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Contents

Note from the Editor:

The question of the right to reply, easy enough to accommodate in a daily or a weekly, becomes tricky in a bi-annual. Readers' memories are short; old copies are thrown away. I had some misgivings, therefore, about revisiting Peter Giles and the countertenor. But I took heart from our greatly respected contemporary, *Early Music* (whose editor, Tess Knighton, was the first editor of *Leading Notes*), where, for example, the controversy over Bach's chorus has been rumbling on for years. That's not to say that I expect the countertenor argument to do likewise; but one more round would be reasonable, if anyone is bursting to say more.

Mention of *Early Music* leads me to the present state of Radio 3 (or BBC Radio 3, as the announcers and presenters repeatedly intone as if their very jobs depended on it – perhaps they do). Tess Knighton wrote about it, clearly and temperately, in the August 1998 issue. I would just add, intemperately, that the constant dribble of music underneath the announcements – even the climax of an opera just before you are about to hear it – is a monstrous and disgusting trivialisation, and the BBC planners' obsession with celebrities rather than experts is a betrayal of what Radio 3 is supposed to stand for.

I don't myself mind Brian Kay, the thinking man's Petroc Trelawney, dominating Sunday evening as well as Sunday morning. But, elsewhere, the Listen with Mother style and the way an excerpt from this follows a movement from that (often with a scarcely a breath in between) bespeak a loss of nerve; while the mispronunciations and the uncorrected mistakes indicate a slapdash approach unimaginable a decade ago. Now, even as I write, we hear that Radio 3 is to 'lose' (weasel word!) 18 posts. In her call in *The Times* for a ring-fenced BBC radio, protected from uncomprehending and contemptuous television executives, Libby Purves no doubt had Radio 4 in mind, but her words apply equally to poor, beleagured, downsized Radio 3. Who is going to champion the values of the station's founders?

—RICHARD LAWRENCE

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OWEN REES – A VIEW FROM THE SOPRANO LINE

HELEN GARRISON

Some years ago, when I was a wide-eyed student at Cambridge, I had the dubious privilege of singing in a group with the doomed title of 'The Blow Consort' (although we all had a much more appropriate nickname for it which good manners forbid me to repeat here). Remembering the various musicians who made up this distinctive band of singers and players, it often surprises me to think how eminent some of them have become: Mark LeBrocq, now a star at ENO; James Gilchrist, a tenor who is now in huge demand among the early music fraternity; and Martin Baker, currently acting director of music at Westminster Abbey while the Martin Neary saga continues, to name but three.

These characters all loomed large in the varying exploits of the aforementioned consort, along with a substantial list of now successful medical consultants, university academics, professional musicians and the like, and all made their impact on my musical life. One person who, at the time, made no impact at all, was often stuck out of sight at the back of the chamber orchestra sitting behind a keyboard and whose self-effacing personality meant that few people even knew his name, was a postgraduate from St. Catharine's College, Owen Rees. This was not his own project, and so he simply played well and contributed to the music as required. However, as far as I was concerned, this insignificant collaboration was the first of many, thanks to his subsequently inviting me to sing in his own choir; and Owen Rees has, over the years, become one of the most important musical influences of my life, and of the lives of many other singers and students.

In his own quiet way, without any career fanfares or publicity puffs, Rees has become one of the most respected scholars in his field, and certainly one of the best choral conductors with whom I have had the privilege to work. In the conducting world he may not be the name that pulls in the thousands at the Albert Hall, but to those who know him, and even more to those who have encountered his scholarship, he ranks among the very best. At the age of 34, Rees is a don at Oxford University and one of the foremost experts in Portuguese Renaissance music. His two choirs have established themselves as leading interpreters of this repertory, A Capella Portuguesa having released three successful CDs on the Hyperion label, and the Cambridge Taverner Choir having been nominated for a Gramophone Award a few years ago for their debut release on Herald. For a man who is not seeking fame and glory, this is an impressive achievement, so how did he find himself here? As somebody who is now passionate myself about Portuguese Polyphony, thanks to Owen, and who sings in both the above choirs, I thought it was high time I discovered what lies at the heart of his enthusiasm and how he embarked upon his musicological journey into Renaissance Iberia.

His father taught French at Leeds University and his mother taught Spanish at Trinity All Saints College in Leeds, so an interest in things Iberian was evidently in the genes, as was Owen's musicality. It was at school, however, that Rees developed an early interest in specifically choral music. Leeds Grammar was one of the few day schools in the country which had regular choral Sunday services, so it was natural for the young Rees to take up playing the organ, his early teachers being his then director of music, Anthony Cooke, and the sub-organist at Leeds Parish church and later at Coventry Cathedral, Timothy Hone, who is now organist at Newcastle Cathedral. The latter helped to develop Owen's awareness of interpretation and his gratitude is forthcoming – 'He was a major inspiration in organ playing and musicality in the way you can analyse a piece to tease out details of performance to make it well shaped and expressive.'

At university, Peter Hurford and David Sanger took up the roles of teaching Rees the organ, and he made the most of the wonderful opportunity afforded by a Cambridge organ scholarship to learn how to direct choirs. It was here that Owen met somebody who was to become one of the biggest influences on his musical career – John Butt. At the time, Butt was studying for a PhD in performance practice, in which Owen took a great interest, but that was not all. 'I learnt a tremendous amount from him, especially about training choirs. For instance, an essential part of encouraging singers to sing well is to have them in the right mood and enjoying themselves. With humour you can help singers to aspire to higher standards than they thought possible.'

In Cambridge one is surrounded by the choral tradition is all its guises, and like a lot of students Owen would attend evensong at other choral foundations such as St. John's, King's, Clare, Trinity and the rest. Consciously and unconsciously he was picking up a whole repertoire of choral training techniques such as how to shape a phrase, how to persuade young singers to use their voice in a full way, and the best way to help singers to sing in tune. 'This is not necessarily a case of telling them exactly what they are doing wrong,' explains Rees, 'but through metaphor and listening to each other you can obtain the results you

want.' Singing technique has gradually become a major feature in Owen's work, and he has indulged in lessons himself although one could never describe his voice as one that would be hugely in demand. He himself admits that 'I have done some singing in public, but the audiences suffered more than they gained in the process. I've learned from talking to singers and in working through with student conductors the way they get people to sing well, but it is such a huge and complex issue and so personal to individual singers that I'll still be finding out about it in 40 years time.'

After graduating, Owen remained at Cambridge and studied for an MPhil. His researches were initially centred on Tudor music, specifically sixteenth-century Latin psalm settings in English. After a year, he decided to change tack and spent nine months looking for topic in Spain or Portugal. 'It was partly a combination of realising that there's a great deal of first-rate music and that it's a field enormously under researched, there's a huge amount of information and music yet to be dug up. In the England of the same period, yes there's a great deal to be found, information to be revised and music which should be better known but there's a longer and more solid history of scholarship in that area.' Rees found large number promising topics and wrote to a number of scholars asking for their views.

In the mid 80s, Iberian music was becoming more available through Mapa Mundi performing editions. Some of it was completely new or only available in complete editions not suitable for buyers, the works of Guerrero being one example. 'It was apparent that he's a first-rate composer, though even now people think 'who?'. He's not one of the top names in the public eye and he deserves to be.' There were certainly Iberian scholars at the time – such as Tess Knighton, Robert Stevenson, Robert Snow, Bruno Turner, Ivan Moody, Martyn Imrie, plus many in Spain and Portugal – but given the size of musical culture there, our knowledge lagged well behind Tudor music and perhaps still does. 'The reasons for this are fairly straightforward. For example the published details of Iberian archives were relatively scarce, which may have discouraged scholars. This gave the incorrect impression that Spain and Portugal were on the periphery of the musical world. In fact those countries have a fascinating and rich, musical culture.'

One glaring gap was spotted by Rees through Robert Snow (who died this year), who was one of the scholars to whom Owen wrote. Snow wrote back pointing out that there was an enormous number of sources in the University Library of Coimbra, in fact one of largest collections of 16th-century music manuscripts in Portugal, much of which was from an Augustinian monastery (Santa Cruz) and was relatively unstudied. Rees went to work there in July 1988. The seam was so rich, that he went to live in Coimbra for a while in 1989, coming back to England with a vast amount of material plus music transcribed or on microfilm.

Rees is pretty sure that a large percentage of the manuscripts were copied actually at Santa Cruz. When Portugal secularised its state in the 19th Century and monasteries closed, a lot of manuscripts were dispersed and a large amount lost. Some were found and purchased by the library from various places and reunited with manuscripts from Santa Cruz. It was a dream project for a musicologist like Rees, and a perfect vehicle for the choir with which he loves to work.

The Cambridge Taverner Choir was formed to perform Taverner's 'Missa Gloria Tibi Trinitas' in a concert in Tatishall, Lincolnshire, a place connected with Taverner, who worked there. The event was a liturgical reconstruction on Trinity Sunday 1986 and was conducted by John Butt. Although this event was intended as a one-off, its success encouraged Owen, along with his friend Gary Snapper, to keep the choir going after they graduated. It quickly became a stable group of singers and now sings four or five times a year in Jesus Chapel. In the early years the choir concentrated on Tudor music, reflecting Owen's research, but inevitably it soon began performing some of the music brought back from Portugal.

By early 1990, Rees had already transcribed performable music, and it was with these sources that his love of research began to collide happily with his love of conducting. Music from the Santa Cruz manuscripts was first performed by Cambridge Taverner Choir 1989, and I remember it vividly. At the first rehearsal a pile of rather unpromising sheets of music were handed around the choir. 'O goodness,' we thought, '400 year old music from Portugal. How very academic!' How little we knew! As we sight-sang our way through the notes in Owen's familiar hand, the realisation that what we were singing was stunningly beautiful gradually dawned on us. Much of the music was by Pedro de Cristo, characteristically melancholy, exploiting the colours of the Dorian mode. Since that performance the choir has never looked back. The Coimbra project culminated in a fascinating tour to the city in 1991, a radio broadcast and a CD recording which was nominated for a Gramophone award.

A further CD of music from Coimbra was recorded for Hyperion not long after this with Owen's other choir, which he took up conducting around that time, A Capella Portuguesa. ACP was formed by a colleague of Rees – Bernadette Nelson – to reflect her research interests. Owen obtained a College Lectureship at St. Peter's College and St. Edmund Hall, Oxford and became involved with the choir in 1990 as co-director and conductor. Although there is an overlap between the two choirs in repertoire, ACP tends to cover a smaller field than the CTC, using chant and organ music to create more extensive liturgical reconstruction. Rees likes to keep the two choirs quite distinct

from each other. 'I suppose the principal difference is that the Cambridge Taverner Choir is a semi-professional group whose membership (many of them close friends) has remained stable. ACP is fully professional, smaller, and has a more narrowly defined purpose.'

Following his College posts in Oxford, Rees then became a lecturer for several years at Surrey University where he continued his research and taught a wide range of subjects. He was promoted to a Readership at the age of 31. In 1997 he moved back to Oxford to a combined Fellowship and Lectureship. He is in charge of music tuition at the Queen's College and at Somerville, and teaches several Faculty courses. He also works with the chapel choir at Queen's.

Views on choir training, then, are close to Owen's heart, but of course everything starts with the music itself, and he has equally strong views on how to interpret what is on the page. 'It's fundamental to proceed from looking at the text and how the composer has responded to the text. This was a high priority for composers at the end of the 16th century and beyond. Much of the shape and expressiveness that we believe is present in a 16th-century piece is text inspired. When you are looking at a newly transcribed piece, the finest works tend to suggest a dynamic shaping. Pieces that are slightly less successful, in my estimation, are those where no particular shape springs from the notes themselves. Of course, the sources give no dynamic markings, so all that we do may well be a misconception.' There is nevertheless some evidence which one can use as a starting point, as Owen explains. 'It's important to be aware of accentuation of Latin, and of how the composer wished to draw attention to important words in a piece. Then it's up to you to decide what the composer would have wished in performance. Often, we can have opposite views, emphasis can occur through an increase in dynamics or through a decrease, so which is correct? There are some standard expressive devices used in this repertoire, however, which are obvious, such as a suspended dissonance. Every director has his or her own view regarding how and whether these need to be brought out, and there's a huge difference in taste as to what people might class as expressive, overdone, or mannered.'

Whatever the minutiae of authentic ways to make music expressive, there is no doubt in Owen's mind that this repertoire needs to be performed expressively and not with any bland detachment. 'I think that quite a lot of the composer's approach to music of this period is quite impassioned, particularly with certain kinds of texts, for instance the Song of Songs and many Marian texts. These seem to have inspired composers to very expressive responses. Personally I think one is not serving the music well if giving a neutral interpretation.' Rees agrees that there is less consensus about how to perform 16th-century vocal music than even for later repertory; one only has to listen to the various artists who have recorded Portuguese polyphony to realise this, such as the Tallis Scholars, The Sixteen and Westminster Cathedral Choir, to name but a few. 'There are differing opinions on the use of vibrato, for example, or the ideal recording acoustic – should there be an aura of reverberation or should it be direct and dry? From time to time mannerisms arise with regard to phrasing. One instance of this is the cadential suspension followed by a turn [fah me ray me]. Should there be a silence before the turn or a crescendo through the suspension? I don't imagine that I have all the answers. We're often left in the dark about these things because at this time there are fewer treatises which offer very specific information about performance practice.'

These matters are universal to most European Renaissance polyphony, but what exactly makes the Iberian segment of this repertoire distinctive? 'We perhaps need to know more of the Iberian and more about the Italian repertory in order to compare this music on an international level. For example, it's useful to consider Victoria's music in both the Spanish context and the Italian, not least since he worked in Rome for some 20 years.'

There is so much more to be learned about comparisons within Portugal and Spain as well. 'Lobo, Cardoso and Magalhães were all working in Lisbon at the same time, so they are good comparison material. However, we do not know the contemporary Spanish repertory well enough to see how distinctive they are or even how international. May be one day we can pin down the local accents, but not yet.'

When it comes to local accents, when singing Renaissance polyphony, there is always the hoary old chestnut of pronunciation to consider, something which both Owen's choirs try to achieve in as authentic a manner as is possible (causing untold amusement during rehearsals), but which is always a bone of contention among the fanatics. Despite this, it is perhaps surprising, then, that Rees does not feel particularly strongly about it. 'It's not fundamental. When I'm transcribing and I see the spellings, there is certain value in not changing it to a standard spelling and therefore a standard pronunciation. It's a matter of colour rather than its effect on the musical fabric. Latin was pronounced in a way which reflected the local vernacular, and such pronunciation can make the result more colourful.'

In both choirs we have all learned a great deal both because of Owen's teaching and alongside him as we have discovered more and more music. Rehearsals are often exciting, usually informative and always good fun. There is no question that Owen has taken John Butt's advice to heart and all of us who sing for him have 'enjoyed' Owen's distinctive humour which has become famous. There appears to be no limit to the outrageousness of his imaginative metaphors when he is

describing how to phrase a particular passage or to approach a new piece of music. It is debatable as to how much we find his jokes funny (and believe me, the groan factor is high and references to Monty Python feature rather too strongly), but there is no doubt in anybody's mind as to how he wants the music to sound, which of course is the aim of the exercise. 'I expresses myself through humour, not just for effect. I get an extraordinary pleasure from choral singing, and there's an excitement that comes from singing together and discovering new repertory together, or sharing views on pieces. If I dressed it up in po-faced seriousness in a rehearsal it would seem to go against the nature of the experience. I'm conscious of the need not to waste people's time and I'm not simply trying to play a game to prevent singers from becoming bored; I'm trying to encourage everybody to feel the pleasure derived from the music.' This pleasure has spawned a unique social phenomenon in the Cambridge Taverner Choir particularly. While primarily all working towards a common goal of performing music to the highest of standards, the members of the choir have, in the process, gradually become very close friends. This network of friendship (including several marriages!) helps to create a sense of teamwork when singing so that there is an almost telepathic response to Owen's conducting. Last autumn Owen himself married an Australian composer and pianist – Amanda Baker.

And so what of the future? Does Owen Rees want to share the limelight with all those tyrants out there commanding fame and fortune from the early music boom? 'I'm not like a character on 'Yes Prime Minister' saying I don't want to be the PM when I do really. I don't want to be well known, I just want to have the opportunities to direct this music with singers who are responsive and who are excited by it. It's nice to have my efforts preserved on CD and heard on broadcasts and so on, and without those things the enterprise would seem less exciting, but it's the approach that matters. One needs an incentive for the choir to carry on singing and improving, but I don't have a ten year plan to be famous. I am happiest when performance, teaching and research are inseparable, and my ambition is realised when all three are feeding into each other. So far I'm lucky in that already this has happened a great deal.' ❖

Helen Garrison is a producer for BBC Radios 3 and 4, and a singer.

CDs available

A Capella Portuguesa
Masters of the Chapel Royal, Lisbon. Hyperion CDA66725
Music of Renaissance Coimbra. Hyperion CDA66735
Holy Week at Braganza. Hyperion CDA66867

Cambridge Taverner Choir
Music from Renaissance Portugal. Herald HAVPCD155
What is our Life? – Renaissance Laments and Elegies. Herald HAVPCD187

QUANTZ'S *SOLFEGGI*

a unique document

JOHN BYRT

Quantz's *Solfeggi* is an important and unusual manuscript source. It is a flute player's notebook which combines technical exercises with passages from flute pieces of the day. Since some of these pieces are by well-known German composers like Telemann, WF Bach and JJ Quantz himself, this document has considerable importance for students of performance practice.

Solfeggi was discovered in the Royal Library, Copenhagen and restored in 1958. Its inequality aspects have already been described in an article by Claire Fontijn[1] and it is referred to by Stephen Hefling in his recent book on alteration.[2] In 1978 Winfried Michel and Hermien Teske published an edition;[3] at the time they believed that the *Solfeggi* might have been a practice notebook written by Quantz for his illustrious pupil, Crown Prince Frederick, later to become Frederick the Great.[4] More recently, however, Horst Augsbach has claimed that the manuscript is not in Quantz's handwriting, but comes from the circle of Augustin Neuff, who studied with Quantz and played in the Berlin Hofkapelle from 1751 to 1792.[5] Hefling suggests that the work was actually written out by Neuff between 1775 and 1782. He does not doubt the manuscript's authorship, giving the original a provisional date of *c.*1770 (Quantz died in 1773).[6] In a recent article Steven Zohn considers that 'no evidence has emerged to undermine the view that most, if not all, of its contents originated with the composer'.[7]

Rhythmic inequality, or *notes inégales*, was present at the very dawn of the Early Music revival. Arnold Dolmetsch referred to it in his trail-blazing book of 1915. He was ready to apply the style to Bach and Handel but more recently opinion has favoured its restriction to French music. The unequal performance of short notes – a feature of jazz and some kinds of folk music – is often just left to the performer and not notated at all. This presents real problems for the student of baroque music, for in most cases the musical text will have no visible sign of whether the performer used inequality or not. Composers sometimes give themselves away in their notation (parallel passages etc.). Most of the evidence for rhythmic inequality, however, has come from published music tutors which, as well as giving instructions for fingering, bowing and so on, actually tell the pupil when to use *notes inégales*. In those days inequality was linked to the time-signature. If it was **C**, for example, it was the semiquavers that were played *inégal*.[8] Most of the tutors that deal with inequality were French, so it is not surprising that modern performers tend to confine it to French music. Nevertheless there is strong evidence that inequality was practised outside France also and *Solfeggi* is a particularly important source for this aspect of *inégales*.

The principal evidence for non-French inequality comes from Jacques Hotteterre (1719)[9] and Michel Corrette (1738, 1741 and *c.*1742)[10] and from Quantz's flute tutor – the *Versuch* (1752).[11] The last of these casts a good deal of light on the *Solfeggi* and the reverse is true also. The *Versuch* featured in the *inégales* controversy of the 60s and 70s. Sol Babitz claimed that Quantz's inequality instructions could be applied to Bach; Frederick Neumann, rushing to Bach's defence, declared that they were only meant to apply to French music. During this controversy *inégales* tended to be treated as a theoretical concept – little attention was given to the practicalities of actual performance. And yet no discussion about *inégales* can be profitable that shirks the matter of how it makes the music sound, either in the more familiar French repertoire or in the shadowy world beyond the French boundaries. Years of experimention with inequality lead me to the conclusion that *inégalité* was meant to function within a certain musical ecosystem. This is likely to have included a slower tempo, a more emphatic approach to rhythm and a more relaxed and urbane manner. Only within such an authentic ecosytem will inequality sound natural.

The *Solfeggi* is a prime source for the study of inequality in the late Baroque. The evidence comes partly from the appearance of the words *unegal, ungleich* (unequal) and *egal* – the opposite of *unegal*. This verbal evidence is backed up with tongueing indications, which reflect a tradition that generations of wind players had followed. Also essential to the complete picture are the time-signature, the national style and the note-values that would be eligible for inequality in that metre. All this information is presented in table 1.

Assessing national styles can be a subjective business. My source on this matter is the *mesure* chapters in the tutors of Hotteterre and Corrette. In the end it is usually a matter of time-signature and figuration. An allegro in **C** with running semiquavers, for instance, belongs in the Italian style for, aside from allemandes with their characteristic *stile brisé*, the French confined their use of **C** time mainly to recitatives and church music. Anything with unequal quavers, though, must be French. Some time-signatures are unique to one national style: **2, 3** and 6/4 are only used in the French. Pieces in 2/4 and compound time are more difficult to

distinguish because these time-signatures were used in both styles.

The most frequently-used time-signature in *Solfeggi* is Italian **C** time. In the Michel and Teske edition 414 systems are in that metre. Of the remainder 188 systems are in Italian or French 2/4; 173 systems in Italian 3/4 with running semiquavers and 136 systems in compound time, Italian or French, with the dotted crotchet pulse. Very much in the rear are 37 systems in French **3**, 16 systems in French **¢**, 7 systems in French 6/4, 5 systems in French **C** and 3 systems in French **2**. It is plain that the bulk of the music in *Solfeggi* is in the Italian style. Out of roughly 1,222 systems in the 1978 edition, I found that 624 were clearly in the Italian style and a mere 66 in the French style.

28 of Quantz's musical fragments are marked with one or other of the inequality words. *Unegal* appears next to 17 of the fragments and *ungleich* next to 8 of them. *Unegal* usually appears on its own, or in the phrase *etwas unegal* (somewhat unequal). Fontijn has noted that *ungleich* usually appears within a whole sentence while *unegal* can be used on its own. This suggests to me that *unegal* was really a technical term, borrowed from France, while *ungleich* belonged more in the German vernacular. *Ungleich* appears three times in the negative, as in *nicht sehr ungleich* (not very unequal).

Quantz's phraseology rivals Couperin's in subtlety. He is clearly aware that, in the words of Engramelle, 'a little more or less inequality in the quavers considerably alters the expression of an air'. Hence *nicht alzu*

Table I – Passages marked unegal, ungleich or egal

P.*	T-s	Style	Ineq. words	Transl.	N-value +	Comments
38/8	C	Italian	*unegal*	unequal	dj sq	
38/9	C	Italian	*unegal*	unequal	cj sq	
40/6,7	C	Italian	*sehr ungleich*	very unequal	cj sq	
41/8	¢?	Italian?	*ungleich*	unequal	dj sq	
42/6	C?	Italian?	*unegal*	unequal	cj sq	
42/9	C?	Italian?	*nicht sehr ungleich*	not very unequal	dj sq	
44/4	C?	Italian	*unegal*	unequal	dj sq	
44/6	2/4	?	*unegal*	unequal	dj q	abnormal
45/9	C	Italian	*sehr ungleich*	very unequal	cj sq	
47/8	3/8	?	*ungleich*	unequal	cj & dj sq	
47/12	6/8	?	*nicht gar zu ungleich*	not too unequal	dj sq	slurred in pairs
49/6	C	Italian	*etwas unegal*	somewhat unequal	cj sq	
49/6	C	Italian	*egal*	equal	dj sq	compare 52/5 last bar
54/7	C	Italian	*fast egal*	almost equal	cj sq	slurred in pairs
55/10	3/4	French	*zwar nicht egal doch auch nicht zu unegal*	certainly not equal but not too unequal either	cj q	slurred in pairs
57/9	2	French	*egal*	equal	cj q	
60/9	3/8	?	*unegal*	unequal	cj sq	'as notes at the same pitch' ??
61/8	C	Italian	*nicht alzu ungleich*	not too unequal	cj & dj sq	
63/8	3/4	Italian	*etwas kurz und egal*	somewhat short & equal	dj sq	cf 52/5 and 49/6
64/2	C	Italian	etwas unegal	somewhat unequal	dj sq	
65/10	2/4	?	*unegal*	unequal	cj sq	
70/8	C	French or German?	*unegal aber nicht als Puncte*	unequal but not as if dotted	dj sq	Blokwis's allemande
72/7	C	Italian	*1.&3. Note unegal immer länger als dll.*	1st & 3rd notes unequal always longer than dll.	cj sq	'dll' means 2nd & 4th notes: i.e. the 2nd part of the 'did'll'
73/7	C	Italian	*ungleich*	unequal	cj sq	
76/12	C	Italian	*unegal*	unequal	cj sq	
77/1	C	Italian	*unegal die 16thl*	the sqs. unequal	cj sq	
77/5	3/4	French	*unegal*	unequal	dj q	v. disjunct!
87/10	2/4	?	*unegal*	unequal	cj & dj sq	
88/3	3/8	?	*unegal*	unequal	cj sq	
89/8	6/4	French	*unegal* × 3	unequal	cj & dj q	
89/12	C[¢]	French	*unegal* × 2	unequal	cj & dj q	
90/6	C	Italian	*unegal*	unequal	cj & dj sq	
90/8,9	C	Italian	*unegal*	unequal	cj sq	

* page number and system in Michel and Teske

\+ cj = conjunct; dj = disjunct

unegal (not too unequal), applied by Quantz to an Italianate allegro ma non troppo of his own which, perhaps, he didn't want to be too effeminate. The phrase *nicht gar zu ungleich* has the flavour of 'don't spoil it with too much inequality' (47/12). Some of Quantz's rather circuitous instructions include the elegant *zwar nicht egal doch auch nicht zu unegal* (certainly not equal but not too unequal either, 55/10) and the more practical *die erste und 3te Note unegal immer länger als dll.* (the first and third notes must be played unequal – always longer than the 'dll', 72/7). Here the *'dll'* is presumably the tonguing syllable that would normally be given to the weak notes in a passage of unequal semiquavers. Perhaps the most amusingly equivocal marking is *fast egal* 'almost equal' (54/7) applied to a Graun allegro [see ex. 1]. At the other extreme are *sehr ungleich* (very unequal) next to a tempestuous allegro di molto by WF Bach (40/7,9) [see ex. 2] and also for an allegro assai by Glösch (45/9). *Sehr ungleich* comes twice but you never see *sehr unegal.* Perhaps the word *unegal* suggested gentle inequality to Quantz and so he felt that it would be inappropriate to put the word *sehr* in front of it.

His instructions for an allemande by Blockwis (70/8) are *unegal aber nicht als Puncte* (unequal but not as if dotted). Here he is making a distinction that Bacilly makes back in the 1660s, showing that in those days a dot indicated a nuance, as well as a length of time.[12] Presumably he means the same by the phrase *nicht als punctirt* (71/11).[13]

The tonguing syllables are in the tradition of Hotteterre and earlier writers of wind tutors.[14] They also relate to passages in Quantz's *Versuch*, incidentally confirming the common authorship of both works.[15] The chief syllables used are

ti, ti and *di, di*	for equality (Hotteterre: *tu, tu*)
ti ri and *di ri*	for inequality, starting on a 'bad' note (Hotterrre: *tu ru*)
tid'll or *did'll*	for inequality, starting on a 'good' note

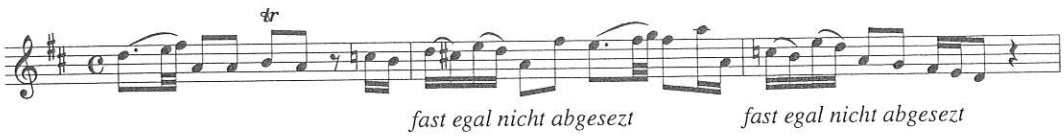
In chapter 6 of his *Versuch* Quantz makes it clear that he associates *di ri* and *did'll* with inequality.[16]

> In quick passage-work the single tongue does not have a good effect, since it makes all the notes alike, and to conform with good taste they must be a little unequal. Thus the other two ways of using the tongue may be employed, that is, *tiri* for dotted notes and moderately quick passage-work, and *did'll* for very quick passage-work.
> (chapter 6, section 1, paragraph 9)

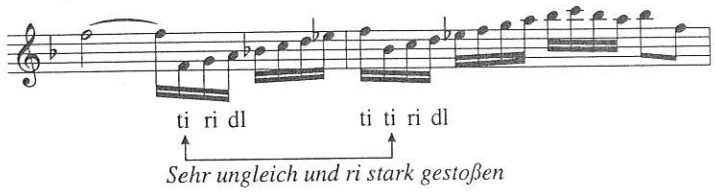
He goes on to discuss *tiri* in detail.

> This kind of tongue-stroke is most useful in passage-work of moderate quickness, especially since the quickest notes in them must always be played a little unequally ... In this word *tiri* the accent falls on the second syllable; the *ti* is short and the *ri* long. Hence the *ri* must always be used for the note on the downbeat, and the *ti* for the note on the upbeat. Thus in four semiquavers the *ri* always

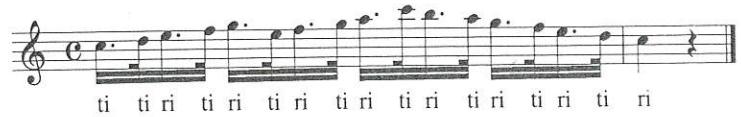
Example 1: Graun: Allegro (54/7)



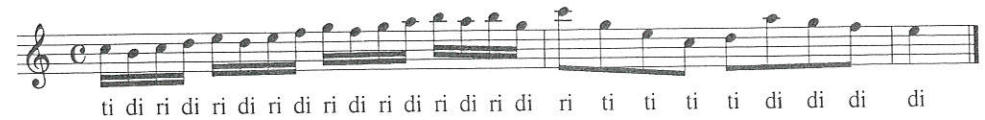
Example 2: W.F. Bach: All° di molto Concert di Bach (40/7,9)



Example 3: *Versuch*, Ch. 6 §2, Figure 10



Example 4: *Versuch*, Ch. 6 §2, Figure 19



comes on the first and third notes, and the *ti* on the second and fourth.

(chapter 6, section 2, paragraphs 1, 4) [See ex. 3]

In notes without dots *di* can be used in place of *ti*. Quickness does not permit articulation with *ti* in passage-work; for there it would strike the ear disagreeably, and would eventually make the notes all too unequal. The first note, however, always keeps *ti*, and the others *diri*. If leaps in quavers follow semiquavers, *ti* is used, in stepwise quavers *di*.

(chapter 6, section 2, paragraph 7) [See ex. 4]

Quantz goes on to talk about double-tonguing, which involves the syllables *did'll*.

In its use *did'll* is the opposite of *tiri*. In *tiri* the accent lies on the second syllable, in *did'll* it falls on the first and always comes on the note on the downbeat, the so-called *good note* ... You must ... seek always to hold on to the first note with *di* a little, and to make the second, with *d'll*, slightly shorter ...

(chapter 6, section 3, paragraphs 3, 5) [See ex. 5]

Claire Fontijn has already given instances where Quantz's tonguing syllables suggest inequality as, for example, in her exx. 4a, 5b and 5d. I would add Quantz's Menuetto con var. (unequal quavers in French 3) and the allegro from the Graun trio (unequal double-tongued semiquavers), both on p. 62. Quantz's use of the syllable *di* is interesting. Fontijn's ex. 6b shows him using *ti* on repeated notes but *di* on a stepwise-moving legato passage, though no inequality is implied.[17] It is clearly a softer alternative to *ti*. Fontijn rightly stresses that in *ti ri* and *di ri* passages the *ri* marks the strongest note, though I think she goes too far when she says that 'quite often the strongest note in a four-note passage is the third'.[18]

Quantz's indications for inequality in *Solfeggi* relate to the metre/note value relationships expounded in the French documents, though they are expressed in a different way. I shall therefore compare its information with the inequality material in the tutors of Hotteterre and Corrette, as well as with the relevant parts of the *Versuch*.[19] What follows is an attempt to do this in the accepted French manner – by time-signature.

Example 5: *Versuch*, Ch. 6 §3, Figure 7

$\frac{3}{2}$ This time-signature doesn't appear in the *Solfeggi*.

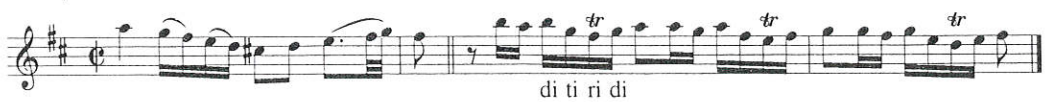
2 This time-signature was traditionally confined to French music and appears only in French-style movements in the *Solfeggi*. Quaver inequality is implied. However, in a **2** metre movement from Quantz's duetto in G minor (57/9) a group of slurred quavers are marked *egal*. This might be connected to Quantz's obscure rule about *wenn über mehr als zwo Noten ... ein Bogen steht* (when there is a slur over more than two notes).[20]

𝔠 was used in two distinct ways in the late Baroque. In the French style it was usually beaten in 2 while the Italians could beat it in 2 or 4. The French would use unequal quavers in this metre: this is confirmed in Hefling's metre-inequality table, where the 2-beat type is clearly preponderant. In his *Versuch* Quantz himself only refers to the 2-beat type and the inequality that he recommends is firmly at quaver level. This helps to give the French bias to the passage that Neumann noticed. The semiquaver inequality of the Italian 4-beat version is mentioned in one of Corrette's tutors, though not by Hotteterre.[21]

In the *Solfeggi* French-style 2-time 𝔠 is used in gavottes (e.g. Telemann's at 56/3) where unequal quavers are expected, if not indicated. At 55/8 there is a French style dance headed 'gay' which uses 𝔠, and in which unequal quavers would seem very natural. There is a handful of obviously final movements that use 𝔠 time, e.g. prestos at 58/1 and 77/10, probably from Quantz *duetti*. These have running, conjunct quavers (no semiquavers are present) and so quaver inequality would be appropriate. Aside from such French-style movements there are a few Italian-style examples where 𝔠 is apparently used with 4 beats in a bar. The most interesting of these are two melodies of a distinctly cantabile nature by composers of the Berlin court. An allegretto by Neuff (22/13), the Quantz pupil who may have copied out the manuscript, is in such a modern, Italianate style that it seems to belong to the post-inequality era (there is no sign of any inequality intentions of Quantz's). A trio by Graun, however (79/4), whose poco allegro also has a 𝔠 time-signature and is in an Italian style, has some tonguing marks which suggest unequal semiquavers [see ex. 6]. Often it seems, however, that in such cases 𝔠 is merely an alternative for **C**, especially in *moto perpetuo* exercises like 1/1 and the fragment at 25/11.

C is home ground for the *Solfeggi* – roughly 50% of the music is in that metre. This indicates a strong leaning towards the Italian style, for **C** – with its strong crotchet pulse – was the Italians' favourite metre.

Example 6: Graun: trio (79/4)



Hotteterre and Corrette confirm that it was used frequently in Italian sonatas, concertos and operas.[22] The French used it in allemandes, recitatives and airs, motets and cantatas but their favourite time-signatures were those that used unequal quavers, like **2** and **3**.[23] All the French documents agree that when **C** was used the semiquavers were played unequal and this is the practice today in French music. But Hotteterre and Corrette go further, recommending semiquaver inequality in common-time Italian music too. Quantz echoes this recommendation in the *Versuch*, but with no mention of national styles.[24] This extension of the French practice to Italian music, however, is little observed today.

But the *Solfeggi* changes the picture considerably. Inequality words crop up next to at least thirteen passages in **C** (see table 1), and countless strings of running semiquavers in **C** time are accompanied by unequal tonguing syllables similar to those in chapter 6 of the *Versuch* [see exx 4 and 5].[25] The most remarkable feature of all these examples is that not only is **C** time not a characteristic time-signature of French music at this time but neither are continuous running semiquavers typically French. The *stile brisé* texture of the allemande (of which there is only one in *Solfeggi*) is a very different animal. *Solfeggi*'s huge body of music in Italian **C** – much with clear indications of inequality – challenges current theory.

demisemiquaver inequality

In the *Versuch* Quantz mentions demisemiquaver inequality, of which there is a hint in Hotteterre (page 25) though it is not treated by Corrette. Quantz says that demisemiquavers may be unequal in 2/4 and **C** and emphasizes the point further when he warns that his inequality advice only holds good

> as long as no figures of still more rapid notes, or doubly quick ones, are intermingled each metre, for then the latter must be executed in the manner described above ... excepted from the rule, however, is first, quick passage-work in a very fast tempo, in which the time does not permit unequal execution ...
>
> (chapter 11, paragraph 12)

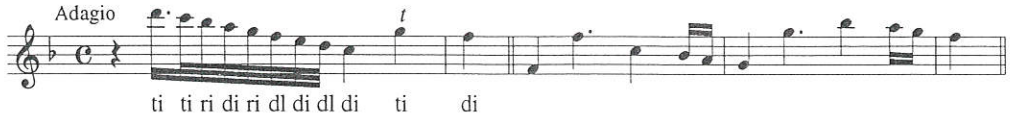
The first remark, about inequality moving to a higher denomination, seems to echo Quantz's words in the *Solfeggi* that 'die 16tel. werden unegal vorgetragen *als die geschwindest*' [my italics]: the semiquavers are played unequally, *since they are the fastest notes*. In other words, if there are demisemiquavers, they take over the inequality from the semiquavers.

Though demisemiquaver flourishes appear throughout the *Solfeggi*, there are very few hints about how they were played. The glorious downward scale on 47/3 has tonguing which could imply paired inequality [see ex. 7]. The only snag is that the note values do not add up. It would make more sense if the first note was a dotted demisemiquaver and the second a hemidemisemiquaver. In a passage from a Graun trio, pairs of demisemiquavers are tongued with *ti dl* (54/10). Long-short or short-long inequality is possible here but equality is just as likely. A little later we see another example of demisemiquavers with tonguing syllables about which the same might be said. It is really a matter of tempo: the faster it is played, the less likely it is that inequality would be used. This may be the case with 55/1 which, though it has ti ti ri dl tonguing that would convey inequality if attached to semiquavers, could hardly be *inégal* at the allegro tempo indicated. At any rate these isolated examples do make it appear that the many other demisemiquaver flourishes in *Solfeggi* were actually tongued out, unless marked with a slur.

One passage (12/8) combines *di dl* tonguing on demisemiquavers with *egal* instructions. Here it is possible that Quantz intends the demisemiquavers to be unequal and the semiquavers equal, to conform with his comment in the *Versuch* (ch. 11, para. 12) that the inequality moves to *noch geschwindern oder noch einmal so kurzen Noten* (still faster or shorter notes if there are any). Or maybe everything is meant to be equal, for if the tempo is fast enough inequality will inevitably slide into equality. Corrette tells us that around 1740 inequality died away in Italian sonatas and concertos[26] and it seems likely that it was increasing speed that dealt the mortal blow. Is Quantz's remark about 'very fast notes' another way of saying the same thing? How would Quantz have played the piece of continuous demisemiquavers on 14/9–13? It is hard to come to a conclusion about demisemiquaver inequality in *Solfeggi*; indeed this is a particularly grey area of inequality studies.

2/4 Hotteterre and Corrette differ about 2/4. In 1719 Hotteterre sees it as a mainly French time-signature while 20 years later Corrette describes it as mainly Italian. This may mark a shift in practice. Nevertheless both concur that, in either style, the semiquavers should be unequal. In the *Versuch* Quantz actually links 2/4 together with **C**, prescribing unequal semiquavers or

Example 7: Quantz? (47/3)



demisemiquavers for both. 2/4 is one of the more popular time-signatures in the *Solfeggi*, governing about a quarter of the music. Three passages in 2/4 time are marked *unegal* (see table 1). 2/4 is often found among the rather intimate Berlin-style allegros which shun the boldness of the Italian style. In such movements the second note is typically syncopated [see ex. 8].[27] Equally Berlin-like in style are allegros which start with lilting semiquavers, like the Quantz example also quoted by Fontijn (87/10). This is marked *unegal, die erste u dritte Note marquirt* (unequal, the first and third note marked). If the first and third semiquaver of each group are indeed to be marked, this implies quite a slow tempo. A similarly easy tempo is implied in the allegretto from the 'Trio di Bach' (82/9).

The incessant semiquavers which dominate the opening pages of the *Solfeggi* are sometimes in 2/4, though as often in **C** or 3/4. Tonguing suggesting semiquaver inequality is plentiful (11/10–13, 41/3), even in arpeggios (55/2).

$\frac{3}{4}$ (usually appears as **3** in the French style). French sources confirm that quavers were played unequally in French music, and Hotteterre and Corrette join with Loulié and others to confirm that in 3/4 the Italians played their *quavers equal*. The implied semiquaver inequality in the Italian style is not well attested but Corrette recommends it.[28] There are certain complications in this metre, however. Hotteterre (1719) points out that the French sometimes used the signature 3/4 instead of **3**, though still playing their quavers unequally. He also mentions that, if the music contains leaping quavers, or if semiquavers appear, then the quavers become equal. But it is not clear if this makes the semiquavers unequal.

When he comes to triple time in the *Versuch* Quantz favours the French style to the total exclusion of the Italian style. He merely instructs that the quavers should be unequal in 3/4 time (Quantz doesn't use the French form **3**). The absence of any reference to unequal semiquavers or equal quavers eliminates the Italian style altogether. The *Solfeggi* shows both French and Italian practices, which conform to what is indicated by Hotteterre and Corrette. About a quarter of the music in *Solfeggi* is in triple time, and most of this has the running semiquavers that point to the Italian style. Some of these have tonguing which suggests semiquaver inequality. For instance, in one extract there is generous tonguing with much *ti dll* and *di dll* (52/5) [ex. 9] and a further example can be seen at 71/6–8. Most of the small amount of French-style music in this metre has the key-signature 3/4. Only two passages in 3/4 have inequality words applied to them. Both are in the French style: the first has conjunct quavers (55/10) though the second has very much the opposite (77/5). A 3/4 movement from a Quantz duet [see ex. 10] has much *di di ri di ri* tonguing: a clear sign of inequality (57/4). The most meticulous unequal tongueing in triple time comes in the Menuetto con Variazioni by Quantz (62/4).

In spite of the last-quoted examples, however, French style music in this metre is still greatly outbalanced by Italian. This makes the triple time instruction in the *Versuch* look even odder and makes his failure to mention the possibility of unequal semiquavers in that time-signature look like an oversight.

$\frac{6}{4}$ All period sources agree that 6/4 time was only used in the French style. One of the few examples of its use in the *Solfeggi* is the vivace from Telemann's *Duetto à la française* (89/4) where its quaver movement is three times marked *unegal*.

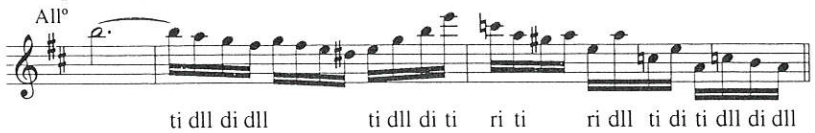
♩. pulse

About one-sixth of the music in the *Solfeggi* is in 3/8, 6/8, 9/8 or 12/8. To begin with 3/8, Hotteterre and Corrette (1738) give the impression that this was an important metre on both sides of the Alps. In the *Versuch* Quantz agrees with these two that the semiquavers were played unequally. In *Solfeggi* quite a few examples of 3/8 metre have unequal tonguing, notably a moderato from a sonata by Nichelmann, the pupil of Sebastian Bach, which has *di ri* tonguing throughout (26/1). A 3/8 vivace by Graun has similar tonguing (65/6-8) [ex. 11] and a 3/8 dolce has the instruction *diese Noten werden ungleich, als die geschwindesten vortragen* (47/8). Once again Quantz recites the theory-book formula that the shortest notes in a piece should be unequal. Three passages in 3/8 are marked with inequality words.

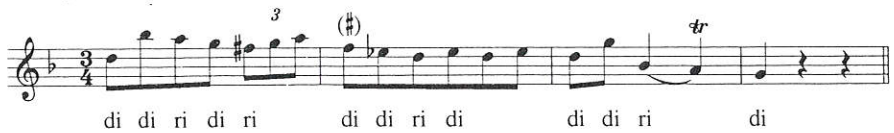
6/8 is not so common as 3/8 in the *Solfeggi*. A vivace in 6/8 (47/12) is marked *die 16tel nicht gar zu ungleich* (take care – the semiquavers not too unequal), an indication that

Example 8: Graun: Trio in E flat, Vivace (73/5)

Example 9: Quantz? (52/5)



Example 10: Quantz: Duet in d (57/4)



inequality would normally be applied. Hotteterre and Corrette regard 9/8 as mainly used in Italy. It does not appear much in the *Solfeggi*, though at one point Quantz has to remind his pupil that the quavers are equal in 9/8 (69/9).[29] A 9/8 effect is often achieved, however, by the use of quaver triplets in 3/4, as in 46/1-7 and 50/3 (see Fontijn's example 6d). As for 12/8 time, which Hotteterre and Corrette consider to be mainly confined to gigues, there are two examples in the *Solfeggi* but neither have any semiquavers (48/11 and 59/9–10). 6/8, 9/8 and 12/8 are not mentioned in chapter 11 of the *Versuch* though there are examples of 6/8 and 12/8 in section 6 of chapter 6, section 2. These do not feature running semiquavers, however, and so do not cast any light on questions of inequality.

Some of the inequality in the *Solfeggi* does not match Quantz's own instructions in the *Versuch* (or those of the other major theorists). For instance, the quaver inequality implied in the **C** at 59/11 does not agree with Quantz's recommendation of unequal *semiquavers* in **C** time. Since the tempo mark is alla breve, however, no doubt the time-signature should be **¢**. A more serious departure from normality involves unequal quavers in 2/4 at 44/6. This goes against the inequality conventions and against Quantz's own advice in the *Versuch* (chapter 11, para. 12). Maybe another kind of inequality is indicated here, such as durational inequality, in which some value is taken away from the end of the *nuota cattiva*.

Quantz sometimes implies that slurring notes in pairs may moderate the inequality ratio. In the 6/8 vivace mentioned above, he indicates that in 6/8 some semiquavers slurred in pairs should be *nicht gar zu ungleich* (not too unequal) but remarks that they could be more unequal if they weren't slurred. As for the slurs in the 2/4 allegro on (44/6) I am doubtful about Fontijn's supposition that the slurring can have any effect on the inequality of the quavers here.

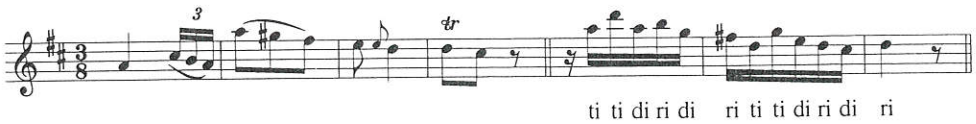
Quantz's treatment of triplets in *Solfeggi* is puzzling. He usually appears to want them played equal but I find his request for the third note of a quaver triplet to be played louder than the first as enigmatic as Fontijn does (50/3). Perhaps he has made a mistake here. In any case I feel that Quantz confuses the issue by describing both three-note groups in 9/8 and triplets as *Triolen*. Quantz's demand for real triplets to be played equal, however, could confirm that there was a time when they were played unequal.[30]

In general the *Solfeggi* evidence indicates that Quantz considered disjunct semiquavers just as eligible for inequality as conjunct ones. There are indeed many cases where disjunct semiquavers occur alongside the words *unegal* or *ungleich*[31] and Quantz prescribes unequal tongueing in numerous leaping passages.[32] A particularly striking example is the Blockwis allemande quoted by Claire Fontijn (70/8). Many more examples can be found in chapter 6, section 3 of the *Versuch*.[33] In the vivace of Telemann's Duetto à la française (89/8-9) an indication *alles unegal* (everything unequal) seems to apply to some quite disjunct quavers [see ex. 12] and there are disjunct quavers marked *unegal* at 77/5.

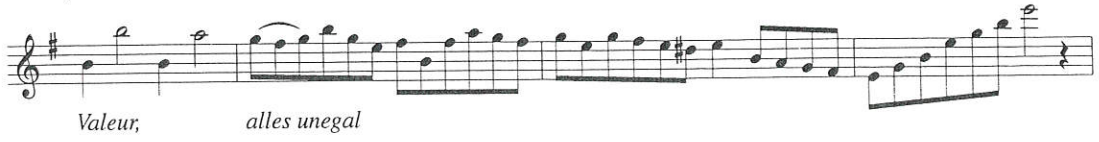
There are a few cases, however, where disjunct motion is accompanied by indications for equality. In a duet by W.F. Bach a falling arpeggio has continuous *ti ti* syllables, an indication of equality (12/6,7). At 49/6 [ex. 13] Quantz prescribes inequality for the running semiquavers and equality for the leaping ones.[34] In a few cases the evidence seems contradictory. At 4/4 there is an extract in which *ti d'll* and *ti ti* seem to imply a constant switching from unequal to equal rhythm and back. Here Quantz's intentions are unclear.

As regards the use of inequality on repeated notes, Quantz sits on the fence. In chapter 11 of the *Versuch* he excepts from his rule of inequality *die Noten...von welchen etliche nach einander auf einem Tone vorkommen* (a series of notes at the same pitch). Yet in chapter 6 he gives a number of examples in which repeated semiquavers are played to *did'll* [see ex. 14].[35] In *Solfeggi* he seems to follow the *Versuch*: in the Trio by Graun from

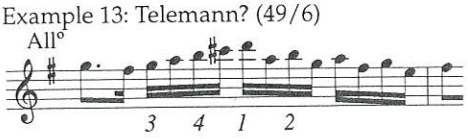
Example 11: Graun: Trio in D, Vivace (65/6)



Example 12: Telemann: Duet in e, Vivace (89/9)

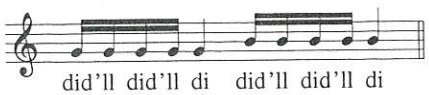


Example 13: Telemann? (49/6)



3. 4. etwas unegal
1.2. egal.

Example 14: *Versuch*, Ch. 6, Table 4, Figure 9



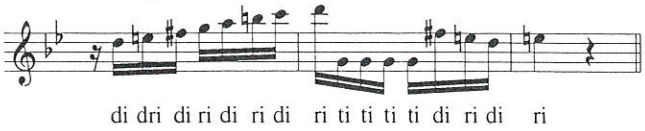
the *Solfeggi* (73/2), *di ri* tongueing on scalic passages contrasts with *ti* on repeated notes [see ex. 15]. Repeated notes are actually quite rare in the *Solfeggi.*

The inequality evidence from *Solfeggi* will be of interest to anyone involved in baroque performance practice. But assessing the value and significance of this source is not as easy as it seems. The extent to which this material may grow to have wider significance depends on how these annotations are interpreted. As well as asking 'what did he say?' we need to ask the more searching 'why did he say it?' If Quantz marks a phrase *unegal* we should ask why he did so. Was he introducing his pupil to a new idea or was he simply reminding him of a convention that he might have momentarily forgotten? Was he confirming the unequal note values in a small extract where the time-signature was omitted[36] or was he helping his pupil to cope with an unfamiliar style, as would appear to be the case in the few French examples in *Solfeggi*?[37]

I find it helpful to divide the written indications of inequality into two categories: the plain words *unegal, ungleich* or *egal* and the phrases in which these words are qualified, as in *nicht sehr ungleich.* If *unegal* or *ungleich* are qualified, it would seem that inequality would be normal in such a passage, but that Quantz is instructing his pupil to modify it in some way. The instruction *nicht sehr ungleich* (not very equal) at 42/9 implies to me that the pupil would have usually played semiquavers unequal in that time-signature but that Quantz is advising him to go easy on the inequality, perhaps because of the leaping nature of the passage. This is good evidence for general inequality. A similar case is the passage in 6/8 (47/12) marked *16tel nicht gar zu ungleich* (semiquavers really not too unequal). Once more it is reasonable to suppose that the pupil would normally have played semiquavers unequally in this metre and that Quantz is trying to prevent him overdoing the inequality. The qualified words favour the implication that inequality was normal in such passages and needed to be modified.

Unegal aber nicht als Puncte (unequal but not as if dotted) is applied to a fragment of an allemande by the shadowy Blokwiz (70/8). This is one of a number of pleas for moderation in his pupil's use of inequality. Even greater refinement is called for by the phrase *fast egal* (54/7) which definitely approaches equality from a position of customary inequality. These carefully-phrased cautions remind one of Couperin's *tant-soit-peu* from *La Laborieuse.*[38] Quantz splits even finer hairs when he coins *diese Passagen brauchen zwar nicht egal, doch auch nicht zu unegal seyn* (these passages should certainly not be equal, but not too unequal either).

Example 15: Graun: Trio in g, All° (73/2)



It is more difficult to assess the implications of the words *unegal, ungleich* or *egal* when used entirely on their own. When a string of semiquavers are marked plain *unegal,* (76/12) we need to tread carefully. Why should the pupil need this information? Does it mean that after all inequality was not normal in such instances? In many cases Quantz seems merely to be isolating a small problem. For instance, the performance of triplets was much discussed in theoretical works of the period[39] and his pupil(s) may well have had trouble with them (see 57/8 and 39/2). Playing straight semiquavers after a triplet can be difficult too (88/3). In the same way it can be awkward to sort out the inequality in a *suspirans,* hence a phrase which Quantz marks *unegal,* adding unequal tongueing as well (38/9). When you are playing unequally, changing from demisemiquavers to semiquavers can be confusing (see 60/9). And the pupil can certainly be forgiven for trying to play the quavers of the Simonetti minuet equally, with their huge leaps (77/5). Considering how little French-style music there is in the *Solfeggi,* it is not surprising that Quantz felt he needed to sprinkle *unegals* all over Telemann's Duetto à la française (89/8-12). The excess of Italian style music in *Solfeggi* would make a pupil *unaccustomed to unequal quavers.* Here we have the converse of the problem that Loulié and the rest were coping with – French musicians playing Italian music were *unaccustomed to equal quavers.* The most puzzling indications are the ones that seem to be going back to first principles, as this one (see 38/8): *Die 16tel werden unegal vorgetragen als die geschwindest* (The semiquavers are played unequally as the shortest notes).This links up with his Remark in the *Versuch.* But why should Quantz need to make such an elementary point to an apparently experienced pupil?

The *Solfeggi* is a rich source of inequality evidence, particularly valuable because it makes a strong connection between pedagogy and the world of professional music. Its format makes it unique. In no other document are suggestions for inequality added to the musical text, like dynamics. By comparison the famous inequality passage from the *Versuch* is sketchy. Among several signs of haste is the absence of any reference to 6/8, 9/8 and 12/8. Chapter 6 is richer in inequality information and contains many links with the *Solfeggi.* In the *Solfeggi* Quantz follows the example of Hotteterre and Corrette, who embellished their work with extracts from music of their time. Each author drew on his own favourite circle of composers: Hotteterre cited Lully, Campra, and Corelli, Corrette quoted Handel, Vivaldi and Locatelli. In the *Solfeggi* Quantz draws on composers of *his* circle, which include at least one composer of distinction – Telemann – along with a few second-rankers like Graun, W.F. Bach and himself. Lesser lights like the Dresden and Berlin musicians Zarth and Blockwitz

also find a place. These attributed extracts are the most interesting parts of *Solfeggi*, especially when they are accompanied by verbal instructions for inequality. These help to close the credibility gap that still affects our perception of *inégales*. In table 2 are listed the most important of these, divided into national styles.

TABLE 2 – References to inequality in attributed extracts

Italian Style

Semiquavers in C

38/8 W.F. Bach: Duet F59: allegro non troppo. *Unegal als die geschwindest* [unequal, since they are the fastest notes].

40/7 W.F. Bach: Concerto in D mi: allegro di molto. *Sehr ungleich* [very unequal].

45/9 Glösch: Concerto in F: allegro assai. *Sehr ungleich* [very unequal].

54/7 J.G. Graun: Trio in D: allegro. *Fast egal* [almost equal].

73/7 J.G. Graun: Trio in Eb: allegro. *Ungleich* [unequal].

90/6 Telemann: Duetto, no 3 in D (1727), TWV40:102: dolce. *Unegal* [unequal].[40]

French Style

Quavers in 3/4

55/5 Telemann: Trio alla Francese in d, TWV42:d11: minuet. *Zwar nicht egal, doch auch nicht zu unegal* [not exactly equal, but not too unequal either].[41]

Semiquavers in C

70/8 Blokwis: Allemande. *Unegal aber nicht als Puncte* [unequal but not as if dotted].[42]

Quavers in 6/4

89/8,9 Telemann: Duetto à la française, no 4 in e (1752): vivace. *Unegal.*

These quotations from the music of named German composers are the most valuable part of *Solfeggi*. Though inequality in this period is still often thought to have been confined to the French style, Quantz proves this to be false by spreading his inequality instructions over both French and Italian style music. This manuscript reveals a new type of Italian-style inequality with its own metre-inequality relationships. It is quite distinct from the French kind and chimes in with the Italian inequality practice described by Hotteterre and Corrette. ❖

John Byrt is a conductor and performer of early music. He has made a lifetime study of notes inégales, *first publishing on the subject in 1967 in a triple paper with Sol Babitz and Michael Collins.*

Footnotes

1 Claire Fontijn: 'Quantz's *unegal*: implications for the performance of 18th-century music' in *EM* (February, 1995) pp. 55–62.

2 Stephen Hefling: *Rhythmic alteration in 17th- and 18th century music* (New York, 1993), pp. 43–44.

3 J. J. Quantz, *Solfeggi pour la flute traversiere...* ed. Michel and Teske (Winterthur, 1978).

4 Quantz joined the Court Orchestra at Dresden in 1728 and in 1729 was given permission to go to Berlin (Ruppin or Rheinsberg) twice a year to teach the prince. The editors considered that the notebook might have been in use between 1729 and 1741, when Quantz took up residence at Potsdam.

5 H. Augsbach: Johann Joachim Quantz: *Thematisches Verzeichnis der musikalischen Werke, Werkgruppen QV 2 und QV 3* (Dresden, 1984), pp. v–vi; and Augsbach: *Quantz Werkverzeichnis*, p.xii.

6 *Rhythmic alteration*: p. 179, note 27.

7 Steven Zohn: 'New light on Quantz's advocacy of Telemann's Music' in *Early Music* (August, 1997) pp. 441–461.

8 See Hefling: *Rhythmic alteration*, table 1–1, pp. 8–9.

9 Jacques Hotteterre-le-Romain: *L'art de préluder* (Paris, 1719), ch. 11.

10 Michel Corrette: *L'ecole d'Orphée: Méthode pour apprendre...a joüer du violon* (Paris, 1738), pp. 3–5; *Méthode... pour apprendre...le violoncelle* (Paris, 1741), pp. 4–6; *Méthode pour apprendre aisément à jouer de la flute traversiere*, (Paris–Lyons, *c.*1742), pp. 4–6;

11 J. J. Quantz: *Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen* (Berlin, 1752) ch. 6 and ch. 11, ¶12.

12 Bénigne de Bacilly: *L'art de bien chanter* (Paris, 1668), p. 232. See my 'Writing the unwritable', *Musical Times* (January, 1997).

13 Another word that Quantz is fond of using is 'valeur'. This seems to mean: give the note its full value, in other words hold it right through to the end. Though at one time I thought 'valeur' might relate to inequality, I no longer hold this view, for in one place Quantz writes 'ungleich und im Valeur' (41/8) and later he writes 'valeur und unegal' (89/12).

14 Hotteterre: *Principes de la flute etc.* (Paris, 1707; Amsterdam, 1728). An important early source on tonguing is Sylvestro Ganassi: *Opera intitulata Fontegara* (Venice, 1535).

15 J. J. Quantz, *Versuch*: chapter 6, §2, ¶7 and §3, ¶5.

16 The English translations of the passages from the *Versuch* are taken from Reilly's translation.

17 This is illustrated in the *Versuch:* chapter 6, section 1, paras. 6 & 7 and table 3.

18 See Fontijn's 'Quantz's *unegal*', p. 61. This remark seems to be derived from Quantz's comment *'und ri sehr stark marqu:'* at her example 4a. But in this case surely Quantz does not imply that the *ri* should necessarily be stronger than the first *ti* of the bar? I would say that in this repertoire the third of a group of four semiquavers is normally weaker than the first though stronger than the other two.

19 See notes 9 and 10. I discuss the problems of non-French inequality in my 'Just a habit with us' in *MT*, cxxxvi (1995), pp. 536-39 and 'Some new interpretations of the *notes inégales* evidence' in *EM*, forthcoming. I refer the reader especially to tables 2 and 4,

which give hypothetical metre-inequality relationships for the Italian style.

[20] Quantz: *Versuch*, chapter 11, ¶12.

[21] Corrette: flute tutor, p. 4.

[22] Corrette: violin tutor, p. 4 and flute tutor, p.4.

[23] Hotteterre: p. 57.

[24] Neumann claimed that the inequality passage in Quantz's *Versuch* (ch. 11, ¶12) was appropriate for the French style only. Frederick Neumann: 'The French *Inégales*, Quantz and Bach' in *JAMS* vol. 18 (1965) pp. 313–358. He was responding to Sol Babitz: 'A Problem of Rhythm in Baroque Music', *Musical Quarterly* vol. 38 (1952), pp. 533–565.

[25] See 11/8, 10, 39/1, 3, 5.

[26] Corrette: flute tutor, p. 4.

[27] This rhythm is used by Bach at the opening of the first movement of his F minor harpsichord concerto (BWV 1056).

[28] See Corrette: violin tutor, p. 4.

[29] In compound time with the ♩. beat any inequality is normally at the ♪ level.

[30] My research into unequal triplets is written up in my Notes inégales – *a European style:* appendix page lii.

[31] See pages 38/8, 41/8, 42/9, 44/4, 47/8, 70/8, 87/10, 89/9,12, 90/6.

[32] See 5/6, 11/6,7, 22/9,11, 40/9, 42/6,9, 48/3, 52/5,10, 53/5, 70/2, 75/1,11.

[33] See table 4, figs. 10-24 and table 5, figs 1–9.

[34] See also 63/7, 75/1, 76/11 and 87/9. The question of whether disjunct semiquavers were exempt from inequality in the late baroque arose in the debate between myself and David Ponsford in *The Musical Times* (January and April 1997). I argued that they weren't, but that it was different with quavers. These few examples support his side of the argument but they are outnumbered by the examples cited at notes 32, 33 and 34..

[35] *Versuch* ch. 6, table 4, fig. 2.

[36] As at 31/11–12.

[37] See the Minuetto con Var. (62/4–6).

[38] *Premier livre de pièces de clavecin*, (Paris, 1713).

[39] Michael Collins expresses the view that, though Leopold Mozart (1756) and Türk (1789) firmly insist that triplets should be performed equal, there is evidence that a previous generation may have played their triplets unequally. Michael Collins: 'The Performance of Triplets in the 17th and 18th centuries' in *JAMS* vol. 19 No 3 (1966), pp. 281–328, (see esp. pp. 325–326).

[40] Other examples of inequality indicated in Italian style **C** time movements can be seen on pages 49/6, 61/8, 72/7, 76 (bottom), 77/1.

[41] A facsimile of this can be found in *EM* (Aug. 1997), p. 448.

[42] I explain the effect that written dotting had on nuance in my 'Writing the unwritable' in *MT* (Jan. 1997), pp. 18–24.

THE LIRA DA BRACCIO:
A player's manual

J.M. SKEAPING

The lira da braccio is a remarkable and beautiful instrument of great historical importance, yet it remains almost totally neglected by scholars, performers and amateurs of early music alike. It is scarcely played at all, still less with any understanding of its true nature or scope. This short article constitutes an attempt to redress this situation in a small way by suggesting a new approach to the problem.

What will not be found here is a scholarly treatise. There is so much conjecture, speculation and surmise in circulation, in place of accurate knowledge of the subject, that the musical 'zoologist' will quickly find himself ensnared in a minefield of conflicting academic irrelevancies.

The only way out of this impasse is to embrace wholeheartedly the process of reinvention, whereby the historical evidence is used selectively in order to arrive at a conclusion that is consistent and rational in character, as well as according with the ideas of the 're-inventor'. There is no legitimate alternative to this necessity, for in such a case as this, the pursuit of objective truth may lead to a result that, in itself, might be admirable, but will achieve little in the way of a practical solution to the problem of reconstructing performance practice, which should surely be the ultimate aim of the entire project.

The overwhelming need, therefore, is for clear guidance, and a few positive indications as to how the instrument might have been, and indeed, might be played, as well as constructed, but this needs to be done in a spirit free from both dogma ands academic pretension. This may serve as a basis on which the aspiring player may develop his own ideas, using his own particular approach and experience.

Such historical evidence as there is suggests that the lira assumed a wide variety of shapes, sizes, string lengths and numbers, tunings, etc. during the course of its history, as did its predecessor, the medieval fiddle, an instrument as little known and understood as the lira itself.

The morphology of the lira has been exhaustively dealt with in a widely circulated article by Laurence Witten II[1]. However, form is only important insofar as it affects , or reflects, function. The clearest example of this may be seen in the transition from the medieval fiddle-like instruments of the 15th and early 16th centuries to the violin-like instruments of the later 16th and early 17th centuries.

There are a total of ten known examples of the lira da braccio that have survived up to the present day in various museums and collections. Of this number, four exist as violas but are, quite reasonably, assumed to be converted liras, having been adapted to their present condition by the late 16th or early 17th centuries.

With the exception of the well known 'anthropomorphic' lira by Giovanni d'Andrea, in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, dated 1511, all the remaining instruments were made during the latter half of the 16th century. By this time, the lira was well and truly out of favour, due, no doubt, to the growing preference for the fashionable ideals represented by the ubiquitous madrigal and consort style, symbolising the final emancipation of music from its long standing subservience to sung text, the overriding characteristic of the repertoire both of the medieval fiddle and of the lira itself.[2] This led to the disestablishment of the lira from its hard-won position as a favoured courtly instrument, relegating it to a minor and largely public role in pageants, masks, theatre and dance.

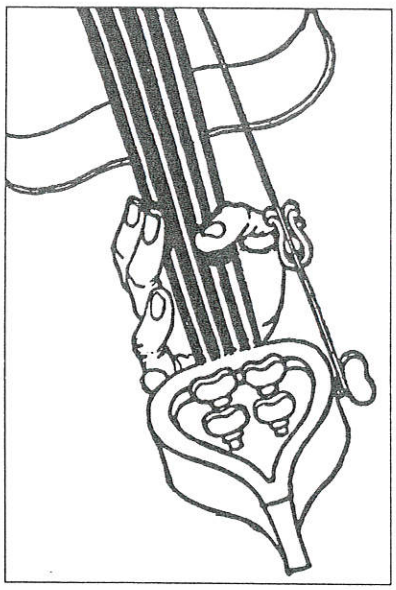
Significantly, all surviving examples reflect the 'violinisation' of the instrument, not only in form, but in structure. A small but telling instance of this the narrowing of the neck and fingerboard, easily seen when surviving instruments are compared with characteristically highly accurate representations of the lira seen in late 15th century religious paintings. This necessitates crowding the strings together in such a way as to restrict repertoire to the performance of simple *frottole* and *passemezzi*, etc. The lira had become, and indeed remains, merely a violin with knobs on.

Before this, in its earlier form the lira was clearly a highly sophisticated development of the medieval fiddle, and there is little doubt that in this form it reached a pinnacle of perfection both musically and structurally. It was the cultural heir to a long, rich and diverse tradition which was (partly) aural and itinerant in nature, with strong literary associations. Later becoming familiar in the hands of wandering poet-musicians, it acquired a place at court, where it was used in vocal and instrumental compositions during the 14th and 15th centuries. All this background, now irrecoverably lost, was no doubt fully integrated into the classical form of the lira da braccio. At this stage, it is reasonable to suppose that, by the end of the 15th century, the instrument had fully earned its reputation and high status at court by playing a part in all important areas of musical life, its inherited versatility allowing it to be played upon in many different ways.

This is a far cry from its presently perceived role as a mere humanist icon, draped in a toga and adorned

with laurel leaves, grinding out repetitious and simplified chord routines for stilted recitations by aspiring courtier-poets. This is an image more in keeping with Pre-Raphaelite pastiche than with the high Italian Renaissance. Anyone who has ever had the pleasure of playing the lira must surely realise that the technical and musical possibilities of the instrument could hardly have escaped the attention of a sophisticated and civilised community such as inhabited *fin-de-siècle* Venice, Florence or Mantua. This was the age of Leonardo and Raphael, Macchiavelli and the Medicis, Petrarch and Petrucci. It was a time of feverish experimentation that, in the field of music, gave rise to such remarkable innovations as the lirone and the archicembalo, a 48-note microtone scale system as well as the full documentation of equal temperament, not to mention the development of virtually all the prototypes of the instruments of the modern orchestra.

At this stage, around 1490 or thereabouts, the design of the lira was probably very carefully reconsidered. Clever compromises were made regarding string length, tuning, body size and neck profile; in short, every detail crucial to the sound and performance of the instrument. In this way the lira da braccio became a masterpiece of self-conscious evolutionary design, retaining all the features that had served it so well during its long history, but refining techniques of construction and performance to new levels. Disertori, in his ground breaking treatise 'Practica et Technica della Lira da Braccio' (*Revista*, 1948), shows a detail from the Coronation of the Virgin by Girolamo del Pacchio, from around 1500, with the usual angel playing a large five-string lira with a single bourdon string (see below).



Showing the thumb-ring capo (from Disertori)

On her left thumb she is wearing a brass thumb ring with a U-shaped attachment. By flexing her thumb to stop the fourth string (on the fingerboard), as she is doing, she makes the U-shaped device come into contact with the bourdon string, presumably altering the entire tonality of the instrument of the instrument in this position. While such a procedure may seem a trifle far-fetched and problematic, it demonstrates at the very least the existence of a highly experimental attitude, bent on pushing the technical and tonal possibilities of the instrument to the absolute limit.

This was the 'golden age' of the lira, an entirely credible perspective that finally overturns the previously established viewpoint held by Hadjeki, Boyden and others that the lira owes its historical significance to its supposed 'ancestry' to the illustrious and all-conquering violin. On the contrary: it borrowed the form of the violin, or moved in parallel with it, in a final act of self-preservation.

All this is greatly at variance with the usual account of the instrument and its repertoire. The latter consists, in most description, of simple *passemezzo*-like chord grounds, possibly a few *frottole*, and other similar musical trifles. This conclusion has almost certainly been reached by the failure of modern experimentalists to resolve the undoubtedly difficult problem of setting up the lira correctly (string spacing, bridge curvature, use of correct bow etc.) and exploiting the tuning to full advantage. Such experiments, usually conducted by career musicologists, assisted by otherwise accomplished but uncommitted string players, must inevitably fail to achieve any result. Twenty years of passionate interest and experimentation is hardly sufficient to achieve these goals. However, this summary dismissal of the instrument by the musicological community has proved to be a great disservice to the cause of full recognition of the historic importance of the lira. This now has to be determinedly achieved. In particular, the question of repertoire must be addressed in practice, using specialised and dedicated ensembles of musicians and a variety of well designed, practicable instruments in order to try out a whole range of possibilities that lie far beyond the deceptive horizons of mere speculation.

This cannot occur until there is a ready supply of new instruments available. Accurate copies of surviving examples (notwithstanding the vexed issue of unscrupulous nineteenth-century restoration), and carefully researched reconstructions based on the rich source of contemporary paintings, are both needed to make this possible. With this in mind, I am currently designing a range of instruments, as well as supplying appropriate bows and strings. It is worth noting that the general design of the lira was never subjected to the same process of standardisation that progressively affected the violin family from about the middle of the seventeenth century. Full advantage should be taken of this fact to have instruments 'made to measure' as would have been the case historically. This is of vital

importance, bearing in mind the considerable technical demands made on the players left hand in particular. By opening up the practical possibilities in this way, a considerable upturn in the level of interest in this centrally important instrument of the high Italian Renaissance should result.

As suggested above, the lira was spiritual heir to both the great traditions of music making, aural-vocal and written. In addition, its frequent appearance in religious as well as mythological paintings powerfully suggests that its use had become established in church music and in the ecclesiastical courts. All these possibilities now need to be urgently examined in the light of practical experimentation, combined with a fresh examination of existing source material for new clues. It is inconceivable that the high reputation enjoyed by the lira could have arisen from the flimsy structures so far suggested by the desultory investigations of uninspired musicology.

In order to get a better idea as to how the lira might have developed, I will describe two hypothetical examples of vielle-like instruments from the 14th and 15th centuries.

Case 1: drone fiddle, 5 strings (4 fingered, 1 bourdon). Let us say open G tuning (G, d, g, d', g'.) Tonality G/G minor. Flat or minimally curved bridge. Very large, especially if strapped across the upper body. Long strings to allow for the string technology of the time, requiring the use of 'cello' fingering (i.e. little finger extension). Neck wide at nut allowing wide spacing of strings to permit re-entrant melodic line (i.e. stopping inner strings separately, essential with a flat bridge). Status and repertoire: used by lowly professional minstrels travelling from court to court rendering epic or narrative poems, topical songs, humorous ditties suitable for feasts and other entertainments whether in chambers, halls or even outdoors. Hence the need for a large instrument, as can be seen in frequent illustrations. If he could not be heard, he would not get paid. According to this tradition, the instrument was entirely subservient to vocal and poetic purposes, to which it owed its very existence.

Case 2: melodic fiddle. 4 strings, tuned in fifths, i.e. C, g, d', a'. No bourdon. Somewhat curved bridge, permitting greater flexibility, such as single lines, 2–3 note chords, drones, and other effects. Smaller size than previous example, giving much greater manageability. Status and repertoire: used by professional court musicians and musically trained courtiers for chamber music, table music and other more intimate occasions, rendering love songs, humorous ditties, instrumental ensemble music etc.; an essentially written repertoire, provided by retained court composers.

We now come to the fully evolved lira of the late 15th century, typical of the examples seen in the religious and mythological paintings of Raphael and his contemporaries. Here both the harmonic and melodic possibilities represented by the two cases given above were preserved and, indeed, enhanced, producing not the mere courtier's musical toy and combined philosophical emblem of common supposition, but a richly endowed and highly flexible musical instrument possessed of an extensive and diverse repertoire, the culminating achievement of a lengthy process of historical development.

As has already been suggested, the lira, 'zoologically' speaking, has come down to us in two broadly distinct 'species', the violin-like and medieval fiddle-like models of the instrument. The external differences reflect a much more fundamental distinction than merely the absence or presence of corners and their numbers. There is a basic difference in the construction of the two types.

The operations involved in making braccio-type instruments (i.e. violins, rebecs, fiddles etc.) can be reduced to two categories, these being the construction of the body, and the formation of the resonating surfaces. To take the body first, this may be made, as with the violin, by bending the ribs, then adding the front and back or, as with the rebec, by carving the entire body out of one piece of wood.

There is a third, 'hybrid' category, in which the ribs are carved out of a solid plank, or alternatively joined in pieces forming an elongated ring, and then carved to shape. This method was used for both medieval fiddle-like ('classical') liras and violin-like ('decadent') liras. In the case of the 'classical' lira, this method gave the advantage of a stiff central structure with a broad glueing surface which could be profiled in such a way that the soundboard (and back) could be bent over it to give effective lateral arching. The soundboard would typically be a sheet of pine or cedar of uniform thickness.

To judge as best one can from pictorial references, the practice of bending the front (and possibly the back as well) over solid ribs was probably the most common method of construction in use for making 'classical' liras. As with the Renaissance viol (which was also constructed using a thin soundboard bent over the ribs), this arrangement required careful barring to maintain the profile of the arching. This is in sharp contrast to the heavier, carved arching of the 'decadent' lira, graduated in depth towards the centre, and perhaps 2–2.5 times thicker overall than the earlier pattern.

The reason for labouring these distinctions is to suggest that, when taken together with the pictorial evidence that 'classical' instruments were, on average, larger than their 'decadent' brethren, it is fair to conclude that the 'classical' lira was altogether larger, lighter, and very probably more lightly strung than the 'decadent' subspecies, or indeed its usurping cousin, the violin.

It is worth noting that this trend from the delicate to the robust is a recurrent theme in evolutionary organology, as, for example, in the case of the lute to

the guitar, or the harpsichord to the piano, to give two important instances. Undoubtedly there were social and economic factors at work in each case, as well as practical ones, such as heavier, less breakable strings, the ease of tuning a more stable, and indeed less fragile, instrument and so on.

The chief consequence of this development was a radical difference in the quality of the sound, and equally important, the 'feel' of the two instruments. The sound of the 'classical' lira would have been clearer and more transparent. The instrument spoke instantly, and was playable with the lightest touch. These are characteristics ideally suited to multiple string stopping and bowing. Too much resistance from the combined factors of instrument and its strings makes playing very hard work, and restricts the dynamic range of the performance.

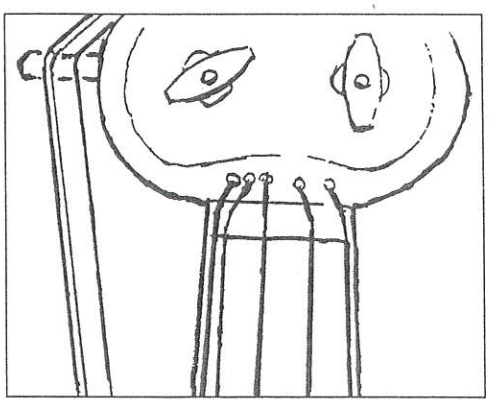
Unfortunately, there are no surviving examples of the late 15th century lira, so familiar through the iconography of the period. This is chiefly due, no doubt, to the inability of the instrument to adapt successfully to membership of the violin family.

Tunings for the lira were probably many and various, undoubtedly developing directly from the medieval fiddle, giving the choice of open chords (i.e. fourths and fifths) or regular fifths. With characteristic subtlety, in its final form the tuning of the lira is a combination of these two patterns. The most likely tuning for the fully developed 'classical' lira would translate (descending) as : g' (later a'), d', g, c, C, then bourdons g, G.

There is, amongst the tiny community of scholars and performers upon the instrument, a clear division of opinion as to how this well documented tuning should be interpreted in performance, especially the octave c, C. This is obviously a matter of crucial importance. One school of thought has it that these two strings may be bowed and fingered separately, and therefore laid out on the fingerboard spaced evenly with the other three. This solution has been comprehensively dealt with in a very thorough way by Sterling Scott-Jones,[3] well-known through his association with the Studio der frühen Musik.

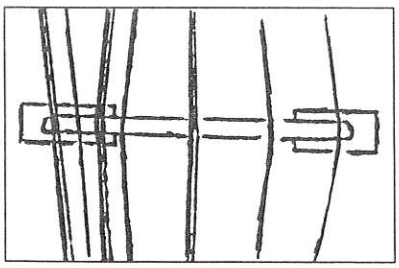
However, common sense (as well as practical experimentation) compellingly suggest that this seemingly irregular pair of octave strings (numbers 4 and 5 on the fingerboard) should be treated as a double course. Despite a reduction in the gross total number of keys theoretically available on the instrument as compared with the alternative solution, the compensations of the latter arrangement are, arguably, conclusive. These are, simpler fingering, wider overall string spacing, and better resonance, as well as ample scope for harmonic modulation in the home keys. In addition, it is commonplace in earlier examples to find only four strings on the fingerboard, suggesting that the upper member of the pair was added later to enhance the resonance of the fourth, bass, string, at a time when covered strings had not yet become available.

As has already been suggested, the spacing of the fingered strings at the nut is absolutely crucial to success in performance upon the lira. Each set of double courses should be set as closely as possible without jangling. The fourth course, c, C, should run as near as possible to the bass edge of the fingerboard, to allow maximum spacing of the remaining three strings. This enables each string to be fingered separately, as already discussed. This is a great advantage in 'polyphonic' styles of playing (see below).



String spacing at the nut.

At the bridge the fourth and fifth (bourdon) course can be crowded together without causing difficulties with bowing. This saves width, thereby avoiding the necessity for an excessively wide tailpiece. (illustration below).

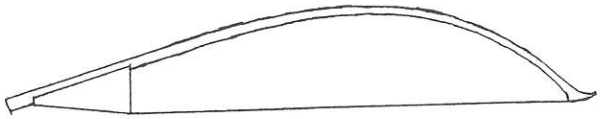


String spacing at the bridge.

However, the tailpiece should be wide enough to prevent the strings converging too sharply behind the bridge, thereby causing it to tilt forward, as well as creating difficulty with tuning.

Bridge and fingerboard should be flat or nearly flat. Both profiles were widely used, as is confirmed by a large number of authoritative sources. There is, however, a significant difference between the two when it comes to the matter of performance. At the same time, there does not seem to be any indication of a historic progression from flat to curved, reflecting, as it were, a hypothetical progression from lira-like to violin-like forms. This can only have remained ambivalent, a traditional matter of choice among individual musicians.

The 'classical' lira bow is, naturally enough, quite unlike the typical 16th century violin or viol bows, and is for this reason, essential for proper performance upon the instrument. In form it is the convex 'hunting bow', flexible enough to play on any number of strings from just one, to the full complement (see illustration).



A typical fifteenth-century bow.

Bows would have been made of suitable native woods in plentiful supply, such as ash, beech, cedar, cypress or yew, and were often strung with dark horsehair to give more 'bite', as well as making an attractive colour contrast with the light woods used for the stick. There was usually a fixed frog, gripped underneath by the thumb, which would not have been placed on the hair in order to vary tension. Pressure alone, varying the curvature of the stick, would be sufficient. The bow would have been as long as possible to facilitate sustained playing. With the 'violinisation' of the lira during the middle decades of the 16th century, the 'hunting bow' pattern was abandoned in favour of the typical Renaissance violin bow.

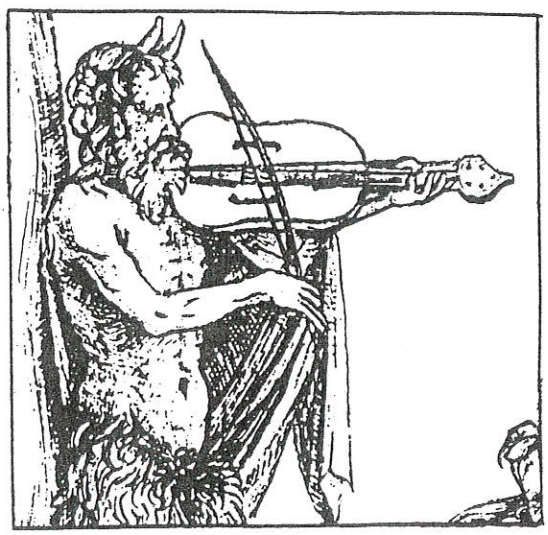
Of all the unusual features of this remarkable instrument, surely the most distinctive is the use of the left-hand thumb to stop both the fourth course and even the inner, third, string. This was first observed by the Italian musicologist Disertori, in his revolutionary iconographical research into the origins of the lira (see diagram 1). This is a practice more readily associated with the present-day folk, rock and jazz guitar, banjo and ukulele. The use of this device is overwhelmingly borne out by pictorial evidence, and it cannot be overemphasised that upon it depend the whole style and character of performance. The use of the thumb in this way almost certainly originated with the medieval fiddle, perhaps initially as a means of varying the drones as music became more harmonic in nature (see woodcuts, Figure 1). This action of the thumb leaves all the fingers free to pursue a melodic line, simultaneously allowing the performer to pursue an elaborate melody, whilst accompanying this with the typical '1, 4, 5, 1' *passemezzo moderno* chord progression, for example, in the bass, quite independently. To facilitate this technique, the instrument should be grasped unashamedly 'poker fashion' in the left hand, with the top joint of the thumb protruding above the fingerboard – a feature displayed in the pictorial references given.

To achieve this '1, 4, 5, 1' chord sequence, for instance, the thumb begins by stopping the fourth course alone, giving the tonality 'Doh', or G, then disengages altogether to give 'Fa' (C). By then stopping both the fourth course and the third string, the resulting tonality is 'Soh' (G), returning to 'Doh' by resuming the opening position. Using the thumb in this way incalculably increases the scope of both melody and accompaniment, given the condition of a flat or nearly flat bridge, which would otherwise prove to be totally unmanageable. The full chords thus achieved add greatly to the overall sympathetic resonance of the instrument.

The player may rest his chin either side of the tailpiece, there being no rule on this point, though most pictorial references show the chin on the 'wrong' side. This may be an advantage in supporting a large instrument by balancing it nearer the shoulder, but this is a

Figure 1 (below and opposite): Venetian woodcuts showing the use of the left thumb for stopping bass strings of medieval fiddles and liras.

Lira *circa* 1500.



Lira *circa* 1500.

matter of individual preference, as with many other details of performance technique.

A system of tablature was devised for the lira, of which only one example, the Pesaro Ms., survives. This is, by any standards, a highly ambiguous document, and of uncertain but probably late date. The lira belongs, essentially, to an aural-vocal tradition, and its characteristic repertoire would have reflected this.

For those of an experimental turn of mind, the inference may be correctly drawn that it is perfectly possible to play 'lira' style on virtually any member of the fiddle family, ancient or modern. Indeed, the tradition of playing in the style of the Renaissance lira has in essence been maintained right up to the present through a progression of solo violin works by Biber, Balthazar, Bach, and later the Italian virtuosi Tartini and Paganini, as well as relatively recent works such as the unaccompanied violin sonata of Bartok. In addition, there are various traditional forms of folk fiddle in central Europe, such as the three-string Hungarian viola known as the *kontra*, with its typical lira tuning in re-entrant fifths, and, of a very different character, the Hardanger fiddle from Norway, and the keyed nickelharpe from Sweden. These are just a few examples of the way that the influence of the lira has perpetuated itself throughout the history of European music.

In conclusion, it may safely be said that the importance of the lira in historical terms cannot be overestimated, and that its reconstruction must form a natural and inevitable part of the new historical consciousness that may now be seen to be at work throughout the entire field of musicology and historic performance. ❖

Joseph Skeaping was born in 1942. He studied sculpture and ornamental woodcarving at the Royal Academy Schools in London. He was a founder member of the City Waites, and now plays with his own ensemble, the Reichenbach Falls Festival Orchestra. He is well known for his carved heads for viola da gamba, and is now devoting himself to producing copies and reconstructions of the lira da braccio.

Footnotes

1 'Apollo, Orpheus and David, a Study of the Crucial Century in the Development of Bowed Strings in North Italy, 1480–1580'. *Journal of the American Music Society*, 1975.

2 Peter Holman, *Four and Twenty Fiddlers*; see chapter 1. OUP, 1995.

3 *The Viola da Braccio*, Early Music Institute, Indiana Press.

Fiddzle, *circa* 1500.

Fiddle, 1522.

Fiddle, 1537.

SOME ASPECTS OF CONTINUO REALIZATION

England *c.*1700: William Williams, William Croft and Henry Purcell

IAN PAYNE

In 1700, five years after the death of Henry Purcell, two interesting volumes of instrumental music were published in London: *Six Sonatas in Three Parts* by William Williams (†1700), beautifully engraved by Thomas Cross, who had earlier (1683) produced Purcell's *Sonnatas of III Parts*;[1] and a composite set of *Six Sonatas or Solos, Three for A Violin and Three for the Flute* by William Croft (1678–1727) and an anonymous 'Italian M[aste]r', much less accurately turned out by Walsh and Hare.[2] Both sets hedge their respective composers' bets on the commercial front by including music for violins and flutes (that is, recorders); and both contain sonatas written (for the most part) in the four-movement, slow-fast-slow-fast plan established by the post-*c.*1690 *sonata da chiesa*, though there are other influences, not least dance-styles imported from the *sonata da camera* and the French tradition.

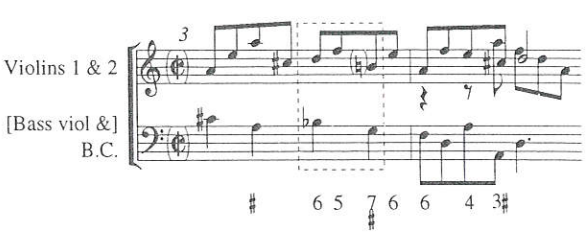
The music of Croft and Williams bears witness to the struggle each composer had in assimilating contemporary Italian and (to a lesser extent) French influences, though both conform to the Italian sonata concept,[3] and follow Corelli in general and (as might be expected) Purcell in particular.[4] But in other respects they are very different. First, Williams's sonatas are *a tre*, for two equal melodic parts (violins or recorders) and string bass, with continuo, whereas Croft's are for a single violin and continuo. Second, and more to the point, Williams's continuo basses are fully figured and expertly engraved by Cross, with the result that the figuring, though by no means always complete or unambiguous, is not as hopelessly confused as that in Purcell's posthumous (1697) *Sonatas of Four Parts*.[5] Croft's figuring, on the other hand, is sparse, incomplete and inexpertly underlaid (one suspects) by the printer. Both sets, however, present some 'distinctive and instructive' points which 'open a pleasing field for intelligent speculation' (as Sherlock Holmes might have put it[6]) to anyone setting out to realize their continuo parts.

Most of our technical knowledge of English continuo practice is owed to the treatises of Matthew Locke[7] and Dr John Blow.[8] Both write concisely, with copious musical illustrations; but in their choice of material both writers are terse and selective and have clearly designed their 'rules' – much as the introductions to contemporary printed keyboard 'lessons' were designed[9] – for the novice. Thus they assume little or no previous musical knowledge in describing the triad, a few features of inversions, the basis of dissonance treatment, and give only a few essential practical hints.[10] In short, we search in vain for the wealth of expert practical guidance offered so freely by C.P.E. Bach and some other late, and especially German, writers.[11] Let us now consider some problems of interpretation that are faced by an editor or continuo player of these works of Croft and Williams.

'Modal' key-signatures: minor key

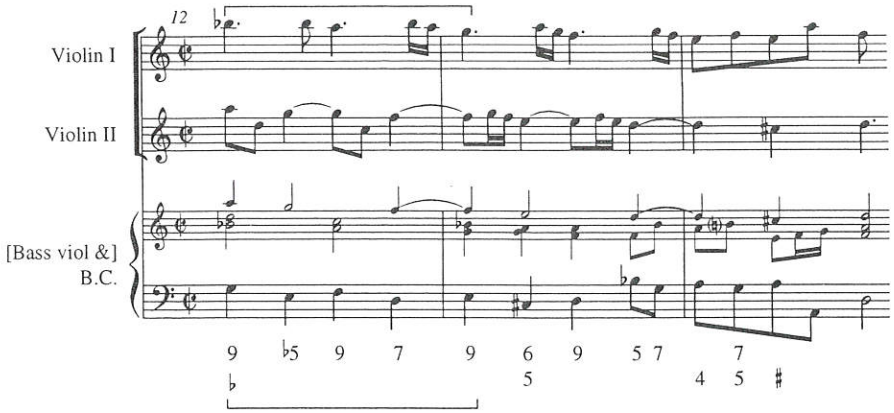
One major editorial problem with both sets is the implication of 'modal' key-signatures (namely D minor without B-flat, C minor without A-flat, and A major without G-sharp, in their respective key-signatures) for both music text and figuring. It should be said at the outset that nothing is solved and little gained by editorially 'modernizing' them. The difficulties do not vanish, and the same editorial decisions still have to be taken, but the critical apparatus to a modernized text simply becomes chock-a-block with entries stating that 'such-and-such a note bears no accidental in the original'. The best that can be said for such an approach is that it transfers points of doubt from the text to the commentary. For this reason, and folllowing in spirit the excellent effects that have recently been achieved using innovative, quasi-facsimile editorial techniques,[12] they have ben retained in both editions.

There are two related, but distinct, issues to consider under this head. First, the use by Williams of 'Dorian' key-signatures in his Sonata I (D minor, no signature) and Sonata V (C minor, two-flat signature). The basic question here is simple: should Bs and As be flattened in the realization only when figured? This question, however, is not easily answered. Taking the D minor sonata first, the music text itself, thanks to Cross's expert engraving, is seldom deficient in the necessary B flats; the figuring, on the other hand, though usually accurate, is not always complete in respect to this accidental. Often, of course, melody and figuring perfectly agree, and even conspire to produce an 'English' false-relation (boxed in Example 1):



Example 1: Williams, Sonata I, Largo, bars 3–4

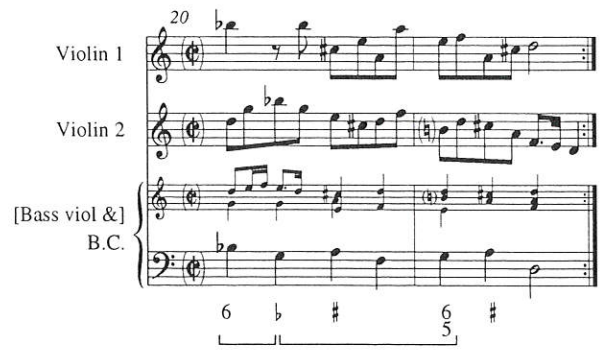
While elsewhere the use of text flats, both liberal[13] and meagre (Example 2), may reasonably be interpreted as having continued force:



Example 2: Williams, Sonata I, Largo, bars 12–14

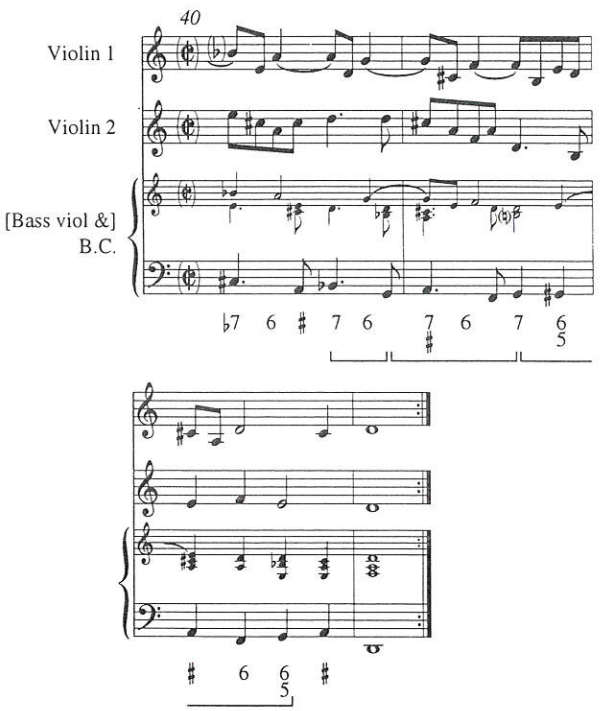
But even here a trap awaits the unwary continuo-player at the end of each sequence, the greatest danger-point being the quality of the approach-chord to the dominant chord at the cadence. In bar 14 of Example 2, the seven-five chord preceding the dominant lacks a flat sign for its third, even though the same chord on the last crotchet beat of bar 13 has a B♭ in the bass. Should this third be major (as is strictly implied by the lack of figuring) or minor (as may be implied by the B♭ in the bass in bar 13)? Musical common sense and force of habit may prefer the latter. But one must be very careful in assuming a flat to the 7th chord on the last quaver of bar 14 because, as Example 1 shows, Williams happily juxtaposes B♭ in one chord with B♮ in the next. Returning to Example 2, bar 14, second chord, B♭ is probably favourite in such common minor-key progressions, but one cannot be dogmatic about it, especially as a B♭ would create consecutive fifths with the preceding A. The safest thing is to omit the note B altogether.

Another factor in the same decision is the melodic movement of the string parts. In bar 21 of the same movement, for example, Williams favours a major third in the second violin because two notes later it has the leading note (C♯) before which a B♭ would have produced the interval of an augmented second:



Example 3: Williams, Sonata I, Largo, bars 21–21

We can only guess whether the composer would have notated B♭ here had this part gone down to A on the second crotchet-beat, rather than up to D and C♯. At least in this case the continuo-player has the string parts to guide him; but he is not always so fortunate (Example 4).

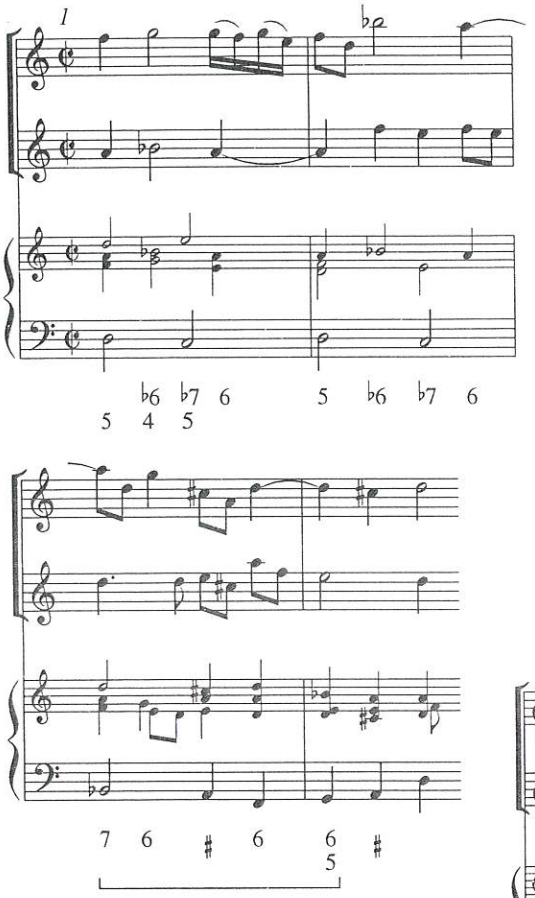


Example 4: Williams, Sonata I, Largo, bars 40–end

After all, how the player chooses to approach the leading-note C♯ on the first beat of bar 41 in the accompaniment is, in theory at least, partly a matter of taste. Following the composer's apparent logic in such matters, if the middle-C♯ were approached from below then a B♮ would be justified; if, on the other hand, it were approached from the D above it, a B♭ would be grammatically possible. B flats are justified in my realization only by the fact that, in the context of the surrounding accompaniment, both Bs proceed downwards to A, the fifth of the scale, with consequences derived from *musica ficta* (see below, page 25 and note 17). This is not to say that both work equally well: the composer must have had a preference here, but constrained by his ambiguous notation we can only

guess what it was; and he may not have intended Bs of any sort to be played here.

Another questionable approach chord occurs in the opening bars of the next movement, at the end of a passage rich in B flats (Example 5). Again, flat or natural to the third in the six-five chord on the first beat of bar 4? I have chosen B♭ mainly on account of previous text flats, especially the accented cadential one in the bass in bar 3; but perhaps Williams intended that the third be omitted?

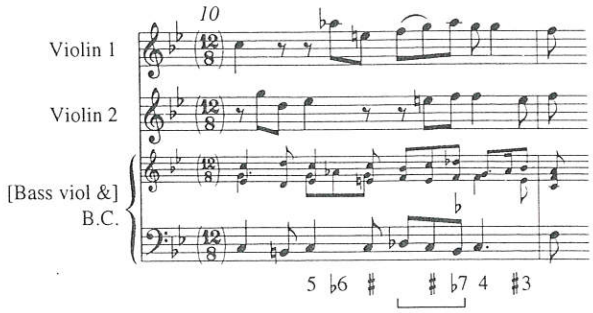


Example 5: Williams, Sonata I, Adagio, bars 1–4

Before we leave this sonata, one cadence-type invites comment. After the bass has entered with the fugal subject at the start of the final Allegro, a firm modulation from D minor to the relative, featuring a short but impressive quasi-canonic imitation in stretto (a device typical of Williams and probably part of his debt to Purcell),[14] culminates in a cadence that is not quite as straightforward as it looks (Example 6, right).

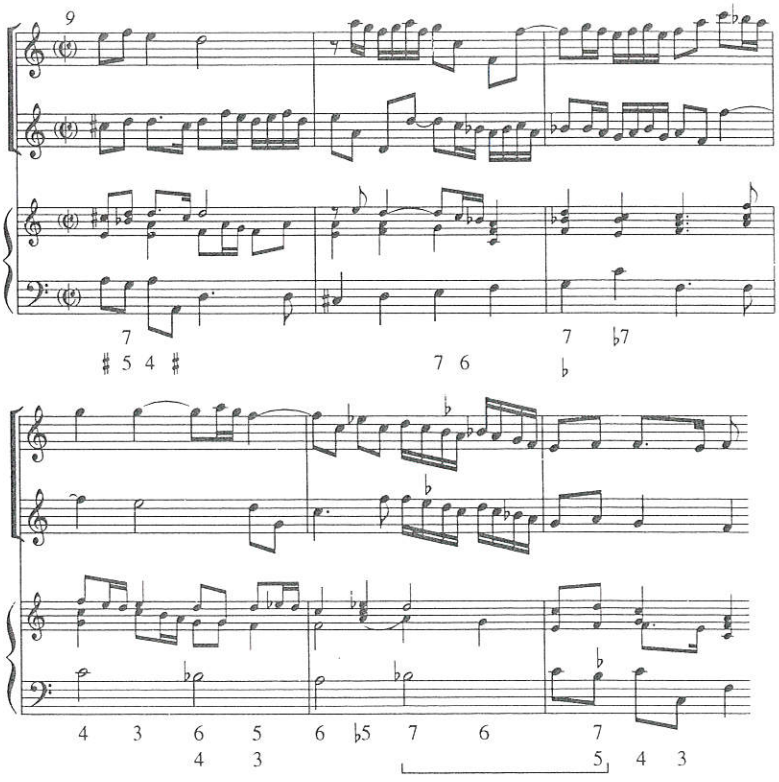
In this case the lack of a flat to bass B in bar 14 would be explicable only if it were the root of a chromatic 7th chord, since in Italianate cadences of this sort the seventh is usually diminished.[15] But there is no flat to A in the second violin or to the figure 7 in the continuo. Rather than assume that both the second-violin part and the continuo figuring are wrong here, therefore, it is more reasonable to posit the continued force of the previous bass B♭, retain the A natural, and assume that a diatonic subdominant-seventh triad in F major was intended.

The C-minor sonata lacks a key-signature which flattens A, the sixth degree of the scale, so many of the above comments apply here with equal force. At least in Example 7 we have Dr Blow to guide us:



Example 7: Williams, Sonata V, Allegro (last movement), bars 10–11

In this passage the player must decide both whether the flattened-seventh chord should have a B natural (by continued force of the previous one) or a flat (strictly implied by the lack of a cancelling accidental, which are however very rare), and whether the third should be major or minor. The bass D♭ three notes before, proceeding in contrary motion to the violin, perhaps implies that the third above B should be minor



Example 6: Williams, Sonata I, Allegro, bars 9–14

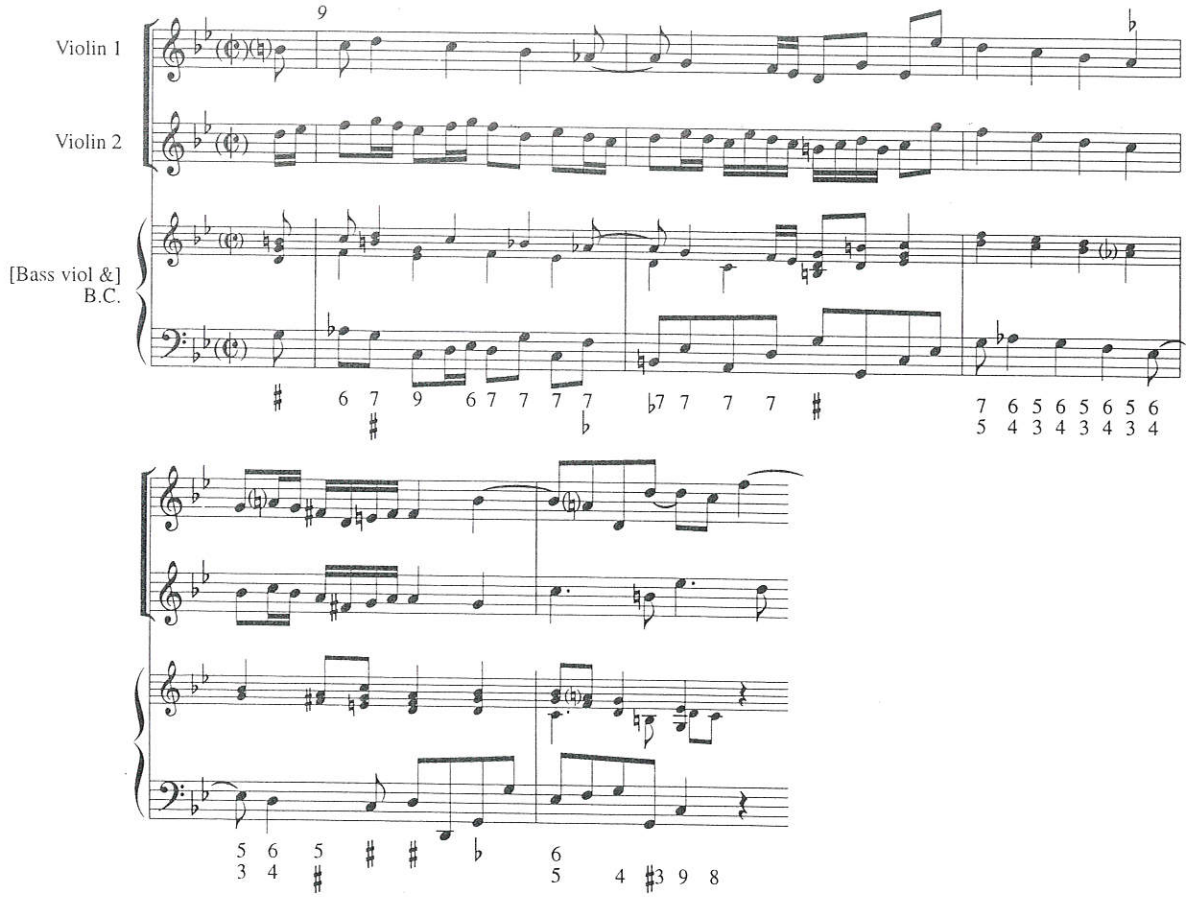
(that is D♭), though no flat is figured; and this suggests in turn that the bass B should be flat. In other words, the usual renaissance and baroque convention is assumed to be in play: accidentals apply only to the notes they precede and do not normally have continued force.

There are a number of occasions where typically dissonant 'English' false relations, one of them virtually simultaneous, are produced by the contrapuntal logic of the angular canzona subject (Example 8, below).

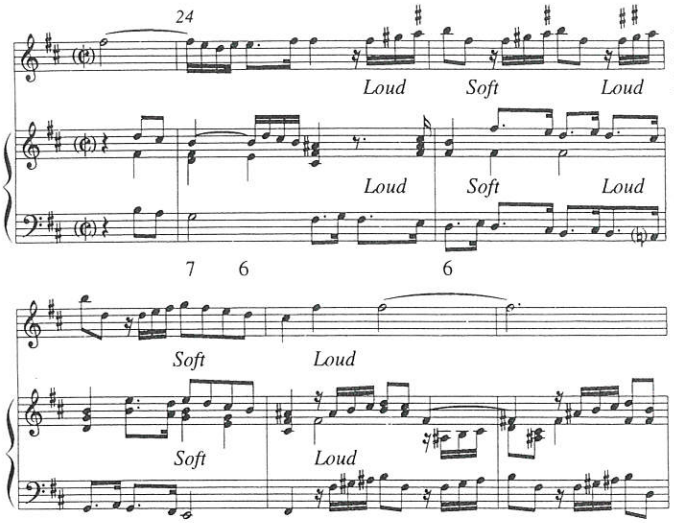
These passages show Williams at his most polyphonic, indulging in short bursts of canon and three-part *stretti* as freely as Purcell.[16] Indeed, the subject begins with an expression of the old *musica ficta* rule, *una nota super la semper est canendum fa*, especially when the fifth degree (G) of the C-minor scale is returned to after the flattened sixth degree (A) and the following note is the tonic (C) a minor sixth lower, making a familiar pattern G–A (flat)–G–C which is as old as plainchant.[17] There is a slight ambiguity in the text of Example 8, bar 11, where the bass enters with a syncopated version of the subject's antecedent phrase. The first violin's A at the end of that bar carries no accidental, and this is confirmed by the figuring. In retrospect, after a clear modulation to the dominant in the next bar, the violin part is apparently correct; but the parallel motion of the parts in this progression (which is one of those dealt with in Blow's treatise) makes it look as though a flat might be missing.

If any conclusion can be drawn from the discussion so far, it is this: modal key-signatures in a minor key often cause greater ambiguity in cadential formulae than in a contrapuntal fabric, where the question of a flattened or raised sixth degree is more likely to be determined by the rules of part-movement; but even these are not infallible, and perhaps the safest course is to omit the ambiguous note altogether.

It is hardly surprising that the sonatas of William Croft, a pupil and protégé of Dr Blow (whose musical 'crudities' caused such offence to a later learned Doctor, Charles Burney[18]), should present us today with a number of puzzles. These sonatas are, in fact, suave and elegant, highly Italianate in their Purcellian two-part canzona-like second movements, and with their French-style *rythmes saccadés* and unmistakably English 'air' very neatly bridge the style gap between Purcell and Handel.[19] The numerous false relations, which Dr Burney would doubtless have thought crude, would probably have led Roger North to rank Croft's solos with Purcell's 'noble set of [trio] sonnatas, which, clog'd with somewhat of an English vein, for which they are unworthily despised, are very artificiall and good musick'.[20] To the modern player or listener, well accustomed to such 'crudities', they are simply heard as part of the style, and a highly effective one at that. The most striking example, and also the most difficult textually, occurs in Sonata V (Example 9, next page).

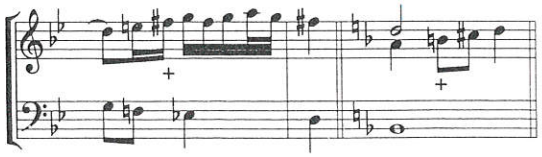


Example 8: Williams, Sonata V, Allegro (second movement), bars 8–13



Example 9: Croft, Sonata V, Adagio, bars 23–8

Here, a short motive comprising the top tetrachord of a B minor scale (F♯ G♯ A B) is thrice repeated, in ostinato fashion, by the violin over a descending bass composed of the (descending) melodic minor scale. The burning editorial question is whether to sharpen the As in the violin part or leave them as naturals. Given the extreme paucity of figures throughout the set, the sparse figuring in this passage provides no help whatsoever. Three musical features do, however, suggest A sharps: (i) the first of the four-note violin motives follows a major dominant chord; (ii) the (related) fact that the As in the first two motives form, respectively, a dominant seventh in third inversion correctly resolving on to a first-inversion tonic (six-four-two to six-three) and a dominant substitute, the first inversion of the triad on the seventh degree[21] – both are cadential chords and both strongly imply leading notes; (iii) the fact that when the bass takes over the figure both degrees are raised by source accidentals. This last might argue for consistency in accidentals between outer parts; conversely, however, it could be used to support the case for leaving the violin part well alone, for if the composer or printer had intended A sharps here, they were perfectly capable of writing them in. But perhaps they felt that the context was sufficient to indicate sharpening; or possibly, in true renaissance style, that what was acceptable in performance was not always equally acceptable when written down. My instinct, then, was to add sharps in the edition. The last word on this subject goes to Croft's teacher, Dr Blow – or rather to his severest critic, Charles Burney – who includes among his 'specimens of Dr Blow's crudities' just such a simultaneous false relation as occurs here on the last beat of bar 25 (Example 10).[22]

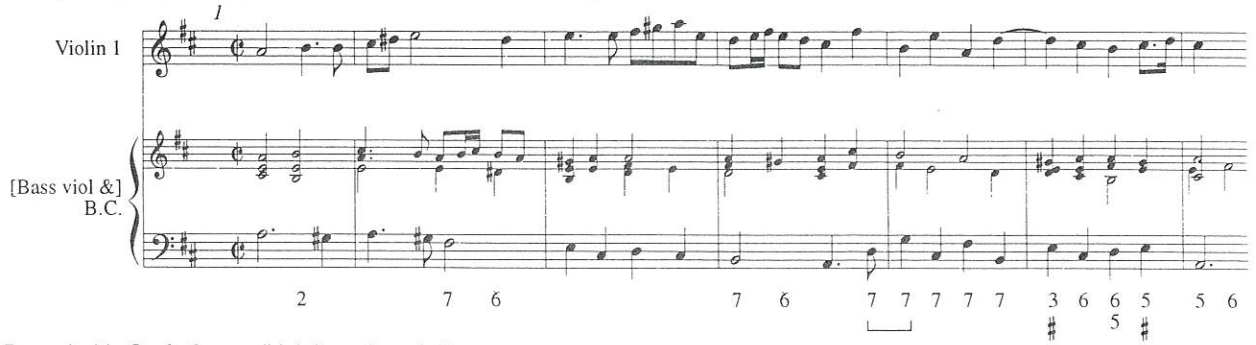


Example 10: Two examples of Dr Blow's false relations quoted by Charles Burney (see note 22)

'Modal' key-signatures: major key

'Modal' key signatures are not, however, restricted to minor keys. For example, Croft's Sonata IV, though in A major (transposed Mixolydian mode), lacks a G sharp in its key signature, and problems of interpretation are not long in emerging. As early as bar 5 of the Adagio, in fact, when, after a firmly diatonic A major passage abounding in G sharps, Croft begins a sequence in which the bass rises in fourths (Example 11, below).

The question of whether the bass G should be sharp or not is difficult. A sharp certainly fits the previously-established clear tonality better than a natural; but the use of flattened leading notes, especially to avoid the melodic tritone, was a well-established practice in the renaissance and would have dominated the musical instinct of any composer (like Croft and Purcell) well-versed in the polyphonic tradition.[23] Mindful of both the context and the fact that Croft (or his printer) was extremely lax in his application of leading notes in these sonatas, I tentatively retain the G natural of the source-text, which has the advantage of avoiding the melodic tritone with the preceding note; but I do so with slight reservations and just a mild twinge of regret that Associated Board theory training, or at least the standardization of basic notation which it represents, was not available in 1700. (On further reflection, however, one wonders how many scholarly editors would happily purchase clinical uniformity at the cost of the challenges to intellect and musicianship that are

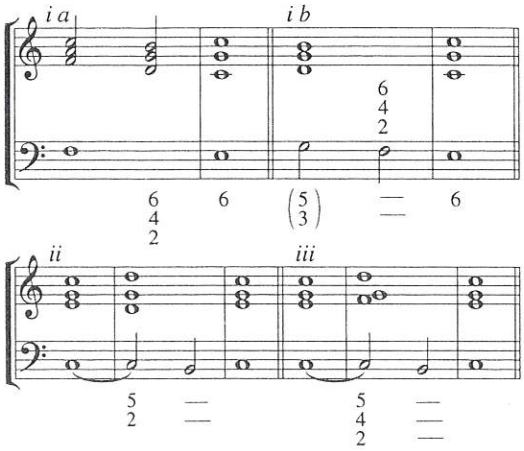


Example 11: Croft, Sonata IV, Adagio, bars 1–7

posed by such matters, and which raise the editorial process above the level of mere copying?)[24]

The mysterious case of the solitary figure '2'

One of the most difficult problems encountered by the accompanist is that of incomplete figuring. Of these, one of the most widespread in English music of the period is the use of the isolated figure '2' to indicate a bass suspension in any one of three different chords: (i) a seventh in third inversion (figured six-four-two); (ii) a six-three chord with the third delayed (five-two – really an inverted four-three suspension and most often used on a dominant chord with the third delayed in the bass); (iii) the same (dominant) chord as (ii) but with the dominant seventh added (five-four-two). Simple examples are given in Example 12.



Example 12: (i) Two examples of the chord of six-four-two, (a) as a bass suspension, (b) as a passing note between root-position dominant and first-inversion tonic chords; (ii) chord of the five-two, really an inverted four-three suspension; (iii) chord of the five-four-two, simply (ii) with the dominant seventh added.

The player's first instinct, of course, is to seek guidance from any instrumental parts which may be sounding a tell-tale interval or two above the bass, but this option is not always available: the bass may be solo; there may be a single part playing only the figured note '2' (see opposite, Example 11, bar 1); or, at best, two parts in a trio sonata may play the fourth and the second which rules out only chord (ii) but, because it leaves to the accompanist the choice of either fifth or sixth, allows both (i) and (iii). Neither of the English thoroughbass treatises, by Locke and Blow, sheds any light at all on what must have been, especially for the beginner, a source of considerable doubt. Williams, in his trio sonatas, uses only four-two for third inversion dominant sevenths, so there is never any ambiguity. But both Croft (as in the example cited above) and Purcell are fond of the single figure two, as well as four-two.

Can any rule be formed from the use of two or four-two which will help the accompanist to choose? The short answer is no, or at least, not an infallible rule. But let us briefly analyse the figuring of one of Purcell's 1683 sonatas (that in the 1697 set is jumbled and confusing) to see whether any pattern can be discerned among the various figurings. (Unless stated otherwise, all bar references below are to Sonata I in G minor, which is typical of Purcell's figuring practice in this set.[25]) Purcell uses the isolated figure '2' very often in these works. The single figure frequently accompanies one instrumental part forming the interval of a second with the bass, is purely descriptive of the melodic part in such contexts, and does not obviously imply either six-four-two or five-four-two, though it must have had a specific meaning to the composer (see bars 9 and 21).

The figure '2' sometimes stands for five-(four)-two, as is shown when the string parts variously outline the simple five-two suspension (bars 81, 86 and 99) and the same with added fourth (bar 92). In bar 113, the string parts above the figure '2' imply six-four-two; and in 95 the sharp fourth rules out the addition of a fifth and clearly requires the sixth, making six-four-two. (The '2' in bars 81 and 86 is ambiguous: for the latter, see Example 13 (next page) and comment.)

Also common is the addition of the fourth and the second in the string parts, leaving undecided the choice between fifth and sixth (bars 11 and 121).[26] When Purcell figured his basses, rather than think out the progressions in full and then notate the complete chords, he often took portions of each upper part and literally translated its melodic line into figures, supplementing the chords here and there, but seldom systematically.[27] This explains why the single figure '2' is so often accompanied by that note alone in one of the top parts; or, put more logically, why one part making the interval of a second with the bass is so often accompanied by the isolated figure '2'. Croft apparently derived the figure in exactly the same way (see above, Example 11, bar 1) and there is no way of deciding which of chords (i)–(iii) above were intended.

The other common figuring here is four-two (the full figuring, six-four-two, is rarely used in these sonatas). Here, four-two usually stands for six-four-two (Sonata I, bars 19 and 100), though it is sometimes ambiguous (as in bar 5, for example, where the chord could be either six-four-two or five-four-two). Four-two is the figuring most often used for third-inversion dominant-seventh chords, though the incomplete figuring six-four (two implied) is occasionally found (bar 72). All the foregoing applies with equal force to Croft's sonatas, except that he occasionally notates six-four-two in full.

The evidence discussed above seems to cast doubt on the logical belief that different figurings were meant to distinguish between different chords, though bars 81 and 99 cited above further suggest that five-two and five-four-two chords are more likely to be represented by '2' alone than by four-two. This suspicion finds conclusive support, not in the English theoretical sources but in one of the best French treatises, Michel de Saint-

Lambert's *Nouveau Traité de l'Accompagnement* (Paris, 1707). In his first section, Saint-Lambert interprets the single figure '2' always as either five-two or five-four-two.[28] He goes even further in section two, and offers crucial contemporary testimony (albeit French, so of uncertain relevance to Purcell and his English contemporaries) to the ambiguity of the figures four-two:[29]

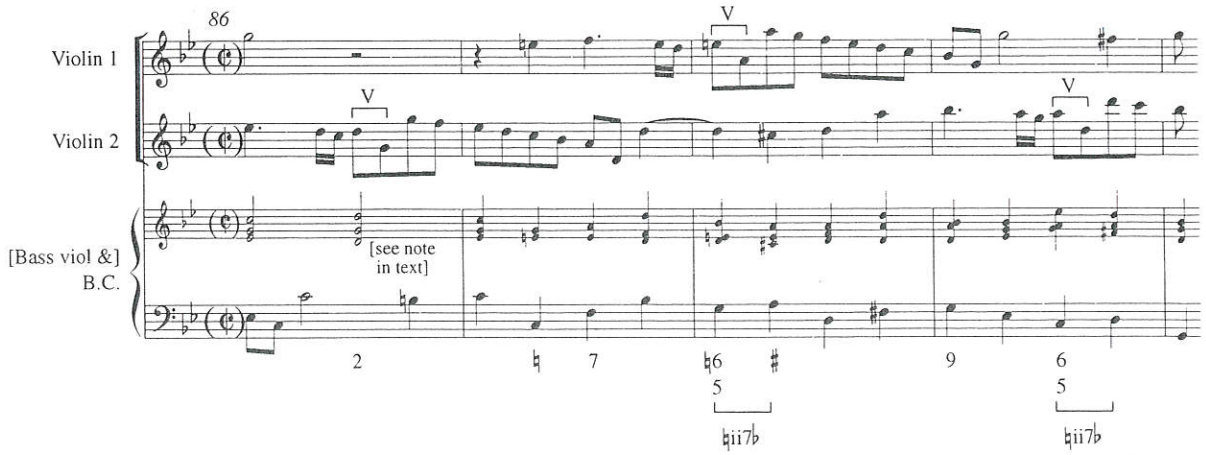
> 4 2 The double figure, two and four, is accompanied by the Fifth, or, if desired, by the Sixth, but the fifth is better. 4♯ 2, The double figure, two and tritone, is accompanied by the Sixth.

As Arnold points out in his discussion of this entry, this rule 'is a striking example of how little figuring was as yet standardized'. Later, as Arnold also observes, the figures four-two were normally taken to mean six-four-two,[30] but although such standardization was slow in coming, his observation is supported by a random selection of English prints. Thus in *c.*1724 Handel, in his Opus 1 sonatas, often uses the isolated figure '2', as well as four-two, over a passing seventh in the bass to signify a third-inversion seventh chord. In his Opus 6 Concerti Grossi (1740), however, third-inversion sevenths are usually indicated by the common figuring four-two and (less commonly) six-four-two, and these two figurings indicate this chord in every single case. There are, in the entire set, only eight instances of the isolated figure two: of these no fewer than six (a seventh instance is ambiguous) definitely require a five-two chord, but only one is definitely a six-four-two.[31] Three years later, in Walsh's edition of *Six Overtures* by Maurice Greene, the figure '2' alone is used for all six-four-two chords except those where the fourth is altered by accidental and must therefore be included in the figuring.[33] Again, the string parts support the thesis that six-four-two is implied in every single case. And by 1760, when William Boyce (1710–1779) wanted the unusual five-two, he actually notated it. He left nothing to chance – probably because the other figurings (two, and four-two) had by then become synonymous with the six-four-two.[34]

If, in the earlier period, Saint-Lambert's *laissez faire* approach to the choice between five-four-two and six-four-two was shared across the English Channel, and the above discussion of Purcell's figuring suggests that it was, then the conclusion follows that the composer was leaving the accompanist to make the choice – unless, of course, the chord was decided by attendant instrumental parts, as is the case with some of Purcell's figuring in Sonata I (1683) discussed above. The true five-(four)-two chord does appear, however, from the string parts in Purcell's sonatas, to have been much more common in England around 1700 than half a century later, so the difficulty of choosing between these chords tends to diminish (though not to disappear) as the century progresses. A further conclusion, suggested from the above discussion of Handel's Opus 6 concertos (see also note 31), is that since roughly half the total number of five-two chords occur in fugal passages, this chord most often occurs as a result of the inversion (by double counterpoint) of the common four-three suspension. The latter hypothesis is fully supported by the Allegro from Boyce's Symphony V (see note 34) where the five-two chord occurs when the subject, which in an upper part provides the four-three suspension, appears in the bass; and both conclusions are tentatively endorsed by the testimony of C.P.E. Bach.[35]

The reader may be amazed that composers with such a precise tool at their fingertips should have been content to leave open the choice between two chords, but similar incongruity is present in at least one comparably *laissez faire* harmonic technique of the period. Briefly, this concerns the 'telescoping' of two cadential chords when a dominant chord, outlined in the upper part(s), is superimposed on the supertonic seventh in first inversion. In such cases the continuo-player, following the logic of the bass, and often the figuring, accompanied the dominant chord with a six-five-three chord, as in the following example by Purcell (Example 13, below).

This example also presents a particularly ambiguous case of the single two: in bar 86, does the continuo-player follow the contour of the violin part and realize



Example 13: Purcell, Sonata I (1683), Presto, bars 86–90, after Fiske's edition (above, note 1), p4; continuo realization by the author

it as five-two, as I have done; or follow the logic of the double counterpoint and, assuming that the dominant and supertonic chords are simply inverted, use six-four-two? There is simply no means of knowing the composer's intentions here, but the former solution requires less special pleading.

Our discussion of modal key signatures and the figure '2' allows two important conclusions to be drawn: first, that a considerable degree of choice was exercised, and expected by the composers, in the filling-out of chords; second, taking this hypothesis a step further, as Peter Holman has recently done, that figuring was *descriptive* rather than *prescriptive*, describing to the player what was happening so that he could decide what to add. This tradition, argues Dr Holman, went back to that of organists simply doubling instrumental parts, leaving incomplete chords incomplete rather than filling them out. In such a scenario the choice between a major or minor third in an incomplete triad simply would not necessarily arise, for the player, often reading from a manuscript score, would have the option of merely reproducing the voice-parts. This is a logical interpretation of organ-parts in consort music although, again, one cannot be certain that additional material was never added in performance. But I find it gratifying that Dr Holman and myself, after following independent routes, firmly converge in the view that there was a very much greater element of actual chord-choice in performance than is implied by the apparent precision of the figured-bass system.[36]

Postscript: further light on Williams and Croft

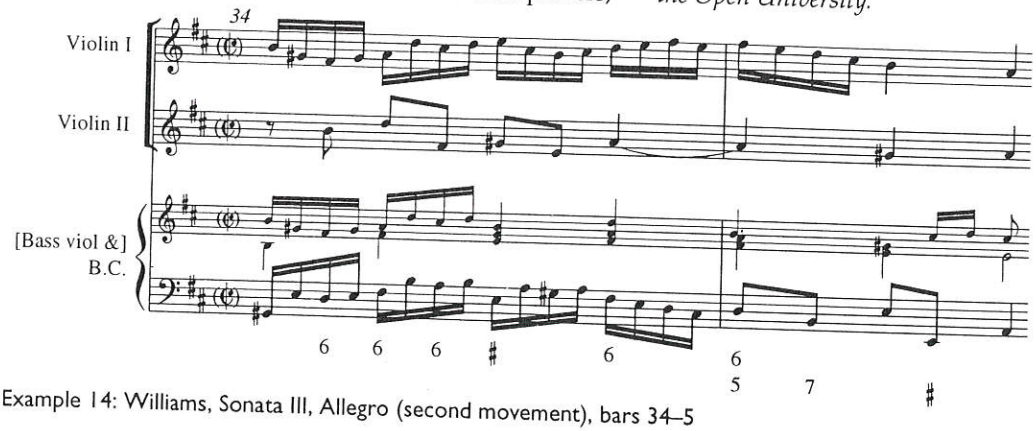
By way of a postscript, let us consider briefly some points of contact between the treatises of Locke and Blow and the 'real' music of Williams and Croft. First, both treatises assert that when the bass moves in short notes, the right hand need only play once (that is, one chord) per two or four *quavers* (my emphasis). The examples they give, however, are florid division basses built upon single primary triads and cannot therefore be taken as a universal rule.[37] Williams, for example, sometimes requires a quicker rate of chord change and actually figures two of his florid bass canzona-subjects, forcing the accompanist to move after two *semi*quavers, which is technically quite demanding at speed even if the harpsichord bass is simplified (Example 14, below).

We have already mentioned in passing (Example 8 above) Williams's use of the chain of six-four five-three chords which are included among Blow's progressions as '6th & 5th descending'.[38] Other points of interest to the accompanist include the use by Williams and Croft of parallel six-three chords, which call for accompaniment in only three parts, suggested by Blow and later a widely-accepted practice;[39] the use by both composers of Blow's '5th & 6th ascending gradually', again set in three parts, though Williams has a penchant for Blow's second version descending six-five;[40] in accordance with Blow's 'rule of playing in 4 or 5 parts', the implication in Williams's trio sonatas that right-hand voices should cross in order that nine-eight suspensions may be doubled at the unison with the string parts, rather than at the octave below which was held by some later writers to sound unpleasant;[41] and, in Croft's excellent ground-bass Largo (Sonata IV), the editor's poetic licence in incorporating into the repeated four-three cadences a version of Dr Blow's 'common [English] Cadence divided by 4 crotchets, 3 [i.e. a compound 3rd, or 10th] 9th, & 8th, & 7th' in an attempt to imbue the realization with the spirit of Croft's text (Example 15, next page).[42]

Although we have only touched here on a small selection of the many questions of accompaniment and realization presented by English Baroque music, it is hoped that the discussion has conveyed to the reader something of their flavour. The ultimate conclusion, if one is helpful, is summarized by Robert Donington who, referring to an early music lecture he once attended, reports the audience's response to the speaker's statement on a similarly hypothetical matter:[43] ❖

> so how, we asked, can any *one* right solution possibly emerge from such a typically inconsistent state of the evidence? The whole moral is that the performer chooses.

Ian Payne was educated at the Universities of Exeter and Cambridge. He is a Lecturer in Music at Charles Keene College, Leicester, and an Associate Lecturer in Music with the Open University.



Example 14: Williams, Sonata III, Allegro (second movement), bars 34–5

Footnotes

1 RISM lists only two known exemplars of Williams's set: the first edition (London: Thomas Cross, 1700) at the Library of Congress, Washington DC; and a slightly less accurate reprint of Cross's edition (London: Walsh and Hare, 1703). The three violin sonatas are to be reprinted, edited by the author, by Severinus Press (12 St Ethelbert Close, Sutton St Nicholas, Hereford HR1 3BF, UK) under its modern editions imprint, *Thesaurus Harmonicus*, at the end of 1998. The solo string-bass part is labelled 'violone', and I am grateful to Dr Peter Holman both for his suggestion that the bass viol, rather than the bass violin (similar to the violoncello), is the instrument that Williams most likely had in mind, and for a number of helpful suggestions made after reading this article in draft. For discussion of the two Purcell prints, see the editors' introductions to their respective Eulenburg editions: *Sonatas of Three Parts*, ed. R. Fiske (London, 1975); and *Ten Sonatas in Four Parts*, ed. C. Hogwood (London, 1978). The former edition, which is the only one of Purcell's quoted in this article, is preferable to the Purcell Society edition (*Twelve Sonatas of Three Parts*, ed. M. Tilmouth, *The Works of Henry Purcell*, Vol. 5 (London, 1976)) in that the original key signatures are retained. All the bar-references to the 1683 sonatas quoted are, however, the same in both editions.

2 RISM lists three exemplars: all were consulted by the author for his two-volume edition, published by Severinus Press (London, British Library, shelfmark g.932; Durham, Dean and Chapter Library, Mus. C.30(i); London, Royal College of Music Library, II.B.13). They all transmit identical texts and bear the same imprint (London, Walsh and Hare, 1700).

3 A general discussion of the English trio sonata is in C. Hogwood, *The Trio Sonata*, BBC Music Guides (London, 1979), pp. 79ff. One quaint indication of this conflict of national styles is the use by Croft (or his printer) of the English 'soft' in Sonata V and the Italian 'piano' in Sonata VI.

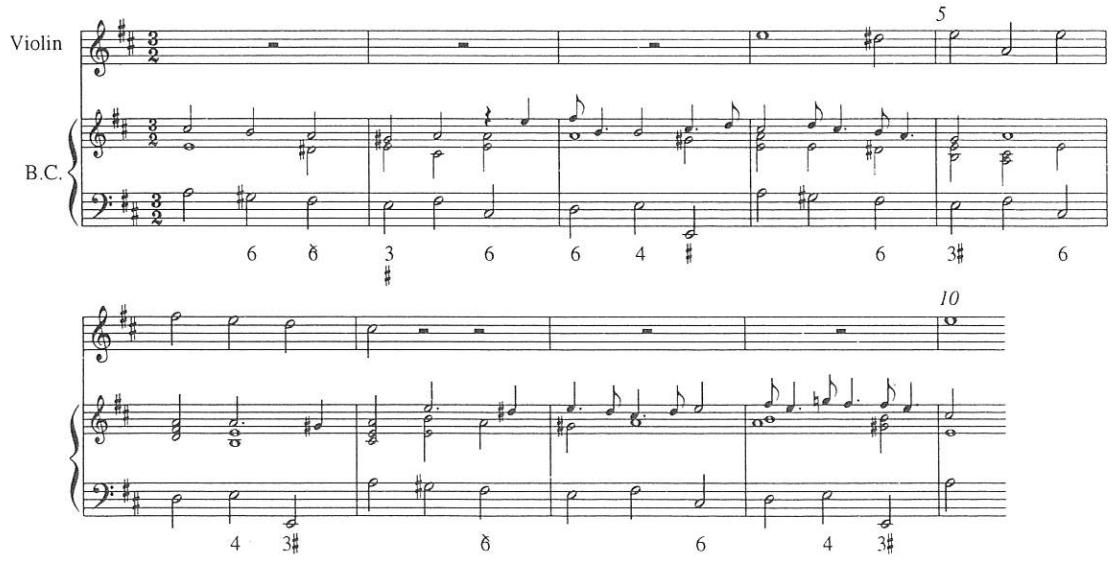
4 The similarities between Williams's set and Purcell's of 1683 are too numerous to mention. But it is interesting to note especially strong musical ties between Purcell's Sonata III and Williams's Sonata V: their opening phrases include the same progression involving the augmented triad, though Williams reserves his essay in French-overture style for the opening bars of Sonata V; both feature the same rhythmic figure slightly differently harmonized (Purcell bars 16–17, marked Adagio, Williams Adagio, bars 13–14); and the second movement of each (actually called 'canzona' in Purcell) features exactly the same syncopated stepwise descending figure. Williams also followed Purcell's example in his predilection for fugal subjects based on a sequence of fourths (cf. Williams, Sonata V, Allegro (II) and Purcell's Sonata IV (1683), Canzona). Although the preoccupation with fourths seems at first sight to be a typically English feature, it was also common in Italian music: see the two extracts by Purcell and G.B. Basani (†1716) quoted in Hogwood, *Trio Sonata*, pp. 88–90.

5 See again C. Hogwood's introduction to his edition (above, note 1).

6 Sir A. Conan Doyle, 'The Adventure of Wisteria Lodge' and 'The Adventure of the Red Circle', both in *His Last Bow*.

7 *Melothesia; or Certain General Rules for Playing upon a Continued-Bass* (London: J. Carr, 1673); reprinted and discussed in F. Arnold, *The Art of Accompaniment from a Thorough-Bass*, 2 vols (New York, R/1965), i, pp. 154–63.

8 'Rules for playing of a Thorough-Bass upon Organ & Harpsicon' (London, British Library, Add. MS 34072, fols 1–5); reprinted and discussed in Arnold, *Art of Accompaniment*, i, pp. 163–72.



Example 15: Croft, Sonata IV, Largo, bars 1–10

[9] See, for example, the exactly contemporary *Second Book of the Harpsichord Master* (London: Walsh, 1700); facsimile reprint in Boethius Musical Sources, 15 (Clarabricken, 1980)), which includes pieces by both Blow and Croft. The preamble covers such basics as the scale as it relates to the compass of the keyboard; tables of note-values and 'Graces'; and a simple fingering chart. The music consists of very rudimentary, two-part material. Locke's four keyboard suites from *Melothesia* include simple preludes for practising scales as well as much more florid and demanding dance-pieces. (They are reprinted in *Matthew Locke: Keyboard Suites*, ed. Thurston Dart (London, R/1964).)

[10] Both give basic rules about simple part movement, basic cadential suspensions, and more extended exercises for the practice of modulation and cadences. Blow, however, goes somewhat further and discusses such matters as the so-called 'English' cadence and the (Italianate) diminished seventh chord before the cadence.

[11] See C.P.E. Bach, *Versuch über die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen* (Berlin, 1753–62), translated by W.J. Mitchell as *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments* (London, R/1974). This is undoubtedly the greatest, and the most informative to the performer, of all extant thorough-bass treatises. See Arnold, *Art of Accompaniment*, for discussion.

[12] See, for example, *John Lugge: The Complete Keyboard Works*, ed. S. Jeans and J. Steele (London, 1990). Although the editors' retention of manuscript sharps and flats for naturals in their text is debatable (the arguments for retaining such symbols in figured basses are somewhat different), the overall effect is that of a breath of fresh air: many original features are faithfully reproduced from the originals and present, at least to the present writer, no obstacles to performance.

[13] See, for example, Sonata I, Largo, bars 23–7.

[14] See, in addition to Example 6, Sonata V, Allegro (I), bars 20–1; Allegro (II), bars 22–4. Another good example of canonic imitation occurs in Sonata I, Allegro, bars 14–16.

[15] Blow's discussion of this chord (Rule [19] in Arnold's reprint (*Art of Accompaniment*, i, p. 172)) sheds no light on this question.

[16] See also note 14, above.

[17] The Latin means simply 'the note above la [and returning to it] is always to be sung as fa', or in other words lowered by a *semitonum*. For brief accounts of this ancient rule see R. Rastall, *The Notation of Western Music: an Introduction* (London, 1983), p. 131; C. Parrish, *The Notation of Medieval Music* (New York, R/1978), p. 198; and P. Samuel Rubio, trans. Rive, *Classical Polyphony* (Oxford, 1972), p. 55. The two-sharp signature for A major, G sharp being supplied by an acidental, is a feature of the transposed Mixolydian mode. (The best-known example is perhaps Handel's 'Harmonious Blacksmith' air and variations from Suite V in E major for harpsichord (1720) which has a three-sharp signature in the original, D sharp being supplied as an accidental.) For a brief discussion of these matters, see R. Donington, *Baroque Music Style and Performance: a Handbook* (London, 1982), Chapter six.

[18] See Example 10 and below, note 22.

[19] On the English trio sonata, see Hogwood, *Trio Sonata*, pp. 16–18.

[20] *Roger North on Music*, ed. J. Wilson (London, 1959), p. 310 note 65.

[21] The editorial D sharp in bar 26 is implied by the movement of outer parts from a sixth (D and F sharp) to octaves Es, though it is not so figured. The sixth in this context should be major (by another very ancient rule of *musica ficta*), hence the editorial sharp.

[22] See Charles Burney, *A General History of Music*, 4 vols (London, 1776–89), ed. F. Mercer, 2 vols (New York, 1957), ii, p. 354. A very good example of this simultaneous clash of ascending and descending melodic minor scales occurs in the Overture to Purcell's incidental music to Abdelazer (1695): see *Abdelazer: Incidental Music for Strings*, ed. C. Hogwood (London, 1985), p. 1 (Overture, bar 13). A remarkably close parallel with the Croft passage is found in J.B. de Boismortier's *Sonata VI a-moll*, Opus 34 no. 6 (1731), ed. B. Päuler (Winterthur, 1989), Allegro (I), bars 19 and 36. The Frenchman, with faultless contrapuntal logic, does not hesitate to sound the sharpened and flattened seventh simultaneously, thereby lending some (necessarily limited) support to my editorial suggestion apropos Croft.

[23] The latter's Sonata I (1683), Vivace, bar 31, has an excellent example of a *ficta* A flat, added simply to avoid such a melodic tritone. See Roger Fiske's Eulenburg edition (above, note 1).

[24] This would put the editor in the predicament of Sherlock Holmes who, at the outset of *The Sign of Four*, complained 'My...mind rebels at stagnation. Give me problems,...give me the most abstruse cryptogram, or the most intricate analysis, and I am in my own proper atmosphere...I crave for mental exaltation.' A little over-dramatic, perhaps; but the literary editor who wrote some time ago that scholars seem to be paid simply to disagree with one another clearly had little feeling for the thrill of research and debate.

[25] See Roger Fiske's Eulenburg edition (above, note 1).

[26] Purcell's Sonata V, Largo, 45–100, is very rich in single '2' figurings: these are usually accompanied by four-two and six-two in the string parts. See Roger Fiske's Eulenburg edition (above, note 1).

[27] For proof of this practice see especially Sonata V, Largo, 79–88, where the figures spell out the first violin line, even when it is sounding below the second.

[28] Arnold, *Art of Accompaniment*, i, p. 179.

[29] Arnold, *loc. cit.* The 4# 2 was, of course, by definition always a dominant seventh and the sharp fourth made an added fifth impossible. Such a chord could only add the sixth.

[30] Arnold, *loc. cit.* In 1733/4 G.P. Telemann, in his treatise on thoroughbass, was hard-pressed to distinguish the chords of two, five-four-two and six-four-two. Although he concluded that the figure '2' alone, when it occurs over a passing note, must be completed as a six-four chord (this must follow because the chords have to be a third-inversion seventh followed by a first-inversion for the passing note to function grammatically), he was still unable (or unwilling) to say whether a '2' alone over a tied note is better accompanied five-four or six-four. So he played safe by recommending such a tied note be taken in three parts, omitting both the fifth and sixth so that the chord could be interpreted as either! Thus in two identical leading-note contexts in songs in his treatise Telemann uses the five-four-two chord in no. 44, bar 5; while in no. 26, bar 3, he calls for six-four-two. By implication, this ambivalent stance endorses Saint-Lambert's point about performer choice. (Telemann, *Singe-, Spiel- und Generalbaß-Übungen* (Hamburg, 1733/4), ed. M. Seiffert (Kassel, R/1968), pp. 22, 44 and note. For discussion see Arnold, *Art of Accompaniment*, i, pp. 288–9.

[31] The first seven instances of the figure '2' are in the following concertos: IV, 2nd movement, bar 11; VI, 1st movement, bar 2 and 2nd movement, bars 26 & 40; VII, 2nd movement, bar 49; VIII, last movement, bar 23 (this could imply six-four-two); X, 3rd movement (Allegro), bar 12. The eighth example is in X, 1st movement, bar 8, where two must indicate six-four-two.

[32] See *John Stanley: Six Concertos Opus 2*, ed. J. Caldwell, Musica da Camera, 106 (Oxford, 1987).

[33] See *Overture No. 5* and *Overture No. 6* from this set, both ed. R. Platt (London, 1973).

[34] *Eight Symphonys in Eight Parts* (London: Walsh, 1760). See, for example, Symphony V, Allegro. Contrary to his scathing criticism of Blow, the critical Dr Burney heartily approved of Boyce's music.

[35] In his treatment of the five-two chord, C.P.E. Bach writes (*Essay*, translated by Mitchell, p. 263) that it 'always sounds empty', is 'rare in the galant style' and 'is more frequent in learned works and in company with syncopation'. I submit that Bach is here, in the last two phrases, hinting at its frequent use in invertible counterpoint.

[36] In a personal communication, Dr Holman supplements his comments cited in this paragraph with information that players could be left to decide what to do because they were working within a tradition where organists, for example, basically doubled the written-out parts and often left incomplete chords incomplete. This, argues Dr Holman, was Italian practice pre-Corelli, and even beyond, and also obtained in English consort music. In the latter tradition, keyboard-playing composers (such as Orlando and Christopher Gibbons, Matthew Locke and Henry Purcell) used scores rather than keyboard bass-parts and essentially doubled the written-out parts. (See P. Holman, *Henry Purcell*, Oxford Studies of Composers (Oxford, 1994), p. 86, for the suggestion that Purcell originally intended to publish only string parts to his 1683 set of sonatas, the organist playing from a manuscript score or reduction.) Since our correspondence, Dr Holman has published a fuller treatment: see his ' "Evenly, Softly, and Sweetly Acchording to All": The Organ Accompaniment of English Consort Music', in *John Jenkins and His Time: Studies in English Consort Music*, ed. A. Ashbee and P. Holman (Oxford, 1996), pp. 353–82. While I broadly accept this very convincing thesis, in editing the Williams and Croft pieces I opted to follow the implications of the treatises, as well as the complex figurings (many of which indicate material additional to the string parts), and provide a full accompaniment which players may either simplify or disregard.

[37] Blow, rule [11] (Arnold, *Art of Accompaniment*, i, pp. 166–7); see also Locke, rule 8 (Arnold, i, pp. 157, 159).

[38] Blow, rule [13] (Arnold, *Art of Accompaniment*, i, p. 168.

[39] See, for example, Williams, Sonata II, Allegro (I), 27–8; Croft, Sonata V, Adagio, 13–14. Cf. Blow, rules [4] and [14] (Arnold, i, pp. 164, 168). In his treatise of 1733/4 Telemann (nos 6, 20) not only uses six-three chords in three parts but also doubles the voice-part at the unison, with the advice that if the music of no. 6 be sung by a tenor the right hand should also play an octave lower (*Singe hier ein Tenor, so spielte die rechte eine 8 tiefer*) so that the voice is again doubled at the unison. This is excellent practical advice for avoiding consecutives. I cannot agree with Arnold's conclusions (*Art of Accompaniment*, i, pp. 371–2) that octave doublings of six-three chords can be acceptable: they always sound wrong to my ears at least, and presumably did so to Telemann's, hence his concern that the right-hand six-threes should double those in the principal parts.

[40] See Croft, Sonata IV, Allegro, 13–14; Williams, Sonata III, Allegro (II), 24–5 (complicated by the fact that each six-three chord changes to root position before moving to the next chord). For the descending version see Williams, Sonata III, Allegro (II), 6–7 and 35–6.

[41] Blow, rule [15] and Arnold's annotations in i, p. 169 and discussion of ninths at pp. 396–7. In Williams, Sonata I, Adagio, 5–6 and elsewhere, I have followed both Blow and Arnold (the latter quoting J.P. Kirnberger's 1781 treatise but using part of a trio sonata by Giovanni Ravenscroft († by 1708) as illustration) in doubling ninths at the unison; but this has not always proved expedient. Incidentally, Williams's ornamental treatments of the nine-eight suspension in bars 7–8 of this movement and elsewhere in this Sonata seem strongly redolent of the English polyphonic tradition. See, for example, the 'sacred end' figure briefly discussed in I. Payne, 'The Sacred Music of Thomas Ravenscroft', *Early Music*, 10 (1982), 309–15 (pp. 310–11, exx. 2–3).

[42] Blow, rule [16]; Arnold, i, p. 170.

[43] *Baroque Music Style and Performance: a Handbook* (London, 1982), pp. 76–7.

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Letters

Book Reviews, *or* Who can tell how oft he offendeth?
[A reply to Simon R Hill's review of *The History and Technique of the Counter-Tenor*, in *Leading Notes*, Autumn 1997, with some reference to Frances Killingley's letter in the Spring issue of 1998.]

And who can tell, when going through a book review, in what lurking agendas one is treading? Certainly, a review often betrays more about the reviewer than the work it purports to assess. Frequently, it seems written primarily to showcase the reviewer, and, thereby, as if from some Parnassus, to pour down acerbic discouragement to both author and potential buyer. (Not that anything is above criticism – for only Allah is perfect, as the saying has it.) One notorious ploy is that the reviewer fashions a lengthy article on the back of the book in question, which, apart from incorporating properly acknowledged quotations, uses other material from it, suitably paraphrased. The impression given is that the reviewer is omni-erudite. While this is possible, it is unlikely.

For the book's author, there's a dilemma – should he answer critical reviews? The trouble with answering is that:

1 It uses much irreplaceable time, especially if the review in question is long and detailed.
2 It imbues that review with an importance it may not justify.
3 It suggests that the book's author is simply piqued, rather than merely keen to redress the balance.
4 If the editor then prints a second response from the reviewer, the reviewer still has the last word, especially if the editor announces closure of the topic.

The author's traditional course, therefore, is to maintain a dignified silence, or send in a snappy three-liner. After all, a book will remain when a review is long forgotten.

Yet an author's colleagues, associates and knowledgeable friends often underline the importance of his answering a misleading (or indeed unnecessarily mean) review. Therefore, because *Leading Notes*, an influential journal, includes such reviews from time to time, and a misleading review now seems to beg an author's answer, it seems a useful idea to offer the following to its readers.

It is in two sections. The first discusses two main approaches to assessment, while the second is specifically concerned with a particular review of a specific book.

In 1966, Liam Hudson published an important work, *Contrary Imaginations: A Psychological Study of the English Schoolboy* – employing a sexist exclusivity (*sic*) which would, no doubt, be totally inadmissible at present. Be that as it may, Dr Hudson explored therein the differences between the thought-modes of what he termed the converger and the diverger, these intellectual types roughly equating with scientists and artists respectively. This said – and here I much over-simplify aspects of a complex discussion for the sake of space – he found that most convergers, however clever, not only display a lack of imagination, but tend to be unable to handle fluidity, width of approach, and arguably what Edward de Bono later called 'lateral thinking'. Indeed, such divergent characteristics usually infuriate the very average scientist, merely jobbing academic, or anxious academic-manqué), though not, significantly, minds of high calibre (in Einstein's case, the highest, who acknowledged the need for the imaginative leap ahead of the plod of evidence-gathering in pedantic detail).

Convergers favour essentially logical ways of looking at a matter. In our technologically-obsessed twentieth century, it can be claimed that convergence has attained its highest kudos so far. Yet, running parallel, divergence thrives as an essential antidote.

Divergers favour width, and the lateral, alternative approach – the 'but-what-if?' component. The majority of convergers – always ready with the 'that is irrelevant or digressive' accusation – are impatient with divergence, not grasping its significance. The majority of divergers have a scorn of convergence. Most people, of course, are all-rounders (which is as well for mankind), with a tendency to favour one characteristic or the other.

It can be no surprise, therefore, that many have long questioned the efficacy of any exclusively academic, narrow mode of assessing some sphere of artistic/creative activity – particularly when it is concerned with the historical aspects and contexts of a given art-form, backed up with evidence and argument. They point out that to appraise it purely as a quasi-scientific investigation or academic research is at the very least unwise – that, in it, something else of importance is going on, too.

Almost certainly, absolutist converger-readers of *Leading Notes* will not empathise in the slightest with any such talk of alternative approaches, while absolutist diverger-readers almost certainly will. The average reader, it is suspected, probably will. It is to be hoped that, at the very least, this discussion might cause all readers (probably most of whom are performer-artists) to reflect – to ponder the matter.

Whatever the case, it is surely supremely important, even exquisitely fruitful, to ascertain the author-artist's intention and aims before deciding how successful he is. That perceptive scientist, the late Dr Jacob Bronowski, always explained that 'entering-in', or not, is the true difference between our response to a work of art and our evaluation of a work of science. Certainly, entering-into rather than examining somebody's original creative/artistic work requires a mainly divergent, as opposed to convergent, response.

At any event, it is always sad when a reviewer – especially when the subject is one on which, not only has he some detailed knowledge, but of which he is an experienced exponent – seems unable to accept the author's invitation to enter in (even, perhaps, to make it possible for the work to move him, as with a creative work in any sphere) – in short, to show so little empathy. Again, this is far from claiming that such work cannot be criticised, but merely to suggest that criticism bears in mind the author's stated intentions at the outset, as a key aspect of assessing creative performance.

So purely quasi-scientific methods of investigation and assessment, applied to musical and artistic topics, valuable though they are to a degree, have their limitations.

Of course, one can sympathise with people who, wedded to or obsessed by the parading of provenances – even of prepositions – in exhaustive footnotes, find it difficult to allow an alternative approach into the arena, so to speak. While a hospital seems the best place to be treated for a broken limb, try talking to the average medical doctor/general practitioner about holistic methods and alternative medicine clinics, particularly when, after being treated in such a clinic, you are demonstrating recovery from something that the general practitioner's or hospital treatment has failed to deal with.

Regarded by strictly convergent minds, therefore, books written by divergers are often seen as flawed creations, but they are not necessarily so if the premise of the reviewers is examined or called into question.

• • •

It is with these reflections in mind that we come now to a specific review of a specific work: Simon R Hill's assessment of my book, *The History and Technique of the Counter-Tenor*. In addition, because Frances Killingley's letter 'Further on the countertenor' (LN. Spring 1998), with its constructive and relevant points, has appeared since first I planned this letter, I shall refer briefly to her letter too.

Lack of space decrees that we consider only Hill's main complaints. We start with his loaded question, 'At whom, precisely, is this work aimed [usually meaning suited to]?' Such a question implies the questioner's automatic (scornful?) answer: 'Not me!': a conclusion which is, of course, entirely his personal prerogative, and one cannot argue with it. On the other hand, most people's unsolicited opinion seems to be that this book provides a good basis for anyone likely to be interested in the subject, in at least some depth, at a variety of levels.

> I hope that these volumes will prove helpful to fellow counter-tenors, music students, the musically interested public and music directors and even as a stimulant or source of ideas to the musicologist.

Yes, I have written all this on page xxiii of my Introduction. (And no, 'volumes' is not a misprint – see later explanation.) But something, quite clearly, I did not write, was the paragraph below, to which Hill took exception, and which he accused me of penning. Take note of the asterisk. On page xv, paragraph six, it states:

> It is a book not merely for singers and instrumentalists who happen to be musicians*, nor just for musicologists, nor for those who promote performances in concert halls, opera houses, or theatres, but also for artists, architects, writers, clerics, politicians and for many others.

These lines occur in the Preview, whose one-and-three-quarter-pages, reduced by my editor from the originally much fuller twelve, was sub-headed 'The following comments were received from' (and there followed recommendations from eight varied, distinguished contributors). Hill quotes the first line, and my present asterisk marks his pointed insertion: '(my emphasis – I assume he knows what he means)' – the 'he' clearly meaning me. His comment demonstrates that he has not grasped either the slightly barbed point made by that contributor, or – given the clear subheading – the fact that I myself could have made no contribution to such a Preview. I highlight this, because Hill's mistake in this regard shows that, seemingly so keen to slight the book, he gets matters wrong! It should also serve to suggest that the review-reader might reach for the salt cellar regarding some of Hill's other points.

I hesitate to throw one of his few compliments back in his face, but there's irony in his crediting me with finding 'what may be the earliest recorded example of the prejudice against falsetto singing, as early as 1827/8, in the pages of the *West Briton and the Royal Cornwall Gazette*'. Why? Because, on page 99, I clearly acknowledge Patrick Johns's research on this, and secondly, as I show – and quote – on page 257, Dr Arne made a seemingly rueful comment in 1771 that Robert Owenson (1744–1812) was 'one of the finest baritones he ever heard, and particularly susceptible of that quality of intonation then so much admired and *now so out of fashion*, the falcetto [*sic*]'. My italics serve to suggest how some on the fashionable London scene were already beginning to be prejudiced against falsetto-use, though of course it took several decades for such prejudice to affect most male singers. We can perhaps discern Arne's regret at the implications for future singers, but it really rather depends on what we want to read into it – a point which should always be borne in mind.

Your reviewer smirks at me for supplying over-copious footnotes, but manages to find the only scanty one, and trumpets it triumphantly. (In the present letter, I have decided to eschew all footnotes.) When I

discuss both sides of an argument, adopting the favoured, balanced convergent method, he accuses me of 'sitting on the fence'. When I discuss philological matters in an effort to explore possible variations or vagaries in meaning, he calls this approach a 'flight of fancy'. When I develop ideas helped by the use of analogies, or informed conjecture, he seems to include this in his accusations of my making 'unwarrantable assumptions'. There's no pleasing him! It is sad to be taken to task by a clear converger for my attempts to find the middle path for a satisfactory balance – for trying to use the strengths of both main methods involved in presenting a comprehensive work. Hill seems to be saying 'Heads I win, tails you lose.'

Certainly, I have addressed an enormous canvas or mural. Artists painting on a huge scale usually work broadly, visiting particular areas in more detail than others. This enhances and expresses spatial relationships and perspective, accentuates depth by exploiting contrast, and, if done effectively, exudes an organic, genuinely living quality. It allows the viewer that comprehensive experience and vantage-point which is what is today called the overview. This was my intention when writing the work under discussion. Yet *The History and Technique of the Counter-Tenor* is only half the mural, because text-length was always an issue. This explains why I was forced to abbreviate or omit so much already prepared material on the important countertenor/haute-contre question – concerning which Frances Killingley is quite right to note my puzzlingly short reference (though the reader could discern my views on the subject, views which are similar to hers). I shall nevertheless expand on this topic in the next edition.

The whole work consisted originally of a single tome of over 700 pages; but, rather late in the day, as I was finishing the first draft, Scolar Press pondered a three-volume scheme, and then decided on a two-volume plan: *The History and Technique of the Counter-Tenor*, and *The Training and Future of the Counter-Tenor* (my probable title), intending to publish them simultaneously – hence that plural: 'volumes'. Then, instead, after next deciding to issue them a year apart, they resolved to leave the matter open. Meanwhile, the first printing of the first title is almost sold out.

In one way, of course, problems with matters of this sort are irrelevant to the reviewer and reader when a book finally appears after such a difficult birth. In another sense – to continue the analogy – problem pregnancies and deliveries can be said to have at least some effect on the child. This said, it is interesting, nevertheless, to compare the apparent converger who takes a year to write four-and-a-half pages about a text which required him only to read its 430 pages, as opposed to the diverger who took ten years to

i research for and write *c*700 pages with reference to many extremely disparate sources,
ii start re-ordering into three volumes, and then
iii recast the whole thing for publication into two.

Hill complains of the 'lamentable' index. 'Reasonable' is surely a better word. Certainly, it is as full as the publishers would allow. In truth, one suspects that no index short of music-dictionary length would satisfy a reviewer in this mood. There's little mention of the term 'falsettist' in it? Consult 'violinist' in the index of most books about violin playing. You won't find many (or any?) entries. Listing every textual mention and cross-reference to violinist would have caused chaos (and probably an extra bookbinder's section!) in a work concerned with that very subject. It would have done in mine.

It was the publisher's editor who decided that my planned bibliography was unnecessary. Of course, the typo in Appendix 10 was left in – after all, the whole thing was an exact reproduction, warts and all, of an original printed text, which I consider was part of its charm (like Arne's 'falcetto'). Why, while scorning me for leaving an original text uncorrected, complain of my not using enough primary sources, presumably on the grounds that all secondary sources must always have been got at, and are automatically inferior? In truth, I used the seventeenth-century translation of Aelred of Rievaulx purposely: it employed several examples of revealing terminology; though on reflection, had there been room, it would have been even more revealing to have given Aelred's terms as well (so Hill has half a point in this case). Perhaps both versions will be possible in the next printing.

While on the primary-versus-secondary-source subject, the same editor advised against my original keen inclusion of 'anthological' in the sub-title – an aspect which I saw as a key to a significant part of my approach to the work – remarking that it was self-evident. Obviously, not to Simon R Hill.

My chosen illustrations 'often bear little relevance to the text'? Well, as one might reasonably expect in a book called *The History and Technique of the Counter-Tenor*, they comprise portraits of countertenors, places of significance connected with countertenors, their performances and performance-modes; musical examples, and technical diagrams and drawings about singing techniques, especially those affecting the countertenor, for careful study in relation to the text. One cannot, of course, expect every diagram to be understood immediately by everyone – even reviewers – but, to take merely one example, the double-page spread (pp. 292–3) clearly labelled 'Historical variation of head-position and stance in performance-context' seems simple to follow, if one has understood the equally plain explanations on this subject in the text (particularly on the surrounding pages 288–96). I should make the point that it is precisely because most writers of wide-ranging surveys of aspects of the history of voice do not include much or any in-depth

material about vocal-production, with diagrams, that I do include it.

Presumably, Hill is complaining that the illustrations do not comprise facsimiles of documents exclusively (as exemplified coincidentally on page 22 of the same issue of *Leading Notes*)? It was a deliberate choice that all the numerous musical examples are not shown in exact reproduction, or in Urtext editions. While such reproduction would have pleased some readers, it would have been less helpful to others. The adjustment to a' = 440, which is reasonably implied, or indeed, fully acknowledged where thought to be necessary, has of course been made for readier comparisons. Admittedly, different readier comparisons could have been made had a' = 440 adjustment not been made – different, not better. Again, in an ideal world, there would have been room for both options.

Regarding my intrinsic approach to my text, there are links, too, with some aspects of what Anthony Rowland-Jones had to say in his excellent article, 'Let your imaginative forces work', also in that issue of *Leading Notes*.

Incidentally, why carp about my extensively researched appendix devoted to the biography of Saville, which naturally includes his famous – or infamous – amorous intrigue? Why cannot the reader be informed and entertained at the same time? – or is this verboten? Anyway, I have hardly short-changed Elford. In addition to his appendix, he is discussed in some detail on pages 246–251 and elsewhere.

Perhaps, indeed, as Hill states almost jubilantly, many musicologists – convergers, surely! – will dismiss the book out of hand – implying the whole book – (wisely or unwisely). Yet, on page 7, I acknowledge that, in a work of this wide scope, '...the following account of the development of the voice and of harmony may be too simplified for the specialist' (admittedly, I didn't precede 'the following' with the word 'inevitably'), and that '...the beginnings of European harmony are most convenient for our purpose' (admittedly, *mea culpa*, I didn't precede it with 'this succinct account of'). So does Hill's statement mean that every musicologist concerned with historical vocal-performance already knows everything of the physiognomy of the male high-voice family and how those voices have always worked? I fear not.

Whatever the case, inside the dust-jacket are these sentences:

> The author adopts something of an alternative approach to the subject...In this work, in some respects, standard musicology is complemented rather than complimented.

As I worked through the complete project, my approach developed and evolved creatively – as, indeed, I explain in the Introduction. Though parts of *The Counter-Tenor* (a 1982 book which was never more than a 'kite') were incorporated, suitably adjusted, the present work is a different one, particularly when read in its entirety. It contains many totally original and new ideas, and to suggest that it is almost identical to *The Counter-Tenor*, with the complaint I 'do not appear to have taken...on board in any way' Dr Harold Watkins Shaw's previous criticisms, is puzzling. I did in fact take on board some of Watkins Shaw's points. I carefully ignored others, including my remaining in mortal sin concerning my occasional fallings into informality. By the way, unlike Shaw in 1982 – who totally ignored my friendly letter, and me, when I asked for advice on a point or two (ignored, that is, until he came to write his four-page review) – Simon R Hill contributed most usefully to *The History and Technique of the Counter-Tenor*, and I here thank him for it, as, of course, I do in my Acknowledgements. In fact, lest I seem churlish, I offer true thanks for his detailed, flatteringly lengthy review, and for one or two seemingly genuine compliments – including his opinion that it will be 50 or 100 years before my book need be replaced. I thank him also for the spotting of a few slips and for some useful information which fills in a few gaps or fills out some thinner areas. (I take this opportunity to thank Frances Killingley, too, for her useful letter (*LN*, Spring 1998) and, much earlier, her valuable contribution to the research for my book; even though, again, I do so in my Acknowledgements.)

What, then, of my intention when writing this work? In my Introduction, on page xix, I explain that my book

> ...covers a broader width than that with which most musicologists would attempt to deal. This volume forms an artist's book, and is likely to demonstrate associated characteristics. The artist can often reach where reason fails or falters. I hope that the reader will sympathise with this perception. Certainly, the complete work can and should be seen as both an individual journey and a basis for reflection.

I suggest that either Simon R Hill didn't understand what it was likely to mean, or that, clearly, he did not sympathise with any such perception. Now whether or not either suggestion is true; or, indeed, whether he likes my book or not (and we know that answer); there seems no real excuse for the vinegary, oddly Quelch-like vein running throughout his review. Indeed, some might suggest that Hill seems to preside over a Victorian-style Remove schoolroom – or windowless learning-vault – in which free discussion is banned, and in which, apparently, there are no marks for imaginative thinking. That bald facts, freezing logic, tidiness, are the only criteria for gaining the form-master's approval! That mortar-boarded, frowning, perched loftily behind his high desk Mr Hill seems unable to entertain the concept of those imaginative leaps and

lively questionings which must precede, or occur parallel to, any quasi-scientific method of evidence-gathering. Is there significance in his suspiciously elitist put-down of what he calls 'the chattering classes...'? Perhaps not!

Frankly, after perusing his review-article, most readers must wonder why Hill himself has failed to write the definitive work on the countertenor – or, indeed, that long over-due dictionary of vocal terms, of which he bewails the lack. Perhaps he simply hasn't had the time for either!

And I, as I work on two more commissioned books, having finished two articles for *The Revised New Grove*? As the Psalmist bewails, 'Who can tell how oft he offendeth? O cleanse thou me from my secret faults'! ❖

PETER GILES

In view of point 4 in the second paragraph of Peter Giles' response, above, it seems best not to try the patience of the readers of *Leading Notes* any further by taking up the editor's offer of space to reply. However, I would like to respond to Frances Killingley's contribution in the Spring 1998 issue. She is to be thanked for bringing to light some contemporary remarks on the *haute-contre* which should give pause for thought to those writers, conductors and critics who regularly (and without comment) replace the term *haute-contre* with 'high tenor' in articles, programme notes, cast lists and reviews.

To the many passages cited could be added that referred to (though in translation only) by James Anthony in chapter 7 of his *French Baroque Music from Beaujoyeulx to Rameau*. It appears to come from the Parfaict brothers' *Histoire de l'académie royale de musique* (Ms in Bibl. Nat.):

> 'Du Mesny', wrote Parfaict, 'had the voice of a very high tenor ('haute-taille') which enabled him to pass for a counter-tenor ('haute-contre').'

(A letter from James Anthony in the *Musical Times* of March 1975 makes it clear that the original phrase was 'du Haut-Taille des plus hautes'). Du Mesny (or Demenil) was the leading singer at the opera between 1677 and 1699, and created several roles for Lully and others. (His range was a little lower than most *hautes-contres* – something like e–b'). The Parfaict brothers were writing in the mid-eighteenth century, and would have been well aware of the difference between an *haute-taille* and an *haute-contre*.

As for the demise of the voice, it would be interesting to look at what happened at the Opéra at the end of the 18th century. After LeGros retired in 1783, the principal singer was Lainé. He had been singing at the Opéra since 1776, and continued there until 1810, creating many roles including two in Spontini operas (1807 and 1808), but was presumably an *haute-contre*. (He would have been the leading singer when Tomeoni made his remarks.) He was followed by Louis Nourrit (1780–1831), who first sang at the Opéra in 1804. Nourrit took the *haute-contre* role of Renaud in Gluck's 'Armide' in 1811 (a part created by LeGros), and he retired in 1826.

He was succeeded by his son, Adolphe Nourrit (1802–1839), who is generally regarded as the first of the 'heroic' tenors. He first sang in Gluck's 'Iphigénie en Tauride' in 1821, and he created roles in operas by Rossini (notably 'Guillaume Tell', with its famous top C), Auber, Cherubini and Meyerbeer. He also sang *haute-contre* roles in revivals of Gluck. He was, however, also the last of the great 'falsetto-tenors' – it was supposedly (though apocryphally) Duprez's *'ut de poitrine'* in 'Guillaume Tell' which caused Nourrit to commit suicide.

What is interesting is whether Nourrit *père* was a tenor or an *haute-contre*, or perhaps another *haute-taille* who could pass for an *haute-contre*? Apparently he restricted himself to the revival of old roles, without creating any new ones. (He was the leading singer when Castil-Blaze was writing, but the latter must surely have remember Lainé.)

Even more instructive, however, would be to examine what happened to the opera chorus during this period. Who sang the alto part? It seems that contraltos had been employed alongside *hautes-contres* since at least 1788, but presumably the *hautes-contres* were not all suddenly dismissed. Did they move tenors up to sing alto? When did the last *haute-contre* retire from the chorus of the Opéra? How does the nature of writing for the chorus, and especially the alto line, change over this period? (Chorus *haute-contre* ranges from Lully to Rameau seem to have been pretty constant: (f sharp) g–b' (c'').)

Finally, two questions to be addressed: (a) what was it about the voice of Du Mesny which enabled him to pass for an *haute-contre*, and (b) what was it that distinguished the *haute-taille* from the *haute-contre*? I would suggest that (a) both voices used falsetto for the upper part of their range – most tenors would use an undisguised falsetto, as was customary at the time, markedly different from the rest of their range, while Du Mesny had probably cultivate a more 'produced' falsetto, similar to that of a modern countertenor; (b) what differentiated them was the extent to which the falsetto was carried downwards, the tenor dropping back into his 'natural' voice around f' or e' while the *haute-contre* continued on down into the chest register, blending it where necessary into his (lower) 'natural' voice.

SIMON R HILL

Erratum

A phrase was inadvertently omitted from Frances Killingley's letter in the Spring 1998 issue. The last sentence of the quotation on page 34 should read:

> Je reconnaîtrai les accens d'Achille dans un ténor vigoureux et sonore, et non dans l'éclat étourdissant d'une haute-contre.