

Asbgate Historical Keyboard Series

MUZIO CLEMENTI AND BRITISH MUSICAL CULTURE

SOURCES, PERFORMANCE PRACTICE AND STYLE

Edited by

Luca Lévi Sala and Rohan Stewart-MacDonald



Muzio Clementi and British Musical Culture

Recent scholarship has vanquished the traditional perception of nineteenth-century Britain as a musical wasteland. In addition to attempting more balanced assessments of the achievements of British composers of this period, scholars have begun to explore the web of reciprocal relationships between the societal, economic and cultural dynamics arising from the industrial revolution, the Napoleonic wars, and the ever-changing contours of British music publishing, music consumption, concert life, instrument design, performance practice, pedagogy and composition. Muzio Clementi (1752–1832) provides an ideal case-study for continued exploration of this web of relationships. Based in London for much of his life, whilst still maintaining contact with continental developments, Clementi achieved notable success in a diversity of activities that centred mainly on the piano. The present book explores Clementi's multivalent contribution to piano performance, pedagogy, composition and manufacture in relation to British musical life and its international dimensions. An overriding purpose is to interrogate when, how and to what extent a distinctive British musical culture emerged in the early nineteenth century. Much recent work on Clementi has centred on the Italian National Edition of his complete works (MiBACT); several chapters report on this project, whilst continuing to pursue the book's broader themes.

Luca Lévi Sala is a *Professeur associé* at Université de Montréal. He was Visiting Researcher at New York University in 2017 and Visiting Research Fellow at Yale University in 2015–2016. He has published in the *Journal of Musicological Research*, *Notes*, *Revue de musicologie*, *Eighteenth-Century Music*, *Studi Musicali*, *Rivista italiana di musicologia*, *Ad Parnassum Journal*, and *Analecta musicologica*. Articles about Clementi are forthcoming for *Oxford Bibliographies Online* (OUP) and *The New Grove Online* (OUP). Member of the Board of the *Italian National Edition of the Complete Works of Muzio Clementi* (MiBACT), he has edited the critical edition of the *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra Op-sn 30* (Bologna, 2012) and, together with Rohan H. Stewart-MacDonald, the critical edition of the 'Viennese' sonatas Opp. 7–10 (Bologna, 2018). He is now preparing the new *Thematic Catalogue with Updated Bibliography for Each Work, Documents and Iconography Relevant to Muzio Clementi's Life* (Bologna, Opera Omnia, Italian National Edition, vol. XV).

Rohan H. Stewart-MacDonald studied at St Catharine's College, Cambridge, between 1993 and 2001. Since completing his Ph.D. he has specialized in British music of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, publishing the book *New Perspectives on the Keyboard Sonatas of Muzio Clementi* in 2006 (Quaderni Clementiani series). In 2012, with Roberto Illiano, he co-edited and contributed to the multi-author, multi-lingual *Jan Ladislav Dussek: A Bohemian Composer "en voyage" through Europe* (Bologna, 2012). In the last few years, his academic interests have diversified, to include topics such as mid-eighteenth-century Italian symphonism and the early nineteenth-century virtuoso concerto (both piano and violin). Stewart-MacDonald also performed regularly as a pianist. Member of the Board of the *Italian National Edition of the Complete Works of Muzio Clementi* (MiBACT), he recently edited, together with Luca Lévi Sala, the critical edition of the 'Viennese' sonatas Opp. 7–10 (Bologna, 2018).

Ashgate Historical Keyboard Series

Series Editors: David J. Smith, *Master of Chapel
and Ceremonial Music, University of Aberdeen*
and Andrew Woolley

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Sources, Performance Practice
and Style

**Edited by Luca Lévi Sala and
Rohan H. Stewart-MacDonald**

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Series editors' preface

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David J. Smith and Andrew Woolley

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Rohan H. Stewart-MacDonald studied at St Catharine’s College, Cambridge between 1993 and 2001. Since completing his Ph.D. he has specialized in British music of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, publishing the book *New Perspectives on the Keyboard Sonatas of Muzio Clementi* in 2006 (Quaderni Clementiani series). In 2012, with Roberto Illiano, he co-edited and contributed to the multi-author, multi-lingual *Jan Ladislav Dussek: A Bohemian Composer “en voyage” through Europe* (Bologna, 2012). In the last few years his academic interests diversified, to include topics like mid-eighteenth-century Italian symphonism and the early nineteenth-century virtuoso concerto (both piano and violin). Stewart-MacDonald also performed regularly as a pianist. Member of the Board of the *Italian National Edition of the Complete Works of Muzio Clementi* (MiBACT), he has recently edited, together with Luca Lévi Sala, the critical edition of the ‘Viennese’ sonatas Opp. 7–10 (Bologna, 2018).

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Post scriptum

This volume is devoted to the memory of Rohan H. Stewart-MacDonald (1975–2017) who passed away just a few days after the completion of the copy-editing process. Rohan was a central figure in Clementi scholarship. He was a member of the *Italian National Edition of the Complete Works of Muzio Clementi* (MiBACT), from the very beginning, since its launch in 2008. Our scholarly lives crossed several times since we met almost eighteen years ago and he was a central figure in Clementi scholarship.

Luca Lévi Sala
New York 2018

Introduction

Luca Lévi Sala and Rohan H. Stewart-MacDonald

The traditional conception of early-to-mid nineteenth-century British musical life as a wasteland or as a ‘dark age’ followed decades later by a ‘Renaissance’ (Temperley 1999) has been significantly modified, if not vanquished, by several generations of scholarship. The related, more justifiable, perception of early nineteenth-century Britain as an arena for the performance and marketing of predominantly foreign music has remained more tenacious. Some counterbalance has been provided by various comprehensive biographical accounts and renewed assessments of the achievements of native British composers of the period, namely Samuel Wesley (1766–1837), Samuel Sebastian Wesley (1810–1876) and William Sterndale Bennett (1816–1875) (Olleson 2001; Olleson 2003; Horton 2004; Bennett 2010). Given the genuine difficulties these figures faced in establishing their pre-eminence as composers in British musical circles of the period, these studies have inevitably reinforced existing perceptions of the predominance of foreign music and the seemingly strategic marginalisation of native talent. These accounts have, however, contributed significantly towards the more nuanced understanding of British musical life generally that has emerged from other studies situating its many interlocking spheres within the broader context of contemporary European history. In various multi-author studies from the last decade, many of the most recent scholars have adopted an interdisciplinary approach, construing music as a cultural practice; this has shed much new light on an ever-ramifying web of reciprocal relationships between the societal, economic and cultural dynamics arising from the industrial revolution and the Napoleonic wars, and the ever-changing contours of British music publishing, music consumption, concert life, instrument design, performance practice, pedagogy and composition (Bashford and Langley 2000; Samson and Zon 2002; Wollenberg and McVeigh 2004; Illiano and Sala 2010; Golding 2018).

In many ways Muzio Clementi (1752–1832), who occupied the epicentre of British musical life for several decades (Tyson 1967; Plantinga 1977), provides the ideal case-study for such approaches; and it is unsurprising that he has figured prominently in several of the recent, multi-author studies of late eighteenth-early nineteenth-century British musical life (Gerhard 2002; Illiano, Sala and Sala 2002; Bösel and Sala 2004; Antolini and Mastroprimiano 2006; Stewart-MacDonald 2006; Ad Parnassum 2007; Ellsworth and Wollenberg 2007; Illiano and Sala 2010;

Kassler 2011; Golding 2018). Clementi's long career encompassed that period of dynamic social change that spanned the mid-Georgian and early Victorian periods. Based in London for much of his life, after some initial struggles¹ Clementi eventually achieved notable success in the environment that shaped his multivalent career as performer, teacher, composer, conductor, businessman and administrator. Since his own lifetime, it has been widely acknowledged that many of the social and cultural changes to which Clementi responded and to which he vigorously contributed centred on the rising popularity of the piano within an ever-expanding social spectrum, together with the rapid evolution in that instrument's design, construction and distribution (Rosenblum 1988; Rowland 1993; Rowland 1998; Bösel 2009; Kassler 2011; Badura-Skoda 2017). Clementi's place in this evolution, a central theme of the present book, is directly considered by Jenny Nex, in her account of major developments in piano technology that took place during Clementi's lifetime. She also describes other initiatives that, being more short-lived, are now unfamiliar and in some cases bewildering.

A central stimulus for both short- and longer-term developments in piano technology at this time was the boom in London's music publishing industry that set in during the 1770s and extended to the 1830s, along with its international dimensions. Clementi exploited this from the time of his entry into the music-publishing world in the 1790s until the end of his career. Formed from the ashes of the bankrupt firm Longman and Broderip, Clementi's publishing firm (initially Longman, Clementi & Co. and later Clementi and Co.) quickly entered the forefront of London's commercial musical life (Rowland 2013). Clementi was also centrally involved in the early formation of major institutions such as the Philharmonic Society (1813) and the Academy (later the 'Royal Academy') of Music (1823) (McVeigh 2002; Rowland 2006). As well as providing the foundations for major sectors of British musical life in the Victorian period and beyond, those two institutions and the figures connected with them also acted as conduits from the European to the British musical scene which disseminated, through both performance and pedagogy, the instrumental music by Mozart and Beethoven that quite soon came to lie at the heart of British concert life. These and other developments formed the central dynamics of a British musical culture that did eventually gain some distinctiveness whilst, paradoxically, becoming progressively more intertwined with overseas locations and events. This was a consequence of the expansion of international publishing, and also of Britain's hosting of figures of international prominence, such as Ignaz Moscheles (1794–1870), who lived in London from 1822 until 1846, and who was himself highly successful and influential in multiple sectors of British concert and institutional life (Kroll 2014). Because of this network of reciprocal, international transmission, defining with any clarity the distinctive elements of British musical life in this period remains a major challenge for scholarship of the present and the future.

A central purpose of this book is to report on, respond to and pursue further the scholarly work on Clementi that was stimulated by the bicentennial of his birth in 2002 and that has since continued to emerge in a steady flow (see Sala and Illiano 2019). A good deal of this work (Rowland 2010; Sala 2012; Sala and

Stewart-MacDonald 2018; Sala 2019; Sala-forthcoming) has centred on the Italian National Edition of Clementi's complete works established in 2008 (www.muzioclementi.org and www.muzioclementi.com).

The publication of multiple editions of Clementi's works that were overseen by him during his lifetime, and that were published in numerous geographical centres, was one major consequence of the continual rounds of revision to which Clementi subjected already-published compositions (Stoelzel 1984; Harrison 2002; Sala 2017). These multiple versions pose major challenges to contemporary editors of Clementi's work, and form a central topic of scholarly inquiry in other contexts besides. Rohan H. Stewart-MacDonald discusses a selection of sources relating to the 'Viennese' Sonatas Opp. 9 and 10, dating from the early 1780s, in which some of the sonatas are heavily modified, and thus emerge in a more advanced state than they appear in any existing editions: one major source relating to the Sonatas Op. 10 has never previously been published, establishing a strong case for its inclusion in the current critical edition (Sala and Stewart-MacDonald 2018).

Other chapters of this book examine the relationships between Clementi's meticulous preoccupation with revision and the broader spheres of piano evolution, publishing and performance practice. Luca Lévi Sala looks at the dissemination of Clementi editions throughout the European continental publishing network, a topic hitherto largely unexplored. He addresses early publications in Vienna that appeared in the final fifteen years of the eighteenth century. Discussing the genesis of Artaria's editions and their production, Sala opens up questions about the problem of the secondary dissemination of Clementi's output, where the distribution of English editions of Clementi works was fairly inconsistent, and in some places even non-existent. Finally, he questions the quality of the English text that was eventually transmitted and performed beyond England. David Rowland considers revision of a rather different type: in later editions of his major pedagogical work, the *Introduction to the Art of Playing on the Pianoforte* Op. 42 (1801), Clementi changed the selection of repertory, supplementing the earlier, eighteenth-century music with modern repertory more closely attuned to contemporary tastes. The evolving capacities of the English piano, its suitability for sustained *cantabile*, expressive nuance, and its expanding compass, also directly affected Clementi's own editorial policies. With reference to Clementi's edition of *Scarlatti's Chefs-d'œuvre* [. . .] Laura Cuervo considers the inclusion of markings that promoted *cantabile* and other characteristics of the 'British piano performance style' in relation to the evolution of the piano. Cuervo also emphasises the importance of *Scarlatti's Chefs-d'œuvre* [. . .] as the first printed English edition of ten of Scarlatti's sonatas: Kk. 378, 380, 490, 400, 475, 381, 206, 531, 462 and 463.

The multiple editions of Clementi's *Introduction* [. . .] described by Rowland arose not only from Clementi's seemingly constitutional preoccupation with revision, but also from the overwhelming demand for pedagogical material in this period that was generated by the growing popularity of the piano. Pedagogical material constituted some of Clementi's most familiar and commercially successful output (Wollenberg 2018). Penelope Cave focuses on Clementi's Op. 19, a

curious compendium of ‘Preludes and Cadences’ imitating the styles of Haydn, Koželuch, Mozart, Sterkel, Vanhal and Clementi himself. Ambiguous in function and uncertain in significance, Op. 19 has been variously interpreted, sometimes pejoratively (Badura-Skoda 1970). Cave emphasises the educational properties of Op. 19 as a series of sample preludes and cadenzas that could be inserted, or emulated, in place of spontaneous improvisation. This invokes the broader topic of the changing status, throughout this period, of improvisation versus the notated product.

The confluence of the ‘commercial’ and ‘artistic’ is also highlighted by Samuel Girling’s account of Clementi’s incorporation of tambourine and triangle parts into Opp. 38 and 39. Clementi’s purpose was to exploit the emerging fashion for the tambourine, strongly associated with the desirable gracefulness and elegance of upper-middle-class girls. Girling discusses the shifting perception of the instrument as a picturesque accessory to its eventual status as an integral component of a girl’s musical education. He considers the cultural forces that drove the tambourine’s short-lived but significant growth to prominence within British musical life of the 1790s to the 1820s.

The gradual coalescence of a distinctively ‘British’ musical scene, however elusive, remains discernible and calls for careful investigation. The development was undoubtedly driven by, and drove, the progressive institutionalization of British musical life. In conjunction with this, new types of performance culture emerged, often promoted by native musicians such as Bennett and his teacher Cipriani Potter (1792–1871) who, in the early stages of their careers, also pursued eminence as performers and composers.² A major purpose of this book is to begin to pursue the question of when, how and to what extent a distinctive British musical culture emerged, and if it does, in what terms it might be portrayed. Leon Plantinga surveys Clementi’s relationship with the British capital over the course of his long career. He emphasises the initial problems Clementi faced in establishing himself in the city, compared with Mozart’s quicker assimilation into Viennese musical life after his move there in 1781. Plantinga attributes the difference to Clementi’s initial lack of social connections, compared with Mozart: Clementi fared markedly better after his European tour of the early 1780s, following the contact he had established with Marie Antoinette in Paris and Joseph II in Vienna. Clementi’s professional advancement and all-but-complete assimilation into British society was also assisted by the institutional structures that he helped personally to create. Accordingly, Clementi emerges as a (very) early prototype of the ideal of the socially assimilated British musician of international standing (Stewart-MacDonald 2010).

The insufficiency of simply celebrating and scrutinising ever more keenly the cosmopolitan vibrancy of turn-of-the-century British musical life without addressing the difficult question of British musical identity is reinforced by Simon McVeigh’s contribution. His point of departure is the ambivalence of the term ‘cosmopolitan.’ It can connote sophistication, modernity and the enriching absorption of varied national cultures; it can also indicate an elitist exchange of cultural elements, accessible only by the wealthy and well-connected. With his multi-national

upbringing, command of the international marketplace and responsiveness to different national styles, Clementi the verbal and intellectual polyglot emerges as a candidate for all of the positive attributes of a ‘cosmopolitan’ (Gerhard 2004; Sala 2011): but, much as with the later example of Franz Liszt, Clementi’s ultimate historical canonisation has been impeded by charges of excessive professional diversification, materialistic values, and a body of compositions whose juxtapositions of desiccated pedagogy with proto-Lisztian virtuosity, Beethovenian motivic rigour and rarefied ‘learnedness,’ might seem incoherent or even linguistically anonymous. The term ‘cosmopolitan,’ as negatively construed, could also be provoked by native British composers’ notoriously ‘excessive’ dependence on European stylistic models, issuing from a lack of originality, compounded, or even engendered, by the British musical public’s apparent fixation with foreign music. The justification of such charges remains unclear at a time when a large proportion of native British works from the early nineteenth century remain unpublished and unrecorded. Full re-evaluation of them is a major task for the future, alongside clearer contextualisation of their composers’ achievements, within an emergent British musical culture in which linguistic heterogeneity might well be construed as a defining characteristic, or even a positive attribute.

A comprehensive definition of ‘early nineteenth-century British musical culture,’ distinct from that of mainland Europe, is obviously beyond the scope of this book; it may in any case be impossible to achieve, or even misleading and undesirable. Many of the chapters in this book do, however, point towards a central orientation, in British musical life, towards didacticism, education and the veneration of early styles that have clear European parallels, but that appear to have assumed a more intense, focused and culturally deep-rooted form in Britain than elsewhere. By the mid-1800s these orientations extended from the recital series of the 1830s, 40s and 50s that disseminated the chamber music of Mozart (late) Beethoven and earlier composers such as Bach, Handel and Scarlatti, to increasingly discerning, studious and attentive audiences (Bashford 1997, 1999, 2000a, 2000b; Ritterman and Weber 2007; Stewart-MacDonald 2015), to the training schemes at the Royal Academy of Music in which Potter and George Alexander Macfarren (1813–1887) espoused the principles of ‘form’ or ‘plan’ with reference to the instrumental works of Mozart and Beethoven; and in Bennett’s public lectures, delivered in London, Cambridge and elsewhere, where he was to expound the virtues and benefits of students studying and imitating Mozart (Bennett 2006, pp. 155–162). All of this can be aligned with the general preoccupation, in early Victorian society, with education and ‘self-improvement’ through intellectual engagement: Christina Bashford has illuminated parallels between mid-century British chamber-music series and ‘literary, philosophical, and scientific societies’ that articulated a “‘moral identity’” for the middle-classes that established and sustained them (2000b, pp. 91, 115, note 19). The interest in the music of Scarlatti, Handel, Palestrina, Bach and other earlier figures that ran through certain circles of British musical education and concert life again finds an early embodiment in Clementi’s inclusion of compositions by J. S. Bach, Couperin, Handel, Rameau and Scarlatti in his *Introduction* [. . .] and of anterior techniques into his own compositions, such as

the later piano sonatas and the *Gradus ad Parnassum*. Anterior orientations could take subtle forms in Clementi's work. Matthew Riley discusses the composer's unusually insistent treatment of the minor mode; he defines a constellation of approaches associated with the minor whose distinctive types of harmony and texture included archaic counterpoint. By acknowledging parallels with Austrian and Bohemian symphonists, Riley makes no exclusive association of these tendencies with Clementi or with British musical style generally; but their most immediate context remains the British veneration for the archaic. In a chapter written partly in response to the bicentennial, in 2016, of the birth of Bennett, Rohan H. Stewart-MacDonald addresses the equally elusive question of 'Britishness' in piano concerto composition. The substantial output of Johann Baptist Cramer, Potter and Bennett alone establishes the concerto as a genre of considerable – and previously unacknowledged – importance in British musical life of this period. Part of the purpose is to compare the approaches of Bennett and his contemporaries (see Lindeman 2007; Stewart-MacDonald 2007) with immediate contemporaries in Paris (Frédéric Kalkbrenner, Henri Herz) and Austro-Germany (Ferdinand Ries, Clara Wieck, Ignaz Moscheles). Stewart-MacDonald also includes some discussion of manuscript sources relating to the concertos of Potter, omitted from all previous accounts of the early Romantic concerto.

Notes

- 1 See Leon Plantinga's chapter in the present book.
- 2 The only substantial biographical account of Potter remains (Peter 1972).

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