

CON FURIA: CHARLES AVISON AND THE SCARLATTI SECT IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND

Mark Kroll
(BOSTON, MA)

Domenico Scarlatti may justly be ranked among the great masters of this age.
Charles Avison, *Essay on Musical Expression*, 1753

CHARLES AVISON (1709–1780), the leading eighteenth-century English composer of Italian-style concerti grossi, published twelve concerto arrangements of Domenico Scarlatti's harpsichord sonatas in 1744¹. These works represent an important contribution to the Scarlatti craze that was sweeping the British Isles during this era. They also reflect an ambivalence that Avison felt about certain aspects of the Scarlatti compositional style, that was shared by some of his contemporaries². What precisely was the nature of that ambivalence? Was it a function of Scarlatti's unusual approach to harmony, rhythm, phrase structure and form, or did it have more to do with his idiosyncratic approach to the keyboard? A discussion and analysis of these concerto arrangements can provide a more nuanced understanding of Scarlatti reception in England at this time, an appreciation of Avison's skills as an orchestrator and arranger, and a wider perspective on the influence and popularity of the keyboard music of other foreign composers in the British Isles throughout the eighteenth century.

¹. *Twelve Concerto's [sic] in Seven Parts for Four Violins, one Alto Viola, a Violoncello, & a Thorough Bass, done from two Books of Lessons for the Harpsichord. Composed by Sig^r. Domenico Scarlatti with additional Slow Movements from Manuscript Solo Pieces, by the same Author. Dedicated to M^{rs}. Bowes [...] Printed for the Author, by Joseph Barber in Newcastle, and Sold by the musick Shops in town.* The edition sold for £1.11s.6d. For an excellent discussion of these concerti, see CASSINGHAM, Jack. *The Twelve Scarlatti-Avison Concertos of 1744*, D.M.A. Diss., Kansas City (KA), Conservatory of Music, University of Missouri, 1968, and BOYD, Malcolm. *Domenico Scarlatti: Master of Music*, New York, Schirmer, 1986, pp. 224–231.

². The English furor over the Scarlatti sonatas has been well documented. See NEWTON, Richard. 'The English Cult of Domenico Scarlatti', in: *Music & Letters*, xx/2 (April 1939), pp. 138–156.

MR AVISON OF NEWCASTLE AND THE ENGLISH SCARLATTI SECT

Avison would seem at first glance to be an unlikely proponent of Scarlatti or of any non-English composer³. Except for a youthful visit to London he made at some point between 1721 and 1735, when he met and probably studied with Francesco Geminiani (1687–1762), and a few brief excursions to neighbouring towns in Northern England, Avison was a provincial musician who lived, worked and died in his native city of Newcastle-Upon-Tyne. Nevertheless, he was familiar with the music of many continental composers, not only from Italy, but also from Germany and France, such as Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach and Jean-Philippe Rameau. Evidence for this can be found in the preface to his *Six Sonatas for the Harpsichord with Accompaniments For two Violins and Violoncello*, published in 1764:

Among the various Productions of foreign Composers for the Harpsichord, the Sonatas of SCARLATTI, RAMEAU AND CARLO-BACH have their *peculiar Beauties*. The *fine Fancy* of the Italian — the *spirited Science* of the Frenchman — and the German's *diffusive Expression* are the distinguishing Signatures of their Music.

Avison, moreover, not only wrote about these foreign composers; he also performed their music. In 1751, as Director of the Newcastle Music Society, he was the first to introduce Rameau's *Pièces de Clavecin en Concert* to England⁴.

It is therefore not surprising that Avison would want to promote Scarlatti's sonatas in England, adding his voice of approval to those members of what Charles Burney called «the Scarlatti sect», whose most prominent advocates were Joseph Kelway (c1702–1782) and Thomas Roseingrave (1690/1691–1766). Burney described Kelway as a brilliant harpsichordist

³. For further information on Avison's life and works, see BURCHELL, Jenny. *Polite or Commercial Concerts? Concert Management and Orchestral Repertoire in Edinburgh, Bath, Oxford, Manchester, and Newcastle, 1730–1799*, New York-London, Garland, 1996 (Outstanding Dissertations in Music from British Universities); *Music in the British Provinces, 1690–1914*, edited by Rachel Cowgill and Peter Holman, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2007; *Charles Avison's Essay on Musical Expression: with Related Writings by William Hayes and Charles Avison*, edited by Pierre Dubois, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2004; HORSLEY, P. M. 'Charles Avison: The Man and His Milieu', in: *Music & Letters*, LV/1 (1974), pp. 5–23; AVISON, Charles. *Concerto-Grosso Arrangements of Francesco Geminiani's Sonatas for Violin and Basso Continuo*, Op. 1, Nos. 1–10 and 12, edited by Mark Kroll, Middleton (WI), A-R Editions, 2010 (Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era, 160); SOUTHEY, Roz. *Music-Making in North-East England During the Eighteenth Century*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2006; EAD-MADDISON, Margaret – HUGHES, David. *The Ingenious Mr Avison: Making Music and Money in Eighteenth-Century Newcastle*, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, Tyne Bridge Publishing (in association with the Avison Ensemble), 2009, and STEPHENS, Norris Lynn. *Charles Avison: An Eighteenth-Century English Composer, Musician and Writer*, Ph.D. Diss., Pittsburgh (PA), University of Pittsburgh, 1968.

⁴. Avison announced these premieres in the *Newcastle Courant* of 21 September 1751: «[...] there will be performed [...] in every Concert, during this Season, select Pieces from the Works of M. RAMEAU»; cited in BURCHELL, Jenny. *Op. cit.* (see note 3), p. 283.

who «kept Scarlatti's best Lessons in constant practice [and] executed the most difficult lessons of Scarlatti, in a manner peculiarly neat and delicate»⁵. Roseingrave's most significant contribution was his collection of 42 Scarlatti sonatas that he published in 1739, shortly after the London publication of the 30 sonatas in the *Essercizi per Gravicembalo* (London, 1738)⁶. Avison, although a skilled harpsichordist and organist, was not a keyboard player by profession like Roseingrave and Kelway. He therefore turned to the genre with which he was most comfortable, to promote and perform Scarlatti's music: the concerto grosso.

Avison nonetheless began his project of arranging Scarlatti sonatas rather tentatively. At some point early in 1743 he issued a single concerto arrangement of Scarlatti's sonatas K 21 and K 29, *1 Concerto in Seven Parts done from the Lessons of Sigr. Domenico Scarlatti*. He published this himself in Newcastle⁷. Avison's caution probably stemmed from monetary as well as musical concerns. An excellent businessman, he may have worried that a larger edition might be a financial failure. Avison therefore announced on the reverse of the title page that a complete set of 12 concertos «will not be publish'd till One Hundred Setts are subscribed for». His fears were unjustified: he attracted 151 subscribers to the 1744 set, among them highly regarded professionals such as Michael Festing, Geminiani, Maurice Green, Kelway and the harpsichord maker Burkat Schudi (1702-1773). The «Musical Societies» of Carlisle, Glasgow, Norwich (which ordered «two Setts»), Oxford, York (also «two Setts»), and «The Philharmonic Society at the Crown and Anchor in the Strand on the Wednesday Nights 3 Setts» also subscribed, indicating that there were already plans to perform these works beyond Newcastle⁸.

⁵. BURNEY, Charles. *A General History of Music From the Earliest Ages to the Present Period* (1789), 4 vols., London, Printed for the Author, and sold by J. Robson, 1782-1789; rpr., edited by Frank Mercer, 2 vols., New York, Dover, 1957, vol. II, p. 1009. Kelway was organist at the church of St Martin-in-the-Fields, and from 1764, harpsichord master to Queen Charlotte. For more information on Kelway, see BOYD, Malcolm. *Op. cit.* (see note 1), pp. 213-215 and p. 226.

⁶. Among the list of subscribers to Roseingrave's edition, titled *XLII Suites de Pieces pour le Clavecin. En deux volumes*, were Thomas Arne, William de Fesch, Morris Green, John Pepusch, Geminiani, Edward Purcell, Joseph Mahoon («Harpsichord Maker to his Majesty»), William Boyce, and Charles Avison. For further information about Roseingrave, see BOYD, Malcolm. *Op. cit.* (see note 1), *passim*, and KIRKPATRICK, Ralph. *Domenico Scarlatti*, revised edition, Princeton (NJ), Princeton University Press, 1983, *passim*. For additional information about the *Essercizi*, which contained Sonatas K 1-30, and were published between 21 April 1738 and 31 January 1739, see BOYD, Malcolm. *Op. cit.* (see note 1), pp. 157-159, and KIRKPATRICK, Ralph. *Op. cit.* (see *supra*), pp. 101-104 and 156-161.

⁷. Avison announced that it was sold «at the golden Harp in New Street Covent Garden, Mr Simpson by y^e Royal Exchange and Mr Wamsley in Piccadilly». See BOYD, Malcolm. *Op. cit.* (see note 1), p. 225. The manuscript of this concerto can be found in the second of two recently discovered workbooks of Avison, pp. 266-274. For information on these workbooks, see KROLL, Mark. 'Two Important New Sources for the Music of Charles Avison', in: *Music & Letters*, LXXXVI/3 (August 2005), pp. 414-431. The two workbooks are currently owned by the Charles Avison Society of Newcastle, England, and are housed in the Charles Avison Archives of the Newcastle Public Library.

⁸. See NEWTON, Richard. *Op. cit.* (see note 2), p. 143.

One name, however, is notably absent from this list of subscribers: Thomas Roseingrave. Since Avison had used his edition as the primary source for the arrangements, one would have expected Roseingrave to purchase a set of compositions based on his own publication. We might imagine that these two Scarlatti enthusiasts had a falling-out during the process of composition; a more likely — and positive — explanation is that Avison presented Roseingrave with a complimentary copy, as an expression of gratitude for providing the sources for his concertos.

CAPRICIOUS SCARLATTI?

As I have indicated, Avison parted ways with many members of the English ‘Scarlatti sect’ by not taking a completely uncritical view of Scarlatti’s style. Although in his *Essay on Musical Expression* he called Scarlatti «one of the great masters of this age» and admired the originality and «the beautiful Chain of *Modulation*» in the sonatas, Avison qualified his praise by adding that in many places «the finest *Passages* are greatly disguised with capricious *Divisions*»⁹. Avison had, in fact, previously described his reservations about Scarlatti in 1743, in the preface to the trial concerto arrangement:

THESE LESSONS for the HARPSICHORD being extremely difficult, and many delightful Passages entirely disguised, either with capricious Divisions, or an unnecessary Repetition in many Places, few Performers are able to execute them with that Taste and Correctness they require: therefore, the forming them into Parts, and taking off the Mask which concealed their natural Beauty and Excellency, will not only more effectually express that pleasing Air, and sweet Succession of Harmony, so peculiar to the Compositions of this Author, but render them more easy and familiar to the Instrument for which they were first intended.

We recall that Avison was not alone in his opinion that the «natural beauty and excellency» of Scarlatti’s sonatas was often concealed or too difficult to render. Ambrose Pittman, reportedly a student of Thomas Arne (1710–1778), would echo many of Avison’s complaints some 40 years later, in his edition of 15 sonatas, titled *The Beauties of Domenico Scarlatti*¹⁰. Pittman writes in his preface that the reception of Scarlatti’s sonatas has «been

⁹. AVISON, Charles. *An Essay on Musical Expression* [...] *The Second Edition, with Alterations and Large Additions*, London, C. Davis, 1753, rpt. New York, Broude Brothers, 1967, p. 52.

¹⁰. The full title is *The Beauties of Domenico Scarlatti: Selected from his Suites and Lecons* [sic], for the Harpsichord or Piano Forte and Revised with a Variety of Improvements, edited by Ambrose Pittman, London, s.n., c1785. All the sonatas were taken from the Roseingrave edition. There is no publication date, but it probably appeared in the mid-1780s.

greatly retarded by the many superfluous and studied difficulties with which they abound», and that in order «[t]o remove these Obstacles, which have, in some measure, obscured such admirable Lessons from Public Notice, and that they may, in future, be more readily understood by the Student, [he has] divested them of their pedantic difficulties». These included «the Tenor Cleff, intended only to perplex the Sight of the Performer», and «unnatural and cramp positions of the hands [so] that the fingering might *be* rendered easy and graceful». Despite such dramatically stated intentions, however, Pittman's edition contained very few alterations of the originals, none of them significant. Avison went much further and essentially re-wrote a large number of the Scarlatti sonatas he used. Indeed, from these rewritings, many of which are substantial and even quite radical, we can begin to understand the flaws that he perceived in Scarlatti's sonatas.

THE TWELVE CONCERTOS

Avison's edition involved a variety of sources. TABLE I lists each movement and the Scarlatti sonatas he used (when known), as well as the changes he made to keys and tempo markings. 'K' refers to Kirkpatrick numbers, 'R' the numbers in the Roseingrave edition, and 'V' indicates the sonatas found in various Venice manuscripts¹¹.

TABLE I: SOURCES, KEYS AND TEMPO MARKINGS OF THE AVISON-SCARLATTI ARRANGEMENTS

CONCERTO	MOVEMENT	K	SOURCE	KEY: ORIGINAL/NEW	TEMPO: ORIGINAL/NEW
I	i	91/I	V	G/A	<i>Grave/Adagio</i>
	ii	24	R ₃₀	A/A	<i>Presto/Allegro</i>
	iii	91/IV	V	G/A	<i>Allegro (3/8)/ Amoroso (3/4)</i>
	iv	26	R ₃₃	A/A	<i>Presto/Allegro</i>
II	i	91/III	V	G/G	<i>Grave/Largo</i>
	ii	13	R ₂₀	G/G	<i>Presto/Allegro</i>
	iii	4	R ₂	G minor/G minor	<i>Allemanda/Andante*</i>
	iv	2	R ₅	G/G	<i>Vivace/Vivace</i>

¹¹. For information on these and other Scarlatti manuscripts, see KIRKPATRICK, Ralph. *Op. cit.* (see note 6), pp. 399-340 and 442-344; BOYD, Malcolm. *Op. cit.* (see note 1), pp. 150-157 and p. 226; CASSINGHAM, Jack. *Op. cit.* (see note 1), pp. 20-25; and CHOI, Seunghyun. *Newly Found Eighteenth-Century Manuscripts of Domenico Scarlatti's Sonatas and Their Relationship to Other Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth-Century Sources*, Ph.D. Diss., Madison (WI), University of Wisconsin, 1974.

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CONCERTO	MOVEMENT	K	SOURCE	KEY: ORIGINAL/NEW	TEMPO: ORIGINAL/NEW
III	i	89/II	V	D minor/D minor	<i>Grave/Largo andante</i>
	ii	37	R25	C minor/D minor	<i>Allegro/Allegro spiritoso</i>
	iii	38	R26	F/F	<i>Allegro/Vivace</i>
	iv	1	R10	D minor/D minor	<i>Allegro/Allegro</i>
IV	i	12	R19	G minor/A minor	<i>Presto (c)/ Andante (4/4)</i>
	ii	3	R11	A minor/A minor	<i>Presto/Allegro</i>
	iii	—	Avison?	—	—
	iv	36	R24	A minor/A minor	<i>Allegro/Vivace (semiquaver=quaver)</i>
V	i	—	Avison?	—	—
	ii	11	R28	C minor/D minor	<i>Allegro/Allegro</i>
	iii	41	R41	D minor/D minor	<i>Andante moderato/ Andante moderato</i>
	iv	5	R14	D minor/D minor	<i>Allegro/Allegro</i>
VI	i	—	Avison?	—	—
	ii	29	R13	D/D	<i>Presto/Con furia</i>
	iii	89/III	V	D minor/D minor	<i>Allegro/Adagio</i>
	iv	21	R32	D/D	<i>Allegro/Vivacamente</i>
VII	i	88/I	V	G minor/G minor	<i>Grave/Adagio</i>
	ii	19	R22	F minor/G minor	<i>Allegro/Allegro</i>
	iii	88/IV	V	G minor/G minor	<i>Minuet/Adagio</i>
	iv	17	R34	F/G	<i>Presto/ Allegro affettuoso</i>
VIII	i	81/I	V	E minor/E minor	<i>Grave/Adagio</i>
	ii	20	R21	E/E	<i>Presto/Allegro</i>
	iii	81/IV	V	E minor/E minor	<i>Allegro/Amoroso</i>
	iv	15	R31	E minor/E minor	<i>Allegro/Vivace</i>
IX	i	81/II	V	E minor/E minor	<i>Allegro/Largo</i>
	ii	31	R3	G minor/A minor	<i>Allegro/Con spirito</i>
	iii	—	Avison?	—	—
	iv	7	R18	A minor/A minor	<i>Presto/Allegro</i>
X	i	—	Avison?	—	—
	ii	10	R16	D minor/D minor	<i>Presto/Allegro</i>
	iii	—	Avison?	—	—
	iv	9**	R8	D minor/D minor	<i>Presto/Giga allegro</i>

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CONCERTO	MOVEMENT	K	SOURCE	KEY: ORIGINAL/NEW	TEMPO: ORIGINAL/NEW
XI	i	–	Avison?	–	–
	ii	28	R ₃₅	E/G	<i>Presto/ Allegro</i>
	iii	25	R ₃₇	F \sharp minor/G minor	<i>Allegro/ Andante moderato</i>
	iv	6	R ₁₅	F/G	<i>Allegro/ Vivacement</i>
XII	i	–	Avison?	–	–
	ii	23	R ₃₉	D/D	<i>Allegro/ Allegro spiritoso</i>
	iii	–	Avison?	–	–
	iva (bars 1–12)	–	Avison?	–	–
	ivb (bars 1–107)	33	R ₇	D/D	<i>Allegro/ Allegro</i>

*. The tempo was *Allegro* in the *Essercizi*.

**. The Sonata K 9 is attached to Roseingrave's Sonata No. 7. Avison did not use it here, but rather in Concerto x/iv.

This list confirms that Avison used the Roseingrave edition as his primary source, since six of the sonatas do not appear in the *Essercizi*, but only in the Roseingrave (for instance, K 31/R₃, K 33/R₇, K 36/R₂₄, K 37/R₂₅, K 38/R₂₆, and K 41/R₄₁)¹². Ten movements for the concerti, however, appear in neither Roseingrave nor the *Essercizi*. These come from the multi-movement 'basso continuo' sonatas for violin and harpsichord, K 81, K 88, K 89, and K 91, which are found in the Venice manuscripts also listed in TABLE 1.

THE VENICE SOURCES AND GEMINIANI

Avison's apparent access to works by Scarlatti that were likely extant only in Venetian manuscripts raises some interesting questions. Despite Burney's claim to the contrary, we know that Avison never visited Italy and therefore could not have seen the originals in Venice¹³. Perhaps Roseingrave brought copies of them back to England and shared them with Avison. It is, however, not inconceivable that Geminiani was the source. An émigré to London from his native Italy in 1714, Geminiani remained an inveterate traveller who spent a considerable amount of time outside England, in centres like Paris, where he possibly met Rameau. If this is the case, perhaps it was Geminiani who had brought Rameau's

¹². Roseingrave's edition contained 45 individual pieces: the 30 sonatas found in the *Essercizi*; a second version of the Sonata in G major, K 8; his own *Introduction* [...], and twelve additional Scarlatti sonatas that Roseingrave probably found during his visit to Italy.

¹³. Burney wrote that Avison «visited Italy early in his youth». BURNAY, Charles. *A General History of Music* [...], *op. cit.* (see note 5), vol. II, p. 1013.

Pièces de Clavecin en Concert from France for his «heir», as Geminiani once called Avison¹⁴. Geminiani could have done the same with Scarlatti: that is, providing Avison with copies of the otherwise inaccessible Scarlatti manuscripts. Indeed, Geminiani may well have been the guiding force behind the decision to make concerto arrangements of the Scarlatti sonatas. A skilled and frequent arranger of his and other people's music, Geminiani had composed concerto-grosso transcriptions of Corelli's *Sonatas for Violin and Continuo*, Op. 5, and his own violin sonatas, Opp. 1 and 4; Avison himself had also made an arrangement of Geminiani's Op. 4 for the same ensemble, again probably at his teacher's suggestion¹⁵.

TAKING OFF SCARLATTI'S MASK

Regardless of whether or not Avison was working from a published version or manuscripts of the sonatas, he made alterations to almost every one. Some of the changes were minor, such as a transposition to another key or the occasional re-wording of tempo markings. As we see in TABLE 1 (see *supra*, pp. 257–259), Avison changed the key for 11 of the 39 Scarlatti sonatas or movements he used. These can be found in the following concerti: I/i; I/iii; III/ii; IV/i; V/ii; VII/ii and VII/iv; IX/ii; and XI/ii, XI/iii and XI/iv. Alterations to the tempi are also frequent. The second movement of Concerto VI exemplifies a subtle but interesting change in tempo marking: Avison replaces Scarlatti's (and Roseingrave's) «*Presto*» with the assumedly more colourful and energetic «*Con furia*»¹⁶.

Scarlatti's harmonies also provided fodder for Avison's arranging skills¹⁷. In the second half of bar 8 in the concerto VI/ii he simplifies Scarlatti's progression from IV–

¹⁴. For information on this quotation and the relationship between Avison and Geminiani, see KROLL, Mark. '«You are my Heir». Geminiani's Influence on the Life and Music of Charles Avison', in: *Geminiani Studies*, edited by Christopher Hogwood, Bologna, Ut Orpheus Edizioni, 2012 (Ad Parnassum Studies, 6), pp. 301–330. Geminiani's travels might also explain how three sonatas for two violins and basso continuo by Johann Adolph Hasse (in E minor, G minor and B_♭ major) came into Avison's possession; they appear in Workbook I, pp. 132a–137b. Avison was never in Berlin or Dresden, of course, but Burney tells us that Hasse heard Domenico Scarlatti play in Naples, and marvelled at Scarlatti's «wonderful hand, as well as fecundity of invention». BURNEY, Charles. *The Present State of Music in Germany, the Netherlands and the United Provinces*, 2 vols., London, Printed for T. Becket & Co., Strand, J. Robinson and G. Robinson, 1773, vol. I, p. 347. Geminiani was in Naples from 1711–1714, and might possibly have obtained a copy of these trio sonatas at that time.

¹⁵. The arrangements of Corelli's Sonatas Op. 5 are found in Workbook I, pp. 1a–1b, 29a–63b. Avison's concerto arrangements of Geminiani's Sonatas Opp. 1 and 4 are found in Workbook II, pp. 5–74 and 79–171, respectively. On Geminiani's sonatas and arrangements, see RASCH, Rudolf. 'Francesco Geminiani's Harpsichord Sonatas and the Art of Arrangement', in the present volume.

¹⁶. Pittman uses the tempo designation «*Brillante*» for this sonata, which he calls *Lesson IV*. He also adds trills to bars 16–20, and re-writes the concluding three bars.

¹⁷. In all examples, the seven-part concerti are reduced to a four-part score, with the stem directions indicating *concertino* and *ripieno* parts.

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vii (in the new key of A major) to just I (see Ex. 1); in bar 9 Avison changes Scarlatti's I-VI-II-V to two chords: tonic and dominant. He would make similar or more significant harmonic alterations to the other sonatas, sometimes even changing the mode from major to minor.

Ex. 1: Domenico Scarlatti, Sonata K 29/R13, bars 4-7 and 10-11; Charles Avison, Concerto vi/i, bars 4-9.

Scarlatti
PRESTO

Hpsd.

Avison 1744
CON FURIA

VI I

VI II

Vla

Vc

Workbook II
[NO TEMPO]

VI I

VI II

Vla

Vc

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Ex. 1: Domenico Scarlatti, Sonata K 29/R13, continued.

Scarlatti

Hpsd. LH

RH

Avison 1744

VI I *tr*

VI II

Vla

Vc 6 — 7 # 6 —

Workbook II

VI I *tr*

VI II

Vla

Vc

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Ex. 1: Domenico Scarlatti, Sonata K 29/R13, continued.

Scarlatti Bar 10 (8-9 omitted) LH LH

Hpsd.

Avison 1744

VI I

VI II

Vla

Vc

Workbook II

VI I

VI II

Vla

Vc

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This movement, moreover, also provides an opportunity to examine Avison's skills as an orchestrator, since it appears in two versions: the manuscript setting of the 1743 concerto that can be found in Avison's *Workbook II*, and Concerto VI of the complete set of 1744¹⁸. Returning to Ex. 1, we see in bars 8–9 (bars 10–11 in the Scarlatti sonata) that in the later setting Avison has made some subtle changes in the voicing of violins I; and 2, *concertino* and *ripieno*, has expanded the role of the viola, and has placed the bass-line an octave higher. Furthermore, the broken triads in violin 2, *concertino* and *ripieno*, and in the viola of the 1744 version, come closer to the melodic contours of the original harpsichord sonata.

Other differences in the scoring between the two settings are noticeable in bars 23–24 from this movement, which correspond to bars 27–28 in Scarlatti's sonata (see Ex. 2):

Ex. 2: Domenico Scarlatti, Sonata K 29/R13, bars 27–28; Charles Avison, Concerto VI/ii, bars 23–24.

The musical score for Ex. 2 is presented in two systems. The top system, labeled 'Scarlatti' and '27', shows the Harpsichord (Hpsd.) part for bars 27–28 of Sonata K 29/R13. The bottom system, labeled 'Avison 1744' and '23', shows the orchestral parts for bars 23–24 of Concerto VI/ii. The Avison system includes staves for Violins I and II (VI I, VI II), Viola (Vla), Violoncello (Vc), and a second Violoncello (Workbook II). The Avison system also includes fingerings (6, 7, #, 6, 6, #) and a second Vc staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C).

¹⁸. See *supra*, footnote 7. There is no tempo indication in the manuscript.

Here, Avison has thinned out the texture of the *tutti* orchestration in the manuscript version, creating a more transparent scoring with only *concertino* violin and *concertino* cello. In addition, Avison's replacement of Scarlatti's short semiquaver punctuations in the bass-line with crotchets in both versions raises an interesting performance-practice question: does Avison's notation indicate that long note values were typically played shorter in his orchestra, or did Avison use crotchets rather than semiquavers because they were more idiomatic to a sustained orchestral sonority? The answer to these questions remains elusive.

As the previous examples reveal, Avison removed musical material from the sonatas, perhaps to avoid the «unnecessary repetition» that he had criticized in the preface. He omitted even more of the originals in many of the other concerti. TABLE 2, which compares the number of bars in Scarlatti's sonatas with those in Avison's concerti, tells us just how far Avison pursued this practice:

TABLE 2
COMPARISON OF BAR NUMBERS BETWEEN AVISON'S CONCERTOS AND THE SOURCE SCARLATTI SONATAS
(Alterations in metre, note values and tempo are indicated where necessary.)

CONCERTO	MOVEMENT	AVISON	SCARLATTI
I	i	14	15
	ii	66	66
	iii	38 (<i>Amoroso</i> 3/4)	92 (<i>Allegro</i> 3/8)
	iv	137	148
II	i	22	22
	ii	108	113
	iii	32 (<i>Andante</i> 4/4)	39 (<i>Allegro</i> c)
	iv	63	78
III	i	26	17
	ii	45	54
	iii	52	70
	iv	31	31
IV	i	32 (<i>Andante</i> 4/4)	49 (<i>Presto</i> c)
	ii	60	94
	iii	Avison	-
	iv	88 (quavers)	94 (semiquavers)
V	i	Avison	-
	ii	27	28
	iii	45	107
	iv	73	90

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CONCERTO	MOVEMENT	AVISON	SCARLATTI
VI	i	Avison	-
	ii	83	87
	iii	39 (3/4)	94 (3/8)
	iv	102	150
VII	i	18	26
	ii	89	93
	iii	28	32
	iv	113	128
VIII	i	12	15
	ii	96	101
	iii	49 (3/4)	54 (3/8)
	iv	69	112
IX	i	-	-
	ii	108	123
	iii	-	-
	iv	137	155
X	i	-	-
	ii	71	75
	iii	-	-
	iv	52 (<i>Giga allegro</i>)	60 (<i>Presto</i>)
XI	i	-	-
	ii	112	129
	iii	73 (<i>Andante moderato</i>)	87 (<i>Allegro</i>)
	iv	75	75
XII	i	-	-
	ii	55	70
	iii	Unknown (bars 1-12)	-
	iva	107	101

To cite just a few of the most notable instances, in Concerto IV/i the 94 bars of the Scarlatti sonata become 60 in the concerto; Concerto V/ii contains 45 bars, with 107 in the Scarlatti original; and Concerto VIII/iv has 69 bars, Scarlatti 112.

Ex. 3, from the fourth movement of the sixth concerto, exemplifies several of the categories of alterations described above, namely a change of tempo from *Allegro* to *Vivacemete*, adjustments to the orchestration, and most significantly, the removal and re-writing of musical material:

CON FURLA: CHARLES AVISON AND THE SCARLATTI SECT IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND

Ex. 3: Domenico Scarlatti, Sonata K 21/R32, bars 83–92; Charles Avison, Concerto VI/iv, bars 67–76.

The musical score is presented in three systems. The first system, titled 'Scarlatti', shows the original manuscript for Sonata K 21/R32, bars 83–92, for Harpsichord (Hpsd.). It is in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a tempo marking of 'ALLEGRO'. The notation includes markings for the Left Hand (LH) and Right Hand (RH). The second system, titled 'Avison 1744', shows the adaptation for Concerto VI/iv, bars 67–76, for a full orchestra (VI I, VI II, Vla, Vc). It is in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a tempo marking of 'VIVACEMENTE'. The notation includes trills (tr) and a curtailed 3-note figure in bar 70. The third system, titled 'Workbook II', shows the adaptation for a full orchestra (VI I, VI II, Vla, Vc) with a tempo marking of '[NO TEMPO]'. The notation includes trills (tr) and a curtailed 3-note figure in bar 70.

Moreover, in bar 70 of the concerto (which corresponds to bar 86 in the Scarlatti) Avison has replaced Scarlatti's continuation of the melodic and rhythmic patterns in the preceding bars with a curtailed 3-note figure; and in Avison's bars 72, 74 and 76 Scarlatti's continuous semiquavers accompanied by his trademark repeated chords are arranged as two sharply accented quavers. This is, to be sure, a dramatic rhetorical gesture, but quite distinct from the sense of energy and drive that Scarlatti created with his passagework.

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Ex. 3: Domenico Scarlatti, Sonata K 21/R32, continued.

Scarlatti
88

Hpsd.

Avison 1744
72

VI I

VI II

Vla

Vc

Workbook II

VI I

VI II

Vla

Vc

In Exs. 4a and 4b (pp. 269–271), showing three excerpts from the second movement of Concerto III, we find another instance of modified tempo marking and key.

Avison, here, has altered the tempo from *Allegro* to *Allegro spiritoso*, choosing a faster or more energetic designation that recalls his use of *con furia* in Concerto VI; he has also transposed the sonata from C minor to D minor, perhaps because his string players, many of whom were amateurs, might have found it easier to play¹⁹.

¹⁹. Avison was forced to accommodate the limited abilities of the «Gentlemen Amateurs» who played in his orchestra in Newcastle, especially because many were also his patrons.

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Ex. 4a: Domenico Scarlatti, Sonata K 37/R25, bars 5-7, 15-23, 25-28.

5 ALLEGRO [A-----] [B-----]

15 [C-----] [D-----]

17 [E-----] [F-----] [G-----]

20 [Omitted in Avison-----] [H-----] [I-----]

23 [J-----] [Omitted in Avison] [K-----]

26 [L-----]

The musical score is written for piano and consists of 28 measures. It is in G minor (three flats) and 3/4 time. The tempo is marked 'ALLEGRO'. The score is divided into sections labeled A through L, with some sections marked as 'Omitted in Avison'. The notation includes various ornaments, trills, and a repeating bass line. The score is presented in a single system with multiple staves.

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Ex. 4b: ; Charles Avison, Concerto III/iii, bars 5-7, 13-22.

The musical score consists of three systems of staves for Violin I (VI I), Violin II (VI II), Viola (Vla), and Cello/Vibraphone (Vc). The tempo is ALLEGRO SPIRITOSO.

- System 1:** Measures 5-8. Features a first ending bracket [A-----] over measures 5-6 and a second ending bracket [B-----] over measures 7-8. The Vc part has fingerings #, #, and # under measures 5, 7, and 8 respectively.
- System 2:** Measures 9-12. Features a third ending bracket [C-----] over measures 9-10 and a fourth ending bracket [D-----] over measures 11-12. The Vc part has fingerings 6, 6, 6, 4, 6, 6 under measures 9-14 and a sharp symbol (#) under measure 12.
- System 3:** Measures 13-16. Features a fifth ending bracket [E-----] over measures 13-14, a sixth ending bracket [F-----] over measures 15-16, a seventh ending bracket [G-----] over measures 17-18, and an eighth ending bracket [H-----] over measures 19-20. The Vc part has fingerings 6, 4#, 6, 4#, 6, 6, 6b, 6b, 6b, #, 6, 6, 6, 6, 6# under measures 13-24 and a sharp symbol (#) under measure 20.

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Ex. 4b: Charles Avison, Concerto III/III, continued.

The musical score for Charles Avison's Concerto III/III, measures 18-28, is presented in four staves: Violin I (VI I), Violin II (VI II), Viola (Vla), and Violoncello (Vc). The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The score includes various melodic and harmonic changes, including 'telescoping' of passages. A large watermark 'University of Cambridge' is visible across the score.

Measures 18-19 are marked with bracket [I] and [J]. Measures 20-21 are marked with bracket [K]. Measures 22-23 are marked with bracket [L]. The score shows various melodic and harmonic changes, including 'telescoping' of passages. A large watermark 'University of Cambridge' is visible across the score.

The other changes to Scarlatti's original text in these examples, however, are far more substantial. In a certain sense they leave the world of arrangement and enter that of re-composition. The most notable is Avison's practice of what I call 'telescoping', whereby he takes certain passages or melodic figures in the original and moves them, sometimes in a re-written form, to different positions in the bar. The bracketed and lettered figures in Exs. 4a and 4b indicate where and how this was done. For instance, Avison shifts Scarlatti's melodic figures on the second halves of bars 5 and 6 to the beginning of the corresponding bars in the concerto (brackets A and B), using a modified version of Scarlatti's bass-line to connect each bar. Brackets C-K indicate similar examples of 'telescoping' in this concerto. Avison also takes the three bars that conclude the first half of Scarlatti's sonata (bars 26-28), and combines them into two (bars 26-27), as indicated by bracket L. Similar cuts and re-writing can be found in many of Avison's concertos, some amounting to 25% or more of the total structure.

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FINDING HIS ADAGIOS

Avison was faced with another problem that was more practical than stylistic: he would need 24 slow movements for his 12 concertos, the Scarlatti sonatas he had at his disposal providing only 7. Avison acknowledged this challenge in the revised issue of the 1743 concerto, published later that year, on 23 May:

It is but too obvious that this Undertaking would have been liable to Exceptions from Want of slow Movements in the Original, which is now sufficiently remov'd, Mr AVISON having been favour'd (since the printing of this Specimen) with as many Pieces of the same Author's as will be an Addition, in general, to two to each *Concerto*; and tho' attended with an extraordinary Expence, yet shall not impede the Prosecution of this Design, there being all imaginable Hopes of succeeding in a Work which has already had the Approbation of the ablest Judges²⁰.

Avison would fulfill this requirement using three different strategies: firstly, by including the slow movements of seven sonatas to which he had access, albeit at «extraordinary Expence»; secondly, by slowing the tempos of seven fast movements, also sometimes altering the metre and including some judicious re-writing; and most radically, by composing ten slow movements of his own. TABLE 3 lists the movements in these three categories.

TABLE 3: SOURCES OF AVISON'S SLOW MOVEMENTS

SCARLATTI ORIGINALS	CHANGE OF TEMPO	NEWLY COMPOSED
I/i	I/iii	IV/iii
II/i	II/iii	V/i
III/i	IV/i	VI/i
V/iii	VI/iii	X/i and iii
VII/iii	VII/iii	IX/iii
VIII/i	VIII/i	X/i and iii
XI/iii	IX/iii	XII/i, iii and iv (bars 1-12)

Exs. 5a and 5b show how Avison transformed a fast movement into a slow one, here by changing the tempo from *Allegro* to *Amoroso*, and the metre from 3/8 to 3/4:

Ex. 5a: Domenico Scarlatti, Sonata K 91/IV, bars 1-4.



²⁰. This statement appeared as Avison's 'P.S.' in the preface to this edition. See BOYD, Malcolm. *Op. cit.* (see note 1), pp. 225-226.

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Ex. 5b: Charles Avison, Concerto I/iii, bars 1-4.

AMOROSO

The third strategy, composing new slow movements, posed its own set of challenges. Avison was certainly capable of writing a slow movement; he had done so frequently for his own works. In this instance, however, he had to ensure that his new compositions would fit well into the overall Scarlatti style, and not create a jarring effect with the arrangements of the Scarlatti sonatas that preceded or followed them. Avison adopted two methods to achieve this goal. The first was to write a fully developed movement that echoed Scarlatti's harmonic and/or melodic vocabulary. Ex. 5c belongs to this category. In bar 10 of the first movement of the Concerto x in D major, Avison skillfully evokes what he had earlier described as the «*fine Fancy of the Italian*» with a slightly syncopated figure in the first violin, a Scarlattian gesture that would sound quite well on the harpsichord.

Ex. 5c: Charles Avison, Concerto x/i, bars 9-10.

The second method was to compose a short, cadential movement more typical of Corelli, Geminiani (and, of course, Avison himself) than of Scarlatti. This would function

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as a transition between the Scarlatti arrangements of the concerto. A good example of this method can be found in the third movement of the same concerto (see Ex. 5d):

Ex. 5d: Charles Avison, Concerto x/iii.

ADAGIO

CONCLUSION

Avison's Scarlatti concertos were highly popular during his lifetime. Today they are probably better known than his original compositions. Moreover, despite such extensive alterations to sonatas that were known and beloved by so many English musicians and audiences, Avison's concerto arrangements were fully accepted by most members of the Scarlatti sect. Evidence for this can be found in the large list of 151 subscribers, including music societies in Carlisle, Glasgow, Norwood, Oxford, York and «The Philharmonic». The 'Scarlatti craze' would continue in England up to the final years of the eighteenth century, or at least until Germans such as Johann Christian Bach and Carl Friedrich Abel began to supplant the English passion for anything Italian²¹. John Worgan, John Johnson and Pittman

²¹. See ROE, Stephen. 'The Keyboard Sonatas of Johann Christian Bach (1735-1782)', in the present volume.

kept the sect alive, and even Muzio Clementi (1752–1832) discovered Scarlatti, not in Italy, the native country of both men, but rather after he moved to London at the age of 14²².

The nineteenth century witnessed a waning, but not a total disappearance, of interest in Scarlatti. The virtuoso pianist Ignaz Moscheles (1794–1870) included Scarlatti's «Lessons» in many of the «Historical Soirées» that he presented in London between 1837–1846, even playing some on a Schudi harpsichord²³. Johannes Brahms, whose historicism and interest in early music is well known, chose the opening bars of Scarlatti's Sonata in D major, K 223 to begin his song *Unüberwindlich*, Op. 72 No. 5²⁴ (see Ex. 6):

Ex. 6: Domenico Scarlatti, Sonata K 223, bars 1–4; Johannes Brahms, *Unüberwindlich*, Op. 72 No. 5, bars 1–4.



It is interesting to observe in this example that Brahms shifts the metrical position of the original Scarlatti sonata, much as Avison had done in many of his concerti.

²² Burney writes that Worgan «became a great collector of [Scarlatti's] pieces, some of which he had been honoured with from Madrid by the author himself». BURNEY, Charles. *A General History of Music* [...], op. cit. (see note 5), vol. II, p. 1009. John Johnson reprinted Roseingrave's edition in 1754 and 1756. For a discussion of Clementi's admiration for Scarlatti, see PLANTINGA, Leon. *Clementi: His Life and Music*, London-New York, Oxford University Press, 1977 (Oxford Books), p. 49 and pp. 140–142. Clementi's knowledge of Scarlatti is also discussed in: STEWART-MACDONALD, Rohan H. 'The Keyboard Sonatas of Baldassare Galuppi: Textures, Topics, and Structural Shapes', in the present volume.

²³ See KROLL, Mark. *Ignaz Moscheles and the Changing World of Musical Europe*, Suffolk (UK), Boydell & Brewer, 2014, ch. 7, *passim*. William Sterndale Bennett (1816–1875) also included sonatas by Scarlatti in the series of 'Classical Chamber Concerts' he ran between 1843 and 1856. See STEWART-MACDONALD, Rohan H. 'The Recital in England: Sir William Sterndale Bennett's "Classical Chamber Concerts", 1843–1856', in: *Ad Parnassum. A Journal of Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Instrumental Music*, XIII/25 (April 2015), pp. 115–175.

²⁴ A prime example of Brahms' interest in early music is his edition: COUPERIN, François. *Pièces de Clavecin*, edited by Johannes Brahms and Friedrich Chrysander, London, Augener, 1888; rpr. Mineola, Dover Publications, 1988. Brahms was reported to have owned more than 300 Scarlatti sonatas.

Avison's Scarlatti concertos, however, are in many ways unique: the vast majority of arrangers in every century usually adopted the approach of reducing a large work to a smaller one, for keyboard²⁵. Examples include J. S. Bach's harpsichord and organ arrangements of Vivaldi violin concerti; Rameau's keyboard transcription of pieces from his operas, and Liszt's arrangements of just about everything, such as his solo piano transcriptions of Beethoven's nine symphonies. Avison, however, did the opposite: he took a keyboard piece and transformed it into one for orchestra.

And what of George Frideric Handel, Scarlatti's erstwhile competitor on the keyboard, and admirer? Handel admittedly used material from Scarlatti's sonatas in some of his orchestral compositions, such as the fourth movement of his *Concerti grossi*, Op. 6 No. 1 in G major²⁶ (see Exs. 7a and 7b):

Ex. 7a: Domenico Scarlatti, Sonata K 2/R5, bars 1-8; Charles Avison, Concerto II/iv, bars 1-8.

²⁵. It is reported that Burney made his own concerto arrangements of Scarlatti sonatas; but if he did, they no longer exist. See BOYD, Malcolm. *Op. cit.* (see note 1), pp. 230-231.

²⁶. For an excellent discussion of Handel's use of material from Scarlatti, and more examples from Handel's *Concerti* Op. 6, see SILBIGER, Alexander. 'Scarlatti Borrowings in Handel's Grand Concertos', in: *The Musical Times*, CXXV/1692 (February 1984), pp. 93-95.

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Ex. 7b: George Frideric Handel, Concerto grosso in G-major, Op. 6 No. 1/iv, bars 1-4.

ALLEGRO

VI I

VI II

Vla

Vc

Unlike Avison, however, who made a full arrangement of the sonata, Handel, the serial borrower, alights on the opening bars of Scarlatti's Sonata in G major, K 2 merely as a point of departure. The remainder of this movement, which is in 6/8 rather than the 3/8 metre of the original, is vintage Handel.

It was Charles Avison who not only dared to orchestrate some of the most idiomatic harpsichord music of the Baroque era, but who also attempted to take «off the Mask which concealed [the] natural Beauty and Excellency» of these works. With his arrangements, Avison disseminated Scarlatti's fame throughout Northern England and beyond, even to Scotland, and translated Scarlatti's iconic harpsichord sonatas into an idiom that was another favourite of English musicians and audiences: the Italian concerto grosso.

