

Comparisons of Perspective in the *Empfindsamer Stil*:

How the music of Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach represents a microcosm of an emerging cultural initiative

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“The Nightmare” Henry Fuseli, 1782

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I. INTRODUCTION

“If you would have me weep, you must feel grief yourself.”

Horace

The brief period of the *Sturm und Drang* era, roughly 1770-1777, sweeping through Germany’s cosmopolitan centers is an area of great fascination to me. Having its origins in literature and philosophy, the movement represented an artistic struggle to show the depths and extremes of the human experience via one’s expressive devices. Its influence crept further into cross disciplines of poetry, theater and painting, yet striking deepest in its most ambiguous and indefinable arena, music.

Personally speaking, I came across works of chamber music from Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach which surprised and demanded of me a more explicit and contemplative attitude in order to execute with any real consciousness or effect. I believe that the orchestra compositions of this time period can show this tumultuous time of musical creation in its most dramatic fashion. My personal area of interest lies, however, in the intimate chamber music setting, one that requires a more definitive performance from the individuals as it consists of considerably fewer players. Essentially recreating a symphonic texture with the Keyboard taking central importance, single-line or previously considered “melody” instruments, like the flute, take on a more supportive role harmonically. In this sense the art of accompaniment becomes a more universal requirement for every musician. Perhaps most taxing for the performer of these Quartets is the abruptness with which one must make changes in mood and character; drastic intervallic leaps, modulation to strange keys and an intentional disruption of the rhythmic pulse all contribute to a sense of impulsiveness, the suggestion of something, which cannot be predicted and should be performed with an equal amount of surprise.

When describing this new style in music, we often hear reference to both *Sturm und Drang* and *Empfindsamkeit*, or *Empfindsamer Stil*, as general descriptors. But what is the origin behind these terms and do they truly have any musical value? It is my hope and aim to find a similar, if not more poignant, description of *Empfindsamkeit*, used here as a general equivalent for alternative modes of expression.

So the questions arise: What are the origins of and distinctions between the stylistic terms *Empfindsamkeit* and *Sturm und Drang*? Can *Empfindsamer* qualities exist musically? If so how can we define them in words, or better yet, how can we express them using concrete musical terminology?

THE RESEARCH QUESTION

What are the musical tools available to musicians which can be used to unlock the complex understanding of the *Empfindsamer Stil*?

DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS

From the outset, it has been my intention to understand in a deeper sense the music of composers writing in the so-called *Empfindsamer Stil*. Based solely on general connotations from teachers and texts taken at face value, the impression was one of quick changes of character and unpredictable and abrupt shifts of mood and affect. The repertoire of choice for me was chamber music from Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach, finding in the Quartets for Keyboard, Flute, Viola and Bass a profound example of what I *thought* to be *Empfindsamer Stil*. And still to this day I find it there but now with a more detailed and informed perspective. I began an in-depth search for the origins of the terminology, including such phrases as *Empfindsamkeit*, as well as *Empfindsamer Stil*, and *Sturm und Drang*, which are so readily and eagerly used by musicians and scholars today as a springboard in which to categorize this very particular era of music lying between the Baroque and Classical realms.

This paper will attempt to understand the musical world in existence at this time, by examining the exact terminology we use contemporarily and also by exploring the literary *Sturm und Drang* to a great extent. It is through this examination of the origins of the *Sturm und Drang* that I will conclude that in order to describe music more accurately, perhaps it is more useful to use a more all-encompassing term such as *Empfindsamer Stil*. Direct *Sturm und Drang* musical characteristics cannot accurately be claimed since there was no direct link to support the idea that these two worlds were in any way functioning together. However, the influence of the *Stürmer und Dranger* is undeniably present in the artistic footprint of the 18th century. This is why a full exploration of the literary world can help us to understand and shed light on the changing musical aesthetics of the time.

Part one will explore this terminology debate present in many contemporary articles and texts, ranging from the beginning of the twentieth century all the way to present day. Since no one musician at the time used the terms *Empfindsamer Stil* or *Sturm und Drang* to describe their own music, these labels are purely modern ones. To this end, what I end up describing is not in fact *Empfindsamer Stil* but our perception of a style that has no name! In order to tackle this problem, a great article by Catherine J. Minter entitled *Literary 'Empfindsamkeit' and Nervous Sensibility in Eighteenth-Century Germany* is considered. Minter explains certain distinctions between the two terms and other associations with the physiological and medical worlds at the time. We closely associate the sensibility of such music in correlation with the literary movement, which has much written about it in the way of philosophical and argumentative viewpoints.

After this we will explore a possible musical equivalent to the *Sturm und Drang* in part two, which contains a list of musical characteristics, comprising three vast categories, corresponding to the aesthetic imperatives of the literary circle. Later we will make an examination of Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach and his influence over the musical world in the changing dynamic of instrumental music.

Finally, a case study of the 1788 Quartets of Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach for Keyboard, Flute, Viola and Bass will illuminate the three categories initially presented at the beginning of part two. This section helps to form a more practical perspective for the oftentimes lofty and abstract concepts of the *Sturm und Drang* and its corresponding musical equivalent, *Empfindsamkeit*.

II. PART ONE: A Style with No Name

A. *Empfindsamkeit* versus *Sturm und Drang*: The Debate over Terminology

Often in an effort to skirt ignorance or evade deeper inquiry, the interchangeability of terms can be a source of debacbling curiosity. It's true that once one has a general grasp of any given topic, it becomes all too easy to use two, or more, terms to express the same meaning. Take a common example from today: the use of the words "fundamentalist" and "extremist". Depending on the context, these terms can either mean virtually the same thing or can dramatically, even embarrassingly, differ from one another. To avoid any misuse, which we may take for granted today but realize in twenty years was vastly underdeveloped, I've decided to take a brief detour in order to differentiate between the terms *Empfindsamkeit* and *Sturm und Drang*. I will then explain how I will use them for my own purposes for the remainder of our exploration on the subject of style to come.

The term *Empfindsamkeit* is a reference to a sentimental style of writing developed by Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock (1724-1803) around the middle of the century after his publication of *Odes* set off a frenzy of emotional fervor. In the introduction to the vast volume *Literature of the Sturm und Drang*, David Hill explains how "writers in the sentimental style...had a preference for an ecstatic and elevated but rather abstract tearfulness."¹ The term *Empfindsamkeit* would later expand to fit a vast range of artistic disciplines and serves as a kind of blanket term to describe a style, which has over-arching influence from the time of Klopstock's initial treatment all the way up until the dawn of Classicism.

By many English interpretations, the term *Empfindsamkeit* is directly translated as "sensibility" or "sensitive style." The notion of sensibility in the English sense refers to an acuteness of sensory perception, the ability to empathize and react (emotionally) accordingly. It should remain in this way defined and not to be mistaken for something like "common sense," which is, in effect, exactly the opposite of the first concept which should be removed from too much rationale, relying instead on those senses for emotional in (and out) put.

The English equivalent mentioned above gives a fairly decent explanation. However, context always plays the vital and sometimes missing link to full understanding. Catherine Minter's inexhaustible essay *Literary Empfindsamkeit and Nervous Sensibility in Eighteenth-Century Germany* offers a more complex underpinning to the term *Empfindsamkeit*, or rather more specifically *Empfindsamer* behavior.² Her exploration on contemporary thinkers and medical professionals offers us a perspective removed from our artistic, or at least musical, leanings. Taking a fantastic and humorous account from Karl Philipp Moritz's *Magazin zur Erfahrungsseelenkunde* regarding a man "who is empfindsam to excess," Minter relates to us that a person afflicted with *Empfindsamer* qualities is, no doubt, not to be envied: "A character

¹ Hill, David. (2003) "Introduction" in: *Literature of the Sturm und Drang*, ed. David Hill, Camden House, p. 6.

² Minter, Catherine J. (October, 2001) "Literary 'Empfindsamkeit' and Nervous Sensibility in Eighteenth-Century Germany," in: *The Modern Language Review*, Vol. 96, No. 4, Modern Humanities Research Association, p. 1016-1028.

who suffers from a nervous disorder begins to take on the traits of a person who is unhealthily empfindsam: misguided poetic inclinations and an exaggerated desire for friendship and (sexual) love.”³

In general the very whiff of *Empfindsamkeit* suggested a penchant for sadness, even weakness, particularly concerning its affliction on men. Let us not forget the tightly wound gender roles dominant during the time and how this kind of un-steadfast behavior was regarded as “unmanly” and undesired. Minter refers to the 1777 essay *Über die Fülle des Herzens* in which Friedrich Leopold Stolberg “attacks spineless *Empfindsamkeit* and puts forward his ideal of manly, vigorous feeling, describing this ideal in strongly (neuro)physiological terms.”⁴ At its worst, one suffering from such affliction was certainly introspective, contemplative and vulnerable to his or her impulses. It suggested a lack of control, dominance and surety, qualities required of any man seeking the acceptance of his fellow man.

Perhaps most revealing and relevant for a study on style and terminology, Minter describes the theories behind the neurophysiological treatment of *Empfindsamkeit*, particularly the “conception of emotional and mental activity as rapid, forceful and sometimes unpredictable; it endows emotions with holistic potential because, according to this model, transitions between sensations, emotions and ideas are fluid and the physical and moral spheres are never polarized.”⁵ In this sense we can gather that a person experiencing *empfindsame* tendencies is in fact undergoing a volatile inward intensity, which cannot be readily predicted or remedied. Indeed, the impression is one of incurable, intense and all-consuming exposure to one’s emotions, which have physical results representing the chaos developing in the mind.

If we can agree that *Empfindsamkeit* is a general term used to refer to a vast spectrum of emotional possibilities, then we can move on to the direct treatment of the concept *Sturm und Drang*. The term *Sturm und Drang* refers to the German literary movement occurring during the late 18th century (roughly 1770-1777), which focused on individual expression and subjectivity. It came about as a reaction to the restrictive rationalism so prevalent in the contemporary Enlightenment mentality. The movement had strong philosophical roots but took its strongest expression in the field of literature, where the writers were most able to articulate the frustration with artistic restrictions and the desire to break free of the standard norms. Based on a fervent sense of Nature as intuitive guide, this particular set of aesthetic criteria focused on the senses as the emotional gateway to expression. We will explore the intricacies of the literary *Sturm und Drang* movement in the next section.

Again, translating directly from German to English, the terms mean “storm and stress.” In the shadow of what we now know of *Empfindsamkeit*, we can surmise to which emotional context these terms refer: the violent and ravaging, unpredictable and unexpected. An initial search for direct translations brings us face to face with a possible re-translation of the word

³ Ibid, p. 1018.

⁴ Ibid, p. 1022.

⁵ Ibid, p. 1024.

“drang.” Max Rudolf suggests that it could mean instead “urge” or “yearning,” which gives a more vivid picture.⁶ Indeed, the “drang” of *Sturm und Drang* is the more puzzling of the two, not only because of this possible double, and triple, meaning but also because of the overtly subjective connotation of the offered translations. As opposed to “sturm”, “drang” suggests something internal, an intimate yet persistent desire, which either cannot be expressed, making it even stronger, or finds its release in rather irrational and inexplicable ways.

For my purposes of cross-disciplinary comparisons, most of all concerning music, I will refer to the music and style therein as either *Empfindsamer Stil* or *Empfindsamkeit*, as it refers to a more general state of consciousness. *Sturm und Drang*, while it could describe categories of people, will not be used to describe music. Rather, the notion *Sturm und Drang* will be used to relate a general style and perhaps occasionally to certain individuals (the *Stürmer und Dränger*) in the literary movement. I will avoid referencing musicians and composers this way, however; for distinction, I will use the aforementioned terms.

B. The Birth of a “Cult”

“The writers of the Sturm und Drang were impelled by an urge to protest against the aesthetic and moral values of a social world that they felt had become deadeningly oppressive.”⁷

Around 1770 a young, spontaneous and emotionally involved group of intellectuals, writers and philosophers sprouted up in the regions of Strasbourg and Frankfurt. They spearheaded an intense spurt of creative literary discourse, which resulted in the production of many poetic and prose works coming one after the other. This Strasbourg-Frankfurt Group was led by the soon-to-be literary celebrity Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), a fresh-faced and vigorous writer whose poetry and prose alike had insured his place in contemporary stardom. The years of its greatest activity, from 1770-1777, fostered the minds of perhaps the youngest writers of their generation. Goethe himself was 21 years old when the association first began and the eldest member was but 25 years of age. Propelled by the vigor of youth and a binding sense of brotherhood, this testosterone-fuelled crew inherently amassed a nervous and emotional energy, prone at times to (metaphorical) violence, which manifested itself both in real-life and on the page.⁸

Sturm und Drang became a natural reference for these writers, particularly when one of its members, Friedrich Maximilian Klinger (1752-1831), renamed his 1776 play *Wirrwarr* to

⁶ Rudolf, Max. (1994) “Storm and Stress in Music” in: *The Riemenschneider Bach Institute*, 25/2, p. 10.

⁷ Hill, David. (2003) “Introduction” in: *Literature of the Sturm und Drang*, edited by David Hill. Camden House, p. 15.

⁸ Pascal, Roy. (1953) *The German Sturm und Drang*. Manchester University Press, p. 5.

Sturm und Drang.⁹ Children of the Enlightenment, Goethe and his friends were ushered into a brief yet productive era of artistic output by the fore-bearers of changing Enlightenment thought. Members of the *Stürmer und Dränger* in Strasbourg had been mentored and educated in a manner that cast a skeptical eye on the capacities of current Enlightenment thought. Many discussions on the *Sturm und Drang* begin only with Goethe, yet the legacy of this kind of anti-establishment thought had its roots in earlier generations.

One such mentor from the earlier days was Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803), considered the father of the *Sturm und Drang* offering counsel to Goethe in his formative years in Strasbourg. Influential as he may have been, his wisdom resulted from his admiration of another such thinker who came before him, Johann Georg Hamann (1730-1788). A Pietist, like so many in Germany during the eighteenth century, he believed in the wholeness of divinity and was convinced that somehow creation was not something which had happened only once at one sacred moment in history, but rather that it was something constantly occurring in nature.¹⁰ Active at the dawn of the Enlightenment, Hamann's ideas on religion stem from the course this movement was taking, although he pushed the limits of the emerging reason by suggesting that it should be accessible to the common man and not only to a select few and via the confines of an established papacy or denomination. It was holistic and perhaps regarded as pushing the envelope, but the roots of this thinking were to carry on to the mindset of Herder and in turn, to Goethe and the *Stürmer und Dränger*.

After a bout of illness and subsequent seclusion with a religious family who taught him the value of piety and a humble respect for nature, Goethe found himself in Strasbourg in the winter of 1770-71. Aware that Herder was in the same city, he made it his business to visit the man at his home. This period would prove to be Goethe's cultural education at the hands of Herder, who encouraged him to study the classics of Homer and Shakespeare. The protagonists of Shakespeare especially enamored the taste of Goethe, as they were quite often flawed characters whose moral compass was beyond repair. With so few German examples to look to, of which Klopstock was indeed held in high regard, yet it was perhaps a bit lonely at the top, Herder stressed the importance of the works of English writers like Shakespeare, as he believed they mirrored German life and values more strongly than those of the French.¹¹

It was again after hiatus in the nature of Alsace in which he fell in love and wrote prolific love poetry and the beginnings of what would later become two of his masterpieces *Faust* and *Götz von Berlichingen*, that Goethe found his center of creative activity. Back in Strasbourg, his circle of friends and colleagues grew to fever pitch. Spurred on by the influence and encouragement of his new mentor in Herder, Goethe met with a number of other writers, playwrights and poets active in the city. This group, including Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz,

⁹ Chantler, Abigail. (June 2003) "The 'Sturm und Drang' Style Revisited" in: *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music*, Vol. 34, No. 1, Croatian Musicological Society, p. 17.

¹⁰ Hill, David. (2003) "Introduction" in: *Literature of the Sturm und Drang*, edited by David Hill. Camden House, p. 7.

¹¹ Hill, David. (2003) "Introduction" in: *Literature of the Sturm und Drang*, edited by David Hill. Camden House, p. 10.

Friedrich Maximilian von Klinger, J.H. Jung-Stilling and Heinrich Leopold Wagner, was charged by its youthful vigor and intensity of collaborative spirit. In fact, Hill points out that the works of each man were at one point indistinguishable from one another.

This was the literary avant-garde formed by young men who felt that they were engaged in a common enterprise with Goethe. Reviewers were often unable to distinguish the works of Goethe, Lenz, and Klinger; and because these men engaged in intense discussions of work in progress, there is a sense in which at least some of their productions were collaborative ventures.¹²

Examples of German writing were hard to come by at this point in the century. In fact during the past 70 to 80 years in Germany, these same writers had no models from their own country to look for inspiration or an example. It was only with the emergence of Klopstock around 1748 that German writers started to think once again in a literary fashion.¹³

Klopstock was indeed the initiator of *Empfindsamkeit* (Sentimental Style) around mid-century with the publication of his *Odes*. Besides these great examples of unifying poetry, the rather controversial anti-establishment Lessing and the rococo ridiculousness of Wieland prompted the group in Strasbourg to strike out on their own towards a different goal. It was not an all-out disregard with Enlightenment in all its forms and achievements. Rather, the desires of this fervent crew were to stretch the boundaries or rather, to explore the limits of this new form of thinking. If emancipation of the Self was indeed the goal of the Enlightenment, then it was the goal of the *Sturm und Drang* to see just how far this emancipation could reach. One thing they did reject was the stifling illusion of reason as the just protector of morality and judgment. These themes, exemplified in the already archaic writings of Klopstock, Lessing and Wieland, were considered out-of-date by the up-and-coming *Stürmer und Dränger*.

C. The Strasbourg *Stürmer und Dränger*: Shifting Perceptions of the Enlightenment

As previously mentioned, the *Sturm und Drang* proponents, or rather writers within a broader movement under the blanket term *Empfindsamkeit* (Sentimentality), were part of a larger European phenomenon. England and France were also undergoing artistic, along with philosophical, shifts at the time. However, the German movement presents an intriguing counterpoint to these others, as the youthfulness and direct, sometimes violent, expressionism grasp the restlessness before the 1770s and influenced all art forms to come. Nationalistically speaking, the discombobulated state of Germany's then small provinces contributed to a sense of

¹² Ibid, p. 10.

¹³ Garland, H.B. (1952) *Storm and Stress (Sturm und Drang)*. George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., p. 12.

discontent and lack of unity. It was amongst this unorganized mess of city-states that certain thinkers began to emerge with a desire to see real German art and culture prosper.

These writers can be distinguished by three broad characteristics:

- a) the shifting perception and the role of **protagonists** in works of fiction (novels, plays, etc.);
- b) the idea of **genius** as a prerequisite to great art;
- c) and the belief that **Nature** could provide sublime inspiration and a guide to one's moral compass

As a result of this general restlessness with the ideas of the Enlightenment, the Strasbourg group inadvertently began to compose its own criteria for the elements of a good literary work and its hero in question. Diabolically opposed to the idea that heroes, or rather **protagonists**, should be morally superior, the *Stürmer und Dränger* wrote about characters whose moral compass was significantly flawed. They wrote of the common man rather than the popular choice of the aristocracy. This bold stance pushed against the common belief that the upper echelons of society were the desirable candidates not only for the central role in a work of fiction but also in the ranks of society in general.

In their changing views on heroes in works of art to their own perceptions of themselves as creators of artwork, the *Stürmer und Dränger* became obsessed with the idea of **genius**. This gradually became the spark considered necessary to create something of value. Their regard for the likes of Homer and Shakespeare weighed heavily on their treatment and acknowledgement of their fellow countrymen and contemporaries in other countries. So while many of the works of the *Stürmer und Dränger* were seeking a unifying blend of German culture and value, the primary criteria for any work of art to be considered good, whether it be from England, France or the ancient Greeks, lay solely on the glint of genius inherent in its creator.

The idea of genius was a central theme for Goethe and his crew. As previously mentioned, the teachings of Herder instilled upon the group a sense of appreciation for the execution of gifted talent. Herder's own image of Shakespeare, which he passed on to the Strasbourg group, was of

a genius who flings away the garments of civilization, directly experiences nature, and transmits it undistorted and unadulterated to his readers. It is the special gift of genius that he can thus recapture the state of the unspoiled natural man, short-circuiting the conventions of a civilized age from which his humbler brothers cannot escape.¹⁴

One third and final element setting the *Sturm und Drang* aesthetic apart was its emphasis on the **sublime**. In order to get closer to the divine (whether it be to God or one's own source of

¹⁴ Garland, H.B. (1952) *Storm and Stress (Sturm und Drang)*. George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., p. 17.

inspiration, i.e. genius), it was believed that one's association with nature was of paramount importance. This was arguably also a theme of the Enlightenment but this time taken to the extreme. It was in exposure to nature and its humbling effects that Goethe was most productive on his own. Let us not forget the still vigorous significance of piety in the daily lives of these men and their predecessors; we have already explored just how important religion, or at least an appreciation of the holistic sense of divinity, was for Hamann and Herder. The evidence of the legacy of such appreciation in the words of Goethe and the *Stürmer und Dränger* was readily accessible both in the novels and plays generated by the group during this time.

Nature was an especially valuable tool for inspiration to philosophers and artists but it also possessed a source of morality for these writers. David Hill captures the idea thus: "Sturm und Drang were capable of idealizing a peasant farmer who is one with the land, or a gardener who is sensitive to nature, because they in some sense participate in the oneness of nature that for these writers had acquired a moral value."¹⁵ It seems that the purity associated with nature was assumed to wipe the slate clean, so to speak. Supposedly, Nature held within it the capacity to provide a humble sense of self and the gumption to continue one's work with a great moral keenness.

Taking the lead from the Enlightenment raging throughout Europe, the *Stürmer und Dränger* could not help but be influenced by their changing world. However, for them there were limits to this new ideology. Its heavy predominance on man's reason as a means of liberating the Self seemed rather restrictive. As a result we read in the works of Goethe and the other writers a particularly murky moral ground. Because the conflicts of the characters the authors write about are so intertwined, it becomes nearly impossible to take a simple stance for or against them. In a way they become more human, flawed and unable to escape their true nature. Indeed, their conflicts and struggles become so complex that one's judgment of them becomes more empathetic than accusatory. One-sided simplicity was no longer an option for interpretation by readers.

The so-called *Sturm und Drang* "movement" had the goals and general aspirations of the Enlightenment in mind. How could it not? These writers so active in 1770s were undoubtedly influenced by these changing topics in society. If the efforts of the *Sturm und Drang* worked against these new and evolving norms, it was primarily to push the boundaries or perhaps to test whether or not any boundaries actually did exist. They were young and impetuous; their image as revolutionary writers is in fact a falsehood, since they were more taking the lead from the few sources they could find from their own "country," i.e. Klopstock and the few sources provided by Herder. It wasn't an artistic movement working against another artistic movement but instead a period that can be set apart from societal and established norms, which had already started to evolve in major part by the Enlightenment.

¹⁵ Hill, David. (2003) "Introduction" in: *Literature of the Sturm und Drang*, edited by David Hill. Camden House, p. 21.

As a side remark, it should be mentioned that the study of this topic has been evolving significantly over the twentieth century, starting off with the assertion that the *Sturm und Drang* was a movement diametrically opposed to the Enlightenment. Scholars of this ilk considered the Enlightenment with a narrow vision, not considering that perhaps the *Sturm und Drang* could be, instead, a natural parallel of the same goals so prevalent at the time. More radical they were for sure, but were they directly opposed to the progress of the emancipation of the Self? Perhaps not. David Hill articulates this concept rather perfectly by saying that “more recent critics have drawn attention to the continuities between the Enlightenment and the *Sturm und Drang* and have seen the *Sturm und Drang* as a particularly radical set of attempts to achieve the emancipation of the self, which was, indeed, a central goal of the Enlightenment.”¹⁶

This approach to the *Sturm und Drang* lessens the grip on the idea that the *Stürmer und Dränger* were out to prove some radical shift away from the Enlightenment. Instead of pushing them into a box, which doesn't fit, let us rather allow the style and approach of these writers to be acknowledged as new and radical but not assume that they themselves pushed for an absolute break with the Enlightenment track.

The *Stürmer und Dränger* of Strasbourg saw a great disruption in activity towards the end of 1775, when Goethe retreated to Italy for a short time escaping the thralls of a disastrous love affair. Instead of returning to Strasbourg, however, he was directed to Weimar where the vast majority of his output was to be achieved. Owing much to his influence, the evolution of the general Weimar Classicism in the course of the next years would make its mark on German culture. Lenz and Klinger attempted to join Goethe in Weimar in 1776 but both were unsuccessful and shunned by Goethe as he attempted to create a new artistic world for himself apart from the group, which had consumed his thoughts for the past five years. Lenz eventually suffered a mental breakdown and Klinger would find himself on the same artistic path for solitude when he moved to Russia. When Wagner died in 1779, the group could more or less already be considered dead. The vigor of youth had dissipated into other endeavors of maturity.¹⁷

Sturm und Drang may not have been enough to be considered a movement on its own, ranging indeed only about five to seven years long in its entirety, yet its quick and intrepid productivity and experimental questioning of both art and society stirred up the artistic landscape even in ways which were perhaps difficult to detect. However, the knowledge of this group makes the evidence of the emerging classicism all the more apparent. Society and culture were shifting the balance and questioning motives and practices of the past. The *Sturm und Drang*, though a very small part of the story, contributed a great deal to the artistic path towards Romanticism Germany was destined to set out upon.

David Hill sums it up best:

¹⁶ Hill, David. (2003) “Introduction” in: *Literature of the Sturm und Drang*, edited by David Hill. Camden House, p. 5.

¹⁷ Hill, David. (2003) “Introduction” in: *Literature of the Sturm und Drang*, edited by David Hill. Camden House, p. 14.

The Sturm und Drang is represented by a relatively small number of texts; they are important not because they represent a necessary stage in the development of German culture but because of the quality of the writing they contain and because of the radicalism, the complexity, and the incisiveness of their analysis of the human spirit on the threshold of modernity.¹⁸

¹⁸ Ibid. p. 5.

III. PART TWO: A Musical Equivalent?

A. Characteristics of *Empfindsamkeit* in Music

Efforts to characterize the elements of *Empfindsamkeit* in music have often been related to other styles from which we can draw reference. Just as the literary world compared the rebellious and vehement *Sturm und Drang* to the rational establishment of the Enlightenment, *Empfindsamkeit* in music is often contrasted, in the academic musical literature, with the *style galant*, or *Stil galant* in German. Equivalent to the Rococo style in painting, *Stil galant* was a new style at the beginning of the 18th century yet by mid-century it was phasing out of fashion. It was essentially the culmination of the Italian and French influences in combination with Southern German tendencies. It can be summed up as the pursuit of hedonistic pleasure, intangible and unquantifiable, the search for beauty in all its pomp and ostentation.

Empfindsamkeit presented what many call a “sentimental style” in music, which has often been compared in the literary world to the sentimental novel, Laurence Sterne’s *A Sentimental Journey* (1768) and Goethe’s 1774 *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* (The Sorrows of Young Werther) leading the ranks. This kind of sentimentality concerns a sort of visceral connection to the artistic material, primarily on the part of the artist and later in its recipient, be it the reader, listener, etc. The laws of Rhetoric have always been the basis for Baroque music and in this particular genre we see them being stretched to their ultimate capacity. It required an intensity of commitment and emotional investment and often conjured tears of sorrow and pity amongst audiences and readers alike.

Perhaps the most beautiful articulation of the essence of *Empfindsamkeit* comes from William J. Mitchell who wrote the English Introduction to Carl Philipp’s *Versuch über die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen*. He writes that at this time the means by which one expressed oneself was equally important as to the content being delivered.

Music here was far removed from a decorative art, from abstract patterns of sound; it was, above all else, a vehicle for the expression of the emotions. Music must languish, it must startle, it must be gay, it must move boldly from one sentiment to another; these were the requirements that had to be met by the composer. And the performer must understand the true content of each piece that he played. He must transmit accurately and faithfully its expressive nuances to an audience whose heart must be stirred. This was the core aesthetic of the Berlin school.¹⁹

As can be assumed with all things overtly emotional, this “sentimental” style enjoyed but a brief period of success, the idea of showing too much emotion in public later becoming passé, a laughable notion. But for the moment when it existed in its appreciated context, it represented

¹⁹ Mitchell, William J. (1948) “Introduction” in Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach’s *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, translated and edited by Mitchell, William J., W. W. Norton & Company, p. 14.

both a connection to its roots of Rhetoric and a break with its often stringent execution. It allowed the artist and audience to experience something higher than was normally possible in a concert. Rather than relying solely on intellect to guide moralistic behavior, the *Empfindsamkeit*, as it pertains to the music of this era, focused rather on an immediacy of expression and emotional response. It was, indeed, a startling, demanding and cathartic period of musical creation. Dietrich Bartel reinforces this idea with the following:

During the course of the eighteenth century, the need to have personally experienced the affection was increasingly emphasized to the point that, at the dawn of the *Empfindsamkeit*, experience rather than rational knowledge of the affection was considered of paramount importance.²⁰

To boast a direct musical equivalent to the *Sturm und Drang* literary movement would be futile. This would border on suggesting a kind of *Zeitgeist*, a connection of two or more artistic realms built up around the same ideology clearly working together to achieve the same aesthetic goal. That is neither the belief held in these pages or the aim of their author. However, the exploration of fundamental ideas regarding aesthetic values and shifting perceptions of the artist's role in society would serve a purpose in mapping out the path between the Baroque standard practices and the emerging classical dominance asserting itself into the 19th century.

As stated previously in part one, we will use the terms *Empfindsamkeit* and *Empfindsamer Stil* to express issues in music, since they grasp a wider range of artistic medium. We have already explored the true origins of this term and its often-interchanged counterpart, *Sturm und Drang*. In fact there is no such musical equivalence for the *Sturm und Drang* in music, though we undoubtedly hear, perform and experience the aesthetic imperative present in the literary movement, as well as a greater sense of purpose and penchant for raising up the composer as genius. Indeed, this is the legacy of Carl Philipp; he paved the way for personalities like Mozart and Beethoven, by acknowledging the work of the composer as sacred and the expression of musical language, particularly in instrumental music, as paramount to the allocation of Affect and performance. Let's reiterate here that *Sturm und Drang* belongs exclusively to the realm of the literary works and style contained therein.

Musical examples of the *Empfindsamer Stil* run rampant in the repertory of Carl Philipp, most notably in the Fantasias for solo keyboard. He says himself that "it is especially in fantasias...that the keyboardist more than any other executant can practice the declamatory style, and move audaciously from one affect to another."²¹ After his gargantuan output at the court of Frederick the Great and his subsequent successes at the printing press, Carl Philipp's time in Hamburg allowed him to compose three so-called "Quartets" for "Keyboard, Flute, Viola und Bass" in the year of his death, 1788. They serve as a final testament to an often-neglected area of

²⁰ Bartel, Dietrich. (1997) *Musica Poetica: Musical-Rhetorical Figures in German Baroque Music*. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln & London.

²¹ Bach, Carl Philipp Emmanuel. (1753; 1787) "Performance" in *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, translated and edited by Mitchell, William J., William J., W. W. Norton & Company (1948), p. 153.

composition, which displays an abrupt and volatile unpredictability in character and expressive content. Indeed, to perform these works, “a musician cannot move others unless he too is moved. He must of necessity feel all of the affects that he hopes to arouse in his audience.”²²

In order to tangibly discuss the changing aesthetic in music throughout the late eighteenth century as a result of the evolving identity of the Enlightenment, I have laid out a series of three categories corresponding to the stylistic “revolution” of the *Sturm und Drang*. They include a) texture and shifting roles of instrumentation, b) rhythmic manipulation and surprise, and c) dynamic juxtaposition. Again, I don’t claim to directly match music to the literary phenomenon but rather wish to show that without the *Sturm und Drang* anti-establishment questioning of the rules of the Enlightenment, perhaps we would not see such captivating rule-breaking and stylistically daring music as we do toward the end of the century.

a) Symphonic Texture & Shifting Roles of Instrumentation

The most obvious change that comes to mind in the world of music during this time is the gradual development of different instrumental roles. The function of the bass and so-called “melody” instruments becomes hazy, and they cannot be relied upon to *stay* in their original setting. We will explore this issue more in depth in the final section of this paper during the case study of the Quartets, but in a very broad sense one could argue that the role of the keyboard in these works is vastly different from its standard, “old” role of accompaniment and harmonic support. Now the keyboard is given primary dominance and virtuosic prominence. This, the idea of the keyboard as a solo instrument on its own, isn’t a surprising notion, especially considering Carl Philipp’s fame on the clavichord and other keyboard instruments, but thrown into the context of a chamber music setting including flute, viola and bass, it suddenly becomes something new and challenging.

Instead of conforming to the commonly established rule that the keyboard has a basso continuo function, one which presents, supports and elaborates the harmonic basis of a piece, the texture is mounted in a more symphonic sense. The keyboard rises to the role of the voice of content (melody), while the other instruments work together to form the harmonic foundation. It’s as if the established norm is completely flipped on its head. Bach is asserting his genius, his artistic voice and it makes sense, since his writing for the keyboard consciously transports his place from accompanist to soloist in the group.

Bach’s decision to write the major content of these Quartets for the keyboard instrument is perhaps a major effect of the times. The idea of “genius” was heavily dominant not only as we’ve seen in the literary circles of Germany but also in the musical world of the court of Frederick the Great. We see over and over again, not just the plays, novels and poetry of the *Sturm und Drang* but also in the treatises of major composers and aestheticians, that the concept

²² Bach, Carl Philipp Emanuel. (1753;1787) “Performance” in *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, translated and edited by Mitchell, William J., William J., W. W. Norton & Company (1948), p. 152.

of genius was an evolving one. Musically speaking, the closest Bach could come to his artistic “genius” would be to write expressive content directly for his instrument. As a natural consequent, the function of the other instruments reverts to a subservient role, a place that at first may feel absolutely foreign to them.

b) Rhythmic Manipulation and Surprise

We have explored the extent to which the *Sturm und Drang* writers pushed the envelope in terms of what kind of characters they chose as protagonists and their reactions to conflict. We also know that the *empfindsam* qualities in a person are ones that are unpredictable and potentially volatile. Music, being a temporal art form, must rely on other devices to achieve the same affect. If we can agree, at least in the Quartets of 1788, that the protagonist is the keyboard player, then we place our ears completely in his care. At times the music is difficult to understand from an outside perspective simply because it does not always adhere to normative phrase lengths and often presents breaks or pauses which can, depending on performers’ interpretation, disrupt the listener’s sense of time and space.

By constantly playing with this rhythmic cohesion, Bach is tampering with his audience’s level of trust in him. The listener can no longer predict the course the musicians will take, just as one could never fully place one’s full trust in the protagonist of a *Sturm und Drang* novel or play since they were often prone to follow their inner troubles rather than socially accepted forms of reason and restraint. Indeed, this kind of predictability in storyline and musical phraseology is an easily recognizable one once it has been deceived.

We can conceive of this concept in a more systematic way when we realize that the hierarchy of the bar has been done away with. Its disappearance becomes an Affect in and of itself. Discarding this sacred Baroque principle is probably less shocking to modern ears that are inherently less surprised thanks to a lifetime of subconscious musical influences. To listeners of the time, I imagine that something we call “subtle” today was indeed quite shocking and unexpected to their ears.

c) Dynamic Juxtaposition

It isn’t just through rhythmic surprise that we are thrown into an unpredictable sonic sphere. The dynamic range found in these Quartets is enhanced by their quick juxtaposition from very soft to especially loud. His clever placement of attacks and dynamic markings severely alters the mood and character of the piece making it all the more subjective and susceptible to personal taste. The shifting of accent markings and the number and function of syncopations is explicitly indicated in the score, making the task of performing these works all the more enticing.

This brings up the notion of character in music. Bach himself offers in his chapter on Performance a vast lecture on how touch can affect the mood and explains his rant is intended “to encourage a more musical way of portraying rage, anger, and other passions by means of harmonic and melodic devices rather than by an exaggerated, heavy attack.”²³ In this sense, dynamics show us just how to touch the instrument, how to make it speak and portray the emotional content. Of course, these things can vary from person to person, but as long as the execution is made with the right intent, we can be transported by that performer.

All three factors point to one resounding conclusion: that the Affect of such a late work must be constantly varying. It is music intent on surprise, a willful deceit of rhythmical hierarchy built on instrumentation uncommonly used in the 18th century up until this point. Initially at the beginning of the century, the number of Affects possible per movement or piece was typically one. Throughout the course of the 18th century, this starts to evolve and much sooner than one might expect. Johann Sebastian Bach’s vocal works stayed more or less in one Affect per movement while his gallant instrumental works, one thinks of later works like the *Musicalisches Opfer* (Musical Offering), border on a new *Empfindsamer Stil*. Rather than call father Bach’s innovative compositions a precursor, one can certainly claim that his work could have been a huge influence no doubt for Carl Philipp, and the other sons’, own compositions. In reference to a rapidity of changes in mood hinting at far more changes of Affect per piece, Carl Philipp even states in his own treatise that “constantly varying the passions he will barely quiet one before he rouses another.”²⁴

The effect of the evolving state of the Enlightenment across Europe at this time had caused the *Stürmer und Dränger* to lash out artistically against the established norms which they considered simply too constrictive for their taste and personal standards. At this time and after, we see composers breaking free of the gallant powers of the court and making something new, creating a new criteria for artistic expression that had, as of yet, no specific name.

B. Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach as the Torchbearer

“He grew so animated and possessed, that he looked like one inspired. His eyes were fixed, his under lip fell, and drops of effervescence distilled from his countenance.”²⁵

²³ Bach, Carl Philipp Emmanuel. (1753; 1787) “Performance” in *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, translated and edited by Mitchell, William J., William J., W. W. Norton & Company (1948), p. 149.

²⁴ Bach, Carl Philipp Emmanuel. (1753; 1787) “Performance” in *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, translated and edited by Mitchell, William J., William J., W. W. Norton & Company (1948), p. 152.

²⁵ Burney, Charles. (1773) *Present State of Music* in “Introduction” in Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach’s *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, translated and edited by Mitchell, William J., William J., W. W. Norton & Company (1948), p. 21.

To understand why Carl Philipp is considered so paramount in the stylistic shifts in music during the late 18th century, we must first understand where he comes from and what influences contributed to the labeling of him as the father of the *Empfindsamkeit*. In the luxurious light of retrospect, this seems quite obvious when one considers the sweeping statements regarding affectation and sentiment in his *Versuch* and the subsequent *Lessons* on the free fantasia contained therein. There was no set group of composers who adapted directly to this style but we are aware of Carl Philipp's vast influence over not only his contemporary colleagues at the court of Frederick the Great but also later in his life and posthumously in the acknowledgements from those we now observe in the "Classical Canon" of composers, including Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven. Indeed, it is probably because of his well-known popularity as a player in Frederick's court as well as the more concrete testaments he gives in the *Versuch*, which give credence to the labeling of him as the father of *Empfindsamkeit*, at least in music.

Three factors explain why his influence was so strong and continues to mark the transition in music: a) the **musical upbringing and education** from his father, J.S. Bach, b) his **reputation** during his lifetime as a vivid performer, particularly in his improvisations, and c) the **pedagogical legacy** of his *Versuch über die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen*, which had a generational impact on some of the forerunners of the Classical music movement.

a) Musical Upbringing & Education

Of the four composing sons of Johann Sebastian Bach, Carl Philipp perhaps achieved the most acclaim during his lifetime both for his vivid performances at the court of Frederick the Great, to whom he was employed for some 30 years, but also for the success of his publishing career, which included myriad works for keyboard and other orchestral instruments. To give us a glimpse into his very early character, Johann Friedrich Doles, a schoolmate and the future successor to J.S. Bach's successors at the Thomasschule, explains, "like many boys of active mind and body, he was afflicted from childhood on with the malady of the roguish tease."²⁶

Just as Goethe and his contemporaries looked back to the examples of the past for inspiration and models of genius, so did musicians and composers. Growing up next to one of the finest models of counterpoint in the history of 18th century composition, Carl Philipp and his three other composing brothers had little choice in the matter. Examining each of the four sons brings up startling questions of style, taste and puzzles over the four distinct personalities prevalent among them. And far from mimicking their father's style to a tee, the children were encouraged, rather, to find their own musical voices.

In his 1802 biography of Johann Sebastian Bach, Forkel reflects upon the distinction among the Bach sons. "Both the eldest sons...confessed frankly that they had been necessarily obliged to choose a style of their own because they could never have equaled their father in his

²⁶ Doles, Johann Friedrich. "Introduction" in Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach's *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, Mitchell, William J., W. W. Norton & Company (1948), p. 12.

style.”²⁷ This is a pretty grim reflection of the situation, taking little into account of their later achievements. However, the musical ingenuity of both is subject to scrutiny only amongst the body of their own works, precisely because of the varying style at work.

The concept of genius had not been fully accepted or developed when Carl Philipp was but a child. Instead, the musician composer worked more as a craftsman than someone plucked from the divine talent pool. The idea, for J.S. Bach for example, was to work hard, perfect a skill and fashion it into a craft of high level. This was merit enough for the Northern German Protestant mentality; work in music was like that of any other, it was in service to God and the concept of ego was neglected in order to pay homage to the Creator. And while Carl Philipp may have maintained the philosophy and integrity of serving a higher purpose, he did so in his own way. Carl Philipp explains in his own Autobiography regarding his own style,

It is because I have never liked excessive uniformity in composition or taste, because I have heard many different kinds of good things, because it has always been my opinion that the good should be accepted regardless of where it may be found, even when it appears in small details of a piece; it is because of these considerations and the assistance provided by a God-given natural ability that the variety which is attributed to my compositions has arisen.²⁸

b) Performing Reputation

Carl Philipp’s employment from Frederick II (“The Great”) of Prussia from 1738 to 1768 offered him the perfect platform to display his musicality, both as a composer and a performer. The scene in the Berlin court was regarded, in comparison to others in Vienna, Mannheim & Hamburg for example, as the most academically upstanding. Frederick The Great set out to employ the best musicians for his court. Indeed, it was this sort of atmosphere where Carl Philipp was exposed to the current trends not only in music but also in the fields of science, literature, architecture and dance.

Berlin was alive with publishing the current trends in musical pedagogy and performance practice. It was here where some of the most well-known names in music and musical commentary published their works, including Johann Joachim Quantz, Johann Kirnberger, Friedrich W. Marpung and Johann Friedrich Agricola, not to mention some highly influential musicians such as five members of the Benda family, including both Franz and Georg and two of

²⁷ Forkel, J.N. (1802) “On Johann Sebastian Bach’s Life, Genius, and Works,” translated by Kollmann, A.C.F. (1820) in: *The Bach Reader: A Life of Johann Sebastian Bach in Letters and Documents*, edited by David, Hans T. & Mendel, Arthur. W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. New York, p. 333.

²⁸ Mitchell, William J. (1948) “Introduction” in Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach’s *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, translated and edited by Mitchell, William J., W. W. Norton & Company, p. 11.

the Graun brothers. There was plenty of music on the daily, and it makes sense that observers and practitioners of music were eager to document the playing practices taking place. We find, as well, several writings by outsiders observing the court, commentators who give us a glimpse into the performing world surrounding Frederick and his peers. We can count among them Charles Burney throughout his travels; Johann Friedrich Reichardt who published in *Musikalischer Almanach, Alethinopel* (1782); Johann Georg Sulzer who employed Kirnberger and Johann Abraham Peter Schulz, both members of the court in Berlin, to contribute to the theoretical section of his *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste* (1771-74); and Carl Philipp who offers much in the way of candid advice in his chapter on Performance in his *Versuch*.

Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach was highly influenced by his contemporaries and likewise members of cross-disciplinary arts such as poetry. The aspiring writers of the Strasbourg-Frankfurt “geniuses” were not the only ones standing in awe of Mr. Klopstock. In fact Carl Philipp set several of Klopstock’s texts to music in a publication of songs. Later on the two would engage in a working relationship, in which Klopstock encouraged and pushed Bach to continue publishing his own music. A surprising connection lies in the publication dates of both Goethe’s *Werther* (1774) and these very songs written in homage to Klopstock (1775). There was a certain appreciation and knowledge of the general artistic output at this time and Carl Philipp’s consciousness of his fellow minds can certainly be linked to his choices for publication.²⁹

While in Berlin, it is known that Carl Philipp fraternized with writers and other intellectuals. One of the most interesting connections we can make between the world of music and the literary *Sturm und Drang* is Carl Philipp’s friendship with the dramatist Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, who was one of the predecessors of the *Sturm und Drang*. Born but two decades before Goethe in 1729, the *Stürmer und Dranger* considered his work, in addition to those of the Rococo-esque Christoph Martin Wieland and even Klopstock, already out of date by the time they hit the literary scene in 1770. Deeply devout in his religious piety, Lessing’s anti-establishment penchant won him only a few points of praise from Goethe and his hot-blooded fellows. Later on in Hamburg, it seems Carl Philipp kept up with the acquaintance where “he continued the tradition of public concerts initiated by his predecessor (G.P. Telemann), while his house became the centre of a literary circle which included the poet Klopstock and the critic and dramatist Lessing.”³⁰

c) Pedagogical Legacy

We have stated earlier that Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach’s influence extended far past his local reach and continued most importantly posthumously through the publication and spread of

²⁹ Bach, Carl Philipp Emmanuel. (1775) *The Letters of C.P.E. Bach*, translated & edited by Clark, Stephan L. (1997) Clarendon Press, Oxford, p. 60.

³⁰ Hindley, Geoffrey. (1996) “Music in the German lands in the 18th century” in *The Larousse Encyclopedia of Music*, edited by Hindley, Geoffrey. Chancellor Press, London, p. 231.

his *Versuch*. There is documented evidence from Mozart, Haydn and even Beethoven as to the merits of the essay and the commentary contained therein. Mozart bent a knee when he claimed that “He is the father, we are the children”³¹ and Haydn followed suit when he described the essay as “the school of all schools.”³² Indeed, there is a wealth of anecdotes pertaining to the essay and its popularity as a teaching tool but also for non-keyboardists for clues on performance practice. One lasting story deals with Beethoven’s acquisition of the pupil Czerny; after accepting him as his student, he told his father to purchase Bach’s *Versuch*, which was used arduously throughout his study with the great genius-composer.³³

When discussing legacy we are talking mainly about the spread of the *Versuch* across Europe. Of course Bach had several pupils but none of them hold such testament as the words stated above. Bach said himself in regard to the publishing scope of the essay to Schwickert, “Sale of my works is chiefly in the North, in Russia, Livonia, Courland, Sweden, Denmark, Holstein, Hanover, Mecklenburg, in Lauenburg, and Lübeck.”³⁴ It was through the local success during Bach’s lifetime that he was aware of his influence but the effects of his words were perhaps most powerful posthumously.

C. Music as a Microcosm of Social Change

Since we have argued that the literary world and the subsequent works of the *Sturm und Drang* had lasting effects on society and culture, being themselves the result of societal changes, we can justly say the same for music. That is, we can correlate the similarities between the musical developments and more strongly the role of the artist in general to all fields of expression, including the stage, music, poetry, and painting. This is not to say that these vastly different mediums of expression worked consciously together to form something new; rather, finding commonalities between the fields of literature and music can simply help us understand the paradigm shift in art during the course of the 18th century.

The aim of the *Stürmer und Dranger* was to develop a new emotional language to describe the human experience. Their great legacy was the, oftentimes subliminal, encouragement to do so in all art forms. Music at this time saw a growing importance for instrumental music, and with the music of Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach we start to experience a

³¹ Mozart, W.A. “Introduction” in Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach’s *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, translated and edited by Mitchell, William J., W. W. Norton & Company (1948), p. 4.

³² Haydn, F.J. “Introduction” in Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach’s *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, translated and edited by Mitchell, William J., W. W. Norton & Company (1948), p. 2.

³³ Mitchell, William J. (1948) “Introduction” in Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach’s *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, translated and edited by Mitchell, William J., W. W. Norton & Company, p. 2.

³⁴ Bach, Carl Philipp Emmanuel. (1753; 1787) “Introduction” in *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach, translated and edited by Mitchell, William J., W. W. Norton & Company (1948), p. 11.

new emotional language being used sonically. Just like the *Stürmer und Dranger*, the acceptance of certain rules and the conscious decision to walk away from them is, in fact, a powerful artistic statement. This is what the two worlds of music and literature have in common: their goal to find a new emotional language, both literally and metaphorically, as a means to portray and express the human experience in a more truthful, yet not necessarily more beautiful, light.

A common thread we find in both literature and music is the idea of genius as the new, or evolving, role of the artist. The so-called “cult of genius” we have explored in the plays, novels and poetry of the *Stürmer und Dranger* was not in and of itself a new idea. Music had already begun to take the lead in shaping its new concept of the composer and performer as inspired by the Divine. Even towards the very end of the century, immortality becomes an important concept for the composer and his works. In this sense, the cult of genius is an artistically transferable idea, applicable to both literature and music.

Unlike the lack of German literary examples in the first half of the 18th century, the realm of music seems to have undergone a more systematic overhaul of the role of the musician, composer and performer. Originally conceived and treated as a craftsman, the musician was oftentimes required and capable of composing and performing his own works, in addition to crafting his own instruments and, if he was literate, writing commentary and treatises on the practical elements of his occupation. In every sense of the word he was working in service to something greater than himself, but most importantly, literally. He was most likely to be employed by a wealthy patron and composed for either sacred or royal occasions. Very rare was the chance for him to sit down and write expressly for himself, with no future purpose of his music being used for someone else.

As the century progresses, artists start to express their emancipation in whatever ways they wish and can afford to make. Indeed, the example of Carl Philipp to his father is perhaps the most striking one. While father Bach worked his entire life in service to the Church, Carl Philipp’s employ was mainly via courtly commission or publishing demands. It was only when he finally moved to Hamburg that his career started to resemble that of his father. However, Carl Philipp was able to experience a great deal of appreciation and fame during his lifetime, which allowed him the social security to take artistic risks in his music. This was perhaps not a luxury his father had so often enjoyed. It was exactly this shift of the artist, be it musician, writer, poet or painter, from that of a craftsman to a divinely endowed agent of the sublime that marks the transition of creative and expressive evolution throughout the 18th century. Chantler puts it less than mildly when she says that

The corollary of the appropriation of the sublime as an aesthetic category by musical commentators was the view of the composer as a genius, which, by the end of the eighteenth century, had totally eclipsed the notion of the composer as a craftsman working in accordance with pre-established rules. Whilst the idea of genius was popularized by thinkers of the *Sturm und Drang* movement in the 1770s, that it was already

important in musical thought of the mid-eighteenth century is illustrated by the writings on genius of de Jaucourt and Rousseau.³⁵

Another musical shift occurs of quite some importance towards the end of the 18th century and that is the recognition of instrumental music as an equally expressive counterpart to vocal music. It was indeed a common belief held before this time that vocal music was the only true genre capable of eluding all that the human soul had to offer, since it was through text that the listener was drawn to the subjective, emotional content. In this way one could easily focus attention to a topic already laid out by a poet or librettist and was not required or allowed to grasp the music itself as the expressive agent, but rather a tool of enhancement. Text was considered the means by which one understood the meaning of a work of art and could put such drastic emotions in place.

³⁵ Chantler, Abigail. (June, 2003) "The 'Sturm und Drang' Style Revisited" in: *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music*, Vol. 34, No. 1, Croatian Musicological Society, p. 29.

IV. PART THREE: A Case Study of Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach's Late Quartets

Directly studying the works of Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach, one finds symptoms of individual expressionism and startling musical characteristics springing up well before the writers of the *Sturm und Drang* had even reached puberty. As for the lasting effects of the *Empfindsamkeit*, they can be seen well past the death of Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach in 1788. One has only to hear the Trio in F Major from Haydn from 1794 to understand that the *empfindsam* aesthetic, though not officially articulated by any musicologue of the time, was still alive and well, forging what would later be acknowledged as Classicism.

Of course Carl Philipp's own style changed throughout the course of his lifetime and the later works are arguably more "Hamburger" in character, having an inherently more relaxed and expressive content. However, this does not mean that when he left the court of Frederick the Great in 1767 that he was somehow disavowed with the ideas of the *Empfindsamkeit*, which would in turn suggest a disconnect with himself. In her contribution to David Hill's book on the apparent *Sturm und Drang* in music, Margaret Stoljar supports the idea that some of his most *empfindsam* works appeared at the end of his life.

Given that the preeminent writers of the age, Goethe and Schiller, trace this development in their own work, it is not surprising that the *Sturm und Drang* has often been interpreted as the transient expression of impassioned youth, to be left behind with greater maturity. However valid this conclusion may be for literature, it cannot be sustained for music. Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, whose later composition shows most unequivocally the kind of revolutionary diction that is typical of the *Sturm und Drang*, was at the end of his long career. His experimental writing was not superseded by new styles but contributed substantially to the development of the classical sonata, for instance.³⁶

This leads one to conclude that music progressed at a different rate and intensity than that of literature, making a clear-cut chronological distinction not only impossible but also undesirable. By leaving the question of exact dates pertaining to style open for interpretation, we also allow each composition to stand in its own right. Indeed, there was an overlap of various styles, practices and instruments, which all coincided with one another, representing both old and new trends. Music does not follow the same timeframe and quickness of movement as the literary *Sturm und Drang*. The writers were fast and compact, driven by their vast desire for individual emancipation in yet uncharted territories. Music was influenced for sure but had

³⁶ Stoljar, Margaret. (2003) "The *Sturm und Drang* in Music" in *History of German Literature, Vol. 6: Literature of the Sturm und Drang*, ed. David Hill, Camden House, p. 306.

already been breaking at the Baroque seems for a long time. This suggests that there was a paradigm shift evident in artistic procedures in Germany, which begged for these shifts of aesthetic to occur.

Let us now explore some concrete musical examples from the set of Quartets for Keyboard, Flute, Viola and Bass of 1788. Let it be noted that it is no coincidence that the title of this set was expressed stated with Keyboard first in the list of instruments. Bach's meaning could not be clearer. Composed in the last year of his life, this set of compositions represents the duality of looking back to the past but also to the future. We will explore the musical content of these pieces and in turn how this reflects shifts in both Bach's own life and the morphing artistic society of which he was so actively a part.

a) Symphonic Texture & Shifting Roles of Instrumentation

One of the most poignant examples of the shifting roles of instrumentation from the Quartet series is the slow middle movement from the Quartet in G Major, Wq. 95. It is here that we see a movement almost entirely focused on the melancholia of the keyboardist and the dialogue corresponding between the flute and viola in response.

The flute and viola lay the foundation with the opening two bars of introduction, the piano remaining dormant and in the background, until it bursts to the fore with the upbeat to bar 2. Though the flute and viola will exchange passages suggesting the hope of optimism to the soloist, we find in the chromatic urgency and the intervallic leaps a kind of stubborn insistence of mood. Just like a *Sturm und Drang* protagonist, one cannot predict what comes next.



Figure 1: Adagio from Quartet in G Major, Wq. 95, m. 1-2

In fact there is only one moment towards the beginning of the movement in which the flute and viola present the opening material in Bb Major, suggesting an alternate path for the troubled soul. The piano quickly, however, reverts back to its despair in the following bar with the blow of the Db in the left hand suggesting no end in sight. From this point forward, we experience a new function for the symphonically supporting team of the flute and viola.



Figure 2: *Adagio from Quartet in G Major, Wq. 95, m. 8-10*

Unable to convince the piano otherwise, the flute and viola join in with the keyboard's mood and find their own way to express their melancholia and heartbreak. Notice this in bars 19 through 21 after the third and final solo passage of the piano; interrupting the piano almost in solidarity with an upward chromatic swell gesture, the course for the end is now in sight.



Figure 3: *Adagio, Quartet in G Major, Wq. 95, m. 19-21*

A natural consequence of changing the roles of instrumentation is that the texture morphs into something more symphonic. The so-called “melody” instruments now carry the role of harmony and support the texture in a function they have not previously done in the 18th century. In addition, Bach plays with his opening material. In the Quartet in G Major, for example, we are immediately thrown into an unknown sound world, one which is wrought with syncopations distorting one’s sense of rhythm and pulse. Such activity suggests a flurry of movement reminiscent of many of his symphonic works.

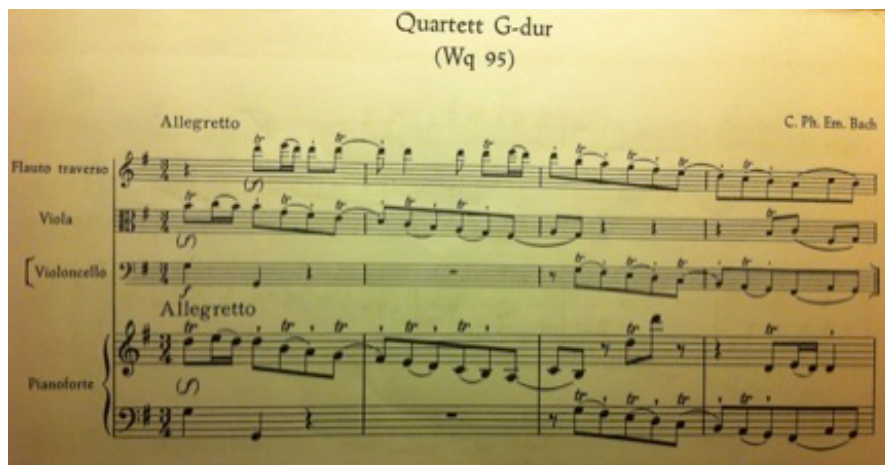


Figure 4: *Allegretto from Quartet in G Major, Wq. 95, m. 1-4*

This same movement shows a wonderful example of the flute and viola shifting to the harmonic role. As the keyboard assumes the soloist's position, they sustain the harmony in long tones floating above the texture.



Figure 5: Allegretto from Quartet in G Major, Wq. 95, m. 56-62

b) Rhythmic Manipulation & Surprise

The *Allegro di molto* in the Quartet in D Major, Wq. 94 represents the kind of sprightly energy described by Sulzer in his *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste*. As a final movement to this piece, whose middle movement we have already seen above, it offers a stark contrast to the depressive melancholia of the middle movement. Sulzer, in his Chapter on the Symphony, offers us some requirements and guidelines for envisioning the allegro, which should

...contain profound and clever ideas, a somewhat free treatment of the parts ... an apparent disorder in the melody and harmony, strongly marked rhythms of different types, robust melodies and unison passages, concerting middle voices, free imitations of a theme (often in fugal style),

sudden modulations and digressions from one key to another that are all the more striking the more distant their relation, strong gradations of loud and soft and especially of the crescendo, which when used in conjunction with an ascending and swelling expressive melody, is of the greatest effect.³⁷

We can see from measures 84 to 93 already a strong interruptive motif passed throughout the ensemble. By using rests in unpredictable places, our sense of pulse becomes distorted and a sense of urgency is instilled. Notice that in bar 96 the *tutti forte* comes as an absolute surprise after we have been given a version with more time in between.

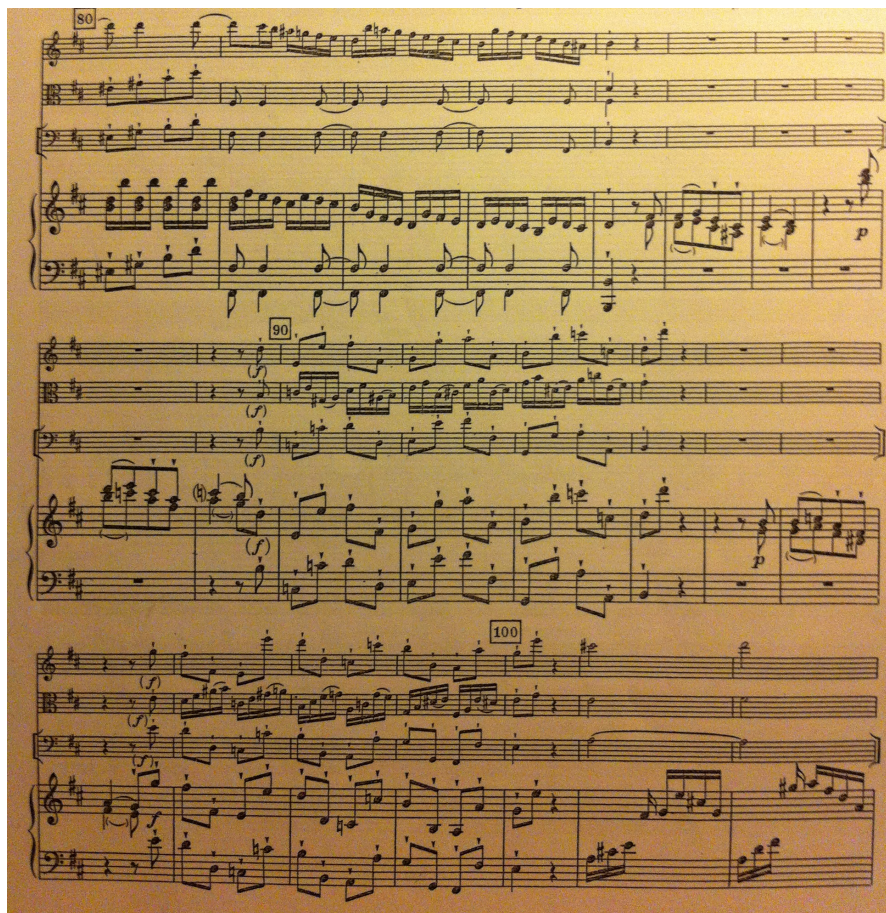


Figure 6: *Allegro di molto*, Quartet in D Major, Wq. 94, m. 84-100

³⁷ Sulzer, Johann Georg. (1771-74) “Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste” in *Aesthetics and the Art of Musical Composition in the German Enlightenment: Selected Writings of Johann Georg Sulzer and Heinrich Christoph Koch* (1995), edited by Baker, Nancy Kovaleff & Christensen, Thomas. Cambridge University Press, p. 106.

c) Dynamic Juxtaposition

It is most often in the developmental sections of Carl Philipp's music that we find the most contrast, as if he is fusing all of the musical ideas together into one final statement. One example of how he uses the juxtaposition of soft and loud dynamics to create the utmost contrast is in the final movement of the A minor Quartet, Wq. 93. In the development of the already very lively dotted rhythm motif, Bach takes us from piano to pianissimo and startles us with a tutti forte in bar 68. Notice as well the completely antithetical subito piano immediately afterwards in bar 70. The effect is one of being played with, that the listener has now idea what is coming next but somehow doesn't mind!

The image displays two systems of musical notation for the development section of the A minor Quartet, Wq. 93, measures 60-70. The top system, starting at measure 60, features a treble and bass staff with a piano (p) dynamic marking. The bottom system, starting at measure 18, features a treble and bass staff with a piano (p) dynamic marking. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings (p, pp, f, (p), (f)). The score is presented in a clear, legible format with a light background.

Figure 7: *Allegro assai*, *Quartet in A Minor*, Wq. 93, m. 60-70

V. CONCLUSIONS

Throughout the course of the 18th century and especially as the century wanes, we witness shifts in philosophical thought. Enlightenment ideology had swept throughout Europe with work from the likes of Rousseau and Locke, establishing the virtues of man's reason as templates for constructive artistic output. An interesting shift in this mainstream perspective began to take shape in the cosmopolitan districts of what is now Germany. Writers and philosophers, who would later be led by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), would seek to break free from the idea of reason infringing upon the creative process by searching for varied and oftentimes volatile and unprecedentedly spontaneous and unpredictable paths. They would later be known as the *Stürmer und Dranger*, a group of strongly-held male friends whose youthful vigor and anti-establishment rebellious nature combined to spur a great flurry of literary productivity from about 1770-77.

This path of the literary persuasion has been well documented. However, we can witness at this time glimpses of the Baroque aesthetic cracking at the seams also in the realm of music. This is not to say that the "high" Baroque ideals of the mid-18th century had no value or would not, for the remainder of the century, hold massive sway in courtly and domestic musical lives. Yet the shift for music, unlike that for literature, was a subtle one. It progressed at different rate and intensity than the literary world, experiencing changes far before and lasting much longer all the way until the dawn of Classicism.

Our apparent torch-bearer in the field of music, Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach, was still in service to Frederick the Great of Prussia when he began proclaiming his personal approach to performance in his *Versuch über die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen* (An Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments) of 1753. Later on in life, he would compose works that now are deemed perfect examples of a style, which at the time had no formal descriptor as it does now. A reprinting of the *Versuch* in 1787, one year before his death, contains even more telling verses hinting at the practices of the day, oftentimes in a blunt and candid way. To compare the fields of literature and music is perhaps a futile one but the world in which Carl Philipp composed was a changing landscape. He was aware of this and wrote according to his personal expressive taste, desires and abilities.

For this very reason his influence was impertinently strong not only for contemporary colleagues in service to Frederick the Great in Berlin but also later on in life and of course posthumously by the classical canon of composers such as Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven and others. Though the stretch of influence was great and continues to inspire musicians even today, I believe it wise to not get too lofty in comparing his aesthetics with those who came *after* him. He was writing from the perspective of a musician in service at court, somehow able to speak freely enough to express his personal opinions on music making and execution.

It is quite important here to realize that the Sturm und Drang was indeed very short-lived, despite the level of success achieved during its years of activity, 1770-77. It was indeed a period of literary activity reflecting society's acceptance of Enlightenment ideology and strove, most

distinctly, to push the limits of man's reason and the means by which this could be expressed. David Hill remarks in his Introduction to the volume of essays surrounding the Sturm und Drang, "The Sturm und Drang is, therefore, not a period in the history of culture in the way that, for example, the Renaissance or the Enlightenment are; it is not a turning point in the evolution of culture. Even to call it a 'movement' may imply more cohesion and purpose than is appropriate."³⁸

One of the primary goals, or at least one of the most influential consequences of the Sturm und Drang, was the attempt to develop a more holistic, all-encompassing language with which to express the extremes of the human experience. Deeply concerned, like the rest of the Enlightenment thinkers, with the state of man's emancipation of the Self, this particular period in history is interesting for its intentional anti-establishment stance in a world which was still itself developing. And just like any art form, the quality of a work of art will always hold precedence over its hype. Hill again reiterates this for us.

The Sturm und Drang is represented by a relatively small number of texts; they are important not because they represent a necessary stage in the development of German culture but because of the quality of the writing they contain and because of the radicalism, the complexity, and the incisiveness of their analysis of the human spirit on the threshold of modernity.³⁹

This makes the examination of music less constrictive as well. When one realizes or accepts that the literary Sturm und Drang was but a blip on the radar screen for the artistic spectrum of German artistic development, we can see in music several influences, some of which spring from this "movement" and oftentimes others which are more conservative, subscribing to a more general Enlightenment perspective.

The *Sturm und Drang* movement was an abrupt undertaking which developed primarily in the literary field and spread to all areas of art throughout the course of the latter half of the 18th-century. After 1770 we see the emergence of this new style, wrought with images of humoristic debauchery and violence. In terms of literature, the shift of moral protagonist, from the aristocratic and debonair hero to the common and often poor countryman, becomes highly prevalent as a result of Goethe's influence and also the shifting perceptions of the Enlightenment. Indeed, music also becomes more demanding and active for both the participant and listener, as can be seen in the music of Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach. An exploration of his music in addition to his *Versuch* concludes that as musicians, our awareness of the shifting role of instrumentation and symphonic texture, rhythmic manipulation and surprise and dynamic

³⁹ Hill, David. (2003) "Introduction" in: *Literature of the Sturm und Drang*, edited by David Hill. Camden House, p. 5.

juxtaposition can aid as tools for interpretation and understanding of a style that at one time had no name.

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