9 The concerto

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The Baroque

The term 'concerto', implying an aggregation of performing forces large or small, described many musical genres in the early seventeenth century. These ranged from vocal music accompanied by instrumentalists, to purely instrumental music in which the element of contrast was prominent. The development of the *concertato* style is witnessed both in the later madrigal books of Monteverdi and in the church music and madrigals of Venetian composers such as Andrea and Giovanni Gabrieli. The Gabrielis' *Concerti per voci e stromenti musicali* (1587), comprising sacred music and madrigals in six to sixteen parts, is the earliest known publication to use the term 'concerto' in its title. The instrumental concerto emerged as an independent form towards the end of the seventeenth century and soon evolved into a genre in which virtuosity was a significant ingredient.

Italy

The earliest type of purely instrumental concerto, the concerto grosso, contrasted a large (concerto grosso) and a small group (concertino) of performers. The first essays in this genre emerged with Stradella in Rome in the 1670s,[1] but Corelli brought the form to its first peak with his collection of twelve concerti grossi for strings Op. 6 (1714).[2] These are essentially elaborations of Corelli's trio sonata ideal, the 'concertino' section consisting of two violins and a cello. Eight of the set conform to the *da chiesa* (church) slow–fast–slow–fast pattern, excluding movements of a dance character but including fugal fast movements;[3] the other four comprise largely sequences of dance-like movements in *da camera* (chamber) fashion.

The repeated-note patterns and triadic figurations of the trumpet works[4] by such Bolognese composers as Gabrielli, Perti and Torelli were prominent features of the developing concerto style. Torelli's *Concerti*

musicali Op. 6 (1698) herald the emergence of the solo violin concerto, prescribing specific solo passages for violin, while the last six of his set of *[12] concerti grossi . . .*, published posthumously as Op. 8 (1709), specify a solo violin in the concertino role. Op. 8 No. 8 arrives at the recognised form of the Baroque solo concerto, a three-movement (fast–slow–fast) design whose outer movements are cast in ritornello form, in which varied tutti statements in different keys of a recurrent idea alternate with modulating episodes of free thematic content for the soloist with appropriate ensemble accompaniment.

In Venice, Albinoni was composing his *[6] Sinfonie e [6] concerti a cinque* (1700), concertos for solo violin and strings in a similar fast–slow–fast design. His Op. 5 concertos (1707) introduce fugal finales, and his Op. 7 (1715) and Op. 9 (1722) sets include works for one and two oboes as well as four for strings, those in Op. 9 as well as many in Op. 10 (c.1735) including a part for solo violin. Marcello's twelve concertos Op. 1 (1708) are essentially amalgams of the concerto grosso and solo concerto. An obbligato violin and cello make up the concertino group in a design generally of four or more movements, normally incorporating a slow introductory movement followed by a fugal Allegro.

The foremost Venetian concerto composer, however, was Vivaldi. He contributed about 230 solo violin concertos to the repertory,[5] introduced virtuosity into the genre, and was the first to make consistent use of both the fast–slow–fast concerto design and ritornello form (often elaborately treated) in the outer movements. His first printed collection, *L'estro armonico* Op. 3 (1711), comprising twelve concertos, arranged in four symmetrical groups, for one, two and four violins (sometimes with an obbligato cello part), proved extremely influential both in Italy and abroad. This was particularly so in Germany, where J. S. Bach transcribed six of them for keyboard (c.1714) and later arranged No. 10 for four harpsichords and orchestra. Most of these concertos are in three movements, but No. 7 comprises five, and Nos. 2 and 4 revert to the four-movement cycle of the Corellian trio sonata. Among Vivaldi's eight other published concerto collections are his experimental *La stravaganza* Op.4 (c.1712–13), comprising seven for solo violin, four for two violins and one for two violins and cello; his *VI concerti a 5 stromenti* Op. 6 (1716–17) for solo violin and strings; a similarly titled set of twelve works Op. 7 (c.1716–17), of which Nos. 1 and 7 are for oboe and strings; and the ambitious *Il cimento dell'armonia e dell'inventione* Op. 8 (1725), of which Nos. 1–4 form the quartet of violin concertos known as 'The Four Seasons'. Vivaldi added a 'sonetto dimostrativo' as well as some further instructions in the instrument parts as programmatic guides to each of these four works. Of the other concertos in the Op. 8 set, Nos. 9 and 12 are probably oboe concertos, and Nos. 5, 6 and 10 have descriptive titles ('La tempesta di mare', 'Il piacere' and 'La caccia' respectively).

Of Vivaldi's three subsequent concerto sets, Opp. 11 and 12 (c.1729–30) are rough and ready by comparison with the twelve concertos entitled *La cetra* Op. 9 (1727). All but one of Op. 9 are for solo violin and strings – No. 9 in B♭ major is for two violins – and Nos. 6 and 12 require the soloist to play in *scordatura*; only No. 5 deviates from the established three-movement (fast–slow–fast) design, opening with a slow introduction and running the ensuing Presto straight into the slow movement. Strangely enough, Italian composers assimilated Vivaldian precepts slowly, often combining them with earlier practices. Other contemporaries, notably Bonporti and Durante, were more indebted to Corelli.

Most important among the post-Vivaldian generation of Italian composers are Locatelli and Tartini. A pupil of Corelli, Locatelli published five sets of concertos between 1721 and 1762 (Opp. 1, 3, 4, 7 and 9) his *XII concerti grossi a 4 e a 5 con 12 fughe* Op. 1 (1721) displaying the greatest debt to his mentor (although the concertino group comprises one or even two violas as well as two violins and a cello). Like Corelli's Op. 6, the first eight works are in the church style,[6] while the final four are *da camera* concertos. Locatelli's *L'arte del violino* Op. 3 (1733) is undoubtedly his most significant and progressive set, influencing composers as diverse as Albinoni (Op. 10), Dall'Abaco (Op. 6), Leclair and Paganini in their virtuosity (especially the twenty-four *Caprices*), resourceful harmony, and skilful exploitation of the Venetian three-movement concerto plan; No. 8 comprises two movements.

Tartini's c.135 violin concertos generally conform to the Vivaldian three-movement pattern, the central movement normally adopting a contrasting tonality. Many features of the *galant* style are discernible in his works from c.1745, Brainard counting a 'peculiar blend of lyricism, pathos and virtuosity ... violinistically conceived mannerisms, frequent echo effects, occasional harmonic boldnesses and ... elaborate cadence formulae' as some of the hallmarks of his mature style.[7]

Germany

Corelli's influence was supreme in late-seventeenth-century Germany, thanks largely to Muffat, who probably studied with Corelli in Rome in the early 1680s. Muffat's *Armonico tributo* (1682) comprises five 'chamber sonatas' which are essentially concerti grossi modelled after Corelli's Op. 6, although some movements betray the influence of his other mentor, Lully. For five-part strings with solo passages for two violins and a bass, these works comprise from five to seven movements founded on a mixture of *da chiesa* and *da camera* traits. Muffat's last publication, *Ausserlesene Instrumental-Music* (1701), a collection of twelve concerti grossi, consists of six new works and six re-workings (as Nos. 2, 4, 5, 10, 11 and 12) of musical material from his *Armonico tributo*.[8]

The Dresden-based (from 1712) Pisendel, a pupil of Torelli and Vivaldi, left at least seven violin concertos modelled after Vivaldi but with hints at a more *galant* idiom, and four one-movement concerti grossi. Among others who followed Italian models but pointed towards the pre-Classical style were Graupner, Fasch, Stölzel and Heinichen, although much of Heinichen's music comprised a mixture of German, Italian and French styles in the manner of Telemann. Telemann's twenty-one surviving violin concertos comprise three or four movements but display no consistency of first-movement structure. More progressive in construction, content and realisation are Telemann's ensemble concertos for two or more soloists.[9]

The move of Telemann's contemporary and friend J. S. Bach to Cöthen (1717–23) as *Kapellmeister* to Prince Leopold changed the emphasis of Bach's compositions from church music to instrumental pieces. Bach was well acquainted with the concertos of Vivaldi and others, arranging several of the Italian composer's concertos for solo harpsichord; it is possible that he had already composed works in the genre at Weimar. The only solo concertos to survive in their original forms from the Cöthen period are the violin concertos in A minor (BWV 1041) and E major (BWV 1042), and the D minor concerto for two violins (BWV 1043). Each comprises three movements and follows the Vivaldian model, but with the interior dimensions significantly expanded and more freely treated and also with formal outlines veiled by the remarkable variety of solo writing. The slow central movements form the works' crowning achievements, each of the two solo concertos featuring a beautiful, lyrical solo cantilena over an ostinato bass.

Bach's Brandenburg Concertos (BWV 1046–51, 1721) employ largely the Venetian three-movement pattern. However, No. 1 (vn picc, 3 oboes, 2 horns) comprises seven movements, including some stylised dances and displaying some French traits in the manner of Muffat, and only a Phrygian cadence (possibly elaborated by a brief solo violin cadenza) links the two fast movements of the third concerto. No. 2 contrasts a concertino group (tpt, rec, ob, vn) of different tonal characters, while No. 3 explores the tonal and contrapuntal possibilities inherent in nine string parts (3 vn, 3 va, 3 vc) with basso continuo. No. 4 (vn, 2 rec; str, bc) gives prominence to the solo violinist, while the fifth concerto (fl, vn, hpd; str, bc) features the solo harpsichordist, notably in the opening movement's extended, written-out cadenza. The central movement of the fifth concerto is essentially a trio sonata for the solo grouping, as is also the case in the unusually scored No. 6 (2 va, 2 va da gamba, vc, bc), in which the violas and cello form the concertino group.

Great Britain

British musicians had assimilated much of the Italian and French styles from Purcell and had generally been very receptive to continental musicians and musical fashions. The music of Corelli was the prime influence, thanks doubtless to one of his pupils, Geminiani; he came to England in 1714 and, apart from visits to Dublin, lived in London. Geminiani's concerti grossi were closely modelled on those of his mentor, his earliest set of twelve (1726–7) actually comprising arrangements of Corelli's Op. 5 violin sonatas with a viola included in the concertino group. This four-part concertino became standard practice for Geminiani,[10] as did also the four-movement scheme of the trio sonata. Of the two further sets of six 'second-hand' concertos (1735 and 1743), the first consisted of arrangements of trios from Corelli's Opp. 1 and 3, and the other comprised arrangements of violin sonatas from Geminiani's own Op. 4. Of Geminiani's three original sets of six concerti grossi (Op. 2, 1732; Op. 3, 1732; Op. 7, 1746), Op. 3 and Op. 7 (wind instruments etc.) are arguably superior.

Handel, who settled in London in 1712, also assisted greatly in perpetuating the Corelli tradition. Much of his orchestral music was a by-product of his work for the theatre, and several of his concerto movements were adapted from vocal and instrumental numbers in his operas and oratorios. It is doubtful if all six Concerti Grossi Op. 3 (1734) for woodwinds and strings[11] came originally from Handel's pen, but the twelve Grand Concertos Op. 6 (1740), scored for strings and a concertino group of two violins and cello[12] are *echt* Handel. They are more dramatic and more diverse both in content and structure than their Corellian models and embody also elements of the German suite tradition. Some follow the slow–fast–slow–fast sonata scheme, while others comprise five or even six movements. Nos. 5, 9 and 11 adapt material from other works, and all but one (No. 8) include a fugue.

Of native Englishmen, only Avison, Stanley, Mudge and Bond are worthy of mention. Stanley's Six Concerto's [*sic*] in 7 Parts, Op. 2 (1742) are retrospective in their Corellian-Handelian inspiration, while Avison's sixty concerti grossi, published in seven sets between 1740 and 1769, look back to his teacher Geminiani, in both their four-movement structure and their four-part concertino grouping (2 vns, va, vc). Amongst others who published concertos in London during the mid eighteenth century were the Dutchmen de Fesch and Hellendaal, and the Italian Castrucci.

France

French composers began to write concertos only comparatively late in the period and their works followed Vivaldian precepts from the outset,

notably Aubert's two sets of six violin concertos (Op. 17, 1734; Op. 26, 1739). The fast outer movements of his Op. 17 collection (the first violin concertos to be published in France) are based firmly on Venetian models, but the central movements often comprise French dances such as the gavotte or minuet. Most significant, however, was Leclair, who studied in Italy and published two sets of six Italianate concertos in Paris – Op. 7 (1737); Op. 10 (1745). Leclair follows the Vivaldian fast–slow–fast movement pattern in all but one of his concertos (Op. 7, No. 2), where he adds an introductory Adagio. His treatment of the outer movements is freer and more adventurous, with virtuosity much in evidence. As with Aubert's *opera*, the slow movements exhibit French traits, most notably in the song-like simplicity of their solo melodies and their incorporation of national dance rhythms.

The Classical period

By c.1750 the solo concerto had superseded the concerto grosso, although concerto grosso principles were later resurrected somewhat in the *symphonie concertante*, a genre especially popular in Paris in the 1770s. There was also a shift of emphasis from the violin to the keyboard concerto and the emergence, at Italy's expense, of Austria, Germany and France as centres of concerto development.

Tartini and his pupils Pietro Nardini and Maddalena Sirmen (née Lombardini) were among the first Italians to abandon Baroque practices in favour of a new, more dramatic concerto form; this was taken up by Gaetano Pugnani, Josef Mysliveček, Luigi Boccherini, Antonio Lolli and Giovanni Giornovichi. In their consistent exploitation of high position-work, double stopping and other bravura techniques, the concertos of Lolli and Giornovichi prepared the way for the virtuoso feats of Paganini and his successors.

North German composers contributed greatly to the development of the genre, particularly the keyboard concerto. However, Tartini's pupil Johann Gottlieb Graun composed at least sixty violin concertos, while the works of the Benda brothers, Franz and Georg, like those of Johann Wilhelm Hertel and Johann Friedrich Reichardt, perpetuated Baroque elements within a dramatic, expressive style.

In Mannheim, Johann Stamitz took Tartini as his model, while his sons Carl and Anton leaned more towards the ascendant French style, a model followed increasingly by such composers as Ignaz Holzbauer, Ignaz Fränzl, Christian Cannabich, Carl Joseph Toeschi, Peter Ritter and Friedrich and Franz Eck. Many of these composers contributed also to the *symphonie concertante* repertory.

In Austria, Georg Monn, Georg Wagenseil and Johann Michael Haydn were the first to absorb Classical elements in their violin concertos. However, it was not until the Mannheim composers lost much of their

forward impetus – at the removal of the electoral court to Munich (1778) – that their concerto style eventually caught on in Vienna, where Leopold Hofmann, Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf and others capitalised on their work.

Concerto composition by French composers developed slowly. Parisian concert circles were dominated by the works of the Mannheim school, including *symphonies concertantes* in plenty. French *concertante* works of the period initially comprised only two movements: an Allegro in concerto-sonata form with orchestral introduction, followed by a *rondeau* (usually Allegretto) of lighter character and smaller proportions, but the three-movement concerto and *symphonie concertante* later became the norm. The most prominent French-based exponent of the *symphonie concertante* was the Italian Giuseppe Cambini, while Chevalier de Saint-Georges, Marie-Alexandre Guénin, Jean-Baptiste Davaux and Simon Leduc *l'aîné* all absorbed Mannheim influences in their *concertante* works for the violin. On the other hand, Pierre Gaviniès continued the tradition of Leclair in his Op. 4 violin concertos, but with Classical phrasing and structure and with more than a hint of Mannheim seasoning. The three violin concertos of Michel Woldemar foreshadow the technical developments of Paganini's generation. Interestingly, their slow movements are presented in both undecorated and ornamented versions.

The four violin concertos accredited to Joseph Haydn date from the 1760s. The second is lost – it is known only from an entry in Haydn's thematic catalogue – and none of the surviving three (in C, A and G; HobVIIa: 1, 3 and 4) was published until the current century. These are conservative, three-movement works written in a language characterised by numerous short sighing figures, pallid rococo triplet decorations and spirited dotted tutti rhythms.

Handel's concerti grossi inspired many native Britons to cultivate the genre, but their contributions were conservative compared with those of such foreigners as Luigi Borghi, Ignaz Pleyel and Johann Christian Bach, who 'dropped anchor' in England. J. C. Bach's concertos, largely for instruments other than the violin,[13] exerted a direct influence on Mozart and thus initiated the culminating phase of the eighteenth-century concerto, dominated by the piano.

In addition to J. C. Bach's influence, Mozart absorbed 'formal unity from Vienna, thematic sophistication from Mannheim, and rhythmic continuity from Italy',[14] but his achievement in fusing the ritornellos of the Baroque concerto with the dramatic possibilities of sonata form was accomplished principally through his piano concertos. His violin concertos number only five (all 1775).[15] K207 in B♭ and K211 in D are modestly proportioned 'apprentice' works in the Austro-German tradition. Their finales appear to have caused Mozart most trouble.[16] Not so the other three concertos, whose finales display characteristics of the

Austrian serenade in their incorporation of folk-like melodies and their affinities with J. C. Bach's favoured *menuet en rondeau* form (with literal or slightly varied repetitions of the refrains, and episodes in contrasting tempos and metre). The slow movement of K216 and the modifications of the traditional form in all three movements of K219 (notably, the soloist's Adagio arioso after the very first orchestral tutti, the subtle modifications to the initial orchestral theme on its three repetitions in the ternary central Adagio, and the 'alla Turca' interruptions, with cymbals, droning horns etc., and the cellos and basses playing *coll'arco al rovescio* – i.e. *col legno* – in the final *rondeau*) testify to Mozart's experimentation and ripening craftsmanship.

By far the greatest influence in France was Viotti, who wrote nineteen of his twenty-nine violin concertos during his years in Paris. They range from those in a cosmopolitan *galant* style to those whose character, drama and expressive potential were strengthened immeasurably by operatic influences, such that the last six (Nos. 14–19) presage the Romantic concerto. But the products of Viotti's London sojourn (from 1792) surpass them in substance, drama, adventurousness, craftsmanship and solo exploitation. They represent the Classical violin concerto style in its fully evolved form.

Viotti's imaginative fusion of Italian, French and German concerto elements undoubtedly provided the main inspiration for Beethoven's Violin Concerto in D Op. 61 (1806).[17] The march-like character of Beethoven's monumental first movement (the timpani-strokes providing a rhythmic cell which pervades the whole movement) and the spirited rondo finale (ABACABA) with its striking, humorous G minor episode featuring the bassoon smack of the contemporary French concerto style. Viottian influence also extends to the shape and character of some of Beethoven's themes as well as to the technical vocabulary exploited.[18] The slow movement, in which orchestral statements of the main theme (never actually played by the soloist) are complemented by varied solo embroidery, is more individual. Apart from leading without a break into the finale, it bears little resemblance to the brief *romance*, complete with improvised embellishments, of the traditional French concerto scheme. No original cadenzas for the violin concerto have survived, but Beethoven wrote four cadenzas, including one with timpani accompaniment, for his version for solo piano.

The nineteenth century

The violin concerto developed in three main directions during the nineteenth century. One line of descent cultivated traditional musical values, while another introduced nationalistic elements; but this was also the age of the virtuoso, who contributed much to both the development and the debasement of the genre. The element of display, although

omnipresent from the solo concerto's beginnings, became one of its essential ingredients.

Traditionalists and nationalists

Spohr's eighteen violin concertos (composed 1802/3–44)[19] show clear debts to Viotti and the French violin school in their lyrical, expressive slow movements, sense of drama and bravura passage-work; but their structure, texture, thematic integration and development possess a Germanic symphonic breadth suggestive of Beethoven. The four violin concertos which Spohr composed between the A major Concerto Op. 62 (1810) and the A major Concertino Op. 79 (1828) arguably represent his best work in the genre. Of these, the E minor Concerto Op. 38 (1814) is probably most characteristic of its composer, but Op. 47 in A minor (1816), subtitled 'in modo di scena cantante', confirms the operatic influence and intention already foreshadowed in the dramatic recitative in the central movement of Op. 28 (1809). Composed especially for Italian consumption, it is in one continuous movement – a dramatic, lyrical monologue with recitative, arioso and an aria in two sections.

Although Spohr's pupil David himself composed five violin concertos, he is still best known as Mendelssohn's adviser for the E minor concerto Op. 64 (1838–44). That Mendelssohn's inspiration was essentially Classical is evident from the structure and content of his initial essay in the genre, in D minor.[20] But Op. 64 also exhibits the formal experiments, some not without precedents, of a Romantic at work and initiated a new symphonic tradition for the concerto. Remarkable in its first movement are the entrance of the soloist in the second bar,[21] the central placement of the cadenza before the recapitulation, and the linking of this Allegro with the ternary Andante by a sustained bassoon note. Furthermore, a brief transition between the Andante and the sonata-rondo finale gives the impression of a through-composed form of the kind Mendelssohn had used in his two piano concertos Opp. 25 and 40.

Mendelssohn's influence on succeeding generations was made more potent through the achievements of his protégé – and David's 'pupil'[22] – Joachim. Joachim composed three violin concertos of which the Brahmsian *Concerto in the Hungarian Style* (1857–60), a nationalistic piece based upon freely invented thematic material in the spirit of Hungarian music, is by far the best.

Schumann composed two *concertante* works for Joachim in the last year of his creative life (1853) – the Concerto in D minor, published posthumously, and the single-movement *Fantasie* Op. 131.[23] Joachim had misgivings about the violin writing in the concerto and resolved[24] that it would do Schumann no service if it were included in the Breitkopf *Gesamtausgabe*. Jelly d'Arányi, Schumann's great-niece, resurrected the work for its first public performance (London, February 1938), but its

structural weaknesses, uneven content and numerous miscalculations of solo writing and orchestration account for its neglect nowadays.

Bruch's Violin Concerto No. 1 in G minor (1866) also owed its inspiration to Joachim, its dedicatee. First performed in April 1866, it was later revised with Joachim's help, the new version[25] being premiered in Bremen in 1868. Bruch departs from the traditional scheme, including a large-scale Prelude ('Vorspiel') with three principal thematic elements as the first movement, punctuated by violin solo recitatives. The first and second movements are linked, and the sonata-form slow movement assumes the work's centre of gravity, dominated by a broad cantabile melody. The Hungarian characteristics of the finale's principal theme are often claimed, rightly or wrongly, as a tribute to Joachim. Here is a well-proportioned mix of noble melody and virtuoso figuration, the pace quickening in the coda for one final energetic solo burst. Of Bruch's two other violin concertos, both in D minor (1876 and 1891), the second is the more remarkable. It resembles Spohr's operatically influenced concertos, the extended Adagio and sonata-form finale being linked by a section of recitative. Bruch's *Scottish Fantasy* (1880), intended for Sarasate,[26] was inspired by the novels of Sir Walter Scott. It incorporates Scottish folk melodies in its four movements and also features a prominent part for a harp. The solemn Grave introduction proceeds via recitative-like sections for solo violin into the main Adagio cantabile section, based on 'Auld Rob Morris'. 'Hey, the dusty miller', with bagpipe effects etc., carries the second movement (Allegro) along, enhanced eventually by bravura solo writing. The recall of 'Auld Rob Morris' links the second to the third movement, a sustained Andante (based on 'I'm a-doun for lack o' Johnnie') with a contrasting middle section. The Allegro guerriero finale comprises variations on two contrasting themes – 'Scots wha hae' and a more lyrical foil – culminating in a mass of virtuoso histrionics.

Joachim also provided the inspiration behind Brahms's Violin Concerto in D major Op. 77 (1878) and became its dedicatee. He advised Brahms on technical matters[27] and premiered the work in Leipzig on New Year's Day 1879, with Brahms himself conducting. It was not well received. Hans von Bülow dubbed it 'a concerto against the violin', possibly because the solo part is not only a virtuoso showpiece encased in the wrappings of Classical concerto form but also takes its place in a totally integrated composition of symphonic breadth and character. Indeed Brahms originally planned it on a four-movement symphonic scale,[28] but he later substituted 'a feeble Adagio' for the two central movements.

The first movement keeps faith with Classical models in that nearly all the subject matter is stated in the orchestral exposition, each subject group comprising in this case three contrasted but related ideas. Less traditional is the fantasia-like process by which the soloist prepares for his statement of the principal theme, high on the E string. He even

contributes a new lyrical melody to the argument[29] and invents a variety of counter-melodies to set against the orchestra, moving through an adventurous arc of keys. A fairly orthodox recapitulation precedes the cadenza, the energetic coda following only after the soloist has sung an ethereal meditation on the movement's opening idea. The central 'feeble Adagio' features a solo oboe with a ravishing, expressive melody. Curiously, this melody is never given in its entirety to the violinist, who largely extends and elaborates upon it in partnership with the oboist, particularly after the rhapsodic middle section of this ternary design. The finale, an impetuous rondo (ABACBA), has a strong dash of Hungarian flavour about it. Its two interludes are in strong contrast, one energetic, the other more tranquil and lightly scored. The pace quickens in the coda, as the main theme is transformed over the march-like tread of the orchestra.

Joachim also influenced Ferruccio Busoni in the composition of his retrospective Violin Concerto in D (1896–7), which remains faithful to the German Romantic tradition, while one of the most celebrated of David's pupils (1861–4) at Leipzig, Wilhelmj, also contributed a violin concerto to the repertory. Wilhelmj's versatile 'finishing' teacher in composition, Joachim Raff, left two violin concertos, while the two concertos of the Hungarian/'adopted Viennese' Károly Goldmark suggest the German influence of Schumann, Mendelssohn and Spohr, particularly No. 1 in A minor Op. 28. Strauss also left an early Violin Concerto in D minor (1880–2), which, though conservative in scope and lacking an opportunity for a cadenza, is pregnant with lush romantic melodies and technical challenges.

In Scandinavia, only the concertos of Franz Berwald (1820), Niels Gade (1880), Johan Svendsen (1869–70) and Christian Sinding (Opp. 45, 60 and 119) are noteworthy. Berwald's Classical sympathies are immediately apparent in his concerto, especially the influence of such contemporaries as Spohr, Hummel and Beethoven. It is remarkable for its assured craftsmanship and individuality of style, not least its imaginative harmonies, audacious modulations and striking orchestration.

Lalo and Saint-Saëns were the French nationalists/traditionalists in the genre. Of Lalo's three *concertante* works for the violin,[30] only his five-movement *Symphonie espagnole*[31] has claimed a firm place in the repertory. Displaying rhythms, orchestral colours and melodies that are part gypsy, part Moorish and wholly Spanish in suggestion while culminating in a vigorous, sparkling rondo finale, it is a virtuoso work of considerable demands. Saint-Saëns's first two violin concertos (Opp. 20 and 58) are technically demanding and of unconventional design – No. 1 is a single-movement work; the slow movement of No. 2 is linked with the finale – but the less adventurous No. 3 (Op. 61) has proved the most popular. Doubtless this is because of its richer musical content, its

original scoring and its one oddity, the strange chorale contrasted with the gypsy-like main theme in the finale.

Although it initially had a rough ride from critics and performers alike, Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 35 (1878) completely dwarfs those of his compatriots, of whom only Anton Rubinstein (1857), Arensky (the single-movement Op. 54, 1891) and Jules Conus (1896) are worthy of mention.[32] Intensely lyrical in style, it follows Mendelssohn's Op. 64 in some crucial formal aspects: these include the structure of the opening movement, the long written-out cadenza immediately preceding the reprise and the interlinking of slow movement and finale. Although the technical demands of the opening movement and the brilliant, trepak-like rondo finale are extremely challenging, virtuosity is subordinated to the musical design. The central ternary 'Canzonetta' is a second thought, Tchaikovsky publishing the original Andante as 'Méditation', in the set of three pieces entitled *Trois Souvenirs d'un lieu cher* Op. 42.

The Slavonic origins of Dvořák's Violin Concerto in A minor Op. 53 (1879–80, rev. 1882) are displayed by the first main theme of its rhapsodic, formally irregular opening movement. Of symphonic conception, the movement leaves no room for a cadenza. The melancholy ternary Adagio is interlinked with the first movement, while the lively sonata-rondo finale incorporates melodic ideas of folk derivation. Originally intended for Joachim, the work was eventually premiered by František Ondříček in Prague in October 1883.

In Britain only the violin concertos of Sir Alexander Mackenzie (1885), Coleridge-Taylor (Op. 80) and his mentor Stanford (two concertos) are worthy of passing mention, while George Enescu's Violin Concerto (1896) represents the chief Romanian interest.

Virtuosi

Musicologists are still unable to match their tally of authenticated concertos by Paganini – six are currently known to have survived – with the eight works that he (and one of his biographers, Conestabile) claimed that he had written. None of these works was published during his lifetime[33] and access to the orchestral parts was strictly controlled. The influence of the late-eighteenth-century French violin concerto is particularly evident in Paganini's opening movements, the Allegro maestoso of No. 2 and the Allegro marziale of No. 3 furnishing typical examples of Paganini's indebtedness to Viotti. Broad, intensely lyrical phrases alternate with bravura passages to form the chief hallmarks of Paganini's style in the outer movements; the central slow movements are of more simple, aria-like construction, the melodic flow occasionally being interrupted by short solo cadenzas. The finales generally incorporate popular melody. The rondos of Nos. 3 and 6, including a polonaise

as their main theme and the finale of No. 2, 'La campanella', provide ample opportunity for virtuoso display.

Most notable among the violinists who imitated Paganini's approach to the violin concerto were de Bériot, Vieuxtemps, Ernst, Bull, Lipiński, and Wieniawski. De Bériot's First Violin Concerto (1827), of moderate technical demand, owes much to late-eighteenth-century French models; the second (1835) is in stark contrast, immediately betraying the influence of Paganini's virtuoso techniques. The remaining eight concertos are somewhat more restrained in their technical requirements, favouring a compromise of lyricism and melodiousness intermingled with bravura playing, rather than virtuosity for its own sake.

De Bériot's most celebrated pupil, Vieuxtemps, composed seven concertos for the instrument, all of which appeared after he had met Paganini in London in 1834. His Concerto in F♯ minor (1836), published as No. 2, combines Viottian formal principles with the enriched technical vocabulary of the early nineteenth century, setting the solo part within a full symphonic framework and subordinating technical considerations to musical ends. Nos. 1 in E (1840) and 3 in A minor (1844) continue very much in the same vein, but the four-movement Fourth Concerto in D minor (1849–50), completed in Russia with his return to Paris in mind, has been described as 'a magnificent symphony with a principal violin'.[34] Following a declamatory, impassioned introduction (with substantial cadenza) comes a rhapsodic Adagio religioso. A brilliant scherzo with brief pastoral-like trio is succeeded by an energetic, march-like finale of virtuosic demand. By contrast, the Fifth Concerto (1861), originally written as a competition piece for the Brussels Conservatoire, is in one continuous movement with a cadenza near the end. The remaining two concertos (Opp. 47 and 49), published posthumously (Paris, 1883), sustain the technical demands of the others but display no further structural experiments of note.

Lipiński's main contribution to the genre (*Concerto militaire* Op. 21 No. 2) is outshone by his compatriot Wieniawski's two concertos. Apart from the central Larghetto ('Preghiera'), Wieniawski's First Concerto in F♯ minor (1853) is a rather empty technical display piece; but the combination of rich melodic invention, nationalist inflection and extrovert bravura in No. 2 in D minor (1862), dedicated to Sarasate, has ensured for it a permanent place in the repertory. The loose structure of the first movement accommodates increasingly exuberant virtuoso passages for the soloist, concluding with a clarinet solo which acts as a bridge to the Romance, a virtually unbroken violin melody of great beauty and intensity. A brilliant cadenza heralds the ebullient gypsy-style finale.

Of Ernst's two *concertante* works, Farga claims that the Concertino in D (1839) is on 'a somewhat higher level, full of ardour and lyrical atmosphere'[35] than the *Concerto pathétique* in F♯ minor (1844), but the latter, dedicated to Ferdinand David, is undoubtedly the more genuinely

inspired work. Closely resembling the concertos of Paganini in its technical demands[36] this large-scale one-movement work particularly impressed Joachim, who described Ernst as the greatest violinist-musician of his generation.

The twentieth century

The early twentieth century witnessed a consolidation of late-nineteenth-century concerto traditions, many of the more radical composers eschewing a medium with such conventional associations. Interest in the genre increased towards the middle of the century only to wane again more recently, owing partly to the lack of top-flight violinists who are willing to champion new music.

Scandinavia

Most significant of the Scandinavian contributions were the concertos of Sibelius (1903, rev. 1905), Nielsen (1911) and Lars-Erik Larsson (1952). The orchestral tuttis of Sibelius's Violin Concerto in D minor Op. 47 bear the main burden of development and are largely independent of the soloist's material; but the rhapsodic opening movement, with its unusual tonal relationships and its substitution of a cadenza (which dovetails into the reprise) for the formal development, represents a reappraisal of the traditional form. The Adagio, a lyrical ternary Romance, has a central section of sterner stuff. The finale is somewhat rondoish, its rhythmic drive, *Zigeuner*-like virtuosity and imaginative orchestration ensuring interest and a sense of momentum to the end. Nielsen's concerto is of unusual shape: two extensive slow introductions (Praeludium with cadenza; chromatic Intermezzo) are followed by a sonata-form Allegro, with a further cadenza, then a rondo with two contrasting episodes and a third cadenza.

Russia

Most early-twentieth-century Russian music was broadly national in spirit, but Glazunov's affinity with Western European idioms was as strong as his own native allegiances; his Concerto No. 2 (1904), a continuous work in two main divisions, with individual sections separated by solo cadenzas, demonstrates this. J. S. Bach was arguably the strongest influence on Stravinsky's neo-Classical Concerto (1931).[37] Stravinsky himself drew parallels between his finale and Bach's Concerto for two violins, especially 'the duet of the soloist with a violin from the orchestra'. Aria II, a lyrical ternary-form cantilena for solo violin and (mainly) string accompaniment, is also of Bachian stock. Thematic material is interchanged freely between soloist and orchestra, as illus-

trated particularly by the opening subject of the Toccata (introduced by four chords which appear in varied guise at the beginning of each movement) and the ternary Aria I. Considering the orchestral forces employed, the orchestration is surprisingly light, and the atmosphere is closer to chamber music than to the nineteenth-century 'symphonic' concerto.

Prokofiev's two violin concertos were composed or part-composed during his self-imposed exile in France. In the impressionistic No. 1 (1923), Prokofiev's motor rhythms feature briefly in the opening 'sonata' movement but play a more extensive role in the central Scherzo. The first movement's initial dreamy melody is recalled in the rhapsodic finale, firmly pulling the work into a well-proportioned circular structure. No. 2 in G minor (1935), more modestly scored than the first, was originally conceived as a concert sonata for violin and orchestra; this explains the orchestra's subsidiary role, anticipated by the soloist's presentation of the first theme unaccompanied. The ternary Andante assai incorporates two original and capricious touches towards its close: a pizzicato solo for the violin and a concluding duet for clarinet and double bass. The witty, grotesque rondo finale is of true Russian character.

By contrast, Kabalevsky's idiom originates in the same tradition as that of Russian popular song, as exemplified in the second movement of his Concerto in C (1948); and Khachaturian's Violin Concerto (1940) features Armenian folk material supported by stirring rhythms reminiscent of Gershwin. Shostakovich's two concertos represent distinct phases in his development. No. 1 in A minor (1947–8) is a complex four-movement structure of which the opening Moderato (Nocturne) is of truly symphonic cast; the energetic Scherzo includes an allusion to the composer's Tenth Symphony, and the intense third movement, a passacaglia with a solo cadenza at its climax, is the focal point. The lively rondo-like finale ('Burlesca') follows without a break, incorporating a reminiscence of the passacaglia. No. 2 in C♯ minor (1967) is a more intimate, lucid, three-movement design, with a prominent part for solo horn. The dark opening Moderato adopts a concise quasi-sonata form, while the slow movement incorporates much relaxed solo violin writing high in the register. A cadenza follows, structural in implication and incorporating previous ideas, before the rondo finale provides a riotous conclusion.

More recently, the concertos of Kara Karayev (1967) and Alfred Schnittke (1957, rev. 1962; 1966; 1982) have attracted attention; Schnittke's works juxtapose elements of atonality and diatonicism and recall somewhat the idiom of Berg.

Germany

The Romantic tradition lived on in Germany in the dominant figures of Richard Strauss, Pfitzner and Reger. Reger's large-scale symphonic

Violin Concerto in A (1907–8) is tonally, texturally and harmonically somewhat simpler than his norm, while Pfitzner's turbulent Concerto (1923) is remarkable both for its intensity of expression and for its slow movement, which omits the soloist altogether.

Hindemith revived the concerto grosso spirit in his set of seven *Kammermusiken*, using ensembles inspired by Bach's Brandenburg Concertos. The fourth *Kammermusik* Op. 36 No. 3 (1925) is a violin concerto with an opening movement in ritornello form. The Violin Concerto (1939) also looks back, this time on the symphonic concerto of the previous century. It adopts a traditional three-movement design, its lyrical central movement being framed by a fully developed 'sonata' movement and a lively finale, complete with extended cadenza. The violin concertos of Blacher (1948) and Fortner are similarly retrospective in style and content, while those of Weill and Henze are more experimental. Weill's Violin Concerto Op. 12 (1924) uses a wind ensemble in place of a full orchestra. Henze's First Violin Concerto (1947) heralds a move towards serialism, while No. 2 (1971) stands on the borders between concert music and music-theatre. It calls for bass-baritone soloist and pre-recorded tape in addition to violin soloist and thirty-three instrumentalists, and includes a setting of a propagandist poem by Hans Magnus Enzensberger.

Austria

Very much in the German Romantic concerto tradition, Schoenberg's Violin Concerto Op. 36 (1935–6) extracts remarkable lyricism from its foundations in serialism and poses severe technical challenges for the soloist. It opens with an expansive sonata movement (with a waltz-like central development section), succeeded in turn by a reflective Andante. The march-like finale incorporates a long, partly accompanied cadenza, which includes recollections of the previous two movements.

The Violin Concerto (1935) of Schoenberg's pupil, Berg, was written as a memorial for Manon Gropius, who had died of polio at the age of eighteen – it was dedicated 'to the memory of an angel'. Berg revealed that the concerto's four movements (it is in two parts, each differentiated by a pause and divided into two distinct sections) were designed as a biographical portrait – birth, teenage delight in dancing, the catastrophe of illness, death. The opening Andante, with its clear subdivisions into introduction, principal subject, subordinate subject, concluding subject and codetta, is followed by a scherzo-like movement with two trios of which the first is a waltz and the second a Carinthian ländler tune. An Allegro in the free style of a cadenza leads to a concluding Adagio based on the chorale *Es ist genug* (in Bach's own harmonisation) whose opening pitches form the first four notes of the twelve-note series on which this work is based.

France

Of 'Les Six', only Milhaud contributed to the violin concerto repertory. Of his four violin concertos, the first (1927) is remarkable for the brevity of its three-movement whole, its severe technical demands (especially in the finale's cadenza), cheerful atmosphere, monothematic central Romance, and polytonal 'Prélude'. No. 2 (1946) opens in more serious vein, passages of dramatic recitative flanking an uneasy 'animé' principal section. Not even in the lively finale, which follows the intense, sombre slow movement, are the feelings of unease lifted for good. Nos. 3 (1958) and 4 are rarely performed, but Milhaud's *Concertino de printemps* (vn, ch orch, 1934) and his three further concertinos named after the other seasons of the year (that for summer is for violin accompanied by nine instruments, mostly wind) have achieved some popularity. Other French violin concertos of note are Dutilleux's *L'Arbre des songes* (1980–5), Sauguet's *Concerto d'Orphée* (1953), and the works of Françaix (1970 and 1978–9), Jolivet (1972) and Martinon (1937 and 1960).

Italy

Italy is represented chiefly by the 'neo-Classical' works of Casella (1928), Respighi (*Concerto gregoriano*, 1921),[38] Pizzetti (1944), Zandonai (*Concerto romantico*, 1919), Rieti (1928 and 1969) and Bucchi (*Concerto lirico*, 1958). From c.1940, composers such as Riccardo Nielsen (1932), Peragallo (1954) and Malipiero (1952) turned with varying strictness to twelve-note technique; so, too, did the younger generation of Maderna (1969), Donatoni (*Divertimento*, vn, ch orch, 1954) and Clementi (1977).

The Americas

American composers cultivated a mixture of styles at the beginning of the century, ranging from French, through Austro-German dodecaphony and neo-Classicism to home-cultivated jazz and negro spirituals. The Russian-born Louis Gruenberg turned to jazz, folk and negro spirituals for his individual expression (Op. 47, 1944), while Roy Harris (1950) also exploited American idioms. Walter Piston (No. 1, 1939) favoured a neo-Classical approach, while Roger Sessions's four-movement Concerto (1935), remarkable for its exclusion of violins from the orchestral forces and the duet for soloist and basset horn (alternating with clarinet) at the beginning of the 'Romanza' (third movement), illustrates his moving towards a more chromatic and expressionistic style. Leaning towards dodecaphony was Berg's pupil Ross Lee Finney (1933, rev. 1952; 1973), whereas Menotti's (1952) and Barber's (Op. 14, 1939–40) concertos are largely lyrical and neo-Romantic – only the

angular, dissonant and virtuosic Toccata finale of Barber's work does not fit such a description.

'Foreign' influences in the USA included Bloch (1938), Korngold (1945) and Krenek. Bloch described his Violin Concerto as 'pure' music, but the Jewish characteristics of his style[39] are never far from the surface of this quasi-cyclic work. Typically, Korngold's Concerto incorporates a theme from one of his finest film scores, *Juarez* (1939), and concludes with a virtuosic finale. Krenek left two concertos (1924 and 1954), the first in one continuous movement.

More recently American interest in the progress of the violin concerto has been preserved by Ben Weber (1954), Benjamin Lees (1958), Piston (No. 2, 1960), Rochberg (1974–5) and the conservative Eastman group, notably William Bergsma (1966) and Peter Mennin (1950). David Diamond (1936, 1947 and 1967) left the Eastman School after a year to seek more progressive instruction with Sessions and Boulanger. More experimental still have been Charles Wuorinen (amp vn, orch, 1972), Lou Harrison (vn, perc, 1959), Philip Glass (1987) and Gunther Schuller (1975–6), the last-named finding much inspiration in jazz.

The musical renaissance in Latin America brought to the fore several composers, many of whom were nationalistic in intent. Notable violin concerto composers include the Chilean Pedro Allende (1940), the Brazilians Oscar Fernández (1941), Camargo Guarnieri (1940 and 1953), Francisco Mignone (1961) and Radames Gnattali (1947 and 1962), the Colombian Guillermo Uribe-Holguin (Opp. 64 and 79) and the Argentinians Juan José Castro (1962), Jacobo Ficher (1942) and Alberto Ginastera (1963). Ginastera's virtuosic concerto requires six percussionists and a whole range of percussion instruments; its finale incorporates quotations from Paganini's *Caprices* Op. 1. In Mexico, the nationalistic approaches of Carlos Chávez (1948–50 and 1965), Manuel Ponce (1943) and Rodolfo Halffter (1940) have contrasted markedly with the microtonal experiments of Julián Carrillo (1963 and 1964).

Hungary

German Romanticism gripped many early-twentieth-century Hungarian composers, notably Dohnányi (1914–15 and 1949–50) and Weiner (1950 and 1957),[40] with only occasional use of folk melody. Bartók's Second Violin Concerto (1937–8), on the other hand, is symmetrically constructed around two large-scale sonata-form movements that make extensive use of variational procedures. It has as its focal point a set of six variations on a theme which incorporates the melodic and rhythmical inflexions of Magyar folk-music. The turbulent, final Allegro molto provides stark contrast with the ethereal conclusion of the Andante tranquillo. It is itself often regarded as a complex variation of the opening movement, but Bartók has skilfully manipulated its material so that it

takes on a very different overall shape and character. No. 1 (1907–8)[41] adopts the two-movement (slow–fast) structure of a rhapsody and is also essentially in Romantic vein – richly chromatic, passionate, and full of lyricism and bravura. While the opening movement alternates sections of contrapuntal character with others of lyrical conception and rhapsodic treatment, the economical second movement is more savage, softened by sections of pure romanticism.

Poland

The first (1916) of Szymanowski's two violin concertos, ambiguous in tonality and complex in texture and structure, is in one continuous movement, subdivided into sections of contrasting character. Inspired by the poem *May Night* by Tadeusz Micinski, it has a marked Oriental flavour and gives the impression of an improvisation. The second (1932) is more nationalistic, incorporating Polish folk materials into its concise one-movement structure, which is clearly divisible into four sections. Other major Polish contributors to the repertory include Andrzej Panufnik (1971),[42] Grażyna Bacewicz (1937, 1946, 1948, 1951, 1954, 1957 and 1965) and Krzysztof Penderecki (1976).

Great Britain

Elgar's Concerto in B minor (1910) is in the vanguard of twentieth-century British concertos. It is especially remarkable for its thematic unity, notably the ternary Andante's naturally developed reference to the first subject of the opening movement and the reference to the Andante in the finale; and the uncontrived brilliance and unexpected formal development of this finale itself, which incorporates an accompanied cadenza and rounds off the whole work by recalling themes from the first movement. The wealth of contrasting materials in Delius's lyrical Concerto (1916), comprising three main sections played without a break, are unified by a fanfare-like motif which appears in various keys at different points throughout. Similarly, in Walton's unashamedly Romantic, symphonic Concerto (1939), the opening idea of the finale harks back to the theme of the trio; a third, broader melody is related to the concerto's opening theme, bringing unity to the whole work.[43] Unity is provided in Benjamin Britten's Concerto (1939, rev. 1950) by a motto-rhythm (timpani), which pervades the opening movement. A solo cadenza bridges the central scherzo and finale (a skilfully orchestrated passacaglia) and recalls the motto-rhythm and other principal first-movement material.

The violin concertos of Hamilton Harty (1908–9), Vaughan Williams (1925), Arnold Bax (1937–8), E. J. Moeran (1937), Roberto Gerhard (1942–3), Alan Rawsthorne (1947–8 and 1956), Iain Hamilton (1952 and

1971), Sir Arthur Bliss (1955), Lennox Berkeley (1961), Alexander Goehr (1962), Hugh Wood (1971), David Blake (1975), Richard Rodney Bennett (1975) and Peter Maxwell Davies (1985) are also worthy of passing mention, although they have never been in the forefront of the repertory.

Other countries

Other countries making notable contributions to the literature include Spain (Rodrigo: *Concierto de estio*, 1943), Switzerland (Frank Martin: 1951), the Netherlands (Henk Badings: 1928, 1933, 1944 and 1946), Greece (Skalkottas: 1937–8) and Czechoslovakia (Martinů: 1933 and 1943; and Hába: 1954–5). Martinů's concertos are in lyrical vein and comprise three movements, incorporating folk idioms in their central movements of pastoral character. Prominent Australian composers in the genre have included Arthur Benjamin (1932), Don Banks (1968) and Malcolm Williamson (1965), while Saburo Moroi (1939), Michio Mamiya (1959) and Akira Miyoshi (1965) have done much to broaden the repertory in Japan.