

"Baroque Music, The Library of Essays on Music Performance Practice" edited by Peter Walls and Mary Cyr

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In the sciences, there are foundational articles on which entire disciplines are founded. Physicists today rarely read the papers in which Einstein demonstrated the principles of the theory of relativity, but thousands of papers based on them have been published during the past hundred years, and the results are enshrined in textbooks. The original papers remain of interest as historical documents and as models of style and reasoning.

Such cannot be said for most of the papers gathered together in this contribution by Peter Walls to a series called, not without pretension, “The Library of Essays on Music Performance Practice.” Titles in the series are limited to the style-periods of the Western European art-music tradition, implying that the only practices worth studying are those that were employed in the past for “classical” repertoires of interest to present-day academics and recording companies. I happen to share those interests, as do probably most readers of this journal—but the point of view conveyed by the title is surprisingly old-fashioned.

So too is the idea that current students and practitioners are well served by a heavy volume of previously published articles, many of them resized to be smaller than the originals. The price (\$300.00) is equally hefty, startlingly so given that some of the illustrations are reproduced too indistinctly to be fully legible. Two thirds of the thirty items reprinted here are readily available online, many of them more readable (and searchable) in electronic format. A few items have been reset, and there is limited new matter—an editor's introduction, and author's “postscripts” attached to a handful of items—although these show signs of poor proofreading, including odd digits (misplaced page numbers?) that pop up in one of them. Gaps stand on some pages where advertisements appeared in the original publications, and at least one footnote has been unintentionally deleted (at the end of the article by Anne Schnoebelen).

Despite these quite serious problems, the book is at least potentially useful, and it raises interesting questions. Close to half (thirteen) of the articles were originally published in the journal *Early Music*; twelve come from other periodicals, and five originated as chapters in books. The greatest number (thirteen) was originally published in the 1990s; seven are more recent, whereas six go back to the 1980s and four are even earlier. Only two first appeared in the present journal (in its original print

version), and only two have been translated (badly) from languages other than English. Does this mean that the discipline has been chiefly represented by English-language writings, peaking in the 1990s? Or did conditions in the 1990s happen to favor publication, in English, of relatively short review articles that twenty years later would turn out to be particularly apt for anthologizing in a volume of this kind? Or do the contents merely reflect the editor's occasionally eccentric choices and, perhaps, a limited range of reading?

No volume of this type could adequately represent the discipline of historical performance as a whole. Much that is relevant to the field has been published in the form of monographs, as critical commentaries in scholarly editions, even in reviews and in liner notes to recordings. Presumably the publishers of some material, especially recent writings, were unwilling to grant permission to reprint at a reasonable price. Nevertheless, it is striking how many of the items included here are isolated examples, often intelligent and useful—either because they contain valuable documentation or ask valuable questions—yet not foundational in the sense of having led to a body of further research and writing. It could be argued that a “foundational” article in this discipline has its offspring in performances rather than in subsequent publications that cite it. Still, as thick as it is, the volume does not add up to a definitive collection of material for teaching or study; it is not a true library as suggested by the series title.

A century-old article by Camille Saint-Saëns constitutes part one (“Prologue”), followed by nine further sections containing two to six articles each on such topics as “The Right Instrument,” “Pitch[,] Tuning[,] and Temperament,” “Technique and Style,” and “Vibrato,” to quote the titles of parts two through five. Despite an apparent effort to distribute the articles around various areas of the discipline, there is a strong bias toward instrumental music and especially that for bowed strings. The voice and vocal music are decidedly secondary—literally in the sense that articles on these topics come last in each group, if present at all. Dance is entirely absent. Even more fundamentally, music itself is not directly engaged: none of the selections treats specifically of how Baroque music was notated, disseminated, learned, taught, analyzed, or studied in its own time and since, except as these issues come up somewhat obliquely in Philip Brett's essay “Text, Context, and the Early Music Editor”—an important article which, however, derives largely from the author's experience as an editor of Renaissance music and says nothing concrete about any specific Baroque works.

Also lacking (clearly by choice) are primary sources, except as these are represented by quotations and extracts. Indeed, a number of items quote liberally from both famous and less famous sources. Still, the volume is essentially a miscellany of writings that represent scholarship of a few decades ago. A few articles are well known and important, notably Joshua Rifkin's “preliminary report” on “Bach's chorus.” Others are less known but remain worth reading, including the editor's own contribution on eighteenth-century violin fingering. Still others, however, such as Schnoebelen's pioneering essay on personnel at the Bolognese basilica of San Petronio, are dated in outlook, content, or approach. If not exactly superseded by later publications, their appearance here is problematical

because most readers will not be in a position to determine whether the information in them is current.¹

What else is missing? Aesthetics and the philosophy of music; expression and rhetoric; religion and liturgy; the economics and business of music; orchestral practice and direction; the staging of operas and ballets; songs and poetry; diction and pronunciation; the organ; brass and plucked string instruments; Iberia and the Americas; iconography. Of course it is easy to name authors or topics that should have been represented in a book such as this. Some of the subjects just mentioned do come up from time to time, but that a five-hundred-page volume could exclude writings focusing on so many topics is an indication of how vast is the literature, and of how selective must be a choice of essays that “represent research that has made a difference to performance (and/or listening)” (editor's introduction, p. xiii). Still, how could any such volume include nothing by Peter Williams, who has made as great a difference as anybody to historical performance by forcing performers to ask inconvenient questions about what they are doing? And is it really possible that hardly anything worthy of inclusion has appeared in languages other than English?

Surprisingly, the answer to this last question may be yes, if one is looking narrowly for writings of article length on the how-to topics that make up the majority of the volume's section headings. A more fundamental problem, perhaps, is the absence of a bibliographic essay that summarizes the scope of the field and characterizes the most important writings in it—primary ones as well as secondary. The editor's introduction to the volume hardly serves this purpose, limited as it is to previewing the volume's contents. The failure to provide a real overview of the discipline is related to a deeper problem shared with most of the volume's contents: an avoidance of self-examination, a refusal to theorize Baroque performance practice: what is it? why is it worth pursuing? Only Laurence Dreyfus offers something along these lines, but his essay “Early Music Defended Against Its Devotees” is more an attack on myopic or misguided perspectives of the 1980s (and earlier) than a vision or definition of what the study and reconstruction of historical practices might entail or serve.

The avoidance of theory is felt particularly strongly in the editor's introduction. Remarks about the “inappropriateness” of mean-tone tuning for Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier* (p. xviii) or the use of “appropriate” dynamic nuances (p. xix) beg the question of just what it means to be appropriate; is the adjective anything other than a substitute for previously fashionable words such as *authentic*? What makes an interval “hideously” out of tune in certain temperaments (p. xviii), and what does the expression “the right instrument” mean, if not used ironically? There is something fundamentally anti-intellectual in the notion that eighteenth-century musicians tuned “almost instinctively” (p. xix); perhaps they did, but we still need to try to explain today how they understood tuning and temperament, if we are to replicate their practices.

¹ On San Petronio and music at Bologna, it is now imperative to read Marc Vanscheeuwijck, *The Cappella Musicale of San Petronio in Bologna Under Giovanni Paolo Colonna (1674–95): History, Organization, Repertoire* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003).

Walls takes very seriously Adorno's famous essay "Bach Defended Against His Devotees," as well as Dreyfus's response to it, but both are now period pieces in need of more stringent commentary than is offered here. (Dreyfus, incidentally, has directed the viol consort Phantasm, not Fretwork as stated on p. xxvii.) Neither article is likely to be seen today as seriously "challenging HIP," to use Walls's phrase (HIP of course stands for "historically informed performance"). One almost wishes that he had included something by Richard Taruskin, who at least writes clearly enough to leave few questions about his meaning. Why Taruskin is absent from the book becomes clear from a footnote (p. xxviii, n. 16), where one learns that Walls has been the object of one of Taruskin's public attacks.

Allied with the reluctance to theorize is the frequently inadequate approach to source criticism. John Byrt, writing on "[Rhythmic] Alteration in Handel," pays serious attention to different ways in which dotted and "unequal" rhythms have been notated. Yet he does not sufficiently identify or evaluate the sources for his examples. Worse, he assumes that it is necessary to resolve "apparently conflicting" rhythms in vocal and instrumental parts (p. 372; page numbers are those of the present volume, not the original publications). As a result, he dismisses the arguments of Graham Pont, which, although overstated in positing a new grand "paradigm of inconsistency," did support the use of distinct rhythms in simultaneously doubling parts under certain circumstances.² Pont's argument at least was based on close study of the sources, and he probably would not have denied the possibility of more than one "logical" interpretation for a famously problematical passage by Handel (as does Byrt, p. 370).

The arbitrary dismissal of modes of performance that run counter to an author's assumptions was a common feature of theoretically naive older writings. Walls himself has called out the presence of this error elsewhere,³ and finding it in some of the items reprinted here is disappointing. Within the volume, Byrt's article follows Stephen Hefling's more carefully documented and impeccably reasoned offering on the same subject (rhythmic alteration). Hefling, however, presented his full argument in book form;⁴ it is represented here only by his reply to an unsympathetic review—not the only instance where it might have been preferable to give extracts from an author's more extended publication on a given subject.

If one can overlook all these drawbacks, one will find some things of value in the present volume. Few readers are likely to have previously seen everything in it, and essays such as Byrt's, however flawed, raise questions that have ceased to engage scholars without ever having been adequately answered. Yet this is to return to the problem noted at the beginning. Although Byrt described his article of 2001 as "part of an ongoing investigation into the use of notes inégales" (p. 376),

² Graham Pont, "Handel and Regularization: A Third Alternative," *Early Music* 13 (1985): 500-5.

³ As in Robert Donington's pronouncements on vibrato; see Walls's *History, Imagination, and the Performance of Music* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2003), 19-22.

⁴ Stephen Hefling, *Rhythmic Alteration in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-century Music: Notes Inégales and Overdotting* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1993).

the only follow-up publications of which I am aware are his own.⁵ Apart from Rifkin's article, which was the first in a long series of related publications—including books by Daniel Melamed and Andrew Parrott⁶—hardly any of the essays has become part of a sustained scholarly discussion. Hence few have been subject to the type of post-publication review and criticism that is routine in other fields (and that is offered below).

The rarity of scholarly follow-up might simply reflect the relatively small number of authors and publications within the field of performance practice. It suggests, however, that some of the questions raised in the articles reprinted here are no longer being asked. It may be that some questions have been answered, not necessarily correctly, and that current teachers and practitioners have fallen into a historically suspect orthodoxy of their own making. In other cases, the questions themselves may have turned out to be the wrong ones; old controversies over, say, the proper performance of dotted rhythms in overtures, might have been products of larger misunderstandings, arising, for example, from the use of inappropriately slow tempos. If it is true that the dotted overture was a lively, vigorous type of piece, then the exact rhythm of its dotted figures may not be as important as it seemed to be forty years ago.

Yet Bruce Haynes's articles on woodwind temperament and articulation from the 1990s are not, in fact, the last word on their respective subjects, nor can this be said of Ardal Powell ("with David Lasocki") on "Bach and the Flute," or Robert Seletsky on Baroque violin bows. Crucial matter on each of these topics has appeared more recently in other formats, such as Stewart Pollens's book on Stradivari and the preface to Mary Oleskiewicz's edition of Quantz trio sonatas.⁷ Multimedia offerings by Sally Sanford on Baroque singing and Brent Wissick on *da spalla* performance of cello music integrate audio and video components in a way obviously impossible in a print publication such as the present one.⁸ In short, it would be hazardous to reach any conclusions about the state of performance-practice research and study from this volume alone.

⁵ John Byrt, "Elements of Rhythmic Inequality in the Arias of Alessandro Scarlatti and Handel," *Early Music* 35 (2007): 609–28, and "Inequality in Alessandro Scarlatti and Handel: A Sequel," *Essay Music* 40 (2012): 91–110.

⁶ See Daniel R. Melamed, *Hearing Bach's Passions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), and Andrew Parrott, *The Essential Bach Choir* (Rochester: Boydell Press, 2000). The latter reprints the same Rifkin essay as an appendix, raising the question of whether Walls should not have reprinted one of Rifkin's more recent and perhaps more compellingly argued contributions on this subject, such as "From Weimar to Leipzig: Concertists and Ripienists in Bach's *Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis*," *Early Music* 24 (1996): 583–603.

⁷ Stewart Pollens, *Stradivari* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); *Johann Joachim Quantz: Seven Trio Sonatas*, edited by Mary Oleskiewicz, *Recent Researches in Music of the Baroque Era*, vol. 111 (Middleton, Wis.: A-R Editions, 2001).

⁸ Sally A. Sanford, "A Comparison of French and Italian Singing in the Seventeenth Century," *Journal of Seventeenth-Century Music* 1/1 (1995); Brent Wissick, "The Cello Music of Antonio Bononcini: Violone, Violoncello da spalla, and the Cello 'Schools' of Bologna and Rome," *Ibid.* 12/1 (2006). Both online at <http://www.sscm-jscm.org/>.

Individual Items

The first few items are not among the volume's more valuable selections.⁹ The ancient lecture by Saint-Saëns that opens the book is a peculiar choice, perhaps meant to illustrate what the study of historical performance practice was like before the expression had been invented or the discipline recognized. It is, with Adorno's, one of the two items originally written in a language other than English. Both translations are poor, although most readers will recognize that the cymbals here foisted onto Bach cantatas are actually cembalos (p. 13). More substantively, however, by 1915, when Saint-Saëns gave his talk, far better informed writings had been published on the subject. Opening the volume with what is essentially a popular lecture by an amateur in the field is at best misleading to those seeking historical contextualization of the discipline.

Only marginally more useful is Frank Hubbard's memoir on his entry into the harpsichord-making business. This has considerable human interest for those old enough to have come into contact with the author, and some will benefit from reading of the lessons learnt by a thoughtful early-instrument re-constructor. Yet this essay, too, is written at a very high level of generality. A reader not already familiar with the differences between, say, a solidly built Hubbard harpsichord and a sloppy attempt to make a more exact copy of a historical instrument may fail to appreciate the author's points about "over-fastidious craftsmanship" or "complete control" of the maker's material (pp. 39, 40).

Hubbard's is the first of six items on "The Right Instrument," but only one of these is by a professional organologist.¹⁰ Several rely on insufficiently documented assertions. There is no evidence, for example, that the flutist Buffardin "became friends with W. F. Bach" in 1733, when the latter arrived in Dresden (as asserted by Powell and Lasocki, p. 70); Friedemann Bach tended rather to make enemies wherever he went. Both of Seletsky's articles quote Hubert Le Blanc's 1740 *Défense de la basse de viole* on "seamless" bowing (pp. 88, 96), but indirectly via an article by John Hsu, which never actually uses that word.¹¹ Le Blanc's original French describes bow-strokes that are "unis et liés, sans qu'on apperçoive leur succession"; this might well produce bowing that could be described as "seamless," but the latter adjective is meaninglessly vague without the citation of the original language (*Défense*, pp. 22–3), or at least of Hsu's more literal translation. Equally subject to misprision are Seletzky's schematic illustrations purporting to show the evolution of bows; these represent an old and questionable approach to instrument history. There is much information in this section of the book, but also much

⁹ For a list of contents, see the end of this review.

¹⁰ John Koster; because his article originally appeared in a publication that I edited; I refrain from commenting on it here.

¹¹ John Hsu, "The Use of the Bow in French Solo Viol Playing of the 17th and 18th Centuries," *Early Music* 6 (1978): 526–9.

misinformation; for instance, it is now certain that Quantz knew Handel's music.¹²

It is therefore a relief to turn to Andrew Parrott's scrupulously documented essay debunking the myth of the *haute-contre* as a sort of falsettist rather than a very high tenor. The last of the essays on "the right instrument," this is, like Hubbard's and several others, an essay *contra* those performers, scholars, and instrument makers who have allowed ideology and personal conviction to trump documentary evidence as the basis of their beliefs about historical practice. Continuing to part three on tuning and temperament, however, one finds John Barnes opening his essay on "Bach's Keyboard Temperament" with several overstatements: that "the majority" of keyboard composers before 1700 used "a mean-tone system"; that "the influence of mean-tone can usually be recognized . . . from internal evidence"; that "temperament influenced the process of composition" (all on p. 129). These assumptions serve as premises for a quasi- if not pseudo-scientific effort to identify a unique Bach temperament.

Barnes's chief contribution here seems to have been to introduce the useful term *circular* for the well-tempered tuning systems of Werckmeister and others (p. 132)—not that anyone has yet taken to speaking of Bach's "Circularly Tempered Clavier." Like most modern writers on the subject, he uses the cent, a modern unit, to describe pitches and intervals, yet he does not explain how he calculated the numerical values (in cents) for pitches in his tables. Trusting him on this, one must still overlook the problems that his preferred temperament leaves in many pieces, assuming with him that an out-of-tune interval becomes tolerable if it is played fleetingly. Based on this assumption, Barnes assigns "prominence values" to intervals within a piece, an essentially arbitrary procedure that allows him to discount the significance of intervals whose prominence he rates low; this leads to proof that Bach used a particular tuning system. But why should one conclude that the lower incidence of certain major thirds in pieces with many accidentals in the signature has anything to do with temperament? The length, texture, and other features of individual pieces also have to be taken into account. The possibility of organ performance, which might alter perceptions of interval "prominence," seems not to have been considered—nor does Barnes consider interval prominence in pieces outside the *Well-Tempered Clavier*, such as the E-major organ *praeludium* (sometimes termed a toccata) BWV 566. Bach's preferred temperament for this early work, if any, is unlikely to have been the same one that he used a decade later for part one of the "48," or two or three decades later for part two.

Far more significant is Bruce Haynes's 1991 article "Beyond Temperament," which will be instructive especially for those who continue to conceive the subject only in terms of the fixed pitches of a keyboard instrument. Singers, wind players, and string players of course think in other terms, as did Telemann, Quantz, and other eighteenth-century writers cited here. But Haynes incorporates some doubtful assertions alongside uncertain facts. Was the practical, if theoretically imprecise, division of the whole-step into nine commas really the "most common tuning of the time" (p. 147)? If so, exactly when and where? In fact this system probably was widespread even in the early eighteenth century, when it

¹² Contrary to the doubts expressed by Powell and Lasocki (p. 68); see Mary Oleskiewicz, "Quantz and the Flute at Dresden: His Instruments, His Repertory, and Their Significance for the *Versuch* and the Bach Circle" (Ph.D. diss., Duke University, 1998), 210–4.

was mentioned not only in Germany but by the Spanish writer Torres.¹³ But Haynes might have made it clearer that these commas, unlike the famous Pythagorean and ditonic types, have no precise values, for in this system the whole tone itself is not rigorously defined (as Haynes admits, p. 149). How keyboardists “adapted to the other instruments” (p. 153) also is not explained, although Quantz, in the passage cited, gives instructions for continuo players to avoid doubling certain notes whose tuning on a keyboard instrument would differ from that of a singer or flutist.¹⁴

The significance of Haynes’s article lies in its challenge to the over-confident assertions of what we might call the temperamentists,¹⁵ who imagine that abstruse tinkering with numbers can lead us to “Bach’s” tuning. Notwithstanding its imprecisions, Haynes’s essay stands out even within this volume for its hands-on quality, as do the essays that constitute the following part four on “Technique and Style.” All present concrete, practical reconstructions of specific techniques while considering the effects of the latter on actual music making.

The first of these is Mark Lindley’s essay on “Handelian” keyboard fingering. Lindley’s close reading of the source remains instructive even if the fingerings in question, from an early eighteenth-century manuscript copy of music by Handel, are not demonstrably “Handelian” in the sense of deriving from the composer himself, or of representing how he played. Nor are the musical effects of the fingerings as transparent as Lindley assumes; do “paired” scale fingerings (3–2–3–2) of the type seen in his example one necessarily imply groupings in twos, and are octaves smooth unless fingered 2–5 instead of 1–5? For that matter, were all the fingerings in the manuscript as carefully thought out, with consideration for their musical effect, as Lindley’s discussion implies? How seriously we should take them must depend on their provenance, which is never established; were they original entries in the manuscript, or were they copied from another? If the latter, we might expect occasional copying errors or imprecise placement of some numerals.

Here, especially, the absence of both theorization and source criticism limits the value of Lindley’s findings, and the reader must be wary of the author’s unstated assumptions that fingerings imply something about groupings and articulation. I think they do, but not necessarily in the way taken for granted here; much depends on tempo and whether one adds slurs or over-legato, which are not discussed. Lindley also gives technical advice, some of it in the form of photographs of hands (his

¹³ See José de Torres’s *Treatise of 1736: General Rules for Accompanying on the Organ, Harpsichord, and the Harp*, translated by Paul Murphy (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2000), 22. On Quantz’s use of the same system, see Mary Oleskiewicz, “The Flutes of Quantz: Their Construction and Performing Practice,” *Galpin Society Journal* 53 (2000): 205–8.

¹⁴ Johann Joachim Quantz, *Versuch einer Anweisung die flöte traversiere zu spielen* (Berlin, 1752), chap. 17, section 6, para. 20.

¹⁵ Besides Barnes, more recently Bradley Lehman, “Bach’s Extraordinary Temperament: Our Rosetta Stone,” *Early Music* 33 (2005) 3–23 and 211–31, and Luigi Swich, “Further Thoughts on Bach’s 1722 Temperament,” *Early Music* 39 (2011): 401–7, but see the present writer’s letter in *Early Music* 40 (2012): 166–7.

own?) at the keyboard. Although he makes it clear that most of his advice is subjective, it would have been useful to examine the underlying assumptions (e.g., that one should hold the hands close to the keyboard, rather than with the wrist elevated, which would tend to favor more detached playing generally).

Walls's article on eighteenth-century Italian violin fingering is more objective, reporting material from a large number of sources while making few assertions about musical effects. The absence of analytic commentary means that non-string players will find it difficult to grasp the musical consequences of Walls's findings. The article nevertheless remains useful, at least to violinists, for its numerous extracts and examples from eighteenth-century sources—or would be so, if only these were not reproduced so small; this is particularly true of a number of facsimiles from early printed sources. An appendix listing printed violin sonatas that contain fingerings raises the question whether there are also manuscripts containing similar markings—and do we know, from prefaces or other matter within the publications, whether all these fingerings actually come from the composers?

Haynes is the only author honored by having two articles included (discounting the two-part article by Seletsky). But Haynes's second article, on woodwind articulation, seems less useful than the first, at least to this non-woodwind-playing reader. One reason is the idiosyncratic use of terms whose precise meanings Haynes never defines. He seems to use the expression *double tonguing* for any type of paired articulation syllables (used to produce two-note groupings). Double tonguing, for Haynes, thus is used to produce both "lombardic inequality" and the "slower, iambic inequality," that is, *notes inégales*—which, however, Haynes prefers to call "pointing" (from the French *pointer*, p. 205). Haynes also seems to equate inequality with dotted rhythm, at least insofar as "double tonguing" can be used to produce either, even though he quotes the *Solfeggi* attributed to Quantz as distinguishing the two (p. 208).¹⁶

The rhythmic values of individual notes surely were independent of the way in which they were articulated. Double tonguing, in the usual sense of quick pairs of individually articulated notes, might well have involved two-note groupings of notes in either equal or unequal rhythm. Lacking a clear theoretical framework, the article is little more than a jumble of quotations from various treatises and other sources. In the midst of these, a few useful observations, such as Haynes's rightly skeptical point that the syllables given in treatises may not have always "accurately represented the real movements of the tongue" (p. 212), may pass unnoticed.

Equally problematical, although for other reasons, is an essay by Richard Wistreich that provides an intelligent interpretation of Monteverdi's remarks on singing. Culled chiefly from the composer's

¹⁶ Whether or not Quantz had a hand in assembling this collection of annotated extracts from eighteenth-century sonatas and concertos, in its extant form it is certainly much later than the "1729–41" dating here attached to it, on the basis of the edition by Winfried Michel and Hermien Teske (Winterthur: Amadeus, 1978). Oleskiewicz, "Quantz and the Flute at Dresden," 58n. 89, describes the extant source as a late eighteenth-century copy; it includes quotations from music by such younger composers as Glösch, Wolf, and Neuff, as well as from works composed in the 1740s by C. P. E. Bach.

letters, these yield some interesting points: for example, a criticism of a singer ostensibly for failing “to join the chest voice to the throat” actually concerns the musician’s insufficient “breathing support” (pp. 228–9). But singers seeking a clear statement of Wistreich’s fully formed views on late-Renaissance and early-Baroque singing would better turn to his book on the singer Giulio Cesare Brancaccio.¹⁷ We only glimpse in the present article the author’s insight that the separate “chest” and “head” voices that modern singers attempt to join could instead have been cultivated as two equally valid and “natural” registers (see p. 228). Such a technique made possible passages like the one quoted by Wistreich from a monodic setting of “Sfoga con le stelle” by Francesco Rognoni. Employing three clefs (bass, tenor, and soprano) at different points within the vocal part, this solo madrigal is remarkable not only for its vocal span of more than two and a half octaves (G–c’), but for opening in the key of F minor, practically unheard of when it was published at Milan in 1620.

Frederick Neumann, who was most notorious for his contrarian views on ornaments and dotted rhythm, is here represented by a characteristically contentious article on “the vibrato controversy.” Like Barnes on temperament, Neumann adopts a quasi-scientific approach to prove that vibrato is a natural and universal element of “sonance.” The latter, a somewhat vaguely defined term for sound as perceived, seems to turn up especially in mid-twentieth-century writings on the psychology of music. A non-specialist must take Neumann at his word that he is using this concept properly, and that “electronic analyses of Caruso’s records” reveal pitch oscillations of “up to a whole tone” (pp. 236–7)—for Neumann provides no citations for these things. Although turning up numerous positive references in pre-1800 writers to various sorts of vibrato, Neumann fails to find a single one that unambiguously favors the type of continuous vibrato that became customary in nineteenth-century string playing. It is strange that Neumann does not mention the Italian composer-violinist Geminiani, who seems to have done just that. But a brief article on Geminiani by Roger Hickman, which follows Neumann’s, tries to debunk this view as well.¹⁸

I previously reviewed Brett’s article when it was first published in a volume of papers given at Oberlin College during 1986–7. At the time I found it “a useful summary of the basic issues of music editing, and students of the subject will be able to glean a basic bibliography of writings on editorial method from Brett’s footnotes.”¹⁹ This remains true today, when many students and editors of early music seem no more aware of the various possible approaches to textual editing than they were a quarter

¹⁷ Richard Wistreich, *Warrior, Courtier, Singer: Giulio Cesare Brancaccio and the Performance of Identity in the Late Renaissance* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007).

¹⁸ Walls chose not to include the reply to Neumann by Frederick K. Gable published a year later in the present journal (“Some Observations Concerning Baroque and Modern Vibrato,” *Performance Practice Review* 5 [1992]: 90–102). For Walls’s own reply to Donington on the same subject, see note 3.

¹⁹ Review of *Authenticity and Early Music*, ed. Nicholas Kenyon, in *Current Musicology* 48 (Spring 1990): 78–87 (cited: p. 79).

century ago, despite the appearance of a few excellent publications on the subject during the interim.²⁰ Some of the older editions (particularly of English Renaissance repertory) that Brett discusses are no longer much consulted. But his essay would still be instructive reading for the boards of critical editions that impose a so-called “best-text” editorial procedure on contributors, even when other options may be more suitable to the material at hand.²¹ Especially important are Brett’s comments on the “unstable” character of many texts (p. 279), which have evolved under the hands not only of their composers but of subsequent arrangers, copyists, and, ultimately, editors; at what point does one declare a variant version a revision, an alternate form equal in status to the original, or an inauthentic mishmash?

This last issue lies at the heart of David Fuller’s article on the ambiguous status of the text in seventeenth-century French keyboard music. Later French music is now famous for supposedly having been printed with all of its obligatory ornaments.²² Yet manuscript copies transmit the music of Chambonnières (Fuller’s subject) in sometimes radically divergent versions. At least some of the cases illustrated here could have arisen because the composer himself never wrote down his music, or did so only late in life; in any case, some variant versions may have arisen when manuscripts were prepared on the basis of memory rather than copied from an autograph. The significance of this finding has yet to be fully grasped by many of those who edit seventeenth-century music (e.g., that of Sweelinck and Froberger).

Fuller focuses on notated variants; therefore he does not consider how his examples of alternate versions of individual pieces might have become further differentiated by the addition of unnotated ornaments. Chief among these was probably the *port de voix*, neglected by performers today despite the emphasis placed on it in Bacilly’s singing treatise, an important but neglected source.²³ The *port de voix* is the first of those “new beauties” in Chambonnières’s playing that were enumerated by Jean Le Gallois in a passage quoted by Fuller (p. 292).²⁴ Often performed in seventeenth-century France as a graceful

²⁰ Notably James Grier, *The Critical Editing of Music: History, Method, and Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

²¹ “Best-text” procedure is problematical in repertories that are transmitted in faulty manuscript copies that are all relatively remote from the composer. In such cases, the choice of a so-called principal source can become essentially arbitrary, and any text may need to be heavily supplemented by editorial emendations and readings from other sources. Examples include the present reviewer’s editions of the keyboard concertos W. 4 and 24 in *Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach: The Complete Works*, vols. III/9.2 and 9.8 (Los Altos: Packard Humanities Institute, 2009 and 2010).

²² This idea was codified in a famous letter of 1738 by Johann Abraham Birnbaum, who defended J. S. Bach for doing the same thing; see *The New Bach Reader, The: A Life of Johann Sebastian Bach in Letters and Documents*, edited by Hans T. David and Arthur Mendel, revised and enlarged by Christoph Wolff (New York: Norton, 1998), entry 344 (p. 346).

²³ Bénigne de Bacilly, *Remarques curieuses sur l’art de bien chanter* (Paris, 1668; translation and commentary by Austin B. Caswell as *A Commentary upon the Art of Proper Singing*, New York: Institute of Mediaeval Music, 1968).

²⁴ Quoted from *Lettre de Mr Le Gallois à Mademoiselle Regnault de Solier touchant la musique* (Paris: Michallet, 1680), 68–

“pre-beat” glide of the voice (to judge from Bacilly’s account), the *port de voix* may not even have been recognized by every musician as a distinct ornament. Yet it was frequently specified in German keyboard music, especially by Kuhnau. It probably should be used frequently in seventeenth-century music by German as well as French composers, perhaps alongside the improvisatory variation and embellishment whose routine use is suggested by Fuller’s examples.

Fuller’s article strongly implies that his findings should be applied in music beyond that of Chambonnières. The seventeenth-century repertory continues to be known primarily from early printed editions. But the neat and apparently stable texts of the latter may give a misleading view of how works were actually performed—perhaps no more so than in France. Though modest in its stated purview, this witty and humane essay is arguably the best in the volume and essential reading for anyone involved in historical performance.

Some of the same points about the potential unreliability of printed editions resurface in Peter Allsop’s essay on “violinistic virtuosity in the seventeenth century.” This, however, is an old-fashioned survey of repertory, and the reader must trust the author on, for example, the “frankly disappointing” character of certain sonatas by the Roman violinist Giovanni Antonio Leoni (mentioned on p. 306). This sort of blanket value judgment is not nearly as useful as Allsop’s remarks about the potential role of printing technology in skewing the relationship between what was notated and what was actually played (p. 310).

Allsop argues that the typeset prints of string sonatas issued in Italy during the later seventeenth century do not necessarily reflect the sophistication of actual practice there; this is certainly possible, to judge from several highly virtuosic examples taken from manuscript sources. But we need to see more in order to judge the plausibility of the argument. Other factors, including reluctance by Italian musicians to publish all their tricks, might also explain the apparently less developed state of violin playing there as compared to Germany. Nevertheless both Fuller’s and Allsop’s articles, as well as Neal Zaslaw’s handy survey of eighteenth-century “ornaments for Corelli’s violin sonatas,” in effect raise post-modernist questions about the centrality of the composer and his or her texts for the performance of Baroque music (and for its history).

Whereas these articles surely remain valuable, not least for their numerous examples, the old battles over rhythmic alteration that form the subject of part seven are not so clearly worth re-fighting. It does not help that most of the matter reprinted here was originally written in reply to other publications, leaving the reader feeling like someone who joined a conversation too late. Hefling’s entry is a response to Friedrich Neumann’s review of Hefling’s book on dotted and unequal notes. The underlying controversy, which originally centered on French overtures, is now itself a historical event. One might learn something by reading the long series of exchanges on the subject, but even with a new postscript, Hefling’s present contribution to the debate hardly serves as an adequate summary of the whole. Nor

86; translation in David Fuller, “French Harpsichord Playing in the 17th Century—After Le Gallois,” *Early Music* 4 (1976): 22–6.

does his bibliography of “recent writings on inequality” (p. 363) list anything more recent than Byrt’s 2001 article (included in this volume).

Yet the issue of over-dotting and inequality remains unsettled, at least for early and peripheral repertoires. Neumann, Hefling, and the many others who were so animated by the topic twenty and thirty years ago were chiefly concerned with the effective performance of overtures in Lully’s operas and in later compositions by Bach, Handel, and perhaps Rameau. But what about early works, including overtures and *entrées* in French ballets of the 1650s and before? Were these already being performed with the pervasive and consistent over-dotting that apparently was the practice later in some quarters? Or, on the other hand, were conventions still fluid in early eighteenth-century Germany, when Bach was writing overtures that raise questions for anyone trying to apply the same conventions that seem to work effortlessly in other music?

These questions were raised, albeit unsystematically, in Byrt’s article, which, however, fails to clearly distinguish over-dotting from inequality. But perhaps many musicians also failed to do this, particularly in the seventeenth century. It may no longer be necessary to argue so strenuously, as Byrt did, for the use of inequality in Purcell; the latter’s borrowings from French style now seem obvious, justifying routine use of *notes inégales* in Purcell’s music. Yet we must still wonder whether a dotted *allemande* by Purcell, like the one in the published version of the piece shown in Byrt’s example one (p. 366), is an overture-style *entrée* as opposed to a gentler instance of notated inequality. Is such an *allemande* to be played more unequally, with a more vehement effect than, say, a slumber scene, or was no such distinction made in the 1690s, when the piece seems to have been first published?²⁵

Byrt’s three “styles” of rhythm—“strict, careless, and *sacadé*” (over-dotted)—are perhaps better understood as styles of notation. But his underlying point remains important: that degrees of precision in notation varied, perhaps depending as much on the personality of the composer as on his or her intentions for how the music should actually sound. Certain musicians—notoriously Handel, Byrt’s chief subject—were flagrantly inconsistent, taking frequent shortcuts in their notation by omitting dots and the like. In many works, the precise rhythm might have been specified in rehearsals led by the composer himself. Yet this would not explain the “careless” notation of printed music such as the fugue subject in the “Great” suite no. 3 in D minor, HWV 428, published in 1720 (discussed on p. 371).

Matthew Dirst, in his contribution on Bach overtures, is certainly right in distinguishing some early examples, which incorporate regular motion in sixteenths, from later ones whose more diverse rhythm includes “tirades” (*tirate*). But the latter already occur in the early G-minor overture BWV 822. And did Bach’s revisions in what became the first movement of the B-minor harpsichord partita (BWV 831a/831) really effect a shift from one to the other type of overture rhythm? Certainly Bach’s use of what is alleged here to have been a new style cannot have been a product of influence from Dresden (as suggested on p. 395). Music at Dresden had become predominantly Italian by 1719, when Lotti’s opera

²⁵ Unfortunately, Byrt does not adequately identify or evaluate the sources, on which one might consult Candace Bailey, *Seventeenth-Century British Keyboard Sources* (Warren, MI: Harmonie Park Press, 2003).

Teofane received a famous performance there; this was probably well before the composition of BWV 831a and a number of other Bach works in overture style. Dirst is right to point out the “ideological” character of Neumann’s essentialist view of Bach’s style, but this is now water under the bridge; who still questions the use of French performance conventions in Bach, any more than in Purcell?

A contribution by Peter Holman, ostensibly about “Monteverdi’s string writing,” is in fact relevant to seventeenth-century string scoring in Italian music generally. Holman properly observes that scoring with two equal (crossing) violin parts was a parallel to a type of vocal scoring (SSATB) common in late-Renaissance madrigals but rare in instrumental music before 1600. Dating from 1993, however, this is another somewhat summary essay that has been superseded by its author’s later publications.²⁶ The same is true of Samantha Owens’s chapter on eighteenth-century women musicians at the court of Württemberg.²⁷ Although some may still find it instructive to learn that there were female professional musicians anywhere in Baroque Germany, Owens’s findings are rather meager, particularly for actual performance. If her article—one of only two here by a woman—was meant to show how female musicians participated in Baroque culture, that aim might have been more usefully met by reprinting something about the really important and influential female composers and performers who were active at the Paris Opera or in Italian convents and *accademie*.

Similar things must be said of Schnoebelen’s article on the basilica of San Petronio at Bologna. Although good for its time (1969), this essay is now severely dated, not least by its vague if not naive treatment of instrument citations taken from the Bolognese archives. What, for example, are the “double basses,” “tenor viola,” and “tromboni” mentioned in various documents at various points? Did all the instruments listed in a given archival document, or included in a set of parts, actually perform together? Such questions are never raised. There are no music examples, although we do learn incidentally (on p. 447) that theorbo parts were figured—suggesting that these were not merely bass-line instruments, as Rifkin concluded was the case with the two lutes that Bach used in his *Trauerode* (BWV 198).²⁸

More sophisticated on all counts is an article by Niels Martin Jensen on the scoring of Italian violin sonatas; it is the volume’s second most recent contribution, from 2007. Arguing from a survey of older compositions, Jensen confirms Allsop’s view that Corelli’s Op. 5 comprises duo sonatas for violin

²⁶ See “From Violin Band to Orchestra” in *From Renaissance to Baroque: Change in Instruments and Instrumental Music in the Seventeenth Century: Proceedings of the National Early Music Association Conference Held in Association with the Department of Music, University of York and the York Early Music Festival, at the University College of Ripon and York St. John, York, 2–4 July 1999*, ed. Jonathan Wainwright and Peter Holman (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 241–57.

²⁷ See her chapter, “The Court of Württemberg-Stuttgart,” in *Music at German Courts, 1715–1760: Changing Artistic Priorities*, ed. Samantha Owens, Barbara M. Reul, and Janice B. Stockigt (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2011), 165–96.

²⁸ See “Some Questions of Performance in J. S. Bach’s *Trauerode*,” in *Bach Studies 2*, ed. Daniel R. Melamed (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 119–53 (cited: 133–43).

and bass, with optional continuo—and that we should abandon the use of “rigid genre terms like ‘solo sonata’ and ‘duo sonata’” for earlier works (p. 476).²⁹ Yet the consequences for performance, as opposed to nomenclature, are not spelled out. And although Allsop’s view seems to have become the received orthodoxy, one must wonder whether the absent harmony would not have been missed in performances of these works that lacked a keyboard instrument or lute. Surely, it would normally have been preferred to leave out the “violone” in performances of Op. 5 while retaining a continuo instrument—unless the empty sound of unaccompanied soloists was more tolerated in instrumental than in vocal music.

The volume closes out with four items whose central issue is Bach performance, although this is completely explicit only in Rifkin’s famous article on “Bach’s chorus.” The latter expression, which now reads more ironically than ever, points up the problem of words and their meanings, which has been fundamental to historical musicology generally and to studies of historical performance specifically. The term *chorus* is not the only one whose interpretation has been at the center of debates over the scoring of Bach’s vocal works—an issue that long ago overtook dotting and rhythmic alteration as the most contentious in the historical-performance world. Despite efforts by some to maintain the controversy, Rifkin’s views have by now been accepted by probably the majority of younger Bach scholars, and a majority of serious performers are probably at least intrigued by them.³⁰ But the resistance that “one-to-a-part” Bach continues to inspire in some musicians lies at the heart of the volume’s final, quasi-confessional article by Sigiswald Kuijken. He chronicles the adoption in his own performances not only of Rifkin’s views on choral scoring but also of *da spalla* playing in Bach’s cello parts and true natural brass instruments (without vent holes).

Although less preoccupied with specific aspects of Bach interpretation, the essays by both Adorno and Dreyfus are concerned above all with the effects of “historically informed” performance in Bach’s music. Both essays, however, are now best read as documenting particular moments in the history of the performance of Baroque music. Adorno’s real topic is Bach performance as a form of nostalgia in post–World War II Germany; he is not concerned with historical performance as we understand the term today. Dreyfus’s article, in turn, was not so much a response to Adorno as an attempt to offer a clever postmodernist critique of historical performance.

Originally published in German in 1951—one must consult Dreyfus (p. 502, n. 2) for the date—

²⁹

See Peter Allsop, *Arcangelo Corelli: New Orpheus of Our Times* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), especially 120–1.

³⁰

Among the few scholars who have not only explicitly accepted Rifkin’s findings as historical scholarship but taken up their implications for criticism and interpretation is Melamed, *Hearing Bach’s Passions*, especially part 1, “Performing Forces and Their Significance.” John Butt reviewed performances of both types without taking a clear position on the historical issue in “Bach Recordings Since 1980: A Mirror of Historical Performance,” in *Bach Perspectives*, vol. 4: *The Music of J. S. Bach: Analysis and Interpretation*, ed. David Schulenberg (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 181–98 (esp. 188–91).

Adorno's essay appears here in the familiar English rendition by Samuel and Shierry Weber. The musically uninformed translators cannot be faulted too harshly for failing to make complete sense of the original, which is often opaque. Adorno's essay now requires a commentary not only to clarify many obscure sentences but to identify references to what seemed at the time important recent compositions and writings by Schoenberg and Hindemith. Particularly likely to mislead readers today are Adorno's references to things "inauthentic," which he equates with the "Romantic" versions of old music found in anachronistically annotated twentieth-century editions. Adorno's "authenticity," by contrast, is what we now recognize as a modernist or literalist approach to the performance of Bach's texts, only superficially informed by research into historical instruments and practices. These were the prevailing approaches to the performance of Baroque music in 1950, but neither has much to do with today's "historical performance."

Dreyfus recognized that Adorno, like virtually all his contemporaries, failed to appreciate such things as Bach's use of specific instrumental colors—thanks to misconceptions of historical instruments and performing practices. But Dreyfus argues chiefly against a straw man, the naively historicist performer or listener who would become fair game as well for Taruskin within a few years. Like Joseph Kerman, another music historian who aspired to cultural criticism,³¹ Dreyfus attacks not only so-called positivistic scholarship but its "objectivist" corollary in performance. Yet Dreyfus hardly explains what he means by "Mainstream" and "Early Music" performance, offering no specific examples of either. This leaves it unclear what he has in mind by "restoration" and "critique," the two "modes of interpretation" that, he concludes, make historical performance valuable (p. 322). And just what is one to make of an assertion along the lines of this: "It was probably capitalist development of the late Middle Ages which first brought envy into special prominence in the West" (p. 518)? Vaguely hinting at Marxian investigations into the production and consumption of "early music," this sort of armchair history is utterly vacuous in the absence of supporting data. Dreyfus's 1997 "postscript" asks whether his "'theory of historical performance' is mostly a historical curio of the 1980s" (p. 525); the question answers itself.

Kuijken's more modest and more recent essay, first published in 2010, remains timely, at least for now. Many readers will be fascinated, and perhaps moved, by his chronicle of how he came to be won over by modes of performance that went against the grain of his training. Among the lessons learned, it seems, was how one's ears and mind can be opened up when one refuses to accept received practices and anachronistic readings of instrument names (such as *violone* and *basso*). Implicit here, however, is the admission that challenges to received wisdom tend to be instinctively rejected by even thoughtful musicians. Inertia—comfort in continuing to perform in familiar ways—can easily trump the nagging thought that a particular practice is not only historically inauthentic but may be musically less interesting or compelling than one that is. Indeed, Kuijken admits that it has not been historical arguments, which he glosses over, but musical ones, that have led him to make radical changes in his approach to works such as Bach's cantatas and cello suites.

³¹ See Kerman's *Contemplating Music: Challenges to Musicology* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), esp. chap. 6, "The Historical Performance Movement."

Some may find Kuijken's personal "odyssey" a fitting topic with which to close this weighty volume. Yet I am troubled by the absence of anything in the editor's introduction or in the book's organization and section headings that distinguishes Kuijken's subjective argument from a scrupulously argued scholarly one like Rifkin's. Rather than organizing future anthologies along thematic lines like this one, editors might focus instead on the methodology or perhaps the genre of the various component essays. Which selections represent historical musicology—organology, archival research, source study? Which ones are chiefly analytical or interpretive? Which are essentially autobiographical, like Hubbard's and Kuijken's in the present volume?

The most important thing any teacher of historical practice can do is to encourage students to ask and research their own questions about what they perform. Perhaps a student does learn something about this by retracing old debates over-dotting or vibrato—probably not by puzzling over the arid postures of self-promoting academics. Most students specializing in performance are likely to prefer readings that suggest practical solutions to problems in actual music. Many entries in the present volume do that; the best ones do so by critically engaging with a wide range of sources. Yet even articles of that type are only as valuable as the questions they raise.

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