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Valerie Walden. *One Hundred Years of Violoncello: A History of Technique and Performance Practice, 1740–1840*. Cambridge Musical Texts and Monographs. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. xv, 311 pp. ISBN 0-521-55449-7 (hardcover)

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the Ptolemaic account of hearing (sense-perception) and reason in harmonic science within the larger context of the “criterion of truth.” They conclude that Boethius’s translation is an interpretation of Ptolemy’s ideas, which Boethius uses to present his own position on the subject—a position which is radically different in its understanding of the concepts in the Greek original. Selected passages from Euclid’s treatise are similarly examined in terms of Boethian adaptation or abridgement in this case, additionally shedding light on existing controversial scholarly views surrounding Euclid’s allegiance or lack thereof to Pythagorean doctrines, and concluding that the treatise should be properly reinstated within the Euclidian canon.

A single typographical error appears in the last paragraph on p. 108, where “... in may often fail” should read “... it may often fail.” In its advancement of new data and provocative theories, this collection of essays fulfills more than adequately the objective of a conference on editing and translating. Not only is it a rivetting read, but it is also an invaluable technical tool to the modern-day editor and translator of ancient and early texts.

Olga E. Malyshko

Valerie Walden. *One Hundred Years of Violoncello: A History of Technique and Performance Practice, 1740–1840*. Cambridge Musical Texts and Monographs. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. xv, 311 pp. ISBN 0-521-55449-7 (hardcover).

In this welcome contribution to the field of performance practice, Valerie Walden broadens her scope beyond a single historical era to cover a critical period of one hundred years in the cello’s history. She skilfully weaves two principal concepts or themes—*innovation* and *nationalism*—throughout her study of technique and performance practice issues and demonstrates how these themes helped to shape the continuous changes the cello underwent during this period and how the traditions of cello playing gradually coalesced into several different national schools. The result is an excellent resource for players and a very valuable addition to the sparse literature on historically-informed performance practice of the cello.

The hundred years from 1740 to 1840 coincide with the cello’s rise to the status of a solo instrument. They are further defined by the publication of Michel Corrette’s *Méthode théorique et pratique* in 1741 and the death of Bernhard Romberg, founder of the Dresden school, in 1841. As Walden demonstrates, Romberg was exceptionally influential as a performer and author of a cello treatise that was accepted for use at the Paris Conservatoire. The author regards the period 1790 to 1815 as the “apex of this era of change and growing nationalism” (p. 4) when cello performance techniques were transmitted from Paris by performers such as Jean-Pierre and Jean-Louis Duport, Jean-Baptiste Aimé Joseph Janson, and Jacques-Michel Hurel de Lamare, who travelled and performed throughout Europe. The interaction of their stylistic ideas and concept of bow design and instruments with those of players in each locale they

visited helped to establish regional pedagogical centres of playing. The strength of Walden's approach lies in the way she surveys each cellist's individual contribution, adding a wealth of new biographical detail, and then moves to the larger issue of how the common interests and practices of certain cellists helped to define each school of playing. Biographical information is especially rich on Justus Johann Friedrich Dotzauer, Bernhard Romberg, Max Bohrer, and a host of other, lesser-known cellists whose playing styles, performing careers, and friendships with well-known composers influenced the regional schools of performance that became established all over Europe.

Although the author includes many references to the cello's role in chamber ensembles and as an orchestral instrument, she is concerned primarily with the cello's rise to popularity as a *solo* instrument and the techniques that soloists practised. A particularly valuable contribution lies in the chapters devoted to changes in the design and stringing of the instrument and bow. The cello itself was not yet standardized in dimensions during this period. Although Antonio Stradivari had codified the small pattern cello in 1707, the large pattern cello continued to be made throughout the eighteenth century. Walden notes that there was also considerable experimentation in bow design during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Although the most significant development was the replacement of the transitional bow by the Tourte design, there were also some other, unusual designs by Jean-Baptiste Vuillaume, such as a hollow steel bow in 1834, and a self-rehairing bow, also from the 1830s. Walden's insights about the changes in technique that were made possible by the Tourte bow are enlightening, for example, its ability to negotiate passages in continuous multiple-string chords, which were used by some composers for greater power of sound. The bow grip also varied considerably during this period, with the hand being held higher or lower on the stick, and even an underhand grip (like that for the viola da gamba) being used by some Italian and German players. This period of change also coincides with the advent of the Tourte bow and the predilection of Parisian violinists for the lower grip, even though French cellists were not yet using it. The modern grip at the frog can be credited to Romberg, who used it for a leveraged bow stroke in the early years of the nineteenth century, when he also began using the Tourte-design bow after becoming familiar with it in Paris. His bow grip was then adopted by other German and Russian players.

The author traces some performance practice issues backwards into the Baroque era, but readers should not expect to find specific advice for performing music written before 1750. In this regard, the publisher's claim on the jacket that the book addresses "the full range of performance issues for the violoncello from the Baroque era to the early Romantic period" seems to overstate the author's objective. A more substantive criticism is that Walden fails to acknowledge the role of female players in the cello's history. She frankly asserts that she intends to discuss "the individuality and humanness of the *men* who made the music" (my italics), but even if there were few female performers, it still seems worth discussing why that was the case. The absence of women does not serve Walden well when she discusses the introduction of the endpin, for as Tilden A. Russell has argued, the acceptance of the endpin by performers

may have been hastened by the increasing number of female performers on the instrument.¹ One who surely should have received mention is Lisa Cristiani (1827–53), to whom Mendelssohn dedicated his only solo work for that instrument.

This one criticism aside, I found Walden's overall approach refreshing in that she does not attempt to mask the fact that different practices co-existed and that no one approach is necessarily valid when attempting to play in a historically informed manner. Cellists may enjoy reading Pierre Marie Baillot's description of the problem of holding the ensemble together, or what the Italians called *tempo disturbato*, a type of rubato that soloists engaged in, during which the cello was expected to serve as the "regulator" of the ensemble and hold the tempo steady (p. 248). Walden also highlights Romberg's account of tempo variations encountered by touring cellists, such as the allegro being faster "in Paris than in Vienna, and in Vienna, again, faster than in the north of Germany" (p. 248). Another fascinating example demonstrates chordal realization of recitative, with the double bass playing sustained notes and the cello playing two-, three-, and four-note chords (p. 264).² Both Johann Georg Christoph Schetky and Jean Baumgartner advised that chords on the cello were to be struck just after the singer had pronounced each syllable of text. The performances in Mannheim by Peter Ritter (1763–1846), who used scordatura in several concertos and employed *bariolage* figures (an alternation between stopped note and open string at unison) for unusual sonority with his cello tuned in B-flat (a half-step higher than the orchestra), were a novel approach to combining different pitch levels.

These few illustrations only sample the wealth of new material and possibilities for different approaches demonstrated in the volume. There are literally dozens of musical examples, and the appendices provide a useful chronological list of thirty cello methods published between 1741 and 1855 as well as a good selected bibliography. Walden's book is a fascinating and in-depth account of an extraordinarily rich and varied period of performance practice. It makes engaging reading and is sure to remain a valuable resource for cellists and one that can profitably serve other string players as well.

Mary Cyr

John Rink. *Chopin: The Piano Concertos*. Cambridge Music Handbooks. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. x, 139 pp. ISBN 0-521-44109-9 (hardcover), 0-521-44660-0 (paperback).

John Rink's consideration of Chopin's concertos, including the rarely-heard *Allegro de concert*, op. 46, embraces much more than the genesis, reception, form, and structure of three of the composer's most controversial works. Not that these important matters are overlooked; rather, in the course of his investigation, which includes a survey of other concertos of the period, a chapter on

¹ Tilden A. Russell, "The development of the cello endpin," *Imago musicae* 4 (1987): 335–356.

² The example is taken from Bernard Stiastry, *Violoncell-Schule* (Mainz: Georges-Zulehner, [1829]), p. 21.