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## Boccherini's Workshop: The *Quartettini* for Friedrich Wilhelm II

In October of 1783, Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm II wrote to Luigi Boccherini to express his delight upon receiving a copy of the composer's Opus 33 quartets:

Nothing could give me more pleasure, Signor Boccherini, than to receive some of your compositions from your own hands and just at a time when I have begun to perform your instrumental work. It alone gives me full satisfaction and everyday I enjoy that pleasure.<sup>1</sup>

Thus began a mutually satisfying relationship between the Italian musician and the Prussian heir that resulted, nearly three years later, in the appointment of the former as «Composer of Our Chamber», a position he held for the entirety of the latter's eleven-year tenure as King (1786-1797).

Among the various works Boccherini composed for Friedrich Wilhelm II were twenty-nine string quartets (G. 213-241), none of which was published during that period. 1798, the year after Friedrich Wilhelm II's death, saw the publication of no less than thirteen of these quartets by the Parisian firm of Pleyel: G. 213-215 and G. 232-241. Of great interest are the sixteen quartets (G. 216-231) that fall between the two groups. None appeared in print either during Boccherini's lifetime or soon after. And with two exceptions (G. 223 and G. 228) all remain, to the present, in manuscript form. The question one asks is: why? The answer, as will be argued below, lies with the patronage of Friedrich Wilhelm II. Because of the extraordinary relationship that existed between the composer and his patron, Boccherini was presented with a unique opportunity to compose as he wished, rather than in a manner designed to please a public audience.

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from Friedrich Wilhelm II to Boccherini, produced in the original Italian in D. ALFREDO BOCCHERINI Y CALONJE, *Luis Boccherini: Apuntes Biográficos y Catálogo de las Obras de este Célebre Maestro*, Madrid, Imprenta y Litografía de A. Rodero, 1879, p. 15 (facsimile reprint ed., ALFREDO BOCCHERINI Y CALONJE - GONZALO PÉREZ MORALES, *Luis Boccherini, Apuntes Biográficos y Catálogo; Vida de Luis Boccherini, Boccherini en Familia*, Madrid, Asociación Luigi Boccherini - Editorial Arpegio, 2010). English translation in GERMAINE DE ROTHSCHILD, *Luigi Boccherini: His Life and Work*, London, Oxford University Press, 1965, p. 48.

## The Publication Gap: 1787-1796

This approach is at odds with Boccherini's normal practice throughout his life. Most of his ninety-one quartets were written with the amateur music-maker in mind, be it the individual patron or the public-at-large.<sup>2</sup> In a letter to the Viennese publisher Artaria dated 22 September 1780, Boccherini wrote about his practice of writing three works each year for Infante Don Luis. As long as his patron received one copy of each, Boccherini was free to offer the compositions to a publisher.<sup>3</sup>

In a 2005 *Early Music* article examining Boccherini's publishing history with Artaria, Rupert Ridgewell remarked that the Italian composer's music was in great demand until the late 1780s, at which point his «fortunes appear to have suffered a dramatic reversal».<sup>4</sup> He attributed this decline to Boccherini's appointment as composer to Friedrich Wilhelm II, suggesting that that position may «have led ... [him] to disengage from music publishing from about 1787 until 1796».<sup>5</sup> Ridgewell, in a later publication and in light of new evidence and documents, speculated further about Boccherini's "disappearance" from publication during this period:

It is not known whether Artaria made a conscious decision to cease publishing new Boccherini editions after 1785, or whether the opportunities to do so were limited. Factors such as the death of Boccherini's employer, the Infante Don Luis (in 1785), and his new commitment to send compositions to the King of Prussia may be related.<sup>6</sup>

Christian Speck described this same time frame as a «black hole» («schwarzes Loch») in the composer's otherwise steady publication history.<sup>7</sup> Both

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. ELISABETH LE GUIN, "One Says That One Weeps, But One Does Not Weep": *Sensible, Grotesque, and Mechanical Embodiments in Boccherini's Chamber Music*, «Journal of the American Musicological Society», LV, 2 (2002), pp. 207-254: 212, who notes that the general public was the intended audience of the Parisian firms such as Vénier, La Chevardière, Boyer, and Pleyel that dealt with Boccherini's chamber works, including his quartets.

<sup>3</sup> In 1770, Boccherini had been chosen by the Infante to be «violoncellist of his Chamber and composer of music with authorization of H. M. Charles III». While it was understood that Boccherini would work exclusively for the Infante, he was not restricted from sending his works to publishers, cf. G. DE ROTHSCHILD, *Luigi Boccherini*, cit., p. 35 and p. 100.

<sup>4</sup> RUPERT RIDGEWELL, *Artaria's Music Shop and Boccherini's Music in Viennese Musical Life*, «Early Music», XXXIII, 2 (2005), pp. 179-189: 183-184, 188.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 179-180.

<sup>6</sup> R. RIDGEWELL, *Boccherini, Artaria and Joseph Kaunitz-Rietberg: New Documents, New Perspectives*, in *Understanding Boccherini's Manuscripts*, ed. by Rudolf Rasch, Newcastle upon Tyne (UK), Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014, pp. 139-154: 151.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. CHRISTIAN SPECK, *Boccherini und die Verbreitung seiner Musik in europäischen Musikzentren des 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhunderts*, «Chigiana», XXIII (1993), pp. 111-134: 123.

scholars have rightly pointed out Boccherini's steady pace of publication throughout his employment with the Infante and following Friedrich Wilhelm II's death. The glaring gap comes from the years 1786-1797 (see Table 1).

Gérard No.	Boccherini's Op. No.	Year Composed	First Year Published
159-164	Op. 2	1761	1767 (Paris: Vénier)
165-170	Op. 8	1769	1769 (Paris: Vénier)
171-176	Op. 9	1770	1772 (Paris: Vénier)
177-182	Op. 15	1772	1773 (Paris: Vénier)
183-188	Op. 22	1775	1776 (Paris: La Chevardière)
189-194	Op. 24	1776-1778	1778 (Paris: Sieber)
195-200	Op. 26	1778	1781 (Vienna: Artaria)
201-206	Op. 32	1780	1782 (Vienna: Artaria)
207-212	Op. 33	1781	1958 (Rome: del Turco)
213	Op. 39	1787	1798 (Paris: Pleyel)
214-215	Op. 41	1788	1798 (Paris: Pleyel)
216-217	Op. 42	1789	unpublished
218-219	Op. 43	1790	unpublished
220-225	Op. 44	1792	unpublished <sup>8</sup>
226-231	Op. 48	1794	unpublished <sup>9</sup>
232-235	Op. 52	1795	1798 (Paris: Pleyel)
236-241	Op. 53	1796	1798 (Paris: Pleyel)
242-247	Op. 58	1799	1803 (Paris: Sieber)
248-249	Op. 64	1804	unpublished <sup>10</sup>

Ridgewell's first set of comments implies that Boccherini's works were no longer commercially viable. If one accepts that premise, it is difficult to explain why the composer so successfully found a market for many of his works written during the period in question, albeit not until the end of the century. Ridgewell's later observations allow for greater ambiguity and other possibilities. Boccherini's own letter to Pleyel, dated 12 September 1796, suggests that it was the composer himself who opted out of the commercial market, at least temporarily, for he refers to a «standing obligation to write for the King of Prussia [...] [This makes] it absolutely impossible for me to devote myself to commercial speculations of

<sup>8</sup> G. 223 (Op. 44, No. 4) was published as No. 6 in LUIGI BOCCHERINI, *Ausgewählte Streichquartette*, revised by Walter Upmeyer, Kassel, Bärenreiter, 1952.

<sup>9</sup> G. 228 (Op. 48, No. 2) was published as No. 7 in L. BOCCHERINI, *Ausgewählte Streichquartette*, cit.

<sup>10</sup> G. 249 contains one movement only. Gérard regards this work as incomplete, cf. YVES GÉRARD, *Thematic, Bibliographical, and Critical Catalogue of the Works of Luigi Boccherini*, London, Oxford University Press, 1969, p. 272.

any kind».<sup>11</sup> This was in no way an externally-imposed restriction or a fall from public favor, but rather a self-imposed withdrawal. Eventually, Boccherini did enter into negotiations with Pleyel for fifty-eight compositions;<sup>12</sup> this was followed by an even larger offering of 110 pieces.

Table 2 lists the works Boccherini chose to send to Pleyel. Notable is the fact that all of the first transaction compositions were written during the years 1792-1796 when the former served the Prussian King. The works included in the second transaction are earlier ones, and are a mix of compositions written both when Boccherini was in the service of the Infante and from the first part of his tenure with Friedrich Wilhelm II. Of the chamber works written for the Prussian monarch, all but the Opp. 42, 43, 44, and 48 *quartettini*, as well as three quintets,<sup>13</sup> were published by either Pleyel or Janet et Cotelle sometime between 1798 and 1824.<sup>14</sup>

Boccherini Op. No.	Contents	1796 Transaction	1797 Transaction
Op. 21	6 <i>sinfonie</i>		X
Op. 25	6 <i>quintetti</i>		X
Op. 27	6 <i>quintettini</i>		X
Op. 28	6 <i>quintetti</i>		X
Op. 29	6 <i>quintetti</i>		X
Op. 30	6 <i>quartettini</i>		X
Op. 31	6 <i>quintetti</i>		X
Op. 32	6 <i>quartetti</i>		X
Op. 33	6 <i>quartettini</i>		X
Op. 34	6 <i>terzetti</i>		X
Op. 35	6 <i>sinfonie</i>		X
Op. 36	6 <i>quartettini</i>		X
Op. 37	2 <i>sinfonie</i>		X
Op. 38	6 <i>notturmi</i>		X
Op. 39	3 <i>quintetti</i> , 1 <i>quartetto</i>		X

<sup>11</sup> G. DE ROTHSCHILD, *Luigi Boccherini*, cit., pp. 100-101.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 104.

<sup>13</sup> Op. 42 *quintettino* (G. 350), Op. 43 *quintetto* (G. 354) and *quintettino* (G. 352).

<sup>14</sup> Cf. G. DE ROTHSCHILD, *Luigi Boccherini*, cit., pp. 108-109 for a translated deed of sale for the first set of works. Rudolf Rasch has written extensively about Pleyel's re-establishing contact with Boccherini in August or September of 1796, after a twenty-year hiatus, to inquire about publishing the composer's works. The first transaction included fifty-eight works selected from Op. 44 up to the trios, Op. 54. A second transaction followed on 8 July 1797 and included 110 works selected from the Op. 21 symphonies up through Op. 43. A third transaction on 14 August 1797 included the 12 *Arie Accademiche*. Although Boccherini contracted for 180 works, not all were published. Cf. RUDOLF RASCH, *Boccherini's Manuscripts: A Typology*, in *Understanding Boccherini's Manuscripts*, cit., pp. 1-30: 20.

<sup>15</sup> This list is drawn from MARCO MANGANI - FEDERICA ROVELLI, *Boccherini's Thematic Catalogues: A Reappraisal*, in *Understanding Boccherini's Manuscripts*, cit., pp. 109-128: 112-114.

Boccherini Op. No.	Contents	1796 Transaction	1797 Transaction
Op. 40	6 <i>quintettini</i>		X
Op. 41	1 <i>sinfonia</i> , 2 <i>quartetti</i> , 2 <i>quintetti</i> , 6 <i>quintettini</i> , <i>Il gioco de' minuetti</i> <sup>16</sup>		X
Op. 42	1 <i>sinfonia</i> , 1 <i>notturmo</i> , 2 <i>quartettini</i> , 1 <i>quintettino</i> , 3 <i>quintetti</i>		X
Op. 43	1 <i>sinfonia</i> , 2 <i>quartettini</i> , 2 <i>quintetti</i> , 1 <i>quintettino</i>		X
Op. 44	6 <i>quartettini</i>	X	
Op. 45	4 <i>quintetti</i> , 1 <i>sinfonia</i>	X	
Op. 46	6 <i>quintettini</i>	X	
Op. 47	6 <i>terzettini</i>	X	
Op. 48	6 <i>quartettini</i>	X	
Op. 49	5 <i>quintetti</i>	X	
Op. 50	6 <i>quintettini</i>	X	
Op. 51	2 <i>quintetti</i>	X	
Op. 52	4 <i>quartetti</i>	X	
Op. 53	6 <i>quartettini</i>	X	
Op. 54	6 <i>terzetti</i>	X	

It is the consistent *non-publication* of the Prussian *quartettini* that is noteworthy; the fact that they were withheld suggests that they were different from other chamber compositions and that both men knew this. In a letter to Pleyel dated 14 November 1796, Boccherini wrote «I beg you not to judge of these works of mine until you have heard them two or three times and until the musicians who have to perform them shall first have practiced them and thoroughly understood them».<sup>17</sup> Further acknowledgment of the difficulty of his works is mentioned in another letter dated 18 March 1799 in which Boccherini notes that his works needed time in order to be accepted:

I am resigned to the fact that the unfortunate amateur can rarely succeed with studied compositions owing to the difficulty of the tempo and the variations in the tone and for other reasons [...] in this set of quartets and in any others which I shall write [...] two quartets shall be in my style and manner and four others as you wish them to be.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Y. GÉRARD, *Thematic, Bibliographic, and Critical Catalogue*, cit., p. 599, describes this as a «suite of ten minuets for dancing, for two violins, viola, 'cello, two oboes, two French horns and one bassoon».

<sup>17</sup> G. DE ROTHSCHILD, *Luigi Boccherini*, cit., p. 106.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 67. Boccherini made this offer (or suggestion) «in the interest of commercial speculation».

## Boccherini's Prussian Contract

These unpublished *quartettini* are best understood if one examines them within the context of Boccherini's employment. Because of the special relationship he enjoyed with Friedrich Wilhelm II, the composer entered an immensely productive eleven-year period which yielded works designed specifically for the King's private and personal use. Between his contract with Friedrich Wilhelm II, which provided him with a pension of 1000 German crowns,<sup>19</sup> and his position as cellist in Charles III's Royal Chapel, the latter from which he was excused owing to health reasons, Boccherini was in the fortunate position of being able to devote himself solely to composition. As Germaine De Rothschild notes, Boccherini appears to have gone into semi-retirement during this time, focusing exclusively on composition.<sup>20</sup>

Boccherini's relationship with Friedrich Wilhelm II was unique, for the composer was neither a typical court employee nor was he either a special guest or *Kammerherr*. When Friedrich Wilhelm II ascended the throne in 1786, he had at his disposal a roster of sixty-five court musicians. The size of the *Kapelle* remained fairly constant during his reign, although at its peak, in 1791, it increased to eighty.<sup>21</sup> In addition to these *Kapelle* musicians, Friedrich Wilhelm II also maintained an association with a group of amateur composers/musicians who formed part of the Court *Kammerherren* (chamberlains; gentlemen of the bedchamber). Based on known biographical information, these people were of noble rank and were not dependent on the King for financial support.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Boccherini received 1000 «scudi di Germania» per year, cf. D. BOCCHERINI Y CALONJE, *Luis Boccherini*, cit., p. 21.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. G. DE ROTHSCHILD, *Luigi Boccherini*, cit., pp. 60-61. The result was a «marked increase in creative activity». For a more recent discussion of this period, cf. GERMÁN LABRADOR, *Luces y sombras de una biografía: Luigi Boccherini y la música en la corte de Carlos III y Carlos IV: Consideraciones socioeconómicas sobre su estancia en España*, in *Boccherini Studies*, I, ed. by Christian Speck, Bologna, Ut Orpheus Edizioni, 2007, pp. 3-29; and JAIME TORTELLA, *Boccherini: un músico italiano en la España ilustrada*, Madrid, Sociedad Española de Musicología, 2002, pp. 239-305.

<sup>21</sup> For a discussion of the membership of this ensemble, as well as biographical and bibliographical information, cf. MARA PARKER, *Soloistic Chamber Music at the Court of Friedrich Wilhelm II: 1786-1797*, PhD dissertation, Indiana University, Bloomington, 1994, pp. 41-50.

<sup>22</sup> For a full list of court-appointed *Kammerherren* up to and during Friedrich Wilhelm II's reign, cf. JOHANN FRIEDRICH UNGER, *Adreß-Kalender der Königlich Preußischen Haupt- und Residenz-Städte Berlin und Potsdam, besonders der daselbst befindlichen hohen und niederen Collegien, Instanzen und Expeditionen auf das Jahr 1798. Mit Genehmigung der Königlich Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Berlin, Johann Friedrich Unger, 1798, pp. 10-15. A separate year-by-year listing of these appointments may be found in *Handbuch über den Königlich Preußischen Hof und Staat für das Jahr 1796*, Berlin, George Decker, [1796], pp. 4-10, <http://Catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/011570672> (accessed June 19, 2015).

Boccherini's Prussian contract, dated 21 January 1786, placed him in neither the regular court employee nor the *Kammerherren* group. The full text of his appointment is provided below:

We, Frederick William, by the grace of God Hereditary Prince Royal of Prussia, heir presumptive to the crown, having recognized the eminent musical talents of Signor Luigi Boccherini, have been induced thereby to confer upon him the present Patent, with the title of Composer of our Chamber, and in consequence we have signed these presents and caused the seal of our arms to be opposed thereto.

Berlin, the 21<sup>st</sup> day of January 1786

Frederick William

Pr. of Pr.<sup>23</sup>

This single-paragraph notice is, in many ways, a continuation of a letter Boccherini had received from Friedrich Wilhelm II when the latter was Crown Prince, slightly more than two years prior and from which I quoted at the beginning of this article. The full text reads as follows:

Potsdam, October 1, 1783

Nothing could give me more pleasure, Signor Boccherini, than to receive some of your compositions from your own hands and just at a time when I have begun to perform your instrumental work. It alone gives me full satisfaction and everyday I enjoy that pleasure. So that I am willing to believe that the pleasure you find in composition will not shortly come to an end and that we may hope to see something new from your pen, in which case I shall be most grateful if you will communicate it to me. Meanwhile pray accept, Signor Boccherini, this gold box, in memory of me and as a mark of the esteem in which I hold your talents in an art which I particularly value, and be persuaded of the consideration with which I remain, Signor Boccherini.

Your most affectionate,

Frederick William

Prince of Prussia<sup>24</sup>

Here Friedrich Wilhelm II, the originator and signer of the letter, is effusively complimentary towards the Italian composer. Only at the end, after the closing phrase «Your most affectionate, Frederick William» does the Crown Prince indicate his royal status («Prince of Prussia»). From these two letters, we know that Friedrich Wilhelm II had played some of Boccherini's works, that he was enchanted with them, and that when the opportunity arose to deepen his ties to the Italian composer, he seized it. Both of these documents were written in Italian, certainly not Friedrich Wilhelm's native tongue, and signed only by the royal cellist. Moreover, both communications came to Boccherini wholly unsolicited.

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<sup>23</sup> D. BOCCHERINI Y CALONJE, *Luis Boccherini*, cit., p. 16. English translation in G. DE ROTHSCHILD, *Luigi Boccherini*, cit., p. 52.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 15. English translation in G. DE ROTHSCHILD, *Luigi Boccherini*, cit., p. 48.

Boccherini's appointment letter to the Prussian Court includes no stipulations as to duties, hours of availability, behavior, or right of termination.<sup>25</sup> In essence, Boccherini's situation neither fits the normal employee model nor is it commensurate with what we know about employment contracts at other courts. Such appointment letters routinely specified duties (how many days a week one worked, performance obligations, repertoire performed, what instruments one was expected to play, and the procuring of music), pay information, expected behavior, and conditions for dismissal.<sup>26</sup> Neither does his letter mention any expectation as to types or number of compositions.<sup>27</sup> At best one can say, as has been suggested by Germán Labrador among others, Boccherini intended to write «in principle, twelve individual works *per annum* for the King».<sup>28</sup> This assumption is based on the fact that the title pages of those works sent to Friedrich Wilhelm II bear both a month and a year.

Boccherini's connection to the Court of Prussia simply does not fit the typical court musician model. Musicians associated with Friedrich Wilhelm II's court are generally identified as to position or instrument (*Kapellmeister*, clarinettist, copyist, etc.) and documentation exists as to their salaries, both monetary and other forms of compensation.<sup>29</sup> Neither, though, does Boccherini belong in the *Kammerherren* category as described above. Boccherini's contract was unusually unrestrictive; it was neither a standard offer of employment nor was it an honorary title to add to

<sup>25</sup> This stands in stark contrast to Boccherini's appointment letter with Charles III to whom he had petitioned for financial assistance following the death of the Infante in 1785. Here, the precise position was specified, as was the salary, cf. G. DE ROTHSCHILD, *Luigi Boccherini*, cit., p. 51.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. BARBARA M. REUL, *The Court of Anhalt-Zerbst*, in *Music at German Courts, 1715-1760: Changing Artistic Priorities*, ed. by Samantha Owens, Barbara M. Reul, and Janice B. Stockigt, Woodbridge (Suffolk), The Boydell Press, 2011, pp. 259-286, for an extended discussion as to expectations. Reul notes that German court hires were typically expected to play more than one instrument, compose, be proficient in other non-music-related areas, and to teach. See also EAD., *Court Musicians at Anhalt-Zerbst: New Sources for Eighteenth-Century Employment Practices*, in *Haydn and his Contemporaries*, ed. by Sterling E. Murray, Ann Arbor, Steglein Publishing, 2011, pp. 117-152: 118-119, 151; EAD., *Musical Life at the Court of Anhalt-Zerbst: An Examination of Unknown Primary Sources at the Landeshauptarchiv Sachsen-Anhalt, Abteilung Dessau*, in *Musik an der Zerbster Residenz. Bericht über die Internationale Wissenschaftliche Konferenz vom 10. bis 12. April 2008 im Rahmen der 10. Internationalen Fasch-Festtage in Zerbst*, ed. by Konstanze Musketa and Barbara M. Reul, Beesko, Ortus Musikverlag, 2008, pp. 197-222: 199-202; and RÜDIGER THOMSEN-FÜRST, *The Court of Baden-Durlach in Karlsruhe*, in *Music at German Courts, 1715-1760*, cit., pp. 365-388: 378-379. Joseph Haydn's well-known contract at Eisenstadt specifically regulates his appearance, behavior, duties, availability, salary and pay schedule, and period of employment. Cf. HOWARD CHANDLER ROBBINS LANDON, *Haydn Chronicle and Works*, I, *Haydn: The Early Years, 1732-1765*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1980, pp. 348-356 for a discussion of Haydn's contract as well as those of his fellow musicians at Eisenstadt.

<sup>27</sup> G. DE ROTHSCHILD, *Luigi Boccherini*, cit., p. 52, notes that Boccherini was to send the royal patron a «certain number of quartets and quintets» for which he would receive an annual pension of 1000 German crowns. Cf. D. BOCCHERINI Y CALONJE, *Luis Boccherini*, cit., p. 15.

<sup>28</sup> G. LABRADOR, *Towards a Revised Chronology of Boccherini's Works*, in *Understanding Boccherini's Manuscripts*, cit. pp. 31-66: 41.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. FRITZ KOHLMORGEN, *Die Brüder Duport und die Entwicklung der Violoncelltechnik von ihren Anfängen bis zur Zeit Bernhard Rombergs*, PhD dissertation, Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Berlin, 1922, p. 34.

his name. It served, in written form, as a means of demonstrating Friedrich Wilhelm II's respect for Boccherini, and the former's intense desire to receive compositions from the latter. It is a reflection of the King's enormous interest in and love of Boccherini's compositions. It is highly plausible that the hiring of the Italian musician was not simply a "court decision" but rather one of great personal importance to the King.

One can argue that the normal patron-musician relationship had been turned on its head. Friedrich Wilhelm II did not command Boccherini to compose for him; rather he made a respectful and deferential request. He did not stipulate specific conditions. Aside from the vague requirement of chamber compositions, everything else was left open-ended and up to Boccherini's discretion. In doing so, Friedrich Wilhelm took himself out of the equation and removed the issue of audience. This left Boccherini free to compose as he wished, in a style and manner that he found most satisfying. It also provided him with a unique opportunity to experiment. In essence, Boccherini was given the chance to compose "art for art's sake" rather than for public acceptance. Because of these conditions, Boccherini's works for Friedrich Wilhelm II did not need to be commercially viable. They did not need to be comprehensible to a wide range of listeners nor did they have to be conceived in light of the needs of non-professional musicians.<sup>30</sup> One might speculate that Pleyel withheld the sixteen *quartettini* from publication because he thought these might be too different and would not meet with public approval.

### **The Berlin *Quartettini*: Structure**

With but one exception, all of the quartets under consideration are two-movement works; Boccherini himself designated these compositions as *quartettini* to distinguish them from his *quartetti* of three or four movements.<sup>31</sup> In their most generic format, the former comprise a fast sonata-form movement followed either by a minuet or a slow movement preceding a simple presto. That Boccherini wrote two-movement works for the King is not in itself so remarkable; he had composed *quartettini* throughout his life. What is unusual about Boccherini's *quartettini* for Friedrich Wilhelm II is that they do not meet our expectations as far as the typical structural sequence.

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<sup>30</sup> Cf. MARK EVAN BONDS, *Listening to Listeners*, in *Communication in Eighteenth-Century Music*, ed. by Danuta Mirka and Kofi Agawu, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008, pp. 34-52: 35; and ID., *Wordless Rhetoric: Musical Form and the Metaphor of the Oration*, Cambridge (Mass.), Harvard University Press, 1991 (Studies in the History of Music, 4), pp. 59-60, for a discussion about eighteenth-century composers and their commercial audience. Bonds argues that much eighteenth-century music was conceived in terms of moving the listener. Such a goal might be achieved if a composer were guided by rhetorical principles.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. MARCO MANGANI, *Luigi Boccherini*, Palermo, L'Epos, 2005, pp. 120-131, for a discussion regarding the structure of the larger quartets. See also pp. 227-252, in this same volume, for a thoughtful presentation of Boccherini's unique approach to tonality, cyclic features, and reuse of melodic material.

While one might normally expect a two-movement quartet to contain a sonata form followed either by a minuet and trio or rondo, only nine of the works under examination meet that expectation (G. 216, 217, 218, 219, 223, 225, 226, 228 and 231, see Table 3). Boccherini seems to have taken special delight in exploring alternative opening structures: an extended slow introduction leading into a minuet and trio (G. 221), a binary form (G. 224), ABA (G. 230, G. 222, G. 229), ABB (G. 227), or a hybrid sonata-sectional form (G. 220).

Gérard No.	Shelf No.	Date	Key	Movement Titles	Structure
G. 216	KHM590/591 <sup>32</sup> Rés 507(3) <sup>33</sup>	Feb. 1789	A A/D	(i) Allegro moderato (ii) Minuetto/Trio	(i) sonata form (ii) ABA' CDC'
G. 217	KHM592/593 Rés 507(4)	April 1789	C C/a	(i) Andante (ii) Minuetto/Trio	(i) sonata form (ii) ABA' CDC'
G. 218	KHM594 Rés 507(5)	March 1790	A A/a	(i) Allegretto Moderato (ii) Tempo di Minuetto	(i) sonata form (ii) ABA' CD
G. 219	KHM595 Rés 507(6)	Nov. 1790	A A/D	(i) Allegretto con moto (ii) Minuetto/Trio	(i) sonata form (ii) <sup>34</sup> ABA' CDC
G. 220	KHM596/597 Rés 507(7)	Feb. 1792	B <sup>b</sup> B <sup>b</sup> /E <sup>b</sup>	(i) Maestoso assai (ii) Tempo di Minuetto	(i) sonata/sectional hybrid (ii) ABA' CDC' x A''B'A'
G. 221	KHM598 Rés 507(8)	April 1792	e-B E	(i) Andante larghetto – Minuetto: Amoroso. (ii) Rondeau: Andante Allegretto	(i) <sup>35</sup> binary – ABA' CDC' (ii) ABA' CABA'
G. 222	KHM599 Rés 507(9)	June 1792	F F/B <sup>b</sup>	(i) Lento assai – Allegretto con moto – Lento come prima (ii) Tempo di Minuetto/Trio	(i) ABA (ii) ABA' CDC'
G. 223	KHM 600 Rés 507(10)	Aug. 1792	G G/g	(i) Presto (ii) Tempo di Minuetto/Trio	(i) sonata form (ii) ABA' CDC'
G. 224	Rés 507(11)	Oct. 1792	D D	(i) Andantino lento (ii) Allegro non tanto	(i) binary (ii) sonata form
G. 225	KHM601 Rés 507(12)	Dec. 1792	E <sup>b</sup> E <sup>b</sup>	(i) Andantino (ii) Minuetto	(i) sonata form (ii) ABA' CD
G. 226	KHM602 Rés 507(13)	Feb. 1794	F F/f	(i) Andante Moderato (ii) Minuetto/Trio	(i) sonata form (ii) ABA' CD
G. 227	KHM603 Rés 507(15)	April 1794	A A/D	(i) Andante Lento (ii) Tempo di Minuetto	(i) ABA' BA' (ii) ABA' CDC'
G. 228	Rés 507(14)	June 1794	b b/B	(i) Allegretto moderato (ii) Minuetto/Trio	(i) sonata form (ii) ABA' CDC'
G. 229	Rés 507(16)	Aug. 1794	E <sup>b</sup> E <sup>b</sup> /c	(i) Andantino lento (ii) Minuetto con un poco di moto/[Trio]	(i) ABA (ii) ABA' CC' C''

<sup>32</sup> A shelf number beginning with KHM (Musiksammlung der Königlichen Hausbibliothek) indicates a manuscript housed at Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Musikabteilung.

<sup>33</sup> A shelf number beginning with Rés indicates a manuscript housed at Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Opéra.

<sup>34</sup> Includes written-out transition to repeat of minuet.

<sup>35</sup> Opening *Andante* serves as a slow introduction to *Minuetto*; it concludes on V.

Table 3					
Movement Structures, G. 216-231					
Gérard No.	Shelf No.	Date	Key	Movement Titles	Structure
G. 230	Rés 507(17)	Oct. 1794	G G/g	(i) Larghetto (ii) Minuetto con un poco di moto/[Trio]	(i) ABA (ii) ABA'CDC
G. 231	Rés 507(18)	Dec. 1794	C C/C	(i) Allegro vivace (ii) Tempo di Minuetto: affettuoso	(i) <sup>36</sup> sonata form (ii) <sup>37</sup> ABA'CEDEF

The works with slow beginnings are particularly interesting. The opening of G. 221 can be viewed in two ways: as a two-movement sequence (*Andante larghetto* – *Minuetto*) or as a single movement containing an extended slow introduction. The e-minor *Andante larghetto* is laid out in two large sections: the first, in the minor mode (mm. 1-14), the second, in the major (mm. 15-40). Both portions are characterized by brief imitative exchanges, restless rhythms, and short, almost choppy phrases. Using the final cadence on the dominant as a lever, Boccherini propels us into the following *Minuetto: Amoroso*. The Minuet's inherent stability – a seemingly luxurious amount of time spent on the tonic (from which we were thwarted in the *Andante*) – and lyrical, even phrases provide us with a sense of arrival and relaxation, as if we have finally reached the movement proper.<sup>38</sup>

A further exploration of the possibilities of a slow opening may be found in G. 222. Boccherini constructs the first movement as an *Allegretto con moto* sandwiched between two identical *Lento assai* sections. Because the *Lento assai* returns, in its entirety, one is forced to rethink the role of the slow opening. We no longer have a slow introduction-fast main body layout but rather an emphasis on the leisurely unfolding of material interrupted by a quicker section.

Such use of recurring material allows Boccherini to create a “grounding effect” as in the first movement *Andante Lento* of G. 227. Although laid out as a three-part ABB structure, the movement incorporates rondo-like aspects with its regular return of the initial thematic material. Each of the two identical B sections (mm. 17-52, 53-88) contains a lengthy twenty-bar segment that begins with a quotation from A (mm. 33-52, 69-88). Thus, in more detailed form, the movement has an ABA'BA' structure. Example 1 provides the first two large sections of this movement. Note the

<sup>36</sup> The recapitulation of this movement reviews the thematic material of the exposition in reverse order of its initial presentation. Cf. note 40, below, for a discussion of the “reverse recapitulation”.

<sup>37</sup> C and F are written-out transitions.

<sup>38</sup> Ellen Amsterdam notes that Boccherini used slow introductions sparingly in his chamber music. When they do occur, they do not stand alone. Most will cadence on the dominant and require a complement movement. In addition to G. 221, a slow introduction also appears in Boccherini's 1795 quintet, Op. 51, No. 2. Cf. ELLEN IRIS AMSTERDAM, *The String Quintets of Luigi Boccherini*, PhD dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1968, p. 85.

reference to A in bar 33 that temporarily suggests we will hear the opening melody again. No sooner have we comfortably settled in than our expectations are thwarted by something different.

**Andante Lento**

The image shows a musical score for four instruments: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The score is in 2/4 time and the key signature has three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The tempo is marked 'Andante Lento'. The first system (measures 1-6) includes the instruction 'sotto voce sempre' for all instruments. The second system (measures 7-13) features a trill ('tr') in the first violin part. The third system (measures 14-17) includes a 'pp' (pianissimo) dynamic marking in the cello part.

Violin I  
*sotto voce sempre*

Violin II  
*sotto voce sempre*

Viola  
*sotto voce sempre.*

Violoncello  
*sotto voce sempre.*

7 *tr*

14 *tr*  
*pp*  
*pp*

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20

Musical score for measures 20-22. The score is in treble and bass clefs with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). Measure 20 features a complex rhythmic pattern with sixteenth and thirty-second notes. Measure 21 has a similar pattern with some rests. Measure 22 shows a continuation of the rhythmic motif.

23

Musical score for measures 23-25. Measure 23 continues the rhythmic pattern. Measure 24 introduces triplet markings (3) over groups of notes. Measure 25 features a dense texture with multiple triplet markings (3) throughout the staff.

26

Musical score for measures 26-28. Measure 26 features a triplet (3) over a group of notes. Measure 27 continues with triplet markings (3) and a more complex rhythmic structure. Measure 28 shows a continuation of the triplet pattern.

28

Measures 28-29 of the musical score. The piece is in 3/4 time with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The score consists of four staves: Treble, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. Measures 28-29 feature a complex rhythmic pattern with frequent triplets. Dynamic markings include *cresc.* and *cresc. 3*.

30

Measures 30-33 of the musical score. The piece continues in 3/4 time with a key signature of two sharps. Measures 30-33 feature a complex rhythmic pattern with frequent triplets. Dynamic markings include *f*, *ff*, and *pp*.

34

Measures 34-37 of the musical score. The piece continues in 3/4 time with a key signature of two sharps. Measures 34-37 feature a complex rhythmic pattern with frequent triplets. Dynamic markings include *f*, *ff*, and *pp*. Trills (*tr*) are present in measures 35-37.

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40

*sforz*

*ff*

*pp*

*ff*

*Solo*

*pp*

45

*pp*

*poco cresc.*

*poco cresc.*

*poco cresc.*

*poco cresc.*

49

*pp*

*p*

*f*

*f*

*p*

*f*

*pp*

*pp*

Example 1: Boccherini, G. 227, *Andante lento*, mm. 1-52.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Opéra, Rés 507(15), author's transcription.

Even those *quartettini* that begin with a sonata form movement offer something different for the performer and listener. For example, the recapitulation of G. 231 begins with the Group II material. This is not particularly unusual, either for Boccherini or many of his contemporaries. But, rather than moving forward to “review” the rest of the exposition, Boccherini instead works in reverse through the expository material. He makes his way through each of the main sections of the first part of the movement; following the recapitulatory presentation of the Group II material (beginning with bar 79), he restates first the transition (beginning in bar 101), and then the Group I material (beginning in bar 109).<sup>40</sup> These recollections are very strong and vivid so that the listener and performer have no doubt that they have travelled backwards through the exposition. As a result, Boccherini is able to create a symmetrical formal design for the entire movement. Examples 2a and 2b provide the exposition and recapitulation in full for ease of comparison.

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<sup>40</sup> This “reversed” or “mirror recapitulation” is often associated with the Mannheim symphonists, although, as Eugene Wolf notes, the claim that it was frequently used by «Stamitz and the other Mannheimers [...] is not statistically accurate», cf. EUGENE K. WOLF - JEAN K. WOLF - FRITZKAISER, *Stamitz*, in *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, <http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.libcat.widener.edu.subscriber/article/grove/music/40302pg1> (accessed May 6, 2015). For a discussion and consideration of issues of terminology concerning the reverse or mirror recapitulation, cf. REY M. LONGYEAR, *Binary Variants of Early Classic Sonata Form*, «Journal of Music Theory», XIII, 2 (1969), pp. 162-185: 165; NIELS KRABBE, *A Critical Review of Fritz Tutenberg’s Theory of First-Movement Form in the Early Classical Symphony*, in *Haydn Studies: Proceedings of the International Haydn Conference, Washington D.C., 1975*, ed. by Jens Peter Larsen, Howard Serwer and James Webster, New York, W.W. Norton and Company, 1981, pp. 487-493: 492-493; JOEL GALAND, *Form, Genre, and Style in the Eighteenth-Century Rondo*, «Music Theory Spectrum», XVII, 1 (1995), pp. 27-52: 39 fn. 27; ID., *Some Eighteenth-Century Ritornello Scripts and Their Nineteenth-Century Revivals*, «Music Theory Spectrum», XXX, 2 (2008), pp. 239-282: 245; JAMES HEPOKOSKI - WARREN DARCY, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth-Century Sonata*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2006, pp. 353-387.

**Allegro vivace**

The musical score is arranged in four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The score is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 1-5) features a strong dynamic of *f* in the lower strings and *p* in the upper strings. The second system (measures 6-12) continues with *f* dynamics and includes a trill (*tr*) in the Violin I part. The third system (measures 13-15) shows a dynamic shift to *ff* in the lower strings and *pp* in the upper strings, with a *dolcis.* marking in the Violin I part.

Violin I  
Violin II  
Viola  
Violoncello

6  
13

*f* *p* *f* *f* *pp* *dolcis.* *pp* *p*

19

Musical score for measures 19-24. The score is written for four staves: Treble 1, Treble 2, Bass 1, and Bass 2. Measure 19 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first staff has a melodic line with a trill (tr) and a forte (f) dynamic. The second staff has a rhythmic accompaniment with a forte (f) dynamic. The third and fourth staves provide harmonic support with a forte (f) dynamic. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 24.

25

Musical score for measures 25-29. The score is written for four staves: Treble 1, Treble 2, Bass 1, and Bass 2. Measure 25 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first staff features a melodic line with triplets (3) and a piano (p) dynamic. The second staff has a piano (p) dynamic. The third and fourth staves provide harmonic support with a piano (p) dynamic. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 29.

30

Musical score for measures 30-34. The score is written for four staves: Treble 1, Treble 2, Bass 1, and Bass 2. Measure 30 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first staff features a melodic line with triplets (3) and a piano (p) dynamic. The second staff has a piano (p) dynamic. The third and fourth staves provide harmonic support with a piano (p) dynamic. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 34.

The image displays a musical score for Boccherini's G. 231, first movement, measures 35-46. The score is written for four staves: two treble clefs (Violin I and Violin II) and two bass clefs (Viola and Cello/Double Bass). The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor). The time signature is 3/4. The score begins at measure 35. The first system (measures 35-40) features dynamic markings of *f* (forte) and *pp* (pianissimo). A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3' in measure 37. The second system (measures 41-46) features a *pp* marking in measure 41 and a trill (tr) in measure 45. The score concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots in measure 46.

Example 2a: Boccherini, G. 231, first movement, mm. 1-46.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Opéra, Rés 507(18), author's transcription.

79

pp 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

Musical score for measures 79-83. The system consists of four staves. The top staff is in treble clef and contains a melodic line with eighth-note triplets. The second staff is in treble clef and contains a bass line with quarter notes. The third staff is in bass clef and contains a bass line with quarter notes. The fourth staff is in bass clef and contains a bass line with quarter notes. The dynamic marking *pp* is present at the beginning of the first measure.

84

3 3 3 3 pp

Musical score for measures 84-88. The system consists of four staves. The top staff is in treble clef and contains a melodic line with eighth-note triplets. The second staff is in treble clef and contains a bass line with quarter notes. The third staff is in bass clef and contains a bass line with quarter notes. The fourth staff is in bass clef and contains a bass line with quarter notes. The dynamic marking *pp* is present at the beginning of the fourth measure.

89

ff 3 pp

Musical score for measures 89-93. The system consists of four staves. The top staff is in treble clef and contains a melodic line with eighth-note triplets. The second staff is in treble clef and contains a bass line with quarter notes. The third staff is in bass clef and contains a bass line with quarter notes. The fourth staff is in bass clef and contains a bass line with quarter notes. The dynamic marking *ff* is present at the beginning of the second measure, and *pp* is present at the beginning of the fourth measure.

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95

*tr*  
*con smorfia*  
*dolcis. con smorfia*  
*pp*  
*dolcis.*

101

*pp*

107

*ff*  
*ff*  
*ff*  
*f*  
*f*  
*f*

Example 2b: Boccherini, G. 231, first movement, mm. 79-119.<sup>42</sup>

Of the sixteen quartets, all but two end with a minuet and trio although not all are labeled as such. G. 221 concludes with a rondeau and G. 224 finishes with a full-blown sonata form. Most of the minuet and trio movements fall into an ABA'CDC' structure or some variation of this. Externally, they appear to be in keeping with the minuet structures of Boccherini's earlier works. But the proportions are skewed. Few of Boccherini's Berlin minuet and trios bear the regularity of the pre-Berlin ones. While the first halves of all the minuets are eight measures in length, the second portions contain between sixteen and twenty-eight measures. The trios are similarly irregular; initial sections, while generally eight measures in length may also be ten, twelve, or sixteen measures (G. 216, 225 and 226 respectively). The trios' second halves are equally varied, ranging between sixteen and twenty-four measures.

Those minuet and trio movements that bear the closest structural resemblance to earlier works are those that also contain irregular features. In other words, the regularity and expected layout serve as a balance — an antidote — to the unexpected. For example, the first movement of G. 221 includes the previously mentioned lengthy slow introduction that leads into a minuet. The unexpectedness of the introduction is balanced by the seeming normality of a straightforward A//BA' minuet with eight and sixteen measures in the first and second halves respectively and a C//DC' trio with a similar dispensation of measures.

This same structural regularity of minuet and trio sections also appears in the second movement of G. 231. What is not expected, however, are the written-out sixteen-

<sup>42</sup> *Ibidem.*

and eight-measure transitions that Boccherini inserts between the minuet and trio, and between the trio and the return to the minuet respectively. Thus the regularity of the primary portions serves to balance the unexpected connecting ones (see Example 3).

**Affettuoso**

Violin I  
*pp*

Violin II  
*pp*

Viola  
*pp*

Violoncello  
*pp*

6

*poco cresc.*

*tr.*

12

*poco cresc.*

*f*

*poco cresc.*

*f*

*f*

*f*

16

pp poco cresc. poco cresc. poco cresc. pp

pp poco cresc. poco cresc.

pp poco cresc. pp

pp poco cresc.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 16 through 22. It features four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The music is in a 3/4 time signature. The first two staves (treble clefs) have a melody with eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. The third and fourth staves (bass clefs) provide a harmonic accompaniment with similar rhythmic patterns. Dynamic markings include *pp* (pianissimo) at the beginning and end of the system, and *poco cresc.* (poco crescendo) in the middle sections.

23

pp dolcis. ff 3 p

pp dolcis.

pp dolcis.

pp dolcis.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 23 through 28. It features four staves. Measures 23-25 are marked *pp* and *dolcis.* (dolce). Measure 26 is marked *ff* and features a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 27 is marked *p*. Measure 28 is marked *ff* and features a triplet of eighth notes. The accompaniment in the bass clefs is mostly sustained notes or simple rhythmic patterns.

29

ff p dolcis. p dolcis. p dolcis.

ff p p dolcis.

ff p p dolcis.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 29 through 34. It features four staves. Measures 29-31 are marked *ff* and feature triplet markings over eighth notes. Measures 32-34 are marked *p* and *dolcis.* The melody in the first two staves is more active, with frequent triplet figures. The bass clefs provide a steady accompaniment.

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35

*ff* *ff* *p* *ff* *f*

40 **Fine**

*pp con semplicita*  
*pp sempre con semplicita*  
*pp sempre*  
*pp sempre*

45

*3*

49

Musical score for measures 49-53. The system consists of four staves: Treble, Treble, Alto, and Bass. The key signature has one sharp (F#). Measures 49-52 feature a complex melodic line in the top Treble staff with frequent triplets and slurs. The second Treble staff has a more rhythmic accompaniment. The Alto and Bass staves provide harmonic support with various note values and rests.

54

Musical score for measures 54-57. The system consists of four staves: Treble, Treble, Alto, and Bass. The key signature has one sharp (F#). Measures 54-57 continue the melodic development in the top Treble staff, featuring a triplet in measure 55. The accompaniment in the other staves remains consistent with the previous system.

58

Musical score for measures 58-61. The system consists of four staves: Treble, Treble, Alto, and Bass. The key signature has one sharp (F#). Measures 58-61 show further melodic and harmonic progression. The top Treble staff continues with intricate melodic patterns, while the other staves provide a steady accompaniment.

The image displays three systems of musical notation for Boccherini's G. 231, second movement. Each system consists of four staves: two treble clefs (Violin I and Violin II) and two bass clefs (Viola and Cello/Double Bass). The first system, starting at measure 62, features a complex rhythmic pattern with sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The second system, starting at measure 66, shows a dynamic contrast between *pp* and *ff*. The third system, starting at measure 69, concludes with the instruction "D.C. Sino al" and a repeat sign. Dynamic markings include *ff* and *pp* throughout the passage.

Example 3: Boccherini, G. 231, second movement.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>43</sup> *Ibidem.*

## The Berlin *Quartettini*: Repetition

Throughout these sixteen quartets, Boccherini uses repetition in a novel fashion — to create stasis. In his earlier works, Boccherini employed repetition in a more or less traditional manner either to allow listeners to identify musical themes and motives or to generate form.<sup>44</sup> Rudolf Rasch argues that among composers of the classical period «Luigi Boccherini is one whose works make the most abundant use of repetition procedures».<sup>45</sup> Rasch identifies several types of repetition in Boccherini's compositions moving from reiteration of single figures to phrases, sections, or even entire movements. He notes that Boccherini, in such early works as his Opus 5 sonatas for violin and keyboard, generally repeated phrases or ideas just once, and less frequently twice. Only with circular repetition, which Rasch defines as repetition of a phrase moving through a succession of chords with roots that proceed downward successively in fifths, do we find three repetitions.<sup>46</sup> Such repetitions are a means of creating musical form.

Janet Schmalfeldt, while not discussing Boccherini's works specifically, has examined the use of repetition — the “one more time” technique — in late-eighteenth-century compositions.<sup>47</sup> By repeating a figure at just the moment that one expects a cadence, a composer can both extend a cadential function and expand the form. She identifies the expansion of secondary-key materials and the generation of formal expansion as important reasons for repetition. Additionally, these evaded cadences can both create «surprise through thwarted expectation»<sup>48</sup> and create climaxes.<sup>49</sup>

While Boccherini's use of repetition does allow him to generate form and expand his structures, he also creates blocks of repetition that provide not forward motion or drama, but rather stasis and respite. The second movement of G. 218 is a particularly good example (see Example 4). Throughout the trio, Boccherini has employed uneven phrasing and startling f-p dynamic contrasts. Moreover, rather than a C//DC' layout, the composer has kept the two sections of the trio quite distinct, foregoing any return to familiar material in the second half. In addition, rather than cadencing on the tonic at the end of the trio (a minor), Boccherini chooses to conclude this part on the dominant, leaving us with an unsettled feeling that can only be resolved with the return to A Major of the minuet; if one repeats this section, a return to the D section's C Major tonality foils our expectation

<sup>44</sup> Cf. RUDOLF RASCH, *The Art of Repetition as Practiced by Luigi Boccherini in His Sonatas for Keyboard and Violin Opus 5*, in *Boccherini Studies: New Evidence*, ed. by Christian Speck, Bologna, Ut Orpheus Edizioni, 2014, p. 291.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 292.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 296.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. JANET SCHMALFELDT, *Cadential Processes: the Evaded Cadence and the “One More Time” Technique*, «The Journal of Musicological Research», XII, 1-2 (1952), pp. 1-52.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 6.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 37.

of resolution. Harmonically, Boccherini uses the final eight measures of the trio to ground us firmly in E Major, the dominant of both the minuet and trio. Thematically, the first violin, with its continuous reference to the pitches E and D, repeats the same nearly identical two-bar figure four times. Likewise the cello part reveals an insistent emphasis on two pitches — F and E — which follow each other in succeeding measures. Furthermore, the second violin and viola, moving in parallel motion for much of the eight measures, repeat their same figure four times with only one minor difference: the final note of each grouping alternates between either a quarter or half note.

**Tempo di Minuetto**

The musical score is divided into three systems of four staves each. The first system (measures 1-4) shows the Violin I part with trills (tr) and the 'sotto voce' instruction. The Violin II and Viola parts also feature 'sotto voce' markings. The Violoncello part has a 'sotto voce' marking. The second system (measures 5-8) includes a triplet (3) in the Violin I part and piano (p) markings in the Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello parts. The third system (measures 9-10) features forte (f) markings in the Violin I, Violin II, and Violoncello parts, and piano (p) and crescendo (cresc.) markings in the Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello parts.

15

15

*f* *sotto voce* *tr* *p* *sotto voce* *p*

This system contains measures 15 through 18. It features four staves: Treble, Violin, Bass, and Bassoon. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 3/4. Measure 15 starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. A double bar line occurs after measure 16. Measures 17 and 18 are marked *sotto voce* and *p* (piano). Trills (*tr*) are indicated in measures 17 and 18.

19

19

*tr* *cresc.*

This system contains measures 19 through 22. It features four staves: Treble, Violin, Bass, and Bassoon. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 3/4. Measure 19 starts with a trill (*tr*). Measure 22 is marked *cresc.* (crescendo). Trills (*tr*) are also present in measures 20 and 21.

23

23

*f* *p* *tr* *p* *pp* *f* *p*

This system contains measures 23 through 26. It features four staves: Treble, Violin, Bass, and Bassoon. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 3/4. Measure 23 starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. Measure 24 has a piano (*p*) dynamic. Measure 25 has a piano (*p*) dynamic. Measure 26 has a pianissimo (*pp*) dynamic. Trills (*tr*) are present in measures 24 and 25. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3' in measure 26. The system concludes with a forte (*f*) dynamic in measure 26.

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28 Fine

Musical score for measures 28-32. The score is in treble and bass clefs with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). Measure 28 starts with a treble clef and a bass clef. The music features a melody in the treble and a bass line in the bass. Dynamics include *f* (forte) and *p* (piano). A trill (*tr*) is marked above the first note of measure 30. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3' in measure 31. The piece ends with a double bar line and the word 'Fine'.

33

Musical score for measures 33-37. The score continues from measure 32. It features a melody in the treble and a bass line in the bass. Dynamics include *p* (piano), *cresc.* (crescendo), and *f* (forte). Trills (*tr*) are marked above the first notes of measures 33, 35, and 37. The music concludes with a double bar line.

38

Musical score for measures 38-42. The score continues from measure 37. It features a melody in the treble and a bass line in the bass. Dynamics include *cresc.* (crescendo), *f* (forte), *p* (piano), and *pp* (pianissimo). The music concludes with a double bar line.

42

Musical score for measures 42-45. The score is written for four staves: Treble Clef 1, Treble Clef 2, Bass Clef 1, and Bass Clef 2. Measure 42 features a complex rhythmic pattern in the first staff. Measure 43 has a melodic line in the first staff and rests in the others. Measure 44 continues the melodic line in the first staff. Measure 45 features a dynamic shift to *f* in the first three staves and *f* *p* in the fourth staff.

46

Musical score for measures 46-50. The score is written for four staves. Measure 46 includes the instruction *dolcis.* and *pp* in the first staff. Measure 47 features a trill (*tr*) in the first staff and *pp* in the second staff. Measure 48 includes a trill (*tr*) in the first staff and *p* in the second staff. Measure 49 features a trill (*tr*) in the first staff and *pp* in the second staff. Measure 50 features a trill (*tr*) in the first staff and *pp* in the second staff.

51

Musical score for measures 51-54. The score is written for four staves. Measure 51 features a melodic line in the first staff. Measure 52 features a melodic line in the first staff. Measure 53 features a melodic line in the first staff. Measure 54 features a melodic line in the first staff.

Example 4: Boccherini, G. 218, second movement.<sup>50</sup>

Given the unusual aspects of this trio, these last eight bars, with their repetitive and non-directional nature, provide a respite before we return either to the repeat of this last section or to the minuet itself. This repetition is not the circular sequence type discussed by Rasch nor does it fit Schmalfeld's "one more time" criteria of expansion or creating tension. Rather, the inclusion of a static block serves as a replacement for the traditional return to familiar material. This architectural unit, thematically unrelated to either the minuet or the trio's D section, provides the listener with a moment of repose created by repetition; it serves as a "time to digest", as it were, what has taken place before we return to the rest of the movement.

A similar creation of architectural stasis occurs in the second movement of G. 227. The D section of the trio (mm. 37-52), set in D Major, seemingly consists of two identical eight-measure phrases dominated by submediant harmony (see Example 5). Only the closing of each large phrase moves us temporarily to D Major. Each of these phrases may be divided into two identical sub-phrases. The net result is a four-bar segment repeated four times. Throughout the sixteen bars, the first violin repeats the same figure every other measure. The lower three instruments maintain uniform figurations but with slight changes in bars 40, 44, 48, and 52 to bring temporary closure to a phrase. Even here, though, the slight changes in bars 44, 48, and 52 are repetitions of measure 40. When Boccherini does return us to the material of the trio's opening in measure 53, he does so in such a way that

<sup>50</sup> Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Opéra, Rés 507(5), author's transcription.

we are propelled forward. While not a verbatim repetition of C, this return is fairly literal, offsetting the static nature of the D portion.

4

37

pp

pp

pp

tr

tr

Detailed description: This system of music covers measures 37 to 40. It features four staves: a vocal line in treble clef, a piano accompaniment in treble clef, a piano accompaniment in bass clef, and a bass line in bass clef. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The vocal line contains two trills, each marked with 'tr'. The piano accompaniment in the treble clef consists of a continuous eighth-note pattern. The piano accompaniment in the bass clef consists of a steady eighth-note bass line. The bass line is mostly static, with some movement in the final two measures.

41

tr

tr

Detailed description: This system of music covers measures 41 to 44. It features the same four-staff structure as the previous system. The vocal line contains two trills, each marked with 'tr'. The piano accompaniment in the treble clef continues with the eighth-note pattern. The piano accompaniment in the bass clef continues with the eighth-note bass line. The bass line shows more movement in the final two measures, including a descending eighth-note pattern.

45

tr

tr

Detailed description: This system of music covers measures 45 to 48. It features the same four-staff structure. The vocal line contains two trills, each marked with 'tr'. The piano accompaniment in the treble clef continues with the eighth-note pattern. The piano accompaniment in the bass clef continues with the eighth-note bass line. The bass line is mostly static, with some movement in the final two measures.

Musical score for measures 49-52. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It features a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp and a bass clef with a key signature of one sharp. The music includes a trill (tr) in the first measure of the treble staff and a trill in the second measure of the treble staff. The bass line consists of a simple harmonic accompaniment.

Musical score for measures 53-56. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It features a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp and a bass clef with a key signature of one sharp. The music includes a trill (tr) in the first measure of the treble staff and a forte (f) dynamic marking in the second measure of the treble staff. The bass line consists of a simple harmonic accompaniment.

Musical score for measures 57-60. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It features a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp and a bass clef with a key signature of one sharp. The music includes a forte (ff) dynamic marking in the first measure of the treble staff and a forte (f) dynamic marking in the first measure of the bass staff. The score concludes with the instruction "D.C. il Minuetto" in the top right corner.

Example 5. Boccherini, G. 227, second movement, mm. 37-60.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>51</sup> Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Opéra, Rés 507(15), author's transcription.

This use of repetition resulting in stasis is not limited to the two works mentioned above. Boccherini achieves similar results in the first movement of G. 217, at both the close of the exposition and at the end of the movement, and in the second movement, at the close of the minuet. As with the repetition found in G. 218 and G. 227, Boccherini repeats an entire measure wholesale in all four voices, not just once, but multiple times. In both cases, the repetition serves to articulate the finish of a large section, not by creating a harmonic drive to the cadence, but rather, by a sheer lack of momentum. The stasis thus becomes an architectural tool to ensure a sense of completion.

One last example will suffice. The final eight bars of the second movement of G. 231 (see Example 3) which form a written-out transition to the *da capo* minuet (F) offer us the, by now, familiar four-fold repetition of a figure (here in the first violin) over three supportive voices forming a second layer of repetition. This section consists of two nearly identical phrases, each of which can be broken down further into two-measure segments. The first violin part is particularly repetitive; every other measure (mm. 65, 67, 69, 71) is identical and the intervening ones bear a strong resemblance to each other. Likewise, every other measure of the viola part returns us to an F sharp that resolves to a G in the following bar. The second violin and cello complete the simple backdrop. Their parts, less literally repetitive, add to, rather than detract from, the static feel of the section. Here, as with the previously mentioned examples, Boccherini uses repetition not as a way of enlarging a section or making sure that we are familiar with a melody, but as a form of punctuation. Just as one might naturally drop or relax one's voice at the end of a sentence, Boccherini creates a momentary lull through non-directional repetition.

### **Boccherini's Workshop**

Knowing that the King had appreciated and enjoyed his earlier works, without reservation, and knowing that his contract had not stipulated any specific requirements, Boccherini was free to experiment, to create his own workshop. While he did include interesting parts for the cello, Boccherini tended to use the King's instrument as a participant in the chamber fabric, rather than as a soloist. There are, in fact, only two marked solos in the entire set — in the second movement of G. 217 and the first of G. 219. Moreover, Boccherini was careful not to place too much of a burden on the cellist. The technical requirements, while not too simple, are not so difficult as to discourage the King. The *quartettini* are amazingly similar in their demands for the royal musician: broken

chords, arpeggios, octave leaps, up-bow staccato, scalar passages, double stops, and string crossings. Moreover, only four times in all sixteen *quartettini* does the cello part extend past the first octave above middle C (see Table 4). In contrast, the seven published quartets written during Boccherini's tenure with Friedrich Wilhelm II have a larger range (see Table 5), make greater use of the upper register, feature the cello more frequently in a solo capacity, and in general, require greater technical facility on the part of the performer. G. 214 and G. 215 have particularly difficult cello parts.

Gérard No.	Range: first movement	Range: second movement
G. 216	C <sup>#</sup> – g <sup>1</sup>	C <sup>#</sup> – e <sup>1</sup>
G. 217	C – g <sup>1</sup>	C – a <sup>1</sup>
G. 218	D – f <sup>1</sup>	C – c
G. 219	E – a <sup>1</sup>	D – a <sup>1</sup>
G. 220	C – c	C – g <sup>1</sup>
G. 221	C – a <sup>1</sup>	D – a <sup>1</sup>
G. 222	C – c	C – a <sup>1</sup>
G. 223	D – g	C – d
G. 224	C <sup>#</sup> – a <sup>1</sup>	C <sup>#</sup> – e <sup>2</sup>
G. 225	C – g <sup>1</sup>	D – e <sup>b2</sup>
G. 226	C – g <sup>1</sup>	C – a <sup>1</sup>
G. 227	D – d <sup>2</sup>	D – c <sup>#1</sup>
G. 228	D – a <sup>2</sup>	D – f <sup>#2</sup>
G. 229	D – e <sup>1</sup>	C – g
G. 230	D – d <sup>2</sup>	D – c <sup>1</sup>
G. 231	C – g <sup>1</sup>	C – c <sup>1</sup>

Gérard No.	Range: first movement	Range: second movement	Range: third movement	Range: fourth movement
G. 213	E – a <sup>1</sup>	D – a <sup>1</sup>	C – g	D – g
G. 214	E <sup>b</sup> – e <sup>b2</sup>	C – f	C – c <sup>2</sup>	
G. 215	C – c <sup>1</sup>	C – g	C – c <sup>3</sup>	C – e <sup>2</sup>
G. 233	D – a <sup>1</sup>	D – e <sup>2</sup>	D – e <sup>1</sup>	D – e <sup>1</sup>
G. 234	D – d <sup>1</sup>	C – f <sup>#1</sup>	D – f <sup>#1</sup>	D – e <sup>1</sup>
G. 235	C – g <sup>1</sup>	C – e <sup>1</sup>	C – a <sup>b1</sup>	C – a <sup>1</sup>
G. 237 <sup>52</sup>	D – a <sup>1</sup>	C – c <sup>1</sup>		

In his discussion of the chronology of Boccherini's works, Labrador observes that the composer «would not write for pleasure or other noncommercial reasons; on the contrary,

<sup>52</sup> G. 237 is a *quartettino*.

he would rather try to get the biggest profit out of his work».<sup>53</sup> These sixteen *quartettini* are the exception. Due to the conditions of his employment with Friedrich Wilhelm II, Boccherini had a unique opportunity to create his own compositional workshop.

What resulted was a blend of innovative and traditional features. While the musical structures were recognizable, their appearance in the movement sequence was unexpected. Likewise, while Boccherini had previously used repetition as a compositional device, his employment of it here, to create stasis and to punctuate sections, was different and unique. What Boccherini produced was not the expected music designed for public consumption. The sixteen *quartettini* sent to Pleyel never made it into print. That Boccherini did not pursue other avenues suggests that the publication of these particular works was not his primary objective; this stands in sharp contrast to Labrador's assessment of Boccherini's business sense.<sup>54</sup> These works are different. They were created in Boccherini's workshop, for himself and his cello-playing patron.

#### NOTE

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<sup>53</sup> G. LABRADOR, *Towards a Revised Chronology*, cit., p. 31.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 48-52. Labrador details the confusion regarding the chronology of Boccherini's works written during the period 1782-1790, suggesting both that it is likely that compositions of Opp. 37-43 were written prior to 1786, and that those works composed after 1782 were intended expressly for Friedrich Wilhelm II. He argues that «the main misunderstanding regarding this period probably lies in not realizing to what extent Boccherini was a successful composer, who traded his music with different patrons», *ibidem*, p. 54.