

lacking is the sonata argument itself, as opposed to a loose assembly of contrasted episodes. And in this regard Rachmaninov was by no means untypical of the 'sunset' period in which he worked. As in Germany and France so also in Russia, an overripe romantic style of expression, evident equally in the near contemporary piano trios of Arensky, Grechaninov, Taneyev, and Zolotariev, was beginning to turn to decay, making the accession of fundamentally new modes of musical thought inevitable. The nature of the changes involved, and how they affected the piano trio, will be the concern of the final chapter.

7 The Twentieth Century

To the eye of the historian, eager to trace clear patterns of development, the piano trio's progress during the twentieth century presents a complex and varied picture. A large number of composers of many nationalities have been involved, and their combined output has been very substantial. Some have shown progressive and others conservative inclinations, and their works, naturally, have revealed wide divergences of style and technique. Some have turned to the piano trio very early, and others very late, in their careers, and many have produced only single examples of the genre. Nationality has remained a significant element, as much if not more than in the previous century; but the wars and revolutions of the period, by their resultant migrations, have introduced, also, a significant strain of cosmopolitanism. Not only have composers from mainland Europe moved as refugees to Britain and the United States and exercised a powerful influence in their new environments, but others, again, have travelled in the reverse direction in search of intellectual stimulus, particularly to Paris where the teaching of Nadia Boulanger (up to her death in 1979) proved a constant magnet.

The radical changes which took place in the musical language during the first half of the century had surprisingly little immediate effect on the piano trio. Among the principal revolutionary composers of the time only Bartók added significantly to the trio repertoire, and his contribution, *Contrasts* (1938), splendidly original though it is, stands outside the normal pattern of works by virtue of its unusual scoring—for violin, clarinet, and piano.¹ It is difficult to see any fundamental reason why the trio genre should have been regarded as less adaptable to the innovations of the period than, for example, the string quartet, which was

¹ Specially commissioned by Benny Goodman (clarinet) and Joseph Szigeti (violin) for performance with Bartók as pianist, the work has three movements—Verbunkos (recruiting music), Pihenés (relaxing), and Sebes (quick)—the last of which requires in performance both A and B flat clarinets and a 'spare' violin tuned to G sharp, D, A, and E flat.

widely cultivated by composers of an experimental tendency. Possibly the medium was thought to be too restricted in colour and articulation to offer much scope for technical development, or too closely tied to a long and somewhat adipose romantic tradition to be capable of sustaining impressive new modes of expression. But there seems, with hindsight, to be nothing in the nature of the ensemble, not even its linking of instruments of non-equivalent tonal character, to have created misgivings about its adaptability to the disciplines of twelve-note composition, or to the lean textures and austere dissonant contrapuntal styles typical of the neo-classicism of the period. In the event, with its openness to change largely untested by the experimentalists, the genre's flexibility remained in doubt and its traditionalist profile, however unjustly, was substantially compounded.

A further factor, affecting the modernist image of the trio, was the absence, from the pen of a major composer, of an extended sequence of works for the medium, comparable to the string quartets of Bartók, Hindemith, and Shostakovich. As a result of this no definitively 'progressive' forms of trio writing emerged and the genre continued to be represented by a quantity of somewhat isolated works which, though often of the highest quality, simply reflected the varied styles and fine technical skills of their largely conservative composers.

In more recent times, however, signs of a somewhat different picture have begun to emerge. Although the piano trio has remained the preserve mainly of traditionalists, it has also, since the end of the Second World War, attracted the interest of a small number of more experimental composers (particularly in Britain and America), who have discovered in the medium considerable scope for the promotion of new textures and sonorities. In the process, as we shall see, fresh emphasis has been placed on novelities of instrumental colour, new rhythmic concepts have affected the traditional bases for cohesion in the ensemble, and a drastic realignment has taken place of the piano's role in relation to the strings. Whether in the long run these and other similar developments will prolong the life of the genre remains to be seen; the only alternative seems, unhappily, to be a slow decline towards museum status.

Despite the antipathy of the progressives the piano trio was fruitfully cultivated during the first half of the century by a

number of prominent composers, including Ravel, Fauré, Martinů, and Shostakovich. And virtually for the first time, important contributions were made by Britons and Americans of international repute, such as Frank Bridge, John Ireland, Aaron Copland, Roy Harris, and Walter Piston. It is interesting to observe the wide range of nationalities involved, and also to note that the distinguished French, Czech, and Russian successors to Franck, Dvořák, and Tchaikovsky, respectively, were not matched by a German composer of comparable stature to follow in the tradition of Brahms and Reger, a situation which has since remained largely unaltered. Also noteworthy are the contributions which have been made by composers of 'new' nations (ones, that is, which were not involved during the previous century), such as Pizzetti, Malipiero, and Casella in Italy; Granados and Turina in Spain; and Pijper and Andriessen in the Netherlands. An example of interesting formal innovation is found in Malipiero's *Sonata a Tre* of 1927, in which different scoring is used for each of the movements (cello and piano, and violin and piano, respectively, for the first two, and the full ensemble for the third), the effect of symmetry being enhanced by the recall of themes from the first two movements in the finale. And a particularly attractive nationalist flavour is evident in the third of Turina's trios, a Fantasia, dating from 1942, entitled *Circulo*, Op. 91, the three movements of which—*Amanecer* (daybreak), *Melodio*, *Crepúsculo* (twilight)—provide vivid scene-painting, full of Spanish life and colour.

Among the earliest works which have a special claim on our attention are the trios of Ravel and Fauré, the former completed in 1914 shortly after the start of the First World War, and the latter in 1923 some eighteenth months before its composer's death. In their refinement of thought and expression these two works represent a splendid culmination to the older French chamber tradition, traceable from César Franck through Saint-Saëns, Lalo, and Chausson to Roussel and Ropartz; but, though without rivals in their time, they were essentially 'terminal' works, the respective styles of which offered little if any scope for further development.

Ravel's A minor trio is his third chamber composition, standing between the Introduction and Allegro for flute, clarinet, harp, and string quartet of 1906, and the violin and cello sonata of 1922.

Classical in its poise and precision of expression, the work preserves the outline framework of the traditional sonata concept with its provision of four self-contained movements, each sharply contrasted with its neighbours. But in place of the motivic development and dramatic key schemes typical of the German sonata style, it substitutes eloquent phrase repetitions, extended ostinatos, contrasted tempo blocs, and a striking combination of modality and progressive tonality. As a way of contributing to the work's overall unity, Ravel provides an unusual type of 'head-motif'—involving a simple step downwards and back of a whole tone—which features prominently in the opening themes of each movement except the last, where the pattern is inverted. The method clearly owes something to the system of thematic recall, so assiduously cultivated by Ravel's predecessors, but it is simpler and altogether more subtle in effect. Also strikingly original is the composer's exploration of new sonorities in relation to the trio medium. Calling upon his experience in other fields he combines the brilliant string techniques of his early string quartet—double-octave spacing, harmonics, tremolandi, and extended pizzicato passages and trills—with the powerful and evocative piano writing developed in *Miroirs* (1905) and *Gaspard de la nuit* (1908), in order to achieve some entirely new effects of colour and expression in trio-writing.

The first movement is based on themes of a special melodic and rhythmic character, derived from the folk music of the composer's Basque homeland; originally, they were intended for a concerto entitled *Zaspiaak-Bat* which Ravel had planned in 1912 but subsequently abandoned. Folk elements are apparent not only in the modal style of both the principal melodies but also in their general fluidity of rhythm, expressed notationally in each bar by eight quavers grouped in patterns of twos and threes—usually $3+2+3$ —to produce a gentle swaying motion. The resultant music is stately and dance-like, rather than dynamic in the normal sonata fashion, though sharp contrast is achieved by lively transitions in fast demisemiquavers, and some near-traditional development tactics are employed, such as the contrapuntal combination of the two main themes (the second in diminution) at the point of climax after figure 9. In a key scheme of unusual design both the principal themes are set originally in a modal A minor (the first with Dorian and the second Aeolian character-

tics) over dominant and tonic pedals, respectively; then, at the recapitulation, the pedal notes shift their relative positions, so that the first theme, now in E minor, is placed over a C sharp (the sharp submediant) while the second theme, again in A minor, is set above a D (the subdominant). Finally, prolonged emphasis on a pedal C draws the whole movement to a gentle close in C major.

The somewhat languid ending to the first movement contrasts admirably with the extreme vivacity of the scherzo which follows. The title given to this, *Pantoum*, refers to an ingenious poetic form, allegedly of Malayan origin, in which two distinct ideas are presented in each quatrain, one for each pair of lines, and developed by a system of line repetition in the succeeding stanzas. In the process each poetic idea is advanced by only one line in each verse, accompanied by, and integrated with, its 'fellow' idea; and to end the whole poem there is a simple recurrence of the opening line. The form had been adopted for their own purposes by several of the French Romantic poets during the second half of the nineteenth century, including Théodore de Banville, Verlaine, and Baudelaire, and may well have attracted some special attention during the vogue for oriental culture which followed the Exposition Universelle in Paris in 1889. Ravel's interest in it for musical exploitation is not surprising in view of his leaning towards exotic cultural ideas in general, and his known predilection for problem-solving as a source of inspiration. In fact, as Brian Newbould has shown, he followed the poetic scheme 'through in remarkable detail, providing a well-contrasted pair of themes, the first spiky and fantastic and the second smooth and surging, and a system of 'overlaps' to correspond closely to the basic poetic pattern.² Particularly skilful is his introduction (for desirable musical contrast) of a central 'trio' section, with a broad cantabile theme, which provides, as Newbould writes, 'the perfect backcloth against which the interwoven fortunes of the twin scherzo themes can be worked out'. In order to accommodate all three themes, at least in outline, and at the same time maintain the visual as well as the audible integrity of his musico-poetic form, Ravel uses an ingenious system of unequal bar-lengths in the manner shown in Example 54. In the effect of brilliant energy and excitement which it generates this movement

² B. Newbould, 'Ravel's Pantoum', *Musical Times* 116 (Mar. 1975), 228.

Ex. 54

[Assez vif]

Vn.

Vc.

Pf.

arco

pizz.

pizz. + arco

is even more electric than the scherzo of the composer's earlier string quartet, which clearly served as a model for it.

For his third movement the composer goes to the opposite extreme in expression, and provides a slow 'baroque' passacaglia, comprising ten free variations on an eight-bar theme. Starting deep in the piano bass with a grave modal melody centred around F sharp, it builds in an arch shape towards a powerful central climax containing some of the richest harmony and scoring in the

work, before retracing its steps, both in pitch and dynamics. From bar 32, the fourth of the variations introduces, on cello and piano alone, a new thematic idea akin to a second subject, which is later developed in various different keys and provides a valuable contrast element in the structures. An 'enchainez' link connects this movement to the finale, a spirited affair, which starts most attractively in a 'chinois' style, with an opening theme in 5/4 time and harmonized in fourths and fifths. Scored high on the piano against rapid violin figuration in harmonics and chordal tremolo patterns for the cello, this initial idea creates an aura of busting energy and excitement; but for reasons we shall consider in more detail, the freshness and drive engendered are not maintained consistently as the movement proceeds.

It is clear that Ravel completed the work under abnormal pressure. On the outbreak of war, on 4 August, he seems to have been torn between a desire to finish the trio and a powerful urge to enlist and contribute as best he could to the war effort. After working 'avec une rage folle' he succeeded in completing the trio by the end of August,³ but to his great disappointment was turned down by the recruitment board because he was too short and underweight. Writing early in October from Saint-Jean-de-Luz to the composer Florent Schmitt, he referred bitterly to his predicament: 'As for me, I remain here, alas, and seethe with anger. I hurried to finish my trio so that I could join up. But they have found me too light by two kilograms.'⁴ Whether or not shortage of time and psychological pressure were the reasons, the final movement of the trio seems to lose a good deal of its momentum and drive as it unfolds. The weaknesses lie partly in an excess of short-scale repetition, always a Ravellian characteristic, but one rarely exploited so mechanically as here; and partly in the rigid metrical patterns—5/4 and 7/4 time—to which he commits himself throughout the greater part of the movement. There are some exquisitely beautiful examples of trio writing (for instance bars 12 to 16) and some which are surprisingly ugly and ineffectual, such as the passage between figures [3] and [4], where the rising octaves on the strings are all but smothered by tremolando chords in the piano right hand, and the section starting at figure [6] with its overworked accompanimental trills

³ R. Chalupt, *Ravel au miroir de ses lettres* (Paris, 1956), 113.

⁴ Chalupt, *Ravel*, 120.

and arpeggios on the strings. Also beyond the scope normally accepted in chamber music are the final pages of the work, where the '*vous surs ff*' marking, the massively scored piano part, and the continual high trills on the strings suggest a striving for an orchestral effect which is as unwieldy as it is inappropriate. This type of extravagance is unusual in Ravel, normally the most precise and fastidious of composers. It is symptomatic of what may be seen as a distinctive finale problem, prevalent in, though not of course peculiar to, the piano trio. In essence, the problem is how to achieve an effect of climax and culmination without overstepping the bounds of the chamber style. The solutions most usually proffered involve a choice between, or combination of, increased speed and more extravagant scoring and dynamics, the former being the 'safer' of the two. The intemperate effect of overscoring, coupled with powerful dynamics, is plainly evident at the end of the Tchaikovsky trio; and the brilliant result achievable by a progressive accelerando, in the '*nach und nach schneller*' of the finale to Schumann's D minor trio. Ravel's solution is by no means a total failure; but the scale and expressive range of the preceding movements seem to demand a more expansive, perhaps more thoughtful, ending. The noisy one provided (possibly prompted by war fervour) conveys in the context an unduly conventional impression.

Subsequently, the composer found an outlet for his patriotic aims as an army truck-driver; and his trio secured its first performance at a concert in aid of the Red Cross early in 1915, with Alfredo Casella taking the formidable piano part and Willaume and Feuillard the string roles. Immediately it was recognized for the remarkable masterpiece it is, and soon became absorbed into the repertoires of those ensembles capable of doing it justice.

Very different in conception is the D minor trio, Op. 120, by Ravel's former teacher, Gabriel Fauré, his only essay in the medium, which appeared in 1923 when he was in his seventy-eighth year. The differences are apparent in virtually every aspect of style and technique. Where Ravel employs vividly colourful scoring, brilliant piano writing, and a highly sectional construction, Fauré prefers a studied simplicity of texture, a gentle, unostentatious piano style, and a seamless continuity in the presentation of his ideas. Where Ravel relies upon phrase repeti-

tions, contrasted tempo blocs, and progressive tonality to provide momentum, Fauré allows his music to unfold gradually, in the manner of a skilled organ improvisation. And where Ravel clearly takes dance, both stately and lively, as a prime source of inspiration, Fauré turns with equal naturalness to song, particularly in the first two movements of his work. Restraint in Fauré's scoring is evident not only in the large amount of two-part writing he allots to the piano but also in the many octave and unison doublings provided in the string parts. Typical is the opening of the first movement, where the cello presents a long-drawn theme, moving by simple steps from tonic to dominant, against an oscillating, two-note figure for the piano, right hand alone. Not until bar 23 does the violin enter, and three bars later the piano left hand, to establish a plain four-part texture of quartet-like clarity. Particularly unusual in advanced trio writing is the use of string unisons. As employed by Fauré the supplementary string parts in each case add emphasis and warmth to lowering passages, much in the way that the drawing of an additional stop imparts extra colour to a melodic line in organ music. With such simplicity of means the composer is able to achieve a raising and lowering of the intensity of expression by only slight variations of texture, coupled commonly with a significant enrichment of the harmony. A striking example of this occurs in the approach to the recapitulation in the first movement, where a build-up of excitement results as much from the sudden introduction of augmented triads (with their whole-tone harmonic implications) as from the use of slightly enlarged leaps in the string parts and modestly heightened dynamic levels.

The slow movement, which was completed at Annecy-le-Vieux in September 1922, was the first section of the work to be written—and it is interesting to notice that the composer referred to it in his correspondence at that time as part of a clarinet trio, with the violin mentioned only as an alternative treble instrument. Set in F major, the movement is an extended, song-like meditation on three themes, the first of which appears to be related, at a considerable distance of time, to the orchestral counter-melody in the Agnus Dei of the composer's *Requiem* of 1883 (see Ex. 55Ⓢ). Containing very little variety of texture, the movement makes its effect by subtle thematic metamorphosis and a remarkably wide-ranging, almost improvisatory, modulatory

Ex. 55

③ *Andantino*

Vn.

Requiem: Agnus Dei

Vn.

④ *poco rit.*

Vn.
Vc.

a tempo

Pf.

scheme. At times the wind of key-change seems to blow where it lists, for example in bar 65, where the composer finds himself on the dominant of C sharp (= D flat) minor as he approaches the reprise of his first theme in the tonic. As the eventual point of return is reached, it requires a truly remarkable piece of modulatory sleight of hand to restore the home tonic (see Ex. 55^④).

After so much solemn contemplation the strenuous third movement, a combination of scherzo and finale, comes as a major surprise. Though remaining light in texture, it provides scope for much lively pianism in the form of very rapid semiquaver figuration and some sharply etched string passages with powerful cross-rhythms. Much comment has been generated by the superficial, and certainly quite unintentional, resemblance between its opening theme and the well-known aria 'Ridi Paggiaccio' from Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci*, if only because the latter's somewhat tawdry staginess is so comically at odds with the French composer's known refinement of taste.⁵ In the trio the 'offending' theme, which is confined entirely to the strings, and set invariably in loud octaves or unisons, functions as an essential rhythmic pillar. This not only marks out the three-bar pattern ($3 \times \frac{3}{8}$ time) underlying much of the movement but also provides, with its

many repetitions, a stable background against which the piano's flying semiquavers can best make their effect. Like the first movement, the finale builds gradually to a resounding fortissimo climax, and then just stops; with his customary fastidiousness the composer, avoiding any trace of bombast, makes do, as much horizontally as vertically, with no more notes than are absolutely necessary. The moderation and refinement which mark this penultimate work of Fauré cannot be taken as evidence of failing powers in the ageing composer. Such characteristics are common enough in his works generally (though they are by no means the only ones) and appear emphasized in the trio mainly because of the slenderness of the medium's resources. No doubt the gentle, ruminative style of much of the work reflects to some extent the cooled ardour of old age; but any suggestion of diminished creative energy is readily refuted by the vigorous, challenging nature of the work's finale. Also, it is worth observing that a 'burnt-out' composer would hardly have proceeded, immediately on completion of the trio, to embark on the composition of his first string quartet.

It was during 1923, the year of the composition of Fauré's piano trio, that the Czech composer Bohuslav Martinů, at the age of 33, settled in Paris to study privately under Roussel. By that time Roussel had left well behind him the late romantic influences which we observed earlier in his E flat piano trio, and had turned, somewhat under the influence of Stravinsky, to leaner, neo-classic forms of expression, evidenced progressively in such works as his second violin sonata (1924); his orchestral suite in F (1926), and his third symphony (1930). Under his guidance Martinů rapidly gained in technical assurance, developing a highly personal style of expression which, for all its newly acquired Parisian traits, retained strong links with the folk idioms of his Czech homeland. Always remarkably prolific, he produced, following his time with Roussel, a series of works of increasing maturity, including his first piano concerto (1925), his second string quartet (1926), his earliest opera, *The Three Wishes* (1929), and in 1930 his first piano trio. This initial essay in the trio genre, subtitled *Cinq pièces brèves*, comprises a series of well-contrasted character pieces, in a powerfully athletic style, with vivid motor rhythms, closely-wrought counterpoint, and a bitter-sweet harmonic palette. Wholly characteristic of the composer are the colourful effects which result

⁵ See R. Orledge, *Gabriel Fauré* (London, 1979), 187.

from the combination of octaves, thirds, and sixths, striding purposefully together in apparent disregard of passing harmonic clashes, as illustrated by Example 56 which is taken from the first of the pieces. Although any sense of key is almost totally obscured by the intensive use of chromaticism and dissonance, the composer attempts to create an illusion of tonal organization by ending each piece with a plain tonic chord, usually approached very obliquely in the manner of Hindemith. In the process a broad key sequence is suggested, consisting of C major, E flat major, C major, F major, and G major. Brilliantly scored, the pieces create a general impression of somewhat steely efficiency. A softer approach is found only in the second piece, the only slow section in the work, where a warmly expressive duet for the string duo, unaccompanied, is commented upon by the piano in quiet chordal passages with subtly dislocated rhythms.

Eleven years later in 1941, Martinů moved to the United States where he stayed until 1953; and it was there that he produced, in 1950 and 1951, his two later piano trios. These are considerably

different in character from the *Pièces brèves*; in place of the studied brilliance and excitement of the earlier composition, the two mature works show, equally, a striving towards a classical openness of structure, clarity of texture, and sobriety of expression. Conceived apparently as a matching pair, they have many formal features in common: three-movement structures, sonata-form first movements, central slow movements (one in rondo and the other in ternary form), and *perpetuum mobile* finales. Also shared in common is a striking use of 'progressive' tonality, of the type already seen in the first movement of Ravel's trio. In the titles he provides—*Trio en ré mineur* and *Grand Trio No. 3 en ut*—Martinů appears quite unequivocal about his conception of the works' overall tonalities; yet in practice it is rare for a movement in either trio to end in its original key. In the D minor work, for example, a flatwise tendency in both outer movements results in the original tonic being gradually overpowered by B flat; while in the central movement, by even more tortuous means, the original G minor is supplanted finally by E major. In the C major work a similar system operates, which carries the tonality progressively through B flat and E flat, as two of its main centres, to a final cadence in F. Also very characteristic of the composer is the deceptive harmonic style which he employs. Frequently passages of straightforward diatonic writing are interrupted by strangely 'irrational' dissonances and harmonic *non sequiturs* which add a powerful tang to the music, of decidedly French orientation.⁶ The works belong clearly enough to the lean, economical school of trio writing, but are far from being arid or austere. Czech elements are evident in the song-like melodies found in the two slow movements, and particularly in the brilliant passage-work of the toccata-style finales, with their headlong ostinato rhythmic patterns and dance-like verve. In the last movement of the D minor trio, for example, the passage beginning at figure [3] seems to reach back momentarily, for all its harmonic pungency, to the world of Smetana and Dvořák at their most exuberant.

Strong nationalist expression, heightened at times by the

⁶ The 'irrational' element, it may be mentioned, extends in some cases to the printed scores of the works, where the presence of discrepant notes in various parallel passages, and the not infrequent omission of precautionary accidentals, leave the composer's precise intentions in doubt. For example, in the D minor trio, first movement, violin, bar 4, it is likely that note 4 should be d' to correspond to bar 107; and in the second movement, piano right hand, bar 64, that note 6 should similarly be g' natural to match bar 16.

Ex. 56
[Allegro moderato]

Vn.
Vc.
Pf.

experience of war, is apparent even more markedly in the work of Shostakovich. Wide though the stylistic gulf is between his music and that of his nineteenth-century predecessors, he nevertheless shares with them an awareness of a common national heritage, both of culture and temperament, which constantly shapes his creative thinking. And among his works, few are more profoundly Russian, or more redolent of contemporary experience, than his E minor piano trio, Op. 67.⁷ Composed in 1944, at one of the darkest periods of the Second World War, it is dedicated to the memory of Ivan Sollertinsky, a talented musicologist and close friend of the composer, who died in a Nazi concentration camp during that year. Thus, like many of the earlier Russian piano trios, it is an elegiac composition, intended to give expression to deep personal sorrow. However, it is hard not to feel that, from a wider point of view, the work is also a lament for the sufferings of the whole nation. Although the composer provided no official 'programme' for the trio, its aura of mingled bitterness and forced gaiety, of wild hysteria and despair, together with its prominent use of a 'Jewish' theme, suggest strongly that, like the seventh and eighth symphonies, it was chiefly inspired by the agony of wartime Russia.⁸

Traditional in its overall conception, the trio comprises a standard four-movement structure, with the scherzo placed second; and in keeping with the composer's normal practice, it preserves a strong sense of tonality, despite the use of an astringent harmonic palette, with much vivid dissonance and chromaticism. Altogether unusual, however, is the composer's handling of the trio medium. Expanding its normal scope to embrace quasi-orchestral sonorities, often of a bizarrely extravagant kind, he attains a degree of expressionism which strains at the limits of the chamber style, but none the less stops short of breaching entirely its necessary restraints. The result is a work which achieves, despite the intensity of the emotions expressed in it, a near-classical equilibrium between form, content, and the means of

⁷ This is actually the second of Shostakovich's piano trios. His first essay in the form, entitled *Poem* for violin, cello, and piano, was written in 1923 when he was 17 and still a student at the Leningrad Conservatoire. A one-movement work, it comprises eight interlinked sections, alternately in slow and fast tempi. In style it owes something to Glazunov, but already shows the beginnings of a striking originality of approach.

⁸ For an account of Shostakovich's wartime music, see B. Schwarz, 'Dimitri Shostakovich', in S. Sadie (ed.), *The New Grove, Russian Masters 2* (London, 1986), 179 and 187.

communication. Immediately impressive is the impact created at the opening of the work, where a six-bar theme in a modal E minor, the so-called 'Jewish' theme, is presented unaccompanied in harmonics high up on the cello. Capital is made out of the extreme difficulty of the passage which, even in the most skilled player's hands, produces the chilling effect of a shrill and tortured voice. Subsequently, the violin and piano in turn contribute mock-fugal answers to the theme, each pitched a thirteenth below the previous entry, and emphasize in the process the vital role which counterpoint is destined to play throughout. The first movement is analysable in sonata terms, though its themes and their deployment lack the clear elements of contrast one would normally expect to find. Instead the process involved, as very often with Shostakovich, is one of organic growth, in which every new feature can be related in some degree to the opening theme. At the beginning a relentless pulse is established, which adds to the generally doom-laden character of the music; but subsequently the speed gradually increases until bar 107 where with the emergence of the main subsidiary theme, the original tempo is doubled.

The strong forward drive apparent in the first movement is continued even more intensely in the scherzo. Set in the remote key of F sharp major, it exudes an air of forced jollity, its loud, emphatic themes and calculatedly crude scoring conveying a deliberate impression of brashness and insensitivity. A vivid contrast is created between the opening theme, with its wide-ranging arpeggio patterns, and two ideas which are introduced later, the first a tight-fisted, knotted theme at figure 31 and the second a surging motif at 37. Subsequently, each of these is combined contrapuntally with the main idea to provide a complex of ingenious cross-references. And still further contrast is provided by a radiant 'trio' section in G major at figure 45, which has some of the giant simplicity of late Beethoven, recalling, for instance, the equivalent section in the scherzo of his A minor string quartet, Op. 132. Shostakovich's alternation of tonic and dominant harmonies on the piano, against a largely unyielding tonic motif in the string parts, conveys in its way almost as much charming rusticity of character as Beethoven's drone bass effect on the violin's A string.

The slow movement, designed as a chaconne or passacaglia, is

based on a fixed series of eight chords, constantly repeated at different dynamic levels on the piano, which provides the basis for a set of five variations; and these, linked together, are built into an extended elegiac duet for the strings, involving a formal procedure similar to that used by Ravel in the slow movement of his trio. The key, ostensibly, is B flat minor, but over its eight-bar span the chordal pattern moves unpredictably to end on a chord of B (natural) minor, though without its fifth degree. The absence of the F sharp is significant since, each time round, it allows for the insertion of an F natural on the second beat of the bar as a dominant leading back to B flat minor. Particularly curious is the effect produced by the third of the chords, a major 6/4 over a bass G, which is reluctant to shed the powerfully cadential effect it naturally suggests in diatonic harmony. Each time it occurs it provides a momentary oasis of warm repose which is immediately dispelled by the darker, more dissonant harmonies that follow. After the final variation, which contains recalled thematic motifs from the start of the movement, a short extension with sombre repeats of the final B minor chord leads directly back to E major for the rondo finale. This returns, with its pattern of lively dance rhythms, to the general style of the scherzo, but conveys an altogether harsher mood of bitterness and despair, in contrast to the ironic gaiety of the earlier section. Tightly organized, the movement has three principal themes which constantly recur in a rich variety of rhythmic and melodic shapes, and frequently in contrapuntal combination with each other. A bizarre scoring element is introduced from the start by the persistent use of pizzicato, for both strings, in the presentation of the main themes and their accompaniment, producing an effect which is both etioliated and somewhat macabre. The violin, in fact, is bowed only from bar 58, and the cello not until bar 100 when it introduces the third main theme. Repeated motifs and persistent ostinato patterns lead to a wild climax at figure 86, after which, at 91, a striking effect of disintegration is achieved by a swirling piano cadenza, the arpeggios of which outline exactly the solemn chordal progression from the slow movement. This leads directly to a recall of the entire fugal section from the opening of the first movement, rescored and with halved note-values, against which the piano maintains its continuous pattern of rapid demisemi-quavers. After a short reprise of the finale's opening ideas, the

work ends with a further reference to the slow movement's chordal sequence, the final B minor chord of which moves home with perfect logic to the central E major tonality. And high above this the strings provide plaintive, half-whispered reminders of the main rondo theme, and conclude impressively with quiet pizzicato chords. The emphasis on thematic recall at the end of this movement is perhaps the weakest, and in a sense most old-fashioned, structural feature of the work. But from a subjective viewpoint, its function in heightening the trio's powerful expressive message provides a wholly convincing justification for it.

The principal piano trios of the first half of the century, which we have been considering, reflect clearly the diversity of styles current at the time, and underline the significant role which nationality continued to play in shaping them. It would be a mistake, however, to regard the works in question as isolated contributions, entirely unrelated to each other; behind each of them, despite obvious surface differences, it is not difficult to detect a shared conceptual basis deriving from a common European tradition. But outside mainland Europe, particularly in Britain and the United States, the situation was very different; and in the almost total absence of any similar tradition, especially in the field of chamber composition, a high premium was necessarily placed on the work of such pioneers as emerged. It cannot, therefore, be regarded as other than a strange quirk of fate that the most important initial impetus, in their respective countries, was entrusted to a British businessman, Walter Willson Cobbett, and an American insurance agent, Charles Ives.

Ives, whose particular significance to our survey resides in the remarkable piano trio he composed early in the century,⁹ is generally regarded as the great 'primitive' of modern American music. Coming from the New England background which had earlier nurtured such original thinkers as Hawthorne, Emerson, and Thoreau, he is a 'primitive' in the sense that he almost totally disregarded the accepted musical conventions of his time and instead turned for inspiration to the sights and sounds of everyday life, such as town bands, drawing-room ballads, hymn tunes, and the music of country fiddlers. With these he endeavoured to build entirely new sound patterns, in which such features as free

⁹ C. Ives, *Trio for Violin, Violoncello and Piano*, ed. J. Kirkpatrick (New York, 1955). This edition includes an extended and detailed critical commentary.

dissonance, the random combination of rhythms, the clash of unrelated keys, and the products of chance were taken as normal. But primitive though his bases for musical organization undoubtedly appeared to his contemporaries, when indeed they bothered to consider them at all, their results in the longer run proved sophisticated in the extreme, foreshadowing by several years many of the fundamental ideas which were to shape the later development of twentieth-century music, such as atonality, polyrhythm, the use of quartertones and chord clusters, and the aleatory approach. Thus, in historical perspective, he came to be regarded as a prime mover in modern American music, and, if not widely influential, at least much respected in European circles.

His trio was begun in 1904 but, because of his business preoccupations, and the demands of other compositions on which he was engaged at the time, was not completed until 1911. The work is in three movements and is intended, according to a letter written by his wife in 1948, to portray aspects of the composer's college life at Yale during the 1890s. In a characteristically self-deprecatory way Ives attempted to hide the basic seriousness of his musical intentions by attaching amusing and eccentric headings to the work, rather in the manner of Erik Satie: 'Yankee Jaws at Mr (or Eli) Yale's School for nice bad boys', for example, as an alternative title for the whole trio, and 'TSIAJ' (this scherzo is a joke) as a superscription for the middle movement. But none of these could disguise the substantial nature of the composition and the deeply considered character of the innovations it contained. Immediately striking is the experimental structure of the opening movement, involving a first section for cello and piano (treble range only), a second for violin and piano (bass range only), and a third in which the two previous sections are combined, the cello and violin retaining their original parts and the piano joining together its previous treble and bass elements. Curiously enough, in view of the essential rigidity of the scheme, the two opening sections are unequal in length, respectively 24 and 27 bars, so that some small but not insignificant adjustments have to be made in the final combination. Whether this happened by accident or design it is difficult to tell, but possibly this happened by accident or sought by this means to avoid over-symmetry and an excess of simple repetition in the second section. The final combined phase produces some harshly dissonant and decidedly arbitrary music—

perhaps inevitably if, as seems likely, no preliminary care was taken to ensure any sort of logical 'fit'. Clearly enough the whole plan was purely experimental and must be accepted as such, but the overall effect is indisputably somewhat contrived—or academic, even.

By contrast, the second movement is an uninhibited rampage of sound, providing a remarkable pot-pourri of student songs and popular songs and hymns preceded by a short introduction. The tunes, some of which still remain unidentified, are normally presented in a straightforward diatonic form, but heavily disguised by an accompaniment which involves bizarre chord progressions, note-clusters, bitonal clashes, and the imitation of drum patterns. A free piano cadenza over tremolando strings produces some effective contrast towards the end, but the final presto coda, comprising a six-bar chordal passage in which the piano 'doubles' the strings at the distance of a semitone (E major against F major) provides what seems to be an excessively laboured brand of humour. The movement is scored with remarkable fullness; out of a total of 217 bars, the cello is silent for eight, the piano for two, and the violin for only one.

Shorter and more concentrated in style, the last movement consists of eight sections at varying tempi, and contains gapped sectional repeats and thematic cross-references, some of the latter reintroducing motifs from earlier movements. One of its more significant ideas is shown in Example 57(i), together with various of the forms (Ex. 57(ii) and (iii)) in which it appears in other parts of the work. In order to expand the scope of the finale, a comprehensive repeat at a slower tempo is indicated immediately before the final coda, after a massive climax, marked *fff*, with strings and piano playing together in unison. The final section itself is concerned largely with the 'derived' theme from bar 68 (see Ex. 57(i)) in combination with a straightforward version of the well-known tune to Topleady's hymn, 'Rock of Ages', allotted first to the violin and finally to the cello.¹⁰ As it reaches its penultimate note the hymn tune breaks off, apparently with some hidden symbolic significance, and the work concludes with a *ppp* dissonant chord on the piano which gradually dissolves into silence. (See Ex. 57(iv)).

¹⁰ See C. Ward, 'Hymn Tunes as "Substance and Manner" in Charles Ives', Univ. of Texas diss. 1969.

Ex. 57

3rd movement, bar 68
[Andante con moto]

(i)

Pf.

1st movement, bar 15
[Moderato]

(ii)

Pf.

2nd movement, bar 43
[Allegro moderato]

(iii)

Vc.

3rd movement, final bars
(iv) Adagio cantabile

(v)

Vn.

(vi)

Vc.

(vii)

Pf.

Ives's piano trio, together with his two string quartets and four violin sonatas, provided an important foundation for later American chamber composition in the twentieth century. Although during the 1920s and 1930s his music was often ignored or ridiculed, it was not long before various of the more discerning musicians of the time began to recognize the value of his pioneer work in freeing American music from the grip of various debilitating forms of foreign influence. Nevertheless, the path of musical isolationism—the basing of a distinctive American style purely on indigenous, folk-derived, or picturesque elements—which Ives appeared to support, was not one which appealed uniformly to the succeeding generation of composers. For them there could be little significant future for an American style which ignored the exciting developments which were taking place in Europe at the time, the importance of which was continually manifested by the distinguished *émigré* composers who had settled

in their country: Varèse, Bloch, and Rachmaninov among others. As a result, during a significant period of interchange, the number of enterprising young American musicians travelling to Europe for study began to correspond roughly with that of composers from the old world removing to the United States as refugees. And inevitably styles were enriched, and national differences attenuated, on both sides of the Atlantic.

Among the Americans who made contributions to the piano trio at this time were Walter Piston, Roy Harris, and Aaron Copland, each of whom studied with Nadia Boulanger in Paris during the 1920s. The Harris and Piston trios, which date respectively from 1934 and 1935, are somewhat dryly neo-classical in manner, and lack the sharp edge of characterization which distinguishes the near-contemporary first trio of Martinů. Essentially 'period pieces' they reflect a little palely the predominant influences of the time—Stravinsky, Hindemith, Prokofiev, and Milhaud—and reveal American traits mainly in their occasional touches of rhythm and harmony of jazz derivation. More characteristic is Aaron Copland's trio, a single-movement work entitled *Vitebsk*, which dates from 1929. The title refers to the birthplace of the Jewish writer Ansky (1863–1920), who incorporated into his play *The Dybbuk* (1916) a Jewish folksong which he had encountered there in his youth. Copland heard the melody first while attending a performance of the play, and at once conceived the idea of basing a trio on it. At the time the composer was fresh from his studies with Madame Boulanger, and rapidly gaining a reputation, at least in his home country, as a notable young *avant-gardiste*. Basing his approach in the trio on the experimental techniques employed by Alois Hába in his string quartets of the early 1920s, Copland makes an extensive use of quartertones, both above and below the written note, as indicated by special symbols. In fact it may well be that he was the first to exploit the system in a piano trio. The technique is used particularly in an extended introductory paragraph and a matching final section, where descending, quartertone-inflected thirds on the strings, delivered fortissimo in 'snap' rhythms and in octaves, are interspersed between ringing chords on the piano like a clashing peal of bells. The scoring sonorities which result are quite strongly reminiscent of the tolling-bell effects which Stravinsky creates with four pianos and percussion at the end of *Les Noces*, a work

which received its first performance in Paris in 1923, while Copland was still studying there. Arranged as a sequence of closely knit sections, the trio, which is more specifically Jewish than American in style, comprises a number of contrasted meditations on the central folk tune. The melody itself, which appears in various minor key versions, has an unambiguously modal character; but by the use of extreme dissonance and quartetone patterns in the surrounding material a fully atonal effect is produced throughout the work. Copland has never again attempted a piano trio; but later in his career he contributed significantly to the chamber repertoire with a violin sonata (1943) and a piano quartet (1950). In these he discarded many of the more exploratory features of style and technique found in *Vitebsk* in favour of complex, finely devised textures, not infrequently constructed on serial lines.

In parallel with these American developments there began in Britain also a remarkable upsurge of creative activity in chamber composition early in the century, in which a prominent part was played by Walter Willson Cobbett. In addition to founding a medal for services to chamber music, and compiling and publishing in 1929 his renowned *Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, a reference work of much continuing value, Cobbett instituted a series of competitions designed to encourage the production of new chamber works by native composers. Competitors were invited to submit one-movement compositions for various media, in which, in any way of their own free devising, the successive sections should correspond broadly to the movements of a full-length sonata work. Described by the term 'Phantasy' the works were intended to recall the spirit, though not of course the actual form, of the English 'Fancy' of Elizabethan and Jacobean times. There is something peculiarly, not to say eccentrically, English about the idea of using a competition as a spur to artistic creation; but, under Cobbett's guidance, the venture was hugely successful, eliciting new works over a fifteen-year period from a host of rising composers, including William Hurlstone, Frank Bridge, John Ireland, Eugene Goossens, Herbert Howells, Ralph Vaughan Williams, and Benjamin Britten. At the second of the contests in 1907 entries were invited specifically of Phantasy piano trios, and for their contributions on this occasion prizes were awarded to Bridge, Ireland, and the Scottish pianist-composer

James Friskin. All three men were at the time in their twenties, though Friskin was seven years junior to the others, and all were pupils of Stanford at the Royal College of Music.

The Phantasy trios produced by Bridge and Ireland for this event are attractive, skilfully written works which have readily retained a place in the repertoire. Bridge's movement, which is the more individual of the two, comprises an arch structure in which outer allegro sections, representing formally the exposition and recapitulation, enclose a central slow-scherzo-slow pattern which does duty for a development. Particularly striking is the almost continuous use of thematic metamorphosis, by which nearly every idea in the work is drawn, with notable (and almost unnoticeable) ease and naturalness, from the dramatic motif announced at the start. The style, which involves broad melodies and colourful harmony, owes at least as much to French influence—of Chausson, d'Indy, and early Fauré—as to that of Stanford. A similar degree of melodic elegance and harmonic luxuriance is apparent in Ireland's trio, which shows clearer evidence also of indebtedness to Stanford. His structural treatment, however, is rather less enterprising than Bridge's, involving a single slow section at the centre, and relying more for the progress of the sonata argument on simple repetition than on the imaginative refashioning of the thematic material. Subsequently, in 1917, Ireland gained a further Cobbett prize for a Phantasy trio, and proceeded many years later to crown his output for the medium with a full-scale, four-movement work, his trio in E minor, of 1938, which he dedicated to William Walton. Written in the grand manner, and supremely confident in tone, this last of his trios shows great technical accomplishment with its sweeping melodies, colourful harmonies, and masterly control of structure. But what it fails to reveal, surprisingly, is any significant degree of stylistic growth, even over the very earliest of his trios. All the exciting new developments in European music, which had so attracted the Americans of the period, seem to have passed the composer by, making little or no impact on his creative thinking.

With Frank Bridge, however, the case was very different. His second trio, a four-movement work published in 1930, shows a remarkable advance on his earlier chamber music, revealing the outcome of his search for a thoroughly individual style, enriched by a close absorption of the most recent new ideas and techniques

from abroad. Turning right away from the Stanford tradition from which he had started, he embarked, disconcertingly to his British contemporaries, on a darkly emotional, expressionist mode of writing akin to that found in the earlier works of Schoenberg and Bartók, in which he deploys a degree of chromaticism which borders on atonality. In order to compensate for any loss of cohesion resulting from his loosened grip on tonality, he introduces many thematic cross-references and transformations, and makes a particularly extensive use of ostinato patterns, as in the passage in Example 58 from near the start of the haunting slow movement, with its air of stillness and timelessness. Retaining some contact with the Phantasy concept, Bridge joins his four movements together in pairs, linking the opening allegro to the scherzo, and the slow movement to the finale, so that an impression is created of two long and strongly contrasted movements. In the course of some brilliant trio writing he places effective emphasis on both extremes of the keyboard, particularly in the vivid scherzo, a counterpart, with its exciting use of pizzicato and *'pointillisme'*, to the equivalent movement in the Ravel trio. The ghostly, somewhat tenebrous character of the work in general is effectively dispelled in the finale which, though still largely atonal, provides a broader melodic sweep and conveys a stronger, more confident mood. However, by means of a brief but impressive return of the mysterious opening idea from the first movement, a powerful overall sense of unity is imparted to the work. Wholly convincing in style and substance, the second Bridge trio is one of the most notable examples of the genre of the first half of the twentieth century, worthy of a place beside the trios of Ravel, Fauré, and Shostakovich. The fact that its composer was an Englishman, and its style alien to British sensibilities in the 1930s, led to its almost complete neglect for many years. Only quite recently has it begun at last to gain some of the recognition it deserves.

Ex. 58

[Andante molto moderato]

pp dolcissimo

Pf.

The 'Cobbett' composers, and others not directly influenced by the competitions, gradually built up during the first half of the century a corpus of new British chamber music of a distinctively national character which, within the somewhat narrow historical perspective of the time, was recognizably modern and original. Initially, in the absence of a firm native tradition they turned to the current French style, and particularly that of Ravel with its finely pointed dissonances and brilliant instrumental writing, to give a sheen of modernity to their music; and by combining these techniques with melodies and rhythms of an English folk-song cast, began to progress towards a genuine individuality of expression. As early as 1920, in his D major piano trio, E. J. Moeran provided an elegant conflation of the folk style with the shimmering, impressionist harmonies of the French school. And in the following year Rebecca Clarke, in an entry for a competition organized by Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge,¹¹ produced her rugged, cogently argued E flat piano trio in which an English forthrightness combines most effectively with advanced French traits of the period, including a stylish use of whole-tone patterns. Gradually, as composers increased in confidence, the French influence became diluted; but even as late as 1938 a residual element of the Ravel style is still evident in the third Ireland trio, though overlaid by the broad gestures of a typically English brand of romanticism. Altogether more unusual for the period, however, are the German-style 'expressionist' features which we have seen in the second of Bridge's trios, indicative of the radical change in his style which had occurred after the end of the 1914-18 war. Apart from the piano trio, the new orientation in Bridge's thinking is apparent in his piano sonata (1924), string trio (1928), violin sonata (1934), and fourth string quartet (1937), all of which can be seen now, with hindsight, to have contributed significantly towards the internationalism which increasingly characterized British music during the 1940s and 1950s.

Of the generation of British composers who were coming to prominence at the start of the Second World War, three in particular were later to make notable contributions to the piano

¹¹ Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge (1864-1963), one of the most outstanding musical patrons of the twentieth century, was a fervent supporter of chamber music. The organizer of festivals, and originator of numerous commissions to leading composers, she also had many works dedicated to her, including several piano trios.

trio form: Edmund Rubbra, Lennox Berkeley, and Alan Rawsthorne. Rubbra's first trio, dated 1950 and thus of the same period as his fifth symphony, is described as being 'in one movement', but actually comprises three short movements linked together without break, rather in the manner of a Cobbett Phantasy. His more substantial second trio, written some twenty years later, has two large interconnected movements in contrasted styles, and well demonstrates his main style characteristics: a largely linear approach, with seamless contrapuntal textures propelled by some powerfully dissonant harmony and an ingenious system of continuous thematic variation. The work contains music of substance and dignity, but its lack of the clear instrumental differentiation characteristic of trio scoring suggests that the medium may not have been entirely congenial to the composer. Lennox Berkeley's contribution is an effective horn trio, composed in 1954. After studying with Nadia Boulanger in Paris from 1927 to 1933, Berkeley gained an initial reputation for the 'Gallic' wit and precision of his music, in which offshoots from the somewhat ironic neo-classicism of early Poulenc and Stravinsky are plainly evident. Later, however, a deeper, and indeed more English, note became apparent in his work, most decisively in his full-length opera *Nelson*, which was completed in 1953. In the horn trio (written, perhaps as a relaxation, a year later) variety and textural clarity are achieved by employing the instruments more often in pairs than as a full ensemble, some particularly charming effects resulting from the use of duets for unaccompanied violin and horn. Specially noteworthy are the variations with which the work ends. Based on a sixteen-bar theme, with a falling minor seventh as its main melodic feature, the ten variations are sharply characterized by contrasts in mood and tempo, and emphasize instrumental timbres in various horn and violin solos, supported by a richly eventful piano part.

Rawsthorne's trio was commissioned by the Worshipful Company of Musicians for the Festival of the City of London in 1962, and first performed there on 12 July of that year by Yehudi Menuhin, Gaspar Cassadó, and Louis Kentner. Its three movements—Introduction, Capriccio, and Theme and Variations—are interlinked (the second and third by an *attacca*) to form continuous and highly unified music over an extended time-span. The sense of unity is further enhanced by the use of thematic transference

and metamorphosis, often in widely spaced contexts. For example, the scalar ideas which characterize the Introduction, while in no sense forming a 'motto' theme, return in fragmentary form during the link, from letter (M), to the start of the variation movement, and again at the end of the whole work; and features of the striding opening theme of the Capriccio (Ex. 59(i)) return, transformed in rhythm, first as a fugue subject initiated by the cello at letter (J) (Ex. 59(ii)), and secondly as the principal idea at letter (V) (Ex. 59(iii)) of the last of the variations which make up the final movement, in the latter case suggesting, also, some hidden interconnection with the basic variation theme. Colourfully scored, the work contains some unusual passages for unaccompanied strings. A particularly notable example is the seventeen-bar section between letters (C) and (E), where double-stoppings on both instruments, together and separately, establish a consistent string texture in three and four parts and in the process impart a markedly concertante air to the solo piano section which ensues. Rawsthorne's tough, somewhat gritty harmonic style—non-diatonic, but not fully atonal—and his strong contrapuntal lines combine to provide a decidedly 'internationalist' manner, which leans unmistakably on Bartók and Hindemith. In his work, as increasingly in British music of the time, there remains little which can be identified as specifically national in character.

More recently, the British composers who have written piano trios are separable into three main categories. There are those, in the first place, who have maintained a traditionalist line by adopting, in a host of personal ways, the musical lingua franca of

Ex. 59

(i) *Allegro deciso*

Vn. *f*

Vc. ①

Vn. ⑤ *p*

(ii) *♩ = ca. 144*

(iii) *arco*

(iv) *pizz.*

p

the times, traceable back through Rawsthorne and Walton to its roots in the work of Hindemith, Milhaud, and Bartók. In the dissemination of this style in Britain a not unimportant role was played by the Hungarian-born Mátyás Seiber and the German-born Franz Reizenstein, both of whom settled in England in the mid 1930s. Reizenstein, whose large output of chamber music includes a piano trio, actually studied with Hindemith in Berlin before he left for England in 1934; and later, from 1958, he became particularly influential through his teaching at the Royal Academy of Music. Secondly, there are those who have been drawn initially to the methods of Schoenberg and his pupils, and subsequently to the developments in the post-Webern era engendered by Messiaen, Boulez, Stockhausen, and others, including asymmetrical rhythms, the serialization of durations and dynamics, and the use of aleatory and improvisatory techniques. In some cases the British composers involved have expanded their horizons by study abroad, both in Europe and the United States, with such leading composers as Messiaen, Petrassi, Lutosławski, and Milton Babbitt. But once again the foundations for this departure in British music were clearly laid half a century earlier by refugee musicians from Europe who settled here in the 1930s, notably Egon Wellesz, Roberto Gerhard, and Walter Goehr, all of them one-time pupils of Schoenberg. And the third of our categories comprises a small group of what may be called 'radical revisionists', who, in very recent times, have turned away from the extreme complexities of avant-garde composition towards simpler melodic and rhythmic styles, and sparser textures, while remaining essentially innovative in their approach.

Two works of contrasted character which illustrate the 'traditionalist' style of the later twentieth century are the piano trios of William Mathias and Kenneth Leighton, both of which were composed in 1965, three years after the Rawsthorne trio. Each of them was written for a special purpose, the Mathias for performance by the Tunnell Trio at the Cheltenham Festival in 1965, and the Leighton for a competition in Hanover in the same year, where it was awarded the Bernhard Sprengel Prize for Chamber Music. Despite considerable differences of style the two trios share a number of features which are typical of the neo-classical approach. Both are basically tonal in orientation (and both, in fact, in D) despite a free use of chromaticism and dissonance; and

both adopt a lean, athletic style of writing, with Stravinskian ostinato patterns and sharply etched rhythms to create a vivid sense of forward propulsion. Octave writing between the strings is frequent in both works, together with much two-strand writing (sometimes amplified by octaves) for the piano; and chordal patterns are correspondingly rather less common. Furthermore, both works are predominantly contrapuntal in conception and make extensive use of imitative, canonic, and fugal procedures. Mathias's trio is notable for its compactness; its four movements (of the traditional type, with the scherzo second) are clear and economical in structure, and exploit simple thematic ideas in a variety of ingenious ways. Particularly striking, in the sonata-form first movement, is the telescoped recapitulation, at bar 153, where both first and second subjects enter together (the former inverted) in a delightful, pre-planned contrapuntal combination, producing an irresistible impression of a good-natured argument between the participants. A deeper mood is established in the slow movement, in which meditative string solos and duets are set against a resonant background of sustained, arpeggiated piano chords, creating an oasis of calm between the Waltonesque scherzo and fugal-style finale, both of unbridled energy. The lilting folk-song style of the central melody and its harp-like accompaniment provide a clear reflection of the composer's allegiance to his Welsh origins and background.

The Leighton trio, despite having only three movements—an interlinked allegro, scherzo, and finale—is longer and more complex in structure. Throughout the work a great deal is made of certain 'contradictory' motifs—particularly ones involving tone and semitone intervals and conflicting major and minor thirds—which are linked together to provide firmly characterized thematic material. Strong contrasts are developed between various extended sections, some in a thoughtful contrapuntal style and others in which dynamic energy is built up by means of sharply pointed rhythms, in the manner of Walton. In the process an overriding sense of excitement is generated, particularly in the central scherzo, which is then gradually relaxed in the slow finale (entitled *Hymnus*) and resolved most memorably in the eloquent closing paragraphs. The trio exhibits much resourceful scoring. Though by no means prodigal with his notes the composer succeeds in cultivating an impressive variety of textures, showing

his clear awareness as a performer of the medium's rich potential, and is particularly successful in creating strong climaxes without overloading the ensemble.

In their inventiveness and technical assurance these two works provide worthy samples of the 'traditionalist' types of trio composed during the last twenty-five years. Their qualities, however, are shared equally by numerous similar works of the period, in which a musical language and structure of traditional orientation are deployed with a refreshing lack of conventionality. Two further examples may be briefly considered. One is the trio in three movements—Sonata, Rondeau, and Finale—by Trevor Hold, which was composed for the resident ensemble (the Archduke Trio) at Leicester University. The title of the slow middle movement possibly holds some special significance, since this meditative section seems to owe as much, structurally, to the verse form of the medieval rondeau as to the instrumental rondo pattern of later times. An opening 'refrain', comprising a simple chordal progression on the piano, occurs four times, in conjunction with expressive counterthemes for the strings, at first separately on violin and cello in turn and later in an ingenious contrapuntal combination. And between the recurrences of the 'refrain' there are inserted contrasted episodes for the full ensemble, in a manner comparable to the addition of new 'lines' to a poetic text. The resultant music is unusual in form and elegant in expression, and provides, within its modest limits, a miniature compendium of quietly effective ways of writing for the medium. In splendid contrast, the finale adds a new dimension to the concept of the exuberant ending, with its employment of Charleston tempo, with a pattern of 3 + 3 + 2 quavers to the bar, and consistently paired notes in 'swung' rhythm.

The other example is the second trio, Op. 111, by Alun Hoddinott, which was written for the Stuttgart Trio in 1984 and first performed by them in Cardiff in March of that year. Yet another three-movement work, but this time with a central scherzo and an adagio finale, the trio is in every way as spare in texture and finely pointed in rhythm as the other neo-classical works we have been considering. However, it departs interestingly from usual practice in both its second and third movements by its use of free-rhythm note patterns for the piano, which provide, with the aid of the sustaining pedal, a shimmering,

impressionist type of accompaniment. First heard in the middle section of the trio's macabre sounding scherzo, the note patterns are derived from the principal melodic ideas on the strings that they support; and when recalled in the finale, either in direct or inverted form, they add considerably to the cohesion of the structure as a whole (see Ex. 60 for a section from bar 18 of the third movement).

The rarity of piano trios which employ Schoenbergian twelve-note techniques is very marked; indeed, before the middle of the century such works are practically non-existent. It is not easy to see why composers working with this system should have avoided the trio genre so completely. Possibly the mixed nature of the medium, with its two essentially melodic instruments pitted against one more naturally biased towards harmony, proved a deterrent, since it may have seemed to provide less scope for a strict application of serial principles than, for example, a string quartet with its more purely linear procedures. Certainly,

Ex. 60
[Adagio]

Vn.
Vc.
Pf.

those few composers who actually attempted trios in serial form tended to employ the system with much freedom. Two examples of contrasted character from the middle of the century show the methods involved and their application in piano trio terms. One is the *Kammersonate* for piano, violin, and cello by Hans Werner Henze, which was written originally in 1948 when the composer was studying twelve-note techniques with René Leibowitz in Darmstadt, and subsequently revised in 1963. The work has four short movements—fast, slow, slow, and moderately fast—followed by a separate slow epilogue, all of which are based on two distinct note-series, one for movements 1, 3, 4, and the epilogue and the other for movement 2. The presentation of the melodic material, and consequently of the principal note-rows, is allocated largely to the strings, with the piano supplying a varied chordal accompaniment. However, a notable exception occurs at the start of the fourth movement where the piano maintains a whimsical variant of the basic note-series for four bars before the entry of the strings, and then leads on into a ghostly waltz, involving much delicate scoring and shared melodic interest, the intense, febrile character of which echoes early Schoenberg, of the Op. 25 Suite for piano, for example, or parts of *Pierrot Lunaire*. Also of particular interest is a passage for keyboard alone at the beginning of the second movement, in which pianissimo chord clusters support a purely diatonic melodic fragment which sounds, in context, like the bearer of a secret message; the mysterious, whispered response is a two-strand section for muted strings, in which all the notes of the second series used are given in a tightly-knit contrapuntal pattern. In its overtly expressionist manner, the trio is as much a 'period piece' as Frank Bridge's second trio, but it makes a convincing use of serialism and is distinguished by its colour and delicacy of scoring.

The other work of the period is the one-movement trio by the American composer Earle Brown, entitled *Music for violin, cello, and piano*, which dates from 1952. Brown is one of a group of composers, including Morton Feldman and Christian Wolff, who became, under the aegis of John Cage, leaders of the American avant-garde, with a special interest in graphic scores and the products of chance in the compositional process. In his trio the element of chance is restricted to certain aspects of ensemble and rhythmic notation. Against a crotchet pulse, varying in speed

between $\text{♩} = 40$ and $\text{♩} = 120$ the players are required to observe the mathematical durations of the notes in their parts as precisely as possible, and in the absence of regular rhythmic patterns, to achieve a sufficient degree of ensemble by 'hearing' their relationship to each other. The obvious difficulty of this is intended to produce, in the composer's words, 'a rather flexible, floating quality in performance'. In other respects the trio is precisely organized, using fairly strict serial procedures, vivid pointillist textures, and a large amount of extreme octave displacement. Some impression of its general character may be gained from the opening bars of the work (given in Ex. 61). This shows the first complete statement (and the first ten notes of the second) of the basic note series, expressed in asymmetrical rhythms and in bars comprising twelve, sixteen, and eighteen semiquavers, respectively. Also shown is the extremely dislocated melodic style, with its continually changing dynamics.

It seems likely that, in the judgement of history, this American trio will appear more significant for its experimental features than for its artistic merits. Yet, with its early date of composition, it pointed the way forward, interestingly enough, to several later developments. In Britain, where a 'time-lag' so frequently affects the rate of artistic progress, it was a number of years before piano trios of a similarly advanced nature began to appear, in parallel with more traditionalist works. Two of the earliest and most important examples are the trios of Alexander Goehr and Jonathan Harvey, the former commissioned by the Bath Festival

Ex. 61

Vn. $\text{♩} = 40$ $\text{♩} = 60$

Vc. $\text{♩} = 40$

Pf. $\text{♩} = 40$

Ex. 62
(♩ = 100)

The musical score for Example 62 is presented in three systems. The first system shows the Violin (Vn.) and Viola (Vc.) parts with dynamic markings of *in pp* and *pp*, and a tempo marking of $\text{♩} = 100$. The second system continues the Vn. and Vc. parts, with dynamic markings of *pp* and *ppp*. The third system shows the Piano (Pf.) part with dynamic markings of *pp* and *ppp*. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and repeat signs.

ate contexts, the separate instrumental parts are given a time-signature and barring which conflict with those in the piano part. But in order to simplify the *appearance* in the score and thus facilitate ensemble, a lay-out is used for the piano part in which all the time-signatures and bar-lines are made to coincide, while the 'real', conflicting metre is shown only by a cue-line between the staves. In Example 62, an overall $2/4$ metre is shown in the score, and to accommodate this the string contributions are notated in triplets; but in the individual parts a $4/8$ signature is provided, with independently placed bar-lines which, as the cue-line shows, do not coincide with those in the piano score. The example shown illustrates, in fact, one of the simpler uses of the device; in various other instances, where only one of the players is 'out of

and first performed there in June 1966 by Yehudi and Hephzibah Menuhin with Maurice Gendron (cello), and the latter composed for the Orion Trio and premièred by them in Southampton in December 1971. Though hardly less experimental than Earle Brown's trio, these two works far outstrip the American one in musical substance.

A radical rethinking of the potentialities of the trio medium is evident in Goehr's work, with its intensive exploration of new techniques and sonorities—including scordatura tuning, the use of quarter- and three-quarter tones, skeletal piano writing, and various subtle forms of rhythmic organization. Yet, equally, it shows a continuing allegiance to the classical traditions of trio composition in its clear structure, finely articulated scoring, and essentially direct manner of expression. Stylistically the music is refreshingly difficult to categorize. Certain influences, notably early Schoenberg and Messiaen, are traceable readily enough; but they are distilled, through Goehr's wide-ranging musical sympathies, into a personal and very distinctive musical language which, though complex and intellectually challenging, is always intensely communicative. The work is in two movements of strongly contrasted character; the first sectional, with numerous immediate and long-range repeats, and the second 'through-composed' in a more freely improvisatory manner. In the opening movement the systematic use of repeats (often involving only a double-bar and repeat sign) imparts a remarkable openness to the form, which is closer in outline to that of a baroque ritornello movement than a classical sonata. In order to create a sense virtually of tonal stability, the same pitch is nearly always adopted for the spaced repeats as they occur; and to replace the dynamic contrasts of the sonata style, a simple decorative system is employed which involves the colourful ornamentation of various relatively static harmonic patterns. The method of adding decorations to a repeated section may be seen in Example 62, a passage from figure 9 of the first movement which, at its original appearance fifty-one bars earlier, consisted of the piano part only. The string parts added here provide a good example also of the unusual system of rhythmic notation which Goehr employs at several places in the first movement. The aim, quite simply, is to allow each of the string players to adopt a different metrical pattern from either one or both of his partners; thus, in appropri-

step', and the rhythms of the other two are much more complex, it becomes increasingly necessary, as the composer stresses in his preface, for each player to 'realise his own metre . . . unhampered by the demands of precise ensemble'.

The second movement is notable for its lyrical beauty. Quietly contemplative, it exploits a rich vein of solo and duet writing for the strings, against a background of sparse and somewhat reticent contributions from the piano. Particularly remarkable is the passage for the strings alone between figures $\boxed{3}$ and $\boxed{5}$, where gentle chordal writing, with double-stopping on both instruments, is linked with quarter- and three-quarter-tone slides, marked *sospirando*, to convey a mood of quiet sorrow. Unlike the first movement there is no attempt to achieve unity through spaced repeats, but simply to provide, through the recurrence of tiny melodic cells, an overall sense of thematic integration. And even though twelve-note patterns are introduced at the start, shared between cello and piano, and in some later instances also, they do not appear to fulfil any vital structural purpose.

In Jonathan Harvey's trio, on the other hand, twelve-note techniques play a more significant role. The work was composed very soon after Harvey had completed a period of study with Milton Babbitt at Princeton in 1969-70, and not surprisingly it reflects to some considerable degree the experience he had gained there. The opening movement, entitled 'Song', comprises a long-drawn cantabile melody, played largely in octaves by the strings against a flowing, mainly single-line piano part in demisemi-quavers, involving various twelve-note patterns in whole or partial series. The texture is predominantly two-part but, as the extensive pedalling indications show, the intended effect is frequently more impressionistic than crisply contrapuntal. After this relatively orthodox beginning the ensuing movements show increasing complexity. At the opening of the second movement (enigmatically called 'System') separate four-note chords for strings and piano resound repeatedly against each other like tolling bells, the strings getting gradually softer and the piano simultaneously louder, over eleven and ten stages, respectively. Following this grave introduction the somewhat doom-laden effect is dispelled by an extended, highly ornate section of formidable rhythmic intricacy, much of it unbarred and present-ing, with its fluctuating tempi, extraordinary problems of ensem-

ble for the performers. Certain interconnecting links appear at the start of the finale (entitled 'Rite'). The piano begins with a fragment of its opening phrase in the first movement, and this leads directly to the keyboard's 'tolling bell' chord from the middle movement. Thereafter, as the movement proceeds, both string and piano 'tolling' elements recur in various guises, eventually recombining as the long-held chord of the almost inaudible (*pppp*) ending. Elsewhere, in the main body of the finale, elaborate improvisatory techniques are employed. These involve the allocation of thematic segments, or specified groups of notes, to one or more instruments in the ensemble, to be played in free rhythm and in any chosen order against a stable background of precisely notated rhythms in the other instrumental part(s). The contrast between freedom and restraint is not however confined to these improvisatory passages; in the structure of the movement as a whole a similar dichotomy is apparent between the freely decorative style of the improvised sections and the tightly organized nature of the opening paragraphs, in which closely-knit four-strand textures are worked out precisely on serial lines.

These works by Goehr and Harvey represent the furthest extreme in modernist 'language' and scoring to which the piano trio has so far travelled; and it is arguable, at least, that the radical approaches employed in them impose almost as much of a strain on the medium as did, in their quite different way, the quasi-orchestral methods of many late nineteenth-century composers. The differences, however, are substantial and significant. Whereas in the typical grand romantic trio a certain insensitivity seems to lie behind the overblown approach—an attitude which implies that the medium is only a rough-and-ready means to broader musical ends, rather than a delicate mechanism with its own, wholly individual, expressive capabilities—in the modern works it is an obsessive regard for technical minutiae, together with an intensive search for entirely new sound potentialities in the medium which have tended to alter the traditional balance between the substance of the music and its means of expression. In both cases the trio techniques represent, of course, a reflection of the more general styles characteristic of their respective periods. But in the twentieth-century works the approach has been imaginative and creative in a way which is altogether less apparent in the earlier ones. Also it is worth repeating that the

feature which has probably contributed most to the changed concept of the trio is the drastically reduced role of the piano as a subsidiary partner to the strings, often contributing only single notes, chords, or melodic fragments to the texture, or indeed remaining silent for long periods. The contrast which this has produced with the traditional 'concerto-style' trio—without in any way 'straining the medium'—could hardly be more marked.

More recently the piano trio has continued as the vehicle for a remarkably wide variety of styles. Indeed, it is difficult not to conclude that, if a musicologist two hundred years from now were to be confronted by half-a-dozen unidentified trios from the 1980s, he would find the greatest difficulty in determining their authorship and chronology with any accuracy. A work in a latter-day Schoenbergian style, and constructed with excellent craftsmanship, is the trio by Hugh Wood composed during 1982-4 and dedicated to the erstwhile Parikian-Fleming-Roberts Trio. A splendidly characterized 'appassionato' opening, with a powerful descending twelve-note pattern on the strings matched by a similar ascending one (also involving all twelve notes) on the piano, sets the scene for a first movement of much vigour with sensitively varied scoring. The Adagio which follows maintains a free use of twelve-note patterns, but is based on rather less striking melodic ideas and makes a somewhat pale impression. The final movement, on the other hand, shows the composer at his most characteristic—and indeed most English—with its vivid dancing rhythms and gently whispered scoring, leading through a final crescendo to a brilliantly effective close.

Amongst the trios characterized earlier as 'radical revisionist' in style, particular mention may be made of those by David Matthews and Dominic Muldowney, the former published in 1984 as a tribute to Hans Keller, and the latter in 1985 (though completed a few years earlier) to a commission from the Montpelier Trio. In general terms, works in this style take a middle road between the traditionalist neo-classical manner and that of the experimental avant-garde, avoiding on the one hand the serialism, disjoint melodic lines, and rhythmic complexities of the progressives, and on the other the clear-cut melodic statements, thematic contrasts, and broadly tonal orientation of the conservatives. But they are not, for that reason, any less 'advanced' in

language and expression. The Matthews trio is somewhat the more conventional of the two, with four contrasted movements, including a scherzo placed second, and a slow movement which is linked to the finale. In the first movement the themes grow organically from descending arpeggio figures stated in the introduction, and there are clear-cut sections corresponding broadly to those in a regular sonata movement. The textures are characteristically light, and there are some effective examples of interchange of material between keyboard and strings in a markedly 'classical' manner. Pungency is imparted to the fairly plain melodic lines by much sharply dissonant harmony which, in the first three movements at least, effectively dispels any sense of tonality. It is the more surprising, then, that the finale suddenly acquires an F sharp as its key-signature and creates an initial impression of G major. Any sense of tonal stability thus achieved proves illusory, however, and following a last-minute switch to a six-flat signature implying G flat, the movement ends with an oblique shift to a final D flat chord, with colourful accessory notes. By comparison, Dominic Muldowney's trio is more enigmatic in form and 'language'. Cast in a single extended movement, with fourteen sections at differing tempi (ranging from *lento* to *presto agitato*) it develops its musical argument from the assembly of numerous tiny intervallic patterns, among which the ascending major sixth is particularly prominent. Special importance attaches also to an opening three-note pattern on the piano—D, A flat, G—spread widely across the keyboard, which recurs seven times at spaced intervals, and in a variety of forms, acting as a type of 'signpost' to map out the progress of the music as it unfolds. This opening figure, together with a sample of the undulating, motivic string texture, and a curious use of the piano to provide quiet echoes of notes just played by the strings, can be seen in Example 63.

As a pair, despite considerable differences of style, these two works point the way towards an interesting new concept in trio writing—one which makes a virtue out of textural simplicity, but does not shrink from a powerful individuality—obscurity, even—of 'language'. However, when stripped of so much of its natural capacity for vivid contrast, and restricted to pastel shades of musical colouring, the character of the medium necessarily undergoes considerable change. And, as a result, if the danger of

Ex. 63
Andante (ma con intensità)
(little vibrato except at \leftarrow)

Vn.
Vc.
Pf.

monotony is to be averted, the musical arguments need to be very strongly profiled.

As final testimony to the extreme diversity of styles found in the 1980s, brief mention may be made of three other trios, by composers of Swedish, American, and French origin, each of which could hardly have failed to magnify the detection problems of our hypothetical musicologist in the twenty-second century. All three works were written late in their respective composer's careers, and represent their sole contributions to the genre. The first is the *Trio in One Movement* (1986) by the Swedish composer Sven-Erik Bäck, which provides a vivid example of post-Webernian *Punkt-musik*. Using a wide range of string devices, skeletal piano writing, persistent tempo fluctuations, notes, clusters, and passages of improvisation (partly free and partly timed in seconds), it represents one of the more experimental

extremes to which notated, as opposed to electronically-realized, music may be taken. Stylistically it belongs firmly within the ambit of influence of Boulez and Stockhausen, and shows few if any traits of a nationalist character. In total contrast is the second of our works, a one-movement trio by the American composer Morton Feldman, which was published in 1980. With a duration said to be 'approximately one hour and twenty minutes' the work contrives to create a hypnotic effect of timelessness by means of a succession of isolated notes, chords, and fragmentary motifs, often linked solely by the piano's sustaining pedal. No tempo indications are given, but the impression created is of a slow measured progress, undisturbed by continual changes of time-signature, often one for each bar, which appear designed chiefly to test the alertness of the players. Both strings are muted throughout, and the dynamics are restricted in range from mezzo-piano down to *ppppp*, the softest levels being the ones most frequently cultivated. Reflecting the philosophy of a particular sector of the American avant-garde centred around Cage, the trio possesses the character somewhat of a devotional incantation—meditative, remote, and perhaps consciously related in its manner to the Vedic hymn or mantra.

To turn from this to our third work is to move to an entirely different, more 'corporeal', world—that of France in the 1930s. The trio is one published in 1987 by the septuagenarian composer Jean Françaix, which in four short, thematically-interrelated movements, conjures up delightfully the half-forgotten world of Poulenc, Milhaud, Auric, and others in pre-war Paris. There is no reason to suppose that the work is not newly minted; nor clearly is it simply a piece of pastiche. What it shows, in fact, is a very senior composer applying himself, for the first time in his long career, to a genre which the French, generally, have so greatly enriched; and doing so with wit and urbanity in a musical style which is second nature to him.

Any speculation about the likely future of the piano trio is probably as unwise as it is likely to be unrevealing. Inevitably it will be linked to the whole future development of the musical language, and this from our present viewpoint seems certain to be exceptionally problematic. All that can be said with any confidence is that the large output of trios in recent times (of which the ones considered above represent only a small part), together with

the variety of styles contained in them, appear to augur well for the continuing vitality of the genre. Certainly there seems to be no good reason to anticipate its early demise. Complete casualties amongst the major forms of instrumental music are very rare in history, and occasioned in almost every case by the 'obsolescence' of particular instruments—the viol, the harpsichord, and the baryton, for example—a fate which seems unlikely to overtake the piano trio in the foreseeable future. Much more difficult to estimate is the likely style and content of any continuing trio form. In general the trios of the traditionalists, well though they have maintained the constructive aims and technical criteria of the founders of the genre, have begun to suffer some inevitable loss of immediacy and freshness of expression. While those of the avant-garde, exciting though their technical innovations have been, have tended to place excessive emphasis on scoring and instrumental colour as a largely 'impressionist' means of expression, and to retain in the music itself, for all its deeply buried mathematical logic, only restricted powers of communication. It seems probable, therefore, that some new stylistic *rapprochement* may be expected, somewhat on the lines of the 'revisionist' works we have identified, but more arresting in content and more securely aligned with the natural scoring attributes of the medium.

It is unlikely that, in the process, the piano trio—or, indeed, chamber music generally—will readily regain its historical position as a performers' medium in the widest sense, able to absorb into its repertoire important new works which are in any way within the competence of even the best amateur players. Although, as we have seen earlier, the trio has caught up only rather belatedly with the more extreme advances in twentieth-century music, the modernist repertoire it has recently begun to acquire is of such a daunting complexity that its accessibility is limited entirely to the virtuosos professional ensembles of the present time—and often only to them with very considerable difficulty. It is noteworthy that the problems involved are not only the 'physical-technical' ones resulting from new performance practices, such as special bowing procedures, pizzicati, harmonics, scordatura tunings, and the rest but also the 'mental-assimilation' ones proceeding from the baffling obscurity of many present-day systems of notation and the difficulties of ensemble they create. Curiously enough, similar, though much less drastic,

problems appear to have troubled amateur players in the late eighteenth century; as a reviewer in the *Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek* put it in 1790, in relation to some recently published Haydn trios, 'it is more the frequent modulations to remote keys—where many accidentals, often double sharps and flats, occur—than any innately difficult passages or ones requiring great technical ability, which demand a trained keyboard player for these sonatas'.¹² No doubt, as in the past, today's musicians, professional and amateur, given a sufficient period of consolidation, will eventually come to terms with the new notational systems and learn to handle them with the same freedom and comparative ease as traditional notation. But the process of adaptation is certain to be very protracted; much more so than in Haydn's day. In the meantime the 'realization' of advanced new scores remains the province of a few specialist groups who are linked with composers in a somewhat inhibiting 'closed circuit' of supply and demand, in which new works are left, often after only a very few performances, to establish what precarious footholds they can within the wider repertoire. And inevitably, that 'wider repertoire' relies heavily—perhaps too heavily for the continuing health of the genre—on the accepted masterpieces of the past. Parallels with history should obviously be drawn with caution; but it is difficult not to observe that, when Mozart in June 1788 suggested 'making a little music again' at Puchberg's place, it was contemporary music he had in mind—specifically his own latest piano trio, K.542 in E major—not something written fifty or more years earlier.

¹² *Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek*, 117/1 (1790); cited from H. C. Robbins Landon, *Haydn: Chronicle and Works II* (London, 1978), 723.