

2010

Historically Informed Performance Practice of the Baroque Era

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Historically Informed Performance Practice of the Baroque Era
by
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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
Requirements of the CSU Honors Program

For Honors in the degree of
Music in Music Education.
Schwab School of Music,
Columbus State University

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In recent years, much debate has ensued regarding the level of consideration that should be given to the historical context of musical compositions that were written and performed during the Baroque era, which extends from 1600 to 1750 CE. The question arises as to how closely we should strive to emulate the performance conditions that would have been present during the Baroque era. Robert Donington, an English musicologist and author of two definitive texts on Baroque performance practice, suggests in his *Performer's Guide to Baroque Music* that we can meet the expectations of the Baroque composers to a greater degree than many modern performers suppose. Regardless of whether one is able to invest in period instruments, or to study Baroque music extensively, a performer at any level can strive to understand and to apply the universal principles of historically informed performance practice. The rich body of music produced during the Baroque period should not be restricted to the enjoyment of Baroque scholars alone, nor should it be abused by those performers who are unwilling to explore the traditions that place the works within a unique historical context. Every work of art belongs within a specific cultural context, and our enjoyment can be enhanced rather than deterred by learning to appreciate the elements which make the work unique. While the misconception exists that the performance of Baroque music is somehow limiting or unemotional, in reality the opportunity for personal expression and individualized performance in the Baroque era is unrivaled by most other periods of music history. If one will truly seek to understand and to apply some of the basic elements of Baroque performance practice, a treasure trove of artistic options are available to the performer. Through the works of G. F. Handel, one of the most prolific composers of the Baroque era, the flutist can learn to appreciate the rich language of the Baroque era, and begin to apply the specific elements of this language that can facilitate a historically informed performance. The many instrumental works of G. F. Handel, including his *Sonata in G major* op. 1, no. 5 (HWV 363b), provide an excellent starting point for those instrumentalists who would endeavor to explore the elements that make the Baroque tradition unique, including the production of a desirable characteristic sound, a stylistically appropriate system of articulation, an understanding of the practice of ornamentation, well-informed choices of

tempos, the application of the *inégaie* style, and a sensitive performance of a variety of distinct musical styles.

George Frederic Handel was one of the most influential and prolific composers of the Baroque era, and his works provide performers of many instrumental and vocal mediums with a wealth of finely crafted works which exemplify the spirit of the age. Although Handel was born in Halle, Germany in 1685 and spent some time in Hamburg and in Italy, he enjoyed his greatest success in England, where he became a naturalized citizen. The operas and oratorios that Handel wrote in the English vernacular merited the admiration and respect of the nation, and Handel's legacy persists as one of the most beloved English composers of all time. Employed by many wealthy patrons, including the Elector of Hanover, who would later become King George I of Great Britain, Handel was obligated to produce great variety of instrumental and vocal works. The scope of his required duties may have contributed to his notable practice of self borrowing and the use of interchangeable instrumentation in his instrumental works which was common at the time (Streatfield, 130-136). While strongly influenced by the Italian Baroque style, Handel successfully incorporated a variety of national styles in his works. His operas, probably the clearest examples of the influence of the Italian style on Handel's writing, dominated much of the composer's attention throughout his lifetime. His mastery of the oratorio, clearly manifested in beloved works such as the *Messiah*, is one of his most notable contributions, although the popularity of such works has often unfairly detracted from the position of historical importance that Handel holds in all genres (Hicks).

While often overshadowed by Handel's notable accomplishments in the opera genre and in the development of the oratorio, his instrumental chamber works made significant strides in the evolution of sonata form and in advancing the quality of the instrumental music available (Streatfield 330). Sonata form was one of the most universally used forms of the Classical era and continued well into the 20th century, and is used in almost every major symphony or instrumental work with which we are familiar today. Sonata form is used for single movements of a work and consists of an exposition, in

which two to three basic melodic themes are presented, a development section, which expounds upon these basic themes, and a recapitulation, which reiterates these themes in the tonic key (Webster). Many of the individual movements of Handel's sonatas, including the second movements of the Sonatas in A major (HWV 361) and D major (HWV 378), conform to the basic structure of sonata form, and provide some of the clearest examples of his contribution to the development of the sonata form (Streatfield 330).

Handel can be credited with the supply of a vast body of repertoire for a number of solo instruments. Although Handel was often preoccupied with the composition of opera, the obligations that he had to his patron required that he produce a substantial amount of instrumental music. The flutist of the Baroque era would have performed upon the transverse flute, which was blown from the side, in contrast to its frequently used counterpart, the end-blown recorder. The term 'transverse', or 'traverso' flute is used broadly today to signify a side blown flute. The characteristic instrument of the Baroque era was constructed of wood or ivory and had holes where the fingers were to be placed and often a single key which resembles our modern D sharp key. This instrument had a cylindrical bore and produced a softer, more mellow sound than the flutes to which we are accustomed. It was used most frequently in small chamber settings, which served as the most practical and appropriate context for the instrument. Handel wrote twelve sonatas that could be performed upon the transverse flute, although most were written with nonspecific instrumentation which could be performed interchangeably by various treble voiced instruments. Featured in your handout are images which depict the transverse flute designed by Johann Quantz.

Handel's *Sonata in G major*, HWV 363B, while somewhat unusual because of its five movement structure, provides a brilliant specimen of this skilled instrumental writing. This work was composed between 1712 and 1716, shortly after his residence in Italy. Handel's time in Italy, which spanned the period of four years, between 1706 and 1710, was crucial in his development as a composer. During this time, he participated in weekly evenings of chamber music at the residence of

Cardinal Peitro Ottoboni alongside Alessandro Scarlatti and Archangelo Corelli, among the most notable and influential composers of the Italian Baroque style. Handel's compositional technique, which shared many characteristics of Italian Baroque writing, was shaped unmistakably by their influence. Handel adopted the four movement form of the *sonata da chiesa*, which was established by Corelli. This model, which featured the movements of the sonata in the consecutive order of slow, fast, slow, fast, served as a basis for many of Handel's sonatas. The *Sonata in G major* (HWV 363B), unusual among Handel's sonatas because of its five movement form, features a *Bourrée* and a *Minuet*. This work resembles the suites of stylized dances which formed a significant part of the body of instrumental repertoire for some time. This suite and others featured popular dance forms and their stylistic features, but were intended to be performed upon instruments rather than danced. The identification of a movement as a stylized dance should shape the performer's interpretation of the work, because of the specific considerations unique to each dance.

Perhaps the most valuable tools that the modern performer possesses in attempting to render a historically informed performance of Baroque music are the treatises that were authored by influential performers and teachers of the day. There are no recordings to which we can refer, so we must examine these treatises to ascertain details about appropriate performance practice. Two of the treatises which provide a solid foundation for those seeking to perform Baroque music are the works *On Playing the Flute* by Johann Quantz and the *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments* by Carl Philip Emanuel Bach.

On Playing the Flute was written by Johann Joachim Quantz, an influential German flutist, flute maker and composer who served at the court of Frederick II of Prussia for much of his life. His treatise has become one of the most authoritative sources on Baroque performance practice, partly because of its thoroughness and practicality. The treatise outlines in great detail almost every consideration that faced the Baroque performer, from the elements of tasteful ornamentation to the discussion of practical practice techniques. While many sections apply specifically to the flutist, such as the description of a

quality flute embouchure or of the complex fingering system of the Baroque flute, the universal application of the sections on rhythmic alterations, ornamentation, and of the roles of concertante accompanists provides valuable insight for all musicians. Quantz provides many musical examples that can provide a solid foundation for the beginner who would seek to ornament a Baroque work or to perform a tasteful cadenza (Quantz).

Carl Philip Emanuel Bach, the author of the *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, was the son of J.S. Bach and served as a crucial figure in the transition from the Baroque to the Classical era. A virtuosic harpsichordist as well as composer, C.P.E. Bach wrote his *Essay* with much experience and authority, providing a definitive pedagogical source for keyboard players and Baroque performers in general. This text is especially useful for those who would seek to learn the harmonic language of the Baroque era, as it provides detailed, practical guidelines for the realization of figured bass. There are sections within the treatise that specifically address the performance of keyboard instruments, such as those dedicated to suggested fingerings, but much of the text is useful for all performers, including the extensive section on ornamentation.

Before endeavoring to perform any work from the Baroque era, it is important to explore the dialect of the Baroque musical language and the desired characteristic sound of the instrument to be played. As mentioned previously, we possess no recordings from the Baroque era but we can form conclusions about the desirable sound quality of the Baroque flute through careful examination of period instruments. While few purchase and learn the complex fingering system of the Baroque flute, all flutists should strive to understand the unique qualities of this instrument to guide the musical decisions that they make. Nancy Hadden, who teaches at the Guildhall School of Music in London and has produced several internationally acclaimed recordings on the Baroque flute, describes some of these necessary considerations. She claims that the intense and powerful sound which flutists strive to produce on a modern instrument would be impractical and uncharacteristic on the wooden instrument of the Baroque era. This instrument would often have been performed in small carpeted rooms and

accompanied by the harpsichord, which lacks the dynamic capabilities of the modern piano (Borst Jones). The mellow, sweet sound of the Baroque flute is the sound to which Handel would have been accustomed.

To think that this characteristic sound is limiting to the expressive range of the flute is a gross misconception. In fact, Nancy Hadden applauds some of the unique expressive capabilities of the flute, stating that the Baroque flute has a “tremendous range of expression”, and that it is capable of doing “things that the modern flute cannot do, such as the *flattement*, or finger vibrato, and *messa di voce*, or swelling of the sound, which Quantz prizes so highly” (Borst Jones, 29). While vibrato is now considered a crucial element of a flutist's core sound, it was not extensively used by flutists in the Baroque era. *Flattement*, or finger vibrato, was considered an ornament to color the sound at appropriate times in the music. *Flattement* is produced by a quick movement of the finger above the tone hole, without actually covering the hole. This slight wave in the air was not intended to perceptibly change the pitch, but rather was to introduce a new color to a musical passage, usually on a sustained note. Quantz does not advocate a straight or unexpressive tone. Rather, he instructs flutists to strive for a rich, full sound that imitates the chest voice of a contralto, enhanced by *messa di voce*, or the swelling of the sound, on long notes. He also suggests that musicians “early accustom themselves to singing and playing neither too simply nor too colourfully, always mixing simplicity and brilliance” (Quantz 99). Donington further describes this balance, claiming that the discipline present in baroque music is a “discipline of strong feeling, strongly ordered. Cold formality and cautious reticence have no place in a good performing style” (Donington Performer's 17). I will demonstrate *messa di voce*, the swelling of the sound by playing an excerpt from the beginning of Handel's *Sonata in G major*.

A light, crisp articulation was deemed appropriate for the Baroque flute in lively or dance-like pieces or movements (Donington Performer's 37). In his treatise, Quantz describes a complex system of articulation, which involves using specific syllables to form the articulation which are appropriate to the style of the music. Quantz describes the tongue as the necessary tool which brings animation and

liveliness to the music being played (Quantz 71). Particularly in quick, lively pieces, the articulation was meant to convey a sense of gaiety and brilliance. Even in lyrical, legato pieces or movements, a more incisive articulation was useful to bring out important elements of the music, including appoggiaturas, strong beats in the music, beginnings of phrases, and dotted notes. Furthermore, Nancy Hadden describes the practical limitations of the Baroque flute, including the complex cross fingerings of the flute and the inequality of sound on various notes. These considerations make the ability to articulate with great clarity a crucial asset for the performer of Baroque flute music to possess.

While modern flutists strive to achieve an evenness of strength and color throughout all registers as they articulate, the system of tonguing that Quantz outlines in his treatise emphasizes the hierarchy of beats which was appropriate during the Baroque era. For example, while the modern flutist might use syllables similar to the syllables 'tu ku' to double tongue quick passage work, Quantz asks that flutists use the syllables 'did'll' to perform fast passages. Flutists today may spend hours strengthening the 'ku' syllable, attempting to make the syllables, which are both relatively strong syllables, sound equally important. However, Quantz states that to “conform with good taste they must be a little unequal” (Quantz 74). It was considered important in Baroque music to distinguish between 'good beats' and 'bad beats'. Beats one and three were considered 'good beats' in common time, and beats two and four were considered 'bad beats'. The syllables which Quantz suggest require emphasis on the strong beats, and less weight on the beats that were considered to be passing beats (Quantz 123). While it may be counterintuitive to the modern musician, studying and using Quantz's system as a frame of reference can benefit any flutist who would seek to render a more historically informed performance. I will now perform an excerpt from the second movement of the Handel *Sonata in G major* twice. The first time I perform the work, I will use the syllables 'tu ku' and the second time I will demonstrate the use of the syllables 'did'll'.

An important extension of the expressive intent of Baroque music was the practice of ornamentation. An accomplished performer of the Baroque era would be expected to ornament the

pieces that he or she performed tastefully. Donington states in his *Performers' Guide to Baroque Music* that “The Baroque ideal, like one modern ideal, was to depend upon the individuality of the performer to fill out the implications of a sketchily notated text” (Donington 15). This further confirms the fact that Baroque music, rather than limiting the performer, allows the performer to explore the vast possibilities for personal expression available to them. Quantz strongly stated that the ornaments that were available to the Baroque performer were “absolutely necessary for good execution” (Quantz 99).

However, all ornaments were intended to be chosen carefully and knowledgeably, and the overuse of them was considered frivolous. In their treatises, Quantz and C. P. E Bach continually reinforce their disdain for those who would make a melody unrecognizable through excessive ornamentation. It was considered offensive to tamper with the inherent qualities of the music. Quantz suggests practicing the melodies without alteration first, and then filling in the ornamentation in a manner that enhances the original intent of the composer, rather than detracting from it. C.P.E. Bach stresses the importance of ensuring that all ornaments have an expressive purpose (Bach 79).

Perhaps the most important ornamental option available to the Baroque performer was the appoggiatura. Literally translated from the Italian “to lean”, the appoggiatura embodies the spirit of baroque music, providing the opportunity for tension and release, and conveying a sense of deep longing that dispels any notion that baroque music is unemotional. Most frequently the appoggiatura introduced a dissonance to the harmony, and it was intended to be performed on the beat. It was an auxiliary note that could either be taken from above or below the main note. While not always notated in the music, it was frequently implied, and it was no less essential in those places of inference than in the notation. When notated in the music, it was represented by the appearance of a small note. The most frequently occurring appoggiatura, the long appoggiatura, was to be played half the length of the main note. In the case of dotted notes, the note was divided into three parts with the appoggiatura being held for the duration of two of those parts, and the main note being held for one (Quantz 92-95). In figure one, the appoggiatura is presented within a few different contexts, first as it would have been

notated in the music, and second as it would have been interpreted in reality. The short appoggiatura, sometimes appropriate in later Baroque music, was not notated any differently than its counterpart, but was deemed stylistically preferable in some cases depending on the context of the music. C.P.E. Bach describes some of the possible scenarios when the use of the long appoggiatura would have been desirable. It was appropriate before very quick notes or before long notes that were repeated or syncopated, or if the appoggiatura formed an octave with the bass. In figure two, an example is provided that depicts the proper interpretation for some of these exceptions (Donington Baroque 185). Besides interpreting notated appoggiaturas correctly, it was the responsibility of the performer to insert them where they were contextually implied. Quantz states that it is not enough to understand the rhythmic tendencies of each appoggiatura, but that the performer must know where to insert them in the music. Quantz provides a musical example which is reproduced in figure 3 that presents the appearance of the appoggiatura in a variety of contexts.

Because the appoggiatura provided a musical device for tension and release, the manner in which one performed this crucial ornament was important as well. The belief of many Baroque musicians, including Quantz, was the idea that music was a process that was meant to arouse the passions and then to soothe them again (Quantz 98). The appoggiatura served as a microcosm of this philosophy, providing both longing and resolution within a short period of time. The performer should strive to lean on the appoggiatura and to de-emphasize the following note, as if sighing. From a technical standpoint, Quantz suggests that appoggiaturas be “tipped gently with the tongue, allowing them to swell in volume if time permits; the following notes are slurred a little more softly” (Quantz 91). It was also considered appropriate to allow a slight space before the appoggiatura is played, in order to highlight the ornament even more (Donington). I will now play a brief excerpt from Handel's *Sonata in G major*, in which I have chosen to incorporate the use of appoggiaturas.

Another of the most frequently occurring ornaments is the trill or 'shake', which has very specific rules that govern its execution. The trill is a rapid alternation between the primary note and its

upper neighbor, which may be a whole step or a half step higher than the main note (Donington 195)

The execution of the Baroque trill can be differentiated from the trill to which we are accustomed today by the additional components that are implied by the occurrence of a Baroque trill. In most cases, the Baroque trill had three parts, the appoggiatura that preceded it, the trill itself, and the 'termination' of the trill. As was the case with all appoggiaturas, the appoggiatura was considered a necessary part of any trill that had a specific harmonic function in the music (Quantz). So important was the appoggiatura to the trill itself, that often a trill was implied by the presence of an appoggiatura in the music. The performer was expected to place special emphasis on the appoggiatura, as it was seen as the most colorful element, acclimating the listener's ears to the dissonance introduced by the trill. The trill was intended to sound unmeasured and free, and could be performed at various speeds depending on the musical context (Donington Performer's). Quantz suggests that in "melancholy" or lyrical pieces, the trill should be played slowly and that in spirited, gay pieces the trill should be performed more quickly (Quantz 101). The "termination" of the trill, as Quantz called it, consisted of two additional notes played at the end of the trill, which created a quick turn. This turned ending was usually obligatory, but could be omitted at times when the trill occurred on notes that were very short in duration or appeared in quick succession with other trilled notes. In figure 4, the interpretation of a trill is depicted, including the three parts of the trill that were implied. I will play an example of the three part trill.

The cadential trill, performed in the same manner as described above, had a strong harmonic function and was considered essential at almost every cadence. Like the appoggiatura, whether or not the ornament was notated in the music, the performer was expected to execute the trill at all appropriate cadences. Cadential trills served a similar purpose as the cadenza in a more compact form. It provided an unwritten alteration of the dominant harmony, introducing dissonance into the chord before its resolution to the tonic chord. Robert Donington states that the most important note of the trill is the auxiliary note, rather than the main note, as the former introduces something new and different to the

chord, and should be heard as the accent of the trill. Donington suggests that, above all, the performer must be aware of the obligatory nature of both the appoggiatura and the cadential trill in order to render a historically informed performance of Baroque music (Donington 178). Figure 5 shows a cadence as it might appear in the music and the implied cadential trill immediately following. I will now play an excerpt from the Handel *Sonata in G Major* that features this implied cadential trill.

The mordent, like the trill, was an unmeasured alternation between two notes. The inverted, or upper mordent, featured the main note and the note a half step or whole step higher. The mordent, which was typically accented on the main note, primarily served a rhythmic function. Usually played on the beat, mordents consist of only three notes, and were often intended to enhance the rhythmic drive of the piece rather than to sustain a particular note. Neumann describes an additional musical function for the mordent as a melodic connector. In this case, he states that the mordent can “anticipate, straddle, or avoid the beat altogether by delayed entrance” (Neumann 416). In figure 6 I have included some possibilities of execution for those mordents which occur on the beat, and those which occur before the beat as depicted by Neumann. C.P.E. Bach suggests incorporating the use of mordents when a passage ascends by step or by leap, or on notes that are the high point of a phrase (Donington Performer's 203).

The turn was another useful ornamental device that was available to the performer. The turn featured a group of notes which circled around a main, principal note. The standard turn began with the upper neighbor of the principal note, which then moved to the principal note, to the note a whole step or half step below it, and back up to the principal note. The inverted turn could also be used, which was just the opposite, beginning with the note below the main note, passing through the main note followed by the upper neighbor, and then returning to the principal note. Turns would either be placed on the beat, which typically served a harmonic purpose, as well as melodic, or off the beat, which was often used to enhance the melody by providing additional color (Donington Performer's 204-206). The latter was often appropriate when a turn symbol was placed between two notes and served a connective

purpose, while the former was effective in accentuating the principal note and adding rhythmic intensity (Neumann 465). While turns were most commonly performed evenly as a group of four notes, many other rhythmic possibilities existed, including the use of triplet rhythms and the unequal rhythms that will soon be discussed in greater detail (Donington Performer's 204-206). Neumann provides a depiction of some of these rhythmically diverse options, which is featured in Figure 7. I will now perform a few excerpts from Handel's *Sonata in G Major*, which feature turns in a few different contexts.

Determining the appropriate tempo for any given piece of music is one of the most difficult interpretative decisions to objectively quantify. Tempo markings in Baroque music were often more indicative of the mood or general character of the music than of tempo. Specific metronomic indications were rare and choices of tempi were left to the discretion of the performer. Slight variations in the tempo were acceptable, providing the performer with yet another opportunity for creative personal expression. To further complicate the issue, tempi often varied based upon the acoustical setting in which the work was performed or upon the size of the ensemble performing the work. In a resonant acoustical setting, the performers would often slow down the tempo to enhance the clarity of the performance, while in a dry setting the performers might increase the tempo to compensate for the lack of resonance.

An additional factor that guided the performer's choice of tempo was the proportional relationship that often existed between changing meters within sections or movements of a work. A complex system existed called the 'mensural' or 'proportional notation', which attempted to relate all meters to one another through diminution or augmentation. Ideally, the primary note value for all movements, often called the 'tactus', was to remain constant as the meter changes. The tactus was to be chosen at a moderate speed, so that the fast movements would not sound hurried or frantic, and the slow movements would not lose their melodic flow. For example, the first movement of Handel's *Sonata in G major, Adagio*, might guide the choice of tempo for the second movement, the *Allegro* movement. The eighth note pulse for the *Adagio* movement would provide the quarter note pulse for

the second movement (Veilhan 1-10). This complicated system, however, was not intended to be exact. Mary Cyr even states that the relationship between cut time and common time, which seems the most obvious, was not typically two to one. Rather, cut time was usually played one third the speed of common time (Cyr 30). Nevertheless, a loose adherence to these basic proportions can bring unity and balance to multi-movement works.

The performer could also use their knowledge of popular dance forms to guide their choices of tempo. Many sonatas and suites from the Baroque era, including Handel's Sonata in G major incorporated the use of dance forms. A useful approach when a piece or movement takes the form of a dance, is to consider the practical tempo for dancing the dance from which it is derived. Although variations exist even in the speed of the dances, this approach can provide a solid frame of reference for the performer. Each dance has specific stylistic parameters which govern the character and tempo of the piece. Some of these will be discussed in further detail as they apply to the performance of Handel's *Sonata in G major*.

Furthermore, within the context of a specific tempo, the performer could advance or pull back the time as the stylistic and structural elements of the music allowed. Rigidity had no place in Baroque music and a certain amount of ebb and flow was considered appropriate (Quantz). It was common performance practice to prolong cadences, especially structural cadences which separated major sections of the music. Notated *Rallentandos* were rare, but they were often marked in the music as *Adagio* or *Lento* as a musical statement was drawing to a close. The absence of these markings did not suggest that the performer should proceed in time. Rather, all cadences implied the necessity of a slight *ritardando*, and these markings were intended to inform the performer that the passage should be drawn out even further (Donington Performer's 250-253). This flexibility of tempo served as an acknowledgement of something important in the music, whether it was a harmonic arrival point, or a new melodic idea. Above all, the performer was expected to convey a sense of ease and flexibility that enhanced the flow of the music.

Besides the general sense of rhythmic flexibility which was implied by Baroque music, there existed an important specific practice of rhythmic alteration, called *inégale*, literally translated from the French 'inequality'. While many variations on the practice existed, *inégale* can be loosely defined as the unequal performance of notes that are notated equally (Donington Performer's 255). *Inégale* established clear groupings of notes into pairs. The most common occurrence of *inégale* required that the first of the two notes, no matter the rhythmic duration, be given additional weight and importance through the lengthening of the notes, while the second note was shortened. Reverse *inégale* was less frequently used, and required the second note to be lengthened beyond the first. Some suggested conditions that might indicate that *inégale* would be stylistically appropriate include the presence of notes that fall naturally into pairs, typically of the shortest rhythmic duration in the work, the movement of notes in a stepwise fashion, or the presence of slur markings over pairs of notes in the music. *Inégale* was an expressive tool that could portray different characters or styles depending upon the context. Donington describes a 'lilting' inequality, which would be particularly effective in a lyrical, expressive work and a 'vigorous' inequality, which would convey a stately, majestic character. Lilting inequality was performed loosely using a triplet rhythm, and would be appropriate at moderate tempos, when additional elegance and expression was necessary. Figure 8 provides a loose representation of how *inégale* might be played in various situations. I will now play an excerpt from Handel's *Sonata in G major* to which I have applied the use of *inégale*.

Many Baroque composers formed clear associations between the perceived psychological role of the soul or the spirit and the music which they composed. Many believed that the soul manifested itself in various affections or passions that governed human action. Composers often subscribed to the philosophy of the "Doctrine of Affections", in which emotional states were seen as involuntary, and could be aroused through specific compositional techniques. It was common throughout the Baroque era for composers to strive for a unity of affection within a particular movement or work, attempting to represent only one emotional state for each piece of music. Monteverdi speaks of three principal

passions, those of anger, of moderation and of humility, which directly correspond to his classification of musical styles: agitation, moderation, and softness. Quantz mentions several passions, including boldness, flattery, gaiety, melancholy, majesty, and the serious (Cyr, 31-35). Regardless of the level of classification each composer used, the performer shares a responsibility to capture many different characters effectively. Quantz emphasizes the importance of the deeply human nature of music, stating that “The composer and he who performs the music must alike have a feeling soul, and one capable of being moved” (Quantz 28). Before performing any Baroque work, performers would find it helpful to explore the passion that the composer intended to recreate in musical form. As mentioned previously, tempo markings such as *Allegro* and *Adagio* carried connotations of specific stylistic features in addition to providing a guideline for the tempo at which the work was to played. Many stylized dances also clearly represented a variety of affections, and should be performed in the appropriate spirit. Handel's *Sonata in G major* provides an opportunity for a deeper look at a few of the available expressive options.

The first and third movements of Handel's *Sonata in G major* (HWV 363B) receive the label of *Adagio*, a character which Quantz relates to the passion of melancholy or tenderness. Identifying the *Adagio* as a 'flattering supplication', Quantz differentiates this particular label from other slow movements, such as those marked *Largo* or *Grave*, which require a more solemn or serious performance. The use of ornamentation is particularly effective in an *Adagio* movement, and the sighing quality of appoggiaturas can greatly enhance the appropriate plaintive character. Quantz recommends that one swell the sound on longer, singing notes. These notes should begin with a gentle but clear attack which recedes to a lower dynamic level, rises in the middle, and once again diminishes. It was also considered appropriate to extend notes which occurred right before a rest slightly beyond their intended duration and to taper the end of the note slightly. A slightly gentler tongue was appropriate in the *Adagio*, described by Quantz as an articulation which 'caresses' and 'flatters' each note. Quantz also reminds us that there are different kinds of *Adagio*, and that a lyrical, singing *Adagio*

should be played a little quicker and with more forward motion than a mournful, melancholy *Adagio*. (Quantz, 162-178)

Quantz identifies those movements which are marked *Allegro*, such as the second movement of Handel's *Sonata in G major* (HWV 363B), as bearing the chief characteristic of 'sprightliness' and 'liveliness'. He advises that the performer choose a reasonable tempo for the *Allegro*, not only for the sake of a clean execution of technical passages, but also for the ease and comfort of the listener. The brilliance and 'fiery expression' described by Quantz as appropriate characteristics of the *Allegro* may not be present in the music if it is at all hurried or frantic. To moderate the tempo and capture the character of the music, Quantz suggests using a very clear and incisive articulation, which still incorporates the emphasis of 'good beats' over 'bad' ones. Large leaps are present in many *Allegro* movements, such as this one, and Quantz instructs the performer to bring them out, as they are often the important notes in the harmony. Ornamentation can enhance the spirit of the *Allegro* movement as well, especially the use of quick, energetic trills, mordents and turns.

The fourth movement, *Bourrée angloise*, takes the form of the popular traditional dance for which it is named. One of the faster dances of the French Baroque, the *bourrée* was to convey a sense of easygoing liveliness compared by composer Johann Mattheson to the affections of contentment, pleasantness and comfort. These descriptions stress the importance of performing the dance with a relaxed ease, despite its quick tempo. A dance in duple meter, the *bourrée* was typically notated in cut time or in two. The fourth movement of the Handel *Sonata* is written in common time, but the longer rhythmic durations indicate that the work should be performed in half time. The structure of the *bourrée* consisted of eight beat, four bar phrases, beginning with an upbeat pickup, which would have been slightly detached from the following note with a small separation between the two notes. Syncopated rhythms were common in the *bourrée*, and could be highlighted by a slight separation or lift between the notes as well. I will perform an excerpt from the fourth movement of Handel's *Sonata in G Major*, which demonstrates the separation that is appropriate in syncopated passages.

The final movement of Handel's *Sonata in G major* (HWV 363B) is a *Minuetto*, perhaps the most frequently used and famous of all the French dances. This dance persisted in popularity and importance through the eighteenth century, providing the form for several movements of major symphonies and sonatas. While the appropriate tempo of the *minuet* has been heavily debated, it is generally considered a moderately paced dance which should convey a sense the nobility, poise and elegance. The phrasing of the *minuet* is unusual in how it corresponds to the dance itself, as the sections of one common form of the dance required twelve bars of music, and the music typically featured eight bar phrases. Little and Jenne, in *Dance and the Music by J.S. Bach*, describe this conflict as a “pleasant tension” which created a cross-rhythm that contributed to the unique character of the *minuet*. This triple meter dance often uses one strong beat per measure, although another characteristic of the dance itself provides an interesting perspective on which parts of the music should be highlighted. Some dance masters used a downward gesture of the arm on one measure, which was known as the “good” measure, and an upward motion on the next, which was called the “bad” measure. Balance and regularity characterize the *minuet*, which never used an uneven number of measures, and was built upon multiples of four measures (Little, Jenne, 62-82).

The elements that have been described merely scratch the surface of the wealth of available options for expressive individuality. The interpretative choices left to the performer, which were guided by certain general rules, may intimidate the modern performer at first, but can be embraced as one becomes more familiar with the language. Regardless of the level of commitment or investment a performer has in learning the musical language of the Baroque era, all performers can and should strive to take the basic stylistic considerations described into account. To ignore the traditions and characteristic musical features that would have heavily influenced Baroque composers, including G. F. Handel, as they wrote, would be a disservice to both the composer and to the music. While one should continually strive to grow in their knowledge of appropriate performance practice, some of the basic principles described in this paper can provide a basis for future study and growth. Through considering

and applying the elements of a characteristic Baroque sound and system of articulation, a historically informed method of ornamentation, the application of appropriate tempos, the execution of the *inégaie* rhythmic alteration, and the portrayal of the affections and passions which brought life to the music, performers can take their first steps in the fulfilling, worthwhile journey of capturing the spirit of Baroque music. I will now perform Handel's *Sonata in G major* in its entirety, and will apply some of the characteristics which have been discussed.

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Figure 1- Excerpt from *A Performer's Guide to Baroque Music*, Donnington, p. 183

Ex. 64

(a) Fig. 11 Fig. 13 Fig. 15

Fig. 12 Fig. 14 Fig. 16

Figure 2- Excerpt from *A Performer's Guide to Baroque Music*, Donnington, p. 185

Ex. 66

(a) *stato compasso* (b) *in allegro* (c) *in adagio*

Figure 3- Excerpt from *On Playing the Flute*, Quantz, p. 97

Moderato

a) b) c) d) e) f) g) h) i) j) k) l) m) n)

Figure 4- Excerpt from *A Performer's Guide to Baroque Music*, Donnington, p. 197

Ex. 79

[interpretation (a)]

[interpretation (b)]

Figure 5- Excerpt from *A Performer's Guide to Baroque Music*, Donnington, p. 197

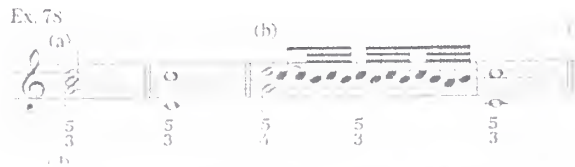


Figure 6a- Excerpt from *Ornamentation in Baroque and Post-Baroque Music*, Neumann, p. 416- Mordent performed on the beat



Figure 6b- Mordent performed slightly before the beat



Figure 7- Excerpt from *Ornamentation in Baroque and Post-Baroque Music*, Neumann, p. 466

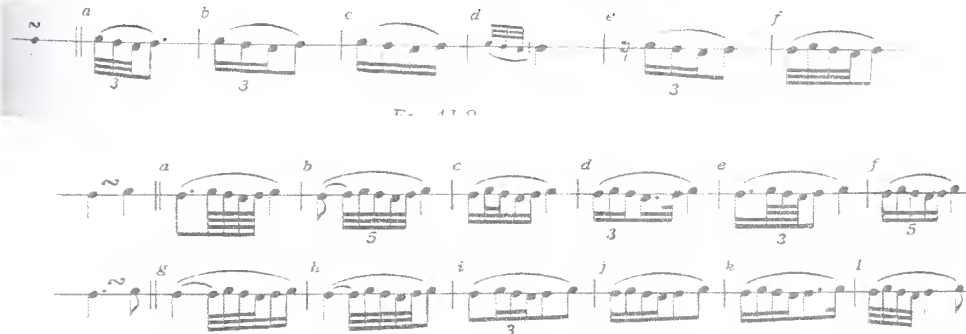


Figure 8- - Excerpt from *A Performer's Guide to Baroque Music*, Donnington

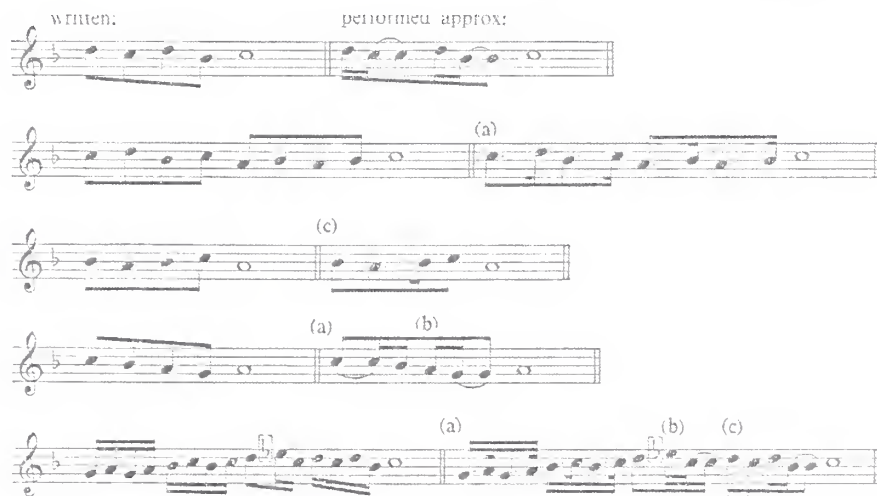


Image taken from *The Development of the Modern Flute* by Nancy Toff, p. 21

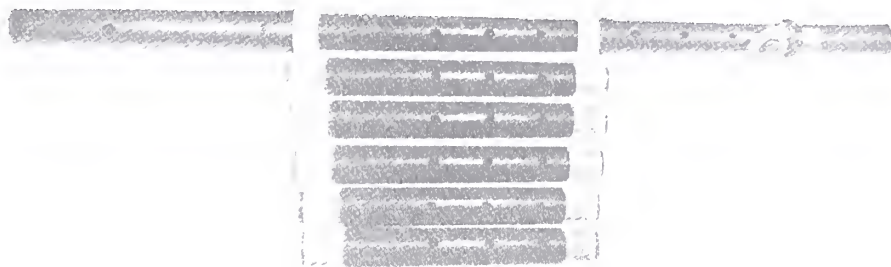


Image taken from *On Playing the Flute* by Johann Joachim Quantz, p. 28

Fig. 15.



Fig. 16



