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**STYLE AND INTERPRETATION IN THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY GERMAN
VIOLIN SCHOOL WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE THREE SONATAS
FOR PIANOFORTE AND VIOLIN BY JOHANNES BRAHMS**

Robin Wilson

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Philosophy

Sydney Conservatorium of Music
University of Sydney

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Statement of Originality

I declare that the research presented here is my own original work and has not been submitted to any other institution for the award of a degree.

Signed:.....

Date:.....

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ABSTRACT

From the mid nineteenth to early twentieth centuries the performance of Brahms's music was intricately bound with the performance style of artists within his circle. In violin playing Joseph Joachim (1831-1907) was the foremost exponent of the German violin school. The stylistic characteristics of this school, which included selective use of a pre-modern style of vibrato, prominent application of portamento, predominantly legato approach to bow strokes and the frequent and noticeable modification of tempo and rhythm, were considered indispensable expressive devices by Joachim, Brahms and others associated with this circle. While the use of such devices in the nineteenth century has been well documented in published research over the past 15 years or so, there is currently much contention about the *extent* to which such devices were employed. Importantly, in addition to written documentation and solo recordings, this thesis examines recordings of chamber ensembles—whose members had a connection to the German violin school and/or Brahms—that as yet have been little consulted as primary source evidence. Spectrogram analyses of many of these recordings provide definitive evidence of vibrato that was narrow in width, fast, and applied selectively. Other new evidence in my thesis strongly supports the hypothesis that portamento, tempo modification and rhythmic alteration were used to a much greater extent than today, and this significantly enhanced the rhetorical features in Brahms's music. A detailed Performance Edition with Critical Notes about Brahms's three Sonatas for Pianoforte and Violin Opp. 78, 100 and 108, applies the evidence elucidated throughout the thesis.

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ability to clarify and elucidate information have made this thesis possible. Neal was instrumental in igniting my fledgling curiosity of nineteenth-century performance practices and in encouraging me to take the plunge and explore this subject in depth. His remarkable ability as an inquisitive and skilled musician has led to many rewarding performance collaborations of Brahms's music that have been eye-opening and inspirational. I also wish to express my deepest gratitude to Professor Clive Brown at the University of Leeds who was instrumental in helping me gain a deeper understanding of this style and assimilate it into my own playing. The many coaching sessions and discussions were revelatory and continue to be a source of learning and inspiration while his wonderful hospitality and the time he sacrificed during my several visits was immensely generous. Rob Dyball at the University of Sydney gave countless hours of his time to assisting me in the presentation of spectrograms. I wish to thank him not only for his expertise but also for his patience and his willingness to offer encouraging and friendly assistance despite his busy schedule. My warmest thanks go to Stephen Yates for proof reading drafts and providing helpful comments and for his skilled work in preparing the Performance Edition. Finally, to my colleagues in Ironwood, Daniel Yeadon, Nicole Forsyth, Rachael Beesley and Neal Peres Da Costa, who have shared the challenges of this journey back into the nineteenth century. It has been and continues to be the greatest pleasure and honour to work with you all.

INTRODUCTION

During the nineteenth century the performance of Brahms's music was intricately bound with the performance style of artists who were closely associated with his circle. In string playing, Joseph Joachim (1831-1907)—Brahms's close friend and musical collaborator—was the leading exponent of the German violin school from the mid nineteenth century until his death. Like Brahms, this school sought to preserve the aesthetic ideals and performance traditions of the great Classical masters, such as Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn and Schumann. Although beyond the scope of this thesis, pianists within Brahms's circle, such as certain students of Clara Schumann, including pianists Fanny Davies (1861-1934), Ilona Eibenschutz (1872-1967), Adelina de Lara (1872-1961) and Carl Friedberg (1872-1955), as well as other pianists such as Etelka Freund (1879-1977) also embodied a manner of playing closely allied to the German Classical tradition. Brahms himself undoubtedly sanctioned the performance style of these pianists, alongside artists of the German violin school, such as Joachim.

However, the late nineteenth century saw the German Classical tradition waning in favour of the progressive compositions of Franz Liszt (1811-1866) and Richard Wagner (1813-1883). Similarly, the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw a dramatic shift in string performance style, and this had a profound effect on the interpretation of Brahms's music. In string playing, the shift began with the increasing prominence of the Franco-Belgian violin school during the second half of the nineteenth century. Led by Eugène Ysaÿe (1858-1931), it became by the turn of the twentieth century the dominant style of

playing. Central to the ethos of the Franco-Belgian violin school was the concept of the artist-as-hero. This notion often engendered an overt virtuosity (paralleled in the style of Liszt) that was antithetical to the ideals of Classical integrity upheld by Joachim, Brahms and others allied to the German Classical tradition. In their authoritative *Violin School* (1905) Joachim and Andreas Moser (1859-1925), openly express disdain for the Franco-Belgian style, proclaiming that players from that school ‘never bring out the inspired meaning of the work of art they presume to play.’¹

The dominance of the Franco-Belgian violin school during the early twentieth century meant that the manner of playing so closely associated with the performance of Brahms’s music up until the 1920s was largely forgotten. The German violin school had all but disappeared.² Furthermore, the burgeoning of the recording era in the early twentieth century resulted in violinists who favoured the Franco-Belgian style, as well as famous soloists such as Jascha Heifetz (1901-1987) and Fritz Kreisler (1875-1962) whose playing embodied other parallel traditions, being frequently recorded. These recordings exerted tremendous influence on subsequent generations of violinists. Tellingly, the playing on these recordings bares little resemblance to the style of Joachim and the German violin school.

At the same time, during the first half of the twentieth century, general elements of nineteenth-century performance style, such as tempo modification and rhythmic flexibility began to alter dramatically. Performances recorded in

¹ Joseph Joachim, and Andreas Moser, *Violinschule*, trans. Alfred Moffat, *Violin School in 3 Volumes* (Berlin: Simrock, 1905), iii, 33-34.

² Clive Brown, “Joachim’s violin playing and the performance of Brahms’s string music” in *Performing Brahms: Early Evidence of Performance Style*, ed. Michael Musgrave and Bernard Sherman (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 48.

the first three decades of the twentieth century often sound ad hoc or uncontrolled to the modern ear.³ The tempo commonly fluctuated significantly—speeding up and slowing down according to the implicit intensity of the music—or was so fast that rhythmic and/or notational accuracy was sometimes sacrificed. Seemingly, the aim was to create a rhetorical delivery producing heightened characterisation and delineation of moods and structure, rather than to focus on accuracy of detail or faithfulness to the letter of the score. Post WWI recordings show that, in general, tempi became slower while metric constancy, rhythmic precision and literal interpretation of the score were increasingly regarded as important hallmarks of competency. Furthermore, the degree and frequency of tempo fluctuation within a movement, particularly the speeding up of passages, diminished noticeably.⁴

Such changes in performance style throughout the twentieth century have undoubtedly contributed to the common perception nowadays that Brahms's music is inherently turgid or heavy. His compositional style is certainly often thickly textured, but it is largely a twentieth-century performing style that has skewed the picture. In Brahms's case at least, modern performance style is antithetical to the expressive underpinnings of his music. Harold Schonberg remarks about the 'glacial shift' during the twentieth century towards slower and stricter tempi and heavier sonority.⁵ These changes may well have developed due in part to the increase in the size of the orchestra since Brahms's

³ Robert Philip, *Early Recordings and Musical Style; Changing Tastes in Instrumental Performance 1900-1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 6.

⁴ Philip, *Early Recordings*, 35.

⁵ Bernard Sherman, "Postscript: On Historical Brahms Recordings", *The American Brahms Society Newsletter*, 14:2 (Fall 1996), 6.

day.⁶ However, this does not account for the fact that the shift occurred in the performance of Brahms's smaller scale works too. It is more likely that the dramatic move away from the playing style most familiar to Brahms during his lifetime has led to an 'overblown approach,' as pianist Murray Perahia (b. 1947) calls it, 'where the tempos are slow and the style portentous.'⁷

Throughout this thesis, reference is made to the fact that the playing style of today contrasts starkly with the playing heard on many of the early recordings consulted. Undoubtedly, the historically-informed performance (HIP) movement has had a significant influence on the playing style of certain repertoire, particularly, but not exclusively, music of the Baroque and Classical eras. Therefore it would be naïve to suggest that there is simply a 'generic' modern style that eschews all stylistically appropriate practices. However, there is a striking difference in the way particular expressive devices are commonly used today in the performance of Brahms's music (and other composers aligned to the mid- to late nineteenth-century German Classical tradition), compared with the playing of artists associated with the German violin school, preserved on early recordings. A quick survey of modern recordings (that is, recorded in the last 30 years) of Brahms's Violin Sonatas clearly evidences a predominant use of a continuously applied vibrato and an infrequent use of portamento.⁸ This

⁶ A typical German orchestra during the late nineteenth century consisted of about 36 strings (approximately 9 per instrument), nine woodwinds and nine brass. (see Norrington, R. "Performing Symphonies with period instruments," *The American Brahms Society Newsletter*, 11:1 (Spring 1993), 2. However, Norrington's total does not appear to account for the double basses, of which there were usually 6 to 8 during this period. This would push the total to 44 strings. The standard size of a symphony orchestra today is about 60 strings (16-14-12-10-8), 12 to 16 woodwinds and up to 22 brass.

⁷ Sherman, "Postscript: On Historical Brahms Recordings," 6.

⁸ For example: *Brahms Complete Works for Violin and Piano*, Nikolaj Znaider and Yefim Bronfman, RCA 88697-06106-2 (2007); *Johannes Brahms, Die Violinsonaten*, Augustin Dumay, Maria João Pires, Deutsche Grammophone, DG435800-2 (1992); *Brahms, The Three Sonatas for Violin and Piano*, Lydia Mordkovich, Gerald Oppitz, Chandos, CHAN 8517 (1987); *Johannes Brahms, Sonaten*

contrasts dramatically with the more infrequent application of vibrato and predominance of portamento heard on early recordings. In modern recordings tempo is certainly modified at times but rarely as often, and to the extent frequently heard on early recordings. Importantly, the degree to which particular expressive devices were employed in early recordings often sounds extreme in comparison to the playing on modern recordings (and for that matter in live performance). While we do not have a recording of Joachim performing any of Brahms's Violin Sonatas it is fair to assume that the playing style heard in his performances of his own *Romance* in C and Brahms's *Hungarian Dance* No. 1 exhibit practices that he would have employed in performances of Brahms's Violin Sonatas.

Written and recorded sources from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries make it abundantly clear that the performance style of the German violin school was central to the interpretation of Brahms's music during his lifetime. Recordings of Joachim and Marie Soldat-Roeger (1863-1955), reportedly his favourite pupil, provide evidence of a style that is vastly different from the playing style of today. Their vibrato is predominantly narrow and fast and applied ornamentally. They use portamento frequently and as well as a distinctly nuanced approach to sound with the bow. Additionally, rhythm and tempo are highly flexible. While these features are clearly discernible in early recordings, what is most important is the extent to which such expressive devices were used. Significantly, the written evidence often appears to support a

für Violine und Klavier Nr. 1, 2 und 3, Scherzo in c-moll, Ismere Then-Bergh, Roland Pröll, Polyphonia Tongesellschaft mbH Köln, 881230-907 (1988). Interestingly, the recording *Johannes Brahms Violin Sonatas*, Moderntimes_1800, Challenge Classics, CC72194 (2007), evidences a sparing use of vibrato. However, the distinct lack of portamento appears to align more with a conventional modern style.

more conservative approach to such practices than the recorded evidence reveals. For example, in their discussion of tempo modification, Joachim and Moser stress the ‘extreme caution’ with which ‘this liberty [tempo modification] must be used’ and that fluctuation in tempo should be ‘hardly perceptible.’⁹ However, in his 1903 recordings Joachim modifies tempo to an extent that is certainly very perceptible and even extreme by today’s standards. Of course it is almost impossible for us to understand what the expression ‘hardly perceptible’ might truly have signified to a musician of the nineteenth century. As Neal Peres Da Costa has shown, a face-value interpretation of such words is both erroneous and dangerous.¹⁰ Similarly, Brahms may appear to have advocated a conservative use of tempo modification if his written comments are taken on face value: “‘*Con discrezione*” should be added to that [tempo modification] as to many other things.’¹¹ However, eye-witness accounts by the English pianist Fanny Davies (1861-1934) of rehearsals of the Piano Trios Opp. 8 and 101 with Brahms, Joachim and the cellist Robert Hausmann (1852-1909) paint a very different picture of Brahms’s attitude towards rhythmic flexibility. Metronome markings annotated by Davies (and confirmed by Joachim) show that the trio made significant modifications of tempo.¹² Davies explains that Brahms’s tempo was ‘very elastic’ and that he would ‘linger not on one note alone, but on a whole idea, as if unable to tear himself away from its beauty.’¹³ The 1889 wax-cylinder recording of Brahms performing his own *Hungarian Dance* No. 1 also reveals

⁹ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, 16-17.

¹⁰ Neal Peres Da Costa, *Off the Record: Performing Practice in Romantic Piano Playing* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 76.

¹¹ Robert Pascall and Philip Weller, “Flexible tempo and nuancing in orchestral music: understanding Brahms’s view of interpretation in his Second Piano Concerto and Fourth Symphony” in *Performing Brahms*, 235.

¹² George Bozarth, “Fanny Davies and Brahms’s Late Chamber Music,” in *Performing Brahms*, 204-209.

¹³ Bozarth, “Fanny Davies and Brahms’s Late Chamber Music,” in *Performing Brahms*, 172.

significant tempo fluctuation as well as rhythmic freedom.¹⁴ Clearly, that which Brahms may have considered discreet ('con discrezione') in the addition of such expressive practices may by today's standards appear exaggerated. Furthermore, the fact that Brahms, and other commentators, felt compelled to warn against over indulgence may imply that more liberal use of tempo modification was prevalent at the time.

Despite irrefutable evidence that during his lifetime Brahms's music was interpreted in a manner significantly different from the present day, stylistically appropriate practices are generally not adopted in today's performances of repertoire by Brahms and other late-nineteenth-century composers associated with the German Classical tradition. This is partly because aspects of the nineteenth-century style, such as narrow selectively applied vibrato, frequent portamento, and rhythmic flexibility and tempo modification challenge notions of competency that are now hallmarks of the accomplished musician. It is also due to the erroneous notion that faithful adherence to notational markings in an Urtext constitute a complete rendering of the composer's expectations. Clive Brown argues that 'an Urtext may well embody the composer's intentions for the *notation*, but to make a naïve connection between this and the composer's intentions for the *performance* in nonsensical.'¹⁵ In the apt words of Bernard Sherman 'in order to be faithful to historical practice, we would have to be unfaithful to the score.'¹⁶ In other words, the modern perception of Urtext as sacrosanct neglects the fact that many performing traditions of the nineteenth

¹⁴ Jonathan Berger and Charles Nicols, "Brahms at the Piano; An Analysis of Data from the Brahms Cylinder." *Leonardo Music Journal* vol. 4 (1994), 22-30.

¹⁵ Brown, "Rediscovering the Language of Classical and Romantic Performance," *Early Music*, Vol XLI:1 (February 2013), 73.

¹⁶ Sherman, "Postscript: On historical Brahms recordings," 7.

century (and before) were not notated. Fritz Steinbach (1855-1916), who annotated scores of Brahms's symphonies after years of working closely with the composer, hints at this fact: 'though the composer's instructions are to be observed and studied precisely, pedantry can lead to the very opposite of a faithful reproduction.'¹⁷ Indeed earlier in the nineteenth century Louis Spohr (1784-1859) emphasised in his *Violin School* (1832) that playing the musical notation was merely achieving a 'correct style,' while a very particular way of applying portamento, vibrato, tempo modification and tone shading among many other things—unnotated in the score—were essential attributes of true artistry, which he felt would lead to a 'fine style.'¹⁸

While written and recorded evidence shows that Joachim and his disciples practised many of these expressive devices, there is contention among scholars today about the degree to which such devices were employed. The overarching purpose of this thesis is therefore to investigate further the available evidence to extend the knowledge in this area. Recent research, that is, in the last 15 years, has focussed on the performance attributes preserved in the solo recordings of Joachim and his students such as Soldat-Roeger and Leopold Auer (1845-1930). However, more detailed analysis is required for a deeper understanding of how, and the extent to which, these performers utilized such devices. Furthermore, the recordings of early-twentieth-century chamber ensembles, particularly those associated with the German violin school, have been largely neglected. In this

¹⁷Walter Blume, *Brahms in der Meininger Tradition: Seine Sinfonien und Haydn-Variationen in der Bezeichnung von Fritz Steinbach*, Stuttgart, 1933, trans. Jonathan Robert Pasternack, "Brahms in the Meiningen Tradition – His Symphonies and Haydn Variations According to the Markings of Fritz Steinbach, Edited by Walter Blume: A Complete translation with Background and Commentary" (DMA, University of Washington, 2004), 10.

¹⁸ Louis Spohr, *Violinschule* (Vienna, 1832), trans. C. Rudolphus, *Violin School* (London: Edwin Ashdown, 1847), 179.

thesis, I consider a selection primarily of pre-WWII ensemble recordings, of which some preserve practices that have significant implications for my research question (Table 1).

Quartet and Work Performed	Year Recorded
Rosé Quartet	
Beethoven, Quartet Op. 131	1927
Beethoven Quartet Op. 74	1927
Beethoven, Op. 18 No. 4	1927
Beethoven, Op. 18 No. 5 (ii, iii)	1921
Borodin, String Quartet No.2, (iii)	1921
Glazunov, Cinq Novellettes Op. 15	1921
Schubert D810 (ii, iii)	1927
Gewandhaus Quartet	
Beethoven, Quartet Op. 131	1916
Klingler Quartet	
Mendelssohn, String Quartet Op. 12	1922/23
Haydn, String Quartet Op. 64, No. 5	1912/13
Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 130	1912/13
Beethoven, Serenade Op. 25	1935/36
Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 127	1934/35
Mozart, String Quartet K. 421 (iii)	1912/13
Mozart, String Quartet K. 428 (iii)	1912/13
Schumann, String Quartet Op. 41, No. 3	1912/13
Schumann, String Quartet Op. 41, No. 2	1933/34
Cherubini, String Quartet Op. 12	1933/34
Reger, Serenade Op. 77a	1935/36
Reger, String, Trio Op. 77b	1935/36
Haydn, String Quartet Op. 76, No. 5	1933/34
Mozart, String Quartet K. 465	1922/23
Schubert String Quartet D810, (iii)	1911

Tchaikovsky String Quartet No. 3 (ii)	1935
Wendling Quartet	
Schubert, String Quintet D956 (Walter Reichardt, 2 nd Vlc.)	1934
Reger, String Quartet Op. 109	1934
Riele-Quering Quartet	
Haydn String Quartet No. 67	1939
Bohemian Quartet	
Dvorak, String Quartet Op. 96	1928
Dvorak, String Quartet Op.51 (ii)	1928
Dvorak, String Quartet Op.54 (i)	1928
Smetana String Quartet	1928
Suk String Quartet	1928
Grete Eweler Quartet	
Brahms, String Quartet Op. 67, <i>Andante</i> .	1922
Dvorak, String Quartet No. 12, (ii)	1924
Prisca Quartet	
Mozart, String Quartet K. 428	1935
Haydn String Quartet Op. 76 No. 3 (ii)	1927
Schubert String Quartet No.4 D. 46	1927
Brüder-Post Quartet	
Haydn String Quartet Op. 3 No. 5 (ii)	1925
Boccherini, String Quintet in E Op. 11 No.5 G275, (iii)	1921
Mozart String Quartet K. 575 (ii, iii)	1921
Beethoven String Quartet Op.18 No. 2 (ii)	1921
Schubert String Quartet No. 13 (ii)	1921
Strub Quartet	
Schubert String Quartet D.810 (iii)	1940
Haydn String Quartet Op 64 No.5 (ii), (iii)	1935
Elly Ney Piano Trio	
Beethoven Piano Trio Op.1 No. 3, <i>Menuetto and Trio</i> (Max Strub Vln., Ludwig Hoelscher, vlc.)	1935-
Haydn: Piano Trio in G Hob XV:25, <i>Rondo all'Ongarese</i> (Florizel von Reuter, vln.)	1938

Schumann, Piano Quartet Op. 47, <i>Allegro ma non troppo</i>	1935
(Florizel von Reuter vln., Walter Trampler, vla.)	
Streichquartett Deutschen Staatsoper Berlin	
Beethoven String Quartet Op 59 No. 3	1940
Reger String Quartet E-flat major, Op. 109	1938
Mairecker-Buxbaum Quartet	
Haydn String Quartet Op. 76 No. 5 (ii)	1922
Schubert String Quartet D.810 (iii)	1922

Table 1. Selected chamber ensemble recordings.

This extension of sources, and their in-depth analysis produces performing practice data that contribute to a more informed approach to the interpretation of Brahms's music. Undeniably, many practices considered indispensable as expressive tools during the nineteenth century are generally neglected in modern performance. It is highly likely that the modern text-literal approach robs Brahms's music of the expression considered so natural by musicians of his time.

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The main body of this thesis focuses on the practices of the German violin school, with frequent reference to the music of Brahms and in particular his three Sonatas for Pianoforte and Violin Opp. 78, 100 and 108. Additionally, I have produced a performance edition of these sonatas, with detailed notes, annotated with the evidence elucidated throughout the thesis. My annotations represent a personal interpretation based on the results of the careful and extensive research presented in this thesis, and serve as an example of the practical

application of acquired knowledge. Importantly, spontaneity was a significant part of the nineteenth-century performing ethos. My annotations are therefore solely a guide to realizing an informed interpretation, for which, in the end, a thorough understanding of the principles, practices and artistic parameters of the German violin school and nineteenth-century performance style are indispensable. The suggestions in my performance edition may be useful to those wishing to explore this manner of playing more deeply.

For the sake of convenience and practicality I have provided recorded examples only for the annotated musical examples and spectrograms. To allow the excerpt to be heard in context, I have included the entire movement from which the excerpt is taken and indicated the precise time on the CD track where the excerpt occurs.

Recordings made from my recitals with pianist Neal Peres Da Costa of the Sonatas Opp. 78 (recorded 19 October 2010), 100 and 108 (recorded 31 October 2012) are included (CD 1, tracks 1, 2 and 3 respectively). I have indicated excerpts from these recordings where appropriate, as aural examples of the written discussion. Importantly, these recordings represent my first attempts to assimilate the performance style of the German violin school into my own playing. In this way, the recordings represent snapshots of my research based performance. The rehearsal and performance process itself facilitated my greater emic understanding of the style than could be gleaned from the study of written and recorded evidence alone.

All translations from non-English language sources, unless otherwise stated or referenced, are my own.

Italian musical terms have only been italicized the first time they appear, or where they constitute the title of a movement or work. For clarity, the term *a tempo* is always italicized. The term *piano* is always italicized when its use refers to the dynamic instruction, but not when it refers to the musical instrument.

In the bibliography, the place of publication, publisher and date are included wherever possible.

CHAPTER ONE

Tempo Modification and Tempo Rubato

I recall an occasion when we [The Guarneri Quartet] were rehearsing in Paris with Arthur Rubinstein. He was practicing the Scherzo of the Fauré Piano Quartet in G minor. I drew his attention to the fact that he was playing it much more slowly than the metronome marking. He turned the metronome on, checked the tempo, and said, “Oh, yes, but that’s only for the first bar.”¹⁹

David Soyer, *The Art of Quartet Playing*, 1986.

Although the term ‘tempo modification’ was coined as late as 1887 in Wagner’s essay entitled *On Conducting*,²⁰ Brahms himself acknowledged shortly afterwards that ‘elastic tempo is not a new invention.’²¹ Indeed, tempo modification was effected by two methods, both of which were in existence before the term came into use:

a) *Tempo modification*, in which the overall pulse of all parts are altered simultaneously via an *accelerando* or *rallentando*, or a sudden change of tempo. This generally applies to larger motivic units, whole phrases or sections, but can also include single rests or notes.

b) *Tempo rubato*, in which a single or several notes are altered without disturbing the underlying pulse. Thus, the melodic line is rendered in a rhythmically flexible manner while the accompanying part remains more or less strictly in time. The

¹⁹ David Blum, *The Art of Quartet Playing* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1986), 90.

²⁰ Richard Wagner, *Wagner on Conducting*, (1st ed. London: William Reeves, 1887; repr., New York: Dover, 1989), 21.

²¹ George Henschel, *Personal Recollections of Johannes Brahms* (Boston: Gorham Press, 1907), 78-79.

implication is that any time taken is given back. In reality, however, the overall tempo may fluctuate therefore blurring the distinction between tempo rubato and tempo modification.²² Tempo rubato often involves rhythmic alteration, resulting in a redistribution of note values and rhythmic stress.

Before considering these two types of tempo modification, it is necessary to clarify further the use of the term 'rubato.' Richard Hudson explains that during the second half of the eighteenth century the term 'rubato' referred to tempo rubato. Yet, by the first half of the nineteenth century tempo rubato could also include tempo modification, as both devices appear to have been practised.²³ In his *Violin School* (1832) Spohr distinguishes between the two. Tempo rubato is defined as a 'slight delay on single or more notes' with 'the accompaniment continuing its quiet, regular movement.'²⁴ According to Spohr this differs from places where the solo performer 'must neither be hurried nor retarded by the accompaniment; he should be instantly followed wherever he deviates a little from the time.'²⁵ By the late nineteenth century publications tend to define 'rubato' as tempo modification.²⁶ Since the late nineteenth century, the term's meaning appears to have evolved further. Definitions focus on the concept of 'robbed' time and restitution. The first edition of *A Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (1883) gives the 'traditional' definition:

²² Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice 1750–1900* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 98.

²³ Richard Hudson, *Stolen Time: The History of Tempo Rubato* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 1.

²⁴ Spohr, *Violin School*, 231-2.

²⁵ Spohr, *Violin School*, 232.

²⁶ Hudson, *Stolen Time*, 1.

This consists of a slight *ad libitum* slackening or quickening of the time in any passage, in accordance with the unchangeable rule that in all such passages any bar in which this licence is taken must be of exactly the same length as the other bars in the movement, so that if the first part of the bar be played slowly, the other part of the bar must be taken quicker than the ordinary time of the movement to make up for it; and *visa versa*.²⁷

Almost a century later, the fifth edition of *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (1976) is entirely contradictory:

The rule has been given and repeated indiscriminately that the 'robbed' time must be 'paid back' within the bar. That is absurd, because the bar-line is a notational, not a musical matter. But there is no necessity to pay back even within the phrase.²⁸

By 1980, the entry for *rubato* in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* clearly states that there is no restoration of any time taken, indicating that, by the late twentieth century, *rubato* generally came to mean a general slowing down or speeding up of the pulse (i.e. essentially the same meaning as tempo modification). Furthermore, there is no mention of a rhythmically freely rendered melodic line over a strict accompaniment: 'In current usage, *rubato* implies some distortion of the strict mathematical tempo applied to one or more notes, without restoration.'²⁹ Notably, by distorting the tempo, it is conceivable that the notated rhythm may, technically, be distorted too.

²⁷ J. A. F. Maitland, "Rubato," in *A Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 1st ed., ed. Sir George Grove (London: Macmillan and Co., 1883), 188.

²⁸ A. H. Fox Strangways, "Rubato," in *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 5th ed., ed. Eric Blom (Hong Kong: MacMillian Press Ltd. 1976), vii, 290.

²⁹ *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 6th ed., ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 1980), 292.

It appears that tempo modification (as I have defined it at the beginning of this chapter) became increasingly prevalent throughout the nineteenth century.³⁰ In treatises by Carl Czerny (1839), Theodor Kullak (1858), Mathis Lussy (1874), and Adolph Christiani (1885), rules for *accelerando* and *ritardando* remain largely similar. Generally, accelerandi were sanctioned during crescendi and rising tessitura (pitch) to reflect a heightening of intensity, while ritardandi reflected a marked decrease in intensity. In their *Violin School*, Joachim and Moser consider tempo modification ‘the most important factor of musical performance’ and that without it the effect of musical expression ‘would be one of deadly dullness.’³¹ However, like Spohr, they advise the ‘extreme caution [with which] this liberty must be used.’³²

Walter Blume’s (1883-1933) document written between 1914-1918 entitled *Brahms in the Meiningen Tradition – His Symphonies and Haydn Variations According to the Markings of Fritz Steinbach* illustrates the importance of tempo modification in Brahms’s music.³³ It also suggests places in his music where tempo modification may be most appropriate. Blume, a student of Fritz Steinbach (1855-1916), describes Steinbach’s close association with Brahms: ‘Steinbach grew into the composer’s [Brahms] anointed interpreter. Everything that Steinbach undertook relating to Brahms’s works, had Brahms’s sanction, therefore his score markings are to be recognized as completely authentic.’³⁴

In his introduction Blume comments on the decline of tempo modification since Brahms’s time:

³⁰ *The New Grove*, 6th ed., 376.

³¹ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 16.

³² Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 16.

³³ Pasternack, “Brahms in the Meiningen Tradition,” 94.

³⁴ Pasternack, “Brahms in the Meiningen Tradition,” 6.

In today's music making there is a preference for strict tempo and rhythm. Themes become rhythmically two-dimensional. This kind of music making is boring, even if it is dazzling and virtuosic, because it is completely devoid of tension. Thus a microscopically refined feeling for tempo modification must not be forgotten. Tempo modifications protect the rhythm from becoming too motoric and the melody from becoming too lethargic. Expressed positively: tempo modifications are essential in giving rhythm and melody musical life.³⁵

In Blume's document, the frequent instances of tempo modification marked by Steinbach in Brahms's Symphonies appear to fit within one of the following categories formulated by me:

Increasing tempo:

1. Defining character of a theme
2. Heightening a climax
3. Endings
4. Metric displacement
5. Note/motive repetition

Decreasing tempo:

1. Defining character of a theme
2. To creating tension
3. To add weight
4. To provide respite from intensity

³⁵ Pasternack, "Brahms in the Meiningen Tradition," 3.

These loci illustrate that Steinbach used tempo modification in Brahms's music for both structural and expressive purposes. Most instances, such as increasing the tempo to reflect a heightening of intensity (and vice-versa), accord with the aforementioned treatises of the period. Unfortunately, Steinbach did not give metronome markings for these tempo modifications. Therefore the degree of modification that Steinbach practised remains speculative.

Evidence of Brahms's views on tempo modification can be gleaned from a variety of correspondence. In a letter to Joachim in 1886, Brahms's remarks about his own conducting of his Second Piano Concerto and Fourth Symphony are telling: 'I cannot do enough pushing forward or holding back, so that passionate or calm expression is produced more or less as I want it.'³⁶ Yet Brahms pencilled into his rehearsal score only tempo changes at largely structural points in the movement, rather than smaller or localised fluctuations of tempo.³⁷ Nevertheless, there are many reasons (explored later) for believing that these smaller fluctuations took place and were considered indispensable.

Brahms seems to have preferred a compromise between the flexible style of the conductor Hans von Bülow (1830-1894) and the stricter approach of Hans Richter (1843-1916).³⁸ The composer Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924) relates an incident that indicates Brahms's dislike of Richter's rigidity:

His [Brahms's] tempo was very elastic. He loathed having his slow movements played in an inexorable four-square. On one occasion at a performance of his C minor Symphony he was sitting in a box next to a friend of mine, and in the Andante, which was being played with

³⁶ Musgrave and Sherman, *Performing Brahms*, 224.

³⁷ Musgrave and Sherman, *Performing Brahms*, 221.

³⁸ Pascall and Weller, "Flexible tempo and nuancing in orchestral music," in *Performing Brahms*, 220-240.

metronomic stiffness, he suddenly seized his neighbour by the shoulder and ejaculating 'Heraus!' ['Outside!'] literally pushed him out of the concert-room.³⁹

It is possible that Brahms may have exercised and expected greater freedom in chamber music involving the piano than in other repertoire. In a letter to Clara Schumann, Brahms explained that 'on the piano, because of the lighter sound, everything is played decidedly livelier, faster and more forgiving in tempo.'⁴⁰ Davies, who witnessed many rehearsals with Brahms playing his own chamber music, commented on his rhythmic and tempo flexibility:

Brahms's manner of interpretation was free, very elastic and expansive; a strictly metronomic Brahms is unthinkable. He would linger on not one note alone but a whole idea, as if unable to tear himself away from its beauty. He would prefer to lengthen a bar or phrase rather than spoil it by making up the time into a metronomic bar. This expansive elasticity was one of the chief characteristics of Brahms's interpretation.⁴¹

Fanny Davies annotated metronome markings for Brahms's Piano Trio in B major Op. 8,⁴² as well as for his Piano Trio in C minor Op. 101, after attending a rehearsal by Brahms, Joachim and cellist Robert Hausmann (1852-1909) in 1887.⁴³ Importantly, these annotations were confirmed with Joachim after the rehearsal. They highlight instances of tempo fluctuation not notated by Brahms

³⁹ Charles Villiers Stanford, *Pages From an Unwritten Diary* (London, 1914), 202.

⁴⁰ 'Johannes Brahms to Clara Schumann', 25 April 1861, trans. Styrá Avins, *Johannes Brahms, Life and Letters*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 232.

⁴¹ Bozarth, "Fanny Davies and Brahms's Late Chamber Music," in *Performing Brahms*, 172.

⁴² Davies performed this trio with Joachim in 1891 and 1896.

⁴³ Bozarth, 'Fanny Davies and Brahms's late chamber music' in *Performing Brahms*, 204-209. Bozarth notes that Davies inscription of 1890 on the manuscript is incorrect as it was in fact 1887 that Joachim, Hausmann and Brahms gathered in Baden-Baden where the rehearsal took place. The fact that this inscription was added in 1929, several years after the event occurred, accounts for Davies confusion.

that certainly underpin the ‘very elastic and expansive’ tempo that Davies described (see above). The metronome marks for the Piano Trio in B major appear most telling in this regard. Within the first 76 bars the tempo increases from minim = 60 to 80. This is certainly a considerable accelerando when compared to other performances made during the second half of the twentieth century (Fig. 1).

Brahms, Piano Trio in B major, Op. 8. i) <i>Allegro con brio, b. 1-76.</i> (All MM in minims)	Fanny Davies annotations (1887)	Oistrakh, Knushevitsky, Oborin (1951)	Hess, Stern, Casals (1952)	Katchen, Suk, Starker (1968)	Borodin Trio (1982)	Beaux Arts Trio (1986)	Vienna Piano Trio (1993)	Florestan Trio (1997)	Guarneri Trio Prague (2007)
		(13:24)	(16:00)	(14:58)	(15:05)	(15:09)	no repeat (10:46)	(14:51)	(15:05)
Opening tempo	60	72	60	60	63	56	63	60	69
Bar 62	80	76	63	69	66	66	72	66	72
Bar 68	68	76	63	69	66	72	69	66	72
Bar 71-75	Gradual <i>ritenuto</i> to 60	76	60	69	66	69	69	66	72
Bar 76	60	60	50	56	60	58	60	60	63

Figure 1. Tempo fluctuation in Brahms Piano Trio in B major, first movement, bars 1 to 76.

Some written texts give the impression that tempo modification was used extensively (both generally and frequently) throughout the nineteenth century as a means of heightening and relaxing the expression of a phrase. However, these do not inform of the extent to which (the rate of change) that tempo was modified. For this, sound recordings provide a clearer picture of how much tempo was modified.

Recorded Evidence

Solo recordings

The recordings of musicians closely associated with Brahms's circle reveal a greater degree of tempo modification than is practised today. A good case in point is a recording by the tenor Gustav Walter (1834-1910), which exhibits a Brahmsian 'expansive elasticity.' Walter premiered Brahms's Lied *Feldeinsamkeit* (*The Loneliness of the Field*) with Brahms playing the piano in 1883 (Fig. 2).⁴⁴ Given such a close connection to Brahms, it is likely that Walter's 1904 recording of *Feldeinsamkeit* preserves many features of a Brahmsian interpretation.⁴⁵ Throughout the performance Walter's tempo is elastic with particularly broad *allargandos* at the peak of each phrase.⁴⁶ The tempo begins at crotchet = 60 in bar 1 and slows to approximately crotchet = 40 at the climax of the phrase between bars 6 and 8. There is a dramatic fluctuation of tempo when compared with other recorded versions from the twentieth century, such as that of Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (1925-2012) and Daniel Barenboim's (b.1942) 1978 recording in which the tempo remains at a constant crotchet = 44 throughout the same section.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Lucien Stark, *A Guide to the Solo Songs of Johannes Brahms* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 263. The song is translated as 'In Summer Fields' by David Mason, *A Performer's Guide to Music of the Romantic Period*, ed. Anthony Burton (London: ABRSM, 2002), 83.

⁴⁵ From an HMV transfer of a recording made in 1904, not currently available as noted in Burton, *A performer's Guide to Music of the Romantic Period*, 110.

⁴⁶ David Mason, 'Singing,' in *A Performer's Guide*, 86.

⁴⁷ Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (baritone) and Daniel Barenboim (piano), *Brahms Lieder*, CD (Hamburg: Deutsche Grammophon 447 501-2), 1978.

J. Brahms. Op. 86, No. 2

Langsam
Slowly

VOICE

As here I lie a -
Ich ru - he still in

PIANO

p

lone, a - mid the grass, Where gold - en bees des - poil the scent - ed -
ho - hen grü - nen Gras, und sen - de lan - ge mei - nen Blick nach

clo - ver, the clo - ver, I
o - ben, nach o - ben, von

Figure 2. Brahms, *Feldeinsamkeit* Op. 86 No. 2, bars 1 to 9.⁴⁸ [CD 2 Track 1: 00:00–00:48].

The baritone George Henschel (1850-1934)—a close friend and colleague of Brahms—sang the solo of the *Triumphlied* (*Triumphal Hymn*) Op. 55 (for double chorus and baritone solo) with Brahms conducting in 1876.⁴⁹ Brahms

⁴⁸ Johannes Brahms, *Feldeinsamkeit* Op. 86 No. 2, trans. Percy Pinkerton (London: Augener, 19?).

⁴⁹ Henschel, *Personal Recollections of Johannes Brahms*, 18.

apparently admired Henschel's voice and gave many recitals with him.⁵⁰ In a recording from 1913 of Henschel singing Schumann's *Die Beiden Grenadiere* (*The Two Grenadiers*),⁵¹ the tempo is altered frequently throughout (in a similar fashion to the aforementioned performance by Walter) to heighten the implicit urgency or respite of the melodic line.

Other solo historical recordings provide further evidence of frequent tempo modification that sound exaggerated by today's standards. Joachim's 1903 recording of his *Romance* in C begins at crotchet = 102, but fluctuates between approximately crotchet = 108 and crotchet = 80.⁵² While his slower tempi accord with notated *ritenuti*, there is a considerable degree of unnotated tempo modification, such as the significant accelerando from bars 54 to 61. Throughout, Joachim's approach to tempo is certainly 'elastic.'

Soldat-Roeger's recording (c.1926) of the first movement from Mozart's Violin Concerto in A major K. 219 demonstrates a degree of tempo modification that was not generally practised from the mid twentieth century onwards. Interestingly, Josef Wolfsthal (1899-1931), a German violinist and pupil of Carl Flesch (1873-1944), also used significant tempo modification in the first movement of this concerto, recorded in 1928, two years after Soldat-Roeger's performance.⁵³ Wolfsthal begins bar 55 at a distinctly slower tempo than the opening theme, and then accelerates back to the opening tempo at bar 60. Figure 3 gives a comparison of metronome markings for recordings made throughout the twentieth century. As the most significant tempo changes in Soldat-Roeger's

⁵⁰ Sleeve notes in *Sir George Grove; The Crystal Palace 1851-1936*, SYMPOSIUM 1251, 2001, 13.

⁵¹ *Sir George Grove; The Crystal Palace 1851-1936*, track 7.

⁵² David Milsom, *Theory and Practice in Late-Nineteenth Century Violin Performance* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 253-254.

⁵³ [CD 2 Track 3: 02:36-03:02].

recording take place between bars 46 and 71, this section has been used for comparison.

Mozart Violin Concerto K.219	Marie Soldat-Roeger (1926)	Josef Wolfsthal (1928)	Wolfgang Schneiderhan (1952)	Arthur Grumiaux (1961)	Isaac Stern (1963)	Henryk Szeryng (1966)	Iona Brown (1982)	Oskar Shumsky (1983)	Kim Sjögren (1984)	Julia Fischer (2006)
i) <i>Allegro aperto</i> (All MM in crotchets)	(<i>tutti's</i> cut) (9:03)	(9:43)	(9:31)	(9:20)	(9:36)	(9:43)	(9:46)	(10:16)	(10:28)	(9:32)
Bar 46	126	132	134	138	132	126	120	126	120	138
Bar 49-50	126 <i>accel.</i> to 144	132 <i>accel</i> to 138	134	138	132	126 <i>accel.</i> to 130	120	126	120	138
Bar 51	126	132-138	134	138	132	126	120	126	120	138
Bar 55	112	120	126	132	126	126	120	126	116	132
Bar 57-58	112	120 <i>accel</i> to 126 (b.21-23 132)	126	132	126	126	120	126	116	132
Bar 63 beat 2	112	116	120	128	126	126	116	120	116	132
Bar 64 beat 3	132	126	120	128	126	126	116	120	116	132
Bar 65 beat 2	112	116	120	128	126	126	116	120	116	132
Bar 66 beat 3	132	126	120	124	126	126	116	120	116	132
Bar 67 beat 2	108	116	120	128	126	126	112	120	116	132
Bar 68	112	116	120	126	126	120	116	116	112	126
Bar 70-71	120 <i>accel.</i> to 132	120 <i>accel</i> to 138	120 <i>accel.</i> to 126	138	126 <i>accel.</i> to 132	120 <i>accel.</i> to 126	120	116 <i>accel.</i> to 126	116	132

Figure 3. Metronome markings, Mozart Violin Concerto in A Major, K. 219, first movement, bars 46 to 71.

From the data in Figure 3 it is evident that while some tempo modification is present in all selected recordings, none show such marked changes as Soldat-Roeger's and Wolfsthal's interpretations. Of particular note in both recordings is the significant decrease in tempo at bar 55 and the alternation of two different tempi between bars 63 and 67, where the slower tempo helps to highlight the more expressive, lyrical half of the phrase (Fig. 4). These tempo fluctuations indicate a more flexible approach to tempo in the early twentieth century than was the case in recordings made after WWII.

(Allegro Aperto)

The image displays a musical score for the first movement of Mozart's Violin Concerto in A major, K. 219, titled "(Allegro Aperto)". The score is presented in four systems of music, each with specific annotations for tempo fluctuations and performance style. The first system (measures 59-112) includes markings for "TUTTI" and "SOLO", with dynamics of *f* and *p*. The second system (measures 64-112) features alternating dynamics of *f* and *p*, with a note "(ma espr.)" under the final *p* marking. The third system (measures 69-120) is marked "(brillante)" and includes an acceleration instruction "120 accel." indicated by a dashed line. The fourth system (measures 71-132) shows a trill ("tr") and continues with the *f* dynamic. The score is in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#).

Figure 4. Mozart, Violin Concerto in A major K. 219. Annotated metronome markings indicate Soldat-Roeger's tempo fluctuation. (CD 2 Track 2: 01:57–02:23).

Ensemble Recordings

Particularly striking and revealing are the recordings of the Brüder-Post Quartet. In the second movement from Haydn's String Quartet Op. 3 No. 5 (recorded 1925), the first violinist plays a solo melody accompanied by pizzicato figurations from the other string players. The regular quaver rhythm and percussive quality of the pizzicato give a clear indication of the pulse, so any tempo fluctuation can clearly be heard. Furthermore, the precision of ensemble

in the pizzicato chords during moments of tempo modification indicates that such modification was premeditated and rehearsed (Fig. 5).

The image displays a musical score for a string quartet, consisting of four staves: Violin I (Vn. I), Violin II (Vn. II), Viola (Va.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The score is divided into four systems, each starting with a measure number: 25, 31, 37, and 43. The first system (measures 25-30) features a *mf* dynamic marking. The second system (measures 31-36) includes dynamic markings of *dim.*, *pp*, and *p*, and is marked with a 'C' in a box. The third system (measures 37-42) includes *mf*, *dolce*, and *p* markings, and is marked with a 'D (tempo I)' in a box. The fourth system (measures 43-48) includes an *espress.* marking and is marked with an 'E' in a box. The score also contains various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic hairpins.

49 (—————)

Vn. I *pp* *p*

Vn. II *pp* *p*

Va. *pp* *p*

Vc. *pp* *p*

55 *dim.* *mp* **F** (a tempo)

Vn. I *dim.* *mp*

Vn. II *dim.* *mp*

Va. *dim.* *mp*

Vc. *dim.* *mp*

61 *p* *p*

Vn. I *p* *p*

Vn. II *p* *p*

Va. *p* *p*

Vc. *p* *p*

67 *rit.* *dim.* *pp*

Vn. I *dim.* *pp*

Vn. II *dim.* *pp*

Va. *dim.* *pp*

Vc. *p* *dim.* *pp*

Figure 5. Haydn String Quartet Op. 3 No. 5, second movement, Brüder-Post Quartet.⁵⁴ [CD 2 Track 4: 01:09–03:45].

⁵⁴ Joseph Haydn, *Quartet in F major for 2 violins, viola and cello Op. 3 No. 5*, ed. Wilhelm Altmann (London: Eulenburg, c.1969), 10-12.

The movement begins at crotchet = 88. The ends of structural sections, such as at bars 33, 41 and 58, are defined with pronounced *rallentandi*. Here, the speed decreases considerably to crotchet = 63 (bar 19), crotchet = 66 (bar 33), crotchet = 63 (bar 41) and crotchet = 56 (bar 58, where notably, the key changes to G minor). The tempo is also slackened at bar 47 seemingly to reflect the more expressive quality of the melody line (which includes the seventh and flattened second of the A major tonality sounded in the accompaniment). *Accelerandi* are made when chords on the dominant increase the harmonic tension, for example in bars 27 and 28 and bars 36 and 37. From bar 68, a *ritenuto* is drawn out over the last five bars, the final tempo being crotchet = 52. Such a prolonged *ritenuto* is extreme by today's standards. It is also worth noting that in bars 34 to 35 and 56 to 58 the first violin plays an octave below the notated pitch in the score. In addition, the players' articulation markings in the recorded performance do not always correspond to the markings in the printed score. While the apparent disregard for such details seemingly suggests a more casual approach to our modern text-literal approach, it is impossible to know just what edition the quartet used (and therefore what articulation markings they were reading) at the time of the recording.

An excerpt from the Bohemian Quartet's recording (1928) of the third movement from Smetana's String Quartet No. 1 in E minor also reveals considerable freedom of tempo and rhythm. Between bars 76 and 82 the semiquavers marked *pizzicato* in the cello part, are played distinctly unevenly within each bar. The cellist tends to linger on the first and last two semiquavers of each ascending group whilst playing the middle two semiquavers faster. At bar 76 the tempo commences at approximately quaver = 66 and gradually

accelerates to quaver = 96 by bar 82, followed by a pronounced *ritenuto* and return to the slower tempo of quaver = 66 at bar 85. The forward impetus—accompanied by a gradual *crescendo*—of this *accelerando* increases the expressive quality of the passage by enhancing the urgency implicit in the harmony (Fig. 6).

76 *accel* *dolce cantando*
p
pizz.
p poco marcato

78

80
f cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.

82 *rall.*
arco

85
P *tranquillo*
p *tranquillo*
mf *espress.*
P *tranquillo*

Figure 6. Smetana String Quartet No. 1, third movement, bars 76 to 87, Bohemian Quartet.⁵⁵ [CD 2 Track 5: 06:31-07:32].

A comparison of the Gewandhaus's (1916) and Rosé Quartet's (1927) recordings of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 131 shows that these two ensembles modified tempo in similar places (Fig. 7).

<i>Beethoven String Quartet Op.131, (vii)</i>	Gewandhaus Quartet (1916)	Rosé Quartet (1927)
<i>Bar</i>	<i>M.M. (minim)</i>	<i>M.M. (minim)</i>
1	120	96
5	120	120
21	112	116
30	104	112
40	120	120
56	84	120
78	120	126
93	132	126-132
124	120	accelerando
136 accelerando		138
140	138	144
144	144	ritenuto

⁵⁵ Bedrich Smetana, *From My Life: Quartet for 2 violins, viola and Violoncello in E minor* (London: Ernst Eulenburg, n.d.), 33-34.

<i>145 ritenuto</i>		132
<i>154</i>	116	120
<i>160</i>	120	126

Figure 7. Beethoven String Quartet Op. 131, seventh movement bars 1 to 160. Tempo modification made by the Gewandhaus and Rosé Quartets.

Both ensembles maintain a similar tempo of $\text{minim} = 120$ for the march-like principal theme. Both decrease the tempo during the lyrical interlude at bar 21. The initial tempo is resumed with the return of the opening material at bar 40. Both ensembles make an *accelerando* from bars 78 to 117 during which the tessitura rises from bars 86 to 93. At bar 136, with the *crescendo* and rising tessitura, both ensembles again make a marked *accelerando* (Fig. 8).

121

accel. - -

Musical score for measures 121-127. The score consists of four staves. The first and third staves are marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The tempo marking *accel. - -* is positioned at the top right of the system.

128

Musical score for measures 128-132. The score consists of four staves. The first staff is marked with the instruction *non legato*.

133

Musical score for measures 133-138. The score consists of four staves. The first staff is marked with *non legato*. The second, third, and fourth staves are marked with *cresc.* (crescendo).

139

Musical score for measures 139-144. The score consists of four staves. The first, second, and third staves are marked with the instruction *non legato*.

Figure 8. Beethoven String Quartet Op. 131, seventh movement, bars 121 to 168
 Gewandhaus Quartet and Rosé Quartets.⁵⁶ [Gewandhaus, CD 2 Track 6: 02:10-02:58;
 Rosé, CD 2 Track 7: 02:07-02:51].

⁵⁶ Ludwig van Beethoven, *String Quartet Op. 131*, seventh movement (Eulenburg: London, 1970), 43-45.

The similarity between these two ensembles' tempo modifications suggests strongly that such performance choices were based on matters of thematic and harmonic structure. Both ensembles enhance the inherent rhythmic and melodic characteristics of the thematic material through contrasting tempi, while the increasing urgency or relaxation implicit in the underlying harmony is defined through *accelerandi* and *ritenuti*.

Many other instances of marked increases of tempo are evident in early recordings of chamber ensembles. Turning again to the Bohemian Quartet, the tendency is clearly to increase the tempo during marked crescendi. In the second movement of Smetana's String Quartet No. 1 (recorded 1928) dramatic *accelerandi* occur at bars 27, 75 and 97. In the first movement a gradual but extreme *accelerando* can be heard between bars 136 (minim = 80) and 165 (minim = 100). In the Brüder-Post's recording (1925) of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 18 No. 2, the *Allegro* (bars 26 to 58) within the *Adagio* second movement increases in speed from beginning to end. The opening tempo is crotchet = 126 with a continuous acceleration to crotchet = 160 by bar 58. Not only is this amount of tempo modification eye opening, but also the tempo reached by bar 58 creates a frenetic effect that is extreme by modern standards. The Grete Eweler Quartet uses subtle fluctuations of tempo throughout their recording (1922) of the second movement in Brahms's String Quartet Op. 67. The opening two bars begin at a tempo of approximately crotchet = 44. When the melody proper begins in bar 3 the tempo is immediately faster (crotchet = 48) leading to a slight further increase at the peak of the phrase in bar 5 (crotchet = 50). The tempo decreases to crotchet = 44 at bar 12, corresponding with the arrival of flattened minor harmony (moving from C major to B-flat minor) and

change to *piano* dynamic. At the climax of the movement through bars 87 and 88, the considerable *accelerando* from crotchet = 52 to crotchet = 63 heightens the effect of the *crescendo* indicated in the score. To modern ears this is a significant acceleration over a short space of time in a slow movement.

Instances where tempo is decreased for expressive or structural purposes are also a feature on many early recordings. Often, these highlight a harmonic change or relaxation of rhythmic impetus. From bars 50 to 60 of the *Finale* from Haydn's Piano Trio Hob. XV: 25, the Elly Ney Trio (recorded 1938 with violinist Florizel von Reuter) alternates between faster and slower tempi, adding to the urgency and excitement of the movement. At bar 213 in the first movement of Schumann's Piano Quartet Op. 47 (recorded 1935), the Elly Ney Trio significantly decrease the tempo, which has the effect of emphasising the key change as well as giving weight to the chords.

Karl Klingler (1879-1971), a favourite student of Joachim's from 1897-1900,⁵⁷ was the first violinist of the Klingler Quartet. They make frequent decreases in tempo throughout their recordings. In the tenth movement *Allegro vivace e disinvolto* from Beethoven's Serenade in D Op. 25 (recorded 1935/36), the tempo is suddenly much slower at bar 201 four bars before the *presto* coda, decreasing from crotchet = 120 to crotchet = 96. The *presto* itself is played with a slight *accelerando* throughout. The third movement *Largo cantabile e mesto* from Haydn's String Quartet Op. 76 No. 5 (recorded 1912/13) reveals a highly flexible approach to tempo. The expressive melody in the first violin, which begins at approximately crotchet = 44, is played with considerable rhythmic freedom. A

⁵⁷ Tully Potter, sleeve notes to *The Klingler Quartet: The Joachim Tradition*, Testament SBT 2136, 4.

faster, more regular pulse of crotchet = 48 follows at bar 10 in response to the regular crotchet accompaniment in the lower strings and lively dotted figuration in the first violin. Many small-scale changes of tempo occur, often in response to a change in a printed dynamic. For example from bars 27 to 28 where *forte* is printed, the tempo increases to crotchet = 52 but quickly slows to crotchet = 44 throughout bar 29 in response to the printed decrescendo. The tempo continues to decrease to crotchet = 34 at the cadence at bar 33. The pronounced slower tempo of crotchet = 34 is also taken at the corresponding cadential passage (bars 87 to 89) of the same movement. The first movement *Maestoso - Allegro* of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 127 (recorded 1934/35) also provides evidence of considerable rhythmic flexibility. Decreases in tempo appear to be in response to printed diminuendi or *piano* dynamics, or a change from a lively, rhythmic figuration to lyrical material. From bars 206 to 220, the tempo is dramatically slackened from crotchet = 140 to crotchet = 92 corresponding with the drop to *piano* dynamic in bar 207, and the change from lively staccato passage (bars 198 to 205) to an expressive melody in the two inner voices (bar 207). Following this the tempo is accelerated to crotchet = 132 during the printed crescendo in bar 221 that leads to lively *forte* staccato quavers in bar 222 but is immediately slackened in bar 223 with the return of lyrical material marked *piano*. Rhythmic drive picks up again in bar 229 where there is staccato figuration in the lower three voices. The slow tempo from bar 234 to the end again reflects the lyrical material and soft dynamic. During the third movement (*Scherzando vivo*) the tempo suddenly decreases from crotchet = 168 to crotchet = 160 between bars 64 to 65 enhancing the effect of the subito *pianissimo*. The tempo is restored to crotchet = 168, with the *forte* in bar 266 but immediately accelerates with the

upward scale until the end of the section at bar 269, where the tempo reaches crotchet = 174. At bar 126 in the *Allegro* from the third movement, the tempo decreases significantly until the *Presto*. This corresponds with the key change and calmer, lyrical writing in the first violin. In the fourth movement (*Finale*) there is a significant decrease in tempo over a large section that appears to directly reflect the gradual decrease in printed dynamic level. At bar 77 where the dynamic is *fortissimo* the tempo is minim = 116. The tempo decreases to minim = 108 at bar 81 where *forte* is printed, and again to minim = 96 at bar 88 where *piano* is marked. Finally the tempo slows to minim = 80 from bars 93 to 95 where *pianissimo* is indicated.

Recordings of the Prisca Quartet also reveal marked tempo modifications at times. For example, in the last variation of the second movement (*Poco adagio; cantabile*) from Haydn's String Quartet Op. 76 No. 3 (recorded 1927) the tempo slows down dramatically over the course of the variation from crotchet = 58 at the beginning (bar 81) to crotchet = 46 at bar 100.

The fact that, in most of the aforementioned examples, marked tempo modification coincides with and consequently has an enhancing effect on structure, harmony or dynamics strongly suggests that these fluctuations were premeditated and rehearsed. Many such tempo changes would be difficult to execute without collective understanding. Smaller fluctuations, particularly caused by agogic accents,⁵⁸ may well have occurred spontaneously. Significantly, tempo modifications in ensemble performances are no less frequent or less pronounced than in the solo recordings of Joachim and Soldat-Roeger.

⁵⁸ The term 'agogic accent' refers to a note that is emphasized through a slight rhythmic lengthening.

Evidence preserved on early recordings of solo violinists and string ensembles strongly suggests that a striking degree of tempo modification was a norm in the performance style of those trained in the tradition of the German violin school. Outside of this circle, Wolfsthal's recording, along with those by string quartets such as the Bohemian Quartet, give a broader perspective of the degree of tempo modification used by artists of the time, revealing a degree of tempo modification that is equally as distinctive.

Tempo Rubato and Rhythmic Alteration

In spite of heaping the most minute suggestions to every measure and to every note of the score, the musical work of art never becomes and *unalterable* and *eternally fixed*. Something like [sic.], e.g., a work of architecture ("dead" or "frozen" music as someone has said) or like a Victor record or like one of Plato's fondly dreamed "ideas." Minute regulation as to the last detail is neither possible nor desirable. A masterwork "lives" by its interpreters and in no other way.⁵⁹

Luigi von Kunits, *The Canadian Journal of Music*, 1918.

Rhythmic alteration is alluded to, even if not always specifically described, in many nineteenth-century treatises. In such sources rhythmic alteration is sometimes described as a consequence of tempo rubato. For example, in his *Violin School*, Spohr shows rhythmic alterations in his annotations to Rode's Seventh Violin Concerto (Fig. 9):

⁵⁹ Luigi von Kunits, "Interpretative Freedom," *The Canadian Journal of Music* 4, no. 9, (February 1918), 132.



Figure 9. Rode Concerto No. 7, first movement. Excerpts showing Rode's original score (below) and Spohr's alterations (above).

In his *The Art of the Violin* (1835) Pierre Baillot (1771-1842) provides realisations of how bars 384 to 399 of the first movement from Viotti's Violin Concerto No. 19 in G minor G. 91 can be rhythmically altered in tempo rubato (Fig. 10a, b and Fig. 11a, b).⁶⁰ These examples illustrate re-organisation of note values and/or some re-composition, including embellishment of the original material as in bars 5 and 15 (Fig. 10b). Most often the written notes are displaced or delayed by a quaver or sometimes even more (bar 5).



⁶⁰ Pierre Baillot, *L'Art du violon* (Paris: Depot Central de Musique, 1835); trans. Louise Goldberg, *The Art of the Violin* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1991), 238-9.

Figure 10a. Viotti Violin Concerto No. 19 in g minor, G. 91, first movement, bars 384 to 399, as reprinted by Baillot.



Figure 10b. Suggested realisation by Baillot, using tempo rubato.



Figure 11a. Viotti violin concerto No. 18 in E minor, G. 90, third movement, bars 1-8, as reprinted by Baillot.



Figure 11b. Suggested realisation by Baillot, using tempo rubato.

Recorded Evidence

Joachim's and Soldat-Roeger's recordings preserve frequent use of rhythmic alteration. In Joachim's recording (1903) of his own *Romance*,

numerous expressive lingerings cause a range of rhythmic alterations including the creation of dotted rhythms (Fig. 12). It must be noted that such nuanced rhythmic alteration is difficult to represent accurately as notation, and therefore must be regarded as approximate.



Figure 12. Joachim, *Romance* in C major, bars 115 to 121, showing original text (above) and Joachim's rhythmic alterations (below). [CD 2 Track 8: 02:16-02:25].

In her recording of Mozart's Violin Concerto K. 219, Soldat-Roeger makes expressive lingerings and shortens notes, resulting in the creation of dotted rhythms similar to the French *notes inégales* or inequality (Fig. 13).⁶¹ Often, a duplet of equal-valued notes becomes noticeably dotted or becomes a triplet, while a group of four equal-valued notes is played unevenly. The practice of inequality usually associated with the performance practice of the eighteenth century and earlier remained widespread until at least the early twentieth

⁶¹ Hudson, *Stolen Time*, 27.

century.⁶² Its purpose was to emphasize important melodic or harmonic notes and consequently to de-emphasize others.

The image displays a musical score for a guitar solo, consisting of six systems of two staves each. The music is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo and expression markings are *(con espressione)*. The score includes various musical notations such as fingerings (1-4), trills (tr), and accents. Several notes and phrases are circled in blue, highlighting specific melodic or harmonic elements. The score is divided into measures, with measure numbers 4, 8, 11, and 14 indicated at the beginning of their respective systems. The notation includes slurs, ties, and dynamic markings like *f* (forte).

⁶² David Fuller, 'Notes Inégales', *The New Grove*, XIII (London: Macmillan, 1980), 423.

Figure 13. Mozart Violin Concerto in A major K. 219, first movement, original version (above) with Marie Soldat-Roeger's realization (below, with rhythmic alteration circled). [CD 2 Track 2: 00:37-01:51].

Soldat-Roeger employed other methods of rhythmic alteration, noticeable for example on her recording (c.1926) of Beethoven's *Romance* Op. 50. Often, she plays the solo violin entries early by almost a semiquaver (bars 69, 70, 72 and 74). The consistency with which this happens suggests it is unlikely that this was due to sloppiness or miscalculation on her part. A similar practice is evident on her recording (c.1926) of the second movement (*Adagio*) from Spohr's Ninth Violin Concerto. In bar 10, she plays the C-sharp sooner than notated, lengthening it considerably. Other notes are also subtly displaced giving a sense of 'elastic' rhythm. For example she resolves the D-natural in bar 2 later than notated, and consistently plays slightly behind the accompaniment in bar 6 (Fig. 14).

Figure 14. Spohr, Violin Concerto No. 9, second movement, bars 1 to 11, my brackets (top line) show placement of Soldat-Roeger's rhythmic alterations.⁶³ [CD 2 Track 9: 00:15-01:04].

Recordings of the Klingler Quartet reveal Klingler's frequent use of agogic accents (lengthening), resulting in conspicuous rhythmic alteration. For example, Klingler plays the equal-valued duplet motive as written on the first statement from bars 55 to 59 of the *Menuetto* from Mozart's String Quartet K. 465 (recorded 1922/23). On the repeat, however, he slightly lengthens certain quavers, and more so in the *da capo* from bars 55 to 59, causing the rhythm to sound dotted (Fig. 15).

The image displays two musical score excerpts from Mozart's String Quartet K. 465, Menuetto, bars 55-59. The top excerpt shows the original notation with a bracket above the first staff indicating rhythmic alterations. The bottom excerpt shows the same notation with a bracket above the first staff indicating rhythmic alterations. Both excerpts feature a piano (*p*) dynamic in the first staff and a forte (*f*) dynamic in the second staff.

⁶³ Spohr, *Violin School*, 212.

Figure 15. Mozart, String Quartet K.465, third movement, bars 55 to 59, original text (above), transcription of Klingler Quartet's recording showing dotted rhythms (below). [CD 2 Track 10: 01:15-01:31].

In the second movement from Haydn's String Quartet Op. 76 No. 5 (recorded 1933/34), Klingler significantly lengthens the quavers on the third and fourth beats of bar 39, causing them to sound as triplets (Fig. 16).

(Largo cantabile e mesto)

39 Played

Written

Vln I

Vln II

Vla

Vlc

p

Figure 16. Haydn, String Quartet Op. 76 No. 5, second movement, bars 39 to 40. Klingler Quartet. [CD 3 Track 1: 03:23-03:36].

And in the second movement (*Tempo ordinario d'un menuetto*) of Beethoven's Serenade Op. 25 Klingler makes agogic accents (lengthenings) in the semiquaver passage from bars 24 to 32. This is all the more noticeable as the flautist plays a similar semiquaver passage from bars 40 to 48 with little or no agogic accents. In the second variation of the fourth movement (*Andante con variazioni*), Klingler frequently makes agogic accents. And in the *Menuetto* from

Haydn's String Quartet Op. 64 No. 5, Klingler's agogic accents in bar 30 causes the consecutive quaver pattern to sound tripletized (Fig. 17).

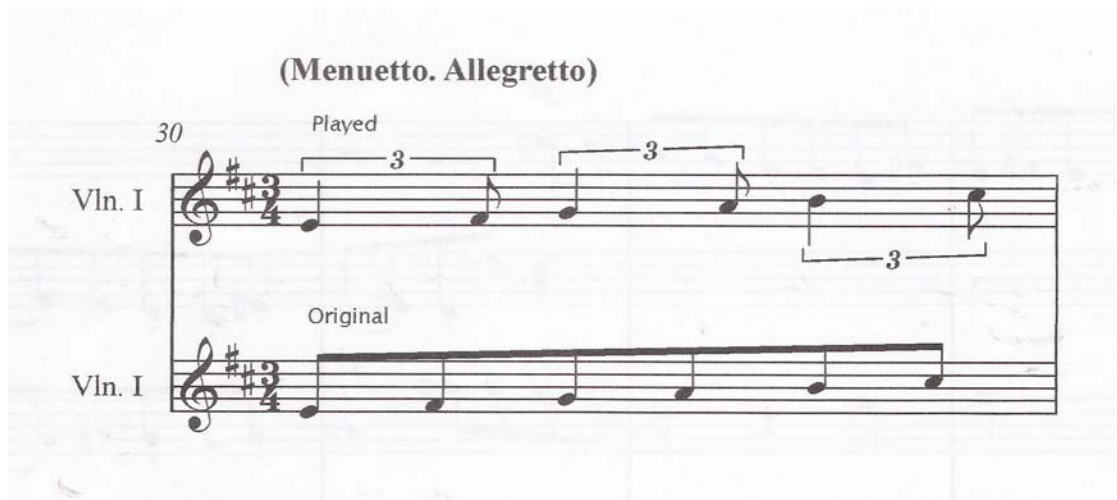


Figure 17. Haydn, String Quartet Op. 64 No. 5, *Menuetto*. Klingler Quartet. [CD 3 Track 2: 00:36-00:38].

While this effect occurs frequently, sometimes notated triplets are altered creating different rhythmic patterns. The first violinist of the Grete-Eweler Quartet frequently does so in the second movement (*Lento*) (Fig. 18) of Dvořák's String Quartet Op. 96 (recorded 1924).

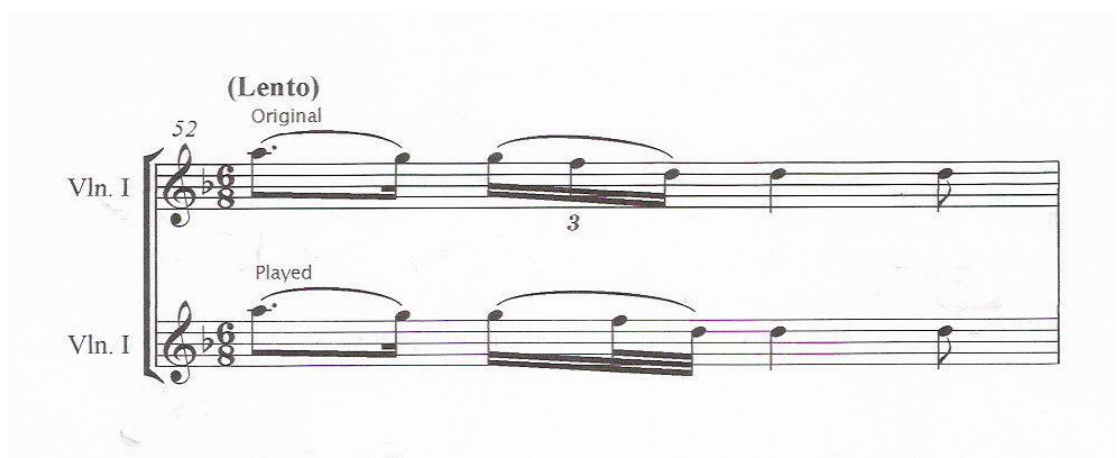


Figure 18. Dvořák, String Quartet Op. 96, second movement. Grete-Eweler Quartet. [CD 3 Track 3: 04:07-04:10].

In Haydn's Quartet Op. 3 No. 5 the first violinist of the Brüder-Post Quartet not only alters rhythm but also register, playing several notes and bars an octave lower than notated. This is exemplified in his interpretation of bar 53 from the second movement where he also adds notes (Fig. 19). It may be that such alterations were notated in the edition of the work used by the Brüder-Post Quartet for the recording (1925). Nevertheless, the practice belongs to a generally established ethos of flexibility.

Figure 19. Haydn, String Quartet Op. 3 No. 5, second movement. Brüder-Post Quartet. [CD 2 Track 4: 01:11-01:14 (bar 26); 01:44-01:50 (bars 37 to 38); 02:26-02:35 (bars 52 to 54; 02:40-02:45 (bar 57))].

Evidently, agogic accentuation was sometimes coordinated between players. Both Klingler and the violist of the Klingler Quartet markedly lengthen the first note of the slurred duplet in bar 37 of the first movement of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 127 (recorded 1934/35). The ensemble here is perfectly

unified, indicating that the agogic accent was premeditated and rehearsed (Fig. 20).

(Allegro)

37 Written

37 Played

Vln I

Vln II

Vla

Vlc

Figure 20. Beethoven String Quartet Op. 127, first movement, bar 37, Klingler Quartet. [CD 3 Track 4: 00:58-00:59].

Klingler and the second violinist coordinated their agogic accents in bars 57 and 59 of the *Trio* from Haydn's String Quartet Op. 64 No. 5 (recorded 1912/13), possibly because they play together in rhythmic unison. However, in bar 61 the cellist does not play an agogic accent with Klingler, despite being in rhythmic unison (Fig. 21). This may be an example of a type of tempo rubato where the bass line (in the cello part) remains rhythmically steady, while the melody (in the first violin part) is flexible.

The image displays a musical score for the Trio section of Haydn's String Quartet Op. 64 No. 5. The score is in 3/4 time and consists of five staves: Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vlc.), and a 'Trio' part. The Trio part is marked '56 Played' and contains a triplet of eighth notes. The 'Original' part is marked 'Original' and contains a triplet of eighth notes. Dynamics include *f*, *sf*, and *p*.

Figure 21. Haydn, String Quartet Op. 64 No. 5, *Trio*. Klingler Quartet. [CD 3 Track 2: 01:02-01:09].

Coordinated rhythmic alteration is also a feature of The Bohemian Quartet's performances. In the second movement from Smetana's String Quartet No. 1 (recorded 1928) the first violinist and violist lengthen the first crotchet beat at each occurrence of the ascending quaver motive. The continuous semiquaver and quaver accompaniment played in the other instruments slows

during the first crotchet beat to compensate for such alteration and thus to keep good ensemble (Fig. 22).



Figure 22. Smetana String Quartet No. 1, second movement, bars 54 to 68, Bohemian Quartet.⁶⁴ [CD 3 Track 5: 00:56-01:12].

Early recordings reveal that, occasionally, the rhythmic liberties exercised by individuals in an ensemble create conspicuous non-alignment of the parts. For example, from bars 66 to 73 in the second movement of Schumann's String Quartet Op. 41 No. 3 (recorded 1912/13), Klingler makes more of a ritentuto than the other members of the quartet. Consequently the quavers become misaligned. Although such an interpretation does not in this case appear to be

⁶⁴ Smetana, *From My Life: Quartet for 2 violins, viola and violoncello*, 17-18.

deliberate, it does indicate a freer, more casual approach to rhythm and ensemble than is expected nowadays. A similarly casual approach to rhythm and ensemble is also evident in recordings by the Bohemian Quartet. In the third movement of Smetana's String Quartet No. 1 (recorded 1928) the ensemble is often misaligned. For example in bar 10 the first and second violinists are not together on the unison dotted pattern. And in bar 15 the first and second violin and cello are not together on the second chord (Fig. 23). Such details would generally be unacceptable in ensemble playing today. At the end of bar 126 in the fourth movement (*Vivace*) the ensemble even adds an extra crotchet rest. It is likely this was to demarcate the beginning of the new section and facilitate starting together at bar 127.



Figure 23. Smetana String Quartet No. 1, third movement, bars 5 to 15. Bohemian Quartet.⁶⁵ [CD 2 Track 5: 00:25-01:37].

⁶⁵ Smetana, *From My Life: Quartet for 2 violins, viola and violoncello*, 17.

In Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 18 No. 2 the Brüder Post Quartet (recorded 1921) also display a more casual approach to ensemble. In the allegro section (bars 26 to 71) of the second movement the increasing excitement generated by the constant *accelerando* causes the ensemble to sound frenetic and untidy. Here, the overall musical effect of the section is clearly more important than unity and clarity of ensemble.

Rhythmic alteration was also a prominent part of piano playing during the nineteenth century. The degree of rhythmic alteration preserved on piano roll recordings of Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921), Theodor Leschetizky (1830-1915) and Carl Reinecke (1824-1910) can be quite shocking when viewed in terms of modern aesthetics (Fig. 24).⁶⁶ These artists frequently altered the printed notation. This involved the redistribution of note values, addition of embellishments, and even the re-composition of certain passages.



Figure 24. Chopin, Nocturne Op. 27 No. 2, bars 31 to 32, Leschetizky's 1906 piano roll recording (above) and Chopin's original text (below).⁶⁷ [CD 3 Track 6: 02:31-02:38].

⁶⁶ Peres Da Costa, *Off the Record*, 189.

⁶⁷ Peres Da Costa, *Off the Record*, 210.

In 1889, Brahms recorded a segment of his *Hungarian Dance* No. 1 for the Edison phonograph. Berger and Nicols have shown that significant rhythmic alteration, tempo modification and even improvisation are present in Brahms's performance.⁶⁸ This included frequent changing of dotted rhythms to even duplet rhythms between bars 25 to 36, and the addition of beats resulting in four quavers being changed to two crotchets and two quavers in bar 24.⁶⁹

Over-dotting

Related to rhythmic inequality is the practice of over-dotting. Philip notes that this practice was still prevalent in the early twentieth century across a wide range of musical styles as preserved on many early recordings.⁷⁰ Evidence suggests that this practice was adopted and became traditional in the performance of a particular passage (bars 24 to 40) from the second movement of Brahms's *Violin Sonata in G major Op. 78*. In a review of a performance by English violinist Isolde Menges (1893-1976) and pianist Harold Samuels (1879-1937) in 1933, the critic comments on the absence of over-dotting in this section (Fig. 25):

As an example of disagreement, one may cite the treatment of the middle section of the Adagio in the G major Violin and Pianoforte Sonata [by Brahms]. The tradition for this passage is to lengthen by a little the dotted quavers and correspondingly shorten the semiquavers – a tradition followed by Madame Marie Soldat. Its effect was noble and incisive. Miss Menges and Mr Harold Samuel, on the contrary, hewed out the notes at their exact face value till this admirer of theirs

⁶⁸ Berger and Nicols, "Brahms at the Piano," 23-30.

⁶⁹ Berger and Nicols, "Brahms at the Piano," 27-28.

⁷⁰ Philip, *Early Recordings and Musical Style*, 70.

mentally trotted alongside saying *one-two-three-four, one-two-three-four*.⁷¹

The mocking tone of the reviewer suggests that not only was over-dotting expected here, but also that to play with precise rhythm as Menges and Samuels did was unstylish and artistically lacking.

The image displays a page of musical notation for the second movement of Brahms' Violin Sonata Op. 78, covering bars 24 to 38. The score is written for violin and piano. The key signature is two flats (B-flat major/D minor), and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo marking is 'più andante'. The score is divided into three systems. The first system (bars 24-29) features a piano accompaniment with a steady eighth-note pattern in the left hand and chords in the right hand. The second system (bars 30-34) shows the violin entering with a melodic line, marked 'mp espress.', while the piano accompaniment continues with a similar eighth-note pattern, marked 'p espress.'. The third system (bars 35-38) features a more complex piano accompaniment with triplets and sixteenth-note patterns, marked 'f'. The violin part continues with a melodic line, marked 'f'. The score includes various performance instructions such as 'p mezzo voce', 'mp espress.', 'p espress.', and 'f'. Fingering numbers (1-5) are indicated for both hands throughout the piece.

Figure 25. Brahms, Violin Sonata Op. 78, second movement, bars 24 to 38.⁷² [CD 1 Track 1: 13:29-14:12].

⁷¹ M.M.S., *The Musical Times*, 74, No. 1084 (June 1933): 548.

⁷² Brahms, *Sonaten für Klavier und Violine*, piano score (München: G. Henle Verlag, 1995), 19.

Brahms occasionally notated double dotting presumably to provide variation. A notable example is bars 21, 23, 59 and 61 of the second movement of the Violin Sonata in D minor Op. 108 (Fig. 26).

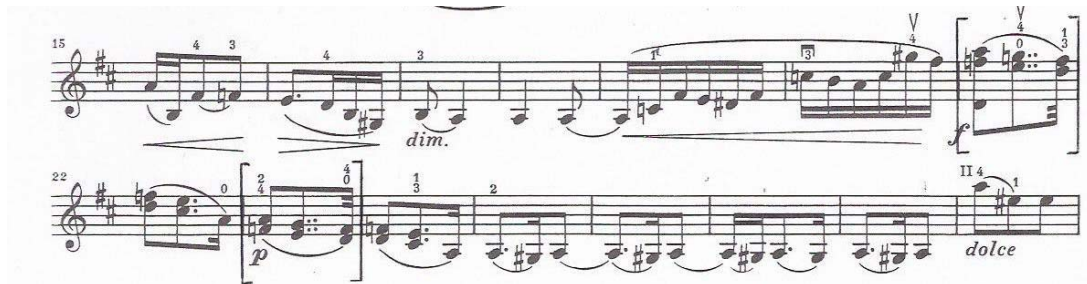


Figure 26. Brahms, Violin Sonata Op. 108, second movement, bars 15 to 29.⁷³ [CD 1 Track 3: 09:52-10:38].

Arpeggiation of Pizzicato Chords

Nowadays the fashion is to play the notes of chords marked pizzicato with absolute synchrony. Yet evidence suggests that this was not always the case. Concerning the chords, marked pizzicato, from bars 82 to 90 in the first movement of the Brahms's Violin Sonata in G Major Op. 78 (Fig. 27), Donald Tovey explains that:

Brahms did not anticipate a time when violinists, who would harp this passage like angels if they thought it part of a popular piece of musical cookery, could think that classical chastity compelled them to tighten these chords into dry clicks.⁷⁴

⁷³ Brahms, *Sonaten für Klavier und Violine*, violin score (Henle), 26.

⁷⁴ Donald Tovey, "Brahms's Chamber Music" in *The Main Stream of Music and Other Essays* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1949), 235-6.



Figure 27. Brahms, Violin Sonata Op. 78, first movement, bars 82 to 92.⁷⁵ [CD 1 Track 1: 03:34-04:04].

Early recordings reveal that some string players practised the spreading of notes in chords marked pizzicato up until the first decade or so of the twentieth century. On a recording by the Klingler Quartet (1912/13) of the *Scherzo* from Schumann's String Quartet Op. 41 No. 2, the first violinist Karl Klingler can be heard spreading the final double-stopped chord marked pizzicato. In a much later recording by the Klingler Quartet (1934/35) of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 127, Klingler spreads the opening pizzicato chords of the *Scherzo*. Such a practice would be considered unusual today. Interestingly, the first violinist of the Flonzaley Quartet (whose members were not trained in the tradition of the German violin school) plays the chord with notes strictly

⁷⁵ Brahms, *Sonaten für Klavier und Violine*, piano score (Henle), 9.

synchronised in a recording (1926) of the *Scherzo*. Remarkably, the Klingler Quartet's recording of Haydn's String Quartet Op. 64 No. 5 suggests that the players deliberately staggered their pizzicato entries in a chordal texture to create an arpeggiated effect. This is evident in the A section of the *da capo* of the *Trio* where the texture is one note per instrument collectively forming a chord, the first violinist entering slightly later than the violist and cellist. This striking effect is similar to the arpeggiation of a four-part chord on a single string instrument. The Klingler Quartet also creates the effect on particular chords in the *Menuetto* from Mozart's String Quartet K. 421 (recorded 1912/13). On the downbeat of bars 52 and 53 the notes marked pizzicato making up the chordal accompaniment are subtly but distinctly spread, beginning with the cello and working upwards through the viola and second violin parts (Fig. 28).

(Trio)

Vln I

Vln II

Vla

Vlc

47

pizz.

pizz.

pizz.

50

Figure 28. Mozart, String Quartet K. 421, third movement, bars 51 to 53. Klingler Quartet. [CD 3 Track 7: 01:56-02:05].

The recordings of other ensembles also reveal the occasional practice of collective arpeggiation. The Gewandhaus Quartet spread the pizzicato chords in bar 277 of the fourth movement from Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 131 (recorded 1916) (Fig. 29).

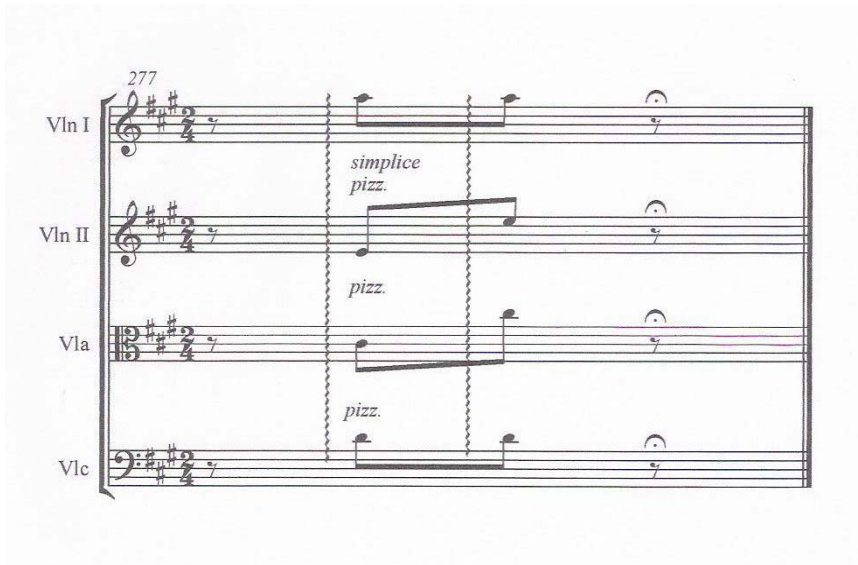


Figure 29. Beethoven String Quartet Op. 131, fourth movement, bar 277. Gewandhaus Quartet. [CD 3 Track 8: 15:18-15:22].

In the Bohemian Quartet's recording (1928) of the fourth movement from Smetana's String Quartet No. 1, the final pizzicato chords in bars 284 and 285 are spread. Interestingly, the lower three parts are plucked after the higher part. It is unlikely that faulty ensemble playing is to blame here as the first two chords in bar 284 are executed in the same way. The chord in bar 285 is also spread, though less noticeably, with the highest voice heard only very slightly early (Fig. 30).



Figure 30. Smetana, String Quartet No. 1, fourth movement, bars 281 to 285.⁷⁶
[CD 3 Track 9: 06:35-06:43].

The Bohemian Quartet did not, however, always arpeggiate pizzicato chords. In the second movement from Suk's String Quartet Op. 11 (recorded 1928) the pizzicato chords from bars 30 to 34 are played with absolute synchrony. Yet, given the complicated rhythm in the first violin part and the *tempo di marcia* marking calling for a fairly rhythmic pulse, this performance choice appears logical. More surprising perhaps, are the pizzicato chords in the cello part from bars 37 to 43 and bars 79 to 85, which though marked with an arpeggiation sign are not noticeably spread (Fig. 31). Similarly, in the fourth movement of Smetana's String Quartet No. 1 the pizzicati chords in the first and second violin parts from bars 163 to 185 are marked with an arpeggiation line, yet spreading is not noticeable.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Smetana, *From My Life: Quartet for 2 violins, viola and violoncello*, 47.

⁷⁷ Josef Suk, *String Quartet Op. 11* (Berlin: Simrock, 1896), 27.

Figure 31. Suk, String Quartet Op. 11, second movement, bars 28 to 41.⁷⁸ [CD 3 Track 9: 01:18-01:45].

The practice in string playing of spreading pizzicato chords appears analogous with the practice of chordal arpeggiation in piano playing. This is well documented in texts throughout the nineteenth century and is clearly captured on piano rolls of Reinecke, Leschetizky and Saint-Saëns⁷⁹ as well as many

⁷⁸ Suk, *String Quartet Op. 11*, 27.

⁷⁹ Theodore Leschetizky, *Early Piano Rolls*. Steinway-Welte No. 209642, 1906 (transfer 2008); Carl Reinecke, *Early Piano Rolls*. Steinway-Welte No. 209642, 1906 (transfer 2008), Saint-Saens, *Early Piano Rolls*. Welte-Mignon piano roll 800, 1905 (transfer GEMM 9312, 1988).

acoustic and electrical recordings by pianists associated with Brahms, such as Freund, Eibenschütz, de Lara and Grünfeld.⁸⁰

Conclusion

Written texts make it clear that tempo modification and rhythmic alteration were indispensable expressive devices in nineteenth-century performance, a fact that is well supported by evidence preserved on early sound recordings. Many of these recordings reveal a degree of tempo modification (both frequency and actual tempo variation) that is extreme by present standards. At times, such modification impinged upon rhythmic and ensemble accuracy, producing a somewhat ad hoc or improvised feel to performances, which, however, was considered artistically acceptable. Tempo modification and rhythmic alteration in the manner outlined in this chapter were prevalent in the style of ensembles, such as the Klingler Quartet, that had a close connection with the German violin school, as well as ensembles outside of this circle such as the Bohemian Quartet. Such practices appear, therefore, to have been widespread during the first few decades of the twentieth century and undoubtedly were a continuation of nineteenth-century practices.

Tempo modification was clearly of central importance in delineating musical structure and enhancing character in ensemble playing. Early recordings of ensembles reveal that a faster tempo was immediately taken, or an *accelerando* made, during repeated material, increased harmonic tension (particularly harmony centred around the dominant), rising tessiture and *crescendi*. Slower tempos often enhanced a more expressive or melodic section

⁸⁰ Pupils of Clara Schumann. GEMM CDS 9909, 1991.

(especially within a faster movement). Pronounced *ritenuti* were often made at cadential points (particularly at the ends of sections), during lower or falling tessiture, during a relaxation of harmonic tension or with a decrease in dynamic level.

Rhythmic alteration was often a direct result of a form of *tempo rubato*, in which certain notes are held longer while others are played shorter. At times this resulted in the rhythm being noticeably altered. Early recordings reveal the common tendency to lengthen certain notes creating agogic accentuation. This often resulted in an equal-valued duplet rhythm turning into a triplet or dotted rhythm. At times dotted rhythms were over-dotted. Rhythmic alteration appears to have been used frequently to vary repeated material, or to create variety for the repeats of sections, such as in *da capo* movements. At times rhythmic alteration was carefully coordinated within an ensemble, while at other times such alterations resulted in asynchrony of ensemble parts. This, along with a propensity for frequent and wide-ranging tempo modification points to a more casual approach to the execution of notated rhythms, within both the vertical and horizontal texture of the music.

CHAPTER TWO

Bowing

Tone shading in music may be compared to the effects of light and shade in painting. One of the greatest difficulties in drawing tone is this very playing of one long drawn tone crescendo and decrescendo. But the effect it produces is often far greater than a whole passage of beautiful harmony.⁸¹

Emil Kross, *The Art of Bowing*, 1904.

Written Evidence

The Singing Sound

Texts from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries provide evidence of an aesthetic approach to sound that clearly allied the violin with singing and in particular the Italian tradition of *bel canto* ('beautiful singing'). This style of singing is aptly defined by James Stark as 'creating qualities of *chiaroscuro* [light and shade], *appoggio*, register equalization and malleability of pitch and intensity' and includes 'various forms of vocal onset, *legato*, *portamento*, glottal articulation, *crescendo*, *decrescendo*, *messa di voce*, *mezza voce*, floridity and trills, and *tempo rubato*.'⁸²

Spohr hailed the violin as the instrument most closely resembling that of the human voice 'on account of its fitness to express the most deepest [sic] and tender emotions.'⁸³ In their *Violin School* Joachim and Moser explain that the roots of Spohr's art lay in the Italian *bel canto* style and that German violin playing was generally characterized by a 'natural *cantilena* [singing style].'⁸⁴ They declare that, like a singer with 'that heaven-born gift, a beautiful *tone* of

⁸¹ Emil Kross, *The Art of Bowing; A Theoretico-Practical Method for Developing the Technics of the Bow and Acquiring a Fine Tone on the Violin. Op. 40*, trans. Theodore Barker (New York: G. Schirmer, 1909), 28.

⁸² James Stark, *Bel Canto; A History of Vocal Pedagogy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999) 189.

⁸³ Spohr, *Violin School*, 3.

⁸⁴ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 33-34.

voice,' a 'fine warm tone is of the greatest importance.'⁸⁵ They stress the student must be made to 'sing, sing and sing again!' and reference Tartini's maxim that 'to play well you must sing well.'⁸⁶ Joachim and Moser make it clear that, on the contrary, the Franco-Belgian school neglects this fundamental singing style. Instead, bowing and tone production 'merely aims at the sensuous in sound,' lacking the 'modulatory richness in variety of tone, whereby all nuances of expression may at once be commanded.'⁸⁷ Furthermore, virtuosic bowing effects were clearly favoured:

The neglect of its [the violin's] *singing* qualities soon resulted in the utter downfall of bow technique in its classical sense. In the employment of an artificial kind of bowing with the object of obtaining certain technical effects, the modern French violin players have certainly evolved an astonishing execution; but their stiff style of using the bow leaves much to be desired, and has none of the characteristics necessary for a singing tone, or for purposes of an inspired nature.⁸⁸

'Artificial' bowing undoubtedly refers to the use of off-the-string strokes such as *spiccato*, *sautillé*, and *ricochet* for superfluous virtuosic effect, rather than to serve a truly musical purpose. However, despite these comments, Joachim clearly had more tolerance for these strokes than predecessors such as Spohr (discussion to follow). Spohr deemed off-the-string strokes unsuitable for use in the works of the great Classical composers Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 6.

⁸⁶ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, i, 7.

⁸⁷ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 32.

⁸⁸ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 33. On page 35, Joachim and Moser make a clear distinction between the classical French players who did play with a desirable *cantilene*, and the more modern Franco-Belgian school. Here, 'modern French violin players' clearly refers to the latter.

⁸⁹ Brown, 'Joachim's Violin Playing,' in *Performing Brahms*, 79.

According to Moser, it was Mendelssohn who first convinced the young Joachim to use off-the-string strokes (such as spiccato and sautillé) in such works, instructing: 'Always use them my boy, where it is suitable or where it sounds well.'⁹⁰ Indeed, a section in Joachim and Moser's *Violin School* entitled 'Rebounding bowing in its various forms' covers ricochet, tremolo, and arpeggio.⁹¹ They consider the ricochet arpeggio to be the most important because of its 'most beautiful and artistic use in the cadenza of the Mendelssohn Concerto.'⁹² Yet, while certainly advocating the spiccato or sautillé, Joachim and Moser clearly considered the use of off-the-string strokes as of secondary importance to the cultivation of a singing sound.

Tone Shading

Allied to a singing sound was the importance of 'shading' the sound with the bow—similar in effect to *chiaroscuro*, referred to by Stark in his definition of *bel canto* (see above). This was achieved through the variation of degrees of intensity and nuance in each bow stroke. Unsurprisingly, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century German treatises place great importance on the practice of drawing a sustained, yet varied tone. Spohr speaks of the bow as being the 'soul of playing' and emphasizes the 'slow drawing of it,' giving exercises for practising crescendo and decrescendo through sustained tones.⁹³ In his *Violin School* of 1864, Ferdinand David (1810-1873) includes a similar section entitled 'The

⁹⁰ Moser, *Joseph Joachim; a Biography*, trans. Lilla Durham (London: P Wellby, 1901), 46.

⁹¹ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, ii, 170.

⁹² Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, ii, 176.

⁹³ Spohr, *Violin School*, 110-111.

formation of tone, marks of expression,' where the notation clearly indicates variation of dynamic level throughout long, sustained tones (Fig. 32).⁹⁴



Figure 32. David, *Violin School*, sustained tones.⁹⁵

Significantly, in 1891 Christian Hohmann (1811-1861) includes a similar notated example to Spohr's in his *Praktische Violinschule* (Fig. 33).



Figure 33. Hohmann, *Praktische Violinschule*.⁹⁶

In his didactic *Art of Bowing* (1904), Emil Kross (1852-1917) devotes a large section to tone production and nuancing of sound, calling it 'tone shading.' Moreover, he provides three pages of examples showing long sustained notes

⁹⁴ Ferdinand David. *Violinschule* (Leipzig, 1863), trans. as *Violin School* (London, 1874), i, 19.

⁹⁵ David, *Violin School*, 19.

⁹⁶ Christian Heinrich Hohmann, *Praktische Violinschule* (Cologne: P.J. Tonger 1891), 72.

with crescendo and decrescendo inflections. The different ‘shading’ is accomplished by varying the combination of speed, weight, and contact point of the bow.⁹⁷ Further to this an extensive collection of musical excerpts illustrates the importance of ‘tone shading.’ These include many slow passages from the works of Tartini, Viotti, Rode, Spohr, Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Bruch. Clearly the technique of ‘tone shading’ was considered fundamental and indispensable to the artistic performance of such repertoire during this period. Kross speaks of the importance of the ‘absolute evenness of tone,’⁹⁸ and a ‘smooth bow change without accent.’⁹⁹ He asserts that it is ‘this very shading of tone’ that ‘constitutes the chief means of musical expression,’ and compares it to the effects of light and shade in painting.¹⁰⁰ Importantly, Kross singles out the *Adagio* from Spohr’s Ninth Concerto as a notable example where tone shading is particularly effective. The use of such shading is clearly evident in Soldat-Roeger’s recording of this work (discussion to follow).

Like Kross, Joachim and Moser advise the maintaining of an even bow pressure, as well as the imperceptible change of the bow at the nut.¹⁰¹ They, too, devote a section to ‘the different intensities of the tone,’ with exercises for varying the speed, weight, and contact point of the bow throughout long sustained notes. Clearly, achieving variety and nuance of sound, particularly within long sustained notes or phrases, was considered an imperative technical and musical skill in the German violin school.

⁹⁷ Kross explains the interrelationship of these factors: playing closer to the bridge with greater speed and weight produces a crescendo and while the reverse produces the opposite effect. See Kross, *The Art of Bowing*, 28. Generally, in violin playing it is understood that while a faster bow speed with greater weight will increase volume, as the bow moves closer to the bridge the speed must in fact decrease to avoid a *ponticello* effect. Kross neglects to clarify this.

⁹⁸ Kross, *The Art of Bowing*, 25.

⁹⁹ Kross, *The Art of Bowing*, 1.

¹⁰⁰ Kross, *The Art of Bowing*, 28.

¹⁰¹ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, i, 14; iii, 13.

Bowstrokes

Détaché

Today, in modern violin playing, the term *détaché* generally denotes an on-the-string bowstroke, in which the hair of the bow does not leave the string and there is no deliberate separation between strokes. The *détaché* stroke may vary according to how much articulation or accent is given at each bow change. Ivan Galamian's *Principles of Violin Playing and Teaching* has largely defined standard 'modern' technique since its publication in 1962, and is therefore useful to clarify currently accepted definitions. Galamian refers to the basic form of the *détaché* as the 'simple *détaché*,' and explains that:

A separate bow is taken for each note and the stroke is smooth and even throughout with no variation of pressure. There is no break between the notes and each bow stroke has, therefore, continued until the next takes over. The simple *détaché* can be played in any part of the bow and with any length of stroke from the whole bow to the smallest fraction.¹⁰²

When no articulation marking is given for notes, and they are not printed under a slur, today it is generally common practice that *détaché* bowing is expected.

However, the meaning of the term *détaché* varied throughout the nineteenth century. Some treatises do not discuss a basic *détaché* stroke, evidently assuming it, or a similar variant will be used if notes have no articulation marking or are not printed under a slur. To clarify the term's meaning in the nineteenth-century German violin school, it is useful to consider its use in a broader selection of treatises throughout the nineteenth century.

¹⁰² Ivan Galamian, *Principles of Violin Playing and Teaching* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1962), 67.

Extensive use of the term *détaché* appears in Baillot's *The Art of Violin*, published in 1835. It is used to describe several different strokes. The *grand détaché* is played on the string in the middle of the bow, with a slight release of bow pressure at the end of each stroke. Baillot explains the notes are thus slightly separated (Fig. 34).

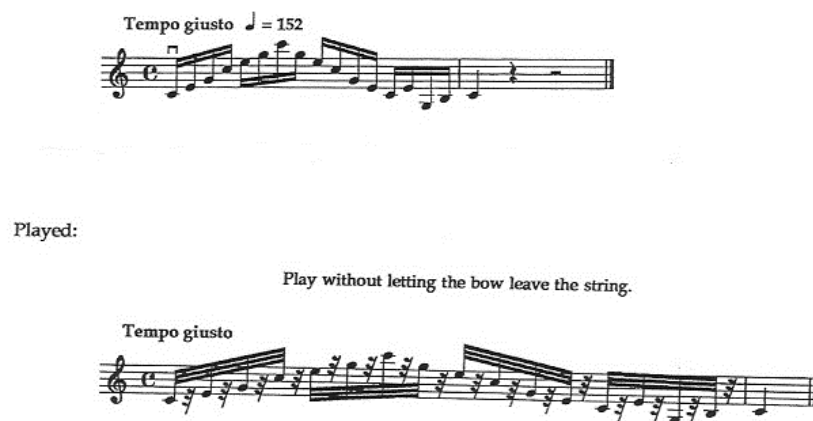


Figure 34. Baillot, *grand détaché*.¹⁰³

The *light détaché* is performed in a similar fashion, but uses the natural elasticity of the stick to give an ‘imperceptible and slightly elongated “bounce.”’¹⁰⁴ Baillot also refers to a *sustained détaché* and *détaché with pressure*, the former played with no separation between notes while the latter ‘separates each note by a little silence.’¹⁰⁵ While the description of separation (implying release of bow pressure) may seem at odds with the apparent meaning of *détaché with pressure*, Baillot explains that more bow pressure is placed on the string and less tapering of pressure occurs towards the end of each stroke, but there is still a separation

¹⁰³ Baillot, *The Art of the Violin*, 173-4.

¹⁰⁴ Baillot, *The Art of the Violin*, 186.

¹⁰⁵ Baillot, *The Art of the Violin*, 188.

between notes. Baillot also refers to the staccato stroke as the *articulated détaché* and the ricochet stroke as the *thrown détaché*.

Several treatises throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries make reference to a stroke termed the *French détaché*. However, there is some discrepancy as to whether the stroke is performed with or without a separation during the bow change. Writing in the early twentieth century, Flesch makes reference to Baillot's method. He discusses the *French détaché* stroke 'used exclusively in the Baillot School of the first half of the nineteenth century,' explaining it is performed with a 'slight "break" between the individual notes,' (Fig. 35).¹⁰⁶ It appears the *French détaché* stroke mentioned by Flesch is most similar to Baillot's *grande détaché* (Fig. 34).¹⁰⁷ Notably, Flesch deems this stroke outdated and limited in its scope for expression.¹⁰⁸ Possibly, this was due to the increasing use of off-the-string bouncing strokes (such as spiccato), in first decades of the twentieth century, in instances where a separated *détaché* stroke may previously have been used.



Figure 35. Flesch, *French détaché*.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing*, i, 67.

¹⁰⁷ Louise Goldberg also notes the correlation of Baillot's *grande détaché* to Flesch's *French détaché*. See Baillot, *The Art of the Violin*, 509.

¹⁰⁸ Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing*, i, 67.

¹⁰⁹ Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing*, i, 67.

In 1887, Hermann Schröder (1843-1909) included the term *détaché* under the heading ‘staccato notes,’ and explains it is performed by using ‘short strokes.’¹¹⁰ His musical example appears similar to Flesch’s and Baillot’s examples (Fig. 36).



Figure 36. Schröder, *détaché*. Top line shows the printed notation and the bottom line represents the execution.¹¹¹

Spohr also makes reference to the *French détaché* in his *Violin School* of 1832, just three years before Baillot’s treatise was published. Curiously however, his description appears to contradict Baillot’s description of the *grande détaché*—and Flesch and Schröder’s descriptions of the similar stroke—as it states that there is no separation between the notes. He explains the stroke:

is made with a stiff back-arm,¹¹² and with as long bowings as possible in the upper half of the bow. The notes must be equal in duration and force, and join each other without letting an unequal stop, gap or rest,¹¹³ be observed at the changing of the bowing. This bowing is at all times understood when no marks for bowing are given.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ Schröder, *Die Kunst des Violinspiels*, (Cologne: P.J. Tonger, 1887), 71. ‘Kurze Striche.’ My translation.

¹¹¹ Schröder, *Die Kunst des Violinspiels*, 71.

¹¹² This clearly implies only the fore-arm is to be used. In a sentence immediately following the translation reads ‘steady back-arm.’

¹¹³ In the 1850 edition by John Bishop the passage ‘unequal stop, gap or rest’ reads ‘no break or chasm.’ See Spohr, *Violin School*, ed. John Bishop (London: Rocks & Co., 1850), 118.

¹¹⁴ Spohr, *Violin School*, 116.

It appears most likely that Spohr's description of the *French détaché* is in fact closer to Baillot's *sustained détaché*. Interestingly, Spohr's direction not to allow an 'unequal stop, gap or rest' in the *French détaché* is absent from the 1878 edition of Spohr's *Violin School*, edited by Henry Holmes.¹¹⁵ This omission suggests Holmes may have been attempting to avoid the confusion.

In their *Violin School* Joachim and Moser describe what appears to be the same stroke as Spohr's *French détaché*, yet they call it the *fore-arm stroke*. Their description is very similar to Spohr's; the stroke is performed with only the forearm in the upper half of the bow. Like Spohr they emphasize that:

no breaks take place in the strokes, which must follow one another evenly and smoothly; also no pauses nor rough sounds occur in changing from the one stroke to the other.¹¹⁶

Kross, whose *The Art of Bowing* was published in 1904, one year earlier than Joachim's and Moser's *Violin School*, also categorizes the same stroke under the heading 'fore-arm bowing, with smooth change, also called *détaché*.'¹¹⁷ Notably, he only uses the term *détaché* to describe the stroke throughout the remainder of the treatise. Schröder also describes a similar stroke 'where the bow change is performed without stopping or noticeably pausing' and which is 'not represented by any symbol in particular.'¹¹⁸ He terms this stroke 'sliding

¹¹⁵ Spohr, *Spohr's Violin School*, ed. Henry Holmes (London: Boosey & Co., 1878). The corresponding passage reads: 'This is the plain detached bowing, called by the French *détaché*, in which every note receives a separate stroke. When employed as in the present instance, each stroke is made with a full quarter of the upper division of the bow.'

¹¹⁶ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, i, 35.

¹¹⁷ Kross, *The Art of Bowing*, 3.

¹¹⁸ Schröder, *Die Kunst des Violinspiels*, 70. 'Ohne Aufenthalt und ohne merkliche Pausen geschieht,' and 'bei welchem keine besondere Bezeichnung vorgeschrieben steht.' My translation.

movements (*portamento*)¹¹⁹ and categorizes it under a general section of ‘*Legato* bowstrokes.’ Flesch also explains what is clearly the same stroke, terming it the *détaché* (as distinct from the *French détaché*), and noting the stroke is performed without a ‘longer or shorter (*consciously carried out*) stopping of the bow.’¹²⁰

Other nineteenth-century German treatises do not use a specific terminology for what is clearly a *détaché* stroke made without any separation between bow strokes. David merely specifies a ‘sustained bow’ (as opposed to a ‘sharply detached stroke’) under the heading ‘First Bowing-Exercises’ in his *Violin School*,¹²¹ while Hohmann describes a ‘broad lying stroke,’ again contrasted with ‘short, sharp strokes.’¹²²

The term *détaché* and *French détaché*, although clearly associated with Baillot and the French school, appears to have had different meanings throughout the nineteenth century. While in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the term *French détaché* implied for some, such as Schröder and Flesch, a distinct separation between bow strokes, for Spohr, writing in the same decade as Baillot, *French détaché* was a stroke performed without separation. During the early twentieth century it seems the term *détaché*, used by itself, gradually came to assume its currently accepted meaning.

Spiccato, Sautillé and Martelé

Again, due to the diverse terminology used throughout the nineteenth century to define these bow strokes, it is useful to clarify the meaning of the

¹¹⁹ Schröder, *Die Kunst des Violinspiels*, 70. ‘Der getragene Vortrag (das *Portamento*).’ My translation.

¹²⁰ Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing*, i, 66. Flesch’s italics.

¹²¹ David, *Violin School*, i, 17.

¹²² Hohmann, *Praktische Violinschule*, 41. ‘Liegenden und mit kurzen, scharf abgestoßen Strichen.’ My translation.

terms spiccato, sautillé and martelé as they are understood today. Galamian explains the spiccato stroke occurs when:

the bow is dropped from the air and leaves the string again after every note. As far as dropping on the string is concerned, there always has to be an individual impulse for every tone, and because of this there is a definite speed limit beyond which the spiccato becomes impractical.¹²³

Sautillé is defined by Galamian as being “distinguished from spiccato by the fact that there is no individual lifting and dropping of the bow for each note. The task of jumping is left principally to the resiliency of the stick.”¹²⁴

The use of the term martelé has remained more consistent throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and is generally understood as a sharply articulated stroke that remains on the string, with distinct separation between each note. Most nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century treatises appear not to use the term sautillé. In their *Violin School*, Joachim and Moser use the term spiccato generically, at times referring to the stroke now commonly termed sautillé.¹²⁵ Spiccato, it is explained, can be played with varying degrees of shortness, referred to by Joachim as ‘snow, rain and hail.’¹²⁶ As both spiccato and martelé cause the note to be shortened, it follows that many passages in the musical literature could be played with either stroke. Joachim and Moser condone the use of either martelé or spiccato in passages requiring a shorter articulation:

¹²³ Galamian, *Principles of Violin Playing and Teaching*, 75.

¹²⁴ Galamian, *Principles of Violin Playing and Teaching*, 77.

¹²⁵ Other treatises of the time also use the term *spiccato* for what is now known as *sautillé*. See Kross, *The Art of Bowing*, 46-48.

¹²⁶ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 12.

We arrive therefore at two points:

1. That many passages can, without injury to their musical expression, be played martelé as well as spiccato.
2. That in special cases only a very clear conception of the true nature of the piece can decide whether the “hammered” [martelé] or “springing” bow stroke [spiccato] is the proper one to employ.¹²⁷

However, Joachim and Moser make it clear that speed is usually the governing factor over the choice of stroke; faster tempos in which martelé is physically impossible are to be played spiccato. Spiccato is appropriate where ‘the musical ideal demands a light, pleasing delivery,’ while martelé should be used where ‘the nature of the theme expresses itself in energy and strict rhythm.’¹²⁸ The examples given by Joachim and Moser appear to advocate performing practices that are generally different to those of the present day (Fig. 37). Such passages are nowadays invariably played with spiccato to achieve short articulation and lightness of character. Yet Joachim and Moser comment:

A violinist who is capable of grasping even to a small extent, the meaning of the Italian word ‘brio’, would not dream of playing the two following themes by Beethoven (Op. 18) with any but the martelé stroke, for the use of another kind of bowing would deaden the fresh and joyful character of both themes [Fig. 37].¹²⁹

¹²⁷ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, i, 126.

¹²⁸ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 12.

¹²⁹ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 12.

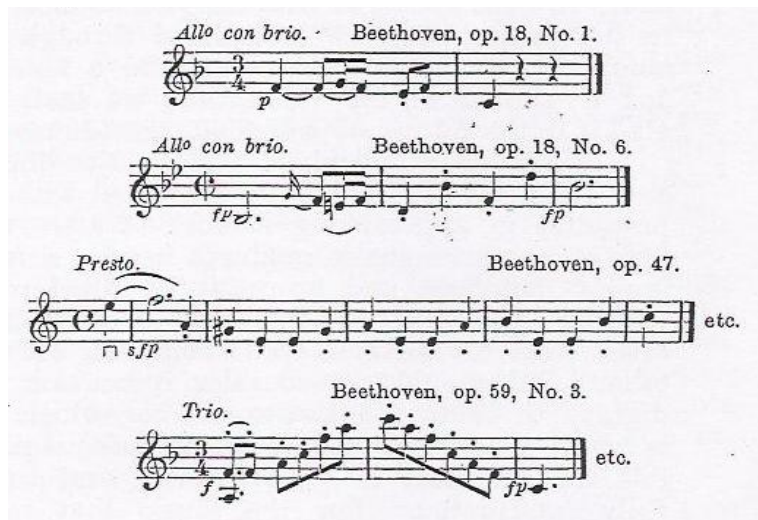


Figure 37. Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, examples of martelé.¹³⁰

Joachim and Moser were far more accepting of the use of spiccato than Spohr. He disparaged it as ‘a showy type of bow stroke which is not appropriate to the dignity of art.’¹³¹ Clearly, Joachim and Moser considered that spiccato had gained importance over martelé since Spohr’s time:

Neither must we forget that Spohr and certain other classical masters of the violin, scorned the use of the spiccato as trivial and altogether unworthy of true art. Fortunately this severe judgment did not exercise any lasting influence, except perhaps in the works of the said composers; on the contrary, the spiccato has so triumphantly survived in unmerited condemnation, that it now plays a much more important part than the martelé in the rendering of classical, romantic and modern compositions. And this is only as it should be for there are hundreds of passages in our magnificent literature of chamber music, which are either totally prohibited by their prescribed tempi from being played martelé, or which if executed with the soft, instead of the springing bow stroke, would

¹³⁰ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 12.

¹³¹ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 12.

acquire such heaviness of expression, that deadly dullness would take place of the intended freshness and vivacity.¹³²

It is puzzling that Joachim and Moser attribute ‘freshness and vivacity’ to spiccato articulation, yet the same stroke is not considered appropriate to capture the ‘fresh and joyful’ character of the passages in Fig. 37. Clearly, it is difficult to make any clear distinction here due to the use of similar terminology in both contexts. It comes as no surprise then that Joachim and Moser state that the choice of stroke is largely governed by taste:

The performer is only rarely enlightened as to whether certain passages, provided with the usual ‘staccato’ marks, should be played martelé or spiccato. Even great artists differ on the point, some using the former where others prefer the latter. Not only that, but the same performer will at one time play at the point of the bow a passage martelé, which on another occasion he will give with the springing bow stroke at the middle of the bow. It is evident from this that in discussing the matter, we must not look upon it as a definite musical point, but rather a question of style and taste.¹³³

In his *Violin School*, David appears to make much more use of martelé than spiccato. Although he does not use the term ‘martelé’ in his ‘explanation of signs,’ the *Keil* denotes ‘firm strokes near the point of the bow.’¹³⁴ This is clearly a description of a martelé stroke. Many of David’s musical examples at moderate to faster pace are notated with *Keils*. Today these would more than likely be played with spiccato strokes (Fig. 38). David describes two other types of shorter

¹³² Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, i, 126.

¹³³ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, i, 126.

¹³⁴ David, *Violin School*, ii, 75. The *Keil* sign is today commonly referred to as a ‘dagger’ or ‘carrot.’

strokes. He terms these the ‘hopping’ (*hüpfende*, abbreviated to *hpfd*) and ‘springing’ (*springende*, abbreviated to *spdg*) bow, yet only gives a short exercise for each.¹³⁵ These are closest to what we now call sautillé and spiccato respectively. A subsequent application of the ‘springing bow’ (spiccato) indicates its use in softer, lighter and more accompanimental textures (Fig. 39). Significantly, the ‘hopping’ and ‘springing’ bow strokes are introduced towards the end of the second volume, suggesting that for the majority of the *Violin School*, short notes were intended to be played with the martelé stroke.



Figure 38. David, *Violin School*, martelé.¹³⁶

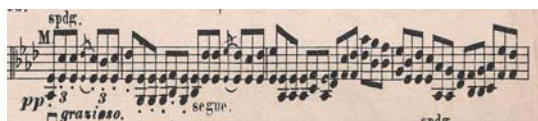


Figure 39. David, *Violin School*, *springende* (spiccato).¹³⁷

Later nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century treatises provide evidence of an increasing use of the spiccato stroke. These give it equal, if not more consideration than the martelé stroke. In his *Kunst des Violinspiels*, Schröder

¹³⁵ David, *Violin School*, ii, 40.

¹³⁶ David, *Violin School*, ii, 12.

¹³⁷ David, *Violin School*, ii, 58.

gives a only a brief and literal description of the martelé stroke as ‘pounded’ or ‘hammered.’¹³⁸ The spiccato stroke, on the other hand, is replete with fuller explanation and examples. Although most examples are of faster passages during which martelé is well nigh impossible, spiccato is advocated in two instances where martelé would conceivably have been suggested by David (Fig. 40a and 40b, bars 1-8).¹³⁹ Kross describes spiccato as ‘producing one of the most charming of tonal effects which the violin is capable of.’¹⁴⁰ Four pages of exercises are prescribed for perfecting the spiccato, while the martelé is allotted only two pages. Frustratingly, few musical clues as to their appropriate application are given. In contrast to Schröder and Kross, Hohmann describes the martelé stroke early in his treatise as ‘short abrupt strokes’ at the middle and point of the bow.¹⁴¹ Off-the-string bowing, termed ‘spring-bowing,’ (and clearly indicating sautillé rather than spiccato), is not touched upon until much later. This would suggest the majority of notes marked with staccato dots before this point in the treatise are intended to be played martelé. Curiously, the term ‘spiccato’ is not used at all.

While Schröder’s and Kross’s texts appear to confirm Joachim’s declaration that by the early twentieth century spiccato was more frequently practised than martelé throughout Germany, Hohmann’s treatise indicates that martelé was still commonly used instead of spiccato.

¹³⁸ Schröder, *Die Kunst die Violinspiels*, 56. ‘Pochend, gehämmert.’ My translation.

¹³⁹ Schröder, *Die Kunst die Violinspiels*, 72-3.

¹⁴⁰ Kross, *The Art of Bowing*, 46.

¹⁴¹ Hohmann, *Praktische Violinschule*, 41. ‘In der Mitte an der Spitz mit kurzen, scharf abgestoßenen Strichen.’ My translation.



Figure 40a. Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 18 No. 5, third movement, bars 33 to 36, first violin.¹⁴²



Figure 40b. Beethoven, Sonata for Pianoforte and Violin, Op. 24, third movement, bars 1 to 13.¹⁴³

During the late nineteenth century the term *leggiero* often appears to have implied spiccato bowing.¹⁴⁴ For example, Schröder refers to ‘leichter bogen’ [lighter bowing], and notes its use in ‘moderate and fast eighth- and sixteenth-note figures in *Leggiero*.’¹⁴⁵ Brahms uses this term many times in his compositions, likely to indicate spiccato (Figs. 41a-d) or even sautillé when the tempo is faster (Fig. 41e).

¹⁴² Schröder, *Kunst des Violinspiels*, 71.

¹⁴³ Schröder, *Kunst des Violinspiels*, 72.

¹⁴⁴ Brown, “Joachim’s Violin Playing,” in Musgrave and Sherman, *Performing Brahms*, 79.

¹⁴⁵ Schröder, *Die Kunst des Violinspiels*, 71. ‘Diese strichart wird größtenteils zu mässigen und schnellen Achtel- und Sechszehntelfiguren im *Leggiero* angewandt.’ Author’s translation.



Figure 41a. Brahms, Sonata Op. 78, third movement, bars 33 to 36.¹⁴⁶



Figure 41b. Brahms, Piano Trio Op. 8 (revised version), second movement, bars 1 to 24.¹⁴⁷



Figure 41c. Brahms, Piano Trio Op. 87, fourth movement, bars 54 to 66.¹⁴⁸



Figure 41d. Brahms, String Quartet Op. 51 No. 2, third movement, bars 40 to 51.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁶ Brahms, *Sonaten für Klavier und Violine*, violin part, 10.

¹⁴⁷ Brahms, *Klaviertrios*, violin part (München: G. Henle Verlag, 2000), 6.

¹⁴⁸ Brahms, *Klaviertrio*, 22.



Figure 41e. Brahms Violin Concerto Op. 77, third movement, bars 35 to 46.¹⁵⁰

If the passages marked *leggero*, such as those in the aforementioned examples by Brahms, were to be played *spiccato* or *sautillé*, this may imply that Brahms intended passages of a more assertive character (marked with staccato dots) to be played *martelé*. When the passages are at a moderate tempo (Figs. 42a and b), *martelé* may be most appropriate. Places marked *marcato* appear also to call for the *martelé* stroke (Figs. 42c and d). When the tempo and note values are faster, either *martelé* or *spiccato* may be appropriate (Figs. 42f-i).



Figure 42a. Brahms String Quartet Op. 51 No. 2, fourth movement, bars 22 to 31.¹⁵¹



¹⁴⁹ Brahms, *Streichquartette Opus 51*, violin I part (München: G. Henle Verlag, 2007), 25.

¹⁵⁰ Brahms, *Konzert in D-Dur für Violine und Orchestra Op. 77*, violin part (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2006), 14.

¹⁵¹ Brahms, *Streichquartette Opus 51*, violin I part, 26.

Figure 42b. Brahms, Piano Quartet Op. 60, fourth movement, bars 32 to 37.¹⁵²

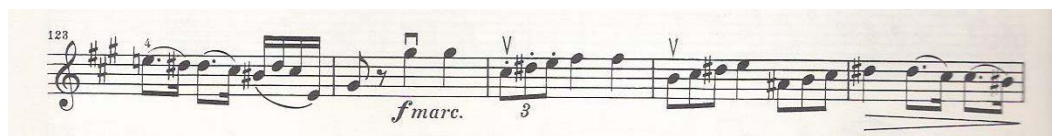


Figure 42c. Brahms, Violin Sonata Op. 100, first movement, bars 123 to 27.¹⁵³



Figure 42d. Brahms, String Quartet Op. 51 No. 1, first movement, bars 127 to 130.¹⁵⁴

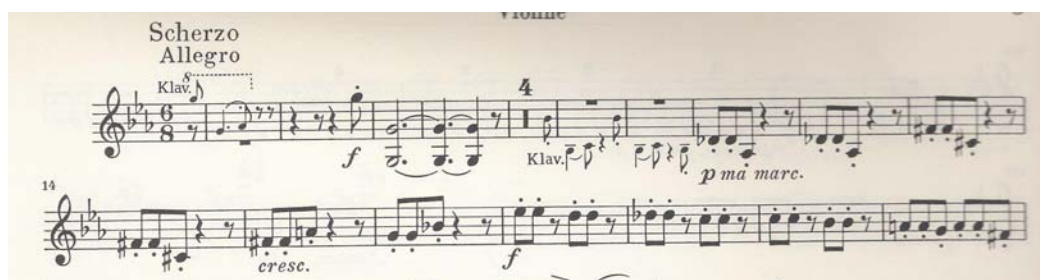


Figure 42e. Brahms, Piano Quartet Op. 60, second movement, bars 1 to 20.¹⁵⁵



Figure 42f. Brahms, String Quartet Op. 67, first movement, bars 1 to 8.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵² Brahms, *Klavierquartett c-moll Opus 60*, violin part (München: G. Henle Verlag, 2002), 10.

¹⁵³ Brahms, *Sonaten für Klavier und Violine*, violin part, 15.

¹⁵⁴ Brahms, *Streichquartette Opus 51*, violin I part, 5.

¹⁵⁵ Brahms, *Klavierquartett c-moll Opus 60*, violin part, 5.

¹⁵⁶ Brahms, *Streichquartette B-dur Opus 67*, violin part (München: G. Henle Verlag 2007), 1.

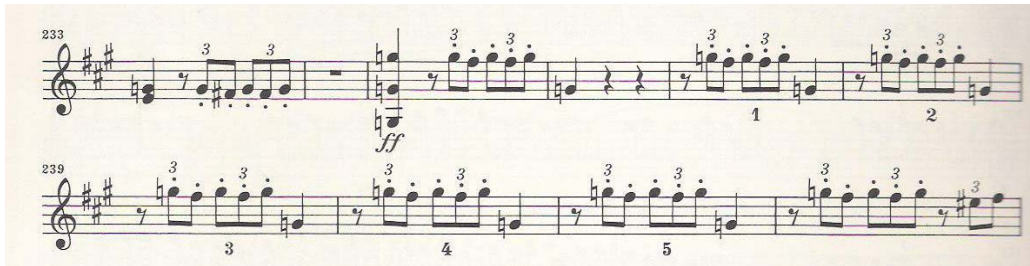


Figure 42g. Brahms, Piano Quartet Op. 26, first movement, bars 233 to 242.¹⁵⁷

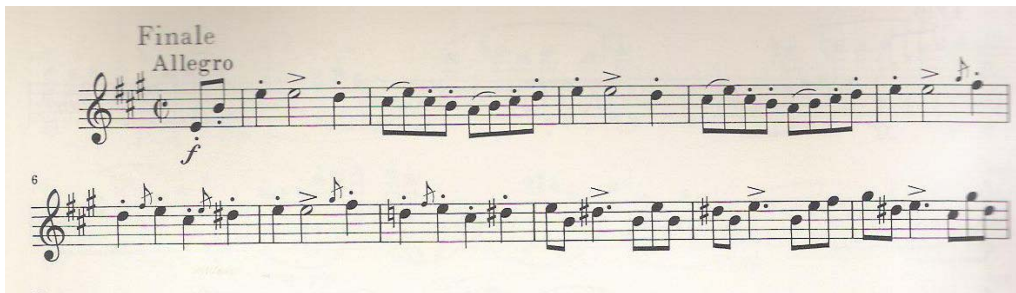


Figure 42h. Brahms, Piano Quartet Op. 26, fourth movement, bars 1 to 11.¹⁵⁸

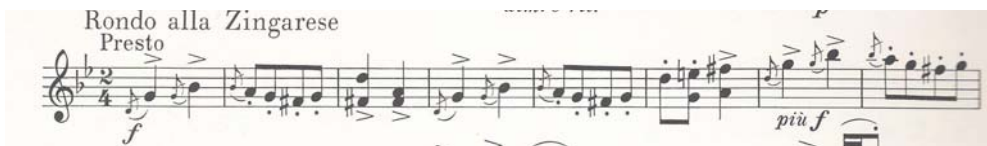


Figure 42i. Brahms, Piano Quartet Op. 25, fourth movement, bars 1 to 8.¹⁵⁹

Staccato and Portato

The up-bow staccato was clearly favoured by the German school. Spohr explains that ‘the [up-bow] staccato, if done well, produces a brilliant effect, and is one of the principal ornaments of Solo Playing.’¹⁶⁰ Evidently, this opinion held strong throughout the nineteenth century. In 1904 Kross echoes Spohr, stating that ‘staccato [up or down-bow staccato] is the boldest and most brilliant bowing

¹⁵⁷ Brahms, *Klavierquartett A-dur Opus 26*, violin I part (München, G. Henle Verlag, 2002), 6.

¹⁵⁸ Brahms, *Klavierquartett A-dur Opus 26*, violin I part, 14.

¹⁵⁹ Brahms, *Klavierquartett g-moll Opus 25*, violin part (München: G. Henle Verlag, 2001), 16.

¹⁶⁰ Spohr, *Violin School*, 118.

on the violin, and one of the finest ornaments in solo playing.¹⁶¹ Up-bow staccato (referred to by Joachim and Moser as ‘staccato serioso,’ ‘staccato volante’ or ‘flying staccato’)¹⁶² was generally used for fast scalar passages, written especially for this stroke (Fig. 43).

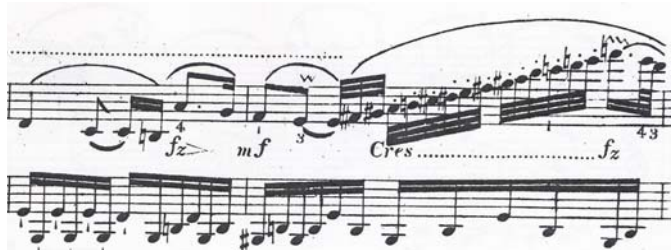


Figure 43. Spohr, Violin Concerto No. 9, *Adagio*, bars 27 to 28.¹⁶³

However, Joachim and Moser note that ‘there are cases, usually connected with bow division, where spiccato cannot be conveniently used, and where the spiccato volante [staccato volante] may take its place with admirable results.’¹⁶⁴ This was evidently the case. For example, David chooses up-bow staccato over spiccato in the first movement of Beethoven’s String Quartet Op. 18. No. 4 (Fig. 44). Interestingly, on a recording made in 1927 the Rosé Quartet plays this passage with a *detaché* stroke (See Fig. 61 below).



¹⁶¹ Kross, *The Art of Bowing*, 36.

¹⁶² Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, i, 128.

¹⁶³ Spohr, *Violin School*, 213.

¹⁶⁴ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, i, 128.

Figure 44. Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 18 No. 4, first movement, first violin, bars 20 to 23.¹⁶⁵

Portato stroke or articulation refers to instances where two or more notes marked with staccato dots under a slur, are separated with the bow. While the notation appears the same as for up or down-bow staccato (both notated by staccato dots under a slur), pedagogical texts describe a clear difference. Rather than short, sharp strokes, portato articulation calls for smoother, longer strokes. That is, as close to legato as possible, but without being legato. This similarity of notational practice caused certain confusion during the nineteenth century. For example, while working on his Violin Concerto in 1879, Brahms reacted against Joachim's suggested markings:

With what right, since when and on what authority do you violinists write the sign for portamento [portato] (. . .) where it does not mean that? You mark the octave passages in the Rondo (. .) and I would put sharp strokes . Does it have to be so? Until now I have not given in to the violinists, and have also not adopted their damned lines _ _ . Why then should . . mean anything else to us than it did to Beethoven?¹⁶⁶

Clearly, Brahms assumed that dots under a slur would naturally be interpreted as portato. Joachim attempts to clarify the situation by alerting Brahms to the fact that dots under a slur have traditionally signified up-bow staccato to violinist-composers. He suggests the tenuto line as a solution explaining:

¹⁶⁵ Ludwig van Beethoven, *String Quartet Op. 18 No. 4*, violin I part, ed. F. David, (Leipzig: Peters, 1867), 29.

¹⁶⁶ Letter of May 1879, *Johannes Brahms Briefwechsel VI*, 246-47.

All violinists since Paganini and Spohr, Rode, etc., mark staccato, if it is to be made in one bowstroke, thus [Figs. 45a and b]. I don't think Viotti yet knew this. It means merely as far as the bow goes, in one stroke [Ex. 45c]. It is true since the great majority of composers were (and are) chiefly or wholly pianists, that confusion in the present manner of marking things is unavoidable, for that reason it seemed a good idea for us violinists to write portamento [portato] thus [Fig. 45d]. But I would naturally have had to mark the second main theme in the last movement of your concerto in any case; for I have always played it short and energetic. I thought the rest was sufficient to show that.¹⁶⁷



Figure 45a, b, c and d. Annotations included in Joachim's letter to Brahms, 1879.

Certainly, before this letter, Brahms wanted portato articulation wherever he notates dots under a slur.¹⁶⁸ However, his later chamber compositions show clearly that he continued this notation and did not adopt the tenuto line as a regular practice. It is therefore likely he expected the following passages to be played portato (Fig. 46). While Brahms does not state how long the notes with

¹⁶⁷ Letter of May 1879, *Johannes Brahms Briefwechsel VI*, 163-64.

¹⁶⁸ Brahms did not make use of the up-bow staccato technique in any of his string compositions.

portato articulation should be played, his reference to tenuto lines implies a detachment that is very slight or brief (as close to legato as possible).

The image displays seven musical excerpts from Johannes Brahms's compositions, illustrating portato articulation. Each excerpt is written for violin (Vln) and includes specific performance markings and articulation symbols.

- Excerpt 1:** Sonata Op. 78, 1st Mvt., b. 29-33. Shows a series of chords with tenuto lines and a slight detachment.
- Excerpt 2:** 3rd Mvt., b. 8-9 and 3rd Mvt., b. 63-64. Features eighth-note patterns with tenuto lines.
- Excerpt 3:** Sonata Op. 100, 1st Mvt., b. 83-85. Includes a triplet of eighth notes.
- Excerpt 4:** 1st Mvt., b. 146-7 and Scherzo WoO 2, b. 99-112. Shows triplet patterns and a dynamic marking of *f espressivo*.
- Excerpt 5:** Violin Concerto Op. 77, 2nd Mvt., b. 105-6. Includes a *dim.* marking and dynamic accents (<f>).
- Excerpt 6:** 2nd Mvt., b. 113-16. Features a *p* marking and a sixteenth-note triplet.

Figure 46. Brahms, examples of portato articulation.

Notable exceptions where Brahms did use tenuto lines under slurs, instead of staccato dots under slurs, were clearly the result of Joachim's influence. For example, from bars 1 to 16 in the third movement of the Violin Sonata Op. 108, the first edition contains staccato dots under slurs, but in the separate violin part tenuto lines are marked instead (Fig. 47). In the third movement of the Violin Concerto Op. 77, tenuto lines are used to denote a longer dotted quaver as distinct from the preceding articulation (Keils) that indicates a short, sharp attack (Fig. 48).



Figure 47. Brahms, Sonata Op. 108, third movement, bars 1 to 24.¹⁶⁹



Figure 48. Brahms, Violin Concerto Op. 77, third movement, bars 58 to 64.¹⁷⁰

Other written evidence fails to clarify the length of notes (presumably longer than staccato) marked portato. Nor is there clear indication of the point at which portato articulation begins to be interpreted as a shorter (staccato) stroke. Clearly, the degree of separation was determined by the context of the passage.

¹⁶⁹ Brahms, *Sonaten für Klavier und Violine*, violin part, 27.

¹⁷⁰ Brahms, *Konzert in D-Dur für Violine und Orchester*, violin part (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2006), 15.

While the up-bow staccato is commonly used for faster passages, it remains difficult to determine in slower passages how much separation actually took place when notes were marked portato. Given the general legato approach of the German violin school, it is likely that portato articulation was interpreted with significantly more length than it is generally today.

Although Spohr did not discuss portato, he clearly made use of this type of articulation (Fig. 49a and b). The slow tempo of the excerpts in both examples (quaver = 76 and quaver = 88 respectively) suggests perhaps that a more legato articulation may be musically appropriate. Yet, the degree of separation and articulation in such contexts is impossible to determine from the score alone.

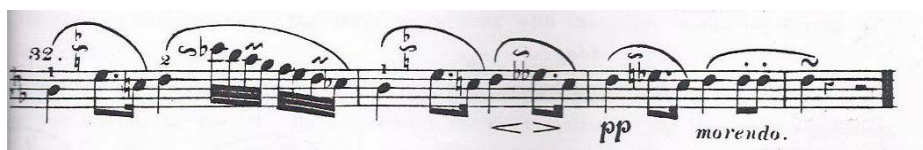


Figure. 49a. Spohr, *Violin School*, No. 64, bars 32 to 35, showing implied portato in bar 34.¹⁷¹

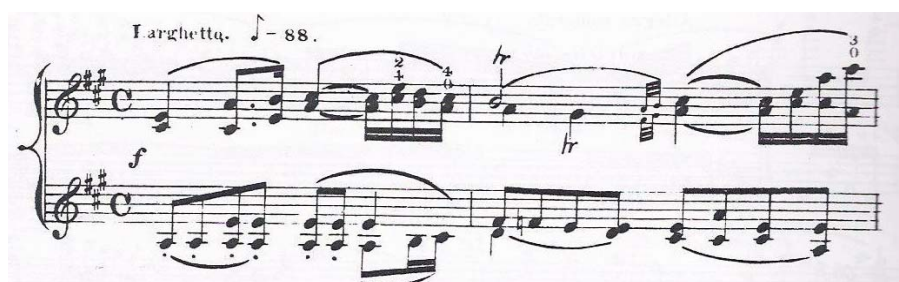


Figure 49b. Spohr, *Violin School*, No. 66, Var. 7, showing implied portato in first bar of the lower staff.¹⁷²

¹⁷¹ Spohr, *Violin School*, 157.

¹⁷² Spohr, *Violin School*, 173.

Joachim and Moser include more discussion than Spohr of the portato as a stroke. Although the term ‘portato’ is not used, they describe a ‘gentle separation of the notes’ that is ‘neither too sharp or too dull’ (Fig. 50).¹⁷³ Curiously, they note the separation is achieved by a lift and fall of the bow on the string.¹⁷⁴ It is unclear whether the bow hair leaves the string altogether, or whether it stays in contact with the string while the stick itself undulates due the pulsing action of the fingers on the stick, creating the ‘gentle’ articulation. Given the propensity for sustained legato, the latter appears more likely.

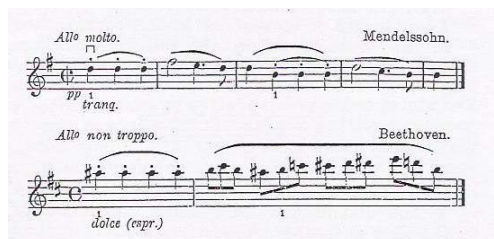


Figure 50. Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii.¹⁷⁵

In summation, based on Joachim’s and Moser’s comments, the degree of separation for portato articulation that actually occurred in performance throughout the nineteenth century remains in question. Concerning other strokes, written sources throughout this period indicate strongly that martelé was used more frequently than it is today.¹⁷⁶ Yet spiccato evidently became more prominent towards the end of the nineteenth century than it was earlier. Written sources do not clearly illustrate the context and factors that governed the use

¹⁷³ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 14.

¹⁷⁴ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 14.

¹⁷⁵ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 14.

¹⁷⁶ Brown, “Joachim’s Violin Playing,” 84.

and execution of these strokes. For further clarification, the evidence and implications of early recordings is imperative.

Recorded Evidence

Early recorded evidence reveals that while a legato style of bowing certainly dominated late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century performance by string players trained in the German violin school, it would seem that the attitude towards off-the-string strokes and degree of articulation varied within movements, between players in the same ensemble, and indeed from ensemble to ensemble.

Tone Shading

Striking examples of tone shading can be heard in the recordings of Soldat-Roeger made c.1926. Her use of this expressive technique appears to agree with the advice advocated in nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century treatises (discussed above, see Figs. 32 and 33). The sound quality of Soldat-Roeger's recordings, notably clearer than in the recordings made by Joachim, is of sufficient quality to allow her tone shading to be clearly audible. Additionally, the deft use of fingerings,¹⁷⁷ vibrato and portamento (see vibrato and portamento chapters), adds another dimension to the shading of her sound, while frequent rubato and agogic accentuation enhances the expressive quality of her performance. These factors combine to give a sound that is noticeably more varied and nuanced than what is considered normal today.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁷ Fingerings govern what string a passage is to be played on. As each string has a unique tone colour the choice of fingering ultimately affects tone shading.

¹⁷⁸ This is not to suggest that players today do not inflect their sound and play with tone shading. However, from these early recordings it appears there was more focus on creating a greater

Unfortunately, without the aid of visual images of Soldat-Roeger's playing it is not possible to describe precisely how she achieves tone shading in her recordings—in other words to decipher the precise degree of speed, weight, or contact point of the bow used throughout each phrase in a work. However, it is possible to hear the constantly fluctuating dynamic level, seemingly achieved by frequently varying the speed, weight, and contact point of the bow. Importantly, this fluctuation of dynamic level appears to be more frequent and exaggerated than might be expected in playing of today. In Schumann's *Abendlied*, the sound is constantly and dramatically inflected (Fig. 51). For example, the diminuendo in bar 3 is very sudden and pronounced. In bar 3 after the peak of the phrase on the a ♭" at an approximate mezzo forte dynamic, the following g" is played pianissimo and is tapered, fading to silence (as if played *morendo*). A dramatic diminuendo like this is used at the ends of phrases in several instances, such as in bars 6, 11 (beat 4), 15, 18 (beat 4), 20 and 27. Soldat-Roeger creates many expressive swells, similar to a *messa di voce* effect, that occur during a single note (annotated in Fig. 51 as crescendo-decrescendo hairpins, for example, bar 5, 9, 11, 14 and 28). In such instances—as well as during broader crescendos or diminuendos—Soldat-Roeger often uses vibrato, portamento, rubato or agogic accent (or a combination of these), to give an expressive emphasis.

array of colour with the bow, rather than primarily with the vibrato as is often the case today. Furthermore, the use of other factors, such as portamento, a narrow and infrequent vibrato and rhythmic freedom results in a highly inflected interpretation, very different from what we are accustomed to hearing today.

Soldat-Roeger's tone shading

(Mit Verschiebung.) *p*

Printed dynamics

6

11 *fp*

17 *tr*

22 *fp*

26 *pp*

Figure 51. Schumann, *Abendlied*. Annotated score showing Soldat-Roeger's use of tone shading (above staff).¹⁷⁹ [CD 3 Track 11: 00:00-02:58].

¹⁷⁹ The annotated score in Fig. 20 gives a visual representation of the frequency of Soldat-Roeger's use of tone shading *with the bow* that results in a noticeable change in dynamic level. The dynamic signs do not indicate the precise degree of crescendo and diminuendo; clearly some dynamic levels are more pronounced than others. The dynamic signs also do not account for other factors such as the use of vibrato, portamento, rubato or agogic accent that might enhance a sudden dynamic change. As the edition Soldat-Roeger used for the recording is unknown, it is possible her score included different printed dynamics. Nevertheless, it is unlikely they would have differed significantly from the dynamics printed here. Score: Robert Schumann, *Robert*

Importantly, Soldat-Roeger's recordings of slow movements of other works, such as the *Adagio* from Spohr's Ninth Violin Concerto and Bach's *Air* from the Orchestral Suite BWV 1068, reveal a similar style of tone shading, as does Joachim's recording of his *Romance* in C.

Bowstrokes

Détaché

Early recordings of German string players reveal that notes without any slur or articulation markings (*détaché* notes) were often played, as they are today, on the string with a bow change that is as smooth as possible. Notably however, *détaché* passages that would undoubtedly in modern performance be played *spiccato* were often also played *détaché*.¹⁸⁰ For example, in a recording (1927) of the first movement of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 74, the Rosé Quartet plays the quavers in bars 70 and 71 of the exposition with *détaché* strokes (Fig. 52).

Schumann's Werke Serie VI: Für 1 oder 2 Pianoforte zu 4 Händen, ed. Clara Schumann (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1887), 47.

¹⁸⁰ For example, see *The Late String Quartets*, Takács Quartet, Decca 470849-2 (2004); Alban Berg Quartet (1989): <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UPBvS4Pj2HM>; *Middle Beethoven Quartets*, Tokyo String Quartet, RCA Victor Red Seal RD60975 (1991); Members of the Perlman Music Program (2012): <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U1jEYFNhlx8>;

The image shows a musical score for four string instruments: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The tempo is marked '(Allegro)'. The key signature is two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and the time signature is common time (C). The music features a dynamic contrast between fortissimo (*f*) and sfzando (*sf*). The Violin I and Violin II parts have a melodic line with a half note followed by a triplet of eighth notes. The Viola and Violoncello parts have a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes.

Figure 52. Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 74, first movement, bars 70 to 71. [CD 4 Track 1: 02:59-03:03].

At the opening of the fourth movement of Smetana's String Quartet No. 1 (recorded 1928) the Bohemian Quartet play the triplet quavers that are printed without staccato dots, on the string. This was likely to enhance the fortissimo dynamic. Today, at such a fast tempo (*vivace*) most ensembles would undoubtedly play this passage with off-the-string strokes. When the quavers are printed with dots at bar 25, the Bohemian Quartet plays off the string with a spiccato stroke (Fig. 53).

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a string quartet. The first system, labeled 'Vivace (detaché)', covers bars 1 to 3. It includes staves for Violin I (Vln I), Violin II (Vln II), Viola (Vla), and Violoncello (Vlc). The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 2/4. The first violin part begins with a forte (ff) dynamic and a sforzando (sf) accent, followed by a triplet of eighth notes. The other instruments also play triplet patterns. The second system, labeled '(spiccato)', covers bars 25 to 28. It features a first violin part starting with a sforzando (sf) dynamic and a piano (p) dynamic, followed by a triplet of eighth notes. The other instruments continue with their respective triplet patterns.

Figure 53. Smetana, String Quartet No. 1, fourth movement, bars 1 to 3 and 25 to 28. Bohemian String Quartet. [CD 3 Track 9: 00:00-00:04 (bars 1 to 4); 00:24-00:28 (bars 25 to 28)].

Passages marked with staccato dots were also often played on the string. On the 1922 recording of the second movement of Brahms's String Quartet Op.

67, the Grete-Eweler Quartet plays demisemiquavers détaché, without separation (Fig. 53).

Figure 53. Brahms, String Quartet Op. 67, second movement, bar 30, Grete-Eweler Quartet. [CD 4 Track 2: 02:27-02:32].

Yet, it is evident that the length of the détaché stroke varied according to the musical context. For instance, when the quaver figuration (see Fig. 52) returns in bars 246 to 247 of the recapitulation of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 74 (recorded 1927), the Rosé Quartet interpolates the quavers with more separation than can be found in the exposition. Earlier, the quavers, marked *piano* from bars 35 to 42 of the exposition, are played with spiccato strokes.

Interestingly, minuet style movements appear particularly to have elicited a varying degree of separation for détaché notes. In the Klingler Quartet's recording (1912/13) of the Menuetto from Mozart's String Quartet K. 421, we hear the opening theme in bar 3 of the first violin part played with martelé

strokes, with distinct separation of the crotchets. Yet in bar 5 the crotchets are only slightly separated. In bar 7 the crotchets are played as basic *détaché*, but with a subtle accentuation of each note. In each recurrence of this theme throughout the movement, the articulation is similarly varied (Fig. 54). In the Klingler Quartet's recording (1912/13) of the *Menuetto* from Mozart's String Quartet K. 428, the three *détaché* crotchets in bars 11 and 13 of the first violin part are played with separation.

The image displays a musical score for the first violin part of Mozart's Menuetto (Allegretto) from String Quartet K. 421. It is divided into three systems. The first system shows bars 1-5, with a 'written' staff and a 'played' staff. The 'played' staff includes a dynamic marking 'f' and a 'martelé' marking. The second system shows bars 6-10, with a 'played' staff and a 'martelé' marking. The third system shows bars 11-15, with a 'played' staff and markings for 'released détaché' and 'legato détaché'. The score is in 3/4 time and features a key signature of one flat.

Figure 54. Mozart, String Quartet K. 421, Menuetto, bars 1 to 10, Klingler Quartet. [CD 3 Track 7: 00:00-00:13].

Clearly the propensity for off-the-string strokes in *détaché* passages (even at slower or moderate tempos) increased throughout the early decades of the twentieth century. On the Prisca Quartet's 1935 recording of the Menuetto from Mozart's String Quartet K. 428, the players interpolate *détaché* crotchets with a greater contrast of strokes than the Klingler Quartet. Bars 21 and 59 are played

martelé clearly to reflect the louder dynamic, while the lighter character of bars 11 and 13 is enhanced with a very short spiccato stroke (Fig. 55).

The image shows a musical score for the first movement of Mozart's String Quartet K. 428, titled '(Menuetto. Allegro)'. The score is in 3/4 time and features four staves: Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Cello (Vcl.). The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score is divided into two sections: bars 11-13 and bar 21. In the first section (bars 11-13), the Violin I part is marked 'spiccato' and the other parts are marked 'spiccato' or 'martelé'. In the second section (bar 21), the Violin I part is marked 'martelé', the Violin II part is marked 'martelé', the Viola part is marked 'martelé', and the Cello part is marked 'f martelé'.

Figure 55. Mozart, String Quartet K. 428, Menuetto, bars 11 to 13 and 21. Prisca Quartet. [CD 4 Track 3: 00:14-00:18 (bars 11 to 13); 00:27-00:29 (bar 21)].

Again, the Prisca Quartet uses a great variety of articulation in the Trio section of the Menuetto (third movement) from Schubert's String Quartet D. 46 (recorded 1927). Quavers marked *pianissimo* and with staccato dots are played with a spiccato stroke. In a more lyrical context, even at a *piano* dynamic, quavers are played with a *détaché* stroke. At fortissimo dynamic quavers are played *détaché* with a slight separation and accent (but not as short and accented as *martelé*). Within these parameters the shortness of the articulation—even within the spiccato stroke itself—is clearly varied to reflect the particular character of the passage (Fig. 56). Today, these passages would commonly be played off the string and spiccato.

99 Trio

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vcl.

f

decresc.

pp

pp

pp

pp

spiccato

spiccato

spiccato

spiccato

105

détaché

détaché

détaché

spiccato

détaché

détaché

détaché

112

détaché, separated

détaché

détaché

détaché, separated

détaché

détaché

2

118

spiccato

détaché

ff

détaché, separated, accented

ff

ff

124

détaché, separated, accented

détaché, separated, accented

128

détaché, separated, accented

spiccato

Figure 56. Schubert, String Quartet D. 46, third movement, bars 128 to 132. Prisca Quartet. [CD 4 Track 4: 01:53-02:38].

Similarly, the Klingler Quartet uses different articulation for *détaché* notes apparently in reaction to the dynamic level as well as to give variety to a repeated motive. In the *Menuetto* of Haydn's Quartet Op. 64 No. 5 (recorded 1912/13), the notes in bars 57 to 58 (marked forte) are played *détaché*, while for

the repeat of these two bars, from bars 59 to 60 (marked *piano*), the same notes are played spiccato.

These differences of strokes, even within one statement of a theme, clearly demonstrate that performers did not necessarily adhere steadfastly to rules, or to uniform articulation. Rather, the variation of articulation to reflect and/or enhance the character of the music, especially for repeated material, was clearly of great artistic importance.

Spiccato and Martelé

Comparison between different nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century editions of the same work often reveals striking discrepancies with regards to the notation of staccato dots. Unfortunately, it is not possible to know with any certainty the editions used by performers on early recordings. Yet it is clear that many editions that were in general circulation at the time show a reasonable resemblance to Urtext editions. For the purposes of this study, it is useful to compare the evidence of early recordings to printed scores in order to assess the actual use of bow strokes.

The recordings of many German ensembles reveal that passages marked with staccato dots were often played martelé, whereas these would normally be played spiccato today. In a 1912/13 recording the Klingler Quartet plays the quavers throughout the *Finale* of Haydn's String Quartet Op. 64 No. 5 with martelé strokes (Fig. 57).

The image shows a musical score for Haydn's String Quartet Op. 64 No. 5, Finale, bars 29 to 31. The score is in 2/4 time, marked (Vivace) and b.29. It features four staves: Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., and Vlc. The first violin part (Vln. I) is marked with 'f' and 'sf' dynamics and 'martelé' articulation. The second violin part (Vln. II) plays a semiquaver accompaniment. The viola (Vla.) and cello (Vlc.) parts are marked with rests.

Figure 57. Haydn, String Quartet Op. 64 No. 5, Finale, bars 29 to 31. Klingler Quartet. [CD 4 Track 5: 00:30-00:32].

The first violinist of the Prisca Quartet uses a martelé stroke for the semiquaver accompaniment in the second movement of Haydn's String Quartet Op. 76 No. 3 (particularly from bars 29 to 40) where violinists today would use a spiccato stroke. Likewise, the Brüder-Post Quartet plays the quavers in the Trio of Boccherini's Minuet from the String Quintet in E G275 martelé, as well as in the second movement of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 18 No. 2. In the Finale of Schumann's Piano Quartet Op. 47, the violinist and violist of the Elly Ney Trio use martelé stroke for the quavers from bars 8 to 18. In bars 62 to 63 of the first movement of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 18 No. 4, the Rosé Quartet plays the staccato quavers longer and more on the string than would be the case today. Similarly, the first variation of the fourth movement of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 74, marked *sempre fe staccato*, is played entirely martelé by the Rosé Quartet (Fig. 58). The Gewandhaus Quartet plays the seventh movement of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 131 (effectively a dotted rhythm) as a hooked

stroke on the string, and most likely performed in the upper half of the bow. Today, this passage would commonly be played in the lower half of the bow and off the string.

(Allegretto con Variazioni)
Var I b.20

Vln. I *sempre f e staccato*

Vln. II *sempre f e staccato*

Vla. *sempre f e staccato*

Vlc. *sempre f e staccato*

Figure 58. Beethoven String Quartet Op. 74, fourth movement, bars 20 to 23, Rosé Quartet. [CD 4 Track 6: 00:28-00:33].

Significantly, on recordings from the 1930s onwards there appears to be an increasing tendency for passages to be played spiccato, instead of martelé. In a 1935 recording of the Finale from Haydn's String Quartet Op. 64 No. 5, the Strub Quartet plays bars 29 to 31 with spiccato strokes, unlike the Klingler Quartet's 1912/13 recording where martelé is used (Fig. 57). In their later recordings however, the Klingler Quartet appears to use spiccato more readily. For example in their 1934/35 recording of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 127 the quavers in bars 28 to 31 of the first movement, and corresponding places throughout, are played spiccato. Yet, the moderate tempo would not prohibit the use of martelé. Despite this apparent propensity towards the use of spiccato in

their later recordings, the Klingler Quartet's style was nevertheless generally more legato than other ensembles of the time. Incidentally, Tully Potter compared the Busch Quartet's recording (1936) with the Klingler Quartet's and thought the latter played with comparatively more legato and less articulated attack.¹⁸¹

Early recordings reveal that both spiccato and martelé strokes were used within the same movement for notes marked with staccato dots. Echoing Joachim's and Moser's advice, it appears martelé was often used for music with louder dynamics and/or more assertive character, while spiccato was used for softer and lighter passages. For example, in certain passages (Fig. 56), the Prisca Quartet plays staccato dots with a great variety of articulation. In the *Menuetto* from Mozart's String Quartet K. 428 (recorded 1935), bars 60 to 61 are played martelé to emphasize the fortissimo dynamic. In bars 17 to 18, and throughout the movement when the dynamic is softer, spiccato is used (Fig. 59).

(Menuetto. Allegro)

b.17-18

b.61-62

Vln. I

(p) spiccato spiccato sf martelé sf martelé

Vln. II

sf sf

Vla.

sf sf

Vlc.

sf sf

¹⁸¹ Tully Potter, liner notes to *The Klingler Quartet 1905-1936; The Joachim Tradition* (Testament, SBT 2136, 1998), 6.

Figure 59. Mozart, String Quartet K.428, Menuetto, bars 17 to 18 and 61 to 62. Prisca Quartet. [CD 4 Track 3: 00:22-00:24 (bars 17 to 18); 01:53-01:55 (bars 61 to 62)].

The Rosé Quartet also displays the use of a variety of articulation in passages marked with staccato dots. In bar 35 of the first movement of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 74 (recorded 1927), the quavers are played spiccato, while in bars 48 to 49 they are played détaché, but slightly separated. Again, in bars 151 to 152 the quavers are played détaché with slight separation, and in bar 153, spiccato. Evidently, in these instances the quavers with melodic contour are played longer while the quavers in the repetitive chordal passages are shorter. Such choices of articulation appear consistent throughout the movement (Fig. 60).

The image shows a musical score for four string instruments: Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vlc.). The score covers three bars, starting at bar 151. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is common time (C).
 - Bar 151: All instruments play a half note. Vln. I has a melodic contour. Dynamics are marked *p*.
 - Bar 152: All instruments play a half note. Vln. I has a melodic contour. Dynamics are marked *cresc.*.
 - Bar 153: Vln. I and Vln. II play eighth notes. Vln. I is marked *détaché* and *spiccato*. Vln. II is marked *spiccato*. Vla. and Vlc. play a half note. Vlc. is marked *pizz.*. Dynamics are marked *p*.

Figure 60. Beethoven String Quartet Op. 74, first movement, bars 151 to 153, Rosé Quartet. [CD 4 Track 1: 05:13-05:18].

When a combination of this melodic and chordal figuration occurs simultaneously in for example bars 20 to 21 of the first movement of

Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 18 No. 4 (recorded 1927), the members of the Rosé Quartet also play with articulation appropriate to the figuration (Fig. 61).

The image shows a musical score for the first movement of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 18 No. 4, specifically bars 20 and 21. The score is arranged in four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is common time (C). The score is divided into two measures. In the first measure, Violin I plays a half note G4, followed by a quarter rest, then a quarter note A4. Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello play a continuous eighth-note accompaniment. In the second measure, Violin I plays a half note B4, followed by a quarter note C5. Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello continue the eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamics include *p* (piano) for Violin I in the second measure, and *fp* (fortissimo piano) for Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. Articulations include *spiccato* for Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello, and *détaché* for Violin I in the second measure. A rehearsal mark 'b.20' is above the first measure.

Figure 61. Beethoven String Quartet Op. 18 No. 4, first movement, bars 20 to 21 Rosé Quartet. [CD 4 Track 7: 00:35-00:40].

Interestingly, in bars 119 to 121 from the *Adagio* of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 127 (recorded 1934/35) the Klingler Quartet distinguishes melody from accompaniment with the reverse articulation; the accompaniment (marked with staccato dots) is played *détaché* with only slight separation, while the first violin plays the quavers very short, with a lightly articulated martelé stroke (Fig. 62).

(Adagio molto espressivo) short, martelé

119

Vln I

Vln II

Vla

Vlc

121

Figure 62. Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 127, second movement, bars 119 to 121, Klingler Quartet. [CD 4 Track 8: 15:10 to 15:29].

Similarly, the Prisca Quartet uses articulation to delineate the melody from the accompaniment in bars 133 to 138 from the *Trio* of Schubert's String Quartet D. 46 (recorded 1927). Here the accompanying line in the viola part is played spiccato, while the first violinist uses detaché (Fig. 63).

(Trio. Allegro)
b.133

detaché, legato

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vlc.

pp
spiccato
pp
pp

Figure 63. Schubert, String Quartet D.46, third movement, bars 133 to 138, Prisca Quartet. [CD 4 Track 4: 02:37-02:44].

Sautillé

The term 'sautillé' is infrequently mentioned in nineteenth- and early-twentieth century treatises. Rather, sautillé is often discussed under the term 'spiccato' (see 'Spiccato and Martelé').

Again early recordings reveal a tendency toward the use of spiccato when quicker tempos prohibited the use of martelé. For example, in the last movement (*Allegro*) of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 18 No. 4 (recorded 1927), the crotchets are marked with staccato dots and the Rosé Quartet play them spiccato throughout. The quavers in the same movement, also marked with staccato dots, are played sautillé. Similarly, the Gewandhaus (1916) and Rosé Quartets (1927) play the opening of the Presto from Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 131 using sautillé strokes (Fig. 64).



Figure 64. Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 131, fifth movement, bars 1 to 5.¹⁸² [Gewandhaus, CD 4 Track 9: 00:00-00:04; Rosé, CD 4 Track 10: 00:00-00:04].

Likewise, the quavers in the *Scherzo* from Schumann's Piano Quartet Op. 47 (recorded 1935) are played sautillé by the string players in the Elly Ney Trio. In the *Finale* of Haydn's String Quartet Op. 64 No. 5, both the Klingler (1912/13) and Strub (1935) Quartets interpolate the semiquavers with a sautillé stroke, almost certainly in accordance with the notated instructions *sempre staccato*.

Early recordings also reveal that the marking *non legato* (or *non ligato* as it commonly appeared in the eighteenth century)¹⁸³ elicited an off-the-string stroke. For example, the quavers marked *non ligato* in bars 128, 133 and 139 of the seventh movement (*Allegro*) from Beethoven's Quartet Op. 131 are played sautillé by both the Gewandhaus (1916) and Rosé (1927) Quartets.

Yet even in fast movements, the stroke was sometimes varied. The Klingler Quartet often oscillates between sautillé and détaché, the détaché corresponding with louder dynamics. For example, from bars 17 to 20 of the

¹⁸² Beethoven, *String Quartet Op. 131*, 26.

¹⁸³ Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice*, 186.

Finale from Haydn's String Quartet Op. 64 No. 5, the stroke becomes gradually more on the string during a crescendo (Fig. 65).

(Finale. Vivace)
b. 17

Vln. I
sautillé ————— détaché ————— sautillé

Vln. II
sautillé ————— détaché

Vla.

Vlc.

Figure 65. Haydn, String Quartet Op. 64 No. 5, fourth movement, bars 17 to 21, Klingler Quartet.¹⁸⁴ [CD 4 Track 5: 00:20-00:24].

In the Presto from Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 74 (recorded 1927) the Rosé Quartet uses a predominantly sautillé stroke. Occasionally, however, a more on-the-string stroke is used when the dynamic level increases. For example, at the forte dynamic in bars 1 to 4, the quavers are played détaché and on the string, while in bars 5 to 8 when the dynamic is *piano*, they are played sautillé (Fig. 66).

¹⁸⁴ See <http://clmu.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy1.library.usyd.edu.au/View/379726>.



Figure 66. Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 74, third movement, bars 1 to 10.¹⁸⁵ [CD 5 Track 1: 00:00-00:12].

Alternation between sautillé and détaché strokes is also evident in a later, recording (1938) of the *Finale* from Haydn's Piano Trio Hob. XV: 25 by the Elly Ney Piano Trio. Detaché strokes correspond with the louder dynamic from bars 16 to 18, while the softer passages from bars 8 to 11, or the repeat of a motive, for example bars 124 to 125, remain with sautillé strokes. Notably, almost none of the semiquavers throughout the movement have staccato dots marked except for the variation from bars 53 to 54 (and corresponding bars 57, 61 to 62 and 65). Yet this passage is played détaché very probably in correspondence with the louder dynamic. Clearly, this variety of articulation was used to create musical interest in a rhythmically repetitive movement (Fig. 67).

¹⁸⁵ Beethoven, *Xe Quatour a Cordes Op. 74 Mi b Majeur* (Paris: Heugel), 25.

Figure 67. Haydn, *Gypsy Rondo* Piano Trio Hob XV:25, third movement, bars 8 to 11, 16 to 18, 53 to 54 and 122 to 125, violin. Elly Ney Piano Trio. For recording see <http://clmu.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy1.library.usyd.edu.au/View/379726>.

Portato

Early recordings show that portato articulation (where two or more notes marked staccato under a slur) was predominantly executed as close to legato as possible. Rather than a distinct break in the sound, there is a slight release in bow pressure at the end of each note creating an almost imperceptible articulation between notes, with the sound remaining continuous. Considering the propensity towards legato evident in most early recordings, it seems unlikely that the portato stroke was performed with a 'lift' of the bow, as advised by Joachim and Moser (see 'Portato' above). Rather, the hair of the bow appears to have stayed in contact with the string while the pressure and release exerted upon the stick by the action of the fingers created the characteristic pulsing of each note. Ensembles today generally make a more distinct separation of notes marked portato than is evident on many early recordings.

Portato strokes with minimal separation can be heard in both the Gewandhaus (1916) and Rosé (1927) Quartets's recordings of the fourth movement of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 131 (Fig. 68).

Figure 68. Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 131, fourth movement, bar 187. [Gewandhaus, CD 3 Track 8: 09:28-09:33; Rosé, CD Track 2: 08:18-08:22].

Similarly, the violinist, violist and flautist interpolate portato strokes with minimal separation in the Klingler Quartet's recording (1935/36) of the fourth movement from Beethoven's Serenade Op. 25 (Fig. 69). A similar effect is noticeable in the first violinists' rendition of bars 69, 71, and 73 from the second movement of Haydn's String Quartet Op. 76 No. 5 (recorded 1933/34). In bars 119 to 121 of the *Adagio* from Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 127 (recorded 1934/35) the second violinist and violist of the Klingler Quartet play the portato quavers on the string, with only minimal release between notes.



Figure 69. Beethoven Serenade for Flute Violin and Viola, Op. 25, fourth movement, bars 8 to 9. [CD 5 Track 3: 00:19-00:27].

A striking example of minimal separation between notes marked portato can be heard from the first violinist of the Brüder-Post Quartet in a 1921 recording of the second movement from Schubert's String Quartet D. 804. In bar 1 it is difficult to distinguish the rhythm of the repeated notes (Fig. 70).

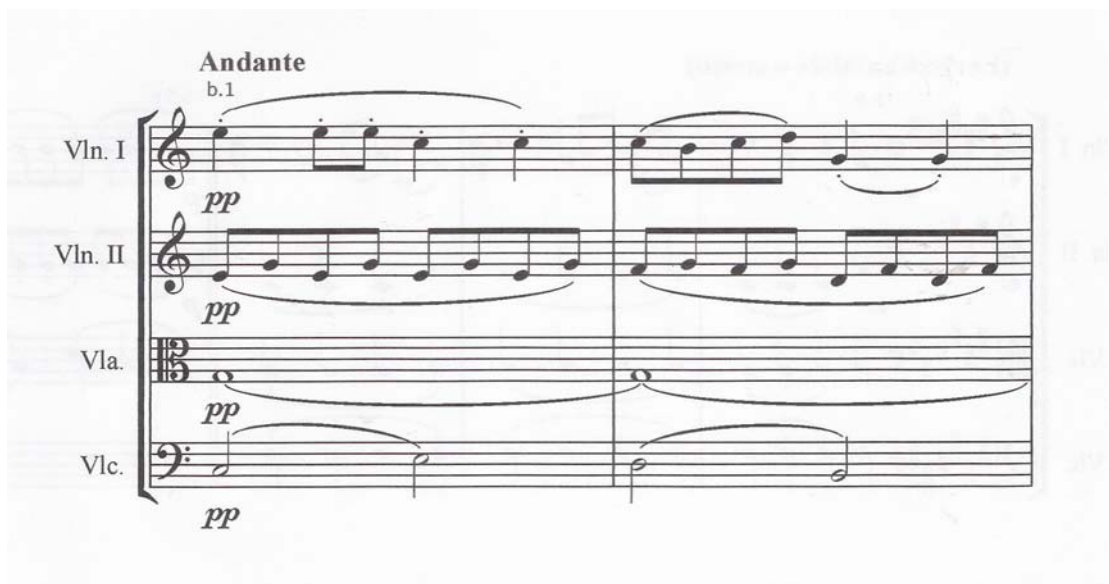


Figure 70. Schubert, String Quartet D. 804, second movement, bars 1 to 2. CD 5 Track 4: 00:00-00:07].

At bar 46, however, the second violinist plays a much shorter articulation for the portato notation. Arguably, this might be a departure from the norm to enhance the dramatic nature of the unexpected D-sharp on the third beat of the bar. Interestingly, the first violinist answers with longer portato strokes, but more detached than in the opening statement. This suggests that, at least for the Brüder Post Quartet, the character of the music governed the degree of separation in portato articulation (Fig. 71).

The image shows a musical score for Schubert's String Quartet D. 804, second movement, bars 46 to 47. The score is for Vln I, Vln II, Vla, and Vlc. The tempo is marked (Andante). The key signature is one flat (B-flat major/D minor). The time signature is common time (C). The score shows the first two bars of the passage. Vln I has a portato stroke in bar 46 and a longer portato stroke in bar 47. Vln II has a portato stroke in bar 46 with a 'separated' marking above it, and a shorter portato stroke in bar 47. Vla and Vlc have portato strokes in bar 46 and are silent in bar 47. The dynamic marking pp is present for Vln II, Vla, and Vlc in bar 46.

Figure 71. Schubert, String Quartet D. 804, second movement, bars 46 to 47, Brüder-Post Quartet. [CD 5 Track 4: 02:02-02:08].

On the Grete-Eweler Quartet's 1922 recording of the second movement from Brahms's String Quartet Op. 67, the minimal separation in portato articulation also appears to correspond with the nature of the music. Where the line is more singing a greater forward impetus is applied, for example at bars 15, 17, and 23, the portato stroke is played legato with a slight separation between

the notes. When at bar 24 the figure is more reticent and accompanimental (during a decrescendo) the separation between notes is greater (Fig. 72).

The image displays a musical score for Brahms' String Quartet Op. 67, second movement, bars 14 to 17 and 23 to 24. The score is arranged in four staves: Violin I (Vln I), Violin II (Vln II), Viola (Vla), and Violoncello (Vlc). The tempo is marked as (Andante). The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The score includes various articulations and dynamics. In bars 14-17, the dynamics range from *pp* to *dim.*, with a *legato* marking. In bars 23-24, the dynamics range from *f* to *pp*, with *legato* markings and a *dim.* marking. The score also features triplets and specific articulations such as 'distinctly separated' and 'slightly separated'.

Figure 72. Brahms, String Quartet Op. 67, second movement, bars 14 to 17 and 23 to 24, Grete-Eweler Quartet. [CD 4 Track 2: 01:05-01:24 (bars 14 to 17); 01:48-01:59 (bars 23 to 24)].

One finds in portato articulation, like spiccato, the degree of separation was sometimes slightly varied. In a 1935/6 recording of the *Adagio* from Beethoven's Serenade Op. 25 the Klingler Quartet plays with more separation for the duplet figures marked portato. Similarly in bars 9 to 12 and 51 to 60 of the Klingler Quartet's recording (1933/34) of the second movement from Haydn's String Quartet Op. 76 No. 5 the repeated crotchets and quavers marked portato are played with minimal separation (Fig. 73).

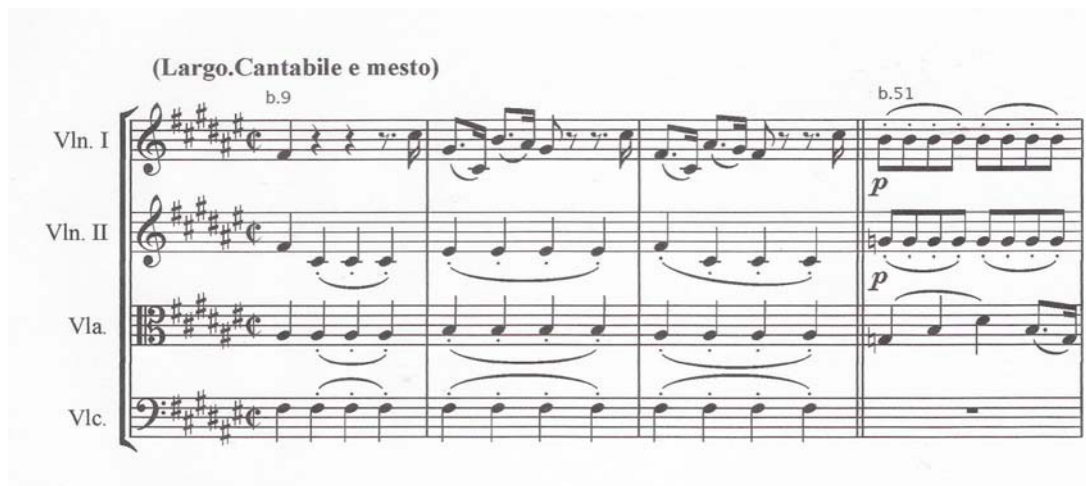


Figure 73. Haydn String Quartet Op. 76 No. 5, second movement, bar 9 to 11 and bar 51. [CD 3 Track 1: 00:49-01:03 (bars 9 to 11); 04:34-04:40 (bar 51)].

Conclusions

Written and recorded evidence from around the turn of the twentieth century indicates a German playing style that was generally more legato (predominantly on the string bowing) than today. This aesthetic naturally influenced the selection of bow strokes, such as *détaché*, *spiccato*, *martelé* and *portato* as well as the degree of articulation (effectively the length of the note).

David's *Violin School* (1864) shows a predominance of the martelé stroke, while later treatises such as by Schröder (1897), Kross (1904), and Joachim and Moser (1905) clearly indicate that spiccato was increasingly employed. Taken together, it is apparent that martelé was more frequently used than it is today. Unfortunately, these sources give limited information about the artistic reasons underlying the choice of these bow strokes. Importantly, Joachim and Moser imply that the use of either martelé or spiccato was largely governed by taste.

Early recordings provide strong evidence that notes/passages devoid of articulation markings, which would commonly be played spiccato nowadays, were often played with a basic détaché stroke. And passages marked with staccato dots that would be played spiccato nowadays, were often played martelé. Around the turn of the twentieth century then, there appears to have been a greater predilection for on-the-string strokes. Also revealed is a tendency during the first three decades of the twentieth century towards the use of spiccato bowing. Yet recordings by German-trained ensembles such as the Klingler Quartet (1912/13) and the Gewandhaus Quartet (1916) reveal a prevalence of the détaché and martelé strokes, while the use of spiccato is only occasionally to be heard. Significantly, the Klingler Quartet's later recordings (1933-35) and those by other ensembles such as the Prisca Quartet (1936), show more inclination towards spiccato strokes. However, it is difficult to draw firm conclusions regarding the evolving use of bow strokes during the period. Some ensembles, such as the Brüder-Post, Rosé, and Bohemian Quartets, also show a tendency toward the use of détaché and martelé in their recordings made as late as 1921, 1922 and 1927 respectively. Evidently, these ensembles (and others)

continued to play in a style that was prevalent during the nineteenth century, while others moved toward a modern aesthetic.

Furthermore, ensembles often varied bow strokes within a passage that was marked with the same articulation. This usually corresponded with and presumably helped to enhance the character and notated dynamic of the music. There was a tendency for softer passages marked with staccato dots to be played spiccato, and at louder dynamics to be played martelé. Similarly, lighter (and at times faster) passages were played with spiccato strokes while heavier (and at times slower) more assertive passages were played with martelé strokes. When a passage was repeated, the degree or type of articulation varied from the initial appearance seemingly to create interest. Lyrical passages were often played on the string (*detaché*), while the accompaniment, even when the articulation markings were the same as the melody, was played spiccato. In this way, the choice of bow stroke helped delineate melody from accompaniment and clarify the texture.

During *sautillé* passages, players often changed frequently between *sautillé* and *detaché* strokes according to the dynamic level. A *sautillé* stroke is naturally shorter and lighter while a *detaché* stroke is longer and heavier. It follows then that during a crescendo players changed from *sautillé* to *detaché* to support an increasing dynamic, while during a decrescendo the reverse was true. While these tendencies certainly correspond with Joachim's and Moser's advice, they also illustrate that characterization through choice of bow stroke was to a large degree subjective.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁶ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, i, 126.

Like other bow strokes, bow speed appears to be a governing factor in the degree of articulation created by the portato stroke. In slow movements, such as the second movement of Schubert's String Quartet D. 804 recorded by the Brüder-Post Quartet, notes marked portato could be extremely long with minimal separation between them. In such instances, portato does not appear to have been performed in the way that Joachim and Moser describe, with a 'lift' of the bow between notes. Rather, the bow hair remained on the string and the notes were accentuated by the 'pulsing' of the bow. Also, the degree of separation in portato passages was often varied within a single movement. In the Grete Eweler Quartet's recording of the second movement from Brahms's String Quartet Op. 67 this is clearly to distinguish the theme from the accompaniment.

During faster tempos, there was generally a greater degree of separation. This is perhaps to be expected as notes marked staccato under a slur in faster tempos invariably signal a more articulated up or down-bow staccato stroke rather than the use of an expressive portato.¹⁸⁷

The use of a martelé stroke instead of a spiccato stroke, and the almost imperceptible separation of notes in a portato stroke, reflect an aesthetic in which a singing tone was of greater importance than heavily articulated, virtuoso off-the-string bowing techniques. Yet, unlike today, where there is a strong emphasis on the projection of sound—causing players to use a constantly heavy bow contact and continuous vibrato—much emphasis was placed on frequently shading the tone with the bow. Possibly, because vibrato was not the primary means of creating tone colour amongst players of the German violin school,

¹⁸⁷ Soldat-Roeger's c.1926 performance of the second movement *Adagio* of Spohr's Violin Concerto No. 9 clearly illustrates a series of fast, short articulated notes used for the up-bow staccato figurations (see Fig. 43). While the precise way up-bow staccato is executed may vary from player to player, the passage would effectively be played in the same way today.

greater importance was placed on tone shading with the bow. This skilled use of the bow frequently created pronounced dynamic and timbral contrast. Soldat-Roeger's recordings of the *Adagio* from Spohr's Ninth Concerto and Schumann's *Abendlied* illustrate tremendous skill in tone shading. It is, however, the combination of tone shading with the use of other techniques, such as portamento, vibrato and rhythmic flexibility that creates an intensely expressive result.

CHAPTER THREE Slurs and Phrasing

Where the musical instinct in itself does not suffice for a characteristic arrangement of phrases (especially intricate in this respect are the last quartets of Beethoven), light can only be obtained on the subject by a thorough insight into the laws which govern the formation of musical sentences and melodies. Here may be once more pointed out the indispensability of theoretical knowledge for the understanding and the correct rendering of complicated works.¹⁸⁸

Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, 1905

During the late nineteenth century the interpretation of slur markings appears to have been the subject of controversy. Whereas earlier in the century slur markings generally indicated only bowing, the increasing use of longer phrasing slurs caused confusion. In piano playing there was also uncertainty surrounding the accentuation of notes within these longer phrasing slurs.

To clarify the issue it is useful to consider the meaning of the slur in piano music. Throughout the nineteenth century it was generally accepted that when two notes were slurred together, the first note was to receive some particular emphasis while the second note was to be shortened.¹⁸⁹ This interpretation is advocated in treatises from Louis Adam in 1804,¹⁹⁰ through to Mathis Lussy in 1874,¹⁹¹ and even as late as 1927 in a published lecture by Tobias Matthay.¹⁹² During the early nineteenth century pianists such as Czerny also extended the precept of shortening the last note of a slurred duplet to include groups of more

¹⁸⁸ Joachim and Moser, *Violinschool iii*, 15.

¹⁸⁹ Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice*, 231.

¹⁹⁰ Louis Adam, *Méthode de Piano* (Paris, 1805; repr., Genève: Minkoff, 1974), 151.

¹⁹¹ Mathis Lussy, *Musical Expression* (London: Novello, 1874), 71.

¹⁹² Tobias Matthay, *The Slur or Couplet of Notes* (London: Oxford University Press, 1927), 6.

than two notes.¹⁹³ It stands to reason, however, that the nuancing of longer slurred groupings in this way might break up the larger phrase. Nevertheless it is evident that this practice was still alive at the end of the nineteenth century. In 1898 Adolph Carpé cautions that ‘it is in the nature of a cantabile phrase that the ending should not be too abrupt. A well bred pianist will only look for shades of detachment.’¹⁹⁴

Furthermore, during the early nineteenth century longer slurs were increasingly appearing in the music of Beethoven and his contemporaries to indicate legato or the larger phrase (Fig. 74). Brown asserts that while nuancing and accentuation in between slurs became less prevalent in the nineteenth century, some nuancing, whether accentuation or dynamic shaping, within these larger slurs was not necessarily forbidden.¹⁹⁵

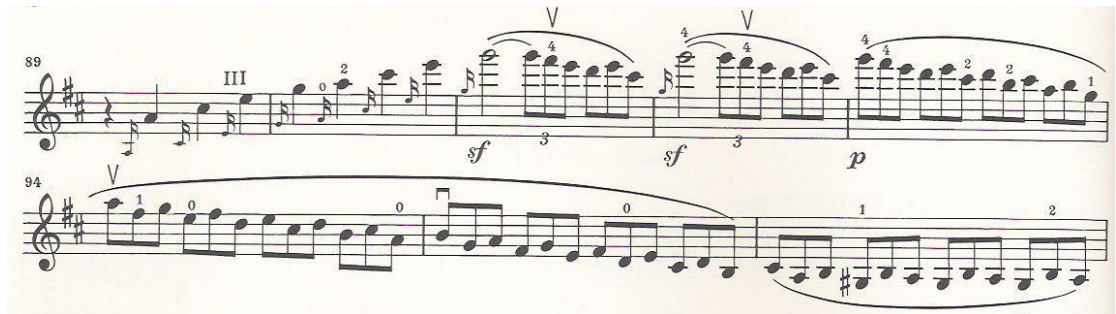


Figure 74. Beethoven, Violin Concerto Op. 61 (1806-1807), first movement, bars 89 to 96.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹³ Carl Czerny, *Theoretical and Practical Pianoforte School Op 500*, Vol. 3 (London: Cocks 1839), 27. It is also possible that a similar effect may have occurred in string playing with pre-Tourte bows, as a result of the natural decay at the end of a down-bow stroke.

¹⁹⁴ Adolph Carpé, *Grouping, Articulating and Phrasing in Musical Interpretation* (Boston: Bosworth & Co., 1898), 30.

¹⁹⁵ Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice*, 236.

¹⁹⁶ Beethoven, *Violin Concerto Op. 61*, violin part (München: G. Henle Verlag, 1982), 2.

In the early twentieth century Matthay and Stewart Macpherson both remarked on the confusion surrounding the interpretation of the printed slur during the nineteenth century. They point out that, often, longer slurs did not align with the end of the musical phrase or unit because of a reluctance to print the slur across a bar line.¹⁹⁷ This added further doubt as to the integrity of these markings. To rectify this, many late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century editions modified original slur markings to longer phrasing slurs that indicated in the opinion of the editor the 'true' phrasing intentions of the composer.¹⁹⁸ In 1955 the German musicologist Hermann Keller recalled that 'after 1900, the phrasing slurs began to overgrow musical notation in unwholesome fashion.'¹⁹⁹ While this editing practice potentially helped to clarify the boundaries of the larger phrase, it ran the risk of obscuring the slur patterns notated by the composer.

In Brahms's chamber music, the purpose of the printed slurs seems generally clearer. In the string parts it normally indicates bowing, and also signifies important melodic, motivic, or rhythmic groupings. However, the interpretation of slurs in performances during second half of the nineteenth century remains uncertain. Whether the second note of a slurred duplet should be shortened is a point of contention particularly in Brahms's writing. A detailed discussion of this issue is therefore warranted.

¹⁹⁷ Matthay, *The Slur or Couplet of Notes*, 1.

¹⁹⁸ Stewart Macpherson, *Studies in Phrasing and Form* (London: Joseph Williams Ltd, 1934), 8; Matthay, *The Slur or Couplet of Notes*, 2.

¹⁹⁹ Hermann Keller, *Phrasing and Articulation*, trans. Leigh Gerdine, 1965 (New York: W. W. Norton, 1955), 109.

The Slurred Duplet

In his *Treatise on the Fundamental Principles of Violin Playing* (1756), Leopold Mozart instructs that ‘the first of two notes coming together in one stroke is accented more strongly and held slightly longer, while the second is slurred onto it quite quietly and rather late.’²⁰⁰ In Germany during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the shortening of the second note of a slurred duplet (hereafter referred to simply as a ‘duplet’) was termed the *Abzug*. This practice was particularly applicable when the first note of the duplet constituted an appoggiatura. Significantly, Brown notes that the nuancing of appoggiaturas may have contributed to a nuanced performance of any slurred pair and even longer groups of notes.²⁰¹ However, in the early nineteenth century, opinion was clearly divided on how much to shorten the second note of each pair. In his *Musikalisches Lexicon* of 1802 Heinrich Koch states:

This soft slurring of the appoggiatura to its following main note is called the *Abzug*, on the execution of which the opinion of musicians is still divided. Some hold namely that, for example, on the keyboard the finger or on the violin the bow should be gently lifted after the main note; others, however, regard this as unnecessary, so long as the rest does not follow the main note.²⁰²

By the late nineteenth century, treatises offered varied opinions about how much to shorten the second note of the duplet. In 1898 Carpe insists that any shortening must be very subtle:

²⁰⁰ Leopold Mozart, *A Treatise on the Fundamental Principles of Violin Playing* (Augsburg, 1756), trans. Editha Knoch (1948); repr., (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 115.

²⁰¹ Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice*, 231-32.

²⁰² Heinrich Christoph Koch, *Musikalisches Lexicon* (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1802), art. ‘Vorschlag.’

It is likewise to a great extent misleading and withal superfluous to employ a staccato mark on the second of two notes which are brought into connection and dependence by a legato, only the real artist will not in every instance emphasize this separation as a detachment which shortens the sound, but as a gentle infringement which is frequently a matter of touch.²⁰³

Furthermore, composers throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries often indicated the nuancing of even-valued duplets in their notation by shortening the second note with a rest or staccato dot. In the first movement of Mozart's Piano Trio K. 542, a threefold group of duplets occurs frequently throughout the movement, as in bar 83. However, at bar 92 (and in the recapitulation at bar 233) in both the violin and piano parts, Mozart writes the duplets as a succession of quaver-semiquaver-semiquaver rests (Fig. 75). This appears to indicate that he did not expect this shortened articulation for the other duplets in the movement. However, it may be argued that in this instance, all the even-value duplets that move by step are effectively written-out appoggiatura/resolution figures. Mozart's shortened notation only occurs on duplets that move in larger intervals of a third (and thus do not function as appoggiaturas/resolution figures). It is conceivable that Mozart was aware of the conventional practice of nuancing appoggiatura/resolution-like duplets and wrote the shortened notation to ensure a similar nuancing on the other occasions.

²⁰³ Carpé, *Grouping, Articulating and Phrasing in Musical Interpretation*, 31.

Figure 75. Mozart, Piano Trio K. 542, first movement, bars 83 and 92.

Yet, other examples occur in Mozart's music where duplets that function as appoggiatura/resolution figures are also written with a shortening of the second note (Fig. 76). In bar 3 of the second movement of Mozart's String Quartet K. 575 the duplets are written as a succession of quaver-semiquaver-semiquaver rests (Fig. 3 Ex. a). This suggests that a nuanced execution of the written-out appoggiatura/resolution figure was not necessarily expected where even quaver duplets were notated. Mozart also wrote this shortened notation throughout passages that include both duplets in step-wise movement and at intervals of a third. For example, in the fourth movement of Mozart's String Quartet K. 428 at bars 64 to 65, 72 to 73, 80 to 81, and 88 to 89 (Fig. 3 Ex. b). This would also suggest that Mozart did not consider there to be a difference of articulation between these duplet figurations. Furthermore, in bar 18 to 19 of the

same movement (Fig. 3 Ex. c] the duplets are notated with even values suggesting that the nuanced interpretation in this instance was not expected.

The image displays a musical score for four string instruments: Violin I (Vln I), Violin II (Vln II), Viola (Vla), and Violoncello (Vlc). The score is divided into three sections: [Ex. a] at bar 3, [Ex. b] at bars 72-73, and [Ex. c] at bar 18. Each section shows a pair of notes beamed together, representing a duplet. In [Ex. a], the duplets are marked with a '3' above them, indicating a triplet. In [Ex. b] and [Ex. c], the duplets are marked with '72' and '18' respectively, indicating the bar number. The notation shows the rhythmic values of the notes in each duplet, which are often shorter than the surrounding notes.

Figure 76. Mozart, String Quartet K.575, second movement, bar 3 [Ex. a]; String Quartet K. 428, fourth movement, bars 72 to 73 [Ex. b] and bar 18 [Ex. c].

There are several early nineteenth-century examples of duplets with shortened second notes. In bar 45 of the second movement of Schubert's String Quartet D. 804 (1824) the duplets are written as quaver-semiquaver-semiquaver rest. Yet earlier in the movement in bar 8, the duplets are written out as even-value quavers (Fig. 77). As with Mozart, it is possible that Schubert envisaged a different effect from these two styles of duplet notation.

The image shows a musical score for Schubert's String Quartet D.804, second movement. The tempo is marked '(Andante)'. The score is for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. Bar 8 shows a duplet in the Violin I part. Bar 45 shows a similar duplet in the Violin I part, with other instruments providing accompaniment.

Figure 77. Schubert, String Quartet D.804, second movement, bars 8 and 45.

During the late nineteenth century some composers occasionally notated a nuanced duplet. In the first movement of his String Quartet Op. 11 (1896), Joseph Suk (1874-1935) writes out the duplets as a quaver-semiquaver-semiquaver rest with accents on many of the first notes (Fig. 78). Again, this may suggest that he did not expect this type of nuance for even-valued duplets.

Figure 78. Suk, String Quartet Op. 11, first movement, bars 61 to 62.

A staccato dot placed over the second note of a duplet also implies a nuanced execution. At bar 235 in the second movement of his String Quartet No. 1 (1876), Smetana notates a staccato dot over the second note of each duplet (Fig. 79). Again, a different effect may have been intended when a staccato dot was not notated. However, such anomalies in articulation markings may have been due to printing inconsistencies.

Figure 79. Smetana, String Quartet No. 1, second movement, bars 235 to 237.

Curiously, Suk notates a duplet with a staccato dot on the second note in the same bar as a duplet written as a quaver-semiquaver-semiquaver rest (Fig. 78, bar 62). In this case it is possible that two different effects were intended. Given that the duplet with the second note marked staccato occurs at a broader point a point in the phrase (where, following a crescendo, the dynamic is forte) Suk may have expected less shortening of the second note.

The fact that composers sometimes shortened the second note of a duplet implies that they did not expect a similarly nuanced effect in the absence of such notation. Such precise notation might also support the idea that the noticeable shortening of the second note of a duplet was not a universal practice throughout the nineteenth century. Perhaps composers indicated shortening only when they wished to ensure such nuanced separation. Furthermore, such notation suggests that different degrees of shortening and separation of duplets was practised. It

may be that even-valued duplets were nuanced by a release of bow pressure on the second note without any shortening, and thus without separation between the duplets. Possibly, composers shortened the second note of the duplet in their notation when they wished for greater separation than was commonly practised.

Brahms and the Slurred Duplet

Correspondence between Brahms and Joachim shows alignment between Brahms's views about the interpretation of slurs and those promulgated in the aforementioned eighteenth-century treatises. It also brings to light Joachim's uncertainty about the matter. In a letter to Brahms in 1879 Joachim questioned whether slurs indicated phrasing or merely bowing, and whether the last note under the slur should be shortened:

In legato it is difficult to decide with slurs where they merely mean: so and so many notes in the same bow-stroke, or on the other hand, where they signify meaningful division of groups of notes, for instance: [Fig. 80, Ex a] could just as well sound connected, even when played with different bow-strokes, while on the piano this would have to be approximately thus in all circumstances (Fig. 80, Ex. b).²⁰⁴



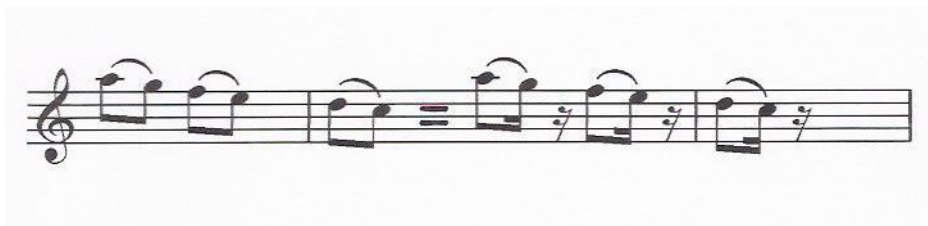
Figure 80. Joachim's letter to Brahms, 'about 20 May,' 1879.

²⁰⁴ Joachim's letter to Brahms, 'about 20 May,' 1879. *Johannes Brahms Briefwechsel VI*, 163-64.

Notably, Brown suggests Brahms's view on the articulation of the slurred duplet may have been atypical in the nineteenth century due to his 'antiquarian' interests.²⁰⁵ Brahms's reply to Joachim gives a clear indication of his views on longer slurs as well as the nuancing of the duplet.

I still think that the slur over several notes takes no value from any of them. It signifies legato, and one marks according to groups, phrases or whim. Only over two notes does it shorten the last one [Fig. 81, Ex. a]. In the case of longer groups of notes it would only be a liberty or refinement in performance [Fig. 81, Ex. b], which, however, is usually appropriate.²⁰⁶

(Ex. a)



(Ex. b)

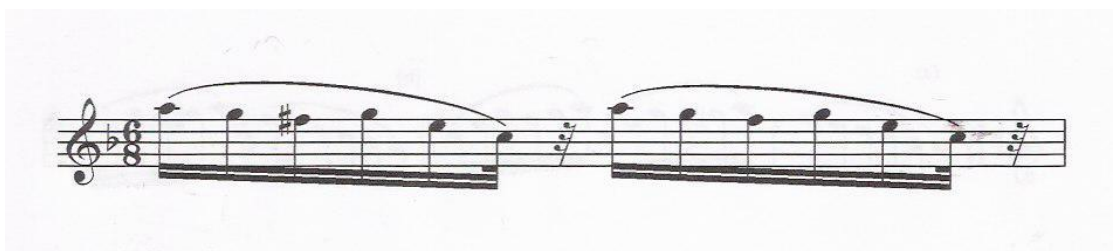


Figure 81a, b. Brahms, letter to Joachim, 30 May 1879.

In her biography, Brahms's piano student Florence May (1845-1923) implies that he expected duplets to receive some type of special nuance.

²⁰⁵ Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice*, 234.

²⁰⁶ Brahms's letter to Joachim, 30 May 1879, *Johannes Brahms Briefwechsel VI*, 169-70.

Although not explicitly clear, May's reference to a 'well known effect' probably refers to a shortening of the second note of the duplet:

He made very well of the well known effect of two notes slurred together, whether in a loud or soft tone, and I know from his insistence to me on this point that the mark has a special significance in his music.²⁰⁷

There are instances of duplets in the piano parts of Brahms's Violin Sonatas that probably call for shortening. In bars 35 to 36 of the second movement of the Violin Sonata Op. 100, the emphasis is clearly on the first note supported by the chord of each duplet. Here the second note would likely be shortened to match the staccato articulation in the left hand of the piano part (Fig. 82).



Figure 82. Brahms, Violin Sonata Op. 100, second movement, bars 35 to 36.

²⁰⁷ Florence May, *The Life of Johannes Brahms* (London: The New Temple Press, 1905), 1:19.

In his letter Brahms does not specify whether his examples concern piano or violin playing. However, given that he was a pianist and the letter was to an eminent violinist it is likely that his explanation pertains to both. Yet, contrary to Brahms's views on the matter, the characteristic legato-bowing style of the German violin school as evidenced in early recordings, appears to be antithetical to the notion of a release or separation between slurs. Clearly, a more detailed study of early recordings might help determine the extent to which nuancing of and separation between slurs was a general performing practice of the era.

Execution of the Slurred Duplet: Recorded Evidence

The style of the German violin school was not necessarily confined to those professional String Quartets that had a direct link to Joachim or Brahms. Principal characteristics of the style, such as prominent portamento, selective use of vibrato and a flexible approach to tempo were also hallmarks of a general style of string playing throughout Europe during the second half of the nineteenth century.²⁰⁸ Clearly, certain artists and ensembles outside of Germany who had no direct link to the leading exponents of the German violin school also played in this older style. The Bohemian Quartet is a striking case in point. Therefore, to gain a broader perspective about general performing practices, it is also useful to consider recordings of non-German ensembles that played in this style.

What is immediately evident from early recordings is the varying degree to which the duplet is nuanced. Predominantly, duplets are performed without any shortening of the second note. However, in certain instances shortening of

²⁰⁸ Robert Philip, *Performing in the Age of Recording* (London: Yale University Press, 2004), 193.

the second note does occur, creating a slight separation between each pair of duplets. This shortening appears to be made consistently with a release of bow pressure, rather than by lifting the bow off the string. Most importantly, the extent of the release varies. In instances of more release, the second note of the duplet is shorter and there is greater separation between the duplet pairs. Less release results in less separation. In some instances there is no separation but still a release of bow pressure on the second note. This causes the first note to be more prominent than the second. This inequality is further exaggerated if the first note is accented. Duplets are also nuanced by the use of agogic accents. In such cases the lengthening of the first note results in the transformation from even-valued rhythms to dotted rhythms. It is therefore useful to consider the different degrees of nuancing, and the types of duplet figurations and musical parameters in which this occurred.

Duplets occur in a variety of melodic patterns. To distinguish any performance trends they may be grouped into the following types:

Type A

Descending or ascending with the pitch of the second note repeated. The duplets may function as a succession of written out appoggiaturas followed by resolving note.

Type B

Descending or ascending in step-wise motion (no repetition of the pitch of the second note).

Type C

Ascending or descending in thirds.

Type D

A single duplet written in isolation, or successive duplets of varying intervals.

Type A: *Descending or ascending with the pitch of the second note repeated.*

This type of duplet figuration occurs frequently throughout the music of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and often functions as a written out appoggiatura/resolving figure. On several occasions The Brüder-Post Quartet (1925) plays Type A extremely legato without nuancing. At bar 50 in the second movement of the 'Hoffstetter' String Quartet Op. 3 No. 5 (attributed to Haydn) the duplets in the first violin part are melodic material and are played legato (Fig. 83). The duplets are played equally legato by the first and second violinists in the faster paced Trio (Fig. 84).

(Andante Cantabile)

Vln I
Vln II
Vla
Vlc

Figure 83. Attributed to Haydn, String Quartet Op. 3 No. 5 'Hoffstetter,' second movement, bars 50 to 51, Brüder-Post Quartet [CD 2 Track 4: 02:20-02:26].

Trio (Allegretto)

Vln I
Vln II
Vla
Vlc

Figure 84. Mozart, String Quartet K. 575, third movement, bars 74 to 76, Brüder-Post Quartet. [CD 5 Track 5: 01:26-01:29].

A notable exception to this legato style is heard in the Brüder-Post's performance of the second movement. The cello part is notated with dotted-

rhythm duplets, and a clear separation is made between each. Interestingly, in this instance the cello has the main melodic line and the other three instruments play accompaniment figuration (Fig. 85).

(Andante)

45

Vln I

Vln II

Vla

Vlc

Played

Written

Figure 85. Mozart String Quartet K.575, second movement, bar 45, Brüder-Post Quartet. [CD 5 Track 6: 02:11-02:14].

In the Gewandhaus Quartet's recording (1916) of the fourth movement of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 131, the duplets in bar 152 of the first and second violin parts are played legato. The tempo here is slower than the examples in Figs. 83 and 84 (above) and these two upper parts carry the prominent melodic line. The violinists of the Rosé Quartet (1927) also play this line legato but with more accentuation on the first note of each duplet (Fig. 86).

Figure 86. Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 131, fourth movement, bar 152, Gewandhaus Quartet and Rosé Quartet. [Gewandhaus, CD 3 Track 8: 07:35-07:40; Rosé, CD 5 Track 2: 07:03-07:07].

In bar 77 of the *Trio* from the third movement of Mozart's String Quartet K. 428, the Klingler Quartet (1912/13) plays a similar type of descending figuration legato (Fig. 87).

Trio (Allegro)

legato

Vln I

Vln II

Vla

Vlc

Figure 87. Mozart, String Quartet K. 428, third movement, bar 77, Klingler Quartet. [CD 5 Track 7: 01:27-01:29].

However, when a phrase is repeated, such as in the third movement of Mozart's Quartet K. 465, the Klingler Quartet (1922/23) plays the duplets with a varying nuance. In the first statement of the *Minuet* the duplets begin legato but the second note of each is shortened when the phrase repeats in bar 18 (Fig. 88).

(Menuetto Allegro)

legato

16

Vln I

Vln II

Vla

Vlc

Figure 88. Mozart, Quartet K. 465, third movement, bars 16 to 20, Klingler Quartet. [CD 2 Track 10: 00:19-00:25].

Notably, the Klingler Quartet also varies the duplets with agogic accents. For example, in the *da capo* of the same movement, the first quaver beat of bars 17 and 18 and the fifth quaver of bar 19 are lengthened (Fig. 89).

(Menuetto Allegro)

16 Da Capo Written

Vln I

Played

Vln I

Figure 89. Mozart, Quartet K. 465, third movement, bars 16 to 19, Klingler Quartet. [CD 2 Track 10: 02:54-03:00].

This type of agogic accent can frequently be heard in duplet passages on many early recordings. In most instances, it enhances expression and creates variety within a legato articulation. The Bohemian Quartet uses agogic accents frequently throughout the second movement of Dvořák's Quartet Op. 51 (recorded 1928), transforming the equal-valued duplets into dotted rhythms (Fig. 90).



Figure 90. Dvořák, String Quartet Op. 51, second movement, bars 5 to 6, Bohemian Quartet. [CD 5 Track 8: 00:13-00:19].

The Bohemian Quartet plays duplets with some separation when these are placed under a second, longer slur. The longer slur necessitates a re-articulation with the bow of the first note of the second duplet. The release of bow pressure before the re-articulation causes the separation. The second duplet is also rhythmically transformed with an agogic accent on its first note (Fig. 91).

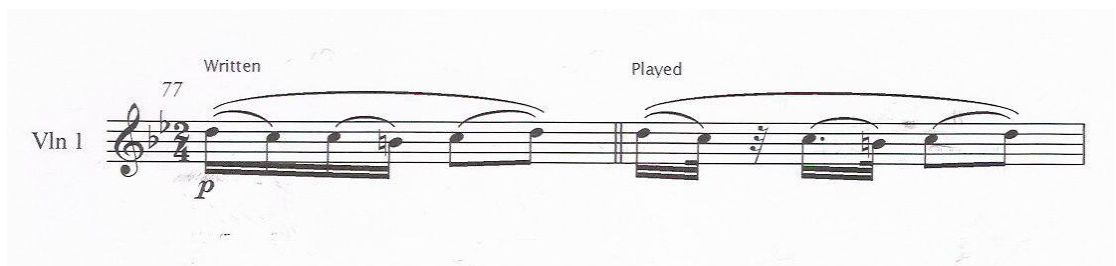


Figure 91. Dvořák, String Quartet Op. 51, second movement, bar 77, Bohemian Quartet. [CD 5 Track 8: 03:14-03:17].

The recordings of other ensembles show that Type A is at times nuanced with shortening and separation. In the moderate tempo section of the Trio from Beethoven's Piano Trio Op. 1 No. 3 (recorded 1935) (Fig. 92), and the third movement of Haydn's Piano Trio Hob. XV:25 (recorded 1938) (Fig. 93), The Elly Ney Trio shorten the second note of each duplet considerably, resulting in a distinct separation between each pair.



Figure 92. Beethoven, Piano Trio Op. 1 No. 3, third movement, bars 11 to 13, Elly Ney Piano Trio, Max Strub violin [for recording see <http://clmu.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy1.library.usyd.edu.au/View/379726>].

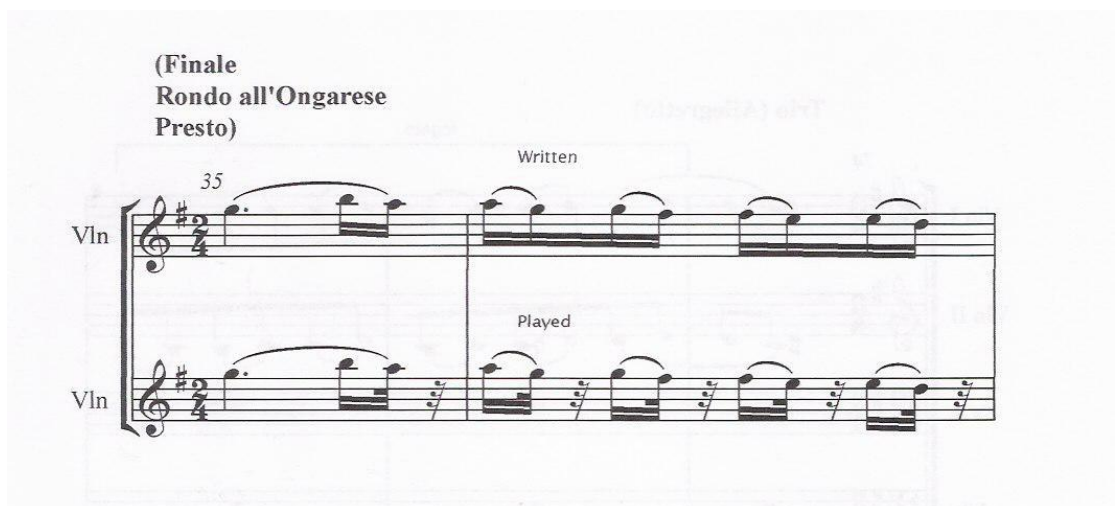


Figure 93. Haydn, Piano Trio in G Hob XV:25 'Gypsy Rondo', third movement, bars 35 to 36, Elly Ney Piano Trio, Florizel von Reuter violin [for recording see <http://clmu.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy1.library.usyd.edu.au/View/379726>].

Soldat-Roeger plays very legato throughout slurred groupings in Beethoven's *Romance* Op. 50 (recorded c.1926). In bar 97 there is a succession of descending appoggiaturas, played by Soldat-Roeger as acciaccaturas—crushed

before the beat. Although, strictly speaking, these are not duplets, the resultant slurred pairs are similar to Type A. Notably, the second note is played very short, creating a distinct separation between the pairs. (Fig. 94). The effect is strikingly different to the legato playing of other slurred patterns throughout the piece.

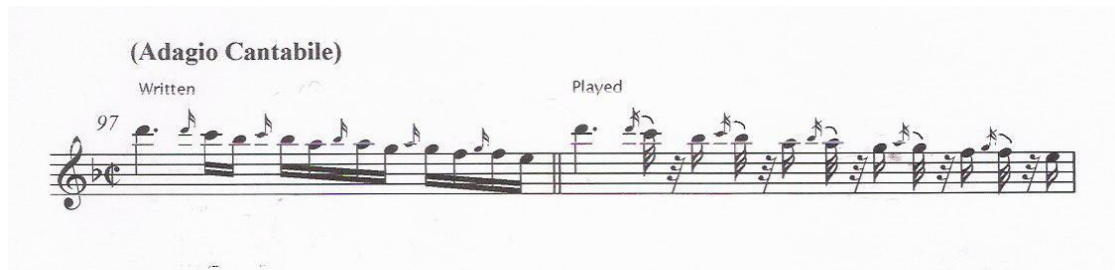


Figure 94. Beethoven, Romance Op. 50, bar 97, Soldat-Roeger. [CD 5 Track 9: 07:10-07:17].

The Gewandhaus Quartet plays with a pronounced legato style throughout Beethoven's Quartet Op. 131 (recorded 1916). During the first three movements the connection between the slurs is consistently legato. Significantly, however, in bars 104 and 105 of the fourth movement, the cellist plays the duplets with a marked release on the second note of each pair. This nuanced articulation is particularly noticeable against the surrounding dotted-duplet figures that are played very legato. It is possible that the release on the second note of each duplet was intended to allow the semiquaver of each duplet pair in the viola to be heard clearly. Thus, in this circumstance, it is possible that the duplets in the cello part were deliberately nuanced because they function as an accompaniment within the texture (Fig. 95).

(Andante moderato e lusinghiero)

103

The image shows a musical score for the fourth movement of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 131, starting at bar 103. The score is for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo/mood is 'Andante moderato e lusinghiero'. The score shows a passage with duplets and trills. The Viola part has a 'Written' version and a 'Played' version. Dynamics include *p*, *cresc.*, and *p*. Trills are marked with *tr*.

Figure 95. Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 131, fourth movement, bars 103 to 5, Gewandhaus Quartet. [CD 3 Track 8: 04:17-04:30].

The Klingler Quartet clearly nuances the duplets in the third movement of Mozart's Quartet K. 421 (recorded 1912/13). Here for the duplets notated as back dotted rhythms, the dotted quaver is played as a quaver, creating a distinct separation between the duplets (Fig. 96).

Trio

Figure 96. Mozart, String Quartet K.421, third movement, bars 1 to 3, Klingler Quartet. [CD 3 Track 7: 01:37-01:42].

The flautist Gustav Scheck, playing with members of the Klingler Quartet appears to interpret this same figure with similar articulation when a staccato dot is printed over the second note of the duplet. This is noticeable in the seventh movement from Beethoven Serenade Op. 25 (recorded 1935/36) (Fig. 97).

Allegro vivace e disinvolto

22

Figure 97. Beethoven, Serenade Op. 25, seventh movement, bars 22 to 24, Gustav Scheck (flute), with members of the Klingler Quartet. [CD 5 Track 10: 00:00-00:04].

In a recording by the Bohemian Quartet (1928) of the second movement of Dvořák's Quartet Op. 96, the second note of each duplet is distinctly shortened in the viola part throughout the movement (Fig. 97). From bars 11 to 18, the second violin also plays this accompanying figuration, but only shortens the second note of each slurred duplet on the second, third, fifth and sixth beats. The first and fourth beats are played more legato, although this may be due to the shift from first to third position that occurs across these duplets. As a consequence of the shifting there is less time for a physical release of bow pressure on the second note (the arrival note) of each duplet.

The image displays a musical score for the second movement of Dvořák's String Quartet Op. 96, specifically bar 3. The score is arranged in four staves: Violin I (Vln I), Violin II (Vln II), Viola (Vla), and Violoncello (Vlc). The tempo is marked '(Lento)'. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 6/8. The first violin part features a triplet of eighth notes, with the first note marked '3' and the dynamic 'mp molto espressivo'. The second violin part has a slurred duplet of eighth notes. The viola part has a slurred duplet of eighth notes, with the second note of each duplet marked 'Played' and the first note marked 'Written'. The cello part has a slurred duplet of eighth notes.

Figure 97. Dvorak, String Quartet Op. 96, second movement, bar 3, Bohemian Quartet. [CD 5 Track 11: 00:00-00:16].

Collectively, these performances demonstrate a distinct nuancing of the Type A duplet whereas other performances do not. While such inconsistency of approach clearly shows that there was little agreement towards execution in this regard, certain tendencies are noticeable. Instances of un-nuanced duplets are more common in passages where the duplets occur as part of a prominent melodic line, especially in slow to moderate tempos. Two notable exceptions are the heavily nuanced duplets in the third movement of the Haydn Piano Trio in G Hob XV:25 (Fig. 93) and the third movement of Beethoven's Trio Op. 1 No. 3 (Fig. 92) played by the Elly Ney Trio. In these examples, the shortened articulation may have been intended to reflect the livelier character of the movement. The use of this articulation may also indicate a stylistic awareness on the part of the Elly Ney Trio of earlier nineteenth-century practices. Alternatively, it may be indicative of a style that, by 1937, was generally less legato than many recordings made some twenty years earlier, such as those by the Brüder-Post and Gewandhaus Quartets.

Type B: *Descending or ascending in step-wise motion (no repetition of the pitch of the second note).*

As with Type A, this type of duplet also occurs frequently throughout music of the eighteenth century and early nineteenth century. In the third movement of Haydn's Quartet Op. 64 No. 5 (recorded 1912/13), the Klingler Quartet plays the duplets in bars 4 and 5 without any nuance. For the descending figures in bars 22 to 24, the first note of each duplet is given a slight accent, causing the second note to sound less prominent (Fig. 98).

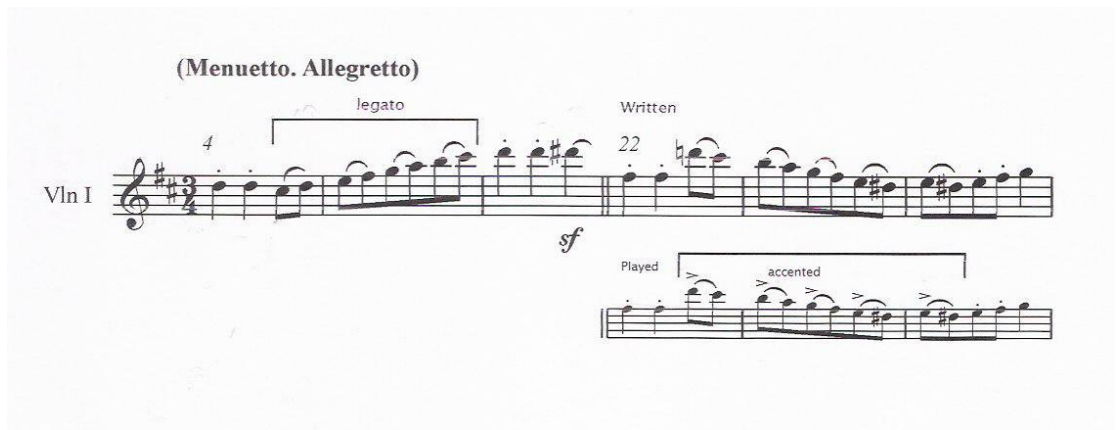


Figure 98. Haydn, String Quartet Op. 64 No. 5, third movement, bars 4 to 6 and 22 to 24, Klingler Quartet. [CD 3 Track 2: 00:04-00:07 (bars 4 to 6); 00:29-00:32 (bars 22 to 24)].

Type C: *Ascending or descending in intervals of a third.*

Soldat-Roeger separates particular duplets in her recording (c.1926) of the first movement of Mozart's Violin Concerto K. 219. At bars 59, 72, and 74 she makes a strong accent on the first note of each pair and shortens the second note, creating a separation between the duplets (Fig. 99). She makes a similarly pronounced articulation in the corresponding passages in the recapitulation (bars 161, 176, and 178) and in the similar duplet figuration at the beginning of the cadenza. Notably, the instances of shortened duplets all occur within a forte dynamic. The accented duplets at bar 59 provide rhythmic incisiveness at the cadence, while the accents on the first note of each duplet in bar 72 and 74 articulate the step-wise movement between successive quaver beats.



Figure 99. Mozart, Violin Concerto K. 219, first movement, bars 59, 72 and 74, Soldat-Roeger. [CD 2 Track 2: 01:57-01:59 (bar 59); 02:26-02:28 (bar 72); 02:30-02:32 (bar 74)].

Elsewhere, Soldat-Roeger nuances duplets altering their rhythm. For example, the duplets that make up the fourth crotchet beat of bar 54 are played legato but with an agogic accent on the first note, creating a dotted rhythm. Similar duplet patterns in bars 55 to 57 are played legato with first notes accented, or played evenly and legato (Fig. 100). Also, the final duplets before the cadence in bar 59 are shortened (Fig. 99). The fact that similar duplet patterns occurring within the same passage are played differently strongly suggests that, rather than conforming to any rigid rule, the nuancing of duplets was applied according to taste and circumstance as a means of creating variety.

Figure 100. Mozart, Violin Concert K. 219, first movement, bars 54 to 59, Soldat-Roeger. [CD 2 Track 2: 01:47-01:59].

Type D: *A single duplet written in isolation, or successive duplets of varying intervals.*

Soldat-Roeger noticeably nuances isolated quaver duplets throughout the first movement of Mozart's Violin Concerto K. 219 (recorded c.1926). While these are played with no shortening of the second note, the first note is significantly lengthened causing the duplet rhythm to become dotted.

Other recordings show that, often, the placement of the duplet in the melodic line or accompaniment appears to determine the choice of articulation. The Brüder Post Quartet plays legato and un-nuanced the appoggiatura/resolving note duplets in the principal melody line in Boccherini's *Minuet* from his String Quintet Op. 11, No. 5 (recorded 1921) (Fig. 101).



Figure 101. Boccherini, String Quintet Op. 11 No. 5, third movement, bars 1 to 4, Brüder Post Quartet. [CD 5 Track 12: 00:00-00:09].

Similarly, the Klingler Quartet (1934/35) plays this type of figure legato and un-nuanced when it is part of a prominent melodic line (Fig. 102).

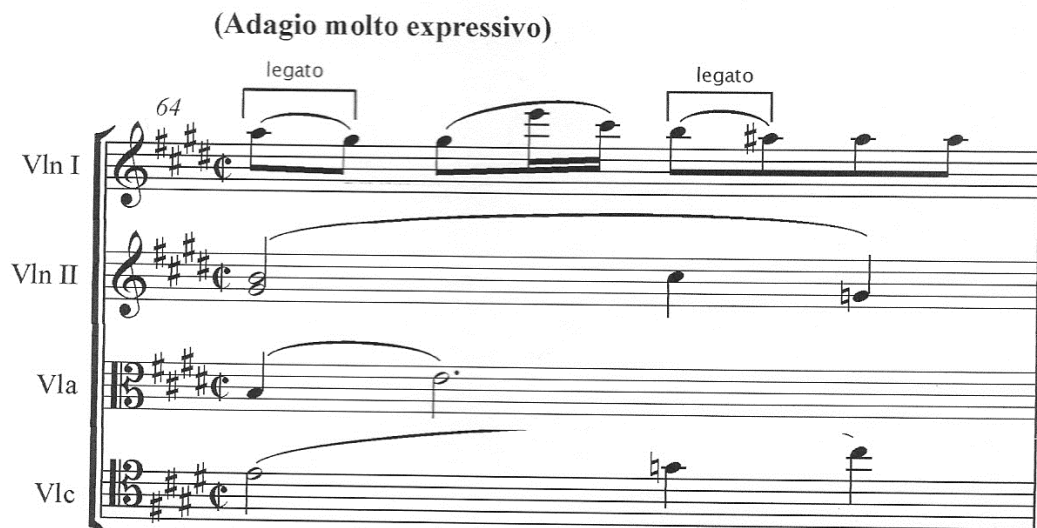


Figure 102. Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 127, second movement, bar 64, Klingler Quartet. [CD 4 Track 8: 08:23-08:30].

At bar 61 in the second movement of Mozart's Quartet K. 575 the Brüder Post Quartet (1921) plays all the unslurred quavers shorter than notated in the second violin and viola parts. The duplets within these parts (slurred from weak

to strong beats) are played with the second note shortened. Given the preponderance of legato playing throughout the movement, the style here might be a deliberate attempt to lighten the texture of the accompaniment (Fig. 103).

(Andante)

61 Written
Vln 2 *p*

Played
p etc.

Written
Vla *p*

Played
p

63
Vln 2

Vla

Figure 103. Mozart, String Quartet K. 575, second movement, bars 61 to 64, Brüder Post Quartet. [CD 5 Track 6: 02:58-03:04].

Similarly, the Rosé Quartet appears to vary the degree of legato according to whether the duplets are part of the melody or accompaniment. At bar 129 in the second movement of Beethoven's Quartet Op. 74 (recorded 1927), the duplets in the first violin part play an equal melodic role alongside the second violin part. The Rosé Quartet plays these duplets legato and un-nuanced.

However, at bar 131 where the duplets in the second violin and viola parts form an accompaniment, the second note of each duplet is noticeably shortened, lightening the texture in the middle register. When the first violinist has the same accompanying duplet figuration at bar 133, most duplets are played with a slight shortening of the second note (Fig. 104).

The image shows a musical score for four instruments: Violin I (Vln I), Violin II (Vln II), Viola (Vla), and Violoncello (Vlc). The score is for measures 129 to 133. The tempo is marked "(Adagio ma non troppo)" and the articulation is "legato".

Measure 129: Vln I has a melodic line with a *cresc.* marking. Vln II and Vlc have accompaniment with *cresc.* markings. Vla has a *(pizz)* marking.

Measure 130: Vln I has a melodic line with a *f* marking. Vln II and Vlc have accompaniment with *f* markings. Vla has a *f* marking.

Measure 131: Vln I has a melodic line with a *p* marking. Vln II and Vlc have accompaniment with *p* markings. Vla has a *p* marking. Vln II and Vlc have a "Played" marking above their accompaniment.

Measure 132: Vln I has a melodic line with a *p* marking. Vln II and Vlc have accompaniment with *p* markings. Vla has a *p* marking. Vln II and Vlc have a "Played" marking above their accompaniment.

Measure 133: Vln I has a melodic line with a *p* marking. Vln II and Vlc have accompaniment with *p* markings. Vla has a *p* marking. Vln II and Vlc have a "Played" marking above their accompaniment.



Figure 104. Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 74, second movement, bars 129 to 134, Rosé Quartet. [CD 6 Track 1: 05:54-06:10].

The Bohemian Quartet's performance of the second movement of Dvorak's Quartet Op. 96 (recorded 1928) provides evidence of the articulation of duplets to distinguish melody from accompaniment. While the accompanying duplets in the viola part are played with a slight separation, the duplets in first violin part, constituting part of the melody, are played legato and un-nuanced (Fig. 105). The dynamic level also appears to be an important factor in determining the choice of articulation. With each marked crescendo in the viola part, the duplets are played increasingly more legato. Furthermore, the crescendo of the violin consistently elicits a sympathetic response from the viola, throughout the movement. For example, in bar 4 the violist lengthens the second note of each duplet to support the first violinist's crescendo. When the dynamic rises to fortissimo in bars 55 and 66 the duplets in the viola part are played

consistently legato and un-nuanced. The first and second violinists also appear to adjust the degree of separation between duplets according to the dynamic level. When a louder dynamic occurs in the second violin from bars 14 to 15 and 16 to 17, the duplets are more legato and un-nuanced. But, at the pianissimo in bar 30 the duplets in the first violin part are played with separation (Fig. 105).

The image shows a musical score for four instruments: Violin I (Vln I), Violin II (Vln II), Viola (Vla), and Violoncello (Vlc). The score is in 6/8 time and begins at measure 4, marked **(Lento)**. The first violin part starts with a dynamic of **(mp) molto espressivo** and includes a **legato** marking over a duplet. The second violin part starts with a dynamic of **p**. The viola part is marked **Played** and **p**, while the cello part is marked **Written** and **p**. The score continues through measures 6, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 30. At measure 30, the first violin part is marked **pp** and **Played**, showing a change in articulation for the duplet. The second violin part is marked **pp** and **Written**. The viola and cello parts are also marked **pp** at this point. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Figure 105. Dvorak, String Quartet Op. 96, second movement, bars 4 to 6 and bar 30, Bohemian Quartet. [CD 5 Track 11: 00:16-00:30 (bars 4 to 7); 02:26-02:34 (bar 30)].

The dynamic level certainly appears to influence the choice of articulation at certain points in the Bohemian Quartet's recording (1928) of Suk's String Quartet Op. 11. At bar 238 in the first movement, the second note of each duplet is slightly shortened in the first violin part when the dynamic is *pianissimo*. At bar 42 in the third movement (*Adagio*), there is an expansive climactic passage marked *forte* and the slurred duplets are played very legato without nuance. The legato playing throughout this passage may be a deliberate attempt to support or enhance the melodic line. (Fig. 106).

(First movement)
(Allegro moderato)

238

Played

pp

Vln I

Written

pp

Vln II

pp

Vla

pp

Vlc

pp

239

(Third movement)
(Adagio ma non troppo)
accelerando

42

cresc. f sf

cresc. f sf

cresc. f

cresc. f

The image shows a musical score for Suk's String Quartet Op. 11, first movement, bars 238 to 239. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. The tempo is 'poco più mosso' and the dynamics range from 'legato' to 'ff'. The music consists of a series of eighth-note duplets with slurs and accents.

Figure 106. Suk, String Quartet Op. 11, first movement, bars 238 to 239; third movement, bars 42 to 44, Bohemian Quartet. [CD 6 Track 2: 08:08-08:11 (bars 238 to 239); CD 6 Track 3: 02:40-02:46 (bars 42 to 44)].

Dynamic level also appears to influence the degree of duplet nuancing in the second movement of Brahms's String Quartet Op. 67 played by the Grete-Eweler Quartet (1922). The duplets in the second violin, viola and cello parts are slightly nuanced when the dynamic is pianissimo in bars 41 and 42. The nuance is created by a slight release of bow pressure on the second note of each duplet, not by an audible separation between the duplet pairs. The duplets are less nuanced during the crescendo that immediately follows in bar 44, and between bars 88 and 90 where the dynamic is forte (Fig. 107).

(Andante)

40

Vln I *pp*

Vln II *fpp*

Vla *fpp*

Vlc *pp*

Played

Written

Figure 107. Brahms, String Quartet Op. 67, second movement, bars 40 to 44 and 88 to 90, Grete-Eweler Quartet. [CD 4 Track 2: 03:13-03:36 (bars 40 to 44); 06:48-07:00 (bars 88 to 90)].

Throughout the first movement of Beethoven's Quartet Op. 127 (recorded 1934/35) the general bowing style of the Klingler Quartet is legato. Yet they play duplets with a variety of articulations. In bar 9 the duplet is played with some separation, but when it is repeated in bar 13 it is absolutely un-nuanced (Fig. 108). At bar 250 this motivic figure is repeated in three successive bars in the first violin part and then passed between the different voices of the quartet. All repetitions are played with some separation between the duplets. Significantly,

when the figure is played in unison, the articulation is not necessarily the same. For example at the very end of the movement from bars 280 to 282, the violinist plays the duplets with some separation while the cellist plays them without any whatsoever (Fig. 108).

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a string quartet. The top system covers measures 278 to 282. It includes staves for Violin I (Vln I), Violin II (Vln II), Viola (Vla), and Violoncello (Vlc). The tempo is marked '(Allegro)'. The first violin part is marked 'Played' and includes the instruction 'sempre p e dolce' and a 'legato' marking. The second violin part is marked 'Written' and also includes 'sempre p e dolce'. The viola and cello parts also feature 'sempre p e dolce' markings. The bottom system shows measures 280 to 282, with 'pp' (pianissimo) markings in the first, second, and cello parts.

Figure 108. Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 127, first movement, bars 9 to 13, 250 to 252 and 280 to 282, Klingler Quartet. [CD 3 Track 4: 00:21-00:29 (bars 9 to 13); 06:20-06:24 (bars 250-252); 07:08-07:15 (bars 280-282)].

In the Elly Ney Piano Trio's recording (1935) of the first movement of Schumann's Piano Quartet Op. 47, the first violin noticeably shortens the second note of each duplet resulting in distinct separation between the duplets. This has the effect of emphasizing the metric displacement caused by the slurs from weak to strong beats (Fig. 109).

The image shows a musical score for two Violin (Vln) parts, labeled 'Written' and 'Played'. The tempo is marked '(Allegro ma non troppo)'. The score covers bars 31 to 35. The 'Written' part shows a sequence of duplets with dynamic markings *sf* and *p*. The 'Played' part shows the same sequence but with the second note of each duplet shortened, creating a distinct separation between the duplets. The notation includes slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Figure 109. Schumann, Piano Quartet Op. 47, first movement, bars 31 to 35, Elly Ney Piano Trio, Max Strub, Violin [for recording see <http://clmu.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy1.library.usyd.edu.au/View/379726>].

A variety of articulation, clearly deliberate, is evident in the opening of Mozart's Quartet K. 428 played by the Prisca Quartet (1935). Here the isolated duplets form the principal thematic material. Notably, the second note of each duplet is shortened. This results in a livelier duplet character. Yet at bar 17, with the unexpected harmony—a diminished chord on G—the second quaver of the duplet is completely un-nuanced (Fig. 110).

Allegro Vivace

The image shows a musical score for the fourth movement of Mozart's String Quartet K. 428, titled 'Allegro Vivace'. The score is for four instruments: Violin I (Vln I), Violin II (Vln II), Viola (Vla), and Violoncello (Vlc). The music is in 2/4 time and the key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The score is divided into two measures, with the first measure further divided into 'Written' and 'Played' sections, and the second measure also divided into 'Written' and 'Played' sections. The dynamic marking is 'p' (piano). The 'Written' sections show the original notation, while the 'Played' sections show the actual performance, which includes some rhythmic variations and slurs.

Figure 110. Mozart, String Quartet K. 428, fourth movement, bars 1 to 2 and 17, Prisca Quartet. [CD 6 Track 4: 00:00-00:02 (bars 1 to 2); 00:24-00:25 (bar 17)].

Similarly, the first violinist of the Rosé Quartet alters the length of the second note of the duplets between bars 45 to 47 and 53 to 54 of the third movement of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 74 (recorded 1927). In both instances the second note of each duplet is gradually lengthened and has the effect of enhancing the crescendo. (The Rosé Quartet makes a subtle crescendo from bars 45 to 47 despite it not being marked in the score). This gradual lengthening occurs again from bars 215 to 226 when the passage is repeated (Fig. 111). This certainly shows a propensity for less nuanced execution in conjunction with increasing dynamic level.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a string quartet. The first system, labeled '45', covers bars 45 to 47. It includes staves for Vln I, Vln II, Vla, and Vlc. The Vln I staff is marked 'Played' and 'Written' with a dynamic of *p*. The Vln II staff is marked 'Written' with a dynamic of *p*. The Vlc staff is marked with a dynamic of *p*. The second system, labeled '53', covers bars 53 to 55. It includes staves for Vln I, Vln II, Vla, and Vlc. All staves in this system are marked with a dynamic of *p (cresc.)*. The music is in 3/4 time and B-flat major.

Figure 111. Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 74, third movement, bars 45 to 47 and 53 to 55, Rosé Quartet. [CD 5 Track 1: 00:35-00:38 (bars 45 to 47); 00:41-00:43 (bars 52 to 55)].

Shortening the second note of isolated duplets also occurs between bars 150 and 152 of the second movement from Beethoven's Quartet Op. 74. Despite

the general tendency for a less nuanced style in slower tempos, the Rosé Quartet distinctly shortens the second note of each pair (Fig. 112).

(Adagio ma non troppo)

150 Written 150 Played

Vln I

Vln II

Vla

Vlc

p

Figure 112. Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 74, second movement, bars 150 to 151, Rosé Quartet. [CD 6 Track 1: 06:54-07:00].

The Klingler Quartet shortens the second note of each duplet from bars 1 to 3 of the third movement of Haydn's Quartet Op. 64 No. 5 (recorded 1912/13). Again, this gives a lighter and more lifted character to the figuration (Fig. 113). That this articulation is clearly deliberate is supported by the fact that the second note of each duplet (with crotchets) from bars 31 to 36 is played for its full duration (Fig. 113).

Menuetto. Allegretto

The image displays two musical staves for a string quartet. The top staff is for Violin I (Vln I) and the bottom staff is for Violin II (Vln II). The music is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first four bars (bars 1-4) are marked 'Played' and 'Written' with a dynamic of *f* (forte). The last four bars (bars 31-36) are marked with a dynamic of *p* (piano). The bottom staff shows a detailed view of the duplet rhythm, with a bracket indicating that the second note of each duplet is played with full duration. Dynamics of *f* are indicated at the end of the first and second systems of the bottom staff.

Figure 113. Haydn, String Quartet Op. 64 No. 5, third movement, bars 1 to 3 and 31 to 36, Klingler Quartet. [CD 3 Track 2: 00:00-00:04 (bars 1 to 4); 00:37-00:44 (bars 31 to 36)].

Both the Gewandhaus and Rosé Quartets nuance the duplets in the fourth movement of Beethoven's Quartet Op. 131 (recorded 1927). In bars 47 and 55 the first note of each duplet is slightly accentuated while the second note is

slightly shortened by a release in bow pressure (Fig. 114). Clearly, in bar 55 the duplets (in the second violin, viola and cello parts) are an accompaniment to the first violin part. In general, however, the Rosé Quartet nuances duplets to a greater extent than the Gewandhaus Quartet in many instances. For example, in bars 63 and 152 in the same movement the Rosé Quartet subtly nuances the duplets by leaning on the first note of each, while the Gewandhaus Quartet play them legato, without any nuance whatsoever.

(Andante, ma non troppo e molto cantabile)

47 Written 47 Played

55 Written 55 Played

Figure 114. Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 131, fourth movement, bars 47 and 55, Gewandhaus Quartet and Rosé Quartet. [Gewandhaus, CD 3 Track 8: 02:06-02:09 (bar

47), 02:29-02:32 (bar 55); Rosé, CD 5 Track 2: 02:00-02:03 (bar 47), 02:20-02:23 (bar 55)].

Summary: Factors influencing the articulation of the slurred duplet

1) *Tempo*

In slower tempi, such as in adagio movements, the tendency is to play all slurs, including duplets, very legato and un-nuanced. Notable examples occur in the Rosé Quartet's performances of the first movement (*Adagio*) from Beethoven's Quartet Op. 131 and the first movement (*Poco Adagio-Allegro*) and second movement (*Adagio*) from Beethoven's Quartet Op. 74. Un-nuanced duplets are also a feature in the Gewandhaus Quartet's performance of the first movement of Beethoven's Quartet Op. 131, and the Klingler Quartet's performance of the second movement (*Adagio*) from Beethoven's Quartet Op. 127.

Yet, faster tempi do not appear to exclude this approach. The Rosé Quartet plays all the duplets legato and un-nuanced throughout the first movement (*Allegro*) and third movement (*Scherzo*) of Beethoven's Quartet Op. 18, No. 4. (nevertheless, this approach is reflective of the slower tempo of the first movement compared to performances today). The Brüder-Post Quartet plays un-nuanced duplets in both the second movement (*Andante Cantabile*) of Haydn's String Quartet Op. 3 No. 5 and the faster paced third movement (*Trio*) from Mozart's String Quartet K. 575.

Separating the duplets in faster paced movements may have been intended at times to enhance a lively character or provide greater clarity. In the *Trio* from Beethoven's Piano Trio Op. 1 No. 3, and the third movement of Haydn's Piano Trio Hob. XV:25 the Elly Ney Trio play with a very pronounced separation

between duplets. The effect is similar to certain duplets in Soldat-Roeger's performance of the first movement of Mozart's Violin Concerto K. 219. In both instances the succession of duplets are part of the principal melodic line and are at a forte dynamic. Soldat-Roeger plays these with no separation when the passage is more lyrical (bars 54 to 58) and with marked shortening of the second note when the passage requires rhythmic incisiveness (bars 59 and 72). Notably the separated duplets in the Elly Ney Trio's performance are also played with great rhythmic verve. Separating the duplet in such a way during a fast forte passage naturally creates a pronounced emphasis on the first note of each duplet. These isolated cases suggest that this may only be appropriate in passages of a strong rhythmic character that do not require a more sustained, legato approach. When duplets are separated in slower movements, these tend to be part of an accompaniment figuration (see 'Voicing' below).

It appears that fast-paced movements contain instances of both nuanced and un-nuanced duplets. However, in slow-paced movements the tendency is toward an un-nuanced execution when the duplets are part of the principle melodic line.

2) *Voicing*

In slow-paced movements, the Gewandhaus, Bohemian, Rosé and Brüder-Post Quartets separate duplets when they are part of the accompaniment. Seemingly, this gives greater clarity to the texture and helps delineate the melodic line. Notably, in performances by the Bohemian Quartet the accompanying duplets become increasingly less nuanced when the melody intensifies (Figs. 104 and 105). Clearly, the sensitive adjustment of articulation was intended to avoid obscuring the melodic line.

3) *Dynamic level*

In many instances it appears that a soft dynamic level elicited more release of the second note of the duplet. For example in the Bohemian Quartet's performance of Dvorak's Quartet Op. 96, the accompanying duplets in the viola part throughout the second movement are played with slight separation caused by a shortening of the second note of each duplet. When the dynamic rises to fortissimo, these duplets are played increasingly un-nuanced. This pattern is similar in the first and second violin parts (Figs. 104 and 105). The Bohemian Quartet also reflects these tendencies in other performances. In the first movement of Suk's Quartet Op. 11 the separation of the duplets is again more pronounced when the dynamic is pianissimo, and less nuanced when the dynamic is forte. While separation gives clarity in pianissimo dynamic, the legato duplets reflect the expansive climatic passage (Fig. 106). The Grete-Eweler Quartet also varies the articulation of duplets in this way. In the second movement of Brahms Quartet Op. 67 the forte duplets are played absolutely un-nuanced, but when the dynamic decreases to pianissimo the duplets are more of an accompaniment and played with more separation. The Rosé Quartet's performance of the third movement of Beethoven's Quartet Op. 74 clearly illustrates a tendency toward making the second note of the duplet longer when the dynamic is louder (Fig. 111).

4) *Repetition*

When a melodic fragment is repeated, often the articulation of the duplet is varied. Frequently, this is achieved by the application of various agogic and rhythmic accents. The use of agogic accents often results in unevenness of duplets and the creation of dotted rhythms. Notable examples occur in

performances by the Klingler, Brüder-Post and Bohemian Quartets and Soldat-Roeger.

5) *The articulation following the duplet*

When succeeding notes after a duplet were played off the string then the second note of the duplet was sometimes shortened to facilitate the successful bouncing of the bow. A notable example occurs in a performance of Mozart's String K. 575 by the Brüder-Post Quartet. At bar 49 in the third movement, the second note of the duplet is shortened when followed by a spiccato stroke. In the repeat of the passage at bar 57, the duplet is played un-nuanced when followed by an on-the-string detaché stroke. Similar instances occur in the Brüder-Post Quartet's recording of Boccherini's Menuetto from the String Quintet Op. 11 No. 5. There are, however, some notable exceptions. The Prisca Quartet maintains the length of the second quaver of the duplet in bar 3 of the fourth movement of Mozart's Quartet K. 428, despite the off-the-string stroke that follows. Similarly, the Klingler Quartet gives the second note of the duplet its full length at bar 285 in the Finale of Beethoven's Quartet Op. 127 when off-the-string semiquavers follow.

5) *Appoggiatura Figures*

A notable example occurs in Soldat-Roeger's performance of Beethoven's Romance Op. 50 (Fig. 94). The succession of notated descending appoggiatura/resolving figures are heavily nuanced. The second note is shortened and there is a clear separation between each slurred pair. This is the only instance in this performance where the slurs are not legato. This may reflect an earlier nineteenth-century practice of nuancing appoggiatura figures.

The Execution of the Duplet in Selected Passages in Brahms's Chamber Music Works

Two distinct issues regarding the performance of the slurred duplet arise when comparing the written and recorded sources. Firstly, the question of the extent to which second notes were shortened (with an implied diminuendo) and secondly, whether the emphasis remains on the first note regardless of rhythmic placement within the bar.

Concerning the first issue, recorded evidence shows a distinct shortening, (as advocated in Brahms's letter to Joachim), usually only for duplets that require rhythmic incisiveness (in faster-paced movements, at a loud dynamic or at cadence points) or duplets that form part of an accompaniment (often at a soft dynamic). The ending of the third movement of Brahms's Violin Sonata Op. 78 is an appropriate instance for such an articulation. The violinist plays quaver duplets over a succession of rhythmically-incisive chords in the tonic. In this instance, the first note of each duplet may be strongly accented and the second note significantly shortened (Fig. 115).

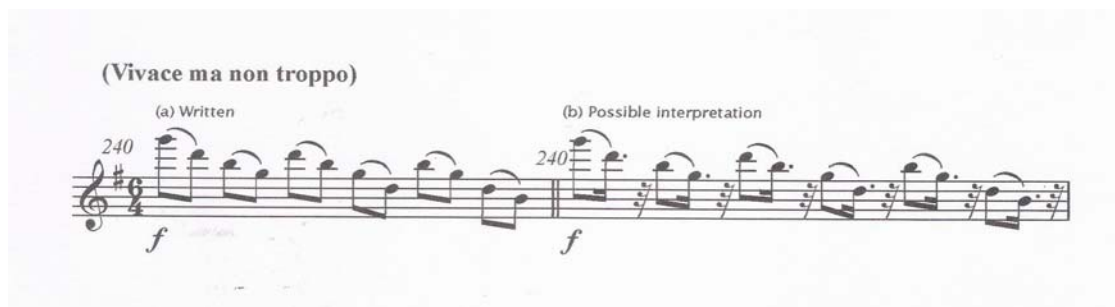


Figure 115. Brahms, Sonata in G major Op. 78, first movement, bar 240.

There are other examples in Brahms's string music where this nuance could be applied. For example, duplets featured in the third movement of

Brahms's String Quartet in C minor Op. 51 No. 1 and the first movement of his String Quartet Op. 67 (Figs. 116a and b).



Figure 116a. Brahms, String Quartet in C minor Op. 51 No.1, third movement, bars 1 to 4.



Figure 116b. Brahms, String Quartet Op. 67, first movement, bars 85 to 100.

However, in both instances the duplets form the melodic line within the texture, rather than the accompaniment. They are marked to be played at a moderate tempo and dynamic and as such, do not necessarily require pronounced rhythmic incisiveness. Based on the recorded evidence, less or no

shortening of the second note might be historically appropriate in this circumstance. The duplets may have been played with a slight emphasis on the first note (resulting in a slight release on the second note and diminuendo through the duplet), but without any separation between the pairs. It stands to reason that the printed accent over the duplet in the anacrusis and in bar 4 (Fig. 116a) would cause a more distinct diminuendo on the second note.

The placement of a longer slur over duplet slurs occurs frequently in Brahms's violin sonatas. Two differing methods of interpreting this slur may be considered. First, the longer slur may elicit a release on the second note of each duplet, in order to re-articulate the first note of the next duplet. Thus, some separation is likely. Alternatively, given that Brahms may have expected duplet slurs played with succeeding bows to be nuanced (as he suggests in his letter), the longer slur may in fact indicate a more legato execution between duplets (Fig. 117).



Figure 117. Brahms, Violin Sonata Op. 78, third movement, bars 11 to 13, 126, 162; Op. 100, first movement, bar 254; and third movement, bars 4 and 8.

This latter scenario appears logical when considering the longer slur in the context of a slow tempo with a notated crescendo (Fig. 118).

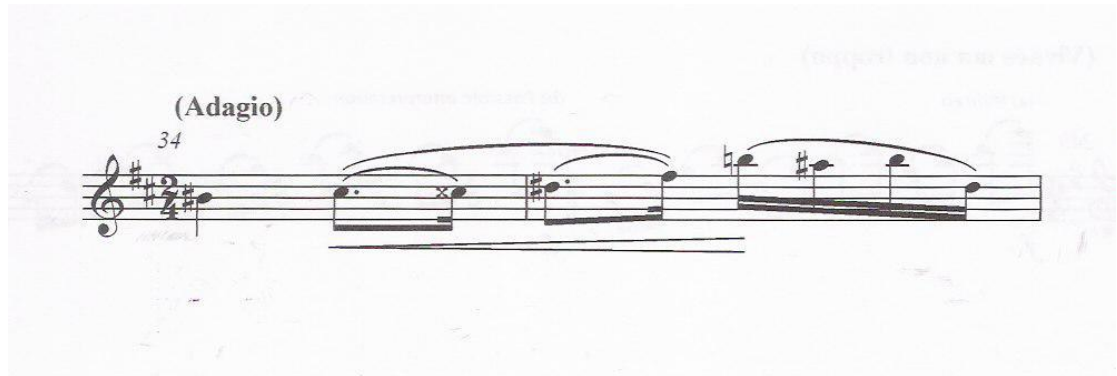


Figure 118. Brahms, Violin Sonata Op.78, second movement, bars 34 to 35.

In bars 11 to 13 in the first movement of Brahms's Violin Sonata Op. 78 it is not clear whether he intended the longer slur mark to indicate the bowing or the phrasing, or both (Fig. 119).

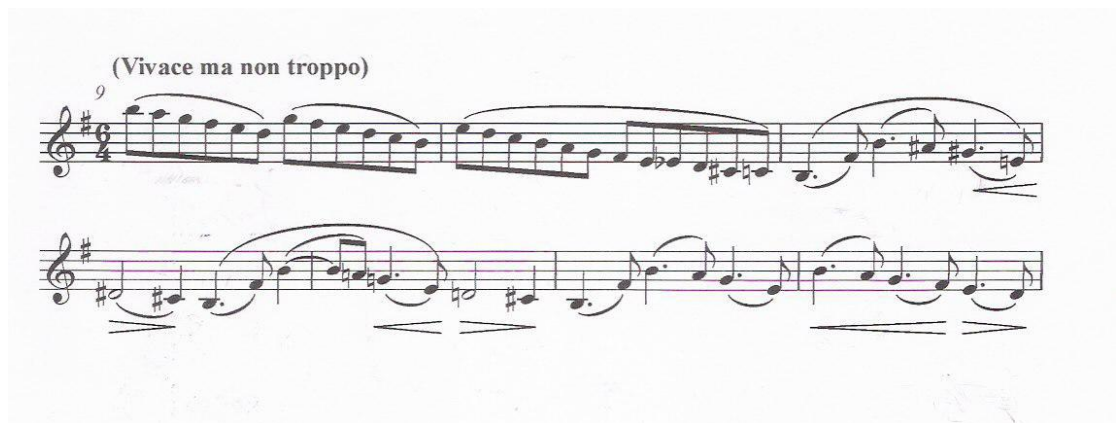


Figure 119. Brahms, Violin Sonata Op. 78, first movement, bars 9 to 15.

The longer slur appears in bars 11 to 13 but not in bars 14 and 15. If the longer slur is a phrasing slur, and not a bowing slur, it may simply indicate a

legato approach. Brahms may naturally have expected the performer to assume the same phrasing in bar 14 and 15. However, this passage is slurred identically in the recapitulation (bars 165 to 169). This suggests that the discrepancy may be deliberate, and that the longer slur may indicate, as in the previous examples, the bowing pattern. Possibly, this may make sense considering the development of the phrase and the increase in dynamic level in bar 15.

Nevertheless, there are still some instances where the notated slurring, lengthened by ties, is too impractical to be an indication of bowing (Fig. 120). In bar 70 of the second movement of the Violin Sonata Op. 78 Brahms writes the term 'legato' in the violin part, suggesting that the nuancing of the slurs is not appropriate anyway. Notably, this is the only instance in the violin sonatas where the term 'legato' is used, indicating that Brahms may have been aware of the difficulty faced by the violinist in executing the passage in one bow. Ossip Schnirlin (1874-1939), a student of Joachim's, indicates a split in the bowing in his 1926 edition (Fig. 121).²⁰⁹



Figure 120. Brahms, Violin Sonata Op.78, second movement, bars 70 to 71²¹⁰.

²⁰⁹ The double asterisk (**) in the Schnirlin edition refers to the semiquaver C-sharp in bar 71 being notated enharmonically as a D-flat in the Stichvorlage.

²¹⁰ Brahms, *Sonaten für Klavier und Violine*, violin part, 9.

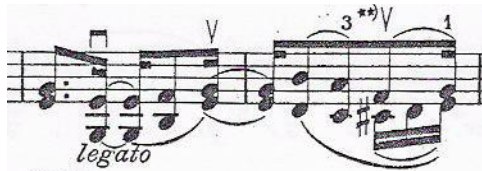


Figure 121. Brahms, Violin Sonata Op.78, second movement bars 70 to 71.²¹¹

The 'Conjoined' Slur

In several instances, in both the violin and piano parts of the Violin Sonata Op. 78, Brahms writes a seemingly unnecessary 'extra' slur at the beginning of a longer slur, usually from an upbeat to the downbeat. For purposes of discussion I have termed this extra slur a 'conjoined' slur (Figs. 122, 123a, b and c).

It is fair to assume that emphasis typically occurs on the first note of a duplet, and to a degree on the first note of a larger slurred group. This being so, in the case of a conjoined slur, where the duplet is 'attached' to the larger grouping, it is unclear whether emphasis should be placed on the first note of the conjoined slur or the first note of the larger slurred group. In the example in Fig. 122 Brahms leaves no doubt. The dynamic marking underneath clearly indicates that the emphasis should be on the first note of the conjoined slur (and not on the downbeat), despite its weak position in the bar (Fig. 122).

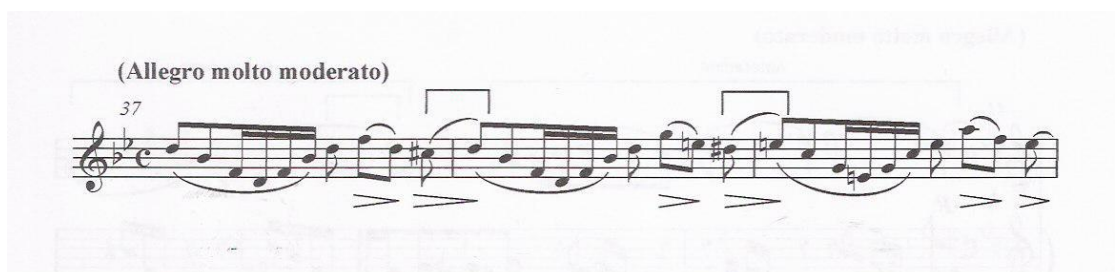


Figure 122. Brahms, Violin Sonata Op. 78, third movement, bars 37 to 39.

²¹¹ Brahms, *Sonate G Dur für Piano und Violine*, ed. Ossip Schnirlin (Berlin: Simrock, 1926), 8.

Most instances of conjoined slurs, as in Fig. 122, occur from a weak upbeat to a strong downbeat. However, unlike Fig. 122 where the printed dynamic markings give a clear indication of emphasis, in most instances the intended emphasis remains unclear. There are three possibilities. Firstly, the emphasis may be placed on both the first note of the conjoined slur and the first note of the larger slurred group. In this way, both the upbeat and the downbeat are prominent. This seems appropriate in many contexts where the conjoined slur occurs at a climatic point in the phrase. This 'double emphasis' allows for expressive broadening from the upbeat to the downbeat (Figs. 123a). The second possibility is that the conjoined slur may indicate an emphasis on just the downbeat. Thus the conjoined slur functions as a weaker upbeat 'attachment' to the larger slurred grouping that begins on the strong downbeat. This may also allow for appropriate broadening at peaks of phrases (Fig. 123a), or a reassertion of the downbeat at the beginning of a phrase (123b). In both possibilities, the conjoined slur may be read as an articulation marking, and not necessarily a bowing instruction, as it appears in both the piano and violin parts. The third possibility is that downbeat emphasis may simply have been assumed and the conjoined slur merely indicates a smooth attachment to the larger slur.

(Allegro molto moderato)

34

Vln

Pn

Figure 123a. Brahms, Violin Sonata Op. 78, third movement, bars 34 to 35.

(Allegro molto moderato)

28

Vln

Pn

p

leggiero

p

Figure 123b. Brahms, Violin Sonata Op. 78, third movement, bars 28 to 29.

Either of these two possibilities for interpreting a conjoined slur appears appropriate in other instances throughout the violin sonatas. In Fig. 123c, Ex. i, ii and iii, the conjoined slur occurs at the peak of the phrase where expressive broadening through a 'double emphasis' seems natural. Emphasis on the down-

beat appears appropriate in order to enhance the expressive rising interval of the theme in Ex. iv and v, or to reaffirm the pulse in Ex. vi and vii.

Figure 123c. Brahms Violin Sonatas, examples of conjoined slurs.

The occurrence of a single larger slur in a similar circumstance may imply a more conventional emphasis on the first note of the slur, regardless of where it falls within the bar. In Fig. 124, the upbeat beginning the phrase at bars 28 and 29 is notated with a conjoined slur while the upbeat to a similar phrase at bar 42 and 43 is written with one continuous slur. The downbeat of bar 29 may be

thought of as requiring emphasis to establish the pulse, after interrupting the descending diminished arpeggio in the piano part. Contrastingly, the F-sharp upbeat at the end of bar 42 functions as the third of a dominant chord moving to a tonic chord on the downbeat of bar 43. The tension implicit in this F-sharp (the leading note), and the chromatic movement across the bar line suggests that emphasis on the F-sharp may be more appropriate. While the difference between the printed slurs in Fig. 124 may conceivably be a printing anomaly, they are consistent with the first edition.²¹² The slur markings are also consistent in the repeat of this phrase from bars 49 to 51.

(Allegro molto moderato)

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a violin and piano. The first system, labeled 'Vln' and 'Pn', covers measures 28 through 43. The second system covers measures 42 through 51. The tempo is indicated as '(Allegro molto moderato)'. The key signature consists of two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The score includes various musical markings such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings like 'p' (piano). The violin part (Vln) and piano part (Pn) are both marked with 'p'. The score is divided into two systems, with the first system covering measures 28-43 and the second system covering measures 42-51. The F-sharp in measure 42 is highlighted as a point of interest in the text above.

²¹² Brahms, *Sonate für Pianoforte und Violin Op. 78* (Berlin: N. Simrock, 1880).

Figure 124. Brahms, Violin Sonata Op. 78, third movement, bars 28 to 30 and 42 and 43.

The conjoined slur also occurs in stepwise movement in several instances. Here, re-emphasis is needed at the beginning of each conjoined slur to enhance the chromatic nature of the melodic line (Fig. 125).



Figure 125. Brahms, Violin Sonatas, examples of conjoined slurs in stepwise movement.

The slurs in Fig. 125 could conceivably have been notated as in Fig. 126. If a conjoined slur implies a re-emphasis on the note to which it is attached, it follows that the slurring in Fig. 126 would render a more legato, less nuanced interpretation.

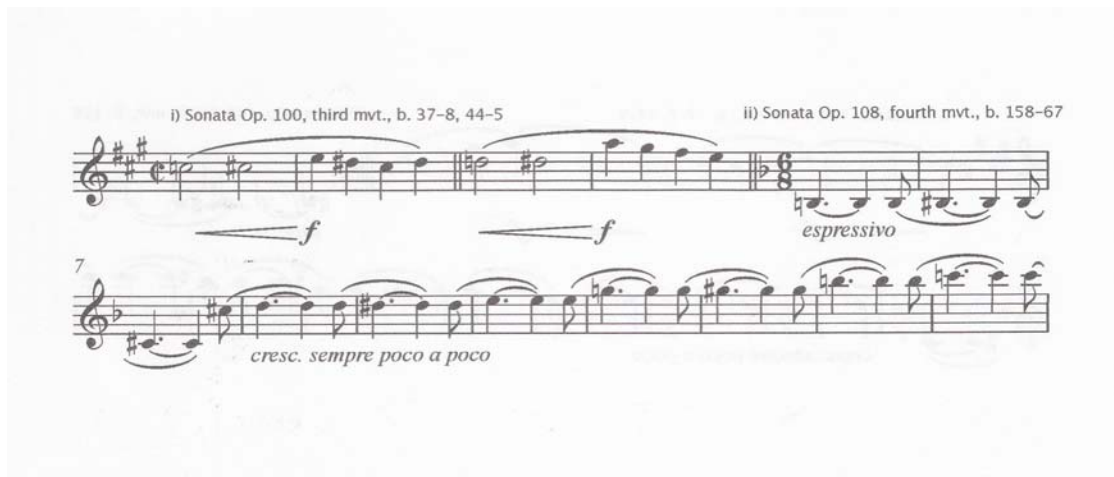
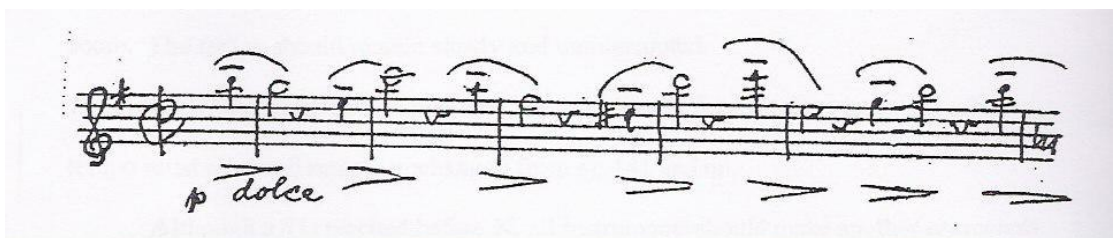


Figure 126. Brahms, Violin Sonatas, hypothetical notation of larger slurs.

Slurs from Weak to Strong Beats

In Brahms's music, whether the first note of a slurred duplet that occurs from a weak to a strong beat should receive emphasis is a point of contention. The examination of recorded and written evidence reveals discrepancies between theory and practice. Blume describes Brahms's frequent emphasis of weak beats as a 'typical Brahmsian nuance.' He adds that 'The upbeat should always be stressed and the downbeat, the strong part of the measure, should be given less emphasis.'²¹³ A notable example of this is seen in Steinbach's interpretation of the beginning of the first movement from the Fourth Symphony (Figs. 127 and 128). Today, in complete opposition, most performances emphasize the downbeats.



²¹³ Pasternack, "Brahms in the Meiningen Tradition," 94.

Figure 127. Brahms, Symphony No. 4, first movement, first violins, bars 1 to 6.²¹⁴



Figure 128. Brahms, Symphony No. 4, first movement, first violins, bars 13 to 17.²¹⁵

Several early twentieth-century treatises such as by Johnstone and Matthay seemingly promote the older style of slurred duplets.²¹⁶ In his treatise Matthay explains that ‘the accent remains on the first note, no matter whether this first note occurs on an accented or unaccented portion of the bar, provided this first note is *at least as long* as the second note.’²¹⁷ Instances of the first note of equal-valued slurred duplets occurring from weak to strong beats are numerous in Brahms’s Violin Sonatas (Fig. 129), creating rhythmic interest through metric displacement and hemiola.

²¹⁴ Pasternack, “Brahms in the Meiningen Tradition,” 94.

²¹⁵ Pasternack, “Brahms in the Meiningen Tradition,” 95.

²¹⁶ J. Alfred Johnstone, *The Art of Expression in Pianoforte Playing* (London: Weeks & Co., 19?), 40-41; Tobias Matthay, *The Slur or Couplet of Notes in all its Variety, its Interpretation and Execution*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1927), 7.

²¹⁷ Matthay, *The Slur or Couplet of Notes*, 7.



Figure 129. Brahms, Violin Sonatas, example of slurred duplets occurring from weak to strong beats.

Furthermore, there are examples in other chamber music by Brahms in which dynamic markings leave no question as to the necessary emphasis of slurred duplets. For example, in the first movement of the Piano Quintet Op. 34, the diminuendi (bars 256 to 258 and 104 to 106) clearly indicate that the emphasis is on the first note of each duplet (Fig. 130).

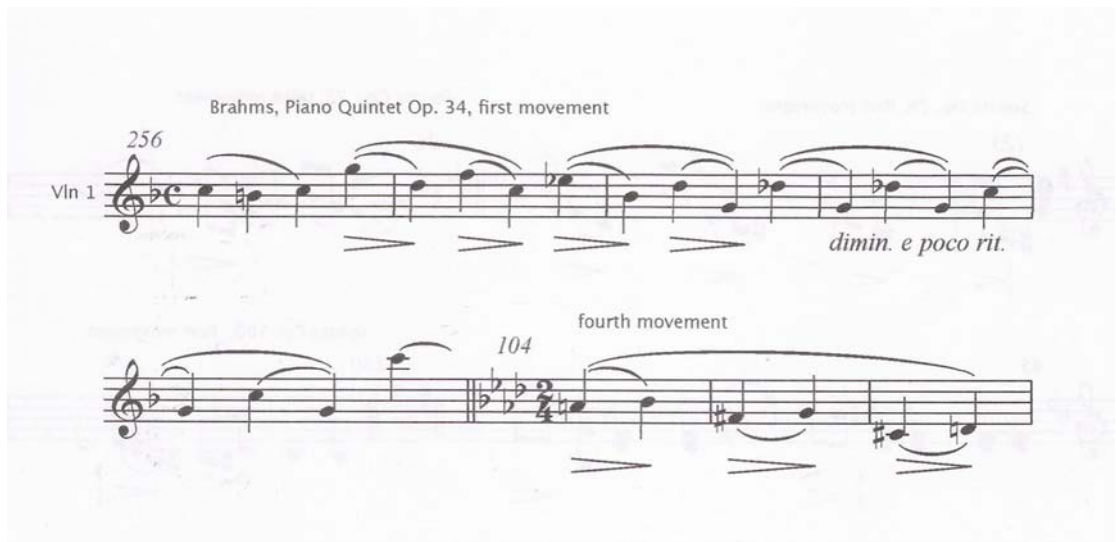


Figure 130. Brahms, Piano Quintet Op. 34, first movement, bars 256 to 260; fourth movement, bars 104 to 106.

The diminuendo markings in Fig. 130 indicate, at least in these instances, that the emphasis remains on the first note of the duplet, whether it starts on a weak or strong beat. Examples of duplets starting on strong beats are numerous in the violin sonatas (Fig. 131).

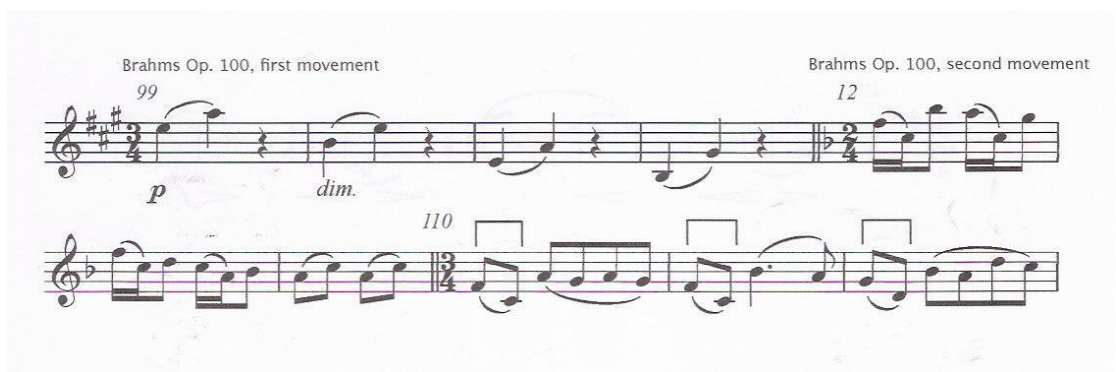


Figure 131. Brahms, Violin Sonatas, Op. 100, first movement, bars 99 to 102, second movement bars 12 to 14 and 110 to 113. Examples of duplets occurring on strong beats.

However, by the early twentieth century, not all written evidence concurs with this premise. If the second note of a slurred duplet is longer than the first Matthay stipulates that it must be given more emphasis. He terms this the 'inverted slur' (Fig. 132).

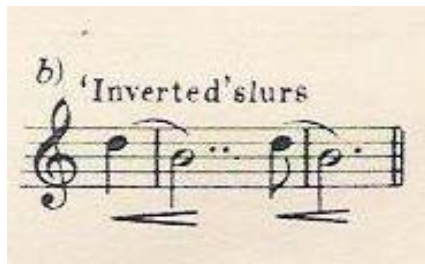


Figure 132. Matthay, the 'inverted slur.'²¹⁸

In Figs. 127 and 128 above, Steinbach clearly places emphasis on the first note of the duplet, despite the second note being longer than the first. Steinbach's desire to bring out the frequent metric displacement in Brahms's music therefore does not align with the theories of Johnstone and Matthay, arguably suggesting a shift in practice between the late nineteenth century and 1927, when Matthay's work was published. This inconsistency creates ambiguity about the emphasis of particular duplets, such as in bar 101 of the last movement of the Violin Sonata Op. 78. Following Steinbach's premise the weak quaver upbeats should be emphasized. This gives unity with the accented metric displacement in the piano part, and reflects the emphasis given by the marked accents in the violin part in the previous bar (Fig. 133). In contrast, if the second note of each pair were emphasized as advocated by Johnstone and Matthay, rhythmic cross-emphasis would be created with the piano part.

²¹⁸ Matthay, *The Slur or Couplet of Notes*, 7.

(Allegro molto moderato)

101

mf cresc.

cresc.

Steinbach

Johnstone and Matthey

103

f

f

105

f

6

7

Figure 133. Brahms, Violin Sonata in G major Op. 78, third movement, bars 101 to 106.

In Brahms's violin sonatas, certain instances of duplets in which the second note is longer than the first, and which start on a strong beat, are less ambiguous as these include clear dynamic markings. Here, Brahms clearly wished the emphasis to be placed on the downbeat (Fig. 134). It must be noted however that in this instance Brahms's use of the double hairpin may also have implied a temporal broadening at the peak of the hairpin, and not necessarily only dynamic emphasis (see 'The Hairpin Sign' below).

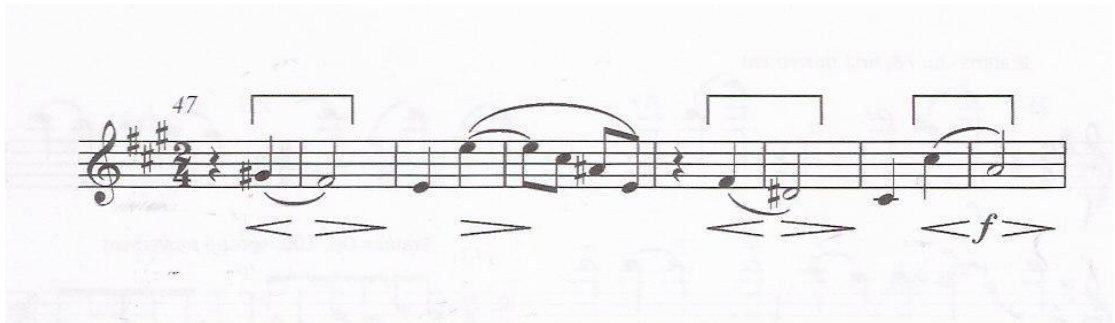


Figure 134. Brahms, Violin Sonata Op. 108, second movement, bars 47 to 54.

Additionally, Matthey states that the 'inverted slur' may also occur when the notes are of equal value (Fig. 135). Clearly, this does not accord with Brahms's letter to Joachim, which implies that the first note should always receive the emphasis.



Figure 135. Beethoven, Piano Sonata in D minor Op. 31. Matthay's inverted slur on notes of equal value (my circles).²¹⁹

In the examples given by Matthay, the inverted slur always occurs with a leading ascending duplet (Figs. 135 and 136).



Figure 136. Brahms, Waltz Op. 39 No. 15. Matthay's inverted slur on leading ascending duplets (my circles).²²⁰

A crescendo through a duplet naturally creates a more legato connection with the following note while a shortened second note naturally creates a diminuendo, and potentially a shortening of the second note creates a separation between the successive duplets. It is useful to compare Matthay's suggested use of the inverted slur in Brahms's Waltz Op. 30 No. 15 with early recordings of this work by the pianists Eibenschütz and Alfred Grünfeld (1852-1924) recorded in 1903 and 1910 respectively. Both were pupils of Clara Schumann and thus had some connection to a performance style associated with Brahms. Their respective recordings of this Waltz reveal different interpretations for the duplet. Eibenschütz plays the duplets as inverted slurs, evenly and with a crescendo, just

²¹⁹ Matthay, *The Slur or Couplet of Notes*, 11.

²²⁰ Matthay, *The Slur or Couplet of Notes*, 21.

as Matthey suggests. However, Grünfeld shortens the second note of the duplets (creating a diminuendo) in bars 1 and 4. He does however play them as inverted slurs in bars 2, 5 and 6 (Fig. 137). While these two performances appear to imply deliberate renderings of the slurred duplets, it is also conceivable that carelessness on the part of the performers accounts for the inconsistency in the execution of marked articulations in these two recordings.

The image shows a musical score for Brahms' Waltz Op. 39 No. 15, starting at measure 15. The score is in 3/4 time with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The tempo/mood is marked 'p dolce'. The score is presented in two systems. The first system shows measures 15 through 20. The second system shows measures 21 and 22. Annotations are placed above the notes: dots (·) indicate shortened notes, and dashes (—) indicate legato articulation. The top line of the first system represents the recording by Grünfeld, and the bottom line represents the recording by Eibenschütz. In the first system, Grünfeld's annotations show shortened notes in measures 15 and 18, and legato slurs in measures 16, 17, 19, and 20. Eibenschütz's annotations show legato slurs in measures 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20. The second system shows a first ending bracket in measure 21.

Figure 137. Brahms, Waltz Op. 39 No. 15. My annotations from recordings of Grünfeld and Eibenschütz showing articulation of slurred couplets A dot indicates a shortened note, while a dash indicates legato. Grünfeld top line, Eibenschütz lower line.²²¹ [Grünfeld, CD 6 Track 5: 00:00-00:29; Eibenschütz, CD 6 Track 6: 00:00-00:19].

These recordings demonstrate that despite Brahms's advocacy that the second note of a slurred couplet must be shorter, this was not always observed in practice. The rhythmic placement of duplets within the bar appears to have influenced the way in which it was articulated.

There are numerous implications arising from the effect of the inverted slur on duplets of equal rhythmic value in Brahms's string writing. The inverted

²²¹ Brahms, *Kleinere Klavierkompositionen* (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1981), 45. My annotations.

slur occurs in Matthay's example (Figs. 135 and 136) when the duplet is rising, and the note following the inverted slur is at the same pitch or higher. This precept could clearly be applied to the third (cited above) or fourth movements of Brahms's String Quartet in C minor Op. 51, No. 1. The inverted slur is potentially an effective way of shaping the melodic line (Fig. 138).

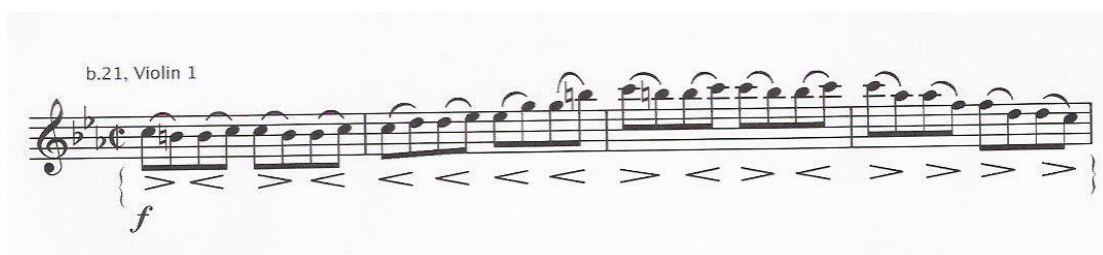


Figure 138. Brahms, String Quartet in C minor Op. 51 No. 1, first violin, fourth movement, bars 21 to 24. My annotations of Matthay's 'inverted' slur.

At the beginning of the last movement of Brahms's Violin Sonata Op. 100 the concept of inverted emphasis appears entirely appropriate (Fig. 139).



Figure 139. Brahms, Violin Sonata Op. 100, third movement, bars 1 to 7. My annotations of Matthay's 'inverted' slur.

Matthay's 'inverted slur' is potentially appropriate in other instances in Brahms's Violin Sonatas (Fig. 140).

Figure 140. Brahms, Violin Sonatas Op. 78, first movement, bars 125 and 126, third movement 16 and 17, 45 to 47; Op. 100, first movement, 130 and 131, and 255; second movement, bar 74, to 90; third movement, bar 56; Op. 108, third movement, bars 332 to 335. My annotations of Matthay's 'inverted' slur.

At bar 28 in the third movement of the Violin Sonata Op. 78, each duplet pair consists of a descending interval, although in terms of the overall structure the tessitura rises. Emphasis on the first note of each duplet may therefore be more appropriate despite the underlying crescendo (Fig. 141).

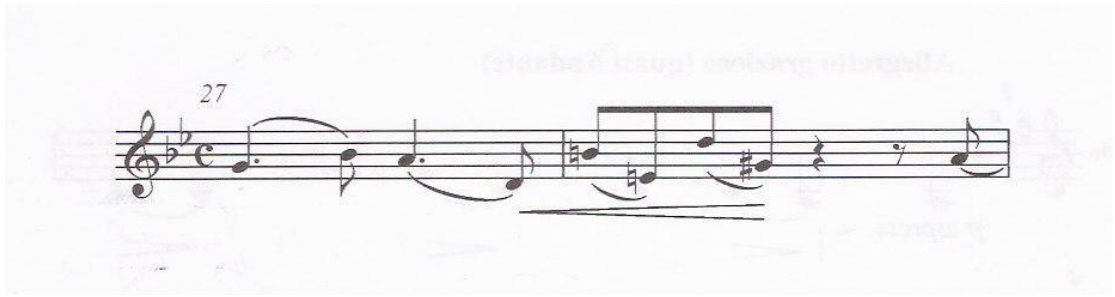


Figure 141. Brahms, Violin Sonata Op. 78, third movement, bars 27 and 28.

In other instances, in bars 136 and 137 of the third movement of the Sonata Op. 78, the concept of the inverted slur is clearly implied by the notated dynamic markings (Fig. 142a). The inverted slur may also be appropriate on beat four of each bar (Fig. 142b).



Figure 142a, b. Brahms, Violin Sonata Op. 78, third movement bars 136 and 137 (my inverted slurs in brackets).

Johnstone's and Matthey's treatises suggests that prior to their respective publications, the slurred duplet was not as nuanced as Brahms implies in his letter to Joachim. Early recordings of Brahms's music, such as by the Grete-Eweler Quartet (Fig. 107) and pianist Alfred Grünfeld (Fig. 137) show that, at times, duplets received emphasis on the first note (with diminuendo to the second note) but were also played legato and un-nuanced, sometimes even with a crescendo, as suggested by Johnston's and Matthey's concept of the inverted

slur. When applied to Brahms's other chamber music, it may be an effective means of achieving a natural phrasing that reflects the rise (and fall) of the musical line. Furthermore, there are instances in Brahms's own dynamic markings that indicate an inverted emphasis. The concepts proposed by Johnston and Mathay may also reflect a need to provide a theoretical justification for the playing of a duplet that did not naturally lend itself to a nuanced approach, that is with a diminuendo and a possible shortening of the second note. If so, the presence of such theory in the early twentieth century suggests the practice of the 'inverted slur' may frequently have occurred in performances of the time.

The Longer Phrasing or Bowing Slur

Longer slurs over more than two notes in Brahms's Violin Sonatas are usually playable within one bow, and generally do not encompass entire phrases. There is clearly one phrase from bars 78 to 82 of the first movement of the Violin Sonata Op. 78, but Brahms still breaks the slur to effect manageable bowing. Typically, Brahms does not align the start of each slur with the strong downbeat (Fig. 143).



Figure 143. Brahms, Violin Sonata Op. 78, first movement, bars 78 to 82.

Concerning the slur over more than two notes, Brahms suggests in his letter to Joachim that no shortening occurs on the last note of the slur, but that there can be exceptions, which unfortunately he does not specify. However, he does state that in performance these exceptions are 'usually appropriate.' While it is difficult to understand the full significance of this remark, it may reflect Brahms's comments about having to exaggerate tempo fluctuations in first performances until the musicians knew and understood the music:

Such exaggerations are only really necessary as long as the work is unknown to the orchestra (or soloist). In that case I often cannot do enough pushing forward and holding back, so that the passionate or calm expression is produced more or less as I want. Once a work has gotten into the bloodstream, there should be no more talk of such in my view, and the more one departs from this, the more inartistic I find the performance style.²²²

Could Brahms have been implying that a similar exaggeration of nuancing at the end of longer slurs in order to clarify the phrasing was also necessary in the first performances of a work? If so, then clearly he would not condone this for all subsequent performances. In Davies' description of a rehearsal of Joachim, Brahms, and Hausmann in 1889,²²³ there is no mention that Brahms felt a necessity to exaggerate the articulation of slurs because it was the first rehearsal of these works. Yet it is still conceivable that he may have wished for such exaggeration in the first performance of these trios or other chamber works then unknown to his audience. Ultimately, the meaning of Brahms's remarks in his

²²² Letter of Brahms to Joachim, 20? January 1886, in *Brahms Briefwechsel VI*, 220.

²²³ Davies, "Some personal recollections of Brahms as pianist and interpreter," in *Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, ed. W.W. Cobbett (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 182-4.

letter to Joachim concerning the nuancing of larger slurs must remain speculative.

Brahms states in his letter to Joachim that he writes slurs according to 'groups, phrases or whim.' Clearly this suggests that longer slurs may indicate both melodic or rhythmic groupings as well as bowing. For example, the variety of smaller groupings in bars 95 and 96 (Fig. 144) clearly emphasize the metric ambiguity and hemiola; in bar 96 the implied meter is 3/2 instead of 6/4. In Fig. 145 continuing stepwise movement on the second half of bar 10 elicits a longer grouping.

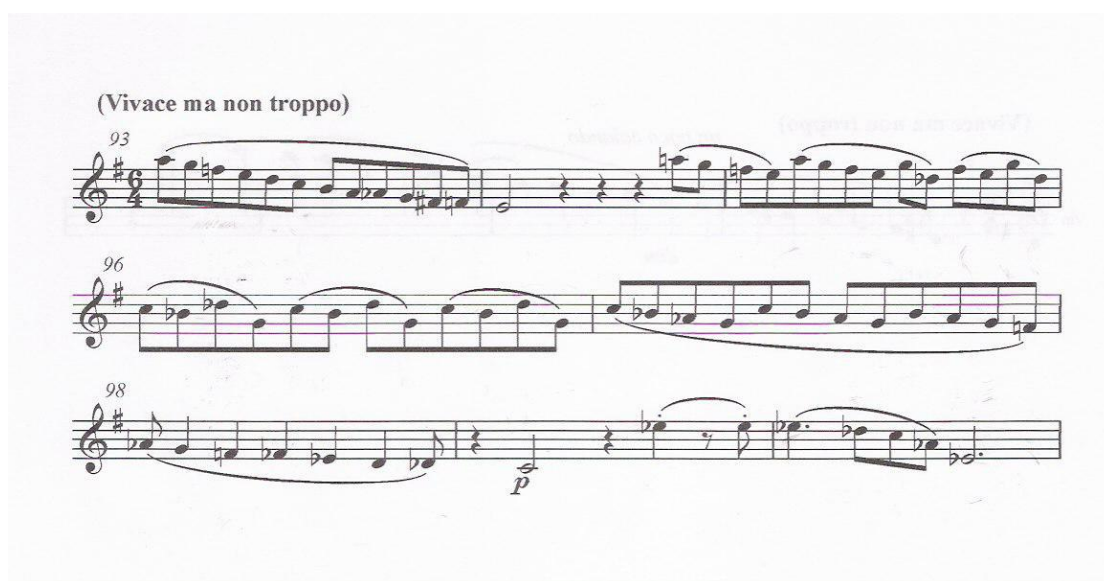


Figure 144. Brahms, Violin Sonata Op. 78, first movement, bars 93 to 97.

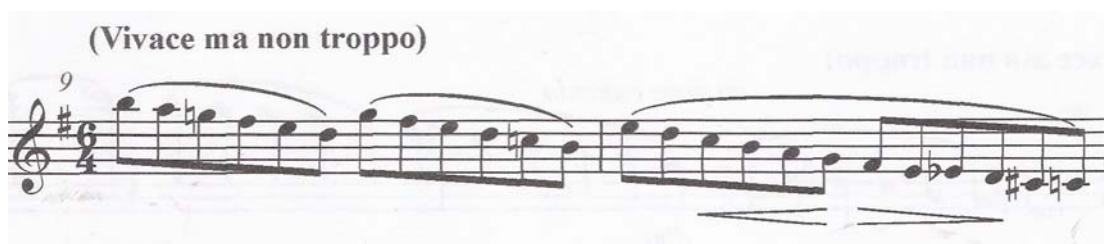


Figure 145. Brahms, Violin Sonata Op. 78, first movement, bars 9 and 10.

The fact that Brahms grouped slurs according to rhythmic and melodic structure, and within the limits of manageable bowing, suggests that he wished for these groupings to be distinguishable. In the account of the rehearsal of Brahms's C minor Piano Trio in 1887 by the composer, Joachim, and Hausmann (cited above), Davies recalls that at the opening of the third movement (*Andante Grazioso*), 'Brahms wished the little phrasings inside the musical line, in the violin solo, to be gently detached, just as marked' (Fig. 146).²²⁴



Figure 146. Brahms, Piano Trio in C minor Op. 101, third movement, bars 1 to 6.²²⁵

Playing the slurred duplets with detachment in bars 2, 3, 5 and 6 aligns with Brahms's statement in his letter to Joachim about the nuanced duplet. On the other hand, the detaching of the slurred three-notes groupings does not. However, exceptions to the rule are clearly permissible considering Brahms's

²²⁴ Davies, "Personal recollections of Brahms," 182-4.

²²⁵ Brahms, *Klaviertrios*, piano score, 134.

comment on the 'liberty or refinement in performance.'²²⁶ While it is impossible to know exactly how much separation Davies meant in her description by 'gently detached', it does imply a slight separation.

The score annotations of Steinbach show that he frequently marked commas between slurs, even under a longer phrasing slur (Fig. 147). Concerning a passage in Brahms's Third Symphony, Blume explains that 'It is important to separate the slurred phrases, slightly yet distinctly, so that the little repeated motive never gets lost.'²²⁷ It appears in most instances that Steinbach places commas between slurs to achieve greater clarity of a melodic or rhythmic motive. It is quite feasible that greater exaggeration of nuance was needed in orchestral playing to achieve the clarity that would more readily be possible in a sonata or string quartet.



Figure 147. Brahms, Symphony No. 2, second movement, bars 45 to 47. My penciled annotations of Steinbach's bowings.²²⁸

²²⁶ Letter of Brahms to Joachim, 20? January 1886, in *Brahms Briefwechsel VI*, 220.

²²⁷ Pasternack, "Brahms in the Meiningen Tradition," 89-90.

²²⁸ Brahms, *Complete Symphonies*, ed. Hans Gál (New York: Dover, 1974), 118.

Yet Brahms clearly disliked this type of separation of phrases as exemplified in his criticism of the conducting of Hans von Bülow:

Bülow's conducting is always calculated for effect. At the moment when a new phrase begins, he gets [the musician's] to leave a tiny gap. In my symphonies I have strenuously sought to avoid all this kind of thing. If I had wanted it I would have written it in.

While Brahms clearly considered Bülow's style to be overly nuanced at times, he was also known to have disliked the overly rigid approach of Hans Richter. It appears, therefore, that Steinbach's interpretative style in orchestral playing struck a 'middle ground' in terms of nuancing. There is sufficient evidence to support Brahms's approval of it in this context.²²⁹

An exception to Steinbach's nuancing of slurs occurs at the beginning of the Brahms's First Symphony, where Steinbach breaks a larger phrasing slur into smaller slurs for 'maximum resonance,'²³⁰ but an un-nuanced legato approach to the smaller slurs, as indicated by the original larger slurs, is maintained. The bowing is also split to enhance the chromatic motive of the first three notes in the violin part (Fig. 148).

²²⁹ Pascall and Weller, "Flexible tempo and nuancing in orchestral music," in *Performing Brahms*, 220-240.

²³⁰ Pasternack, "Brahms in the Meiningen Tradition," 9.



Figure 148. Brahms, Symphony No. 1, first movement, bars 1 to 7. My penciled annotations of Steinbach's bowings.²³¹

Early recordings reveal that the splitting of longer phrasing slurs without nuancing also occurred in chamber music performances. In the fourth movement of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 127 the long slur in the first violin part from bars 14 to 23 is impractical to play in a single bow. In the 1934/5 recording by the Klingler Quartet the slur is split but the un-nuanced legato is maintained. Similarly, in the *Finale* of Schumann's Piano Quartet Op.47 it is impractical to play many of the notated slurs in the string parts between bars 147 and 175 under one bow. In the 1935 Berlin recording, the violinist of the Elly Ney Trio clearly splits the bowing but maintains the un-nuanced legato throughout.

Recorded evidence also indicates that nuancing of longer slurs was not practised in solo and chamber music to the extent that is implied by Blume's comments. We hear varying degrees of nuancing of the slurred duplets in Soldat-Roeger's recording (c.1926) of Mozart's Violin Concerto K. 219 (see Fig. 100 above), although there is a clear tendency for a sustained un-nuanced legato

²³¹ Brahms, *Complete Symphonies*, 1.

during longer slurs. Other solo recordings, such as Bach's *Air* from Orchestral Suite BWV 1068 by Rosé (1909 and 1927), and Tchaikovsky's *Melodie* by Auer (1920), also show a tendency for a sustained legato throughout slurred passages. In Joachim's recording (1903) of his *Romance* there is no detachment between slurs and only a hint of release to indicate the endings of larger structural sections (Fig. 149). Often this release is merely the result of a bow change. At other times, such as the double stops in bar 78 and 82, the release of bow contact is a feature or a result of a staccato articulation, string crossing, or position changing.

 = Bow contact/release



The score consists of ten staves of music. The first staff begins with the tempo marking *Bewegt* and the dynamic *dolce e espress.*. It includes a *cresc.* marking and a bow contact/release symbol. The second staff starts at bar 18 and features dynamics *f*, *dim.*, *p*, and *pp*. The third staff starts at bar 26 with *a Tempo* and *poco rit.*, followed by *cresc.*, *f*, and *p*. The fourth staff starts at bar 35 with *p*, *cresc.*, and *dim.*. The fifth staff starts at bar 43 with *p* and *p<*. The sixth staff starts at bar 52 with *pp*. The seventh staff starts at bar 57 with *cresc.*, *f e con fuoco.*, and includes technical markings *6* and *IV 3*. The eighth staff starts at bar 63 with *ff* and *3*. The ninth staff starts at bar 73 with *cresc.* and *3*. The tenth staff starts at bar 79 with *p* and *f*.

Figure 149. Joachim, *Romance* in C major, bars 1 to 84. Transcription of Joachim's performance showing bow contact and release. [CD 2 Track 8: 00:00-01:39].

In Joachim's performance, phrase beginnings or endings are often clarified by other means such as subtle dynamic variation, agogic accents (bars 15, 30, and 42), vibrato - especially at beginnings of phrases (bars 13 and 30), and rubato - either pushing forward (bar 19) or holding back (bar 41). Joachim's performance of his *Romance* accords with the advice in his treatise in which he implies that a 'caesura,' or break in the sound is appropriate only at the end of the phrase proper, that is not after every short slur (Fig. 150).

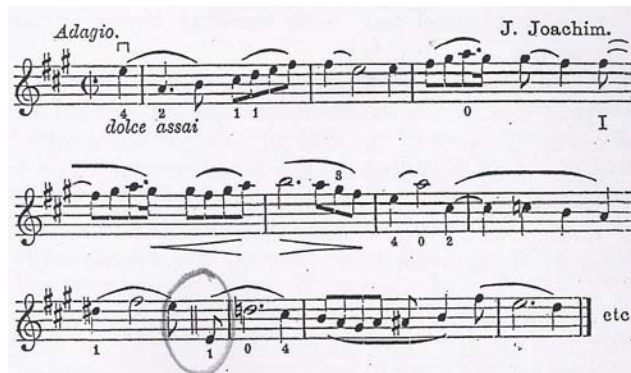


Figure 150. Joachim's and Moser's example of a caesura.²³²

Recordings by ensembles whose members had an association with the German violin school, such as the Klingler, Gewandhaus, Brüder-Post and Rosé Quartets show a propensity towards no detachment between slurs of more than two notes. An indicative example occurs in a recording (1912/13) by the Klingler Quartet of the second movement of Schumann's Quartet Op. 41 No. 3. The opening passage contains short slurs in the first violin and viola parts, and longer slurs in the second violin and cello parts. All players perform the passage with a seamless legato without any detachment between the slurs (Fig. 151).

²³² Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 15.



Figure 151. Schumann, String Quartet in A Op. 41 No. 3, second movement, bars 1 to 16.²³³ [CD 6 Track 7: 02:56-03:55].

Other evidence alludes to the importance of this un-nuanced legato approach. In a 1929 review of a performance of Brahms's Violin Sonatas Op. 78 and Op. 108 given by Soldat-Roeger, the critic alludes to a 'tensely held tone' as a defining feature of her playing. While we may only speculate exactly what is meant by that remark, it might imply a sustained approach to phrasing. The fact that this trait was worthy of mention indicates not only its prominence but also that playing styles at the time may have been changing:

[the sonatas] were a model of the classical style: it is a style that holds its own as does the classical music itself. Part of the secret is the tensely-held tone which plays such an important part in the thematic phrasing.²³⁴

Given that Brahms was accustomed to the legato style of the German violin school, he may generally have expected no more nuancing between slurs than would naturally result from a bow change. Davies' description, in which she points out Brahms's insistence that the smaller slurs be 'gently detached' in the

²³³ Robert Schumann, *Complete Chamber Music of Robert Schumann*, ed. Clara Schumann (New York: Dover, 1981), 270.

²³⁴ Gamba, *The Strad* XL, no. 470 (June 1929): 69-70. The pianist for this concert was most likely Fanny Davies. In a review the following year the same reviewer states: 'I heard them play a Brahms sonata last year and it was memorable.' Gamba, *The Strad*, XLI, no. 482 (June 1930): 70-71.

third movement of the C minor Piano Trio, must be considered in context. In this movement such nuancing may be appropriate to enhance the *grazioso* character. However, Davies' comments cannot be taken as to imply that such detachment of all smaller slurs be applied universally Brahms's music. Written and recorded evidence shows that many slurred duplets were played without detachment and reveals that musicians of the German violin school rarely detached between longer slurs. Furthermore, it is likely that any detachment between slurs was achieved by a release in bow pressure rather than a lift of the bow.²³⁵ Interestingly, an article Jon Finson provides seemingly contradictory ideas:

The modern performer's stereotype of Brahms's music, that it consists of long uninterrupted phrases, runs totally contrary to the practice of performers trained during his lifetime. In the surviving recordings these contemporary musicians use every expressive means at their command to separate melodic and motivic units from one another in Brahms's music.²³⁶

This statement seems erroneously to imply that performers never played in long uninterrupted phrases, and often physically separated melodic or motivic units (commonly distinguished by slur markings). Finson's assertion is, however, partly true. Joachim for example, certainly delineates phrasing in his *Romance* using a variety of expressive means, such as vibrato, portamento, and rubato. However, most of the recorded evidence makes it clear that musicians of the German violin school infrequently made a physical separation between melodic or motivic units (or slur markings), except at larger structural points.

²³⁵ Personal correspondence with Clive Brown, August 5, 2010.

²³⁶ Jon W. Finson, "Performing Practice in the Late Nineteenth Century, with Special Reference to the Music of Brahms," *The Musical Quarterly* 70, No. 4 (Autumn 1984): 472.

Conclusions

Slurred Duplets

Early recordings display a variety and inconsistency in the way slurred duplets are played that suggests the choice of articulation was, to a large extent, a matter of personal choice. Certainly, it is possible that some nuancing may have been influenced by nineteenth-century practices; and a lack thereof by changing aesthetics over time. While there are instances of a nuanced approach to playing duplets, the characteristic on-the-string, legato style of the German violin school appears to have led to the prevalence of un-nuanced duplets within this style of playing. Therefore, contrary to the impression gained from written evidence, including Brahms's letter to Joachim, there was not a universally accepted approach in string playing during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries of shortening the second note of a duplet.

Early recordings also show that performers clearly varied the degree of nuance when it came to playing slurred duplets. Varying degrees of emphasis were placed on the first note, and the length of the second note carried out according to personal choice or context. The second note was sometimes played for its full duration but with a release of bow pressure, resulting in a diminuendo through the duplet. When this release was more pronounced, a slight shortening of the second note sometimes occurred, also resulting in a diminuendo through the duplet. A heavier emphasis on the first note tended to cause more release on the second note. However, a significant shortening of the second note (and thus a prominent separation between duplets) appears to have occurred relatively infrequently. Duplets in which the second note was shortened tend to occur

when the duplets are an accompaniment and/or usually at a soft dynamic (Figs. 98, 103, 104, 105, 106, and 114) or part of a louder, faster, and rhythmically incisive passage (Figs. 92 and 93).

Early recordings also show that certain violinists and ensembles tend consistently toward the nuancing of duplets. This suggests that in these cases there was a culture of accepting (and possibly expecting) this practice in particular contexts. For example, the Bohemian, Brüder-Post, Rosé and Gewandhaus Quartets often play with distinct separation between duplets when, as already noted, they are playing accompaniment figurations or at soft dynamic levels. Similarly, they tend to play duplets legato and un-nuanced when they are playing material that forms part of the principal melody or within a crescendo or loud dynamic level.

The predominantly legato bowing style of the German violin school may have encouraged players to nuance duplets where they appear in a continuing chain by means other than a shortened second note and subsequent physical separation. Ensembles, such as the Bohemian, Brüder-Post and Klingler Quartets and violinists such as Soldat-Roeger also used agogic and rhythmic accents to vary the duplet. The frequency and consistency of this nuancing suggests that this was a widespread practice. The following is a summary of the various factors that, on early recordings, appear to have influenced the execution of the slurred duplet.

Accentuation of weak and strong beats

Ultimately, Brahms's compositional style is characterized by its propensity for metric displacement and rhythmic sophistication. Particular

aspects of theoretical writings, such as those by Johnstone and Matthay, purporting to espouse the 'correct' accentuation of weak and strong beats, do not always concur with the performance practice of the time. Yet their concept of the inverted slur may offer a theoretical basis for justifying an un-nuanced legato approach to the slurred duplet in particular circumstances. Other considerations, such as Brahms's use of the conjoined slur may also have consequences for rhythmic accentuation.

Longer phrasing/bowing slurs

Brahms's comments in his letter to Joachim, and Davies description of a rehearsal of the C minor Piano Trio suggest that Brahms may have at times wished for the nuancing of longer slurs. Yet on early recordings, the prevalent un-nuanced legato style of performers suggests that the practice of nuancing slurs was not the norm during the early twentieth century. Obviously, Steinbach believed that characteristic rhythmic features of Brahms's music should be enhanced. Notably, he marked commas between many slurs in his scores to delineate phrasing. Arguably, the clarity he achieved from this nuancing was an important factor in the success of his interpretations. Yet, while this may have been more necessary in orchestral playing, early recordings show that in solo and chamber music such separation rarely occurred, other than at major structural points.

CHAPTER FOUR

Portamento

‘The artificial shifts which are not used merely on account of any easier mode of playing, but for expression and tone, to which belongs also the gliding of one note to another.’²³⁷

Louis Spohr, *Violinschule*, 1832.

During the late nineteenth century portamento was considered an indispensable expressive device in both string playing and singing. Gradually, during the first half of the twentieth century, it was used less as vibrato increasingly became a principal means of expression and a fundamental aspect of tone production.²³⁸

Portamento (‘portamento di voce’ It. or ‘port de voix’ Fr.) means literally ‘to carry the voice.’ The *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (1980) defines it as a ‘smooth and rapid “sliding” between two pitches, executed continuously without distinguishing the intervening tones or semitones.’²³⁹ In string playing this creates an audible shifting or slide (glissando) between one pitch and the next.

During the late nineteenth century, portamento in string playing reflected contemporaneous trends in singing. In his treatise entitled *Singing* (1880) Alberto Randegger (1832-1911) explains that:

As a general rule it [portamento] should be sung *slowly, diminuendo* or *piano* in passages conveying a sense of tenderness, and *rapidly*,

²³⁷ Spohr, *Violin School*, 179.

²³⁸ For a discussion of the decline of portamento between 1900-1930 see Philip, *Early Recordings and Musical Style*, 149.

²³⁹ David Boyden, ‘Portamento’ in *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London: Macmillan, 1980), vl. 15, 134.

crescendo or *forte* when stronger emotions are intended to be expressed.²⁴⁰

Earlier, in 1840, Manuel Garcia (1805-1906) had already made reference to the important issue of speed during the use of expressive portamento in singing. Significantly, he emphasizes that the speed must remain uniform throughout:

Its [portamento] rapidity will depend on the kind of expression required by any passage in which it occurs. It must be made, also, to preserve an equable and progressive motion, whether in ascending or descending; for if one part of the slur were executed slowly, and the other rapidly, or if the voice sunk to rise again directly afterwards, the result would be perfectly detestable.²⁴¹

Early twentieth-century recordings of prominent singers demonstrate a style of portamento that corresponds with such maxims. Adelina Patti (1843-1919) and Emma Calvé's (1858-1942) recordings of 'Voi che sapete' from Mozart's opera *The Marriage of Figaro*, made in 1905 and 1920 respectively, preserve frequent slow portamenti enhanced with noticeable diminuendo. The speed of their portamenti remains even throughout. Of note is the portamento on the descending and ascending intervals of a minor third in bars 17 and 18 (Fig. 152). Calvé's recording arguably shows a tendency for less frequent use of portamento than Patti's. For example, Calvé makes no portamento between bars 9 and 13, and in bars 17 and 18 she only uses it between the first intervals of

²⁴⁰ Alberto Randegger, *Singing* (London: Novello, 1880), 174.

²⁴¹ Manuel Garcia, *Garcia's New Treatise on the Art of Singing* (Paris, 1840; reprint, London: Leonard & Co., 1924), 8.

each bar. In contrast Patti uses it frequently between bars 9 and 13 and on each interval in bars 17 and 18. While Calvé applies portamento more selectively than Patti, the frequency with which she applies it is much greater than today.



Figure 152. Mozart, 'Voi che sapete' from *Le Nozze de Figaro*, bars 17 to 18. Transcription of portamento in recordings of Patti (top line) and Calvé (lower line). [Patti, CD 6 Track 8: 00:05-00:10; Calvé, CD 6 Track 9: 00:26-00:32].

In 'Connais-tu le pays' by Ambroise Thomas recorded in 1906, Patti's portamento incorporates a variety of speeds in order, it appears, to enhance phrasing and dynamic shape. Slow portamento is used at the beginnings and ends of phrases when the dynamic is softer. In the first three phrases (bars 14 to 25) her portamento is effected in a moderate speed at the peaks of phrases. At the climax (bars 26 to 29) of the section marked crescendo and forte, faster portamento is used for greater dramatic effect (Fig. 153). Also of note are the portamento swoops up to the pitch when the new note is the same or lower than the previous (bars 19, 27, and 29). Interestingly, Marcella Sembrich's (1858-1935) recording, also from 1906, shows less use of portamento than Patti.²⁴² Yet, in the isolated places where she makes a fairly slow portamento, the effect is highly expressive.

²⁴² Marcella Sembrich was the stage name for Polish coloratura soprano Prakseda Marcelina Kochańska.

(Andante)

14 Patti: *slow* *slow* *moderate slow* *moderate* *moderate*
 Con-nais tu le pays ou fleur rit l'o ran ger, Le pays des fruits d' or

Sembrich: *slow* *slow*

20 *slow* *slow* *slow* *moderate* *slow* *slow*
 et des ro ses mer veil les *pp* Ou la brise est plus douce et l'oi-seau plus le
slow *slow*

25 *fast* *fast* *fast* *moderate* *moderate* *slow*
 ger Ou dans tou-te sai-son bu-ti-nent les a beil-les.
f *slow*

Figure 153. Portamento in 'Connais-tu le Pays?' from the Opera *Mignon* by Ambroise Thomas . Transcription of recording by Patti (above) and Sembrich (below). [Patti, CD 6 Track 10: 00:18-01:37; Sembrich, CD 6 Track 11: 00:26-02:00].

Recordings by Calvé in 1902 of 'Près des remparts' from Bizet's *Carmen* and 'Voi lo sapete' from Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana* show a more frequent use of portamento compared with her 1920 recording of 'Voi che sapete.' This may suggest a change in Calvé's style, from more to less portamento, between 1902 and 1920. Sembrich, on the other hand, made sparing use of portamento as early as 1906. A thorough study of changing trends in portamento use amongst singers in the first decades of the twentieth century is beyond the scope of this

thesis. Milsom's study of singers from this era suggests a decline in the use of portamento during this time is indeterminable.²⁴³

Written Evidence

In his *Art of Violin Playing* (1924) Flesch made a distinction between shifting that served merely a technical function and shifting that enhanced expression. He called the technical shift a glissando and noted that it should be 'as imperceptible as possible.'²⁴⁴ The expressive shift was deliberately more audible; this he referred to as portamento. During the nineteenth century, shifting also fulfilled both of these purposes. However, nineteenth-century annotated editions provide fingerings that belie an aesthetic that valued audible shifting to a much greater extent than was later the case, particularly with those more aligned with Flesch's ideals.

Furthermore, as vibrato gradually replaced portamento as a primary means of left-hand expression between 1900 and 1930, 'cleaner' fingering that avoided audible shifts was increasingly favoured. For example, Flesch notes that portamento between notes spanning a third 'in past generations were frequently played by the same finger,'²⁴⁵ implying this was no longer desirable (see Fig. 165, bar 1). He notes that, particularly in faster passagework, this fingering would result in unnecessary portamenti. Interestingly, in their *Violin School* Joachim and Moser also recommend avoiding such fingering in faster passagework. This is achieved by coordinating changes of position with bow changes to 'avoid the

²⁴³ Milsom, *Theory and Practice in Late Nineteenth-Century Violin Performance*, 106.

²⁴⁴ Carl Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing vl. i*, (New York, Carl Fischer, 1924), trans. and ed. Eric Rosenblith (New York: Carl Fischer, 2000), 14.

²⁴⁵ Carl Flesch, *Violin Fingering, Its Theory and Practice* (London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1966), 338.

danger of objectionable sliding.’²⁴⁶ However, Joachim and Moser’s comments may be viewed as highlighting the importance of efficient shifting in faster passagework, rather than a comment against the deliberate cultivation of an expressive trait. Portamento, it appears, was not considered to be a more manageable way to shift. Yet, Flesch’s remarks about the fingering of ‘past generations’ clearly refers to cantabile passages during which portamento was deliberately used to heighten expression. The *Violin Schools* by Spohr, and Joachim and Moser, as well as annotated editions by students of Joachim such as Auer and Schnirlin frequently include such fingerings. Annotated fingerings for cantabile passages in other nineteenth-century editions point to an aesthetic that favoured the type of localised expression achieved by audible portamento over ‘clean’ execution. For example, in the first edition of Reissiger’s Quartet Op. 111 No. 1, published in 1838 (six years after Spohr’s *Violin School*), the third finger is used for all the notes in bar 3, undoubtedly resulting in noticeable portamento between each note (Fig. 154).



Figure 154. Carl Gottlieb Reissiger, String Quartet Op. 111 No. 1, first movement, first violin, bars 1 to 5.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁶ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 15.

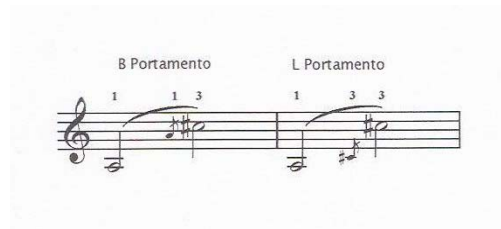
²⁴⁷ Carl Gottlieb Reissiger, *Trois Quatuors pour Deux Violons, Viola et Violoncelle* (Leipzig: Peters, 1838), 2.

Unquestionably, this style of expressive portamento in cantabile passages was a feature of the German violin school, and indeed wider string playing practices, throughout the nineteenth century.

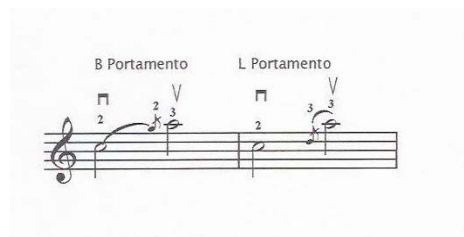
Portamento: Main Types

Flesch classified the two main types of audible shifts as ‘B’ and ‘L’ portamento.²⁴⁸ This classification is useful in the following discussion. In ‘B’ portamento the shift is effected with the old finger, while for ‘L’ portamento the shift is with the new finger (Fig. 155a). When shifting during a bow change the coordination of the fingers with the bow also determines the type of portamento. If the shift is on the same finger, a bow change at the arrival of the finger on the new pitch will create a ‘B’ portamento, while a bow change before the new pitch is reached will create an ‘L’ portamento (Fig. 155b).

1



(a)



(b)

Figure 155. Carl Flesch, ‘B’ and ‘L’ portamento.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁸ Carl Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing vl. i*, 15.

²⁴⁹ Carl Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing vl. i*, 15, 18.

Significantly, one hundred years earlier Spohr's examples suggest that only 'B' portamento was acceptable (Fig. 156). However, it is impossible to know if that was true in reality.

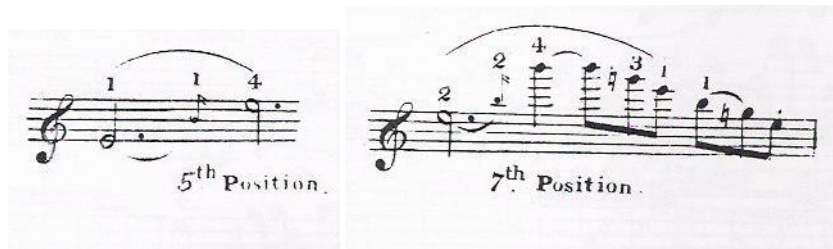


Fig. 156. Spohr, portamento with the old finger ('B' portamento).²⁵⁰

Spohr explains:

But this gliding must be done so rapidly as to make the passing from the small note [the guide note] to the highest note imperceptible, and so to deceive the ear, that it appears to have passed the whole space from the lowest to the highest note uniformly, by the sliding finger.²⁵¹

Exactly what Spohr means by 'imperceptible' is difficult to determine. Later in his treatise he emphasizes the importance of the portamento being audible, referring to the 'expression and tone, to which belongs also the gliding of one note to another.'²⁵² Yet, Spohr is quick to warn of the 'unpleasant howling' that results if 'L' portamento is used (Fig. 157).

²⁵⁰ Spohr, *Violin School*, 106.

²⁵¹ Spohr, *Violin School*, 106.

²⁵² Spohr, *Violin School*, 179.

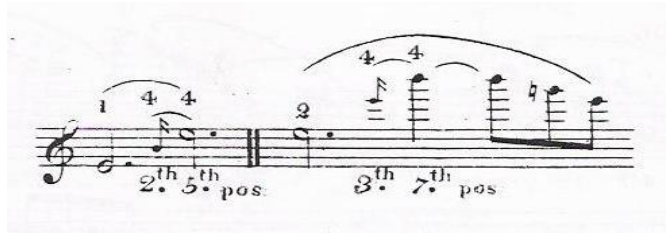


Fig. 157. Spohr, portamento with the new finger ('L' portamento).²⁵³

Reading between the lines, Spohr's strong condemnation of the 'L' portamento might be a reaction to contemporary abuses. Flesch remarks that treatises up to the beginning of the twentieth century advocated only the 'B' portamento, 'condemning the 'L' portamento as the devil's invention of bad taste.'²⁵⁴ However, this is not entirely true. In 1857, Charles de Bériot (1802-1870), confirmed the association of the 'L' portamento with the Franco-Belgian violin school, advising its use in an annotated score of his Ninth Violin Concerto (Fig. 158).

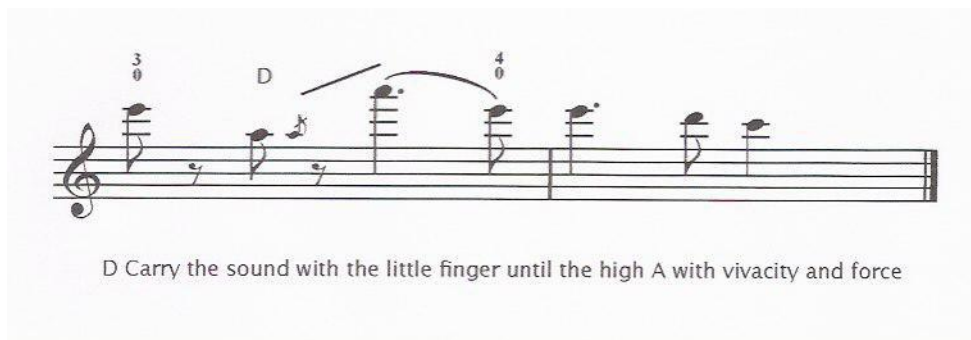


Figure 158. De Bériot, Violin Concerto No. 9, example of 'L' portamento.²⁵⁵

Similarly, in his discussion about portamento, 'L' portamento is implied where the shift from an open string can only be made on the new finger (Fig. 159):

²⁵³ Spohr, *Violin School*, 107.

²⁵⁴ Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing vl. i*, 15

²⁵⁵ Charles de Bériot, *Méthode de Violon*, (Paris, 1857; reprint Paris: J.M. Fuzeau, 2001), 244.

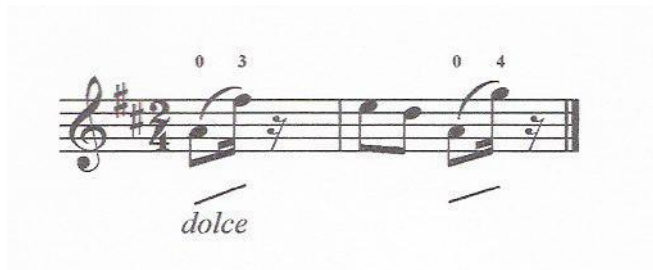


Fig. 159. De Bériot, implied 'L' portamento.²⁵⁶

Furthermore, the symbols employed by de Bériot to illustrate different speeds of portamento suggest that the shift is to be performed on the new finger upward or downward with varying intensities according to musical affect (Fig. 160):



Fig. 160. De Bériot, different speeds of portamento.²⁵⁷

Notably, de Bériot devotes much attention to different nuances achievable through portamento. His signs give a visual portrayal of intensities and speeds of the shift. 'Port-de-voix vif' suggests a fast shift to the new note, while 'Port-de-voix trainé' suggests a slower shift just before the landing note is reached.²⁵⁸ Here the slower portamento portrays a singing quality while the fast portamento gives a brilliant, virtuoso effect.

²⁵⁶ De Bériot, *Méthode de Violon*, 237.

²⁵⁷ De Bériot, *Méthode de Violon*, 237.

²⁵⁸ De Bériot, *Méthode de Violon*, 237.

Six years after the appearance of de Bériot's *Méthode*, David's *Violin School* (1863) confirms the German violin school's rejection of 'L' portamento, although less unequivocally than Spohr. David states that 'It is in exceptional cases only and in skipping to a distant note [that it] is allowable, to glide with the finger, which takes the second note.'²⁵⁹ Spohr also notes a case where 'L' portamento is acceptable: shifting to and from a harmonic on the new finger (Fig. 161a).

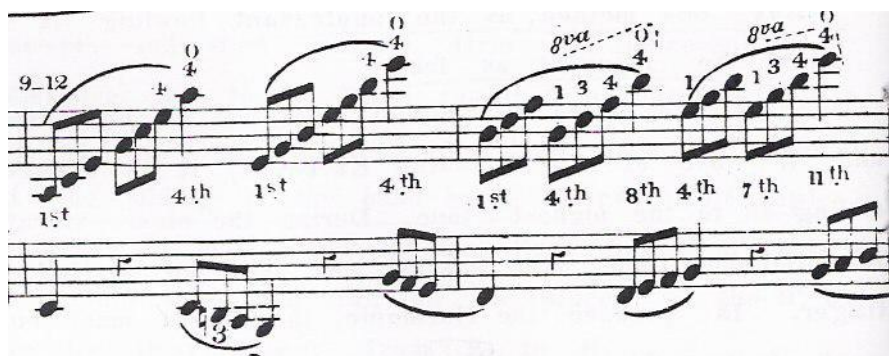


Figure 161a. Spohr, 'L' portamento to a harmonic.²⁶⁰

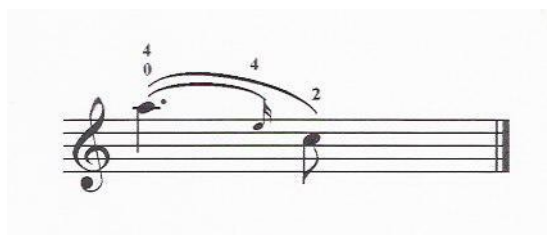


Figure 161b. Spohr, audible descending portamento.

Unlike the shift in Fig. 156, the shift in Fig. 161b was clearly intended to be very audible based on Spohr's explanation that 'the fourth finger at the moment of the sliding must be firmly pressed on the string.'²⁶¹

²⁵⁹ Ferdinand David, *Violinschule vl. ii* (Leipzig, 1863), trans. *Violin School vl. ii* (London, 1874), 33.

²⁶⁰ Spohr, *Violin School*, 108.

Portamento: Other types

Other instances of portamento implicit in Spohr's fingered examples include:

- The anticipation of the new pitch with a grace note (Fig. 162).



Figure 162. Spohr, shifting with anticipation of new pitch with grace note.²⁶²

- Shifting on the current finger (here the first finger) but with the change of bow (Fig. 163).²⁶³



Figure 163. Spohr, shifting on the current finger and with the change of bow.

The aforementioned anticipation (Fig. 162) is addressed in violin treatises such as Baillot's *The Art of the Violin* (1835), de Bériot's *Méthode* (1855), and

²⁶¹ Spohr, *Violin School*, 113.

²⁶² Spohr, *Violin School*, 212.

²⁶³ Spohr, *Violin School*, 206.

Randegger's *Singing* (1880), suggesting its continual usage throughout the nineteenth century (Fig. 164a, b, c).²⁶⁴



Figure 164a. Baillot, *The Art of the Violin*.



Figure 164b. De Bériot, *Méthode de Violon*,



Figure 164c. Randegger, *Singing*.

Joachim's and Moser's *Violin School* condemns backward portamento (that is the sliding from a higher to a lower position) to an open string (Fig. 165) and stresses it is only to be used 'in a very special case when serving the purpose of a *nuance* of expression.'²⁶⁵ However, Joachim uses this type of portamento,

²⁶⁴ Baillot, *The Art of the Violin*, 126; De Bériot, *Méthode de Violon*, 236; Randegger, *Singing*, 174.

²⁶⁵ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, 9.

albeit subtly, in his recording of his *Romance* (Fig. 172, bar 14). This illustrates how verbal caution did not always reflect practice.

As implied in Joachim's fingerings in the *Violin School*, successive portamento on the same finger was acceptable (Fig. 166).²⁶⁶ This can also be heard in Joachim's recording of bars 77 and 81 of the *Romance* (Fig. 172).

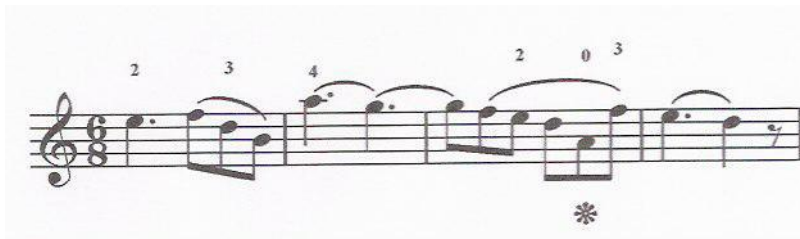


Figure 165. Mendelssohn, Violin Concerto Op. 64, second movement, Joachim's fingering.

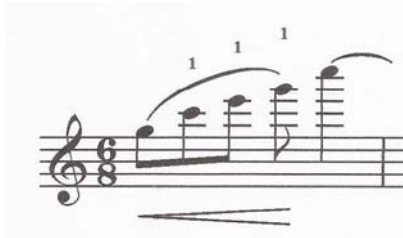


Figure 166. Mendelssohn, Violin Concerto Op. 64, second movement, Joachim's fingering.

Larger leaps (Fig. 167) were undoubtedly intended to be performed with a guiding tone as discussed by Spohr (Fig. 156).²⁶⁷

²⁶⁶ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 239.

²⁶⁷ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 105.

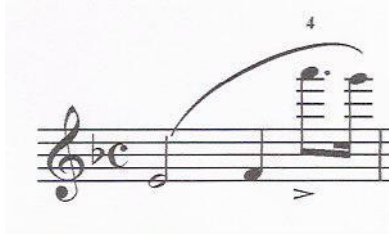


Figure 167. Kreutzer, Concerto No. 19, first movement.

Placement

Auer was a student of Joachim's between 1861-1863. In his own playing and pedagogical writing he upholds the principles of the late nineteenth-century German violin school (see chapter 'Vibrato,' p. 319) even though his own students (such as Heifetz and Milstein) played with a more continuous use of vibrato and frequent use of 'L' portamento. Regarding placement, he states that portamento is only acceptable between descending intervals, and between ascending intervals only in special instances. Although not explicitly stated, Auer's advocacy of descending portamento is undoubtedly referring to portamento between stopped tones, rather than portamento to an open string (as is condemned by Joachim and Moser). Significantly however, almost all early recordings, including Auer's, show that ascending portamenti were used just as frequently as descending ones (see below). It is likely that such remarks stem from cautionary pedagogical practice, and did not necessarily reflect the actual practice.

Joachim and Moser stress the importance of uniformity of tone-colour (Fig. 168),²⁶⁸ especially when the notes are 'slurred in one bow-stroke'.²⁶⁹ In such instances it was deemed important to keep the slurred melody on the same

²⁶⁸ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 90.

²⁶⁹ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, 9.

string. Bars 11 and 31 in Joachim's recording of his *Romance* (Fig. 172) reveal that the resulting portamento between step-wise intervals was very audible.



Figure 168. Viotti, Concerto No. 22, first movement, Joachim's fingerings.

Flesch notes that '*portamenti* between notes a third apart are the ones that occur with the greatest frequency.'²⁷⁰ It appears portamento between descending intervals of a third (as evident in 'Voi che sapete,' Fig. 152) were particularly frequent (Fig. 169).²⁷¹ Examples of this are evident in Joachim's recording of his *Romance* (Fig. 172, bars 39, 40, 42, 47, 49, 71) and both Soldat-Roeger's recording and Joachim's fingered edition of the first movement of Mozart's Violin Concerto K. 219 (Fig. 174).

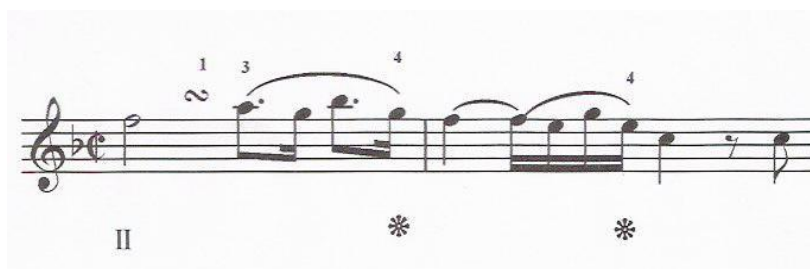


Figure 169. Beethoven, Romance in F major, Joachim's fingerings.

²⁷⁰ Flesch, *Violin Fingering, Its Theory and Practice*, 338.

²⁷¹ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 216.

Dynamic and Speed

Neither Joachim and Moser nor Spohr address the matters concerning the dynamic and speed of portamento in any detail. Joachim and Moser merely call for a 'clear full tone' during the shift.²⁷² Much later, however, Flesch alludes to the audible dynamic swell of the portamento employed by players of the German violin school, during which the connection between two notes is emphasized more than the notes themselves (Fig. 170).²⁷³

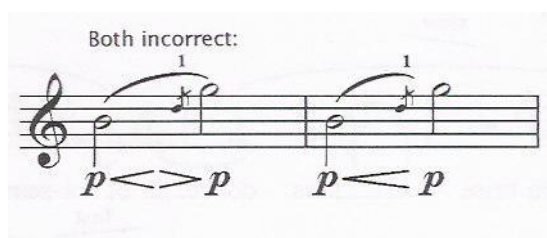


Figure 170. Flesch, audible dynamic swell during portamento.

Clearly, Flesch considered this to be an undesirable feature of the portamento style of those he referred to as the 'old regime.'²⁷⁴ Recalling Joachim's portamento, Flesch explains:

Whoever remembers Joachim's quartet playing will never forget the poetic quality he achieved by the portamento in the following example [Fig. 171]. Unfortunately the *crescendo* and *decrescendo*, a favourite mannerism of the period, detracted somewhat from the beauty of the passage.²⁷⁵

²⁷² Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, ii, 77.

²⁷³ Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing*, i, 18.

²⁷⁴ Flesch, *The Memoirs of Carl Flesch* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1957, reprinted 1979), 251.

²⁷⁵ Flesch, *Violin Fingering, Its Theory and Practice*, 338.

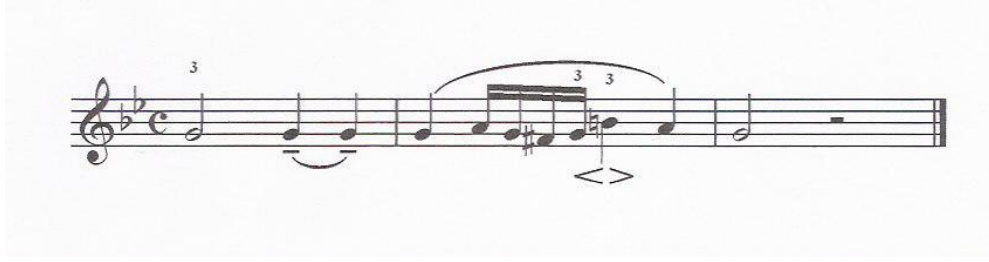


Figure 171. Schubert, String Quartet *Death and the Maiden*, second movement, bars 22 to 24, as played by Joachim.

Flesch also remarks about a similar dynamic swell in the portamento of Klingler, who continued to teach in the style of the German violin school at the Berlin Hochschule after Joachim's death in 1907.²⁷⁶

Written texts do not advise definitively about the frequency with which portamento ought to be used. For example, Joachim and Moser merely warn against using portamento to excess, lest it result in an 'unbearable whining and snivelling [sic].'²⁷⁷ They also state that in some places 'an obtrusive change of position would sound just as undesirable as a clumsily executed change of bow.'²⁷⁸ Interpreting what was considered appropriate or excessive from written evidence alone is impossible. To determine the appropriate placement, dynamic, speed and frequency of portamento further, we must turn to the evidence of early recordings.

Recorded Evidence

Early twentieth-century recordings by violinists of the German violin school reveal frequent audible dynamic swells during portamento. In Soldat-Roeger's recording (c.1926) of Bach's *Air* from Orchestral Suite BWV 1068,

²⁷⁶ Flesch, *Memoirs*, 251.

²⁷⁷ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 9.

²⁷⁸ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, ii, 9.

portamento shifts in bars 4 (beat 4) and 15 (beat 2) are louder than the arrival notes (Fig. 175). This is similarly the case in bars 15 and 43 (Fig. 172) of Joachim's recording (1903) of his *Romance*. In the fourth movement of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 130 (Fig. 176), the Klingler Quartet (1912/13) make portamento that are louder than the arrival notes. The playing of other artists associated with the German violin school, such as Rosé and Auer, reveals similar instances of dynamic swell during portamento. Clearly this evidence supports Flesch's opinion that dynamic nuance within portamento was a performing practice of the late-nineteenth-century German violin school.

In his *Romance*, Joachim executes almost all of the types of portamento discussed in the treatises (Fig. 172). These include:

- Stepwise portamento (bar 11).
- Portamento on the same finger (bars 40 and 43) and larger leaps with the old finger as a guide note (bar 48).
- Multiple successive portamenti (bars 24, 43, 46, 77, 79 and 81).
- Portamenti effected with variety of speeds according to how much emphasis is desired at particular points in the phrase. Thus with the forward impetus at the beginning of the phrase he uses a quicker portamento (bar 31) while at the end of the phrase where the tempo often eases the portamento tends to be slower (bars 40, 42, 43).
- Consciously placed portamenti. For example, during the passage from bar 61 to 68 Joachim does not make use of portamento despite there being an appropriate place—a descending interval of a third in bar 63. Given the frequency of audible portamenti on intervals of descending thirds in bars 39, 40, 42, 47, 49, and 71, this is a notable and perhaps

deliberate omission. It is possible he wished to make a contrast with the corresponding figure in the next phrase (bar 71) where portamento is unavoidable because of the double-stop figurations. Perhaps he deemed portamento not appropriate to the *con fuoco* character.

- Joachim uses ascending portamento 15 times and descending portamento 9 times.

The image displays a musical score for Joachim's *Romance* in C, covering bars 1 to 84. The score is written in a single system with a treble clef and a 2/4 time signature. It begins with the tempo marking 'Bewegt' and the performance instruction 'dolce e espress.'. The music features a variety of dynamics, including *f*, *dim.*, *p*, *pp*, *cresc.*, and *ff*. There are also markings for 'a Tempo', 'poco rit.', and 'f e con fuoco'. The score includes several slurs, some of which indicate portamento, and various articulations such as accents and fingerings (e.g., '3', '6', 'IV', '3'). The piece concludes with a final *f* dynamic marking.

Figure 172. Joachim, *Romance* in C, bars 1 to 84, transcription of Joachim's recording showing portamento. [CD 2 Track 8: 00:00-01:39].

Soldat-Roeger's 1920 recording of the *Adagio* from Spohr's Violin Concerto No. 9 Op. 55 shows similar use of portamento to Joachim (Fig. 173).

What is notable is the expressive quality achieved by:

- Very audible and frequent portamento (14 instances in 16 bars), often slow and heavy, that reflects the adagio tempo (bars 1, 3 and 5).
- Predominant use of 'B' portamento, although there are subtle instances of 'L' portamento in bars 1 to 2 and 9 to 10 for example.
- Portamento to a harmonic (bar 15).
- Anticipation of the note on the old bow (bar 2).
- Selective use (she uses different fingerings to Spohr): bars 1 to 2, 7, 9 to 10 and 11.
- Equal numbers of ascending and descending portamenti (7 times each).
- Multiple successive portamenti as in bars 1 to 2, 3, 9 to 10 and 15.
- Soldat-Roeger uses portamento more than Spohr's fingerings imply; a total of 14 times compared with Spohr's possible 11.

This appears to indicate that during the century following the publication of Spohr's treatise, the frequency of portamento use did not decline. Soldat-Roeger uses different fingerings than those notated by Spohr, although she allegedly studied this concerto with Augustus Pott, one of Spohr's pupils.²⁷⁹ Yet, the style and frequency of portamento use remains similar.

Soldat-Roeger's recording of the *Adagio* from Spohr's Violin Concerto No. 9 (c.1926) provides clear evidence of the varying degrees of nuance with which the portamento was used. Soldat-Roeger varies the speed of the shift and weight of the finger on the string to vary expression during portamento. In the slower portamenti the finger is dragged heavily on the string during the shift (bars 1, 3,

²⁷⁹ Tully Potter, "Brahms's Understudy," *The Strad*, 107:1280 (Dec 1996), 1315-1320.

5, 7, 11, and 15). At other times the finger is dragged more lightly and the shift made slightly faster (bars 2, 3, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, and 15). However, a slightly faster shift may sometimes be played with a heavier finger, such as from bars 14 to 15. The prominent portamenti in this section corresponds closely with Flesch's remarks about the audible swell in the portamento being louder than the arrival note itself (see Figs. 170 and 171 above).

The choice of nuance often appears to be governed in relation to the natural metric hierarchy of the bar. In the demisemiquavers in bar 11, Soldat-Roeger uses ascending portamento twice. In both instances the shift is the same type on the same finger (2-2). The first portamento to the weak third quaver beat is not prominent (it is fast and more a 'technical' shift). The second portamento to the stronger fourth quaver beat is slower and heavier and gives a momentary expressive emphasis.

Generally, portamenti to strong beats tend to be faster and less emphasized than those to weak beats. In bar 1 the portamento from quaver beat 5 to 6 (weak beat) is slower and more prominent than the portamento to beat 1 (strong beat) of bar 2. In bar 3, the portamento to quaver beat 4 (strong beat) is faster than the following heavy portamento to beat 6 (weak beat). In this way Soldat-Roeger broadens the phrase at its peak, just before the strong downbeat. This broadening gives a perceptible flexibility and elasticity to the rhythm and tempo.

Notably, Soldat-Roeger uses a discreet 'L' portamento in three instances; bars 1 to 2, 3 and 9 to 10. Bars 1 to 2 and 9 to 10 may be considered 'L' portamento because the shift occurs on the new bow, while in bar 3 the shift is performed on the new finger (rather than the old finger with the new finger

placed cleanly on the new pitch). Yet the portamento is light, at a moderate speed and subtle. Interestingly, the portamenti in bars 1 to 2 and 9 to 10 are coupled with vibrato on the arrival notes. Soldat-Roeger may possibly have used this combination to add a different expressive emphasis to particular down-beats. Despite the aforementioned (isolated) moments, Soldat-Roeger uses the characteristic 'B' portamento in all larger leaps throughout the movement, for example at bars 18, 22, 27, 31, and 32. These portamenti are very pronounced and executed in the manner prescribed by Spohr (Figs. 155 and 156).

Adagio

The image shows a musical score for the Adagio movement of Spohr's Violin Concerto No. 9. It is divided into three systems, each with two staves. The top staff represents the original manuscript by Spohr, and the bottom staff is a transcription of Marie Soldat-Roeger's recording. The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics (p, f, mf, dim., pp, fz), articulation (accents), and performance instructions (SOLO, Possese, slow, L. port., L. port., moderate, s). Fingerings and bowings are indicated with numbers and slurs. A key signature change to one sharp (F#) is shown above the first staff. The recording transcription includes additional annotations like '5th pos' and 'Tire'.

Figure 173. Spohr, Violin Concerto No. 9, *Adagio*, Spohr's original text (above) and transcription of Marie Soldat-Roeger's recording (below) showing frequency and speed of portamento. [CD2 Track 9: 00:00-01:25].

Significantly, Joachim and Soldat-Roeger did not always employ portamento in the same places. A comparison between Soldat-Roeger's recording of Mozart's Violin Concerto K. 219 (recorded c.1926) and the portamenti implied by Joachim's fingerings in his edition of this work²⁸⁰ shows that Soldat-Roeger's portamenti were selected to suit her particular expressive needs (Fig. 174). In this respect, Joachim asserts in the *Violin School* that 'passages may after all be played effectively with the use of quite different fingering and bowing.'²⁸¹ Joachim's fingering implies a portamento in bar 1 on the descending interval of a third. However, Soldat-Roeger makes a portamento in bar 2 on the same interval, but not in bar 1. In doing so she arrives in first position at the beginning of bar 3 and thus uses no portamento in bar 3, beat 1. Neither employs portamento in both bars. To sound portamento twice in succession on the same interval may have been deemed excessive. Clearly, Soldat-Roeger did not adhere to Joachim's published fingerings (undoubtedly available to her), suggesting that the placement of portamento was a matter of individual artistry.

The image shows a musical score for a solo violin part, marked 'Adagio' and '(con espressione)'. It consists of two staves of music. The top staff has a tempo marking 'Adagio' and 'SOLO' above it. The bottom staff has '(con espressione)' and 'SOLO' below it. The music is in G major (one sharp) and common time. The score includes various fingering numbers (1, 2, 3, 4, 0), bowing marks (slanted lines), and trills ('tr'). There are also some square symbols above the notes. The music is a descending sequence of notes, with some trills and slurs.

²⁸⁰ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 164.

²⁸¹ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, i, 4.

Figure 174. Mozart, Violin Concerto K.219, first movement, Joachim's implied portamento (top line) and transcription of Soldat-Roeger's recording showing portamento (lower line). [CD 2 Track 2: 00:39-01:04].

Joachim's recordings (1903) of some solo works by J. S. Bach show a seemingly conscious restraint in the use of portamento. Despite the music not requiring many changes of position, the absence of portamento in Joachim's recording of the *Adagio* from Bach's Sonata in G Minor BWV 1001 belies perhaps a more purist attitude to a pre-classical repertoire. Other contemporaneous editions suggest Joachim's portamento-spare interpretation of Bach recorded in 1903 was unusual for its time.²⁸² For example, the fingerings in an edition by Wilhelmj of Bach's Concerto for 2 violins in D Minor BWV 1043, published in 1901 two years before Joachim's recording, imply frequent portamento. Later, in a 1928 recording of Bach's *Air* from Orchestral Suite BWV 1068 by Rosé, portamento is also prolific.²⁸³ Both Soldat-Roeger and to a lesser extent Rosé also appear more conservative in their use of vibrato in recordings of solo Bach, indicating they too approached his unaccompanied music differently. (See chapter 'Vibrato', p. 294 and 319). Soldat-Roeger's recording (c.1926) of Bach's *Air* contrasts to her playing of unaccompanied Bach and shows her prominent use of portamento. Interestingly, the frequency of Soldat-Roeger's and Rosé's portamenti is similar in this work: Soldat-Roeger makes descending portamenti 13 times and ascending ones 8 times; 21 times in total. Rosé makes descending portamenti 9 times and ascending ones 11 times; 20 times in total (Fig. 175).

²⁸² Philip, *Early Recordings and Musical Style*, 149.

²⁸³ Milsom, *Theory and Practice in Late Nineteenth-Century Violin Performance*, 236.

The image shows a musical score for the 'Air' from Orchestral Suite BWV 1068 by J.S. Bach. The score is in G major, 3/4 time, and marked 'Lento'. It features six staves of music with various performance instructions such as 'Sul G', 'p molto espressivo', 'cresc.', 'pp dolce', 'p cresc.', 'tr', 'f', and 'dim - e - poco - rit.'. The score includes a triplet and a trill.

Figure 175. Bach, *Air* from Orchestral Suite BWV 1068, transcription of portamento used by Soldat-Roeger (above) and Rosé (below). [Soldat-Roeger, CD 6 Track 12: 00:00-03:51; Rosé, CD 6 Track 13: 00:00-04:39].

As with solo playing, portamento was used prominently by several ensembles that either had a connection with the German violin school or played in a noticeably nineteenth-century style. Ensembles such as the Klingler, Gewandhaus, Rosé and Brüder-Post Quartets made frequent use of 'B' portamento, overshadowing vibrato as an expressive device. Yet, at times the manner of use was not consciously uniform within a single ensemble. A great case in point is the Gewandhaus Quartet's recording (1916) of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 131. The Gewandhaus's cellist, Julius Klengel, was of an older generation than the other players. His playing—with frequent portamento and

minimal vibrato—clearly reflects a nineteenth-century aesthetic. At times this is in stark contrast with the playing of Carl Herrmann, the violist in the ensemble (see chapter ‘Vibrato,’ p. 333).

Klingler was first violinist of the Klingler Quartet from 1905-1936. Flesch writes of Klingler’s close technical and musical affiliation with the style of Joachim:

His bow technique was still dominated by the fallacious theory of the lowered upper arm and the ‘loose’ wrist, not to speak of the unpleasant swells during his portamentos. He even inherited some of the holy fire of his unforgettable master. He stood as it were, posthumously hypnotized by Joachim and shaped his music more under the compulsion of a revered tradition than with independent, personal imagination. This influence was so deep that there was about him, even in his young days, something of the detachment and equanimity of an old man. I myself always enjoyed listening to his quartet because many an interpretative point reminded me of Joachim.²⁸⁴

A notable example of Klingler’s portamento style can be heard in a 1912/13 recording of Beethoven’s String Quartet in B-flat Op. 130. In the fourth movement a heavy portamento is used seemingly to define the character of the recurring motive of a descending diminished fifth (bars 7 and 23). Other prominent portamenti can be heard in bars 17 and 19 (Fig. 176). It is very unlikely that such heavy portamento in these places and in this manner would be employed in performances today.

²⁸⁴ Flesch, *The Memoirs of Carl Flesch*, 251.

Alla Danza tedesca
vi. 1 Allegro assai

Figure 176. Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 130, fourth movement, first violin part annotated with Klingler's portamento (marked by an asterisk). [CD 6 Track 14: 00:00-00:45].

In the Klingler Quartet's 1933/34 recording of Haydn's String Quartet Op. 76 No. 5, the playing could be considered more 'modern,' with less portamento and more vibrato compared to earlier recordings. Yet in the *Largo cantabile e mesto*, portamento does occur, but only in specific places. The opening melody recurs throughout the movement and thus serves as a useful phrase to survey. In the first bar, the ascending interval of a third between the first two beats allows for portamento on the same finger (1-1 or 2-2). In bar 1 the portamento sounds very subtle (more a 'technical' shift), whereas the repeat of the motive in bar 5 is played with no portamento. At bar 63, however, the portamento is slow and prominent and has the effect of marking the recapitulation. The repeat of the same motive in bar 67 (similar to bar 5) is again played without portamento. Similarly to bar 1, bar 45 is played with a very slow portamento enhancing the important harmonic shift to E minor. In this movement, the occurrence of portamenti at specific structural points underlines its selective use as a way of delineating form.

While Klingler consistently used ‘B’ portamento throughout the early recordings of the Klingler Quartet (1912/13), there are isolated examples of ‘L’ portamento. For example at bar 108 in the Trio section of the *Scherzo* from Schumann’s String quartet Op. 41 No. 2 he plays an ‘L’ portamento between the G-natural and the C-natural. The shift is clearly taken on the new finger (likely the third finger), rather than dragging the old finger (likely the second finger) and placing the new finger cleanly on C-natural (Fig. 177).

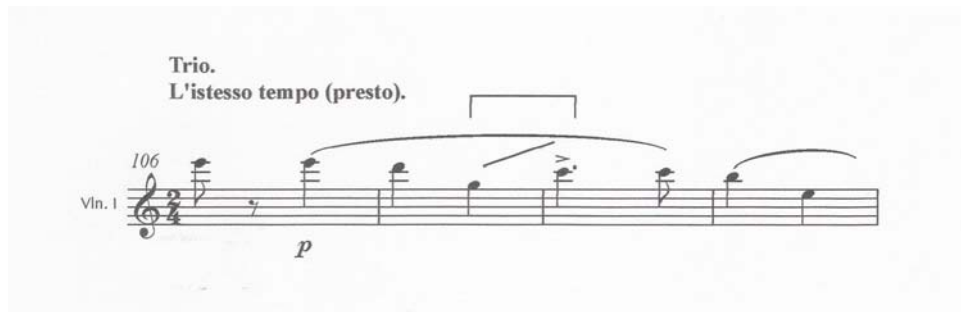


Figure 177. Schumann, String Quartet Op. 41 No. 2, third movement, Klingler Quartet, bars 106 to 109, showing use of ‘L’ portamento. [CD 6 Track 15: 01:40-01:45].

Portamento was often necessitated through choice of fingering. The desire to keep a melody on one string wherever possible (see Fig. 168) led to larger and more prominent shifts. This practice lasted well into the twentieth century, although with the general decline in portamento use, instances of portamento might sometimes have been played less prominently.²⁸⁵ In the Strub Quartet’s 1935 recording of the second movement of Haydn’s String Quartet Op. 64 No. 5, the melody in the first violin is played entirely on the G-string from bars 39 to 50. Despite the first violinist, Max Strub, playing in a fairly modern style

²⁸⁵ In fact, the practice of using higher positions to keep a melody on one string can be seen in some printed editions and recordings of solo Bach as late as the 1970s. For example see J. S. Bach, *Sonatas and Partitas for Violin Solo*, Henryk Szeryng’s (ed.) Partita No. 2, ‘Chaconne,’ (Mainz: Schott, 1979), b. 26 and 42.

with continuous vibrato, his portamento throughout this section is prominent (Fig. 178). Of note is the very slow and pronounced portamento between a' and g' in the second half of bar 40.

The image shows a musical score for Violin I, first movement of Haydn's String Quartet Op. 64, No. 5, bars 39 to 50. The score is in 3/4 time and features a melodic line with various ornaments and techniques. The tempo is marked "(Adagio cantabile)". The score is divided into three systems: bars 39-43, 44-46, and 47-50. The first system starts with "Sul G" and includes a trill (tr) and a triplet (3). The second system includes a triplet (3) and a sextuplet (6). The third system includes "Sul D" and a fortissimo (sf) dynamic marking.

Figure 178. Haydn, String Quartet Op. 64, No. 5, second movement, bars 39 to 50, Strub Quartet. [CD 7 Track 1: 01:44-02:17].

In the Rosé Quartet's recording (1927) of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 18 No. 4 the second violinist plays the entire melody on the G-string at bar 33, with heavy 'B' portamento between each leap at the beginning of each subphrase. Following this, the first violinist plays the repeat of the melody an octave higher entirely on the A-string, also with 'B' portamento. It is highly unlikely that such fingerings and resultant portamenti would occur in performances today (Fig. 179).

(Allegro ma non tanto)

Vln. II Sul G

Vln. I sul A

Figure 179. Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 18 No. 4, first movement, bar 33 to 48, Rosé String Quartet. [CD 4 Track 7: 01:00-01:29].

Commonly, the speed of portamento often reflected the tempo of the music. The portamenti in Figs. 176 and 179 are relatively fast, while in slower tempo movements (Fig. 178) or during ritenutos, the portamenti were considerably slower. The portamento made by the Bohemian Quartet's second violinist in bar 118 of the first movement from Smetana's String Quartet No. 1 (recorded 1928) is slow compared to portamenti found within the movement. In addition, the very slow portamento made by the violist in bar 120 clearly serves to announce the recapitulation (Fig. 180).

(Allegro vivo appassionato)
(Meno allegro)

117

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vlc.

rall.

a tempo

pp

slow

pp

pp

pp

120

pp

pp

very slow

Figure 180. Smetana, String Quartet No. 1, first movement, bars 117 to 121, Bohemian Quartet. [CD 7 Track 2: 03:17-03:30].

The Brüder-Post Quartet makes very audible portamenti between successive intervals in several instances in the second movement of Schubert's String Quartet D. 804 (recorded 1921) (Fig. 181), for example in bars 24 and 25.

Importantly however, the numerous instances where a repeated passage is played with the portamento placed between different intervals suggests that selective placement was governed by artistic whim.

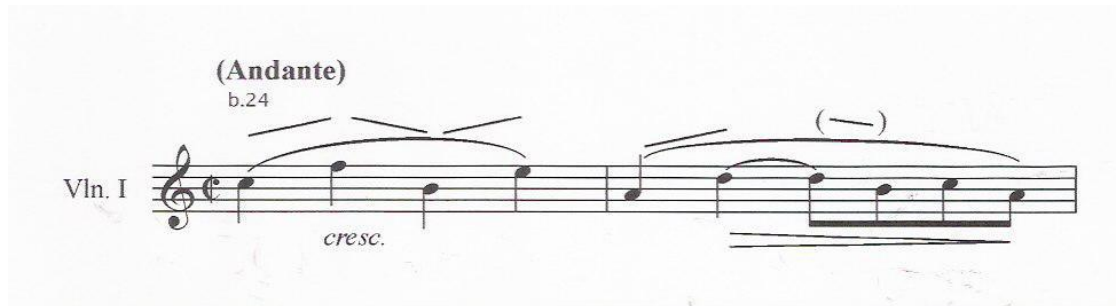


Figure 181. Schubert, String Quartet D. 804, second movement, Brüder-Post Quartet. [CD 5 Track 4: 01:01-01:07].

In addition, players were clearly aware of the role portamento could play in characterizing and clarifying motifs or intervals when passed between players in the ensemble. For example, throughout the seventh movement of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 131, players in both the Gewandhaus (1916) and Rosé (1927) Quartets accentuate the important recurring interval of an augmented second by using portamento (Fig. 182).

Figure 182. Beethoven, String Quartet Op.131, seventh movement, Rosé and Gewandhaus Quartets, bars 185 to 186 and 193 to 194. [Rosé, CD 2 Track 7: 03:05-03:07 (bar 185 to 186), 03:15-03:18 (bars 193 to 194); Gewandhaus, CD 2 Track 6: 03:12-03:14 (bars 185 to 186), 03:20-03:23 (bars 193 to 194)].

Similarly, Rosé uses a slow portamento at each occurrence of the interval f' to g'' in bars 21 and 29 (the peak of the phrase) in the fourth movement of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 131. While Rosé uses portamento in both ascending leaps to harmonics in the repeated motivic figure at bar 10 and 12, the second violinist, Paul Fischer, only makes a subtle portamento on the second of the identical figures in bar 4. This may have been a premeditated decision so as not to exaggerate the portamento in this figure. Notably, the Gewandhaus Quartet's recording of the same work reveals that the players also made use of portamento to distinguish this figure, but only in bars 10 and 12. They also make a heavy and slow portamento in bar 5 to mark the interval of a falling tritone. Returning to Rosé, it is also clearly that he was selective in his use of portamento; he makes no portamento in bar 14 between the descending interval of a third

where it might have been expected (see Flesch's aforementioned remark on page 221). This was undoubtedly a conscious decision as he does shift between this interval, but quickly and subtly. Also, the violist makes a noticeable portamento in bar 5 seemingly to emphasise the important change of harmony after a sustained pedal-note (Fig. 183).

Andante, ma non troppo e molto cantabile.

First system of musical notation (measures 1-5) for Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., and Vlc. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#) and the time signature is 2/4. The Vln. I and Vln. II parts are marked *p dolce*. The Vla. part is marked *p pizz.* and the Vlc. part is marked *p*. The Vln. I and Vln. II parts feature melodic lines with slurs and accents. The Vla. part consists of a series of eighth notes. The Vlc. part consists of a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

Second system of musical notation (measures 6-10) for Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., and Vlc. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#) and the time signature is 2/4. The Vln. I and Vln. II parts continue their melodic lines with slurs and accents. The Vla. part continues with eighth notes. The Vlc. part continues with eighth-note accompaniment.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a string quartet. The first system covers bars 12 to 20, and the second system covers bars 21 to 28. The music is written for four staves (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass) in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The first system shows the beginning of a phrase with various articulations. The second system features a 'cresc.' (crescendo) marking in all four staves, indicating a dynamic increase. The score includes first and second endings for several measures.

Figure 183. Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 131, fourth movement, bars 1 to 15, 20 to 22 and 28 to 30, Rosé Quartet. [CD 5 Track 2: 00:00-00:38 (bars 1 to 15), 00:48-00:58 (bars 20 to 22), 01:10-01:19 (bars 28 to 30)].

The leader of the Gewandhaus Quartet also makes a portamento to a harmonic, (similarly to bars 10 and 12 of Fig. 183), in bars 72 and 80 of the *Presto* fifth movement from Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 131 (Fig. 184).

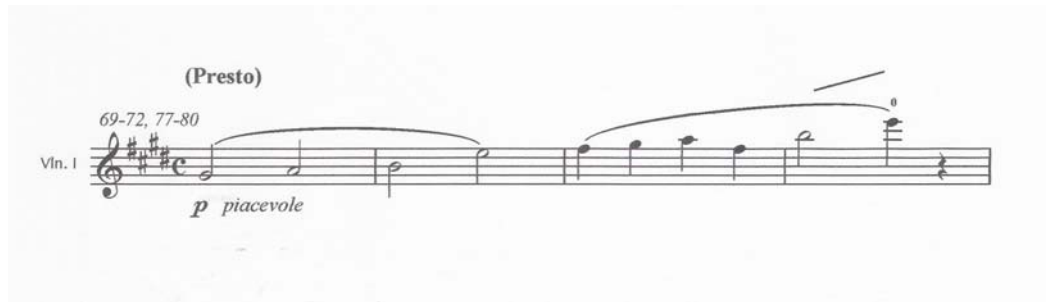


Figure 184. Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 131, fifth movement, Gewandhaus Quartet. [CD 4 Track 9: 00:50-00:52].

Conclusions

The evidence considered in this chapter reveals that around the turn of the twentieth century portamento was more prominent (both more frequent and audible) in music of a slow tempo that naturally lends itself to a cantabile character. Likewise, this use of portamento is evident in slower sections within a movement or work. For example, Joachim's use of portamento in the lyrical sections of his *Romance* is more frequent than the aggressive *con fuoco* passage between bars 61 and 68. Soldat-Roeger's use of portamento in the *Adagio* introduction to Mozart's Violin Concerto K. 219 is more prominent than in the ensuing *Allegro Aperto*.

The German violin school predominantly used 'B' portamento, although there are isolated instances of 'L' portamento. Recordings of Rosé, Soldat-Roeger and the Klingler Quartet reveal some instances of 'L' portamento, although its use is subtle and infrequent. Notably, 'L' portamento was used (although rarely)

by Joachim and Auer, who condemned it in their writings. Soldat-Roeger also used it with great discretion in her playing. Importantly, however, their use of this type of portamento is markedly more discreet than recordings of violinists such as Ysaÿe who made prominent use of the 'L' portamento. Nevertheless, this illustrates not only the discrepancy between theory and practice but also how instructive sound recordings are in constructing a more accurate picture of portamento practices of the era.

In its heyday, portamento was used mainly between larger intervals but was often audible in stepwise shifting too. It was also used between intervals of a descending third. Sound recordings reveal that ascending and descending portamento was used in fairly equal measure.

Players varied the type, speed and weight of portamento. The weight, and thus the audibility, of the portamento generally corresponded to the speed of the shift and the tempo of the music. Thus in slower tempi the portamento tended to be heavier, slower and more audible. Despite this, the desired expressive nuance within the phrase also dictated the relative speed and weight of the shift, meaning there could be fast and slow portamenti even within a slower paced movement. The extensive variety of nuance is illustrated by Soldat-Roeger in the opening section of the *Adagio* from Spohr's Violin Concerto No. 9. Recordings confirm that the audible dynamic swell made during portamento was a feature of the German violin school.

Within a movement the speed of the portamento naturally related to the speed of the music. Although portamento was a matter of personal artistic choice, it often delineated weak and strong beats. At ritenutos or the ends of phrases portamento was generally slower.

Portamento was used to enhance crescendos or a cantabile melody, or to highlight melodically or harmonically important notes. It often served to characterize a theme or motive and at times was consciously coordinated within an ensemble. It was also used to draw attention to a structural moment within a movement, such as the recapitulation, or a significant change of harmonic direction within a movement.

Clearly, portamento was integral to performing style at the turn of the twentieth century. Given that the performing careers of the majority of recording artists of the period began in the nineteenth century, the use of portamento demonstrated that it was indeed prevalent much earlier than when their recording careers began at the turn of the century. Portamento not only enhanced the expressive quality of music but also clarified motivic material and delineated important structural moments. In other words, its use extended beyond the expressive, into structural parameters.

Discussing the portamento of early nineteenth-century violinists, Robert Donington comments that 'At their worst, the romantic fiddlers were sentimental; at their best, they were out of this world for aural nectar and ambrosia.'²⁸⁶ While some playing of this period might sound sentimental to our modern ears, the gradual outlawing of portamento during the first half of the twentieth century may be seen to have robbed the classics of an expressive and interpretative tool that was once thought indispensable.

²⁸⁶ Robert Donington, *The Interpretation of Early Music* (London: Faber & Faber, 1974), 40.

CHAPTER FIVE

Vibrato

'it trembles like jelly on a plate in the hands of a nervous waiter.'²⁸⁷

'The Strolling Player,' *The Strad*, 1908.

Written Evidence

Like portamento, the use of vibrato during the nineteenth century reflected vocal practices. In his *Violin School*, Spohr explained vibrato as imitating the 'trembling' of the human voice.²⁸⁸ In Garcia's influential *Treatise on the Art of Singing* (1840), vibrato is described as a 'uniformly continued series of small swelled sounds, multiplied to a great extent as the breath will allow,' sometimes known as '*making the voice vibrate* [Garcia's italics].'²⁸⁹ As was common in string playing, he indicates the vibrato as beginning part way through the note and explains that:

Great singers first hold out a sustained sound, with a third of the breath, which sound is followed by another of less power and duration; after which follows a long succession of echoes, becoming gradually weaker as they approach the end – the last, indeed, can scarcely be heard.²⁹⁰

Importantly, Garcia emphasizes that this effect must not be used too frequently. However his comments also indicate that, during this time, singers may have used vibrato more frequently than he considered desirable. Garcia writes:

true intonation, unchangeable firmness, and perfect harmony of the timbres, constitute steadiness of voice. This important quality, which

²⁸⁷ The Strolling Player, 'The Everlasting Vibrato,' *The Strad*, (January 1908), 305.

²⁸⁸ Spohr, *Violin School*, 161.

²⁸⁹ Garcia, *Garcia's New Treatise*, 33.

²⁹⁰ Garcia, *Garcia's New Treatise*, 33.

forms the foundation of a good style of singing, is as rare as it is valuable.²⁹¹

In string playing, the term *vibrato* only became truly established, in the modern sense of the word, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.²⁹² Throughout the nineteenth century other terms were used to denote various tremulous wavering effects, some of which were performed with the bow and many of which are completely different to what is known today as vibrato. These included *tremolo* (Spohr, 1832), *ondulation* (Baillot, 1834), *sons vibrés* (de Bériot, 1858) and *balancement* or *Bebung* (Schröder, 1887).²⁹³ Notably, Schröder discusses three types of wavering effects under the heading *Bebung*: *tremolando*, *vibrato* and *balancement*. While the term *balancement* denotes what we now call vibrato (albeit a narrow finger vibrato), *tremolando* indicates a *tremolo* with the bow and *vibrato* a repeated tapping of a harmonic on an adjacent string (Fig. 185). Remarkably, Schröder specifies the latter as the most ‘attractive’ *Bebung* that ‘most violinists know by the name of *vibrato* or *vibration*.’²⁹⁴ It is possible that this type of *Bebung* was widely practised as it is also mentioned in Luis Alonso’s treatise *Le Virtuose moderne* (c.1880).²⁹⁵



Figure 185. Schröder, *Die Kunst des Violinspiels*, 27.

²⁹¹ Garcia, *Garcia’s New Treatise*, 33.

²⁹² Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice*, 520.

²⁹³ Spohr, *Violin School*, 161; Baillot, *The Art of the Violin*, 240; de Bériot, *Méthode de violon*, 242; Schröder, *Die Kunst des Violinspiels*, 26.

²⁹⁴ Schröder, *Die Kunst des Violinspiels*, 27; ‘ist den meisten Violinisten bekannt unter dem Namen *Vibrato* oder *Vibration*.’ My translation.

²⁹⁵ Luis Alonso, *Le Virtuose moderne* (Paris, c.1880), IV.

Nevertheless, German treatises throughout the nineteenth century frequently discuss a very narrow oscillation of pitch produced by the finger or wrist.²⁹⁶ For the purposes of clarity, the term *vibrato* will henceforth be used to describe this type of effect. Throughout the nineteenth century various treatises stress that the oscillation must be very narrow. Spohr remarks that the vibrato is

produced by a trembling motion of the left hand. This motion must however be slight and the deviation from the perfect intonation of the tone should hardly be perceptible to the ear.²⁹⁷

Interestingly, there is no mention by Spohr of varying the width of the vibrato, suggesting that it remained very narrow at all speeds. In his *L'Art du violon* (1835) Baillot advises:

Make the whole left hand rock back and forth with a rather moderate movement, in such a way that the oscillation or shaking of the hand is carried to the finger, which is on the string.²⁹⁸

Almost fifty years later in 1878, Carl Courvoisier's *Die Violin-Technik* also emphasizes a discreet finger vibrato made by 'shaking of the finger. Only when this uncertainty is so trifling as to be barely noticeable in a consonant harmony

²⁹⁶ Throughout the nineteenth century a narrow finger vibrato was clearly widespread. Writing in Boston in 1880, and using the term 'close shake,' Howe describes a 'slight deviation from the true or false intonation, rapidly repeated, caused by a rise and fall of the finger on the string without quitting it.' See Howe, *The Violin: How To Master It* (Boston: Elias Howe Co., 1880), 73.

²⁹⁷ Spohr, *Violin School*, 161.

²⁹⁸ Baillot, *The Art of the Violin*, 240.

does it relieve the tone of stiffness.²⁹⁹ And as late as 1905, Joachim and Moser describe in their *Violin School* the ‘quivering movement of the finger,’ and ‘oscillating movements more or less rapidly performed with a perfectly loose wrist.’³⁰⁰

Throughout the nineteenth century, many writers including Spohr, Baillot, David, Schröder, Hohmann (1891),³⁰¹ and Joachim and Moser, considered the narrow style of vibrato best used ornamentally. They all advocated its selective and sparing use and warned sternly against excessive application. Such cautionary tone was clearly widespread in French and German treatises of the time.³⁰² For example Spohr warns the reader to ‘avoid its frequent use, or in improper places.’³⁰³ Baillot explains that ‘if used often, it would soon lose its power to move [the listener].’³⁰⁴ David cautions that it ‘must not be employed too frequently nor without sufficient reason.’³⁰⁵ Schröder advises that ‘one takes care of not using it very often since it gives the whole

²⁹⁹ Carl Courvoisier, *Die Violin-Technik* (Cologne, 1878); trans. *Violin Technic* in Siegfried Eberhardt, *Violin Vibrato: Its Mastery and Artistic Uses: Practical Suggestions for Correct Technical Development and Good Violin Tone Production* (New York, 1911), 11.

³⁰⁰ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, ii, 96a.

³⁰¹ Christian Heinrich Hohmann, *Praktische Violinschule* (Cologne: P.J. Tonger, 1891).

³⁰² Clive Brown, “Singing and string playing in comparison: instructions for the technical and artistic employment of portamento and vibrato in Charles de Bériot’s *Méthode de violon*,” *Zwischen schöpferischer Individualität und künstlerischer Selbstverleugnung. Zur musikalischen Aufführungspraxis im 19. Jahrhundert*, ed. Claudio Bacciagaluppi, Roman Brotbeck & Anselm Gerhard (Schliengen, Argus, 2009), 101. During this period treatises outside of Europe also used similar cautionary tone. Howe’s treatise of 1880 remarks: ‘it [vibrato] is greatly abused and often introduced where it has no right to appear. Indeed with some solo players it appear impossible to play a clear, steady pure note, without the perpetual *tremola* coming in like an evil spirit or haunting ghost to mar its beauty. See Howe, *The Violin: How To Master It*, 73.

³⁰³ Spohr, *Violin School*, 161.

³⁰⁴ Baillot, *The Art of the Violin*, 240.

³⁰⁵ David, *Violin School*, ii, 43.

rendering a softish and crying character.’³⁰⁶ Hohmann stresses it ‘shouldn’t be used too much.’³⁰⁷ And Joachim and Moser emphasize that:

A violinist whose taste is refined and healthy will always recognize the steady tone as the ruling one, and will use the vibrato only where the expression seems to demand it.³⁰⁸

Spohr also addresses appropriate loci for vibrato. He stresses the necessity to vary vibrato speed but notably, there is no reference to varying its width. He gives the following general rules (including speed and place) for its use:³⁰⁹

- i) The rapid, for strongly marked tones (*fz or >*)
- ii) the slow, for sustained tones of passionate cantabile passages
- iii) slow-fast in long notes
- iv) fast-slow in long notes

Spohr provides annotated score excerpts using a wavy line to indicate vibrato placement and speed: a line with smaller amplitude indicates a faster vibrato while larger amplitude indicates a slower vibrato (Fig. 186).³¹⁰ Spohr used similar annotations throughout his *Violin School* and in his Violin Duos Opp. 148,

³⁰⁶ Schröder, *Die Kunst des Violinspiels*, 27. ‘Nur hüte man sich, sie nicht zu oft anzuwenden, da sie dann dem ganzen Vortrage einen zu weichlichen und weinerlichen Charakter giebt.’ My translation.

³⁰⁷ Hohmann, *Praktische Violinschule*, 119. ‘Das Beben soll nicht zu viel angewendet werden.’ My translation.

³⁰⁸ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, ii, 96a.

³⁰⁹ Spohr, *Violin School*, 161.

³¹⁰ Spohr, *Violin School*, 161.

150 and 153 and String Quartet Op. 152.³¹¹ The infrequency of such annotations suggests that Spohr intended vibrato to be applied in a highly selective manner.

Figure 186. Spohr, *Violin School*, 163.

³¹¹ Violin Duos Opp. 148, 150, 153: <http://chase.leeds.ac.uk/view/composer/63/>; String Quartet Op. 152: [http://imslp.org/wiki/String_Quartet, Op. 152](http://imslp.org/wiki/String_Quartet,_Op._152).

Notably, in his *Violin School*, David advocates a greater variety of vibrato speeds than Spohr (Fig. 187).³¹² But like Spohr, there is no discussion of varying width.

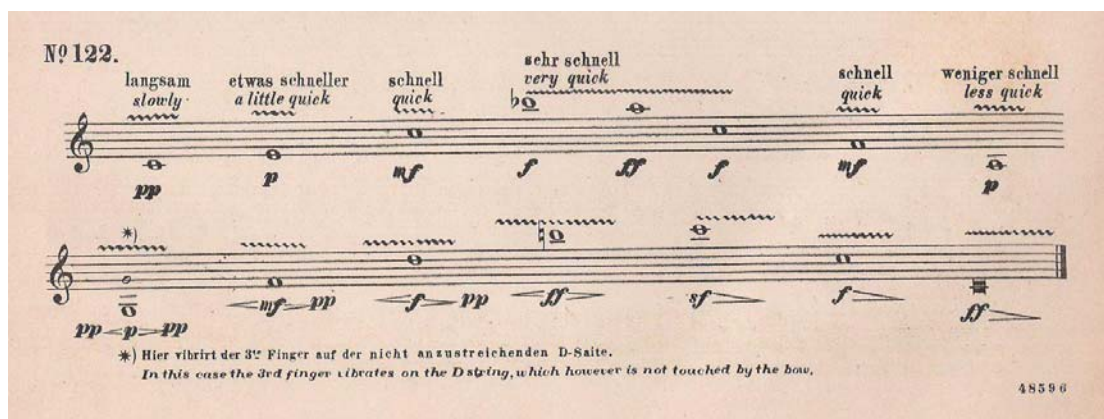


Figure 187. David, *Violin School*, ii, 45.

Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century editions, with annotated fingerings by artists such as Joachim, Auer, David and Schnirlin, provide evidence of an aesthetic that was clearly not reliant on an ever-constant vibrato, particularly through prevalence for open strings, harmonics and fourth fingers.³¹³ Brown affirms such fingerings ‘would in most instances make no sense if all the surrounding notes were to be played with vibrato.’³¹⁴ In David’s personal copy of his *Introduction and Variations* Op. 15, wavy lines serve as a reminder to vibrate, suggesting that a constant vibrato was not fundamental to his playing style, or a greater intensity of vibrato was required at these moments. The vibrato

³¹² David, *Violin School*, 45.

³¹³ Milsom, “Practice and Principle; Perspectives upon the German ‘Classical’ School of Violin Playing in the Late Nineteenth Century,” *Nineteenth Century Music Review* 9 (2012): 37.

³¹⁴ Brown, “Bowing Style, Vibrato and Portamento in Nineteenth-Century Violin Playing,” *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 113:1 (1988): 117-18.

annotations occur during expressive features of the music, for example, during strong beats in bars 1, 2, 5, 12, 13 and 16, and over the entirety of bars 3 and 6. A wavy line with larger amplitude (perhaps indicating a faster or wider vibrato) is written over what is arguably the climax of the variation—the E-string passage from bars 16-18 (Figure 188). Significantly, these lines do not occur anywhere else in the piece, again indicating that his use of vibrato was highly selective. David’s vibrato annotations are also infrequent in other repertoire. Notably, he marks wavy vibrato lines above only four notes (bars 57 and 59) in his personal copy of Beethoven’s *Romance* in G major Op. 40.³¹⁵

Var. 3. Lento

Vln.

f *p*

p dolce

cresc. *f* *p*

cresc. *f*

dim.

³¹⁵ See <http://chase.leeds.ac.uk/view/edition/941/>.

Figure 188. David, *Introduction and Variations* Op. 15, Var. 3, bars 1 to 21. Placement of David's own pencilled annotations denoting vibrato. The lines in bars 17 and 18 are of distinctly bigger amplitude in David's score.³¹⁶

Late nineteenth-century compositions sometimes include instructions for vibrato use, again indicating that either a constant use of vibrato, or a greater intensity of vibrato at such places was not yet common practice. For example, at bars 30 to 33 in the second, and 101 to 104 in the fourth movement of Joseph Rheinberger's (1839-1901) *String Quartet No. 2* Op. 147 (1886), the term *vibrando* is indicated (Figure 189).

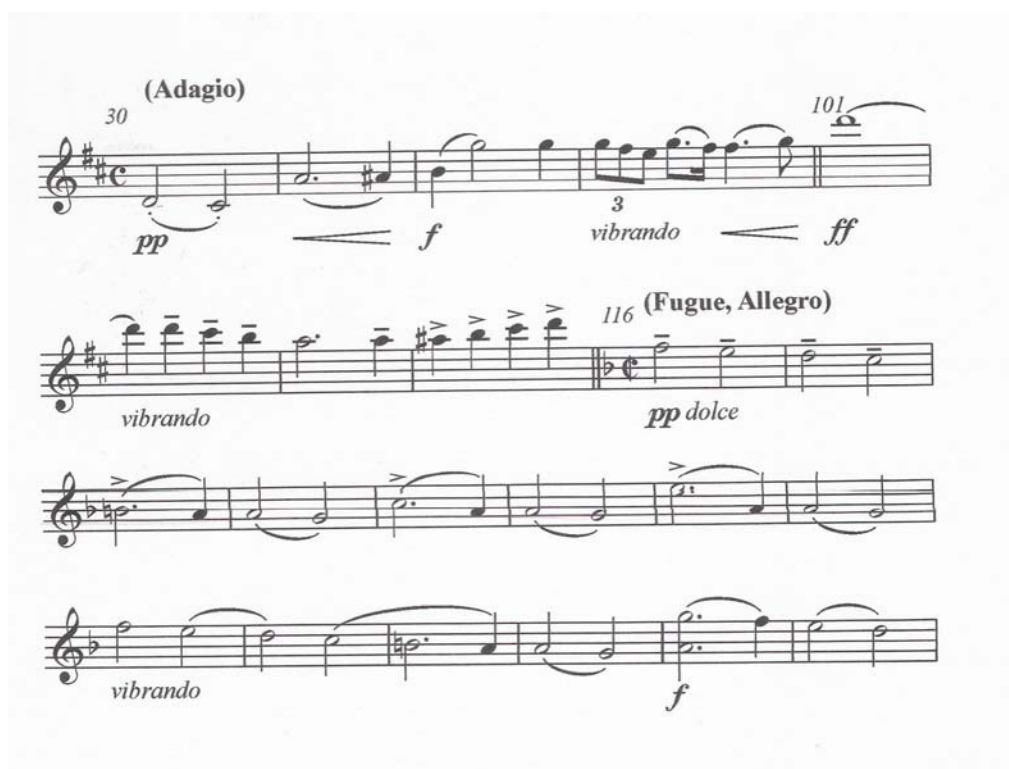


Figure 189. Joseph Rheinberger, *String Quartet No. 2* Op. 147, second movement, bars 30 to 33 and 101 to 104.

³¹⁶ Ferdinand David, *Introduction et variations sur un thème de Schubert* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1842). See <http://chase.leeds.ac.uk/view/edition/1132/>.

Just one year later in his *Die Kunst des Violinspiels* (1887), Schröder, includes an annotated excerpt of the first and second movements of Rode's Concerto No. 7, showing specific loci for vibrato (Fig. 190). He explains that vibrato is not to be used in a continuous or incessant fashion, and only occurs 'on particularly accented sounds in expressive vocal range places.'³¹⁷ Undoubtedly, Schröder was aware of Spohr's inclusion in his *Violin School* of these entire movements.³¹⁸



Figure 190. Rode, Violin Concerto No. 7, first movement (bars 1 to 4), second movement (bars 1 to 4), in Schröder, *Die Kunst des Violinspiels*, 26.

Joachim and Moser write in more detail about appropriate circumstances for vibrato, stating that:

In order to use the vibrato with meaning, the performer must above all things take into consideration the general character of the piece about to be played; for it would be in the worst possible taste if he were to employ the same violent close shake [vibrato] in a melody marked *piano, dolce, or grazioso*, as at places marked *forte, molto espressivo, appassionato*, etc. but even in melodies headed *con gran*

³¹⁷ Schröder, *Die Kunst des Violinspiels*, 26. 'geschieht nur auf besonders accentuierten Tönen in ausdrucksvollen, gesangreichen Stellen.' My translation.

³¹⁸ However, in Spohr's example in his *Violin School* there is no vibrato sign over the B-natural in bar 4 of the first movement. See Spohr, *Violin School*, 182.

espressione, or *molto appassionato*, it would also be very objectionable on the part of the performer to use the tremolo [vibrato] on every note of each bar incessantly, either because he had got into bad habits, or because the notes happen to lie well for the hand.³¹⁹

Joachim and Moser strongly emphasize that the placement of vibrato must be decided by a true insight into the character of the composition dependent on the mature and cultivated taste of the performer. They suggest specific places for its use:³²⁰

- On harmonically correct notes (including dissonances occurring on the accented part of the bar) rather than on passing notes.
- Notes of rhythmic or melodic, harmonic or modulative importance.
- According to ‘musical prosody’: where natural accentuation might occur in vocal declamation.
- Even in fleeting course of passages that are to be rapidly played.
- To highlight a Gypsy style of playing.³²¹

Concerning musical prosody, Joachim and Moser stress that the vibrato should correspond with the natural emphasis of speech. To illustrate this point, Joachim applies verse of a German folksong to the opening notes of his *Romance*

³¹⁹ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 6-7.

³²⁰ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 7-8.

³²¹ For example in bar 69 of the trio of Brahms’s *Hungarian Dance No. 4*, where *pp sempre, ma vibrato* is marked in the score. Joachim also marks the term *vibrato* at bar 222 in the first movement of his *Hungarian Concerto* Op. 11.

Op. 2.³²² He explains that the natural emphasis of speech, and therefore the application of vibrato, should occur on the syllables ‘Früh’ and ‘wie’ (Fig. 191).³²³



Figure 191. Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 7.

It appears that the use of vibrato as a deliberate means of sound projection may have increased during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In Albert Tottmann’s *Booklet on the Violin* (1904) vibrato is advocated to equalize the sound of ‘covered’ tones (tones stopped with a finger) and open strings, and ‘at the same time enhance the carrying power of the tone, particularly in slow passages.’³²⁴

³²² The first verse of the folksong is as follows:

‘Holder Frühling, komm doch wieder,
Lieber Frühling, komm' doch bald,
Bring' uns Blumen, Laub und Lieder
Schmücke wieder Feld und Wald.
La lala lalala...’

[‘Beautiful spring, come back,
Dear Spring, come soon but
Bring us flowers, foliage and songs
Adorn again field and forest.
La lala lalala...’] (My translation).

³²³ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 7. Interestingly, Joachim still warns of vibrato in this instance: ‘If therefore the player wishes to make use of the *vibrato* in the first bars of the Romance (which however, he should certainly not do)...’

³²⁴ Albert Tottmann, *Büchlein von der Geige* (Leipzig: C. F. Kahnt, 1904), II, in Warner Hauck, *Vibrato on the Violin*, trans. Dr Kitty Rokos, (London: Bosworth, 1975), 38.

Some nineteenth-century string players may have employed an arm vibrato (where the vibrato action is made by the entire forearm as opposed to just the hand) but it is unlikely to have been a widely accepted practice. In 1880, Alonso considers it extremely undesirable: ‘The arm vibrato is insufferable, it is a nervy, stiff vibrato, it is comparable to a counterfeit chromatic trill.’³²⁵ In the early twentieth century it was still clearly considered by many to be a defective form of vibrato. Siegfried Eberhardt’s communication with Flesch³²⁶ leaves no doubt that well before the publication of his *Art of Violin* (1924), Flesch only advocated the use of the hand vibrato. In 1910, Eberhardt stresses that ‘according to the views of Prof. Flesch [the vibrato] is a combined movement of fingers and wrist in which no arm participates.’³²⁷ André de Ribaupierre (1893-1955), a student of Ysaÿe’s in the early years of the twentieth century, criticizes the arm vibrato stating that ‘the student makes use of the whole arm in order to produce the vibration, which is exhausting for him and wearisome for his listeners.’³²⁸ However, by the second decade of the twentieth century arm vibrato was evidently gaining validity. Samuel Grimson and Cecil Forsyth, in their *Modern Violin Playing* (1920), remark that:

there has been much discussion as to how the vibrato should be produced, and a great deal of dismal rubbish has been written on the

³²⁵ Luis Alonso, *Le Virtuose moderne* (Paris, c.1880), IV.

³²⁶ Prior to 1910. See Eberhardt, *Violin Vibrato*, 21.

³²⁷ Siegfried Eberhardt, *Der Beseelte Violin-Ton* (Dresden, 1910), trans. *Violin Vibrato: Its Mastery and Artistic Uses: Practical Suggestions for Correct Technical Development and Good Violin Tone Production* (New York, 1911), 21. Flesch still considers the arm vibrato (he calls it ‘forearm vibrato’) to be undesirable in his *Art of Violin Playing* published in 1924.

³²⁸ Frederick H. Martens, *String Mastery: Talks with Master Violinists, Viola Players and Violoncellists* (New York: Frederick Stokes Company, 1923), 158.

subject. The main bone of contention is whether it should be made by means of a swing from the wrist or from the elbow.³²⁹

They devote several pages to advocating the arm vibrato, the implication being that until that point it had not been considered an accepted practice. In a statement that was undoubtedly controversial at the time (the most famous violinists of the early twentieth century, such as Ysaÿe, Kreisler and Heifetz all having used a 'wrist' or 'hand' vibrato) Grimson and Forsyth conclude that:

anatomically and mechanically the proper method of producing the vibrato is by swinging the forearm and hand from the elbow ... the correct left hand technique renders the performance of the wrist-vibrato impossible.³³⁰

Interestingly, during the early twentieth century vibrato in the higher positions may generally have been used infrequently, or more discreetly. Schröder states that vibrato

might be performed the easiest in lower situations [positions]; in higher situations they are rarely appropriate by contrast of their minor effects and on account of their aggravated execution.³³¹

Alonso, also makes reference to the undesirable result of violinists vibrating in higher positions:

³²⁹ Samuel Grimson and Cecil Forsyth, *Modern Violin Playing (1920)* (New York: Novello & Co. Ltd., 1920), 9.

³³⁰ Grimson and Forsyth, *Modern Violin Playing*, 13.

³³¹ Schröder, *Die Kunst des Violinspiels*, 26. 'Sie lässt sich am leichtesten in unteren Lagen ausführen; in hohen Lagen wird sie dagegen ihrer geringen Wirkung und ihrer erschwerten Ausführung wegen, selten angebracht.' My translation.

it tires your hearing, and when a violinist plays in high positions and especially double stops it is with pleasure that one sees the end of the piece approaching.³³²

Later in 1922, while clearly advocating a more constant use of vibrato, Bronislaw Huberman (1882-1947) discusses the general tendency to play with less vibrato in higher E-string positions, suggesting that it was a common occurrence. He postulates that

there are certain climaxing tones in famous compositions where, *if it were not so difficult*, ninety-five percent of violinists would make the *vibrato* they ought to make. As it is, they do not observe the *vibrato*. And in general, if the tone calling for the *vibrato* happens to be in a high position on the E string, it is ignored.³³³

Huberman's comments are borne out by the playing on several early recordings. Throughout the high notes (bars 37 to 8 and 112 to 3) Joachim uses a very narrow vibrato in his recording of his *Romance*. Soldat-Roeger often uses a very narrow vibrato in the higher registers in her recordings of Schumann's *Abendlied*, Beethoven's *Romance* in F major, Mozart's Violin Concerto K. 219, and Spohr's *Adagio* from the Violin Concerto No. 9.³³⁴ Violinists not aligned with the German violin school, but representing parallel traditions of playing in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries also show a propensity for a very

³³² Alonso, *Le Virtuose moderne*, IV.

³³³ Martens, *String Mastery*, 68. Huberman's italics. Huberman was a student of Joachim for eight months during 1892, at the age of ten but confesses he studied during this time also with Gregorovitch, Wieniawski's best pupil. Despite Huberman later proclaiming that 'occasional [vibrato] use for contrast is very effective, and much to be preferred to the terrible continuous vibrato which irritates the nerves,' his many recordings provide evidence a very constant use of vibrato. See Martens, *String Mastery*, 63.

³³⁴ This very narrow vibrato in these registers can clearly be seen in spectrogram analyses.

narrow vibrato in the high E-string register. For example, in his 1904 recording of *Zigeunerweisen*, Pablo de Sarasate's (1844-1908) vibrato is extremely narrow and barely audible, or he uses no vibrato at all.³³⁵

While limited vibrato use in higher positions on the E-string may have been due to aesthetic considerations, the tendency for the gut E-string to squeak or crackle in higher registers may have contributed to artists' conservative approach to sound in this register. As vibrato enables greater bow pressure to be applied to the string—and thus a louder sound to be projected—it is conceivable that violinists who played with generally less vibrato, such as artists of the German violin school, played with a weaker sound in higher registers.

The Hairpin Sign

Throughout the nineteenth century, the small hairpin sign (<>), likely adopted from the *messa di voce* in vocal practice,³³⁶ may have signalled the application of vibrato. Joachim and Moser cite Pierre Rode (1774-1830) as a composer who frequently uses the sign for this purpose (even in rapid passages), such as in his Caprice No. 1 (Fig. 192), from 24 Caprices (composed 1814-1819).³³⁷

³³⁵ Pablo de Sarasate, *Zigeunerweisen* Op. 20, No. 1 (1904), Opal CD 9851, 1993, track 6.

³³⁶ Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice*, 552.

³³⁷ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 7.



Figure 192. Rode, Caprice No. 1, from 24 Caprices.

In addition to vibrato, Joachim and Moser note that during instances marked with hairpins the bow should support the left hand by making ‘a soft pressure on the string.’³³⁸ The hairpin sign appears in other treatises such as those by Bartolemeo Campagnoli (1824) and Baillot (1835),³³⁹ without however necessarily annotating the use of vibrato. For Baillot the hairpin sign is used to denote a bowing effect rather than vibrato. He calls the hairpin sign the ‘swell’ instructing the player first to ‘increase the force of the tone by degrees as far as the middle of the bow’ and then to ‘diminish it in the same way until the note dies away’ (Fig. 193).³⁴⁰

³³⁸ Joachim and Moser, *Violin School*, iii, 7.

³³⁹ Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice*, 552.

³⁴⁰ Baillot, *The Art of the Violin*, 230.



Figure 193. Baillot, Violin Concerto No. 4 Op. 10, first movement, bars 81 to 104
Baillot, *The Art of the Violin*, 232.

Importantly, Romantic composers such as Schumann and Brahms also frequently employed the hairpin sign. David Hyun-Su Kim has asserted that the hairpin sign—a crescendo or decrescendo sign used separately, or both together—can indicate a variety of meanings. That the crescendo and decrescendo symbols often appear at the same time as a verbal crescendo or diminuendo indication, suggests strongly that the symbols held a different meaning than merely an increase or decrease in dynamic level. Kim’s useful categorization of the different possible meanings for hairpin can be summarised as follows:³⁴¹

³⁴¹ David Hyun-Su Kim, “The Brahmsian Hairpin,” *19th Century Music*, 36:1 (Summer 2012), 46-57 at 48.

1. *The closing-type* hairpin is a decrescendo sign that occurs at the end of a phrase or section and often indicates a slowing of the tempo.

2. *The accelerando-type* hairpin is a crescendo sign, often found in energetic passages that may indicate an accelerando.

3. *The lingering-type* hairpin is a pair of crescendo and decrescendo signs that is often found in lyrical passages and may indicate a slowing at the peak of the hairpin.

4. *The accent-type* hairpin is a smaller decrescendo sign, or a smaller crescendo/decrescendo pair that may occur over one single note or a small group of notes. It denotes an expressive emphasis that may be realized in different ways, for example by using vibrato or arpeggiating the chord (in piano playing).

In addition to these four meanings for hairpin markings, Kim notes other tendencies:³⁴²

- When a crescendo hairpin is followed by forte, fortissimo or sforzando, it almost always indicates an accelerando type, with a lingering at the expressive peak (particularly with sforzando).
- Successive lingering or accent-type hairpin pairs that appear at the end of a section often denote an overall accelerando or ritenuto, depending on context.

The application of these varying meanings at the occurrence of hairpins that occur frequently in Brahms's music carries significant performance implications. While the hairpin markings throughout Brahms's Violin Sonatas are

³⁴² Kim, "The Brahmsian Hairpin," 51.

considered in detail in the performance edition that accompanies this thesis, it is useful to give a few examples of general use here.

In Fig. 194a, the lingering-type hairpin in bar 14 of the violin and piano in the first movement from the Violin Sonata Op. 78 may indicate a slight broadening at its peak. The crescendo sign from bars 16 to 17 in both parts (leading to the forte in bar 18) may be read as an accelerando-type hairpin while the diminuendo sign from bars 19 to 20 may indicate a closing-type hairpin. Brahms's notated '*dim.*' in bar 19 suggests that the decrescendo sign means something other than a decrease in volume. As Joachim and Moser explain (see above), the expressive emphasis indicated by the accent-type hairpin most likely indicated both vibrato and an increase in pressure from the bow (Fig. 194b-e).³⁴³

The image shows a musical score for Brahms' Violin Sonata Op. 78, first movement, bars 14 to 21. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features a violin part and a piano accompaniment. The piano part has dynamic markings: *f*, *f dim.*, *p*, *poco f*, *dim.*, and *p*. The violin part has a lingering-type hairpin in bar 14. The piano part has a crescendo sign from bars 16 to 17 and a diminuendo sign from bars 19 to 20. The score ends with a fingering 4 3 2 1 1 in the piano part.

Figure 194a. Brahms, Violin Sonata Op. 78, first movement, bars 14 to 21.

³⁴³ For a more in depth discussion of the hairpin signs in bar 3 and 4 of Brahms Sonata Op. 108 please see Critical Performance Edition, Sonata Op. 108, note 4.



Figure 194b. Brahms, Violin Sonata Op. 108, first movement, bars 1 to 5. (See also note 4 for this sonata in the performance edition).

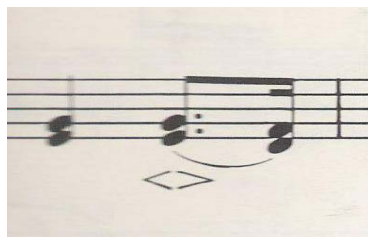


Figure 194c. Brahms, Violin Sonata Op. 78, second movement, bars 72.

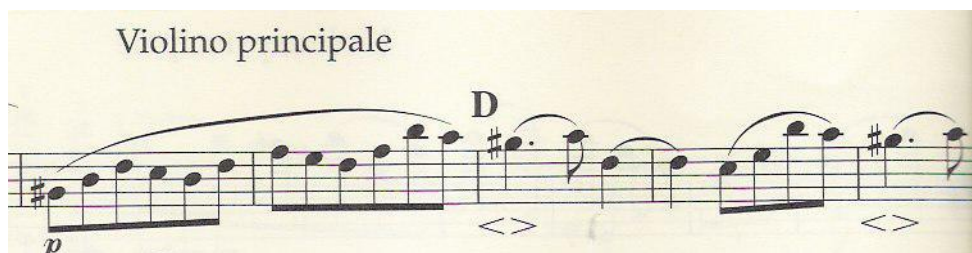


Figure 194d. Brahms, Violin Concerto Op. 77, first movement, bars 204 to 208.



Figure 194e. Schumann, Violin Sonata in A Minor Op. 105, first movement, bars 51 to 53.

Clearly, hairpin signs were also interpreted by performers as indicating expressive emphasis (made by one or a combination of lingering, vibrato or bow pressure). Pencilled annotations of hairpin signs occur in David's autographed

personal copies of music that he used for performance. For example, over the minim in bar four of the first movement of Beethoven's Sonata Op. 24 (Fig. 195) and throughout the first movement of Spohr's Violin Concerto No. 9 (Fig. 196).³⁴⁴ As David used a wavy line to denote vibrato in his *Violin School* and personal copies of various works (see *Introduction and Variations* Op. 15 above), his use of hairpin signs likely implied a swell in sonority using the bow, as well as vibrato. David's hairpin markings in Spohr's Concerto No. 9 are at times confined to one note, but in other instances are marked over multiple notes in a phrase (Fig. 196).



Figure 195. Beethoven, Sonata Op. 24 for Piano and Violin, first movement, bars 1 to 4, David's personal copy showing annotated hairpin in bar 4.

³⁴⁴ Ludwig van Beethoven, *Duos Pour Piano & Violin par L. van Beethoven*, ed. Ferdinand David (Leipzig & Berlin: C.F Peters, 1868), see <http://chase.leeds.ac.uk/view/edition/264/>; Louis Spohr, *Violin Concerto No. 9 in F major*, ed. Ferdinand David (Offenbach: André, 1820), see <http://chase.leeds.ac.uk/view/edition/1133/>.

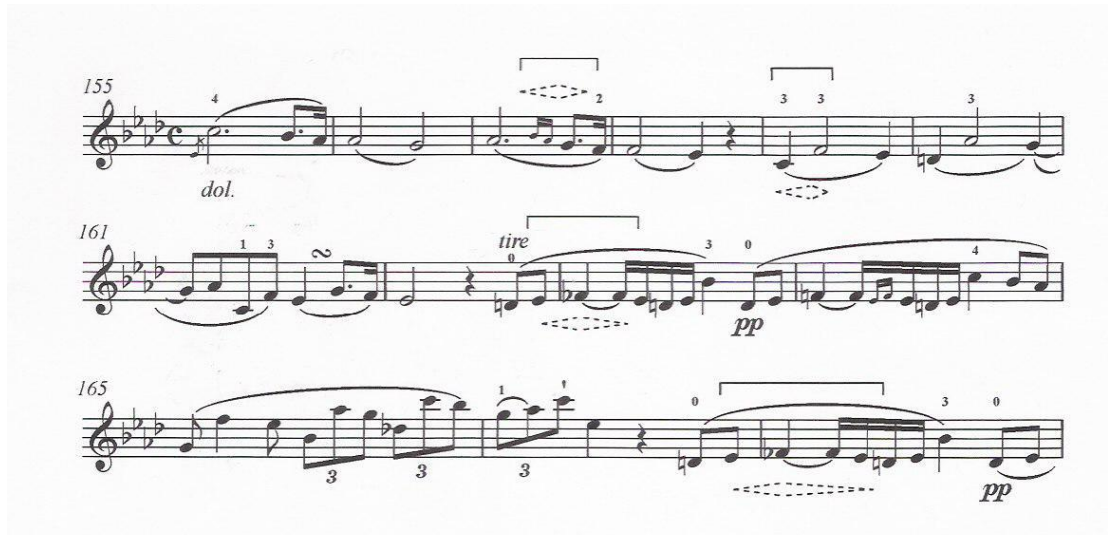


Figure 196. Spohr, Violin Concerto No. 9, first movement, bars 155 to 167, showing David's annotated hairpins as they occur in his personal copy.

A Burgeoning Trend

A more frequent use of vibrato appears to have developed in tandem with a widening of the vibrato amplitude. According to Flesch it was Ysaÿe, the leading representative of the Franco-Belgian Violin School during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries,³⁴⁵ who was 'the first to make use of a broader vibrato.'³⁴⁶ This marks the 1880s as the beginning of significant change, as Ysaÿe made his successful Paris debut in 1885. Flesch also cites Ysaÿe and Kreisler as being responsible for initiating more constant use of vibrato:³⁴⁷

³⁴⁵ Charles de Bériot is considered to have founded the Franco-Belgian Violin School at the Brussels Conservatoire in the 1840s.

³⁴⁶ Flesch, *The Memoirs of Carl Flesch*, 120. 'Broader' here likely means 'wider.' This is clearly implying vibrato was narrower previous to Ysaÿe. Importantly, Ysaÿe's 'wider' vibrato is still very narrow when compared to vibrato commonly used today. Flesch died in 1944, although his memoirs only cover events in his life until 1928.

³⁴⁷ This more constant style of vibrato is often referred to in early nineteenth-century texts (and also today) as 'continuous' vibrato. The author has purposefully avoided using this term as it can be misleading. Artists of the German violin school occasionally vibrated 'continuously' from one note to the next while artists such as Ysaÿe did not necessarily always vibrate 'continuously.' What is really implied by 'continuous' vibrato is that the vibrato was used more constantly as a fundamental characteristic of the sound, rather than used very selectively as an expressive ornament.

it was Kreisler who forty years ago [i.e. also in the 1880s], driven by an irresistible inner urge, started a revolutionary change in this regard, by vibrating not only continuously in cantilenas like Ysaÿe, but even in technical passages.³⁴⁸

Kreisler himself suggests that a more prominent, and possibly more constant vibrato developed even earlier with the violinist Henryk Wieniawski (1835-1880). He remarks that his teacher Lambert Massart (1811-1892)

liked me because I played in the style of Wieniawski (1835-1880). You will recall that Wieniawski intensified the vibrato and brought it to heights never before achieved, so that it became known as the 'French vibrato.' Vieuxtemps also took it up, and after him Ysaÿe, who became its greatest exponent, and I. Joseph Joachim, for instance, disdained it.³⁴⁹

Wieniawski began concertizing in the late 1840s after graduating from the Paris Conservatoire, although he probably exerted most influence during his teaching at the St Petersburg Conservatory between 1860 and 1872.³⁵⁰

Despite Kreisler's comments, Flesch frequently hails the 1880s as a pivotal point in the widespread emergence of a new style of vibrato. He refers to Rosé's style as 'that of the [eighteen] seventies, with no concession to modern tendencies of our art.'³⁵¹ This clearly specifies the 1870s as the decade before

³⁴⁸ Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing Vol. 1*, 40.

³⁴⁹ Louis Lochner, *Fritz Kreisler* (London: Rockliff, 1951), 19. It should be noted however that Vieuxtemps was significantly older than Wieniawski and already well established before Wieniawski became well known.

³⁵⁰ Notably, Robert Philip points out that Kreisler never heard Wieniawski or Vieuxtemps play so it is unlikely that there was this direct influence. See Robert Philip, *Performing Music in the Age of Recording* (London: Yale University Press, 2004), 194.

³⁵¹ Flesch, *The Memoirs of Carl Flesch*, 50.

'modern tendencies' (surely including the new vibrato) began. Flesch later states that

even in the year 1880 the great violinists did not make use of a proper vibrato but employed a kind of *Bebung*, i.e. a finger vibrato in which the pitch was subjected to only quite imperceptible oscillations.³⁵²

Certainly, treatises of this period and later, such as by Courvoisier (1878), Schröder (1887), Hohmann (1891) and Joachim and Moser (1902-05), continued to advocate a narrow finger vibrato. However, the use of vibrato was evidently increasing in England even during the 1870s. An article published in England in 1873 states that 'The particular vice [vibrato] has already become a positive nuisance, and having got to be the fashion is spreading with alarming rapidity.'³⁵³ By the turn of the century, the younger generation of players was clearly aspiring to use a wider, more continuous vibrato, like that of their idols such as Ysaÿe (and later Heifetz).³⁵⁴ Flesch explains that 'Ysaÿe's vibrato became the goal of the generation around 1900.'³⁵⁵ An article from the same year affirms this:

the vibrato excites the ambition of youthful players, and seems to represent to them the very pinnacle of musical joy and aspiration;

³⁵² Flesch, *The Memoirs of Carl Flesch*, 120. Flesch is most likely referring to Joachim who was at the height of his career at this stage. Ysaÿe did not rise to widespread prominence until after 1885. Flesch was probably not referring to Wieniawski or Vieuxtemps, who died in 1880 and 1881 respectively. It is interesting to note that at the time of writing in 1920, Flesch clearly considered the narrow finger vibrato 'improper.'

³⁵³ Anon., "The Tremolo," *The Musical Standard* 5:466 (July 5, 1873), 2.

³⁵⁴ Philip, *Performing in the Age of Recording*, 194.

³⁵⁵ Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing* Vol. 1, 40.

and until they can reproduce a tone effect resembling in some degree the results of a good vibrato, their happiness is incomplete.³⁵⁶

Importantly, the article later questions this trend, warning ‘that special care is needed since it [vibrato] easily and frequently degenerates into tonal abuse of a quite serious nature.’³⁵⁷ William Honeyman, writing in the 1890s, also suggests that ‘it is no exaggeration to say that the strongest desire and ambition of every amateur violin-player is to play the close shake [vibrato] well.’³⁵⁸ This implies strongly that vibrato amongst amateur players during this time was not yet ubiquitous:

“How do you do it? How on earth do you make that *tremola*?” said an amateur to me once in an orchestral society. Hundreds of violin players are in exactly the position of that young man.³⁵⁹

Frequent comments published in musical periodicals and journals during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries portray the controversy surrounding the increasing use of vibrato during this period.³⁶⁰ The epigraph at the head of this chapter gives a comment from a polemic article published in 1908 in *The Strad*, entitled ‘The Everlasting Vibrato.’ The writer mocks the practice of constant vibrato, taunting that it ‘trembles like jelly on a plate in the

³⁵⁶ Anon., “The Vibrato in Violin Playing,” *The Violin Times; a Monthly Journal for Professional and Amateur Violinists and Quartet Players*, 7:79 (May 1900), 123.

³⁵⁷ Anon., “The Vibrato in Violin Playing,” 124.

³⁵⁸ Wm. C. Honeyman, *The Secrets of Violin Playing: Being Full Instructions and Hints to Violin Players, for the Perfect Mastery of the Instrument* (Edinburgh: E. Kohler & Son, 1890), 60.

³⁵⁹ Honeyman, *The Secrets of Violin Playing*, 60.

³⁶⁰ For example see Anon., “The Exaggerated Vibrato,” *The Musical Standard* 17:436 (May 10, 1902), 300; Alfred Johnstone, “The Vice of Vibrato and the Torture of Tremolo,” *The Musical Standard* 34:879 (November 1910), 289.

hands of a nervous waiter.’³⁶¹ Notably, the author (likely an amateur violinist going by the pseudonym ‘The Strolling Player’) clearly aligns his aesthetic views with those of the German violin school, referring reverently to the virtues of Spohr’s treatise. Other publications in the early twentieth century, such as by Archibald Saunders (1900), James Winram (1908), Petrowitch Bissing (1914) and Pavel Bytovetski (1917), still cautioned against the growing practice of constant vibrato.³⁶² Lucien Capet’s treatise *La Technique Supérieure de l’Archet* (1916) also railed against this trend, equating the absence of vibrato with artistic and spiritual ideals:

Absence of left hand vibrato—in certain passages of the musical life of a work—becomes a way to discover the abstract but ineffable beauties of an Art that is superior from all points of view. It is like a type of vision of the Almighty, allowing us to appreciate the true value of all the inferior manifestations realized by means of left hand vibrato. This [vibrato], abused by the majority of violinists, is what most often closes the door to superior aspirations and prevents us from realizing sublime realities, by plunging us into the domain of an inferior illusion.³⁶³

Later publications such as by Moser (1923), Wilhelm Trendelenburg (1925) and Sir Henry Wood (1927) valiantly attempted to reaffirm more conservative vibrato practices.³⁶⁴ Yet, such resistance proved futile and clearly

³⁶¹ The Strolling Player, “The Everlasting Vibrato,” *The Strad* (January 1908), 305.

³⁶² Archibald Saunders, *A Practical Course in Vibrato for Violinists* (London: Lavender, 1900); James Winram, *Violin Playing and Violin Adjustment* (London: William Blackwood & Sons, 1908); Petrowitch Bissing, *Cultivation of the Violin Vibrato Tone* (Chicago: Central States Music, 1914); Pavel L Bytovetski, *How to Master the Violin* (Boston: Ditson, 1917).

³⁶³ Lucien Capet, *La Technique supérieure de l’archet* (Paris, 1916); *Superior Bowing Technique*, trans. Margaret Schmidt, ed. Stephen B. Shipps (Maple City: Encore Music, 2007), 37.

³⁶⁴ Andreas Moser, *Geschichte des Violinspiels* (Berlin: 1923) repr. (Tutzing: H. Schneider, 1966); Wilhelm Trendelenburg, *Die natürlichen Grundlagen der Kunst des Streichinstrumentspiels*

did little to stem the growing tide of the newer style of vibrato. Practices of the German violin school, including the narrower more selectively applied vibrato, lived on in varying degrees in the first three decades of the twentieth century through musicians such as Moser, Rosé and some of Joachim's students such as Soldat-Roeger and Klingler. Yet, despite the publication of Joachim and Moser's *Violin School* in 1905, Joachim's death in 1907 signalled the end of an era. The German violin school, which in essence stood for the preservation of more traditional nineteenth-century aesthetics, quickly became an anachronism.³⁶⁵

In 1910 Eberhardt's *Violin Vibrato* was published and, as Werner Hauck comments, 'established the year 1910 as a turning point and the beginning of an entirely new attitude towards vibrato as a means of artistic expression.'³⁶⁶ Importantly, this appears to be the first publication that anoints vibrato as the defining feature of an artist's sound:

The difference in playing only becomes apparent when the vibrato is employed. Here alone in the individualization of tone, clearly lies the great importance of vibrato.³⁶⁷

Eberhardt also makes a notable distinction between a narrow finger 'tremor,' and vibrato proper: a movement originating from the wrist that results in a more

(Berlin: J. Springer, 1925); Sir Henry Wood, *The Gentle Art of Singing* (London: Oxford University Press, 1927).

³⁶⁵ Brown, "Joachim's Violin Playing and the Performance of Brahms's Music," in Michael Musgrave and Bernard Sherman, eds., *Performing Brahms: Early Evidence of Performing Style*, (Cambridge, 2003), 48.

³⁶⁶ Werner Hauck, *Vibrato on the Violin*, trans. Dr Kitty Rokos, (London: Bosworth, 1975), 19.

³⁶⁷ Eberhardt, *Violin Vibrato*, 14-15.

rounded oscillation.³⁶⁸ He cites Flesch as being central to the formation of this more 'modern' vibrato.³⁶⁹

In 1920 Grimson and Forsyth asserted that 'now the vibrato must be available everywhere and at every time.'³⁷⁰ In 1924 Flesch alludes to a divide still existent amongst players but makes it abundantly clear that a continuous style of vibrato was the norm:

There are harsh differences of opinion as to whether vibrato should be used in a continuous or intermittent manner. Purely theoretically, the vibrato being a means of heightened expression should only be used when the musical, expressive feeling justifies it. If we take survey however of the well-know violinists of our time, we realize however that practically all of them use vibrato constantly.³⁷¹

Just over a decade later, publications no longer refer to a conflict of opinion, but rather affirm the necessity of constant vibrato as fact. In 1938, Lionel Tertis (1876–1975), a leading violist throughout the first half of the twentieth century advises that:

A perfect vibrato is indispensable. The vital things about the vibrato is that it should be *continuous*; there must be *no break in it whatever* [sic.], especially at the moment of proceeding from one note to another, whether those notes are in the same position or whether a change of position is involved.³⁷²

³⁶⁸ Eberhardt, *Violin Vibrato*, 15.

³⁶⁹ Eberhardt, *Violin Vibrato*, 21. This is most likely because Flesch was the first prominent pedagogue to systematically teach the vibrato.

³⁷⁰ Samuel B. Grimson, and Cecil Forsyth, *Modern Violin Playing (1920)* (New York: The H.W. Gray Co., 1920), 5.

³⁷¹ Carl Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing*, i, 24.

³⁷² Lionel Tertis, *Beauty of Tone in String Playing* (London: Oxford University Press, 1938), 12.

The Contention in Current Scholarship

The selective use of vibrato by artists of the German violin school, as documented in early recordings, is the subject of much contention in current scholarship. In his article 'So Klingt Wien' ['So Sounds Vienna'],³⁷³ David Hurwitz rebukes conductor Roger Norrington's claims that little or no vibrato was used in orchestral playing until the late 1930s and 40s.³⁷⁴ However, Hurwitz skews the picture as he associates Norrington's views with those of other scholars who do not necessarily subscribe to Norrington's hypothesis. Hurwitz asserts:

Norrington's position, however, has come to reflect much of the current thinking in the field of Applied Musicology. It finds support in the work of Clive Brown and other scholars active in the field of period performance practice.

Contrary to what Hurwitz infers, scholars such as Clive Brown have not proposed a complete absence of vibrato in orchestral playing during the first decades of the twentieth century. In fact, research by Brown and other scholars has acknowledged the increasing use during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries of vibrato applied continuously.³⁷⁵

Hurwitz's sweeping remarks need further clarification. Norrington's claims are concerned with the vibrato employed—or not—by orchestral players (not necessarily belonging to any 'school' of violin playing) during the first four

³⁷³ David Hurwitz, 'So Klingt Wien: Conductors, Orchestras and Vibrato in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries,' *Music & Letters* 93 (February 2012).

³⁷⁴ Roger Norrington's claims are found in the self-authored booklet notes accompanying his recording of Mahler Symphony No. 9, Radio-Sinfonicorchester Stuttgart des SWR (Hänssler Classic CD 93244), 2008.

³⁷⁵ For example see Clive Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice*, 533-35; Mark Katz, *Capturing Sound; How Technology Has Changed Music* (California: University of California Press, 2004), 92; Robert Philip, *Early Recordings and Musical Style; Changing Tastes in Instrumental Performance, 1900-1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 143 and 179.

decades of the twentieth century. His views may arguably be questionable as a more continuous use of vibrato was clearly prevalent by the early twentieth century. The increasing prominence of the Franco-Belgian style of playing, alongside preeminent individuals such as Fritz Kreisler and Jascha Heifetz who played with a continuously applied vibrato, exerted considerable influence on the younger generation of violinists at the time. Importantly, Hurwitz does not distinguish players who employed the continuous style of vibrato that became the norm during the first decades of early twentieth century (undoubtedly amongst orchestral players too), from the playing of a select group of musicians who represent the nineteenth-century German violin school, and who continued to perform with a more selective application of vibrato even during the first decades of the twentieth century (see 'Recorded Evidence' below).

In his article, Hurwitz questions the notion that Joachim's vibrato represented an ongoing tradition of vibrato use in the German violin school: 'The precise extent to which Joachim typified or influenced the use of vibrato in his time remains a source of controversy.'³⁷⁶ During much of his career, Joachim undoubtedly influenced vibrato practices of those within his circle who aspired to his aesthetic ideals. For example, Marie Soldat-Roeger, Joachim's favourite pupil, applies vibrato to a similar degree as Joachim in her c.1926 recordings (see 'Recorded Evidence' below). While Leopold Auer, who also studied with Joachim, espoused the importance of a selective application of vibrato, and even insisted on it in his teaching (see page 70 and 71 below), he tended to use vibrato more frequently than Joachim. Clearly, Joachim exerted much less influence,

³⁷⁶ Hurwitz, 'So Klingt Wien,' 51.

particularly during the late nineteenth century, on the younger generation of violinists who followed the trend of continuous vibrato.

To bolster his case, Hurwitz sites Styra Avin's discussion of the improbability of selective vibrato use by Joachim and others of the German violin school. Avins opines:

There is a school of thinking that calls for using vibrato sparsely in Brahms's music, based on the supposition that Joseph Joachim, Brahms's favourite violinist, played essentially without vibrato, using it as an ornament. The assumption is that Joachim followed the recommendations set out in Louis Spohr's *Violinschule* (1832), which call for saving the effect for notes of long duration, or those marked by a *sforzando* or an accent, or in passionate passages, or wherever a singer would use it. There can be no doubt that Joachim used less vibrato than modern violinists do, *but we will have an extremely difficult time obtaining a clear picture of just how much or how little that means* [my italics]. For one thing, accents, passionate passages, and long notes make up quite a large part of many a composition. The entire *Kol Nedrei* by Max Bruch, dedicated to Robert Hausmann, one of Brahms's favourite cellists, is such a piece.³⁷⁷

Clearly, as Avins suggests, written documents such as Louis Spohr's treatise (and by implication Joachim and Andreas Moser's treatise of 1905), can only provide a theoretical framework for vibrato use within the German violin school. As Neal Peres Da Costa has shown, the assumption that contemporaneous theory and practice align throughout musical history is both erroneous and

³⁷⁷ Styra Avins, "Performing Brahms's Music: Clues from His Letters," in Musgrave and Sherman, eds., *Performing Brahms*, 27.

dangerous.³⁷⁸ While Avins concurs that Joachim may have vibrated less than performers of today, she nevertheless goes on to cite an example of Joachim's frequent use of vibrato. Avins refers to the English pianist Fanny Davies (1861-1934) account of a rehearsal in 1887 of Brahms's C minor Piano Trio Op. 101 by Brahms, Joachim and the cellist Robert Hausmann (1852-1909). Davies recalls that the F minor section of the second movement 'was passionate, as the music demands, and played vibrato in contrast with what had gone before.'³⁷⁹ Yet Davies' remark requires clarification. The 'passionate' passage Davies refers to lasts 20 bars from bars 43 to 63, before the material 'that had gone before' returns. Davies does not specifically state whether Joachim and Hausmann used vibrato on all or the majority of notes throughout this section, or only on a select few notes in each phrase. It is possible then that even an infrequent use of vibrato during this passage may have created sufficient contrast as to prompt Davies reaction. Given the spectrogram evidence of Joachim's vibrato use in the passionate passages in his *Romance* in C (Fig. 201, 202b and Table. 2) it is unlikely he vibrated on every single note, but rather on several notes in each phrase. For example, during the section marked *espressivo* in his *Romance* (bars 88 to 97), and similarly in the *con fuoco* passages from bars 61 to 71 and 123 to 126, he uses vibrato on the majority of longer notes in the phrase, but much less on the shorter notes such as the quaver and quaver triplets (Ex. 201).³⁸⁰ Importantly, the vibrato is still narrow and less prominent in the sound than the vibrato commonly employed by players of today. It is highly plausible then that

³⁷⁸ Neal Peres Da Costa, *Off the Record*, 159.

³⁷⁹ Avins, "Performing Brahms's Music: Clues from His Letters," in Musgrave and Sherman, eds., *Performing Brahms*, 27.

³⁸⁰ Clearly, while the marking *espressivo* may have generally prompted more frequent application of vibrato in performance, in Joachim's *Romance* this does not necessarily occur in all passages with this marking. See the opening of Joachim's *Romance* for example (Ex. 4).

during the *espressivo* passage in the C minor Piano Trio his use was similar—he used vibrato on the majority, or all of the longer notes, but applied vibrato less frequently, or not at all, on the shorter notes. The only thing clear from Davies’ recollection is that Joachim and Hausmann *did* use vibrato during this section, and that this use was ‘in contrast to what had gone before’ (bars 1 to 43). Plainly, what is uncertain from Davies’ comments is the extent to which vibrato was employed. It is not implausible to deduce from Davies’ description that no vibrato, or very little, was used from bars 1 to 43. All things considered, her description tells us no more than that Joachim applied vibrato more frequently in passages of expressive intensity—the premise of which entirely aligns with written evidence and other aforementioned early recordings from this era.

Returning to Hurwitz’s article, two sources of anecdotal evidence are given, seemingly crucial to his argument that Joachim and artists associated with the German violin school did not use vibrato selectively but rather in a more continuous fashion. The first is a description by Imogen Holst (1907-1984) of the playing style of musicians involved in the 1918 premiere performance of Gustav Holst’s *The Planets*:

At the time when *The Planets* was first performed [1918], many of the distinguished solo string players in England had studied in Germany when they were young; they had listened to the Joachim Quartet playing Brahms, and they had handed down to their own pupils the tradition they had learnt. In that tradition, an *espressivo* rising phrase such as the Largo in Venus would have meant *molto* vibrato, and portamento at each shift of position.³⁸¹

³⁸¹ Imogen Holst, *The Music of Gustav Holst and Holst’s Music Reconsidered* (London: Oxford University Press, 1951, rev. 1984), 144, in Hurwitz, “So Klingt Wien,” 50.

Importantly, this statement was published in 1983, some 65 years after *The Planets* premiere—at which time Imogen Holst was only 11 years old. Therefore, it is highly probable that her comment is a general statement about solo string players in England around 1918, rather than an astute and vivid recollection of the playing style of the violinists who performed at the concert. Furthermore, these string players, she claims, studied in Germany when they were young (and not necessarily with Joachim—who they evidently heard). Hence, many years may have elapsed since their early study, during which time they were undoubtedly exposed to the culture of continuous vibrato that was widespread by 1918. Certainly it is plausible that in the tradition of the German violin school to which Holst refers, passages marked *espressivo* might be played with a more frequently applied vibrato. As discussed above, this occurs at times in Joachim’s performance of his *Romance*. However, it is impossible to determine just *how much* vibrato is implied by Holst’s use of the term ‘molto vibrato.’

Hurwitz also cites the English pedagogue Alfred Gibson (1849-1924), who studied and played with Joachim. Referring to vibrato, Gibson stated in 1896 that ‘I agree with its [vibratos] very free use. All the best players use it freely.’³⁸² Again, it is difficult to interpret the real significance and meaning of this statement when removed from the context of the time. How much vibrato does ‘freely’ indicate? One might say Joachim uses vibrato ‘freely’ in that he employed it whenever he deemed it appropriate. Possibly, at the time of this statement Gibson’s aesthetic ideals of vibrato use were not in harmony with Joachim’s more selective use. Conceivably, Gibson preferred the playing of Ysaÿe or Kreisler—possibly to whom he was referring when he mentions ‘the best players.’ Importantly, the statement

³⁸² Hurwitz, “So Klingt Wien,” 52.

does not indicate, as Hurwitz implies, that Joachim and other artists of the German violin school vibrated continuously. Rather, it highlights the problems of interpreting with our modern sensibilities the true meaning of evidence written during a different era. And as we will see, recorded evidence paints quite a different picture.

Recorded Evidence

Historical written texts highlight two distinct styles of vibrato during the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The narrow, selectively applied vibrato of players associated with the German violin school stands in contrast to the wider, more frequently applied vibrato that began to emerge from the 1880s and was increasingly used in the first decades of the twentieth century. However, to ascertain the frequency with which players associated with the German violin school used vibrato, a more detailed analysis of their recordings is imperative. These are the five 1903 recordings of its principal exponent Joseph Joachim (1831-1907) and the seven c.1926 recordings of his favorite student, Marie Soldat-Roeger (1863-1955). Soldat-Roeger studied with Joachim from 1879-1882 and was hailed as having played in a style very similar to Joachim's. Reviews of her performances frequently commented that her playing style represented the 'Classical School' or the 'Joachim School.'³⁸³ For example, in 1888 the *Musical Times* published the following remarks about her performance of Brahms's Violin Concerto: 'Her method and style are those of her master, who must have found it an easy task to direct the studies of a young lady

³⁸³ For a more detailed discussion of these reviews and critical perception of her career see Brown "The Decline of the 19th-Century German School of Violin Playing," <http://chase.leeds.ac.uk/article/the-decline-of-the-19th-century-german-school-of-violin-playing-clive-brown/> (accessed 10 Sept 2013), and David Milsom, "Practice and Principle," 42.

so highly gifted with musical feeling and intelligence.³⁸⁴ Previous to Joachim she studied with Augustus Pott, (a pupil of Spohr); therefore she had a close connection to the ‘founding father’ of the German violin school.³⁸⁵ To a lesser extent the two 1920 recordings of Leopold Auer (1845-1930), a pupil of Joachim’s from 1861-1863, are also representative of this style of playing (Table 1). Other solo recordings of artists who spent the majority of their performing careers in the nineteenth century, but who do not necessarily have a direct connection to Joachim, such as Arnold Rosé, also evidence a similar style of vibrato use. In addition, recordings of chamber ensembles that had an association with Joachim and the German violin school such as the Klingler String Quartet, or those whose playing demonstrates other aspects of nineteenth-century performance style,³⁸⁶ such as the Gewandhaus, Brüder-Post, Bohemian, and Grete Eweler String Quartets, give further evidence of this style of playing.

Artist	Work	Year Recorded
Joseph Joachim	J.S. Bach, <i>Bourée</i> from Partita BWV 1002 J.S. Bach, <i>Adagio</i> from Sonata BWV 1001 Brahms, <i>Hungarian Dance</i> No. 1 Joachim, <i>Romance</i> in C major	1903
Marie Soldat-Roeger	Spohr, <i>Adagio</i> from Concerto No. 9 Beethoven, <i>Romance</i> in F major Mozart, <i>Violin Concerto</i> K. 219 (i) Schumann, <i>Abendlied</i> J. S. Bach, <i>Air of the G string</i> (Wilhelmj) J. S. Bach, <i>Preludio</i> from Partita BWV 1006 J. S. Bach, <i>Largo</i> from Sonata BWV 1005	c.1926
Leopold Auer	Brahms, <i>Hungarian Dance</i> No. 1 Tchaikovsky, <i>Melodie</i> Op. 42	1920

Table 1.

³⁸⁴ *The Musical Times*, 29 (1888), 218. See Brown, “The Decline of the 19th-Century German School of Violin Playing.”

³⁸⁵ Milsom, “Evidence and Incentive: Perspectives upon Joseph Joachim’s Performing Practices and the Viability of Stylistic Revival,” *University of Leeds AHRC Fellowships in the Creative and Performing Arts Scheme* (June 2007), under “19th Century String Music,” http://www.leeds.ac.uk/music/dm-ahrc/Joseph_Joachim_Article.shtml (accessed 10 May 2012).

³⁸⁶ For example the frequent use of tempo modification, rhythmic alteration, portamento, or a seemingly ‘ad hoc’ approach to the precision of ensemble.

Limitations: Poor Recorded Sound

In his article, Hurwitz cites Carl Seashore's research in the 1920s and 30s,³⁸⁷ which suggests that 'the vibrato is always heard [in recording playback] in a much smaller extent than it is in physical tone.'³⁸⁸ In other words, early wax-cylinder and disc recordings (before the advent of electrical recording in 1927) did not adequately register the vibrato oscillations of the artist, while the background noise on playback may have a further masking effect. For this reason Hurwitz infers that early recordings cannot be used to validate the notion of selective vibrato.³⁸⁹ Uncertainty clearly exists about the audibility of vibrato on historical recordings, such as those by Joachim and other artists of the German violin school (for further discussion see 'Solo Recordings,' p. 48 below).

Deterioration of Vibrato

In addition to potential limitations of poor recorded sound on pre-electric recordings, the possibility that vibrato action may deteriorate with age must also be considered. All of the solo artists associated with the German violin school who recorded were in the twilight of their careers at the time. Joachim was 72 years old, Soldat-Roeger 63 and Auer 75. Flesch notes that vibrato deterioration is an 'unavoidable tendency in old age if no steps are taken in good time to counteract it by means of gymnastic exercises.'³⁹⁰ He recalls that Joachim's hands

³⁸⁷ Hurwitz, "So Klingt Wien," 53.

³⁸⁸ Carl Seashore, *Psychology of Music* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1938), 45-46.

³⁸⁹ Hurwitz, "So Klingt Wien," 54.

³⁹⁰ Flesch, *The Memoirs of Carl Flesch*, 51.

'in his last years became gouty and stiff.'³⁹¹ J. A. Fuller-Maitland writes of Joachim in 1905 that

in recent years the top joint of the little finger of the left hand has become physically weakened and that occasionally it fails to obey the brain's command in the stopping of some very high note; but this occurrence is extremely rare.³⁹²

Moser, Joachim's biographer, also refers to 'the gradual diminishing of his physical strength' in his latter years.³⁹³ Avins suggests that Joachim may have used more vibrato in his prime.³⁹⁴ In 1901, Joachim declined the opportunity to record a Spohr concerto, writing 'my staccato, as wanted for his compositions, has left me.'³⁹⁵ However, in his memoirs, William Whitehouse suggests that Joachim's staccato still functioned adequately:

I think with his usual modesty he under-rated his power in this respect, for when playing the Octett [sic.] of Mendelssohn with him I remember distinctly how beautifully he executed the staccato passage in the Scherzo.³⁹⁶

While Joachim's up-bow staccato may not have been suffering by 1901 as much as he led people to believe, it is difficult to ascertain whether physical deterioration restricted his vibrato when he made recordings in 1903.

³⁹¹ Flesch, *The Memoirs of Carl Flesch*, 30.

³⁹² J.A. Fuller-Maitland, *Joseph Joachim* (London and New York, 1905), 32.

³⁹³ Moser, *Geschichte des Violinspiels*, 267.

³⁹⁴ William Weinert, "In Review: What Brahms Heard," *American Choral Review* 46, No. 2 (Summer-Fall 2004): 7.

³⁹⁵ Joachim to Sir Charles Villiers Stanford (in English), Charlottenburg, March 25, 1901, in *Letters From and To Joseph Joachim*, ed. and trans Nora Bickley (New York: Vienna House, 1972), 461.

³⁹⁶ William E. Whitehouse, *Recollections of a Violoncellist* (London: Horace Marshall & Son, 1930), 15.

To clarify this issue, possible ways in which physical deterioration may effect vibrato must be considered. Firstly, as any observer who has witnessed an aging string player will testify, vibrato commonly becomes slower and wider in older age. This is evident for example in the 70 year-old Jenő Hubay's (1858-1937) 1929 recording of *Czardajenelet 12*, where the vibrato is clearly extremely slow and wide.³⁹⁷ In contrast, Joachim, Auer and Soldat-Roeger's recordings provide evidence of a very fast and narrow vibrato, suggesting that their vibrato had not been affected by similar physical deterioration. Secondly, it is also possible that stiffer finger joints may constrict the oscillation of the finger-pad on the string, making the vibrato narrower (but not necessarily faster), and the action more difficult to control. Yet, the narrow, fast vibrato heard on recordings by Joachim, Auer and Soldat-Roeger is typical of the vibrato used by many other artists on early recordings.³⁹⁸ Joachim's vibrato also shows a range of speed and width within a generally narrow oscillation, suggesting that he had the physical ability to control and vary his vibrato.³⁹⁹ Furthermore, probably to reflect the gypsy style he uses distinctly more vibrato in his recording of Brahms's *Hungarian Dance No. 1* than in his own *Romance*. Therefore, it is apparent that the more conservative vibrato use in his *Romance* (see discussion below) was not a result of physical incapacity. Soldat-Roeger also shows a highly skilful

³⁹⁷ *Important Early Sound Recordings; Violinists: Vol. 1*, SYMPOSIUM 1071, track 12). Hubay's very slow and wide vibrato can be seen in a short video clip dating from 1937, only a short time before his death at the age of 79: [youtube.com/watch?v=zZm9x7q_JX-Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zZm9x7q_JX-Y). Hubay apparently made earlier recordings in 1910 for the *First Hungarian Record Company* that were reputedly reissued on the 'Masters of the Bow' series (MB1033). At the time of writing I have been unable to find this recording and there appears to be some doubt as to whether it was in fact ever reissued. Nevertheless, it is highly unlikely that Hubay's vibrato was as wide and slow when in his prime.

³⁹⁸ For example, in the respective 1912 and 1909 recordings of Tivadar Nachéz and John Dunn. See SYMPOSIUM 1071, tracks 12 and 13. These are just two of many examples from early recordings.

³⁹⁹ For example, passages containing a slightly wider vibrato occur very deliberately, and even on smaller note values (Figure 202b) and the width of the vibrato is deliberately increased or decreased during longer notes (Figure 202c and 202d).

control of width and speed suggesting that any narrow vibrato was very deliberate. Importantly, she was younger than both Joachim and Auer, making it much less likely that her narrow vibrato was a result of restricted movement. Furthermore, her playing style was commonly reported to be just like that of Joachim's, implying that Joachim's vibrato was similarly narrow and selectively applied throughout his career.

Furthermore, given that the narrow and selective vibrato heard on these recordings reflects descriptions in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century written sources, it is highly unlikely that Joachim's, Auer's and Soldat-Roeger's vibrato was merely a result of physical degeneration. If they did suffer from any physical impediment at the time of recording it appears not to have affected their vibrato significantly.

Although Soldat-Roeger (and possibly other violinists associated with the German violin school, such as Klingler and Auer) may have used more vibrato in later years in response to the general trend, they nevertheless exercised a highly selective placement of vibrato, which was far less prominent than the majority of their contemporaries.⁴⁰⁰ Thus, even if Joachim were to have used more vibrato in his prime, the frequency of his vibrato would very likely still be conservative in comparison to practices of Ysaÿe, Kreisler and later artists. It is therefore fair to assume that these early recordings accurately represent the vibrato practices of these artists throughout their careers. Significantly, in Joachim's case, this probably provides a window to the practices of the German violin school as far back as the 1830s.

⁴⁰⁰ Although Auer's famous students such as Heifetz, Milstein, Zimbalist, and Seidel all played in a style more aligned with the Franco-Belgian violin school (i.e. a continuously applied vibrato), Auer clearly did not adopt the aesthetics of this style to the same extent in his own playing.

Acoustic versus Electrical

Rosé's recordings of Bach's *Air* from the Orchestral Suite BWV 1068, made in 1909 (acoustic) and 1927 (electrical), present a valuable opportunity to compare the audibility of vibrato between these two recording mediums. The beginning of the electrical recording era in the early 1920s marked a significant change in the quality of recorded sound.⁴⁰¹ Today, pre-electrical recordings are often dismissed as inaccurately representing of the artist's playing due to poor sound quality. Spectrograms may therefore be useful in determining the extent to which early recordings give an accurate representation of the recorded sound.

A spectrogram is a graph that maps the frequency of sound vibrations (Hertz) across time (Seconds). The lowest frequency 'sound-line' at the bottom of the vertical axis represents the fundamentals of the pitch while the sound lines above represent the upper partials. Thus, a monophonic melody is represented on a spectrogram as several sound-lines 'stacked' upon one another. The sound-lines very accurately reflect any oscillation in pitch. A flat horizontal sound-line represents a non-vibrated tone, while a wavy sound-line (that may vary in amplitude), represents a vibrated tone.⁴⁰² It is often easier to see the contour of the sound-line in the upper partials of the spectrogram. Consequently, the upper partials can reveal that vibrato was used even when the fundamental tone appears relatively flat. Thus, a small degree of error is inevitable in the visual transcription of vibrato from spectrogram to annotated score. I have erred on the side of caution, noting even slight tremors in the sound-lines on the spectrogram

⁴⁰¹ Peres Da Costa, *Off The Record*, 8-9.

⁴⁰² Unevenness of bow pressure may at times also cause the sound line not to be perfectly flat. However, this tends to produce an irregular, flatter undulation in the sound-line and not the regular, rounded waves that vibrato generates.

as vibrato in the annotated scores. Overall however, it is fair to say that spectrograms provide a very accurate representation of vibrato in the recorded sound.

Importantly, spectrogram analyses of Rosé's two recordings provide evidence of a similar frequency of vibrato use (Fig. 197).⁴⁰³ This suggests that Rosé maintained a nineteenth-century aesthetic in his latter years despite the prevalence of constant vibrato that developed during this time. Contemporaneous violinists evidently viewed Rosé as belonging to an old-fashioned epoch. Flesch considered Rosé's vibrato 'noble if a little thin,'⁴⁰⁴ indicating that he considered a slightly wider, more prominent vibrato as ideal.⁴⁰⁵ Tully Potter remarked that Rosé's 1927/8 electrical recordings 'find him phrasing more stiffly' and his renowned accuracy of intonation 'under threat from old age.'⁴⁰⁶ Possibly, Rosé's 1927/28 string quartet recordings, such as that of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 18 No. 4, reveal a slightly more sparing and subtle vibrato that is apparent, for example, in his earlier solo recordings of Sarasate's *Habanera* (1902), Svendsen's *Romance* (1909), Wieniawski's D major Polonaise (1909/10) and the Andante from Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E minor (1910).⁴⁰⁷ Milsom suggests this may be because 'Rosé's quartet playing was comparatively puritanical and that he reserved the vibrato ornament mostly

⁴⁰³ The aural analyses conducted in this study represent my subjective opinion. Importantly, the aural annotations of vibrato were conducted *before* spectrogram analysis was used to avoid any subconscious influence.

⁴⁰⁴ Flesch, *The Memoirs of Carl Flesch*, 51.

⁴⁰⁵ Tully Potter also refers to Rosé's vibrato as a 'pure finger vibrato.' Sleeve notes to *Arnold Rosé and the Rosé String Quartet*, Biddulph Recordings, LAB 056-57, 1992, 9.

⁴⁰⁶ Potter, sleeve notes to *Arnold Rosé and the Rosé String Quartet*, Biddulph Recordings, LAB 056-57, 1992, 9.

⁴⁰⁷ See *The Great Violinists – Volume XXIV; Arnold Rosé*, SYMPOSIUM 1371, tracks 1, 3, 10 and 17 respectively.

for solo playing.⁴⁰⁸ However, far from becoming stiff and narrower in the 1927 recording of Bach's *Air*, the spectrograms in Figures 198a and 198b show that the width of Rosé's vibrato remained largely the same as on his 1909 recording.



Figure 197. Bach, *Air* from Orchestral Suite BWV 1068. Comparison of vibrato use, using spectrogram analysis of Rosé's 1909 and 1927 recordings. [1909 recording, Track 1: 00:00-03:04; 1927 recording, Track 2: 00:00-04:39].

⁴⁰⁸ Milsom, "Practice and Principle," 45.

Importantly, a comparison of aural and spectrogram analyses of the two recordings shows a similar pattern and frequency of discrepancies (Fig. 199 and 200). Firstly, in the aural analyses of both recordings the vibrato is more difficult to detect on many of the smaller note values, such as the semiquavers and demisemiquavers.⁴⁰⁹ Secondly, the vibrato on smaller note values (for example, in bars 13 and 14 in both recordings) is at times more constant than was detected during aural analyses (circled areas in Figs 198a and b). Thirdly, during longer note values in both recordings (for example the minims in bars 1, 3 and 4) the vibrato is generally only audible towards the middle or end of the note, while the spectrograms show that the vibrato sometimes begins, albeit very subtly, soon after the beginning of the note. An exception is bar 13 in the 1909 recording where the late emergence of the vibrato in the aural analysis (on the C-natural) is the same in the spectrogram. Overall, the vibrato appears no less audible on the 'poorer' quality of the 1909 acoustic recording than on the later 1927 electrical recording. The majority of vibrated and non-vibrated tones are clearly audible. This makes a strong case for the validity of pre-electrical recordings as evidence of vibrato use.

⁴⁰⁹ The uneven line in the spectrogram during some of these smaller notes, for example in bar 2, beats 2 and 3 and correspondingly 24.0 to 28 seconds in Fig. 198a and 26.5 to 30.0 seconds in Fig. 198b most likely represents a subtle vibrato action but may also be caused by an unevenness of bow pressure. These notes have nevertheless been marked as being played with vibrato in Figs. 199 and 200.

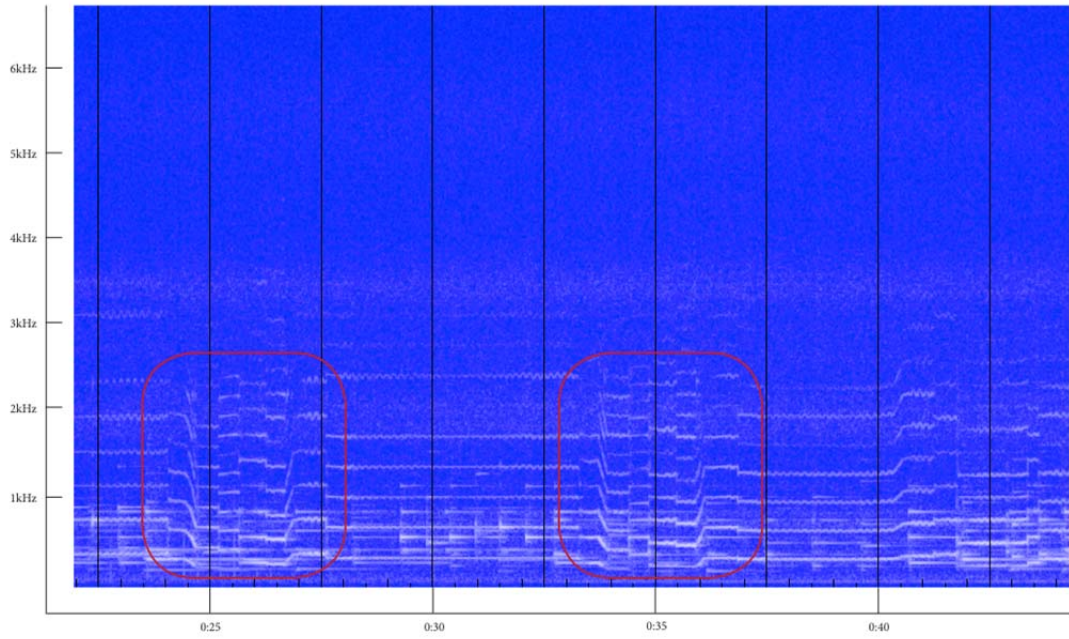


Figure 198a. Bach, *Air* from Orchestral Suite BWV 1068, bars 3 to 5, Rosé, 1909.

[Track 1: 00:22-00:44].

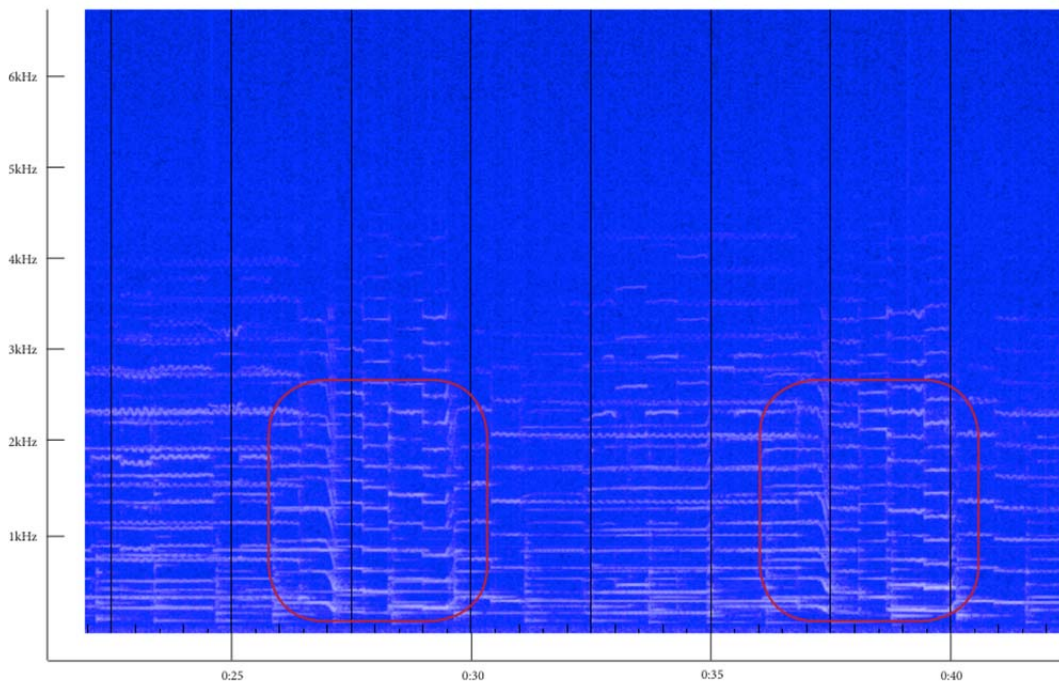


Figure 198b. Bach, *Air* from Orchestral Suite BWV 1068, Rosé, bars 3 to 5, 1927.

[Track 2: 00:22-00:42].

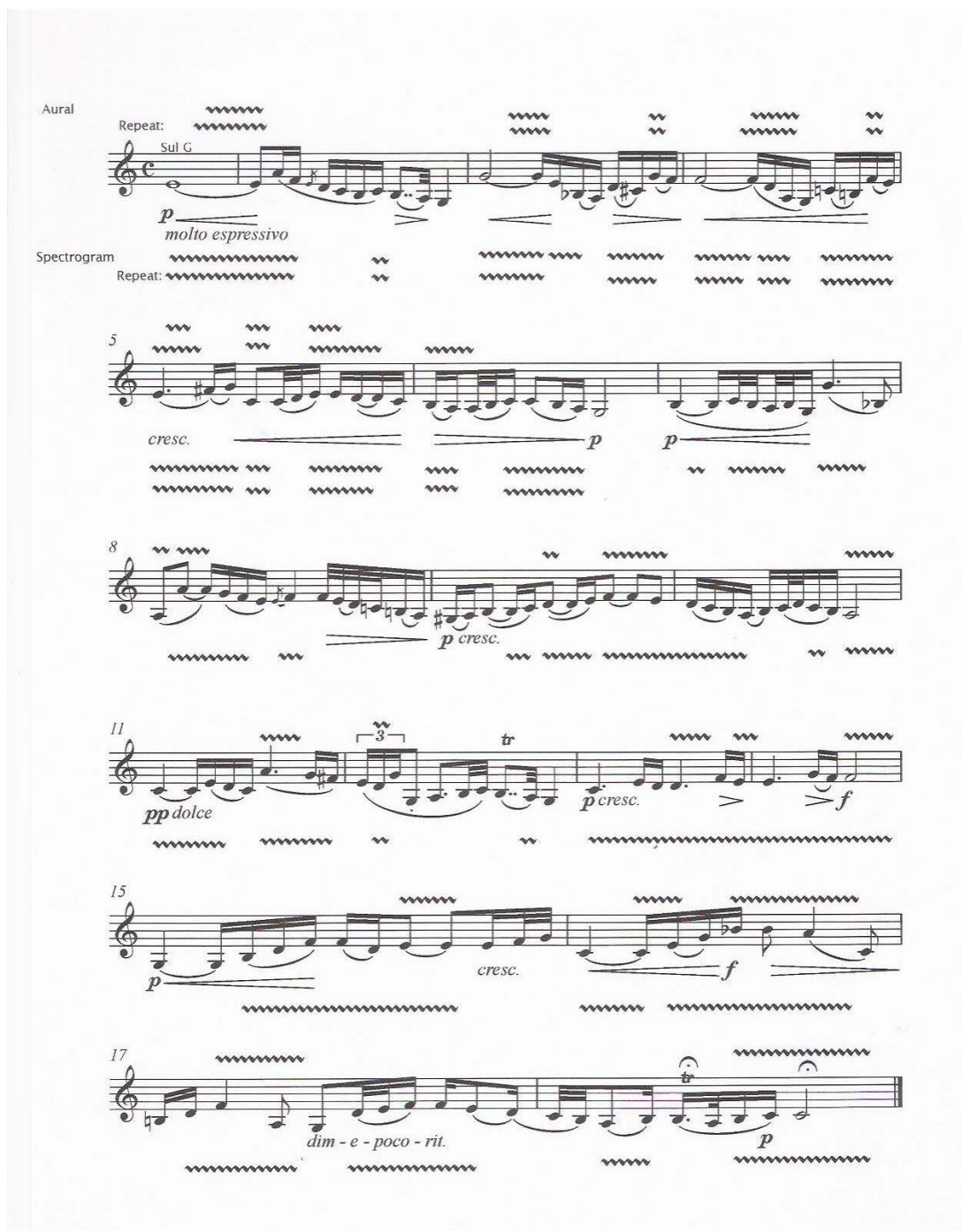


Figure 199. Bach, *Air* from Orchestral Suite BWV 1068, Rosé, 1927. Comparison of spectrogram and aural analysis. [Track 2: 00:00-04:39].



Figure 200. Bach, *Air* from Orchestral Suite BWV 1068, Rosé, 1909. Comparison of spectrogram and aural analyses. [Track 1: 00:00-03:04].

Solo Recordings

Aural analyses of recordings of performers who were associated with the German violin school appear to reveal a predominant use of a fast, narrow vibrato that was applied selectively. However, due to the possible limitations of

pre-electric recordings (previously discussed), it may well be difficult to hear such features accurately. Spectrogram analysis is therefore very useful in providing a greater clarity in this area of investigation.

Comparisons between aural and spectrogram analyses reveal that vibrato is not always clearly audible on early recordings. Generally, it is more difficult to detect on smaller note values, or when the vibrato is extremely narrow. In the latter case, for example, when the vibrato begins very narrowly at the beginning of a long note, it is often not audible until the vibrato oscillation becomes wider, part way through the note.

Nevertheless, spectrograms clearly show that Joachim and Soldat-Roeger, and to a lesser extent Auer and Rosé, used a fast and narrow vibrato applied selectively (Figs. 201 and 209). In Joachim's recording of his *Romance* (recorded 1903) (Fig. 201):

- Spectrogram analysis reveals vibrato is more difficult to hear on notes of a quaver duration or shorter. On notes longer than a quaver, the majority of those with vibrato are clearly discernible (Table 2).⁴¹⁰ For example, in the passage from bars 61 to 68 vibrato on longer note values and stronger beats tends to be audible while on fleeting passing notes it is very difficult to detect.

	Aural	Spectrogram	Percentage of notes detected aurally %
<i>Total notes with vibrato</i>	64	114	56%
<i>Vibrato on notes longer than a quaver value</i>	53	71	75%
<i>Vibrato on notes of a quaver value or shorter</i>	11	43	26%

⁴¹⁰ Generally speaking, whether vibrato is detectable on 'shorter' note values depends on the tempo of the work concerned.

Table 2: Notes with vibrato in Joachim's *Romance* in C major.

- Throughout the *Romance* vibrato is used very selectively. For example in the first 38 bars, Joachim applies vibrato on 18 of the 83 notes (21%). An extended passage occurs with very little vibrato from bars 137 to 164 (Figure 202a). In other sections vibrato is more frequently applied though not constantly. For example, seemingly in response to the expressive poignancy of the E minor tonality, Joachim applies vibrato on smaller notes throughout bars 85 to 96 (Fig. 202b). Joachim generally applies vibrato on longer note values seemingly to enhance crescendos or beautify the tone, but expressive highlighting through vibrato also occurs on shorter note values such as the quaver G-naturals in bars 24, 30, 34 and 36. Overall, vibrato is used on 104 notes out of a total of 616 notes in the *Romance* (17%). If we do not include note values of semiquavers or smaller (totalling 194) on which vibrato is very difficult or impossible to apply, the percentage is 25%. Clearly, the vast majority of notes in the work are played without vibrato.
- Joachim's vibrato is predominantly very narrow and fast. His vibrato appears to be similar to the 'quivering' or 'tremulous' action described in many of the nineteenth-century violin treatises. On many notes this vibrato is barely aurally discernible (for example, bars 37 to 38, 43, 45 and 52). On other notes the vibrato is slightly wider and more easily audible (for example, bars 12 and 13).

- Notably, while treatises only speak of vibrato varying in speed, Joachim's vibrato frequently varies in width. Furthermore, often it is slightly wider in the middle of notes, for example in bars 12, 13, 17 and 23 (Fig. 202b). This contrasts significantly with the consistently wider vibrato of artists such as Ysaÿe and Kreisler (Figures 205 and 206 respectively). On longer note values, Joachim's vibrato often begins very narrowly and increases in width and speed throughout the note (and visa versa) (Figs. 202c and 202d).
- Joachim's vibrato at times sounds constantly applied from one note to the next. However, this occurs infrequently and only for a short succession of notes at any given time (bars 28 to 30, 63, 86, 104 to 105, 124 to 126 and 136 to 137).
- Joachim evidently adjusted his vibrato according to the musical period and style of the composition. While he vibrates more frequently in gypsy-style pieces, in the solo music of Bach he uses very little. This tendency is clear in his recording of the *Adagio* from the Solo Sonata BWV 1001 and the *Bourrée* from the Solo Partita BWV 1002.

(Aural)

Bewegt

dolce e espress. *cresc.*

(Spectrogram)

18

f *dim.* *p* *pp*

26

a Tempo

poco rit. *cresc.* *f* *p*

35

p *cresc.* *dim.*

43

p *p*

52

3 3

pp

57

cresc.

6

4ta Corda
3

f e con fuoco.

63

ff

3

73

dolce

3

cresc.

p

82

f

3

f

p

3

mf espress.

91



99

poco accel. al Tempo I.

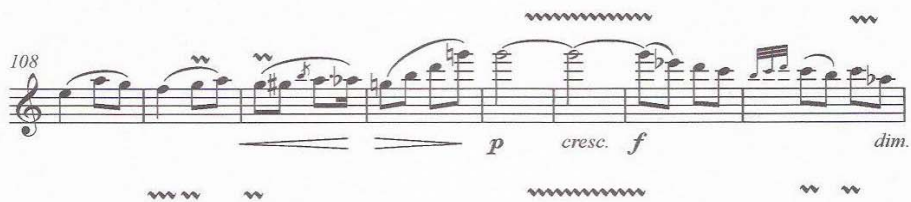
morendo e riten.

cres.



108

p cresc. f dim.



116

4ta Corda

dim.

f con fuoco



124

3za Corda

dim.

p f



133 *accel. al Tempo I.*
f dim. e riten. p cresc. ff

143 *p*

151 *4ta Corda*
3 3

159

167 *dolce assai*

Detailed description: This block contains five staves of musical notation. The first staff (measures 133-142) features a melodic line with various dynamics including *f dim. e riten. p*, *accel.*, *al Tempo I.*, *cresc.*, and *ff*. The second staff (measures 143-150) continues the melodic line with a *p* dynamic. The third staff (measures 151-158) includes a section marked *4ta Corda* with triplet markings (*3 3*). The fourth staff (measures 159-166) shows a melodic line with various articulations. The fifth staff (measures 167-171) is marked *dolce assai* and features a dense, rapid melodic passage.

172 *pp*

176 *8va*

Detailed description: This block contains two staves of musical notation. The first staff (measures 172-175) begins with a *pp* dynamic and features a melodic line with various articulations. The second staff (measures 176-180) features a melodic line with a *8va* marking, indicating an octave shift, and concludes with a final note.

Figure 201. Joachim, *Romance* in C, Joachim, 1903. Aural analysis (above) and spectrogram analysis (below). [Track 3: 00:00-03:45].

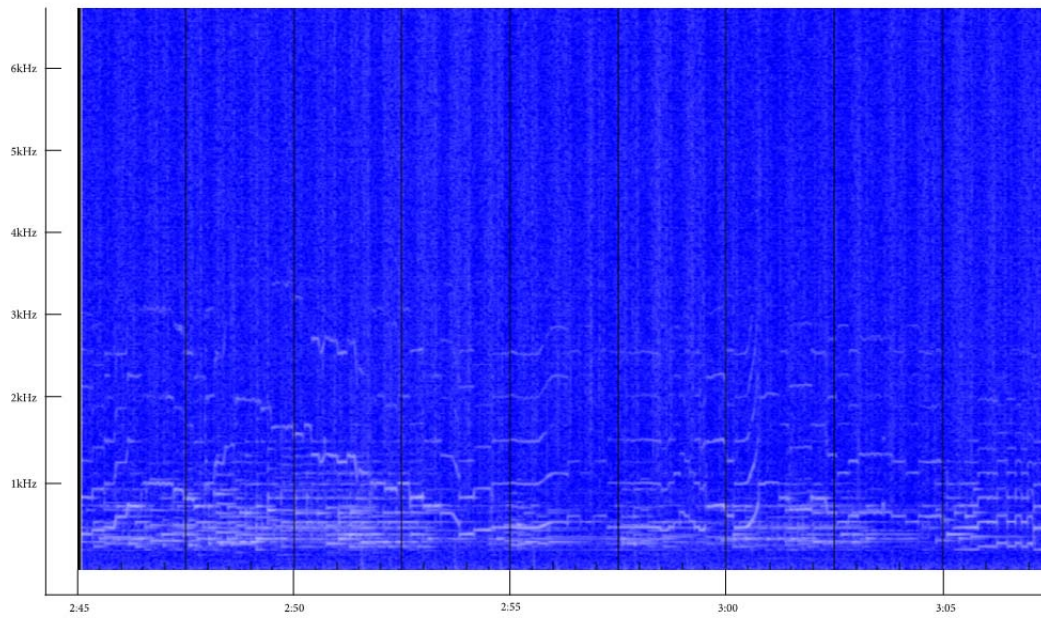


Figure 202a. Joachim, *Romance* in C, bars 137 to 156, Joachim (1903), showing little or no vibrato on most notes. [Track 3: 02:45-03:07].

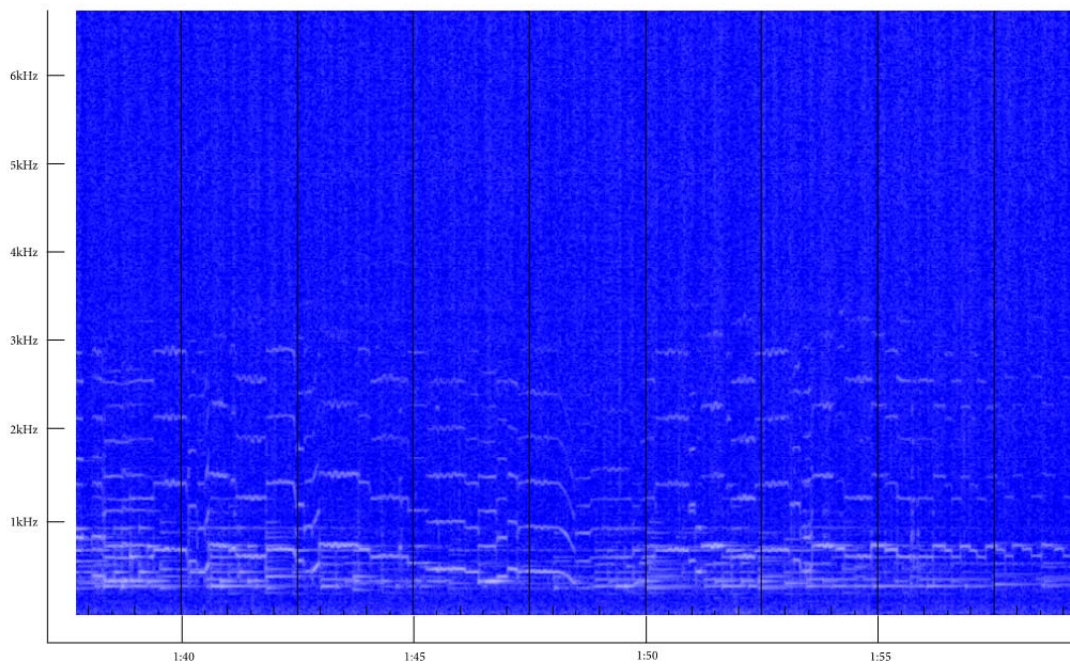


Figure 202b. Joachim, *Romance* in C, Joachim (1903), bars 84 to 100, showing more frequent use of vibrato to highlight minor tonality. [Track 3: 01:38-01:58].

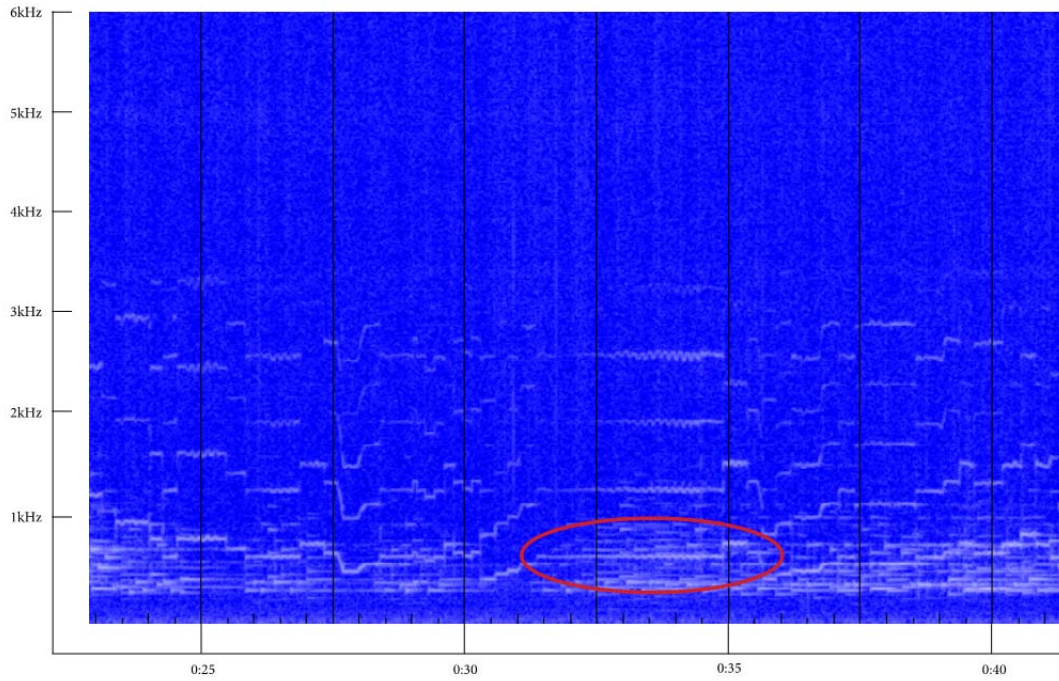


Figure 202c. Joachim, *Romance* in C, Joachim (1903), bars 20 to 37, showing increase in vibrato during long note. [Track 3: 00:22-00:42].

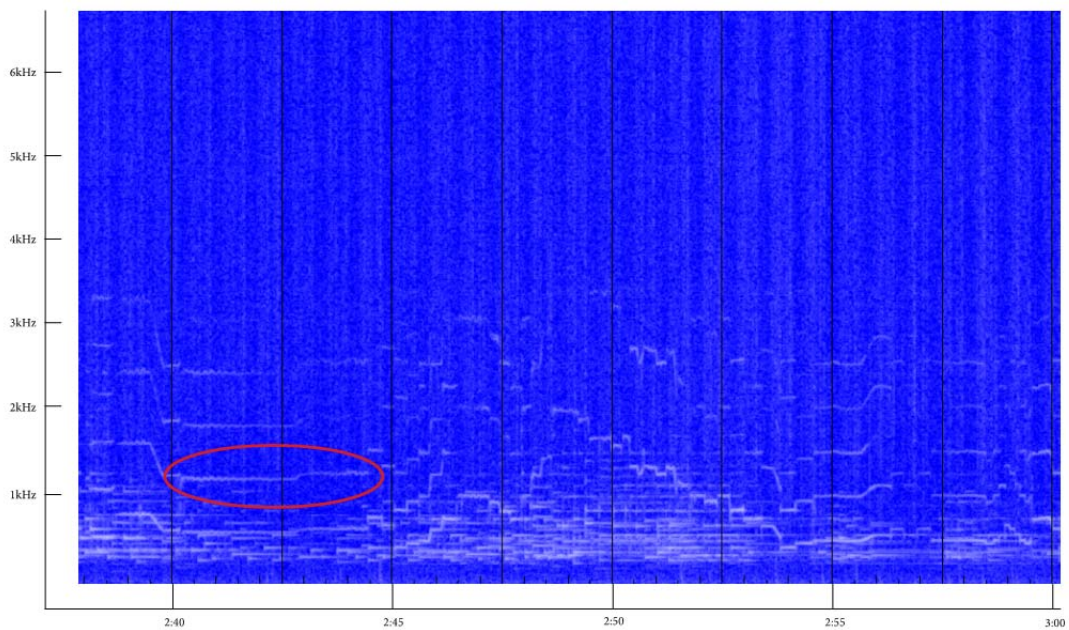


Figure 202d. Joachim, *Romance* in C, Joachim (1903), bars 133 to 151, showing decrease in vibrato during long note. [Track 3: 02:38-03:00].

Joachim's recording (1903) of Brahms's *Hungarian Dance* No. 1 shows a more frequent use of vibrato than in the *Romance*, most likely to match the gypsy style of the work (Fig. 203). In the first 48 bars a total of 35 notes received vibrato out of 72 notes in total (49%). In the first 48 bars, on notes longer than a quaver duration, my aural analysis revealed 26 tones with vibrato while the spectrogram shows that vibrato was used on 33, equalling a 78% detection rate. This detection rate is similar to the analysis of Joachim's recording of his *Romance* (73%). During this section, vibrato is only heard on the quavers in two instances, making the detection rate of 0% on notes shorter than a quaver's duration insignificant (Table 3).

	Aural	Spectrogram	Percentage of notes detected aurally %
<i>Total notes vibrated</i>	26	35	74%
<i>Vibrato on notes longer than a quaver value</i>	26	33	78%
<i>Vibrato on notes of a quaver value or shorter</i>	0	2	0%

Table 3. Notes with vibrato in Joachim's performance of Brahms's *Hungarian Dance* No. 1.

Due to its predominantly narrow amplitude (especially on the double stops), Joachim's vibrato is not a prominent feature of his sound; rather, it adds a subtle yet expressive urgency to the tone. This contrasts dramatically with Ysaÿe's recording (1912) of Brahms's *Hungarian Dance* No. 5 in which, during the dotted-crochet/quaver rhythm (similar to that of the *Hungarian Dance* No. 1),

vibrato occurs more constantly throughout the quavers (Fig. 206). Like Kreisler's vibrato heard on his recording (1924) of Bruch's Violin Concerto No. 1 (Fig. 208), Ysaÿe's vibrato is consistently wider in amplitude throughout, making it a prominent and fundamental feature of the sound.⁴¹¹ Dorottya Fabian supports this observation remarking that 'Ysaÿe's vibrato is more constant and continuous than Joachim's. The visual illustration [spectrogram] shows that Joachim plays certain longer notes without obvious vibrato. These readings corroborate Katz's aural analysis in 1999 and 2004 of Joachim's recordings of Brahms's pieces.'⁴¹² Furthermore, Ysaÿe's vibrato is also wide and prominent during double-stopped passages, a tendency that is evident in other recordings by Ysaÿe, such as in *Caprice Viennois* Op. 2 by Fritz Kreisler (recorded 1912).⁴¹³ In Auer's 1920 recording of Brahms's *Hungarian Dance* No. 1 vibrato is heard frequently and is slightly wider than Joachim's, although it is not as wide or as constant as Ysaÿe's (Fig. 205). Rosé's 1909 recording of Brahms's *Hungarian Dance* No. 5 also reveals a vibrato that is narrower and less frequent than Ysaÿe's. The vibrato is similar to Joachim's although it is slightly more frequent and varied in width (Fig. 207).

⁴¹¹ It must be noted, however, that Ysaÿe adjusted his vibrato to a certain degree according to the style of the music. For example, his vibrato is wider and more constant in his recording of Brahms's *Hungarian Dance* No. 5—most likely to characterize the gypsy style—than in his recording of Fauré's *Berceuse* Op. 16 or Schubert's *Ave Maria* Op. 52 No. 6. Nevertheless, in these latter recordings the vibrato, while at times very narrow in quieter phrases, is generally wider throughout the full duration of the note and more constantly applied than Joachim's. See Ysaÿe, *Complete Recordings*, SYMPOSIUM 1045, tracks 5 and 13.

⁴¹² Dorottya Fabian, 'The Recordings of Joachim, Ysaÿe and Sarasate in Light of Their Reception by Nineteenth-Century Critics,' *International Review of Aesthetics and Sociology of Music*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (Dec 2006), 189-211.

⁴¹³ Eugène Ysaÿe, *Complete Recordings*, SYMPOSIUM 1045, 1986 & 2002, track 11.

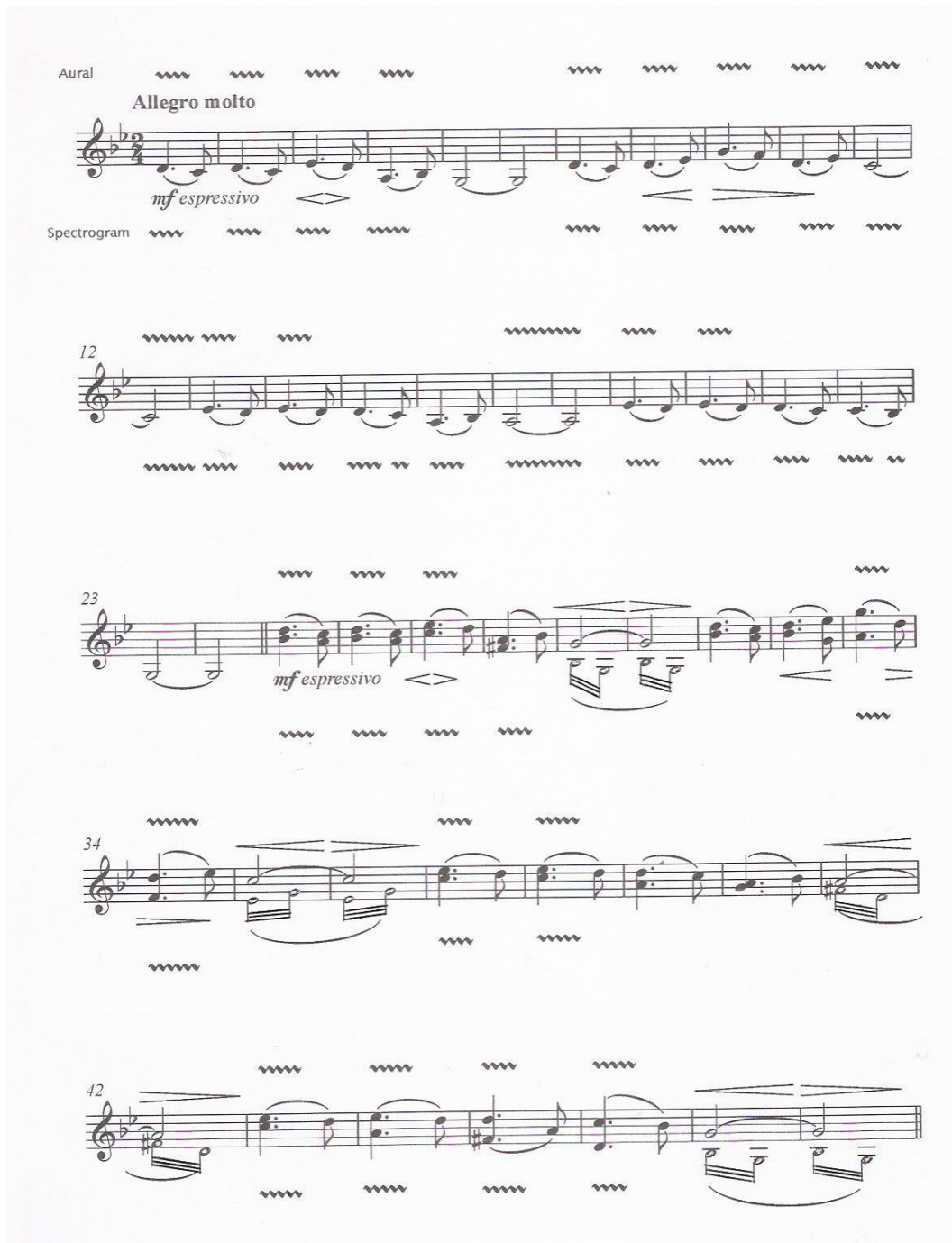


Figure 203. Brahms, *Hungarian Dance No. 1* (arranged Joachim), bars 1 to 48, Joachim (1903). [Track 4: 00:00-00:45].

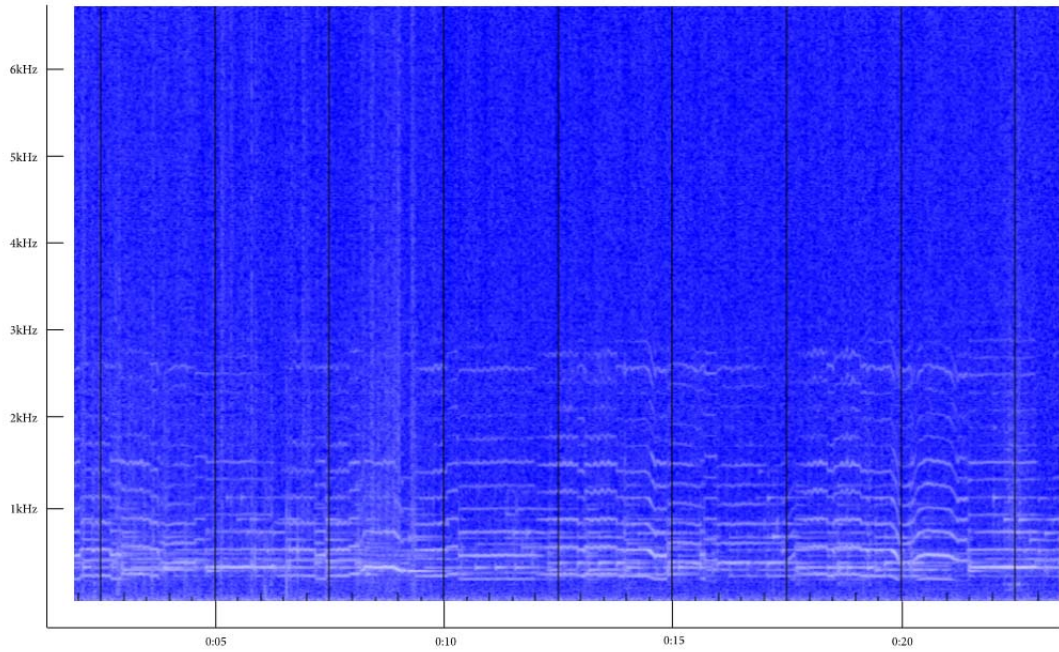


Figure 204. Brahms, *Hungarian Dance No. 1*, bars 1 to 24, Joachim (1903). [Track 4: 00:00-00:23]

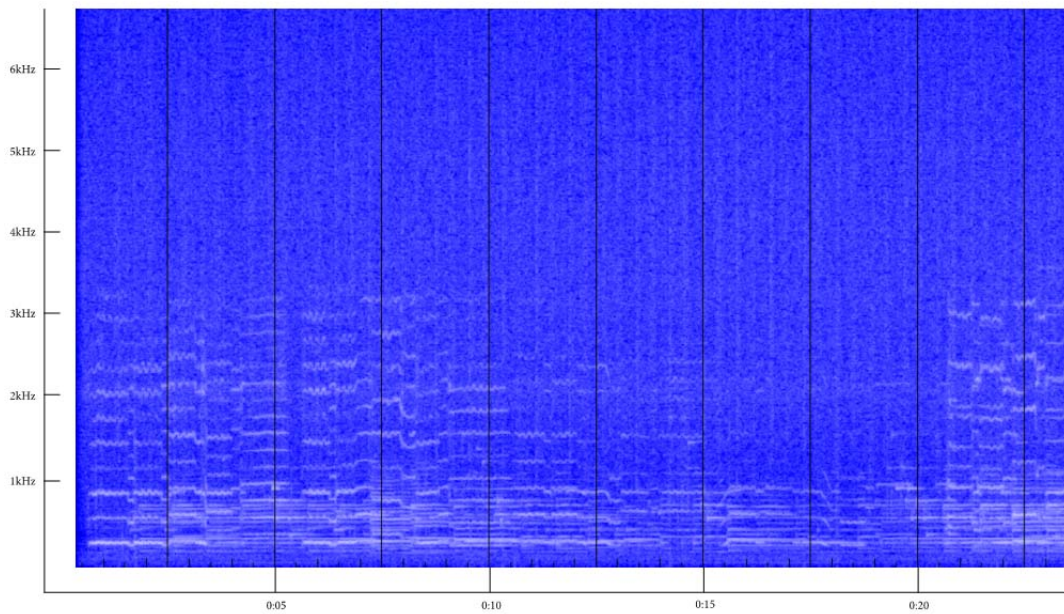


Figure 205. Brahms, *Hungarian Dance No. 1*, bars 1 to 28, Auer (1920). [Track 5: 00:00-00:23]

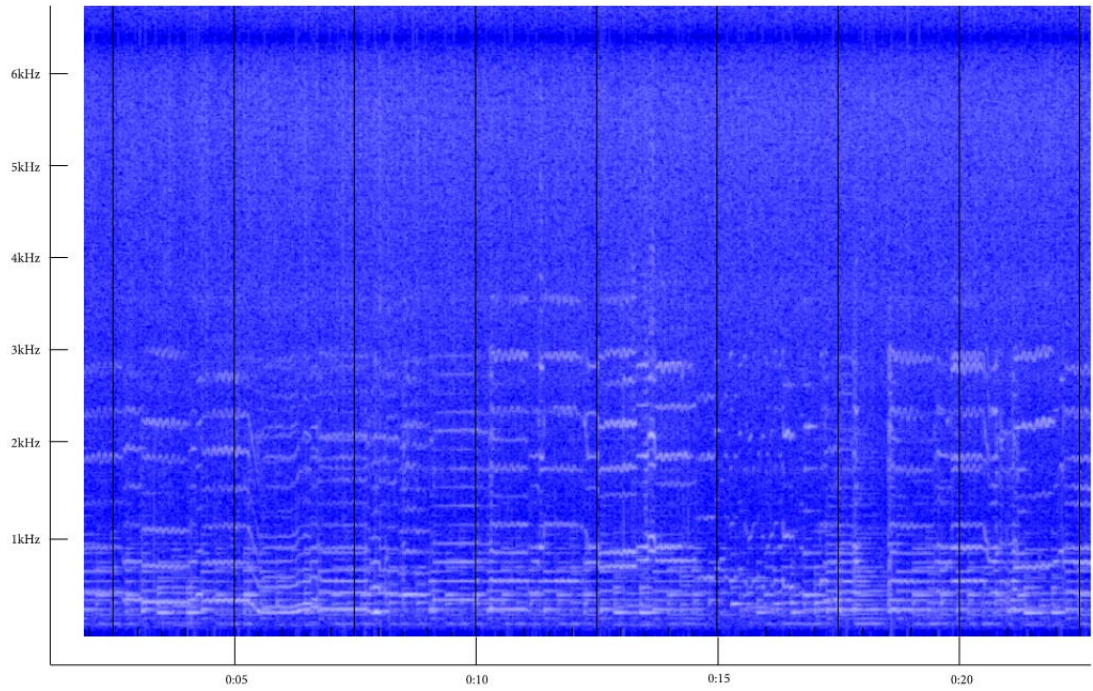


Figure 206. Brahms, *Hungarian Dance* No. 5, bars 1 to 21, Ysaÿe (1912). [Track 6: 00:00-00:24].

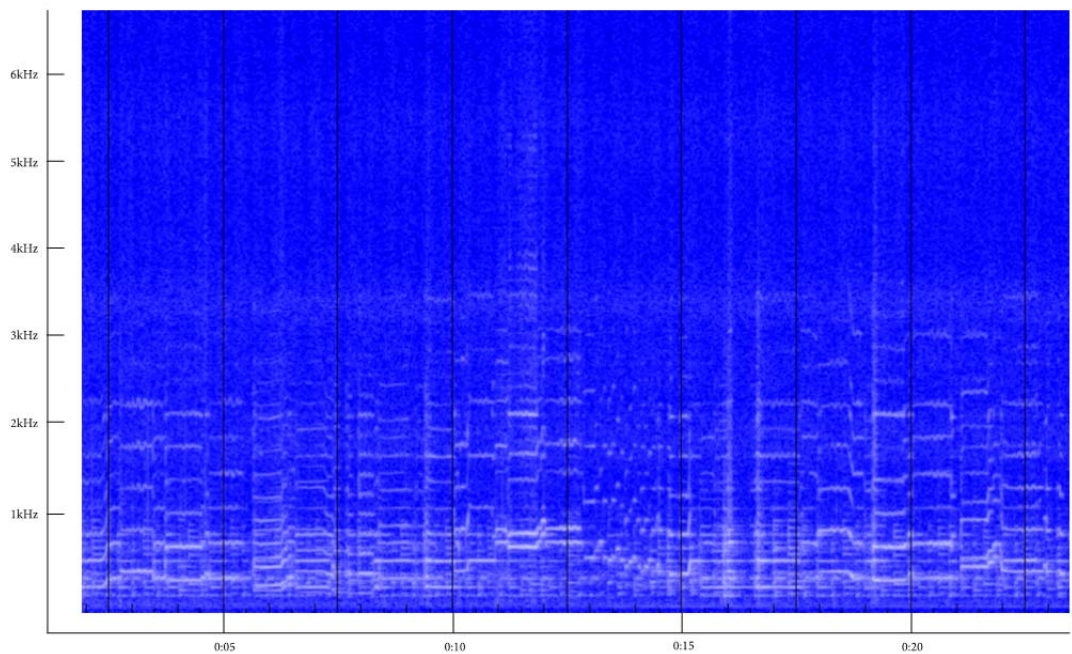


Figure 207. Brahms, *Hungarian Dance* No. 5, bars 1 to 21, Rosé (1909). [Track 7: 00:00-00:21].

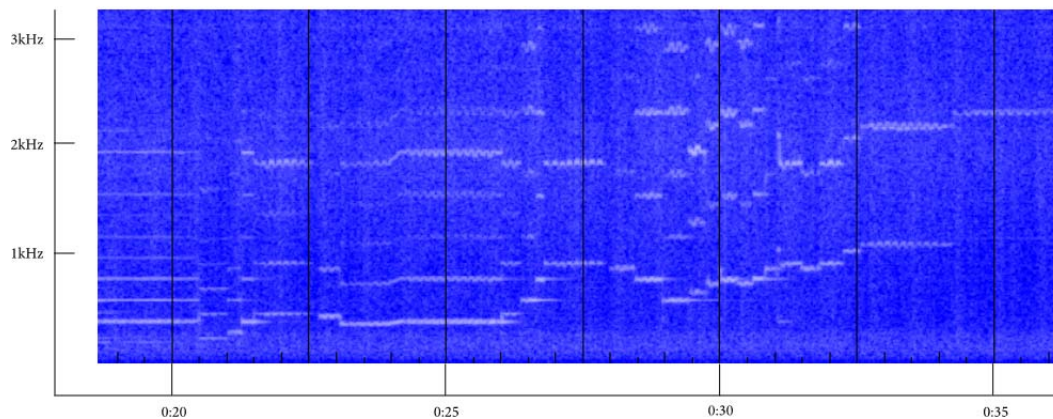


Figure 208. Bruch, Violin Concerto No. 1, first movement, bars 1 to 7, Kreisler (1924). [Track 8: 00:00-00:37].

Soldat-Roeger studied with Joachim from 1879-1882 and was hailed as having played in a style very similar to Joachim's. Reviews of her performances frequently commented that her playing style represented the 'Classical School' or the 'Joachim School.'⁴¹⁴ For example, in 1888 the *Musical Times* published the following remarks about her performance of Brahms's Violin Concerto: 'Her method and style are those of her master, who must have found it an easy task to direct the studies of a young lady so highly gifted with musical feeling and intelligence.'⁴¹⁵ Previous to Joachim she studied with Augustus Pott, (a pupil of Spohr); therefore she had a close connection to the 'founding father' of the German violin school.⁴¹⁶ Her recording of the *Adagio* from Spohr's Violin

⁴¹⁴ For a more detailed discussion of these reviews and critical perception of her career see Brown "The Decline of the 19th - Century German School of Violin Playing," <http://chase.leeds.ac.uk/article/the-decline-of-the-19th-century-german-school-of-violin-playing-clive-brown/> (accessed 10 Sept 2013), and David Milsom, "Practice and Principle," 42.

⁴¹⁵ *The Musical Times*, 29 (1888), 218. See Brown, "The Decline of the 19th-Century German School of Violin Playing."

⁴¹⁶ David Milsom, "Evidence and Incentive: Perspectives upon Joseph Joachim's Performing Practices and the Viability of Stylistic Revival," *University of Leeds AHRC Fellowships in the*

Concerto No. 9 (c.1926) reveals a very selective approach to vibrato application. Spectrogram analysis confirms that the aural analysis is mostly accurate, with the exception of notes in bars 5, 11, 14, and 15 (Fig. 209).

Soldat-Roeger varies her vibrato significantly throughout the *Adagio*. The vibrato is very narrow and selectively applied in the cantabile opening from bars 1 to 16 (Fig. 210), and wider and more frequently applied in the impassioned passage on the G-string from bars 20 to 25 (Fig. 211). Similar to Joachim's practice in his *Romance*, vibrato is added gradually during long notes, for example, in bar 8 (Fig. 212). Interestingly, during the first 16 bars in his annotated score of the concerto, Spohr indicates vibrato on 8 notes out of a total of 66 (12%).⁴¹⁷ Soldat-Roeger vibrates on 14 notes (21%). While this is more than Spohr's annotations indicate, it nevertheless represents a highly conservative approach towards vibrato use, not dissimilar to Spohr's practice almost 100 years earlier. In the first 18 bars aural analysis revealed 13 tones with vibrato, while spectrogram analysis revealed 17, giving a detection rate of 76%. The aural detection rate of vibrato on notes longer than a quaver in duration was 71%, similar to the recording of Joachim's performance of his *Romance* and Brahms's *Hungarian Dance* No. 1. In Table 4, the high detection rate for notes of a quaver value or shorter is due to the majority of notes being of longer value in this section of the movement, and the overall tempo being slow.

	Aural	Spectrogram	Percentage of notes detected aurally %
<i>Total notes with vibrato</i>	14	19	74%
<i>Vibrato on notes longer</i>	10	15	67%

Creative and Performing Arts Scheme (June 2007), under "19th Century String Music," http://www.leeds.ac.uk/music/dm-ahrc/Joseph_Joachim_Article.shtml (accessed 10 May 2012).
⁴¹⁷ Spohr, *Violin School*, 212.

than a quaver value			
Vibrato on notes of a quaver value or shorter	4	4	100%

Table 4. Tones with vibrato in Soldat-Roeger's performance of the *Adagio* from Spohr's Concerto No. 9 (c.1926).

The image displays a musical score for the *Adagio* from Spohr's Concerto No. 9, comparing the original notation with Soldat-Roeger's performance. The score is organized into three systems, each containing two staves: the top staff shows the original notation, and the bottom staff shows the performance with various annotations.

- System 1 (Measures 1-4):** The top staff includes markings for *Pousse*, *Tire*, and *5th pos*. Dynamics range from *p* to *f*, *mf*, *dim.*, and *p*. Fingerings (3, 4, 2, 3, 2) and vibrato symbols are present.
- System 2 (Measures 5-8):** The top staff includes markings for *Pousse* and *Tire*. Dynamics range from *pp* to *f*, *fz*, and *p*. Fingerings (3, 2, 4, 2) and vibrato symbols are present.
- System 3 (Measures 9-12):** The top staff includes markings for *Tire*. Dynamics range from *p* to *fz*, *pp*, and *fz* > *p*. Fingerings (2, 3, 2, 4, 2, 0, 3, 1, 3) and vibrato symbols are present.

The performance staff in the first system is labeled with "(Aural)" and "(Spectrogram)".

Figure 209. Spohr, Concerto No. 9, *Adagio*, bars 1-16, Spohr's annotations (1833, upper stave), annotations of Soldat-Roeger's vibrato (1920, lower stave). [Track 9: 00:00-01:25].

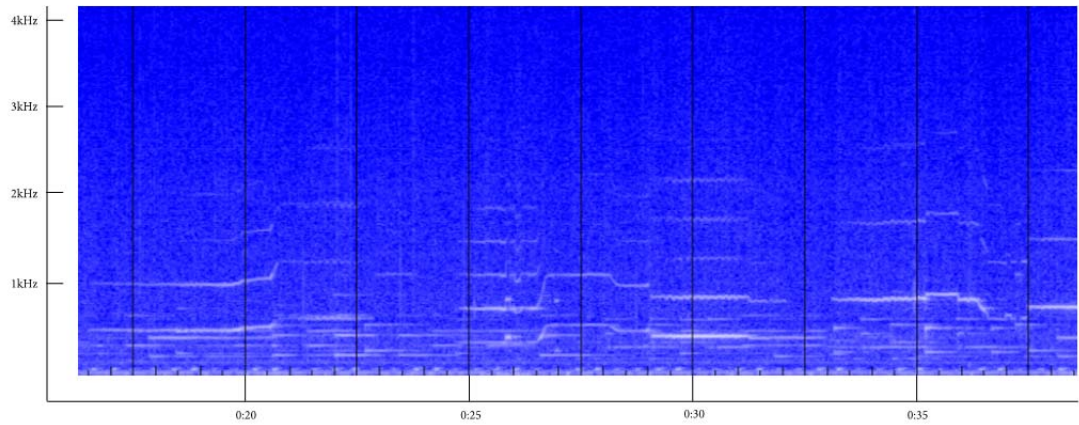


Figure 210. Spohr, Concerto No. 9, *Adagio*, bars 1 to 9, Soldat-Roeger (c.1926). Narrow and infrequent vibrato. [Track 9: 00:16-00:51].

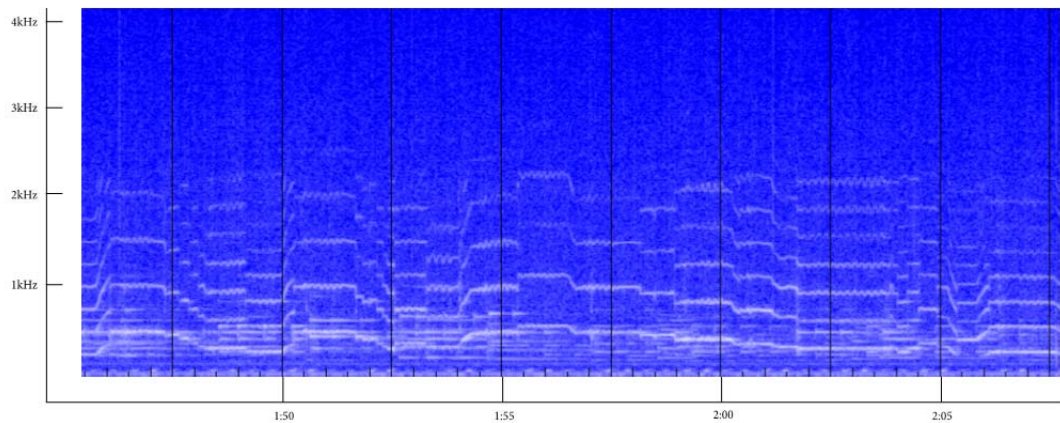


Figure 211. Spohr, Concerto No. 9, *Adagio*, bars 20 to 24, Soldat-Roeger (c.1926). [Track 9: 01:44-02:01].

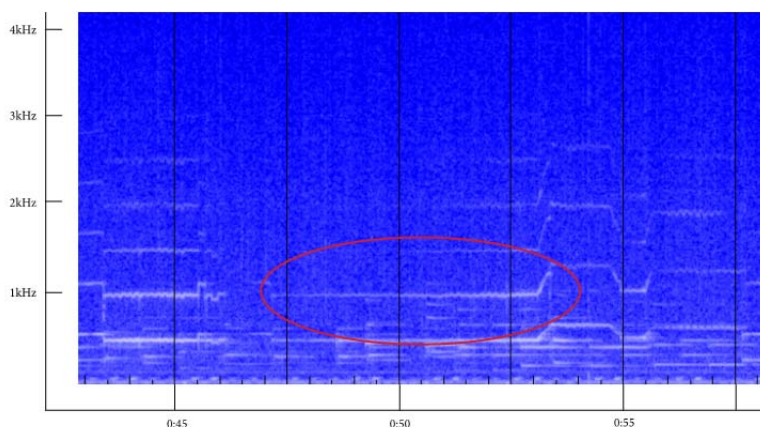


Figure 212. Spohr, Concerto No. 9, *Adagio*, bars 7 to 12, Soldat-Roeger (c.1926). showing increase of width of vibrato oscillation during a long note. [Track 9: 00:41-01:04].

In Schumann’s *Abendlied* (recorded c.1926), Soldat-Roeger uses vibrato more frequently but constantly varies the width and speed. The overall aural detection rate is 87% (Table 5). Soldat-Roeger applies vibrato to 55 out of a total of 114 notes in the piece, meaning that 48% of notes were coloured with vibrato (Fig. 213). While this may appear to be a significant portion, the vibrato is often very narrow, making it barely detectable (Fig. 214). Like Joachim’s recordings, the vibrato is not a prominent feature of the sound.

	Aural	Spectrogram	Percentage of notes detected aurally %
<i>Total notes with vibrato</i>	48	55	87%
<i>Vibrato on notes longer than a quaver value</i>	30	32	94%
<i>Vibrato on notes of a quaver value or shorter</i>	18	23	78%

Table 5. Vibrated tones in Soldat-Roeger’s performance of Schumann’s *Abendlied*.

Aural

Ausdrucksvoll und sehr gehalten.

(Mit Verschiebung.) *p*

Spectrogram

6

11

17

23

26

fp

pp

Figure 213. Schumann, *Abendlied*, Soldat-Roeger (c.1926). Annotations of aural (above) and spectrogram (below) analyses. [Track 10: 00:00-02:58].

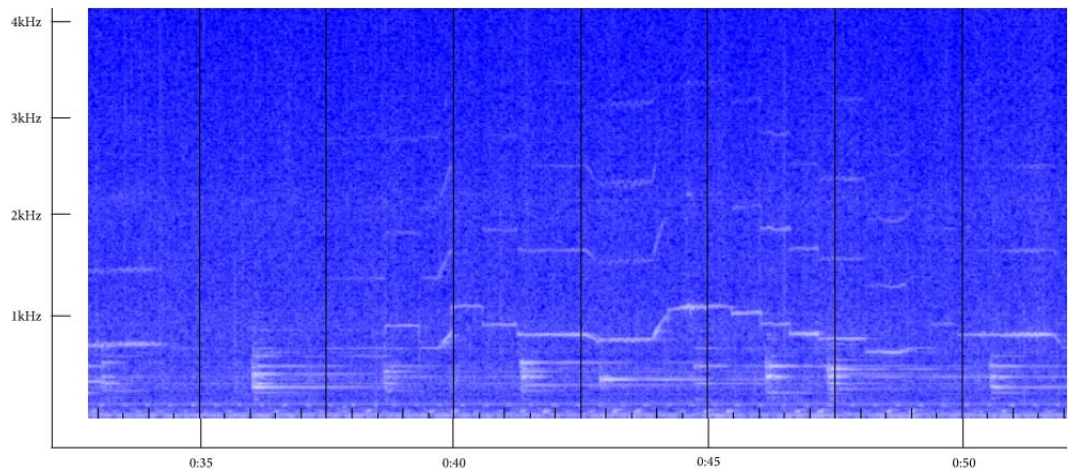


Figure 214. Schumann, *Abendlied*, bars 6 to 10, Soldat-Roeger (c.1926). Very narrow vibrato. [Track 10: 00:30-00:58].

Notably, Soldat-Roeger's other recordings (c.1926) of the first movement of Mozart's Violin Concerto K. 219, Beethoven's *Romance* in F major and of Bach's *Air* from Orchestral Suite BWV 1068 provide evidence of a similarly narrow but varied vibrato selectively applied. Like Joachim, she also takes a purer approach in the solo music of Bach, using very little vibrato in her recording of the Largo from Bach's Solo Sonata BWV 1005.

Auer studied with Joachim from 1861-1863, and continued to teach well into the first three decades of the twentieth century. Auer's own recordings reveal an aesthetic predominantly aligned with the principles of the German violin school, in particular his use of portamento and a narrow vibrato. However, his most famous students such as Heifetz, Milstein, Elman, Seidel and Zimbalist played with a constant vibrato, a style more reflective of Ysaÿe and the Franco-Belgian school. Auer's attitude towards allowing artistic individuality thus appears unsurprising:

I still take pride in the fact that I have always insisted on the one great principle – that my pupils express *themselves*, and that they must not try to express me. Elman, Zimbalist, Heifetz, Seidel, Kathleen Parlow, Eddy Brown, Max Rosen, Thelma Given, Ruth Ray, Michel Piastro – is not each and every one of them distinctly different from every other? I have never tried to mould my pupils to any narrow aesthetic of my own, but only to teach them the broad general principles of taste out of which individual style develops. I have always allowed them all freedom except when they have tried to sin against the aesthetic principles of art.⁴¹⁸

Given the propensity for constant vibrato in the playing of Auer's students, it might be expected that he did not insist on the aesthetic principles of the German violin school in his teaching. Yet Auer states elsewhere:

I forbid my students using the vibrato at all on notes which are not sustained, and I earnestly advise them not to abuse it even in the case of sustained notes.⁴¹⁹

Thelma Given, a student of Auer's highlighted in the aforementioned reference, affirms his strict attitude in this regard. During lessons, Auer was evidently adamant about the sparing use of vibrato. Givens recalls:

And then there was my *vibrato!* I had an overabundance of nervous energy and vitality and this gave me a tendency to abuse the *vibrato* in playing. Now there is nothing the professor disliked more than an exaggeration of an effect, and in order to acquire perfect control of the *vibrato*, he would stop me again and again during a lesson, and call my attention to an excess of vibration, until it got to be a perfect nightmare. But, gradually – his patience never tiring – I came to live up to his

⁴¹⁸ Leopold Auer, *Violin Playing as I Teach it* (New York: Frederick Stokes Company, 1921), 85.

⁴¹⁹ Auer, *Violin Playing as I Teach it*, 62.

requirements in the matter. He knew how exasperating it is for the student to stop, say, at every second note of the 'Bach Air on the G String' while playing it and begin again, for after the lesson he would pat me on the back with his bow and say: 'I'm sorry, Thelma, but it has to be!' It is hard for the temperamental artist or student to control the vibrato and avoid over-doing it, and calls for great watchfulness.⁴²⁰

This testimony is very revealing. Clearly Auer was keenly aware of the propensity for younger students to over-use vibrato. Certainly in the case of Given, he insisted she use less vibrato in many instances. Whether he attempted to curtail the vibrato of his more famous students is impossible to surmise, particularly given his remarks about allowing individual artistry and freedom. Given's last comment about 'watchfulness' also indicates that, in time, she came to absorb a degree of his aesthetic ideals. Most importantly, from these testimonies it is clear that, despite the growing tide of constant vibrato, Auer attempted to impart the virtues of restraint (undoubtedly stemming from aesthetic principles and practices of his own training in the nineteenth-century German violin school) to his students.

In his 1920 recording of Tchaikovsky's *Mélodie* (Fig. 215) Auer's vibrato, like Joachim's, is fast and narrow, although spectrograms show it is at times slightly wider, and more frequently applied (Figs. 216 and 205), particularly throughout shorter note values (Fig. 217). Out of 76 notes, 45 are coloured with vibrato (59%). Unlike Joachim, the vibrato does not tend to swell in the middle of the note. The discrepancies between aural and spectrogram analyses of this piece all occurred for shorter note values (quavers). Aural analysis revealed 26 notes with vibrato while the spectrogram revealed 45, giving a detection rate of

⁴²⁰ Martens, *String Mastery*, 52.

58%. It must be noted that this lower detection rate reflects the fact that the majority of the analysed section consists of quavers. Possibly, the prominent static noise of this recording further inhibits the audibility of vibrato on quaver note values.

	Aural	Spectrogram	Percentage of notes detected aurally %
<i>Total notes vibrated</i>	26	45	58%
<i>Vibrato on notes longer than a quaver value</i>	7	7	100%
<i>Vibrato on notes of a quaver value or shorter</i>	19	38	50%

Table 6. Vibrated tones in Auer's recording of Tchaikovsky's *Mélodie*.

The image displays a musical score for Tchaikovsky's *Mélodie*, marked *Moderato con moto*. The score is presented in three systems, each with an 'Aural' view (musical notation) and a 'Spectrogram' view (wavy lines indicating vibrato). The first system starts at measure 1 with a dynamic marking of *mf espr.*. The second system begins at measure 7, featuring a *p* dynamic marking and a sixteenth-note triplet marked with a '6'. The third system starts at measure 12. The spectrogram annotations show wavy lines above and below the notes, indicating the presence of vibrato. The Aural view shows the musical notation with slurs and articulation marks.

Figure 215. Tchaikovsky, *Mélodie*, bars 1 to 17, transcription of Auer's recording (1920) showing annotations of vibrato use. Aural analysis (above) and spectrogram analysis (below). [Track 11: 00:00-00:49].

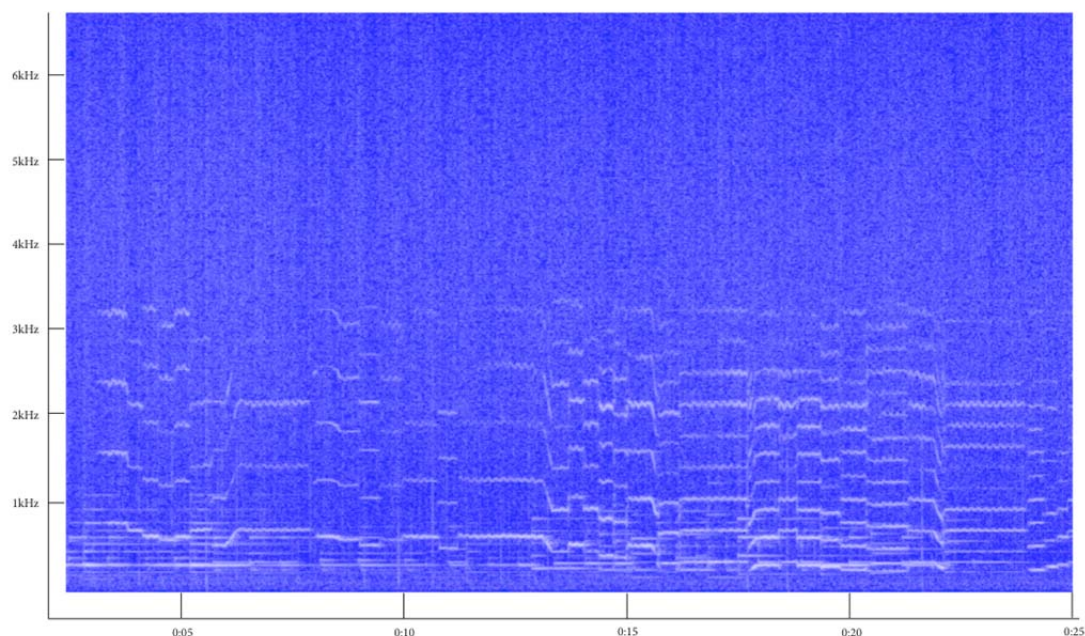


Figure 216. Tchaikovsky, *Mélodie*, bars 1 to 10, Auer. [Track 11: 00:00-00:25].

Auer's recording (1920) of Brahms's *Hungarian Dance No. 1* (arr. Auer) also shows a more frequent application of vibrato (Figs. 205 and 217). In the first 48 bars, a total of 32 out of 99 notes were coloured with vibrato (32%). The rate is higher (44%) however, if the fast triplet embellishments in bars 29, 30, 35, 36, 41 and 42 (notes on which vibrato is impossible to apply) are discounted. This more frequent application (interestingly slightly less than in Joachim's recording) might be expected given the gypsy style of this piece. Notably, Auer applies vibrato throughout the double-stopped passage between bars 25 and 48 where Joachim uses very little. For notes on which the vibrato was not detected the spectrogram revealed that the vibrato was predominantly very narrow. The

overall detection rate using spectrogram analysis was 62%, similar to Auer's recording of Tchaikovsky's *Mélodie*, and Joachim's recording of his *Romance* (Table 7).

	Aural	Spectrogram	Percentage of notes detected aurally %
<i>Total notes vibrated</i>	20	32	62%
<i>Vibrato on notes longer than a quaver value</i>	20	31	65%
<i>Vibrato on notes of a quaver value or shorter</i>	0	1	0%

Table 7. Tones with vibrato in Auer's recording of Brahms's *Hungarian Dance No. 1*.

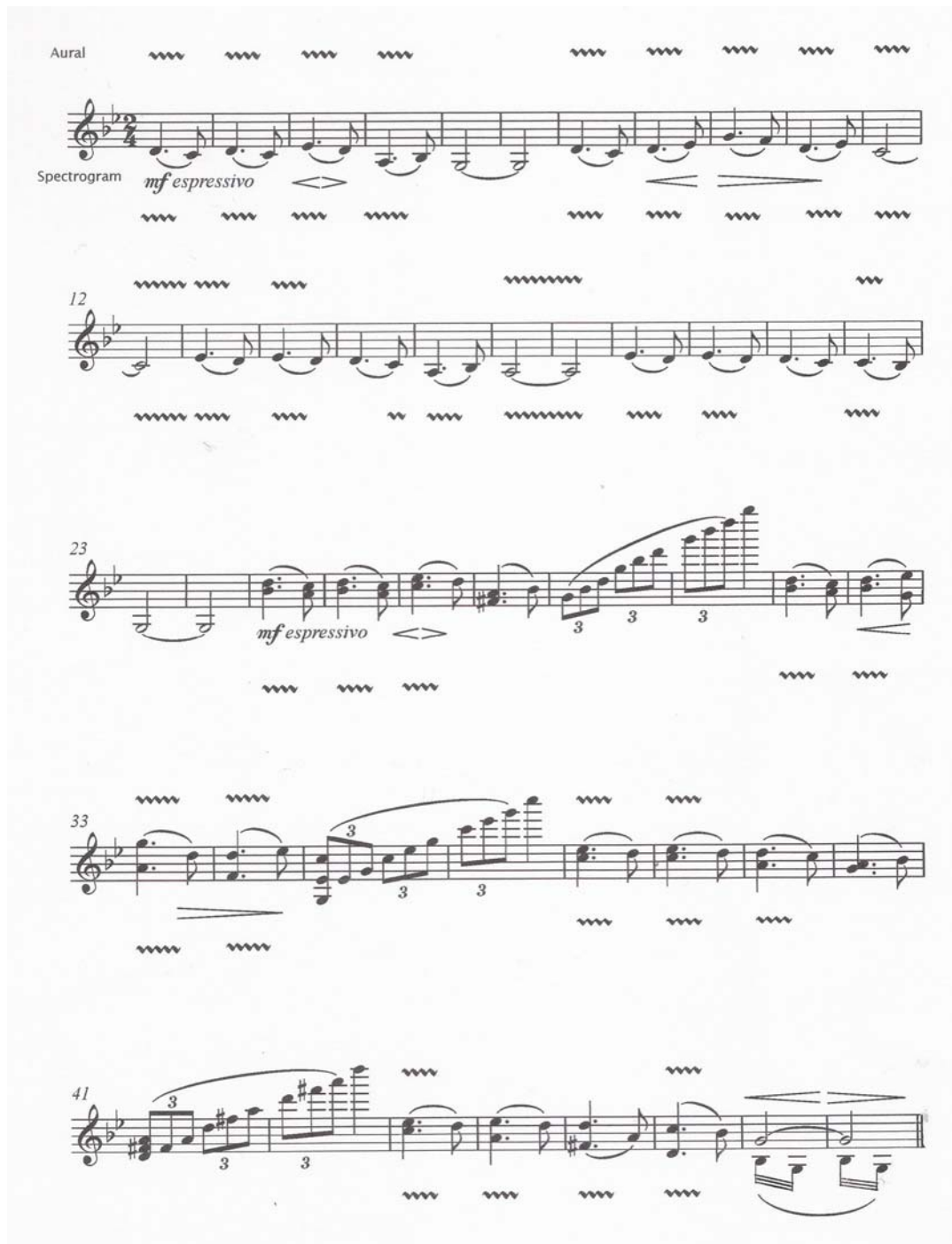



Figure 217. Brahms, *Hungarian Dance No. 1* (arranged Auer), bars 1 to 48, annotations of Auer's vibrato. [Track 5: 00:00-00:39].

Rosé's 1927 recording of Bach's *Air* from BWV 1068 (discussed above) shows a greater frequency of vibrato than Soldat-Roeger's recording (Fig. 218). However, the location of vibrato is comparable; both commonly apply it on

longer notes or peaks of phrases, although Rosé uses it in a more continuous fashion than Sodat-Roeger (for example bars 13 to 14). Nevertheless, Rosé's vibrato is clearly more selectively applied than is evident in other recordings of artists not strongly associated with the German violin school. For example, in Willy Burmester's (1869-1933) 1909 recording the vibrato is clearly constant throughout (Fig. 219).⁴²¹ Rosé uses significantly less vibrato in his recording of Bach's *Adagio* from the Solo Sonata No. 1 BWV 1001 (recorded in 1928, one year later than the *Air* from Orchestral Suite BWV 1068), which also suggests a more restrained approach to vibrato in the solo works by Bach.

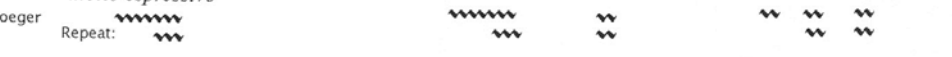
⁴²¹ See *Important Early Sound Recordings, Violinists; Vol. 1*, SYMPOSIUM 1071, track 16. Burmester in fact studied with Joachim at the Berlin Hochschule; however, he apparently did not get along with Joachim 'and left after four unfruitful years, considering himself self-taught.' See sleeve notes by Eliot B. Levin.

Lento

Rosé
Repeat: 

Sul G

p
molto espressivo

Soldat-Roeger
Repeat: 

5
cresc. *p* *p*

8
p cresc.

11
pp dolce *p cresc.* *f* *f*

15
p *cresc.* *f*

17
dim - e - poco - rit. *p*

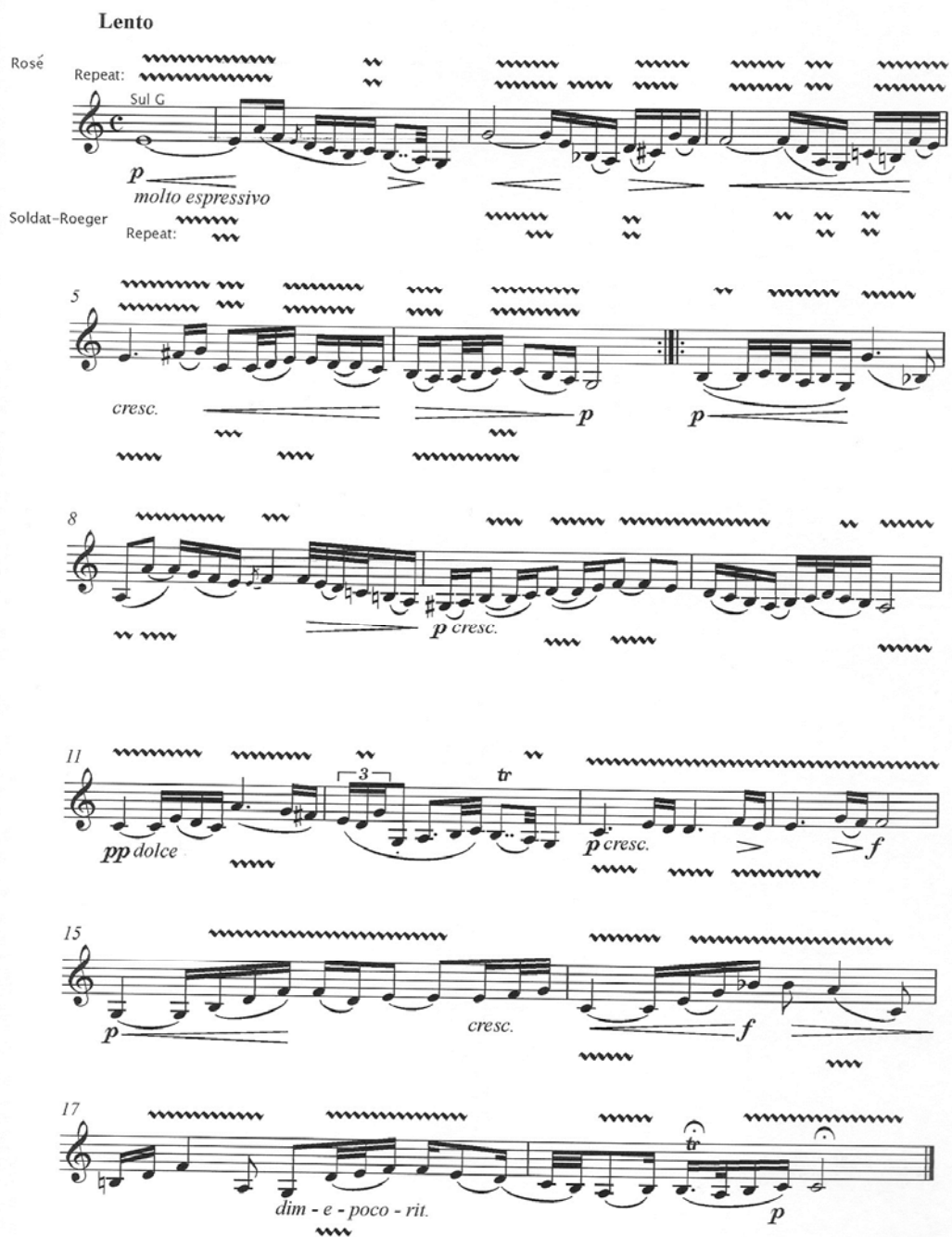


Figure 218. Bach, *Air* from *Orchestral Suite BWV 1068*, annotations made from spectrogram analyses of Rosé's vibrato (above) and Soldat-Roeger's vibrato (below). [Rosé, Track 2: 00:00-04:39; Soldat-Roeger, Track 12; 00:00-03:51].

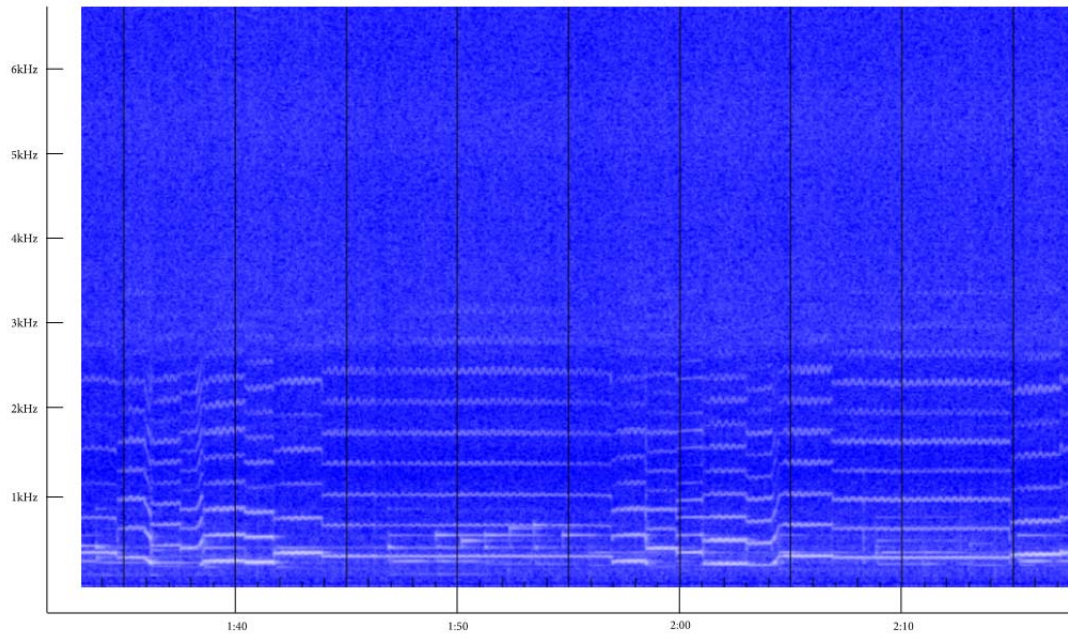


Figure 219. Bach, *Air* from Orchestral Suite BWV 1068, bars 3 to 5, Willy Burmester (1909). [Track 13: 00:17-00:39].

The playing of other artists who recorded in the first decade of the twentieth century, but did not necessarily have an association with the German violin school, also demonstrate a selective use of narrow vibrato. That the majority of their respective performing careers occurred during the last decades of the nineteenth century affirms that this conservative style of vibrato use (well supported in written evidence, discussed above) was widespread during this period. Sarasate, for example, uses a narrow, fast vibrato sparingly in his recordings made in 1904.⁴²² Although Rosé generally uses vibrato more frequently than Joachim, Auer or Soldat-Roeger (as revealed by both his 1902/09/10 solo recordings and his 1927/8 string quartet recordings), his vibrato is nevertheless narrower and more infrequent than that of Ysaÿe or Kreisler. Flesch's comments made in 1920 (discussed above) testify to the

⁴²² *Important Early Sound Recordings*, SYMPOSIUM 1071, tracks 5-7.

perception of his playing as representative of general nineteenth-century practices, before wider and more constant vibrato became the norm.

Chamber Ensemble Recordings

A selective application of vibrato—reflective of the style of the German Violin School—can be heard in early twentieth-century recordings of the Bohemian, Capet and original Budapest Quartets. This suggests that this practice was widespread.⁴²³ In general, however, recordings of early nineteenth-century chamber ensembles provide evidence of a growing tendency towards wider, slower and more constant vibrato (and less portamento) during the first three decades of the twentieth century. Phillip suggests that by the 1930s this became the prominent style.⁴²⁴ Artists who had a connection with Joachim may also have been influenced by the increasing use of vibrato during this period. Klingler uses vibrato liberally in his Quartet's early recordings made in 1912/13, and more so in latter recordings made between 1934 and 1936 (see discussion below). Violinists Florizel von Reuter and Max Strub, both with connections to Joachim,⁴²⁵ made recordings with the Elly Ney Trio. Both play with more continuous vibrato in their respective 1935 recordings of Schumann's Piano Quartet Op. 47 and Beethoven's Piano Trio Op. 1 No. 3. Similarly, the Prisca Quartet's 1927 recording of the second movement (*Poco adagio; cantabile*) from Haydn's String Quartet Op. 76 No. 3, the Wendling Quartet's 1934 recording of the second movement (*Adagio*) from Schubert's String Quintet D. 954, the Riele-

⁴²³ Philip, *Performing Music*, 192.

⁴²⁴ Philip, *Early Recordings*, 143 and 179.

⁴²⁵ Florizel von Reuter was introduced in his American debut as a protégé of Joachim (see *New York Times*, 29 Nov, 1908, p. 3) although he principally studied at the Geneva Conservatory under Émil Sauret, Max Bendix, César Thompson and Henri Marteau. Strub studied with Bram Eldering, a pupil of Joachim.

Quering Quartet's 1939 recording of Haydn's Quartet Op. 64 No. 5, and the Strub Quartet's 1940 recording of Schubert's Quartet D. 810 all demonstrate a more constant vibrato (and less prominent portamento). Recordings of other German quartets, such as the Mairecker-Buxbaum Quartet (1922) and Streichquartett Deutschen Staatoper Berlin (1938, 1940), provide yet more evidence of increasingly constant vibrato, which at times is wider and slower and closer to the style of today.

Naturally, the transition to a more constant and wider vibrato was a gradual process. Therefore, various styles of vibrato existed in tandem amongst musicians and ensembles during this period. Differing styles may also have been a result of the idiosyncratic personalities of the players. For example, in the Prisca Quartet's recording (1927) of the second movement from Haydn's String Quartet Op. 76 No. 3, each member plays the theme in the course of the second movement. Although all play with a more constant vibrato, the speed and width varies greatly from player to player. In the third variation the violist's vibrato is generally very fast and narrow, although the vibrato is wider and faster when used to emphasize particular notes in the phrase. The cellist and second violinist play with a slightly slower vibrato than the violist (although still fast and narrow by today's standards), while the first violinist's vibrato is significantly slower and wider than the other members.

Vestiges of nineteenth-century vibrato practices still remained in the playing of string quartets such as the Rosé, Klingler, Brüder-Post and Gewandhaus. Yet spectrogram analyses of recordings reveal that these ensembles often used vibrato more constantly than is evident in Joachim's and Soldat-Roeger's solo recordings. Nevertheless, the fast speed and propensity to

vary the frequency and intensity—that is the speed and amplitude—is nevertheless similar. After Joachim's death, the Klingler Quartet was widely touted as a potential successor to the Joachim Quartet.⁴²⁶ Notably, Flesch's criticisms of the Klingler Quartet suggest that their style and aesthetic values were antiquated by the 1920s (see chapter 'Portamento,' p. 242).⁴²⁷

The Klingler Quartet's early 1912/13 recordings reveal a selective use of vibrato in faster paced movements, such as the third (Menuetto; Allegretto) and fourth (Finale; Vivace) movements from Haydn's String Quartet Op. 64 No. 5, the fourth movement (*Alla danza tedesca; Allegro assai*) from Beethoven's Quartet Op. 130, the third movement (*Menuetto; Allegretto*) from Mozart's Quartet K. 421 and K. 428, and the second movement (*Assai agitato*) from Schumann's Quartet Op. 41 No. 3. In more lyrical passages, such as from bars 1 to 40 in the fourth movement from Beethoven's Quartet Op. 130 and bars 1 to 48 and 145 to 192 in the second movement from Schumann's Quartet Op. 41 No. 3, the vibrato is more constant, although still varied in speed and amplitude. In the Schumann Quartet, Klingler uses very narrow and barely detectable vibrato at the beginning of the melody at bar 145, increasing the width during the notated crescendos at bars 147 to 148 and 151 to 152. There is variation in the style of vibrato within the ensemble, possibly to set apart the melodic line from the overall texture. For example, from bars 148 to 154 the melody is played by the violist with very little vibrato, creating the effect of a distant echo of the first violin part (Figure 220).

⁴²⁶ Potter, *The Klingler Quartet: The Joachim Tradition*, sleeve notes, 4.

⁴²⁷ Flesch, *The Memoirs of Carl Flesch*, 251. Flesch's memoirs only cover events in his life up to 1928, so these comments were probably written before this date.

Un poco Adagio

Vln I
Vln II
Vla
Vlc

Figure 220. Schumann, String Quartet Op. 41 No. 3, second movement, bars 145 to 160. Klingler Quartet. [Track 14: 02:56-03:55].

From bars 176 to 187 in the same movement the cellist plays the melody written in high tessitura with constant vibrato, while the other instrumentalists, particularly the first violinist, apply vibrato in a more restrained fashion. This has the effect of enhancing the cellists' projection, bringing the melody to the fore in the texture (Fig. 221).

Un Poco Adagio

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a string quartet. The first system, starting at bar 176, includes staves for Violin I (Vln I), Violin II (Vln II), Viola (Vla), and Violoncello (Vlc). The second system, starting at bar 182, continues the same instrumentation. The music is in 3/8 time and features a mix of eighth and quarter notes, often with slurs and vibrato markings. The tempo is marked 'Un Poco Adagio'.

Figure 221. Schumann, String Quartet Op. 41 No. 3, second movement, bar 176 to 187. Klingler Quartet. [Track 14: 04:24-04:46].

Other ensemble recordings also show a distinct contrast in vibrato use, unlike present-day expectations, which generally result in a more unanimous approach. A striking example can be heard on the Gewandhaus String Quartet's 1916 acoustic recording of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 131. During bars 98 to

104 in the fourth movement (*Andante ma non troppo e molto cantabile*), a passage of overlapping antecedent and consequent phrases is passed between the cello and viola parts. The cellist Julius Klengel (1859-1933) was 57 years old at the time of the recording. The violist was a younger Carl Herrmann (b. 1876). Clearly, Klengel's playing, replete with much portamento and almost no vibrato—in stark contrast to Herrmann's lack of portamento and more continuous use of vibrato—represents a nineteenth-century style.⁴²⁸ Herrmann uses vibrato almost constantly, while Klengel uses it hardly at all. Significantly, in aural analyses, the tones of both players, with or without vibrato, were clearly distinguishable (Fig. 222). The accuracy of the aural analysis is confirmed in the spectrogram. The flat sound-line (indicating no vibrato) that begins at 4:13 in the spectrogram represents Klengel's entry on beat four of bar 101 (Figures 223a and 223b). This flat sound-line, consistent throughout, contrasts with the constant wavy sound-line (indicating vibrato) in Herrmann's part.

⁴²⁸ Possibly, Klengel tended to use less vibrato in quartet playing than in solo repertoire. For example, he uses vibrato more regularly in his 1927 recording of J. S. Bach's Sarabande in D from Suite No. 6 BWV 1012, see Pearl, GEMM CDS 9984-6.

Andante moderato e lusinghiero

98

Vln I

Vln II

Vla

Vlc

Aural

Spectrogram

p dolce

p dolce

cresc.

102

cresc.

p

cresc.

Figure 222. Beethoven String Quartet Op. 131, fourth movement, bars 98 to 104. Gewandhaus Quartet. [Track 15: 04:00-04:26].

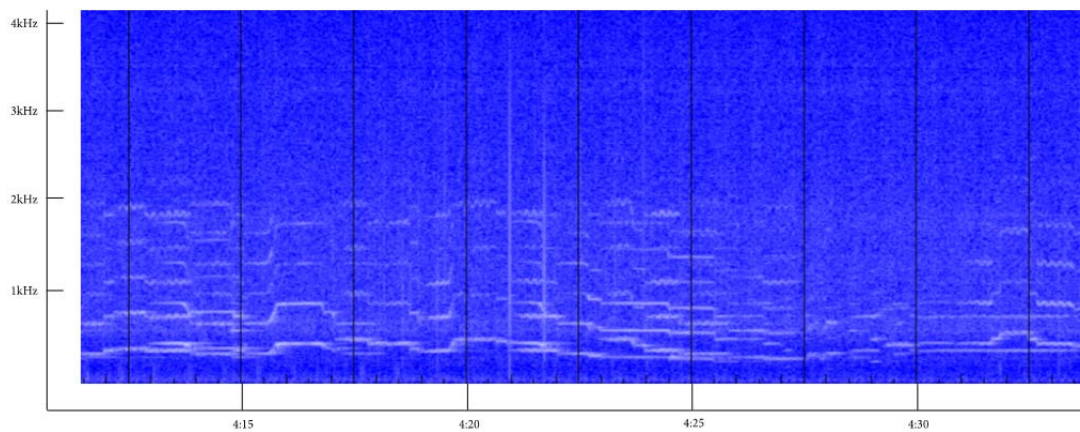


Figure 223a. Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 131, fourth movement, bars 101 to 104, Gewandhaus Quartet. Spectrogram showing flat lines (Klengel) and wavy lines (Herrmann). [Track 15: 04:10-04:22].

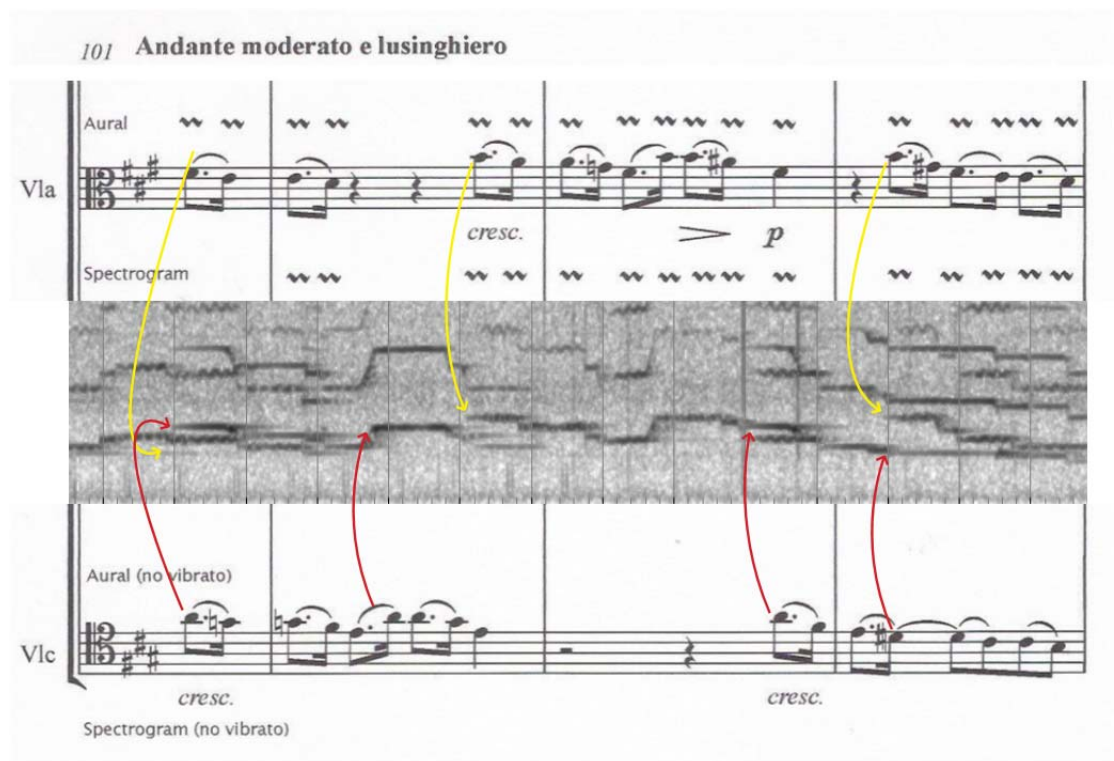


Figure 223b. Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 131, fourth movement, bars 101 to 104, Gewandhaus Quartet. Spectrogram aligned with annotated score. [Track 15: 04:12-04:25].

The Klingler Quartet's recordings appear to document a shift in aesthetic as far as vibrato is concerned. The Quartet's recording (1922/23) of the second movement (*Canzonetta; Allegretto*) from Mendelssohn's String Quartet Op. 12 reveals that the members still employed a narrow, discreet vibrato on some of the longer notes. However, a decade later, its 1934/35 recording of the second movement (*Adagio*) from Beethoven's Quartet Op. 127, exhibits wider, more prominent vibrato on practically every note of the melody in both the violin and cello parts.⁴²⁹ Similarly, in recordings of the second movement (*Largo cantabile e mesto*) from Haydn's String Quartet Op. 76 No. 5 (1933/34) and Beethoven's Serenade in D Op. 25 (1935/36), the vibrato is wider, used more frequently and thus more prominent. In recordings of faster paced movements, such as the 1933/34 recording of the Trio of the third movement (*Scherzo*) from Schumann's String Quartet Op. 41 No. 2, the vibrato—although generally more prominent—is increases in width and speed at climactic points. For example, it enhances the peaks of phrases from bars 89 to 92 and 100 to 103, and emphasizes the notated *sforzando* in the unison passages from bars 104 to 107. Unlike the Gewandhaus Quartet, members of the Klingler Quartet appear to match each other's vibrato at these moments, suggesting a more uniform approach.

Other ensembles also appear to increase the use of vibrato in a uniform manner, seemingly to enhance a crescendo or to emphasize the climactic point of a phrase. For example, in the fourth movement (*Andante ma non troppo e molto cantabile*) from Beethoven's Quartet Op. 131 (recorded 1927), the members of

⁴²⁹ The cellist in this recording is Ernst Silberstein (1900-1985) who was a member of the ensemble from 1929-1935.

the Rosé Quartet uniformly increase the speed, width and constancy of their vibrato during the crescendo that leads to the peak of the phrase in bar 22 (Figs. 224 and 225).

(Andante, ma non troppo e molto cantabile)

The image shows a musical score for the first four instruments of a string quartet: Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vlc.). The score is for bars 20 to 22 of the fourth movement of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 131. The tempo/mood is indicated as '(Andante, ma non troppo e molto cantabile)'. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 2/4. Bar 20 starts with a '20' above the first measure. The Viola part has a '(pizz.)' marking in bar 20. All four parts have a 'cresc.' marking in bar 21. Wavy lines above the notes in bars 21 and 22 indicate vibrato. The score ends with a double bar line at the end of bar 22.

Figure 224. Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 131, fourth movement, bars 20 to 22, Rosé Quartet. [Track 16: 00:48-00:58].

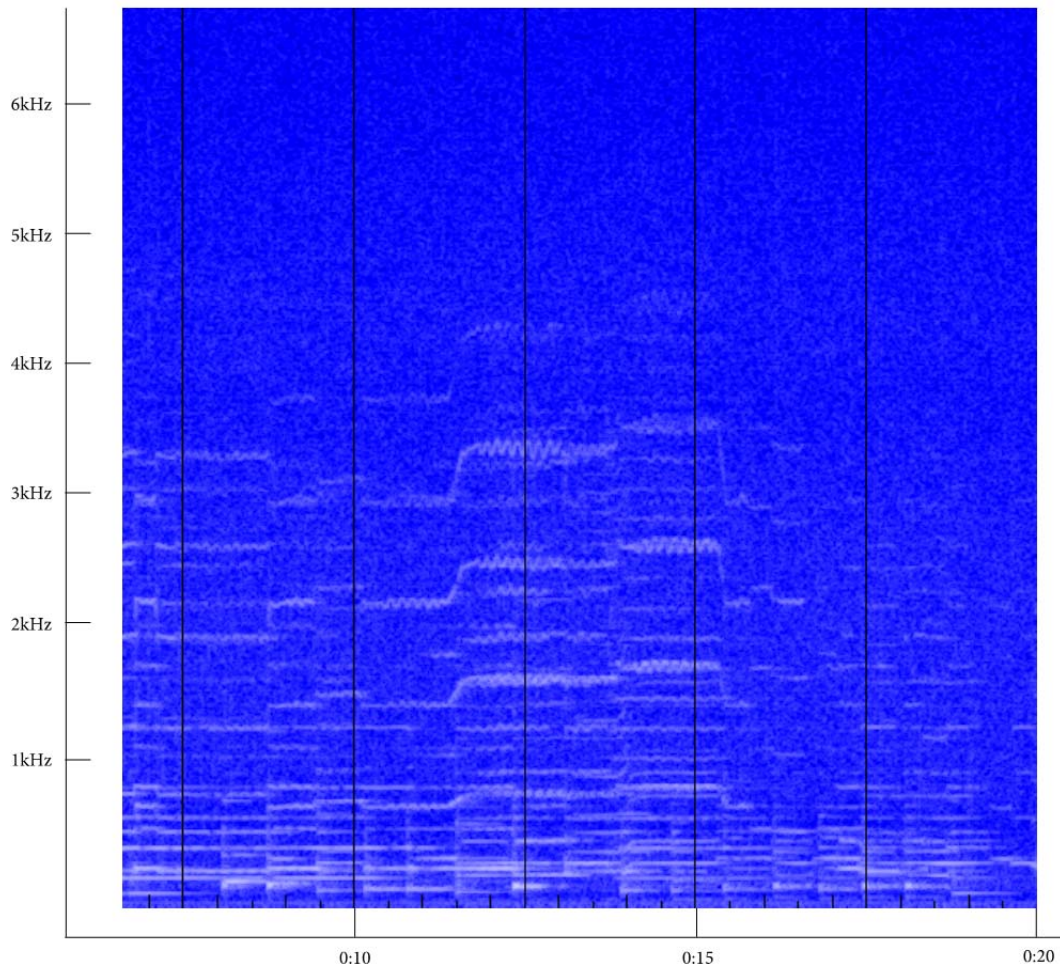


Figure 225. Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 131, fourth movement, bars 20 to 22, Rosé Quartet, showing increase of vibrato during the peak of the phrase. [Track 16: 00:48-00:58].

Although using vibrato more frequently in general, the first violinist of the Grete-Eweler Quartet increases vibrato width and speed during many of the notated crescendi in the second movement (Andante) from Brahms's Quartet Op. 67 (recorded 1922) (Fig. 226).

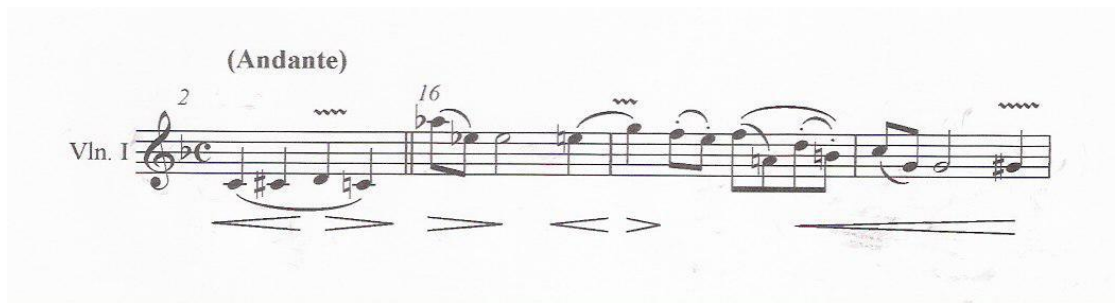


Figure 226. Brahms, String Quartet Op. 67, second movement bars 2 and 16 to 18, Grete-Eweler Quartet. [Track 17: 00:07-00:12 (bar 2); 01:15-01:30].

Similarly in the Elly Ney Trio's recordings of Schumann's Piano Quartet Op. 47, the violinist, violist and cellist uniformly apply a faster and wider vibrato to highlight the expressive peak of each crescendo (Fig. 227). On longer notes (for example in bars 259 and 263 where no crescendo is notated) all the string players start the vibrato somewhat after the initial tone has sounded, intensifying it gradually. The ensemble's unity as far as vibrato is concerned may well have been consciously rehearsed or the result of an unconscious and automatic aesthetic approach. Whatever the reason, in these instances vibrato was clearly used in a unanimous manner to enhance melodic contour.

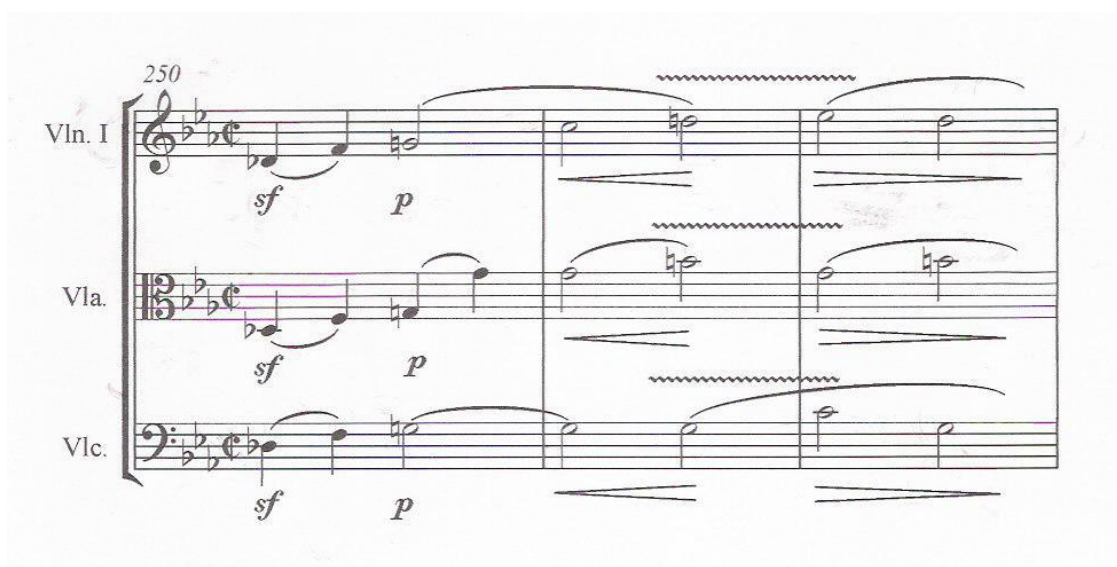


Figure 227. Schumann, Piano Quartet Op. 47, Elly Ney Trio, with Walter Trampler, viola [for recording see <http://clmu.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy1.library.usyd.edu.au/View/379726>].

At times, vibrato also appears to have been used to delineate changes in melodic character. The first violinist of the Brüder-Post Quartet uses a very subtle, narrow vibrato in the second movement (*Andante cantabile*) from Haydn's Quartet Op. 3 No. 5. However, at bar 42 where the entire ensemble makes a crescendo, and in bar 48 where the melodic line is immediately more expressive, the vibrato suddenly becomes wider and more constant. In the second movement (*Lento*) from Dvořák's Quartet Op. 96 the first violinist of the Bohemian Quartet begins the melody in bar 3 (marked *mezzo piano*) with barely detectable vibrato. As the phrase develops to the peak of the crescendo in bars 4 and 5, the vibrato becomes wider and more audible. Both the repeat of the melody on the downbeat of bar 7 (marked *forzando*) and the climax of the passage in bar 9 (marked *mezzo forte*) are played with wider, more audible vibrato. During this section, the vibrato seemingly enhances the melodic structure of the first 10 bars (Fig. 228). In their recording (1924) of the identical section from Dvořák's String Quartet Op. 96, the Grete-Eweler Quartet's vibrato is similarly wider and more audible during crescendos and peaks of phrases.

Lento. M.M. = 112

Musical score for Vln I, Vln II, Vla, and Vlc. The score is in 6/8 time and B-flat major. Vln I has a rest in the first two measures and then plays a melodic line starting in the third measure with the instruction *mp molto espressivo*. Vln II, Vla, and Vlc play a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. Vln II and Vla are marked *p*. Vlc is marked *p pizz.*

Musical score for Vln I, Vln II, Vla, and Vlc. The score is in 6/8 time and B-flat major. Vln I has a melodic line with a *p* dynamic marking. Vln II, Vla, and Vlc continue their accompaniment. Vln II has a *p* dynamic marking. Vlc has a *p* dynamic marking. There are trills above the Vln I line in the second and third measures. A fingering of 5 is indicated for the Vln I line in the third measure.

Figure 228. Dvořák, String Quartet Op. 96, second movement, bars 1 to 10. Bohemian Quartet. [Track 18: 00:00-00:50].

For some ensembles hairpin markings triggered a collectively intensified vibrato. For example, in bar 27 of the second movement (*Adagio*) from Beethoven's Quartet Op. 127 (recorded 1934/35), the members of the Klingler Quartet all use wider and faster vibrato at the appearance of every notated hairpin (Fig. 229).

(Adagio, ma non troppo e molto cantabile)

27

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vlc.

Figure 229. Beethoven, Quartet Op. 127, second movement, bar 27, Klingler Quartet. [Track 19: 03:25-03:34].

Similarly, the members of the Gewandhaus Quartet use wider and faster vibrato and a heavier contact with the bow on the string to accentuate the hairpins from bar 35 to 38 in the fourth movement (Andante ma non troppo e molto cantabile) from Beethoven's Quartet Op. 131 (recorded 1916) (Fig. 230).

(Andante, ma non troppo e molto cantabile)

35

Vln I

Vln II

Vla

Vlc

Figure 230. Beethoven, String Quartet Op.131, fourth movement, bar 35 to 38.

[Track 15: 01:32-01:43].

Conclusions

Without doubt, the spectrogram analyses provided in this chapter illustrate that artists of the German violin school, such as Joachim and Soldat-Roeger, and to a lesser extent Auer, did not use vibrato constantly. They applied vibrato selectively for expressive nuance, rather than as a consistently defining feature of their sound production. These artists also varied their vibrato speed, width (within a generally narrow parameter) and frequency of use according to the musical character or the melodic/harmonic intensity of a passage. Vibrato was also deliberately varied depending on the type of music they played; Joachim and Soldat-Roeger use less vibrato in solo works by Bach, while Joachim use vibrato more frequently—almost twice as much—in music of a gypsy style (Table 8). The fast, narrow and selectively applied vibrato of Joachim, Soldat-

Roeger and Auer aligns with verbal advice about the proper application of vibrato in treatises written throughout the nineteenth century. Notably, their vibrato appears not to have been significantly inhibited by physical degeneration, or influenced by the general increase in vibrato use during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Considering these factors, it is highly plausible that the recordings of these artists represent a style of vibrato that is indicative of general nineteenth-century practices, before the advent of sound recording.

Artist/Piece	Total notes with vibrato (%)
Joachim, <i>Romance</i> in C (discounting note values of semiquaver or smaller)	27%
Joachim, <i>Hungarian Dance No. 1</i>	49%
Soldat-Roeger, <i>Adagio</i>	29%
Soldat Roeger, <i>Abenlied</i>	48%
Auer, <i>Melodie</i>	59%
Auer, <i>Hungarian Dance No. 1</i>	44%
Average of total tones with vibrato	42%

Table 8. Total tones with vibrato.⁴³⁰

Spectrogram analyses demonstrate that the vibrato used by Joachim, Soldat–Roeger and Auer can be difficult to detect aurally. The vibrato is generally less detectable during shorter note values (where the note is fleeting and there is not time to complete several oscillations of vibrato), or on longer note values where the width is extremely narrow. Occasionally, the very narrow vibrato of these artists is certainly audible. Nevertheless, it is probable that the quality of

⁴³⁰ Percentages reflect the total notes vibrated evidenced in spectrogram analyses in relation to the total number of notes in the piece. To give a more realistic percentage, the faster paced semiquavers in Joachim’s *Romance* and triplets in Auer’s *Hungarian Dance No. 1* are discounted from the total notes in each piece, as vibrato is very difficult or impossible to use in such passages. Were these notes to be counted, the percentages would be 17% and 32% respectively.

the recorded sound and degree of playback noise may influence clarity and identification.

In aural analyses the highest rate of vibrato detection occurred in Soldat-Roeger's recordings of Schumann's *Abendlied* and Spohr's *Adagio* from Concerto No. 9, where an average of 82% of tones with vibrato were detected. This high percentage reflects the very slow tempo of both works, the absence of faster passagework, and the slightly clearer quality of the recordings, making the vibrato generally easier to hear. For Joachim's recordings of his own *Romance* in C and Brahms's *Hungarian Dance* No. 1 the average aural detection rating was 65%. This lower rate reflects the slightly faster pace of both works. The average detection rating for Auer's recordings of Tchaikovsky's *Mélodie* and Brahms's *Hungarian Dance* No. 1 was 60%, also reflecting the faster pace and shorter note values in both pieces. The average detection rate across all works sampled is 70% (Table 9). This indicates that while there is some restriction in terms of vibrato audibility on early recordings, the majority of tones played with vibrato can be clearly heard.

Artist/Piece	Notes detected aurally (%)
Joachim, <i>Romance</i> in C	56%
Joachim, <i>Hungarian Dance</i> No. 1	74%
Soldat-Roeger, <i>Adagio</i>	74%
Soldat-Roeger, <i>Abendlied</i>	87%
Auer, <i>Mélodie</i>	58%
Auer, <i>Hungarian Dance</i> No. 1	62%
Average detection rate	70%

Table 9. Overall detection rates in aural analyses.⁴³¹

⁴³¹ Percentages are calculated by the total number of notes detected aurally in relation to the total notes evidenced in spectrogram analyses.

Vibrato use in early twentieth-century recordings of chamber ensembles is generally more prominent than in the solo recordings of Joachim and Soldat-Roeger, and to a lesser extent Auer. This is probably to be expected given that the majority of players in ensemble recordings were of a younger generation.⁴³² Overall, the recordings document a variety of vibrato styles and uses. While some string quartets, such as the Klingler and Rosé use vibrato in a unified way, the member of other ensembles, such as the Gewandhaus and Bohemian used a variety of vibrato speed, width and frequency. Such variation is evidence of the different aesthetic approaches to vibrato that coexisted during the transitional period of the early twentieth century. Many recordings reveal that ensembles used vibrato deliberately to enhance melodic contour, delineate changes in melodic character or clarify a prominent part in the texture. Vibrato width, speed and/or frequency was often increased by one or other individual or in a unified way by all ensemble members during notated crescendos, accents and hairpin markings.

The vibrato of artists closely associated with the German violin school contrasts dramatically with the wider and more frequent vibrato of artists such as Ysaÿe and Kreisler. A more prominent style of vibrato was increasingly used from at least the 1880s onwards by Ysaÿe and Kreisler (who were exceptional in their own right) and other non-German violin school players. Arguably, such a style of vibrato was already ascendant and considered the norm by the time sound recording began at the turn of the twentieth century. Possibly, as a result,

⁴³² The earliest ensemble recording considered for this study was from 1912 and is of a relatively youthful Klingler Quartet. The earliest solo recording used was from 1903 is of a 72-year-old Joachim. In all the solo recordings of artists representing the German school, the players were in their mid-fifties to mid-seventies.

artists who used this newer style of vibrato (such as Kreisler and later Heifetz) were more frequently recorded and disseminated than those who still used the older style of vibrato. This may have contributed to the ever-increasing popularity of the new way of playing and the demise and inevitable obscurity of the vibrato practices of the German violin school. During the first three decades of the twentieth century, recordings provide evidence of the increasing use of vibrato amongst string players. Published material from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries regularly alludes to the desire of the younger generation to use vibrato more frequently.

It is questionable to assume that the playing of artists who embraced the newer vibrato represents the common and accepted vibrato practices of the nineteenth century, pre c.1870/80s. Arguably, the newer style of vibrato gained prominence through the efforts of particular artists after this time, and gradually became standard during the first three decades of the twentieth century. It is important to recognize the distinction between, and simultaneous existence of differing styles of vibrato during the transitional period where the shift from the old to the new style occurred steadily but gradually over many decades. At times these two styles undoubtedly overlapped. Certainly, some performers may have played with a wider, more frequently applied vibrato earlier in the nineteenth century, but such isolated cases were likely idiosyncratic rather than widespread or the cause of advocated schools of playing.

While limitations of early sound recordings must be taken into account, these undoubtedly capture the practices of a bygone era, thus providing an invaluable source of aural evidence of vibrato practices that were common during much of the second half of the nineteenth century. Importantly, the

vibrato employed by artists of the German violin school bears little or no resemblance to the style and frequency of vibrato that is common today. Clearly, this holds great implications in achieving a historically appropriate style in performances of music of the era, and particularly that of Joachim and others aligned with the German school, including Schumann and Brahms.

CONCLUSIONS

The extensive use of expressive devices by artists of the German violin school—and/or those musicians associated with Brahms and his circle—was clearly integral to a style of performance with which Brahms was familiar. While published research has addressed the use of these expressive devices by musicians of the nineteenth century, much uncertainty surrounds the extent of their use. Clearly, evidence contained in treatises and documents provides only a starting point against which recorded evidence must be compared. To date, the solo recordings of artists of the German violin school, such as Joachim and Auer and to a much lesser extent Soldat-Roeger, have been examined to illustrate the use of these expressive devices. These recordings together with spectrogram analyses provide specific and quantifiable data as regards the use of vibrato at the time. Furthermore, a large number of recordings by early twentieth-century chamber ensembles, many of whose members had a close association with Joachim and/or Brahms, have hitherto been unrepresented in published research. These provide a wealth of recorded evidence, used in this thesis to illustrate the reasons for, and the extent to which these expressive devices were employed. Undoubtedly, the expressive devices used by performers such as Joachim and Soldat-Roeger, and ensembles such as the Klingler and Bohemian Quartets, were entirely familiar to Brahms and were considered as indispensable tools in achieving an appropriate rhetorical delivery of the music. That his music may have been conceived with such practices in mind makes a detailed understanding of their use all the more necessary.

Tempo modification was clearly used by solo artists and ensembles to a degree that would often be considered extreme by today's practices. Evidently, performers concerned themselves with the general sweep of a phrase or passage, the pacing of which was seemingly governed by the implicit tension and release of the underlying harmony and the rise and fall of the tessitura and dynamic level. The placement of the phrase or section within the larger structure of the movement was also integral to these temporal decisions. The result was a highly flexible rendering in so far as tempo and pulse that delineated the micro and macro structures of the music. The use of tempo modification for this purpose is particularly clear when comparing, for example, the recordings of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 131 by the Rosé and Gewandhaus Quartets—both of whom employ the same modifications throughout an extended section in the seventh movement (see chapter 'Tempo Modification and Tempo Rubato,' p. 30). Rather than mere coincidence, this clearly illustrates that temporal decisions, at least for these two ensembles, were based upon the inherent musical features of the passage. For Brahms's music, in which hairpins—implying tempo as well as dynamic fluctuation—are frequently notated, the often-extreme degree of these tempo modifications hold significant performance implications.

On a smaller scale the fluctuation of tempo, commonly referred to as tempo rubato, often resulted in pronounced rhythmic alteration. Early recordings of both solo players and those in ensembles employed such alteration to such a degree that would appear extreme by today's standards. At times this practice was coordinated within an ensemble, while at other times such alteration resulted in asynchrony of ensemble parts. Agogic accents were frequently employed to emphasize harmonically or melodically important tones.

The lengthening of one or more notes often resulted in the shortening of others, commonly transforming duplets into tripletized or dotted rhythms. Again, this seemingly ad hoc approach to the notated rhythm was not due to carelessness on the part of the players, but rather was a fundamental part of adding expressive emphasis and variety to the melodic line. Such practices are well documented in written treatises, such as Spohr's *Violin School*, in which the ability to employ such rubato is hailed as paramount to true artistry.

The use of on-the-string bow strokes, as opposed to virtuosic bouncing strokes, resulted in a generally more legato approach to bowing than is common today. This fundamentally stemmed from the German violin school's emphasis on producing a constantly singing sound. Consequently, the martelé stroke was commonly employed whereas the spiccato stroke is used today. Similarly the portato stroke was played with much less separation between the notes than is generally the case today. Early recordings show that ensembles varied the use of the martelé and spiccato stroke to clarify the texture within an ensemble, the prominent part often being played more on the string than the accompanying part. Recordings also suggest there was an increasing use of the spiccato stroke throughout the first three decades of the twentieth century.

Allied to a singing tone was the importance of tonal shading. The recordings of Soldat-Roeger are particularly revealing. Her performance of Schumann's *Abendlied* displays considerable skill and nuance in this regard. The tone constantly alternates between a dense and transparent timbre to a much greater degree than is common in performances of today.

The incredible sensitivity to timbral nuance displayed in Soldat-Roeger's recordings suggests a distinctly different aesthetic approach to sound than is the

case today. The selective use of vibrato and the prevalence of portamento make the difference all the more apparent. My spectrogram analyses of many solo and ensemble recordings quantify the use of vibrato by comparing the occurrence of vibrato evidenced on the generated spectrogram to aural detection. Overall, using six recordings of artists from the German violin school (Joachim, Soldat-Roeger and Auer) 68% of vibrated tones were detected aurally (see Table 8, p. 346), while spectrogram analysis showed that vibrato was employed on an average of 42% of notes played (see Table 7, p. 345).

While much controversy has existed until now over the validity of these recordings as evidence of selective use, these results clearly demonstrate that the majority of vibrated tones can clearly be heard on early recordings and that artists of the German violin school used vibrato in a highly selective manner. Furthermore, the spectrograms give a clear visual representation of the fast, narrow vibrato that was used by these violinists, and that was very likely common during most of the nineteenth century, especially before c.1880. More importantly, the vibrato shown on the spectrograms is vastly different from the wider and comparatively slower vibrato employed today.

Again, the use of vibrato, like other expressive devices, accorded with the expressive intensity and structure of the music. It was used to highlight important melodic, harmonic or rhythmic notes, characterize motifs, beautify or colour the sound and clarify an important part within an ensemble texture. This last point in particular illustrates the way in which ensembles coordinated their use of vibrato. However, markedly different approaches to vibrato use also coexisted within ensembles at times. This is particularly true of ensembles that consisted of both older members who spent the majority of their performing

careers during the nineteenth century and younger players of the generation spanning the twentieth century, who were influenced by the increasing use of a more constantly applied vibrato. Overall, the evidence gleaned in this study presents significant implications for a historically informed use of vibrato—that differs dramatically from current day practices—in the music of Brahms and other nineteenth-century composers.

Early recordings of chamber ensembles also provide significant evidence of the extent to, and reasons for which portamento was employed by players. Notable in these ensemble recordings is the use of portamento to characterize important intervals within a melody, seemingly deemed by the players as particularly expressive.⁴³³ Occasionally, in movements where each member of the ensemble repeats the melody, the same portamento was used in each successive rendering.⁴³⁴ Striking examples of successive portamenti also occur in early chamber ensemble recordings.⁴³⁵ Particularly striking is the pronounced and audible nature of the portamento. While its audibility and speed varied—to an extent dependent on the expressive whim of the performer—the majority of portamenti used in early recordings is highly prominent and audible, and far more frequent, than the portamento employed by players today. Also notable is the apparent discrepancy between written and recorded evidence. While the ‘B’ type of portamento was the only type sanctioned in written treatises of the German violin school, such as Spohr’s *Violin School* and Joachim and Moser’s *Violin School*, recordings reveal that artists, including Joachim, used the ‘L’ type of portamento at times.

⁴³³ See for example Fig. 176, p. 245.

⁴³⁴ See for example Fig. 182, p. 251.

⁴³⁵ See for example Fig. 181, p. 250.

The findings from my analyses of portamento use in early recordings, and particularly examples in recordings of ensembles that are not widely known (see for example Fig. 181 p. 247) provide a challenge for performers today. Despite portamento clearly being indispensable in the performance of music during the late nineteenth century, there is great reluctance amongst players to adopt portamento to the degree heard in early recordings. Rather, there is an emphasis on 'clean' melodic lines where any portamento is carefully and sparingly applied. The 'heavy' style of portamento, frequently heard in early solo and ensemble recordings, is still viewed by many as an anachronism—an overly sentimental trait of a bygone era, not to be revived.

Often overlooked in the performance of Brahms's music is the interpretation of slurring and/or phrasing markings. Brahms's own words make it clear he expected slurred duplets to be nuanced by a shortening of the last note, as was the practice in piano playing, while the last notes of longer slurs would only be shortened at the whim of the performer (see 'Brahms and the Slurred Duplet,' p. 134). Yet, Brahms's written word does not clarify the extent to which players shortened the last note of duplet and longer slurs. Both solo and ensemble recordings show that during slower, highly melodic passages duplets were generally played un-nuanced, that is without a shortening of the second note, while in music of a faster tempo duplets were occasionally nuanced. There was a propensity for some ensembles to nuance duplets more consistently than others, suggesting that this was accepted or standard practice (perhaps stemming from awareness of older performance practices) amongst some ensembles. However, both solo and ensemble recordings clearly show that longer slurs were predominantly un-nuanced, except at larger structural points.

Quite possibly, the emphasis on a singing legato sound in the German violin school resulted in the sustaining of sound between longer slurs contained within a structural section.

In Brahms's music the stress placed on particular notes within slurred or un-slurred patterns is important, given the propensity in his music for metrical ambiguity, hemiola and syncopation. Theoretical writings, advocating the 'correct' accentuation of weak and strong beats according to the placement of slurred pairs within the metrical hierarchy of the bar, do not always align with recorded evidence (see for example Fig. 137 p. 195). According to Blume, Steinbach accentuated the first note of slurred pairs regardless of where they sat in the metrical hierarchy of the bar. In this way, the rhythmic sophistication of Brahms's writing, in which slurs often begin on weak beats and obscure strong beats, is greatly enhanced. However, this practice is opposite to the theoretical writings of Johnston and Matthay, who suggest that a realization of the 'inverted' slur (where the emphasis is placed on the second note of the slurred pair, regardless of the rhythm and metrical placement) is also valid. Both of these possibilities for metrical emphasis hold interpretative implications for the performance of slurs notated in Brahms's music.

There is a prevalent conception amongst performers today that fidelity to the Urtext (original text) results in a faithful rendering of the composer's intentions (see Introduction, p. 6). This thesis provides evidence that this is far from being the case as the majority of expressive devices considered here, and clearly audible in the recordings of artists of the German violin school (and several chamber ensembles of the time), were un-notated. Furthermore, the extent to which many of these devices were employed is clearly extreme when

compared with today's standards. This provides a clear picture of their importance within the performing ethos of the German violin school and general nineteenth-century performing traditions.

The Performance Edition appended to this thesis provides a subjective application of these devices to Brahms's three Sonatas for Pianoforte and Violin, and in so doing attempts to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Furthermore, the inclusion of my recordings of the three Sonatas for Pianoforte and Violin serves as a practical realization of the expressive devices notated in the Performance Edition. It is hoped that the Performance Edition, in conjunction with the thesis and recordings, may provide a significant and eminently practical way for musicians to explore and perform Brahms's music in a historically informed manner.

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Beethoven, String Quartet, Op. 18 No. 2

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Beethoven, String Quartet, Op. 18 No. 4

Rosé String Quartet (rec. 1927), Biddulph Recordings, LAB 056

Beethoven, String Quartet, Op. 18 No. 5 (ii, iii)

Rosé String Quartet (re. 1921), Shinseido SGR-8501

Beethoven, Serenade, Op. 25

Klingler String Quartet (rec. 1912/13), Testament SBT 2136

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CD 1

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Track 3. Brahms, Sonata for Pianoforte and Violin in D minor, Op. 108.

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Neal Peres Da Costa, Pianoforte (Track 1: Streicher, 1878; Track 2 and 3: Steinway & Sons).

CD 2

Track 1. Brahms, *Feldeinsamkeit* Op. 86 No. 2, Gustav Walter (tenor).

Track 2. Mozart Violin Concerto in A Major, K. 219, first movement, Soldat-Roeger (violin).

Track 3. Mozart Violin Concerto in A Major, K. 219, first movement, Joseph Wolfsthal (Violin).

Track 4. Haydn String Quartet Op. 3 No. 5, second movement, Brüder-Post Quartet.

Track 5. Smetana String Quartet No. 1, third movement, Bohemian Quartet.

Track 6. Beethoven String Quartet Op. 131, seventh movement, Gewandhaus Quartet.

Track 7. Beethoven String Quartet Op. 131, seventh movement, Rosé Quartet.

Track 8. Joachim, *Romance* in C major, Joseph Joachim (violin).

Track 9. Spohr, Violin Concerto No. 9, second movement, Soldat-Roeger (violin).

Track 10. Mozart, String Quartet K.465, third movement, Klingler Quartet.

CD 3

- Track 1.** Haydn, String Quartet Op. 76 No. 5, second movement, Klingler Quartet.
- Track 2.** Haydn, String Quartet Op. 64 No. 5, third movement, Klingler Quartet.
- Track 3.** Dvorak, String Quartet Op. 96, second movement, Grete-Eweler Quartet.
- Track 4.** Beethoven String Quartet Op. 127, first movement, Klingler Quartet.
- Track 5.** Smetana, String Quartet No. 1, second movement, Bohemian Quartet.
- Track 6.** Chopin, Nocturne Op. 27 No. 2, Theodor Leschetizky.
- Track 7.** Mozart, String Quartet K. 421, third movement, Klingler Quartet.
- Track 8.** Beethoven String Quartet Op. 131, fourth movement, Gewandhaus Quartet.
- Track 9.** Smetana, String Quartet No. 1, fourth movement, Bohemian Quartet.
- Track 10.** Suk, String Quartet Op. 11, second movement, Bohemian Quartet.
- Track 11.** Schumann, *Abendlied*, Soldat-Roeger (violin).

CD 4

- Track 1.** Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 74, first movement, Rosé Quartet.
- Track 2.** Brahms, String Quartet Op. 67, second movement, Grete-Eweler Quartet.
- Track 3.** Mozart, String Quartet K. 428, third movement, Prisca Quartet.
- Track 4.** Schubert, String Quartet D. 46, third movement, Prisca Quartet.
- Track 5.** Haydn, String Quartet Op. 64 No. 5, fourth movement, Klingler Quartet.
- Track 6.** Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 74, fourth movement, Rosé Quartet.
- Track 7.** Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 18 No. 4, first movement, Rosé Quartet.
- Track 8.** Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 127, second movement, Klingler Quartet.
- Track 9.** Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 131, fifth movement, Gewandhaus Quartet.
- Track 10.** Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 131, fifth movement, Rosé Quartet.

CD 5

- Track 1.** Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 74, third movement, Rosé Quartet.
- Track 2.** Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 131, fourth movement, Rosé Quartet.
- Track 3.** Beethoven Serenade for Flute Violin and Viola, Op. 25, fourth movement, Gustav Scheck (flute), Klingler Quartet.
- Track 4.** Schubert, String Quartet D. 804, second movement, Brüder-Post Quartet.
- Track 5.** Mozart, String Quartet K.575, third movement, Brüder-Post Quartet.
- Track 6.** Mozart, String Quartet K.575, second movement, Brüder-Post Quartet.
- Track 7.** Mozart, String Quartet K. 428, third movement, Klingler Quartet.
- Track 8.** Dvořák, String Quartet Op. 51, second movement, Bohemian Quartet.
- Track 9.** Beethoven, Romance Op. 50, Soldat-Roeger (violin).
- Track 10.** Beethoven, Serenade Op. 25, seventh movement, Gustav Scheck (flute), Klingler Quartet.
- Track 11.** Dvořák, String Quartet Op. 96, second movement, Bohemian Quartet.
- Track 12.** Boccherini, String Quintet Op. 11 No. 5, third movement, Brüder Post Quartet.

CD 6

- Track 1.** Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 74, second movement, Rosé Quartet.
- Track 2.** Suk, String Quartet Op. 11, first movement, Bohemian Quartet.
- Track 3.** Suk, String Quartet Op. 11, third movement, Bohemian Quartet.
- Track 4.** Mozart, String Quartet K. 428, fourth movement, Prisca Quartet.
- Track 5.** Brahms, Waltz Op. 39 No. 15, Alfred Grünfeld (piano).
- Track 6.** Brahms, Waltz Op. 39 No. 15, Ilona Eibenschütz (piano).
- Track 7.** Schumann, String Quartet in A Op. 41 No. 3, second movement, Klingler Quartet.
- Track 8.** Mozart, 'Voi che sapete' from *Le Nozze de Figaro*, Adelina Patti (soprano).
- Track 9.** Mozart, 'Voi che sapete' from *Le Nozze de Figaro*, Emma Calvé (soprano).
- Track 10.** Thomas, 'Connais-tu le Pays?' from the Opera *Mignon*, Adelina Patti (soprano).
- Track 11.** Thomas, 'Connais-tu le Pays?' from the Opera *Mignon*, Marcella Sembrich (soprano).
- Track 12.** Bach, *Air* from Orchestral Suite BWV 1068, Soldat-Roeger (violin).
- Track 13.** Bach, *Air* from Orchestral Suite BWV 1068, Arnold Rosé, 1927 (violin).
- Track 14.** Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 130, fourth movement, Klingler Quartet.
- Track 15.** Schumann, String Quartet Op. 41 No. 2, third movement, Klingler Quartet.

CD 7

Track 1. Haydn, String Quartet Op. 64, No. 5, second movement, Strub Quartet.

Track 2. Smetana, String Quartet No. 1, first movement, Bohemian Quartet.

Track 3. Bach, *Air* from Orchestral Suite BWV 1068, Arnold Rosé, 1909 (violin).

Track 4. Brahms, *Hungarian Dance* No. 1 (arranged Joachim), Joseph Joachim (violin).

Track 5. Brahms, *Hungarian Dance* No. 1 (arranged Joachim), Leopold Auer (violin).

Track 6. Brahms, *Hungarian Dance* No. 5, (arranged Joachim), Eugène Ysaÿe (violin).

Track 7. Brahms, *Hungarian Dance* No. 5, (arranged Joachim), Arnold Rosé (violin).

Track 8. Bruch, Violin Concerto No. 1, first movement, Fritz Kreisler (violin).

Track 9. Tchaikovsky, *Mélodie*, Leopold Auer (violin).

Track 10. Bach, *Air* from Orchestral Suite BWV 1068, Willy Burmester (violin).