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The English Piano in the Classical Period:

Its Music, Performers, and Influences

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Music Department

of

City University, London

In Candidacy for the Degree

Doctor of Musical Arts

by

Andrew Brownell

August 2010

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Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to Drs. Simon Keefe, now at Sheffield University, and Melania Bucciarelli, my two advisors on the progress of this dissertation. Their support and understanding have been much appreciated.

Thanks also go to the staff at the Music Room of the British Library, who helped me to locate a number of rare volumes and analyse plate numbers to determine the publication dates of several scores, and with whom I also assisted in tracking down a number of mislabeled or misfiled books. I hope that the Integrated Catalogue is slightly more accurate as a result of our efforts. I would also like to thank Knut Maseide at the library of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, who was indispensable in acquiring copies of several little-known peer-review journals and dissertations.

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Abstract

Despite an abundance of research and literature on the Viennese piano in the Classical period, the influential role of the English instrument and its literature – in terms of keyboard idiom and compositional style – still remains something of a blind spot. This thesis attempts to address this imbalance by providing an overview of the most significant literature of the period, guided by the premise that the characteristics of the English instrument led to a style of keyboard writing that is distinct from the Viennese Classical style. The advent of the piano in England is traced, establishing the traits of the 'English grand' piano in the English harpsichord and other early instruments. This is followed by an overview of early piano concerti by James Hook, J.C. Bach, and Schroeter. Stylistic evolution in the early works of Clementi and Dussek is analysed, as well as that of Haydn's London works. The thesis concludes with a chapter examining the interaction c. 1800 between the London and Viennese schools, demonstrating how contact with the more progressive London school precipitated changes in the Viennese keyboard style and the instrument itself.

Introduction

In the general introduction to *The London Pianoforte School 1766-1860*, a multi-volume facsimile edition of English keyboard music from the early Classical era to c. 1850, Nicholas Temperley wrote that ignorance of the English school of piano music constitutes

> … one of the largest remaining 'gaps' in the history of Western music. Historians recognize the importance of London in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as a center for the manufacture of pianos and for the performance, publication, and composition of piano music… And yet the number of piano pieces from this huge body of works that are performed with any frequency, or even used as teaching pieces, is pitifully small.[1]

More than twenty years have passed since those words were written, and the situation described by Temperley has changed little, if at all. Names from the piano world of early nineteenth-century England like Cipriani Potter, George Pinto, and William Sterndale Bennett will likely elicit a confused stare from the overwhelming majority of piano students in the world's conservatories today.

The existence of such a blind spot with regard to the English piano school in the Classical period, though, is difficult to understand, as London and Vienna were the two great centres of pianistic activity of the time. Moreover, the English school was demonstrably the more progressive of the two, both with regard to its musical

[1] Nicholas Temperley, general introduction to *The London Pianoforte School 1766-1860* Vol. 1 (New York, 1987), vii.

style and innovations in the design of the instrument. English piano builders pioneered advancements in design and technology that paved the way to the modern instrument, while the Viennese piano became a static entity that was forced to adapt after 1800 when English pianos became known in Austria, and whose action eventually fell into obsolescence. Similarly, English Classical piano music was more forward-looking than the Viennese style in its use of the instrument, and many of the characteristics of piano writing in the nineteenth century owe their provenance to the English school. The erosion of the tonic-dominant axis as the primary crux of harmonic tension, the development of a distinctly pianistic language with its own palette of textures and colours, and even the programmatic character piece are all found in the repertoire of the English Classical piano.

And yet Clementi, though no longer confined to the lower grades of the ABRSM exams as he was in years past, is still primarily known to pianists through the Sonatinas Op. 36 or, for pianists of a certain generation, a few pedantic etudes from the Tausig edition of *Gradus ad Parnassum*. The appearance of Clementi's sonatas on recital programmes is exceedingly and unjustifiably rare. Other composers of the English Classical style fare even worse. Dussek, Cramer, and Field are names encountered almost exclusively in books, while their music remains almost totally unknown. The rare pianist who wishes to explore this repertoire will find his task exceedingly difficult, with virtually no modern or easily accessible editions available.

This blind spot is not limited to players of the modern piano, or even pianists in general. The term 'fortepiano', though used imprecisely to refer to any number of historical pianos, typically refers in common parlance to the Viennese instrument of the Classical period.[2] Indeed, the very understanding of Classicism in general has

[2] Bart van Oort, 'Haydn and the English classical piano style', *Early Music* xxviii (2000), 74.

either been reserved for or restricted to the Viennese school. Charles Rosen's influential book *The Classical Style* is significantly subtitled 'Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven' as if no other musical activity in Europe at the time qualifies as 'Classical'.

The present study begins with the premise that the English pianoforte school of the Classical period has been unjustly overlooked, and aims to demonstrate the fullness of its contributions to piano style and the development of the instrument, both during and after the Classical period. This will be accomplished primarily through examination of the music, charting its evolution from works in the *style galant* to the mature English Classical style, with a particular focus on how the music represents an approach to the instrument that is distinct from the more well-known Viennese Classical style. Much of the discussion will focus on how the particular qualities of the English piano precipitated the traits of the English style, and the final chapter will explore how this consequently led to changes in the Viennese style and instrument. While some of these issues have been dealt with in the existing literature as individual issues, this study aims to comprehensively explore these various interactions, to arrive at a more complete picture of the evolution of the piano and its music during the Classical period.

Another area of focus will be the creative and original approach to form often taken by composers of the English piano school. It is inevitable that one should find that non-Viennese music deviates from established definitions of Classical forms, given that the Classical style has largely been defined from the Viennese perspective. Alexander Ringer offers an interesting sociological explanation for the many unexpected structural irregularities encountered in this music, proposing that the English public favoured a

> … musical art catering to short-range emotional effects, often at the expense of structural solidity and logic. For music, not unlike the Gothic novel, was to provide an affective counterweight to the highly rationalized behavior that produced the urban middle classes' ever-increasing material affluence.[3]

Intriguing though this theory is, it lays bare a Viennese bias. This study, in contrast with what little attention the literature has paid to the issue of form in English Classicism, will endeavour to examine the music independent of any pre-conceived notions of sonata form derived from Viennese models and demonstrate that the 'peculiarities' found in piano music of the English Classical style result in structurally solid forms that follow their own, non-Viennese logic and, once again, prefigure later trends in the nineteenth century. Attention is particularly given to the sonatas of Dussek, whose liberal approach to form responded uniquely in different situations to achieve dramatic coherence, and the sonatas of Clementi, whose experiments with non-tonic recapitulations and three-key expositions grew increasingly sophisticated and served as models for the works of Schubert, Mendelssohn and Brahms, among others.

Certain limitations have been imposed on this study for the sake of focus and completeness. The decision was made to confine the discussion to music written before c. 1800. This was not an arbitrary demarcation, but one based on a number of historical factors. By 1800, the English piano had achieved the form it would maintain until well into the Romantic era, and a recognisable English Classical piano style had emerged. In 1802, the Viennese piano builder Anton Walter began redesigning his instruments to incorporate features of the English piano. Dussek fled London in 1799 to avoid debtor's prison, and Clementi embarked on his eight-year tour of Europe in 1802, temporarily putting an end to his compositional activities. It

[3] Alexander Ringer, 'Beethoven and the London Pianoforte School', *Musical Quarterly* xvi (1970), 744.

is evident from these facts that the turn of the nineteenth century represents a convenient demarcation in the development of the English piano school. This limitation unfortunately leaves out a great deal of interesting music that was written after the turn of the nineteenth century, including works of Field, Cramer, and the late sonatas of Dussek. Clearly, there is ample room for further exploration of this repertoire.

Also, the present effort deals primarily with the solo sonata and concerto literature. This may seem to be a limitation, given the diversity of forms and genres being composed for during the period. However, since one of the aims of this study has been to examine the development of the English style, it has been necessary to focus upon the most advanced and 'serious' music, which was written by professional pianists, for professional pianists (or their talented aristocratic students). The many 'accompanied sonatas' of the period, for piano with various combinations of other instruments, were largely written for the domestic consumption of casual amateurs and generally contain a different sort of writing and musical intent; the technical and musical demands made of the pianist tend to be far less taxing in this music, and the exploration of profound emotion or dramatic contrast is not one of its aims. (A major exception to this is the trios of Haydn, which are discussed in Chapter 4 and were, in any case, written for the aforementioned talented aristocrats.) Some of these works did find their way to the concert stage, though, and there are undoubtedly interesting things to be discovered in that literature. There was also a significant body of fanciful character pieces for the amusement of the same amateur demographic, including Kotzwara's once-ubiquitous *Battle of Prague* and Dussek's *Sufferings of the Queen of France*, Op. 23. This literature may make for an interesting study, particularly as an

indicator of the activities and tastes of amateur pianists of the time, but its tone and intent do not fall within the aims of the present effort.

The concerti that emerged around 1770 are discussed in Chapter 2; they were among the first keyboard concerti written anywhere to mention the piano as a solo instrument, and they are analysed for evidence of a changing approach to the keyboard. Of the later composers considered in this study, Dussek is the only one who wrote a significant body of piano concerti that has survived. However, a substantial part of his concerto output was written after 1800, outside the established limits of this study, and any survey of his concerti would naturally lead to comparison of his dramatic aims with those of Mozart, as well as analysis within the context of later Classical piano concerti. It was therefore decided that such a discussion would be too peripheral to the aims of this study. Nevertheless, they are intriguing, forward-looking works that deserve attention.

This thesis begins with a synopsis of the piano's arrival in England during the eighteenth century, charting its progress from an object of mild curiosity among musicians to an indispensable commodity that brought domestic music-making to the burgeoning middle class. The origins of the English piano are understood as a product of the musical environment in England, owing more to the characteristics of the English harpsichord than to any existing Continental school of piano-building. Over the course of this chapter, some commonly-held and frequently-repeated beliefs regarding the origins of the English piano are questioned or entirely rejected.

Chapter 2 examines the music that was written to satisfy the growing vogue for solo keyboard concerti in England. Concerti by James Hook, Johann Samuel Schroeter, and Johann Christian Bach are all discussed and analysed, particularly in their diverse experiments with ritornello form as a means of arriving at a coherent

dramatic formula for the Classical concerto. Chapter 3 deals with the works of Muzio Clementi, and how he went from indentured servant to 'father of the pianoforte'. His early, sensationally virtuosic works are compared alongside his Continental compositions of the 1780s to explore his remarkably rapid shedding of a general, *galant* keyboard style and development of a keyboard idiom uniquely suited to the piano, a process of change that can be partially attributed to German and Austrian influences, but much of which appears to have stemmed from Clementi's own ingenuity. His 'middle' sonatas are also analysed for their unusual approach to sonata-allegro form, specifically Clementi's development of a consistent model for a three-key exposition in minor-mode movements, and his tendency to blur the line between development and recapitulation sections by fusing or reorganising their usual harmonic and thematic functions.

The fourth chapter focuses on foreign visitors to the world of the English piano, namely Jan Ladislav Dussek, the wandering Bohemian composer, and Joseph Haydn. Dussek's Parisian sonatas of the late 1780s are considered with his London compositions, which in some ways contain even more surprises than Clementi's sonatas with regard to structure and keyboard idiom. It will be noted how many of his experiments with sonata form resulted in works that bear an uncanny resemblance to later examples by Beethoven, and Dussek's celebrated role as the *causa prima* of a series of expansions to the piano's compass is probed. Haydn's London trios and sonatas are scrutinised for evidence of any discernible change in his approach to keyboard writing as a result of his exposure to English pianos and their music. This chapter goes on to examine how Haydn's new keyboard idiom is complemented by a new approach to rhetoric and dramatic presentation.

The final chapter attempts to synthesise what has preceded and define exactly the characteristics of the English Classical piano style. Distinct aesthetic differences between the English and Viennese styles are highlighted by looking at the music of both repertoires, as well as the various treatises of the two schools. The chapter goes on to examine how the English school influenced and instigated change in the Viennese school, both in terms of musical style and the design of the actual instrument. The thesis concludes with an exploration of Beethoven's pivotal role as a lifelong student of the English school who adopted many elements of the style while still remaining, in essence, a Viennese Classicist. The common wisdom regarding Beethoven's enthusiasm for his Broadwood piano, as expressed in the writing of various modern pianists and scholars, is rejected on the basis of historical evidence.

Whenever possible, the best available urtext editions were used for reference in this study. In the cases of Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven, there has been plenty of choice, and musical quotations have been taken respectively from Barenreiter, Wiener Urtext, and Henle editions; in the case of the Haydn piano trios, the Doblinger edition prepared by H.C. Robbins Landon was used. Music of the English school, however, was rather harder to find in reliable modern editions. Henle published a small selection of Clementi's piano sonatas in the late 1970s, but of course this was insufficient. The complete edition of Clementi's works by Ut Orpheus Edizioni of Bologna is still in progress at this time, and extant editions are difficult to access. Clementi's complete solo piano works are reproduced in facsimile in the series *The London Pianoforte School* by Garland of New York, which also proved indispensable for consulting the works of other composers of the English school. The same publisher also issued the 48-volume *Collected Works of Johann Christian Bach* edited by Ernest Warburton, which was used for J.C. Bach's sonatas and concerti. The

complete sonatas of Dussek were most recently printed in 1983 by Editio Supraphon of Prague, but as the editorial principles of this edition were found to be inadequate by modern standards, the earliest available editions in the British Library have been consulted for comparison whenever possible. Similarly, eighteenth century English editions were used for the works of James Hook and Johann Samuel Schroeter. Full citations of all these editions are given in the text and the bibliography.

The unavailability of scores is undoubtedly responsible for the unfamiliarity of much of this music; in turn, this lack of interest provides little incentive for editors and publishers to print the music, perpetuating a cycle of obscurity. There has been increasing exploration of this repertoire in recent literature, yet no matter how enlightening an analysis or essay may be, 'music lives only in performance, it must be edited, published, and performed as well as discussed.'[4] It is hoped that the following pages will demonstrate that the music of the English Classical piano school is worthy of being heard again, not just because it foreshadows later developments in piano music or enhances the understanding of the Viennese school, but on its own merit.

[4] Temperley, vii.

Chapter 1

The advent of the pianoforte in Britain

An innocuous arrival

The arrival of the pianoforte in Britain would prove to have enormous and far-reaching consequences, changing the social role of music-making by precipitating a significant middle-class demographic, paving the way for British dominance in piano construction and development for several decades, and eventually influencing the development of the Classical style both in Britain and on the Continent. It is therefore somewhat ironic that the process of the pianoforte's introduction to Britain was met with a distinct lack of fanfare or interest, attracting little attention outside a small circle of keyboard *cognoscenti* in the middle of the eighteenth century. Documentary evidence from the period is scant, and the few facts that may be gleaned from writers of the period reflect a conservative, cautious interest, rather than unbridled enthusiasm.

According to Charles Burney, the first piano to arrive in England was brought from Rome by a gentleman named Samuel Crisp, who had spent some time abroad in the 1730s. The instrument was built by an English monk in Rome called Father Wood. Sometime in the 1740s, Crisp sold the instrument to Fulke Greville (who later paid £300 to release Burney from his apprenticeship to Thomas Arne) for 100 guineas. Burney played the piano at Greville's country mansion in Wiltshire during an extended visit in 1747, and he wrote that,

> … the touch and mechanism were so imperfect that nothing quick could be executed upon it, yet the dead march in Saul, and other solemn and pathetic strains, when executed with taste and feeling by a master a little accustomed to the touch, excited equal wonder and delight to the hearers.[1]

Burney's extended stay at the house afforded him time to acquire fluency with the tonal possibilities of the instrument, to the end that he 'gained considerable credit in shewing it off.'[2] Samuel Crisp's piano does not survive, nor is there any known evidence of an English monk named Wood having lived in Rome. Burney's testimony is the sole documentary evidence for this story, which remains something of a mystery.[3]

In 1741, a Dutch harpsichord maker named Roger Plenius, working in London at the time, set about building a replica of Crisp's Roman piano.[4] Plenius is chiefly remembered today for inventing another 'expressive' keyboard instrument, the lyrichord, whose tone was produced by rubbing rosined wheels against strings.[5] Burney declined Plenius' invitation to demonstrate his replica of the Roman piano, but he must have at least played it, as he later wrote, 'Of this instrument the touch was better, but the tone very much inferior.'[6]

On the eve of the Seven Years' War, in spring of 1755, Lord Holdernesse, secretary of state to King George II, was dispatched on a secret diplomatic mission to Hanover, accompanied by his chaplain William Mason. In a letter dated 27 June 1755, Mason wrote from Hanover to his friend Thomas Gray that he had purchased a

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[1] *The Cyclopaedia, or Universal Directory of the Arts, Sciences, and Literature*, ed. Abraham Rees, (London, 1819) *s.v.* 'Harpsichord'.
[2] Charles Burney, *The Memoirs of Dr. Charles Burney*, ed. Slava Klima *et al*, (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1988), 73.
[3] Arthur Loesser, *Men, Women and Pianos: A Social History* (New York, 1954), 219.
[4] David Rowland, *The Cambridge Companion to the Piano* (Cambridge, 1997), 16.
[5] Michael Cole, *The Pianoforte in the Classical Era* (Oxford, 1998), 44.
[6] *Cyclopaedia.*

keyboard instrument containing both a harpsichord and pianoforte action. No further details of this intriguing instrument survive.[7]

Recent research has uncovered two other instances of pianos mentioned in writings of the period, both of them related, although somewhat obliquely, to Handel. A letter of Thomas Harris, a friend and admirer of Handel, dated 17 May 1740 states that the composer played a 'Piano-forte' the previous day. The letter does not indicate whether this event is in any way extraordinary; perhaps the very lack of such indication implies that there is nothing novel about the act of playing a 'Piano-forte'. Also, Charles Jennens, who assembled the libretto for *Messiah*, seems to have been in possession of a piano in 1756.[8] It is possible that these two instances may refer to the same instrument, given the connection to Handel.

It is likely that other pianos found their way to England by this time, but due the paucity of surviving information, no further light can be shed on this. It is interesting to note that the instrument apparently failed to arouse much interest outside a small circle of musical enthusiasts. In the nearly twenty years between Crisp's return from abroad to the year 1760, only one documented attempt seems to have been made to duplicate the piano mechanism in England, and according to Burney, the results were clearly mixed.

Things were about to change very rapidly, though. In 1761, George, Prince of Wales ascended to the throne of England and took as his wife Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz. While the marriage was politically expedient, it also proved to have profound effects upon the musical life of England, for although Queen Charlotte may have come from a minor provincial German court, she was well-educated and a great lover of music. She even had a harpsichord brought on board the ship that took

[7] M. Cole, *Pianoforte in the Classical Era*, 45.
[8] Michael Cole, "The Twelve Apostles? An Enquiry into the Origins of the English Pianoforte," *Early Keyboard Journal* xviii (2000), 20.

her to England, which she played during the journey.[9] There had already been a number of German musicians living and working in England, Handel chief amongst them, partly owing to the previous two monarchs having been Electors of Hanover. The presence of a musically inclined German queen, in combination with the most vibrant concert scene of any European city at the time, made London a desirable destination for German musicians seeking to practise their art, and the 1760s saw a significant injection of German musical culture into England.

One of the first to follow Charlotte to England, from Strelitz itself, was Gabriel Buntebart, a harpsichord maker. Whether he had any connection with Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz is unknown, but his relation to Queen Charlotte of England was that of official piano builder, and Buntebart styled himself in his will as 'grand Piano forte Maker to Her Majesty'.[10] Buntebart would also go on to be a central figure in the development of the English piano, later becoming a business partner with Zumpe.

Undoubtedly, the most famous of the German émigrés to arrive in London was Johann Christian Bach. Commissioned to write two operas for the King's Theatre in the Haymarket, Bach set sail for England in the summer of 1762, leaving behind his post as organist at the cathedral of Milan. So lamented was his departure by the ecclesiastical authorities of Milan that Bach was officially designated on leave, and his position was left vacant for an entire year by the cathedral in the vain hope that he would be unsuccessful in England.[11] But it was not to be; Bach became the master of the Queen's music within two years of his arrival,[12] eventually established his famous

[9] M. Cole, *Pianoforte in the Classical Era*, 47.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Heinz Gärtner, *John Christian Bach: Mozart's Friend and Mentor*, trans. Reinhard Pauly (Portland, Oregon, 1994), 167.
[12] Charles Sanford Terry, *John Christian Bach*, 2nd ed. (London, 1967), 74.

series of concerts with the gambist Carl Friedrich Abel, and spent the remainder of his life in London.

The presence of a German queen undoubtedly influenced musical taste in England by attracting German musicians to London, but did it have any direct effect in precipitating the coming piano revolution? Of the German musicians and instrument makers that were central figures in the advent of the piano in Britain, many were already living and working in London prior to the accession of George III. The arrival of Frederick Neubauer in London can be dated to 1758.[13] Johann Zumpe, inventor of the square piano, may have been in England as early as 1750 and was working in the harpsichord shop of Burkat Shudi, at the very latest, by 1760.[14] Other central personalities in the early history of the piano in Britain were not even German; Americus Backers may have been Dutch. Roger Plenius, definitely a Dutchman, had been in London for some time before going bankrupt in the 1750s. Clearly, many of the central personalities associated with the development of the English piano were already living and working in London prior to the arrival of Princess Charlotte. Considering these facts, it is possible that the advent of the piano in England was an inevitability that would have come to pass, regardless of whom King George had chosen to marry.

Even if Queen Charlotte's presence had little direct influence on the development of the piano, the years following her arrival were busy with a flurry of experimentation and refinement by harpsichord builders, attempting to fulfill the increasing demand for an 'expressive' keyboard instrument while solving the problems that hampered widespread acceptance of the piano. According to Burney,

[13] M. Cole, *Pianoforte in the Classical Era*, 46.
[14] David Wainwright, *Broadwood by Appointment* (London, 1982), 28. See also M. Cole, 'Pianoforte, I, 4: History of the instrument: England and France to 1800', *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., ed. Stanley Sadie (London, 2001).

'After the arrival of John Chr. Bach in this country, and the establishment of his concert, in conjunction with Abel, all the harpsichord makers tried their mechanical powers at piano-fortes.'[15] In 1763, at the end of the Seven Years' War, the appropriately-named Frederick Neubauer became the first to advertise pianofortes for sale in London at his shop in Soho. It has been proposed that the piano in Neubauer's shop was Plenius' replica of the Roman piano or – if his use of the term was a concession to English usage – it actually referred to the pantalon, a predecessor of the piano with a primitive striking action, which Neubauer had experience building in Hamburg prior to his arrival in London.[16] However, Neubauer's advertisements clearly refer to pianos in the plural, mentioning them among various other keyboard instruments, including lyrichords, available at his shop without drawing much attention to them as a novelty. It therefore seems logical that Neubauer had more than one instrument called 'pianoforte' in stock and that their availability was, if novel, not revolutionary. In addition, if Burney is to be taken at his word – and there is no reason not to do so – regarding the widespread manufacture of pianos during these years, the term 'pianoforte' and its meaning would have surely been well-known. The lack of any historical evidence for a need to disambiguate the term 'pianoforte' in the 1760s would seem to mitigate the notion that Neubauer had adopted an 'English' word to refer to the pantalon, and Neubauer's advertisement can probably be taken at face value.

Clearly, pianos were being built, bought, and refined in the early 1760s, but it was one man in particular whose innovation would catapult the piano virtually

[15] Burney, *Cyclopaedia.*
[16] M. Cole, *Pianoforte in the Classical Era*, 49. In the *Grove* article cited above, Cole definitively asserts that Neubauer was selling pantalons under the name 'Piano forte' in London, without providing evidence or explanation.

overnight from a curious innovation to a highly fashionable, socially egalitarian commodity that would irrevocably change European music.

Zumpe and the square piano

Johann Christoph Zumpe left Burkat Shudi's employ in 1761 and established his own workshop on Princes Street, next to Hanover Square. Interestingly, Zumpe does not seem to have built harpsichords or any other keyboard instruments in his first few years as an independent instrument maker; the surviving instruments of this period are all plucked string instruments, and indeed the sign over his shop was that of a 'Golden Guittar'.[17]

It is not known what caused Zumpe to return to building keyboard instruments, but in the mid-1760s Zumpe built the first square piano, an event that may be regarded as the 'opening shot' of the English piano revolution. It is difficult to conclusively determine when the instrument was invented, but the four earliest surviving Zumpe pianos date from 1766, and the variation between these models, as well as their differences from subsequent models that display a remarkable degree of uniformity, suggests that Zumpe was perfecting and refining the design in this year.[18]

Visually, Zumpe's square pianos do not make a particularly dramatic impact. The casework is in plain mahogany, basically devoid of any ornamentation. In this regard, the instrument continues the tradition of eighteenth-century English harpsichord making, which was characterised by a lack of painting or lavish ornamentation (although Kirckman's harpsichords are known by the characteristic rose on the soundboard). The overall impression is one of neo-classical utility, or perhaps sober Protestantism.

[17] Ibid., 51-52.
[18] Ibid., 53-55; Richard Maunder, 'J.C. Bach and the Early Piano in London', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* cxvi (1991), 202.

The ingenuity of Zumpe's invention lay on the inside. Previous attempts at perfecting the piano had all been pursued on the horizontal, wing-shaped instrument. This piano, however, was horizontally strung like a clavichord, with two strings for each note across the compass of the instrument, GG-f^3. Zumpe's 1766 pianos were fitted with a hand stop for lifting the dampers, although Zumpe divided this device from 1767 onward, with one stop each for the bass and treble.[19] A third stop, operating a buff, became standard on his instruments in 1769.[20]

As none of the pianos built in England up to this point survive, it is impossible to know what sort of actions were familiar to instrument makers in London before 1766 and therefore may have inspired Zumpe's action. However, the action employed by Zumpe in his square pianos is a marvel of economy and quite unlike anything known to have existed before its invention. Lacking any sort of intermediate lever, escapement, or back-check, the key acts directly upon the hammer via a brass pin (known in some diagrams as the 'Old Man's Head'). The hammer, as in other earlier actions, is mounted on a hammer rail, but the alignment of the hammershank is ensured by the use of guide pins, and the head of the hammer is quite small and pointed.

[19] M. Cole, *Pianoforte in the Classical Era*, 55.
[20] David Rowland, *A History of Pianoforte Pedalling* (Cambridge, 1993), 21.

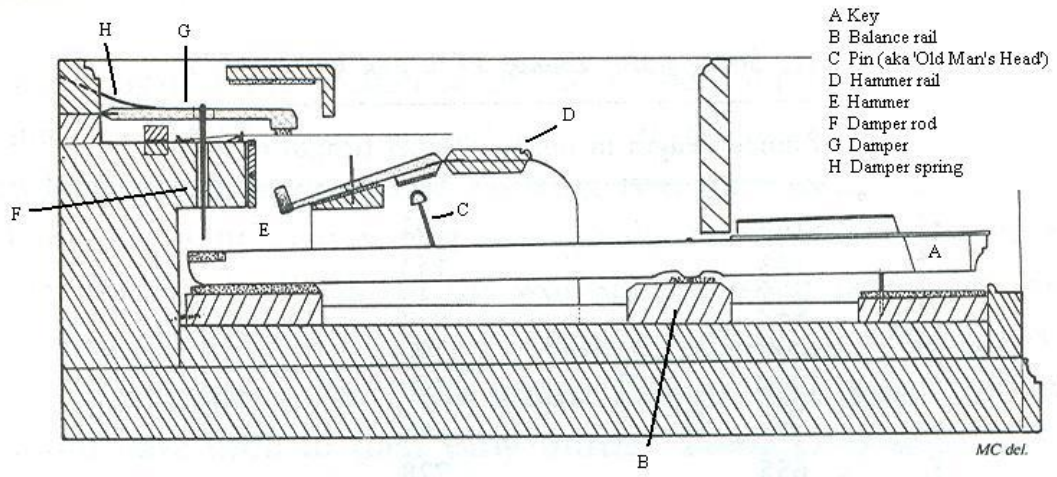


Fig. 1.1. A typical square piano action, drawn from a 1775 piano by Adam Beyer. From M. Cole, *Pianoforte in the Classical Era*, 74. Labeling of parts added.

The question of what inspired, influenced, or otherwise led Zumpe to create the square piano is a subject of much conjecture and confusion. In almost all of the existing literature on the history of the English piano, one may read of a group of piano makers from Germany known as the 'Twelve Apostles', some of whom worked for Gottfried Silbermann in Freiberg, who emigrated to England to escape the turmoil of the Seven Years' War. Philip James, a curator of the Victoria and Albert Museum at the beginning of the twentieth century, states unambiguously that 'Zumpe had been employed in Germany by Silbermann.'[21] Rosamond Harding writes, 'A party of twelve, several of whom came from Silbermann's workshop, arrived in England in the year 1760, bringing with them the Cristofori tradition. Johannes Zumpe, a pupil of Silbermann, was one of the company.'[22] Harding goes even further than this and interprets Zumpe's action as the final stage of a gradual process of simplification of Cristofori's action that was carried out by German piano makers, and even ascribes the invention of Zumpe's square piano action to Silbermann himself.[23]

[21] *Early Keyboard Instruments* (London, 1930), 51.
[22] *The Piano-Forte: Its History Traced to the Great Exhibition of 1851* (New York, 1973), 54.
[23] Ibid., 55.

This version of events has been repeated so often that it has been accepted as fact, and the alleged Silbermann connection appears in reference materials as specialised as the *Grove* article on Zumpe and as general as *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.[24] However, recent research by Michael Cole has failed to uncover any documentary evidence whatsoever from the period to substantiate the 'Twelve Apostles' story.[25] The earliest known occurrence of the 'Twelve Apostles' narrative seems to be in Edward Rimbault's *The Pianoforte, Its Origin, Progress and Construction* of 1860, in which the author mentions that a group of piano makers arrived from Germany around 1760, without identifying any specific names or citing any sources.[26] The involvement of Gottfried Silbermann, the Seven Years' War, and Zumpe himself in this story all seem to be later accretions upon Rimbault's unsubstantiated assertion; or, as Michael Cole puts it, 'What began as a simple story in a not very reliable source has been progressively elaborated with every repetition.'[27]

Other inconsistencies and contradictions with the 'Twelve Apostles' story are self-evident to anyone familiar with the relevant literature. Many piano makers working in London in the 1760s were German, but as noted above, a number of them were working in England prior to the outbreak of the Seven Years' War and still others arrived well after 1760.[28] Lists of exactly who the 'Twelve Apostles' were vary widely, and there is no evidence whatsoever that any of them, or indeed any other piano maker working in London at this time, ever worked for Silbermann.[29] The story of the 'Twelve Apostles' can probably be dismissed as a myth, yet its

[24] *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (2007) *s.v.* 'Zumpe, Johann Christoph', Encyclopaedia Britannica Online, 4 April 2007 (http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-9078493).
[25] See M. Cole, 'The Twelve Apostles?'
[26] (London, 1860), 131.
[27] Ibid., 17.
[28] Ibid., 48.
[29] M. Cole, *Pianoforte in the Classical Era*, 81.

pervasiveness invites consideration of why it was, and continues to be, so easily accepted by writers on the subject. The idea that piano-building in 1760s London was a continuation of an existing German tradition, or was somehow received from the hands of Silbermann – however unfounded the idea may be – is understandably attractive as a convenient explanation for the sudden appearance of pianos in Britain, which had not previously known any significant attempts at building pianos, and the subsequent burst of interest in the instrument. Since this is not true, though, one may arrive at a more remarkable conclusion: the invention of the square piano, and the subsequent evolution of the English piano, was a manifestly English affair, independent from Continental influences or traditions, resulting from the unique and vibrant combination of musical influences in London at the time. Even if many of the central personalities involved were foreign, their contributions to the development of the English piano are wholly original and owe nothing to any existing school of piano building.

The characteristics of Zumpe's square piano may owe nothing to existing piano building traditions, but they do owe something to existing keyboard instruments, and these influences make themselves clear upon close examination of Zumpe's instrument. Obviously, the visual appearance of the instrument reminds one of a clavichord, but the influence of the clavichord may be found within as well. Michael Cole's analysis of the action identifies elements borrowed and adapted from both the clavichord and the panatalon.[30] These are combined with many of Zumpe's own innovations in a novel way to produce a completely new kind of keyboard instrument that solved problems in the pianos that existed in England at the time. That square pianos began to be built on the European continent not long after also

[30] Ibid., 58-59; idem, 'The Twelve Apostles?' 32.

demonstrates that the appeal of Zumpe's invention reached beyond the musically adventurous climate of London and fulfilled a wider need for this kind of instrument.

The popularity of the square piano

At home, enthusiasm for the square piano spread quickly. Owing to the simplicity of the action, the lack of superfluous ornamental casework, and the overall efficiency of the design, Zumpe's first pianos sold for sixteen guineas, about a third of the price for a decent harpsichord.[31] The size of the square piano made it an ideal domestic instrument as well, and this undoubtedly contributed immensely to the instrument's popularity among England's growing middle class. Zumpe had also clearly solved the most serious obstacle to the piano's widespread acceptance up to this point: its heavy action. Burney addressed all these issues when he wrote in the *Cyclopaedia*,

> Zumpé, a German, who had long worked under Shudi, constructed small piano-fortes of the shape and size of the virginal, of which the tone was very sweet, and the touch, with a little use, equal to any degree of rapidity. These, from their low price, and the convenience of their form, as well as power of expression, suddenly grew into such favour, that there was scarcely a house in the kingdom where a keyed-instrument had ever had admission, but was supplied with one of Zumpé's piano-fortes…[32]

The square piano was quickly endorsed by none other than Johann Christian Bach. In 1766, the same year Zumpe's four earliest surviving pianos were built, Bach published his six sonatas, Op. 5, 'pour le Clavecin ou le Piano Forte'. Although this was not the first time music had been written with the piano in mind, these six sonatas are the first works for piano by someone who is still remembered today as a significant composer, and they are the first music for piano to have been published in England.[33] That Bach's Op. 5 sonatas are linked with Zumpe's square piano or in some way constitute a response to it is evinced not only by the year of their

[31] M. Cole, *Pianoforte in the Classical Era*, 53.
[32] Burney, *Cyclopaedia.*
[33] M. Cole, *Pianoforte in the Classical Era*, 65.

publication, but also by the notable fact that they lie within the range of Zumpe's square pianos.[34]

The keyboard writing in these six sonatas seems calculated for the widest possible commercial appeal. Apart from some passages in double-notes (No. 5/II and some awkward consecutive sixths in No. 6/III), there is nothing in these sonatas to pose any serious challenge to the technique of an amateur keyboard player. Likewise, no great demands are made of the listener; the sonatas have pleasant melodies, presented in clear textures with occasional periods of effervescence. One will not find overly dramatic gestures or shocking modulations within these sonatas.

The chief innovation of these pieces is, of course, their use of dynamic indications. *Forte* and *piano* had previously appeared in the few examples of Continental piano music that existed hitherto, and such indications had been used to denote manual changes in harpsichord music, chiefly by the French *clavecinistes*. However, Bach's use of dynamic indications in these sonatas calls for a variety of effects that demand a keyboard instrument capable of dynamic variation. Occurrences of *forte* and *piano* within a single phrase, for effects of contrast or accentuation, appear in several sonatas, particularly No. 3 in G. These cannot possibly indicate manual changes on a harpsichord, which would be exceedingly clumsy and unidiomatic for the instrument. In addition, a single *crescendo* direction appears in the last movement of the first sonata, at bar 39, eight bars before the recapitulation. While such an effect could conceivably be realised on an English harpsichord of the period, possibly involving one of the swell devices that were common at the time (see below), it is unlikely that this is the intention of the indication.

[34] Ibid., 66.

The last two sonatas in the set do not have dynamic markings, and it is probably no coincidence that these two seem to be the most idiomatically suited to the harpsichord. The fifth sonata, in E, begins and ends with movements that make extensive use of dashing scales and splashy arpeggios. The last sonata is the only one set in a minor key, and it makes for a striking contrast with the other members of the Op. 5 set. From its very first measure, it expresses a dark, heavy pathos, more dramatic than any of its companions in the set. The textures are also thicker and more complex, and as the opening Grave gives way to a double fugue, the sonata seems to allude to the more learned contrapuntal style of Johann Christian's father.

In the years that followed 1766, the piano suddenly received a tremendous amount of public exposure, no doubt due to the advocacy of respected and celebrated musicians like Johann Christian Bach. Two significant 'firsts' are usually mentioned in relation to the appearance of Zumpe's square piano, and while the popularity of the instrument undoubtedly contributed to an environment where the piano would be enthusiastically received in public performance, there does not seem to be any conclusive documentary evidence to show that a Zumpe square was used at either event.

The first of these events is the use of a piano in 1767 by Charles Dibdin, accompanying a Miss Brickler during the interval of a performance of the *Beggar's Opera* at Covent Garden.[35] This is believed to be the first public performance on a piano in Britain, and while the significance of the event is obvious, it is not at all certain that Dibdin played a Zumpe square.

The second event is the first known public appearance of the piano as a *solo* instrument, this time at the hands of Bach, at a concert in St. James Street in June of

[35] Rimbault, 133.

1768. In this case, there is some circumstantial evidence to suggest that Bach may have been playing on a square piano. Bach's bank account for July of 1768 shows a £50 payment to Zumpe, and this is usually taken as evidence that Bach played one of Zumpe's square pianos at the concert the previous month.[36] However, at a cost of sixteen guineas each, the sum paid by Bach is enough to have purchased three of Zumpe's pianos. Rather, the payment seems to indicate that Bach, like his father before him promoting early Silbermann pianos in Leipzig, was acting as an agent for Zumpe, advocating and arranging sales of the square piano.[37] Given Bach's enthusiasm for the square piano of Zumpe, it is possible that he played the June 1768 concert upon such an instrument, but this is far from conclusive.

It is worth recalling Burney's statement that pianos were actively being built and experimented upon at this time; the success of Zumpe's invention must have caused other makers to redouble their efforts. While the Zumpe square created a great deal of excitement, it is by no means impossible that the two events mentioned above may have been given upon a horizontal, 'grand' piano, by another maker. Indeed, one maker in particular, Americus Backers, may have already perfected his instrument by the time of these performances.

The first English grand

Despite the widespread success of Zumpe's square piano, there are some serious problems with the action, which is somewhat ironic, as it is the simplicity of the action that was one of its chief advantages. Lacking both an escapement and a backcheck, the action must be regulated in such a way that the motion of the key disengages from the hammershank when the hammer is still some distance from the string. If the key were to disengage later, the risk of a 'double-strike', in which the

[36] Terry, 113.
[37] M. Cole, *Pianoforte in the Classical Era*, 62-63.

hammer returns from the string with such force that it rebounds off the rail (or the pin, if the key remains depressed) and strikes the string a second time, increases dramatically. However, disengaging the action so early also impairs the sensitivity of the action, as the player must ensure that the key is struck with sufficient force to propel the hammer to the string. This makes playing at softer dynamic levels rather perilous, as the pianist must negotiate a fine line between playing with sufficient force to ensure that the strings are set into vibration, and not playing so lightly that the hammer does not reach the string.

Experimentation and other refinements to the square piano continued at the hands of various other makers, but the basics of Zumpe's action remained unchanged. In the meantime, however, John Broadwood and Robert Stodart, two Scotsmen employed in Burkat Shudi's harpsichord shop, would leave work together in the afternoon and go to the shop of Americus Backers in Jermyn Street, where the three spent countless evenings working on what would eventually be known as the English grand piano.[38] The importance of this invention can hardly be overstated, not only because of its immediate influence upon English pianos, English piano music, or piano building in neighbouring countries such as France, but because the basic elements and principles of Backers' action are still found and easily identified in the modern piano.

[38] Wainwright, 41-42.

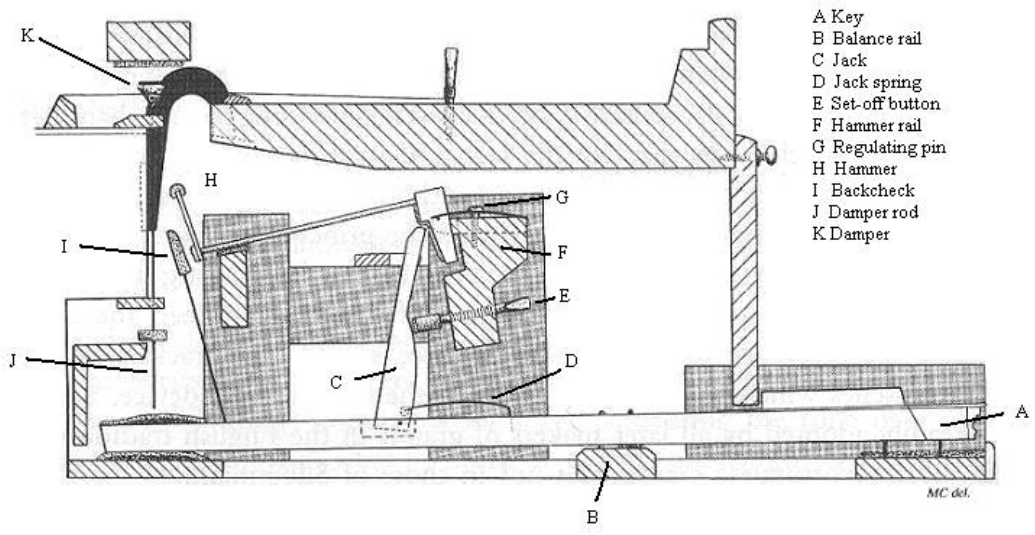


Fig. 1.2. Backers' action of 1772.
From M. Cole, *Pianoforte in the Classical Era*, 120. Labeling of parts added.

The first immediately observable characteristic of Backers' action, as compared to that of Zumpe, is the presence of an escapement and backcheck. The so-called 'Old Man's Head' of Zumpe's square action is replaced here by a jack, which is hinged to the key. When the key is depressed, the top of the jack acts upon the butt of the hammer, where it is hinged. The escapement occurs when the jack encounters a set-off button, conveniently regulated by a screw compatible with the tuning hammer, pushing the jack back and disengaging it from notch in the hammer butt, at which point the hammer is free to move on its own. If the key remains depressed after the hammer has struck the string, the hammer is caught by the check.

Clearly, this action solves many of the problems that existed with Zumpe's square action. The restoration of an escapement meant that the hammer could be carried much further to the string before escaping from the action, thus increasing the sensitivity of the action and enabling the instrument to be played at softer dynamic levels with greater ease. The use of a check also eliminates the risk of double-striking, which has already been greatly decreased by the escapement.

The placement of such an action in a grand piano also solved another shortcoming of the square piano, its limited sound. While the square piano could be played as a solo instrument or used to accompany another instrument or voice, its lesser resonance rendered it essentially useless in larger ensembles and performance spaces, where the powerful English harpsichord, with its myriad colours, continued to dominate. This increase in the piano's resonance is attributable to more than the greater size of a wing-shaped instrument, however. Backers also experimented with moving the striking point of the treble closer to the nut, and the hammerhead he employed is considerably elongated and has a firmer point. Unfortunately, only one of Backers' pianos survives, dating from 1772; like Zumpe's square piano, it is strung bichord (i.e. two strings per note) throughout, but it is known that Backers' later instruments were trichord.[39]

Another startlingly modern attribute of Backers' pianos is the use of two pedals, attached to the front legs, in modern disposition: that is, the right pedal lifting the dampers and the left operating an *una corda* mechanism. This may be the first piano in Britain to be equipped with an *una corda* device; it is certainly the first known instance, anywhere in Europe, of pedals being fitted to a piano to perform functions that had previously been controlled by hand stops. The idea of fitting pedals to a piano was almost certainly inspired by the use of pedals on English harpsichords at the time, which is discussed in more detail below.

Even more than the *una corda*, the use of a pedal-operated damper mechanism has enormous musical implications. The previous use of hand stops to lift the dampers required the player to lift one hand off the keyboard to operate the stop, and it seems likely that such opportunities only occurred at significant structural junctures

[39] M. Cole, *Pianoforte in the Classical Era*, 118. An instrument of the period at Fenton House in Hampstead, bearing Backers' name, is commonly considered to be a forgery.

in the music. In other words, entire passages of music would be played either with or without damping, and there was no way to make such changes in the midst of such a passage. Manipulating the dampers via a pedal, though, enables such changes of acoustic and colour to be made while the hands are otherwise occupied at the keyboard. While such an observation may seem self-evident, from the vantage of more than two hundred years' hindsight, it is worth noting that this is exactly what makes modern pedal technique possible, and it also led to a far more sophisticated use of the pedal by English pianists and composers than was known by their German and Austrian counterparts for many decades.

Backers' piano is not just a successful experiment in piano design at a time of many such endeavours; Backers' piano is 'the English grand', in its mature and developed form. His piano would serve as a model and was soon adopted by all the major English piano builders, and the only fundamental changes that the instrument would undergo over the next thirty years would be a division of the bridge and an expansion of the instrument's range (both at the hands of John Broadwood).[40] That the instrument's basic design went unchanged for so long, and that most of its basic characteristics are still found in the modern piano are a testament to the sophistication and durability of Backers' invention.

Backers' English grand was first advertised and publicly shown in 1771. As with Zumpe's square piano, enthusiasm for the instrument spread rapidly, and it was quickly championed by the likes of J.C. Bach and Johann Samuel Schroeter, another German pianist living in London. Its increased dynamic range made it the ideal vehicle for the new instrumental genre of the piano concerto, which both Bach and Schroeter were beginning to explore. Bach published his Opus 7 concerti in 1770,

[40] W. H. Cole, 'Americus Backers: Original Forte Piano Maker', *The Harpsichord and Fortepiano Magazine* iv (1987), 81.

which may indicate that Backers' instrument had been completed by then. It seems inconceivable that these works would have been performed in public concerts on a square piano.[41] There is more than conjectural evidence for this, though; Burney praised Schroeter's performances upon Backers' piano, and Bach's bank account records a payment of £10 to Backers in 1773.[42]

Writing in the same year, Burney paid Backers high praise:

> I must observe, that the Germans work much better out of their own country, than they do in it, if we may judge by the *harpsichords* of Kirkman and Shudi; the *piano fortes* of Backers… which far surpass, in goodness, all the keyed instruments that I met with, in my time through Germany.[43]

This clearly shows the high regard that Burney had for Backers' pianos in the early 1770s. A more well-known quote, however, is rather less complimentary:

> Backers, a harpsichord maker of the second rank, constructed several piano-fortes, and improved the mechanism in some particulars, but the tone, with all the delicacy of Schroeter's touch, lost the spirit of the harpsichord, and gained nothing in sweetness.[44]

What might have caused such a change in Burney's opinion? It is worth remembering that a period of at least thirty years separates these two quotes, during which time the piano had undergone significant refinement and change, so while the latter quote may be a criticism (or even a false memory) informed by the experience of later instruments, the first quote demonstrates the immediate enthusiasm and regard Backers' invention initially received.

The English harpsichord, 1760-75

As the piano emerged as a significant force in London musical life, the dominant concert keyboard instrument, the harpsichord, was itself undergoing a

[41] Maunder, 'J.C. Bach', 206. See Chapter 2 for more on instrument choices in these concerti.
[42] M. Cole, *Pianoforte in the Classical Era*, 117.
[43] *The Present State of Music in Germany, The Netherlands, and United Provinces*, 2nd ed., vol. 2. (London, 1773; reprint, London, 2003), 146. Burney uses the word German quite freely here; Kirckman was Alsatian, Shudi Swiss, and Backers may have been Dutch.
[44] Burney, *Cyclopaedia.*

dramatic period of change. Surprisingly, though, the harpsichord itself does not seem to have been threatened in any way by the increasing popularity of the piano. As a matter of fact, harpsichord sales in London actually increased during this period, reaching their peak in 1775 and maintaining strong sales for yet another ten years, even as piano sales eventually eclipsed harpsichord sales during this period.[45] A decline began only in the mid-1780s; in 1784, John Broadwood, onto whom the Shudi firm was passed, sold 133 pianos, but only 38 harpsichords.[46] Broadwood eventually ceased harpsichord production in 1793, when Shudi's son left the firm.[47]

Despite the success of the authentic instrument movement, the eighteenth-century English harpsichord remains a largely unknown quantity. Harpsichordists of recent decades have exhibited a distinct preference for instruments of the Flemish and French styles, seemingly irrespective of whether such harpsichords are indeed 'authentic' for a particular repertory, and while it is true that not much of the popular solo harpsichord repertoire was written for the English instrument of this period – Handel being a notable exception, particularly as he is known to have owned a Shudi – this does not explain why the English harpsichord continues to be eschewed today, even as a continuo instrument, in relevant repertoire.

Two names dominated English harpsichord-building during this time, and they need little in the way of introduction: Shudi and Kirckman. Both had apprenticed with Hermann Tabel, a harpsichord maker of possibly Flemish origin, in the 1720s.[48] Certain details of the internal design used by Shudi and Kirckman demonstrate a lineage from the Flemish harpsichord tradition, particularly the use of a 'true unison',

[45] M. Cole, *Pianoforte in the Classical Era*, 1.
[46] Wainwright, 60.
[47] Cyril Ehrlich, *The Piano: A History* (London, 1979), 18.
[48] Wainwright, 19.

an 8' choir common to both manuals in the double instruments.[49] To ears accustomed to the Flemish and French instruments preferred by the authentic instrument movement at this time, a Shudi or Kirckman harpsichord is unexpectedly powerful and capable of a wide, contrasting range of colours.

Taking advantage of this wide range of colours was precisely the motivation behind a number of curious innovations in English harpsichord-building at this time. The most dramatic of these was Shudi's invention of the 'machine stop', by which rapid changes of registration could be made through the use of a pedal. The device is activated by the use of a hand stop on the left panel which, when pushed in, prevents the other hand stops from functioning. When the pedal is released, or 'up', all three choirs sound on the lower manual. When the pedal is depressed, only the lower unison and upper 'lute' register remain. This mechanism allowed the harpsichord to switch almost immediately between the instrument's two opposite extremes of sound, enabling dramatic dynamic and colour contrasts.

The first harpsichord to be fitted with a machine stop was premiered at the last concert given by the Mozart children in London, on 13 May 1765 in Brewer Street. The Mozarts had developed something of a bond with Shudi during their time in London, and Shudi seems to have found it fitting to allow the new instrument to be premiered by the Mozart children before he sent it to Frederick the Great of Prussia.[50] (Whether the young Wolfgang was of sufficient height to reach and manipulate the machine-stop pedal at this concert is an amusing question upon which writers of the period are silent.) By all accounts, the mechanism was new at this time, but its period of development must have been long enough for the idea to have disseminated; by April of 1765, one month after the Mozarts' concert, Neubauer was advertising

[49] Raymond Russell, *The Harpsichord and Clavichord: An Introductory Study*, 2nd ed. (London, 1973), 77.
[50] Robert Gutman, *Mozart: A Cultural Biography* (New York, 1999), 197.

harpsichords with a similar, pedal-operated device for changing the registration.[51] The machine stop met with great enthusiasm, and it quickly became a standard feature on double-manual English harpsichords until their regular production came to an end in the 1790s.

Another device that is frequently found on English harpsichords of this period is the 'Venetian swell', another pedal-operated mechanism that opened and closed a set of parallel shutters over the harpsichord case. Such a device appears on Shudi and Kirckman harpsichords from the 1760s, and Shudi took out a patent on the Venetian swell in 1769 (although it is curious that Shudi did not take out a patent on the machine stop).[52] Another pedal operated swell was the so-called 'Nag's Head swell', which opened a section of the lid. This device does not seem to have been favoured by Shudi, but it appears on numerous harpsichords by other makers started in the 1760s, including those of Kirckman and a surviving harpsichord by Backers from 1766.[53]

Both these devices have notable disadvantages associated with them. The effect of the various swell devices is most pronounced when the shutters are first opened, and the crescendo effect becomes increasingly negligible as the shutters are opened further. In addition, when the shutters are closed, the sound produced is extremely muted and essentially that of the lid being completely shut – which, in the case of the Nag's Head swell, would be exactly the case. For this reason, several Shudi harpsichords have an added feature in which the entire Venetian swell mechanism can be done away with by simply raising the shutters with the lid.[54]

[51] M. Cole, *Pianoforte in the Classical Era*, 49-50.
[52] Russell, 80.
[53] M. Cole, *Pianoforte in the Classical Era*, 75.
[54] Russell, 80.

There is a temptation to see such devices – which may seem exotic or even bizarre, due to the relative unfamiliarity of English harpsichords to modern audiences – as grotesque, artificial implants that were grafted to the harpsichord in a last-ditch effort to correct the instrument's alleged deficiencies and prevent it from being rendered obsolete by the nascent piano. Virginia Pleasants, the American harpsichordist, wrote, 'English harpsichords… in a last desperate attempt by their makers to compete with the ever-growing popularity of the piano, were subjected to a number of innovations.'[55] However, an examination of the relevant dates and facts simply does not substantiate such an interpretation. As noted above, harpsichord sales in England had yet to reach their zenith when these innovations were introduced to the instrument. Additionally, if the dating of Zumpe's first square pianos to 1766 is correct, the introduction of the machine stop and the various swell devices to the harpsichord was concurrent with, and even preceded, the advent of the piano in British musical life. If anything, the introduction of swell devices to the English harpsichord undoubtedly comes from the English organ of the period, in which swell divisions had become increasingly popular during the first half of the eighteenth century. When regarded in the larger context of these developments, the innovations of the English harpsichord reflect the changing needs of musical style of the time, rather than any frantic attempt to remain competitive with the piano.

An appreciation of the English harpsichord is essential to understanding the origins of many of the characteristics and later developments of the English piano. The idea of using foot pedals to alter the sound of a keyboard instrument seems to have originated with the English harpsichord, and clearly it inspired Backers' piano pedals. Also, the powerful English harpsichord had undoubtedly accustomed English

[55] 'The Early Piano in Britain (*c*1760-1800)', *Early Music* xiii (1985), 44.

ears to certain levels of volume and colour. If the new piano were to compete with the harpsichord on an equal footing, it would also need to have these characteristics, and indeed the greater volume of the mature English Classical piano was one of the most obvious traits that distinguished it from its lighter Viennese cousin. Rather than surpassing the English harpsichord due to its alleged shortcomings, the English piano actually owes many of its fundamental features to its predecessor.

Although the two instruments coexisted on the concert stages of London through the 1770s, change was inevitable. Within the space of a decade, the piano had advanced from a minor curiosity to a place of significance and influence in English musical life. The square piano of Zumpe, now imitated by many builders both in England and on the Continent, was becoming a compulsory domestic item for the growing middle class. Major composers were beginning to write music for the instrument in a manner that distinguished it from the harpsichord. And the English grand piano, already extant in a mature and developed form, was quickly replacing its predecessor as the preferred solo keyboard instrument in concerts.[56] The coming decade would bring further change and see the development of a distinct musical rhetoric, unique not just to the piano, but specifically to the English piano.

[56] Maunder, 'J.C. Bach', 207, 209.

Chapter 2

The piano concerto in the 1770s

The piano ascendant

The piano and the harpsichord happily co-existed in 1770s England, but the former was beginning to displace the latter as the preferred keyboard instrument. Several developments early in the decade foreshadowed the coming change. Americus Backers had exhibited his grand piano in 1771, possibly after J.C. Bach had already performed on it in public.[1] In 1773, Burkat Shudi passed away, leaving his son as John Broadwood's partner in the firm. Burkat Jr., though, was neither skilled nor interested in building instruments, so the direction of the firm was, for all intents and purposes, in the hands of Broadwood, who promptly set out to take advantage of the growing market for the piano.[2]

Concert advertisements from newspapers and other publications of the era show that J.C. Bach had abandoned the harpsichord in public performance as early as 1770.[3] The British taste for keyboard concerti in public concerts embraced the new instrument, resulting in a growing number of appearances for the piano as a solo instrument. While Bach had the honour of being the first to publish solo keyboard music 'pour le Clavecin ou le Piano Forte' in England with his Op. 5 sonatas in 1766,

[1] Richard Maunder, 'J.C. Bach and the Early Piano in London', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* cxvi (1991), 206.
[2] Arthur Loesser, *Men, Women and Pianos* (New York, 1954), 224. The younger Shudi dissolved the partnership twenty years later, leaving Broadwood as sole proprietor.
[3] Maunder, 207.

the distinction of publishing the first keyboard concerti to list the piano as an option belongs to Philip Hayes, who brought out six concerti in 1769. While Bach's sonatas clearly take advantage of the possibilities of the piano, though, Hayes' concerti undoubtedly list 'ORGAN, HARPSICHORD OR FORTE-PIANO' largely as a marketing ploy; several of the concerti contain registration indications for the organ, for which instrument they are undoubtedly intended.[4] There was nothing disingenuous about this, of course. The instrumentation of music in the eighteenth century and before was regarded with great flexibility; 'accompanied sonatas' for high instruments were usually intended equally for the flute or violin (the accompanying party, in this case, being understood as the non-keyboard instrument) and the various keyboard instruments were treated with a certain degree of interchangeability. While listing or advertising keyboard works as suitable for multiple instruments had obvious commercial benefit, it also reflected an aesthetic attitude of the time, albeit one that became increasingly outdated as the piano asserted its independence from the harpsichord (to say nothing of the organ) and developed its own distinct keyboard idiom. Concerti that listed only the harpsichord or piano as options soon followed the Hayes concerti of 1769. J.C. Bach published his Op. 7 concerti in 1770, and 1774 saw the publication of six concerti each by Carl Friedrich Abel and James Hook, and twelve by Johann Samuel Schroeter.

As with much of the music examined in the present discussion, this concerto repertoire remains virtually unknown at this time, outside the world of specialists in the early Classical period. A few of the concerti by J.C. Bach were printed in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by German and British publishers – some of them with hilariously anachronistic cadenzas written by their respective editors – but

[4] Timothy Rishton, 'The Eighteenth-Century British Keyboard Concerto after Handel' in *Aspects of Keyboard Music: Essays in Honour of Susi Jeans*, ed. Robert Judd (Oxford, 1992), 128.

both these and the later, more sober volumes by Peters are now out of print. Though the *Collected Works of Johann Christian Bach, 1735-1782* series of volumes by Garland Publishing[5] went a long way in rectifying the need for a modern edition of J.C. Bach's works, it has always been a fantastically expensive publication intended primarily for reference and scholarly use. The works of the other composers are even more obscure. A facsimile edition of Schroeter's Op. 3 concerti seems to have been printed by Heuwekemeijer of Amsterdam in 1970 – though the present author has foregone it, given the availability of the original editions for reference – and the most recent article dedicated exclusively to the keyboard music of Schroeter that this author has found dates from as long ago as 1958.[6]

The keyboard concerti of 1770s England seem very much to be a genre in a state of transition, both in terms of overall musical style and the way the keyboard is used. In the more familiar piano concerti of Mozart, both the structural form and the piano writing serve the dramatic function of contrasting the soloist with the orchestra.[7] In the English concerti of the 1770s, however, this high-Classical concept of the concerto had not yet fully developed, and the Baroque principle of alternating between ripieno and concertato sections is still a dominant dramatic formula, adapted to fit into the sonata-allegro form. This dichotomy is also seen in the scale and instrumentation of these concerti; the scoring is almost invariably limited to two violins and cello, although Schroeter's Op. 5 concerti have a part for viola.[8] This seems calculated to make these works particularly suited to domestic performance as chamber music, a setting in which grand dramatic effects tend to be less apt. With regard to keyboard writing, the *style galant* is still very much the vernacular in these

[5] Ed. Ernest Warburton (New York, 1984-1989).
[6] Konrad Wolff, 'Johann Samuel Schroeter' *Musical Quarterly* xliv (1958), 338-59.
[7] Charles Rosen, *The Classical Style: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven* (New York, 1997), 197.
[8] See the discussion below about the scoring of J.C. Bach's concerti.

concerti; fluid two-voice textures dominate in the keyboard part, and one does not find dense chordal writing, extravagant virtuoso passages, or complex counterpoint. Most of the concerti are in two movements, the second movement usually being a minuet or something of a similarly light vein. And in keeping with that *légeresse*, the concerti of this period are nearly always in a major key. All of these factors – mildness of dramatic effect, scoring, keyboard writing, and lightness of character – strongly place these works in the domain of amateur or domestic music-making. This carries with it the implication that the square piano, quickly becoming the favoured domestic keyboard instrument, was probably the most common, if not the ideal, instrument for the performance of these concerti. At the same time, it is worth observing that these concerti were also played in concert, so clearly they were not perceived as beneath the purview of professional keyboardists and the concert stage.

The first movements of these concerti are usually in the expected ritornello form, developed in solo concerti of the Baroque period, but by the 1770s the form had absorbed many of the characteristics and functions of sonata form. The opening ritornello, which usually remains in the tonic, often presents all of the movement's thematic material. Charles Rosen, whose Schenkerian understanding of sonata form focuses on the exploration and resolution of tension between tonic and dominant harmonic areas, is reticent to refer to an opening ritornello as a first exposition unless it modulates to the dominant.[9] However, if the form is regarded primarily as a thematic process, the complete presentation of a movement's thematic material in the ritornello strongly gives the impression of a first exposition. In these works, as later in the Classical period, such a perception is also reinforced by the fact that subsequent ritornellos, even the last, tend to be much shorter by comparison. Another example of

[9] Charles Rosen, *Sonata Forms* (New York, 1980), 70.

the influence of sonata form is the erosion of the third ritornello between the second and third solo sections (or the 'development' and 'recapitulation'); in most concerti, this ritornello is done away with altogether or merely alluded to by giving the opening phrase of the 'recapitulation' to the orchestra, to which the solo keyboard subsequently joins.

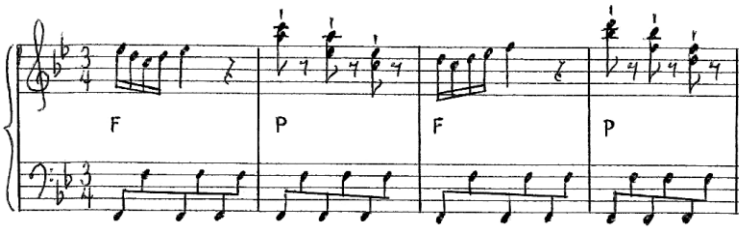
Hook and Schroeter

James Hook, one of the busiest organists in London of the time, was another early advocate of the piano and may have been the first to play a concerto on the piano publicly in London.[10] In 1774, Hook published six concerti 'for the HARPSICHORD or FORTE-PIANO'.[11] All six concerti in this collection are in major keys, and all save one (No. 5) are in two movements. Hook's treatment of the first movement in these concerti fits the general description above quite well. His opening ritornellos are substantial enough to qualify as a first exposition; they present a secondary theme in the tonic, as Mozart tended to do in his early concerti, which is later presented in the dominant during the soloist's 'exposition'. The development section of these movements is typically rather involved, becoming more than the brief section for modulatory passagework typical of this period.

As to the writing for the solo keyboard instrument, there are no significant risks taken here. Apart from a few caesurae that require embellishment, there are no opportunities for a fully-fledged cadenza (i.e. over a I 6/4 chord) in this set of concerti, possibly a reflection of the intended domestic market of these pieces. The keyboard idiom employed is quite conservative, typically *galant*, and contains nothing that emphatically demands the piano over the harpsichord. Indeed, the entire

[10] David Rowland, *A History of Pianoforte Pedalling* (Cambridge, 1993), 13. See also Simon McVeigh, *Concert Life in London from Mozart to Haydn* (Cambridge, 1993), 90.
[11] Given Hook's activities as an organist, it is significant that he did not include that instrument as a possibility, as many of his contemporaries did.

collection of concerti contains only one example of dynamic indications for the soloist, in the Minuet of No. 4 (Ex. 2.1). It is a simple call-and-response effect, something easily realised on the harpsichord by observing the notated variation in articulation, rather than requiring any fussy manual changes.



Example 2.1: Hook: Concerto No. 4, II, mm. 63-66
Copied from Longman & Broderip, London, c. 1780.

While such dynamic indications are hardly idiomatic to the harpsichord, neither is their use here a sign that Hook, at least in these concerti, unambiguously calls for the piano.

Johann Samuel Schroeter was born in Warsaw around 1752, although at an early age his family moved to Leipzig, where he spent most of his childhood. His family arrived in London in 1772, and on 2 May of that year, he appeared in one of the Bach-Abel concerts. Bach subsequently took a great interest in him and presented him at court in 1774, laying the ground for Schroeter's eventual succession as master of the Queen's music upon Bach's death in 1782.[12]

Schroeter quickly developed a reputation as the premiere pianist in the British Isles, widely known for his singing touch at the piano; Charles Burney made reference to this in his article on the piano for Abraham Rees' *Cyclopaedia*.[13] Given how widely lauded Schroeter was during his life, it is curious that posterity has consigned

[12] Wolff, 339-41 passim.
[13] *The Cyclopaedia, or Universal Directory of the Arts, Sciences, and Literature*, ed. Abraham Rees, (London, 1819) *s.v.* 'Harpsichord'. See Chapter 1, p. 29 for the quote.

his name solely to the pages of literature on piano history. If his output as a composer seems quite small and concentrated in the space of a very few years (7 opuses in total, all from the 1770s), it is due to the circumstances of his marriage and his tragically premature death in 1788. As a condition of his marrying an aristocrat, he agreed to cease all public performing (and, presumably, other public musical activities); he 'later surrendered all rights to his wife's property in exchange for an annuity of £500.'[14]

By comparison to James Hook's six concerti of 1774, Schroeter's Op. 3 is a study in diversity. Three of the concerti in Op. 3 (Nos. 3, 4, and 6) have three movements, rather than two, and his slow movements – particularly the Larghetto of No. 6 – are of greater substance than the examples in the Hook concerti. With regard to the amalgamation of ritornello and sonata form in the first movements, Schroeter exhibits a great deal of variety and flexibility in his approach. Like Hook, Schroeter also presents a distinct second theme in the orchestral exposition that will be heard in the secondary key area during the soloist's 'exposition'. The second and third concerti of this set also contain a notable structural oddity; the recapitulations begin with the second theme, a device which was to be employed occasionally by Clementi and Dussek in subsequent years and by Chopin in subsequent decades.

The first movement of Op. 3 No. 5 is a significant departure from this process, though, in which the concerto ritornello form merges with a rounded binary form. The opening 'ritornello' (if such a term can be used in this case) modulates to the dominant, whereupon it introduces a second theme. The following solo exposition follows a similar plan, in expanded form, and closes with a brief four-bar tutti. At this point, the score indicates a repeat of this entire double-exposition, going back to the

[14] Deborah Rohr, *The Careers of British Musicians 1750-1850: A Profession of Artisans* (Cambridge, 2001), 28.

very beginning of the movement. The following section, which is also repeated, is essentially the B section of a rounded binary form with two five-bar ritornellos punctuating the major structural junctures. It is a fascinating departure from the expected structural procedure in these kinds of works, and it is difficult to understand how Konrad Wolff can regard Schroeter's use of a double exposition as more consistent and akin to the spirit of Mozart than J.C. Bach, whose use of the double exposition is characterised by Wolff as occasional and 'one of many experiments in search of a concerto structure'.[15] Bach's concerti are examined below, but their scale and handling of multiple themes seems far more Mozartean in spirit than Schroeter's, even as Schroeter and Bach seem to be simultaneously in search of a coherent dramatic structure for the opening movement of the concerto.

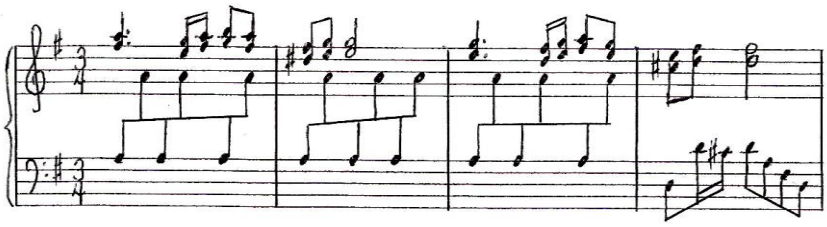
Op. 3 contains no less than six opportunities for cadenzas on I 6/4 chords, two each occurring in Nos. 3 and 6. Interestingly, the young Mozart wrote a set of cadenzas for these concerti, KV 624 (626a), some of which only survives in fragments. Mozart knew these concerti well, and in a letter of 3 July 1778 to his father, he recommended them as 'very fine' and enquired whether they were available for purchase in Salzburg.[16]

By and large, Schroeter's writing employs the standard *style galant* keyboard vocabulary of the time: two-voice textures, broken-octave basses, widely-voiced bass chords, and so on. As with Hook's concerti, there are almost no dynamic indications for the soloist; however, there are a few surprises to be encountered. In Op. 3 No. 5, Schroeter displays a fondness for consecutive thirds, which would eventually become an identifying characteristic of the English keyboard style. In both the exposition and

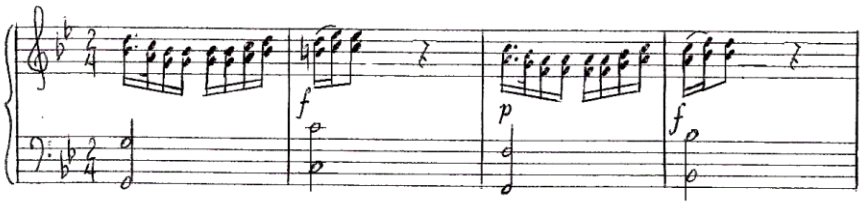
[15] Wolff, 356.
[16] *The Letters of Mozart and His Family*, ed. Emily Anderson, 2nd ed. (London, 1966), 559.

recapitulation of the first movement, the piano states the second theme in thirds. A minor episode of the second movement also uses thirds quite extensively (Ex. 2.2).

a. I, mm. 69-72

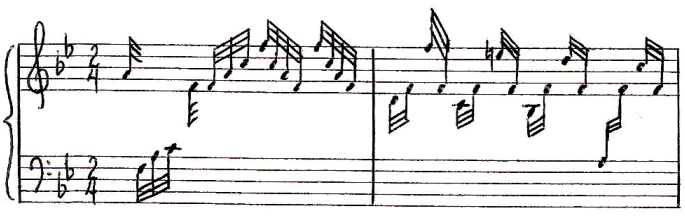


b. II, mm. 49-52

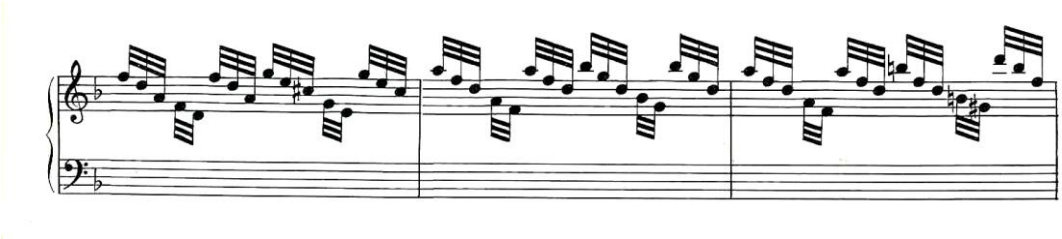


Example 2.2: Schroeter: Concerto in G Op. 3 No. 5
Copied from Napier, London, 1774

In the same opus, the writing in the first movement of the second concerto makes allusion to the past with generous use of the sort of passagework that is ideally suited to the harpsichord, in which a single voice in constantly-moving notes is traded off between the two hands (Ex. 2.3). This was a standard gesture of the German Baroque *stylus phantasticus*, but one is reminded here also of Haydn's frequent use of this type of passagework in, for example, the Sonata in F Hob. XVI: 23 (Ex. 2.4).



Example 2.3: Schroeter: Concerto in B-flat Op. 3 No. 2, I, mm. 50-51
Copied from Napier, London, 1774



Example 2.4: Haydn: Sonata in F, Hob. XVI: 23, I, mm. 68-70
From *Sämtliche Klaviersonaten*, ed. Christa Landon.
Copyright Wiener Urtext, Vienna, 1973

Although Schroeter made his name as a pianist, his keyboard writing in these concerti is still heavily influenced by the language of the harpsichord and the *galant* style. Even so, his use of consecutive thirds in Op. 3 No. 5, and elsewhere in his keyboard writing, hints at future directions in the development of a distinctly English pianistic style.

The concerti of Johann Christian Bach

No discussion of the English keyboard concerto in the 1770s would be adequate without mentioning the works of J.C. Bach, the best-known composer of this period in England. Bach had previously published six keyboard concerti, Op. 1 in 1763 for the harpsichord, but his Op. 7 of 1770 and Op. 13 of 1777 mention the piano as an option for performance, and they were almost certainly written for Bach's own concerto performances on the instrument in London.[17]

As published by Welcker in London, the Op. 7 concerti are accompanied by the usual strings (i.e. two violins and cello, *sans* viola), but research by Richard Maunder in the 1980s uncovered manuscript sources in Berlin containing authentic parts for oboe and horn.[18] There is no evidence that these wind parts were known and used in England, but their existence has obvious implications for the forces used in performance. As noted earlier, the typically sparse instrumentation of these concerti

[17] Richard Maunder, introduction to *The Collected Works of Johann Christian Bach, 1735-1782*, ed. Ernest Warburton, vol. 34, Keyboard Concertos III (New York, 1986), viii.
[18] Ibid., vii.

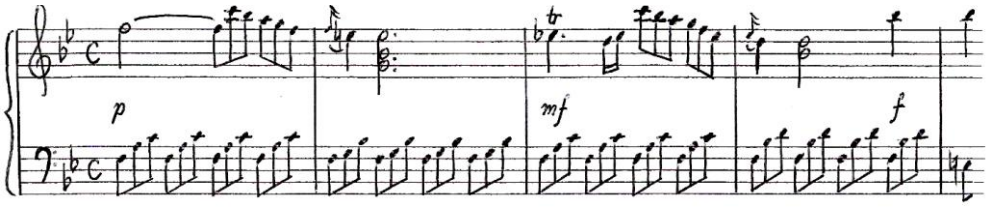
renders them conducive to chamber music performance, conceivably on a square piano with one player on each string part. The use of winds, however, changes the balance dramatically, demanding larger string forces and, consequently, a keyboard instrument with sufficient volume to be heard against a larger orchestra, either a harpsichord or – given the evidence of Bach's preferences at this time – the new 'English grand'. The Op. 13 concerti were published in London seven years later with wind parts *ad libitum* – although they are hardly expendable except in case of emergency – and an unpublished concerto of c. 1772 employs a rather fuller wind section (see below). Although a chamber music performance of Opp. 7 and, to a lesser degree, 13 is still possible, it is clear that Bach was conceiving his concerti in increasingly orchestral terms and thus moving them out of a domestic milieu.

Of the twelve concerti in Opp. 7 and 13, four are cast in three movements, and of these, there is a great deal of variety to be found amongst the second and third movements. There are two minuets to be found in each opus, but Bach seems to be more interested in exploring other forms. Slow movements are often in a binary form, alluding to the Baroque and Rococo. Rondo movements, whether they are specifically labeled as such or not, are also in ample supply, and Bach is very free with his treatment of this form, playing with the number of episodes and their tonality. For example, the *Allegro di molto* of Op. 7 No. 4, though not labeled as a Rondo, is of the form A |: B A :|. By contrast, the last movement of Op. 13 No. 4 is a set of variations on a popular 'Scotch Song'.[19]

Bach is more specific about dynamic indications in his solo parts than either Hook or Schroeter. Although there is no 'crescendo' marking found in Op. 7, as there

[19] Maunder, introduction to *The Collected Works*, vol. 35, viii.

is in the Op. 5 sonatas,[20] the first movement of Op. 7 No. 4 contains a carefully marked terraced crescendo at the very end of the development (Ex. 2.5).



Example 2.5: J.C. Bach: Concerto in B-flat Op. 7 No. 4, I, mm. 137-141
Copied from *The Collected Works of Johann Christian Bach, 1735-1782*,
Garland Publications, New York, 1986

Elsewhere, Bach makes liberal use of 'forte' and 'piano' indications. While performance of these concerti on harpsichord is of course possible, use of the piano is clearly implied by these dynamic indications. In contrast with the Hook concerti of 1770 and Schroeter's Op. 3, where a handful of dynamic markings may be ignored without compromising the musical effect, Bach's keyboard part is conceived in a few places with dynamic effects that the harpsichord is not capable of executing.

Bach lies somewhere between Hook and Schroeter with regard to the need for cadenzas in these concerti. While there are opportunities for *Eingänge* and the embellishment of caesurae, it is notable that these concerti offer very few places for a typical cadenza on a I 6/4 chord. The entire Op. 13 set contains only one such place for a cadenza, in the slow movement of No. 4. This is particularly puzzling, given that the scale and scoring of Bach's concerti seem to suggest a less 'domestic' or amateur setting. Was Bach uninterested in cadenzas or in some way doubtful of his improvisatory skills?

The sole occasion in which Bach provides a I 6/4 chord for a cadenza at the end of a first movement is Op. 7 No. 5, and this cadenza occurs at the end of the last

[20] See Chapter 1, p. 22.

solo section, as a link to the final ritornello, thereby truly functioning as an extended cadence.[21] This is in distinction to the practice of Mozart or Schroeter, who position the cadenza as an interruption of the final ritornello. This may be a clue to the reason that so few opportunities for cadenzas are found in Bach's concerti. By positioning the cadenzas as an interruption of the final ritornello, Schroeter and eventually Mozart demonstrate their conception of the dramatic contrast between soloist and orchestra; the soloist, as it were, will not allow the orchestra's final statement to be made without reminding the audience who the principle performer has been, through the use of virtuoso display. Bach's placement of the I 6/4 chord in Op. 7 No. 5, on the other hand, seems more akin to the Baroque principle of alternation, with the soloist's cadenza serving to introduce the final ritornello.

This understanding is magnified by observing what may be the most intriguing aspect of these concerti, which is the flexibility with which Bach approaches the structure of the opening movement. The opening ritornello usually presents four or five themes in rapid succession. This ordinarily remains in the tonic, although in the first movement of Op. 7 No. 1 the ritornello modulates to the dominant. One of the themes presented is often of a clearly contrasting nature – though this is not always the case – and may appear in the secondary key area during the soloist's 'exposition'. Subsequent ritornellos tend to be quite brief, and the expected ritornello that would separate the second and third solo sections (i.e. the development and recapitulation, respectively) is typically absent.

The first solo entrance invariably consists of an elaborately decorated version of the opening material. Bach then typically introduces a new theme, although this is frequently used as 'bridge' material to modulate to the secondary key area.

[21] Michael Thomas Roeder, *A History of the Concerto* (Portland, Ore., 1994), 124.

Occasionally, however (e.g. Op. 7 No. 5), Bach waits until the modulation is complete before introducing a new, and therefore 'secondary', theme. Generally speaking, Bach's treatment of secondary themes in the 'exposition' of these movements, whether they are new or taken from the first ritornello, is also unusual in that, contrary to later Classical practice, the secondary key area is usually well established by several cadences in the new tonality before anything identifiable as a secondary theme appears. Furthermore, the secondary theme is often presented in a very episodic manner in the 'exposition'. The resulting effect is that the arrival in the new tonality is no longer experienced as a major structural point, but rather as a large-scale harmonic motion, and the secondary theme simply becomes one theme among many in a somewhat discursive exposition. In fact, these secondary themes must often wait until the recapitulation to receive a fuller, more structurally significant presentation that rarely follows the order of events established in the analogous passage of the exposition. In an interesting departure from this procedure, though, the recapitulation of the first movement of Op. 13 No. 2 makes no reference at all to the secondary theme, first heard in the opening ritornello and then in the dominant during the exposition, segueing instead into a development of another theme. However, Bach could certainly use the secondary theme as a major structural point when he wished; the opening movement of Op. 7 No. 2 'recapitulates' to the secondary theme, as in two of the Schroeter concerti.

A curious treatment of the opening movement occurs in Op. 7 No. 3, whose exposition is actually repeated, returning to the point of the soloist's entrance. There is also a notable exception in this movement to the characteristic noted above of omitting the ritornello between the development and recapitulation; this movement has quite a substantial ritornello at this point that is a verbatim repetition of nearly

half of the opening ritornello. Bach's fluid approach to the structure of the opening movements in these concerti demonstrate that he was experimenting with different forms, in search of a coherent dramatic model such as Mozart later developed.

Bach wrote two other keyboard concerti in the 1770s that warrant attention. The Concerto in E-flat, Op. 14 was published in Paris in 1777. The work is grander in scale, as compared to Opp. 7 and 13, although once again it is accompanied only by strings. The keyboard writing is slightly more virtuosic than in Opp. 7 or 13, although there are no dynamic indications in the solo part. While the title page indicates the solo instrument as 'clavecin', it is worth remembering that the French used this term, as the Germans used *clavier*, to refer to a number of different keyboard instruments.[22] On the other hand, Bach may have been catering to the French preference for the harpsichord.

An unpublished concerto of c. 1772, W C75, mentioned earlier, provides a greater contrast to this. On a similarly larger scale, the orchestra is expanded by the addition of a rather full wind section of flutes, clarinets, bassoon and horns. As in Op. 14, the structure of the opening movement is on a broader scale than the first movements of Opp. 7 and 13, and the opening ritornello is sufficiently extended that it modulates to the dominant for the introduction of the second theme. The solo part also makes liberal use of dynamic indications, including a long crescendo in mm. 110-16 of the first movement, terminating in an extraordinary marking of fortissimo. This concerto was subsequently rearranged into a *Symphonie concertante* for two violins, and factors such as its colourful orchestration and more opulent writing for the solo part probably made it an ideal candidate for the adaptation.[23]

[22] Maunder, introduction to *The Collected Works*, vol. 34, viii-ix.
[23] Ibid.

The conventions of the high Classical concerto had yet to be established in the 1770s, and so the English keyboard concerto of this time, while possessing certain general features, is a diverse species with few rules. Orchestration varies from a minimal complement of strings, conducive to chamber music performance, to a fuller wind section with strings firmly establishing the work in a public concert setting. The number and type of movements varies widely, including minuets, rondos, and more old-fashioned binary-form movements. Even the movement most in common among these concerti, the first, receives widely diverse treatments, from allusion to binary forms to something very near the mature Classical concerto. The keyboard writing is still firmly entrenched in the language of the *style galant*, but in passages in thirds and an increasing use of dynamic indications (particularly by Bach), these concerti increasingly explore and make use of the resources of the piano and point the way to the future.

Chapter 3

Clementi: father of the pianoforte

Clementi's early sonatas

Muzio Clementi was once commonly referred to as the 'father of the pianoforte',[1] and his influence upon piano music, piano technique, and even the development of the instrument itself was enormous. Thanks to his longevity (1752-1832), his career spanned the entirety of the Classical period, and his compositions not only reflect the stylistic changes that occurred during that time, but were in some cases the very cause of those changes. Clementi's sonatas were a staple of Beethoven's piano teaching repertoire,[2] and his large didactic work *Gradus ad Parnassum* was the bane of many a child's piano tuition for most of the 19th century. Also an entrepreneur, Clementi bought the Longman & Broderip firm upon its bankruptcy in 1798, and the pianos manufactured under his name display a number of distinct innovations.

Clementi's music is not well-known, although his name is always mentioned first among those composers of the Classical period whose work is unjustly neglected today. His gradual rehabilitation was perhaps sparked when Vladimir Horowitz, who held Clementi in high regard, [3] recorded a selection of his sonatas in 1955. Musicologists have maintained an interest in his work, particularly in its capacity as a

[1] This title appears, for example, on his tombstone in the cloister of Westminster Abbey.
[2] Alexander Ringer, 'Beethoven and the London Pianoforte School', *Musical Quarterly* xvi (1970), 746.
[3] Harold C. Schonberg, *Horowitz: His Life and Music* (New York, 1992), 197-98.

bearer of the vanguard of changes in Classical style. William Newman went so far as to rank Clementi with Frescobaldi and Scarlatti as among the greatest Italian innovators of the keyboard.[4] For many years, though, the only comprehensive study of Clementi's music was Leon Plantinga's *Clementi: His Life and Music*,[5] already an overdue volume at the time. There has been a significant increase in Clementi scholarship recently, beginning with the monograph *Muzio Clementi: Studies and Prospects*, [6] issued on the 250th anniversary of Clementi's birth. Its editors have since brought forth additional volumes, including Rohan Stewart-MacDonald's *New Perspectives on the Keyboard Sonatas of Muzio Clementi*, and in 2008 initiated a series of practical and critical editions of Clementi's complete works which is still in progress. Also in press at the time of this writing is David Rowland's *The Correspondence of Muzio Clementi, His Family, and Business Partners*, which presents many of Clementi's letters in English translation for the first time, with a particular focus on Clementi's business dealings.

Clementi was born in Rome in 1752. As a child, he displayed prodigious musical gifts and passed examinations at the age of nine to be accepted as an organist in Rome. At the age of fourteen, Clementi was heard by a wealthy Englishman traveling in Italy named Peter Beckford, and Beckford bought the young Clementi into indentured servitude. Clementi accompanied Beckford back to England, where he lived at Beckford's recently-inherited estate in Dorset. As there is no evidence that Beckford hired a teacher or did anything to further Clementi's musical education, it

[4] William Newman, *Sonata in the Classic Era*, vol. 2, *A History of the Sonata Idea* (Chapel Hill, 1963), 754.
[5] Leon Plantinga, *Clementi: His Life and Music* (Oxford, 1977).
[6] *Muzio Clementi: Studies and Prospects,* ed. Roberto Illiano, Luca Sala, and Massimiliano Sala (Bologna, 2002).

seems that the sole purpose of Clementi's presence was to furnish economical (and exotically foreign) musical entertainment for Beckford and his guests.[7]

When Clementi's servitude ended in 1773, he eventually found his way to London, where he apparently was conductor for the opera at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket.[8] As a concert performer, though, he seems to have toiled in relative anonymity until the publication of his Op. 2 Sonatas in 1779, whose ferocious technical difficulties still shape our general perception of him today as one of the first virtuosi of the piano.

Opus 2 must have been a very strange publication to the music-purchasing public of London. Consisting of six sonatas, the first, third, and fifth are 'accompanied sonatas' with an *ad libitum* part for violin or flute. This would seem to put the publication firmly in the realm of domestic music, for the private entertainment of amateurs, and the keyboard writing in those sonatas confirms this assumption. Sonatas 2, 4, and 6 for solo keyboard, however, stand in complete opposition to this, with passages in double-notes, scales and arpeggios cascading up and down the keyboard, and avalanches of octaves that still remain, over two hundred years later, a hair-raising technical feat. These demands, of course, put half the contents of Op. 2 beyond the abilities of the casual, amateur keyboard player (and most professionals as well). Considering Clementi's later business acumen, it is not inconceivable that including such outrageously difficult music in a publication otherwise aimed at amateurs was part of a clever marketing strategy. Clementi played 'lessons' (a contemporary term for sonata) at all his appearances in London in 1780, and given the storm that his performances whipped up, it is not difficult to imagine

[7] Plantinga, *Clementi*, 4-5.
[8] Ibid., 37-8.

that the 'lessons' in question are the solo sonatas of this collection.[9] It is also likely that the public would have attached sensational value to owning something so 'unplayable'. In any event, the solo sonatas of Op. 2 earned Clementi a great deal of attention and notoriety; they remained his best-known music for quite some time, and Clementi returned to them often in subsequent decades and produced revised versions (whereby Op. 2 notably continued to be a source of income).

With his stock slowly rising in London, Clementi left for Paris in the summer of 1780, where he remained for a year. There is very little evidence of Clementi playing concerts in Paris in the form of surviving advertisements or reviews, but there are several accounts of Clementi's performance activities in Paris from private writings. It is known from a letter by the French pianist Antoine François Marmontel, for example, that Clementi even had the privilege of performing before Queen Marie-Antoinette, the sort of honour and recognition that he had yet to receive in London.[10]

The other evidence of Clementi's popularity in France was the sudden demand for his compositions. His Opp. 5 and 6 were published in Paris by Bailleux in 1780, the very year of his arrival, and his *Oeuvre* 1, a collection of sonatas using material reworked from Clementi's English Opp. 1 and 2, was also brought out by Bailleux. Two years later, his Opus 8 was published by Castaud of Lyons.

Assured by Marie-Antoinette of an introduction to the emperor of Austria, Clementi made his way to Vienna, stopping in Strasbourg and Munich along the way. Five days after his arrival in Vienna, on Christmas Eve of 1781, Clementi accepted an invitation to court, where, in the words of Leon Plantinga,

> Clementi unwittingly became a participant in a pianoforte competition staged by the Emperor Joseph II for the entertainment of his Russian guests;

[9] Ibid., 39.
[10] Ibid., 59-60.

> Clementi's opponent was a local keyboard player of note, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.[11]

What followed, of course, is the stuff of legend. Mozart and Clementi both played their own compositions, sight-read, and accompanied each other's improvisations. Contests of this sort did not have results or prizes, as such; 'the response would have been formed, at most, in private opinions.' Indeed, the Emperor confided privately to Carl von Dittersdorf that he found Mozart's playing to be of greater taste.[12] The Emperor also made, and was subsequently paid, a wager with Grand Duchess Maria Feodorovna, his guest, that Mozart would vanquish Clementi, although it is likely that the duchess paid the wager as much out of tact as agreement with Joseph.[13] Mozart, of course, famously wrote for years after the event, heaping scorn and condemnation both on Clementi's playing and composition. In a letter of 7 June 1783 to his father and sister, Mozart wrote,

> Clementi is a *ciarlatano*, like all Italians. He writes *Presto* over a sonata or even *Prestissimo* and *Alla breve*, and plays it himself *Allegro* in 4/4 time. I know this is the case, for I have heard him do so. What he really does well are his passages in thirds; but he sweated over them day and night in London. Apart from this, he can do nothing, absolutely nothing, for he has not the slightest expression or taste, still less, feeling.[14]

Mozart's protests can probably be disregarded as professional jealousy; he had only just arrived in Vienna and was keen to develop his reputation as a keyboard player. But what of the Emperor's opinion? It is very likely that Clementi's exuberant, virtuosic style, the likes of which had probably never been heard before in Vienna, struck some as slightly crude, hence the Emperor's remark about Mozart's greater taste.[15]

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[11] Ibid., 62.
[12] Katalin Komlós, 'Mozart and Clementi: A Piano Competition and Its Interpretation', *Historial Performance* ii (1989), 7.
[13] Robert Gutman, *Mozart: A Cultural Biography* (New York, 1999), 582.
[14] *The Letters of Mozart and His Family*, ed. Emily Anderson, 3rd ed. (London, 1985), 850.
[15] Plantinga, 66.

Another significant factor that has rarely been mentioned in the literature is the issue of instruments. Clementi had been in Vienna for less than a week before accepting the invitation to court, and even if he had previously encountered Austrian pianos – with their shallower keydip and distinctive action – they would still have been a relatively new quantity to him, as the pianos he would have been accustomed to were those of the English variety, a rather different instrument. Even more significantly, though, it seems that at this early stage in his career, the 'father of the pianoforte' preferred the harpsichord. Surviving notices from the *Public Advertiser* indicate that Clementi played the harpsichord at all but one of his concerts in London prior to 1780.[16] Later that year, Clementi asked Broadwood to ship a harpsichord to Paris for his concerts there.[17] The sturdy, full-bodied English harpsichord was clearly Clementi's preferred instrument at the time. Without putting too much stock in Mozart's notoriously petty rants, it is worth considering if the 'atrocious chopping effect'[18] that Mozart attributed to Clementi's playing was a result of his harpsichord technique being unsuccessfully transferred to the highly sensitive action of the Viennese piano.

Clementi, on the other hand, had only complimentary things to say about Mozart. Ludwig Berger, one of Clementi's students, wrote in 1829 that Clementi said of Mozart, 'Until then I had never heard anyone perform with such spirit and grace. I was particularly astonished by an Adagio and some of his extemporized variations…' Berger also wrote,

> … in that earlier period he had taken particular delight in brilliant feats of technical proficiency, especially in those passages in double notes that were not common before his time… It was only later that he adopted a more melodic and noble style of performance.[19]

[16] Ibid., 39.
[17] David Wainwright, *Broadwood by Appointment* (London, 1982), 58.
[18] *Letters of Mozart*, 850.
[19] Plantinga, 65.

Whether Clementi's later style of performance was in any way a result of this encounter with Mozart is certainly an intriguing possibility.

'German' influences in the early 1780s

Whether Clementi's time on the Continent had any influence on his composition, though, is more easily demonstrable. A review in Carl Friedrich Cramer's *Magazin der Musik* in 1787 stated:

> It is evident that Clementi, during his stay in Vienna, learned a great deal from many German composers, particularly Haydn, Mozart, and Koželuch; for from that time on his newest works show evidence of a German style and of a more correct motion of the middle voices. [20]

What evidence of German influence is to be found in Clementi's compositions of this period? The first three opuses tend to vary in their contents, whereas Opp. 7-10 consist exclusively of solo keyboard sonatas, and it is in these sonatas that the most interesting music is to be found.

Prior to 1780, the vast majority of Clementi's sonatas were in two movements, but the sonatas of this period show him shifting decisively to three-movement sonatas, with only a few exceptions. The two-movement keyboard sonata – or 'lesson' – seems to be a characteristic of English composition at this time; about 80% of J.C. Bach's keyboard sonatas of the 1770s are in two movements,[21] and there can be little doubt that Clementi's sudden shift to a three-movement sonata was a result of Continental influences, even if it was simply a matter of catering to Continental taste for the sake of sales.

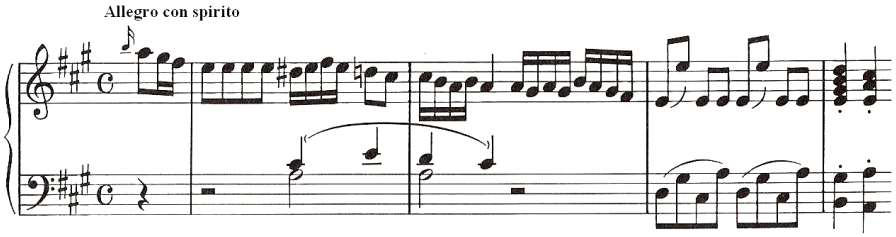
Another characteristic of these sonatas is Clementi's increasing interest in the sonata-allegro form. Amongst Opp. 7-10, half of the final movements are in sonata-

[20] Carl Friedrich Cramer, *Magazin der Musik*, Zweiter Jahrgang (1786), 1378. 'Von Clementi ists gewiß, daß er bei seinem Aufenthalt in Wien von vielen deutschen Componisten, hauptsachlich von Haydn, Mozart, Kozeluch gelernt habe; denn von dieser Zeit an tragen seine neuesten Werke deutschen Zuschnitt und richtigere Bearbeitung der Mittelstimmen.' Translation by the present author.
[21] David Newman, *The Sonata in the Classic Era*, vol. 2 of A History of the Sonata Idea (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1963), 707.

allegro form, including all the sonatas of Op. 10.[22] Coupled with this interest in writing sonata-allegro movements is a willingness to experiment with and expand the form in ways that Clementi had not previously done, with the result that his sonata-form movements achieve a greater structural cohesion than his earlier essays in the form.

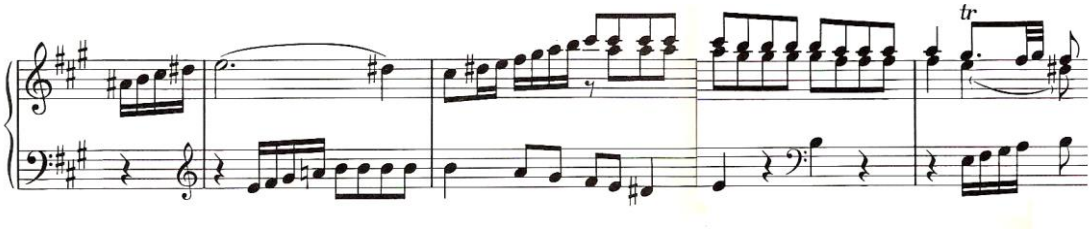
In the first movement of Clementi's Sonata in A, Op. 10 No. 1, the second theme is cleverly derived from the first theme in a procedure that Rohan Stewart-MacDonald refers to as 'motivic processing'.[23] The descending semiquavers that open the movement are inverted in the second theme (Ex. 3.1), although in both cases they come to rest on an E, and the four repeated-quaver figure is delayed and developed briefly after the left hand plays the inverted motive in full. Of the composers that C.F. Cramer mentions in his review as influences on Clementi, one is of course reminded of Haydn by the use of monothematicism. While Haydn's approach to monothematicism is more obviously perceptible to the listener through its literalism, Clementi's process of extracting motives from the first theme to generate subsequent material is more subtle and, though less immediately appreciable to the ear, contributes to the unity of the movement on a subconscious level.

a. Sonata Op. 10 No. 1, I, mm. 1-4



[22] Plantinga, 90.
[23] Stewart-MacDonald, 97.

b. mm. 22-26

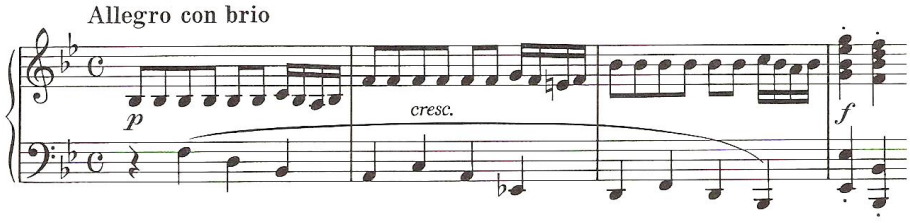


Example 3.1: From *Clementi: Klaviersonaten*, ed. by Sonja Gerlach and Alan Tyson.
Copyright G. Henle, Munich, 1977

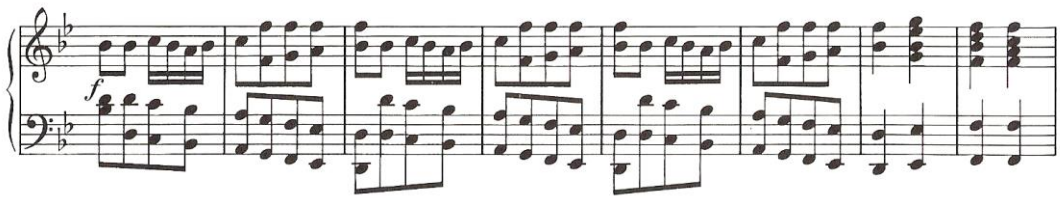
One may observe a similar procedure at work in the Sonata in B-flat, Op. 24 No. 2. Despite the higher opus number, this work actually dates from the same period, and it is now well-established that Clementi performed this sonata during his contest with Mozart before Joseph II.[24] The first movement of this sonata is more obviously monothematic, in a recognisably Haydn-esque manner, than Op. 10 No. 1, as the same theme is used almost verbatim in both the tonic and dominant areas of the exposition. The last movement of the sonata, though, also contains thematic links with the first movement. Example 3.2b is from the coda of the finale, where Clementi alludes to the opening theme of the first movement. Without question, this figure in the coda is derived from the second bar of the Rondo's main theme (which is therefore, by extension, also related to the theme of the first movement). However, the link to the first movement is only made explicit in the coda by the insistence of the repeated F quavers after the 'turn' on the second beat, almost resulting in a literal quotation of the theme from the first movement. The use of thematic connections in this case is particularly noteworthy because it occurs between different movements, pre-dating Beethoven's own experiments with cyclicism by more than twenty years.

[24] Much has been said and written about the striking similarity between the opening of this sonata and the overture to Mozart's *Magic Flute*; the connection will not be discussed here.

a. Sonata Op. 24 No. 2, I, mm. 1-4



b. III, mm. 259-266



Example 3.2: From *Clementi: Klaviersonaten*.

Another notable development in Clementi's sonatas of this period is a decisive move away from the explicitly 'technical' passages that fill so many pages of his earlier sonatas. While there are still technical difficulties to be overcome in Opp. 7-10, they are clearly at the service of the music, rather than existing solely for the sake of virtuosic display. If Clementi's technical wizardry, though impressive, was thought a bit gaudy in Vienna, it is not too great a leap to imagine that Clementi forsook such superficial virtuoso writing due to the influence of German ideas about *bon goût*.

Other developments

While some aspects of the increasing sophistication in Clementi's compositional technique can be attributed to German influences, there are certain stylistic features in the works of this period for which no precedent seems to exist, and which seem to spring from Clementi's own individualism and ingenuity.

One notable stylistic feature of the sonatas from this period is their departure from *galant* keyboard idioms, which still predominate in the Viennese keyboard

music of this time. The reference in Cramer's *Magazin der Musik* to a 'more correct motion of the middle voices' may be taken as a reference to Clementi's use of increasingly complex textures, leaving behind the Italiante two-voice textures found in such abundance in his earlier keyboard output. Rather than being a symptom of German or Continental influences, though, the beginnings of this development in Clementi's keyboard writing can be observed in works written during Clementi's time in France. Although any discussion of organology in this context must be at least mildly conjectural, due to the degree of interchangeability with which keyboard instruments were regarded at this time, it can be demonstrated fairly clearly that Clementi's move away from *galant*-style keyboard writing also indicates a movement away from the harpsichord and toward an idiom that caters to, and therefore requires, the possibilities of the piano.

The sonatas of Opus 2, which Clementi probably played in his London appearances of 1780, appear to be unexpectedly full in texture, but this impression wanes upon examination. Bass lines are frequently in octaves, and the first edition (Welcker, 1779) actually prints significant portions of the bass line as single notes with a profusion of '8' markings below the staff. However, this writing still falls within *galant* stylistic norms, as the right hand plays only one or two (e.g. passages in consecutive thirds) voices against the bass. The only textural novelty in the writing is the sheer extent of the virtuoso passages, which contribute to an impression of density. Even the infamous cascading octaves of Op. 2 No. 4 are, strictly speaking, a *bicinium*, two voices that just happen to be doubled in octaves. Beyond this apparent difference of texture and the virtuoso devices in these sonatas, though, they are actually quite similar to the concerti of Schroeter, discussed in the previous chapter, insofar as they contain nothing that explicitly demands the piano over the harpsichord.

Dynamic indications, when they even occur, simply alternate between 'piano' and 'forte' at places that are quite self-evident. As in much of the music of this time, their inclusion is almost superfluous, and if Clementi indeed performed these works on the harpsichord, it seems possible that dynamic markings were included simply for the sake of novelty. It is also interesting that the music is virtually devoid of slurs, containing at most one or two per movement. Many of these passages would certainly be played *legato* anyway, so this lack of slurs is probably less indicative of articulation than of a keyboard style that is not centred upon *cantabile* playing, which was to figure so prominently later in Clementi's style. While such a statement cannot be made unequivocally, it is probably safe to say that the sonatas of Op. 2, which have done so much to cement the image of Clementi as a piano virtuoso, are probably harpsichord music, at least to the same degree as Haydn's keyboard sonatas of the same decade.

Ironically, it is Clementi's exploration of Bach-style polyphony in the fugues of Opp. 5 and 6 (published in 1780 by Bailleux of Paris) where a more sophisticated use of dynamic indications first appears. Most of these fugues end with some sort of decrescendo, whether of the gradual or terraced variety, and Clementi uses 'dim.' and 'pp' indications for the first time here. In the 'accompanied' sonatas that are also found in Op. 5, Clementi's slow movements take on a far richer expressive vocabulary than he has used hitherto, making use of thicker textures, exploration of lower tessituras, and a strikingly chromatic harmonic language. Plantinga views many of these stylistic developments, particularly the increasingly complexity of Clementi's textures, as the result of studying the works of J.S. Bach.[25] Clementi's sophisticated dynamic markings, however, must come from elsewhere and indicate a

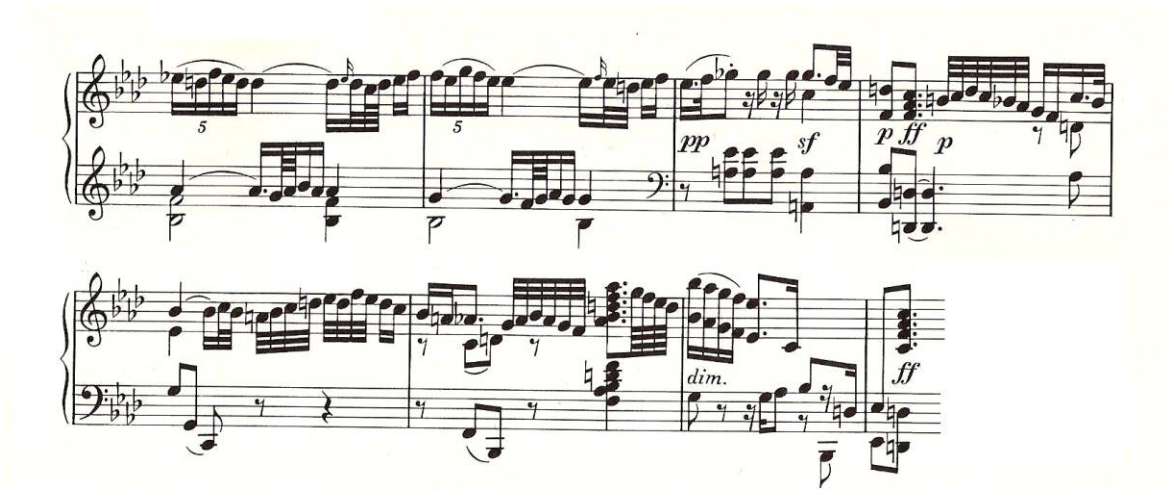
[25] Plantinga, 80-82.

change in his conception of the expressive possibilities of keyboard writing. Indications of loud and soft are used on a smaller scale to prescribe levels of accent and nuance, a degree of detail which is not seen in the sparse markings of Op. 2 and which are impossible to realise on the harpsichord.

By the time of Op. 7, published in 1782 by Artaria, there are still occasional movements with thinner two and three-voice writing and other characteristics of the earlier music, but on the whole, a complete change has taken place in Clementi's keyboard language. Slurs appear in profusion, and there is a far more sophisticated use of dynamic and expressive markings. The textures used in these movements are considerably more complex, a definite departure from the earlier, lighter style. It is not difficult to perceive in these works from his time in Vienna that Clementi was experimenting with new ways of writing for the keyboard that exploit and suit the possibilities of the piano, while moving away from idioms more typical of harpsichord writing. One may compare, for example, the writing in the *Cantabile e lento* of Op. 7 No. 3, which almost consistently employs at least three largely independent voices to achieve sonorous harmonic effects, particularly in lower registers, to the much lighter *Andantino grazioso* of *Oeuvre* 1 No. 2 which features a homophonic two-voice texture throughout. In the set of variations that follows this earlier movement, Clementi even writes a few harpsichord-like passages where single-voice passagework is traded between the two hands, which would be noticeably out-of-place in Op. 7. The *Mesto* of Op. 7 No. 1 begins with some very fully-voiced chords, which are thick enough to require thoughtful registration and execution on the harpsichord. The movement goes on to include a number of 'ff', 'pp', 'cresc.' and 'dim.' markings, whose detail illustrates that the movement is

evidently not ideally suited to the harpsichord, even if it may have been played on that instrument.

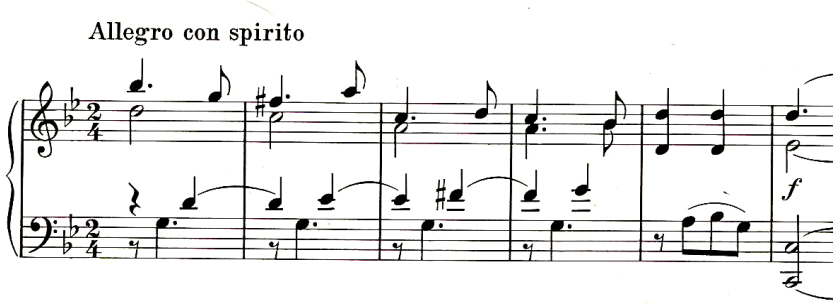
In example 3.3, taken from the slow movement of the Sonata Op. 9 No. 3, a number of these factors come together to make for an expressive, rather elaborately ornamented passage typical of the *Emfindsamer Stil*. Bars 17 and 18 again illustrate the contrapuntal development that Cramer mentioned in his review of 1787, and the cadence at the end of the excerpt provides an unexpected wandering into the lower range of the keyboard. Clementi's use of dynamics to emphasise dissonances in this excerpt is also noteworthy. In mm. 19 and 20, within the space of two bars, Clementi gives five separate dynamic indications, an unusually detailed and sophisticated use of dynamics for this time. It is worth remembering that Haydn, by contrast, was only just beginning to use dynamic indications regularly in his keyboard music at this point.[26] Clementi's writing here clearly calls for the piano, which is significant when recalling that Clementi had a harpsichord shipped to Paris for his concerts there just two years earlier; something in his thinking had obviously changed.



Example 3.3: Sonata Op. 9 No. 3, II, mm. 17-24
From *Clementi: Klaviersonaten.*

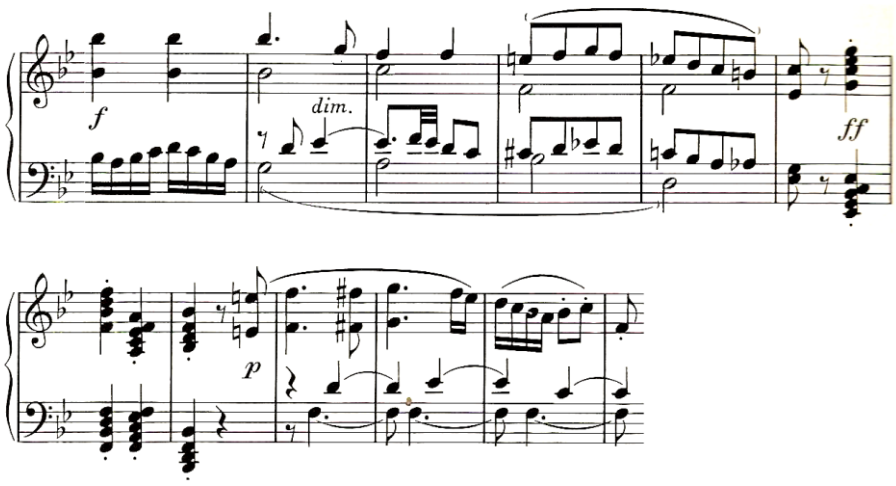
[26] James Parakilas and Gretchen Wheelock, '1770s to 1820s: The Piano Revolution in the Age of Revolutions' in *Piano Roles: Three Hundred Years of Life with the Piano*, ed. James Parakilas (New Haven, 1999), 114.

Perhaps no other movement from this period better exemplifies Clementi's synthesis of these factors – the economy of motivic material, his progressive approach to keyboard textures, and his increasingly confident experiments with sonata form – than the *Allegro con spirito* of Op. 7 No. 3. At the beginning of this movement (Ex. 3.4), which is noticeably cast in four voices, the dotted rhythm of the melody in the right hand, which emphasises the first beat, is answered by a complementary rhythmic figure in the left hand that emphasizes the second beat with a pick-up. This rhythmic cell is employed regularly throughout the movement, appearing in the second theme, the closing theme, the codetta, and even in bridge material, serving as a device to bind the movement together and provide unity.



Example 3.4: Sonata Op. 7 No. 3, I, mm. 1-6
From *Clementi: Klaviersonaten*.

Other motivic relationships are also found in this movement. The 'motivic processing' used to derive the second theme in Op. 7 No. 1 reappears in this movement, whose second theme, with its two-octave anacrusis, is derived from mm. 5-6 of the first theme.

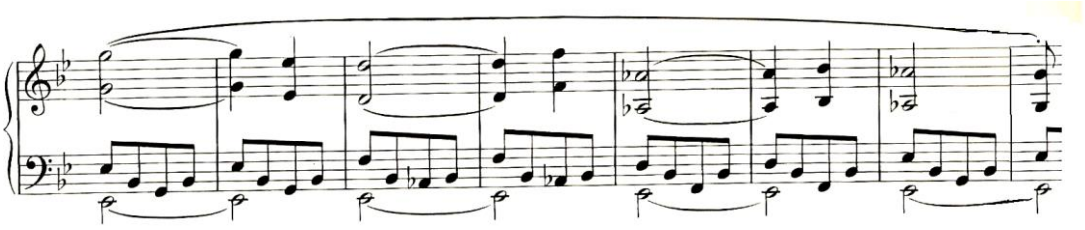


Example 3.5: Sonata Op. 7 No. 3, I, mm. 51-62
From *Clementi: Klaviersonaten*.

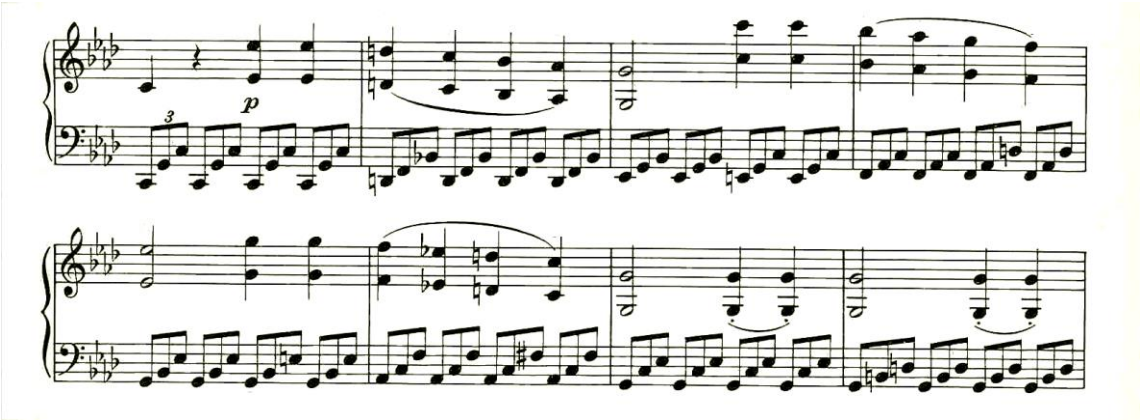
As the development begins, the first theme appears initially in the alto voice, and then in augmentation (m. 102). (See Ex. 3.6 below.) The passage later in the development at mm. 124-131, with its dialogue between the alto and bass ranges, is arguably also an augmentation of the dotted-rhythm exchange found at the beginning of the movement.

The augmentation of the first theme in m. 102 is notable for another reason: the melody is given in legato octaves, resulting in an extremely un-*galant* keyboard texture that is, at the very least, exceptional in the early 1780s.[27] This use of legato octaves in a melody eventually becomes commonplace for Beethoven in the mid-1790s; an instance of this is given in Ex. 3.7 from Beethoven's Op. 2, but Clementi's Op. 7 pre-dates this by about thirteen years.

[27] Plantinga, 89.



Example 3.6: Clementi: Sonata Op. 7 No. 3, I, mm. 102-109
From *Clementi: Klaviersonaten*.



Example 3.7: Beethoven: Sonata Op. 2 No. 1, III, mm. 34-41
From *Beethoven: Klaviersonaten*, ed. Bertha Antonio Walter.
Copyright G. Henle, Munich, 1980.

Clementi also employs some very dense fortissimo chords, as seen in bars 56-58 of Ex. 3.5, one of them requiring the use of all ten fingers. Once again, this kind of texture might be expected of Beethoven's piano writing in the late 1790s, but it is totally unexpected and produces quite a forceful effect in the context of the lighter textures of the *galant* keyboard style. In the words of Plantinga, 'By any account, this piece is stylistically precocious in 1782.'[28] By using textures like this, Clementi is making a clean break with keyboard writing of the past and developing a new and unique way of writing for the piano. Melodies in legato octaves are not only unidiomatic to the harpsichord; strictly speaking, they are impossible, requiring at least some use of the damper pedal to connect the wide intervals in the line. Dense

[28] Ibid.

chords of the sort that appear in this movement are simply unacceptable on the harpsichord, particularly the fuller English-style instrument. In the *Mesto* of Op. 7 No. 1, mentioned above, the tempo at least permits the arpeggiation of such chords; that is clearly not the intent in the Allegro of No. 3, where the chords have an exceedingly violent and percussive effect on the harpsichord. Furthermore, these stylistic traits demonstrate how Clementi both anticipated and influenced Beethoven, through the latter's intimate familiarity with the sonatas of Clementi. Even as the younger Beethoven is undoubtedly the poster child for 'stylistically precocious' composition, the novelty of his writing in the 1790s actually has its precedent in the music of Clementi.[29]

What is most unusual and initially bewildering about this movement, though, is Clementi's unconventional approach to sonata form. The exposition offers few surprises, apart from the totally unprepared modulation to the secondary key area in m. 21. Rather, the surprises are to be found in the second half of the movement, where the typical functions of development and recapitulation seem to merge and the demarcation between the two is somewhat blurred. The aforementioned passage beginning at m. 124 occurs over a B-flat pedal point which persists for eighteen measures, very strongly giving the impression of a retransition that will end the development section. The music inevitably arrives at the key of E-flat, which is obviously not the tonic of the movement – but is, interestingly, the subdominant of the movement's secondary key area, B-flat – and presents the second theme. This eventually ends and arrives at a half-cadence on D, which is far less elaborately prepared than the earlier eighteen-bar pedal point on B-flat, and the opening theme appears at m. 169. After giving the first theme, though, the apparent recapitulation

[29] See Chapter 5, p. 132 ff. for further discussion of English influences on Beethoven.

segues immediately into the closing material, presumably because the second theme has already been given a full treatment in the development, and the movement comes to a more conventional conclusion.

The resulting effect on the structure of the movement is very odd. The typical experience of a recapitulation as a major structural point of return is subjugated by the build-up and preparation for the appearance of the second theme in E-flat, to which the sense of return is decisively shifted. By contrast, the retransition back to g minor is accomplished so quickly and without fanfare that the music flows almost seamlessly into the recapitulation, whose arrival, while 'given weight by the pause in bar 168',[30] is nevertheless no longer perceived as a major event. Plantinga finds that the development 'sounds like a series of false starts that really lead nowhere.'[31] On the other hand, one might also argue that the idiosyncracies of this movement are a confidently executed and dramatically coherent experiment that foreshadows developments in sonata form later in the Classical period that placed greater weight on the development section. This early prototype would also serve as the model for some of Clementi's later, bolder experiments with minor mode sonata-form movements.

'Middle years' in London

Upon his return to England in 1785, Clementi found himself greatly in demand as a teacher and a performer. In 1786, he was made the principal pianist and composer of the Hanover Square concerts, and over the next few years he also made multiple appearances in the Salomon concerts and various other benefits. His compositional interests spread to orchestral work, but his efforts as a symphonist appear to have been thwarted by inevitable comparisons to Haydn, by then the

[30] Stewart-MacDonald, 129.
[31] Plantinga, 89.

preferred composer of symphonies in London.[32] His reputation as a pianist and a composer for that instrument, however, remained intact. Clementi's gradual retirement from the concert stage starting around 1790 must have been related to social pressures of the time and his own desire to pursue other professional endeavours from an auspicious position. Plantinga has made the interesting suggestion that another factor may have been Clementi's age and gender, at a time when mostly young, female pianists dominated the London concert scene.[33]

A survey of the works of this period shows that Clementi was occupied with a number of compositional activities, some of them less lofty than others, which undoubtedly occupied his attention and energies. In addition to his efforts as an orchestral composer, it appears Clementi was capitalising as much as possible on the vogue for accompanied sonatas. The opus numbers of this period are replete with sonatas for piano accompanied by various instruments, most of it unremarkable and written without much apparent exertion. In most of these, the accompanying instruments are flute or violin, with cello, but Opp. 38 and 39 are sets of twelve waltzes each for piano with tambourine and triangle. One need not expend much effort guessing at the musical substance of such curiosities.

The solo piano works of this period generally continue the processes initiated in the works from Clementi's time on the Continent, without making any leaps as momentous as, for example, the stylistic distance between his Opp. 2 and 7. The evolution of Clementi's keyboard style in these years 'shows no very clear lines of development'[34] or consistent direction, and this is no doubt due to the diversity of Clementi's activities and compositional interests at the time. Nevertheless, Clementi

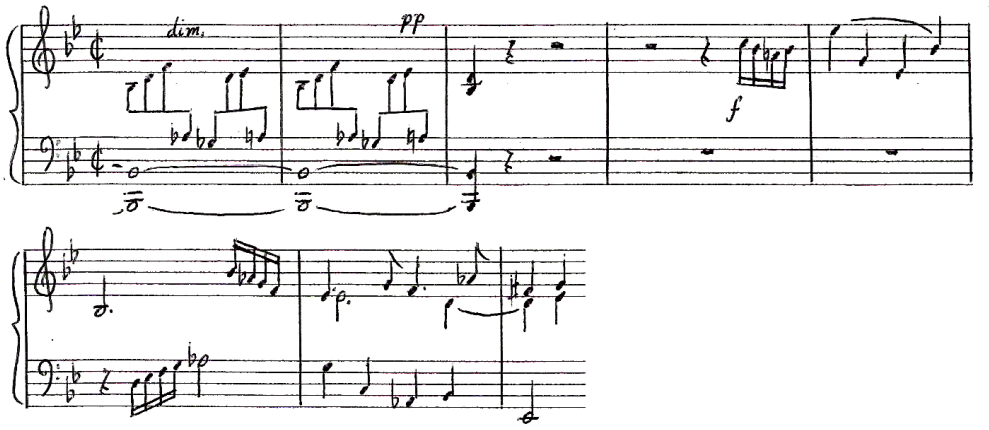
[32] Ibid., 113-16 passim.
[33] Ibid., 118.
[34] Ibid., 126.

produced some of his finest and most strikingly original solo sonatas during this period, which build upon and further develop the achievements of the earlier sonatas.

One such feature found in the earlier works is a predilection for recapitulations starting in keys other than the tonic, usually the subdominant. Clementi first uses this device in the third accompanied sonata of Op. 5.[35] While recapitulations that begin in the 'wrong' key are undoubtedly in the minority, they are not entirely unknown in the Classical period. Both Haydn and Beethoven made use of this device, but their non-tonic recapitulations are nearly always for humour or shock value and are usually 'corrected' in the space of a few bars. This is not the case with Clementi, for whom the reappearance of the opening theme in a key other than the tonic is in no way a 'false recapitulation'. Clementi's use of subdominant recapitulations foreshadows Schubert's use of the device, although the latter's works date from after 1800. Earlier in the Classical period, subdominant recapitulations may be found in the works of Dittersdorf, Stamitz, and even C.P.E. Bach to such an extent that the device may be considered a 'default option within the genre' of the sonata-allegro form.[36]

In the first movement of his Sonata in B-flat, Op. 10 No. 3, the retransition at the end of the development closes on a B-flat chord in a half cadence, and the recapitulation begins in E-flat, the subdominant (Ex. 3.8). In this sonata from his years in Vienna, Clementi takes full advantage of the possibility of duplication afforded by this scheme, and the recapitulation is a literal repeat of the exposition, transposed down a fifth.

[35] Plantinga, 76.
[36] James Arnold Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth-Century Sonata* (Oxford, 2003), 264.



Example 3.8: Sonata Op. 10 No. 3, I, mm. 67-74
Copied from Torricella, Vienna, 1783.

In later sonatas, though, Clementi uses the subdominant recapitulation in a more sophisticated manner that explores its dramatic possibilities and structural effects. In the first movement of the Sonata in B-flat, Op. 25 No. 3, the development is unusually brief, lasting for only nineteen measures, and when the recapitulation begins in E-flat, one might well think that the development section has not yet come to an end, because of both the brevity of what preceded and the appearance of the first theme in the 'wrong' key. The retransition in this case is not a dominant preparation for E-flat, as in Op. 10 No. 3, but a dominant preparation for g minor, closing on a D major chord. The resulting shift up to E-flat results in a sort of 'harmonic *non-sequitur*'[37] that accentuates the jolt of hearing the first theme in the subdominant. In another departure from the process used in Op 10 No. 3, the recapitulation of Op. 25 No. 3 contains a number of divergences from the exposition, the most important of which is a greatly expanded bridge section. This additional thematic development within the recapitulation may be part of the reason for the brevity of the development section, but there may also be a larger structural purpose in mind. Stewart-MacDonald argues that while a non-tonic recapitulation temporarily subverts a return

[37] Stewart-MacDonald, 113.

to the tonic, this is compensated for by delaying its return even further, and thereby heightening the expectation for it. In so doing, the 'grammar of closure' is revitalised or elevated.[38]

Clementi uses several other unusual structural devices in the sonatas of this period, especially the three-key exposition, which appears exclusively in minor-mode movements. This scheme, which invariably follows the progression i – III – v, may be found in Op. 13 No. 6, Op. 25 No. 5, Op. 34 No. 2 (third movement), and Op. 40 No. 2. Clementi's confident and consistent use of this scheme prior to 1800 is notable, and it prefigures a later use of the scheme by composers such as Schubert, Mendelssohn, and Brahms.

In the first movement of Op. 25 No. 5, the three-key exposition provides Clementi with another opportunity for a highly unusual development and recapitulation. In the exposition, the tri-partite structure of the section is made explicit through his use of distinct themes for each of the three key areas: f-sharp minor, A major, and c-sharp minor. In the development, there is a dominant preparation for d minor which is implicit as early as the tenth bar. When the first theme appears in m. 87 in d minor, it seems possible that this could be another of Clementi's non-tonic recapitulations, but the harmonic instability demonstrates that the development is still in progress. This modulates upward and arrives at the A major theme of the exposition, now heard in the tonic minor. The first theme is then heard (m. 117) with a new accompaniment and variations of register, effects that re-affirm the tonality and give the theme a sense of return or closure. If the sense of stability is not clear enough, Clementi actually repeats the sequence in m. 125. This is

[38] Ibid., 116.

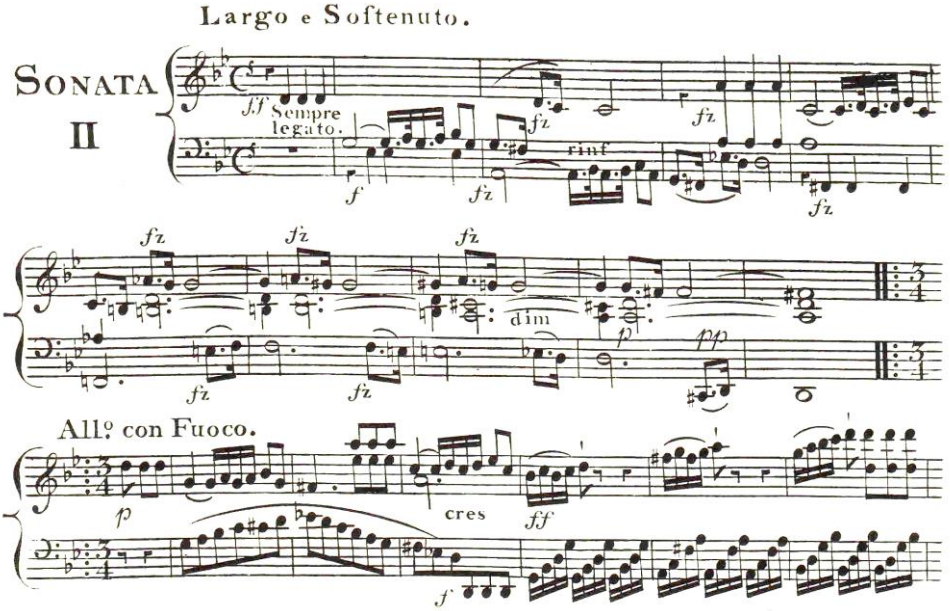
followed by the 'third group' material, which appears more or less as in the exposition.

Stewart-MacDonald observes that in the exposition of this movement, the A major section closes more definitively than the following c-sharp minor section that ends the exposition. The dominant minor group concludes with a number of irregular-length phrases and truncated cadences, which creates a feeling of instability and shifts the dramatic weight of contrast with the tonic toward the A major section.[39] In doing so, Clementi is faced with the dilemma of how to present the 'second theme' in the recapitulation; because it has received the greater dramatic weight in the exposition, an appearance in any key other than the tonic is unthinkable. By presenting the theme while the development appears to be still in progress, Clementi avoids the undesirable prospect of a recapitulation with three themes in the tonic minor and shifts the dramatic weight of re-affirming the tonality to the first theme, in mm. 116-134. This appearance of the first theme may be regarded as the beginning of an abridged recapitulation, but the actual process of recapitulation has of course already begun with the appearance of the second theme in m. 105. In the vein of Op. 7 No. 3, this is another movement where the delineation between development and recapitulation is blurred or elided, and the respective functions of these sections are combined or reordered in a novel way.

Clementi's most individual essay in sonata form is unquestionably the first movement of Op. 34 No. 2 in g minor. One of the few sonatas of Clementi that has a slow introduction, its motivically pregnant *Largo e sostenuto*, which generates the themes of the rest of the movement, returns during the development. This was undoubtedly the model for Beethoven's Op. 13 ('Sonate Pathétique') and Op. 31 No.

[39] Ibid., 94.

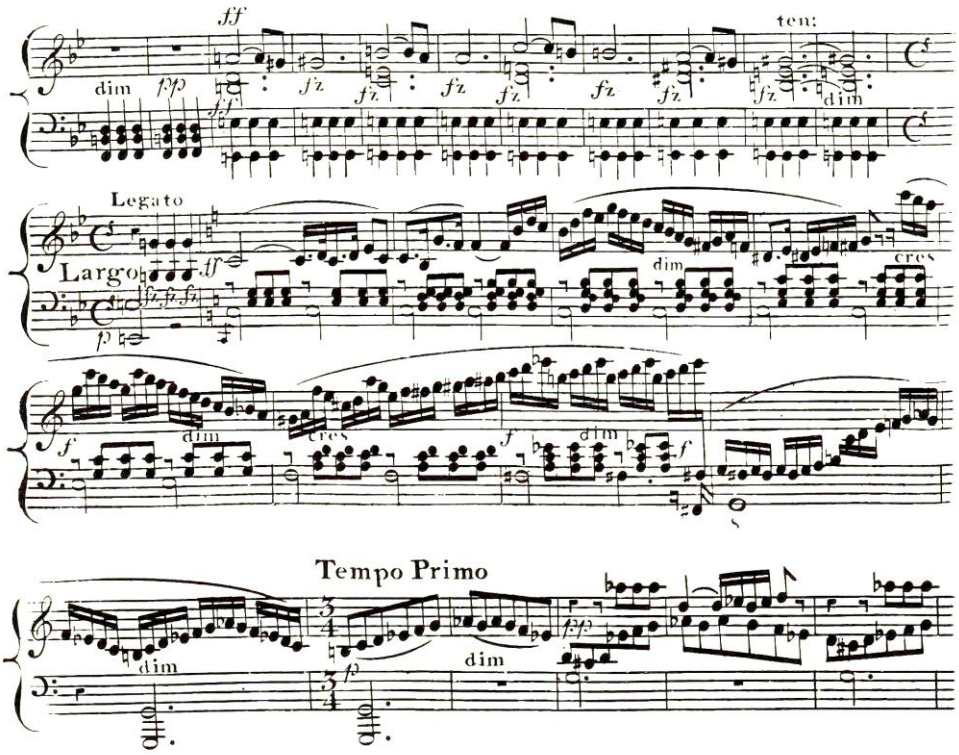
2 (‘The Tempest’), which both have slow introductions that reappear later in the movement. Interestingly, Clementi casts the exposition in three keys, but in this case they are i – III – iii (although Clementi’s more usual i – III – v scheme appears in the last movement). And as with Op. 25 No. 5, both the secondary and tertiary key areas have distinct themes assigned to them. Clementi’s penchant for ‘motivic processing’ is also very much in evidence in this movement. The second and third themes are generated from motives in the first theme, which is itself derived from the introduction (Ex. 3.9).



Example 3.9: Sonata Op. 34 No. 2, I, mm. 1-16
From London, 1795.

The *Largo* introduction intrudes into the development quite unexpectedly. Mm. 117-125 present a dominant preparation for a minor which is never resolved (Ex. 3.10). Instead, there is a common-tone modulation to C major, where the introduction is reprised in a songful, lyrical manner that contrasts with the terse, contrapuntal reiteration of motivic cells in the introduction to the movement. And yet, by presenting the introductory material in such a contrasting manner, it takes on a

grotesque vulgarity, through its low register and *fortissimo* dynamic level.[40] It is as if the pathos of the introduction is converted into an ironic, exaggeratedly feigned pleasance.



Example 3.10: Sonata Op. 34 No. 2, I, mm. 115-140
From London, 1795.

By means of some clever metric displacement, the movement returns to its usual tempo, presenting the bridge material (based heavily on the first theme) in c minor, the second theme in E-flat major, the bridge material again in g minor, the third theme in g minor, and finally a coda that wanders through several diminished-seventh chords that lean strongly toward the subdominant before finally reaffirming the tonic minor.

How might one understand the sections of such a movement? Plantinga suggests that everything after the intrusion of the introduction in the development be

[40] Ibid., 132.

understood as a double recapitulation. He provides a diagram of the movement,[41] which is altered here to clarify the idea of a double recapitulation.

Exposition			*Recapitulation 1*		*Recapitulation 2*	
A	B	C	A	B	A	C
i	III	iii	iv	VI	i	i

Figure 3.1: Plantinga's diagram (altered) of Op. 34 No. 2

Stewart-MacDonald, however, disagrees with this interpretation, which tacitly implies a subdominant recapitulation. He points out that the return of the tonic minor is delayed so extensively, due to the presentation of the second theme in E-flat major (i.e. Recapitulation 1, B group), that Plantinga's 'first recapitulation' is not really experienced as a return.[42] Nevertheless, the presentation of the second theme before a 'double return' of the first theme and its tonality was observed in Op. 25 No. 5, although in that case the tonic minor had already been re-established as a prevailing tonality. There is a similarity, though, in that in Op. 34 No. 2, Plantinga's 'first recapitulation' is obviously making explicit reference to the exposition by presenting the first two themes (the A and B groups) in analogously related tonalities (i.e. i – III becomes iv – VI). While the return of the tonic is significantly delayed, as Stewart-MacDonald observes, there is still a grammar of return at play. Perhaps precisely identifying the onset of the recapitulation – a retroactively-applied theoretical concept in any case – is not needed here and it is sufficient to acknowledge that, once again, Clementi blurs the functions of development and recapitulation.

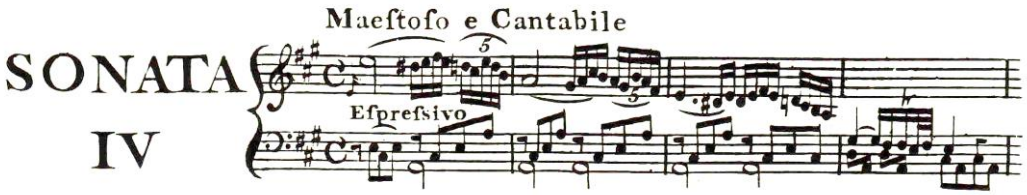
Clementi's use of the keyboard during his 'middle years' exhibits no massive stylistic leap, as seen in his earlier works. But the sonatas of this period combine the two extremes of Opp. 2 and 7 into a *via media* that fluently moves between assorted

[41] Plantinga, 173.
[42] Stewart-MacDonald, 136.

textures to achieve various musical and instrumental ends. If Clementi can be said to have invented the mainstream language of the English Classical piano, then the sonatas of this period are virtually a dictionary of that style. Two-voice writing is still found, especially in lighter works intended for amateurs, alternating with thicker textures, contrapuntal harmonisations, and virtuoso figurations. Alberti bass and 'murky bass' broken octave accompaniments continue to be a trademark of Clementi's style, but the bare left hand octaves of his earliest writing are replaced by an exploration of different accompanying textures, often enhancing the melodic material by providing a counterpoint or augmenting the prevailing character. Particularly in this last trait, Clementi's writing bears a striking resemblance to the language of early Beethoven, although the one who was imitated is surely Clementi.

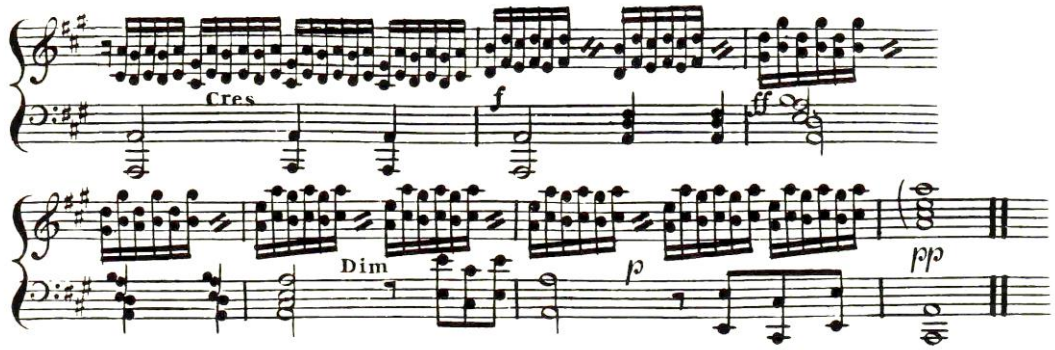
The first movement of the Sonata in A, Op. 25 No. 4, can be singled out as one of Clementi's most prophetic works of this period in matters of keyboard style. Superficially, the contours of the opening theme are reminiscent of Beethoven's 'Spring' Sonata in F, Op. 24 for violin and piano. However, it is actually so much closer to the style of Dussek that it is very hard to imagine that Clementi was not consciously imitating the Bohemian's style in this piece. As in so many of Dussek's opening movements, Clementi's Op. 25 No. 4 is in a broad 4/4. The placid arabesques of the first theme, the consistent maintenance of close four-voice textures, and the use of semiquaver triplets as a prevailing note value in the movement all remind one strongly of Dussek.[43]

[43] See Chapter 4, p. 86 ff. for further discussion of Dussek's early sonatas.



Example 3.11: Sonata Op. 25 No. 4, I, mm. 1-4
From Dale, London, 1790.

This movement ends with a magical passage in double notes, an allusion to the bridge material of the movement, that demonstrates Clementi's evolution as a composer through the different ends served by his bravura writing. In his Op. 2, such a passage would have served the purpose of technical display and been otherwise disconnected from the musical content, but here the passage creates a marvelously Romantic colour effect. In this handful of measures, Clementi reaches beyond even the style of his own pupil Field and touches the spirit of Liszt, in *Feux Follets* mode.



Example 3.12: Sonata Op. 25 No. 4, I, mm. 132-137
From Dale, London, 1790.

This movement is even more astonishing when it is placed beside an almost exactly contemporary work, Mozart's Sonata in D ('The Hunt'), KV 576, written in 1789, the year before Clementi's Op. 25 was published. The Mozart sonata is a stunningly conservative work by contrast, to the point of seeming archaic. Its outer movements are predominantly in two voices (albeit very independent ones), and

whose slow movement features an episode involving harpsichord-like single-voice passagework.

Clementi began his career as a harpsichordist who composed a few trivial sonatas as vehicles for virtuoso display. In just over ten years, though, the 'father of the pianoforte' had developed a unique keyboard idiom that left behind the *galant* language of the harpsichord, while exploring and making use of the expressive possibilities of the piano. Although German influences undoubtedly played a crucial role in his artistic development, as asserted by Carl Friedrich Cramer, Clementi's bold experiments with sonata form seem to have no precedent and, in tandem with his keyboard style, actually became the models for later developments in Austro-German Classicism. It is the influence of Clementi, more than that of anyone else, as both a composer and pedagogue that resulted in the English school being at the forefront of piano style in the Classical period.

Chapter 4

Foreign influences in the 1790s

Aftermath of the French Revolution

Throughout the 18th century, France had been a major centre of musical activity. Beginning in the Baroque period, French music developed along a highly individual path, giving rise to a distinctly French style, both in vocal and instrumental music. Paris was an essential destination for touring musicians, including the Mozart family in the 1760s and Clementi in the 1780s.[1]

By the late 1780s, though, Paris was no great centre of keyboard innovation. The piano first appeared at the Concert Spirituel in 1768, but the piano revolution was met with a degree of hesitation.[2] Although pianos of the Silbermann-type were being built in Paris from the 1760s on and English imports were widely available,[3] the harpsichord was still the preferred keyboard instrument in France. As noted earlier, Clementi had a Broadwood harpsichord shipped to Paris for his performances there in 1780. Voltaire also famously remarked that the piano was a 'cauldron-maker's instrument' that would never displace the majestic harpsichord.[4]

The Revolution, however, disrupted the stability of French musical life, and a number of musicians and institutions fell under suspicion or worse, due to their

[1] See Chapter 3, p. 54 regarding Clementi's performance for Marie Antoinette.
[2] Jean Mongrédien, 'Paris: the End of the Ancien Régime' in *The Classical Era: From the 1740s to the end of the 18th Century*, ed. Neal Zaslaw (London, 1989), 81.
[3] David Rowland, *Early Keyboard Instruments: A Practical Guide* (Cambridge, 2001), 37.
[4] David Rowland, *A History of Pianoforte Pedalling* (Cambridge, 1993), 12.

aristocratic and ecclesiastical connections. The resulting exodus brought several prominent musical personalities to London in 1789, including the piano builder Sebastien Erard, the composer Ignaz Pleyel, and pianists such as Daniel Steibelt and Jan Ladislav Dussek. The resulting interaction of musicians from France with the London music world had significant repercussions for the English piano, both at home and abroad.

Sebastien Erard built his first piano, a square, in 1777 under the patronage of the Duchesse de Villeroi.[5] He seems to have limited his efforts to the square piano for the following decade, as all his surviving instruments of the period are squares, modeled after the English instrument. An interesting hybrid feature of some of his squares, though, is that they incorporate the Viennese knee-lever to lift the dampers, rather than the English pedal or hand-stop. Subsequent commissions for Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette undoubtedly led to the destruction of his shop in Paris at the outbreak of the Revolution. Sebastien and his nephew Pierre escaped to London later in 1789 and set up a new workshop. The workshop in Paris was eventually rebuilt, and the two workshops produced pianos bearing the Erard name in tandem for most of the 19th century.

A number of sources indicate Erard had some interaction with Broadwood during his time in London,[6] although the exact nature of this interaction remains unclear. What is certain, though, is that upon Erard's return to Paris in the mid-1790s, the French workshop began building English-style grands. Through both his construction of English-style grands in France and his earlier work building English-style squares, Erard can be seen as the primary importer of English piano-building to France. While it is true that the house of Erard went on to make many innovations of

[5] Cyril Ehrlich, *The Piano: A History* (London, 1979), 110.
[6] Rowland, *Early Keyboard Instruments*, 38; David Wainwright, *Broadwood by Appointment* (London, 1982), 73.

its own (most notably the invention of the double-escapement action in 1821), those developments must be properly regarded as descendant from the English piano, to which the later French instrument owes its provenance.

Jan Ladislav Dussek

Another Paris refugee who arrived in London in 1789 was Jan Ladislav Dussek, a pianist of Czech origin who, like Sebastien Erard, fell out of favour after the Revolution due to his connections to the aristocracy in Paris.[7] Dussek is a name one encounters frequently in literature on the history of the piano, yet despite his undoubtedly important contributions to the instrument and its repertoire, his music is little known today. Born in 1760 in Čáslav, Bohemia, he began playing across Europe before reaching the age of twenty, traveling as far east as St. Petersburg. He wrote some incredibly forward-looking music, both in terms of his keyboard idiom and his highly chromatic harmonic language. Dussek was also responsible for the practice of turning the piano sideways on stage in performance, apparently so that the audience could admire his handsome profile.[8]

Dussek thrived in London, quickly establishing himself as one of the premiere pianists in the city. He appeared in concerts with Haydn during both of the latter's visits to London during the 1790s, and he may have even lent his five-and-a-half-octave Broadwood piano to Haydn for his concerts in 1791.[9] In 1792, Dussek married the singer Sophia Corri and subsequently became a partner in her father's music publishing business.[10] However, the marriage was not happy, with infidelity apparently occurring on both sides. Though initially successful, the publishing

[7] Howard Allen Craw, *A Biography and Thematic Catalog of the Works of J. L. Dussek (1760-1812)* (Diss., University of Southern California, 1964), 48-49.
[8] Arthur Loesser, *Men, Women and Pianos: A Social History* (New York, 1954), 239.
[9] David Wainwright, *Broadwood by Appointment* (London, 1982), 75.
[10] Craw, 58-60.

business had fallen into debt by the late 1790s, and Dussek fled for Hamburg in 1799, leaving his father-in-law Domenico Corri to face debtor's prison.[11]

The sheer amount of music composed by Dussek is quite impressive, given the brevity of his life. Much of it involves piano, including twelve piano concerti, nearly twenty works for piano trio (including *The Naval Battle and total Defeat of the Dutch Fleet by Admiral Duncan, 11th Oct. 1797* for piano trio and percussion), twelve sonatas for two pianos, and many sonatas with violin. In this regard, the centrality of the piano to Dussek's *oeuvre* is something shared with other pianist-composers like Clementi and Chopin, although Dussek wrote more orchestral music than either of them. As the title of the work for piano trio with percussion suggests, Dussek also wrote many programmatic works with fanciful titles, designed to appeal to as broad a public as possible. However, many programmatic titles were also given to more serious works, including his piano sonatas, which were written more for the appreciation of the connoisseur, and most of which lie beyond the faculties of the casual, amateur pianist.

One of the reasons that Dussek's piano music remains relatively unknown must be the difficulty in finding actual scores of his music and the fragmentary nature of existing Dussek scholarship. The complete piano sonatas were issued in 1961 as four volumes of the Musica Antiqua Bohemica series (which also printed a few other piano works by Dussek), and subsequently reprinted in 1983 by Editio Supraphon, the music publishing monopoly of the Czechoslovakian state. At the time of this writing, the edition has been out of print for over twenty-five years and is very difficult to obtain. The editorial principles of the edition, though free from the subjectivity of nineteenth-century editorial practice, nevertheless fall woefully short of modern

[11] Howard Allen Craw, 'Dussek: (2) Jan Ladislav Dussek', *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., ed. Stanley Sadie (London, 2001) vol. 7, p. 762.

critical standards. This author is not aware of any subsequent publication of Dussek's piano works.

Another issue that must be confronted is precisely what may be considered a piano sonata. The sonatas Opp. 9 and 10 were published c. 1789 by Sieber of Paris as works for piano with violin accompaniment, in the truest sense of that term. This author has been unable to identify any subsequent edition of the sonatas as works for piano solo issued during Dussek's lifetime, but almost all the editions issued after his death, including the Breitkopf & Härtel *Oeuvres complettes* of 1813-17, printed only the piano parts of these works. Given the precedent established by this publishing history; the perfunctory nature of the accompanying parts, which adhere strictly to doubling material already present in the piano part; and the treatment in what little secondary literature exists, Opp. 9 and 10 are here treated as solo piano sonatas.

There is also some confusion regarding Dussek's opus numbers. Like Clementi, Dussek simultaneously published many of his works in different countries, and his various publishers maintained different catalogues; consequently, several works were issued under different opus numbers.[12] Howard Allen Craw compiled a thematic catalogue of the works of Dussek in 1964, which went a long way in standardising the opus numbers and generating a new catalogue that includes Dussek's many unpublished works. The opus numbers employed here correspond to Craw's catalogue, which is also followed in the *New Grove Dictionary*, 2nd ed. It is not, however, necessarily followed in all secondary literature.

[12] The author believes this must be the reason for an embarrassing error in the Musica Antiqua Bohemica edition of Dussek's sonatas, where the Sonata in B-flat Op. 24 is printed as Op. 23 (the opus number from the first French edition) and assigned the title 'The Sufferings of the Queen of France', a programmatic character piece issued as Op. 23 in England. The error is not particularly understandable, though, as the Sonata Op. 24 contains very little that could be characterised as anguish or distress.

To those familiar with the standard canon of piano sonata literature in the Classical period, the piano sonatas composed and published by Dussek prior to his fleeing England in 1799 – particularly the works written in Paris during the 1780s – are extraordinary works, quite unlike anything else being written at the time and utterly defying expectation. It is simply impossible that an educated musician would confuse his writing with that of Mozart, Haydn, or even Clementi. Characteristics normally identified with a variety of different composers, many of them of a later generation, combine in unique and novel ways, even in Dussek's early sonatas; one 'is often reminded of Weber, Chopin, Schubert and even Brahms' by the forward-looking textures and keyboard idioms used by Dussek.[13]

One similarity shared amongst the early sonatas of Dussek, Haydn, and Clementi is a preference for writing in two movements; of the six sonatas that comprise Dussek's Opp. 9 and 10, four are in two movements. This characteristic of early Classical sonatas seems to suit the earlier sonatas of Haydn and Clementi, where the keyboard writing and musical content easily fit such a framework. By contrast, it seems oddly anachronistic in even the earliest sonatas of Dussek, where the keyboard writing is rather more involved and the music unfolds in a more leisurely manner. This latter characteristic seems to counterbalance the reduced scale of a two-movement structure, whereas in some of Haydn's early two-movement sonatas one is often conscious of the didactic intent of the writing. In this way, Dussek foreshadows Beethoven's later two-movement sonatas, which (*pace* the two Op. 49 examples) are never facile works.

When Dussek does write slow middle movements in these sonatas, they tend either to be quite simple larghetto movements or highly expressive arias for the piano

[13] Orin Grossman, *The Piano Sonatas of Jan Ludislav Dussek (1760-1812)* (Diss., Yale University, 1975), 198.

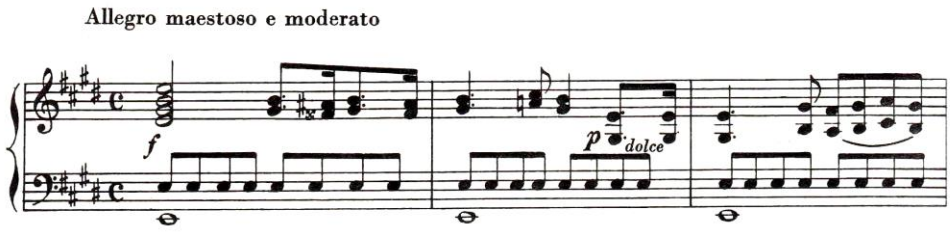
in the style of Mozart, although only occasionally does Dussek actually sound like Mozart in these cases due to his profuse ornamentation and some densely-voiced accompaniment patterns. The form typically employed in these movements is a rounded binary or free-sonata form, or a form involving episodes alternating with a ritornello: i.e. ABA or ABACA structures. Dussek's later sonatas, of course, contain increasingly complex and elaborate slow movements.

Despite this reliance on simple Classical forms, Dussek was also willing to experiment with the sonata in a way that foreshadows Beethoven's own such ventures. The final movement of the Sonata in c minor, Op. 35 No. 3, for example, is introduced by a brief Intermezzo that develops the primary motive of the movement before it is introduced. In a bolder essay, Sonata in G, Op. 39 No. 1 seems to presage Beethoven's *Sonata quasi una fantasia*, Op. 27 No. 2. Its first movement is a typical sonata-allegro form, although it conspicuously lacks the usual repetition of the exposition. The opening movement then segues into what seems to be a slow movement, a canzona marked *Andantino ma moderato e con espressione*. This proceeds *attacca* into a furious *Allegro* in g minor that eventually modulates to a lyrical second theme in B-flat, but a quick modulation back to g minor hastens the return of the first theme of the *Allegro*, thus creating the impression of a rondo. However, this rondo is interrupted by the return of the *Andantino* canzona, which again leads to the *Allegro* in g minor. The second theme of the *Allegro* is heard in G major and developed at greater length, and the sonata ends in the major mode without referring again to the initial themes of the *Allegro*. None of the standard terms used to refer to Classical forms seem sufficient to describe what occurs structurally after the opening movement of this sonata; it contains elements of rondo, sonata, and cavatina

forms. It would not be difficult to imagine a programmatic intent behind this very unusual sonata, although none is specifically indicated in the score.

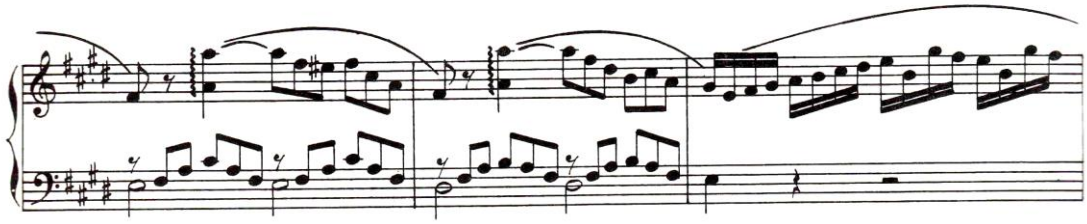
Dussek's first movements are probably the most distinctive aspect of his sonatas, which contain a number of trademarks peculiar to him. Unlike many of his contemporaries, especially Haydn, Dussek wrote quite spacious and substantial first movements from the very beginning of his sonata output. In scale and content, these movements are large even by comparison with the mature sonatas of Mozart or Haydn, and closest in size to the sprawling first movements of certain early sonatas by Beethoven. Many of his principal themes involve dotted rhythms, and like Haydn, Dussek seems to have had an affinity for broad allegros (qualified with 'moderato' or 'maestoso') in common time. (See Ex. 4.1 below.)

Bridge sections in these sonatas can be rather extensive, and the longest opening movements often owe their breadth to the length of these sections, which frequently involve a great deal of passagework in semiquavers. The appearance of perpetual motion passagework is another characteristic trait of his piano writing, particularly in first movements, and Dussek frequently uses a gradual reduction of prevailing note values as a technique for increasing tension. This is particularly true in the broader allegro movements, where the tempo will accommodate semiquaver sextuplets. For example, the first movement of Op. 10 No. 3 opens with steady quavers in the tenor voice as the prevailing note value:



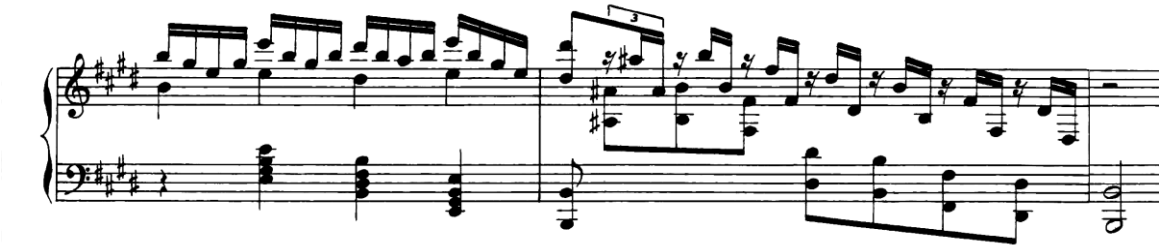
Example 4.1: Dussek: Sonata in E, Op. 10 No. 3, I, mm. 1-3
From *Jan Ladislav Dusík: Sonate*, ed. Jan Racek and Václav Jan Sýkora.
Copyright Editio Supraphon, Prague, 1983.

After the first theme is repeated *twice* in different keys, a theme in quaver triplets appears for three bars, leading to a bridge section in semiquavers:



Example 4.2: Sonata in E, Op. 10 No. 3, I, mm. 14-16
From *Jan Ladislav Dusík: Sonate*.

The bridge is concluded with a sudden, one-bar increase to semiquaver sextuplets, at which point the modulation is complete and the second theme begins:



Example 4.3: Sonata in E, Op. 10 No. 3, I, mm. 27-29
From *Jan Ladislav Dusík: Sonate*.

It is interesting to observe in this movement that the secondary key area of the exposition essentially undergoes the same process of increasing motion, leading to a more extensive passage in sextuplets. This technique of decreasing note values to generate momentum may be derived from harpsichord writing, on which instrument

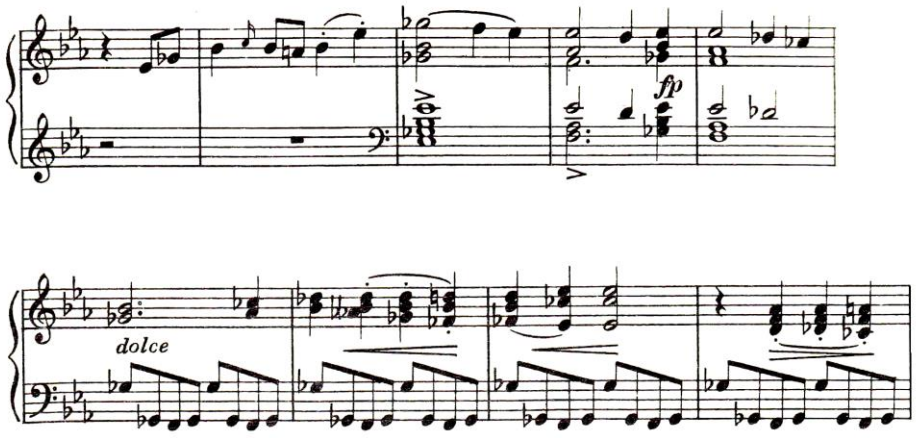
an increase in the number of notes leads to a perceived increase of volume. The use of such a technique in music whose textures would be blatantly unacceptable on the harpsichord, though, is an interesting mix of idioms.

Like the first themes, though not nearly as often, second themes may appear twice, but they receive diverse treatments.[14] In the first movement of the Sonata in C, Op. 9 No. 2, the second theme is introduced in m. 31, which is rather early in an exposition of 97 bars but logical given the length of what follows. The theme is in an eight-bar period which closes on an imperfect cadence, at which point follows a nineteen-bar tangent of passagework in semiquavers.[15] The theme returns in m. 59, this time with a different accompaniment of quavers, and is developed for slightly longer in a lyrical mode before embarking again upon some closing passagework in thirds.

In the first movement of the Sonata in c minor, Op. 35 No. 3, the second theme is introduced in m. 84, rather later in the exposition than the previous example. The repetition of the theme in m. 100 presents an opportunity for a sort of Schubertian modal inflection; the theme begins here in the parallel minor, and the remainder of the repetition is in G-flat, marked 'dolce'.

[14] See Grossman, 85-118 for a detailed analysis of Dussek's sonata-allegro movements, with a particular emphasis on Dussek's approach to the form as a thematic process, rather than a harmonic one, prefiguring later nineteenth-century practice.

[15] It is interesting to note that the accompaniment in m. 31 is in quaver triplets, preceding the passagework in semiquavers, once again demonstrating Dussek's compositional device of increasing the prevailing motion.



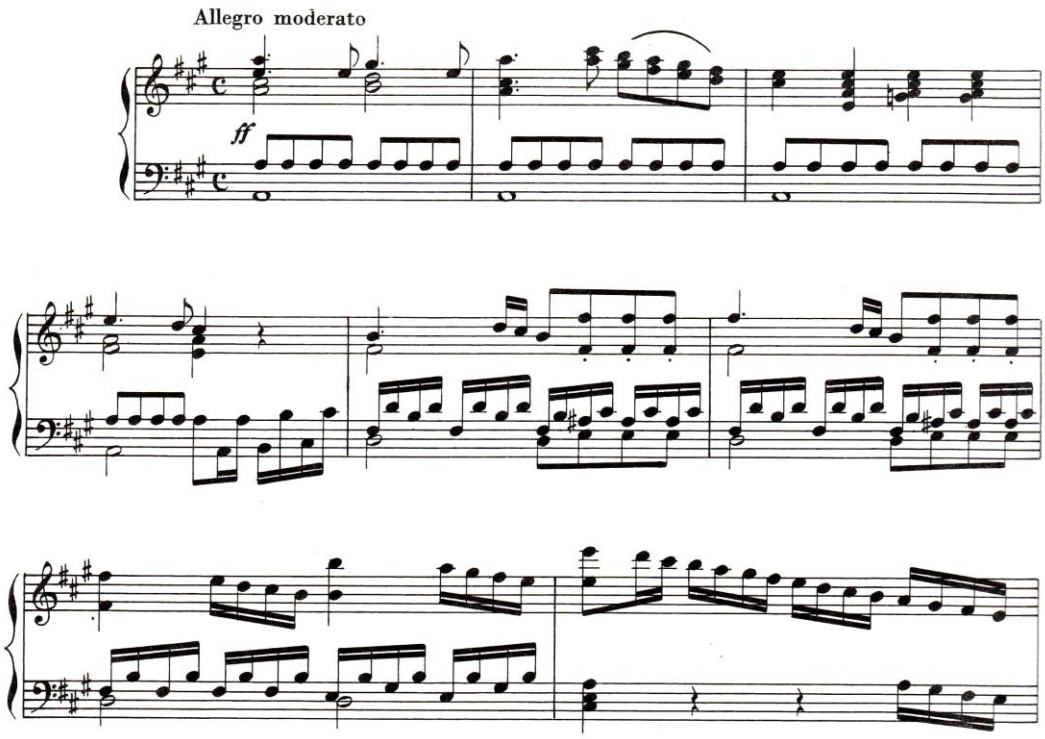
Example 4.4: Sonata in c minor, Op. 35 No. 3, I, mm. 99-108
From *Jan Ladislav Dusík: Sonate*.

The frequently unorthodox arrangement of Dussek's exposition sections demands careful handling in the recapitulations, and another characteristic of Dussek's sonata movements is recapitulations that are truncated or abbreviated in some fashion. In both of the immediately preceding examples, Op. 9 No. 2 and Op. 35 No. 3, the recapitulations are significantly altered to accommodate the unusual expositions. In the first movement of Op. 9 No. 2, where two appearances of the second theme in the exposition are separated by some passagework, the recapitulation compacts the thematic material by using the passagework as a bridge between the first and second themes, thereby bypassing the 'first' appearance of the second theme, and from that point on the recapitulation is a more or less literal repetition of what occurred in the exposition. By contrast, the second theme in the first movement of Op. 35 No. 3 – which was introduced quite late in the exposition and repeated with modal inflections – is heard only nine measures into the recapitulation, thereby seeming to omit the bridge material of the exposition. However, the second theme unexpectedly veers off course and alludes to material heard in the bridge, coming to an abrupt stop on the deceptive cadence that introduced the second theme in the

exposition. In this way, the exposition is fully recapitulated, but its constituent thematic material is presented in a different order.

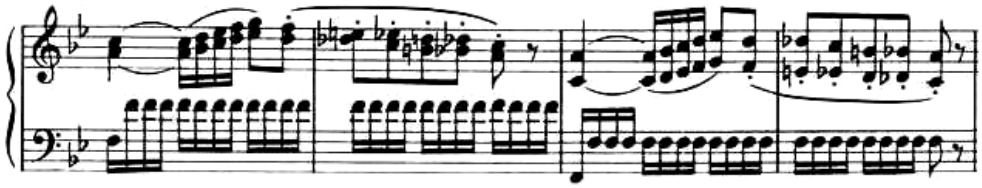
One of the most striking aspects of Dussek's writing in these sonatas is an unexpectedly progressive keyboard idiom, which comprises a total departure from the thinner, two- or three-voice textures in the middle of the keyboard that dominate in *galant*-style keyboard writing. As with some of the other distinctive features of these sonatas, this unexpected piano style may be found in Dussek's earliest sonatas, written and published while he was still in Paris in the late 1780s. For example, the use of legato octaves to sustain an important melody, previously noted in the first movement of Clementi's Sonata Op. 7 No. 3,[16] is used at the very beginning of Dussek's Op. 9 No. 1. Dussek also exhibits a fondness for unusually thick keyboard textures, often maintaining four or even five voices for the duration of certain passages. This is a typical example:

[16] See pp. 66-67.



Example 4.5: Sonata in A, Op. 10 No. 1, I, mm. 1-8
From *Jan Ladislav Dusík: Sonate*.

Compare this, though, with the simplicity and economy of Mozart in a similar passage from a contemporary work, the Fantasia in c minor, KV 475.

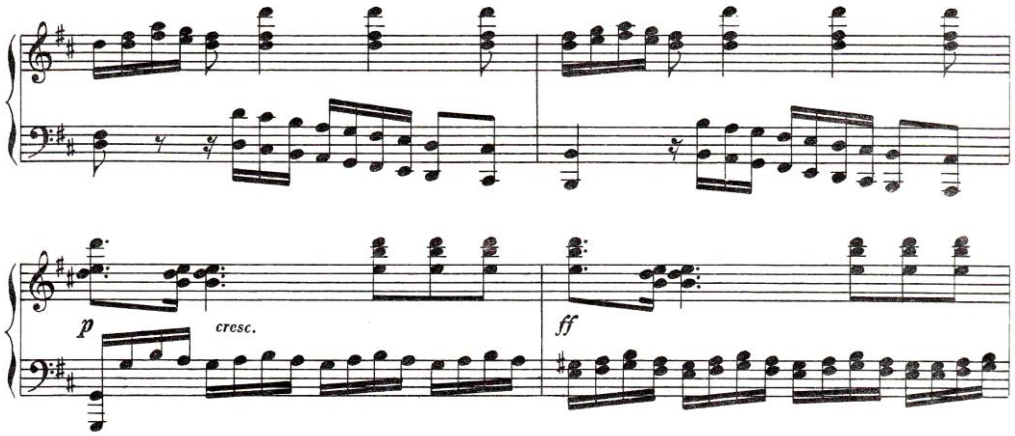


Example 4.6: Mozart, Fantasia in c minor, KV 475, mm. 102-105
From *Mozart: Klaviersonaten*, vol. 2, ed. Wolfgang Plath and Wolfgang Rehm.
Copyright Neue Mozart Ausgabe, Salzburg, 1986.

This contrast is not to imply that Dussek was unable to do more with less. His penchant for thicker textures is clearly a stylistic trait, possibly born out of a response to English-style pianos. It is a forward-looking characteristic that eventually became

part of the *lingua franca* of Classical keyboard writing across the Continent and is found in the works of Beethoven, Hummel, and Clementi, amongst others.

Much of the perceived density of Dussek's writing comes from his generous application of splashy, virtuoso figurations including octaves and thirds, both consecutive and broken. The following example looks very much like an awkward keyboard reduction of an orchestral score:



Example 4.7: Dussek: Sonata in D, Op. 9 No. 3, I, mm. 20-23
From *Jan Ladislav Dusík: Sonate*.

The impression of an orchestral effect in this example is amplified by the dynamic markings; the fortissimo in m. 23 coincides with the appearance of consecutive thirds in the left hand, and the change in the texture suggests, for example, the entrance of wind instruments. Such writing is very adventurous for the late 1780s, particularly in contrast to the leaner writing of Mozart and Haydn at the time. It is possible that such orchestral thinking is another trait of Dussek's keyboard style that was inspired by the tonal possibilities of the English-style piano.

Bravura writing like this can certainly be found in a few of Haydn's sonatas of the 1780s, and quite exceptionally in Mozart, but in the music of these Viennese composers, such writing appears rarely and typically last for only a brief period of time to supply a concentrated frisson of excitement, rather than comprising the basic

texture of the music. Dussek, on the other hand, sustains such textures for extended periods, even making them an essential characteristic of a theme or motive (e.g. the opening theme of the *Vivace con spirito* from Op. 10 No. 2). In works such as this, Dussek, like Clementi, was writing neither for didactic purposes nor for the casual amateur; this is music that demands a virtuoso technique.

Dussek's move to England signals a change in his keyboard writing. Upon his arrival, Dussek seems to have quickly established a relationship with John Broadwood, laying the ground for a series of significant changes to the piano in the 1790s. The first of these occurred in either 1790 or 1791, when Dussek requested that Broadwood extend the upper range of the piano by a fifth to c4. Either on his own initiative or again at Dussek's request, Broadwood made another expansion to the piano in 1794, this time extending the bass by a fourth to a low C, and this six-octave range (contra C to c4) became standard for English pianos for many years.[17]

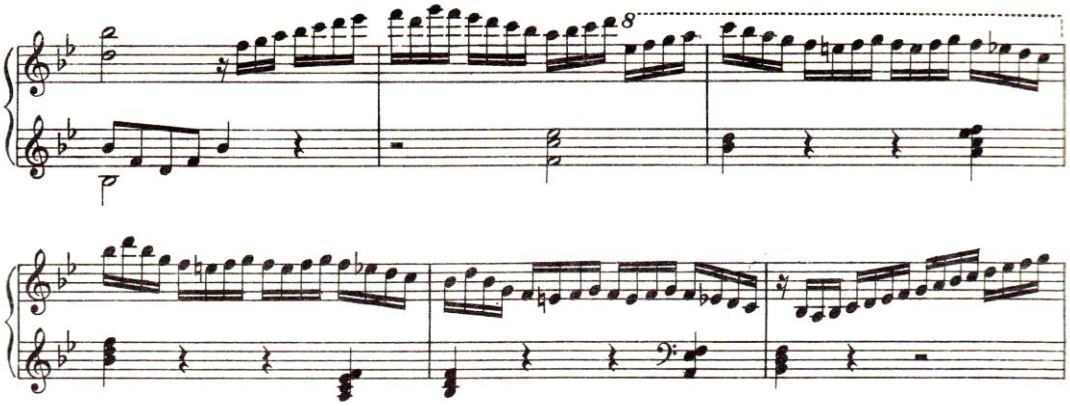
The story of these initial expansions of the piano's tessitura is becoming more widely known. However, there is still a body of literature which, due to an apparent bias that reserves the understanding of Classicism to the Viennese school, seems unaware that these initial expansions of the piano occurred in England and continues to regard Beethoven's receipt of an Erard in 1803 as the first historically significant expansion of the piano's range. For example, in Charles Rosen's 2002 book on Beethoven's piano sonatas, one finds the following, in a section specifically dealing with the range of the piano during Beethoven's lifetime:

> During Beethoven's lifetime the piano keyboard was extended… Early in the nineteenth century, the range was extended upwards, and by 1815 an octave had been added above, and the bass was enlarged by a fourth below to the C.[18]

[17] David Rowland, 'Piano music and keyboard compass in the 1790s', *Early Music* xxvii (1999), 283.
[18] *Beethoven's Piano Sonatas: A Short Companion* (New Haven, 2002), 117.

This passage can only be accurate if one's definition of 'piano' is limited to the instrument built in Austria and Germany; as noted above, the expansion of the bass to a contra C had already occurred in England twenty-one years before 1815.

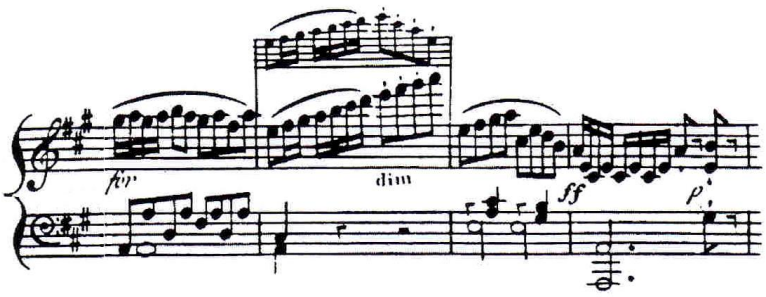
It seems reasonable to assume that the five-and-a-half-octave instrument quickly became available in at least the British marketplace, because in 1793, Longman & Broderip published Dussek's *Sonata for the Grand & Small Piano Forte with additional Keys*, Op. 24 in London, which made use of this extended compass in many passages.



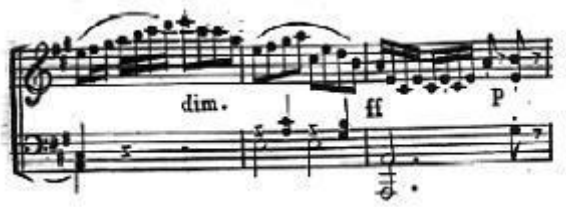
Example 4.8: Dussek: Sonata in B-flat, Op. 24, I, mm. 15-20
From *Jan Ladislav Dusík: Sonate*.

The following year, Clementi also published his Sonatas Op. 33, which exploited the newly available notes. However, Clementi was more conservative than Dussek and, in the London edition, included *ossia* passages above the main body of the text which remained within the usual five-octave range.

a. mm. 104-107. From Longman & Broderip, London, 1794.



b. mm. 105-107. From Artaria, Vienna, 1794.



Example 4.9: Clementi, Sonata in A, Op. 33 No. 1, I

In general, Clementi was more cautious with regard to issues of range, undoubtedly due to the lucrative business arrangement he had whereby most of his works were published simultaneously in Britain and on the Continent, where pianos with extended compass were not readily available. This difference may be observed by comparing the first London edition of Clementi's Op. 33 with a Continental edition. In Example 4.9 above, the same passage from the first movement of the Sonata in A, Op. 33 No. 1 is given in both the Longman & Broderip and Artaria versions. The Viennese Artaria edition, also published in 1794, does not contain the notes for pianos with extended compass; in fact, the right hand of m. 105 in the Viennese edition does not even correspond exactly to the more conservative *ossia* reading given in the London edition. Clementi's last sonata, Op. 50 No. 3 published in 1821, actually remains within five-and-a-half octaves (i.e. FF – c4), an exceptionally cautious range for such a late date. By contrast, Dussek's *Grande ouverture* for four hands, published in 1796, contains a contra E, a note which would not be available on German-built pianos for nearly twenty years.

The Sonata in B-flat, Op. 24 for pianos 'with additional keys' was Dussek's first solo sonata to be printed in England, and the keyboard writing in this work marks quite a dramatic contrast to his sonatas of just a few years earlier. The writing is much lighter and thinner, with many extended passages in only two voices, almost as if a conscious attempt was being made to rein in the extravagance of the earlier works

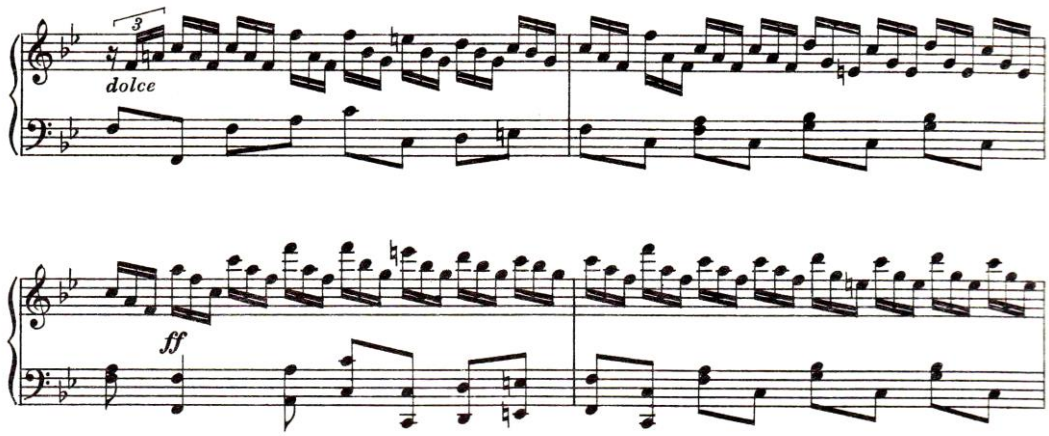
and adopt a simpler, more frugal means of expression. This contrast is particularly evident in the Sonata in D, Op. 25 No. 2. The *Presto* of the first movement, coming after an *Adagio maestoso* introduction, is almost startlingly sparse. A few passages that are obviously orchestral in character are written with two or three voices, whereas similar effects in the sonatas of the 1780s are accomplished with more densely-voiced chords and octave doublings. The slow movement of this sonata, a brief rounded-binary form *Larghetto,* is so simple and sparing in character that it might have been a page from J.C. Bach's Op. 17 sonatas.

As to the reasons for this noticeable change in style, one can only speculate. With this new economy of means, the music still achieves a level of expression comparable to Dussek's earlier sonatas, so it would be inaccurate to regard the change as some sort of regression. Instrumental differences may have played a small role;[19] Dussek's proximity to Broadwood meant that he had access to the best and latest instruments available in London in the early 1790s. However, these instruments cannot have been so fundamentally different to the instruments Dussek played in France, unless he had been limited to square pianos there, and his many public performances in Paris make this unlikely. One possible explanation for this change is that Dussek was making an attempt to ascertain and appeal to the English taste; it is notable that the Sonata Op. 24 was published in 1793, about four years after his arrival in London, a generous period of time for just such a process of absorption.

Another rationale is that this stylistic re-evaluation was simply part of Dussek's artistic development as a composer. This adoption of lighter textures was certainly not permanent; the three sonatas Op. 35, published in 1797, in some ways represent a reversion to Dussek's earlier style, integrated with the refinements of

[19] Katalin Komlós, *Fortepianos and Their Music: Germany, Austria, and England, 1760-1800* (Oxford, 1995), 64.

dramatic presentation and texture of his earlier London sonatas. The first movement of Op. 35 No. 1 looks very much like it belongs with the Paris sonatas; it is a common-time movement marked *Allegro moderato e maestoso*, and there is a profusion of passagework in semiquaver sextuplets. This movement, however, is very much longer than usual, even by the typical standards of early Dussek, and while textures of five or six voices are occasionally reached, they last for only a brief while and serve to punctuate longer sections of two-voice writing. One also cannot help but notice the Schubertian quality of a figure like this:



Example 4.10: Dussek, Sonata in B-flat, Op. 35 No. 1, I, mm. 80-83
From *Jan Ladislav Dusík: Sonate*.

This bears a striking resemblance to mm. 86ff. of the last movement of Schubert's final sonata, D. 960.

The second and third sonatas of Op. 35 integrate elements of Dussek's writing in the 1780s with the Classical economy of Opp. 24 and 31 No. 2, such that they sound very much like Beethoven's sonatas of the late 1790s with regard to expressive and dramatic content, as well as use of the keyboard. The expected sections of scintillating passagework, particularly in the first movement of No. 2, are no longer self-contained units, but rather serve the form of the movement as a vehicle for modulation and the development of motives. Notably, the first movement of No. 3

manages to avoid any such passagework. While Dussek never previously had any problems sustaining a particular mood for a length of time, the handling of contrasting thematic material in these sonatas exhibits a previously unseen ability for building and releasing tension in the service of a coherent, large-scale dramatic narrative. And yet, many of the trademarks of Dussek's sonatas are present, including themes written in four-bar phrases, the repetition of principal themes, dense textures, and altered recapitulations.

Another matter that points to the sonatas of Op. 35 as a development in Dussek's musical language is the slow movement of the third sonata. As noted above, the earlier slow movements tend to be quite simple in form, even when this belies the expressive content of the movement. The *Adagio patetico ed espressivo* of Op. 35 No. 3, however, achieves levels of breadth and expression not previously seen. The movement is in a rounded-binary form, but it has been expanded to such proportions that a performance of it, even one that ignores the repeats of the two halves, must take about seven to eight minutes, a significant increase in the length of a slow movement for a Dussek sonata. The melodic content of the movement is also a departure from earlier efforts, where the melodies are couched in a Mozartean language of decoration. That rhetoric is still dominant in this movement, but it displays a tendency for greater elaboration and, in a few places, bursts forth into the rhythmically free fioritura embellishment that would eventually become a staple of the styles of Field and Hummel.

Dussek's harmonic language is also one of his distinguishing characteristics, and it casts him again in a very progressive light. Frequently, Dussek displays a penchant for chromatic material, especially in the form of auxiliary notes in the melody or surrounding harmony, to such an extent that it almost becomes an

affectation. Dussek is also very forward-looking in his confident exploration of mediant relationships, even from the beginning of his sonata output. In his first sonata, Op. 9 No. 1, the development of the first movement begins unexpectedly in D major (m. 87), after the expected F major cadence that closes the exposition. Drawing from the sonatas written while Dussek was in London, in the first movement of Op. 35 No. 2, the truncated recapitulation states the first theme in G and then plunges into the second theme, which is developed successively in E-flat major, g minor, and then finally repeated in the expected G major. This interest in mediant tonalities of course plays a major role in the musical language of late Classicism, but Dussek's bold and frequent exploration of these relationships in the 1780s clearly place him ahead of his time.

Mention has already been made of the Schubertian qualities of the keyboard writing in Op. 35 No. 1, yet Dussek also occasionally resembles Schubert from a harmonic point of view through a similar use of modal variation. The above Example 4.10 from this sonata is preceded by a passage in f minor, which is itself a varied repetition of the second theme group, first heard in F major. Dussek's repetitions of themes occasionally deviate into a modally inflected variant, which is then often used as an opportunity for a more expressive development of themes or a brief modulation into the parallel minor.

Dussek's piano sonatas of the 1780s and 90s contain a wealth of invention and forward-looking traits that foreshadow stylistic developments not only later in the Classical period, but the Romantic as well. For this reason alone, it is difficult to understand why his music has been almost entirely forgotten, but a familiarity with his musical language and distinctive keyboard idiom is essential to a complete picture of the diversity of piano writing in the Classical style. His influence upon his

contemporaries, such as Clementi, was enormous, and his interaction with Continential musicians such as Haydn spread his influence beyond the immediate milieu of the English piano, the instrument to which his style is intimately connected.

Haydn in England

Haydn's two celebrated and historically significant visits to England in the 1790s are perhaps the most well-documented period of his life, and the circumstances that led to these sojourns need not be recounted here.[20] What is relevant, though, is the important role of the English piano in these two visits and Haydn's own response to the instrument. Prior to his visits to England, Haydn's interest in solo keyboard composition seems to have waned; after a prodigious output of solo keyboard sonatas earlier in his life, Haydn wrote only two between the years 1784 and 1794 (Hob. XVI: 48 and 49) and few other significant works. By the mid 1790s, though, Haydn returned to the instrument with a renewed vigour, and his 'newly awakened interest in the piano… was the result of his English trips and the many and varied contacts with pianos and pianists that occurred…'[21]

Through his many concerts in England, he regularly heard pianists such as Clementi, Dussek, and Cramer in performance.[22] Haydn even shared the stage several times with Dussek during both of his visits, and a letter he wrote to Dussek's father illustrates the high esteem he held for the Bohemian pianist.[23] Dussek, in turn, dedicated his three Sonatas Op. 14 for violin and piano to him. Haydn also met a number of amateur lady pianists, such as Theresa Bartolozzi (*née* Jansen), a pupil of Clementi, and Rebecca Schroeter, the aristocratic widow of Johann Samuel Schroeter, with whom it is known that Haydn had a romantic relationship during his time in

[20] Bart van Oort, 'Haydn and the English classical piano style', *Early Music* xxviii (2002), 74.
[21] H.C. Robbins Landon, *Haydn: Chronicle and Works*, vol. 3 'Haydn in England, 1791-1795' (London, 1976), 419.
[22] Komlós, 73.
[23] Craw, *Grove*, 761.

London.[24]. To judge solely from the music dedicated to these amateur pianists, they must have possessed formidable technical skills of a professional level; and they were amateurs only insofar as they did not perform in public for money, as of course no respectable person of social standing in England would have done at the time.[25]

Perhaps as a response to the large market in England for 'accompanied sonatas', much of Haydn's music from the 1790s for the piano involves the accompaniment of violin and cello. As a general characteristic of his trios, more in these works than in most other 'accompanied sonatas' of the period, the contemporary term is particularly appropriate as the piano really is the primary instrument, whereas the other two assume clearly subsidiary roles. The cello, in particular, is used in a very conservative manner, invariably bound to the bass line already present in the piano part, and Haydn does not seem to have been interested in using the cello as a melodic instrument in these pieces. If the violin and cello play subsidiary roles in these works, it is because Haydn has undoubtedly reserved some of his most captivating piano writing in his entire output for these trios. Charles Rosen has found them to be, 'along with the Mozart concertos the most brilliant piano works before Beethoven.'[26]

The impact of the late trios is not due solely to the brilliance of the keyboard writing, though; these trios also contain a great deal of harmonically imaginative and chromatic writing,[27] and the use of dramatic and musical effects is as much a part of their effect as the keyboard writing. The extraordinary nature of these trios has elicited a certain amount of conjecture and explanation in the literature attempting to

[24] Landon, 143.
[25] Ibid., 411.
[26] *The Classical Style: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven* (New York, 1997), 352.
[27] James Parakilas and Gretchen Wheelock, '1770s to 1820s: The Piano Revolution in the Age of Revolutions' in *Piano Roles: Three Hundred Years of Life with the Piano*, ed. James Parakilas (New Haven, 1999), 115-16.

identify their impetus and origin. Annette Richards analyses the mood swings, strange outbursts, flights of fancy, and 'timbral excesses' in the context of a late eighteenth-century aesthetic of the grotesque, in the sense of something that is self-consciously bizarre or illogical. This interpretation is particularly interesting from an interdisciplinary point of view, as it offers a coherent explanation for some of the *bizarreries* encountered in these works as the channeling of a recollected Baroque.[28]

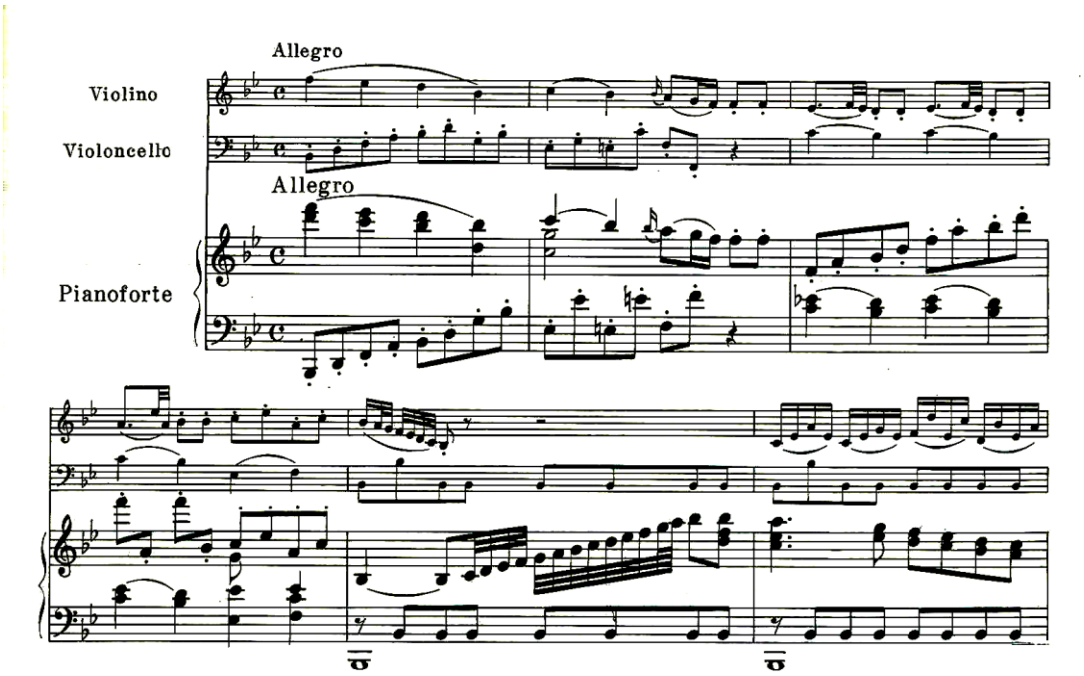
Mary Hunter's essay 'Haydn's London Piano Trios and his Salomon String Quartets: Private vs. Public?' contrasts the 'private' trios with the 'public' quartets, examining the role and function of dramatic and rhetorical gestures in the two presumed settings. Hunter posits that the 'private' setting for which the trios were written amounted to an opportunity for greater intimacy and emotional immediacy, as well as room to experiment with the very medium of the piano trio.[29]

As far as the present discussion is concerned, the most germane stimulus on Haydn's London trios is the composer's contact with the English piano school. Haydn's keyboard writing in these works clearly exhibits his assimilation of elements from the stylistic vocabulary of English piano writing. While the harmonic adventurousness found in these pieces is hardly unusual for Haydn *per se*, the concentration of such writing in these trios also suggests that they may be another result of Haydn's contact with the English Classical piano style which, as has been previously observed, typically tended toward more freely chromatic writing.

These English influences begin to make themselves apparent before Haydn's second trip to London, in the Trios Hob. XV: 18-20, written in Vienna in 1793 and

[28] Annette Richards, 'Haydn's *London* Trios and the Rhetoric of the Grotesque' in *Haydn and the Performance of Rhetoric*, ed. Tom Beghin and Sander M. Goldberg (Chicago, 2007), 251-80.
[29] Mary Hunter, 'Haydn's London Piano Trios and his Salomon String Quartets: Private vs. Public?' in *Haydn and His World*, ed. Elaine Sisman (Princeton, 1997), 103-130.

dedicated to Princess Maria Theresa Esterházy.[30] The last of these, in B-flat (Hob. XV: 20), opens in an extroverted, virtuosic manner that is a significant departure from Haydn's usual keyboard style until this point. From the beginning of the movement, the piano starts at the extreme ends of the keyboard, and the opening bars involve dramatic ascending figures followed by some wide, disjointed leaping and sweeping scales.[31]



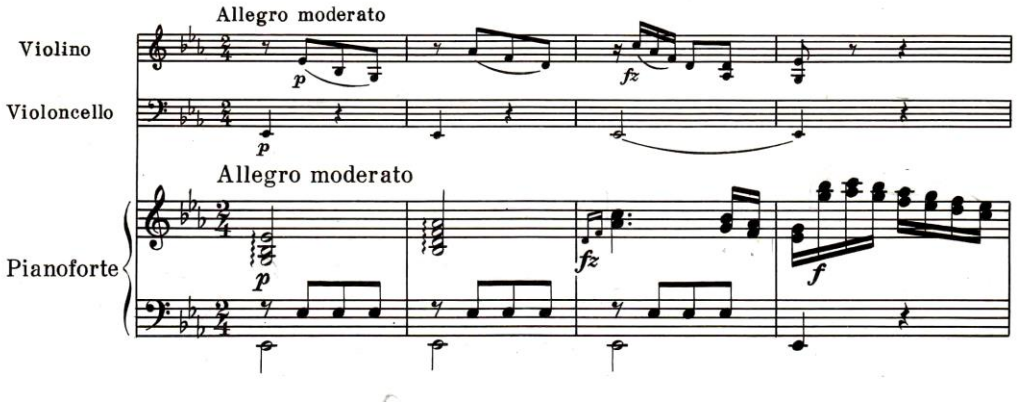
Example 4.11: Haydn: Trio in B-flat, Hob. XV: 20, I, mm. 1-6
From *Joseph Haydn: Klaviertrios*, ed. H. C. Robbins Landon.
Copyright Verlag Doblinger, Vienna, 1970.

Such writing is not meant only to grasp the attention of a listening audience, but that of a viewing one as well. In this trio and also particularly in Hob. XV: 28, leaps and hand-crossing are exploited as a way of highlighting the physical act of playing. By beginning Hob. XV: 20 at the opposite ends of the keyboard, Haydn is both exploring a contrast of register and drawing attention to the compass of the piano, in much the

[30] Landon, 409.
[31] Ibid., 417.

same way that Beethoven's early sonatas do. This recalls Hunter's point about Haydn using the private setting of the trio to explore the limits and characteristics of the instrumentation (or, in this case, the instrument).

Haydn also used this grander English style of writing to less exhibitionistic ends. In the first movement of the Trio in E-flat, Hob. XV: 22, from the first group of trios written during his second visit to London, Haydn makes extensive use of consecutive thirds (largely, though not exclusively, in the right hand), which has been noted elsewhere as a particular characteristic of English-style keyboard writing. Their use in this movement, however, is not reserved to a few bars for the purpose of technical display, but rather used generously to such an extent that consecutive motion in thirds or tenths becomes an integral part of the texture of the movement's main motives. Consecutive thirds are introduced as early as the first phrase:

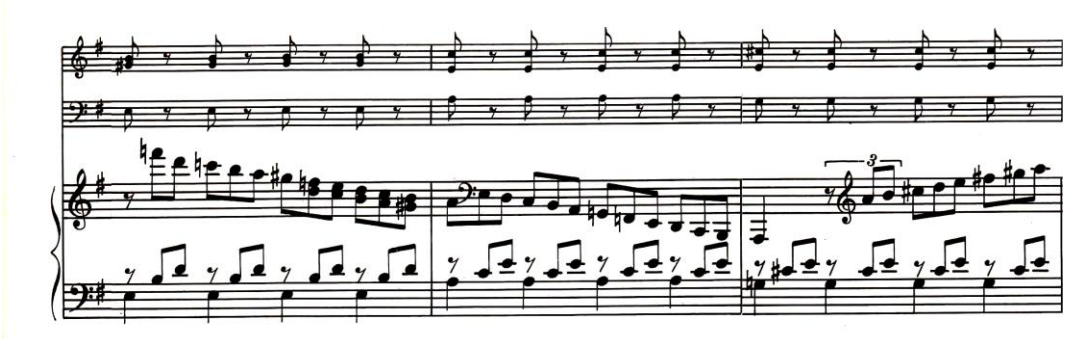


Example 4.12: Trio in E-flat, Hob. XV: 22, I, mm. 1-4
From *Joseph Haydn: Klaviertrios*.

Thirds appear again in the bridge to quite virtuosic effect, this time as semiquaver sextuplets in mm. 32-35, and in the analogous passage of the recapitulation, mm. 178-181. The exposition (and also recapitulation) closes again with a passage in thirds that is motivically related to the thirds of the first theme, and the development takes

that motive and texture as its point of departure, developing the motive for some time before turning to other themes.

Mention should also be made of the use of hand-crossing in this trio. To be sure, hand-crossing is found in Viennese music of the Classical period, but the use of this technique to place thematic material in contrasting registers is again a characteristic of English writing. The development of the first movement of Dussek's Sonata in B-flat, Op. 24, for example, exploits this technique as its primary means of developing the first theme, perhaps to the point of becoming prolix. In Haydn's E-flat Trio (Hob. XV: 22), hand-crossing for this exact purpose appears in the development of the first movement but is also applied for dramatic effect in the slow movement.

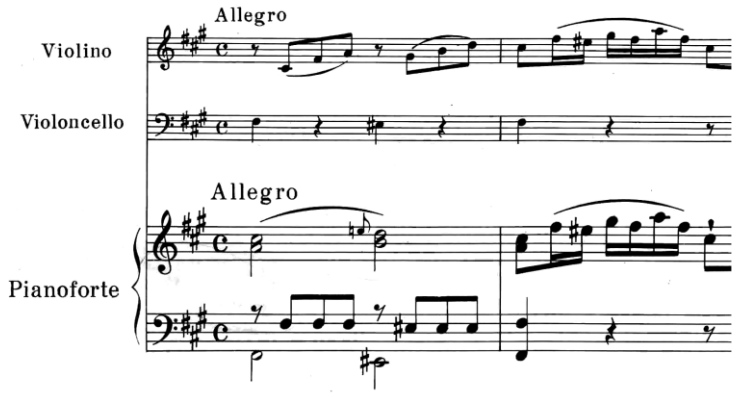


Example 4.13: Trio in E-flat, Hob. XV: 22, II, mm. 38-40
From *Joseph Haydn: Klaviertrios*.

The *Poco Adagio* also contains some unexpected textures, including several passages with three or more voices moving simultaneously as quavers (e.g. mm. 14-16). One will also notice a few melodic passages in octaves and more use of consecutive thirds, although in the slower tempo of this movement they obviously have less use as a vehicle for technical display. They seem to be present simply as an exploration of textural possibilities; indeed, in several passages their inclusion seems almost superfluous. In the previous excerpt (Ex. 4.13), thirds appear in the second half of m. 38, but the passage works perfectly well without them; as a matter of fact, their sudden appearance is almost an intrusion into the texture. Several moments involving

melodic material in octaves would also be entirely acceptable and idiomatic of Haydn if realised with a single voice, but Haydn evidently chose to explore these distinctive textures in this movement.

It is also interesting to note a similarity between the openings of the Trio in E-flat, Hob. XV: 22 and the Trio in f-sharp minor, Hob. XV: 26.



Example 4.14: Trio in f-sharp minor, Hob. XV: 26, I, mm. 1-2
From *Joseph Haydn: Klaviertrios*.

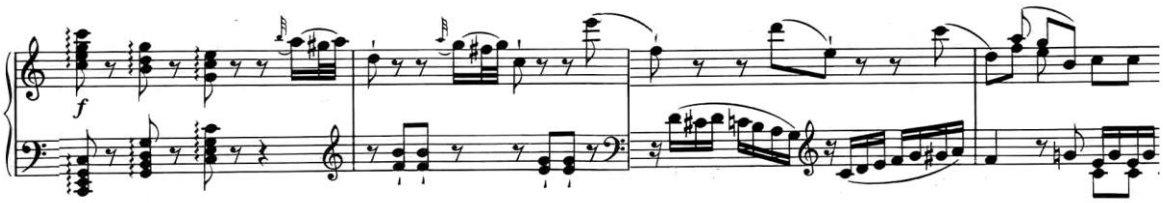
In both cases the left hand uses the same accompanying figure, in which a static bass note is reiterated in quavers an octave above. Similar or identical accompanying figures are found in abundance in the Dussek sonatas of this period, accompanying the first themes of Op. 9 No. 3, Op. 10 No. 1, Op. 10 No. 3, Op. 35 No. 1, etc.

Of course, Haydn's final three sonatas for piano solo were written during his second visit to London. Unlike the trios, which were published in tidy groups of three, the idea that these three sonatas constitute a coherent group is not particularly tenable.[32] The sonatas have a complex publishing history, and one of the movements may have been composed before Haydn's second trip to England, as will be explored below. Nevertheless, the sonatas have certain common factors among them which bind them together: all three were written for the pianist Theresa Bartolozzi, and they

[32] Jerald C. Graue, 'Haydn and the London Pianoforte School' in *Haydn Studies: Proceedings of the International Haydn Conference, Washington, D.C., 1975*, ed. Jens Peter Larsen, Howard Serwer, and James Webster (New York, 1981), 422.

each depart from Haydn's previous keyboard style and exhibit elements of English influence, perhaps in an even more concentrated way than the trios.

The first of these sonatas, in C (Hob. XVI: 50), is one of Haydn's most well-known piano works and needs little in the way of introduction. The English influence on Haydn's piano writing is more strongly evident in this sonata than in the other two from this period. Its first movement is quite dramatic and virtuosic, already something of a departure when so many of Haydn's opening sonata movements require a more leisurely *moderato*. Yet this impression of exuberance is accomplished not through Haydn's customary use of brilliant, single-line passagework, but through the use of densely voiced chords, rapid alternation between thin and much thicker textures, and numerous awkward passages in consecutive thirds. Much of this is heard from the very beginning, when the rather thin two- (and later three) voice first theme is given a rather different *forte* repetition in mm. 7ff.



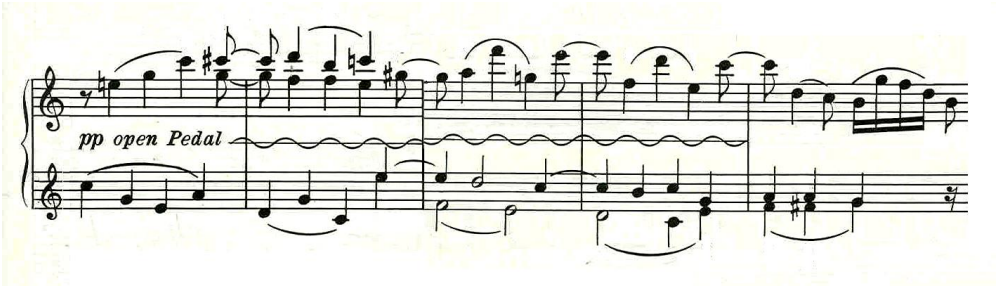
Example 4.15: Sonata in C, Hob XVI: 50, I, mm. 7-10
From *Haydn: Sämtliche Klaviersonaten*, ed. Christa Landon.
Copyright Wiener Urtext, Vienna, 1973.

The first three notes of the theme are reiterated in extremely thick chords of seven or eight voices, and when the passage continues on from m. 10, the accompanying figure in the left hand is in two or three parts and very densely voiced. This kind of writing is a dramatic contrast to the lighter textures of Haydn's earlier keyboard style, and if it does not demonstrate a conscious attempt to imitate textures found in Clementi and Dussek at the time, it at least illustrates how his thinking had been influenced by his contact with the English style.

Upon arriving in the secondary key, a brilliant passage in thirds is accompanied by static broken octaves; these octaves eventually decrease to various intervals and are the occasion for a brief, mysterious harmonic excursion that eventually reaffirms the tonality of G. The passage also appears in the recapitulation and is effectively extended, initially by inversion, in the development to effect a modulation from c minor to a minor. Although the unusual harmonic content of these passages is certainly interesting, the more relevant characteristic, as an indicator of English influence, is in fact their extended use of static broken octaves or intervals as an accompanying figure. This sort of 'hocket technique' appears frequently in English keyboard music, particularly that of Clementi, and is a vestige of keyboard writing for the pantalon, an undamped striking-action keyboard instrument, that had been popular in England several decades prior. The alternating texture imitated the two hammers of the earlier dulcimer from which the keyed pantalon developed.[33]

Imitation of the pantalon occurs in another capacity in this movement, in one of the most infamous passages in Haydn's keyboard output. Upon the arrival of the 'secondary' theme in the recapitulation – the movement is monothematic – the theme is heard in the left hand while the right hand plays a syncopated counter-melody, to be played with the 'open Pedal' (Ex. 4.16). This is the second occurrence of the instruction 'open Pedal' in this movement, and these two moments are the only time in Haydn's keyboard output that pedal indications appear.

[33] van Oort, 83. See Chapter 1, p. 15 for further discussion of the pantalon vogue in 1760s England.



Example 4.16: Sonata in C, Hob. XVI: 50, I, mm. 120-124
From *Haydn: Sämtliche Klaviersonaten*.

The Haydn scholar H.C. Robbins Landon has solely advanced the view that this extraordinary marking must refer to the *una corda* pedal, available only on English pianos at the time, and that it cannot refer to the damper pedal: 'such a use of the sustaining pedal would be wrong, blurring the music in a quite absurd way.'[34] However, just such 'absurd' blurring is precisely what seems to be indicated in a number of long pedal markings at the turn of the nineteenth century, such as Beethoven's indications in the first movements of the 'Moonlight' Sonata Op. 27 No. 2 (1801) and Sonata Op. 31 No. 2 (1802), and the second movement of the Third Concerto Op. 35 (1803). A particularly relevant English example is the final movement of Clementi's Sonata Op. 40 No. 1 (published in 1802), which contains a sixteen-bar pedal through a passage consisting exclusively of broken octaves. This passage, another imitation of the pantalon, is strikingly similar in texture, tessitura, and rhythmic content to Haydn's 'open Pedal' passage (Ex. 4.16). Landon's proposal that the 'open Pedal' marking in Haydn's C major Sonata cannot refer to the damper pedal due to the blurring effect it would produce is simply irreconcilable with a number of pedal markings by other composers at the time. Since the passage imitates the pantalon, an undamped instrument, it seems reasonable to assume that this blurring effect was exactly what was desired in such passages.

[34] Landon, 445. See also H. C. Robbins Landon, 'Haydn on record', *Early Music* x (1982), 511.

Clearly, such use of the damper pedal is not unknown in Classical literature. But is there any evidence that the term 'open pedal' was synonymous with the damper pedal? Clementi uses this term in the opening of the third movement of his Sonata Op. 37 No. 3 (mm. 1-33), published in 1798, in a passage over a drone bass.[35] This example is less liable to create an harmonically unintelligible mess than Haydn's indication, or even in Clementi's own later passage in Op. 40 No. 1, but the musical context in this instance suggests that the instruction refers to the damper pedal. Additionally, the term appears in the final movement of John Field's Sonata Op. 1 No. 3, published 1801, as well as in works by Johann Baptist Cramer; both Field and Cramer were pupils of Clementi. Cramer's 1812 treatise *Instructions for the Piano Forte* clarifies the term: 'Some Authors prefer writing (Ped:) when the Open Pedal is to be used, and when it is to be dropt, they use this mark *. As the Left hand Pedal is only used in soft passages, it does not require any particular mark.'[36] This quote not only confirms that the term 'open pedal' was used to refer to the damper pedal, it also implies that use of the *una corda* was not habitually indicated by composers. Both of these points seem to refute Landon's assertion that the Haydn passages are meant to be played *una corda*.

One remaining issue about the marking is its authenticity. The autograph of this sonata has been lost, but it was in the possession of Theresa Bartolozzi, and it was the basis of the first edition by J. and H. Caufield in 1801. (A copy of this edition in the British Library has Mrs. Bartolozzi's signature on the cover.) It has been suggested by David Rowland that the marking may have originated with Mrs. Bartolozzi, or even Clementi, her teacher, either of whom may have written the

[35] Alexander Furman, '"A horribly bad sound"?: "Open pedal" in Haydn's Sonata in C major Hob. XVI: 50', *Context: Journal of Music Research* v (1993), 13.
[36] Johann Baptist Cramer, *Instructions for the Piano Forte* (London, 1812), 43, quoted in Furman '"A horribly bad sound"?', 13.

indication into the autograph.[37] The fact that so many occurrences of the term 'open pedal' are related to Clementi, either directly or through his pupils, strongly suggests that the marking may be due in some way to his influence, but ultimately, all of this must remain conjecture. What one can be fairly certain of, though, is that the indication, regardless of its origin, does in fact refer to the damper pedal, and that the passage is not so exceptional in the context of contemporary English piano writing.

The slow movement of the C major sonata is an elaborately-ornamented movement, through-composed yet largely following sonata form. Interestingly, the movement was published as an individual piece by Artaria of Vienna in June 1794, possibly from a pirated manuscript.[38] Given that Haydn was in London by February of that year, the circumstances suggest that Artaria took advantage of his absence in publishing this movement. In any event, it is clear that at least part of the Sonata in C was written before Haydn left on his second trip to England. A comparison between this publication and the movement as it appears in the 1801 Caufield edition, assuming the Artaria is based on a legitimate source, yields minor differences of detail, but these divergent readings may give some indication of Haydn's different responses to the pianos available to him in Vienna, where he presumably first wrote the movement, and in London, where he wrote the manuscript for Mrs. Bartolozzi.[39] Many of the different readings in the 'London version' of the movement involve shortening bass notes or otherwise negotiating the greater resonance of English pianos. This would be a somewhat unexpected response to the instrument, given Haydn's use of thicker, denser textures in his other pianos works at the time, but perhaps these revisions represent an attempt to recapture the clarity that was available to him on a Viennese piano, the instrument at which the movement was probably

[37] 'Correspondence', *Early Music* xi (1983), 285.
[38] Christa Landon, preface to *Haydn: Sämtliche Klaviersonaten*, 3rd ed., vol. 3 (Vienna, 1973), xx.
[39] Robbins Landon, *Haydn: Chronicle and Works*, vol. 3, 446.

conceived. In mm. 6-7, when the unexpected A – C-sharp third arrives, the left-hand A and its resolution to B-flat are given in octaves in the Artaria version, whereas the left hand plays single notes in the London edition. Only when the passage is repeated in the 'recapitulation', mm. 39-40, does an octave A appear in the London edition, but even this resolves to a single B-flat. Additionally, in both passages, the B-flat resolution is a minim (and an octave) in the Artaria edition, but is written only as a crotchet in the Caufield edition. Shorter bass notes in the English edition also occur in mm. 13, 48, and 51. At the end of the exposition of this movement, at the cadence in mm. 22-23, the right-hand part in the London edition appears an octave above where it appears in the Artaria edition, possibly an attempt by Haydn to ensure clarity through wider voicing.

The final movement of the sonata cannot have been written in Vienna, as it contains a well-known passage that requires a high a3. As noted above, the 'additional keys' required had been available on English pianos for a few years by 1794 but were not readily available elsewhere, and it is interesting that the sonata does not seem to have been published on the Continent until 1806 when it was issued in Cahier XII of Breitkopf and Härtel's *Oeuvres complettes* Haydn edition.[40]

The Sonata in D, Hob XVI: 51 has largely failed to enter into the repertoire and is undoubtedly overshadowed by its two larger and more extraordinary companions. Its second and final movement is a 3/4 *Presto* in the style of a scherzo or a German dance, much like the final movements Haydn wrote in London for his trios. The first movement, marked *Andante*, is in an unusual tripartite form that also exhibits elements of sonata form. Each of its three sections begins with the first theme presented in the tonic; the second section presents the same thematic material

[40] Christa Landon, xx.

in a different order and explores different keys, and the final section is essentially a recapitulation of the first. The keyboard writing in this movement continues to explore the English idiom employed by Haydn in the previous sonata, although it is decidedly less virtuosic and more lyrical in character. There are a few technically thorny passages following the second theme in the first and third sections involving consecutive thirds, but it is Haydn's use of octaves in melodic material that is the most unusual departure from his customary style in this movement. While this kind of writing is unexpected of Haydn, it has of course become a standard part of the stylistic vocabulary by the 1790s, making it less 'stylistically precocious' than Clementi's use of this texture in the early 1780s.[41] Haydn's assimilation of this texture again demonstrates his knowledge of the English piano style and his willingness to adopt elements of it, something Beethoven was also doing at the same time.

Haydn's final sonata, in E-flat Hob. XVI: 52, is again one of his most celebrated and well-known sonatas, as well as the grandest piano music he ever wrote. The first movement is dramatic and majestic, and much has been written about Haydn's audacious casting of the slow movement in E. As with the two previous sonatas, the greatest degree of English influence is again to be observed in the first movement, with its exuberant writing, use of passages in consecutive thirds, and sweeping scales. And yet, the English influence seems to be less explicit in this sonata, or perhaps it is simply better integrated with other elements of Haydn's style; alternation between thinner textures and densely-voiced chords is less abrupt, and dramatic contrasts of mood are achieved on a more spacious scale than the frenetic pace set in the first movement of the C major sonata.

[41] Leon Plantinga, *Clementi: His Life and Music* (London, 1977), 89. See Chapter 3, p. 67.

Haydn's propensity for abrupt shifts of tonality is also more evident in the first movement of this sonata than the previous two. The unexpected chromatic descent in octaves of mm. 38-39 is expanded in the recapitulation to something even more harmonically ambiguous at mm. 109-110. In the development, the imperfect cadence in c minor in m. 67 is answered astoundingly in the key of E. While this may seem like eccentricity for its own sake, it does foreshadow the tonality of the slow movement.

This author also sees a similar procedure at work in the E-flat trio, Hob. XV: 22, written essentially at the same time in London. In the development of the last movement of the trio, an imperfect cadence is achieved in the key of c-sharp minor at m. 80, followed by a 'false' recapitulation in E. Of course, the tonal relationship at work here is not as remote as in the piano sonata; answering a G-sharp major chord in E major is exactly what happens after countless slow movements in the Baroque that end on a Phrygian cadence. In both the trio and the sonata, though, the development of a movement in E-flat has modulated to E via an imperfect cadence in a mediant tonality, requiring further modulation to return to the tonic for the recapitulation (or, in the case of the trio, the 'true' recapitulation). It is perhaps not too fanciful to see Haydn having worked out such a modulation in the trio before trying something even more harmonically remote in the first movement – which, by custom, would be 'weightier' – of the sonata, where it serves a larger purpose by pointing to the tonality of the second movement.

Haydn's distinctively individual style makes it difficult to conclusively identify influences upon his thinking and composition. Nevertheless, his contact with English pianos and pianists during his two visits to England influenced him in ways that can be tangibly demonstrated, both through a concentrated increase in

harmonically adventurous writing and his adoption of elements of English piano style. His exposure to the instrument inspired not only a greater output of music for the piano, but some of his most extraordinary music for it. Haydn's sojourns in England, particularly the second, constitute the beginning of 'a long and for both countries profitable exchange of pianos and pianistic concepts between England and Austria.'[42]

[42] Landon, *Haydn: Life and Works*, 413.

Chapter 5

The 'English style' and influences abroad

Defining the 'English style'

The term 'English pianoforte school' has entered into the literature, but the notion of an 'English style' or school of piano composition and playing may seem to be something of a misnomer. From the very beginning, most of the major players in the story of the English piano in the Classical period were foreigners, including the men who built the first instruments, like Johannes Zumpe and Americus Backers. John Broadwood and William Southwell, though not from the Continent, were Scottish and Irish, respectively. The important composers for the English piano also represent a variety of national origins and individual styles, and despite the enormous influence of Clementi as a composer and teacher, no single person can be said to have exercised a degree of dominance to the point of having created a single, unified school.

Nevertheless, careful examination of the music written from about 1770 to 1810, both in England and in places where the English-style piano was the dominant keyboard instrument, reveals a coherent set of stylistic traits, distinct from the kind of music that was being written within the sphere of influence of the Viennese piano.[1] The three most obvious characteristics are the embrace of legato as a normative articulation, a tendency toward virtuoso writing or an otherwise 'grand' style, and a

[1] Bart van Oort, 'Haydn and the English classical piano style', *Early Music* xxviii (2000), 74.

progressive use of the pedal. Each of these is a matter of texture or keyboard idiom, and an examination of these traits in relation to the English piano reveals the degree to which they represent a response by composers and pianists to the possibilities of the instrument.

By the mid-1790s, a small number of changes or improvements had been made to the English grand piano, but most of the essential elements of the instrument exhibited by Americus Backers in 1771 had remained unchanged, including the basic principles of the English action and the function and position of the two pedals.[2] The few major changes included Broadwood's breaking of the bridge in 1791 to increase the strength of the bass,[3] the universal adoption of trichord stringing, and of course, the expansions to the piano's range carried out at the request of Dussek. It is commonly observed that the English piano was sturdier, more powerful, and more resonant than its Viennese cousin. This was due not only to the somewhat larger size of English pianos when compared to the Austro-German instrument, but also to a number of factors in the instrument's construction. The complexity of the English action resulted in a heavier touch, and this required a greater key dip in order to deliver a sufficiently powerful blow to the string. Tri-chord stringing across the range of the piano also contributed to the greater resonance of the instrument, when compared to the Viennese piano.

Perhaps the most important tonal characteristic of the English piano, in terms of stylistic repercussions, is a sort of 'haze' or after-ring caused by the lightness of English dampers. These were constructed with strips of cloth radiating out from the body of the damper, such that they lay gently on the string at an angle, damping the sound gradually. This after-ring is by no means a shortcoming of the English

[2] For more on Backers' grand piano of 1770, see Chapter 1, p. 24 ff.
[3] Michael Cole, *The Pianoforte in the Classical Era* (Oxford, 1998), 136.

damping mechanism, but was essential to the aesthetic of the English piano, and it actually became increasingly pronounced in English pianos early in the Romantic period. On an 1846 Broadwood at the Finchcocks Museum in Kent, the bass notes can take up to ten seconds to fade completely after being released. This trend was maintained well into the nineteenth century, until English makers adopted the modern damper.[4] This after-ring of the English piano, combined with other factors such as a heavier touch and a fuller sound, inevitably led to a number of developments in the English style that culminated in the adoption of legato as the 'default' articulation.

The first of these developments is a tendency to use long slurs, sometimes lasting for several bars, starting in the 1780s. This represents one of the major differences between the English and Viennese styles, as such extended slurs are rarely found in the keyboard music of Mozart or Haydn. The rules of Viennese musical grammar usually required a legato slur to break at the bar-line, and another trait of the Viennese style is the use of shorter slurs to indicate details of nuance and articulation within a phrase. This rhetoric of carefully-detailed inflection demands a great degree of clarity, and German performance treatises of the eighteenth century consequently devote a significant amount of discussion to the need for this quality in order that phrases be intelligible, their *Affekt* conveyed, and so on. Logically complementing this rhetoric was an understanding that, at least until around 1800, some degree of detachment was the normative articulation generally implied in the absence of a slur.

The roots of this aesthetic can be found in C.P.E. Bach's *Versuch über die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen*, first published in 1753. On the subject of articulation, Bach writes, 'Tones which are neither detached, connected, nor fully held are sounded for half their value… Quarters and eighths in moderate and slow tempos

[4] William Burnett and William Dow, *Company of Pianos* (London, 2004), 54.

are usually performed in this semidetached manner.'[5] It is significant that Bach mentions four distinct articulations in this passage; he clearly did not feel that articulation could be reduced into two categories of legato and staccato, as Clementi does in the quote further below. Daniel Gottlob Türk's exhaustive *Klavierschule*, which first appeared in 1789, echoes this understanding: 'For tones which are to be played in customary fashion (that is, neither detached nor slurred) the finger is lifted a little earlier from the key than is required by the duration of the note.'[6] Additionally, both C.P.E. Bach and Türk are largely in agreement about the language of the slur: that the first note under a slur receives a slight accent, and the last note is generally released early.

The Viennese piano, with its clear attack and efficient damping, was particularly suited to this approach to articulation, and these qualities of the instrument were clearly prized. The treatise on piano playing by Johann Peter Milchmeyer contains very specific advice, in a section on purchasing square pianos: 'One must also be sure that all tones damp precisely, that the sound stops quickly after and does not leave behind any sort of unpleasant reverberation or buzz.'[7]

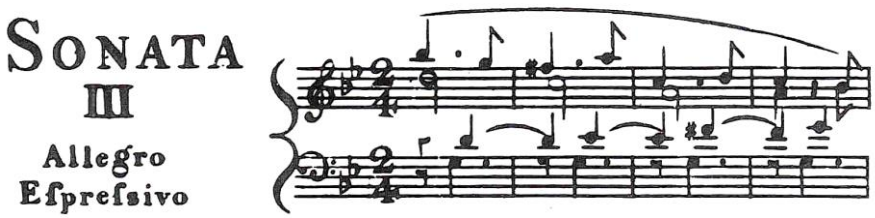
In the following oft-quoted passage, Mozart's observations about the pianos of Stein demonstrate the importance of efficient damping. In a letter to his father dated 17 October 1777, Mozart opens:

> This time I shall begin at once with Stein's pianofortes. Before I had seen any of his make, Späth's claviers had always been my favourites. But now I much prefer Stein's, for they damp ever so much better than the Regensburg

[5] Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, trans. William J. Mitchell (New York, 1949), 157.
[6] Daniel Gottlob Türk, *School of Clavier Playing*, trans. Raymond H. Haggh, (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1982), 345.
[7] Johann Peter Milchmeyer, *Die Wahre Art das Pianoforte zu spielen* (Dresden, 1797), 58. 'Auch muss man beim Dämpfen aller Töne genau Acht geben, ob der Ton kurz aufhöre und nicht einen gewissen unangenehmen Nachhall oder ein Zischen hinter sich lasse.' Translation by the present author.

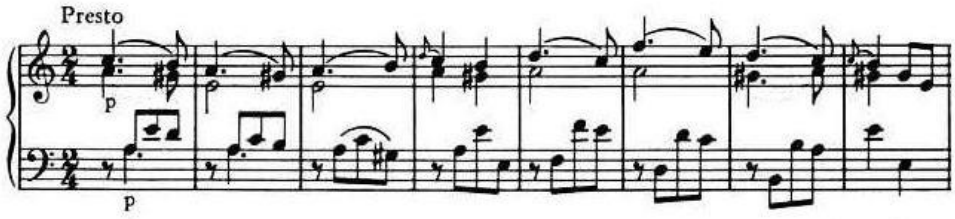
> instrument. When I strike hard, I can keep my finger on the note or raise it, but the sound ceases the moment I have produced it.[8]

The degree of nuance and articulation that is described in these quotations is quite difficult, if not impossible, to realise on an English piano.[9] Its fuller sound causes it to speak less distinctly than the Viennese piano, and its deeper key dip and delayed damping interfere with the clarity and release of shorter slurs within a phrase, particularly at lively tempos. On the other hand, while the English piano may not speak as distinctly, its tonal character is very conducive to longer, sustained lines that sing.[10] Although short articulation slurs do appear in English music, in the manner used by Viennese composers, the appearance of longer slurs in English piano music, beginning with Clementi in the 1780s, is probably a response to this singing quality of the English piano. The contrast between English and Viennese approaches to the use of the slur may be observed by comparing similar musical examples in the writing of Clementi and Mozart.



Example 5.1: Clementi, Sonata in g minor, Op. 7 No. 3, I, mm. 1-4
From London, 1784.

[8] *The Letters of Mozart and His Family*, ed. Emily Anderson, 2nd ed., (London, 1966), 328.
[9] Katalin Komlós, *Fortepianos and Their Music: Germany, Austria, and England, 1760-1800* (Oxford, 1995), 25.
[10] van Oort, 78.



Example 5.2: Mozart, Sonata in a minor, KV 310, III, mm. 1-8
From *Mozart: Klaviersonaten*, vol. 1, ed. Wolfgang Plath and Wolfgang Rehm.
Copyright Neue Mozart Ausgabe, Salzburg, 1986.

Examples 5.1 and 5.2 present two strikingly similar passages by Clementi and Mozart, respectively. (For the sake of accuracy, several editorial slurs have been removed from the Mozart example.) In the Clementi excerpt, the first phrase of the movement is under a four-bar slur. The identical dotted rhythms in the Mozart example, however, are individually slurred, presumably indicating a finer degree of nuance or even articulation. This difference in slurring is maintained through both movements and provides a vivid illustration of the two slurring techniques. This difference is further confirmed by comparing the first English edition of Clementi's Op. 7 No. 3 (reproduced in Example 5.1) with the first edition of the work, which was published in Vienna (Artaria, 1782), in which several long slurs found in the later English edition are conspicuously absent.[11]

While longer slurs became common in the English style, there is no obvious corresponding increase over time in the number of slurs used, when compared with the increase that occurred in Viennese keyboard writing. By the turn of the century, legato was becoming the 'normal' touch in the English style, and performance instructions such as *legato* or *sempre legato* began to replace the slur at this time. For example, of Cramer's 42 Etudes, Op. 30, published in 1804, twenty-seven are marked

[11] See Example 3.4, p. 65 from Alan Tyson's edition of Op. 7 No. 3 for Henle, which is based on the Artaria edition of 1782.

legato.[12] Clementi made clear his preference, and probably the dominant practice of the time, in this well-known quote from his treatise of 1801:

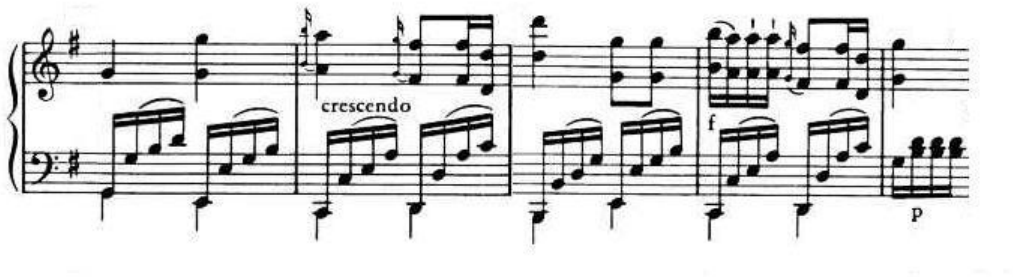
> When the composer leaves the LEGATO, and STACCATO to the performer's taste; the best rule is, to adhere to the LEGATO; reserving the STACCATO to give SPIRIT occasionally to certain passages and to set off the HIGHER BEAUTIES of the LEGATO.[13]

At least for Clementi, legato was still implied, even in the absence of a slur.

This tendency toward longer, *cantabile* lines is also illustrated by the frequent casting of legato melodies in octaves, observed numerous times in previous chapters in the music of Clementi, Dussek, and eventually Haydn. This texture exploits the rich treble of the English piano and reinforces the melody, thereby increasing the perception of a singing line. Of course, doubling a melody at the octave in this way is a standard texture in orchestral music, frequently applied to broad melodic lines, and this may also speak to a degree of orchestral thinking inspired by the tonal possibilities of the English piano. Significantly, melodies presented in octaves are rarely encountered in piano music of the Viennese school until Beethoven's first published sonatas.[14] The reasons for this are not difficult to deduce; the texture of such writing is by nature thick, as accompanying patterns and the bass line must both be negotiated by the left hand, and the increased resonance of the melody interferes with the highly-detailed levels of nuance and articulation that are typical of melodies in the Viennese style. Both of these factors would be antithetical to an aesthetic that placed such a premium on the principle of clarity. It is interesting to observe how these issues are negotiated in the one of the few examples of legato melodic octaves in Mozart, the striking conclusion of the *Andante con espressione* from his Sonata in G, KV 311. Mozart avoids density in the left hand by spreading the accompanying

[12] Ibid, 78-79.
[13] Muzio Clementi, *Introduction to the Art of Playing the Pianoforte* (London, 1801), 9.
[14] See Chapter 3, pp. 66-67.

pattern over nearly two octaves and separating the bass line from the rest of the pattern by a distance of an octave, which has the added effect of doubling the bass in octaves against those of the melody.



Example 5.3: Mozart, Sonata in G, KV 311, II, mm. 86-90
From *Mozart: Klaviersonaten*, vol. 1, ed. Wolfgang Plath and Wolfgang Rehm.
Copyright Neue Mozart Ausgabe, Salzburg, 1986.

This shift in the preference for legato and long, singing lines over short and concisely articulated phrases, as seen through changes in the language of the slur and the way melodies were conceived at the piano, continued through the Classical period and can be regarded as one of the most significant developments in the keyboard style and performance practice of the time. The legato, *cantabile* touch became the norm for the pianists and composers of the Romantic period, illustrating the degree to which the English style was more progressive than the Viennese style, and consequently exercised a greater impact on the Romantics.

Another characteristic of the English piano style, which is undoubtedly a result of the English instrument's sturdy construction and fuller sound, is a 'grander' and more extravagant approach to keyboard writing. Austro-German writing, guided by its principles of clarity and articulation, moved beyond *galant* keyboard textures but retained many features of that style until later in the Classical period: textures rarely exceed three or four voices, melodies almost always appear in the soprano, and the extreme ends of the keyboard are also generally avoided except as a special effect.

English pianists, on the other hand, developed a rather different, more extroverted keyboard style that, by the 1790s, had significantly moved away from the idioms of the *galant* keyboard style. The music of this period revels in densely-packed chords and thick accompanying patterns, seen even in the earliest Paris sonatas of Dussek. The extreme ends of the keyboard are regularly explored, often at the same time, to such an extent that the instrument was forced to expand at both ends during the 1790s.

Perhaps nowhere is the grandeur of the English style more vividly illustrated than in the juxtaposition of Clementi's Op. 25 No. 4 with Mozart's KV 576, previously compared at the end of Chapter 3. The first movement of the Clementi sonata closes with rapidly-undulating double-notes in the right hand over dense left hand chords, and ends with the two hands at opposite ends of the keyboard, all of it in a grand *messa di voce* dynamic effect (Ex. 3.12).[15] In contrast, Mozart's final sonata, particularly in the first two movements, employs much thinner textures with a great deal of contrapuntal interest and keeps the hands in relative proximity to each other. While it is obviously not music intended for the harpsichord, it is written in a keyboard style informed by the possibilities and characteristics of that instrument. However, the active accompanying patterns, rapid shifts of texture, and colour effects of Clementi's Op. 25 No. 4 are entirely unsuited to the harpsichord, calculated specifically for the tonal resources of the piano.

This 'grand' element of the English style often manifests itself as brilliant virtuoso writing, in the form of sweeping scales, passages in various consecutive intervals, and so on. Perhaps the origin of this kind of writing may be found in Clementi's earliest works; it will be recalled that his Opus 2 sonatas achieved a great deal of notoriety for their hair-raising cascades of octaves and thirds. Clementi's

[15] p. 79.

keyboard style may have become less explicitly virtuosic after his Continental compositions of the 1780s, but the dramatic potential in this kind of writing must have been obvious to most keyboardists and composers, particularly when transferred to the resonant English piano.

Examples of this kind of writing can surely be found in Viennese piano music of the era, particularly cadenzas and free-form works, but the signal difference between the English and Viennese use of such devices is that they are an integrated element of the English language, even in more formal pieces. From a purely technical point of view, a solid virtuoso technique is requisite to approach many of the sonatas of Clementi and Dussek, placing them firmly beyond the grasp of the amateur; the same cannot be said of most of the sonatas of Mozart and Haydn, which make far less taxing physical demands of the player. The dramatic change that may be observed in Haydn's piano writing, in both the trios and sonatas of his second visit to London, demonstrates his assimilation of the virtuoso element in the English keyboard style. Extremes of range, bridged by sweeping scales, are explored in Example 4.11, and the reliance on consecutive thirds as a basic texture is observed in Example 4.12.[16] Interestingly, most of Beethoven's sonatas are closer to those of Clementi and Dussek than of Mozart and Haydn in terms of their technical demands, possibly a result of his familiarity with the English style, whose influence upon him is examined in further detail below.

English pianists were also generally more advanced than their Continental colleagues in the use of pedals. In Chapter 1, it was observed that Americus Backers' 1770 prototype of the 'English grand' had both an *una corda* and damper pedal on the left and right legs, respectively, of the piano, a design and disposition which was

[16] pp. 105 and 106, respectively.

either remarkably forward-looking or so eminently sensible that the only change that has been made to it in over two hundred years is the relocation of the pedals to a central lyre when the expansion of the keyboard made it impractical to place the pedals on the legs. While devices for lifting the dampers, operated either by a hand stop or knee lever, were well-known throughout Europe in the eighteenth century, the use of pedals to lift the dampers and shift to *una corda* seems to have been widely welcomed by players of the English piano, as they were a standard feature of grands by the 1780s.[17]

It is believed that the first indications for use of the damper pedal were written by Daniel Steibelt, a pianist of German origin, in his *Mélange d'airs et chansons*, Op. 10, published c. 1793. As Steibelt was living in Paris at the time, the pianos he would have played were either English imports or French instruments based on English models, and his early indications give evidence of this: 'prennez la pédale', 'relachez', or, in an instruction that seems to prefigure a common indication of the French Impressionists of a hundred years later, 'les deux pédales ensemble'.[18] Obviously, such terms would not have been used if Steibelt had been writing at an instrument on which these devices were operated with hand stops or knee levers.

Later in the 1790s, Steibelt and Dussek were both in London and made increasing use of pedal indications for special effects, eventually adopting the usual *Ped.* and * signs in their scores. According to the pianist Friedrich Kalkbrenner, the pedal was used extensively by Field, Cramer, and Dussek; Kalkbrenner even claimed that Dussek 'kept the dampers almost continually raised when he played in public.'[19] While Clementi's use of the pedal was more conservative in effect, he frequently

[17] Kenneth Mobbs, 'Stops and other special effects on the early piano', *Early Music* xii (1984), 471-472.
[18] David Rowland, 'Early pianoforte pedalling', *Early Music* xiii (1985), 6-7 passim.
[19] Friedrich Kalkbrenner, *A New Method of Studying the Piano-forte* (London, 1837), 9.

added pedal markings in later editions of his own compositions. In the *Oeuvres complettes* series of Clementi's music begun by Breitkopf & Härtel in 1804, over half of the piano music that Clementi revised himself has pedaling added, usually in passages involving broken chords or arpeggiated accompanying figures. Occasionally, a pedal marking takes the place of a slur, illustrating how, even for the relatively conservative Clementi, the pedal was increasingly assuming a role in legato playing, which previously had been solely the responsibility of the fingers.[20]

By contrast, a very different state of affairs existed on the Continent. The *una corda* mechanism was not available on Viennese-style instruments until after 1800 (see below). Attitudes toward the damper pedal were far more conservative, and its use even seems to have been regarded with a degree of suspicion in certain circles. A German review of Milchmeyer's treatise *Die wahre Art das Pianoforte zu spielen* condemned it for enthusiastically devoting an entire chapter to the use of the pedals.[21] Kalkbrenner reported in his 1831 treatise *Méthode pour Apprendre le Piano* that 'The Germans know virtually nothing of the use of the pedals.'[22] As a product of French and English training, Kalkbrenner had a vested interest in exaggerating here, as of course there is plenty of evidence for widespread use of the pedal by Austro-German pianists, particularly by the 1820s. Nevertheless, as late as 1829, Johann Nepomuk Hummel expressed some startlingly conservative views of the role of the pedals.

> … a truly great Artist has no occasion for Pedals to work upon his audience by expression and power… Neither Mozart, nor Clementi, required these helps to obtain the highly-deserved reputation of the greatest, and most expressive performers of their day. A demonstration that, without having recourse to such worthless means, a player may arrive at the most honorable rank.[23]

[20] David Rowland, *A History of Pianoforte Pedalling* (Cambridge, 1993), 80.
[21] Rowland, 'Early pianoforte pedalling', 15.
[22] Friedrich Kalkbrenner, *Méthode pour Apprendre le Piano à l'Aide du Guide-Mains* (Paris, 1831), 10. 'On ne connait presque pas l'usage des pédales en Allemagne.' Translation by the present author.
[23] Johann Nepomuk Hummel, *Art of Playing the Piano Forte*, Part 3 (London, 1829), 62.

Of course, this is patently untrue, as Hummel was certainly aware. Clementi used the pedal, and plenty of it, as has been observed. The music of Hummel also makes use of pedal markings, albeit sparingly, and the above quote from his treatise is followed by a section on intelligent and tasteful use of the pedals. The fact that Hummel could still express such an extreme view in 1829 demonstrates not only his conservative disposition but also a concern for the abiding, distinctly Viennese ideal of clarity. Nevertheless, it is amusing to read Kalkbrenner and Hummel, as representatives of two different schools, both making wildly exaggerated claims about the other's use – or lack thereof – of the damper pedal.

Impact on the Viennese school

The pianists of the English school were among the most widely-travelled musicians of the time. As so few of them were actually English, they had to travel some distance in the first place just to find themselves in London, but few of them subsequently limited their musical activities to Britain. Clementi made two trips to the Continent in the 1780s, and then spent most of the first decade of the nineteenth century abroad. His pupil John Field accompanied him on this later tour, parting company with him in Russia and remaining there, where Steibelt also spent the latter part of his life. After leaving England in 1799, Dussek spent his brief remaining years in Germany, Prussia, and France. Given such wide travels by pianists of the English school, it was inevitable that the English style would be disseminated abroad, and it made a considerable impact upon the Viennese school, giving rise to many of the developments in that particular school of piano-playing late in the Classical period.

The travels of Continental musicians played a part in this interaction as well. Hummel, Beethoven's chief rival amongst Viennese pianists, had toured in England during the early 1790s as a child prodigy, initiating a lifelong relationship with the

English piano school. He appeared in concerts in London with Haydn and Cramer, and judging from his music, his lessons with Clementi during this time had a greater effect on him than his earlier work with Mozart in Vienna.[24] Although Hummel preferred the Viennese piano (see below) and was clearly an exponent of that style of playing, his early contact with music of the English pianoforte school enriched his own style, both as a pianist and as a composer for the piano. Harold Truscott has observed that Hummel's first piano sonata, Op. 2 No. 3, written and first published in London, has too many similarities of texture and technical devices with Dussek's Op. 9 No. 2 to be coincidental. Hummel's sonata is a conscious, if adolescent, attempt to imitate the English style before finding his own voice later in life.[25] Yet even in maturity, so many of the trademarks of Hummel's distinctive style – flamboyant technical display, densely-voiced bass chords, and ornamental fioritura – were clearly appropriated from the English style.

While English pianists and their manner of playing had an impact on the Continent, English pianos also influenced piano building abroad. English keyboard instruments were aggressively exported and marketed on the Continent throughout the eighteenth century, even going back to the time of Shudi and his harpsichords. In France, piano construction started more slowly, due to the continued preference for the harpsichord in that country and the later disruptions of the Revolution.[26] Most of the pianos that were available in France were English imports, and when the French began building pianos in earnest, they built instruments modeled on the English piano.[27]

[24] Harold Truscott, preface to *J.N. Hummel: Complete Piano Sonatas* (London, 1975), ii.
[25] Ibid., iii.
[26] See Chapter 4, pp. 81-83.
[27] David Rowland, 'Pianos and pianists c. 1770 – c. 1825', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Piano*, ed. David Rowland (Cambridge, 1998), 20-21.

When Haydn returned to Vienna in 1795 from his last trip to England, he brought with him a Longman & Broderip piano, setting off a process of dramatic changes to the Viennese piano. Sometime in the late 1790s, the young Beethoven had the opportunity to play Haydn's Longman & Broderip, and he was captivated by two features that were unavailable on Viennese pianos of the time: the 'additional keys' going up to c4 and the *una corda* mechanism.[28] He also would have found these on the piano that Erard sent to Haydn in 1801,[29] but he had to wait a number of years before these features would be available on Viennese instruments. In a letter of November 1802 to the Baron Nikolaus Zmeskall von Domanovecz, Beethoven expressed impatience with Anton Walter's progress in incorporating these English features, but also demonstrated a clear preference for Walter's instruments. He asked the baron to convey to Walter his desire to buy one of the maker's pianos, 'on the condition that it be made of mahogany, and I also want to have the *una corda* pedal.'[30] In 1803, however, Beethoven's wait came to an end when he received a piano from Erard, which was equipped with both the expanded treble and the *una corda*. The newly-available notes were immediately incorporated into his third Concerto in c minor, Op. 37.[31] Clementi and Dussek, of course, had first made use of these notes some ten years prior.

Another aspect of English pianos that was admired by Viennese pianists was their greater volume and power of projection, when compared with the lighter sonority of the Viennese instrument. As English pianos became increasingly known

[28] H.C. Robbins Landon, *Haydn: Life and Works*, vol. 3 'Haydn in England, 1791-1795' (London, 1976), 416.
[29] Ibid., 415.
[30] *Beethovens Sämtliche Briefe,: Kritische Ausgabe mit Erläuterungen*, ed. A.C. Kalischer (Berlin, 1907), 105. '…unter der Bedingung daß es von *Mahagoni* sey, und den Zug mit einer Saite will ich auch dabey haben…' Translation by the present author. Emily Anderson's *Letters of Beethoven*, quoted elsewhere, curiously translates 'den Zug mit einer Saite' as 'the tension with one string', obscuring the meaning and significance of Beethoven's request. The German word 'Zug' in this context obviously refers to a stop or pedal.
[31] Landon, 414.

in Germany and Austria after 1800, many Viennese makers began to adopt elements of English piano design or, when this was not possible, adapt their pianos in the quest for greater resonance. H.C. Robbins Landon's *Haydn: Chronicle and Works* quotes a letter of 5 June 1802 by a F.S. Silverstolpe, just five months before Beethoven's letter to Zmeskall, describing a mechanism in a Walter piano that seems to be a sort of 'reverse' *una corda*, in that the knee lever, when activated, shifted the action such that it played on three strings, rather than the usual two, thereby increasing the sound.[32] With Walter experimenting with the opposite of an *una corda* mechanism, it is little wonder that Beethoven was so impatient in his request.

Walter's 'reverse *una corda*' is significant not only because it demonstrates that he had incorporated a shifting mechanism into the action; it also establishes that he had built a piano with trichord stringing, in the English manner, and this soon became normal on Viennese pianos. In the 1820s, Conrad Graf actually went a step further and introduced quadruple stringing from the tenor through the upper end of the piano. This was an innovation of Graf's and seems never to have been attempted by any other piano maker. Beethoven's Graf of 1824, now at the Beethoven-Haus in Bonn, is one of the very few of Graf's surviving quadruple-strung pianos. The Streicher firm, possibly the most conservative in Vienna, also began making changes after 1805, incorporating backchecks into their actions, increasing the size of their hammers, and expanding the part of the piano that was triple-strung.[33]

The basic narrative of these developments in the evolution of the piano may be gleaned from various histories of the instrument in the extant literature. However, where the present study differs is in its presentation and interpretation of that history as a process of Viennese pianos 'catching up' to their more advanced English cousins.

[32] Ibid., 415.
[33] Tilman Skowroneck, 'Beethoven's Erard piano: its influence on his compositions and on Viennese fortepiano building', *Early Music* xxx (2002), 527.

This is not how the evolution of the piano in the Classical period is usually depicted, but when the totality of the evidence is considered, this interpretation seems unavoidable. After Stein's development of the Viennese action c. 1770,[34] the Viennese piano experienced no significant changes for about 30 years, apart from a few exceptional attempts to expand the range of the treble beyond f3. It is no coincidence that Viennese builders, led initially by Anton Walter, were suddenly compelled to make such extraordinary changes to an instrument that had remained fixed for roughly thirty years at precisely the same time that English pianos (or English-style pianos, in the case of Erard) were arriving at the homes of the most prominent composers in Vienna. These changes did not occur in a sort of Austro-German vacuum, as an inevitable process of change in the Viennese piano, nor were they born solely out of Beethoven's presumed frustrations with the instruments of his day.[35] Rather, these changes constitute a reaction to the English piano, whose features stimulated Viennese piano builders and were demanded by Viennese pianists who became familiar with them. Notably, the same cannot be said of the reverse: that English pianos ever adopted features of the Viennese instrument.

Viennese aesthetic and Beethoven *in medio*

Viennese pianists and piano builders, though, were not enamoured of every aspect of the English piano, and some important aesthetic differences persisted between the two schools of playing. The English action, possibly the most distinguishing characteristic of the instrument, was not adopted by German and Austrian builders until Erard's double escapement, itself derived from the English action, became virtually ubiquitous late in the nineteenth century. Even so, many Austrian and Bavarian builders continued to use the Viennese action, with minor

[34] Cole, 189-90.
[35] This latter assertion is particularly disputed by Skowroneck in 'Beethoven's Erard piano'.

alterations, until World War I. In general, while Viennese pianists in the Classical period admired the volume and resonance of the English piano, they found the English action overly heavy and lacking in sensitivity, when compared to the Viennese *Prellmechanik*.

In 1804, Gottfried Härtel, of the Breitkopf & Härtel publishing firm, hosted Clementi in Leipzig for two months. Härtel wrote to Andreas Streicher that Clementi had chosen the strongest and heaviest pianos available for his own use, and that he wished Viennese pianos would adopt this kind of touch. Streicher was unconvinced, and he wrote to Härtel that increasing the key dip on Viennese pianos would render the instrument unplayable for ninety per cent of the amateur pianists in Austria.[36]

Hummel, again writing in his *Art of Playing the Piano Forte*, admired not only the resonance of the English piano but also the durability of its action. Nevertheless, this enthusiasm was tempered by objections to its heaviness and insensitivity, causing him ultimately to prefer the Viennese action.

> To the English construction however, we must not refuse the praises due on the score of its durability and fullness of tone. Nevertheless this instrument does not admit of the same facility of execution as the German; the touch is much heavier, the keys sink much deeper, and, consequently, the return of the hammer upon the repetition of a note, cannot take place so quickly.[37]

Even Beethoven – who was by no means a 'light player', to judge from contemporary accounts of his performances and the athletic writing in his earliest piano music – had difficulties with the English action. After initial enthusiasm with his Erard, he told Streicher that he found the piano 'incurably heavy' and had it sent away (possibly to Streicher) to have radical alterations made to the action which resulted in a lighter touch and a reduced key dip.[38] This interesting anecdote contradicts the common notion, perhaps born out of a simplistic presumption that

[36] van Oort, 75.
[37] Hummel, 64.
[38] Skowroneck, 523-25, passim.

Beethoven preferred all things loud and heavy, that he favoured English-style pianos or, by extension, would have preferred the modern piano. Though encountered less often now, this view is still found in recent literature, where much like the 'Twelve Apostles' story,[39] it has been repeated so often that it has become the commonly accepted wisdom.

Stewart Gordon's *A History of Keyboard Literature,* a standard textbook in the United States, states that Beethoven's music

> … was suited to the piano of the nineteenth century rather than the instrument Beethoven worked with for most of his productive years. The piano that John Broadwood shipped to him in 1818 [*sic*] went a considerable way toward meeting the composer's demands…[40]

In Derek Melville's essay for *The Beethoven Companion,* one may read that, 'There seems little doubt that Beethoven preferred the Broadwood to all his other pianos.'[41] A 1980 review of the first installment of fortepianist Malcolm Binns' Beethoven sonata cycle notes that the Op. 10 Sonatas were recorded on an 'early Broadwood (the manufacturer increasingly favoured by the composer in maturity)'.[42] Apart from the assumption in the review, Binns' choice of instrument is curious, as Op. 10 was written long before Beethoven ever encountered a Broadwood and constitutes a retroactive application of Beethoven's presumed preference. More recently, in 1989-90 Melvyn Tan recorded a complete cycle of Beethoven concerti with Roger Norrington and the London Classical Players, interestingly using the same Broadwood piano for all five works. Given how much the piano changed between

[39] See Chapter 1, pp. 18-20.
[40] Stewart Gordon, *A History of Keyboard Literature: Music for the Piano and Its Forerunners* (New York, 1996), 143-44. Thomas Broadwood was actually in charge of the firm by 1817, when the piano was shipped to Beethoven.
[41] Derek Melville, 'Beethoven's pianos' in *The Beethoven Companion*, ed. Denis Arnold and Nigel Fortune (London, 1970), 66.
[42] R.O.C., *Gramophone* lviii (1980), 517.

Beethoven's first and last piano concerti, the implication of Tan's decision to use the same instrument in all five works is surely obvious.

Carrying this assumed preference a step further, it is often asserted that Beethoven would have preferred the modern instrument. While the view that Beethoven may have preferred the modern piano is certainly worthy of debate, this opinion is frequently expressed without any supporting evidence to justify the claim. In an essay for the *Cambridge Studies in Performance Practice* series, the English pianist Martin Hughes begins a discussion of Beethoven's pianos with the declaration, 'Delighted with the modern piano though he would have been…'[43] The American pianist Robert Taub is particularly biased:

> Studying the pianofortes available to Beethoven and trying them in rehearsal… I begin to understand Beethoven's frustrations with his pianofortes and bear these in mind as I work with the fuller capabilities of today's instruments.[44]

Taub is undoubtedly entitled to his opinion, but such a statement disregards the many positive remarks Beethoven made about the pianos of his day, and it incorrectly assumes that there is unanimous agreement that the modern piano is an objectively superior instrument.

William Newman seems to be the first to have dispelled the Broadwood myth; his book *Beethoven on Beethoven* contains a comprehensive discussion of Beethoven's preference for the Viennese instrument, particularly those of Streicher.[45] Yet even Newman's thinking seems to be influenced by a certain degree of bias in favour of the modern instrument.

> Beethoven probably never saw or tried either of two chief innovations in piano construction during the first half of the 19th century, the half century that

[43] Martin Hughes, 'Beethoven's piano music: contemporary performance issues' in *Performing Beethoven*, ed. Robin Stowell, Cambridge Studies in Performance Practice (Cambridge, 1994), 232.
[44] Robert Taub, *Playing the Beethoven Piano Sonatas* (Portland, Ore., 2002), 92-93.
[45] William Newman, *Beethoven on Beethoven: Playing His Piano Music His Way* (New York, 1988), 49-55 passim.

> witnessed the virtual perfection of the piano as we now know it. There is every reason to believe that he would have welcomed both.[46]

Newman then specifies those two innovations as Erard's double escapement action and the cast-iron frame.

Is there, in fact, 'every reason to believe that he would have welcomed' such developments? With the exception of the problems posed by his deafness, many of Beethoven's 'frustrations' (as Taub puts it) with the pianos of his day, particularly heaviness of touch and excessive key dip, are encountered to an even greater degree in the modern instrument. An increased key dip is virtually guaranteed by Erard's double escapement; it was for this very reason that Chopin preferred the instruments of Pleyel. Despite the enthusiastic assumptions of adherents of the modern piano, it seems entirely possible that Beethoven would have rejected the modern piano outright, at least as far as its touch and action are concerned.

There is further reason to question the received wisdom that the Broadwood is the ideal instrument for Beethoven's music, and this is a simple matter of observation that the present author has not found in any other literature. The piano that Broadwood sent to Beethoven in 1817 had the usual compass for English pianos at that time, CC – c4. For several years prior, though, Beethoven had already been writing music that called on the extremes of the usual six-octave compass in Germany and Austria, FF – f4. Indeed, the last movement of his Sonata in E-flat, Op. 81a 'Das Lebewohl', written in January 1810, calls for notes above c4 several times, placing it beyond the range of the Broadwood. Similarly, the Sonatas Opp. 101 and 106 also require notes beyond the range of this piano. It would be presumptive to claim that the Broadwood is not the ideal instrument for Beethoven's music solely because of its limited tessitura, but the fact remains that Beethoven had already written major works

[46] Ibid., 62.

for which the Broadwood was simply inadequate. While there may have been aspects of the piano that genuinely pleased Beethoven (although given his deafness by 1817, even that is uncertain), it cannot have been the piano nonpareil for Beethoven that it is frequently made out to be.

The purpose of these observations is to demonstrate clearly that important aesthetic differences remained between the Viennese and English schools, even for a composer as totally influenced by the English school as Beethoven. Even so, he certainly had a lifelong interest in the English school that permeated and influenced his entire keyboard output. Beethoven owned nearly all of the Clementi sonatas, which he greatly admired and used regularly as teaching material.[47] He also taught from Clementi's treatise *Introduction to the Art of Playing on the Piano Forte*, holding it in the same esteem that he had for C.P.E. Bach's *Versuch*, which is rather odd considering how brief and perfunctory the Clementi treatise is. His letters of 1825-26 demonstrate that he was trying to obtain additional copies of Clementi's treatise, presumably for his students.[48] Beethoven also used Cramer's *Studio per il Pianoforte* as teaching material, having written annotations to some of the etudes for the use of his nephew Carl.[49]

Beethoven's familiarity with the English school must have begun at an early age. Many of the characteristics of his early keyboard writing that constitute such a marked departure from the prevailing Viennese style, as exemplified by Mozart and Haydn before his visits to England, have their precedent in the writing of Clementi and Dussek. A number of authors have observed the influence of the English school upon Beethoven, although each of them tends to focus on a different aspect of it.

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[47] Alexander Ringer 'Beethoven and the London pianoforte School', *Musical Quarterly* lvi (1970), 745.
[48] Leon Plantinga, *Clementi: His Life and Music* (London, 1977), 167.
[49] Jerald Graue, 'Cramer, Johann (John) Baptist' in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., ed. Stanley Sadie, vol. 6, 641.

Beethoven's fondness for densely-voiced chords, thick textures, blazing passages in broken octaves, exploration of extreme registers, and so on are all characteristics that have been identified as elements of the English style, but Leon Plantinga argues that the use of bravura piano writing seems to be the least profound extent of this influence. 'It was evidently the dramatic, harmonically adventurous Clementi sonatas of the 1780s and 1790s that particularly attracted Beethoven'.[50] Plantinga also notes the growing interest in counterpoint shared by Beethoven and Clementi late in their careers.

Harold Truscott also observed the influence of the English school on Beethoven, in an article focused on Beethoven's earliest piano music, asserting that 'if we are to understand the origins of Beethoven's mature piano style it is necessary to know a fair amount of Clementi's music, as well as that of another composer, Dussek.'[51] He points out numerous correlations between several early Beethoven piano works and analogous examples in the works of Clementi and Dussek, strongly suggesting Beethoven's familiarity with – and in a few cases, literal imitation of – the earlier English-style works, not only through the use of similar motives and textures, but even in the treatment of sonata-allegro form. Alexander Ringer's 'Beethoven and the London Pianoforte School' is less concerned with specific musical examples, preferring an examination of broader connections between Beethoven and the English school such as sociological and cultural phenomena. Even so, Ringer points out several examples of Beethoven imitating Dussek, particularly the uncanny resemblance of the former's Sonata Op. 81a 'Das Lebewohl' with the latter's Sonata

[50] Plantinga, 312.
[51] Harold Truscott, 'The Piano Music I', in *The Beethoven Reader*, ed. Denis Arnold and Nigel Fortune (New York, 1971), 69-70.

Op. 44 'The Farewell' in their shared tonality, subject matter, and the textures of their slow movements.[52] The Dussek sonata, however, pre-dates Beethoven's by ten years.

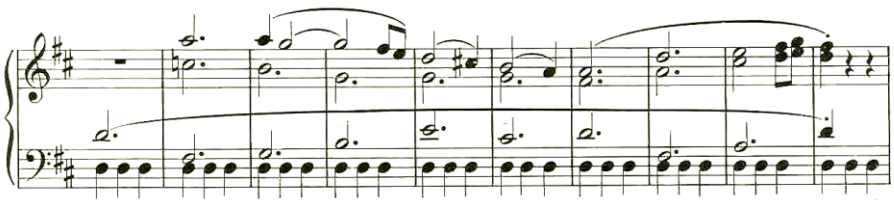
As convincing as Truscott and Ringer are in arguing for the influence of Dussek upon Beethoven – particularly in the musical links identified by Truscott – the evidence remains circumstantial. There does not seem to be any direct evidence or testimony that Beethoven owned Dussek's piano music or used it as teaching material, as there is in the case of the music of Clementi and Cramer, nor does Dussek's name appear in Beethoven's letters. That being said, it is virtually impossible that Beethoven was not at least familiar with Dussek's music, and not peripherally through his knowledge of other English-school composers. After Dussek fled from London in 1799, the next few years found him in Bohemia and Prussia, in relative proximity to Vienna, during which time he continued to perform, compose and publish, all to great critical acclaim. Also, as Beethoven had access to Haydn's Longman & Broderip piano, he was clearly still in contact with the elder composer and likely aware of his activities in London, which included a close relationship with Dussek. Beethoven would certainly have heard about Dussek's playing and had the opportunity to become familiar with his music. Dussek's influence upon Beethoven can probably thus be taken for granted, but there is room for further exploration of the historical evidence.

Beethoven's adoption of legato as a basic touch, another hallmark of the English style, can certainly be traced to its influence. His adherence to the Clementi treatise, whose advice on legato is quoted above, makes sense in this regard. Czerny also recalled that Beethoven insisted on legato playing in his teaching.[53] In a fascinating passage from his treatise *Complete Theoretical and Practical Piano Forte*

[52] Ringer, 752-54.
[53] Komlós, 139.

School, Op. 500, he recalled Beethoven's instruction for the execution of a group of four semiquavers. 'To obtain the strictest legato, the finger must not be lifted off the first note of each group until the fourth note is to be struck.'[54] Is such an exaggerated *legatissimo* touch a conscious attempt to imitate the haze of English dampers on a Viennese piano?

Although Beethoven's slurring and phrasing practices remained grounded in the older Viennese style throughout his life, his adoption of the legato style began to manifest itself in a very English use of long slurs quite early in his piano writing. Like many other elements of English influence on his piano writing, this can be observed very early in his output, even within Op. 2. Later works illustrate how Beethoven combined both longer, English-style slurs and shorter Viennese ones. In the opening of the first movement of the Sonata Op. 28, the immediate repetition of the first phrase has a ten-bar slur over the tenor countermelody, while the upper voices are slurred in the more conventional Viennese manner, indicating smaller degrees of nuance within the larger phrase.



Example 5.4: Beethoven: Sonata Op. 28, II, mm. 11-20
From *Beethoven: Klaviersonaten*, ed. Bertha Antonio Walter.
Copyright G. Henle, Munich, 1980.

In this practice, Beethoven differed from the rest of his Austrian and German contemporaries, at least initially. This was not simply an indicator of changing times, though; while a greater use of legato became common in Viennese Classicism, some

[54] Quoted in Reginald Gerig, *Famous Pianists & Their Technique* (London, 1976), 91.

degree of detachment was still implied in the absence of a slur. This is indicated by the profusion of *tenuto* markings that continued to appear in the music of Hummel and Weber well into the nineteenth century. According to Czerny, Beethoven criticised the playing of Mozart for its detached style, which continued to be practised by Mozart's students.[55]

[55] Gerig, 90.

Conclusion

Despite the fact that the English Classical piano style is not dominated by a single personality who defined the style, there is clearly a coherent and consistent body of characteristics to be observed in the music of the English pianoforte school that distinguishes it from the more well-known Viennese style during the Classical period. Many elements of the style, such as a tendency for thicker textures and the preoccupation with *cantabile* as the 'default' articulation, developed as a response to the qualities of the English piano. Even if most of the principal exponents of the style were not English, the term 'English pianoforte school' is nevertheless fitting, as it affirms the central role of the instrument in determining the style.

Although the Viennese school maintained many of its aesthetic principles, its interactions with the English school led to the eventual adoption of many of its stylistic traits. Beethoven's life-long connection to the music of the English pianoforte school made him a central figure in this interaction, and its influence upon his music can be observed in some of his most striking works for piano, many of which have clear antecedents in the works of Clementi and Dussek. Even the Viennese piano did not escape this interaction. In the late 1790s and the first years of the nineteenth century, the arrival of several English and English-style pianos in Austria spurred Viennese piano builders to make fundamental changes to their

instruments in order to adopt certain features of English pianos, most notably the *una corda* device and the gradual expansions of compass. The Viennese continued this process and eventually arrived at an instrument that could compete with English pianos for power and colour, but retained distinct qualities like the Viennese action and the Continental six-octave compass.[1] Nevertheless, these changes were stimulated through contact with the English instrument and seem to have been unavoidable. The influence of the English pianoforte school was clearly pervasive, effecting changes in both Viennese piano style and the instrument itself.

The English Classical piano style was the result of a process of developing a new way of writing for the keyboard, as the harpsichord and its attendant idioms were gradually overtaken by the piano. The Vienna and London schools were separated in this by their respective instruments, which necessarily affected the course of that development. The maturation of a recognisably English piano style occurred over a surprisingly short period of time, as seen in the stylistic leaps of Clementi's Continental works in the early 1780s. Even so, the bravura spirit of English Classicism's grander, more exuberant manner can be traced to the earliest keyboard works of Clementi and the dominant style of the 1770s, in which the resonance and colour of the English harpsichord fostered a particular manner of keyboard writing in which the seeds of the later style can be detected.

The English style is also characterised by various unexpected deviations from expected Classical structures. In the case of the early Classical concerti by J.C. Bach, Schroeter and others, this is indicative of an evolving style, seeking to adapt existing Baroque forms to serve a new dramatic conception. With regard to apparent aberrations of form in English music later in the period, though, it has been noted that

[1] See Chapter 4, pp. 95-97 for a discussion on the difference between the English and Continental six-octave compasses.

the received definitions of these forms are almost exclusively based on Viennese music, so it is inevitable that non-Viennese music will fail to conform to these definitions. It can be shown that many of these unexpected approaches to form follow their own, distinctive logic, resulting in dramatically coherent structures, while still fulfilling the conventional harmonic and thematic functions of Classical forms. Many of the more unusual works clearly served as models for the innovations of later composers – including Beethoven's deviations from sonata form or Schubert's leisurely discursive movements, to say nothing of later developments in the Romantic period – thus placing their works in a larger perspective of Classicism and possibly even eroding the perception of originality that is typically attributed to them. A knowledge of the English style must lead to the realisation that the common understanding of Classicism is biased and incomplete. In the case of alleged 'deviations' from Classical form in the English style, the recognition of this incompleteness may force, as implied by Rohan Stewart-MacDonald, an expansion and rewriting of the definition of sonata form.[2]

It is hoped that the preceding pages have demonstrated that the English Classical piano repertoire is a fascinating body of work that is worthy of study, not just as a progressive influence on Viennese Classicism and the first generation of Romantics, but on its own merits. This study has considered a diverse range of music, from the lighter, early Classical works of J.C. Bach and Schroeter to the dramatic and expressive sonatas of Clementi and Dussek. For the sake of focus and brevity, a great deal of music has been ignored, including the contributions of Cramer, Field and their generation, and there is obviously ample room for a great deal more research and exploration of this repertoire. There are many treasures to be mined from the English

[2] Rohan Stewart-MacDonald, *New Perspectives on the Keyboard Sonatas of Muzio Clementi* (Bologna, 2006), 382.

Classical literature that surely deserve a place in both the teaching and performing repertoire of the piano, and they have languished too long under a blind spot of unwarranted obscurity.

Appendix

Programme and remarks of final assessed recital,

given 18 June 2010 at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London

Clementi v. Mozart

A reconstruction of the 1781 contest

Introductory remarks

Toccata in B-flat, Op. 11 — Muzio Clementi (1752-1832)

Sonata in B-flat, Op. 24 No. 2

I. Allegro con brio
II. Andante
III. Rondo. Allegro assai

Modulierendes Präludium, KV 624 — Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Variations on 'Salve tu, Domine', KV 398

Canzona in d minor, 'La Partenza' — Giovanni Paisiello (1740-1816)

Prelude and Rondo in F

Fantasia on themes by Paisiello — Andrew Brownell (b. 1978)

Introductory remarks

The programme that you're about to hear is an attempted reconstruction of the famous contest between Clementi and Mozart of Christmas Eve, 1781 at the court of Joseph II in Vienna. I'd like to speak briefly, albeit substantively, about the historical circumstances of the contest, the research involved, and how I decided upon the programme that you see before you this morning.

In the mid-1770s, Muzio Clementi was released from his indentured servitude to Peter Beckford, and he eventually made his way from Beckford's estate in Dorset to London, where he conducted opera at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket. By the end of the decade, Clementi was building a reputation as a solo performer, buoyed by the sensational publication of his Op. 2 keyboard sonatas, which contained passages of stunning technical difficulty, even by modern standards. In 1780 he embarked on an extended tour of the Continent which brought him to Vienna in December 1781. Clementi discovered that Paul, Grand Duke of Russia and soon to be the ill-fated Czar Paul I, and his wife were also visiting Vienna at the time as guests of Emperor Joseph II, and it is known that Clementi was eager to meet the Grand Duchess Maria Feodorovna, possibly in the hopes of securing a court job in St. Petersburg. So when Clementi received an invitation to court on Christmas Eve, he naturally accepted and, in the words of the American musicologist Leon Plantinga,

> … unwittingly became a participant in a pianoforte competition staged by the Emperor Joseph II for the entertainment of his Russian guests; Clementi's opponent was a local keyboard player of note, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

What followed, of course, is the stuff of legend. Contests of this sort were rather more like exhibitions, and any 'result', as such, would have been formed at most in individual opinion. Indeed, it was only in private that the Emperor confided to Carl von Dittersdorf that while he thought Clementi's playing to be art, he found Mozart's playing to be art and taste combined.

Mozart, on the other hand, famously wrote for years after the event, heaping scorn and condemnation both on Clementi's playing and composition. In a letter of 7 June 1783 to his father and sister, Mozart wrote,

> Clementi is a *ciarlatano*, like all Italians. He writes *Presto* over a sonata or even *Prestissimo* and *Alla breve*, and plays it himself *Allegro* in 4/4 time. I know this is the case, for I have heard him do so. What he really does well are his passages in thirds; but he sweated over them day and night in London. Apart from this, he can do nothing, absolutely nothing, for he has not the slightest expression or taste, still less, feeling.

Mozart's protests can probably be disregarded as professional jealousy; he had only recently arrived in Vienna and was keen to develop his reputation as a keyboard player, and he probably felt threatened by Clementi's impressive technical arsenal. But what of the Emperor's opinion? It is very likely that Clementi's exuberant virtuosity, the likes of which had probably never been heard before in Vienna, struck some as slightly crude, hence the Emperor's remark about Mozart's greater taste.

Another significant factor that has rarely been mentioned in the literature is an issue of instruments. Clementi had been in Vienna for less than a week before accepting the invitation to court, and even if he had previously encountered Viennese pianos – with their shallow keydip and distinctive action – they would still have been a relatively new quantity to him, as the pianos *he* would have been accustomed to were those of the English variety, a rather different instrument. Even more significantly, though, it seems that at this early stage in his career, the 'father of the pianoforte' preferred the harpsichord. Surviving advertisements indicate that Clementi played the harpsichord at all but one of his concerts in London prior to 1780, and early in his Continental tour, Clementi asked Broadwood to ship a harpsichord to Paris for his concerts there. The sturdy, full-bodied English harpsichord was clearly Clementi's preferred instrument at the time. Without putting too much stock in Mozart's notoriously petty rants, it is worth considering if the 'atrocious chopping effect' that Mozart attributed to Clementi's playing was a result of his harpsichord technique being unsuccessfully transferred to the highly sensitive action of the Viennese piano.

What exactly was played at this contest? Mozart's letter to his father of 16 January 1782 gives a fairly detailed account of the proceedings, and according to him, Clementi began the contest by playing a prelude and a sonata. As luck would have it, Clementi conveniently corroborates this in an 1804 Breitkopf & Härtel edition of his works, in which the Sonata Op. 24 No. 2 and the Toccata Op. 11 are printed with the inscription, in slightly broken French, 'This Sonata, and the Toccata which follows it, was played by the composer before HIM Joseph II in 1781, Mozart being present.' The Toccata, as you will shortly hear, is packed with parallel 3rds and 6ths, and is also marked *Prestissimo* and *alla breve*. The Sonata Op. 24 No. 2 is technically less hair-raising, but late in life, Clementi recalled to a student that he chose it because its several fermatas provided him an opportunity to improvise. Indeed, the first movement ends exactly like a concerto, stopping on a I 6/4 chord that clearly requires a cadenza, before closing with a four-bar coda. Most of you will undoubtedly notice that the sonata begins with the same theme as the overture to Mozart's *Magic Flute*. This has been commented on by numerous musicologists, and I will not say anything further on the matter here.

Mozart's letter of January 1782 tells us that after this, he played a prelude, though he uses the German words 'ich präludierte' which imply that this may have been an improvisation. He then indicates that he played a set of variations. None of this is very specific, and given that variations were Mozart's preferred mode of improvisation, it is possible that this entire part of Mozart's performance was improvised. This has required a bit of creativity on my part in constructing this programme.

For Mozart's prelude, I have chosen an extremely obscure but fascinating work, the Modulierendes Präludium, KV 624, which is essentially a written-out improvisation that begins in one key and ends in another. Despite the late Köchel number, Mozart actually wrote this piece in 1778 in Salzburg as an exercise for his sister. Until a few years ago, this prelude had always been printed as two separate pieces, one of which modulated from F major to E minor, and the other which modulated from E minor to C major. However, recent analysis of the ink and the watermarks on the autograph by Christoph Wolff has demonstrated rather conclusively that the two sheets of manuscript, which somehow came to be preserved in separate locations, are actually

meant to be two parts of the same piece. The Neue Mozart Ausgabe subsequently reissued the work in 2005 as a single piece, and that is how you will hear it this morning.

I have chosen Mozart's Variations on Paisiello's 'Salve tu Domine', KV 398 to follow this. The relevance of the Paisiello connection will become clear very shortly, but I've also chosen this set of variations because it *originated* as an improvisation at a concert Mozart played in March 1783, just over a year after the contest with Clementi. This is not one of the more often-played variation sets of Mozart, but I think it shows a wealth of invention, and the numerous cadenzas in the work tie in nicely with the general theme of improvisation in this programme.

After this, Mozart tells us that the Grand Duchess Maria Feodorovna 'produced some sonatas by Paisiello (wretchedly written out in his own hand), of which I had to play the Allegros and Clementi the Andantes and Rondos. We then selected a theme from them and developed it on two pianofortes.' Giovanni Paisiello was one of the most popular opera composers of the age, and he happened to be Kapellmeister at the court in St. Petersburg, where he taught harpsichord to the Grand Duchess as one of his duties, so it is only natural that she had access to a manuscript of his keyboard music, though why she decided to take it with her to Vienna is anybody's guess.

The totality of Paisiello's surviving solo keyboard music by is in a manuscript held at the Nationalbibliothek in Vienna. Dated 1783 and dedicated to Maria Feodorovna, it is a compilation of simple, didactic keyboard music, mostly simple Andante rondos, and given the connection with the Grand Duchess, it seems very likely that whatever Mozart and Clementi were made to sight-read at the contest is contained in this collection. However, there is only one item in the collection called a sonata, and it contains but two movements, rather than the three-movement compositions that Mozart describes in his letter. It is possible that the Duchess produced sonatas by Paisiello that are now lost; it is also possible that Mozart used the term 'sonata' very loosely in his letter or was simply mistaken. Regardless, this collection of didactic pieces is Paisiello's only surviving solo keyboard music, so I have selected a few of the more interesting movements from the collection.

For the benefit of my examiners, who have the facsimile of the manuscript before them, I would like to mention that most of the movements in the Paisiello manuscript have obbligato parts for violin that contribute significantly to the musical content of these pieces. Given the didactic nature of their composition and the improvisatory aesthetic of performance in the late eighteenth century, I have taken the liberty – where it is musically desirable and expedient – of adding inner voices from the violin parts or altering the accompanying pattern in the keyboard part, in order to achieve a more musically satisfying result.

We now come to, for the purposes of this reconstruction, the most problematic stage of the contest in which, according to Mozart, he and Clementi chose a theme from the Paisiello movements and improvised on it at two pianos. Obviously, I am only one pianist, and I would never presume to pass off my meager skills of extemporisation as worthy or representative of an improvisation by Clementi or Mozart. I initially thought of playing other works by Mozart and Clementi based on Paisiello themes for this part of the programme, but it was suggested to me that it might be far more

interesting and faithful to the spirit of the contest to play a fantasia on themes from the Paisiello movements that I selected. I must confess that I've worked most of this out in advance, so it is not an extemporisation as such, but I have left several cadences and transitions unwritten, so there will be an element of improvisation. I have tried to be faithful to the language of the Classical style, there are a few places where I have attempted to explicitly imitate Clementi and Mozart, and I hope you will find the result at least mildly amusing.

This brings me to a few final observations about the aims of this programme. I cannot claim that what you are about to hear is what was heard on Christmas Eve 1781 at the court of Joseph II, nor is this meant to be a re-enactment of the contest; I am playing the whole programme, and I'm doing it on the modern piano. Furthermore, as I've explained, much of the information that we have about the contest is fragmentary and imprecise, much of the contest seems to have been improvised, and constructing this programme has required a certain amount of educated guesswork. So, even if this programme cannot re-create the contest between Clementi and Mozart with total accuracy, I hope it will at least give an *idea* of what was played on that occasion. If nothing else, this is an opportunity to hear unusual music, some of it magnificently obscure, and to gain a different perspective on what keyboardists in the late eighteenth century played and what was expected of them in public performance.

I would like to finish with some acknowledgements. I want to thank Dr. Michael Robinson, former head of music at Cardiff University and author of the Paisiello thematic catalogue, for his invaluable guidance. I also want to thank Jonathan Vaughn, head of music here at the Guildhall and Prof. Dennis Smalley of City University London for granting research travel allowances for my work at the Nationalbibliothek in Vienna.

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