

ity that it creates, at least for a modern reader.⁴⁴ For this reason, and in order to avoid further complicating the already complex notation of the movements in question, the edition refrains from emending the text in these passages. Further issues relating to performance of the *Probestücke* are discussed at the end of the corresponding section of the critical report.

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David Schulenberg

44. *Versuch* I:1, §96. Previous editions have not acknowledged the ambiguity in the passages cited; the range of interpretation is small but not insignificant.