

## REVIEWS



## BOOKS

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CLAUDE DAUPHIN, ED.  
*MUSIQUE ET LANGAGE CHEZ ROUSSEAU*  
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Rousseau's writing on the subjects of music and language was, until relatively recently, understood to occupy a rather marginal place in his output as a whole. The work on the nature and origin of language was more or less entirely overlooked, while the sporadic interest shown by twentieth-century musicologists in Rousseau's musical and music-theoretical concerns was, if both genuine and productive in documentary terms, primarily motivated by the fact that Rousseau was a famous philosopher and a posthumously credited architect of the French revolution. However, as the foundations of the assumed link between Rousseau and France's great moment of iconoclasm emerged as less stable, there has been a growth in critical attention on those areas of his output where relationships to his theories of public polity and private morality were less obviously prominent.

A notable moment in this shift was, of course, the publication in 1967 of Jacques Derrida's early masterpiece *De la grammatologie* (Paris: Minuit; translated in 1976 as *Of Grammatology*). While this coincided with a general renewal of interest in the French Enlightenment, Derrida's work was the first extended study of the central text in Rousseau's linguistic and musical thought – the *Essai sur l'origine des langues* (*Œuvres complètes*, volume 5 (Paris: Gallimard, 1995)), translated as *Essay on the Origin of Languages* in *The Collected Writings of Rousseau* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1990–), volume 7 (trans. John T. Scott), in 1998 – in which the problems of the text were not attributed to internal weakness and rhetorical overbite, or to the circumstances of its reportedly somewhat botched composition. Instead, Derrida's critical reading of the *Essai* was intended to show how its problems reflect wider and more serious faultlines, in eighteenth-century conceptions of mimesis and signification as well as in the metaphysical armoury Rousseau co-opts for the purposes of mobilizing his by-and-large received linguistic and musical theories.

It is somewhat surprising, therefore, to find that Derrida merits a mere half dozen cursory references in this new volume of essays, *Musique et langage chez Rousseau*. Since the publication of *De la grammatologie*, of course, much important work has been done (by Robert Wokler, Elisabeth Duchez and others) to establish both the genealogical and the theoretical importance of Rousseau's musical writing in relation to his philosophical and literary concerns, and the scope of contemporary scholarship in this area obviously both differs from and exceeds Derrida's concerns. So while one would neither expect nor hope to find the contributors to this volume deferentially trudging over the same ground as that covered in a book originally



published nearly forty years ago, it goes without saying that where the relevance and value of Derrida's work remains, it should not be covered over by work that treads the same paths, but with less dexterity and scope.

A somewhat uneven level of content is probably to be expected in a collection of short and insubstantially revised conference papers. The conference, held in Montreal in 2001, was a seminal event, marking the confluence of interest of musicologists, political philosophers, literary historians and others in this area of Rousseau's work. Following the eventual publication in 1995 of the fifth and final volume of the *Pléiade Œuvres complètes* – covering Rousseau's writing on music and language and including the first scholarly edition of the *Dictionnaire de musique* – the conference provided a unique opportunity to reflect on the forty or so years of work underlying the new preoccupation with the philosopher's musical and linguistic concerns. As sometimes proves to be the case, however, an exciting and regenerative conference was followed by a written publication of considerably less import.

The first contribution to the volume, by Catherine Kintzler, is a good case in point. Magisterial in style and full of interest, Kintzler's paper would no doubt have worked perfectly as an inspirational keynote address (it originally concluded the conference). Furthermore, in elegantly restating two of the central themes of her work on Rousseau – namely that the confrontation between Rousseau and Rameau occurs less as a genuine music-theoretical opposition than as a 'shock of two aesthetics' and that behind Rousseau's work on music and language and their putative common origin 'a history of subjectivity is also woven in' ('c'est aussi une histoire de la subjectivité qui se trame', 3) – Kintzler's text usefully familiarizes her audience with some of the key assumptions of contemporary critical work in this area. But strength in spoken delivery does not equate here with a good written publication. To be sure, without understanding them in the context of a general theory of subjectivity, Rousseau's theories of music and language become not only less interesting but even to some extent unintelligible. Then again, it is hardly news that they should be read in such a context, coming nearly forty years after the publication of *De la grammatologie*, in which precisely this point is axiomatic to the discussion of Rousseau. If an edge is being cut in Rousseau studies, then Kintzler's paper makes a nice guide to the upper levels of the mine.

If Kintzler's contribution reads rather like an elegant introduction, the fact that it assumes this position causes serious problems for many of the later articles. Some of the contributors might have followed Kintzler's sense that an exposition of the central arguments and themes of the *Essai* is no longer necessary, dispensing with them in their accounts. More seriously, though, Kintzler introduces fundamental points of which some authors seem in ignorance. For instance, her measured restatement to the effect that the 'object of passion', the awareness of which for Rousseau opens up the possibility of both subjectivity and communication in the sense of signification, is located as structurally inaccessible (9) does not sit easily with the reading of Michel Schmouckovitch ('La fonction du désir dans l'origine des langues selon Rousseau'), whose otherwise very interesting analysis of the *Essai*'s metaphorical landscape seems to assume that this idea is somewhat exceptional in Rousseau. Equally, Melissa Butler's contribution on 'The Quarrel between Rousseau and Rameau: Evidence from Contemporary Psychology' is considerably more interesting for its reports on a number of findings in contemporary developmental psychology than for the rather simplistic account of the quarrel she proposes, precisely the kind of account that Kintzler has already – and long ago – discredited. Again, nestling amidst a good deal of extremely clear, useful and interesting discussion in Christopher Bertram's 'Language, Music and the Transparent Society in Rousseau's *Essai sur l'origine des langues* and the *Contrat social*' is an uncritical construal of the relation between vocal accents and the experience and representation of passion, and of Rousseau's metaphorically laden geographical scheme. One doesn't have to venture very far into Kintzler's piece to grasp that Rousseau's model of the vocal expression of emotion is fraught with metaphysical and metaphorical difficulty. This is a particular shame, because Bertram's subtle handling of the possible extension of Rousseau's political distinction between the righteous and the good into the equally normative landscape of musical and linguistic writing suffers as a result.

Despite these provisos, there are items of genuine scholarship and value in the collection, if in somewhat abbreviated forms. Indeed, the best contributions are precisely those that deploy brevity as an asset,



providing, on the one hand, convincing cases for minor questions, or, on the other, limited speculations on major ones. An example of the former is Jacqueline Waeber's 'Paysage d'avant Querelle: Rousseau continu-ateur de Grimm' (The Landscape before the Querelle: Rousseau's Continuation of Grimm), which sketches a genealogy of some of the key tenets of the combative *Lettre sur la musique française*. Showing not only the level of Rousseau's debts to points of (then) liberal orthodoxy on opera, Waeber also presents the case for looking less to the *Lettre* and more to the slightly earlier *Lettre à Grimm* for the definitive early presentation of Rousseau's operatic aesthetics. Similarly, Jeff Black's 'The Dupes of Words: The Problem and Promise of Language in Rousseau's *Discours sur les sciences et les arts*' provides an illuminating analysis of the relation between the controversial first *Discours* and the classical epigraphs with which Rousseau chose to introduce it. Rather than arguing that in his concern with hypocrisy and the misappropriation of virtue Rousseau was also engaging with specific questions about the nature of language and subjectivity – one could quite legitimately take this to have been the case without worrying too much about documentary evidence – Black's paper simply weakens the case for doubt by pointing to the linguistic concerns of the work's title pages. Other examples include Alexandra Cook's brief comparison of Rousseau's attitude to music with his botanical writing – one a flowering of nature, the other a flowering of culture, but with our understanding of both endangered by scientific utilitarianism – and Guillaume Bordry's interesting documentary summary of Berlioz's attitude to Rousseau the musician. The contribution of John T. Scott, comparing the deployment of climate differences to illustrate contrasts in musical and communicative styles in Rousseau and Mont-squieu, is a model of clarity.

A good example of the other, more speculative, approach is Julia Simon's 'Music and the Performance of Community in Rousseau'. Simon's principal reflection concerns an important – in my view crucial – aspect of Rousseau's understanding of the idea of communication. For while the oft-cited epistemic and emotional 'transparency' between self and other obviously plays a part in Rousseau's conception and normative deployment of the idea of communication, his usage points equally to a seemingly more primitive sense of the term: communication is to be understood in terms of the bringing into being and maintaining of community. Given that such a model does not necessarily extend to a semantic layer, one can see how music, too – even purely instrumental music – can be aesthetically and, more importantly for Rousseau, morally privileged according to this scheme.

This subject of the relation between Rousseau's understanding of musical communication and his understanding of morality is also the subject of another of the more speculative contributions. José Oscar de Almeida Marques ('The Politics of Taste: A Place for Art Music in Rousseau's Construction of the Political Community') begins by expressing a certain disappointment that Rousseau's treatment of the relation between music and morality wasn't more extensive, or at any rate more exoteric. Marques demonstrates that in contradistinction to Plato and Aristotle, both of whom were important sources for Rousseau dealing with the subject categorically and at some length, Rousseau is unusually reticent. As Marques argues, this was of course partly because his moral suspicions about art in general – including both the moral vanity and intellectual vacuity of non-vocal music and the ethically hazardous nature of theatrical imitation – made it rather difficult for him, as an occasional composer and genuine lover of music, to formulate a concrete position on the subject. Marques's pointer to the passages in *Émile* is a good one and could, in my view, be pushed a good deal further, not least because certain passages in *Émile* state almost openly that the refinement of aesthetic sensibility establishes and develops the structure required for a healthy moral imagination.

Other important contributions include Martin Stern's ruminations on the relation between Rousseau's famous moral conversion and his earlier 'conversion' from French to Italian opera and Mira Morgenstern's study of the relevance to his political theory of his musical approach to language, and specifically to the kind of language appropriate for legislation. Both articles ask more important questions than they answer, which is entirely to the good. A mixture of great elegance of style and a commanding knowledge of the literature is to be found in Jean-François Perrin's contribution, which provides a gentle challenge to Rousseau in the form of an affirmation of the musicality of the French language and a concomitant though subtle unsettling



and refinement of Rousseau's depiction of the affective content of speech as opposed to writing. And of course, despite the mixed quality and compromised format, there is much of interest to be found – occasionally only with difficulty – in all the contributions to the volume. Its academic value would have increased considerably, however, if the editor had seen fit to reduce the total number of contributions. With its subject being both timely and of great relevance to eighteenth-century studies, to musicology, to political philosophy and aesthetics, the volume as published – despite many merits – is surely an opportunity missed.

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ANIK DEVRIÈS-LESURE

*L'ÉDITION MUSICALE DANS LA PRESSE AU XVIII<sup>E</sup> SIÈCLE: CATALOGUE DES ANNONCES*

Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2005

pp. xxix + 573, ISBN 2 271 06303 5

Over the last thirty years Anik Devriès-Lesure has produced a considerable amount of work on music publishing in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century France, and the two volumes of her *Dictionnaire des éditeurs de musique français des origines à environ 1820*, written in collaboration with François Lesure (Geneva: Minkoff, 1979 and 1988) are a major research tool in this field. If 'generations of researchers have spent precious time skimming through the same journals in order to collect information relating only to their own fields of research' (ix), this new book should henceforth relieve scholars of the need to undertake this 'ritual' (ix). In publishing the results of her 'detailed examination of twenty or so journals published during the eighteenth century' (ix), Devriès-Lesure has contributed yet another monumental volume which is likely to become an essential contribution to the literature. This *Catalogue des annonces* records 10,000 works, classified alphabetically by composer. It opens with a brief historical introduction, in which the author sketches out the relatively well known state of the trade and the diffusion of music in France, pointing out in particular the dominant role of Parisian engravers and publishers in the history of European music publishing up to the beginning of the nineteenth century. Devriès-Lesure also remarks that approximately seventy per cent of the musical works issued in the second half of the century were the subject of advertisements in contemporary periodicals. Such advertisements offer the researcher prime documentary evidence of this commercial activity. Indeed, they have the potential to increase considerably our understanding of the evolution of the repertory according to developments in instrument manufacture, and to help in the precise reconstruction of the careers of a number of musicians through the many references to their positions at a given court, orchestra or church. Because of the frantic craze for new music that began c1740–1750, a large number of volumes were printed without their year of publication so as to prevent their remaining in traders' stocks. Here again, advertisements make it possible to determine precisely the chronology of these numerous undated publications, and even to trace the existence of books no longer available today. Such advertisements also make it possible to follow the evolution of prices and to become acquainted with eighteenth-century editorial practices (subscriptions, rights and pirated editions). Finally, these advertisements – those in the *Mercur de France* in particular – sometimes provide invaluable comments and judgments on the quality of the musical content of the volumes.

Devriès-Lesure justifies the choices made in the selection of her corpus of works (scores, theoretical writings, opera and opéra comique librettos containing some musical extracts), describes how to read the rubrics, explains her adopted policy on the transcription of the advertisements, draws up a list of the periodicals examined and provides a selective bibliography. The layout of the catalogue is extremely clear: it is very easy to locate information on the page. Methodologically the work is meticulous, but it is perhaps



regrettable that ‘some extended comments . . . describing the work in detail were not transcribed in their entirety’ (xxvi): such arbitrary cuts will probably oblige professional readers to refer to the original documents in order to locate information relating to their field of research, thus undermining the catalogue’s main objective. Indeed, how can we be sure that the cuts mutilating the advertisements of Toussaint Bertin de La Doué’s *Jugement de Paris* (48), Michel-Richard de Lalande’s motets (252), Jean Benjamin de La Borde’s *Annette et Lubin* (290), Joseph Haydn’s three quartets HIII 63–65 (296) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s *Musique de chambre* (456) – only a few examples among many – are not important to our research? Conversely, some errors and inaccuracies are difficult to avoid, given the huge quantity of information handled. Thus the first name of Bertin de La Doué is always given erroneously as Thomas, even though Jérôme de La Gorce has shown that it was indeed Toussaint (48), while the first name of L’Amy is not provided, even though there is no doubt that it was Michel. Laurent Gervais’s *Méthode pour l’accompagnement du clavecin* is wrongly attributed to Charles-Hubert Gervais (212), in spite of the present writer’s work on these two musicians, and Alphonse Châteauminos (active 1780–1788, quoted on 108–109) did not serve Philippe d’Orléans, Regent of France, as the general index implies on page 566.

In spite of these small details, which will be corrected by attentive readers, *L’édition musicale dans la presse au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle: catalogue des annonces* is the fruit of careful and authoritative research, and will remain a very useful reference work for years to come.

JEAN-PAUL MONTAGNIER



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LUDWIG FINSCHER

JOSEPH HAYDN UND SEINE ZEIT

Laaber: Laaber, 2002

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This reissue of Ludwig Finscher’s original 2000 study, part of the series *Die großen Komponisten*, was made to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Laaber-Verlag in 2002. If in his Foreword Finscher distances himself from the life-and-works genre, the book does nevertheless seem to inhabit such territory, with chapters tracking Haydn’s various places of employment followed by chapters based on genres (operas, symphonies, quartets, keyboard music, and late masses and oratorios). The treatment and flow of thought are more flexible than this sounds, though, with much music being discussed in the earlier chapters and more circumstantial matters also being considered later on. In addition, the author interposes two brief ‘excursions’, on ‘musical logic’ then ‘logic, wit and humour’, while the main text is preceded by a very extensive *Chronik* counterpointing the events and products of each year of the composer’s life against those relating to other culturally important figures. While this might again seem to suggest the traditional life-and-works approach, Finscher is at pains to stress that the listings are not meant to imply direct connections. Rather they indicate something of the extraordinary fullness of events of these times, often quite disparate and contradictory in their implications (9). He also lays a welcome emphasis not just on the history of ideas but also on discoveries and inventions.

The study proper begins with a chapter entitled ‘Assumptions about Haydn’, which almost immediately picks up on this theme of discovery or invention. Finscher’s discussion of the composer’s famous words about ‘having to become original’, as transmitted in Griesinger’s biography, highlights how Haydn uses the lexicon of the scientific laboratory in his references to ‘making experiments’, ‘observing’ and ‘adding and subtracting’ (83). (And to this he might have added Haydn’s emphasis on his isolation at Eszterháza, sealed off from the world.) This striking reading is typical of Finscher’s fresh approach to largely familiar source



materials. This is one of greatest strengths of the book, for all that the author's avowed intention is to place the works in the centre of his study (7–8). With reference to the same passage, when Haydn remarks that there was no one to annoy or pester him, Finscher finds an irritability and vulnerability, and shortly thereafter, in connection with a letter to Artaria about his lieder, a slight persecution mania and prickliness that seem far from the composer's modest conduct in everyday life (86). Such interpretations suggest the outright biographical virtues of this study, and they are especially welcome because the historical figure of Haydn has hardly been lavished with such attention – certainly compared with the efforts devoted to some other major composers of the time. Of course it has always been hard to do this with Haydn, given his evident lack of a confessional impulse – the vast bulk of his surviving letters, for instance, represent business transactions. Indeed, Finscher characterizes Haydn as an interested observer, not just of the world but of himself too, with distance and reserve as biographical leitmotifs (90).

But these virtues are not confined just to 'psychobiography'. For instance, Finscher remarks that the strangest aspect to the time Haydn spent at home in Vienna and Eisenstadt between his two London visits was its very unobtrusiveness (*Unauffälligkeit*), attributing this partly to Vienna's lack of the sort of public concert life that was found in London, but also to the fact that the public concert was not understood as a genuine social event (372–373). A further example of a reflexive approach to evidence lies in the reassessment of Haydn's request to Franz von Greiner to advise him on the choice of texts for his set of 1781 lieder and their 'correct expression', often taken to indicate the composer's uncertain literary taste, if not his cultural philistinism. Finscher points out that in the absence of regular direct contact Haydn had to seek out the views of others by letter (Greiner ran a notable salon in Vienna). The composer's isolation deprived him of the appropriate forum for social exchange on such a topic (exchanges that would normally have left little documentary trace), involving the enlightened discourse that typified salon culture. Further, such an attitude embodies an inherently sociable view of how one arrives at artistic and aesthetic judgments, that these are 'established discursively' (86). The words of Caroline Pichler, Greiner's daughter, that 'man is born to society' are aptly invoked to encapsulate this cultural moment (87).

Finscher also engages with musical genres and generic issues in some unusual and fresh ways. He is one of the rare writers who realizes that *tempo di menuetto* has a distinct musical identity for Haydn and rarely misses a chance to comment on the implications of this designation. And he makes much of the controversy that arose in light of Haydn's use of octave doubling (especially that of the violins) in the early string quartets, leading us to realize how underplayed this issue often is. He traces the use of *Oktavierung* in the later sets of quartets, observing that Haydn had obviously become very sensitive on the matter. This even leads to the almost total absence in Haydn of a common textural procedure involving the coupling of a line not just at the octave but also at the third (202) – a wonderful perception of a negative attribute. The author notes how freely such doubling occurs in Mozart, but it is also widespread in the quartets of, for example, Kraus and Boccherini.

At a more straightforwardly generic level Finscher proves a strong advocate for many little known works, such as the early concertinos or the baryton trios. While he remains ambivalent about Haydn's operatic achievements, he writes eloquently on the composer's campaign to break down barriers between *seria* and *buffa* styles and to raise the status of comedy ('"Nobilitierung" der Komödie', 246); he praises the 'extraordinary richness of the nuances of ensemble playing and sonority' in the London piano trios (445); and he is especially robust in his defence of the late masses against nineteenth-century (and later) charges that they were mindlessly optimistic. Certainty of belief, he avers, is more important to the world of these works than the *Glaubenszerknirschung* of baroque and then romantic approaches (468) – a nice phrase that we might translate somewhat loosely as the 'furrowed-brow' school of religious devotion. As if by way of compensation, the C minor Sonata H20 comes in for some harsh treatment; it 'has often been overrated in the literature' (435).

This judgment, insufficiently justified, is indicative of a generally less rewarding approach to individual works. To an extent this is an inevitable result of the survey mode, which demands broad, efficient coverage. But it also derives from the author's tenacity in pursuing certain angles of vision on the instrumental output



in particular. Supreme among these is thematic work (*thematische Arbeit*), long a byword of Germanophone approaches to this repertoire. Finscher is certainly aware of the need to defend such a concept nowadays, and does so in a discussion of the sketches for the finale of Symphony No. 99. These show ‘the primacy of the thematic, so readily doubted of late. Haydn was a composer who thought thematically; without this foundation the development of *thematische Arbeit*, which was largely his personal “invention”, would hardly have been possible’ (93). In this sense, though, surely all composers from the eighteenth century until well into the twentieth thought ‘thematically’; didn’t they all sketch ‘themes’ at this stage of proceedings? Of course one wouldn’t want to deny that there is something original and distinctive, even radical, about Haydn’s thematic practice, and indeed his conception of theme altogether. These entail a particular way of focusing and releasing musical energy, and Finscher uses his central idea to articulate crucial arguments – that the composer demands wide-awake listening, forcing the hearer to attend to structures and processes (156–157), in effect a new kind of listening practice altogether and one of incalculable historical resonance.

Yet even if we assent to Finscher’s priorities, difficulties arise. His idea of what constitutes a thematic connection is very literal (perhaps justifiably so if emphasis is to be laid on the sort of overt connections that could inspire a new brand of ‘analytical’ listening). He contends, for instance, that the exposition section of Symphony No. 104 contains no thematic work (389) – an unlikely verdict, and application of Jan LaRue’s ideas about ‘multistage variance’ would soon dispel it (see ‘Multi-Stage Variance: Haydn’s Legacy to Beethoven’, *The Journal of Musicology* 1/3 (1982), 265–274). Equally, Finscher fails to grasp the frequent ambiguities that arise between what one might call motivic and what seems formulaic, and that formulas are often in fact thematized – a fundamental part of the way not just Haydn but many composers of the time operated. The slow introduction to Symphony No. 97, for example, ‘begins with an idea that melodically is not very characteristic’ (370), one which then reappears near the end of the exposition, prophetic of the cyclic forms that will become more apparent in the music of the next generation (370–371). On both counts, he really misses the point – that Haydn starts his slow introduction with a misplaced closing formula, which sounds very marked and ‘characteristic’ for just that reason and is then reheard in the exposition in a syntactically more appropriate position. A much larger reservation about Finscher’s approach, of course, is that all sorts of factors besides explicit thematic organization may be deemed artistically significant in any given movement. A telling case is his description of the slow movement of Symphony No. 64 as a ‘drama of motives’ (287). But it is surely the management of syntax and timing that we must turn to first in order to try to unlock the secrets of this cryptic movement, in which cadences are continually aborted (a feature that might have led to the work’s nickname of ‘Tempora mutantur’).

A related *idée fixe* in Finscher’s study is that Haydn was a highly systematic composer, as can be seen in his planning of sets of works such as the ‘Paris’ Symphonies or the string quartets from Op. 9 onwards. Again, there can be no doubt that there is some substance to this claim, and that Haydn did indeed look to plan multi-work sets with an eye to balance and variety of materials. But the idea that such variety always operates under strict external control can prove difficult. The ‘programme’ of Op. 17, for example, is said to be ‘the stronger individualization of the works relative to each other’ (403), seemingly excluding the possibility that such differences of procedure might simply issue from the different demands of the material, as Charles Rosen, among others, has persuasively shown. Finscher does acknowledge at least once, however, the porous boundaries between ‘mere variety of forms and systematic cyclical ordering’ (311). That some of the systematic thinking issues more from the writer than the composer is apparent when the early masses are described as mixed and ‘inconsistent’ and when the Op. 20 string quartets are signalled as inherently problematic (see 211 and 407 respectively). And the dangers of asserting a governing ‘opus character’ are apparent in other ways – to describe Op. 76 as being ‘turned inwards, unconcerned with outer affect’ and ‘almost completely lacking in musical jokes as well as easy, “popular” themes in the sonata-form movements’ (421) seems a very partial reading.

A concentration on the formal design of individual movements and whole works is another way in which Finscher’s discourse favours ‘rigour’, no doubt reflecting entrenched *Formenlehre* thinking. Other disappointingly traditional features are the emphasis on the composer’s ‘experimentation’ and the



frequently teleological narratives that link one group of works to the next; both relegate the individual compositional act to the status of a by-product. The favouring of process over product is also apparent in the claim that Haydn thought strongly in terms of distinct genres ('Neigung zum Denken in Gattungen', 131). Again, this is not implausible in itself, but the larger difficulty lies in the one-sided portrayal of the composer's achievement that is created. Traditionally 'hard' quantities like form, thematic work and design dominate Finscher's discourse. What about the relevance of a domain such as topic theory, implying, as it does, plurality, the borrowing between genres and styles? Was Haydn really that 'systematic'? To describe his compositional decisions and procedures in this way may well capture something vital about his creative thought, but it represents a failure to respond to the tone and aesthetic moment of much of his musical production, and this holds for his epoch altogether. Comedy is never far away, if not in actual musical character then in the ways in which music is put together, and comedy is a force for misrule: it pulls things apart, it undoes 'systems'.

For all these objections on matters of principle, one cannot deny the force and conviction of Finscher's arguments, and he explicitly defends many of the approaches criticized above, aware of the different intellectual currents elsewhere in Haydn studies. And there are of course many instructive moments and insights along the way, many details to cherish. That these can sometimes be lost in the vastness of the book might also owe something to several formal proclivities on the part of the publishers – the lack of a proper index (we are provided with only a *Personenregister*) and the lack of numbering of music examples and references to them in the text. Both create difficulties when we want to engage once again with the many provocations, both positive and negative, of Finscher's considerable achievement.

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ANSELM GERHARD

*LONDON UND DER KLASSIZISMUS IN DER MUSIK: DIE IDEE DER 'ABSOLUTEN MUSIK' UND CLEMENTIS KLAVIERWERKE*

Stuttgart and Weimar: Metzler, 2002

pp. 379, ISBN 3 475 00976 9

That Clementi is a wonderful composer is one of classical music's best-kept secrets. Following in the train of the current renaissance of Clementi studies, Anselm Gerhard's radical new book – half composer study, half treatise on eighteenth-century music aesthetics – argues that the idea of classicism was invented in England rather than in Vienna, that it informed English musical style and that this style was brought to perfection by the 1780s in Clementi's piano sonatas. A bold claim indeed, and Gerhard almost pulls it off. From one perspective Gerhard's gambit attempts to align musicology with a revisionist tendency in English literary criticism, that is, to wean theory off its dependence on German models and open it up to Britain's indigenous intellectual heritage (see Noel B. Jackson, 'Critical Conditions: Coleridge, "Common Sense", and the Literature of Self-Experiment', *English Literary History* 70 (2003), 117–149, and Manfred Kuehn, *Scottish Common Sense in Germany, 1768–1800: A Contribution to the History of Critical Philosophy* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill–Queen's University Press, 1987)). A quotation from Coleridge aptly concludes the book, since it was Coleridge who most famously blended British empirical philosophy with idealist streams emanating from Germany. At the other end, Gerhard's book begins with a genealogy of Oscar Schmitz's notorious 1914 *das Land ohne Musik* trope (starting with an anonymous report, 'Der Engländer hat kein Genie für Tonkunst', from 1805, and continuing through Heine's 'Diese Menschen haben kein Ohr' of 1854 and so on). The reason, Gerhard suggests, that British musicology has no Coleridge is that our chronic





musical inferiority complex makes us our own worst enemy. We can reflect on the fact that it takes a German musicologist to tell us that (notwithstanding the renaissance in English-music studies in full flood elsewhere). Gerhard has written a book of enormous learning, with a truly internationalist knowledge of the literature in English, German, French and Italian (for example, books on the sublime by Luca Zoppelli and Michela Garda). The writing style is dialectic in the Dahlhaus mould and the text leaves an impression both of high seriousness and of absolute thoroughness. This is an important book that has the capacity to change people's minds about the classical style; it deserves to find a translator.

Gerhard is motivated by the scandal at the heart of the Viennese classical style – namely, the apparent absence of a Viennese intellectual context. 'A music-aesthetic discourse in Vienna in the decade around 1800' was 'virtually nonexistent' (14), with the singular exception of the theorist Johann Daube, who in any case hailed from Stuttgart (22). The most influential aesthetic writings flowed instead from north Germany, from the Berlin philosophical circle of Moses Mendelssohn and C. P. E. Bach (about which Gerhard has edited a collection of essays) and the Sulzer circle of Schulz, Kirnberger and Koch. None of these fits the style of Haydn or Mozart particularly well (but see Hermann Förschner, *Instrumentalmusik Joseph Haydns aus der Sicht Heinrich Christoph Kochs*, Beiträge zur Musikforschung 13 (Munich and Regensburg: Emil Katzschler, 1984)). Writing a generation later at Göttingen, the north German Amadeus Wendt enshrines Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven in a classical canon under a post hoc nationalist agenda. Gerhard enjoys the irony that the Viennese themselves doubted, in the words of an anonymous reviewer, 'whether a classical art can exist in music, by analogy to the plastic arts' (320). Nor does Gerhard agree with Daniel Chua's notion that 'the Viennese classical style has nothing to do with classicism', being a 'confused style' theorized retrospectively by the Romantics (Daniel Chua, *Absolute Music and the Construction of Meaning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 71), countering persuasively with the question 'Which "style" in the recent history of music was *not* mixed?' (319). Rather, Gerhard solves the seeming lack of a Viennese intellectual context by discovering that context in Britain, and then seeing Clementi as instrumental in communicating musical classicism to Vienna by way of a creative dialogue with Haydn and Beethoven (Mozart is oddly sidelined). A compelling case is made for London being *the* 'World City' (8), a commercial environment capable of sustaining a competitive culture of instrumental performance and thus of generating an aesthetic of autonomous or 'absolute' music decades before this concept crystallized in less enlightened mainland Europe. Thus Adam Smith's remarkable 1795 formulation of this aesthetic ('[Music] can occupy, and as it were fill up, completely the whole capacity of the mind, so as to leave no part of its attention vacant for thinking of anything else', cited on page 137) can now be properly grasped as a fitting culmination of a century of British Enlightenment, rather than as an astonishingly prescient anticipation of German Romantic thought. From Gerhard's perspective, the Dahlhaus–Chua discourse of absolute music suddenly appears rather provincial. And yet how curious that Gerhard dispenses with the conventional yet still convincing argument of negativity which holds that German ideas were influential because of, and not in spite of, political fragmentation and economic weakness. In other words, philosophy, literature and music in the German lands were the conduit and beneficiary of the middle class's social frustrations. Perhaps the situation was not all that different in Josephine Vienna, despite its political strength. Thus it is difficult to accept that the provincialism of Berlin compromised the significance of its intellectual life, vis-à-vis London. (It is notable, in this regard, that London is conspicuously absent from Daniel Hertz's monumental account of the *galant* as fundamentally a metropolitan style, notwithstanding a few pages charting J. C. Bach's sojourn there; see *Music in European Capitals: The Galant Style 1720–1780* (London and New York: Norton, 2003).) A second example of a 'negative' argument is the notion that music can be a cause, rather than simply an effect, of cultural change. In this respect, Viennese musical classicism's intellectual novelty is exactly the point. By contrast, Gerhard's study moves mostly down a one-way street from culture to music, from British classicism to Clementi.

Putting questions of influence to one side, it must be said that Gerhard's book is magisterial in breadth of scope, intellectual ambition and sheer command of sources. The first half, devoted to 'British Music Aesthetics and Its Assumptions', is a treasure trove of facts and insights from a host of writers seldom charted



on the musicological map: major philosophers such as Shaftesbury, Beattie, Burke, Hartley, Hutcheson and Smith; critics like Avison and Burney; little known figures such as Thomas Busby (who wrote a *Complete Dictionary of Music* in 1801) and John Callcott (author of *A Musical Grammar in Four Parts*, 1806); some very obscure names indeed, for instance a certain James Holden, a church musician active in Glasgow, whose 1770 text *An Essay towards a Rational System of Music* Gerhard holds to be a model for Smith. Many of the *outré* sources are also French, German and Italian. The likes of Villoteau, Mizler and Martini are brought into useful counterpoint with their British contemporaries, and Gerhard unearths an essay by one Cosimo Alessandro Collini that contains a celebration of absolute music remarkable for 1760 ('Compositional freedom', writes Collini, 'is the means of musical perfection, just as freedom of thought is the means of spiritual perfection'; cited on page 149).

This first half of the book is divided into five chapters. A wide-ranging opening chapter, entitled 'London, the Capital of the Eighteenth Century', considers the rise of the city's music economy, discussing important issues such as international relations and Italian immigration, the nature of public musical taste, the origin of the Corelli cult and its association with classicism, and the significance of the piano sonata. Gerhard makes the crucial points that the British love for Corelli was not matched on the continent and that the piano sonata's pre-eminence in Britain was at the expense of symphonic writing. While the piano sonata was arguably peripheral to the oeuvres of Haydn and Mozart, and just one of several keyboard genres utilized by C. P. E. Bach (competing with fantasy and rondo), 'by 1800 it had assumed in London, under Clementi's leadership, its undisputed threefold position as a genre which was commercially successful, compositionally extremely innovative, and thereby capable of establishing a tradition' (56) – indeed, it was the very 'engine of musical development' (54). Chapter Two, 'The Sublimity of the Virtuoso', begins to delve in detail into British 'common-sense' philosophy, beginning with Shaftesbury, who Gerhard emphasizes invented aesthetics in 1711, four decades before Baumgarten. Likewise, Gerhard shows that the *topoi* of 'edle Einfalt und stille Grösse' (noble simplicity and quiet grandeur) were assimilated in England long before Winckelmann. The keyboard was a common conceit in the writings of associationists such as Beattie and Hartley as a practical analogue of mental combination, just as Shaftesbury's concept of virtuosity (derived from the Renaissance *virtù*) carried a sense of the ethical and cognitive as well as the artistic. In Gerhard's happy phrase, Clementi's 'virtuosity of the intellect' (65) draws all these aspects together. Pianism, as a bodily index of mental gymnastics, is a living metaphor for British pragmatism as musical practice. The keyboard, imagined in this way, symbolically opens up clear blue water between Britain and the continent and helps carve out an intricate cultural space. Much as British aesthetics resembles German organicism seen through the empiricist's looking-glass, Gerhard's concern is not to award plaudits for priority, but to differentiate his three main national cultures from each other. If the French and German traditions are the more familiar, then one of the book's triumphs is the foregrounding of a British voice as distinctive as it is estranging. Most striking of the many differences is the persistence in Britain of the baroque visual (that is, mimetic/ expressive) paradigm, with its correlative metaphor of music as painting, which by Gerhard's estimation was defunct in Europe by 1750 (114; for a survey of the 'music as painting' metaphor see my *Metaphor and Musical Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004)). The surprising survival – and actual apotheosis – of the visual model in Britain is explored in Gerhard's next two chapters. Epochal status is accorded Avison's 1752 treatise *An Essay on Musical Expression*, with its chapter on 'The Analogies between Music and Painting'. Painting, by virtue of being for Avison 'an art much more obvious in its principles, and therefore more generally known [than music]', affords a concrete metalanguage able to reach out to a readership that finds music theory too technical (113). Of course, painterly metaphors were strong in France too. But French theorists tended to apply them to vocal music, rather than to instrumental, and generally mediated through rhetoric and poetry – thus as an aspect of mainstream Enlightenment *language* models. By contrast, British analogies from painting were direct, and made on the basis of pragmatic technique. The empirical dimension of painting is compelling: paintings could be seen and touched, cross-checked with reality, sold as objects, collected in galleries. Gerhard sees the painting metaphor as regulating the mutation of the ancient Universal Harmony *topos* into the architectural models that permeate British aesthetics. Shaftesbury talks of



a 'unity of design' (112), and Avison compares 'a musical composition . . . to the elevation of a building' (119), which leads ineluctably to 'The Rise of Formal Thinking in Music' (the title of the last chapter of Part One). Here, in a section on "The Concept of the "General Plan" [*Gesamtplan*]", Gerhard links the architectural paradigm to the British preoccupation with wholeness, part/whole relationships and the general trope of 'unity in diversity' (132). 'Unity in diversity' (or 'uniformity amidst diversity' for Hutcheson; see 184), is of course a staple concept of German organicism too (though Gerhard traces it originally to the French mathematician Yves-Marie André); what makes it British is a typical orientation towards the psychologically real (rather than the philosophically ideal) and the formally closed (rather than the dynamically open-ended). Paradoxically, this is borne out especially clearly by British biology, and here a 1759 citation from Samuel Johnson's journal the *Idler* is very pertinent: 'Every species of the animal as well as the vegetable creation may be said to have a fixed and determinate form, towards which nature is continually inclining, like various lines terminating in the centre' (326).

So how does this empiricist formalism translate into Clementi's compositional style? Before we tackle this question, Gerhard's reading of British aesthetics poses a few problems. First and foremost is the discontinuity between Avison's presumed assimilation of the painterly/architectural paradigm in 1752 (Gerhard's 'Paradigmenwechsel', 114) and its much later application to sonata models in the treatises of Kollmann (1799) and Callcott (1806). Avison the composer wrote not sonatas but concerti grossi, after Geminiani, and when Avison the critic says 'leading *Subject*' (115) or 'principal Design' (132), he means the theme and outline of a fugue. Secondly, Gerhard himself admits that British philosophers had a fairly shallow understanding of musical form; one need only compare Beattie's hazy 1776 account of rhythm as a 'a copious source of both variety and uniformity' (186) with Sulzer's infinitely more sophisticated rhythmic theory published earlier in his *Allgemeine Theorie* of 1771–1774. If psychologically oriented (that is, empirical) theories of form and rhythm are what one wants, then the Germans are leagues ahead of the British. In short, mediators like Sulzer who bridge the gap between philosophy and compositional theory are gapingly absent from the British scene. Thirdly, 'classicism' is just one of several streams in late eighteenth-century British culture. Where are the gothic or ironic traditions? Annette Richards relates the picturesque not to classicism but to the sublime (*The Free Fantasia and the Musical Picturesque* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 73); a more obvious bridge from Britain to Haydn's Vienna is the witty abstraction of Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (see Mark Evan Bonds, 'Haydn, Lawrence Sterne, and the Origins of Musical Irony', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 44/1 (1991), 57–91). Finally, rubrics such as 'unity in diversity', 'classicism' and the painterly metaphor itself are all a bit general. Painterly/architectural models in music go back at least to the middle ages (see Anna Maria Busse Berger, *Medieval Music and the Art of Memory* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 221–222), and its classical English variant of course only makes sense as part of a specific historical and geographical nexus. Thus the representational paradigm of the German Enlightenment, by contrast to the British empiricists, treats imagery at a more abstract, foundational level, so that a 'picture' is akin to a generative deep structure. It is in this light that Sulzer compares a concept to a *Gemälde* (see the entry 'Periode' in the *Allgemeine Theorie*). Kant himself notes that the old rhetorical visual figure of *hypotyposis* transmogrifies into his notion of *Darstellung* (*The Critique of Judgement*, trans. James Meredith (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 221–223); one could say, then, that the painterly paradigm sank to the depths in Germany and rose to the surface in Britain.

Part Two of the book, devoted to Clementi's piano music, is roughly chronological, a couple of chapters devoted to the sonatas prior to the 1802 watershed (Clementi's departure on his eight-year continental tour) and two chapters focusing, respectively, on the *Gradus ad Parnassum* and the late sonatas (including the celebrated programmatic Op. 50 No. 3, *Didone abbandonata*). This half of the book is as richly historical and densely argued as the first half. Gerhard portrays Clementi's construction of a popular style, a music of 'new simplicity' (153) written 'for the happy few' (169), as having been shaped by London's social and philosophical milieu. The imprint of British aesthetics is found chiefly in the sheer melodiousness of Clementi's style – borne out as much in his cantabile art of transition as in his melodious counterpoint ('Die Kantabilisierung der polyphonen Techniquen', 24ff) and in the music's 'unity in diversity' (179). The latter is epitomised by



Clementi's monothematicism, and Gerhard credits him, rather than Haydn, with the invention of this device. He detects Clementi's influence on the Austrian composer most blatantly in the String Quartet Op. 74 No. 1 in C major of 1793, which is 'obviously gauged for the London market' (193) since its monothematicism is so systematic and transparent. As for Beethoven, Gerhard argues that he took from Clementi the English (architectural) conception of an overall formal plan (*Gesamtplankonzeption*, 321), unfolded by a driving developmental *telos*. A shocking, iconoclastic idea, but acquaintance with Clementi's Op. 34 No. 2 in G minor, the masterpiece of his mid-career, dispels the myth that Beethoven's heroic style was *sui generis*. Formally speaking, too, with its return of the Largo introduction in the middle of the development section, Clementi's experimental 1796 sonata is a 'source work' for many of Beethoven's slow/fast hybrids, from the *Pathétique* of 1799 to the late quartets. Indeed, Clementi's sonata journey foreshadows Beethoven's each step of the way: a classicizing turn c1802 (Clementi's Opp. 40 and 41; Beethoven's 'Waldstein', Op. 53, of 1804), followed by a dramatic falling-off of piano sonata production, a striking neobaroque tendency, with an embrace of counterpoint and canon (Clementi's *Gradus*; Beethoven's late style) and ending with a 'Recollection of Classical Models' (Clementi's Op. 50; Beethoven's Op. 135). The link with late Beethoven is especially compelling. The fugue/sonata fusion of Clementi's Op. 44 No. 18 from the *Gradus* is very close in idiom to the final movements of Beethoven's Opp. 110 and 111; given that 'both composers are clearly engaged with the same compositional problem, leading to the melodicization [*Kantabilisierung*] of polyphonic technique' (235), Gerhard is at pains to stress that Clementi's 1817 work precedes Beethoven's by some four years. Moreover, Beethoven never quite followed Clementi into neoclassicism (Op. 135 is pointedly a quartet, not a sonata), so Gerhard is correct to conclude that, by the 1820s, in adhering unwaveringly to the classical ideal of instrumental music, 'Clementi was much more clearly a classical figure [*Klassiker*] than all other composers active in Vienna at that time' (330). Clementi is the 'master of the sonata', wrote Wilhelm Riehl in his 1857 appreciation, 'because he composed not necessarily the best, but the most sonata-like [*sonatenhaftesten*] sonatas' (cited on page 330).

Given the schematic, two-part structure of the book, does Gerhard prove his case that Clementi's music embodies a London classicism? One of his most suggestive ideas is that Britain rejected the north German aesthetic of wild disorder sanctioned by the literary paradigm of the ode. Mendelssohn explains, in an essay of 1764, the 'apparent disorder ascribed to odes' in terms of the elision of 'mediating concepts' (*Mittelbegriffe*) that normally unify a poem's structure (given on pages 174–175). The implicit comparison, which Gerhard doesn't quite draw out, is neat: the 'plötzliche Übergänge' (Lessing's phrase, 181) of C. P. E. Bach and Haydn put the onus on the listener's imagination to join up the dots; by contrast, the listener finds continuity on the *surface* of Clementi's music, 'mediated' not by 'concepts' so much as by those 'flowing transitions' which Gerhard nicely compares with the timbral modulations of William Turner's paintings (117). English continuity, then, is concrete and quasi-visual; German continuity is abstract and imaginatively poetic. Gerhard might have observed that classical play is virtually absent in Clementi; it is hard to find a single sonata that begins off-tonic, or with an incongruous cadential progression (Haydn's favourite trick). Dramatic interruption, cadential evasion and topical/functional interplay are also relatively mild. For a book so impressively internationalist in its scope, and which seems aware (judging from the bibliography) of the writings of Mark Evan Bonds, Charles Rosen, Elaine Sisman and James Webster, it is strange that Gerhard refuses to buy into the Anglo-American analytical discourse of the classical style, which has taught us so much about the manipulation of formal, generic and topical conventions. Likewise, Gerhard shows no interest in tonality or voice leading. His analytical method is geared almost entirely to aspects of thematic transformation and unity, which is a shame. To be sure, his ideas on monothematicism are interesting, if contestable: notions, for example, that thematic duality (as in Beethoven's 'gegensätzliche Themengestalten', 180) arose with the ascendancy of French dramaturgical models but was marked against a late eighteenth-century norm of thematic unity; that monothematicism in Haydn was rare before the 'Paris' Symphonies of 1784–1785 (181); that Haydn's monothematicism contrasts with 'Clementi's differentiation technique' (193), whereby the second subject is a variant, rather than a ritornello, of the first, and



so on. Nevertheless, such ideas are capable of more mileage. There is so much more one could write about the 'English' clarity of Clementi's sonatas from the perspectives, say, of form and voice leading.

**Form.** Clementi's formal junctures are marked for consciousness (as a music psychologist would say) with great transparency, particularly the caesura at the exposition modulation. Each juncture is also expanded: the tonic group is generally repeated (a procedure Beethoven takes up), whereas Haydn's and Mozart's repetitions tend to be confined to just the opening phrase; the second group is lengthened through enchainning one idea after another, with a prolixity which suggests that Schubert learnt as much from Clementi as from Dussek (his more familiar ancestor); the development is more discursive and episodic than in Haydn's and Mozart's sonatas and features more frequent off-tonic false or premature reprises of the first group. Clementi often extends monothematicism into monotonicity, as when the second group reworks the original pitches against the grain of the modulation. Thus the tonic and relative major groups of Op. 7 No. 3 in G minor share the same B $\flat$ -G-F-C-B $\flat$  gestalt; Op. 13 No. 4 in B flat major builds tonic and dominant themes on the same F-B $\flat$ -F figure (at bars 1-2 F and B $\flat$  arpeggiate a B $\flat$  harmony; at bars 36-38 the Fs are tonicized and the B $\flat$  becomes the seventh of a dominant). Clementi rarely matches Haydn's ability to encapsulate long-range tonal ideas in motivic detail. Nevertheless, such 'monotonicity' bespeaks his sensitivity for overarching tonal coherence, as when the harmonic issues of a first movement spill over into the key of the slow movement. (In the sonatas Opp. 7 No. 3 and 34 No. 2, both in G minor, the developments are dominated by remarkable plateaus in E flat major, fifty-nine and twenty-nine bars long respectively, and their slow movements take up this key. In fact, the very imbalance created by these episodes actually necessitates the intermovement link, and is thus comprehended at the level of the cycle.) Finally, Clementi's 'differentiating monothematicism' makes sense of his deceptively archaic liking for recapitulating the first group in the wrong key without ever resolving it in the tonic. (Op. 10 No. 3 from 1783 and Op. 25 No. 3 from 1790, both in B flat major, recapitulate in the subdominant (like the first movement of Mozart's C major piano sonata K545); Op. 13 No. 5 in F from 1785 recapitulates in an even more extreme fashion in the flat seventh.) Since each of these sonatas features second groups that are variants of the first, the lack of a strict reprise does not endanger the form. A tonic reprise is avoided not in the spirit of Haydnesque wit, but in that of formal continuity. The procedure is Janus-faced, looking back to baroque binary form as well as forward to Beethoven and Schubert. The great F minor sonata Op. 13 No. 6, which is not monothematic at all and loses its first group entirely in the development, recalls Scarlatti in its wiry two-part counterpoint and nervous repetitions. Conversely, the development of Op. 34 No. 2 in G minor constitutes a second exposition (or an extra recapitulation) in the subdominant, reprising first and second groups in C major/minor and E flat major respectively. This, surely, was a model for Beethoven's sonata/ritornello hybrids in his late works, particularly the A minor String Quartet, Op. 132.

**Voice leading.** Christopher Wintle was among the first to note the importance of Corelli's contrapuntal models for Schenker's theory of voice leading ('Corelli's Tonal Models: The Trio Sonata Op. III/1', in *Nuovissimi Studi Corelliani*, ed. Sergio Durante and Pierluigi Petrobelli (Florence: Olschki, 1982), 29-69). From this standpoint, Clementi provides the missing link between Corellian counterpoint and Beethovenian directed tonal motion. Moreover, the synthesis of motivic argument and melodic lyricism, which both Haydn and Beethoven took a lifetime to master, is achieved effortlessly by Clementi from the outset. From this standpoint one of Clementi's most satisfying mature creations is the first movement of Op. 40 No. 3 in D from 1802. Partly a creative response to Beethoven's 'Pastoral' Sonata, Op. 28, from 1801 (evoked by the tonic pedals and the flat seventh at the start) and distantly recalling both the triadic glitter and purple *passaggi* of Haydn's HXVI:37 in the same key from 1779 (the retransition C# trill, feinting at B minor, is a give-away), Clementi's sonata none the less achieves an architectural breadth and clarity which arguably was not matched by Beethoven in a piano sonata before the 'Waldstein'. Its premise is a two-voice contrapuntal structure presented at bars 15-17 (the opening phrase of the Allegro), a stepwise descent A-F# intersecting with a rising scale A-D. Clementi actually focuses on the lower voice, and the twelve-bar first subject breaks down into five iterations of a B-C#-D cadential figure, whose ever changing rhythmic and registral disposition (note how the fourth, penultimate, arrival of D at bar 21 overlaps with a transfer of B an



octave down to the bass) disguises the periodicity and leads to an effect of seamless continuity. With the first perfect authentic cadence arriving only at the climax, in bars 24–25, Clementi seems to be blending Scarlattian cadential repetition with Haydnesque cadential evasion. And, like Haydn and Beethoven, Clementi tells a ‘tonal story’ about a couple of pitches, the  $\hat{6}-\hat{5}$  crux of B–A. When the tonic group is repeated at bar 37, Clementi generates modulation to the dominant by transposing the B–C#–D progression up a fifth, to F#–G#–A from bar 41, and transferring it up first one octave, then another, so that it occupies the melody. The voice leading throughout the transition is so clear (usually with one scale step per bar) as to merge with melodic cantabile. This, surely, is the epitome of what Gerhard calls ‘Kantabilisierung der polyphonen Techniken’, or what Scott Burnham identifies in Beethoven as a melodicization of form (*Beethoven Hero* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 31). The role of the dominant group is simply to stabilize the A as a melodic agent, so that the B (marked against the A pedal at bar 58), pointedly falls, to confirm the A, rather than climbing away from it. The stabilized A is ultimately that of the opening melody at bar 15, which had been a point of departure for falls and ascents. There had also been something rather disjointed about that A, since the opening melody ought to have continued its rising D–F# triad to the A above, rather than collapsing down. In this respect too, both in its high register (which realizes the missing octave A) and its triumphant A–C#–E arpeggiations, the second subject is a ‘correction’ of the crabbed first. Monothematic or not, the two groups are really differentiated by their broad functional character, rather than by motivic permutations. Clementi understands how textural and gestural simplicity can communicate large-scale formal ideas with crystal-clear transparency. The astonishing projection of the rising A–B–C#–D progression into the development’s tonal architecture is also transparent. The development’s forays into the keys of A, B and C, with the theatrical rise of C# to D (on the eleventh hour of B minor) at the lead-back, audibly prolong this progression and take forward the ‘story’ of B. This story involves two grand interruptions: the C major episode at bar 121, a striking non sequitur after the fermata on B, and the evasion of B minor in the retransition. Clementi’s *Gesamtplan* dramatizes tonal shape through texture, register and contour, and perfectly accommodates the music’s ideational unity within classical form.

The invention of this ‘Hegelian’ coherence between form, material and idea is normally credited to Beethoven. Yet perhaps Gerhard is right, and this palpable, *greifbar* quality is actually English, rather than German, in which case Beethoven’s hero is not Hegel or Napoleon, but one of Clementi’s British philosophers. Of course, there is no evidence that Clementi read philosophical texts. And one may question whether the ‘relationship between theory and practice’ (the title of an all-too brief subsection of the introduction on 23–25) is as direct as Gerhard suggests. Perhaps by the time the fourteen-year-old composer reached these shores he was already shaped by the Italian tradition and was thus only circumstantially linked to the English Enlightenment. After all, his greatest influence was Scarlatti, with whom he was so closely identified that the Breitkopf & Härtel complete Clementi edition of 1803–1819 even intercalates some Scarlatti sonatas without attributing them, indeed with the popular E major  $\kappa$ 380 transposed into the apparently easier-to-play key of F. Haydn wrote ‘entertainment’ symphonies like the 1778 *L’Imperiale* at Eszterháza, and thus a long way from major cities. Mozart’s tonal breadth (whether or not it was informed by Viennese civic experience) was surely as influential for Beethoven as Clementi’s – why is Mozart so signally absent from Gerhard’s picture? Nevertheless Gerhard deserves much praise for bringing Clementi back to the top table of musical classicism – thereby adding a refreshing fourth strand to the familiar dialogue between ‘the big three’ – and sketching an Italian–Spanish–English–Viennese axis perpendicular to the Austro-German tradition. Although it is ultimately hyperbolic, the notion that the classical style is ‘English’ resonates with Joseph Kerman’s argument that Donald Francis Tovey constructed the Anglo-American image of Beethoven. Just as the Germans claim Shakespeare (via Schlegel’s translations) as their own, we can take pride in Beethoven as an English composer.

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CATHERINE KINTZLER

*THÉÂTRE ET OPÉRA À L'ÂGE CLASSIQUE: UNE FAMILIÈRE ÉTRANGETÉ*

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In *Théâtre et opéra à l'âge classique: une familière étrangeté* Catherine Kintzler resumes the quest begun in her previous book *Poétique de l'opéra français de Corneille à Rousseau* (Paris: Minerve, 1991) to clarify the relationship between the *tragédie en musique* and the *tragédie classique*. Opera appeared in France at a time when the theatre had reached great heights, thanks partly to its leading figures Corneille, Racine and Molière; as a result, the legitimacy of opera as an artistic medium was defined from the beginning in the context of its relationship with the spoken genre. Even though many obvious features relate these two types of entertainment, their coexistence was a recurrent concern for philosophers fond of the theatre right from the start: classical tragedy and opera maintain the same 'familiarity', but the latter differs from the former in that it tends to put on stage that which spoken tragedy leaves implicit or hides in the wings. Thus Catherine Kintzler attempts to show that the theatre has to do with the metaphysics of morals (*mœurs*), whereas opera is concerned instead with the metaphysics of nature and aims at flattering the senses, thanks to a 'strange' elevated combination of music, scenery and machines.

*Théâtre et opéra à l'âge classique* is a collection of thirteen articles, conference papers and programme notes, most of them already published, making more readily available a number of texts previously distributed among periodicals, proceedings and festschrifts. Each one of these chapters can be read independently; the resulting totality contains occasional repetition of material.

The first part ('Le partage des deux scènes (1): Le théâtre du non-dit et sa métaphysique des mœurs', Chapters One to Four) is devoted exclusively to the spoken theatre. Kintzler uses it to explore the question of morals in the *théâtre classique* and its frequent presentation of an ambiguous disorder. She scrutinizes the way in which Corneille tackled this question through the excess of *invraisemblance* and heroic equivocality (Chapter One) and proposes a critical reading of Gotthold Ephraïm Lessing's comments on *Rodogune* (Chapter Two). She then discusses the topic of infanticide and its ideological (if not political) dimension in an enthralling study of the various versions of *Idoménée*. She contends that successive representations of infanticide were increasingly 'humanized', forsaking the depressive (Crébillon) and caricatural horror (Danchet-Campra) for a maudlin sentimentality (Le Mierre) before attaining the status of myth with Varesco-Mozart (Chapter Three). Finally, she ponders the morality of knowledge (*savoir*) as a means for the self-emancipation of women in a brilliant reading of Molière's *Les Femmes savantes* (Chapter Four).

In Part Two ('Le partage des deux scènes (2): Le théâtre du hors-texte et sa métaphysique de la nature', Chapters Five to Nine) Kintzler addresses opera, referring directly to her 1991 book *Poétique de l'opéra français*. Opera is a transposed, reversed, even caricatured, theatre which borrows the latter's principal rules (*vraisemblance*, necessity, propriety) to apply them to frivolous or purely external objects (gallantries, enchantments, magic, violence, the spectacular, meteorological phenomena). Kintzler reconsiders the idea that the opera knowingly withdraws from any question of morals in order to make way for a supernatural world of music and dance (Chapters Six and Seven), a world in which the exaggeration of effects can lead to unexpected comedic elements. This reading is further supported by a meticulous analysis of the Preface to Pellegrin's published libretto of Rameau's *Hippolyte et Aricie* (Chapter Five) and by a study of the opposition between classical poetic reason and the realistic reason of the Enlightenment, which leads to a renewed vision of the supernatural (Chapters Eight and Nine).

The third and last part ('La fascination des deux scènes', Chapters Ten to Thirteen) investigates the reciprocal fascination between the two domains of spoken and musical theatre, dwelling notably on the role of the *comédie-ballet* in the formation of French opera through the example of *Le bourgeois gentilhomme* (Chapter Ten), and on *Platée* and *Les Paladins* considered as caricatures of the *tragédie lyrique*



(Chapter Eleven); the parallel between *Platée* and Acts 1 and 2 of Lully's *Isis* is particularly illuminating. The interplay between the two types of entertainment is also very noticeable in the way in which Voltaire (with the example of *Sémiramis*) and Metastasio 'dramatized' the opera. *Sémiramis* in particular is presented as an 'abortive opera, marked by the attraction of the theatre' ('opéra manqué et marqué par l'attraction du théâtre', 270), halfway between the two aesthetics (Chapter Twelve). In the final chapter Kintzler discusses emerging reforms at the end of the eighteenth century – those of Gluck–Calzabigi and of Beaumarchais (as proposed in his preface to *Tarare*) – which aimed at restoring the primacy of the words, suggesting that they failed 'in their common ambition to form a new system' (293). Finally, she considers Da Ponte's and Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* as a paradoxical example of a completely autonomous opera from the dramatic point of view, detached from the spoken theatre not because of its poetic system, but because of the music itself; she concludes that 'the opera is itself the essential theatrical element' ('l'opéra s'impose par lui-même comme théâtre', 299).

All things considered, *Théâtre et opéra à l'âge classique: une famille étrangeté* is an excellent and densely wrought collection, offering an enjoyable, if at times difficult, read, one in which theatre and opera are considered in the context of the philosophy and the literary theories of the Enlightenment.

JEAN-PAUL MONTAGNIER



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## PHILIP OLLESON

*SAMUEL WESLEY: THE MAN AND HIS MUSIC*

Woodbridge and Rochester, NY: The Boydell Press, 2003

pp. xxiii + 360, ISBN 1 843 83031 0

The lives of Samuel Wesley, his brother Charles and his son Samuel Sebastian have recently received considerable scholarly attention – the work of Peter Horton and Alyson McLamore as well as that of Philip Olleson springs to mind – but this apparently sudden focus on them belies their enduring fascination for those with a passion for nineteenth-century British music. From the publication in 1875 of Samuel Wesley's 'Bach Letters' edited by his daughter Eliza (and now published in facsimile edition as *The Wesley Bach Letters* with an Introduction by Peter Williams (London: Novello, 1988)), a steady stream of Wesley-focused books and articles has recently appeared.

Eliza's seminal book is notable for more than its general interest in the Wesley family. As a collection of edited letters to his friend the organist Benjamin Jacob, it highlights Samuel (1766–1837) as both an able correspondent and an early champion of Johann Sebastian Bach. Subsequently, however, Wesley studies took a biographical turn, focusing on Samuel and his significance in the musical world of the early nineteenth century, but surprisingly more or less ignoring the wealth of other correspondence – spread across libraries and private collections in the UK, USA and beyond – sent or received by Wesley himself.

In a 1996 article Olleson himself highlighted the significance of these letters, noting that 'They constitute the largest and most important corpus of letters by an English musician of this period, and are an invaluable source of information on many aspects of musical life in London in the early nineteenth century' (*BIOS Reporter* 20/2 (1996), 10). It is not a surprise, then, to discover that Olleson's long-standing passion and dedication to his subject is the key to the success of his book. Also editor of *The Letters of Samuel Wesley* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) and, with Michael Kassler, *Samuel Wesley (1766–1837): A Source Book* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), Olleson is uniquely placed to write a biography of Wesley, delving into Wesley's character and world with a good feel for his subject's motivations and mores, and supporting his ideas with some superb anecdotal and contextual material.





Born the younger son of Charles Wesley (1707–1788), one of Methodism's founding fathers, Samuel Wesley's conversion to Roman Catholicism was just one of many controversial decisions he made in his eventful life. Much of what is now commonly known about him relates to his early prodigiousness and the concerts given with his brother, his head injury (apparently sustained around 1787), his subsequent operations and mental illness and his intimate relationships – first his fraught and ultimately ill-fated marriage to Charlotte Martin and later his 'immoral' but long-term relationship with his fifteen-year-old former servant Sarah Suter. But it is clear that there is more to Wesley than first meets the eye: his musical career spanned around sixty-five years and encompassed work not only as a composer, but also as an organist, teacher, lecturer, journalist, impresario, transcriber, editor and – perhaps most notably – Bach pioneer, and he was father to thirteen children (four from his first marriage and nine from his second).

In setting the context of Wesley's early life – and drawing on Deborah Rohr's excellent recent work (*The Careers of British Musicians, 1750–1850: A Profession of Artisans* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001)) – Olleson describes his portfolio-based career, explaining that music as a vocation offered the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century practitioner 'no career progression, and little chance of substantial earnings' (14). (This comment will no doubt also resonate with many twenty-first-century freelance musicians.) For the reader unfamiliar with the musical scene of this period, there is much to commend Olleson's book, and his painstaking source studies have revealed some gems. Accounts abound of Wesley's early Bach researches and performances, each involving big names of the day. According to Wesley's friend and colleague Vincent Novello (1781–1861), for example, a private duo performance he and Wesley gave of Bach's *Goldberg Variations* led the eminent historian Charles Burney (1726–1814) to comment that 'he had formed a very inadequate opinion of Sebastian Bach's fertility of invention and versatility of style' (105–107). Though later maligned for failing to champion Bach's works, Burney's humble admission at this late stage in his life only serves to highlight Wesley's significance as a promoter of Bach's music.

Perhaps my favourite anecdote relates to the visit made by Wesley and his friend Samuel Webbe Jr to Ramsgate in the autumn of 1812. Taking advantage of their seaside location:

they took to swimming every other day 'in puris naturalibus'. On one such occasion, just as they were about to undress, and much to Wesley's amusement, they met William Horsley with his fiancée, Elizabeth Callcott, the eldest daughter of John Wall Callcott, and her mother. Elizabeth Callcott remarked to Wesley that she would have recognized him by sight at any distance, on which Wesley later commented to Novello that she had narrowly escaped the chance of exercising this skill 'in his birthday suit'. (125)

By casting his subject in a human light, Olleson allows readers to see Wesley as a whole man – not just as a musical prodigy, mad genius or subject of ribaldry, but also as a warm and rounded individual; in particular he helps us to view Wesley as far more than the composer of those conservative church works by which he is, rather unfairly, best remembered by many musicians today.

One of the few problems with Olleson's work stems from his decision to 'discuss [Wesley's] music separately from his life' because 'the existence of a large number of works that are either undated or have no known links with the events of the composer's life . . . makes this approach impractical' (xiii). While this chronological approach allows 'full accessibility to readers without technical knowledge' and '[permits] the discussion of Wesley's music on a category-by-category basis over his entire career' (xiii), it does somewhat fragment and even occasionally duplicate the book's narrative, particularly in Chapter Eighteen. Nevertheless, the second section of the book provides a detailed account of the musical influences upon, and the nature of, Wesley's musical output. It provides a comprehensive outline of Wesley's works, with more extensive discussion and analysis of his larger-scale compositions supported by numerous music examples. Olleson's analyses reveal a more varied composer than Wesley's oft-emphasized predilection for Handel might suggest. Looking back as far as Gregorian chant and at the work of Wesley's contemporaries, Olleson finds a clue to the nature of his compositional style in Novello's comment that the music 'strongly resembled that of Purcell, with a mixture of Mozart, Handel, and Sebastian Bach in it' (280). And Wesley's interest in



instrumental textures and harmonic colour reveals his profound sensitivity both to his audience and to the contexts in which his works were to be received. A number of the pieces discussed are little known, but among his prolific output it is clear that there are some real but hitherto unknown gems. It can be hoped that the increased curiosity brought about by Olleson's book will result in the performance of several of these in years to come.

My only other small criticism is that, perhaps because of the plethora of source materials available to him, Olleson is often forced to interrupt his narrative in order to interject anecdotes. For example, discussion of Wesley's Masonic activities abruptly interrupts an account of his rather fraught attempts to mount his annual benefit concert in 1812 (120–123); in another case the reader is told of the advanced state of Sarah's second pregnancy, but the child in question appears never actually to have been born (124).

The overall impression, however, is of a consistent and coherent account written in a fluid and highly readable manner that will be as accessible to and valued by experts as non-experts. Arguably (though I doubt Olleson would agree), Wesley's importance as the author and recipient of so many illuminating letters bestows upon him a more influential place in British music history than his music ever could. At the very least, his written legacy deserves far more attention than it has been given hitherto. With this book – together with his other contributions to Wesley scholarship – Olleson has ensured the continued preservation of Wesley's memory.

CLAIRE MERA-NELSON



## EDITIONS

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### WILLIAM BABELL, TWELVE SOLOS FOR A VIOLIN OR OBOE WITH BASSO CONTINUO

ED. CHARLES GOWER PRICE

Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era 140

Middleton, WI: A-R Editions, 2005

pp. xvii + 82, ISBN 0 89579 576 0

Bruce Haynes is probably unkind to William Babell when he describes the composer's twenty-four 'solos' as 'the woodwind players' pale shadows of Corelli's famous solos' (*The Eloquent Oboe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 351). The occasional oddities of voice leading and harmonic ambiguities are more than compensated for by Babell's imaginative response to Corelli's violin sonatas. Babell's works possess genuine melodic appeal, both in the rhapsodic first movements and in the attractive dance movements, and his music is often far more expansive than Corelli's Op. 5 in terms of harmony and melodic development. The edition under review presents the twelve sonatas published by Walsh and Hare (1725) as 'Part the First of [Babell's] Posthumous Works'; a further twelve, 'Part the Second', were published shortly afterwards and are yet to appear in a modern edition.

The son of French bassoonist Charles Babel, William Babell is best known for his keyboard arrangements of popular opera arias and overtures between 1709 and 1718, including in 1717 a selection from Handel's *Rinaldo*. The difficulty of his variations, and his proficiency in their execution, earned him the admiration of Johann Mattheson and later John Hawkins; Charles Burney poured scorn, with equal enthusiasm, on Babell's 'wiredrawing' of the melodies to produce empty displays of virtuosity. His ability as a violinist, meanwhile, is evident from the graces supplied to the slow movements of his sonatas, which, as Charles



Gower Price suggests, seem better suited to the composer's own instrument than to the oboe also stipulated on the title page (x). While these graces are perhaps the most interesting historical aspect of the works, there is even more to commend them to the performer in the well planned fugues and stylish dances that make up the remainder of the movements. A particularly attractive feature of Babell's style is his evident fondness for the interrupted cadence towards the end of a movement (see, for example, Sonatas 2/iii, 3/iii, 10/ii and 10/iv of the present set).

The overall standard of Price's edition is exemplary. The music is clear and uncluttered, and editorial intervention is clearly signalled both in the text and in a detailed critical report at the back of the volume. Only occasionally did I find the editing heavy-handed. The removal of the simultaneous false relation in sonata 5/ii, bar 25, seems unnecessary given the similar and incontrovertible details in sonatas 10/iv (bar 11) and 11/ii (bar 27); clearly Babell, like many English composers before him, was not squeamish about such things. In sonata 1/iv, meanwhile, Price's alteration of the last note in the bass in bar 13 from f to g, and the editorial natural added to the melodic  $e\flat^2$  above, certainly make the ensuing modulation sound more convincing by modern standards. The double misprint implied seems unlikely, though, and the original notes are stylistically consistent with other passages in Babell's sonatas. Such points of contention are few, however, and Price is rarely guilty of the arguably more serious failure to correct obvious errors in the original: the missing flats in the melody, sonata 2/iv, bar 33, are an exception to an otherwise thorough improvement on a source that is often sloppy. Unfortunately, one or two more errors appear to have crept in during typesetting and escaped the attention of the proofreaders (sonata 4/ii, bar 5, bass, note 3:  $e\flat$ , *recte* d; same movement, bar 34, bass, note 1: f, *recte* d; sonata 9/ii, bar 20, bass, note 4: c, *recte* A).

A-R's most recent volumes in the Recent Researches series have avoided realizations of figured bass parts, preferring instead to include a greater number of editorial figures. This undoubtedly saves valuable space and also increases the life of the edition in the face of new information about performance practice, which can render printed realizations obsolete. Unfortunately, it also limits the usefulness of the edition to the potentially large amateur performance market for these sonatas; in this respect the recent edition edited by Matthias Maute (Winterthur: Amadeus, 1999–2000), which does contain a usable realization, may well be preferable for some performers. Indeed, even seasoned keyboard players may have appreciated guidance on the treatment of the few but recurrent eccentricities in Babell's voice leading. The most frequent of these is the occurrence of scale degree  $\xi$  over scale degree  $\natural$  at the approach to a cadence, where one might expect subdominant or supertonic harmony (Sonatas 2/i, bar 5; 2/ii and 2/iii, bar 15; 6/iv, bar 19; 9/ii, bars 6 and 30; 10/ii, bars 12 and 15). These are rarely figured, and on the one occasion that Price provides editorial assistance the result implies an unsatisfactory cluster (sonata 2/i, bar 5; surely a first-inversion tonic chord over a passing note, not a subdominant minor with added ninth). In most other cases the best solution would seem to be to add a single inner voice a sixth above the bass.

The absence of advice on the continuo in the 'Notes on Performance' (xii–xvi) thus represents a missed opportunity on the part of the editor. Such advice could also have covered the instrumentation of the accompaniment, which is strangely neglected in spite of the decision to alter the original designation from 'with a bass, figur'd for the harpsichord' to 'Basso continuo', both on the cover of the volume and in the score. Given the propensity of contemporary English composers to advertise their Italianate credentials, the retention of English terminology here is surely worth respecting, especially since the term 'basso continuo' as often understood today is considerably less flexible than Babell's designation. Indeed, the original more vague stipulation might well reflect contemporary practice, in which the harpsichord bass was doubled by whatever suitable instrument was to hand or, indeed, none at all: the heavy use of broken-chord accompanimental semiquavers in sonata 7/ii seems strongly suited to performance with a lone harpsichord accompaniment. The omission of any discussion of the bass part from the 'Notes on Performance' is all the more disappointing given the highly practical and detailed advice on other aspects of performance. The notes on the performance of ornaments notated by sign (xii–xiv) are highly recommended, while the interesting discussion of the performance of the various dance types in the sonatas (xiv–xv) could potentially make these movements far more rewarding for performers and listeners alike.



The situation with Babell's 'graced' slow movements is almost exactly the opposite to the problem with the bass part: here the extempore element of performance practice not only survives in printed form, but actually replaces the original melodies, leaving little trace (in the absence of any surviving manuscript sources) of the unadorned forms of the works as Babell presumably composed them. Price's treatment of these graces invites comment on two grounds: his treatment of the notation of the graces themselves, and the provision of the 'reconstructed simple air' for each of the graced movements.

Like the ornamented versions of Corelli's Op. 5 published by Estienne Roger of Amsterdam (c1710), and reissued soon after by Walsh and Hare in London, Babell's graced adagios are notated with clusters of demisemiquavers, usually in smaller note heads and often metrically irregular. In transcribing the sonatas, however, Price 'resolves' all of these notes into conventional metrical groupings. Many of the decisions made in the process are matters of personal interpretation and not worth debating here, but the more serious point is that this practice seems almost antithetical to Price's own exhortation to the performer to 'avoid a strict metric interpretation of the graced passages', and to aim for 'a gradual acceleration of activity . . . rather than a series of absolute rhythmic values' (xiv). Given that the resolution itself arguably increases the complication of the music in terms of sheer visual impact, one wonders, then, what is gained from the laborious process of fitting all of these rhythmically supple notes into the constraints of the metre. Performers who prefer to rely on the original notation in their efforts to recreate the desirable effect are aided by the helpful inclusion of all the graced movements in facsimile as an appendix.

The provision of hypothetically reconstructed 'simple airs' brings with it a further set of problems, this time affecting the ontology of the works as well as performance practice. Price considers this a matter of practicality: the reconstructed simple melodies afford increased performing options, 'from performing the simple tunes in first reprises to improvising their own graces in lieu of those that Babell provides' (79). In effect, what he does is to take Babell's sonatas as printed and turn them into something more closely resembling Walsh's Corelli print, with the graces printed on a separate staff above the unadorned melodies. Yet the performance practice he suggests cannot represent the way that the original edition of Babell's sonatas was used, unless we postulate that a large number of earlier manuscript copies existed and have since been lost. Even then, the suggestion can apply only to the bipartite movements with repeated sections and not to those that are through-composed. The reconstructed part itself, like the rhythmicization of the graces, is a matter of interpretation. One could argue about the detail, but the more interesting issue is what the reconstructed part represents: is it the work of Babell? Surely it cannot be; only by uncovering a lost manuscript could one confidently recover Babell's sonatas in their original form. Yet this conclusion causes problems in the context of what we understand about the sonata in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. We are accustomed to giving priority to the unadorned forms of works like Corelli's Op. 5 sonatas; all ornamented versions, even those by the composer, are considered aberrations – usually evidence only of contemporary performance practice. Strictly speaking, then, Babell's sonatas do not survive; all that remains are the remnants of a postulated historical performance, real or idealized. Price's reconstructed 'simple air', meanwhile, is nothing less than the restoration of a lost work.

Clearly such a position is untenable. Given the degree of choice involved in the reconstruction, we must retain, as I am sure Price would, a degree of scepticism about the extent to which the 'simple airs' can represent Babell's sonatas in their original form. The graces themselves, meanwhile, have considerably more authority, since they have a demonstrable authorial link to the composer (assuming, that is, that we take the assertion 'with proper Graces adapted to each Adagio by the Author' on the title page at face value; in the absence of evidence to the contrary, we would seem to have little choice). In line with much recent thought on Baroque music, then, the survival of these sonatas solely in their ornamented form demonstrates the need for a more flexible attitude to what constitutes a musical work in this period, both in its original context and in the context of performance and scholarship today.

It remains to consider how this new edition adds to existing publications of Babell's first set of sonatas. The minor inaccuracies I have described do not detract from the quality of the edition as a whole, which is based on solid scholarship and an obvious appreciation of Babell's style. In this respect the edition will be



valuable to anyone interested in early eighteenth-century English chamber music. Like other recent offerings from A-R editions, however, this publication suffers slightly from its attempt to fulfil the dual roles of performing edition and scholarly text (see the review by Wiebke Thormählen of A-R's edition of sonatas by Pierre Gaviniés, ed. Anthony F. Ginter, *Eighteenth-Century Music* 1/1 (2004), 105–107). Professional performers and scholars may well prefer to work from facsimiles (Alston, Cumbria: J. P. H. Publications, 1996) unencumbered by Price's editorial rhythmicizations and reconstructed parts, while amateur performers, even if they welcome the simplified airs as aids to performance, are likely to miss the presence of a realized continuo and thus look to the earlier editions of individual sonatas (Sonata 3, and Sonata 3 from the second set, ed. Michael Tilmouth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963); Sonata 11, ed. George Pratt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978) or the edition mentioned above by Matthias Maute. Price's edition gains, nevertheless, in its excellent provision of background commentary and advice to the performer (notwithstanding the neglect of the continuo) and for this reason will be attractive to anyone seeking to study or perform these neglected works. If Babel's sonatas become better known as a result, the edition will have served its purpose.

ALAN HOWARD



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CARL STAMITZ, VIOLA CONCERTO NO. 1 IN D MAJOR (URTEXT)

ED. NORBERT GERTSCH, ANNEMARIE WEIBEZAHN / PIANO REDUCTION BY JOHANNES UMBREIT /  
CADENZAS AND LEAD-INS BY ROBERT D. LEVIN / FINGERING AND BOWING BY JÜRGEN WEBER

Munich: Henle, 2003

pp. vi + 26, ISMN M 2018 0758 4

Carl Stamitz remains a relatively unappreciated composer for whom serious re-evaluation is long overdue. The only major study of his music to date, albeit one restricted to his orchestral works, is an unpublished dissertation by Friedrich Kaiser ('Carl Stamitz (1745–1801): Biographische Beiträge, das symphonische Werk; Thematischer Katalog der Orchesterwerke', Philipps-Universität, Marburg, 1962) – circulated photocopies of it are like gold dust! Relatively little of his music has been published, though several concertos, including the one under review, have been accorded the luxury of a number of editions over the years, if frequently only in the form of a piano reduction. The majority of music publishers still regard Stamitz as something of a lost cause, in spite of the fact that much of his instrumental music is of a far higher quality than that of many of his contemporaries whose music has been successfully reintroduced in recent decades through publications and/or recordings. My own attempts to seek publication for anything by him other than critical editions of concertos and chamber music have been fruitless: many of his fifty-one symphonies and thirty-eight *symphonies concertantes* (seven of which involve a viola in the solo grouping) are highly imaginative in terms of both musical content and scoring, with a generally more cosmopolitan outlook than is the case with contemporary Mannheim symphonies by, say, Christian Cannabich, and many of these works merit publication and performance. The reason for this general neglect of Stamitz's music is perhaps not hard to find. He spent much of his career as a peripatetic musician and composer, unattached to any musical establishment from the late 1770s until the mid-1790s, touring around Europe with great success, many of his compositions being purchased by court and ecclesiastical libraries. Both he and his music enjoyed great popularity during his lifetime, though he died in poverty, and a number of the stylistic features of his music (such as the melodic 'sigh') are frequently cited as having influenced many lesser composers to the point of becoming clichés. His reputation suffered after his death (his style did not develop during the last few decades of his life) and has still not been rehabilitated. Although he was a product of the



so-called Mannheim 'School', his itinerant lifestyle has apparently prevented him from even being considered for inclusion in a number of major publishing projects, such as that initiated by the Forschungsstelle Mannheimer Hofkapelle der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften or the ongoing Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Bayern (which does include a volume of Cannabich symphonies). It is perhaps not difficult to comprehend the lack of recent academic studies of his life and works: with archival documentation and music manuscripts scattered around Europe, the daunting task of filling in the gaps may seem unrewarding to potential researchers, not to mention costly and time-consuming.

Stamitz played the violin, viola and viola d'amore to a virtuoso level and composed music for all three instruments for his own use. With fifteen violin concertos (according to Stanley Sadie, editor, in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London: Macmillan, 2002), volume 24, 270, five of these are lost and another six are doubtful) and three for viola d'amore to his credit, it is perhaps surprising that his output for the viola remains relatively small. The *New Grove* lists just two such concertos for certain (the companion to the present work, in B flat major, is lost) and a third, two movements of which have also been attributed to Giovanni Giornovich. Composers at the time were not averse to recycling music by their contemporaries (generally uncredited): the bassoonist-composer Franz Anton Pfeiffer (1752–1787), for example, reworked part of Stamitz's F major bassoon concerto as a sonata movement and rearranged two movements of his viola da gamba quartet for bassoon quartet. The two viola concertos definitely by Stamitz were advertised in the 1774 Supplement of the *Breitkopf Thematic Catalogue* (facsimile in Barry S. Brook, ed., *The Breitkopf Thematic Catalogue: The Six Parts and Sixteen Supplements 1762–1787* (New York: Dover, 1966), column 538). Brook's index, incidentally, misattributes these to Carl's father, Johann, which is perhaps understandable, since the composer's name is simply given as Stamitz, while some viola quartets in the same column are more clearly identified as being by 'Stamitz, le Fils', though whether by Carl or his brother Anton is unclear. This gives a *terminus ante quem* for the D major concerto, since the Breitkopf listing was clearly for the work's first publication by Heina in Paris c1773–1774 – 'Parigi' is appended to the entry. Stamitz left Mannheim for Paris in 1770 and remained there, it is believed, until 1777. It is therefore more than likely that he composed both concertos in Paris, though the Henle edition states that they were written 'by the end of the 1760s at the very earliest' (iv), possibly before Stamitz left Mannheim. Unlike the other two viola concertos, both of which utilize pairs of flutes and horns with strings, the D major one is highly progressive for its time in being scored for clarinets, horns and strings with two viola parts, the latter a feature also of the B flat concerto and a number of his symphonies. (For a discussion of this aspect see David J. Rhodes, 'The Origins and Utilisation of Divided Viola Writing in the Symphony at Mannheim and Various Other European Centres in the Second Half of the 18th Century', in *Mannheim: ein Paradies der Tonkünstler?*, ed. Ludwig Finscher, Bärbel Pelker and Rüdiger Thomsen-Fürst (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2002), 67–170.) As for the solo viola part, it rises to a high  $e^3$  at one point in the first movement and includes a number of characteristically large leaps, as in bars 88–90, where it plunges from a  $d^3$  semiquaver to a succession of minims:  $g-b^2-d-a^2$ , something widely encountered in solo instrumental music at the time, especially that influenced by the Mannheim style. There are also several passages of double-stopped notes acting in a melodic capacity, such as in bars 201–206, and the usual sections of scalar, arpeggiated or alternating-note semiquaver passagework. A notable recording of the concerto has been made by Ulrich Koch with the Collegium Aureum under Franzjosef Maier (DHM/BMG, 05472 77457-2, 1997).

The first modern edition of Stamitz's D major viola concerto was a performing one made by the violist and later music librarian of the Mecklenburg-Schwerin library, Clemens Meyer, and published in Leipzig by Rieter-Biedermann in 1900; based on the second print by W. N. Hauelsen (Frankfurt am Main, c1775–1780), a copy of which is at Schwerin, it is still on sale under the Edition Peters imprint and appears to be the edition most favoured by violists today. Later editions include those by Kurt Soldan (Leipzig: Peters, 1937), William Primrose (New York: Schirmer, 1979) and a critical one in full score edited by Ulrich Drüner (Winterthur: Amadeus, 1995). The last-named was based primarily on the Heina print and on a manuscript 'copy of the parts unquestionably done by Stamitz himself' (Drüner, inside front cover) at the Národní Museum in Prague. Another eighteenth-century copy of the parts but with oboes instead of clarinets at the University



Library in Münster (Burgsteinfurt collection) was also consulted. Henle states that it ‘clearly antedates the first [Heina] edition’ (iv) and represents ‘a much earlier stage of the text in which the articulation and dynamics are not nearly as detailed . . . It also lacks a number of derivative errors . . . [and] is therefore only useful as an aid in cases of doubt’ (iv). Drüner, on the other hand, believes this manuscript to be a much later one (‘prior to 1793’: Drüner, inside front cover); this dating disagreement is, however, not fully explained.

The new Henle ‘urtext’ edition, whatever that term means, given the editorial intervention to a greater or lesser extent of no fewer than five people, is based on all four eighteenth-century sources noted above, including the Hau Eisen one dismissed by Drüner as an ‘unreliable’ reprint of Heina’s; Henle states, however, that it includes a reading from the Prague manuscript that is not present in the Heina print and must therefore have been prepared from both Heina and another source. Both Drüner and Henle note the considerable number of errors and inconsistencies in the Prague manuscript, hence their primary reliance on the Heina print. The new edition itself is a model of scholarship and clarity. The trilingual prefatory notes and end commentary are concise and outline various problems involved in the preparation of the edition, though little is stated regarding the preparation of the piano reduction other than that it ‘has been newly extracted from the parts of the first edition’ (v). Footnotes in the separate viola part relate to editorial decisions made concerning it alone, and these comments are not duplicated in the piano reduction. Missing markings of whatever nature are noted only if missing from Heina – a sensible decision, given its relative primacy. Similarly, deficiencies of articulation and dynamic markings in the Münster source are omitted, since it ranks below Prague in importance.

Comparison with Drüner’s full score indicates that the piano reduction is generally satisfactory, though orchestral viola parts that cross over the *basso* line do tend to ignore the fact that a double bass (or related instrument) would have sounded an octave below the cellos: bar 2 of the first movement, for example, gives the initial bass note as g (the viola 2 pitch) rather than the *basso a/A* (beat 3 of this bar, incidentally, omits the third of the chord until the offbeat, though it is present in viola 2 – the solution, a left-hand dyad, is already present in bar 1). No attempt has been made to fill out missing harmonies. The question of a continuo instrument is ignored, but certain passages – such as in bars 27–28, where the violins in octaves are simply accompanied by the *basso* line – surely require one; this could easily have been effected with the use of cue-sized notes. The piano left hand in bar 247, incidentally, omits the requisite rests on beats 2–4. The piano reduction is cued as to the precise nature of the original orchestration in each passage of music, which is something I had not encountered before in such detail, but a surprisingly useful device, given the relative difference between a string *forte* marking and one that also involves, for example, wind instruments. Page breaks are expertly managed: there is no need on the pianist’s part either to omit notes or to employ a page turner.

Robert Levin’s suggested cadenzas and lead-ins are printed as an appendix in the separate sixteen-page viola part, and Jürgen Weber’s fingering and bowing markings are also confined to that part, sensibly leaving the piano reduction as a critical and the viola part as a critical performing edition. The viola part (but not the viola line in the piano reduction) reproduces what was originally included in the solo part of the music played by first violas during the orchestral tutti. Drüner sensibly omits this, since it includes substantial rests not present in the viola 1 part – in other words, the original soloist could not have been expected to play with the orchestral first violas (who may well have been numerically deficient) in the tutti, as might otherwise be implied by these cues. The provision of melodic cues would therefore have been user-friendlier. One highly unusual and innovative feature of the rondo finale is the use of left-hand pizzicato on every second semiquaver in bars 78–83, a technique later popularized by Paganini. Drüner appears to have been the first editor correctly to interpret these markings (Meyer and Primrose omit them), citing Pierre Baillot’s *L’Art du violon* ((Paris, 1834), 224), and the Henle edition also includes them. Another disagreement with the older editions is found in the finale at bars 163–165 and concerns an octave marking in the solo viola part that breaks off too early in all but the Münster source: once again Drüner spotted this and Henle likewise adopts it.



Henle's debt to Drüner is fully acknowledged, and this edition obviously fulfils the requirement for a modern critical piano reduction of the most frequently performed classical viola concerto in the repertory, something that Drüner's full score cannot provide, and in this respect the two editions complement each other, despite a number of editorial differences of opinion. One major difference concerns the triplet quavers in the first movement, often encountered in a melodic context: there are two such groups within the main theme, for example. Henle follows the Münster source (already noted for its comparative lack of articulation markings) and leaves them all unslurred, whilst Drüner adopts those slurs present in the other three sources. Henle argues against the slur because of the common eighteenth-century notational convention of automatically adding a slur to all triplet groupings, though Jürgen Weber in fact reinstates them editorially in the solo viola part whenever they occur within a melodic context, resulting in an obvious inconsistency with such passages in the piano reduction! The question as to whether such slurs are ever applied to repeated-note triplets unfortunately does not arise here; this would doubtless have clarified the situation. Drüner's would appear to be the correct decision, however, given the fact that two such groups of triplets in bar 78 are actually unslurred in his edition, presumably in line with the majority of sources, as also are a substantial number of triplets and sextuplets in the finale: these would surely all have been slurred had the automatic slurring convention argued by Henle been applied in this concerto. This naturally brings us back to the question (something commonly encountered in Henle editions) as to whether the new edition should rightly be called an 'urtext' or a 'critical edition'. The amount of editorial intervention, not to mention the lack of an authoritative primary source, would surely point to the latter rather than the former.

DAVID J. RHODES



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GIUSEPPE TORELLI, *CONCERTI MUSICALI*, OP. 6

ED. JOHN G. SUESS

Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era 115

Middleton, WI: A-R Editions, 2002

pp. xv+138, ISMN M 2153 0860 2

John G. Suess's beautifully and meticulously executed edition of Torelli's Op. 6 is a welcome contribution to both the study and the performance of the large repertory of early concertos. The volume consists of an Introduction, giving the biography of the composer and a detailed stylistic discussion of the music, the score of the twelve-concerto set, and a clear and well organized critical report. The edition is yet another illustration of the very high standards set by the long-standing *Recent Researches* series, which has proved a major contributor to musicological research.

Giuseppe Torelli (born Verona, 1658; died Bologna, 1709) was for most of his life a prominent violinist and composer in the *Accademia Filarmonica* at St Petronio, Bologna. In 1695 he accepted an offer to join the orchestra of George Friedrich, Margrave of Brandenburg, apparently anticipating the difficulties that caused the temporary disbanding of the St Petronio orchestra a year later. He performed with much success in Berlin in 1697 and in Vienna in 1699. His Op. 6 was his only set published in Germany, having been printed in Augsburg in 1698. His next set, the frequently discussed Op. 8, was published posthumously in 1709 (see Simon McVeigh and Jehoash Hirshberg, *The Italian Solo Concerto 1700–1760: Rhetorical Strategies and Style History* (Woodbridge and Rochester, NY: Boydell, 2004), 51–61). Op. 6 attracted immediate international attention: it was reprinted in the same year by Roger in Amsterdam and in 1701 by Giuseppe Sala in Venice. In the Introduction Suess quotes Claude Palisca, who, having praised Torelli's Op. 8, 'later admits that the





fast–slow–fast sequence of movements does occur in Torelli's Op. 6 concertos; the other traits he mentions may be found in them as well' (viii).

Suess has based his scoring on Roger's print. Indeed, the two facsimiles in the edition confirm his observation that the Amsterdam engraving is visually much superior to the German publication (100). The Venetian print is identical to Roger's.

I concur with Suess's view that Torelli's two important concerto sets, Opp. 6 and 8, should be viewed as an integrated, important step forward in the emergence of the concerto, ripieno and solo alike. Torelli's Op. 6 fits the definition of concerto as a 'generic term for a large-scale multi-movement composition for strings, irrespective of its precise scoring' (McVeigh and Hirshberg, *The Italian Solo Concerto*, 52). This is one of the earliest compilations of concertos to make a distinction between solo and ripieno, in that Torelli introduced the music with a comment to the performer: 'I must warn you that if you find the word solo in any of these concerti, the part must be played by a single violin. Elsewhere you may have as many as three or four instruments to a part. In this way, you will discover my intentions, and live contented' (cited on page 100). For a detailed study of concerto scoring see Richard Maunder, *The Scoring of Baroque Concertos* (Woodbridge and Rochester, NY: Boydell, 2004)). Torelli's instruction applies to only two of the concertos, Nos 6 and 12, both of which open with unambiguous ritornellos that alternate with solo sections. Thus they anticipate Torelli's Op. 8, which is a landmark in the emergence of the solo concerto as a distinct (and leading) subgenre of the concerto.

In the Introduction Suess suggests a stylistic classification of the movements into three types: ritornello, trio sonata and orchestral. Table 2 would have been clearer had it been set as a timeline with the bar numbers indicated. (When we want to check Solo 3, for example, we have to add up the bars in the right-hand column in order to find out where it begins.) But my main reservation concerns the criteria for stylistic classification. To begin with, the three terms are not mutually exclusive. 'Ritornello' is a formal concept, 'orchestral' is textural and indeed covers all of movements in the set, and 'trio sonata' has both textural and formal resonance. The beautifully structured first movement of No. 3, which Suess has defined as being in ritornello form, is only marginally related to the form that Vivaldi was later to establish. The initial section, which can be understood as ritornello (bars 1–11), ends on the dominant, and the following section continues with the same texture and thematic material, featuring another cadence in bar 15, this time on the subdominant. The brief phrase that follows is a motivic variant modulating back to the tonic in bar 21. The ensuing second ritornello, mostly on the dominant, continues until the (slightly altered) repeat of the first ritornello in bar 44. The form could also be described as A–B–A, though, or just as 'orchestral'. The violin concerto Op. 6 No. 6 features a trio sonata texture, with the second violin omitted in the two solo sections. Likewise, I found it hard to define the parameters of the ritornello in No. 7 with its continuous, monothematic flow.

It is inevitable that anachronisms will filter into studies of Op. 6 in light of the immense achievement of the 'Vivaldian revolution', to quote Michael Talbot's apt formulation ('Concerto', in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music Online*, ed. Laura Macy, accessed 3 August 2002), drawing on expressions such as 'already', 'still not' and 'anticipating'. There is nothing wrong with this approach, as it deepens our realization that 'all the required elements were available during the 1700s', when Vivaldi synthesized them into 'order, connection, and proportion' (McVeigh and Hirshberg, *The Italian Solo Concerto*, 51), and has already been employed in a brief discussion of Op. 6 No. 12 (McVeigh and Hirshberg, *The Italian Solo Concerto*, 58). At the same time, the availability of the full edition of Op. 6 encourages in-depth analyses of the twelve concertos on their own terms. The first movement of the violin concerto Op. 6 No. 6 in C minor can be used to illustrate this point.

The first ritornello is modulatory (C minor to E flat major) and monothematic. The first solo (bars 8–14) introduces another rhythmically related motive, as well as idiomatic triplets, and modulates to G minor; two related tonal centres have thus been reached. A brief tutti (bar 15) confirms the moment of tonal arrival. The second solo (bars 16–27) modulates back to an intermediate tonic through sequences and chromaticism, all based on the initial motive. The entire process restarts, with the ritornello modulating to E flat major (bars 27–39) and including motivic variants. The ensuing solo (bars 40–51) modulates, as before, to G minor, this



time employing fully diatonic harmony. The final ritornello (bar 51–68) starts on the dominant minor, returning to the tonic through an intense imitative process, and the movement closes with a coda. The movement therefore features a striking balance between unified material and continual variation, and between sequential and chromatic progressions in solo 2 and diatonic and slow harmonic rhythm in solo 3, reaching its climactic point in the third ritornello, the only one in the dominant. While each of these devices could be said to anticipate the Vivaldian ritornello movement, they also produce a mature and well balanced violin concerto movement in its own right.

JEHOASH HIRSHBERG



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## GIOVANNI BATTISTA VIOTTI, SIX STRING QUARTETS, OPUS 1

ED. CLIFF EISEN

The Early String Quartet, volume 1

Ann Arbor: Steglein, 2003

pp. xvi + 124, ISBN 0 9719854 0 5

This admirable new series is devoted to string quartets composed during the period c1760 to 1830, with a deliberately wide geographical catchment area that includes outlying European centres as well as the Americas. Quartet parts accompany the scores, and the series is clearly aimed as much at the adventurous performer as at the scholar. This first volume, edited by the general editor of the series, provides a welcome opportunity to assess the contribution of Giovanni Battista Viotti, the Italian violinist known today almost exclusively for his full-scale Paris and London violin concertos (alongside his rather less ambitious violin duos). Viotti's string quartet output is unfortunately restricted to three very late works and two early sets, both published shortly after his sensational debut at the Concert Spirituel (17 March 1782) and thus contemporary with the earliest of his concertos.

As the editor suggests, the Op.1 set is in many ways typical of the Parisian *quatuor concertant* of the 1780s: it represents neither the first-violin-dominated *quatuor brillant* nor the Viennese classical debate of Haydn and Mozart. Most of these quartets have the customary succession of solos for each instrument in turn, with the second violin often expected to mirror the virtuosity of the first. Yet this is a classification that demands a more rounded consideration, since as with other quartet sets of the decade (such as those of Pleyel) some of the six have only very limited solo writing for the viola and cello. This is surely a significant distinction, not only for the composition itself, but also for players selecting their repertoire. Where there are cello solos, for example, they are high and quite demanding (the slow movement of No. 5 contains a lovely cello cantilena), but in some movements the cello line is essentially a *basso* part that could even be played by keyboard.

The immediate impression is of melodic fecundity, often on an expansive scale as material is repeated across different instruments. Generally the tone is relaxed, even leisurely: sometimes this produces a rather diffuse impression, with a tendency towards over-sectionalized structures linking a succession of separate four-bar phrases. But elsewhere Viotti uses the expectation of instrumental rotation more subtly so as to go against these norms, as in the first cello solo in No. 5/1, where instead of handing over to the anticipated second violin the cello turns in a different direction with an expressive *minore* variant.

Viotti is also clearly keen to experiment with unusual and striking textures, delighting in the exploration of varied doubling patterns, and a rich Mozartean sonority frequently arises from doubling at the octave and third together (indeed this texture is often used in Mozart's own *quatuors concertants*, the three 'Prussian' quartets). The broad pacing of Viotti's appealing Italianate melody often allows space in the accompaniment for quite intricate rhythmic figurations and triplet patterns, as well as the *sotto voce* rococo ornamentation of



the second variation of No. 2/ii. By contrast, most of the rondo themes are highly whimsical in character – whether the fragmentary mock bravura of No. 5, hardly a tune at all, or the *scherzando* No. 3, with its catchily independent inner parts.

Although these quartets by no means inhabit the deeply expressive world of the later violin concertos, there is a boldness of manner here that belies the normal easy-going charm of the *quatuor concertant*. Much of the music suggests an operatic character, sometimes *buffo* in origin, but at other times more serious in its rhetorical gestures. No. 3, for example, begins with an operatic *scena* featuring an adagio call to attention, an andante aria and a recall of the opening, all serving as an introduction to the Allegro proper. Elsewhere there is more than a hint of the concerto. The very first quartet opens with an arresting orchestral assertion, such that when the second violin takes its solo turn – leading a commanding version of the opening idea towards the dominant – the effect is strongly reminiscent of the solo entry after an orchestral ritornello. Viotti indeed uses quartet solos not only to articulate structural markers in the usual rotational way, but also (in a more active manner) to carry the argument forward, as, for example, in the unexpected interposition of a plaintive *minore* episode in the second subject area by the viola in No. 3/i, or by the second violin in No. 6/i.

Bold harmonic dislocations add to the dramatic thrust of many of the development sections. Thus in No. 4/i in B flat major a *pianissimo* F major at the double bar is immediately dismissed by an A flat major version of the brusque opening chords: further dislocations follow as the tonal scheme descends by thirds through F minor, D flat major and B flat minor. This sense of tonal expansiveness is one of the most striking characteristics of this otherwise elegantly turned, melodic music. Indeed, such third relationships – a penchant throughout Viotti's career – are found elsewhere, with both No. 3/i and No. 6/i arriving similarly at the flat mediant in the development section.

Formally, too, there are moments of real individuality: an avoidance of the routine, with (as Eisen remarks (viii)) varied reprises, reworkings and transformations of material. Thus in No. 5/i the recapitulation is altered not merely in the casual way of previous decades, but rather as a clearly intended transformative gesture. Ingenuity is also to be found in the finales (generally the second of two movements), where Viotti seems at pains to avoid the predictable. Even in the variation set of No. 2 the first variation is *minore*; other finales are nominally rondos, but Viotti avoids the simple pattern of rondo repetitions surrounding solo episodes so characteristic of this genre. In No. 1 in A major the second episode begins conventionally enough in the subdominant, but at the moment of expected return a disruptive cello gradually interposes a more soloistic presence, which is eventually rewarded with a full solo in C major. Still more arresting is the finale of No. 4 in B flat major, where a pastoral Andantino resolves into the main Allegretto, extraordinarily starting in the subdominant, E flat major, as if the pastorale had been merely an introduction. But of course a tonic return is inevitable: this is eventually achieved by a reiteration of the pastorale in the tonic, but transformed into the tempo of the Allegretto. Such sophisticated transformations and paradoxical juxtapositions foreshadow the mature classical idiom that Viotti was to explore in his later violin concertos.

The edition is based on two contemporary prints, published by Sieber in Paris and Götz in Mannheim, both apparently derived from a common source but in some respects independent. This results in some discrepancies and inconsistencies, though readings in the Sieber print are naturally given precedence. Editorial interventions are made with pragmatic musicianship: on the whole interference is kept to a minimum, as is certainly preferred by specialist period-instrument groups. This to some extent reflects the nicely expressed aims given in the Series Preface, which stresses that 'the act of performance is often – if not always – an extension of the creative act'; the scores and parts 'reflect not only modern concerns for historical awareness but also the obligation on players to create individual interpretations, whether historically informed or not' (vi).

Inconsistencies certainly remain in the score, in terms of dynamics, phrasings and even rhythms in simultaneous or parallel passages; but these very inconsistencies may sometimes guide or inspire performers. Thus in the opening movement one oft-repeated phrase (bar 11) is sometimes spelled as crotchet, crotchet rest, minim, and sometimes as two minims. For the performer this suggests a first note that is long yet still separated, intensely lifted, an effect best realized with two downbows. (Neither notation alone



suggests all of these aspects, but the two together do.) In other places, though, the inconsistencies of detail will need to be addressed, and one wonders whether players inexperienced in such repertoire might have welcomed a little more intervention or direction. Occasionally the notes themselves are open to question: the E rather than D in the cello part in No. 1/ii (bar 167) is presumably a slip of the mouse or the engraving tool, but the grace notes in the cello in No. 5/i (bars 26–28) seem to be simply one note too low. Later in the same movement, the *ad libitum* marking in the cello part at bar 98 is presumably an ‘octave higher’ indication – a necessity if this is to make any musical sense at all.

The score is handsomely presented and it is a relief to find the critical report so generously laid out with notated rhythms rather than their more economical text equivalents. Dynamic markings in the report are given in the traditional, elegant italic font, whereas in the score itself they have an upright stance, which appears clean but rather clinical by comparison. The original sources maintain some distinction between the lengths of appoggiaturas: whether those notated here as acciaccaturas are in reality semiquavers is unclear (surely they must often be realized as such).

There is plenty here to interest today’s amateur and professional quartet players, both in the shifting textures and in the individual parts. Certainly there are taxing moments for all four instrumentalists, notably in the perverse slurrings of the so-called ‘Viotti bowing’ and in the plethora of trills that periodically burst out across the score. At the same time these remain highly approachable works, which will undoubtedly give pleasure to players looking for agreeable classical quartets with a certain quirky individuality.

SIMON McVEIGH



## RECORDINGS

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JAN JOSEF IGNÁC BRENTNER (1689–?1742)

*MUSIC OF BAROQUE BOHEMIA*

Helena Zemanová, Gabriela Eibenová, Hasan El Dunia, Jaroslav Březina, Martin Prokeš, Matthias Gerchen, Marian Krejčík / Ensemble Inégal / Adam Viktora

NIBIRU, 0144 2211, 2004

This recording of offertories and motets by Brentner is welcome evidence that Czech music of the early eighteenth century is at last emerging from the shadows. The notion of an eighteenth-century Czech music replete with specific local characteristics is, to an extent, an artificial construct. It is also one shaded by the still prevalent view that the music of the nineteenth-century Czech national revival offers something genuinely concrete where identity is concerned and that the preceding epoch offers evidence of similarly concrete roots. Increasingly, even the apparent certainties of the Czech national revival of the second half of the nineteenth century are proving susceptible to challenge as a realistic way of defining the music of that region. In the eighteenth century the musical product of what might be described as the lands of the Bohemian crown finds no convenient means of definition. One could point to the distinctive tradition of the pastorella, but this is hardly the sole property of an area specific to anything definable as Czech, since it was practised widely throughout central Europe. Maps are usually drawn by political affinity but can also be drawn by language, economic endeavour and so on, but no method is entirely satisfactory; for central Europe, indeed, one might derive a certain amount of understanding of the breadth of congruity of cultural practice within a musical genre by drawing a pastorella map.



But do we not have Charles Burney riding to the rescue with his pungent description of Czech music-making? As a result of his fascinating literary snapshots we are aware that in the Czech lands wind-playing was excellent and children studied music at village level in at least one room full of clavichords, and there is corroborative evidence for many of his observations. If Burney taught us anything about Czech musicians – apart from beguilingly picturesque vignettes – it is that their work flourished more conspicuously abroad than at home. And then there is Mozart, whose five visits to Prague provide a magnifying glass for musical life in the Czech capital towards the end of the eighteenth century. His association with the city grew through the huge popularity of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* and *Le nozze di Figaro*; the composition of *Don Giovanni* and *La clemenza di Tito* for the Czech capital have been pored over in numerous studies of varying value, but we still await a serious consideration of the relationship that certainly existed between Prague and the Salzburg of Mozart's day. At one remove are the Czech composers who had connections with Mozart. It would be an injustice to claim that the extremely useful critical biographies of Leopold Koželuch by Milan Poštolka and of Mysliveček by Rudolf Pečman exist solely because of their subjects' connection with Mozart, but this connection clearly adds lustre in the views of many.

The émigré nature of so much of the productivity of eighteenth-century Czech musicians observed by Burney has coloured views ever since. Jan Racek's formative study of Czech music up to the nineteenth century (*Česká hudba od nejstarších dob do počátku 19. století* (Czech Music from the Earliest Period up to the Nineteenth Century) (Prague: Statni nakladatelství krásné literatury, hudby a umění, 1958)), with its extensive list of musicians and its seductive map locating the centres where the members of the wandering regiment of Czech musicians washed up between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, has tended to reinforce the prevalent view. The well known names before Tomášek in our prevailing cosmology of Czech musicians – notably Zelenka, the Stamitzes and numerous Bendas – certainly did not stay at home. But this particular focus has meant that our understanding of the musical institutions and their musicians in eighteenth-century Prague is still distinctly undernourished. Notwithstanding the distinguished work of Czech musicologists such as Zdenka Pilková, Tomsilav Volek and Jiří Sehnal, to name but three, and the sterling endeavour of non-Czechs such as Daniel Freeman and Jan Stockigt, a deeper understanding of Czech music in the eighteenth century remains a virtuous quest still to be fulfilled.

Consider the case of Jan Josef Ignác Brentner. His entry in *Československý hudební slovník* (the Czechoslovak Music Dictionary (Prague: Státní hudební vydavatelství, 1963)), the still helpful *Czech Grove*, leaning heavily on the early nineteenth-century work of Bohumir Dlabáč, offers scant biographical information concerning his activities in Prague, gives no place or date of birth and speaks rather mistily of his influence on the music of Mysliveček. More recent research, much of it distilled in the excellent accompanying notes to this CD, shows that he was in fact born outside Prague in 1689 in Dobřany and, true to type, went to the capital in search of employment, which he found with the city's abundant religious foundations and the orchestra of Count Thun. Luckily, the four collections of his music published in Prague secured his reputation in his own time and for later generations, notably in South America, where his music was taken by Jesuit missionaries. The music on this CD is taken from Brentner's Op. 1, *Harmonica duodecatometria ecclesiastica*, and Op. 2, *Offertoria solenniora*, and also includes three of his four surviving funerary motets to German texts composed for a spiritual fraternity attached to the Jesuit church of St Nicholas in the Lesser Town.

Brentner's musical style in Opp. 1 and 2 shows the clear imprint of the Italian lingua franca of the early eighteenth century and more specifically that of Vivaldi. Like Mondonville somewhat later in the century, the assimilation of the style is relatively complete and does not prompt extensive exploration of further possibilities. Unlike Mondonville, the range of orchestral colour in Brentner's Italian-influenced work is relatively circumscribed and the adopted style does not appear to coexist with other manners in single works. Nevertheless, Brentner deploys the style with compelling vigour, notably in the setting of 'Gloria et honore' from Op. 2, and there are many ear-catching moments, in particular the affective chromatic writing in the central section of 'Benedicite gentes', also from Op. 2. He is also responsive to the content of his texts: rather



than using them as mere hooks for note-spinning, he appears consciously reflective, repeating in particularly effective fashion the word 'omnis' before 'terra' in 'Jubilate Deo', again from Op. 2. The three German motets show a different side of Brentner's musicianship. While they do not eschew the Italian manner, they are, understandably, rather more subdued in tone and occasionally more richly textured. Interestingly, they also evince what might be described as a more locally coloured accent; the charming setting of 'O Jesu mein', for example, approaches the pastorella manner.

In addition to the absorbing accompanying notes – notwithstanding some poor proofreading in the initial lineup of works recorded – the performances themselves are a tribute to the state of historically aware playing in the Czech Republic. In the mid-twentieth century, apart from the activities of the conductors Milan Munclinger and Miroslav Venhoda and the harpsichordist Zuzana Růžičková, early music was something of a marginal activity in Communist Czechoslovakia. With increasing impetus through the 1970s, performance on historical instruments came from the margins towards the centre with dramatic effect. By the late 1980s a substantial collection of players was available to address the preromantic repertoire, and a distinguished series of performances and recordings is testament to their vigour. While one might complain that occasionally the upper lines on this recording are a little breathless, the overall impression is one of assured command of the idiom with some highly impressive instrumental playing.

JAN SMACZNY



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### DOMENICO SCARLATTI (1685–1757)

*COMPLETE KEYBOARD SONATAS; SIX CONTINUO SONATAS (K78, K81, K88, K89, K90, K91)*

Richard Lester (harpsichord, fortepiano and organ), Mark Baigence (oboe), Warwick Cole (violoncello), Elizabeth Lester (recorder), Jonathan Morgan (flute), Ben Sansom (violin) and Taro Takeuchi (mandolin)

Privilege Accord 68001 – 68020, 2001–2005; 38 discs

This is only the second successful attempt by a single player to undertake the enormous task of recording all of Domenico Scarlatti's keyboard music: the first was Scott Ross's complete recording, created in 1984–1985 and released a few years later (Erato 2292-45309-2, 1988). Ross's recordings, backed by Erato in conjunction with Radio France, are elegant and precise, but suffer from a bland, uninspired uniformity of performance style betraying the fact that they were recorded in rapid succession. Lester's is a very different project, and it is immediately apparent that his recording has been much more lovingly prepared. As the product of a greater number of years' work and considerably more scholarly awareness than Ross's recordings, the resulting performances are consistently impressive. Indeed, they deserve the backing of a major recording company: although the sound quality is quite acceptable, it is clear that these recordings are home-grown. The earthy immediacy of the mix in Pierre Hantai's discs for Mirare (Mirare 9918, 2004; 9920, 2005; 007, 2006) has given Scarlatti's harpsichord a better voice than hitherto, and similar engineering artistry in combination with Lester's excellent performances would make for a fairer comparison not only with Hantai but also with other important Scarlatti recordings on the harpsichord by, for example, Andreas Staier (Deutsche Harmonia Mundi 82876 673752, 2005 (reissue); Teldec 0360-12601-2, 1996). (The typical sound sought by engineers of piano recordings has not generally served Scarlatti well, tending to situate the instrument inappropriately in a generously glowing reverb which blunts the music's sharp edges.)

Lester's project is also better laid out than Ross's, with the CDs packaged in pairs so that each pair represents a volume in the 'Venice' codex, one of the two primary sources for most of Scarlatti's sonatas and the principal source for Ralph Kirkpatrick's  $\kappa$  numbers. We might observe that this privileges 'Venice' over the other primary source, 'Parma' (and indeed over other appealing eighteenth-century anthologies, though



these are less likely to have been collated by the composer himself) and thus confers an unwarranted sense of authorial stamp of approval on the Venice groupings, but it does help the listener to navigate a path through this enormous quantity of music. The recording also includes a number of sonatas attributed to the composer that have been discovered in the last few decades and are not found in the primary sources, along with a valuable essay by W. Dean Sutcliffe appraising these pieces. Lester's awareness of Scarlatti studies also appears to inform his faithfulness to the text when it becomes eccentric. Although writers on the composer such as Joel Sheveloff and Sutcliffe have argued convincingly that textual inconsistencies deserve to be taken seriously (see Sheveloff, 'Tercentenary Frustrations', *The Musical Quarterly* 71/4 (1985), 339–436, and 72/1 (1986), 90–118, and Sutcliffe, *The Keyboard Sonatas of Domenico Scarlatti* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), for example 39–40), few players have dared to test the theory to the same extent as Lester. He scores memorable successes in some of Scarlatti's most syntactically uncomfortable sonatas, celebrated much more by writers than by performers:  $\kappa 157$  is a marvellous example. He also chooses to treat the six multi-movement pieces with figures as sonatas for melody instruments with continuo rather than as solo keyboard music, a decision in accordance with the scholarly consensus on these pieces. On the whole these are played competently, though not spectacularly; the decision to use a variety of solo instruments including mandolin is a welcome piece of imaginative freedom. Lester also plays a few sonatas on the fortepiano, thus supporting an underdeveloped performance option for this composer. Several sonatas such as  $\kappa 418$  become magically galant as a result – a surprising transformation in the case of  $\kappa 418$ , since it occurs in spite of ubiquitous toccata-style figuration. The reason is probably that Lester's fortepiano can treat  $\kappa 418$ 's long written-out appoggiaturas with such notable delicacy that they become the dominant characteristic of the sonata. One wonders whether a recording in which performances on the modern piano jostled with those on other instruments might ever be made, or whether this would represent too jarring a juxtaposition of different performance ideologies.

The main aspect of Lester's recordings that is open to question is its sobriety – more specifically, its attitude to pacing. It is interesting that both the Ross and the Lester projects are less 'experimental' than the best of the smaller-scale Scarlatti recordings. One might think that the huge space available would invite the performers to take risks with individual pieces, but perhaps this impulse is trumped by the desire to create something 'definitive', a kind of aural urtext. It is fairly clear that different concepts of tempo and harpsichord playing style collide in Scarlatti's music (as do compositional styles, of course). While an approach to rhythm that regularly dips under tempo – 'struggling' against the beat as is typical of the performance of much French keyboard music of this time – is sometimes appropriate, it can be problematic for those passages in more infectiously rhythmic dance-like idioms. Harpsichordists are reluctant to employ completely strict rhythm – quite understandably, given the dynamic constraints imposed by their instrument. However, one often feels, with Lester as with other players, that it would be possible (in obviously rustic music, say) to nudge closer towards rhythmic consistency, the only deviations being rather 'boisterous' heavy downbeats. In any case, it is often striking (not least in performances of harpsichord concertos in highly rhythmic eighteenth-century Italian idioms) that harpsichordists' stodgy rhythm can be quite at odds with the rhythmic practices of other instruments. If we fear that the sound will become 'mechanical', we might perhaps hear precisely this quality in a positive light in the reams of rhythmic semiquavers occurring in so much early eighteenth-century Italian music: could the mechanistic be a joyous and life-affirming trope in an eighteenth-century context? Even if we can conceive the mechanical only in negative terms, this might still be appropriate for Scarlatti, a composer who has attracted a number of other unsavoury associations – madness, evil, sadism and so on.

Having said this, Lester gives Scarlatti a more vigorous rhythmic pacing than many players; indeed, he presents the composer as more weighty than usual. Scarlatti frequently benefits from this approach, for example in  $\kappa 215$ , a sonata that can accommodate considerable heaviness. (This is one of many sonatas that renders grossly inaccurate the nineteenth-century image of a 'dainty Scarlatti'.) Lester's steadier pace also works well in its partner sonata,  $\kappa 216$ , whose unstable syntax has generally promoted a style of playing that pushes forward, almost stumbling. Kirkpatrick's recording from 1956 is one example of this type (reissued



Urania 4222, 2004). Although this is exciting, Lester's slightly heavier tread allows him to bring out the 'groove' that so often emerges in Scarlatti's writing; again, the idea of music as dance comes to the fore, and more generally the sense of an evergreen popular style. This issues from a melodic neatness during repeating phrases with which some peculiarity of syntax or voice leading is set up and dealt with in a matter of a few notes, and which generations of writers have agreed sounds new and fresh; in a sense this is literally true, because one cannot second-guess how such twists will work themselves out until one has heard them.

The effect just described brings Scarlatti close to the flavour of popular music, even when there is little in the stylistic idiom to suggest it. My feeling is that it demands a foot-tapping (though not necessarily metronomic) rhythm in many sonatas where Lester persists with a more flexible and 'artful' rhythmic flow.  $\kappa 394$  is a good example: its style throughout the first half is outwardly fairly uniform but difficult to pin down. The opening descending lines are generally played with a rhythmically imprecise, improvisatory air, the up-and-down gestures understood as free flourishes, and this technique works well in Lester's performance. However, the approach runs into trouble when a change of syntax occurs in bar 38. Whilst looping round a number of times, the music becomes more punning and tuneful: we cannot decide, for instance, whether or not to hear the third bar of the phrase as an embellished repetition of the first. An added twist is that we hear the phrase in a quite different way when the first note of the melody is in the upper octave, as in bar 46. Lester does not perceive enough of a stylistic shift here to warrant changing gear, and indeed it is notable that the cadential formulas are more or less the same as at the start of the sonata. However, I would argue that the music does require a change; wrestling with the beat, in fact, starts to sound somewhat arbitrary when the music has suddenly become more stable in terms of both tonality and phrase rhythm. Indeed, it might be possible to effect a significant change in rhythmic behaviour, to begin very freely but discover a precise 'groove' around bar 38. To do so, though, would be to 'intervene' in a way that Lester would perhaps find unpalatable.

A similar case concerns isolated passages which could be much slower and less rhythmic than those that surround them, most obviously at the start of second halves. In some sonatas Lester does precisely this, to great effect: the opening of the second half of  $\kappa 201$ , for example, lurches unexpectedly into exotic territory (the strange Phrygian ornaments are excellent), slowing down considerably, and then seamlessly rediscovers the festive sound world of the first half a few bars later. (It is instructive to note the equal success of both Lester's and Vladimir Horowitz's entirely divergent – but both bold – readings of these bars. Horowitz jabs the notes with an unrelenting staccato: reissued Sony 53460, 1994.) A similarly histrionic slowing would suit many other sonatas: examples include  $\kappa 175$  and  $\kappa 414$ . Perhaps paradoxically, more extreme changes of pace in performance can make more sense of Scarlatti's strange contrasts than is possible when continuity by means of a happy medium is sought.

The more pressing complaint to direct at Lester concerns high speed rather than low speed. Although we see in  $\kappa 157$  that Lester's playing can be wonderfully busy, he rarely plays very fast, nor does he achieve a frenetic effect by pushing forward. The desire for 'weight' may be behind this, and this is laudable, as we have seen, but I would argue that manic speed is an essential part of this composer's style. Further, we must lay to rest any sense that wild, fast music, even if it becomes bizarre or comical (as in Horowitz's fabulous recording of  $\kappa 455$ ; reissued RCA 60986, 1993), cannot be 'weighty' in the abstract sense of artistically satisfying. The mythology surrounding Scarlatti's own playing leaves no doubt that the composer himself could play extremely fast; and tempo indications such as *Presto quanto sia possibile* in  $\kappa 427$  also contribute to this. Perhaps the more general point here is that Lester is reluctant to alienate the listener with excessively strange behaviour, preferring to be lucid and clear in his delivery. At times, though, the strangeness of Scarlatti's writing encourages the performer to abandon this kind of communion with the listener and actively to adopt a more irrational and unpredictable 'persona'.

Some of the largest and stylistically most varied sonatas such as  $\kappa 240$  and  $\kappa 402$  seem most urgently in need of decisive shaping. It is here that we are reminded of Ross and the tendency to play 'straight' when faced with highly confusing music. If these hugely challenging pieces do not seem yet to have found completely 'finished' interpretations, it is not so much a failure on Lester's part as a reflection of the depressing lack of





a performance tradition for much of Scarlatti's music: neither performers nor listeners have learned at this stage what to expect. The formation of such a tradition, of course, will be helped considerably by Lester. Most recordings of this composer tend to revisit the same pieces again and again; this testifies to the genuine difficulty of taking on a Scarlatti sonata without a precedent, and is a reminder of the scale of Lester's achievement in giving literally hundreds of pieces their first really convincing recordings.

CHRISTOPHER WILLIS