Transforming Notational Transcriptions into Scores: Editorial Practice in Posthumously Notated Compositions



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Abstract

Music that is orally/aurally transmitted without relying on notation is typically regarded as inferior to notated compositions. Whether in academic or editorial contexts, un-notated compositions that exist only through recordings in Western art music, as well as their notational transcriptions, remain little-explored. This dissertation addresses the editorial challenges posed by such compositions, examining if, how, and to what extent posthumous transcriptions of their recorded performances can become prescriptive scores that provide the intrinsic elements of the composition itself, rather than the composer's interpretation. Using as case studies two un-notated piano cycles by the Cypriot pianist and composer Nicolas Economou, this research investigates the applicability of traditional editorial practices to transcriptions, and extends beyond them by considering the nature of the primary sources as one-take, unedited recorded performances. This dissertation demonstrates that a definitive separation between composition and interpretation may be unattainable, but a rigorous editorial endeavour to distinguish the composer's interpretation from the piece itself, grounded in a deep familiarity with their compositional and interpretative practices, can provide an authoritative musical text that can be used for further faithful performances. Transcriptions of recorded performances of un-notated compositions can be treated much like any other legitimate textual source, while the evaluation of the musical material they provide is enhanced by an understanding that these texts occur from a performance of a composition that has been shaped and evolved without ever being notated, and an interpretation that is possibly flawed, or even provisional. In addition to offering the first critical editions of Economou's two cycles, this dissertation contributes to broader debates on musical ontology, authorship, and editorial responsibility. It challenges the hierarchy between textual and audio sources in scholarly editing in Western art music, proposes a novel approach to editing posthumously notated compositions, and draws attention to an artistically rich, yet overlooked repertoire that necessitates further scholarly and artistic engagement.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Context and Objectives

Western art music and its practices are deeply embedded in a "culture of authorship" (Kivy 1995, 186) which denotes ethical and moral obligations to composers and their creative ideas. The latter – often referred to as 'compositional intent', though this is a much-challenged and debated term in the literature – along with what one would call 'the composer's authority', is generally understood to be manifested in their manuscripts and related musical texts. Therefore, sketches, drafts, fair copies, or composer-supervised editions are typically regarded as "'site[s] of negotiation' between composer and performing artist" (Dodd 2015, 495), or musical contracts that "demand fulfilment" by the performer, ensuring an interpretation that is both authentic and faithful (Gritten 2005, 139). As Ronald Broude and Mary Cyr write, "the composer's text has become the repository of the work's identity, providing a specific, visible, and fully defined point of reference from which performerly initiative, if exercised, departs" (Broude and Cyr 2022, 182). Besides, artworks in general are inextricably linked with their creators, and while "there is not an ethical responsibility to music 'itself', it does not mean that there are no responsibilities to the labours of other people" (Warren 2014, 168-9). Therefore, performers, music analysts and editors more often than not feel compelled – and rightly so – to honour the composer's creative ideas and accomplishments on moral grounds, by assuming that the content of an edition or an interpretation should align with what the composer himself would have approved to be disseminated.

That said, the process of reading and interpreting a score lies on ambiguous musical laws, therefore "[m]ultiple possibilities of realizing a musical text are a basic tradition of Western music", as Charles Rosen observes (Rosen 1991, 50). And despite some endeavours to elevate the value of interpretation and ever-evolving performance traditions against the rigidity of fixed musical texts – most famously by Nicholas Cook in his *Beyond the Score* (Cook 2014), where he explores the concept of music as performance – deviation from the 'immutable' notated text still feels immoral in both academic and practical contexts, while eschewing Urtext or authorized editions, which claim to provide definitive scores of *Fassung letzter Hand*, is nowadays viewed as an artistic crime grounded on "the modernist doctrine of Werktreue" (Cook 2015, 120). However, it is noteworthy that when it comes to textual criticism, several scholars advocate for rigorous editorial practices grounded on compositional 'authority' and 'intent', acknowledging and criticising, at the same time, the excessive reliance on, and the elevated value attributed to written musical texts directly originating from composers in music-making practices. For instance, James Grier argues that "[n]o text, even the composer's, is fully authoritative" (Grier 1995, 78), Richard Taruskin maintains that "the product of textual criticism [...] should be a text that is better than any of its extant sources and therefore different from all of them" (Taruskin 1995, 39), while literary critic D. C. Greetham maintains that being an editor entails "critical attitude to all evidence that a text brings with it, not taking anything merely on faith and not believing that anybody is completely free from error" (Greetham 1992, 296).

Since the publication of Georg Feder's comprehensive *Musikphilologie* (Feder 1987, English trans. 2011), critical editing of musical texts has gained some scholarly attention – primarily through the significant contribution of James Grier to Anglophone musicology with

his monograph *The Critical Editing of Music* (Grier 1996), Maria Caraci Vela's *La Filologia Musicale* (Caraci Vela 2005, English trans. 2015), as well as writings by other scholars such as Ronald Broude, Margaret Bent, Roy Howat, and László Somfai – though not to the same extent as similar pursuits in literary studies. Unsurprisingly, the vast majority of the literature focuses on musical works in relation to written texts and editions produced after critical evaluation of textual sources directly associated with composers, while music that is orally/aurally transmitted without relying on notation is typically regarded as "a musical Other" (Winkler 1997, 171).

Such practices, along with the transcriptions that arise from them, have long been a focal point in ethnomusicological studies, both on methodological and ideological grounds, while transcriptions comprise a significant aspect of jazz musicianship too. However, whether in academic or editorial contexts, un-notated compositions that exist only through recordings in Western art music, as well as the resulting notational transcriptions, remain significantly underexplored, while the scholarly processes involved in editing these texts using composers' recorded performances of their own compositions have received little to no attention within the broader musicological community. Such compositions for piano include Vladimir Horowitz's *Carmen Variations*, *Danse Excentrique*, as well as his arrangement of John Philip Sousa's *The Stars and Stripes Forever*; György Cziffra's *Réminiscences de Johann Strauss* and *Improvisations on Themes from "Guillaume Tell"*; Friedrich Gulda's *Aria* and *Für Rico*; Julius Eastman's *Piano Pieces I-IV*; Nicolas Economou's *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, *Eight Nocturnes*, *Quatschmusik*, '*Orthodoxia' Piano Sonata* and *Sonate für Chick*; Arcadi Volodos' *Concert Paraphrase on Mozart's Rondo alla Turka*; Gabriella Montero's *Song for Natalia and Isabella* and *Continuum*; and

improvisations by Edward Elgar, Isaac Albéniz, Charles Ives, Cziffra, and Montero. A more thorough discussion on the concepts of 'work' and 'improvisation' (including the contentious question of whether the outcome of an improvised performance qualifies as a composition) will be provided in subsequent chapters. However, it is useful to clarify at this stage that a musical piece is described in this dissertation as a 'work' due to the aesthetic refinement it has undergone, the creative labour invested in its completion, as well as its ontological profile as a deliberately conceived, repeatable musical entity with premeditated constitutive elements that define its instantiations in writing and performance. An improvisation is a composition spontaneously created in real time, without prior preparation.

An un-notated composition's recording comprises not only the inherent elements of the composition, as a written text would, but also the composer's interpretation of it. As such, it could initially be argued that one can only create a descriptive musical notation – what Charles Seeger describes as "a report of how a specific performance of it actually did sound" – rather than a prescriptive text of the composition: "a blue-print of how a specific piece shall be made to sound" (Seeger 1958, 184). In his *Musical Works and Performances*, Stephen Davies contends, for example, that notational transcriptions cannot be considered scores – i.e. "a set of instructions, addressed to performers, the faithful execution of which generates an instance of the piece it specifies" – due to their descriptive content which carries features of the recorded performance used for their creation, rather than only those intrinsic to the work (S. Davies 2001, 100).

Building on S. Davies' argument, this dissertation explores if, how, and to what extent notational transcriptions of recorded performances can become prescriptive *scores* that

provide the intrinsic elements of the composition itself, rather than document the composer's interpretation, and potentially errors, inaccuracies, and spontaneous decisions. This study addresses the editorial challenges posed by such compositions, examining in what ways the composer's recorded performance(s) and their transcription(s) can be utilized to achieve this objective; whether the editorial practice applied to this process differs from that employed in the preparation of editions of more 'normative' musical texts; how a critical edition for such a composition might function as an authoritative source for future performances, and potentially, formal analyses; and finally, what the role of the editor is in the shaping, dissemination, and perception of posthumously notated compositions.

In order to address these questions, I use as case studies Cypriot pianist and composer Nicolas Economou's two un-notated piano cycles, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* and *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, investigating the applicability of traditional editorial approaches to notational transcriptions, while extending beyond them by incorporating considerations stemming from the status of the primary sources used as one-take, unedited recorded performances. In addition to offering answers to the aforementioned central research questions, this dissertation provides a critical interrogation of the hierarchy and interplay of authorities between textual and audio primary sources when preparing critical editions for musical works, questioning the conventional privileging of written sources they are often attributed due to their perceived fixity. Also, this study challenges ontological debates surrounding the nature of musical compositions, their supposed fixity, and the conditions under which texts and performances can be regarded as legitimate instantiations of a piece. Lastly, this dissertation sheds light to Economou's underexplored

life and work, as it offers the first comprehensive academic investigation of this pianist-composer in English. It is noteworthy that this is the first research project conducted with full access to the Nicolas Economou Archive, currently housed at the LUMA Foundation in Zurich. While chapters devoted to the editorial process provide illustrative examples of decision-making, this dissertation is complemented by critical editions of Economou's two piano cycles, contributing to the pianistic repertoire. These editions include detailed critical commentary, providing a thorough account of the editorial rationale applied.

In the remainder of Chapter 1, I provide a literature review on un-notated/posthumously notated compositions and notational transcriptions, as well as an overview of published editions of posthumously notated compositions, exploring the conceptual, methodological, and editorial frameworks through which such pieces and transcriptions have been approached. Chapter 2 offers a biographical account of Nicolas Economou's life, and an overview of his compositional and interpretative practices, identifying distinctive features of his work as a composer, and traits of his playing style, which have been used to guide and inform the transcription and editorial process of his un-notated works. In Chapter 3, I investigate the three sources used in the creation of the critical edition of Economou's *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* – the first case study of this dissertation – and, in turn, I discuss the editorial challenges and decisions involved in the editorial process of this piano cycle. In this chapter I focus on editorial concerns related to pitch and rhythm, while in Chapter 4 I provide examples from the editorial process of *Corelli Variations* that shed light on the complexities of deciphering expressive elements in a composer's recording in order to establish the performance directions necessary to appear in a prescriptive score for a posthumously notated work.

Before proceeding with the second case study of this dissertation – another piano cycle by Economou that consists of not only precomposed, but improvised movements – in Chapter 5 I examine the ontological status of un-notated premeditated compositions, their recorded performance(s) and their posthumously created text(s), as well as the extent to which the acknowledgement of these compositions as musical works influences the editorial approach taken in posthumously created musical texts. Chapter 6 offers a discussion on the sources used for the creation of the critical edition of Economou's *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, and explores how the transcriptions of recorded improvisations and those of improvisatory and rhythmically fluid performances can be editorially approached and modified. Before the dissertation's concluding chapter, I reflect on the role and contribution of the transcriber-editor in the preservation, dissemination, and perception of posthumously notated compositions, as well as the manner by which the transcriber-editor's contribution may be communicated in the resulting editions.

1.2. Literature Review

This literature review surveys the relatively sparse body of writings on un-notated and posthumously notated compositions, as well as notational transcriptions in Western art music. As the scholarly literature on these topics is limited, relevant work from ethnomusicology and jazz studies – where practices of oral/aural transmission and transcription are well-established – is also included. Additionally, a brief reference to research in Automatic Music Transcription is provided to evaluate technological approaches to the process of musical transcription. The aim of this literature review is not

to be exhaustive across all these fields, but to explore the conceptual, methodological, and editorial frameworks through which un-notated musics and transcriptions have been approached, even if some of the writings discussed address issues beyond the immediate concerns of this dissertation. At the same time, this review highlights the absence of any focused, comprehensive study on the editorial challenges posed by un-notated or posthumously notated compositions in Western art music, and the relevant issues involved in the creation of their critical editions – a gap this dissertation seeks to fill.

While compositional practices within Western art music typically rely on written notation, several minimalist composers refused to notate their works – an act that formed a central part of their critique of traditional art music scholarship. Patrick Nickleson's *Transcription, Recording, and Authority in 'Classic' Minimalism* (Nickleson 2018) stands out as one of the most comprehensive writings on this phenomenon and this kind of compositions and their musical texts, particularly in terms of conceptual depth. It explores matters related to the notions of authorship and authority, challenging, at the same time, the function of a musical text as the primary ontological source of a work. However, his discussion is limited to a genre as particular as minimalist 'retroactively' written music, and unlike posthumously notated works, the scores Nickleson references throughout his article, created after the performances of the compositions they represent, were validated by their (living) composers. His discussion does not engage with editorial challenges and decisions based solely on critical, and essentially, conjectural evaluation of recorded performances and their transcriptions. It also lacks a deeper analysis of the prescriptive/descriptive nature of such transcriptions/scores, as well as the editing process that needs to be undertaken to

produce a score reflecting the inherent features of the work, rather than elements of the recorded performance.

In a similar vein, a set of writings by composer, transcriber, critic and scholar Kyle Gann approaches un-notated minimalist music from both analytical and editorial perspectives. His online essay (Gann 1998), for example, consists of an overview of the evolution of the 'Downtown' and 'Uptown' movements in the experimental music scene of post-war Manhattan, suggesting an implicit bias in how compositions are generally valued. Works that exist as musical texts tend to be afforded greater value and appreciation, while those documented solely through recordings or live performances are often diminished in terms of their artistic status and merit.[1] Gann's more focused work on La Monte Young's *The Well-Tuned Piano* (Gann 1993) and Dennis Johnson's *November* (Gann 2010) highlight the process and challenges of transcribing and reconstructing un-notated, improvisatory minimalist works. Relying on a 1981 recording and unpublished fragmentary notation by the composer, his study of Young's *WTP* lacks in-depth editorial commentary, since it focuses on harmonic and structural aspects of the composition, and is grounded on purely technical and analytical considerations related solely to pitch and rhythm, rather than decisions involving critical evaluation of interpretative features of the recorded performance used.

In his more comprehensive article on Johnson's *November*, Gann refers to the transcription of a poor-quality recording of only a small part of the composition, analysis

[1] Gann explains in his essay that 'Downtown' composers deemed notation inadequate to carry the full meaning of a composition. In contrast, 'Uptown' composers "believed in notated music of considerable complexity", criticising Downtown composers for using "media and materials that don't carry a strong sense of tradition [e.g. score, Western-art-music forms]" (Gann 1998).

and use of written fragments, and conjectural reconstruction of musical material to create a 'performance score' that reflects the composer's intended effect and compositional logic. While Gann argues that his score enables a performance that closely approximates Johnson's composition, his editorial decisions remain only briefly justified. Overall, this article provides a rare glance into editorial processes undertaken to produce musical texts for un-notated compositions, that rely on speculative, yet informed, decisions, as well as critical evaluation of the material used, regardless of its medium – textual or sonic. However, due to the fact that this is another un-notated minimalist piece, these editorial decisions merely deal with defining (repetitive) melodic and harmonic patterns/motifs. Hence, his article bypasses more intricate editorial challenges; there are no conceptual or practical considerations of the prescriptive/descriptive nature of the primary sources and the 'performance score' produced.

Although un-notated compositions that fall outside the specific creative, ideological and practical framework of minimalism are relatively rare in Western art music, some of the most celebrated un-notated works in Western art music were composed by Vladimir Horowitz, which have been the central focus of no extensive scholarly study, aside from two doctoral dissertations. The first of these (Loudermilk 2010) primarily deals with his *Carmen Variations*, his version of Franz Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2*, as well as his arrangement of Sousa's *The Stars and Stripes Forever*. However, this dissertation offers only a thorough analysis of Horowitz's compositions/arrangements, in comparison to the original works by Georges Bizet, Liszt, and Sousa, without addressing the practical or ideological challenges while transcribing Horowitz's recorded performances.

The second dissertation on Horowitz's un-notated pieces (Mi-Jin Kim 2014) provides a thorough examination of how Kaikhosru Sorabji and Horowitz manipulate material from Bizet's original work in their 'Carmen' paraphrases. Although Kim offers a brief discussion on the distinctive traits of each composer-pianist's playing, she does so only in correlation to the musical material of their compositions and the compositional techniques incorporated. Namely, she examines how their pianism influenced the formation of their compositions. It is also worth mentioning that, to complement her analysis of Horowitz's *Carmen Variations*, Kim incorporates musical examples from an unauthorised score of the piece found online. Relying on this musical text and its performance directions, she ignores the questionable legitimacy of such a document, its potentially descriptive function and the adverse effects it may have on both her formal analysis and the broader perception of the composition.

An article by Angela Ida De Benedictis (2005) stands out as one of the few scholarly discussions (perhaps the only one) that explicitly advocates for the value of recordings in editing processes of musical compositions, positioning them as equal – superior, even – to more traditional, written sources. Using compositions by Luigi Nono, Bruno Maderna, and Luciano Berio as case studies, her discussion offers several intriguing remarks that challenge the much-criticised application of philological methodologies to the editing of musical works, as well as our perception of the potential forms a composition can be directly communicated by composers, questioning the value typically attributed to fixed, written musical texts. However, the case studies she provides involve recordings of avant-garde ensemble pieces supervised by the composers, rather than (solo) recorded performances given by the composers themselves. Also, while De Benedictis asserts the

usability of a recorded performance as a primary source in an editing process of an un-notated piece, or in conjunction with a composer's manuscripts, she does not address the interpretative considerations required to decipher the content of a recording into prescriptive musical notation and performance directions that align with the composer's creative ideas. And although she provides an insightful comparative discussion of the available sources and editions for each work used as case study, she does not engage with the editorial decision-making process involved in these particular cases of un-notated, or partly notated, compositions.

Stephen Davies' aforementioned discussion (S. Davies 2001) touches upon the distinction between prescriptive and descriptive notations, focusing on the challenges an ethnomusicologist might face when transcribing non-Western music using Western notation. Although he acknowledges that "[t]he object work or performance could be a Western one" (S. Davies 2001, 130-1) in one's attempt to create a musical text using a (recorded) performance, his argument remains framed within an ethnomusicological context. It lacks detailed consideration of how one might address the challenges of creating a prescriptive score from a transcription, and he does not explore how a transcription of un-notated works might be approached and handled in Western art music in a way that it becomes a prescriptive score.

While scholarly discourse on un-notated music and transcriptions in Western art music remains limited, oral/aural music traditions and this kind of texts have long been a focal point in ethnomusicological studies, both on methodological and ideological grounds. Abraham and Hornbostel's study on the transcribing process of folk music using Western notation appears to be a foundational (Abraham and Hornbostel 1909), yet

comprehensive and influencing attempt to form a methodological framework for such task, discussing notational transcriptions only as descriptive textual representations of oral/aural events. Nevertheless, in the ensuing years scholars have increasingly examined the varying degrees of precision in notating musical events. As Alan Merriam writes in his seminal *Anthropology of Music*, "[e]thnomusicologists are agreed that the ultimate aim of translation to paper is to obtain an accurate picture of a song [...]. How this can best be done, however, and to what extent the details of sound must be faithfully recorded, is open to question" (Merriam 1964, 57).

Charles Seeger appears to be the first to discuss the different uses and implications of prescriptive and descriptive writing in different cultural contexts, acknowledging the fact that different musical cultures require different types of notations to accurately capture their musical practices (Seeger 1958, 187). Generally, Seeger's essay offers an extensive theoretical account on prescriptive and descriptive music-writing, as well as on the challenges posed by the use of Western notation in ethnomusicology (something argued in James Reid's 1977 and Doris Stockmann's 1979 essays too). Nonetheless, it falls short in addressing more practical issues – for example, the actual process of creating a prescriptive, rather than descriptive, text using a recorded performance, or the drawbacks (creative or ethical) of using a descriptive text in order to give an interpretation of a musical piece.

In both Western and non-Western musics, the inherent subjectivity in transcription processes may deprive the resulting musical text of validity and reliability. Therefore, one could argue in favour of electronic/automatic methods of transcription over human transcribers. However, by comparing transcriptions of monophonic lines notated by ten

different ethnomusicologists using the same recordings, George List concludes that "these transcriptions are generally equivalent, that is, they display considerably more concurrence than divergence in the notation of pitch and duration" (List 1974, 374), observing that discrepancies are more common in the transcription of rhythm than of pitch. List's discussion demonstrates that certain elements in transcribing processes can be perceived and notated with a level of objectivity that leaves little room for contesting the resulting musical text. But surely, it stands to reason that if other musical parameters – such as dynamics, articulation, or tempo fluctuations – had been considered, or melodic and rhythmic elements of the transcribed pieces were much more complex than those used in List's study, the degree of agreement between the transcriptions would likely have been much lower.

Similarly to List, Nazir A. Jairazbhoy (1977) maintains that while electronic/automatic methods of transcription can provide highly objective outcomes, they should not be considered superior to those produced by human transcribers. Though written in 1977, his insights remain relevant in light of recent literature on automatic music transcription (AMT) discussed later in this literature review, which highlight the indispensability of critical skills and musical insight in translating an aural event into written notation. However, Jairazbhoy's discussion is clearly concerned with descriptive notational transcriptions, used as ethnomusicological research tools, and this raises questions (which will be later addressed) concerning the 'subjectivity' of editorial conjectures and decisions involved in editing a posthumously notated work's transcription.

Similarly, in his essay *I Can't Say a Thing until I've Seen the Score*, Bruno Nettl (2005) acknowledges that human-generated transcriptions remain irreplaceable, despite

numerous twentieth-century efforts to develop reliable mechanical transcription methods. He provides a thorough and insightful overview of both practical and ideological approaches to transcription, critiquing the entrenched Western notion of music as text, noting that "[t]he academics among us can hardly conceive of discussing music without knowledge of a single, authoritative, visible version" (Nettl 2005, 74). Addressing, rather briefly, debates between prescriptive and descriptive notation, he observes that while some ethnomusicologists attempted to create "generalised" versions of folk songs, this approach of "providing a notation that gives an 'average' version based on many performances" was largely abandoned after 1950, especially due to proponents of mechanical transcription (Nettl 2005, 81). Overall, Nettl gives a well-supported and comprehensive discussion on notational transcriptions as research tools in ethnomusicological studies, and their position within broader musicological contexts. At the same time, he underscores a prevailing reluctance towards the production of prescriptive musical notations derived from recorded performances, alongside a general lack of understanding regarding the requirements a musical text must fulfil to either serve as a reliable document for the formal study of orally/aurally transmitted music, or as a guide for future performances that balances fidelity to the piece with the flexibility needed for authentic interpretation.

Marin Marian-Bălaşa stands out as one of the few scholars who acknowledge the necessity of transcriptions serving different purposes, such as "pedagogic, laboratory, archival, or mnemonic" (Marian-Bălaşa 2005, 16), and thus cannot be expected to conform to a single, objective standard. In addition, he argues that neither electronic nor human transcriptions can be described "perfect", "objective", or "complete", especially since the latter "imply subjectivity, variable expertise, and a certain degree of interpretation and

(re)composition" (Marian-Bălaşa 2005, 6). His article calls attention to a broader conceptual gap in ethnomusicology, and the lack of a clear methodological framework for producing notational transcriptions. While ethnomusicology has long engaged with transcription, Marian-Bălaşa points out the field's inconsistency of approaches towards these texts – an observation that extends to the relatively rare instances of un-notated Western art music compositions that demand equivalent scholarly considerations. Most importantly, rather than viewing subjectivity in transcription as a limitation, Marian-Bălaşa highlights the need for a more focused discourse on editorial practices – one that does not aim for objectivity, but for informed and musically valid outcomes – acknowledging the potential of using recordings to produce both descriptive and prescriptive musical texts. Surely, what one might call a 'prescriptive' text in ethnomusicological contexts, serving educational or mnemonic purposes, for example, may differ from that referred to in Western art music performance practice, as a text intended for an accurate interpretation of the musical composition. However, Marian-Bălaşa's article clearly advocates for exploring the diverse ways in which recordings can be utilised to establish musical texts serving specific functions and purposes.

Moreover, in his *Forum on Transcription*, Jason Stanyek (2014) offers six conversations with twelve experts, exploring diverse transcription practices, considering cultural, educational, technological, practical, and ethical implications. Although this article offers a rich array of perspectives and intriguing discussions on transcription as a practice of transformation of musical (and other) information, it comes as no surprise, given its primary focus on mainly ethnomusicological contexts, that it does not delve into the process of producing prescriptive musical texts from the transcription of recorded

performances. Nonetheless, it does provide valuable insights into the translation of oral/aural musical events that do not conform with typical Western notation practices into fixed texts, whether using Western notation or other systems.

Lastly, providing a discussion on Bartók's transcribing work and its impact on his compositional practices – still within an ethnomusicological framework – László Somfai (2000) touches upon the concept of editorial authority in transcription processes, and how editorial conjectures and decisions incorporated on notational transcriptions can be substantiated by familiarity with the style of the transcribed piece (and by extension, in cases of un-notated musical compositions in Western art music, with the composer's performing and compositional practices, as one may argue). He explains that when transcribing Hungarian folk tunes, Bártok "felt greater authority to decide what was intentional, accidental, or just personal in the performance", providing a simplified version (a "skeleton") of the transcribed material (Somfai 2000, 215). Although with this observation Somfai reveals Bártok's differentiation between descriptive and prescriptive musical writing, and the idea of distinguishing predetermined from spontaneously executed intentions heard in a recorded performance, his discussion primarily serves as an examination of Bartok's manuscripts of his transcriptions and their publication history. It does not delve the transcribing process itself undertaken by Bártok, and the decisions made to define the aspects of the recordings that were 'intentional' and 'accidental'. In addition, Bártok's transcriptions incorporated in the article contain articulation, metronome, and tempo marks, yet again without further commentary on the decision-making process undertaken by Bártok to include them in his published transcriptions (whether descriptive or prescriptive), and therefore, a more focused discussion on the process of creating

musical texts devoid of elements that are attributed to the performance, rather than the piece itself.

As in ethnomusicology, transcriptions comprise a significant aspect of jazz musicianship. However, unlike the extensive scholarly engagement with transcriptions of non-Western oral/aural traditions, the practice of transcription in jazz has received comparatively little academic attention. And unsurprisingly, since the demands of jazz performance practice differ significantly from those of Western art music, even less attention has been paid to the creation of prescriptive musical texts intended for subsequent interpretations.

Much of the existing literature in jazz focuses on transcriptions as educational tools, and as means for advancing improvisation and aural skills (Knox 2004; Acevedo 2014; Schnabel 2021; Weiser 2021), while others deal with the formal analysis of improvised pieces, where transcriptions serve as tools to facilitate such analytical discussions. For example, Gunther Schuller's *Early Jazz* (Schuller 1968), represents the first comprehensive study of jazz performances using musical notation, establishing a foundation for this approach to jazz scholarship.[2] Also, Gary Potter (1992) offers an analytic framework that integrates several aspects of established methods for analysing improvised jazz using transcribed material, demonstrating that a written representation of an un-notated (improvised) piece can serve as a valid and effective tool for analysis, comparable to any other musical text. Similarly, Timothy Stevens (2000) employs transcriptions in order to analyse and compare the trombone parts of two performances of Arnett Nelson's *Buddy's*

[2] For an overview of analytical approaches to jazz music, see Owens (2003), and for a Schenkerian approach to analysis of jazz transcriptions, see Larson (2009).

Habit, while Alex Annan's doctoral dissertation (Annan 2024) focuses on the analysis of nineteen solos by Larry Grenadier, providing, nonetheless, minimal reflection on the transcription process itself, aside from discussing certain decisions related to meter selection.

René Rusch, Keith Salley, and Chris Stover (2016) offer a more comprehensive account on the creation and use of notational transcriptions of jazz performances, suggesting that the limited scholarly attention given to transcriptions can primarily be attributed to the unavoidably highly subjective nature of their creation, and that transcriptions can only serve two functions: to record in written form a jazz performance, and to familiarise oneself with an artist's musical language. By comparing three descriptive transcriptions of the same solo by Sonny Rollins created by each of the authors, their primary objective is to investigate the capacity of Western notation to accommodate as much as possible features communicated by a jazz performance recording, and to assess the role of descriptive transcriptions in shaping one's perception of jazz solos/improvisations/pieces. Echoing S. Davies' view on these notations, the authors deny "a transcription's purely prescriptive potential" (Rusch et al. 2016), and even though they provide an insightful discussion on the prescriptive-descriptive nature of musical texts, they overlook, without due consideration, the possibility of creating a text devoid of features deriving from a specific performance.

In his essay *Writing Ghost Notes*, Peter Winkler (1997) discusses the transcription process undertaken for the notation of Aretha Franklin's *I Never Loved a Man*, providing a detailed account of the challenges one might face in such cases, even when only dealing with fundamental elements such as pitch and rhythm identification. Before delving into the

specifics of his endeavour to notate Franklin's song, Winkler engages in a substantial and insightful discussion on the nature of transcriptions, noting that typically, un-notated music is perceived as "an abnormality, a musical Other, something that is not really, or not fully, music" (Winkler 1997, 171). He is one of the very few who acknowledge that one may undertake transcription to provide a prescriptive written document for future performances of a musical piece for practical and ideological reasons, and observes that in such instances, one performs music "that was never meant to be transmitted and reproduced through notation, and that calls the entire enterprise into question" (Winkler 1997, 198). Additionally, he proposes that a transcription's user should have access to the recording consulted for its creation, to familiarise oneself with "the understanding and involvement that the transcriber originally gained from the process" (Winkler 1997, 200).

Although Winkler does not refer to decisions related to performance directions (nor does he incorporate any in the musical examples he provides), his attempt to create a descriptive score is rather explicit. In other words, he aims to produce a transcription that captures in as much detail as possible what was played/sung and how, and not a text that serves as a 'blueprint' – as Seeger would describe it – for a future performance of Franklin's song. Just like Rusch, Salley, and Stover, his main focus lies in evaluating the capacity of Western musical notation to convey features of jazz recorded performances, rather than exploring the process or feasibility of creating a prescriptive musical score for a Western art music composition. Yet in this article, Winkler raises several significant concerns related to transcription processes and their products. Most importantly, he discusses the implications of notating a work that was originally intended to remain unwritten, and the potential drawbacks of reinterpreting a piece of this kind through a written musical text, as well as the

fact that an un-notated piece may be treated as “a musical Other” – an approach that diminishes the functional and cultural significance of un-notated music in comparison to more conventional, notated repertoire.

Lastly, on a more conceptual level, José A. Bowen’s 1993 prominent article *The History of Remembered Innovation* draws parallels between the fixity of Western art music, and the flexibility of jazz (Bowen 1993). Discussing musical texts in jazz, as well as recordings and their transcriptions, which can provide multiple versions of the same piece, Bowen suggests the possibility of producing “a text to correspond to multiple performed versions of the same work” or “a critical edition to correspond to multiple manuscripts of the same work” (Bowen 1993, 157). He further examines the distinct nature of these documents, noting that they deviate from the textual conventions typically upheld by traditional music philology. In his own words, “[i]t hardly matters if the editor is dealing with variant manuscripts or variant oral performances, both the problems and the solutions of creating a single text result in the same choices: either transcribe a single example or compile a summary” (Bowen 1993, 158). Although transcriptions are not the main focus of his discussion, this article is of considerable importance, since Bowen clearly suggests their function as texts worth consideration equal to those found in Western art music in order to create a text, and subsequently a critical edition, that does not necessarily reflect a single performance and a definitive version, but instead offers a broader interpretative scope. However, he does not provide a more detailed examination of the editorial process itself, nor does he explicitly clarify whether such texts can be of prescriptive function – particularly in terms of performance directions – or whether the realisation of compositional ideas and

the production of a text more 'authoritative' than the one resulting from the transcription of a recorded performance (even within improvisatory practices) is achievable.

As several scholars have observed, transcription is an inherently subjective practice. Consequently, integrating technological tools could indeed enhance such transcription processes, and lead to musically more valid and 'accurate' outcomes. Over the past five decades, Automatic Music Transcription (AMT) has emerged as a significant area of research within the broader field of Music Information Retrieval (MIR). James Moorer's doctoral dissertation, followed by his seminal journal publication (Moorer 1975, 1977), is widely regarded as the foundational work in AMT, and since then, extensive efforts have been devoted to developing algorithms and parametric models aimed at accurately transcribing recorded piano music into written notation. These studies primarily focus on identifying elements such as pitch, rhythm/duration, organisation of music into bars, and time and key signatures (e.g. Barbancho et al. 2004; Poliner 2008; Emiya et al. 2010; Wang et al. 2017; Nakamura et al. 2018; Ycart et al. 2020). In addition, a significantly smaller body of research addresses the identification of expressive features such as dynamics, timing, timbre, articulation, and pedalling (e.g. Ewert and Müller 2011; Gang et al. 2011; Hu et al. 2024; Wang et al. 2024), but not the translation of such data into performance directions employable in a musical score.

A comprehensive analysis of these highly technical studies would exceed the scope of this dissertation. However, it comes as no surprise that they provide, at best, only descriptive written representations of the performances processed to extract such transcriptions. More often than not, the musical texts generated through such automated processes are often riddled with errors – from incorrect pitches and imprecise rhythm, to

erroneous voicing, flawed harmonic spelling, and misplacement of upbeats and downbeats. Several scholars, including those actively engaged in AMT and MIR research, such as Emmanouil Benetos, acknowledge the limitations of current methodologies, admitting that the outputs of their efforts, as well as the products of commercially available software, such as *ScoreCloud*, *AnthemScore* and *AudioScore*, are still insufficiently reliable for the independent production of musical scores. Some other researchers, such as Andrea Cogliati, clarify that the aim of their studies is not necessarily to produce fully accurate, standalone scores. Rather, the objective of their endeavours is to create transcriptions intended for consultation purposes, which human transcribers can use as reference to produce much more refined and precise scores (Benetos et al. 2013; Cogliati and Duan 2017; Cogliati 2018; McLeod and Steedman 2018; Holzapfel and Benetos 2019; Holzapfel et al. 2022; Jamshidi et al. 2024).

1.3. Overview of Published Editions of Posthumously Notated Compositions

Despite the rarity of un-notated/posthumously notated pieces in Western art music, some of the most reputable music publishing houses have published a small number of editions, created using only composers' recorded performances. Also, in recent years a growing number of jazz transcriptions has become accessible to those interested in their study and performance, both through official publications and online circulation. The following discussion provides an overview of a selection of published editions of posthumously notated compositions, examining the editorial approaches employed, as well as the rigour of the process, and the overall quality of the resulting editions.

One of these editions is Iain Farrington's transcriptions of Edward Elgar's *Five Piano Improvisations*, which were recorded in 1929, published by Novello (Farrington 2006). The edition consists of a preface by Farrington, where he provides an overview of the source material, and a brief description of his transcribing and editorial approach, highlighting challenges he had to tackle, such as the flexible, improvisatory nature of Elgar's playing which complicated the notation of rhythmic features, as well as his muddling pedalling and the poor sound quality of the recordings. In instances where Elgar's playing was imprecise or unclear, Farrington explains that he drew upon analogous passages within the pieces to restore the integrity of the musical text, while "[o]bvious blemishes have been deliberately polished". In addition, Farrington explains that his ultimate aim was "a clear text" reflecting "the most accurate representation of Elgar's *performance*" (emphasis mine). He writes that he omits certain nuanced performance elements of the recorded performance from the score, such as subtle tempo fluctuations suggestive of rubato, and Elgar's specific use of the pedal, to allow the performer to give "an individual interpretation". Concluding, Farrington states that his transcriptions represent his personal "realisation of Elgar's *performance*" (once again, emphasis mine), intended as a foundation for a more flexible interpretation than the notation alone may imply (Farrington 2006).

Although Farrington expresses his aspiration to produce a text that allows performers to shape their own interpretations of the pieces, it is also rather clear that his primary aim after all is to provide a text that accurately reflects Elgar's performance and interpretative features of it (as he states in the edition's preface twice). Given that these pieces were created through improvisation, it may be argued that it is indeed challenging to distinguish between the performance and the fundamental elements of the pieces

themselves. However, a comparison of Elgar's recordings with Farrington's transcriptions reveals numerous performance directions of descriptive nature, which clearly derive from nuanced dynamic and tempo changes heard in Elgar's recording, and whose inclusion in the text seems at odds with Farrington's stated goal of allowing space for "individual interpretations", and his attempt to create a "clear text". Namely, there does not seem to be an effort by Farrington to create a refined musical text devoid of unnecessary and descriptive interpretative details heard in Elgar's performance. Consequently, one may suggest that their inclusion in the edition compels users of the edition to slavishly replicate the composer's performance.

Furthermore, upon closer examination, Farrington's transcriptions display a lack of melodic and rhythmic coherence and uniformity which is a consequence of the improvisatory nature of the pieces.[3] Hence, in such cases, he did not attempt to proceed with editorial interventions of reparative nature in analogous/sequential passages. Farrington achieved recovery of flawed text, but only when caused by muddled and unclear playing. Everywhere else, he opted for a faithful, note-by-note transcription of the recording, preserving the spontaneity of Elgar's performance. Also, in some cases Farrington retains notes which are clearly played by accident. A critical commentary would be useful to provide users with further insight into the editorial decisions made, although the sheer volume of editorial interventions would probably result to an extensive list of corrections.

Another example of published transcriptions of posthumously notated compositions is Isaac Albéniz's *Three Improvisations*, which were recorded by the

[3] One may argue in favour of variability in composition, and that strict adherence to the principles of consistency and coherence is not always necessary. Nevertheless, there are instances in Farrington's edition where it is evident that such alterations would strengthen the integrity of the musical text.

composer in 1903. These pieces were transcribed and edited by Milton R. Laufer, and the edition, published by G. Henle Verlag (Laufer 2010), consists of a preface and transcriptions of the three improvisations, without any critical commentary or any other kind of supplementary notes throughout the musical text. Laufer's preface consists of an overview of the sources used, as well as a short discussion on challenges related to the transcription and editing of the three pieces. More specifically, Laufer notes the absence of pedal markings in the score, explaining the difficulty of discerning Albéniz's precise pedalling choices from the recordings, and thus, the use of pedal "is left to the discretion of the performer". Also, he writes that "certain instances of articulations, slurs, and phrases transferred more clearly than others on the recording, and therefore should be regarded by the performer as suggestions".[4] Laufer explains that in order to define the dynamics employed in Albéniz's playing, he consulted "the audio spectrum images of each track". This method either points, once again, to limitations in the recordings' ability to convey Albéniz's dynamics, or suggests that Laufer took a descriptive, non-critical, stance when notating such performance directions. Lastly, he gives a short explanation of the meters used for each improvisation, and writes that the three improvisations as recorded by Albéniz were reordered "[f]or the purpose of performance aesthetics" (Laufer 2010, V).

Upon close examination of the transcriptions, alongside Albéniz's performances, it becomes evident that Laufer adopted an editorial approach akin to Farrington's. Subtle tempo and volume fluctuations heard in the recordings are indicated with explicit performance directions (most of them clearly resulting from Albéniz's phrasing). That being

[4] Although this remark is somewhat puzzling, it is most likely that Laufer explains that the recordings used fail to clearly communicate the articulation employed by Albéniz in his playing, and therefore he attempted to restore the integrity of the text's articulation through editorial conjectures, which should be considered mere editorial "suggestions".

said, many other dynamic changes and accents indicated in the edition cannot be discerned in the composer's performance. It is therefore presumed that their inclusion in the edition was either determined by Laufer's analysis of 'audio spectrum images' of each recording, or added as editorial suggestions. In either case, these markings are not implied by Albéniz's performance or the musical material itself, something that undermines the edition's credibility. In some cases, Laufer provides a literal written representation of Albéniz's playing, without refining the transcription into a more polished musical text. Just like Farrington's transcriptions, some 'obvious' incoherences resulting from the improvisatory and un-notated nature of the compositions were notated as performed by the composer, rather than being adjusted for a more uniform musical outcome. Also, the material of the first improvisation is wrongly organised into bars, with recurring patterns and motifs placed in different beats of the bar each time, despite maintaining the same metrical function throughout the piece. In some cases, Laufer's phrase markings neither represents Albéniz's performance nor follows a musically informed rationale. In essence, his editorial decisions do not only reflect a blurred distinction between prescriptive and descriptive properties, but they lack the scholarly rigour required for the production of an authoritative edition.

Similar observations are discussed in Jonathan Bellman's review of Laufer's edition, which he describes as "an uneasy document, consistent neither in intent nor realization", viewing it as "more workbook than finished product" (Bellman 2011, 181). Bellman argues that Albéniz's three compositions are fixed, precomposed pieces rather than improvisations, maintaining that this "is relevant to the way this edition is to be thought of and used". He explains that if these pieces were indeed improvisations, "a certain

dissonance arises from the meticulous study, critique, and performance of something supposedly produced in the moment, so some inconsistency unavoidably results from the very existence of an edition such as this". Also, apart from the aforementioned weaknesses and flaws of the edition, Bellman criticises Laufer's decision to provide "prescriptive" tempo indications instead of directions explicitly indicating "what Albéniz actually does on the recording". He briefly touches on the ethical dilemma of publishing a posthumously created text of an un-notated composition that was likely never intended to be written down, and he argues that such a text that does not originate from the composer himself is an "incomplete document", requiring "repeated hearings of the [composer's] recordings" (Bellman 2011, 180).

Throughout his review, it becomes clear that Bellman finds problematic the notation of an improvised performance that leads to 'inconsistent' and 'dissonant' uses and evaluations of it as a textual source. But most notably, he expects a posthumously notated composition's transcription to accurately reflect the composer's performance, rather than being shaped into a prescriptive score that might stand on equal footing with a text provided by the composer that could be used for future performances. At any rate, Bellman raises important questions regarding un-notated compositions, and the way their status as either 'fixed' works or improvisations defines the use and analytical value of their posthumously created texts – questions I will attempt to answer in the forthcoming chapters.

Schott Music is another major music publisher, which has released scores of Vladimir Horowitz's un-notated compositions and arrangements, although many unauthorised versions have been circulated online and elsewhere over the years. Since 2022, Schott has published his *Danse Excentrique/Moment Exotique* (1930 recording), and

Ehemals (1986 recording), which is based on material from Franz Liszt's *Weihnachtsbaum*, as well as his famous *Carmen Variations* (1947, 1957, 1967 recordings/versions) and his arrangement of John Philip Sousa's *The Stars and Stripes Forever* (1951 recording). Here, only the last two editions will be discussed.

In the 2022 edition of Horowitz's *Carmen Variations* (Horowitz 2022a), it is stated that the work appears "as played and recorded on December 22, 1947, for RCA Victor". The edition features a foreword by Bernard Horowitz (no relation; Horowitz enthusiast and administrator of vladimirhorowitz.com), who briefly discusses V. Horowitz's early ventures into composition before establishing a career as a concert pianist, and the events that lead to the composition of his renowned *Carmen Variations*. No name of the transcriber and editor is provided, yet it is presumed that the transcriptions of Caine Alder were used for this edition, who is explicitly credited in the other two editions discussed below. The musical text is annotated with footnotes that provide some information regarding variants that appear in other versions of the piece (recordings made in 1928, and several others between 1942 and 1950), corrections of 'erroneously' played notes, and editorial commentary on textual modifications. Some subtle differences from other versions are incorporated into the main text (clearly specified as such), while an appendix at the end of the edition offers a comprehensive list of alternate versions of several passages that appear in other performances by Horowitz. However, no critical commentary is provided with further discussion on editorial considerations and alterations.

The 2023 edition (Schäffer 2023) includes two versions of Horowitz's *Carmen Variations*: a transcription based on a recording made in 1967, and a "longer, more elaborate version than the one usually played" (Alder 1978, 71), which was recorded in 1957

for RCA Victor. Despite featuring a more detailed foreword by Paul Schäffer, an editor at Schott, the edition lacks footnotes and critical commentary that indicate or justify editorial interventions, or an appendix that provides alternative versions of passages from Horowitz's recordings made either before or after 1967. In the foreword, Schäffer states that the edition is published "on the basis of transcripts by Caine Alder" (Schäffer 2023), though it remains unclear if Alder's work served only as a starting point – whether Schott used only pitch and rhythm from Alder's transcriptions, or whether Alder's performance indications and editorial changes were also incorporated. Although Schäffer's role as the editor is not explicitly stated, it is reasonable to infer that he undertook refinements of all sorts on Alder's texts (although no further commentary on the process is provided). Schäffer further notes that Alder drew on both audio and video recordings to produce his transcriptions, with video primarily used for the realisation of Horowitz's fingerings. Also, he emphasizes that despite Alder's thorough work, "his solutions are only one of a number of several possibilities". That being said, it is also noted that Horowitz himself was reportedly "impressed by Alder's notated versions of his transcriptions" (Schäffer 2023).

Another edition published in 2022 by Schott Music provides Horowitz's arrangement of Sousa's *The Stars and Stripes Forever*, "[a]s played and recorded in a live recital at Carnegie Hall on April 23, 1951, for RCA Victor" (Horowitz 2022b). The foreword is once again written by Bernard Horowitz, offering some context related to this arrangement, noting that in some instances, Adler was unable to identify and transcribe all the notes performed by Horowitz. However, by consulting other recorded performances of this arrangement and slowing them down, he was able to reconstruct passagework that initially appeared too complex to fully notate (no information is provided regarding how Alder's transcriptions were

utilised, or whether an additional editor was involved in the process). Similar to the 2022 edition of *Carmen Variations*, the main musical text based on Horowitz's 1951 recording is supported by some footnotes with commentary on editorial alterations, and observations resulting from the meticulous study of Horowitz's 1945, 1949, 1950 and 1977 recordings, as well as an appendix with alternative passagework that appears in these four performances. Notably, although a chord is not heard in the 1951 recording, a footnote on page 6 of the edition states that its inclusion in the text was confirmed by consulting a recording made a year before, as well as a video recording from 1977. Also, Adler (or whichever editor was involved in the preparation of this edition) seeks to restore coherence and uniformity in places where material aligning with these principles is expected but omitted in Horowitz's recording, either through informed editorial conjectures, or by consulting other performances.

Horowitz's 1947 and 1967 interpretations of *Carmen Variations* exhibit a notable degree of consistency. However, this consistency is not equally reflected in the two corresponding musical texts. They display many differences in performance directions across the editions and in the manner his compositional ideas are notated, an observation that highlights the inherent subjectivity involved in posthumous editorial processes. Nonetheless, in all three editions, there appears to be an effort (deliberate or not) to produce prescriptive scores, instead of detailed textual representations of Horowitz's performances, and texts containing features and nuances communicated in the recordings that nonetheless cannot be considered intrinsic elements of his compositions.[5] For

[5] There are some accents and *sf* markings throughout the editions whose function and necessity in the score is open for debate. However, there is a set of clear descriptive indications in bars 13-16 of the edition based on Horowitz's 1967 recording. An accent with a *tenuto* mark are placed in the second quaver of the first beat of each bar, reflecting a more stressed nuance in that moment, something most evident in bar 13. Yet this

example, in the 1957 version of his *Carmen Variations*, the dynamic suggested by the right-hand melody and some relatively loud moments in the left-hand accompaniment in bars 16-24 could have been misinterpreted for *mf* or *f*. However, it is evident that the intended dynamic implied by both the musical material and Horowitz's overall playing is *piano*, as indicated in the score, whilst the right-hand melody sounds relatively louder than that due to the pianist's well-projected and expressive sound.

Yet in several instances across the three editions, the musical text is somewhat plain and seems to underrepresent not just the performances, but the compositions themselves, with several features that seem to be inherent to the pieces being omitted. For instance, in the score based on Horowitz's 1947 recording, no dynamic marking is indicated at the very beginning of the piece, and it is only in bar 39 that the first dynamic, *ff*, appears, despite the fact that several performance directions could have been specified in the preceding bars. In the same edition, many accents which seem crucial for conveying the fervent temperament and intensity of the composition are absent, whilst in some places there are obvious tempo and dynamic fluctuations, suggesting *ritenuto* and *diminuendo* markings, which are also omitted. The significance of such indications in the musical text is reinforced not only by the overall structural progression of the piece but also by comparisons with Horowitz's other recordings of his *Carmen Variations*. Similar observations can be made about the edition based on Horowitz's 1957 recording, where performed dynamics that seem to facilitate the overall progression of the piece are omitted from the score, while pages 15-19 of the same edition lack obvious dynamic contrasts clearly communicated in

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does not appear in any other of Horowitz's performances of his *Carmen Variations*, while by bar 16 such a nuance is almost unnoticeable, and it is therefore presumed that these more stressed moments may have occurred inadvertently.

Horowitz's playing. Likewise, the opening bars of the score for which the 1967 recording was used lack *staccato* marks in the left hand, although these appear to be essential for the accurate execution of Horowitz's introductory section of the piece.

Generally, the distribution of dynamics across the musical texts is somewhat disproportionate, and this is most evident in the 2022 edition of *The Stars and Stripes Forever*. Although Horowitz's interpretation is indeed extremely vigorous and robust, there is an excessive use of *fff*, which detracts from a structural plan for a more balanced dynamic progression throughout the piece. That being said, *f* or *ff* are indicated in places where the piece reaches its climactic intensity – as communicated by Horowitz's timing and use of left-hand bass octaves/chords – while *fff* is assigned in passages that suggest a more fluid, less intricate flow, or, at any rate, a dynamic softer than the extreme *fortississimo*. Similarly, in the score based on his 1967 recording, bar 133 which signifies the climax of the whole composition is marked with *ff*, while another passage a few bars before, which does not carry the same significance in the piece, is marked with *fff*. In addition, in all editions there are some dynamic changes that are indicated in moments where there is either no evident dynamic change in Horowitz's playing, or the dynamic fluctuation is subtle and nuanced enough for such indication to be considered purely descriptive. Most of these instances can be found in the edition for the 1967 of his *Carmen Variations*; in bars 23, 66, 101, for example.

These editions communicate editorial intervention and variants in a generally effective manner through footnotes and appendices, although they lack detailed commentary explaining the rationale behind editorial decisions. As multiple audio (and in some cases video) recordings were consulted to reconstruct compromised musical texts

and to inform the editorial process, this approach implies the potential of recorded performances and their transcriptions to function as authoritative sources like traditional written texts – an idea that will be explored further in the next chapters. Of particular interest is a remark noted in the 2023 Schott edition's foreword of Horowitz's *Carmen Variations* that the musical text provided does not represent a definitive textual version of the composition, but rather one of many possible written realisations. This idea, too, will be examined further in the dissertation, as well as the aforementioned issue of the disproportionate distribution of dynamics in a posthumously notated work's edited score.

The renowned 'Omnibook Series', published by Hal Leonard, offers editions "Transcribed exactly from [...] Recorded Solos" of prominent jazz artists such as Oscar Peterson, Thelonious Monk, Chick Corea, Charlie Parker, and Miles Davis. While such editions give one the opportunity to recreate performances of these musicians, they lack commentary on the transcription process, or the interpretative choices made when translating their recorded performances into musical notation. In contrast, a limited number of publications, such as those of the Music of the United States of America (MUSA) series, established by the American Musicological Society and published by A. R. Editions, offer diligent critical commentaries that inform users of the transcribing process and editorial interventions, providing insightful discussions of the recordings too.

One of these thoroughly prepared editions is a set of transcriptions of recordings by Fats Waller, which were transcribed and edited by Paul S. Machlin (2001). Generally, his diligent commentaries demonstrate that recorded performances of un-notated compositions and their transcriptions may be successfully used to create critical editions similar to those of 'normative', written works. Each transcription is accompanied by a

comprehensive commentary that details the recordings used, as well as critical notes on editorial decisions. These highlight distinctive features of Waller's performances and traits of his playing (although these observations are not used to inform the editorial process), and in some instances, they offer specific observations – some of them highly descriptive – on aspects of the transcribed performance: erroneously played notes, rhythmic elements, pedalling, tempo fluctuations, ornaments. Some of these remarks are somewhat dogmatic – e.g. "LH: the pitch should be D" (Machlin 2001, 23) – while others provide more elaborate and informed comments on 'intentional' or 'unintentional' deviations from the established coherence, referring, for example, to the use of material from analogous passages to restore the intended uniformity throughout the text.

The final section of Machlin's edition is an apparatus with further discussion on the sources used, notes on the transcription process, as well as specific notational choices (for example, particular symbols indicating expressive qualities of the performances, and editorial indications such as brackets and footnotes with alternative versions). Machlin clarifies that just like any jazz transcription, the texts he provides reflect "a descriptive account of the playing". However, there seems to be a blurred distinction between prescriptive and descriptive music writing. He elaborates, explaining that "[t]he transcriptions published here are intended to reconcile these two seemingly contradictory agendas: that is, they are meant to provide both an accurate description of what Waller played and a prescriptive document from which others could attempt to reenact Waller's performances" (Machlin 2001, 192-3). To achieve this, Machlin advocates for a transcription that avoids "excessive visual clutter" while carrying "sufficient detail to reflect the nuances of Waller's playing" (Machlin 2001, 193). Nonetheless, it seems reasonable to

argue that refraining from creating an exhaustively detailed musical text does not attribute prescriptive qualities to a transcription if one's objective is still to produce a text reflecting the performance *per se*, rather than the piece. Similarly, a descriptive score need not be densely packed with performance instructions and expressive markings in order to effectively convey (excessive) nuances of the recording, as opposed to the underlying piece.

Additionally, Machlin encourages the users of his edition to consult Waller's recordings, and "to make additional editorial refinements in the transcriptions in conjunction with the recordings" (Machlin 2001, 193). In this regard, much like Winkler, he considers the transcription of a jazz performance a complementary document in one's toolkit for the realisation/interpretation and reproduction of it. Lastly, he acknowledges the impossibility of providing definite conclusions regarding "the intent of the improvising performer captured on record", and therefore, the main text contains "everything heard on the recording", with footnotes providing alternative versions, while the notes perceived as errors are further discussed in the critical commentary (Machlin 2001, 197). By presenting these 'flaws' in the primary musical text, Machlin once again underscores his priority to give a transcription of what Waller actually played, rather than what might have been intended in an attempt to construct a prescriptive score of a hypothetical 'ideal' version of the piece.

Another edition in the MUSA series features piano solos by Earl Hines, transcribed and edited by Jeffrey Taylor (2006). It is structured in a way very similar to the Waller edition, although Taylor's critical commentaries consist mainly of simple and occasionally cryptic notes – e.g. "LH: chord corrected, original contains c' " or "LH: chord unclear, solution conjectural" (Taylor 2006, 37-8). It seems that Taylor adopts a different editorial stance compared to Machlin, since there is an attempt to provide a 'blueprint' of Hines'

performances rather than an exact, detailed transcription. In his own words: “[w]hile trying to remain true to the recorded sounds, I have been less interested in slavish accuracy than in portraying general stylistic conception and intent”. Taylor also notes the addition of dynamic markings in the musical texts that are not communicated by Hines’ recordings, “mainly to make the scores more inviting for the performer and scholar”. However, no further discussion is provided regarding the decision-making process involved in such editorial additions (Taylor 2006, 124).

That said, Taylor explains later on that “[c]hanges in dynamics are particularly difficult to hear on early recordings, and my markings represent often extremely subtle variations in volume grasped only after many listenings” (Taylor 2006, 124). Evidently, despite his endeavour to provide a somewhat prescriptive text, he explicitly refers to his decision to specify nuanced dynamic fluctuations that are most likely excessive, attributing a descriptive function to the edition. Like Machlin, he encourages users of his edition to also immerse themselves in the original recordings (Taylor 2006, 125).

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Overall, notational transcriptions have been discussed primarily in relation to oral/aural cultures and traditions. Established literature in ethnomusicological studies deals to some extent with the prescriptive and descriptive nature of musical texts, their purposes and uses, while scholarly discussion in jazz is primarily concerned with the use of transcriptions for analysis of recorded performances, although a very small number of writings deals with the process of transcription too. The objective of the latter, nonetheless, is the accurate written representation of the artists’ playing rather than the pieces performed. That being said, both

disciplines encounter a notable challenge in establishing a clear distinction of what constitutes prescriptive and descriptive music writing, as well as a widely accepted methodological and ideological framework.

The discussion on un-notated compositions in Western art music, as well as texts created using composers' recordings, whether posthumously or under the direct supervision of the composer, remains limited, and is confined to particular genres, such as minimalist music and avant-garde. These writings provide some insight into conceptual considerations, as well as the transcription process of this kind of work and the editorial decisions involved in preparing their texts. Nonetheless, the distinctive nature of minimalist and avant-garde works precludes the generalisation of these observations and conclusions, limiting their broader applicability to other, more 'normative' cases of un-notated works. Also, they neither explicitly nor implicitly propose an editorial approach oriented toward the creation of a prescriptive score.

Lastly, research on Automatic Music Transcription remains inadequate for providing reliable musical texts, something that highlights the necessity of (human) critical evaluation and musical insight in producing authoritative posthumous musical texts. That being said, published scores of Western art music compositions, transcribed and edited by specialists familiar with the composers and their work, demonstrate a confusing interplay between prescriptive and descriptive music writing, although some reveal that conventional editorial practices can be employed for their creation. Generally, the approach undertaken in the preparation of these editions lacks a more hermeneutic engagement with the transcribed material in order to recover the potentially compromised integrity of the initial transcription, and to produce a score that aligns as closely as possible with the composer's creative ideas.

Lastly, whether editions for jazz or Western art music compositions, the majority of them are described as supplementary material alongside the recordings used to create them, rather than musical scores that can be used in their own right for further performances of the compositions.

This literature review and overview of published editions of posthumously notated compositions reveal a significant gap in musicological and editorial discourse – the absence of methodological conventions or a coherent ideology for creating (prescriptive) musical texts for un-notated musical compositions, whether in Western art music or oral/aural traditions, as well as conceptual discussion relevant to this process and the nature of these compositions. The lack of more extensive scholarly literature on un-notated music in Western art music also reflects the privileging and prioritisation of written over un-notated music, and by extension, it implies an established hierarchy that prioritizes written over audio sources, as well as reluctance to acknowledge texts created by someone other than the composer as authoritative, valid and worth appreciation. Whether in academic or editorial contexts, there is no focus on the process of producing prescriptive musical texts using composers' performances of their un-notated compositions. There is little to no engagement with the editorial and notational challenges involved in this kind of process, or with more conceptual concerns related to authorship, authority, the ontological status of such compositions and their posthumous texts, as well as the validity and authority of the resulting editions.

This dissertation responds directly to this gap by developing a methodology for producing prescriptive musical texts using composers' performances of their un-notated works, proposing an editorial approach that navigates the complexities of such an

endeavour. This study addresses a type of musical compositions and texts that have been overlooked in both academic, editorial and interpretative contexts, and challenges with focused discussions established assumptions on traditional hierarchies of source material, authorship, and textual legitimacy.

2. Knowing the Composer as a Foundation for Editorial Credibility

2.1. Probability Judgments and Informed Editorial Practice in Posthumous Musical Texts

The act of editing is generally described as a "series of educated, critically informed choices", where "the authority of the composer" interacts with "the authority of the editor" (Grier 1996, 2). To attain such authority, and develop the critical sensitivity required to transcribe an un-notated work and subsequently transform the resulting musical text into a prescriptive, authoritative score, an editor must first achieve comprehensive familiarity with the composer's oeuvre and practices. Equally essential is an understanding of the contextual factors that may have influenced the composer's output, as well as the sources consulted to construct an edition. Certainly, these principles apply broadly across the editing of literary or musical texts. Yet an editor aiming to construct a prescriptive, authoritative score for a posthumously notated composition can do so only by immersing themselves in the composer's performance practice. Essentially, since the primary source for this task is the composer's recording(s), a deep engagement with their playing style enables the editor to interpret the recorded performance used in the editorial process with greater critical insight, to produce a musical text that, as far as possible, excludes performative idiosyncrasies in favour of the work's inherent features.

Even though some assume that critical editing is grounded in objective, fixed, methods that yield definitive results, the reality is that, more often than not, editorial decisions are made without absolute certainty. For example, Greetham notes that the process often involves "a speculative, personal, and individual confrontation of one mind

by another, despite attempts by some textual critics to transform the process [of textual criticism] into a science" (Greetham 1994, 295). As one would expect, the transcription and editing of un-notated and posthumously notated musical works is especially reliant on assumptions and conjectures, more so than in conventional editorial tasks. Here, it is worth considering literary critic E. D. Hirsch's argument that "probability judgments are informed guesses" which are "rational means of reaching conclusions in the absence of directly experienced certitude" (Hirsch 1977, 175). More specifically, Hirsch writes that

> [w]e can have the truth without being certain that we have it, and in the absence of certainty, we can nevertheless have knowledge – knowledge of the probable. We can reach and agree upon the most probable conclusions in the light of what is known. [...] We are content to judge that an event is probable, highly probable, or almost certain, without allotting any numerical values to these judgments. [...] [P]robability judgment may be perfectly correct in relation to the known evidence, yet incorrect as a statement about the unknown reality.
> (Hirsch 1977, 173-5)

Essentially, familiarity with the work and practices of a posthumously notated composition's composer may not provide definitive answers to editorial questions, but it offers a necessary foundation for making informed decisions. Certainty may remain elusive, yet such knowledge enables the editor to evaluate the relative probability of editorial choices, and make appropriate judgments on what may or may not to appear in an authoritative edition of a posthumously notated composition. In this way, the editor moves past arbitrary guesswork, and engages instead in an interpretive process that, while inherently speculative, remains grounded in evidence and insight.

One could argue in favour of the certainty that quantitative methodologies provide (stylometry, for example), and measurable insights into a composer's compositional style, notational habits and traits of his playing. Nonetheless, an overreliance on such

approaches goes against and undermines human critical evaluation, musical competence, sensitivity, or intuition, even, required to achieve editorial scholarship, even if assumptions and conjectural decisions are the only way to construct a musical text and edition. Therefore, a purely data-driven method risks replacing valid editorial interpretation with reductive conclusions leading to "banalities or tautologies" (Craig 1999, 103); such formal analytical approaches have been criticised in both literary and musical textual studies, since "[i]n the humanities generally, when scholarship has sought to become objective in what are considered 'scientific' ways, it has tended to lose its primary meaning and to retain only instrumental value" (Thorpe 1990, 68).

Therefore, a careful familiarity with the composer's life, creative output, as well as compositional and interpretative practices – gained through the study and critical evaluation of primary and secondary sources – can inform the editorial process in posthumously notated compositions. To that end, this chapter provides a biographical account of Nicolas Economou's life, and an overview of his work, both as a composer and performer. It explores his compositional and interpretative practices, identifying distinct features of his work as a composer, and traits of his playing style which have been used to guide and inform the transcription and editorial process of his un-notated works. This investigation draws on material from both unpublished and published materials, including press releases, articles and interviews, CVs, recordings, program notes, letters, and more, housed in the Nicolas Economou Archive at the LUMA Foundation in Zurich. Additionally, several publicly available sources were consulted to compile this biographical account of Economou, such as the documentary *Remembering Nicolas Economou*, directed by Steve

Sklair (2012),[6] Galina Dimova-Georgieva's PhD dissertation on Economou's compositional work (Dimova-Georgieva 2017), and the Biography page from the now-defunct Nicolas Economou Foundation website, accessible via a cached version.[7] Whenever necessary, the source of information provided is clearly cited.[8]

2.2. Biographical Overview of Nicolas Economou

Nicolas Economou was a Cypriot pianist and composer, born in 1953. Often described as an artist who fused Mediterranean warmth with the precision of 'steely' Russian technique, he was hailed during his lifetime as "among the best pianists of his generation" (Abel 1985, 5). Following his 1973 debut recital in Cologne, reviewed under the headline "Firehead from Cyprus" (Schuchardt 1973), he gradually gained international recognition, while critics have also described him a "[f]resh wind from Cyprus" (Schumann 1976), a "[v]olcano with a Russian Soul" (Kaiser 1978), "a piano genius" and a "phenomenal natural talent" (Plenio 1985), and a "[t]rue comet in the universe of pianists" (Friédérich 1998, 78), with "enormous musicality and a technique that could hardly be more perfect" (Höpfl 1977).

Economou's prodigious abilities emerged at a young age. Upon hearing the seven-year-old Nicolas perform, the eminent Cypriot composer, conductor, and musicologist

[6] *Remembering Nicolas Economou* is available on DVD and online at https://vimeo.com/228130000.
[7] The Nicolas Economou Foundation officially ceased operations in 2021, resulting in the original site's removal. However, the cached snapshot of the webpage from December 2018, accessible at https://web.archive.org/web/20181207074339/http://www.nefcy.com/bio.htm, provides a substantial amount of material on Economou's life and work.
[8] Every effort has been made to provide complete source information. However, citations of certain magazine or newspaper interviews and reviews in the following discussion do not include page numbers where that information was missing from clippings found in the Nicolas Economou Archive and could not be obtained elsewhere. The reference list at the end of the dissertation includes all other essential bibliographic details for these sources: title, author, name of the magazine or newspaper, and date of publication.

Solon Michaelides proclaimed him “a blessing to his parents, Cyprus and the world”.[9] In 1964, Economou was awarded a full scholarship to attend the Special School of Music at the Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Moscow, where, a year later, he began his studies with Nina Emelyanova and her assistant, Rimma Hananina. At the age of sixteen, after only a few months of preparation, he participated in the Tchaikovsky Competition, receiving numerous laudatory reviews from audience and press. Around the same time, despite the Tchaikovsky Conservatory's minimum admission age of eighteen, Economou was granted special entry when he was sixteen – an exception rarely made. Two years later, he left Moscow in order to embark on his career in West Germany, mainly due to his disagreement with the ideological constraints of the pervasive politicisation of musical education at the time, which created considerable difficulties with his studies at the Conservatory, as well as his interactions with fellow students and teaching staff (Economou 1971a; Economou 1994, 12:30-13:01).

In 1972, Economou moved to Düsseldorf, and subsequently to Munich, where he continued his formal training on a DAAD scholarship at the *Hochschule für Musik und Theater München*, studying piano with Ludwig Hoffmann and composition with Wilhelm Killmayer (Dimova-Georgieva 2017, 18). After completing his first year of studies, Economou left the *Hochschule* due to disagreements with both professors that revolved around their teaching methods and musical taste (Economou 1972). Following his departure from the *Hochschule*, Economou worked in a recording studio for three years, composing numerous pop songs for the renowned German record producer and songwriter Ralph Siegel, while developing his career as a pianist and composer (Sklair 2012, 29:45-

[9] This quote appears on the Biography page of the Nicolas Economou Foundation website, accessible via a cached version from December 2018 at https://web.archive.org/web/20181207074339/http://www.nefcy.com/bio.htm .

30:30). In an interview with journalist Christina Valanidou a decade after relocating to Germany, Economou candidly reflects on how discouraged he felt during his first few years there: "I gave up many times [...] Playing well is not enough to make a career. It is a constant struggle to impose yourself [as an artist] and I was wondering back then whether it was worth it" (Economou 1987, 33:19-34:08). Despite early challenges, Economou initiated his own projects with the support of friends and acquaintances, many of whom were distinguished figures in the artistic scene at the time: Friedrich Dürrenmatt, Elmar Zorn, Manfred Frei, Gottfried Knapp, Arthur Miller, Maximilian and Maria Schell, Volker Schlöndorff, Margarethe von Trotta, and Ulrike and Klaus Voswinckel. The collective efforts of his friends, and, ultimately, devoted supporters, helped Economou advance his career to new heights through their acquaintances and connections.

Economou was a highly skilled jazz player and improviser too, and one of his greatest achievements was the co-founding of the *Münchner Klaviersommer* in 1981, a pioneering festival that brought together classical and jazz musicians in unprecedented onstage collaborations. Chick Corea, Martha Argerich, Sviatoslav Richter, Rodion Shchedrin, Nelson Freire, Ivo Pogorelich, Friedrich Gulda, Mischa Maisky, and Oscar Peterson are some of the world-renowned artists who have participated in the *Klaviersommer* across the years. Concerts in the *Kongresssaal* of the *Deutsches Museum* were resounding successes, with more than 2000 seats consistently filled to capacity. As Bela Hartmann writes

> [t]he festival flourished, not least because of the infectious informality of proceedings, where programmes were spontaneous and musicians dress casually – unusual for the Bavarian capital, where dinner jackets and conservatism have always been highly valued. Economou, a prodigiously gifted improviser, often appeared together with other pianists, improvising in various styles on two or even three pianos.
> (Hartmann n.d.)

Economou released his first solo album in 1979 with a small record label called *Artistic Musikproduktion* (Economou 1979), and after the success of the *Klaviersommer* in 1982, his performances and improvisations with Chick Corea were released by *Deutsche Grammophon* (Economou and Corea 1983). Economou was also offered a contract by DG for a solo album almost a decade later (Economou 1991a), while his friendship and artistic partnership with Martha Argerich led to another release with the Yellow Label in 1983, which included Economou's now-famous and highly acclaimed arrangement of Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite* for two pianos (Economou and Argerich 1983). It is known that Argerich was highly impressed by his playing, and she has openly admitted in the past that Economou was "very important" to her and "one of the most important pianists she ever met" (Sklair 2012, 41:03-41:12). They performed together for many years and remained close friends until Economou's passing.[10]

In 1983, *Bayerischer Rundfunk* aired *Kreisleriana*, a full-length documentary directed by Klaus Voswinckel, which offers a glimpse into Economou's life and artistry (Voswinckel 1983). Moreover, by the mid-eighties, his professional activity as a composer was constantly growing. He composed music for films such as Margarethe von Trotta's multi-award winners *Die bleierne Zeit* (1981) and *Rosa Luxemburg* (1986), as well as for Robert Wilson's *Stations* (1982), Maximilian Schell's *Marlene* (1984), and Nico Hofmann's *Quarantäne* (1989), amongst others (MUBI n.d.; IMDb n.d.). Moreover, Economou was one of the composers alongside Philip Glass, David Byrne, Jo Kondo and Gavin Bryars chosen by Robert Wilson to compose music for his monumental five-act, twelve-hour opera *CIVIL*

[10] The cover of the published score of one of Economou's piano cycles, *Kinderlaunen*, features a drawing by Martha Argerich's daughter, Stephanie.

warS, conceived for the 1984 Summer Olympic Games in Los Angeles. Hildegard Behrens, Jessye Norman, and David Bowie were among of the singers who participated in the project (Strand 1983, 14).[11] In addition, in 1990 Economou collaborated with the prima ballerina Maya Plisetskaya, a dear friend of his, recording seven improvisations for piano and dance, commissioned by the Swiss national broadcaster (SRF).[12] He was also invited twice by the Union of Soviet Composers in 1988 and 1990, and participated in the International Festival of Contemporary Music, in Leningrad and Moscow respectively.

Economou received numerous accolades in recognition of his artistic contributions and achievements. In 1979, he received the *Förderungspreis für Interpretierende Kunst* due to his contribution to the cultural life of Munich, and since 1988, the seat no. 868 bears his name in the *Prinzregententheater* in the same city. Also, in 1991 he received the *Tefkros Anthias-Theodosis Pierides* Cultural Contribution Award, a significant recognition among Cypriot artists. A year later, he was elected a member of the European Academy of Arts and Sciences, and in 1993 he became the artistic director of the *Pianisti non Solo* Festival in Venice, where his arrangement of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* for four pianos was premiered.[13]

Economou's work as a performer and composer was gradually reduced during his last few years of his life, as he grappled with a continuous feeling of personal dissatisfaction with his career, as well as a turbulent personal life. He stopped practicing or preparing new repertoire, which, according to Elmar Zorn, led to a number of "horrible concerts" (Sklair 2012, 01:11:34-01:11:42). His sister, Tania Economou, attributed his decline in part to the

[11] The project was eventually scrapped due to lack of funds.
[12] These improvisations are available on YouTube from LOFTmusic: "Maya Plisetskaya & Nicolas Economou: Dance Impressions," Youtube video, September 30-October 6, 2016, https://youtu.be/wfiLBDZp-Hw?si=WuMjdW7LgdW4fK9t.
[13] Economou's arrangement of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* for four pianos was performed in Lugano in 2007 (Argerich et al. 2007) and in Verbier in 2009 (medici.tv 2009).

psychological toll of high expectations (Sklair 2012, 01:11:42-01:11:52). A close friend and collaborator of Economou, German music producer Manfred Frei, states in the documentary *Remembering Nicolas Economou*:

> [Economou] wanted to make a very big career, [...] playing not only with Chick [Corea], or Martha [Argerich], or [Friedrich] Gulda, [but] playing on his own in the biggest rooms of the country. And this was not so easy, even with these successes, even with good critics – *very* good critics; even with *some* very good concerts in Munich and other places. But a really big career was not so easy. And he wanted it *subito*, immediately. And he was not patient at all!
> (Sklair 2012, 01:07:56-01:08:33)

In the same documentary, his daughter, Semeli Economou discusses that her father found it difficult to navigate and adapt to the political intricacies of the music industry: "it's not just enough to be good. You have to play the game" (Sklair 2012, 01:08:33-01:08:42). His close friend Mike Reynolds similarly explains that "[Nicolas'] irreverent attitude created immense problems for career development in the conventional sense. And the sheer originality of his interpretations did not always help" (Reynolds 1996, 3).

Economou's identity extended beyond that of a pianist, composer, and conductor; he was also a profound thinker. His diaries and notebooks preserved in the Nicolas Economou Archive reveal his thoughts and beliefs, expressed in poetry and prose, on themes such as society and the role of the artist within it, human values, and class structures. He also completed a novel titled *Vromolaos*, which remains unpublished to this day. He was known for his provocative discussions and his great interest in politics and philosophy, as well as his longing for social justice and equality. As Hartmann writes, "[w]hether as a composer, improviser, pianist or conductor, whether discussing Shostakovich, Stendhal, Plato or Lenin, he expressed himself with an uncompromising energy that was as infectious as it was direct" (Hartmann n.d.).

In a letter, young Economou articulates his artistic credo: “I want to break the barriers which divide music into different genres. There are only two types of music: good and bad” (Economou [1974?]). He detested the idea of identifying music as ‘serious’ or ‘light’ according to the genre it belonged, or pigeonholing himself only as a pianist or composer – he believed in the multifaceted role of a musician (Economou 1990, 7:25-8:02). He believed that what is called ‘classical’ music should not be presented in an anachronistic way, as a “ritual” in concert halls, and that when music is approached as a “museum”, it loses its societal relevance, becoming a lifeless entity “that young people don’t need” (Economou 1981, 24:00-25:21). For Economou, there were no borders between arts, and he advocated their accessibility to everyone, regardless of their social status, wealth or education.

He was always eager to explore the social dimension of music, and the relationship/interaction between performers and audiences. During a radio interview, he confessed that it is much easier for him to relate to jazz than twentieth-century music, since for the former’s execution, collaborative effort is essential: “there is no ‘dictator’ in jazz ensembles. [...] No one can fulfil anything without everyone else’s help and contribution. [...] It doesn’t matter what you wear or how you behave on stage. Audience and performers are one” (Economou 1981, 21:40-25:20). Similarly, he held a deep appreciation for The Beatles, as “they are four musicians creating as equals” (Economou 1981, 17:45-18:00). In an interview with Greek musicologist and critic Katy Romanou, Economou stated that “adapting to, and being indifferent to your audience means that you underestimate it” (Economou 1980).

Nicolas Economou died on the night of the 29th of December 1993, in a car accident in Cyprus. He had given his last concert in Nicosia three weeks earlier, a performance that combined music with verse and prose. Approximately ten hours of recordings have been released posthumously in seven volumes (Economou 1998), yet many compositions remained unfinished or un-notated, and several projects were left unrealised. One of these projects was a ballet for Maya Plisetskaya, and *The Tower*, a rock opera based on a libretto by Reynolds, which had been a major work in progress from 1972 until his death. Additionally, a piano festival in Limassol, featuring Argerich and Freire, Maria João Pires, Evgeny Kissin, Krystian Zimerman, Yo-Yo Ma, Nigel Kennedy, Wynton Marsalis, Kathleen Battle, Keith Emerson, and the DIVA Jazz Orchestra, among others, never came to fruition (Zivkovich 1993). One of Economou's most ambitious endeavours was the foundation of the Centre for the Arts and Sciences in Cyprus, with support from the European Academy of the Arts and Sciences – a project which was also never fulfilled. This idea was expressed as early as 1974 in one of his interviews (Economou 1974, 4).

2.3. Economou the Composer

Economou was praised during his lifetime not only as a virtuoso pianist but an accomplished composer too.[14] He composed more than twenty works for solo piano, several works for various ensembles, music for theatre and film, a rock opera, as well as some short pieces for solo instruments and songs. As already mentioned, he also arranged

[14] The renowned Russian composer Rodion Shchedrin expressed his deep respect for Economou on multiple occasions, recognizing him not only as a pianist but also as a composer, going so far as to encourage him to prioritize composition over performance (George Economou 1970; Nicolas Economou 1971b).

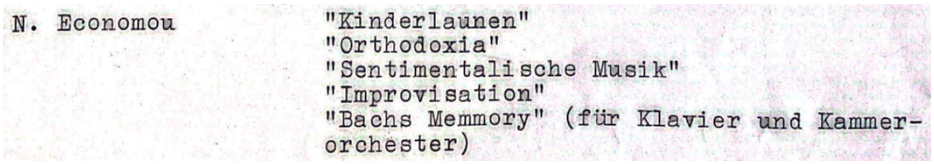
Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite* for two pianos, as well as Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* for four pianos.[15] Economou regarded his compositional work with equal significance to his career as a pianist, while in his final years, composition became an increasingly central focus of his artistic identity. In a 1991 interview, he confessed: "For now, I do not intend to quit piano but my path pulls me towards this direction. To conduct orchestras and compose music" (Economou 1991b, 18).

With the exception of his *Kinderlaunen* for piano, none of Economou's compositions have been published to this day. His works can exclusively be found in the Nicolas Economou Archive, currently housed at the LUMA Foundation in Zurich. In addition to manuscripts of his finished compositions, the Archive holds more than thirty unfinished compositions, including a sonata for clarinet and piano, a sonata for flute and piano, works for large orchestra, works for piano and orchestra, as well as various sketches and drafts. Most notably, the Archive includes Economou's recordings of his un-notated works for piano, which exhibit his unique approach to composition. Although many of his compositions were fully notated, a significant number of his piano works was never written down by Economou himself, as he was "notorious for his reluctance to set his compositions on paper" (Dimova-Georgieva 2015, 25). According to Nicolas' sister, Tania Economou, he considered the task of notating his piano compositions as painstaking, dull and "a futile endeavour", since these works were conceived and developed at the piano, without the need to use a manuscript (Tania Economou, pers. comm., October 21, 2021). *'Orthodoxia' Piano Sonata*, *Memories*, *Stilparodien*, *Eight Nocturnes*, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, *Variations on an Original Theme*, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, *Pictures for Piano*, *Mephisto Waltz*

[15] His arrangement of Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite* was published by Alfred Music in 1988, while his arrangement of *The Four Seasons* remains unpublished.

Paraphrase, *Quatschmusik*, and *Sonate für Chick* are Economou's known piano works which exist only as recordings. It is worth mentioning that he attempted to notate some of these compositions during his lifetime. The Nicolas Economou Archive houses manuscripts of the first movement and the first twenty bars of the second movement of his '*Orthodoxia*' *Piano Sonata*; the opening nocturne from his *Eight Nocturnes*, the first thirty-five bars of the cycle *Hommage à J. S. Bach*; the theme and first eight Variations of the first version of his *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*; and the opening twenty-four bars of his *Pictures for Piano*, which are not identical, but very similar to the existing recording.

Several of Economou's works appear in the repertoire lists attached to his CVs. The Archive contains two versions of these lists, though neither is dated. The first accompanies one of Economou's CVs written in German, hence, it was created after 1972, when he relocated from Moscow to Germany. It includes only early works, and it is therefore assumed that this repertoire list was made in the first half of the 1970s.

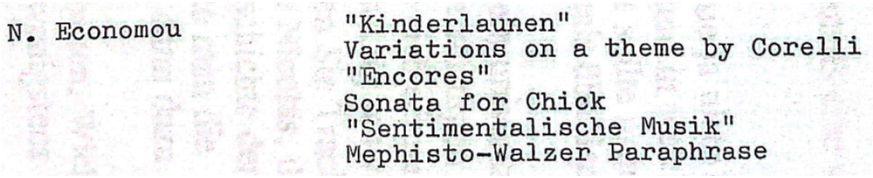

N. Economou

"Kinderlaunen"
"Orthodoxia"
"Sentimentalische Musik"
"Improvisation"
"Bachs Memmory" (für Klavier und Kammer-
orchester)

Figure 1. Nicolas Economou's Repertoire List [early seventies], Nicolas Economou Archive, LUMA Foundation, Zurich, box 11.2.

Even though no date is indicated in the second repertoire list either, it was certainly made in 1992 or 1993, as the CV it accompanies mentions Economou's membership in the European Academy of Arts and Sciences, an honour he received in 1992.[16]

[16] There is no written or recorded documentation of *Improvisation*, *Sentimentalische Musik* and *Encores*.


N. Economou

"Kinderlaunen"
Variations on a theme by Corelli
"Encores"
Sonata for Chick
"Sentimentalische Musik"
Mephisto-Walzer Paraphrase

Figure 2. Nicolas Economou's Repertoire List [1992/1993], Nicolas Economou Archive, LUMA Foundation, Zurich, box 11.2.

Economou performed both his notated and un-notated works on several occasions. Concert programmes and recordings in the Archive document fifteen performances of *Kinderlaunen* between 1971 and 1989, four performances of *Song of Freedom* between 1971 and 1977, and a single performance of *Memories* in 1974. His *Cyprus Dances* and *Cyprus Pictures*, written for septet and octet respectively, were performed three times in 1979, while in 1980 and 1981, Economou performed an arrangement of *Cyprus Dances* for piano and clarinet with Raúl Alvarellos. In 1980, Economou performed his *Sieben Stücke im Alten Stil* and his *Mephisto Waltz Paraphrase*,[17] and as will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter, he performed his *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* during his tour with Chick Corea in 1981. His *Labyrinth* for piano and percussion was performed twice, in 1975 and 1993.

Economou's unwillingness to set his compositions on paper is also exhibited by the large number of unfinished manuscripts he left behind. While some are clearly sketches, containing only fragmentary musical ideas, several others, though consisting of fewer than ten bars, bear titles, indicating that Economou intended to eventually fully notate his compositions.

[17] There is no written or recorded documentation of *Sieben Stücke im Alten Stil*.

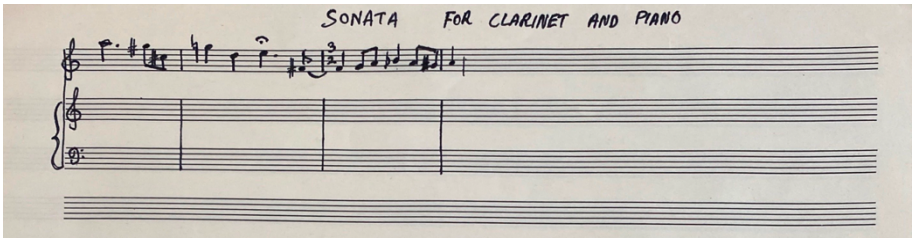


Figure 3. Opening bars of Economou's manuscript for his *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano*, Nicolas Economou Archive, LUMA Foundation, Zurich, item 5.19.13.

Other drafts appear to be mostly finished, lacking only a few bars for their completion, while manuscripts for various chamber ensembles or orchestra are completed but with missing parts. In other cases, all parts are completed with the piano part missing or incomplete (e.g. his *American Bar*, a song cycle, and the finale of his *Cyprus Pictures*).[18] It is assumed that in these instances, the piano part is omitted because Economou himself played it, and as discussed, he may not found it necessary to notate it.

As mentioned, Economou was also an accomplished jazz player and improviser. Thus, one could argue that, perhaps, his practices as a composer were heavily shaped and influenced by the jazz tradition, where the need for notation is not as strong as in Western classical music. Moreover, his remarkable memory is not only proved by his capacity to create 'fixed' compositions without the need to notate them – many of which exceed fifteen minutes in duration – but also by the absence of any written notes or markings in the scores he used as a pianist.[19] Consequently, in multiple aspects of his music-making practices as

[18] Nicolas Economou Archive, Items 5.11.b and 5.15.
[19] Semeli Economou has kindly granted me access to her father's sheet music collection, which includes books he used from his time at the Special School of Music of the Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Moscow and throughout his career until his passing.

a pianist and composer, Economou displayed no need for any form of written documentation.

In 1991, Economou acknowledged that most of his compositional work had remained unpublished, in a somewhat cryptic statement: “I have not aspired to publish anything because I made it for myself” (Economou 1991b, 18). Even though he was frequently asked during interviews regarding his work as a composer, there were very rarely any instances when Economou referred in detail to specific compositions. Most importantly, he never addressed his un-notated works. It remains unclear whether Economou intended to eventually notate them, or whether the recordings were simply created for personal reference. Each recording contains errors and wrong notes, and they were all produced as unedited single-take performances, suggesting they were never meant for release. Therefore, two possible scenarios are in play regarding the function of Economou’s recordings of his un-notated works: that he either wanted to capture these compositions in order to use the recordings to notate them at a later point, or he intended to use these recordings as mnemonic devices, potentially for future revision or refinement of his compositions (without necessarily setting them on paper). Although the integrity of Economou’s playing and the musical material *per se* leaves little room to classify them as sketches or drafts, it remains impossible to know whether he intended to revise them after the recording sessions.

A comprehensive analysis of Economou’s compositional output, although worthwhile, lies beyond the scope of this dissertation. However, the following summary of his notated and un-notated compositional work highlights an impressive spectrum of styles, techniques, and influences (see Appendix for a list of Economou’s finished

compositions). His first few works are meticulously notated, composed with more conventional techniques than his later ones, and using simple melodic and rhythmic material. Starting in the early 1970s, Economou's growing interest to develop his craft as a composer is reflected in his consistent efforts to expand the harmonic language in his compositions, experimenting, at the same time, with texture and other compositional techniques. While he was a strong critic of avant-garde music, insisting that music must retain the essential elements of melody, rhythm, and harmony (Economou 1991b, 18), from the mid-eighties until the end of his life, his works take on a progressively more dissonant character, with almost none of them written down by him. Yet even in the later, more mature works of Economou, there seems to be a dynamic interaction between 'traditional' writing and more experimental compositional approaches, with a frequent use of quasi-improvisational writing, or as will be discussed later, direct instructions for improvisation and *ad libitum* playing.

He emphasized the importance of composing music that resonated with his personal and cultural identity, stating that he wrote "as someone who was born in Cyprus, studied in Russia, and now lives in Germany. [...] All my experiences are reflected in my music" (Economou 1987, 11:10-12:10). He also described his ensemble music as jazz, not necessarily due to its material, but because of the interactive, flexible approach it requires from the performers, though in some of his compositions, he did incorporate jazz rhythmic and melodic features (Economou 1981, 23:48-24:00). Consequently, Economou's development as a composer was not confined towards one direction, but was continually enriched by material from various sources and traditions. This blend of influences from Romantic writing, Cypriot folk music, post-tonal and jazz music, occurs not out of

eclecticism, but as a means of authentic artistic expression. It is what makes his compositional style distinct and unique; in Cyprien Katsaris' words, "[t]he diversity and the range of his compositions show and demonstrates a universal musician" (Katsaris 2003).

Considering that "[t]he manner in which a composer consigns musical ideas to paper [...] sheds light on the composer's priorities, underlying assumptions and unconscious givens" (Sallis 2004, 51), a close examination of Economou's manuscripts – be they sketches, drafts, or fair copies – could help to better understand his compositional practices, which, in turn, could potentially inform editorial decisions for the creation of posthumous editions of his un-notated compositions. At the same time, it is worth taking into account that composers may also create sketches and drafts which are not destined to be seen by anyone but themselves. Their function might be merely mnemonic, for example, and even "[c]omplete scores in manuscript", as Grier writes, "sometimes function as performing materials [for the composer], or as pre-publication state" (Grier 1996, 39). Generally, the Nicolas Economou Archive contains very few manuscripts that can be identified as fair copies – 'final', polished versions of compositions prepared for performance or publication – or revised drafts, at least. Therefore, although some observations are discussed below, they are based primarily on sketches and rough, early drafts.

The draft and fair copy of Economou's *Cyprus Dances*, for instance, offer insight into how a typical draft by Economou evolved into a more polished manuscript, as they exhibit significant differences between them (Figure 4). The draft lacks performance directions, while the clarinet in B♭ and trumpet in B♭ are notated in concert pitch. In contrast, Economou's fair copy includes detailed dynamic, phrasing and articulation markings. Also,

the clarinet and trumpet parts are transposed accordingly, while a section originally marked *Presto* in the draft appears in the fair copy as *alla breve*, with halved time values. Similar variations between draft and fair copy are evident in the manuscripts of his *Song of Freedom*, *Encore* and *Conversation with Myself*.

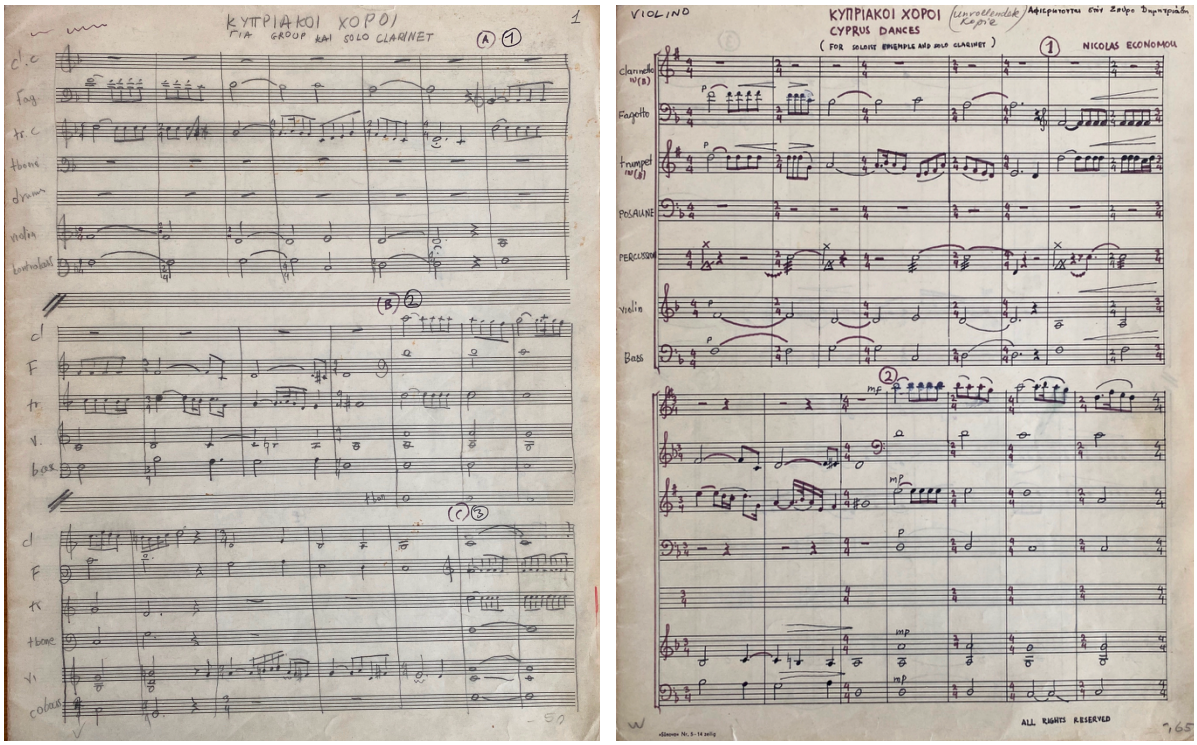


Figure 4. First pages of the draft and fair copy of Economou's *Cyprus Dances*, Nicolas Economou Archive, LUMA Foundation, Zurich, items 5.15a and 5.15b.

While most of Economou's sketches and drafts lack performance directions, and sometimes time signatures and rests too, it is worth mentioning that in some manuscripts, Economou writes down phrase markings and slurs (and more rarely other articulation marks), even if there is no other performance direction (see Figure 5). It could therefore be argued that this suggests the significance he placed as a composer on phrasing and articulation. As will be discussed in the following section of this chapter, this observation is substantiated by his piano playing too.

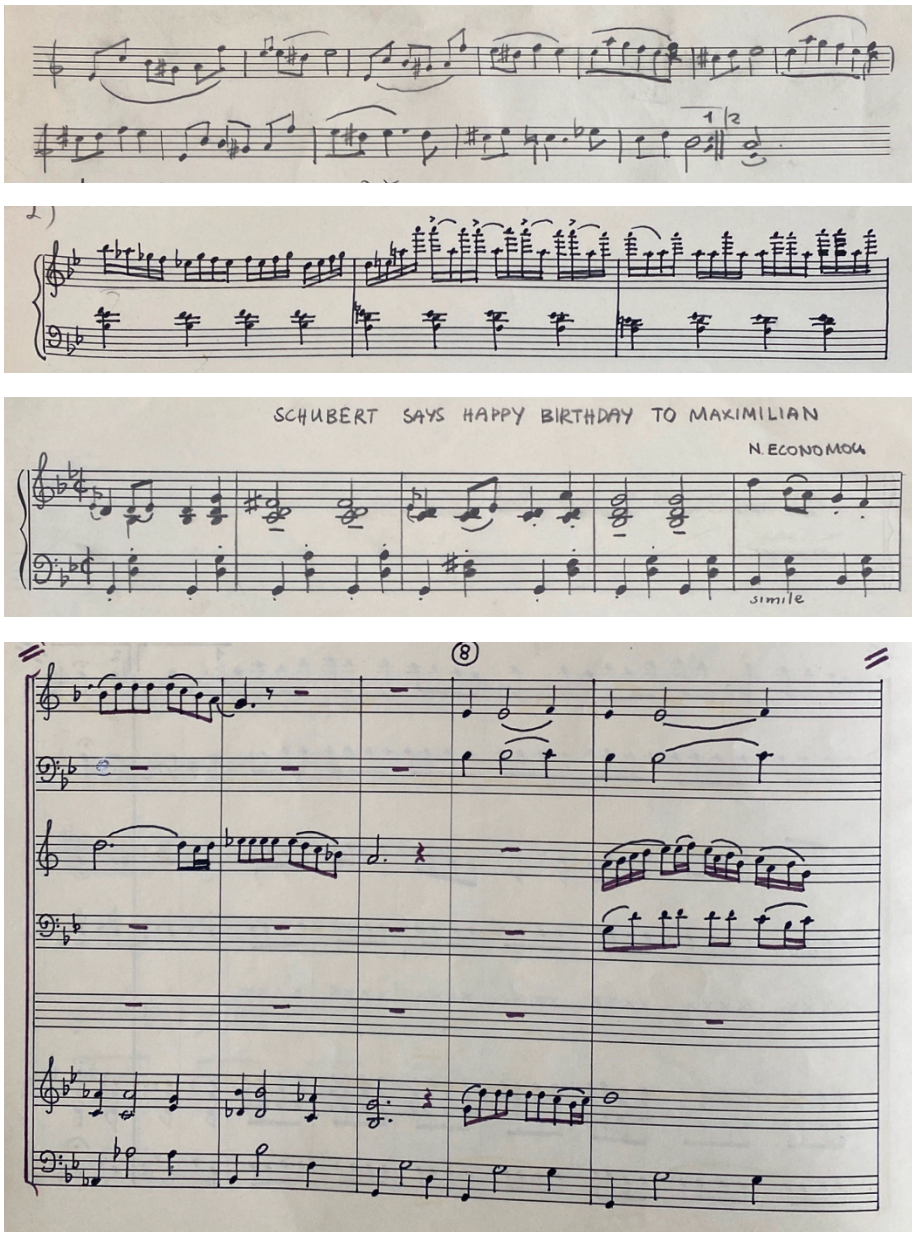


Figure 5. Excerpts from sketches and drafts of Economou, Nicolas Economou Archive, LUMA Foundation, Zurich, items 5.19.3, 5.19.19, 5.19.20, 5.15.b.

In addition, many drafts indicate the use of compound meters or unconventional time signatures, as well as frequent changes in time signature. For example, a draft for a work for orchestra starts in 3/4, transitions to 2/4 after three bars, and then shifts to 3/8 after two bars; the subsequent bar reverts to 3/4 before transitioning back to 2/4.[20] Another

[20] Nicolas Economou Archive, Item 5.19.5.

sketch, indicates many frequent time signature changes with meters such as 5/4, 5/8, and 3/16, while the 'Toccata' from his *Labyrinth*, arranged for orchestra, starts in 4/4 before changing into 15/8, and then returning back to 4/4 after a few bars.[21] Consequently, Economou's decisions on meter and organisation of musical material into bars could inform the editorial process of his un-notated compositions. Some drafts and sketches bear indications for improvisation and *ad libitum* development of material too (Figures 6 and 7).[22]

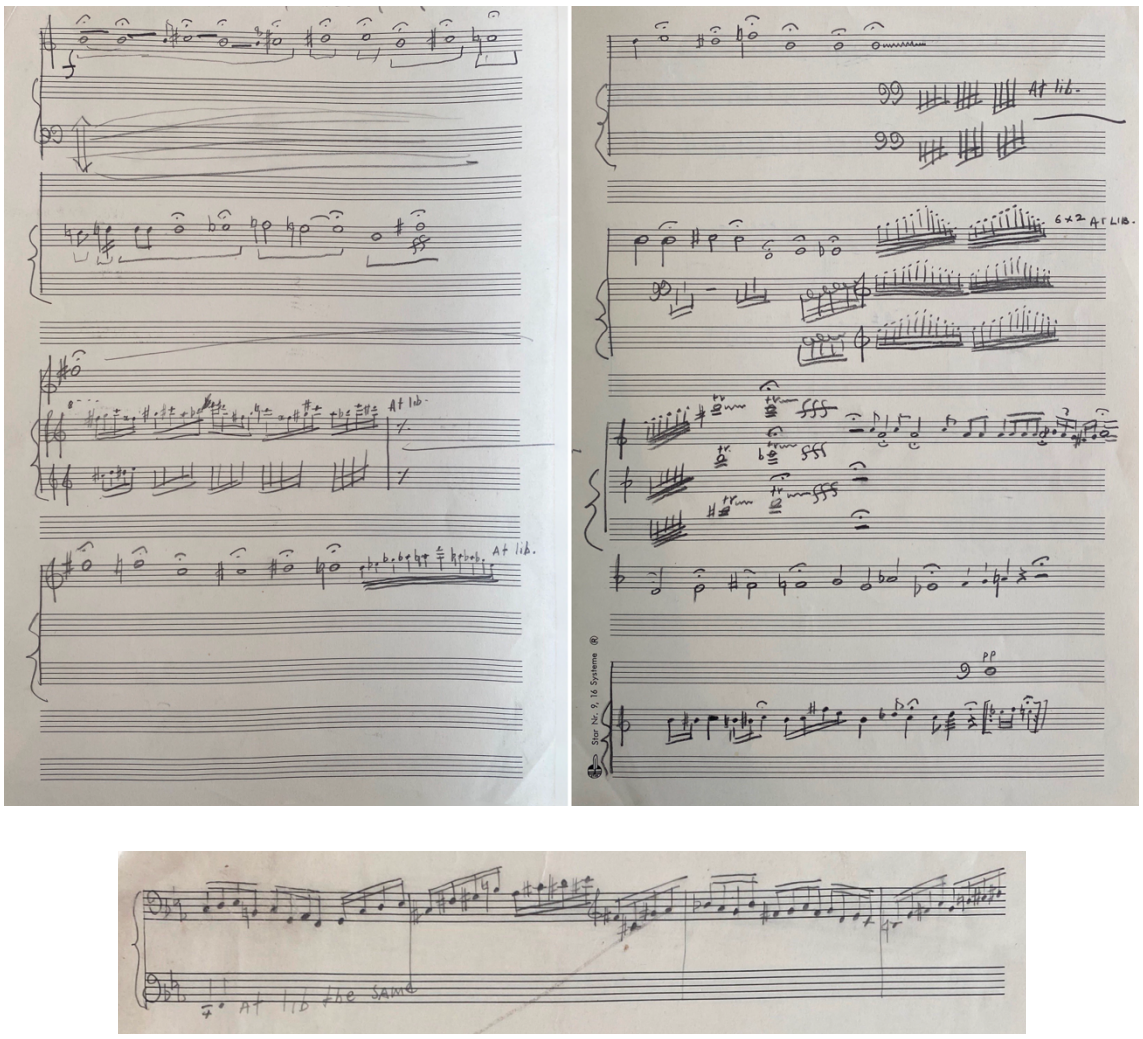


Figure 6. Excerpts from sketches and drafts of Economou, Nicolas Economou Archive, LUMA Foundation, Zurich, items 5.19.14, 5.19.34.

[21] Nicolas Economou Archive, Items 5.19.7 and 5.19.56a.
[22] Nicolas Economou Archive, Items 5.19.34 and 5.19.39.

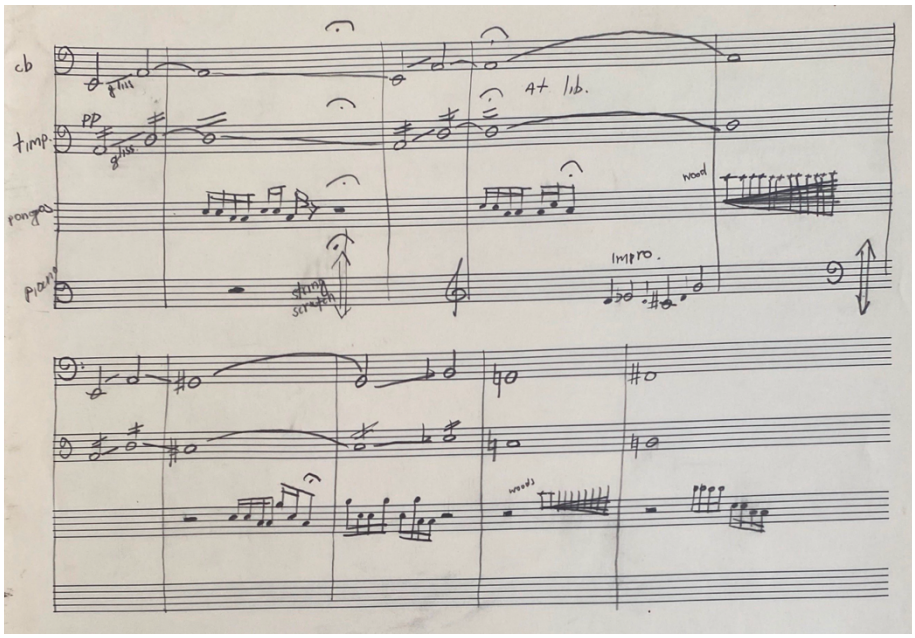


Figure 7. Excerpt from untitled draft of Economou, Nicolas Economou Archive, LUMA Foundation, Zurich, item 5.19.39.

The manuscripts of 'finished' and fully notated compositions (fair copies) present further information regarding Economou's compositional practices and writing style. Apart from frequent time signature changes, which one can find in both unfinished and finished compositions, Economou often uses extreme dynamics, usually ranging from *ppp* to *fff*, as well as dramatic and sudden dynamic contrasts. In certain instances, Economou takes these to even greater extremes. For example, one can find hushed dynamics as subtle as *pppp* in his *Walzer mit Variationen* and *Enigma*, or *crescendos* reaching as far as *ffff* and even *ffffff*, both used in his *Song of Freedom* (Figure 8). Nonetheless, these examples appear primarily in his early works, perhaps reflecting the bold experimentation and excitement characteristic of a young composer still exploring the outer limits of his expressive range, rather than as indicators of a mature or consistent stylistic trait. Hence, their cautious interpretation is necessary; they should not be overemphasized in a serious evaluation of his overall compositional voice.

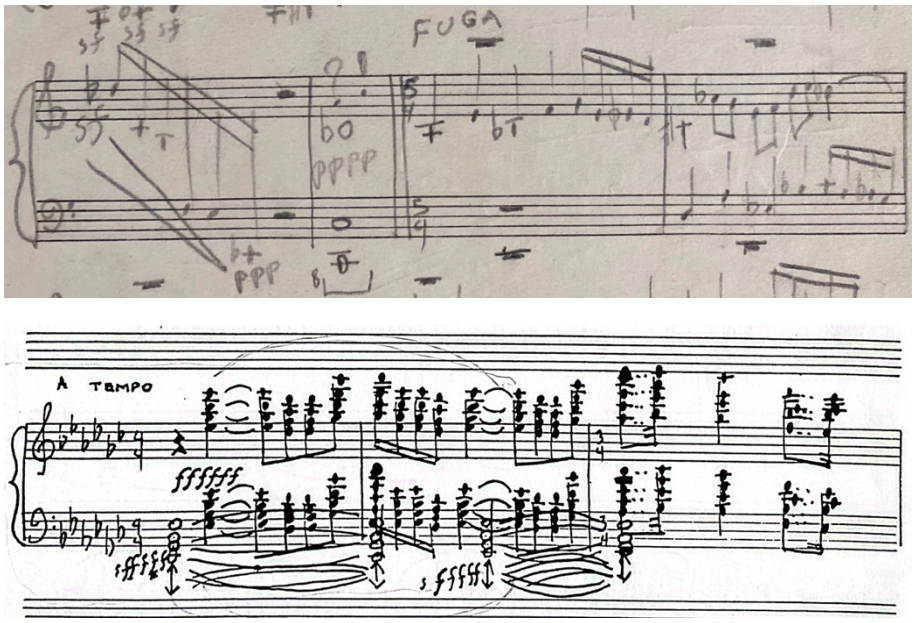


Figure 8. Excerpts from Economou's manuscripts of *Enigma* and *Song of Freedom*, Nicolas Economou Archive, LUMA Foundation, Zurich, items 5.11.m. and 5.9.n.

That said, the diligent use of phrase and articulation marks is evident in almost all his finished manuscripts/fair copies (Figure 9), as well as clear voicing and part-writing (Musical Example 1) – another set of observations that could inform the editorial process for his un-notated compositions. In most manuscripts, Economou provides a tempo marking, and on few occasions, a metronome marking too – more specifically, only in his *Song of Freedom*, *Kinderlaunen*, *Encore*, and *Conversation with Myself*.

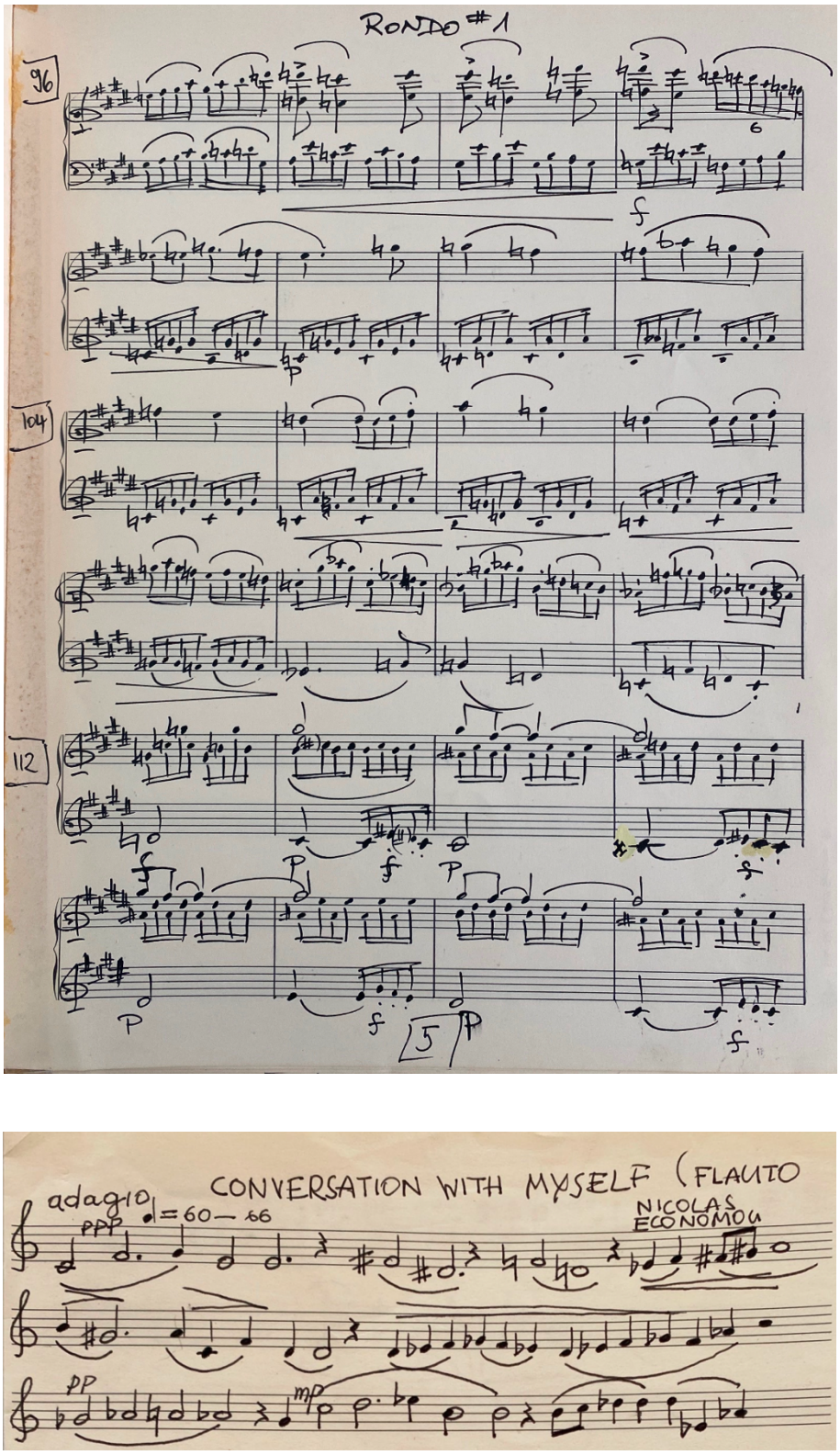
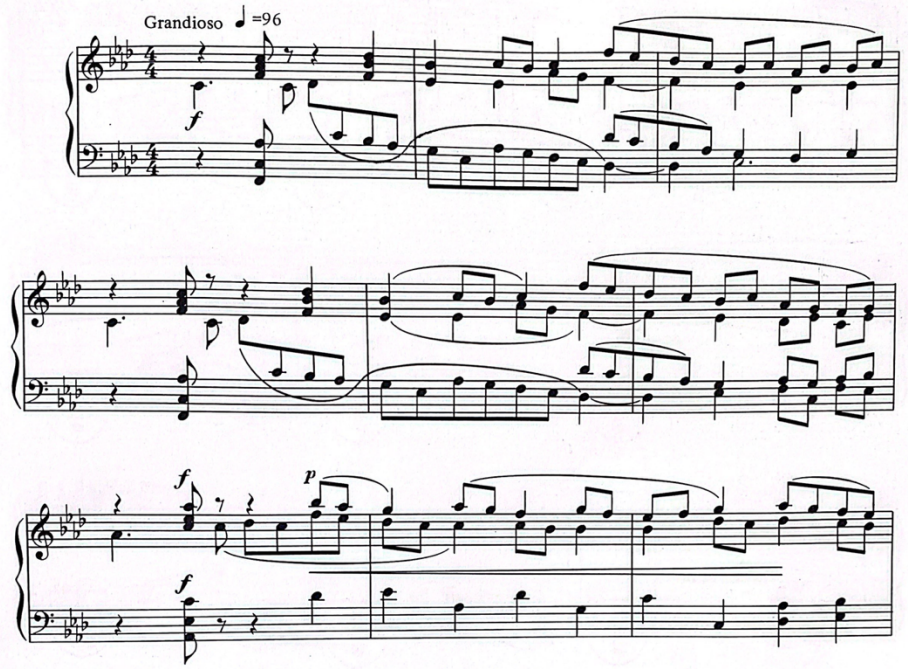


Figure 9. Fifth page of Economou's manuscript of *Rondo No. 1*, and opening bars of *Conversation with Myself*, Nicolas Economou Archive, LUMA Foundation, Zurich, items 5.9.v. and 5.9.m.



Musical Example 1. Opening bars of 'Psalmus', from Nicolas Economou, *Kinderlaunen*, Edition Modern, 1982, 13. © Ricordi Berlin.

2.4. Economou the Pianist

It is worthwhile to initially examine how critics received Economou's pianistic artistry during his lifetime. When considered together, these reviews offer a composite portrait of the most significant attributes of his playing, which substantiates observations discussed later in the analysis of both released and unreleased recordings of Economou's performances. Numerous reviews commend, not only the quality of his artistry and craft, but his idiosyncratic interpretations and rich sound. Margo Schuchardt remarks that "Economou's stupendously polished technique is never an eye-catcher, but rather a point of departure combining both spiritual and musical perception" (Schuchardt 1973). Similarly, Lily Drakou observes that Economou's playing "captivates precisely for the spirituality of his interpretations. And if this pianist surprises you with his technical vigour and his winged touch, he simultaneously moves you deeply with the clarity, the expressive richness"

(Drakou 1982). Wolfgang Plenio commends Economou's "self-evident technical perfection, [...] able to release immense power" as well as his ability to "weave and float extremely fine veils of sound" (Plenio 1985). Lutz Höpfl highlights his "idiosyncratic sound" (Höpfl 1977), while David Murray commends his "bold attacks" (Murray 1980, 15). In addition, Günter Weiß applauds Economou's "assertive temperament, the satisfyingly resonant left hand, the fascinatingly accurate right hand, that effortlessly conquered all octave leaps, a crystal-clear, polished technique, steel-like attacks, delicate exploration of tonal values in striking alternation", as well as his "[o]verwhelming climaxes" (Weiß 1987).

A recurring theme in many reviews is the improvisatory quality of Economou's interpretations. Zorn, for example, writes that "[w]hether it be Bach or Mozart, Liszt or Skrjabin, music played by him (his listeners and critics confirm that again and again) sounds like just composed, like spontaneously created" (Zorn n.d.); Klaus Kirchberg admires Economou's ability to enrich his interpretations with "a touch of improvisational freedom" (Kirchberg 1989); and Stéphane Friédérich hails Economou's interpretations with "immense dynamic palette, the melodic vibrations, the sense of epic – almost nearing improvisation" (Friédérich 1998, 78). Furthermore, Philippe van den Bosch writes: "he gives me a feeling of genuineness and incomparable clearness. Whereas the others [Arrau, Horowitz, Argerich, Richter], appear to me as interpreters of some kind of text. Some of the styles very interesting and touching, but Economou seems to me the incarnation of Truth. Every line, with him, takes its own expressive and exact value" (van den Bosch 1999, 52).

Despite this considerable acclaim, Economou's interpretive choices were not universally embraced. A number of critics expressed reservations about specific aspects of Economou's playing, such as his quick tempos, his heavy-handed playing, or perceived

stylistic liberties. Joachim Kaiser, for example, criticizes his tendency to rush, his neglect towards stylistic idioms, as well as "an intensity that has more to do with indiscipline than temperament" (Kaiser 1987). Karl Schumann writes in a concert review that "[h]is forceful temperament, completely unleashed by some nervousness, often got the better of him with the help of his skilful fingers" (Schumann 1976), while David Murray refers to Economou's "sensational piano-playing, with some hair-rising speeds solidly held" (Murray 1980, 15). Regarding Economou's sound, Robert Hambleton also observes that "[h]e loves sharp, even brutal contrasts, but he is harsh rather than aggressive" (Hambleton 1985). Also, in his review for *The Toronto Star*, William Littler writes that "[t]he problem with Enconomou's [sic] Russian-style playing was that the poetry which should have emerged from Schumann's *C Major Fantasy* and *Papillons* especially, tended to be smothered under the weight of his attack". In the same review, Littler adds that "[i]t was only in the starker canvases of Mussorgsky's *Pictures At An Exhibition* that his heavy-weight technique found a convincing outlet, and even there he consistently applied the paint with a palette knife rather than a fine brush. Exciting, yes, he was that. But in the way brute force is exciting. Music takes better to seduction than rape" (Littler 1986, H2).

This collection of reviews underscores the individuality of Economou and his artistry – a pianist lauded for his technical prowess, emotional depth, and interpretative originality, yet not immune to critique by a few on his rich and often harsh sound, quick, and sometimes, unsteady tempos, as well as a temperament that, in their view, occasionally exceeded the bounds of stylistic propriety. Nonetheless, as Zorn admits, "[o]ne can, at best, disapprove categorically of his sensibility that is not afraid of extremes but to push him away into the boring mediocrity of the daily concert business is impossible" (Zorn n.d.).

Economou expressed on multiple occasions his views on the dynamic relationship between performers and composers' texts. For instance, in 1973 he reflected on the interpretative process, describing how he used the composer's text both as a point of reference *and* departure. In his own words, Economou always tried "to focus on the meaning [of the composition] and remain faithful to the composer's idea rather than the signs themselves", maintaining that "[t]here are no rules of interpretation. It would be boring if everyone played in the same way" (Economou 1973, 106). In another interview, he explains further that "[t]he performer should always express his own thoughts and concerns through music, without misinterpreting the composer [and his text]. [...] The composer draws the basic lines and the interpreter fills these in, but, of course, one cannot express things that do not match with these lines" (Economou 1986, 103). Additionally, in the last interview he gave a few days before his death in 1993, Economou discussed the role of interpreters as creative agents responsible to communicate composers' ideas, describing performers and their instruments as 'wires' transmitting music further (Economou 1994, 20:20-21:20).

These statements collectively reveal Economou's stance on performance as an act of mediation between composer and audience. While advocating for personal expression, he remained firmly grounded in the belief that, such expression must always align with the composer's text – the foundation of one's interpretation – without, nonetheless, implying a higher priority on rigid adherence or mechanical fidelity to specific instructions or musical signs, over the unavoidably creative nature of musical interpretation. This balance between interpretive freedom and textual fidelity that defines Economou's approach to musical texts – evidenced by the close analysis of his recorded performances that follows – positions the

performer not as a passive reproducer, but as an engaged and thoughtful collaborator in the evolving life of a composition.

The aforementioned reviews (among many others) highlight the key characteristics that define Economou's interpretations, and the following discussion seeks not only to confirm these observations, but also to delve deeper into them, while exploring additional defining features of his performances. Using a selection of released and unreleased live and studio recordings of Economou's performances, the aim is to construct a comprehensive and well-substantiated profile of his playing style. As will be demonstrated in the next two chapters of this dissertation, this profile will serve as a critical point of reference during the editorial process of Economou's two un-notated works selected as case studies, enabling a clearer distinction between elements of the recorded performance that stem solely from his playing style and inherent features of the composition itself that merit inclusion in a prescriptive musical text.

The Nicolas Economou Archive contains more than a hundred unreleased audio and video recordings of live performances, as well as some unreleased studio recordings. This recording collection spans from 1965, with a live performance of twelve-year-old Economou at the Educational Academy in Nicosia, Cyprus,[23] to his last (known) recording made in September 1991 in a recording studio in Munich.[24] The two un-notated works chosen to be transcribed and edited as case studies for this dissertation, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* and *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, were recorded in the eighties, presumably during the first half of the decade. Hence, the recordings chosen to be analysed here were

[23] Nicolas Economou Archive, Item 3.1.
[24] Nicolas Economou Archive, Item 4.85.

made around that period, with very few exceptions, when recordings from the late seventies were also necessary.

Works that had been recorded more than once were selected for this task in order to provide a more nuanced and well-supported perspective of Economou's playing style. The objective of this study was to identify the defining traits of his playing style, assessing, at the same time, the level of consistency across multiple performances of the same work, as well as Economou's engagement with, and interpretation of, musical texts. The conclusions discussed are based on a thorough examination of these recordings, with specific examples provided as necessary:

Table 1. Recordings of Economou's interpretations of works by other composers, used in the analysis of his playing style.

Composer	**Work**	**Dates of recordings (released/Nicolas Economou Archive Item Number)**
L. v. Beethoven	*Piano Sonata No. 12* in A-flat major, Op. 26	1976 (4.36), 1989 (released by Suoni e Colori)
L. v. Beethoven	*Bagatelles*, Op. 126	1982 (2.7), 1983 (4.11), 198?* (4.81), 1989 (released by Suoni e Colori)
F. Chopin	*Scherzo No. 2* in B-flat minor, Op. 31	1984 (4.15), 198?* (not part of the Archive)
F. Chopin	*Ballade No. 3* in A-flat major, Op. 47	1984 (4.15), 198?* (not part of the Archive)
F. Liszt	*Piano Sonata* in B minor, S. 178	1980 (released by Suoni e Colori), 1980 (4.24), 1983 (4.13), 1983 (4.11)
F. Liszt	*Mephisto Waltz No. 1*, S.514	1980 (released by Suoni e Colori), 198?* (4.81), 198?* (not part of the Archive)
W. A. Mozart	*Piano Sonata No. 10* in C major, K. 330	1979 (released by Artistic Musikproduktion), 1984 (2.10)
M. Mussorgsky	*Pictures at an Exhibition*	198?* (4.81), 1991 (released by Deutsche Grammophon)
A. Scriabin	*Preludes* No. 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, Op. 11	1976 (4.80), 1983 (4.13)
R. Schumann	*Papillons*, Op. 2	1983 (2.3), 1983 (4.11), 1986 (4.86), 1987 (4.87), 1989 (released by Suoni e Colori)

Table 1 (continued).

R. Schumann	*Kreisleriana*, Op. 16	1982 (2.3), 198?* (not part of the Archive), 1991 (released by Deutsche Grammophon)
R. Shchedrin	*Piano Sonata No. 1*	1980 (4.98), 1983 (2.14)
* These recordings were found on undated cassette tapes/compact discs. A thorough assessment of the repertoire recorded on these tapes/CDs and Economou's recital programs, provided the eighties as a reasonable timeframe for their origin. Some of them are not included in the Nicolas Economou Archive, but were provided by his sister, Tania Economou.		

Economou's statements on his approach to musical scores are supported by examining his interpretations in relation to the musical texts of the works performed. His fidelity towards other composers' texts is mostly exemplary, consistently displaying his commitment to treat them as the foundation of his own interpretations. Elements such as articulation, phrasing, and other performance directions are mostly incorporated in Economou's performances with notable fidelity to the composer's instructions. Nevertheless, deviations do occur, primarily with respect to dynamics, either because of his idiosyncratic, rich sound, or simply due to oversight, and potentially, deliberate departure from the text. Economou's interpretations also diverge from the score's instructions when it is evident that he refrains from playing repeated material in the same manner. Whether repeating an entire section marked by repeat signs, or navigating passages where the composer reintroduces identical musical material within a few lines or the same phrase, Economou introduces variation in his playing through nuances in dynamics, timing, and, at times, articulation too.

A particularly high degree of fidelity to the musical text is evident in Economou's interpretations of works by Mozart and Beethoven, where articulation and phrasing as it appears in the score are rendered with exceptional precision. His interpretations of much more dense and complex scores, such as that of R. Schumann's *Kreisleriana*, Chopin's *Scherzo No. 2* and *Ballade No. 3*, Scriabin's *Preludes*, or Shchedrin's *Piano Sonata No. 1*,

exhibit a similar level of accuracy with the composers' musical texts. Although some may characterize Economou's performances as idiosyncratic – describing them, as previously noted, as sounding "just composed," "spontaneously created," with "a touch of improvisational freedom" – what is truly remarkable is his ability to offer deeply original interpretations while remaining fundamentally faithful to the composer's musical text. His performances of Liszt's *Mephisto Waltz*, for example, may come across as disobediently individual. However, listening to his interpretations alongside Liszt's score reveals that Economou meticulously adheres to the composer's instructions, even his pedal markings.

It is also worth mentioning that Economou's commitment to follow composers' instructions is reflected in his nuanced distinction between accent, *sforzando*, and *marcato* markings, particularly evident in his recordings of *Kreisleriana*, *Papillons*, and Shchedrin's *Piano Sonata No. 1*. Notes bearing an accent are stressed and more projected than others, while *sforzando* is interpreted with an immediate and forceful gesture towards the keys, preceded by a subtle moment of preparation. *Marcato* conveys energetic emphasis, while maintaining a *non-legato* length. The interpretation of these three signs may not be consistent throughout Economou's performances of other composers' works, yet in most cases, his clear intention to distinguish these commonly conflated markings is a notable aspect of his fidelity towards musical texts.

Whether praised or criticized, the most defining characteristic of Economou's playing is undoubtedly his profoundly rich and well-projected idiosyncratic sound; some may argue it borders on being heavy and excessively loud. Virtually all his recordings demonstrate his heavy-handed playing, producing a direct, forceful, and occasionally harsh sound, while accented and *marcato*-like playing appears in places where the score bears

no such indications. As a result, the dynamics heard in his performances often exceed those specified by the composer. For example, both of his recordings of Scriabin's *Prelude No. 6*, op. 11, made in 1976 and 1983, show little in terms of dynamic fluctuation, as his playing ranges from what one might describe as *forte* to *fortississimo*. However, Scriabin's score indicates dynamics as soft as p, along with other performance directions such as *crescendo* and *diminuendo*. Similarly, Economou's recordings of Liszt's *Piano Sonata* and *Mephisto Waltz* exemplify his thunderous, yet sometimes overwhelmingly loud, playing. In the *Sonata*, for example, the climactic fff in bar 292 is played at virtually the same volume as earlier passages, marked by Liszt with f or ff. Likewise, in *Mephisto Waltz*, many *forte* passages are played with the intensity of fff, while softer dynamics such as ppp are rarely, if ever, observed – his quietest moments rarely dip below *piano*. Economou's interpretations of *Papillons* and *Kreisleriana* may also be described as overly loud, heavy, or sometimes harsh whenever f or ff is indicated in the score. In all his recordings of Chopin's *Scherzo* and *Ballade*, octave passages louder than *mezzo-forte* consistently sound *marcato* or accented – something also evident in his interpretation of the *Mephisto Waltz*.

This kind of playing is not limited to Romantic repertoire. For example, his 1979 recording of the second and third movements of Mozart's *Piano Sonata No. 10* in C major, K. 330, as well as his recording of 'Marcia Funebre' from Beethoven's *Piano Sonata No. 12* in A-flat major, Op. 26 may also be described as heavier and louder than what is conventionally expected in performances of this repertoire. Certainly, Economou's playing is equally elegant, refined, delicate and gentle, offering a rich palette of sound colours, as well as captivating, contemplative moments. However, his characteristically bold, rich sound, which results in accentuated and sharp playing, is a defining trait of his

interpretations which must be carefully considered when transcribing and editing his un-notated works.

Phrasing and structural clarity are paramount not only in Economou's compositional output where, as previously discussed, phrase markings appear to be among his primary when notating his compositions, but in his interpretations too. His fidelity to composers' phrase markings is evident in virtually all his recorded performances, yet what can be discussed further are the means by which he achieves this. Generally, Economou predominantly shapes phrases through (nuanced) dynamic fluctuations, often in ways which imply hairpins in the score which are not indicated. In other words, Economou conveys direction and development by adjusting dynamic intensity according to the phrase's contour and the trajectory of the melodic line. All this is particularly evident in Economou's recordings of Scriabin's *Preludes*, where, despite the intricate interplay between the right and left hand's material, each phrase is meticulously shaped, not only through subtle dynamic fluctuations, but also through timing and pacing. Economou's attention to phrase shaping is further demonstrated in his realization of written hairpins, which serve to regulate phrasing, guide temporal flow, and highlight structural arrival points. A notable interpretative trait is his tendency to slow down at the end of phrases, movements, or entire pieces, sometimes subtly, at other times more overtly, thereby creating the impression of a *ritardando*, even when nothing is indicated in the score. This trait of his interpretations is most evident in his recordings of Chopin's *Ballade No. 3*, Beethoven's Op. 126, Schumann's *Papillons*, Scriabin's *Preludes*, and the slow sections in Liszt's *Piano Sonata*.

Another distinctive feature of Economou's playing, which is consistently evident across his recorded performances, is his tendency to rush and accelerate, or, at least, to 'move forward', in quick, swift passages, especially ascending ones, when no such indication is written in the score. This is particularly evident in his recordings of Liszt's *Mephisto Waltz* which is full of bravura and virtuosic passages, and the *Piano Sonata* (notably in bars 40-54 and 541-555). Similar tendencies appear in his 1983 recording of the ninth movement of Schumann's *Papillons*, and in both his 1982 and 1985 recordings of *Kreisleriana*. In the latter, the opening section and the seventh movement (especially its second half) reveal this trait of Economou's playing, as the relentless semiquavers create a forward momentum. Quick passages also sound rushed in his recordings of Mozart's K. 330, and in Beethoven's last, 'Allegro' movement of his Op. 26, as well as in the rapid passages in his *Bagatelles* nos. 2, 4, 6. Likewise, his recordings of Chopin's *Scherzo* (e.g. bars 334-364) and *Ballade* (e.g. bars 116-182), reveal similar tempo inflections in their rapid passages. All quick passages in his interpretations of Shchedrin's *Piano Sonata*, as well as in his recordings of 'Ballet of Unhatched Chicks' and 'Limoges. Le marché (La grande nouvelle)' from Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* also demonstrate Economou's characteristic forward motion in rapid passages.

Economou's interpretations are also distinguished by his tendency to occasionally arpeggiate chords without an arpeggio sign, or to introduce asynchrony by delaying one note when two or more notes – sometimes in different hands – are meant to be played simultaneously. This appears in his recordings of Scriabin's *Prelude No. 2* (bars 11, 14, 25-31, 62), in *Prelude No. 4* (bars 20-23), as well as his interpretations of Liszt's *Piano Sonata* (bars 124-127 and 339-343). In addition, a quick roll of each chord is heard in his

performance of ‘Tuileries (Dispute d'enfants après jeux)’ and in the final bars of ‘Cum mortuis in lingua mortua’ in *Pictures at an Exhibition*. Moreover, as in his compositional work, Economou’s performances display diligent care for projection of counterpoint and polyphony, even in instances where composers may have not explicitly notated the part-writing in their scores. In his recordings of *Papillons* there is constant projection of lines in all registers (especially in the fifth and ninth movements), as well as throughout various sections of *Kreisleriana* (e.g. the ending of the first movement, ‘Intermezzo II’, and fifth and sixth movements). Economou’s commitment to clear voicing and projection of lines is also evident in his recordings of Beethoven’s Op. 26, as well as Chopin’s *Scherzo* (e.g. bars 310-333).

Lastly, as the table above indicates, there is a considerable time gap between the recordings of some works selected for this analysis of Economou’s playing. Nonetheless, despite minor variations in performances of the same work, the majority of his recorded interpretations are remarkably similar. For example, a high level of interpretative consistency is evident in Economou’s 1976 and 1983 recordings of Scriabin’s *Preludes*, as well as his 1979 and 1984 recordings of Mozart’s K. 330. Yet the 1983 performance of the former and the 1984 of the latter present a few disparities in dynamics with the other recordings of the same works. The high level of Economou’s consistent playing is also demonstrated in his two recordings of Beethoven’s Op. 26, made thirteen years apart, yet performed very similarly. It is worth mentioning, for instance, that bars 31-33, marked with *crescendo* in the published score, are performed with *diminuendo* instead in both recordings. Economou’s two 1983 recordings of *Papillons* are also almost identical, while his 1986 and 1987 performances are very similar to them. However, the playing in the 1989

recording (the only one of *Papillons* recorded in a recording studio, likely intended for commercial release) is more subtle and refined, without the exaggerated dynamics heard in the other recordings, and with much fewer interpretative liberties (mainly in terms of dynamics). His 1982 and 1985 recordings of *Kreisleriana* are also very similar, and just like *Papillons*, his 1991 recording of Op. 16, released by *Deutsche Grammophon*, displays more controlled and polished playing. The same observation can be made for his recordings of *Pictures at an Exhibition*, which was also released by *Deutsche Grammophon* in 1991, since his 1985 performance is notably more idiosyncratic, loud, and harsh.

The recordings that arguably show the greatest discrepancies are those of Liszt's *Piano Sonata* and *Mephisto Waltz*. While all recordings of the *Sonata* are similar to each other, one of the 1983 recordings – a live performance in Freiburg – stands out for its more grounded essence and noticeably slower execution of several rapid passages. Another 1983 performance of the *Sonata*, which Economou gave at the *Klaviersommer* festival, exhibits a much more careful design of climaxes and distribution of ranged dynamics. His 1980 and one of the undated recordings of *Mephisto Waltz* display a high level of interpretative consistency, yet the other undated recording is clearly less faithful to the score, and exhibits a much more idiosyncratic approach to the Liszt's composition. This recording lacks sense of stability, as there is a constant tendency for forward momentum (e.g. Economou ignores completely the *più appassionato ma non accelerando* direction), while the dynamics are much louder than his other two (already excessively loud) performances.

After identifying the defining traits of Economou's interpretive style and his approach to other composers' texts, it is also important to consider how he engaged with his own notated compositions, and assess the consistency observed across his performances of

these pieces. The Nicolas Economou Archive contains recordings of only three such works: *Song of Freedom*, the first movement of the *'Orthodoxia' Piano Sonata*, and *Kinderlaunen*.

Table 2. Recordings of Economou's interpretations of his own works used in the analysis of his playing style.

Work	**Dates of recordings (Nicolas Economou Archive Item Number)**
Song of Freedom	1971 (4.91), 1977 (4.40)
'Orthodoxia' Piano Sonata †	1977 (4.8)
Kinderlaunen	1972 (4.91), 1981 (4.72), 1982 (2.26), 198* (not part of the Archive), 198?* (not part of the Archive)
* These recordings were found on undated cassette tapes/compact discs. A thorough assessment of the repertoire recorded on these tapes/CDs and Economou's recital programs, provided the eighties as a reasonable timeframe for their origin. Some of them are not included in the Nicolas Economou Archive, but were provided by his sister, Tania Economou. † Economou's recording of 'Orthodoxia' Piano Sonata will not be discussed here. Although he notated the first movement, the manuscript lacks performance directions, making it impossible to accurately assess his fidelity to the score.	

It is highly probable that the compositions Economou eventually notated were initially conceived without the use of manuscript, and given the reasonable lack of need to consult his own scores after their completion or publication, it would not be surprising if he did not strictly adhere to the written text in subsequent performances. Indeed, as will be discussed, the recordings listed in Table 2 indicate that his performances of his own works often exhibit more interpretative freedom, deviation from the written text, and improvisational nuance than his interpretations of music by other composers. For example, both of Economou's 1971 and 1977 recordings of *Song of Freedom* deviate significantly from the performance directions specified in his score. Some seem to be ignored, while many pronounced dynamic fluctuations evident in his performance are not indicated in the score. These fluctuations do not necessarily facilitate phrasing and directions (as in other instances discussed above), but they result in an actual growth or diminution of sound, leading to dynamics that are absent from Economou's text. Furthermore, although the

phrasing in the score is meticulously notated, it is not conveyed as clearly in Economou's playing as one might expect, especially considering his recorded performances and the resulting observations already discussed. Nonetheless, what makes these observations from both recordings of *Song of Freedom* particularly striking is that, despite being made six years apart, nearly all of the deviations from the score are identical.

Economou's flexible approach to interpreting his own compositions and their texts while still maintaining a remarkable consistency across performances, is exemplified in the five recordings of his sixteen-movement piano cycle *Kinderlaunen* too. Across these performances, many of Economou's interpretative choices come across as spontaneous, idiosyncratic, and at times impulsive, with timing and pace that suggests an improvisatory essence to many of the cycle's movements – especially the slower ones, such as 'Wiegenlied', 'Spielzeugladen', and 'Neugier'.[25] This kind of rhythmic flexibility and freedom results in more varied interpretations than one might expect from Economou, but primarily in terms of pacing and flow. In contrast, dynamics and articulation heard in Economou's recordings most often correspond to his text. Still, variations in volume, which are not written in the score, are sometimes obvious enough to suggest the establishment of a dynamic different from that indicated in Economou's published text. Some dynamic fluctuations are more subtle, enhancing phrasing and direction, yet several dynamics written in the score are completely disregarded in favour of others. In addition, tempos remain largely consistent across the five recordings, with the 1972 version standing out for

[25] Economou's five recordings of 'Neugier' differ notably despite its brevity (seventeen bars with a repeat), with variations in the execution and placement of mordents, dynamics, tempo, and left-hand accompaniment. It is assumed that its short length and the simplicity of the musical material allowed spontaneity and flexibility in its interpretation. It is worth clarifying that this is the only instance where Economou introduces so many varied ideas, without consistency across performances.

its slower pace throughout the cycle. Ultimately, despite some evident flexibility in flow and pace, the main characteristics of each movement and some distinct deviations from the score generally appear consistently across the five performances. Just as in *Song of Freedom*, these recordings of *Kinderlaunen* diverge from the published score in remarkably similar ways.

Other defining traits of Economou's interpretations, as reflected in his five recordings of *Kinderlaunen*, include generally accurate phrasing and articulation in alignment with the score, though a few exceptions exist – notably, in his performances of 'Greek Dance'. He frequently accelerates through rapid passages, which sometimes sound muddled, particularly in 'Waltz à la Prokofiev', 'For Chopin and Tchaikovsky from Prokofiev', and 'Etude'. His playing often sounds accented and heavy – again, most noticeably in 'Greek Dance' – with dynamic levels that exceed those indicated in the score. A tendency to slow down at the end of phrases is also apparent, especially in the slower movements, and nearly every piece concludes with a distinct *ritenuto*, despite the absence of such markings in the published edition or Economou's manuscripts. Also, his voicing is consistently clear, allowing various lines to emerge with precision, even in sections where the part-writing is not explicitly indicated in his text. Furthermore, any repeated phrase or melodic idea is always varied through changes in articulation, timing, and/or dynamics, in keeping with his known aversion to literal repetition.

※ ※ ※ ※ ※ ※

As discussed at the outset of this chapter, editing posthumously notated compositions presents a unique set of challenges, and chief among them is the absence of written

sources. In such cases, the editor must work within a framework of informed approximation, drawing on a broad base of contextual and stylistic knowledge. The process is not driven by certainty, but by critical evaluation of what is most plausible based on the available evidence. In this light, the act of transcription and editorial intervention becomes a highly interpretative task grounded in musical insight, and intuition, even, rather than a purely technical or objective operation.

The analysis of Nicolas Economou's available manuscripts, recordings, critical reception, and personal reflections reveals a distinctly original and compelling artistic identity. The following summary outlines the most important findings regarding his compositional and interpretative approaches, which will therefore inform the editorial rationale applied to the reconstruction of his un-notated piano works.

A significant portion of Economou's piano music was never written down and survives only through performances. Only a very small number of finished manuscripts and fair copies exist, while sketches and rough drafts appear to have served primarily as tools to preserve pitch and rhythm, with expressive elements decided during the preparation of fair copies. That said, some drafts do provide (only) phrasing and articulation markings, demonstrating that these parameters were central to Economou's compositional thinking. The completed manuscripts, in turn, reveal meticulous and consistent attention to phrasing, articulation, and dynamics. His scores, particularly early ones, occasionally include extreme dynamic markings and *ad libitum* passages, and rarely, direct invitations for improvisation.

Generally, Economou's interpretations exhibit a rare balance between fidelity to the composer's text and expressive freedom, an approach he explicitly endorsed in his

interviews too. Interestingly, when performing his own notated compositions, Economou allows himself greater freedom than with the works of other composers. Yet these deviations from his texts remain consistent across performances, suggesting deliberate recomposition, rather than improvisational unpredictability. It seems, therefore, that it is his interpretations, rather than his written scores, that provide most accurately his compositional ideas. That being said, his recordings of the same work by other composers, even when made years apart, show remarkable consistency in interpretation too.

Taken together, these insights into Economou's compositional methods and interpretative tendencies help establish a framework for transcribing and editing his un-notated works. To further substantiate the editorial process, it is essential to identify the defining features of his pianism. Based on several published and unpublished live and studio recordings, the following traits emerge as characteristic of his playing style:

a) Heavy, idiosyncratic sound: A hallmark of his pianism is a full, assertive tone, often louder than indicated, which at times verges on harshness.

b) Expressive phrasing through dynamic shaping: Economou frequently shapes musical phrases through dynamic inflection, sometimes implying hairpin markings where none exist in the score.

c) Avoidance of exact repetition: Economou rarely repeats material in exactly the same way; instead, he introduces subtle changes in dynamics, timing, and articulation.

d) Arpeggiation and asynchrony: Occasional unwritten arpeggiations and deliberate asynchrony reflect his desire to nuance texture and voicing.

e) Attention to counterpoint and voicing: Even when not explicitly notated, inner lines and contrapuntal textures are clearly projected, aligning with his compositional approach to clear voicing and polyphony.

f) Rhythmic propulsion: A frequent tendency to accelerate through rapid, especially ascending passages, even when not indicated in the score.

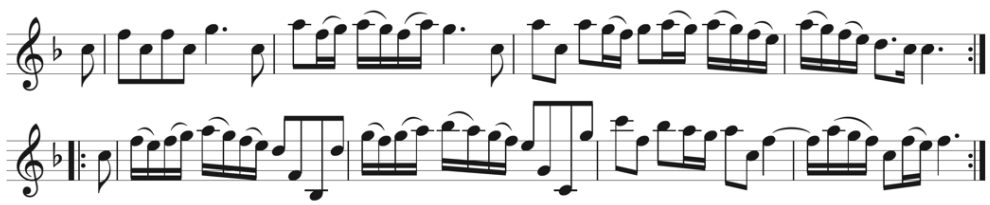
All these conclusions form a vital interpretative lens through which the recordings of Economou's un-notated works will be approached. As will be discussed later, the aim is not to impose finality and claim definitiveness, but to offer a plausible and well-informed realization of the compositions selected as case studies in this dissertation.

Case Study 1: Nicolas Economou – *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*

3. (Re)constructing the Musical Text

3.1. Work and Sources Overview

Economou's *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* is one of the piano compositions he never (fully) notated. It is based on Arcangelo Corelli's 'Gavotta' from his *Violin Sonata No. 10* in F major, op. 5, published in his *Sonate a violino e violone o cimbalo* in 1700, and as mentioned, it appears in a repertoire list attached to one of Economou's CVs made between 1992 and 1993.



Musical Example 2. Arcangelo Corelli, *Violin Sonata* in F major, op. 5, no. 10, 'Gavotta'.[26]

Two recordings and an unfinished manuscript of the work survive, which I used during its transcription and editorial process. The first recording captures a live performance by Economou during a concert with Chick Corea in Stuttgart in November 1981 (hereafter referred to as the '1981 recording' or 'first version', etc.). This performance, however, differs substantially from a subsequent recording made several years later, possibly in 1984 (hereafter referred to as the '1984 recording' or 'revised version', etc.), revealing that Economou had considerably revised the cycle since that 1981 performance.[27] These discrepancies between the two recordings are in most cases significant, with the second

[26] Arcangelo Corelli, *Sonate a violino e violone o cimbalo* (London: John Walsh, n.d.[1700]); note grouping was slightly modified in this music example according to subsequent editions of Corelli's sonatas.
[27] Nicolas Economou Archive, LUMA Foundation, Zurich, items 4.67 ('first' version) and 7.30 ('revised' version).

recording providing evidently improved musical material that appears to result from deliberate aesthetic refinement and intentional creative effort, rather than from spontaneous decisions or minor changes, perhaps unconsciously adopted after flexible interpretations of the work. It is worth mentioning that the precise date of the second, studio recording remains uncertain. It is presumed to have been made in 1984, when most of Economou's other un-notated works were recorded. Recordings of compositions found in the Archive, such as his *Pictures for Piano* and *Quatschmusik*, bear the date they were made (23rd April 1984), as well as his *Hommage à J. S. Bach* (24th April 1984). Also, in terms of overall compositional achievement, these works are closely comparable to *Corelli Variations*.

Alongside the two complete recordings, Economou partially notated his *Corelli Variations*, including the theme and the first nine variations.[28] Although the purpose of this manuscript remains uncertain, a number of observations indicate that it should only be considered a preliminary draft rather than a fair copy. This hypothesis is supported by the absence of the work's title on the first page, unclear and messy voicing/part-writing, smudges, and very few performance directions throughout – observations which imply that the manuscript represents Economou's initial attempt to notate the work. Moreover, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the manuscript was created after the 1981 performance, but prior to the 1984 recording. For example, certain material (including a whole movement; Variation IV) found in Economou's manuscript appears in his 1981 recording but not in the 1984 performance. Moreover, in many instances when the same Variation appears across all three sources, but not in an identical manner, the manuscript

[28] Nicolas Economou Archive, Item 5.12.

and the 1984 recording present the same or extremely similar, revised material, which deviates from the 1981 recording. It is also important to clarify that the musical material was not notated in a 'sketchy' manner intended solely for personal use. Instead, as the first page of the manuscript below demonstrates, melodic and rhythmic material were meticulously notated, despite the lack of performance directions.

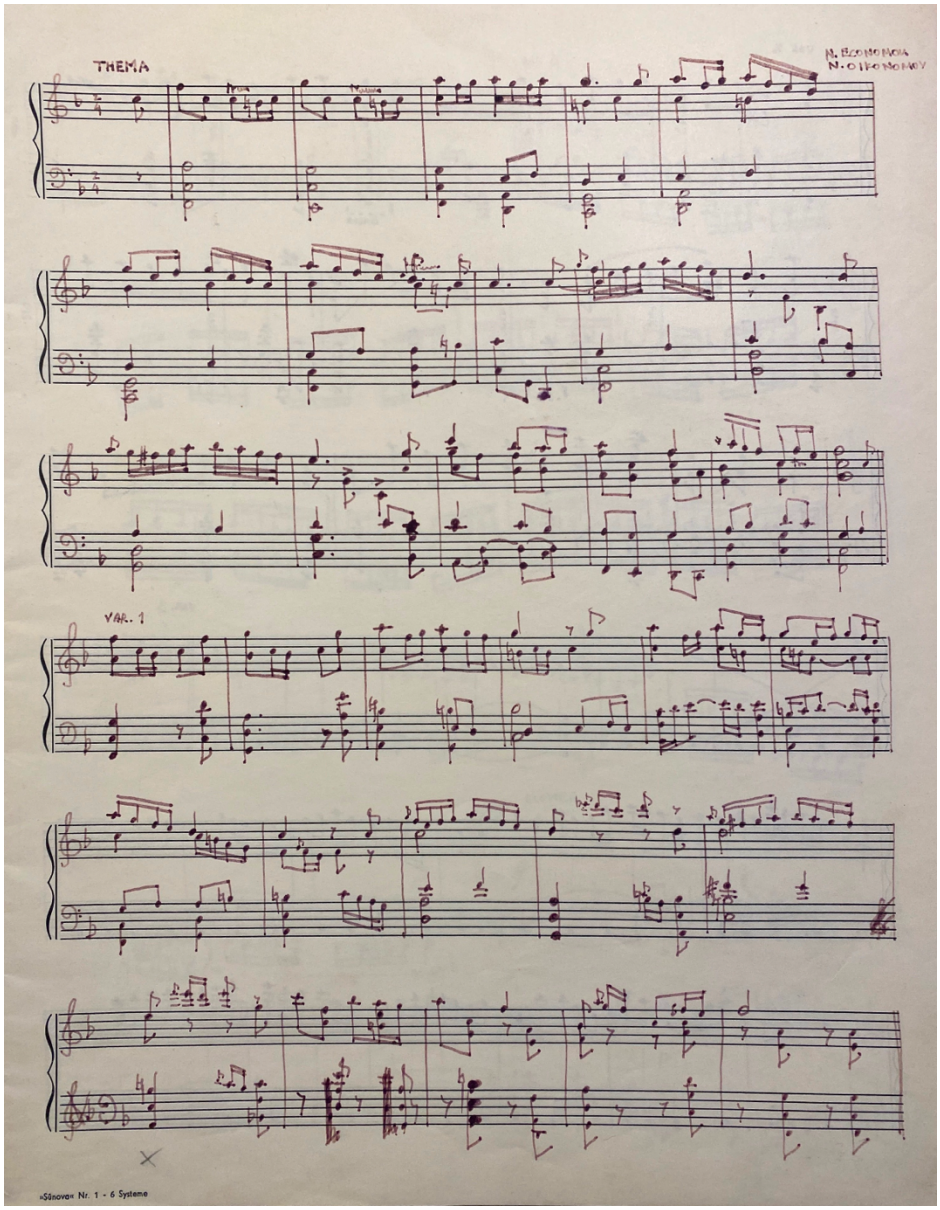


Figure 10. First page of Nicolas Economou's manuscript of *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* (date unknown), Nicolas Economou Archive, LUMA Foundation, Zurich, item 5.12.

Furthermore, Figure 11 illustrates the relationship between these three sources. Solid lines connect Variations that appear in more than one source – this does not suggest they are identical, since, as mentioned, many of them underwent melodic, rhythmic, harmonic, textural, or structural revisions which in many cases were substantial. Also, dashed lines indicate Variations that, while (vaguely) sharing some melodic and rhythmic features, or a similar overall character, their interconnection and the inspiration drawn from the older version of a Variation into the creation of the new version is evident. Asterisks mark Variations that are unique to a single source.

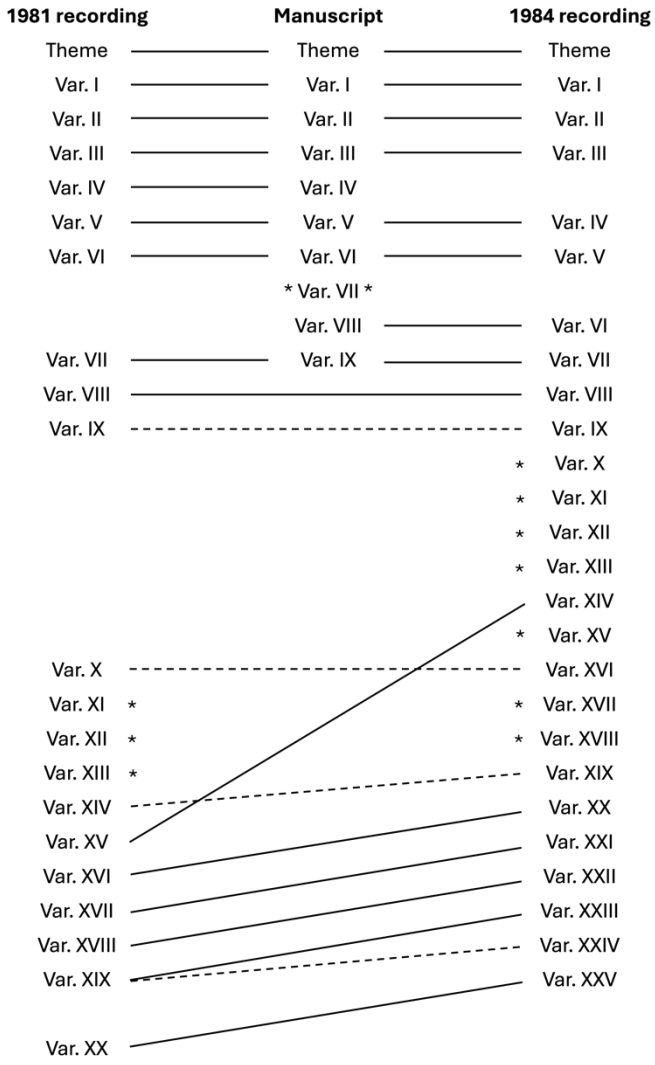
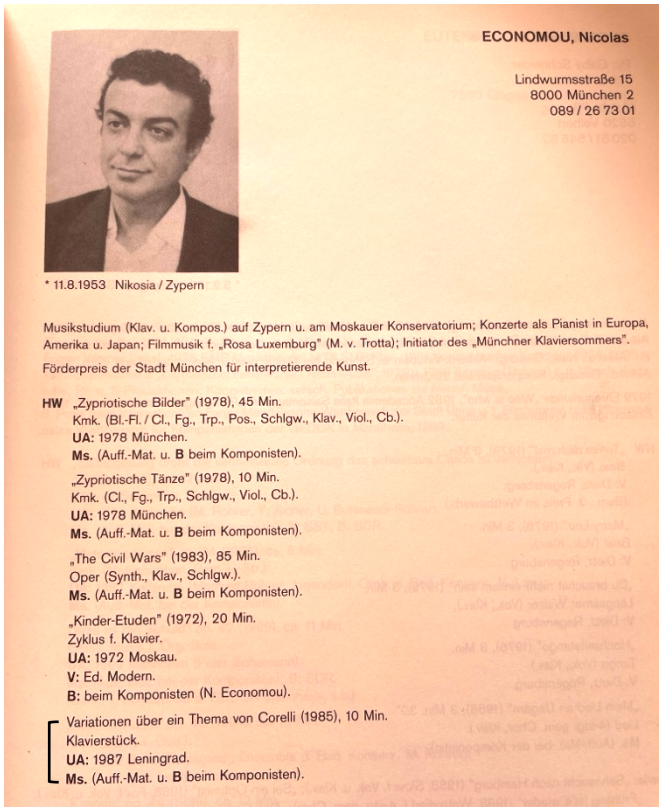


Figure 11. Relationship between the three sources.

In the *Handbook of Contemporary Composers* (*Komponisten der Gegenwart*) published in 1990 by the German Composers Association (*Deutscher Komponistenverband*), Economou lists his *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* as one of his five major works (Bruchhäuser 1990). The work's composition date there is listed as 1985 (but no reference to earlier versions), and it is noted that its premiere was given by Economou in 1987 in Leningrad.[29] Nonetheless, the existing evidence indicates that the work had been publicly performed as early as 1981. In addition, the concert programme for the 1984 International Franz Liszt Festival in Utrecht shows that the piece had already been performed there as well (Muziekcentrum Vredenburg 1984).



ECONOMOU, Nicolas

Lindwurmsstraße 15
8000 München 2
089 / 26 73 01

* 11.8.1953 Nikosia / Zypern

Musikstudium (Klav. u. Kompos.) auf Zypern u. am Moskauer Konservatorium; Konzerte als Pianist in Europa, Amerika u. Japan; Filmmusik f. „Rosa Luxemburg" (M. v. Trotta); Initiator des „Münchner Klaviersommers".

Förderpreis der Stadt München für interpretierende Kunst.

HW „Zypriotische Bilder" (1978), 45 Min.
Kmk. (Bl.-Fl. / Cl., Fg., Trp., Pos., Schlgw., Klav., Viol., Cb.).
UA: 1978 München.
Ms. (Auff.-Mat. u. **B** beim Komponisten).

„Zypriotische Tänze" (1978), 10 Min.
Kmk. (Cl., Fg., Trp., Schlgw., Viol., Cb.).
UA: 1978 München.
Ms. (Auff.-Mat. u. **B** beim Komponisten).

„The Civil Wars" (1983), 85 Min.
Oper (Synth., Klav., Schlgw.).
Ms. (Auff.-Mat. u. **B** beim Komponisten).

„Kinder-Etuden" (1972), 20 Min.
Zyklus f. Klavier.
UA: 1972 Moskau.
V: Ed. Modern.
B: beim Komponisten (N. Economou).

Variationen über ein Thema von Corelli (1985), 10 Min.
Klavierstück.
UA: 1987 Leningrad.
Ms. (Auff.-Mat. u. **B** beim Komponisten).

Figure 12. 'Nicolas Economou' entry in the 1990 *Komponisten der Gegenwart*.



grote zaal - 19.30 uur

Liszt Pianomarathon
José Carlos Cocarelli
Arnaldo Cohen
John & Richard Conti-Guglia
Nicholas Economou
Rian de Waal

De transcriptie
Franz Liszt/Michael Glinka - *Tscherkessenmars uit: Russlan en Ludmilla*
Franz Liszt/Johann Sebastian Bach - *Prelude en fuga in a*
Leopold Godowsky/Johann Strauss - *Künstlerleben*
Serge Rachmaninov/Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy - *Scherzo, uit: Midzomernachtdroom*
Carl Tausig/Richard Wagner - *Die Walkürenritt*
Sigismond Thalberg/Gioacchino Rossini - *Mosé-Fantasie*
Franz Liszt - *Weihnachtsbaum (delen)*
Ferruccio Busoni/Johann Sebastian Bach - *Chaconne*
Frédéric Chopin - *Variations sur un air allemand*
Franz Liszt/Franz Liszt - *Der Tanz in der Dorfschenke (Mefisto Wals nr. 1)*
Nicholas Economou/Arcangelo Corelli - *Variations on a theme by Corelli, as harmonised by Stravinsky*
Franz Liszt/Franz Liszt - *Hongaarse Rapsodie nr. 2*

Figure 13. Concert programme from the 1984 International Franz Liszt Festival in Utrecht.

[29] The date provided in the Handbook for the first performance of *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* appears to be incorrect. It is very likely that the work was premiered in 1988 instead, at the International Festival of Contemporary Music, organized by the Union of Soviet Composers, to which Economou had been invited.

Although the Liszt Festival programme reads: "*Variations on a theme by Corelli, as harmonised by Stravinsky*", it is worth mentioning that, after extensive research, no such harmonisation or arrangement by Stravinsky could be found. It is highly likely that the concert programme's description was inaccurate, and that instead, Economou drew upon Fritz Kreisler's harmonisation of Corelli's theme. Still, it appears that Economou only uses Kreisler's harmonisation as a point of departure, rather than adopting it note for note. Hence, it could not be used in any way to inform the editorial process of Economou's variation cycle.

When multiple versions of a work exist, and the sequence of their creation can be defined, the most recent version is generally regarded as reflecting the author's 'final' or 'latest' intentions (Tanselle 1976, 191). Given the information Economou provided for the German Composers Association's 1990 Handbook, it is reasonable to conclude that the 1984, and not the 1981, recording of the *Corelli Variations* should be considered as the source providing a state of the work that supersedes those that preceded it, particularly considering the evident function of the 1981 as an early version of the work. Surely, as G. Thomas Tanselle maintains, in such cases, "[b]oth versions of a given work deserve to be read in their own right", and that "[t]he revised version [...] manifests as 'final intention' which does not supersede the 'final intention' of the earlier version" (Tanselle 1976, 196). Similarly, Nicolas Donin writes that "documents drawn from the creative process should not only be considered with respect to the final musical product; they should also be viewed as temporary components of a cognitive act-in-progress" (Donin 2012, 29). Along the same lines, Georg von Dadelsen challenges the common editorial preference for the latest available version of musical works over earlier ones when preparing new editions,

discussing cases where composers did not necessarily view their later revisions as *improvements* over their original ideas (von Dadelsen 1961). For instance, Chopin left behind multiple versions of several passages across many of his works, creating significant challenges for editors of his oeuvre, while eye/earwitness accounts of his performances noted that his interpretations often deviated from his written scores and varied considerably from one performance to another (Kallberg 1996; Rink 2024).

Chopin and a few other composers indeed challenged with their compositional and interpretative practices the notion of musical works as fixed, repeatable entities based on a single authoritative text, questioning, at the same time, the primacy of later versions over earlier ones. Nevertheless, several considerations suggest that Economou's second recording should indeed be regarded as representing the ultimate version of *Corelli Variations*. Apart from the fact that, as mentioned, Economou's interpretations exhibit a high degree of fidelity to musical texts, as well as notable consistency across performances given several years apart, there is no evidence that Economou attributed equal value to different versions of passages or works. Drafts and fair copies show no indication of an equal preference for multiple versions of a passage or complete work. Moreover, the unfinished manuscript of the *Corelli Variations* presents a single version, without any *ossia* passages or alternative readings, reinforcing the notion that Economou intended one final, authoritative text.

Thus, despite his dual creative identity as a 'classical' concert pianist and a jazz musician, all available evidence points to his adherence to the fixed musical text as the primary and ultimate ontological source for the interpretation of works within the tradition of Western art music. Referring to Chopin's compositional approaches, John Rink observes

that "'later' generally means not better but different" (Rink 2024, 51), yet it is rather evident that Economou pursued a definitive musical text based on his latest compositional ideas, or, similarly, on the latest form of the composition. Hence, while editing his *Corelli Variations* I regarded the 1984 version as superior to the 1981 version and his unfinished manuscript. Economou's decision to date the work to 1985 in the German Composers Association's Handbook further underscores that its earlier versions were not intended as authorized forms of the composition; rather they were replaced by a version containing clearly more refined material.

There has always been a keen interest and curiosity towards the process of creating (and perfecting) a work of art, matched by an equal fascination with the final product itself. As Hans Zeller suggests, this "axiomatic preference for the final intention of the author" may be justified by two reasons. First, "it is based on the teleological notion that the work itself has a goal, or that the author envisages one, and that in the course of time he brings his work nearer and nearer to it". Second, "the work is an organism that its mutations are a 'development', an 'organic growth', a continual process of ripening, from the seed perhaps even to perfect maturity" (Zeller 1975, 242-3). Thus, on the basis of all the aforementioned remarks, I decided that the 1981 recording, along with the unfinished manuscript, would still serve as a reference, much like any source related to a work undergoing editing, in order to create a prescriptive, authoritative score for the version which Economou's 1984 performance instantiates. Several Variations appear in both 1981 and 1984 recordings, as well as the manuscript, offering insights into Economou's compositional process and ideas, facilitating, at the same time, more confident editorial decisions.

The question of whether the 1987 (or 1988; see footnote 32) performance given in Leningrad was of the same version of *Corelli Variations* as the one found in the second recording made in 1984, remains unresolved. However, Economou's decision to attribute the work's composition date to 1985, rather than 1987/8, might provide the answer to this uncertainty. Surely, the recording might have been actually made in the second half of the eighties, as there is no concrete evidence that confirms 1984 as the year of the recording session. Yet even if this is the case, it does not harmfully affect its perceived level of authority and usability in the editing process of the work's score. But for practical reasons, to avoid any confusion, and most importantly, since there is proof that a number of Economou's un-notated works were recorded in 1984 (which is also the same year the piece was played in Utrecht), the performance here will continue to be referred to as the '1984 version/recording'. Although the *Corelli Variations* recording may indeed have been made in 1984, it is extremely likely that the performance given in Leningrad was of the same version, possibly with some minimal changes – as was the case with the extremely similar fifteen performances he gave of his *Kinderlaunen* between 1971 and 1989 – unless another radical revision of the work was made. But in that case, the date of composition in the German Composers Association's Handbook would be the same as that of the Leningrad performance.

At any rate, there is ample proof to regard the second recording of the cycle as the most reliable and authoritative source available for the posthumous creation of a score, which represents the latest known form of the composition (if not the final) that can arguably be considered the ultimate expression of the work. Bearing in mind the composition's integrity as performed in this recording, the overall quality of the playing, and the fact that

the recording was made in a recording studio, it seems that Economou's intention was to capture what he considered, at the time, the optimal version of the work. It is unknown whether he wished to further refine the cycle, or whether he did refine it, but without leaving behind evidence of such an (notated or un-notated) attempt. Nonetheless, it is important to bear in mind that, like any written or published work, musical or otherwise, the fixity and status of this recording as the definitive representation of the work cannot be guaranteed, as it may not reflect the composer's potentially ever-evolving vision. Still, it serves as the most viable foundation for a scholarly reconstruction of the cycle's musical text.

The discussion that follows in this and subsequent chapters provides examples from the editorial process through which I prepared posthumous scores for the two cycles selected from Economou's un-notated oeuvre as case studies in this dissertation. Certainly, it is important to clarify that the aim of this undertaking was not to reconstruct the 'composer's intentions', or to produce definitive scores and argue for indisputable editorial decisions. As Grier writes, "the task of the editor is to establish and present a text that most fully represents the editor's conception of the work, as determined by a critical examination of the work, its sources, historical context and style" (Grier 1996, 37). The editorial decisions discussed in the following pages, although informed, grounded in evidence and musical reasoning, remain inherently interpretative, and provide an unavoidably subjective outcome. Like in any editorial enterprise, the editorial interventions and the resulting musical text reflect my own understanding, rather than Economou's, of how these compositions might take shape in written form and subsequently be performed, and of what may be considered intrinsic/inherent to them.

Generally, the following discussions demonstrate an attempt to render the compositions performable by consolidating and concretising a particular state of them that the available sources allowed me to (re)construct while employing editorial alterations that I considered necessary to enhance the integrity of the resulting texts. The scores produced represent one among several possible realizations and conceivable alternatives that can bring these compositions to life in performance. Furthermore, although I sought to create editions that can stand in their own right, they do not claim definitiveness and finality. And based on the aforementioned remarks, I decided to encourage their users in the preface of each edition to consult Economou's recordings alongside the score, in order to gain a fuller understanding of the editorial process and the decisions made, inviting performers to engage critically with them, forming their own judgements regarding choices I have made that might be questioned, revised, or adapted in their performances.

3.2. Assessing and Establishing the Authority of the Textual and Audio Sources

"There is only one ultimate source for good readings, the authorial original", Grier writes (Grier 1996, 64). The 'authorial original' is typically understood as a manuscript or, perhaps, a first edition published under the composer's direct supervision. At first glance, Economou's autograph of *Corelli Variations*, though unfinished, might fit this definition, offering 'good readings', at least for the Variations it shares with the 1984 recording. However, as the following discussion will reveal, the 1984 recording and the resulting transcription demonstrated greater authority than his unfinished manuscript in the editorial process of Economou's *Corelli Variations*, especially when discrepancies arose among the three available sources. In such instances, the second recording superseded what would

normally be regarded as the ‘definitive’ source, since it provides the latest known form of the composition, thereby challenging long-held assumptions about the primacy of the written score in editorial practice, and inviting a broader reconsideration of what constitutes an authoritative source.

The 1984 recording, after all, documents a performance by the composer himself, fulfilling a key criterion for what might qualify as an 'authorial original.' Even so, a recorded performance cannot be equated with the kind of stability represented by a finished manuscript, fair copy, or a published edition in the Western art music tradition, as performance practice fundamentally relies on written notation to ensure the accurate transmission of a work from composer to performer, and by extension, to the listener. And since the recording’s transcription is produced by someone other than the composer, it cannot itself be regarded as an authorial original either. Therefore, a composer’s recorded performance and its transcription remain ontologically distinct from an authorial original, yet they could be approached as generative tools – means of arriving at a written approximation of what could have constituted an authorial original. In the case of Economou’s *Corelli Variations*, no authorial original exists that provides good readings; rather, there are multiple sources whose relative authority is determined not by their medium (textual or audio), but their proximity to what the composer would have wanted to appear in a published edition of the work.

As performed in the 1984 recording, the cycle’s opening movement ‘Thema’ is almost identical to Economou’s manuscript, while his 1981 live performance, though also very similar to the other two sources, exhibits some notable differences in the alto and tenor voices. As this earlier recording represents an early version of the work, I chose not to focus

on these discrepancies in the inner voices. Nonetheless, the last few bars of the movement necessitated a careful comparative analysis across all three sources, to evaluate the need for any editorial adjustments to the 1984 recording's transcription.

The right hand in these bars is identical in the 1981 recording and manuscript, with only a few minor deviations found in the 1984 performance, as indicated in Figure 14: a D in the alto voice in bar 11, which appears exclusively in the 1984 recording;[30] a slight disagreement between sources in part-writing in bars 13 and 14, where the transcriptions of both recordings follow Corelli's original theme;[31] and a D in the first chord of bar 15, which, once again, appears only in the 1984 recording.[32] Furthermore, although the left hand in bars 13-15 is quite similar in all three sources, each exhibits distinct material. In bar 13, the manuscript appears to serve as a hybrid of the two recordings: the tenor voice aligns with the 1981 performance, while the rest of the left-hand material corresponds to the 1984 recording. Bar 14 is significantly different in the 1981 recording, yet the manuscript and 1984 performance are nearly identical. In bar 15, where the 1984 performance deviates from the manuscript, the 1981 recording aligns with the manuscript's tenor voice.

[30] Given that bars 9-12 form a sequential passage, with the material of bars 9-10 transposed a tone higher in bars 11–12, it is worth clarifying that, in the 1984 recording, the D appearing in bar 11 was preceded by a C in the analogous moment in bar 9. In the manuscript, a C also appears in bar 9, tied with the last quaver of the preceding bar, yet no D was written in bar 11. Whether this omission was intentional or simply an oversight remains uncertain, though the latter seems highly likely. This alto voice is absent from the 1981 recording in both bars 9 and 11, suggesting that it was introduced during a later stage in the cycle's compositional evolution.

[31] In bar 13, the F on the second quaver of the first beat was notated in the 1981 and 1984 recordings' transcriptions as part of the top main melody, consistent with Corelli's original theme. Similarly, although the top line in bar 14 appears as A-F in the manuscript, it was notated in both transcriptions as A-C-F.

[32] While the D found in the first chord of bar 15 in the 1984 recording's transcription does not appear in either the manuscript or the 1981 recording's transcription, there is insufficient evidence to consider it as an inadvertent deviation from these sources.

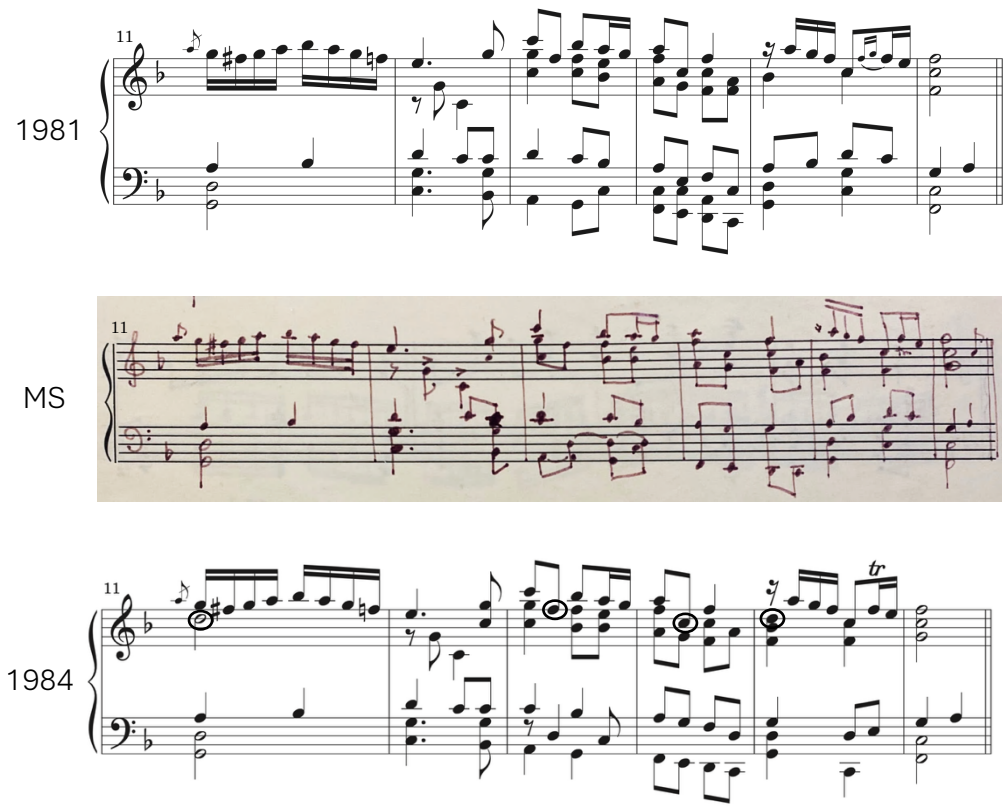


Figure 14. Bars 11-16 from Economou's manuscript of *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, alongside transcriptions of the 1981 and 1984 recordings.

Since some elements in 'Thema' appear identically in the 1981 recording and manuscript, one may suggest prioritizing these sources when creating a score for *Corelli Variations*, over the distinct material found in the 1984 performance, especially due to the fixity and reliability a composer's manuscript typically inspires against a performance of the composition which may convey spontaneous decisions or inadvertent changes. However, the 1984 recording reflects a revised version of the cycle, and it is expected that new thoughts will appear throughout, with compositional ideas reworked to various degrees (see, for example, footnote 33). Consequently, while the 1984 version survives only as a recorded performance rather than a written source, this recording was considered more authoritative than Economou's manuscript, as it documents the latest known version of the cycle. And despite not originating from the composer himself, the resulting transcription

was considered superior to the other two sources due to the content it provided. Musical material that appears differently in the 1984 recording from the other two sources were not regarded as deviations from predetermined compositional decisions, but rather as valid, deliberately performed ideas.

Just as in any editorial process, there are instances where sources present multiple readings that cannot be definitively hierarchized. In such cases, it becomes the editor's responsibility to present all viable alternatives, especially when no single version can be conclusively identified as the most authoritative. For example, the 1984 recording provides a substantially different tenor voice in bar 15 compared to the other two sources, and at first glance, this might be one of the many revisions Economou introduced during the evolution of his *Corelli Variations*. Nonetheless, it remains somewhat puzzling that he would favour this version of the tenor voice over the more musically appealing melodic movement that appears in the other two sources. Yet again, the conclusion of the theme's exposition is an unlikely place for Economou to deviate from predetermined decisions, especially given the *ritenuto* at that point, which gives him ample time to consider what to play, as well as the fact that the rest of 'Thema' as performed in 1984 – with material much more challenging to reproduce in their un-notated form than the final cadence of the cycle's opening movement – is almost identical to the manuscript.

The rest of the cycle offers no relevant insights for making a confident editorial decision regarding the tenor voice in bar 15, since the cadences in all Variations differ both harmonically and rhythmically from the ending of 'Thema'. As such, any editorial intervention here would exceed the scope of responsible editorial practice based on the existing evidence. Therefore, I decided that the 1981 and manuscript version of bar 15 is

provided as an *ossia* in the edition of the cycle, thereby allowing the score's users to choose which version of the bar to use in their interpretation.

Variation I presents another case in which editorial challenges, arising by conflicting material across the three available sources, had to be addressed, favouring, eventually, the 1984 recording over Economou's manuscript. The left hand varies across all three sources, as does the right-hand's alto voice. Some activity in the alto voice is evident in each version, but traces of it as it appears in the 1984 version are present in the manuscript version (circled). For reference, the first eight bars of this Variation from each of the sources are provided in Figure 15 (articulation as heard in the recordings).

The top melody in the first half of the Variation is identical in the three sources, except from some subtle differences in the 1984 version – the second beats of bars 22 and 23, as indicated in Figure 15. These may initially suggest the need for editorial intervention to restore the integrity of the text according to the 1981 recording and Economou's manuscript. Nonetheless, although these two sources provide melodic material closer to Corelli's theme, as presented in 'Thema', I concluded that there is no strong indication suggesting that these deviations in the 1984 version were unintentional. On the contrary, the overall simplified material of the Variation in the second recording justifies the replacement of the semiquavers played in the 1981 recording and notated in the manuscript with quavers in bars 22 and 23.

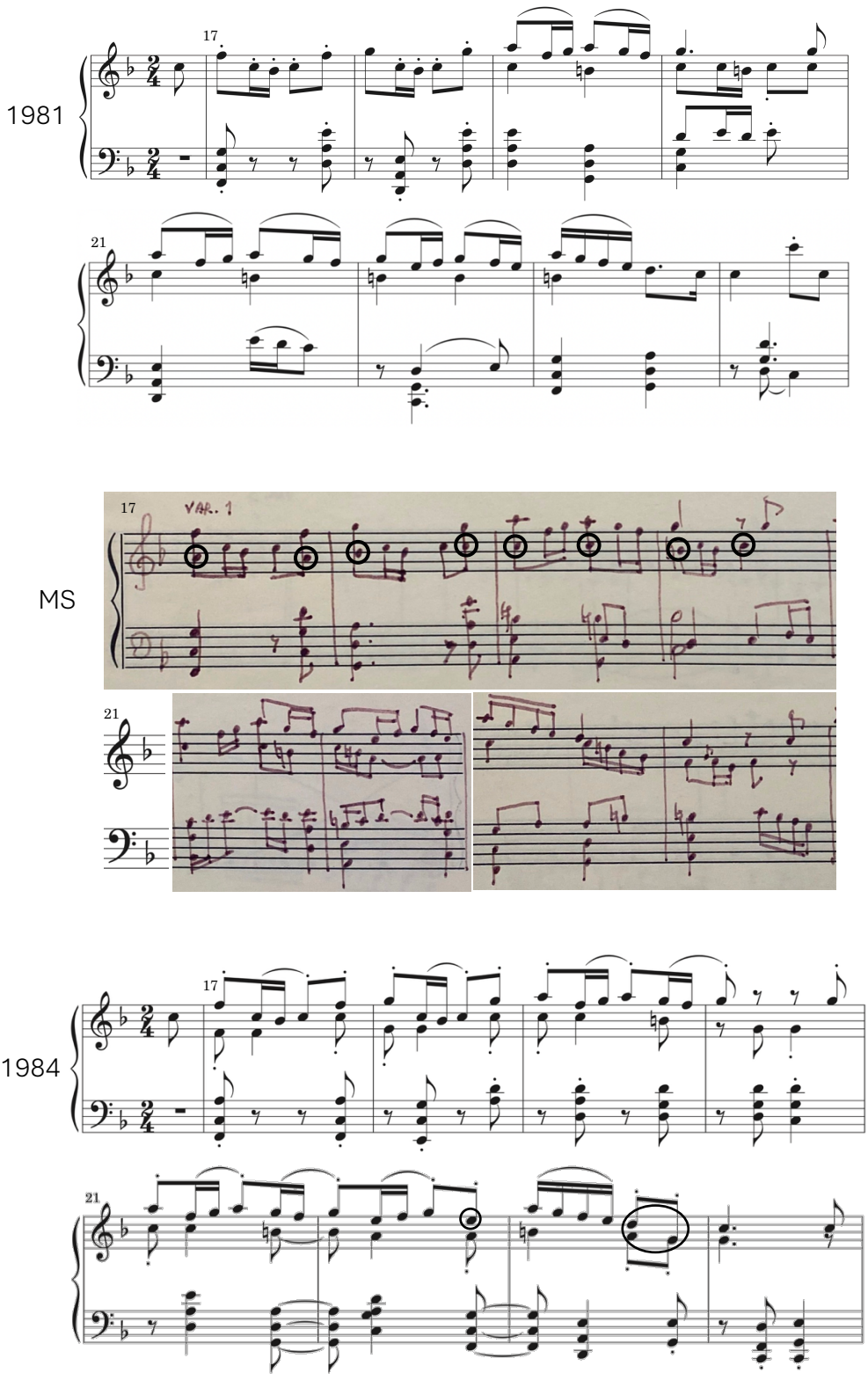


Figure 15. Bars 17-24 from Economou's manuscript of *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, alongside transcriptions of the 1981 and 1984 recordings.

Also, the manuscript, written between the two performances, introduces active melodic lines in all voices that do not appear in either recording. While it is possible to view the 1984 recording as a sketch rather than a 'definitive' statement of the cycle due to its simpler material, Economou's capacity as an accomplished, exceptionally skilled pianist and improviser would allow him to seamlessly incorporate these new ideas (or similar ones) in his playing, regardless of the time passed between the manuscript's creation and the 1984 recording session, or the extent to which these new ideas were practiced. Even though he most probably invested time and creative effort to write down this material unique to the manuscript, it appears to have been consciously set aside.

Essentially, although the 1981 recording and Economou's manuscript provide material richer in melody, rhythm and texture, the 1984 recording provides the latest or final form of the cycle. It displays new ideas, such as the suspended chords in the left hand, and demonstrates greater consistency in both articulation and the treatment of the alto voice, which appear to have been refined since the 1981 live performance and the creation of the manuscript. For these reasons, the 1984 recording and its transcription were used once again as the most authoritative sources for the edited score of *Corelli Variations*, prioritizing the revised material they offer over the conventional primacy most often ascribed to a composer's autograph.

Variation II presents another instance where I disregarded the content of Economou's manuscript, prioritizing instead that of my transcription of the 1984 recording, to create an authoritative text for *Corelli Variations*. The manuscript version of this Variation is similar to the 1984 performance (but not identical), while from bar 39 onwards, the 1981

recording varies significantly from the other two sources.[33] All three sources display considerable differences in the left hand, yet once again, the manuscript aligns more closely with the 1984 version. For reference, the opening bars of each transcription and manuscript are provided below:

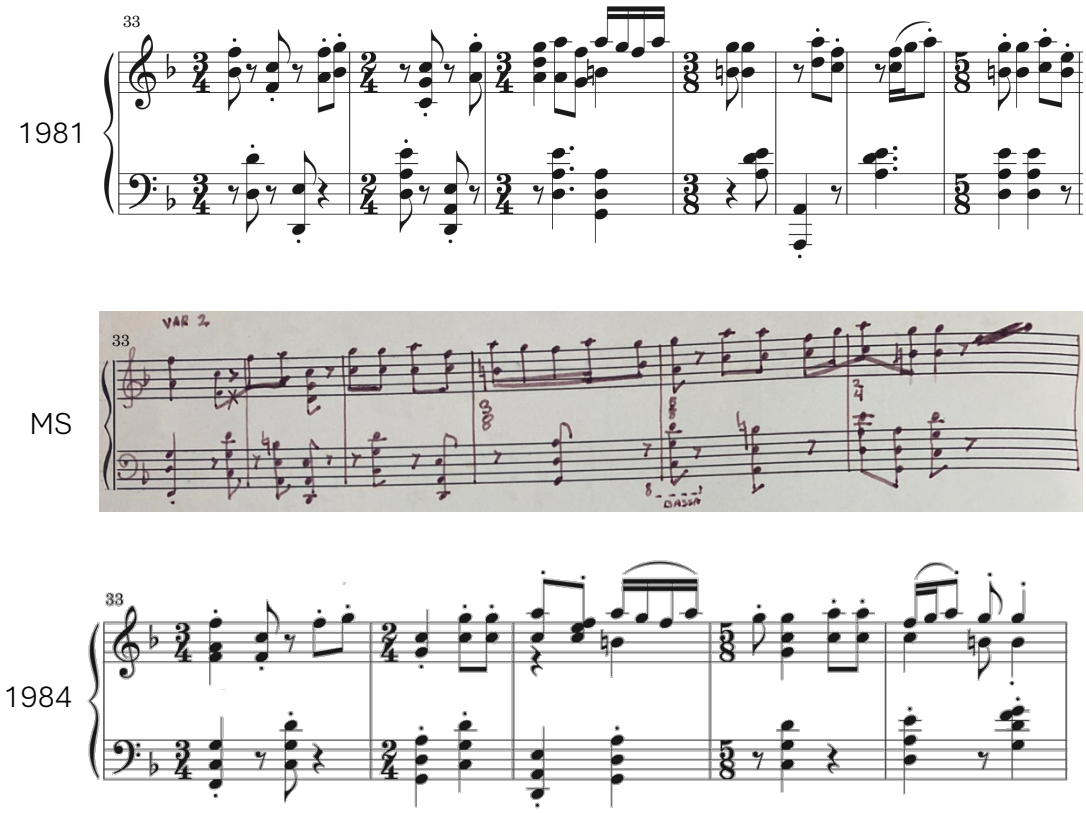


Figure 16. Bars 33-38 from Economou's manuscript of *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, alongside transcriptions of the 1981 and 1984 recordings.

Beyond certain differences in the left hand, it is evident that the Variation was transcribed and organised into bars in a manner that differs from the manuscript. Additionally, time values and part-writing, as conveyed in the 1984 recording, were interpreted and notated in ways that diverge from the Economou's written version.

[33] To avoid confusion, all bar numbers from this point onward in the main text, musical examples and figures are given according to the transcription of the 1984 performance.

Economou's playing in most of Variation II in both 1981 and 1984 recordings gives undisputable indications of time values – and consequently, the need in some cases to show accordingly the length of notes in the alto voice – as well as a clear sense of metric structure, including placement of strong beats and the syncopated chords that follow from them. The articulation, moreover, is also clearly conveyed throughout. These observations, however, stand in contrast to the way Economou notated the alto voice and organised the musical material into bars in his manuscript, which appears to have been done in an unconventional – if not somewhat peculiar – manner.[34] It is also worth noting that, even in the absence of his recorded performances, one could reasonably argue that the manuscript's notation of this Variation is unorthodox and puzzling.

As previously discussed, this unfinished manuscript is most probably Economou's initial attempt to notate his *Corelli Variations*, and based on several observations, it can be regarded only as a preliminary draft. Compositional ideas were conceived and developed prior to the manuscript's creation, and it is likely that Economou's autograph represents an early effort to express those ideas in written form. Hence, the most effective or accurate way to translate them into musical notation might not yet had been realised during the manuscript's making, and this could therefore explain the somewhat unconventional (and unreliable) manner in which Variation II was notated.

Regardless of whether Economou's notational choices were deliberate or tentative, the Variation as notated in the manuscript does not align with either of his recorded performances, which, essentially, offer direct insight into the accurate execution of his

[34] For example, both 1981 and 1984 recordings clearly imply that the Variation starts in 3/4, yet the first bar in the manuscript is written in 2/4.

compositional ideas, particularly as both 1981 and 1984 recordings provide highly similar performances of the Variation. Hence, it is evident that I had to consider how Economou communicates intrinsic features of Variation II in his 1984 interpretation – with several observations substantiated by his 1981 recording – when reconstructing its musical text for the cycle's critical edition. Accordingly, the voicing and bar organisation in Economou's manuscript were not taken into account in the editing process of the 1984 recording's transcription, and instead, the information conveyed through both recordings was treated as the most trustworthy. That being said, in the interest of transparency, I have included as an appendix to the cycle's critical edition the Variation as it was performed in 1984, preserving the bar organization that appears in Economou's manuscript.

Similar issues encountered in Variation II also required attention in Variation V, which appears in all three available sources. The melodic and rhythmic material in the 1984 recording is identical to that of the manuscript, yet Economou's performance suggests different phrasing and, more notably, different organisation of the material into bars compared to what the manuscript indicates. Although this Variation appears in the 1981 recording of the cycle, and shares many similarities with the other two sources, it exhibits several differences in melodic material that influenced bar structuring and resulted in subtle variations in phrasing. For this reason, and since the sources which were created last are melodically and rhythmically identical, the 1981 recording was consulted only for specific reasons, the rationale for which is outlined below. For reference, the first few bars of the Variation as notated in the manuscript and as transcribed from the 1984 performance are provided in Figure 17.

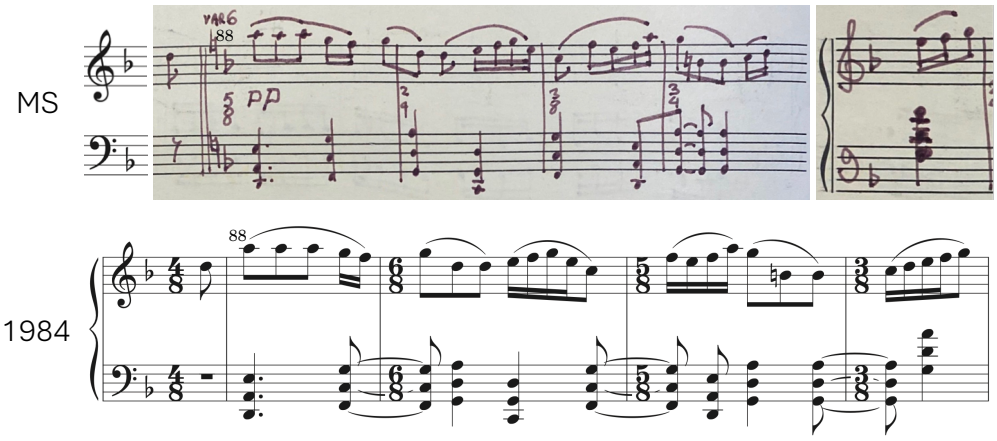
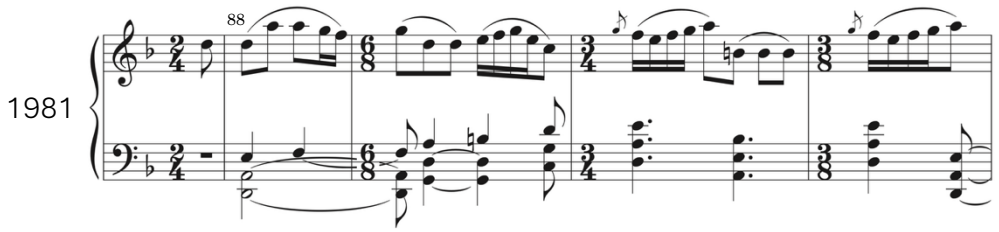


Figure 17. Bars 88-91 from Economou's manuscript of *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, alongside the transcription of the 1984 recording.

It is worth highlighting that, overall, Economou's playing in the 1984 recording is somewhat ambiguous and confusing, failing to provide undisputable information regarding elements such as pulse or strong beats, unlike Variation II. It is equally important to acknowledge that, despite certain differences in the version the 1981 recording provides, there are moments, particularly in the right-hand melody, where the material aligns with the 1984 performance. In these instances, both recordings exhibit agreement in terms of sense of pulse and metric emphasis, thereby supporting conclusions regarding the placement of strong beats and, by extension, the appropriate time signatures, as well as phrasing and metric organization.

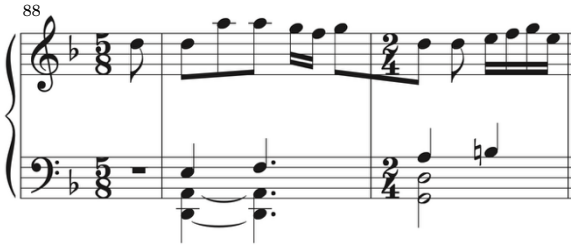


Musical Example 3. Nicolas Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* [1981 version], Variation V, bars 88-91.

While the pulse in Economou's two performances could, at times, have been conveyed more clearly, in many instances where it is indeed discernible, his playing diverges from the manuscript's content. Therefore, this was another instance where the incorporation of material from the composer's manuscript into the edited musical text of the Variation had to be done with particular care. In parallel, previously discussed factors were considered in evaluating the authority of the manuscript relative to the recorded performances: the uncertainty surrounding how meticulously Economou notated the cycle's first few Variations, and the unconventional and peculiar manner in which the musical material in both hands is notated in the manuscript.

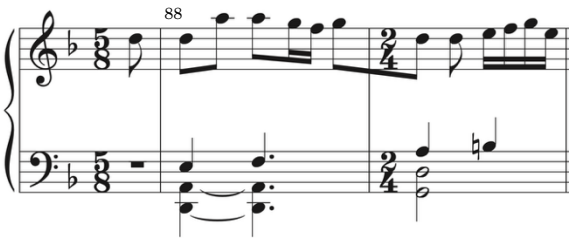
It is, once again, most probable that this Variation was composed well before it was ever notated. Although the sense of metric ambiguity and imbalance seems to be an intrinsic feature of the Variation, it is unlikely that Economou, in composing it at the piano rather than on paper, explicitly considered how this would eventually be rendered in written form. One might argue that this sense of imbalance is best reflected in Economou's unusual right-hand writing. However, both recordings make it evident that it is the left hand, with its syncopated and tied chords, that primarily contributes to the feeling of metric disorientation. Taking all of this into account, I decided that the edited score for this Variation should adopt the right hand, and not the left, as the principal reference for determining pulse, beat placement, and time signatures, based on the 1984 performance. This decision is further justified by the fact that many features of the 1984 recording – which, as established, represents the latest known version of the cycle – appear in the 1981 recording too.

Both the 1981 recording and manuscript offered valuable insights in a few places, which were taken into consideration during the editorial process. One such instance is the very first bar of the Variation, which, as played in the 1984 recording, is ambiguous enough to suggest several options for how it might be notated. In his manuscript, Economou groups the first three quavers of the bar together, followed by two semiquavers. Yet as demonstrated in Musical Example 3, the second note in the left hand's middle voice in the 1981 performance (which does not appear in any of the other two sources) strongly conveys a 2/4 time signature. An alternative realization of this performance is provided in the musical example below, where time signatures and grouping/beaming of right-hand melody are preserved as notated in Economou's manuscript:



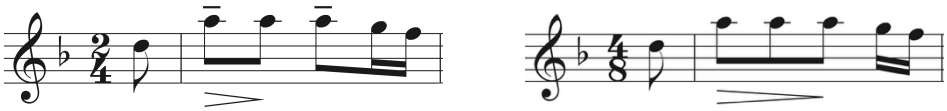
Musical Example 4. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* [1981], Variation V, bars 88-9 with time signature and note grouping/beaming as in Economou's manuscript.

The grouping of the right hand, nonetheless, required further modification, as the left hand implies a 2+3 grouping. The right-hand playing in the recording, by contrast, does not distinctly convey a strong sense of either 2+3 or 3+2 grouping (Musical Example 5).



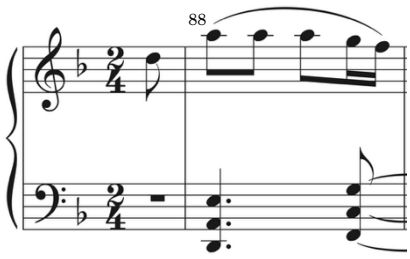
Musical Example 5. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* [1981], Variation V, bars 88-9 with time signature as in Economou's manuscript, and adjusted right-hand note grouping/beaming.

As previously noted, Economou's playing in the 1984 recording offers limited information that can be considered unequivocal in guiding editorial decisions. Nonetheless, the first musical example below, with the first and third quavers stressed slightly more than everything else (these gestures represented with tenuto marks and a diminuendo), implying a 2/4 time signature, seems to closely reflect what is heard in the recording. In contrast, the second musical example below in 4/8 shows that the first three quavers would have been played in a way that conveys the manner they are grouped within the bar, whether in 2/4, 4/8 or 5/8. However, the latter grouping is not convincingly supported by Economou's performances.



Musical Example 6. Notational possibilities for bar 88 as performed in 1984.

Consequently, given that both recordings suggest a 2/4 time signature through different elements in each hand, and considering the generally unconventional (and unreliable) notation found in the manuscript for this Variation, which fails to correspond to the gestures heard in Economou's two performances, I decided that the first bar of the Variation should be notated in 2/4, with the right hand grouped as shown in Musical Example 7.



Musical Example 7. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation V, bar 88, edited score.

As with Variation II, I decided to provide as an appendix to the cycle's critical edition the Variation preserving the bar organization found in Economou's manuscript.

3.3. Restoring the Integrity of the Compromised Text

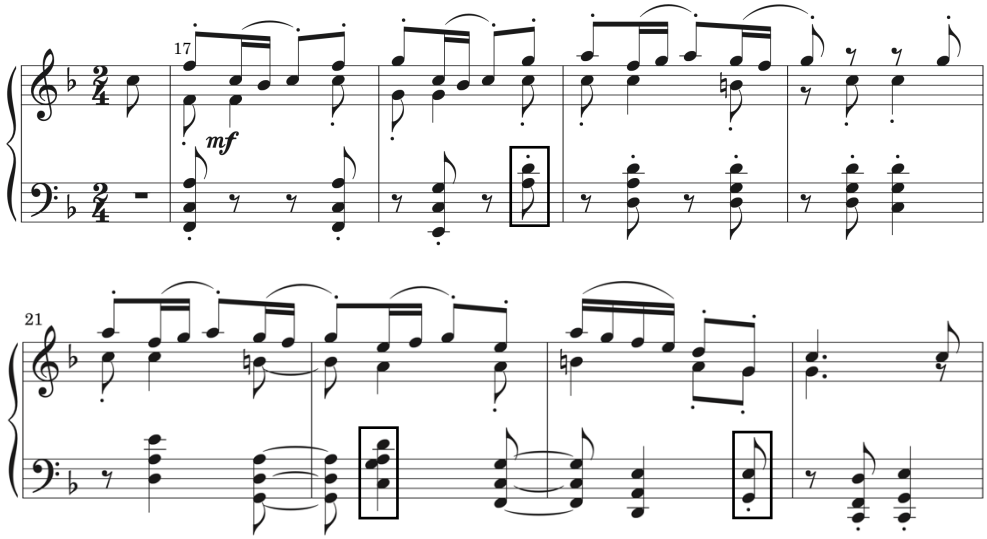
In Aaron Kozbelt's words, "composers must navigate many decisions, generating ideas; evaluating them on aesthetic and pragmatic criteria; assembling them into a coherent structure; working out scoring, voice leading, and counterpoint; gauging the piece's likely emotional impact" (Kozbelt 2018). Yet due to the manner in which un-notated works are composed and subsequently performed, many undertakings which Kozbelt takes for granted as key concerns for any composer may be difficult to realize and fulfil during the compositional process if the musical piece never underwent any formal notation. Certainly, composers may be skilled enough to compose works comprised of elaborate and complex elements without the need to write them down. However, the process of transmitting this kind of work through performance after conception might be more malleable to inadvertent deviations from planned actions and outcomes, than a normative notating process. Here, editorial mediation and critical intervention come into place, aiming to establish a text composed solely of the elements inherent to the work (ultimately perceived as such by the

editor), which surpasses what may be communicated in an un-notated work's performance.

Any compositional process is affected by the means with and the methods through which a work is developed. Surely, the act of sketching and notating musical ideas guarantees time for refinement of the musical material, as well as identification of mistakes and omissions. And it comes as no surprise that recordings of un-notated works such as Economou's *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* may not offer as accurate musical material as composers' manuscripts or published scores. Hence, a key objective in editing *Corelli Variations* was to alter moments that I perceived as having been compromised by the un-notated nature of its composition and transmission. Some of these editorial interventions involved reference to the 1981 recording and/or the unfinished manuscript. In other cases, where I could not use sources other than the 1984 recording to validate editorial conjectures and decisions, alterations to the material transcribed from Economou's performance were grounded on informed editorial decisions. In the following discussion, using indicative examples from the editing process of *Corelli Variations*, I demonstrate how the transcription of an un-notated work's recording may initiate legitimate editorial interventions intended to elevate its standing to that of an authoritative score. It is worth clarifying, once again, that the aim of these alterations was not to produce a text that claims to offer a definitive version of the work itself and to reflect Economou's 'compositional intentions'. Instead, the outcome of this process was a construction of the cycle that essentially reflects my understanding of it following critical evaluation of all available materials, as well as my own perception of *potential* flaws and errors they may provide,

while seeking to strengthen the integrity of the resulting initial transcription by taking into account a variety of factors.

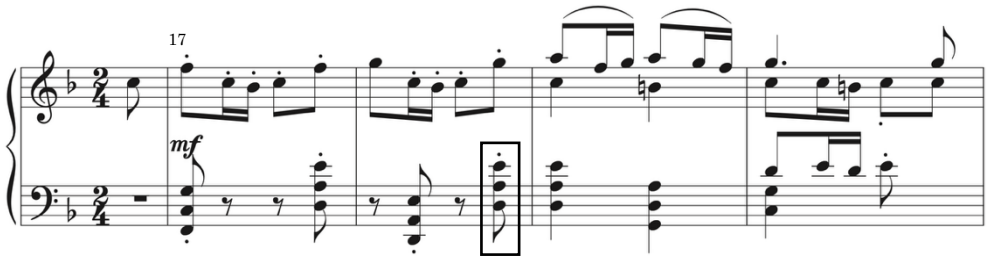
At times, the process of identifying and evaluating 'flawed' moments in a text relies on the wider contextual setting of the musical moment or passage in question – namely, the musical material that surrounds it. In Hirsch's words, such an attempt requires "a sense of the whole meaning, constituted of explicit partial meanings plus a horizon of expectations and probabilities" (Hirsch 1977, 237). This can be formed in relation to the composer's stylistic principles and compositional practices, or simply by assessing distinct features of each case that demands such editorial intervention. Musical example 8 below indicates the moments in Variation I where I found that editorial intervention was necessary.



Musical Example 8. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* [1984 version], Variation I, bars 17-24.

In bar 18, I added D as the root note of the marked chord to align its structure with the manner the chords of the subsequent two bars are constructed. This alteration was substantiated by the transcription of Economou's 1981 recording. Although the left-hand material there is different from the 1984 version's, the first chord of bar 19 is anticipated by

the same chord in the preceding bar. Besides, I concluded that there is no strong reason that may justify a texture thinner from the rest of the Variation's chords (or from the rest of that phrase) at this specific point in the 1984 recording.[35]



Musical Example 9. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* [1981], Variation I, bars 17-20.

For similar reasons, I removed the A from the marked chord in bar 22, as there seems to be sufficient evidence to conclude that the root-fifth-ninth pattern in the left hand should be preserved in this passage. There appears to be no justification for constructing this chord differently than the others – harmonically and texturally – and it is quite possible that A was inadvertently played at that moment. However, even if its inclusion was intentional (yet spontaneous) during the performance of the piece, it is reasonable to assume that Economou would likely have omitted this note had he notated this version of the Variation, especially given that no other left-hand chord in this sixteen-bar Variation contains more than three notes.[36]

In addition, I added a low D to the last chord of bar 23, as it is likely, once again, that Economou either unconsciously omitted this note during the performance or, due to the

[35] All chords in Variation I consist of three notes, except those marked in bars 18 and 23 in Musical Example 8. In the same Variation, there are two more instances of two-note chords in bars 26 and 28, which were, nonetheless, justified after close analysis of the material. In brief, they appear in a coherent manner within the sequential passage of bars 25-28.
[36] Economou's unfinished manuscript offers a rendition that differs considerably from both recordings.

nature of the compositional and transmission process, did not thoroughly consider this moment in relation to the surrounding material. While it is possible that Economou sought a thinner texture here, it seems improbable that the final cadential point was intended to be texturally weaker than the rest of the Variation, particularly since, once again, all chords in the Variation – apart from those under discussion here – comprise three notes. Both the 1981 recording and the manuscript feature material different from the 1984 version, yet the texture in this moment in both sources aligns with the first seven bars of the Variation, without becoming thinner than the preceding left-hand chords.

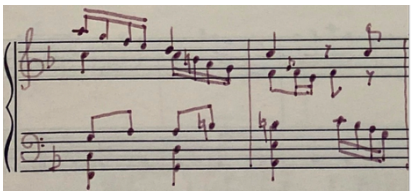
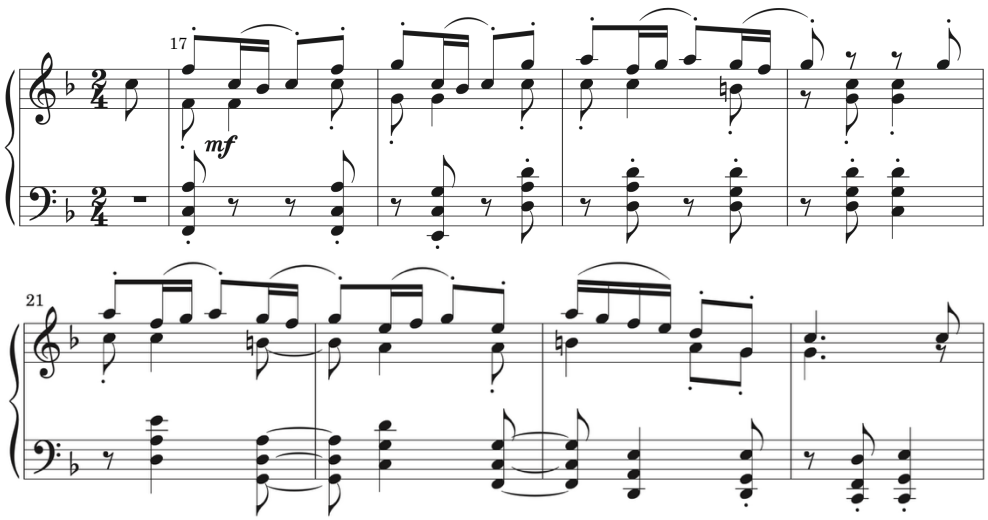


Figure 18. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, unfinished manuscript [n.d.], Variation I, bars 23-4.

Hence, the first few bars of Variation I were altered as shown below:

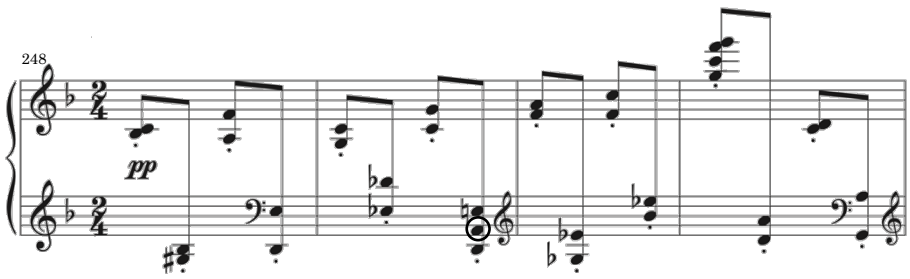


Musical Example 10. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation I, bars 17-2, edited score.

A similar editorial adjustment was made in Variation XV.[37] Generally, in this Variation no clear pattern appears to govern the construction of intervals in either hand. At first glance, this lack of discernible structure may initially suggest inconsistencies, spontaneous decisions, or 'unorthodox' writing because of the un-notated nature of the cycle. Editorial actions based on such assumptions, however, risk leading to impulsive choices that exceed editorial boundaries, potentially generating a distinct composition. While it is possible that certain intervals or chords in the 1984 recording were played inadvertently, this remains impossible to prove.

As Musical Example 11 shows, the left hand consists of two-note harmonic intervals, with one exception: a three-note chord appears at the end of bar 249, which features an A between the major ninth interval formed by D and E♮. However, the A appears to interrupt the uniformity established by the two-note chords that structure this passage, leading to the decision to omit it in the edited score. In this Variation, the left hand features only two-note chords, with the exception of this instance and one other, which is discussed later. As I concluded that there is no strong indication for a richer texture in the last quaver of bar 249 than any other moment in the rest of the Variation, the A was omitted in the edited score. It is also worth taking into account that the major ninth formed by D and E♮ may be viewed as an inverted version of E♭ and D♭ played by the left hand on the first beat (just like the right-hand G-C in the same bar is inverted to C-G in the subsequent beat). The decision to remove A is further supported by the fact that the same interval appears at the end of the preceding bar too.

[37] Variation XV appears only in the 1984 recording.

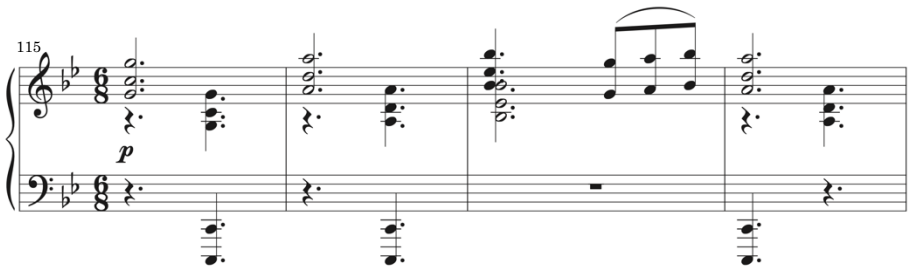


Musical Example 11. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* [1984], Variation XV, bars 248-51.

The examples discussed thus far demonstrate simple yet informed editorial considerations. However, certain passages in Economou's cycle demanded a more nuanced interpretation of the available material to determine the necessity and nature of editorial modifications. When trying to fix moments and passages perceived as compromised – often in the name of consistency and coherence – there is a risk of eliminating a novel or unconventional compositional idea that might simply be unexpected. In other words, one's eagerness to establish consistency, uniformity, or 'smoothness' throughout a text may undervalue the originality of the material a source provides, which can lead to "extreme eclecticism, subjectivism, and normalization according to the esthetic dictates of the [textual] critic, not the author" (Greetham 1992, 299). Nonetheless, despite the risks of one's pursuit to alter an un-notated work's posthumously created musical text, due to the absence of a source providing authorized readings of the composition's written representation of the composition – whether these are of an earlier or 'final' nature – the recorded performance(s) used and the transcribed material could provide satisfactory information for one to assume in which moments such corrections may be applied.

For instance, I initially regarded the left hand in the opening bars of Variation VII as a case necessitating editorial intervention. As the transcription of the 1984 recording shows

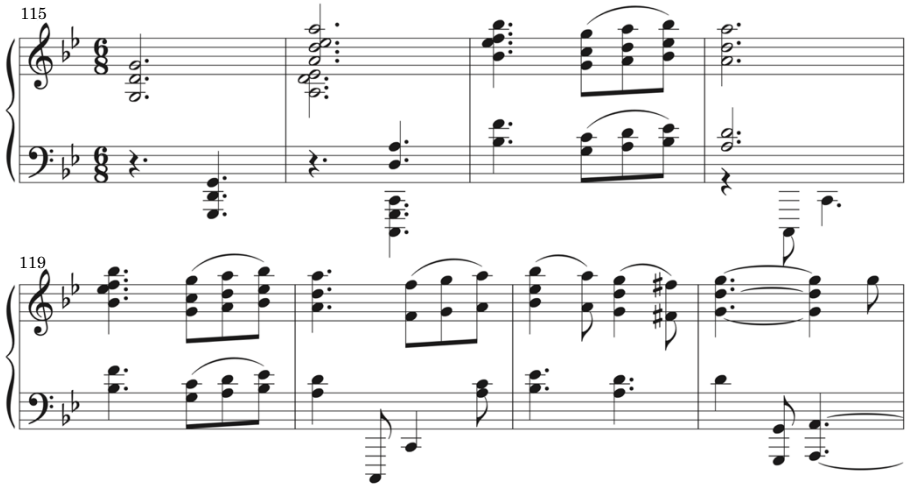
in the following page, a C octave appears on the second beat of each bar, a pattern that continues until bar 120. Nonetheless, bars 117 and 118 deviate from this pattern.



Musical Example 12. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* [1984], Variation VII, bars 115-118.

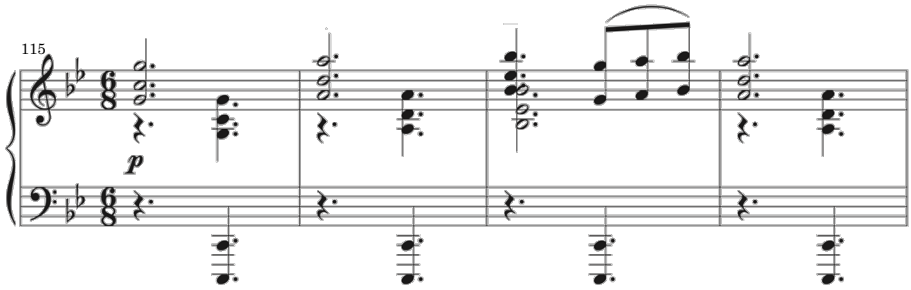
To gain a deeper understanding of Economou's compositional approach here, the 1981 recording was used in addition to the transcription of his 1984 performance, to assess if one might glean insights into whether this alteration in the pace of the left-hand accompaniment was deliberate (Musical Example 13).[38] The left-hand material in the 1981 recording clearly differs from the 1984 rendition of the Variation, yet the stressed second-beat pattern in the left hand is evident in the 1981 performance too, underscoring its status as a defining feature of this Variation. It seems significant to note that this established pattern is disrupted only when the left hand provides support to the melody played by the right hand in the third and fifth bars of the example below, and it becomes physically impossible for the left hand to play anything else at the same time. However, this is not the case for the 1984 version of the Variation, since the left hand there does not duplicate the right hand's movement.

[38] The first bar of this Variation was the last he notated in his manuscript.



Musical Example 13. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* [1981], Variation VII, bars 115-122.

Consequently, it could be argued that placing C octaves on the second beats of bars 117 and 118 would restore what initially appears to be the compromised integrity of the left hand:



Musical Example 14. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* [1984], Variation VII, bars 115-118 (possible editorial amendment).

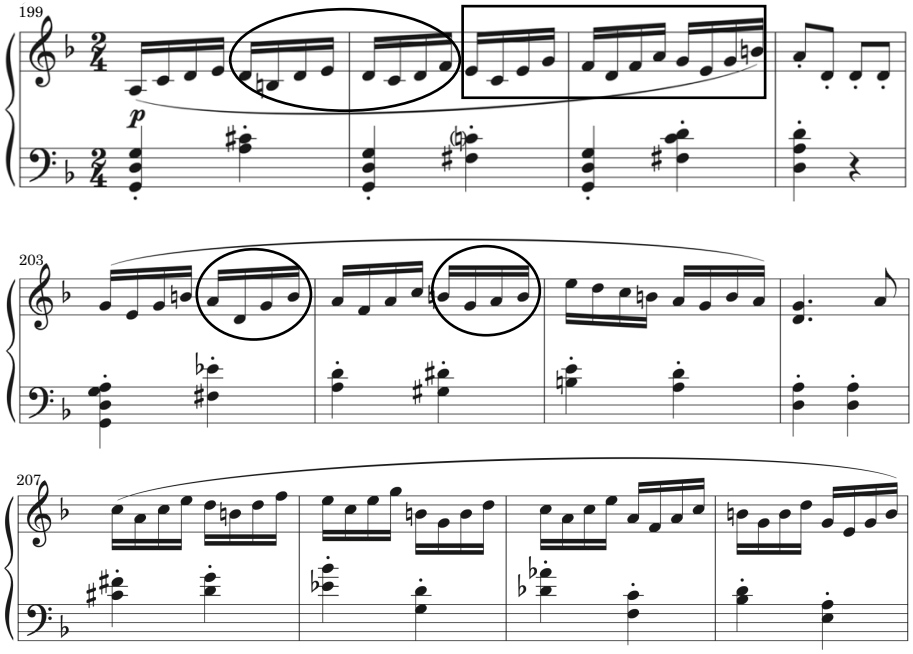
It is possible that in the 1984 performance, the divergence from the left hand's second-beat octave pattern occurred due to the way the piece used to be constructed, as the 1981 recording demonstrates. Namely, although the left hand does not support the right-hand material in the 1984 version as it does in the 1981 recording – and thus a C octave could have been played in bar 117 – one may suggest that during the revision process of the

cycle, Economou neglected to modify this section by adding a C octave in the left hand, with this 'omission', therefore, necessitating editorial intervention.

However, it is very unlikely that traces of the older version of the cycle such as this were unconsciously or unintentionally preserved in his playing during the revision process, especially since the cycle underwent several alterations involving much more complex and nuanced changes. The left-hand's deviation from the 'established' left-hand octave pattern in the 1984 version might alternatively be construed as an inadvertent omission of the octave in bar 117 during the performance. Consequently, the C octave on the first (rather than the second) beat in bar 118 could be interpreted as an instinctive gesture by Economou, prompted after realising that no octave had been played in the preceding bar. Nonetheless, if these octaves placed on second beats were as defining as to warrant their presence at the same place in every bar up to bar 120, it is unlikely that a pianist as skilled as Economou would make such an error during the performance. Hence, I argue that it is more plausible that he aimed for a subtle and nuanced change in the progression of the piece, perhaps to evoke a feeling of instability that aligns with the enigmatic character of the Variation's opening bars. Despite compelling indications favouring uniformity in the left hand, no editorial modifications were deemed necessary in this instance.

In Variation XII, it seems that Economou establishes a pattern in the right hand throughout (in rectangle boxes), which is nonetheless disrupted by some subtle 'deviations' from it (circled). Therefore, considering the un-notated nature of the work and the fact that a performance of it is more amenable to inadvertent departures from pre-determined decisions than a written draft or fair copy, or that musical ideas are shaped and formed in a manner divergent from those typically seen in notational composition, it is worthwhile to

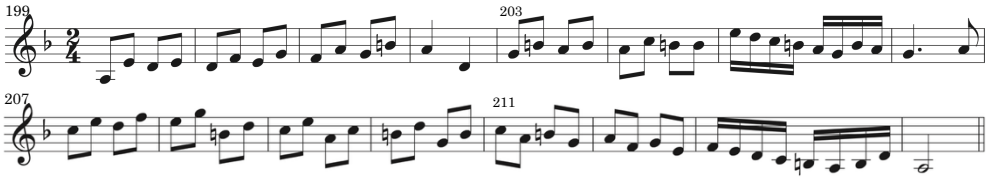
explore whether these observations justify any editorial intervention to the right-hand material.[39]



Musical Example 15. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* [1984], Variation XII, bars 199-210.

Unlike Variation VIII (discussed below), where substantial alterations made in the recording's transcription were prompted by Economou's shaky performance, his playing here sounds confident and secure, and there is little room to doubt that any moment of his right-hand playing was not carefully planned and executed (especially when considering the quick tempo of the Variation). Moreover, reducing the right-hand melodic material shows coherent, as well as, what seems to be, well-planned voice leading – another factor which contributes to the validity of the performance and the material of its transcription (Musical Example 16).

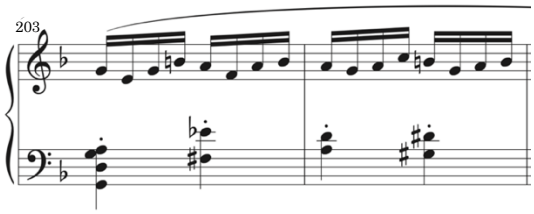
[39] This Variation appears only in the 1984 recording.



Musical Example 16. Reduction of Variation XII (right hand).

In bars 199 and 200, the progression of all layers in the semiquaver figures is smooth and appears to be thoroughly considered, and there is an intention for similar movement for the right-hand semiquavers in bars 203 and 204. It is evident that Economou aims for a sequence between bars 199-202 and 203-206, yet the second-beat figure of bar 203 and both beats in bar 204 do not correspond to what is played in bars 199 and 200 (see Musical Example 15). Hence, it is worth analysing further these bars to determine whether they should be adjusted in order to match with the analogous bars in the Variation's first phrase.

There is no evidence that indicates which of the two instances of the sequence needs to be followed for any alterations. Moreover, there is no convincing indication which implies whether the two phrases have to be identical or not, and whether the last beat of bar 199 and first beat of bar 200 should be adjusted in order to match the semiquaver figure of the other bars. That being said, given the smooth voice leading in the first instance of this sequential passage, I concluded that some adjustments may enhance the overall flow of bars 203 and 204, as shown in Musical Example 17, and establish coherence in accordance with bars 199 and 200. Still, it should be acknowledged that this remains a highly subjective editorial decision, as it is possible that this passage was performed by Economou as planned. Therefore, these bars as played in the 1984 recording were provided in the edition of the cycle in the footnotes.



Musical Example 17. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XII, bars 203-204, edited score.

In addition, the semiquaver figure in the second beat of bar 204 departs from the arpeggiation pattern found in the preceding bars, only to facilitate Economou's intention to make a direct reference to the cadence of the first half of Corelli's theme. If the figure was constructed as B♮-G-B(♮)-D, this reference would not be possible, as the passage would lack a leap that mirrors the major sixth that appears in 'Thema' (see Figure 19).[40] Consequently, no editorial intervention was deemed necessary here. Taking all the aforementioned observations into account, it is evident that, although one could argue that Economou develops this Variation in a rather erratic manner, it facilitates the underlying voice leading. Thus, there is little justification for making adjustments in the semiquaver figures throughout the piece, except in some specific moments discussed above.

[40] The descending scale in bar 205 must begin on E to lead to a cadence in G major, just like the analogous passage in bar 7 starts with A leading to a cadence in C major.

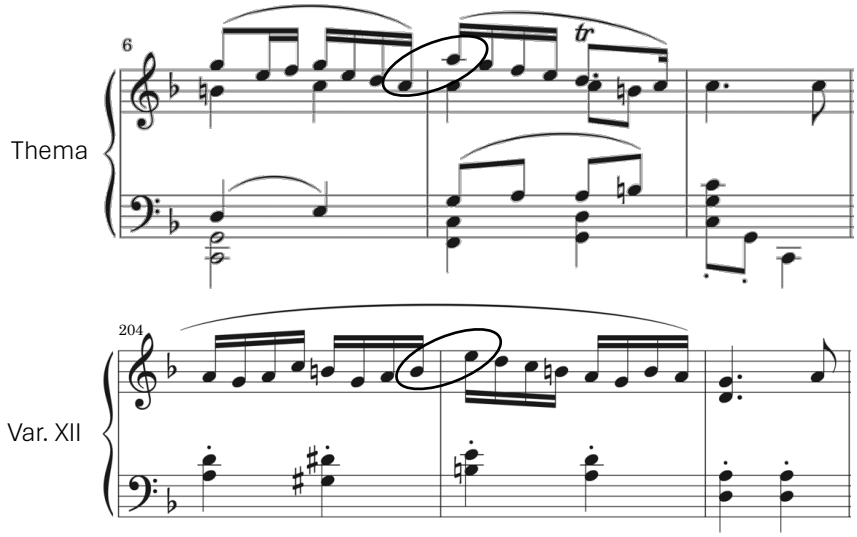


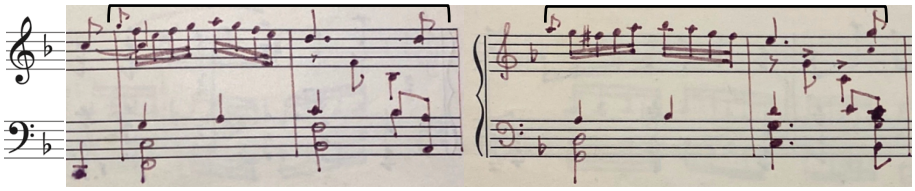
Figure 19. Comparison of bars 6-8 (Thema) and 204-206 (Variation VII of 1984 version).

As already mentioned, Variation XV is built on intervals which do not seem to be constructed on a particular pattern, and apart from the instances already discussed above, only a few subtle alterations in bars 256-259 were made to provide a score devoid of potentially flawed material arising from the un-notated nature of the work. While it is evident that these four bars form a sequence, the transcription of Economou's 1984 performance shows that the material in bars 256 and 257 was not merely transposed a tone higher in bars 258 and 259, as one would typically expect. Hence, whether this passage necessitates editorial intervention to advance the authoritative weight of the musical text had to be examined further.

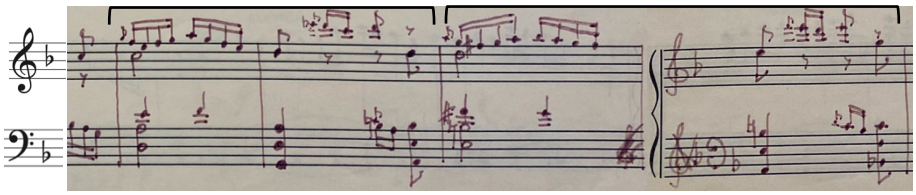
That is mainly because generally, Economou's 1981 and 1984 recordings, as well as his manuscript, exhibit particular care in other instances of four-bar sequences such as this, which are analogous to bars 9-12 of 'Thema' (see Figure 20). And despite the fact that the manuscript does not always provide accurate information regarding the latest/final form of Economou's ideas – as his 1984 rendition proves – this observation on his general

compositional approach to sequential passages may indeed be taken into consideration during the editing process of this Variation's text. Namely, his manuscript gives insight regarding Economou's process of developing such material, supporting relevant editorial conjectures.

Thema



Variation I



Variation IV (appears as Variation V in manuscript)

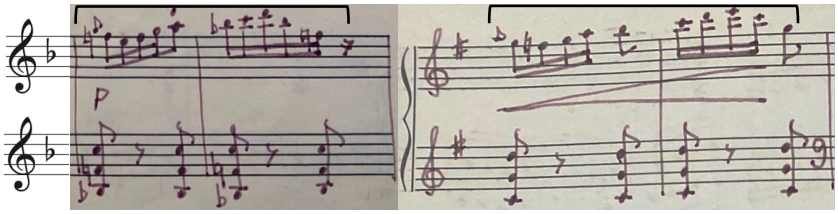
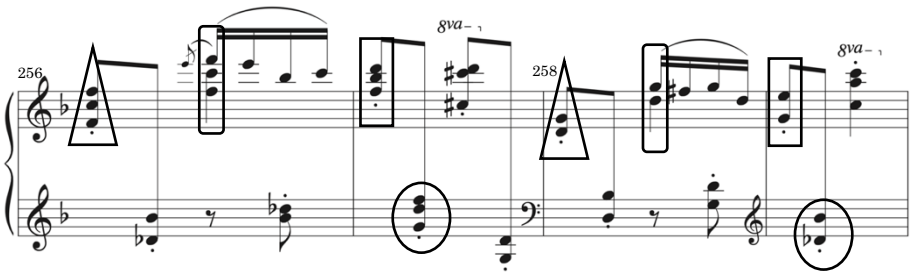


Figure 20. Other instances of sequential passages in Economou's manuscript.

The first observation one can make is that a grace note is found in the second beat of bar 256, but not in 258. It is not clear in the recording whether that note is indeed an ornament or part of the chord, yet again, since this passage is analogous to bars 9-12 of 'Thema', I decided that the high E should be notated as a grace note.



Musical Example 18. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* [1984], Variation XV, bars 256-259.

All chords marked in bars 256 and 257 in Musical Example 18 consist of three notes, while the corresponding moments in bars 258 and 259 consist of two-note chords. In addition, the semiquaver figure in bar 256 is dissimilar to that of bar 258, although, once again, this appears to be a sequential passage (it is also the first time when such an obvious variation of this semiquaver figure within this sequential passage appears in the cycle).

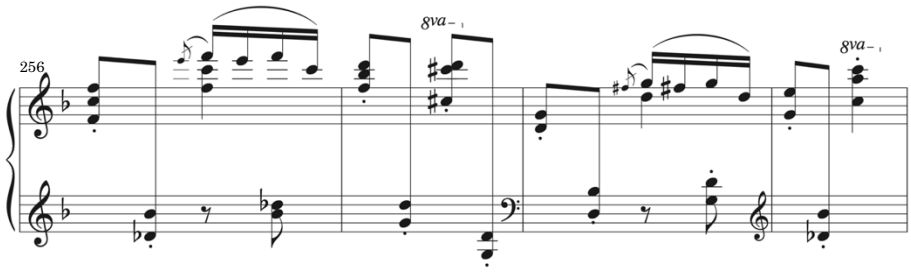
Regarding the chords in this four-bar passage, two interpretations were considered: a) Economou wished for a thinner texture in bars 258 and 259 than bars 256 and 257, and therefore, no changes should be made in the transcribed material; b) these inconsistencies stem from the un-notated nature of the work (i.e. he unconsciously played fewer notes), and therefore, necessary modifications should be made for a more coherent musical text. It is worth bearing in mind that the entire Variation is built on a teasing interplay between different registers, and it could be argued that Economou aims to achieve a playful character here by employing shifts in texture too. Hence, even though there is no definitive proof for or against editing this passage, the argument for the first scenario is stronger. Consequently, I decided to retain all chords as shown in the musical example above.

However, the first left-hand chord in bar 257 stands out as the only instance in the Variation where the left hand consists of more than two notes, with the exception of bars 254-255 and 263, the final bar of the Variation, where the chords there facilitate the phrases'

cadences (as well as bar 249 discussed above). Given this, I found it necessary to remove the top F, opting against keeping the minor seventh formed by G and F. One reason for this decision is that this would be the first seventh interval after eight bars, with another four bars before encountering the next one, while the left hand consists mostly of fifths, sixths, and a few fourths – the perfect fifth formed by G and D seems closer to the major sixth found in bar 259. And even though one could argue that the perfect fourth formed by the top notes of the right hand's first chord (B♭) and the left-hand's (F) is intended to be echoed in bar 259 with the top notes of its first two chords (E and B♭), the top F in bar 257 in the left hand is actually not harmonically or melodically effective to keep it in the text, instead of D (and G).

No further editorial adjustments appear necessary for the left hand, since, as already discussed, there is no evident pattern which Economou applies to the left-hand material. That being said, two alterations in the right hand were deemed essential: the addition of a grace note on the second beat of bar 258, as well as the correction of the semiquaver figure in bar 256 in order to match with that of bar 258. Given Economou's meticulous approach to sequential passages analogous to bars 9-12 of 'Thema', the disparity observed in the semiquaver figure in bars 256 and 258, along with the absence of a grace note in bar 258, are unlikely to be intentional compositional choices. To reiterate, this is the only instance in the whole cycle where the shape of the figure is not identical in both of its appearances within this sequential passage.[41] Thus, this four-bar passage was included in the edited score of the cycle as shown on the following page:

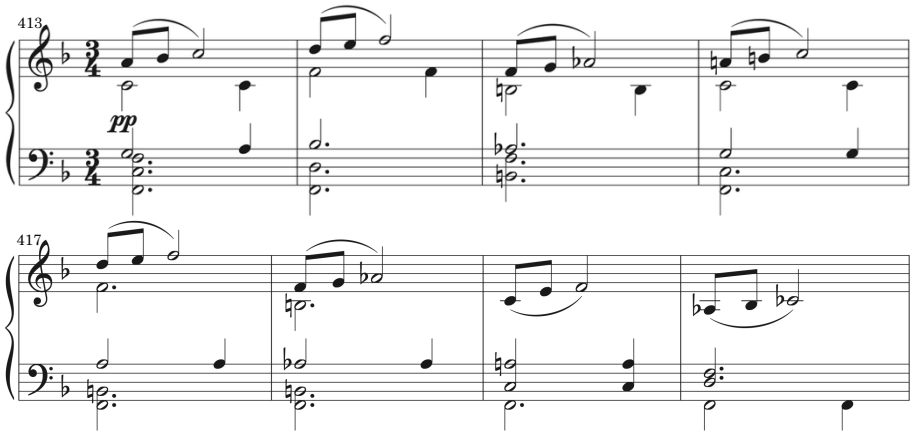
[41] It is worth clarifying that this semiquaver figure is indeed slightly different in similar sequential passages in Variations V and IX, but only because the material there is developed in an intentionally different way.



Musical Example 19. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XV, bars 256-259, edited score.

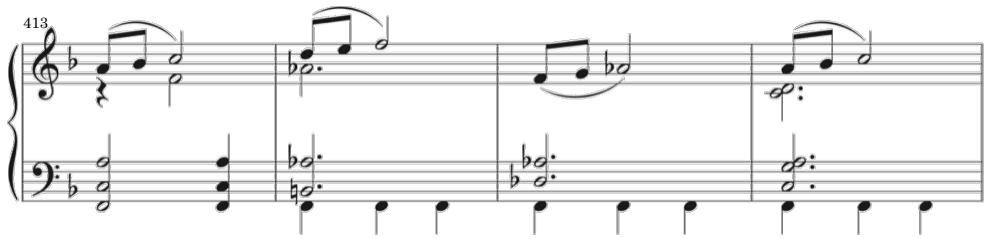
It is worth stressing, once again, that like any other editorial decision discussed here, these observations and corrections to the initial transcription of the 1984 recorded performance of Variation XV reflect my perception of the composition and Economou's compositional process. Therefore, it cannot be argued that they certainly provide a definitive text for the work, although they result after critical examination of the musical material and Economou's manuscript.

Variation XXII is another case where editorial refinement was initially considered vital to address what was perceived as the compromised integrity of the 1984 recording's transcription. However, a close analysis of the material proved otherwise, and as a result, I opted for only minimal editorial adjustments in the musical text. As Musical Example 20 shows, the movement of the two inner voices in Economou's 1984 performance give the impression of irregular and asymmetrical middle-voice activity that could possibly stem from the un-notated nature of the composition. More specifically, a crotchet appears on the third beat in both hands only in bars 413 and 417, while everywhere else, the melodic line remains active on the third beat either solely in the right hand (bars 414-415) or exclusively in the left hand (bars 417-419).



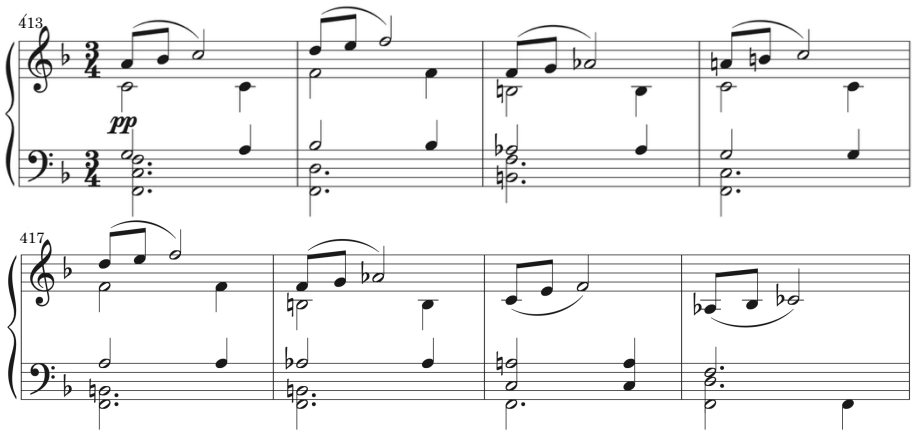
Musical Example 20. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, [1984], Variation XXII, bars 413-420.

This Variation appears in the 1981 performance as well, albeit in a shorter and somewhat simpler form compared to the 1984 version, and unsurprisingly, the inner melodic lines there differ from between the two recordings. Hence, there the transcribed material from that recording could not be used to inform or support any editorial conjectures made in relation to the 1984 version of the Variation.



Musical Example 21. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* [1981], Variation XXII, bars 413-416.

As previously noted, this 'inconsistent' movement of the inner voices could be grounded on the un-notated nature of the cycle's composition and transmission. On that basis, one could reasonably consider introducing crotchets on the third beat of each bar in all voices up to bar 419, where the progression of the middle voices becomes slightly different:

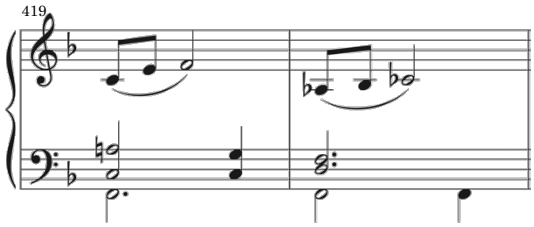


Musical Example 22. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* [1981], Variation XXII, bars 413-420 (possible editorial amendment).

However, two considerations point to the conclusion that such editorial amendments would be unwarranted. Firstly, as discussed in Chapter 2, Economou consistently demonstrated meticulous attention to voice leading and counterpoint, both as a performer and composer. Thus, it seems highly unlikely that this Variation exhibits the degree of neglect in its inner voices that was initially presumed. Secondly, bars 413-420 may be understood as falling into two distinct segments: the first, consisting of bars 413-416, features an active alto voice that contrasts with a static tenor voice in the left hand; the second, comprising bars 417-420, where this activity shifts from the alto to the tenor voice. In this case, the third-beat crotchet in the left hand in bar 413 can be interpreted as a passing note, facilitating a smoother transition from G to B♭, while the third-beat crotchet in bar 416 may be construed as a cue – an anticipatory gesture – signalling the forthcoming motion in the tenor voice.

From bar 419 onward, further study of the rhythmic and melodic material seemed necessary. The omission of A as a passing note between G and B♭ in the tenor voice in bars 413-414 would mark the sole interruption to the stepwise motion of inner-voice melodic

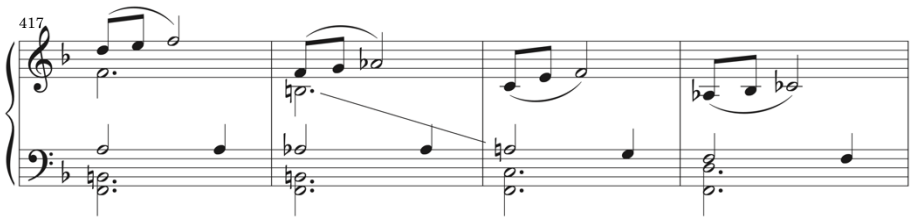
lines, which is disrupted in bars 419-420. Given that this stepwise motion functions throughout the Variation as a developmental device, the use of A as a passing note in bar 413 may be seen as a subtle foreshadowing of a minor adjustment in bar 419 – the introduction of G as a passing note between A and F in the tenor voice.



Musical Example 23. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XXII, bars 419-420, edited score.

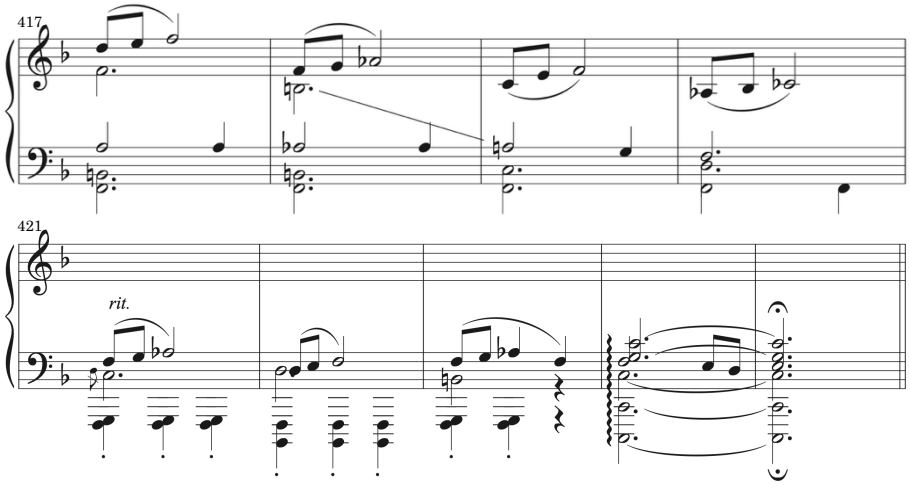
In addition, the low C played in the left hand in the same bar was removed, as its appearance was perceived as uncharacteristic – nowhere else in the Variation is that part repeated on the third beat. That being said, these editorial alterations may be challenged, as it may still possible that Economou's recording accurately provides his conception of the composition. However, the aim of these editorial alterations was not to blindly impose consistency on the musical text, but rather to correct moments I perceived as more likely to have been compromised by the un-notated nature of the composition, rather than deliberate, predetermined compositional decisions.

Bar 420 presents the only instance in the Variation where a melodic line other than that of the inner voices – the bass line – remains active on the third beat of the bar. There is no immediate justification for this departure from the pattern established by the left hand's accompaniment, and thus that part could have been revised, as shown below, in order to provide a more 'cohesive' result.



Musical Example 24. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XXII, bars 417-420 (possible editorial amendment).

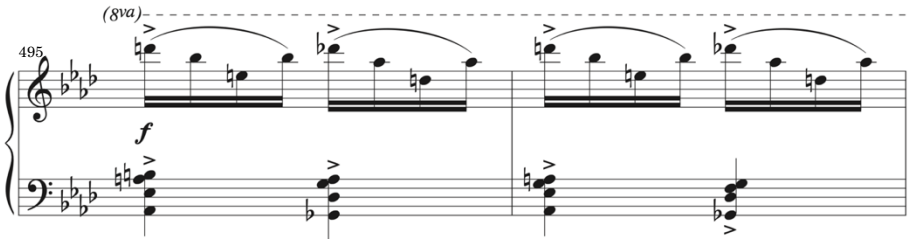
However, the third-beat crotchet in the bass was ultimately interpreted as another preparatory gesture, anticipating the material that unfolds in the same voice in the concluding bars of the Variation (bars 421-425), much like the analogous third-beat G in bar 416. Hence, the F in the bass line was retained in the edited score, as performed by Economou in his 1984 recording.



Musical Example 25. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XXII, bars 417-425, edited score.

Another instance in the transcription of the cycle, which at first glance appears to call for editorial refinement occurs in the left hand of bars 495 and 496 in Variation XXIV. Economou achieves a feeling of reciprocating motion in the right hand, repeating the same material across both bars. However, as the musical example below illustrates, there are

subtle changes in each of the left hand's chords. Given the manner the right hand's exact repetition, one would reasonably expect the left-hand chords in bar 495 to be repeated in the following bar without alteration.



Musical Example 26. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* [1984], Variation XXIV, bars 495-496.

However, when assessed from a pianistic perspective, it is worth noting that the hand position required to play the first chord of bar 496, immediately after the final chord of the previous bar, is awkward enough that it is unlikely to have been adopted by mistake. Therefore, it is more plausible that Economou's performance of the chords in bar 496 was the result of a deliberate compositional (and interpretative) choice, rather than of error or oversight.

3.4. Addressing Performance and Recording-Related Ambiguities

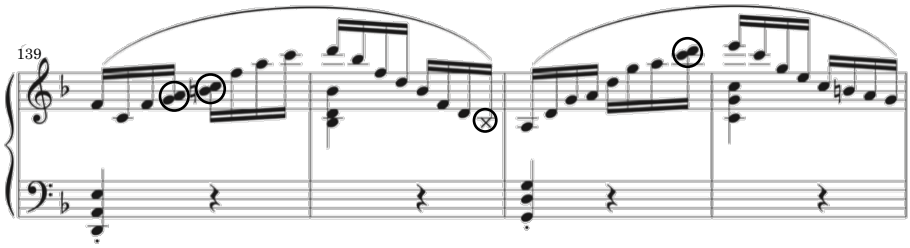
The calibre of a composer's playing in an un-notated work's recording, as well as the quality of the recording itself, plays a pivotal role in the editorial process of its transcription, especially when the primary objective is to elevate the status of such a musical text to a prescriptive, authoritative score. Such performances can vary due to a range of factors that define their purpose, function, as well as their usability in the editorial process. A recording

might be deemed accurate representation of the final or latest version of the work by the composer himself, and might have been produced using multiple takes, aiming to create an 'ideal' performance of the composition. Conversely, a composer's interpretation of an un-notated piece may have been spontaneously recorded, or captured without purpose to be used as a primary source for its notation. As a result, it might contain improvisatory elements and spontaneous decisions. It is also possible that the performance was not sufficiently prepared to provide the desired level of precision in aspects of the composition such as pitch and rhythm, dynamics, articulation, speed, phrasing, texture/counterpoint, and may therefore fall short of accurately conveying the composer's intentions and ideas. Another possibility is for a recording of an un-notated work to be intended as a sketch or draft to be used later on by the composer in order to develop or refine the composition. Or, it could serve merely as a mnemonic device for the composer in order to fully notate it on a later stage. Thus, in such a case, if the performance is destined to be captured and used for reference purposes only, preparation for a polished, flawless execution is unnecessary.

In essence, the status of a recording and the integrity of a composer's performance influence the transcriber's/editor's ability to interpret what was performed, and to determine what and how they should be notated in an authoritative score. Economou's playing in the 1984 recording of *Corelli Variations* demonstrates a generally confident and precise interpretation, suggesting substantial preparation prior to the recording session. However, in a few instances it deviates from the established stability and accuracy, prompting several editorial considerations and interventions.

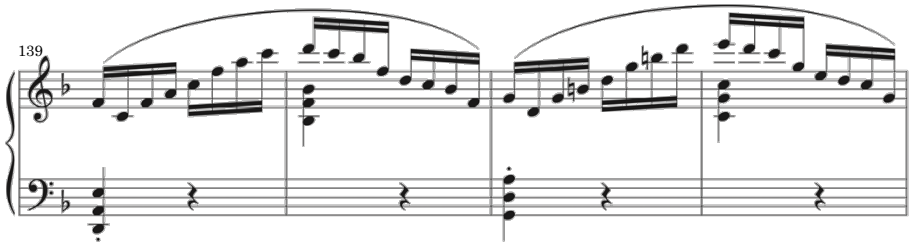
For example, in the 1984 recording, Variation VIII is executed in a somewhat uncertain manner, resulting in a flawed performance. In contrast, the performance of the

same Variation in the 1981 recording is notably more accurate and assured.[42] The right hand in bars 139-142 underwent an initial revision to align with the rendition heard in the 1981 recording, driven by two factors. First, in the 1984 recording, the semiquaver passage in bars 141-142 deviates from the pattern established in bars 139-140, despite strong indications for a sequence – something confirmed by the 1981 performance too. Second, wrong notes are executed throughout, with some pitches rendered indiscernible (indicated with x noteheads).



Musical Example 27. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, [1984], Variation VIII, bars 139-142.

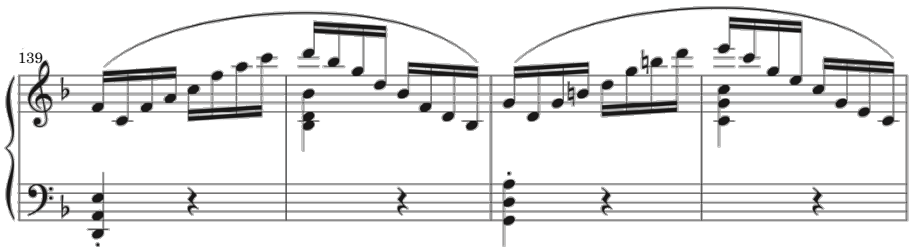
In pursuit of enhancing the sequential character of this passage, subtle adjustments were also made to the left hand's chords in bars 140 and 141, based solely on editorial conjectures. The 1981 recording does not provide any information which may substantiate such modifications, since the left hand there differs from the 1984 recording's.



Musical Example 28. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation VIII, bars 139-142, edited score.

[42] This Variation does not appear in Economou's manuscript.

One could argue that the descending passages in bars 140 and 142 as played in 1984 were deliberately arpeggiated in a manner distinct from the analogous passages in 1981, and that they should be preserved in the text as illustrated on the following page (with minor editorial adjustments made for consistency, particularly at the end of bar 142):



Musical Example 29. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation VIII, bars 139-142, editorial possibility.

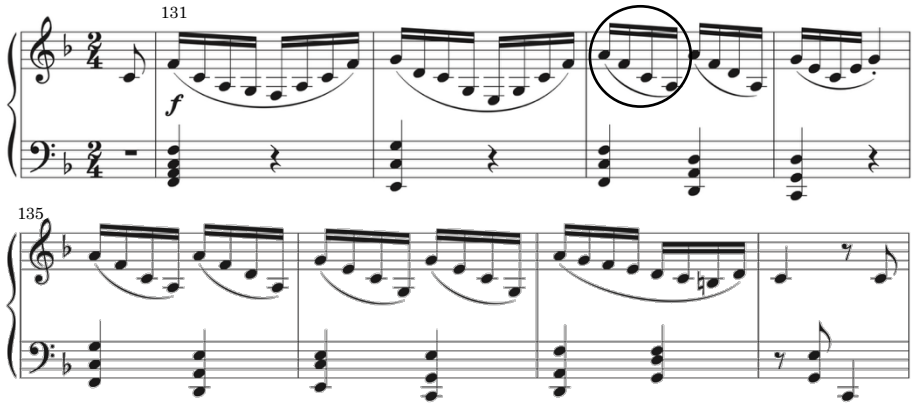
However, in both recordings, the transition from bar 140 to 151 is done via stepwise motion, suggesting that a major-sixth leap from B♭ to G, as indicated in Musical Example 29, seems very distant from what Economou's two performances demonstrate. And despite his somewhat unstable performance, shifting to G major position after the B♭ in bar 140 would likely pose no difficulty for a performer and improviser of Economou's calibre. Therefore, as it happens in the 1984 recording (Musical Example 27), the last B♭ in bar 140 would lead to A at the beginning of the following bar (and not C, due to harmonic reasons), and consequently, the shape of the ascending passage in bar 141 would differ from that of bar 139.[43] Also it is worth noting that in this scenario, the corrected left-hand chord in bar 141

[43] As shown in Musical Example 27, the pitch of the last semiquaver of bar 140 could not be identified during the transcribing process. However, taking into consideration the arpeggiated pattern that appears in that bar, as well as the first note of bar 141, it was confidently concluded that the note marked with x in the musical example is indeed a B♭.

with A as its top note (Musical Example 28) would clash with the right hand, which would be playing the exact same key.

Considering Economou's 1981 performance, which, once again, displays confident and accurate playing, it was concluded that another set of patterns in this Variation, as performed in the 1984 recording, needs to be evaluated. While the chords between bars 133 and 136, as well as in bar 144, are arpeggiated in the same manner, bar 143 is the sole instance where Economou employs the same arpeggiation pattern that appears in the 1981 rendition, which is used throughout the entire Variation (see Figure 21 on the following page).

1981 recording



1984 recording

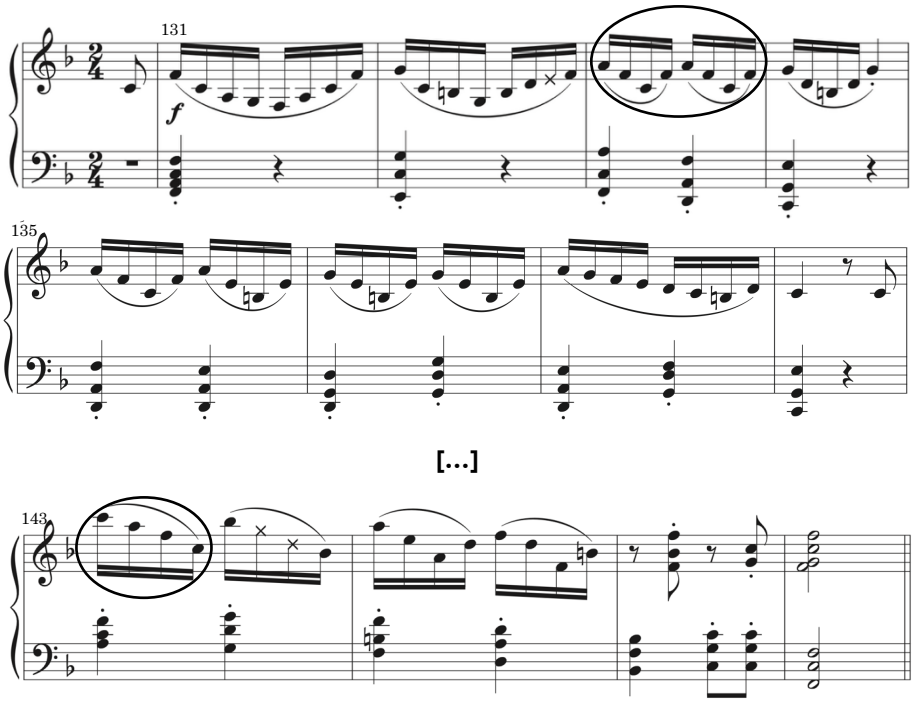


Figure 21. Comparison of semiquaver figures in 1981 and 1984 recordings.

One might argue that the 1984 performance of this Variation, with these patterns distinct from those in the 1981 recording, exhibits revised material, thereby negating the need for editorial intervention to construct a more coherent musical text. However, considering that the descending pattern used throughout the Variation in the 1981 recording

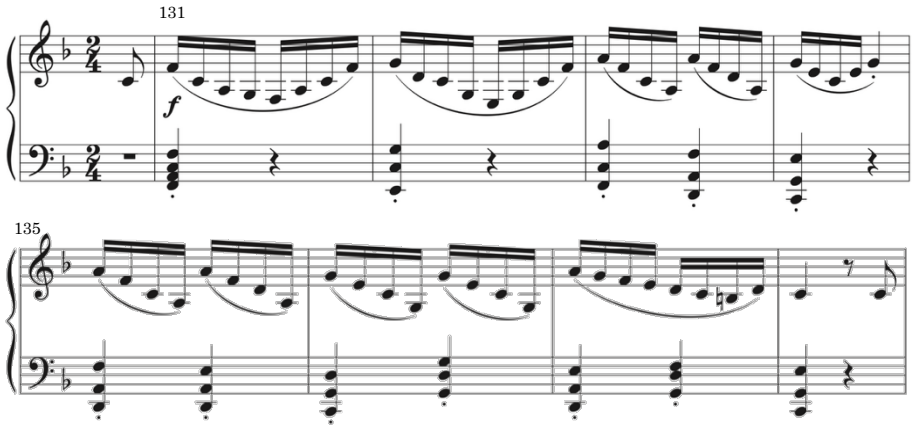
does appear in the 1984 recording's transcription, yet only in bar 143, coupled with Economou's unassured playing, raises questions about the validity of the performed material in the right hand. Even if one suggests modifying only bar 143 in order to match with the figures used in the rest of the piece in 1984, it is worth taking into account that from a pianistic point of view, the dominant pattern in that recording is easier to play than that of 1981. In other words, if this Variation was inadequately prepared before the recording session, this pattern was (consciously or unconsciously) favoured throughout the 1984 version since it demands less technical effort than that of the 1981 version.

Therefore, it can be argued that the '1981 pattern' appears only in bar 143 due to factors which may have caused confusion or turmoil during the recording session. Hence, the rapid figures and virtuosic passages in the Variation were susceptible to spontaneous changes in the way they were intended to be constructed (as demonstrated in the 1981 recording). But to reiterate, it is the overall quality of the playing throughout the Variation that challenges the reliability of the 1984 performance, and thus, I concluded that the transcription of the 1984 recording had to be altered in order to match the pattern established in the 1981 recording.

Given the high level of similarity between the 1981 and 1984 versions of the Variation – evident in rhythmic and (intended) melodic material, structure, and overall character – it seems very unlikely that Economou intended to revise the Variation by introducing new patterns in the right hand, creating a new version that supersedes the one featured in the 1981 recording. The differences that emerge do not appear to reflect deliberate revisions but rather, deviations that are more likely attributable to the level of reliability that the 1984 performance conveys. Meanwhile, minor differences in the left hand between the two

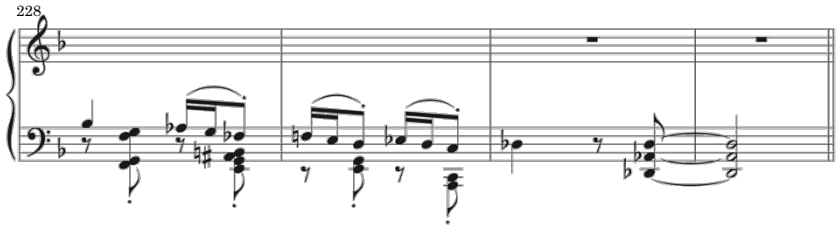
performances most likely stem from the composition's un-notated nature (namely, it is possible that since 1981, Economou altered the left-hand material without being aware of having done so due to the absence of notation), or from a set of deliberate choices, even, to provide different left-hand material in the 1984 version of the cycle from the 1981 version. Therefore, although the right hand as heard in the 1984 performance in bars 131-138 was replaced with that of the 1981, the left hand was kept intact in the edited score, since the 1984 recording's transcription provides material whose reliability and integrity cannot be challenged in any way.

Only a subtle alteration was made in the left hand, in bar 136, rectifying the first chord to a C (ninth) major in order to match with the harmonic profile of Corelli's theme, since the overall harmonic progression of the Variation develops according to Economou's harmonisation in 'Thema'. Yet again, any other disparities between the 1984 and 1981 recordings appear to arise from Economou's muddled playing, presumably due to insufficient preparation.



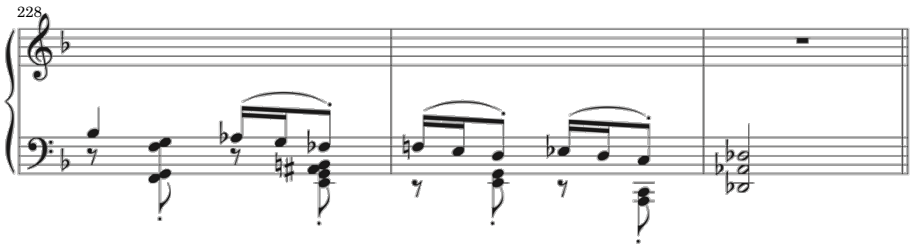
Musical Example 30. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation VIII, bars 131-138, edited score.

Another instance in which Economou's playing prompted editorial consideration occurs at the end of Variation XIII, where he plays a solitary D♭ – somewhat hesitantly – before proceeding to the full D♭ chord. Although the musical example below provides an approximate visual representation of the timing between the two gestures, a definitive understanding of the uncertainty or ambiguity in Economou's playing at that moment can only be made upon listening to the recording itself.



Musical Example 31. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* [1984], Variation XIII, bars 228-231.

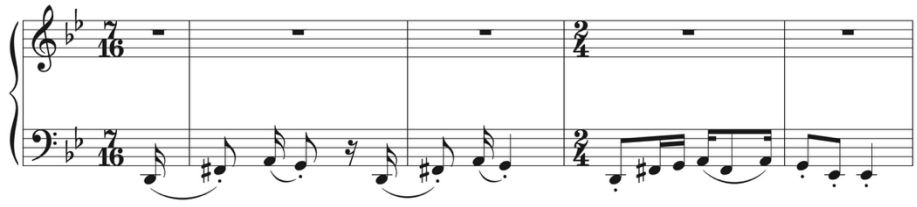
It is evident that this editorial decision rests primarily on conjecture and interpretative nuances in Economou's playing and sound. Nonetheless, these details offered compelling grounds to conclude that Variation XIII should better end with the D♭ chord alone, as shown in Musical Example 32.



Musical Example 32. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XIII, bars 228-230, edited score.

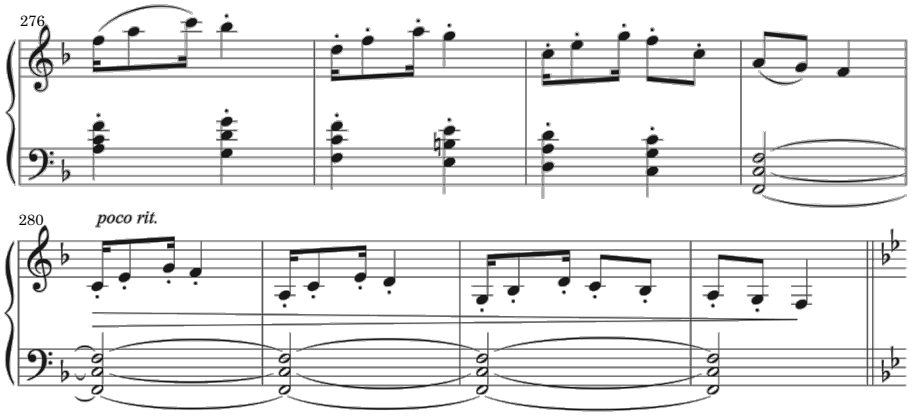
Another case where unclear execution necessitated editorial intervention can be found in Variation XVII. The opening bars required alteration due to a noticeable lack of

rhythmic clarity and precision in articulation in Economou's playing. An accurate transcription of the recording would appear as follows:



Musical Example 33. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* [1984], accurate transcription of opening bars of Variation XVII.

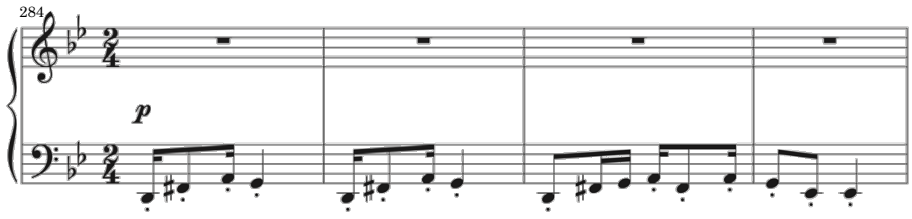
This syncopated pattern is first introduced at the end of the preceding movement, Variation XVI, where its *staccato* character is clearly established. As shown below, only bars 276 and 279 appear to deviate from this articulation, and following informed editorial consideration, there bars were amended to align with the surrounding material.



Musical Example 34. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* [1984], Variation XVI, bars 276-283.

Therefore, the final bars of Variation XVI, along with the more rhythmically secure and clearly articulated passages throughout the remainder of Variation XVII, were used as reference

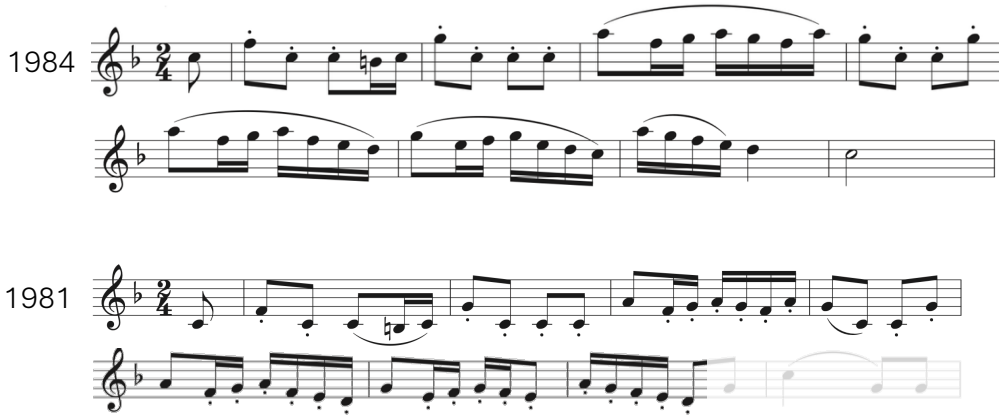
points and sufficient proof to establish rhythmic and articulatory consistency. The first few bars of Variation XVII were revised as shown below.



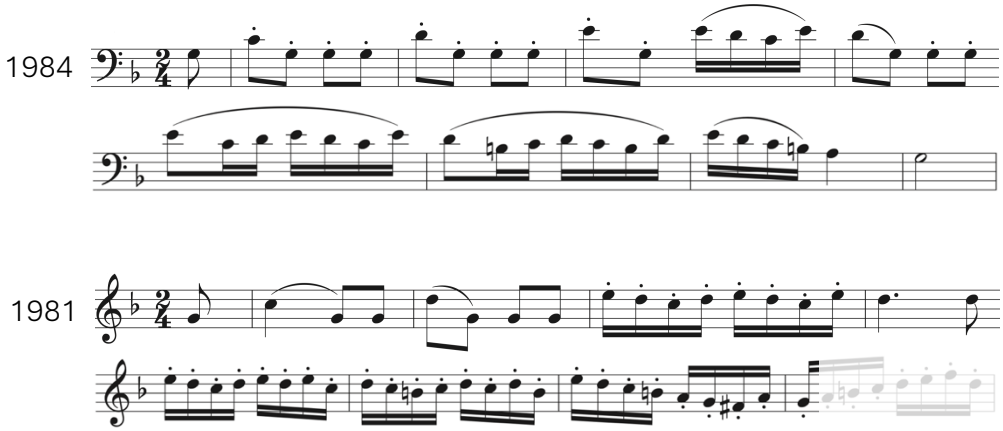
Musical Example 35. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XVII, bars 284-287, edited score.

Moreover, Economou's performance of Variation XXIII lacks confidence, resulting in a compromised transcription that required significant editorial intervention. Akin to a fugato, it appears as Variation XIX in the 1981 recording, and it is slightly longer and more elaborate than the 1984 version. While both versions develop the same thematic material through counterpoint, they share few similarities. Each features a subject exposition in F, followed by two restatements – in C and F. As Figure 22 demonstrates, only the exposition appears the same in both recordings, aside from a minor difference at the very end of the subject, while neither of the two restatements in either recording is identical to the subject or to one another (articulation is notated as accurately as possible according to Economou's recorded performances).

Exposition



First restatement



Second restatement

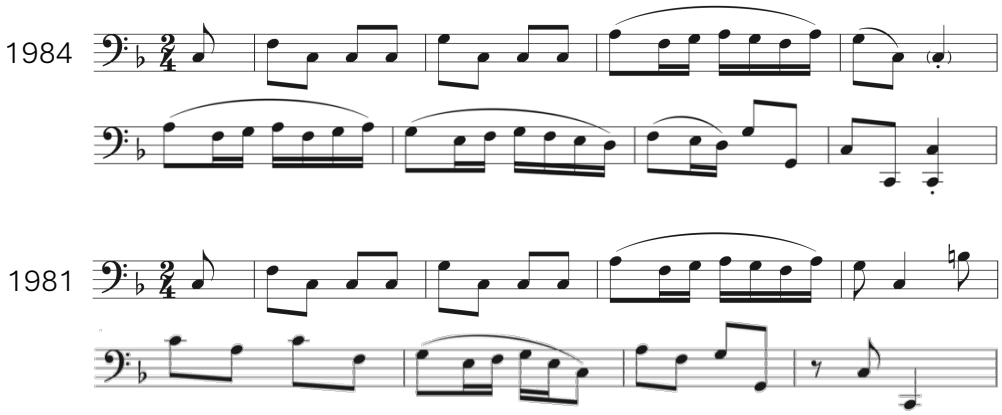
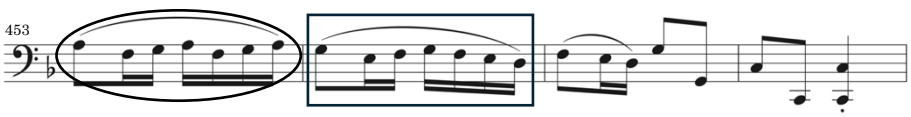


Figure 22. Subject and its restatements as performed by Economou in the 1981 [Variation XIX] and 1984 [Variation XXIII] recordings.

Clearly, the four restatements differ from one another. It is possible that Economou introduced these subtle changes in each of the restatements of Corelli's theme for a more interesting musical outcome through variability, or to avoid any dissonance with other contrapuntal lines. However, I found neither explanation is fully convincing. The first seems unlikely, given that the form and structure of the Variation rely on repetition of thematic material, and that all restatements in both recordings are dissimilar from one another. As for the second, any dissonances could have been easily avoided with the use of appropriate accidentals. Therefore, other matters were considered to gain greater insight to support editorial decisions in this Variation.

One key indication shedding light on the ambiguity surrounding the theme's appearances in this Variation lies in the high variability of articulation used in his playing. If a pianist of Economou's calibre had fully determined how the restatements were to be executed, one would expect a greater degree of consistency in articulation throughout. Further evidence questioning the legitimacy of this inconsistency in Variation XXIII emerges upon closer examination of the second half of the theme's second restatement in the 1984 recording, where a different pattern is played in each of the two bars that would typically form a sequence.



Musical Example 36. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* [1984], Variation XXIII, bars 453-456.

Although the analogous bars in the first restatement in both recordings also deviate from the theme's established pattern in distinct ways, they still maintain sequential

development.[44] Given this, even if Economou had intended to diverge from the theme's exact pattern, a sequence would still be expected in the second restatement, as demonstrated in the first restatement in both recordings. These observations suggest that these passages may not have been thoroughly worked out and prepared prior to Economou's performances.

But to reiterate, it is the quality of Economou's playing in both 1981 and 1984 recordings that reinforced the need for editorial intervention in the transcription of the latter. While the 1981 performance is slower and more grounded, both performances of the Variation lack the assurance found in other movements of the cycle. Most notably, Economou's playing in the 1984 recording becomes rushed after the opening bars, and the execution of the theme's second restatement exhibits noticeable uncertainty. Throughout, each restatement is accompanied by a subtle imbalance and a lack of full technical control.

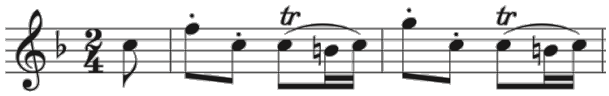
It is worth acknowledging that the 1981 performance of this Variation displays a more intricate development compared to the 1984 version, featuring a dynamic interaction between the two voices of the counterpoint. Hence, this may justify all the changes observed in the restatements of the subject as deliberate compositional choices. By contrast, the 1984 version features a simpler and more straightforward dialogue between the two melodic lines, as well as more transparent texture, something which, in contrast to the material of the 1981 version, does not justify how incoherently the thematic material is presented. Therefore, several alterations seemed justifiable, in order for the subject's restatements to align with the overall simplicity observed in the 1984 version of the Variation – an editorial decision that might not reflect Economou's compositional process, but

[44] It is worth clarifying that the absence of this sequence in the second restatement in 1981 is most likely due to the manner in which the right hand evolves.

certainly, my interpretation of what the composer's playing reveals about his execution and the composition itself.

Taking everything into consideration, I decided to retain the subject in the edited score as performed in the 1984 recording, despite a minor deviation from Corelli's original theme at the end of its second bar, where a semiquaver figure is replaced by a quaver. This departure from the original theme appears in both the 1981 and 1984 recordings, and seems to reflect an intentional compositional choice by Economou. This is further supported by the recurrence of the repeated-note quaver pattern not only in the subject's restatements, but also as a developmental device in other contrapuntal lines throughout the Variation.

Corelli's Theme



Variation XXIII Subject

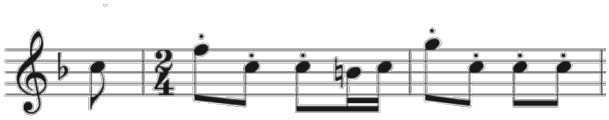
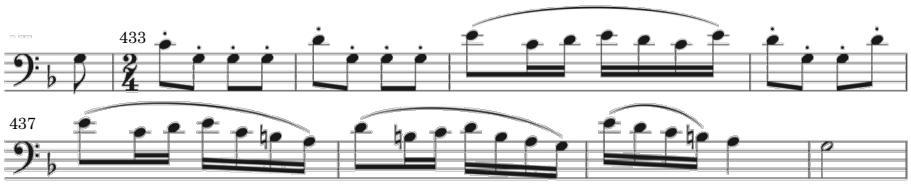


Figure 23. Corelli's theme as presented in Economou's 'Thema', and subject of Variation XXIII, as performed in the 1984 recording.

The two restatements of the subject were revised accordingly, and now appear in the edited score as follows:

First Restatement



Second Restatement

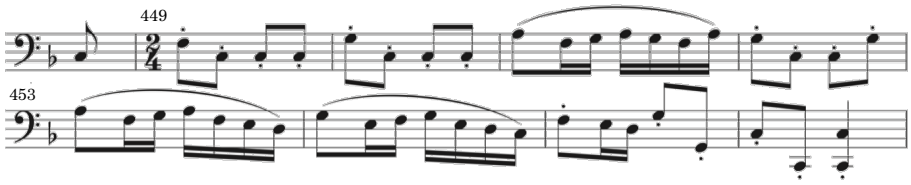


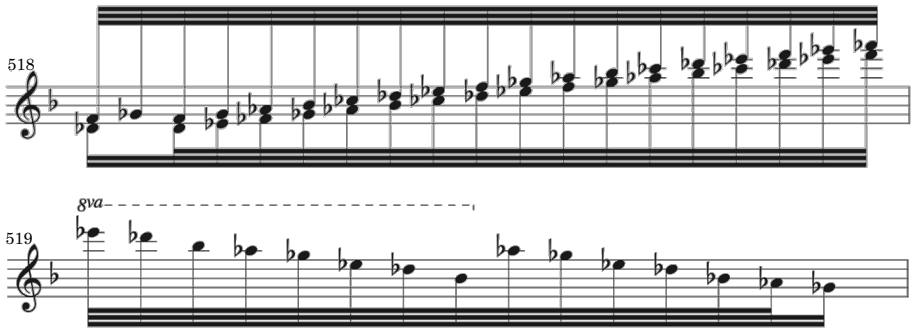
Figure 24. Revised first and second restatements of the subject in Variation XXIII.

None of the theme's restatements in either of the two recordings contain the semiquaver figure at the end of the first two bars, as in the original theme.[45] Of course, as already discussed, other patterns in this Variation performed by Economou in both 1981 and 1984 recordings also deviate from Corelli's theme; however, they lack consistency between the two versions of the Variation, and therefore offer little justification for validating such performed material. In contrast, the repeated quavers stand out as the only element that appears consistently across all restatements in both recordings, and therefore, it seems reasonable to consider them as a deliberate compositional choice. For the reasons

[45] One may argue that Economou sought to avoid the raised subdominant in the first bar of Corelli's theme, to prevent potential dissonances with other contrapuntal lines – for example, in bar 449. Yet, as noted, such issues could have been easily resolved using appropriate accidentals.

already outlined, the rest of the semiquaver figures in the second half of the restatements were adjusted to align with Corelli's original theme.

Lastly, bars 518-521 in the final Variation of the cycle stood out as the most challenging of the whole work to transcribe, due to Economou's muddled playing in the 1984 recording. Even after slowing down the recording by up to 80%, his unclear playing made it exceedingly difficult to identify which notes were played, irrespective of their correctness or intended nature. A very similar passage appears in the 1981 recording too (Musical Example 37), however, although every note Economou plays was also not easy to identify, the passage's shorter and simpler shape and structure revealed a much more straightforward compositional plan. Therefore, 'filling in the gaps', where necessary, was achieved with a greater degree of certainty.



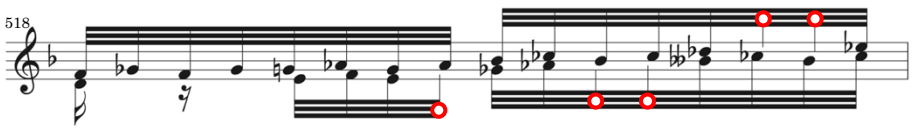
Musical Example 37. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* [1981], Variation XX (appears as XXV in 1984 recording), bars 518-519.

Since the analogous passage in the 1984 recording is longer and structured differently than the 1981 version of it, the transcription of the latter could not provide much useful information that could be used to restore the integrity of the former's (other than the fact that the first bar of the passage there also develops in thirds). However, the 1984 recording, regardless of the unclear execution of bars 518-521, offers some understanding of the

passage's shape, as well as some indicative reference points, which were helpful enough to reconstruct a version of what Economou might have intended to play.

The musical examples below present an approximate transcription of those bars, as captured in the 1984 recording. The headless note stems, marked with circles, indicate where identification of the pitch proved extremely challenging. Due to Economou's unclear playing in these bars, rhythm is also very unclear and confusing. Therefore, it would be very challenging to provide a visual representation of where exactly each note falls, hence, it should be also clarified that the transcription provided below has already undergone some editorial adjustments.

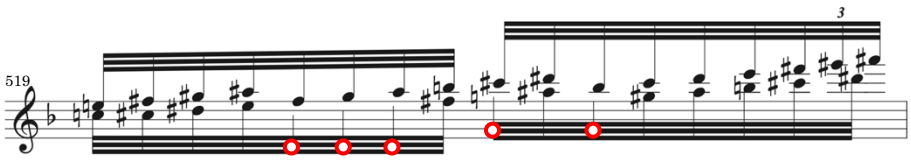
Reconstructing bar 518 was relatively straightforward. As previously mentioned, the 1981 version of this passage provides sufficient information to verify the bar's progression in thirds. Of course, much of the right hand in this bar is clearly audible, providing information about shape and pitches. But even in the end of the bar, where a couple of right-hand notes were indiscernible, the left hand was distinct enough to provide clear guidance about the direction and pitches needed to accurately complete the right-hand.



Musical Example 38. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* [1984], Variation XXV, bar 518.

Economou's playing in bar 519 stands out as the vaguest and most perplexing, as already mentioned. In the recording, right and left hands almost never fall together, and pitches in both hands were loosely detected, especially in the first half of the bar. Most of

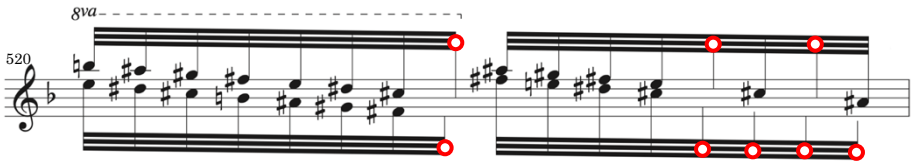
the right-hand's first group of semiquavers was repeated (possibly due to Economou's unclear compositional intentions and/or their underprepared execution), while the left hand continued its ascend towards F#, before another disruption, and then to A#.



Musical Example 39. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* [1984], Variation XXV, bar 519.

Due to Economou's muddled playing, the recording does not clearly convey the melody's intended shape in bar 519, and what is presented in the musical example above is a conjecture-based reconstruction, produced by taking into account all the notes identified during the transcribing process.

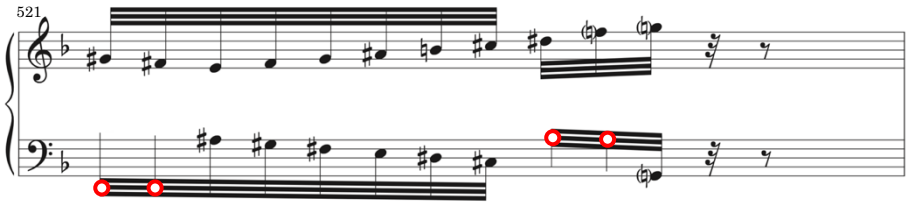
Additionally, just like the first bar of this coda, bar 520 proved to be straightforward to reconstruct. Most of the top line, a descending B major scale, can easily be heard and was confidently transcribed, with the two hands moving in parallel motion, a fifth apart until the end of the first beat. As the musical example below shows, there is a small disruption/slip at the very end of the first beat, after which right and left hands move in thirds instead of fifths, but only for half a beat, before the left hand becomes inaudible.



Musical Example 40. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* [1984], Variation XXV, bar 520.

It is highly unlikely that Economou intentionally altered the pattern midway through the B major passage. This unplanned disruption just before the second beat of the bar most probably forced him to find as quickly as possible a note consonant with the right hand's A# (it is also worth considering the speed with which he had to act in order to resolve this issue, maintaining the fluency of the performance). Therefore, the shift from fifths to thirds between the two hands was corrected during the editing process. In addition, such a change facilitates a smoother transition to the remaining left-hand material with which this virtuosic cadenza-like section ends.

While the right hand in bar 521 does not pose any significant challenges in the transcribing process, the left hand as heard in the recording presents, once again, certain difficulties in identifying and placing the notes played by Economou at the correct positions. Specifically, the six-note group (A# to C#) in the left hand starts earlier than indicated in the musical example below – the first note of this group is actually played with the last A# found in the right hand of bar 520 (this may be observed only when the recording is slowed down, because of the rapid pace of these demisemiquavers).

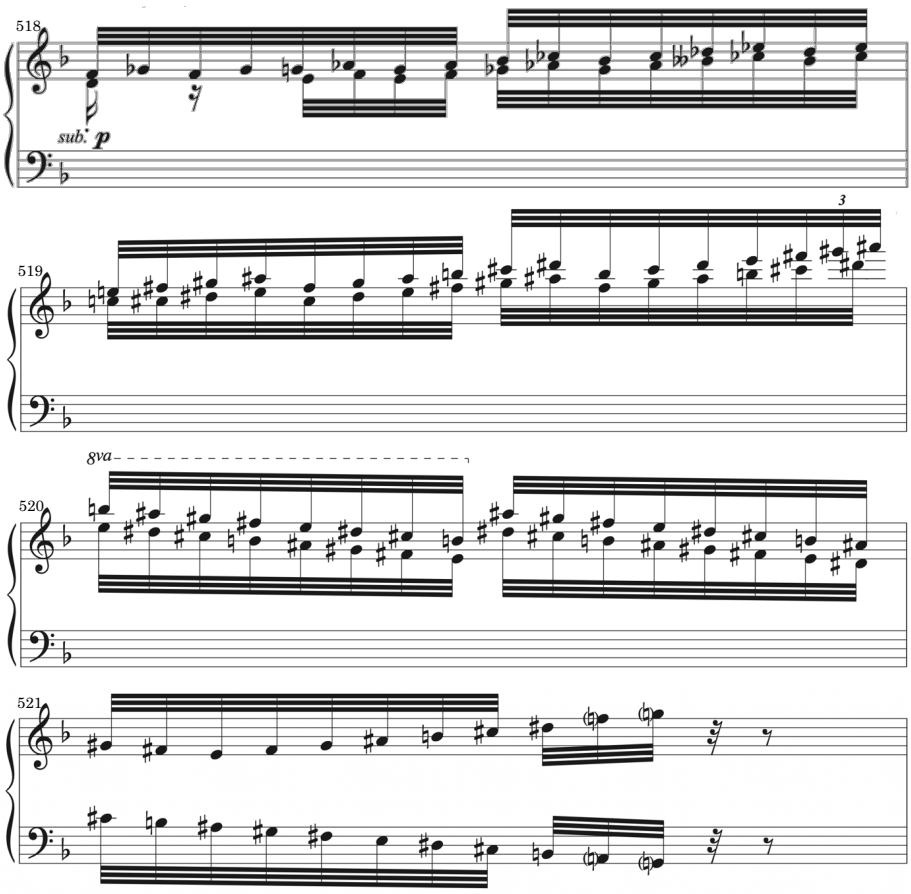


Musical Example 41. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* [1984], Variation XXV, bar 521.

Listening to Economou's recording, it is clear that both hands end on G, and that his intention was to finish this cadenza with a contrary-motion passage. If the descending scale

in bar 520 was played in fifths throughout, the last note in the left hand there would be D#. This leaves the first two gaps of the left hand in bar 521 to be filled in with C# and B, before moving the six-note group mentioned above after that B. Similarly, before the last G in the left hand, B and A♮ were added; A♮ and not A# seemed to be the most favourable choice. This decision ensures alignment between the left-hand tone and the F and G formed by the right hand.

Hence, taking all these observations into consideration, bars 518-521 were therefore constructed as follows:



Musical Example 42. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XV, bars 518-521, edited score.

It is clear that the reconstruction of bars 518-521 rests largely on conjectural reasoning, making it difficult to assert with confidence that they accurately reflect what Economou would have liked to be notated in a published score of the cycle (except for bar 518). A substantial portion of the cadenza in the 1984 recording could not be transcribed note for note with certainty, and thus, many moments in his playing had to be guessed. This degree of editorial speculation may seem to compromise the authority of the resulting score. Yet such concerns overlook a crucial truth: all editorial work – especially when engaging with fragmentary sources – is inherently interpretive, yet the absence of definitive material does not preclude meaningful reconstruction. Rather, it demands a critically engaged process, guided by musical insight, stylistic understanding, and editorial rigour. Far from weakening the musical text, a transparent editorial approach, where each decision is backed by justifiable reasoning and clearly communicated to the score's user, can establish its validity. In this light, the reconstructed cadenza in the final movement of *Corelli Variations* – which comprises only four out of the 526 bars that make up the entire composition – should not necessarily be seen as a distortion of the composer's intentions, but as a conscientious effort to present Economou's cycle as a complete and performable work to performers and their audiences alike.

※ ※ ※ ※ ※ ※

Throughout the editorial process of Economou's *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, his two recordings were considered superior to his manuscript after well-informed observations and decisions, challenging conventional views on the primacy of written authorial originals. His performances took precedence over his notated ideas and notational preferences,

while the resulting transcription of the 1984 recording was treated as a kind of best-text. Generally, the aforementioned discussion demonstrates that a range of considerations, arising from an interplay between text- and performance-related factors, can inform the editorial process of a posthumously notated composition to restore the integrity of a musical text perceived as compromised. Given that the transcription process itself is executed with utmost skill and thoroughness, the resulting notation can be treated as a legitimate text in its own right, similarly to any other type of written source and utilized accordingly in the editorial process. Ultimately, it is the condition, purpose and integrity of the recording and the performance itself that define the level of usability and reliability attributed to the transcribed material, and subsequently, the editorial procedures to be undertaken, and not merely the fact that an unauthorized text – a transcription – is used. When approached with informed decision-making, musical insight, and editorial rigour, such notations can be employed akin to other 'normative' musical texts in an editorial process to create a prescriptive score.

In any editorial undertaking, the perceived definitiveness of a manuscript, or an already published edition used for a new edition, is always, and rightly so, open to question – more often than not, for valid reasons (Tanselle 1995, 12). And when dealing with texts of more conventional nature, being aware of “the responsibility that follows from understanding the status of texts as fallible instructions for the recreation of works” (Tanselle 2005, 7) justifies one’s effort “to return to that authorial state, to peel back the layers of accident and reveal the text, the physical manifestation of the work that would have been known to the author” (Grier 1995, 78). Surely, if this approach is deemed essential for addressing issues in ‘traditional’ written documents, then the imperative to alter the content

of un-notated works' transcriptions in order to "peel back the layers of accident" and to identify "the physical manifestation of the work that would have been known to the author" becomes even stronger in the pursuit of establishing an authoritative musical text.

Traditional editorial principles and considerations were applied in the aforementioned editorial process, yet only to a certain extent, as other significant factors influenced the evaluation of the transcription's content. The fact that a work such as Economou's *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* was never written down in its entirety, and instead, was shaped and subsequently revised without being notated, played an integral role in this undertaking. Certain editorial conjectures and decisions were informed by the understanding that a) its conception was not affected or constrained by the restrictions of Western art music notation, and b) a performance of an un-notated work is more prone to provide inaccurate information than a written text. Essentially, the likelihood of accidentally playing a wrong note is higher than writing down a note incorrectly in a manuscript. Similarly, missing or mishearing a note in an un-notated work's recording is more probable than a composer accidentally omitting a note in a manuscript. All this is significant in identifying the cause of textual issues, and underscoring if and what editorial alterations are necessary.

A deceased composer's 'intentions' are ultimately inaccessible, yet the aspiration to create a score that reflects them as accurately as possible should not be dismissed as futile. Certainly, just like in any editorial process, working with transcriptions of un-notated works carries the risk of overstepping the bounds of editorial involvement. Nevertheless, the examples from the editorial process of Economou's *Corelli Variations* discussed above demonstrate that, even when dealing with written documents that were not provided by the composer, one is not hindered from making nuanced judgments and drawing a range of

informed conclusions. Close reading of the text, analysis of the performed musical ideas, as well as meticulous consideration of hermeneutic and musical factors, links with thematic material, or the quality of the playing and the level of assurance it conveys, even, plays crucial role in evaluating musical material and making the most fit decisions. Certainly, although the editor seeks to act in the best interest of the composer and their creative ideas, these decisions ultimately communicate the former's realization of the work, rather than the latter's.

Given the inherent challenges of producing a reliable musical text for an un-notated work based on the composer's performance(s), one might argue that unless the execution of the musical material is flawless, so that an integral transcription serves as a credible point of departure for the editorial process, it is unlikely to make confident and valid editorial decisions, using a defective or incomplete musical text derived from a flawed performance. Nevertheless, even when the playing itself is unclear or flawed, some of the examples discussed above prove that it remains possible to restore the compromised integrity of the text to bring it as close as possible to what the composer would have wanted to be written down and published, or, at the very least, an editorial version produced through informed choices. This is, of course, contingent upon the degree of the performance's deficiencies.

In such cases, a text's reconstruction may rely on audible traces and fragments of the passage in question. Such information might include the overall contour or direction of the passage in question, distinguishable pitches (even in the form of scattered notes) and rhythm that can collectively give information about the melodic and rhythmic material of the piece, as well as any patterns, sequences, or intervals on which the musical material is constructed, that can be validated and processed within the established melodic, rhythmic,

and harmonic contexts. Consequently, as long as the text's reconstruction is carried out with thoroughness and scholarly rigour, and that the outcome of such editorial endeavour conveys the intended character and overall impression (a bravura-like passage/cadenza in the case of the cadenza of *Corelli Variations*), the edited score as a whole can retain its authority and reliability.

4. Interpreting Performed Actions and Realizing Performance Directions

Although an undertaking to transcribe the pitch and rhythm performed in a recording involves a degree of interpretative judgment, it results in a factual document – a musical text that reflects, with as much precision as Western notation allows, what was played, and potentially, following editorial evaluation, reveals moments where informed alterations can enhance its integrity. Conversely, an attempt to interpret the *performed* loudness, speed, articulation and phrasing as captured in a recorded performance to determine the performance directions intrinsic to the un-notated work, entails a far higher degree of subjectivity and uncertainty, making it, on first consideration, inconclusive and open to debate.

Certainly, with the increasing scholarly interest in the study of recordings as a means of understanding performance practices, computational methodologies have allowed musicologists to extract objective and highly precise data from these audio documents that can also be diagrammatically presented (e.g. Cook 2007; Cook 2011; Rector 2021; Thompson 2021). Nevertheless, setting aside the fact that some of these diagrams can be hard to read or extract meaningful information from, the objectivity afforded by these methods does not guarantee an accurate representation of the expressive features inherent to a musical work, but merely a formal diagrammatic representation of what has been captured in the recording.

Examples from the editorial process of Economou's *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* discussed in this chapter shed light on the complex issues one might have to face when

attempting to decipher expressive elements in a composer's recording in order to establish the performance directions necessary to appear in a prescriptive score for a posthumously notated work. When creating such a musical text – one devoid of elements emerging entirely from the composer's playing traits and/or the individual performance(s) used in the process – the editor's musical insight and hermeneutic abilities, as well as familiarization with the composer's playing style, become essential in making informed and appropriate decisions regarding the performance directions to be included in the musical text. This process involves not only determining whether a performed action should be included in the prescriptive score, but also interpreting how that action as conveyed through the recording may be transformed into a prescriptive, rather than merely descriptive, performance direction. Much like the editorial choices discussed in the preceding chapter, this process ultimately produces a score consisting of performance directions that the editor, rather than the composer, considers necessary and intrinsic to the composition, based on their own understanding of the work and their interpretation of the composer's recorded performance(s).

4.1. Dynamic Markings

As discussed in Chapter 2, a distinctive characteristic of Economou's playing is the use of dynamic fluctuations to facilitate the effective shaping of musical phrases. While such interpretative nuance is a common trait among performers, Economou's application of it ranges from subtle to particularly evident, and is often mistakenly perceived as a response to *crescendo* and *diminuendo* markings when no such directions are present in the score.

For example, in Variation VI, I interpreted all but one of the dynamic fluctuations as expressive vehicles employed by Economou to convey the melodic contour. These are illustrated in the waveform graph below, where the amplitude patterns form distinct arches that mirror the arch-like shape of the melodic line in each phrase.

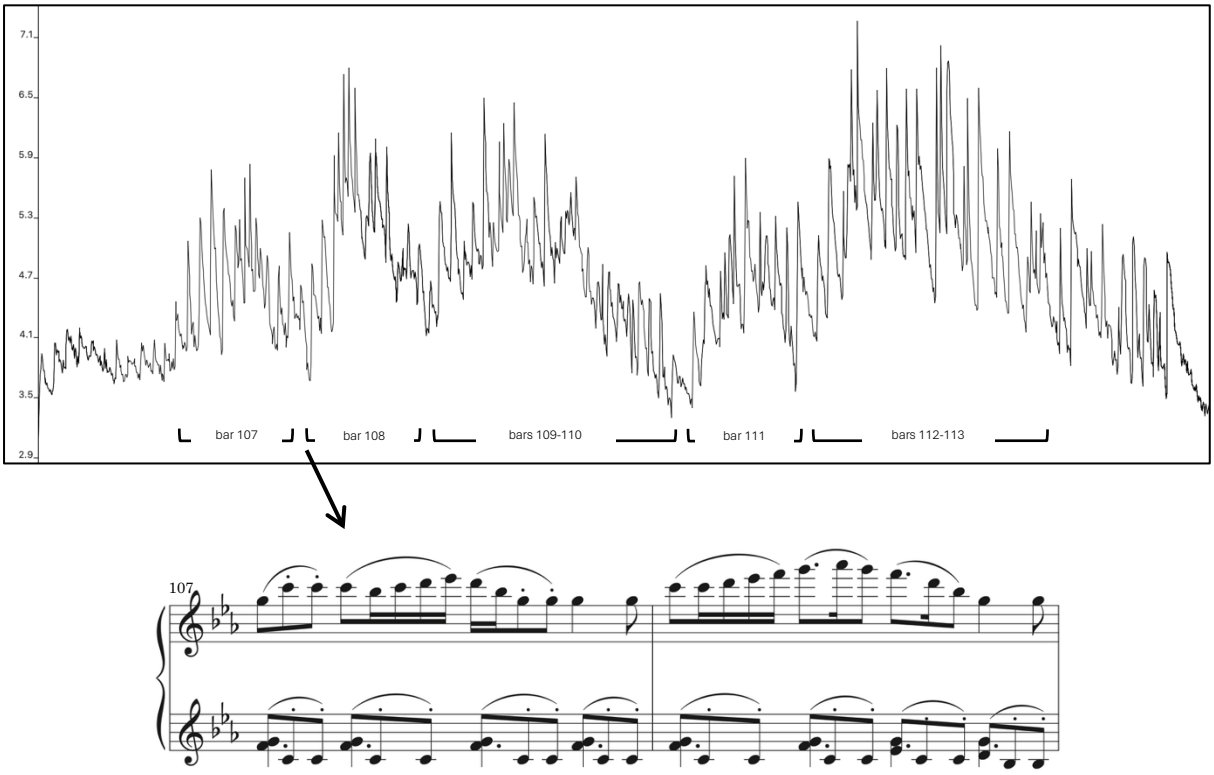
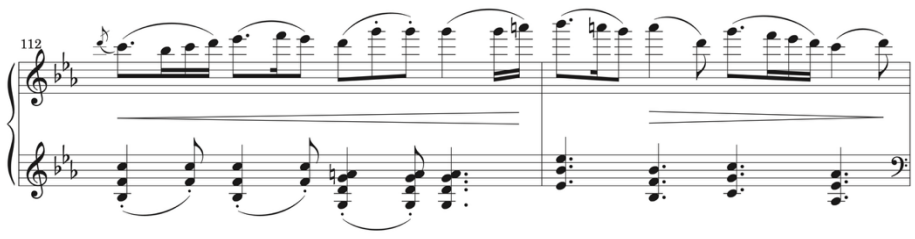


Figure 25. Waveform graph of Variation VI, 1984 recording (dB/loudness, time), and bars 107-18 from the edited score.

In the first four instances, the dynamic fluctuations are relatively subtle. Bearing in mind Economou's tendency to employ such gradual, yet restrained, dynamic changes to highlight the shape of a melodic line, they were not perceived as intrinsic elements of the composition, although an editor unfamiliar with his playing style might have been inclined to notate them in the score. Even if these dynamic fluctuations were intrinsic features to the composition, the absence of performance directions suggesting them in the musical text

does not compromise the intended progression of the piece. This is not only due to the extent to which these dynamic fluctuations are conveyed in the recording, but also because the text itself with its arch-shaped figures implicitly calls for appropriately nuanced phrasing. Moreover, incorporating such directions into the score might risk initiating a sequence of *crescendos* and *diminuendos* that could be misinterpreted by performers, distorting the overall essence of the Variation.

However, as the waveform graph in Figure 25 shows, there is a longer and bigger increase in volume in bars 112-113, leading to the culmination of the Variation, followed by a gradual return to the initial dynamic. As Musical Example 43 indicates, these were indeed treated as intrinsic features of the Variation and were accordingly included in the edited score. This development of sound, clearly conveyed in Economou's performance, builds toward the climactic point of the piece, making the inclusion of a *crescendo* in the musical text essential. Without such a performance direction, this passage would most likely not be properly conveyed in future performances, and bar 113, the climax of the Variation, would not be realized as such. It is also worth noting that, despite this increase of volume in bar 112, there is a discernible effort to maintain a relatively restrained dynamic level. For this reason, no specific dynamic marking is assigned to the first beat of bar 113.



Musical Example 43. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation VI, bars 112-113, edited score.

Variation XXI offers another instance in which this trait of Economou's playing was considered to define the dynamic changes that seem to be intrinsic to the composition. Figure 26 presents all the dynamic fluctuations that were deemed essential to be included in the written representation of the Variation. The same graph also demonstrates other dynamic fluctuations that appeared to contribute more to the expressive flow and phrasing of Economou's interpretation than the composition's dynamic trajectory; they were thus excluded from the edited score. These are most evident in bars 393-398, where an arch-like shape in the graph reflects the overall dynamic development of this six-bar passage. However, it should be clarified that this arch results from a series of brief and subtle dynamic fluctuations which were perceived as expressive devices employed in Economou's playing to outline the melodic contour of the right-hand material, as well as due to the rich texture of the passage and some accented notes. Hence, although the waveform graph may suggest a *crescendo* and *diminuendo* at the beginning and end of bars 393-398 (along with other, shorter dynamic fluctuations), these were not regarded as inherent to the composition.

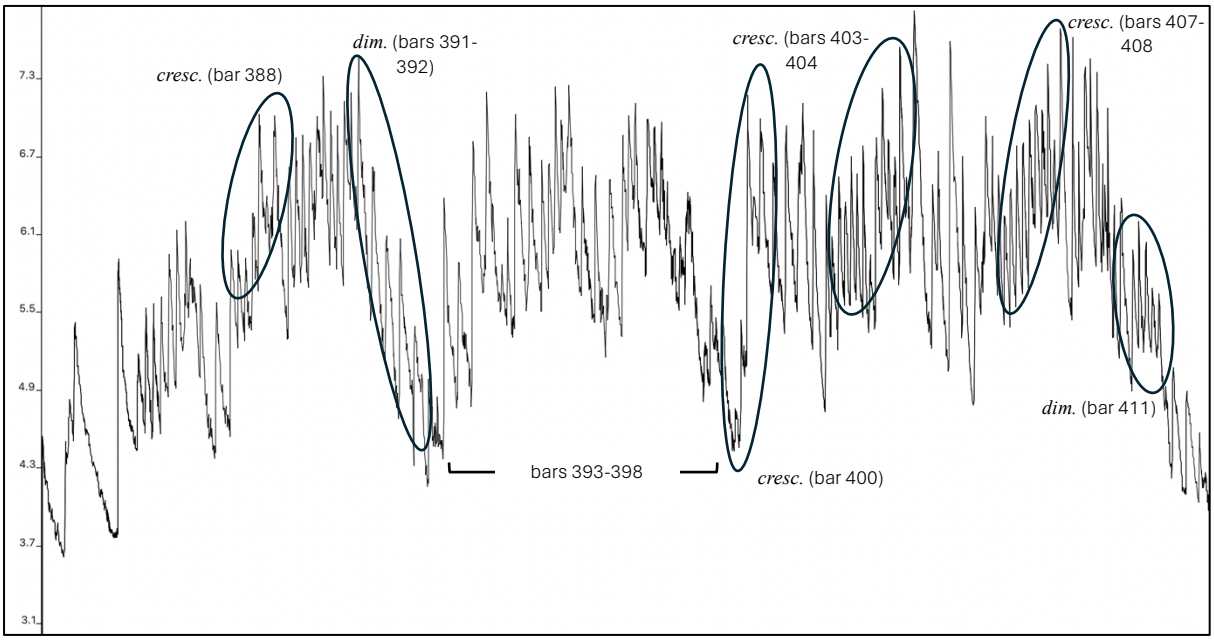
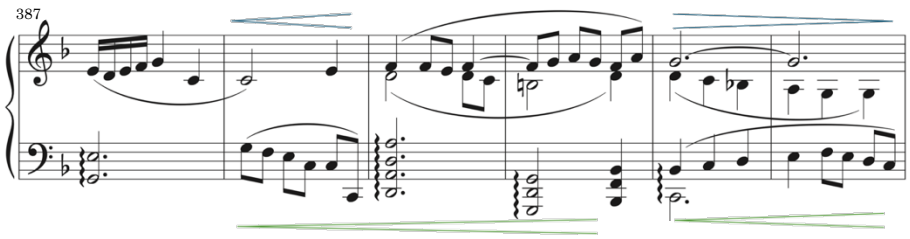


Figure 26. Waveform graph of Variation XXI, 1984 recording (dB/loudness, time).

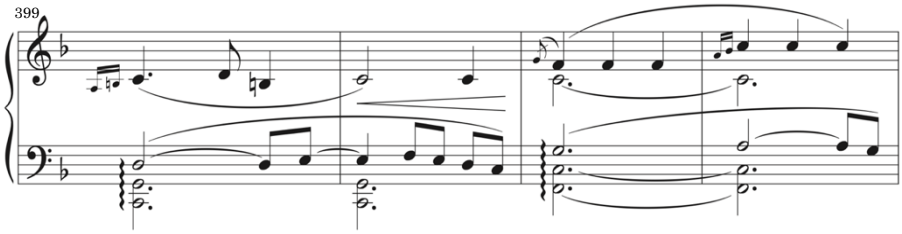
It is worth providing a commentary on the decisions made regarding the remaining dynamic fluctuations shown in the graph above, which were incorporated into the edited score, exemplifying, once again, instances where gradual dynamic changes heard in an un-notated work's recordings may indeed be perceived as intrinsic elements of the composition. To begin with, this Variation appears in the 1981 performance too, which was consulted during the editorial process to assess whether any similarities between two recordings might offer a clearer understanding of the Variation's dynamic progression. I placed a *crescendo* in bar 388, where both recordings display a clear increase in volume. Also, a *diminuendo* observed in bars 391-392 in his 1984 performance was considered essential to appear in the edited score too. However, in the 1981 recording, the *crescendo* extends through to the end of bar 390, while in bars 391-392, the same performance suggests a *crescendo* rather than a *diminuendo*, before, nonetheless, a gradual volume decrease too in bars 393-394 (see Musical Example 44; blue performance directions refer to the 1984 recording and green to the 1981).



Musical Example 44. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XXI, bars 387-392 (dynamic fluctuations as conveyed in the 1981/green and 1984/blue recordings).

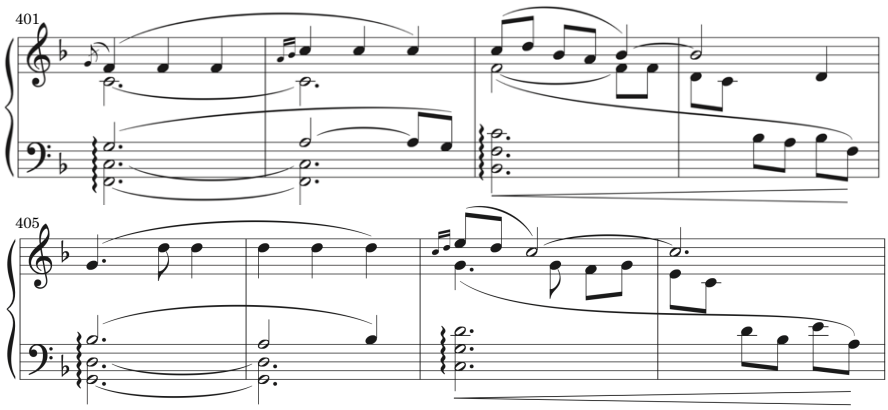
One of the reasons the observations drawn from the 1984 recording were prioritized over those of the 1981 performance is that the former provides the latest known version of the work. Most importantly, even if the 1981 recording did not exist, I would still have included these two dynamic markings in the edited score as played in 1984: bars 389 and 393 are approached and treated as arrival points following these gradual dynamic changes preceding them – *crescendo* and *diminuendo* respectively – with the reached dynamic level maintained for a few bars before the next dynamic change. These dynamic fluctuations were not disregarded as mere manifestations of Economou's tendency to shape melodic contours through dynamic inflection, not only due to the evident growth and diminution of sound, but also because they are supported by the musical material itself.

Another *crescendo* was placed in bar 400 in the edited score, which also appears in the 1981 performance of the Variation. The function of this bar appears analogous to that of bar 388, since in both instances the left hand serves as the driving force for sound development, leading to key arrival points. Economou's intention for sound growth is once again clearly conveyed in his playing as it leads to a new phrase from which the progression towards the climax of the Variation is initiated.



Musical Example 45. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XXI, bars 399-402, edited score.

Similarly, both recordings communicate a clear growth of sound in bars 403-404 and 407-408, facilitating a gradual and smooth build-up toward f in bar 409 – the climax of the Variation.

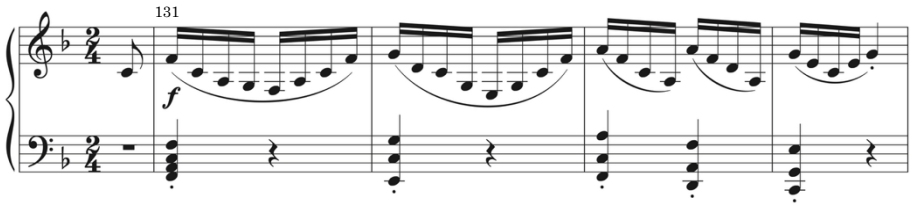


Musical Example 46. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XXI, bars 401-408, edited score.

In the 1984 recording, there is a clear *diminuendo* after bar 409, suggesting a smooth transition to the next, softer Variation. Accordingly, a *diminuendo* marking was placed two bars before the following Variation.

Economou's heavy-handed playing, as well as his rich, expressive sound constituted another set of traits of his pianism taken into account throughout the editorial process of his *Corelli Variations*. His performance of Variation VIII in both the 1981 and 1984 recordings, for example, is rather harsh and heavy – a listener unfamiliar with his playing

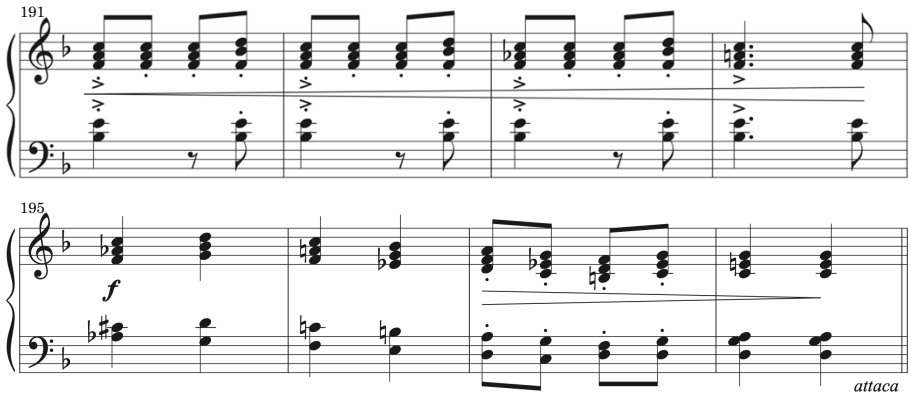
style would consider *ff* the most appropriate dynamic marking to describe it. Nonetheless, given Economou's playing, it is reasonable to conclude that had he intended to convey a dynamic as loud as *ff*, his performances would have been even more intense. Also, a dynamic louder than *f* would not suit the fleeting semiquaver figures, while anything softer, such as *mf*, would fail to convey the energy and vigour not only expressed in Economou's interpretations, but suggested by the musical material itself. For these reasons, *f* was deemed the most suitable dynamic for Variation VIII.



Musical Example 47. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation VIII, bars 131-134, edited score.

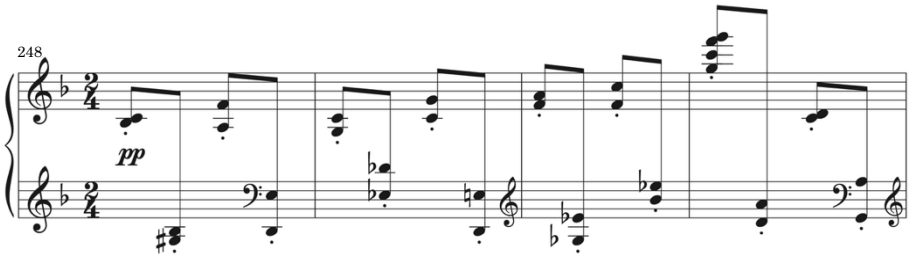
A similar approach was applied to Variation XI, where *mf* was determined to be the most fitting dynamic for its first half. Once again, considering Economou's distinctive playing style, had he intended to perform at a *forte* level, his execution would likely have been noticeably louder. At the same time, anything softer than *mf* would have been too quiet given the volume and energy conveyed in the 1984 recording. Certainly, determining whether a Variation should be marked with *mp* or *mf*, instead of *p*, *f*, or *pp* and *ff*, is rather challenging, and such decisions can be debatable when attempting to 'decode' features of a recorded performance into performance directions. However, the proportional relationships between different sections of a composition, alongside other interpretative features, can provide useful information when seeking to determine the most appropriate markings. Hence, another reason why I assigned *mf* (and not *f*) to the first half of the

Variation is a clear *crescendo* in Economou's playing in bars 191-194, which leads to the peak moment of the Variation in bar 195, marked with *f*. And that is because, considering, once again, Economou's characteristically rich and forceful sound, bars 195-196 would likely have sounded distinctly louder, or harsher and aggressive, even, had he aimed for a dynamic as loud as *ff*.



Musical Example 48. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XI, bars 191-198, edited score.

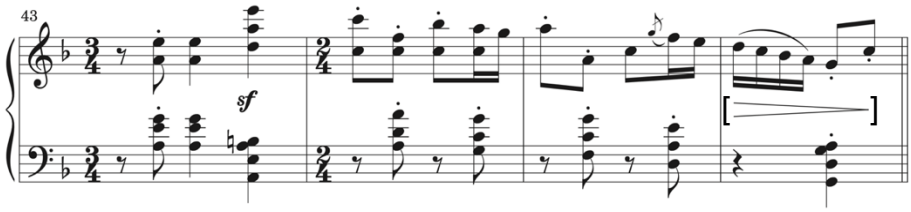
Variation XV offers another instance in which traits of Economou's playing influenced decisions regarding the dynamic markings chosen for the edited score. His playing here is surprisingly controlled and gentle; *p* could have been a reasonable choice for this Variation's dynamic indication. However, there seems to be a deliberate effort by Economou to play as softly as possible. Given the typically rich sound that characterises his playing, the rarity of such truly soft moments of unforced sound in his performances, as well as the Variation's whimsical character, the Variation was marked with *pp*. Moreover, considering the *ff* assigned to the preceding Variation, there seems to be a planned dramatic contrast between the two Variations.



Musical Example 49. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XV, bars 248-251, edited score.

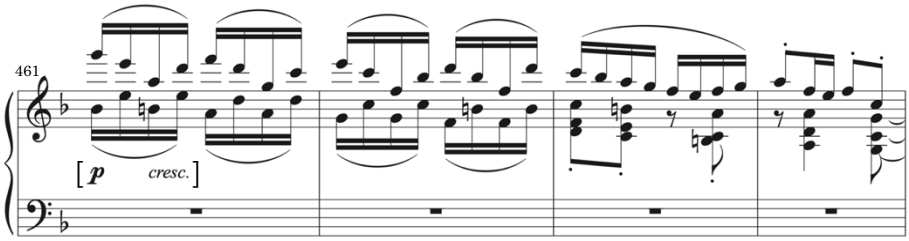
In other cases throughout the cycle, the task was not to interpret features of the recorded performance in relation to Economou's distinctive playing style, but rather to address musical material that warranted the addition of performance directions to the score, despite these not being suggested in any way by his interpretation. For example, a *diminuendo* was added in the final bar of Variation II. Although this dynamic change is not discernible in the 1984 recording, it functions as a gradual transition from this Variation, marked throughout with *mf*, to the next, which is soft and delicate enough, in terms of both character and execution, to warrant a *p* marking. This editorial addition seemed essential, not only because Economou's performance does not convey or imply a *subito piano* drop after the *mf* dynamic marking of Variation II, but also due to the musical material itself in the two Variations, which also does not suggest such a stark contrast between them. [46]

[46] It is assumed that Economou did not employ a *diminuendo* at the end of Variation II to reach the desired, clearly softer dynamic of the following Variation because, after the last *sforzando* chord in bar 43, his playing in the remaining three bars of the Variation already sounds (perhaps inadvertently) softer than *mf*. However, the sound colour of his playing and the conveyed impression of his gestures do not suggest a dynamic as soft as *p* or *mp* that needs to be indicated in bar 44. For this reason, it is possible that he felt no need to approach the following Variation with a smoother and more obvious transition.



Musical Example 50. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation II, bars 43-46, edited score.

In Variation XXIII, bar 461 was marked with p and *cresc.* Once again, Economou's performance does not clearly reflect such a dynamic shift to p following the climactic section in bars 449-460, marked with f. Yet the sound colour of his playing in bar 461 changes, becoming lighter and more articulated, only *hinting* at a softer dynamic. Given that the subsequent Variation XXIV was assigned f, approached with an ascending chromatic scale, and considering that the material from bar 461 onward may be described as a passage of relentless development, I decided that a *crescendo* is an essential performance direction to include in the edited score, even if it is not explicitly communicated in Economou's interpretation. Recognizing that this *crescendo* must unfold over ten bars, p was chosen as the most suitable dynamic marking in bar 461, as mp would not offer sufficient room for the necessary volume growth. And if Economou's aim was for bar 461 to be as quiet as pp, his performance would likely have communicated that dynamic more clearly and convincingly.



Musical Example 51. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XXIII, bars 461-464, edited score.

Another movement in *Corelli Variations* that required a careful analysis of both the recording and the resulting transcription to attempt to concretise Economou's compositional ideas was Variation XII. After careful consideration of several factors, I concluded that p was the most appropriate dynamic marking for the entire Variation, despite the fact that Economou's playing in the recording is definitely louder than this marking suggests. This is most evident in the first eight bars of the Variation primarily due to the left hand, which is noticeably more prominent than the fleeting right-hand semiquavers.[47]

From bar 207 onward, Economou's playing becomes softer in comparison to the first half of the Variation, something evidenced by the waveform graph of the recording as well (Figure 27). This shift in volume between bars 199-206 and 207-214 results solely from a drop in volume in the left hand and not the right. It is rather unlikely that this was a predetermined compositional decision; the left hand asserts itself with a disproportionate force that seems less a conscious compositional or interpretative choice by Economou to prioritize its material – which offers no compelling justification for such prominence – over the right hand's brilliant passages, than a reflection of his idiosyncratic and impulsively expressive playing style. By extension, I presume that bar 206, where there is significantly less activity in both hands than in the preceding bars, provided an opportunity for Economou to recalibrate the intensity of his playing before the second half of the piece.

[47] It is worth mentioning that the dB values recorded for the first half of this Variation are very similar to those of other Variations that were assigned mf or f in the edited score (e.g. Variations I, II, VIII, IX).

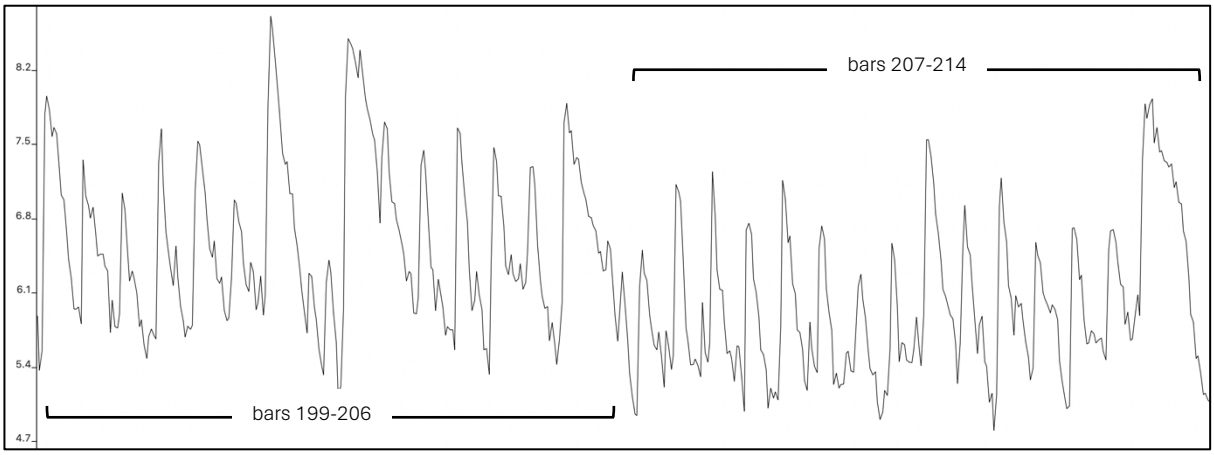
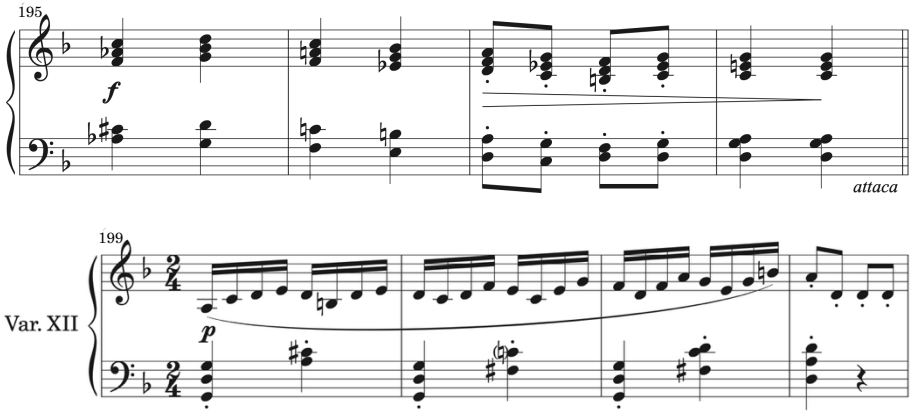


Figure 27. Waveform graph of Variation XII, 1984 recording (dB/loudness, time).

In addition, bearing in mind Economou's heavy-handed playing, if his aim had been to perform at a dynamic level closer to mf or f, the rapid right-hand figures in the 1984 recording would have sounded noticeably louder, heavier and more forceful. Furthermore, the *diminuendo* in the final bars of the preceding Variation further supports the decision to mark Variation XII with p.

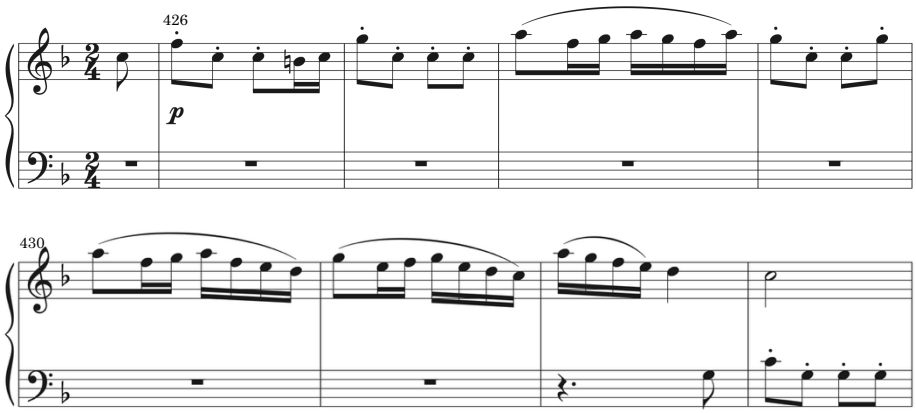


Musical Example 52. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XI, bars 195-198 and Variation XII, bars 199-202, edited score.

While there is no explicit indication whether the intended dynamic here is mp or p, mp was assigned to the next Variation which, as conveyed in Economou's 1984 performance,

exhibits a distinctly different character and sound colour from Variation XII. Thus, to maintain a meaningful balance between the two variations, p was chosen for Variation XII, and mp for Variation XIII.

The process of determining dynamics in Variation XXIII also relied more on musical insight and critical awareness than on any distinct changes in volume in Economou's recording.[48] The Variation's beginning was marked with p, as pp was assigned to the preceding Variation, which is even quieter.



Musical Example 53. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XXIII, bars 426-433, edited score.

Despite the fact that Economou's playing gradually gets louder from bar 433 onwards, especially in the left hand, I concluded that placing in the edited score a louder dynamic marking there, or a *crescendo* in bars 433-440, would be of descriptive, rather than prescriptive, nature.[49]

[48] Even though an earlier version of this Variation appears as Variation XIX in the 1981 recording, it is considerably different, and therefore, could not be used to substantiate or challenge any editorial conjectures discussed here.

[49] As the waveform graph for Variation XXIII shows, there is a tendency in Economou's playing for increase in volume even in the first phrase of the piece.

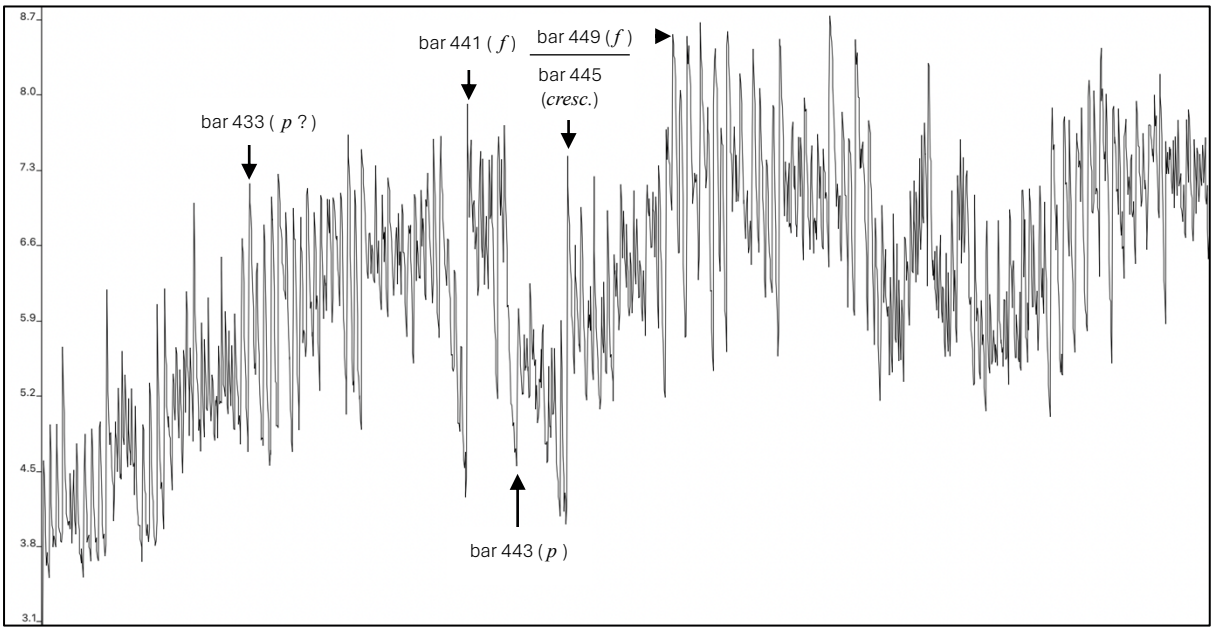
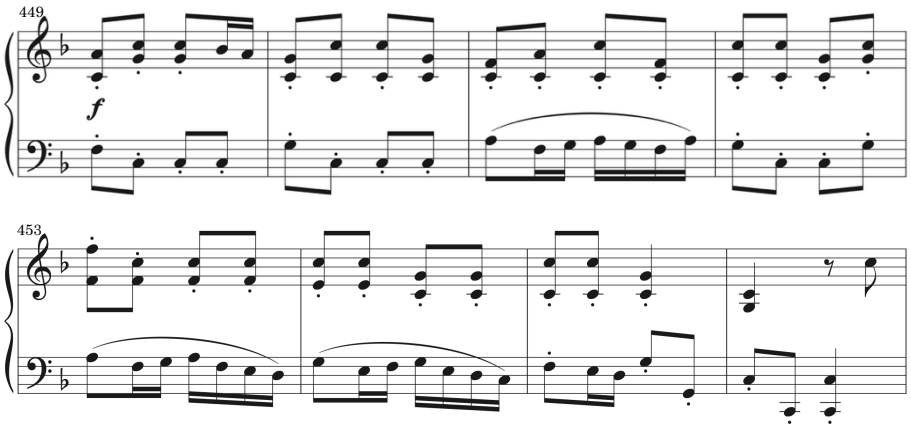


Figure 28. Waveform graph of Variation XIII, 1984 recording (dB/loudness, time).

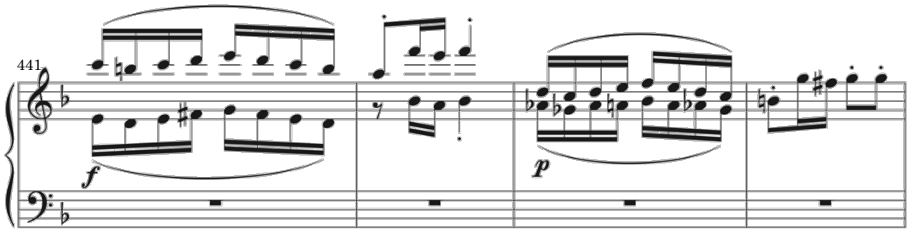
Firstly, Economou's heavy-handed playing may justify the increase in volume observed from bar 443 onwards, and, as this is primarily confined to the left hand, there also seems to be an intentional effort to achieve balance between the two contrapuntal lines and to ensure the subject is projected with clarity. Moreover, as previously noted, the overall execution of this Variation is generally marked by a degree of insecurity, hence one could attribute the relatively louder playing in bars 433-440 to a general uncertainty regarding the Variation's progression. In addition, it seems unlikely that Economou aimed for a louder dynamic so early in the Variation, particularly since its first few bars appear to establish a delicate, refined character with the exposition of the subject, while the musical material itself, including its thin texture and the function of the left-hand material as the answer to the right hand's subject entry, offers little indication of a dynamic change there. It is also worth considering other passages, for example bars 449-456, where a louder dynamic marking is justified by the texture of the musical material, as well as Economou's

performance, which is both effective and convincing, lending credibility to the inclusion of *f* (yet not *ff* for several reasons already discussed) in the edited score.



Musical Example 54. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XXIII, bars 449-456, edited score.

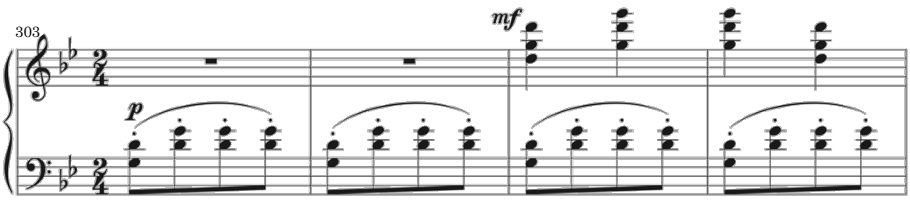
Furthermore, while Economou's performance clearly conveys a *subito* dynamic drop in bars 443-444, which were marked with *p* , the execution of bar 441 in relation to bar 440 suggests another sudden dynamic change, this time from a softer to a louder dynamic. Although this shift in volume is subtle, *both* hands become louder at that point – until then, the left hand was louder than the right – and Economou's sound acquires a more direct and vigorous quality. Therefore, another reason why no dynamic marking was added between bars 433 and 440, and the *p* marking at the start of the Variation was retained, was to preserve this contrast between bars 440 and 441.



Musical Example 55. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XXIII, bars 441-444, edited score.

As discussed, creating a prescriptive edited score for an un-notated work involves studying the composer's recorded performance to define performance directions that do not impose the composer's own interpretation, in an attempt to offer future performers a musical text comprised only of the work's intrinsic features. That said, although an exact inclusion of the dynamics in the edited score, as executed by Economou in Variation XVIII, might at first seem descriptive, they were ultimately perceived as intrinsic elements of the composition, and thus necessary to appear in the edited score of his *Corelli Variations*.

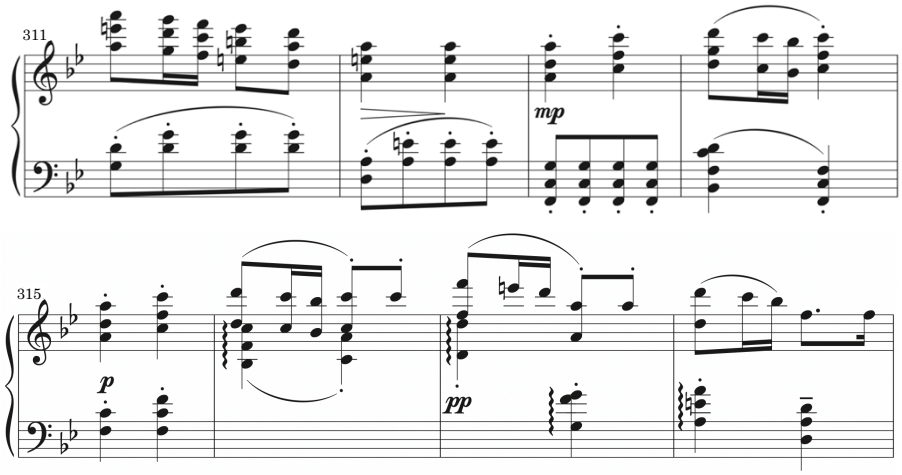
The Variation begins with a gentle and soft accompaniment on the left hand, before the vigorous, well-projected right hand joins in two bars later. Initially, I assumed that Economou simply maintains a conventional balance between melody and accompaniment. However, for two key reasons, I concluded that the dynamic contrast between the two hands as illustrated in Musical Example 56 needed to be explicitly specified in the edited score.



Musical Example 56. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XVIII, bars 303-306, edited score.

Firstly, the difference in volume between the hands is so apparent that it surpasses what might merely be considered preservation of balance between melody and accompaniment. Secondly, both hands eventually converge at the same dynamic level (with the earlier dynamic contrast between them no longer present) identified as *mp* in bar

313 for reasons explained below. If one took for granted the fact that the dynamic contrast between the two hands occurs merely due to Economou's effort to preserve a melody-accompaniment balance, and thus opt for a single dynamic for the first ten bars of the Variation, *p* and not *mf* would be the most appropriate choice.[50] This is because the Variation's contemplative character is established from the very beginning of the piece by the left hand's accompaniment. Marking this section as *mf* for both hands would encourage a louder introduction with much more energetic left-hand quavers. Also, the evident drop in the right hand's volume in bars 312-313 suggests that a dynamic considerably louder than *mp* was indeed in effect in that hand up to that point.



Musical Example 57. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XVIII, bars 311-318, edited score.

From bar 313 to bar 317, each two-bar unit is played more softly than the last.[51] Thus, bearing in mind that bar 317 is the quietest point in the passage, and therefore should

[50] Taking into account Economou's rich and at times heavy sound, it is most likely that had he intended for a dynamic as loud as *f*, the playing in this Variation would almost certainly be louder. Also, this dynamic would not match the overall contemplating character of the introduction, nor the compact and focused – rather than loud and harsh – sound, conveyed in Economou's recording.

[51] Although the shift from *mp* to *p* is subtle, it is perceptible upon close listening to Economou's recording and can also be observed in the Variation's waveform graph.

be marked *pp* (Economou's performance does not justify a softer dynamic marking), bars 313-314 were marked with *mp*, and bars 315-316 with *p*. Once again, one may perceive the detailed indication of these dynamic changes in the edited score as descriptive. However, these progressively softer dynamics are clearly executed, and appear to be a defining feature of the Variation's concluding bars; there seems to be no compelling reason to omit them from the edited score. Also, it is worth noting that a continuous *diminuendo* across these bars, rather than successively quieter dynamics every two bars, would not achieve the same effect in this passage. As the waveform graph demonstrates, there is a distinct drop of volume every two bars, rather than a gradual decrease throughout bars 313-317.

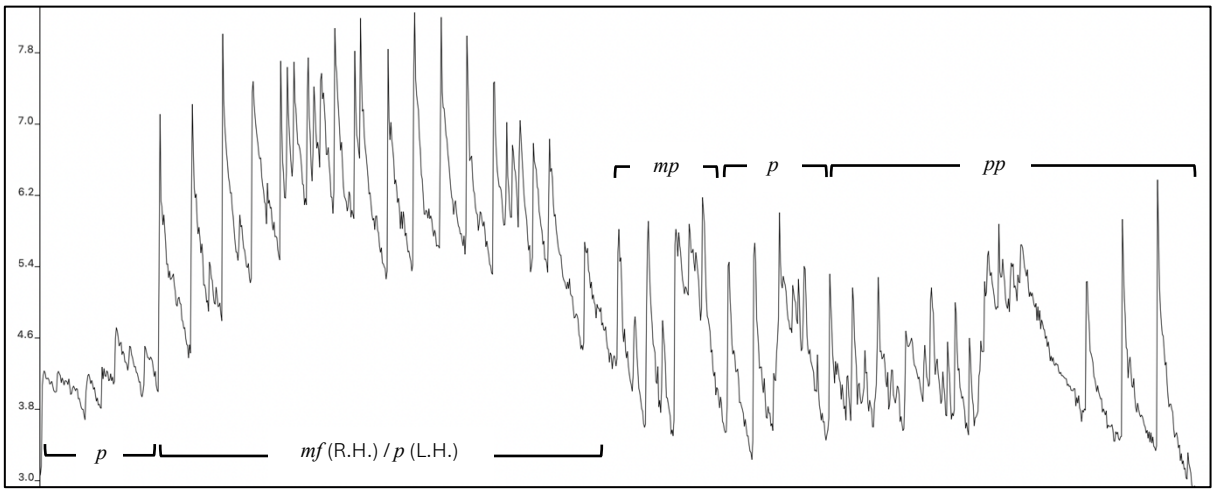


Figure 29. Waveform graph of Variation XVIII, 1984 recording (dB/loudness, time)

Variations IV and V are the only instances in Economou's unfinished manuscript where dynamic markings are indicated. As such, they provide an opportunity to further explore the relationship between textual and audio sources, this time with a focus on expressive, rather than textual, elements. To begin with, Economou marks the opening

section of Variation IV with f, while the middle passage, designated p, progresses – as indicated in Figure 30 – through a *crescendo* into the last section, which also bears a f marking , followed by a concluding *diminuendo* leading to another p indication.

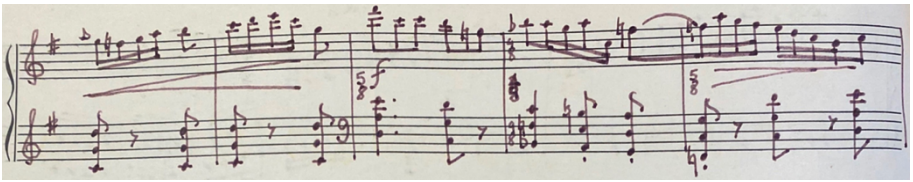
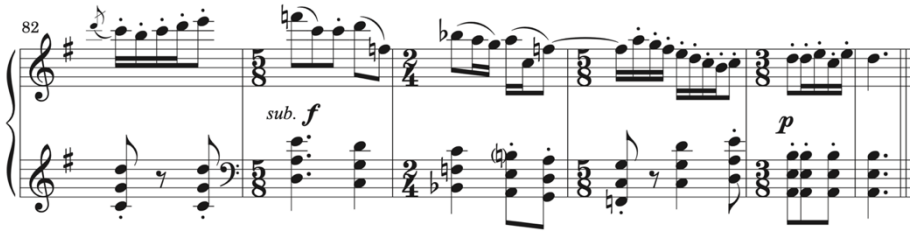


Figure 30. Bars 81-5 from Economou's manuscript of *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation IV (appears as Variation V in the manuscript)

The dynamics heard in the 1981 performance of this Variation align with those indicated in Economou's manuscript. The loud first and last sections, as well as the soft middle one, are also preserved in the 1984 recording, yet the return to the final *forte* section is clearly executed in a *subito* manner, and the *diminuendo* at the very end of the Variation is absent in this second recording. Instead, as illustrated in the musical example below, there is a drop to a dynamic as soft as p in bar 86. Bearing in mind the function of the first recording as an early version, and that it was not rare for Economou to diverge from the performance directions in his own texts, yet consistently employing such reworked expressive features in his performances, these sudden shifts in dynamics clearly executed in his 1984 performance were not perceived as accidental deviations from predetermined material, but instead, as revised compositional ideas.



Musical Example 58. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation IV, bars 82-7, edited score.

While the middle section of this Variation is marked p in Economou's manuscript, the subsequent Variation V is indicated pp. This dynamic relationship between the two Variations is clearly conveyed in his 1981 recording as well, illustrated in Figure 31.

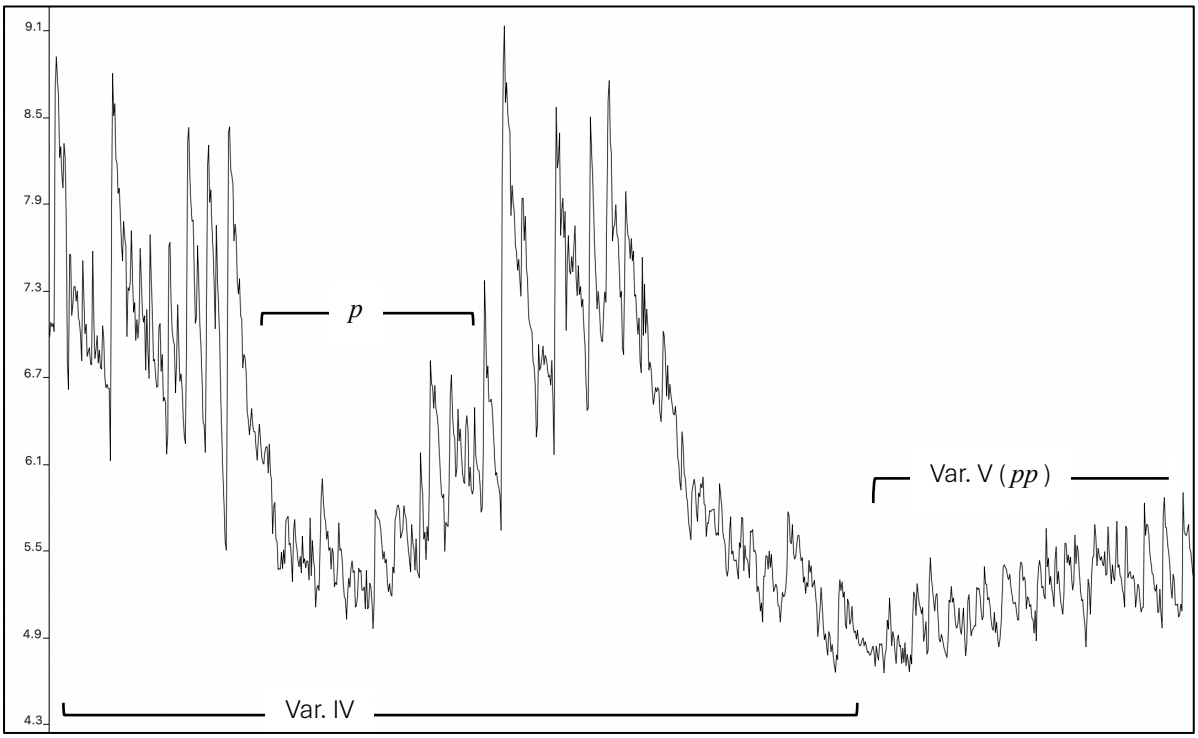


Figure 31. Waveform graph of Variation IV (last 13 bars) and Variation V (first 3 bars), 1981 recording (dB/loudness, time).[52]

Nonetheless, as Figure 32 shows, in the 1984 recording Variation V starts with a dynamic surpassing that of the middle section of Variation IV, deviating from the expected softness

[52] Variation numbers according to the 1984 version.

of *pp* . One might argue for adhering strictly to Economou's dynamic markings found in his manuscript (and 1981 recording), and including them in the edited score of the work's 1984 version by attributing this discrepancy to a spontaneous interpretative decision or an inaccurately communicated compositional decision. Nevertheless, the depth and colour of Economou's playing clearly communicates an effort for substantial, expressive and well-projected sound, while still maintaining a relative lyrical softness – a particular nuance best captured by *mp* . It is also important to bear in mind that the following Variation VI – which is absent from the 1981 version, yet it appears in the manuscript two Variations after Variation V – is performed in a much softer and delicate manner than Variation V, suggesting *pp* as the most suitable dynamic for it. Therefore, the same dynamic could not be used for Variation V too.

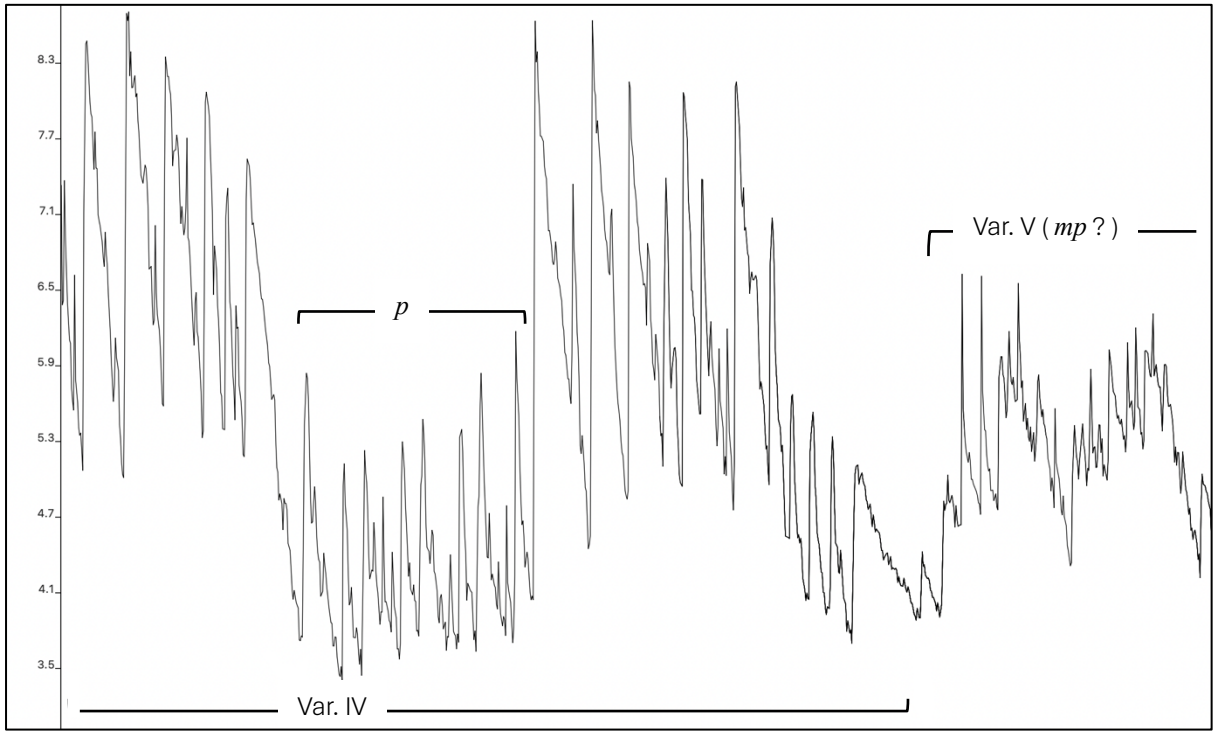


Figure 32. Waveform graph of Variation IV (last 13 bars) and Variation V (first 3 bars), 1984 recording (dB/loudness, time)

Undoubtedly, assigning a dynamic as loud as *mf* or *f* to Variation V would generate an intensity incongruent with its fundamentally gentle character. Similarly, *p* and *pp* would also be ill-suited. Not only would they fail to reflect the richness and expressive depth evident in Economou's song-like playing, but they would also disrupt the dynamic balance between Variations IV and VI – as noted, Variation VI is even more subtle and delicate than Variation V, and Variation V is evidently louder than the *piano* section of Variation IV.

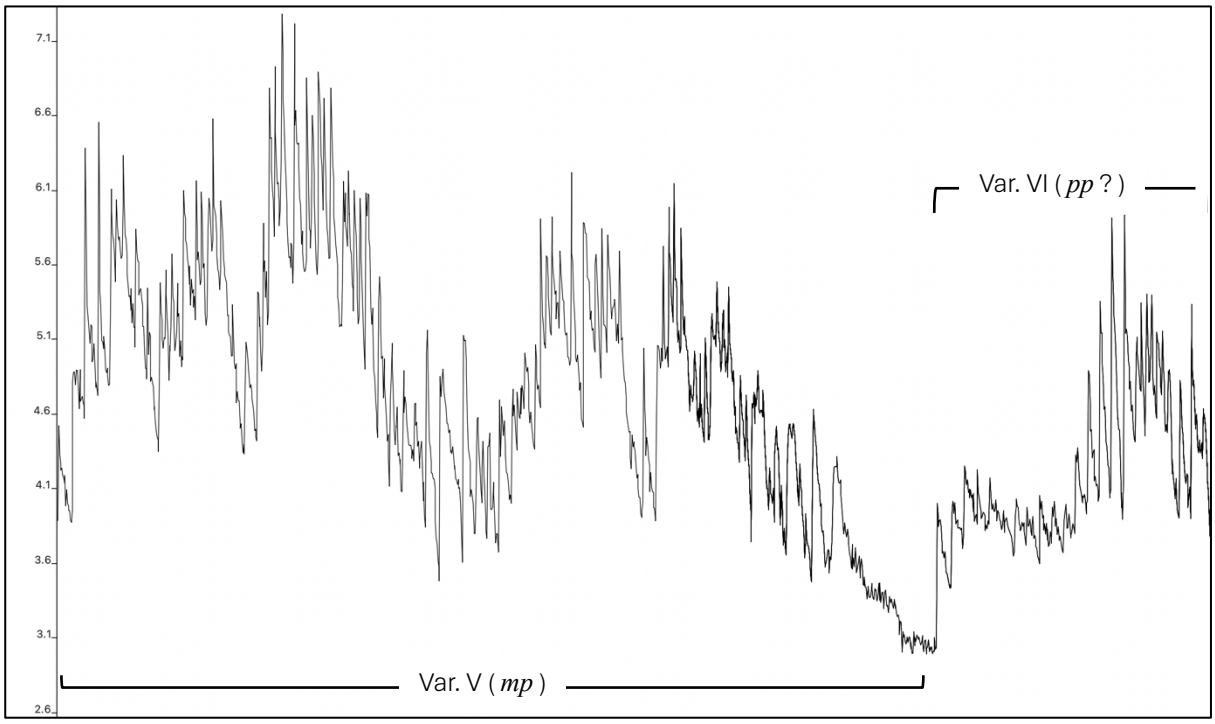


Figure 33. Waveform graph of Variation V and Variation VI (first 4 bars), 1984 recording (dB/loudness, time)

Since the 1984 recording presents a revised version of *Corelli Variations*, featuring various alterations across various aspects of the composition, it is reasonable to infer that dynamics were also subject to reconsideration. Along the same lines, the introduction of new Variations, and the omission or substantial revision of others inevitably impacts the distribution of intensity and loudness throughout the cycle. Hence, to reiterate, accepting

that Economou's compositional intent for Variation V, as conveyed in the revised, 1984 version of the cycle, is best represented by *mp*, then *p* or *pp* would be the only appropriate choices for Variation VI. However, Economou's 1984 recording suggests a significantly softer and delicate tone than Variation V – a rarity in his performances – which can therefore only be conveyed through a dynamic as soft as *pp*, rather than *p*. It is also worth considering that retaining the *pp* written by Economou in his manuscript for Variation V would inevitably lead to the assignment of *ppp* (or *pppp*!) for Variation VI to maintain the right balance between the two Variations' intensity and loudness. However, taking into account Economou's sound and overall character of Variation VI, such an indication would be an exaggeration, and consequently, Variation V was marked with *mp* and Variation VI with *pp*.

4.2. Articulation and Phrasing

One may suggest that the mechanical specificity required to execute distinct articulations implies a conscious and deliberate intent behind such actions. Indeed, although premeditated articulation can be inaccurately executed, it is reasonable to argue that, particularly in well-prepared performances, the outcome of such physical effort is more often than not conveyed as planned. That said, as with any expressive parameter in music making, a consciously executed articulation may have been spontaneously decided and intentionally executed. Also, an articulation intrinsic to the work may not come across as planned, while performed mannerisms and gestures suggesting specific articulations may in fact stem from the composer's playing style, misunderstood as intrinsic features of the composition.

All these possibilities bring to the forefront the complex and debatable issue of establishing coherence and consistency in a musical text, and most importantly, the necessity for constant hermeneutic engagement and critical evaluation of the available musical material derived from an un-notated work's recorded performance, as well as of features of the recording/performance itself. The editor of a posthumously notated work must ultimately determine the most appropriate way a performed gesture should be deciphered into an articulation marking (which will not necessarily communicate the exact articulation conveyed in the recorded performance), preserving the prescriptive status of the musical text. The following discussion provides a selection of such challenges encountered while editing Economou's *Corelli Variations*, with the aim of producing an authoritative score intended for future performances.

As previously noted, one of the most distinctive traits of Economou's performances is his heavy-handed touch, which, even in relatively soft moments, produces a sound that is rich and well-projected. Especially in louder passages, his forceful gestures frequently generate a stressed, at times harsh, tone, which can easily be mistaken for the execution of explicit accents, *marcato* and *sforzando* markings. All this was therefore a significant consideration in the editorial process of his *Corelli Variations*.

In 'Thema', for example, Economou's playing contains several stressed and forceful moments, most noticeably on the first beat of each bar, though not exclusively there. Were these specified in the edited score, accents would appear on nearly every beat of this opening movement. It is doubtful, however, that Economou himself would notate 'Thema' in this manner. And recognising these emphases as products of his idiosyncratic playing, they were omitted from the edited score as explicit performance directions. At any rate, the

movement's performance indication *Allegro con brio* already invites comparable nuances in interpretation.

Similar principles were applied to Variation VIII. Even though each first note in bars 131-138 is clearly stressed, implying accent markings, these gestures seem to derive from Economou's playing style, rather than intrinsic features of the Variation that need to be specified in the score (see Figure 34 on the following page). This may be also interpreted as Economou's effort to project the melodic outline formed by the first note of each semiquaver figure. Yet even if that is the case, it is common practice to achieve the same result without explicit performance directions such as accents, which could be misinterpreted for a sound harsher than desired. Instead, this may be suggested by the slurs used, which can be appropriately interpreted by the score's user.

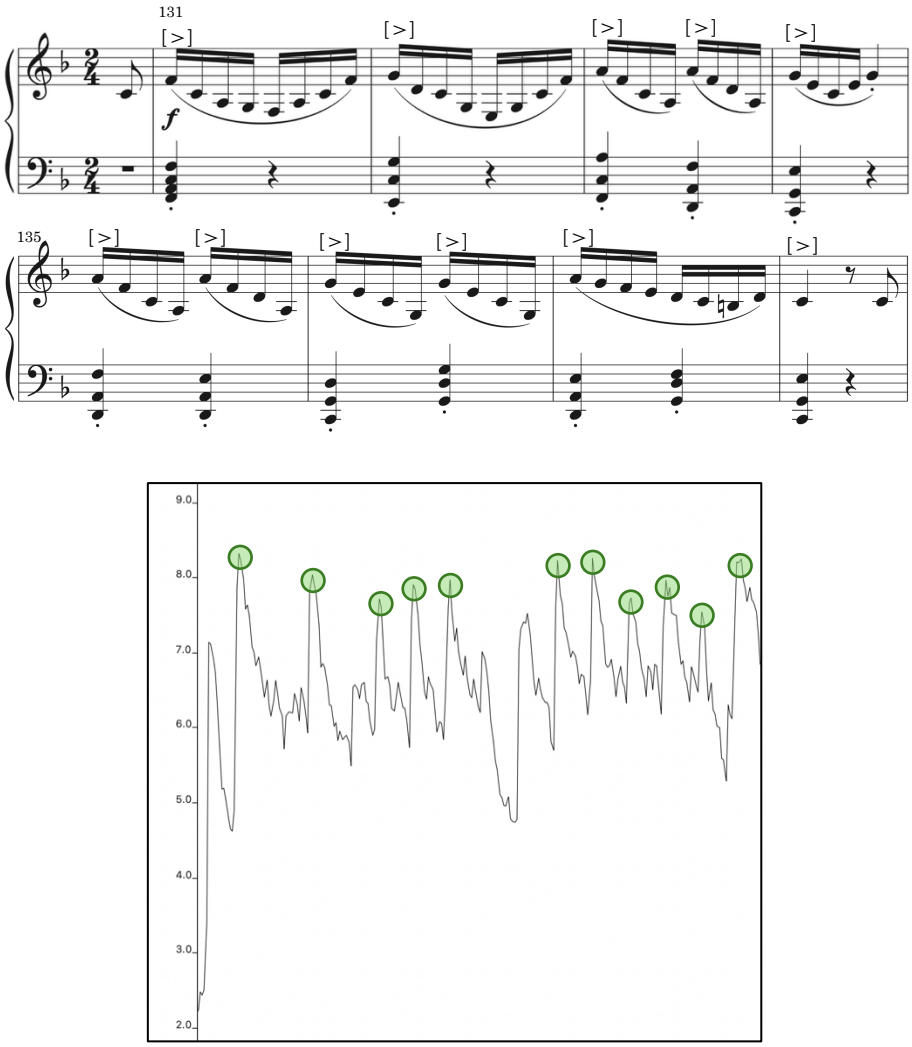
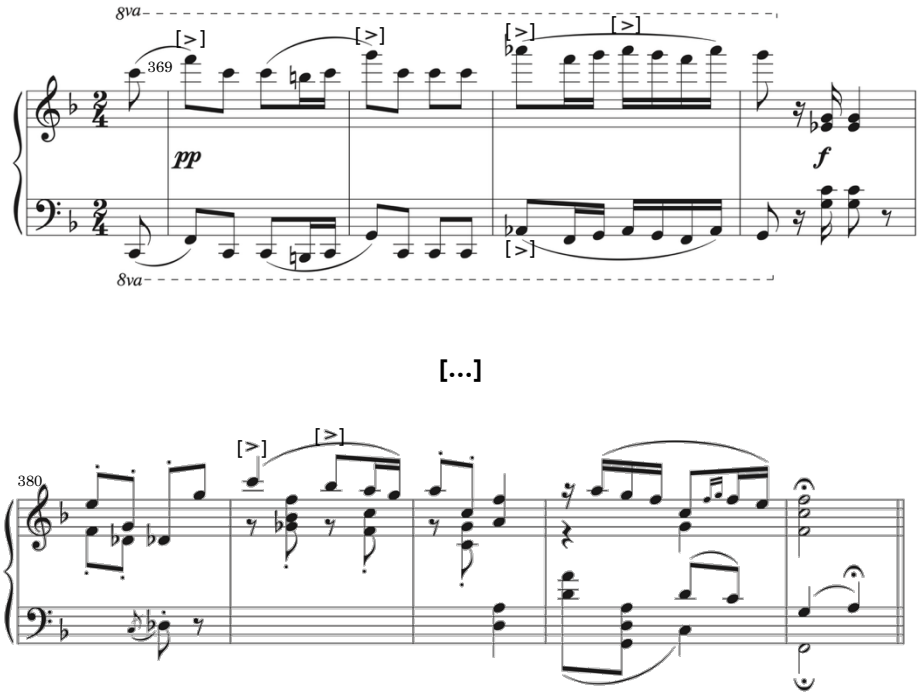


Figure 34. Bars 131-138 and waveform graph, 1984 recording (dB/loudness, time)

In addition, stressed moments in Economou's playing in the opening and closing sections of Variation XX were realized as yet another instance in which his typically forceful touch comes across in a manner that implies the inclusion of explicit accents in the edited score. Such gestures, which appear only in the right hand with a single instance in the left, seem to stem from his endeavour to evoke a bell-like timbre through his characteristically well-projected sound, while the surrounding material is played softly enough to be assigned a *pp* dynamic marking. This assumption is substantiated by the fact that these accents occur exclusively in the right hand, with only a single isolated instance in the left. It is

therefore presumed that if these accents were an inherent feature of the Variation, one would expect them to be distributed more evenly and consistently between the two hands.

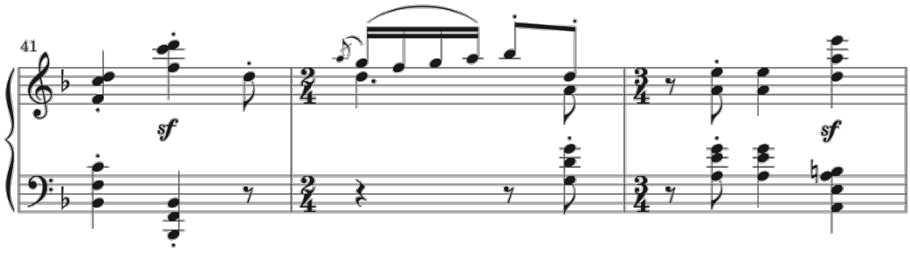


Musical Example 59. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XX, bars 369-372 and 380-384, edited score.

While one could argue that it is challenging to distinguish between accented and forceful moments that result from Economou's typical heavy-handed playing and those that are executed as inherent elements of the composition, further examples of nuanced considerations from the editorial process of Economou's *Corelli Variations* prove that one's familiarity with the composer's playing style, combined with musical insight and intuition can result to valid judgments and well-informed editorial decisions.

For example, in Variation II, the *sf* markings on the second chord in bar 41 and the last chord of bar 43, reflecting Economou's playing in those moments, were included in the edited score as intrinsic features of the piece. These chords, which appear on weak beats

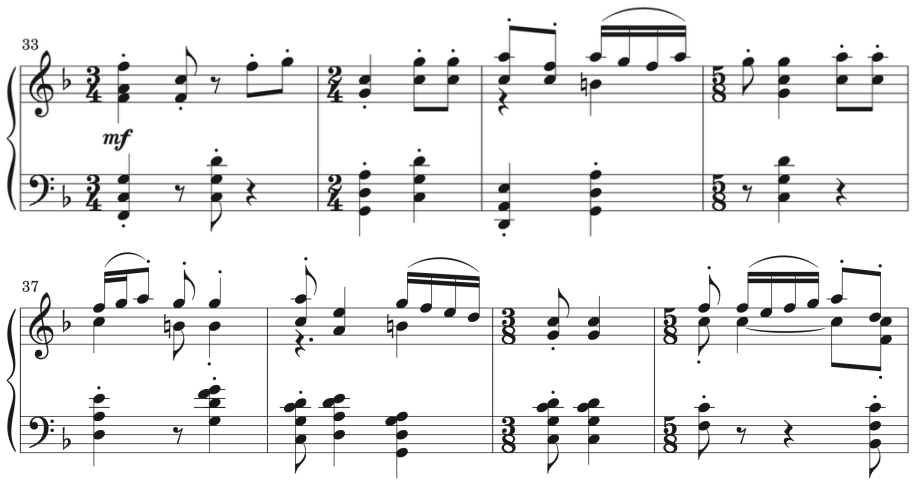
of their respective bars, were executed in a direct and forceful manner, strong enough for these markings to be included in the musical text (indicated in Figure 35 in red). Their omission from the edited score would likely result in future interpretations lacking the intended impact in this passage.[53]



Musical Example 60. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation II, bars 41-3, edited score.

Other comparable moments within the same Variation that are performed more forcefully than the surrounding material were once again omitted from the edited score. For example, the first beats of bars 33 and 34, as well as the crotchet chord in bar 36, are performed with stressed, direct gestures that suggest an accent or *sf* marking in the musical text (indicated in Figure 35 in green). And although other moments in the Variation, such as the last chord of bar 37, and the crotchet chords in bars 38 and 39 (indicated in Figure 35 in blue) are not as accented as those in bars 33, 34 and 36, they imply similar performance directions.

[53] As discussed, this Variation appears in Economou's manuscript. Although it is organized into bars differently than in the transcriptions of the 1981 and 1984 recordings, these chords likewise fall on the weak beats of the bars.



Musical Example 61. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation II, bars 33-40, edited score.

However, these gestures were interpreted as the product of Economou's heavy-handed playing, presuming, at the same time, that he sought to emphasize the syncopated rhythmic patterns of the Variation, as well as the downbeats of each measure. Therefore, it appears that these are nuances inherent in the musical material itself, and do not require explicit performance directions to be appropriately executed.

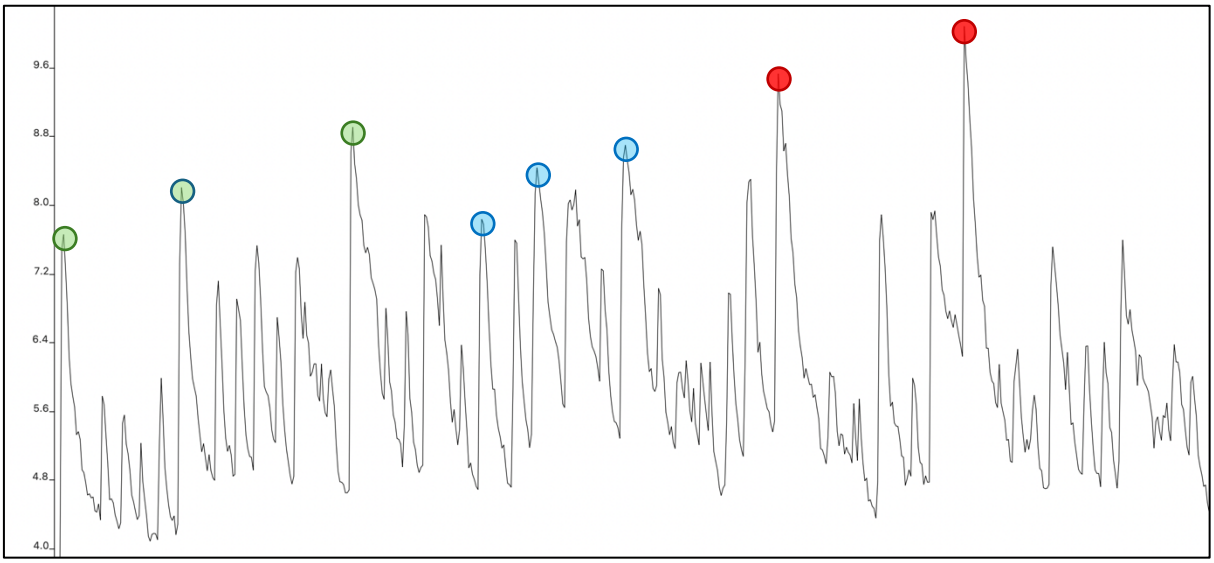
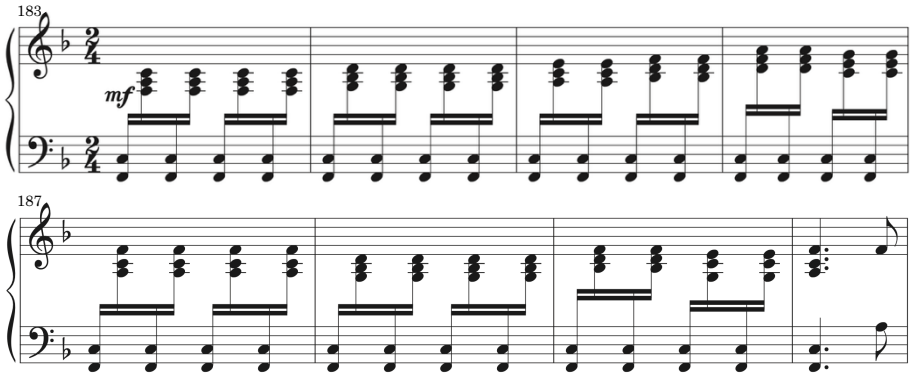


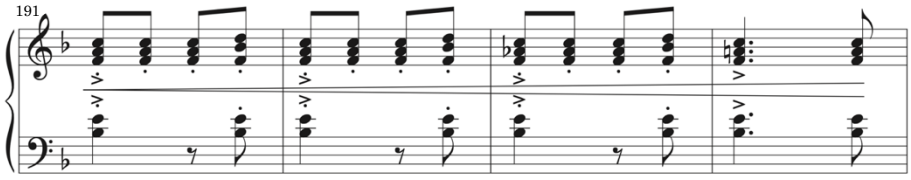
Figure 35. Waveform graph of Variation II, 1984 recording (dB/loudness, time)

Furthermore, in Variation XI, certain moments of direct gestures and stressed sound were judged as warranting explicit indication in the edited score, while others were considered instances where such markings would assign a descriptive function to the text. In bars 183-190, these more emphasized moments (indicated in Figure 36 in blue) occur on the first semiquaver of each bar, with the exception of bar 189. It is presumed that Economou applied this stressed nuance to the first beat of each bar for a clearer sense of the downbeats, since the rapid semiquaver figures in this passage, split between the two hands, can be challenging to be accurately performed without such strong rhythmic accents. For this reason, I concluded that these accents most probably appear in Economou's playing for rhythmic clarity, and thus, they were not regarded as definitive features of the Variation requiring notation in the edited score.



Musical Example 62. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XI, bars 183-190, edited score.

However, the accents in bars 191-194 serve a distinct purpose compared to those in bars 183-190. They are notably stronger and more focused, acting as vehicles for the phrase's progression towards the f marking in bar 195.



Musical Example 63. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XI, bars 191-194, edited score.

This is also evident in Figure 36, and more specifically, it is demonstrated in the distance between each peak of the graph (indicated in red) and the waves shaped from the material in the remainder of each bar (indicated in green). This distance for bars 183-190 is shorter, which is another indication that the accents there would probably have been stronger if Economou had intended them as defining features of the Variation that need to be specified in the musical text.

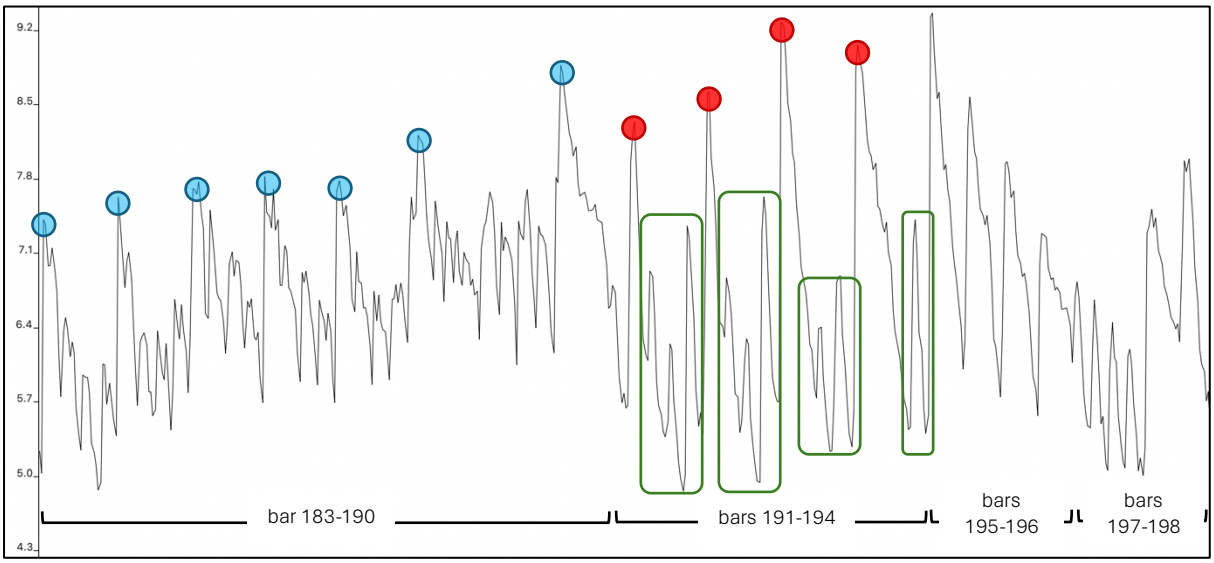
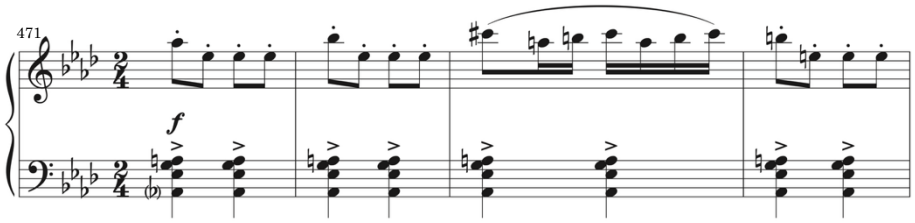


Figure 36. Waveform graph of Variation XI, 1984 recording (dB/loudness, time)

Similarly, in Variation XXIV, the heavy left-hand playing does not seem to be merely a product of Economou's forceful playing. Instead, I concluded that it is a defining element

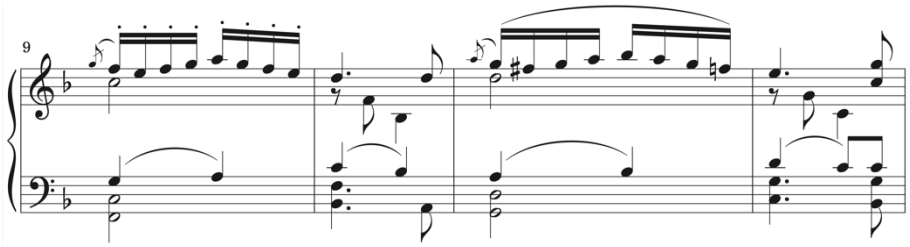
of the Variation's opening bars, essential for the delivery of the intended intensity and character in bars 471-474. Namely, these markings ensure that the left-hand chords are prominently projected; without them, they would most likely be perceived simply as ordinary chordal accompaniment, quieter than the right hand.



Musical Example 64. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XXIV, bars 471-474, edited score.

As discussed earlier, any attempt to 'restore' coherence and uniformity in a text, whether literary or musical, is a much-contested approach in editing that demands nuanced critical engagement and careful hermeneutic analysis of the existing sources. In addition, performed articulation may be more difficult than any other expressive element to challenge as unintended, given the fine motor skills involved in its execution. Yet again, a few instances in *Corelli Variations* seemed to call for editorial amendments.

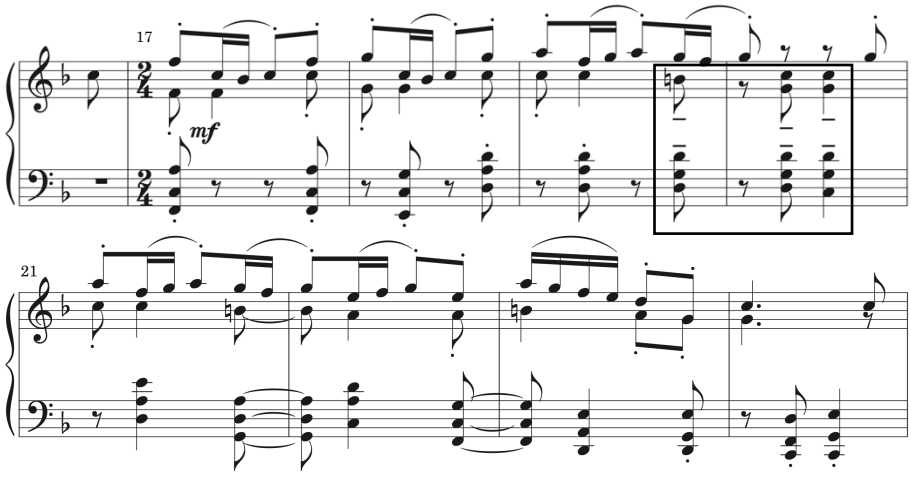
One would expect that Corelli's original theme, on which the entire cycle is based, would initially appear in its simplest form, with minimal intervention. However, in the 1984 performance of 'Thema', the top line of bar 9 is well-articulated, played *non-legato*, almost *staccato*, evoking a playful character to the opening movement, while bar 11, is executed in a *legato* manner.



Musical Example 65. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* [1984], 'Thema', bars 9-12.

In the 1981, both bars 9 and 12 are executed *legato*. As discussed in Chapter 2, Economou frequently introduced varied articulation in similar instances of sequential or repeated passages, even when his own or other composers' score specified uniform articulation. Also, it is worth noting that this *staccato-legato* alternation does not appear in any other reoccurrence of this sequential passage throughout the cycle. It always occurs in a *legato* manner, with the exception of Variation IV, where the *staccato* articulation in the delicate middle section enhances the contrast with the loud, *marcato* opening bars. Taking all this into account, in the edited score I replaced the *staccato* markings that appear in bar 9 in Musical Example 9 with a slur marking, so that it aligns with the *legato* execution of bar 11, informing the edition's user through a footnote regarding the performed articulation heard in Economou's recording.

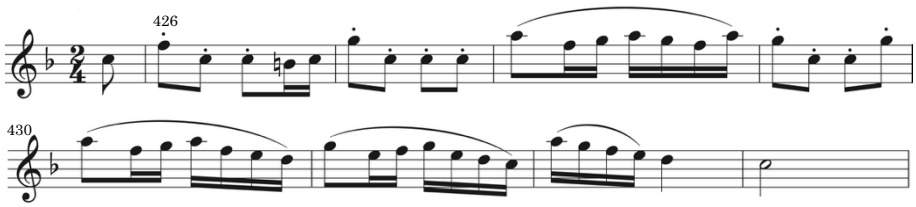
Another case where editorial adjustments to articulation deemed necessary was in Variation I. In the first three bars, the left hand consists of *staccato* quaver chords, while the alto voice is comprised of a *staccato* quaver, followed by a syncopated crotchet and another *staccato* quaver. This pattern, however, is disrupted in bars 19 and 20, as the musical example below demonstrates (indicated with *tenuto* markings).



Musical Example 66. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* [1984], Variation I, bars 17-24.

It seems that this occurred due to the subsequent few bars, in which longer values – crotchet syncopations – appear in both alto and left hand. In other words, it is likely that Economou inadvertently applied the articulation from bar 21 to bar 23 slightly earlier. This assumption is reinforced by the fact that bars 19 and 20 are analogous to bars 23 and 24, where middle voices and left hand are executed *staccato*. At any rate, there is no evident and convincing musical rational for the final quaver of bar 19 and the two chords in bar 20 to be longer than the preceding bars. For these reasons, in the edited score the *tenuto* markings indicated in the example above were replaced with *staccato* markings. As always, these modifications constitute an editorial construction based on subjective interpretation, rather than a set of alterations that confidently claim definitiveness.

As discussed in Chapter 3, Economou's playing in Variation XXIII lacks confidence and security – an issue that affected not only on the assessment of the resulting transcription's integrity, but the employed articulation too. The articulation used in the exposition of the subject (Musical Example 67) was inconsistently employed throughout the remainder of the Variation, despite its function as a fugato.

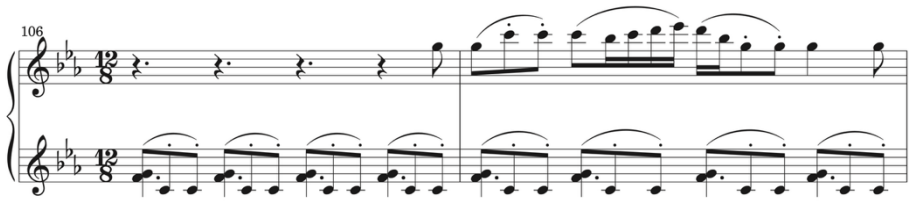


Musical Example 67. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XIII, bars 426-433 (right hand/subject), edited score.

Consequently, appropriate alterations were made in the restatements of the subject. This decision was based on the likelihood that these inconsistencies in articulation arose unintentionally, rather than from a deliberate compositional choice by Economou to vary the articulation with each appearance of the subject. Also, traces of the articulation pattern used in the subject's exposition in bars 426-433 appear elsewhere in the Variation, yet in an ambiguous and inconsistent manner.

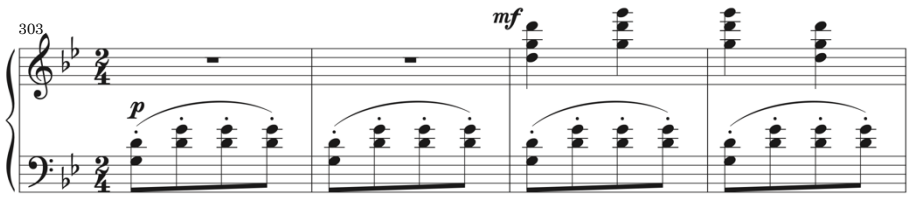
An un-notated work's recorded performance can also communicate particular sound colours, gestures and nuances that have to appropriately be translated into specific articulation markings. The following discussion demonstrates that even with an audio-only recording, one can appropriately decipher captured sound and realise through informed conclusions the most appropriate articulations that should appear in the edited score. Including such performance directions in a musical text will not attribute a descriptive function to it, since the physical actions required to produce such varied sound colours (that are subsequently identified by the listener) have to deliberately be employed in one's playing. Rather than merely describe the composer's interpretation, they convey the intrinsic expressive qualities of the work, providing performers with insight into the character and embedded nuances of the composition.

In Variation VI, for example, Economou's sound clearly suggests the use of *portato* articulation. As the musical example below illustrates, in the left hand – and in some moments in the right hand too – the last two notes of each quaver group are executed with a slight upward motion, producing a light and 'pulsing' sound, while the first note is sustained just long enough to suggest a more 'conventional' touch. These observations are substantiated by several other moments, such as the third beat of bar 107, where Economou, whether deliberately or not, slightly or fully releases the pedal, and the last two quavers of these note groups are executed in a somewhat *non-legato* manner.



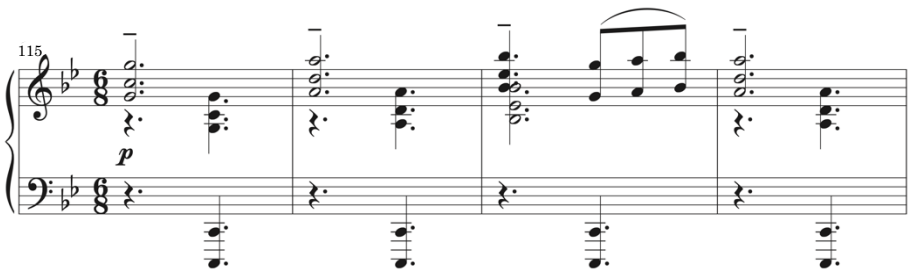
Musical Example 68. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation VI, bars 106-107, edited score.

Similar observations were made in Variation XVIII, yet Economou's performance here suggests that every quaver in each bar should be placed under a *portato* marking – unlike in Variation VI, where the first note of each group clearly carried different weight than the following two.



Musical Example 69. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XVIII, bars 303-306, edited score.

In addition, the first chord of the first six bars of Variation VII sounds more emphasised (though not louder) and executed in a more stressed and sustained manner than either the right hand's second-beat chords or left hand's octave. Thus, I deemed necessary to explicitly indicate these two different types of sound colour conveyed by Economou's performance in the edited score; this distinction in sound also suggests the voicing indicated in the example below. It is very likely that these bars would otherwise be executed in a different manner, potentially impacting the inherent essence and character of the Variation. Accordingly, *tenuto* markings were applied to the first chord in each of the first six bars where this pattern occurs.

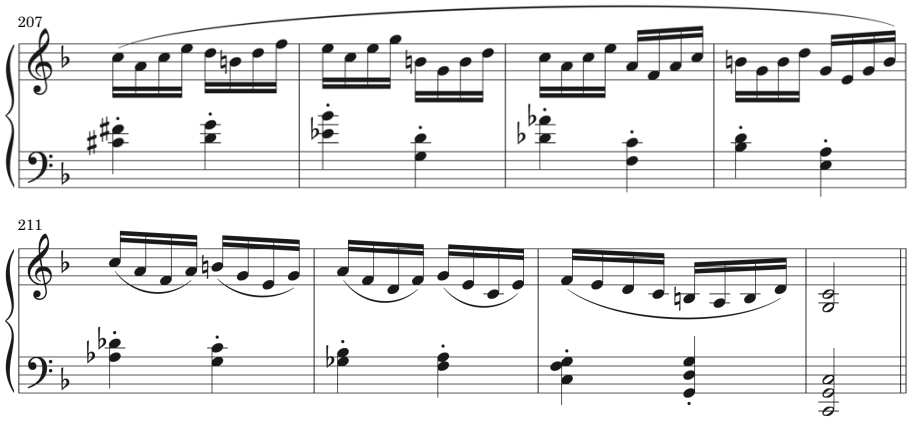


Musical Example 70. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation VII, bars 115-118, edited score.

Distinctive among Economou's interpretive traits is his meticulous attention to well-defined phrasing and refined *legato* playing, both of which also occupy a central place in his priorities during the compositional and notational process, as evidenced in Chapter 2 – qualities that informed the editorial process. When editing the transcription of his 1984 recording, determining the precise length of each slur proved to be a relatively straightforward task. Given the paramount importance Economou assigned both as performer and composer to articulation, and following a rigorous critical and hermeneutic examination of the musical material in relation to the performed articulation, the transcribed material was found to carry inherent expressive cues closely aligned with the

articulation employed in Economou's performance. In other words, there emerged virtually no instances in the musical text suggesting articulation different from that executed in Economou's recording, except from a few cases, some of which mentioned above.

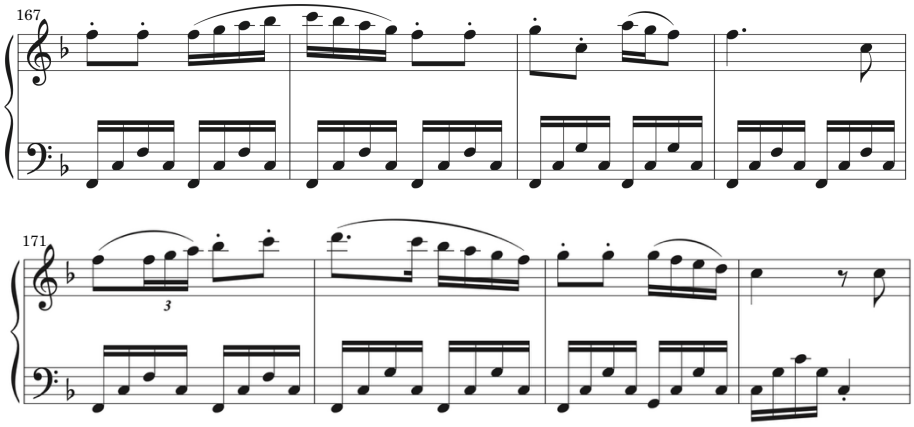
For instance, Economou's playing in Variation XII suggests three four-bar sentences (bars 199-202, 203-206, 207-210), followed by five shorter semiquaver figures spanning bars 211-213, as Musical Example 71 shows. The first note of each group is slightly stressed, but one can also detect through closer listening Economou's gesture dividing the semiquaver figures. To put it differently, he does not merely employ subtle accents on the first note of each group, but instead, he slightly shortens the last note of each semiquaver figure, which is followed by a very subtle gap before the next. Most importantly, these observations deriving from Economou's playing are substantiated by the inherent structural attributes of the semiquaver figures themselves.



Musical Example 71. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XII, bars 207-214, edited score.

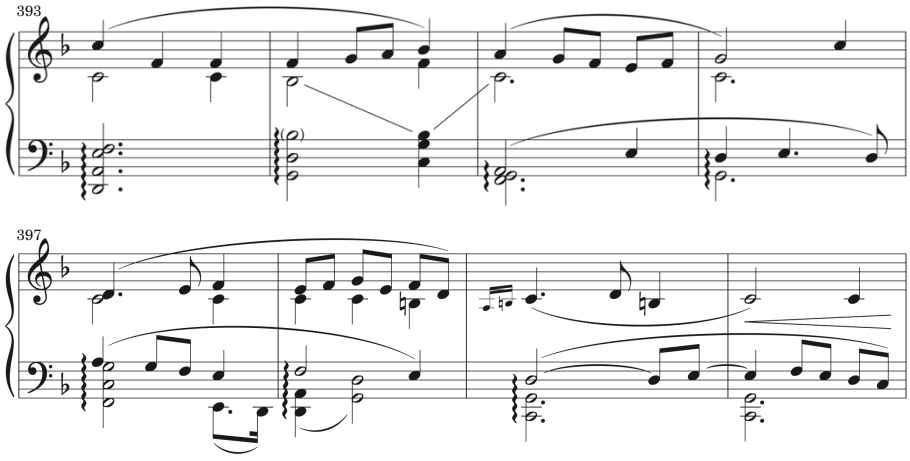
Variation X is another example where Economou clearly executes a range of articulations that were incorporated in the edited score as performed, without ascribing

descriptive qualities to the text. Here, there is consistent use of *staccatos* on quavers and *legato* execution of semiquavers.



Musical Example 72. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation X, bars 167-174, edited score.

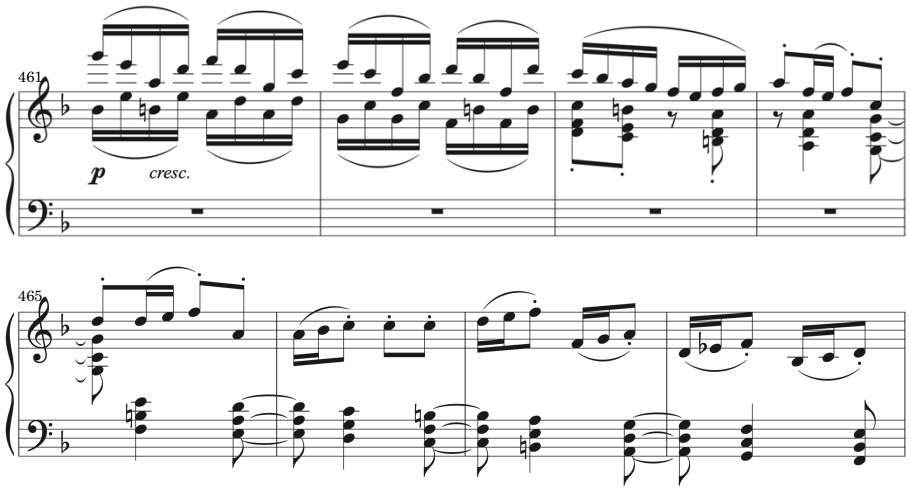
In addition, in Variation XXI, Economou clearly conveys two-bar sentences throughout, not only with nuanced dynamic fluctuations previously discussed, but also evident weight to the first note of each.



Musical Example 73. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XXI, bars 393-400, edited score.

Lastly, in Variation XXIII Economou performs the semiquaver figures in bars 461-462 in a manner very similar to those discussed in Variation XII, followed by a diligently articulated

descending passage, which despite its relatively complex rhythmic structure, is consistently executed.



Musical Example 74. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XXIII, bars 461-468, edited score.

Although arpeggio signs do not constitute a form of articulation, their use by Economou throughout the cycle merits brief consideration here, as well as the critical evaluation of their inclusion in the edited score. As discussed in Chapter 2, Economou often arpeggiated chords in places where no such indication appears in the score, or employed asynchrony when two or more notes were meant to be simultaneously played – both remarks particularly evident in his interpretations of Romantic repertoire.

In Economou's 1984 performance of 'Thema', for example, most left-hand chords are arpeggiated, though with some exceptions, whereas in the 1981 recording, every chord is arpeggiated. However, I concluded that these arpeggiations are not intrinsic elements of the cycle's opening movement, and therefore, they do not appear in the edited score. It seems that Economou employs a quick roll for each chord to facilitate the clear projection of the melodic line in the tenor voice. It is also worth noting that in both recordings, the

opening two minim chords of ‘Thema’ are not arpeggiated, coinciding with the lack of any movement in the middle voice. Thus, it may be argued that, if arpeggiated chordal accompaniment were a defining feature of ‘Thema’, it would likely have been applied from the very first chords of the cycle. Once again, in the 1984 recording, arpeggiation was not used as consistently as in 1981, and in both performances, the spread of each chord is rapid, often almost unnoticeable – at times executed in an unclear or vague manner. Hence, it is presumed that there was no particular intention on Economou’s part to apply arpeggiation consistently or to effectively project it as an expressive device throughout ‘Thema’. In addition, although his manuscript bears almost no performance directions, an arpeggio sign was written down in Variation V, an observation suggesting that such directions were intended to be written down during that particular stage of the notation process – trill markings appear in ‘Thema’ in the manuscript.

This arpeggiated chord in Variation V notated as such in Economou’s manuscript, is also spread in both the 1981 and 1984 recordings. An arpeggio sign was therefore included in the edited score, since it appears in all three existing sources.

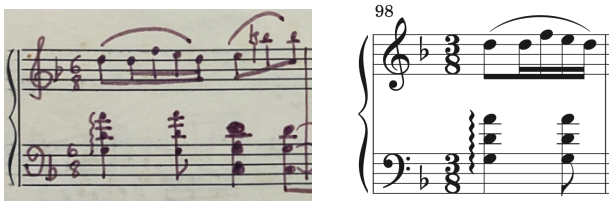
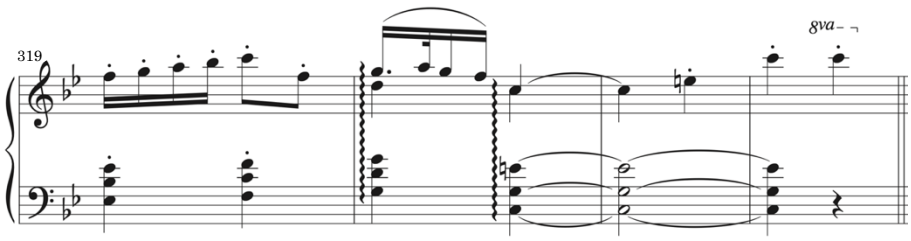


Figure 37. Bar 98 from Economou’s manuscript and the transcription of the 1984 recording.

This raises questions about the interpretation of other arpeggiated chords in the two recordings throughout the cycle, and their potential realization as intrinsic features of the

work instead of spontaneous interpretative decisions, or products of traits of Economou's playing style. It is worth noting that, while the spread in the 1981 recording is clearly yet quickly executed, and in the 1984 recording the chord is arpeggiated in a somewhat slower manner, in both recordings, there is a nuanced change of sound colour at that moment, enhanced by this left-hand chord. Hence, the arpeggiation was not impulsively employed, but used as a deliberate expressive tool.

Consequently, the manner in which this arpeggiated chord in Variation V was executed served as a reference point for further editorial conjectures and decisions in similar cases. One such instance occurs in the last few chords of Variation XVIII. As in Variation V, the arpeggiations here appear to enhance the delicate yet playful character established by Economou's playing, and were therefore perceived as definitive elements of the piece and included in the edited score.



Musical Example 75. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XVIII, bars 319-322, edited score.

4.3. Tempo Markings

Just as with performed dynamics, articulation, and any other expressive gesture, the performed tempos and speed fluctuations do not constitute intrinsic elements of an un-notated work. It is only after critical evaluation of the composer's recording that the editor

can determine through informed decisions the tempo indications they consider most appropriate for inclusion in the posthumous score. Also, in order to maintain the prescriptive nature of a posthumously notated work's edited score, I argue that one may only use verbal tempo indications. Incorporating metronome markings derived from the composer's recording in the main text seems problematic – especially in a variation cycle where the pace of each movement depends on the preceding one – as it provides information for an aspect of interpretation that is inherently subject to fluctuation from one performance to another. That said, metronome markings may be provided to the score's user as factual indications in the edition's commentary. If, however, the recording used for the creation of the score is identified by the composer himself as definitive in every respect, then metronome markings drawn from that performance can be placed as bracketed suggestions next to the tempo indications, as they offer accurate insights into the tempos that most closely, if not exactly, reflect his compositional ideas, offering a reliable guide for future interpretations.

No tempo markings are specified in Economou's unfinished manuscript of *Corelli Variations*, except for an informal indication 'SLOWER' found in Variation IV (appearing as Variation V in the manuscript).

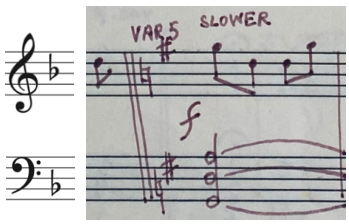


Figure 38. First bar of Variation IV in Economou's manuscript (appears as Variation V).

Providing detailed commentary on every decision made throughout the work regarding tempo markings would be exhaustive, yet it is worth providing a detailed account of how the tempo indication for the opening movement, 'Thema', was determined, as it functions as the foundation upon which the entire cycle's speed progression was built. Although the form of this cycle is particular – each Variation being defined by an individual character, and a tempo that enhances its distinctive characteristics – the forthcoming discussion exemplifies a decision-making process that could serve as a guide for establishing appropriate tempo markings in other posthumously notated compositions.

Given the cycle's foundation on Corelli's theme, two possible tempo indications were considered for 'Thema': *Tempo di Gavotta* and *Allegro con brio*. While the former explicitly recalls Corelli's 'Gavotta' from his *Violin Sonata No. 10*, the latter not only suggests a suitable speed but also communicates the pompous character Economou's performance conveys in both the 1981 and 1984 recordings. It is worth noting that in all editions of Corelli's violin sonatas published since 1700, 'Gavotta' bears the marking *Allegro*. Certainly, in Corelli's time Italian terms were used to indicate character and affect rather than tempo. Such indications carried different meanings over the years, and it is worth clarifying that Economou most probably employed them in his compositions primarily to communicate tempo. That being said, using the *Allegro* marking in the opening movement of *Corelli Variations* would establish a direct reference to Corelli's theme. This is a term which, at any rate, communicates the appropriate character reflected in Economou's recorded performances, and in its more modern sense, the tempo as well. Besides, *Tempo di Gavotta* may be (mis)understood in a variety of ways today and could potentially invite unnecessary debate over its interpretation.

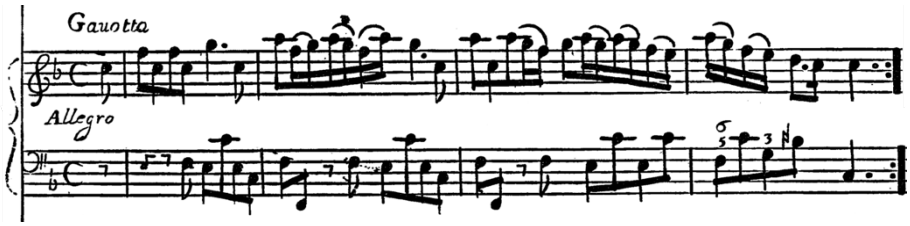


Figure 39. Arcangelo Corelli, *Violin Sonata* in F major, op. 5, no. 10, 'Gavotta'*, Sonate a violino e violone o cimbalo* (London: John Walsh, n.d.[1700]), University of Pavia.

In the 1981 recording, 'Thema' is performed at a tempo ranging from approximately 90 to 100 bpm, while in the 1984 recording, it is played between approximately 96 and 100 bpm. Although these speeds might typically be classified as *Andante*, *Moderato*, or *Allegretto*, such markings would be misleading, negating both the liveliness and vigorous tempo clearly evident in both recordings.

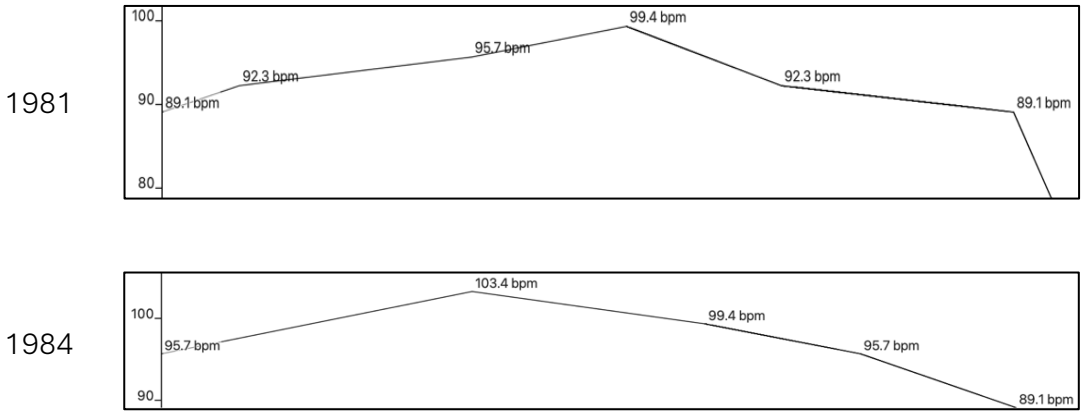


Figure 40. Tempo fluctuation graphs of 'Thema', 1981 and 1984 recordings (BPM/tempo, time).

In contrast to Economou's tendency for quick and occasionally hurried tempos in his performances, in this instance there is a clear effort to maintain a somewhat brisk, but not overly fast pace that should be communicated with indications such as *Vivace* or *Presto*. As a result, *Allegro con brio* was deemed the most fitting indication for the opening movement of the cycle, as it reflects the features that seem to be inherent to the movement,

both in character and tempo, communicated through Economou's playing and his vigorous harmonization of Corelli's theme.

When no perceptible change in speed was observed between Variations, *L' istesso tempo* was used as the most appropriate indication. However, this was done only after ruling out the possibility that a speed change was intended but did not come across as such. Namely, this decision of using *L' istesso tempo* was further justified when pairs of Variations, for example I-II, VIII-IX, XI-XII, and XXI-XXII, exhibited not only closely aligned tempos but no substantial shifts in character, sound, or other expressive qualities. However, in a few other instances, even when Economou's 1984 recording exhibited subtle yet noticeable fluctuations in speed, *L' istesso tempo* was still judged the most suitable tempo marking.

For example, in the first three bars of Variation III, his playing becomes slightly more grounded compared to Variation II. However, by bar 51, when the right hand joins, he returns to the original tempo. This brief tempo fluctuation was most likely an endeavour to evoke the Variation's pastoral-like character, and therefore, *L' istesso tempo* was chosen as its tempo marking. It is worth mentioning that in the 1981 recording, Economou not only maintains the same speed as Variation II, but also his playing demonstrates a slight tendency to move forward.

In addition, Economou's performance of Variations X-XIII maintains a seamless flow between them, both conceptually and literally – something communicated in the edited score with *attaca* indications – implying a sense of coherence and unity that would be compromised by introducing markings suggesting changes in speed. Nonetheless, subtle tempo fluctuations do occur, which were evaluated in order to determine the most

appropriate tempo markings, considering, at the same time, this musical and structural cohesion between them.

For instance, the first bar of Variation XI is played at the same speed in which the preceding Variation finished, yet soon after, a sense of urgency emerges, subtly quickening the pace of Economou's playing for the rest of the Variation that could be communicated with an *accelerando* or *più mosso* indication. However, I concluded that this was most probably caused by the repetitive semiquaver chords in this Variation, presuming, at the same time, that had Economou intended to establish a faster tempo than Variation X, there would be a much more pronounced and effective tempo change. Hence, *L' istesso tempo* seemed the most appropriate tempo marking for Variation XI. The same indication was used for the two subsequent Variations, as Economou's intention to preserve the same tempo between Variations XI and XII is clear. Nevertheless, Variation XIII carries a more grounded quality than Variation XII, which could have been indicated with a *meno mosso* indication. Yet this nuanced tempo change appears to result not from a deliberate shift in speed, but from the rhythmic density of the three-against-two rhythmic patterns in the lower register of the piano, as well as the chromatic material closely intertwined between the two hands. As a result, *L' istesso tempo* was employed once again as the most suitable tempo indication communicating this continuous flow across these four variations.

Generally, in a manner akin to selecting the most appropriate dynamic markings for a posthumously notated work's score, I would first evaluate a performed tempo fluctuation to understand whether it was deliberately and accurately executed. Subsequently, I would identify all possible ways the intended speed change could be translated into a tempo marking, and subsequently, I would consider how each option could potentially be

interpreted by users of the score, applied to their interpretations, and accurately convey or distort the composition's overall flow. For example, Variation VIII consists of vigorous semiquavers, executed at a fairly brisk pace. Despite its relatively quick tempo, I decided that *Vivace* would be a more appropriate tempo indication than *Presto*. The latter suggests a faster pace than that employed in both 1981 and 1984 recordings, while the former more accurately reflects both the character and the speed of Economou's performance.

Similarly, the pace of Variation XIV, as performed in both 1981 and 1984 recordings, is evidently more reserved compared to the preceding Variation. Thus, it was marked *Andante maestoso*, an indication deemed sufficient to capture both its relationship to the previous Variation and the mood conveyed by Economou's interpretation. Although *Meno mosso* and *Lento* were also considered as potential tempo indications, I concluded that the former would be insufficient to accurately communicate the substantial drop in tempo between Variations XIII and XIV (a reduction by nearly half), whereas the latter would suggest a slower than desired speed. Also, the pace of the subsequent Variation XV is fairly faster and controlled – yet not quick enough to be assigned *Allegro* – and due to its character, regarded as a distinctive feature of the piece, I decided that *Andantino scherzoso* would best describe both the Variation's spirit and tempo.

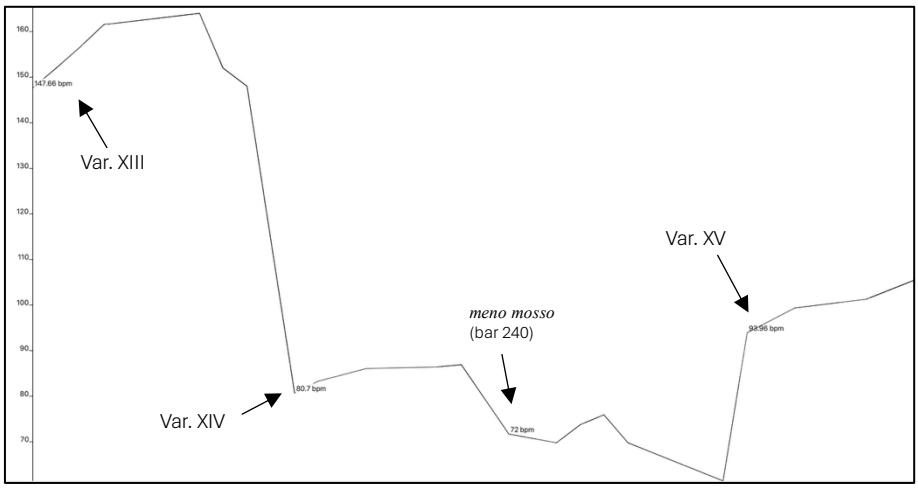


Figure 41. Tempo fluctuation graphs of Variations XIII-XV, 1984 recording (BPM/tempo, time).

Moreover, the final movement of the cycle, marked *Allegro maestoso*, culminates in an intense passage bearing the indication *cresc. e molto rit.* , which leads into a cadenza-like coda. For these concluding bars of the cycle, I chose to assign an *Allegro vivace* indication, after considering that this section, as transcribed, primarily consists of demisemiquavers, and therefore, a tempo indication suggesting a quicker speed would be excessive. Furthermore, this section is evidently lighter in character than the first half of the Variation, and by using the crotchet beats as the metric reference, it was determined that it is only marginally quicker than the first half of the Variation. Therefore, *Allegro vivace* chosen for this cadenza effectively conveys both the speed and character required for an appropriate interpretation of the cycle's concluding bars.

As evident in some of the aforementioned examples, I added expressive indications to tempo markings when their omission would likely have prevented users of the score from realizing a specific character or sound world, as conveyed in Economou's recordings. For instance, Variation VII was marked *Andante misterioso* to suggest the enigmatic essence communicated in Economou's 1984 performance; Variation XVI bears the indication *Alla*

marcia to reflect the strong rhythmic qualities typical of a march, as demonstrated in Economou's playing; Variation XXI carries the marking *Andante cantabile* – a performance direction frequently employed by composers for slower, lyrical pieces serving as the expressive centre of a composition, communicating both the appropriate speed and the Variation's song-like nature; and the last, Variation XXV, was marked with *Allegro maestoso*, due to its vigorous and commanding character, which is executed by Economou as the ultimate climactic point of the whole cycle.

One could argue that specifying the character conveyed in Economou's playing in a Variation's tempo marking would impart a descriptive meaning to the edited score. Yet such indications were employed only when expressive features were unmistakably present in Economou's recordings and could be perceived as intrinsic elements of the composition's identity. Such indications were assigned to Variations when I evaluated that, without them, the suggested expressive elements might be missing in future performances, or that the musical text might be inaccurately interpreted, establishing a character at odds with what the composer communicated through his recorded performance.

The degree of speed changes between Variations sometimes called for use of indications for subtle speed fluctuations, such as *più mosso* or *meno mosso*, rather than more specific tempo markings. This depended on whether a more indicative tempo marking was necessary to convey expressive nuances that these two terms alone could not reflect. For example, Variation X was marked *Un poco più mosso*. Despite the fact that its tempo is very close to that with which Variation IX ended, from the very first bar there is a perceptible forward momentum that is preserved throughout. One might attribute this to the restless semiquavers in the left hand, giving such a tempo indication a descriptive function.

However, this Variation consists of musical material that self-evidently demands a quicker pace than the preceding one, while Economou's 1984 recording reinforces this conveying a lighter essence than the preceding Variation, which is more grounded in terms of both sound and speed. In essence, had he intended to maintain the speed from Variation IX to Variation X, the latter's overall character and flow would differ from what was conveyed in the 1984 performance. Similarly, Variation V was marked with *Un poco più mosso e cantabile*, and Variation VI with *Un poco più mosso*. There is an evident effort in each Variation for a fairly brisker movement than the preceding one, and therefore, gradual forward motion through each of them. Hence, had a more particular tempo marking been used, it would distort the conveyed subtlety of this delicate continuous momentum.

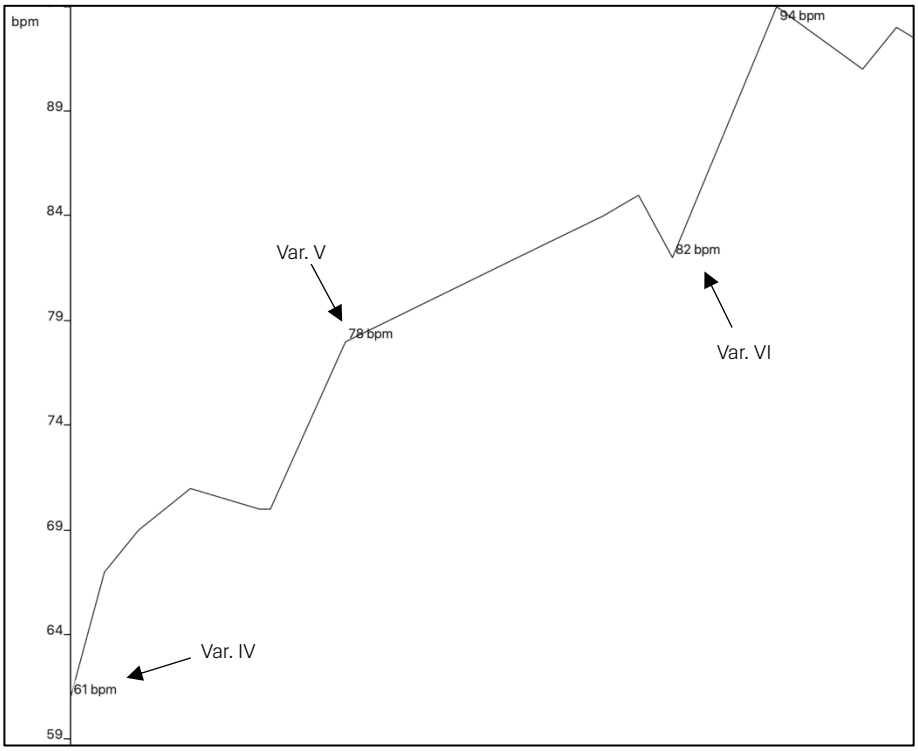


Figure 42. Tempo fluctuation graphs of Variations IV-VI, 1984 recording (BPM/tempo, time).[54]

[54] Figure 42 provides an approximate diagrammatic representation of the tempo fluctuations between Variations IV and VI, as the diagram automatically generated using Sonic Visualizer was compromised due to

In addition to tempo changes occurring between Variations, certain speed fluctuations within individual Variations, some of them subtler than others, were also identified and appropriately realized. A number of them were included in the edited score, understood as intrinsic elements of the work, while others were interpreted as inadvertent deviations from the established tempo. To determine whether a performed tempo change was deliberate or not, I took into account a range of factors: its duration and how effectively it was communicated in the performance; its purpose and function within the piece, as well as its impact to the implied flow of the music; features of the musical material whose execution can initiate unintentional speed fluctuations; inherent elements of the musical material which obviously suggest a tempo change; the inevitability of such imperfections in a one-take, unedited recorded performance; and traits of Economou's playing.

For example, Economou's playing in bars 487-494 becomes rushed, suggesting an *accelerando* marking. However, considering his tendency for such speed fluctuations in similar rapid, wave-like passages in many other recorded performances of his, I concluded that no performance direction should be assigned to this passage. Conversely, other speed fluctuations were realized as intrinsic features of the work. In the 1984 recording of Variation XIV, for example, the pace of Economou's playing in bar 240 becomes evidently slower, illustrated in Figure 41, suggesting a *meno mosso* indication. Given the noticeable sudden drop in speed, and since there is no significant reason why Economou would inadvertently slow down at this point, I decided that it should be indicated in the edited score. Besides, two other observations validated this as an intrinsic element of the work: the same tempo change appears in the 1981 recording of the Variation (yet a couple of bars later, in what

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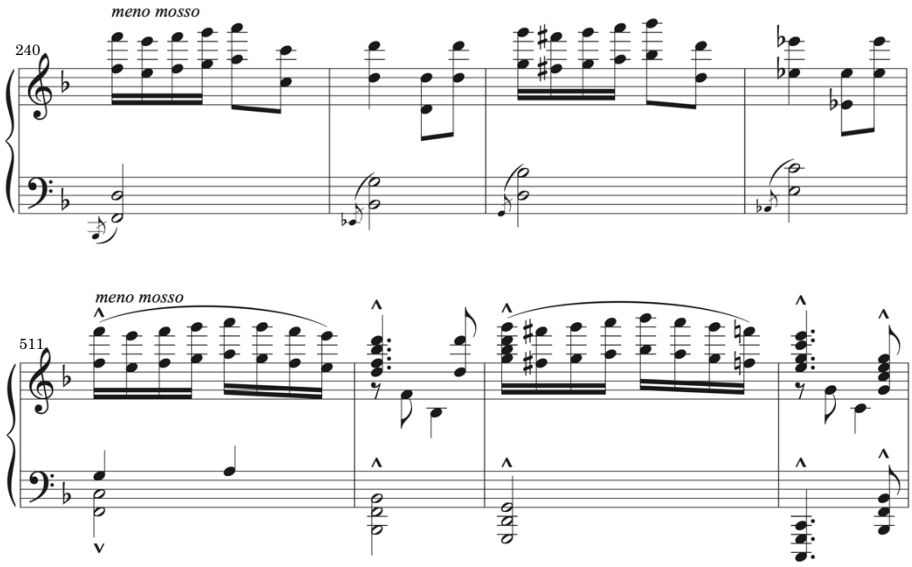
the changing meters in Variations IV and V. Figure 42 here illustrates the initial speed of each Variation and offers a general sense of how the pace progresses throughout within each.

appears in the musical example below as bar 242), as well as in the analogous moment in the concluding Variation of the cycle in bar 511 in both recordings.



Musical Example 76. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XIV, bars 240-243, and Variation XXV, bars 511-514, edited score.

Also, six bars after the beginning of Variation XXIV (bar 479), Economou clearly shifts to a distinctly brisker and more vigorous tempo, marked *Vivace*, which establishes both the desired speed and character conveyed in his playing.

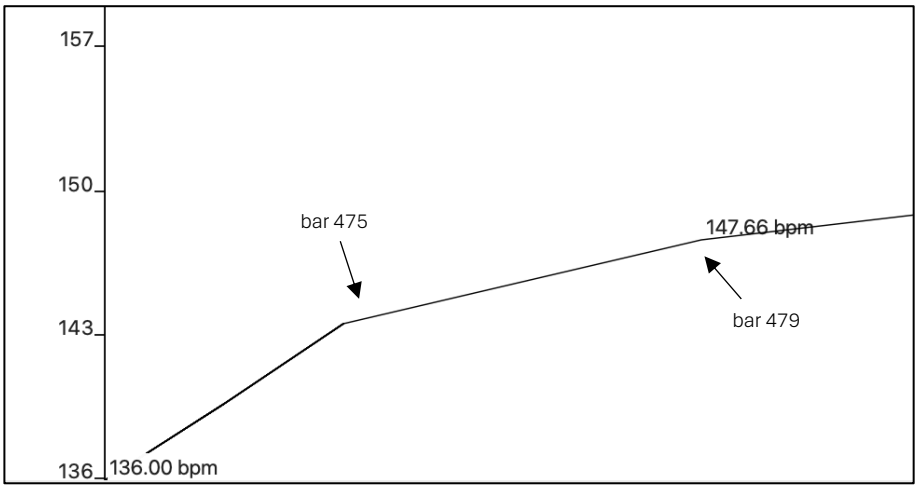
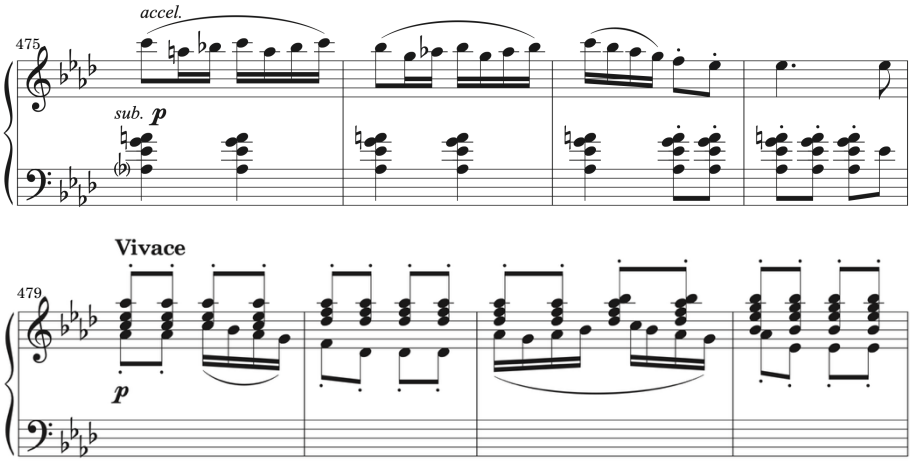


Figure 43. Tempo fluctuation graphs of Variations IV-VI, 1984 recording (BPM/tempo, time).

It is worth clarifying that, although the graph above illustrates a gradual increase in speed from the beginning of the Variation, this occurs from the forward momentum of Economou's playing caused by the spirited character of the piece. The transition to the *Vivace* section is initiated in an evident manner and is clearly executed from bar 475, where I placed an *accel.* marking, therefore identifying this tempo change and the manner it was fulfilled as inherent features of the piece, instead of an inadvertent deviation from the Variation's established tempo.



Musical Example 77. Economou, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, Variation XXIV, bars 475-482, edited score.

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There cannot be a universal set of principles that can be applied to interpret appropriately each expressive nuance in a recorded performance into a performance indication. For example, various moments throughout Economou's *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* with very similar levels of loudness (dB) were assigned different dynamic markings. Ultimately, much like editing any other musical or literary work, the authority of a resulting edition does

not always depend on undisputable evidence and definitive decisions. Instead, the reliability and value of one's editorial endeavour and its final product emerge from the scholarly rigour and thoroughness of the process.

All expressive attributes of a composer's recorded performance of an un-notated work should be subjected to critical evaluation. One should not assume that all expressive features present in a composer's performance should be explicitly indicated in the edited score of the un-notated work, or that only those conveyed in the recording may be included in the musical text. Instead, as evidenced through this chapter:

a) an expressive attribute may not come across as originally intended;

b) an expressive attribute may be executed and communicated rather ambiguously, or it may not come across at all;

c) an expressive attribute may be communicated exactly as intended, but its realisation into a prescriptive performance indication has to be evaluated in relation to various factors, such as the distinct traits of the composer's playing and the surrounding musical material;

d) an expressive attribute may not have been intended at all, but was communicated as such.

Generally, an 'appropriate' performance direction is one that facilitates the effective conveyance of the music's character and essence, identity and overall progression. With this in mind – unless the editor decides that an indication should appear as an editorial addition where the musical material, yet not the performance, suggests one – the first step

in defining the most suitable performance direction to be included in the edited score is to identify all the possible yet reasonable ways the performed actions captured and conveyed in the composer's recording – loudness, articulation, speed, character – can be translated into performance directions that will preserve the prescriptive nature of the edited score, taking into consideration factors such as the composer's playing style. In order to subsequently define the most appropriate performance direction, it is essential to evaluate how each of these potential indications might be interpreted and employed in future performances of the posthumously notated work, and how they might either faithfully convey or distort the intended outcome of the composition or passage in question, as well as the overall progression of the piece.

A critical task in defining the most appropriate dynamic markings for posthumous musical texts is ensuring their proportional distribution throughout the composition – namely, to establish the right balance of dynamics between different parts of the work, according to each section's conveyed or implied character and 'dynamic profile', as well as its role and function within the composition. This principle may also apply when defining the most appropriate tempo markings. Such balance might be clearly depicted in the composer's playing, which can be reflected in the edited score without compromising its prescriptive function after evaluating both musical material as well as the expressive features of the recorded performance. The composer's performance might also give indicative information regarding the dynamic structure of the piece – for example, where the loud(est)/fast(est) and soft(est)/slow(est) moments, its climactic moment(s) or distinct emotional core of the piece are. But in other cases, this balance of dynamics and pace between various moments or sections may have to be established by the editor themselves

to effectively convey the work's progression, especially if they conclude that dynamics and tempos were inaccurately or insufficiently conveyed in the composer's recorded performance. At any rate, the performed loudness and speed are certainly a point of departure that needs to be considered, so that it is subsequently interpreted and realised accordingly into the most appropriate dynamic and tempo markings, which will subsequently be assessed in relation to all other prescriptive performance directions across the composition – a process which will most probably generate further editorial alterations of dynamic and tempo markings until the desired balance across the composition is established.

On first consideration, relying exclusively on an audio-only recording to identify performed articulations and phrasing in a performance may pose challenges to the editor of an un-notated work's text. As W. Luke Windsor writes, "[n]ormally, gestures are considered to be visual signals". However, "in music it has become quite normal to talk about gestures being expressed through sound, sometimes independently of any visual complement" (Windsor 2011, 45). The examples drawn from the editorial process of Economou's *Corelli Variations*, as well as relevant scholarship, demonstrate that such recordings hold valuable potential, and that informed decisions can still be made, even in the absence of visual evidence (Cox 2006; Doğantan-Dack 2011; Kühl 2011; Rink et al. 2011; Windsor 2011). Detecting the performed articulation is merely the first step in such a process, and as evidenced, various other considerations can be vital to narrow down the spectrum of possibilities one has to evaluate to determine the purpose of executed sound, in order to determine whether it should be deciphered into articulation marks and in what form.

Visual observations, such as facial expressions, posture, gestures, pedal use, or fingering even, could potentially provide further information that may allow one to make firmer decisions regarding performed actions and their interpretation into prescriptive performance indications. Certainly, critical considerations on performance directions to be included in a posthumous prescriptive, rather than descriptive, score can still be comprehensive, as demonstrated in the aforementioned discussion, drawing from self-evident qualities of the musical material, convincingly executed performed actions, as well as profound familiarity with the profile of the composer's playing. However, other equally valid editorial decisions might carry purely conjectural value, stemming from intuitive conclusions, which, nonetheless, are grounded on common practices, musical insight, and critical awareness. At any rate, it is important to remember that all performance directions found in a posthumous score are the editor's well-informed suggestions for how the work might be performed, and not the composer's own instructions expressing their creative ideas.

5. The Work Status of Un-notated Compositions and the Authority of Posthumous Notations

The editor's understanding of the musical work and its relation to texts and performances can shape the framework within which their practices to preserve and transmit a composition take place. Taking as a point of departure Michel Foucault's argument that one's editorial practice and its products "suffer" if they lack a "theory of the work" (Foucault [1969] 1998, 207-8), Ronald Broude maintains that "what an editor does – the sort of edition that he sets out to produce, the sorts of decisions that he makes at each stage along the way, the uses that he thinks his edition will serve – is dependent upon what he believes a work to be" (Broude 2012). In other words, how an editor perceives the nature of musical works defines the ways he evaluates sources (and the variants they might give), and ultimately, his decision-making in the editorial process. In Western art music, the work-concept is a framework that (notoriously) defines music-making practices, while the related notion of *Werktreue* presupposes the existence of fixed musical texts for works, and that fidelity to the 'composer's intentions' can be measured against these texts. Such an ideology implicitly devalues compositional achievements that do not exist in written form, and therefore, it is worth asking whether premeditated compositions that were never notated can be regarded as works; if so, why such classification matters, and how it may influence the editorial process of posthumously created musical texts, as well as the reception and value of the resulting editions.

5.1. Defining Un-notated Compositions as Works

Lydia Goehr describes the work-concept as a "regulative concept" (Goehr 1992, 90), explaining in her influential *Imaginary Museum of Musical Works* that "regulative concepts determine, stabilize, and order the structure of practices", which define "the nature, purpose, and relationship between composers, scores, and performances" (Goehr 1992, 102, 253). Over the last century, various conflicting ontological accounts of the musical work have emerged. Some philosophers argue that works are abstract entities, lacking spatio-temporal properties and existing everlastingly and independently of their scores or interpretations (e.g. S. Davies 2001; Dodd 2002, 2007; Ingarden 1986; Kivy 1983; Levinson 1980, 2011; Scruton 2013; Wolterstorff 1975, 1980), and others identify works with concrete, physical objects – musical texts – as well as their performances (e.g. Caplan and Matheson 2006; Goodman 1968; Tillmann 2011), or with ideas shaped in the composer's mind (e.g. Collingwood 1938; Cox 1986; Cray and Matheson 2017). More recently, these accounts have been challenged by other scholars such as Andrew Kania (2008, 2013) and Anton Killin (2018) who maintain that musical works do not exist in any concrete or abstract form, and that our discourse and music-making practices are shaped merely *as if* such entities existed.

Certainly, philosophers tend to present their arguments as commonsensical and obvious. As Amie L. Thomasson writes, "knowledge claims in the ontology of art are often presented as discoveries of fully determinate, mind-independent facts" (Thomasson 2005, 221), yet such ontologies are often based on personal beliefs and intuitions (Young 2011). It is also notable that many scholars addressing issues concerning the work in relation to music-making practices are not themselves musicians or performers. Nonetheless, they

regard their own intuitions as "a reliable guide" in developing theories of the musical work (Bartel 2017, 348-50), shaping ontological arguments according to their purely theoretical, "philosophical commitments", rather than the realities of musical practice (Bartel 2017, 352). Along the same lines, as Marcello Ruta observes, common sense in such debates "risks becoming a sort of theoretical ghost: everyone talks about it, but no one knows what it is" (Ruta 2014, 69). Several ontological arguments are built on abstract, metaphysical speculation instead of lived experiences and the realistic demands of music-making. However, the most convincing and defensible of these 'intuitions' are those rooted in artistic practice – an argument that has been extensively developed by David Davies as the 'pragmatic constraint' in his *Art as Performance* (D. Davies 2004).

The aim of this discussion is not to offer an in-depth, thorough ontological inquiry, or to fully endorse a Platonist, nominalist, idealist or fictionalist/nihilist position. Instead, its main purpose is to clarify, as a guiding assumption for the arguments that follow, that musical texts and performances are not the works themselves but only realizations/instantiations and *interpretations* of them. In this sense, while the ideal state of the work – the 'abstract entity' – may be conceived as existing independently of any particular embodiment, its transmission through notation and subsequent instantiation in performance inevitably involves a departure from that ideal form. Arguments such as Nelson Goodman's "double demand", which Goodman himself describes as "a strong one" (Goodman 1968, 129-30), that require a work, its score, and its performances to be perfectly identified with one another are ultimately unpragmatic and go against the realities of music-making. A work must be distinguished from its instantiations, not only due to the inherent creativity and variability that characterize performances of the same composition,

but because no text can capture every detail necessary for a perfect, ideal performance of a musical work. In Nicholas Wolterstorff's words, "the intention involved in performing a work is the intention to follow the [written] specifications for producing examples of that work" (Wolterstorff 1975, 132). Or as Roger Scruton puts it, "to identify the work of music in the material world is to identify the sound pattern intended by the composer which is realized in performances", which "can be written down in the form of a score" (Scruton 2013, 40).

A musical composition is typically identified as a work due to the intentional compositional effort and aesthetic refinement it has undergone, the creative labour invested in its completion, as well as its ontological profile as a deliberately conceived, repeatable musical entity with premeditated constitutive elements that define its instantiations in writing and performance (Broude 2012). The recognizability of a work is also substantiated by the existence of a title, which distinguishes it from other compositions, and confirms its identity as a discrete artistic product. As Levinson maintains, titles are fundamental attributes of musical works, suggesting that they are "integral parts" and "essential properties" of them (Levinson 2011, 159-60). Although he focuses on the title's role in shaping aesthetic perception and the appreciation of a composition, he also argues that it serves as a defining attribute of its identity as a work – "an intentionally designed cultural entity whose every apprehendable feature [...] is potentially relevant to the artistic content of the work" (Levinson 2011, 176).

As briefly mentioned in the introduction of this dissertation, un-notated compositions are most commonly approached in various contexts as a 'musical Other'. Although many philosophers and scholars merely ignore the potential of their existence in

their discussions, some refuse to recognize them as works due to the lack of written notation for them. For example, Paul Thom argues that a work "has not been authored unless instructions for its performance have been given", specifying that the performance of an un-notated piece is merely "a content for replay" (Thom 1990, 146-7). Nonetheless, works are social artefacts, and there are no natural laws that regulate their ontology and very existence. In Noël Carroll's words, "a new object as a part of the corpus of art" can be distinguished through "rational strategies, rather than rules", which do not need to correspond to "a single theory of the nature of the artwork" (Carroll 1988, 145). Cultural practices "negotiate their self-transformations in ways that sustain continuity between the existing tradition and expansions thereof", and therefore "the modes of identifying new objects as art make essential reference [...] to the history of the practice" (Carroll 1988, 149). In other words, novelties allow artistic practices to be ever evolving and relevant. Among these novelties are un-notated compositions, simply due to the technological advancements in the twentieth century that enabled the recording of musical performances, allowing composers to preserve and share their compositions without relying on written notation.

If works are understood as abstract entities (structures of sound instantiated in performance), and scores as merely one possible vehicle for preserving and transmitting them, recognizing a composition as a work does not require written notation. An un-notated composition can be considered a work as much as a composition that has been written down, since its work-status derives from the intentional compositional and creative effort behind it, as well as its capacity for re-instantiation, rather than from its existence on paper. Therefore, it becomes evident that, taken together, all the considerations discussed above

indicate that an un-notated composition bearing the aforementioned defining characteristics of a musical work – such as Economou's *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*; Horowitz's *Carmen Variations*; Volodos' *Concert Paraphrase on Mozart's Rondo alla Turka*; or Cziffra's *Réminiscences de Johann Strauss* – may indeed be regarded as such.

This perspective has found support among a few scholars, who similarly maintain that notation is not a necessary condition for recognizing un-notated compositions as musical works. For example, Saam Trivedi suggests that works may exist without a score, only by the fact they have been performed (Trivedi 2008, 124-5), while S. Davies maintains that a work can be "conveyed by instructions from the composer addressed to the performer [...] via a score, orally, or by a performance with the status of a model" (S. Davies 2001, 20). In addition, Wolterstorff argues that if a composer composes and performs a work before (and without ever?) writing it down, then "it would have been possible for him not merely to produce an occurrence of a sound-sequence" of the work, "but actually perform the work" (Wolterstorff 1975, 131-2). Lastly, although he addresses only cases of folk music and improvisations, Ingarden discusses that un-notated musical compositions may be considered works, despite "a certain difficulty for repeat performances" (Ingarden 1986, 38). He argues that on such occasions, the work may be "derived directly from the composer's creative intentional acts, intentions that are sometimes immediately realized in a performance by the composer himself" (Ingarden 1986, 40).

Some of these arguments clearly suggest, while others merely imply, that a composer's performance of their own work may be approached as its ultimate realization, or similarly, a fully accurate representation of its intrinsic features. Economou's *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* is a work that exists in its entirety through the composer's

performance, and as Chapters 3 and 4 have shown, an attempt to create a textual representation of the work, avoiding misrepresentation of the composition and its constitutive elements, requires careful critical judgment, rigorous editorial scrutiny, as well as musical insight and intuition. Certainly, in Kivy's words, "the composer's opinions about how his or her work is to be performed are not to be taken lightly. It is not an outsider's advice but the advice (usually) of an expert" (Kivy 1995, 165). Nonetheless, identifying a composer's performance with the work seems to be not only ontologically problematic, but pragmatically invalid. Like any performance, it may contain errors, spontaneous decisions, and inaccurately conveyed expressive features or creative ideas. And even if the composer presents their rendition as exemplary, it is merely one of the many possible interpretations of it and not the embodiment of the work. At any rate, the task of producing a score for an un-notated work, devoid of descriptive elements derived from the composer's recording, requires filtering the performance through multiple interpretive layers.

The work-concept "is as 'real' as any aesthetic idea can be" (Strohm 2000, 128). As discussed, it is a socially constructed framework that has been established over time, determining a general understanding and "agreed norms" (Johnson 1997, 5-6) concerning the relationships and expectations between works, composers, musical texts, performers, and audiences. Undoubtedly, this framework involves editors too, as they act as mediators between composers and performers, and by extension, listeners.[55] Consequently, identifying an un-notated musical composition as a work affects the editorial process, as it entails an acknowledgment of the aesthetic refinement it has undergone, and therefore, moral and ethical obligations toward the creative labour of another person. In other words,

[55] I provide a more detailed discussion on the role of the editor in the shaping and perception of posthumously notated works in Chapter 7.

the editor is required to engage with an artistic entity that holds intention and meaning, but most importantly, an identity that extends beyond its texts and performances, *including the composer's*.

As the preceding two chapters have demonstrated, the editor must 'peel back' the available sources and examine them critically, aiming to understand and realize as much as possible the deliberate compositional process that formulated the work. The editorial process undertaken for Economou's *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*, for example, was at times guided by a) the fact that the primary source is a one-take performance, which is inherently prone to inadvertent deviations from predetermined compositional ideas, or their inaccurate execution, and b) the un-notated nature of its generative process, which resulted to material that would presumably have been formulated differently if a manuscript had been used. Most importantly, the way the transcribed material was evaluated, as well as the resulting observations and editorial interventions, were defined by the fact that this was a deliberately crafted composition, with its constituent elements purposefully chosen, that was improved and refined through multiple stages of revision. Therefore, although the work-concept 'legitimizes' the significance of the editor's role, in a sense it 'constrains' it too, since the objective of an editorial process is to recover the composer's ideas, rather than to improve them, in an attempt to preserve the work's integrity, even though, ultimately, the final outcome of such a process grounded in assumptions inherently remains a subjective interpretation of the composition.

5.2. Ethical Aspects of Editorial Responsibility and Interpretative Practice

The rise of the notion of genius as "a kind of divinely inspired authorship" from the sixteenth century onwards signalled a turning point, leading to the now-dominant understanding of works as unique creations of their author (Cook 2014, 11), with the Western art music tradition having been developed and established on a "culture of authorship" (Kivy 1995, 186). Artworks are regarded as inextricably linked with their creators, and although "there is not an ethical responsibility to music 'itself', it does not mean that there are no responsibilities to the labours of other people" (Warren 2014, 168-9). This is most clearly reflected in the ultimate objective of musical editions since the second half of the last century to define through "critically authorized musical knowledge" a "definitive, final version of the work" based on 'the composer's intentions' (Gillies 2019, 154-5).

As already noted, recognizing a composition as a work entails moral and ethical obligations toward its composer, which apply not only to performers, but to editors too. This observation raises some crucial questions: why does fidelity to the composer's creative ideas and achievements carries such significance if an un-notated composition is identified as a work, both in editorial and interpretative practices, and why should an editor aim to produce a prescriptive, rather than descriptive, score for it? Moreover, it is important to consider that un-notated works may never have been written down by their composers for several reasons. For instance, a composer may not have written down their work because it was conceived without the use of manuscript, and therefore considered such a process unnecessary or time-consuming, perhaps because they wished to cultivate an air of mystery around the composition, or simply because they did not want others to perform it.

What, then, are the moral implications of producing a posthumous score for a work that the composer perhaps never intended to be published or performed by others?

One of the reasons our practices are guided by the composer's authority is our social interactions which "reminds us that we have responsibilities to other people that we have not had a face-to-face encounter with" (Warren 2014, 169).[56] In other words, this awareness to respect and honour the composer and engage faithfully with their ideas through editorial and interpretative processes is not simply a conceptual principle of textual scholarship and performance practice, but an ethical stance stemming from the fact that musical works come into being after someone's artistic labour and focused compositional effort – these demand respect, even if the composer is someone we have never encountered, and perhaps never will. As Jeff R. Warren explains, the works we receive from them should be treated "as an inheritance and as a gift" (Warren 2014, 169), implying a responsibility of stewardship rather than ownership.

Therefore, as editorial practice is grounded in the necessity to restore the potentially compromised text of a composition, the editor contributes to the preservation of a cultural legacy by aiming to safeguard the artistic and aesthetic integrity of the musical work, and similarly, by ensuring that the composer's achievement is not distorted or misrepresented. It is for this reason that the editor's task of producing a posthumous score for an un-notated work must be guided by a conscious effort to create a prescriptive, rather than descriptive, text that is intended to align as closely as possible to a score the composer would have wished to see published and used by performers for future performances of it. As Kivy

[56] In his *Authenticities*, Kivy (1995) offers an extensive discussion on authenticity with regard to the composer's intentions, approaching it as a moral obligation. Nevertheless, he does not explore the underlying reasons why such a moral obligation exists in music-making practices in the first place.

writes, the composer's intentions "are not necessarily where we stop; but they are perhaps necessarily where we must begin" (Kivy 1995, 185-6). Hence, a text for an un-notated work that serves a descriptive function would fail to comply with the aforementioned attitudes, since an editorial process that prioritizes features of the composer's recorded performance, rather than only those essential for the faithful instantiation of the work itself, would provide a flawed textual representation of it, compromising the accurate preservation and transmission of the composer's artistic achievement, and encouraging the imitation of the composer's own performance. It is reasonable to argue, nonetheless, that what defines the ethical quality of such an endeavour is not the resulting score, but the editor's intention, effort and attentiveness in producing a prescriptive text, as there is no definitive way to validate whether the elements appearing in an edited score indeed prescribe an instantiation of the posthumously notated work or describe the composer's performance. In addition, the transparency with which editorial decisions are communicated in the resulting edition plays a crucial role in the evaluation of the editorial process and its results.

Moreover, Kivy maintains that "along with such obvious duties as telling the truth, keeping promises, not causing unnecessary pain, and so on, we have an obligation to honor when possible the wishes and intentions of the dead, a special case of this last being the obligation to honor the performing intentions of dead composers. We can think of the composer's score, in this regard, much as the dying words or written will of the deceased" (Kivy 1993, 105). For Kivy, respect and fidelity to the composer's creative labour, as communicated by the score, constitute a commonsensical moral responsibility analogous to honouring the wishes of the dead. However, in the case of un-notated works, this analogy collapses. As discussed, the function of the composer's recorded performance cannot be

equated to that of an authoritative score (yet a recording of a person's final words and its transcription could be regarded as equivalent to a written will, setting legalities aside). Thus, one cannot know with certainty what intentions or wishes are to be honoured, whether in interpretative or editorial contexts, since a score is not provided by the composer himself, and must instead be posthumously constructed. Even when the composer's text exists in some form, there are "insurmountable epistemic barriers to our having access to the composer's performance intentions", making it impossible to know with certainty whether authenticity has been achieved (Kivy 1995, 14). Thus, what ultimately matters is that editors and performers still *strive* through their practice to honour the composer's intentions and creative labour, seeking to appropriately preserve the work in notation or appropriately realize it in performance, based on the available material and evidence.

One may argue that the absence of a score in instances of un-notated compositions may itself express the (deceased) composer's wishes regarding its preservation and transmission. For example, as mentioned in Chapter 2, Economou stated during a radio interview in 1991: "I have not aspired to publish anything because I made it for myself" (Economou 1991b, 18). A composer may have been reluctant to leave behind notations for their works, perhaps to cultivate an air of mystery around them or simply to prevent others from performing them. In such cases, it would seem an ethical responsibility to respect these wishes of the composer and refrain from notating their works they deliberately chose to leave un-notated.

Certainly, ethical and moral obligations are notions powerful enough to define social and cultural aspects of our lives. However, even in relation to composers' authority and wishes, they are also "open to empirical defeat" (Kivy 1995, 187). Cases of works

deliberately left un-notated recall other cases when composers feeling dissatisfied with their compositions destroyed their manuscripts, or gave explicit instructions to others to do so.[57] In many instances, nonetheless, those responsible to carry out such tasks, or similarly, those who had access to manuscripts and sketches that were eventually published despite the composers' wishes, did otherwise, as they had another, stronger responsibility: "to refrain from injuring us, [...] by depriving us [...] wonderful works" (Kivy 1993, 112).

Along the same lines, it is one's moral obligation not to deprive performers and listeners of works that were never notated by their composers. In cases where they may have chosen only to perform their compositions without notating or publishing them, discouraging others from performing them, one should still undertake the task of constructing a text for them. One's initiative to create an authoritative score after conscious efforts for it to reflect the constitutive features of the composition itself, rather than features of its performance, fulfils an ethical duty of enriching the existing repertoire with new, potentially significant, artistic contributions. It should not be considered an abuse to the composers' authority and their wishes for these works to remain un-notated, particularly if this endeavour is undertaken with rigour, musical insight and sensitivity, attention and thoroughness.

[57] Notable examples include Leoš Janáček's *Piano Sonata 1.X.1905*, which survived only through Ludmila Tučková's copy, as she premiered the work in 1906; Janáček himself had thrown the original manuscript into the river Vltava out of frustration with the result of his compositional endeavours. Similarly, Felix Mendelssohn, dissatisfied with his Fourth Symphony, refused to publish it during his lifetime, and it was only published posthumously. Also, after the premiere of *Carmina Burana*, Carl Orff asked his publisher to destroy all of his earlier compositions, an order that was never carried out.

5.3. The Two Authenticities and the Value of the Posthumously Created Score

Although musical texts serve only as representations of the works themselves and instructions for instantiating them, our practices privilege and ascribe ultimate authority to texts that can be directly tracked back to the composer. In other words, even if it is one of the many realizations of the work in writing, we tend to rely – understandably and naturally so – on the text that the composer finds most accurate to convey their compositional achievement. It is therefore worth asking how a posthumously created score for an un-notated work that represents the transcriber-editor's realization of the composition in textual form can still be granted authority and value, and be regarded as a written representation of the composition that will generate performances faithful to the composer's creative ideas. The following discussion aims to answer this question, considering that, in Stan Godlovitch's words, performers "assume two obligations between which conflicts can arise: to render the work (1) accurately, and (2) creatively, interestingly, imaginatively" (Godlovitch 1998, 84). In his *Authenticities*, Peter Kivy (1995) frames these 'obligations' as two kinds of *authenticity* in music-making practices – that of fidelity and creativity. Thus, building on these two forms of authenticity, this section argues that in cases of posthumously notated works, the possibilities to achieve an aural and aesthetic result using a score authored by the composer himself could be the same as using a score created by someone else through a conscious effort and informed decision-making to construct a prescriptive score.

Despite criticisms of the (over)reliance of Western art music tradition on written texts, not only in interpretative contexts, but musicological too (see Cook 2014), one has to acknowledge that the score – identified as "the symbol of the composer's authority over

what is played" (Small 1998, 115) – serves as a central, indispensable tool that ensures the accurate preservation and transmission of musical works from composers to editors, performers, and subsequently, to audiences. In Levinson's words, "the authenticity of a performance of a work is a matter of faithfulness to the determinative intentions publicly expressed in a score by a composer" (Levinson 2011, 337). The term 'authentic' is often used in music-making practices as a synonym for good or exemplary, in praise of "the creative role of the performer in realizing faithfully the composer's specifications" (S. Davies 1987, 39). Authenticity, therefore, is typically evaluated by "the degree of faithfulness with which the performance realizes the composer's musical conception as recorded in the score" (S. Davies 1987, 47). Considering that "[c]omposers have very rarely written down things which they did not feel were essential" (Boorman 2001, 406), all the elements a composer chooses to include in a score usually carry normative weight, which are determinative of the work itself, as essential properties that a performance must comprise to qualify as an instantiation of the work. Therefore, by attempting to follow such a score, the performer aims to meet the standards that define their interpretation as faithful to its composer's wishes for performances of the composition.

That said, a performer is not only an "executor of another's work", but a "creative personality" too (Carrier 1983, 209). Therefore, the inherent variability in musical performances which originate from the same musical text is more often than not recognized as "a desired, intended and logically required ontological fact" (Kivy 1995, 272). Taking into account this variability and creativity evident in performances of the same work, one needs to admit that, as Grier suggests, over the centuries, "notation proved an imperfect tool to assure the reproducibility of performance" (Grier 2021, 192). And although *Werktreue*

remains a concept deeply embedded in music making practices, it is after all "an aesthetic ideal", rather than "an actual state of affairs" (Cook 2014, 25). Hence, despite the authority and value typically ascribed to composers' musical texts, they do not warrant identical or uniform performance outcomes, since there is not a single, definitive manner to interpret the content of a score, but multiple valid ones.

Alongside one's attempt to be faithful to the composer's wishes and instructions for an instantiation of a musical work, an interpretation may also be described as authentic if it is recognized as "autonomous, sincere, self-originating, original, an expression of the performer" (Kivy 1995, 6). Essentially, this 'personal' authenticity and the unavoidable variability in performance are inherent and defining aspects of the nature of music making. Therefore, they are not only welcomed and embraced, but expected, as vital qualities in one's endeavours to deliver an interpretation of a musical work. All these features stemming from the performer's individuality collectively reflect "quasi-moral responsibilities falling upon and standards of professional virtue expected of performers qua performers" (Godlovitch 1993, 579-80). Namely, novelty and personal expression are required so that a performance is musically compelling and artistically valuable.

Originality in performance does not equate with deviation from the composer's written text. Certainly, departures from the score's content may happen, either deliberately or unintentionally. However, variability amongst interpretation of the same composition occurs because performers realize various elements of a score and employ them in their interpretations in different manners. As S. Davies writes, "[t]he faithful execution of the composer's work instructions leave open a multitude of choices that a performer must make in giving a performance" (S. Davies 2001, 110). Therefore, even after a conscious

effort to follow the composer's instructions, demonstrating fidelity to their creative labours, a performer's interpretation will inevitably differ from others'. Consequently, one can remain faithful to the score, aiming, at the same time, to be original and imaginative, fulfilling their role as a creative interpreter, and delivering varied performances distinct from those of others.

It is important to recognize that even composers' performances of their own works reveal this inherent and inevitable variability of musical interpretation. The following examples do not only demonstrate that a composer's performance is simply one of many possible interpretations, and that the score cannot be ontologically equated with the work itself, but they also call into question the fixity of their texts, as well as the authority ascribed to them as the ultimate, definitive textual representations of their compositions. Although, as noted, it is commonly assumed that composers' texts provide the most accurate instructions for instantiations of their compositions, this remark becomes untenable when their own performances diverge from those instructions, revealing that the compositional process is not always completed with the notated text, and that this text is amenable to deviations. At any rate, it is also worth considering that it is not uncommon for composers to accept and embrace interpretations contradict their written instructions (Kivy 1995, 30).

For example, Bartók always endeavoured a *Fassung letzter Hand* status for his scores, aiming for "an extremely detailed, precise, consistent, and inventive notation" (Somfai 1993, 37-8). Nevertheless, many of his recorded performances deviate from indicated melodic and rhythmic material, tempos, articulation, phrasing (Garst 1985; Lampert 2001; Somfai 1981, 1993, 1996a, 1996b). Even in different takes of the same recording session, Bartók's performances of the same work exhibit notable variability

(Somfai 1996b, 281). Similarly, Shostakovich's recorded performances reveal deviations from his scores, especially in pedalling, melodic and rhythmic material, as well as tempos (Moshevich 2004), while Debussy's piano roll recordings also exhibit departures from his texts, as well as from his own publicly expressed instructions on how performers should approach his texts, especially regarding tempo, rhythmic precision, and articulation (Lee 2001). Certainly, the authenticity of piano roll recordings may be challenged for several reasons (see Durkin 1999; Philip 1998). Nonetheless, the value of Debussy's Welte-Mignon rolls, which were digitally recorded by Kenneth Caswell and published in 2000, "has been acknowledged by many musicians as well as music critics" (Lee 2001, 72; see also Howat 2023). Notably, Debussy himself was "highly pleased" with this set of piano rolls (Hirakouji 2008, 75-7).

In addition, Stravinsky famously viewed performers as 'transmitters' and not interpreters of music, insisting on "scrupulous fidelity to the letter of the text, and an ascetic avoidance of unspecified nuance in the name of expression" (Taruskin 1995, 129). He considered recordings as a means of conveying his intentions "with real exactitude" (Predelli 1995, 346), especially tempo and duration. Nonetheless, several of his own recorded performances diverge from the tempo indications and durations marked in his scores, and from his strong ideals of objectivity in performance, since his playing demonstrates "a recognizably romantic tone-quality, incorporating gestures that clearly derive from the nineteenth-century Russian piano tradition" (Griffiths 2013, 125). As Taruskin writes, "whenever Stravinsky documented his performances more than once he created quite different objects, particularly with regard to tempo", despite identifying some

of these recordings as “particularly successful documentations” of his compositional ideas (Taruskin 1995, 339).

In the particular cases of posthumously notated works, one may argue that due to the absence of a score originating from the composer himself and his autographs, composer-supervised editions, or other sources which are essentially linked to his own hand, a posthumous text created using his recorded performances can never be regarded as an authoritative score. And this is because it lacks connection to the composer’s authorship, a phenomenon comparable to challenges in oral literature (see, for example, Niles 2013). Similarly, it could also be argued that a performance derived from such a text can never be perceived as authentic and faithful to the composer’s musical ideas. However, as this discussion has shown, variability in performances of the same work occurs even if the same text, originating from the composer, is used; if one transcribed these performances without access to the score of the composition, they would likely produce several distinct textual versions of the same work. Once again, this variety in interpretation is inevitable, expected, and even necessary, in the music making practices of the Western art music tradition, and therefore, texts and performances are not identified with the work itself, but serve only as instantiations of it. Consequently, it is reasonable to maintain that an un-notated work’s posthumous text, created using the composer’s recorded performance and produced through rigorous editorial practices and well-informed decisions, can serve as a valid foundation for a faithful and authentic interpretation of the work. More specifically, I argue that the degree of variability in performances of the composition resulting from the realization of a score originating from the composer’s hand – had such a manuscript ever existed – would be the same as the degree of variability in

performances resulting from the realization of a carefully constructed posthumous edited score.

Certainly, a posthumous text for an un-notated work will *ipso facto* differ from a score the composer could have provided. However, what should matter in these particular cases of posthumously notated compositions is not the author of the text used, but its capacity to enable performances of the work that align as closely as possible with the composer's compositional ideas. If the posthumous score instantiates performances faithful to their compositional achievement, created with editorial rigour and purpose – a deliberate and informed endeavour to produce a prescriptive text that is intended to eliminate purely descriptive elements deriving from the composer's recorded performance as far as possible – it should still be ascribed value and credibility, despite the absence of direct relation with the author's hand. After all, audiences never prioritize ontological issues over an opportunity to experience an interpretation of a work, even if it does not originate from a score written by the composer himself.[58] As Alfred Lessing puts it, the generative process of an artistic object "can neither add anything to nor subtract anything from the aesthetic experience" (Lessing 1965, 464).[59] Therefore, although posthumous editions of such works may be speculative (re)constructions, they can still be regarded as reliable mediations between the absent original and its performative afterlives.

[58] This idea is suggested by Christopher Janaway in his article "What a Musical Forgery Isn't" (Janaway 1999, 71).

[59] Similar debates regarding the impact of the generative process on the appreciation of an artistic product appear in discussions on art forgery, although these focus on the aesthetic and artistic value of paintings and sculptures (see, for example, Dutton 1979; Irvin 2007; Janaway 1997, 1999; Lessing 1965). Nevertheless, such discourses share with the present discussion this concept of the extent to which perception, evaluation, and appreciation of an object are defined solely by its direct association with its creator. Certainly, creating a posthumous score for an un-notated work should not be considered a forgery, as long as the manner such a text came into being is transparently communicated to its user, and similarly, the resulting text is not meant to deceive or mislead in any way its users.

※ ※ ※ ※ ※ ※

Identifying a musical composition as a work suggests that, as an abstract entity, it is distinct from both its text and performances, while its status as a product of deliberate creative effort entails a degree of responsibility from editors and performers towards the composer's creative labour and its faithful preservation and transmission. The inherent variability that characterizes musical performance does not only validate this distinction between works and their performances but also challenges the perceived immutability of musical texts. Authority and value have been traditionally understood as qualities attributed only to scores derived from the composer's autograph manuscripts. Nonetheless, as this discussion demonstrated, no musical text – including the composer's – can ensure identical interpretations, while a conscious or inadvertent deviation of various degrees from the instructions it carries is inevitable. And while the composer's text is typically identified as the ultimate written representation of a work, several examples of composers performing their own works reveal their ever-evolving vision, the numerous ways a work and its score can be realized in performance, or simply the fact that these texts are not as definitive as commonly assumed.

Taking everything into consideration, it seems that the author of a score must not be the sole factor for ascribing value and credibility to it; a score constructed for a posthumously notated work can be of equal standing to a composer's text. As discussed, performances generated by using a posthumous text could provide the same aural result as using the composer's text, had that existed. Certainly, there are cases, such as Debussy, where a composer's unique notational style conveys distinctive expressive qualities. On such occasions, there might indeed be an issue of misrepresentation of *textual*

achievement which, nevertheless, does not necessarily compromise the aural or aesthetic outcome of a performance, or its fidelity to the composer's ideas. By extension, what ensures the integrity, as well as the value of a posthumous score is transparency regarding the generative process of such a musical text. As will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 7, clearly documenting the editorial and reconstructive process behind such a text is essential, as well as explicitly indicating its status as posthumously created. This information serves an important role in informing the score's users and listeners, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of its generative and editorial history.

Variability in performance occurs from the unique interpretative qualities and creativity of performers, and their interpretations play a crucial role in the perception of musical works. As Robert L. Martin observes, "[p]erformances of musical works, rather than scores, are at the heart of the listener's world" (Martin 1993, 121). Even though the posthumous score is definitely an indispensable tool that enables accessibility and ensures the accurate textual transmission of a previously un-notated work, it is through these variable performances that the composition is most fully realized, evaluated and appreciated as an artistic creation. The posthumous score (just like any other musical text) does not represent a single, fixed and definitive version of the work, but an editorially constructed text that allows numerous interpretative possibilities aligning not only with the composer's compositional achievement, but its inevitably dynamic nature as a musical composition too. By extension, it is worth considering Cook's argument that "performances create meaning in relation to other performances, and not just in relation to works" (Cook 2014, 224). Essentially, it is not an abstract entity or a 'definitive' version of the work reflected in a score that defines our perception of a composition, but its interpretations.

Case Study 2: Nicolas Economou – *Hommage à J. S. Bach*

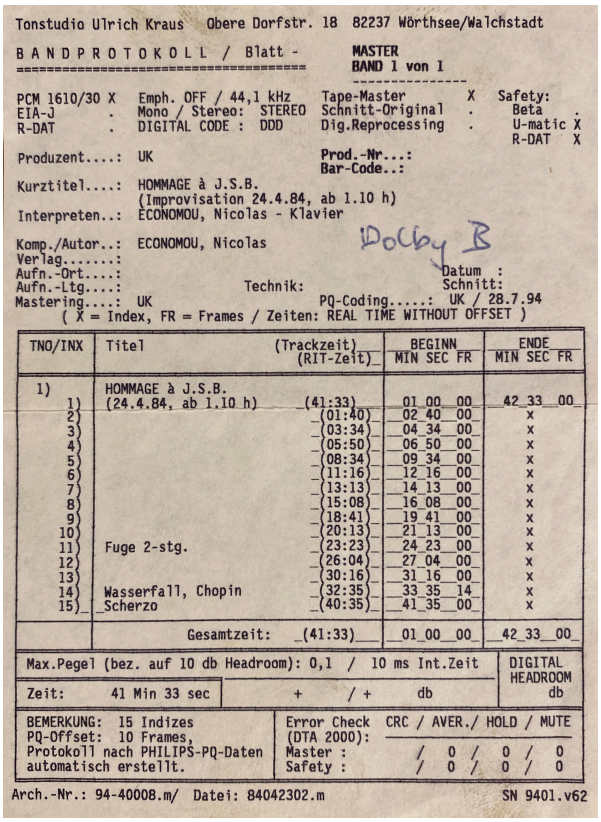
6. Approaches to Notating and Editing Improvisatory and Improvised Playing

6.1. Work and Sources Overview

As noted in the preceding chapter, Economou's *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* is a musical work – a deliberately and carefully conceived artistic creation, consisting of premeditated compositional ideas that underwent compositional attention and refinement. His *Hommage à J. S. Bach* is another piano cycle, which also exists only as a recorded performance. In this case, the status of the cycle as a work cannot be established as confidently as that of *Corelli Variations* or of other un-notated compositions by Economou, such as his two piano sonatas, *'Orthodoxia'* and *Sonate für Chick*, and other multi-movement cycles, for example *Memories*, *Eight Nocturnes*, and *Quatschmusik*.

The cassette tape with Economou's performance, stored in the Nicolas Economou Archive, is accompanied by a label ('Bandprotokoll') including the title of the cycle, followed by the indication 'Improvisation', the date of the recording session, as well as a list of fifteen tracks/movements (Figure 44).[60] This label was created in 1994 – a year after Economou's death – by Ulrich Kraus, a German sound engineer and producer, most probably after transferring the original recording, potentially preserved on reel-to-reel tape, into cassette format. Therefore the 'Improvisation' title may have been added by him, rather than Economou, but it is possible that this was indeed a fifteen-movement improvisation, and was therefore labelled as such on the original tape.

[60] Nicolas Economou Archive, Item 4.64.



Tonstudio Ulrich Kraus Obere Dorfstr. 18 82237 Wörthsee/Walchstadt

BANDPROTOKOLL / Blatt - MASTER
BAND 1 von 1

PCM 1610/30 X Emph. OFF / 44,1 kHz Tape-Master X Safety:
EIA-J . Mono / Stereo: STEREO Schnitt-Original . Beta .
R-DAT . DIGITAL CODE : DDD Dig.Reprocessing . U-matic X
R-DAT X

Produzent....: UK Prod.-Nr...:
Bar-Code..:

Kurztitel....: HOMMAGE à J.S.B.
(Improvisation 24.4.84, ab 1.10 h)
Interpreten..: ECONOMOU, Nicolas - Klavier

Komp./Autor..: ECONOMOU, Nicolas Dolby B
Verlag.....:
Aufn.-Ort....: Datum :
Aufn.-Ltg....: Technik: Schnitt:
Mastering....: UK PQ-Coding.....: UK / 28.7.94
(X = Index, FR = Frames / Zeiten: REAL TIME WITHOUT OFFSET)

TNO/INX	Titel	(Trackzeit) (RIT-Zeit)	BEGINN MIN SEC FR	ENDE MIN SEC FR
1)	HOMMAGE à J.S.B.			
1)	(24.4.84, ab 1.10 h)	(41:33)	01 00 00	42 33 00
2)		(01:40)	02 40 00	x
3)		(03:34)	04 34 00	x
4)		(05:50)	06 50 00	x
5)		(08:34)	09 34 00	x
6)		(11:16)	12 16 00	x
7)		(13:13)	14 13 00	x
8)		(15:08)	16 08 00	x
9)		(18:41)	19 41 00	x
10)		(20:13)	21 13 00	x
11)	Fuge 2-stg.	(23:23)	24 23 00	x
12)		(26:04)	27 04 00	x
13)		(30:16)	31 16 00	x
14)	Wasserfall, Chopin	(32:35)	33 35 14	x
15)	Scherzo	(40:35)	41 35 00	x
	Gesamtzeit:	(41:33)	01 00 00	42 33 00

Max.Pegel (bez. auf 10 db Headroom): 0,1 / 10 ms Int.Zeit DIGITAL HEADROOM db

Zeit: 41 Min 33 sec + / + db

BEMERKUNG: 15 Indizes
PQ-Offset: 10 Frames,
Protokoll nach PHILIPS-PQ-Daten
automatisch erstellt.

Error Check (DTA 2000): CRC / AVER. / HOLD / MUTE
Master : / 0 / 0 / 0
Safety : / 0 / 0 / 0

Arch.-Nr.: 94-40008.m/ Datei: 84042302.m SN 9401.v62

Figure 44. Cassette label ('Bandprotokoll') for Economou's recording of *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Nicolas Economou Archive, LUMA Foundation, Zurich, item 4.64.

That said, a draft manuscript of the first movement of *Hommage* in Economou's handwriting was found in the Archive, which, unsurprisingly, was left unfinished; only the first 35 out of 120 bars of the piece were written down (two additional manuscripts demonstrating Economou's efforts to notate material from this cycle will be discussed later).[61] Bearing in mind the compositional and notational process of *Corelli Variations*, Economou's decision to notate a composition he had initially only recorded supports conjectures regarding the standing of *Hommage* as a composition – potentially a *work* – intended to be written down and reproduced. Considering the simplicity of this first movement of the cycle, alongside Economou's artistry – most specifically his remarkable

[61] Nicolas Economou Archive, Item 5.19.46; the autograph was verified as Economou's after comparing clefs, noteheads, lines, and the manuscript paper with other completed manuscripts signed by him.

memory and improvisation skills – it seems improbable that he sketched the first few bars of his 'improvisation' in anticipation of the recording session in 1984.

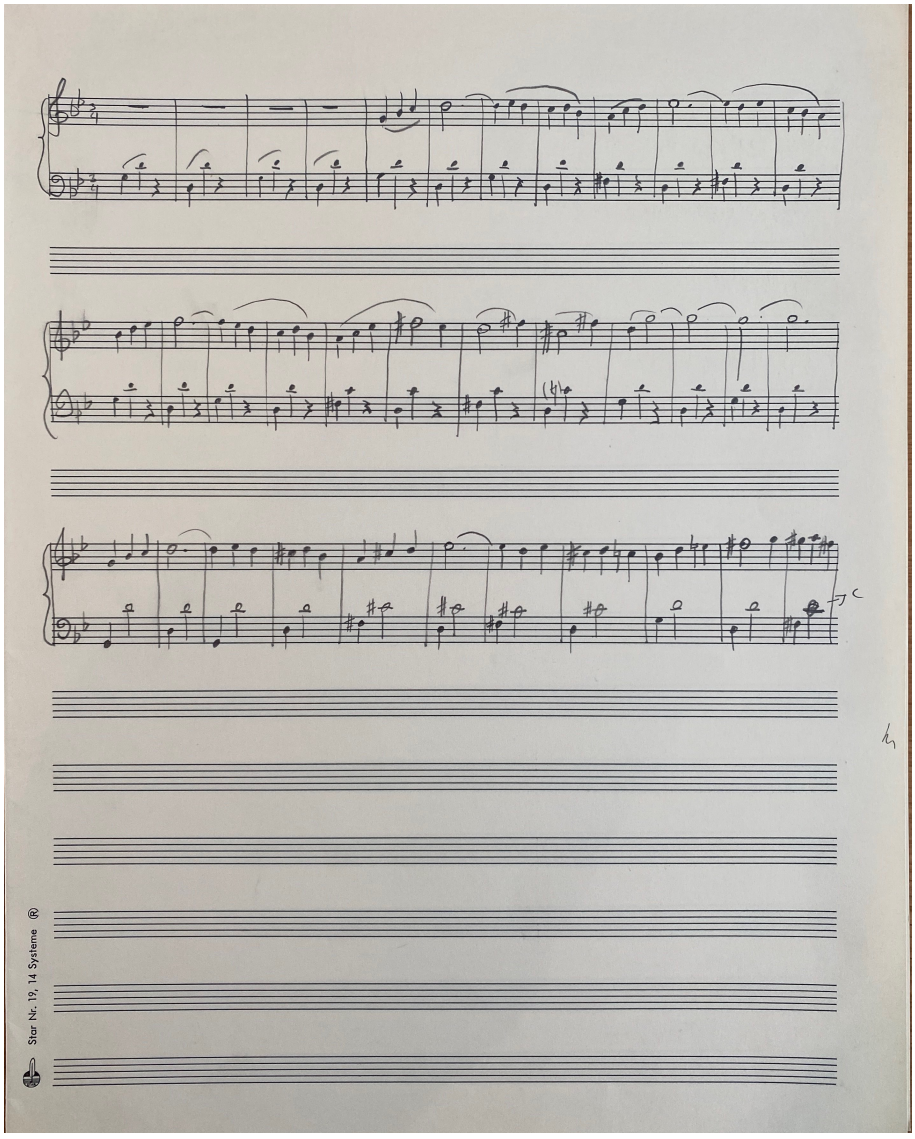


Figure 45. Nicolas Economou's manuscript of Movement 1 of *Hommage à J. S. Bach* (date unknown), bars 1-35, Nicolas Economou Archive, LUMA Foundation, Zurich, item 5.19.46.

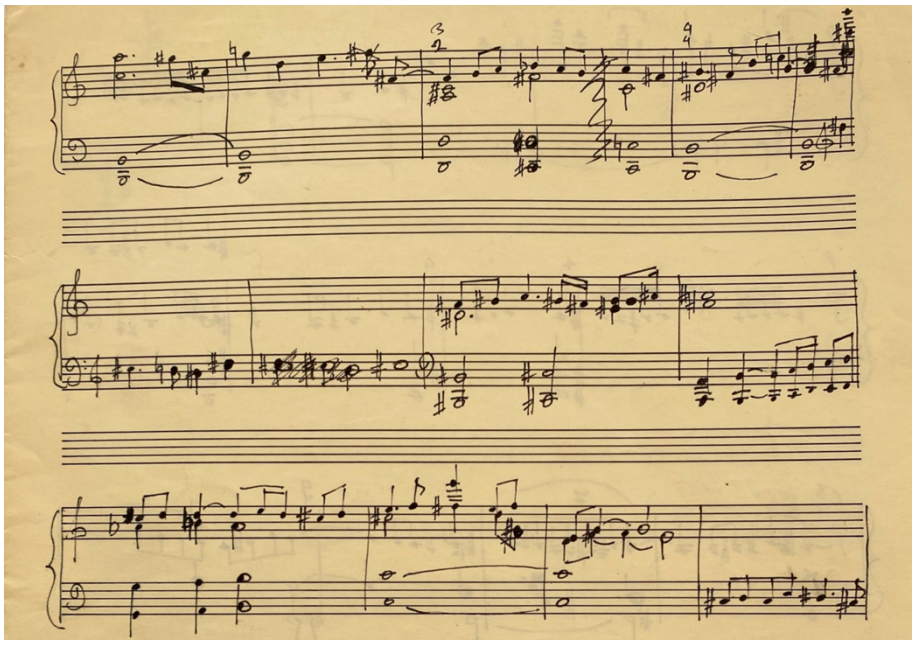
Nonetheless, to add a layer of confusion to the discussion, it is worth referring to an instance where Economou did retroactively notate two improvisations of his. Before his three album releases with *Deutsche Grammophon* in 1982, 1983, and 1991, Economou had already released an LP record in 1979 under the recording label *Artistic*

Musikproduktion, consisting of works by Mozart, R. Schumann, Tchaikovsky, as well as four improvisations by him named 'Prelude', 'Fugue', 'Aria', and 'Toccata'. In the liner notes of the LP album, Andreas Elsner writes: "[a]t the end of a recording session in the studio, [...] Economou decided – at the request of the people present – to improvise in classical patterns of style. A choice was made in favour of the forms prelude, fugue, aria and toccata, which were in use above all in the baroque age" (Elsner 1979).

The Nicolas Economou Archive holds transcriptions of 'Prelude' and 'Aria' in Economou's hand, which demonstrate characteristics of rough drafts, similar to those of his unfinished manuscript for the *Corelli Variations*.[62] These include not only the absence of titles and the lack of date and signature at the end of the manuscript, but also the omission of a time signature at the beginning of both pieces, as well as several smudges throughout the autograph. The transcribed material exhibits minimal alterations, notated exactly as performed in the recording, with frequent time signature changes accommodating the improvised material; there are only a couple of minor rhythmic alterations in 'Prelude'. These observations collectively suggest that this manuscript for 'Prelude' and 'Aria' was either created for Economou's personal use or to be used as a preliminary draft, potentially intended for further refinement at a later stage.

[62] Nicolas Economou Archive, Item 5.9.g.

‘Prelude’



‘Aria’

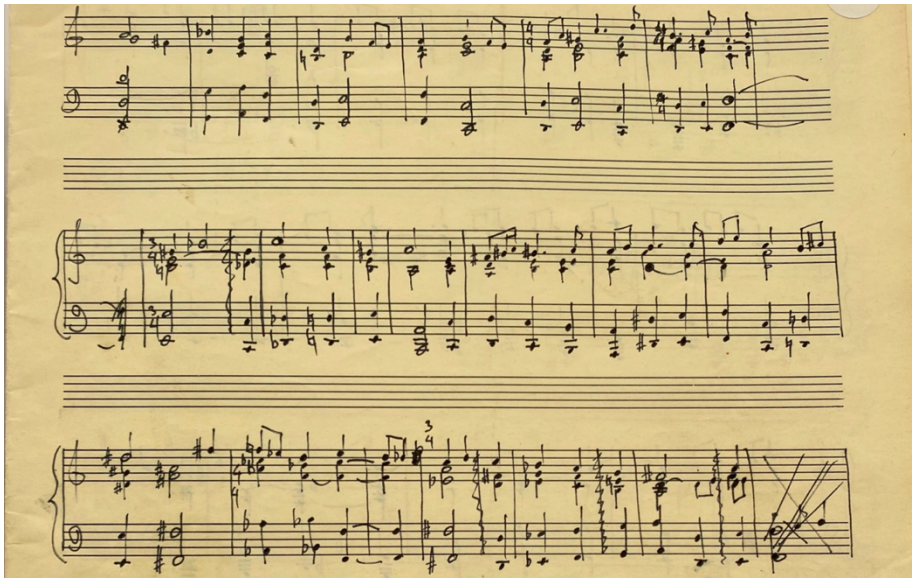


Figure 46. Excerpts from Nicolas Economou’s manuscript (transcription) of ‘Prelude’ and ‘Aria’ (date unknown), Nicolas Economou Archive, LUMA Foundation, Zurich, item 5.9.g.

Before proceeding with the remainder of this discussion, a clear distinction between improvisations and works seems essential here, in order to establish the relevant conceptual framework. The question of whether improvisations should be classified as

musical works has sparked a stimulating debate among scholars, and it is worth noting that in virtually all scholarly writings, improvisation is examined as a music-making practice within the context of jazz. Most famously, Scruton and Philip Alperson argue that improvisations are works produced during their performance (Alperson 1984, 23; Scruton 1999, 111). However, while improvisation is indeed both a process and a product simultaneously delivered, appreciated for their creative and aesthetic qualities, the product of such a process cannot be considered a musical work since it inherently lacks the intention to be considered as such – an argument maintained by scholars such as D. Davies (2021), Andy Hamilton (2021), and Kania (2011). In Kania's words, "[w]orks of art are not just things intended to be worthy of aesthetic appreciation, but things worked on over time so that their aesthetic or artistic value can be maximized" (Kania 2011, 399). That said, improvisation may be considered a compositional method, in terms of "putting things together in an aesthetically effective form" (Hamilton 2021, 171), or "bringing new music into being at the very moment it is played" (Kania 2020, 204). Therefore, the product of an improvisation is a *composition*, but not a musical work.

There are no fixed criteria or standards by which a musical piece can definitively be classified as either a work or an improvisation just by listening to it. As Alperson writes, "many improvisations do exhibit an extraordinary level of musical complexity that one can appreciate in the same ways one can appreciate composed notated music" (Alperson 2013, 425). However, it is also true that improvisers "cannot avail themselves of the luxuries and benefits of musical notation", and that "the musical product of the improviser usually, if not always, falls short of the architectonic (and especially) polyphonic possibilities of conventional Western music" (Alperson 1984, 22-3). The playing itself may reveal whether

what is performed is spontaneously created or precomposed, depending, perhaps, on the level of conveyed stability or uncertainty, which could suggest either prior preparation and premeditated decisions, or spontaneous creation. However, an improvisatory feel conveyed through one's playing "can only be paradigmatic of, not sufficient for, improvisation" (Kania 2020, 207). A highly sophisticated and intricate piece can emerge spontaneously, perhaps through an exemplary, 'flawless' performance. In addition, a precomposed work may lack originality or refinement, which may be delivered through an underprepared performance or one compromised by the technical or interpretative limitations of the composer's playing. It may also be executed in a (flexible) manner giving the impression of real-time creation. Certainly, although improvisation is associated with the act of spontaneous creation, an improvised composition can also be delivered after varying levels of preparation and practice, which may lead to achieving an artistically compelling performance indistinguishable from that of a precomposed work (Kania 2011, 396).

Although it has just been argued that an improvisation may be perceived as a pre-composed piece and vice versa, a comparison between a composer's works and spontaneously created pieces could allow one to confidently distinguish between the two. It is rather clear that Economou's 'Prelude', 'Fugue', 'Aria', and 'Toccata' were spontaneously created (something, of course, clearly stated in the liner notes of his 1979 LP album). These pieces are through-composed, lacking structure and distinct thematic material, while Economou's playing occasionally conveys a sense of instability and uncertainty, particularly in 'Toccata'. Also, he attempts several times to introduce and develop counterpoint, yet these efforts are invariably brief, spanning only a few bars, with the thematic material intended to be re-instantiated only vaguely referenced.

Economou's *Hommage* and his four 1978 improvisations draw upon and reference baroque music, requiring similar, if not the same, compositional techniques. Therefore, a comparison between the two cycles and the level of artistic achievement exhibited in each of them, as well as the fluency and stability that his performances convey, supports the hypothesis that most of *Hommage* was indeed composed and refined in advance of the recording session. More specifically, unlike his 1978 improvisations, the majority of *Hommage* demonstrates compositional coherence, clear structure and attractive thematic material, alongside successful integration of complex and sophisticated counterpoint, and (what sounds to be) prepared execution. Although, as mentioned in Chapter 2, Economou was praised for his improvisational skills, the aforementioned characteristics are absent from pieces confirmed as spontaneously created, such as these 1978 improvisations and others.[63]

The two recordings were made six years apart, and it could be argued that the musical material in *Hommage* exhibits a significantly higher level of creative accomplishment compared to his four 1978 improvisations, and that the performance itself sounds more stable and secure, possibly due to a refinement of Economou's improvisation skills during that period. However, this scenario appears unlikely. As will be argued later, *Hommage* includes some movements that display very similar features to his 1978 and other improvisations, suggesting that they themselves were spontaneously created. To put it differently, if Economou's improvisatory abilities had evolved so substantially over those six years – resulting in improvisations indistinguishable from precomposed pieces due to

[63] Other recorded performances of Economou known to have been improvised include audio tracks titled 'Reflections' (Nicolas Economou Archive, Item 7.31) and 'The Indian's Drum' (Nicolas Economou Archive, Item 4.7). Other improvisations by Economou are publicly available on YouTube, such as his improvisations with Maya Plisetskaya, as well as his improvisations with Chick Corea and Friedrich Gulda.

their structural coherence and the sophistication of their melodic and harmonic elements – it would not be as straightforward to differentiate the movements perceived as improvised in *Hommage* from those believed to be precomposed. At any rate, whether improvisations or precomposed works, 'Prelude', 'Aria', and the opening movement of his *Hommage* (and probably most of the rest of the cycle) seem to have been important enough for him to be worth retroactively notating, even if only partially.

Once again, Economou's playing in most of his *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, as well as the musical material itself, demonstrate a notable degree of preparation prior to the recording session. However, its fifteen movements exhibit varying levels of refinement and execution which can be categorized into three groups:

a) Precomposed Movements (1,2,3,5,7,8,9,10,15):

These movements seem to have been composed and refined in advance. This is due to their structural coherence, the complexity and sophistication of the musical material, the fluency of Economou's playing, as well as the confidence and security it conveys. It should be clarified that some of the performances of these movements are not without flaws, providing opportunities for informed editorial interventions and alterations to enhance the integrity of the musical text.

b) Partially Preconceived Movements (4,6):

In these movements, elements such as thematic material and overall structure sound largely predetermined, yet certain passages were likely only vaguely/approximately conceived prior to recording. Some sections may have been entirely composed in real time.

c) Fully Improvised Movements (11,12,13,14):

These movements appear to have been entirely improvised during the recording session, characterized by unstable playing, aimless passages, and a lack of the sophistication evident in other movements perceived as precomposed.

In the fourth movement rapid semiquavers that mostly appear in the right hand provide the harmonic profile throughout, developing through chromatic voice leading. Yet after a certain point, these figures seem to have been pre-conceived only in a sketch-like manner rather than meticulously designed and prepared/rehearsed in advance. Also, a few moments of instability in Economou's playing disrupting the generally established fluency potentially reflect moments where he had to improvise during his performance or to incorporate material that was not previously (sufficiently) considered/rehearsed. Despite this, it is important to emphasize that the majority of the movement bears elements and qualities of a precomposed piece. Similarly, the sixth movement appears to have been largely preconceived, as evidenced by its thematic material (which loosely references Antonio Vivaldi's *Violin Concerto No. 6* in A minor, RV 356) and its uniform structure. There are a few moments where Economou's playing becomes slightly unstable, and that is when material lacks the refinement and sophistication of other movements which were perceived as precomposed, or even of other passages within the same piece. It is worth noting that in these moments and elsewhere, the manner of his playing and the material itself bear a resemblance to his improvised 'Prelude' and 'Aria' from his 1979 LP record. Consequently, this further supports the assumption that his creative process in this movement may have involved a blend of premeditated composition and improvisation.

Furthermore, it is most likely that the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth movements were entirely improvised. While the eleventh and twelfth movements will be discussed in detail later in the chapter, it is important to note that I decided to exclude the thirteenth and fourteenth tracks of the recording from the critical edition of the cycle. As noted, these last few movements of the cycle demonstrate increasingly improvised character in both conception and execution. However, in contrast to the other thirteen movements, the thirteenth and fourteenth movements seem irrelevant to the cycle's title and its connection to Bach; the latter, titled in the recording's label as 'Wasserfall, Chopin', clearly signals a departure from the purpose of the cycle. Generally, they do not reference Bach's music in any way. That being said, the thirteenth movement recalls very vaguely (and potentially unconsciously), only for a few moments, material from the middle section of the twelfth movement, while the fourteenth movement which is by far the longest – an eight-minute homage to Chopin and Romantic music rather than Bach – features a fleeting reference to material from the cycle's first movement. It seems very likely that Economou intended to perform only the first twelve and fifteenth movements, and that the thirteenth and fourteenth movements were spontaneous experimentations, perhaps testing whether by integrating ideas from the rest of the cycle would eventually justify their inclusion in the cycle and give them contextual and creative relevance. Simply put, these two tracks may be viewed like rough drafts containing ideas that were notated and developed spontaneously, serving as experiments intended for potential future use instead of finished compositions meant to be included in the cycle and reproduced.

This dissertation has thus far focused on the process of creating prescriptive scores for un-notated works comprising predetermined compositional ideas, formed after

deliberate compositional efforts, and communicated through prepared performances, rather than improvisations, created in real time. This chapter focuses on a selection of movements from Economou's *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, and explores how the transcriptions of either recorded improvisations, or improvisatory/rhythmically fluid performances of precomposed compositions, can be editorially approached and modified to provide a more coherent musical text that, however, does not compromise the composer's compositional achievement, even if realized in real time. Additionally, this chapter deals with those movements that were mostly pre-composed, but contained passages only loosely defined by Economou prior to the recording session. It is important to clarify that this chapter will not address editorial concerns discussed in Chapters 3 and 4; a discussion on such editorial decisions is provided in the Critical Commentary of the cycle's critical edition.

6.2. Notating Improvisatory Playing and 'Fixing' Fluidity in Notation

A performance of an un-notated composition, whether precomposed or improvised, can pose several challenges when it is attempted to be fixed in notation to produce a score for its dissemination and reproduction. When a piece is conceived and developed without being written down and 'moulded' into Western musical notation, passages may not be fully realized on a note-by-note basis, or may not be executed in a manner that allows for the accurate transcription of all the performed material, as was the case with the concluding cadenza of *Corelli Variations*.

For example, the execution of the rapid middle-voice semiquaver figures throughout the fourth movement of *Hommage* is mostly muddled and approximate, played in an

improvisatory manner. It is most likely that this material was indeed conceived in advance, built on repetitive patterns and gestures, albeit executed in a flexible manner, most likely due to the un-notated nature of the compositional process. In other words, it is possible that the conceived material was never fixed into notation, and therefore, defined, detailed realization of these patterns in practice and employment into Economou's performance was never achieved. While the compositional ideas were pre-formed, their manifestation remained open-ended and responsive to the moment. That said, it is equally possible that, even if these figures had been defined, and notated note by note by Economou, they would have still been performed in much the same way, given their 'Lisztian', cadenza-like character. It is also likely that the performance was simply insufficiently prepared, thus, Economou failed to provide a polished interpretation of these passages.

In most instances, all notes in each figure were distinctly identifiable, and occasionally, the order in which they were played too. Yet in some others, Economou's playing becomes blurred, and some of the performed notes could only be vaguely discerned through the figures' conveyed harmonic profile. At any rate, including these figures in the edited score exactly as performed would result in descriptive rather than prescriptive notation. This is because Economou most likely retained the intended hand position for each figure playing the desired keys, yet in an indeterminate/spontaneous order. Although he had a clear conception of the pitch content and contour of each figure, its realization in performance was only approximate. Figure 47 consists of representative examples of such passages, accompanied by the proposed editorial solutions that appear in the critical edition. In each first musical example, the pitches reflecting the constituent

tones of the figure are presented in ascending order – in most cases, they were performed in a random sequence after the first few notes were played.

Generally, despite Economou's muddled playing, the melodic movement and shape of each figure was determined by taking into account the overall impression and gesture each figure conveys, along with the identified pitches. Deciding the pattern closest to what Economou potentially intended to execute and presenting it in a prescriptive manner in the edited score required testing multiple combinations of the set of notes he performed, in order to identify the option that best reproduces the melodic and harmonic effect suggested by his recorded performance. This process was guided not only by attentive listening, but also by musical insight, logical reasoning, as well as by considering standard pianistic practice. For example, despite Economou's unclear playing and the random (or indeterminate) order of the performed pitches, it was still possible in most cases to identify the strong and weaker points of each figure. This, in turn, offered cues about which pitches were structurally, melodically, and harmonically more significant than others, thereby determining their role and position within each figure. As briefly noted, the openings of most figures also provided some helpful guidance. In several cases, the initial one or two notes were clearly articulated before the playing became indistinct, often serving as anchors for reconstructing the remainder of each figure. Yet again, their position in the figure was still confirmed through the process explained above.

Bars 39-48

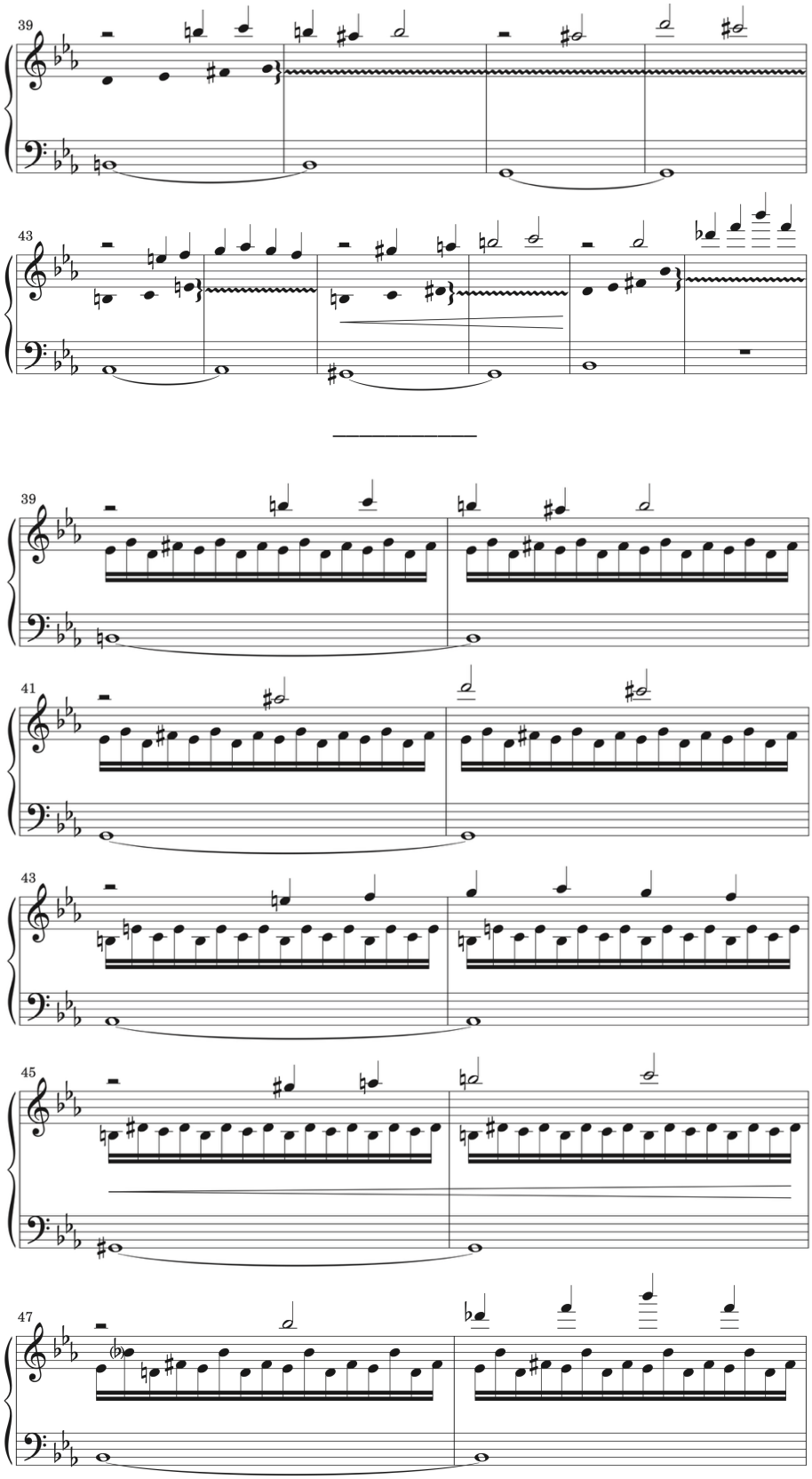
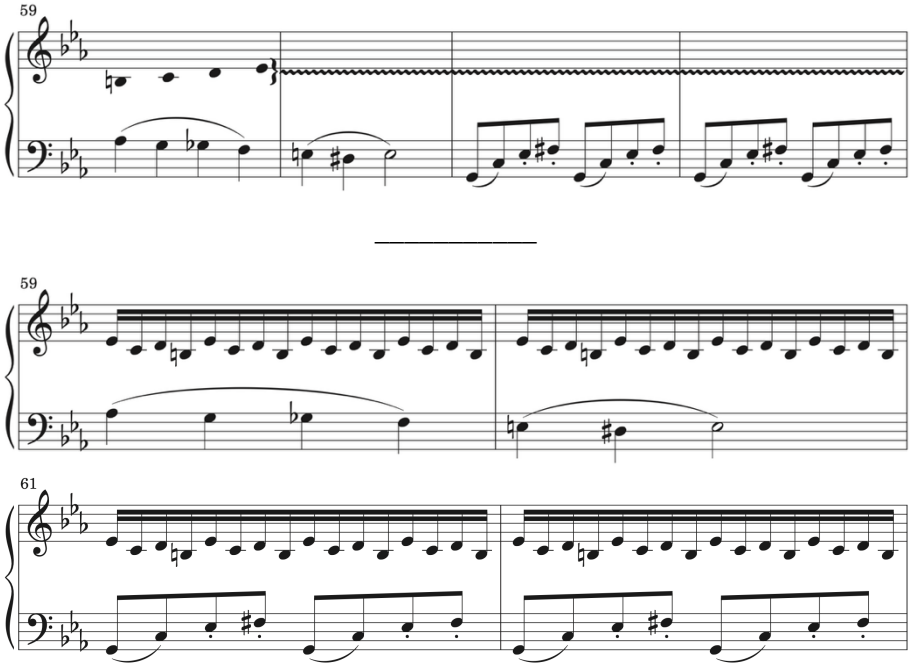


Figure 47. Approximately executed passages from Movement 4 of Economou's *Hommage à J. S. Bach* with editorial solutions.

Bars 59-62



Bars 97-99

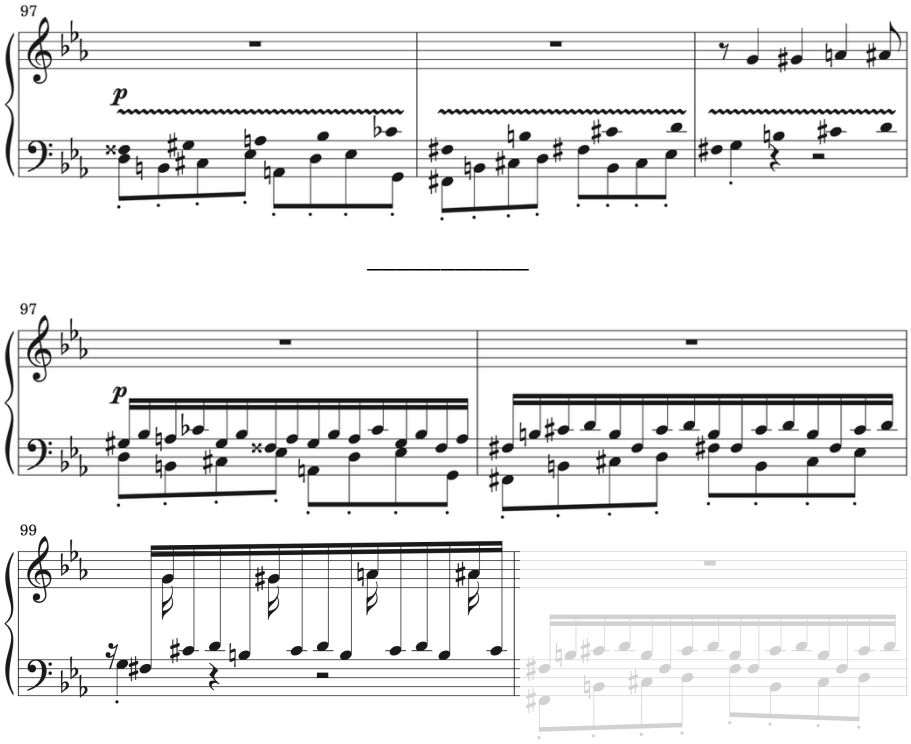
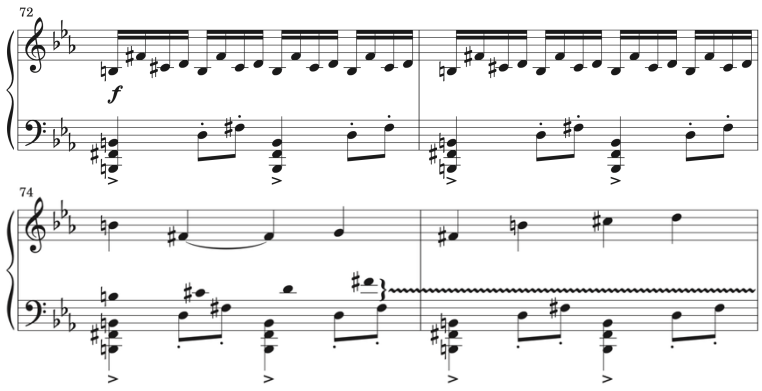


Figure 47 (continued). Approximately executed passages from Movement 4 of Economou's *Hommage à J. S. Bach* with editorial solutions.

It could be argued that the approximate execution of these figures was a deliberate compositional decision by Economou, and that this should somehow be reflected in the edited score – perhaps in the same way as in the first musical example provided for each of the cases given in Figure 47, with pitches arranged in ascending order and followed by a sign (and possibly a brief note) indicating the flexible manner they should be performed in. However, bars 72-73 offer a clear answer to this concern. In these bars, which mark the beginning of a new section after a silent bar, the semiquaver figures are clearly executed, as demonstrated in Musical Example 78, while Economou's playing becomes approximate again from bar 74 when the right-hand melody is introduced. It is reasonable to assume that this clarity in bars 72-73 stems from the preceding silence, which allowed for a moment of recollection, as well as from the structural significance of the new section's onset, which likely demanded greater precision in its realization. And as previously mentioned, there are several other instances throughout the movement where the first few moments of figures are accurately executed before becoming blurred again. Therefore, it appears that Economou's approximate playing results from the technical challenges posed by these rapid figures and other material that need to be simultaneously executed, rather than a deliberate compositional strategy.



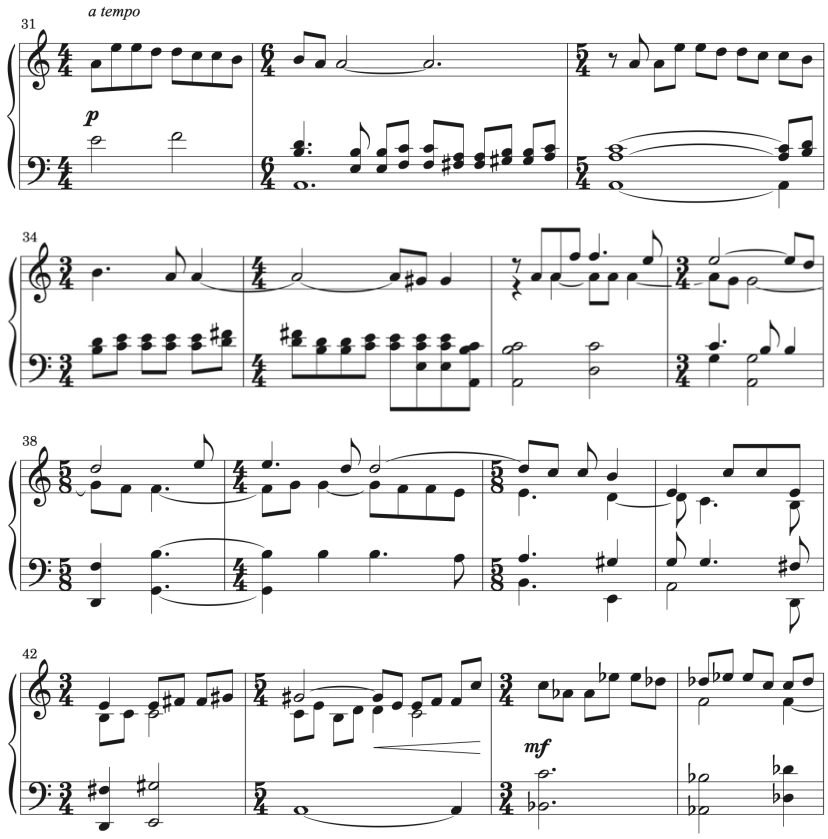
Musical Example 78. Nicolas Economou, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Movement 4, bars 72-75, edited score with approximate representation of the middle voice in bars 74-75.

A composition that was conceived and shaped without a manuscript may not conform to the traditional textual framework and specifications (or limitations) imposed by conventional notational practices of Western art music. Such a challenge was encountered in Variation V of *Corelli Variations*, where 'unconventional' and frequent changes of time signature had to be employed to accurately communicate in the score the idiosyncratic musical material – namely, the constantly-changing meter – which presumably Economou himself struggled to deal with during the notational process, as his manuscript demonstrates. That said, his playing there is evenly paced throughout with rhythmic clarity, communicating a sense of stable timing. Conversely, in his *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, some movements demonstrate improvisatory playing, which, during the transcription and editorial process, required particular attention.

The eighth movement is one of the slower pieces of the cycle, where Economou demonstrates *cantabile* playing. It was most probably precomposed prior to the recording session that took place in April 1984, as it appears to evolve in a calculated manner: there is a clear structural plan with a gradual tension buildup, sophisticated thematic material and subsequent development of it, as well as a mostly coherent texture. Despite Economou's flexible playing, there is also a sense of stability that his improvisations (whether faster or slower) often lack. Essentially, all these characteristics do not align with compositions that are known he indeed improvised, which are generally through-composed and with a characteristic melodic, harmonic, and textural, even, language.

Several challenges arising from the flexibility and fluidity of Economou's playing and the material itself had to be tackled during the editorial process, in order to notate as effectively as possible his compositional ideas. In order to organise and accommodate the

performed music into bars, this movement was notated into eighty-five bars with fifty-two changes of time signature due to constant shifts in meter, something which is partially illustrated in Musical Example 79.[64]



Musical Example 79. Economou, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Movement 8, bars 31-45, initial transcription.

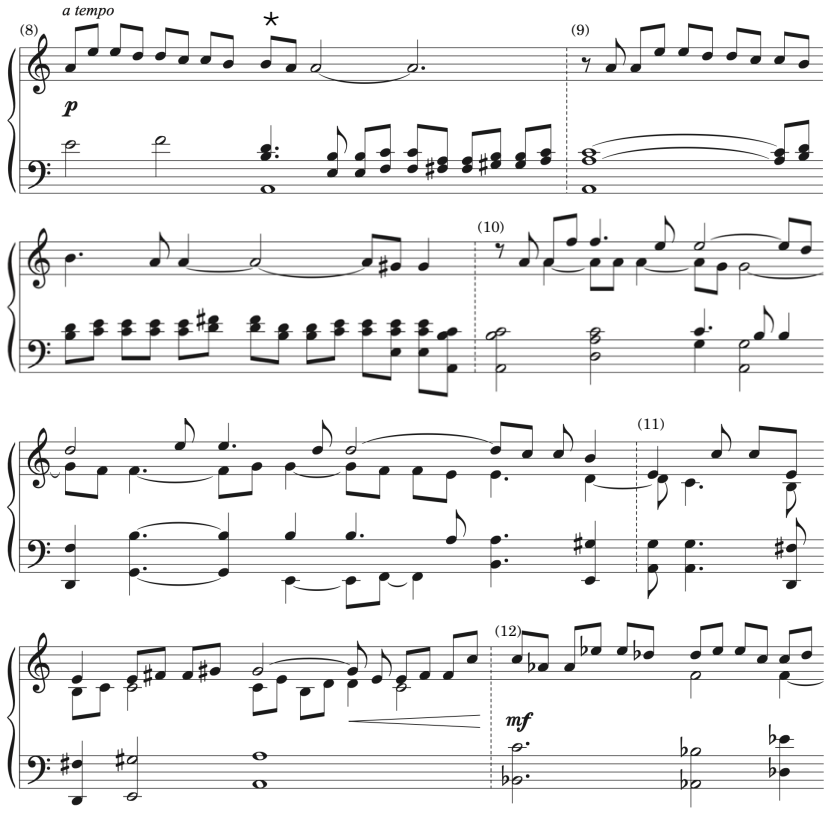
The fluidity conveyed by Economou's playing appears to be not only a feature of his interpretation, but an important attribute of the piece. In other words, I perceived this flexibility and improvisatory essence as defining characteristics of the composition, considering that any future performance lacking these attributes might produce an

[64] Although the time signatures that were chosen here reflect Economou's performance and the nuanced moments in his playing ('strong beats') indicating changes in meter, alternative time signatures could have potentially been used (e.g. 3/4 instead of 6/4, or 2/4 instead of 4/4, or a combination of 2/4 and 3/4 in place of 5/4), However, these would not eliminate these frequent metric changes to accommodate the musical material.

interpretation that distorts Economou's compositional achievement. For this movement, I chose *Andante cantabile* as the main tempo marking, along with *Tempo rubato*. Although these two indications seem, at first glance, sufficient to express the overall essence of the composition, the impression of linear musical thought being formed and shaped without being notated is so evident in Economou's performance that I decided that the notation itself must somehow reflect this too.

To visually communicate these characteristics in the edited score, I removed time signatures and barlines, not to invite the performer to replicate Economou's interpretation, but rather, to ensure that the score reflects a sense of broadness in a straightforward manner. That said, I used dashed barlines at specific places to indicate distinct structural points – in a sense, to define musical phrases suggested by Economou's interpretation. Once again, these indications do not aim to describe his performance. Instead, I placed the dashed barlines where nuanced moments throughout the movement should be conveyed as such in future performances. Without these structural cues, future interpreters of the score might miscommunicate the pace and structure of the piece.

For instance, as Musical Example 80 shows, I placed a dashed barline just before the ninth bar of the movement, but not before the beat marked with an asterisk in the preceding bar. Despite the left-hand chord and the right-hand's melodic contour suggesting a point of arrival, Economou's playing conveys forward movement, treating those ten beats as one musical sentence. Analogous moments that occur throughout the movement are executed in a similar manner, despite the fact that, at first glance, one could argue that these musical sentences should be divided into two bars.



Musical Example 80. Economou, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Movement 8, bars 8-12, edited score.

The main melodic idea of this movement appears in another composition by Economou, titled *Für Mausi*, dated 26th December 1984 – eight months after *Hommage* was recorded – which is developed in an entirely different manner than the eighth movement of *Hommage* (see Figure 48). The time signature used throughout is 3/4, and much like in a couple of Variations he notated in his manuscript of the *Corelli Variations*, the organization of the musical material into bars appears in a musically unorthodox manner, while the main thematic idea enters on various beats throughout. Taking everything into account, as well as the fact that his capacity to effectively notate material that was initially conceived without the use of manuscript has been challenged before, this manuscript could not be used as a reliable source to inform any editorial decisions regarding the eighth movement of *Hommage*.

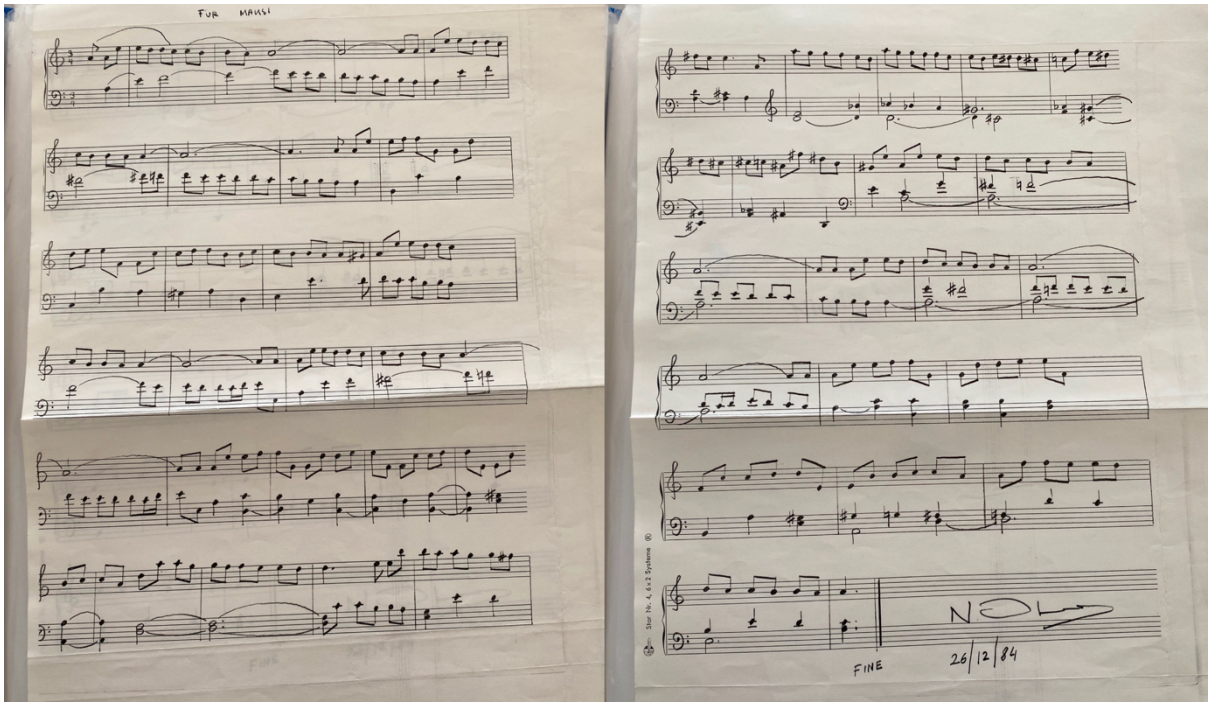


Figure 48. Economou's manuscript of *Für Mausi*, dated December 26, 1984, Nicolas Economou Archive, LUMA Foundation, Zurich, item 5.9.j.

The Nicolas Economou Archive contains another autograph, with the same thematic idea, that appears to be a sketch (Figure 49). However, none of its material corresponds to the transcription of the eighth movement of *Hommage*, or *Für Mausi*, and thus, it could not be used either to substantiate any editorial decisions. That said, it could be argued that the fact that Economou drafted the musical material without any time signature(s), and with only a couple of barlines sporadically written down, supports the editorial approach I have outlined above.

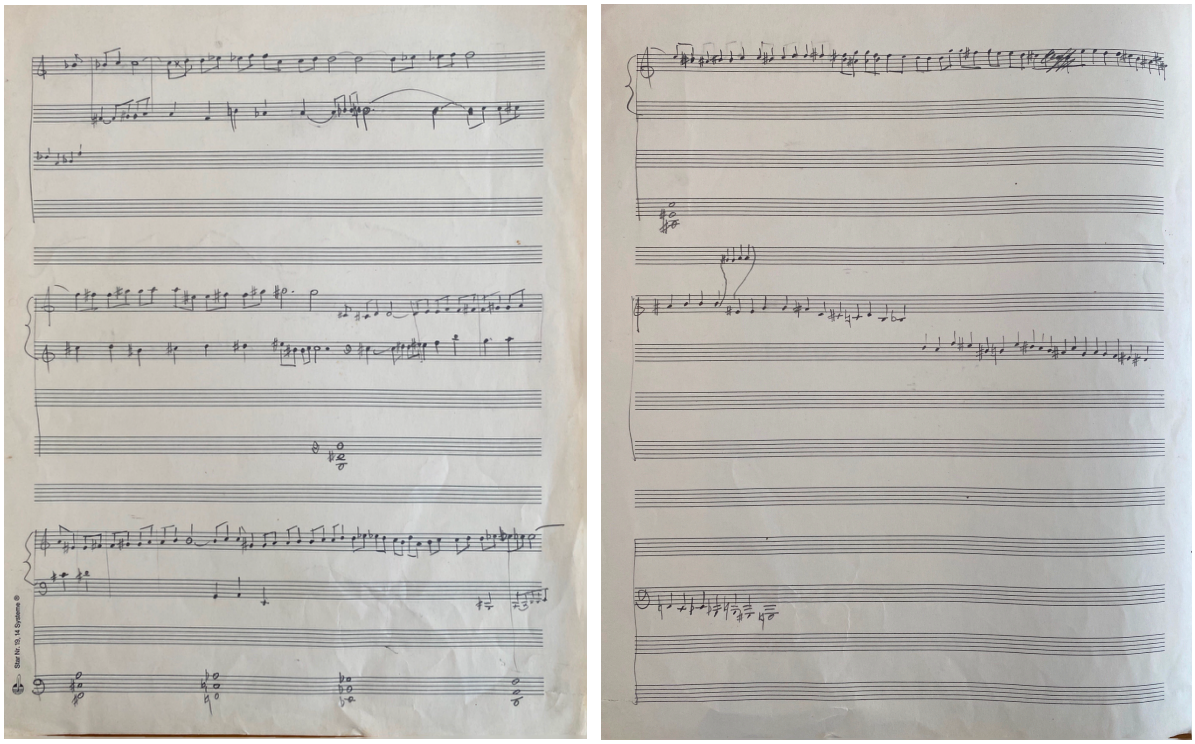
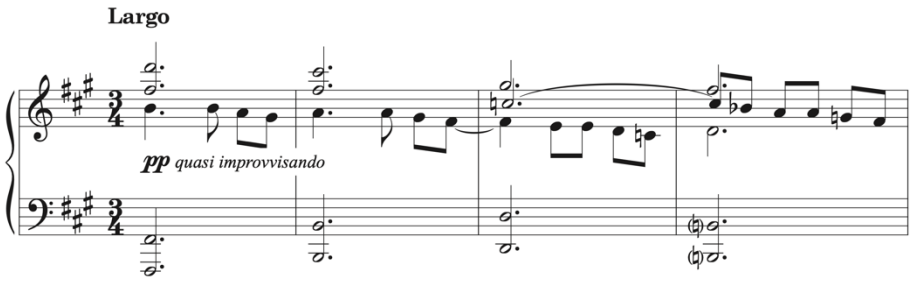


Figure 49. Economou's sketch with thematic material that appears in *Für Mausi* and Movement 8 of *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Nicolas Economou Archive, LUMA Foundation, Zurich, item 5.19.9.

The ninth movement of the cycle carries an improvisatory feel too, as Economou delivers another broad and rather solemn performance. As in the eighth movement, these characteristics do not seem to arise merely from his playing style, but instead, they were realized as features of the distinct identity of the composition. One could argue that, since the overall essence of this piece is very similar to that of the eighth movement, this flexibility in his performance could be communicated by omitting time signature(s) and/or barlines in the edited score. Nonetheless, I did not find necessary such a deviation from typical notational practices in this case. On the contrary, I concluded that a time signature and barlines are vital for the accurate written representation of the piece and its intrinsic features.

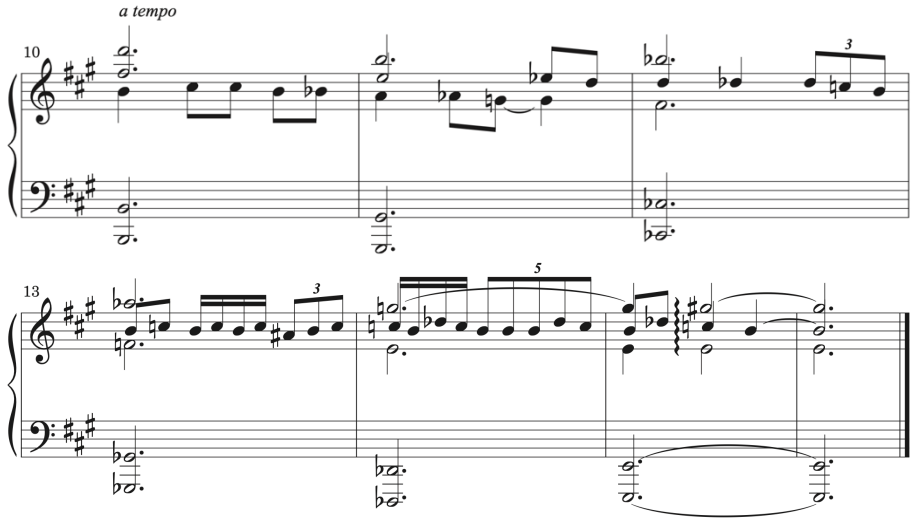
In essence, despite the flexibility with which Economou performs this movement, his playing remains grounded in a 3/4 meter, something which I concluded must be preserved

in future performances as well. Unlike the eighth movement, where there is a constantly changing meter, and whose indication in the edited score would only perplex the score's user, the 3/4 meter in the present case comes across throughout (with only a few exceptions discussed below) despite Economou's flexible performance. Here, I used *Largo* and *quasi improvvisando* to indicate what I considered the most appropriate speed, as well as the movement's improvisatory character. Once again, these performance directions do not serve a descriptive function in the edited score. Rather, they intend to provide information regarding features of the composition which, if omitted in one's performance, would compromise its overall essence.



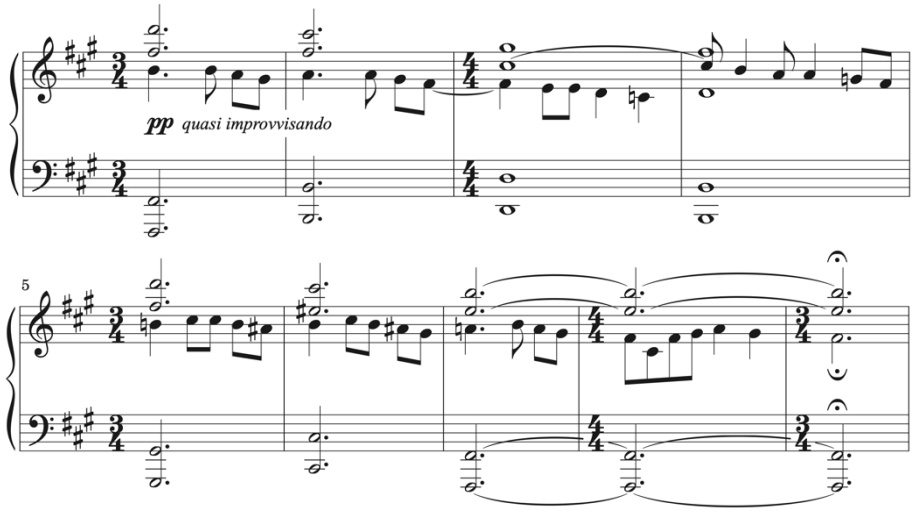
Musical Example 81. Economou, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Movement 9, bars 1-4, edited score.

After 'decoding' Economou's performed actions, discerning the intended note values – their 'true' duration after taking into account the flexibility of the interpretation itself – and after organising them into bars, the chosen 3/4 time signature was confirmed as the most suitable. Even between bars 12 and 15, where Economou deviates from the established pace and adds notes within beats, introducing triplets and semiquavers, he maintains this meter without altering the pulses. And even when he introduces a group of quintuplets, they are executed in a manner across the last two beats in bars 14, that preserves, once again, the established meter.



Musical Example 82. Economou, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Movement 9, bars 10-16, edited score.

In a few bars, nonetheless, it seems that Economou diverges from the 3/4 meter by adding a fourth beat. Although this may stem from his broad playing, in bars 3, 4 and 8 some notes are clearly longer than others, and they would be more accurately reflected in the edited score as the following example illustrates:



Musical Example 83. Economou, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Movement 9, bars 1-9.

Firstly, it is worth noting that, until bar 12, where Economou introduces for the first time a triplet, all bars end with two quavers, except bar 3, as well as bar 8, which will be

discussed later on. The last two notes in bar 3 are twice as long as each quaver in the second beat of the same bar, and there is no indication in his playing that these longer notes resulted from his broad playing, although certainly, these notes perceived as crotchets are not metronomically executed either. Therefore, three options were considered: a) to change the bar's meter from 3/4 to 4/4, with the last two notes notated as crotchets, as performed by Economou and as indicated in Musical Example 83; b) to preserve the 3/4 meter and notate the last two notes as quavers, as shown in Musical Example 81, aiming for uniformity across bars 1-11; and c) to preserve the 3/4 meter, notate the last two notes as quavers to ensure uniformity between bars 1-11, but place fermatas on both notes to indicate Economou's desire for longer durations, regardless of their nature as intentional or spontaneous.

The third option was favoured, primarily because the last two longer notes of the bars evoke a sense of stillness and tranquillity before leading into bar 4, contributing to the solemn character of the composition, deemed, therefore, intrinsic to the piece. If, instead, crotchets without fermatas were used, the aesthetic effect, and by extension the compositional achievement, at that moment would differ from what Economou communicates in his recorded performance. In other words, omitting fermatas would undermine the stately quality created by this spaciousness at the end of bar 3 – it would be compromised by the continuous (even if 'improvisatory') flow of quavers, as they appear in Musical Example 81. In addition, I did not choose the first option, since I found that the 3/4 meter should be maintained throughout this movement.[65] As argued, despite Economou's

[65] It is worth noting that the next movement is built on a 6/8 meter, with some brief deviations to 9/8. It also contains a middle section notated in 3/4 that directly references Movement 8. This section is performed with a straightforward rhythmic pace, clearly establishing 3/4 as the time signature.

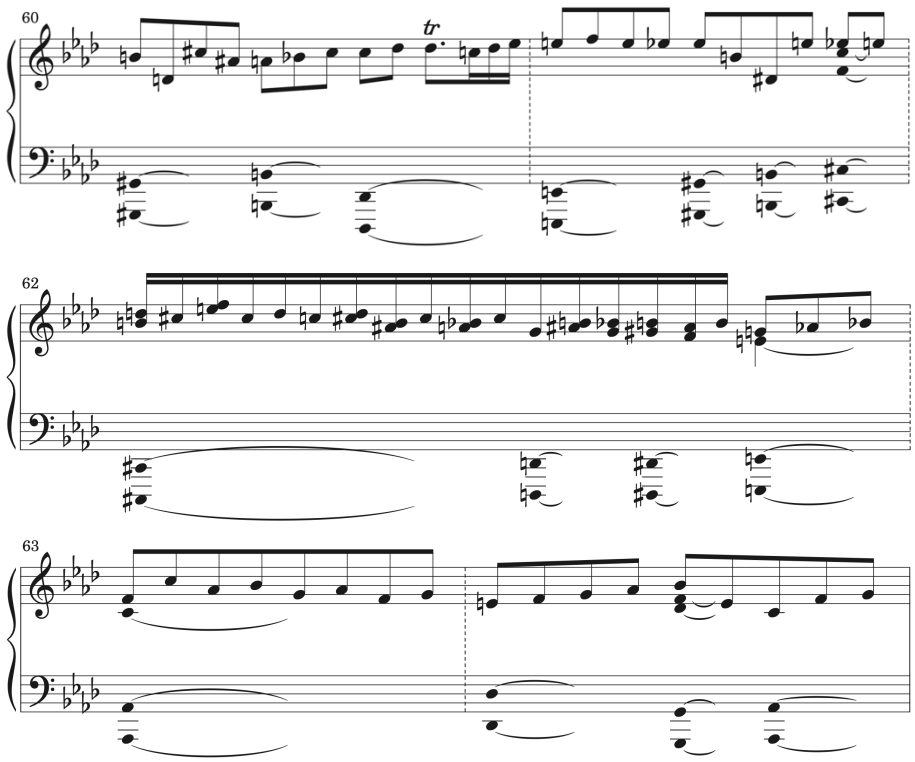
flexible playing, the meter clearly comes across throughout most of the movement, an observation implying its function as a key element of the composition. In other words, it is assumed that if Economou had not considered this time signature as a defining feature for his composition, because of the overall broadness and improvisatory essence of the piece, the meter would most probably be more malleable, as in the eighth movement. Therefore, if crotchets were notated in bar 3 instead, it would be the only place where a shift to 4/4 would occur, which, as discussed, would also interrupt the established 3/4 meter (the following discussion demonstrates that bars 4 and 8 should also retain the 3/4 time signature after all). At any rate, incorporating fermatas into the musical text generates a result very similar to the one conveyed in Economou's recording, yet without rigidly suggesting an 'imitation' of the performed crotchets, which may, in fact, have been intended as lengthened quavers.

Furthermore, despite the clearly longer second and fourth notes in bar 4, suggesting a fourth beat, they were still understood as outcomes of Economou's flexible performance. The timing of his playing does not indicate intentionally sustained and distinctly longer notes as in other cases, where performed crotchets and dotted crotchets were interpreted and subsequently notated as such. In other words, it is more likely that the somewhat ambiguous pacing of his interpretation occurs due to the broad essence of the piece rather than an intentional introduction of syncopation in the first two beats of the bar. For these reasons, bar 4 has been preserved in the edited score as illustrated in Musical Example 81.

In bar 8, it seems that the A and G are longer than the other quavers in the same bar due to a *ritenuto* Economou introduces, yet only fully realized at the bar's conclusion. This is also substantiated by the gradual expansion of the temporal spacing between notes from

the second beat onward, leading to a prolonged pause between bars 8 and 9, which confirms a gradual tempo reduction. Moreover, close listening reveals that the quavers in the first two beats of bar 8 are very subtly sustained, and therefore, it seems that, while Economou initiated the *ritenuto* from the start of the bar, its full effect became perceptible from A onward. Consequently, a *rit.* indication was placed at the beginning of the bar, and the last A and G were notated as quavers. This *ritenuto* may not have been effectively implemented from the beginning of the bar, as it could have been a spontaneous decision that was fully realized 'late'.

Moreover, the middle section of the twelfth movement of the cycle – which was identified as composed in real-time, as will be discussed in more detail later, making Economou's playing both improvisatory and improvised – appears in the edited score in a similar manner as the eighth movement, as there is a great sense of broadness, as well as metric freedom and rhythmic flexibility. To signify this essence of linear creation, there are no time signatures or barlines in the edited score. However, I selectively added dashed barlines to mark clear structural points in places where their presence can enhance one's understanding of the music's progression, just as in the eighth movement. Each bar here formed by these dashed barlines comprises a musical thought, as conveyed in Economou's performance, while the notes were grouped according to his execution to show the smaller structures that constitute each bar/phrase.



Musical Example 84. Economou, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Movement 12, bars 60-64, edited score.

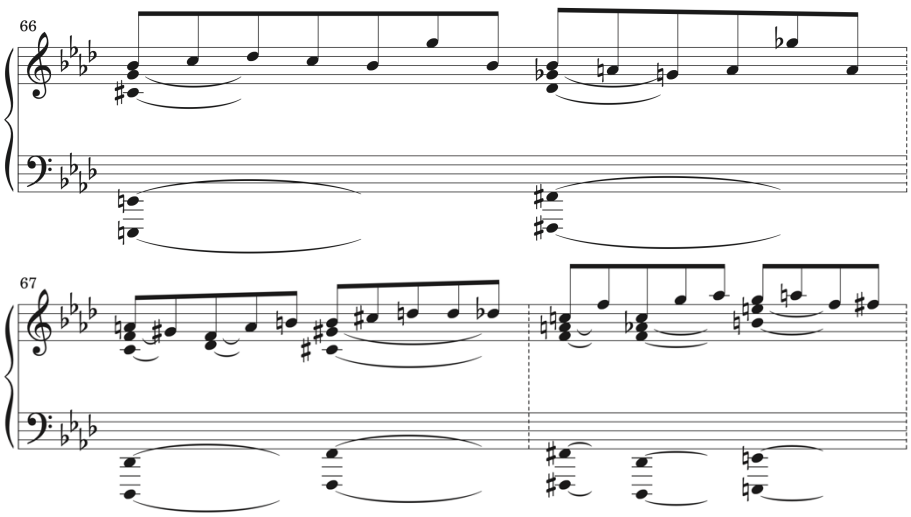
Once again, this editorial approach could certainly be seen as resulting to a descriptive musical text. However, if the organization of the music is distinctly articulated in Economou's performance, then the resulting score merely reflects the structural features of both the performance and the resulting composition. One could argue that improvised pieces such as this are created while being performed, and therefore, the distinction between the composition *per se* and its interpretation is a futile task. However, there is still potential of presenting the performed material in a manner that conveys what the recording allows us to understand as defining for the resulting composition, while eliminating elements that stem from the composer's idiosyncratic playing, or even making well-informed alterations to the text of the initial transcription.

For example, although some notes are stressed and somewhat longer, or slightly shorter and more fleeting than others, all of them were notated as quavers, unless there was a distinct rhythmic differentiation (e.g. notes that were exactly as half as what was perceived and notated as a quaver, or rapid figures which were eventually notated as demisemiquavers or ornaments). Even though there were opportunities for a more accurate written representation of the performed rhythm, notating this section using the exact time values communicated in Economou's recorded performance, or using accents and *tenuto* markings to show the more stressed moments in this section would generate a descriptive and unnecessarily detailed musical text. And that is because it appears that Economou adopts a flexible rhythmic pace, rather than specific, intentionally executed rhythmic values. It is for this exact reason that in order to convey this section's distinctive sense of broadness – which is even more evident than in the eighth movement – I decided to place an *agitato e ad libitum* indication at the start of this section. Therefore, this spaciousness and expansive essence was perceived as a distinctive element of this section, and communicated in the edited score in the most prescriptive manner possible, without suggesting imitation of Economou's performance.

Musical Example 84 exemplifies the use of the left hand by Economou throughout this section as a pedal point. It consists of long, sustained octaves that last for entire bars or multiple beats, held until the next one is played, providing harmonic foundation for the right hand's activity. Yet due to the unorthodox length of each bar, notating the left hand to show the exact duration of each octave would result in an unnecessarily visually complex musical text. Hence, I decided that ties stretching across the bars would reinforce the sustained and resonant quality of the left-hand material – musically and visually –

conveying, at the same time, this fluid metric structure communicated in Economou's recording.

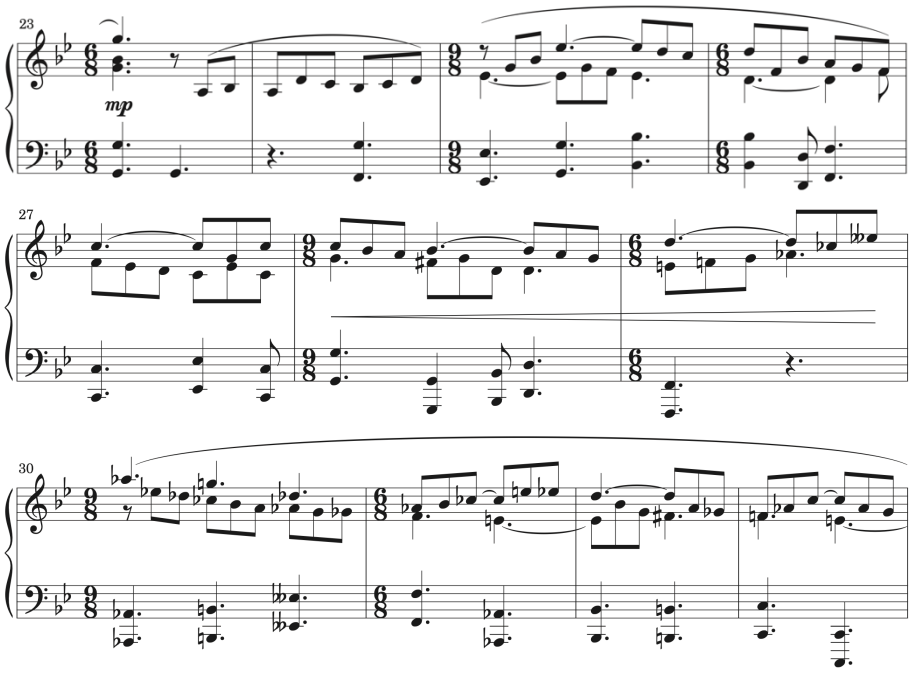
This notational approach was also employed for the middle voices appearing throughout this section. Despite the un-notated nature of the piece, Economou's recorded performance communicates a differentiation between the top melody and the rest of the right hand's notes/voices which impart to this section a choral-like texture and character particularly evident in Musical Example 85 (which also aligns with the identity of this cycle as a tribute to Bach's legacy). What is noteworthy is the fact that the manner these notes are played clearly suggests their function as separate voices, rather than notes merely forming chords along with the top melody.



Musical Example 85. Economou, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Movement 12, bars 66-68, edited score.

Hence, although this may fall outside the aim of this discussion to address how notation can effectively accommodate improvisatory and flexible playing, it is worth briefly mentioning that recordings of un-notated compositions can offer valuable insights into

elements such as individual melodic lines and voicing in contrapuntal and polyphonic textures. The extent to which these aspects are conveyed depends not only on the composer's ability to communicate them effectively – whether in pre-composed or improvised pieces – but also on the transcriber-editor's sensitivity to such nuances. The tenth movement of the cycle, illustrated in Musical Example 86, demonstrates to a further extent this potential of un-notated compositions' recordings. Referencing Bach's chorale 'Jesus bleibet meine Freude' from his cantata *Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben* in G minor, instead of the original key G major, Economou develops this movement through a three- and occasionally four-part counterpoint, and its transcription demonstrates that even with a single recording, un-notated compositions featuring contrapuntal or polyphonic material can be accurately notated. In some cases, despite two or more voices moving in close proximity, their individual lines can still be distinctly identified.



Musical Example 86. Economou, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Movement 10, bars 23-33, edited score.

6.3. Perceiving Improvisations *like* Musical Works

As discussed, the ontological status of an un-notated composition as a precomposed work can impact the editorial process of its transcription. It defines how the performed actions captured in a recording are evaluated, and determines the extent to which an editor may intervene in the initial transcription, while ethical and moral responsibilities deriving from the genetic process and the creative labour invested in the formation of such a musical composition demand the most accurate preservation and dissemination of one's compositional achievement. In such a case, the editor seeks to identify predetermined compositional ideas and the constitutive elements of the work deserving inclusion in a prescriptive score, as much as the existing sources allow him to.

Conversely, improvised compositions denote the impossibility of applying this notion of premeditated compositional ideas in the editorial process of their transcriptions, since their existence and integrity are intrinsically linked to the spontaneity of their real-time creation process. As Lucia Angelino writes, with improvisations one engages with "a continuous reshaping of emerging intentions over time [...] structuring extended sequences of actions" (Angelino 2019, 205). And although music-making, whether in the Western art music tradition or elsewhere, occurs through "events, activities or processes, that take place or occur here and now", our understanding of music worth appreciating, studying and analysing, performing, and by extension, editing and publishing, has been formed "in terms of objects, facts or structures" (Bertinetto 2013, 82). Consequently, given that the first ten and last movements of Economou's *Hommage à J. S. Bach* were most likely conceived, developed and refined prior to his recording in April 1984, collectively deserving work-status, it is worth asking whether the eleventh and twelfth movements should be included in the critical edition of the cycle. Can an improvisation, perhaps, be transformed into a work

through editorial alterations to its transcription? And what kinds of alterations may be applied in such instances where the notion of premeditated composition is absent, and the spontaneous nature of this compositional process may provide musical material with evidently compromised integrity requiring editorial intervention for its performability?

Some scholars have addressed improvisations in relation to their transcriptions and their subsequent perception as repeatable and performable entities, but only with reference to jazz practices. Hamilton, for example, maintains that a jazz improvisation can be studied, appreciated and reproduced *as if* it were a musical work (Hamilton 2000; 2021), clarifying that "improvisation is a compositional method, but not a method of creating works" (Hamilton 2021, 176). Along the same lines, D. Davies writes (again, within jazz tradition) that improvisation is a compositional process, and that the recording of an improvisation provides "a set of prescriptions for future performances, and thus a performable work" (D. Davies 2011, 154). In addition, David Lloyd maintains that an improvisation's recording "allows the separation of its content from the act of performance and may be used as guidance [...] on how to recreate that content". He suggests that the transcription of an improvisation can be "reworked in the same way as a work conceived from the outset as a composition", and that this process "has the potential to allow an improvisation to be transformed into a composition, or at least undermines the supposition that there is a hard boundary between the two" (Lloyd 2020, 20).[66]

[66] It should be clarified that Lloyd uses the terms 'composition' and 'work' interchangeably in his text, and although he addresses the process of retroactively amending an improvisation's transcription, it remains unclear whether he believes that such alterations, aimed at refining it into a composition/work, can only be carried out by the composer-performer, or whether others are entitled or capable to do so.

One could suggest that since Hamilton, D. Davies, and Lloyd address improvisations within a jazz context, their arguments that an improvised performance can later be perceived as or like a 'performable work', or that it even becomes one, are more plausible than in the Western art music tradition. After all, music-making practices in the jazz tradition differ from those in Western art music, with improvisation playing a central role in it. A lead sheet, for example, instead of a fully fleshed-out transcription (even if descriptive), suffices for an appropriate performance of a jazz composition, regardless of whether it was improvised or pre-composed. Certainly, the "celebration of the moment" as an inherent attribute of jazz practices comes in contrast with the "supposed timelessness" of a musical work in Western art music stemming from creative labour (Sharp 2021, 293). At any rate, improvisation is generally identified with attributes that musical works typically cannot be: "ephemeral, irrational, inexplicable, created at a 'whim' on the 'spur of the moment'" (Nooshin 2003, 246). However, as will be argued now with the 'aesthetics of imperfection', in any tradition, improvisations and their inherently imperfect nature deserve to be appreciated in their own terms, and to be approached and perceived *like* musical works, after considering their composer's ability to produce a musical product bypassing the comforts of typical compositional processes.

In his book *The Imperfect Art*, Ted Gioia suggests that although improvisation provides, more often than not, "a pale imitation of the perfection attained by [pre]composed music" with "[e]rrors [...] not only in form but also in execution", the outcome of such an endeavour "will show moments of rare beauty intermixed with technical mistakes and aimless passages" (Gioia 1988, 68). Along the same lines, he argues that despite their 'flaws' or 'imperfections', improvisations should be appreciated due to the opportunity they

give us to see "what a great musical mind can create spontaneously" (Gioia 1988, 69). Expanding on Gioia's argument, Hamilton challenges "an aesthetics of perfection which arose with the work-concept" (Hamilton 2000, 170), proposing instead his 'aesthetics of imperfection'. Drawing on the Japanese philosophy of wabi-sabi, he advocates for more than mere tolerance towards musical improvisations' 'imperfection', as implied by Gioia. Instead, Hamilton suggests "a positive sense of imperfection, an open, spontaneous response to contingencies of performance or production, aiming to create something positive from apparently unpromising as well as promising circumstances" (Hamilton 2023, 42).

One should always aim for, or expect, "art of the greatest value" (Lloyd 2020, 21). Nonetheless, the aesthetics of imperfection suggests that improvisation should not be regarded as an inferior process compared to 'normative' composition. Instead, its outcome – the improvised piece – should be valued for its inherently unique attributes "as virtues fit for aesthetic appreciation in terms of their own specific excellence" (Lloyd 2020, 27), considering, at the same time, the process that brought it into existence – what was possible to be achieved with the challenges and limitations imposed by the process of improvisation. By extension, the aesthetics of imperfection propose "a new style or aesthetic – a kind of perfection" (Hamilton 2020a, 11), that embraces an "inclusionist ethos [...] that flourishes by accepting rather than excluding as many expressions by as many individuals as would like to participate" (Cheyne 2023, 26).

Essentially, an improvisation may be perceived as an 'imperfect' musical piece because "it falls short of an ideal or standard [for a musical composition/work] that we already have in mind" (Lloyd 2020, 26-7) defined by the musical tradition it belongs, or,

perhaps, prior accomplishments of the composer-performer. However, reflecting on the process through which such musical composition came into existence allows us to reconsider these standards of perfection. Since 'flaws' and 'imperfections' are identified as such due to frameworks and expectations originating from traditions and practices that may be irrelevant to the improvised composition, our perception of an improvisation as a second-rate musical product – and therefore unworthy of the appreciation and attention we typically give to works – may be reevaluated.

What the recording of an improvisation provides is not the final version, but the *only form* of the resulting composition. Therefore, in a sense an improvisation is both an inherently finished and unfinished product. In the former case, it is a 'closed' musical entity that has been shaped and captured as delivered by its composer in real time, with its status as an improvisation signifying no consideration for further evolvement and refinement.[67] At the same time, an improvisation is a piece which has not been produced through a conventional compositional process of contemplation and refinement of the musical material, aimed at achieving its definitive form. In this sense, it may be seen as an unfinished composition – like a sketch with the potential to be worked further, refined, and completed. Despite the potentially remarkable compositional achievements improvisations can generate, or the fact that certain composers may sometimes choose to create a work by

[67] Surely, as mentioned, improvisations in jazz can become 'works' or standards, or their composers may simply use in subsequent performances thematic material, transitional passages and solos that were initially spontaneously shaped through improvisation. Yet a composer revisiting an improvisation of his in Western art music to perform is extremely rare (and that is not always the case in jazz either), although, of course, there have definitely been instances where composers integrated material which came into existence through improvisation into their fixed compositions and published works.

notating ideas with minimal or no subsequent alterations, more often than not composers offer their finest work through careful thought and revision.[68]

There can be a blurred distinction between restorative and ameliorative attempts in any editorial process, yet this becomes even more ambiguous when dealing with an improvisation instead of a precomposed musical work with definitive elements that have been determined prior to its interpretation. In the former case, one seeks to restore the integrity of an artistic creation which is known to have been thoughtfully crafted, taking into account various factors that lead to confident and informed editorial decisions. Hence, compositional ideas and the composition's integrity were once fully realized, but later compromised, to be subsequently restored as faithfully as possible. In the latter case, one aims to improve flaws, defects and weaknesses perceived as such to elevate the composition's value, regardless of whether these align with one's creative achievement that the existing sources allow us to discern. Yet in improvisation there are no predetermined compositional ideas or 'intentions' to restore, nor flaws and defects that can definitely be identified as erroneous. Thus, editorial changes aimed at achieving coherence and uniformity throughout the musical text, removing 'mistakes' and 'wrong notes', or, generally, making alterations of any kind would at first glance be difficult to justify.

Nonetheless, there can be instances where it is evident that editorial alterations can enhance the integrity of the initial transcription. In fact, they may potentially even restore the composer's 'true intentions' (what they actually intended to play), or at the very least, produce a musical text that could have potentially emerged had the composer transcribed

[68] Sabine Feisst, for example, writes that Schoenberg "[m]uch like Mozart, he created many works without sketches and drafts and refrained from improving on the music once he had put it on paper intuitively – just as improvisers would have to accept the results of their live performance" (Feisst 2021, 381).

his improvisation for further performances or publication, making necessary corrections in places that clearly require them. Essentially, at times an editor can employ judgement and make informed decisions akin to that applied to 'conventional' musical texts, as demonstrated in Chapter 3, ensuring, for example, uniformity and coherence in material that clearly demand it. Also, as illustrated in Chapter 4, expressive attributes captured in a recording may be evaluated based on several factors, such as the distinctive traits of the composer's playing style, the musical material itself, or the overall progression of the composition, to realize the most appropriate performance markings. Once again, what such an attempt results to is nothing more than an editorial construction of a text for the resulting composition (or a version of it).

As discussed, the eleventh and twelfth movements of Economou's *Hommage à J. S. Bach* were clearly improvised. Although it can be challenging at times to confidently identify a performance as improvisation, both Economou's unrefined playing and relatively poor musical content in these movements appear compromised and do not meet the expectations set by other compositions and recordings of his. That said, even though these two movements do not align with the standards of compositional, artistic and interpretative achievement set by the first ten movements, they were transcribed and included in the edited score as part of the cycle – a decision grounded on the principles of the aesthetics of imperfection, and therefore, an inclusive attitude towards 'imperfect' or 'flawed' musical outcomes. Besides, due to their thematic material and contrapuntal character, these movements complement this cycle paying tribute to Bach. However, as the following discussion demonstrates, editorial intervention went beyond alterations regarding expressive attributes that would avoid descriptive qualities to the text stemming from

composer's performance, or modifications in melodic and rhythmic material that clearly demand it according to 'traditional' editorial approaches grounded in well-informed decisions. Additional modifications were made to the initial transcriptions of the eleventh and twelfth movements, to ensure that their inclusion meets the minimum standards of compositional achievement as established by the first ten and last movements, preserving, at the same time, the improvisatory essence of the compositions – a sense of spontaneity and linear creation.

Thus, with the following discussion I argue that, when necessary, an editor working on the transcription of a recorded improvisation that has been evidently compromised by the extemporaneity of its compositional process can strive to establish a (minimum) level of integrity throughout the musical text to make it accessible, re-produceable and performable, and not to restore integrity of the composition *per se*. As this approach deviates from typical editorial practices and responsibilities, it does not denote a pursuit to realize the 'composer's intentions', whether premeditated or spontaneously realized, or to 'fix' the resulting composition, potentially aiming to elevate it to work-status. Instead, since it is only once the performance of an improvisation has finished that the resulting composition is fully formed and exists in its entirety, as "the overall aesthetic goal [...] acts as a formative force within the movement that produces it" (Angelino 2019, 211-2), the edited text resulting from its transcription may constitute a *suggestion* of a version of the improvisation that is less corrupt by the spontaneity of this genetic process, and is refined by a retroactive grasp and realization of the performed material. Yet again, the editor must still ensure that the overall identity of the piece and its inherent essence of spontaneous

and linear creation, as an 'imperfect' compositional achievement, are preserved in the edited score.

While such an endeavour implies an attempt to repair or improve an improvisation, the material that prompts any editorial alterations are not necessarily evaluated negatively as flawed. Instead, it is regarded as possessing an intrinsic potential for refinement, the realization of which (full, partial, or to the extent that this is feasible without distorting the improvisation's identity) appears to be defensible, even within the framework set by the aesthetics of imperfection. While embracing the 'imperfections' of such pieces as unique expressions of unplanned creativity, the primary objective here is to restore an 'imagined' integrity – to produce an edited score that reflects a version of the improvised piece devoid as much as possible of features resulted by the inherent challenges and limitations of improvisation to the compositional process, valuing, at the same time, the original identity of the piece and the resulting compositional achievement.

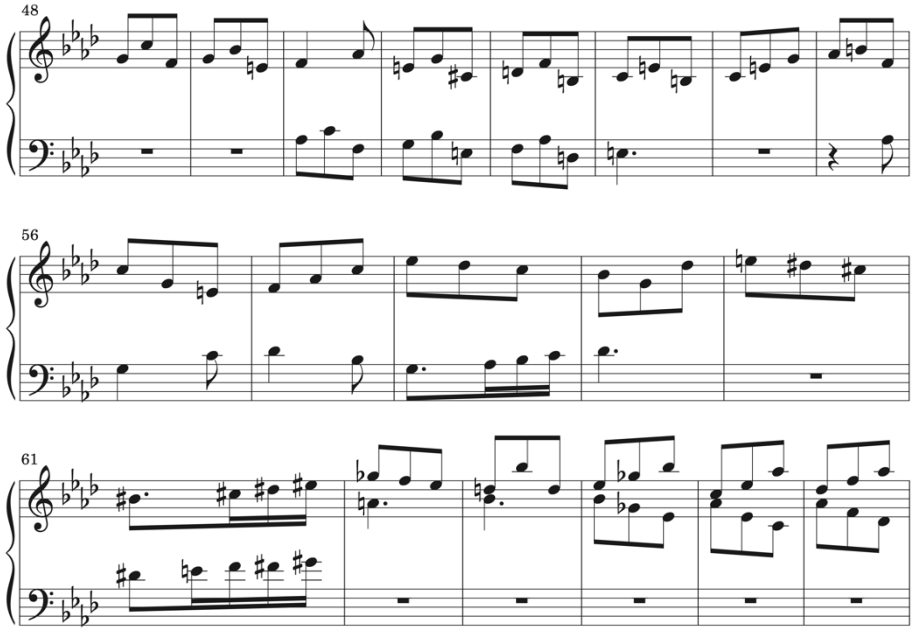
To reiterate, while this may initially appear paradoxical, a commitment to the aesthetics of imperfection is still upheld despite any editorial changes to the improvisation's transcription. What is outlined here is not an endeavour to re-compose or create a reimagining of the original improvisation, nor an attempt to produce a polished, perfect version of it. The essence of the improvisation – its 'imperfect', "rough go-ahead energy" (Whitmer, quoted in Hamilton 2000, 178), spontaneous, "dynamic character" as "activity-in-action" (Bertinetto 2013, 88), and its inherent identity as a real-time, through-composed composition – along with its distinctive melodic, rhythmic and harmonic material are preserved. Yet the score of the improvisation created after undertaking an editorial approach as described above offers a version of it that is less compromised by the

unpremeditated nature of the process than the original resulting composition. This is a subtle creative contribution that enhances the pieces' performability through editorial interventions that have no substantial impact to its original form and shape, justifying their inclusion in the critical edition of the cycle. It is worth noting that, as explained in more detail in the next chapter, both the initial transcription, with some elementary alterations, and the reconstructed version must be provided in the critical edition. This ensures both transparency and accessibility, allowing users to compare the original improvisation with the editorial reconstruction.

6.4. Notating and Editing 'Compromised' Improvisations

The eleventh movement of *Hommage* can best be described as a two-part invention, although Economou does not follow the typical form of invention, neither does he develop the thematic material in the expected manner. The opening theme is (fully) restated three times in the entire piece, and only in the first 25 out of 175 bars of the edited score. However, its melodic contour and rhythmic pattern are developed throughout with vague references of the opening theme. Economou's playing here is relatively stable, yet the musical material itself clearly demonstrates unpremeditated thought. Several factors were taken into consideration when editing this movement that defined the editorial decisions made, including the sudden interruption of right- or left-hand parts, or the overall inconsistent rhythmic pace and simplification of material in one hand when there is an attempt to develop (elaborate) material in the other.

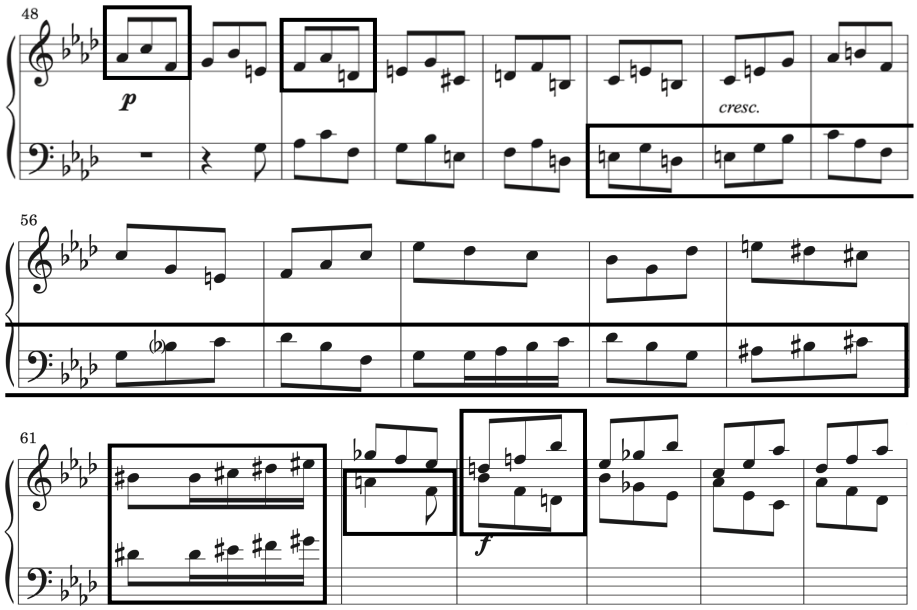
For example, between bars 48 and 63, Economou repeatedly attempts to incorporate previously introduced elements and patterns, and the flow appears to be inconsistent as he pauses and restarts such endeavours in the left hand. In the right hand, he uses a crotchet-quaver figure (that appears throughout the movement) only in bar 50, before using the three-quaver pattern until a ten-bar sequence which starts in bar 63. There, the top line does not align with the subsequent bars, while the left hand remains static, after some active, yet again ever-shifting, movement.



Musical Example 87. Economou, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Movement 11, bars 48-66, initial transcription.

In this passage, I sought to address these 'issues' by preserving features that I considered to define its overall identity – whether melodic, rhythmic, or harmonic. At the same time, my aim was to create a smoother flow in the left-hand line; although Economou attempts to use previously performed material, possibly in an endeavour to enhance the movement's contrapuntal character, these references appear intermittently and

unconvincingly, creating a sense of disruption, while it is clear that the right hand maintains a relentless forward momentum that could be supported by the left hand. The first note of bar 48 was changed from G to A♭, in order to match the outlined F minor harmony, especially since the following bar also starts with G, but this time as the third of the E diminished broken chord there. Also, in bar 50 the crotchet-quaver pattern in the right hand was replaced with a three-quaver figure, which was used in the left hand throughout bars 53 and 60 too. Moreover, in bar 63 the top line was modified to match the rest of the ten-bar sequence that follows. In the left hand in bar 61, Economou uses the rhythmic pattern with which the movement's main theme starts (used throughout the movement too), while a subtle variant version of it appears in the right hand of the same bar, as well as in the left hand in bar 58. I perceived these appearances of this rhythmic figure as Economou's effort to make repeated and distinct references of it during this passage, and therefore, I decided to preserve it in the left hand in bar 58, as well as in bar 61, yet in a slightly modified form to accommodate the intended harmonies of the following bars and to bring it closer to the original rhythmic figure referenced. The left hand in bar 61 leads to an A♮ that appears in Economou's improvisation as a dotted crotchet. However, in the edited score I placed a crotchet that is followed by a quaver, in order to maintain the established forward momentum leading towards the sequence in bar 63, suggesting, at the same time, a brief 'rest' before the sequence, echoing Economou's original performed actions.

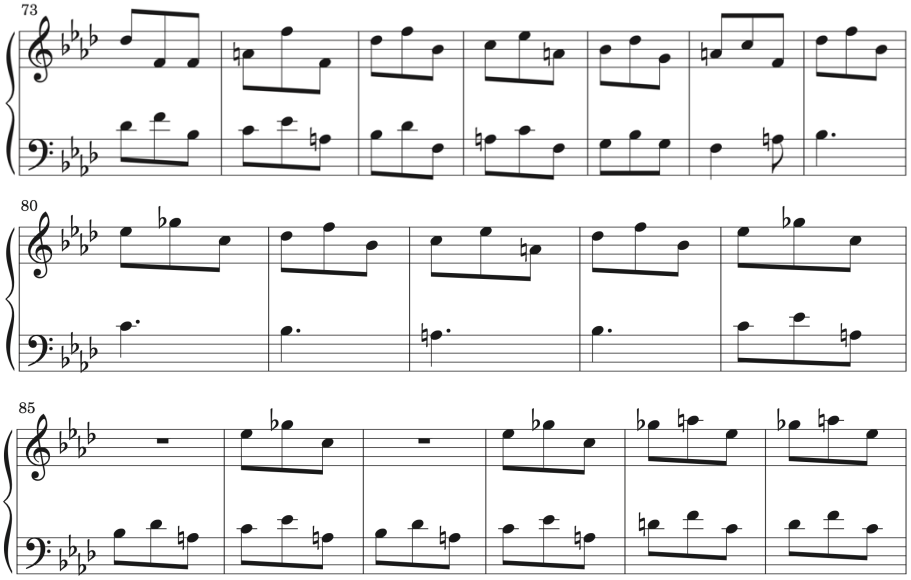


Musical Example 88. Economou, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Movement 11, bars 48-66, edited score.

After the ten-bar sequence between bars 63 and 72, the next section seems to start with a 'false start'. Economou's playing here becomes slightly unsteady, as he repeats F twice in the right hand in bar 73 in a shaky manner, followed by a quaver pattern structured in a way that does not appear elsewhere in the movement. It seems extremely unlikely that Economou would have wanted to introduce these new three-quaver figures at this point only for one bar, and it is also worth noting that from bar 74, he starts a more coherent descending four-bar passage, which is followed by a couple of similar passages of the same length. All this suggests that perhaps Economou restarted this new section from bar 75, after playing bars 73 and 74 with this ineffective material.

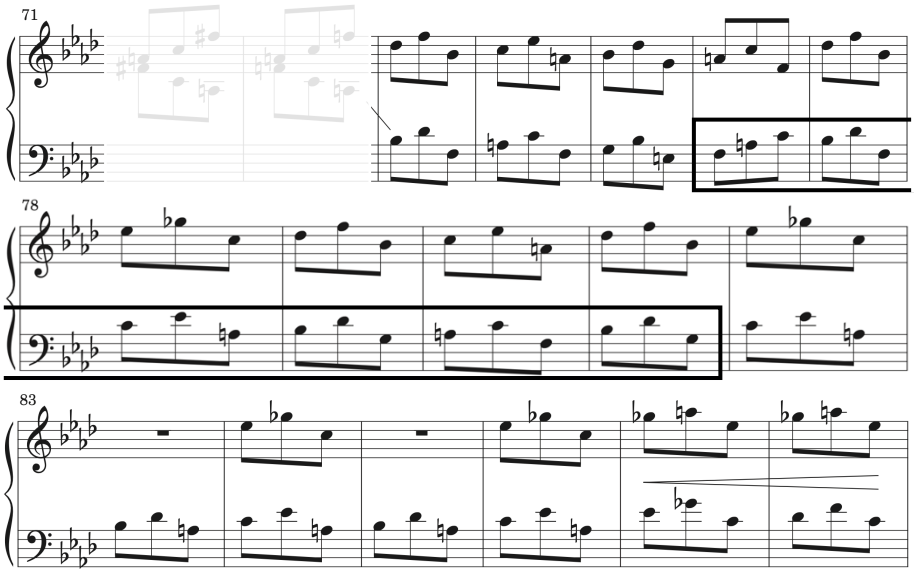
Also, the three-quaver figure in the left hand is interrupted after bar 77, only to reappear in bar 84 before leading into a dialogue between right and left hands. This interplay resolves as both hands align once more in bars 88-90. Throughout this passage, the crotchet-quaver pattern appears in the left hand, but only in bar 78 (possibly another kind

of ‘false start’), followed by five bars of dotted crotchets. Although this can only be assumed, it seems that, here, Economou probably needed time to determine his next steps, navigating the challenge of spontaneous creation. And to achieve this, he may have relied on simpler material in the left hand.



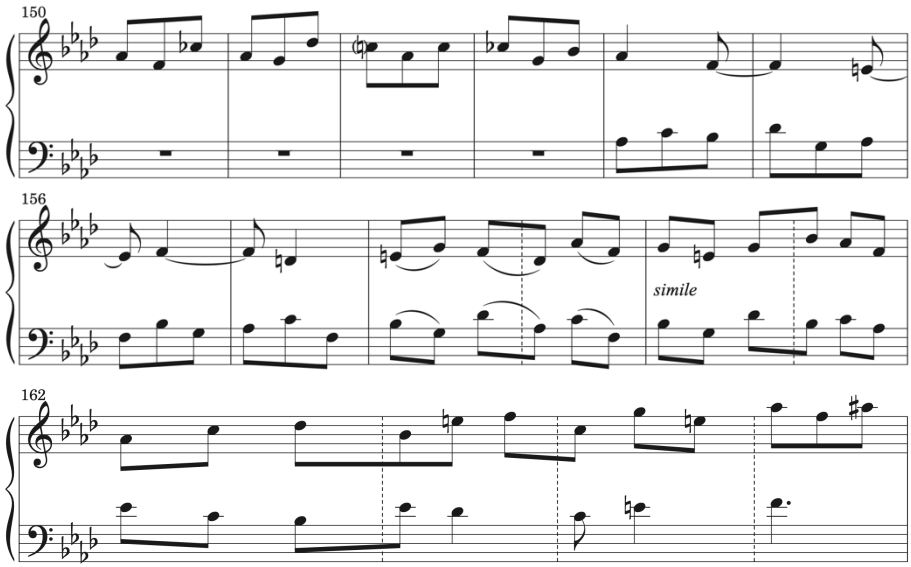
Musical Example 89. Economou, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Movement 11, bars 73-90, initial transcription.

I chose to remove bars 73 and 74, and to modify the left hand between bars 78 and 83 using the three-quaver pattern.



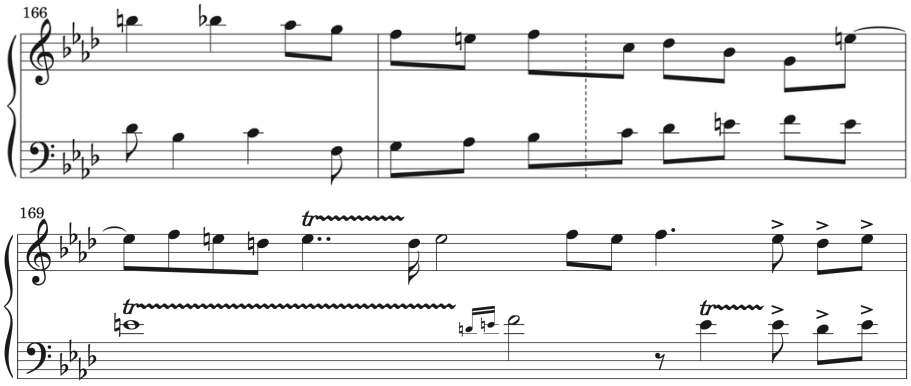
Musical Example 90. Economou, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Movement 11, bars 73-88, edited score.

In the last section of this movement, Economou goes beyond the established rhythmic, melodic and harmonic language used until bar 137, conveying a more experimental approach to counterpoint. Here, there were a few editorial challenges that had to be tackled. For example, from bar 157, Economou shifts from three-note groupings, aligning with the 3/8 time signature, to two-note groupings. In order to convey the fluidity of Economou's performance and the linear creative process of the improvised material, I decided to preserve the 3/8 meter, yet using appropriate note beamings and dashed barlines to facilitate note reading and accurate indication of pulses.



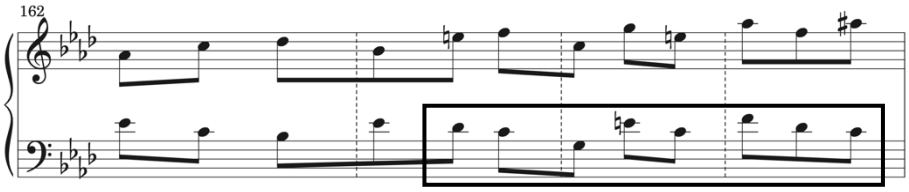
Musical Example 91. Economou, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Movement 11, bars 150-165, edited score.

That said, bars 166 and 168 would be most accurately notated by changing time signature, 3/4 and 5/8, respectively. However, these changes were not explicitly indicated, to preserve, once again, and communicate a sense of fluidity across bars. Similarly, no change of time signature was indicated in bar 169 either, to convey the cadenza-like essence of this passage with which Economou performs it.



Musical Example 92. Economou, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Movement 11, bars 166-169, edited score.

In addition, bars 163-165 could benefit from some alterations in the left hand to provide a more cohesive version of this ascending passage leading into bar 166, as is illustrated in the musical example below.



Musical Example 93. Economou, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Movement 11, bars 162-165, edited score.

Yet again, the syncopated rhythm in the improvisation's original transcription (see Musical Example 91) cannot be described with any level of certainty as a 'weakness' occurring from the spontaneous nature of the improvisation. As previously discussed, any intervention on improvised material should not compromise its original identity, as communicated by their composer. And in this case, omitting a rhythmic element as distinct as a set of syncopations in the edited version of bars 163-5 could be seen as altering the passage's inherent character. Therefore, the edited version of these bars can only appear merely as a

suggestion that maintains the pattern established from bar 157 in both hands, reinforcing, at the same time, the effectiveness of the syncopations in the left hand in bar 166, since in this case, there would be no such rhythmic elements in the three preceding bars.

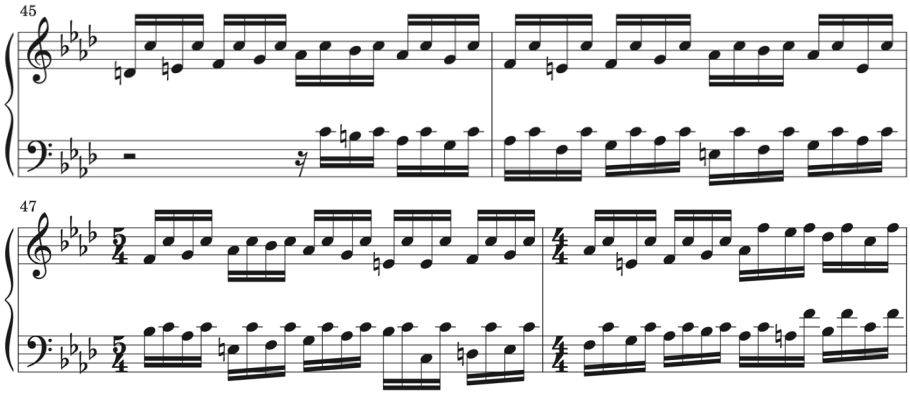
In the twelfth movement of *Hommage*, Economou's playing is unstable, while the musical material lacks the expected, or even minimum, level of refinement and sophistication that other precomposed or improvised pieces of his demonstrate. He uses the subject of Bach's *Fugue in D minor*, BWV 565 (but in F minor here), and although this reference is distinct, Economou does not make an accurate, note-by-note use of Bach's thematic material. The ascending melodic minor passage in the original subject that appears at the end of its first bar, for example, is used by Economou for the first time in bar 4 of this twelfth movement in *Hommage*. The subject is incorporated in both hands, and the speed Economou adopts provides an artistically weak outcome (given the standards set by the rest of the cycle and the rest of Economou's compositional oeuvre).

According to the aesthetics of imperfection, improvisations merit appreciation for their original (and only) form. Nonetheless, a faithful transcription of Economou's performance would simply invite one to reproduce his erratic playing, rather than merely a performance of a spontaneously created composition that may bear 'flaws' or creative 'weaknesses' inherently linked to its genetic process. Hence, intervention to the initial transcription of the improvisation to reach a minimum level of integrity that will make it *performable* seems necessary. As the following discussion will demonstrate, there can still be an effort of suggestive, rather than purely ameliorative, nature to provide an edited score that aligns with the aesthetics of imperfection, appreciating the composition's essence of spontaneity. Such an endeavour is focused on providing a version of the improvisation that

benefits from an understanding of it as a complete creative product, and a retrospective realization of spontaneous performed actions that preserves the artistic identity of the initial improvisation.

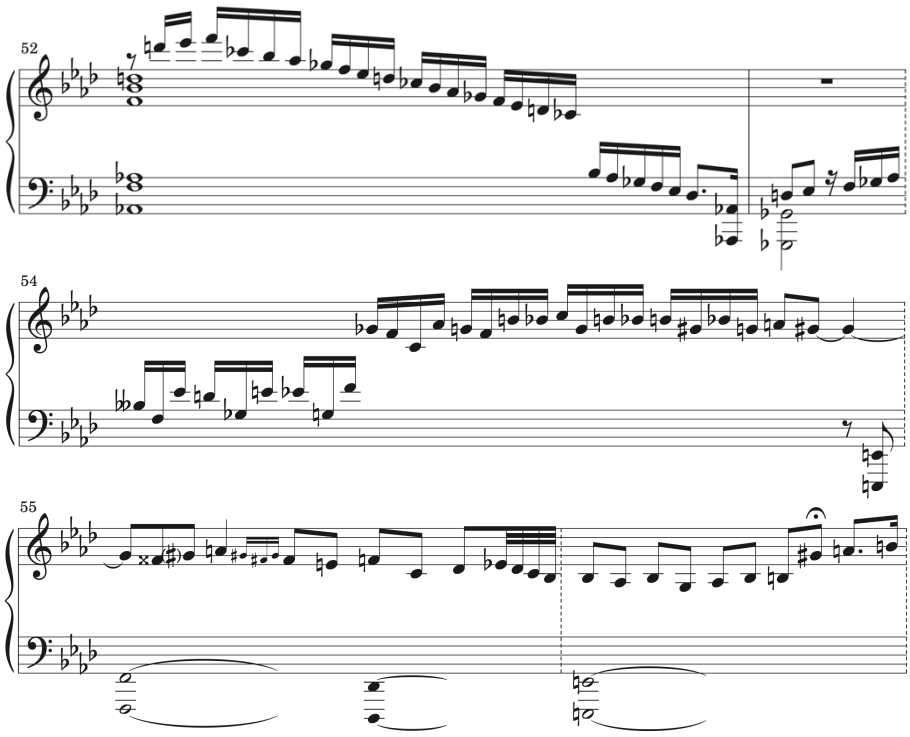
The twelfth movement of Hommage can be divided into three sections:

a) Bars 1-52. This section is built on Bach's subject, with many instances of unstable and blurred playing. In several cases, Economou interrupts an idea he develops as his playing becomes increasingly messier, with an abrupt shift to new material or a new passage. Also, in some instances he shortens or extends the length of bars. Namely, in some places the metric structure varies due to the spontaneous nature of the compositional process, and not because of intentional changes in meter. Most importantly, as mentioned above, Economou uses Bach's semiquaver figure in both right and left hands, yet due to the speed he adopts for this movement, there are many instances of dissonance created between the two lines. I argue that it is extremely unlikely that Economou intended these dissonances, perhaps as a response to Bach's composition using his own idiosyncratic 'contemporary' language. That is mainly because, whenever possible, he attempts to restore consonance, either with short, diatonic intervallic episodes, or by establishing consonance at the beginning of a new phrase, which after a few moments he fails to maintain.



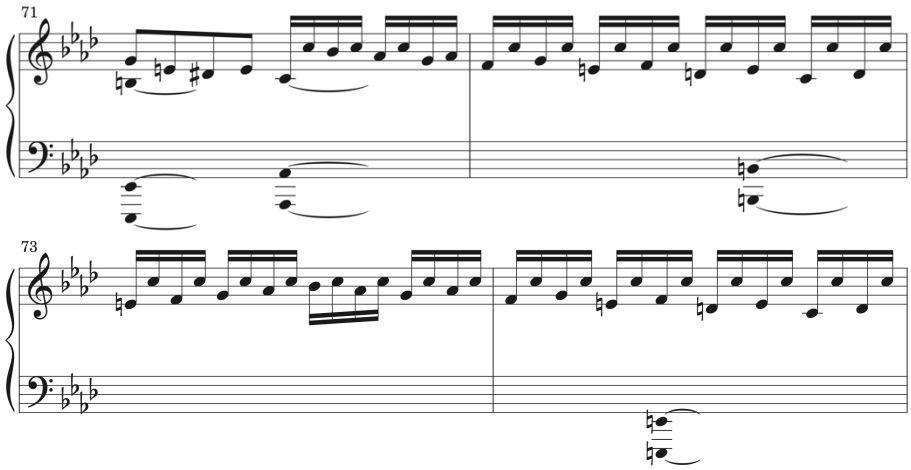
Musical Example 94. Economou, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Movement 12, bars 45-48, initial transcription.

b) **Bars 53-71.** Economou's playing here is evidently improvisatory (and improvised), flexible and broad, with primarily atonal material. It is through-composed with no thematic relation to Bach's fugue subject, yet it vaguely recalls his 'Fantasia' from BWV 903. This section could also be interpreted as an 'intervention' – a personal response by Economou to Bach's legacy.



Musical Example 95. Economou, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Movement 12, bars 52-56, edited score.

c) **Bars 71-93.** Here, Economou combines features from the first two sections, establishing a dialogue between the right hand's (diatonic) material and the left hand's octaves, which together produce a dissonant outcome. These left-hand octaves do not appear to have been mistakenly incorporated during the improvisation, thus, I interpreted this dissonant interaction between the two hands as a feature that Economou consciously incorporated in his playing.



Musical Example 96. Economou, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Movement 12, bars 71-74, edited score.

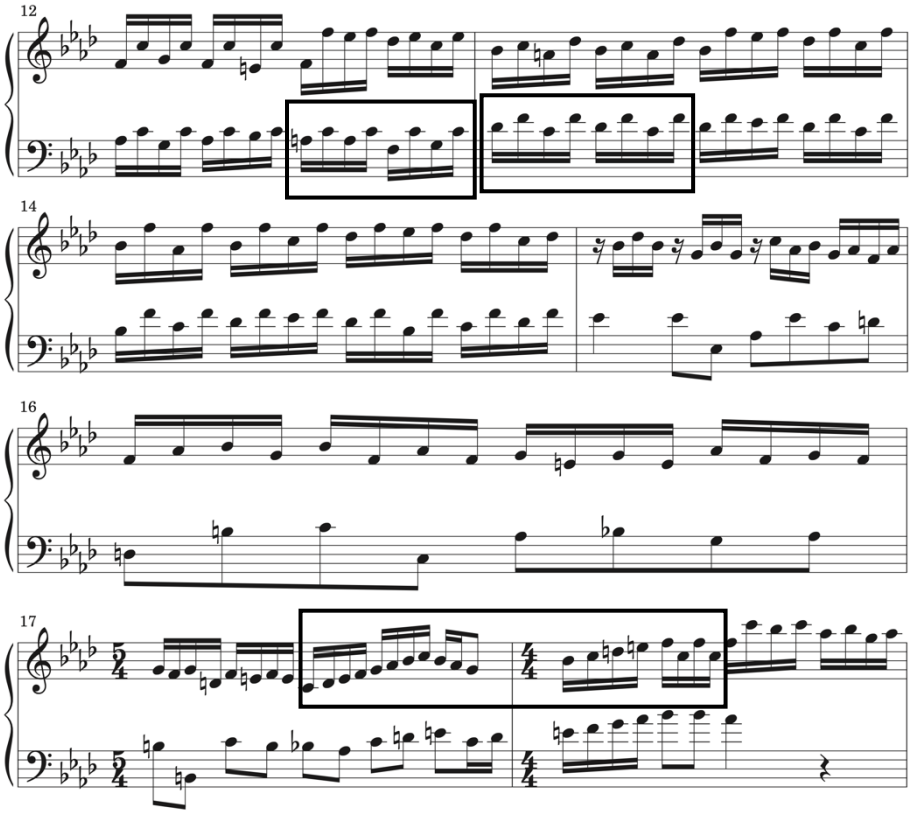
Due to the level of compromised integrity of Economou's performance, and consequently, the resulting transcription, several passages in this movement required complete rewriting. Such editorial alterations were made only to the first and third sections of this movement, as the highly idiosyncratic melodic, harmonic and rhythmic language of the second section, along with its through-composed nature, make it difficult to make any informed, justifiable editorial decisions. In addition, the integrity of the transcribed material here is not compromised by Economou's performance, or, at least, the musical material does not come across as inherently flawed due to the performance's compromised fluency,

as is the case in the first and third sections. Hence, the transcription of the second section was retained in the edited score as performed by Economou with only some very minor alterations discussed in the Critical Commentary of the cycle's critical edition.

The main objective of the alterations made in the transcription of the first section of this movement was the restoration of consonance between the two lines, and the replacement of material that was evaluated as lesser of (minimum) standards set by Economou's compositional work (whether precomposed or improvised) and the cycle itself – namely, material with evidently weaker than expected creative value, even within the context of improvisation, which resulted from the inherent challenges of improvised creation. At the same time, what I ensured to preserve was the sense of linear creation that Economou's improvisation conveys. Therefore, I did not seek to replace the transcribed melodic lines with more refined ones, but instead, to rewrite them in a manner where certain moments of futile melodic movement were replaced with musically more meaningful, yet without sacrificing the overall essence of spontaneity. Similarly, I ensured that despite such alterations to the twelfth movement's transcription, the melodic contour of the improvised material was preserved too, as well as melodic progressions Economou performed that I regarded as key compositional elements, which if omitted from the edited score would presumably distort the identity of those passages. Additionally, several editorial alterations were aimed at fixing passages where Economou's erratic and unclear playing compromised the flow of the melodic lines in either or both hands, as well as realizing better unfinished ideas and performed actions that were not effectively carried out.

For example, in bars 12-14, it seems that the left hand could benefit from some subtle alterations for a smoother melodic movement, while from bar 15 onwards, there is

material in both hands that could be further refined.[69] Notably, the time signature shifts from 4/4 to 5/4 in bar 17, but only for one bar – this was the only way to accommodate the performed material. This adjustment seems to be the most effective way to organize Economou's improvisation into bars, ensuring, at the same time, that the next thematic restatement falls on the third beat of the following bar, consistent with the entry point of the Bach fugue theme in the original composition and in Economou's improvisation.



Musical Example 97. Economou, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Movement 12, bars 12-18, initial transcription.

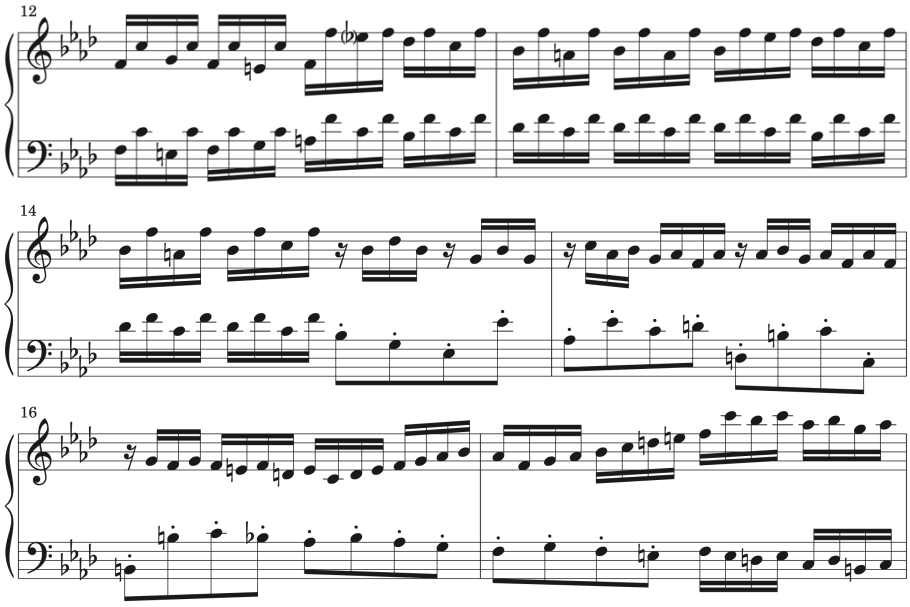
[69] Due to various editorial changes, the bar numbers in the improvisation's initial transcription and the edited score/reconstructed version do not align. For clarity and practicality, bar numbers are referenced here according to the edited score; musical examples have been adjusted to ensure their clearest possible visual presentation.

Firstly, as indicated in Musical Example 97, the left hand in bar 13 switches to a new pattern/position seemingly a couple of beats late, as the thematic material in B-flat minor begins from the third beat of bar 12. Therefore, in the edited score the left hand's semiquaver figures in bar 12 were adjusted accordingly.[70] The following left-hand semiquaver figures were also slightly modified to avoid the unison movement and some dissonances that appear between the two hands in bars 13 and 14. As noted, evidence from throughout this movement suggests that Economou repeatedly sought to maintain consonance between the two melodic lines but often fell short – most likely due to the spontaneous nature of his compositional process and the speed of his performance. Also, the unison movement in these bars is very unlikely to have been something that Economou desired, since whether consonant or dissonant, the performed material conveys an attempt for two independent lines, often moving in contrary motion.

Between bars 14 and 18, a few more alterations were made in order to provide a smoother flow. Firstly, the passage was re-written to eliminate the 5/4 time signature change, preserving the appearance of the thematic material in F minor in the right hand on the third beat of bar 17. I reduced the 5/4 bar to four beats, providing, at the same time, an enhanced realization of the ascending passage leading into the next thematic section on the third beat of the following bar (marked in Musical Example 97). Additionally, I decided to remove the last two beats of bar 14 as this facilitated the removal of the 5/4 time signature change, ensuring that all essential musical material 'fits' in the revised score. This includes the quasi-sequential passage as it now appears between bars 15 and 16 (Musical Example 98).

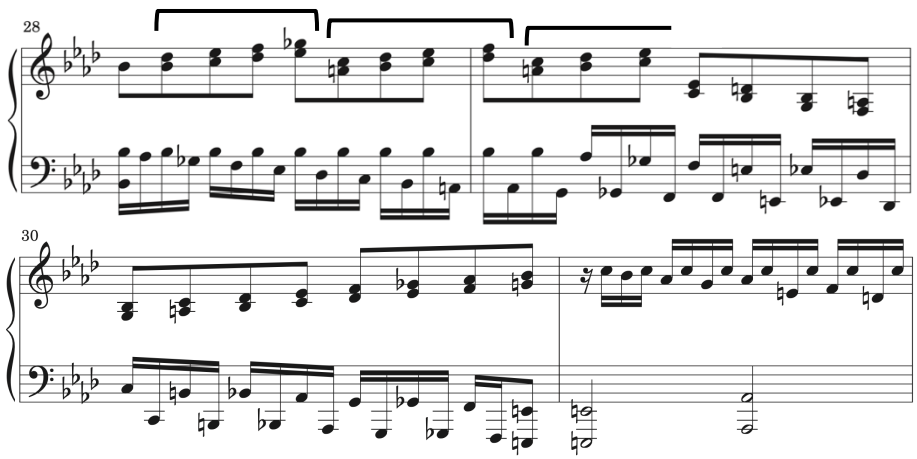
[70] The left hand in the first two beats of bar 12 appears different in the edited score from the initial transcription due to preceding editorial adjustments.

Once again, the goal was not to create a perfect version of the sequence, but rather to solidify the musical ideas suggested by Economou's improvisation. Elements such as the semiquaver rests were incorporated based on the preceding material and justified by the left-hand revisions that support these rests in the right hand. The material from the first two beats of bar 15 (Musical Example 97) was moved to the last two beats of the preceding bar. One could argue that this short two-beat passage functions as a transition between the material in bars 12-14 and 15-17, and it is musically more logical for the sequential passage mentioned above to be placed at the beginning of the bar. Therefore, this brief section appearing now on the third beat of bar 14 (Musical Example 98) parallels the function of the main thematic material derived from Bach's fugue that also appears on the third beat. Finally, as Musical Example 98 demonstrates, the left hand was modified to provide greater coherence while preserving the melodic contour and key features of the performed material.



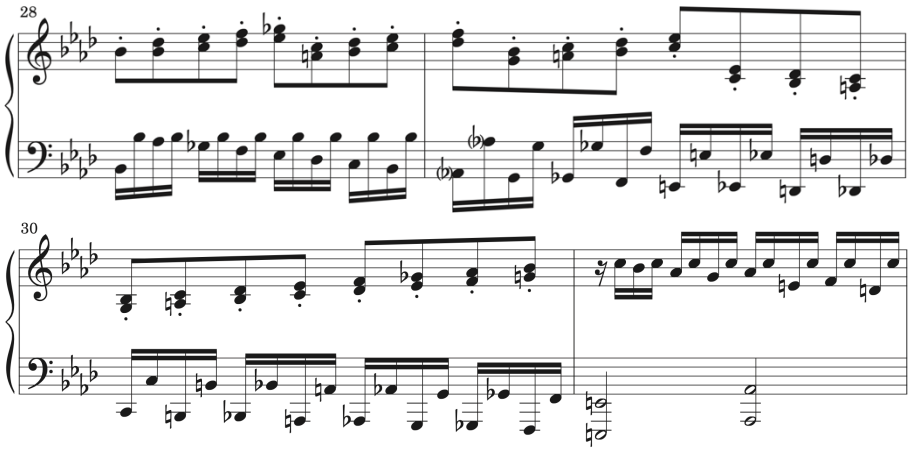
Musical Example 98. Economou, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Movement 12, bars 12-17, edited score.

Some further modifications between bars 28 and 31 aimed at a more coherent version of the improvised material. In Economou's improvisation, the pedal note in the left hand in bar 28 is misplaced in each beat, while the descending chromatic scale leading to the E-natural octave in bar 31 could benefit from a revision to enhance the overall coherence of this passage. Also, the right-hand material between bars 28 and 29 requires some editorial adjustments, in order to 'restore' what appears to be an 'intended' sequential character of the passage, likely compromised when Economou (accidentally?) played an A♮-C triad, rather than G and B♭.



Musical Example 99. Economou, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Movement 12, bars 28-31, initial transcription.

Consequently, appropriate adjustments were implemented, fixing the position of the pedal note throughout the left-hand line in bar 28. Also, the edited score provides a smoother and more coherent descending chromatic scale towards the E-natural octave in bar 31, while the sequential character of the right-hand material was established between bars 28 and the first half of bar 29 by modifying appropriately the initial transcription, as demonstrated in the musical example below.



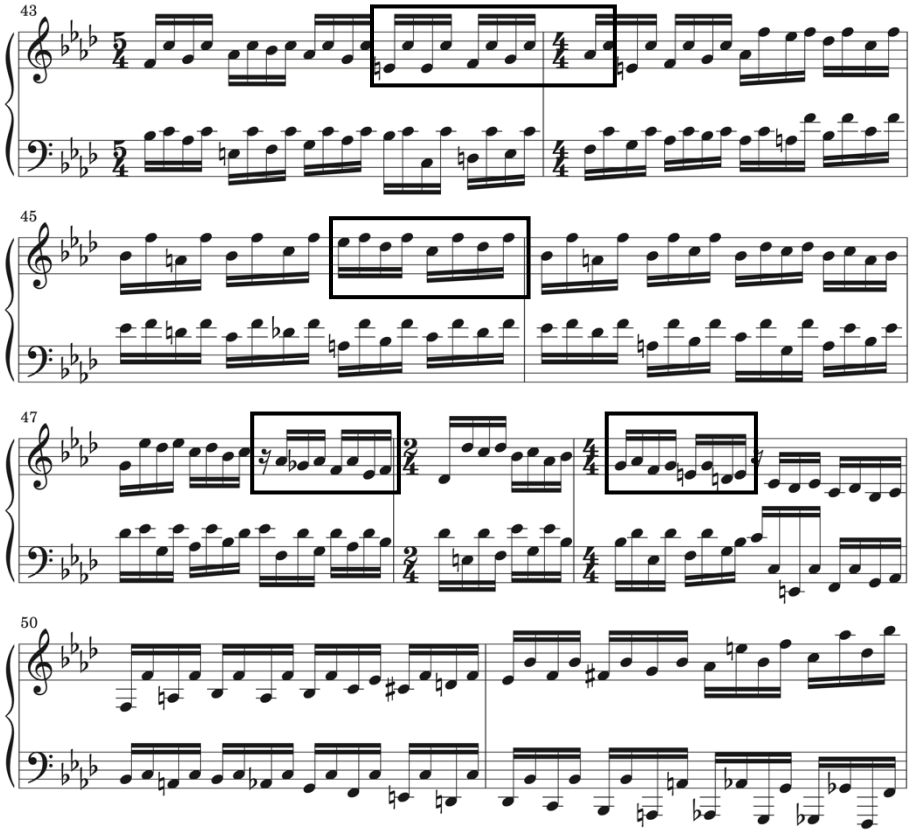
Musical Example 100. Economou, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Movement 12, bars 28-31, edited score.

Between bars 43 and 50 some further modifications were made to provide a smoother musical text. In bar 43 in the initial transcription, Economou's improvisation had to be organized in 5/4, with the changes made to restore the 4/4 time signature marked in Musical Example 102. Throughout this passage, I also made some other subtle alterations in bars 45, 47, 48 (Musical Example 102), aimed at a more coherent text, as some patterns there that are evidently sequential were not 'accurately' executed.

Moreover, as Musical Example 101 demonstrates, in bar 48 there is once again a disruption in the generally coherent metric structure of this section, transcribing the performed material into a 2/4 bar before resuming to 4/4.[71] While in other similar cases the musical material was adjusted with subtle alterations – whether by adding or removing musical material – here this seems rather challenging. This is because removing performed material (or the revised version of them) from this section to eliminate the two 'extra' beats would require further editorial alterations, resulting in a melodic progression substantially

[71] Other alternatives were possible – 6/4, 4/4 + 2/4, or maintaining 4/4 for a few bars before shifting to 2/4 later on. Yet none of these options eliminate the issue of metric asymmetry.

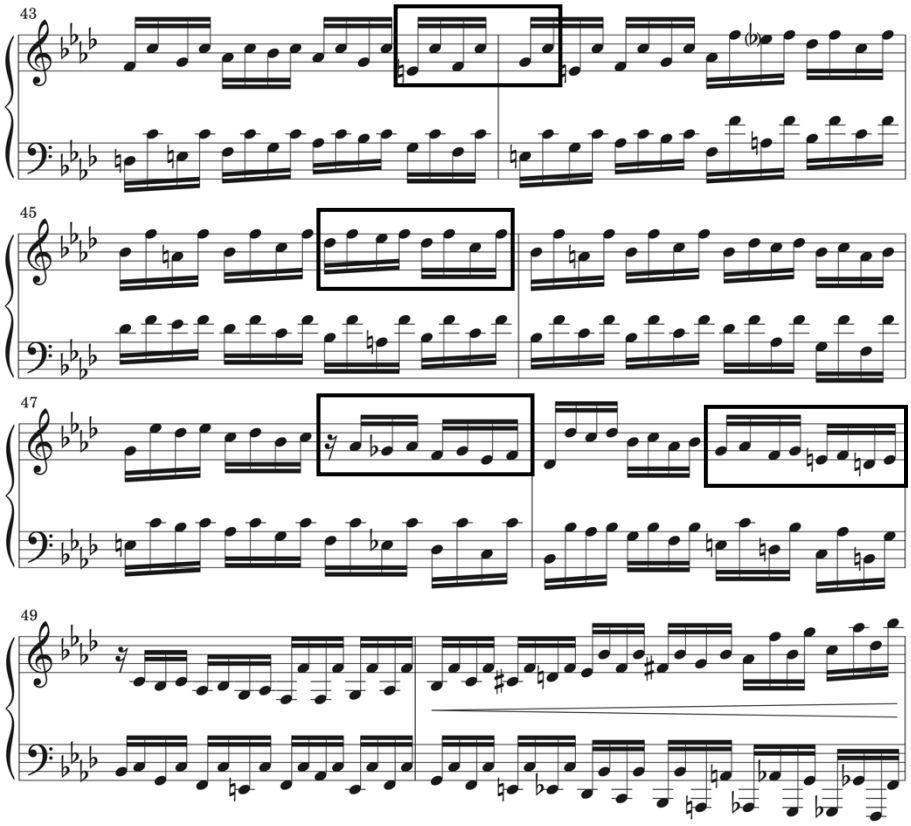
different from what Economou performed, omitting in one way or another material for which there is no compelling reason to be excluded. Therefore, all the performed material from bar 48 onwards (bar numbering according to Musical Example 101) was kept in the edited score and reorganised into 4/4 bars, with the last bar of this passage extended by two beats. Here, no time signature was indicated to communicate, once again, a sense of linear progression.



Musical Example 101. Economou, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Movement 12, bars 43-51, initial transcription.

As the musical example below demonstrates, apart from the editorial considerations mentioned so far, the left hand was rewritten to ensure smoothness – both melodic and harmonic – preserving as much as possible the overall melodic contour of the original improvisation. Similarly, the concluding ascending passage was also rewritten to create a more coherent version, while preserving the contour and harmonic identity of the

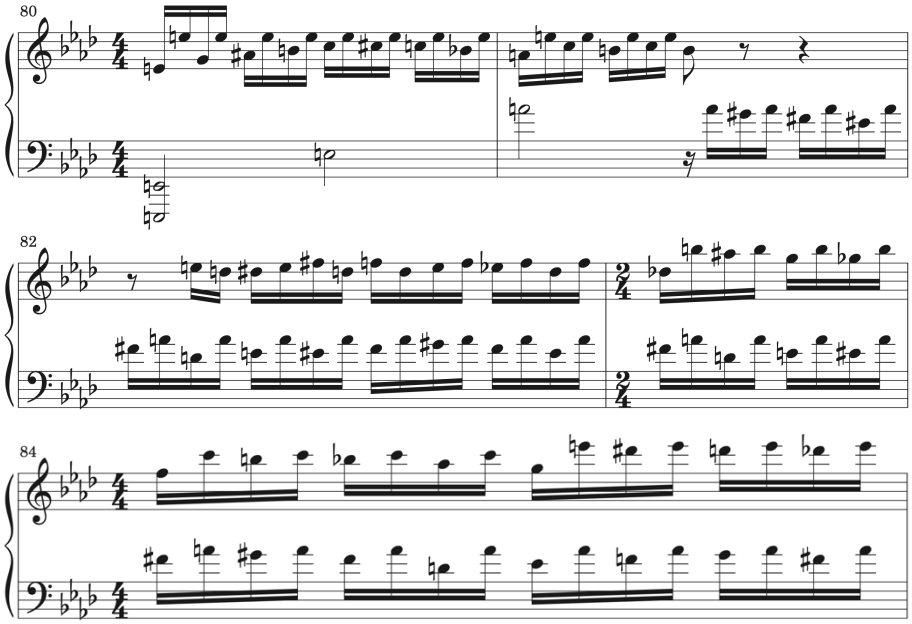
original improvisation. To achieve this, I considered its overall melodic movement and its resolution – a prominent, first-inversion C major dominant seventh chord positioned in the registers where the passage concludes.



Musical Example 102. Economou, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Movement 12, bars 43-50, edited score.

Before initiating a kind of sequence in bar 83, Economou's playing in the right hand becomes muddled in the preceding bar, with some notes barely distinct, conveying a sense of uncertainty and hesitation about how to proceed. From bar 82 onwards, the musical material demonstrates more organized and coherent thought, alongside its execution which sounds more certain and stable. In addition, after organizing the rest of the movement into bars, it appears that switching from 4/4 to 2/4 in bar 83 (or organising bars 82-83 into one

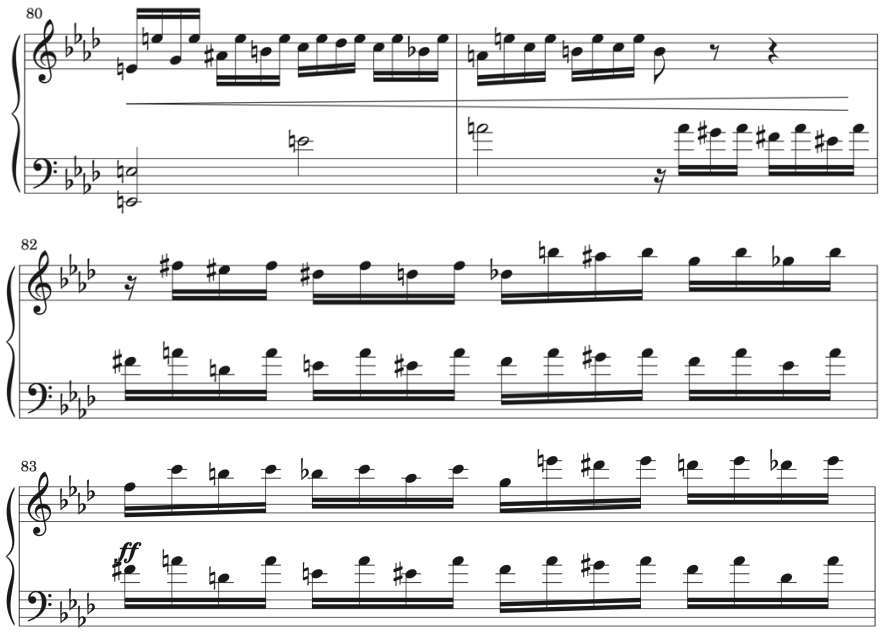
6/4 a bar, or a 2/4 bar followed by 4/4) would be the only way to arrange Economou's performed actions into notation.



Musical Example 103. Economou, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Movement 12, bars 80-84, initial transcription.

Given the way the right-hand material in bar 82 was executed, and considering that it not only falls short of the creative standards established within the movement but also seems irrelevant to the surrounding material, I decided to replace bars 82–83 (Musical Example 103) with a single bar in 4/4. This revision retains the original transcription of bar 83 while refining the preceding material, which appears to have been compromised by the spontaneous nature of its creation and the brisk tempo of Economou's performance. Despite this alteration in the right hand, the left-hand material remained intact in the edited score, using the melodic line from the original transcription, despite the fact that two beats from the right hand were removed. And that is because Economou introduces a distinct, repetitive pattern there. This is executed in the next few bars in a varied manner, as he

changes the order of its pitches (this is noticeable from the second beat of bar 84 in Musical Example 103), and although one might argue that consistency and coherence should be 'restored' in the left hand, it seems that this melodic 'instability' found there enhances the resulting character and identity of this passage which communicate a sense of ever-evolving tension that he clearly aims for here, that builds toward the concluding section of the movement.



Musical Example 104. Economou, *Hommage à J. S. Bach*, Movement 12, bars 80-83, edited score.

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The editor of an un-notated composition must make every effort to present as effectively as possible the features that define its distinct identity. Whether precomposed or improvised, it may consist of elements that do not conform to conventional Western notational practices. For example, improvisatory and fluid playing providing material that must also be

performed in such a manner in future performances of the composition, may have to visually be communicated in an appropriate manner where necessary, as discussed in this chapter. Additionally, the editor of a work or an improvisation might need to solidify compositional ideas that were only vaguely or approximately executed, either due to insufficient preparation, the absence of a formal notation process that would allow the 'concretization' of elements that were never fixed into notation but only performed, the spontaneous nature of the creative process, or occasional inaccuracies in the execution of and deviations from a pre-determined interpretative plan. As in the case of the fourth movement of Economou's *Hommage* and the concluding cadenza in his *Corelli Variations*, even well-informed editorial alterations remain a set of assumptions. Nonetheless, if such endeavours preserve the overall aesthetic/creative purpose and essence of such passages as faithfully as possible, they should be acknowledged as valid reconstructions, rather than rejected as a set of unverified conjectures.

Moreover, as illustrated with the eleventh and twelfth movements of *Hommage*, there might be instances where the editor of an improvisation's transcription must introduce modifications that go beyond conventional editorial practices. He can choose to provide alongside the original transcription of the improvisation a version of it, created after a retrospective realization of the resulting composition as a whole, without distorting the core identity of the improvisation – its distinct melodic, rhythmic, harmonic elements. The two improvisations included in the critical edition of *Hommage* – the eleventh and twelfth movements – underwent alterations that transcended typical editorial responsibility. It is presumed that both the resulting compositions, as well as their execution, were compromised due to the complexity of the required compositional techniques, and the

inherent challenge of developing in real time a contrapuntal composition. To include these movements in the cycle's critical edition, alongside the first ten and last movements, I found it necessary to provide a version that mitigates these limitations of spontaneous creation, although the original transcriptions with only minimal editorial alterations were also provided to the score's user for reference. I ensured that including the reconstructions of the eleventh and twelfth movements in the critical edition – despite their divergence, as performed by Economou, from the overall stability and refinement of the other eleven – would not compromise the overall integrity of the cycle. Their presence maintains a coherent compositional achievement, and preserves a consistent creative standard throughout the cycle.

In Chapter 5, it has been argued that the ontological status of a composition as a musical work necessitates an editorial approach that ensures the most accurate preservation and dissemination of one's compositional achievement. The ontological nature of works suggests a vital distinction between the composition itself, its text(s) and performances (including the composer's), as well as editorial responsibility towards the composer's creative labour, and an effort to avoid misrepresentation of premeditated creative ideas. Therefore, it *demands* a conscious attempt by the transcriber-editor to separate the composer's interpretation from the intrinsic elements of the composition, and create a prescriptive score which will subsequently generate faithful performances of it.

Improvisations are not musical works, since they lack the deliberate creative labour and intentionality to be considered as such. Nonetheless, they are compositions, spontaneously created, that deserve to be valued on their own terms. Although they are ontologically distinct from musical works, their transcriptions may be editorially treated *as*

if they were works – to the extent that this is plausible – and potentially be perceived *like* works.[72] As some of the discussion in this chapter and the critical edition for Economou's *Hommage* demonstrate, a transcriber-editor can aim to create a prescriptive score for an improvised composition – one that does not describe the composer's performance but prescribes the resulting composition – by omitting expressive attributes stemming from the composer's individual playing style, or by defining the most appropriate performance markings following an editorial rational akin to that discussed in Chapter 4. Also, the resulting transcription may be refined through informed editorial alterations, as discussed in Chapter 3, particularly in places where the spontaneous (and un-notated) nature of the composition has led to incoherence and lack of uniformity that justifiably invite editorial intervention (e.g. in analogous/sequential passages, or moments where melodic/rhythmic features or texture do not align with the surrounding material).

Certainly, all these remarks collectively reveal the fluid boundaries between 'fixed' musical works and spontaneously created improvisations, exposing well-established standards of appreciation in Western art music that are unfairly grounded in theoretical assumptions and terminologies, rather than artistic merit and creative value. That said, although it has been argued that an improvisation's transcription may be approached and edited as if it were a precomposed work's, this chapter demonstrates that identifying an un-notated composition as either a work or an improvisation can still have an impact (occasionally a significant one) on the editorial process of its transcription. It can influence how the musical material the recording provides is assessed, interpreted and used during

[72] As argued, a definite distinction between an un-notated premeditated composition and an improvisation may not always be possible. However, comparing a composer's performances of their precomposed works with their potentially improvised pieces may yield valid conclusions regarding the genetic process of the latter.

the editorial process, and by extension, it can help define the boundaries of editorial authority within which the editor can intervene in the initial transcription. To reiterate, a composition's recorded performance and the musical material it offers may be evaluated differently depending on whether it is perceived as a product of spontaneous creation or of deliberate premeditation. At any rate, what matters most is that the editorial process is guided by a clearly defined objective that is consistently applied and transparently communicated to the edition's user.

7. Editorial Authority and the Posthumous Edition as Argument

In Chapter 5, I have argued that since all musical texts, including the composer's, are merely versions of the work they instantiate, one may recognize a posthumous score as a valid source for faithful future performances of the composition. That said, the editorial process for a posthumously notated work remains inherently speculative and subjective, and the absence of direct or indirect textual sources from the composer leaves both the integrity of the resulting score and the process behind its creation open to question. In addition, maintaining the boundaries between compositional achievement and editorial authority is a puzzling task in any editorial process, and the interplay between them is even more intricate and ambiguous when dealing with posthumously notated works, where no authorized written text is available as a reference point. In these cases, the editor's involvement and contribution in shaping how these particular, previously un-notated compositions are preserved, disseminated, and eventually perceived is unavoidably substantial, potentially contributing to the very constitution of the work, even, regardless of the ultimate set goal being the accurate realization of someone else's compositional ideas. Namely, their impact on the work's text may be so pronounced that it could be recognized as an instance of co-authorship.

All these considerations prompt a few critical questions. To what degree does the editor function as a creative, rather than only mediating, agent in such an editorial process? Can editions of posthumously notated compositions be viewed only as part of socially constructed interpretations, rather than as authoritative and accurate/faithful textual representations of the composer's compositional ideas? And how should the editor's contribution be conveyed in the edited score to ensure that users clearly recognize the

nature and extent of the former's involvement in representing the composer's artistic achievement, provided that such kind of clarifications are essential? Despite the fundamentally interpretative, critical act of editing, as well as the growing acceptance of the idea that any edition – musical or literary – is merely one among several valid interpretations that define "an indefinitely long chain of complementary texts and paratexts" (Cook 2015, 123), the question remains whether *valid* editorial decisions, even if *unverified*, can produce a posthumous text that deserves recognition as an authoritative score of the work.

7.1. Authorship and Secondary Agency in Posthumously Notated Compositions

Since the late twentieth century, there has been some departure from the notion of single authorship and the idea that artworks are solely the products of individual creators. Scholars and theorists increasingly recognize the influence of others, such as family members, friends, editors, and publishers, in shaping the creation, as well as the reception of artworks. As Sondra Bacharach and Deborah Tollefsen observe, there is a "growing acceptance of the degree to which art making is social and collaborative" (Bacharach and Tollefsen 2015, 72), while Tanselle similarly argues that "all works in all media, all human artifacts, may be viewed either as the products of individual creators or as the results of the collaborative effort of all the persons required to bring them to the attention of the public" (Tanselle 1995, 24). As a result of this shift away from single authorship, "fevered agitation about irrecoverable intentions has been replaced by calm analyses of material documents" (Shillingsburg 2010, 168); while the concept of compositional intention may guide an editorial process, the objective of creating an authoritative score is ultimately fulfilled by

evaluating the information the existing sources provide and making well-informed decisions based on it.

Although the idea of single authorship has been challenged within academic and theoretical discourse, it is unclear and doubtful whether users of literary or musical texts have indeed entertained such revisionist perspectives. Yet again, it is worth examining if frameworks that address relational and collaborative aspects of artistic production, such as those of co-authorship and multiple authorship, can be employed to describe and acknowledge the editor's role in the posthumous edition of an un-notated composition. It is worth clarifying that 'co-authorship' and 'multiple authorship' are two distinct frameworks that suggest different degrees of contribution and responsibility in the creation of a work. While the former concept, which could potentially be applied in instances of posthumously created musical texts, suggests a deliberate effort by two or more authors to produce a work in which their individual contributions are intended to be integrated into an inseparable and cohesive whole, the latter can be applied to a work composed of distinct and independently created components, brought together to form a collective entity.[73]

Considering the transcriber-editor's substantial role in constructing the musical text of a posthumously notated work, one may argue that this is an instance of co-authorship. However, even if compromised moments and passages in the initial transcription of an un-notated composition may require a more creative contribution in constructing the musical text, this editorial process does not generally demand the *invention* of new material. Ultimately, however, the resulting score – consisting of inherently unverifiable and interpretative decisions – is the sole product of the editor's authority, and as demonstrated

[73] For a more thorough discussion on authorship, co-authorship, and multiple authorship, see Hick (2014).

with Economou's two piano cycles, such an editorial process navigates a nuanced boundary between reconstruction and authorship, refinement and contribution. In Livingston's words, co-authorship is "an uncoerced cooperative activity requiring shared intentions [...] that are the object of mutual belief among those parties making the work" (Livingston 2011, 221). This characterization seems unsuitable to describe the editorial process involved in realizing a deceased composer's un-notated composition, since the editor does not act with a joint commitment as a co-creator of the work, but as a mediator, whose objective is to produce a textual realization that enables the work's future performances.

To further clarify this distinction, it is useful to refer to a definition of 'the author' too: "one with the ultimate responsibility for the form and content of the work, including its artistic and, where applicable, moral qualities". As Darren Hudson Hick argues, "we hold the author or authors responsible for the ideas being expressed [in a work] and the form of that expression. This responsibility [...] arises from the author's power to select and arrange elements as constitutive of the work" (Hick 2014, 151). The editor of a posthumously notated composition assumes responsibility only for contributing to the shaping of the "form" of the "composer's expression", while the creative authority for the composition reflected in their textual realization is still the composer's. However, the matter becomes complicated by the fact that the edited score, by its very nature, prescribes, after all, what is and what is not constitutive of the work. By making editorial choices to construct this musical text without reference to other textual sources, the editor inevitably selects which elements are to be treated as intrinsic to the composition, and consequently, while they may not be its creator, they influence how the work is instantiated and ultimately perceived.

Yet in this process, there is no real sense of collaboration, since the editor's aim is not to create the composition alongside the composer, but to carry out, on the composer's behalf, a task left unfulfilled, without claiming creative parity. Consequently, the framework of co-authorship does not accurately capture the role of the editor when preparing editions of posthumously notated works. Rather, I argue that the most fitting framework for describing and understanding the role of the transcriber-editor in preparing a prescriptive and authoritative musical text is that of secondary agency.

The concept of secondary agency applies in situations where "an agent, A, is acting on behalf of another agent, B, and an action is attributed to B on the basis of A's actions". Secondary agents can be, for example, a lawyer drafting a will for a client, a parliamentary representative voting on behalf of constituents, a real estate agent negotiating a property sale for his client, or parents completing official documents for their children (Bacharach and Tollefsen 2015, 77). This concept has been thoroughly explored by David Copp responding to Thomas Hobbes' theory of artificial persons (Copp 1980),[74] and subsequently adopted by Bacharach and Tollefsen in their discussion on instances where works are credited to deceased artists, even if others have made significant contributions to their content, or when the work is widely considered unfinished "by any standard of completion" (Bacharach and Tollefsen 2015, 71). In the latter instance, they examine whether a posthumously completed work should be regarded as the same that the author left behind, or as a distinct creation. Although un-notated compositions may sometimes indeed remain

[74] In his discussion, Copp focuses on the relationship between author and actor, where the former grants the latter the authority to act on their behalf, and therefore, the author himself can indeed evaluate and validate those actions. In cases of posthumously notated musical works, nonetheless, the notion of secondary agency is complicated by the absence of the composer, raising questions about the legitimacy of the editor's authority.

unfinished, or the available recordings may provide an incomplete, sketch version of them, this does not appear to be the case with Economou's *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* and most of his *Hommage à J. S. Bach*. Yet the framework of secondary agency still offers a compelling lens through which one may understand an editor's role in the process of appropriately creating a musical text for an un-notated work.

In the case of posthumously notated works, the editor acts on behalf of the composer to produce an edition intended for future performances, and although significant time, meticulous work and considerable interpretative judgment is invested in the preparation of this *ex nihilo* musical text, what the final product reflects is credited to the composer, not the editor. Copp explains in his 1980 article that one's actions can be ascribed to another when the first acts "by authority" of the second, and that "[w]hen the actor acts by authority, he 'represents' the author who 'owns' his actions." Conversely, when the actor acts beyond or contrary to the authority granted by the author, the action is considered solely the actor's own (Copp 1980, 583-4). If the editor strives to construct a musical text that reflects as accurately as possible the composer's creative ideas rather than their own – as was the case with Economou's *Corelli Variations* and most of *Hommage* – the editor remains a mediator and not an author, providing the product of the composer's authorship and creative labour through an informed process. Ultimately, to act on another's behalf is to serve their interests, and the objective of any editorial attempt to create an authoritative musical text of an un-notated composition must be, first and foremost, to avoid distortion of compositional achievement.

There is no doubt that, in cases such as the eleventh and twelfth movements of Economou's *Hommage*, the editor's role transcends that of a mediator, and due to the extent of their creative input in shaping the musical text, they may more accurately be identified as a creative contributor. Certainly, this level of involvement borders on re-composition. Nonetheless, I argue that it remains consistent with the notion of the editor as a secondary agent acting in service of the composer's interest. There is definitely no real sense of collaboration with the composer, and the editorial aim is not to bring into existence an entirely new composition. Thus, it remains difficult to identify this process as co-authorship. The editor does not treat the un-notated piece as an inspiration to compose a new work. Rather, they suggest an enhanced version of what was performed by the composer – their own reconstruction, grounded in a retrospective understanding of the composer's performed actions. The resulting musical text is a suggestion through which the original performed composition may be (newly) perceived. In other words, no matter how substantial the editor's contribution is to the initial transcription, if the editor shapes the work's reception and performability in the name of the composer, the former remains a secondary agent whose authority derives from their role to preserve and not to create.

The legitimacy of an editor's actions in cases of posthumously notated compositions could, on some level, rest on authorization, whether legal or less formal. In these instances, it cannot be granted by the composer himself for obvious reasons, yet the composer's estate or the copyright holder of the composition could warrant such authorization, allowing the editor to construct and subsequently publish a reliable text for future performances (Bacharach and Tollefsen 2015, 78). However, mere permission of this kind does not seem to suffice to grant full editorial authority. As argued throughout this

dissertation, what legitimizes the editor's role here is not formal sanction, but the rigour and integrity of the editorial process itself, whose objective must be to produce a text representing as faithfully as possible one's compositional achievement. Once again, this undertaking requires a profound understanding of the composer's compositional and interpretative work, which allows a thorough engagement with the resulting transcription as a legitimate textual source, as well as the appropriate use of the composer's recorded performance(s) of the un-notated work. Essentially, the editor's authority stems from informed decision-making, instead of certainty, grounded in contextual sensitivity and scholarly depth. In Tanselle's words, "[a] text reconstructed by a person who is immersed in, and has thought deeply about, the body of surviving evidence relevant to a work, its author, and its time may well teach the rest of us something we could not have discovered for ourselves, even if the reconstruction can never be definitive" (Tanselle 1994, 5).

The American book editor Maxwell Perkins argued that "an editor at most releases energy. He creates nothing" (quoted in Love 2002, 49).[75] This statement identifies an editor as an 'enabler', instead of a creator, that facilitates the realization of a work's potential in textual form without introducing original material. However, the editor of a posthumously notated composition does, in fact, engage in a generative act, and through the process of transcription and editing, they bring into existence not compositional ideas but a musical text of the work it represents. As discussed, such a notation comprises the editor's interpretative decisions and judgment, yet this does not diminish the legitimacy of the resulting edition as a set of well-informed conjectures. Even the so-called Urtext editions, which claim definitiveness, and strive to objectively present an unmediated version of 'the

[75] Love notes that the phrase originally appeared in Jason Steger's 'The Word Servant'.

composer's intentions', are themselves the product of editorial interpretation. Hence, if one accepts that the outcome of typical editorial processes is not "the composer's written text", but "the editor's reconstruction of it" (Grier 1996, 11), then a posthumously created text (yet not the composition it represents) is without doubt the editor's, rather than the composer's.

7.2. The Posthumous Edition as the Editor's Argument

Even in the most rigorous, well-informed endeavour to create a prescriptive text, whose authority derives from precisely this conscious effort to provide a text devoid of descriptive elements, it must be acknowledged that editions of posthumously notated compositions are merely suggestions. In other words, the edition of a posthumously notated work functions as the transcriber-editor's scholarly (and perhaps artistic) argument for how the work might be realized in textual form, in order to be subsequently performed.[76] As Eggert writes, approaching editions as arguments means that such texts cease to be "understood to be in a one-to-one relationship with the work considered as existing in some ideal sense but, rather, as part of a rhetorical and semiotic unrolling of the editorial argument" (Eggert 2019, 75). Essentially, an edition is not the one and only possible text that can reflect the work it instantiates. Instead, it is part of an ongoing, ever-evolving interpretative process. As argued, multiple musical texts can instantiate the same work, while just a single edition, potentially based on a composer's manuscripts, can generate varied interpretations of the same work, so much so that it may seem as if each performance was based on a different text altogether. Hence, the provisional or unverified nature of editions of posthumously

[76] The concept of a critical edition functioning as a form of argument was first introduced by Eggert; see, for example, Eggert (2019).

notated works should not undermine their authority or value originating from the editor's decisions.

The particularity of un-notated compositions demands this kind of interpretative stance when it comes to the reception of their posthumous texts. Without any written sources to guide and validate the editorial process, every single notated element in such a composition's posthumous text essentially forms the editor's proposal as to how the composition may appear in writing, instead of the work's creator. After all, posthumously notated compositions are, in a sense, a *tertium quid* – entities shaped outside the constraints of Western notation, only disseminated aurally, and later fixed in writing by someone other than their composer. Therefore, acknowledgment of the particular generative process of these posthumous texts enhances the editor's authority, as well as the validity of their text-argument, as one version among potential realizations that could collectively contribute to our understanding of a posthumously notated composition, given that such a text is meticulously constructed with a clear intent for prescriptive function.[77]

An edition of a posthumously notated work inevitably embodies the editor's interpretative argument, yet it is equally important to emphasize that "an edited text should reflect, not the personal preferences of the editor, but the editor's judgements regarding the preferences of the author" (Tanselle 1994, 6). Referring to the text of a posthumously notated work as 'the editor's argument' should not be confused with interpretative editions, such as Schnabel's editions of Beethoven's piano sonatas, where the performer-editor's interpretive choices, such as dynamics, phrasing, and articulation, are incorporated into the

[77] This idea of aural/oral-derived texts as inherently hybrid in form was suggested by John D. Niles (2013, 212).

score alongside the composer's original markings. Certainly, the resulting edition and its musical text in its entirety is the product of the editor's informed, critical construction grounded on their judicious assessment and analysis of the recording and the resulting transcription, as well as their musical competence and insight. However, even if the editor is, by necessity, the author of the *text*, the goal remains to reflect the composer's compositional achievement as accurately as the circumstances and the available sources permit.

7.3. Presentational Attributes of the Edition-Argument

Any argument that merits serious consideration, let alone validation, must be clearly articulated and supported by evidence. If a critical edition is indeed approached as a form of argument concerning the written instantiation of a posthumously notated work, there are matters that demand particular attention in its preparation. As a textual instantiation of an un-notated composition, a score through its structural and visual elements can significantly shape how its content is perceived, evaluated and interpreted.

Textual criticism scholars, whether in the literary or musical domain, agree that any kind of editorial action should be transparently indicated and properly justified, whether through footnotes or critical commentary. Normally, by clearly distinguishing elements stemming from the editor's own judgment and critical assessment of source materials, and by offering a comprehensive account of how those sources have informed the edition, the score's user is given insight into the editorial work put on the creation of an edition, and subsequently, they are able to make their own informed decisions while navigating the

authority and validation the editor's musical text is expected to carry. Nevertheless, every element of a posthumous edition reflects solely the editor's conception of how the work should be rendered in written form. Hence, a separation between the 'composer's text' and the 'editor's text', or the 'editor's interventions' to pre-existing sources, is impossible to maintain.

Grier argues that although a musical score "is an extremely complex piece of visual communication", one should not attempt "to reduce that complexity but to enable the user to grasp it efficiently" (Grier 1996, 156). However, one needs to be aware that, although some users may seek full clarity regarding the editorial process and the evolution of the edition's content, others simply wish to understand the most practical and immediate implications of editorial decisions – especially those that remain open to question – without being overwhelmed by exhaustive detail. A performer, after all, relies on the editor to do the necessary critical groundwork, hence, while editorial judgment should clearly be communicated in a critical edition, it should not fall to the user to establish the text that they perform. At any rate, as de Assis argues, there needs to be "clarity of presentation, allowing immediate comprehension and coordination of the many disparate elements that are being communicated through the score" (de Assis 2009, 11). In preparing an edition of a posthumously notated work, then, one must aim for a balance between transparently communicating the editor's role in shaping the text in a comprehensive, yet practical manner, and providing a score devoid of unnecessary clarifications.

The Complete New Debussy Edition (*Œuvres complètes de Claude Debussy*) is probably the first major editorial project to treat a composer's own recordings (in this case Debussy's Welte piano rolls) as sources of equal authority to written documents, using

them to inform and justify editorial decisions. Describing how variants and other observations deriving from these recordings were eventually integrated in the edition of Debussy's *Préludes*, editor Roy Howat explains that "to avoid littering the new edition with debris" they had to be sorted into four categories: a) "clear corrections", included directly in the main text, and mentioned at the end of the edition; b) "interesting and musically sensible variants", provided on auxiliary staves, where the validity of Debussy's original material found in written sources could not be challenged either; c) "barely-plausible variants", mentioned only at the end of the edition; and d) "obvious fluffs", deliberately omitted "to avoid pages of useless clutter" (Howat 1994, 9).

Certainly, Howat's classification of the various observations, arising after analysis of Debussy's piano rolls in relation to textual sources, provides a valuable account on how material deriving exclusively from a composer's recording can be judiciously incorporated into a critical edition, whether in the main musical text, or discussed elsewhere for its user's consideration. However, preparing an edition of a posthumously notated work is an exceptionally complex task that demands a somewhat different approach in how editorial observations and amendments are presented. In such cases, it is neither practical nor desirable to provide footnotes or commentary of some sort for every editorial decision. As the process of transcription and the subsequent editing of this text is inherently highly subjective, one would have to address through footnotes or in the critical commentary virtually every single element that appears on the score, something that, for obvious reasons, would ultimately overwhelm its user. Similarly, since the objective of such an endeavour is to produce a prescriptive, rather than a descriptive text, the resulting edition should avoid becoming an account of how the composer's recorded performance sounds

like through detailed remarks in footnotes and critical commentary, even if these were to justify the omission of performed expressive attributes from the musical text to ensure its prescriptive function. Therefore, if the edition is to be understood as the editor's 'argument', then its components – the preface, the main text with accompanying footnotes, and the critical commentary at the end – should all together be seen as forming an interdependent 'system', where each part contributes to the overall validity and value of the edition. In other words, the resulting edition should be understood as consisting of interconnected parts and elements that collectively reflect the editor's interpretive stance.[78]

The preface of the edition must serve as the foundation for the editor's argument, addressing the editorial rationale and the guiding principles behind the analysis and interpretation of the composer's recording, as well as the realization of the resulting prescriptive text. In other words, if the editor's aim is to create a prescriptive musical text instantiating the performed composition, instead of a score depicting in as much detail as possible the composer's performance, then this approach needs to be specified and explained. In addition, as with any other introduction of a critical edition, it must provide an overview of the work, reference to contextual information related to the composer's compositional and interpretative work and practices, as well as discussion on the recording(s) used and any other resources that were consulted to inform the editorial process. Although the edition's users should have access to the recordings used for its creation, it is crucial that the editor comments on the quality of the recording(s), as well as the nature of the interpretation it provides. Namely, they must refer to any limitations posed by the quality of the recording itself in the transcription and editorial process, whether the

[78] This idea is suggested by Eggert (2012; 2019).

intended function of the recorded performance is known or can be determined (e.g. an optimal, 'ideal' interpretation of the work, or a spontaneous, unprepared/informal performance), and how these considerations affected the editorial process.

As the edition's introduction is designed to offer a comprehensive account of the editorial approach taken, including the manner the composer's recorded performance was used to construct the musical text, principles discussed there that are extensively applied throughout the text need not be reiterated at each instance to avoid repetitive footnotes addressing similar editorial decisions. For example, since Economou's typically heavy-handed and harsh playing may lead to misinterpretation of numerous moments throughout his performances, the choice of somewhat softer dynamics than what his performance actually conveys, or the omission of accent or *sforzando* markings in the score on this basis do not require repeated clarification. That said, if the introduction proves insufficient to justify an editorial decision which may also have an impact on the perception of the work, and/or is subject to debate, further explanation should be offered in the form of footnotes and/or within the critical commentary.

The decision to incorporate an editorial alteration directly into the main text (pitch and rhythm), present it as a suggestion, or address it in a footnote, critical commentary, or not at all, depends on several factors: the depth of explanation required (i.e. whether a brief footnote suffices or a more detailed commentary is required), the alteration's potential impact on the perception of the composition by the edition's user, and therefore, the urgency and directness with which the information should be communicated. Performance directions should also be appropriately addressed in the edition, where that is needed. Although the transcription of performed material and the editorial choices concerning pitch

and rhythm carries some degree of subjectivity, defining dynamics, tempo indications, articulation and other expressive indications is a process requiring a much greater level of subjectivity and personal judgment. In standard practice, if a performance direction that appears in the musical text is an editorial suggestion, or its inclusion in it is open for debate for whatever reason, then it is enclosed in brackets or parentheses, while in cases of hairpin dynamics and slurs, they are distinguished from those attributed to the composer with diagonal or vertical lines. If this practice were applied to an edition for a posthumously notated composition, then every performance direction would be placed between brackets and parentheses. Hence, a careful distinction must once again be made between performance directions that need to be addressed through footnotes and/or require reference to the critical commentary of the edition, and those that could be incorporated directly into the text as part of the transcriber-editor's 'argument' for the composition's prescriptive textual realization.

For example, if the divergence in expressive attributes between the composer's recording and the edition is substantial enough to potentially confuse the user or risk misrepresenting compositional achievement, or similarly, if such a decision is open to debate, explanatory notes may be included in the footnotes and the critical commentary. Also, if a dynamic/dynamic change, or a tempo change does not appear in the composer's performance, yet a more hermeneutic engagement with the recording and the musical material suggests its inclusion in the edited score (and vice versa), these performance directions should appear in the main text in brackets, or should otherwise clearly marked as purely editorial suggestions, with corresponding justification in the critical commentary.

While they stem from the particular demands of Economou's *Hommage*, a few additional considerations merit brief attention, as they could be applicable to other endeavours for the creation of an edition for a posthumously notated composition. If the written text of an un-notated composition requires notational practices that deviate from standard conventions, then a brief guidance on interpreting these elements should be provided in footnotes of the score, explaining the features of the recorded performance that led to such textual representation of compositional ideas. Additionally, in instances like the eleventh and twelfth movements of *Hommage*, where extensive reconstruction of an un-notated composition may be decided – whether due to poor recording quality, a partially realized or inadequately prepared interpretation, or an improvised performance evidently compromised by its spontaneous nature – the editor's intervention to the initial transcription becomes very complex and difficult to convey with clarity and accuracy to the edition's user.

When editorial intervention is limited to short passages, such editorial 'contributions' may be incorporated into the main text using smaller noteheads, or indicated as *ossia* passages, accompanied by relevant explanatory footnotes. However, when the resulting transcription of an un-notated piece that is considered compromised, and therefore, substantial conjectural reconstruction is deemed necessary throughout the entire composition for various reasons, then it is imperative that the editor presents both the original transcription and their suggested version side by side. In this case, the editor should outline in the edition's introduction the scope and rationale of their intervention, specifying the principles and criteria guiding the reconstruction of these un-notated pieces. Within the main body of the edition, the original transcription, with some elementary, 'light'

alterations, may be placed on the left-hand page, while the corresponding reconstructed version is presented on the right-hand page. This layout ensures both transparency and accessibility, allowing users to compare the source material with the editorial reconstruction in a clear, side-by-side format. To maintain a clear distinction between the initial transcription and editorial alterations, typographic cues should be employed. On the right-hand pages, where editorial input can be clearly differentiated from the original transcription, it can be indicated by using smaller noteheads, as in the eleventh movement of *Hommage*. However, in cases where such reconstruction entails more extensive intervention, as in the twelfth movement, and the transcribed material is creatively reconfigured, alternative means of visual differentiation must be employed.

Leading publishing houses such as G. Henle Verlag, have developed software for digital critical editions, offering features far beyond those of paper medium. They provide immediate access to high-resolution scans of primary sources, variant readings, and bar-specific critical commentary via pop-up windows, allowing users to engage directly with materials that are typically relegated to the back of printed scores, often overlooked due to their dense and unintuitive presentation.[79] While the question of whether digital editions are truly surpassing printed editions in popularity remains open (despite the growing use of tablets in both practice rooms and on stage), it is certain that the critical edition of a posthumously notated composition can appear in a digital medium, in the same manner as that of a 'normative' work. What may distinguish such editions, however, is the integration of the composer's recorded performance(s). Just like digital editions provide bar-specific scans from primary sources and variants, these editions could allow users to listen to the

[79] For comprehensive discussions on recent developments on digital music editions, see Rink (2021); Veit (2021); Bogdanienė et al. (2024); Cividini (2024).

recording(s) that informed the editorial process, aligned precisely with individual bars or passages.

At first glance, such a feature appears highly appealing. It offers access to excerpts from the composer's recorded performance aligned with specific passages of the edited score, providing direct insight into the nature and extent of editorial intervention in the initial transcription. However, this approach seems problematic, as it does not align with the established objective of a posthumously notated work's critical edition – the production of a prescriptive musical text intended for future performances. Namely, the ease of accessing excerpts of the composer's recording linked directly to individual bars may inadvertently encourage users to adopt elements of their interpretation, undermining efforts to present a score free of expressive nuances and musical material that belong solely to the performance.

Nonetheless, the composer's recording is the primary source for the creation of the un-notated composition's edition, and given the inherent subjectivity involved in its use and realization during this process, it should indeed be made available to its users, who should be encouraged to consult it alongside the edited score. That said, rather than being provided as fragmentary excerpts corresponding to specific passages or bars, the work (or its movements, if a multi-movement composition) should be presented in its entirety, as part of the critical commentary at the end of the edition. In this way, it can serve as reference material for the evaluation of the edited score and the editorial decisions it consists of, without making its user imitate features of the composer's performance. The composer's recording can be made accessible to the edition's user through various means, such as an

accompanying CD, website links, or QR codes (as is the case with the two critical editions accompanying this dissertation), allowing easy and direct access to the relevant recordings.

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Despite the significant and formative role the transcriber-editor plays in the preservation, dissemination and perception of an un-notated composition, their actions and decisions ultimately occur in the name of the composer. This process does not involve the creation of musical material, either in collaboration with the composer, or independently. Instead, the transcription of a composer's recording is judiciously processed with the purpose of producing a text that enables faithful performances. When approached with rigorous editorial practices and well-supported decisions grounded in a thorough examination of all available sources, such a text attains a level of scholarly validity, and this validity is further enhanced when this score appears as the main body of a critical edition, depending on the care and precision with which it was prepared. Essentially, what initially seems to be an unauthorized transcription can evolve into a legitimate and authoritative score, through meticulous work and appropriate presentation of editorial contribution in the edition.

The resulting critical edition may be understood as a *proposition* – it is the editor's inherently subjective argument for how the un-notated composition can be textually represented, which can be situated among several other, equally valid and authoritative suggestions of textual representations of the same composition. The musical text that appears in such an edition is entirely the editor's and not the composer's, reflecting the former's interpretation and understanding of the work rather than the latter's. However, its sole purpose remains to reflect the intrinsic elements of the composition, which the editor

seeks to recover by attempting to understand what was intended to be communicated in the un-notated composition's recorded performance. Certainly, relying on and evoking compositional intentions in an editorial process is a highly debatable endeavour. That said, this notion merely serves as a guiding principle that allows the editor to unravel layers of transmission and interpretation, in order to recover the constitutive elements of the composition as accurately as possible.

The validity of the critical edition is defined by all its constituent parts – the preface, the main musical text, and the critical commentary – that collectively articulate the editor's argument and their authority. The content of a posthumous score is inherently subjective, shaped entirely by the editor's grasp, interpretation and realization of the composition. Commentary on every single feature of the musical text would be exhaustive, and therefore, aspects of the editorial rationale alongside editorial intervention or contribution must be communicated in a clear and practical manner, where necessary, and their significance in understanding the editor's role in the text must be reflected in the immediacy and extent to which such information is provided. Certainly, of paramount significance is the inclusion of the composer's recorded performance, as it enables the edition's users to familiarize themselves with the primary source used for the creation of the edition, as well as to assess the validity of the suggested musical text.

All these remarks position the transcriber-editor and their edition as one among several factors contributing to the ever-evolving socially constructed interpretation of a musical composition. This is not unique to un-notated pieces – the perception of all compositions is in one way or another shaped by a variety of influences, such as editors and editions, musicologists, recording engineers, performers, or even audiences. However, as

the musical text holds indispensable importance in Western art music practices, it serves as the foundation on which the practices of the aforementioned people are built. Hence, the editor's responsibility becomes even more critical than in typical editorial processes when dealing with un-notated compositions, as the chain of transmission and perception starts with a text constructed entirely by them, rather than the composer. Although their edition can be seen as an argument (and one of many) of how an un-notated composition can be posthumously notated, it must be a meticulously prepared, thoroughly supported and convincing one, in order to be recognized as a valid and meaningful contribution to this network of interpretations that shape our understanding of one's compositional achievement.

8. Conclusions

This dissertation has addressed the neglected field of un-notated music in the Western art music tradition that exists only through recordings, and the editorial process required to transform a posthumous notational transcription of an un-notated composition's recorded performance into a score – a musical text that provides as accurately as possible the intrinsic elements of the piece, or a state of it the existing sources allow us to grasp, devoid of expressive attributes that belong exclusively to the composer's interpretation, and free of flaws, errors, and inaccuracies. In addition, this research has dealt with the ontological identity of these compositions and their posthumous text(s), as well as the role of the transcriber-editor in their formation, dissemination and perception. It has challenged ontological views on the nature of musical works and their written realizations, their supposed fixity, and the conditions under which scores and interpretations can be regarded as valid instantiations of a composition. This study has also brought attention to the relatively unknown life and work of Cypriot pianist and composer Nicolas Economou, serving as the first comprehensive academic investigation of this pianist-composer in English, and the very first conducted with full access to the Nicolas Economou Archive. The critical editions of Economou's *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* and *Hommage à J. S. Bach* which complement this dissertation contribute to the pianistic repertoire and are intended for future publication.

Using as case studies Economou's two un-notated piano cycles, this dissertation has demonstrated that, while a definitive separation between composition and interpretation may be unattainable, an editorial endeavour to distinguish the composer's interpretation from the piece itself can provide a valid and authoritative, if unverifiable,

outcome, though it ultimately communicates the editor's understanding of the composition instead of the composer's definitive textual representation of it. What defines the legitimacy of such a process and its product is a clearly defined editorial objective, a conscientious and rigorous effort to fulfil this objective in respect to the composer's creative labour and compositional achievement, and a methodological framework grounded in a deep understanding and familiarity with compositional and interpretative practices of the composer that informs this process. As with any reasonable editorial undertaking, the goal has not been to assert absolute insight into the 'composer's intentions', but to complete, using all the available sources, a well-defined editorial task based on informed and/or substantiated decisions. Certainly, what enhances even further the worth of this task and the resulting critical edition is a transparently and effectively communicated editorial approach throughout, which allows users to critically engage with the editorial process and its outcomes, fostering trust in its scholarly and musical value.

The editorial process of a posthumously notated composition ultimately differs from that of a conventional notated work. Certainly, as this study has demonstrated, transcriptions of un-notated compositions' recorded performances can and should be treated as legitimate notations, much like any other textual source, as a basis for the necessary editorial alterations, as long as the transcription process is carried out with the highest possible accuracy and thoroughness. Conventional editorial approaches can be applied to these texts in order to elevate their integrity where needed. Nonetheless, the editor's task in posthumously notated compositions reaches beyond the resulting transcription itself, navigating a broader spectrum of information that the composer's recorded performance provides. The evaluation of the musical material these notations

provide (pitch, rhythm, expressive attributes) and the corresponding editorial decisions are substantiated by acknowledgment of the very nature of the primary sources used – the recordings. Namely, the editorial process is supported by an understanding that these texts occur from a performance of a composition that has been shaped and evolved without ever being notated, as well as an interpretation that is potentially flawed, compromised, or even provisional. The un-notated nature of such a composition and its interpretation might pose editorial and notational challenges that need to be effectively addressed by the editor, to provide an accessible and performable, yet alone faithful, musical text. And depending on the level of preparation and accuracy of the performance itself, such a process might demand not only restorative/corrective, but more creative editorial intervention.

This dissertation has also challenged an established stance in Western art music, grounded in the concept of *Werktreue*, which requires a work to primarily exist as a definitive text that, in some way, derives from an authorial original. It has shown that premeditated un-notated compositions that exist as recorded performances rather than texts can qualify as musical works. They can be equally or even more artistically valuable (and potentially complex) than notated ones, while sharing all the essential characteristics of what are typically identified as musical works. Recognising an un-notated composition as a work implies enduring significance, as well as certain responsibilities for editors and performers that apply to their editorial and interpretative practices: a deliberate effort to avoid distortion of the composer's compositional achievement at any level, and to present the composition, whether through edited texts or performances, as accurately and faithfully as possible.

Furthermore, this study has contested the notion that only scores originating from composers' manuscripts are worthy of being ascribed authority, significance, and value.

Although a musical work is normally preserved and disseminated through its composer's manuscript and texts that originate from it, a composition that was only performed but never notated by its composer during their lifetime can exist in textual form and be further performed only through posthumous notations. As discussed, a musical score represents just one of many possible textual realizations of a composition (or a particular state of it), whether authored by the composer or someone else. Therefore, the standing of a posthumously created text for an un-notated composition as the product of the efforts of someone other than the composer does not diminish its value and authority. Instead, it should be approached as a notation that reproduces the same aural result that the composer's would have, as long as it was produced with the intention to do so. That said, while posthumously created texts can be used as valid sources for faithful performances, their usability in formal musicological analysis may be problematic. Typical analytical approaches are based on textual elements, rather than aural experiences. Therefore, although every effort should be made to avoid misrepresentation of compositional achievement both aurally and textually, it seems that arguing that a posthumous score holds equal analytical validity and authority to a text directly originating from an authorial original may be regarded as a tenuous position. Nonetheless, it could be used cautiously for such purposes, provided that one bears in mind the genetic process of both composition and its text.

In addition to the aforementioned observations, the editorial process outlined in this dissertation challenges the traditional hierarchy between textual and audio primary sources in scholarly editing. By prioritizing audio sources over textual, it suggests a re-evaluation of the authority typically ascribed to both types of sources during the preparation of critical

editions for musical compositions, whether un-notated or notated. It proposes that variants offered by composers' performances of their own works can actively inform the editorial process and be incorporated in the main text, rather than relegated to footnotes or the critical commentary as inferior to variants derived from textual sources.

There is no doubt that in editorial endeavours of posthumously notated compositions, the editor's role is of paramount importance. While they hold responsibility for the dissemination of the composition, since it is perceived through (and because of) the text they produced, they cannot be acknowledged as a co-creator, neither as a collaborator in any sense. Ultimately, the editor of a posthumously notated composition completes a task, in the name of the composer, that was never realized during their lifetime. Moreover, the validity and authority ascribed to the posthumous score, due to the editorial rigour with which it was prepared, is further strengthened when this musical text becomes part of a critical edition, whose components collectively present the editor's argument regarding how the posthumously notated composition can be textually represented, in an effective and practical manner.

This research project was undertaken to shed light on the little-explored domain of musical compositions that exist solely through recordings, never having been written down by their composers. Although relatively unknown, these compositions constitute a limited, yet musically and artistically rich repertoire that deserves to be notated and brought to life through future performances. As demonstrated in the outset of this dissertation, scholarly engagement with such pieces and their transcriptions within the Western art music tradition is minimal, while existing published editions of this kind of composition display inconsistent editorial approaches that, interestingly enough, fall short of the rigorous standards typically

applied to critical editions of 'normative', notated compositions. Until now, there has been no comprehensive academic study addressing un-notated compositions within the Western art music tradition that exist only as recorded performances, and certainly no focus on an editorial approach that explicitly aims for a prescriptive, rather than descriptive, text for these pieces, as part of a carefully prepared critical edition.

Fascinated by the un-notated oeuvre of Nicolas Economou, I undertook this doctoral research to lay the groundwork for a scholarly approach to these compositions on both a conceptual and editorial level by proposing methodological and ideological frameworks that can be applied to other cases of un-notated compositions. Initially, the goal of this project was to develop a methodology that would produce definitive scores corresponding to the 'composer's intentions'. Soon, nonetheless, it became clear that such an objective was ultimately unattainable, not only because any editorial endeavour is by nature an interpretative task, but also because the primary sources for these pieces exist in a medium other than text, and therefore, the editor must navigate the dual challenge of analysing a recorded and interpretation and (re)constructing, almost *ex nihilo*, a text for the underlying composition. However, this dissertation puts forward a novel editorial methodology that has not previously been applied in similar editorial tasks, while the resulting critical editions, although not definitive, honour Economou's compositional achievements and equip pianists with musically credible scores for further faithful performances of the two cycles. Due to the inherently subjective nature of textual criticism and editorial judgment, any attempt to establish a rigid, universally applicable methodological process is very unlikely to succeed. Nonetheless, the editorial process outlined in this dissertation provides a solid methodological framework for approaching and

thoughtfully treating composers' recorded performances and the resulting transcriptions in similar editorial tasks.

The two piano cycles discussed here represent only a small part of Nicolas Economou's un-notated oeuvre still awaiting transcription, editing, and publication, while his life and contributions as a pianist and composer merit far greater scholarly research. Also, this dissertation focuses exclusively on un-notated piano music and the use of audio recordings as primary sources. Therefore, future research could explore such compositions for other instruments or ensembles, and employ the use of video recordings, examining how visual observations may inform a similar editorial process. The two case studies examined in this dissertation are primarily diatonic, adhering to conventional tonic and rhythmic frameworks. Hence, further studies might investigate the challenges presented by music that departs from such harmonic and rhythmic norms and traditional performance practices (e.g. employment of extended techniques).

Julius Eastman, Gabriela Montero, György Cziffra, Charles Ives, Vladimir Horowitz, Friedrich Gulda, and Arcadi Volodos are only some of the pianist-composers whose un-notated compositions, whether premeditated or improvised, deserve comparable editorial and scholarly attention, both in terms of editing and conceptual analysis. In addition, considering that un-notated music has been described as a 'musical Other', it seems worth considering how this notion of 'Otherness' can be explored in relation to their composers and their cultural, political, racial and sexual identities. Although no relevant discussion has been provided in this dissertation, Economou's identity as an unconventional 'classical' pianist and composer, who rejected formal differentiations between musical genres – a trait evident in both his interpretative practices and compositional language – as well as his

rebellious spirit and desire to challenge social and artistic norms, may help explain his reluctance to notate his piano compositions.

This dissertation primarily examined editorial practices applied to premeditated compositions – musical works – with only a relatively brief exploration of improvised pieces. The challenges presented by the improvisations discussed here were partly due to their ontological status as spontaneously created compositions, but arose mostly from the compositional demands imposed by the techniques required for their execution (i.e., contrapuntal writing). Consequently, future research could also focus on improvised compositions delivered through more stable, secure, and well-executed performances, exploring the editorial and notational challenges they may pose to the transcriber-editor when retrospectively documenting them, striving to enhance the integrity of their notations and producing a prescriptive musical text.

In recent years, artificial intelligence has become a powerful tool for advancing research across many disciplines, and it is tempting to advocate for the integration of AI in editorial practices. However, critical editing is fundamentally an interpretative task, and as this dissertation demonstrates, numerous nuanced parameters must be taken into consideration to produce a legitimate and musically valid result if the set objective is the creation of a prescriptive score for an un-notated composition. AI could potentially assist in validating certain observations, without replacing the human editor. That said, it seems inadequate to meet in the near future the complex challenges involved in transcribing and editing un-notated music, despite the explosion of related technological advances.

Musical texts constitute an indispensable aspect of music-making in Western art music. Certainly, there have been efforts to question or diminish their significance in the

preservation, transmission, and perception of musical compositions. However, it would be a naive and dismissive approach to overlook the fact that they still play a vital role in musical performance, which, naturally, lies at the very heart of music's existence. Artistic integrity and responsibility should always act as guiding principles that regulate our engagement with musical compositions, as well as the *means* with which we do so.

Appendix. List of Compositions by Nicolas Economou

The date of composition for many of these works remains unknown. In these cases, their approximate chronological order has been determined after evaluation of the compositional language, and in instances of notated compositions, by examining Economou's handwriting and the materials used.

Piano Compositions

- *Scherzo*
- *Song of Freedom* (1970)
- *'Orthodoxia' Piano Sonata* (1970) *****
- *Kinderlaunen* (1972)
- *Prelude* (1972)
- *Memories* *****
- *Encore* (1974)
- *Exisosis* (1975)
- *Improvisation in Vier Sätzen* (1978) *****
- *Piece in B-flat Major*
- *Eight Nocturnes* *****
- *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* (1981/1985) *****
- *Variations on an Original Theme* *****
- *Waltz with Variations*
- *Rondo* (1984)
- *Für Mausi* (1984)
- *Hommage à J. S. Bach* (1984) *****
- *Mephisto Waltz Paraphrase* *****
- *Stilparodien* *****
- *Pictures for Piano* *****
- *Quatschmusik* *****
- *Reflections* *****
- *Sonate für Chick* *****

***** These compositions were never notated by Nicolas Economou.

Other

- *Conversation with Myself for Flute* (1992)

Arrangements

- P. I. Tchaikovsky - *The Nutcracker Suite* (arr. for 2 pianos, 4 hands)
- A. Vivaldi - *The Four Seasons* (arr. for 4 pianos, 8 hands)

Chamber Music

- *Divertimento No. 1* for Flute, Oboe, Clarinet and String Quartet (1969)
- *Song without Words* for Violin and Piano (1969)

- *Divertimento No. 2* for String Orchestra (1969)
- *Labyrinth* for Piano and Percussion
- *Cyprus Dances* for Clarinet in B, Bassoon, Trumpet in B, Trombone, Percussion, Violin and Bass (1978)
- *Cyprus Pictures* for Piano, Clarinet in A/B, Bassoon, Trumpet in B, Trombone, Percussion, Violin and Bass (1978)
- *Marina* for Voice and Piano (1993)

Music for Theatre and Film

- *The Tower*. Rock Opera (1972-1993; unfinished)
- *Die bleierne Zeit*, dir. Margarethe von Trotta. Film Soundtrack (1981)
- *Stations*, dir. Robert Wilson. Film Soundtrack (1982)
- *Heller Wahn*, dir. Margarethe von Trotta. Film Soundtrack (1983)
- *Civil WarS* ('The Seasons'; 'Los Angeles Suite'), dir. Robert Wilson. Music for the 1984 Summer Olympic Games
- *Unerreichbare Nähe*, dir. Dagmar Hirtz. Film Soundtrack (1984)
- *Marlene*, dir. Maximilian Schell. Documentary Soundtrack (1984)
- *Tschechow in meinem Leben*, dir. Vadim Glowna. Film Soundtrack (1985)
- *Rosa Luxemburg*, dir. Margarethe von Trotta. Film Soundtrack (1986)
- *Quarantäne*, dir. Nico Hofmann. Film Soundtrack (1989)
- *O Anthropos, to Ktinos, kai i Areti* (*Man, Beast and Virtue* by Luigi Pirandello), dir. Monica Vassiliou. Music for theatre play/Cyprus Theatre Organisation (1991)
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