Music and the Middle Class

William Weber

An **Ashgate** Book

Music and the Middle Class

To Linda Clark

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The Social Structure of Concert Life in London, Paris and Vienna between 1830 and 1848

WILLIAM WEBER

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General Editor's Series Preface

Music in nineteenth-century Britain has been studied as a topic of musicology for over two hundred years. It was explored widely in the nineteenth century itself, and in the twentieth century grew into research with strong methodological and theoretical import. Today, the topic has burgeoned into a broad, yet incisive, cultural study with critical potential for scholars in a wide range of disciplines. Indeed, it is largely because of its interdisciplinary qualities that music in nineteenth-century Britain has become such a prominent part of the modern musicological landscape.

This series aims to explore the wealth of music and musical culture of Britain in the long nineteenth century (*c.* 1780s–1920s). It does this by covering an extensive array of musicological topics, and situating them within the most up-to-date interpretative frameworks. All books provide relevant contextual background and detailed source investigations, as well as considerable bibliographical material of use for further study. Areas included in the series reflect its widely interdisciplinary aims, and although principally designed for musicologists, the series is also intended to be accessible to scholars working outside of music. Topics include criticism and aesthetics; musical genres; music and the church; music education; composers and performers; analysis; concert venues, promoters and organizations; the reception of foreign music in Britain; instrumental repertoire, manufacture and pedagogy; gender studies; and music in literature, poetry and letters.

Although the nineteenth century has often been viewed as a fallow period in British musical culture, it is clear from the vast extent of current scholarship that this view is entirely erroneous. Far from being a 'land without music', nineteenth-century Britain abounded with musical activity. All society was affected by it, and everyone in that society recognized its importance in some way or other. It remains for us today to trace the significance of music and musical culture in that period, and to bring it alive for scholars to study and interpret. This is the principle aim of the Music in Nineteenth-Century Britain series – to advance scholarship in the area and expand our understanding of its importance in the wider cultural context of the time.

Bennett Zon
University of Durham

General Editor's Foreword: Second Edition

At the beginning of his preface to the first edition of *Music and the Middle East* (London, 1975), William Weber writes: 'Troubled times have come to the classical-music world. Since the middle of the 1960s its exponents in both Europe and the United States have voiced increasing worry – sometimes virtual panic – that its public is dying, that its institutions are near collapse, and that it will soon cease to be the pinnacle of Western musical culture.' That did not happen, needless to say, even though some concert institutions are going through troubled times. That Beethoven's Ninth Symphony is featured so centrally in public festivals all around the world – always on New Year's Eve in Japan, and in cities on diverse continents when East Germany was liberated – suggests that classical music has continued to hold a prominent place within modern culture. Yet the present book shows how the very tradition of calling old or ageing music 'classical' was beginning in this very period, and was heralded by ideologies claiming that it would right the precipitous *moral decline* of musical culture generally. Indeed, claims of decline tell more about those making it than about what was in reality happening. At root in this work is the idea that we can understand the classical-music world better by examining the social fabrics within which it emerged. For Weber, the reasons for change in musical values lie not so much in the music alone as in the interaction of music and the society in which it is situated. As he says, this book 'concerns the people who went to concerts, the groups they came from, the taste publics they formed, and the huge new entertainment world they shaped. It is a social history.' In the same preface Weber also decries the absence of musicological interest in 'the social dimension of their field', and laments the canon-driven hegemony which excludes what he calls 'the mundane side of it all'.

As Weber shows in the second preface to his book, the social dimension – and many other related topics – now forms a significant component in our musicological understanding, and far from eschewing the broadly sociological and cultural, modern musicologists are embracing it with fervour. The clearest manifestation of this type of joined-up thinking is interdisciplinary studies, and there can be no doubt that their musicological origins lie in precisely the kind of work Weber

was advocating, and carrying out, in the 1970s. The second edition of *Music and the Middle Class* is testimony to this, in its longevity of method and the sheer breadth of its lasting vision. So where, according to Weber, the modern classical-music world of the 1970s may be declining, the modern musicological world of the twenty-first century is not. It has accepted Weber's call for change, and has evolved a more holistic understanding of music. Of course *Music and the Middle Class* is of similar value to social historians. As Weber says, it 'should alert historians to the wealth of insight which musical life can provide'. And indeed, as a template for intellectual change, *Music and the Middle Class* does just that, and continues to provide scholars of all disciplines with an opportunity to expand their own horizons and break down the barriers that have artificially isolated them.

Bennett Zon
University of Durham

Preface: Second Edition

It is both pleasing and unnerving to see one's first book reappear some twenty-five years after its publication. A lot has happened in both history and music history since that time, necessarily changing scholarly perspectives in many ways. Were I to rewrite the book, I would remove the now dated term 'modernization' from the Conclusion and the problematic 'popular-music public' from Chapter 3. But the issues and arguments raised in *Music and the Middle Class* are still current in a variety of ways, two points most of all. For one thing, an increasing number of social historians accept the idea that in the middle of the nineteenth century the nobility and the upper-middle class began forming a broad elite that came to be known as the bourgeoisie by 1900. The idea that the middle class 'rose' during the 1830s continues, and has been given a more precise accounting than previously by some historians. But the main point of view at present is to see it as a matter of perception of leadership than as the dominance of actual social groups. For another thing, while it is unwise to speak of popular music as such in this period, a major reconstitution of musical taste was under way from which the dichotomy between popular and classical music emerged. Not only did the production of sheet music have a profound effect upon musical culture as a whole, but also the leaders of the emerging classical-music world began setting an agenda – indeed an ideology – for 'serious' music in a wholly new fashion.

Historians and musicologists have become much more familiar with one another during the last twenty-five years. When I was a graduate student there existed no scholarly book by a historian on a strictly musical subject. Robert Isherwood accomplished that with his 1973 book on the opera works of Jean-Baptiste Lully under Louis XIV, and such major figures as Helmut Koenigsberger and Carl Schorske wrote on musical topics shortly after that.[1] I was motivated in this direction by Peter Stearns and William McNeill while at the University of Chicago.

[1] H. G. Koenigsberger, 'Music and Religion in Modern European History', *The Diversity of History: Essays in Honour of Sir Herbert Butterfield*, ed. J. H. Elliott and Koenigsberger (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970), pp. 35–78; Koenigsberger, 'Republics and Courts in Italian and European Culture in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', *Past and Present*, 86 (1980), pp. 32–56; Carl E. Schorske, *Fin-de-siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (New York: Knopf, 1979); Schorske, *Eine Österreichische Identität: Gustav Mahler*, foreword by Hubert Christian Ehalt (Vienna: Picus Verlag, 1996); Robert

But now scholars from the two fields connect regularly, most visibly at conferences hosted by the William Andrews Clark Library at UCLA, the Max Planck Historical Institute in Göttingen, the Social Science Research Council, and the *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*.[2] Books keep coming from historians on musical topics, for example from Paul Robinson, Leon Botstein, Michael Steinberg, James Johnson, David Dennis, and Dave Russell.[3] These works and their authors have gained increasing attention in the scholarly world: Johnson won two prizes for *Listening in Paris*, and Steinberg serves as an editor of *Musical Quarterly*. Many graduate students and young scholars are working on a whole host of musical topics – Jennifer Hall-Witt on London opera in the nineteenth century, Kelly Maynard of UCLA on Parisian Wagnerians, and David Sheridan of the University of Southern California on state-supported music programs in England during World War II. Musicologists have likewise turned to historians for help – Jane Fulcher in her studies of opera and composers' political careers, and David Gramit in his work on early nineteenth-century German musical taste.[4] And sociologists are contributing another important area of analysis for musical culture, as

M. Isherwood, *Music in the Service of the King: France in the Seventeenth Century* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1973); Isherwood, *Farce and Fantasy: Popular Entertainment in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

[2] Between 1992 and 2001 the Clark Library hosted four conferences with historians and musicologists: Rethinking Mozart, Eighteenth-Century Opera, Women in the Theatre, and The Musician as Entrepreneur and Opportunist, led variously by myself, Kate Norberg, and Anne Mellor; the Max Planck Institute held five conferences on nineteenth-century concerts, in part with the European Science Foundation, led by Hans-Erich Bödeker and Patrice Veit; the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales has inaugurated a seminar of music and history led by Michael Werner and Laure Schnapper; the *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* will hold a conference on Opera and Politics led by Theodore K. Rabb; and the Social Science Research Council is sponsoring several workshops on Opera and Society, led by Thomas Erdmann.

[3] Paul Robinson, *Stokowski*, discography by Bruce Surtees, The Art of the Conductor Series (London: Macdonald and Jane's, 1977); Robinson, *Opera, Sex, and Other Matters* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); Leon Botstein, ed., *The Compleat Brahms: A Guide to the Musical Works of Johannes Brahms* (New York: Norton, 1999); Leon Botstein and Linda Weintraub, eds., *Pre-Modern Art of Vienna* (Annandale-on-Hudson, N.Y.: Edith C. Blum Art Institute, 1987); Michael P. Steinberg, *The Meaning of the Salzburg Festival: Austria as Theater and Ideology, 1890–1938* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990); Scott Burnham and Michael P. Steinberg, eds., *Beethoven and his World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); James H. Johnson, *Listening in Paris: A Cultural History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); David B. Dennis, *Beethoven in German Politics, 1870–1989* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).

[4] Jane F. Fulcher, *The Nation's Image: French Grand Opera as Politics and Politicized Art* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987) and *French Cultural Politics and Music from the Dreyfus Affair to the First World War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); David Gramit, *Cultivating Music: The Aspirations, Interests, and Limits of German Musical Culture, 1770–1848* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

seen in Tia DeNora's book on Beethoven's career and Sophie Maisonneuve's emerging study of how the recording business affected canons in the early twentieth century.[5]

Where has the study of the middle class gone in the last twenty-five years? My work came hard upon the heels of Anglo-American revisionism, a rethinking of the nature of social class that cast suspicion upon the common practice of speaking of the middle class or the bourgeoisie as an identifiable social and political group that initiated the French Revolution of 1789 and triumphed in that of 1830. The French Revolution received much more extensive, indeed productive, attention in the 1970s and 1980s than the evolution of social classes in the nineteenth century. The complexity and diffuseness of social classes proved daunting to historians.[6] In 1979 Peter Stearns wrote a historiographical piece despairing of what had happened in the field, arguing that no coherent framework had emerged to identify how wealth, power, and status interrelated in the evolution of such groups.[7] That same year I myself wrung my hands about the 'muddle of the middle classes' as it seemed to appear in music history.[8] Many scholars began moving away from the harder, sociological methodologies of social history to culture, trying to find ways to define how groups behaved within key areas of their lives. At the same time the idea of a bourgeois spirit did not die; quite a few historians found it necessary to invoke it, in some case ignoring the critical literature of the 1960s done by post-Cobbanite historians such as Lenore O'Boyle.[9] An opposite tendency proved prominent in deferring the rise of a dominant modern bourgeoisie virtually until World War I. Arno Mayer was the leading proponent of such an argument in *The Persistence of the Old Regime*.[10] Would a scholarly center hold in the work of the field, one had to wonder?

By this time one can identify a productive middle ground, one that sees bourgeois and aristocratic groups working in close contact with one another in the dynamic political and economic movements in the course of the nineteenth century. This book's argument fits with that point of

[5] Tia DeNora, *Beethoven and the Construction of Genius: Musical Politics in Vienna, 1792–1803* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Antoine Hennion, Sophie Maisonneuve, and Emilie Gomart, *Figures de l'amateur: formes, objets, pratiques de l'amour de la musique aujourd'hui* (Paris: Documentation Française, 2000).

[6] Alfred Cobban, *The Myth of the French Revolution* (London: H. K. Lewis, 1955).

[7] Peter N. Stearns, 'The Middle Class: Toward a Precise Definition (in Debate on Social Class)', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 21 (1979), pp. 377–96.

[8] 'The Muddle of the Middle Classes', *19th Century Music*, 3 (1979), pp. 175–85.

[9] See the articles by Cobban and O'Boyle in *French Historical Studies*, 5 (1967), pp. 41–56.

[10] New York: Pantheon, 1981.

view, seeing musical life as an open-ended field within which members of the two social classes could explore new projects and new relations between each other, with the end result being a reconstituted common elite, the bourgeoisie, by the end of the century. Such a point of view sees change in social class as gradual, and defined as much in cultural as in social or economic terms. It is vital to see both unity and diversity within the middle classes. As I put it, we have to resign ourselves to admitting that 'there-was-but-there-wasn't a single middle class' (p. 140).

The most important Anglo-American historian to have continued the revisionistic discourse of the 1960s is Pamela Pilbeam, chiefly in *The Middle Classes in Europe, 1789–1914: France, Germany, Italy and Russia*.[11] Pilbeam starts where Alfred Cobban and Lenore O'Boyle left off in focusing not simply upon business families but also upon those of professionals and civil servants. She indeed shows how central the growth in frameworks of the state was to the evolution of social class. Her thinking bears directly upon music history when she concludes that '[t]he nineteenth century was a "bourgeois" century not so much because of the development of industry but because of the growing role of the state'.[12] In subscription lists of music societies in Paris and Vienna one can see many names of civil servants and professionals, generally a more highly educated if not learned area of the middle class. They took important roles within the gradual knitting together of bourgeois and aristocratic groups, especially in defining the ideology surrounding classical-music taste that came to dominate musical life by the end of the century.[13]

The most deep-rooted new research on the middle class has been done by German historians. Their ability to work in teams on large subjects bore fruit in a wide-ranging set of studies about nobles and bourgeois that shows extensive interaction among them in sophisticated form. The main general study of this type, *Bourgeois Society in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, edited by Jürgen Kocka and Allan Mitchell, aims for a broad Continental perspective upon the problem.[14] The attempts by the two

[11] Chicago: Lyceum Press, 1990.

[12] p. 302.

[13] The subscription list of the Société des Concerts du Conservatoire in Paris was not available at the time of my research, since the institution was then being reconstituted as the Orchestra of Paris. See Kern Holoman, The Société des Concerts du Conservatoire (1828–1967) (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), and the index to its papers at <http://hector.ucdavis.edu/sdc/>. Elisabeth Bernard has written about the subscribers in 'Les Abonnées à la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire en 1837', *Music Life in 19th-Century France*, ed. Peter Bloom (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon, 1987). On opera subscribers, see Steven Huebner, 'Opera Audiences in Paris, 1830–70', *Music and Letters*, 70 (1989), pp. 206–25.

[14] Originally edited by Kocka and Ute Frevert as *Bürgertum im 19. Jahrhundert* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1988; Eng. tr., Oxford: Berg, 1993).

classes to have closer social and political lives – though not often marrying one another – appear with particular prominence in Werner Mosse, 'Nobility and Middle Classes in Nineteenth-Century Europe' and in Ute Frevert's 'Honour and Middle-Class Cultures: The History of the Duel in England and Germany'.[15] Other scholars have extended this research with important work on varying aspects of interaction between bourgeois and aristocrats found in different regions and economic or cultural contexts. The main principle that has emerged is that the two classes were interacting in complicated but highly significant ways; no longer can we speak of *Adel* and *Bürgertum* as separate social worlds.[16]

Moving to British history, one finds Dror Wahrman taking a specially innovative approach on the subject, in *Imagining the Middle Class: The Political Representation in Britain, c. 1780–1840*.[17] Wahrman approaches the problem of the middle class as a matter of perception and consciousness, providing important guidelines by which to reconceive the whole question. He also links discussion of gender, domestic values, and political meanings deftly, in ways that have major implications for analysis of how middle-class musical activities in the home related to their growing prominence in public life after the 1830s. He argues that it was only after 1830 that political commentary on the middle class began to identify such groups with any particular domestic virtues, and that such notions played an important role in the growing public prominence of the class.

Several musicologists have also made important contributions to the analysis of social class, in ways useful to historians. In the definitive book on London concert life in the second half of the eighteenth century (wittily put, *From Mozart to Haydn*), Simon McVeigh demonstrated that almost no concerts went on in the City of London. That was the case

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[15] pp. 70–102 and 207–40, respectively. Kocka provides a broadly focused introduction, 'The European Pattern and the German Case'.

[16] See Ulrike Döcker, *Die Ordnung der bürgerlichen Welt: Verhaltensideale und soziale Praktiken im 19. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 1994); Dolores L. Augustine, *Patricians and Parvenus: Wealth and High Society in Wilhelmine Germany* (Oxford: Berg, 1994); Dieter Hein and Andreas Schulz, eds., *Bürgerkultur im 19. Jahrhundert: Bildung, Kunst und Lebenswelt* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1996); Klaus Tenfelde and Hans-Ulrich Wehler, eds., *Wege zur Geschichte des Bürgertums* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994); Elisabeth Fehrenbach, ed., *Adel und Bürgertum in Deutschland, 1770–1848* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1994); Dorothea Kuehme, *Burger und Spiel: Gesellschaftsspiele im deutschen Bürgertum zwischen 1750 und 1850* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 1997); Peter Lundgren, ed., *Sozial- und Kulturgeschichte des Bürgertums* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000).

[17] Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. See also his 'Middle-Class Domesticity Goes Public: Gender, Class, and Politics from Queen Caroline to Queen Victoria', *Journal of British Studies*, 32 (1993), pp. 396–432.

even though the bourgeoisie served in effect as an elite socially parallel to the nobility and landed classes of the West End, not distinctively subordinate to it, as Linda Colley argues in her book *Britons*.[18] The two elites related to one another within concert life and the opera, but the upper-middle class did not take on significant direct leadership there until the 1830s. By the same token, in a discussion of parlor and ballroom music, Nicholas Temperley argued that bourgeois and aristocratic tastes cannot be differentiated to any great extent in the early or middle decades of the nineteenth century.[19]

We cannot forget that musicians of prominence belonged to the middle ranks of the bourgeoisie, and recent studies indeed deepen our sense of how they strengthened that status. Cyril Ehrlich and Deborah Rohr, historians from two succeeding generations, wrote influential studies about the profession as a whole; Fiona Palmer contributed a study of the London bass player Domenico Dragonetti that shows such tendencies in fascinating detail; and Bradley Strauchen has analyzed how musicians developed benefit concerts in her study of the horn-player Giovanni Puzzi.[20] The mention of Cyril Ehrlich recalls his other major contributions to the study of this period, on the history of the piano and of the Philharmonic Society.[21]

One likewise obtains a nuanced sense of the middle levels of the middle class from studies of the press in the period. Katharine Ellis and

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[18] Simon McVeigh, *London Concert Life from Mozart to Haydn* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); McVeigh, 'The Musician as Concert-Promoter in London, 1780–1850', *Le Concert et le public, 1780–1914*, ed. Hans Bödeker, forthcoming; Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

[19] Nicholas Temperley, 'Salon and Drawing-Room Music', *Music in Britain: The Romantic Age, 1800–1914*, ed. Temperley (London: Athlone, 1981), pp. 109–34. See also David Tunley, *Salons, Singers and Songs: A Background to Romantic French Song, 1830–1870* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002).

[20] Cyril Ehrlich, *The Music Profession in Britain since the Eighteenth Century: A Social History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985); Deborah Rohr, *The Careers of English Musicians, 1750–1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); and her somewhat different Ph.D. dissertation, 'A Profession of Artisans: The Careers and Social Status of British Musicians, 1750–1850', University of Pennsylvania, 1983; Fiona Palmer, *Domenico Dragonetti in England (1794–1846): The Career of a Double Bass Virtuoso* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); Bradley Strauchen, 'Giovanni Puzzi: His Life and Work. A View of Horn Playing and Musical Life in England from 1817 into the Victorian Era (c. 1855)', D.Phil. dissertation, Oxford University, 2000. See also A. V. Beedell, *The Decline of the English Musician, 1788–1888* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), and Dave Russell, 'Musicians in the English Provincial City: Manchester, c.1860–1914', *Music and British Culture, 1785–1914: Essays in Honour of Cyril Ehrlich*, ed. Christina Bashford and Leanne Langley (Oxford, 2000), pp. 233–54.

[21] *The Piano: A History* (rev. edn, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990); *First Philharmonic: A History of the Royal Philharmonic Society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995).

Leanne Langley have made detailed studies of musical periodicals in Britain and France in the 1830s and 1840s, giving us a deep acquaintance with the internal structures of early musical journalism. Both illustrate how closely people from business and the professions collaborated, and how aggressively those from journalism advanced their projects.[22] I find myself impressed particularly by how such men balanced practical business with powerful ideological interests. Such figures as Richard Bacon, editor of the *Quarterly Music Magazine and Review*, and J. W. Davison, music critic of *The Times*, were leaders in framing the idealistic principles about listening and respecting the work of art that became basic to classical-music life in the course of the century.[23] A similar picture of the press can be found in Jeremy Popkin's study of newspapers in Lyon in this period. The book offers a well-couched argument for a rise of the middle class in the July Monarchy at least as seen within this particular profession.[24]

Before we consider the problem of popular music, it is necessary first to discuss the rise of classics within musical life – one of the most fundamental and least studied changes in the field. Study of classics and canon as cultural systems has become established as a basic scholarly subject within the humanities. The field of English literature has gone the farthest in mapping out the subject in both theoretical and historical terms, most notably for the reshaping of practices and assumptions during the eighteenth century.[25] The main work in this direction among music historians can be seen in three books published in the early 1990s:

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[22] Katharine Ellis, *Music Criticism in Nineteenth-Century France: La Revue et Gazette musicale de Paris, 1836–1880* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Leanne Langley, 'The English Musical Journal in the Early Nineteenth Century', Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1983; Langley, 'The Use of Private Papers, Correspondence, and Archives of the Publishing Trade in British Music Periodicals Research', *Periodica Musica*, 1 (1983), pp. 12–13; Langley, 'Italian Opera and the English Press, 1836–56', ibid., 6 (1988), pp. 3–10; Langley, 'The Life and Death of *The Harmonicon*: An Analysis', *RMA Research Chronicle*, 22 (1989), pp. 137–63; Langley, 'The Musical Press in Nineteenth-Century England: An Introduction', *Notes*, 46 (1990), pp. 583–92.

[23] See Richard Kitson, 'James William Davison, Critic, Crank and Chronicler: A Re-evaluation', *Nineteenth-Century British Music Studies*, i, ed. Bennett Zon (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), pp. 303–10.

[24] Jeremy Popkin, *Press, Revolution, and Social Identities in France, 1830–1835* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania University Press, 2001).

[25] Frank Kermode, *The Classic: Literary Images of Permanence and Change* (Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1983) and 'Survival of the Classic', *Shakespeare, Spenser, Donne: Renaissance Essays*, ed. Kermode (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971), pp. 164–80; Robert von Hallberg, ed., *Canons* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984); Trevor Ross, *The Making of the English Literary Canon: From the Middle Ages to the Late Eighteenth Century* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998).

Marcia Citron's *Gender and Musical Canon*, Lydia Goehr's *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works*, and my own *Rise of Musical Classics in Eighteenth-Century England*.[26] Recent work on the subject in Britain shows the variety of methodologies that can profitably be brought to the subject. Howard Irving contributed a sophisticated aesthetic discussion of divisions between proponents of ancient and modern music in the early nineteenth century in *Ancients and Moderns: William Crotch and the Development of Classical Music*.[27] Bennett Zon traced the return of Gregorian chant to England, having made a major discovery of little-known manuals for singing it published in eighteenth-century London.[28] And Rachel Cowgill has constructed an impressively detailed case history of the repertory played on the chamber organ called the Apollonicon around 1830.[29]

Still, not much has yet been done systematically on repertories or on the esthetics or ideologies underpinning such musical practices. What is needed now is discussion of methodologies – how to analyze change in repertories – and of periods – how to perceive stages by which classics emerged over about two hundred years.[30] Whenever we find ourselves speaking of great works we need to ask when, where, and in what performing contexts such music became established, and how texts treated it in canonical terms.

Roughly stated, the evolution of musical classics now appears to have occurred in four major periods.[31] The first, 1500–1700, witnessed the

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[26] Marcia Citron, *Gender and Musical Canon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992); William Weber, *The Rise of Musical Classics in Eighteenth-Century England: A Study in Canon, Ritual & Ideology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992).

[27] Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999.

[28] Bennett Zon, *The English Plainchant Revival* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999). See also Zon, *Music and Metaphor in Nineteenth-Century British Musicology* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000).

[29] Rachel Cowgill, 'The London Apollonicon Recitals, 1817–32: A Case-Study in Bach, Mozart and Haydn Reception', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 123 (1998), pp. 190–228.

[30] My present projects are *The Great Transformation of Musical Taste: A History of Concert Programs, 1750–1940*, Leverhulme Lectures at the Royal College of Music, 2002; and *From Contemporary to Classical: The Evolution of Musical Classics*.

[31] My main discussion of the subject is to be found in 'The History of Musical Canons', *Rethinking Music*, ed. Mark Everist and Nicholas Cook (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 340–59. See also *The Rise of Musical Classics in Eighteenth-Century England* (1992); 'Intellectual Foundations of Musical Canon in Eighteenth-Century England', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 47 (1994), pp. 488–520; 'Lully and the Performance of Old Music in the 18th Century', *Congress for the Tricentennial of the Death of J. B. Lully Heidelberg/St. Germain-en-Laye* (Laaber:

establishment of a pedagogical but not a performing canon, focused upon styles derived – but not taught historically – from Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina and Girolamo Frescobaldi. The second period, the eighteenth century, saw the first performing repertories of a canonic nature, most fully accomplished in Britain but found to a certain degree in the performance of Lully and his successors in Paris and C. H. Graun and Johann Adolf Hasse in Berlin. The first international repertory of musical classics began around 1800, focused upon Austro-German works but also including music by Luigi Cherubini, Giovanni Battista Viotti, and Arcangelo Corelli, and this had become established at the center of concert life by about 1870. From World War I on ensued a protracted conflict over contemporary music and its place within musical life for which there is no parallel prior to that time. A loosening up of the boundaries between classical and popular, and, differently, classical and contemporary music, began to occur around 1980, but it has by no means transformed the canonic practices begun in the middle of the nineteenth century.

We cannot forget that canonic repertories of a permanent order arose in Britain much earlier than anywhere else, in stages marked by the founding of the Academy of Ancient Music in 1726 and of the Concerts of Antient Music in 1776. From the 1780s to the 1840s the esthetic status of such music was hotly debated, since its preservation had so little precedent, musical culture having to develop its first language by which to define classics. The debate was closed by the rapid spread of the international Austro-German repertory across Europe, and by the successful manipulation of romantic ideas to define its authority. On a broad plane, Britain took the lead in establishing classical repertories, after which Germany and Austria were the leaders in developing esthetics and ideologies by which to define them. The two regions influenced one another intensely in this history, music and ideas flowing back and forth between them. For a certain time repertories maintained balance between classical and contemporary works, the two kinds of

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Laaber Verlag, 1991), pp. 581–90; 'Mentalité, tradition, et origines du canon musical en France et en Angleterre au XVIIIe siècle', *Annales E.S.C.*, 44 (1989), pp. 849–75; related to Daniel Milo, 'Le musical et le social: variations sur quatre textes de William Weber (Note critique)', *Annales*, 42 (1987), pp. 27–40; 'The Eighteenth-Century Origins of the Musical Canon', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 114 (1989), pp. 6–17; 'The Classical Repertory in Nineteenth-Century Symphony Orchestras', *The Orchestra: Origins and Transformations*, ed. Joan Peyser (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1986); '*La musique ancienne* in the Waning of the Ancien Régime', *Journal of Modern History*, 56 (1984), pp. 58–88; 'The Contemporaneity of Eighteenth-Century Musical Taste', *Musical Quarterly*, 70 (1984), pp. 175–94; 'Consequences of Canon: Institutionalization of Enmity between Contemporary and Classical Music' *Common Knowledge*, 9 (2003), pp. 78–99.

music being given relatively equal emphasis. By the 1870s, however, classical works moved to the center of most repertories and were treated esthetically and ideologically in hegemonic fashion by 1900.[32]

The key turning-point in these developments – indeed within musical culture as a whole – came about during the 1850s. While one can discern a tendency to turn away from virtuosi toward classical music coming on strongly in the mid-1840s, the hegemony of classics was established most definitively of all after mid-century. Did that have anything to do with the events of 1848–49? I am increasingly of the view that the Europe-wide disturbances found in more than fifty states at that time – an event without any historical parallel – turned existing musical developments in a far more consistent direction than might otherwise have happened. Recent work on the revolutions suggests that the very uncertainty about what they accomplished encouraged movements of a cosmopolitan political and cultural nature around which disparate groups could unite. International socialism arose as a powerful force by the late 1850s, as did social Darwinism and positivistic social science, and we can fruitfully view musical classicism among such movements.[33] The musical classics came to offer morally uplifting, cosmopolitan leadership in a time that desperately needed strong new cultural traditions. Simply the fact that musical societies all over Europe turned to the oratorios of Handel, Haydn, and Mendelssohn during the crisis of 1848–49, and focused their attention upon them so much thereafter, suggests that the revolutions lent a powerful impetus to the hegemonic status of classical music.

The primacy of the 1850s as a turning-point highlights the significance of the previous two decades as a transitional period. The key forces that would govern musical life for the rest of the century – the new capitalism of sheet music and the movement of musical idealism

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[32] On chamber-music concerts, see Christina M. Bashford, 'Public Chamber-Music Concerts in London, 1835–50: Aspects of History, Repertory and Reception', Ph.D. dissertation, King's College, University of London, 1996, 2 vols.; and Joël-Marie Fauquet, *Les Sociétés de musique de chambre à Paris de la Restauration à 1870* (Paris: Amateurs des Livres, 1986). The ageing of repertory is being opened up on opera, too: see Matthew Ringel, 'Opera in the Donizettian Dark Ages: Management, Competition and Artistic Policy in London, 1861–70', Ph.D. dissertation, King's College, University of London, 1996; Rachel Cowgill, '*Le nozze di Figaro* on the London Stage, 1786–1813', *Musica Antiqua*, 9 (1992), pp. 168–77; and Cowgill, '"Wise Men from the East": Mozart's Operas and their Advocates in Early Nineteenth-Century London', *Music and British Culture*, ed. Bashford and Langley, pp. 39–62.

[33] See Axel Körner, ed., *1848: A European Revolution? International Ideas and National Memories of 1848* (London: Macmillan, 2000), especially chapters by Körner, John Breuilly, Martin Swales, and Reinhart Koselleck. One might also rethink what Jacques Barzun said in *Darwin, Marx and Wagner: Critique of a Heritage* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1941).

that both opposed it and joined it – had appeared but remained in still indeterminate balance. By 1860 one finds that their relations had become clarified, as the world of elite benefit concerts receded, virtuosi shifted into a largely classical repertory, and new realms of music defined by general taste arose in the ballad concert and the music hall.

I proposed the notion of 'musical idealism' in a contribution to a book on the Wagnerian movement I co-edited.[34] This movement posed a powerful moralistic critique against the publication and concert performance of opera medleys as a dangerous lowering of musical taste. It called for performers, publishers, and the audience to look to classics from the recent past as models of taste, and to establish high standards of programming, performing, and listening in opposition to what it saw as a grossly commercialized musical world then coming into being. The principles proposed by Robert Schumann in Leipzig, François-Joseph Fétis in Paris, and Henry Chorley and J. W. Davison in London emerged as the intellectual foundation of the new classical-music world of the modern age. We are so accustomed to voicing these principles that we have not asked when they arose, or indeed what kinds of musical principles preceded them. It is vital to see what emerged in this period as a fundamental shift in musical values.

Musical idealism arose within an intense political context. Rereading the musical press of the 1820s and 1830s recently has impressed upon me how frequent and how harsh were the themes of class antagonism that appeared, expressed most often in diatribes against benefit concerts, Italian opera, and the pre-eminence of the aristocracy in the musical world. In England such rhetoric was deeply influenced by the movements for parliamentary reform. In 1845 a conservative magazine went so far as to compare the issues made about benefit concerts with those about 'rotten boroughs'.[35] Likewise, British composers drew directly from Chartist rhetoric in arguing that their music was systematically excluded from elite concerts. In their writings one can see the rise of a wholly new kind of musical politics.[36] Still, however strong attacks upon the aristocracy appear in musical commentary, we must remember that the same writers gave vent to harsh criticism of the arrogant new capitalism

[34] 'Wagner, Wagnerism and Musical Idealism', *Wagnerism in European Culture and Politics*, ed. David C. Large and William Weber (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984).

[35] *The Connoisseur*, 1 August 1845, no. 5, vol. 1, p. 48: 'Thus it is with Benefit Concerts, like the old borough system, they may be nothing but mercenary speculations; they may be inveighed against as containing some vitiating principles; yet they often are the only chance which many a rising artist has of opening before him a career of future success.'

[36] Simon McVeigh, 'The Society of British Musicians (1834–65) and the Campaign for Native Talent', *Music and British Culture*, ed. Bashford and Langley, pp. 145–68. For study of the world of elite benefit concerts, see Strauchen, 'Giovanni Puzzi: His Life and Work'.