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Introduction

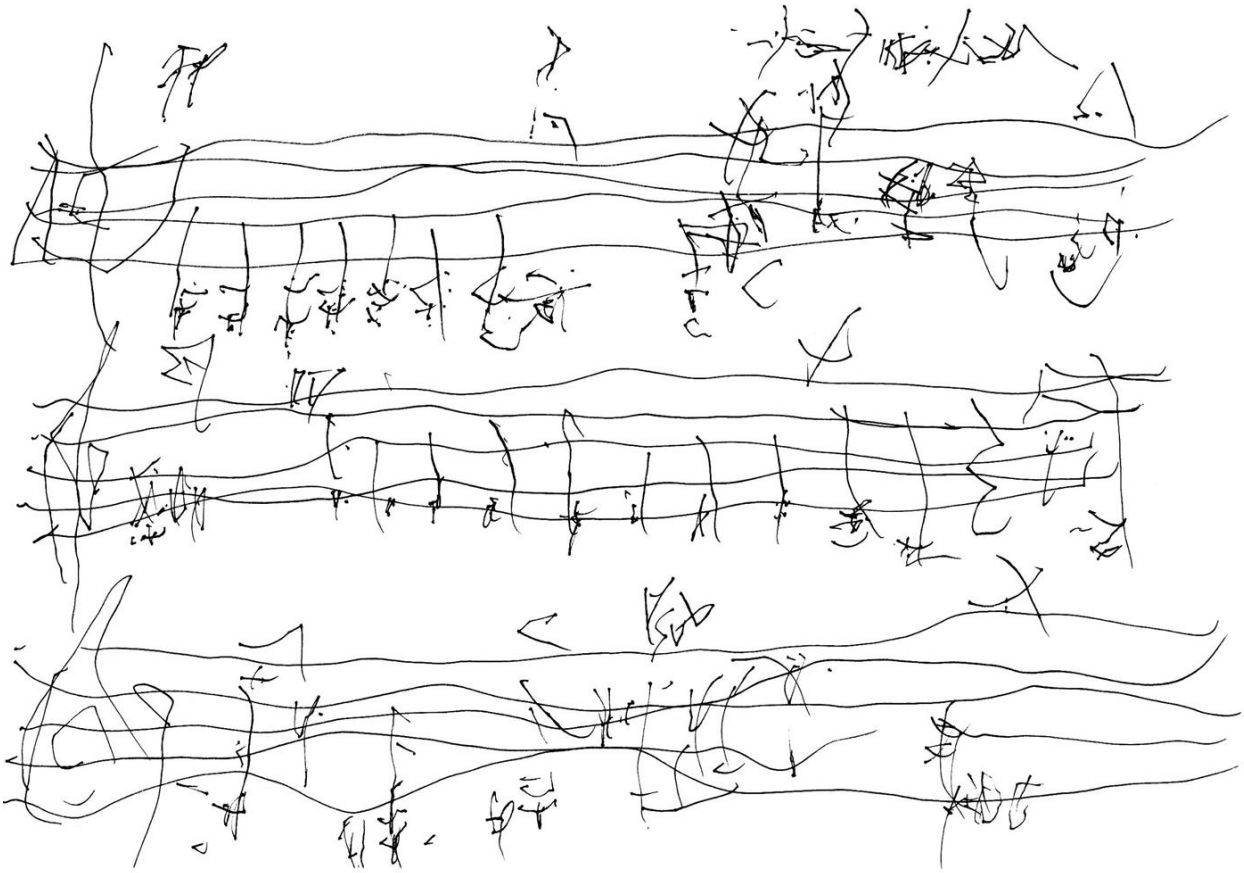


Figure 0-1. Voice Box (2019), Claudia Molitor. From the composer. Reproduced with permission.

You are presented with a score that looks almost scratched into the page. It is not quite the writing of a child: details like the evenness of the leger lines, the confidence of the letters *fp*, and the equal spacing between the staves suggest that this was the work of someone accustomed to creating scores. But who? The score looks like it was made by a composer experiencing physical tremors, or under the influence of a psychoactive substance.

This is Claudia Molitor's *Voice Box*, a work that the composer wrote using her foot. With this new information, we can better see the purpose in each line of the score, the difficulty of drawing—or failing to draw—staves of five parallel, non-overlapping lines without the use of one's hands. The *forte-piano* dynamic marking above the repeated note that opens the piece now takes on a new bodily import. Knowing how the score was created, one might even perform it differently, perhaps with the easy strides of an afternoon stroll, perhaps with the stomping flourish of a tango. Molitor writes that this score is meant to "frame the compositional act as a physical expression": through this defamiliarizing maneuver, "the very physicality of writing music is brought to the forefront" (2019, 93).

I open with this score because it stresses the bodily involvement required to make music, even just to create a score. Looking at the jerky scratches of *Voice Box*, one is newly aware of composers' physical involvement with their craft. One might suddenly realize how much one's own hands are taken for granted, both in music-making and in everyday life. And not just one's hands: the coordination necessary to write without tremors, or even the habituated ease of drawing a treble clef for the thousandth time.

In this dissertation, I want to analyze this kind of bodily coordination and habituation. Molitor's piece, created in 2019, can help us reexamine what Jim Samson calls the "idiomatic figures" of nineteenth century postclassical pianism, making them more compelling, recapturing our interest (Samson 2007, 3, 46). In all, this dissertation investigates how improvisation was taught and practiced by nineteenth-century European pianists and pedagogues. I develop a theory of extemporized musical textuality using tools from linguistic anthropology and the cognitive study of skill. Here I draw out three facets of nineteenth century music-making central to my project—facets that are illuminated by Molitor's *Voice Box*.

First, this project conceives of music theory from the bottom up: short passages are its focus rather than whole works or deep structures. These passages (*Passagen*) are much like the habituated patterns that Molitor's piece emphasizes: they are learned and absorbed, they are practiced, and they become almost automatic for the musician. I posit that instrumentally idiomatic figurations were a main concern for pianists of the nineteenth century. Recent work in music theory inspired by the linguistic theory of construction grammar has also emphasized a modular, exemplar-based approach to musical structure. My approach is similar in attitude but does not set out to find the musical corollaries to linguistic meaning. Instead, I focus on the immediate physical dimension of improvised performance using concepts from the cognitive study of skill. In literary studies, this approach is akin to what Stephen Best and Sharon Marcus call "surface reading," an analytic mode that prefers to build up reliable theoretical constructs that are close at hand, rather than to suggest psychological or metaphysical depths (Best and Marcus 2009).

Second, I describe nineteenth-century practices that highlight the presence of the body within the musical text. Molitor's *Voice Box* is a text that does exactly this. In this project I introduce two new ideas. One is that musical improvisation, rather than being *opposed* to text, is itself a textual practice, and the other is that a musical text is co-created by its reader in a way that draws on bodily skills—skills that can be analyzed in historical depth. This brings a level of detail that is often lacking in the conception of textuality as it is depicted by theorists like Roland Barthes and Julia Kristeva.

Third, this project illustrates how nineteenth-century musical improvisation shuttled between process and product in the minds of musicians and listeners. Molitor writes that her works like *Voice Box* are meant to draw attention to musical creation as "an embodied act, a tactile event" (2019, 91). This project, in the same manner, takes analytical

emphasis away from static products like the concept of the musical work, placing emphasis instead on the processes performers go through to learn and deploy idiomatic passages. My project parallels the textual theories of Jerome McGann, who has argued that texts are not objects or properties but rather a series of acts performed by authors, readers, editors, publishers, designers, and marketing agencies (1991). Instead, textuality is a particular kind of action within time: a moment of communication. Textuality, nevertheless, takes place in social spaces that revolve around the physical artifact of the written word. Improvised music-making in early- to mid-nineteenth-century Europe, likewise, can only be understood as a process occurring within time—but this process takes place in an environment where musical works (and their imagined tokens, the written score) became increasingly powerful as regulators of musical practice. By creating a vocabulary of entextualization, skill, pedagogy, and (physical) practice, I hope to recover the idea of nineteenth-century improvisation—and composition—as a process rather than as a product.

Context within the Fields of Music Theory and Musicology

This project is inspired not only by linguistic anthropology and the study of cognitive skill, but also by recent theories of musical grammar and musical schemas. The construction grammar framework, which has recently gained a foothold in music theory, is especially illuminating for the repertoire studied here. Robert Gjerdingen and Janet Bourne have outlined the similarities between the linguistic theory of construction grammar and Gjerdingen's schema-based approach (2015). The theory of construction grammar holds that linguistic structures are best analyzed through "learned pairings of form and function," visible chiefly through "surface form" (Goldberg 2013). Lawrence Zbikowski has systematized the construction grammar approach to musical structure, arguing that musical forms are intelligible through analogic comparison with what he calls "dynamic

processes"—physical movement, for example (2017). Unlike Gjerdingen and Bourne's work, this project does not allude to a musical corollary to linguistic meaning, and unlike Zbikowski's, it does not systematize an analytics of meaning. Nevertheless, the approach taken here is similar in organization and in analytic attitude.

This project is also inspired by a loose musicological subfield that might be called the bodily ontology of performance in Western European art music—an interest that has emerged in the past fifteen years through the scholarship of Elisabeth Le Guin (2006), Matthew Head (2013), Emily Dolan and John Tresch (2013), James Davies (2014), Martha Feldman (2015), Roger Moseley (2016), and Dana Gooley (2011; 2018), among others. Moseley, in his book *Keys to Play: Music as a Ludic Medium from Apollo to Nintendo,* argues that the keyboard has an ability to bring notational concepts, largely encoded in binary forms, into the material world. For Moseley, the keyboard is an instrument with two conflicting strengths. On one hand, it is the instrument *par excellence* for reading the score, for tallying and planning—but on the other, it is an instrument of play, of improvisation, and of unpredictable musical processes.

There is, then, a vacillating relationship between system and play in music-making. Play derives from an initial system—like a rulebook—but in order for true play to issue forth, some part of the outcome must be unanticipated by the system's premises. As Moseley puts it, "outcomes…are commensurate with and yet indeterminable by those premises" (2016, 138). Moseley introduces his ludomusical ideas with a sketch of a unique nineteenth-century "improvising" machine: Diederich Nicolaus Winkel's "componium." Invented in the 1820s, the componium was an organ that, to modern eyes, looks like a player piano. It used a system of coils and elliptical discs to hold and release tension, controlling its "improvisation" in a manner that was difficult for onlookers to predict.

Moseley shows that the unpredictable complexity of the componium was a central part of its improvisatory claim. A predictable sequence of notes was regarded as rule-following; an *unforeseen* sequence of notes was regarded as improvisation (Moseley 2016, 162).

The unforeseen is at the core of improvisation in its recent cultural connotations: the word's Latin roots—*im-pro-visus*—refer to the inability to foresee the future course of a performance. But, framed in this way, this notion of improvisation seems to run oblique to the present study. Here, I show that a pianist's curatorial practice and physical practice very clearly determine the what is possible within their composition and improvisation. I frame nineteenth century pianistic practice, both extemporary and compositional, as a practice of absorption, collation, and arrangement—but the objects of this arrangement are *bodily skills*, not "themes" or musical materials on the page. In this dissertation I lay out a framework for this theoretical view in detail, applying the theory to the music of Clara Schumann, Carl Czerny, Franz Liszt and the Austrian pianist Leopoldine Blahetka.

Can one say, then, that nineteenth century improvisation at the piano of the kind examined here is "unforeseen"? Stephen Blum has explored this tension in his essay "Recognizing Improvisation" (1998). A similar tension exists in other works in the fields of musical schema theory and partimento practice. As jazz guitarist Derek Bailey has pointed out, practicing improvisers rarely use the term "improvisation" (1993, xii). Perhaps the term does not sit right for these musicians because of the very tension outlined above.

Another source of tension is the ocular root of the term "improvisation." What does it mean to *see* a performance in advance, when that performance is a musical one? In chapter 1, I address this disjunction between sight-based conceptions of music theory—analysis as a study of notation, of scores—and the approach taken here, which focuses on

the bodily process of making improvised music at the piano during the nineteenth century, a process that is informed by what the pianist hears. The tension between sight and hearing goes still further: performances are seen as well as heard, after all. Both modalities need to be addressed when analyzing bodily skill at the piano. But to analyze music using "music theory" may have visual connotations as well: the term *theory* has ocular origins that the political theorist Raymond Williams has traced out. *Theory*, he writes, was used in seventeenth century Europe to refer to "a contemplated sight": thus people from that time write of "a Theory or Sight," or of the "theory" or eureka moment that one arrives at while visually contemplating an object (Williams 2015, 249–50). In this project I consider the implications of *theory* in its historical usage, pointing out the term's tangled relationship with the body and the senses. Music theory, I believe, is capable of stretching beyond these tangled relationships to address the bodily systems of transmitting and creating music.

Emily Dolan has persuasively argued for the importance of the bodily interface in her essay "Toward a Musicology of Interfaces" (2012). "Instead of thinking about music as a genus in which keyboard music exists as a species," she suggests, "perhaps it could be productive to think of the keyboard—here standing in for all immaculately controllable instruments—as the genus, while this thing we have come to know as music as a species of keyboard" (2012, 12). This cannot be taken literally, but the provocation implicit in Dolan's statement helps clarify the musical stakes here. The physicality of music-making, even in sacrosanct eighteenth and nineteenth century repertories, can no longer hide behind the scenes. The influence of the keyboard as a default channel between bodily action and musical production is so historically entrenched that *keyboard-ness*, per Dolan, can in many cases be equivalent to *music-ness*.

Dolan's essay uncovers another facet of music-making at the piano: the fantasy of control that accompanies the interface of the keyboard. Hector Berlioz imagined an "ideal orchestra" of 467 players, and he imagined the conductor who presided over this mass as a keyboard player whose movements controlled the orchestra. "In the quest to create a keyboard instrument with ever greater nuance and control," Dolan writes, "the keyboard becomes itself a model of control and organization" (2012, 10). But in this chain of control, there is more than just player and instrument: there is also the looming composer. Berlioz, for example, saw his imaginary conductor as a figure who transmitted "the directions of the composer" to the compliant orchestra. Mary Hunter has discussed the authoritative role of the composer and its effects on nineteenth century performers within the *Werktreue* paradigm (2005). One of my goals is to explore this chain of authority in improvisation—in the absence of an overarching musical work concept—by examining the musical materials granted or denied to the improvising pianist.

But in the repertoires examined here, the separation between composer and performer (and even audience) is not so clear. All of the figures whose music-making practices are discussed in this dissertation were multi-hyphenate pianists, composers, improvisers, and pedagogues. Further, the boundaries between improvisation and composition are not always clear. One of the case studies in this dissertation, for example, is the notated prelude that resulted when Clara Schumann tried to write down her improvisations.

Dana Gooley, in his book *Fantasies of Improvisation*, has addressed the methodological problems that arise when the practice of improvisation uses notated texts as key pieces of evidence (2018). He warns of the difficulty of treating Beethoven's *Fantasia* op. 77, for example, as though it were an uncomplicated exemplar of what Beethoven's

improvisations sounded like: to "round up" the piece in this way, or to treat it "as a 'close enough' representation" of historical improvisation, misses the modifications that artists make when taking a passage they created in the moment and transforming it into a printed work (Gooley 2018, 29–30). Here, my approach is not to look for pieces that resemble improvisation in order to declare: "this is what improvisation sounded like." Instead, I examine pedagogical sources as well as accounts of improvisation, looking for clues as to how improvisers (and composers) prepared themselves for their task. In some places I turn to published works for evidence of how pianistic skills can be developed and brought together into an uninterrupted whole. But this is not so much to create an aural snapshot of what a particular improvisation would have been, or to liken those works to written-down improvisations. Instead, my goal is to reconstruct a *practice*, a daily interaction with the piano in which improvisations and compositions were already intermingled.

Overview

Chapter 1 of this dissertation analyzes two Viennese thoroughbass manuals from the nineteenth century, written by Simon Sechter and Carl Czerny—both pedagogues of enormous influence. What makes these manuals noteworthy is that, in Sechter's case, all the figures are already realized, and in Czerny's case, there are no figures at all, only fully written-out exercises in the form of short pieces. I show how the use of these manuals, in accordance with Sechter's and Czerny's instructions, aligns with concepts from the cognitive study of skill. In particular, they promote cognitive generalization, which is, in short, the ability to find the essential components of an exemplar and then interpret other exemplars using the same framework. This chapter posits that the kind of bodily practice encouraged by these manuals can be seen as a "theory" of musical improvisation and composition, thus introducing bodily skill into a theoretical discourse that, through the

nineteenth century, was increasingly seen as the domain divorced from the body. Here I introduce what I call the "carnal outlook" of nineteenth-century pianism. Taking the word "carnal" in Elisabeth Le Guin's sense (2006), I describe this as an outlook where the musician reaches outward for inspiration, taking passages from the music they hear and using cognitive generalization to integrate them into their body and make them their own.

Chapter 2 describes the pedagogical techniques of Friedrich Wieck, the father and teacher of Clara Schumann, showing how they promoted the improvisatory flair that her early reviewers noted, and demonstrating the close relationship between those techniques and Clara Schumann's early compositions. Wieck created what he called "little pieces," short harmonically-closed exercises that gave the player a strong grasp of the postclassical pianistic idiom. By transposing and varying the pieces as Wieck suggests, one fosters the same cognitive generalization that was outlined in chapter 1. This method was not unique to Wieck: I show that Czerny used the same approach. I further elaborate on the concept of *entextualization* from Michael Silverstein and Gregory Urban (1996) in linguistic anthropology, showing how this method of practicing piano through "little pieces" encourages pianists to see texts not as autonomous, abstract wholes, but rather as thoughtfully curated collections of cleverly varied components.

Chapter 3 extends the framework of entextualization to analyze a prelude that Clara Schumann wrote down around 1895, first improvising at the piano and then picking up her pen to capture on the page the spirit of what she had just played. This prelude was meant to introduce Robert Schumann's "Aufschwung" ("Soaring"), from his *Fantasiestücke* op. 12. I chart the borrowings and similarities of figuration that link Clara Schumann's prelude not only to Robert's composition, but also to passages—idiomatic figurations—found in pieces that Clara Schumann was likely familiar with, as well as exercise books from the mid-

nineteenth century. Using the concepts of *entextualization* and *discursive interaction* from linguistic anthropology, I show how these links promote the reader to view Schumann's prelude as a text in itself. All musical texts, I argue, are categories of reception that are built on performance events: thus one's conception of Robert Schumann's *Fantasiestücke* as a static text, for example, relies on one's memory of actual performances of it.

Chapter 4 examines the nineteenth century practice of collecting excerpts. I analyze published collections by Czerny and Theodor Kullak (a Liszt student), who collated short, distinctive passages from the works of others. Beethoven and Mendelssohn are well represented in these collections, but so are figures less well known, like Henri Herz and Joseph Gelinek. Czerny went a step further by modifying these excerpts, rearranging their contents to make them a uniform length and even adding his own cadences to the ends of each exercise. Case studies of published music by Franz Liszt and Leopoldine Blahetka demonstrate that the idiomatic figures found in Czerny's collection can be found throughout the piano music of this time, creatively varied and remixed. I take up the theoretical tools developed in the other chapters, showing how this practice of excerpting encourages the "carnal outlook" first set out in chapter 1.

Chapter 5, too, brings together the tools developed in the other chapters, showing how the ideas of cognitive generalization and entextualization as applied to this repertoire is similar to Walter Ong's conception of orality. This provides another angle to the connections this dissertation makes between musical production and linguistic and literary theories of text. I outline the characteristics that Ong describes as central to oral art, showing how they apply to nineteenth century pianism as it has been described here. But Ong also assumes essential differences between "oral" and "literate" cultures in a way I find indefensible. I end by asking why the frame of orality—and the frame of

improvisation—is more often applied to Black music and European "early" music than it is to the musical practices of nineteenth century Europe. Orality, like "improvisation," was used by mid-twentieth-century musicologists to mark difference in a distinctively racialized manner: this rhetorical maneuver has been traced by Laudan Nooshin (2003) and Vijay Iyer (2019). Finding "orality" within nineteenth century European music can be a way of reversing, in some small way, the center-to-periphery model of music theoretics.

Improvisation, orality, entextualization, and cognitive generalization belong to a side of musical practice that is not often highlighted in studies that focus on musical works. In building my project around those concepts, I hope to defamiliarize readers' ideas of what music could be in the nineteenth century. The goal of this dissertation is not just to theorize musical text with evidence from improvisation. It is also to show how, despite the rapid canonic reification of repertoires through this time period, piano playing was still conceptualized as something bodily, adaptable, and personal.

0. Passage Practice, Thoroughbass Pedagogy, and Exemplar Generalization

"The age of so-called thoroughbass theory is over."[1] The composer Friedrich Silcher made this declaration in 1851, ostensibly marking the end of an era. Thoroughbass, which can be summarized from a nineteenth-century perspective as the practice of teaching composition, improvisation, and accompaniment through annotated basslines, seemed to have nothing in common with the contemporary music that surrounded Silcher. Indeed, Hugo Riemann famously used the title "The Age of Thoroughbass" (*Der Generalbass-Zeitalter*) for the Baroque section of his *Handbuch der Musikgeschichte* (1919). Based on this, one might conclude that thoroughbass was abandoned in the nineteenth century in favor of newer techniques: with his music-historical tome Riemann had inscribed the epitaph on its gravestone. But this kind of rigid periodization is of course flawed: it overlooks influential mid-nineteenth-century developments in the teaching of composition and improvisation using adapted thoroughbass principles. This chapter describes such a development: the figureless thoroughbass pedagogies employed Simon Sechter (1788–1867) and Carl Czerny (1791–1857). I argue that these pedagogies are a link between older thoroughbass traditions and the newer form of improvisatory practice that I call "passage practice." I will show how Czerny and Sechter engage with the nineteenth-century movement of "practical" pedagogy. Finally, I explore why it may be difficult to posit historical performance traditions like thoroughbass or passage practice as theories of music—even while I argue that it is necessary to do so.

Just how relevant was thoroughbass in the nineteenth century? In 1863, A. B. Marx wrote that the practice was "formerly very important—in the eighteenth century in

[1] "Die Zeiten der sogenannten Generalbasslehren sind vorüber" (1851, iii). Translations throughout this chapter are mine, unless otherwise indicated.

particular" (1863, 521–22). This lends credence to Silcher's declaration. But thoroughbass manuals were still published and sold throughout the century, to the point where the theorist H. J. Vincent could publish a pamphlet entitled *Kein Generalbass mehr!* , or "No more thoroughbass!" (1860). Carl Czerny, unlike the writers mentioned above, was fully convinced of thoroughbass's continued relevance: "in all music," he wrote, "no bar occurs which does not repose on this foundation" (1837, 53).[2] Nineteenth-century musical thinkers, then, had mixed views on the legacy of thoroughbass in their time.

If it is true that thoroughbass is the "foundation" on which all music "reposes," as Czerny put it, then thoroughbass pedagogy could be a valuable piece of evidence, emphasizing the bodily skills musicians had to use in order to perform *and* compose music. I argue that Czerny's "foundation" is as much performerly as it is compositional or theoretical. This evidence brings bodies back into focus in nineteenth-century repertoires that we often think of as intellectual rather than physical achievements. Elisabeth Le Guin has written that the performing body has a bodily knowledge "which by its nature contains an extremely fine grain of detail" (2006, 14). Inspired by Le Guin's "carnal musicology," this chapter uses the postclassical thoroughbass pedagogies of Sechter and Czerny to demonstrate how nineteenth-century compositional and improvisational practices were dependent on forms of knowledge shared across mind and body. In the two treatises under discussion here, there are no rules to learn and no basses to realize: the student learns only from playing and transposing fully realized examples. To show how these treatises foster the skills required to improvise, this chapter deploys concepts from the cognitive study of

[2] Describing thoroughbass (Generalbass) with the term "foundation" or "fundamentum" was something of a trope in music-pedagogical texts. See, for example, Thomas Christensen's entry "Fundamentum, fundamental, basse fondamentale" in the *Handwörterbuch der musikalischen Terminologie* (2004).

skill acquisition: chunking, exemplar-based learning, and generalization. These concepts are at play not only in Sechter and Czerny's treatises, but also in passage practice and in older thoroughbass traditions: thus, these nineteenth-century treatises can be seen as an illustrative link between music-theoretical concepts of the mind and body.

One of the consequences of a skill-based view of keyboard pedagogy is that it makes certain kinds of repetitive exercises more intelligible—exercises that, without the vocabulary of skill acquisition, seem to be unreflectively mechanical. This constrained perspective is most conspicuous in Grete Wehmeyer's *Carl Czerny und die Einzelhaft am Klavier, oder, Die Kunst der Fingerfertigkeit und die industrielle Arbeitsideologie* (Carl Czerny and Solitary Confinement at the Piano, or, the Art of Finger Dexterity and Industrial Work Ideology) (1983). This book puts forward the claim that musicians around the turn of the nineteenth century incorporated the "puritanical-bourgeois" ideology of nascent industrial capitalism into their instrumental practice through repetitive practice techniques.[3] David Trippett and Jordan Musser, respectively, have since presented subtler and more nuanced readings of Czerny's keyboard pedagogy (Trippett 2015; Musser 2019), but strands of Wehmeyer's polemics still float unquestioned beneath the surface. The present chapter is an effort to call attention to those aspects of skill that Trippett and Musser were unable to address in their arguments. Wehmeyer's distrust of the bodily regimen of practice, I suggest, is misplaced: this distrust may be built on a romantic perspective that views performance, composition, and especially improvisation as ideally

[3] "Die Instrumentalistengeneration um 1800 war in den Sog der kapitalistischen Arbeitsideologie gekommen und erklärte die Ideale der puritanisch-bürgerlichen Lebensführung auch zu den Kennzeichen der Instrumentalausübung" (Wehmeyer 1981, 625).

free and effortless. Cognitive approaches to skill acquisition underscore the daily effort that nineteenth-century practitioners needed to exert in order to maintain their craft.

Sechter's *Practical School of Thoroughbass*

Simon Sechter's *Praktische Generalbass-Schule* (Practical School of Thoroughbass) (1830) is highly unusual: it consists entirely of three- to eight-measure exercises that are fully written out, with very little verbal exegesis. The images of this reproduced here come from an 1876 edition printed in Leipzig by F. E. C. Leuckart. This treatise comes from the middle of Sechter's career, before he joined the Vienna Conservator as professor of thoroughbass and composition. In this work, each thoroughbass chord type (triads, sixth chords, etc.) receives its own "chapter." Each chapter works that particular chord type into a single formulaic progression and presents the learner with a variety of right-hand realizations.

After each section, Sechter provides three to five variations of the bassline in a small appendix. This pedagogical method is familiar from earlier theorists like Friedrich Niedt, who used "variations" to illustrate how simple textures can be elaborated via diminution.[4] Sechter presents these variations separately, on their own single bass staff, sometimes separated by a page-turn from the exercises they're meant to accompany. shows how Sechter's Exercise XVI is laid out on the page. In order to use a bass variation, the student must hold large parts of the exercise in their memory as their sight shuttles between the variation and the exercise. This forces the student to remember the large patterns, making

[4] See Joel Lester's extensive treatment of the second volume of Niedt's *Musikalische Handleitung* (1706) in the third chapter of his *Compositional Theory in the Eighteenth Century* (1992, 49–89).

it more likely that the student will internalize those patterns—along with the implicit rules that they embody.

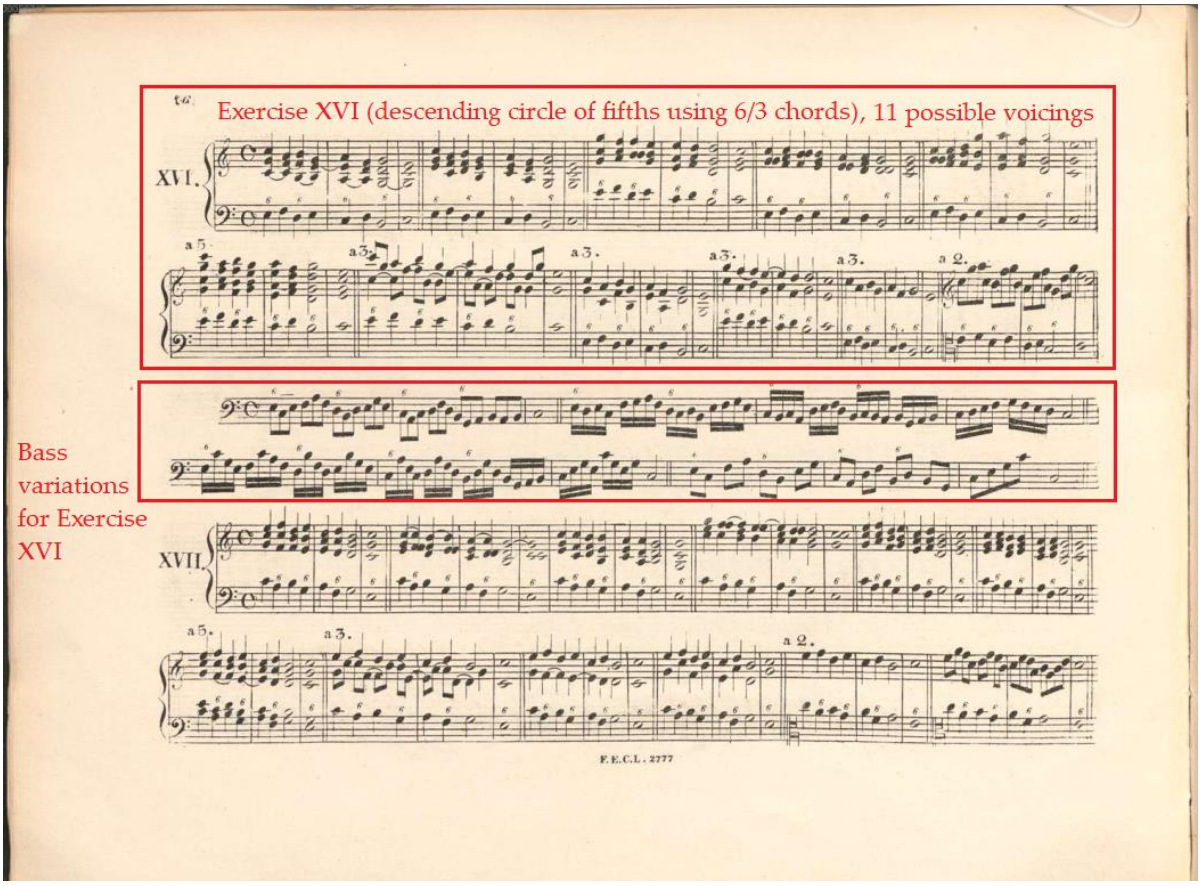


Figure 0-1. An exercise from Sechter's Practical School based on the descending circle of fifths: double bars separate each of eleven right-hand voice-leading options; bass variations are provided on a separate staff

Another strategy Sechter uses for internalizing the practice of thoroughbass is *transposition*. In his prologue, he writes that "these exercises will provide the most benefit if they are translated into all keys."[5] By transposing each exercise, students can connect exemplars to the real manifestations they will later find, either while reading other

[5] "Diese Übungen werden den meisten Nutzen bringen, wenn sie in alle Töne übersetzt werden. Dieses Übersetzen (Transponiren) kann theils schriftlich, theils durch die Einbildungskraft…ausgeübt werden" (1).

compositions or while creating their own. Transposition gives the student a bodily knowledge of each thoroughbass principle that in turn enables them to play and vary it in any key, feeling in advance which fingers will work for which black and white keys. This translates each principle into Le Guin's "extremely fine grain of detail": a responsiveness to the affordances of the instrument, a bodily topology that is physical and not just metaphorical.

This pedagogical method is virtually identical with the one found in Friedrich Wieck's *Pianoforte Studien* (*Pianoforte Studies*), an exemplar of the passage practice method. Marie Wieck writes that the studies should be "played by heart, and transposed into various keys" (F. Wieck 1875b). In most cases, Wieck's student would have to methodically change their fingering to fit the transposed key. Wieck's exercise 14, "Little Exercise on a scale in Thirds," is reproduced below. Note how the exercise, in E-flat major, begins with both hands in the standard E-flat major scale fingering. The next figure shows how this exercise would be fingered when transposed to A major, following Wieck's recommended scale fingerings. The new topology of black and white keys means that the beginning of the passage, for example, must start with different fingers: the first right-hand note, a black note, is played with the middle finger so the thumb can pass beneath the hand to take the next note. The ending, too, must be re-fingered to better accommodate the scalar pattern in the right hand. Even though the student is only re-playing the exercise in a different key, the landscape of keys beneath the fingers has shifted dramatically: not just from three flats to three sharps, but from one starting and ending position to another. A major feels different from E-flat major, and this feeling is the sum of all the fingering changes illustrated below.

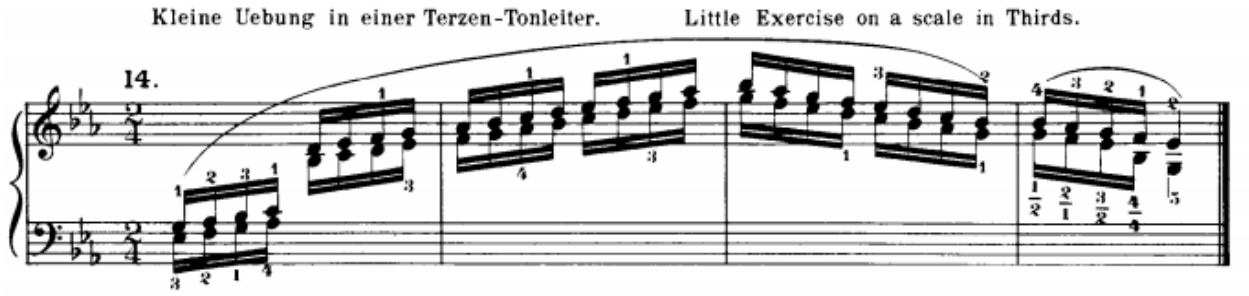


Figure 0-2. Exercise 14 from Friedrich Wieck's Pianoforte Studies (1901, 6)

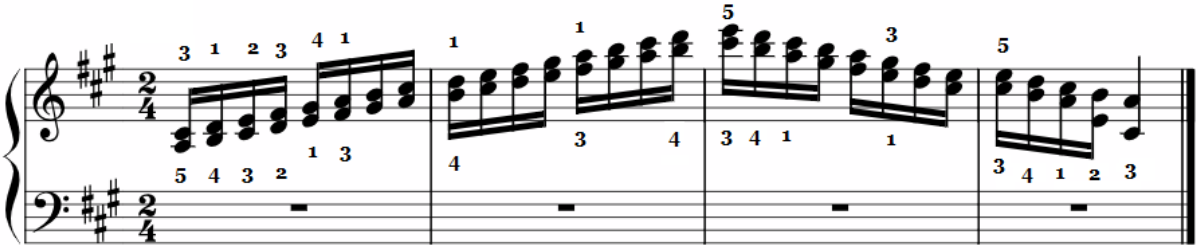


Figure 0-3. Wieck's Exercise 14, transposed to A major and re-fingered using Wieck's recommendations

This exercise is more useful for the student than simply writing out a scale in thirds, because it spans a normative four measures and ends with a cadence: the exercise, as written, could be a plausible part of some larger composition. Because Wieck's exercise unfolds in this "realistic," true-to-performance sort of way, the student may be more likely to carry over these learned fingerings into new music—both the music they learn, and the music they improvise or compose. (In a later chapter, I describe this "realistic" or "plausible" approach using the term "ecological plausibility.") Sechter's short thoroughbass progressions also end with cadences that could make the student feel more like they are performing, rather than just exercising their fingers. Wieck's *Pianoforte Studies* and Sechter's *Practical School* use strikingly similar pedagogical methods, even though the former is presented as a piano method and the latter as a thoroughbass treatise. Semi-

improvisatory passage-practice and nineteenth-century thoroughbass, then, used similar pedagogical strategies.

Czerny's *Studies*

In the introduction to his *Studien zur Praktischen Kentniss aller Accorde des Generalbasses* (Studies for the practical understanding of all chords of the thoroughbass), Czerny writes: "The study of thoroughbass can only be of real use to the student if he gets to know all chords and their applications, practically as well, in all their diverse forms at the piano, and is capable of performing them with confidence" (Czerny 1854).6 The "practical knowledge" that Czerny alludes to in this introduction is the study of unfigured, fully-realized thoroughbass exercises: like Sechter's treatise, Czerny's *Studies* is made up of musical examples, with no written rules given. Czerny's exercises are much longer than the short progressions in Sechter's *Practical School*—on the order of one to four pages long. This length appears to serve two purposes. First, Czerny only provides one exercise for each category of thoroughbass figure. For example, the category "The seventh chord and its three inversions [Versetzungen]" corresponds to just one exercise that must expose the student to all possible inversions and their resolutions. Second, Czerny makes sure to modulate through all possible major keys in each of his exercises. Czerny frequently urged his students to transpose in his other works: "It is… of the greatest importance," he insists in his *Letters to a Young Lady* that she "should transpose these examples into all the other keys" (1837, 54). Czerny, like Sechter, recognized the value of practicing thoroughbass exemplars in all keys. In the Letters he gives instructions to his student to do so, but in the

[6] "Das Studium des Generalbasses kann dem Schüler erst dann von wahrem Nutzen sein, wenn er alle Accorde und ihre Anwendung auch praktisch in all ihren mannigfachen Formen auf dem Fortepiano kennen lernt und sie mit Sicherheit vorzutragen vermag" (1).

Studien he walked his readers through this process on paper instead of trusting them to transpose on their own.

The second half of Czerny's *Studies* cover the same harmonic ground as the material from the first half, but the exercises are realized in a more elaborate way. These exercises are meant to foster "dexterity" by including virtuosic figurations in both hands: as Czerny puts it, they are "animated" or "moving" [*bewegte Übungen*] rather than given "in block chords" [*in festen Accorden*]. The figurations that appear in the second half of Czerny's *Studies* include scales (not just runs, but also scalar patterns that double back on themselves), arpeggios, repeated-note bariolage patterns, and trills. Figure 0-4 illustrates how one such "moving" exercise teaches the use of the chord of the seventh in its different inversions. Like the exercises in the first half, these also modulate through all possible key signatures. Such patterns seem to fall in the middle of a spectrum between short thoroughbass exercises and longer études: they have the pedagogical aims of the former, but the technical difficulty and length of the latter. On top of this, they are too difficult for an unskilled amateur to learn in a single sitting, but at the same time they are not appropriate for concert performance owing to their lack of memorable thematic content. The target audience for this book appears to be the skilled amateur pianist or novice composer.

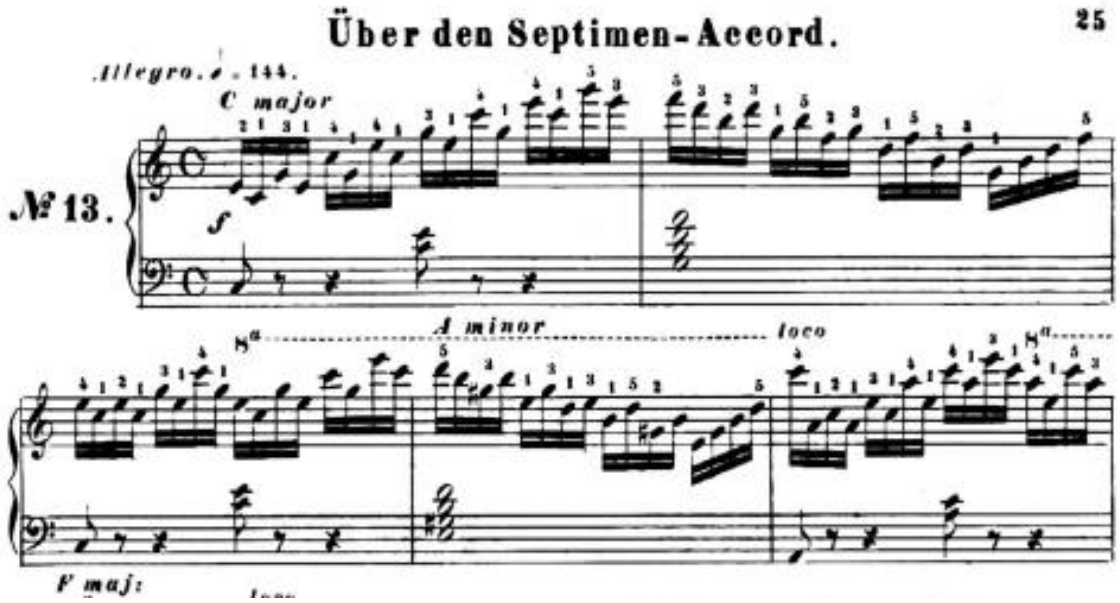


Figure 0-4. Czerny's exercise on the seventh chord, mm. 1-5, from the second half of his *Studies* ("in bewegten Übungen") (1854, 25).

We can connect the two halves of Czerny's Studies through the process of "chunking." Chunking is a concept developed by psychologist George Miller to describe how discrete pieces of information from the surrounding environment can be cognitively combined and processed as a single unit, called a chunk (Miller 1956). This concept helps us understand how, despite the physical limitations on human cognition, experienced learners with prior knowledge can perceive and process far more environmental information than those with less prior knowledge. Miller's ideas have proven influential in the field of cognitive science, and chunking is regarded as a basic building block of human cognition. When we view the wide-ranging arpeggios from the end of Czerny's *Studies* as discrete harmonic-melodic chunks—that is, as short, replicable patterns—they can be more easily connected to the block-chord exercises of the first half, which follow the same harmonic patterns. In Figure 0-4, for example, one can see labels above the staff for each key the exercise modulates through (C major, A minor, etc.). This labeling does not appear

for the sake of harmonic "analysis," but rather for physical cueing. A student practicing these exercises is meant to see the label "C major" and cue the quick, interrelated finger movements that correspond to "arpeggiating through tonic and dominant in the key of C."

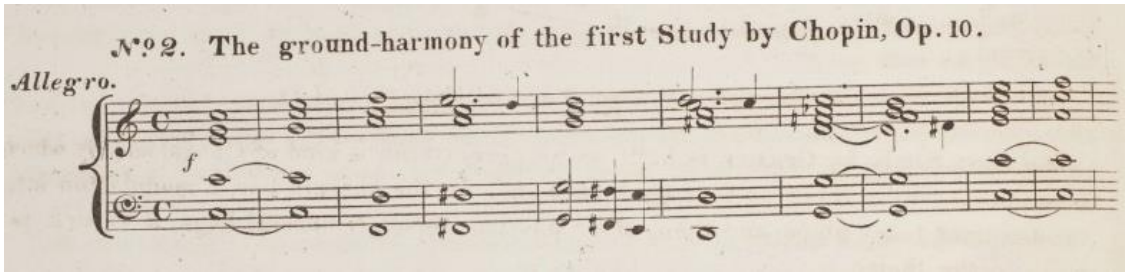
Czerny's other works, as well, invite the analyst to view the playing of harmonies as itself a form of cognitive chunking. His *School of Practical Composition*, op. 600 (1849—50), includes a passage that connects his "moving" thoroughbass exercises to more familiar concert études. There, Czerny gives examples for how a composer might go about writing a virtuosic étude. Czerny abbreviates Chopin's Étude in C major, op. 10, no. 1 into what he calls a "harmonic skeleton," shown in Figure 0-5.[7] Below this skeleton, Czerny reproduces an excerpt of the first two measures of the étude as printed. Czerny makes the claim that a thoroughbass progression in block chords (similar to the thoroughbass exercises from the beginning of his *Studies*) forms the basis of even the most elaborate concert showpiece (1848, 92–93).

Czerny refers to this fully fleshed-out excerpt as the "moving figure" of the harmonic skeleton, connecting the two examples with the idea of acquired skill. The skeleton, Czerny suggests, is compositionally prior to Chopin's étude. This skeleton does not represent the immanent "background structure" of a *work*, but rather charts the composer's presumed image of the étude's harmonic plan, *elaborated in performance* into a torrent of passagework through the expert bodily conception of thoroughbass. If Czerny's *Studies* gives us "exercises in block chords" and "moving exercises," his discussion of Chopin's op. 10, no. 1 shows us that a pianist can turn the former into the latter through bodily skill. There is a conspicuous likeness between Chopin's op. 10, no. 1 and the

[7] The phrase "harmonic skeleton" is used in the first English edition of Czerny's *School of Practical Composition*, translated by John Bishop (1848).

"moving" exercises in Czerny's *Studies*. If an enterprising student learned Chopin's Étude op. 10, no. 1 (noting the underlying "harmonic skeleton") and transposed short sections of it through all possible major keys, Czerny likely would have considered this new bodily skill to be a form of practical thoroughbass deployable in the student's own compositions and improvisations.

a.



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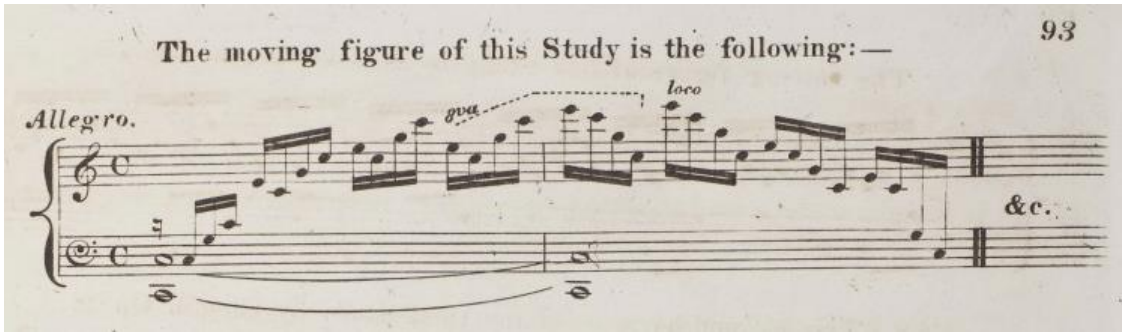


Figure 0-5. Czerny's "harmonic skeleton" for Chopin's Étude op. 10, no. 1 (a), paired with its corresponding "moving figure" (b). From *The School of Practical Composition*, op. 600 (1849–50), pp. 92–93.

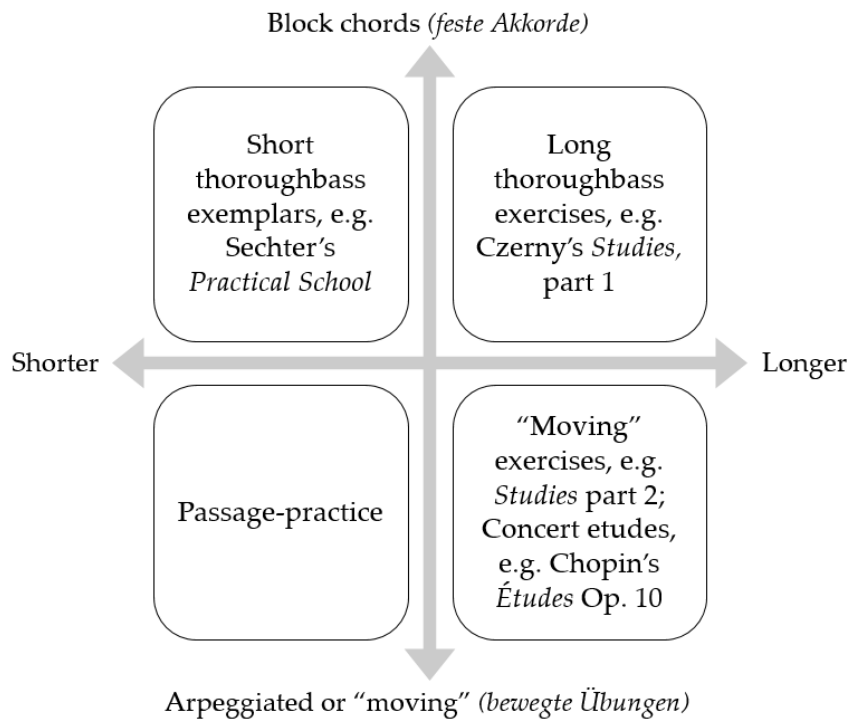


Figure 0-6. Matrix of pedagogical exercises including passage-practice, thoroughbass exemplars, and études.

All the musical examples discussed above, from Sechter's *Practical School* and Czerny's *Studies* to Chopin's Études op. 10, may be termed "studies" or "exercises." Figure 0-6 arranges each of these examples in a matrix according to both texture and exercise length: the vertical axis plots exercises that are either "moving" or in block chords, while the horizontal axis plots how long the exercises are. On the top left of the matrix are the shorter thoroughbass exemplars from Sechter's Practical School. The brevity of these exercises, as well as the clear voicing of the harmonies within the exercises, further Sechter's aims by making it easier for the student to transpose. On the top right are the long thoroughbass exercises of Czerny's *Studies*, part 1. These are similar to Sechter's exemplars in pedagogical aim, but do not need to be transposed because they modulate into every key. The bottom portion of the matrix shows "moving" exercises where each

harmony is broken up into idiomatic figurations. On the left are the exemplars of passage practice, and on the right are the long exercises from the end of Czerny's *Studies* as well as concert études like Chopin's op. 10, no. 1.

This figure, then, relates passage-practice to the pedagogies of thoroughbass discussed here, within the wider realm of keyboard exercises in their diversity. Passage-practicing, like Sechter's thoroughbass method, involved transposition into every key. To accommodate the task of transposition, passage-practice exercises were typically around eight measures long, similar in length to Sechter's exercises. On the other hand, passage-practice exercises also featured idiomatic figurations much like the longer virtuosic exercises in Czerny's Studies. Passage-practice, then, is not only closely related to the thoroughbass pedagogies described here: it is complementary to them.

Czerny's discussion of "harmonic skeletons" within the étude make it plain that his thoroughbass pedagogy was closely related to the improvisatory passage-practice that he espoused. Both practices begin with exemplars and slowly extend outward to involve idiomatic textures like arpeggios, scales, and broken chords. In Czerny's Studies, the student progresses from simpler exercises in block-chord textures to more complex exercises that nevertheless cover the same harmonic ground. In Wieck's and Liszt's passage-practice, pianists similarly begin with exemplars, memorizing them and varying them until the bodily skill demanded by the exemplar has been acquired as a reliable part of the pianist's technique. I describe at length this process of improvisatory learning from exemplars in the second half of this chapter.

The evolution of exemplar-based pedagogies

The thoroughbass pedagogies described above were not without antecedent. Three examples of eighteenth-century exemplar-based pedagogies can be considered relevant precursors: first, the fully-notated exercises that appeared as supplements to the learning of partimenti; second, the widespread teaching of unfigured realization; and third, a specific example of both of these in practice: Handel's exercises for the daughters of George II, which I single out as an especially illustrative instance of exemplar-based continuo pedagogy. These three examples show that this nineteenth-century practice has eighteenth-century precedents which emphasize nonverbal, procedural knowledge to a similar degree.

First: the eighteenth-century partimenti traditions described by Sanguinetti and Gjerdingen were not wholly restricted to a figure-realization model. Earlier Italian pedagogies included not only partimenti but also short, fully-composed practice pieces meant not only to advance the learner's technique, but also to serve as a textural or voice-leading model for how a completed *partimento* ought to sound. Although Gjerdingen refers to these practice pieces as *intavolature* (2011, 191), Sanguinetti points out that, strictly speaking, the word *intavolatura* described all pieces written as a "two-stave, fully notated score" and was often used simply as an antonym to pieces written in the abbreviated *partimento* manner (2012, 5). Italian music masters seemed to have "prescribed" a variety of fully written exercises or complete pieces for their students. Second: partimento practice at more advanced levels often did not include figures. Students were expected to make inferences in order to harmonize unfigured basses just as well as figured ones—so earlier practices have more in common with nineteenth-century examples than contemporaneous writers of the nineteenth century had thought. In fact, one can characterize partimenti as a non-discursive or oral practice that uses examples to show the student a skill rather than

tell them. Third: Handel's set of exercises written for the princesses Anne, Caroline, Amelia, and Louisa, the daughters of George II, is structured similarly to the approach discussed here. Handel's exercises are arranged in ascending order of difficulty without any lengthy explication of rules—although it seems highly likely that the teacher himself would have verbally explained the rules to his students (Mann 1987, 21–32; Ledbetter 1990). These exercises can be taken as representative of an eighteenth-century approach to thoroughbass, as taught by one of the century's most influential composers. Older thoroughbass traditions, in short, were more complex than nineteenth-century scholars like Marx and Vincent made them seem, and the newer thoroughbass methods of Sechter and Czerny did not represent a revolutionary change but rather a natural and gradual evolution.

For a responsive teacher, the chosen teaching strategy will naturally change when the learning context changes. The students of eighteenth-century Italian pedagogues like Leonardo Leo and Francesco Durante were children who learned models and rules of realization under master teachers, whereas Sechter's and Czerny's students would likely never be called upon to realize a figured bass in their professional lives. For Sechter and Czerny the "practical" approach was their most effective tool. Leo or Durante, on the other hand, probably would have found Sechter's and Czerny's approach familiar but lopsided: this approach, in their eyes, would have been seen as using only one method to teach a skill that should have required, for them, a multi-pronged strategy. But a skilled amateur or professional pianist of the nineteenth century would find the approach perfectly balanced: it is a way of learning the most relevant aspects of thoroughbass, using methods that are familiar from virtuosic passage practice.

How was this new thoroughbass different from more familiar, earlier traditions? One significant difference concerned audiences and learning contexts. The *Neue Zeitschrift*

für Musik lists the price of Czerny's treatise as 1 Thaler and 10 Groschen, which was over half the average weekly pay for a skilled laborer in Lower Austria (Flagg 1857, 253), while Sechter's treatise was even more expensive than Czerny's at a price of 3 Thaler and 8 Groschen. Unlike the copied-out Italian partimenti of the previous century, these treatises were intended to be read by wealthy advanced amateurs or professionals. Unlike a student practicing partimenti, someone practicing from Czerny's or Sechter's treatises did not have the feedback of a master teacher to keep them on track. These new nineteenth-century learning contexts, in sum, were transformed by the institutional and class affiliations of target audiences.

One defining aspect of thoroughbass, historically, is that it involved a bass voice that participated in an activity of abbreviation, implying the presence of voices above it. Thoroughbass was, for example, "a figured-bass voice within which the entire harmony is expressed," according to Johann Georg Vogler, an influential performer, theorist, and pedagogue of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.[8] Neither the *Studies* nor the *Practical School* walks the reader through any logic of abbreviation to or extrapolation from the bass—yet these two works were still considered by their authors to be thoroughbass treatises. How have Sechter and Czerny *changed their conception* of the term "thoroughbass" in order to accommodate the teaching methods found in the *Studies* and the *Practical School?* In brief, this new pedagogical attitude did away with the rules of figure realization that are were no longer relevant in mid-nineteenth-century Vienna while retaining practices that were still usable (such as the drilling of formulas like the Rule of

[8] Georg Joseph Vogler, *Handbuch zur Harmonielehre und für den Generalbass* (Prague: K. Barth, 1802), pp. 125-26. Cited and translated in David Chapman, "Thoroughbass Pedagogy in Nineteenth-Century Viennese Composition and Performance Practices," PhD, Rutgers University (2008), 109.

the Octave). Thoroughbass, in the nineteenth century as in the eighteenth , was both a cognitive and a bodily skill, but there is a conspicuous difference in pedagogy: bass realization, and indeed, any form of notating thoroughbass principles through figures, was now seen as an old-fashioned activity, tested in conservatories but no longer expected from most practicing performers.

Carl Dahlhaus has described how later nineteenth-century composers regarded earlier musical practices, suggesting that whenever an older practice becomes tightly codified, it loses its contemporary meaning. "The instruction that was meant to make professional composers superior to dilettantes," he wrote, "resembled exercises in a dead language, the easy codifiability of which is obtained only at the price of irrelevance" (1989, 26–27). Dahlhaus evokes the image of dead languages in a way that at first seems to ring true: the extensive tables of thoroughbass figures in sources like David Kellner's *Treulicher Unterricht im General-Baß*, for example, seem to have the same relevance for the nineteenth century that a table of Latin declensions has today. But thoroughbass pedagogies did not always become "dead languages" in the nineteenth century: they survived through adaptation and resistance to codifiability. Czerny and Sechter's thoroughbass, through its focus on embodied knowledge, avoided the petrifying effect of this codifiability and brought thoroughbass into the nineteenth century as a living language.

Practicality

The word "practical" appears not just in the title of Sechter's treatise, but also, conspicuously, in the foreword to Czerny's *Studies*. Viewed in light of changing nineteenth-century audiences and contexts of learning, one could take this as a sort of promise from the authors. We might imagine what that promise might sound like: unlike other thoroughbass primers, this one offers you skills that are relevant, taught in a realistic

manner. "Practical," then, can call up its opposite, denoting a sense of obsolescence for the "thoroughbass" in general. But in another sense, the "practicality" signaled by Sechter's title is a lean economy of instruction. Czerny wants to efficiently convey only the most relevant aspects of thoroughbass so a learner can treat his treatise like a one-stop shop. Sechter's Practical School shares the same pedagogical attitude, and adopts the word "practical" for the same purpose as Czerny: for this reason, I call this teaching method the "practical thoroughbass." This method is distinct from previous practices both in manner of instruction and in intended audience, although it shares many similarities with eighteenth-century partimento practice.

Practicality is a crucial concept here not only because it appears in both treatises, but also because the word indexes new pedagogical methods that sprang up in England and Europe in the early nineteenth century. Many of these new German and English trends in education were influenced by phrenology. David Trippett describes this new nineteenth-century interest in phrenology as arising from two pedagogical groundings. The first grounding was the systematic recitation of standard texts in English schools, which made mass education possible in a rapidly industrializing nation. The second grounding, dovetailing with the first, was the phrenological idea that mechanical "exercise" was necessary to develop the brain. Trippett believes the "practical" approach to compositional pedagogy (represented mainly by Czerny's 1848 *School of Practical Composition*, op. 600) falls under a larger nineteenth-century movement towards "systematic" pedagogy that in turn fell under the sway of this pseudo-science. In this way, the concepts of practicality, systematicity, exercise, and phrenology were bound up in a loose network of educational reform.

The main phrenological hypothesis held that certain activities and capacities of an individual were linked to specific regions of the brain. Early phrenologists like Franz Joseph Gall and Johann Spurzheim based this hypothesis on the metaphor of the brain as a muscle. Spurzheim believed that hands-on activity (over and above explicit knowledge-building) was necessary to strengthen the brain, allowing it to accommodate new information. He suggested that exercising the brain would lead to positive change in brain shape: "This may certainly happen in the brain as well as in the muscles," he ventured. Spurzheim, who wielded significant influence in Britain, wrote in 1815 that "education is nothing but exercise, cultivation and direction" (cited in Trippett 2015, 106). Education policymakers in Britain gave these precepts an enthusiastic reception. The lawyer and lecturer James Simpson wrote in 1836: "To be improved each and every faculty must be positively exercised. Perceptive instruction is notoriously insufficient to give mechanical skill" (112). In this way, British educators developed a convenient focus on rote recitation and performed repetition, influenced by I will call the "exercise postulate."

Although there is no concrete evidence that Czerny interacted with phrenological thought, the surface-level resemblance between rote learning in the English classroom and Czerny's many pedagogical works is striking. The word "practical," associated with these new teaching practices, signals a way of learning that centers on bodily activity. In this way, "practical" is an apt word to describe the postclassical pedagogy that appears in Czerny's Studies and Sechter's Practical School. But still, we cannot assume that Czerny or Sechter adopted explicitly phrenological views. Trippett does not, in fact, make strong claims about Czerny and phrenology per se: he only associates Czerny's pedagogical methods with a broad attitude that prefers hands-on experimentation over untried theory. The goal of Czerny's School of Practical Composition op. 600, Trippett writes, is "skillful

activity (delineating form) rather than new knowledge; the latter, uncultivated through activity and exercise, appears of little value for a practical school" (2015, 112).

Trippett's assertion that Czerny was more concerned with activity than "knowledge," however, only makes sense within a framework where activity does not count as knowledge. This is what makes the pedagogical attitude of Czerny and Sechter distinct from the phrenological "exercise postulate": for these pedagogues, exercise is not just exercise. Here, John Anderson's cognitive conceptions of *procedural knowledge* and *declarative knowledge* will be useful. Anderson writes:

> Intuitively, declarative knowledge is factual knowledge that people can report or describe, whereas procedural knowledge is knowledge people can only manifest in their performance. . . The same abstract knowledge can have both procedural and declarative embodiments. Thus, declaratively we might have memorized the layout of the type-writer keyboard, and procedurally we may know the keyboard as part of our typing skill. (1993, 18)

The difference between declarative and procedural knowledge can be summarized as a distinction between "knowing that" and "knowing how." When Anderson's paradigm is applied to thoroughbass pedagogy, it is clear that both kinds of knowledge can be present. Declarative knowledge, in this context, would comprise the memorization of figures and their implications (including thirds that may be implied but not notated), rules for dissonance resolution and the figures that would accompany those resolutions, and other facts one might glean from reading (but not necessarily playing through) a thoroughbass manual. Procedural knowledge, on the other hand, would consist of the overlapping skill of

realizing these facts in performance—an activity that may or may not be accompanied by the ability to verbally explain what is happening while it happens.

The declarative-procedural paradigm can describe how torrents of arpeggios can be distilled into "harmonic skeletons"—as well as how skeletal thoroughbass principles can be expanded back into virtuoso passagework as they are in the second half of Czerny's *Studies*. A skill-based focus avoids the extensive abstract claims that hamper those approaches to tonal analysis that we might otherwise use to compare elaborate musical phenomena to their "skeletons."[9] Procedural knowledge describes the practiced, unconscious movements that a player would execute to create a brilliant, arpeggiated texture. Procedural knowledge also describes the small, instinctive changes to voicing and voice leading that a player absorbs from repeating the simpler thoroughbass exercises in Sechter's *Practical School* or the beginning of Czerny's *Studies*. Declarative knowledge, on the other hand, describes the decisions a player would make in order to elaborate a simple thoroughbass texture into virtuosic figurations (what kind of scale or arpeggio will I play? Where will I start and end?). Declarative knowledge also describes the harmonic and formal planning a player might devise on the spot.

The two categories of knowledge occasionally intersect: some harmonic turns, for example, might be better-practiced and more automatic than others, and this might affect an improviser's declarative "plan." This observation is supported by Anderson's theory that the two forms of knowledge commingle in many skilled activities. Nevertheless, the categories of declarative and procedural knowledge are productive tools for modeling

[9] Schenker, in his essay "Der Kunst der Improvisation," wrote that improvisation was valuable insofar as it conveyed lessons about *Auskomponierung* and his conception of the *Ursatz (1925)*. See Matthew Brown's "C. P. E. Bach, Schenker, Improvisation, and Composition" (2010).

musical skill acquisition—especially for improvisatory traditions like thoroughbass. Unreflective analytic approaches can potentially hem in the tradition's openness. Anderson's framework can help analysts avoid a musical vocabulary that splits improvisation, composition, and performance into insular (and rigid) categories.

The concepts of declarative and procedural knowledge can also show how the attitude of the practical thoroughbass remains distinct from phrenology's "exercise postulate." Czerny's pedagogy, even when it skews toward the far end of the "compositional" spectrum, never devolves into purely rote work in the way Trippett's argument implies. Rather than showing a preference for activity over knowledge, or the procedural over the declarative, Czerny's pedagogy blends the two. Czerny, for example, advises his readers to use the "harmonic skeleton" method discussed above to improve their own compositional skill. First, the student must create harmonic sketches based on "distinguished compositions" for emulation: "knowledge, care, and a great penetration into the spirit of the music is required…in order thus to divest the melodies and figures of all ornaments, and to reduce them to their *most simple* harmony" (1848, 93). Next, the student is to create a harmonic skeleton in preparation for their own original composition. Contrary to what one might assume based on Czerny's late-nineteenth-century reputation and Trippett's larger argument about phrenology, Czerny's "practical" approach turns out to be more than mechanical repetition—it is, rather, an exemplar-based pedagogy that fosters the acquisition of procedural knowledge, calculated to be as effective as possible. Declarative knowledge has a part to play here: Czerny's advocacy of the "harmonic skeleton" approach, as well as his arpeggio key-labeling in the second half of his Studies (Figure 0-4), are examples of how discrete forms of declarative knowledge advance his student's acquisition of cognitive skills.

Sechter shares with Czerny a preference for procedural execution over declarative rule-learning. His *Musical Advisor,* for instance, gives readers examples for how to correct common mistakes in composition (1834). This troubleshooting document is made up of examples rather than verbally-articulated rules. In his preface to the *Advisor,* Sechter makes it clear that he finds examples more valuable than lists of rules when it comes to teaching:

> It is customary to forbid the apparent and hidden fifths and octaves, the dissonant false relations and the unprepared entry of dissonances; *but almost no one thinks to show those who are eager to learn how to improve such mistakes,* or in other words, [to show] what can be done better in such a case.. (1834, 3, emphasis added)

Illustrations of common errors and how to correct them do appear in earlier thoroughbass manuals—but these earlier sources are usually far more limited in scope. Heinichen, for example, largely restricts himself to positive exemplars of what we might call well-formedness in *Der General-bass in der Composition* (1728). There are only three places in Heinichen's comprehensive manual where errors are presented and fixed according to the rubric of "bad" vs. "good" ("falsch" and "gut") (148, 185, 779). Almost a century later, Thomas Attwood would fill his thoroughbass manual (marketed under the name of his teacher Mozart) with examples showing how to correct common errors, with their solutions falling along the continuum of "very bad," "bad," "improved," and "good."[10] Sechter, in the 1850s, would use an even more subtle scale that included "weak," "more tolerable," and "uncommon" (Sechter 1854; see, e.g., p. 16).[11] Through these gradations, one can discern the pedagogical role Sechter tried to play for his students: instead of inculcating

[10] "sehr übel," "übel," "verbessert," "gut."
[11] "matt," "erträglicher," "selten."

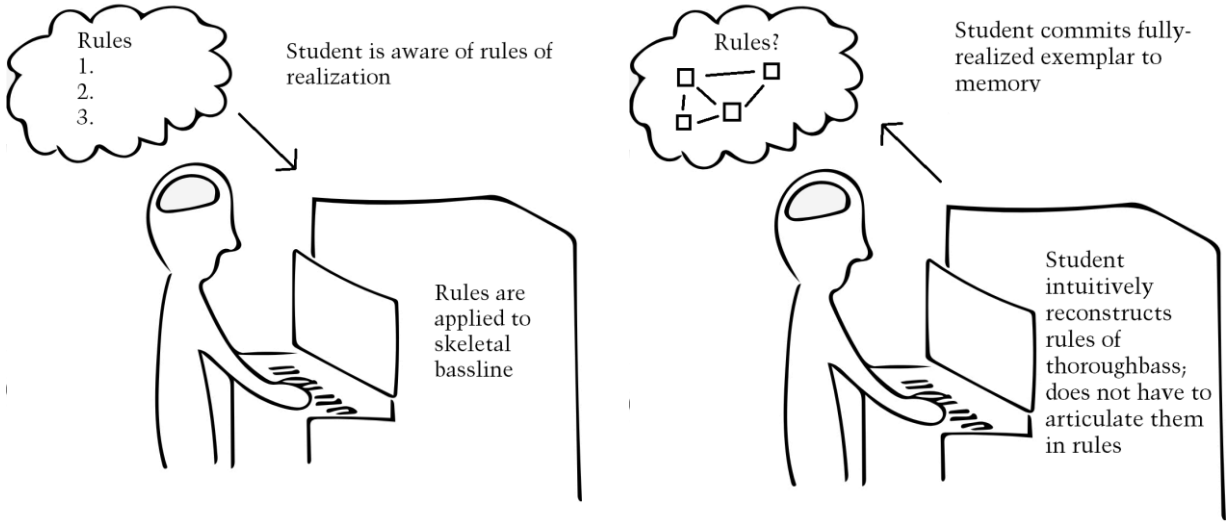
a knowledge of rules, he tried to give them a discerning ear for the conventions of practice, showing them how certain combinations of voices could lie closer to or further from a conventional ideal. Sechter's descriptive focus can be reformulated as an overarching concern for the well-formed execution of procedural knowledge rather than a parsing of declarative knowledge.

The two musicians under discussion, in sum, prioritize methods that give the learner procedural knowledge from an early stage. They both give precedence to exercises and exemplars over rules. A British public infatuated with phrenology may have seen parallels in Czerny's work, but this is due more to his methods' surface similarities with phrenologically influenced education rather than to any deep-seated connection with that defunct science itself. Contrary to the phrenological exercise postulate, repetition in these treatises is not only for repetition's sake.

Acquisition Models

How do declarative and procedural knowledge interact when a student learns thoroughbass? Giorgio Sanguinetti defines the *partimento* as "a guide for improvisation of a composition at the keyboard," and as "plan[s] for a composition not yet in existence" (2012, 14, 11). Sanguinetti's words closely echo J. S. Bach's, who according to Philipp Spitta called thoroughbass "an extemporaneous composition" (cited in Lester 1992 page number?). Czerny and Sechter, in contrast, only present the reader with "compositions" already in existence. Here we have complete realizations to be learned by rote, as opposed to the basslines of partimenti that are meant to be a starting point. Both of these are exemplar-based approaches, but figured-bass realization exemplars and "practical thoroughbass" exemplars represent two different acquisition models, as illustrated in Figure 0-7. The two styles of thoroughbass pedagogy diverge sharply from each other in some respects, but

nevertheless share similarities. This section argues that both pedagogies use similar tactics to foster the acquisition of skills needed for improvisation.



(a) Figured bass realization **(b) Practical thoroughbass**

Figure 0-7. Acquisition models of figured bass realization and practical thoroughbass

The figure above offers a simplified view of how a student acquires cognitive skills in two scenarios: the rule-based realization of figured bass, and the "practical" practice of thoroughbass. (A fuller account of earlier eighteenth-century practices beyond the realization of figures appears at the end of this section.) Model (a) on the left presents us with a model of acquisition in *figured-bass realization*. In this model, declarative knowledge of the rules of thoroughbass is given, and the student is presented with a skeletal bassline. The student translates this preexisting declarative knowledge into a sounding result using procedural knowledge. Model (b) on the right, in contrast, *begins* with procedural knowledge: the student starts with a fully-realized exemplar with no

prerequisite rule-learning. The student is to commit this realization to muscle memory, along with any variations that might be provided with it. In Czerny and Sechter's acquisition model, procedural knowledge is prioritized over declarative knowledge, to the point where rules are never listed at all. On its face, this method may seem wholly mechanical and unsuited to the acquisition of improvisatory skill, but study of cognitive skill acquisition can illustrate how the method can become an indispensable tool for musical creation.

I emphasize here, though, that this nineteenth-century approach to thoroughbass was related to eighteenth-century practices that likewise highlighted procedural knowledge and bodily skill. The figure above, which compares a rule-based approach with a "practical" one, is *not* a comparison of eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century models. Rather, the figure stresses that rules can only be a single component of a larger and more complete thoroughbass pedagogy.

Exemplars and Generalization

The nineteenth-century thoroughbass can be analyzed through two core concepts from the study of cognitive skill acquisition: first, it is structured around complete *examples*, and second, it fosters *generalization*. Cognitive studies uniformly emphasize the importance of *examples*. A study by Xinming Zhu and Herbert Simon found that middle-school students who learned calculus only from written examples were able to complete a three-year sequence in only two years, without any direct instruction (1987).[12] Sechter's *Practical School* makes it clear that he sees the value of vivid musical examples. Czerny,

[12] Zhu and Simon report that the students were given no lectures: they first studied examples, and then worked through pre-tests and a final post-test while stating aloud what they were thinking (1987, 144–45).

too, openly embraced an exemplar-based pedagogy not only in his *Studies,* but also in the "harmonic skeletons" of his *School of Practical Composition* discussed above. The use of examples, then, isn't just an important part of musical skill acquisition—it has the potential to be the entire curriculum.

Another useful concept from the study of skill acquisition is the principle of *generalization*. Cognitive studies of skill often center on the acquisition of mathematics, and examples are often presented as word problems. In a 1989 study, Brian Ross found that students tended to associate the variables of a formula with superficial facets of the first word problem they learned from: in one case, they tended to associate one variable with "people" (e.g. scientists, programmers) and another with "objects" (computers) regardless of how the new problem should have been solved (1989). The most successful students, however, were able to tell the difference between these superficial variations and more important signs of underlying structure: as Ross put it, they were able to *generalize*. Kurt VanLehn defines *generalization* as:

> the process of modifying one's' understanding of an example or principle in such a way that surface information does not play a role in retrieval, mapping, and application. Generalization allows one to apply the principle or example to more problems. (VanLehn 1996, 520)

In other words, generalization isn't just the indiscriminate extension of an example to cover multiple cases—it is the ability to see how the example must be modified in each case. In this nineteenth-century thoroughbass, "generalization" would involve following particular harmonization principles even when the current exercise has surface-level dissimilarities with the exemplar used to teach the rule. Sechter addresses generalization

when he asks the student to transpose exercises into all keys, and Czerny addresses it by modulating through all possible keys in a single exercise. Both pedagogues take generalization further by incorporating variation into their treatises: Sechter does this in the form of bass variations, and Czerny does this by giving examples where voice-leading principles are decorated with torrents of arpeggios and scales. In Czerny's case, these virtuosic elaborations are meant to show how basic thoroughbass principles are generalizable into even the most specialized cases. Generalization, in brief, allows musicians to relate music in their wider world to patterns they already know, and thus to grasp that music quickly.

In Czerny's *Letters to a Young Lady*, a series of letters to a fictional piano student, Czerny sketches out a chord-by-chord thoroughbass primer for his reader and urges her to use her new skills to find similar structures in all the music she finds: "I have already made you acquainted with seven chords," he tells her. "If you give yourself the trouble to transpose them into other keys, you will speedily be able to trace them out in every composition, under whatever forms they may occasionally be hidden" (1837, 45). This passage shows that Czerny conceived of thoroughbass as a skill foundational to both playing and composing: one only needs to generalize its constituent parts to see it and hear thoroughbass everywhere.

Czerny insisted on exercises that cultivate the tenet of generalization. This insistence, however, may be responsible for much modern-day frustration. Generalization at the keyboard can be a daunting task, especially to readers who come across instructions to transpose an exercise into every key with no cogent explanation as to why. Jordan Musser, in his recent article "Carl Czerny's Mechanical Reproductions," describes these sorts of transpositional instructions with incredulity:

> the process [of playing a scalar exercise] is repeated *ad nauseam* by way of traversing the major-key circle of fifths. . . [T]his circuitous journey doubles as a way of teaching both manual technique and knowledge about modulation and transposition—in, again, a thoroughly embodied manner. Not once in the process does Czerny state a rationale for shifting from C to F major, or from F to B-flat, and so on. (2019, 373)

By pointing out Czerny's lack of rationale for modulation through all keys in this excerpt (which comes from the *Piano Forte School,* op. 500), Musser argues that the process of modulation was its own justification in Czerny's pedagogy. This mechanics-first strategy, for Musser, is part of a larger regime of *mechanistic* self-discipline for the purpose of the bourgeois amateur's formation of self (2019, 386). Some of Wehmeyer's claims seem to undergird this view: Czerny's transposition and repetition, according to this view, does not directly contribute to musical creation, but serves some non-intellectual bodily exigency instead. They are, for Musser, part of a "finger doctrine" (383).

But I suggest we re-think this view of Czerny's methods. Instead of building upon Wehmeyer's assumption, we might consider the advantages of a cognitive approach, in particular one that recognizes cognitive generalization. This generalization can potentially give the musician access to a power of invention that goes beyond the rote memorization of notes: in this light, transposition and repetition directly impact one's capabilities for musical creation. The "generalizing" impulse in Czerny's pedagogy is effective not only for bourgeois subjects insulated from public performance, but also for composers and public improvisers. In this sense, then, the pedagogy of the nineteenth-century thoroughbass would not be limited to the modes of "mechanical reproduction" that Musser describes. This pedagogy might be characterized as both "mechanical" and "reproductive," but one

must be careful to avoid seeing these terms only as constraints foisted onto the music-maker. Repetition and transposition, as tools, can be used for acts other than the replication of musical works. These tools, as techniques of generalization, can give the practitioner an authorial, generative musical role.

In this generative sense, the pedagogy presented here expands on Le Guin's concept of carnal knowledge. *Carnal knowledge* connotes bodily connection with a composer: for Le Guin, her own carnal knowledge at the cello can connect her performing body to the body of Luigi Boccherini in eighteenth-century Spain. Le Guin, sensitive to the unknowable epistemic gap between Boccherini her twenty-first-century performances of his music, nevertheless sees performance as a way of knowing. Boccherini's musical works become a mirror for Le Guin: by playing with the work in front of her, she can sense Boccherini's body playing beside her as she navigates the physical imperatives of his written passages. In contrast to Le Guin's *carnal* knowledge, the carnal knowledge of the passage-based thoroughbass is an *exploratory* one that looks outward in all directions, rather than towards a single composer or work. The practical injunction to generalize urges the player toward new bodily knowledge, unconfined to the written text before her: in the case of Sechter's *Practical School*, for example, this new and unwritten knowledge is the sum of the transposition and recombination of treble and bass variations. But when the player driven by the urge to generalization goes even further, she might invent her own variations, or incorporate musical ideas from pieces outside the scope of the thoroughbass manual in front of her (as discussed elsewhere in this dissertation). This form of carnal knowledge instilled by the nineteenth-century thoroughbass, in short, takes in material from more than a single source. It embraces all music that the player has the power to generalize.

Such a view would sharpen some of Musser's most perspicacious arguments. The "finger doctrine," he argues, contributed to a dynamic that Ruth Solie (after Judith Butler) described as the *girling experience*, a coercive system of social expectations that "idealized and sentimentalized" women at the same time, ultimately depriving them of agency (2004, 91). This system, for both Solie and Musser, is ambivalent: it gives for the purpose of taking away. Musser writes that amateurs who played transcriptions at the piano were, in a certain manner, creative participants bringing "musics of the public sphere" into the domestic orbit (392). Even if performance outside the domestic circle was prohibited, Czerny nevertheless held girls to a very high standard of music-making, as shown by the unpatronizing tone and ambitious goals in his *Letters to a Young Lady*. But this only sharpens the ambivalent edge of girling as a social system. Richard Leppert has analyzed visual portrayals of the piano as an instrument of domestic music-making, arguing that the piano symbolized female subjugation through the foiling of feminine desire: "[musical] pleasure comes—perversely—from desire's unrealized aspirations" (1992, 124). The assiduous development of a carnal sensibility of improvisation and composition, and its subsequent imprisonment at the piano in the family parlor, may well be what Leppert calls "self-denial, built on a foundation of domination" (124)—that virtue of feminine restraint, one of the double-edged weapons of coercion so familiar to the girls that Solie describes. This is all to say that the "carnal" outlook, one of open-eared learning and self-development, might seem utopian—but in fact, this outlook on its own is just an instrument, one that can be used either for self-exploration or for social control. The tendency to take on a utopian view of improvisation and live performance is a constant through-line in this dissertation, one that is explored more fully in its final chapter.

Body and mind: performance tradition as music theory

Sechter and Czerny, then, conceived of thoroughbass as a broad system of practice that allowed musicians to acquire unconscious bodily knowledge of harmonic syntax, dissonance resolution, and voice leading—and then to deploy that knowledge in their compositions, whether written or improvised. This widened conception stands in marked contrast to the other voices of the nineteenth century like Marx, Silcher, and Vincent, who thought that thoroughbass was synonymous with the specialized, largely obsolete activity of figured bass realization. Although Sechter's and Czerny's widened definition allows for the analysis of thoroughbass acquisition presented here, the scope of this new thoroughbass is sweeping and its borders are inexact. This introduces a difficult, larger question: can a tradition of performance count as a music theory?

The difficulty of this question largely stems from associations of improvisation and performance (and of thoroughbass in particular) with bodily knowledge and the Body in the abstract. In short, if musical activities are divided *a priori* into a "body-mind" dyad, it is much easier to see the "mind" as the domain of theory (or of musicology), even while knowing in a physically palpable way that music requires bodily participation. Indeed, Thomas Christensen (2007) has noted that practical topics dealing with performance did not figure within the largely Aristotelian tradition of music theory writing until well into the seventeenth century—because of this very dyad. Suzanne Cusick expresses her discomfort with this dyad while writing about the difficulty of using existing musicological discourse to address gendered bodies:

> As a performer, I act on and with what we ordinarily call music with my body; as a musicologist I have been formed to act on (and with?) what we ordinarily call music with my mind, and only my mind. Thus, my musicological habitus inclines me to

> think about music's fixed, textlike qualities, an inclination that is perpetually at odds with the way my performing self inclines me to think about and respond to music. (1994, 9–10)

Cusick's musicological-historical argument can be applied just as well to music theory, a field where open-ended musical creation is often at odds with scholarly analysis. To "theorize," within the discourse described by Cusick, means to make fast, to illustrate with diagrams, at worst to reify, and at best to translate musical experiences into a written medium. These "theoretical" acts only deal with one small and non-representative corner of the vast realms of musical practice that music theorists can access. It is no surprise, then, that the contingent and "practical" aspects of instrumental pedagogy—especially its improvisatory aspects—are difficult to capture with our existing music-theoretical vocabulary.

This problem of vocabulary is nothing new. Gustav Nottebohm, Beethoven's biographer, tried to sidestep this terminological difficulty by giving a two-part definition for "thoroughbass." He wrote that thoroughbass referred to two things, summarized by Holtmeier as: "(1) the embodiment of the rules for accompanying a figured bass, and (2) the science of the combination and connection of intervals and chords, with or without consideration of thoroughbass performance" (cited in Holtmeier 2007, 7). For Nottebohm, then, the word could encompass two topics that were ontologically distinct: one was the *embodiment* of rules, and the other was a *science* liberated from the concerns of embodied performance. Here, a distinction is made between bodily and non-bodily musical knowledge—the exact split that Cusick criticizes.

In a sense, the question posed here—"can a tradition of performance count as music theory?"—is easy to answer: yes, it can. The field of music studies has become increasingly broad-minded and diverse with regard to skilled music-making practice. But disciplinary openness is not at issue. The real difficulty is finding music-theoretical methodologies that are not only relatable to seminal work in the field, but are also responsive to the concerns of skilled improvisatory practices like thoroughbass.[13] In short: it may be easy to declare performance a form of music theory, but it is much more difficult to show how these bodily practices can relate to the domain of knowledge most readily identifiable as "music theory"—and to show how this new "theory" might be fruitful for musical thought.

In light of the targeted pedagogical strategies of the postclassical thoroughbass outlined here, I posit that the bodily knowledge cultivated by performance can—and does—constitute music-theoretical knowledge. Czerny's and Sechter's' exercises develop exemplar-focused, generalizable skill. This skill is necessary not only for performance (whether improvised or prepared in advance), but also for the work-based compositional practices we more readily associate with the term "music theory." Le Guin's conception of "carnal knowledge," which she expresses in her own work largely through first-person narrative, can be articulated from a different angle by considering the bodily knowledge demanded of a performer in terms of the cognitive skills the performer must acquire.

As shown above, the binary understanding of the musically "practical" and the musically "theoretical"—the assumption that these forms of knowledge, sometimes found in the same place, are fundamentally different—has a long history. Allan Keiler, in his

[13] Recent direction-setting work by Georgina Born (2010) and Ingrid Monson (2018) addresses the post-structural concept of relationality within the methods of music studies. **Does this address what you wrote in your sentence, though?**

article "The Problem of the Retrieval of Musical Knowledge," describes the difficulties of extracting "theoretical" knowledge from thoroughbass treatises. Keiler describes "theoretical modes of discourse," in these treatises, which can be found alongside the "practical modes" meant to teach either performance or composition. "There is, of course, nothing very startling in the claim that theoretical statements, as well as their implications, occur from time to time throughout more practical treatises," Keiler writes. "This sort of thing happens in virtually all practical manuals of instruction; foundational statements occur from time to time, more systematically in one manual, less so in another, often by implication alone" (2013, 292). Keiler concedes that the practical and theoretical modes usually manifest in ways that make them difficult to disentangle into two separate strands. Nevertheless, his main goal in the essay is to dig down and discover the "foundational statements" of theory, to label the modes of discourse in order to untangle and extricate the theoretical from the practical.[14] Keiler is concerned with identifying and highlighting examples within the treatises that represent statements of rigorous theoretical import, as opposed to those that represent practical exercises for the student, because to him, this is the only way to find out what conceptual theories might silently inform an author's writing (e.g. *basse fondamentale*, inversion theory).[15] Keiler's conceptualization of thoroughbass pedagogy as the combination of two ontologically unrelated activities seems to be a philosophical descendant of Nottebohm's 1873 two-part definition of thoroughbass, described above.

[14] "Clear connections between modes are rarely made, the kinds of connections that one expects to find in frankly theoretical treatises" (2013:292).

[15] Keiler asserts, for example, that a specific example in Johann Adolph Scheibe's Compendium Musices (1730) represents an abstract statement in the theoretical mode which implies "understanding" of chordal inversion, while an adjacent example on the same page represents a more practical "compositional mode" inserted "in an attempt to be exhaustive for the sake of the student" (297).

Keiler instructively notes that it is usually difficult to disentangle "practical" from "theoretical" modes of discourse, especially when one approaches a treatise with the assumption that an underlying abstract argument inheres within its examples. As Ludwig Holtmeier writes, "theory" in the thoroughbass treatise is not, in the common meaning of the word, presented and developed 'scientifically'" (Holtmeier 2007:6). "Theory" is, rather, presented and developed in these works with acquisition in mind, and its presentation is ordered by logics of practice. And practice, in Pierre Bourdieu's memorable formulation, "has a logic which is not that of logic" (1977, 109).

This practice-based view of nineteenth-century thoroughbass complicates received notions about contemporaneous pianism that focus, to the exclusion of all else, on the "mechanics" of skill acquisition at the piano. Musser, for example, describes Czerny's *Pianoforte School* op. 500 as "rote before note, sensation before theoretical conception, and even physical strength before ideation" (371). One can see how, at first glance, Czerny's *Studies* and Sechter's *Practical* School might support with this view. But conceptual dyads in Musser's assessment—"rote" vs. "note," "physical strength" vs. "ideation"—are difficult to maintain when one considers how the theoretical and practical are tightly intertwined in these works, just as they are intertwined in improvisatory music-making in general. In a pedagogy where skill is learned progressively and characterized by the execution and generalization of exemplars, "physical strength" (in the sense of a physical command of skill) and "ideation" are not learned separately, but rather concurrently.

I argue that, in nineteenth-century texts like the ones described here, the "theoretical" and "practical" strands are intertwined because their authors had little reason to differentiate them. The "epistemological grounding" of *theoria*, as Christensen puts it, with its revered Platonic pedigree (see Christensen 2007, 18), has little foothold in this new

nineteenth-century practical environment. If contemporary theorists like Keiler see few "frankly theoretical" connections between discursive modes in these works, it is because the authors of those works *did not need connections between modes* in order to be effective for their target audiences. Many nineteenth-century music pedagogues (like many earlier pedagogues) may never have expected their future readers to plumb their texts for these unstated but internally consistent theoretical structures: pedagogues had little reason to make them explicit. This is why Keiler's arguments about disentangling the theoretical mode from the practical are so difficult to make in the present context. It is also why working with historical sources like Sechter's *Practical School* and Czerny's *Studies* can be demanding for those of us whose eyes are accustomed to speculative theoretical underpinnings. But at the same time, coming to terms with the historical exigencies of these works makes the task worthwhile.

Nineteenth-century thoroughbass and bodily approaches to music theory

The two treatises discussed here constitute a link between passage practice and older eighteenth-century thoroughbass traditions. Sechter's *Practical School* specifies formulaic ways of varying an exemplar, while Czerny's *Studies* elucidates the bodily relationship between "moving" realizations and realizations that are given in chords. Both these treatises ask that the student transpose every exercise into all major keys. These instructions promote the cognitive task of generalization, which refers to the process where information from an exemplar is extrapolated to account for its use in new contexts. In passage practice, the nineteenth-century thoroughbass, and older thoroughbass traditions, musicians must break down passages into normative patterns, manipulating and varying those patterns in order to decide, through bodily repetition, what aspects of the pattern are superficial details and what aspects are structurally essential. This process of generalization

gives the musician the ability to assemble and perform new combinations of patterns in the moment.

Studies of Czerny's pedagogy in particular tend to emphasize repetition as a tool that fashions a domestic, "industrious" selfhood for those who sit at the piano. The approach taken here highlights instead the exploratory, outward-oriented nature of these types of practice methods. This emphasis leads me to expand upon Le Guin's conception of "carnal knowledge": while Le Guin sees carnal knowledge as a cross-temporal, bodily link between performer and composer, I cast it as a way of positioning oneself in a musical world. Music-theoretical concepts are ultimately also bodily concepts.

This claim can be supported by evidence for what Arnie Cox has called the "mimetic hypothesis" (2001; 2011; 2016). This is Cox's term for the idea that music involves as a central component the conscious or unconscious mental copying of physical actions involved in producing sound. This occurs as actual movement to music, which Cox calls "mimetic motor action," or as imagined movement, which he calls "mimetic motor imagery" (2016, 38). Cox argues that there is plenty of evidence for this type of imagined movement, provided by studies involving "motor-related brain activity that occurs when participants observe the actions of others" (2016, 23). Within this view, the experience of music is inseparable from one's perception of performing bodies and the physical labor of producing sound—even if one's mental image of a performer is hypothetical or imagined. Learning to play the piano within a "carnal" mindset might be an extension Cox's mimetic hypothesis.

The methods explored here, then, represent a "carnal" outlook: a way of perceiving the music of others—and sharpening one's own musical palette—with one's body. Sechter's

and Czerny's practical treatises reinforce this point: just by looking at their exercises, we can feel ourselves playing our way through and learning wordlessly as we go.

1. Entextualization in Clara Schumann's Piano Practice

Clara and Friedrich Wieck in Kassel

In 1831, the twelve-year-old Clara Wieck visited the city of Kassel on a mission. Urged by her father, Friedrich Wieck, she was to impress the influential composer Ludwig Spohr during a visit to his home, in the hopes of receiving further invitations for private salon performances and, hopefully, a public performance in a concert hall. She and her father arrived at Spohr's house on November 3rd—one can imagine the apprehensive Spohr ushering the quiet Clara and her steely father out of the cold and into his home, taking their coats, and apologizing for the absence of the rest of his family. Spohr's wife and daughter were at home but were occupied with their own affairs elsewhere in the house. This visit was, then, strictly for business. The three settled into Spohr's expansive music room, where Clara sat at the piano. The elder Wieck, difficult to impress in spite of his rural upbringing, noted to himself that the Streicher piano of six and a half octaves was "fairly good" (Litzmann 1913, 31). Clara began to play.

By the time Clara finished playing one of her own compositions, Spohr was entirely won over. He called his family into the music room to listen. Spohr was married to Dorothea "Dorette" Scheidler, a touring virtuoso of the harp, and though Wieck only referred to Scheidler as Spohr's wife, one nineteenth-century encyclopedia notes that she was at that time "the most famous harpist in Germany" (Champlin 1890, 411). One can imagine the harpist Scheidler's initial skepticism when her husband called her into the music room to listen to a twelve-year-old play the piano, but she was quickly won over as well. Spohr and Scheidler delivered their comments and critiques in between words of

effusive praise for the young Clara's compositional voice and instrumental technique. Friedrich Wieck reported on the successful visit:

> Spohr… found Clara's playing so broad and sustained, and at the same time so brilliant and solid, that he could hardly listen to the end of each variation without discussing it with his wife. It is however, difficult to make Clara's talent appreciated on all sides, *and I am continually doubtful whether to let her play something of her own, or of Herz or Field or Pixis, or simply improvise*. (Litzmann 1913, 31. Emphasis mine.)

The elder Wieck certainly had an agenda in portraying his daughter and star pupil in this adulatory manner: he was not only her father and piano teacher, but also her concert manager. Spohr does not mention this episode in his autobiography, although he recounts a performance he saw later in life where the famous Clara Schumann played a piano concerto written by her husband (Spohr 1861, 334). Wieck's account is, nonetheless, trustworthy: Berthold Litzmann reproduces an effusive letter of introduction that Spohr wrote for Clara when she left Kassel, praising her "certainty and ease which is to be seen only in the greatest living artists," as well as her compositions, which despite their rigor "[spring] from her own heart" (1913, 33).

Friedrich Wieck's report shows how in this situation *pieces* of music were subservient to the overall goal of showcasing one's performance technique and personality: this complicates our perception of an "interpretive" framework in which performers were to bend themselves in order to serve "the music" (Hunter 2005). During this visit, in addition to Chopin's Variations on "Là ci darem la mano" op. 2, Clara also played what her father described as her "Variations No. 2" and her "Scherzo in C"—these may have been

the pieces later published as the *Caprices en forme de valses* op. 2 and the *Romance variée* op. 3., both of which she wrote around this time. These were chosen to showcase the young artist's technical command and compositional voice: one imagines that the selections were picked out by Wieck with particular passages in mind—passages that best exemplified the young artist's skill. Another significant part of this report is that Wieck considers his daughter's improvisation, for the purpose of this sort of musical networking, to be on par with all these pre-composed works—including Chopin's op. 2.

The aim of opening this chapter with this story is not simply to emphasize the young Clara Wieck's compositional powers or skill at the piano, nor is it to place her early works on a par with Chopin's compositions. Instead, my purpose is to illustrate a vivid scenario where works themselves are not the focal point of a performance, even within a music culture where a repertoire of "classics" was quickly solidifying.[16] The fact that the young pianist played Chopin's op. 2 in particular was not the focal point of this encounter, because her improvisation could sometimes serve the same aim of impressing the listener with her musical intelligence (according to the elder Wieck). Notable, too, is that Spohr and Scheidler commented on each variation as Clara played them. The focal point was the bodily skill she was able to display.

One might object that the Wiecks' visit to Spohr and Scheidler was not a performance proper but a sort of audition, and that this would explain why Friedrich Wieck placed his daughter's compositions and even her improvisations on a par with her renditions of works written by others. But instead of dismissing the anecdote as a special case outside the normal world of performance, I want to highlight the social aspect of the

[16] William Weber writes, for example, that from the middle of the nineteenth century to roughly the 1870s an "international canon" congealed (1999, 341, 347).

visit described above. One of the aims of this chapter is to emphasize scenarios where the functions of improvisation and works, whether self-composed or written by others, start to blur in the face of social exigencies—and to make this blurring the normal state of affairs rather than a limit case. Rather than analyzing music on the level of works according to the vocabulary established by what Lydia Goehr calls the musical "work concept" (1992, 5), I instead look at smaller units of construction that can be defined, roughly, in terms of bodily skill. These smaller units—passages, as I term them after Liszt—are often assumed to exist for the purpose of making up some larger structure like a work. Here, I wish to reverse this prioritization of works over skills, or of works over practices.

This project asks: is it possible to create an analytic framework that addresses the deployment of skill in the form of passages in and of themselves, rather than treating them as a precondition for works? In other words: what if we assumed that musicians played works in order to showcase their performance of passages, instead of the other way around? What kind of approach to musical analysis would best serve these types of performances? I argue that such a skill-centered approach would address both extemporaneous and premeditated musical creation by broadening the concept of the musical "text" and examining how texts are created in performance.

In order to do this, I will begin with an introductory description of the practice method Clara Schumann used, which emphasized creative variation and transformation rather than the rote practice of repertoire. I draw similarities between the exemplars used in Friedrich Wieck's method and textures from Johann Nepomuk Hummel's influential set of études, Op. 125.

This practice method sheds light on the young artist's treatment of musical materials in her *Caprices en forme de valses*, Op. 2, which forms the first case study of this chapter. Here, an analysis informed by the linguistic-anthropological theory of *entextualization* shows how passages on the phrase level can be described in terms of metrical transformations: entextualization describes how people lift pieces of continuous discourse out of their contexts (and their "co-texts," as defined below) in order to render them as texts that are repeatable in new situations. Entextualization provides a "zoomed out" view that sees more than just scores. This new perspective enables the analyst to see bodily practices and listening habits embedded within musical text. This perspective also allows improvised and precomposed performance to exist in the same theoretical framework, analyzable with the same vocabulary.

Finally, I put musical entextualization into larger contexts. First, I consider how the view of improvisation as bodily skill conflicts with influential early twentieth-century theories of improvisation expounded by Arnold Schoenberg and Heinrich Schenker. Then, it reflectsI reflect on the gendered hierarchies of authority that entextualization can uncover—hierarchies that affected Schumann even at the height of her career. In sum, I will argue that improvisation, as a way of playing with text, is central to Schumann's composition.

Friedrich Wieck's pedagogy

Friedrich Wieck marketed himself as a piano pedagogue rather than as a pianist. In 1816 he married his star student, the nineteen-year-old Marianne Tromlitz, who would go on to give solo performances in the Leipzig Gewandhaus as both a pianist and a soprano. Tromlitz, Clara's mother, was tasked with teaching the advanced students in Wieck's piano studio. Her professional achievements were touted as proof of Wieck's pedagogical efficacy,

foreshadowing his daughter's career during her childhood and young adulthood (Reich 1985, 32). Tromlitz and Wieck eventually separated under acrimonious conditions, again foreshadowing Clara Schumann's eventual relationship with her father. By then, Friedrich Wieck was successfully able to connect his teaching method with the early successes of both Marianne Tromlitz and Clara Schumann within the public eye. After Clara Schumann's first performance at Leipzig's Gewandhaus in 1828, a reviewer wrote in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*: "It was especially pleasing to hear the young, musically talented Clara Wiek [sic], just nine years old, perform…to universal and well-earned applause Kalkbrenner's Variations on a March from Moses. We may entertain the greatest hopes for this child who has been trained under the direction of her experienced father, who understands the art of piano playing so well and teaches with devotion and great skill" (cited in Reich 1985, 45).

This young pianist, then, was part of a marketing engine for a certain style of learning. In Friedrich Wieck's polemical teaching manual, *Klavier und Gesang* (Piano and Song), the elder pedagogue takes bold positions on some widely held beliefs about piano practice (1853).[17] Friedrich argues against the use of finger exercises that were, in his words, "a useless and senseless mechanical 'practising'" (1875a, 11). Wieck writes:

> I teach the pupil to find the triad and the dominant chord of the seventh, with their transpositions in every key, and to practice them diligently; and to make use of these chords in all sorts of new figures and passages. […] After that, I teach them to play fifty or sixty little pieces, which I have written for this purpose. They are short, rhythmically balanced, agreeable, and striking to the ear, and aim to develop

[17] The longer, translated quotations that appear throughout are taken from a nineteenth century translation by Mary P. Nichols (F. Wieck 1875a).

> gradually an increased mechanical skill. I require them to be learned by heart, and often to be transposed into other keys. . . They must be learned *perfectly* and played well…without stumbling or hesitating; first slowly, then fast, faster, slow again, *staccato, legato, piano, forte, crescendo, diminuendo,* etc. (1875a, 13)

Wieck's "little pieces," reproduced in a volume published by his daughter Marie Wieck (1875b), tend to be eight to sixteen measures long and end with cadences. All excerpts from Wieck's *Pianoforte Studien* that are presented below come from an edition of this volume, translated and reprinted in 1901 by Schirmer in New York. One such "piece" is reproduced in the figure below. Here, a "double-stopped" texture is highlighted in the right hand throughout. The harmonic trajectory is plain, almost stereotyped: the double-stopped idea appears in the tonic and dominant for the first four measures. In the last four measures that idea is repeated over predominant harmonies before a rising sixths figure brings the exercise to a cadential conclusion.

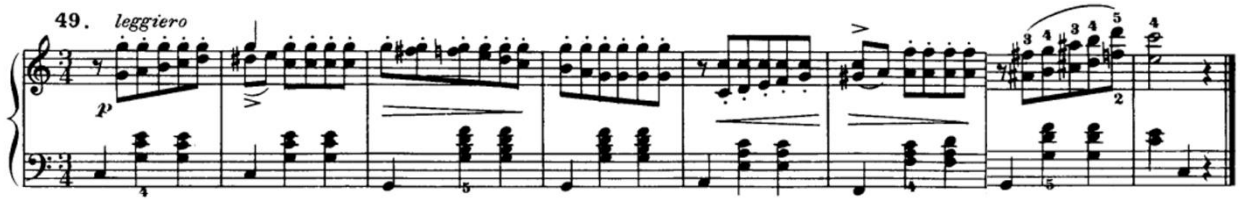


Figure 1-1. Exercise 49 from Wieck's *Pianoforte Studien*

This exercise exemplifies the qualities that Wieck described in *Klavier und Gesang:* it is concise and rhythmically balanced, its eight measures divided perfectly in half. Its distinctive double-stopped texture gives it a motivic recognizability that Wieck might term "striking to the ear." Its motivic and harmonic balance might qualify as "agreeable." Above all, the exercise stands on its own as a "little piece": its tight formal closure would convey a sense of completion to a student practicing its eight measures.

The sense of closure and the "agreeable" balance of the exercise contribute to its *ecological plausibility*. One can imagine a musician working within two systems: a "practice system" where they work through small individual problems, and a "performance system" where these efforts on the small scale are merged with larger-scale concerns of rhetoric and musical form as heard by an audience. This twofold division is a generalization—one can imagine scenarios where the two environments are in some ways indistinct from each other—but nevertheless, the distinction accounts for how performances are prepared, whether improvised or written in advance. The exercises and excerpts of the practice system, in this framework, can be viewed as "models" that prepare a student for the "natural environment" of the performance system. The practice system, in other words, should prepare a musician by guiding them through a representative sample of all the tasks they will have to carry out in the performance system.

It is possible for a pianist's activities within the practice system to look quite different from their activities within the performance system: they might use finger exercises, for example, or they might repeat a single measure many times. Indeed, for some musicians today the phrase "practicing piano" might call to mind exactly this kind of rote practice. Wieck's approach was in many ways the opposite of this: his writing shows that he was concerned with bringing the practice system and the performance system (as I have termed them here) into closer contact. Finger exercises and scales still found their place in Wieck's approach: Part I of the volume edited by Marie Wieck includes some five-finger exercises, and the end of the volume lists scales and fingerings. But if we think of the practice system as providing models for study, Wieck wanted these models to be as close as possible to what the student would eventually encounter in the performance system.

Wieck's approach, then, stressed the kind of practice we might term ecologically plausible. In *Klavier und Gesang* Wieck insistently argues his case for this practice, arguing that this approach was the most realistic way to teach students to pay attention to the sound of their own playing:

> I have hit upon a different way, and one more in accordance with nature than that used in the piano schools. [...] I endeavored, without notes, to make the necessary exercises so interesting that the attention of the pupils always increased; and that they even, after a short time, took great pleasure in a sound... (1875a, 25)

When Wieck insists that his method is "in accordance with nature," he is writing about the "nature" or the tendency of his piano students to prefer musical and performance-like "little pieces" over mechanical finger exercises. These exercises, then, are ecologically plausible because they put the student in the mindset of performing for others, which one might posit is the main goal for most of Wieck's students. The beneficial side effect here, as Wieck claims, is that by practicing little pieces as if to perform them for others, his students become attentive to the way their sound at the piano will be received, eventually taking "great pleasure" in their explorations of sound.

Wieck's particular stance towards piano pedagogy did not expressly address improvising. He instead crafted his method of short exemplars played in all keys as a way to make students invested in the sounds that they produced during practice, as an antidote to the disinterested, "vague, dreary, time- and mind-killing piano-jingling" that he believed other teachers were foisting on their students (1875a, 10). His "little pieces" include distinctive figurations and employ the conventions of harmony and motive that one might find in a larger piece or hear in a free improvisation. Because Wieck asks the student to

transpose and modify his exercises during practice, his method posits plausible models that are generalizable within the environment of concert performance.

The exercise of Wieck's shown above, for example, would help furnish a student with the skills to perform a piece like Johann Nepomuk Hummel's Étude in F major from his influential Études op. 125 (1832). In the excerpt reproduced below, we see many of the technical features previously pointed out in Wieck's exercise. The upper line is cast in a rapid but delicate "double-stopped" texture. In the third measure we see a chromatic line underneath a repeated fifth scale degree played by the fifth finger—mechanically similar to the figure that appears in measures 1, 3, and 5 of Wieck's exercise. The left hand in both figures plays simple bass-chord accompaniments. Between the exercise and the étude excerpt, there are even similarities of stylistic detail in the way the phrase structure is terminated: Hummel's étude concludes its first four-bar phrase with a short scalar passage in parallel thirds over the dominant, and Wieck likewise ends his eight-bar phrase with a rising figure in parallel sixths. The image below is reproduced from an 1832 edition printed by Haslinger in Vienna and held in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek.

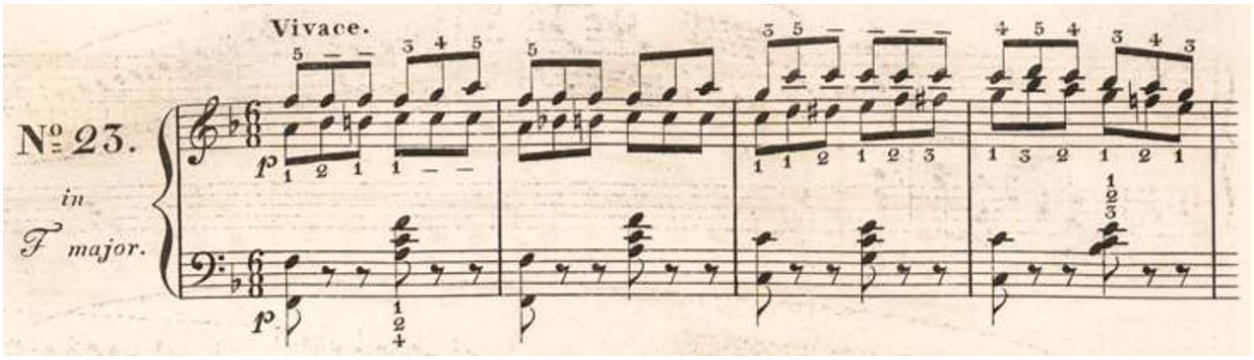


Figure 1-2. Étude no. 23 from Hummel's *Études* op. 125, mm 1–4 (1832, 59)

Memorizing Wieck's exercise and transposing it to every key, as Wieck instructed, is more than just a hurdle for a student to clear before moving on to larger pieces like

Hummel's Études, op. 125. Wieck's "little pieces," as a part of the practice system, could familiarize a student with specific idiomatic and figurational features that they would later encounter in the repertoire that makes up the performance system. It could also equip a student with the skills needed to improvise in an idiomatic fashion. Framing practice in this way shows how a pianist's activities in the practice system contributed to both improvisatory performance and composition.

In *Klavier und Gesang*, Wieck writes about himself as though he is the only sensible person in the room—literally. Several chapters are written in the manner of a dialogue between rival pedagogues at a salon: Wieck's mouthpiece is a "gruff" pedagogue whose two talented daughters Cäcilie and Emma stay quiet and let their playing (and their father) speak for them. The other actors in Wieck's imaginary salon scenes include not only misguided piano teachers, but also clueless parents. One passage encapsulates the attitude that suffuses Wieck's entire treatise. Here, Wieck's persona tries to evangelize a young pianist's father, Mr. Buffalo (*Herr Büffel*):

> *Dominie*. Do you not think that the taste for a beautiful interpretation may be early awakened, without using severity with the pupil? and that to excite the feeling for music, to a certain degree, even in early years, is in fact essential? The neglect of this very thing is the reason that we are obliged to listen to so many players, who really have mechanically practised themselves to death, and have reduced musical art to mere machinery—to an idle trick of the fingers.
>
> *Mr. Buffalo*. That's all nonsense. I say teach them the scales, to run up and down the gamut! Gradus ad Parnassum's the thing! Classical, classical! Yesterday you made your daughter play that Trill-Étude by Carl Meyer. Altogether too fine-sounding! It

> tickles the ear, to be sure, especially when it is played in such a studied manner. We stick to Clementi and Cramer, and to Hummel's piano-school—the good old school. You have made a great mistake with your eldest daughter. (F. Wieck 1875a, 22–23)

In this passage, one can see Wieck's argument for a style of practice that above I called ecologically plausible. One also detects the severe binary thinking and us-versus-them mentality that suffuses the whole of Wieck's treatise. Wieck's method, the practice of small pieces and excerpts, is the right method, while Mr. Buffalo's method—scales, *Gradus ad Parnassum, Clementi, Cramer, and Hummel*—can only be wrong. But here I must emphasize that the analytic lens discussed in this chapter can apply to styles of practice beyond Wieck's. The concepts of cognitive skill generalization and exemplar use that I apply in Chapter 1 can shed light on more rote mechanical practice (like scales and *Gradus ad Parnassum*) as well.

Within a perspective informed by the cognitive study of skill, there is little reason to consider scale practice as something purely "technical" and separate from the study of short exemplars, or the study of a repertoire of works. In an earlier chapter, I described transposition and variation at the piano as two techniques that foster skill generalization: that is, transposing and varying an exemplar allows the pianist first to determine what characteristics of the passage are most essential for their purposes, and second to invent their own material based on those essential characteristics in any key. Scale practice is no different. One can apply the same view to well-known technical exercises like Charles Louis Hanon's, or to lesser-known technical exercises like those found in Hummel's 1828 *Ausführliche theoretisch-practische Anweisung zum Piano-Forte-Spiel* (Detailed Theoretical and Practical Instructions for Playing The Pianoforte), discussed in a previous chapter.

The figure below reproduces one of Hummel's exercises from that method book. Here, the pianist is to play melodic thirds, first with the first and third fingers, and then with the second and fourth fingers. Like Hanon's familiar exercises, this pattern is arranged in ascending and descending sequences across a wide swath of the keyboard. The image below was digitized from a copy published by Haslinger in Vienna and held at the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek (catalogue number SA.71.B.2).

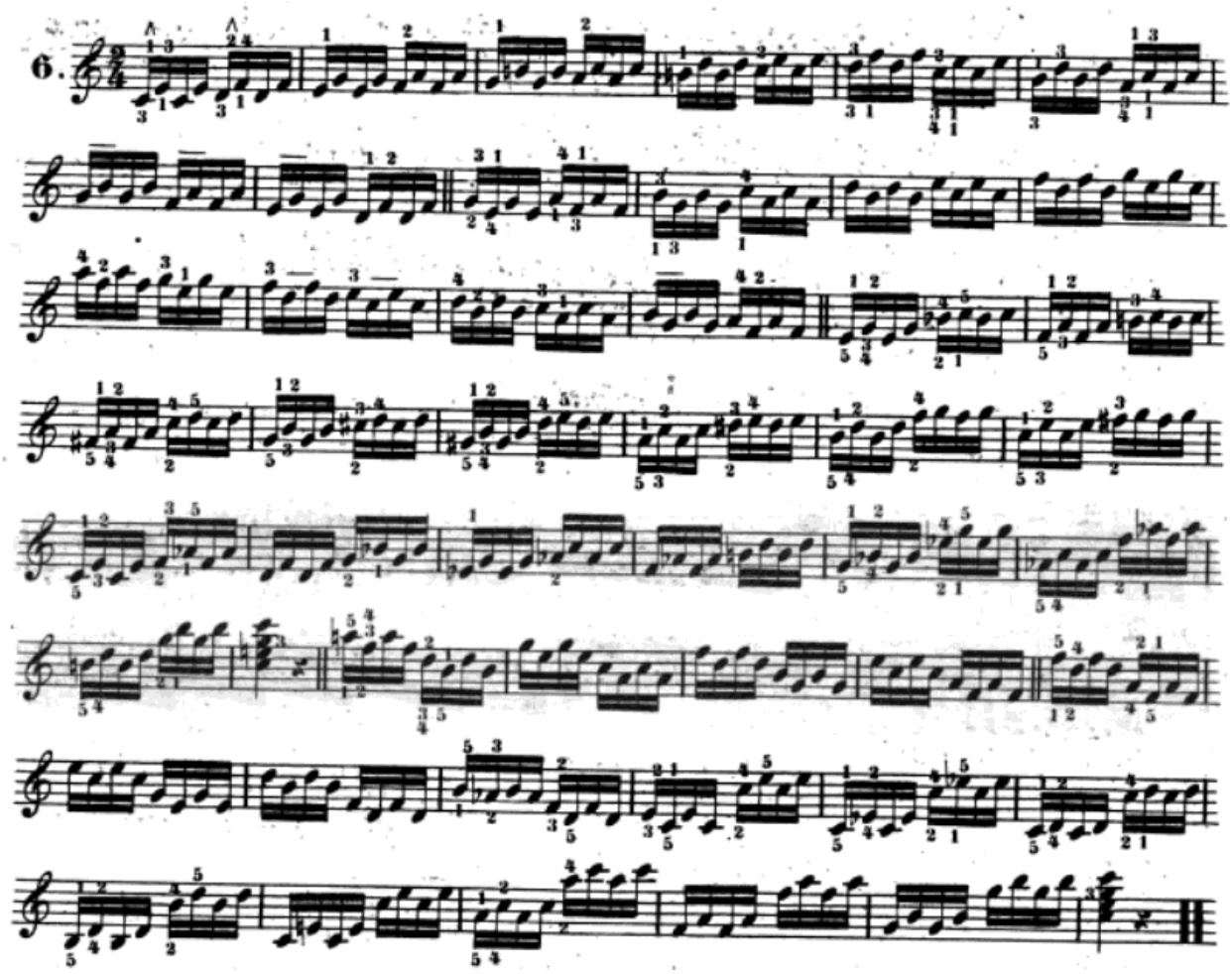


Figure 1-3. Fingering exercise no. 6, from Hummel's *Anweisung* (1828, 119)

Hummel's exercises, however dry and technical they may seem, are also analyzable within the framework of entextualization that is developed here. That is, I consider them to

be more than mechanical exercises: they are also exemplars that equip the player with an arsenal of short figurations to be used in one's music-making, whether practicing a piece from the classic repertoire or improvising freely. Hummel writes that his exercises "consist of easy figures and passages with compound parts, linked together in sequential rows, selected from polyphonic works and from other works, partly from my own works, and partly from well-known masterworks" (1828, ii: 106).[18] Notably, in Wieck's drawing-room dialogue from *Klavier und Gesang,* Hummel's name appears alongside Clementi's and Cramer's when Mr. Buffalo tells Wieck what his son has been practicing. Hummel's exercises, then, are especially relevant sources of evidence for the present chapter. In short, these exercises—many of which are almost indistinguishable from Hanon's exercises—consist of patterns that should not exist in a practice-room vacuum, but rather come from the "real world" of the piano repertoire. I argue that one might take Wieck's method and its insistence on performance-like ecological plausibility and apply it even to the Hummel exercises that Wieck disdained. One might even suggest that Hanon's famous exercises are useful to piano students because to some degree they emulate actual figurations found in the repertoire.

The trenchancy of Wieck's writing may lead a reader to believe that his pedagogical style—characterized by the use of "little pieces" and the merging of "mechanical" and "artistic" practice—was a rarity. But Wieck was not the only pedagogue at this time who taught technique, improvisation, and composition through short transposable pieces. Carl Czerny's *125 Passagenübungen* op. 261 (1833) shares aspects of Wieck's approach. The full title of this collection is "125 Passage Exercises in small pieces, some short, some more

[18] "Übrigens bestehen diese kurzen Übungen aus einfachen, zusammengesetzten, in Kettenreihe folgenden, aus mehrstimmigen, und aus andern, theils aus meinen, theils aus berühmter Meister Werken ausgewählten Figuren und Passagen."

detailed, with marked fingerings" (*125 Passagenübungen, theils in kürzeren, theils in ausgeführteren kleinen Sätzen. Mit Bezeichnung des Fingersatzes*). The purpose of this collection seems to align very closely with Wieck's "little pieces." A later chapter discusses Czerny's *Passagenübungen* in more detail, demonstrating the similarities between this collection of original exercises and Czerny's other collections of excerpts from other composers. Below, I reproduce exercise 91 from Czerny's *Passagenübungen*, comparing it to exercise 26 from Wieck's collection. The excerpt below, and all other excerpts, are reproduced from a digitized 1888 reprint published by C. F. Peters in Vienna.

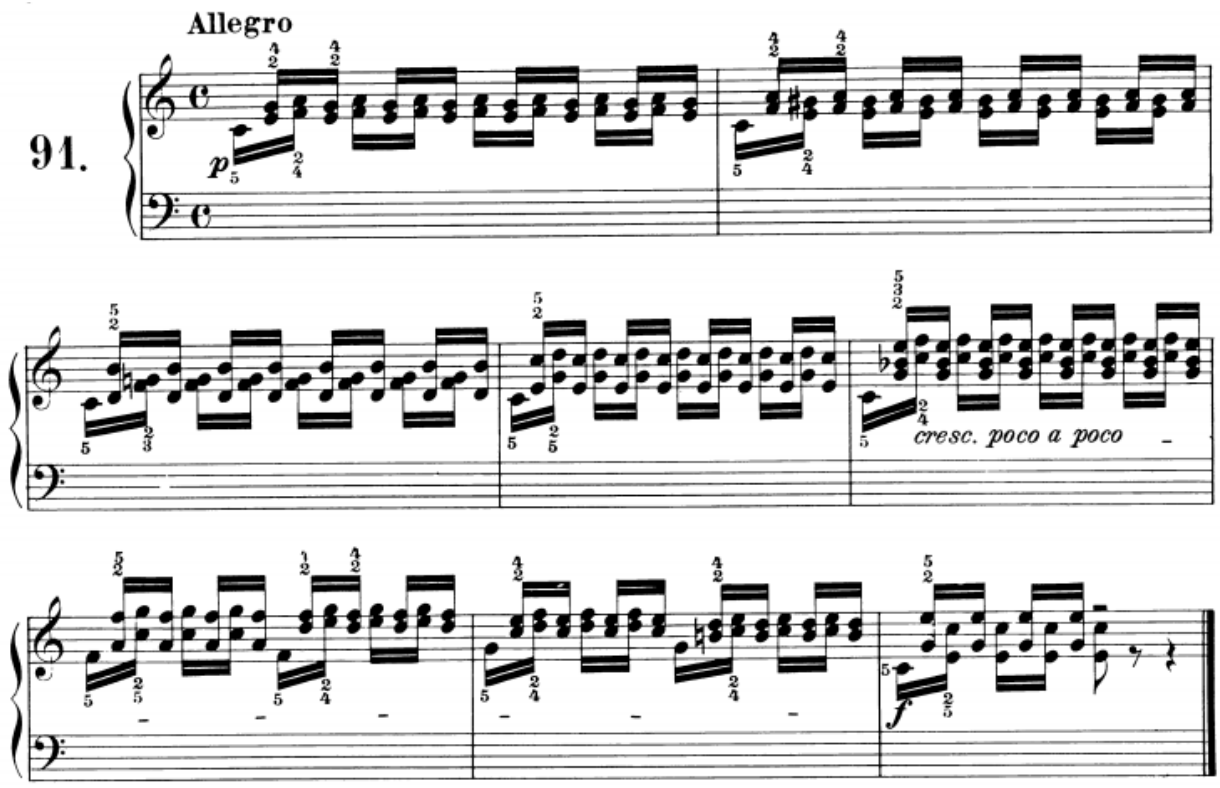


Figure 1-4. Exercise 91, from Czerny's *Passagenübungen* op. 261 (1833, 40)

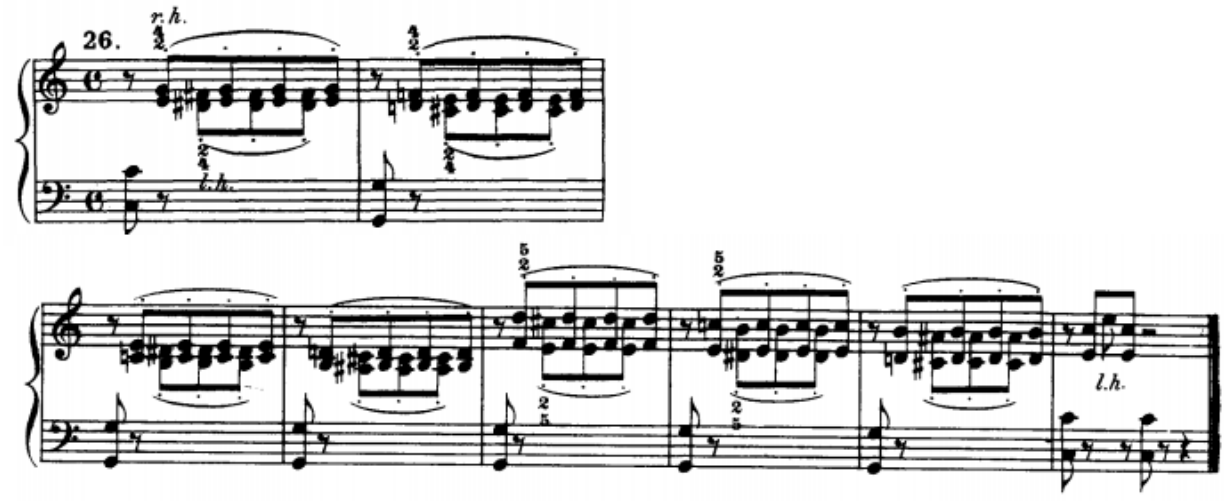


Figure 1-5. Exercise 26, from Wieck's *Pianoforte Studien* (1875b, 8–9)

In the two figures above, we see the same pattern of interlocking thirds and sixths in both hands. There are some minor differences in the harmonic trajectory of the two exercises, but both Czerny and Wieck approach a cadence that is elaborated with the same interlocking pattern. Both exercises use bass notes at the beginning of each measure, followed by a sort of written-out trill in doubled notes between the hands. There are also similarities in Czerny's and Wieck's prescribed fingerings. Both pedagogues seem to treat fingers two and four as the default fingers for playing thirds on white notes in this manner, as seen in the first measures of both exercises. Both pedagogues, also, advise the use of fingers five and two for playing sixths in this manner. In all, the comparison above demonstrates that Czerny and Wieck both saw the practice of short pieces as a part—for Wieck, a crucial part—of their pedagogy. But further, it demonstrates that Czerny and Wieck had significant overlap in the kind of stylistic and bodily knowledge that their short pieces were to pass down. Here I emphasize that the interlocking thirds and sixths pattern above is not only a stylistic feature within a potential composition, but also a distinct skill that these two pedagogues expected their students to possess.

These "little pieces" by Wieck and Czerny, I argue, were short exemplars meant to be transposed and varied to give the player a command of distinctive figurations. This lexicon of figurations was meant to be used in improvisation and composition, but also to make new pieces easier to learn. The physical similarities of figuration between the Wieck exercise and the Hummel étude described above may seem incidental when viewed through the lens of the work and authorship: two composers write two different works, and because the chief criterion of a work is its autonomy or originality, surface similarities—even striking ones—are seen as irrelevant, or at the very most as allusions to be read according to a composer's intentions.

But within a framework of entextualization, the work and the written text in general are not the object of focus: individual bodily skills are more significant. The goal of a musical approach based on entextualization, however, is not to create a genealogy that charts who borrowed from whom. Instead, its goal is to show the similarities and the subtle shadings of difference in how a bodily skill is deployed, and to relate those differences to their new surroundings. Wieck's practice methods, discussed above, give historical credence to an analytical approach that examines units that are defined by physical skill. The next section illustrates how this approach might look, and shows how that approach can be informed by the concept of entextualization.

Clara Schumann's *Caprices en forme de valses* op. 2

Clara Schumann's *Caprices en forme de valses* op. 2 furnishes us with an example of how the practice of ecologically plausible passages could form a bodily starting point for musical creation. Further, it shows how an analysis can track the transformations of a "source" passage within the larger setting of a piece. Schumann wrote this piece around the time of her first foray into Paris in 1832, at age sixteen. The *Caprices* are an ambitious

series of nine fragmented concert waltzes with interlinking themes, forming a sort of bridge between the romanticism of Weber's *Aufforderung zum Tanz* and Robert Schumann's *Davisbündlertänze*. The next figure shows how the first eight measures of Caprice no. 1 make direct use of the Friedrich Wieck exercise previously discussed. All images of Clara Schumann's *Caprices* op. 2 reproduced below are digitized from an 1833 volume printed by Hofmeister in Leipzig and held at the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (4 Mus.pr. 2009.2545).

Like Wieck's exercise, the initial reprise of Caprice no. 1 is divided into two four-measure-long groupings. Each grouping begins with an unaltered quotation from the exercise, but the quotation is at first continued differently, with the waltz's exuberantly accented second beat. In the figure, these quotations from the original material are highlighted. This tiny eight-measure excerpt showcases a rapid change of character, from an accented con fuoco at the beginning to the quiet broken chords at the end.

Friedrich Wieck, Exercise no. 29

Clara Schumann, Caprice no. 1, mm. 1–8

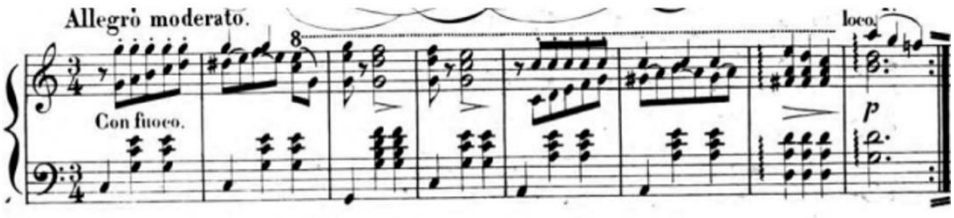


Figure 1-6. Comparison of Wieck's exercise and Clara Schumann's Caprice no. 1

The first reprise (shown above) presents a fairly straightforward transformation of the original exercise into a high-spirited waltz, but the second reprise is more unpredictable

in its transformations: Schumann seems to go off on harmonic and metrical flights of fancy. Measures 9–20 take the easy, balanced phrases of the original theme and throw them off-kilter: after an initial re-statement of the theme, the caprice veers off into E-flat major and G major. To the ear, this section sounds irregular on the small scale—an effect caused by Schumann's liberal use of phrase extension. Yet at the same time, Schumann's flights of fancy follow a large-scale plan, shown in the figure below.

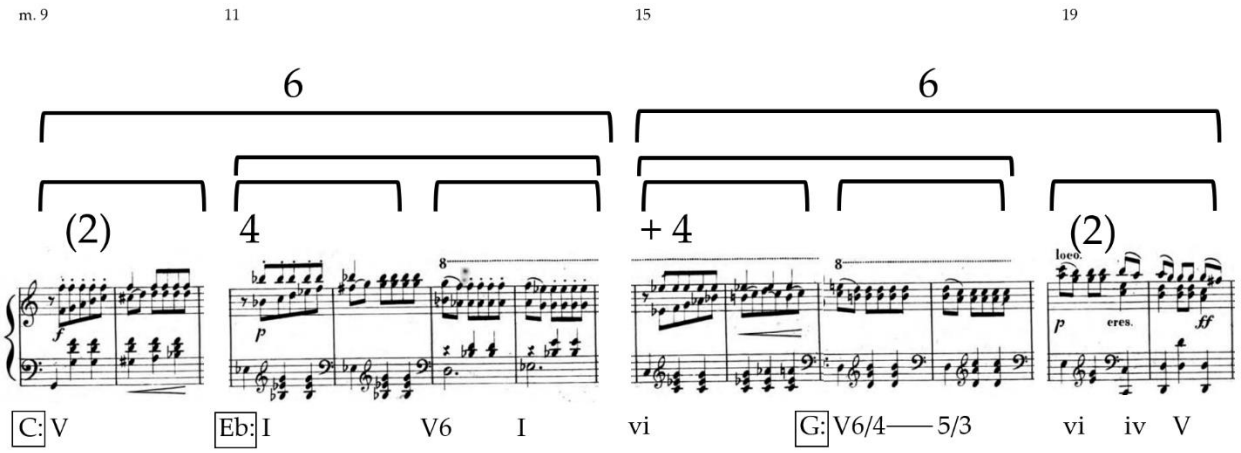


Figure 1-7. Caprice no. 1, mm. 9–20, phrase analysis

This figure shows how Clara Schumann used the original theme's 4+4 structure as raw material for a modified and expanded 6+6 structure: each four-bar grouping receives a two-bar addition. We might call this a transformation of the type *2+2 → 2+2+2*. Note, though, that the two-measure additions come in different places. In the first half, the added two measures appear at the beginning in a sort of feint that later defies expectation: the double-stopped figure is repeated twice, once in C major and again in E-flat major, leading a listener to believe that these initial four measures will form a model for subsequent development. Instead, the E-flat major statement continues on to its own four-measure

phrase (mm. 11–14) as if starting over from the beginning. Like the model, this four-measure phrase is followed by another four measures that begin in the relative minor, but instead of approaching a cadence in E-flat major, Schumann modulates suddenly to the dominant of G major (m. 17). This cadential turn to a new key is extended in measures 19–20. In this way, both parts of the original 4+4 structure receive a two-measure expansion, one at the beginning and one at the end.

Before this 6+6 structure can come to its needed cadential resolution, Schumann gives us additional codetta-like material from measures 21–25, shown below: this is what William Caplin would refer to as cadential extension (2000, 20). The left hand denies us the root of the tonic on a strong beat. Instead, Schumann comes in after an eighth-note rest, virtuosically elaborating in octaves the span of a fifth between the tonic and dominant in G major. Meanwhile, in the right hand, there are eighth-note pulses that recall the double-stopped rhythm of the theme. But instead of resolving to the tonic after four measures, Schumann again veers away from the established key, deceptively resolving to a dominant harmony in the original tonic of C major. At the last second, then, this cadential extension is made to serve as a retransition to earlier material.

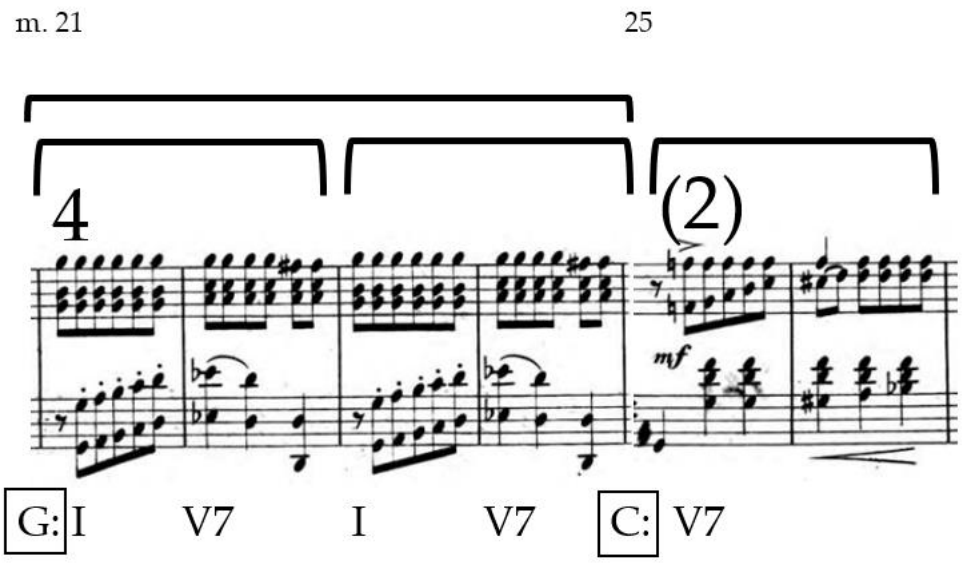


Figure 1-8. Caprice no. 1, mm. 21–26, phrase analysis

This six-measure cadential extension itself fits into the pattern that Schumann set up previously. In the figures above, I analyzed measures 9–20 as a 6+6 structure. Below, a figure illustrates that the cadential extension from measure 21 to 25 is itself a six-measure extension on this larger structure: 6+6(+6). Schumann's large-scale formal treatment is an echo of the way she handled the theme on the small scale: on both levels, she has taken a structure originally subdivided into two and used phrase extension to introduce a third subdivision. In sum: Schumann's chosen tool for recontextualization, the transformation *2+2 → 2+2+2*, is applied on multiple formal levels.

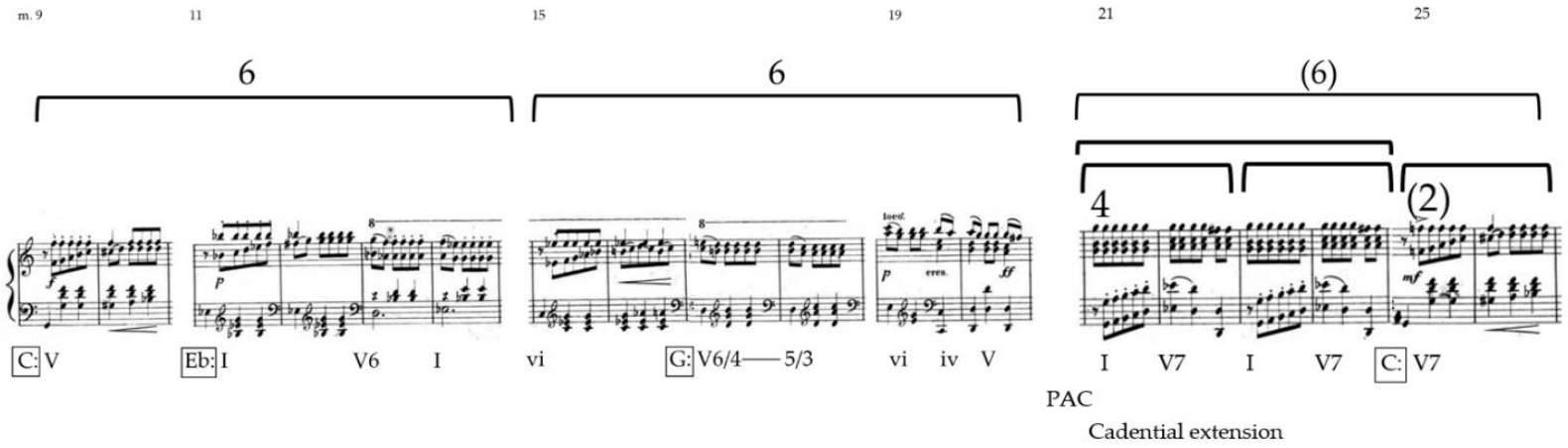


Figure 1-9. Caprice no. 1, mm. 9–26, large scale phrase analysis

Schumann's transformations of the original material stake out a position for her as an artist. Her use of adventurous, irregular phrase structures is remarkable, given the original material's didactic role as a model for balanced phrase structure. The image of Schumann as a capricious compositional virtuoso emerges out of the stark contrast of her *Caprice* no. 1 and Wieck's foursquare original exercise. Schumann's choice of raw material also makes a statement about her artistic status: The *Caprices* were written during her first foray into Parisian musical circles, accompanied by her father. She and her father had high hopes for this trip: prior to Paris, Clara had only traveled as far as Dresden. But the trip was largely perfunctory, and Clara was only able to secure a single, small public performance before returning home (Litzmann 1913, 43). With this background in mind, the ambition of her composition stands out. Schumann did not just choose a preexisting text: more accurately, she extracted material from its continuous environment in her practice routine and granted that fragment the status of a text. This extraction, then, is a matter of *entextual* process. Wieck's pedagogical materials were not published until after his death, so nothing from Schumann's *Caprices en forme de valses* would have been recognizably linked to him. Nevertheless, Schumann's use of a specific passage from her childhood studies—especially in a modern, formally adventurous mold—might have indicated, at least to those close to her, that the *Caprices* were a capstone project, a step towards the end of a musical apprenticeship.

The approach outlined above must be differentiated from an organicist analytics of musical works. The transformational language used to describe this recontextualization might have surface similarities to what David Beach has called "motivic parallelism," the repetition on multiple hierarchies of a motivic nucleus (often defined as an abstracted pattern of scale degrees) that is emblematic of an organicist Schenkerian approach (2012,

35). The approach taken here, however, diverges from motivic parallelism in two significant ways. First: in the present framework, bodily skills are replicated, and this replication occurs during the process of performance, improvisation, or active composition at the keyboard. Here, the musical phenomena in focus are not scale-degree patterns, but rather deployments of skill in the form of learned passages. This leads to a second, related point of difference: the arenas where these skills play out are the practice system and the performance system, not the score or the work. The recontextualizations traced in the preceding figures do not reflect the supposed integrity of Schumann's *Caprices* as a work; rather they reflect the compositional and improvisatory possibilities Schumann commanded within her musical milieu in the 1830s.

Text and entextualization

The case study above demonstrates how Schumann's *Caprices* are made up of *textual* connections that exist not just on an abstract layer of post hoc analysis, but also on the level of physical skill in performance. This study broadens the concept of *textuality* in an attempt to encompass both composition and extemporized performance. To this end, I adapt the textual theories of Mikhail Bakhtin, Roland Barthes, and Julia Kristeva, not only seeking out those aspects of a poststructuralist "text" that are best applied to music, but also using nineteenth-century musical practice to sharpen their view of text in general. Importantly, the sense of intertextuality here is not limited to works and the purposeful allusions made between them by composers: instead, instrumental practice is highlighted. This project also harnesses the theory of *entextualization* from linguistic anthropology to describe how the "text" of performed music is shaped by its "co-texts," which include the people and places of its environment.

Barthes, in his essay "From Work to Text," described his conception of capital-T *Text* not as an object with a predetermined meaning to be consumed, but rather as "a methodological field…*experienced only in an activity, in a production*" (1986, 57–58, emph. in original). One of Barthes's main focuses is the production of meaning within this activity, which he casts in Derridean terms: "The Text…practices the infinite postponement of the signified, the Text is dilatory; its field is that of the signifier" (1986, 59). Because of this focus, Barthes's notion of "productivity" is associated with reading—specifically, reading as an act that creates new meaning. The present study does not extend in scope to musical "meaning," but it nevertheless draws inspiration from this Barthesian idea that the act of reading is dynamic, inventive, and recombinatorial. Barthes's "From Work to Text" draws the same contrasts between work-as-object and text-as-process that are emphasized in the case study above, which highlights the processes of skill acquisition and musical creation that support a text like Clara Schumann's *Caprices*. Here, Barthes's reader is the musician who, even while reading music, does something more than "reading." On its face, the musician's task seems to be far more than just reading. But if we take to its furthest extent Barthes's insistence on the active interventions performed by a reader, the similarities between the literary-theoretical reader and the case study of Clara Schumann above are striking.

Barthes's conception of *Text* was based on the work of Julia Kristeva. In her essay "The Bounded Text," Kristeva envisioned what she called *text* as a field of linguistic play where everyday "communicative speech" was linked to "different kinds of anterior or synchronic utterances" (1980, 36). In other words, her *text* refers to the ways language in one case is built on language in any other case. This linguistic play unfolds in an environment full of textual possibility that she calls the "cultural text" or the "general

text." Kristeva's essay "The Bounded Text" revolves around a case study of a fifteenth-century romance and the impression of boundedness or autonomy that one can read into its text. Writing, she argues, is central to this impression. Kristeva maintains that writing accomplishes two main tasks—first, it creates differences of meaning between words and concepts, and second, it relates all these new differences together in a network that she says is potentially "unbounded":

> The act of writing [in the romance and the novel in general] is the differential act par excellence, reserving for the text the status of *other*…it is also the correlational act par excellence, avoiding any bounding of sequences within a finite ideologeme, and opening them up to an infinite arrangement. (1980, 58)

In her idiolect, Kristeva argues that writing paradoxically accomplishes two things at once: the act of writing turns the continuous (a flow of discourse) into something bounded and autonomous, but at the same time it opens up an infinite number of intertextual windows. Kristeva's conclusions about the act of writing are applicable to musical performance: the conventions of performance create a frame around what is being played, but performance also opens up associational possibilities with every new passage. While Barthes's focus is on the reader, Kristeva's is on the writer—but both address questions of boundedness and openness in environments where material (linguistic, musical) can be copied, varied, and disseminated.

Barthes and Kristeva's conceptions of text emphasize an openness of both structure and meaning that are opposed to static works. But stasis has a use. Kristeva argues that for text to qualify as an ideological activity—for a piece of writing to make a "point" that can be consumed—its audience must assume that the text has "structural finitude," that its

meaning is unitary and closed, and that interpretations of the text will remain the same even though we recognize that the text can be made to signify any number of things through the infinite intertextual connections that might be made (1980, 55).[19] Viewing of music in terms of works, if we follow this line of thinking, then, is a way of freezing music-making in time and place; it is a mnemonic convenience that allows for certain conceptions of music to assume a role in larger power structures. This explains why musical improvisation is so elusive to the analyst. An improvisation, in the moment of its occurrence, is difficult to conceptualize as a work. An improvisation also calls attention to how music-making cannot be "completed" in Kristeva's sense: improvisation is labile not only in its structure, which cannot be fully anticipated, but also in its meaning and its ideological use.

In sum, the literary-theoretical idea of "text" is something more than notation or recording. To Barthes and Kristeva, "text" is not the written word; rather, it is the *practice of writing*, the possibility of recombination and association. This idea of text should be applied to mid-nineteenth-century pianism. In these terms, a musical text is more than notation: it is the possibility of replication and imitation, above and beyond the physical artifact of the score. In this model, a musical improvisation can be considered a text if it is made of elements that can be heard, imitated, deployed, and redeployed. Musical textuality in this expanded sense refers to the connections between these deployments in performance, and is no longer confined to the written score.

[19] Kristeva's usage of "ideology" goes beyond its conventional definition: she coins the term "ideologeme" to refer to the nexus between a "textual arrangement" and the more labile utterances to which that arrangement refers (1980, 36). In this sense, her brand of semiotics takes all ideology as its object of analysis.

To Michael Silverstein and Gregory Urban, too, *text* is not the same as a "text-artifact," which is a script or recording (in writing or audio) that can be physically accessed (1996, 3). Text can be reproduced from memory in the absence of an artifact. Text, then, is neither a script nor a score: it is, instead, a potential for reproducibility. *Entextualization* refers to "the ways in which social actors seem to lift texts from contexts, the transformations that even 'the same' discourse undergoes in the process" (15). This definition takes the spotlight away from the seeming fixity of texts, instead emphasizing the "life cycle" that texts go through. The authors write: "texts (as we see them, the precipitates of continuous cultural processes) represent one, 'thing-y' phase in a broader conceptualization of cultural processes" (1).

Within this framework, one can see Schumann's *Caprices* not just as a musical work but also as an extension of her daily instrumental practice. The point here is not that Wieck's exercise, as a work, appears within another work, the *Caprices*. Rather, the skills involved in Wieck's exercise appear within Schumann's performances of the *Caprices—and both might be conceptualized as works at a later point*. Thinking this way, we might even see the sudden modulations and descrescendos of Caprice no. 1 as entextualized moments of practice in Wieck's mode—"first slowly, then fast, faster, slow again, *staccato, legato, piano, forte, crescendo, diminuendo,* etc."

Silverstein and Urban's textual "life cycle" is characterized by the twin processes of entextualization and "co(n)textualization."[20] Entextualization describes how an actor chooses and removes some snippet of continuous discourse from the other snippets that

[20] The authors often use the word "entextualization" as an umbrella term to represent both entextualization and co(n)textualization, with the tacit understanding that the latter is always concurrent with entextualization proper.

surround it. "Co(n)textualization," on the other hand, describes how this snippet is placed into a new context among new textual bedfellows. The word "co(n)textualization" emphasizes how a context, in this theory, is more than a background: to re-use a text is to choose its new *co-texts*, which are the other texts that are presented alongside it. These co-texts are not just neighboring passages on the page: the word also refers to the new frames of conversation and new social configurations in reception. These norms and configurations that might be held to be in the background are instead seen as features highlighted by a broad assemblage of text.

In essence: the framework of entextualization holds that texts, social relationships, and social norms are all codependent on each other for meaning and significance. This anthropological system is a refinement of the more fixed view of culture "as text" or as a system of static, text-like symbols. Silverstein and Urban *especially* take aim at approaches that separate "texts" from "contexts," where texts are treated as "autonomously meaningful objects" and contexts as a "nonreadable surround" or a backdrop that is less susceptible to the analyst's tools (1). For music analysis, entextualization can provide a tool that combines the analysis of "texts" with the analysis of practices. One can also see the resonances between this view of language and a musicological view, now widely held, that refuses to separate "social context" and "music" into two different spheres.[21]

This approach to text has clear applications for music analysis. Ingrid Monson, for example, has drawn on Silverstein's theories of intra- and intertextual coherence in her work. She has argued that improvisatory music-making creates real-time social bonds

[21] See, for example, Georgina Born's essay "Music and the Social," which encapsulates the sociological view of music as one form of social connection within an interconnected network of other social connections, e.g., the technological and the interpersonal (2011).

among jazz performers (and between performers and audiences) that cannot be separated from either the "musical shapes" produced or the larger social "context" that emerges from the sum of all these musical-social acts (2009, 188). Kevin Korsyn, adopting a literary-theoretical approach to music with a similar ethos, has written: "Although music research has sometimes adopted post-structuralist insights, we have been reluctant to face the radical consequences of such thought to reconstitute not only our methods, but even the objects under investigation. . . Context invades text" (2001, 56). Music, I argue, is an instructive example for the poststructuralist refiguring of the textual concept urged by figures like Barthes and Kristeva, or by Silverstein and Urban. The concept of entextualization, as developed by the latter pair of authors, is especially useful for the study of nineteenth-century European music because it allows the analyst to discuss improvisation, composition, and performance with a cohesive vocabulary. This new entextual vocabulary, I suggest, is much needed. William Weber, for example, has argued that the canon of "classical" works is bolstered by the scholarly habit of talking about music in terms of works and composers, using words that "slip much too easily from the tongue" (1999, 338). The vocabulary of entextualization is sensitive not only to the "contexts" of performance, but also to the sounds being performed. And further: the tools of entextualization would allow music scholars to describe flexible and improvisatory music-making without constantly reaching for the yardstick of the musical work.

2. Text, Improvisation, and Discourse in Clara Schumann's Preluding

Clara Schumann's prelude to Robert Schumann's "Aufschwung"

An example from late in Clara Schumann's career shows how the framework of entextualization makes new analytic approaches possible. Sometime around 1895, Schumann wrote out several preludes that were meant to represent the improvised preludes she performed throughout her career. Valerie Woodring Goertzen has described the context and provenance of these preludes (1998). An autograph held at the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin includes the following note written by her daughter Marie:

> In the last year of her life, our mother, at our request, wrote out the exercises she played before her scales, with which she began her practice daily, as well as a few preludes of the kind she was in the habit of improvising before the pieces, quite freely on the spur of the moment; she also did this publicly, and one could get an idea of her frame of mind from the way in which the harmonies flowed to her.
>
> Now, of course, she maintained that it was not possible for her to capture this type of free improvisation on paper, but she finally gave in to our requests, and these small preludes came into being (translated in Goertzen 1998, 237).

Clara Schumann specifies that four of these notated preludes were meant to introduce a particular piece, and one of these four is a twenty-three-measure sketched prelude for Robert Schumann's "Aufschwung" ("Soaring") from his *Fantasiestücke* op. 12. In the section that follows, the "Aufschwung" prelude will be analyzed as a process of entextualization: Clara Schumann's sketch captures, however tentatively, her practice of

absorbing the bodily skills attendant to Robert's "Aufschwung," adjusting those skills according to the demands of the present, and redeploying the skills within a new improvisatory context. I use a combination of thoroughbass reduction and textural excerpts from "Aufschwung" and other texts to illustrate Schumann's resulting textual network. This network connects Schumann's prelude not only with her husband's work, but also with short exercises that represent the textural stock figures of common practice at that time. Musical works and conventions of musical practice, because they are practiced in the same ways, can be tracked on the same continuum of entextualization.

This chapter provides a case study that extends the arguments made in Chapter 2. It focuses on a prelude sketched by the older Clara Schumann in an attempt to put her improvisation to paper. This prelude adopts passagework and figurations from Robert Schumann's "Aufschwung" ("Soaring"), from his *Fantasiestücke* op. 12. She adapts these materials to a harmonic-rhetorical framework emblematic of the prelude as an improvised genre. This case study shows how musical material, when it becomes text, must be lifted away from its original performance environment (out of "discourse"). The richness of its original discursive environment must be lost in order for the music to be *recontextualized within a new setting*. In this case study I use the term "discursive scenes" to describe those scenarios where a musician's decisions play out in the moment, resulting in sounding music. Here the concept of discourse stretches beyond the previous metaphorical use of "discourse" to describes speech-like exchanges in nineteenth-century musical works. Instead, musical discourse is conceptualized as a frame of interaction between agents in a performance environment. This case study ultimately shows that the framework of entextualization, which focuses on variation and transformation within a context, is useful especially when the object of study is an open process rather than a work.

After representing the sounds of the "Aufschwung" prelude in this analytical vignette, I will address its relationship to its imagined audience. I use the decentered view of text and entextualization to bridge the gap between "the music" and its "context" and more sensitively address improvised playing. Schumann's sketched prelude is described as a product of musical discourse. Here, "musical discourse" is not just music that gives the impression of speech, or of several voices speaking with one another: it is, rather, the use of music as a communicative response within a real-time context. In the framework of entextualization, *discourse* is continuous (it is a process), referential (it is connected to a context), and developmental (the process changes over time). I hypothesize a chain of "discursive scenes," arguing that Schumann's musical decisions are best explained in relation to real, originative performances with their own specific goals. This entextual notion of discourse, in short, reaches outside of the musical work and shows how performance—including the notes being played—serves a purpose in a particular time and place.

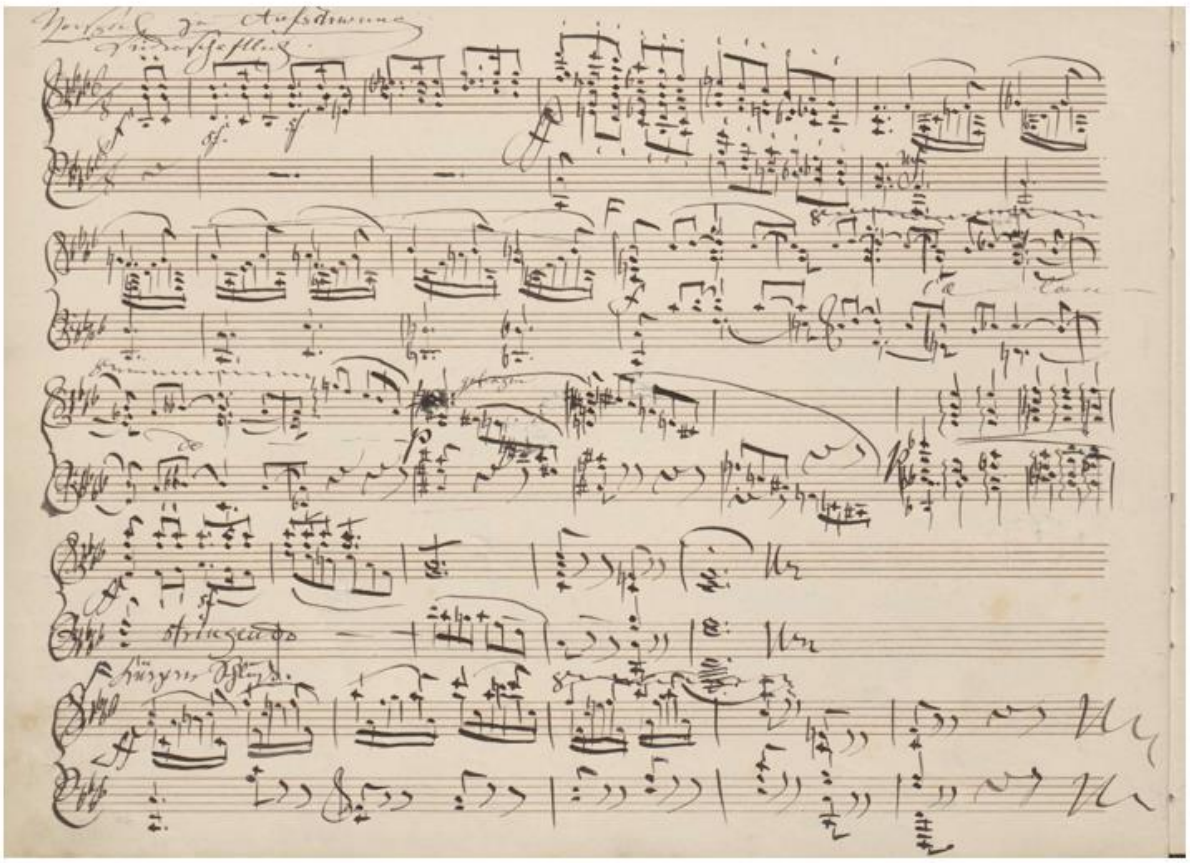


Figure 2-1. Clara Schumann, Prelude to Robert Schumann's "Aufschwung"

The figure above was digitized from a manuscript held at the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (Mus.ms.autogr. Schumann, K. 9). On first examination, Schumann's figurational borrowings from her husband's piano piece are unmistakable. This prelude begins on a diminished triad with a galloping dotted figure that closely resembles the beginning of "Aufschwung." Here, the quick dotted figure and the ominous diminished harmony that it outlines both give the impression of heart-racing anxiety. Schumann refashions this figure to lead upward to a fortissimo peak, which crashes back downward in a torrent of parallel six-three chords played by both hands and ends on the tonic F minor. After this torrent, Schumann refashions another figuration from "Aufschwung." This is the eponymous "soaring" figuration, which consists of a series of uncoiling broken chords in the right

hand, with a melody emerging on top of it in a trochaic rhythm. As before, this figuration climbs upwards, reaches a peak, and then descends back down. In the next six measures, Schumann winds her way from D-flat major back to F minor in a series of winding and unexpected modulations. First comes a string of downward arpeggiations notated in eighth notes—with the indication *gesungen*, sung, which suggests that Schumann took a certain rhythmic liberty. Then, a series of broken chords unfurls over a bassline that descends chromatically until it reaches a climactic cadential six-four. The galloping figure from the beginning returns, starting this time at the top of the keyboard and ending at the bottom, and a decisive cadence brings the prelude to its conclusion.

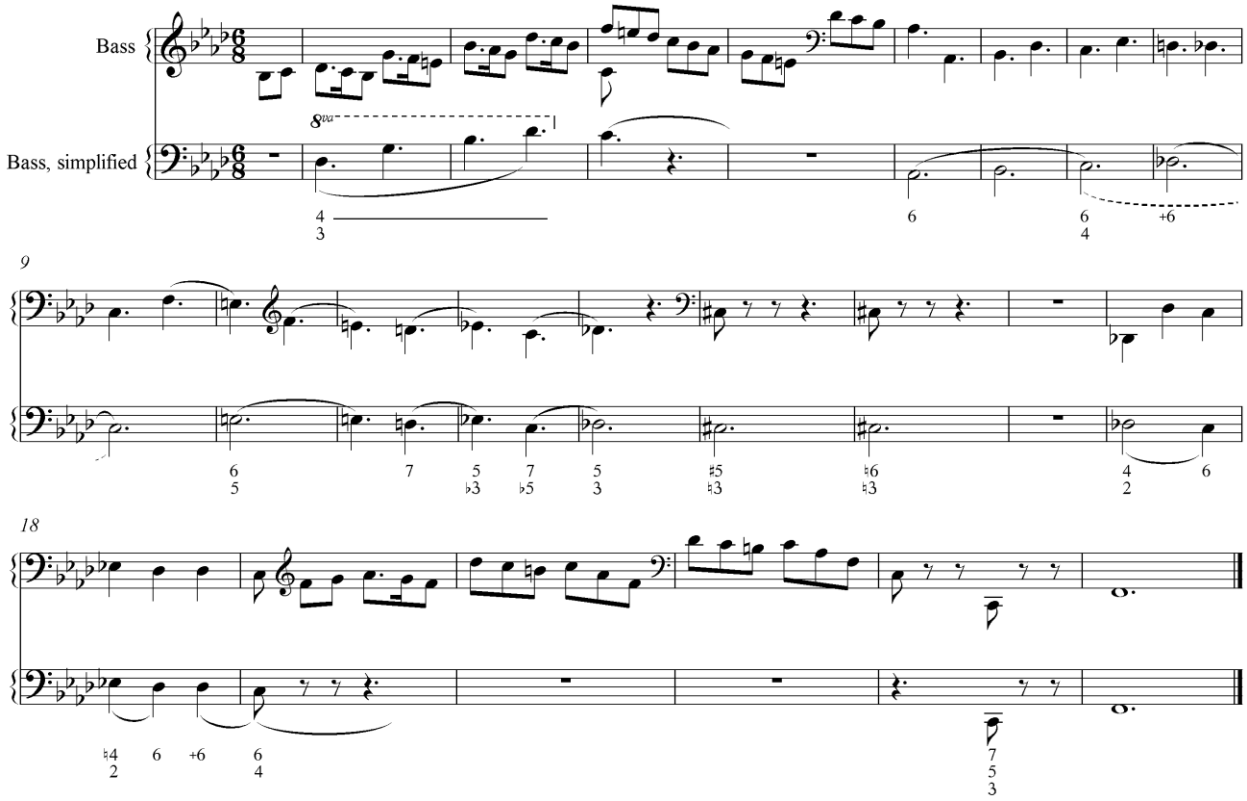


Figure 2-2. Harmonic trajectory of "Aufschwung" prelude with simplified bass

The figure above illustrates the trajectory of this sketched prelude using a simplified bass and figures. The top staff reproduces the bass in the sketch, while the bottom staff

presents a version that has been simplified rhythmically and, in some cases, harmonically. (The galloping diminished figure in measures 1–2, for example, has been reduced to a diminished arpeggio.) Based on this figure, two preliminary observations stand out. First, the prelude is comprised of a series of short phrases that travel up and down the keyboard in arpeggiating, stepwise, or sequential motion. In the climactic cadential event from measure 19 to the end of the prelude, for example, the bass repeats itself as it descends: this is sequential at the octave. The descent from measures 11–13, too, are sequential: leading-tone seventh sonorities resolve to their local resolutions, first to E-flat minor, then to D-flat major. The sequential descent here might be classified as a variant of the "Fonte" schema in Joseph Riepel's terminology. But in any case, the figure shows how this sketch might be viewed as an improvised elaboration upon an extempore bass. In these terms, we can see how Schumann created, in the moment, a wave-like series of ebbs and flows that built up in dramatic tension until the final cadence of the piece.

The second observation is that measures 13–17 appear to hold a static bass note, but in fact this is the crux of this short prelude. These measures merit special attention not only because they consist of arpeggios that make no reference to the figurations in "Aufschwung," but also because of the emphasis these measures place on harmonic invention and variety. The figure below provides a closer focus on these measures, illustrating how the right-hand arpeggiation unfolds over a static bass, which is then reinterpreted four times. The bass is held static on a D-flat. The first arpeggio elaborates on D-flat major: after the Fonte-like schema has that appeared just previously in measures 11–12, this harmony is expected as a local tonic. The second arpeggio reinterprets the bass enharmonically: the lightness of D-flat major turns to the shade of C-sharp minor. The third interpretation of this bass note is as the lowest member of an A-major sonority in 6/3

position: here, 5-6 motion opens up the possibility of resolution in a bright, sharp major key. The fourth and final reinterpretation of the bass note, however, forecloses that possibility: D-flat is now cast as the bass note of a dominant 4/2. After a sequential step up, Schumann abruptly returns to a cadential 6/4 in the F minor tonic that opened the prelude. This is a "double return": over the cadential 6/4 the dotted motive from the beginning of the prelude reappears, ushering in a cadenza-like flourish.

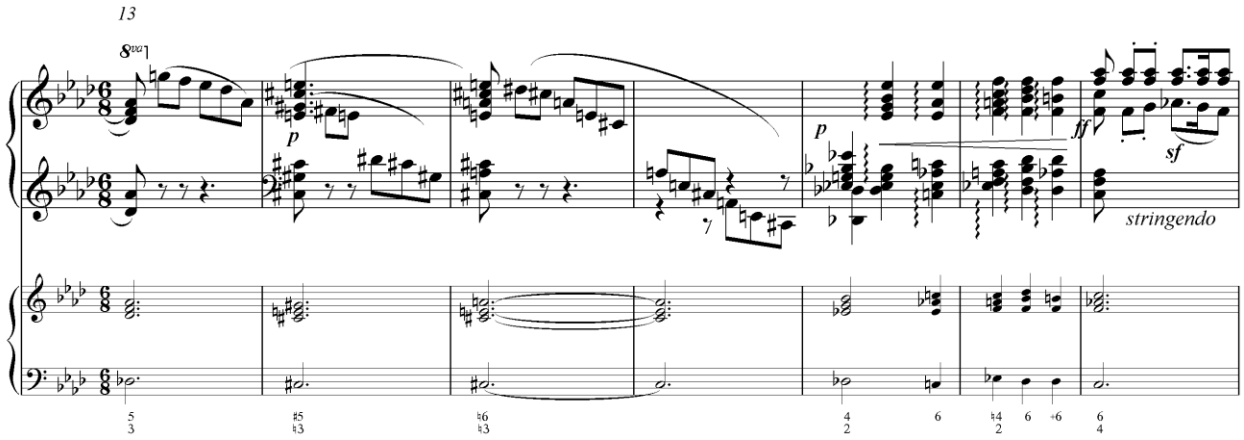


Figure 2-3. Harmonic analysis of "Aufschwung" prelude, mm. 13-19

The successive harmonic reinterpretations heard in measures 13–17 illustrate how Schumann cultivated a sense constant and unpredictable variety in her preluding practice. Nicholas Temperley has referred to this kind of unpredictability as an "aesthetic of surprise," demonstrating that this sensibility loomed large over the genre of the improvised prelude in the early- to mid-nineteenth century (2009, 333). The aesthetic of surprise suffuses this sketch. If one looks at the large-scale trajectory of Schumann's bass line through this prelude, one sees that the bass moves slowly up and down in two gradual waves: the first "peak" can be found at measure 10, and the second at measure 18. The motion of these two waves, though, is structured differently at each step: it occurs through diatonic steps, through sequential repetition, and through chromatic voice leading. This

profusion of variety was certainly meant to surprise the audience, catching—and keeping—their attention.

I note, additionally, that the figurational strategies that Schumann deploys in this section of the prelude align closely with the model of the prelude that was advanced by Philip Antony Corri (1784–1832), a composer and teacher of both piano and vocal performance. In the fourth volume of Corri's manual *L'anima di musica*, he describes improvised preludes as long, drawn-out cadences that the pianist elaborates upon using what he calls the "capo" and the "coda": these are arpeggiating and scalar passages that travel up and down across the keyboard at the beginning and at the end of the prelude (1810). The excerpt from Schumann's prelude pictured above includes arpeggiating and scalar passages that are strikingly similar.

Schumann's figurational borrowings from "Aufschwung" are clear, then, but equally clear is her creativity in sculpting and recontextualizing these borrowed figures for the goals of preluding. The figure below is a schematic representation showing how the sketched prelude can be thought of as a series of entextualized passages, deployed in the moment and modified to fit an extemporized figured bass. Here the first nine measures of the prelude are represented by a simplified bass line, with four small excerpts overlaid above it. The first excerpt shows how the rising dotted passage of the first two measures derives from the opening of Robert Schumann's "Aufschwung." In his piece, Robert used this dotted motivic passage to highlight goal-based harmonic movement from predominant to dominant. Clara Schumann, on the other hand, uses her dotted passage in a fragmentary way to outline a diminished seventh harmony. This fragmentary ascent immediately creates a sense of expectation.

Immediately after this, Clara Schumann sketches a long descending scalar passage in which both hands play parallel 6/3 chords. The second and third excerpts relate this parallel 6/3 passage to similar passages written by others. Such a passage cannot be convincingly traced to a single work, but parallel 6/3 chords were in common use as a virtuosic flourish by the 1830s. Two representative sources that deploy parallel 6/3 chords in this fashion are pictured below. At the top is an excerpt from Friedrich Kalkbrenner's *Introduction et Rondeau Brillant* op. 101, published in 1830—this is a concert showpiece that was published in arrangements for both piano with orchestra and piano solo. Schumann was familiar with Kalkbrenner's work: her first Gewandhaus concert included one of his variation sets. The other example, from Beethoven's sonata op. 2 no. 3, occurs in a finale rondo form that mimics the style of a concerto finale: here, Beethoven's rapid parallel 6/3 chords were meant to signal instrumental virtuosity. Based on these two examples, this type of conventional passage was likely to evoke images of soloistic virtuosity in public performance. Clara Schumann's preluding, then, not only set the mood for her repertoire, but also established her credibility and technical skill as a soloist.

The final excerpt in the figure below is another borrowing from "Aufschwung"—the "soaring" passage mentioned above. In his piece, Robert Schumann anchored this passage to a static bass in order to highlight a rising melodic line. Clara Schumann, on the other hand, uses no such "anchor": she positions this passage over a mobile bass that rises with the melody. The result is an unmoored, unsteady affect.

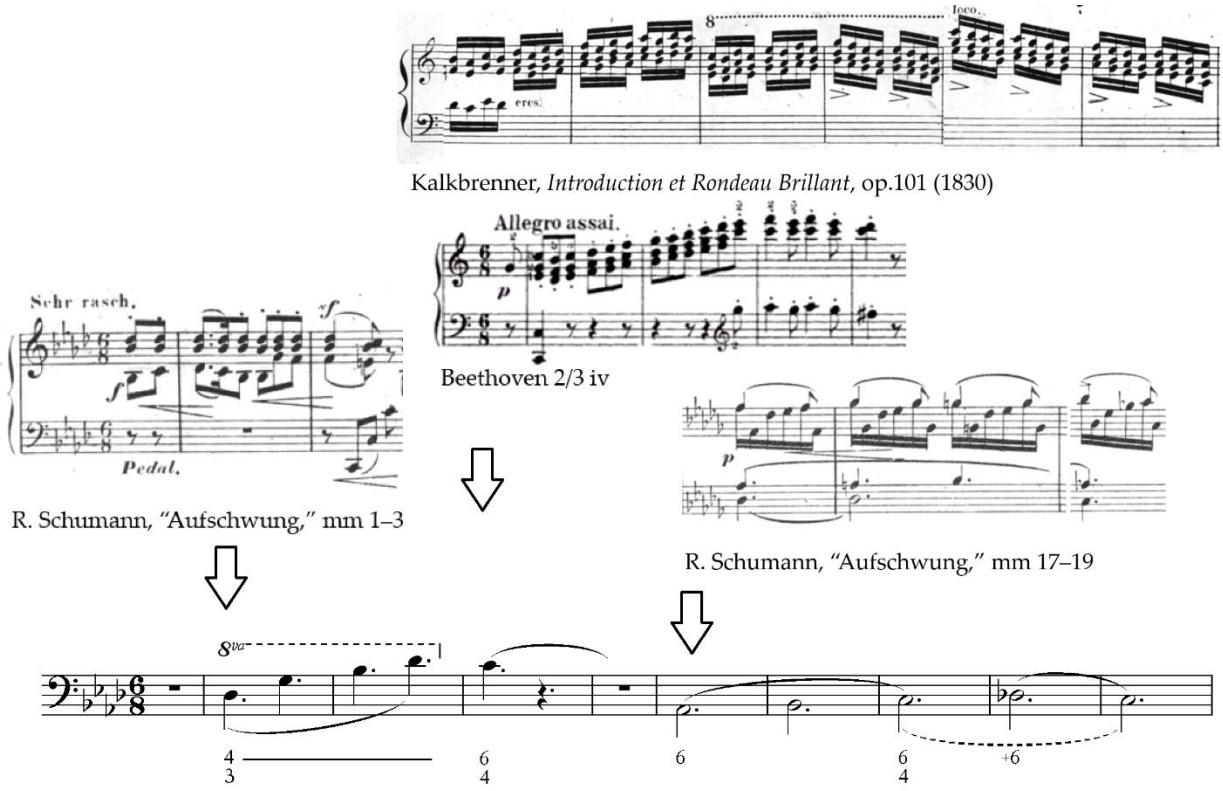


Figure 2-4. Figured bass analysis of "Aufschwung" prelude with passage comparison overlay

Eighteenth-Century Precedents for Schumann's Preluding

The analytic figures above have described Schumann's sketch along the dual axes of bass structure (as a simplified figured bass line) and figuration (as idiomatic textural patterns, broadly speaking). Describing musical practice in this manner—whether that practice is precomposed or extemporized—has a long precedent in German theory, as evidenced by three authors: Friedrich Niedt, Johann Mattheson, and Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach. In the early eighteenth century, Niedt treated basses and figurations as modular concepts that could be varied and recombined according to the demands of the genre performed. In his *Musikalische Handleitung*, Niedt uses a given figured bass to construct whole dance suites: in each movement, the bass cast into different time signatures and is

modified and realized with different figurations and textures. Thus a single bass could become in his hands a courante with doubled sixth and third passages, its double with a sprightly syncopated right hand, or a lilting sarabande (1710, 58).

A few decades later, Mattheson described how harmonic structures could be rendered in any number of textures using what he called *gebrochene Accorde* or "broken chords" (1739, 352–56). To Mattheson, "broken chords" were not just arpeggiated chords, as we understand the term today: instead, the term encompassed two different phenomena that are closely related to each other. The first phenomenon is what we might term compound melody: a single line that can be broken down analytically into multiple and simultaneous simpler voices. The second phenomenon is the realization of bass figures not as block chords but rather as shorter notes delivered in a consistent pattern (for example, instead of playing C and E together, a keyboardist might play C-E-D-E as sixteenth notes and realize the rest of the passage in this same manner). To group both compound melody and accompanimental pattern within the same category, as Mattheson does, is to theorize the relationship between thoroughbass and what we now understand as texture, passagework, or instrumental idiom.

The last chapter of C. P. E. Bach's *Versuch über die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen* indicates that improvisation was also understood as a combination of thoroughbass with variable figurations above. There, Bach provides written exemplars of the free fantasia genre, both as figured-bass skeletons and as fully-notated scores (1762, 325–41).22 Taking all these eighteenth-century sources in combination, one can see an improvisation of the sort Clara Schumann wrote down in 1895 as a permutation of harmonic motion (analyzable

[22] Carl Czerny, in his School of Practical Composition (1848), also describes preludes as being built on a chordal *Gerippe* (1848, 94).

as a simplified thoroughbass) and figurational strategy (which can be connected to figurations in other sources).

The analysis of Schumann's prelude depicted in Figure 2-4 above would seem to highlight two different kinds of sources for entextualization: on one hand, the entextualized material can come from specific works, and on the other hand, it can come from stock figures in common practice. Schumann's borrowings from "Aufschwung" fall into the first category, but they are not direct quotations: in both cases, she takes a distinctive figurational pattern and adapts it to her specific aims. The bass lines that she builds upon are mobile and unstable, and motivic ideas are fragmented, emphasizing a rush of movement rather than discrete thematic ideas. Schumann's use of parallel-sixth passagework might fall into the latter category: this is not an intentional reference to any particular work or performance, but instead is a genre-bound gesture of virtuosity.

Crucially, I argue that these two different "sources"—works and conventions of practice—are points on the same continuum. This aligns with the theory of text advanced by Kristeva and Barthes. This argument is also supported by two points, the first a point of methodology and the second a point of musical practice.

First: the descriptive frame of entextualization can accommodate both sources equally well. When we adapt the anthropological concept of text to address musical creation, we in fact do not need to draw a distinction drawn between entextualizations of distinct moments in musical works on the one hand and those of what we might call generic stock gestures on the other. There may be objections to this method: an analyst, for example, might balk at the fact that the intuitive value of "original" musical ideas is ignored within this framework. As a descriptive tool, entextualization's agnosticism with

regard to source seems to be at odds with this valorization of originality, and the instinctive differentiation between original material and stock gesture that one sees in everyday musical life seems to be theoretically unaccounted for. Silverstein and Urban argue that the abovementioned tendency—to treat texts as abstract entities in themselves, even when they are also legible as the reassembled elements of other texts—is a powerful tendency because of the convenience of a certain demotic idea of cultural transmission. "Texts and text-artifacts," they write, "have the ability to instantiate the timeless, context-free character of culture…which can be shared within a community and passed down across generations" (1996, 12). Musical works, in this logic, are convenient to us because they allow for a practice where "the same" works can be shared between listeners divided by centuries. "The text is made to seem more solid…under an ideology or metadiscourse of fixity," Silverstein and Urban write (1996, 13). In other words, the valorization of musical originality is part of a larger work-based paradigm that is appealing because it creates an impression of immediacy between an analyst (or listener) and the historical figures associated with the work.[23] My counterargument is that a focus on textuality and bodily skill accomplishes something similar, but with even more vividness, historical grounding, and critical reflection.

The second and more important point has to do with instrumental practice. The mechanism through which musical material enters Schumann's musical lexicon is the same whether her materials are generic or whether they are traceable to a particular work.

[23] This impression of immediacy, facilitated by a works-based paradigm, has roots in nineteenth-century music criticism. Mary Hunter has addressed the place of the performer within a Romantic framework of the "interpretation" of works, arguing that for many authors interpretation involved not just intellectual but also spiritual affinities between composer and performer (2005). Benjamin Morgan has addressed the contemporary role of "presence" (as the impression of interpersonal immediacy) in studies of art from the past (2016).

Successions of parallel 6/3 chords, as in the distinctive figurations of Robert Schumann's compositions, must be generalized through a passage-based practice that includes variation and transposition in the style of Friedrich Wieck's method discussed above. This is evidenced in contemporaneous sources. Liszt's *Technische Studien*, a volume of exercises published between 1868 and 1873, contains exercises that would contribute directly to a pianist's ability to play the kind of rapid parallel 6/3 passage found in Schumann's sketched prelude. The figure below reproduces an example from the seventh volume of Liszt's collection, digitized by the Sibley Music Library of the University of Rochester and originally published in 1886 by J. Schuberth in Leipzig. Mechanically the second half of the exercise is nearly identical to the passage in the prelude to "Aufschwung"—the only difference being that Schumann's passage uses the harmonic minor pitch collection. Wieck's volume of "little pieces," as noted above, instructed the student to transpose each exercise to all keys. Likewise, each exercise of Liszt's volume is presented to the student in as many keys or iterations as possible. (Most of Liszt's exercises are presented in twelve major keys and twelve minor keys. Exercises that explore diminished sonorities are presented in their three possible transpositions.) The principle of generalization, then, applies in the same way to both the "little pieces" and to Liszt's more common stock maneuvers. One can see, too, that the playing of Liszt's exercise within the practice system is transferable to a pianist's performance system: like Wieck's exercises, this one is meant to be a direct model for performance.

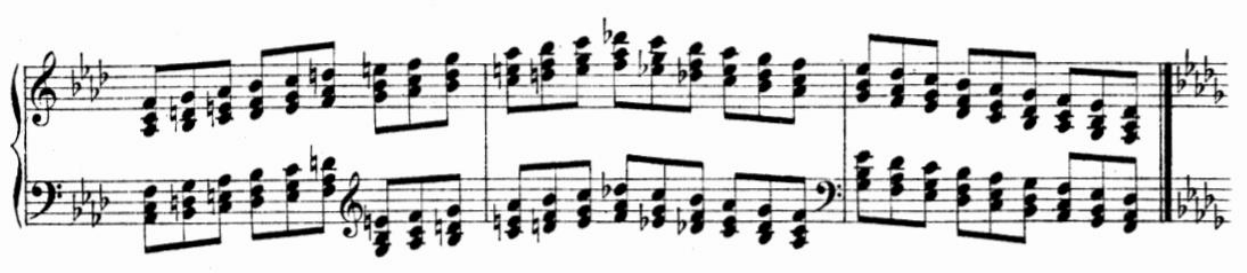


Figure 2-5. Parallel sixth chord exercise from Liszt, *Technische Studien* (1886, 5)

Discursive scenes as a basis for conceiving of text

When a musician encounters Schumann's sketched prelude to "Aufschwung," that musician sees a series of marks on a page—what Silverstein and Urban call a "text artifact." But the text artifact is not a *text*, but rather has what I have previously described as a "potential for reproducibility." Text, as a process and as a potential, is something that coalesces in a musician's or reader's mind. What steps lie in between regarding Schumann's text artifact on one hand and conceiving of it as a text on the other? In this section, I answer this question by imagining a chain of interrelated performances that might influence the reader's thinking as they conceptualize a text from a text artifact. Text may only exist as a potential, as a conceptualization of a process—as Barthes put it, as "a methodological field" (1986, 57)—but this abstract idea is based on real people and tangible social interactions. A chain of performances bolsters the reader's conception of the marks on the page as *text*. I call these performances "discursive scenes." Below I address some hypothetical discursive scenes that support Schumann's prelude to "Aufschwung" as a text.

The first discursive scene is the moment of the analyst's reading as she performs or otherwise imagines the sounds represented in the text-artifact. At this moment, her impression of the continuous sounds associated with the artifact are condensed to a single

point: a text to be remembered and copied. To realize this sketch, one must choose between two options: the sketch as initially laid out, or the shorter ending ("kürzer Schluss") that Schumann specifies below it. The shorter ending, if taken, would enter after measure 8 where Schumann writes an uppercase F over the staff. Even at this moment, then, Schumann's sketch is open in conception, and the path from text-artifact to text involves an entextualizing maneuver in thinking.

The second discursive scene is the elderly Clara Schumann's improvisation at the piano in 1895. Here the analyst should recognize the gap that lies between Schumann's sketch and the actual activity of improvisation that informed it, and extrapolate from that gap. In October 1895, Schumann wrote in her diary: "I should like to write down the preludes which I always play before the scales, but it is too difficult as I always alter them just as it strikes me at the moment!" (Litzmann 1913, 2:433). As her daughter Marie Schumann put it, her performance was liable to change according to her frame of mind.

The third discursive scene is Clara Schumann's hypothetical performance of the piece "Aufschwung." As Schumann attempted to put her improvisation to paper, she was likely imagining its prefatory function in performance. "Aufschwung" appeared on many of Schumann's public concert programs, detached from the rest of the pieces in the *Fantasiestücke* op. 12, as an ambassador of her husband's compositional voice (Goertzen 1998). The hypothetical performance that this prelude is meant to introduce, then, might be imagined as a public one with a mixed audience. The figurations found in measures 1–2 and 5–8, as seen above, are not just references to the piece "Aufschwung" in the abstract—rather, they link themselves to this particular hypothetical scene in which Schumann is preluding before a public audience. The beginning of the sketched prelude and the beginning of the piece it precedes are similar in figuration, key, and affect. This, and other

similarities between the prelude and the piece, probably provided the audience with a blurred transition between the two: were it not for the decisive cadence at the end of the sketched prelude, an audience member might think that the prelude and the piece came from the same compositional voice. Schumann's decision to extract and entextualize the most distinctive figurational patterns from "Aufschwung" is not just a preparatory gesture informing the audience of what is to come. It is also a gesture of authorship and ownership: authorship of the performance of the piece that comes afterwards, and ownership not just of the piece's technical demands but also of its history as a composition.

The figure below illustrates the relationship between the prelude as text and the discursive scenes contributing to that text. The scenes are arranged by how proximate they are to the text ultimately conceived by the reader, and they all consist of moments of performance within a rich context. Through the process of entextualization, the particulars of each context are stripped away in order to render the material repeatable as text. Each of these scenes, too, captures the agents and environments that shaped a particular act of performance. The reader, their instrument, their musical training, and their personal habits of performance are all at play in Scene 1, which means the text may be something slightly different for this reader than for others. In Scene 2, Schumann's improvisation is shaped by her children and their requests, her instrument, and (as reported by her children) her mood in the moment. In Scene 3, Schumann might play her husband's piece differently depending on the instrument and the hall as well as the audience in attendance and their interests. Each scene contributes elements that end up in the reader's final text: these elements might be found notated within the text artifact, or they could be something less concrete, like judgments of what playing style might be most appropriate. In any case, entextualization allows these performances to become something repeatable by leaving

behind old performance contexts and presenting the new text as something adaptable to a new environment.

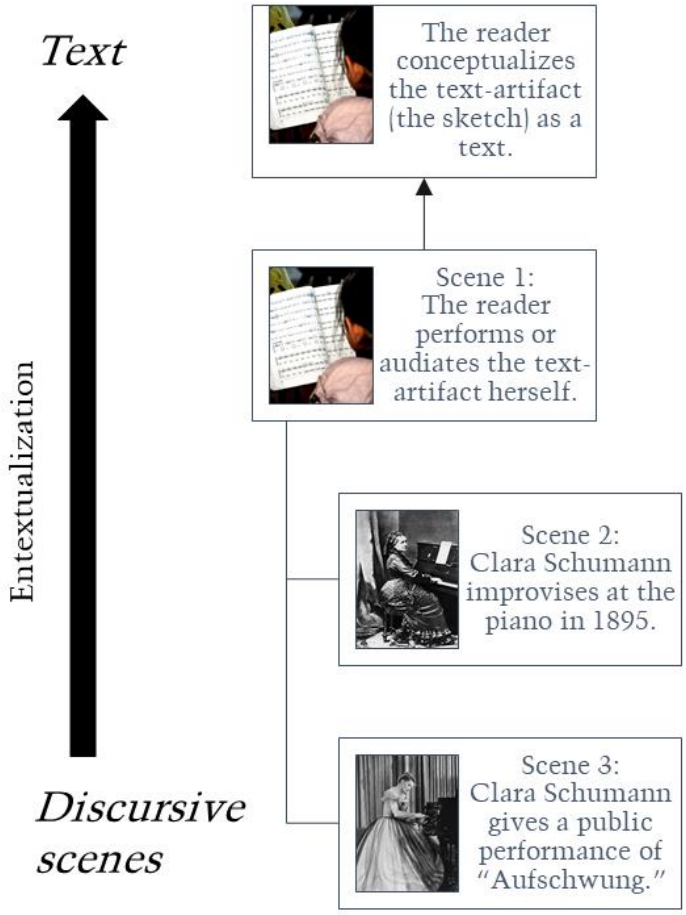


Figure 2-6. Discursive scenes as a basis for the conception of text

Crucially, each one of these discursive scenes draws in turn from other scenes not pictured. Schumann's improvisation at the piano could have been affected by repertoire she may have been practicing, for example. Her public performances of her husband's works set them alongside the "classics" that formed the rest of her concert programs. Beyond this, one might even note that Robert Schumann's compositional practice included intentional

references to works composed by others.[24] This profusion of scenes and the necessity of winnowing away at them to produce text, are similar to what Kristeva calls "loops" (*boucles*): these are initial passes at delimiting a text.[25] Kristeva gives examples of how loops are formed according to the "utterance/addressee," where a text is delimited according to its function for an intended audience, and "at the thematic level," where subject matter determines what is central or peripheral to the text (1980, 44). In the figure above, a similar process occurs: at each step, the previous performances are reevaluated and reinterpreted in light of the present situation to arrive at a text that has been successively delimited over many steps.

Entextualization, then, frames musical text (composed and improvised) as a sprawling network of connected points that expands outwards, far beyond the initial performance environment. An analyst's task is to use texts as a lens to find the relationships between the many points that extend beyond the sound of the performer.

Musical discourse and utterance

The cases studies above have taken up entextualization as a music-analytic tool and addressed the creation of music in performance through the discursive scene. The following section examines the concept of discourse in further detail. "Musical discourse" is already a concept familiar to music theorists. This section enumerates the differences between the familiar concept of musical discourse and the more specific one required by entextualization as a framework. I argue here that this specific vision of discourse is well-

[24] See Reynolds 2015 for an in-depth case study of allusions within Robert Schumann's Symphony No. 2 and other orchestral works.

[25] Kristeva implies that authors or compilers are the actors that perform these loops, and that readers are left to infer the loops' existence in the face of "nondisjunction" (1980, 44). In the present musical context, the actors involved are very similar, but readers or listeners may have a larger role in delimiting the musical text.

suited for describing musical references and musical pragmatic functions that were typical of Clara Schumann's mid-nineteenth-century music culture.

In the anthropological model of musical entextualization, "human discursive interaction" is made up of small units that are interpreted with regard to the other units around them—but at the same time, these units change the shape of the overall discourse event so that previous units must be interpreted in light of more recent ones. This adds the dimension of time to the principle of co-textualization described above. Silverstein writes: "[T]he possible textualities manifested by any chunk of human interactional behavior are always—forever—at least asymptotically subject to retrospective revision, both as the text is being achieved by participants in its creation and ever afterward as it is subject to reinterpretation" (1998, 272). Because of the constant reinterpretation that occurs as time elapses, these discursive units—often called *utterances*—are not repeatable in the way that a "word" or a "sentence" is repeatable. The utterance, unlike an abstract word or sentence, have pragmatic import that is specific to the event in time, and this import shifts as time provides more ways to interpret the utterance.

The figure below illustrates how discursive interaction might be modeled as an accumulation of utterances within this framework. The first part of the figure shows how utterances succeed each other in a chain, through time, each one intelligible through external references. Under Silverstein and Urban's theory of co-textualization, we should picture these references not as an inert background, but rather as an accumulation of similar utterances in their own right. The second part of the figure shows how the pragmatic import of an utterance can change according to "retrospective revision": here, utterance U_1 gains intertextual connections with utterances more recent in time, thus reinterpreting it as U_{1a}.

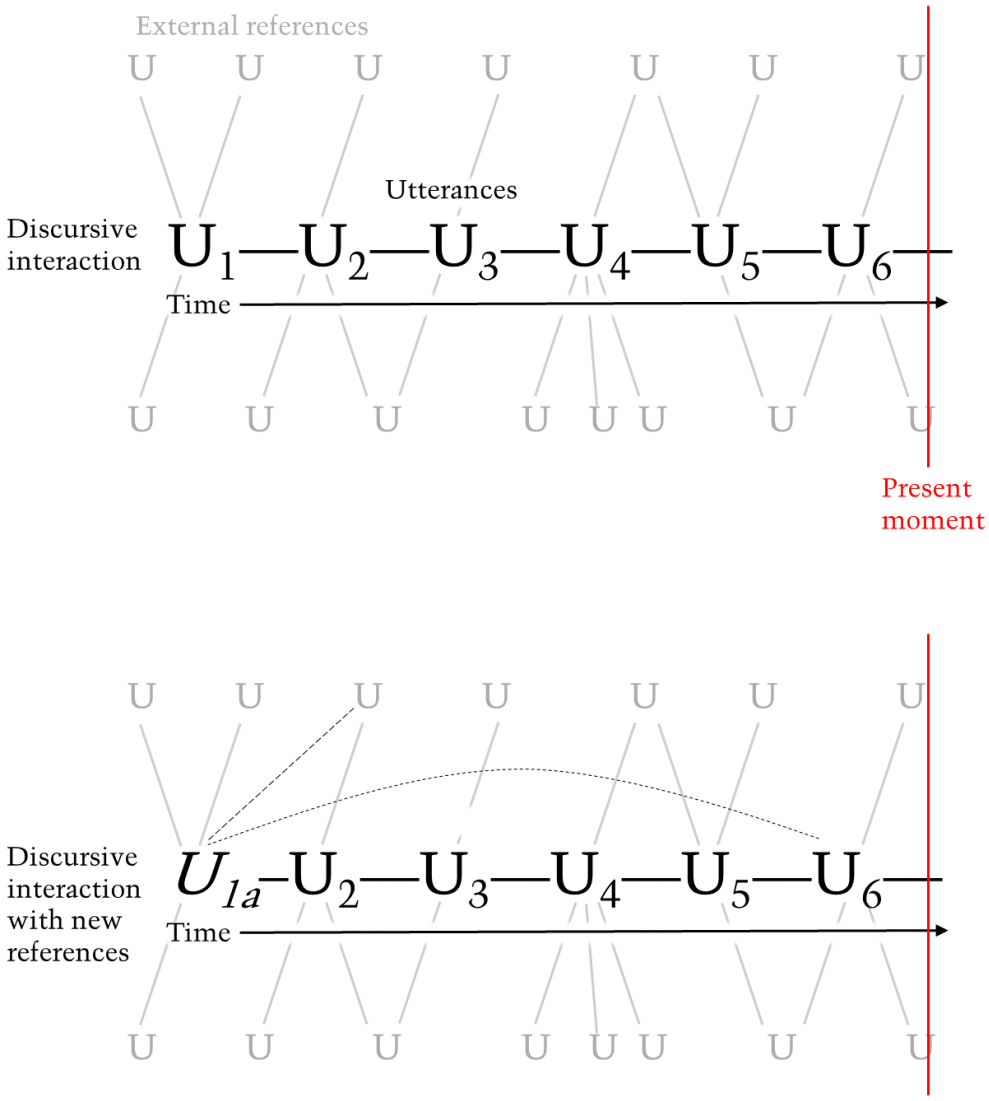


Figure 2-7. Discursive interaction framed as utterances within time

Roughly speaking, a sentence is a type within an abstract typology, while an utterance is a specific token with a context. "Utterance," as a linguistic term, refers to units of speech that occur within the boundaries of a "speaking-turn" in conversation. The stability of this term rests on a process similar to Kristeva's looping, described above. According to John Laver, the usefulness of the "utterance" as a unit rests on the

assumption that "the continuum of speech can be appropriately handled, for analytic purposes, as if descriptive categories were discrete, not continuous" (2001, 157). This is to say that an analyst always has to impose delimitations on the constantly evolving utterance in order for their analysis to cohere. Kristeva's theory and the theory of co-textualization shed light on how the forward motion of discourse must be constantly arrested to arrive at text, even for the sake of entextual analysis.

In this model, a "discourse" (or a "discursive interaction" as Silverstein terms it) is a sequence of utterances at a specific time.[26] Along these lines, I have proposed above that the emergent musical text is based on discursive "scenes" that unfold in a single geographical and social setting in a particular moment in time. *Works* of music, notably, do not take focus: instead, I place them only at the very end of this long chain of scenes as a concept secondary to the entextualized skills under discussion. In the anthropological view of discourse, a musical work is a particular kind of text that has been abstracted after the fact by participants in discourse. Though works of music may figure in an analysis, analytic claims can be "about" something more than pieces of music: they can engage the skills of performers and creators. Most importantly, this conceptualization of discourse is extensible to analyzing music in forms beyond the work—for example, sketches and real-time improvisations.

The "discourse" that the entextualization model draws upon should not be regarded as a script frozen in time, but instead as a continuous process that is meaningful because it refers constantly to what is around it. Discourse, defined in this way, is not only specific to

[26] Silverstein's case studies of discursive interaction include poetry (both individual poems, and also poetic language as a register), evolving arguments between couples, and a very short excerpt from a recorded conversation between two students introducing themselves to each other (1998, 274–75, 282–300).

its current conditions; it also evolves as it spins itself forward. Each time a new utterance is added, older utterances subtly change in contextual meaning, and the contributors find new opportunities for reference. This view of discourse, which casts utterances as units that develop in time, invites a musical comparison. In music studies Ingrid Monson has developed a view of jazz improvisation based on Silverstein's "metapragmatic" view of discourse. Monson lays out what she calls the "referential" and "pragmatic" functions of music-making, both based on Silverstein's views of speech. The "referential" function of speech where words refer to seemingly static outside entities, Monson argues, is analogous to the formal structure of music. The "pragmatic" function of speech, where utterances depend on changing speech contexts that in turn are determined by utterances, is a much larger analytic category, which is analogous to how music is used as a social instrument. In this way, she argues, the pragmatic deployment of music as a mode of interpersonal connection is a larger concern that subsumes any formalist approach to music analysis (1996, 186–87). It is not that Monson's argument disregards sound for the sake of something more like performance studies: rather, she uses a linguistic-anthropological view of context to bring the two together. Here, my model of discursive scenes within a co-textual environment has attempted something similar, based more on the entextual life cycle.

The "discourse" that appears within discursive scenes and gives rise to entextualization is markedly different from the conceptions expounded by Kofi Agawu and Kevin Korsyn, whose ideas of discourse stay within the boundaries of the musical work. For Agawu, music is analyzable "as discourse" (or at least in terms similar to discourse) for three reasons. First, music (like discourse) is organized as a sequence of events; second, music analysis (like discourse analysis) takes "smaller meaningful utterances" as its units and thus the musical period or phrase is homologous with the sentence; and third, music is

"metacritical" in that it comments on itself—this "internal commentary" within a piece must be reconciled with the analyst's own "external commentary" (2014, 7–8). Even here there are significant disjunctions between Agawu's conception of discourse and the one presented above. Periods and phrases cannot constitute "utterances" unless they are non-repeatable tokens within a particular context. One might argue that this is the case in Agawu's analytics: a phrase that returns later in a piece, even verbatim, is not "the same" phrase as it was before. But this already diverges from the sense of discourse and utterance understood here. Musical utterances, as I have described them in an entextual framework, must be *performances* rather than abstract structures within scores. More importantly, the "metacritical" commentary that Agawu describes is a commentary performed by a *work*, accessible only through analytic modes designed for works: "*The musical composition* comments on itself at the same time that it is being constituted in the discourse of the analyst," Agawu writes. "Both *the work's* internal commentary…and the analyst's external commentary feed into an analysis of discourse" (2014, 8–9, emphasis added). The metacommentary Agawu describes, then, is not like the reinterpretation of utterances in time shown in the previous figure. Instead, Agawu makes it clear that his metacommentary is a "dialectical" interaction of foreground and background within a Schenkerian mode—an interaction that is already entirely bounded by the concept of the musical work.[27]

A similar kind of disjunction is present in Korsyn's work. In his essay "Brahms Research and Aesthetic Ideology," for example, Korsyn analyzes Brahms's first string

[27] Agawu expounds on his concept of metacommentary, writing: "For Schenkerians, inquiry into tonal meaning is more productive when it is framed dialectically, when a foreground is seen to take its bearings from a background, when surface and subsurface are understood as locked in a necessary relationship to one another. An analysis that is not informed by this foundational dialecticism is flawed because it produces only flat, one-dimensional, or unmotivated observations" (2014, 11)

quartet op. 51, no. 1 in a Bakhtinian mode, drawing on Brahms's allusions to distinction Beethovenian phrase structures (1993). Korsyn argues that these allusions are deconstructive rather than dialectical, critiquing the ideology of organicism that often drives analysts to proclaim that Brahms's work as a stylistic whole represents a clean synthesis of the Beethovenian past with a proleptic Schoenbergian future (1993, 100). This "aesthetic ideology," he powerfully argues, is a system where musical works play an almost theological role of reconciliation, intervening in history but simultaneously remaining outside history. Korsyn, however, draws on Brahms's string quartet as a work, and likewise on Brahms's *oeuvre* as an *authorial* whole: "discourse" between Brahms and Beethoven appears within these frames, under Brahms's pen alone. Korsyn's Bloomian notion of discourse is a kind of compositional ventriloquism that is not fully compatible with the view of musical utterances expounded here.

Agawu's work is compelling in its own right—I only mean to point out that he works from a definition of "discourse" that differs from Monson, Silverstein and Urban, Kristeva, and Barthes. Korsyn's tracing of an ideological thread in Brahms scholarship, too, is valuable here because it touches on the same precarious methodological point as the present study—wrestling with the analytic implications of "ideology" of the work. Nevertheless, the notion of discourse presented here does not inhere within the frame of the musical work, nor is it at all an abstract entity that exists outside time, as it is for Agawu and Korsyn. In this way, Agawu's and Korsyn's approaches stay within the traditional scaffolding of authorship. The "utterances" they consider are not involved with the pragmatic import of a scene in time, but instead constitute a scripted dialogue.

Agawu's and Korsyn's work-based model of musical discourse, in a manner of speaking, is virtual. Within the framework of entextualization, however, there is a sense of

real-time discursive interaction that the work-based model lacks. This new sense of discourse captures the collaboration between performer and environment that is most apparent in extemporization, but occurs in all performances, improvised or pre-composed.

Contrasting twentieth-century conceptions of improvisation

The idea of bridging a gap between the activity of "improvisation" and the written sketch might recall a pronouncement from Arnold Schoenberg: "composing is a slowed-down improvisation," he writes. "Often one cannot write fast enough to keep up with the stream of ideas" (1984). But Schoenberg's pronouncement is underpinned by a philosophy of music and performance that does not sit well with Schumann's pianism—her interpretation, improvisation, and composition, which all came from the same fountainhead of cultivated bodily skill. If an analyst were using Schoenberg's passage to cast Schumann's pianism in a generous light, they might say that her bodily skills were well-practiced to "keep up" with her stream of ideas. But the case studies above show that her bodily skills and her "ideas" often mingled at the source: it makes little sense to separate the two.

Schoenberg's ideal "improvisatory" composition is designed to have as little to do with the physical task of performance as possible: his is an improvisation that quietly takes place in the mind. In the same essay where he made the pronouncement above, Schoenberg writes:

> "Do you really suppose I think of your miserable violin, if the spirit gets hold of me?"—this is how the artist himself feels whether he creates in hard labor or only by a kind of toying. … A craftsman likes to be conscious of what he produces; he is proud of the ability of his hands, of the flexibility of his mind, of his subtle sense of

> balance, of his never-failing logic, of the multitude of variations, and last but not least of the profundity of his idea and his capacity of penetrating to the most remote consequences of an idea. (1984, 439)

This excerpt raises two issues: the first is the strictly-enforced separation between composing and playing evident in the excerpt above. Here the moment of "improvisation" is separated from the moment of performance: they not only occur in two different times but are carried out by two different actors. This hard-won disjunction between activities that are conceived as coming from the "mind" and "body" results in an exaggerated disdain, in the excerpt above, for the performer's "miserable violin." The image of improvisation in Schoenberg's early twentieth-century circle is different in structure from the image we see in Clara Schumann's nineteenth-century practice methods and sketches: Schoenberg improvises *in spite of* bodily skill and idiomatic knowledge at the instrument, while Schumann uses skill and idiomatic knowledge as both her improvisatory building-blocks and her compositional inspiration.

The second issue is that Schoenberg's prototype for musical thinking is the musical work. The "idea" (*Gedanke*) that he describes in this essay, according to Charlotte Cross, is a metaphysical concept: Schoenberg "disagrees with the commonly accepted definition of a musical 'idea' as a theme, melody, phrase, or motive, insisting instead that it is the totality of the work that is its 'idea'" (Cross 1980, 25). This is to say that for Schoenberg, musical thinking occurs in a process indivisible from the production of works. The case studies of Schumann's output above, meanwhile, would indicate that the entextualization and transformation of shorter passages is at least as fruitful. Schoenberg's attitude values the imagined product of improvisation more than the process that creates it. In Silverstein's and Urban's anthropological lens, one stage of the textual cycle—the stage that includes a

written artifact and imposes single authorship—is often seen as representative of the entire cycle by participants who wish to "instantiate the timeless, context-free character of culture," while other stages are implicitly devalued or ignored (1996, 12). If works are treated as the main hosts of the musical "idea," relational processes would be less valued. The discursive scenes linked to Schumann's sketched prelude emphasize the relationality of several such processes—not only the process of musical improvisation, but also the readerly process of conceiving musical text.

Here I use the term relationality in the anthropological sense. Michael Houseman, a scholar of anthropology and religious practice, describes relationality as it appears within ritual practice as the tracing of relationships: to pay attention to relationality is to pay attention to "an ongoing reciprocal involvement between subjects implying…the attendant qualities of agency, interaction, intentionality, affect, and accountability" (2006, 414). This may seem to be an unruly collection of attributes. But in light of the twentieth-century conceptualization of improvisation exemplified above by Schoenberg, one sees how all these attributes cohere: they are all subservient within a view of performance based on works, which emphasizes only a few forms of agency, intention, affect, or accountability.

Another figure in early twentieth-century music theory, Heinrich Schenker, tried to address the tension between his conception of musical creation and the re-use and variation of existing materials. Schenker's remarks on "improvisation" in the music of C. P. E. Bach are remarkable in light of the instrumental practice described here, and especially in light of recent work on eighteenth-century schema theory:

> What first strikes one about Bach's compositional technique is the absence of any kind of schematic formula, whether in regard to form, idea, or harmony. To invent

> something in advance, in isolation and out of context, only to insert it into a strained patchwork later on—this does not lie in his nature. Instead, everything—at its inception as well as during its successive development—exists by grace of an improvisatory imagination [*improvisierende Phantasie*]. (Cited in Rink 1993, 3)

Here, too, the prototype for musical thinking (even improvisatory musical thinking) is the musical work. Schenker regards "schematic formulas" in all forms as unoriginal interlopers that have no place within the organicist context of the musical work. Preexisting ideas, he suggests, can only result in a "patchwork" rather than a seamless whole. The entextual view of musical performance, on the other hand, would reject this framing entirely. A methodology informed by entextualization stresses the musician's efforts to transform and recontextualize musical materials. Moreover, this methodology focuses not on "ideas" inherent in works, but rather on performable, repeatable bodily skills.

The twentieth-century theoretical judgments of improvisation presented above, in sum, illustrate the shortcomings of applying analytical concepts designed for musical works to the process of improvised music-making. I would suggest further that the concepts of composition and "musical idea" articulated by Schoenberg and Schenker are intelligible only within a narrow band of music-making—where one's performance of one's own works is seen as an exception rather than a rule, and where *works*, indeed, are viewed as more valuable than their performances. Whereas Schoenberg and Schenker both vaunt "idea" as a property of a musical work independent of its performance, a practice-based view would instead underscore how bodily skills can be the foundation of those ideas—Clara Schumann's fingers played a crucial role, for example, in how she developed her "ideas." To think through improvisation and textual formation in terms of discursive

scenes of performance is to address those bodily and situation-specific aspects of improvisation that Schoenberg and Schenker have left out of their improvisatory ideal. All told, the musical ideas of Clara Schumann's nineteenth-century musical culture are more than mental.

Entextualization and hierarchies of authority

A critical aspect of the entextual process is that it almost always tracks a hierarchy of authority or social control: in this study, it is crucial to address gender hierarchy when analyzing Clara Schumann's entextual activities. In a previous chapter, I characterized improvisation and "free playing" as a skill potentially attainable by women in this midcentury, urban, German setting—but, nevertheless, a skill that women could not exhibit publicly, let alone professionally. Clara Schumann faced this kind of gendered restriction during her upbringing. In a letter from 1830, her father wrote: "I am educating my daughter to be a teacher first of all, though—child as she is—she is already far superior to all other women-pianists in the world for she can improvise freely: but I do not allow this to mislead me in any way" (Litzmann 1913, xi). To his understanding, then, women-pianists generally could not improvise—and, for those who could, it was inadvisable to do so professionally.

I note here that improvisatory arts performed by women, in some cultures, are relegated to courtesans: these are figures who could attain social standing but were nevertheless did not enter into mainstream society. In the cross-disciplinary volume *The Courtesan's Arts: Cross-Cultural Perspectives* (2006), contributors emphasize how improvised art forms were connected to unpredictable or unauthorized behavior.[28] The

[28] I thank Martha Feldman for insight in bringing this volume to my attention.

cultural historian Judith T. Zeitlin, for example, describes seventeenth-century courtesans of the late Ming and early Qing dynasties in China as expert improvisers in both the musical and literary arts. A courtesan, Zeitlin writes, "would have been expected to render an impromptu performance of her lover's verses, and for that she would have been capable of modifying the words and the tune on her own" (2006, 85). This description stresses the demanding preparation required for a Chinese courtesan's improvised songs and poetry, but Zeitlin also stresses the uneasy position of courtesans' songs within the larger literary sphere. Here I recall Czerny's high expectations for girls studying piano performance—I recall too the exploration of what I called the "carnal outlook": this is a cultivated way of curating and absorbing the music around oneself for one's own use, an outlook that, though it demands creativity and skill, is nevertheless not the utopian ladder to social prosperity that a more naïve view of improvisation might have you expect.

The hierarchy described above is linked to canon formation and the assumption of single authorship, which both obscure the process-based, network-like nature of musical activity that entextualization illuminates so vividly. As Silverstein an Urban write: "The text is made to seem more solid…under an ideology or metadiscourse of fixity" (1996, 13). Urban, for example, presents a study of verbal transcription in the Xokleng-speaking community in southern Brazil. He collaborated with a younger man, Nil (Urban's "student") and an older man, Wãñpõ (Urban's mentor) to transcribe a story told by a community leader. He found that Nil was much more concerned with phoneme-for-phoneme accuracy, while the socially authoritative Wãñpõ treated his transcription with more license and saw the story more as communal property (1996, 24–27). An asymmetrical

social dynamic of entextualization, as one might term it, is a phenomenon that arises today in the performance of Western European prestige music within institutional settings.[29]

In other words: the force that turns music from a network into a *work* is often a force that creates hierarchies of musical practitioners, with women often on a lower tier. Schumann accepted this hierarchy with a painful sense of resignation. She lays out this resignation in a letter to Joseph Joachim. Here she chides Joachim, who criticized her performance of Beethoven's "Pastoral" sonata behind her back:

> "Do you not understand how bitterly conscious I am of my own insufficiency, when I have studied this or that piece with my whole soul for a long time, and then have to realise that after all I have not yet properly grasped it? Is not intellectual mastery what I am striving for (so far as this is possible for a woman)?" (Litzmann 1913, vol. ii: 151)

This letter shows that Schumann's entextual choices—or opportunities, rather—were limited by the perception that she could not be as authoritative as a male performer. Real-time interpersonal communication contributes directly to the sounds of musical performance, and entextualization is the interface that makes this contribution possible. One can think of musical entextualization as something that occurs along a sliding scale according to how much material is deemed textually repeatable: harmonies, pianistic textures, and small passages of just a few measures are forms of entextualization, but on the other side of the scale, entire movements of music lasting minutes or even hours can be deployed in performance. Concert programming, then, is an entextual activity, and this

[29] See especially the foundational ethnographic work of Henry Kingsbury (1988), Bruno Nettl (1995), and Mari Yoshihara (2008).

activity too is subject to the authorial hierarchy described above.[30] The two cases from Schumann's career discussed here represent both her early career, filled with improvisation and performances of her own works, to her late career in which she "preserved" the works of the men close to her. These cases show how the authority or cultural power granted to an artist affects their approach to entextualizing the music that surrounds them.

The work of anthropologists Richard Bauman and Charles Briggs has emphasized exactly these dynamics of authority within an entextualization-based approach. The analysis of discourse, the authors posit, should address production and reception as *processes*, rather than treating discourse as a static object. Their approach is to make the recontextualizations of a re-used text their main focus, in a manner similar to the musical analyses presented in this chapter and the previous one. Bauman and Briggs suggest that analysts pay attention to the following four elements in any recontextualization (1990, 76–77). First, access: for a person to come into contact with a text at all, they must be a part of a gatekeeping "institutional structure." Second, legitimacy: performances can be judged legitimate or illegitimate on the basis of property rights but also of apprenticeship and the perceived social relationships between the performer and the originator. Third, competence: even when a performer is granted eligibility and is seen as legitimate, there is the possibility that their skill—not just in speaking or music-making, but also in one's knowledge of genres, in "reading the room" for a performance—may not be sufficient for the performance to be counted as authoritatively successful. Fourth and finally, values: Bauman and Briggs write that texts are organized into a "hierarchy of preference"

[30] Alexander Stefaniak, for example, presents a study of Clara Schumann's concert reviews, from both her early career and from her late career. He identifies a discursive trope in reviews from Schumann's late career in which she is cast as "a connecting link between the past and present" due to her personal relationships with the composers whose works she programmed (2018, 221).

depending on what a group sees as valuable. "All of these factors—access, legitimacy, competence, and values—bear centrally on the construction and assumption of authority," the authors write (1990, 77).

These factors are immediately relevant to musicologists studying what Clara Schumann played in her concerts, and scholars investigating the steady formation of the European classical canon in the mid-nineteenth century. But I note here that the factors are meant to be applied to analyses of *recontextualizations*. In other words: when a performer includes musical material from others within their performances, how do audiences and critics permit them to remix or re-use music in this manner? How is their recontextualized music-making valued? I observe that Clara Schumann's *Caprices en forme de valses*, analyzed in a previous chapter, demonstrated an artistic ownership of material introduced to her by her father. Her access to this material, and her legitimacy as its new bearer, comes from her connection to him. The prelude to "Aufschwung" discussed here, too, uses material from another man close to her: her husband. One might conjecture that Clara Schumann's selection of these distinctive materials was a safe choice and did not overstep the bounds potentially present in using material from an authoritative composer more distant from her.[31]

But the theory of entextualization can also encompass much larger recontextualizations or re-performances. A classical concert program, after all, is conventionally (at least at the present time) made up of musical materials first created by people other than the performer. Reinhard Kopiez, Andreas Lehmann, and Janina Klassen

[31] Among Clara Schumann's published oeuvre, there are five works explicitly based on music by other composers. Of these, two are based on themes by Robert Schumann, one on themes by Bellini, one on themes by Bach, and one on music by Friedrich Wieck (in addition to the *Caprices* discussed here).

have examined Clara Schumann's concert programs beginning with her first public performance in 1829 until her withdrawal from public performance before the 1860s. They find that the pieces on Schumann's programs more and more old throughout the run of her career—that is, Schumann steadily became less interested in playing new pieces, in contradistinction to contemporaneous artists like Hans von Bülow and Franz Liszt, who performed recently-composed music on a regular basis throughout their careers (Kopiez, Lehmann, and Klassen 2009, 65, 67). Kopiez et al. suggest that a handful of events in Schumann's life determined this narrowing of her repertoire: the births of her children beginning with Marie Schumann in 1841, her crushing new financial obligations after Robert was committed to Endenich in 1854, and an overuse injury she suffered from between 1869 and 1874 (2009, 56, 57, 68). The first event is especially pertinent here, because of the social expectation that the burden of childcare should fall almost entirely upon women. It is sobering to imagine what kinds of concert programs Clara Schumann might have assembled—filled with modern music by Camille Saint-Saens and perhaps even Anton Rubinstein—if she had been afforded the freedoms given to male artists like Liszt and Bülow.

Entextualization, performance, and co-texts

The two preceding case studies have shown how entextualization, the act of turning continuous discourse into repeatable text, can be harnessed to analyze music. A chief benefit of this type of analysis is that it does not need to appeal to the musical work as an aesthetic measure. In music, entextualization stresses processes (like daily practice, or extemporaneous playing) rather than products, and it stresses patterns (in the form of bodily skills) rather than pieces. The two case studies draw attention to different facets of this approach. The analysis of Schumann's *Caprices en forme de valses* op. 2 showed how

entextualization can be seen as a transformational kind of theory where skills in one instance are redeployed in another setting. The analysis of Schumann's sketched prelude to "Aufschwung" likewise created a preliminary network of intertextual connections, but beyond that, it emphasized the breadth of the co-textuality implicit in entextualization as a process: co-texts are not just skills and patterns of notes, but also features of the performance environment. When a reader sees an artifact as a "text," that reader constructs an image in their mind that highlights some of these co-texts and ignores others.

Throughout this chapter, I have cast music-making as a textual activity, but not textual in the conventional sense: here, textuality refers not to "the notes," or writing, or fixity, but rather to music's constant shuttling between flux and fixity, or repetition and variation, in the minds of its performers. This conception of musical textuality is directly informed by the work of Kristeva and Barthes, but it also parallels the textual theories of Jerome McGann, who has argued that texts are not objects or properties but rather a series of acts performed by authors, readers, editors, publishers, designers, and marketing agencies. Here textuality is a particular kind of action within time: a moment of repetition and communication, but more than that—a "material negotiation" (McGann 1991, 3). Textuality, nevertheless, takes place in social spaces that revolve around the physical artifact of the written word. Music-making in Clara Schumann's nineteenth-century music world, likewise, can only be understood as a process occurring within time—but this process takes place in an environment where musical works (and their imagined tokens, the written score) became increasingly powerful as regulators of musical practice. By focusing on skills, I hope to insert the performing body into these "material negotiations." And by creating a vocabulary of entextualization, skill, pedagogy, and everyday practice, I

want to recover the idea of nineteenth-century improvisation as a process rather than as a product.

Ultimately, conceptions of "text" are always built on performances. The significance of a performance is, in turn, inextricable from social contexts (or "co-texts") and social hierarchy. Most importantly, these concerns can be addressed analytically by music theorists. In this study I analyze music-making, composed and improvised, by using entextualized skills as my main building blocks rather than allowing "text" and "work" to be conflated. Clara Schumann's entextualizations were not just borrowings: she was following a creative practice of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that has been obscured by the vocabulary of composition and work. Entextualization is what animates this creative practice.

3. The Art of the Excerpt: Composition as Collation

Czerny's *La ricordanza* and instrumental idiom

Vladimir Horowitz claimed that of all his taped performances, his favorite was the 1944 RCA Victor recording of Carl Czerny's variations, *La ricordanza* (International Piano Quarterly 2004, 73). Horowitz was known for making daring choices in his concert programming, pushing his audiences to reconsider their assumptions about mid-nineteenth century composers like Czerny and Muzio Clementi. This recording, in fact, helped bring Czerny's music—through the lens of Horowitz's virtuosity—to the general public. Its nine minutes are, like Horowitz, alternately suave and urbane, anxiously wistful, and nervously brilliant. When listening to this recording, one recognizes a sad glance backward toward the belle époque, as the name *La ricordanza* implies.

But what theme is at the center of these variations? One author, familiar with Horowitz's recording, mistakenly names this piece *Variations on the Aria "La Ricordanza"*—but the theme is not an aria of that name (American Liszt Society 57). It is, rather, a set of variations on a theme first written for the violin but later popularized as a vocalise. Subtitled "Variations on a well-known theme of Rode,"[32] this variation set for piano is an exemplar of the practice of writing variations on a "well-known" or "favorite" theme.[33] This practice was widespread to the point where a pianist or composer had to point out, in the title page, when their variations were based on a theme of their own invention. But here there is an intermediary step between Czerny's "reminiscence" and

[32] " Variationen über e. beliebtes Thema von Rode," Vienna: Steiner, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Mus.pr. 9466.

[33] Dana Gooley has discussed the genre of variations on a given theme in the early- to mid-nineteenth century, noting that critics often juxtaposed this popular genre against the more vaunted free fantasy (Gooley 2016, 135, 148, 162).

Rode's theme. The music being recalled is not just Rode's theme for violin, *per se*, but the way it was sung and varied by the Italian soprano Angelica Catalani, who "created the greatest enthusiasm" for the theme between about 1815 and 1824 during her tours of Paris, Vienna, and Northern European cities. Catalani, by some accounts, was known not so much for her appearances within operas as for her crowd-pleasing recitals (Marshall 1879).

Czerny's text is based on the transmission of multiple layers of performance. Indeed, Czerny was not the only pianist and composer to capitalize on the craze for Catalani's vocal variations. Joseph Gelinek, a Prague-based composer famous for his variations and potpourris, also produced his own *Air de Rode chanté par Mad. Catalani varié pour le Piano Forte* in 1825. Abbé Gelinek, now obscure, was a considerable figure in salon music for the piano. A priest and chaplain to Prince Nikolaus II Esterházy, Gelinek was described by one prominent Austrian critic as Prague's "famous blacksmith of variations" (Ambros 1858, 14).[34]

The excerpts from *La ricordanza* below come from a 1945 edition prepared by Isidor Philipp and published by the International Music Company in New York.

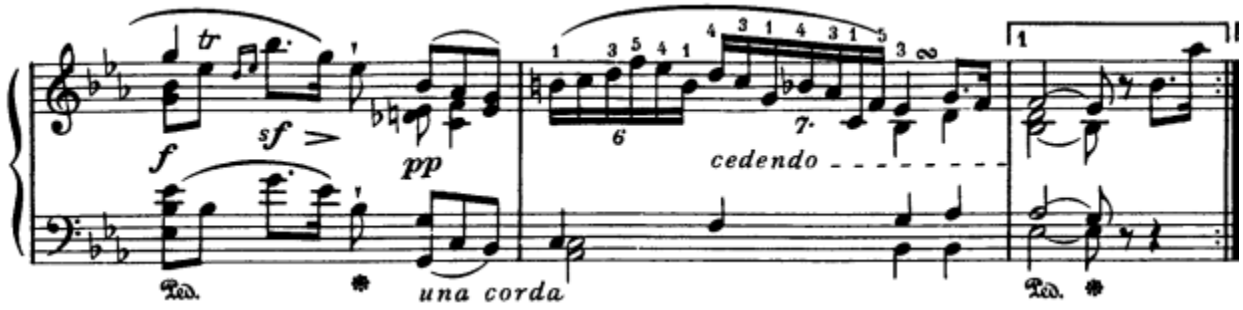


Figure 3-1. Czerny, *La ricordanza*, mm. 18–20

[34] "[D]er bekannte Variationenschmied."

La ricordanza is full of knowing references to the idiomatic figures of Italian opera and virtuosic violin performance—even the theme is adorned with ornamentation. Figure 3-1 reproduces the very end of the theme, where an effusive Bellinian figure embellishes the passage from predominant to dominant at the final cadence. The unworried placement of thirteen notes into two beats suggests that the player is to take their time in imitation of the dramatic *bel canto* rubato that a singer like Angelica Catalani may have used.

The first variation turns from the world of *bel canto* to the idiomatic figures of violin performance. Figure 3-2 below reproduces the first reprise of this variation and the beginning of the second reprise. This variation starts with a distinctive string-crossing figure on the upbeat, which embellishes the dominant. Taken at the same tempo as the theme, this figure in sixteenth notes does not suggest pianistic brilliance as much as a charming or even cloying violin *legato.* The beginning of the second reprise again projects a violinist's virtuosity rather than a pianist's: here, staccato thirds cascade downward, evoking a violinist's separated bowings or possibly *spiccato* playing.

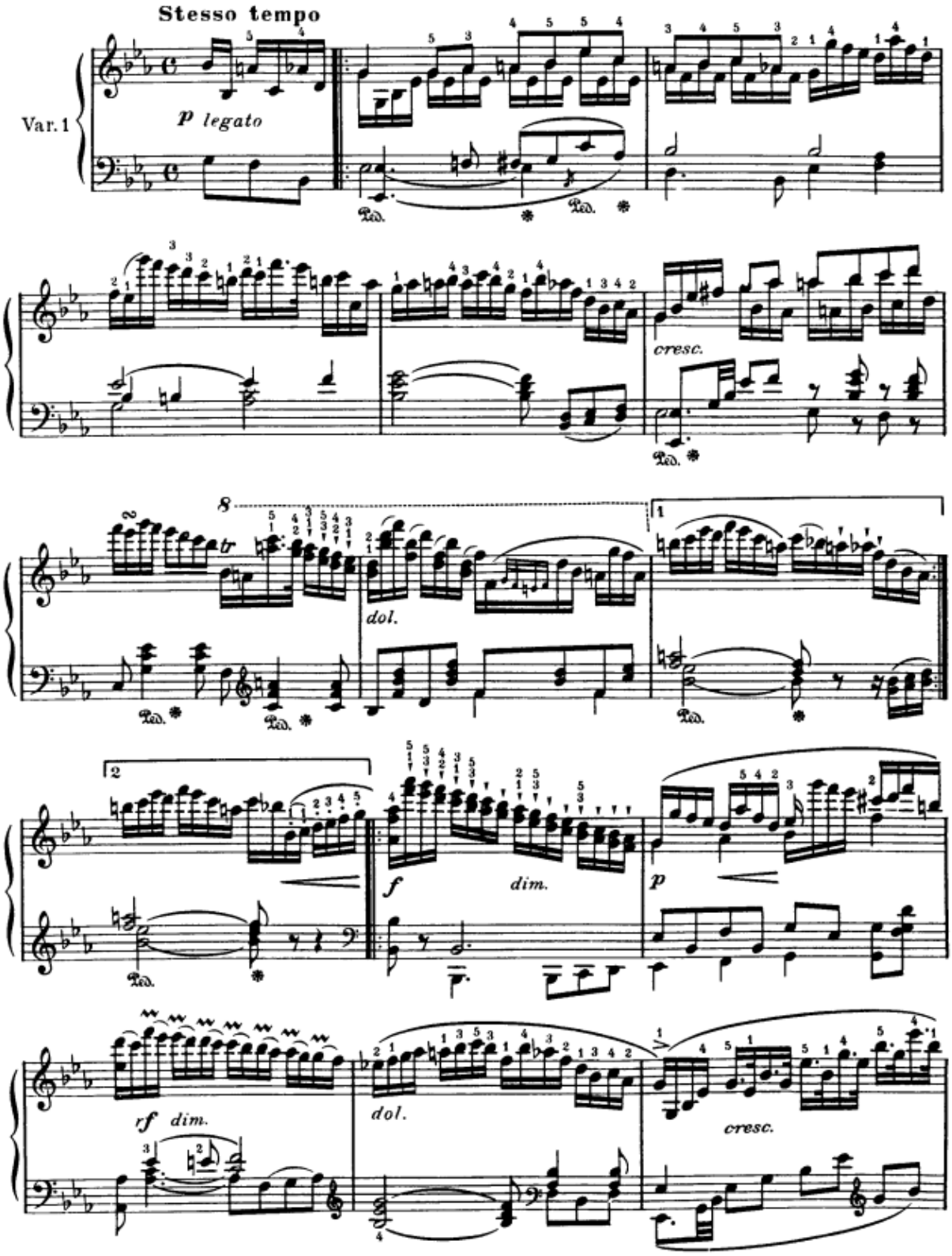


Figure 3-2. Czerny, La ricordanza, mm. 21–33

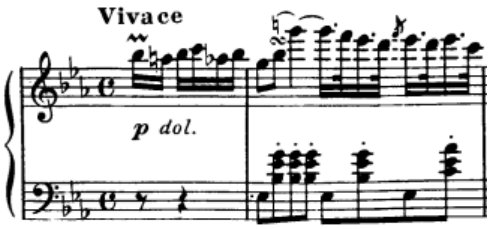
I hear a thrilling tension within the musical signifiers of instrumental idiom for the piano, the violin, and the voice. Another factor intensifies this feeling of tension: three works, or perhaps three performances, are intermingled here. Czerny's *Ricordanza* seems to barely stand on its own as an originary, autonomous work: they require a support system of references to outside actors and imagined performances to be intelligible. This is almost a musical version of what, in linguistics, is referred to as *exophora*: aspects of a text or utterance that are only intelligible when the hearer is able to connect them to referents outside the conversation or outside the boundary of the text. Indeed, the linguistic-anthropological frameworks that were discussed in a previous chapter can be fruitfully applied here. The concept of the *discursive scene* helps to clarify where this tension lies and why it is a productive tension here. I have previously described *text* as the potential for reproducibility that coalesces in a musician's practice: in Barthes's words, "a methodological field" (1986, 57). A written score becomes a "text" because a player has used it to create a performance and hypothesize future performances, all while imagining previous *ur*-performances linked to rich performance contexts of the past. Czerny's *La Ricordanza* (and Gelinek's *Air de Rode)* make these text-making discursive scenes clear to their perspective audiences: they allude not only to Rode's performance on the violin, but also to Catalani's redux of it. Further, they explicitly ask their audience to reminisce on those performances even while a new one is being created. Tension arises when the analyst or modern-day listener recognizes these prompts for reminiscence and the whole apparatus of discursive scenes appears —an apparatus that usually remains in the background.

Czerny does not only use the idiomatic figures of vocal and violin performance: he draws from his own palette of pianistic effects as well. Figure 3-3a below reproduces the beginning of Czerny's third variation. Here, the upbeat again embellishes the dominant in

the key of E-flat major, this time with a small turning figure around the fifth scale degree: first, it is decorated with its chromatic lower neighbor the sharp fourth scale degree, and then with the unaltered fourth scale degree, finally falling to the third scale degree at the downbeat. After this turn, the right hand rockets upward to prepare for the eventual filigreed descents that will characterize this variation.

A nearly identical maneuver appears in another work by Czerny: his *Variations brillantes* op. 14, written sometime between the late 1810s and 1821. The short excerpt that appears below comes from an 1821 edition published by Tobias Haslinger in Vienna. A copy is held at the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek. These variations are in E-flat major, the same key as his *Ricordanza*. Figure 3-3b reproduces a short excerpt from these variations. Here, the exact same turn occurs on the upbeat: the same passage through the sharp fourth to the unaltered fourth scale degree, falling to the third scale degree at the downbeat, and then flying upwards in a dramatic arpeggio. One concludes, then, that this was a technical flourish that Czerny readily deployed as an introductory upbeat in E-flat major. *La ricordanza* includes not only imitations of the idiomatic figures belonging to the voice and violin, but also special maneuvers designed for the piano.

a)
La ricordanza



b)
Variations brillantes,
op. 14 (1821, 3)

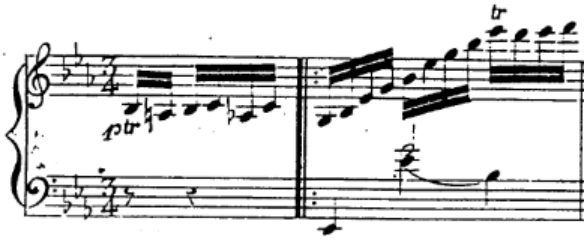


Figure 3-3. Comparison of (a) Czerny's La ricordanza op. 33, m. 62, and (b) Czerny's Variations brillantes op. 14, mm. 33

This is not the only moment in *La ricordanza* where a distinctive figuration appears which has been used elsewhere in Czerny's work. In the final bravura variation of *La ricordanza*, a shimmering repeated-note effect materializes, illustrated in the figure below. This passage is a long elaboration on the dominant. Here, the right hand plays rapid repeated notes with the first and second fingers, with the fifth finger darting upwards to play the same note in the higher octave. In a pedagogical work of his, the *125 Passagenübungen* op. 125 (1833), Czerny includes a short piece focusing on exactly this shimmering repeated-note maneuver. An excerpt from that short piece also appears below.

One might view the short piece as a preparatory exercise for longer pieces like *La ricordanza*, and indeed, this can be the case. But in the rest of this chapter, I explore musical practices that blur the boundaries between "technical" practice, composition at the instrument, and the playing of pre-composed pieces. Rather than viewing the practice of passages as a means to an end—the playing of pieces pre-composed by others—I want to pay attention to those passages themselves. Indeed, Horowitz's performances of *La ricordanza* are exhilarating to listen to, not because of the notion that he was interpreting a work of

music, but because of the dashing spontaneity of his playing in exactly these passages. One can easily see Czerny's piece as a tissue of passages, borrowings, and re-workings—is it not possible to view the whole of nineteenth century pianism in this way as well?

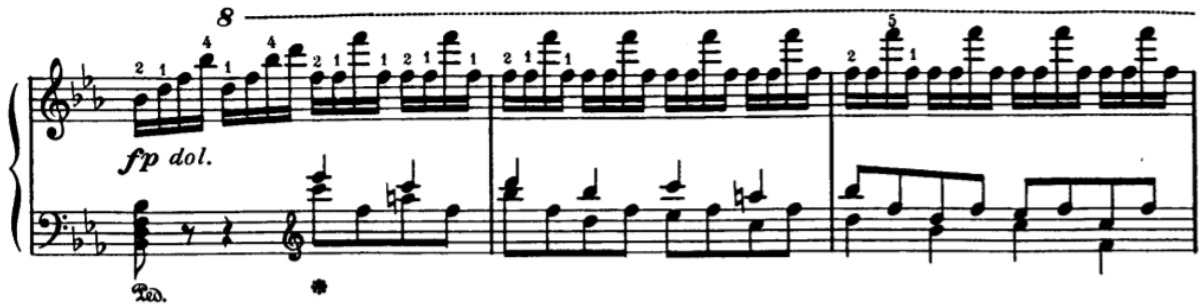


Figure 3-4. La ricordanza, repeated-note effect found in final variation

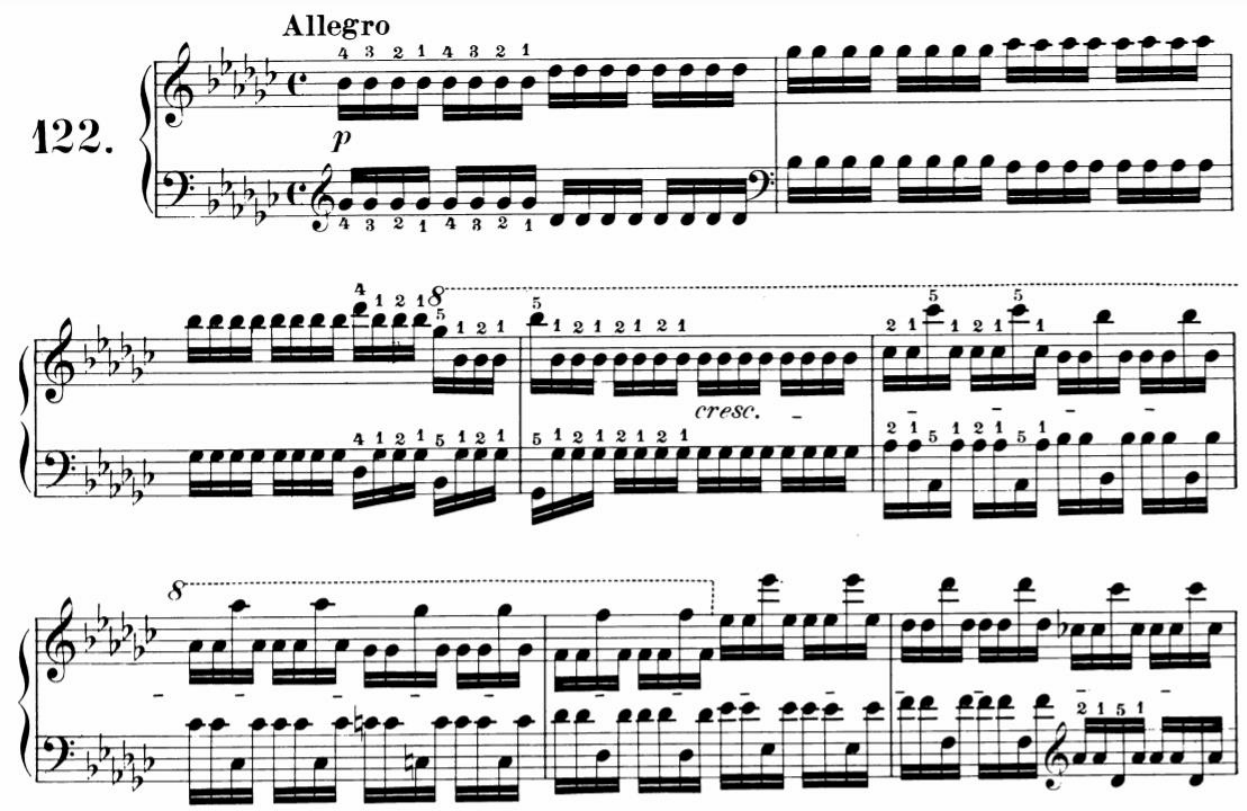


Figure 3-5. Czerny, 125 Passagenübungen op. 261, no. 122, excerpt

This re-use of melodic formulas and figurations places the work concept under tension. Because some of these melodic formulas appear in exactly the same guise (and

even in the same key) within different pieces, one may ask whether this type of re-use damages the impression of Czerny's set of variations as an independent or autonomous work of music. Czerny (and other composers in his position) may have desired this kind of reception.[35] But this chapter shows that there are other factors at play. Here, I will explore the practices of excerpting and adaptation that were widespread in nineteenth century piano composition. The approach taken here, I must emphasize, comes from the perspective of practice and skill acquisition rather than from the study of intertextual connections between works. The systematic excerpting, imitation, and generalization of distinctive patterns from others' music was part of the everyday experience of pianists and composers in cosmopolitan mid-nineteenth century Europe.

I begin this chapter by examining two of these published collections, showing what kinds of musicians were best represented in the collections, as well as how the editors altered the excerpted material. Well-represented in these collections were musicians like Sigismond Thalberg and Joseph Gelinek—musicians who were driving forces behind trends in early nineteenth century popular pianism like the operatic paraphrase, potpourri, and variations on well-known themes. I show, in particular, how approaches to excerpting could be very liberal, changing the source material, re-barring, and adding new cadences—or it could be done with a light touch. In both cases, more emphasis is placed on skills rather than on works or composers: that is, the musical work is something almost incidental in this practice; a vehicle for the pianist's skills in the form of virtuosic passages and patterns. I analyze Liszt's Transcendental Étude "Mazeppa" as well as a set of variations by the Austrian pianist Leopoldine Blahetka, showing how the figurations and harmonic

[35] As Carl Dahlhaus has argued, histories of reception must take grapple with the concept of musical autonomy (See Dahlhaus 1983, 28).

maneuvers from these excerpt collections find their place in newly composed and newly improvised music from the time. These analyses frame nineteenth century music-making at the piano as an art of stock figures, with artists imitating and absorbing each other's performances and printed works.

In a previous chapter, I demonstrated the skill-based connections between the *Caprices en forme de valses* op. 2 of the young Clara Schumann and the "little pieces" of Friedrich Wieck's pedagogical system. There, I showed how the acquisition of technical skill at the piano overlapped with the absorption and redeployment of discrete musical patterns and figurations within one's own output, whether composed or improvised. In this chapter I extend the framework of entextualization developed previously, showing how it can encompass an even more diffuse network of figurations, composers, and skills. I posit that excerpt books like Czerny's and Kullak's represent a drive to hear, absorb, and transform musical materials through one's own bodily skills—a drive that I have previously characterized as a "carnal outlook."

Czerny's *Studio generale* and Kullak's *Schule des Oktavenspiels*

Collections of musical excerpts, taken from the music of the "brillant" school of postclassical pianism, show how the ideas of technique, composition, and authorship all interact in subtle ways during the mid-nineteenth century. Czerny's *Studio generale,* published by Ricordi in Florence in 1842, is a fine exemplar of such a collection. All images from the *Studio generale* presented below come from this edition. The title page represents this collection as an "encyclopedia of brilliant passages for the pianoforte extracted from the works of celebrated pianists ancient and modern."[36] Within this four-volume collection

[36] "Enciclopedia di passi brillanti per il pianoforte estratti dalle Opere dei celebri Pianisti antichi e moderni"

are 261 short, modified excerpts from the published works of an array of composers beginning with Domenico Scarlatti and ending with Franz Liszt. All of these excerpts share two features. The first is that they all end with an authentic cadence, even when there is none in the original source. The second is that the excerpts all consist of eight-bar phrases, either fully written out or by virtue of a repeat sign at the end of the fourth measure. In this way, Czerny's excerpts prioritize the performance situation over any concern for authorial integrity.

The figure below reproduces one of these excerpts and compares it to the original piece from which it is taken. This is an excerpt from the third movement of Beethoven's Piano Sonata Op. 57 "Appassionata," although it is identified only as an Allegro by "Louis van Beethoven" in Czerny's collection. In the first part of the figure, we see Czerny's adaptation of the excerpt. Czerny has rewritten this excerpt in quadruple meter, perhaps so the reader can think of it as an eight-bar phrase. (The original was written in duple meter.) Czerny's other additions include not only editorial fingering but also caret accents that emphasize the imitative maneuvers in this passage: the main motive of this movement is an upward arpeggio followed by a descending figure with an upper neighbor, and here that motive is played by both the right and left hands at a delay of one quarter note. These alterations, then, can be interpreted as an analytic and communicative tool for the pianist reading the excerpt: Czerny has changed the meter to more clearly communicate eight-bar periodicity, and he has marked Beethoven's imitative figures with strong accents so the pianist can gain an aural and tactile recognition of the excerpt's motivic structures.

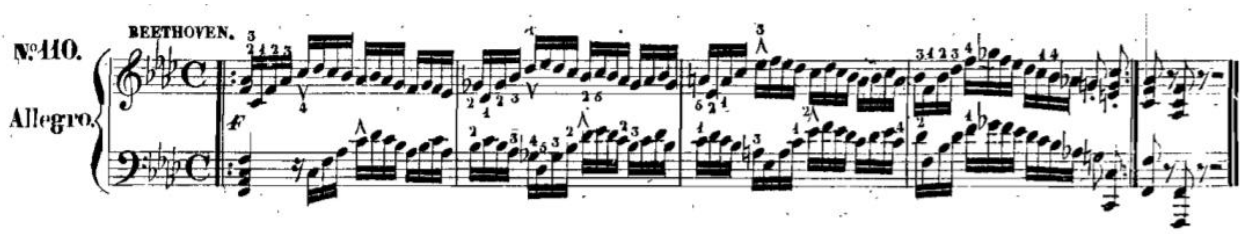


Figure 3-6. Czerny's excerpt of Beethoven's op. 57, mvt. iii

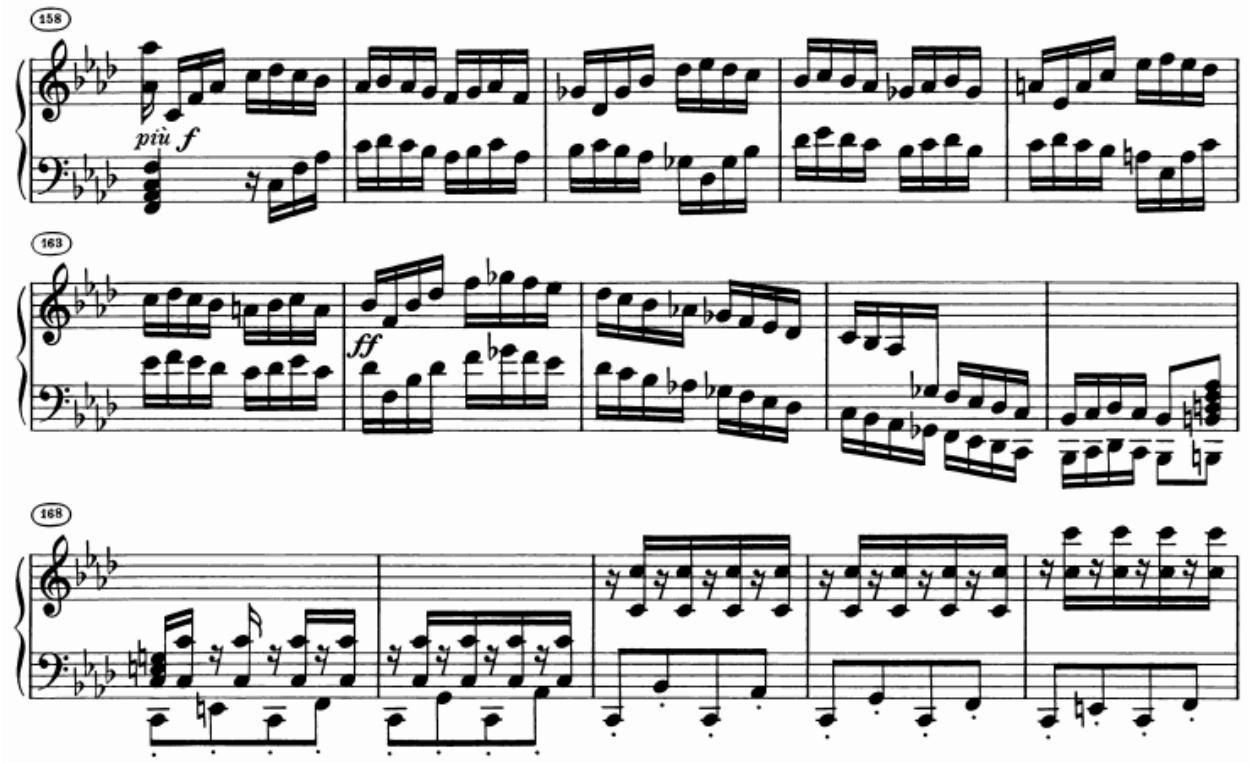


Figure 3-7. Beethoven, Sonata in F minor "Appassionata" op. 57, mvt. iii, mm. 158–172. Urtext edition, edited by Bertha Antonia Wallner and published in 1976 by Henle in Munich

Below, another figure illustrates the full extent of Czerny's editorial intervention within these excerpts. This is a passage from Johann Sebastian Bach's Prelude in B-flat major, BWV 866, from Book 1 of the Well-Tempered Clavier. Czerny's long slur lines, legato marking, and *diminuendo* and *crescendo* markings are immediately conspicuous: these are found throughout the Well-Tempered Clavier editions that he assembled in 1837

and are a conscious choice.[37] But more important is the way Czerny ends this excerpt. This is no mere one-bar cadence, like the Beethoven excerpt seen previously. Instead, the entire latter half of the Bach excerpt is composed anew: Czerny creates an original four-bar antecedent based on small snippets from the original prelude, as well as material of his own creation. As with the figure above, Czerny has also changed the time signature of this excerpt in order to emphasize his newly imposed 4+4 structure.

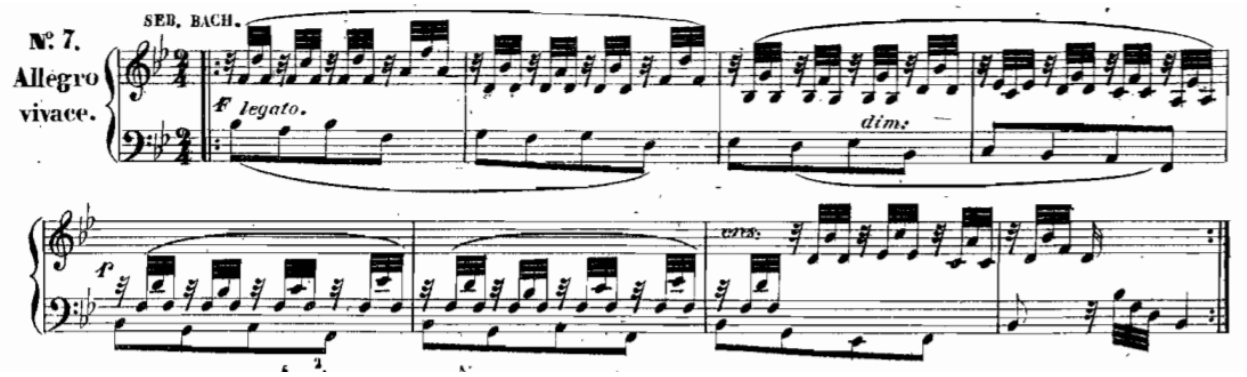


Figure 3-8. Czerny's adapted excerpt from Bach's BWV 866, *Studio generale*

[37] Matthew Dirst has argued that these editorial editions, which were dismissed or derided by scholars from the 1950s to the 1980s, actually represent a late-eighteenth-century Viennese tradition of keyboard playing. This tradition, Dirst notes, has many similarities with the way Carl Gottlob Horstig (a student of one of Bach's sons) was taught to play J. S. Bach's music (Dirst 1997; see especially 121).

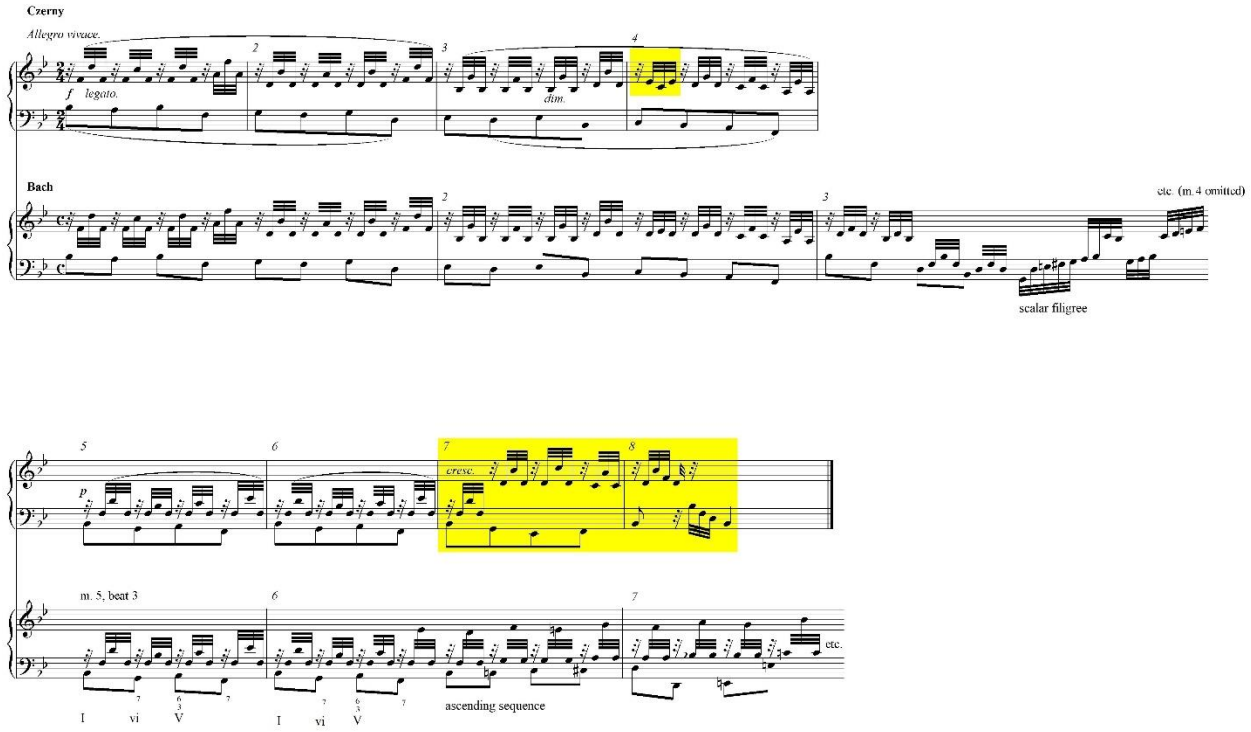


Figure 3-9. Comparison of Czerny's adapted excerpt and Bach's original

Figure 3-9 shows where Czerny found the material that he reassembled into his new antecedent, highlighting where his excerpt diverges from the original prelude. The grand staff on top reproduces Czerny's excerpt, while the grand staff below reproduces Bach's prelude as notated in the holograph manuscript held in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, written in 1722–23 (Mus. ms. Bach P 415).[38] Analytical overlay is included to show how Bach's longer sequential processes have been truncated to form more regular four-bar groupings. Note that the measure numbering in this figure differs between the upper and lower staves: Czerny has two measures for every one measure of Bach's original. The first four bars of Czerny's excerpt are nearly the same as the original as far as notes are

[38] I have changed the upper staff from soprano clef to treble clef for ease of reading and comparison. Bach's beamings are preserved.

concerned (setting aside slurring, articulation, dynamics, meter, and tempo markings). There is a changed note in the fourth measure: here, Bach includes a 2–3 suspension between the C in the bass and the D of what one might call the alto voice of the right hand. The result is a brief but arresting dissonance as C, D, and E-flat collide. Czerny seems to have heard this as a mistake. He has "corrected" this dissonance, changing this sonority from a bass suspension to a simple diminished sonority.

The latter four bars of Czerny's excerpt include much more dramatic changes. First, the figure below shows how Bach's scalar filigree has been excluded from the excerpt: Bach's measure 3 and measure 4 are ignored. Secondly and more importantly, Czerny ends his excerpt with figurations from later in the prelude, patched together into a plausible close. After the omitted measures, Czerny picks back up in the middle of Bach's measure 5 where a stable alternation between tonic and dominant appears. Bach uses this stable alternation as a low "wind-up" maneuver before moving upwards in a sequence with chromatic leading tones, as if one were winding up a toy before setting it off to roll away at high speed. Czerny, on the other hand, uses the alternation between tonic and dominant to spin away tension, closing off the excerpt with new, tidy cadence in his measures 7 and 8.

The examples above, comparing Bach's prelude with Czerny's excerpt of it, demonstrate Czerny's willingness to extensively adapt the original textual material. There are two further factors that must be underscored here. First, Czerny has chosen (and modified) his excerpts *in order to stress their distinctive figurations*. In the Bach example, for instance, he has focused completely on Bach's "right hand on offbeats" manner of elaborating on a chordal skeleton, and he has omitted the other figurations that appear in the prelude, including Bach's extensive scalar filigree. This may demonstrate a sense of

tight pedagogical focus: throughout the whole collection, excerpts are chosen that emphasize only one idiomatic pattern.

Second, all of Czerny's excerpts are *ecologically plausible*—that is, they are modified in order to better resemble complete pieces. The excerpts found in these collections bear a striking resemblance, both in musical content and pedagogical intent, to the "little pieces" discussed in a previous chapter—these were prescribed by Friedrich Wieck in his teaching manual *Piano and Song* (F. Wieck 1875a). These pieces, as they appear in the volume edited by his daughter Marie Wieck, are nearly all eight measures long, just as Czerny's excerpts are (F. Wieck 1875b). Furthermore, Wieck's short pieces all end in a cadence to provide closure, just as Czerny's excerpts do. Czerny invents cadences when his source material lacks a cadence, signifying that this was a crucial part of using his excerpts for practice. These features, I suggest, make it possible to practice the excerpts in a way that feels similar to public performance—in my terminology, these harmonically closed and self-contained excerpts bring the practice space and the performance space closer together. Czerny posits plausible models that are generalizable within the environment of concert performance—that is, the changes that he makes on these excerpts makes it easier for a pianist to absorb the textures and patterns within the collection and deploy those patterns in their own musical output. Czerny's and Kullak's collections, then, can be taken as evidence of what I have called a "carnal outlook" in pianistic practice—a body-focused attitude emphasizing the absorption, variation, and refashioning of musical materials in one's own improvised or composed music-making.

With these two factors in mind, I suggest that the *Studio generale* was not strictly meant to help students learn canonical masterworks, but rather to encourage a broad technique and a familiarity with many figurations so that students would find it easier to

sight read new pieces or to compose and improvise their own creations. I frame the *Studio generale* as a diffuse network, bringing small parts of other pieces into conversation with each other in a way that runs counter to the emerging view of the performing pianist as the "interpreter" of the works of a composer.

Czerny's practice of excerpting, I argue, is not just an oddity—it is not a mere exception within the larger ethos of the pianist as an interpreter of works. Instead, the practice signals a more flexible relationship between one's own compositions or improvisations and the output of others. Czerny's extraction of figurations and his reincorporation of those figurations into new contexts is a practice of his that extends beyond the *Studio generale*. The figure below reproduces one of his exercises from his *Passagenübungen* op. 261—this exercise almost certainly was inspired by the excerpt from Bach's B-flat major prelude analyzed above. Three features attest to the close link between Bach's prelude and the exercise from the *Passagenübungen*. First, the pattern shared between the hands is almost identical here: the left hand plays bass notes in a steady eighth note rhythm (or, here, sixteenth note and rest) while the right hand fills in the space between bass notes with groups of three thirty-second notes. Second, like the prelude, this exercise is in a flat key: Czerny's exercise below is in A-flat major, while Bach's passage is in B-flat major. The similarity of key leads to similar usages of black and white keys between the two: for example, the relative minor triad in both Czerny and Bach's passages (F minor and G minor) consists of a white key for the first and fifth of the triad, and a black key for the third. (Similarities of key, in these excerpting practices, will be discussed further on in this chapter.) Third and most strikingly, both Czerny's exercise and Bach's prelude have the same harmonic trajectory: they both traverse what Robert Gjerdingen refers to as the pattern "down a fourth, up a step," borrowing terminology from the Neapolitan

pedagogue Fedele Fenarole (Gjerdingen 2019, 232). In Czerny's *Passagenübung*, the harmonic motion occurs measure by measure, with the bass elaborating in small arpeggios.

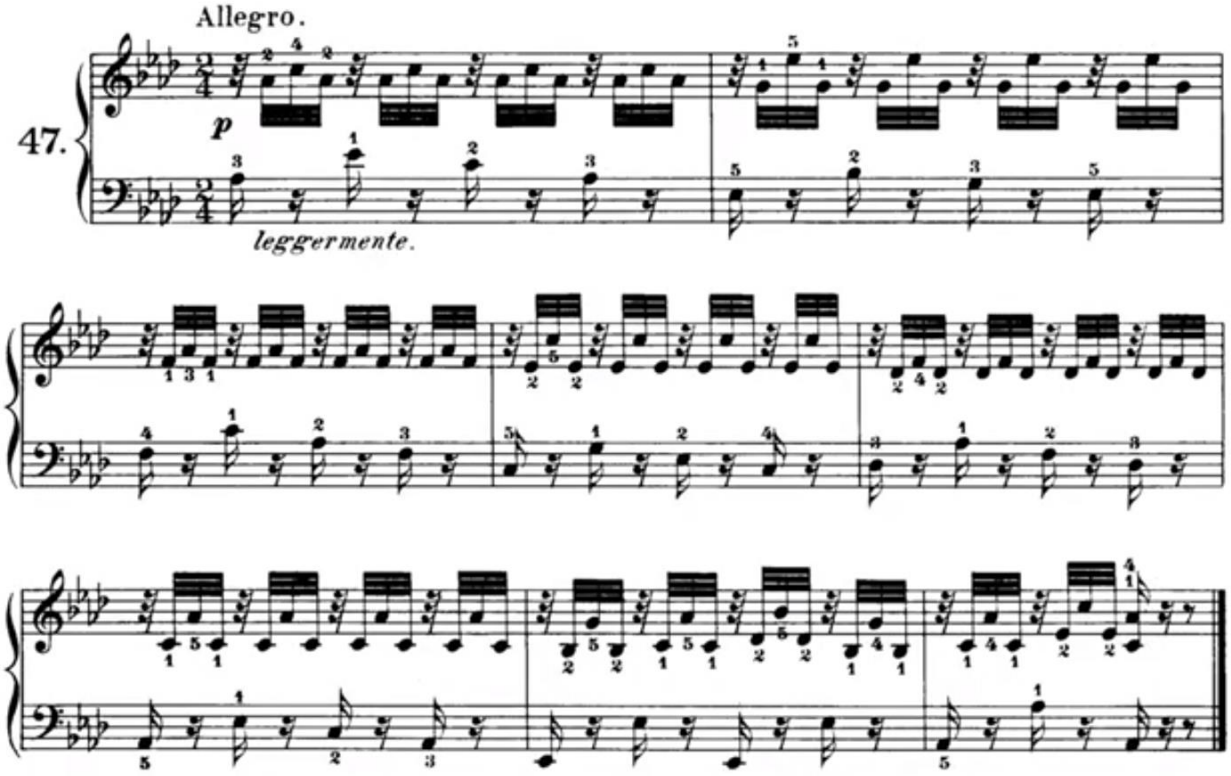


Figure 3-10. Czerny, 125 Passagenübungen op. 261, no. 47 (1833)

I posit, then, that Czerny's approach to developing technique at the piano—or, rather, developing technique while simultaneously "mining" raw materials for composition and improvisation—was not an exception for him, but rather the rule. The *Studio generale* of 1842 is not the only collection of this kind that Czerny had compiled and published. Ricordi's catalogue includes more items like this, published around the same time. These include such titles as "Fingered collection of very brilliant passages for piano," a two-

volume collection,[39] as well as "Selected easy pieces for pianoforte extracted from [the] works" of Czerny, Hummel, Kalkbrenner, Moscheles, and Ries—a ten-volume collection.[40] It is not uncommon to see collections of selected pieces chosen for beginners, but Czerny's *Studio generale*—and these similar collections—represent something more than a simple anthology: they create a network that traces the transmission of technical possibilities at the piano.

The flexibility with which Czerny treats the materials taken from Beethoven and Bach is striking, especially since Czerny later capitalized on his personal relationship to Beethoven by advancing a *Werktreue* paradigm of textual fidelity. He advanced this view not only in his editions of Beethoven's piano works, but also in his pedagogical works. His *Pianoforte-Schule* op. 500, for example, includes a chapter titled "On the Proper Performance of All Beethoven's Works for the Piano Solo," which gives instructions as to the character, articulation, and dynamics of passages from a long list of Beethoven's pieces (Czerny 1970, 20–64). But Czerny did not adhere to this fidelity paradigm for the entirety of his career: it was an adherence that he gradually developed. He reports, for example, of an incident in 1812 in which he added virtuosic filigree and extra octaves to a performance of Beethoven's Quintet for Piano and Winds—and afterwards was excoriated by Beethoven in front of the other players. This incident, he writes, "cured me of the craze for taking liberties of any kind when performing his works" (Parakilas 2008). I read here the implication that "taking liberties" may have been more personally acceptable to Czerny

[39] *Recueil doigté des plus bril. Passages pour Piano tirés des œuvres de Beethoven, Ries, Kummel, Móscheles, Dussek et Worzischek* (Fingered collection of very brilliant passages for piano from the works of Beethoven, Ries, Kummel, Moscheles, Dussek, and Vorischek), Op. 3 (1825).

[40] Czerny, Carl. Hummel, Johann Nepomuk. Kalkbrenner, Friedrich. Moscheles, Ignaz. Ries, Ferdinand. Pezzi i facili per Pfte estratti dalle loro opere (Selected easy pieces for pianoforte extracted from their works), (1828).

when performing the works of composers other than Beethoven. But more to the point regarding Czerny's handling of excerpts throughout the *Studio generale* is that he may have seen this method of practicing excerpts as something that occurs on a different plane than the interpreting of canonical works within a paradigm of fidelity. All told, Czerny's adaptation of materials from Beethoven this collection is remarkable—as are his adaptations of Bach, Mozart, and other venerated composers—and his liberal adaptations rightly prompt the analyst to reconsider Czerny's reputation as an idolator of Beethoven.

Theodor Kullak's *Schule des Oktavenspiels* (School of octave playing) is another exemplary instance of just such a network of transmission. Kullak began working on the *Schule des Oktavenspiels* in 1842, the same year Czerny published his *Studio generale*. He was a pianist employed in Berlin by Friedrich Wilhelm IV, who sponsored his musical studies under Carl Czerny, Simon Sechter, and Otto Nicolai in Vienna (Leuchtmann 2001; Bischoff 1883, 8). As a student of Czerny and Sechter, Kullak would have been familiar with the techniques of exemplar usage, transposition, and variation stressed by both those pedagogues—techniques that lead to *cognitive skill generalization*, which I have shown to be a crucial part of improvisation and composition.

The third volume of the *Schule des Oktavenspiels* is a collection of "passages, exercises, and examples composed by Chopin, Döhler, Dreyschock, Heller, Henselt, Hummel, Kullak, Liszt, Litolff, Thalberg, etc." (cited in "Ankündigungen" 1848).[41] Kullak's *Schule* remained popular throughout the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth: Emil von Sauer updated the collection of excerpts as late as 1910, adding new excerpts (Kullak 1910). These new excerpts were taken not only from the works of later nineteenth-

[41] "Passages, Exercices et Exemples comp. p. Chopin, Döhler, Drezschock, Heller, Henselt, Hummel, Kullak, Liszt, Litolff, Thalberg etc."

century composers like Moszkowksi and Rubinstein, but also from those of earlier figures like Robert Schumann who were not represented in Kullak's first edition. This later edition expands the collection to sixty octave passages taken from prominent works for piano, or piano with orchestra: these range from Bach arrangements to concerto excerpts. All images from Kullak's *Schule des Oktavenspiels* reproduced below come from Sauer's 1910 edition, published by C. F. Peters in Leipzig.

The figure below illustrates how Kullak's approach to excerpting passages differed from Czerny's approach: we might call Kullak more of an originalist. His excerpt no. 10 comes from the end of the Scherzo movement of Chopin's Sonata No. 2: here, unlike in Czerny's *Studio generale*, the work title and opus number are specified above the excerpt. Unlike Czerny's excerpts, Kullak's do not have any new endings appended through editorial intervention, and they retain their original time signatures. One even notices Kullak's reticence to change Chopin's articulations and dynamic markings.

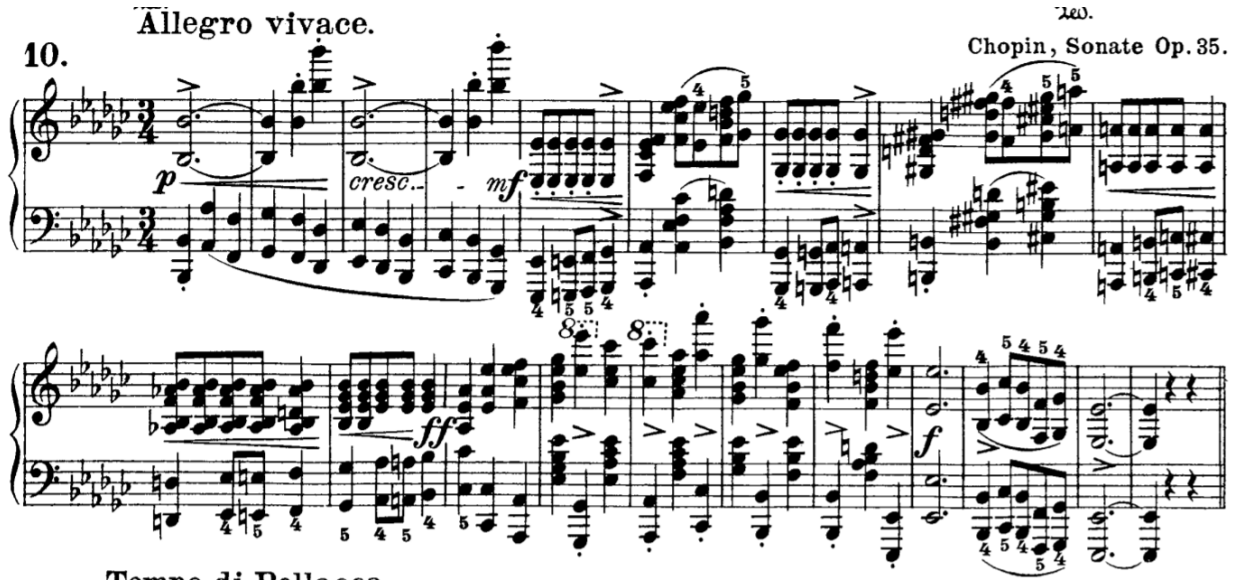


Figure 3-11. Kullak's excerpt from Chopin's Sonata No. 2, *Schule des Oktavenspiels* (1910, 10)

Czerny's and Kullak's collections, despite their differences, are both organized around bodily skills. In Czerny's case, these are skills pulled from the most distinctive effects in a wide corpus of works. In Kullak's case, the technical scope of exploration is more specific: all of the excerpts focus on octave playing. Within this specificity, though, there are still subsets of octave-playing technique. In his introduction, Kullak describes two different varieties of octave-playing that may be called for: *staccato* playing, where the hand must be lifted between tones "easily and without stiffness," and *legato* playing "by the aid of the wrist," where the weight of the hand must be used to "facilitat[e] a sustained and connected style of execution" (translated in Kullak 1898, 1). Both collections, too, contain editorial fingering, a prominent selling point emphasized in the title page of the *Studio generale:* "collected, fingered, and classified in chronological order by Carl Czerny."[42] In sum, specific skills are the main sorting criterion in these collections. This puts the musical works represented by each excerpt in a different light. Instead of seeing the performance of works as one's primary goal, with the execution of skills as a necessary step to get there, the reader of these collections sees the execution of skills as their primary goal—the fact that these skills are found in particular works is almost incidental.

One further approach for analyzing these collections is the examination of which composers and musicians are featured. The table below organizes all excerpts in Czerny's *Studio generale* by composer, sorted by the number of works represented. Notable here is the top of the list: those composers represented by ten or more excerpts, from Beethoven to Kalkbrenner. Canonical figures like Beethoven and Mozart are well-represented here, but equally striking is the emphasis this collection places on comparatively minor figures like Sigismond Thalberg, Johann Baptist Cramer, and Abbé Joseph Gelinek—all of whom were

[42] "Raccolti, digitati e classificati per ordine cronologico da Carlo Czerny."

best known as pianists and as seminal contributors to postclassical piano composition. Although Cramer's work did not have longevity outside the sphere of piano-playing, his piano études exerted considerable influence throughout the nineteenth century. Ferdinand Ries, for instance, records Beethoven's high regard for Cramer as a pianist: "Among piano players he praised one as an excellent player to me: John Cramer," Ries writes. "All other [pianists] meant very little to him" (Wegeler and Ries 1838, 99–100).[43]

[43] "Unter den Klavierspielern lobte er mir einen als ausgezeichneten Spieler: John Cramer. Alle andern galten ihm wenig."

Carl Czerny, *Studio generale*	
Composer	Works represented
Ludwig van Beethoven	21
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart	17
Muzio Clementi	15
Johann Nepomuk Hummel	15
Franz Liszt	15
Sigismond Thalberg	14
Henri Herz	12
Ignaz Moscheles	11
Frederic Chopin	11
Joseph Gelinek	10
Johann Baptist Cramer	10
Ferdinand Ries	10
Friedrich Wilhelm Kalkbrenner	10
Felix Mendelssohn	9
Carl Maria von Weber	8
Theodor Döhler	8
John Field	7
Carl Czerny	7
Jan Ladislav Dussek	6
Adolf von Henselt	6
Domenico Scarlatti	5
Joseph Haydn	5
Daniel Steibelt	5
Louis Ferdinand, Prince of Prussia	5
Johann Peter Pixis	5
Johann Sebastian Bach	3
George Frideric Handel	2
Joseph Woelfl	2
George Onslow	2
Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach	1
Wilhelm Friedemann Bach	1
Johann Christian Bach	1

Figure 3-12. Czerny's *Studio generale*: composers listed by number of works represented

The *Studio generale*, then, is a snapshot of mid-nineteenth century trends in piano composition. In it, one finds not just figures like Beethoven and Mozart—who, as William Weber points out, were quickly beatified as the notion of "classical" works took hold in Europe in the 1830s (Weber 1999)—but one also finds figures like Hummel, Thalberg, and

Herz, whose music was closest to the pianistic "lifeworld" (to borrow a term from Walter Ong, a scholar of oral art). I see the excerpting of distinctive passages as a practice close to the use of a commonplace book, a book of quotations that a scholar or philosopher uses to record the striking quotations they come across in their reading. This practice is distinctively one of the performing composer-pianist, and it emphasizes how piano works fit into the lifeworld of pianistic music-making. But, as a practice, it does not necessarily work against canon formation: it is, of course, a reflection of the habits and priorities of its practitioners, and oblique as it may be to the emerging canon, it does not always destabilize that canon.

In the study of Victorian periodicals, David Higgins has made a similar observation. The nineteenth century literary landscape in the United Kingdom and on the continent was marked by journals, monthlies, and annuals, and these periodicals were full of articles, poems, and fragments by authors both famous and little-known, often writing pseudonymously. Higgins notes that it may seem intuitive to argue that this fragmentary and network-like print culture had an undermining effect on the literary canon. On the contrary, he argues—the periodical furnished a place for readers to develop ideas of masterwork and genius. These periodical networks, he writes, open a window onto constructions of authorship. "Studying the social construction of genius," Higgins writes, "makes us aware of the complex set of mechanisms—particularly the valorizing activities of critics, academics, publishers and so on—by which long-term literary reputation is secured" (Higgins 2007, 9).

The same perspective can apply to the practice of nineteenth century pianism. Here we have an equally complex set of discursive mechanisms: excerpt collections, exercise books, salon music, classicist genres like the symphony or concerto, and the constant

stream of critical appraisal directed at music both in concert and in print. Canonical beatification, I suggest, is just as likely to result from this set of mechanisms as the destabilization of the musical work paradigm. The notion of rewriting a Bach prelude to come to a cadence within eight measures may seem rebarbative to some traditionalist sensibilities, and the high prestige given to the music of the "brilliant" school of piano composers like Clementi and Hummel (let alone Herz and Gelinek) may not align with contemporary perceptions of the nineteenth century canon. But Czerny's collection—as the table above has shown—also vaunts Beethoven and Mozart above all other artists represented in the collection. I note further that of the thirty-two composers represented in Czerny's collection, none of them are women. Higgins points out that a close analysis of the "mechanisms" of literary reputation also "sheds light on the ways in which [reputation] has been denied to certain groups" (2007, 9).

These excerpt collections represent a view of the repertoire where skill is valued just as much as, or perhaps more than, the attribution of works—but the collections nevertheless create a potential network of authorial names for the player. They establish a sense of lineage, connecting composer names within a historical frame. Czerny's collection, for example, is in rough chronological order, starting with excerpts by Bach and ending with Liszt, perhaps the most famous student of Czerny. Kullak's collection (in the edition by Sauer) is not ordered chronologically, but nevertheless begins with nineteenth-century arrangements of Bach: the first excerpt comes from the beginning of Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D minor, BWV 656, as arranged by Carl Tausig. In this way, the two collections in part reflect the same sensibility present in the 1834 music history written by Raphael Kiesewetter, in which music history is outlined as a chain of great composers, each with their own characteristic age.

In all, Czerny and Kullak took different approaches to the practice of excerpting works by other composers. Kullak scrupulously indicated the titles of the pieces he took passages from, and largely left them unchanged. Czerny, on the other hand, changed what he took, making each excerpt more legible not only as a piano exercise but also as an ecologically plausible part of a pianist's compositional or improvisatory practice. Despite these differences, though, the examples above show that a significant amount of piano composition was an act of exploration, a tracing of a network of patterns and textures that already exist. Building these networks was an act of exclusion just as much as inclusion: this practice, then, was equivocal when it came to the nascent musical canon. Examples taken from the music of Franz Liszt and Leopoldine Blahetka will show how pianists explored these networks.

Liszt's "Mazeppa": form through the variation of skills

The following section furnishes us with examples, both familiar and unfamiliar, to show how collections like Czerny's and Kullak's could represent a way of listening to piano music and of assembling, composing, or improvising one's own music. These collections are not a mere historical curiosity, I argue, but instead indicate a broader musical mindset. My initial set of examples show how a specific skill, attested within collections like Czerny's, can be manipulated and varied while preserving its original aspects of bodily movement. I first examine how a passage with chromatic triplets is handled in a diatonic environment by Moscheles and how a similar passage occurs within a diminished harmonic environment by Thalberg. I then examine how the same passage was handled by Carl Tausig, who (like Kullak) was a student of Liszt: Tausig's exercise based on this pattern shows that it was used by default in an ascending configuration. Finally, I consider how Liszt takes up this passage in various forms within his transcendental étude "Mazeppa."

Liszt's treatment of other bodily skills in this étude is also illuminating: through each of his variations, he intensifies the frantic étude's frenzied affect by manipulating the physical elements of his idiomatic figures. In this way, skill takes center stage as a determinant of large-scale formal structure.

The excerpt below, taken from Czerny's *Studio generale*, comes from a piece by Ignaz Moscheles. The passage I want to focus on is in the first one and a half measures: after a brassy chord in C major, the tonic continues to be elaborated as the two hands move outward in contrary motion. The bass notes arpeggiate downwards, decorated by biting chromatic grace notes. The right hand, meanwhile, moves upwards in dyads that outline the C major triad. The lower member of the dyad slides smoothly upwards, in turn diatonic and chromatic, connecting the dyads with a sinuous stepwise inner line. The effect altogether is like ratcheting or sliding, as if running a fingernail over the teeth of a comb.

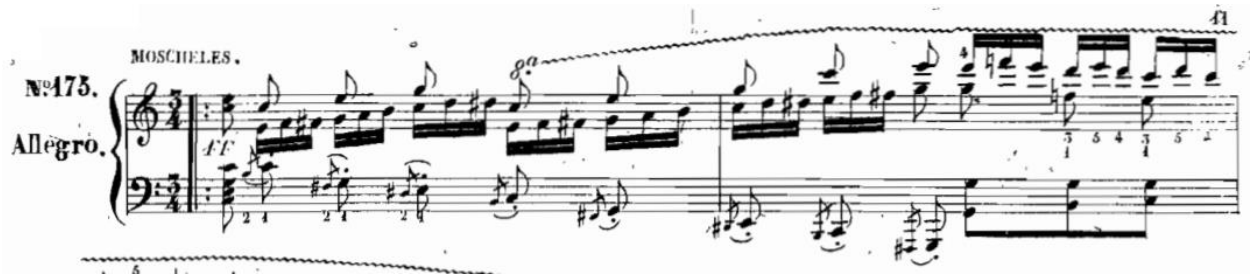


Figure 3-13. Czerny, *Studio generale*: excerpt from Moscheles

Another excerpt, by Sigismond Thalberg, has the same "ratcheting" effect, but here it creates dissonance and tension. It is reproduced in the figure below. Instead of outlining the tonic harmony, this pattern outlines a diminished seventh sonority that includes the leading tone. Now the pattern appears in both hands, with the "sliding" portion—in the inner parts—entirely chromatic. Czerny specifies that these chromatic scales be played largely by the first and second fingers, with the third finger interpolated whenever two

white notes are adjacent. Here, overall, the physical skill required is similar to the Moscheles excerpt, but it has been adapted for different harmonic purposes.

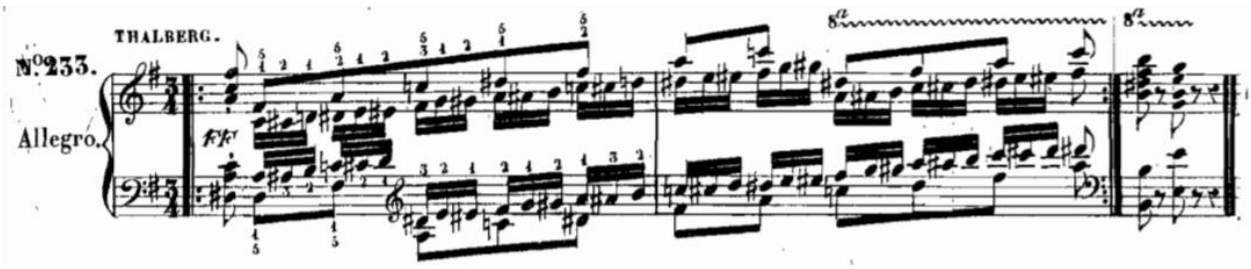


Figure 3-14. Czerny, *Studio generale*: excerpt from Sigismond Thalberg

A final example of this specific "ratcheting" maneuver within an exercise collection comes from Carl Tausig's *Tägliche Studien* (1873), published several decades after Czerny's collection. Tausig's career was cut short by his early death in 1871, at thirty; his exercises were edited and published posthumously. In Tausig's exercise, the fingerings are identical to what Czerny had specified for his Thalberg excerpt: here, the chromatic scale alternates between the first and second fingers except where two white notes are adjacent, in which case the third finger is added. In all previous examples, this ratcheting pattern was only used to move upwards. Here, though, Tausig writes out this pattern going both up and down. Based on the preceding examples, it is likely that the sliding pattern was conceptualized as ascending by default, with its descending form as a lesser-used variant.

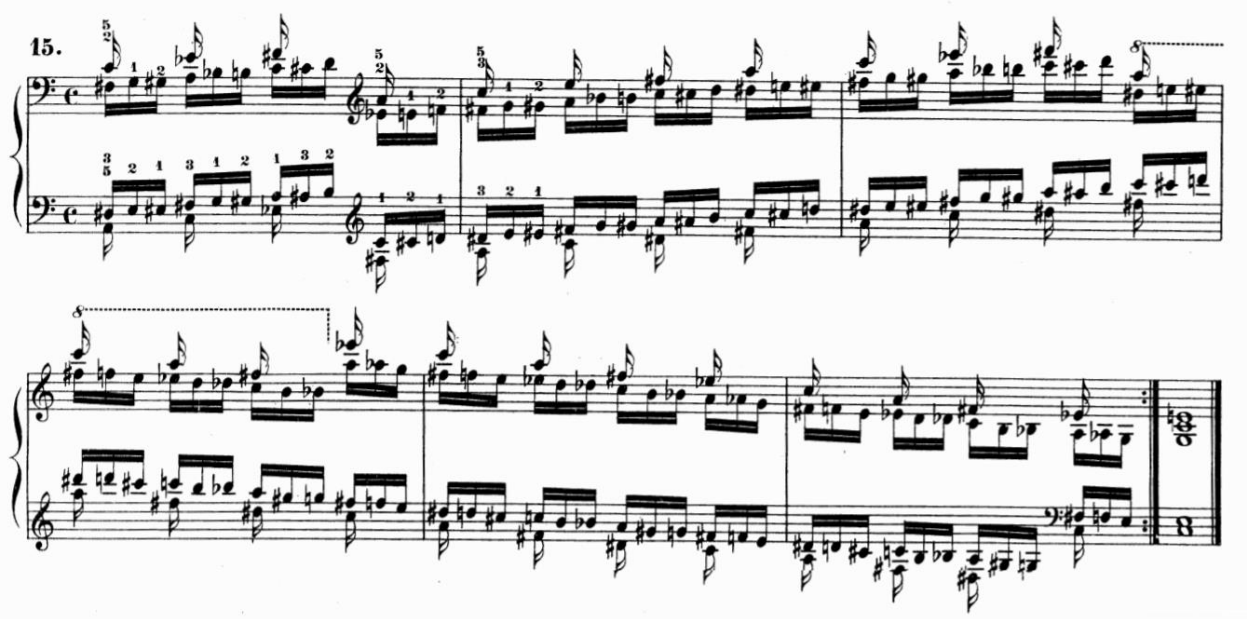


Figure 3-15. Exercise from Carl Tausig's *Tägliche Studien*

I now turn to Liszt's manipulations of this same pattern in his étude "Mazeppa," from his *Études d'exécution transcendante* S. 139. This étude is a programmatic showpiece that takes inspiration from Lord Byron's eponymous ballad of 1819, and from Victor Hugo's poem of 1828, also on Ivan Mazeppa. It is meant to portray how the seventeenth-century Cossack figure was supposedly tied to a wild horse by an angry husband: after a treacherous ride, the frenzied horse dies of exhaustion and Mazeppa is saved by a group of Ukrainian Cossacks. Liszt published his first version of the étude in 1826, and his final version of the étude for solo piano, included in the *Études d'exécution transcendante*, appeared in 1851. The étude itself is structured as a theme with five variations, with a cadenza-like introduction and conclusion and two *majeure* variations in the middle: in this way the set of variations suggests a large-scale ternary form, outlined in the figure below. Jim Samson, in tracing Liszt's revisions of this étude, describes it as a series of six poetic "strophes," with each one successively more brilliant than the last (2007, 205).

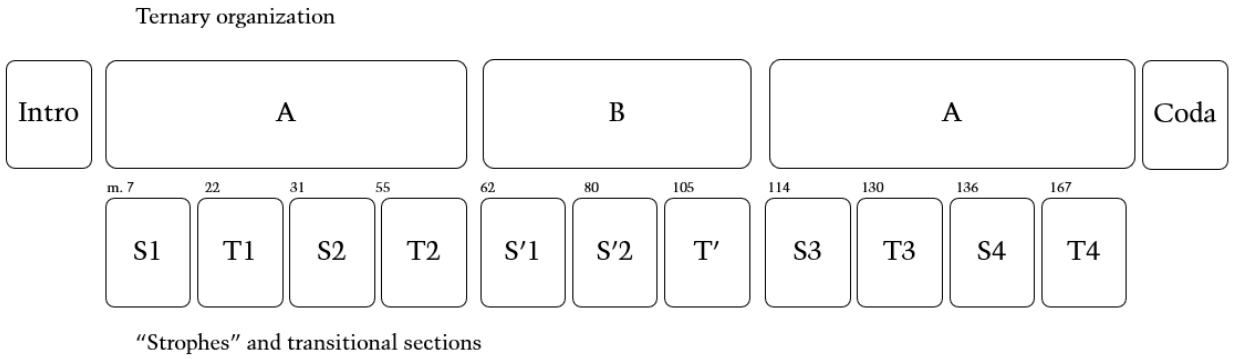


Figure 3-16. Formal structure of Liszt's *Transcendental Étude* "Mazeppa"

In Figure 3-16 above, the broad outlines of this étude's ternary organization is presented in the top row, while the row below displays the component parts of each of those large sections: these components are the variations, as well as recurring transitional themes in between. The main theme (or "strophe") of the étude is represented, in the figure, as theme S. As described by Samson, this theme appears six times (with the middle two appearances cast in a major key, denoted here as S′ instead of S). In between statements of this theme, transitional material appears (represented in the figure as T). It is in these transitional T sections that the "ratcheting" passage appears. The figure shows how the étude suggests a ternary form: statements of the theme are paired, with two in minor at the beginning, two in major in the middle, and a final two in minor at the end.

What follows is a closer look at Liszt's étude. First, I will examine how Liszt deploys the "ratcheting" passage in between variations in "Mazeppa," showing how he varies the passage and provides a sort of physical commentary on it through the interjections that he inserts after each appearance of the passage. Then, I will trace Liszt's usage of yet another passage, this time a leaping passage whose parts bear some resemblance to the "ratcheting" passage described above.

The ratcheting passage, in its upward-sliding form, first appears between Liszt's two initial variations (marked in the form table of Figure 3-16 as T1). The following figure reproduces this passage, showing how it outlines a diminished sonority that decorates the dominant harmony in the key of D minor. The passage, as deployed by Liszt, looks almost identical to Tausig's exercise (Figure 3-15) and the Thalberg excerpt (Figure 3-14): the inner parts slide in chromatic triplets while the outer parts move in thirds, filling out the diminished sonority. One prominent difference, however, is that while Tausig and Thalberg use diminished fifths (or augmented fourths) between their inner parts and outer parts, Liszt opts for a wider chord voicing, using sixths and sevenths instead.

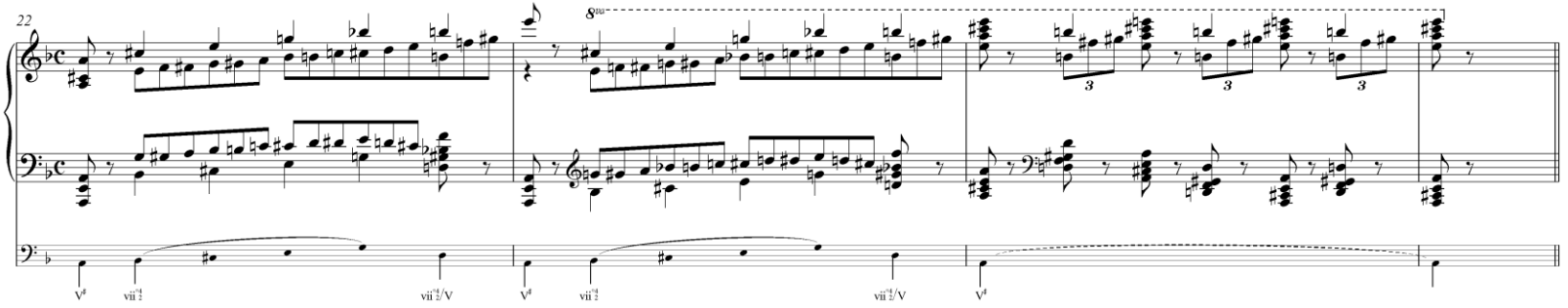


Figure 3-17. Reproduction of “Mazeppa,” transitional passage T1 mm. 22–25, with harmonic analysis

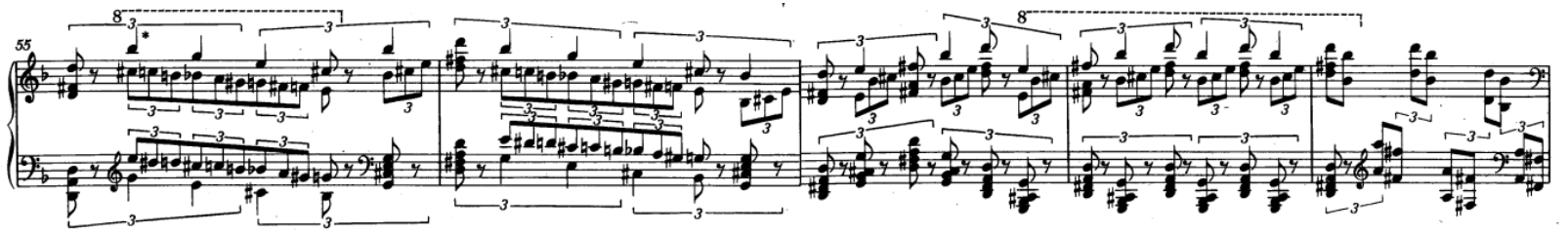


Figure 3-18. "Mazeppa," theme T2, mm. 55–59

In the second transitional section (marked in Figure 3-16 as T2), the ratcheting passage is once again used to embellish a dominant—but this time, the dominant resolves repeatedly to the tonic major, creating a provisional sense of tonal closure. This sense of closure reinforces the perception of the étude's six variations as a ternary form. The harmonic trajectory of this section, T1, is outlined in Figure 3-17. A later appearance of this transitional section, labeled T2, is reproduced in Figure 3-18. Here, one sees that the ratcheting passage now appears in its downward-falling variant. The excerpts from "Mazeppa" that are reproduced in this chapter are taken from the Neue Liszt-Ausgabe, Series 1, Volume 1 (1970).

Below are two other appearances of transitional theme T. First, in measure 130, we see how Liszt has truncated the pattern when it appears midway through the return of the ternary A section. Instead of ascending through diminished sonorities using, sliding inner voices, Liszt outlines theme T using rapid-fire dyads that alternate between the hands. This foreshortened appearance of T aligns with what William Caplin has called a compressed recapitulation in ternary form—a condensed restatement of expositional material that often projects more closure through the reduction of non-tonic material, while still having the effect of thematic return (2000, 83). The other passage that appears below is the final statement of T at measure 165, at the end of the recapitulated A section. Here, the ratcheting maneuver returns in its downward-falling guise.

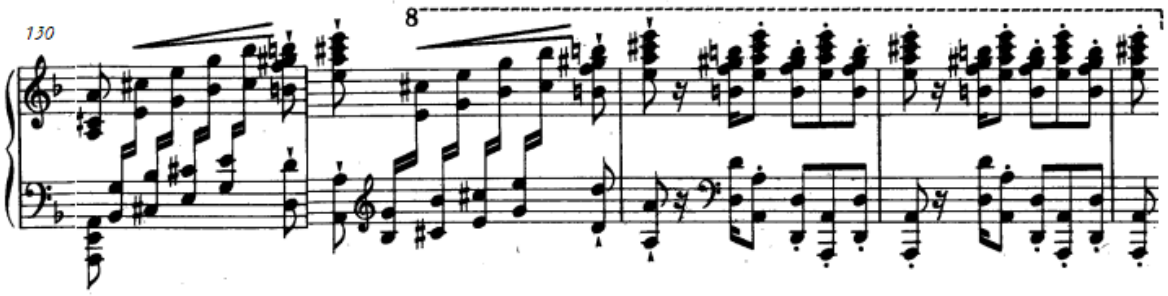


Figure 3-19. "Mazeppa," theme T3, mm. 130–35

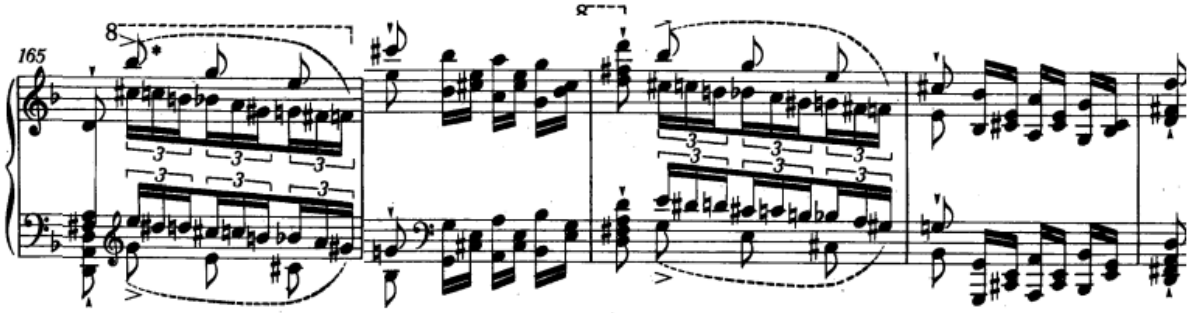


Figure 3-20. "Mazeppa," theme T4, mm. 167–71

Figure 3-21 below compares all four appearances of the transitional theme T, showing how it is divided into two different physical ideas or components. The first component is the sliding or "ratcheting" diminished pattern moving either up or down: this idea is similar across all four appearances with the exception of the truncated T3 noted above. The second component is a repeated gesture of cadential confirmation: in all appearances of theme T, the movement towards the half cadence is brought to closure by a repeated two-beat figure.

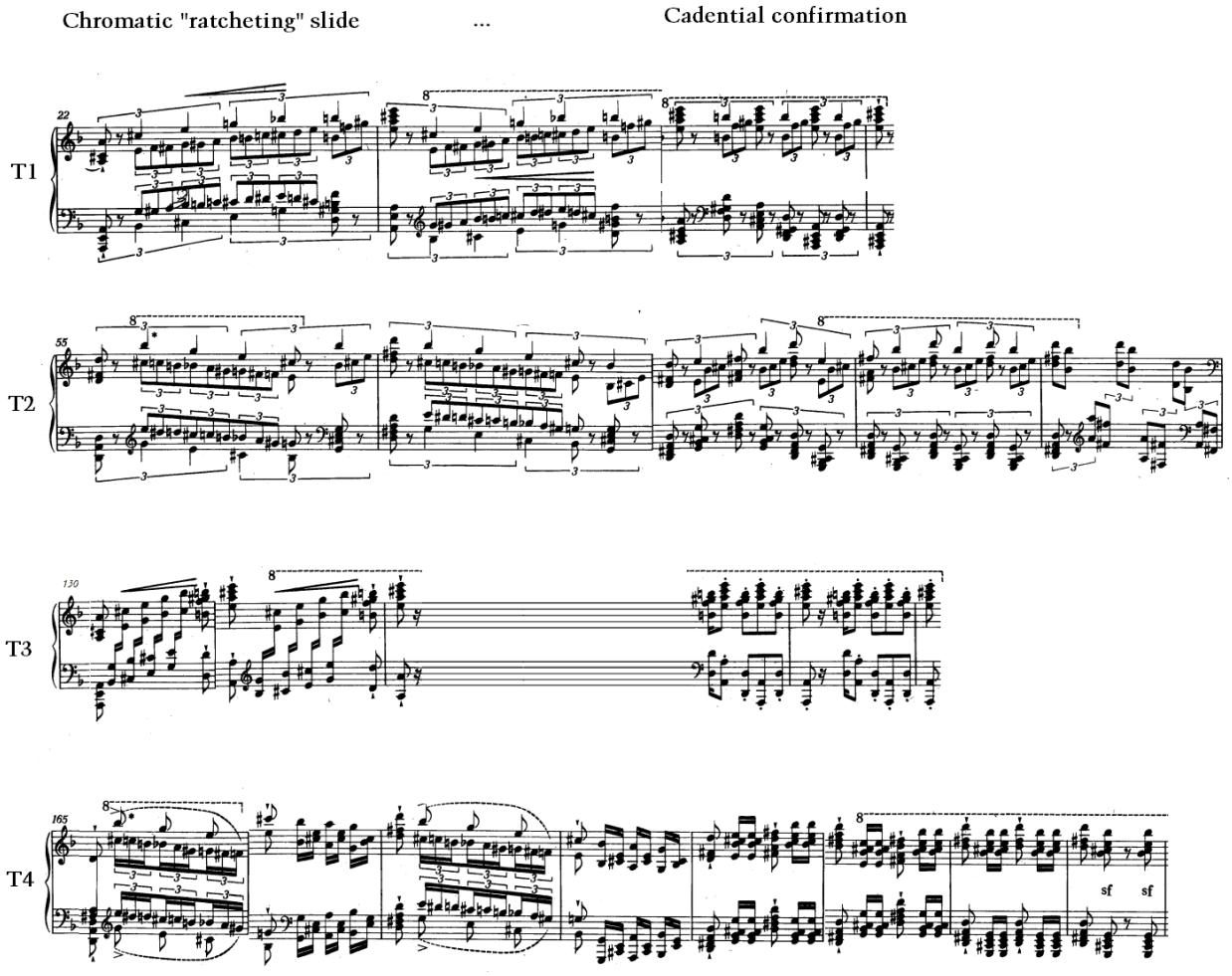


Figure 3-21. "Mazeppa," division of all T themes into chromatic slide component and cadential confirmation component

If Figure 3-21 above lays out all appearances of the theme T, showing their variations, the same can be done for the main theme S. The "strophes" or appearances of theme S, all in D minor, hinge on the same physical pattern: the melody and bass are set in octaves far apart and jumps inward between the beats to fill out the texture with thick chordal accompaniment.

Figure 3-22 below displays all instances of this texture. In the first part of that figure, we can see a clear rhythmic process at play in the transformation from texture to texture.

When the theme first appears, the texture is clamorous and busy: between each hammer-stroke of the melody we have six sets of accompanimental dyads (the top example of the figure below). But as the piece goes on, the dyadic inner accompaniment becomes more and more sparse in order to accommodate an ever-increasing tempo. To an audience, it would sound as though the textures were becoming swifter and more streamlined, with excess notes falling away, suggesting that Mazeppa's horse gains speed. In the final variation, hammer-strokes of the melody follow each other at a breakneck pace, separated only by a single chordal interjection at a time.

In terms of their complexity, the variations shown in the figure below are displayed in descending order: Liszt begins with his showiest tricks and ends with something that, though simple, is more forceful and incisive in concept. We might call "Mazeppa" a theme and variations presented in reverse: the final statement is the actual "theme," while the first statement played at the beginning of the piece is in fact the theme's most complex variation. Liszt is able to create the effect of hurtling acceleration by cannily turning variation form on its head. In sum, the excerpts presented above make it clear that the *physicality* of a passage's performance could determine where that passage would lie within a larger piece. The pianist's body, then, plays a determining factor in actual musical structure at the compositional level.

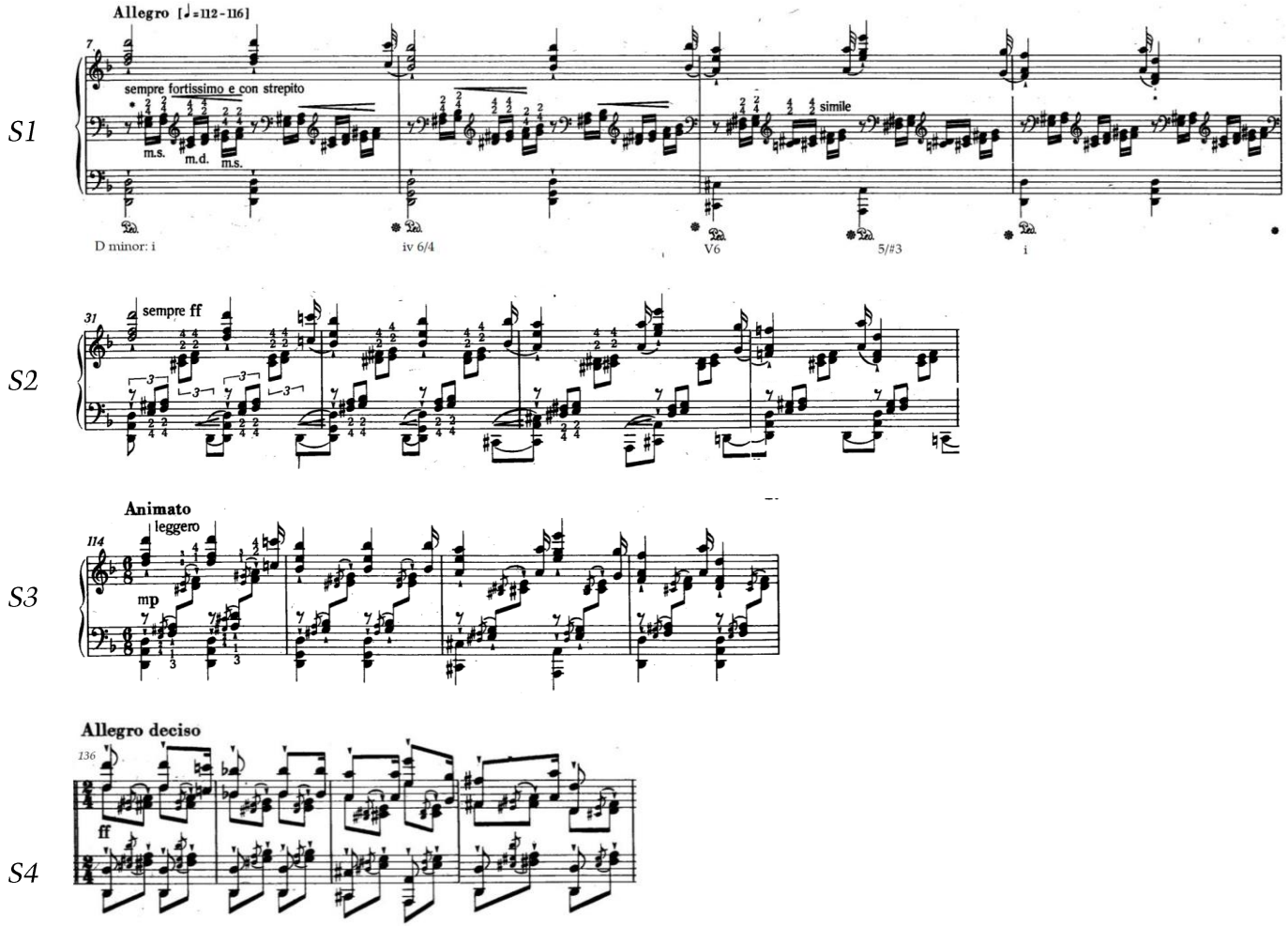


Figure 3-22. Iterations of the main theme S of Liszt's "Mazeppa."

Blahetka's "Kaiserhymne" Variations and the curation of skills

Here I will analyze a set of variations by Leopoldine Blahetka, an Austrian pianist and composer. She is sometimes credited as "the only female pupil of Beethoven," but while Beethoven did encourage her and refer her to her teachers, she did not study with him (*The Musical World* 1844, 289). Blahetka was a student of Simon Sechter, so it may be likely that her approach to composition was informed by their nineteenth century "practical" approach to thoroughbass that I have previously discussed. Blahetka also took lessons from Kalkbrenner and Moscheles, who are both represented in Czerny's *Studio generale*, and her approach to piano-playing likely resembled theirs. Blahetka, in sum, may be representative of the cosmopolitan approach to piano-playing evinced in Czerny's pedagogical works.

Blahetka published her 1831 *Variations sur la chanson nationale autrichienne* op. 28, a set of variations on Haydn's "Kaiserhymne," in three versions: one for piano solo, one for piano and orchestra, and one for piano with string quartet. All reproductions of Blahetka's Variations that appear in this chapter are taken from the 1831 first edition published by Alisky in Darmstadt. A copy is held at the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, catalog number 2 Mus.pr. 2493. The piece begins with a tutti introduction, followed by a brief piano cadenza that leads into the theme set in a simple, full-voiced chordal style. The first figure below reproduces the end of that cadenza, a rapidly rising chromatic scale played in thirds with both hands. Below this is an excerpt from the *Studio generale*: in this work for piano by Daniel Steibelt the exact same rising chromatic scale appears, played likewise by both hands. Czerny has provided editorial fingering for the left hand. His fingering here is systematically patterned in a manner similar to the fingerings discussed above in relation to Thalberg's sliding chromatic scales. As a general rule, all black notes are played with the

second finger and all white notes are played with the thumb, with one exception: when two white notes are adjacent, the third finger passes over to play the higher one. The fingering pattern is illustrated in the diagram below. In total, this brief example shows how Blahetka drew from stock figures of postclassical and Romantic pianism, and also how these figures were collected by pedagogues like Czerny. Czerny's systematic fingering pattern for this type of passage is not just a matter of editorial scrupulousness: the pattern shows how a figure like Blahetka's was not just an idea in sound that could be played with any combination of fingers, but with a discrete and generalizable skill associated with a particular way of moving.

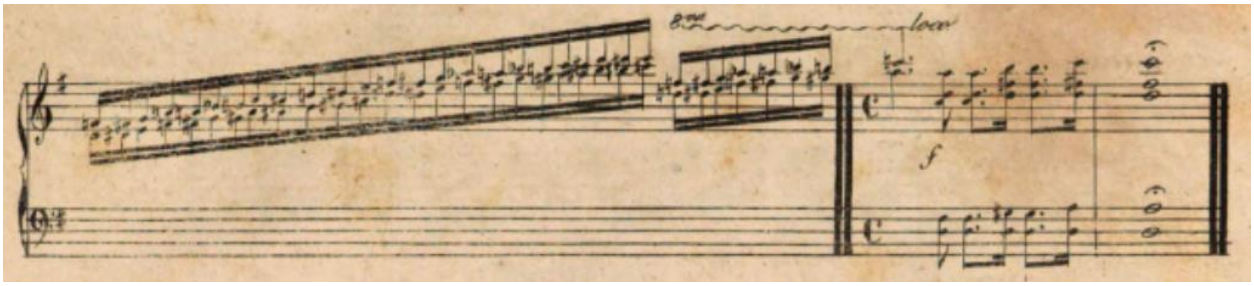


Figure 3-23. Blahetka's *Variations* (1831): cadenza figure in thirds

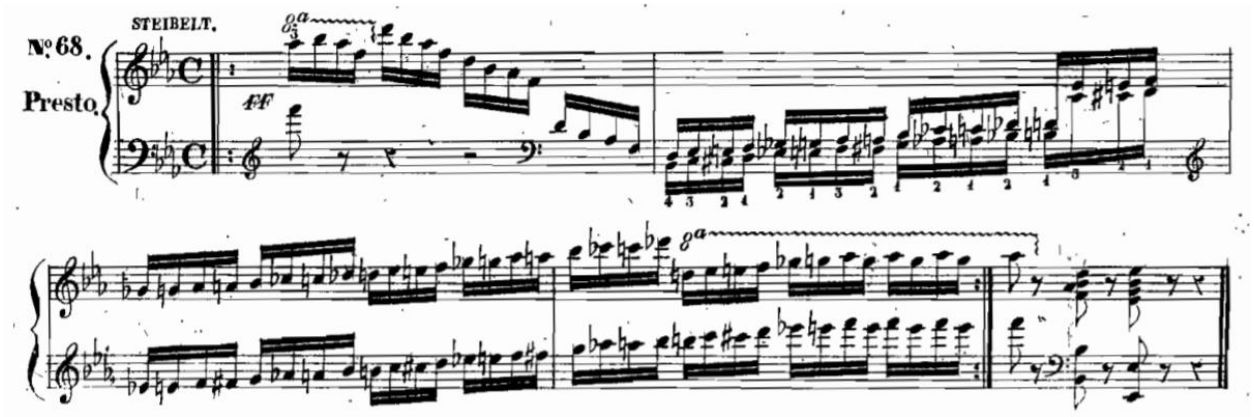


Figure 3-24. Czerny, *Studio generale*: excerpt from Daniel Steibelt

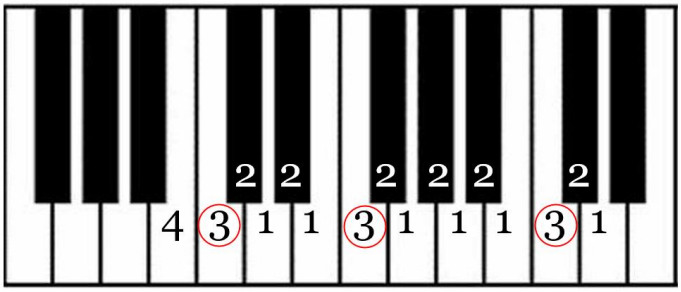


Figure 3-25. Fingering diagram of Czerny's chromatic scale fingering for Steibelt's excerpt

There are four variations in Blahetka's piece: all are in G major except for the third, a slow variation in E-flat major. In each of these variations Blahetka treats the theme freely, incorporating aspects of Haydn's harmonic and phrase structure but combining them with a variety of figurations and melodic lines that bear little resemblance to the original. This free treatment is emblematic of a nineteenth century approach to variations that is less directly "ornamental" than eighteenth century variations, but nevertheless preserves some analogic relations to the main theme, as Janet Bourne terms them (2015, 208). Here I will examine three more passages, showing how Blahetka assembles and develops these stock figures of postclassical pianism.

The first of these passages comes from the beginning of Blahetka's first variation. Harmonically, she has simplified Haydn's already straightforward plan: here there is a preponderance of tonic and dominant harmonies in root position. Above this is an intricate pattern of alternating notes and leaps: the whole variation is characterized by these twisting leaps to a note decorated by its lower neighbor. Again, we see that this figuration is found in the output of other composers represented in Czerny's collection. The first excerpt from the *Studio generale* comes from Czerny himself and includes his fingering. Like Blahetka's variation, Czerny's excerpt is written in a way that aligns three sixteenth notes in the right hand to every eighth note in the left hand. It is also in the closely related key of D major, so

the topology of black and white keys is similar. The leaps in Czerny's excerpt are larger than those in Blahetka's: Czerny's pattern goes up in octaves rather than by fifths and sixths. Nevertheless, he indicates that the player use their fourth finger to reach upward, so when the lower neighbor occurs (on a black key) it is played with the longer third finger. This approach also works well for Blahetka's variation.

Also shown below additional excerpts from the *Studio generale* by Ignaz Moscheles and John Field, both of which share striking figurational similarities to the twisting leaps of Blahetka's variation. The crucial difference is that while Blahetka's neighbor note ornamentations are always the chromatic lower neighbor, Moscheles and Field have used upper neighbors (Moscheles only in the upper register, and Field throughout). In these cases, too, Czerny advises the use of the fourth finger when leaping. Moscheles's excerpt is in F major, which sets up a different landscape of white and black keys. Here, the pianist must jump between F in the middle register and the F above it, ornamenting the lower F with a lower neighbor and the upper F with an upper neighbor. Here, the fourth finger must be used when leaping up because the fifth finger is reserved for playing the upper neighbor. The same reasoning applies for the excerpt from Field. Taken together, one sees that the figurational idea of the "twisting leap" can come in different guises but tends to use a single fingering strategy: it is a specific skill that can be generalized to many contexts.

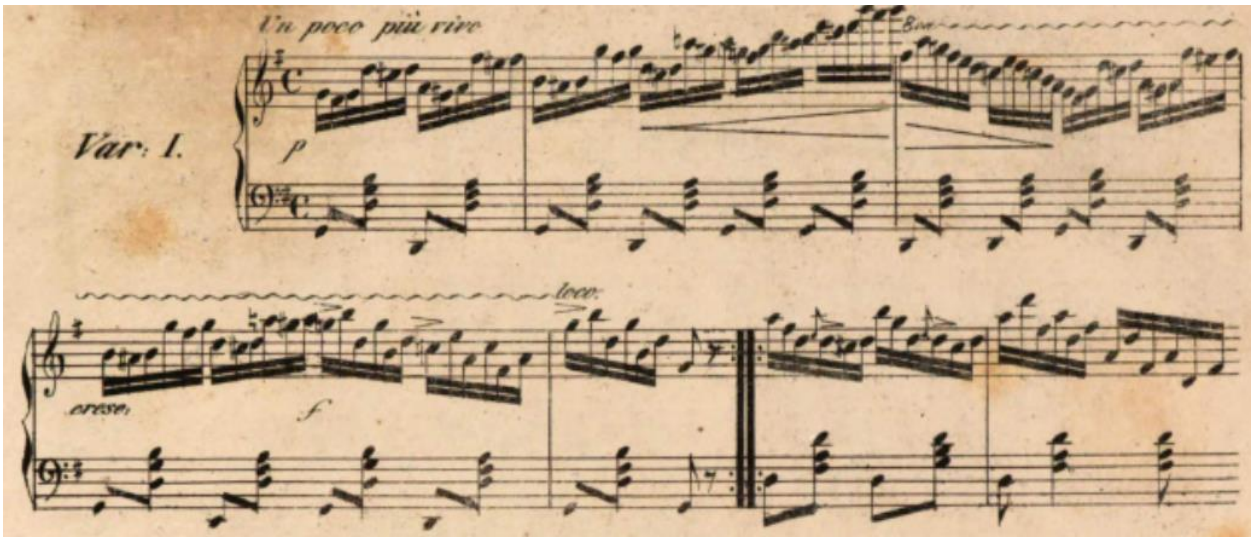


Figure 3-26. Blahetka, Variation no. 1

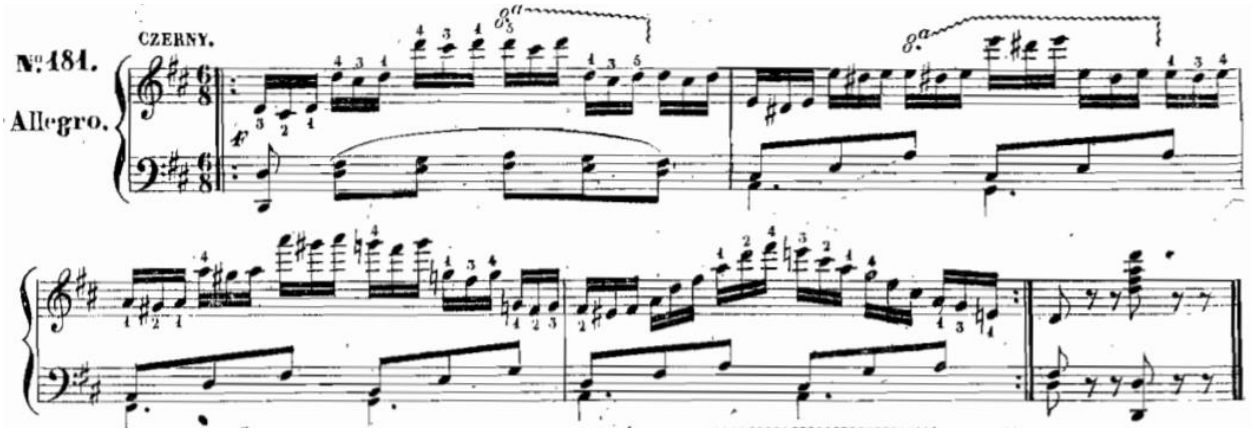


Figure 3-27. Czerny, *Studio generale*: excerpt from Czerny's own work

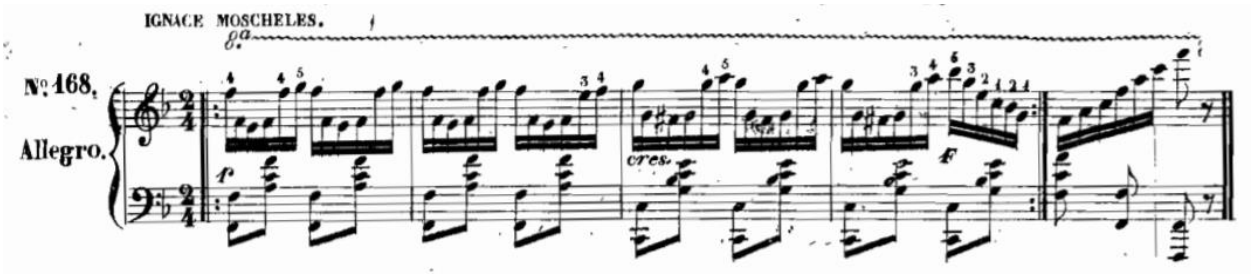


Figure 3-28. Czerny, *Studio generale*: excerpt from Moscheles

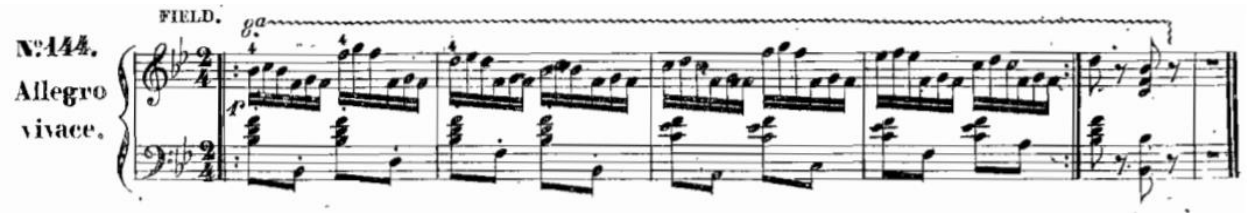


Figure 3-29. Czerny, *Studio generale*: excerpt from Field

The figures above, taken from Czerny's *Studio generale*, illustrate the different forms this "twisting leap" can take, all while preserving the same basic skill. Blahetka's next variation is an example of how these skills, catalogued in collections like Czerny's, could be extended and experimented upon to form more demanding patterns. Below is a portion of Blahetka's second variation, which requires skills remarkably similar to those just described. Here, the right hand continually returns to the D in the middle register, decorated with its chromatic lower neighbor. Unlike the previous variation whose leaps were confined to fifths and sixths, this one contains leaps of more than an octave. The right-hand part, then, uses this "twisting leap" figuration to outline three voices in different registers. Blahetka's enormous leaps of a twelfth or more require an additional layer of skill on top of what has been outlined above. This second variation, then, illustrates how a common skill like the "twisting leap" can be elaborated in an individualized way.

Here I recall the concept of cognitive skill generalization, which I developed in an earlier chapter. Skill generalization, as it is conceptualized in cognitive science, is a process of stripping down an exemplar into its most important component parts, and then relating that stripped-down framework to new contexts (Ross 1989). In the figure-less thoroughbass exercises analyzed earlier, generalization occurs when a pianist adds small variations to an

exemplar, both adding to and subtracting from it. Generalization also occurs when the pianist transposes thoroughbass patterns into all keys. This allows the pianist to employ those patterns in a much broader range of harmonic contexts. The examples that opened this chapter—the upbeat melodic pattern in Czerny's *La ricordanza*—appeared in the same key of E-flat major in Czerny's *Variations brillantes* op. 14, and thus a lengthier process of skill generalization was not necessary. But in the above example from Blahetka, the twisting leap maneuver appears in a key different than the key of Moscheles's excerpt: in terms of cognitive, Blahetka was able to preserve the primary melodic aspects of the "twisting leap" while generalizing it to a different key.

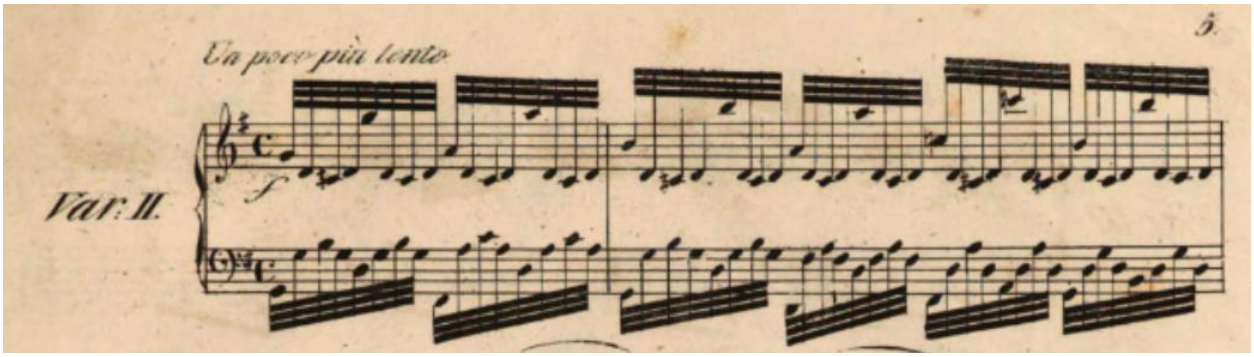


Figure 3-30. Blahetka, Variation No. 2, "twisting leap" figure

Blahetka's figurations are not merely similar to those found in Czerny's collection. They often share a harmonic context with Czerny's as well. Figure 3-31 ci-dessous is a final example from Blahetka's *Variations sur la chanson nationale autrichienne*. It is found towards the end of the variations, just as they start to pick up speed in preparation for a bravura finale. This variation begins with rapid *con fuoco* arpeggios in the right hand, outlining the tonic and dominant harmonies. Here, Blahetka draws from two distinct figurational skills in quick succession—these are highlighted in the figure. The first is an alternating-thirds idea: the right hand plays thirds that move chromatically, with a repeated

note played by the thumb in between each third. The second is a wedge shape where the right hand soars upwards in thirds while the left hand drops downward in a scalar pattern.

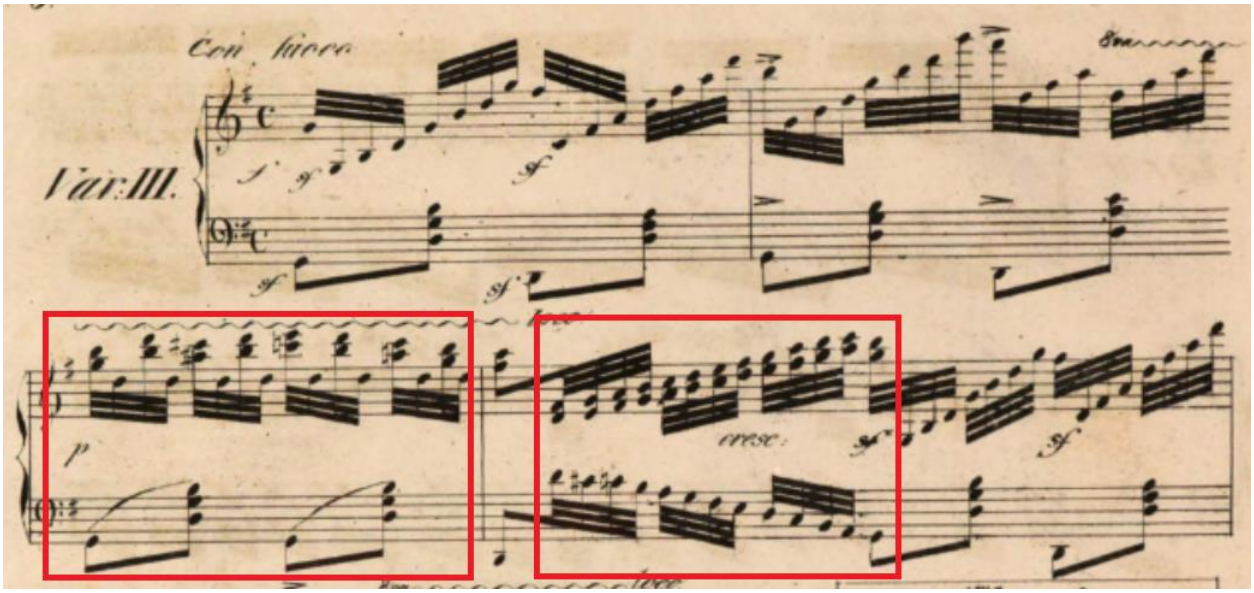


Figure 3-31. Blahetka, excerpt from variation no. 3, showing two different passages (highlighted) that correlate to excerpts in Czerny's *Studio generale*

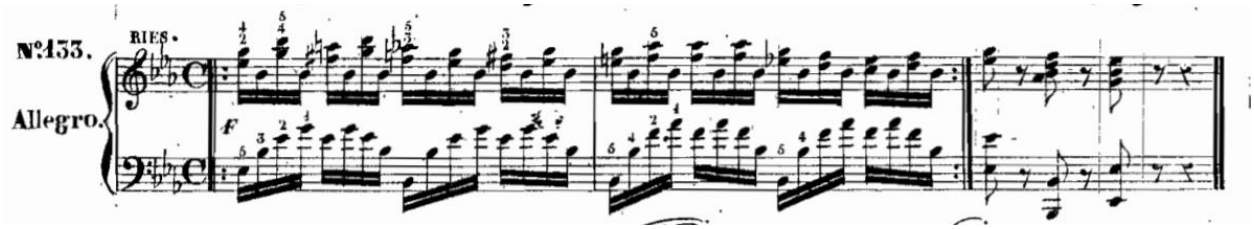


Figure 3-32. Czerny, *Studio generale*: excerpt from Ferdinand Ries

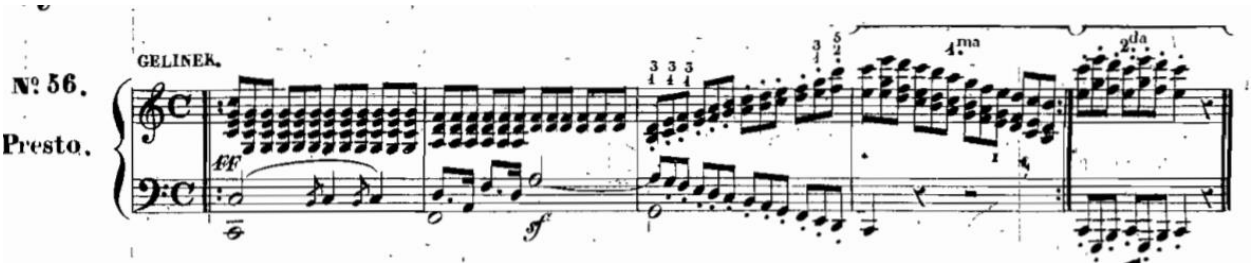


Figure 3-33. Czerny, *Studio generale*: excerpt from Joseph Gelinek

Below this figure, two excerpts from the *Studio generale* are reproduced. The first, by Ferdinand Ries, focuses on the same right-hand figuration highlighted in Blahetka. Here, as in Blahetka's variation, the right hand alternates between moving thirds and a repeated note played by the thumb. If the first two beats of Ries's excerpt were transposed to G

major, the right hand would be note-for-note identical. The key played by the thumb is the fifth scale degree, and the moving thirds follow the exact same pattern as Blahetka's: a chromatic decoration of the third and fifth scale degrees. Below this, the left-hand patterning is different: instead of a bass-chord pattern, Ries uses a short arpeggiation. Nevertheless, both Ries and Blahetka use this alternating-thirds figuration to extend the tonic harmony.

The second excerpt from the Studio generale comes from a piece by Joseph Gelinek. The first two measures of this excerpt outline the tonic and predominant functions, respectively, but the third measure is the most relevant for the present study. Here, the right hand is to dart upwards in staccato thirds while the left hand plunges downwards in stepwise motion. The similarities between this measure and the second highlighted portion of Blahetka's third variation are evident, but evident too is the identical harmonic context of this wedge figuration. In Blahetka's variation, the measure begins with the dominant triad—the bass note in the left hand is at an extreme distance from the other two notes in the right hand. Her wedge maneuver is used to outline this dominant triad and lead, vertiginously, back to the tonic. Gelinek's usage of this wedge maneuver fulfills the exact same purpose. Here, too, is a low bass note on the fifth scale degree to begin the measure. The wedge maneuver, then, is used by both Blahetka and Gelinek to outline the dominant and provide a rhetorical embellishment that leads back to the tonic.

One complication arises when comparing the wedge maneuvers used by Blahetka and Gelinek: the fingering for these two passages is likely different. The reason for this difference has to do with the keys and specified articulations in both excerpts. Gelinek's passage is in C major, with both hands playing *staccato* for the entire wedge. Czerny indicates that the first and third fingers of the right hand should play every single dyad of

Gelinek's wedge, which would bring about a rapid skipping motion of the hand that includes no finger-over-finger motion—this effect would be similar to the bounce of a string player's bow while playing *spiccato*. The same effect, in fact, can be found in the main theme of Liszt's "Mazeppa" that was discussed earlier. Below is an example of the rapid parallel thirds that Liszt specifies to be played only with the second and fourth fingers. Liszt's choice of these fingers, rather than the thumb and third finger that Czerny advises in the Gelinek excerpt, was likely made in order to better reach the black keys in each dyad. Because Blahetka's variation is in G major, it may be difficult to include the black F-sharp key within this rapid skipping style of parallel thirds. In any case, the fact that Blahetka and Gelinek both use rapidly ascending parallel thirds in a wedge maneuver over a dominant pedal is no accident: these are two versions of an archetypal figure playing the same role within a context.

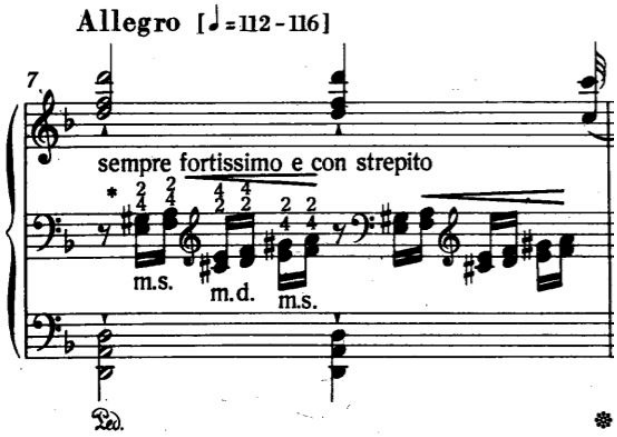


Figure 3-34. Rapid parallel thirds played with the second and fourth fingers only in Liszt's "Mazeppa"

The correspondences between Blahetka's work and the *Studio generale,* then, are more than just similarities of finger use. Blahetka, Ries, and Gelinek all use their

figurations in the same harmonic contexts: these particular skills, then, were understood to belong in specific places within a performance.

These case studies from the music of Franz Liszt and Leopoldine Blahetka reveal much more than the simple fact that the two musicians drew from a common stock of figures or passages. The analyses above show that these passages were connected not just through sound, but also through the relationship of fingers to keyboard. Blahetka's variations are revealing not because they *sound like* certain excerpts from pieces by Moscheles, Field, et al.: rather, Blahetka's variations are revealing because they draw upon the same repertory of *physical skills that depend on the positioning of white and black keys beneath shorter and longer fingers*. The fingerings specified by Blahetka and Czerny (for example, the fingerings for the chromatic scale) indicate the importance of seeing this common stock as a physical resource.

Czerny's and Kullak's collections, I suggest, can be taken as models of how musicians imagined the palette of skills available to them for their performances and compositions. In both the case studies above, Blahetka and Liszt not only drew upon an array of skills that they shared with other pianists—"idiomatic figures," as Jim Samson calls them (2007, 46)—they also used those skills as a point of departure for their own creativity, arranging them in new combinations and changing them to suit their strengths. One did not need to own a printed collection like Czerny's or Kullak's to absorb these skills and incorporate them into one's playing. As shown by the similarities between the excerpts of Moscheles, Field, and Czerny, these skills were transmitted between pianists in a strikingly "oral" manner even before the collections were published.

Idiom, skill, and construction grammar

The practices analyzed here are similar in several ways to the practices that Robert Gjerdingen and Janet Bourne examine in their music-theoretical framework based on construction grammar in linguistics. Within the subfield of construction grammar, linguistic structures are not analyzed through hierarchies and structural transformations, but instead through "learned pairings of form and function" whose meanings are "associated directly with surface form" (Goldberg 2013). An entire utterance, for example, would be analyzed as a series of learned phrases or formulas—"collocations, prefabricated utterances ('prefabs'), idioms, and minor constructions," as Adele Goldberg calls them—rather than as a manifestation of a tree-like generative structure. These constructions comprise a network with some constructions inheriting the characteristics of other, more central constructions. Ronald Langacker describes construction grammar as a "non-reductive approach to linguistic structure that employs fully articulated schematic networks and emphasizes the importance of low-level schemas" (cited in Gjerdingen and Bourne 2015, para. 1.2.1). This construction-based sensibility shares clear commonalities with Gjerdingen's schema-based music analytics, eschewing, as Gjerdingen does, any sense of reductive or prolongational structure beyond what a listener can hear. Musical schemas, Gjerdingen and Bourne posit, are types of constructions. The authors' eighteenth- and nineteenth-century repertoires, they argue, are analyzed most fruitfully without reduction. Like linguistic constructions, some schema variants are more central than others, and schemas often contain bundles of features that are statistically likely to appear alongside each other (see, for example, Gjerdingen and Bourne 2015, paras. 5.1.1–5.4.4).

The case studies presented throughout this dissertation reward the construction grammar sensibility. I note two points of similarity between the present approach to

nineteenth century piano practice and the analysis of linguistic constructions. First: like linguistic constructions, the figurational maneuvers found in the passages excerpted by Czerny and Kullak are sometimes associated with particular purposes, or particular harmonic motions: the extract from Blahekta's Variations presented in Figure 3-31, for example shows how Blahetka deployed two figurations within a harmonic context that was remarkably similar to those of Ries's and Gelinek's excerpts. This shows that pianists had a sense of where the best place for each skill would be for their use within a piece or performance. Second, and more crucially: the present study, like the work of construction grammarians like Goldberg and Langacker, is focused on *usage, and on non-reductive representations of what is heard*. I create here a descriptive approach based on skill rather than an approach that "uncovers" hypothetical structures in music.

To return, however, to the premises of construction grammar, I note that linguistic constructions are parings of "form and function": in other words, form-meaning pairs. What kind of meaning could inhere in the passages I have analyzed here—the rapid-fire arpeggios of Bach's Prelude in B-flat major, BWV 866, or Blahetka's twisting leaps? Gjerdingen and Bourne conjecture that the "meaning" proper to musical constructions might include "the evocation of mood, the suggestion of affect, and the whole range of nonverbal meanings treated in semiotics and embodied cognition" (2015, para. 1.1.2). The properties that these authors refer to as "evocations" and "suggestions" become the subject of deeper exploration by Lawrence Zbikowski, who has created a theory of musical construction grammar where musical forms are paired with a specific function: the analogic imitation of "dynamic processes." "[T]he expression and comprehension of music," Zbikowski argues, is "tied up with embodied processes that unfold through time" (2017, 217). These embodied or

dynamic processes include not only emotional trajectories, but also physical movement—the "darting path" of a hummingbird's flight, for example (2017, 42–51).

The present project cannot fully speak to meaning in this sense, focused as it is on practice, skill acquisition, and live performance rather than musical works. But in this pianistic context, I might suggest, something else takes the place of linguistic meaning in construction-like form-function pairs. This something else is the give-and-take between musician and audience, whether the music-making is improvised or precomposed. I call to mind the discursive scenes analyzed in a previous chapter: these are moments of live performance, of the trading of musical and social utterances, that contribute to the impression of a musical text. Within the musical traditions I analyze here, "responsiveness" as a *process* unfolding between participants is perhaps a better criterion for analysis than "meaning" as a static concept. Further forays into nineteenth century pianistic practices based on exemplar variation and bodily skill should address this intricate question of musical meaning and musical responsiveness.

Nevertheless, this project presents us an adaptable network of pianistic skills, very much like Goldberg's characterization of construction grammar as a *network* of phrasal and word-based constructions. The common skills attested in Czerny and Kullak's collections could be varied and built upon in a cumulative fashion. This is shown not only by Blahetka's manipulations of the twisting leap pattern, but also by Liszt's variations on the central strepitoso pattern in his "Mazeppa." Artists like Blahetka and Liszt, then, manipulated familiar figures to produce new effects. This point is consistent not only with orality as a practice of adapting archetypes to be relevant to current conditions but is also consistent with the theories of text and entextualization that I have laid out in previous chapters. From these examples we are left with an image of nineteenth century pianism

that is one of archetypical skills, each with their proper use and context, absorbed by ear and varied freely among artists.

4. Improvisation and Orality—Kinetic and Otherwise

The previous chapter demonstrated the influence of idiomatic skills at the piano as those skills were practiced by a cadre of nineteenth-century pianists. Many of these early- and mid-nineteenth-century pianists are little known today. Given the huge influence of musicians like Thalberg and Gelinek and the historical ubiquity of genres like the potpourri, why is early nineteenth-century pianism not a larger area of theoretical study? These pianists specialized in "light" genres of music that make up a coherent musical practice of its own. This musical practice, I suggest, does not fare well when we analyze it with the same criteria that we use to analyze canonical works of music.

I argue that this practice is not well-served by "literary" systems of textual analysis, and I turn instead to the frame of *orality* as it has been formulated by Walter Ong and Marshall McLuhan (Ong 2002; McLuhan 2011). The nineteenth-century piano repertoire under discussion shares key structural characteristics with oral art forms as they have been described by these Ong and McLuhan—characteristics including addition, aggregation, and situational specificity. I suggest, following Francesca Sborgi Lawson (2010), that canonical conceptions of musical text and authorship highlight the "literary," leaving this "oral" pianistic practice behind. My framing of nineteenth-century practice is most vivid when the ontology of musical works and canons is bracketed, and individual figurations and skills are instead taken as the building blocks of analysis. This pianistic practice is a reminder that nineteenth-century European music worlds had mechanisms of "oral" transmission and structures reflective of "oral" reception.

If orality can be used as a frame for this nineteenth-century artistic practice, the reverse is also possible: musical practice should be used to critique Ong's idea of orality.

Orality, as it was originally conceptualized in the mid-twentieth century, often implies a pure, natural condition—a state untouched by the tainting effects of written systems of communication. Ethnomusicologists and anthropologists like Steven Feld and Ruth Finnegan have levied criticism against this frame when used in fieldwork (Feld 1986; Finnegan 2006). Feld, for example, writes that Ong's concept of oral psychodynamics runs the risk of "dismiss[ing] rather than address[ing] the meanings, uses, and creative intentions that characterize music in societies of oral tradition" (Feld 1986, 25). "Primary" and "secondary" oralities, and ideas of difference of oral and literary mindset, are not sufficient to describe the practice outlined here—or musical practice in general. By questioning Ong's assumptions, I point out the interconnectedness of sight, sound, and proprioception in prompting recall for the creation of oral art and for producing music at the piano.

To this end, I use the concept of *kinetic orality*, coined by Cornel West and developed by Kyra Gaunt (West 1989; Gaunt 2006).(West 1989; Gaunt 2006). Kinetic orality describes how Black art traditions are disseminated through channels that go beyond text, all within a modality that resembles oral transmission but includes the acquisition of bodily movements and skills as well: dance, structured game-playing, clapping, and other forms of participatory movement all exemplify this type of orality. In deploying West and Gaunt's term, I describe the discursive history of using the term "orality" to describe jazz traditions, as well as the historical reticence of ethnomusicologists to use the term "theory" when describing African musical traditions. Pointing out the orality of a nineteenth-century European musical practice, then, is not just a descriptive maneuver: it is also a reorienting gesture. This chapter builds a general framework of nineteenth-century pianism as kinetic orality. This is not to say that pianism of this era was text-less, or transmitted only by ear: rather, I use the concept of orality to highlight aspects of the

practice that are difficult to address within an entirely score-based paradigm. The frame of orality emphasizes modes of transmission in nineteenth-century pianism that are less rigidly work-bound than the study of canonical works might suggest.

Throughout this chapter I draw from accounts of Black musical practices, as well as accounts of Central Asian and Native Australian oral artistic practices, applying the same frame to these traditions as to the nineteenth-century European musics that are the focus of this project. In doing so, I do not suggest that these practices (spread as they are across wide expanses of space and time) are "the same" as Western ones or as each other. My goal, rather, is to show how discourses of orality and improvisation often become an impediment to musicological scholarship. Vijay Iyer and Laudan Nooshin have argued that the word "improvisation," whether it is intended as a pejorative or as a compliment, serves to create divisions between White, "Western," or otherwise Anglo-European musics and "other" traditions like jazz and Black contemporary music in Iyer's case, and Iranian traditional music in Nooshin's case (Nooshin 2003; Iyer 2019). The oral-literary dichotomy, I suggest, retraces the same divisions between Anglo-European music and its others. I hope to provincialize nineteenth--century piano music using the case studies in this chapter to showhow music-analytic practice is often structured by the *ideas* of musical literature and of musical orality—even while notation, literature, and orality are something much more mutable for practitioners on the ground.[44]

[44] Here I take the term "provincialization" from Dipesh Chakrabarty, who stresses that European concepts of political organization do not form a mold that worldwide political movements must fit themselves into, but instead are one set of concepts interacting with many other concepts across time and space (2009). To "provincialize" a European concept is to bring it into contact with differing concepts from around the world, emphasizing Europe's position as one geographical area among many.

The subject of this chapter is an early- to mid-nineteenth century salon repertoire that has for the most part disappeared from concert performance. This repertoire is made up of balanced melodies, effusive variations, and ornate figurations. A correspondent for *The Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review* in 1825 described the exemplars of this style with a list of names—"Hummel, Moscheles, Kalkbrenner, Pixis, Schunke, Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, and little Liszt," as well as Henri Herz—as a collective of cosmopolitan artists who performed largely in Paris and Vienna ("Assemblage of Piano-Forte Players in Paris in the Spring of 1825" 1825, 311).[45] The music they played was immensely popular in its time and had an influence on composers and performers whose works may be more familiar to the contemporary reader. Herz's music, for example, had a formative influence on Robert Schumann's composition, despite Schumann's later disavowals (Weitz 2019, 42). Hummel was a profound influence on Schumann, who initially considered Hummel as his first-choice teacher, with Friedrich Wieck a distant second. John Daverio has noted how a fragment of an early Schumann concerto owes much to the "virtuosic keyboard idiom inaugurated by Hummel and further developed by such figures as Henri Herz" (Daverio 1997, 62–64).

The music of Hummel, Moscheles, Kalkbrenner, and their colleagues was of a high technical caliber but was nonetheless clear and transparent. Pixis's performance, for example, is described as "exact and brilliant," made possible by his "facility in producing splendid effects"; Mendelssohn, too, is described there as "brilliant and exact" ("Assemblage of Piano-Forte Players in Paris in the Spring of 1825" 1825, 311–12). The overall impression one gathers from this correspondent, then, is that these pianists impressed their audiences with high-caliber virtuosity—but always in a strongly

[45] Dana Gooley cites this 1824 review in *Fantasies of Improvisation* (2018, 131).

determined manner, one that *fulfilled expectations and bolstered existing genre conventions*. This mode of reception resonates with the concept of the "flat" character in oral literature, "the type of character that never surprises the reader but, rather, delights by fulfilling expectations copiously," a character "from primary oral narrative, which can provide characters of no other kind" (Ong 2002, 148). In nineteenth-century music making, this flatness was likely meant to create a predictable, comfortable, and familiar atmosphere for the listener—one that they could return to again and again, perhaps with a sense of relief, confirming their already-held aesthetic values. Here I use "flatness" not as a pejorative, but rather as a way of characterizing the easy, frictionless charm of this repertoire. In this way, the correspondent from 1825 praises Hummel for the "chasteness, moderation, and gracefulness" of his playing, while the young Liszt is criticized for his "confusion of ideas and a continual introduction of passages, *the intention of which cannot be understood*" ("Assemblage of Piano-Forte Players in Paris in the Spring of 1825" 1825, 313, emphasis mine).

This kind of criticism is similar to the traditionalism that Walter Ong ascribes to oral knowledge and art. Ong writes that "oral societies must invest great energy in saying over and over again what has been learned arduously over the ages," an investment that "establishes a highly traditionalist or conservative set of mind that with good reason inhibits intellectual experimentation" (2002, 41). Ong quickly notes, though, that this traditionalism does not necessarily lead to artistic stagnation. It instead drives storytellers and oral poets to adjust the details of their art to the situation and the audience: "in oral cultures an audience must be brought to respond, often vigorously" (2002, 42). This point cannot always be made as strongly in the case of the piano repertoire discussed here, but it nevertheless resonates with early- to mid-nineteenth century European musical worlds

where extemporaneous playing was often integrated into public performance. In these contexts, an unfamiliar sort of intellectual experimentation may sever the understanding between performer and audience—an understanding based on stylistic and genre norms. Here I recall the values implied by that musical correspondent from Paris in 1825, who was opposed to any musical "confusion of ideas" where the player's intent could not be understood. This salon repertoire, then, shares with oral art a focus on familiarity, clarity, and "flatness."

Ong's characteristics of oral art

In his *Orality and Literacy*, Ong describes nine characteristics of expression in the "orally based thought" of practitioners within cultures of primary orality: that is, Ong defines these characteristics as tendencies not only in oral art, but also in oral mindset (2002, 37–56). His first three characteristics might be termed structural: first, expression is *additive* rather than subordinative; second, it is *aggregative* rather than analytic; and third, it is *redundant* or *copious*. The remaining characteristics can be termed positional, or describing the speaker's attitude towards what they are saying: fourth, expression in primary oral cultures tends (according to Ong) to be conservative or *traditionalist*; fifth, it is "close to the human lifeworld;" sixth, it is *agonistic*, characterized by tension and competition; seventh, it is *empathetic* rather than objective; eighth, it is inclined towards *homeostasis* or equilibrium; and ninth, it is *situationally specific* rather than abstract. Ong supports his claims by pointing to twentieth-century anthropological work on groups with robust oral traditions and no tradition of writing. Ong then links these findings to his own observations of how some styles of communication are more expedient in speech than in writing, and vice versa.

Here, I will connect several of Ong's characteristics of orality to the practice of mid-nineteenth century pianism: first, the repertoire's frequent *additive* structure and its *aggregative* accumulation of conventions; second, its *copiousness of output*; and third, its *situational specificity*. Using the examples from Blahetka and Liszt presented above, as well as further examples from Joseph Gelinek, I suggest that these additive, aggregative, copious, and specific qualities are similar to oral art as Ong conceives of it. I also suggest that these qualities are not well-served by a "literary" vision of nineteenth-century repertoires. Later in this chapter, however, I point out serious shortcomings in Ong's orality: chief among these is the circularity with which it divides groups of people into "oral" and "literate," inscribing difference in a manner that has repercussions for critical improvisation studies. I then present a modified conception of orality that is informed by the musical traditions I discuss here.

The examples I draw from here come largely from printed literary sources. One might ask: what does it mean to apply the frame of "orality" to a tradition with a strong literary component? I posit that the piano repertoire of the mid-nineteenth century has features that are well-captured by both the literary and the oral side of Ong's dichotomy. Following Lawson (2010), I further argue that the oral-aural frame has the power to bring into focus aspects of musical practice that are often overlooked—aspects that are difficult to discuss using a vocabulary centered around single authorship, works, interpretations, and the "literary" in general. Among these overlooked elements of the nineteenth-century musical repertoire are the characteristics I address here: addition and aggregation, copiousness, and situational specificity. To say that nineteenth-century pianism is a type of orality, then, is not to deny the crucial role of printed music and text in its development. Instead, the frame of orality shows how this repertoire's robust stylistic conventions, its

ephemerality, its ubiquity—aspects which tend to be inexplicable or even inconvenient for the analyst—are in fact solid building-blocks for a larger theory of musical skill, text, and literature.

Addition and aggregation

Here I draw parallels between trends in mid-nineteenth-century works for the piano and Ong's three structural characteristics of orally based thought. First, Ong classifies oral expression as fundamentally more *additive* than text-based expression. He uses the first few verses of the Book of Genesis an example of additive expression within a text that has "oral residue." here, nine sentences are begun with the conjunction *and* (Hebrew *we* or *wa*): "And the earth was void and empty…And God said…" (2002, 37). Written texts, argues Ong, tend less towards addition and more towards subordination: that is, they tend to organize thoughts within a hierarchy rather than placing them side by side on the same level of emphasis.

The repertoires examined here—printed works by Czerny, Liszt, Blahetka, and other musicians of the mid-nineteenth century—share this logic of addition. The theme and variations form is, at root, paratactic: it often consists of statements laid side-by-side, without connecting elements to signify which variations are more or less "structural." I argue that the theme and variations genre, as well as the closely related genres of the potpourri and the concert paraphrase, resonates with Ong's identification of the additive nature of oral production.

Joseph Gelinek's Potpourri No. 6 as an aggregative structure

Joseph Gelinek, the Prague-based composer and pianist whose works were excerpted in Czerny's *Studio generale*, was well-known in the early- to mid-nineteenth century as a

creator of operatic paraphrases and potpourris. Gelinek's potpourris are fine examples of aggregative structures from the mid-nineteenth-century salon repertoire—structures that share striking similarities to aggregation as it is described above. His *Potpourri* No. 6, written at some point between 1818 and the composer's death in 1825, is based on music from four comic operas. It begins with the main melody from the rondo "Depuis longtemps, gentil Annette, tu ne viens plus" from François Boieldieu's *Le petit chaperon rouge* (Little Red Riding-Hood) of 1818. Here, the jaunty folk-inflected tune serves as an introduction to Gelinek's set of variations, almost filling the function of an operetta overture. The theme for the first variation set is a twenty-measure theme from the aria "Nel cor più non mi sento," from Giovanni Paisiello's *La molinara (The Miller-Maid)* of 1788. This aria was well-known independently of Paisiello's opera because it was frequently used as the theme for variation sets from the late eighteenth century into the nineteenth century, including variations written by Hummel and Beethoven. The other two works that Gelinek borrowed themes from for this potpourri were André Grétry's opéra comique *Zémire et Azor* (an operatic adaptation of Beauty and the Beast) of 1772 and Carl Blum's vaudeville *Der Schiffskapitän, oder Die Unbefangenen* (The Ship's Captain, or the Uninhibited) of 1817. Two of these musical sources come from the 1810s, while the other two come from the 1770s: one might describe this potpourri as an entente between two generations. Further, these were comic staged works based on rustic stories and fairy tales, likely chosen for their cumulative effect of wistful nostalgia within the potpourri. Gelinek, then, emphasizes aggregation through the subject matter of his musical sources.

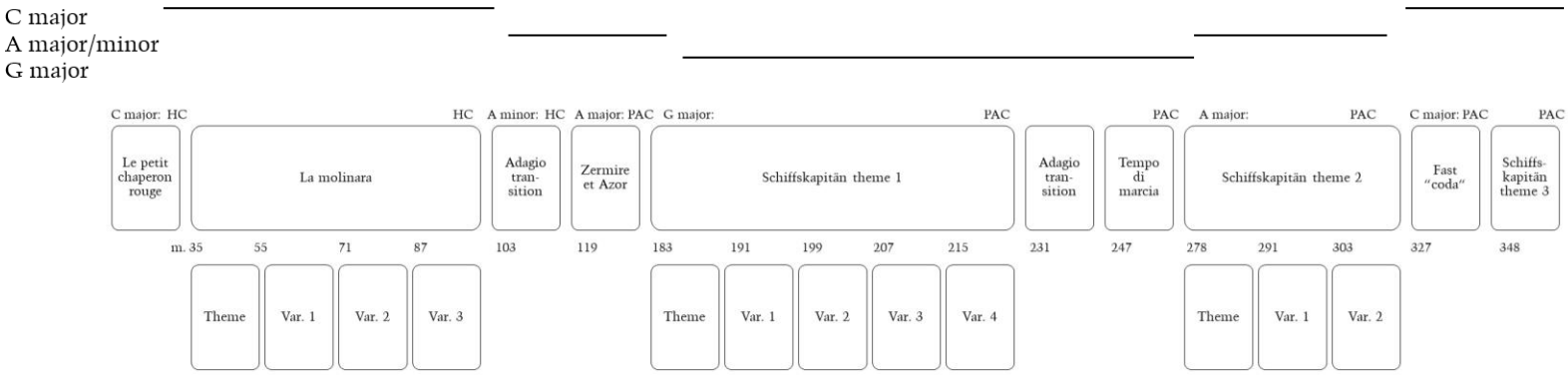


Figure 4-1. Large-scale form, Gelinek, Potpourri No. 6

The form of this potpourri, too, emphasizes the same additive tendency that Ong argues is a central structuring principle of oral art. In Figure 4-1 above, I trace the large-scale outline of this unconventional form. The figure illustrates the three main variation sets that are components of this potpourri: the first *is* "Nel cor più non mi sento" from *La molinara*, and the second and third are both from *Der Schiffskapitän*. The potpourri, however, does not fall into any discernible ternary mold, because between each of these variation sets there are not only transitional sections but also independent, harmonically closed thematic material. This includes the quotation of "Depuis longtemps" from *Zermire et Azor*, as well as a long section without attribution, marked *Tempo di marcia*. Furthermore, this independent thematic material is within the harmonically distant key of A major, with some A minor material. The figure above traces the unusual trajectory of the potpourri with a harmonic overlay. What emerges is an arch-like strategy: the potpourri begins and ends in C major, but the middle passes through A minor/major to G major, and then back to A major.

A further additive tendency in this potpourri is the independence of the connecting or transitional material. Points of cadential action are indicated immediately above the formal sections illustrated in Figure 4-1 above. Here, one sees that any sense of ternary form is disrupted by the moments of harmonic closure that occur at the ends of what one might, on first glance, expect to be "transitional" sections. Before the appearance of the first *Schiffskapitän* theme in measure 183, for example, there is a perfect authentic cadence in A major—a key fairly distant from the home key of C major. Again, prior to the appearance of the second *Schiffskapitän* theme in measure 278, there is yet another perfect authentic cadence, this time in G major. Gelinek's cadential maneuvers, then, do not serve

a clearly-defined architectural formal goal. Instead, they indicate, in an additive, non-hierarchical manner, the end of one theme and the beginning of another.

Aggregation and analysis

Ong notes that the products of oral culture are "*aggregative*" rather than "analytic"—that is, they tend towards accumulation and repetition rather than deconstruction. "Oral expression," he writes, "carries a load of epithets and other formulary baggage which high literacy rejects as cumbersome and tiresomely redundant because of its aggregative weight" (2002, 38). Examples of such aggregation include the solidity of structural formulas and the stereotyping of characters ("not the soldier, but the brave soldier"), because, as Ong argues, "once a formulary expression has crystallized, it had best be kept intact. Without a writing system, breaking up thought—that is, analysis—is a high-risk procedure" (2002, 39). This aggregative quality of oral art can apply to nineteenth-century pianism, with some adjustments. I discuss two such adjustments below.

A similar argument applies to the nineteenth-century piano repertoire, writing system notwithstanding. If an audience did not anticipate hearing a piece of music more than once, if they were listening to improvised music, or if they did not intend to purchase a score for a work they heard, the prospect of being challenged by unfamiliar formal structures may have been undesirable. An analyst, then, could characterize pianists like Czerny, Blahetka, and even Liszt (for much of his career) as faithful adherents to a system of formulas and accretions. With the oral-aural frame in mind, one can see the aggregative, cumulative thrust of this mid-nineteenth century piano repertoire. Further, one can see how these musicians use their output to *bolster* their inherited traditions rather than to critically assess their received structural formulas. Gelinek's Potpourri, for example, links

popular musical comedies from the late eighteenth century to more recent works from the 1810s that draw on similar themes. This is a cumulative act that sustains the structural and stylistic formulas of nineteenth-century light genres rather than challenging them.

Using Ong's terminology, then, it may seem that works like Gelinek's Potpourri and Blahetka's "Kaiserhymne" variations are "non-analytic." But "non-analytic" is a weighty and perhaps overdetermined way to describe the present repertoire, needing some adjustment. In this context, it may be more fitting to describe Ong's opposition of aggregative and analytic as a *reconstructive-deconstructive* spectrum.

Some reviewers bristled at Blahetka's aggregative music-making and her faithful use of a language already in existence. A reviewer for the *Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* wrote, for example, that her pieces lacked "deep feeling" [*tiefe Empfindung*], further claiming that her music was "agreeable and at the same time very difficult—but nothing more; nowhere any sense of a particular inner life; only an easy-moving and flickering tinkling sound" (*Berliner Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* 1826, 227).[46] There is tension here between her music's charm and its difficulty for the player, or perhaps its virtuosity. This anonymous reviewer, I suggest, uses their statement of disapproval to signal a mismatch between Blahetka's virtuosity and her willingness to appeal to audiences using conventions they were already familiar with. My suggestion is supported by Alexander Stefaniak's historical account of depth, difficulty, and "interiority" in piano music around the 1830s. Stefaniak points out that the passages that critics believed to be the most deep and indicative of interior life tended to be passages that pushed harmonic

[46] "Ihre eignen Kompositionen sind gefällig und zugleich höchst schwierig—aber nichts weiter; nirgends eine Spur von eigenthümlichen innerm Leben; nur leicht dahin fahrender und flackernder Klingklang."

boundaries: "striking, localized harmonic gestures," quick tonicizations, and original "digressive pathways" that would take the listener by surprise (Stefaniak 2017, 710). This perceived interiority, according to critics like Robert Schumann, was the justification for virtuosic playing (Stefaniak 2017, 708).

Blahetka's reviewer saw no "inner life" in her music, and this inner life would have been signaled by originality of harmony and form—and thus her inventive and virtuosic figurations, like the twisting leap described above, were not justified. In other words, her music was aggregative despite its virtuosity; it kept conventional accruals intact; it was not (in Ong's terms) "analytic." But this very weakness was also Blahetka's strength. A listener in 1847, for example, proclaimed Blahetka's melodies, which "cannot fail to please," as one of her greatest assets, writing: "Mademoiselle Blahetka, as a pupil of Beethoven, displays her deep studies of this musical Hercules, not disdaining, however, to interlard her works with dashes of brilliant passages, while her melodies are always characteristic and pleasing" ("Foreign Intelligence: Boulogne-Sur-Mer, Jan. 30" 1847, 92).[47] Ong's term "non-analytic," then, may seem on its face to be a negative assessment of these nineteenth-century repertoires, but Blahetka's contemporaneous reviewers give a more complex account of non-analytic or reconstructive musical creation.

Copiousness and structural repetition

The pianism under discussion here shares with oral art a tendency towards what Ong calls "copiousness," a form of structural reiteration that helps people retain

[47] The "non-analytic" view of the piano repertoire under discussion stands in marked contrast with a line of music reception that can be called "Hegelian," one that reads dialectical movement into the structure of early- and mid-nineteenth century piano music. See, for example, Janet Schmalfeldt's exploration of the connections between musical and philosophical-rhetorical structures in "Form as the process of becoming: The Beethoven-Hegelian tradition and the 'Tempest' sonata" (1995).

information that is related to them across a span of time. When reading the printed word, the reader may maintain a sense of where they are within a text by periodically looking backward. Context is always in mind when reading, Ong writes, because context "can be retrieved by glancing back over the text selectively" in a process he calls "backlooping" (2002, 39). For orally delivered information, on the other hand, it is not possible to glance backward in the same way. Backlooping must instead be accomplished within oral delivery itself through constant self-paraphrase and "repetition of the just-said" (Ong 2002, 40).

Nineteenth-century music, as an art that unfolds in time, also uses repetition to grapple with the uneasy relationship between linearity and contextualization outlined above. A. B. Marx, for example, identified repetition (and variation) as the spark that gives music its life. In his quasi-philosophical *Lehre von der musikalischen Komposition* (1837), he likened the repetition of the principal *Satz* in Rondo form to the generational life cycles of living creatures: "[Rondo form] is no longer satisfied to return to the *Satz* to which it must adhere as if this *Satz* were some lifeless piece of property; rather, it enlivens the *Satz*, lets it change, repeat—it makes this *Satz* into another, which is nevertheless recognized as the offspring of the first *Satz* and which prevails in its stead" (quoted in Burnham 1989, 259).

Another distinctive form of "copiousness" in nineteenth-century music-making is the unrelenting pace of music publishing. Czerny, for example, published opus numbers up to op. 861, writing in his Erinnerungen aus meinem Leben (1842) that composition took up "every free moment I had" outside of his demanding teaching schedule (Lindeman and Barth 2001). I suggest that the reliable issuing of new works and pedagogical texts by figures like Czerny created a sense of expectation not only for the amateur and professional pianists and teachers who purchased his works, but also for those who perused the back

matter of any work printed by publishers like C. A. Spina of Vienna and A. Farrec of Paris, who like other nineteenth-century music publishers included a list of titles from their catalogue at the end of every publication. Margaret Beetham's theoretical approach to the nineteenth-century periodical emphasizes how a periodical's publishing schedule aligns its readership within time, building a readerly community by planting the same temporal expectation within each reader, with all participants focusing on the same point in time (1990). The brisk pace of composers' publication schedules (and, by extension, artists' concert schedules), then, establishes the same temporal framework for their audiences as a community.

Situationality and social specificity

Ong writes that "Oral cultures tend to use concepts in situational, operational frames of reference that are minimally abstract" (2002, 49). Ong supported this claim using evidence from the fieldwork of the psychologist Alexander Luria, who conducted a series of interviews in Soviet Central Asia in the early twentieth century. Luria found that his participants' degree of literacy had a significant bearing on how they answered questions about categories and abstract concepts. People without the ability to read or write, for example, would frame their answers in a way that made them more relevant to their everyday life, while people with primary school educations would give answers that addressed the question from a more generalized standpoint. One finding was that, when presented with a drawing of a circle, less literate participants would identify it as an object like a wheel or dinner plate, while more literate participants would categorize it broadly as the shape "circle" (cited in Ong 2002, 50–51). Later in this chapter I address some issues in how Ong uses Luria's fieldwork as evidence. At present, however, I only note that Ong

emphasizes the intimacy between oral art and concrete, everyday experience: oral art, for Ong, is practical, immediate, and resonant with the lives of those who create it.

In the nineteenth century, music-making, practicality, immediacy, and social resonance are frequently at odds with repertory-building and canonization. Nicholas Cook has argued that Beethoven's works written around the time of the Congress of Vienna (1814–1815) have an uncomfortable place within his oeuvre because they do not offer the same affordances for reception that his other "middle-period" music offers. Cook points to the extreme particularity, for example, of Beethoven's *Wellingtons Sieg* op. 91, a piece commemorating the Duke of Wellington's victory during the 1813 Battle of Vitoria. This orchestral piece not only made programmatic reference to the battle through percussion and artillery sound effects, but also thematic reference to the combatants through the use of emblematic musical anthems like "Rule Britannia." *Der glorreiche Augenblick* op. 136, a lengthy cantata praising the nations participating in the Congress of Vienna, is similarly particular in nature: Cook calls it a "script created to choreograph a social process" (2003, 19). After Beethoven's death, critics and musicologists from the mid-nineteenth century on faced the challenge of criticizing these programmatic and socially specific pieces while simultaneously justifying their existence in between Beethoven's vaunted "middle" and "late" periods. Scholars up to the present day have labeled these pieces as self-conscious "condescension" or "calculated" populist strategizing, and even blamed them on Beethoven's "exhaustion" (Cook 2003, 4–6)—and Cook argues that this is because of these pieces' inability to fit the mold of what Scott Burnham has called the "Beethoven Hero" model of reception (Burnham 2000). These pieces, he argues, failed to meet what he calls the "Beethovenian contract": the ability to hear instrumental music as an argument for

ethical self-development (2003, 12), and for that reason they could not be properly contextualized within the political environment that they belonged to.

These programmatic works by Beethoven are, in short, examples of how an abstracted "literary" conception of nineteenth-century music can warp one's perspective of the significance and use of repertoires linked to specific social environments. Using the frame of orality, one can better view these kinds of repertoires without misusing aesthetic criteria that come from a more "literary" perspective. The piano music discussed here is as staunchly particular as *Wellingtons Sieg* or *Der glorreiche Augenblick*. Blahetka's Variations, for instance, is similar to these two Beethoven pieces in two ways. First, as an initial point of comparison, her Variations take a national hymn as their theme: like *Der glorreiche Augenblick*, a hymn stands metonymically for a larger concept of national or imperial culture. I note here that this metonym operates in an *aggregative* manner, preserving instead of deconstructing the associative links between this particular hymn and the empire it represents.

Second and more importantly, Blahetka's variations deploy these aggregative connections to refer to social particularities in the present. The figure below reproduces the title page of the edition of the Variations held at the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek. The most striking typographical emphasis here is on the name *Guillelmine*, in reference to the dedicatee of the piece, Princess Wilhelmine of Baden (1788–1836), who had recently become a Grand Duchess of Hesse and Darmstadt (at this time called Hesse and by Rhine) by marriage. All these territories were former states of the Holy Roman Empire, which by 1831 had been dissolved some twenty-five years beforehand. Blahetka, all told, dedicated her piece based on the imperial hymn to the Grand Duchess of a former imperial state. This dedication, then, was not only an attempt to form a relationship with a potential patron,

but also an appeal to old imperial cultural allegiances—an appeal that strove to rise above existing state entities. That the dedication is written in French, too, is a signal of cosmopolitan cultural ambition. Ultimately, this piece uses the aggregative and almost mythical entailments of imperial culture to make a statement within a present social reality in a manner that Ong might call "non-analytic."

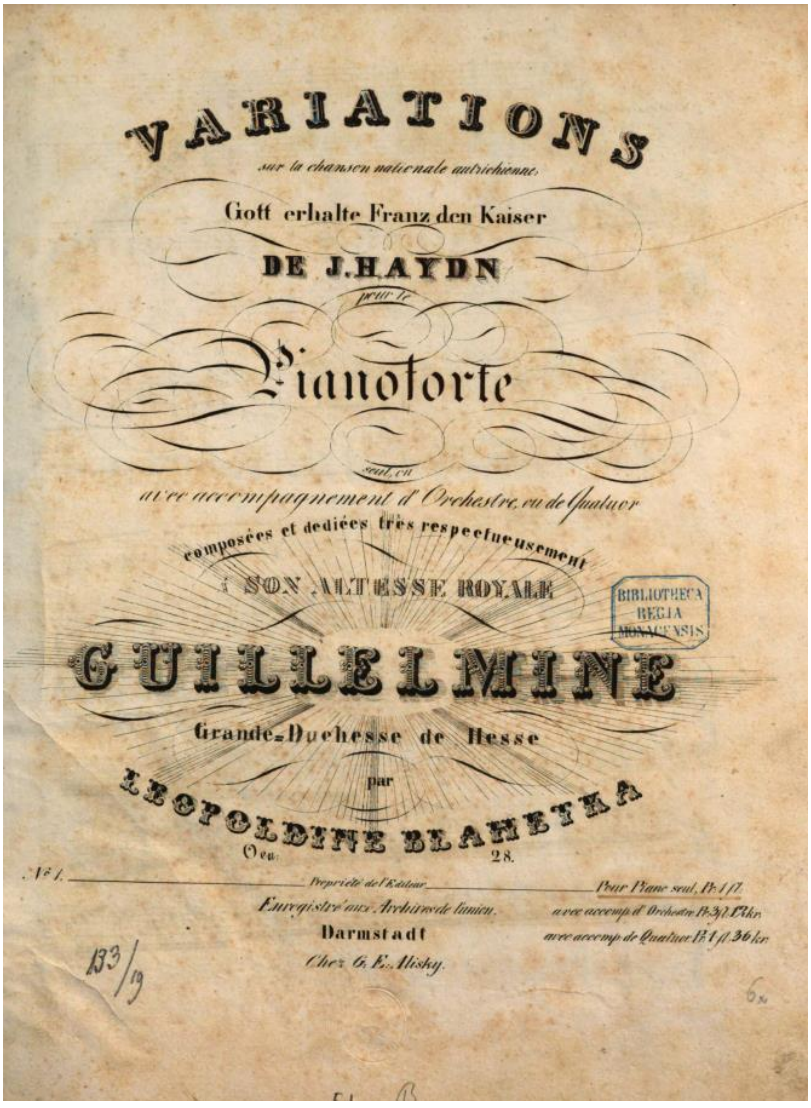


Figure 4-2. Title page of Blahetka's "Kaiserhymne" variations, published in Darmstadt by Alisky, 1831

Blahetka's *Variations*, then, emphasize their position within a social and discursive environment through their overt references to environments and agents. Czerny's *La Ricordanza*, the variation set on a theme by Rode described in the previous chapter, also highlights its discursive environment rather than bracketing it away in the manner of an "autonomous" musical work. In Blahetka's case, piano-playing becomes an appeal for patronage from Princess Wilhelmine of Baden in an explicitly pan-Germanic context, and in Czerny's Rode variations, iconic musicians are called up so that listeners can relive performances from the past—or "live" them for the first time.

The strong social situatedness of these pieces is a trait inherent not only in piano composition in the mid-nineteenth century, but also in nineteenth-century composition in general—even in the most abstracted and canonical of works. Ong's oral situationality, then, is a useful frame for calling attention to music-making practices of nineteenth-century Europe that do not fit the criteria for contemplative or Beethovenian music-listening described by Cook.

Above, I have outlined how the frame of orality can highlight aspects of pianistic practice and transmission that can easily be overlooked when notation and written texts are the analyst's main concern. The outline above appears to divide the music of this period into two repertoires: one popular, non-analytic, and "oral"; the other canonical, analytic, and "literary." The characteristics described above could be taken as an indicator that nineteenth-century pianistic practice was "oral" in structure. The present chapter, and this project as a whole, demonstrates that pianists listened to and read the works of others with the "carnal" outlook I have previously outlined: one where the "carnal knowledge" described by Elisabeth Le Guin becomes not just a connection between performer and composer, but between musicians and their sound worlds. These pianists constructed their

own improvisations and compositions using the embodied knowledge that they developed through exemplar use, variation, and cognitive skill generalization.

Beyond the oral and literate: bodily modalities of production

The examples from earlier in this chapter relate the frame of orality to repertoires and artists discussed throughout this dissertation: people like Leopoldine Blahetka and Joseph Gelinek created music that fits into a loosely oral or non-literary paradigm. Here, I wish to recall in addition the excerpt collections of Czerny and Kullak, and my analyses of them as a compendium not of works but of discrete bodily skills. These collections' focus on the organization of bodily skills is a point of fruitful tension when examining pianistic practice with the frame of orality. The notion that bodily skills could be transmitted along the same channels as oral art (and often alongside oral art) does not figure prominently in Ong's thinking. It does appear, however, in Ong's larger discussions of how writing putatively directs attention away from physical objects and toward their abstract representations. Ong argues that groups with more strongly "oral" culture retain what he terms (after the anthropologist Marcel Jousse) the "verbo-motor lifestyle" (2002, 67). "Purchasing something at a Middle East souk or bazaar is not a simple economic transaction, as it would be at Woolworth's," he writes: "Rather, it is a series of verbal (and somatic) maneuvers, a polite duel, a contest of wits, an operation in oral agonistic" (Ong 2002, 68). I am inclined to point out that purchasing something at a department store is not "a simple economic transaction" either, and that to shop at Woolworths is an activity that potentially includes some of the verbal and somatic actions Ong ascribes to the bazaar. This is to say that the channels of oral transmission always extend beyond the verbal.

Ong's discussion of the senses largely does not acknowledge this extension beyond the verbal—he divides artistic production into two camps: those informed by sound, and

those informed by sight, arguing that "sight isolates, sound incorporates"—that is, sound-based art is more attuned to drawing in listeners and creating a communal sphere of activity (Ong 2012, 71). Speaking, as a sonic practice, is contrasted with writing as a visual practice. The media scholar Marshall McLuhan, in fact, suggested that writing can interfere with the recall of stories and verbal information. Full "oral" recall, he argues, is not just a re-playing in the head, or a quiet transmission from words in the page to ideas in one's mind. In contrast to Ong, McLuhan casts oral recall as a multisensory activity—one that calls upon sight, touch, and bodily movement.

There may be a multitude of examples of verbal storytelling being linked to other sensory referents, but here I will discuss one especially vivid example. The anthropologist Alan Rumsey has pointed out that many people within supposed "primary oral cultures" have ways of "holding" stories and information beyond the ear. Rumsey calls attention to Kimberly and Top End aboriginal communities in central Australia for whom verbal recounting is not the "main form" of a story. Instead, the story is told by a landscape, and in verbal delivery the story is held within that landscape like a mnemonic. "'There,' people say, pointing to a rock formation, '*That's* the story'… the landscape is read primarily *by walking over it*, 'following up' the actions of the creator figures" (Rumsey 1999, 171–72).

Cocky Wujungu, an elder of the Ngarinyin community, describes his people's land in a way that is inseparable from the stories passed down to him:

> There's a Boab tree there that's bent like that snake. From there it runs to where Willy Wagtail cooked yams. Where Olgi sits down. Duck Hole, where Mangurla died… There's white clay there to the west, where it runs to Wawural, where it gets

to be a really big river. Black Plum is there, Black Plum there where dogs walked alongside, that's where it [his tail] stood up. (Rumsey 1994)

For McLuhan, writing can sometimes lead to a different relationship between the spoken word and the visual reference. "The more fundamental reason for imperfect recall [when writing is used as an aid]," McLuhan writes, "is that with print there is more complete separation of the visual sense from the audile-tactile. This involves the modern reader in total translation of sight into sound as he *looks* at the page. Recall of material read by the eye then is confused by the effort to recall it both visually and auditorially" (2011, 93). McLuhan's intuition has been corroborated. A University of Waterloo study led by Colin MacLeod found that producing a word aloud during study improved recall under a variety of conditions—a phenomenon that the authors dubbed the "production effect" (MacLeod et al. 2010). This effect was apparent when studying word lists where some of the words were read aloud and some were not; mouthing the words without speaking produced the same result. Semantic meaning was not an indicator for this effect: the recall of "pronounceable nonwords" was boosted as well.

The "production effect" defined by MacLeod et al. joins what its coiners call "a very select club" of discrete manipulations that improve recall—these reliable manipulations whose effects have been replicated many times (2010, 671). One member of this club is the "imagery effect," whereby the association of a word with a distinctive visual image improves recall (Paivio 1971). Another member is the "generation effect," which captures how memory is made more vivid and recall easier if words and concepts are "self-generated" or cued rather than simply read off the page—for example, if one remembered the word "fast" by pairing it with the phrase *"rapid-f"* and then cued the memory with that phrase (Slamecka and Graf 1978). Taking all these effects together, one sees that recall—

defined in psychological terms as the transferal of previous experience into a scenario in the present—is possibly at its best when one uses both the oral *and* the visual and textual modalities.

Earlier scholars of orality like Ong, because they cast orality as fundamentally non-visual, are quick to point out how recall and production are in a sense incomplete without speaking aloud. This point is well-taken. But the psychological effects discussed above show that it would be mistaken to cast the oral as a basic or "natural" modality and to cast the literary as an unnatural adjunct to it. These effects should remind the music scholar that hearing, sound production, vision, and text each have crucial roles to play in music-making both contemporary and historical. To characterize the oral as totally non-visual and the literary as totally non-aural, as Ong frequently does, may lead to a reductionist perspective. Ong writes, for example, that "the shift from oral to written speech is essentially a shift from sound to visual space," and that "eventually…print replaced The lingering hearing-dominance in the world of thought and expression with the sight-dominance which had its beginnings with writing but could not flourish with the support of writing alone" (2002, 115). In light of this, the analyses of printed material by Blahetka, Czerny, Kullak, Wieck, and Clara Schumann that appear throughout this project can bring into focus the multimodal aspects of "production" at the piano, and how this musical production can be seen through the frame of orality.

Contrary to Ong, one might posit instead that sound is what one makes of it—that is, sound is not solely a matter of air pressure differentials but is, rather, a part of a much larger bodily practice. Mark Grimshaw and Tom Garner, for example, argue for an "emergent" view of sound as a virtual phenomenon rather than a physical one, pointing out how the experience of sound is highly mediated even before conceptualizing it as music or

as the result of an action. From an interdisciplinary viewpoint combining acoustics with cognitive studies, they argue that "sound" is better described as a "sonic aggregate" consisting of multiple "spatio-temporal processes" interpreted through a complex of embodiment (Grimshaw and Garner 2015, 166). This is to say that sound is not simply sound waves. Grimshaw and Garner argue that a host of factors create what we recognize as sound: their body of evidence includes "infra-sonic" sound detected on the skin and cross-modal perceptual effects from the senses of sight and touch (2015, 167, 170). Babies in utero do not perceive sound, the authors argue: "they merely sense sound waves. It is teaching, learning, and experience…that ultimately leads to the ability to perceive sounds" (2015, 174). Sound, like orality, cannot be conceived as a phenomenon operating on a single modality: it is only conceivable as an aggregate created by one's senses.

Kinetic Orality in Black traditions

A broad array of inputs, then, feed into what we think of as the *oral* modality. Kyra Gaunt has created a theoretical framework that connects orality—and its connotations of person-to-person transmission—with bodily movement, which is likewise transmitted within a practice. Her conception of *kinetic orality,* a phrase first coined by Cornel West, describes "the transmission and appropriation of musical ideals and social memories passed on jointly by word of mouth and by embodied musical gestures and formulas" (2006, 3–4). In this way, Gaunt brings the Maussian notion of communicable "body techniques" into contact with orality and its juxtaposition against the written record (Mauss 1973). She observes that both orality and "kinetics" escape capture by the written text, and that they both contain elements of presence—"dramaturgy, enunciation, and gesture," as Paul Gilroy puts it—that are crucial for analyzing artistic "metacommunication," and Black metacommunication in particular (cited in Gaunt 2006, 60). Orality and kinetics, in her

account, seem to be linked for two reasons: first, they are frames that are especially well-suited for describing Black musical traditions, and second, they both strain against the theoretical strictures of the written text.

Gaunt offers as an example the girls' game "shimmy shimmy ko-ko pop," familiar to readers from its quotation in the 2000 hit "Country Grammar" by American rapper Nelly. Although many words in this chant do not create referential meaning in a conversational sense, Gaunt emphasizes that the words of this rhyme are not "nonsense." Instead, the words reinforce the shimmying and shaking that are a part of the game. "While orality tends to be the primary focus of discussions about the transmission of vernacular traditions and cultural identifications," Gaunt writes, "it is a conjunction of orality and kinetics—what Cornel West calls 'kinetic orality'—an underexamined phenomenon in studies of black musical identity and performance" (Gaunt 2006:59). The categories of kinetics and orality, then, are linked not just in their resistance to the written text, but also in their joint use for signification.

Kinetic orality, in this formulation, is illuminating for the forms of skill transmission that I discuss in this project. The examples from Blahetka and Liszt above show how analysis can be fruitful when based on similarities of bodily skill (rather than on notated texts). In her work, Gaunt outlines what she calls a "kinetic intertextuality"—a network that includes girls' musical games as well as the commercial music that samples and references those games (2006, 92). This kinetic intertextuality, for Gaunt, is based on relationships of skill rather than of notes or even words. The network created by Blahetka's *Variations and traced in the section above* is strikingly similar. Kinetic orality is also relevant to the repertoires discussed in other chapters of this dissertation: in Clara Schumann's improvised and sketched prelude to "Aufschwung," for example, Schumann

re-cast not just thematic material but also figurations—patterns of bodily movement. Finally, the nineteenth-century "practical" thoroughbass, though disseminated in print, has the hallmarks of a kinetic orality. Here, the student does not learn chord progressions in the abstract, but rather acquires the skill of playing discrete voice-leading patterns within a specific topology of black and white keys. In Czerny's and Sechter's case, this is done without verbal instructions for each exercise or a written recounting of rules: in this way, the term *kinetic orality* is especially apt.

But the term *kinetic orality* was created to describe music-making in Black contexts, and this facet of the term deserves more discussion. In Gaunt's application, the term describes how Black practices are transmitted through modalities that exceed the written text. This kind of transmission resembles Ong's orality but includes the learning of patterned bodily movements and skills prevalent in Black practices of dance, structured game-playing, and musical participatory movement like clapping. "By kinetic orality," Cornel West writes, "I mean dynamic repetitive and energetic rhetorical styles that form communities, e.g., antiphonal styles and linguistic innovations that accent fluid, improvisational identities and that promote survival at almost any cost" (West 1989, 93).

Here is a crucial difference between the notion of kinetic orality as applied to the music of, for example, Blahetka, and as applied to the Black artists that West mentions, such as Sly Stone and James Brown. In West's usage, "orality" has a tenor of tenacity and unlikely survival. Here, West highlights the oral-aural modality because it is possible for people living in material deprivation. "Kinetic" signals not only the use of the body as an artistic tool, but the use of *this* tool because other tools are not within reach.

Within the context of European piano music *kinetic orality* refers likewise to "dynamic repetitive and energetic rhetorical styles that form communities," but with a crucial difference. This salon and concert hall repertoire does not place the same emphasis on music-making from a place of privation or resistance, instead emphasizing the values Ong calls *homeostasis* and *traditionalism* in a way that preserves existing social configurations. Above, for example, I have outlined how Blahetka's reviewers saw her fluency in the well-established musical language of the brilliant piano repertoire: these reviewers noted that Blahetka offered up the familiar, and to them, this was both her strength and her weakness.

On the other hand, "Black cultural practices," West writes, "emerge out of an acknowledgement of a reality they cannot not know—the ragged edges of the real, of necessity; a reality historically constructed by white supremacist practices in North America during the age of Europe. These ragged edges—of not being able to eat, not to have shelter, not to have health care—all this is infused into the strategies and styles of black cultural practices" (1989, 93).

If this account of kinetic orality seems inapposite to the pianism discussed here, this is to say that oral and improvisatory practices are diverse in themselves do not always entail political resistance or "oppositionality." West readily points out that the resistant orality he describes is not a feature of all Black art across the board: he notes that artists may be influenced by economic and social factors to create art that bolsters a status quo, even if the Black genres in which they operate, as a whole, are "oppositional" (1989, 95–96). Evidence from nineteenth-century music-making also shows that improvisatory practices are not necessarily oppositional, utopian, or politically resistant by nature. Dana Gooley has recently argued that "the vision of musical improvisation as a repository of a social and

ethical 'good,'" or as an inherently resistant cultural force, "is ultimately the product of the early nineteenth century": in other words, the idealistic image of improvisation was born only as actual improvisatory practice declined in Western European concert stages (2018, 21). The vision of improvisation as a force for individual freedom and social transformation, in sum, is easiest to sustain when the daily work of improvisation is hidden away—and this daily work includes the practice regimen suggested by Czerny and Kullak's excerpt collections, as well as the awareness of the golden mean between familiarity and originality suggested by Blahetka's reviewers in the 1830s.

There may seem to be a further disjunction in applying this term to nineteenth-century piano music for the European salon and stage. Some aspects of this disjunction come from the frequent juxtaposition of "classical" music and Black music of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries: the former is frequently described as textual and tied to notation, whereas the latter is described as untexted or oral, with the suggestion that Black practices are learned in a manner that is somehow less formal or organized (Prouty 2006, 318). The category of orality, jazz scholar Ken Prouty argues, is often deployed as a way to assign authenticity and "Otherness" to jazz music in a way that simultaneously elevates and denigrates the genre, setting it apart from Western European classical music (2006, 323). In many accounts that Prouty draws from, jazz is held to be untheorized by its practitioners—perhaps even untheorizable. This is a way of saying that jazz is *non-analytic* in Ong's original, negative sense.

This view of jazz as untheorized and untheorizable has been particularly pronounced in university settings. "Before the late 1960's," writes Bill Dobbins, "the words 'jazz' and 'academia' were generally assumed to be mutually exclusive" (Dobbins 1988). And this is the case in spite of jazz's standing as "the most remarkable musical phenomenon of our

century" (Dobbins 1988). Dobbins relates the disjunction between Black music and the academy to larger social forces in the United States. "White Americans," he writes," generally feel no great need to know about the culture of black America, since such knowledge generally does not increase their potential for economic advantage or upward social mobility… Black Americans, on the other hand, have always had to know a great deal about the culture of white America simply in order to survive" (Dobbins 1988).

The "untheorizable" view of jazz that Dobbins outlines is present in accounts of non-White, non-Western "oral" musics. For example, A. M. Jones—the author of a monograph on African rhythm—makes the totalizing statement that "the African" is "utterly unconscious of any organized theory behind his music. He makes his music quite spontaneously" (quoted in Agawu 2003, 63). Kofi Agawu roundly critiques Jones's methods and rhetoric, as well as the larger system of colonial representation they embody (2003). Below I will describe how this way of characterizing oral art often indicates more about the describer and their position, and less about the oral art being studied.

Psychodynamics, difference, and race

As described above, Ong draws strict distinctions between orality and literacy because each mode determines not only the structure of a person's communication, but also the structure of a person's thought. He describes these structures of thought as "psychodynamics," which he divides into an oral psychodynamics and a literary psychodynamics. In brief, Ong argues that oral art throughout the world tends towards certain structures (like addition and aggregation, described above) because of its creators' psychodynamics. Ong asserts that there are cross-cultural similarities in oral psychodynamics, and that these distinctive patterns of thought are absent or altered in literate cultures. This assertion has been a major point of critique. John Niles points out

that because the main evidence for the psychodynamics is oral art itself, Ong's assertions "tend towards circularity" (2020).

A similar tendency emerges when one looks backwards to Ong's evidence for "oral psychodynamics." This tendency is most marked when Ong describes the relationship between "oral man" and "abstract" thought. In describing this relationship, he used the fieldwork of Alexander Luria in Central Asia, in Uzbekistan—fieldwork that suggested that participants were more likely to identify a round shape as a "circle" rather than a "dinner plate," for example, if they were literate (Ong 2002, 50–51).

This argument, shared between Ong and Luria, is susceptible to many points of critique. With regard to the categorization of shapes, for example, Luria concluded that his subjects tended towards or away from categorical thinking as a result of their education. But a simpler conclusion could be drawn: one might posit that the participants had different levels of familiarity with what the experimenter was expecting, or with the register of scientific or academic rhetoric in general. Thus, when presented with questions like "Precious metals do not rust. Gold is a precious metal. Does it rust or not?" (cited in Ong 2002, 52), a participant's answer might have more to do with their familiarity with the social situation of the anthropological interview—if not simply the mannerisms of scholarly rhetoric—and less to do with their intrinsic "psychodynamics." In other words, Ong and Luria may be seeing essential patterns of thought where there is, in reality, only a cultural familiarity (or a lack of familiarity) with a certain way of speaking or posing.

Overall, then, when one ascribes "orality" to a tradition, one often makes strong implicit claims about the people within that tradition. Agawu has pointed out how scholars' unreflective commitments to Western forms of notation and of representing

knowledge can lead to exaggerated (and often politically expedient claims) about practitioners themselves and their tendencies, instead of more realistic claims about those practitioners' types of knowledge and the ways scholars can best reflect that knowledge in musical and textual notation. The same dynamic is at play here when music is described as "oral."

In using this label to highlight overlooked aspects of European music in the nineteenth century, it is not my intention to simply point out how, say, Czerny's music-making could be similar to Black musical traditions. Instead, my intention is to stress (as Agawu does) that music-theoretic methods often entail unintentional commitments that, through a process of miscommunication, lead to exaggerated claims about the tendencies of the people making music—their psychodynamics, in Ong's terms. This miscommunication, within a certain sociogenic framework, "creates" race. Within a sociogenic theory of racialization, race is "a concept which signifies and symbolizes social conflicts and interests by referring to different types of human bodies"—that is, race is a strategic process of transposing the source of people's conflicts and confrontations onto the essential nature of the people themselves (Omi and Winant 1994, 55). In this way, an exploration of orality in nineteenth-century music, and of how this may differ from orality in other contexts, is implicitly an exploration of race.

Orality and coevalness

The analyst applying the frame of orality to a repertoire must be vigilant to keep from conflating history with technological opportunity: history and opportunity are related, but distinct. People in the present, no matter their material surroundings, cannot be used as examples of archaic media cultures without significant qualification. Sindhumathi Revuluri has made a similar point about the archaeology of song traditions in her "French

Folk Songs and the Invention of History" (2016). There, Revuluri describes how the composer Vincent D'Indy and the Paris Conservatoire librarian Julien Tiersot treated rural French provinces as though they were living snapshots, centuries apart from urban city centers. "Long seen as frozen in the past," Revuluri writes, "the provinces seemed to provide access in the present to a pure French history" (2016, 255).

Revuluri's point echoes an argument made by anthropologist Johannes Fabian. Euro-American scholars, Fabian argues, compare Western and non-Western cultures as their implicit goal. Anthropology and other fields in the humanities, he posits, continue to carry traces of the colonial forces that birthed them. One of these traces is the unspoken suggestion that non-Western peoples can be studied as though they were frozen in time, somehow both available to interrogation but also exemplars of a mythic age, allowing the anthropologist to tacitly deny that they are interacting with their interlocutors on the same plane. This is a distancing rhetoric that Fabian calls the "denial of coevalness," which he defines as "a persistent and systematic tendency to place the referent(s) of anthropology in a Time other than the present" (Fabian 2014, 31). It is noteworthy, I suggest, that references to musical orality appear more often within the subfields of medieval musicology and jazz studies than in the more "canonical" areas of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century music studies: early music and jazz are marked with difference, and thus it is more permissible to use concepts of orality in discussing them. Ernst Ferand, for example, has suggested that oral and "improvisatory" aspects of European music reached their peak in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and declined slowly thereafter—with the implication that orality has been left permanently in the distant past (Ferand 1938, 414). These subfields within music studies could be connected, through orality, in a larger denial of coevalness.

Paths through orality and improvisation

Looking at nineteenth-century pianism through the frame of orality, then, can be a fraught task. At the same time, oral "characteristics" like aggregation and copiousness may give the analyst a clearer picture of those aspects of nineteenth-century music-making that are not prominent in the canonical repertoire. In this section, I will describe how recent critiques of improvisation as a rhetorical category can be applied to Ong's idea of orality, and I will suggest ways of reclaiming orality as an analytic tool.

Laudan Nooshin has observed how the idea of "improvisation" only entered the lexicon of Iranian music studies in the twentieth century. She points out how mid-twentieth-century ethnomusicologists used generalizing and often baldly racializing language to define improvisation within Iranian and other non-European music traditions. "Improvisation came to represent everything that [European] composition was not," she writes: "simple, ephemeral, irrational, inexplicable, created at a 'whim' on the 'spur of the moment' by the 'primitive,' 'untutored' mind" (Nooshin 2003, 246). Through interviews and material collected in her fieldwork, Nooshin argues that the concept of improvisation is inapposite to a classical Iranian music concept. Iranian musicians mold the term "improvisation" to fit their music-concept when they talk about their practice. In Iranian classical music, "creativity in performance was simply an accepted part of a tradition in which no distinction was made between the roles of composer and performer," Nooshin writes. "However, this creativity was understood to be firmly grounded in a lengthy and rigorous training involving the precise memorization of a canonic repertory known since the late nineteenth century as *radif* " (Nooshin 2003, 244). One can recognize the relevance of Nooshin's argument for the practice-based approach to postclassical pianism presented here. The closer one looks at pianistic practice, I suggest, the less useful the term

"improvisation" appears to be: thus my vocabulary of bodily skill, generalization, and entextualization might be read uncharitably as an attempt to avoid talking about "improvisation" in a direct way, or more charitably as a way of valorizing "improvisation" within a canonical repertoire that otherwise revolves around composed works. By using these tools from linguistic anthropology and the cognitive study of skill, my intention is to fasten on to something concrete and practice-based—to shine a light on the firm grounding and "rigorous training" of the type Nooshin describes. But the more concrete and grounded an analysis of practice becomes, the less "improvisatory" that practice can seem.

Vijay Iyer, in his essay "Beneath Improvisation," stresses how improvisation is perceived through what he calls "systems of difference": that is, the word is only used when different musical phenomena are implicitly compared (2019). This observation has been made by others in music studies: after all, even the most studious performance of a published nineteenth-century piano piece, for example, must include elements of dynamics and phrasing that are not indicated in the score—there is a lingering question, then, as to how music scholars should recognize improvisation without recourse to a preconceived non-improvisatory default (Blum 1998, 27–18; Nettl 1998, 4–5). The danger here, Iyer argues, is that the continued use of the term improvisation in music studies can, without reflection, easily re-inscribe racial categories—and this within academic institutions that already undervalue Black art and life (Iyer 2019). This aligns with Nooshin's arguments about the ascription of improvisation to Iranian music: "to deny the constructed nature of our [musical] categories is also to deny their political nature" (Nooshin 2003, 243). Both scholars point out with apprehension how the recent surge of improvisation studies takes on an "entrepreneurial," perhaps even exploitative tinge in this political light.

Nooshin and Iyer's critiques can be directed at Ong's conception of orality, and especially at his construction of "primary" oralities and oral psychodynamics. My criticism of Ong's argumentation, and Luria's experimental design when interviewing non-literate people, parallels the criticisms that have been directed at the concept of improvisation: here, differences in locution, in attitude, and in knowledge of cultural references are construed as essential differences in types of humans, just as the label of improvisation often signals nothing more than the difference between a European canonical tradition and the traditions of others who have been placed outside of that tradition. Further, Ong's "primary" orality and oral psychodynamics do not always accurately reflect the conditions of oral artistic creation, as evidenced by the example of Cocky Wujungu "reading" the central Australian landscape to re-tell Ngarinyin oral narratives. This mismatch between perceived "psychodynamics" on one hand and the actual details of artistic creation or re-telling on the other parallels a similar mismatch in nineteenth-century music making, a mismatch explored by Dana Gooley (2018). Gooley has argued that nineteenth-century literary production and music criticism created an impression of improvisation—one of ease, freedom, and spiritual disclosure—that is difficult to locate within the actual historical practice of improvisation, and that the slow ebbing of public improvisation only strengthened the grip of this romanticized vision (Gooley 2018, 544). Ong's orality, then, is beset by the same epistemic critiques as the concept of improvisation.

How, then, can Nooshin and Iyer's criticisms help reformulate and improve the study of extemporized music in nineteenth-century Europe? Orality, after all, does seem to be a helpful frame with which to view aspects of pianism that are more elusive within a works-based paradigm, including its aggregate structures, its situational specificity, and its copiousness as outlined above. Here I propose three ways to move forward with the concept

of musical orality. These are not simply applications of the orality framework to music: instead, they use musical practice to amend and improve the idea of orality.

First, Ong's studies in orality emphasize how the written word is in many ways dependent on the tendencies of oral communication. This point can be broadened: oral and notated musical traditions are not always distinct, but rather share the same set of tools and in some cases are indistinguishable. My discussion of discursive scenes in chapter 3 is an example of this: there, I argued that the impression of musical text is based on performances, and on the contextual specificity that these performances entail. The perception of Clara Schumann's prelude to "Aufschwung" as a text, for example, is built not only on a reader's audiation of the sketched score, but also on that reader's imagined impression of where this prelude could be in one of Clara Schumann's concert programs, and who she might have been playing for. The intermingling of oral and notated musical paradigms is also demonstrated by the fact that many of Ong's characteristics of oral art can apply to notated music within the work paradigm. Repetition and redundancy, for example, are features of many musics, notated or not. As for situational specificity: printed music and oral art are both produced in ways that constantly refer backward to the social position of their creators. This situationality can be more difficult to locate in a works-based paradigm because the printed score is easily treated as an artifact outside of time.

Second, the oral frame emphasizes the role of preexisting material to a degree that a works-based paradigm does not. As Ong points out, the Greek etymology of the verb "to rhapsodize" refers to the act of "stitch[ing] together song" (Ong 2002, 99). "Homeric Greeks," he writes, "valued clichés because not only the poets but the entire oral noetic world or thought world relied upon the formulaic constitution of thought" (Ong 2002, 102). The theory of entextualization, as well as the linguistic theory of construction grammar,

provides evidence for the continued relevance of this subtle "formulaic constitution" of utterance. The component skills of pianism that I have emphasized throughout this dissertation—components that pianists practiced through exemplar generalization—parallel this constitution.

Third and finally, the oral frame calls attention to the spectrum of traditionalism and experimentalism in extemporized art. Ong emphasizes what he calls the "homeostatic" character of oral art: this is its tendency towards retrenchment and the reinforcement of older forms, a retrenchment that is encouraged because those forms have established modes of transmission (2002, 46–49). But musical improvisation is not only traditionalist: it can also be experimental, pushing aesthetic boundaries. Gooley highlights this potential for experimentation in his work on Hummel, who was among the last improvisers in the late-eighteenth-century style. Improvisers like Hummel, he argues, were faced with a difficult problem: they had to "adapt an elite, private musical practice with the conditions of industrial modernity and its expanded public" (2016, 199–200). Hummel responded to this problem, Gooley writes, by striking a tenuous middle ground in his free fantasies, straddling the line between the intricacy that one might expect at a private salon and the simpler, more extroverted charm proper to public performances for paying audience members. Gooley ends his article with the provocative suggestion that scholars of improvisation have overemphasized the experimental end of the improvisatory spectrum, overlooking the accessibility of "public communication" that was central to historical improvisation (2016, 199). Ong's conception of oral homeostasis aligns with this accessibility stressed by Gooley, and likewise encourages music scholars to further explore genres and repertoires on the basis of their influence and social importance rather than on their newness, originality, or current cultural prestige.

Orality and improvisation, then, are concepts that call for critical reflection when deployed in music studies. Historically, these concepts have reinscribed and strengthened preexisting political and racial boundaries. But if those boundaries are traced and questioned, the concept of orality has the potential to uncover aspects of music-making that score-based analysis too often overlooks. My goal in this dissertation has been to investigate historical practices of improvisation without falling back on the word's muddled connotations, and further, to point out those connotations and create a new vocabulary for analyzing extemporized music. The theoretical scaffolding developed here—cognitive skill generalization, entextualization, discursive scenes—shows how nineteenth-century improvisation was supported by a sophisticated bodily regimen of practice.

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