Abstract

Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1759) is well-known for his 555 keyboard sonatas. Although his work is greatly revered by many professional musicians, some claim that his work does not show any compository development. In this thesis, his sonatas are clustered by normalized compression distance (NCD), a non-informed method without musical background knowledge. NCD is a similarity metric rooted in Kolmogorov Complexity (KC), which captures the similarity between any two sonatas in a single number. The results clearly show clusters of similar sonatas and suggest Scarlatti’s work does show compository development, even ‘milestone sonatas’ marking changes in artistic style during his lifetime.