

## Introduction

This book has been a long time in the making, as my family, friends, colleagues, and editors can all attest. I thank them all for their patience, forbearance, and support, and I can only hope that the wait was worth it. As the work on this book has extended over the years, I have become ever more convinced that its historical thesis is its most needed and most important contribution, while newly published analyses and interpretations of the music, of a quantity and quality hard to imagine fifteen years ago, along with changes in the theory profession, have obviated many of the concerns I initially felt driven to address. The only portion remaining that directly engages theoretical questions is part of Chapter 5, on the first sonata form Schubert wrote for his Beethoven project.

I also abandoned, with much greater reluctance, a comprehensive attempt to locate Schubert's music within disillusioned second-generation Romanticism, or within Biedermeier culture as Virgil Nemoianu would have it, which would require among other things an extended discussion of the practices and values of the Schubert circle, and would threaten to distend unbearably the hermeneutic and historical scope of this book.<sup>1</sup> Vestigial indications of the direction such a discussion would take can be found in the first and last chapters. Accordingly this is not a book that attempts systematic or comprehensive analyses and hermeneutic readings of all fourteen works by Schubert that are within its purview. Rather than aspiring to such blanket coverage of the literature, which would in any case have necessitated writing a very different book, I have been guided in my choice of which close readings to undertake primarily by the historical narrative.

Nor, despite its title, is the focus of this book Schubert's reception of Beethoven, or the "anxiety of influence" Schubert experienced when composing in Beethoven's genres. To some chapters, especially Chapter 6 on the Octet and Chapter 8 on the "Great" C-major Symphony, that topic is germane and indeed inescapable, but to follow through on that theme would have required at the least a similar chapter on the C-minor Sonata

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<sup>1</sup> Virgil Nemoianu, *The Taming of Romanticism: European Literature and the Age of Biedermeier* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984).

(D 958), as well as some follow-up on how the situation had changed since c. 1815 when Schubert made the plaintive exclamation, according to his friend Josef von Spaun, “Wer vermag nach Beethoven noch etwas zu machen?” (“Who can still do something after Beethoven?”).<sup>2</sup> A chapter on the C-minor Sonata seems doubly unnecessary since it did not mark a crucial turning point in Schubert’s project of composition in Beethoven’s genres, and since Charles Fisk has already made Schubert’s reception of Beethoven the focus of his fine chapter on that sonata.<sup>3</sup>

My basic approach begins with history on one side, and the musical work on the other, and is particularly interested in those fault lines where problems in history, analysis, and hermeneutics meet in suggestive ways. The starting point for the historical thesis is a simple chronological observation: that Schubert wrote all the large four-movement instrumental works that he wished to make public, either through performance or publication, after the beginning of 1824. The first seven of those new four-movement instrumental works belonged to the very genres – string quartet, piano sonata, symphony – that were most closely associated with Beethoven’s fame; 1824 marked the start of Schubert’s Beethoven project. I first made the published case for the “divide of 1824” in Schubert’s work in an article on the “Unfinished” Symphony in 2007, and Chapter 1 presents the basic thesis and some of its many implications more comprehensively. In addition to providing at least part of the answer as to why the B-minor Symphony remains unfinished, the “divide of 1824” has implications for how we evaluate the several fragmentary or incomplete symphonies, the one important string quartet fragment (D 703), and the many fragmentary or incomplete piano sonatas from before 1824. It also has implications for how we view Schubert’s career, starting with the so-called “years of crisis, 1818–1823” which I argue was really only one year – 1823. Chapter 2 examines the crises of that year and how they contributed to Schubert’s decision to begin a new project of composition in Beethoven’s genres in 1824, while Chapter 3 investigates the one positive factor that may well have proved decisive – the return of the violinist Ignaz Schuppanzigh to Vienna,

<sup>2</sup> Deutsch, Otto Erich, ed. *Schubert: Die Erinnerungen seiner Freunde* [hereafter *EsF*] (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1957, 1983), 150; Deutsch, Otto Erich, ed. *Schubert: Memoirs by His Friends* [hereafter *Memoirs*], Rosamond Ley and John Nowell, trans. (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1958), 128. See also Walther Dürr, “Wer vermag nach Beethoven noch etwas zu machen? Gedanken über die Beziehungen Schuberts zu Beethoven,” 10–25 in *Musik-Konzepte Sonderband: Franz Schubert* (Munich: text+kritik, 1979); reprinted from an article first published in the *Beethoven-Jahrbuch 1973/77* (Bonn, 1977).

<sup>3</sup> Charles Fisk, *Distant Cycles: Contexts for the Interpretation of Schubert’s Impromptus and Last Sonatas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

and his founding of a series of public chamber music concerts centered on string quartets.

Much of my delay in finishing this book can be attributed to the detour of my absorption with Schuppanzigh, which began with another simple observation: all of the works of Schubert's Beethoven project that were performed in public during his lifetime were performed by the Schuppanzigh ensemble, and none were performed by anyone else. Initially Schuppanzigh's monopoly caused me to imagine him the most important champion of Schubert's instrumental music in Vienna. I began to collect records of his programs and of other Viennese concerts that featured instrumental music, as well as newspaper notices and reviews, and published an article on his premieres of Beethoven's late quartets, which also meant perusing the Beethoven conversation books. As I gradually absorbed all this material I reluctantly came to the conclusion that Schuppanzigh had misgivings about Schubert's instrumental music, and performed publicly only as much of it as the obligations of personal friendship and professional courtesy required. The main part of the story of Schubert and Schuppanzigh is told in Chapter 3, but since Schuppanzigh's aid would have been nearly indispensable in order to organize a benefit concert featuring a symphony he figures in Chapter 7 as well.

While Schuppanzigh looms large in the stories of Schubert's quartets and symphony, his influence extends to other genres as well. Why did Schubert write an octet and begin to write piano trios while neglecting violin sonatas, even though the violin sonata was a prominent Beethovenian genre, and even though Schubert had much more experience composing violin sonatas than piano trios? Why did he write a cello quintet? Whatever other factors contributed, Schuppanzigh's programming was almost certainly of decisive importance: he never programmed violin sonatas, he often scheduled Beethoven's Septet (relevant to Chapter 6), he began to feature piano trios in his concerts in the fall of 1825 (relevant to Chapter 11), and he liked to perform cello quintets by Georges Onslow (relevant to Chapter 12).

The first three chapters covering the crises of 1823, the divide of 1824, and the inspiration provided to Schubert by Schuppanzigh set the stage for a chronological narrative of Schubert's Beethoven project from 1824 through 1828. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 examine the works with which Schubert began his project in early 1824, the Octet, the A-minor Quartet, and the D-minor Quartet. Chapters 7 and 8 move the narrative forward to 1825–1826 and the "Great" C-major Symphony, while Chapters 9 and 11 cover the new genres Schubert added to his project during those years and the next, the piano sonata and the piano trio. Chapter 12 is a discussion of the C-major Cello

Quintet within the context provided by the many other works of that last and most miraculously productive year, 1828.

The historical narrative of this book is driven not primarily by Schubert's biography, nor by a chronology of when Schubert composed which works, and thus differs materially from both strands of standard life and works narratives. Rather, my primary concern has been with Schubert's public career, to which life and works are of course highly relevant, but which imposes a different emphasis, and poses different questions. The divide of 1824 and Schuppanzigh's monopoly, for example, are hidden in plain sight within life and works narratives, but both spring into sharp relief when considered in the context of Schubert's public career. While career considerations underlie the arguments of almost every chapter, they are the explicit focus of two chapters, one on his relationship to the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde (GdMf, or Society of the Friends of Music), and one on his publishers. Since Chapter 7 seeks to explain, among other things, why Schubert chose to give his "Great" C-major Symphony to the GdMf, it reaches back to Schubert's first association with the Society in 1818 and provides a bird's-eye view of the whole sweep of his public career and the role the Society played in it. Chapter 10 recapitulates in brief Schubert's publication history in order to explain why the publication in Germany of the E-flat Trio was of prime importance both to his career and to his posthumous reception. Both of these career chapters thus also interrupt the chronological narrative with flashbacks.

If career provides one track that guides the narrative, the concept that provides the second track is genre. Instead of life or works (more common now than life and works) my focus is on career and genre. Genre is the crucial link between the notes on the page and the wider cultural context. Distinctions between public genres and private genres, genres for large and small public venues, male genres and feminized ones, aristocratic and folkish genres – all these distinctions determined who performed what and where, what publishers bought, how much they were willing to pay, and the titles chosen for publication, and these distinctions were constantly being renegotiated. The vast gulf in prestige and musical culture that separated the Lied and the partsong from all of Beethoven's instrumental genres is a subtext for every step of Schubert's new compositional initiative, and is important especially to Chapters 1, 3, 4, 5, and 7. But the genre in the greatest flux between 1815 and 1840 was the piano sonata, and Schubert's many experimental and fragmentary piano sonatas during his years of self-imposed apprenticeship were due not only to his greater level of comfort with the string quartet and the symphony, but also to the peculiar

state of neglected limbo in which Beethoven's piano sonatas languished during the 1810s and 1820s. Schubert's decision to write four movements for all six of the sonatas he wrote for publication has been noted on occasion, almost as if it were merely a curious factoid, but it is a leading indicator of his intentions in the piano sonata. Accordingly I have devoted Chapter 9 to the generic status of the piano sonata in the 1820s, to how Schubert negotiated the shoals surrounding the genre, and to how his solutions were received.

I have mentioned the fourteen works that form Schubert's Beethoven project, and for the most part the criteria that distinguish them from other works are straightforward. There are, however, two borderline cases that require discussion. Table 1:I lists the fourteen works by date of composition, while for purposes of comparison and easy reference Table 1:II is organized by date of first performance, and Table 1:III by date of publication.

The two works that merit explanation for their absence from the lists are the Piano Sonata in C major (D 840), the so-called "Reliquie" Sonata, and the Sonata in A minor for Arpeggione and Piano (D 821). The first two movements of the "Reliquie" are complete, the third and fourth remain incomplete. Schubert wrote it in April 1825 just prior to work on his Sonata in A minor (D 845), and the openings of the two sonatas show a close relationship. The "Reliquie" is the sole exception to the rule that after 1824 Schubert began no works in Beethoven's genres that he then decided to abandon in an incomplete state (the Symphony in D major D 936A was presumably left incomplete by his death), and it is not surprising that of all genres this occurred in the piano sonata. As an incomplete work Schubert never offered it for publication, and it does not figure in his public career, which is the focus of my discussions of the first "triad" of piano sonatas (D 845, D 850, D 894).

The "Arpeggione" Sonata has a stronger claim for inclusion. The autograph carries the date of November 1824, and according to the foreword when the sonata was published in 1871, it was performed in public near the end of 1824 by Vincenz Schuster, who published a primer on how to play the "Bogen-Gitarre" (bow-guitar) in Vienna in 1825.<sup>4</sup> Although the premiere left no trace in the "complete" listings of public concerts published by Sollinger, and received no mentions or reviews in the newspapers, the 1871 account seems plausible, if hazy. The

<sup>4</sup> Schubert's stipulation on the autograph of the "Arpeggione" is the only known use of that term, but since his sonata became the Bogen-Gitarre's best-known literature we now use Schubert's designation for the instrument invented by Georg Stauer in 1823 and championed by Vincenz Schuster.

Table 1. Compositions of Schubert's Beethoven project

I. Listed chronologically in order of composition

<b>1824</b> D 803 Octet; February to 1 March D 804 String Quartet in A minor; February to 1 March D 810 String Quartet in D minor; before 31 March (letter to Kupelwieser, <i>DsL</i> 234–235) [D 887, String Quartet in G major; perhaps begun before departure for Zseliz on 25 May, or perhaps begun in Zseliz]
<b>1825</b> D 845 Piano Sonata in A minor; before 20 May (the date Schubert left Vienna for Steyr) D 850 Piano Sonata in D minor; Gastein, 20 August (title page) [D 944 “Great” C-major Symphony; begun]
<b>1826</b> D 944 “Great” C-major Symphony; begun and largely completed in Gmunden and Gastein, summer of 1825; finished in 1826, and dedicated and presented to GdMf in October 1826. D 887 String Quartet in G major; June 20–30 (title page of autograph) [begun, at least, in 1824?] D 894 Piano Sonata in G major; October (title page of autograph)
<b>1827</b> D 898 Piano Trio in B-flat major; prior to D 929 [begun no earlier than the fall of 1825] D 929 Piano Trio in E-flat major; November (date on score)
<b>1828</b> D 956 Cello Quintet in C major; September (letter to Probst of 2 October, <i>DsL</i> 540) D 958 Piano Sonata in C minor D 959 Piano Sonata in A major D 960 Piano Sonata in B-flat major September (based on letter to Probst, and date on Reinschrift of all three sonatas)

II. Listed chronologically by first public performance

<b>1824</b> D 804, 14 March by the Schuppanzigh Quartet
<b>1827</b> D 803, 16 April by Schuppanzigh and others D 898, 23 December by the Schuppanzigh ensemble and Bocklet
<b>1828</b> D 810 or D 887, 1st mvt. only, 26 March for Schubert's benefit concert by the Schuppanzigh ensemble with Böhm instead of Schuppanzigh on 1st vln. D 929, 26 March for Schubert's benefit concert
(posthumous)
<b>1833</b> D 810 all mvts., 12 March, in a concert of Karl Moser's in Berlin
<b>1839</b> D 944, 21 March in the Gewandhaus, Leipzig, by Felix Mendelssohn

Table 1 (cont.)

<b>1850</b> D 956 17 November, Josef Hellmesberger Quartet + Josef Stransky in Vienna D 887 all mvts., 8 December, Josef Hellmesberger Quartet in Vienna	
<b>III. Listed chronologically by date of first publication</b>	
<b>1824</b> D 804, 7 September by Sauer & Leidesdorf as op. 29, no. 1	<b>Dedicatee</b> Schuppanzigh
<b>1826</b> D 845, beginning of the year, by Pennauer as op. 42 D 850, 8 April by Matthias Artaria as op. 53	Archduke Rudolph Carl Maria von Bocklet
<b>1827</b> D 894, 11 April by Haslinger, “Fantaisie, etc.” op. 78	Josef von Spaun
<b>1828</b> D 929, October by Probst of Leipzig as op. 100 (posthumous)	
<b>1831</b> D 810, 16 February by Josef Czerny	
<b>1836</b> D 898, 10 June, A. Diabelli & Co. as op. 99, score and parts	
<b>1839</b> D 958, D 959, D 960; 26 April by A. Diabelli & Co.	J. N. Hummel (Schubert’s wish) Robert Schumann (Hummel died 1837)
<b>1840</b> D 944, parts, by Breitkopf & Härtel; score in 1849	
<b>1851</b> D 887, November by A. Diabelli & Co.	
<b>1853</b> D 956, beginning of the year by C. A. Spina (took over from Diabelli in 1851) D 803, March by Spina (4 movements only; cut movements 4 and 5)	

“Arpeggione” Sonata is, broadly speaking, in a Beethovenian genre, the accompanied string sonata, and the manner in which its second movement leads to its third shows similarities with Beethoven’s op. 102 cello sonatas. Its opening melody shows similarities to the opening of the String Quartet D 804 in the same key, and it could be examined along with the Octet, the A-minor Quartet, and the D-minor Quartet as one of the works with which Schubert opened his project. As a cellist I have performed the “Arpeggione,” and have a soft spot for it.

Nevertheless, there are important ways in which the “Arpeggione” Sonata does not fit. Unlike all the works on the list, the “Arpeggione” Sonata has only three movements, and unlike the other works that could be performed publicly, Schubert wrote the “Arpeggione” Sonata without even one eye on Schuppanzigh, since Schuppanzigh never presented violin or cello sonatas, although the showman in him might have found the novelty of the arpeggione seductive.<sup>5</sup> It seems likely that Schubert received a commission to write a work for Georg Staufer’s novel instrument, and the work itself is tailored to show off that new instrument’s peculiar capabilities, giving many passages a feel and sound closer to the many fashionable bravura potpourris, fantasies, and themes and variations, and indeed closer to Schubert’s own Fantasy for Violin and Piano (D 934), than to Beethoven’s cello or violin sonatas. It also seems likely that had Schubert conceived of the “Arpeggione” Sonata as a work he wanted heard next to Beethoven’s works, he would have followed up with other accompanied sonatas for instruments with a Beethovenian precedent like the violin or the cello. Had Schubert thought of the “Arpeggione” Sonata as speaking to the legacy left by Beethoven’s op. 96 Sonata or his op. 102 Sonatas, he would have proceeded as he did later with another Beethovenian genre that had no connection to Schuppanzigh, the piano sonata, of which he wrote two sets of three sonatas each, and all six of which he gave four movements. So in spite of its “sonata” title, the “Arpeggione” Sonata seems to have little connection to Beethoven and his genres, and no connection at all to Schuppanzigh, who in 1824 was still Schubert’s exclusive bridge to Beethoven’s audience.

As the second and third parts of Table 1 show, the fourteen works of Schubert’s Beethoven project did not become fully public until after mid century, by which time the process of institutionalizing Beethovenian norms, particularly in judging sonata forms, was already well under way (Chapter 5). Schubert admired Beethoven, but far from considering Beethoven’s procedures normative, Schubert was using the genres and forms of Beethoven’s legacy to write music expressive of values quite different from those of Beethoven, music that therefore not only could stand comparison with Beethoven’s, but gained in resonance from the contrast. Not only had the climate for the reception of the works in Schubert’s Beethoven project changed by mid century, but as they entered the public

<sup>5</sup> On 26 November 1826 Schuppanzigh closed his program with guitar variations by a Mr. Beilner, whose method of playing was advertised as special (“ganz besondere Spielart”). According to the review, Beilner’s special method consisted of metal extensions for plucking the strings, which drove all the listeners from the hall (*Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, Leipzig [hereafter LAMZ] 29/2 [10 Jan 1827]: 26).



sphere in a slow intermittent trickle, they were accompanied by many early instrumental works that Schubert himself had withheld from the market, along with other early “works” that were cobbled together after his death from diverse fragments, a circumstance that continues in the piano sonatas. So in addition to trickling into public circulation over the course of almost thirty years, the works of Schubert’s Beethoven project were joined after his death by a flood of works he had never intended to be made public, augmented by a sludge of other “works” he had never even assembled, creating altogether a pool in which the public profile he had labored to create was muddied to unrecognizability.

Contrary to the image we have inherited of a Schubert careless of money, appearance, and connections, he took meticulous care in shaping his public profile in the four-movement instrumental genres. The twin tracks of career and genre bring into focus a picture of Schubert utterly at odds with the accounts retailed by his friends of the humble, feckless innocent, living for the moment, jotting down the inspirations of the moment. Where his instrumental works were concerend, an area his friends did not in any case consider very interesting (Chapter 2), the divide of 1824 reveals a Schubert who planned for the long term, and who was completely consistent in his actions, from a time well before his public career began in 1821 right through his final year. When he died only five of the fourteen works had been published, and only four works plus one movement of a fifth had been performed in public. With his death control of his legacy slipped from his hands, and his posthumous reception has varied to an extreme that is bizarre. Never has a composer of Schubert’s stature been the object of so much careless love, the subject of so much kitsch, and the recipient of so little intellectual respect. But the pendulum of Schubert’s reception is moving again. I believe the present finds a musical and scholarly world able and ready as never before to give Schubert’s Beethoven project a hearing commensurate with its ambitions. This book is an attempt to abet that process.

1 | Preparations

The divide of 1824

In 1824 Franz Schubert risked a public verdict upon an ambition he had long nursed, a verdict he had avoided for even his best previous efforts. The performance in March of his A-minor String Quartet (D 804), and its publication in September as op. 29, no. 1, presented Schubert for all to see, hear, and judge, as the composer of a work that would inevitably evoke comparison with Beethoven. The audience that long-ago March, subscribers to Ignaz Schuppanzigh's concert series dedicated primarily to performances of Beethoven's chamber music, could not know that the new string quartet they were hearing was merely the first sign of Schubert's determination to write new works in all the large instrumental genres that Beethoven had raised to an unprecedented prestige – and to seek for these new works the most discriminating public scrutiny available.

All Schubert's actions and words indicate that the string quartets, symphonies, and piano sonatas he had composed before 1824 belonged for him to a pre-professional species, unworthy of appearing in public bearing his name. In February 1828, for example, he listed for the publisher Schott some works he hoped to sell, and started his list with a piano trio and two string quartets he had written after 1824. He also listed some works which, even though he had no hopes of selling them, he said he was mentioning "only to acquaint you with my striving after the highest in art."<sup>1</sup> Included in this second listing were a symphony, three operas, and a Mass, which would have been the "Great" C-major Symphony (D 944) of 1825–1826, three operas written between 1821 and 1823,<sup>2</sup> and the Mass in A-flat, which he had worked on from 1819–1822 and revised in 1826/1827. Schubert's "highest

<sup>1</sup> Otto Erich Deutsch, ed., *Schubert: Die Dokumente seines Lebens* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1964), 495 (hereafter *DsL*); Otto Erich Deutsch, ed., *The Schubert Reader: A Life of Franz Schubert in Letters and Documents*, Eric Blom, trans. (New York: W. W. Norton, 1947), 739–740 (hereafter *SR*).

<sup>2</sup> *Alfonso und Estrella* (D 732; September 1821–February 1822); *Die Verschworenen* (D 787; April 1823); and *Fierabras* (D 796; May–October 1823). Dates according to Otto Erich Deutsch, *Franz Schubert: Thematisches Verzeichnis seiner Werke in chronologischer Folge* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1978) (hereafter *DV*).