

‘CHOICE THINGS OF VALUE’: THE MYSTERIOUS GENESIS AND CHARACTER OF THE VI CONCERTOS IN SEVEN PARTS ATTRIBUTED TO ALESSANDRO SCARLATTI

ROSALIND HALTON AND MICHAEL TALBOT



ABSTRACT

The VI Concertos in Seven Parts published by Benjamin Cooke under Alessandro Scarlatti's name in 1740 have long been suspected of being either arrangements or works by a different composer. Close study of the sources, some of which have only recently come to light, shows them to be arrangements of sonata a quattro, four composed by Alessandro Scarlatti and two by his younger brother Francesco. The unacknowledged compiler and arranger of the set was almost certainly Charles Avison, who in addition made a significant compositional intervention. The publication of the concertos formed part of a pioneering strategy on Cooke's part whereby he acquired, and under the protection of a royal privilege engraved, significant works in manuscript owned (but not composed) by individual musicians within his circle. Among the latter was John Christopher Pepusch, whose role in the first publication of Domenico Scarlatti's sonatas K31–42 is described for the first time.

A PUBLISHER, A PRIVILEGE AND A PRESUMED PROVENANCE

On 8 December 1740 the London music publisher Benjamin Cooke advertised for the first time, in the *Daily Gazetteer*, a new instrumental collection. Its text read:

NEW MUSICK. | *By His Majesty's Royal Licence.* | This Day are Publish'd, | SIX Concerto's, in Seven Parts, for | Violins &c. Compos'd by Signior ALEXANDER SCARLATTI. | Printed for and sold by B. Cooke, in New-Street, Covent-Garden. | *Of whom may be had, Just Published,* | I. Six Solos for Two Violoncellos. Compos'd by Sig. Sal-ivatore Lanzetti, for the practice of his Royal Highness the | Prince of Wales. | II. Two Volumes of Lessons for the Harpsichord (Dedicated | to, and composed expressly [*sic*] for the Practice of her Royal High-ness the Princess of Asturia) by Sig. Domenico Scarlatti. | III. New Editions of the Original Score of Corelli's 48 So-l-natas and 12 Concertos. Also the Single Parts of the same | Works; and his 12 Solos, neatly and exactly engrav'd on | Copper-Plates. | IV. Twelve Concertos in Seven Parts. Compos'd by John | Humphries.

Of the many interesting details, the first to attract attention is the mention of a 'Royal Licence' (a privilege conferring an exclusive right to engrave and publish the stated item) on the second line. Royal privileges of this kind for printing music dated back to Handel's *Suites de pieces pour le clavecin* of 1720, and between then

<rosalindhlt@gmail.com>; <mtalbot@liverpool.ac.uk>

The authors would like to thank the following for their advice and assistance in the preparation of this article: Luca Della Libera, Simon Fleming, François-Pierre Goy, Thomas Griffin, Christopher Hair, Peter Holman, Nicholas Lockey and Rudolf Rasch.



and 1760 forty-one such privileges were granted for musical works.¹ The standard duration of a privilege was fourteen years. It was a slightly more effective means of protecting musical publications against piracy than simple copyright (as defined by the Copyright Act of 1710), but its main value seems to have been to lend them the aura of royal association.

Those who petitioned for a privilege, which cost about ten pounds and entailed a wait of about a month, were normally the authors of the works to be protected.² On 20 July 1737, however, Benjamin Cooke became the first music publisher to seek and gain a privilege. To achieve this, he had to demonstrate that he was the sole and lawful owner of the music in question, described in his petition as ‘abo[u]t Twenty original Concertos for Violins and other Musicall Instruments compos[e]d by Ino [John] Humphries dec[ease]d.’³ To this end, he appended to his petition a certificate written by the organ and harpsichord builder John Harris confirming that he had sold Cooke the works. Cooke went on to bring out these concertos in two collections, the first of which is the final item in the advertisement above.

This privilege was very specific, and therefore limited, regarding the composer and type of works covered. Eighteen months later Cooke repeated the exercise, but this time he took pains to make the new privilege as open-ended as possible. Its text, known to scholars but not quoted in full before, reads:

To the King’s Most Excellent Majesty

The Humble Petition of Benjamin Cooke of S.^t Martins in the Fields in the County of Middlesex
Musick Printer,

Sheweth

That he has purchased a Collection of Original Pieces – of Vocal and Instrumental Musick composed by Dominico Scarlatti, and other Authors, and with great Labour and Expence Engraved, printed and fitted (Some of the said Works, in part of the Same) in such a manner as will render them very usefull and entertaining to all Performers on the Harpsichord, Organ, or any other Instrument as the s.^d Musick shall Require.

He therefore Humbly prays your Majesty will be gracciously pleased to grant him your Royal Privilege and Licance [*sic*] for the sole engraving, printing and Publishing the said Work or Work’s for the Term of Fourteen Years. And your Petitioner shall ever Pray &c.

Benj:ⁿ Cooke⁴

The music to be covered is not defined closely according to scoring or authorship – Domenico Scarlatti seems to be named mainly as a peg on which to hang everything else – and the only apparent limitations are that, first, the music should originate from the same purchased collection as the Scarlatti pieces and, second, that it should be composed or arranged for a single instrument. The first limitation was in practice unenforceable, and in the privilege that Cooke was granted – or at least in the form in which he engraved it in his publications – the second limitation was nullified by the crafty substitution of ‘instruments’ for ‘instrument’.⁵ Effectively, Cooke could use the privilege for the next fourteen years to protect any music by a dead or absent composer that he chose to publish on his own account.

1 John Small, ‘The Development of Musical Copyright’, in *The Music Trade in Georgian England*, ed. Michael Kassler (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 281.

2 Small, ‘The Development of Musical Copyright’, 278 and 299.

3 The National Archives (Kew, UK), SP 36/41, f. 291. John Humphries (c1707–1733) was a violinist and composer who at the time of his early death had appeared in print only with violin sonatas.

4 31 January 1739. The National Archives, SP 36/47, f. 42.

5 In all other respects, the engraved privilege sticks to the wording of the petition very closely in the relevant portions of the text. We have consulted the privilege included in both volumes of Domenico Scarlatti’s *XLII Suites de pieces* in the copies sharing the shelfmark e.32.f. held by the British Library.



What scholars have so far failed to notice, however, is the undated supporting certificate by the person from whom Cooke purchased the musical items: John Christopher Pepusch.⁶ This reads:

Wheras I have lately had in my Possession several Original Pieces of Vocal & Instrumental Musick, Compos'd by Sig.^r Dominico Scarlati, (Chapell Master to his Catholick Majesty:) which I have lawfully Purchas'd, they being new, & never before Publish'd in Great-Britain I have now dispos'd of the said Musick to Benj.ⁿ Cooke (of New Street in the Parish of S.^t Martins in the fields Musick Printer) in order to Print and Publish the same as his Property, and for his sole use, and Benefit, who has now with great Labour and Expence, Engrav'd and Printed Part of the same, (and are now ready to be Publish'd) in such a Manner, as will render them very usefull, and Entertaining to all Performers on the Harpsichord, or Organ.

Which I do hereby Certifie

I. C. Pepusch

The close textual similarity of parts of Pepusch's attestation to certain passages in the petition itself is striking, but it is impossible to know for certain whether the certificate borrowed phrases from the petition or the reverse, even if the first seems more likely. Pepusch was an old associate of Cooke, who in 1732 had published by subscription his ground-breaking editions in score of Corelli's Opp. 1–4 and Op. 6 (the penultimate item listed in the quoted advertisement). He was also to become the teacher of the publisher's son, the organist and composer Benjamin Cooke junior (1734–1793), who after the death of Pepusch in 1752 would succeed him as director of the Academy of Ancient Music. An assiduous collector of music, Pepusch, whose admiration for Alessandro Scarlatti's vocal works emerges from his inclusion of the latter's operatic music in pasticcios and, even more, in his own English-language cantatas, had an equally strong link to Domenico Scarlatti. Pepusch's wife, the retired soprano Margherita de L'Épine, had sung at the last performance of the composer's opera *Narciso* in 1720 and was an adept harpsichordist, keen to know and play his music.⁷

The first fruit of the new privilege, and the only one corresponding beyond question to its description of the music purchased, is the second of the 'just published' items in the advertisement, described as 'Two Volumes of Lessons for the Harpsichord . . . by Sig. Domenico Scarlatti' (in an earlier advertisement announcing publication of the first volume, in the *London Evening News* of 19 May 1739, the description appears more exuberantly as 'Select Tocatos or Lessons for the Harpsichord'). However, the publication itself has a very different, at first sight rather mystifying, title: *XLII Suites de pieces pour le clavecin*. As Roberto Pagano first pointed out, the strange choice of French refers back, doubtless intentionally, to Handel's similarly titled publication of 1720.⁸ But it is at once clear that the suites themselves cannot conceivably number forty-two: disregarding the addition of three 'bonus' movements by other composers, this is the sum of the individual 'lessons' from which the suites are formed. The untidiness of the number forty-two arises from the fact that the collection is a composite of at least three and probably four separate constituents:

1. a group (perhaps originating as a formal set) of twelve sonatas, κ31–42. These are the likeliest candidates for the pieces acquired from Pepusch.

6 The National Archives, SP 36/47, f. 42A.

7 On Domenico Scarlatti's possible presence in London in 1719–1720, which would have enabled him to meet Pepusch and his wife in person, see Malcolm Boyd, *Domenico Scarlatti: Master of Music* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1986), 28–31.

8 Roberto Pagano, *Alessandro and Domenico Scarlatti: Two Lives in One*, trans. Frederick Hammond (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon, 2006), 307.



2. the thirty *Essercizi per gravicembalo* pirated from the 'authorized' edition, probably prepared under the supervision of the painter Jacopo Amigoni, a close friend of the composer, which had first been advertised on 3 February 1739 in *The Country Journal*.⁹
3. a single-movement introduction to the first suite composed by Thomas Roseingrave, the ardent Scarlattian who edited the collection for Cooke. Roseingrave was probably likewise responsible for the variant version of the Scarlatti sonata (κ8) placed immediately after it.
4. a fugue in F minor plausibly attributed to Alessandro Scarlatti, found as the fourth item in the second volume. This could have come either from Pepusch or from Roseingrave.

As for the organization of the movements into suites, volume 1 starts bravely enough with an orderly sequence of seven movements in G minor or major, while movements 8–18 are all in D minor or major except for two internal movements in the closely related keys of A minor and F major. After this, no two adjacent movements are ever in the same key, which makes the notion of suites impossible to sustain. One cannot but conclude that Cooke and Roseingrave's incompletely realized presentation of the sonatas to the public as suites was first and foremost a device adopted in order to mingle the sonatas pirated from the *Essercizi* with the legitimately acquired ones, thereby obscuring the theft a little.

If nothing else, this episode demonstrates Cooke's habit of collaborating with a small group of mutually supportive musicians – we have met Pepusch and Roseingrave, and will shortly meet others – to produce commercially successful publications, even if serious compromises were made regarding the quality of engraving, the authenticity of the works offered and, of course, simple business ethics. The 'authorized' edition of the *Essercizi*, lovingly prepared and beautifully executed, cost two guineas in the shops: Cooke could offer half as many movements again at half the cost.

Between the *XLII Suites* and the *VI Concertos in Seven Parts* Cooke brought out, likewise under his new privilege, a set of six duos for two cellos by the Italian cellist Salvatore Lanzetti, who in 1733 had visited London, where he played before the royal family on 23 April and followed up this success with a benefit concert at Lincoln's Inn Fields.¹⁰ Five out of the six duos are concordant with works published in Amsterdam in 1736 as Lanzetti's Op. 1, but the divergence is enough to suggest that Cooke acquired a manuscript originating from the time of the cellist's visit; the connection to the cello-playing Prince of Wales mentioned in the advertisement points in the same direction. Cooke possibly bought these duos from Pepusch as well.

So what about the elder Scarlatti's *VI Concertos*? Could they, too, have been acquired by Cooke via Pepusch? One would be tempted at least to explore this possibility further, were it not for evidence from an unexpected quarter that points in a different, albeit not wholly unrelated, direction.

A DESCRIPTION AND EARLY RECEPTION HISTORY OF THE *VI CONCERTOS*

Before we resume the investigation into Cooke's source for the concertos, we need briefly to discuss the works themselves and outline how they have fared since their first edition in 1740. The concerto 'in seven

9 This edition, which Scarlatti dedicated to John V of Portugal, may have doubled as a leaving present made by Amigoni (who had been very active as a scene painter for the opera as well as a portrait and history painter) to his British patrons prior to his departure for the Continent in 1739. This would make it a musical counterpart to the new edition of Paolo Rolli's Italian translation of Bonaventure d'Overbeke's *Reliquiae antiquae urbis Romae* (carrying the title *Degli avanzi dell'antica Roma*; London: Edlin, 1739) that Amigoni, by now very wealthy, financed from his own pocket, as the volume's Preface explains. Amigoni, or whoever saw the edition through the press, appears to have got wind of Cooke's intention to publish Scarlatti sonatas, since the press advertisement for them ends with a pre-emptive swipe at anticipated 'incorrect printed Editions'.

10 *Read's Weekly Journal or British Gazetteer*, 28 April 1733; *Daily Journal*, 3 May 1733.



parts’, as such concertos were commonly called in Britain between the 1720s and the 1780s,¹¹ took its layout and the description of the parts directly from Roman models, in particular the venerated *Concerti grossi*, Op. 6, of Arcangelo Corelli, first published in 1714. The division of the ensemble into a three-part concertino of two violins and cello and a four-part ripieno (or *concerto grosso*) of two violins, viola and continuo bass instruments suited the British environment as perfectly as it did the Roman.¹² The only significant difference was that whereas in Rome the concertino/ripieno division mapped on to the distinction between household musicians and externally recruited ones (both groups usually consisting of professional players), in Britain – where local music societies dominated the orchestral scene – it corresponded to the distinction between hired professionals and the larger body of amateur players. A layout in seven parts, with a corresponding number of partbooks, did not necessarily mean that more than one (or, indeed, any) solo violinist or a solo cellist was in action during a work or movement, for the option always existed to give exactly the same music to corresponding concertino and ripieno parts, effectively dissolving the first component, wholly or partially, into the second. For this reason, many ostensible ‘concerti grossi’ (now using this term in its more modern, generic sense as a concerto for more than one solo instrument) turn out in reality to be ‘ripieno’ concertos (*concerti a quattro*) or solo concertos (*concerti a cinque*). Superficially, it might appear that the British Isles, uniquely among European regions, held a little aloof from the ripieno and solo concerto for strings alone, but this conclusion would ignore the many such works lying concealed within a seven-partbook layout.¹³

The parts for the Cooke edition, engraved in upright format, comprise (a) Violino primo concertino (thirteen pages), (b) Violino secondo concertino (eleven pages), (c) Violino primo ripieno (ten pages), (d) Violino secondo ripieno (eight pages), (e) Alto viola (nine pages), (f) Violoncello (ten pages) and (g) Basso ripieno (eight pages).¹⁴ All the parts are headed by an identical title-page reading:

VI. CONCERTOS | *in Seven parts, for two VIOLINS | & Violoncello Obligato | With two VIOLINS more | a Tenor & Thorough Bass | Compos'd by | Sig.^r Alexander Scarlatti. | Publish'd by His Majesty's Royal Licence. | London | Printed for & sold by Benj.ⁿ Cooke at the Golden Harp in Newstreet Cov.^t Garden.*¹⁵

Some very interesting details leap out immediately from the overview of the set provided by [Table 1](#). The order of keys used, none of which is duplicated, suggests systematic planning. The four minor-key works (1, 2, 4, 5) progress ‘sharpwards’ through the circle of fifths from F minor to D minor, and each pair is followed by a major-key concerto. But there is an interesting inconsistency in the choice of key signatures, for the minor-key works display the ‘reduced’ key signatures (based on the *tuoni ecclesiastici* and their transpositions) characteristic of the late seventeenth century, as exemplified in the works of Corelli, whereas

11 This nomenclature appears as early as 1726 in a press announcement of an edition of Geminiani’s arrangements of the first six sonatas of Corelli’s Op. 5 published by Cooke and Daniel Wright; it was still current in 1785, when Charles Wesley advertised a ‘Concerto Grosso, in Seven Parts.’

12 Small variations in ‘concerto grosso’ instrumentation occur. For example, the viola can be reassigned to the concertino, or else both concertino and ripieno can have their own viola part. Viola parts belonging to the ripieno were sometimes implicitly or explicitly *ad libitum*, since where players were short, the sacrifice of these parts did least harm to the music. A fundamental principle was that concertino parts were never doubled, whereas part-sharing was always permitted (though never compulsory) for ripieno parts.

13 For example, the seventh of Handel’s *Twelve Grand Concertos* (1740) is a ‘ripieno’ concerto from start to finish, while the last concerto of Corelli’s Op. 6, the foundation stone of the tradition, operates for most of its length as a solo concerto, denying the second concertino violin prominence at any point.

14 The totals are those of numbered pages containing music; they exclude title-pages and pages left blank.

15 These details are taken from the example in the British Library shelfmarked g.1052.



Table 1 Overview of the *VI Concertos in Seven Parts* attributed to Alessandro Scarlatti

No.	Key Key signature	Tempo, metre	Form, texture	Length in bars	Observations
1	F minor two flats	Grave, <i>c</i>	through-composed, contrapuntal	16	ends V–I
		Allegro, <i>c</i>	fugue	64	vc has two solo passages in tenor clef doubling va
		Largo, $\frac{3}{2}$	through-composed, contrapuntal	72	vc has one solo passage in tenor clef doubling va
		Allemanda Allegro, <i>c</i>	binary, homophonic	19 (9 + 10)	
2.	C minor two flats	Allegro, <i>c</i>	fugue	63	vc doubles va in bars 21–24
		Grave, <i>c</i>	through-composed, contrapuntal	24	va entry (bars 4–8) doubled by vn1
		Minueto, $\frac{3}{8}$	binary–rondeau hybrid, homophonic	52 (16 + 36)	both episodes in section 2 with solo scoring
3.	F major one flat	Allegro, <i>c</i>	through-composed, homophonic	16	
		Largo, $\frac{3}{4}$	through-composed, homophonic	19	in D minor, ending on V
		Allegro, <i>c</i>	fugue	53	vn1 has extended solo passage of nine bars
		Largo, $\frac{3}{2}$	through-composed, homophonic	27	starts in A minor, ends on V of D minor
		Allegro, $\frac{12}{8}$	binary, homophonic	38 (9 + 29)	<i>giga</i> style, ending with minor inflections and diminished sevenths preceding fermatas (twice); vn1 has three short solo passages
4.	G minor one flat	Allegro ma non troppo, <i>c</i>	fugue	53	vc has one solo bar in tenor clef doubling va (bars 20–21)
		Grave, <i>c</i>	through-composed, contrapuntal	24	in C minor, ending on V; chromatic character
		Vivace, $\frac{3}{8}$	binary, homophonic	22 (10 + 12)	quick <i>sarabanda</i> style, employing hemiola
5.	D minor (void key signature)	Allegro, <i>c</i>	fugue	51	vc has two solo passages in tenor clef doubling va (bars 19, 28–31)
		Grave, <i>c</i>	through-composed, contrapuntal	13	starts in G minor, ends on V of D minor; chromatic character
		Allegro, $\frac{12}{8}$	binary, homophonic	13 (6 + 7)	<i>giga</i> style, ending <i>piano</i>
		Minuet, $\frac{3}{8}$	binary, homophonic	16 (8 + 8)	phrases open with iambs (quaver + crotchet)
6.	E major four sharps	Allegro, <i>c</i>	through-composed, contrapuntal, with recurrent motto	25	two solo passages; diminished seventh preceding fermata before emphatic concluding phrase

Table 1 *continued*

No.	Key Key signature	Tempo, metre	Form, texture	Length in bars	Observations
		Allegro, <i>c</i>	fugue	63	opening entries for vn1 and vn2 solo; one <i>piano</i> marking (vn1 <i>ripieno</i>); adopts the <i>stile antico</i>
		Largo, $\frac{3}{2}$	through-composed, contrapuntal	17	opens in A major, closes on V of C sharp minor; bars 1–4 marked solo; fermata over GP occurs four times
		Affettuoso, $\frac{3}{8}$	binary, homophonic	79 (28 + 51)	copious use of <i>pianoforte</i> and solo/tutti contrast; galant melodic inflections

the E major concerto adopts a modern key signature of four sharps as used by Vivaldi, but not by Corelli, Torelli or Scarlatti himself, all of whom employ only three.¹⁶

The variable number and configuration of movements (from three to five, beginning with either a fast or a slow movement) is typical of the instrumental ensemble music of Alessandro Scarlatti and his Neapolitan contemporaries such as Francesco Mancini, Francesco Durante and Leonardo Leo.¹⁷ Other recognizably Neapolitan features are the presence of a fugal quick movement (usually entitled ‘Fuga’) at or towards the front of the composition and a short, homophonic and dance-like final movement. However, one finale, that of the C minor work, is anomalous. It departs from the expected simple, symmetrical (or nearly so) binary form to become a binary–rondeau hybrid with two tonic reprises of the opening refrain-theme in the second section.¹⁸ This kind of form, clearly indebted to French models, occurs often in music composed in Britain in the mid-eighteenth century – the extremely popular minuet finale of Geminiani’s Concerto in C minor Op. 2 No. 1 (1732) is a perfect example that could even have served as the direct model for this movement – but is quite alien to the Neapolitan tradition.¹⁹

The ‘Observations’ column of Table 1 mentions several instances where the viola and cello parts are in unison for several consecutive notes at a time. In Italy and England alike, violas were in short supply by the eighteenth century,²⁰ and in any case, the players assigned to the part (particularly in English amateur orchestras) were often the least expert, as Charles Avison regretfully pointed out in his *Essay on Musical*

16 Scarlatti notates with three sharps the E major aria ‘Che sarà, chi a me lo dice’ in his ‘Cantata pastorale’ (1716) *Non so che più m’ingombra* (Hanley 476). F major is the only key out of the six represented in the set for which ‘old’ and ‘new’ key signatures are identical.

17 Good comparators within Scarlatti’s own oeuvre are the twelve autograph *Simfonie di concerto grosso* (1715) once owned by William Boyce and today in the British Library (R.M.21.b.14.) and his seven quartet-sonatas with recorder included in an anthology of twenty-four works of this kind in Naples (I-Nc, Musica Strumentale 34–39).

18 The form can be represented schematically as A₁ A₂ :||: B A, C A₂ :||.

19 Unaware of the true chronology of the two movements, Charles Burney observed, in his correspondence with Thomas Twining, that Geminiani’s minuet was ‘very like one in the same key, among old Scarlatti’s concertos, in Melody and Conduct’ (in impugning Geminiani’s originality, he was of course innocently assuming that the finale of the second of the *VI Concertos* was Scarlatti’s, not Avison’s, composition). For the context of this remark see Enrico Careri, ‘The Correspondence between Burney and Twining about Corelli and Geminiani’, *Music & Letters* 72/1 (1991), 42.

20 On the decline in viola making see W. Henry Hill, Arthur F. Hill and Alfred E. Hill, *Antonio Stradivari, His Life and Work (1644–1737)*, reprint of 1902 edition (New York: Dover, 1963), 107–108.



Expression.²¹ For pragmatic reasons, the viola was often treated as an *ad libitum* part that, when not playing ‘filler’ notes, could most suitably double the bass part in an appropriate octave. Where, however, the viola had important thematic material, such as a fugal entry, its part could be doubled momentarily either by the cello or by a violin: this provided insurance against either the absence of a viola or the possible shortcomings of its player.²² Without such prudent reinforcement, in fact, the equality of the viola’s treatment in the Scarlatti concertos might well have caused consternation in their new English context.

Finally, the major-key concertos both make use of dramatic fermatas placed immediately before cadential phrases, often following diminished-seventh harmony. This rhetorical feature, so familiar from the music of Handel, is entirely absent from the minor-key concertos. The E major concerto differs from all five of its companions in having a final movement of markedly galant character, with complex melodic decoration and modal shifts (its final phrase is in E minor).²³

Available information on the initial reception of the concertos gives a mixed picture. The number of extant examples of the print listed by RISM is a respectable, but not overwhelming, thirteen.²⁴ Indeed, set alongside the ubiquitous and universally loved works of Handel or Corelli, these works seem to have enjoyed a muted reception, both in the eighteenth century and in our own time. One early performance is documented. A press notice of 30 March 1756 for a benefit concert for ‘Mr Nares’ (the organist James Nares) in York, to be held on ‘Friday next, the second of April’, specifies ‘The First Concerto of Signor Scarlatti’ as the closing piece of ‘Act I’.²⁵ This first concerto, in F minor, has a markedly austere, even penitential, mood for a piece programmed alongside such items as ‘A favourite Chorus of Mr. Handel’s, in *Acis and Galatea*: O the Pleasure of the Plain’. The date of the York performance – 2 April – suggests that the concerto was chosen especially for its suitability for a Lenten performance. As one might gather from Haydn’s Symphony No. 49, ‘*La Passione*’ (which like Scarlatti’s concerto is homotonal), or from Pergolesi’s and Vivaldi’s settings of the *Stabat mater*, the key of F minor has a historical association with lamentation.²⁶ Indeed, the prevailing mood of Concerto No. 1, notwithstanding its concluding Allemanda, is sacred rather than secular. The same can be said for the other three minor-key works in the set. Burney perhaps did not err when, some decades later, he remarked in a footnote: ‘*Six Concertos* for the church, by Ales. Scarlatti, were printed in England by Benjamin Cook . . . early in this century; but when they were composed is not easy to discover. They were too grave perhaps for any other place but the church; but the fugues, harmony, and modulation, are very fine’.²⁷

21 Charles Avison, *An Essay on Musical Expression* (London: Davis, 1752), 19. The 1753 text is reprinted, together with an ample commentary, in Pierre Dubois, *Charles Avison’s ‘Essay on Musical Expression’* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004).

22 This is the case in Corelli’s Op. 6 (where the ripieno itself is optional) and also in Handel’s Op. 6.

23 Modal shifts, dramatic pauses and diminished sevenths are of course typical of the Neapolitan ‘school’ in general, and of Alessandro Scarlatti in particular. It is specifically the contrast with the four minor-key works (where these features are absent) that attracts attention here.

24 RISM A/I/7 (1978) lists for the Cooke edition (S1187) twelve locations: D-B, GB-Cpl (incomplete), GB-Cu (incomplete), GB-HAdolmetsch, GB-Lbl, GB-Ob, I-Rama, NL-Uim, S-Skma, US-NH, US-NYp and US-Wc. RISM A/I/14 (1999) lists one further example in RUS-Mrg (as SS1187).

25 Elizabeth Chevill, *Music Societies and Musical Life in Old Foundation Cathedral Cities 1700–60* (PhD dissertation, University of London, 1993), 286.

26 Rita Steblin, *A History of Key Characteristics in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries*, second edition (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2002), 39, quotes the following early characterizations of F minor: ‘complaints and lamentation’ (Rousseau, 1691); ‘gloomy and plaintive’ (Charpentier, c1692); ‘sad and lugubrious’ (Masson, 1697); ‘tenderness and plaints, mournful songs’ (Rameau, 1722).

27 Charles Burney, *A General History of Music, from the Earliest Ages to the Present Period* (London: Payne, 1776–1789), volume 3, 546n.



The same F minor concerto seems also to have been singled out on the Continent, for as early as 1742, under the description of 'Un Concerto Primo del Signor Scarlatti', it was advertised by the Parisian engraver and publisher Louis Hue.²⁸

A sharp-eyed user of the Concertos might have noticed that the two major-key works of the set exploit the possibilities of the concerto 'in seven parts' much more fully than the four minor-key ones. Concerto No. 3 in F major contains passages of display writing for solo violin as well as a number of solo/tutti alternations, as does No. 6 in E major. This solo interest and textural contrast are fundamentals of the Roman-style concerto grosso. True, the minor-key works contain a modicum of apparently independent cello writing, signalled by the use of the tenor clef, but in nearly every case this turns out to be merely a doubling of the viola part at a fugal entry. Given, however, the prior history of the seven-part layout in Britain as a sort of universal receptacle for concertos of different kinds, there was nothing intrinsically strange about this absence of a genuinely solo role for the cello.

What could instead have aroused suspicion even then, as it has certainly done in more recent times, is the pronounced 'Roman' character of the scoring. The instrumental ensemble works postdating Scarlatti's definitive return to Naples from Rome at the end of 1708 give no hint that he had adopted concerto-grosso instrumentation for strings in seven parts as a normal and permanent part of his compositional equipment, even if 'when in Rome' he had accepted and used it. The twelve *Sinfonie di concerto grosso* (1715) show him exploring different concertino combinations – pairs of wind instruments, for example, not simply two violins and cello.²⁹ From these considerations, two possibilities, equally unsettling, emerge. One is that the Concertos were written not by Scarlatti but by a different composer, one who was thoroughly at home with the concerto 'in seven parts' as cultivated in Britain. The other possibility is that Scarlatti was indeed the composer, but the expansion to seven parts was the work of someone else. As we shall learn, both surmises are in part true, interacting in a complex way.

ORIGINS, SOURCES AND AUTHORSHIP OF THE VI CONCERTOS

The Four Minor-Key Works

The first step towards unravelling the history of the *VI Concertos* was taken unobtrusively in 1903 by Edward J. Dent. His exhaustive knowledge of the Santini Collection in Münster led this pioneer of Scarlatti research to identify an earlier version of the four minor-key concertos preserved in the form of manuscript parts written out by a contemporary copyist, D-MÜs, SANT Hs. 3957a (1–4). The parts for the first work are enclosed within its cello part, which acts as a folder for the other three (two violins and viola). Its first page serves as a title-page, which reads (ignoring later library inscriptions): 'Violoncello// | Sonata Prima à Quattro | Due Violini Violetta, e Violoncello | Senza Cemb.^o | Del Sig.^r Caval.^{re} Ales.^o Scarlatti'.³⁰ For the three

28 *Mercur de France*, February 1742, 355. No example of this edition appears to have survived. A year or two later, Hue also engraved the second concerto separately.

29 It is in his oratorios, such as *San Filippo Neri* of 1704 (D-MÜs, SANT Hs. 3860) and *Il giardino di rose* of 1707 (D-MÜs, SANT Hs. 3861), that we see Scarlatti most explicitly adopting the vocabulary and resources of the Roman orchestral world, with scores headed 'Concertino' and 'Concerto Grosso' in Corellian style (although some examples from Naples exist, such as the 1696 serenata *Genio di Partenope, Gloria del Sebeto, Piacere di Mergellina*). A telling instance of adaptation is seen in the 1706 revision for Rome of *Venere, Adone, et Amore* from its original four-part scoring (for Naples in 1696) to concerto-grosso scoring (D-MÜs, SANT Hs. 3945). But more commonly throughout his work, including this serenata, Scarlatti's concertino consists of solo violin and cello (often the only instrument to be designated in his scores) rather than the regular Corellian concertino of two violins and cello.

30 'Cavaliere' was a title that Scarlatti received from Pope Clement XI in 1715. This year is obviously a *terminus post quem* for the copying of the four sonatas, but since the manuscripts are non-autograph, the presence of the title does nothing to clarify the date of composition, which may have been much earlier. Edward Dent's assumption, in 'The Earliest



companion works, in contrast, each part has its own title-page; the form of wording, however, always remains similar.³¹

The reason for Dent's particular interest in these sonatas becomes obvious from the title of the article that he wrote on them: 'The Earliest String Quartets'. The prime focus of this article is the claim made in his opening paragraph that Alessandro Scarlatti, not Haydn, should be regarded as the composer of 'the first real string quartets', and that Italy (rather than Austria) was the country where the string quartet originated.³²

Dent made the connection with the published versions (as concertos) of the four sonatas and, profiting from the fortunate existence of a manuscript score of the six concertos on his doorstep (in Cambridge's Fitzwilliam Museum),³³ was able to make some very useful observations in passing. While showing commendable foresight in surmising that it was 'extremely probable that the arrangement of the compositions in seven parts was more likely to be Cooke's than Scarlatti's',³⁴ he gave surprisingly little emphasis to two aspects that today seem interesting: (1) the recurrence of the phrase 'senza cembalo' (with obvious precautionary intent) in each of the parts for all four 'quartets'; (2) the fact that not all movements in the Santini source reappear in the concerto versions. Specifically, a type of extended, virtuosic allegro movement in $\frac{3}{4}$ appearing in all the sonatas save the first, in F minor, is omitted from the Cooke publication. Dent does, however, make the important and accurate claim that the parts are 'in the handwriting of a copyist frequently employed by Alessandro Scarlatti'.³⁵ They therefore have an especially high degree of textual authority for the *Sonate a quattro*.

In advancing his case that these works should be regarded as 'the earliest string quartets', Dent rightly drew attention to the equality of status accorded to the viola, an instrument 'usually much neglected by composers of that epoch'.³⁶ He completed his description of the works with a synoptic account of selected movements, concentrating on the fugues (which he rated highly) but leaving out of consideration the three movements not included in the published concertos.³⁷ Dent also commented on the concise dance-like movements closing each of the works, drawing attention to their pleasingly asymmetrical phrasing, which he found typical of the composer.³⁸ However, he overlooked the singular fact that the 'rondo' – as he labelled the minuet finale of the C minor sonata – belongs not to the sonata in Münster (which has instead a shorter binary movement using related but not identical musical material of a more obviously Scarlattian cast), but

String Quartets', *The Monthly Musical Record* 33 (November 1903), 202–204, that the sonatas 'belong to the last decade of the composer's lifetime' (203) seems over-confident.

31 The bibliographical individuality of the first (F minor) sonata, which has only a single title-page, is complemented by other features, musical in nature, that set it slightly apart from its three companions. Perhaps it was the 'prototype' work, the others being added later, in the chosen key sequence, to produce a set.

32 Dent must also have seen in Münster the study scores made of the same four sonatas (plus other instrumental works by Alessandro Scarlatti) by Santini himself (D-MÜs, SANT Hs. 3957), in which their description as 'Quattro Quartetti a due Violini Viola e Basso' strongly implies that the Italian collector anticipated and perhaps also influenced the English scholar's view of their scoring.

33 GB-Cfm, MU.MS.158¹ (formerly 32.G.3.). We will return to consider this source later.

34 Dent, 'The Earliest String Quartets', 203. In writing 'Cooke's', Dent was probably using shorthand to denote any person who supplied the publisher with the printer's copy.

35 Dent, 'The Earliest String Quartets', 203. Although this copyist remains unidentified, he is possibly Cosimo Serio, who copied music by Alessandro Scarlatti in Rome in the early years of the century, as documented in Ursula Kirkendale, 'Handel with Ruspoli: New Documents from the Archivio Segreto Vaticano, December 1706 to December 1708', *Studi musicali* 32/2 (2003), 316–317 and Plates 7a and 7b.

36 Dent, 'The Earliest String Quartets', 203.

37 In Sonatas 2 (C minor) and 3 (G minor), the third of four movements; in Sonata 4 (D minor), the third of five movements.

38 Dent, 'The Earliest String Quartets', 204.



only to its later, concerto version.³⁹ His overall attitude towards the sonatas, leaving aside their presumed historical importance, was ambivalent in a way that reflected his usual (and perhaps deliberately provocative) stance: the dances are praised and the fugues admired, but the works otherwise present ‘nothing very striking’ and betray ‘a want of sympathy with his medium’.⁴⁰

Since Dent, those who have edited, performed and discussed the *VI Concertos* have usually been aware of the sonata origins of Nos 1, 2, 4 and 5, albeit with much uncertainty over the identity of the arranger, coupled with a general reluctance to believe that it was Alessandro Scarlatti himself.⁴¹

Closely connected to the Münster source D-MÜs, SANT Hs. 3957a, but unknown to Dent, is an incomplete source which is not listed by RISM, but is highly significant in the transmission history of Scarlatti’s four *Sonate a quattro*: a set of manuscript parts for three of the four sonatas, termed variously ‘Sinfonia’ and ‘Sonata’ on the title-pages, that is preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris.⁴² The musical text of this source is very close to, and in some details more convincing than, that of D-MÜs, 3957a, the positioning of the bass figures being almost identical. The title-pages exhibit significant differences, however, and the absence of ‘Cavaliere’ before the composer’s name suggests that this is the earlier source, and possibly even the exemplar from which D-MÜs, 3957a was copied. All title-pages include the description ‘al tavolino senza cimbalo’ (compare ‘senza cembalo’ in D-MÜs, 3957a), but the two surviving title-pages for the bass part specify a choice of instruments, ‘Liuto, Arpa, ò Violoncello’ (No. 2) and ‘Liuto, Violoncello, ò Arpa’ (No. 3), thereby clarifying the otherwise puzzling nature of a group of works ‘without harpsichord’ but nevertheless containing bass figures.

The phrase ‘al tavolino’ is primarily associated with the performance of polyphonic madrigals in seventeenth-century Rome, the performers grouped around a table and without instruments. According to Martin Kirnbauer, there was also an instrumental equivalent to these sung madrigals, which became the basic repertory of the viol consort acquired in 1634 by Cardinal Francesco Barberini (1597–1679).⁴³ In applying the term ‘al tavolino’ to his set of four sinfonias (or sonatas) in four parts, Alessandro Scarlatti airs his knowledge of this species of vocal or instrumental composition, with which he may have first become acquainted in the 1680s through his association with Queen Christina of Sweden, a patron who, as he himself wrote, ‘enjoyed it more than any other [form of] composition’ (‘se ne compiacenza più d’ogn’altra

39 The reason for Dent’s confusion of the sonata and concerto texts in this instance must have been that, as he himself records, he was consulting the already mentioned manuscript score of the six concertos in the Fitzwilliam Reference Library as a handy alternative to scoring up the parts of the sonatas.

40 Dent, ‘The Earliest String Quartets’, 203.

41 Malcolm Boyd’s observation in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, second edition, ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell (London: Macmillan, 2001), volume 22, 383, that ‘the provenance and attribution of this set as a whole remains problematic’ (he apparently does not reject the possibility of the third concerto’s authenticity) sets the tone. A more emphatic denial of Alessandro Scarlatti’s authorship of the *VI Concertos*, at least in their seven-part layout as *concerti grossi*, occurs in a CD review by Peter Holman (*Early Music Review* 81 (June 2002), 17–18), where one reads: ‘It is worth pointing out that the set as published by Cooke is almost certainly a forgery’. While the term ‘pasticcio’ would be more appropriate, Holman’s doubts are supported by the facts. Presciently, he comments on the stylistic contrast (with the four *Sonate a quattro*) of the third and sixth concertos, drawing particular attention to the uneven musical quality of the sixth concerto, which, he writes, ‘sounds as if it was written in England rather than Italy by someone at least a generation younger than Scarlatti’.

42 We thank the staff of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France for providing information on, and a microfilm of, this important source, which is undoubtedly the earliest among those surviving. The three preserved works have independent shelfmarks: *Sinfonia 2^a a 4^o* in C minor is D-9171; *Sonata 3^a a 4^o* in G minor is D-9172; *Sinfonia [4^a] a 4^o* (lacking its bass part) in D minor is D-8967.

43 Martin Kirnbauer, *Vieltönige Musik: Spielarten chromatischer und enharmonischer Musik in Rom in der ersten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Basel: Schwabe, 2013), 46–51 and 189–197.



composizione').⁴⁴ We may assume that the absence of harpsichord from this instrumental group is the element that defined 'al tavolino' at the time of composition: significantly, the single common term in the titles of the Paris set of parts and the later D-MÜs, 3957a set in Münster is not the archaic 'al tavolino', but the functional and descriptive 'senza cembalo'.

The most recently discovered source for the four sonatas is also the most relevant to our investigation. In 2000 and 2002, respectively, Newcastle City Library (of Newcastle upon Tyne) acquired two manuscript volumes previously in private ownership that have come to be known as Workbooks I and II; these originate from the personal collection of the prominent local musician Charles Avison (1709–1770).⁴⁵ The four sonatas, notated in score and without figured bass, appear continuously in Workbook I on folios 74r–81v, interrupted only (at the top of folio 79v) by the melody and words of the Scots air 'Lochmaben Gate', written in a different hand.⁴⁶

Mark Kroll, drawing on the research of Grace White, identified the hand that copied the sonatas (termed 'Hand A') as that of Avison himself. This identification is confirmed by facsimile illustrations in a recent study of the composer that show the same hand in what is clearly a composition manuscript of his Concerto in E minor Op. 6 No. 8.⁴⁷

The musical text of the sonatas, written clearly but without calligraphic refinement, contains no deviation of note (except for the complete absence of bass figures) from that of the Münster concordance. The supplementary markings, however, contain some surprising and noteworthy features. First, the opening sonata (that in F minor) is headed 'Symphonia da Sig^a Stephani Scarlatti', the following three sonatas having abbreviated titles in the form of 'Symp:^a' followed by the appropriate ordinal number. Kroll, who was clearly unaware of these works' connection to either the set of sonatas by Alessandro Scarlatti or their concerto arrangements, hypothesized as author a hitherto unknown member of the Scarlatti clan, 'Stephani', and commented disparagingly on their musical quality.⁴⁸ Christopher Hair, who recognized the true author straight away, communicated the information privately to Michael Talbot, who brought it to wider notice in a review published in 2011.⁴⁹ As this review pointed out, 'Stephani' is in Italian a surname form, not a forename form (which would end with 'o'). Avison may have substituted it for the true forename for either or both of two reasons: first, in order to conceal the significance of the music from other users of his workbook,

44 Letter from Alessandro Scarlatti to Ferdinando de' Medici (Rome, 28 August 1706), transcribed in Mario Fabbri, *Alessandro Scarlatti e il Principe Ferdinando de' Medici* (Florence: Olschki, 1961), 83–84.

45 These volumes without shelfmark are in fact albums containing music by Avison himself and by various other composers whose works he collected and/or arranged. Much of the music is written in Avison's own hand, but some items were entered by members of his family or his wider circle. The period when the workbooks were in use is estimated by Simon Fleming (in private communication) as 1730–1770. The background, bibliographical features and content of the two workbooks are discussed in detail in Mark Kroll, 'Two Important New Sources for the Music of Charles Avison', *Music & Letters* 86/3 (2005), 414–431.

46 Kroll, 'Two Important New Sources', introduces a misleading inaccuracy into his inventory of this workbook when he writes (on page 428) that on folio 75v a 'Fugal fragment' by an unknown author begins: it is merely to the third and fourth movements of the first sonata, occupying folios 75v–76r, that he refers.

47 Roz Southey, Margaret Maddison and David Hughes, *The Ingenious Mr Avison: Making Music and Money in Eighteenth-Century Newcastle* (Newcastle: Tyne Bridge Publishing, 2009), illustration 11. For unexplained reasons, Kroll has subsequently revised his original hand identification, claiming that Avison's hand is instead the one that wrote into Workbook II (on pages 5–77) his arrangements as *concerti grossi* of violin sonatas from Geminiani's Op. 1. See *Charles Avison: Concerto Grosso Arrangements of Geminiani's Opus 1 Violin Sonatas*, ed. Mark Kroll (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2010), 183. Southey, Maddison and Hughes likewise identify as the composer's the hand (appearing in illustrations 6 and 7) that neatly wrote out the printer's copy of Avison's arrangements, with English words, of canticles by Clari, but a convincing case that this writer was his identically named son is made in Simon Fleming, 'Charles Avison Jnr and His Book of Organ Voluntaries', *The Musical Times* 153 (Spring 2012), 98n.

48 Kroll, 'Two Important New Sources', 421.

49 Michael Talbot, 'Music from Avison's Workbooks', *Early Music* 39/3 (2011), 435–437. We are also grateful to Christopher Hair for letting us have sight of the pages containing the sonatas.



who might have been tempted to publish or otherwise circulate it independently of him; second, as a private joke alluding to the unusually learned and austere character of the music, bearing in mind that the recently deceased Agostino Steffani, his surname often spelled ‘Stephani’ in northern Europe, was a cult figure among British devotees of the ‘ancient’ style.

The second departure comes in the tempo marking given to the fugal second movement of the F minor concerto on folio 74v. It appears that Avison originally wrote this in the space between the first and second staves (a place he often used for this purpose) as ‘Larghetto’, but he then added, presumably as its replacement, a small ‘Allegro’ – the marking found in the other sources – above the first staff. At a still later stage, he deleted ‘Allegro’ and more boldly wrote ‘Andante’ after it.⁵⁰ As we know from changes made in his slightly later (1744) concerto arrangements of keyboard sonatas by Domenico Scarlatti (mostly taken from the *XLII Suites* discussed earlier) and also from the arrangements from Geminiani’s Op. 1 appearing in Workbook II, Avison was in the habit of altering, sometimes radically, the original tempo markings of music he performed or arranged.⁵¹

Known eighteenth-century manuscripts of the complete *VI Concertos* number only two, but each in its own way adds useful knowledge. The British Library source Add. ms. 32, 587 is a binder’s collection containing four apparently unrelated items, the second of which (with original pagination from 1 to 22) is an abbreviated and incomplete keyboard reduction of the set written out, and presumably also undertaken, by Benjamin Cooke.⁵² These keyboard arrangements were most likely made from the printer’s copy while the concertos were at press. They comprise: the first three movements of Concerto No. 1 (the ‘Allemand Allegro wanting’, as noted in the manuscript at the appropriate spot); the first and second movements of Concerto No. 2 (but not the triple-metre Allegro of the sonata version, nor the concluding minuet in either of its two forms); the first four movements of Concerto No. 3 (minus, therefore, the *giga*-like concluding Allegro); and the first movement and the first six bars of the second movement of Concerto No. 4 (but not the triple-metre Allegro of the sonata version, nor the concluding binary-form movement in $\frac{3}{8}$). Cooke smudged out the completed bars of Concerto No. 4/ii as if to signal that, through shortage of time, motivation or paper, he was abruptly abandoning his project. On the last page he wrote a short covering letter to his brother John, who was the recipient of his gift. This revealing letter, with its request for secrecy, reads:

Dear B[rother] Jonny. These Compositions are by no less [a] Master then [*sic*] Sig.^r Alexander Scarlatti. Which I must Desire you’d not communicate to any one but y^r self they being Choice things of value. /

I expect no return till I see you. When I will take it out in ale and tobacco, the ale of all y.^r own spinning

I am w.th all sincerety [*sic*] y.^r B Cooke

London Oct^{br} 18. 1740 /⁵³

50 The chronological sequence described for the three markings is an inference from the context rather than something that it is possible to establish objectively at this stage. The argument is not affected if ‘Allegro’ was written before ‘Larghetto’.

51 This habit is discussed in Malcolm Boyd, *Domenico Scarlatti: Master of Music*, 224–231. In the case of the Scarlatti sonatas, the changes are often motivated by Avison’s quest to obtain slow movements in sufficient number for the concertos, or else to avoid excesses of speed impractical for amateur orchestras, as when ‘Presto’ becomes reduced to ‘Allegro’; on occasion, however, Avison’s alterations are too subtle to have a clear purpose – as, for instance, when Geminiani’s Op. 1 No. 1 is made to open ‘Grave’ rather than ‘Adagio’.

52 The British Library catalogue gives Cooke the incorrect title of ‘Dr’, which belonged to his homonymous son.

53 This letter was first published, with some minor errors, in Richard Newton, ‘The English Cult of Domenico Scarlatti’, *Music & Letters* 20/2 (1939), 141–142. Given the reference to payment in ale and tobacco, Cooke’s brother may be identical with the John Cooke, keeper of the Globe Tavern in Brydges Street, Covent Garden, who gave evidence in a trial at The Old Bailey on 16 April 1740 (information from <www.oldbaileyonline.org>).



The key role of Avison and his four-part score in this story becomes apparent from a study of variant readings across the sources. Avison's unfigured score, which retains all the omitted allegro triple-metre movements and the authentic 'short' version of the C minor minuet, seems to have been compiled directly from Scarlatti's *Sonata a quattro*; it yields no clues about the subsequent allocation of solo and ripieno parts in the later concerto arrangements, or to the doubling of the viola part at crucial moments where it holds centre stage. It is above all in the tempo markings of his score – partly reflected by Cooke, particularly in the keyboard arrangements – that Avison begins to depart from the composer's indications, thereby providing valuable pointers to his role in the transmission process.

In the parts prepared by Alessandro Scarlatti's copyist (D-MÜs, SANT Hs. 3957a) an unusually restricted range of tempo markings appears, stretching from Grave or Largo for the slow movements to Andante and Allegro; one fugal movement (in G minor) remains unmarked. It is therefore surprising to discover that Avison's score contains tempo directions altering the speed of some movements from fast to slow and introducing the marking 'Larghetto' for two substantial fugal movements (in F minor and C minor). This term may have been deliberately chosen as a 'middling' one to mitigate the force of any slowdown in tempo. Most surprising of all, the score reveals apparent changes of mind on Avison's part regarding the tempo to be adopted: there are no fewer than three conflicting markings for the second movement of No. 1 in F minor. At least two motives seem to underlie these interventions and indecisions if, as seems likely, they occurred en route to the works' publication. First, in rethinking the works for an orchestral (rather than one-to-a-part) performance, Avison was mindful of the need to adopt slower tempos in order to maintain good ensemble. Secondly, being distanced in both time and place from the idiom of the music, he may have had genuine difficulty in imagining the affect and character of some pieces.

Table 2 shows the original tempo markings of Scarlatti's four works and their subsequent retention or amendment in Avison's score, the keyboard reduction by Cooke (GB-Lbl, Add. ms. 32, 587) and Cooke's printed parts of 1740. From the three different tempos prescribed by Avison for the second movement of No. 1 we see that Cooke's keyboard reduction selects 'Larghetto', while in the publication he reverts to Scarlatti's original (and Avison's deleted) 'Allegro'. In the fugal first movement of No. 2 Cooke's keyboard reduction at first adopts Avison's 'Larghetto' (spelling it 'Largetto'), before deleting this and reverting to Scarlatti's original 'Allegro', which is retained for the published version. In the fugal first movement of the G minor sonata (which becomes the fourth concerto) Avison has introduced his own tempo marking, 'Allegro ma non troppo', which the 1740 publication follows, whereas the keyboard score has simply 'Allegro'. Most radically altered, however, is the tempo marking for the first movement of the D minor sonata (which becomes the fifth concerto). This is marked 'Largo' in both the Santini parts and Avison's score, but 'Allegro' in the published parts. It appears from the non-uniform but nevertheless clear relationship between Avison's interventions and the tempo markings adopted by Cooke – first in his keyboard arrangement and later, definitively, in the concerto parts – that some form of consultation occurred between the two men. This will have taken account both of the expansion to an orchestral scoring and the unfamiliarity of the idiom to the target purchasers. Interestingly, the short-score reduction is not so idiomatic for a keyboard instrument as to suggest that the tempos in this source are tailored specifically to this medium: the impression is rather that the score was made to provide the publisher's brother with an easily intelligible version for private perusal.⁵⁴

The possibility that these similarities between Avison's score, Cooke's keyboard reduction and the printed parts are merely coincidental lessens when we consider the wider context. Avison, like Pepusch, belonged to Cooke's inner circle of associates. It was Cooke who in 1737 published Avison's Op. 1, a set of six trio sonatas, and who in May 1740, a few months before publishing the Scarlatti concertos, became the official London stockist of the Newcastle composer's *Six Concertos in Seven Parts*, Op. 2, printed locally by Joseph Barber. Perhaps negotiations over the production and sale of Op. 2 and the Scarlatti concertos even proceeded in

54 The keyboard reduction frequently omits middle and even upper parts, but since it presents the harmonic structure of the music with a high level of accuracy and legibility, it would have served effectively as a reference score for the music.



Table 2 Tempo markings for the four minor-key works

Work	Movt	<i>D-MŪs,</i> SANT Hs. 3957a (1–4)	Avison score	Gb-Lbl, Add. ms. 32, 587	Cooke edition
Sonata No. 1 /	I	Grave	Grave	Grave	Grave
Concerto No. 1 in F minor	II	All[egr]o	Larghetto Allegro Andante	Larghetto	Allegro
	III	Largo	Largo	Largo	Largo
	IV	Alemanda	Allemande	‘Allemanda Allegro wanting’	Allemande Allegro
Sonata No. 2 /	I	Fuga and[an]te	Larghetto	Larghetto Allegro	Allegro
Concerto No. 2 in C minor	II	Grave/Largo	Grave	Grave	Grave
	III	—	Allegro	omitted	omitted
	IV	Minuet	Minuet	omitted	Minueto
Sonata No. 3 /	I	—	Allegro ma non troppo	Allegro	Allegro ma non troppo
Concerto No. 4 in G minor	II	Grave	Grave	Grave, six bars only, deleted	Grave
	III	—	—	omitted	omitted
	IV	Minuet	Vivace	omitted	Vivace
Sonata No. 4 /	I	Largo	Largo	omitted	Allegro
Concerto No. 5 in D minor	II	Grave	Grave	omitted	Grave
	III	Allegro	Allegro	omitted	Allegro
	IV	Minuet Unis.	Minuet Unisoni	omitted	Minuet

tandem. Doubtless, the mutually advantageous relationship between the two men would have continued longer, had Cooke not died prematurely in 1743.

Further, one may also ask: who in England around 1740 would have been more likely than Avison to produce an arrangement, for his favoured medium of seven-part strings, of music less opulently scored? Significantly, Avison’s own concertos, following the advice given in his *Essay on Musical Expression*, mirror a salient aspect of the treatment found in the Scarlatti concertos: the protection of the viola part from unwelcome exposure via temporary doubling by another part. True, other concerto composers, from Corelli to Handel, do similarly to some extent, but Avison is more zealous than most in this regard – and less concerned to avoid disruption to the part-writing.

One consequence of attributing the arrangement to Avison is that he now becomes a serious candidate for the authorship of the altered finale of Concerto No. 2. We already know from his Domenico Scarlatti arrangements that he was not above silently inserting music of his own into that credited to others.⁵⁵ From this perspective, it is interesting to compare the first sections of the C minor minuet finale in its ‘authentic’ sonata version (Example 1a) and ‘suspect’ concerto version (Example 1b).

55 Boyd, *Domenico Scarlatti: Master of Music*, 226–228, identifies three such insertions, but this is probably too cautious: there are nine further slow movements labelled by him ‘unknown’ that are on balance more likely to be by Avison himself than to come from any otherwise unknown Scarlatti sonatas.



Minuet

Example 1a Alessandro Scarlatti, *Sonata a quattro* in C minor, final movement, opening section (bars 1–12; bass figures omitted). Münster, Diözesanbibliothek Münster, Santini-Sammlung, SANT Hs. 3957a (1–4). Used by permission

Minuet

Example 1b Charles Avison (?), under the name of Alessandro Scarlatti, *Concerto No. 2* in C minor, final movement, opening section (bars 1–16; bass figures omitted). © The British Library Board, g.1052. Used by permission

Scarlatti's original minuet was conceived as a brief adjunct to the full-length movement in $\frac{3}{4}$ time that preceded it: the coffee following the dessert, so to speak. It is quirky and jerky in a typically Scarlattian manner. Its emphatic juxtaposition of iambs and trochees, all the stronger for the slightly unexpected near-literal repetition of bars 1–4, is very characteristic, and the move to a half close at the end of the section is exactly what one would expect in a very short binary movement.



Avison, or whoever decided to rework and expand the movement, was seemingly motivated by a desire (continuing the earlier metaphor) to turn the coffee into a dessert, thereby rebalancing the work after the omission of the preceding triple-metre movement. He retained the first violin line in bars 1–4 and the general sense of the harmony underpinning it, but otherwise followed his own path. Since the opening section was to serve as the refrain of a rondeau, it naturally had to be made to end with a full close, and this refrain accordingly followed the classic design of two symmetrically balancing phrases differing only in their choice of cadence, respectively imperfect and perfect. The new movement attenuates the contrast of iambs and trochees, partly by giving the bass a steady quaver tread. The implied tempo is slower than in the original: the music becomes stately and more civilized, with nods towards the mid-century galant manner, exemplified by the non-cadential trills and the $\hat{8}-\hat{5}-\hat{1}$ progressions in the bass. In general, the new version is highly competent, the sequential continuation in bars 5–6 being an especially happy find, but there are also some blemishes suggesting that its composer did not belong to the very highest echelon, notably (see [Example 1b](#)) the parallelism of the second violin and the bass in bars 7–9, only partially concealed by melodic elaboration.

Returning to complete our survey of the manuscript sources of the four sonatas and their concerto derivatives, we need to consider briefly the full score of the entire set in the Fitzwilliam Library.⁵⁶ As an ownership inscription states, this manuscript was acquired by Viscount Fitzwilliam in 1775, but its exact date of copying has still to be established. The fact that the six works of the Cooke edition are presented in systems of four, rather than seven, staves might suggest a connection with the pre-publication state of the works (or, at the very least, a clever piece of reverse engineering), but the reality is more prosaic: the copyist has simply reproduced Cooke's three concertino parts – first and second violins and cello (a fully figured part) plus viola – and ignored the three parts designated 'ripieno'. This procedure has resulted in a completely satisfactory text, albeit one that, a little incongruously, retains all the precautionary doublings of the viola part.⁵⁷

The unidentified copyist, evidently a practised musician, notated the concertos meticulously, paying special attention to accurate vertical alignment. Here and there, he corrected a small error (such as a missing accidental) in the print or accidentally introduced a similar error of his own. His only significant deviation from Cooke's text is what one might describe as the bowdlerization of a pungent chromatic effect, evidently deemed too 'Gothic' for mid-eighteenth-century taste, in bar 21 of the central Grave of the G minor work (see [Example 2](#)). The offending note was the $f\sharp^1$ (asterisked) in the second violin, which on the second beat forms a diminished fourth with the bb^1 in the first violin. The anodyne solution was to turn the $f\sharp^1$ into a crotchet g^1 tied to the semibreve of the previous bar, followed by a crotchet d^1 . This little change speaks volumes about how taste evolved during the eighteenth century.

Meanwhile, the existence of at least two other eighteenth-century sources for the four *Sonate a quattro* confirms that in their day they were works that elicited both curiosity and respect, even after the publication of the concerto arrangement. The Royal Music Collection at the British Library possesses a score of the complete set, each work being entitled 'Sinfonia', followed by the appropriate ordinal number.⁵⁸ The provenance, or at least the early ownership, of the sonatas is British, as evidenced by their heading 'By Old Scarlati'. This source appears to be textually congruent with that of Avison. Also of likely British provenance is a bass part for the four sonatas surviving in a partbook in the Library of Congress.⁵⁹ Here, too, the works run continuously

56 MU.MS.158 (formerly 32 G 3). Since the library's catalogue, consultable via Cambridge University's Newton Library Catalogue at <http://depfacfm-newton.lib.cam.ac.uk/vwebv/searchBasic?sk=en_US>, provides a very full and accurate bibliographical description of the source, we give no further details here.

57 The Fitzwilliam score reproduces the tempo markings of the printed edition except for substituting 'Allegro moderato' for 'Allegro' in the opening movement of the second concerto.

58 R.M.24.i.13.(1). The works run continuously (on folios 1–28) and are followed by a group of six sonatas for violin, cello and continuo, each occupying a separate fascicle and variously composed by Porretti (1), Porpora (1) and Costanzi (4). The assembly of the ten works in a common volume dates from the nineteenth century.

59 US-Wc, M317.M15 Op. 1, ff. 10v–14r. We thank the Library of Congress for supplying scans of the partbook and the information that it was owned until 1945 by the Scottish musician and collector Alfred Moffat (1863–1950), whose annotation reads: 'the Basso part of some work not connected with the three books of McGibbon's Trio sonatas'.



(Grave)

Example 2 Alessandro Scarlatti, Concerto No. 4 in C minor, second movement, bars 16–24 (bass figures omitted) (London: B. Cooke, 1740). © The British Library Board, g.1052. Used by permission

in the familiar order: the volume is a binder's collection opening with two published sonata collections by the Scottish violinist-composer William McGibbon (1696–1756) and ending with manuscript copies of seven unidentified sonatas and the Scarlatti bass parts.

The Two Major-Key Works

The works in F major (Concerto No. 3) and E major (Concerto No. 6) in Cooke's set are likewise present in Avison's Workbook I – but not where one might have expected to find them. As Kroll's article pointed out, this source contains a series of eleven four-part sonatas (for two violins, viola and bass) attributed to Alessandro Scarlatti's younger brother Francesco (1666–1741 or later).⁶⁰ In 2010 Kroll edited a published selection from this set, which providentially included both the first (E major) and the eighth (F major) work.⁶¹ It was during an already mentioned review of this volume that the realization dawned on one of the present writers that these were – evidently unknown to Kroll – the basis of the two published concertos.⁶²

Francesco Scarlatti led an itinerant and not very successful life, always remaining in the wings rather than moving centre stage. Born, like Alessandro, in Palermo, he studied in Naples, where he became a violinist at the viceregal court in 1681. Returning in 1691 to Sicily, he applied unsuccessfully in 1715 for the post of *Vize-Kapellmeister* at the imperial court in Vienna. In 1719 he came – possibly just before, or even in the company of, his nephew Domenico⁶³ – to England. Turning down a position in the Cannons band, he initially made some impact in London, but failed to thrive in that competitive environment. In 1733 he moved definitively to Dublin, where he would later be joined by Geminiani. He died there in sickness and

60 Kroll, 'Two Important New Sources', 420–421 (discussion) and 427 (inventory entry). The sonatas are written in score continuously from folio 2r to folio 28r. The first sonata is headed 'Sonate de Sig.r Scarlatti'; the ten subsequent sonatas are merely numbered. The keys of the sonatas (distinguishing major and minor by case) are: E, c, a, e, b, C, B flat, F, D, g and d. That they were planned as a set (perhaps of twelve rather than eleven works) is implied by the absence of any duplicated key.

61 *Francesco Scarlatti: Six Concerti Grossi*, ed. Mark Kroll (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2010). The E major sonata appears on pages 1–17, the F major sonata on pages 45–56; selected pages of both concertos also appears as plates.

62 Talbot, 'Music from Avison's Workbooks'.

63 For a thorough discussion of evidence concerning whether Domenico Scarlatti visited England at this time see Boyd, *Domenico Scarlatti: Master of Music*, 28–31, who comes down in favour of such a visit.



poverty, his second wife having deserted him. His surviving music is otherwise vocal and mostly sacred; the sonatas open a fascinating window onto Francesco's activity as a violinist and ensemble director.

Musical scholarship has generally dealt harshly with Francesco: Malcolm Boyd dismisses him curtly as 'third-rate'.⁶⁴ It is true that, by comparison with Alessandro, his style is unrefined and his writing of inner parts often awkward, or careless of solecisms such as forbidden 'parallels'. However, there is some powerful writing in his numerous fugal movements and an attractive melodiousness in his lighter, more homophonic ones, so he cannot simply be written off as an incompetent.⁶⁵ In terms of movement organization and style, Francesco's sonatas conform generally to the Neapolitan pattern as described: his elder brother's sonatas and *sinfonie* may well have been available to him as guiding models.⁶⁶ However, as the earlier remarks on the distinguishing characteristics of Concertos Nos 3 and 6 make clear, Francesco is willing to accept galant elements (a sign that at least some of the sonatas belong to the later part of his career) and also, where appropriate and convenient, to reduce the texture to three real parts in the contemporary Neapolitan fashion by making the viola double the bass at the unison or upper octave.⁶⁷

Although this fact is disavowed in Kroll's edition, the Francesco Scarlatti sonatas are written throughout in Avison's hand ('Hand A'). The copy was evidently prepared in haste, the notation being rapid and sometimes rather slipshod. The scores show clear signs of having served as copy texts for performance material, and they contain annotations and modifications of five different types:

1. corrections made by Avison in the course of copying. These rectify, for example, notes written at the wrong pitch or in the wrong place (for example, as a result of inadvertently skipping a system).
2. the occasional division of the originally undifferentiated bass part into an upper part for cello and a lower, generally more slowly moving, part for ripieno bass. This elaboration suggests an expansion to concerto grosso instrumentation.
3. 'solo' and 'tutti' cues. It is difficult to know for certain which of these were original, and which added. Further, they are often written above only one instrumental part, though logically applying to other parts as well. Avison frequently uses extra stems placed on the side opposite to the existing stem of one or more noteheads to mark the boundary between 'solo' and 'tutti'.⁶⁸
4. would-be compositional improvements. These notably entail the rewriting of short passages in an individual part (generally, the viola) in order to avoid particularly glaring instances of 'parallels' or some other defect. In addition, some, but not all, of the upper viola notes (which in the original rise as high as e²) have been selectively replaced by lower notes, perhaps for the greater convenience of the anticipated performers.
5. oblique extensions to barlines above and/or below the system, which occur in some of the sonatas (but not those in F major and E major). These appear to delineate the points where a new system should begin in a fair copy of the score, hinting at the practical use of the sonatas

64 Boyd, *Domenico Scarlatti: Master of Music*, 31.

65 Christopher Hair has rendered a service to Francesco's reputation by editing (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996) his *Miserere*. We are grateful to Mr Hair for letting us have sight of the Workbook I copies of the Francesco Scarlatti sonatas.

66 A close thematic similarity between the opening of the final, *giga*-like movement of Francesco's eighth sonata and that of the duple-metre finale of Alessandro's first *Sinfonia di concerto grosso*, in the same key of F major, seems more than a generic resemblance. As will be suggested further on, it may in fact have been Francesco himself who in 1719 brought the autograph manuscript of his brother's *Sinfonie* to Britain.

67 This action sometimes produces an effect similar to the precautionary doubling of the viola by the cello, but its motivation is compositional rather than performance-related. Ultimately, however, both types of doubling are responses to the relative scarcity of violas and the lack of proficient players for them.

68 Avison's precise intention is not always clearly conveyed by these extra stems, but the lack of perfect intelligibility is understandable in a working score never intended for wider circulation.



(Allegro)

Example 3 Francesco Scarlatti, Sonata No. 1 in E major, first movement, bars 10–12. Newcastle City Library, Avison Workbook I. Used by permission

under Avison's direction before, after or even both before and after the two chosen works were co-opted for the set delivered to Cooke.

These changes occasionally correspond to the variants found in the published edition, and this fact tends to reinforce the hypothesis of Avison's agency in both cases. Where they do not, we should bear in mind that Avison's view of the sonatas was an evolving one that permitted different solutions at different times both before and after the publication date of the concertos.

Four music examples will shed more light on both Francesco Scarlatti's style and Avison's interventions. **Example 3** presents in the original notation bars 10–12 of the first movement of the E major sonata. The upward stem in bar 10 of the first violin part marks the point where the ripienists should cease to play, and that in bar 11 where they should re-enter (reinforced by the direction 'Tutti'). In the concerto, however, the ripieno drops out earlier, at bar 8²; when it returns, at bar 11², it dispenses with the ornamentation of the resolution, moving directly from a minim c♯³ to a crotchet b², in the tradition of a *parte di rinforzo* 'picking out' salient notes of the principal part. The second violin loses, in Cooke's edition, the appoggiatura to the trill, but is otherwise unchanged. In the viola part the alteration of the rhythm to make the opening note enter after a quaver rest both removes the harshness of the eleventh between first violin and viola and sharpens the rhythm; this change is retained in the Cooke edition. In bar 12 the significance of the notes marked with both upward and downward stems is not entirely clear. It appears to have nothing to do with the distinction between 'solo' and 'tutti', denoting instead a reinforcement of the viola (at this point exposed), probably by cello. The flagless upward stem on the third beat does not necessarily prescribe the value of a crotchet: in fact, the probable intention is to let the cello rejoin the ripieno bass on the f♯ on the sixth quaver of the bar. In the print no doubling occurs: the viola is left to fend for itself.

Example 4 takes us to bars 18–20 of the same movement. The tonic reprise of the opening theme, starting half-way through bar 19, is anticipated by the viola in the first half of the same bar. Although at first sight a deft touch, this entry of the imitative subject perhaps steals the thunder of the first-violin entry too much, and even appears a little unnatural. Close scrutiny of the Workbook text reveals that the viola part originally had two consecutive crotchets, both f♯¹, in the first half of bar 19; the first of these has been retained and given an additional, upward stem (identifying it as the note after which the ripieno temporarily drops out), while the second, now beamed as a quaver, has become absorbed within the notation of the subject itself. Originally, the subject ended the first half of bar 19 with an a♯¹, preserving the subject's essential intervallic structure, but this obviously clashed unacceptably with the note a(♮) in the bass; Avison at some point overwrote the sharp with a natural sign – which in fact takes him out of the frying pan into the fire, since the replacement note sounds melodically rather odd. At bar 19³ it appears that the viola originally had a simple crotchet b¹,



(Allegro)

Example 4 Francesco Scarlatti, Sonata No. 1 in E major, first movement, bars 18–20

which, to complete the subject, was altered to the paired quavers b^1 and b . In the Cooke edition, where the violas are treated throughout as an undivided ripieno part, the viola retains the imitative entry on the first three beats of bar 19 (with no tell-tale natural for the a^1), but the crotchet $f\sharp^1$ on beat 1 falls.

A truly extraordinary modification was made by Avison in bars 16–17 of the penultimate movement (Largo) of the same sonata, shown as [Example 5](#) in both its printed concerto version (ripieno doubling concertino), which we must assume to represent the original text, and its sonata version in Workbook I. This movement ends with a half close in the relative minor in which the dominant of C sharp minor is preceded by its own dominant, a major chord of $D\sharp$. As was normal for the time, an ordinary sharp additional to the one in the key signature is used for the note $F\sharp$ in both the first violin part and the bass figure on the second beat (the bass figure on the first beat is in fact engraved as a ‘slashed’ 6). For unknown reasons – perhaps because of anticipated difficulties in intonation – Avison modified the cadence. It seems that he originally notated it, at least in bar 16, without alteration; but he then scratched out the notes in the first violin part and the last two notes in the bass part and substituted his own text. At bar 16¹ the $f\sharp^2$ is notated as its enharmonic equivalent, $g\sharp^2$, but the following trilled note is changed to $g\sharp^2$. Matching this, the two final bass notes move up from $d\sharp^1$ and $d\sharp$ to e^1 and e . Avison surprisingly forgets to amend the viola part as well, leaving the original $d\sharp^1$ in place. In the next bar he alters the five–four chord on the first beat to a smoother six–four chord.

[Example 6](#), taken from the second movement of the F major concerto, illustrates Avison’s manner of rewriting Francesco’s inner parts whenever he discerned serious errors of part-writing. The original viola line (upward stems) starts by creating parallel octaves with the first violin, and ends by creating rising parallel fifths with the bass. Avison’s solution (downward stems) was to use suspensions to improve and enliven the counterpoint. However, this merely turns the series of parallel octaves into one of scarcely better concealed parallel fifths. In the Cooke edition a more satisfactory, albeit not wholly perfect, solution is found: the viola part reverts to its original form, except that the notes on the third beats of bars 5–8 are omitted.⁶⁹

There will be many more aspects of Francesco Scarlatti’s sonatas, and of Avison’s interventions in them, to consider if and when the dedicated study that they deserve is undertaken, but before leaving them, we have to consider their provenance. Intriguingly, as Kroll reports, a later annotation by an unknown person written on the contents page of Workbook I provides a clue, relevant also to the ‘Stephani Scarlatti’ works. It reads: ‘The names of these two Scarlatti are not in the Musical Biography, & are no doubt from the MSS

69 The viola notes, reinforcing the first beats of these bars, are partnered by similar notes for the ripieno violins, extracted from the corresponding concertino parts.



(Largo)

16

Cooke

(Largo)

16

Avison

Example 5 Francesco Scarlatti, Sonata No. 1 in E major, third movement, bars 16–17 (Cooke and Avison versions compared). © The British Library Board, g.1052, and Newcastle City Library, Avison Workbook I. Used by permission

(Largo)

5

Avison
Cooke

Example 6 Francesco Scarlatti, Sonata No. 8 in F major, second movement, bars 5–9. Newcastle City Library, Avison Workbook I. Used by permission

in Geminiani's possession, they are very rare & fine.⁷⁰ The supposition that Avison acquired the music from Geminiani, who joined Francesco in Dublin in 1733, is at least plausible, and fits the estimated date of the

70 Kroll, 'Two Important New Sources', 419. The 'Musical Biography' to which the annotation refers is doubtless William Bingley's two-volume reference work of that title, first published in 1814 in London.



Workbooks well. We might even make the further surmise that it was Francesco who brought his brother's *Sonate a quattro* across the Channel, and who later, on account of financial hardship, parted with these and other family manuscripts.

Avison's privileged access to, and interest in, the music of both Scarlatti brothers became the essential condition for the 1740 publication, enabling him to take Alessandro's distinctively crafted set of four sonatas as his initial basis and make up the half-dozen demanded by convention by adding two works generally similar in type but rather different in mood by his younger brother, even if their separate authorship remained rather shamefully unacknowledged. It is interesting that the expression 'very rare & fine', echoing the phrase 'choice things of value' used by Cooke in his letter, is applied to the sonatas of both brothers without distinction. Certainly, Avison himself, by performing some of Francesco's sonatas locally, showed his partiality towards them.

FINAL REFLECTIONS AND LOOKING AHEAD

As a result of following up all relevant leads, this article has become a 'portfolio' of linked investigations, their single but vital unifying factor being their relationship to one publication by a particular publisher. Its central affirmation is that the *VI Concertos in Seven Parts* published by Benjamin Cooke in 1740 under Alessandro Scarlatti's name represent a composite of a set of four *sonate a quattro* by that composer and two similarly scored but stylistically distinct sonatas extracted from a larger manuscript set by his brother Francesco. Various other persons emerge from this story with new facts or hypotheses to place against their names. John Christopher Pepusch is identified as the probable supplier to Cooke of Domenico Scarlatti's twelve sonatas $\kappa 31-42$, while Francesco Geminiani is mooted as a collector and transmitter of the sonatas by the latter's father and uncle. The central, though hitherto unacknowledged, figure among them is Charles Avison, who possessed the sonatas by both brothers, assembled a set of six works from them, revised their text (adding reinforcement for the viola at many points), expanded their scoring to seven parts (in the process undertaking a little recomposition) and sent the result to London for publication by Cooke, who may have remained unaware of the full extent of his colleague's intervention. In the light of Avison's later arrangement of Domenico Scarlatti sonatas as concertos and his similar operation on behalf of Geminiani's Op. 1 sonatas, these newly revealed arrangements constitute a significant addition to his curriculum vitae.

About Benjamin Cooke himself, we learn something more. From his publications of music by two (in reality, three) composers of the Scarlatti family and the royal privileges under which they appeared we gain insight into a new strategy that he pursued as his career as a publisher reached a climax in his last years. In addition to 'pirating' music already published or publishing works by agreement with their composers, he now sought out significant unpublished works in the possession of third parties, which were arranged or revised by members of his circle of close musical associates (who included Pepusch, Roseingrave and Avison) before undergoing engraving. Someone will perhaps produce one day a *catalogue raisonné* of Cooke's musical publications, through which the rapid evolution of his activity, from its modest beginnings in the 1720s, will become clearer.

Our investigation also brings into sharper focus two characteristic features of ensemble music for strings in eighteenth-century Britain: the seven-part format (whether integral or artificial) and the reinforcement of exposed viola lines. A comparison between Alessandro's and Francesco's musical styles sets in relief both the continuities of the Neapolitan tradition of 'multivoice' sonatas and its capacity for evolution, specifically in the British environment, in the second quarter of the eighteenth century.

What the practical outcomes of the new findings could be for the present day is worth a final thought. Despite the evident fascination these works held for the small group of English musicians responsible for the various manuscript copies, and ultimately for the 1740 publication, they have never become widely known or distributed. There is still no commercially available modern edition, critical or otherwise, of the complete set, although facsimile editions and performing editions of individual concertos exist. A notable recording



of the whole set by the Italian baroque ensemble Europa Galante, directed by Fabio Biondi, is based on the Cooke parts – with acceptance of all their errors and idiosyncrasies.⁷¹ The major-key ‘interlopers’ by Francesco are heard here to their best advantage, thereby granting these two works a rare opportunity to be heard without prejudice and win recognition for their freshness and instant appeal.

Conversely, it appears that Alessandro Scarlatti’s *Sonate a quattro* have yet to be performed and recorded in full in their original quartet scoring, although No. 4 in D minor has recently appeared separately in a three-CD anthology entitled *Birth of the String Quartet*.⁷² The ensemble here interprets in the most literal way the original inscription ‘senza cembalo’, performing Scarlatti’s D minor sonata as a pure string quartet, just as Dent envisaged. However, the presence of bass figuring in the two Roman sources closest to the composer suggests that Scarlatti’s vision of the *Sonate a quattro* did not necessarily exclude continuo – a possibility only increased by the reference to ‘Liuto ò Arpa’ in the earliest of the sources. It is an inviting prospect to contemplate the future restoration of these works to their original ‘string quartet’ form, complete with the Allegro movements omitted from the concerto arrangements and played without harpsichord but with arclute and/or harp continuo in accordance with the title-pages of the bass parts in Paris.⁷³ All this does not, of course, undermine the status of the *VI Concertos*, even if we will in future have to take account of their multiple authorship and the sometimes surprising complexities of their textual transmission.

71 *A & D Scarlatti: Concerti & Sinfonie*, Europa Galante / Fabio Biondi, Virgin Veritas 5 45495 2 (2004). A noteworthy precursor of this recording is that by the Solisti dell’Orchestra ‘Scarlatti’ Napoli under Ettore Gracis, Archiv 198442 (1967).

72 Solo Musica SM161 (2011). The performers are the *casalQuartett*.

73 The four sonatas are published in a critical edition by Rosalind Halton as *Alessandro Scarlatti: Four ‘Sonate a quattro’* (Launton: Edition HH, 2014).