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**The Performance of Dynamics in Solo Harpsichord
Music from the Seventeenth to the Twenty-first Century.
An Examination of Ways and Means**

Description of doctoral dissertation with a creative practice component as part
of proceedings for awarding a doctorate degree in the arts of music

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Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
CHAPTER I: THE CHOICE OF INSTRUMENT	5
CHAPTER II: THE EXECUTION OF DYNAMICS ON THE HARPSICHORD	10
2.1 ARTICULATION BY MOVEMENT OF THE FINGERTIPS	10
2.2 FINGER-KEYBOARD "MECHANICS"	14
2.3 ARTICULATION IN HARPSICHORD PLAYING	15
2.4. PRACTICAL ISSUES CONCERNING THE USE OF ARTICULATION	18
<i>2.4.1 The finger technique for producing legato and staccato articulation</i>	<i>19</i>
2.5 TEMPO MANIPULATION	22
<i>2.5.1 The creation of a crescendo or a diminuendo in a very short moment through tempo manipulation between two notes</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>2.5.2 The proper use of tempo manipulation</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>2.5.3 Tempo manipulation in the brisé, arpeggio and long trill</i>	<i>30</i>
2.6 TEXTURE MANIPULATION	31
2.7 THE INFLUENCE OF TUNING ON HARPSICHORD DYNAMICS	34
CHAPTER III: THE HANDLING OF PARTICULAR DYNAMICS PROBLEMS IN SELECTED PIECES	35
3.1. JEAN-HENRI D'ANGLEBERT – PRÉLUDE RE MINEUR	35
3.2. CHRISTIAN PETZOLD – CONCERTO IV FROM THE COLLECTION XXV CONCERTS POUR LE CLAVECIN	42
3.3. CHRISTIAN GOTTLÖB NEEFE – FANTASIA IN F-MINOR	52
3.4. BENEDETTO MARCELLO – SONATE XI FROM THE COLLECTION SONATES POUR CLAVECIN	61
3.5. LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN – 13 VARIATIONS ON THE THEME ES WAR EINMAL EIN ALTER MANN FROM DITTERSDORF'S OPERA DAS ROTHE KÄPPCHEN, WOO 66	70
3.6. MARTA PTASZYŃSKA – TOURACOU	87
CONCLUSIONS	98
BIBLIOGRAPHY	102
ANNEX – LIST OF MUSICAL EXAMPLES	105

Introduction

The harpsichord differs from other keyboard instruments in that it produces sound by plucking strings which are stretched over a sounding board. This is done by plectra (which originally were made from bird quills, but later of leather and nowadays of plastic). The plectra are connected to jacks, which in turn are connected to the keys of the instrument, which – when struck – set the jacks in motion. From a structural point of view, therefore, the harpsichord has little in common with the piano and in particular differs greatly in the way in which it can bring about dynamic changes in the sound it produces. The force with which its keys are struck has little or no influence on the loudness of the sound – nor is it possible to achieve a gradual *crescendo* or *diminuendo* with anything like the ease with which this can be done on the piano. In order to achieve dynamics on the harpsichord, the performer must have recourse to a host of methods, which include the adding or changing registers, the changing of manuals, the changing of musical textures (e.g. by using octave doubling, note repetition or ornaments) and the changing of the way in which notes are articulated.

The aim of the present study is to present an analysis of the phenomena connected with the execution of dynamics in harpsichord playing on the example of pieces coming from various periods (each having its own musical style), ranging from the Baroque (and the Rococo) to classicism and then later to contemporary music. In particular, the author of the present study wished to find those performing techniques that have been common to harpsichord playing since the instrument's heyday in the 17th and 18th centuries, as well as in later periods.

The present study comprises three chapters, together with an introduction and a concluding summary. The first chapter briefly traces the history of this remarkable instrument known as the harpsichord, while the second chapter is devoted to a detailed analysis of the ways in which dynamic effects can be achieved in harpsichord playing, beginning with the various methods of articulation, then going on to examine techniques such as tempo manipulation and finally investigating the way in which the tuning of the harpsichord can affect the dynamics of a given piece of music. The third chapter gives a detailed discussion of the ways in which dynamics can be achieved in six stylistically different works: Jean-Henri d'Anglebert's *Prelude in D-minor*, Christian Petzold's *Concerto N^o IV*, Christian Gottlob Neefe's *Fantasia in F-minor*, Benedetto Marcello's

Sonata XI, Beethoven's *13 Variations on the Theme "Es war einmal ein alter Mann"* from Dittersdorf's opera "*Das rothe Käppchen*" and Marta Ptaszyńska's *Touracou*. The concluding chapter gives a summary of the main findings of the study.

The author's main methods of research have been to analyse the source literature and to analyse musical scores from different periods (each period having its own musical style), as well as making a comparison of available sources. The descriptive method has also been used in order to present historical facts, biographical details, the main creative characteristics of composers and also phenomena relating to the historical development of musical forms. The author's basic field of research has been the phenomenon of dynamics in the performance of works written for the harpsichord in various periods – from the second half of the seventeenth century to the early twenty-first century.

The present study comprises a bibliography of printed sources as well as internet sources. It has also been provided with two annexes – one listing the musical examples presented in the study and another listing the pieces performed and recorded by the author as part of her artistic research. These — together with the recordings and also the Polish and English versions of the present study — are provided on an accompanying CD.

The author's heartfelt thanks go to her doctoral supervisors – Prof. dr. hab. Andrzej Białko and Dr. Michał Gronowicz – for their constant help and support during her years of study at The Krzysztof Penderecki Academy of Music in Krakow and not least for their invaluable help in the preparation of the recordings accompanying the present study, as well as in the preparation of the study itself.

Finally, the author would like to thank Prof. dr. hab. Magdalena Myczka – who introduced her to the world of harpsichord playing – for her constant care and patience during the author's years as an undergraduate and as an M.A. student. During those five years the author learnt not only how to find her own way as a musician (and especially as a soloist), but also how to express her deepest emotions through music.

Chapter I: The choice of instrument¹

The harpsichord is a string instrument related to the zither family. It came to prominence in the fifteenth century and continued to play an important role until the middle of the eighteenth century. The golden age of the harpsichord was the period between 1650 and 1750, when builders of the instrument were to be found in various European countries.

The simplest type of harpsichord — prevalent before 1500 — had one four-octave keyboard and one set of strings (there being one string for each key),² while a second set of strings was added after 1500.³ Before 1579, some instruments also had a four-foot register, which transposed the strings an octave higher, while a lute register was added in the seventeenth century, by which time the instrument was well known in many European countries. The French school of harpsichord playing — represented by musicians such as Rameau and the Couperins — gained great popularity during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In its golden age, the instrument ideally had two manuals with five octaves. On instruments with two keyboards, each of the keyboards usually had its own set of strings. As each register also had its own set of strings (apart from the lute register, it became normal for a harpsichord to have three or four sets of strings.

To a great extent, the sound quality of the harpsichord depends on the type of plectrum used, i.e. whether it is made from hard leather or a quill. These two materials allow the performer to use different kinds of touch when playing the harpsichord, the

¹ This chapter is based on the following publications:

Russell, Raymond, *The Harpsichord and Clavichord; an introductory study*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York, 1973.

Gillespie, John, *Five Centuries of Keyboard Music: A Historical Survey of Music for Harpsichord and Piano*, Dover Publications, New York, 1972.

Ripin, Edwin M. / Schott, Howard / Koster, John (1), Wraight, Denzil (2(i), 3(iii) 4(iii)), Koster, John (2(ii), 3(ii), 3(ii)(a,b,c)), Kenyon de Pascual, Beryl (2(iii), 3(ii)(e), 4(iv)(c)), Ripin, Edwin M. / Schott, Howard (with G. Grant O'Brien) / Koster, John (3(i)), Huber, Alphons (3(ii)(d), 4(iv)(b)), Dowd, William, / Koster, John (4(i)), Ripin, Edwin M., Schott, Howard / Mould, Charles (4(ii)), Ripin, Edwin M., Schott, Howard / Whitehead, Lance (4(iv)(a,b-h), Schott, Howard, Elste, Martin (5), entry: *Harpsichord*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 11, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

Badura-Skoda, Eva & Paul, *Interpreting Mozart: Performance of His Piano Pieces and Other Compositions*, Routledge, New York, 2008.

² Russell, Raymond, *The Harpsichord and Clavichord: An Introductory Study*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York, 1973, p. 14.

³ Gillespie, John, *Five Centuries of Keyboard Music: An Historical Survey of Music for Harpsichord and Piano*, Dover Publications, New York, 1972, p. 7.

small differences being easily noticeable when standing close to the instrument. The other factor which has a bearing on the sound quality are the strings themselves. An instrument with iron strings has a more brilliant sound than one with brass strings, as can be seen in the case of Italian instruments. In the sixteenth century, Italian makers preferred iron strings⁴ and it is a well-known fact that Italian harpsichords have a sharper and bolder sound⁵ than other instruments. This may be due not only to the material of which the strings are made, but perhaps also to the fact that Italian jacks were shorter and thicker than those used in other countries. French harpsichords have more delicate jacks and the lower manual is distinctly louder than the upper manual, which gives the performer more scope.

The accompanying recording made by the author of the present doctoral thesis comprises performances of the following six pieces:

1. Jean-Henri d'Anglebert, ⁶ *Prélude re mineur*. This *prélude non mesuré* or unmeasured prelude — the first movement of a harpsichord suite from a collection of *Pièces de clavecin* published in Paris in 1689 — should be played on a late seventeenth-century or eighteenth-century French harpsichord, as “The keyboards and actions of 17th-century French harpsichords are especially elegant.”⁷ The dynamics are therefore relatively smoother and weaker. Jean-Henri d'Anglebert (1629-1691) was a virtuoso harpsichord player at the Court of King Louis XIV.

2. Christian Petzold's *Concerto IV* from the *Recueil Des XXV Concerts Pour le Clavecin, Premier Volume*, should be played on a German seventeenth- or eighteenth-century harpsichord. Christian Petzold (1677-1733)⁸ was a German composer, harpsichord player and organist.

3. Christian Gottlob Neefe, *Fantasia in F minor*. Christian Gottlob Neefe (1748-

⁴ Ripin, Edwin M. / Schott, Howard / Koster, John (1), Wraight, Denzil (2(i), 3(iii) 4(iii)), Koster, John (2(ii), 3(ii), 3(ii)(a,b,c)), Kenyon de Pascual, Beryl (2(iii), 3(ii)(e), 4(iv)(c)), Ripin, Edwin M. / Schott, Howard (with G. Grant O'Brien) / Koster, John (3(i)), Huber, Alphons (3(ii)(d), 4(iv)(b)), Dowd, William, / Koster, John (4(i)), Ripin, Edwin M., Schott, Howard / Mould, Charles (4(ii)), Ripin, Edwin M., Schott, Howard / Whitehead, Lance (4(iv)(a,b-h)), Schott, Howard, Elste, Martin (5), entry: *Harpsichord*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 11, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001, p. 10.

⁵ *Idem*, p. 10.

⁶ Ledbetter, David, haslo: *D'Anglebert, Jean-Baptiste-Henry*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 6, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

⁷ Ripin, Edwin M. / Schott, Howard / Koster, John (1), Wraight, Denzil (2(i), 3(iii) 4(iii)), Koster, John (2(ii), 3(ii), 3(ii)(a,b,c)), Kenyon de Pascual, Beryl (2(iii), 3(ii)(e), 4(iv)(c)), Ripin, Edwin M. / Schott, Howard (with G. Grant O'Brien) / Koster, John (3(i)), Huber, Alphons (3(ii)(d), 4(iv)(b)), Dowd, William, / Koster, John (4(i)), Ripin, Edwin M., Schott, Howard / Mould, Charles (4(ii)), Ripin, Edwin M., Schott, Howard / Whitehead, Lance (4(iv)(a,b-h)), Schott, Howard, Elste, Martin (5), entry: *Harpsichord*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 11, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001, p. 18.

⁸ Härtwig, Dieter, entry: *Pezold, Christian*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 19, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

1798)⁹ was a German opera composer and conductor, who — as the Court organist in Bonn — was one of Ludwig van Beethoven's first teachers. The score of this piece says that it has been written 'per il clavicembalo'. The *clavicembalo* was the Italian name for the harpsichord, while in Germany the harpsichord was variously called *Cembalo*, *Cavicimbal*, *Flügel* or *Kielflügel*.¹⁰ In the eighteenth century, the words *cembalo*, *clavecin* or harpsichord had a different meaning than in the twentieth century. In Germany in the eighteenth century, these names merely meant that the keyboard instruments in question had the shape of a wing or a harp. As the German word for 'wing' is *Flügel*,¹¹ this piece can be played on the harpsichord as well as on the pianoforte — and even on the clavichord.

4. Benedetto Marcello, *Sonate XI*. As this piece was written for the Italian harpsichord — which usually had only one manual — it can also be played on a two-manual instrument. Benedetto Marcello (1686-1739)¹², was a Venetian nobleman who studied law as well as music. He composed oratorios, operas, stage serenades and over 400 cantatas.

5. Ludwig van Beethoven, *Dreizehn Variationen über das Thema "Es war einmal ein alter Mann" aus der Oper "Das rothe Käppchen" von Dittersdorf*. WoO 66. This piece was supposed to be played on the pianoforte, but — as its style is similar to that of the eighteenth century (it was written in 1792) — it can also be played on the harpsichord.¹³ The author of the present study has had the idea of using the pianoforte approach as a source of inspiration for performing the piece on the harpsichord,

⁹Hoffmann-Erbrecht, Lothar, entry: *Neefe, Christian Gottlob*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 17, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

¹⁰Ripin, Edwin M. / Schott, Howard / Koster, John (1), Wraight, Denzil (2(i), 3(iii) 4(iii)), Koster, John (2(ii), 3(ii), 3(ii)(a,b,c)), Kenyon de Pascual, Beryl (2(iii), 3(ii)(e), 4(iv)(c)), Ripin, Edwin M. / Schott, Howard (with G. Grant O'Brien) / Koster, John (3(i)), Huber, Alphons (3(ii)(d), 4(iv)(b)), Dowd, William, / Koster, John (4(i)), Ripin, Edwin M., Schott, Howard / Mould, Charles (4(ii)), Ripin, Edwin M., Schott, Howard / Whitehead, Lance (4(iv)(a,b-h)), Schott, Howard, Elste, Martin (5), entry: *Harpsichord*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 11, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001, p. 4.

¹¹Skoda, Eva & Paul Badura, *Interpreting Mozart: The Performance of His Piano Pieces and Other Compositions*, ed. cit., p. 15.

¹²Field, Eleanor Selfridge, entry: *Marcello, Benedetto Giacomo*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 15, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

¹³Similarly, the *Pathétique Sonata* op. 13, which was first published in 1799 as a sonata for pianoforte, was later published as a harpsichord sonata under the title *Grande Sonate Pathétique Pour le Clavecin ou Piano-forte, Oeuvre 13*, published by Melles Erard [Paris 1801].

Cf. Hoffmeister. <https://www.abebooks.com/Grande-Sonate-Pathetique-Clavecin-Piano-forte.Oeuvre-13/30668583920/bd>. The score can be accessed on the website of the Österreichische

Nationalbibliothek: :

https://search.onb.ac.at/primoexplore/fulldisplay?docid=ONB_alma21388320960003338&context=L&vid=ONB&lang=de_DE&search_scope=ONB_gesamtbestand&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=default_tab&query=any,contains,Sonate%20Path%20C3%A9tinue%20Pour%20le%20Clavecin%20ou%20Piano-forte&offset=0

especially as regards dynamics.

6. Marta Ptaszyńska (1943-), *Touracou*.¹⁴ As the composer does not stipulate on which instrument the piece should be performed, the author of the present study plays it on a copy of a historical harpsichord, which in her opinion allows the performer to achieve a better imitation of the sound of the *touracou*.¹⁵

Given the descriptions of the above-mentioned six pieces, the best choice might well be a late eighteenth-century French harpsichord, as such an instrument would have a variety of pedals or knee levers for changing the dynamics, creating better *crescendo* effects or changing the register without any need for the hands to move. For practical reasons, however (e.g. the need to practise on a day-to-day basis), it would be difficult to acquire an instrument that would best fit our requirements. The author of the present study has therefore chosen to carry out her practical research and experiments on a copy of the Pascal Taskin harpsichord¹⁶ — dating from around 1769 and made in Krakow by Witold Gertner in 2015¹⁷ — as this eighteenth-century French instrument is perfectly capable of showing all the requisite details in every piece:

“Indeed, although there is little evidence that French harpsichords were exported to other countries during the 18th century, it has been recognized during the 20th century revival of the harpsichord that the classic five-octave French double perhaps comes closest to the ideal of an all-purpose instrument, versatile enough to be a satisfactory medium for the interpretation of harpsichord music of all countries and periods. Thus modern harpsichords modelled after the work of Taskin and other 18th century French makers have been in widespread use during the last half of the 20th century.”¹⁸

It is on such an instrument that the author of the present study has tried to imitate the character of the particular instrument for which each of the above pieces has been written.

The next two chapters of the present study will give more concrete details on the ways in which harpsichord players can enhance the dynamics of the instrument and

¹⁴ https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marta_Ptaszy%C5%84ska, entry: „*Marta Ptaszyńska*”, accessed 20.07.2023.

¹⁵ <https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turakowate>, hasło: *Turakowate*, accessed 20.07.2023.

¹⁶ Dowd, William R. / Koster, John, entry: *Taskin, Pascal (Joseph)*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 25, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

¹⁷ <https://rzeczypiekne.pl/project/witold-gertner/>, entry: „*Witold Gertner*”, accessed 20.07.2023.

¹⁸ Ripin, Edwin M. / Schott, Howard / Koster, John (1), Wraight, Denzil (2(i), 3(iii) 4(iii)), Koster, John (2(ii), 3(ii), 3(ii)(a,b,c)), Kenyon de Pascual, Beryl (2(iii), 3(ii)(e), 4(iv)(c)), Ripin, Edwin M. / Schott, Howard (with G. Grant O'Brien) / Koster, John (3(i)), Huber, Alphons (3(ii)(d), 4(iv)(b)), Dowd, William, / Koster, John (4(i)), Ripin, Edwin M., Schott, Howard / Mould, Charles (4(ii)), Ripin, Edwin M., Schott, Howard / Whitehead, Lance (4(iv)(a,b-h)), Schott, Howard, Elste, Martin (5), entry: *Harpsichord*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 11, op. cit., p. 26.

in particular will examine the various problems connected with the performance of dynamics in the musical works which have been chosen to form the basis of the present doctoral thesis.

Chapter II: The execution of dynamics on the harpsichord

As the jack connected to each key has the same length and the corresponding plectrum is the same distance from the strings — which are much quieter than pianoforte strings — the basic character of the sound of the harpsichord is even and — were it not for the ‘help’ of the performer — would not have any dynamic at all. However — as we shall see — it is possible to show a whole range of dynamics on the harpsichord, ranging from *piano* and *dolce* to *forte*. Indeed, it is even possible to show a gradual step-by-step increase or decrease in the actual volume of the sound. And, of course, it is important for performers to be able to show the dynamics which are dictated by the score and which they themselves feel.

The author of the present study will now proceed to examine the ways in which the execution of dynamics on the harpsichord can be enhanced in solo playing.

2.1 Articulation by movement of the fingertips

“Skilled artists know how to beguile the ears at the harpsichord, so that we believe we are hearing loud and soft tones even though the quills produce them with mostly equal force.”¹⁹

First of all, we should understand the way in which sound is produced on this instrument. As the harpsichord is a plucked instrument, we should make use of the tiny, sensitive nerves that we have in each of our fingertips in order to fully control the plectrum which is connected to each key as it plucks the strings — not unlike the way in which one plucks the strings of a lute or a guitar. As the keyboard action of the eighteenth-century French harpsichord is slightly heavier than that of its predecessor of the previous century,²⁰ the sound and its dynamics are influenced both by the speed of the fingertip movement and the amount of force used in pressing the keys. Different

¹⁹ Kosovske, Yonit Lea, *Historical Harpsichord Technique. Developing “La douceur du toucher”*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington & Indianapolis, 2011, p. 64.

²⁰ Ripin, Edwin M. / Schott, Howard / Koster, John (1), Wraight, Denzil (2(i), 3(iii) 4(iii)), Koster, John (2(ii), 3(ii), 3(ii)(a,b,c)), Kenyon de Pascual, Beryl (2(iii), 3(ii)(e), 4(iv)(c)), Ripin, Edwin M. / Schott, Howard (with G. Grant O’Brien) / Koster, John (3(i)), Huber, Alphons (3(ii)(d), 4(iv)(b)), Dowd, William, / Koster, John (4(i)), Ripin, Edwin M., Schott, Howard / Mould, Charles (4(ii)), Ripin, Edwin M., Schott, Howard / Whitehead, Lance (4(iv)(a,b-h)), Schott, Howard, Elste, Martin (5), entry: *Harpsichord*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 11, ed. cit., p. 25.

articulations are required in order to achieve dynamics, depending on whether there is only one manual, two coupled manuals or several registers.

“The regulation of the plectra and the movement of the keys and jacks constitute the resistance to the finger known as touch; and on this depend many of the most fundamental aspects of refined harpsichord playing.”²¹

Our fingertips should feel the resistance when the plectra are plucking the strings:

“Resistance is produced by the plectrum pressing upwards against the string before plucking it; and the longer, thicker and less supple the plectrum, the greater the resistance.”²²

When the fingertips come into contact with the instrument,

“The finger feels almost as though it were the plectrum itself, and an illusion of actual contact with the string is created.”²³

The early Italian harpsichord could produce two kinds of sound:

“The point at which a string is plucked is important in determining the character of the instrument’s sound. When the plucking point is near the nut (close plucking) the sound is nasal; nearer the middle of the string (centre plucking) it is rounder.”²⁴

This also applies to the later two-manual harpsichords.

In the light of these basic facts and from her own experience (including experience gained from attending various master classes), the author of the present study would now like to discuss two ways of producing harpsichord sound — the faster-fingertip movement and the slower-fingertip movement. When we need a calmer, rounder, singing sound, we can consider the dynamic of the sound to be *p*. The fingertips press the keys down gently with a relatively slow movement. Here the author would use a finger

²¹Russell, Raymond, *The Harpsichord and Clavichord: An Introductory Study*, W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 1973, p. 16.

²²*Ibidem.* p.16.

²³*Ibidem.* p. 16.

²⁴Ripin, Edwin M. / Schott, Howard / Koster, John (1), Wraight, Denzil (2(i), 3(iii) 4(iii)), Koster, John (2(ii), 3(ii), 3(ii)(a,b,c)), Kenyon de Pascual, Beryl (2(iii), 3(ii)(e), 4(iv)(c)), Ripin, Edwin M. / Schott, Howard (with G. Grant O’Brien) / Koster, John (3(i)), Huber, Alphons (3(ii)(d), 4(iv)(b)), Dowd, William, / Koster, John (4(i)), Ripin, Edwin M., Schott, Howard / Mould, Charles (4(ii)), Ripin, Edwin M., Schott, Howard / Whitehead, Lance (4(iv)(a,b-h)), Schott, Howard, Elste, Martin (5), entry: *Harpsichord*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 11, ed. cit., p. 9.

movement that could be called “sticky action”: the skin of the tip of the finger must first of all firmly stick to the surface of the key, after which it slides ever so slightly from the surface of the key towards the palm of the hand, so that the sliding movement is barely noticeable. At the same time, the arm is kept light. When the plectrum plucks the string with this slower fingertip movement, a singing, more rounded sound can be produced without any movement of the arms.

On a one-manual instrument without any additional register, the dynamic and the tension of the sound are relatively weak, as the strings are only too likely to stop vibrating. In this case, therefore, a faster-fingertip movement is required in order to produce a louder sound and to help to prolong the vibration and the tension of the sound — and so, if the performer wishes to have legato articulation, the proper tempo should be used in order to maintain the tension and the overtones of the sound between succeeding notes.

The second way of producing harpsichord sound is the faster-fingertip movement, which is similar to pushing or tapping. Using this technique, we make the plectrum come into contact with the string more decisively, thus producing a sound that is more brilliant, energetic or sometimes more nasal. If the performer wishes to have a sound with a longer overtone, he or she must release the energy from the fingertips immediately after pressing the key down in order to be able to hear the overtones better, as pressing the key sharply or too energetically can sometimes stiffen the body and make the instrument sound dry and — more importantly — prevent the performer’ from hearing these overtones. A dry sound is prone to producing unnecessary accents that can interrupt a musical phrase, so the timely release of energy is conducive to maintaining a longer musical phrase. The way to release the energy is to let one’s fingertips stay lightly on the surface of the keys after pressing the keys down. However, to release energy fast, the fingers leave the keys as soon as the fingertips have pressed the keys down fast. In some contexts, this gives the sound a staccato articulation.

With the faster-fingertip movement, if we wish to have an elegant, delicate, light and smooth sound — especially in a trill or in passages with small-value notes, as in unmeasured preludes — our palms, wrists and forearms need to be at the same height. Our fingertips must also ‘hang’ lightly on the keyboard, making a fast, active fingertip movement that is reminiscent of the light plucking of the strings of a guitar or lute. It would be good if the performer could feel the fingertips becoming smoother and softer — sticking to the surface of the keys in order to feel the plectra evenly plucking the strings. This way of producing harpsichord sound is more suitable for single-manual

instruments or for light registers such as the 8-foot register and the lute register.

A proper execution of the fast- and slow-fingertip movements will help the performer to avoid having a stiff or heavy arm that would inhibit his or her playing. For example, when the performer wishes to express a *p* with a *dolce* sound and his or her fingertips are in fast-movement contact with the keys, he or she will immediately feel hindered by the fact that the sound of the harpsichord has been given too much energy (too much sharpness) by the faster-fingertip movement, which in this case goes against the wishes of the performer, making the body stiff and nervous and producing sound that has too much energy.

Here the author of the present study would like to discuss the way in which sound is produced on the harpsichord in somewhat more detail in order to make it easier for the performer to achieve a good quality of sound with a greater dynamic range for each note by ensuring proper weight and movement of the fingertips as they come into contact with the keyboard. Two methods in particular are worthy of note:

1. The sensitivity of the fingertips on repeated notes can be achieved by doing an exercise with one finger. A different tempo can be used for this repetition, during which the performer can determine exactly how much energy should be released on each finger, depending on the resistance from the plectrum as it plucks the string. In harpsichord playing, the expression and quality of the sound of each note is very important, as it helps to build the overall dynamic of the musical phrase. During a high-quality harpsichord performance, an experienced listener can feel and hear every small dynamic change which the performer makes for each note and can thus easily see the differences between different performers. When exercising repeated notes, the performer should also try the fastest possible tempo, because — as compared with other keyboard instruments — the keys of the harpsichord have an extremely short reaction time.

2. Sometimes there are places where we need to use only one finger in order to play a passage with good *legato*, as in old fingering. It is the personal experience of the author of the present study that better control of the sound of the harpsichord can be achieved by first practising the exercise of making *legato* sound by moving the same finger from one key to an adjacent key. Later — using normal fingering to play the same notes — the performer can feel that there are more and more dynamics in the sound when the fingertips touch the keyboard.

2.2 Finger-keyboard "mechanics"

When we examine various levels of resistance on both manuals, we can see that the sound and dynamics of the upper manual are less intensive, and so are more suitable for creating an echo effect. In order to have better control of the weaker dynamic of the upper manual — and also to have better control of articulation and the keyboard — the fingertips need to be very close to the keys — much closer than on the lower manual or when playing on coupled manuals. When playing at a fast tempo, the fingertips should ideally be slightly curved and they should move fast and lightly. When playing *legato* with a singing sound, the author of the present study keeps the fingertips very flat, using articulation which links the notes very closely with each other, as if the fingers were glued together.

On the lower manual, the resistance of each key and the sound dynamic are much greater and richer, as the harmonics allow the sound to last longer. Differences in dynamics — which depend on the way in which notes are articulated — can therefore be shown more clearly by means of fast and slow movements of the fingertips. The lower manual, which has a singing sound (especially on a French instrument) requires a delicate touch with a somewhat slower movement of the fingertips. When playing on the lower manual, the author of the present study achieves changes in dynamics mainly by keeping the fingertips flat as they control the articulation of notes and the movements of the keys.

When the manuals are coupled, not only is the resistance of the keyboard very strong, but so is the loudness of the sound, as two strings are plucked together. Coupled manuals therefore allow the fingers to have more contact with the keyboard, thus increasing the dynamic effects which can be achieved by various kinds of articulation. When we wish to produce a very expressive *legato* with a strong dynamic, for example, the fingertips must be heavier and must go deeper into the keyboard. In the experience of the author of the present study, the strength of the resistance of the keyboard in the case of coupled manuals is comparable with the execution of the *Bebung*²⁵ technique on the clavichord — especially in the lower register of the clavichord keyboard. When the fingers strike the keys with a very fast movement, the sound is not only very strong and clear, but also has a percussion effect.

When various registers are added, the resistance of the keyboard changes, as do the

²⁵ Rinpin, Edwin M./ Moens-Haenen, G., entry: *Bebung*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 3, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

dynamic and the colour of the sound. In order to have better control of the sound and to be able to feel the varying resistance when two or even three plectra are plucking the strings, the fingertips should be kept as close as possible to the keyboard and any movement of the arms should be minimal. The sound of the lute register, which is on the upper manual, is very short, light and dry. In the opinion of the author of the present study, this special sound acoustic requires that the fingertips be very light and move with a very fast movement when coming into contact with the keyboard.

When the manuals are coupled and we are playing on the lower manual without using the 8-foot register — and the sound is being produced only by the 8-foot register on upper manual — the author of the present study feels that there is less resistance from the coupled keyboards than when the 8-foot register of the lower manual is added or when playing only on the 8-foot register of the lower manual without any coupling, the sound also being slightly quieter, smoother and lazier. When playing without the 8-foot register, the author of the present study uses flat fingers and a slower fingertip movement to produce a particularly singing sound.

Some people see the 4-foot register as one that merely adds color and brilliancy. With the brilliancy of the 4-foot register, the performer can easily feel that the dynamic of the sound is very loud and has a certain sharpness. When the 4-foot register is added to the lower manual, we can feel that the plectra plucking the strings meet less resistance, but in order to produce a better quality brilliant sound, it is better for the fingertips to press the keys with a fast movement without excessive force. When the 4-foot register is used with coupled manuals, the sound is produced by three plectra plucking the strings, so our fingertips will feel strong resistance from the keyboard, which has become heavy. In order to have full control of the three plectra plucking the strings together and also to produce a very powerful and brilliant sound, the author of the present study presses the keys down with heavier fingertips, using a fast finger movement.

2.3 Articulation in harpsichord playing

Articulation is one of the most important elements for showing dynamics in harpsichord playing. Even though the instrument itself has a limited dynamic range in the case of a single note, articulation can extend that range from a very short *staccato*

to an over-*legato* or *legatissimo*²⁶ — all the more so when several or more notes are played together. During harpsichord playing, the dynamics should be shown by means of fast changes in articulation, which is naturally influenced by note grouping, rhythm grouping and sometimes also by finger grouping or early fingering. Fast changes in articulation should be executed smoothly, so as to be barely noticeable. When there is polyphony in the music texture, the performer should show one voice as being more important than the others (e.g. by giving it a stronger dynamic). The performer can sometimes use different articulations or mixed articulations in each hand in order to show dynamics, for example making the notes in one voice longer, while making the notes in the other voices shorter. Such changes depend on the acoustics of the hall, the tension of the harmony, the particular voice, the notes to which the performer would like to give more emphasis, etc. The author of the present study will now proceed to discuss the various articulations connected with the various dynamics that can be used in harpsichord playing.

1. Staccato. *Staccato* can easily help to show a *forte* dynamic on the harpsichord and is also quite easy to execute. However, as *staccato* articulation can easily produce an unwanted accent and a louder sound that can disrupt the shape of the music and its singing quality, the fingertips should closely control the keyboard and not leave the keys very quickly on each note. On the harpsichord, notes can easily be played separately (i.e. with a gap, as in *staccato* articulation), so — before the classical period — composers gave fewer articulation marks in their scores. In particular, it was rare for a composer to put a *legato* mark in his scores. On early keyboard instruments, therefore, most music is played *non legato*. However, as tempos are generally faster on the harpsichord because of the instrument's particular sound, notes that are played *non legato* sound as if they are being played with *staccato* articulation. On the harpsichord, therefore, it is better not to play all the notes using one kind of articulation — especially when would sound too *staccato* — in order to make it easier for the listener to understand the structure of the music and feel the harmony.

2. Legato. When used at a slower tempo, *legato* makes the overall dynamic relatively quiet and makes the sound of the melody smooth and well-shaped. At a fast tempo, *legato* helps to increase the volume of the sound and so makes the dynamic stronger. In harpsichord playing, however, *legato* also helps the performer to make the notes belong

²⁶ <https://sjp.pwn.pl/sjp/legatissimo;2565789.html>, entry: „*legatissimo*”, accessed 07.07.2023.

to different groups in order to make the structure of the music clearer to the audience. For example, when there are small-value notes belonging to one harmony and the notes do not need to be shown with any emphasis, they can be played *legato*.

3. Separated sounds. In harpsichord playing, there is a kind of articulation called division, which means making the sound separately. Although it is not a *staccato*, it can be used in several situations: 1. We can think of it as a breath inserted between the notes. It can be used in this way to show something new or special, such as a new harmony or a new motif that is being played for the first time. 2. This often happens in the bass, good examples being the allemandes and minuets of keyboard suites. A small *legato* is often executed between the notes which are on the strongest beat, while division articulation is more often used on the notes of the weaker beat to help the dynamic be lighter. 3. Sometimes, when the bass notes are in the same harmony, they should be played *legato* with a hidden slur, but when a new harmony makes its appearance, division articulation should be used before the bass note of the new harmony. 4. Division can often be used in a short passage in the bass voice, usually on two notes before a new bar, as this can enhance the dynamic and increase the tension with a small *crescendo*, thus helping the music to move on to the next bar. 5. In early fingering, we can see that separation articulation was already being used in the melody part with the same interval successively ascending or descending. In the keyboard works of Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck²⁷ and in Bach's *The Art of Fugue* or his organ chorales there are many examples of the melody and *cantus firmus* having the same long-value notes in succession. In polyphony, separation articulation is the best way to show the melody to an audience when the sound of the instruments has almost the same volume as the melody in each voice.

4. Mixed articulation. The harpsichord keyboard can be divided into three sections. Because the strings are very short from the A¹ key to the last key on the right side of the keyboard, their sounds are weaker and lighter than those to the left of the A¹ key. On the left side, the keyboard can be divided into two sections: 1. the bass section, in which the strings are much longer and can therefore produce a sound that is broader, heavier and of longer duration. 2. the middle section, which is between A¹ and A. In order to make the overall sound more balanced in a polyphonic texture — so that the melody notes and the bass notes can always be heard as the main or leading voices in the whole piece —

²⁷ Tollefsen, Randall H. / Dirksen, Pieter, entry: *Sweelinck, Jan Pieterszoon*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 24, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

when both hands are playing on different manuals and both hands are playing in different ranges, the performer should consider how to use mixed articulation for the melody, the middle voices and the bass — and also how to control the duration of the sound differently with each of the fingers of each hand.

5. Pause Articulation. Inserting a pause can help to show the note which follows it with a stronger or weaker dynamic, as we shall see in the following examples: 1. we can add a pause before a suspension note, making the note appear to be slightly delayed. In this way, the suspension note can be shown with a stronger dynamic and with emphasis. 2. When adding a pause before a note while playing, if the note is played with a slower movement from fingertip, the dynamic will be quiet and the note will be played *p*. However, if the note is played by pushing the key fast and harder, the dynamic will be strong and the sound will be louder. 3. When adding a pause after pressing the key down, the value of the note is slightly shorter than its original value. The dynamic of this note is also either weakened or strengthened, depending on the length of the pause inserted. As we know, in early keyboard music the basic dynamic had to be shown by means of the good and the bad beat. On the bad beat, in order to show that the note had a lighter dynamic, the notes had to be made slightly shorter, so that we could imagine that there was a short pause added to the end of the weak beat. In French ornamentation, ‘aspiration’ (to use François Couperin’s term) had a similar effect, as a pause had been inserted.²⁸ However, when the ‘aspiration’ effect is used on a strong beat or a strong note (as usually happens), the performer should make the note very short, which means inserting a longer pause, thus making the dynamic of the aspiration note very strong (*f*).

As far as articulations during actual performances are concerned, every aspect should be considered with respect to the style and character of the music, as well as the prosody of the musical phrase. Changes in articulation are also connected with the need to express the particular mood of the music in question. When the mood of the piece is melancholic, sad or rhetorical, for example, more *legato* should be used. When the mood of the piece is happy or full of hope, then less *legato* should be used.

2.4. Practical issues concerning the use of articulation

At the end of this part of the present study, the author would like to point out that

²⁸ Couperin, François, *Complete Keyboard Works*, Dover Publications, INC., New York, 1988, p.14-15. (*Explication des Agréments, et des Signes*).

apart from using the proper finger technique, articulation, changes of register and manuals in order to create dynamics in different pieces, the performer should also take into account the character of the sound of the instrument with which these pieces are connected. For example, given that the sound of an Italian instrument is very dry and sharp, when we play Italian music, we should imitate this sound with coupled manuals, each finger being very active, pushing the keyboard harder with a fast movement and using less legato finger technique.

2.4.1 The finger technique for producing legato and staccato articulation

Playing *legato* is one of the important ways in which harpsichord music can be made to sound good, as it helps to show the structure of the music to the audience in a better way. Although the fast- and slow-fingertip movement can also be used in order to execute a *legato* passage, it is better for our fingertips to come into contact with the keyboard “flatly”. There are three ways of achieving a *legato* articulation:

1. In his book entitled *L'art de toucher le clavecin*, François Couperin wrote that in order to achieve a *legato* on repeated notes or on successive mordents, we should change fingers while playing on the same key.²⁹ This piece of advice could help to restore the proper movement of the fingertips while smoothening the flow of a musical narrative in which the phrase is interrupted at every note or mordent. The slow fingertip movement produces a quiet *legato* with a round, singing sound. The finger of each successive note is always prepared earlier on the keyboard in order to avoid unnecessary accents that would prevent adjacent notes from smoothly joining together. When playing *legato*, our hands should avoid any unnecessary movements.

The next important point is to use the movement of the whole hand together with a little help from the wrist. We should use the gentle energy that comes from rotating the wrist to help one finger move to the next. Without any other movement, the whole hand should merely follow the wrist and the fingers turning in the same direction to the right or to the left. This rotation of the wrist, however, should be slow and executed smoothly, following the movement of the two fingers. In a *legato* passage, the performer should listen carefully and make sure that the sound between the two notes is smoothly joined together. This way of producing a *legato* is more suitable for a single manual or a single manual with an 8-foot register. However, when the performer wishes to execute a *legato*

²⁹ Couperin, François, *L'Art de toucher le Clavecin*, trans. Mevanwy Roberts, VEB Breitkopf & Härtel Musikverlag Leipzig, 1950, p. 16.

on the upper manual, the notes should be played at a faster tempo than on the lower manual in order to maintain the tension and the vibrations of the sound.

The execution of a *legato* is connected with the wrist, which can also be used for a longer trill in order to help it sound like a smooth melody. In the trill, our fingertips should therefore be placed flat on the keyboard, looking as if they were attached to the keyboard with small nails and making no more movement than a slight shaking of the hand together with the wrist at a tempo which is not too fast.

2. When a *legato* is executed at a faster tempo on the lower manual, our fingertips should press the keyboard deeper, which means concentrating more on the moment when the plectra pluck the strings. The finger should only let the key come back up when the other finger has felt the plectrum plucking the string. At the same time, the performer can also feel that emotions can be expressed through a richer sound. However, this way of producing a *legato* at a fast tempo does not really suit the 8-foot register because the character of the sound is relatively lazy, which requires that the fingertip movement should also be slow and slightly lazy. On the upper manual — where *staccato* articulation is produced only too easily — when the *legato* should be executed at a fast tempo in order to help the sound of adjacent notes join together without any gap, our fingers need to be very close to each other, as in the over-*legato* finger technique³⁰.

3. With coupled manuals, the performer can easily feel that the dynamic is *f*, because the sound is louder. In this case, therefore, there are also two ways to execute a *legato*. The first way is to use the normal finger-*legato* technique, which means that there is no gap when one finger moves or switches to the next finger. As the keyboard action is heavier when manuals are coupled, the second way is to make our fingers push harder and deeper to the bottom of the keyboard with over-*legato* finger technique in order to help the sound be louder and more expressive. While pushing the keys, we can feel that the resistance energy is similar to that when we do a *Bebung* on the clavichord, especially in the lower range of the keyboard. Should we wish to have a very ‘wild’ *legato* sound, when pressing the keys down we can make our fingertips very curved, with a very fast and aggressive touch. Such a fingertip movement makes the plectra pluck the strings with much greater force.

Several ways in which finger technique can produce *staccato* articulation. The fast-fingertip movement is always required for the execution of *staccato* articulation and there

³⁰ Over-*legato* comes from the German term *Überlegato*.

are several ways to do this. Sometimes the fingertips should be curved in order to be able to control the sound very precisely.

1. When we use the finger *legato* technique to play running passages and need to execute it with *staccato* articulation, our fingers should push the keys down fast and then leave them fast. This method gives a dynamic that is relatively *p* and light. The author of the present study would suggest using it on a single manual. Sometimes the listener can feel that the performer's delicate fingertip movement produces a *glissando* effect.

2. Patting the keys lightly gives *staccato* articulation a more joyful effect and can be used on the upper manual.

3. On a single manual, *staccato* can be executed with very curved fingertips with a very fast and aggressive movement, the arms being kept high in order to produce *staccato* notes with a very crisp sound that is reminiscent of birdsong. The author of the present study has used this technique in the performance of contemporary music.

4. When the tempo is fast, *staccato* articulation can be produced by making the fingertips feel that the keyboard is very hot. This makes the fingertips very active as they jump onto the keys with a fast movement. Sometimes, when the fingers producing a *staccato* articulation on fast running notes stay on each key a little longer, this helps to make the dynamic weaker, because — when the notes are played at a fast tempo — leaving the fingers a little longer on each note helps to reduce the vibration of the strings and the overtones of the sound. The sound of each note will be a little dry and the *staccato* articulation will be closer to *non-legato* articulation. When the sound has less vibration and shorter overtones, the dynamic becomes slightly lighter, which is preferable if the performer wishes to show a dynamic that has been changed only slightly — as, for instance, when the same figure notes are repeated several times and are played with *legato* articulation. When playing the notes on coupled manuals at a slow tempo, however, the fingers stay on the keys a second longer, which helps to make the dynamic stronger and louder than it would be if the fingers left the keys immediately. An example of this method can be found in the third chapter of the present study.

5. When *staccato* notes need to have a stronger dynamic, especially with coupled manuals, our fingertips first need to be very active, pushing the keys harder to the bottom of the keyboard with a fast movement that produces a percussion effect. Sometime on a single note or a single chord, the fingertips should stay on the keys one second longer before allowing them to come back up in order to make the sound longer and slightly

louder.

6. *Staccato* articulation should be executed on a note whose value has been shortened as a result of tempo manipulation, e.g. in the case of a dotted rhythm. When the tension and ‘inner’ dynamic of a crescendo rises on the dotted note, this note can be played longer than its original value, which naturally shortens the value of the following note. When the tension and inner dynamic grows more dramatically, the notes that follow should be even shorter. This effect is similar to the French “accent” ornament.³¹ However, we should not confuse an “accent” with a slur. In the case of an “accent”, two notes are in a *crescendo*, whereas in the case of a slur, two notes are in a *decrescendo*. The second note in an “accent” should therefore be made shorter and be played with an active and fast fingertip movement, using sharp energy or a very short *staccato* articulation. When two notes are connected by a slur, the dynamic (as we have seen) is a small *diminuendo*, the last note being played with a slight delay using a slow finger movement. The last note should also be played as if with a *staccato* articulation, but the finger should stay on the key one second longer in order to show that it ends with a *p* dynamic and does not end abruptly.

2.5 Tempo manipulation

Tempo manipulation is a fascinating way of showing music dynamics. Frescobaldi³² described it (in the preface to his toccatas) as early as in the first half of the seventeenth century:

“1. First of all, this style of making music must not be governed by a [regular] beat, being the same as that which we see used in modern madrigals which, however difficult, are easily handled by making the beat sometimes quite slow and sometimes fast, and occasionally even suspending it as it were in mid-air, according to the *affetti* or sense of the words.”³³

Frescobaldi’s statement is also applicable to eighteenth-century music, with the difference that the stress is put not on a particular word, but on a particular emotion

³¹ Couperin, François, *Complete Keyboard Works*, Dover Publications, INC., New York, 1988, p.14-15.

³² Hammond, Frederick (1-7, bibliography), Silbiger, Alexander (8-15, work-list), entry: *Frescobaldi, Girolamo*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 9, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

³³ Stembridge, Christopher, *Przedmowa do Girolamo Frescobaldi Orgel-und Clavierwerke: Toccate e partite d’intavolatura di cimbalo...Libro primo* (Rom, Borboni, 1615, ²1616), Bärenreiter, Kassel-Bassel-London-New York-Praha, 2010, p. 64.

or effect.

Tempo manipulation was used very early in the works not only of Frescobaldi, but also those of Rossi,³⁴ Froberger³⁵ and some other composers who lived in the same period and who had a great influence on Northern German composers such as Dieterich Buxtehude,³⁶ Franz Tunder,³⁷ Matthias Weckmann,³⁸ Johann Adam Reincken,³⁹ Vincent Lübeck,⁴⁰ Georg Böhm,⁴¹ Georg Dietrich Leyding⁴² and Nicolaus Bruhns.⁴³ In the eighteenth century, tempo manipulation was also used by composers such as Johann Sebastian Bach, Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, Christian Gottlob Neefe and even Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Free style playing (*Stylus Phantasticus*)⁴⁴ was also described by German theorists such as Kircher⁴⁵ and Mattheson.⁴⁶ French composers also made use of tempo manipulation, but did not describe it as well as Frescobaldi. In French music, this kind of playing was mostly to be found in unmeasured preludes, of which a great number have come down to us from composers such as Louis Couperin, Jean-Henri d'Anglebert, Louis Marchand,⁴⁷ Louis-Nicolas Clérambault,⁴⁸ Lambert le Bègue⁴⁹ and

³⁴ Holzer, Robert R., entry: *Rossi, Luigi*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 21, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

³⁵ Schott, Howard, entry: *Froberger, Johann Jacob*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 9, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

³⁶ Snyder, Kerala J., entry: *Buxtehude, Dieterich*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 4, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

³⁷ Snyder, Kerala J., entry: *Tunder, Franz*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 25, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

³⁸ Silbiger, Alexander, entry: *Weckmann, Matthias*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 27, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

³⁹ Grapenthin, Ulf, entry: *Reincken, Johann Adam*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 21, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

⁴⁰ McLean, Hugh J., entry: *Lübeck, Vincent*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 15, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

⁴¹ McLean, Hugh J., entry: *Böhm, Georg*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 3, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

⁴² Walter, Horst, entry: *Leyding, Georg Dietrich*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 14, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

⁴³ McLean, Hugh J., entry: *Bruhns, Nicolaus*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 4, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

⁴⁴ Collins, Paul, *The Stylus Phantasticus and Free Keyboard Music of the North German Baroque*, Ashgate Publishing Company, USA, Aldershot, 2005, p. 29-70.

⁴⁵ Buelow, George J., entry: *Kircher, Athanasius*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 13, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

⁴⁶ Buelow, George J., entry: *Mattheson, Johann*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 16, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

⁴⁷ Higginbottom, Edward, entry: *Marchand, Louis*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 15, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

⁴⁸ Tunley, David, entry: *Louis-Nicolas Clérambault*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 6, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

⁴⁹ Higginbottom, Edward, entry: *Lebègue, Nicolas*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 14, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

Claude-Bénigne Balbastre.⁵⁰

It is impossible to describe tempo manipulation in a very detailed way in all its forms, as very much depends on the good taste and the historical knowledge of the performer, who has to decide for himself (or herself) how to manage the matter of tempo manipulation.

1. Timing

Generally speaking, timing can be used to give prominence to a note, melody or chord at a special moment. Timing means staying on the note a little longer in order to “bring out” a moment which the composer seems to have intended to be more important. We should analyze phrases in order to identify important notes and apply timing to notes such as the ending note of a passage, a motif etc., a suspension note, dissonant notes such as fourths, sevenths and ninths or important notes which need to be resolved in a chord. If we see that the notes of a melody form a big interval with an ascending shape, the first lower note should be given more time.

Sometimes timing should be used together with an articulated accent in order to bring out a stronger moment in the dynamics. Accentuation emphasizes one short moment:

“Normal accentuation results from a momentary silence of articulation followed by a dynamic emphasis.”⁵¹

Accentuation is sometimes connected with the ‘agogic accent’.

“The effect of accentuation can be further increased by prolonging the note which carries or simulates the accent: this is sometimes called ‘agogic accent’.”⁵²

To execute the agogic accent, the fast-finger movement is needed in order to push the keyboard harder, after which timing is used. In this way, the note has a stronger dynamic, with more tension.

“One of the most effective is the silence of articulation followed by a crisp attack rather than a massive weight, and rendered more effective by that slight prolongation which can

⁵⁰ Curtis, Alan, Cyr, Mary, entry: *Balbastre, Claude-Bénigne*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 2, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

⁵¹ Donington, Robert, *Baroque Music: Style and performance*, W. W. Norton & Company, New York-London, 1982, p. 38.

⁵² *Ibidem*. p. 38.

draw momentary attention to a note without in the least forcing it.”⁵³

Timing can be used to increase the musical tension. The performer should: 1. Analyse the score in order to locate the emotions / *affetti* which the composer has woven into the piece. 2. Add new ideas of his or her own to the elements which have been given by the composer in order to show the music with rich dynamics, tension and emotions. Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714-1788) wrote in his famous treatise (1753):

“A musician cannot move others unless he too is moved. He must of necessity feel all of the affects that he hopes to arouse in his audience, for the revealing of his own humour will stimulate a like humour in the listener.”⁵⁴

There is one special way to help the dynamic to continue to develop by maintaining the tension of the music when playing the harpsichord. The performer should maintain a certain tension (in his or her mind) in order to prolong the process of producing the required dynamic or help the dynamic to reach a higher level. We may compare this keeping up of the tension to a conductor, who — in order to maintain the musical tension — keeps his hands up in the air after the music has ended: at that moment, every player should keep the instrument in his or her hands without making any movement, even though there is no sound, for the audience to be able to feel that the whole atmosphere of musical tension continues in silence until the conductor puts his hands down. When we have the same situation on the harpsichord, we can prolong the tension by firmly holding the notes or chords on the keyboard or by lifting our hands, but remaining motionless.

2. Rhythmic alternation

The use of timing has an influence on rhythm changes. However, these rhythm changes arise in such a way that the general sum of the beat or measure remains the same, meaning that there are various kinds of rhythm changes — something that must be discussed separately. In most situations, there are at least two notes, the first note becoming longer and extending to the following note, which itself is shortened because the value of the shortened note is shared with the previous one. More often than not, this happens on 'good' and 'bad' notes:

⁵³ *Ibidem.* p. 38.

⁵⁴ Bach, Carl Philipp Emanuel, *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, trans. William J. Mitchell, W. W. Norton & Company, INC., New York, 1949, p. 152.

“In Italian treatises beginning with Girolamo Diruta⁵⁵, *nota buona* and *nota cattiva*, “good” and “bad” notes, are used to refer to metrical order. Diruta explained that when a two-note group comes on the beat, the good note is the first and the bad note is the second.”⁵⁶

“Diruta classified certain fingers as ‘good’ and others as ‘bad’ : in either hand the second (index) and fourth (ring) were good, the others bad; the ‘good’ fingers were intended for the ‘good’ notes — mainly consonances on the downbeats (*crusis*) — while the ‘bad’ fingers were for the dissonances or upbeats (*anacrusis*).”⁵⁷

“Good” and “bad” notes and their musical consequences are carefully explained by Georgy Muffat⁵⁸ in Latin, German, Italian and French in the preface to *Florilegium secundum* (1698).

“Of all the notes found in any composition to be played, there are those that are good (nobiliores; edle; buone e principali; bonne, noble ou principales), and others that are bad (ignobiliores, seu viliores; schlechte; cattive, ò vili; chétives ou viles). Good notes are those that seem naturally to give the ear a little repose. Such notes are longer — those that come on the beat or essential subdivisions of measures, those that have a dot after them, and (among equal small notes) those that are odd-numbered and are ordinarily played down-bow. The bad notes are all the others, which, like passing notes, do not satisfy the ear so well, and leave after them a desire to go on.”⁵⁹

Walther⁶⁰ too defined good and bad notes:

Tempo di buona [ital.] is the good part of the beat. Under the equal *tactus*, the first of two minims, or the first half of the beat is good; also the first and third of four quarter notes, the first, third, fifth and seventh of eight eighth notes and so forth, because these tempi, or odd-numbered parts of the beat are suitable for the placement of a caesura, a long syllable, a syncopated dissonance, and above all a consonance (from which comes its

⁵⁵ Palisca, Claude V., entry: *Diruta, Girolamo*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 7, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

⁵⁶ Houle, George, *Meter in Music, 1600-1800; Performance, Perception, and Notation*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1987, p. 81-82.

⁵⁷ Palisca, Claude V., entry: *Diruta, Girolamo*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. cit., vol. 7, p. 365.

⁵⁸ Wollenberg, Susan, entry: *Muffat, Georg*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 17, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

⁵⁹ Houle, George, *Meter in Music, 1600-1800; Performance, Perception, and Notation*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1987, p. 82.

⁶⁰ Buelow, George J., entry: *Walther, Johann Gottfried*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 27, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

name – *di buona*). *Tempo di cattiva*, or *di mala* [ital.] is the bad part of the beat. In the *tactu aequali* or beat with two equal strokes, the second of two minims or the second half of the beat is bad; also the second and fourth of four quarters, sixth and eighth of eight eighth notes, because these tempi or even-numbered parts of the beat are all different from the above-mentioned parts, and are their opposites.’’⁶¹

Using the concepts of good beat and bad beat, tempo manipulation will naturally also be used between the up-beat and down-beat with a small change of articulation, creating a slight *crescendo*. When the notes go from the up-beat to the down-beat, we often play the up-beat with a barely noticeable acceleration that makes the music flow, taking the listeners forward. Sometimes we can even play the last note of the up-beat *staccato* in order to avoid undue acceleration of the tempo.

2.5.1 The creation of a crescendo or a diminuendo in a very short moment through tempo manipulation between two notes

If the performer wishes to show his audience rich dynamics with multi-layered levels in a longer phrase or melody, he or she needs to find a way to show the overall dynamic of the phrase, which is made up of short-moment dynamics. Later, he or she should consider how to use time manipulation to connect these short moments together smoothly and logically, thus creating tension in the music and avoiding a flat sound.

In harpsichord music, when the short moment is a *diminuendo* and *crescendo*, we have things such as *notes inégales* and a syncopated rhythm pattern. Small tempo manipulation with changes in articulation are often used together on two notes. When notes are played as *inégales*, the first note is played shorter than its written value and the second is played slightly longer. As with a syncopated rhythm, we often shorten the first note with *staccato* articulation, after which the second note naturally sounds louder and is more expressive. Elsewhere, when using early fingering in an ascending passage, we use the the same two fingers for each pair of ascending notes. As the second note of each pair is naturally shortened by the fingering, the overall dynamic and music tension of the ascending passage gradually increase with each succeeding pair of notes. Yet another situation is when there are chords in a dotted rhythm, as in a French overture. These are often played over-dotted in order to produce a dramatic *crescendo*. We often shorten chords in semiquaver rhythms by using *staccato* articulation, while the tempo also

⁶¹ Houle, George, *Meter in Music, 1600-1800; Performance, Perception, and Notation*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1987, p. 83.

gradually accelerates chords between the weak up-beat (*anacrusis*)⁶² and the strong down-beat (*crusis*).⁶³

When we do a short *diminuendo* on two equal shorter-value notes played *legato*, we often play the first note longer by taking some of the value of the second note. In other situations, in the melodic line it often happens that when six quavers being played *diminuendo* start on the strongest beat in 3/4 meter, the first, third and fifth notes are dissonant notes and should therefore be played more quietly (or *diminuendo*). The tension and the dynamic are influenced by the notes which are shortened: “The degree to which the note is shortened creates a different dynamic effect with a different level of musical tension.”⁶⁴ The author of the present study would therefore play these dissonant notes slightly longer until the second, fourth and sixth resolution notes are played, taking some of the value from the resolution notes. To show an overall *diminuendo* on these six notes, the author would play these dissonant notes on three different levels, each dissonant note being played sometimes longer, sometimes shorter. This also helps to show a decrease in tension. In order to produce a better *diminuendo* on these six notes, the author of the present study would play the resolution note *legato* (until the dissonant note) in order to avoid unnecessary accents on the shortened (resolution) notes, which would interrupt the whole *diminuendo*.

When showing a short moment with *diminuendo* on two equal shorter-value notes played *non-legato* or *staccato* at a not too fast tempo, the second note should come in slightly late, with a slower fingertip movement pressing the key down and the note ending with the fingertip kept on the key slightly longer.

2.5.2 The proper use of tempo manipulation

When playing music that is not free-style on the harpsichord, the main metre or tempo should be kept, of course, but the audience must not feel that this is something mechanical. Keeping the tempo while playing the harpsichord is the only way in which we can show the musical structure, which would otherwise be very vague and bereft of any tension. However, notwithstanding the regularity of the basic meter, the harpsichord player is free to make the music flow as he or she sees fit by making small, sudden changes of tempo that make the music sound less mechanical.

⁶² The notes on the weak beat which comes just before the bar line.

⁶³ The notes on the strong beat which comes just after the bar line.

⁶⁴ For a more detailed explanation of rhythmic alternation see: Donington, Robert, *Baroque Music: Style and performance*, WW Norton & Company, New York - London, 1982, p. 42-65.

Here the author of the present study would like to suggest three things that ought to be taken into consideration if we wish to achieve dynamics that are free and bold:

1. The performer should keep the inner beat in time. The inner beat is sometimes in each bar and sometimes in every two, four or eight bars. The performer is free to decide how to play the parts between the inner beats, using tempo manipulation to show how the music flows or fluctuates with rich dynamics. When using tempo manipulation to show rich dynamics, the performer should also think how he or she can show the melody clearly, as well as how he or she can show the motifs, the counterpoint, the expressive notes in the polyphonic structure and how the bass voice connects with the melody. All these things keep the audience focused on the music.

2. When we are showing a group of shorter-value notes and longer-value notes which are more important or less important, the group of more important longer-value notes needs to have a stronger dynamic, while the group of less important shorter-value notes needs to have a weaker dynamic. When we show the dynamic changes between these two groups of notes, tempo manipulation can take the form of an alternation between the group of shorter-value notes and the group of longer-value notes, the group of shorter-value notes possibly being played slightly faster than what is in the score, after which the group of longer-value notes can be played slightly slower. In this way, the music sounds more flowing than it would if it were played strictly in accordance with the score.

3. We should use tempo manipulation to show the dynamics together with the rise and fall of the musical tension. In harpsichord playing, the dynamic of the music is closely connected with its tension. In a musical phrase, the tension of the music combines with the harmony and dynamic of the melody and the bass line. When the dynamic is in a *crescendo*, the musical tension is normally also growing, so the tempo should gradually accelerate. In a *diminuendo*, the musical tension becomes lower, so the tempo should gradually slow down.

It sometimes happens that — when the melody goes up to the higher range or comes down from the higher range to the lower range — on *the piano* we can easily achieve a *crescendo* when the melody is ascending and a *diminuendo* when the melody is descending because the volume of the sound can always be shown to be louder in the higher range and quieter in the lower range. On *the harpsichord*, however, the higher range has a weaker sound than the lower range, so — in order to achieve the same dynamic effect on the harpsichord as on the piano — the author of the present study would use tempo manipulation to show an increase or decrease in tension instead

of attempting to achieve a real *crescendo* or a real *diminuendo*. Some examples can be found in the Beethoven Variations in Chapter III.

2.5.3 Tempo manipulation in the *brisé*, arpeggio and long trill

Dynamics can be shown differently when playing a *brisé*, an arpeggio or a long trill at different tempos.

1. ***Brisé***: This means that the intervals are to be played in arpeggio style, as if on the lute. *Brisé* can help the listener to hear the notes of the melody more easily. On the harpsichord, *brisé* can be played in two ways: from the lower note to the upper note or from the upper note to the lower note. *Brisé* can be executed with one hand or with both hands.

When playing a *brisé* between two notes at a slower tempo in an ascending direction, the dynamic is relatively quiet. If the *brisé* is executed at a fast tempo, it has the effect of a short *crescendo* and a sudden louder sound. There is one exception, however: when the music ends in *p* with a small interval and the two notes are played in a fast *brisé* style, the fingertips need to stick to the keyboard, controlling the sound by staying on the keys a fraction of a second longer instead of leaving the keyboard abruptly, thus avoiding dryness of sound with a sharp accent.

When playing a *brisé* from the upper note to the lower note at a relatively slow tempo, the dynamic is a small *decrescendo*, with a calm musical atmosphere. At a fast tempo, it helps the lower note to have a stronger dynamic effect.

2. ***Arpeggio***: When showing the dynamic in the harmony, the use of tempo manipulation should be considered in a chord (or between chords) which depends on the tension in the harmony. When there is more tension, the arpeggio of the chord should be played with more tempo manipulation than when there is less tension.

In a single chord, when the arpeggio is played at an even tempo, which means that there is no acceleration between the notes, it produces a calm and quiet dynamic. When the tempo is slightly faster or is agitated, the dynamic becomes stronger and will make the chord sound more expressive. When the tempo is very fast, it gives the chord a very strong dynamic, also making the volume of the chord very loud. In order to achieve a very loud sound, a fast finger movement is often required, pushing the keyboard harder and producing a percussion effect.

In order to achieve a *crescendo* in a chord when playing an arpeggio, we can divide the notes into two or three parts: 1. The bass note together with the other notes. 2. The

bass note, the notes of the middle voices and the top note. In these cases, the tempo can be speeded up after the bass note. In the first case, we should use timing on the bass note, then speed up the tempo from the second note to the upper note. In the second case, we can keep the bass note sounding longer, as in the first case, then speed up the tempo for the middle notes, after which we can insert a short pause or breath before playing the top note.

When showing the dynamics together with the tension in the harmony, the execution of tempo manipulation between the chords should be carried out with a good plan for each chord. For example, when showing the harmony in a progression with a *crescendo*, each chord should be played with a faster arpeggio than the previous one — or the first chord should start with a slow arpeggio, after which the subsequent chords are played with a faster arpeggio, the last chord being played as a full chord when the dynamic has reached its climax. Of course, situations differ and the performer can even use more complex solutions.

There is one special situation of which the harpsichord player should also be aware. When the chord is in resolution, in most cases it would be played with a slower arpeggio. However, when the general tempo of the piece is slow, the resolution chord can be played at a slightly faster tempo in order to show the resolution chord in a lighter dynamic. An example of this is to be found in the accompanying analysis of Jean d'Anglebert's unmeasured prelude in D minor.

3. The long trill: In the long trill, if we wish to achieve a graceful *crescendo*, we can start the trill at a slow tempo and then slowly speed up to the last two notes, which can be played slowing down a little and with a slower movement of the fingertips. The whole long trill should be played with *legato* articulation as a singing melody and the fingertips should be very close to each other and close to the keyboard. A good example of this can be found in Jean d'Anglebert's unmeasured prelude in D minor, where the composer shows it in the score.

2.6 Texture manipulation

Texture manipulation helps to show the rich inner feeling of a dynamic in melodies and chords by filling in the space between notes, so that the instrument does not sound empty. The Italian composers in particular gave the performer plenty of freedom to add notes in order to show their emotion and their virtuosity. Music written in the Italian style

by non-Italian composers such as G.F. Handel should also be performed in this way.

In early Italian music, it was also possible to add repetition notes and various arpeggios.⁶⁵ In an arpeggio, the performer could add notes which were connected with the repetition notes and adjacent notes in the middle voice. This often happened when there was a chord with more than two voices — sometimes performed with improvisation — an example being the first long pedal chord in the keyboard works of Frescobaldi and Rossi.⁶⁶ In French music, we have a phenomenon called *style brisé* :

“A practice related to arpeggiation is the breaking up of the harmony into a succession of notes played in varied order according to a precise plan, with much use of complementary and syncopated rhythms; the term used for this device is ‘spezzare’, ‘to split’. It had a parallel in the practice of the lutenists, which was taken over by the French harpsichord school and is usually called ‘style brise’ or ‘luthé’.”⁶⁷

“One well-known manifestation of the French approach to keyboard writing was the *style luthé* (lute style) or *style brisé* (broken style), an arpeggiated texture that produces a kaleidoscopic palette of shifting sonorities as well as the suggestion of an implicit polyphony.”⁶⁸

We can also add an ornament with an accent or a mixture of ornaments in the melody:

“The expert harpsichordist has to turn the instrument’s resource to good account by skilful articulation (*spiccato*) and, as Diruta recommends, by embellishing the music with ‘*tremoli* and lovely *accenti*’.”⁶⁹

We can add a mixture of ornaments on the most important note in the motif or melody, or — when the motif is repeated several times — the performer can use different ornaments to show the repeated motif in a stronger or slightly weaker dynamic. A different mixture of ornaments or sometimes just a simple ornament can therefore be

⁶⁵ Tagliavini, Luigi Ferdinando. *The Art of ‘Not Leaving the Instrument Empty’*: Comments on Early Italian Harpsichord Playing. “Early Music”, vol. 11, N° 3, 1983, p. 299–308.

⁶⁶ *Ibidem*. p. 299-308.

⁶⁷ Tagliavini, Luigi Ferdinando, The art of ‘not leaving the instrument empty’: comments on early Italian harpsichord playing, “Early Music” July 1983, p. 305.

⁶⁸ Kroll, Mark, *French Masters*, in Marshall, Robert, *Eighteenth-Century Keyboard Music*, Routledge, New York, 2003, p. 125.

⁶⁹ Tagliavini, Luigi Ferdinando. *The Art of ‘Not Leaving the Instrument Empty’*: Comments on Early Italian Harpsichord Playing. “Early Music”, vol. 11, N° 3, 1983, p. 300.

added on the strong note or good note, though it is not a good idea to add ornaments too many times in one short melody or in repeated motifs. Adding an ornament in the proper place makes the music sound more tasteful and more expressive. Such mixtures of ornaments should be created by the performers themselves.

There are other ornaments which we can add to harpsichord pieces in an elegant way when the dynamic is relatively quiet. They can be found in the explanations regarding ornaments given by various French composers: François Couperin gives these explanations in one of his harpsichord books,⁷⁰ as does Jean-Henry D'Anglebert in his *Pièces de Clavecin, Livre premier* under the name of *Marques des Agréments et leur signification*⁷¹ and as does Monsieur de Saint Lambert in his *Les Principes du clavecin*.⁷²

In a lot of Italian sonatas we can add the notes which belong to the harmony in the chord. This becomes apparent if, for example, we look at the sonatas of Benedetto Marcello, where we can often see sections with a figured bass, despite the fact that these are sonatas for solo harpsichord.⁷³ Sometimes, in order to increase the tension in the harmony, we can add an 8th and a 7th, the 7th needing some preparation. In this way, the musical texture is enhanced with more voices and the dynamic is also made richer and more powerful.

We can also add a small passage between the notes, in the manner of ornaments such as *coulé sur une tierce, sur 2 notes de suite, cheute sur vne notte, cheute sur 2 nottes, and double cheute a vne tierce*.⁷⁴ Ultimately, in order to do better texture manipulation, the performer should also be familiar with the principles of *partimento*,⁷⁵ *diminution*⁷⁶ and *basso continuo*⁷⁷ accompaniment.

⁷⁰Couperin, François, *L'Art de toucher le Clavecin*, trans. Mevanwy Roberts, Breitkopf & Härtel, Leipzig.

⁷¹D'Anglebert, Jean-Henry, *Pièces de Clavecin, Livre premier*, Chez L'Auteur, Paris, 1689.

⁷²I have used the English translation: Monsieur De Saint Lambert, *Principles of The Harpsichord*, trans. Rebecca Harris-Warrick. Cambridge University Press, 1984. p. 75-96.

⁷³Marcello, Benedetto, *Sonates Pour Clavecin*, Heugel, Paris.

⁷⁴These ornaments can be checked in the *Marques des Agréments et leur signification* [in:] D'Anglebert, Jean-Henry, *Pièces de Clavecin, Livre premier*, Chez L'Auteur, b.d.1689.

⁷⁵Williams, Peter & Cafiero, Rosa, entry: *Partimento*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 19, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

⁷⁶Garden, Greer(1), Donington, Robert(2), entry: *Diminution*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 7, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

⁷⁷Williams, Peter & Ledbetter, David, entry: *Continuo*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 6, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

2.7 The influence of tuning on harpsichord dynamics

At the end of the chapter II, the author of the present study would like to draw attention to the fact that good instrumental tuning is also one of the most important elements that can help the performer to achieve his or her desired dynamics during a performance. The instrument should be tuned in such a way that each note is well heard when several notes are played together, as tuning can change the colour of the sound of the harpsichord, as well as being able to make it sharper or smoother. In a natural way, it can bring more loudness and more tension to the sound of a chord, “whetting the appetite” of the performer’s ear and making him or her want to hear more, thus inspiring their musical sensitivity and their musical imagination to create even more dynamics.

Chapter III: The handling of particular dynamics problems in selected pieces

3.1. Jean-Henri d'Anglebert – *Prélude re mineur*⁷⁸

“Rhythmically free preludial pieces were common before the 17th century (under such titles as *intonazione*, *toccata*, *ricercare* and *prelude*), but the usual notation of these pieces was rhythmically precise even if the notes did not fall into regular patterns.”⁷⁹

“Despite superficial similarities, however, the harpsichord preludes are really a separate phenomenon from the lute and viol examples, and in the past too much has been made of their connection with the lute pieces. The surviving repertory of *préludes non mesurés* for harpsichord comprises over 50 works.”⁸⁰

“The majority of unmeasured preludes fall into one of two main groups: toccatas and tombeaux, relating to the Italian toccatas of Frescobaldi and the compositions of French composers in honour of dead teachers, patrons or friends.”⁸¹

„The unmeasured preludes of d’Anglebert constituted an innovative musical form which became a model for other composers.”⁸²

The way in which this type of prelude was composed evolved over time. Unlike Louis Couperin — who wrote his preludes using only semibreves — d’Angleberta pioneered the use of quavers and semiquavers as well as semibreves:

“Louis Marchand, Clérambault and Rameau all used a notation first adopted by D’Anglebert for the printed preludes of 1689.”⁸³

Prélude re mineur may be performed on the lower manual, as the dynamic of the prelude is relatively quiet and the prelude was meant to be improvised by the performer in order to see whether all the keys on this particular instrument functioned properly, as well as allowing him or her do a “warm-up” before the beginning of the “main

⁷⁸ All examples are taken from: Tilney, Colin, *The art of the unmeasured prelude for harpsichord, France: 1660-1720*, Volume I Facsimiles Ed 12226, Schott & Co. Ltd, London, 1991, p. 87-88.

⁷⁹ Moroney, Davitt, entry: *Prélude non mesuré*, [in:] Stanley Sadie, John Tyrrell (eds.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 20, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001, p. 294.

⁸⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 294.

⁸¹ *Ibidem*, p. 294.

⁸² *Ibidem*, p. 295.

⁸³ *Ibidem*, p. 295.

programme”:

“Rhythmically unmeasured notation for preludes originated in lute preludes designed to test the tuning of the instrument before playing”⁸⁴

In order to perform an unmeasured prelude, we need to understand the way in which slurs function, grouping certain notes into greater wholes: 1. “Slurs can isolate notes from what precedes or follows.”⁸⁵ 2. The task of a slur is to show the notes of the harmony. 3. “[A] slur can indicate that a group of notes has ornamental significance or melodic importance.”⁸⁶

The next step is to familiarise oneself with the way in which the scores of d’Anglebert’s works were normally written down:

“Semibreves are used for the basic notation, but fragments of melodic importance are identified by being notated in quavers. The sequence of notes from left to right indicates conventionally the sounding sequence of notes in time, and the occasional bar-lines indicate the end of a significant musical sentence [...] the use of quavers for the arpeggio shows that it is not to be played fast, but rather melodically, and the bar line indicates a pause to mark the arrival on the dominant.”⁸⁷

In this unmeasured prelude, dynamics are mainly achieved by means of tempo manipulation, timing, rhythm alternation on small-value notes and the particular sound character of the various registers of the keyboard.

Example N° 1. Jean-Henri d'Anglebert: Prélude re mineur, line 1



In this example, we have four different chords, each of which has its own musical meaning, so each chord should be played with a different dynamic. Arpeggio chords

⁸⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 294.

⁸⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 295.

⁸⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 295.

⁸⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 295.

should also be played at different tempos. As the first chord is the calmest, the arpeggio should be played not too fast and with a slight lingering on the bass octave D-d. The second chord brings more feeling because of its dissonance (and its being a partly held note), so here the arpeggio should be played at a faster tempo than in the case of the first chord. The third chord – written down with held dissonances – needs to be played somewhat slower than the second chord, but in the arpeggio the note e¹ should be given prominence in order to bring out its significance. The quavers marked in red should be short and should be closely linked to the bass note.

In the first broken chord, the rising melodic line of the initial four notes should be played *inégale*, but at a slower tempo because of the long dissonant note B, while the descending melodic line that follows should be played somewhat faster. By analogy, when the melody ascends again, it should be played somewhat more slowly, but faster than at the beginning, though with a rhythm that is just as *inégale*. The descending notes joined by a slur should be played faster, but in a melodious manner, meaning that they should be held longer. In the final chord, the melodic line should be played *ritardando*, while the last repeated F notes can be played somewhat later at an even slower tempo in order to underline the fact that the dynamic of the end of the phrase is *piano*.

Example N° 2. Jean-Henri d'Anglebert: Prélude re mineur, lines 1-2

In section a, the harmony gradually moves to the Dominant (B-major to F-major), so here we must have our first *crescendo*. In section b, the harmony changes, following the bass notes to the lower register, which also requires a *crescendo*. In these two examples, the melodic line is different, but it should always be given prominence. Any changes in dynamics are achieved by means of tempo manipulation. When the performer wishes to give prominence to the melodic line, the chords should be played so that the melody is heard clearly. Tempo manipulation is therefore essential when the arpeggio is combined with the main melodic line.

In section a, the melodic note a¹ has been highlighted in green. In order for

it to be given prominence, the arpeggio chord needs to be played at a fast tempo and held somewhat before the note a^1 is played. The note b^1 should then be held somewhat longer, after which the remaining small-value notes should be played faster. Similarly, on the note f^1 with a trill, the first g^1 needs to be held somewhat longer and the remaining notes played faster. In order to bring out the melodic line, however, the arpeggio chord in the left-hand part should be played more slowly. This ensures that the audience will have no difficulty in hearing that the long trill starts *piano* and is played louder and louder (i.e. there is a *crescendo* here).

When the melodic line later ascends (as has been marked with a second blue frame), it should be played much faster, though only after the first few notes have been played more slowly. The left-hand part should help to maintain the dynamic of the melodic line in the right-hand part. The dissonant note A, which has been marked in red, should be held longer, after which the following note G should be played firmly and made to ‘seamlessly’ join the melody without any gap. The final arpeggio chord should be played firmly together with the last long trill, which — being played after the first note of the trill — will then have a fuller colour. The first note of the trill should not be lengthened, as this might transform the desired *crescendo* effect into an undesired *diminuendo*.

In the melodic line of section b, we can find elements that are similar to those in examples 1 and part a of example 2. Here, however, we need a bigger dynamic and a fuller sound, so the bass notes after the blue line should be played *forte*, the keys being struck hard in order to achieve a percussive effect, while the melodic line in the right-hand part should be played *legato* and at a faster tempo, with only a slight lingering on the notes which are joined by slurs.

Example N° 3. Jean-Henri d'Anglebert: Prélude re mineur, lines 3-4



In section a, the harmony moves from the Tonic via the Subdominant to the Dominant Seventh (D-minor, G-minor, A-major), so here there should be a *crescendo*, each arpeggio being played ever so slightly faster than the previous one so as not to give

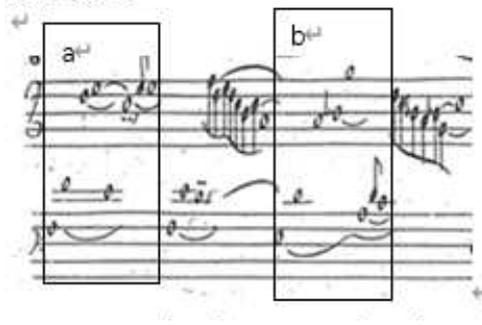
the impression that the tempo is slowing down. Firmly played arpeggio chords help to maintain the *crescendo* effect.

In section b we see a dissonant chord preceded by small-value notes in the left-hand part. These small-value notes should be played using tempo manipulation, i.e. the first three ascending notes should be played somewhat more slowly, while the descending notes should be played much faster. In section b, the author of the present study would like to show that the dissonant chord is resolved to the consonant chord, which also means that the musical tension changes from being intensive to relaxed. The bass note A of the arpeggio chord should therefore be played slightly faster in order to help build a rich sound in the extended chord, after which it should be momentarily held. The arpeggio chord which follows should be played faster, after which the whole chord should be held longer with a short fast trill.

Example N° 4. Jean-Henri d'Anglebert: Prélude re mineur, lines 11-12

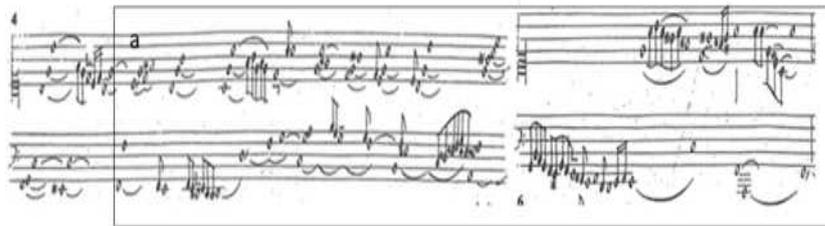
In example 4, we have a situation which is similar to that in example 3. The arpeggio chord (marked in red) divides the flow of the musical narrative. In this example, we have a coda which begins after the D-d octave in line 11 and which should be played at a relatively slow tempo with a tranquil *piano* sound. At this overall slow tempo, which is still gradually becoming slower, the arpeggio chord should be played faster (*accelerando*).

Example N° 5. Jean-Henri d'Anglebert: Prélude re mineur, line 6

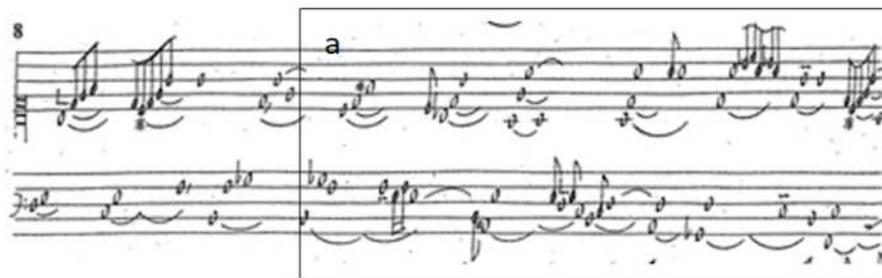


In sections a and b we have dissonant chords which are resolved in different ways. In section a, the chord should be played as a slower arpeggio, holding the dissonant note d^2 longer and adding a fast trill on the chord resolving the d^2 to c^2 . In section b, the dissonant chord should be played very fast and held longer. Its resolution in the form of the last three notes in the left-hand part should be played with *legato* articulation at a slower tempo, using slower finger movements and placing the fingertips flat on the keys.

Example N° 6. Jean-Henri d'Anglebert: Prélude re mineur, lines 4-5



Example N° 7. Jean-Henri d'Anglebert: Prélude re mineur, line 8



Example N° 8. Jean-Henri d'Anglebert: Prélude re mineur, lines 9-10

In each of the above examples (6-8), we have a similar situation: the chords change quickly and eventually reach the key of A-major at the end of each example, while the bass notes move upwards or downwards. The distinguishing quality of example 7 should be a *piano* dynamic, which is maintained thanks to the resolution of the dissonant notes at the end of the example. After each arpeggio chord, the dynamic should normally increase, and so it is possible to achieve a *crescendo* in each of the sections marked by a frame. The notes in the left-hand part should be played in time, while the rest of the arpeggio chord should be played using tempo manipulation, i.e. playing them slightly faster. Sometimes, however, when musical emotions rise as a result of faster playing, the left-hand part can also be played faster, as in frame b in example 8.

Example N° 9. Jean-Henri d'Anglebert: Prélude re mineur, lines 10-11

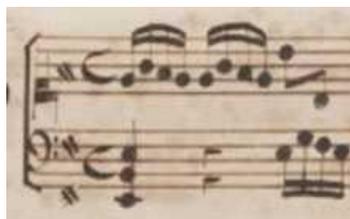
In example 9, we have a small cadence, some ascending arpeggio chords in the right-hand part and descending small-value running notes in the left-hand part. In order to achieve a *crescendo* in this part of the piece, we need to play the chords with *legato* articulation — following the harmony — each chord being played slightly faster than the previous one. The fourth chord — together with the bass note descending an octave lower — should be treated as the final ‘destination’ or culmination of the *crescendo*. The various components of this final chord should therefore be played more slowly, with

a fuller sound and with a percussion effect in order to show that each of them is important. The notes between the arpeggio chords should be played faster in order to prepare for the smooth ‘entry’ of the next chord element in the bass. In order to maintain a steady flow of the musical narrative — especially between the third and fourth chords and the fourth and fifth chords — the notes in both the left-hand and right-hand parts should be played at a faster tempo with a slight *accelerando* effect.

3.2. Christian Petzold – Concerto IV from the collection XXV Concerts Pour le Clavecin⁸⁸

As the first movement of this piece is fast, it should be played using coupled manuals. In the second movement — marked *Larghetto* — we should use both manuals together, without using the 8-foot register, or only the lower manual with the 8-foot register, because the second movement starts as a *Larghetto* in E-major in which the melody in the high register has a very *dolce* and singing sound. In the third movement — marked *Staccato* — the first chord starts in a very high register, which increases the dynamic, thus creating a big contrast with the second movement. As the whole third movement starts in the high register with full, wide chords played in a dotted rhythm — thus creating a sound that is full of energy — the author of the present study would here prefer to use coupled manuals together with the 8-foot register in order to create a powerful and brilliant sound. In the fourth movement — marked *Allegro* — she would use coupled manuals, because the musical texture mostly consists of demisemiquavers, making the addition of the 4-foot register unnecessary because the tempo is sufficiently fast and the sound is sufficiently loud.

Example N° 10. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 1, bar 1

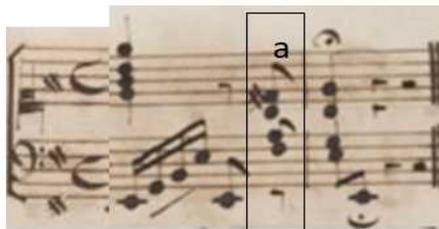


In Example 10, we have the beginning of the piece — in a minor key and with a melodic line in which the same semiquaver motif is played twice, after which the

⁸⁸ All examples are taken from: Petzold, Christian, from the collection of *XXV Concerts Pour le Clavecin...* SLUB Mus.2354-T-1.

melody leaps a fifth to the note h¹. The opening chord should be played *forte* with a fast arpeggio performed by pressing the keys hard, so that the plectra plucking the strings create an additional percussion effect. The melodic line in the right-hand part should move with a *crescendo* to the note h¹, after which the sudden descent by a whole octave should be decidedly weaker. The first e¹ of both groups of semiquavers should be held longer in order to increase the tension of the sound, while the last e¹ in both cases should be played with *staccato* articulation. The higher B (b¹) — which is the culminating point of the *crescendo* — should be played with more energy and held longer than the lower B, thus making the latter ‘appear’ slightly later. It is important that this lower B should be held somewhat longer and played very close to the keyboard with a slow and delicate movement of the finger — if held for too short a time, it would appear to be accented.

Example N° 11. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 1, bars 115-116



In example 11, we have the same minor chord as in example 10, but with a *fermata* closing the whole movement. In order to play it with a *fortissimo* dynamic, the preceding chord (marked with a frame) should be played with *staccato* articulation. The moment of silence thus created makes the final chord seem to be louder than it really is.

Example N° 12. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 4 Allegro, bars 139-140



In example 12, we have a situation which is different from that in example 11. In order to show the strong final chord, here the preceding chord (marked with a red frame) should be held longer and joined to the final chord using *legato* articulation.

Example N° 13. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 1, bars 8-10



In example 13, the harmony moves from the Tonic to the Dominant, which should always result in a greater dynamic, especially in view of the fact that the notes in the right-hand part are in the higher register and are thus very prominent. In the chords of the left-hand part in bar 9, the second and fourth chord should be played as fast arpeggios of a longer duration (dotted quavers instead of quavers). The resolution, however — i.e. the first chord and the third chord — should be shortened to a semiquaver, without any arpeggio effect. In bar 10, the first four chords in the left-hand part should be played with *legato* articulation in order to create a greater dynamic and — at the same time — a richer sound. The final octave $c-c^1$ can be played with a shorter *staccato* articulation in order to give prominence to the Dominant chord on the third beat of the bar, this being the culminating point of the *crescendo*. In the fragment marked with a red frame in the right-hand part, the main melodic line happens to be in the lower voice, which means that here the notes of the lower voice should be played slightly longer, thus increasing the dynamic and the musical tension.

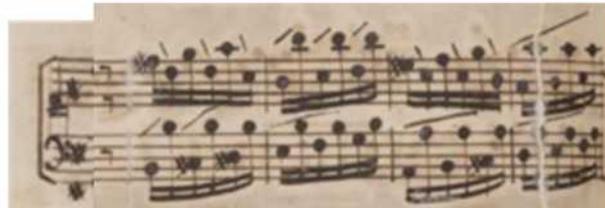
Example N° 14. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 1, bars 10-19



In example 14, we have a long phrase made up of short repeated motifs in a descending progression. In order to provide some variety, we should perform a gradual *diminuendo* in bars 10-14, grouping bars in twos and also changing the articulation and manuals for each group. The notes in the higher voice should be held

longer. In bar 11, the first four quavers in the right-hand part can be played with separation articulation, giving greater prominence to the highest notes, while the four last quavers should be played as groups of two notes joined by a (hidden) slur. In bar 12, the first four quavers should be played with *legato* articulation, while the last four quavers should be played with separation articulation. In bars 13-14, which have a lesser dynamic than bars 11-12, the quavers in the right-hand part should be played as if they were grouped in twos by slurs, with fingers placed flat on the keys in order to obtain a gentler sound. The g^2 in the upper voice should be held longer than the a^1 , while in bar 14 the f^2 -sharp should be held longer than the g^1 . The duration of the opening notes in bars 13 and 14 can be varied, making those of bar 13 longer. In bars 13-14, the left-hand part should be played on the upper manual in order to have a lighter sound in these two bars. The *crescendo* in bars 15-19 should be shown by moving the left hand back to the lower manual and using *legato* articulation in both hands. In particular, the semiquavers in the left-hand part should be firmly grouped using strict *legato* articulation and striking the keys harder, even creating a percussion effect with a louder and broader sound.

Example N° 15. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 4 Allegro, bars 81-95



In example 15, we have a situation which is similar to that in example 14 — the musical phrase is in the form of a descending progression. Here a *decrescendo* should be combined with a gentler and calmer *dolce* sound, using *legato* articulation on each slur. The bars should be grouped in pairs, while the notes of the melodic line should be held longer, first in the higher voice of the right-hand part, then — in the second bar — in the lower voice. Bars 81-84 should be played with a greater dynamic. When the melodic line is in the upper voice, these bars should be played ever so slightly faster. However, when the melodic line is in the lower voice, these bars should be played slightly more slowly.

Bars 85-95 should be played with a gradual, slight slowing down and their dynamic should be reduced. In the last four bars, the articulation of the notes of the higher voice should gradually change from *legato* to *staccato*.

Example N° 16. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 4 Allegro, bars 120-126



In example 16, we have a threefold repetition of a descending two-bar progression, requiring a *diminuendo* up to bar 125. In bars 120-121, both the right-hand part and the left-hand part should be very active, producing sound with a percussion effect. In bars 124-125, the chords in the left-hand part should be played on the upper manual, the fingertips carefully controlling each sound to ensure that it does not vibrate too much, as a gradual reduction of vibration on each note produces a *diminuendo* effect which gives the impression that the articulation used is *non legato* or separation articulation. In bar 126, we should return to the lower manual in order to strengthen the dynamic before the next *piano* section.

Example N° 17. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 1, bars 23-24



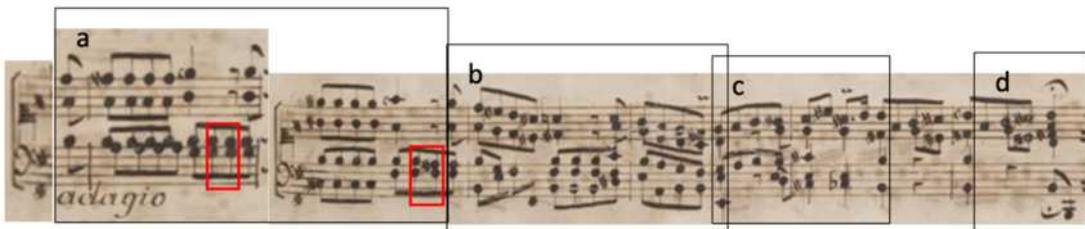
In example 17, the ascending right-hand part should be performed with a big *crescendo*. The first note of each group of four semiquavers should be held somewhat longer, while the remaining three semiquavers should be played faster. The highest b^2 , which is the (current) destination point of the *crescendo*, should be played with an agogic accent.

Example N° 18. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 1, bars 27-30



In example 18, the ascending repeated short motifs should also be played with a *crescendo*. This section of the piece should also be played on the upper manual, because the author of the present study would like to change the musical mood and dynamic to *piano*. In order to vary the sound, the semiquavers in the right-hand part should also be played alternately with a *staccato*-like articulation (bars 27, 29) and *legato* articulation (bars 28, 30). In bar 29, the semiquavers can be played somewhat faster as they move to the highest note b^2 , which is their logical destination and which should also be played with an agogic accent. The semiquavers in the left-hand part should be played without using tempo manipulation, as they must maintain a stable metre.

Example N° 19. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 1, bars 80-8



In example 19, the ascending dissonant chords moving towards their resolution should be played with a *crescendo*. The repetitions of each dissonant chord can be played as fast and compact arpeggios at a slightly accelerated tempo, starting the first dissonant chord as a slower arpeggio. When a dissonant chord has a broader shape, the repetitions should be played even faster. The resolution chord should be held somewhat longer in order to show the destination of the short *crescendo*, while later the thirds marked in red in the left-hand part should be played faster, because the resolution chord has 'stolen' time from them, making their duration shorter.

In section b, the descent to the lower register is combined with two small cadences, the first of which ends in B-major and the second in E-minor. Here there should be a *crescendo* at a relatively fast tempo. In the second cadence, however, the tempo should slow down with every successive chord. In the cadences, the first chords should

be held somewhat longer and played as fast arpeggios. In order to produce a richer sound and give the cadence a stronger beginning, the other chords should be full chords played with *legato* articulation.

In section c — still in the key of E-minor — the *crescendo* should be maintained, while each successive chord should be played as a slower arpeggio in order to obtain a heavier and more intense sound. Section d should be played on the upper manual — more slowly and with a *diminuendo* dynamic to end the phrase — thus creating an echo effect.

Example N° 20. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 1, bars 112-113



In the first bar of example 20, the left-hand part plays solo, descending in semiquavers to the lower register, while a whirling motif makes its entry in the second bar of the right-hand part. The descending semiquavers in the first bar should be played with a *crescendo*, holding the first semiquaver of the first and third group of four notes longer. The last three semiquavers should be played using separation articulation, as this is an excellent preparation for the entrance of the initial whirling motif in the right-hand part. The culminating point of the *crescendo* is the minim chord, which should be played with a compact arpeggio that makes the plectra produce a percussion effect.

Example N° 21. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 2 Larghetto, bar 1-4



In example 21, we have two two-bar phrases. In the first two bars, because of the harmonic changes in them (Tonic — Subdominant — Dominant — Dominant Seventh — Tonic) and also because it is going to the higher register, the first phrase should be played with a *crescendo*, while the second phrase — with its similar harmony and its descending shape — should be played with a *diminuendo*. The first chord should be played calmly with an arpeggio that is not too fast, while the subsequent notes in the right-hand part should be played with a slight *accelerando* until the highest note (b²) is reached. The

last chord in bar 1 should be shortened. In order to show a continually growing dynamic, especially in the melody, ornaments can be added on successive notes and – as mentioned above – tempo manipulation can be used, starting with a slower tempo and then gradually speeding up until we reach the highest note. In order to show the *diminuendo* in the second phrase – and also in order to achieve a calm sound without any sharpness – we should use delicate movements of the fingertips to touch the leys, slowing the tempo down ever so slightly.

Example N° 22. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 2 Larghetto, bar 5



In example 22, we have a similar situation, but the ascending melody forms a single line. Here the *crescendo* must be achieved by using bold tempo manipulation, playing much faster until we reach the dotted semiquaver. The value of each final semiquaver in the motif consisting of a quaver followed by two semiquavers should be shortened. The f²-sharp – being an important element in the building up of the musical tension – should be held somewhat longer.

Example N° 23. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 2 Larghetto, bars 14-17



In example 23, we have a typical pattern of three chords in the key of C-sharp minor: Tonic - Dominant Seventh - Tonic, which – together with the semiquavers in the right-hand part – have different tensions and dynamics, as well as different harmonic values. The first chord should be played quietly with a calm arpeggio, while the semiquavers in the right-hand part should be played faster, the first note of each group of four semiquavers being held longer. The third chord and the semiquavers in the right-hand part should be played more slowly. The last two bars – containing a cadence – should be played with a *crescendo*, the notes in the lower voice in the right hand together with the

notes in the left hand being played in time, without any tempo manipulation, while the melodic line in the right-hand part should be varied using an effect that is quite similar to that of the future rubato until we reach the last chord, which – being the strongest – should be played with a fast arpeggio. In bar 16, the first note of each group of semiquavers should be held longer in order to make the sound more and more intense.

Example N° 24. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 2 Larghetto, bars 22-25



In example 24, the melodic lines of the several voices – along with the changes in the harmony – move in the direction of the lower register, so the dynamic should grow. Here the crescendo can be shown by varying the way in which the chords are played. Every first chord in a bar should be played on time and should be slightly prolonged. The repeated quaver-semiquaver motif in the left-hand part should be played *accelerando* — especially in bar 23, in which each chord in the right-hand part should be played as an arpeggio which is faster than the previous one.

Example N° 25. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 2 Larghetto, bars 29-33



Example 25 starts on the Tonic in the key of E-minor and – via the chords B-minor and C-major 7 – moves to the final B-major chord. As the melodic line ascends, it should be played with a *crescendo*, but when it descends after reaching the note g^2 , it should be played with a *diminuendo*. By analogy – as in previous examples – the first chord should be played with an arpeggio that is not too fast, while the subsequent chords should be held somewhat longer and played with a faster arpeggio than the previous chord. The triplets in the right-hand part should be played after a full arpeggio has been played, using tempo manipulation in order to play them *accelerando* — except for the last triplets in bar 30, which should be played slightly more slowly, thus preparing for the entry of the chord,

which is the destination of the *crescendo*. There should now be a gradual *diminuendo* after the (somewhat longer held) note g^2 , the remaining demisemiquavers being played faster, with the fingers skimming lightly over the keys. Towards the end of bar 32, the quaver-and-two-semiquaver motif in the middle voice should be considerably slowed down, while the final chord should be played with a slow arpeggio, marking the highest note (b^1) with some delay in order to show the gradual fading away of the small dynamic.

Example N° 26. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 3 Staccato, bars 1-2



In example 26, as the first B-major chord – via the B-major 7 chord – gradually changes into the E-major chord in the second bar, a small *crescendo* is needed on the B-major Dominant and a slight *diminuendo* is needed while returning to the tonic E-major chord. The notes of the first arpeggio chord should be played evenly and at a tempo that is not too fast, while those of the second chord – the Dominant Seventh – should be played somewhat faster, adding notes at times, as in example 27. The notes of the third arpeggio chord – the Tonic chord – should be played slightly more slowly.

Example N° 27. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 3 Staccato, bars 5-6



In example 27, we have a situation which is similar to that in example 26, so here the second Dominant chord needs to be played differently. The right hand should play a more extended arpeggio — $f^2 - d^2 - h^1 - d^2 - h^1 - g^1 - h^1 - d^2 - f^2$ — as this will highlight the significance and dynamic of the Dominant chord to a greater extent than in the previous example.

Example N° 28. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 3 Staccato, bar 10



In order to show the *crescendo* at the beginning of example 28, the semiquaver following the dotted quaver should be played with *staccato* articulation, adding a mordent in the highest voice on the next dotted quaver. The four last notes should then be played with a small diminuendo, the semiquavers being made not very short.

Example N° 29. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 4 Allegro, bars 16-21



In example 29, the composer began the left-hand part in the higher register, giving it a descending direction, which suggests to the performer that the character of this section should be more *dolce* and *diminuendo*. In order to create a more singing and more natural sound, the initial four bars should be played on the upper manual, allowing oneself a certain agogic freedom and executing small slurs between pairs of semiquavers – sometimes the first note under the slur will be longer and sometimes it will be shorter. Some notes under the slurs can also be played with a dotted rhythm in order to prevent the playing from sounding too mechanical. The last two bars should be played somewhat more slowly on the lower manual in order to show the *diminuendo* up to the end of the phrase in bar 21 – and also to keep strict time, as this creates an echo effect, bringing to mind the section that precedes bar 16.

3.3. Christian Gottlob Neefe – Fantasia in F-minor⁸⁹

After looking at the whole piece, we can say that the *Intrada* and the *Adagio* should be played using coupled manuals, while the *Allegretto*, the *Allegro di molto* and the *Presto*

⁸⁹ All the examples have been taken from: Neefe, Christian Gottlob, *Fantazja f-moll*, Public Domain, ed. Bonn: N. Simrock, n.d. Plate 58.

should be played in single registers. The *Allegretto* and the *Presto* should be played on the upper manual. The *Allegro di molto come sopra* should be played on coupled manuals, while the *Andantino* should be played without coupling. For the *Più Vivace ch'il Andantino*, the *Largo*, the *Allegretto*, the *Più Allegro* and the *Adagio*, the manuals should be coupled again. After the *Adagio*, the 4-foot register should be added for bars 387-394 in order to present the orchestral character of the subject. From bar 394, however, the 4-foot register should be disconnected, as the melodic line takes on a sweet, singing character. The *Allegro di molto* coda should be started on the lower manual together with the 4-foot register.

Example N° 30. Ch.G. Neeffe, Fantasia in F-minor, Grave, bars 1-4



In the first two bars of example 30 we have a shift from the Tonic F-minor diminished chord via a Dominant Ninth (F - A - C - E-flat - G-flat) to a Subdominant B-flat minor chord. In bar 3, the D-flat major Seventh chord changes into F-minor, after which the B-flat minor with a sixth combines with the Dominant 6-4 (5-3), resolving into the Tonic F minor in bar 4. As a result of the introduction of the Dominant Ninth chord, the harmonic tension rises, and so there has to be a *crescendo* until the end of bar 3, after which there has to be a *diminuendo* from the resolution of the Dominant chord and the return to the Tonic. This piece is often played on the piano. When it is performed on the harpsichord, however, the tempo needs to be faster, as an excessively tempo can adversely affect the flow of the musical narrative and the sound will lose its vigour.

In bars 1 and 2, the first chord should be played with a fast arpeggio and a percussion effect, meaning that the fingertips should strike the keys harder in order to obtain a richer sound. The first chord in bar 2 should be played with a faster arpeggio than the first chord in bar 1. The two chords with a *fermata* should be played in different ways, i.e. the arpeggio in bar 2 should be somewhat slower than that in bar 1. Because of the increase in harmonic tension, the chord in bar 3 should be played without an arpeggio, but the semiquavers should be shortened so that they have a *staccato* sound. In bar 4, which must be performed with a *diminuendo*, the fingers should move more slowly in order to obtain a more peaceful sound with *legato* articulation (this applies

particularly to the middle voice). The whole of bar 4 should be played with a certain rhythmic freedom.

Example N° 31. Ch.G. Neefe, Fantasia in F-minor, Grave, bars 5-8



In example 31, we have a (once) repeated short section with three different dynamic marks. These dynamics therefore need to be varied by changing manuals and by using tempo manipulation. In the first bar, the *piano* should be performed with slower finger movements on the upper manual, keeping the fingers close to the keyboard, while in the second bar the tempo should be slightly slower – with a *pianissimo* dynamic – and the bass notes should be made shorter. The whole of the third bar should be played on the lower manual in order to obtain a *forte* dynamic. Bar 3 can also be played with a *crescendo*, repeating the chords at a slightly accelerating tempo and playing the chord with a minim – which is the culminating point of the *crescendo* – as a slower arpeggio. The last three chords in the right-hand part should be played more quietly, i.e. on the upper manual, which means that here we must use *legato* articulation. The last two notes in the bass are joined by a slur. As harpsichord sound does not last all that long, the last bass note must be discreetly repeated (i.e. not with a *forte* dynamic) on the upper manual.

Example N° 32. Ch.G. Neefe, Fantasia in F-minor, Adagio, bars 9-12



In example 32, we have the same melodic line played on a different register of the keyboard, first with a *mezzo forte* dynamic and then with a *piano* dynamic. In order to obtain a greater dynamic for the octaves, the beginning of this section should be played on the lower manual, with arpeggios played so fast that individual notes cannot be identified, while the right-hand part – now an octave higher – should be played with arpeggios on the upper manual. As the dynamic mark > in bar 1 encourages the performer to linger somewhat longer on the first octave, the note c¹ will need to be somewhat

shorter, joining the next c^1 in the following bar. In bar 11, the dynamic mark $>$ merely indicates the louder beginning of the repeated motif, which can build a greater dynamic thanks to the faster arpeggio on the diminished chord which accompanies the d^2 -flat note in the right-hand part.

Example N° 33. Ch.G. Neeffe, Fantasia in F-minor, Presto, bars 103-108



As example 33 starts with the dynamic marking *piano*, this section should be played on the upper manual. At the same time, the quavers in the left-hand part must be played alternately *forte* and *piano*, so the a^2 -flat in the right-hand part together with the c^2 in the left-hand part should be held somewhat longer, while the b^1 which follows in the left-hand part should be made shorter and played with *staccato* articulation. In order to play the initial c^2 - a^2 -flat with a *forte* dynamic in bars 104 and 106, the lower notes of the melodic line in the right-hand part in bars 103 and 105 should be played with a slight *accelerando*, as this makes it easier for it to start with a weaker dynamic. In the penultimate bar, following on from the notes in the bass and those of the melodic line in the right-hand part, there should be a *crescendo* which leads directly to the chord with a *fermata*. This *crescendo* can be achieved by having both hands play with a slight *accelerando* and by gradually changing the articulation of the bass notes from *legato* to *staccato*. In order to emphasize the stronger dynamic on the *fermata* chord, the performer should execute the arpeggio quickly and add an ornament on the note f^3 .

Example N° 34. Ch.G. Neeffe, Fantasia in F-minor, Andantino, bars 153-164



In example 34, the dynamic has been indicated as *mezza voce* and in the second

phrase the melodic line is doubled in octaves. The first phrase should therefore be played on the upper manual, with a weaker dynamic than the second, which should be played with a *forte* dynamic and with both hands on the lower manual. In the first phrase, there are two places where the dynamic changes quickly (*piano, forte*), so the melodic line in the first half of bar 156 should be played somewhat more slowly, while in the second half of the same bar it should be played somewhat faster. At the point where the dynamic of the melodic line becomes *forte* in bar 157, the right hand should play it on the lower manual until the end of the first phrase. In the last two bars of the second phrase, which are moving towards their resolution, the melodic line is descending, so here there should be a small *diminuendo*. In order to have a more tranquil sound at the end of the second phrase, the chord marked in red should be played as a slower arpeggio (the notes in the left-hand part in particular) and the last bar should be played at a slightly slower tempo.

Example N° 35. Ch.G. Neefe, Fantasia in F-minor, Andantino, bars 211-212



In example 35, in order to play the semiquavers in the melody with a *piano* dynamic, the octaves B and A in bar 211 should be played with a very short *staccato* articulation, while the octaves G - B-flat - D in bar 212 should be played *legato* on the upper manual. The notes with a *forte* dynamic in bar 211 should be played as fast (though somewhat prolonged) arpeggios, while the descending notes in bar 212 should be played with a slight *accelerando* — and back on the lower manual.

Example N° 36. Ch.G. Neefe, Fantasia in F-minor, Allegretto, bars 297-307



Example 36 consists of two sections, the second of which is a repetition of the first, but one tone lower. This repeated section should be played more quietly – and on the upper manual. It can also be played somewhat more slowly, the last two chords being slowed down even further.

Example N° 37. Ch.G. Neeffe, Fantasia in F-minor, Più Allegro, bars 318-329



In example 37, we have progressions descending from the high register to the lower, which means that the sound becomes saturated as well as becoming richer and richer. In order to have a *crescendo* here, we must divide these twelve bars into three sections of four bars each. In each bar of the first section, the first note in the lower voice should be held somewhat longer. In each bar of the second section, each of the notes in the left-hand part should be played as an arpeggio with *legato* articulation. The same applies to the third and last section, in which the semiquavers in the right-hand part should be played with *legato* articulation. All this will ensure that the musical tension increases as the sound becomes louder.

Example N° 38. Ch.G. Neeffe, Fantasia in F-minor, Più Allegro, bars 343-364

In example 38, we have descending dissonant chords alternating with their resolutions in bars 343-350, numerous diminished chords in bars 351-358 and the same chords written a fifth higher in bars 359-364. The initial eight bars can be divided into two-bar sections, each of which should be played faster than the previous one. In the first two bars, the composer has written out a model virtuoso arpeggio which should be played with a *crescendo* and with *tempo rubato*. The first two notes in the left-hand part should be played at a slow tempo, while the remaining notes should be played gradually faster and faster until the last six notes in the second bar, which should be played slightly slower.

In the second phrase in bars 351-358, there should be a small *crescendo* in each successive pair of bars and greater fluctuations of tempo should be used. Each arpeggio chord should accelerate towards the *sforzato* chord. In order to heighten the musical

tension, the bass notes of the *sforzato* chords in the left-hand part should be played somewhat more slowly, creating a deeper and fuller sound. The section from bar 351 to the first chord in bar 355 should be played with great acceleration, while the last chord should be played with a fast arpeggio and be held longer. In bars 353-354, we can add one more note to the arpeggio – a repetition of the bass note, but an octave higher. The same can be done in bars 361-362. The *piano* in bars 355-358 and 363-364 should be started at a slower tempo in both the left- and the right-hand part. Bars 359-364 should be played like the second phrase, the only difference being that the 4-foot register should be added in order to make a bigger *crescendo* than in bars 351-358.

Example N° 39. Ch.G. Neefe, Fantasia in F-minor, Adagio, bars 377-384



Example 39 consists of two parts, the main part being the subject, which reappears in the lower and higher ranges in bars 377-378 and 381-382, while the second part is a descending – and later ascending – improvised passage in bars 379-380 and 383-384. The passages are less important, which means that they should be played with a lighter dynamic on the upper manual, with a certain amount of improvisation and at with a slight *accelerando*. The first few notes should be played at a slower tempo, while the last few notes of the end of the phrase should be played at a slower tempo. The main subject – which first appears in the lower register and then moves to the upper register – should be played on the lower manual.

Example N° 40. Ch.G. Neefe, Fantasia in F-minor, Adagio, bars 408-414



In example 40, we have a repeated F note in the bass, while in the right-hand part we have consonant chords alternating with dissonant chords, the three last of which are notes with longer values. This example needs to be divided into two parts, the first of which (up to the middle of bar 410) should be played with a *crescendo* – the chords being

played with *tempo rubato* – after which (from the middle of bar 410 to bar 414) the second part should be played with a *diminuendo*, the chords in the right-hand part being played on the upper manual with a gradual slowing-down. In the last two bars, the notes in the bass should also be played on the upper manual, the last chord being played with an arpeggio that is not too fast, while the preceding chord should be played with very short *staccato* articulation in order to better bring out the gradual dying away of the sound.

Example N° 41. Ch.G. Neeffe, Fantasia in F-minor, Coda, Allegro di molto, bars 415-424



In example 41, we have a repeated sequential progression (up to bar 424) which starts in the bass and then switches to the right-hand part. As the progressions start in the low register and successively move to the high register, they should be played with a long *crescendo*. In the first section (bars 415-419), the sequence of semiquavers should be played evenly and without hurrying, as when playing on organ pedals. The last two semiquavers of each bar should be played separately. The chords in the right-hand part should be played *legato*, the last chord of each bar leading decisively to the first chord in the next bar), so that the listener can feel the musical tension rising in this part of the work. In the second section (bars 420-424), the semiquavers in the right-hand part should be played with *legato* articulation and with more rhythmical freedom than before. Holding the first note longer – especially in bars 422-424 – we should do the same with the highest semiquavers of each bar, holding them longer than the previous notes in order to maintain the musical tension and the growing dynamic.

Example N° 42. Ch.G. Neeffe, Fantasia in F-minor, Coda, Allegro di molto, bars

441-442



In example 42, each bar of the left-hand part has a different chord. As the chord in the second bar should have a stronger dynamic, the chord in the first bar should be repeated with a short *staccato* articulation, while the second chord should be played with *legato* articulation to make it sound louder.

Example N° 43. Ch.G. Neefe, Fantasia in F-minor, Coda, Allegro di molto, bars 444-458



In example 43, we have repeated chords and semiquavers alternately in the right-hand part and in the left-hand part, together with a changing harmony. It can also be seen that the musical texture in the *coda* and its closest vicinity gradually broadens, so this calls for a *crescendo*, i.e. a change of manual, an additional register and also tempo manipulation. In bars 449-550, the dynamic needs to be lowered because of the ‘sudden’ appearance of a minor chord, so both hands should here play on the upper manual. From bar 451, both hands should play on the lower manual, as the chord is now major and so the dynamic will contrast greatly with that of the previous two bars. In order to produce a more glossy sound with a *forte* dynamic, the chords in the left-hand part in bars 451-452 can be played with a somewhat shorter *non legato* articulation (or some other separation articulation), with a change of manuals and adding the four-foot register. In bars 453-454, the semiquavers in the left-hand part should be played with a percussion effect, while the chords in the right-hand part should be played with *over-legato* articulation in order to make the sound heavier. In bars 455-458, the flow of the musical narrative should gradually become slower thanks to the semiquavers in the left-hand part, so that the listener can feel the heavier and richer sound of the ending of the piece at

a slower tempo. The single final note in the bass can therefore be expanded to the octave $\underline{E} - F$ or a full $\underline{E} - A - C - F$ chord, the chord in the right hand possibly being played as an arpeggio from the bottom note to the top one. After holding it for a short moment, the octave $\underline{E}-F$ should remain in the left hand only.

3.4. Benedetto Marcello – Sonate XI from the collection *Sonates Pour Clavecin*⁹⁰

Eighteenth-century Italian harpsichord music allows the performer a lot of freedom to manipulate musical textures in order to create various dynamic effects and to convey various shades of emotion. In this piece, therefore, dynamic changes are brought about mainly by means of texture manipulation, changes of articulation, changes of register and changes of manual. Coupled manuals are used in all the movements of this sonata, the only exception being the first movement, in which the accompaniment in the left-hand part should be played on the upper manual, while the melodic line in the right-hand part should be played on the lower manual. The author of the present study plays the first movement on a single manual. The above approach does not, of course, apply when Italian harpsichord music is played on an Italian instrument, which has only one manual. As the first movement of a sonata is usually associated with a greater gentleness and a slower tempo than the other movements, its dynamic should be lighter. The 4-foot register should be added for the performance of the final movement so that the whole work has an impressive ending with a very big dynamic.

Example N° 44. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Largo ma vivace, bars 1-3

As section a is divided into three smaller sections of a descending progression, it should be played with a *decrescendo*. In each smaller section, we have a short ascending melody with a dotted rhythm followed by a jumping figure (marked in blue)

⁹⁰ All examples have been taken from: Marcello, Benedetto, *Sonates Pour Claveccin*, Heugel, Paris.

which also has a dotted rhythm. The ascending notes in the first smaller section should be played with a greater *crescendo* than those in the second, which in turn should be played with a greater *crescendo* than those in the third. On the first beat of the first smaller section, there should be an arpeggio in both the left-hand and the right-hand part in order to give the beginning of the piece — bearing the dynamic marking *Largo ma vivace* — a gentler character, after which the ascending notes should be played slightly faster until the a^2 , which — being the destination of a short *crescendo* — should be held somewhat longer. In the second smaller section, the first three notes (from b^1 to d^2) should be played with a slight *accelerando*, lingering longer on the note d^2 , while the other notes should be played without any tempo manipulation. The third smaller section and the whole of that bar should be played in time, without any tempo manipulation or timing. Because using tempo manipulation always ‘robs’ the sections that follow of some of their time, there should be a reduction in the dynamic after each of these sections, which should be played with *legato* articulation and with a certain amount of restraint, keeping the fingertips close to the keyboard.

In section b, the ascending melodic line with its dotted rhythm is longer than that in section a, so there should be a *crescendo* from the note e^1 to the note f^2 -sharp, together with a gradual speeding up of the tempo and a change in the rhythm (caused by a shortening of the value of the demisemiquavers). The thirds marked in yellow in the left-hand part can be played as a fast arpeggio in order to strengthen the *crescendo* effect. A mordent together with a longer trill can also be added to make the sound louder. The destination note f^2 -sharp and the third in the left-hand part should be held somewhat longer, while the bass notes should be played with *legato* articulation. The left-hand part in particular should be played in time in order to preserve the metre and not to hinder the dynamic effect being built up by the main melodic line. These notes can also be played on the main, i.e. lower manual, but this depends on the particular character chosen for this movement by the performer.

Example N° 45. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Largo ma vivace, bars 11-13

In example 45 – unlike in the previous example – the main melodic line is in the left-hand part, while the accompaniment (marked with frame 1) is in the right-hand part. Here the dynamic can be created as before. The melodic line should be played on the lower manual. The accompaniment should be begun on the upper manual with *legato* articulation, holding the notes of the lower voice somewhat longer. The initial c²-sharp and f¹-sharp notes (marked with the numbers 2 and 3) should be held longer, as they are dissonant notes and at the same time are the first notes of a new phrase.

Example N° 46. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Largo ma vivace, bars 4-6

In example 46, we have a sequence of repeated motifs – a demisemiquaver-crotchet motif in the right-hand part and a semiquaver-demisemiquaver motif in the left-hand part – and so adjoining sections of the sequence should have a different dynamic. This dynamic contrast can be enhanced by playing the motifs marked with the number 1 on the lower manual and playing those marked with the number 2 on the upper manual. The notes in the green frame (marked with the number 3) should also be played on the upper

manual in order the help the listener to identify the dynamic changes between motifs number 1 and number 2. Because of the approaching cadence in bar 7, the last two motifs marked with the number 1 in both the left-and the right-hand part should be played on the lower manual in order to strengthen the dynamic before the arrival of the cadence.

Example N° 47. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Largo ma vivace, bars 17-18



In example 47, both hands play on the lower manual. The notes in the frame form a descending repeated motif, which should be played with a *decrescendo*. In the first motif, a short trill can be added on the dotted quaver (e^2) and a mordent can be added on the crotchet e^2 . The same can be done in the second motif on the note d^2 , while the third motif should be played as it is, without adding any ornaments.

Example N° 48. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Largo ma vivace, bars 7-8

In example 48, the notes marked with a frame form a cadence made up of repeated motifs in the right-hand and the left-hand part. Although the cadence is descending, it should be played with a growing dynamic – i.e. with a *crescendo* – that ends with a full *forte*. Each of the demisemiquaver-crotchet motifs should be played with *legato* articulation, the fingertips pressing deeper into the keyboard in order to produce a richer sound. The first C-sharp note after the bass clef in the left-hand part should be held longer, while the final chord should be played with a fast arpeggio so that the cadence has a strong ending.

Example N° 49. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Allegro, bars 3-5

In example 49, the short phrase marked by frame a is repeated in frame b. As the melodic lines of the soprano and tenor voices rise from the Dominant A major chord to the dominant E-major chord, both these sections should be played with a *crescendo*. The melody in the highest voice should be held longer and be played with a slight *accelerando*, while the second G-sharp note – being the culminating point of the *crescendo* – should also be held longer. In order to give prominence to the soprano melodic line, the alto voice should be played with *legato* articulation. As section b should be played with a greater dynamic than section a, in the tenor voice we can add an arpeggio to each quaver, combining it with the demisemiquavers in the right-hand part, which have been marked with a very small frame.

Example N° 50. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Allegro, bars 7-10

In example 50, we have three short sections with a similar dynamic and with ascending melodic lines in both voices. Each of these sections (marked with frames) should be played with a *crescendo*. In frame a, the lower notes – which ‘carry’ the melody – should be held somewhat longer. At the same time, the notes in frame b should be played with mixed articulation, as in bar 8: the first two notes are played *legato*, while next two notes are played *staccato*. Section c – being a repetition or echo of bar 8 – should be played on the upper manual. While repeating a similar section in bars 31-35, we can

play the melodic lines on various manuals with small changes, for example playing F-sharp - E - F-sharp - A or F-sharp - A - G-sharp - F-sharp in each pair of notes instead of F-sharp - A.

Example N° 51. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Allegro, bars 13-15

In example 51, we can see a progression in which each second chord is the resolution of the previous one (as in frame a). As the resolution chord should have a smaller dynamic than the chord which precedes it, the four initial semiquavers can be enriched with other sounds – replacing them, for instance, with the smaller-value notes: A - C-sharp - A (one octave higher) - C-sharp - A (one octave higher) - C-sharp - A (one octave higher) - C-sharp. The following four semiquavers – i.e. the resolution – can be enriched by adding a descending arpeggio consisting of the notes: C-sharp - B - G-sharp (one octave higher) - E - G-sharp (one octave higher) - E - B - G-sharp.

Example N° 52. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Presto, bars 5-8

In example 52, we have two phrases (marked with frames a and b), the second of which is a repetition of the first, but an octave lower. This therefore calls for a long

decrescendo. In section a, the left-hand part should be played on the upper manual, while the semiquaver motifs in the right-hand part should be played on the lower manual. In the place marked in red, the prominent expressive chords in the left-hand part should be played with *legato* articulation. The remaining chords in the left-hand part should also be played *legato* – except for the last chords, which should be played *staccato*. Section b should be played with both hands on the upper manual. The chords in the left-hand part should, however, be made somewhat shorter so as not to drown out the melodic line of the upper voice.

Example N° 53. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Presto, bar 11-14

The image shows a musical score for Benedetto Marcello's Sonate XI, Presto, bars 11-14. The score is in D major and 3/4 time. It consists of two systems of music. The first system (bars 11-14) has a right-hand part with semiquaver motifs and a left-hand part with chords. The second system (bars 15-17) has a right-hand part with a melodic line and a left-hand part with chords. Red markings indicate specific chord changes and articulation points. Section a is marked with 'a' and section b with 'b'. Red numbers 1 and 2 indicate specific chord changes in the left-hand part.

Example 53 contains two sections (a and b) in which the melodic line – consisting of the first semiquavers of each group – is ascending. From a harmonic point of view, this example begins with the Tonic of D-major and moves to the Dominant, i.e. A-major. Each of these sections should therefore be played with a *crescendo* created by adding notes. In the small section marked with the number 1 in the left-hand part, notes can be added to the c^1 and the a, which produces the sequence C - D - C - B and a - B - A - G. In the small section marked with the number 2, an arpeggio chord can be added between the notes d and c^1 , which produces the sequence D - F-sharp - A - C. Section b should be treated in the same manner. In both sections (a and b), the volume of the sound in the right-hand part is weaker than that of the running semiquavers in the left-hand part, so the sound of the chords in the right-hand part should be strengthened by the addition of other notes belonging to the chords — as in bars 15-17, in which the composer himself has given the performer complete freedom by merely indicating the chord number for the bass notes. In order to show that section b starts with a greater dynamic than section a, we can insert a very short ‘pause for breath’ between them.

Example N° 54. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Presto, bars 31-35

The image shows a musical score for Example 54, consisting of two systems of piano parts. The first system covers bars 31 to 33, and the second system covers bars 34 to 35. The music is in G major and 2/4 time. The right hand plays a descending melodic line, while the left hand provides a rhythmic accompaniment. Two sections are highlighted with red boxes: 'a' (bars 32-33) and 'b' (bars 34-35). A red box highlights a diminished chord in bar 35.

In example 54, we have a descending progression (descending towards the chord of B-minor), which should be played with a *crescendo*. The section in frame a should be played on the upper manual with both hands in order to show a lighter dynamic, while the section in frame b should be played on the lower manual in order to show that the dynamic is increasing. Other notes can be added between those marked by the blue frame in order to enhance the *crescendo*. Before its resolution in bar 35, the diminished chord in the red frame should reach its greatest dynamic – with a percussion effect achieved by pressing the keys hard.

Example N° 55. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Prestissimo, bars 7-12

The image shows a musical score for Example 55, consisting of two systems of piano parts. The first system covers bars 7 to 8, and the second system covers bars 9 to 10. The music is in G major and 2/4 time. The right hand plays a descending melodic line, while the left hand provides a rhythmic accompaniment. Two sections are highlighted with red boxes: 'a' (bars 7-8) and 'b' (bars 9-10). Yellow boxes highlight the two last quavers in bar 8.

In example 55, we have two phrases, each of which should be played with a *crescendo* and in each of which we need to concentrate on the notes in the left-hand part, which are moving towards a cadence. In the second phrase, the left-hand part is repeated an octave lower. Section a should initially be played on the upper manual, while the two last quavers in bar 8 (marked in yellow) should be enriched with additional notes,

which produces the sequence: B - A - B - C-sharp. In bar 9, the six notes marked in yellow can also be enriched with additional notes, producing the sequence: C-sharp - D - C-sharp - B - A - G-sharp - A - B - C-sharp - B - A - G-sharp. The notes marked in yellow in section b can be enriched in the same manner. Section b should be played on the lower manual with a richer and heavier sound, the fingers pressing deeper into the keyboard.

Example N° 56. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Prestissimo, bars 16-26

In example 56, we have the same phrase repeated in various tonalities. As section a is in a minor key, it should be played with a smaller dynamic – and so should be played on the upper manual with a more *legato* articulation. Section b should be louder because of the F-sharp major chord, which is the Dominant in the key of B-minor – and so should be begun with an arpeggio chord and an agogic accent, the fingertips being very active and the articulation being almost *staccato*.

Example N° 57. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Prestissimo, bar 43



In example 57, we have the ending of the whole movement, which should have an eminently *forte* dynamic. The final chord should be played with an improvised, wide-ranging virtuoso arpeggio in both the left- and the right-hand part. This final arpeggio should be prepared when playing the notes marked with frame a. These should be repeated in smaller-value notes – like an arpeggio, but twice as fast.

3.5. Ludwig van Beethoven – 13 Variations on the theme *Es war einmal ein alter Mann* from Dittersdorf's opera *Das rothe Käppchen*, WoO 66⁹¹

The theme used by Beethoven comes from the opera *Das rothe Käppchen* by Dittersdorf, which in turn is based on the fairy tale *Little Red Riding Hood* by the Brothers Grimm. As each variation has its own tempo, rhythm, tonality and articulation, it should be played in the appropriate register with the appropriate dynamic and tone colour. The theme should be played with a light tone colour and a *piano* dynamic. The opening theme and variations I, II, III, VI, VIII, X and XII should be played on the lower manual, while – in order to vary the sound of the instrument – variations IV, V, VII, IX, XI and XIII should be played on coupled manuals. Variation X should be played in the lute register, while variation XIII should be played with the addition of the 4-foot register.

As each variation has virtually the same structure as the opening theme, an analysis of dynamic changes allows us to sort the variations into four main groups which can be illustrated by the following examples:

Group 1 — The initial phrase of the theme:

⁹¹ All the examples have been taken from: Neefe: Ludwig van Beethovens Werke, Serie 17. Variationen für das Pianoforte, Leipzig. Breitkopf und Härtel, [1862-90].

Example N° 58. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, theme, bars 1-4

Allegretto.

TEMA

Example N° 59. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation I, bars 1-4

VAR. I.

Example N° 60. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation VI, bars 1-4

Minore.
Espressivo.

VAR. VI.

Example N° 61. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation VIII, bars 1-4

Tempo primo.
sempre dolce

VAR. VIII.

sempre legato

Example N° 62. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation XII, bars 1-4

Allegro non tanto. Con grazia.

VAR. XII.

Example N° 63. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation III, bars 1-4

Commodetto.

VAR. III.

Example N° 64. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation V, bars 1-4

VAR. V.

Risoluto.

Example N° 65. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation IX, bars 1-4

VAR. IX.

Con spirito.

Example N° 66. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation XIII, bars 1-4

VAR. XIII.

Marcia vivace.

In the above examples (58-66), the shape of the melodic line is similar. After starting on the weakest beat of the bar, it ascends, moving from the Tonic to the Dominant. The ascending melodic line in the first two bars should therefore be played with a small *crescendo* and – using tempo manipulation – should be played slightly faster (*accelerando*) before it lands firmly on the note e² (on the good beat), which can be held somewhat longer in order to highlight the destination of the *crescendo*.

In each example, the melodic line descends after reaching its highest point and in each example this descending section should be played with a small *diminuendo* almost in the same way, i.e. at an even tempo with less tempo manipulation, though somewhat faster than in the case of the ascending melodic line. Whenever a variation begins with a *piano* dynamic, the first note should be played with the finger close to the keyboard in order to obtain a more tranquil sound. When the dynamic is *forte* or *fortissimo*, however, the finger should press the key harder, at times even with a staccato articulation, as in examples 65 and 66.

As we have seen, when the theme is ascending, we should try to play it with a *crescendo*, beginning the two initial notes more quietly, with *non legato* articulation. From the third note, the *staccato* should be shorter, while the e² note should be held longer. Together with a small degree of tempo manipulation, these small changes in articulation make the ascending melodic line sound as a *crescendo*. We have a similar situation in example 59, where there are two (hidden) voices in the melodic line in the right-hand part, the lower voice carrying the actual melody. The first two notes of the lower voice in bar 1 and the first F-sharp in bar 2 should be held longer. In example 65, the ascending semiquavers with a *fortissimo* dynamic should be played *legato*, except for the three last notes, which are better played *staccato*, as they lead up to the b² in bar 2, which should be held somewhat longer. In the first bar of example 61, the semiquavers coming after the dotted quavers should be shortened even more, as a ‘sharpened’ rhythm helps to highlight the *crescendo* on the ascending notes.

The way in which the harmony is shown in the left-hand part can also help to create a *crescendo* effect. In examples 58 and 59, the first chord and the third chord should be played somewhat shorter in order to give dynamic prominence to the Dominant. In example 61, the first semiquaver of each of the repeated motifs in the left-hand part should be held somewhat longer in order to highlight the differences in tone colour. In example 62, the *crescendo* can be achieved by repeating the chords in the left-hand part with *over-legato* articulation and applying a little tempo manipulation. In example 63, the upper voice in the left-hand part should be played *legato* in order to enrich the sound and enhance the musical tension after the change in the harmony – in a relatively *piano* dynamic, which could also help to shape the dynamic *crescendo* in the melody in the right-hand part be heard clearly.

In example 64, a *forte* dynamic can be achieved (and the musical tension can be maintained) by paying particular attention to the semiquaver triplets in the left-hand part. These should be played with fast and strong movements of the fingers. The last *staccato* quaver should be held longer, with an articulation that differs from that of the melodic line in the right-hand part.

In the following examples from group 1, the melodic line and the musical structure differs from those above:

Example N° 67. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation II, bars 1-4

In example 67, the first section begins with a single melodic line in the left-hand part, which a little later is joined by the right-hand part in section 2. A different dynamic should be used for each section. Notwithstanding the *piano* dynamic marking in both cases, the first section should be played with a heavier sound and with *over-legato* articulation, while the second section should be played with *staccato* articulation and quick finger movements, touching the keys only lightly. In this way, each section will sound very differently from the other.

Example N° 68. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation IV, bars 1-4

In this example, the left-hand part and the right-hand part move away from each other until they are at a fair distance, which normally calls for a *crescendo*. In the first two bars, the first note in the left-hand part should be held longer – as should the first two semiquavers connected by a slur in the right-hand part. In bars 3-4, the two last chords should be played slightly faster (*accelerando*) as they move towards the first chord of bar 4, which can be played with a very fast arpeggio before the arrival of the strong Dominant chord.

Example N° 69. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation VII, bars 1-4

In example 69, as the harmony oscillates between the Tonic and the Dominant, a long *crescendo* should be planned. Each initial note of each group of three in the left-hand part can be held longer, as can the initial semiquaver of each group of six in the right-hand part, while the last two semiquavers can be played faster, using *staccato* articulation. In bars 3-4, both hands should use *legato* articulation, but the *legato* articulation should be over-*legato* on the last two notes of bar 4. Thanks to this change of articulation, the ending of bar 4 will not sound as if it is being played with a *diminuendo* effect. The three ascending bass notes can be played using *staccato* articulation in order to help the dynamic to grow.

Example N° 70. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation XI, bars 1-4

In example 70, there should also be a long *crescendo*. This can be achieved by lingering somewhat longer on the first note of each group of semiquavers in the right-hand part, these being the sounds of the main melodic line, while in the left-hand part the note F-sharp (marked in red) should be held longer, as it is the strongest note in the initial stage of the *crescendo*. In bars 3-4, the ascending notes of the melodic line in the right-hand part – a¹ - c²-sharp - e² – should be given greater prominence than before.

Example N° 71. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation X, bars 1-4



In example 71, the main idea is to show a growing dynamic through successive chords coming on the first beat of each bar. The melodic line has been enhanced by the shapes of the ornaments, which means that the dotted quavers are important notes which should be highlighted as the strongest notes in the arpeggios. The successive arpeggio chords can be varied by changing the tempo and by holding them for a shorter or longer time. As the melodic line is played on the lute register – whose sounds are very short – the triplets, being ornaments, can be played at a relatively fast tempo – all the more so as the chords on the first beat of each bar take away some of their time as a result of tempo manipulation.

Group 2 — variations with a long phrase ending in a pause and a *fermata* (from the end of bar 12 to bar 22 — the beginning of the long phrase is marked by a vertical green line).

At the end of this section – after the phrase is repeated – the melodic line ascends, while the left-hand part has several variants, e.g. repeating a section an octave lower. The dynamic can be varied by changing manuals, using tempo manipulation and planning a long *crescendo*.

Example N° 72. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation III, bars 10-22

Example N° 73. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation XIII, bars 11-22

In examples 72 and 73, the long phrase ends with a *forte* and *fortissimo* dynamic, while the left-hand part moves from one register of the keyboard to another. In order to bring out the dynamic contrast and the *crescendo* in example 72, the melodic line should be carried by the notes of the lower voice in the right-hand part. Beginning with the notes G-sharp - A - B - E in the left-hand part (from the end of bar 12 to bar 14), both hands play on the upper manual. Beginning with the last note in bar 14, the left-hand part should be played on the lower manual and both hands should play on the lower manual from the end of bar 16. When the same notes — G-sharp - A - B - E — are played an octave lower and the sound spectrum broadens, this section can be played somewhat more slowly in order to produce a heavier and richer sound. In order to obtain a *crescendo* effect from *piano* to *forte*, from the end of bar 18 (in which the left-hand part returns to its original register) the motif should be played once again at a faster tempo together with the melody in the right-hand part. The triplets in bar 20 should be faster than those in bar 21. In order to obtain a *forte* dynamic, these triplets can be played slightly more slowly and with strict *legato* articulation, while the quavers in the left-hand part can be held longer.

In example 73, the chords with a *forte* dynamic (marked in red) should be played on the lower manual with an articulation that is close to *legato*, while the chords with a *piano* dynamic (also marked in red) should be made very short and played on the upper manual. Section a should be played with a *crescendo* by changing manuals, i.e. beginning with both hands on the upper manual, then — after the first vertical red line — moving the right hand to the lower manual and a little later — after the second vertical red line — also moving the left hand to the lower manual. When playing the chords with both hands on the lower manual, the articulation should be *legato*, while the fingertips should press the keys hard in order to obtain an additional percussion effect.

Example N° 74. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation VI, bars 9-24

Example N° 75. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation VIII, bars 12-22

In examples 74 and 75, the long phrase suddenly ends with a *pianissimo* dynamic, but in both cases the *pianissimo* should be preceded by a *crescendo*. In example 74, section a should be played with a slight *accelerando*. The ornamental notes F-sharp¹ - G¹ - A¹ can be added between the last two notes E¹ and B¹. After the note B¹ together with the note E in the bass, we should wait a little while before beginning the next section with a smaller dynamic. As the melody in Variation VI was played on the lower manual with the right hand, with some of the accompaniment being played on the upper manual with the left hand, section b should be played on the upper manual with both hands and with a strong *accelerando* in order to prepare for the sudden lowering of the dynamic to *pianissimo*. The two bars should be played at a considerably slower tempo and with a *pianissimo* dynamic.

In example 75 – in which the melody is played on the lower manual by the right hand, while the left hand plays on the upper manual – section b should be played at a slower tempo with both hands on the upper manual, starting with the bass notes in the lower register. After that – between sections b and c – both hands should move to the upper

manual in order to weaken the dynamic. Section c – where there is to be a *crescendo* – should be played faster (*accelerando*), changing manuals as in the previous example (73). The right hand should be moved to the lower manual after the first vertical red line, while the left hand should be moved to the lower manual after the second vertical red line. The *sforzato* note A² should be held longer, thus enhancing the *crescendo* effect. After the third vertical red line, both hands should return to the upper manual, playing more slowly in order to create a *diminuendo* effect as well as a *pianissimo* dynamic.

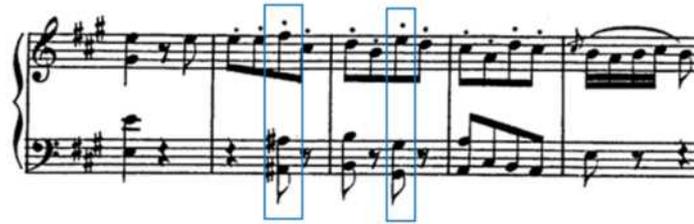
Example N° 76. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation X, bars 12-22

As example 76 is played on the lute register, the sound is very short and very light. However, there should be a dynamic contrast when playing the short semiquaver-crotchet motif (marked in red). The first time round, it should be played at the proper tempo and with *legato* articulation, the fingers ‘moulding’ the sound to make it smooth and calm. When this motif is played an octave lower, it should be played faster, though also with *legato* articulation. This time round, the dynamic should be heavier and the fingers much more active. Section a – in which both hands play in the high register and in which the sound is very light – should be played with a *diminuendo* and with a slight *ritardando*. After the last note of the melody (under a slur) in each bar, we should make a short pause in order to bring some tranquillity to the musical narrative. There should be a similar pause in each bar before playing the quaver with a dot over it together with a bass note, each pause being longer than in the previous bar.

Group 3 — variations in which bars 22-27 are preceded by a pause with a *fermata* and followed by a return of the theme (in most of the variations this is the case). From a harmonic point of view, this group is based on a descending progression and so should

be played with a *diminuendo*. This can be done in two different ways.

Example N° 77. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, theme, bars 23-27



Example N° 78. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation I, bars 22-27

Example N° 79. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation X, bars 22-27

In examples 77-79, the *diminuendo* should be carried out while speeding up the tempo of the last two bars, beginning with a relatively slow tempo, as in example 4 of the *Prélude re mineur* by Jean-Henri d'Anglebert. The two chords marked in blue should be given prominence by holding them somewhat longer, the first being held longer than the second.

Example N° 80. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation V, bars 23-27

Example N° 81. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation VII, bars 22-27

Example N° 82. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation VIII, bars 22-27

In examples 80-82, the *diminuendo* should be carried out together with a slowing down of the musical narrative. The beginning of the phrase should be played faster, while the first chord marked in blue should be played with a fast arpeggio in order to strengthen the dynamic of the beginning of the phrase. The tempo should then gradually slow down, especially in section a, in which the three last chords should have a calm, singing sound and be played with *legato* articulation.

Group 4 — the short *coda*, which in most examples is to be found between bar 32 and bar 37. The *coda* should be played with a *crescendo*, but in some cases it must be played with a *diminuendo*. In the following examples, the beginning of the *coda* is marked by a red line wherever necessary.

Example N° 83. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, theme, bars 31-37



Example N° 84. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation I, bars 32-37



Example N° 85. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation VII, bars 30-37



Example N° 86. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation XIII, bars 32-37



In examples 83-86, we have two cases in which the ending has a *forte* dynamic and two cases in which the ending suddenly becomes *piano*. In the ending of example 84, the last two notes should be played on the upper manual, while in example 86 the last three notes should be played on the upper manual. In order to show a *crescendo* in these four examples, there should be a gradual change in articulation – from an initial *legato* in both the left- and the right-hand part to a less *legato* articulation in the middle section and a more *legato* articulation again in the final section. At the same time, the tempo should

gradually become somewhat slower, as this will make the sound louder. The notes marked *sforzato* in example 85 should be held somewhat longer in both the left- and the right-hand part.

Example N° 87. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation II, bars 27-37

Example N° 88. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation III, bars 28-37

Example N° 89. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation IV, bars 29-37

Example N° 90. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation V, bars 31-37

In examples 87-90, we have quavers with *staccato* articulation. In order to achieve a *crescendo* – especially in the final sections marked in blue – these examples should be played with a slight *ritardando*, lingering somewhat on the *staccato* quavers. At the same time, the semiquavers and the semiquaver triplets should be played with *over-legato* articulation in order to make the sound have more depth and appear to be sharper and louder.

Example N° 91. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation VI, bars 30-39

Example N° 92. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation X, bars 31-37

Example N° 93. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation XII, bars 39-54

In examples 91-93, we have repeated short phrases which – as they are descending phrases – should be played with a *diminuendo*. In order to achieve a *diminuendo* effect (or rather, impression), the sections marked in blue should be played slightly faster so as to create a ‘space’ for the repeated final phrase at the end of the coda, which is also played more slowly. In the short fragment marked in blue, the repeated short phrases should be played on the upper manual.

The following examples illustrate other cases which have not yet been discussed:

Example N° 94. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation III, bars 9-12

Example N° 95. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation VI, bars 9-12

Example N° 96. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation XII, bars 9-12

In examples 94-96, the first two bars are repeated in section a, which should therefore be played with a greater dynamic. In example 94, section a should be played somewhat more slowly in order to give prominence to the *tenuto* notes, while the semiquavers in the left-hand part should be played at a more relaxed tempo and with over-*legato* articulation. In example 95, section a should be played at a slightly faster tempo until the note f¹-sharp in the right-hand part, to which a long trill could be added as a smooth transition to the accented note g¹. The fifth in the left-hand part — which coincides with the g¹ — should be held somewhat longer, as this will help to give more prominence to the accented note. In example 96, the melodic line of section a is shown as rhythmic fragmentation of the melodic line in bars 9-10 and should therefore be played with a slight *accelerando*, like the repeated intervals in the right-hand part.

3.6. Marta Ptaszyńska – Touracou⁹²

When preparing to play this piece, the performer should first determine which sections should be played with a *crescendo* and which parts should be played relatively *forte* or *piano* (depending on changes in note values). The performer must also find a finger technique and a dynamic range that are appropriate and adequate for the imitation of the sound made by the (big and noisy) eponymous turaco bird.⁹³ Turacos

“[...] are gregarious, non-migratory birds which move in family groups of up to 10. Many species are noisy, with the go-away-birds being especially noted for their piercing alarm calls, which alert other fauna to the presence of predators.”⁹⁴

Marta Ptaszyńska’s work requires great sensitivity and speed from the fingertips, especially in the repetitions, where the sound must be crisp and clear. Holding the arm high makes it easier for the fingertips to move very quickly. When creating a very strong dynamic with a (concomitant) percussion effect, the fingers should press the keys deep into the keyboard, making the plectra work in such a way as to produce a powerful sound with long overtones. ‘Dramatic’ dynamics can also be achieved in this piece by quick changes of articulation and / or register, the composer having given the performer a free hand in this regard. Although the composer has not specified which type of instrument should be used to perform this piece, the author of the present study prefers to play it on a traditional instrument, with some modifications of the composer’s suggestions (in the score) regarding the use of particular registers and manuals. These modifications have been dictated by the need to find a balance between the sound effects that are achieved by changing manuals and the need to give greater prominence to the main melodic line.

Example N° 97. Marta Ptaszyńska, Touracou, bars 1-2

As the various motifs in both the left- and the right-hand part of example 97 are

⁹² All examples have been taken from the Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne, Kraków, 1974 edition.

⁹³ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turaco>, entry: „turaco”, accessed 30.03.2023.

⁹⁴ Ibidem.

ascending motifs, the dynamic should here also rise in the form of a *crescendo*. The semiquaver in bar 1 (marked in red) should be accented and played *staccato*, while the d²-sharp (marked in green) should be held longer. The entry of the next semiquaver (in bar 2 – marked in red) should therefore be somewhat delayed and played with a very short *staccato* articulation. The three e² notes that follow should be played with a very fast finger movement, the key being struck firmly in order to produce a sound that is clear and robust.

Example N° 98. Marta Ptaszyńska, Touracou, bars 1-7

Looking at the changes in note values in example 98, in the left-hand part we initially have a motif consisting of four notes. In bar 4, this motif has changed into one consisting of seven notes and in bar 4 it has changed into one consisting of five notes (with triplets in the right-hand part). In the bars that follow, the motif becomes denser in both the left- and the right-hand part, with note values becoming shorter and shorter, while the tempo becomes faster and faster, all of which – together with the marking *poco accelerando* – calls for a *crescendo*, which can be achieved by means of tempo manipulation. Bar 3 (marked with a vertical blue line) should be played with *legato* articulation and without any *accelerando* effect in order to show a *piano* dynamic. The first three notes of the septuplets should be played at an even tempo, the last four being played slightly faster (*accelerando*). The triplets in bar 5 should be played with an over-*legato* articulation on the upper manual in order to produce a louder sound. An even tempo without any *accelerando* effect should be maintained in both the left- and the right-hand part. The tempo of bars 6-7 should be faster, the notes marked in red being played as fast as possible by having both hands use the finger sliding technique.

Example N° 99. Marta Ptaszyńska, Touracou, bars 8-10

The musical score for Example N° 99, bars 8-10, is presented in two systems. The first system (bars 8-9) is in 2/4 time and features a piano part with a trill in bar 10. The tempo is marked 'poco accelerando' and 'a tempo'. The dynamic is marked 'ben marcato'. The second system (bars 10-11) is in 3/4 time and features a piano part with a trill in bar 10. The tempo is marked 'a tempo' and 'ben marcato'. The dynamic is marked 'm.s.' (mezzo-soprano) and 'm.d.' (mezzo-dolce).

In this example, the score itself clearly shows that the rhythm of repeated notes becomes denser and denser, as in the previous example. Here, however, it requires the performer to achieve a more expressive *crescendo* at a faster tempo, as – dynamically speaking – these bars are a continuation of those in the previous example. In bar 8, the tempo should suddenly become slower than that in the previous example in order to prepare for a *crescendo* with an *accelerando* effect. In bar 9, the dynamic should suddenly be reduced to *piano* together with a return to the normal tempo in order to enhance the dynamic contrast. In bar 10, the trill in both the left- and the right-hand part should be played as loudly (*forte*) and as fast as possible, with extra acceleration on the last beat in order to create a contrast with bar 9.

Example N° 100. Marta Ptaszyńska, Touracou, bars 14-16

The musical score for Example N° 100, bars 14-16, is presented in two systems. The first system (bars 14-15) is in 2/4 time and features a piano part with a trill in bar 16. The dynamic is marked 'm.s.' (mezzo-soprano) and 'm.d.' (mezzo-dolce). The second system (bars 16-17) is in 2/4 time and features a piano part with a trill in bar 16. The dynamic is marked 'm.s.' and 'm.d.'.

In bars 14-15 of example 100, the same motifs are repeated in the higher register in both the left- and the right-hand part. From the beginning of bar 16, however, the motifs are repeated in a descending pattern, starting in the high register. The repeated motifs should be played with a *crescendo* – achieved by holding the first accented note of each group of notes and also by a gradual acceleration of the melodic line formed by these

accented notes. The tempo of bar 16 should continue to speed up, with the fingertips sliding off the keys.

Example N° 101. Marta Ptaszyńska, Touracou, bars 19-21

In example 101, the composer has specified which of its sections should be played on a particular manual. If we were to follow these suggestions while playing on a historical instrument, the melodic line would be hardly audible, as the sound of the upper manual of a historical instrument is much quieter than that on a modern instrument. The author of the present study would therefore suggest the opposite, i.e. that the melodic line should be played on the lower manual, while the demisemi-quavers should be played on the upper manual. The demisemi-quavers could also be played together with the melodic line on the upper manual — in which case the melody would have to be played with a more *legato* articulation for it to be heard clearly. The accented D and C-sharp octaves can be played on the lower manual.

Example N° 102. Marta Ptaszyńska, Touracou, bars 30-34

In example 102, section a is based on the repetition of a demisemiquaver motif in the right-hand accompaniment to the melodic line, which itself is made up of repeated motifs. As in the previous example, the main melodic line should be given prominence by being played louder and should therefore be played on the lower manual, the background-accompaniment being played on the upper manual.

Example N° 103. Marta Ptaszyńska, Touracou, bars 46-54

In example 103, we have a melodic line made up of repeated motifs (within the range of a fifth) in bars 46-49, accompanied by a continuously repeated demisemiquaver motif in the right-hand part. From bar 50, the trill in the left-hand part is very close to the right-hand part, which makes the dynamic and the sound become louder. In the next bar there is also a trill in the right-hand part, which increases the tension still further. As we can see, in bars 46-52 there is a gradual increase in musical tension, which calls for the planning of a long *crescendo*. As we have seen in the previous example, the main melodic line is played on the lower manual, while the background-accompaniment is played on the upper manual. Tempo manipulation should be used in order to show more shades of dynamic. Ascending notes such as the ones in section a, for example, can be played slightly faster (*accelerando*), while the note b^2 (and its appoggiatura) which comes after them can be held longer. The *staccato* semiquavers should be played with very fast movements of the fingers, which should strike the keys sharply, thus imitating the loud and shrill cry of the turaco bird. The trills in both the left- and the right-hand part in bar

51 should begin at a slightly slower tempo and then be speeded up. In bar 52, the right hand moves to the upper manual. In accordance with the suggestions of the composer, bars 53-54 should be played *molto ritardando* on the upper manual. This means that these two bars must have a smaller dynamic, bar 54 being slower than bar 52.

Example N° 104. Marta Ptaszyńska, Touracou, bars 55-65

4¹ a tempo

55 *f* *m.d.*

f *m.s.*

1 *m.s.*

58

59

3

3

4

60

a

62

64

b

Most of example 104 is written out on three staves on account of the greater complexity of the musical texture in this part of the work, and so we must use both manuals of the harpsichord. The repeated right-hand part is on the top staff, while the left-hand part – containing the main melodic line – is written out on the two other staves. When changing manuals, we must ensure that the main melodic line has a greater dynamic than the accompaniment in the left-hand part, which should be moved to the upper manual. Sometimes – in order to increase the dynamic and the musical tension – we can repeat those notes which merely strengthen chords without affecting their colour. Different articulation should be used on the accented notes in frames a and b. In frame a, the semiquaver should be played with a very short *staccato*, while the quavers could be somewhat longer. In frame b, where we have an ending with only one voice (played in the left-hand part) we should make an accent on each note, playing at a slower tempo and with *legato* articulation – all the more so as there is a *fermata* over the rest in the upper voice, which gives the performer some leeway as far as rhythm is concerned.

Example N° 105. Marta Ptasińska, Touracou, bars 73-75



Example 105, in which more and more complex *tremolo* chords predominate, should be played with a *crescendo*, though at an even tempo (*senza ritardando*). This can be achieved by holding each successive chord (from bar 74) somewhat longer and by playing each successive *tremolo* (accompanying the chord) faster than the previous one.

Example N° 106. Marta Ptaszyńska, Touracou, bars 76-80

The musical score for Example N° 106, bars 76-80, is presented in three systems. The first system (bars 76-77) shows a right-hand part with a wavy line and a left-hand part with a sextuplet. The second system (bars 78-79) continues the right-hand part with a wavy line and the left-hand part with a long phrase. The third system (bar 80) shows a right-hand part with a wavy line and a left-hand part with a single note. The score includes dynamic markings like 'ff' and articulation like 'legato'.

In example 106, we have a situation which is similar to that in example 104. As the musical texture has a very broad shape, the hands are quite a long way apart – and so an extra stave is needed. In this long phrase, a *crescendo* should be made by producing a richer sound. This applies particularly to the chords in the left-hand part, which should be played with a percussion effect and with *legato* articulation. At the end of bar 80, the quavers in the right-hand part should also be played with a percussion effect. The dynamic can be made even greater by playing the repeated motif in the top stave and the sextuplets in the first bar of the middle stave with *over-legato* articulation.

Example N° 107. Marta Ptaszyńska, Touracou, bars 82-83

In example 107, in both the left- and the right-hand part we have a *tremolo* whose dynamic has been specified as *pianissimo possibile* by the composer. In order to produce a very light sound, this section of the piece should be played on the upper manual with the lute register and with fast movements of the fingertips.

Example N° 108. Marta Ptaszyńska, Touracou, bars 85-92

Example 108, which is the ending of the whole piece, begins with a *tremolo* in the right-hand part. From the end of bar 85, the left-hand part consists of a series of consonances whose rhythm varies. We then have *tremolos* and repeated figures in both the left- and the right-hand part, causing an increase in the dynamic and in the musical tension. As the last section of the piece clearly needs to be played with a *crescendo* leading up to a *fortissimo* dynamic, coupled manuals should be used together with the 4-foot register, the fingertips pressing deep into the keyboard in order to achieve

a percussion effect. While the accented chords should be held longer in order to obtain a heavier and louder sound, the unaccented chords should be played with very fast finger movements, the fingers pressing the keys only lightly, so that they are clearly heard at a very fast tempo, thus imitating the noisy turaco bird. The repeated motifs in both the left- and the right-hand part in bar 89 should be played faster (*accelerando*) until we reach the chords in bar 90. The piece ends with two sequences at some distance from each other and moving in opposite directions (bars 91-92). When the semiquaver triplet goes down to the octave (in the bass), it should be played with the fingers pressing deep into the keyboard, holding each note somewhat longer in order to produce a heavier sound with a large dynamic. The final motif, however, should be played lightly with fast finger movements in order to create a big dynamic contrast — all the more so as the composer suggests that it should be played on the upper manual.

Conclusions

One of the elements of all musical works are dynamics, which give the performance of a given piece of music its full emotional depth. On the harpsichord, however, the execution of even subtle differences in dynamics is a great challenge. There is no easy or simple way to make a smooth *crescendo* or *diminuendo*, which on the piano would be no problem at all. The harpsichord player must therefore find less simpler means of artistic expression in order to make the flow of the musical narrative in a given piece sound smoother, more interesting and more beautiful.

In the present study, the detailed examination of selected works for solo harpsichord of different styles and of different periods – ranging from the middle of the seventeenth century to the beginning of the twenty-first century – has shown that over the centuries, harpsichord players have had recourse to a whole arsenal of techniques that have enabled them to achieve dynamic effects – not only ranging from *piano dolce* to *forte*, but also the execution of *crescendos* and *diminuendos*, not to mention other dynamic effects that are indicated in musical scores.

One of these techniques is to vary the way in which notes (i.e. sounds) are articulated by using the sensitivity of the fingertips in order to precisely control the way in which the plectra – whose movements depend on the jacks, which in turn are set in motion by the keys – actually pluck the strings, thus gaining a degree of control that is comparable with that of lute playing. As instruments built in different historical periods also differ in the way in which they have been built – and in particular in the speed with which the keys react when they are struck – in every case, the execution of dynamics depends on an appropriate adjustment by the performer of the speed with which his or her fingertips move and also of the force with which the keys are struck. When playing *piano* on a harpsichord with two manuals, for example, we need to use slower movements of the fingertips, which should be “glued” to the keys, as it were. At the same time, our arms should be kept light. If we wish to achieve a *legato* articulation, we should choose an appropriate tempo that can help to maintain the required volume of sound and bring out the harmonics (or overtones) between successive notes. Another way of producing sound on the harpsichord is to make the fingertips move more quickly, this being more suitable on instruments with only one manual – whose sound is not as strong as that of instruments having two manuals – or when using light registers such as the eight-foot

register or the lute register. Using this technique, we make the plectra pluck the strings with greater force, causing them to vibrate longer and more intensively, thus producing a fuller, more dynamic sound that is sometimes also more “nasal”. If a sound with more harmonics is required, the energy coming from the fingertips must be released as soon as the keys are pressed. Pressing the keys too violently or with too much force can sometimes make the sound dry or – more importantly – make it impossible for the performer to hear the harmonics. Making the fingertips move quickly or slowly in the proper way can help the performer to avoid having arms that are heavy or stiff, which would hamper his or her playing and could even make the whole body stiff and nervous, thus making the sound excessively strong.

When playing on coupled manuals, not only is the resistance of the keyboard strongest, but so is the loudness of the sound, as it is produced by two plectra plucking their respective strings simultaneously. The coupling of manuals therefore allows the fingertips to come into contact with the keyboard in a greater number of ways, enhancing those dynamic effects which can be achieved by choosing a particular method of sound articulation. When we wish to have a very expressive *legato* with a strong dynamic, for example, the fingertips need to be heavier and need to reach deeper into the keyboard. When the fingers strike the keys very fast, however, the resulting sound is not only very strong and clear, but is also accompanied by a percussion effect.

The resistance of the keyboard – together with the dynamic and the tone colour – is also modified by the addition of various registers. In order to have better control of the sound and to be able to feel the varying resistance of the keyboard when two or even three plectra pluck their respective strings, the fingertips should be kept as close as possible to the keyboard and any movements of the arms should be minimal. As the sound of the lute register (on the upper manual) is very short, light and dry, here the fingertips should move very quickly, touching the keys only very lightly.

Although the four-foot register is commonly regarded as being one that merely adds colour and brilliance, it actually increases the dynamic and gives it a certain sharpness. It can be used both on the lower manual and on coupled manuals. When the four-foot register is added to the lower manual, we can feel that the plectra meet less resistance, but in order to obtain sound of a better quality, we should press the keys with fast-moving fingertips, though without using excessive force. When the four-foot register is added to coupled manuals, the sound is produced by three plectra plucking their respective strings, so our fingers will feel greater resistance from the keyboard, which therefore

seems to be heavier. In order to have full control of the three plectra plucking their strings simultaneously – and also in order to produce a very strong and brilliant sound – we should press the keys with fast-moving, yet heavier fingertips.

When playing music that is divided into bars, we must of course keep to the main metre and keep proper time, but our listeners must not have the impression that there is something mechanical in our playing. In harpsichord playing, keeping time and keeping to the metre are the only ways in which we can convey the structure of a given piece of music, which would otherwise be very unclear and incapable of arousing any feeling. However, notwithstanding the regularity of the basic metre, the harpsichord player can make the music flow as he or she sees fit by making small or sudden changes of tempo that make the music sound less mechanical. Such tempo manipulation – which was described by Girolamo Frescobaldi as long ago as in the seventeenth century – is also an important way of achieving various dynamic effects in solo harpsichord playing and has been widely used by performers ever since Frescobaldi's times (the most famous of whom were J.S. Bach, C.P.E. Bach and W.A. Mozart). According to the contemporary scholar Paul Collins, tempo manipulation was carried out by alternately slowing the tempo down and speeding it up again – and at times even by suspending the flow of the musical narrative in order to express some emotion. Tempo manipulation can be very helpful when we wish to create a *crescendo* or a *diminuendo* and is also of use when we need to execute a *brisé*, an arpeggio or a long trill.

Another way to achieve various dynamic effects in solo harpsichord playing is texture manipulation, which includes techniques such as octave doubling, repetition and musical ornaments of various kinds – the aim being to enhance single chords and melodic lines, as well as filling in the space between sounds.

Given the particular character of the harpsichord, its uniqueness and the diversity of its sound, all the observations and remarks which have been made in the course of the present study regarding the handling of dynamics in works for solo harpsichord apply not only to works composed during the period now known as 'early music', but also to contemporary works that have been specifically written for solo harpsichord. As our research and detailed analyses have shown, notwithstanding the uniqueness of the harpsichord, the great diversity of its sound and its historical associations, this instrument is remarkable for its extraordinary versatility, which is something that merits further research. On the one hand, the harpsichord was the leading instrument of the Baroque period, while on the other hand it now brings new qualities of sound to music of the

twenty-first century – sound whose manifold dynamics are achieved by means of various methods of articulation, the use of agogic nuances, the various ways in which the fingertips can come into contact with the keyboard and a well-thought-out approach to the enhancement of the instrument's sound texture.

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ANNEX – List of Musical Examples

Example N° 1. Jean-Henri d'Anglebert: Prélude re mineur, line 1	36
Example N° 2. Jean-Henri d'Anglebert: Prélude re mineur, lines 1-2	37
Example N° 3. Jean-Henri d'Anglebert: Prélude re mineur, lines 3-4	38
Example N° 4. Jean-Henri d'Anglebert: Prélude re mineur, lines 11-12	39
Example N° 5. Jean-Henri d'Anglebert: Prélude re mineur, line 6	40
Example N° 6. Jean-Henri d'Anglebert: Prélude re mineur, lines 4-5	40
Example N° 7. Jean-Henri d'Anglebert: Prélude re mineur, line 8	40
Example N° 8. Jean-Henri d'Anglebert: Prélude re mineur, lines 9-10	41
Example N° 9. Jean-Henri d'Anglebert: Prélude re mineur, lines 10-11	41
Example N° 10. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 1, bar 1	42
Example N° 11. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 1, bars 115-116	43
Example N° 12. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 4 Allegro, bars 139-140	43
Example N° 13. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 1, bars 8-10	44
Example N° 14. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 1, bars 10-19	44
Example N° 15. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 4 Allegro, bars 81-95	45
Example N° 16. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 4 Allegro, bars 120-126	46
Example N° 17. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 1, bars 23-24	46
Example N° 18. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 1, bars 27-30	47
Example N° 19. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 1, bars 80-8	47
Example N° 20. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 1, bars 112-113	48
Example N° 21. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 2 Larghetto, bar 1-4	48
Example N° 22. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 2 Larghetto, bar 5	49
Example N° 23. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 2 Larghetto, bars 14-17	49
Example N° 24. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 2 Larghetto, bars 22-25	50
Example N° 25. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 2 Larghetto, bars 29-33	50
Example N° 26. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 3 Staccato, bars 1-2	51
Example N° 27. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 3 Staccato, bars 5-6	51
Example N° 28. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 3 Staccato, bar 10	52
Example N° 29. Christian Petzold, Concerto IV, mvmt 4 Allegro, bars 16-21	52
Example N° 30. Ch.G. Neefe, Fantasia in F-minor, Grave, bars 1-4	53
Example N° 31. Ch.G. Neefe, Fantasia in F-minor, Grave, bars 5-8	54
Example N° 32. Ch.G. Neefe, Fantasia in F-minor, Adagio, bars 9-12	54
Example N° 33. Ch.G. Neefe, Fantasia in F-minor, Presto, bars 103-108	55
Example N° 34. Ch.G. Neefe, Fantasia in F-minor, Andantino, bars 153-164	55
Example N° 35. Ch.G. Neefe, Fantasia in F-minor, Andantino, bars 211-212	56
Example N° 36. Ch.G. Neefe, Fantasia in F-minor, Allegretto, bars 297-307	56
Example N° 37. Ch.G. Neefe, Fantasia in F-minor, Più Allegro, bars 318-329	57
Example N° 38. Ch.G. Neefe, Fantasia in F-minor, Più Allegro, bars 343-364	57
Example N° 39. Ch.G. Neefe, Fantasia in F-minor, Adagio, bars 377-384	58
Example N° 40. Ch.G. Neefe, Fantasia in F-minor, Adagio, bars 408-414	58
Example N° 41. Ch.G. Neefe, Fantasia in F-minor, Coda, Allegro di molto, bars 415-424	59
Example N° 42. Ch.G. Neefe, Fantasia in F-minor, Coda, Allegro di molto, bars 441-442	59

Example N° 43. Ch.G. Neefe, Fantasia in F-minor, Coda, Allegro di molto, bars 444-458	60
Example N° 44. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Largo ma vivace, bars 1-3	61
Example N° 45. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Largo ma vivace, bars 11-13	63
Example N° 46. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Largo ma vivace, bars 4-6	63
Example N° 47. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Largo ma vivace, bars 17-18	64
Example N° 48. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Largo ma vivace, bars 7-8	64
Example N° 49. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Allegro, bars 3-5	65
Example N° 50. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Allegro, bars 7-10	65
Example N° 51. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Allegro, bars 13-15	66
Example N° 52. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Presto, bars 5-8	66
Example N° 53. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Presto, bar 11-14	67
Example N° 54. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Presto, bars 31-35	68
Example N° 55. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Prestissimo, bars 7-12	68
Example N° 56. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Prestissimo, bars 16-26	69
Example N° 57. Benedetto Marcello, Sonate XI, Prestissimo, bar 43	70
Example N° 58. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, theme, bars 1-4	71
Example N° 59. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation I, bars 1-4	71
Example N° 60. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation VI, bars 1-4	71
Example N° 61. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation VIII, bars 1-4	71
Example N° 62. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation XII, bars 1-4	71
Example N° 63. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation III, bars 1-4	71
Example N° 64. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation V, bars 1-4	72
Example N° 65. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation IX, bars 1-4	72
Example N° 66. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation XIII, bars 1-4	72
Example N° 67. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation II, bars 1-4	74
Example N° 68. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation IV, bars 1-4	74
Example N° 69. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation VII, bars 1-4	75
Example N° 70. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation XI, bars 1-4	75
Example N° 71. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation X, bars 1-4	76
Example N° 72. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation III, bars 10-22	76
Example N° 73. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation XIII, bars 11-22	77
Example N° 74. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation VI, bars 9-24	78
Example N° 75. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation VIII, bars 12-22	78
Example N° 76. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation X, bars 12-22	79
Example N° 77. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, theme, bars 23-27	80
Example N° 78. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation I, bars 22-27	80
Example N° 79. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation X, bars 22-27	80
Example N° 80. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation V, bars 23-27	81
Example N° 81. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation VII, bars 22-27	81
Example N° 82. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation VIII, bars 22-27	81
Example N° 83. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, theme, bars 31-37	82
Example N° 84. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation I, bars 32-37	82
Example N° 85. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation VII, bars 30-37	82
Example N° 86. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation XIII, bars 32-37	82
Example N° 87. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation II, bars 27-37	83

Example N° 88. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation III, bars 28-37	83
Example N° 89. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation IV, bars 29-37.....	84
Example N° 90. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation V, bars 31-37	84
Example N° 91. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation VI, bars 30-39.....	85
Example N° 92. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation X, bars 31-37.....	85
Example N° 93. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation XII, bars 39-54	85
Example N° 94. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation III, bars 9-12.....	86
Example N° 95. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation VI, bars 9-12.....	86
Example N° 96. L. van Beethoven, 13 Variations, variation XII, bars 9-12	86
Example N° 97. Marta Ptaszyńska, Touracou, bars 1-2	87
Example N° 98. Marta Ptaszyńska, Touracou, bars 1-7	88
Example N° 99. Marta Ptaszyńska, Touracou, bars 8-10	89
Example N° 100. Marta Ptaszyńska, Touracou, bars 14-16	89
Example N° 101. Marta Ptaszyńska, Touracou, bars 19-21	90
Example N° 102. Marta Ptaszyńska, Touracou, bars 30-34	90
Example N° 103. Marta Ptaszyńska, Touracou, bars 46-54	91
Example N° 104. Marta Ptaszyńska, Touracou, bars 55-65	93
Example N° 105. Marta Ptaszyńska, Touracou, bars 73-75	94
Example N° 106. Marta Ptaszyńska, Touracou, bars 76-80	95
Example N° 107. Marta Ptaszyńska, Touracou, bars 82-83	96
Example N° 108. Marta Ptaszyńska, Touracou, bars 85-92	96

