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Provenance as a tool for studying the circulation of music

The case of Francesco Geminiani

CIRCULATION MEANS, IN principle, “movements to and from or around something”, such as blood in the body and money in society. There is a second meaning, described by the *Oxford Dictionary of English* as “the public availability or knowledge of something”. Apparently, music is such a typical example of this “something” that the dictionary cites the following as an example: “His music has achieved wide circulation”. This definition more than justifies the expression “the circulation of music” to describe the ways and processes by which music finds its way from the composer to the musicians who perform it and to the public that listens to it. In turn, studies of the circulation of music should start with the creation of music by the composer and then follow the various paths by which the music finally reaches the performers and listeners (and collectors), both geographically and chronologically.

Provenance is defined in the same *Oxford Dictionary of English* as “a record of ownership of a work of art”. If we apply this concept to extant copies of early music editions, it is in a way the reverse of the circulation of music. The latter concept looks forward, from the composer to the “possessors” (in the widest sense of the word, including listeners). Provenance looks backward, from the present owners back to previous owners and hopes, in an ideal case, to discover the complete chain of ownership of the work. When the reconstructed part of the chain of ownership includes the early part of the chain, provenance data can be used as circulation data. Provenance is also the reverse of circulation in another respect: whereas circulation tries to describe the dissemination of multiple copies of a work, provenance typically provides information about a single copy. This can, of course, be extended by the study of the provenance of multiple copies, in the hope that the resultant data will lead to a reliable image of the circulation of the work.

This contribution will focus on 18th-century publications of the works of Francesco Geminiani (1687–1762), which were mostly issued in England, from 1716 (*Sonate a violino*) to 1762 (*The Second Collection of Pieces for the Harpsichord*). Before discussing specific editions or even specific copies, a general model for understanding provenance as a historical process will be proposed. This model divides the history of ownership of a copy of early printed music into four periods: “the period of the first owners” (roughly, to the death of the composer); “the period of the second generation” (roughly, the half century following the death of the composer); “the period of the collectors” (roughly, the 19th century), and “the period of the libraries” (roughly, the 20th century). After this, some special categories of copies will be discussed, such as dedication copies and deposit copies. Finally, it will be shown what the study of provenance can tell us about the dissemination of two specific sets of works by Geminiani, the *Prima parte* of his concerto arrangements of Corelli’s Sonatas opus 5 (first published in 1726) and the *Sonate a violino e basso, Opera quarta* (first published in 1739).

Francesco Geminiani

Over the last decade, I have been collecting data about the provenance of as many extant copies as possible of all of Geminiani’s works printed or copied into manuscript in the 18th century. My rough estimate is that there are about 1,500 such copies and that I have provenance data for about 1,000 of them. In the sections that follow, I will use these data to give insight into the circulation of Geminiani’s music not only in the century of its creation, the 18th century, but also in later centuries.

Geminiani’s oeuvre is not as concise and limited in size as Corelli’s but is still not very large, at least compared with the number of works composed by, for example, Johann Sebastian Bach, George Frideric Handel or Antonio Vivaldi. Geminiani’s music is almost exclusively instrumental. The most important works are the sonatas (for violin: opus 1, 1716, *Le prime sonate*, 1739, opus 4, 1739, and opus 5, 1747; for cello: opus 5 [sic], 1747) and the concertos (opuses 2 and 3, 1732, opus 7, 1748, arrangements of Corelli’s sonatas opus 5, 1726 and 1729, and after his own Sonatas opus 4, 1743). Apart from these, Geminiani produced a

number of theoretical works or treatises, of which *The Art of Playing on the Violin* (1751) is by far the best known, if not also the most important. All these works will be cited repeatedly in the next sections, Geminiani's other works more sparingly.

Chronology

When surveying the entire history of an extant copy, four broad periods can be defined. These periods should not be regarded as being precisely demarcated; rather, they reflect general trends, and therefore overlap when it comes to specific instances.

The first period is the period of the first owners, which we take to run from 1716, the year of Geminiani's first publication in Britain, to 1762, the year of the last first edition of his work in Britain and also that of his death. Owners of copies of his printed works during this period will often have been first owners—that is, persons or institutions that received a free copy for some reason or bought a copy directly from Geminiani or from a music shop. Of course, copies could already change hands in this period.

The first owners' category can be subdivided into several subcategories. First, we must assume that the composer himself retained at least one copy of his work, the "composer's copy". In fact, there are two categories of composer's copies. If the composer is simultaneously the publisher, which was the case with Geminiani in nearly all cases discussed here, all the copies printed under his supervision are composer's copies, in a way. The true composer's copy is, of course, the one or a few set aside to be retained as a personal copy, whether to use in practice, in which to insert notes for correction or amendment, or just for archival reasons. If the composer is not the publisher, the composer's copies are those copies that the composer receives gratis from the publisher. This could be a single copy or just a few, but also a larger number, such as a dozen or even 150—an extreme case, reported for the *Concerti grossi* opus 6 composed by Corelli in Rome and published by Estienne Roger in Amsterdam.¹ The larger numbers were certainly intended to be sold by the composer as partial or complete compensation for his service as composer.

1 Rasch 1996.

A second category of first owners constitutes the dedicatee(s) of a work published with a specific dedicatee or dedicatees. Such copies are called “dedication copies” and are often recognizable by being bound more luxuriously than regular copies. A third category of first owners receiving a copy gratis is the institutions, mostly libraries, designated by law for legal deposit.² They receive one or more copies of the editions provided with a privilege to protect them against illegal reprinting. Apart from those receiving a copy as a gift from the composer or the publisher, all other first owners must pay for their copies. A first category of paying first owners is the subscribers to the work. As is well known, subscription was a widespread procedure to finance musical publications in the 18th century. If there were payments upon subscription, which there often were, these could be used to pay for the engraving and printing of the edition. If there were no such payments, the subscriptions ensured the sale of a number of copies and took away much of the financial risk involved in the publication. A subscription copy was usually cheaper than a regular copy bought from the composer or another seller. Often, a list of subscribers was printed in the edition of the work. This would add to the prestige of the work, its composer and the subscribers alike (although one should not rule out the possibility of a subscriber being added solely for that reason, not for purchasing a copy). Some, though not all, of Geminiani’s works were published by subscription, among them the Concertos after Corelli’s opus 5, *Prima parte* (1726), the Sonatas opus 4 (1739), the Concertos after the Sonatas of opus 4 (1743), the Concertos opus 7 (1748), the *Dictionnaire harmonique* (Amsterdam, 1756), and *The Art of Playing the Guitar or Cittra* (Edinburgh, 1760).³ Only the first of these editions has a list of subscribers in the printed copies.

The categories identified above all include first owners with a special and defined relationship to the musical work in question. Such a special relationship is absent for copies that were just bought in a shop at the regular retail price. Regarding the buyers, two categories can be

² Guillo 2005, pp. 118–119.

³ The place of publication of an edition is London unless otherwise stated.

distinguished: individuals and institutions such as music societies and the musical establishments of courts, churches and theatres.

The next period will be called, for want of a better name, the “period of the second generation”, which we take as running from 1762, the year of Geminiani’s death, to 1820. The designation is intended to indicate that the people who acquired a copy of a work by Geminiani during this period were no longer Geminiani’s contemporaries. They belonged to the next generation, or rather, to several ensuing generations, since, if we apply the generation concept to the history of music, it seems to apply to time intervals of, say, 25 years, rather than the nearly 60-year period from 1762 to 1820. The year 1820 was chosen because it seems to mark the end (very roughly, of course) of the time when Geminiani’s music was still relevant to contemporary musical life: until then, it was still performed in concerts and still available in music shops, at least in Britain. British writings on music of this period still contain references to Geminiani’s works and his works were still studied by music students. This all means that the possession of works of Geminiani was still useful for one’s own musical practice, whatever form that took.

During the period of the second generation, the range of owners of copies of Geminiani’s works was quite different from those in the period of the first owners. Geminiani’s music was still available in the form of newly printed copies in music shops, notably those of the widow of John Johnson (Ruth Johnson) until 1777, Robert Bremner from 1777 to 1789, and John Preston and Son from 1790 until presumably around 1820. These music sellers, who were also music publishers, were in possession not only of unsold copies printed earlier, but also of the engraved plates for particular editions, so that they could produce new copies—something that at least Bremner and Preston did.

Copies of works printed and sold before 1762 could remain where they were, especially copies acquired by institutions such as music societies and the libraries designated to receive legal deposit copies. Copies in private possession could remain in the family, inherited by sons or other relatives. Other copies were sold when the first owner died. Many catalogues of sales, at fixed prices or by auction, of libraries of deceased people from the second half of the 18th century contain titles of editions

of Geminiani's work. Music shops also could acquire and sell copies that were produced earlier and now were second-hand copies.

After 1820, the relationship between musical life and Geminiani's music changed. By then, Geminiani's music had become part of the past, part of music history. Possessing Geminiani's music represented an act of collecting objects from the past, something to store on a shelf, not something to use in practice. Owners could be individuals or institutions alike. For both categories, a distinction is possible between professional collectors and non-professional collectors. Professional collectors are collectors with some relationship to music, such as musicians, musicologists, music teachers, music publishers and music libraries. Some musicians may still have had professional intentions for the Geminiani copies they possessed, such as performing from them in concerts, but in general copies of Geminiani's works were considered to be treasures of a past era.

The time after 1820 can be very roughly divided into two periods, the 19th century and the long 20th century up to 2020. The difference between the two periods is incremental rather than fundamental. In the 19th century, private owners were by far the most numerous and not that many institutional collections possessed works by Geminiani. In the 20th century, these proportions are reversed: the majority of extant copies of Geminiani's works were now in the hands of libraries, with only relatively few in private hands. The decades around 1900 are pivotal in this respect. During these decades, libraries began to accumulate copies of early editions of music in serious numbers, and these copies never returned to circulation among private collectors. This does not mean that there are no copies owned privately today, but their number can hardly constitute more than a small portion of the total number of extant copies.

After these general remarks, we now discuss some concrete cases. First, attention will be paid to the original owners of the special copies of the first editions of Geminiani's works, in particular the copies owned by the composer, the dedicatee, the subscribers and the legal deposit institutions. This is followed by a general overview of the provenance of two editions of Geminiani's works: the Concertos after Corelli's Sonatas opus 5, *Prima parte* (1726), and the Sonatas opus 4 (1739).

Special copies

It may be assumed that Geminiani kept a carefully assembled library of personal copies of his published works, for reference, for performance, and, not least, to have his works available as models for later arrangements in different formats. However, I so far know of only one extant copy that could, but not necessarily, be a copy owned and kept by Geminiani himself. It is a copy of the *Concerti grossi* after Corelli's Sonatas opus 5, *Prima parte* (1726).⁴ The edition was engraved by William Smith, printed for Geminiani by William Smith and John Barrett, and apparently was not available other than by subscription—at least, there is no hint of any sales outside subscription and the two printers are among the subscribers. The edition includes a list of nearly 200 subscribers who ordered 216 copies.⁵ One copy, held in the Central Library of Manchester, has manuscript corrections and annotations in the printed list of subscribers, and it seems that these corrections and annotations would make sense only for a copy in the possession of Geminiani himself (see *Figure 1*).⁶ The handwriting, in addition, resembles that of the few known specimens of his handwriting, except that these instances are from much later dates.

Several extant copies of Geminiani's works (see *Table 1*) can be classed as dedication copies. A fairly large number of first editions of Geminiani's works have a dedication, from the *Sonate a violino, violone e cembalo* published in 1716 (dedicated to Baron Johann Adolph von Kielmansegg) to *The Art of Playing the Guitar or Cittra* published in 1760 (dedicated to the Countess of Charlesville). One may assume that the dedicatee always received a copy, presumably nicely bound and perhaps provided with a personal inscription. Geminiani's Concertos opus 7 were published in 1748 with a dedication to the Academy of Ancient Music in London and the dedication copy is extant.⁷ It is now in the

4 *Concerti grossi* [...] *composti delli Sei Soli della Prima Parte dell'Opera Quinta d'Arcangelo Corelli*, London: William Smith and John Barrett [for the Author], [1726].

5 See the list with nearly complete identifications of the subscribers in Geminiani 2017, pp. 263–272.

6 GB-Mp, BR 580 Cu 78.

7 *Concerti grossi composti a 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 part reali* [...] *Opera VII* (London: [Author], “1746” [= 1748]), copy GB-Lwa, CG 43.



THE
NAMES
OF THE
SUBSCRIBERS.

His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales.

Her Highness the Princess Anne.

Her Highness the Princess Amelia.

Her Highness the Princess Carolina Charlotta.

A



O N. Edward Ash, Esq.
John Atwood, Esq.
— Aglionby, Esq.
Dr. Arbuthnot.
Mr. Ashfield.

Mr. St. Andre.

B

HIS Grace the Duke of Bedford.
Her Grace the Duchess of Bedford.
The Right Honourable Earl of Bristol.
The Right Honourable Lord of Salisbury.
The Right Honourable Lord Bateman.
Sir John Buckworth, Bart.

Lady

Figure 1. First page of the list of subscribers of Geminiani's *Concerti grossi* after Corelli's *Sonatas opus 5, Prima parte* (1726), possibly with autograph corrections, as found in the copy now in the Central Library of Manchester.

Table 1. Editions of works by Geminiani with a dedication.

Edition	Dedicatee	Dedication copy
<i>Sonate a violino</i> (1714)	Johann Adolph Baron von Kielmansegg	
<i>Concerti grossi</i> ... Corelli, <i>Prima parte</i> (1726)	King George I	
<i>Concerti grossi</i> opus 2 (1732)	Henrietta Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough	
<i>Sonate a violino</i> opus 4 (1739)	Margaret Hamilton, Countess of Orrery	
<i>Le prime sonate</i> (1739)	Dorothy Savile, Countess of Burlington	
— Special dedication copy, with <i>Sonate a violino</i> opus 4 (1740–1741)	Pierre Gaviniès	US-AA
<i>Concerti grossi</i> opus 4 (1743)	Frederick, Prince of Wales	
— Special dedication copy (1748)	Academy of Ancient Music	F-Pn
<i>Sonates pour le violoncello</i> (The Hague, 1747)	Giacomo Milano, Prince of Ardore	
<i>Concerti grossi</i> opus 7 (1748)	Academy of Ancient Music	GB-Lwa
— Special dedication copy (1748)	Philipp, Prince Lobkowitz	CZ-Nlob
<i>A Treatise of Good Taste</i> (1749)	Frederick, Prince of Wales	
<i>Guida Armonica</i> (1756), second issue (1758)	Prince Edward, Duke of York	GB-Lcm
<i>The Art of Playing the Guitar or Cittra</i> (Edinburgh, 1760)	Hester Coghill, Countess of Charlesville	

library of Westminster Abbey, where a large portion of music once belonging to the Academy has ended up.⁸ The copy does not bear any particular inscription but is recognizable as a dedication copy by its binding in an unusual, particularly colourful kind of paper. Interestingly, a similarly bound copy of the *Concertos* after the *Sonatas* of opus 4, first published in 1743, also survives.⁹ The Academy of Ancient Music copy was, however, produced in 1748, as can be ascertained from the paper used

⁸ Johnstone 2014.

⁹ *Concerti grossi* [...] *composti delle Sonate a violino e basso dell'Opera IV* (London: [Author], 1743), copy F-Pn, Ac e8 6 (A-H).



Figure 2. Copy of Geminiani's *Le prime sonate* and *Sonate a violino e basso*, *Opera quarta*, now in the Hatcher Graduate Library of the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; a dedication copy for Pierre Gaviniès.

and the particular version of the privilege contained in it. This copy must have been offered by Geminiani to the Academy at the same time as the first edition of the *Concertos* opus 7. There is even a third copy bound in similar (though not identical) paper: the copy of the *Concertos* opus 7 that was given by Geminiani to the Bohemian nobleman Ferdinand Philipp Prince Lobkowitz (1724–1784) on the occasion of the latter's departure from England; it is preserved in the Lobkowitz Library and Archives in Nelahozeves, Czech Republic.¹⁰

The last two examples cited in the previous paragraph show that dedication copies could also be prepared for persons or institutions other than just the dedicatee or dedicatees mentioned on the title page. There are several more such examples. The Hatcher Graduate Library of the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, possesses copies of Geminiani's *Le prime sonate* and *Sonatas* opus 4 bound together and of exceptional size, 47 × 35 cm (see *Figure 2*).¹¹

These copies are printed on a special kind of large paper not found in any other known copy of these editions. The paper and an analysis of the variants found in the engravings show that the copy must have been produced in Paris in 1740 or 1741, when Geminiani resided there. Its binding is not very special but shows, on the outside front cover, the remains of the following text: "... | de Musique | a ... [illegible word] | avec P. GAVINIÈS | C...". This refers, of course, to the French violinist and composer Pierre Gaviniès (1728–1800), a pupil of Geminiani, probably during his stay in Paris of 1740–1741. The Ann Arbor copy must have been specially produced to be offered to Gaviniès as a dedication copy. This copy is cited, curiously enough, by Jean-Baptiste Cartier in his *L'art du violon* (Paris, 1798), a publication that combines instructions for the violinist with an extensive collection of classical pieces for the instrument. It contains several movements from Geminiani's *Prime sonate* and *Sonatas* opus 4, with the remark "Gravée sur l'épreuve de

10 CZ-Nlob, XGc 26. The accompanying letter from Geminiani to Lobkowitz of 9 August 1748 also survives in the Lobkowitz Archives.

11 *Le prime sonate a violino e basso* (London: [Author], 1739) and *Sonate a violino e basso [...]* *Opera quarta* (London: [Author], 1739), copy US-AA, M219. G32 S71 1739.

dédicace appartenant à Citoyen Gavinies”.¹² That this remark really refers to the Ann Arbor copy is confirmed by the small pencil marks found at the beginning and end of the movements included in *L'art du violon*.

The antiquarian bookseller and auction house of Leo Liepmannsohn offered for sale a bound volume with *Le prime sonate* (1739), the *Menuetti con variazioni* (1739) and *Les pieces de clavecin* (1743) described in the catalogue as a “dedication copy”, unfortunately without mentioning the dedicatee.¹³ It was bought by the famous Belgian violinist Eugène Ysaÿe (1826–1905), but the present location of this volume is unknown.¹⁴

Geminiani's *Guida Armonica* was published without dedication in London in 1756. Two extant copies have a slightly different title page from that of the large majority of the extant copies.¹⁵ It repeats the original title word-by-word and line-by-line (making it indistinguishable in library catalogue descriptions), but adds one sentence, with a dedication to “His Royal Highness Prince Edward”. These copies were probably produced in 1758. The dedicatee is Prince Edward, Duke of York (1739–1767), son of Frederick, Prince of Wales, to whom Geminiani had dedicated two of his works in the 1740s. One of the two extant copies, in the library of the Royal College of Music in London, is printed on large paper and luxuriously bound. Presumably this is the dedication copy.

What about copies sold on subscription, which we can call subscrip-

12 On pp. 255–257 the first two movements of Sonata I of *Le prime sonate*, on pp. 260–263 the second movement of the Sonata opus 4 no. VII, and on pp. 271–273 the entire Sonata VI of *Le prime sonate*.

13 Liepmannsohn Antiquariat 1908, p. 25, no. 367. Described as “Magnifique reliure ancienne bien conservé, riches dorures sur les plats et sur le dos, tranche dorée. Exemplaire de dédicace. Sur le premier feuillet blanc se trouve 3 petits portraits en couleur et une très belle silhouette de Geminiani, tous dessinés d'après l'original de la main d'un contemporain du célèbre compositeur. – Des bibliothèques de Jul. Marshall et de J. E. Matthew.”

14 It is not in the Ysaÿe Collection now in the Bibliothèque Royale Albert 1er in Brussels.

15 *Guida armonica, o Dizionario armonico, Being a sure Guide to Harmony and Modulation [...]* Dedicated to his Royal Highness Prince Edward (London: John Johnson for the Author, [1758]). Copies D-B, Mus Gg 143, GB-Lcm, D 2625.

tion copies? Lists of subscribers are always interesting: more than anything else they show the social, commercial and artistic network around the composer.¹⁶ As mentioned before, a fair number of editions of Geminiani's works were published following a subscription campaign. Of these, only the *Concerti grossi* after Corelli's Sonatas opus 5, *Prima parte* (nos I–VI, 1726) has a list of subscribers, as referred to above. The list begins with King George I, the dedicatee, his wife and his children. The king will not have paid for his copy—although he might have rewarded Geminiani in a different way—but his family may have. Then follows an alphabetical list, which is, per letter, ordered in an interesting way. First come the nobility, in the order of their ranks, dukes and marquises first, earls and countesses and baronets later. Hierarchy is also observed within the list of civilians that follows. People who could qualify as “Esquire” are mentioned first, “ordinary people” later. Apart from the royalty and nobility alluded to above, we find many people obviously belonging to the upper middle class: members of parliament, diplomats, academics, landowners, merchants, stationers, and so on. Several names have Masonic connections and remarkable is the presence of a number of Jewish names. A number of music societies subscribed for copies, usually multiple copies, among them the *Philo-musicae et Architectura Societas*, the Masonic lodge of which Geminiani had the position as Musical Dictator.

Fifteen extant copies are known of the first edition of Geminiani's *Prima parte*. How many extant copies can be connected to any of the subscribers? The answer to this question is bluntly disappointing: none. Only one copy can be connected to a relative of one of the subscribers: the copy now in the Euing Collection in Glasgow has the signature of Joseph Gulston, possibly a nephew of the subscriber William Gulston, who was a director of the *Philo-musicae et Architectura Societas*.

Later editions of Geminiani's works published via subscription do not include lists of subscribers. In the announcement of the subscription for the Sonatas opus 4, it is said that the edition will be published when the number of 200 copies has been reached and that no other copies will

16 About the subscription system for early music editions, see, among many other studies, Hortschansky 1968; Hunter & Mason 1999; Fleming & Perkins 2022.

be printed.¹⁷ This reminds one of the publication of the *Prima parte* in 1726, but the outcome would be different. It is quite possible that the first issue of the Sonatas opus 4 was published in 1739 with a print run of 200 that was completely destined for subscribers. Additional print runs, however, were produced by Geminiani over the next decade, by John Johnson in 1751 and even by Richard Welcker around 1775.

No data are available about the number of subscribers, either desired or realized, to further editions of Geminiani's music published via subscription, among them such diverse works as the Concertos opus 7 (1748), the *Dictionnaire harmonique* (Amsterdam, 1756) and *The Art of Playing the Guitar or Cittra* (1760).

A final category of "special copies" is the "legal-deposit copies", i.e., the copies to be deposited as part of the obligations to be fulfilled for effecting the privilege, the document intended to protect the edition against illegal reprinting, at least within the area under the control of the assigning authority (see *Table 2*). Geminiani obtained privileges in Britain in 1728 and 1739, in France in 1740 and 1752 and in Holland in 1746, for terms of 10 to 15 years. A printed extract had to be included in the edition that the privilege was meant to protect: thus we find the British privilege of 1728 in the first edition of the Concertos opus 2 (1732) and the Sonatas opus 4 (1739), the Cello and the Violin Sonatas opus 5 (1747), the Concertos opus 7 (1748), the *Treatise of Good Taste in the Art of Music* (1749) and *The Art of Playing on the Violin* (1751). The French privilege of 1740 is found in the French issue of the Sonatas opus 4 (1740), the French edition of the Cello Sonatas opus 5 ("1746"

17 *London Evening Post*, 15–17 February 1737: "Proposal for printing by Subscription, Twelve Sonatas, compos'd by Mr. Francis Geminiani, for the Violin and Bass. Conditions. I. That the Sonatas (which are now actually in the Engraver's Hands, to be engraven on Copper-plates, and will speedily be finished) shall be put to Press as soon as 200 Subscribers can be procur'd, and printed off and deliver'd to the Subscribers with all possible Expedition. II. That the copies shall be of two Sorts, one printed on large, the other on small Paper. III. That the Price of the large Paper shall be two Guineas, the Price of the small Paper one Guinea; half to be paid at the Time of subscribing, the other half on the Delivery of the Book. IV. That there shall be no more Copies printed off than are subscrib'd for. Subscriptions are taken in by Mr. John Walsh in Katherine-street in the Strand; Mr. John Simpson in Swithen's Alley near the Royal-Exchange; and Mr. Wamsley in Piccadilly."

Table 2. Editions of works by Geminiani provided with a privilege. All editions published in London, unless otherwise stated.

Country	Date	Duration	Edition	Deposit copy
Britain	26 March 1728	14 years	<i>Concerti grossi</i> opus 2 (1732)	
			<i>Sonate a violino</i> opus 4 (1739)	
Britain	29 July 1739	14 years	<i>Concerti grossi</i> opus 4 (1743)	
			<i>VI Sonate di violoncello</i> opus 5 (1747)	
			<i>Sonate [...] per il violino</i> opus 5 (1747)	
			<i>Concerti grossi</i> opus 7 (1748)	
			<i>A Treatise of Good Taste</i> (1749)	
			<i>The Art of Playing on the Violin</i> (1751)	
France	31 December 1740	12 years	<i>Sonate a violino e basso</i> (Paris 1740)	
			<i>Sonates pour le violoncello</i> opus 5 (Paris, "1746" = [1747])	
			<i>L'art de jouer le violon</i> (1752)	F-Pn
Holland	6 December 1746	14 years	<i>Sonates [...] pour le violoncelle</i> opus 5 (The Hague, 1746)	NL-Lu
			<i>Sonates pour le violon</i> opus 5 (The Hague, 1746)	NL-Lu
			<i>Concerti grossi</i> opus 7 (no place, 1748)	NL-Lu
			<i>Dictionaire harmonique</i> (Amsterdam, 1756)	NL-Lu
France	25 January 1752	10 years	(none)	

[= 1747]) and *L'art de jouer le violon* (1752, the French issue of *The Art of Playing on the Violin*). The Dutch privilege of 1746 is included in the Dutch editions of the Cello and the Violin Sonatas opus 5 (The Hague, 1747), in some copies of the Concertos opus 7 (1748) and in the *Dictionaire harmonique* (Amsterdam, 1756). In all cases, the privilege was successful: no unauthorized reprints of these works were ever published in the territories of the privileges' jurisdiction.

The number of deposit copies necessary to validate the privilege var-

ied by country. The text of the British privileges as printed in the copies does not speak of any deposit copies. The French privileges, on the other hand, require the deposit of four free copies: two copies for the Bibliothèque publique, i.e., the library of the palace of Versailles, one copy for the library of the Louvre, and one copy for the office of the Chancellor. Dutch privileges always require the deposit of a well-bound copy in the library of the University of Leiden.

Some extant copies can indeed be considered to be deposit copies. One copy of *L'art de jouer le violon* is bound in leather with the royal arms stamped on the front outside cover.¹⁸ This must be a copy handed in to become part of the Bibliothèque publique. Dutch deposit copies have fared well. The library of the University of Leiden has an uninterrupted history from its foundation in 1575 to the present day and still contains copies of most if not all editions published with a privilege of the States of Holland and West Frisia. So, it has well-bound copies of all four publications of Geminiani's works issued with the composer's Dutch privilege of 1746.¹⁹

The Concertos after Corelli's Sonatas opus 5, *Prima parte* (1726)

For most editions, the number of special copies is limited: one or a few for the composer, one for the dedicatee mentioned on the title page, one or a few for legal deposit and perhaps a few as dedication copies for people other than the dedicatee on the title page. Larger numbers are involved if the edition was sold by subscription. Copies of an edition that are not designated as special copies can be called "regular copies". They were disseminated first by the composer and by music sellers, and later via a variety of channels, including resale, inheritance and donation. Let us see what provenance data can tell us about these modes of

¹⁸ Copy F-Pn, Vm8 c 6.

¹⁹ NL-Lu, 545 B 28: *Sonates pour le violon avec un violoncello ou clavecin* (The Hague: [Author], "1746" [= 1747]); 545 B 29: *Sonates pour le violoncelle et basse continue, Ouvrage cinquième* (The Hague: [Author], "1746" [= 1747]); 680 A 44: *Concerti grossi [...] Opera VII* (1748); 680 A 45: *Dictionnaire harmonique* (Amsterdam, 1756).

the circulation of music. We will discuss here two editions in particular, first the *Concerti grossi* after Corelli opus 5, *Prima parte*, already discussed, and the Sonatas opus 4, published in 1739 via subscription, but reissued later as regular copies.

As mentioned, no copy of Geminiani's edition of the *Concerti grossi* after Corelli opus 5, *Prima parte* can be connected to any of its first owners, if the assumption is right that the list of subscribers published in the edition correctly represents the complete group of first owners. Four copies can be connected to owners who belong to the "second generation".

The copy now in the Biblioteca Civile in Bergamo bears the signature of Robert Archbold, about whom I can give no further information, with the date 1756. The copy now in the Euing Collection in Glasgow has the bookplate of Joseph Gulston (as mentioned above, presumably a nephew of the subscriber William Gulston), with the motto *Crescit sub pondere virtus* ("Strength grows under weight") and the year 1766 added in ink. It is a part of a bound volume with several concerto publications by Geminiani, including editions published by John Johnson in the later 1750s. Perhaps Joseph Gulston put the volume together in 1766 when he became the owner of the various items included in it. The copy now in the Bodleian Library in Oxford has the inscription "M. Russell of Powick". This probably refers to Mary Russell née Cocks (1758–1786), who married William Russell (1750–1812) in 1781 and lived in Powick, a village just south of the city of Worcester.²⁰ The copy is bound with a number of other items mostly dating from the second half of the 18th century and of rather diverse kinds. The volume was presumably put together in the 1780s. The copy now in the library of the University of Cardiff may also be considered part of this group, with its signature and date "C. Jones 1829". This copy has the remains of a label that was pasted over the imprint with the text fragment "*old by Joh*", which seems to refer to the music seller John Young: a complete label containing this fragment is found pasted over the imprint of a copy of Geminiani's *XII Solos for a Violin* (Walsh & Hare,

20 Martin Holmes, music librarian of the Bodleian Library, provided me with this information.

[1719], a copy produced around 1730).²¹ Since Young must have ended his activities as a music seller not long after 1730, the Cardiff copy of the *Prima parte* must have been sold by Young as a second-hand copy around 1730; Young is not listed among the subscribers. No particular musical interests are known for these later 18th-century owners. They may have been amateur musicians, of course, but such a quality is difficult to establish for people whose biographies are largely or completely unknown.

Nineteenth-century owners include Alfredo Piatti (1822–1902), Henry Watson (1846–1911) and the Charterhouse School in Godalming. Piatti was an Italian cellist who spent a great deal of his career in England and accumulated a large library of early music editions, including several Geminiani items. He possessed the copy formerly belonging to Robert Archbold. Henry Watson was a music teacher and pianist whose impressive collection of early music became, as the Henry Watson Library, part of the Central Library in Manchester. The Charterhouse School, finally, is a private boarding school first established in London in 1611 but that moved to Godalming, a town in Surrey, south-west of London, in 1872. Its copy of the *Prima parte* is bound together with other editions of concertos by Geminiani. The motto of the school, *Deo Dante Dedi* (“I gave because God gave”), is stamped in gold on the leather cover of the front board. Being musicians, Piatti and Watson can be called “professional collectors”. Why the Charterhouse School possessed these copies of Geminiani’s work is unknown. As a collection, it is in the non-professional category.

In the 20th century, several of the now extant copies were still, or once again, in private hands. The copy of the Charterhouse School came into the possession of one of its pupils, the music critic and composer Philip Radcliffe (1905–1986). Radcliffe was born in Godalming and attended Charterhouse School there. I assume that the school saw no reason to keep the copy in its possession. After Radcliffe’s death, it passed with his collection to the Rowe Music Library of King’s College in Cambridge. The copy now in the Western Bank Library of the University of Sheffield was previously owned by the musicologist William

21 F-Pn, D 11651.

Henry Hadow (1859–1937), who was vice-chancellor of the university from 1919 to 1930 and donated his collection to the university in 1930. The copy now in the Music Rare Books Room of the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, comes from the collection of the Belgian musicologist Jean-Auguste Stellfeld (1881–1952). His collection was acquired by the university in 1954.

The copy signed “C. Jones 1829” ended up, in 1950, via unknown routes, in the library of the BBC in London, a collection formed for BBC music productions. Its early editions were later transferred to other libraries, including the library of Cardiff University, where the *Prima parte* copy is now housed.

This overview does not include all 14 known extant copies, for some of which no provenance data are known at all. The given data, in any case, show two things in particular. First, early dissemination was an exclusively British affair: only from the time that Geminiani’s works became collector’s items could copies of the *Prima parte* be found outside Britain. Second, institutional collections, in particular university libraries, gradually but steadily grew in importance as holders of copies of Geminiani’s *Prima parte*. It must be acknowledged, however, that Geminiani’s own edition of the *Prima parte* was not the best-selling edition containing this music: the reprint published by John Walsh in 1726—just a few months after Geminiani’s edition—and reissued repeatedly until around 1760 was sold in massively greater numbers and made the works known in every corner of the British Isles.

The Sonatas opus 4

As a second example of the circulation of Geminiani’s work viewed in terms of the provenance of extant copies, we will discuss the Sonatas opus 4, published by the composer in 1739 as *Sonate a violino e basso, Opera quarta*.²² The first issue was published and sold by subscription only. Reissues were published by Geminiani himself in London in the 1740s, by John Johnson in 1751 and by Richard Welcker around 1775, and copies of these issues could be bought regularly from the composer or in music shops. They were all published from the original plates.

22 See Geminiani 2016 for further details.

One issue from these plates was produced and published in France, with the year 1740 and the names of Mme Boivin and Sieur Hue in the imprint; copies from this issue could be bought in Paris.

First owners of Geminiani's *Sonatas opus 4* known by name include the organist James Worgan (1715–1753; copy GB-Lbl) and the unknown “W. F. Rice”, who acquired his copy on 15 March 1759, presumably directly from Johnson's shop (copy GB-Lam). The French magistrate Charles Fournier de la Chapelle (1714–1779), who served many years in Haïti, may have acquired his copy of the Johnson reissue directly from the shop. Later in the century, it became part of the library of the *Menus Plaisirs du Roy* in Paris.²³

Several owners of the second generation are known, among them the musical antiquarian Richard Viscount Fitzwilliam (1745–1816; a Johnson copy, now in GB-Cfm), the Charterhouse organist Richard J.S. Stevens (1757–1837; a Johnson and a Welcker copy, now both in GB-Lam), Richard Allott, precentor in Armagh (Northern Ireland, 1783–1858; a 1739 copy, GB-Lbl), and the German-British violinist Georg(e) Griesbach (1757–1824, or perhaps his son George Adolphus Griesbach, 1801–1875?; a Johnson copy, GB-Lbl).

Nineteenth-century owners include the Swedish amateur musician and collector Johan Mazer (1790–1847; a 1739 copy now in S-Skma), the librarian of the Royal Academy of Music William Goodwin (1797–1876; a Johnson copy, GB-Lam), the Italian cellist Alfredo Piatti (1822–1901; a 1739 and a Johnson copy, I-BGi), the British Staffordshire aristocrat John Swynfen St Vincent Jervis (Jervis is the surname, 1824–1890; a 1739 copy, US-Wc), the American collector Joseph Drexel (1833–1888; a Johnson and a Welcker copy, US-NYp), the Italian nobleman Count Luigi Valdrighi (1837–1899; a 1739 copy, I-MOe), the Moravian violinist “Lady Hallé” (born Wilhelmina Neruda, 1839–1911, married to the pianist Charles Hallé; a Johnson copy that was donated to her by Alfredo Piatti, D-Mbs), Henry Watson (1846–1911, see above; a 1741–1747 copy, GB-Mp), the British collector Louis Thompson Rowe (1855–1927; a Johnson copy, GB-Ckc), and the Scottish musician, composer and editor Alfred Moffat (1866–1950; a 1741–1747

23 Now F-Pn, L 12204.

copy, US-Wc). All of these copies passed to public libraries, usually more or less immediately after the death of the owner.

Twentieth-century owners include the German–British collector Paul Hirsch (1881–1951; a 1739 copy, formerly Richard Allot’s copy, now GB-Lbl), the Italian composer and musicologist Gian Francesco Malipiero (1882–1973; a Johnson copy, I-Vcg), the Dutch–Austrian musicologist Anthony van Hoboken (1887–1983; a 1740 French issue copy, now A-Wn), the American composer Theodore Finney (1902–1976; 1739), and the world-famous violinist Yehudi Menuhin (1916–1999; 1741–1747). These copies are, like the copies for which 19th-century owners could be established, all found today in public collections.

Conclusion

Although provenance research does not present a complete picture of the dissemination of a particular edition of early music, it certainly provides a preliminary, approximate overview of its circulation through space and time. For such an overview, it is important and useful to collect data about every extant copy of an edition.

In the case of Geminiani’s works, it is evident from the data presented here that, during the first century of their availability, his publications were sold and were available first of all in Great Britain and Ireland. Within the context of the editions studied here, Charles Fournier de la Chapelle’s copy of the *Sonate, Opera quarta* is the only exception. Only around 1800 copies of editions of his work show up in continental collections, such as those of Johan Mazer in Stockholm. The 19th century witnessed a growing proportion of non-British owners of copies of Geminiani’s work, such as the Italian nobleman Count Luigi Valdrighi and the American collector Joseph Drexel. In the 19th century, libraries also began to collect early music editions, including those of Geminiani’s works. This trend continued in the 20th century and to the present, so that today most copies of editions of Geminiani’s works are housed in publicly accessible libraries. Yet, a fair number of them are still in the hands of private collectors all over the world.

For the researcher today, it is a happy circumstance if a previous owner has left his or her signature or stamp in a printed copy of Geminiani’s

work. It must be said, however, that that is the case for only a minority of the extant copies, albeit a large minority. Therefore, for many copies preserved today, there is no clue as to who possessed it in the 18th and 19th centuries. Libraries sometimes have information about how particular copies came into their possession, but this information is not available systematically.

There are further limitations to the study of provenances. It must be assumed that the extant copies of a particular edition represent only a small portion of what was sold or disseminated in other ways in the 18th century. About the lost copies, we know nothing. Auction catalogues of the 18th and 19th centuries may contain titles of the editions that draw our interest, but very often the descriptions are not specific enough to permit any conclusions to be drawn.

Sometimes, in addition, it is possible to infer the presence of copies in certain places in an indirect way. Some copies, for example, of several of Geminiani's works published in London must have been available on the Continent in the 18th century, not long after their publication in London. This can be concluded from the continental reprints of the Concertos after Corelli's Sonatas opus 5, the Concertos opuses 2 and 3, and the Sonatas opuses 1 and 4. The Landesbibliothek in Dresden holds two manuscripts of concertos and several printed editions of concertos that apparently were already there from the middle of the 18th century.²⁴ Locally written 18th-century manuscript copies of the Sonatas of 1716 are found in the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin and the Biblioteca del Conservatorio in Naples.²⁵ More examples of this kind could be given.

24 Notably the printed concerto volumes 2201-O-500 to 504 and 1-O-501, which must once have formed a set of bound partbooks, each with the respective parts of the Concertos opuses 2 and 3, the Concertos after Corelli's Sonatas opus 3, the *Prima* and *Seconda parte* of the Concertos after Corelli's Sonatas opus 5, and the *Select Harmony, Third Collection*. Details of printing and paper show that these copies were produced in the early 1740s. The manuscripts 2201-O-4 (with the Concerto opus 3 no. 1) and 2962-O-1 (with one of the *Select Harmony* concertos, ascribed to Matthew Dubourg) were also written in England in the early 1740s, as the paper shows.

25 Notably, the manuscripts D-B, Mus. MS 7331; D-B, Am. Bibl. 405 and 408; D-Dlb, Mus. 2201-R-1a and 1b, D-Dlb; Mus. 2201-R-9; I-Nc, MS [manoscritto] 22-6-18(1); I-Nc, M. S. [musica strumentale] 2622/b.

Geminiani also published a number of his works on the Continent. Two of these editions, the *Seconda parte* of the Concertos after Corelli's Sonate opus 5 (1729) and the *Dictionaire harmonique* (1756), had a reasonable dissemination, appropriately confined nearly completely to the Continent. Other editions, such as the French editions of the *Pièces de clavecin* (1743) and the *Sonates pour le violoncelle* [opus 6] (1747) and the Dutch editions of the *Sonates pour le violoncello* opus 5 and the *Sonates pour le violon* opus 5 (both 1747) had a very limited dissemination, resulting in one or two extant copies only.

The conclusion must be that, on one hand, provenance research provides valuable information about the dissemination of editions of early music, while, on the other, the results of such research are incomplete and can be used only with considerable caution.

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