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# “The Aroma of the Music and the Fragrance of the Weed”: Music and Smoking in Victorian England

„Muzikos aromatas ir tabako kvapas“: muzika ir rūkymas  
Viktorijos laikų Anglijoje

## Abstract

Throughout its social history smoking has been frequently associated with music, and has been a notable element in the participation and enjoyment of music making. In this essay I shall consider the relationship between smoking and music in the Victorian era, and the function of smoking as a significant agent for the popularisation of art music in the late nineteenth century, particularly through the vehicle of ‘smoking concerts’, which represent a unique and fascinating cultural phenomenon of this time. These concerts, initially established by aristocratic and bourgeois amateur music societies, started as private and exclusively male forms of entertainment. They provided a link between the established culture of the nobility, the social and musical practices of the eighteenth-century Catch Club, and the popular culture at the end of the nineteenth century. They gradually evolved to accommodate a socially diverse audience, including women, and their subsequent acceptance into mainstream concert halls in the later part of the Victorian era reflected changes not only in Victorian society, but also in its attitude towards both the performance and enjoyment of art music. The role of smoking concerts as agents of cultural change has been overlooked in the social history of Victorian music-making, and this study attempts to address this oversight.

**Reikšminiai žodžiai:** Music, smoking, smoking concerts, cultural change in the Victorian era, social history of Victorian music making, music societies.

## Anotacija

Rūkymas socialinėje istorijoje labai dažnai siejamas su muzika, jis buvo laikomas svarbiu elementu mėgaujantis muzikos kūrimo malonumais. Straipsnyje mėginama apžvelgti rūkymo ir muzikos tarpusavio ryšį Viktorijos laikais ir rūkymo kaip reikšmingo veiksnio funkciją populiarinant muzikos meną XIX a. pabaigoje, ypač per „rūkymo koncertus“, simbolizuojančius unikalų ir žavų to meto kultūros reiškinį. Tokius koncertus iš pradžių rengdavo mėgėjiškos aristokratų ir buržuazijos muzikų draugijos ir jie vykdavo privačiuose vakarėliuose, kur juose išimtinai linksmindavosi tik vyrai. Šie koncertai jungė nusistovėjusią aukštuomenės kultūrą ir XVIII a. *Catch Club* socialinio gyvenimo ir muzikavimo praktiką bei XIX a. pabaigos populiariąją kultūrą. Palengva auditorija tapo socialiniu požiūriu įvairesnė, buvo įtraukiamos ir moterys, o leidimas joms lankytis pagrindinėse koncertų salėse Viktorijos epochos pabaigoje atspindėjo tam tikrus pokyčius ne tik to meto visuomenėje, bet ir jos požiūryje į muzikos meną, jos atlikimą ir pomėgius. Rūkymo koncertų kaip kultūros pokyčių veiksnio vaidmuo socialinėje Viktorijos laikų muzikos istorijoje nėra tinkamai išnagrinėtas, todėl straipsniu siekiama šią spragą užpildyti.

**Reikšminiai žodžiai:** muzika, rūkymas, rūkymo koncertai, kultūriniai Viktorijos epochos pokyčiai, socialinė Viktorijos laikų muzikos meno formavimosi istorija, muzikos draugijos.

## Introduction

Despite their apparent incongruity, music and smoking are related in a number of different ways. Music has often celebrated the enjoyment of smoking in the lyrics of its songs,<sup>1</sup> while smoking has been an important element in the participation and enjoyment of music making in a variety of different contexts. For example, in 1889 the *Musical Times* rejoiced that, ‘Social enjoyment has taken a new form. We have our “glee dinners”, our banquets with “selections of high-class music”, and ... concerts of music which may be enjoyed in the company of a pipe or cigar.’<sup>2</sup> The justification for such concerts was that many people ‘accustomed to a cigar or pipe in the evening, and also exceedingly fond

of listening to the performance of good works, have begun to see that the gratification of the one desire need not interfere with the occasional gratification of the other.’<sup>3</sup> These smoking concerts, largely providing high-class music in a relaxed atmosphere, started in the 1860s as private and exclusively male forms of entertainment, but became increasingly fashionable in the 1880s and 1890s,<sup>4</sup> developing into a concert-type in their own right and facilitating the acceptance of smoking during the performance of art music in both private gatherings and at public concerts. Initially established by aristocratic and bourgeois amateur music societies they formed a link between the established culture of the nobility, the social and music practices of the eighteenth-century Catch Club, and the emergence of

popular culture at the end of the nineteenth century. They gradually evolved to accommodate a socially diverse audience, including women, and their subsequent appearance in mainstream concert halls in the later part of the Victorian era reflected changes not only in Victorian society, but also in its attitude towards the performance of art music.

Although smoking concerts represent a unique and fascinating cultural phenomenon of the last quarter of the nineteenth century, contributing to changing perceptions of art music, they were, like many other aspects of Victorian musical culture, not exclusively limited to London, although they originated there.<sup>5</sup> They were also relatively short-lived and only occasionally commented upon by the contemporary press, which makes a detailed investigation rather problematic. Here, I will begin by examining the prevailing social attitudes towards smoking, and its tangential association with music, since they have both a symbiotic and symbolic relationship.<sup>6</sup> I will then consider the role smoking played in changing perceptions towards the enjoyment of art music and the nature of the performance events in which it was found. Furthermore, since there is virtually no account of smoking concerts *per se*, I will set out a typology of these concerts, and consider certain aspects of their function within London's wider concert structure, as well as the more influential music societies which promoted them, considering both their social context and the musical programmes they offered. Smoking concerts of a lower social status will also be reviewed, mainly from the perspective of their musical content, which partly differentiated them from those given by the social elite. In such cases the term concert, albeit employed by both the organizers and the press, is used loosely and incorporates both musical gatherings similar to Glee and Catch Clubs and other convivial events of earlier times, as well as contemporary music-hall practices. Significantly, therefore, the description 'concert' is used as an umbrella term, characterizing many diverse forms of music entertainment. As Ehrlich and Russell argue, 'different [social] groups used music as cultural capital and a means of defining social hierarchies. The concert was a highly charged social space in which class boundaries could be blurred – aspirants seeking kudos by mingling with their betters – or defined by pricing, dress, demeanour and seating arrangements' (1998, p. 117). In the case of smoking concerts the concept of a 'concert' itself becomes a symbol which each class interprets differently within their respective social and cultural confines.

My approach to the examination of the Victorian smoking concerts is influenced by and draws upon the work of Pierre Bourdieu, and particularly his belief that, 'Art and cultural consumption are predisposed, consciously and deliberately or not, to fulfil a social function of legitimating social differences' (Bourdieu, 2002, p. 7). Such legitimation is expressed through his notions of 'capital' and 'taste'.<sup>7</sup> He

argues that 'to the socially recognized hierarchy of the arts, and within each of them, of genres, schools or periods, corresponds a social hierarchy of the consumers. This predisposes tastes to function as markers of "class". The manner in which culture has been acquired lives on in the manner of using it' (Ibid., p. 1–2). Furthermore, Bourdieu's assertion that, 'nothing more clearly affirms one's "class", nothing more infallibly classifies, than tastes in music' (p. 18), is particularly relevant to the typology of concerts I shall propose, as is his division of taste into three categories: 'legitimate', 'middle-brow' and 'popular', which roughly correspond to educational levels and social classes. The first of these categories is represented by a taste 'for legitimate works', such as the *Well-Tempered Clavier* and the *Art of Fugue*, among others; the middle-brow taste, gathering together 'the minor works of the major arts ... and the major works of minor arts', is 'more common in the middle classes than in the working classes or in the "intellectual" fractions of the dominant class'; finally, popular taste, represented by 'works of so-called "light" music or classical music devalued by popularisation ... and especially songs devoid of artistic ambition or pretension' is associated with 'the working classes and varies in inverse ratio to educational capital' (Ibid., p. 16). This tripartite categorization of taste and its function as 'marker of class' is equally applicable to the different types of smoking concerts. However, as will become apparent, smoking concerts would appear to challenge Bourdieu's neat categorisations, and a significant theme of this paper will be the essential hybridity of the various events which are described in this way.

### **Victorian Attitudes towards Smoking**

Throughout its history smoking has had two contrary receptions, being seen either as socially desirable or meeting considerable opposition. Attitudes towards smoking in the early Victorian period were dependant on social class, although overall connotations were largely negative. The introduction of cigars in England after 1814,<sup>8</sup> despite a certain prejudice against tobacco and the high rate of duty they attracted, initiated the revival of smoking (which had waned during the previous century in favour of snuffing), particularly in the fashionable circles of high society. It is likely that the reduction of the duty on cigars from 18s to 9s a pound in 1829 contributed greatly to this revival (Apperson, 1914, p. 139), while the new smoking-room in the House of Commons also helped to spread the fashion (Mack, 1965, p. 9). However, the lower classes continued pipe-smoking, and every public-house plied its regular trade in clays (Apperson, Ibid., p. 148). Despite this increase in the number of smokers across all social classes smoking was still regarded as something of a vice in certain quarters and it had plenty of active opponents. Queen Victoria hated

it in all its forms and banned it from Court, with visiting bishops and ambassadors having to smoke surreptitiously up the chimneys (Ibid., p. 221). Although smoking was always popular in the Army, the Duke of Wellington, annoyed by the increase in cigar smoking among officers, issued orders to curb the habit there (Ibid., p. 156). Smoking in the streets was considered 'a very "fast" and vicious thing to do' (Penn, 1902, p. 88), and the anonymous author of an etiquette book exclaims that, 'smoking in the streets, or in a theatre, is only practiced by shopboys, pseudo-fashionables – the "SWELL MOB"' (Αγώγος, 1854, p. 49).<sup>9</sup> In these early Victorian days it was unthinkable to smoke in front of ladies, with respectable middle- and upper-class women objecting strongly to the fumes of the 'noxious weed'. Although smoking was rarely practised at home, and was confined to the club-rooms of taverns and inns, the vogue for cigars steadily increased and was gradually sanctioned in fashionable London clubs. However, the dread of tobacco-smoke odour was extraordinary. Men who smoked retired to smoking rooms, and had to change their clothes before going into the presence of ladies; thus were the smoking jacket of velvet or fancy silk and the lavishly embroidered cap introduced into the masculine world of fashion in the mid-nineteenth century (Norris and Curtis, 1998, p. 98–99). Disregarding such middle-class sensitivities, however, both the rebellious bohemian youth and the lower classes continued to smoke in the streets and coffee houses. The increasing popularity of the cigar and the objection to smoking at home gave rise in the cities of England to lounges known as 'cigar-divans', where men would go to relax, gossip and smoke.<sup>10</sup> These provoked attacks from moralists and opponents of smoking, who warned their contemporaries 'never be seen in a cigar divan [... because] they are frequented by an equivocal set. *No good* can be gained there – and a man loses his respectability by being seen entering or coming out of such places'; they also cautioned that those songs written in praise of smoking and sung on the stage were 'paid [for] by the proprietors of cigar-divans and tobacco shops, to make their trade popular' (Αγώγος, 1854, p. 49). One such song, written by John Cooke Jnr. for the great music-hall singer G.H. Macdermott, is 'Milly's Cigar-Divan', celebrating the cosy cigar divan in Piccadilly and its proprietress Milly.<sup>11</sup> The early Victorian crusade against smoking focused largely on the negative images of cultural intrusion, since the smoking habit had been spread by foreign travellers, soldiers and students – all powerful images of the outsider – and it was usually identified with the lower classes, who smoked widely and publicly (Feinhandler, 1986, p. 173). This symbolism of alien and intrusive smoke reinforced upper-class perceptions of class distinctions, and thus they separated themselves symbolically by refraining from smoking or by adopting different smoking practices.

In the later Victorian period, a time of great social change, rigid social conventions were relaxed and smoking

became both more popular and more evident. The second half of the Victorian era saw the introduction of the cigarette, which came to England during the Crimean War (1854–1856) via English army officers, who had learned to smoke them from their allies the Turks and the French, and who introduced the novelty into London clubs (Mack, 1965, p. 11). Since it was less expensive to roll one's own cigarettes than to buy ready-made cigars, its popularity increased, with fashion edicts changing so considerably that pipes were now regarded as only suitable for vulgar people, whereas cigars and cigarettes were looked upon as refined (Apperson, 1914, p. 221). The practice of smoking outdoors, which the early Victorians had considered to be intolerable, became more commonly accepted (smoking compartments on trains, for example, became increasingly numerous), although it was still frowned upon by some. Cigarette advertising by the major manufacturers emphasized the pleasant and medicinal qualities of the cigarette. The growing prevalence of 'cigarette cough' led to flourishing campaigns in favour of mild, kindly smokes which were declared to be not only harmless but actually beneficial to the throat (Hamilton, 1928, p. 49). They used opera singers to testify to the throat-easing qualities of certain brands, and such endorsements were further underlined by the introduction of cigarette cards,<sup>12</sup> the collection of which became a craze persisting to the 1940s.

However, nothing is more marked in the change in social attitude towards tobacco than the revolution which took place with regard to women and smoking. Until the middle of Queen Victoria's reign female smoking was largely confined to lower- and working-class women, while respectable middle- and upper-class women objected to the habit. Changing attitudes towards female smoking, however, were first hinted at in the pages of *Punch* in 1851,<sup>13</sup> but it was not until the 1860s that cigarette smoking by women began to gain acceptance. Gradually the custom spread among women of higher social rank, who willingly followed the lead of the Prince and Princess of Wales. Contrary to his mother's tastes, the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII) was a great smoker,<sup>14</sup> as was his brother the Duke of Edinburgh. In 1885 the Princess of Wales served cigarettes to her female guests at luncheon (Hamilton, 1928, p. 136), and the renaissance of smoking among ladies in the upper classes began. The fashion world followed swiftly: perfumed cigarettes emerged with such names as Carnation, Gardenia and Mayhew; coloured cigarettes were sold to match ladies' dresses; there were Morn and Eve cigarettes, tipped alternately with light and dark leaf, and Ladies and Gents cigarettes with alternate silver and gold tips (West, 1953, p. 35–36). The latest fashion accessory came in the form of "Smoking Jackets" for ladies! [... who have] begun to consider the little smoking jacket indispensable" (Apperson, 1914, p. 222).

### **'Cigarette': A Light Opera**

During the second half of the nineteenth century the changing social attitudes towards women and smoking were reflected in the subject's appearance in opera libretti. For example, J. Haydn Parry composed the music to the romantic light opera *Cigarette* (with plot by Barry Montour and libretto and lyrics by Warham St. Leger), which was first produced at the Theatre Royal in Cardiff, on 15 August 1892. Although smoking *per se* did not feature in the opera, as it did for example in the later *Il Segreto di Susanna* (1909) by E. Wolf-Ferrari,<sup>15</sup> its title and character names do suggest an increasingly tolerant attitude towards women and smoking in late Victorian society. The scene is set in the South of France, before and after the Siege of Ratisbon in 1805. The aristocratic Claude, the protagonist, is in love with the equally aristocratic Violette, but the lovers are doomed because of a feud between their parents. War breaks out, Claude fights and is seriously wounded, but has been assiduously tended by 'Cigarette', the vivandière (sutler) of the regiment, who is in love with him. Another army character is 'Nicotin', a villager and a private in the regiment. Claude and Violette are ultimately united, their parents' feud ends, while Cigarette, unselfish to the last, sacrifices her love and returns to the Army. Although the reviews of the opera were rather dismissive, excepting Parry's music, 'whose score presents many pleasant features ... deserving a warm encouragement',<sup>16</sup> there is no comment on its title or content. Yet it is striking that the smoking-related names are given to characters not only from a low social background but also related to the Army, an institution traditionally associated with smoking and whose officers were largely responsible for the introduction of both cigars and cigarettes into England, as noted above. Furthermore, by the early 1890s it was clearly uncontroversial to name female characters in this way, albeit in the relatively undemanding genre of light opera. However, in not wanting to exaggerate unnecessarily the association between women and smoking, 'Cigarette' is not the leading lady but a subordinate character of low social rank, only tenuously connected to smoking through the name and not the habit. Not unexpectedly, she is obliged to sacrifice her love for the aristocratic Claude, leaving him free to marry Violette. Thus Cigarette's position in society is affirmed as unimportant; her menial role in the Army, allied to her name, makes explicit both her social inferiority and her symbolic image as an outsider.

### **Smoking Concerts in the Victorian Era**

A rather more explicit connection between music and smoking is demonstrated by the emergence of a novel form of entertainment, the smoking concert, a cultural event unthinkable in the early Victorian era but of considerable

consequence in its later part. Although smoking concerts *per se* started in the 1860s, smoking during musical performance was not a phenomenon exclusive to the Victorian era. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the use of tobacco, usually in the form of pipe smoking, was frequently associated with music. During this time amateur music-making encouraged the establishment of numerous private musical societies. Catch Clubs and Glee Clubs, such as the aristocratic 'Noblemen and Gentlemen's Catch Club', the 'Anacreontic Society', or the 'Canterbury Catch Club', became increasingly common and played an important part in the cultural and social development of music throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Most of these societies held their 'Musique Meetings' in taverns, which often had long rooms for such purposes. Here the atmosphere was informal; liquid refreshments and often supper were offered; the audience participated in the music-making, and smoking was an essential element of the entertainment.<sup>17</sup> These were exclusively male clubs, and although they started as private social meetings for the entertainment of the moneyed and privileged classes, they inevitably spread to lower social groups. Royal patronage, and support from leading musical figures of the time, distinguished clubs such as the aristocratic Noblemen and Gentlemen's Catch Club from less auspicious 'alehouse clubs, and places of vulgar resort in the villages adjacent to London, [where] small proficient in harmony ... were used to recreate themselves' (McVeigh, 2001, p. 122). Although these meetings were not concert-giving events in the modern sense, merely social gatherings for the entertainment of gentlemen in 'houses of good fellowship' (Ibid., p. 120), they were very important for the development of, and for providing a model for, public concerts. Gradually, in London, musical life revolved around two principal formats: public concerts, generally held in West End concert halls, providing a well-defined repertoire for a predominantly educated, upper middle-class audience, and amateur music-making by exclusively male societies of various kinds at different social levels. In these latter gatherings the tradition of older 'Musique Meetings' was maintained, with convivial socializing accompanied by liquid refreshments, and occasionally supper, a practice similar to contemporary masonic meetings (McVeigh, 2000, p. 75), while audience participation and smoking were essential elements of the entertainment.

Smoking concerts were the ultimate result of these gatherings; a by-product of mechanisms of transformation not only in the musical and institutional structure of London's concert life, but also transformations in Victorian society.<sup>18</sup> They arose from a confluence of many different social, commercial and musical factors, and they presented a new concert-type, within an innovative, if eccentric, social and musical context. They modified existing but artistically contrasting musical institutions and practices (the public



concert, the catch club, and the music hall), in response predominantly to the changing social attitudes and increasing tolerance in late Victorian society. Smoking concerts, finding a niche in the market somewhere between public concerts and private musical club gatherings, were initially offered by the aristocratic amateur music societies, and their success was underpinned by royal support. The Prince of Wales and the Duke of Edinburgh, both avid music lovers, together with other male members of the royal family, patronised these fashionable new concerts, particularly those offered by certain socially exclusive music societies. Eventually, through social emulation and what might be described as cultural osmosis, these concerts became so popular among all classes that they can be regarded as a characteristic feature of the times.

There were approximately four types of smoking concerts, although variations and subdivisions within each type also existed. They were distinguished by the social status of their members and patrons, by the venue, and by the musical content and form of the entertainment they offered. The first type were given by private aristocratic societies such as the Wandering Minstrels and the Royal Amateur Orchestral Society, with direct links to royalty and aristocracy. Although these emulated public-concert practices, being ticket- or subscription-based events given during the season in public concert halls, they were 'private' in the pre-mid-nineteenth century sense that their members and patrons were 'select, elite and aristocratic' (Citron, 1993, p. 104). These were as much social events as they were musical. From contemporary commentators we gather that, regardless of the venue, the patrons were dressed in formal evening attire (thus reinforcing their social status), sitting comfortably around tables (a setting strongly reminiscent of either a drawing room or a gentlemen's club), while the music, emulating public concert practices, was performed in two parts with an interval. The entertainment also comprised food (offered in the interval or as an after-concert dinner), drinks, smoking, and some audience participation, all derived from earlier Catch Club traditions. The musical content, predominantly orchestral, consisted of mixed programmes of overtures, symphonies, light orchestral items, virtuoso or sentimental pieces, a few modern compositions and a large number of songs, thus combining a convivial occasion with educational and intellectual experience. The *Musical Times* of 1882 supplies a vivid description of such an event:

With a full orchestra, and a programme containing some of the best of our standard compositions, not only the total absence of ladies, but the arrangement of the tables intermingled with seats, appeared strange to one accustomed to attending evening concerts at St. James's Hall; but then the stiffness inseparable from fashionable assemblies was replaced by an

air of luxurious enjoyment which appeared thoroughly in consonance with the feelings of the audience ... The characteristic feature of the concert was faithfully preserved, for not only the audience smoked, but the Conductor, the stringed instrument players, and the performers upon wind instruments too, whenever they could get a chance. It was remarked by many that Beethoven sounded much better when, instead of sitting between two elegantly dressed ladies in a sofa stall, you could recline at your ease, and combine the aroma of the music with the fragrance of the weed.<sup>19</sup>

Other smoking concerts of a slightly lower rank were given by high-profile, upper-middle class societies, such as the Strolling Players and the Stock Exchange Orchestral Society. These societies comprised mostly leading musical and literary figures, together with a few aristocratic members. They offered a musical programme very similar to that of the Wandering Minstrels and the Royal Amateur Orchestral Society, but their concerts were now public, and thus less socially exclusive.

The second category is broader and could be roughly subdivided into two different types of smoking concerts. First, those offered by the City bourgeoisie, which were essentially imitations of the aristocratic-type concerts outlined above. These proliferated around the City, London's traditional centre of bourgeois musical culture since the second half of the eighteenth century.<sup>20</sup> Their members and patrons – professionals such as lawyers and civil servants – enjoyed lighter, mixed programmes, with many instrumental solos and songs, in the more modest surrounds of hotels and civic rooms. Second, less prestigious smoking concerts were available for the lower-middle classes, whose members and patrons were of a more modest socio-economic status. Although they were immensely popular a lack of documentation makes them more difficult to assess, but extant reports appear to suggest a cross between bourgeois smoking concerts and singing saloon culture.<sup>21</sup> Similar to eighteenth-century practices their members enjoyed lighter, mixed programmes with songs, glees and considerable audience participation all accompanied by smoking and liberal amounts of drinking.

The third category is comprised of the Army's smoking concerts, which were usually given in the headquarters or barracks of a division and only occasionally in a public concert-hall. These also reflected the different social ranks of the officers and the common soldiers through their musical content and type of entertainment, with the higher status concerts imitating the aristocratic smoking concerts of the first type, while the socially inferior ones were characterized by the rowdy behaviour of the soldiers in a free-and-easy atmosphere. These concerts do not perhaps present a separate type as such, and could easily be subdivided and allocated within the previous upper-class and lower-class smoking

concerts. However, I treat them here as a separate group because of their association with the social and military confines of the Army.

Finally, although not highly regarded and very rarely mentioned by the press, another category of smoking concerts for the entertainment of 'humbler classes' had been successfully produced at the Coffee Palace, formerly the Victoria Theatre, in Waterloo Road. Many popular artists participated and the large building was filled 'by artisans – mostly accompanied by their families – who would not have entered the building unless permitted to smoke'.<sup>22</sup> There is no information about the musical content of these events, although we may presume that it would have been similar to popular entertainment in lower-class music halls.

### **The Music Societies, the 'Smokers' and their Programmes**

The first smoking concerts may well have been given in the early 1860s, as private male gatherings at Mr. Arthur Lewis's mansion in Kensington. In a fashion similar to 'musique meetings' of earlier Catch and Glee Clubs, he 'regaled his [friends] with unlimited oysters and unimpeachable beverages, and permitted them to smoke during the admirable performance of glees and madrigals by the "Moray Minstrels" ... ably directed by Mr. John Foster'.<sup>23</sup> However, these pleasant private '*symposia*' ended when the bachelor Mr. Lewis got married to the actress Kate Terry, who objected to such male gatherings and their attendant smoking in her new home.

The first amateur orchestral society to initiate ticket-based, profit-making smoking concerts was the Wandering Minstrels Amateur Orchestral Society. This aristocratic society was founded in 1860 and for the next thirty-eight years played an active part in English musical life.<sup>24</sup> On the 14 November 1860 a small group of aristocratic amateur musicians met at the Castle Hotel in Windsor, following their participation in a theatrical performance given by the 'Windsor Strollers' Amateur Dramatic Company,<sup>25</sup> and passed a resolution, 'to meet on the first Thursday every month throughout the year for the practice of orchestral music'.<sup>26</sup> They modelled their association on the practices of the aristocratic Noblemen and Gentlemen's Catch Club, with many participants being simultaneously members of both societies.<sup>27</sup> A distinctive, and quite unique feature of the Wandering Minstrels, from the beginning, was that ladies were also accepted as members.<sup>28</sup> The Minstrels never employed professional musicians, and they were proud to be known as 'the only purely *Amateur* Orchestra Society in the World'.<sup>29</sup> The object of the society was to give charity concerts in London and the provinces,<sup>30</sup> bringing them a wide audience at many social levels, as well as private performances for the entertainment of members' friends.

These private gatherings, enjoyed in the social exclusivity provided by their class, became famous as smoking concerts.

Following established Catch Club traditions, the Wandering Minstrels' smoking concerts were first held at the Freemason's Tavern, where, 'after the musical part of the business had been gone through, the members adjourned to supper',<sup>31</sup> but moved shortly afterwards to the London home of Lord Gerald Fitzgerald, where they remained until 1881. He had built a music room specifically for these smoking concerts to the rear of his house in 47 Sloane Street, an idea perhaps taken from singing-saloon structures. The room appeared more like a museum than a music hall; the walls were ornamented with trophies of ancient arms, strange musical instruments, a miscellaneous collection of pictures and bizarre objects, and books of prints on stands.<sup>32</sup> The orchestra was situated on a platform at the end, while upstairs at the back was a gallery where Lady Gerald used to entertain her friends, reminiscent of Evan's Supper Rooms in Covent Garden,<sup>33</sup> where in the late 1860s ladies had been admitted to boxes with lattice-work screens.<sup>34</sup> Performers and audience alike were regaled with oysters and stout, reminiscent of the society's suppers at the Freemasons' Tavern.<sup>35</sup> The Society's smoking concerts, like their public concerts, were given during the winter and spring, and were characterized by social exclusivity, based not only on the patrons' social rank but also their intellectual and artistic credentials. As the Minstrels were proud to indicate, 'everybody who was anybody at that time in Society, Arts, Literature or Music, was to be met with at these pleasant gatherings'.<sup>36</sup> These were enjoyable meetings 'for those who like to listen to music at their ease, and at the same time to indulge in the fragrant weed or the soothing glass of gin-and-water, while for those who are artistically inclined there are lots of portfolios and huge books of queer prints and caricatures to look at'.<sup>37</sup> These *soirées*, however, were strictly private and were 'more to be desired than many good things [...] but strong social reasons prevent them from making their attainments common property'.<sup>38</sup>

The first surviving invitation card, dated 4 July 1862, is for a *Soirée Musicale et Fumante*, during which '*Messieurs les invités* indulged in pipes, cigars and beverages to match, while their harmonious entertainers were zealously going through their music'.<sup>39</sup> One privileged participant gives an insight into the social and musical content of such a concert, during which Beethoven's First Symphony, Rossini's Overture *La Cenerentola*, Handel's *Occasional March*, and Auber's Overture *Le Dieu et la Bayadère* were played among a medley of songs and instrumental solos; he observes:

It was a truly pleasant evening that the Wandering Minstrels gave their friends on Thursday last Dec. 3rd [1868] and I assure you I drank in sweet strains and best Islay Whiskey to my heart's content ... The concert on the whole was excellent, and

the whisky and weeds formed as delightful an accompaniment as mortal bachelor could wish ... My compliments to General de Bathe and his meerscham pipe: a better amateur drummer or more genial piper existeth not in Her Majesty's Army.<sup>40</sup>

Another privileged gentleman also commented upon the convivial nature of these mixed musical gatherings:

The Minstrels perform at stated intervals before the favoured few who are lucky enough to get cards. I saw Lord Chelmsford, fast losing his 'tan', and a crowd of barristers, besides many musical men. Though this was a smoking concert there were a dozen ladies in the small gallery [...] It is thirsty work listening to music, and there was a great run on 'Islay Malt'.<sup>41</sup>

Although these were socially exclusive gatherings in which some of the best art music was on offer, the atmosphere appears to be one of merry informality, encouraging the dismantling of certain social barriers, strongly reminiscent of earlier Catch Club gatherings, albeit still within the upper strata of London's society:

Gentleman, in faultless evening dress, was to be found cheek by jowl with the honest literary or art worker in round jacket, sipping his grog and smoking his pipe in the best of all good company [...] Draper offered the best of his talent, and Lavers, the genial field surgeon of the Queen's was wont to lay his short pipe on the piano and give us a song which set aristocrats and democrats in a roar of laughter.<sup>42</sup>

In 1881 Lord Fitzgerald's lease expired, and the venue for the smoking concerts moved temporarily to 77 Pavilion Road. From 1882 to their last concert in 1898 the 'smokers' concerts were given at the Grosvenor Hall, although their musical and social content remained the same; smoking was universal, and guests, seldom less than 300, 'were attended to by the president himself, who with other members of the society stranded behind the bar in the interval, and dispensed unlimited drinks to the smoke-dried applicants'.<sup>43</sup>

The Wandering Minstrels' repertoire for their public concerts generally included both established classics and favourite items from the lighter contemporary musical repertoire, thus demonstrating a fusion of 'legitimate' and 'middle-brow' taste representative of their audiences.<sup>44</sup> The content and structure of their smoking concerts also mirrored that of the miscellaneous-type public concerts, although, as noted above, some audience participation also took place (see, Weber, 2000, p. 299–320). Initially, they comprised predominantly light music, though as the years passed they included more demanding repertoire. Established pieces by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Weber and Mendelssohn, and newer ones by Gounod, Meyerbeer, Brahms, Liszt, Saint-Saëns, Grieg and Wagner, were

combined with compositions by the members themselves, as well as favourite popular songs, part-songs and glees. All their programmes, alternating between orchestral, vocal, and instrumental solos, were structured around certain orchestral items, which functioned as a framework opening and closing each of the two parts of the concert. Overtures, symphony movements, and eventually entire symphonies by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Mendelssohn were included in the programmes. Although, as Weber observes (2000, p. 301), the miscellaneous concert came into disrepute in the middle of the nineteenth century as the result of the predominance of and reverence for classical works as the core of the concert repertoire, this seems not to have deterred the Wandering Minstrels and other similar amateur orchestral societies from offering such programmes in their smoking concerts; this exclusive, upper-middle class and well-educated audience enjoyed the variety of such musical entertainment, together with other non-musical activities such as drinking and smoking.

The gradual development of musical taste in these smoking concerts can be seen in the following programmes. The first surviving programme for a *Soirée Musicale et Fumante*, given on 4 July 1862, with S. Egerton conducting, had a light musical content which included several arrangements and compositions by the members themselves, who also performed the music:

**The Wandering Minstrels**  
*Soirée Musicale et Fumante*, 4 July 1862, at 9 p. m., at 47 Sloane Street, London

Herold	Overture, <i>Zampa</i>
S.J.G. Egerton (W.M.)	Song, M.S.
Mendelssohn	Serenata, <i>Lobgesang</i>
F. Clay (W.M.)	Polka, <i>The Belles of Brighton</i>
De Beriot	Violin solo, <i>Air Varié</i>
G. Fitzgerald (W.M.)	Selection from <i>La Traviata</i> (Verdi arrang) with solos for flute, oboe, cornet
G. Fitzgerald (W.M.)	Romanza, <i>L'Apostât</i>
Part II	
O. Nicolai	Overture, <i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>
Meyerbeer	Solo: Duo, <i>Robert le Diable</i> (flute and piano)
Donizetti	Aria, 'L'amor funesto'
G. Fitzgerald (W.M.)	Gallop, <i>Crinoline</i>

A few months later, on 4 December 1862, in a similarly mixed concert (including Auber's Overture *Le Cheval de Bronze*, Rossini's Overture *William Tell* and the *Adagio* from Mendelssohn's Third Symphony), Gounod's popular *Ave Maria*, arranged for horn solo and played by S. Egerton, was 'encored and repeated [among] a great deal of



applause.<sup>45</sup> A typical evening's musical entertainment, given on 22 December 1870, included, among a selection of songs and violin solos, Beethoven's Sixth Symphony, Mendelssohn's Overture *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Rossini's Overture *William Tell*, *Amoretten-Tanze* by Gung'l and Wagner's *March* from *Tannhäuser* – a programme which, apart from the implied audience participation during songs, differed little else from contemporary public concerts. By the mid-1870s, under the direction of Lord Fitzgerald, the programmes included a larger proportion of items from the orchestral canon, thus shifting the emphasis of these concerts from convivial light entertainment to a more serious and edifying musical experience. However, the quality of the performances and the standards of musicianship prevailing in these smoking concerts is difficult to determine, since the only press cuttings preserved in their archive were, understandably, enthusiastic rather than critical. A review of 1875, for example, considers that, 'the orchestra (in the ranks of whom are to be found many of the most able of the amateurs amongst the nobility and gentry) of the present season is fully up to the high standard it has previously attained amongst strictly amateur orchestras.'<sup>46</sup> Occasionally some concerts did offer more vocal music than others, but still within the established orchestral framework, thus preserving earlier practices. Such a programme was given on 14 March 1878:

**The Wandering Minstrels  
Smoking Concert, 14 March 1878, at 47 Sloane Street, London**

Héroid	Overture, <i>Zampa</i>
Horsley	Glee, 'Come gentle Zephir'
Pearsall	Madrigal, 'Shoot, false love'
Mendelssohn	<i>Lobgesang</i>
Wasley	Glee (5 voices), 'I wish to tune my quiv'ring lyre'
Gounod	Ballet-music, <i>Faust</i>
Part II	
Offenbach	Selections from <i>La Princesse de Trébizonde</i>
Goss	Glee (5 voices), 'Ossian's Hymn to the Sun'
Nicolai	Overture, <i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>
C.E. Hey	Part-song, 'The Water rushing'
Hatton	Part-song, 'King Witlaff'
Gung'l	Quick-step, <i>Der Rekrut</i>

At their 1000th meeting, which was also their 167th smoking concert, on 14 December 1893 at Grosvenor Hall, Beethoven's Sixth Symphony opened the concert; Kreutzer's Overture *Das Nachtlager in Granada*, Paganini's solo violin Sonata in D, Dvorák's *Suite* in D, Wagner's *March* from *Tannhäuser* were all performed together with songs by Liszt, Grieg, Brahms and Jensen. Their farewell concert

on 24 March 1898 was a more sober occasion. The hybrid nature of their smoking concerts, a cross between the older singing clubs and modern public concert culture, is again evident in the programme of their last concert:

**The Wandering Minstrels  
Smoking Concert, 24 March, 1898, at Grosvenor Hall**

Beethoven	Symphony No. 5
S. Webbe	Glee, 'Discord, dire Sister'
T. Cooke	Glee, 'strike the Lyre'
Marcello	Violoncello solo, Sonata in F
Mendelssohn	Overture, <i>Ruy Blass</i>
Part II	
Grieg	Suite, <i>Peer Gynt</i>
Hatton	Part-songs, 'Absence,' 'The Sailor's Song'
L.H. d'Egville	Violin solo, <i>Strathspey</i>
Volkmann	<i>Walzer</i> (for stringed instr) from Serenade No. 2
Boccherini	<i>Minuet</i> from Sonata in A
Ed. German	<i>Dances</i> from the incidental music to <i>Henry VIII</i>
Mendelssohn	Part-song, 'Slumber dearest'
Beale	Madrigal, 'Come let us join'
Nicolai	Overture, <i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>

The pieces by Mendelssohn, Rossini, Grieg, Wagner, German, Gung'l, and Nicolai were also popular favourites of the major public concerts given at the Queen's Hall and St. James's Hall, by both amateur orchestral societies and the professional orchestras of the time.<sup>47</sup>

Although the Wandering Minstrels were very successful, their smoking concerts were exclusively private and only occasionally mentioned in the musical press. It was the Royal Amateur Orchestral Society,<sup>48</sup> established in 1872 by the Duke of Edinburgh, which made smoking concerts fashionable, bringing them into the public arena and thus to the attention of the national and musical press in the 1880s and '90s. Their smoking concerts in London, held at both St. Andrew's Hall (Newman Street, W.), and Prince's Hall (Piccadilly, W.), and, in the 1890s, frequently at the Queen's Hall, were very similar to those given by the Wandering Minstrels, although their orchestra included many professional musicians. They were attended by royalty, upper-class gentlemen, and leading members of the musical establishment. Their first 'smoker' was given at Cambridge Hall (later known as St. Andrew's Hall) in May 1879, at which the Prince of Wales presided.<sup>49</sup> The first reference to such a smoking concert is found in *The Times* in 1880 (although the society is there described as the Royal Albert Hall Orchestral Society), and this gives some insight into the length and structure of the concert:



The upper end of the hall was beautifully decorated with flowers, and the orchestra performed a selection of classical and other music in a manner worthy of the Handel Festival week. The rendering of Langey's arrangement of 'Home Sweet Home' may be singled out. This piece was given at a quarter-past 11, and marked the accomplishment of about half the programme. The instrumental music was relieved not only by smoking, but by the clever vocalization of Signor Ghilberti.<sup>50</sup>

These were as much social functions for male high society, to be recorded by the national press, as musical events. In 1881 another review of a smoking concert given by the Society at St. Andrew's Hall reads as a 'who's who' of the London musical world, while also noting the established classical favourites in the programme:

Schubert's unfinished symphony, the overtures to *Oberon* and *Pique Dame*, the ballet music from *Faust*, and a novel production, consisting of a series of variations on a German folk-song, adapted to represent the treatment of the theme by Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Strauss, Verdi, Gounod, Wagner, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, and Meyerbeer. Mr. Santley sang two songs [...] The Royal Princes remained until the close of the concert. Mr. Arthur Sullivan, Sir M. Costa, Dr. Stainer, Mr. Cowen, Mr. Stainton, Signor Randegger, and Sir Julius Benedict were among those present.<sup>51</sup>

The social and musical character of another smoking concert is graphically described by the editor of *The Globe* in 1882:

The orchestra are all in their places, amongst them his Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh, violin in hand following the general example by smoking a succession of cigarettes. The hall gradually becomes filled by gentlemen in evening dress, amongst whom are many members of the aristocracy, and eminent representatives of art and literature ... A few minutes before ten the Prince [of Wales] arrives, the National Anthem is played, the audience resume their seats, and the concert begins. Some well selected orchestral music is admirably played, Mr. Santley sings a ballad, and when encored, gives Mr. Arthur Sullivan's 'Pale young Curate' with infinite humour, accompanied by the composer. The first part of the concert concludes soon after eleven, and the company adjourns to the buffets, where a liberal supply of refreshments awaits them. Friends exchange salutations, and after twenty minutes agreeably passed, the concert recommences – concluding long after midnight. During the concert, close attention is paid by the entire audience, who appear to be as fond of music as of smoking.<sup>52</sup>

In 1886 Liszt attended just such a smoking concert of the Royal Amateur Orchestral Society, 'a semi-private gathering', given by 'special desire' at Prince's Hall. Having sat beside the Prince of Wales, Liszt was 'pleased at the entertainment provided, joining lustily in the general applause', and although he did not play, much to the audience's

disappointment, 'it was, altogether a very jovial and pleasant gathering, and the Abbé showed himself thoroughly smoke-proof'.<sup>53</sup> The musical press reviewed the performance in typically descriptive fashion, noting that:

The details of the performance need not detain us: suffice it to say that the selection comprised Beethoven's 'Leonora' (No. 3) Overture; solos for violin by Liszt and Nachèz, rendered by M. Tivadar Nachèz; Rossini's gorgeous 'Semiramide' Overture, pianoforte pieces by Henselt and Liszt, interpreted by M. Vladimir de Pachmann; Gounod's 'Marche Religieuse'; and Liszt's first Hungarian Rhapsody. The vocalists were Mr. Barrington Foote and Mr. Ben Davies, Mr. George Mount conducting.<sup>54</sup>

A few months later, the society's first smoking concert of the 1886–1887 season, given at Prince's Hall on 22 December 1886, comprised a typically mixed programme of light classical pieces, together with some more modern ones and the usual solos and songs:

**The Royal Amateur Orchestral Society  
Smoking Concert, 22 December, 1886, at Grosvenor Hall**

Cherubini	Overture, <i>Anacreon</i>	
Brahms	Symphony No. 4 (slow movement)	
Massenet	Le Dernier Sommeil de la Vierge	
Berghaus	Serenade, <i>Pizzicato</i>	
Denza	Song, 'Marguerite'	Mr. Hirwen Jones
Wieniawski	Solo pianoforte, <i>Valse de Concert</i>	Señor A.A. de Corde-Lass
Liszt	<i>Rhapsodie Hongroise</i> , No. 4	
Part II		
Balfe	Overture, <i>Bohemian Girl</i>	
Wieniawski	Solo violin, <i>Air Russes</i>	Mons. Theodore Werner
Sullivan	Song, 'My Dearest Heart'	Mr. Hirwen Jones
Spindler	Salonstück, <i>Husarenritt</i>	
Wagner	March, <i>Tannhäuser</i>	
	God Save the Queen	

In the 1890s some of their smoking concerts were given at the new and prestigious Queen's Hall, thus becoming rather more public albeit still attended by a social elite. Such a concert was given in May 1895, with the guest Meister Glee Singers featuring alongside well-known performers of the day such as Mlle Frida Scotta (violin), Señor Rubio (cello) and Miss Adelina de Lara (piano).<sup>55</sup>

Another well-known upper middle-class group was the Strolling Players' Amateur Orchestral Society, founded

in 1882 by Norfolk Megone, former conductor of the School of Mines Orchestra.<sup>56</sup> As with both the Wandering Minstrels and the Royal Amateur Orchestral Society, the Strolling Players gave public non-smoking concerts as well as 'smokers'. The programme and performance standards were similar, although the venue, social context and atmosphere were different. Smoking concerts were given at St. Andrew's Hall and Prince's Hall, while their public concerts were given at St. James's Hall and, later in the 1890s, at the Queen's Hall. They too included professional musicians in their ranks, and the music played in these concerts was very similar to that of the amateur orchestral societies noted above. However, they do not appear to have attracted the star performers of the day, although they countered this in their publicity by asserting on their printed programmes that they 'have had the honour of being the first Amateur Society to give performances in England of various important works', as well as 'introducing to the public, vocalists who have since attained celebrity'. Similar to the concerts of the previous two societies, their miscellaneous programmes interpolated songs and glees with the orchestral favourites of the day, as can be seen in the first smoking concert of their fifth season (1886–7) below; these programmes were almost identical to those of their public concerts.

**The Strolling Players Amateur Orchestral Society  
Smoking Concert, 18 December 1886, at St. Andrew's Hall**

Mendelssohn	Overture, <i>Fingal's Cave</i>
Kalliwoda	Symphony No. 1
Maude Valerie White	Song, 'Absent yet present'
J.L. Hatton	Song, 'To Anthea'
Reinecke	Prelude to Act V, <i>King Manfred</i>
Bolzoni	<i>Minuet</i> for strings only
Handel	Air, 'Where'er you walk' ( <i>Semele</i> )
Kücken	Fantasia, <i>The Return of the Soldier</i>
Delibes	Ballet Music, <i>Coppelia</i>
Part II	
Mozart	Overture, <i>Nozze di Figaro</i>
L.H. d'Egville	Musical Curiosity, <i>Introduction and Nocturne</i> (Duet for violin and pianoforte by a single performer)
Marzials	Song, 'My love is come'
J. Thomas	Harp solo, <i>Autumn</i>
Gounod	Ballet Music, <i>Reine de Saba</i>
F.N. Lohr	Song, 'My lady comes'
Liszt	<i>Galop Chromatique</i>
	God Save the Queen

A few years later the *Musical Times* favourably reviewed their smoking concert held at Prince's Hall on 3 January 1891, describing the programme as being 'of a high-class character'; the Meister Glee Singers again contributed some of 'their clever part-songs ... which were much appreciated...

Grieg's favourite "Peer Gynt" Suite and Max Bruch's Prelude to "Loreley" were included, and the playing under the direction of Mr. Norfolk Megone, was, on the whole, strikingly meritorious.<sup>57</sup> Mendelssohn's *Ruy Blass* Overture was played twice, at the beginning of the concert and again before the second part, doubtless for the benefit of the fashionably late audience.

The Stock Exchange Orchestral Society, founded in 1883, was patronised largely by leading figures of the musical establishment rather than the aristocracy.<sup>58</sup> As its title suggests it had connections with the financial professionals of the City. The founder and first conductor was the organist George Kitchin, who was succeeded in 1897 by Arthur W. Payne, who from 1897 to 1903 was also the leader of the Queen's Hall Orchestra. Although the society was better known for its public concerts, in 1889 the *Musical Times*, commenting upon the musical merits of smoking concerts, singled out this orchestral society for the quality of its performances, stating that:

Of the Smoking Concerts given at the present time the name is legion, but not one in a hundred calls for notice in our columns. Exceptions sometimes occur, and in such was the entertainment given by the Stock Exchange Orchestral Society [...] It is a pleasant sign of the times to note that not only a taste for the higher forms of music, but sufficient zeal for the study and practice of the same is to be found in the commercial circles of this busy metropolis.<sup>59</sup>

The programme of the particular concert attended by this commentator, although very similar to that offered by the other societies, was considered as 'perhaps dangerously ambitious, containing the overtures to "Oberon" and "William Tell", Massenet's "Scènes Pittoresques", and some of Sullivan's music to "The Merchant of Venice"'.<sup>60</sup> These comments perhaps reveal the writer's low expectations of the musical quality of such smoking concerts given by a semi-amateur society strongly associated with City merchants, and thus not exclusively aristocratic. But he had to admit that, 'the interpretation was, for the most part, excellent, and indeed not unworthy of a professional orchestra', a comment revealing the increasing ability to discriminate between professionals and amateurs, as well as the tension inhering between these two groups.<sup>61</sup>

The rapid growth of smoking concerts in aristocratic circles encouraged the formation of a number of other societies. These included the Athenæum Club, the only club at which Liszt played during his final visit to England; the Lyric Club, an exclusive society founded in 1880, whose members were elected by ballot and which, like most other societies, had established subscription fees;<sup>62</sup> and the private performances given on Sunday evenings at the Crichton Club, at which only the members and a very limited number of male friends were present. It has been observed that at the latter, 'the best

and newest specimens of chamber music were frequently heard, under the direction of Richter, Buziau, Lasserre, and other notabilities [*sic*], and the music was followed, pipe in hand, by a perspiring party of enthusiasts.<sup>63</sup>

Smoking concerts of the second middle-class type, although apparently numerous, are only occasionally referred to in the press in the late 1880s and 1890s. They were organised by different professional bodies, such as the Bar Society, the Irish Loyalist Club and others. They were given in hotels, such as the Cannon Street and Westminster Palace Hotels, and in civic institutions such as St. Martin's Town Hall and the Inner Temple Hall. Although there are no references to exact audience composition or behaviour, it can be assumed that they were social affairs, similar to the previous upper-class high-profile concerts, but that the music on offer was more popular and largely consisting of songs and instrumental solos, often performed by professional performers of the day. In 1882 a series of five subscription smoking concerts was announced, given at the Cannon Street Hotel, 'with a choir of male voices', featuring the well-known orchestral players, 'M. Victor Buziau (violin), M. Albert (violoncello), Mr. E.H. Manners (french horn), Mr. Leonard Beddome (clarinet), Mr. L.W. Hardy (cornet-à piston), Mr. Fountain Meen, and Mr. A. Izard (pianoforte).'<sup>64</sup> The programmes generally included lighter items from the prevailing repertoire, as can be seen in that offered by the amateur London County Council Musical Society in 1898:

**London County Council Musical Society,  
Smoking Concert, 4 April 1898, at St. Martin's Town Hall**

Paderewski	<i>Minuet</i> (The Orchestra)
Alice Mary Smith	Choral Ballad, 'The Little Baltung' (The Choir)
Mattei	Song, 'Oh! oh! hear the wild winds blow'
Elen	Humorous song, 'The Cockney's Travels'
Clay	Whistling solo, 'I'll sing thee songs of Araby'
Bishop	Whistling solo, 'Tell me my heart'
Messenger	Song, 'Long ago in Alcalá'
S. Adams	Song, 'The Star of Bethlehem'
	Humorous song - Selected
Part II	
Suppé	Overture, <i>Pique Dame</i> (The Orchestra)
M.V. White	Song, 'Marching Along'
Arditi	Whistling song, 'L'Ardita'
Ernest Newton	Song, 'Nita Gitana'
Freeman	Humorous song, 'Stand up'
Schumann	Solo violin, <i>Traumerei</i>
Dancla	Solo violin, <i>Bolero</i>
Greenstead	Song, 'Bjon the Viking'
	Humorous song - Selected
	God Save the Queen

Smoking concerts of a rather different quality were also abundant elsewhere in the City, and were largely patronised by City merchants and their clerks. In these plebeian events the social divide was also reflected in the musical content and overall entertainment, which was closer to that of the eighteenth-century singing clubs described by Roger North (see North, 1925, p. 31–32; and 1959, p. 352), than the more formal and sophisticated orchestral subscription concerts offered elsewhere. Such concerts received mixed reviews. In the early 1880s it was reported that the most successful smoking concerts of this class were those given at the Cannon Street Hotel by the suitably-named 'Coughs' Society. The patrons met at seven and separated at about nine, during which time 'a number of glees and part-songs with solos by Mr. Coates and other excellent singers, [were] admirably executed by a large glee-party, ably directed by Mr. Horscroft of St. Paul's Cathedral'. Coffee, tea, and more potent liquids were consumed; smoking was universal, although 'woe betide the luckless Cough whom the president finds guilty of striking a match while anything is being sung'.<sup>65</sup> Avoiding striking matches during the performance was in fact observed by many societies, and they printed reminders for the audience on the programmes; this became a practice which, towards the end of the nineteenth century, also found its way into public concerts in which smoking was allowed. A few years later such gatherings were given at the Cannon Street Hotel, the Guildhall Tavern and other places, using 'a hired glee-party', which usually sang 'excellent part-songs, but the instrumental and vocal solo performances [were] not of a very high-class order'.<sup>66</sup> In 1883 the *Musical Times* commented, rather unusually, upon the musical content of such a smoking concert given at the Guildhall Tavern by 'Ye London Glee Men'. The report reveals the distinct continuation of the Catch Club music tradition:

The programme comprised glees, madrigals, songs, etc., and ranged in date from John Bennett's madrigal 'Flow, O my tears' (1599), to Wagner's chorus of Norwegian sailors from the 'Flying Dutchman' ... The Concert was brought to a close by the singing of 'Auld Lang Syne', arranged as a song with vocal accompaniment by Mr. Richard Mackway, and sung by Mr. A.J. Kestin.<sup>67</sup>

At these lower middle-class smoking concerts the programmes, reflecting the populist taste of the audience, were generally very mixed, with the entertainment consisting mainly of part-songs, comic songs, sketches, recitations, a few instrumental solos and above all audience participation. Female artists, usually singers, featured as soloists, particularly in the 1890s; for example, we learn that at a smoking concert given by the Grosvenor Club in 1893, among the artists were Mme. Valda from the Royal Italian Opera, Mme. Vaudrey, and Miss Florence Shee.<sup>68</sup> Francis Aveling portrays a smoking concert of this type thus:



The usual songs, with an aria from an opera sung by a lady of whom rumour had it that she had been on stage. The usual recitation by the nervous young man; and a fine old rollicking song – 'Down Among the Dead Men' – with a chorus, you know, in which you all join, 'down, down, down', emphasized by his plump old hand – by the jovial old gentleman who sits by the piano, flushed and perspiring, and happy with the success of his efforts. (Avelin, 1907, p. 209).

According to Keith MacTavish, who had fifty years' experience of attending this type of smoking concerts and club dinners, 'the audience prefer to hear themselves sing rather than listen to the best professional'.<sup>69</sup> Some of the favourite popular songs, mostly with choruses, that 'have proved "winners"', which also predominantly featured in the music-halls, included, 'O, Willie brewed a peck o' Maut', 'Cockles and mussels', 'Auld Lang Syne', 'She was poor but she was honest', 'The tavern in the town', 'Clementine', 'Landlord, fill the flowing bowl', 'Cellar cool', 'Little brown jug', 'Cock Robin', 'Solomon Levi', 'Drink, puppy, drink', 'Drink to me only', 'John Peel', 'Here's a health to his Majesty', 'Bonnie Charlie'. (MacTavish, 1911, Preface).

In those smoking concerts given by the Army we can also observe the division between the more formal, higher-class concerts attended by royalty, high-ranking officers and other dignitaries, and the lower-class events designed for the entertainment of the troops. The latter consisted largely of songs, particularly comic-songs, sketches, recitations, and instrumental solos, and they were characterised by liberal amounts of unruly behaviour. In such a concert, given by the 20th Middlesex (Artists) R. V. Battalion, more than 50 pieces were included in a mixed popular programme of piano, mandolin and banjo solos, songs, recitations, prestidigitations, sketches and skirt dances, delivered by both army personnel and other male and female artists from the music hall scene, including the well-known Mary Lloyd. Concerts of this type started late because 'some of the artists [could] not arrive until late, [and] the concert [would] not finish until about one a.m.'<sup>70</sup>. In the pages of *Punch* we find a humorous yet insightful description of an Army smoking concert:

At intervals during the winter a smoking concert is organised in our barracks ... It consists in trying to persuade those who can sing to do so and trying to stop those who can't, both efforts as a rule being equally unsuccessful. The main thing about the smoking concert itself is that there should be plenty of smoke and not too much concert, for each concert is very like the last.<sup>71</sup>

The writer then proceeds to describe the content of the concert which included acts from the battalion's humourist which are 'the mainstay of the business', a corporal's songs that are 'always popular' and received with

'ferocious applause'; then comes 'the recitation [followed by] well-known funny stories', other readings, dialogues, and sketches. The title 'concert' is thus used as a pretext to legitimise a convivial get-together of lower-rank officers and soldiers, instead of the more rarefied experience to which the term normally refers.

However, Army smoking concerts of a different quality, and attended by royalty, were announced and reviewed in the national press, albeit rather more as social commentary than because of any intrinsic musical merit. Celebrity concert-hall and opera performers, both male and female, participated in these higher-profile concerts, thus projecting the social and musical elitism of the aristocratic music societies upon the army barracks. One such event, which received royal patronage, and featured celebrated artists of the day, was commented upon by *The Times* in 1894:

Last night the Prince of Wales attended a smoking concert given by the Honourable Artillery Company at their headquarters near Finsbury Square ... Arriving at about 10 o'clock ... The drill-hall, which had been decorated for the occasion, was crowded to excess. Amongst those present were the Duke of Teck, Prince Louis of Battenberg, Lord Colville of Culross, Lord Carrington, the American Ambassador, the Lord Mayor ... There was a varied and liberal programme, the entertainment being contributed, amongst others, by Mr. Lionel Brough, Mme. Antoinette Trebelli, Miss Florence St. John, Mr. Hayden Coffin ... At the end, which did not come till a quarter past 1, the band played 'God bless the Prince of Wales' ... Afterwards [he] had supper in the Court-rooms.<sup>72</sup>

Thus, by the late nineteenth century a wide variety of events across all social classes were described as 'smoking concerts', and they had become a significant feature of Victorian London's musical landscape. Notwithstanding the diverse music they encompassed they were characterised not only by their designation as smoking concerts but also, and more importantly, by their inherently hybrid nature. The high-profile aristocratic and upper-middle class concerts, such as those given by the Wandering Minstrels, the Royal Amateur Orchestral Society, the Strolling Players and the Stock Exchange Orchestral Society, were a cross between high-class public concerts and private musical clubs. They afforded their discerning male participants a novel form of entertainment, combining both the leisured, free-and-easy element of the music hall with high-quality art music; yet they had neither the 'inanities and vulgarity of the music-halls' nor 'the starchiness of a Monday Popular Concert at St. James's Hall'.<sup>73</sup> Their programmes reflected a mixture of 'legitimate', middle-brow and popular tastes, with pieces such as Beethoven symphonies and light orchestral favourites interspersed with popular songs in which the audience participated. Such entertainment was undertaken within a socially exclusive environment, reflecting other aspects

of the social elite's entertainment and leisure pursuits. The smoking concerts of the middle classes and particularly the City bourgeoisie, although modelled upon and imitating upper-class practices, catered for and satisfied the middle-brow taste of their audiences, with light orchestral items played by *ad hoc* ensembles of various combinations, and numerous instrumental solos and songs, which again frequently involved audience participation. The entertainments offered to the lower-middle classes were more flexible, encompassing a broad range of material and often more boisterous behaviour, albeit within frameworks which sought to emulate the concert practices of the other classes. From the somewhat elitist perspective of the establishment these concerts were inferior in quality, reflecting the populist taste associated with the lower classes. They were, however, equally enjoyable to the people for whom they were performed, and who identified themselves and their class through this particular type of recreation.

The hybrid nature of these concerts, and the enormous variety of their programmes, would appear to challenge the neat categorisation proposed by Bourdieu with respect to the consumption of musical works. While the upper classes did indeed enjoy those significant 'legitimate' works Bourdieu associates with them, they also appreciated more popular items, those usually equated with middle and low brow tastes. By contrast the middle, and particularly the lower classes enjoyed not only the popular items with which they were most familiar, but also, and more aspirationally, 'light' art music and similar works which were largely unavailable to them in other forms of entertainment. Moreover, a significant and universal feature of all these concerts which further blurs social, cultural and educational boundaries is the extensive audience participation. According to Bourdieu, such behaviour is characteristic of the working class and certain fractions of the middle-class, where deep rooted demand for participation is satisfied by 'popular entertainment [which] secures the spectator's participation in the show and collective participation in the festivity which it occasions' (Bourdieu, 2002, p. 34). Yet, as I have demonstrated, such behaviour was common in these concerts across all social classes. MacTavish's statement above that 'the audience prefer to hear themselves sing', and Aveling's description of being 'jovial, flushed, perspiring and happy' further reinforce these observations. As Bourdieu himself notes, such participation satisfies 'the taste for and sense of revelry, the plain speaking and hearty laughter which liberate by setting the social world head over heels, overturning conventions and proprieties' (Ibid., p. 34). Yet, in the present context at least, the overturning of conventions and proprieties is by no means confined to the lower classes, but evident across the social spectrum. Thus, smoking concerts, while superficially appearing to resonate comfortably with the class distinctions of the milieu in

which they arise, in fact transcend such comfortable classification, frequently demonstrating musical content or patterns of behaviour beyond the conventions ordinarily ascribed to their participants.

### Women in Smoking Concerts

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century there was a subtle but steady change in the perception of the role and social status of women; such realignment took place in many spheres, political, legal, economic, intellectual, and personal, and these changes were also clearly manifested in Victorian society's attitude towards female smoking (see, Harris, 1994, p. 24). Yet, during the middle and late Victorian era upper- and middle-class women were still largely excluded from certain forms of entertainment, such as Catch Clubs and smoking concerts, which were almost exclusively male domains. However, there were some exceptions. As mentioned above, the Wandering Minstrels had many female members, albeit they were relegated to the back of the gallery during the performance itself. Elsewhere, the Strolling Players included in their orchestra a considerable number of ladies among the string section,<sup>74</sup> who, presumably, also played at their male-only smoking concerts. When in 1875 a public smoking concert was proposed at the Cannon Street Hotel, the announcement implicitly acknowledged the slowly changing attitudes towards female smoking:

The smoking concert is strictly for gentlemen. Surely this is not an insinuation that ladies are beginning to smoke on anything like a large scale. At the 'Wandering Minstrels' concert one sees a few ladies in an upper gallery, among the clouds of tobacco smoke.<sup>75</sup>

Social prejudice against female smoking was gradually overcome during the late 1880s and 1890s. This was reflected in the participation of female concert-hall, opera and music-hall artists performing in some of these smoking concerts: the lower the social class and type of concert, the greater the number of participating female artists, almost certainly because in these classes smoking by women was more generally accepted than it was further up the social hierarchy. The 'official' acceptance of women into the male dominated world of smoking concerts was announced by the *Musical Times* in January 1891, in an advertisement for a "Grand Cigarette Concert" ... to which ladies are invited [and which] introduces the gentler sex for the first time to music combined with smoke – but with "limited liabilities."<sup>76</sup> This last phrase is puzzling, and presumably used metaphorically to denote that the presence of women in the audience was either partially troublesome and an unwelcome responsibility to the menfolk attending the concerts,<sup>77</sup> or that the women themselves were partially exposed

to something undesirable, that is, the tobacco smoke, or perhaps that they were not necessarily expected to smoke themselves. Whatever the answer, it did indicate a change of perspective, and some music societies gradually allowed ladies to attend their smoking concerts, albeit segregated in a different part of the hall. For example, in the second half of the 1890s the London County Council Musical Society offered 'a limited number of tickets, price 6d. each, to admit ladies to the galleries,'<sup>78</sup> a move vividly reminiscent of the Wandering Minstrels' earlier practices. However, the dam had been breached, and women's increasing right to smoke in public allowed them to enjoy the pleasures of music in the environment of a smoking concert, even if only from a distance, pleasures that men had always taken for granted within their male-dominated clubland world. Such developments led to Apperson being able to observe in 1914, albeit in relation to music halls, that, 'men go largely because they can smoke during the performance; women go largely because they have ceased to consider tobacco-smoke as a thing to be rigidly avoided, and therefore have no hesitation in accompanying their menfolk' (Apperson, 1914, p. 201).

### Smoking at public concerts

Although the aristocratic and upper-class music societies retained their social exclusivity, they had brought smoking concerts into the public domain by giving them in public halls such as St. Andrew's Hall and Prince's Hall, and the Cannon Street Hotel. By the early 1890s the fashion of smoking during a music performance was so widespread that it also invaded the newly built Queen's Hall, in Langham Place, London. This received its 'baptism of smoke' on 27 November 1893 (a few days before its official opening on 2 December) at an informal royal inauguration, during a smoking concert by the Royal Amateur Orchestral Society, conducted by George Mount and with the Duke of Edinburgh as the orchestra's leader. At this concert the Prince of Wales, accompanied by many other royals, 'seemed delighted with both the hall and the programme of music which was performed'; among the artists who took part were the violinist Tivadar Nachèz and the baritone Ffrangcon-Davies.<sup>79</sup> Figure 1 captures this event.

Robert Newman, the first lessee and manager of Queen's Hall, was open to experimentation and embraced every opportunity that brought the Hall into the public eye. What better advertising ploy than to secure royal patronage from the start, by providing the Hall for a smoking concert that his aristocratic audience could enjoy in the company of a pipe or cigar? Soon many other high-profile amateur orchestral societies held their smoking concerts there. The management, by allowing them to bring the smoke-filled intimacy of the inner circle of the male cultural elite into the plush surrounds of this magnificent building, also



**Picture:** Smoking Concert, given by the Royal Amateur Orchestral Society, 27 November 1893, at the Queen's Hall. The audience is sitting comfortably in chairs, some of them smoking, while the tables in front of the stage are for cigars and opera hats.

benefited through the increased profile that such concerts brought to the Hall, as well as through the revenue they generated. Newman and the Hall gained economic and symbolic capital,<sup>80</sup> while the societies gained cultural capital, reinforcing and legitimising the smoking activities and social conviviality of their meetings.

In 1895 the famous Promenade Concerts ('Proms') were inaugurated at the Queen's Hall, the result of Newman's business talent and artistic sensitivity. He aspired to bring a wider public 'to come to love great music', and his approach was 'to run nightly concerts and train the public by easy stages. Popular at first, gradually raising the standard until I have *created* a public for classical and modern music' (Wood, 1938, p. 68). Initially, a large audience was enticed by appealing to popular taste. In addition to the plush surroundings, flowers, and a fountain in the centre of the promenade arena (novelties not seen in other metropolitan concert-halls), a miscellaneous programme was offered. This included many popular musical items, such as the ubiquitous cornet solo (with Sullivan's *The Lost Chord* 'by desire' as a regular request), the cornet quartet (the Park sisters appearing nightly) and 'Grand Selections' from opera or musical comedy arranged for the orchestra. Additionally,



the freedom to smoke was also used to attract an audience. Smoking was permitted during the actual concert in an attempt to re-create the free-and-easy atmosphere familiar to the male audience from their convivial club and pub gatherings. This practice was strictly forbidden at other serious functions, including the Promenade Concerts at Covent Garden, where smoking was allowed only in the Floral Hall. But it was made clear in the Queen's Hall Proms' programmes that:

Smoking is permitted at these Concerts, excepting in the seats between doors E and F in the Grand Circle, which are reserved for non-smokers. Gentlemen are politely requested to refrain from striking matches during the performance of the various items.

A cigar for three pence, advertised in the programmes and accompanied by beverages sold on the floor, was welcomed during the performance, and this tradition continued well into the twentieth century. Now that smoking was accepted within the Hall, thus informalizing art music and partially undermining the previous reverential state in which it had been heard, men of all classes could enjoy the thrills of both popular and serious music, in a public place, in the company of ladies, without having to 'debar themselves from their usual evening relaxation'.<sup>81</sup> Popular experience of serious orchestral music in a large concert-hall was now available to both the educated upper classes and those lower down the social scale; class boundaries were blurred, particularly in the promenade where aspirants could mingle, smoke and drink with their social superiors, while the middle-class educated connoisseurs could enjoy their smoking, listening to high-class music without the restrictions imposed at other public concerts.

Despite the new fashion's immense success, objections to smoking concerts and smoking at concerts were occasionally noted in the press. In 1889, an 'Indignant Old Gentleman' protested against the increase of smoking concerts, expressing in a letter to a suburban paper his surprise that 'so many vocalists should be found who are willing to exercise their powers under [these] circumstances', which he thought 'belong more to the pothouse than to the realm of art'.<sup>82</sup> However, the baritone Charles Santley, a confirmed smoker himself, in a society magazine article celebrating his 'fifty years of service', asserted that he never knew 'a great singer who did not smoke'.<sup>83</sup> The Old Gentleman further complained that the character of the songs sung at these meetings was not 'elevating' (a comment perhaps revealing more about the lower-class type of concerts he attended). Similar complaints were aired about smoking at the Queen's Hall Proms, with suggestions to set apart 'the whole of the top part of the building for the "gentlemen of the weed", and thus give others an opportunity to enjoy the music,

and protect the ladies from a nuisance'.<sup>84</sup> Rosa Newmarch, a fervent supporter of Henry Wood, Robert Newman and their Proms, implicitly voiced her reservations about smoking during the performance by observing that, 'whether it really adds to the enjoyment of music to hear it, like Satan, "in a horrid vale [...] involved in stench and smoke", is a question which the female pen must not dare to pose' (Newmarch, 1904, p. 19). Such protests were too little avail and they never diminished the success of smoking concerts, which gradually spread out of London and enjoyed national popularity. In 1900 the *Musical Times* commented that a smoking concert of chamber music, given at the Metropole Hotel in Leeds 'in the nature of an experiment' met with 'considerable success'. The artists were 'Mr. E. Elliott's String Quartet, a party of able and artistic local players, [who] gave quartets by Mozart, Beethoven, and Dvorák, and the mixture of music and nicotine seemed to be so well appreciated by the devotees of both who formed the audience, that the experiment is likely to be repeated'.<sup>85</sup>

In the 1890s smoking concerts were at their height, but they appeared to have declined during the early decades of the twentieth century, featuring sporadically in the press and then only as a consequence of royal participation<sup>86</sup> or by way of political comment relating to the particular society giving the concert. Smoking concerts were never intended to compete with mainstream public concerts. On the contrary, they were often given quite late into the night, so that gentlemen could attend them following other social engagements or even public concerts. Consequently they gradually faded from the limelight, yet still continued their original purpose of providing convivial entertainment in private and public gatherings. For example, during World War I, smoking concerts were given for the benefit of British soldiers fighting in France, and were put on by officers who believed in the therapeutic effect of both tobacco and music in alleviating the strains of battle (see, Pulling, 1952, p. 13). Indeed, the most notable legacy of this tradition of smoking concerts survives in a recording made on 23 October 1930 at the Queen's Small Hall, featuring Jack Hylton and his Orchestra and music hall artists such as Gus Elen;<sup>87</sup> this recording, with its laughter, cockney accents and general good humoured banter, would appear to be attempting to recapture the flavour of what I have described as a lower middle-class smoking concert.

### Conclusion

To conclude, I shall briefly return to the relationship between music and smoking in the context of the performance event. As noted above, smoking has often had negative connotations, yet it can also be seen as having an inclusive function. Where tobacco was welcome, it was seen as a contributor to friendship and companionship. Tobacco

smoke can turn strangers into friends, while the 'smoke-filled room' symbolically connotes the sacred inner circle of persons with common statutes and cause (see, similar discussion in Feinhandler, 1986, p. 177). This is as true of the native Americans, for example, who revered tobacco and its smoke, as it is of the convivial gatherings of male entertainment in polite English society during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in which the use of tobacco, usually in the form of pipe smoking, was often associated with music and the social contexts in which it flourished. It is this positive approach to smoking which contributed to the social development of music-making in both eighteenth-century music clubs and nineteenth-century smoking concerts. These male-dominated institutions, denoting an inner circle of persons with common interests were related through their music making and merry entertainment. Dinner, drinking, smoking and music making were means by which friends and equals came together to express their shared relationships within a particular social group. They identified with the music and the performers of that music, and such occasions both engendered and defined the communal feelings enjoyed by these groups. More precisely, smoking is often used symbolically to demarcate both class boundaries and a variety of binary oppositions - 'good' vs. 'evil', 'inside' vs. 'outside', 'we' against 'they'.<sup>88</sup> Similarly, as Bourdieu has observed, tastes in music also 'clearly affirm and infallibly classify one's "class"' (Bourdieu, 2002, p. 18). Yet, the various social classes, having previously developed and distinguished themselves through their own forms of musical entertainment, and their smoking practices, now converged upon a new form of concert giving, the smoking concert. And, notwithstanding that the different concert types I have outlined reflected established social hierarchies, the 'smoking concert' as a cultural symbol became something of a common social denominator, albeit that each class subtly inflected such events with meanings particular to itself.

Furthermore, in the second half of the nineteenth century smoking played an important role in changing social attitudes towards both the enjoyment of music and the nature of the performance event in which it was found; this is attested to by the contemporary commentator who stated that, 'the great success of ... Smoking Concerts in these days [can be] largely attributed to the social influence of tobacco' (Cundall, 1901, p. 55–56). In the aristocratic and upper-middle classes the association of smoking with high-class art music, through the vehicle of the smoking concert, legitimised smoking and drinking and made them more socially acceptable. Simultaneously, the association of art music with smoking, a cultural practice more readily identified with informality and easy conviviality, contributed to the former's demystification and desanctification by presenting it in contexts in which formal behaviour was less *de rigueur*. As

the editor of the *Musical Times* asserted in 1889, 'although the love of the music still exists, it is necessary to provide additional pleasures to make up a balance of delight'.<sup>89</sup> For the lower classes smoking similarly informalized art music while simultaneously elevating singing club culture, and the particular types of entertainment designated as smoking concerts clearly demonstrate an aspiration towards, even identification with, upper- and middle-class practices. Hence smoking was a significant agent for the popularisation of art music in the late nineteenth century, and smoking concerts provided access to this music for people to whom it might otherwise be inaccessible. The establishment of such concerts in Victorian London and its suburbs was seen as a noble form of entertainment, one that was not so much 'a proof of the advance of smoking as of the advance of music'.<sup>90</sup> Finally, although smoking concerts had little influence, if any, on mainstream concert structure, and did not effect significant musical innovation, they acted as agents of cultural change through social imitation and adaptation of class distinctiveness. Their proliferation among and adoption by lower social groups suggests the development of a trend, one which changed the function and appreciation of the music performance event. This trend represented a gradual evolution from private smoking concerts to public smoking concerts, and then the acceptance of smoking in certain mainstream public concerts. And it was these latter, smoke-filled concerts which contributed significantly to both the popularisation and commercialisation of art music in late Victorian England.

## References

- <sup>1</sup> One of the first musical pieces to celebrate tobacco is a five-part madrigal by Michael East, published in London in 1606, in his Second Set of Madrigals (see Fellowes, 1923, p. 115–120). Not later than 1605, Captain Tobias Hume introduced in his Ayres (1st part) a piece beginning with the words 'Tobacco, tobacco, sing sweetly, while the piece 'Of Drinking Ale and Tobacco' in Ravenscroft's *Briefe Discourse* (1614) celebrates tobacco's medicinal benefits: 'Tobacco fumes away all nastie rheumes' (Ravenscroft, *A Briefe Discourse of the True Use of Charact'ring the Degrees*, 1614). A song from this time that has been enduringly popular in England and which has become part of the folk tradition, is 'Tobacco's an Indian Weed'. This song has undergone a variety of changes from the time of the reign of James I to the twentieth century, with versions of it having been used by, among others, Samuel Wesley (1800) and Vaughan Williams (1934). The round 'A Catch on Tobacco' by Dr. Henry Aldrich (1647–1710) has the instruction, 'Sung by 4 Smoaking their Pipes', and is included in the Second Book of *The Pleasant Musical Companion* (1686) (see, van den Borren, 1932, p. 370). For more information on early songs celebrating tobacco, see, Fairholt, 1876, p. 72–127.
- <sup>2</sup> *Musical Times*, vol. 30 (June 1889).
- <sup>3</sup> *Musical Times*, vol. 23 (February 1882).
- <sup>4</sup> Scholes asserts that 'Smoking Concerts ... were started in London in the early eighties' (Percy, 1947, p. 196–97). However,

- this frequently quoted assertion (see for example, Scott, 2001, p. 121) is incorrect in that smoking concerts existed for almost twenty years before the *Musical Times* began to acknowledge them.
- <sup>5</sup> For a discussion about the centripetal influence and concentration of musical life around metropolitan London, see Ehrlich and Russell, 1998, p. 111–22 (particularly, p. 116).
- <sup>6</sup> For a detailed discussion on the symbolic meanings of smoking within societies, see Sherwin, 1986, p. 167–87.
- <sup>7</sup> Bourdieu suggests that culture can be examined in terms of a number of interrelated forms of power, the most obvious being derived from economic power, which he calls economic capital. He also suggests that power can be achieved through acquisition of other types of capital such as social, cultural, and symbolic capital, which are not necessarily reduced to economic capital. R. Johnson, in his introduction of Bourdieu's *The Field of Cultural Production*, defines cultural capital as 'a form of knowledge, an internalised code or a cognitive acquisition which equips the social agent with empathy towards, appreciations for or competence in deciphering cultural relations and cultural artefacts' (Johnson, in Bourdieu, 1993, p. 7). Social capital indicates degrees of relationship with significant others, while symbolic capital refers to 'prestige, reputation, fame, etc.' (Thompson, in Bourdieu, 1991, p. 14). For an exhaustive discussion of Bourdieu's ideas on various types of capital, see Bourdieu, 1984; see also, Thompson's Introduction in Bourdieu, 1991, p. 1–31.
- <sup>8</sup> During the Napoleonic Wars British armies fighting in Spain became acquainted with cigar-smoking, and numerous cigars were imported from that country.
- <sup>9</sup> 'Swell mob' in this context denotes a class of pickpockets who dressed in style to escape detection as they mingled with their fashionable victims (see, Judd, 1983, p. 23).
- <sup>10</sup> 'Cigar-divans' were lounges usually decorated in eastern style and furnished with eastern divans or luxurious reclining chairs, while the smoking guests were served Turkish coffee and other refreshments (see, West, 1953, p. 33).
- <sup>11</sup> For a discussion on social ambiguities within this song, see, Traies, 1986, p. 23–48 (particularly, p. 42–43).
- <sup>12</sup> The earliest Wills of Bristol cards, issued in 1887, were non-pictorial, used as stiffeners for the pack, but were soon followed by picture cards. One of the first cigarette cards was issued by Gloag, while Wills issued a series of cards depicting musical celebrities, famous opera singers (both male and female), and composers and conductors, past and present (West, 1953, p. 37).
- <sup>13</sup> *Punch* vol. 21, London, 1851, p. 196. In 1851 middle-class people were alarmed and shocked at a sudden and short-lived outburst of 'bloomerism', imported from the United States, according to which women were imitating masculine attire, smoking publicly in the street, and to emancipate themselves from the usual conventions of feminine dress, wearing 'bloomer dress' (short wide skirt over 'bloomers' (pantaloons)).
- <sup>14</sup> In 1869 the Prince of Wales founded the exclusive Marlborough Club as a result of the White's Club committee's refusal to relax what he considered their excessive restrictions on smoking (see, Horn, 1992, p. 147).
- <sup>15</sup> The plot of *Il Segreto di Susanna* (libretto by Enrico Golisciani) centres on a misunderstanding, based on smoking, which is eventually resolved: Count Gil smells tobacco smoke around his house, and assumes that his young wife Susanna has a secret lover, but he eventually discovers that she herself is the smoker, and all ends happily, further reinforcing the acceptance of female smoking. The opera was first performed in Munich, on 4 December, 1909; its first performance in England was in July 1958 at the Glyndebourne Festival
- <sup>16</sup> *Musical Times*, vol. 33, October, 1892, p. 601.
- <sup>17</sup> These meetings were described by both the music publisher Henry Playford, and Samuel Pepys in his diary; see, Pepys, 1970–83, vol. 10 for commentary on the diary's musical references.
- <sup>18</sup> McVeigh, discussing the rise and demise of the Benefit Concert in Nineteenth-Century London, identifies two principal mechanisms of transformation in the institutional structure of the city's concert life. The first represents a radical break, such as 'the invention or import of a new concert-type ... or the death of an old one', while the second mechanism 'involves modification and transformation, a gradual process of adaptation resulting in seemingly new types of concert promotion in response to both social and musical pressures' (McVeigh, 1999, p. 243).
- <sup>19</sup> *Musical Times*, vol. 23, 1882, p. 77.
- <sup>20</sup> For a discussion on bourgeois concerts in the City during the second half of the eighteenth century, see McVeigh, 1993, p. 32.
- <sup>21</sup> At a lower social level musical entertainment of a different type was provided by the public house, from which the free-and-easies emerged in the 1840s. These public-house gatherings (or 'Harmonic Clubs'), originated in the meetings of the private Catch Clubs and amateur music societies of the eighteenth century, were informal entertainments given by amateurs who generally met once a week (see, Kift, 1996, p. 18). Out of the free-and easies grew the concert rooms, or singing saloons, which had a stage at one end, a bar at the opposite end, and long rows of tables at right angles to both (see, Kift, *Ibid.*; also, Earl, 1986, p. 3–5). They provided entertainment by professional singers and other performers of both sexes to a lower middle-class audience, they charged an entrance fee, and the audience took an active part in the programme either by singing along with the choruses or in amateur competitions. From these the more elaborate and commercialized music-halls developed in the early 1850s.
- <sup>22</sup> *The Globe*, 1882; press cutting in *The Wandering Minstrels' Book*; British Library Shelfmark: K.6.e.3 (subsequently indicated as BL: K.6.e.3).
- <sup>23</sup> *The Globe*, *Ibid.* The Moray Minstrels frequently gave public, charity concerts together with the Wandering Minstrels.
- <sup>24</sup> From the 1870s to the 1890s the Wandering Minstrels were one of the best known amateur music groups in the south of England. However, following their disbanding in 1898, they were almost entirely forgotten, and although a short article on the 'Wandering Minstrels' was included in the first two editions of *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, it was omitted from the third and subsequent editions.
- <sup>25</sup> In *The Wandering Minstrels' Book*, BL: K.6.e.3.
- <sup>26</sup> *The Wandering Minstrels' Book, 1861 (1860–67)*, title page; BL: K.6.e.2 vol. 1. Captain Seymour John Grey Egerton of the First Life Guards (the son of the Earl of Wilton) was elected president and conductor and held this position until his retirement in 1873. He was succeeded both as president and conductor by Lord Gerald Fitzgerald, an important figure in the history of the society. In 1882 the presidency was given to Colonel, Sir H.P. de Bathe, while Captain Lionel Benson became the conductor. Benson was a gifted amateur, a member of the Noblemen and Gentlemen's Catch Club, and active as conductor of 'The Magpie Minstrels', an upper-class amateur singing society, giving concerts solely for charitable



- purposes. The 'Magpie Minstrels' who changed their name to 'The Magpie Madrigal Society' in 1896, often gave public, non-smoking concerts together with the Wandering Minstrels (for more information on the 'Magpie Minstrels', see Scholes, 1947, p. 52.)
- <sup>27</sup> The influential, and very fashionable, Noblemen and Gentlemen's Catch Club was founded in 1761, and most of the noble amateurs of the day became members. For a history of the Club see Viscount Gladstone, *The Story of the Noblemen and Gentlemen's Catch Club* (London, 1930). The principal motive for its foundation was to meet for dinner and music-making, and to encourage the composition, prize giving and performance of canons, catches and glees. Throughout its history the Club was patronised by royalty, but what gave distinction and character to the club was the inclusion of professional musicians as 'privileged members' (a practice almost universally followed by later clubs). Although the Catch Club was essentially a male Club, an annual 'Ladies' Night' was an early institution, and was organized with the usual care and ceremony; but it was a social and not an 'official' meeting. In the second half of the nineteenth century, concerts described as 'Ladies' Nights', during which smoking was strictly forbidden, were a characteristic feature of many amateur orchestral societies, notwithstanding that such societies at other times took great pride in their smoking concerts.
- <sup>28</sup> *The Wandering Minstrels' Book*, BL: K.6.e.2 vol. 1, and K.6.e.3.
- <sup>29</sup> Statement printed in their programmes. They are also described as 'the only complete orchestra of amateurs in Europe', in *The Graphic*, 25 June, 1870, and *The Morning Post*, 10 July, 1873.
- <sup>30</sup> During their lifetime the Wandering Minstrels gave 138 concerts for charity, some of which were attended by royalty, and raised the huge sum of £16,657 for hospitals, schools, church repairs and other good causes. They also regularly participated in famous social occasions, and their extensive social connections ensured the support of wealthy patrons (see Hyatt King, 1987, p. 178–86).
- <sup>31</sup> *The Wandering Minstrels' Book*, BL: K.6.e.3.
- <sup>32</sup> As with the Noblemen and Gentlemen's Catch Club, the Wandering Minstrels developed an historical, corporate sense; they had their own badge with the inscription *Fidibus et Flatu*, and at the end of every season they published their accounts showing their expenses and profits (from sales of tickets, tobacco and drinks) for their public, 'Ladies', and smoking concerts. These and other curiosities inserted in their archive, were on display at their smoking concerts, and helped to establish the character and traditions of the society.
- <sup>33</sup> Another nineteenth-century remnant of earlier private male clubs, at the more up-market end, were the Song-and-Supper Rooms (club-like institutions in their own right), such as the Coal Hole, the Cyder Cellars and Evans's in Covent Garden. Evans's clientele, in particular, was exclusively male, and the appreciation of good music was combined with the taking of food, drink, and 'smoking expensive cigars'. Evans's Supper Rooms took music seriously, and its booklets printed information on the composers and the words of the glees and madrigals performed (Scholes, 1990, p. 40). Imitations of such clubs at a slightly lower social level were frequented by clerks, tradesmen and amateur musicians. The musical repertoire was similar to both the Song-and-Supper Rooms and the free-and-easies, drawing largely on favourite glees and catches with the addition of recent solos from opera and comic songs (see, Senelick, 1997, p. xii–xiii).
- <sup>34</sup> For a discussion on the detrimental effect of the admittance of women in Evan's Supper Rooms, see Pulling, 1952, p. 175.
- <sup>35</sup> *The Morning*, 16 December, 1893.
- <sup>36</sup> Brochure for their 1000<sup>th</sup> meeting, in *The Wandering Minstrels' Book*, BL: K.6.e.3.
- <sup>37</sup> *The Graphic*, 25 June 1870.
- <sup>38</sup> *The Bat*, 16 June 1885.
- <sup>39</sup> *The Musical World*, 6 December 1862.
- <sup>40</sup> Press cutting; no paper given; in *The Wandering Minstrels' Book*, BL: K.6.e.2 vol. 2.
- <sup>41</sup> *The Whitehall Review*, 29 April 1880.
- <sup>42</sup> *London Figaro*, 12 June 1880.
- <sup>43</sup> *The Morning*, 16 December 1893.
- <sup>44</sup> For example, they performed the *Messiah*, and on 20 June 1861 Mendelssohn's *Elijah* at Freemasons' Hall, while on 25 February 1871 they gave the first ever concert in the Albert Hall. At this concert although the audience comprised only the lower-class 'Messrs Lucas Brothers' Workmen' it was an historic affair, and the Minstrels' archive contains a note that 'in consequence of this [concert], the acoustics were modified by a velarium under the roof' (*The Wandering Minstrels' Book*, BL: K.6.e.2 vol. 2). The programme at this concert was almost identical to that offered in their smoking concerts, excluding audience participation, comprising orchestral items, such as Auber's Overture, *Masaniello*, Wagner's March from *Tannhäuser*, Hérold's Overture *Zampa*, *Amoretten-Tanze* by Gung'l and Rossini's Overture *William Tell*, together with songs by F. Clay, Handel, Benson and Gounod.
- <sup>45</sup> *The Musical World*, 6 December 1862.
- <sup>46</sup> *The London Figaro*, 22 December 1875.
- <sup>47</sup> A typical programme can be seen in the last night of the 1897 Proms (Saturday, 16 October), a few months before the Wandering Minstrels' last concert. Although the Proms programme is longer (and also functioned as Robert Newman's Benefit Concert) its structure and content is very similar to that offered by the Minstrels. It included the ubiquitous Wagner's Overture to *Tannhäuser*, Ed. German's *Three Dances* from *Henry VIII*, Grieg's Suite, *Peer Gynt*, and Rossini's Overture, *William Tell*, to frame each of the two parts of the concert, filled by a host of solo instrumental items and songs; full programme listed in Queen's Hall Promenade Concerts 1896–1898, vol. 1; BL: h.5470.
- <sup>48</sup> The Society was initially formed for the purpose of practising instrumental music each week. The Duke of Edinburgh, a keen violinist, was the leader of the orchestra until his death in 1900. The first conductor was Arthur Sullivan (*The Tatler*, No. 32, 5 February, 1902, p. 230). Following his resignation the conductorship was given to his assistant, George Mount, who was also in charge of another upper-class, amateur orchestra, the British Orchestral Association (1872–1875); he was replaced by Ernest Ford in 1897, who was in turn followed by Arthur W. Payne (see Scholes, 1947, p. 405).
- <sup>49</sup> *The Tatler* (1902), *Ibid*.
- <sup>50</sup> Fourth and last smoking concert of the season, given on Tuesday, 22 June 1880; in *The Times* (24 June, 1880).
- <sup>51</sup> *The Times*, 20 December, 1881, p. 10.
- <sup>52</sup> *The Globe*, 1882.
- <sup>53</sup> *Musical Times*, vol. 27, May, 1886, p. 257.
- <sup>54</sup> *Ibid*.
- <sup>55</sup> Programme of the Society's Fourth Smoking Concert of the 23rd Season (1894–1895), given on 10 May 1895, at 9 p. m. at Queen's Hall.

- <sup>56</sup> Its patron was Princess Frederica of Hanover and the presidents and vice-presidents were all members of the aristocracy.
- <sup>57</sup> *Musical Times*, vol. 32, January, 1891, p. 24.
- <sup>58</sup> The society's distinguished list of vice-presidents, reads like 'Who's Who' in the musical establishment, included Sir Joseph Barnby, J. Francis Barnett, Frederic H. Cowen, W.H. Cummings, Sir George Grove, Walter Macfarren, Hamish MacCunn, Dr. A.C. Mackenzie, August Manns, Sir Herbert Oakeley, C. Hubert H. Parry, Ebenezer Prout, Alberto Randegger, Sir John Stainer, Prof. Villiers Stanford and Arthur Sullivan, most of whom also patronised smoking concerts given by other societies.
- <sup>59</sup> *Musical Times*, vol. 30, 1889, p. 345.
- <sup>60</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>61</sup> For further discussion on the relationship between professionals and amateurs during this time, see Gillet, 2000, p. 321–340.
- <sup>62</sup> *The Globe*, 1882.
- <sup>63</sup> *Truth*, 8 November, 1888.
- <sup>64</sup> *Musical Times*, vol. 23, November 1882, p. 614.
- <sup>65</sup> *The Globe*, 1882.
- <sup>66</sup> *Truth*, 8 November 1888.
- <sup>67</sup> *Musical Times*, vol. 24, June 1883, p. 328.
- <sup>68</sup> *The Times*, 5 January 1893, p. 9.
- <sup>69</sup> Keith MacTavish, *Popular Songs for Smoking Concerts and Club Dinners* (London, [1923]), preface.
- <sup>70</sup> 20<sup>th</sup> Middlesex (Artists) R.V. Battalion Smoking Concert, Thursday, 19 March 1896, in the Head-Quarters Club; in BL: 1801.b.1 (24).
- <sup>71</sup> *Punch*, 11 February 1925, p. 158–159.
- <sup>72</sup> *The Times*, 2 February 1894, p. 5.
- <sup>73</sup> *Truth*, 8 November 1888.
- <sup>74</sup> *Musical Times*, vol. 27, May 1886, p. 276.
- <sup>75</sup> *The Surrey Advertiser and County Times, West Middlesex Herald and Kingston Gazette* (17 April, 1875).
- <sup>76</sup> *Musical Times*, vol. 32, January 1891, p. 21.
- <sup>77</sup> A similar discomfort about women's presence at male musical gatherings was also expressed a century earlier when the Anacreontic Society admitted ladies to the first, concert part of their evening entertainments. Some of these ladies often overstayed their welcome, by not leaving after the concert, leading to many complaints and the Society's eventual dissolution in 1794 (McVeigh, 1993, p. 33).
- <sup>78</sup> Announcement in programmes for smoking concerts given by the Society at St. Martin's Hall (for example, Monday, 4 April 1898; Monday, 2 April 1900).
- <sup>79</sup> *The Illustrated London News*, vol. 103 (2 December 1893), p. 691.
- <sup>80</sup> Bourdieu suggests that culture can be examined in terms of a number of interrelated forms of power, the most obvious being derived from economic power, which he calls economic capital. He also suggests that power can be achieved through acquisition of other types of capital such as social, cultural, and symbolic capital, which are not necessarily reduced to economic capital (see, for example, Bourdieu, 1993).
- <sup>81</sup> *Musical Times*, vol. 23, 1882, p. 77.
- <sup>82</sup> *Musical Times*, vol. 30, 1889, p. 337.
- <sup>83</sup> *The Tatler*, No. 40, 2 April 1902, p. 3.
- <sup>84</sup> *The Daily Telegraph*, 1 September 1896.
- <sup>85</sup> *Musical Times*, vol. 41, January 1900, p. 50.
- <sup>86</sup> For example, the 'first smoking concert attended by an English King' in 1902. This was given by the Royal Amateur Orchestral Society on 5 February 1902 at Queen's Hall, and was attended by both King Edward VII and his son the Prince of Wales (*The*

- Tatler*, No. 32, 5 February 1902, p. 230). Similarly, a smoking concert attended by the King Edward VII in 1905 (*The Sphere*, vol. 41, No. 538, 14 May 1910 – obituary volume for the King). HMVC-2079 and HMVC-2306; National Sound Archive: 2LP0033135.
- <sup>88</sup> Feinhandler (1986) argues that smoking should be evaluated in terms of its social or cultural role, and that it serves a number of social functions, including exchange, affect management, group definition and boundary mediation.
- <sup>89</sup> *Musical Times*, vol. 30, June 1889, p. 337.
- <sup>90</sup> *Musical Times*, vol. 23, February 1882, p. 77.

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### Santrauka

Straipsnyje nagrinėjamas muzikos ir rūkymo ryšys karalienės Viktorijos valdymo laikais Anglijoje, ypač Londone. Rūkymo funkcija laikoma svarbiu veiksniumi populiarinant muzikos meną XIX a. pabaigoje rengiamuose „rūkymo koncertuose“, simbolizuojančiuose unikalų ir žavų to meto kultūros reiškinį. Rūkymo koncertai atsirado susijungus įvairiems socialiniams, komerciniams ir muzikos interesams. Juos imta rengti apie 1860 m. kaip privačius vakarėlius, skirtus išimtinai vyrams, bet jau nuo 1880 m. jie tampa vis populiariesni ir madingesni. Vakareliai peraugo į koncertų tipo privačius ir viešus renginius, kuriuose buvo leidžiama rūkyti grojant muzikai. Tokius koncertus ėmė rengti mėgėjiškos aristokratų ir buržuazijos muzikų draugijos, jie tapo nusistovėjęsios aukštuomenės kultūros ir XVIII a. *Catch Club* socialinio gyvenimo, muzikavimo praktikos ir XIX a. pabaigoje atsiradusios populiariosios kultūros jungtimi. Pamažu auditorija įvairėjo, buvo įtraukiamos ir moterys, o leidimas joms lankytis pagrindinėse koncertų salėse Viktorijos epochos pabaigoje atspindėjo tam tikrus pokyčius ne tik to meto visuomenėje, bet ir pakitusį visuomenės požiūrį į muzikos meną, jos atlikimą ir pomėgius.



Rūkymo koncertus galima suskirstyti į keturias kategorijas, bet buvo ir daugiau jų rūšių bei variantų. Šie koncertai buvo skirstomi pagal narių ir mecenatų socialinį statusą, renginio vietą, pagal juose siūlomos muzikos turinį ir formą. Pirmąją kategoriją sudarė vadinamieji „privatūs rūkymo koncertai“, juos rengė aristokratų draugijos, turinčios tiesioginių ryšių su karališkosios šeimos nariais ir aristokratija. Pobūvis buvo rengiamas išskirtinėje socialinėje aplinkoje, tiek privačioje, tiek ir viešojo koncertų salėje, ir ne tik atspindėjo įvairius socialinius elito pasilinksminimų aspektus bei laisvalaikio leidimo būdus, bet ir drauge imitavo viešųjų koncertų praktiką – į renginius buvo galima patekti tik įsigijus bilietą, abonementą ar paaukojus. Pobūvyje skambėdavo įvairi muzika – uvertiūros, simfonijos, lengvosios muzikos kūriniai orkestrui, *virtuoso* ar sentimentalios pjesės, keletas modernių kompozicijų ir dainų, taip sujungiant šventišką progą su edukacine ir intelektualine patirtimi; būdavo vaišinamasi valgiais ir gėrimais, rūkoma. Kitus šiek tiek žemesnio lygio rūkymo koncertus rengė žinomos aukštesniosios vidurinės klasės draugijos, kurioms priklausė garsūs muzikos ir literatūros veikėjai, taip pat ir kai kurie aristokratai. Jie siūlydavo labai panašią muzikinę programą kaip ir aristokratų draugijos, bet jų rengiami koncertai jau buvo vieši, todėl ne tokie socialiai išskirtini.

Antroji kategorija yra įvairesnė ir gali būti apytikriai suskirstyta į dvi atskiras rūkymo koncertų rūšis. Pirmajai priklausytų Londono miesto (*the City*) buržuazijos rengiami koncertai, iš esmės imitavę aristokratų organizuojamus koncertus. Jie buvo paplitę Sityje, Londono tradiciniame buržuazijos muzikos kultūros centre jau nuo XVIII a. antros pusės. Šių draugijų nariai ir mecenatai – profesionalūs teisininkai ir valstybės tarnautojai – mėgo mišrias programas su lengvosios orkestrinės muzikos kūriniiais, kuriuos grodavo *ad hoc* įvairios sudėties ansambliai, įvairiomis solinėmis instrumentinėmis pjesėmis ir dainomis. Koncertai būdavo rengiami kuklesnėje aplinkoje – viešbučių ir viešose salėse.

Antrajai grupei priskirtini ne tokie prestižiniai rūkymo koncertai žemesniosios vidurinės klasės visuomenei. Jos nariai ir mecenatai buvo kuklesnio socialinio ekonominio sluoksnio. Šių koncertų struktūrą ir atliekamos muzikos turinį sudarė lengvesnės mišrios muzikos programa su dainomis ir sutartinėmis. Susirinkusi auditorija laisvai vaišindavosi valgiais ir gėrimais bei mėgėdavosi rūkymu. Šie koncertai užėmė tarpinę padėtį tarp buržuazijos rengiamų rūkymo koncertų ir dainuojamosios saloninės kultūros. Apskritai aukštesniosios vidurinės klasės koncertai buvo skirti daugiausia vyriškai auditorijai, laisvoje koncertų salių aplinkoje vyrai galėjo linksmai praleisti laisvalaikį ir pasiklausyti aukšto meninio lygio muzikos.

Trečioji kategorija – armijos rūkymo koncertai, paprastai rengiami armijos dalinių štabuose ar kareivinėse ir tik kartais viešose koncertų salėse. Savo muzikos turiniu ir pasilinksminimo pobūdžiu jie atspindėjo skirtingą socialinį

karininkų rangą ir paprastų kareivių lygį, nes aukštesnio lygio koncertai imitavo pirmosios kategorijos aristokratų rūkymo koncertus, o žemesnio socialinio statuso atstovams skirti koncertai apibūdinami kaip triukšmingi kareivių vakarėliai laisvoje aplinkoje.

Galiausiai išskiriama dar viena pramoginių „žemesniųjų klasių“ rūkymo koncertų kategorija. Šiuo atveju siūloma lanksčiai parenkamos programos pramoga, panaši į populiarius renginius žemesnės klasės koncertų salėse ir apimanti platų spektrą muzikos kūrinių leidžiant auditorijai triukšmingai elgtis. Žiūrint iš tam tikros elito perspektyvos, tokie koncertai buvo prastesnės kokybės, jie atspindėjo populistinį žemesniųjų sluoksnių skonį. Apskritai nors juose ir skambėjo įvairi muzika, šie renginiai išsiskyrė ne tik kaip „rūkymo koncertai“, bet, kas yra kur kas svarbiau, savo natūraliai hibridiniu pobūdžiu, tam tikru aukštosios klasės viešų koncertų ir privačių muzikos klubų koncertų mišiniu.

Pradedant 1890-aisiais, rūkymo per muzikinius pasirodymus mada taip paplito, kad pasiekė neseniai įrengtą muzikos meno šventovę – Karalienės salę Londone. Norint pritraukti auditoriją, buvo leidžiama rūkyti per koncertus – tai buvo griežtai draudžiama kituose rimtuose renginiuose. Taip muzikos menas tapo neoficialus, iš dalies jis pakenkė ir sumenkino ankstesnį garbingą savo statusą, kur buvo klausomasi muzikos ir kur visų visuomeninių klasių vyrai galėjo mėgautis tiek populiariosios, tiek ir rimtosios muzikos skambesiu viešose vietose damų draugijoje.

Rimta orkestrinė muzika didelėse koncertų salėse išpopuliarėjo, ji buvo prieinama ir išsilavinusiai aukštuomenei, ir žemesnio socialinio luomo atstovams; klasių ribos nusiūrynė, ypač pasivaikščiojimo metu, kai aspirantai galėjo būti kartu, rūkyti ir gerti su aukštesniais jiems pagal socialinį rangą atstovais, o vidurinės klasės išsilavinę muzikos žinovai galėjo mėgautis rūkymu klausydamiesi aukšto lygio muzikos be jiems taikomų apribojimų kituose viešuose koncertuose. Taip įvairūs socialiniai sluoksniai, anksčiau susiformavę ir atsiskyrę per savitas pramoginių muzikos renginių formas ir rūkymo įpročius, dabar susiliejo į vieną naują koncertų rengimo formą – rūkymo koncertus. Nors skirtingi koncertai atspindėjo susiformavusių socialinių hierarchijų interesus, „rūkymo koncertai“ kaip kultūrinis simbolis tapo lyg ir socialiniu vardikliu, žinoma, kiekviena socialinė klasė subtiliai veikė šiuos renginius jai būdinga prasme.

Tarp aristokratų ir aukštesnės vidurinės klasės rūkymas per „rūkymo koncertus“ buvo siejamas su aukšto lygio muzikos menu ir taip įteisino rūkymą ir gėrimą suteikiant šiems koncertams socialiai priimtinesnį statusą. Drauge muzikos meno susiejimas su rūkymu kaip kultūrinė praktika labiau tapatinama su neoficialumu ir džiaugšmingumu, ir tai prisidėjo prie šio meno mistiškumo ir šventumo išsklaidymo pateikiant jį tokioje aplinkoje, kur oficiali laikysena buvo ne tokia *de rigueur*. Žemesniojo luomo

klasėms rūkymas savo ruožtu suteikė muzikos menui neoficialumo ir pakėlė dainavimo klubų kultūrą, o tam tikros rūšies pramoginiai rūkymo koncertai aiškiai demonstravo siekimą net susitapatinti su vidurinės ir aukštesniosios klasės lygio įpročiais. Taigi rūkymas buvo ryškus veiksnys populiarinant muzikos meną XIX a. pabaigoje, o rūkymo koncertai priartino muziką prie tų žmonių, kuriems kitu atveju ji būtų buvusi neprieinama. Rengti tokius koncertus Viktorijos laikų Londone ir jo priemiesčiuose buvo laikoma kilnia pramogos forma, skirta ne tiek „rūkymui skatinti, kiek muzikai populiarinti“. Galiausiai nors rūkymo koncertai ir neturėjo didelės įtakos ir reikšmės pagrindinei

koncertų struktūrai ir novatoriškai muzikai, jie darė įtaką kultūriniam pokyčiams per socialinių klasių išskirtinumų imitavimą ir adaptavimą. Jų plitimas ir pripažinimas tarp žemesnio luomo socialinių grupių rodo tokios tendencijos, pakeitusios muzikos renginių funkciją ir vertinimą, plėtrą. Ši tendencija demonstruoja laipsnišką evoliuciją nuo privačių rūkymo koncertų iki viešų muzikos renginių, o tada ir rūkymo pripažinimą tam tikruose pagrindiniuose viešuose koncertuose. Ir kaip tik šie dūmuose skendintys koncertai smarkiai prisidėjo tiek prie muzikos meno populiarinimo, tiek ir prie jo komercializavimo Anglijoje vėlyvuoju Viktorijos eros laikotarpiu.