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FLUTE PHRASING: STRUCTURALLY MEANINGFUL INTERPRETATION OF SLURS

by

JOHN de COURTEILLE HINCH

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Supervisor: Dr. H.H. van der Mescht

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ABSTRACT

Phrasing on wind instruments is investigated with a view to establishing groundrules for meaningful slurring.

Many key terms concerning phrasing are used by writers in a vague and inconsistent manner. These are defined - hopefully leading to better understanding and general usage.

A performer's sense of phrasing and interpretation (where music notation is imprecise) often does not coincide with printed indications - especially slurs. Composers confuse matters further by incorrectly notating their intentions - usually due to their limited knowledge of the peculiarities of wind instruments. They are often inconsistent; and mistakes are printed. The situation is further exacerbated when editors do not advise performers with due insight. The performer should rectify these inexactitudes, ambiguities and mistakes.

The nature of wind phrasing is investigated - principally slurs and slur patterns. Slurs are precise notational devices used by composers, signifying that the notes under each slur be played as a single group - with only the initial note articulated. But tonguing-under-a-slur exists - with notes being articulated within the basic legato line. This imprecise concept is often both misunderstood and ambiguously notated.

Composers and editors add phrase-slurs either to indicate the extent of a phrase, to delineate sub-phrases, or to show that the notes are not to be articulated separately. When slurs and phrase-slurs are combined, the performer must continually decide which notes to articulate, and how.

Slur patterns often help bring out the various motives, two-part lines, interpolations and accompaniment figures. Discovering these intrinsic elements and slurring accordingly can often improve the interpretation of over-slurred music. Advice is

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provided by the author.

Composers and editors often phrase according to visual groupings. By means of testing twenty professional wind players it has been shown that performers are usually better able to phrase meaningfully. Four extracts were selected as test pieces, and the results correlated. Wind performers tend to use more and shorter slurs than composers and editors; also, they tend not to favour phrase-slurs.

Dynamics, articulation, breathing and technique influence the performance of slurs. Phrase-slurs and slurs are often written over natural breathing places; suggestions on where and how to breathe are provided. Dynamics and slur patterns are often symbiotic, with printed (or implied) dynamics suggesting the most meaningful slur pattern. The author recommends that teachers encourage beginner wind instrumentalists to utilize technically easier phrasing where it enhances their performance.

Parallels are drawn between wind phrasing and both language and bowing techniques. In the search for the most meaningful way of phrasing, music's analogies with language (both written and spoken) can often be effectively explored. The kinaesthetic 'feel' of bowing patterns can help provide the right impetus to a phrase.

Performance tendencies of any era, if based on the music's intrinsic patterns, will very likely also be relevant to music of other eras. Slurring tendencies from the Baroque and Classical periods are listed and practical examples provided.

Most examples are from the flute repertoire; but the principles are equally applicable to all wind instruments.

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KEYWORDS

Music
Notation
Performers
Interpretation
Wind instruments
Flute
Phrase
Phrasing
Slur
Articulation

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OPSOMMING

Frasering op blaasinstrumente word ondersoek, met die oog op die vasstelling van grondreëls vir die betekenisvolle uitvoering van artikulasieboë.

Baie sleutelwoorde betreffende frasering word deur skrywers op 'n vae en onkonsekwente manier gebruik. Hierdie terme word gedefinier. Dit sal hopelik lei tot 'n beter begrip en algemene gebruik daarvan.

Voordraers se gevoel vir frasering en interpretasie (waar die musieknotasie onnoukeurig is), stem dikwels nie ooreen met die gedrukte aanduidings, veral van fraseboë, nie. Komponiste vertroebel die saak verder deur hulle bedoelings verkeerd te noteer, gewoonlik weens hulle beperkte begrip van die spesifieke eienskappe van blaasinstrumente. Hulle is dikwels inkonsekwent; en foute word dikwels gedruk. Die saak word vererger wanneer redakteure voordraers nie met insig adviseer nie. Voordraers moet self hierdie onnoukeurighede, dubbelsinnighede en foute regstel.

Die aard van frasering op blaasinstrumente word ondersoek - veral artikulasieboë en boogpatrone. Artikulasieboë is presiese notasie-middele wat deur komponiste gebruik word om aan te dui dat die note onder die boog as 'n enkele groep gespeel moet word. Slegs die eerste noot word geartikuleer. Maar tongslag-binne-die-fraseboog bestaan ook, met note wat binne die basiese legato-lyn geartikuleer word. Hierdie onduidelike konsep word dikwels albei verkeerd verstaan en dubbelsinnig genoteer.

Komponiste en redakteurs voeg fraseboë by om die omvang van 'n frase aan te dui, om sub-frases uit te beeld, of om te wys dat die note nie afsonderlik geartikuleer moet word nie. Wanneer artikulasieboë en fraseboë gekombineer word, moet die voordraer deurgaans besluit watter note om te artikuleer, en hoe.

Boogpatrone help dikwels om die verskillende motiewe, tweestemmige lyne,

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invoegings en begeleidingfigure uit te beeld. Die ontdekking van hierdie intrinsieke elemente, en die frasering daarvolgens, verbeter dikwels die interpretasie van 'n musiekpartituur wat te veel fraseboë bevat. Advies hieroor word deur die skrywer verskaf.

Komponiste en redakteurs fraseer dikwels volgens visuelegroeperings. Deur middel van 'n toets waaraan twintig professionele blasers deelgeneem het, is bewys dat voordraers gewoonlik beter in staat is om betekenisvol te fraseer. Vier uittreksels is as toetsstukke gekies, en die uitslae is vergelyk. Blasers is geneig om meer en korter artikulasisboë as komponiste en redakteurs te gebruik; hulle gebruik gewoonlik nie fraseboë nie.

Dinamiek, artikulasie, asemhaling en tegniek beïnvloed die uitvoering van artikulasieboë. Fraseboë en artikulasieboë word dikwels bo-oor natuurlike asemhalingsplekke geskryf; voorstelle oor waar en hoe om asem te haal word aangebied. Dinamiese aanduidings en boogpatrone hou dikwels nou verband met mekaar, en die gedrukte dinamiek (of die geïmpliseerde dinamiese vlakke) gee dan die mees veelseggende boogpatroon aan die hand. Die skrywer beveel aan dat onderwysers beginners op blaasinstrumente sal aanmoedig om tegnies makliker frasering te gebruik wanneer dit hulle uitvoerings sal verbeter.

Vergelykings word getref tussen frasering op blaasinstrumente, taal en stryktegnieke. Wanneer daar na die mees veelseggende frasering gesoek word, kan musiek se verwandskap met taal (geskrewe en gesproke) dikwels doeltreffend ondersoek word. Die kinestetiese 'gevoel' van strykpatrone kan die regte beweging aan 'n frase verleen.

Die uitvoeringspraktyk van enige eeu, indien dit gebaseer is op die musiek se innerlike patrone, sal heelwaarskynlik ook relevant in musiek uit ander eeue wees. Tendense in frasering en artikulasie uit die Barok- en Klassieketydperk word in 'n lys aangegee en praktiese voorbeelde word verskaf.

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Die meeste voorbeelde kom uit die fluitrepertoire; maar die beginsels is by ander blaasinstrumente net so toepaslik.

TIEN VRYETAAL SLEUTELTERME

Musiek

Notasie

Voordraers

Interpretasie

Blasers

Fluit

Frase

Frasering

Artikulasieboog

Artikulasie

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Motivation for the study

The author is a flute player whose playing career encompassed the areas of orchestral playing, chamber music, solo recitals and light music. He is now mainly an academic - teaching flute and lecturing in a variety of subjects.

Working on the level of preparing University students for performing and/or teaching careers has led to an increasing interest in accuracy of performance. With this has come the realisation that certain aspects of the printed music, from which a musician teaches and learns, incorporates mistakes and anomalies that hinder performers in their attempts to most meaningfully interpret music. These printed anomalies and mistakes are in the subtle areas of interpretation, namely articulation, slurs, dynamics and written expressive indications (e.g. dolce). The aspects of articulation and slurs are commonly summed up in the general term 'phrasing'.

1.2 Aim of the study

The aim of this study is to investigate the nature of phrasing as it concerns wind players, concentrating on slurs and the patterns of slurs as they affect the interpretation of a phrase. Guidelines will then be suggested for guiding wind players in selecting more meaningful phrasing.

The investigation will incorporate articulation in as much as it of necessity affects the performance of the first notes of all slurs and usually other notes within that phrase. Effective and defective phrasing from various works will be discussed and compared.

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By means of testing a number of professional wind players as regards their own way of phrasing, it was hoped to prove that players themselves not only have the ability and insight to effectively phrase where this has not been accomplished by the composers and editors, but are usually better able to phrase meaningfully.

1.3 Sources

A large amount of flute music served as the sources of both the defective (containing mistakes and anomalies) and the effective examples used. Background material relating to phrasing was obtained from both books and magazine articles.

1.3.1 Flute music

Four extracts were selected as test pieces (see Chapter 6). The author has prepared three re-phrased extracts from the Sonata for solo flute in A minor by C.P.E. Bach (see Chapter 10). In addition, mistakes and anomalies in a number of flute pieces have been investigated and discussed throughout the dissertation.

1.3.2 Books

Most authors generally only touch on phrasing in the course of addressing other topics. A large number of books were therefore scoured in order to find relevant discussions. Thus from many sources only a few lines or paragraphs were utilised.

The book *The Dynamic Performance: A Performer's Guide to Musical Expression and Interpretation* by Donald Barra (1983) proved a source of inspiration. Similarly the two books by Nikolaus Harnoncourt *Baroque Music Today: Music as Speech* (1982) and *The Musical Dialogue* (1989) provided the starting place for much of the investigation. There is also an excellent and thought-provoking book *Bach Interpretation: Articulation Marks in Primary Sources of J.S. Bach* by John Butt (1990).

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A book that specifically addresses wind playing is that by Tromlitz, *The Virtuoso Flute Player* (1991). The *Practice Book for the Flute* Volume 3 by Trevor Wye (1983) clearly lays out the basic tenets of slurring.

1.3.3 Magazine articles

The main source of magazine articles is the American publication *Flute Talk* - in particular those articles by Michel Debost. *PAN: The Journal of the British Flute Society* and the two American publications *Flutist Quarterly* and *The Clarinet* also carry appropriate articles.

1.3.4 Other sources

The author's BMus(Hons) thesis entitled *Flute Articulation: A Study of Techniques and Teaching Methods* (1991) is frequently referred to in the text. Details of articulation that were covered in this earlier dissertation have not been reiterated here.

1.4 Research methods

Initially much background reading was done in order to more fully understand the nature of phrasing in general, and the slur in particular. This was approached both from historical and practical points of view.

A number of flute pieces were investigated in great detail with regard to the printed slurs and articulations. Motives and phrases that appeared more than once were compared, as were sequential and imitative passages. Where there were mistakes or anomalies these were listed, played by the author, and the best patterns noted.

A test was devised to ascertain the ability of fellow professional wind players to provide passages with slurs and articulations. Four unslurred pieces were sent to twenty players.

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1.5 Problems encountered

The main problem encountered during the course of this study was that of terminology. It was discovered that most terms employed in discussing and describing details of interpretation are used, both in speech and print, in a very vague way; the term 'phrasing' being the least consistent of all. Thus Chapter 3 is devoted to defining the terms used in this dissertation. Hopefully this will lead to a better understanding and usage of these terms generally.

1.6 Organisation of this dissertation

Chapter 2 traces the development of the author's interest in this topic and is intended to stimulate a similar quest in other wind players.

After the terminology has been discussed and defined in Chapter 3, the problems encountered by both composers and performers due to the nature of music notation is discussed in detail, with emphasis on the slur and articulation (Chapter 4). This leads to a detailed investigation into the nature of the slur in Chapter 5.

Chapter 6 introduces the test done on selected wind players, and lists conclusions that can be drawn therefrom.

In Chapter 7 the influence of dynamics, articulation, breathing and technique on the performance of slurs are discussed.

Chapters 8 and 9 draw parallels between wind phrasing and both language and the bowing techniques of string players, in order for the wind player to better understand phrasing by considering these analogies.

The specialised cases of wind phrasing in the Baroque and Classical periods are addressed in Chapter 10. The re-phrased sections of movements by C.P.E. Bach are included here.

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The final Chapter includes a summary of conclusions that can be drawn from this study.

The appendices provide the test pieces discussed in Chapter 6, together with the original printed phrasing and examples of re-phrasing selected from those submitted by the testees.

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CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

2.1 The author's theory on wind phrasing

During the author's musical career, experience gradually taught that the field of notated phrasing (which here includes slur patterns and articulation) was neglected by most players, conductors, editors, arrangers and composers, as opposed to aspects like playing in the correct historical 'style', methods of tone production, improvement of finger technique, etc. This was confirmed by the copious reading of a great many articles, tutors and books by diverse writers from a variety of disciplines. It appeared that few musicians question more than superficially the status quo of printed phrasing marks.

The theory evolved in the author's mind that, given free rein, most professional performing wind players would adopt their own patterns of slurs and various articulations that would not only be more practical than most of those printed in scores, but would also be more musically effective in bringing out the subtle elements hidden amongst the written notes and rhythms. It was felt that professional wind players were more able to naturally 'feel' the most appropriate phrasing of the music, than editors, arrangers and composers, and that the performance of their own slurring and articulation patterns would result in more meaningful performances.

In practice, the author's theory states that wind players would, given this free rein, erase many of the slurs, especially the long phrase-slurs, from the written page and provide more subtle slur patterns that bring out intrinsic groups, sub-phrases, accompaniments and two-part elements.

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2.2 The process of learning an instrument

The student of music in general, and of a practical instrument (in the author's case, the flute) in particular, usually feels no need, and probably no desire, to question the teacher's authority - indeed this is usually tacitly disapproved of. After all, if one comes by choice to a person (or an institution) in search of knowledge then that person (or persons) obviously has your respect. And it would probably be considered disrespectful to question the superior knowledge and experience of one's teachers. (The enquiring student is often acknowledged, in theory, as being the ideal student, but especially when studying a musical instrument, will probably be considered precocious.) In short, the music student in general accepts the information provided to him at face value - as irrefutable fact.

The same type of considerations apply to the written word and the printed music. The young student occasionally comes across anomalies where two or more text books provide differing information. Either the most probable is accepted, or else a discussion of the anomaly used as a contribution to the essay or thesis. The instrumental teacher may also occasionally bring out a pencil and correct a blatant printing error in a piece of music.

Later in life, as a purely performing musician, the situation will probably not differ very much. There will not be time, with the business of earning a professional living, to enter into any in-depth inquiry into the validity of that which is printed on the page. This is especially true with regard to those pieces of music, the basic repertoire associated with a player's own instrument, which were previously studied as a student in the manner suggested above, and are now being offered on a professional basis to the general public in performance.

The notes, rhythmic patterns and all the other subtle nuances initially learned from the printed page and considered irrefutable and generally not to be tampered with, and which had entered and been fixed in the sub-conscious as learned patterns of fingerings, embouchure changes, articulations and nuances, remain the basis upon

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which these same and similar pieces continue to be performed. All that the composer notated, and which was then faithfully transcribed and printed by the publishers, must, at all costs it seems, be revered and re-presented in performance. The experience and refining of technique gained in the interim will usually lead only to more polished performances - but usually not essentially *different* performances based on a more discerning and discriminating mind searching ever more deeply for hidden truths. The rote-type learning, through assiduous practice, of the various patterns of technique (fingers, tongue, breathing, etc.) will continue providing the subconscious matrix which generates and guides the physical processes upon which one relies in performance.

2.3 The printed page

Music publishers, in preparing an edition of a musical work for publication, often show great integrity in desiring to produce good performing editions, and obtain the services of renowned performers or musicologists to assist in editing their publications. This editor will ensure that any compositional inconsistencies, discrepancies and actual mistakes will be ironed out; and he will check before the actual printing run begins that there are no typographical errors. Thus, on the surface, one need have no qualms about regarding an edition of, for example, the Sonata for flute and piano by Poulenc, edited by the renowned flutist Jean-Pierre Rampal, as being definitive - and hence above any reproach and suspicion.

Not only will such pieces be performed using this printed music, but in turn a further generation of budding flutists will be taught using the same printed music. Thus a tradition is established, strengthened and perpetuated.

But the above scenario encompasses one enormous myth; based on one very serious flaw.

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2.4 The myth of the infallibility of the printed page

For approximately fifteen years the author earned his living as a purely performing musician in the fields of orchestral, chamber and solo music and in radio recitals and broadcasting sessions of much music in a great variety of styles. Like all his professional performing colleagues, he never seriously questioned the printed page except where there were blatant mistakes.

Occasionally in chamber music rehearsals there was time for discussion on subtle changes to the strength of a crescendo or a sforzando; on the addition of a slight accelerando; on changing a trill to a mordent; or on playing more staccato.

The arranger of "light music" might be guilty of leaving out three bars from the oboe part, of leaving only two bars of fast tempo in which to change from flute to piccolo, or might write a bottom B flat for the flute. But this was relatively acceptable because it was acknowledged that the arranger was working under the pressure of a deadline and being only an arranger one did not expect him to know as much as a true-blooded composer.

One accepted, under silent protest, the conductor who thought he knew better than Beethoven and Mozart and changed all the dynamic markings in Beethoven's Symphony No 4 and some of the wind slurrings in Mozart's Overture to the *Magic Flute*. The conductor/orchestra relationship is, at root, a power struggle in which the conductor's will *must* prevail, so essentially one did as one was told. Nevertheless one often felt that this type of tampering with the composer's thoughts should not be allowed. It was not the conductor's right to alter the perfect thoughts of a master composer. The fact that Beethoven wrote for instruments whose range of dynamics differed enormously from those used today in the modern orchestra, although realised by all orchestral musicians, did not alter the view that the conductor was tampering. The fact that Mozart himself did not write all the slurs as printed in the published part on the orchestral player's music stand did not occur to him. The name "Mozart" printed on the top right-hand

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corner ensured a certain blind reverence.

Similarly with the Sonata for flute and piano by Poulenc, as edited by Jean-Pierre Rampal. Poulenc must have known exactly what he wanted, and Rampal gave the first performance - they even played it together. What greater pedigree could any piece of printed music enjoy?

2.5 Becoming less passively accepting of the printed page

After the aforementioned fifteen years of basic acceptance of the status quo and the perpetuation of this status quo through teaching numerous influenceable young flute pupils, cracks appeared in the author's 'passive acceptance'. Acceptance of both the printed music and of the tradition, as passed on and taught by performers and teachers, attached to performing of the basic flute repertoire.
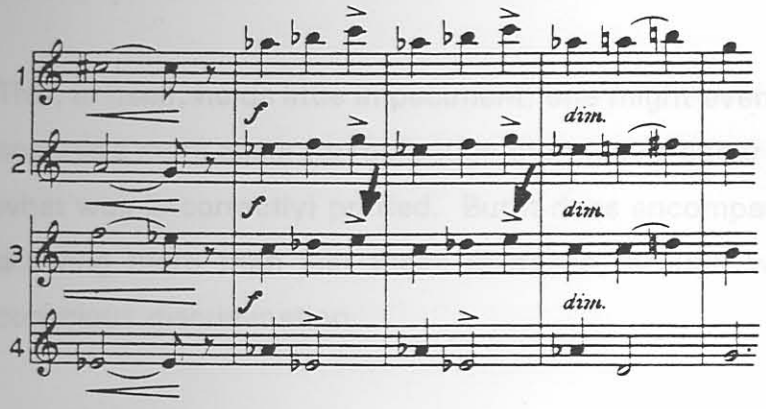
The author became a performing-academic at a university; further becoming, as time progressed, more and more the academic and less and less the performer. And as the roles reversed, so the mind became more enquiring and less passively accepting. It was seen, without initially bothering to delve too much into it, that when teaching well-known pieces, both small hitherto unnoticed mistakes and large blatant anomalies became increasingly obvious.

2.6 Printed mistakes

It came to be realised that the development of an advanced ability to read at sight any new music, a prerequisite for any successful professional musician, had one serious drawback. The player often does not actually *see* what is notated. The printed mistakes are often glossed over because the mind, and hence the fingers and tongue, translate on some unconscious level any illogically notated pattern into a known logical pattern. Thus the following two passages in Ex. 2-1 will automatically, and correctly, be played as in Ex 2-2:

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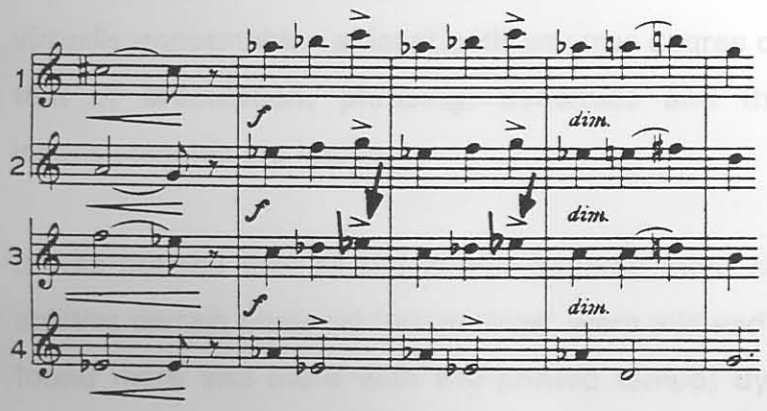
Example 2-1a: Chaminade, Scarf Dance, mm. 28-32



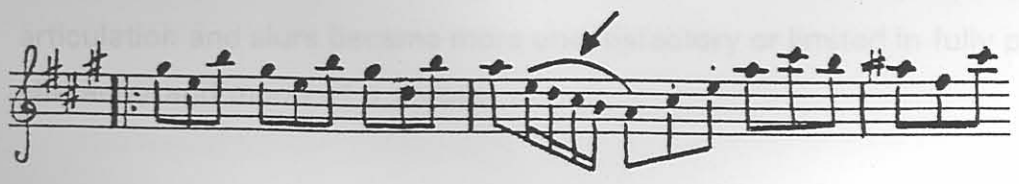
Example 2-1b: Bodinus (ca. 1700 - 1760), Gigue, mm. 26-28



Example 2-2a: corrected version of Ex.2-1a



Example 2-2b: corrected version of Ex. 2-1b



But the conscious mind, hearing the corrected version, somehow accepts that the notation is thus also correct. Henceforth, as the piece is learned better and better, the printed page is actually read less and less. Thus any printed mistakes become less and less liable to be noticed at all. As a consequence the printed page is not

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further questioned.

This, in itself, holds little impediment; one might even call it a fail-safe device that ensures a more accurate realisation than would occur if the conscious mind played what was (incorrectly) printed. But it does encompass the obvious draw-back of allowing more than just these mistakes through what would be the sieve of conscious discrimination.

2.7 Printed anomalies

This automatic correction in situ occurs mainly with the notes (pitches) and the rhythms, both of which are (for most musical intents) accurately notatable. As far as the other parameters of music notation are concerned the position is both much more subtle and much more inaccurate. There is here not only the element of correct versus incorrect, but the whole area of interpretation of that which is virtually unnotatable - at least with any true degree of accuracy. It is in this realm, that of articulation, phrasing, dynamics and the like, that anomalies and inconsistencies are legion.

It was noticed that as the author became more sure of his own interpretative abilities certain personal 'tamperings' were *allowed* to occur. Disagreement was found more and more with the printed tempo; dynamics needed more careful attention and often differed from that which was printed; accelerandos and ritardandos would be felt to begin either earlier or later than printed; the indicated articulation and slurs became more unsatisfactory or limited in fully portraying the character and mood of a phrase.

Increasingly, more and more anomalies, inconsistencies and mistakes were discovered. Differences in the printed dynamics, articulations and slurrings between the performer's flute part and the piano score were discovered to be evident in most repertoire pieces. More than that, gross inconsistencies were discovered between different sections of the same work. Some of these had for

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many years actually been noticed, but had been accepted and readily incorporated into the nuance structure of the works. For example, in the last movement of the Sonata for flute and piano by Poulenc two different articulations of the same motive occur (Ex. 2-3); first in the initial exposition material and secondly in the recapitulation of the same material:

Example 2-3a: Poulenc, Sonata for flute and piano, III:26



Example 2-3b: Poulenc, Sonata for flute and piano, III:202



This particular difference (unlike most of the ones being discussed in this dissertation) had already been pointed out by the author's teacher while first learning the work as a student, with the explanation that it was Poulenc's subtle variation upon the re-entry of the opening material. In the light of all the 'subtleties' now being discovered, an in-depth investigation of this subject was considered, with regard to the parameters that appeared to be the most often misrepresented on the printed page - namely that of slurs and articulations.

2.8 The music behind the printed score

It was further realised that the music, while being played and heard, would suggest its *own* subtleties of performance - including patterns of articulation and slurring - if the performer allowed himself to *feel* the music, as opposed to just playing what is written under the guidance of some learned and memorised tradition (sometimes

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called "style"). And to this end the various nuances would, in the light of an open knowledgeable approach, automatically *present* themselves to the performer - even when this clashed with the printed score.

The printed notation is, by its limiting nature, only a partial representation of the totality of the music - as if it were crystallised in stasis, until revived and given breath in actual performance (this would include a mental realisation of the music). The composer is presented with a workable yet very limited notational system through which to communicate his musical conceptions to the performer. As he *cannot* notate his exact intentions, he has to leave enough guidelines to ensure that the performer will be able to decipher his intentions.

Just to slavishly follow these printed clues does neither the composer nor the music full justice. The composer has to trust that the performer will at least attempt to read 'between the lines' and fully realise (release) the subtle intrinsic, yet unnotatable, nuances, the addition of which are necessary to ensure a full transmission of notes and rhythms into meaningful sound. One might say that music has a hidden power to reveal its full meaning only if the performer allows full play of his natural musical instincts in interpreting the music.

The word "interpret" comes from the two bases "inter", meaning "between", and "prath" meaning in Sanskrit "to spread abroad" (Little et al:1031). Thus the interpreter stands between the composer and the audience, and "spreads abroad" the composer's musical intentions. In order to do this in as human a way as possible, as opposed to an automated, mechanical playing of the notes, the interpreter needs to become as one with the composer's intentions. As, in most cases, an intervening hundred or so years precludes the possibility of direct knowledge of a composer's intentions, one has to rely, besides contemporary writings and letters, on a traditional oral transmission of these intentions - in the sense that the subtleties of performance, as mentioned above, are passed on from teacher to pupil. This has the obvious draw-back of needing to rely on the objectivity and discrimination of the purveyors of this oral tradition.

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Many cultures, of Africa for instance, still rely on their Storytellers for the transmission of their cultural heritage. But any oral transmission can only be successful and meaningful if the Storyteller (or Teacher) ensures that in relating the story, with its intrinsic interest value, the meaning *behind* the story is transmitted - as in the re-telling of an Aesop fable or a parable from the Bible. If the Storyteller (Teacher) fully understands the true meaning of the story (music) then he will know which words to emphasise and where to modulate his voice; he will know which notes to articulate more clearly and where to alter the timbre. He will know because he is interpreting under the same natural laws, the same first principles, as the first Storyteller and the Composer were when originally creating.

An idealistic situation might be envisaged where the composer need only notate the notes and their rhythms; with the music, under the light of these natural laws, revealing all the rest - including tempo, dynamics, nuances, articulations and phrasings. Composers would, under these conditions, need only notate deviations from the natural patterns.

2.9 Does the composer know best?

The next stage in the author's perception of the enormity of the myth of the printed page came with the realisation that perhaps composers themselves do not fully comprehend the potential of what they conceive in their minds. Here, a performer, through his involvement in the physical translation of the notation into sound, may actually come to 'understand' the work 'better' than the composer himself, thus unlocking a new, different and better set of intrinsic nuances.

Or perhaps composers do not translate the sounds/music in their minds accurately into the standard notational system. For instance, the inner phrasing of a single phrase of music, although known and felt by the composer, may be inaccurately notated, causing some confusion on the part of the performer as to the intended character of the phrase. This being the case, there is a communication gap in the transmission of this mind-music onto paper and, hence, on to the performer. It

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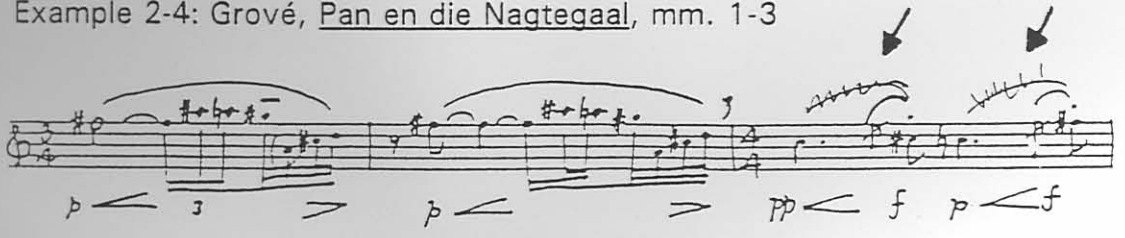
would thus become the performer's duty to re-phrase or re-articulate the passage in order to circumvent the composer's muddying phrasing (either due to lack of insight or to inaccurate transmission through notation).

2.10 A composer's second thoughts

The confusion over phrasing, and the respective stances of composer and performer, all came to a head one day while the author was playing for the South African composer Stefans Grové his piece for solo flute *Pan en die Nagtegaal* (Pan and the Nightingale). The author had requested that he listen to an informal performance of the piece before the actual concert performance; it was also to be recorded at the concert. Being a piece in a modern idiom, albeit relatively conservative, the handwritten indications were followed as accurately as possible.

After hearing the piece through, the composer took out a pencil and changed two slurs in m. 3, saying that these would be more effective. He was completely correct - the second thoughts were more effective in realising the character he intended. On hearing the piece realised in sound he had immediately re-evaluated the efficacy of what he had notated. Example 2-4 shows the composer's own pencilled changes in m. 3:

Example 2-4: Grové, Pan en die Nagtegaal, mm. 1-3



The author of this dissertation then resolved in future to keep in mind the concept that any composer, on hearing his own work being played (realised in sound), might possibly have second thoughts regarding the efficacy of his notated nuances. This strengthened the author's decision to research the efficacy of notated phrasing in wind music.

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2.11 Delimitations of this study

It must be stated that this investigation has only taken into consideration works for solo wind instruments - including concertos, sonatas and recital pieces. In symphonic music and much chamber music, most of the phrasing that might be considered in a solo context to be suspect and needing some form of re-phrasing, will still work well - because in a group context the clean and unanimous articulation of the ensemble is of paramount importance. Equally, no avant-garde music has been included because the whole raison-d'être of contemporary compositional strivings is to rise above the restrictions imposed by progressions of notes suggesting further progressions of notes and forming themselves into phrases; hence the interpretation of avant-garde music is on a different plane.

All of the examples used in the text are taken from the flute repertoire; but the principles as laid out in this dissertation are equally applicable to all wind instruments.

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CHAPTER 3

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

3.1 Problems of terminology

In the introductory chapter the words "phrase", "phrasing", "slur", "slurring" and "articulation" were used in a typically vague, and yet generally understandable context. But for the exigencies of further in-depth study these and similar terms need to be investigated and defined.

3.1.1 Redefining old terms

A performing musician will commonly, and without any feeling of ambiguity, use words like "phrase", "phrasing", "slur", "slurred", "articulation" and "tongued". His general meaning, although considered vague and imprecise by anyone desiring accurate discussion of these elements of interpretation, will be adequately understood by other performing musicians. Amongst wind-players words like "embouchure" and "diaphragm" are equally used quite adequately to describe, discuss and teach playing techniques, despite the fact that these words are, as used, by no means definitive in their meaning. Rothstein (1989:11) even goes so far as to state the following:

> [...] 'phrasing' is one of those words that, in a more perfect world, would probably be outlawed, so meaningless has it become. It might be possible to salvage some definite meaning for the word, if it could be clearly defined and then rigorously used. But I fear that its degradation is too deeply entrenched for that.

Consequently Rothstein outlaws the word from his discussions. Thus in order to use terms like "phrasing" without any degree of vagueness, they must be securely defined before successful critical analysis and discussion can take place.

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3.1.2 Inventing new terms

Some authors do not, apparently, consider merely outlawing problematic words or redefining common terms the best option, and conjure up much ingenuity in order to invent new sets of terms to describe existing phenomena. These terms may, once fully understood and remembered (without necessitating the continual referral back to initial definitions), temporarily provide a succinct analytical language; but it is doubtful whether any will find its way into everyday common usage - least of all by the practical musician, whose performance the analysts are purportedly attempting to describe (or influence).

3.1.3 Intelligibility

As complex analytical discussions are an anathema to the more pragmatic performing musician, a communication gap often exists. In order to render this dissertation intelligible to the performing musician the commonly-accepted vocabulary with regard to the performance and interpretation of instrumental wind music will, once securely defined, be employed. No new terms will be invented.

Rothstein (1989:3) acknowledges both this gap between performer and analyst, and the problems associated with attempts at reaching definitions acceptable to both camps:

> Every musician thinks he knows what a phrase is, and certainly every musician *must* know if music is to be made at all. But ask a musician to define *phrase*, and you will probably get a blank stare. Then, if you are lucky, you will hear an awkward, abstract explanation using such words as energy, tension, motion, expectation, release, arrival and fulfilment, perhaps accompanied by metaphors derived from visual perception ("a line of motion," "an arc of tension," and so forth).

The 18th-century composer and theoretician Koch (1749-1816) realised that unclear language can easily prove a barrier to the unambiguous transfer of information. He states the problem thus (1983:4):

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> [...] the insufficient definition of the nature of phrases makes the teaching of musical period structure more difficult with regard to the punctuation sequence of sections and the rhythm. In this way one creates an obstacle, for the maxims according to which the sections are joined into a whole cannot be formed generally enough.

American composer Milton Babbitt even goes so far as to call musical discourse "that wonderful language which permits anything to be said and virtually nothing to be communicated" (Rothstein 1989:3). In order to bridge the gap, find common ground and communicate, there follows in Chapter 3.2 a microlevel investigation of the manner in which each term is commonly used or defined. In the light of this investigation, each term will be newly defined and thus rendered unambiguously intelligible for the rest of this dissertation - and hopefully beyond.

3.2 Examination and definition of terms

3.2.1 Dynamic/dynamics

A differentiation must be made between the terms "dynamic" and "dynamics". "Dynamic" is defined in *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (Little et al 1972:575): "As or pertaining to force producing motion." Thus energy is contained within a moving, or potentially moveable, system. In music this system would be any unfolding musical process (e.g. a melody line or harmonic sequence).

"Dynamic" in this dissertation will pertain to the horizontal, forward momentum of the musical line. It will infer a self-creating and self-perpetuating energy engendered in the course of the evolution of a musical phrase; and thence throughout the whole musical composition.

On the other hand, the word "dynamics" will refer to the notational devices indicating relative volumes of sound; also the use of relative volumes of sound in performance. The singular of these dynamics, "dynamic", will thus only refer to the relative volume of sound when used in a context like 'a softer dynamic' (meaning fewer decibels).

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3.2.2 Phrase

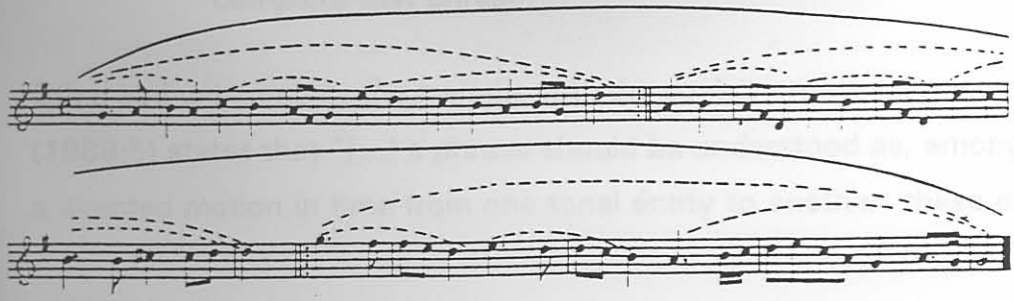
Both as a noun and as a verb (as in "to phrase") this is probably one of the most difficult of musical terms to define. Below are arranged a selection of attempts to do so by a variety of authors.

The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians (Sadie 1980:663) states that "phrase" is a term "adopted from linguistic syntax and used for short musical units of various lengths; a phrase is generally regarded as longer than a Motif but shorter than a Period. It carries a melodic connotation". "Phrase" is thus a word that is used in both linguistic and musical contexts. Colloquially the word "phrase" in music is often used to describe a compact area, independent or contained within some greater whole, rather like a written sentence. (This will be discussed in detail in Chapter 8.)

Koch (1983:4) seems to agree that the length of a common phrase would be between those of a motif and a period: "[...] every melodic section which takes three or four measures of simple meter is usually called a phrase, without distinction; the thought may or may not be complete."

Zuckerkandl (1959:130) on the other hand states that "[w]e think of a melody always as a whole, while phrase applies to wholes or parts". He goes on to complicate matters by mentioning "a large phrase", "smaller phrases" and "still smaller member phrases". For this he provides this example where, he avers, there is one melody, but "three levels of phrase (indicated by appropriate symbols)":

Example 3-1: Haydn, String Quartet Op. 76/3, II:3-15



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Three other definitions disagree about the completeness or incompleteness, and require only that a phrase be goal-orientated; it need not necessarily reach the goal. Koch (1983:6-7) says that a "basic phrase is complete when it can be understood or felt as a self sufficient section of the whole, without a preceding or succeeding incomplete segment fortuitously connected with it." And Randel (1986:629) states that a phrase is "the product, in varying degrees, of melody, harmony and rhythm and concludes with a moment of relative tonal and/or rhythmic stability". The American composer Roger Sessions (in Rothstein 1989:3) calls a phrase "a portion of the music that must be performed, so to speak, without letting go, or, figuratively, in a single breath [...]. The phrase is a constant movement towards a goal - the cadence."

In this description Sessions introduces the important concept of breath. Throughout musical history the length of a single vocal phrase (except in cases of extreme tempi; e.g. Grave or Vivace) has usually been based on what can be sung within the span of a single breath. The same concept basically applies to instrumental wind music.

Some definitions go even further than the statement in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (Sadie 1980:663) that the term phrase merely "carries melodic connotations", and are of a purely melodic nature. For instance Westergaard (in Rothstein 1989:4) avers the following:

> A phrase 1) establishes one set of pitches and then 2) moves to a second set of pitches in such a way that
>
> a. we expect those pitches
> b. we have some sense of when they are about to occur and,
> c. once they have occurred we know the phrase has gotten where it's going and that no further pitches are needed to complete that phrase.

Other authors combine the melodic with the goal-orientated: for example Rothstein (1989:5) states that "[...] a phrase should be understood as, among other things, a directed motion in time from one tonal entity to another; these entities may be

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harmonies, melodic tones (in any voice or voices), or some combination of the two. *If there is no tonal motion, there is no phrase*." Here the notion of horizontal melodic movement, which may be harmonically directed, is emphasised.

Auer (1980:71) states the following: "The musical phrase on the violin is naturally a melody-sentence [...] it forms an uninterrupted sentence in which its composer develops his thought and his feeling." While combining the melodic, the goal-orientated and the linguistic metaphor, this also introduces the more subjective elements of the composer's inner processes (thoughts and feelings).

In establishing a definition of a "phrase" then, the elements of it's length, the breath, linguistic metaphor, melodic-orientation, goal-orientation and harmonic structure apparently need to be incorporated.

"Phrase" in this dissertation will be taken to mean a directed series of pitches forming a melodic sentence with both syntactic (= meaning) and breath (= dynamic/living) connotations. The series of pitches will have metric, rhythmic and harmonic frameworks, but it is the connection of the pitches in forming a melodic sentence that will be addressed here. Most phrases will end with some form of cadential feeling, but in ensemble and orchestral playing the performer may make only a contribution to a compositional whole, i.e. the phrase may be completed and/or begun by other performers. Nevertheless, this phrase contribution will, unless it is only of motive length (see Chapter 3.2.4), be called a phrase. This is because in this dissertation the performer's contribution and approach is being considered, not the composer's - except where the composer's point of reference influences the performer's perception and choices, and thus influences his interpretation.

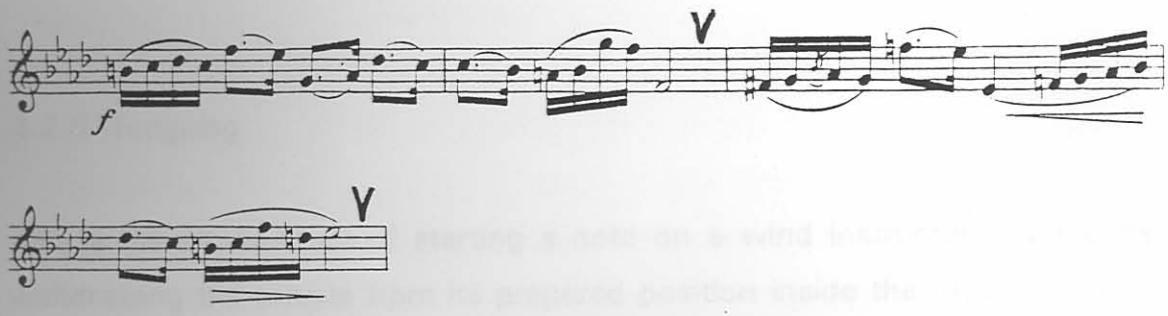
The term "period" will not be used; the practising musician does not readily use this term. A cadencing period is usually considered to consist of a series of two or more non-cadencing phrases; but this dissertation will be investigating only components of phrases or sub-phrases.

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3.2.3 Sub-phrase
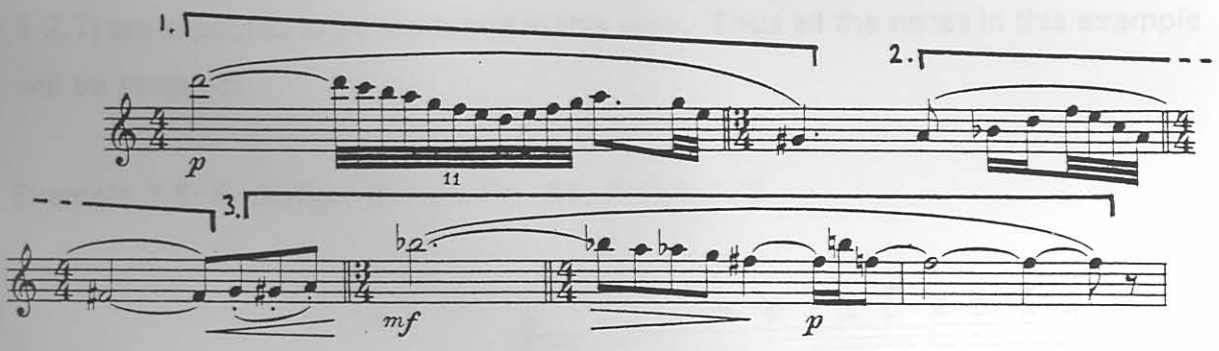
"Sub-phrase" will be taken to mean a segment of a longer phrase, but one that is longer than a motive but shorter than a phrase. In most cases a sub-phrase will be a half or a quarter of a full phrase. In the following example there are two sub-phrases of two bars each:

Example 3-2: Donjon, Adagio Nobile, mm. 3-6



Sub-phrases can also be of irregular lengths. In Ex. 3-3 the first sub-phrase is five and a half beats long, the second four beats long and the third twelve and a half beats long (the sub-phrases are marked above with a straight bracket):

Example 3-3: Roussel, Pan, mm. 1-6
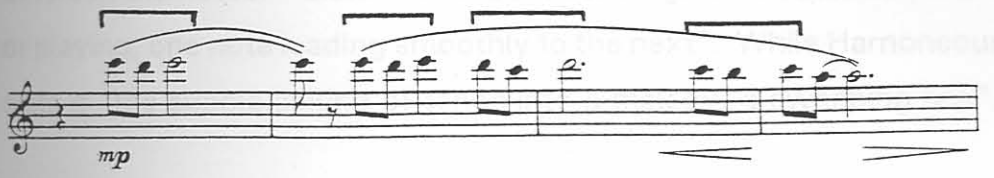


3.2.4 Motive

All sources seem to agree that "elements shorter than the shortest phrase are termed motives" (Randel 1986:629). The spelling "motif" is frequently

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encountered. Motives have rhythmic and/or melodic elements. Ex. 3-4 shows a repeated three-note motive:

Example 3-4: Rutter, Suite Antique, I:53-6
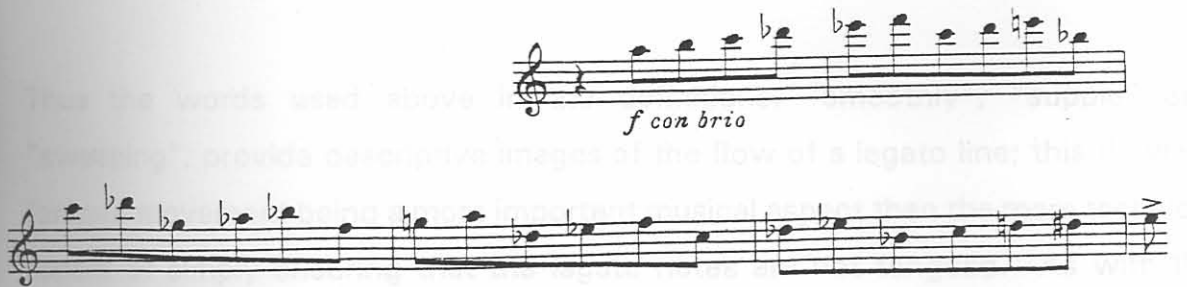


3.2.5 Tonguing

This is the physical act of starting a note on a wind instrument by means of withdrawing the tongue from its prepared position inside the mouth in order to allow a stream of air to exit the lips (or enter the reed or mouthpiece) and hence produce sound within the instrument. A note started in this way is said to be "tongued". See Hinch (1991:32-50) for a detailed analysis and description of all related matters.

Generally, on wind instruments all notes not connected by a slur (see Chapter 3.2.7) are expected to be produced in this way. Thus all the notes in this example will be tongued:

Example 3-5: Prokofiev, Sonata Op. 94, II:180-185



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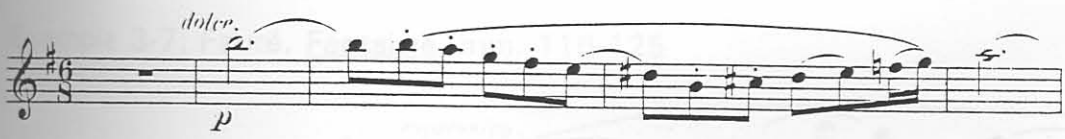
3.2.6 Legato

The following three sources state in essence the same thing. Apel (1979:465) says that legato means: "To be played without any perceptible interruption between the notes." Blom (1975:366) calls legato "a sustained manner of singing or playing, one note leading smoothly to the next". While Harnoncourt (1989:111) calls it "the supple linking of tones into a melody, a sweeping line".

To a player of a wind instrument legato signifies basically 'not tongued', and is notated by a slur over the notes. An exact analogy with singing would appear not really accurate as a group of syllables for a singer may be marked legato but actually include 'tongued notes', i.e. clearly re-articulated syllables in the sense that all consonants are re-articulated sounds. A wordless *Vocalise* by Rachmaninov or the *Bachianas Brasileiras* No 5 by Villa-Lobos, which is sung with vowel sounds only, would be the true vocal equivalent to a legato wind phrase.

In context though, an instrumental phrase may be marked legato either by means of a slur(s) or by the written indication "legato", but include articulated notes within the general legato flow:

Example 3-6: Fauré, Fantaisie, mm. 1-5



Thus the words used above in the definitions, "smoothly", "supple" and "sweeping", provide descriptive images of the flow of a legato line; this flowing, forward movement being a more important musical aspect than the mere technical aspect of simply ensuring that the legato notes are not tongued. As with the singing of a legato phrase, all articulations occur within the exhaled airstream.

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"Legato" will be taken in this dissertation to mean the smoothest possible flow of a melodic line, wherein any tongued notes are tongued within the outward flow of the breath - hence there will be no feeling of separation of tones in a musical line played legato.
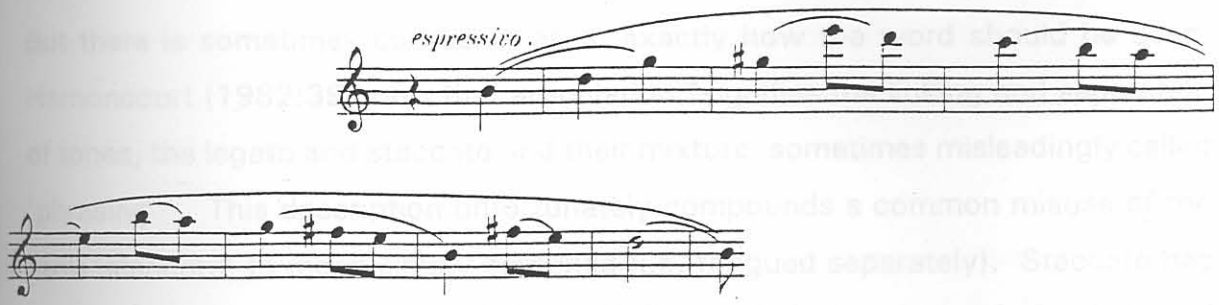
3.2.7 Slur/slurring

As the slur forms the single most important notational symbol under investigation in this dissertation, it is important that it be fully defined.

Apel (1979:780) describes a slur as a "curved line placed above or below a group of notes to indicate that they are to be played legato, eg, with one breath as in singing". This description contains both the symbol used and couples the slur to the concept of legato.

Rothstein (1989:11) acknowledges two types of slur, namely the (original) "legato slur" and the (subsequent) "phrasing slur". The "legato slur" is the same as that defined by Apel above; but the "phrasing slur" (called in this dissertation the 'phrase-slur' - see Chapter 3.2.11) refers to the (usually) longer curved line which indicates to the performer the extent of the phrase or sub-phrase. The following example shows both types of slur:

Example 3-7: Fauré, Fantaisie, mm. 116-125



Rothstein (1989:11-12) blames 19th-century editors for using the former alongside the latter and blurring the distinction. The distinction certainly exists in practical

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terms, both from the composer's and the performer's point of reference; but there has never been a notational difference - apart from where both slurring systems are used concurrently (as in the above example). Much of Chapter 4, regarding notation, will address this issue.

An element that is missing from most descriptions of the slur is that of stress. As will be investigated in Chapter 5, the slur implies some form and degree of stress on the initial tongued note.

"Slur" in this dissertation will refer to the notational arched line drawn in the music above or below a series of notes, signifying that they should be played as a single group without any note (apart from the initial note) being tongued. This initial tongued note is usually stressed in some way.

"Slurring" refers to the writing of, or the performance of, groups of notes in the above manner.

3.2.8 Articulation

As mentioned in the above definition of "slur", the first note of a slur is usually tongued or articulated in some way. As Galway (1982:123) states: "Articulation on the flute boils down to a certain combination of tongued and slurred notes, in the patterns common in standard classical pieces."

But there is sometimes confusion as to exactly how the word should be used. Harnoncourt (1982:39) says that articulation "signifies the linking and separation of tones, the legato and staccato and their mixture, sometimes misleadingly called 'phrasing'". This description unfortunately compounds a common misuse of the term 'staccato' to mean simply detached (i.e. tongued separately). Staccato has a much more definite meaning and usually has technical, accentual, dynamic and characterizing implications. See Hinch (1991:52-6) for a detailed account.

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To a practising musician the term "articulation" can have two meanings:

* musically, the combinations, patterns and mixtures of tongued and legato areas within a phrase; and
* technically, the relative strengths and lengths of the tongued notes.

Thus the term "well-articulated" can mean a more forceful, perhaps more accented tonguing; and "clean articulation" will probably mean more separation of the notes and may be synonymous with a more staccato effect.

Despite Harnoncourt's above admonition, the word "articulation" will not be used in this dissertation to include the slurred patterns of music. The word "articulation" is nevertheless intimately bound up with slurs in the sense that the initial note thereof is probably tongued; and further notes contained under a slur may be articulated in some way. See Hinch (1991:46-9) for a discussion of tongueless and labial attacks.

"Articulation" will be taken in this dissertation to mean the delineation and usually, but not necessarily, the separation of notes - usually by means of the tongue, but also by other variations in airstream pressure. It includes the integration into the musical line of various strengths and lengths of attacks, e.g. sforzando, staccato and tenuto. See Hinch (1991:8-12) for a full discussion of the various attacks.

A single note that is "articulated" is provided with some form of separate attack.

"Articulation markings" will refer to all notational devices that attempt to communicate relative strengths and lengths of notes and their attacks.

3.2.9 Attack

This refers to the initial moment of tone production and the relative strength or force thereof. Attack is notated by means of symbols such as ^ , > , ! or by means of written indications such as "martellato", "dolce" or "fz". Attack forms part of the world of articulation. Tonguing is the main technical element involved

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in its production; but there are other means of articulating the airstream, e.g. by means of the diaphragm or lips. Although not as critical a technical element in the musical process as with, especially, the piano, the wind player's control of attack (in all its varieties) is a vital element in interpretation and characterisation of phrases.

3.2.10 Phrasing

Like the noun "phrase" the concept of "phrasing", whether as a noun or as a verb, is open to a variety of interpretations, and hence definitions.

Apel (1979:668) succinctly defines phrasing as "the separation of a melody into its constituent phrases". He also agrees with Harnoncourt's quoted comment (1982:39) on the general state of confusion regarding the two terms "phrasing" and "articulation".

Randel (1986:629) defines "phrasing" first as a verb: "the realisation in performance, of the phrase structure of a work"; and then as a noun, "the phrase structure itself".

Conti (in Clardy 1992:10) renders a poetic description:

> Phrasing is like an arch, with a beginning, middle, and end. It relates to a tonic-dominant-tonic harmonic progression, much like the stages of human life: babyhood, middle age, and the decline to death.

This infers that, rather than "separating" elements of the music, as Apel's definition suggests, phrasing has to do with creating wholes.

Like Conti's arch, flutist Alain Marion (in Goll-Wilson 1992b:9) is concerned with shape, describing phrasing as "the manner in which a player shapes and contours musical statements".

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Auer, a practising violin teacher, presents the most all-embracing picture of the word "phrasing" as seen from the performers viewpoint (1980:71-2):

> [Phrasing] is a very specific application of nuance - for phrasing is in the broadest sense tonal shading and inflexion combined with rhythmic delineation - all of which applied to compositions as a whole resulting in what is known as 'a correct interpretation'. Phrasing is always something essentially personal. It has really no fixed laws - though various conflicting systems of phrasing exist - and depends wholly on the musical and the poetical sense of the performer.

Rothstein (1989:11), also viewing it from the practical point of view, attempts to define "phrasing" in dictionary style:

> 1. The delineation and internal shaping of phrases [...] by a musical performer. Includes both the joining of notes into phrases and the separation of these phrases from each other. 2. The legato performance of notes under a slur: or, the legato performance of notes as if they were under a slur. Involves the physical connection of notes (legato playing) regardless of their position within the phrases.

Michel Debost, a well known flute player and pedagogue, equates phrasing with the musical expression (1994:2):

> Musical phrasing is an attempt, much like syllables in a spoken sentence, to organize sounds to project their intellectual, spiritual, and emotional content. Phrasing is a connection between freedom and constraint, tension and release, intensity and repose, time and space, and sound and silence.

He also acknowledges a duality of meaning engendered by the common usage of the word. The first part of his description does not, apart from the presumed articulation of the initial note of a phrase, refer to any physical articulation (i.e. attack or tonguing of notes), while the second part essentially bears no relation to phrase structure (although it may in context).

Thus the term "phrasing", perhaps more than any other term in music in general, is taken by writers to mean whatever they take it to mean. This far-reaching word,

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with its multiplicity of inherent meanings, seems to be the one to use when discussing the performance of expressive subtleties that notation either only hints at or does not allow the composer to communicate. The only problem would seem to be that each writer assumes that it refers to only some of the elements of expression; and each one decides which elements they wish to include and exclude.

"Phrasing" in this dissertation will be used as the widest-ranging term. It will refer to the addition, by a composer, editor or performer, of any element that directs the performance of a musical line (be it of motive or phrase length) in order to make that line intelligible and meaningful, both on its own and in context. It also describes the performance thereof. Phrasing usually consists of patterns of slurred and non-slurred notes - with or without the addition of various notated articulations. Often the notated dynamics are also included as elements of phrasing. Harmony, or the harmony implied by a melodic phrase, is intimately bound up with phrasing and helps direct the phrase.

The word "phrasing" will not essentially include the phrase-slur - except where this has a direct influence on other parameters of phrasing.

3.2.11 Phrase-slur

"Phrase-slur" (see also Chapter 3.2.7 above) in this dissertation will refer to the (usually) long notational arc written above or below a series of notes to indicate a (usually) self-contained phrase. Various combinations of slurred and tongued notes usually occur under this phrase-slur.

Example 3-8a: Griffes, Poem, mm. 234-237



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The phrase-slur will often, although certainly not always, suggest that the affected phrase be played relatively smoothly. If the phrase-slur is excised from Ex. 3-8a then the articulated notes will probably receive greater emphasis:

Example 3-8b: Griffes, Poem, mm. 234-237 (re-phrased by the author)



Thus phrase-slurs need to be added with great caution by composers and editors.

The main argument against the indiscriminate use of phrase-slurs in wind music is that, if used in conjunction with slurs, then confusion may arise. If used without slurs, while delineating a phrase or a sub-phrase, they do not leave enough leeway for the finer shaping of sub-phrases, for the bringing out of implied two-part textures, for the shaping of interpolations and for the emphasising of motives. This is further discussed in Chapter 5.

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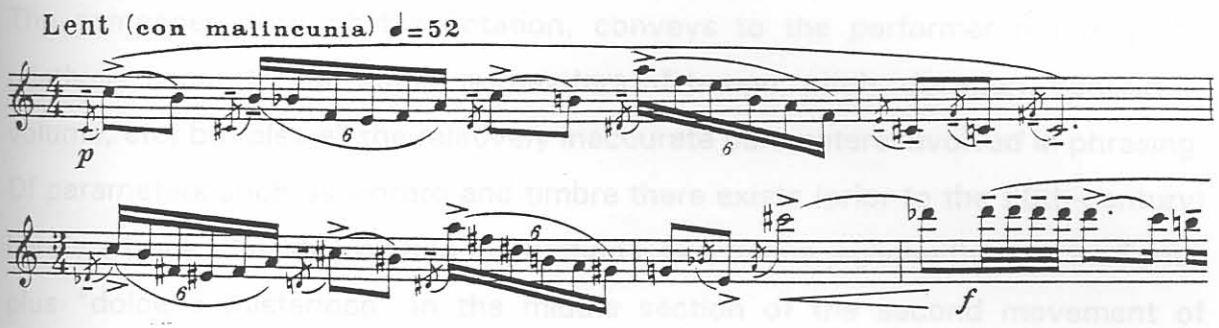
CHAPTER 4

NOTATION

4.1 The role of notation

Notation is the composer's only means of conveying his inner musical ideas to performing musicians who, in turn, actualise and make audible the composer's ideas by translating the notation into sound. But notation is an inexact device - just as written language can be. Performances of the following phrase (Ex. 4-1) with its numerous slurs and articulations can result in as many interpretations from different performers as there are possible pronunciations of a word such as "aprophemeiticelaicete" (especially if different dialects and nationalities are taken into account):

Example 4-1: Tomasi, Sonatine for solo flute, mm. 1-5



Although the Western music tradition is not essentially an oral one (in the sense that it is not entirely handed down from generation to generation by means of the spoken word or the performed sound) it nevertheless requires that both the composer and the performer share, to a greater or lesser degree, the same cultural heritage and environment. This environment includes not only music but also exposure to other art forms (like dance and sculpture) and quasi-art forms (like architecture and, even, flower arranging). In as much as the total cultural environment is a reflection of human values, ethics, morals, religious beliefs etc, and art is by definition a reflection of man's environment in all its multifarious

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forms, the two, environment and art, are inseparably entwined - each influencing the other. (The differing degrees of inter-dependence and influence will not be addressed here.) The composer has to rely on the interpreter of his notation (i.e. the performing artist, the musician) having shared, again to a greater or lesser degree, a common cultural heritage and environment, or the music produced will merely be the result of the performer systematically making the notation audible, and the inner meaning of the composer's art will be either misrepresented or entirely lost.

Thus a music student is required to acquire a knowledge of, and feeling for, 'style': style in an historical context (e.g. Classical style), style in a national context (e.g. Italian as opposed to French) and the style of particular composers (e.g. Bach as opposed to Handel). This sense of style will allow the performer to fill in the notational 'gaps' - those areas where no accurate notational aids have developed, or where notation is not definitive.

The composer, through his notation, conveys to the performer not only the relatively accurate and stable parameters of tempo, pitch, duration, contextual volume, etc, but also all the relatively inaccurate parameters involved in phrasing. Of parameters such as vibrato and timbre there exists (prior to the 20th-century) hardly a trace - besides written instructions, like "Ohne jegliche Bebung im Tone" plus "dolce e misterioso" in the middle section of the second movement of Reinecke's *Undine* Sonata. The transference of the notated musical text into audible sound requires, on the part of the performer, the acquisition not only of a certain degree of technical expertise, but also of insight into the composer's thoughts and feelings. It requires, on the part of the composer, trust that the performer has acquired (usually by being taught) these skills and insights. Nevertheless there is inevitably some form of 'gap' in this insight/trust relationship between the composer's 'style' and the performer's sense of style.

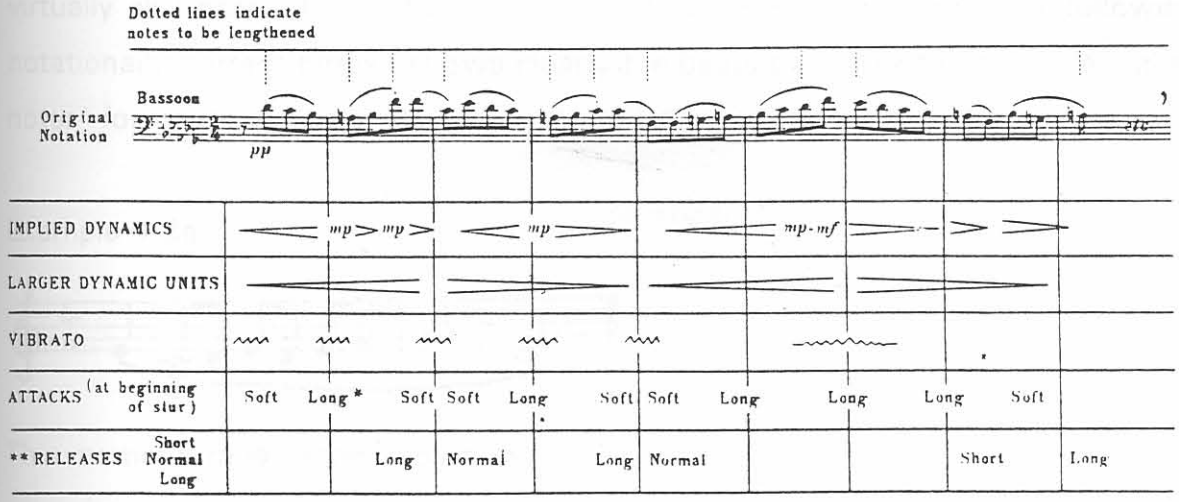
These gaps are virtually unavoidable unless the composer resorts to loading his score with copious written and/or diagrammatic instructions (as in many avant

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garde scores) or provides a definitive recording of his music for all to copy. Both these solutions (neither would be foolproof) would prove inhibiting, especially for the mainstream of classical music here under discussion, and stifle the performer's role as an interpreter. Copious instructions would clutter the page beyond reason and certainly make accurate sight-reading impossible.

Weisberg (1975:137) presents the following detailed analysis of part of the bassoon solo from the second movement of the Symphony No. 4 by Tchaikovsky:

Example 4-2:



It is not suggested that this notation be used by composers, although such detailed instructions would certainly contain some merit. Such instructions might help mitigate, as Pleeth (1982:74) warns, against performers indiscriminately copying other performer's interpretations:

> There is so much 'playing by hearsay' these days that a great masterpiece often ends up like a 'rumour' which is passed so much by word of mouth that it eventually loses all relation to the original truth. Sadly, in the world of performance, there is often such an unquestioned acceptance of these 'hearsay' distortions that the

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players go on repeating every mannerism, every cliché without ever noticing that the composer never put it there.

The performer's musical responsibility, and here there is a large area of contentiousness, will be to add subtleties to the composer's score according to his own musical insight. This will result in an interpretation which differs from that initially intended by the composer. The added subtleties must fully complement the initial ingredients at all times.

4.2 Notational shortcomings

One can question the effectiveness and accuracy of our notational system on virtually all fronts. For instance, as Berr (1990:20) rightly avers, the following notationally correct phrase shows clearly the beats but "fails to show the eighth notes' forward momentum":

Example 4-3a:
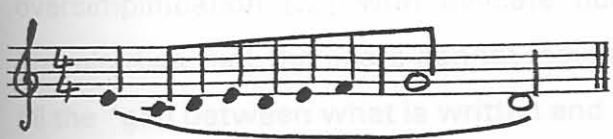


This momentum is better shown in:

Example 4-3b:



He then suggests that the phrase and its momentum are better visually represented by:

Example 4-3c:



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Harnoncourt (1982:39) sums up one of the basic difficulties of our notational system. He states that "articulation signs have remained the same for centuries, although their meaning has often changed, and radically, after 1800". To emphasise the vast differences, he likens the Baroque musical art to speaking, as opposed to the 19th-century musical art which he likens to painting. Obviously the same limited number of symbols cannot accurately notate musics based on such widely different premises.

As early as 1791 Tromlitz (1991:164) bemoaned the fact that composers expect the performer to have full knowledge of style, and do not exactly notate their intentions. Apparently the knowledge of, and feeling for, style was certainly not guaranteed, as he states that "frequently many things are spoiled because an individual does not have the correct feeling". He writes sarcastically that "it would be best and most reliable if Gentlemen Composers would put two dots in those places where they would have the short notes after the dot very short, in contrast to only one dot, and then the player would know where he was":



Maconie (1990:120), on the other hand, notes that the "imprecisions of standard notation need not be despised. They are human and therefore expressive". Although there is, then, an apparently unavoidable gap between the composer's notation and the performer's interpretation thereof, it is, he suggests, this very 'gap' that provides each new performance with the possibility of meaningful renewal - as the spark is produced in the gap in the spark-plugs of a car's engine. He is suggesting that the dynamic element of performance is made possible by acknowledging this 'gap', and allowing the conditions to provide the vital spark.

Goll-Wilson (1992a:1) writes that musical notation is "an unavoidable oversimplification [...] with delicate nuances, subtle inflections and rhythmic irregularities that the score cannot indicate". The performer's responsibility is to fill the "gap between what is written and the sound the composer intended [...] by

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using insight, taste and imagination".

Cook (1990:222) states, somewhat obliquely, that notation is not "simply a technology for communicating musical sounds or ideas: from a productional point of view, musical sounds and ideas are only constituted as such by virtue of a cognition in which means of notation play a predominant role". Halbwachs (quoted in Cook 1990:222) reverses the chicken and egg position and states unequivocally that musical notation (he calls it "language") "is not some instrument invented after the fact to fix and communicate to musicians what certain among them have spontaneously imagined. On the contrary, it is this language that has created music." This concept that the medium is in control of the message is surely an intellectual (not even philosophical) card trick, with little or no reality. And it can be summarily dismissed.

At the other end of the spectrum Campbell (1991:287) states bluntly that notation is "an efficient learning device, but one to be relegated to its proper place in the teaching of an aural art". The importance here lies in the suggestion that once the notes, rhythms, etc. are learnt (memorized?), there need be no further reliance on the printed page, and the performer's own interpretative powers take over and mould the final interpretation.

To a performer the music as pure notation may perhaps be equated to water prior to being brought to the boil; he plays his part (interprets) by energising, transforming and rarefying the water to miraculously produce the more ethereal steam (music as sound). An interpretative performer knows that one cannot force music into any unnatural pattern, yet each performance is beautifully unique. Or, as Sudnow (1979:37) poetically states, "the camera does not capture a movement - it furnishes one version of what a movement can mean". The performer, then, realises (releases) *one version of the possibilities* that imprecise notation contains.

The 'gap' is unavoidably there. But this is not essentially a disadvantage, and its exploitation by the interpretative performer leads to dynamic performances of

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compositions - where the performer is not a mere mechanical sound-producer and one can aptly apply the term 'interpreter' to the performer. The general, commonly-accepted notational system for Western music is sufficient for most ends to be met.
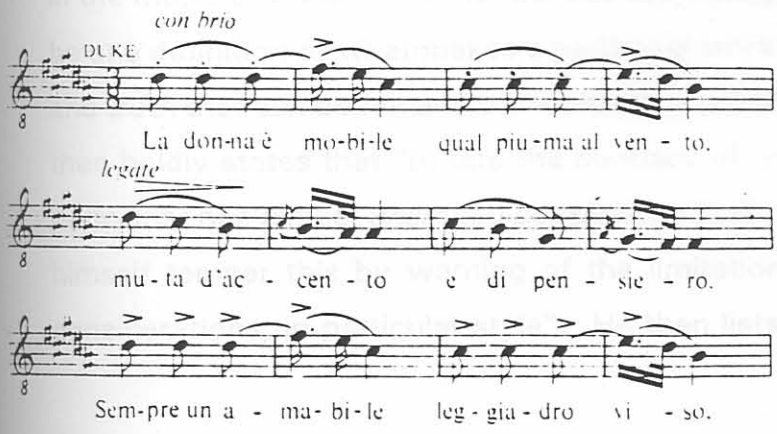
But there are areas of imprecision where this 'gap' exceeds the maximum limit, areas where the 'gap' is too large to accurately communicate the finer nuances of the composer's art to the performer. It is specifically in the area of phrasing that the largest gap exists.

So, given the inaccuracies of notation, both the performer and the composer/editor/publisher chain must play their part in minimalizing this gap.

4.3 The performer's role

Interestingly, the article on "Articulation" in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (Fallows et al 1980:644) discusses the following famous Verdi aria, saying that "[s]ome late 19th- and early 20th-century music is so laden with [...] articulation signs that a heroic effort would be required to interpret them precisely". The article even accuses the composer of trying to control his musicians. The reasonably complex articulations (and dynamics) may be unusual in a vocal part, but to a wind instrumentalist the notation portrays reasonably precisely the length, attack and relative strengths of the notes:

Example 4-4: Verdi, Rigoletto, "La donna è mobile"



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Given the above notational imprecisions, the question arises whether or not the imprecisions are inevitably inherent in the notational system - or if not, where did they come from? Maconie (1990:120) states that "[t]he eighteenth century has left a legacy of signs designed to reintroduce a human dimension of error and ambiguity to notational objectivity". He lists grace-notes, tenuti, ritardandi and figured bass-lines as examples. Surely these are expressive elements that help performers to spark the 'gap' mentioned above?

The performing artist who 'interprets' a composer's work must inject a degree of his own spirit (experience, taste, feel, etc.) under the label of what is sometimes called "artistic licence". But how much artistic licence is the performing musician allowed before he goes *too far*? Goll-Wilson (1992a:1) warns against too little:

> Today's rote musicians, separated by centuries from experiencing early music first hand, misconstrue notation for strict norms, dies they must duplicate. This fatal misunderstanding results in a distorted picture by enthroning a rigid discipline that contradicts the very nature of spontaneous performance.

Of course, with a living composer the possibility exists of consulting with him regarding points of interpretation. As Brymer (1979:163) notes, "it is far from easy to know where to draw the line in this business of taking liberties with a composer's work. Living composers are usually most approachable in this matter, and are rarely dogmatic if there is a good reason for suggesting a change of phrasing."

Weisberg (1975:135) writes with insight that the performer "can even find things in the music that the composer did not even imagine". This he concludes "would be one definition of what makes a particular work of art valid: it contains meaning and truth that can be felt and transmitted by people other than the composer". He then boldly states that "[q]uite the contrary of 'playing what's on the page', the performer has almost *unlimited possibilities* [italics added] open to him". He does himself temper this by warning of the limitations dictated by "various musical considerations, in particular style". He then lists areas of interpretation wherein

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choice may be exercised, including volume, vibrato and attack - but he does not include slurs.

There is also the question of the performer's responsibility with regard to his performance of works, whether unedited, lightly edited or heavily edited. A performer may complain about an editor having been irresponsible; but he may not, then, go out and perform his own equally (or more) irresponsibly 'edited version' - including new articulations and slurrings.

As quoted in Chapter 4.1, cellist William Pleeth (1982:74) warns against an unquestioning acceptance of the "hearsay" of well-known performers, whereby other performers "go on repeating every mannerism, every cliché, without ever noticing that the composer never put it there". These "mannerisms" and "clichés" include the addition and/or subtraction of slurs and articulations (together with parameters like tempo changes, rubato and dynamics). This is especially valid with regard to highly-respected recordings by famous performers. These can virtually become definitive performances. This is a healthy situation if the performer uses such aids to enrich his own interpretative resourses; unhealthy and limiting if slavishly copied without due consideration. A musician must expand, especially in the formative stages, his discriminatory powers. A fresh thought on phrasing as recorded by a respected performer is certainly as worthy of consideration as one that is printed.

4.4 Tradition

In the light of the fact that so-called 'tradition' is a temporary and localised (time and space) acceptance of general taste or style, must the performer bow to tradition or stand squarely on his own two feet and incorporate his own interpretative innovations? Both historical perspective and logical reasoning will show that all traditions slowly evolve, gradually change and are then either watered down or violently overthrown and replaced in time by 'new' traditions.

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Dalton (1988:196) quotes Landowska as saying that "there are a thousand different ways of interpreting a piece without ever getting away from its character". This, he surmises, is "extravagant" and concludes that "we must never deviate too far from what has come to be recognized over the years as a traditional course". (He then adds Toscanini's sarcastic, yet wonderfully cryptic and perspicacious, comment that "tradition" is the last bad performance.)

4.4.1 Tradition and historical changes

Over the centuries the performer's distance from the composer's intentions has obviously increased - leading to the situation where his knowledge of, and feel for, the 'style' of a period and/or a composer has to rely more and more on hearsay. This hearsay can come down to the performer by two different means; original writings of the composers and/or performers themselves (e.g. Quantz 1752, *On Playing the Flute*) or contemporary diarists, critics and historians (e.g. Burney 1776-1789, *A General History of Music from the Earliest Ages to the Present Period* Vols. 1-4). But usually the descriptions of what is right and wrong in historically correct performances (and therefore 'stylistically correct') comes to our attention through our teachers (advice during lessons) and contemporaries (concerts, recordings, etc.). This is certainly true in the especially indefinite areas of timbre and vibrato; but equally so in all areas of phrasing.

Harnoncourt (1989:108) states quite unequivocally that in the 18th-century "articulation on an instrument was basically the responsibility of the interpreter. The composer had to mark only those passages in which he expressly desired an execution which deviated from tradition, from the established norm." And Solum (1992:127) corroborates this by describing this era as a "partnership" between player and composer as far as dynamics and articulations (and realising the figured bass) were concerned. Solum quotes Robert Donington as having written: "The baroque habit was few expression marks, but plenty of expression".

As Urtext editions (see Chapter 4.7) portray only what the composers wrote (i.e.

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without extra hints as to the contemporary phrasing expectations, or modern conceptions thereof) the modern performer, having been brainwashed by the scientific and academic world into believing that the written word (notes) is necessarily more exact than some vague tradition or even vaguer 'feeling', has "grown accustomed to the error of omitting the slurs once taken for granted" (Harnoncourt 1989:109). For example Harnoncourt avers that the following slurs would have been automatically added by contemporary performers to bring out the natural patterns of the (Mozart's) music:

Example 4-5: Mozart, Symphony No. 35 K. 385, IV:20-21



The relationship between the composer and performer was (and still is) to a large degree based on trust. As Schocker says (in Goll-Wilson 1990:12):

> Composers and performers worked closely together during the baroque period; the composers trusted the performers to add the details of articulation, embellishment and even cadenzas, all of which were in the domain of the performer. The composer would not think of interfering. The performers were highly skilled and trusted by the composers.

Historically, Baroque composers did not often add anything except the occasional slur and/or dot above the written note; but with the dawning of the Classical era this situation began to change. As Harnoncourt (1989:110-1) elaborates:

> [...] it would be musically silly to believe that in the second half of the 18th century a constant rattling of eighth and sixteenth notes took the place of the Baroque "sewing machine rhythm", which we fortunately now realise to be an absurd notion because of our knowledge of the old principles of articulation. The old principles were not overthrown abruptly, as many treatises show clearly enough, but rather were gradually replaced as composers increasingly wrote out precisely what they wanted [...]. The more autobiographically (ie. drawing inspiration from his own life) a composer wrote, the more precisely he determined the interpretation and the further he removed himself from tradition.

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Does Harnoncourt's reference to "old principles" imply that with the passing of time these principles of articulation inevitably became invalid? Or were they wrong in the first place? Or did the Classical composers deviate not only from tradition but also from some 'truth', in superseding the "old principles"? Or do traditions inevitably and inexorably change merely because time has marched on? Are the principles immutable and merely change clothing? Or do principles actually change from era to era? Perhaps it is merely the injudicious use of the word "principles" that causes this confusion? Perhaps the words 'expectations' or 'taste' should be substituted?

It is Harnoncourt's last sentence which provides the essential clue to circumventing these questions. The change, for whatever reason, from an objective art to a more subjective art (he calls it "autobiographical" writing) necessarily distanced composers from old traditions. It is certainly not simply that composer's "increasingly wrote out precisely what they wanted". The new musical style (Classical) necessitated new methods of interpretation - including different uses of articulation and slurring - *but using the same notational symbols*.

Harnoncourt (1989:111) relates that Beethoven and Schubert wrote out practically everything in the way of phrasing that they wanted, and implores a return, in the performing of Classical music, to "stylistic" articulation and slurring. As he says (1989:112) "we must reacquire this elementary traditional knowledge". But why? He must be implying that modern standards and taste are defective. Is it impossible to reconcile our late 20th-century position, with its own cultural heritage and environment, with that of the, in this case, late 18th-century? Is a return to 18th-century articulation and slurring advisable or necessary - or even possible?

Style, tradition, taste and standards certainly change from era to era, but writers and critics may not always be correct in blaming only the performer for an unstylistic or less than meaningful performance.

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4.5 The composer's responsibility

William Primrose, the famous viola player, discusses (Dalton 1988:197) the relationship between himself and the composer Sir William Walton in connection with the latter's Viola Concerto. Primrose relates how he himself "contrived to rewrite some passages [...] not without full approval of the composer - or so it seemed to me". Primrose's revisions included octave transpositions and rewriting passages - including articulation and slurring. He thenceforth, for the next thirty-five years, not only gave many performances of the same work with these 'revisions' - some even under the composer's baton or with the composer in attendance - but also made recordings of the work.

Apparently Primrose later had occasion to peruse a newly-published edition of the work and noted that not one of the supposedly sanctioned 'revisions' that he had incorporated for the past thirty five years had been included. Primrose later learned that the composer had told a certain young performer that he would prefer the artist to play what was written - i.e. the original. One wonders what would have happened if Primrose had been asked to edit a version for publication. Surely then the seal would have been set and a 'tradition' established by means of Primrose's (then) definitive recording plus the printed edition? How often does this actually occur?

In this particular case the composer's attitude would appear ambiguous; but other factors may have influenced the scenario.

4.5.1 Understanding instruments

Clarinettist Jack Brymer (1979:162) calls the interpretation of a composer's phrasings a "vexed question". Having played certain works, each under the direction of that work's composer, he is led to conclude that "what they want may not be very similar to what [the performer] can see in the part". He suggests that this may come about because the composer of woodwind music has "phrased

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subconsciously in the manner of a string-melody to accommodate bowing and other aspects of string technique".

Most composers usually have a working knowledge of a keyboard instrument and/or a string instrument, are probably able to sing a musical phrase in an acceptable fashion, but very seldom have much experience of a wind instrument. Their feel for writing for wind instruments, and hence their feel for wind phrasing, must necessarily be coloured by their aforementioned practical experience. George (1993:10), in an article on the need to revise Chaminade's Concertino for Flute and Orchestra, states that "like other fine pianist/composers, [she] was probably not fully aware of the resulting expressive nuances that slurs and articulations produce on other instruments".

4.5.2 Deeper insight - contemporary composers

This may have been the case in previous eras; but do contemporary composers have greater insight, and treat their responsibility differently from those of old? Apparently some do.

Composer Michael Daugherty writes about how he worked together with flutists while writing his *Mxyzptlk* for two flutes and chamber orchestra (Debost 1992:14):

> This was the first work I wrote using instrumentalists so carefully, and I've continued this method for subsequent pieces, bringing in players to read through the parts. This is something most composition teachers don't talk about; composers generally do not know instruments very well. Each instrument has its own characteristics to learn, and a player may spend a lifetime learning the flute. A composer cannot spend a lifetime learning each instrument, but should spend a considerable time on each. I took a six-month crash course on flute to let me learn how players think and work with fingerings, for example. Many composers don't write idiomatically. As a composition student I often heard that doing so would make music sound academic, but this is not the case.

Presuming the "crash course" to be effective and stimulating, and that it does not

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lead to the situation where the composer thus thinks he 'knows it all'; presuming that the advice given to the composer by the players while "reading through the parts" is sound, then this would appear to be closest to the ideal player/composer situation - for example Chopin or Paganini both composing and playing their own works.

4.5.3 The time factor

Situations undoubtedly arise where, for whatever reason, the composer imprecisely notates his intentions. One needs only to study for a short while some pages of manuscript by Handel, Bach or Beethoven to realise that publishers and/or editors are sometimes left in a dilemma as to the composer's exact intentions. For example, as Harnoncourt relates (1989:112), "a hastily written dot may look like a vertical line".

On the other hand, may not a composer, in the moment of inspiration, be excused from producing a totally accurate, functional document? There may not be time (nor, perhaps, the motivation) to retrace every step and nuance to check for mistakes and ambiguities. Equally, the composer may not realise that any problems could arise; knowing one's own intentions, one can always read one's own writing.

Further, as Dalley (in Blum 1986:62) puts it, "when composers write in the white heat of inspiration, they don't always foresee the problems of performance".

Interrogating the Baroque composer's methods of notation Harnoncourt (1989:112) relates the following:

> Finely drawn vertical lines usually have a different meaning [to] powerful lines written with a splayed quill pen. The quill portrays the emotion behind the writing more precisely than a printed edition can. Most printed editions ignore the dash or line and use dots exclusively.

This is an interesting point, that further bears out the problems of publishers and their printed editions.
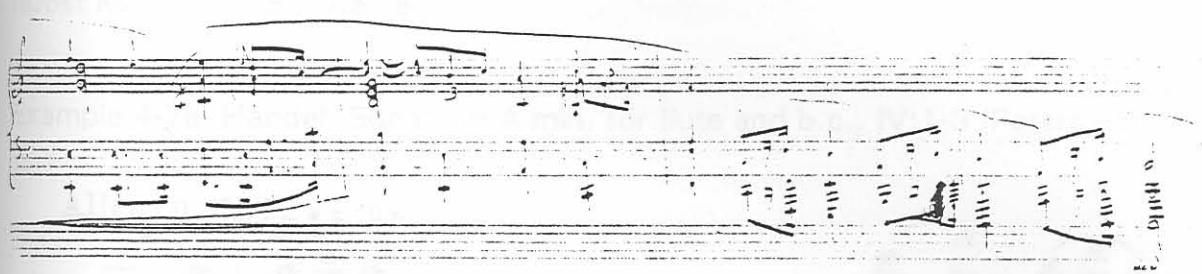
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But the chain involved in publishing music can be complex. Editors, arrangers and publishers are all in a position to revise the score received from the composer, and 'correct' any mistakes or ambiguities wherever they occur.

4.6 The editor's responsibility

Basically an editor (and hence publisher) must print, as clearly and accurately as possible, the composer's intentions. (The position is not quite the same as in the case of book publishing where the editor is often expected to suggest revisions/changes/cuts to the author.) The music editor is dependent upon receiving from the composer his intentions in as unambiguous a form as possible, i.e. they must be both legible and complete. As mentioned in Chapter 4.5, this is certainly not always the case, as the following hand-written score attests:

Example 4-6: Chopin, Fantaisie in F minor Op. 49, mm. 9-12



Should there be any ambiguities then the editor should, where possible, clarify these with the composer before printing. This close co-operation is the ideal scenario, but for reprintings of music by deceased composers this is obviously not possible. Here one can equate the situation to a reprinting of a Dickens novel. A modern editor, considering there to be too much verbiage, cannot request the author's authority to make deletions and must, hence, reprint exactly Dickens' text. 'Abridged', 'condensed', or 'expurgated' editions certainly exist, but they must be described as such; and they are not considered to be an improvement on the writer's artistic product, merely an attempt to make the novel more accessible to
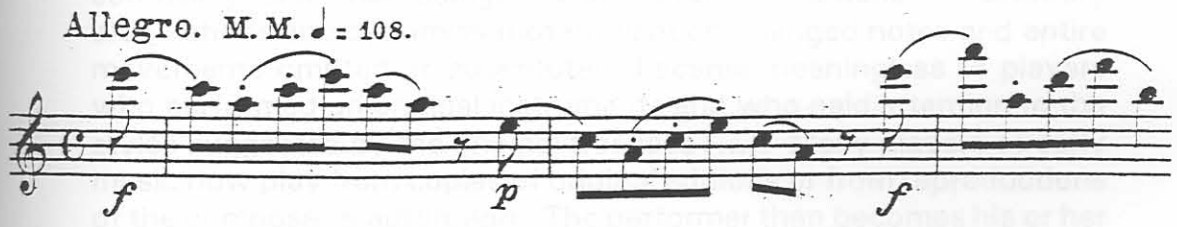
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the modern reader. It is a brave musicologist or conductor who abridges, condenses or expurgates a Beethoven symphony or Verdi opera.

The publishers and/or editors should be responsible for checking every ambiguity with either the composer, the autograph score, an earlier Urtext edition, or the earliest and/or most scholarly (meaning as objectively accurate as possible) source available before committing the finished product to print. Ideally this should be the case. How, then, is it possible that heinous atrocities are perpetrated upon a composer's music, and then published under his name, with merely the addition, in small print, "Edited by A. Smith"?
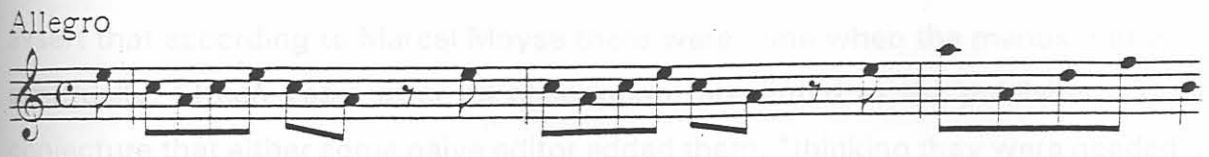
Discussing what he calls "clean" editions of early music Solum (1992:127) says that many of today's readily-available editions are "so unscholarly, so arbitrarily edited with the personal interpretive markings of the editor, that it is impossible to ascertain what the composer might have originally written." A gross example would be the following edition of a Handel Sonata as edited by the 19th-century flutist Maximilian Schwedler:

Example 4-7a: Handel, Sonata in A min. for flute and b.c., IV:1-3 (Peters edition)



Compare this to what Handel actually wrote:

Example 4-7b: ditto (Urtext edition)



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In the absence of articulations, slurs and breathing places in Handel's manuscript, the publishers obviously approached a renowned practising performer to add these, ostensibly to assist the buyers of the publication who presumably require expert assistance. The responsibility for the, in this case, octave transpositions of passages, additions of inappropriate cadenzas and general travesty of phrasing, lies at the feet of both the performer/editor Mr Schwedler and the publishers. The editor should have shown at least some respect for, and knowledge of, historical style; and the publishers should have shown both circumspection in whom they approached for this important task, and used integrity as to whether or not they accepted the recommendations of their chosen 'authority'. Maximilian Schwedler has transposed Handel's music into a Romantic setting, substituting Romantic 'principles' for Baroque 'principles'. Surely one cannot simply publish this edited version under the composer's name and purport that it is what the composer intended? It appears that in this case there was a blind acceptance on the part of the publishers of Mr Schwedler's additions and changes.

John Solum (1992:9) puts forward the performer's perspective well:

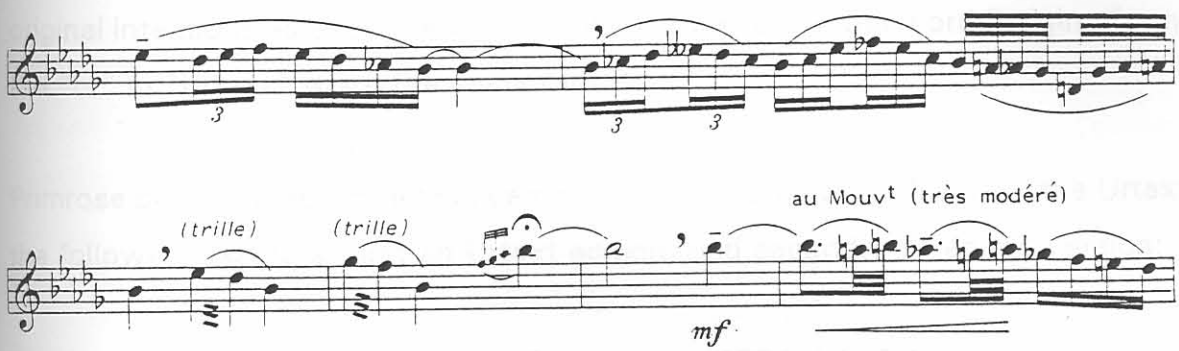
> Most editions of music published in the first half of the twentieth century were quickly recognized by early-music players as being confusing and misleading. The editorial additions of arbitrary articulations and dynamics (not to mention changed notes and entire movements omitted or substituted) became meaningless to players who performed on original instruments and who paid attention to the styles suggested by the original treatises [...]. Many players of early music now play from copies of original editions or from reproductions of the composer's autograph. The performer then becomes his or her own 'editor', readily making the many decisions that are necessary to prepare a performance.

The tampering with the composer's intentions during editing can involve many parameters. For instance it is often said that the much-loved and oft-played *Syrinx* by Debussy was originally written without bar lines. Ernst and Green (1991a:15) assert that according to Marcel Moyse there were none when the manuscript was eventually, fifteen years after its conception, presented to the publisher. They conjecture that either some naive editor added them, "thinking they were needed",

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or Fleury or Moyse (the flutists first associated with the work) had added them at some time. The piece was, and still is, printed in triple metre, whereas it is full of rhythmic ambiguities that could much better be served by a fantasie-like approach. This would be visually enhanced by omitting the time-signature and bar lines. It would also free the interpretative spirit of the performer from the stricture placed upon it by some naive editor.

Example 4-8: Debussy, Syrinx, mm. 21-26



This may be an extreme case, but Primrose makes the following, rather damning statement (Dalton 1988:194):

> I have long had a healthy disdain for some editors whose names one sees over and over on front pages of editions, usually by German publishers who flourished before World War II [...]. Whenever a group of students come to me with string quartet parts edited by so-and-so, I say, 'Suspect everything you see.' This for a simple reason: in many instances, if an editor is asked by a publisher to make an edition of a standard work, he has to do something different from a previous editor, or he can't claim copyright.

Not all editors, whether musicologists or performers, are of this inclination, and many these days desperately try to provide accurate publications, whether of the Urtext variety or of the 'performing editions' variety. Nevertheless the trend continues, partly due to the public's gullibility in these matters, for publishers to try to get a big name on their publications. It is a sad fact that a publication with the announcement "A James Galway Edition" will sell better than one edited by A. Smith. It is a little-known fact that James Galway may have had nothing to do

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with the editing; which may have actually been done by A. Smith after all. This particular aspect is not necessarily a bad thing, for A. Smith may be equally adept at introducing musically meaningful phrasing into the manuscript as any famous name - and he may even be more assiduous in his task.

4.7 Urtext

An Urtext edition is quite simply a publisher's attempt to reproduce the composer's original intentions as accurately as possible. (The "or" in the word "original", and the "ur" in "Urtext" share the same root.)

Primrose presents, as a practical demonstration of the need to refer to the Urtext, the following example, first an Urtext edition, and secondly an edited version:

Example 4-9a: Mozart, Symphonie Concertante K364, I:138-140 (Urtext edition)



Example 4-9b: Mozart, Symphonie Concertante K364, I:138-140 (Peters edition)



The differences here exist on four levels: not only is the Urtext written for scordatura viola, but the phrasing is 'edited' and dynamics are added in the Peters edition. Primrose (Dalton 1988:195) advises students to "[g]o to the Urtext! You don't have to abide exactly by what it shows, but it is your book of reference."

These days, the Urtext edition of (principally) Baroque and Classical works are readily available and are guaranteed better sales than was the case a few years

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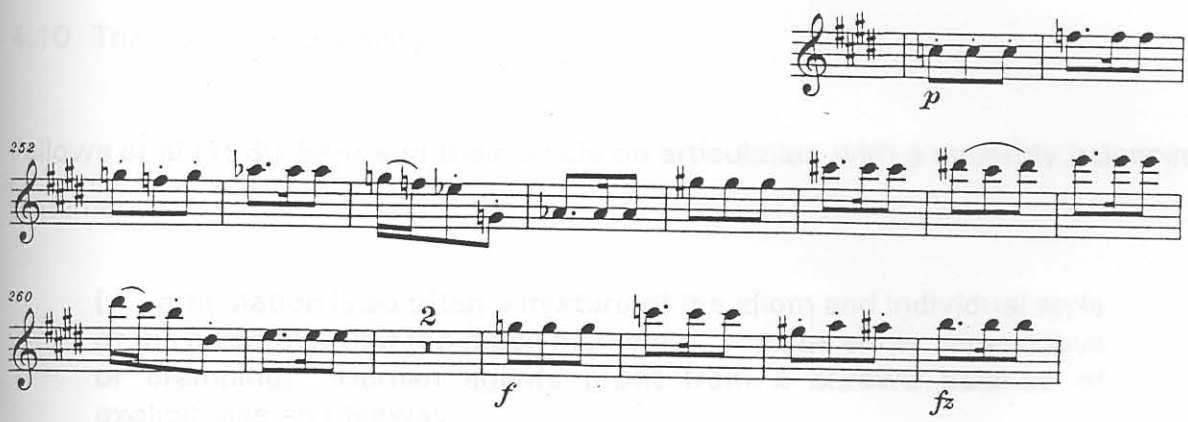
ago. Nevertheless certain contemporary editors such as Harnoncourt or, in the flute world, Wye have achieved such an aura of respectability that their editions, which include well-researched editings of articulations and slurrings, are presumed to be reasonable facsimiles of the performing practices of previous eras. This situation is a definite advance on previous more subjective editions - but they are "edited" nonetheless.

4.8 Who knows best?

Rothstein (1989:11) accuses 19th-century editors of using slurs to indicate phrases (phrase-slurs), thereby obliterating the composer's legato slurs, "apparently reasoning that they, the editors, understood musical notation better than did the composers".

In an article on Schubert's *Trockne Blumen* variations Barcellona (1991:11) discusses the following passage in Variation 6:

Example 4-10: Schubert, Introduktion und Variationen über ein Thema Op.160, mm. 250-267



Barcellona enumerates the inconsistencies in the staccato marking in both the flute and piano parts. "Many argue that Schubert intended the entire section to be staccato, and editions have been published correcting this presumably obvious mistake (Bärenreiter 1970). If this was Schubert's oversight, however, why were staccato marks used intermittently?" He argues that the inconsistencies were

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intended by Schubert, in order to portray an appropriate "erratic and inconsistent feel". In this particular case there can be no definitive answer and each performing artist must decide for himself: Did Schubert intend an erratic feel - or did he intend a consistent staccato character? If, instead, some editor decides, however well-intentioned, then the performer's interpretative potential is thereby limited.

4.9 Summary: the respective roles of composer, editor and performer

The composer must make his intentions clear through precise use of legible notation. The editor must advise the performer, who probably does not possess the editor's knowledge and insight, and who probably does not have access to historical manuscripts and documents, on the composer's probable intentions *where these are not entirely clear*, but leave the originally notated intentions in place where these are unambiguous. Finally, the performer must attempt to understand the composer's intentions through attaining a sense of, and feel for, style, following the composer's and editor's suggestions (where applicable) and then translating these intentions, using his interpretational insight, into meaningful sound.

4.10 The need for flexibility

Fallows et al (1980:644) end their article on articulation with a superbly balanced statement:

> [...] articulation is so often a mixture of the idiom and individual style of the performer that too much marking [...] can be either superfluous or cramping. Human agents profit from a shrewd balance of explicitness and leeway.

This is equally true of slurring. But composers, most editors, teachers, and the imprecise shackles of tradition, style and taste virtually disallow the performing wind player any leeway with regard to slurring. The rule that printed slurs are to have their first notes tongued and all further notes under the slur must be played legato often cramps the performer's interpretation.

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Orlando (1992:26-28), a clarinettist, adds to the argument for more freedom for the performer, by questioning not only the editor's, but also the composer's knowledge of the peculiarities of various instruments. A lack of insight necessarily limits their ability to write the most suitable phrasing for each instrument. He argues for freeing the performer "to choose the forms of articulation which best suit the music, rather than feeling forced to follow literally the markings of the printed edition made by this or that editor, or even (occasionally) by the composer, who often may not have been aware of the difficulties peculiar to [that instrument]."

Weisberg (1975:98) makes the sweeping statement that "[m]ost great composers of the past were also practical musicians who were able to perform the works they wrote". This is certainly not true outside the field of keyboard and, to a lesser extent, string works. Composers certainly did on occasion turn to professional performers for advice, but one wonders to what extent phrasing was addressed. Mainwaring, a contemporary of Handel (Neubauer 1986:72), speaking of Handel's vocal works, accused him of missing the meaning of a sentence by paying too much attention to particular words (in his word painting and melismatic passages). In instrumental works one sometimes gets the feeling that composers do the exact opposite, by paying too much attention to the sentence (i.e. the phrase) and not enough to particular words.

If this is the case - and it is contended that it is - then the responsibilities of the performer intrinsically demand that he rectify the inexactness and 'mistakes' made by editors and composers due to their limited intimate knowledge of the peculiarities of wind-playing. The case for more leeway with regard to phrasing, and hence less cramping of the human agent (i.e. the performer) in his musical quest for meaningful performances will be laid down and explored in the following chapters. Brymer carefully states (1979:163), regarding the possibility of altering the composer's written phrasings, that the intention is to try to "see behind the notes to the mind of the composer - not to be sensational in one's alteration of his intentions, but rather to be more true to his feelings".

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If the performer discriminates thus, there will be no need to speak of authentic or Urtext or researched phrasing, he will be 'feeling' or 'sensing' that which is most appropriate and meaningful.

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CHAPTER 5

THE SLUR

In the performance of music by a wind instrumentalist all notes, whether articulated or slurred together, are welded into phrases. The basic aim of this dissertation is not to decipher and define all phrasings, but to examine their role, especially that of the slur, in the shaping of phrases and, hence, on the interpretation of musical works in general.

5.1 The slur

As Baines (1962:39) succinctly puts it: "The general rule is that every note written in the music is to be tongued unless there is a slur to it from the preceding note." This much is accepted by all wind players. But our point of departure must be the basic question: What is the nature of a slur and what role does it play? (The 'phrase-slur', as defined in Chapter 3.2.11, is another entity, another concept.)

5.2 The basic rule about a slur

Wye (1983:5) states baldly that on a wind instrument (his capitals) "A SLUR OVER TWO NOTES RAISES THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FIRST NOTE AND DIMINISHES THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SECOND NOTE." He provides (1983:7) the following notational/performance guide:

Example 5-1:



phrase it like this:
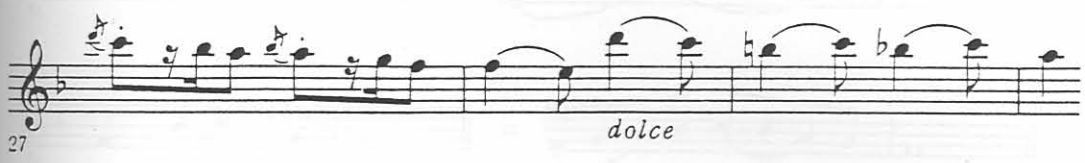


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Michel Debost's statement (1991a:2) that a two-note slur "does not mean that the first note is louder than the second but that the second one is softer than the first" may at first sight appear to mean the same as Wye's statement, and be merely playing with words, but his insight draws one's attention not only to the relative strengths of each note (as Wye does), but, equally important, to the fact that the first note of a slurred group of notes does not necessarily have to stick out from the surrounding general dynamics by automatically being emphasised or accented to any undue extent.

There are occasions where a slur merely indicates that the second note is a release from the first, while the basic flow of the phrase is maintained, as in the following pattern:

Example 5-2: Briccialdi, Carnival of Venice Op. 78, mm. 27-30
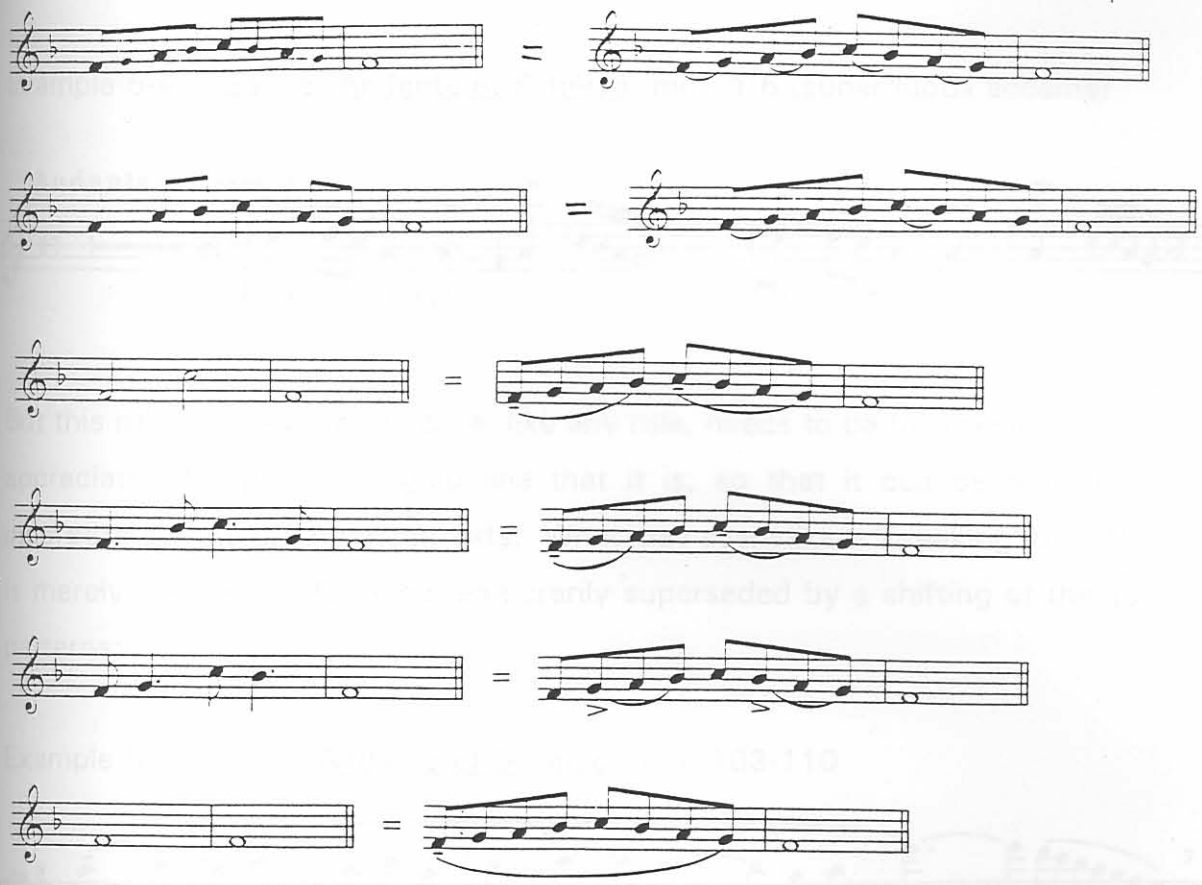


Wye does, though, immediately modify his stated rule (1983:5) by admitting that "there are countless examples of how that rule can be broken". But can his initial statement be taken as our basic rule?

Generally Wye's rule, which allows for some kind of stress on the first note and subsequent release on the second, will suffice. As a specific case Mather (1973:39) describes the 18th-century practice of slurring in pairs (*lourer*) as giving "the first note of each pair a little more length and a little more strength than the second note". Taken to an extreme this leads in 18th-century French music to the often misunderstood performance practice of *notes inégales*. Although this will not be addressed in this dissertation, the practice was originally merely an extension, under the influence of French national characteristics, of the rules of stress combined with the rules of embellishment. (See Mather 1973:40.)

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One can test Wye's basic rule, as he himself does, by taking a simple phrase and applying a series of varying slur patterns to it, thereby bringing out into relief certain notes and diminishing the importance of others. He provides (1983:6) the following six examples of how to bring out the given notes by the addition of six different slur patterns:

Example 5-3:



It is interesting to note that he resorts to two articulation markings, the tenuto and the accent, and a short diminuendo (see Ex. 5-1) in order to clearly delineate his rule. Some composers and editors similarly, perhaps fearing the wrong interpretation of their intentions, crowd their score with similar markings. In a sense they are then therefore duplicating the already notated patterns of stress and release as implied by the subtle combination of metric accent (i.e. placing of notes within the regular periodic pulse as implied by the time signature) and slur patterns. The following is an example where there is no ambiguity as to the placing of stresses in the music:

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Example 5-4a: Ganne, Andante et Scherzo, mm. 1-6
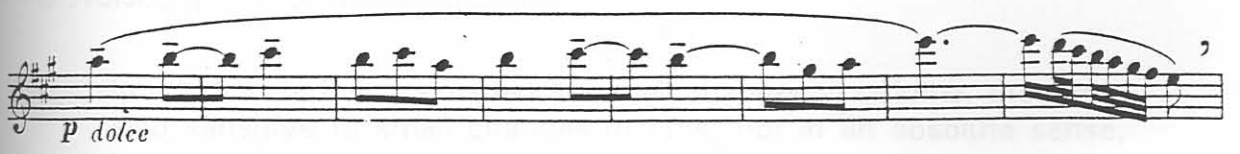


The following additions to the slurs would therefore be superfluous, merely duplicating what, to the performer, is obvious:

Example 5-4b: Ganne, Andante et Scherzo, mm. 1-6 (superfluous accents)



But this rule of stress and release, like any rule, needs to be fully understood and appreciated for the basic guideline that it is, so that it can be meaningfully incorporated into differing contexts. What may seem like a 'breaking' of that rule is merely the basic rule being temporarily superseded by a shifting of the stress patterns:

Example 5-5: Ganne, Andante et Scherzo, mm. 103-110



5.3 Stressed notes

Wye (see Chapter 5.2) resorts to using two notational markings, an accent and a tenuto, to make perfectly clear his intentions regarding the effect of slurring pairs of notes. He implies that merely using slurs is not enough to make the superimposed patterns of measured beats and important notes unambiguous. But

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even the addition of these, and any other indications as to the patterns of stressed notes, will not guarantee that any two performers will interpret the phrase in exactly the same way. As discussed in Chapter 4, the nature of all musical notation (excluding, perhaps, graphic and computerised notation of electronic music) includes a relatively large element of uncertainty - and hence, choice.

The accent over or under a note  will present the lesser amount of variety, being most likely interpreted by the performer as indicating that that note must, to some degree, stick out from the surroundings; this would mean playing the note with a louder volume, a more focused tone-colour and, if tongued, a sharper attack. Cooper and Meyer (in Rothstein 1989:37) bear this out by stating that an accent is a "stimulus (in a series of stimuli) which is *marked for consciousness* in some way. It is set off from other stimuli because of differences in duration, intensity, pitch, timbre, etc."

The tenuto  , which literally means 'to hold a note for its full value', will usually be interpreted, even by the same performer in a single piece, with greater variety. The interpretation will greatly vary according to the style of the composition, the type of ensemble, the acoustic, the tempo and the general dynamics, in addition to the character of the passage.

As Weisberg (1975:128) points out:

> In addition to being sensitive to small changes in volume, the ear is also sensitive to small changes in time; not in an absolute sense, however, but rather in comparing one sound with another. In a series of notes, the one which is longest will stand out from the others.
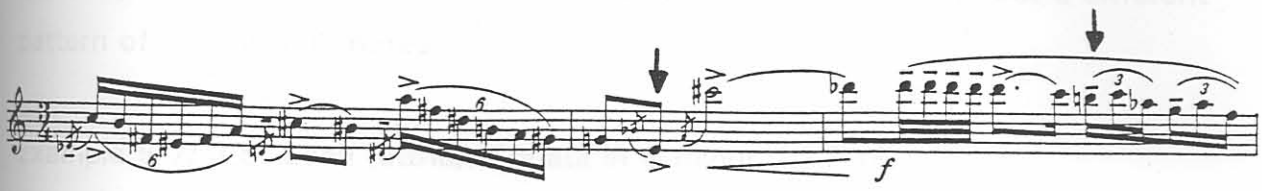
In order for it to be "marked for consciousness" the tenuto note may be merely lengthened, merely stressed by being played relatively louder or, more likely, some combination of the two. As with an accent, a strengthening of vibrato and/or tonecolour are regularly (and often unconsciously) used as more subtle yet very effective ways of stressing certain notes by bringing the attention to them. The tenuto marking has three characteristics:

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* it has a more melodic connotation than has the accent,
* it is more subtle than the accent, and
* it is very flexible (which also means inaccurate, from the composer's point of view).

Both the accent and the tenuto usually occur on separated, i.e. tongued, notes. But they can also occur under a slur:

Example 5-6: Tomasi, Sonatine for solo flute, mm. 3-5



In both cases, due to the slurs, the performer is expected to emphasise the note without recourse to a tongue-stroke. Accenting a note under a slur presents no problem to a wind player who uses his breath to either strengthen the note or to swell on it, < > fashion. With tenutos the wind player may merely lengthen the note.

The amount of stress given to a note and the methods employed are further discussed in Chapter 7.1.

5.4 Longer slurs

Most of Chapter 5.2 was concerned with slurred two-note groups. As a general rule for a slur over a few notes (up to four) the author has no hesitation in supporting Wye's proposition regarding the implied stress on the first note. It is when one comes to longer slurs (i.e. over larger groups of more than four notes) and complex articulation patterns that confusion can arise, especially as more and more possibilities open up as the length of the phrase increases.
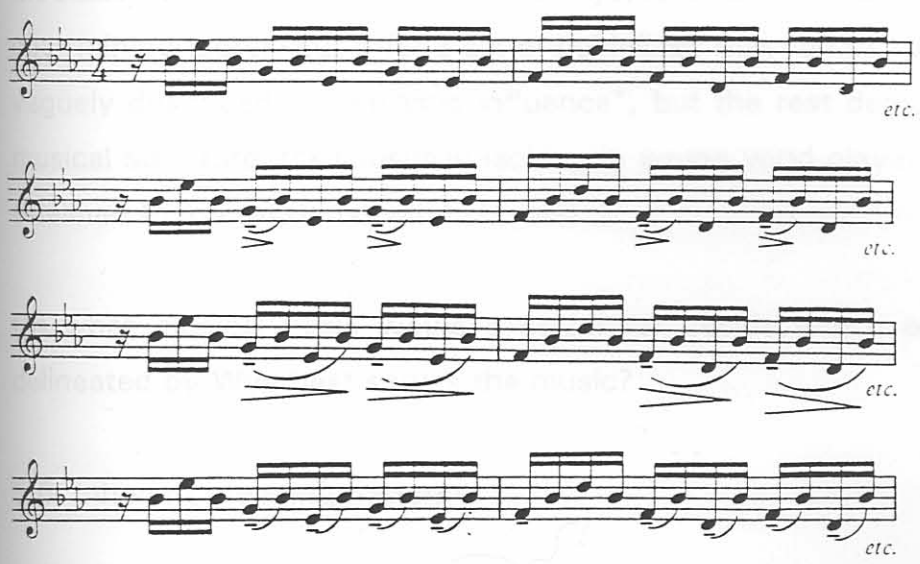
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5.5 The performer's choice

Where few or no slurs are written or printed, how does a performer choose his own pattern of slurs from the many possibilities? Or, equally, how does he decide whether the printed slurs, either the composer's or an editor's, are the best of all possibilities?

Wye (1983:8-9) presents an example which in the Urtext edition is unslurred, and then imposes three different slur patterns, each of which brings out a different pattern of "important" notes:

Example 5-7: J.S. Bach (attrib), Sonata in G minor, I:17-18
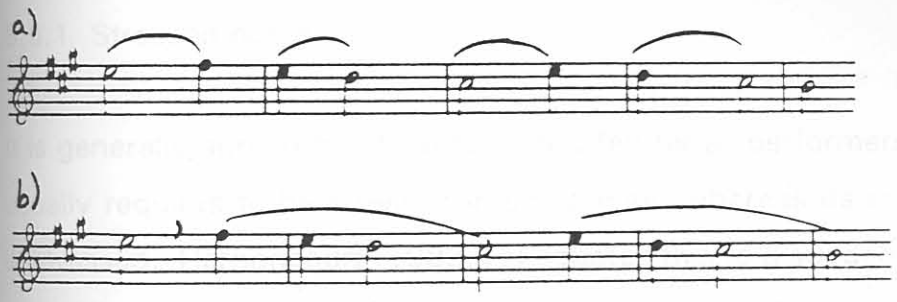


Wye (1983:7) does not decide which one is 'best', and leaves the performer to decide. The performer's decision should be prompted by what he decides is the composer's intended "skeleton, or basic tune". An inexperienced student will possibly be left confused by Wye's next two bits of advice; namely, to use "good judgement" and to rely on one's teacher to "advise you on what is good taste" (1983:7). It is precisely because these latter two are often at a premium that students (and too many others) rely on someone else's judgement and taste, and play from dubiously edited scores.

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The phrasing of a passage can vastly alter the melodic and/or rhythmic meaning thereof. Zuckerkandl (1959:131) provides a simple theme by Bach and phrases it in two different ways in order to demonstrate this:

Example 5-8: J.S. Bach, Organ Fugue in A, BWV 536



McCaskill and Gilliam (1983:64), like Wye, refer to "individual taste" as being the determining factor, but offer a set of guidelines that can be followed. The first is vaguely described as "stylistic influence", but the rest demand insight into the musical structure itself (usually lacking in young wind players, and all too often sidelined by professional wind players).

On what musical basis would a performer decide which one of the patterns delineated by Wye best serves the music?

5.6 Inherent phrasing patterns

The above-mentioned guidelines of McCaskill and Gilliam (1983:64) offer sound, fundamental practical advice, and initially involve considering the contour of a phrase with its "rising and/or falling intensities from climax to resolution", as well as the "underlying harmonic structure". This will lead to defining the fundamental tones of the phrase and the relative strengths of the other tones proportional to them. Then the sub-divisions of the phrase, the motives and the sub-phrases, must be identified. Here the "structural connectives such as phrase groupings, statements of themes, rhythmic sequences, melodic repetitions" must be noted and understood. This leads to the determining and understanding of the relative

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importance of that phrase in the overall musical context.

Once a phrase is "understood" in this manner, the actual matter of its phrasing can be addressed.

5.6.1 Stressed notes

It is generally agreed by all writers, and felt by all performers, that a dissonance usually requires to be stressed in some way, whereas its resolution is relatively unstressed. Harnoncourt (1982:41) equates this to a sudden physical pain which then subsides into relief. Music, he says, has a main hierarchy "like a scaffolding, a skeleton" with a definite order; and this is "breached over and over again by stresses of dissonances".

Therefore one's first step in understanding the nature of a particular phrase, and how it should be phrased, is to determine where these stresses occur, and their relative strengths - relative to each other, and relative to all others in the surrounding phrases. This surrounding territory is, in Western music, largely defined by the harmonic background and movement. This can either be understood by analysis, or it can be gauged by involvement, by feeling, in actual performance (and while practising). Even in unaccompanied solos there will usually be an underlying, and inescapable, harmonic structure that guides the phrases, through various cadences, to an overall meaningful formal whole. (The re-phrased movement from the Sonata by C P E Bach in Chapter 10 is an example thereof.)

Having proposed this counter-hierarchy of stress and accent upon the main musical flow, Harnoncourt (1982:41) further suggests "two additional sub-hierarchies which modify the major accent hierarchy in an interesting way: rhythm and emphasis". The first, rhythmic accent, he summarises as: "If a longer note follows a short note, the former is normally stressed, even if it falls on an unstressed, 'bad' position in the measure". This is commonly expressed in the terms 'syncopation' and 'cross rhythms'. For example:
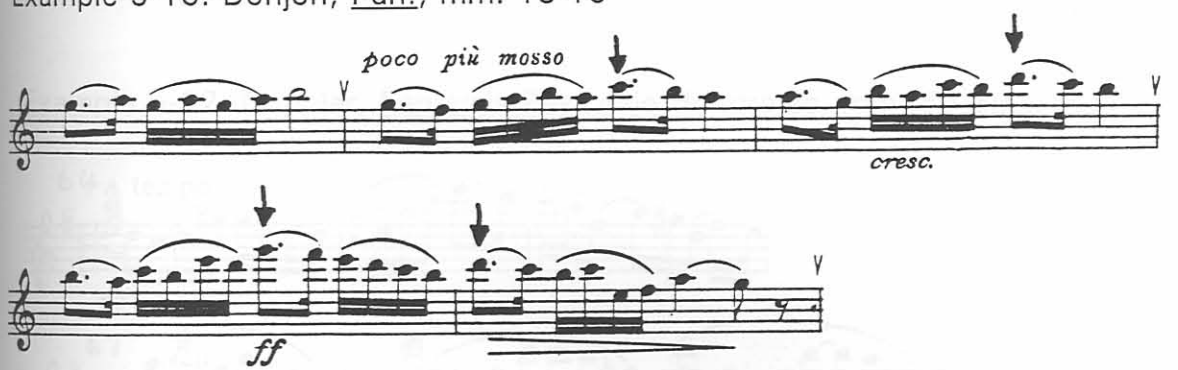
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Example 5-9: Doppler, Fantaisie Pastorale Hongroise, mm. 170-173
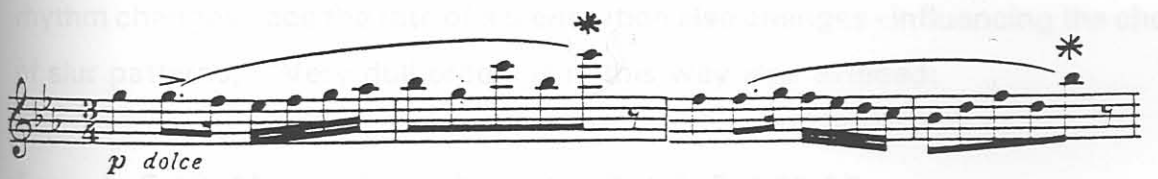


The second, emphasis or emphatic stress, "falls on the top notes of a melody":

Example 5-10: Donjon, Pan!, mm. 13-16



One must, of course, not apply this to all top notes of phrases. For example, the following notes marked * do not require any kind of special emphasis:

Example 5-11: Bizet, Minuet de L'Arlésienne, mm. 3-6



Harnoncourt sums up his proposal and relates it to slurring and articulation in the following statement (1982:41):
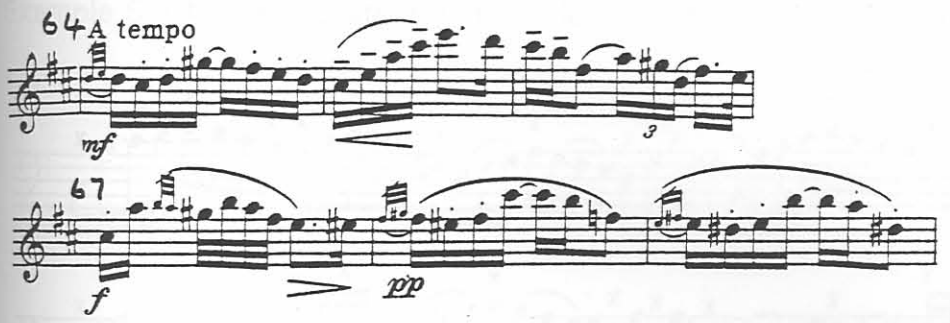
> It is clear that a large number of counter-hierarchies are superimposed on the basic framework of the hierarchy of measure. In this way, otherwise very dull order is constantly circumvented in interesting ways and enlivened at a number of levels.
>
> The application of the rules of stress [...] to eighth and sixteenth-note

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groups result in the actual articulation. Joining and separating individual tones and the smallest groups of tones or figures are the means of expression.
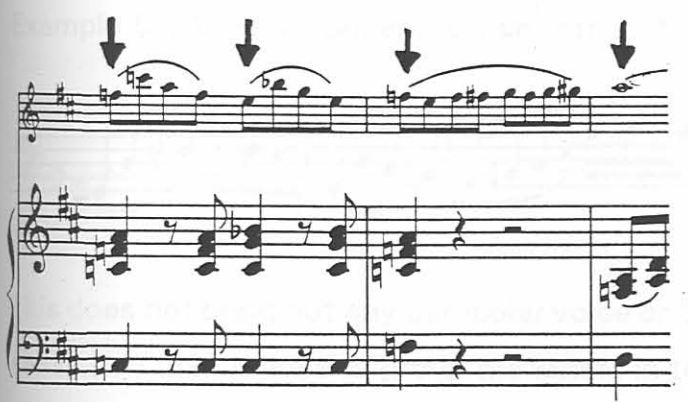
If one analyses the slur patterns used in the following passage it is clear that the "very dull order" that would be created by constantly emphasising both beats of the bar is avoided by two very simple means: In bars 64, 68 and 69 the syncopations avoid any stress coming on the second beat; and in bars 66 and 67 the second beat is slurred over from the previous group, thus effectively de-emphasising the second beat.

Example 5-12: Doppler, Fantaisie Pastorale Hongroise, mm. 64-69



This type of change of accentuation rate is usually coupled to the rate of change of the harmony - sometimes called the 'harmonic rhythm'. Where the harmonic rhythm changes pace the rate of accentuation also changes - influencing the choice of slur patterns. "Very dull order" is in this way also avoided:

Example 5-13: Mozart, Flute Quartet in D K.285, I:85-87
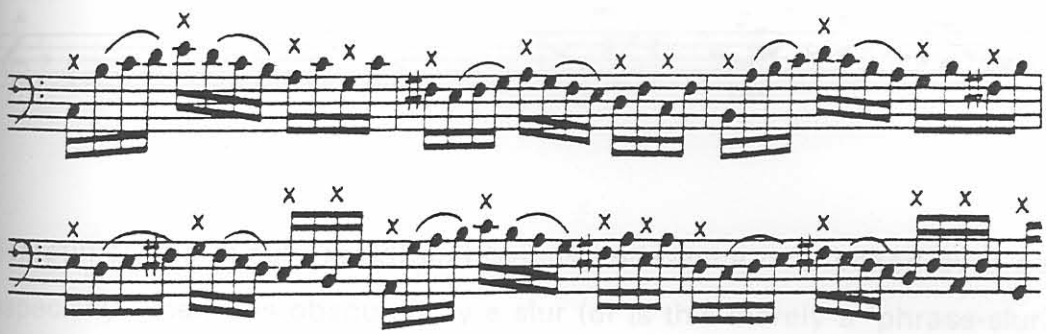


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Thus the harmonic aspects must be taken cognisance of before a phrase can be fully understood and meaningfully slurred.

5.6.2 Implied two-part lines
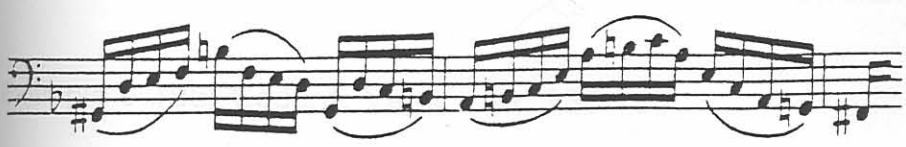
The example by J S Bach (attrib.) used by Wye, and quoted in Chapter 5.5, is an example of the attempt, by means of selected slur patterns, to bring out the implied two-part character of a phrase. Pleeth (1982:65) provides the following example, showing how selected bowing patterns can bring out the notes of what he calls the "hidden tune" (indicated by x):

Example 5-14: Bach, Suite in C for solo cello BWV 1009, Prelude



He compares this with an example of modern editing (he calls it a "tragedy") which forces the musical line into a "false mould of arbitrary bowings", thus creating a "distorted facade":
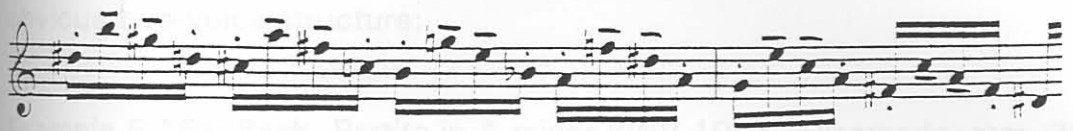
Example 5-15: Bach, Suite in D min. for solo cello BWV 1008, Prelude



This does not bring out any particular voice or "hidden tune", and "makes no more sense [...] than it does to group the letters in this sentence in even groups of four (thel ette rsin this sent ence inev engr oups offo ur)!".
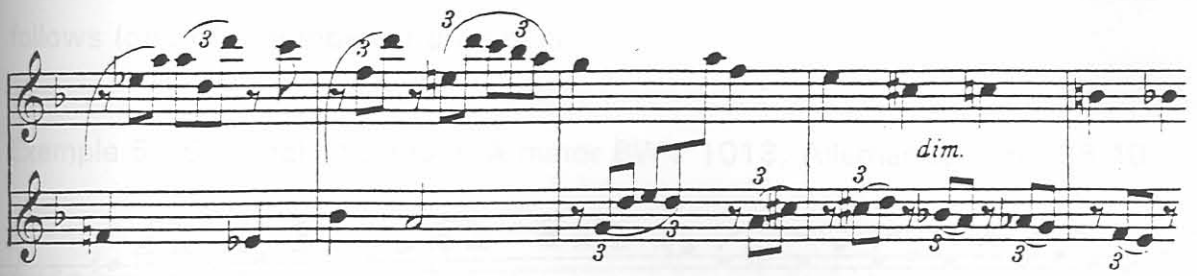
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Example 5-17b: Bach, Partita in A minor BWV 1013, Allemande, mm. 17-18
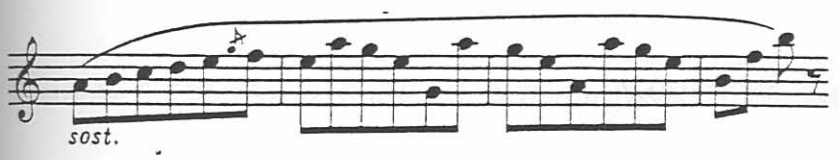


A 20th-century composer such as William Alwyn may choose to notate two voices in a more obvious way, leaving the performer in no doubt as to the inherent two-part structure. This example comes from his solo flute *Divertimento*:

Example 5-18: Alwyn, Divertimento, II:88-92



Sometimes the duality is not so obvious and hence overlooked by a performer - especially when it is obscured by a slur (or is this merely a 'phrase-slur?):

Example 5-19a: Godard, Valse, mm. 130-133



The ascending 'bass' line (G-A-B) can be brought out by slurring thus:
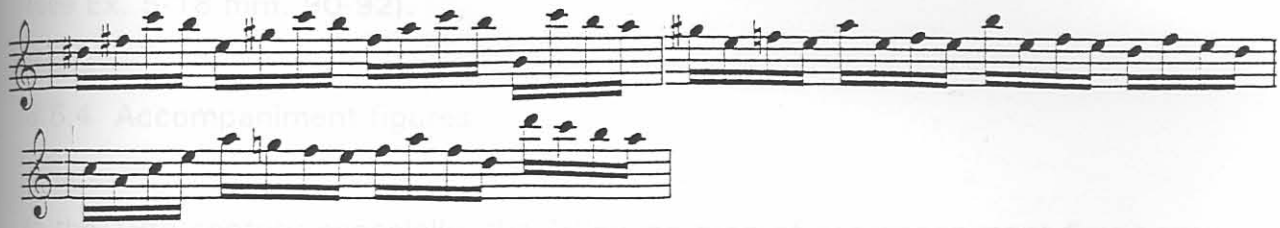
Example 5-19b: Godard, Valse, mm. 130-133



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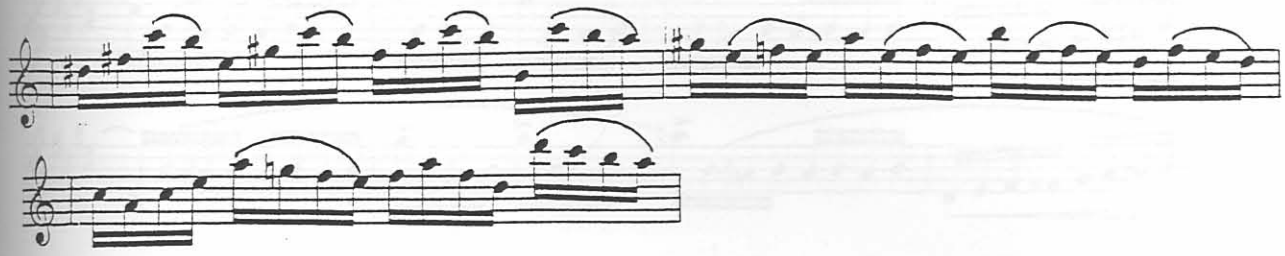
The following passage from Bach's Partita in A minor for solo flute shows an obvious two-voice structure:

Example 5-16a: Bach, Partita in A minor BWV 1013, Allemande, mm. 38-40
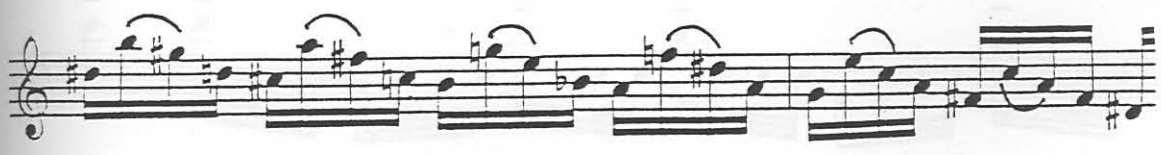


This passage could, in order to more clearly define the two voices, be slurred as follows (one of a number of possibilities):

Example 5-16b: Bach, Partita in A minor BWV 1013, Allemande, mm. 38-40



In this example the duality suggested in the descending line could be brought out by phrasing as follows:

Example 5-17a: Bach, Partita in A minor BWV 1013, Allemande, mm. 17-18



In order to give the passage more energy in its descent to the cadence point, and so as not to make the passage sound too fussy, it is usually played with all the notes tongued. The advanced performer can make use of subtle gradations of tonecolour and dynamics to suggest a type of two-part writing. The two parts can also be brought out by applying two different articulations:

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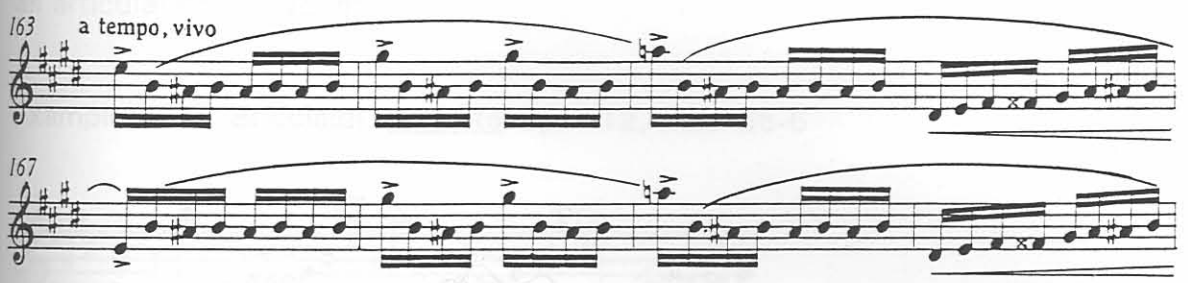
5.6.3 True counterpoint

Sometimes true counterpoint is written for a single wind instrument. In these situations slurring is used as one of the main means of audibly separating the lines (see Ex. 5-18 mm. 90-92).

5.6.4 Accompaniment figures

In the 19th-century especially, the following type of accompaniment figure was often written, usually slurred:

Example 5-20: Köhler, Papillon Op. 30/4, mm. 163-170



An accompaniment figure could also be written tongued, in which case the melody note will probably be played tenuto:
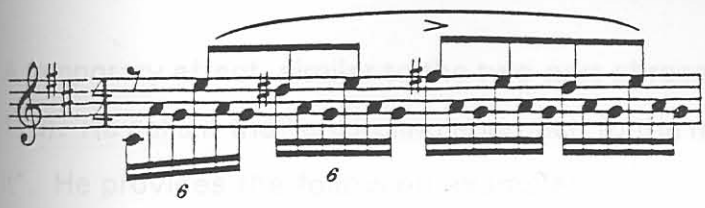
Example 5-21: Genin, Carnaval de Venise, Variation 8, m. 1



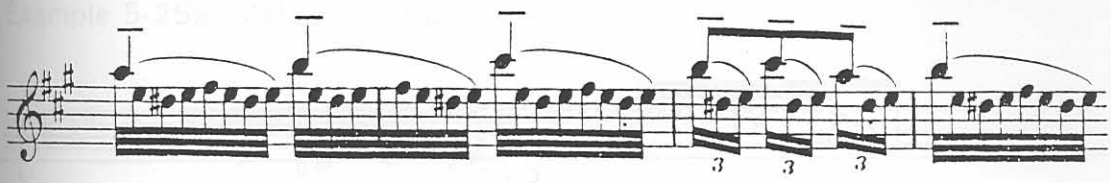
Where the whole group of the melody note and its accompaniment figure is written slurred, then the melody note is usually emphasised by being played tenuto. Exx 24a and 24b show two different notations for this effect:

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Example 5-22a: Doppler, Fantaisie Pastorale Hongroise, m. 193



Example 5-22b: Ganne, Andante et Scherzo, mm. 103-108
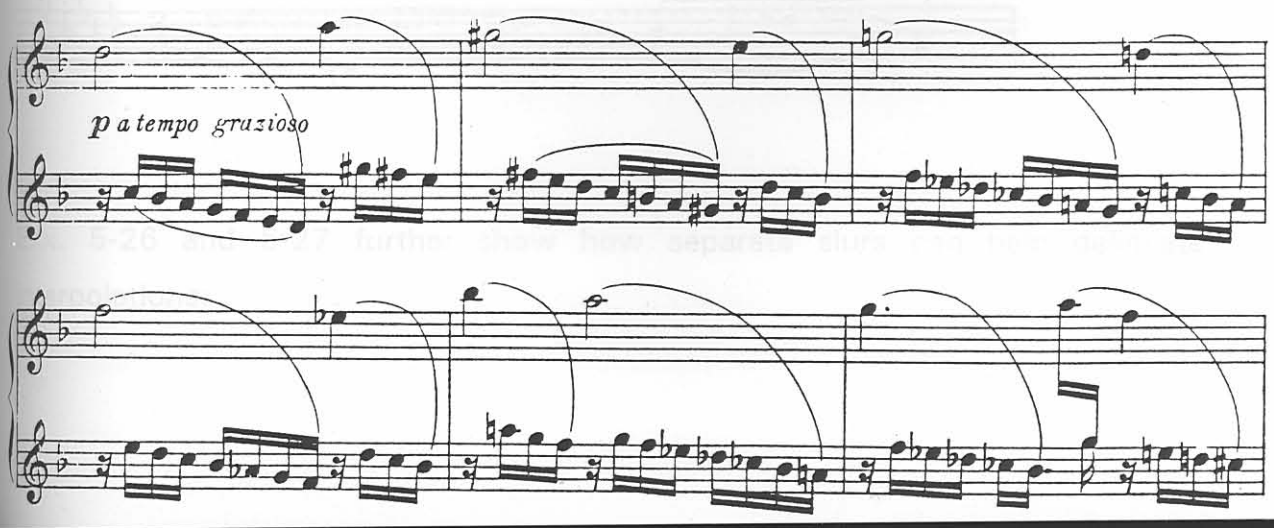


If the interval between the melody note and its accompaniment is large enough then the dual nature will be clearly heard as such whether the group is slurred or an articulation is added:

Example 5-23: Briccialdi, Il Vento Op. 112, mm. 65-6



But where the melody note and the accompaniment are in the same register then (besides the slur patterns) variations in tonecolour, dynamics and articulation have to be subtly employed in order to bring out the lines:

Example 5-24: Alwyn, Divertimento, II:57-62



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5.6.5 Interpolations

A temporary effect, similar to the two-part phrase, is outlined by Toch (1977:118-119). He calls it the "encircling approach to the main harmonic tone before hitting it". He provides the following example:

Example 5-25a: Mahler, Symphony No. 2



The resolution of the stress, created at, and by, the E onto the F (as notated by the dotted lines) is delayed by an encircling four-note figure, which acts like a temporarily interpolating second voice. In order to bring out both the stress-resolution and delineate clearly the interpolating voice the symphonic composer can use his orchestrating skill and dynamics, but the performer on a single instrument has to use other (possibly subtler) means. Dynamics can still play a role (the amount depends on the instrument and the performer's ability), as can tonecolour and vibrato (akin to orchestration), but slurring and articulation make a major contribution too.

The passage could therefore be phrased thus:

Example 5-25b: Mahler, Symphony No. 2



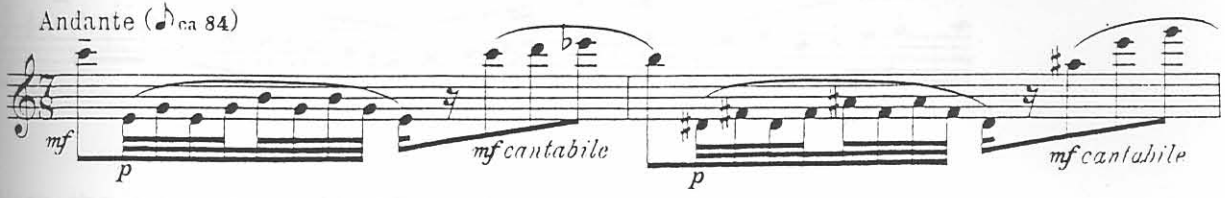
Exx. 5-26 and 5-27 further show how separate slurs can help delineate interpolations:

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Example 5-26: Gaubert, Nocturne, mm. 17-18 (re-slurred by the author)



Example 5-27: Burkhard, Suite Op. 98 for solo flute, III:1-2



5.7 Phrase-endings

Players should always give attention to the length and strength of the final note(s) of a slur, as, even having phrased a passage accurately and effectively, it is still possible to ruin the effect by including incompatible effects at the ends of the slurs. Indeed, Barra (1983:41) calls the ending of a phrase its "most sensitive spot". At phrase-endings there are two extremes, from endings which are rounded-off (tapered off) by allowing the energy level to flag, to abruptly ended phrases which propel the energy level over into the next phrase (or perhaps even into silence). And then, of course, there are all the interpretative subtleties between the two.

Clarinettist Weston (1976:90) provides the following general rules: "Weak endings on unaccented beats or parts of beats should be dynamically tapered off and finished short of the following beat, whereas strong endings on accented beats of the bar must be held full length *over to the beginning* of the next beat".

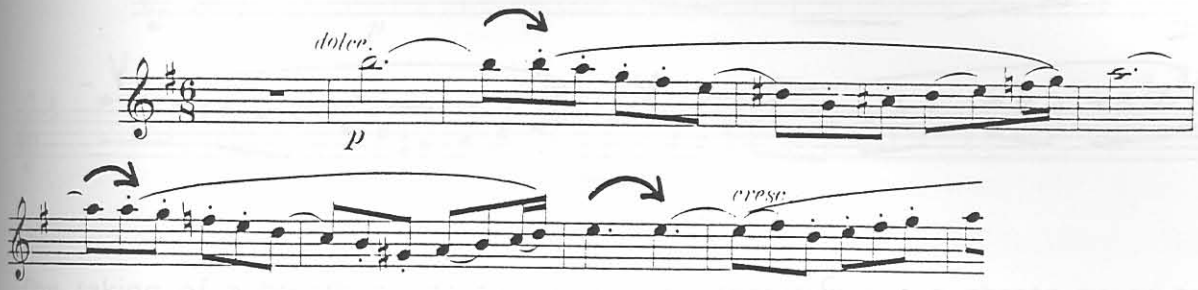
5.7.1 Forward momentum

In the following example the energy level of the ending of each sub-phrase needs to be carried over to the first note of the subsequent sub-phrase, causing a feeling

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of forward movement and gathering expectation (indicated by the arrows):
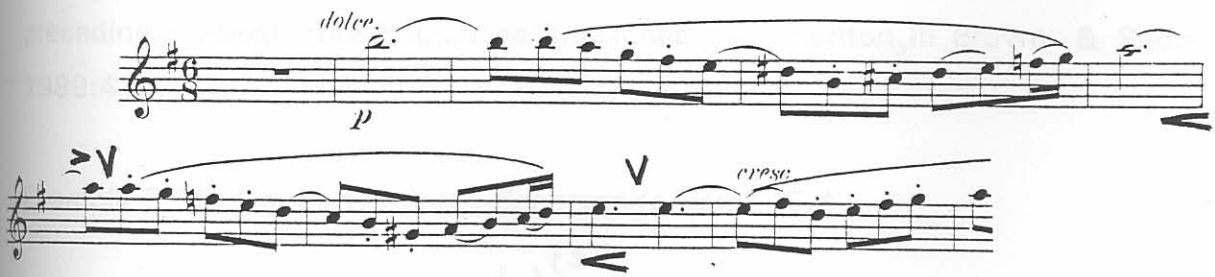
Example 5-28a: Fauré, Fantaisie, mm. 1-10



Here, the initial entry of the B need not be accented to emphasise the first beat of the bar as this is done by the accompaniment; instead the flute can float above, entering gently and propelling the phrase down to the lower B and ending off with a similar gentle articulation on the A. The carrying forward of the momentum can be notated with the usual crescendo and diminuendo. So while the phrase ends with a degree of tapering off, the ending of the initial B needs careful attention in order to propel the phrase onwards.

The insertion of a breath, as indicated in Ex. 5-28b, need not have any deleterious effect on this situation provided that the performer does not suddenly punch out the breath at the end of the note in order to facilitate a quick, deep breath.

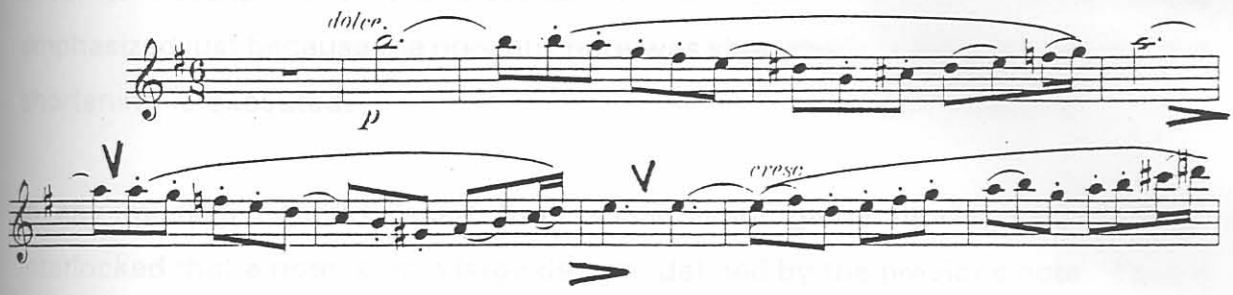
Example 5-28b: Fauré, Fantaisie, mm. 1-10



Equally, the intensity must not be allowed to dip as the breath pressure weakens:
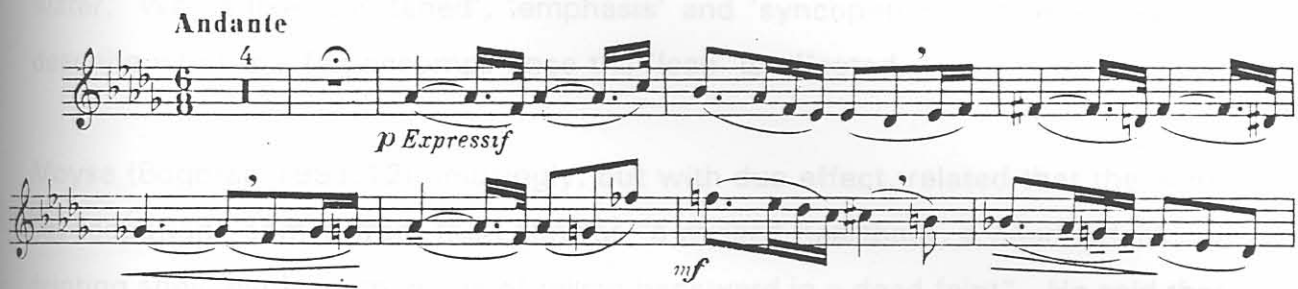
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Example 5-28c: Fauré, Fantaisie, mm. 1-10



The taking of a breath needs always to be integrated into a phrase so as to maintain the character. In the following example the last note before each breath needs to be held as long as possible:

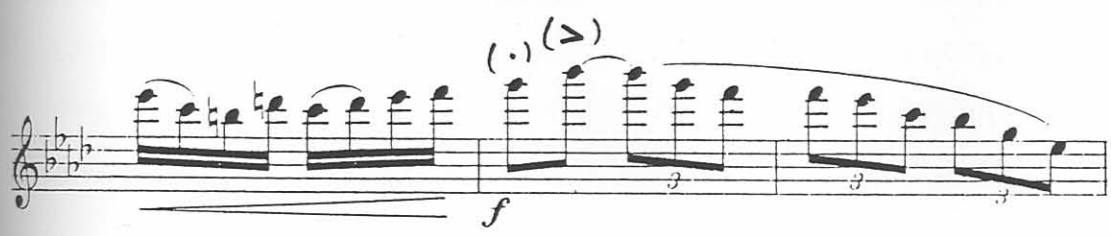
Example 5-29: Gaubert, Nocturne, mm. 1-12



5.7.2 The note before a stress

It is sometimes suggested that, as a means of emphasizing syncopated notes, the preceding on-beat note should be shortened (D. Charlton in Brown & Sadie 1989:415).

Example 5-30: Gaubert, Allegro Scherzando, mm. 45-47



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This type of description is often used in teaching situations; but it is not an accurate description of the process. A note does not automatically sound emphasized just because the previous note was shortened. It depends on how this shortening is executed.
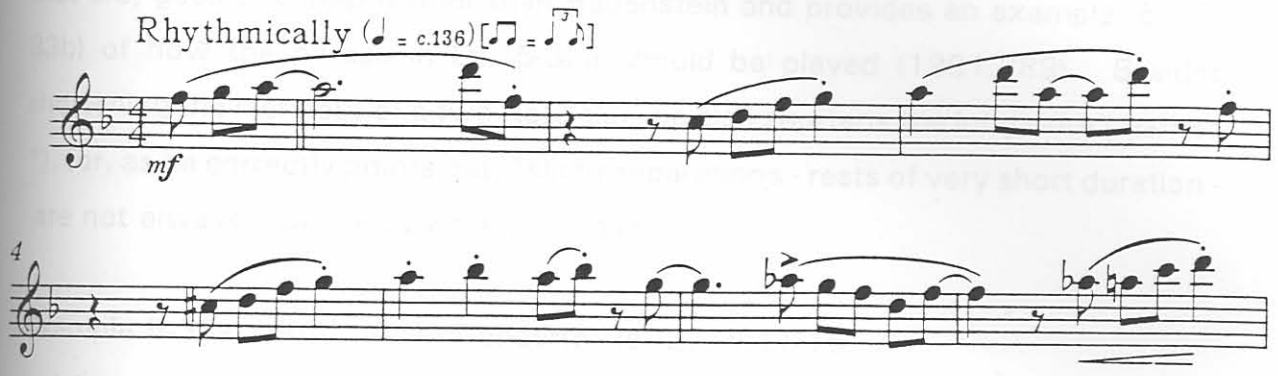
In any musical context (apart from some avant garde music) notes are so interlocked that a note is, to a large degree, defined by the previous note. Thus if the note on the beat is not only shortened, but also 'leant-on', as if 'leaping' in the air, it naturally leads to 'landing', relatively strongly, on the following note (especially if syncopated). The strength of the leap naturally determines the strength of the landing - according to Natural Laws. The shortening and leaning-on the on-beat note causes a natural reflex, as the strength of spring from a diving board automatically determines the height of ascent and velocity of entry into the water. Words like 'shortened', 'emphasis' and 'syncopation' are often used to describe what is a fait accompli once the 'leap' is effected.

Moyse (Bogorad 1991:12) amusingly, but with due effect, related that the word "syncopation" comes from the Latin for "a missed heartbeat, a heart attack, or feinting spell, evoking an image of falling backward in a dead faint". He said that a syncopated note should be preceded by a silence, be emphasized, then fade away. "Of course, you should not vibrate on the syncopation. Can you imagine a man falling back in a feint going *eh-eh-eh-eh*?"

The rhythmic and phrasing structure of much jazz-influenced music is almost entirely based on various patterns of shortened and stressed notes. In analysing Ex. 5-31 it should be borne in mind that in the field of jazz the first note of each slur is usually strongly accented, also the last note of a slur marked with a staccato dot is accented:

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Example 5-31: C. Norton, Swing Out Sister, mm. 1-7



5.7.3 Shortening the last note of a slur

While Wye (1983:9) insists that one should not shorten the last note of a slur, Hauenstein (n.d:11), amongst many others, states that the passage in Ex. 5-32a should be played as in Ex. 5-32b:

Example 5-32a:



Example 5-31b:
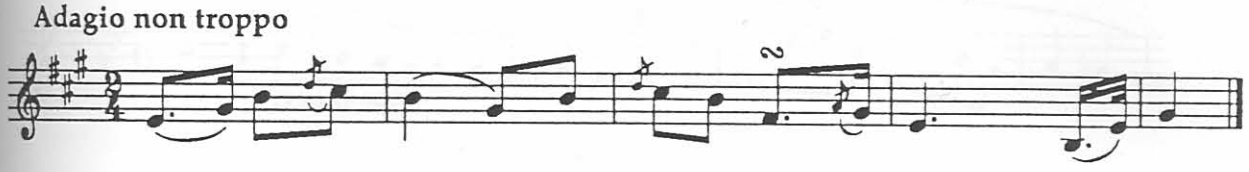


Both writers are partly correct. It must surely be that the musical context and character of the passage will dictate the appropriate length of the last note of a slurred group of notes. As quoted in Chapter 5.7 Weston (1976:90) states the case for both extremes: "[...] weak endings on unaccented beats or parts of beats should be dynamically tapered off and finished short of the following beat, whereas strong endings on accented beats of the bar must be held full length *over to the beginning* of the next beat".

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Baillot, writing in 1835, and who was surely in touch with performance practice of that era, goes one step further than Hauenstein and provides an example (Ex. 5-33b) of how the phrase in Ex. 5-33a should be played (1991:289). Besides shortening the last note of a two-note slur, he also shortens the long note (marked *), for, as he correctly points out, "slight separations - rests of very short duration - are not always indicated by the composer":

Example 5-33a: Viotti, Violin Concerto No. 27, II:11-15
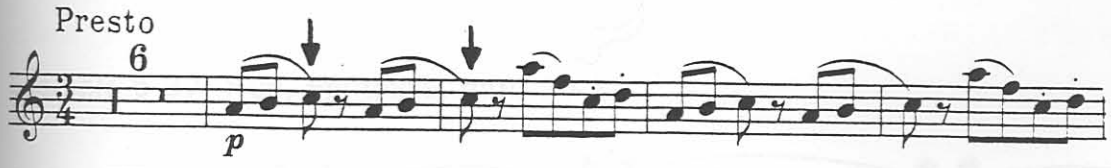


Example 5-33b: Viotti, Violin Concerto No. 27, II:11-15
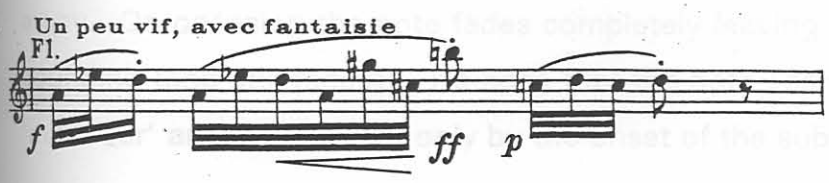


Consider how short the last notes of the slurs in Ex. 5-34 need to be played in order for the light character to be best brought out:

Example 5-34: Prokofiev, Sonata Op. 94, II:1-10



It must be mentioned that the following notation means only that the last note under the slur must be shortened; it must not be tongued:

Example 5-35: Messaien, Le Merle Noir, m. 3

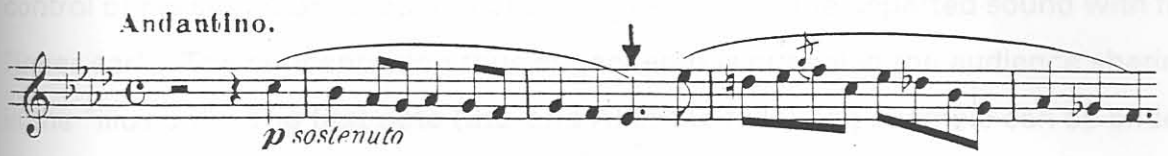


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5.7.4 Rounding-off

In the next example the first sub-phrase needs to be subtly rounded-off (the low Eb in m. 3), with the subsequent sub-phrase beginning with a relatively gentle articulation; this lends a feeling of repose and calmness:

Example 5-36: Widor, Romance Op. 34/3, mm. 1-5



The author uses the following symbol to explain diagrammatically to students how the rounding-off of the last note(s) of slurs should 'feel':



In phrases which follow one another directly as in Ex. 5-37 or, especially, which elide, then the ending of one phrase has an intimate bearing on the beginning of the next; this in turn has a ripple effect on all the surrounding phrases. An incorrectly ended phrase can mar the overall meaning of an entire section by drawing attention too much towards, or away from, that particular area. The notes marked * in this example consequently need to be carefully shaped and articulated:

Example 5-37: Hüe, Fantaisie, mm. 20-24



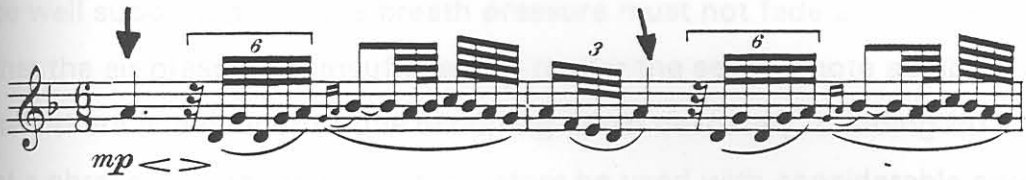
Harnoncourt (1982:31) carefully considers the ending-off of long notes, relating that the piano and plucked instruments cannot help but produce notes that fade away. On occasion the note fades completely leaving the mind to imagine it still sounding (and still fading). He adds that the note "continues to be heard by the 'inner ear' and is cancelled only by the onset of the subsequent note". While this

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may seem a disadvantage, there are, he says, circumstances where sustained sounds (especially on the organ) can "mask and interfere" with busy textures, especially the complexity of a fugue. His statement (1982:31) that "[t]he reality of a sustained sound is not better than the illusion of the sound" needs careful consideration by any wind player.
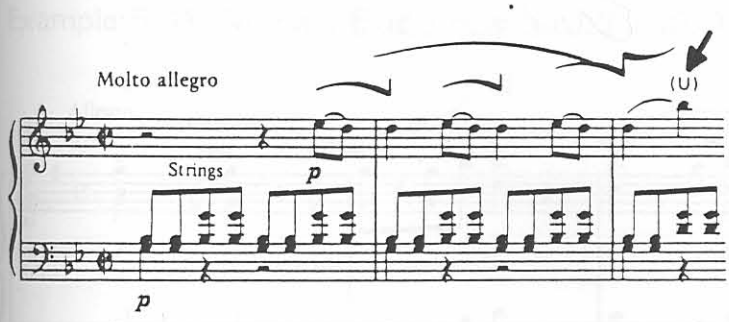
In order for this to be the case, the wind performer needs not only to be in perfect control of his sound production, but also to be hearing the departed sound with his "inner ear". The concentration thus engendered is critical in the audience sharing in the "illusion". The first note (the long A) in the following example can be ended in this way, with the short 'silence' heard as part of the fading note:

Example 5-38: Doppler, Fantaisie Pastorale Hongroise, mm. 9-10



With phrases whose "primary thrust has been fulfilled" it is, Barra (1983:41) says, "particularly easy to neglect these points of declining energy in anticipation of the forthcoming phrase". He uses this particularly appropriate example in order to show (by means of his unique symbols) how the last note of a slur (the Bb in m.3) needs to be rounded-off in order for it not to be emphasised in any way:

Example 5-39: Mozart, Symphony No. 40, I:1-3



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Any rounding-off of the last note of a slur must be judiciously used. Tromlitz (1991:157) issues a warning with regard to the second note of a slurred group of two notes bemoaning the fact that it is "frequently very unclear, sometimes quite inaudible". In other words, one must not treat the following groups as excessively as indicated here:

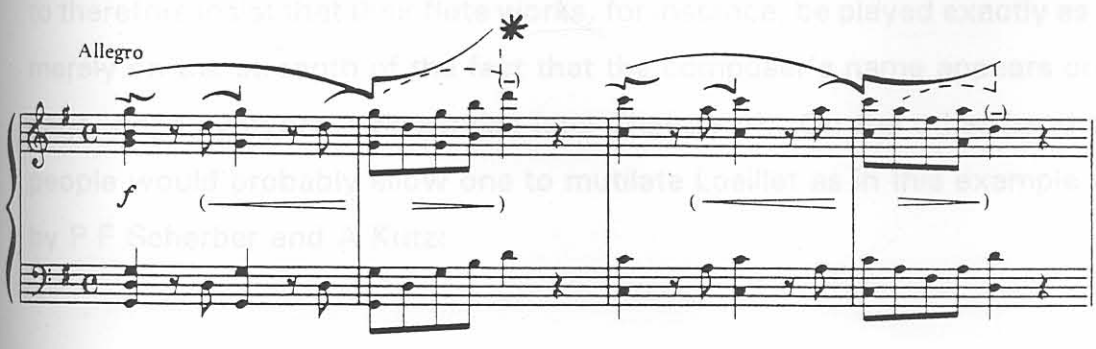
Example 5-40: excessive rounding-off



Being a pragmatist Tromlitz provides a solution, saying that the group must be articulated with a "taa", the second 'a' being made "with the chest". What he is, in essence, suggesting is that, in modern parlance, both notes of the group must be well supported; i.e. the breath pressure must not fade away to such an extent that the air pressure is insufficient to render the second note audible. As inferred here there is a danger of this occurring when delicately rounding-off the last note of a phrase. Although it must therefore be used with considerable care, this type of figure when played in this way is reminiscent of a sigh and, as such, has its definite interpretative place.

Barra (1983:44) acknowledges what he calls "secondary forms of accentuation". He uses the following example (Ex. 5-41) to show that the final note (marked *) of a phrase (here the first sub-phrase) should not always be played short, but sometimes "gently reinforced" by means of a "subtle increase of duration":

Example 5-41: Mozart, Eine kleine Nachtmusik, I:1-4



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Barra says that this subtle accentuation by means of slight lengthening adds "grace and beauty" to the phrase. In Ex. 5-41 it launches the first sub-phrase over the printed rest and leads into the concluding sub-phrase.

5.8 Choosing slur patterns

Pleeth (1982:63) says regarding the string player's choice of bowings that "the real determining factor" must ultimately be "only the shape of the musical phrase, and of the units within that phrase". Referring to the conceptual approach by performers to performing music in the early Baroque era, Meylan (1988:76) states that they "adhered to a clear way of ordering the individual elements of a whole musical sentence" guided by "an ever-present feeling for the place of the elements in the progress of the musical discourse".

The extent to which a wind performer can legitimately modify, re-interpret or actually alter a composer's slurrings and articulations varies according to the style period and the particular composer. Any modifications will be tempered by one's own 'taste' and what is perceived to be currently 'acceptable'. (Two other possibilities, where one either does not bend to such things and consequently merely goes with one's own whim, or is limited by one's own technical deficiencies, will not be addressed here.)

The general situation in the Baroque and the Classical eras is addressed elsewhere in this dissertation (see Chapter 10), but the matter is to some extent compounded by the reverence (rightly) shown to certain composers. Certainly, Bach and Mozart were great creative geniuses, but for anyone (whether critic, musician or audience) to therefore insist that their flute works, for instance, be played exactly as per copy merely on the strength of the fact that the composer's name appears on the title page, does everyone a disservice (see Chapter 4). On the other hand the same people would probably allow one to mutilate Loeillet as in this example as edited by P F Scherber and A Kutz:

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Example 5-42: Loeillet, Sonata in D min. Op. 3/10, I:1-9



For all his depth of musical understanding and insight, can one honestly submit that Mozart understood the capabilities of the contemporary flute better than did player/composers such as Devienne or Wendling? And yet few are heard to complain when some editor re-phrases one of *their* works. (One has to admit that the state of affairs has improved over the years.)

Rowland-Jones (1992:140) discusses the two possibilities for slurring the following passage:

Example 5-42a: unslurred



The ascending notes may be "paired as rising thirds (trochaic) or as falling pairs across the beat (iambic)". This provides us with the following patterns:

Example 5-42b: trochaic



Example 5-42c: iambic



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Clarinettist Orlando (1992:26) makes the point that Classical and even Romantic composers "usually leave a good measure of freedom to performers in articulation [and slurring]". He makes out the case for an intelligent and "creative" use of articulation and slurring in order to clarify the structure of the music for the listener, and "make a difference between a technically correct but mediocre performance and a gripping performance". Orlando presents a series of examples from the clarinet repertoire and provides each with "supplementary [slurrings] to provide sub-phrases". These additions are entirely pragmatic and are intended to both

* make the melodic line clearer for both the performer and the listener, and
* help the performer overcome "technical problems interfering with the flow of the music".

His first example (1992:26), Ex. 5-43, brings out two important aspects of the effect on elements of a phrase when a note is tongued. Firstly (notated by a 1 over the rephrasing in Ex. 5-43b), tonguing a note under a slur will slightly emphasize it without recourse to lengthening it, which might lead to an overemphasis. Although he does not say as much, it also stops too much 'romanticising', in other words incurring a feeling of rubato, which might easily occur when notes are lengthened. Secondly (notated by a 2 in Ex. 5-43b), gently tonguing a particular note can subtly strengthen it and give it prominence over nearby higher notes which, by their nature, easily assume undue prominence:

Example 5-43a: Spohr, Concerto for Clarinet Op. 26, III:19-22 (original slurs)



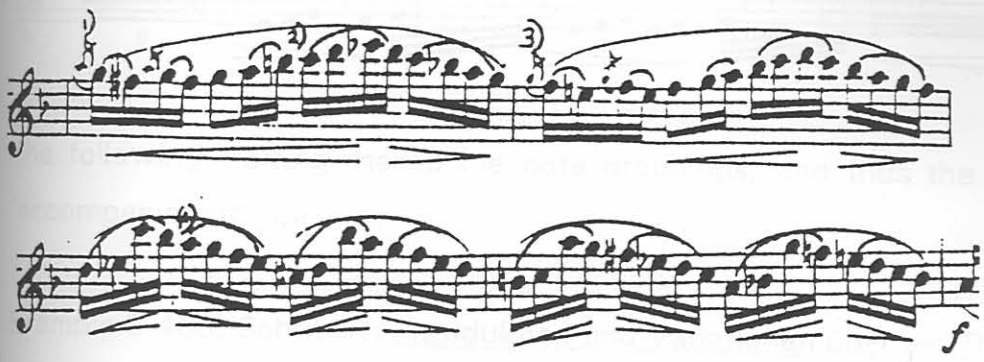
Example 5-43b: Spohr, Concerto for Clarinet Op. 26, III:19-22 (slurred by Orlando)



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His next example (1992:27) is from the same work (the longer slurs are original):

Example 5-44: Spohr, Concerto for Clarinet Op. 26, III:56-60



At 1 he shows the tonguing of grace notes in order to make them "crisper and cleaner". The composer added the grace notes for a reason - and that reason is negated by slurring them all together as indicated. It must be clear by now that Spohr, or perhaps some editor, has indulged in the dangerous occupation of supplying the music with slurs according to visual precepts. A closer look at the music will reveal the way in which the notes must be grouped. The long slurs admittedly give a good visual impression of the smooth legato approach that is needed, but deters the performer from delineating the sub-groups by tonguing them. Orlando rectifies the matter.

At 2 Orlando also shows that tonguing the C's emphasizes the main harmonic tone of this area. From 4 onwards he departs from the preceding reasons for adding tonguings, and suggests these additional tongued notes in order to help the performer "avoid speeding up or fumbling the runs". It may also make the sub-structure of dynamics, and the general forward movement of the phrase easier to bring out. But he does temper this last addition of tonguings by saying that "the use of the tongue should be very light, barely audible - the runs should be heard as groups of eight, not four".

A similar approach can be applied to the following passage:

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Example 5-45a: Schubert, Introduktion und Variationen über ein Thema Op. 160, mm. 169-170



The following slurring makes the note groupings, and thus the theme and its 'accompaniment', clearer:

Example 5-45b: Schubert, Introduktion und Variationen über ein Thema Op. 160, mm. 169-170 (re-slurred by the author)



Orlando's next example (1992:28) shows how (at 1) the addition of an extra tongue-stroke facilitates playing the larger interval cleanly (see Chapter 7.4.1):

Example 5-46a: Mercadante, Concerto in Bb for Clarinet, I:37-39 (original phrasing)



Example 5-46b: Mercadante, Concerto in Bb for Clarinet, I:37-39 (re-phrased)



Orlando provides further examples, but mostly along the same lines. At one point he advises one pattern of slurring for practising, and another, with fewer tonguings,

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for performance; the aim being to guide the fingering of the notes as evenly and rhythmically as possible during practice. In this he is suggesting that the tongue is a more trustworthy rhythmic agent than the fingers. It is the author's opinion that this method of practising yields positive results.

At the close of his article (1992:28) he encourages the performer to "experiment with different forms of [slurring] as part of one's inquiry into a piece under study". As he rightly says: "Trying out different forms of [slur patterns] would be useful if it served no other purpose than to grapple with a piece, to come to understand the structure of the melodic line". This must surely lead to a more meaningful performance.

Any particular performer's choice of slurs, like all other parameters of interpretation, is not entirely dictated by objective influences. The question of subjective 'taste' has already been alluded to. This vague term must include the performer's own sense of musical shape, proportion and flow. As Auer writes (1980:72), "there will always be delicate distinctions, minute variations, qualifications, differences" between the phrasings of various performers due to "individual temperament, the individual quality of their inspiration, and - not to be forgotten - their knowledge and skill as well as their instinct". Not only that but "the mood of the moment, the accidental influence of temper and disposition" results in the same performer providing different interpretations on different occasions. The question is: How much influence may "the mood of the moment" and "accidental influence" be allowed to have on phrasing before the dividing line of objectivity/subjectivity is overstepped?

There is no one easy answer and it is impossible to appease all varieties of prejudice - from the subjective insistence on the printed page to the subjective insistence of individual taste. Although true objectivity is hard to achieve, a deep understanding of all aspects of phrasing will go a long way towards creating objectively meaningful performances.

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5.9 The phrase-slur

As defined in Chapter 3.2.11 the phrase-slur is "the long notational arc written above or below a series of notes to indicate a self-contained phrase". The question arises: is it ever necessary for a composer to delineate for the performer the extent of a phrase?

A large part of a performer's student years are spent learning how best to interpret the printed page. The basic rules of phrase structure are learnt, not only so that phrases are understood and performed in a meaningful manner, but also so that deviations can be recognized.

There are certainly places, especially in twentieth-century music, where phrases (or sub-phrases) are deliberately disguised in order to, using Bernstein's terminology (1976:162), violate our expectation of a clearly logical phrase structure. Such unusual detours can surely benefit from some form of notational signposting. But it is one of music's enigmas that the symbol that developed in the nineteenth-century to show the extent of a phrase (i.e. the phrase-slur) is the same as the symbol used to denote legato playing (i.e. the slur). In keyboard music, where the phrase-slur probably originated, its use does not produce the same degree of confusion as it can in wind music.

Except in avant-garde circles, where composers often invent new notational symbols, the two most logical options to the continuous arc of the phrase-slur have never been accepted. These are the arc of dashes (or even dots - although this could, in complex scores, cause confusion) and the square horizontal bracket:
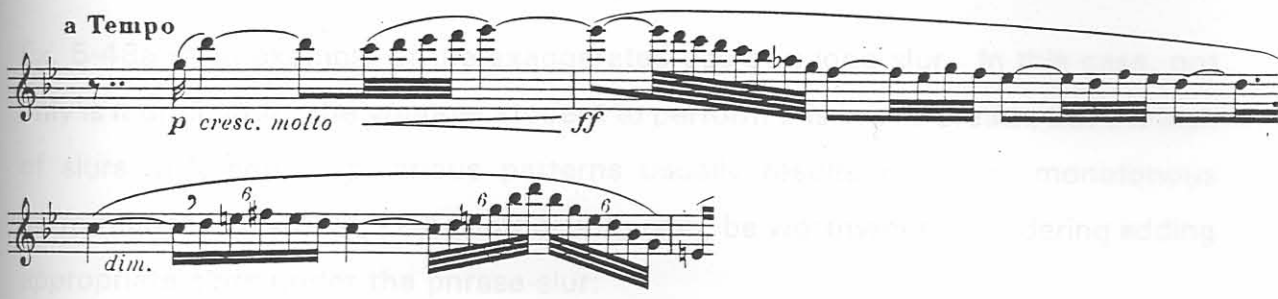


As it is, a true phrase-slur cannot unambiguously be used over any phrase that includes articulation patterns (for example Ex. 5-28a). Especially, it cannot be applied to a staccato phrase, otherwise the staccato is automatically transformed

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into mezzo-staccato. Either the above-mentioned arc of dashes or the square bracket could, on the other hand, be used without altering the articulation.
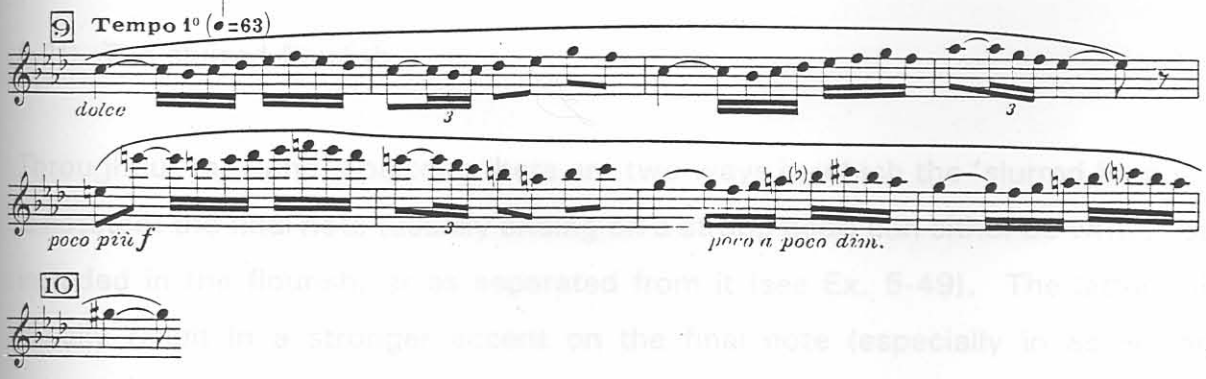
But the long arc that is being called the 'phrase-slur' is often used for another purpose.

Example 5-47: Hüe, Fantaisie, mm. 7-10



In Ex. 5-47 the longer arc does not truly delineate an exact phrase or sub-phrase. It is, surely, used to denote a legato approach to performing the passage. In much wind music this type of 'double-slurring' is the composer's attempt to show that the notes should be articulated within the airstream (i.e. without breaking the continuity of the flow of notes). Some composers attempt to provide the same advice through the use of words like *legato, cantabile, dolce, espressivo* and *sostenuto* - sometimes in addition to the phrase-slur:

Example 5-48a: Rhené-Baton, Passacaille, mm. 68-76



Seen in this light, the phrase-slur in Exx. 7-1 or 3-8a will be seen by most
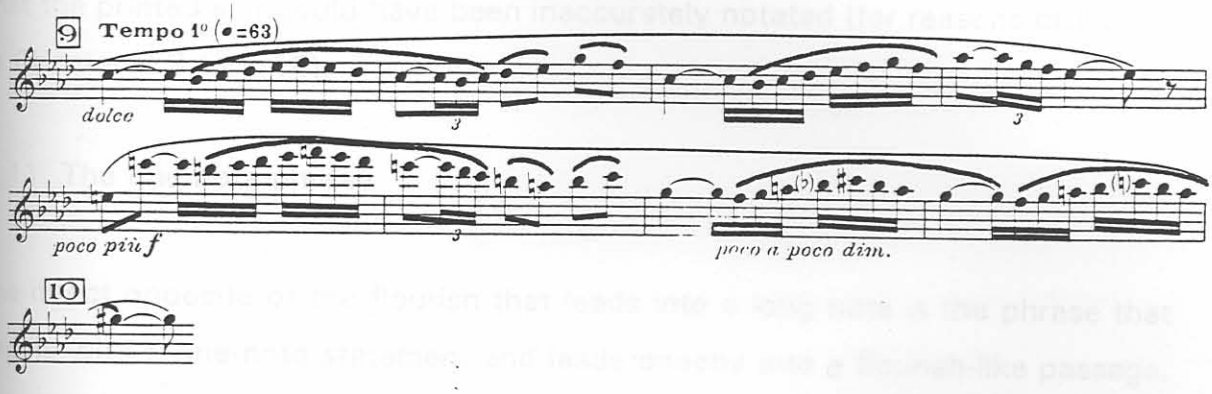
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performers as an indication to play as legato as possible, while gently articulating the repeated notes. Thus 'double-slurring' is an acceptable visual aid to ensure a legato approach.

To the composer the suggestion can be offered, when writing for wind instruments: use a phrase-slur only where the phrase structure is not clear; otherwise its use will infer a legato approach to the notes under the long slur.

Ex. 5-48a is an example of the exaggerated use of a long slur. In this case, not only is it difficult for the younger student to perform this in one breath, but the lack of slurs differentiating various patterns usually results in bland, monotonous performances. It would, in the author's opinion, be worthwhile considering adding appropriate slurs under the phrase-slur:

Example 5-48b: Rhené-Baton, Passacaille, mm. 68-76 (slurs added by author)
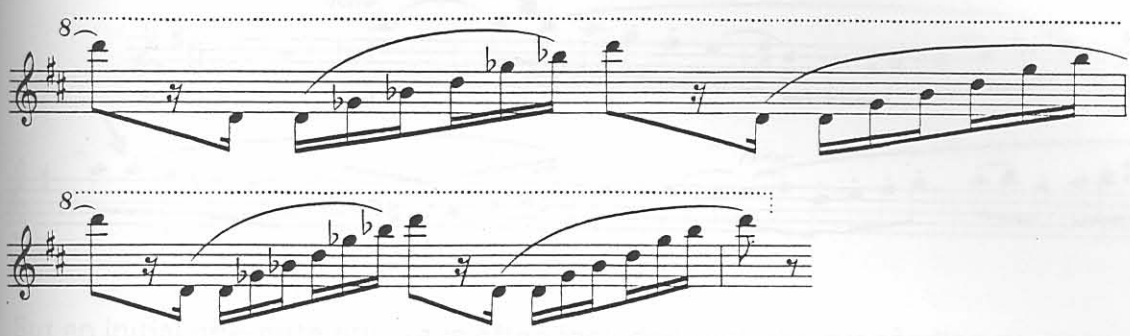


5.10 The slurred flourish

Throughout the wind repertoire there are two ways in which the 'slurred flourish' is notated: the final note (usually ending on a strong beat) can either be written as included in the flourish, or as separated from it (see Ex. 5-49). The latter will usually result in a stronger accent on the final note (especially in ascending flourishes). With this in mind - did Prokofiev really intend the third beats of the bars to sound more accented than the first?

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Example 5-49: Prokofiev, Sonata Op. 94, I:81-83
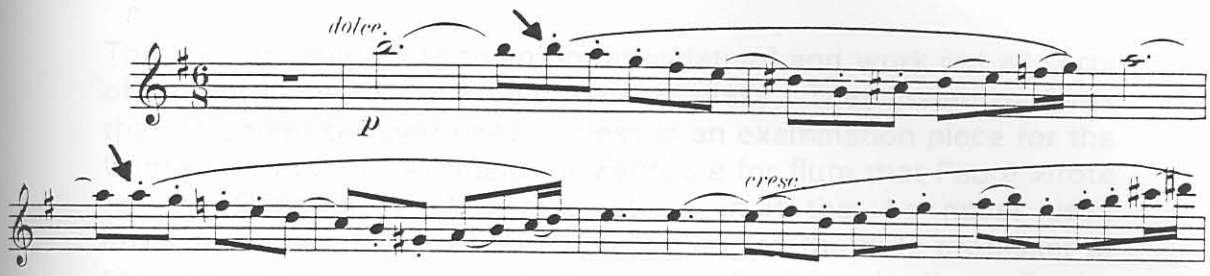


Where the flourish is extremely fast and the final note is notated as being tongued (separated), the attempt to tongue this final note may result in a fractional delay that lessens the impact of the flourish up to this final note. In these situations the author suggests that it not be tongued, but included in the line of the flourish. The opposite may hold true where the flourish is of a moderate speed. It is, after all, always the correct musical effect that is important. It should also be borne in mind that the printed slur could have been inaccurately notated (for reasons discussed in Chapter 2.3 to 2.10).

5.11 The one-note phrase

The direct opposite of the flourish that leads into a long note is the phrase that begins with a one-note statement and leads directly into a flourish-like passage. The opening of the *Fantaisie* by Fauré (Ex. 5-50) begins with such a one-note phrase (the B); this leads directly to the winding two bar introduction to the next principal note (the A in bar 5). The one-note phrase must be recognised as such and given its own independent character; the proceeding passage must not be considered as part of the first one-note phrase, as is often the case, but played as a lead-in to the next long note. Fauré separates each one-note phrase from the proceeding passage by articulating them separately.
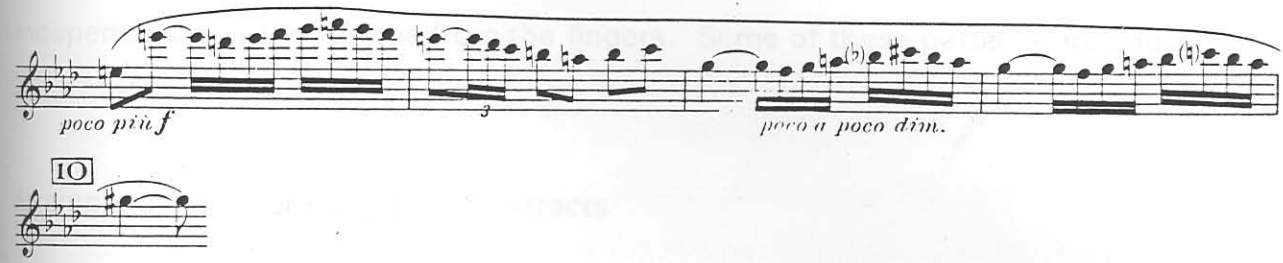
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Example 5-50: Fauré, Fantaisie, mm. 1-10
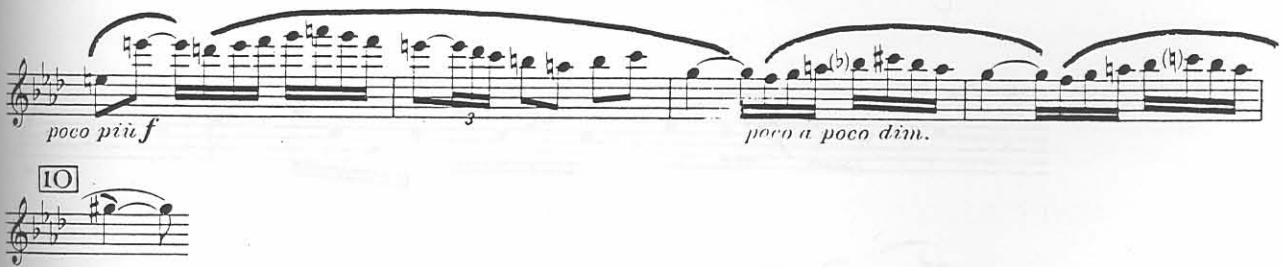


But an initial one-note phrase is often included with the proceeding passage under a slur or phrase-slur - this often leads to confusion. In Ex. 5-51a the long phrase-slur disguises both the initial one-note phrase (the E, with octave shift) and the later one (the G). The passage is re-slurred by the author in Ex. 5-51b to better reflect the implied sub-phrases:

Example 5-51a: Rhené-Baton, Passacaille, mm. 72-76



Example 5-51b: Rhené-Baton, Passacaille, mm. 72-76 (re-slurred by author)



5.12 The *Morceau de Concours* pieces

The pieces written for the yearly examinations at the Conservatoire in Paris are renowned for their tricky slur and articulation patterns. James Galway (1982:123)
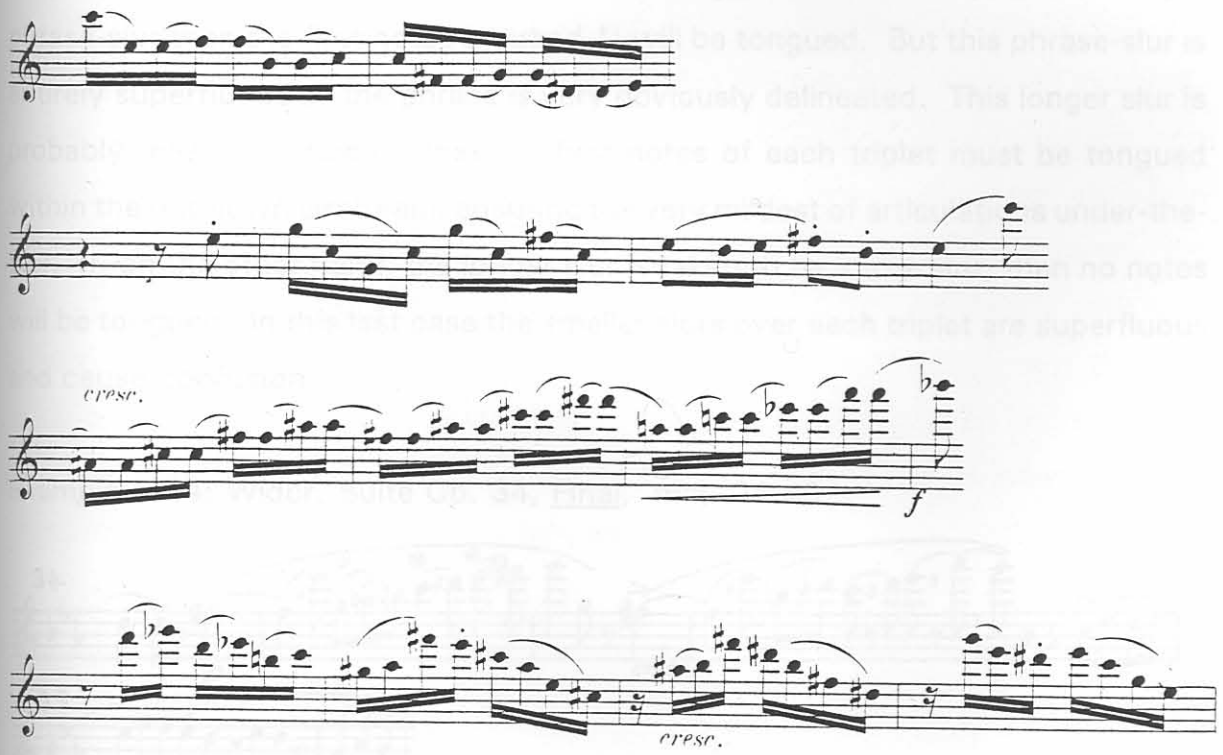
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has the following to say in this regard:

> The French really go to town on [articulation] and work out all sorts of permutations to drive their students crazy. They invent patterns that no composer ever uses - unless in an examination piece for the Conservatoire. For example the *Fantaisie* for flute that Fauré wrote for the Concours: it has articulations in it that he never used anywhere else. I guess he just went along to the flute professor at the Conservatoire and asked what was difficult for the flute. So the professor listed a few problems [...] and Fauré noted them down, thanked the professor, and went off and cooked a musical soup. Well, if you can get the better of the *Fantaisie* you will be equal to most articulations, with a few never otherwise required of you.

There may be more than a grain of truth in this, but the best of the Concours pieces are often included in programmes - especially the Fauré piece maligned by Galway. Thus every aspiring flute player must be able to negotiate their intricacies. Besides this, such articulation patterns are excellent exercises for developing independence of the tongue from the fingers. Some of these patterns are shown in Ex. 5-52:

Example 5-52: Fauré, Fantaisie, extracts



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5.13 The triplet-slur
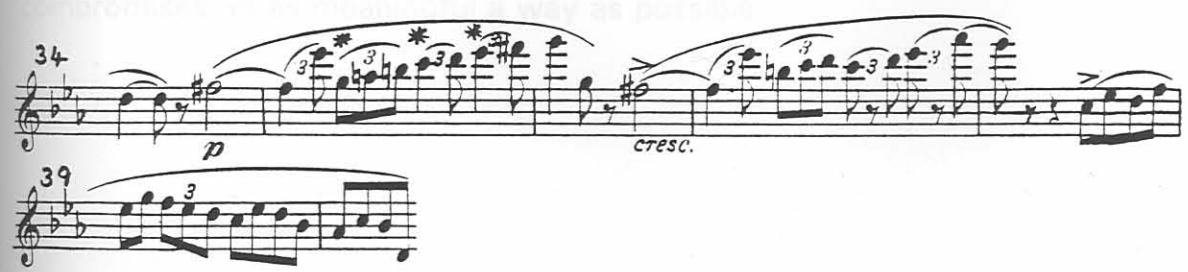
One of the anomalies of music notation is the manner in which triplets are often notated in non-compound time signatures. A triplet group is most simply notated by a 3 over or under the appropriate group, as shown in Ex. 5-53:

Example 5-53: Rutter, Suite Antique, IV:65-68



Ex. 5-54, on the other hand, is typical of passages where confusion arises because the composer or editor has added a slur to the 3 (the author calls this a 'triplet-slur'), and then notated a longer slur over the whole phrase. This additional slur implies that the first note of each triplet group must be tongued. Thus the addition of triplet-slurs to more clearly indicate the triplet groups clashes with the legato requirements of the longer slur. So the question arises: does the performer tongue the first note of each triplet or not? If the longer slur (mm. 34-36) is merely a phrase-slur then the first notes (marked *) will be tongued. But this phrase-slur is entirely superfluous as the phrase is very obviously delineated. This longer slur is probably meant to indicate that the first notes of each triplet must be tongued within the outblown airstream, ensuring the very mildest of articulations under-the-slur. If, on the other hand, the longer slur is taken to be a true slur, then no notes will be tongued. In this last case the smaller slurs over each triplet are superfluous and cause confusion.

Example 5-54: Widor, Suite Op. 34, Final, mm. 34-40



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The second phrase (mm. 36-38) is more confusing because the third and fourth triplet-slurs are over rests. Two bars later (mm. 38-40) Widor shows by means of unambiguous notation that he meant the first notes of the triplets in mm. 34-36 to be tongued. This last phrase is wholly slurred and includes a triplet.

Thus caution must be employed when the triplet-slur notation is encountered. The character of the music must be allowed to dictate whether the groups are to be tongued in threes, slurred into the line of the phrase, or all separated (tongued).

5.14 Compromise slurring

Bearing in mind the anomalies and inconsistencies brought to light in Chapter 2 and thus far in Chapter 5 the conclusion could be drawn that composers and editors often resort to a type of 'compromise slurring'; a compromise in the sense that, although they realise that what they notate is not entirely accurate, it is nevertheless more accurate than the alternatives.

Given the basic rule (see Chapter 5.2) that the first note of a slur is usually accentuated in some way, composers and editors may often be wary of notating too many slurs in music that is either gentle, soft or in a basically melodic style for fear that interpreters may accent these first notes too strongly. Thus, for example, Rhené-Baton in his *Passacaille* (see Exx. 5-48a and 5-51a) may have used the long slurs, neither to denote the phrase structure (i.e. as phrase-slurs) nor as legato instructions, but merely to forestall the tendency to articulate too strongly the notes that begin the slurs in Ex. 5-48b and especially 5-51b. Similarly with bars 8 and 9 in Ex. 5-47. If this is the case it merely underlines the fact that the notation of slurs in particular and phrasing elements in general is an imprecise art; and that performers need to be continually aware of the need to interpret these 'compromises' in as meaningful a way as possible.

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5.15 Conclusion

The violin player/teacher Auer (1980:71) puts the case for proper phrasing very strongly indeed:

> The dead level of monotony which we notice in the performance of some [instrumentalists] is, in the main, due to a lack of proper phrasing. They seem content to play the notes as they are written, and apparently do not realize that a melody is something more than a long string of tones to be sounded in succession. In all music there is an underlying skeleton of form. The melody is not a projection of successive notes; it is carefully and consistently built up of melodic units, each of them independent, yet all dependent on each other, and calling for varying degrees of rhythmic and emotional accentuation. Even in the short melodic phrases of the modernists, which are not subjected to the balance of classic formal rules in their inception, there is an inner musical law of proportion which makes their proper phrasing all the more imperative.

The slur is an imprecise notational symbol with regard to the portrayal of the amount of stress given to the first (tongued) note of a group, the subsequent relaxation or release, and the length and strength of the last note. But it is this very imprecision that provides the performer with the leeway to incorporate and perform his own slurs so as best to serve the music.

Pleeth (1982:65) emphasises the point that while, for the string player, it is the bowing patterns that shape the phrase it is (his italics) "*always the shape of the line that must determine the bowing*". Where for the string player it is the choice of bowing patterns, for the wind player it is the choice of slur patterns. It is critical to fully understand the phrase itself, and its context in the larger structure, before determining the most meaningful patterns of slurs. (The types of articulations used, and the subtler aspects of tonecolour, vibrato, rubato, etc. come with the actual playing of the music.)

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CHAPTER 6

THE TEST GIVEN TO 20 PROFESSIONAL WIND PLAYERS

As outlined in Chapter 4 some aspects of the notational system, and especially the symbol used to denote slurs, are not always objectively ideal. This causes confusion when performers interpret the symbols according to subjective notions. The situation is compounded when composers and editors use slurs in an inconsistent, ambiguous and sometimes completely incorrect manner.

6.1 The theory behind the test

The theory outlined in Chapter 2 was that professional performing wind players could discern patterns of slurs and articulations that would not only be more practical than many of those printed in scores, but would also be more musically effective in bringing out the subtle elements hidden amongst the written notes and rhythms. In practice, the theory states that wind players would, given free rein, erase many of the slurs, especially the long phrase-slurs, from the printed page and provide more, and subtler, slur patterns that bring out intrinsic groups, sub-phrases, accompaniments and two-part elements, leading to more meaningful phrasing in general.

6.2 The method of testing the theory

A method was evolved to test out this theory. To this end extracts from four pieces of flute music were selected and sent to twenty professional wind players. They were asked to add their own "phrasing marks" to these extracts, which had been doctored by the author by removing all the slurs (see Appendices A-D).

6.2.1 The testees

The twenty professional wind players included one with a doctorate, three with

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masters degrees, two with B Mus Honours, three University lecturers and two ex-lecturers, nine current members of symphony orchestras (of which five are regular solo recital players) and one high school music teacher. All are involved in practical teaching in some way or another, and all are or were performers in their own right. Of the twenty, sixteen were flute players, three were clarinet players and one was an oboist. Replies were received from sixteen.

6.2.2 The pieces used for the test

The pieces chosen were as follows (see Appendices A-D):

* *Intermezzo* by Edward German (mm. 1 - 110)
* *Madrigal* by Louis Aubert (mm. 1 - 52)
* *Sicilienne* by Marcel Poot (mm. 1 - 13)
* *Country Dance* by Yuill-Smith (mm. 1 - 15)

These particular pieces were chosen for the following reasons:

* They are relatively obscure, and hence probably not known to the testees.

* They are relatively difficult to categorize; and hence leave the testees an open choice, i.e. they will not phrase in 'Classical style' or 'like *Syrinx*.'

* There are a wide number of possible choices.

* The articulation and especially the slur patterns as originally notated (probably by the composers themselves, as no editors are mentioned on the printed scores) are definitely not, in the author's opinion, good examples of meaningful phrasing.

Two slurs were left in the Aubert (mm. 3 and 18), as were five tenuto signs, in order to provide a few clues as to the piece's character. The passage beginning

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at m. 18 would have a totally different character, lighter and more dance-like, if the sixteenth notes were tongued. All printed dynamics were left intact. Tempo indications and expressive markings such as *calme* and *dolce* were also not excised.

It is realised, although not one of the testees complained on this basis, that a definitive selection of slurs and articulations cannot be made without recourse to the accompaniment. This would provide harmonic, textural and dynamic clues that could influence the choice of patterns. The harmony of three of the pieces (the Aubert is more complex) is relatively easy to understand from the flute part alone. The texture of the accompaniment is only at odds with the flute part in the *Piu vivo* section of the German where it is more flowing than the flute's material. The dynamics of both the flute part and the piano part consistently follow the same patterns.

6.2.3 The correspondence with the testees

A letter was sent to each testee, along with the four musical extracts, requesting their cooperation. In this letter certain points were emphasised, as the following extracts show:

> I have embarked [...] on my M Mus and have chosen as the topic of my thesis "Phrasing". Having discovered many examples of phrasing excesses and anomalies by composers, arrangers and publishers alike [...] I have decided to test out certain theories on you all.
>
> I would like you please to add <u>your own phrasing marks</u> to the enclosed six pages of music [...]. I have excised as carefully as possible all slurs and staccato marks; but I have left in all other composer's directions. So, <u>PLEASE</u> could you [...] play through the pieces, assess them, and then <u>carefully</u> write in (in pen <u>or</u> sharp pencil) how <u>you</u> feel/sense the pieces ought to be phrased (using slurs, staccato dots, tenutos and whatever). I say "carefully" because often with hand written phrasing the <u>exact</u> note on which a slur begins and ends is not clear. I have deliberately not enclosed the accompaniments as [...] I want you to rely solely on your inherent feel for melodic line.

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This is not a test; there are no correct answers and I do not wish you to try and work out what the composer probably wrote. The aim is, roughly, to prove that practising professional musicians can phrase works better than composers who do not play that instrument. Should you know, or even just vaguely recognise, any (all!) of the pieces, please just phrase the one's you don't know. Anonymity will be observed and none of your names will appear in the thesis or in any article derived from this research. I would prefer it if you would also not write your names on the returned music as I will jumble them all up and compare them without considering who wrote what.

6.3 The results

Despite the casual, and perhaps ambiguous, use of the words "phrasing" and "phrase" (used as a verb) in the letter, only one of the testees pointed this out. To this end a rhyme was enclosed:

> I never could resist temptation
> To make each Altercation into a Recitation!
> Please give me further Information:
> Do you mean "PHRASE" or "ARTICULATION"???

Nevertheless, all four examples were returned reslurred with some articulation marks. All the other testees apparently understood what was requested without questioning the terminology used.

One testee used only slurs, while all others also used staccato dots and tenutos as mentioned in the letter. Staccato dots were much used.

An important fact emerged, namely that not one testee used the so-called mezzo staccato notation  . There are two probable conclusions that can be drawn from this:

* The notation is open to misinterpretation and therefore deemed best avoided.

* Both an unmarked tongued note and the tenuto sign can be satisfactorily used to describe the note lengths between staccato and legato.

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One testee used the notation of a tenuto under a slur  ; apparently wishing to ensure that the notes will not actually be separated, but that the tongue will be used within the airstream.

Only one testee, and only in one piece (Poot), used a phrase-slur to show the joining together of two sub-phrases to make a single phrase. All others deemed the phrase-slur as unnecessary.

Breathing places, V, were marked by about half the testees, but not in a very consistent way. In most cases these were used to delineate phrase-endings, as much as actual breathing places - perhaps in place of the phrase-slur. One testee used both the V sign and the ' sign to signify breathing places. It would appear that the ' signified a quick breath; another testee used the (V) sign to signify this.

Only two testees used accents > ; and these were only in the Yuill-Smith. Apparently accents are not considered a part of the world of phrasing; they are probably considered a part of dynamics. No dynamics at all were added.

No additional words, either in English or Italian, were deemed necessary by anybody.

Slur and/or articulation patterns were applied extremely consistently by all testees. Very occasionally (e.g. German mm. 9 and 12) similar patterns were not noticed, and were slurred differently.

A few testees appeared to have favourite slur patterns - slurred in pairs:



and two-slurred/two-tongued:



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Most, though, used a variety of slur and articulation patterns in the more complex pieces (Aubert and German).
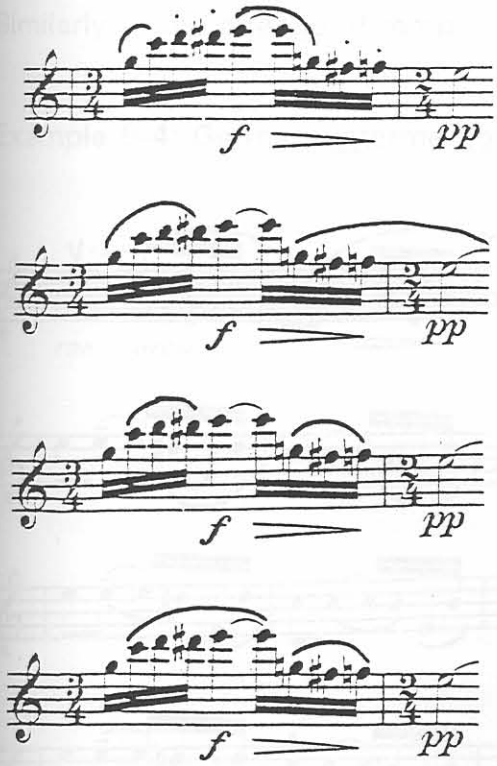
Obvious embellishments of a single note were grouped under a slur; the best example of this being in m. 69 of the German (see also m. 81):

Example 6-1: German, Intermezzo, mm. 69-70
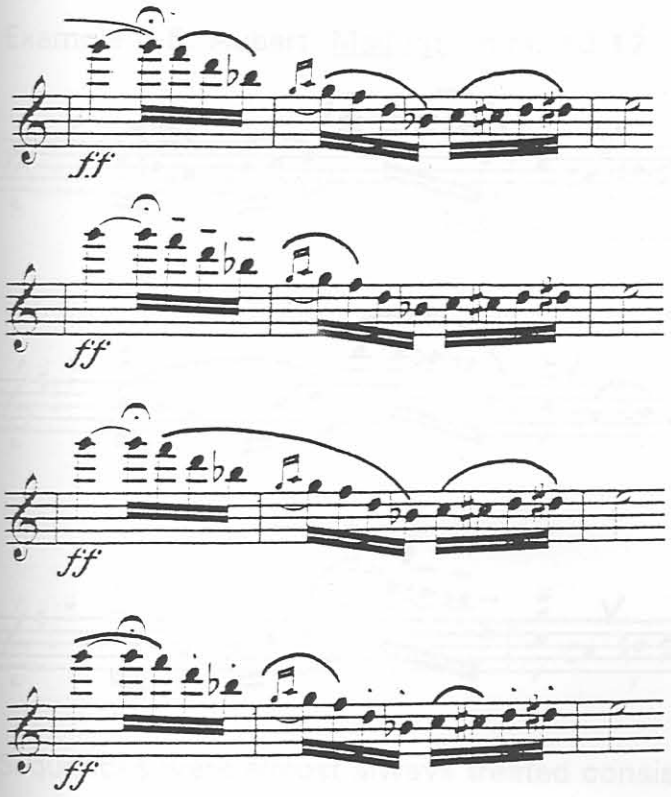


The largest number of possible options were encountered at linking passages and at changes of tempo, e.g. these two linking bars (mm. 45 and 108) in the German where the following options were provided:

Example 6-2: German, Intermezzo, mm. 45-46
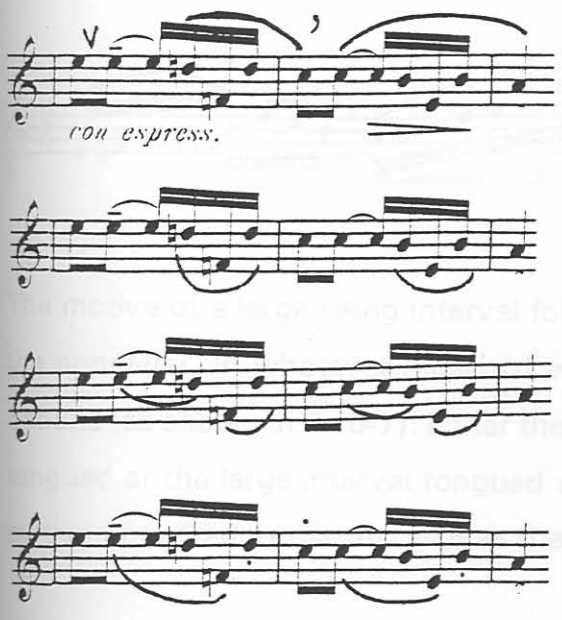


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Example 6-3: German, Intermezzo, mm. 108-110



Similarly at the change of tempo:

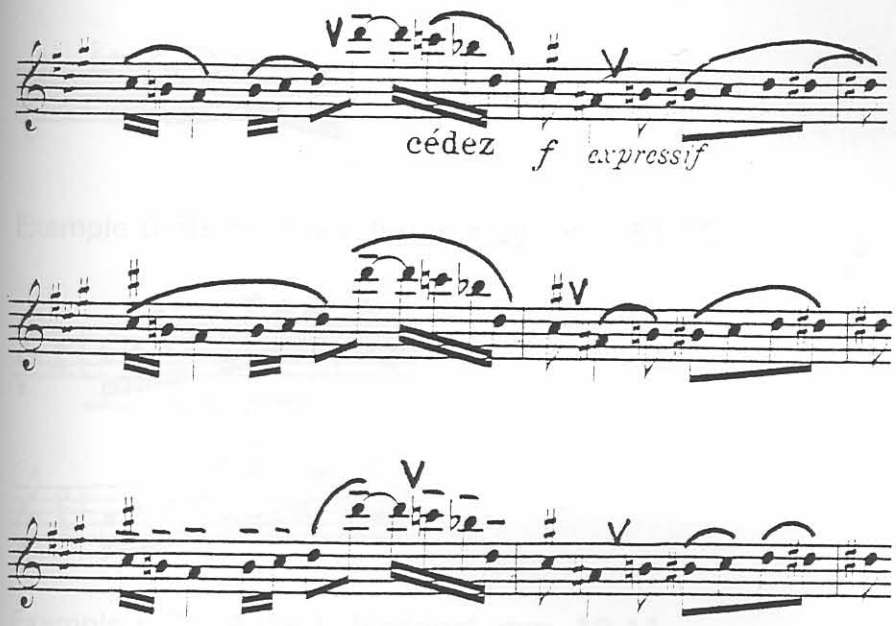
Example 6-4: German, Intermezzo, mm. 55-57



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In the Aubert, greatest variety appeared at the *cédez*:

Example 6-5: Aubert, Madrigal, mm. 10-12



Sequences were almost always treated consistently, but a few of the testees did not recognize some of the less obvious recurring patterns; for example mm. 9, 10 and 11 of the German. It is worth remembering that the composer also did not apply his slurring consistently.
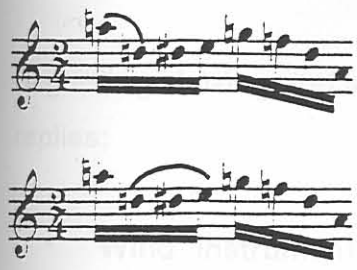
Example 6-6: German, Intermezzo, mm. 9-12
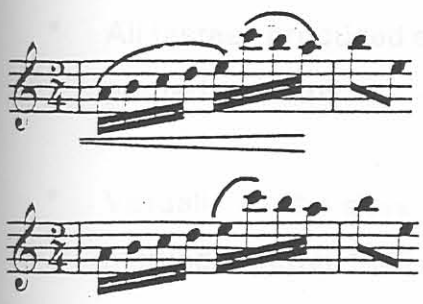


The motive of a large rising interval followed by a descending scale sequence (or the opposite), in whatever music of whatever period, has basically two slurring options (as shown in Ex 6-7): either the large interval is slurred and the other notes tongued or the large interval tongued and the other notes slurred. Wherever this motive appeared in the test pieces these options were chosen almost equally:

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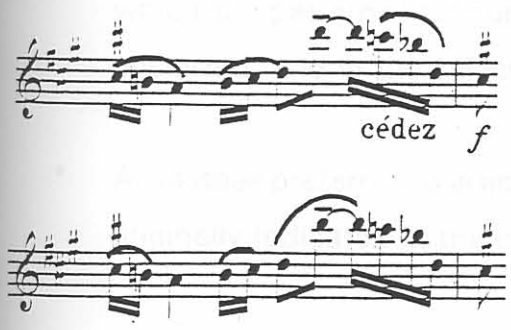
Example 6-7a: German, Intermezzo, m. 22



Example 6-7b: German, Intermezzo, mm. 51-52



Example 6-7c: Aubert, Madrigal, mm. 10-11



One testee slurred all the notes and one tongued all the notes in Exx. 6-7a and 6-7b.

Apart from in the Aubert, which is essentially melodic, all sections which appeared dance-like were provided with many more tongued notes than in the original printed editions. This applied to the Poot, which although called a *Sicilienne* is also melodic, the *Piu vivo* section of the German (mm. 60 - 95) and, mainly, the *Country Dance* of Yuill-Smith.

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6.4 Summary

Regarding slurring and articulation, the following can be inferred from the testees' replies:

* Wind instrumentalists can successfully add slurs and articulations to previously unknown and unheard music.

* All testees produced slur patterns that deviated markedly from the originally printed patterns.

* Virtually all the slurs and articulations added, are, in the author's opinion, markedly better than those notated - presumably by the composers.

* Each testee was individually consistent throughout a piece: in the choice of which slur patterns best suited the music, in the relative number of notes left unslurred, and in the selection of which articulation marks to use.

* All testees preferred to articulate (tongue) many more of the notes than were originally indicated in the printed copy.

* Most testees sought out patterns, and slurred them as such.

* Composers would do well to consult performers on matters of phrasing.

* In the absence of structurally meaningful phrasing printed in the music, performers should feel free to judiciously change or add phrasing where appropriate.

It would appear that the number of slurs and the actual patterns chosen were guided by both what was seen on the printed page and what was heard and felt in playing the pieces.

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Having chosen the most meaningful phrasing, be it that which is printed or the player's own, the next step must be the successful performance thereof. The various parameters that influence the efficacy of phrasing in performance will be addressed in Chapter 7.

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CHAPTER 7

INFLUENCES ON THE PERFORMANCE OF SLURS

Slurs, like all elements of phrasing, do not exist independently, but are woven into the fabric of the music. A change in any one element (e.g. the dynamics) will usually effect other elements (e.g. articulation). Thus various elements of the music exert an influence on the performance of slurs.

7.1 Articulation

Articulation is an essential part of the interpretation of phrases; and it has a direct bearing on both the micro-level of individual notes, and on the macro-level as part of the larger musical picture.

7.1.1 The first note of a slur

Any wind player coming across a note with no slur over or under it will automatically articulate it (usually with the tongue). Equally he will articulate the first note of any slur-group.

Articulation, as defined in Chapter 3, is being taken to mean the various actions of the tongue, and the strengths thereof, in starting a note (i.e. in allowing the airstream to activate sound as if by opening a valve). The term can essentially only be applied to the initial moment of a note, and is closely allied to 'attack.'

7.1.2 Different attacks

Hinch (1991:8-12) lists different attacks and the notations thereof as culled from the wind repertoire, and provides descriptions from various sources. Attacks run basically from "the most legato-like, gentle and smooth musical effects to the shorter, most incisive and harsh effects":

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Legato
Coulé
Tongued legato
Semi-sostenuto
Breath stroke
Tenuto
Portato
Syncopation
Loure (lourer)
Marcato
Bell
Détaché
pf
sf
fp
Mezzo-staccato
Semi-staccato
Soft tonguing
Legato-staccato
Pique
Pearl
Dash ("Point long" in French)
Staccato
Staccatissimo
Martellato
Spitzig

This provides us with a virtual hierarchy of emphases - starting with the gentle natural accents implied by the metrical pulse. From this to the stress on the initial note of a slurred group; through tenutos and tenutos combined with subtle breath-induced emphases (strengthened tone-colour and vibrato); to a series of ever-stronger tongue- and airstream-induced accents. The combination of regular metrical pulses with the series of attacks listed above provides a rich palette of tools for the interpretation and shaping of phrases and compositions as a whole.

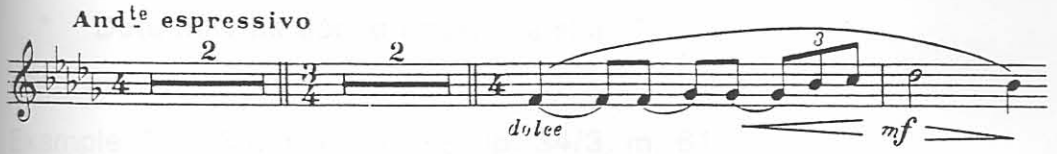
7.1.3 Soft attack

Although, by both definition and implication, the first note of any slur must be tongued, the strength of attack and volume of entry of this first note must be given the widest range of possibilities, in order to enrich the performer's interpretation capabilities. But are there perhaps not even occasions where the entry of a phrase

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will be even subtler if the beginning of the first note is hardly perceivable, or even not heard at all? In other words, may not this note, and hence the phrase, 'creep in' later than notated (and later than expected)? The following phrase will benefit from such a gentle attack:

Example 7-1: Busser, Andalucia, mm. 1-6



A technique exists on the flute, called either 'tongueless attack' or 'labial attack', which accommodates this creeping in (Hinch 1991:46-9). Its subtle use can ensure the gentlest of attacks. But articulation has a direct influence not only on the first note of every phrase, but also on all internal notes of a phrase that are in any sense 'articulated' by a pulsation of the airstream.

Leaving aside the different types and strengths of 'attack', there are three basic possibilities as regards the sounding of a note on any wind instrument. Notes can be either

* tongued
* not-tongued (as in legato, under a slur), or
* tongued-under-a-slur.

7.1.4 Tongued-under-a-slur

It is in the area of notes tongued-under-a-slur that ambiguity arises, where consensus is difficult to obtain and where subtlety of execution is essential. It is the author's opinion that many composers deliberately use the notation of tongued-under-a-slur in cases where they don't know themselves exactly how to write what they are mentally hearing. This is because phrasing is the very subtlest of arts. There are various ways to notate notes tongued-under-a-slur:

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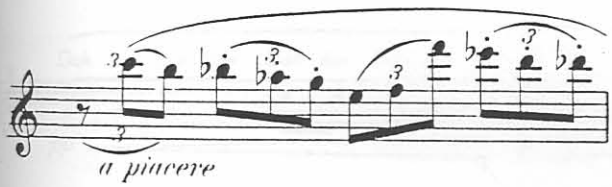
* Notes may be merely repeated under the slur:

Example 7-2: Busser, Andalucia, mm. 5-6
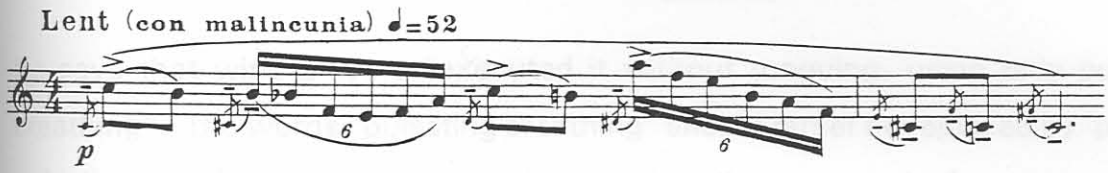


* Dots may be added under the slur:

Example 7-3: Widor, Romance Op. 34/3, m. 61



* Tenutos and/or accents may be written under the slur (this example offers a confusing array):

Example 7-4: Tomasi, Sonatine for solo flute, mm. 1-2
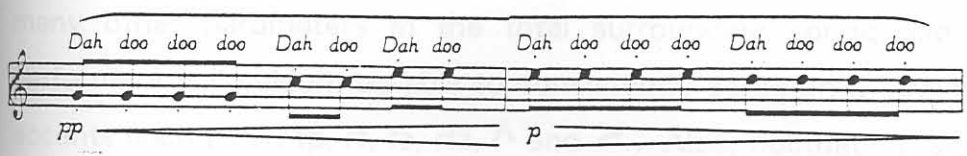


It is an interesting anomaly of notation that a single dot at the end of a slur only signifies that the last note is to be shortened, not tongued (see Ex. 5-34); whereas dots in the course of a slur indicate *mezzo staccato*, and are therefore tongued (see Ex. 7-3).

Technically the difference between a series of separately tongued notes and a series tongued-under-a-slur is that the former involves interrupting, even if for only the shortest moment, the outflow of breath from the lips; whereas the latter involves creating pulsations or waves, of a multitude of varying strengths, within

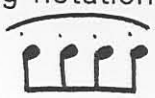
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or upon the airstream as it leaves the lips. In the latter situation the tongue action, while lessening the flow of air entering the instrument, at no time fully closes the valve (lips/reed), and air is allowed to continually produce sound within the instrument. One could liken this to the effect created on the surface of a stream of water by submerged rocks - as in a rapid - where the water surface is disturbed but not actually broken. As a single example, Shotola (1991:15) suggests the following articulation syllables (also discussed in detail in Hinch 1991:24-7) to distinguish the melodic structure from the accompanying repeated notes:

Example 7-5:
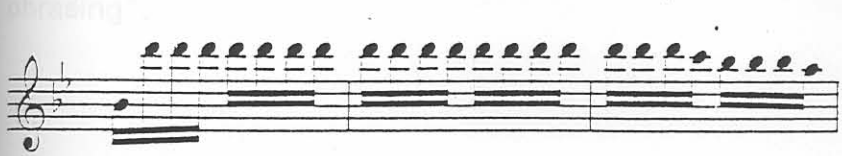


Harnoncourt (1989:114) also makes a similar reference, but one in which the diaphragm, and not the tongue, is used to create the pulsations within the tone. He discusses the meaning of the following notation apropos the articulation of repeated notes in the late 18th-century:



He says that wind players "executed it without tonguing, using only pulsating breathing". The words "pulsating breathing" should rather be replaced by 'periodic pulsations of the airstream initiated by the breathing apparatus'.

At all times one needs to consider why a composer would write a series of repeated notes, when one long note would suffice. Usually the extra impetus given to the phrase by the repetition, through re-articulation, of the same note helps drive the phrase forward, thus increasing tension and expectation:

Example 7-6: Bach (attrib.), Sonata in G min. for flute and b.c., III:43-45



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The world of articulation and attack is intimately bound up with another interpretative device, namely dynamics. (Other devices such as tonecolour and vibrato fall without the scope of this dissertation and are only alluded to in passing.)

7.2 Dynamics

Although there is sometimes some controversy and criticism regarding the interpretation of a composer's notated dynamics, it is generally acknowledged that dynamics cannot be construed as an exact objective matter as they are relative to many other parameters in the total surrounding sound-field. For instance, performers will seldom be able to consistently agree on the relative strengths of accents such as sf, fp, rf, fz, rfz, ^ and > . Also, fluctuating factors like ambient acoustics, modern instrumental improvements, musicological discoveries and even personal taste need always to be acknowledged and taken into consideration during performance preparation.

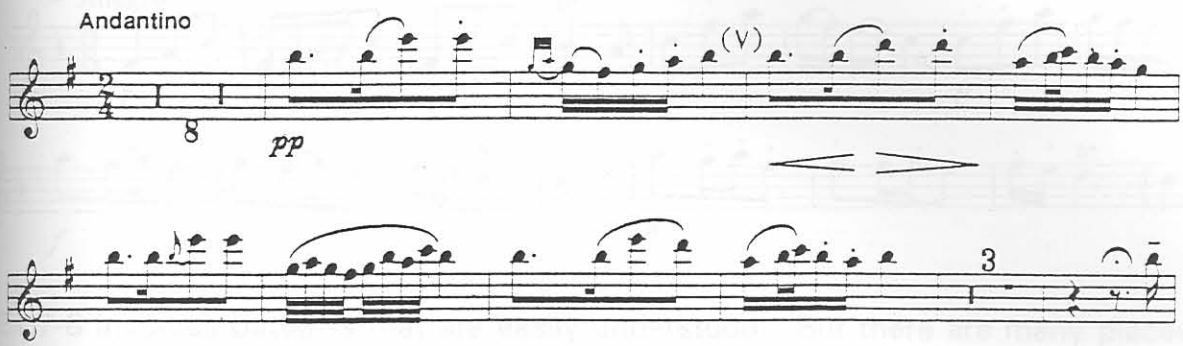
7.2.1 The influence of dynamics

Whereas most dynamic markings (= dynamics) do not have a direct impact on the actual slur patterns of phrases, they obviously do influence the overall structure, meaning and relative importance of a phrase. For instance, a phrase played pianissimo is likely to contain more slurs than a fortissimo one; the slurs will augment the character (probably gentle) of the soft dynamic.
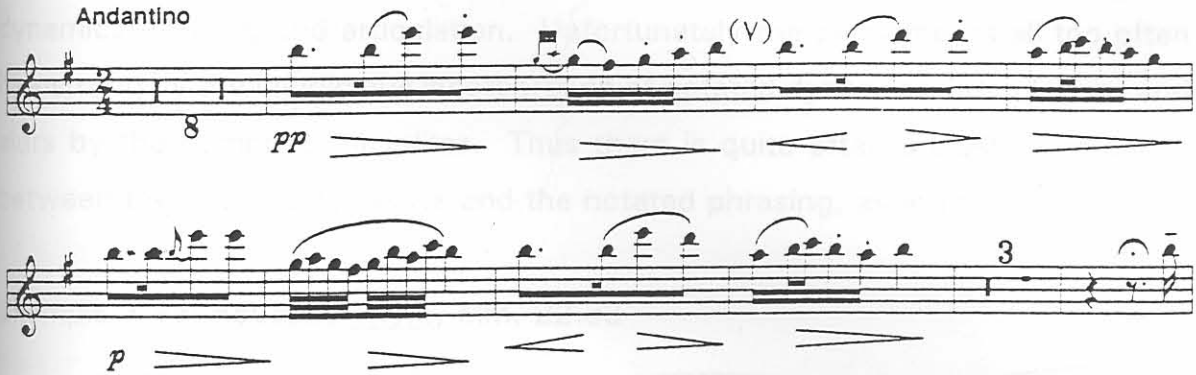
A notated subito forte or a diminuendo will offer vital clues as to the climax point(s) and the dynamic rise and fall of a phrase - especially where these are deliberately displaced by a composer. Floyd (1990:120) offers the following example of Geoffrey Gilbert's teaching a piece through singing its "articulation, line, and phrasing".

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Example 7-7a: Schubert, Introduktion und Variationen über ein Thema Op. 160, Theme



Example 7-7b: Schubert, Introduktion und Variationen über ein Thema Op. 160, Theme (dynamics added)

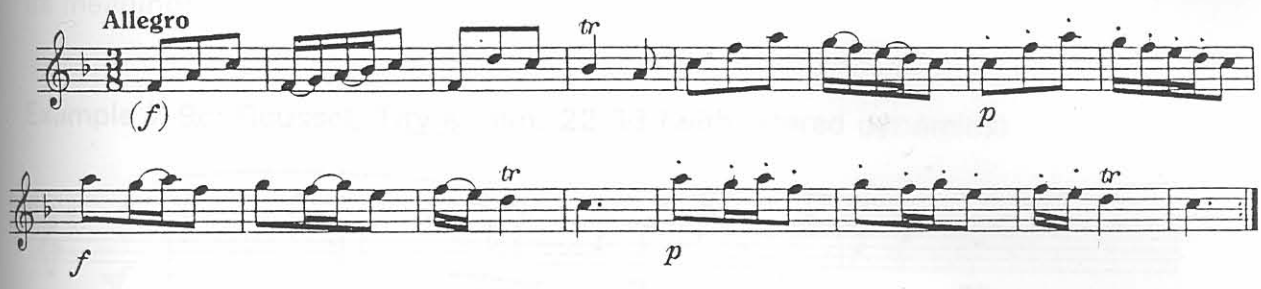


As can be seen in Ex. 7-7b, the actual slurring and articulation remains unchanged; all that has been notationally introduced, through 'naturally' singing the instrumental piece, are a series of undulating dynamics indicating the 'natural' ebb and flow of the phrases. The combination of original slurs and articulations, and Gilbert's suggested dynamics, working in tandem, combine to produce structurally meaningful phrasing. Thus dynamics are directly equated with the phrasing of the piece. Through this approach vital clues as to the (possible) breathing places, the type of articulation and the strength of attack will also be discovered.

Mention must be made of the specialised case of terraced dynamics and echo effects in Baroque music where a simultaneous change of dynamics and phrasing increases the effect. Indeed, as any recorder player will know, a change in articulation is used to imply a change in dynamic too.

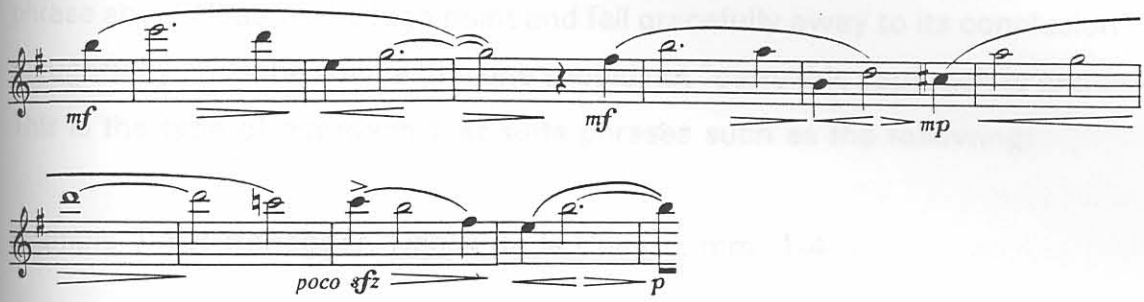
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Example 7-8: R. Valentine, Sonata in F for recorder and b.c., mm. 5-8



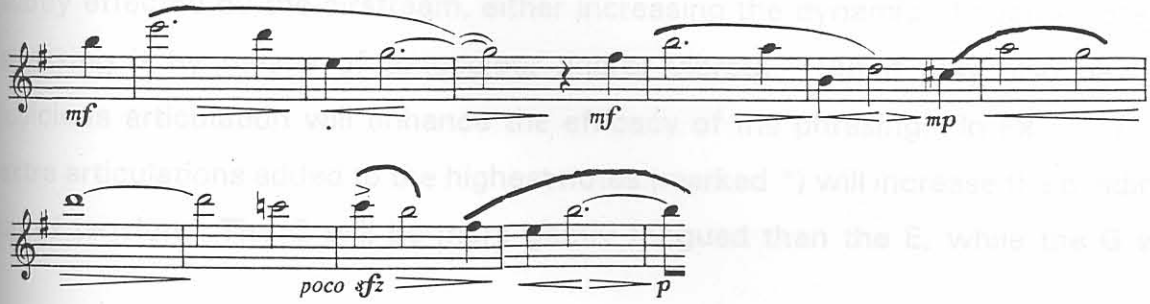
Ex.7-8 involves patterns that are easily understood. But there are many places throughout the literature where ambiguity exists as to the function of certain notes within a phrase; or even as to the function of a phrase in the larger context. Then, patterns need delineating or emphasising by means of a subtle amalgam of dynamics, slurring and articulation. Unfortunately the performer is all too often hamstrung by the injudicious incorporation of notated dynamics, articulations and slurs by the composer or editor. Thus there is quite often a clash of interests between the notated dynamics and the notated phrasing, as in this example:

Example 7-9a: Roussel, Tityre, mm. 22-33



By altering the slur-patterns to work in tandem with the dynamics this phrase is rendered more meaningful:

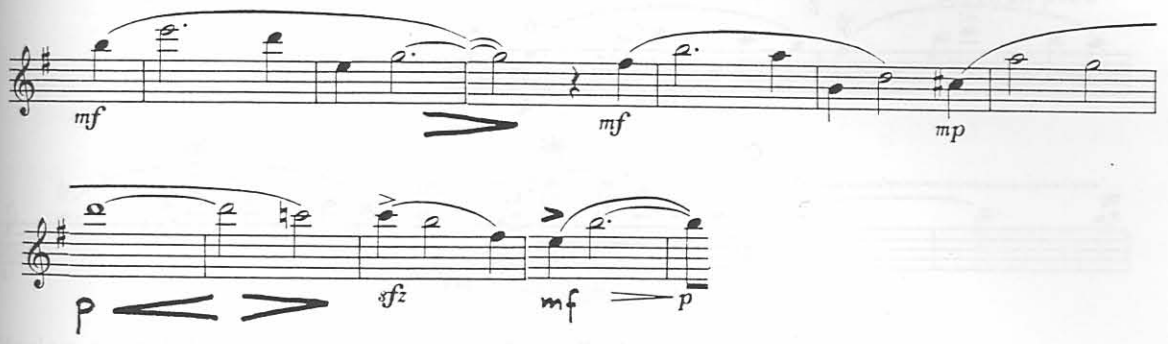
Example 7-9b: Roussel, Tityre, mm. 22-33 (with altered slurs)



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This is equally effected by altering the dynamics, although the phrase subtly alters its meaning:

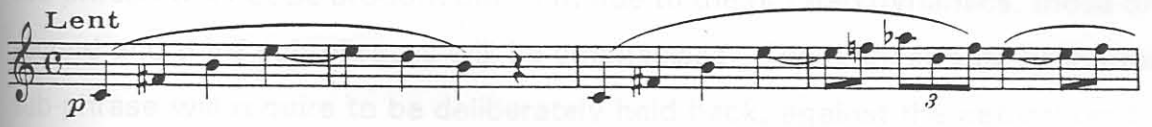
Example 7-9c: Roussel, Tityre, mm. 22-33 (with altered dynamics)



7.2.2 Melodic accents

Marion (in Goll-Wilson 1992b:9) argues that "effective phrasing" needs to be amalgamated with "dynamic variety and articulation". He says that on the simplest, most basic level one must "match the dynamic and pitch levels of the phrase, bringing out the higher tones more loudly than the lower ones [...]. A phrase should lead to the high point and fall gracefully away to its conclusion". He thoughtfully adds the advice that one should not "carry this approach to extremes". This is the type of approach that suits phrases such as the following:

Example 7-10: Honegger, Danse de la Chèvre, mm. 1-4

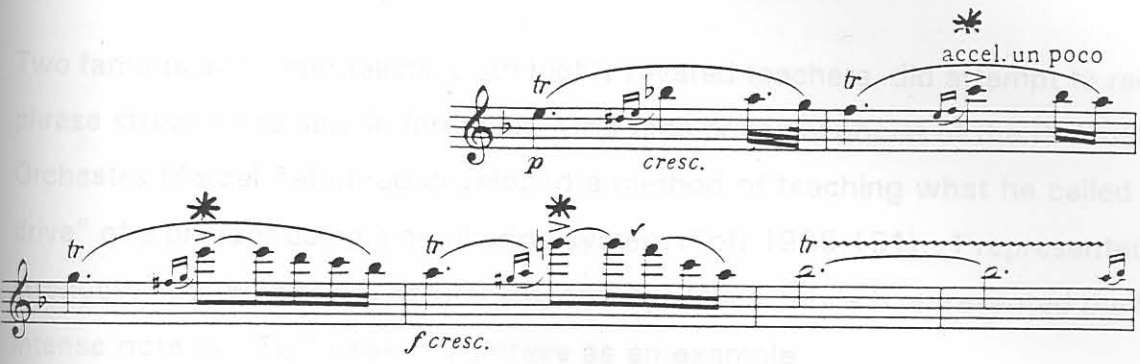


In circumstances where the high note is under a slur this "bringing out" will be subtly effected by the airstream, either increasing the dynamic of such a note or stressing it by means of tonecolour and/or vibrato. But it may also be that judicious articulation will enhance the efficacy of the phrasing. In Ex. 7-11 the extra articulations added to the highest notes (marked *) will increase the building-up of tension. The C will be more gently tongued than the E, while the G will

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receive a strongest attack, as already indicated by the composer:

Example 7-11: Briccialdi, Carnival of Venice Op. 78, mm. 124-129



Marion certainly does not maintain that all phrases are as easily shaped, and would surely agree that the following example offers a rich mixture of dynamics, slurring, articulation and breathing patterns:

Example 7-12: Widor, Suite Op. 34, Final, mm. 87-94



In Ex. 7-12 the initial notes of the first three sub-phrases (each sub-phrase is denoted by a long slur) will be subtly articulated, while the Fb which starts the fourth sub-phrase will be more strongly articulated. The highest note of the first sub-phrase will not be brought out, but, due to the notated dynamics, those of the second and third sub-phrases will be emphasised. The highest note of the fourth sub-phrase will require to be deliberately held back, against the natural tendency of the flute to sound this note more loudly than the surrounding notes.

In an article subtitled *Structural Levels of performance practice in Quantz's Versuch* Hefling (1987:208-11) intricately analyses an Adagio by Quantz. By means of this analysis he deduces that "the dynamics generally favour the so-called 'principal notes' of the original melody". He does not suggest that this analysis accounts for all the more subtle "dynamic inflections". Gratefully he does not fall into the trap

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of many analysts, and over-reduce his findings to simple formulae. As he himself admits, "there is no obvious consistency in the way the dynamics highlight one sort of linear procedure as opposed to another".

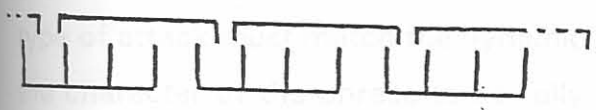
Two famous instrumentalists, both highly revered teachers, did attempt to reduce phrase structure to simple formulae. One-time principal oboist of the Philadelphia Orchestra Marcel Tabuteau developed a method of teaching what he called "the drive" of a phrase, using a numbering system (Toff 1985:151). 1 represented the strongest note(s) in terms of intensity and dynamics, while 5 represented the least intense note(s). Toff uses this phrase as an example:

Example 7-13:



Tabuteau's principal flute colleague William Kincaid adapted this concept into a system of square brackets across beats and bar-lines. This was intended to obscure the bar-lines and portray the forward progression of phrases:

Example 7-14:



While being occasionally useful as teaching tools, the author feels that these approaches are artificial and restricting. Taking Ex. 7-10 into consideration, Kincaid's square bracket system would be inaccurate; while Tabuteau's would result in a plethora of cumbersome numbers.

7.2.3 Rules of interdependence

A few general rules can be laid down that are borne out, in practice, by most of the wind literature. For instance, an accented note will generally sound more accented,

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more effective, if it is also tongued. But there are a multitude of examples of accented notes under a slur - with this being effected by the airstream only, as outlined in Chapter 7.2.2 - leading to a gentler effect. This would suggest that an accent under a slur is meant to be a lesser, or more subtle, accent; this accent being more of the melodic type (probably effected with tonecolour and vibrato) than an actual audibly louder dynamic per se.

But one wonders whether the composer of the following example meant the notated accents to be so subtly graded, with its intricate mixture of tenutos and accents:

Example 7-15: Tomasi, Sonatine for solo flute, I:3-5

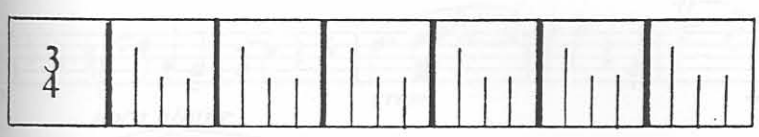


7.2.3.1 Integration

The dynamics, articulation and slur patterns of a phrase influence each other. The type of attack must match the dynamic level(s) of the note or phrase. In order for the character of the phrase to be fully realised, a certain level of consistency is usually required.

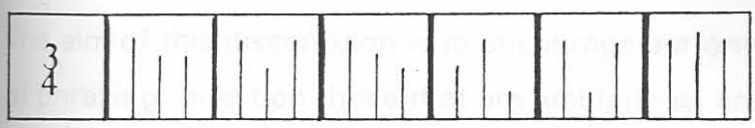
Weisberg (1975:123) provides the following two diagrams to illustrate both the "properly stressed" downbeats (Ex. 7-16a) and a more meaningful interpretation that would correspond to the actual performance of such a phrase (Ex. 7-16b):

Example 7-16a:
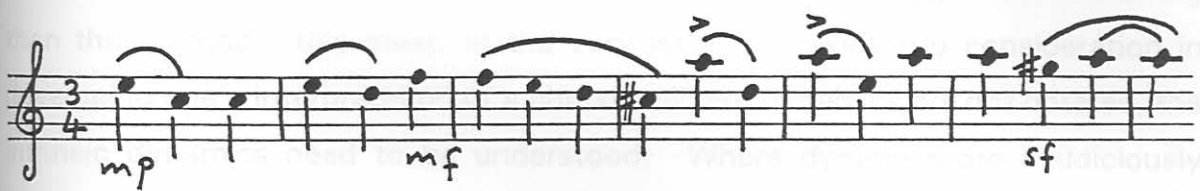


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Example 7-16b:



Ex. 7-16b might infer the following slur and articulation patterns, thus effecting an integration of stresses (dynamics) with slurs and articulations into *phrasing* in its totality:

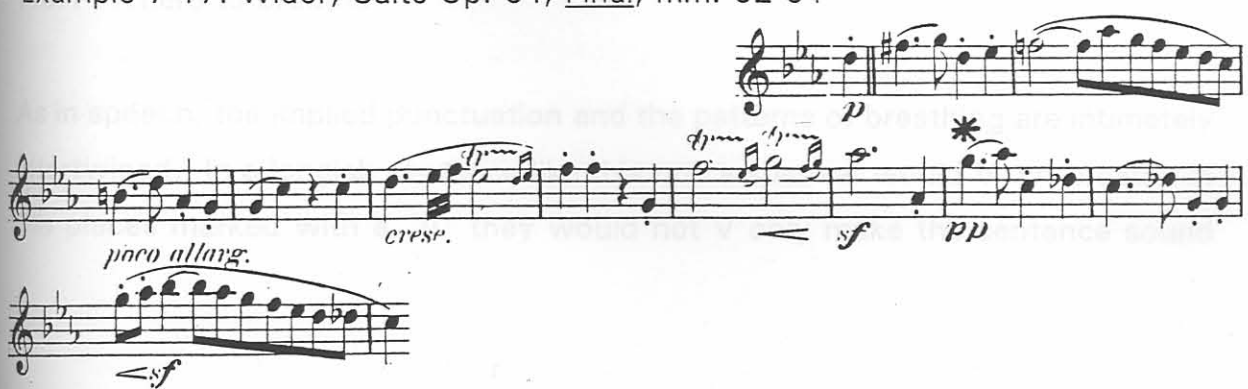
Example 7-16c:



7.2.3.2 Deliberate ambiguity

But there are those occasions where the composer deliberately instills a feeling of ambiguity in order to conjure up some tension/release dilemma. This raises the listener's expectations by creating a delay in offering up the solution to some question posed - or by being too peremptory. This is summed up by Bernstein's evocative phrase: "Violation of Expectation" (1976:105). And in these situations the notated dynamics will probably not exactly correspond with the articulation and slurring patterns. An example of this "violation" would be the following, where after eight bars of building tension and a strong up-beat, a sudden pianissimo is reached (marked *), whereupon a further unexpected surge to the top Bb occurs:

Example 7-17: Widor, Suite Op. 34, Final, mm. 52-64



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7.2.4 Summary: dynamics and slurs

The aim of this dissertation is to encourage performers to investigate all elements of phrasing, question those that are ambiguous, and change the notated slurrings in places where they feel that these slurs do not fit well into the overall picture. And this is intimately bound up with both the notated dynamics and the intrinsic dynamics (which may or may not be notated). The subtlest of balances needs to be attained.

To this end the printed dynamics can sometimes be used to suggest better slurring than that printed - this must, at the very least, be taken into consideration in developing one's interpretation of a phrase. Where dynamics are not notated, the intrinsic dynamics need to be understood. Where dynamics are injudiciously notated, the performer needs to re-investigate the phrase and its place in the overall structure. In all cases the dynamics of a phrase can present clues as to the best patterns of slurs needed for the most meaningful interpretation. Dynamics and slurs usually exist in a symbiotic relationship.

7.3 Breathing

It is a well-known fact that the flute requires more breath, under most circumstances, than any wind instrument besides the tuba. The flutist frequently needs to find a place to breathe, where not only the pianist but also the oboist and often the clarinettist can play completely through that same phrase, forming one continuous arch. Both how and where players breathe have considerable impact on the interpretation of phrases in general, and the slur patterns in particular.

7.3.1 Where to breathe

As in speech, the implied punctuation and the patterns of breathing are intimately intertwined. In a longish sentence like this one a speaker would V not breathe in the places marked with a "V" they would not V only make the sentence sound

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lumpy and V artificial but perhaps also render V up the wrong meaning. Punctuation is used in order to show the orator and reader both where to breathe and also where to pause (even if only for the minutest moment). Correct punctuation enlightens both meaning and clarity. So if the previous sentence were written correctly with both slight pauses in the speech rhythm, and actual breathing places suggested by means of written punctuation, then it would be written as follows: "In a longish sentence like this one, a speaker would (V) not breathe in the places marked with a "V"; they would not (V) only make the sentence sound lumpy and artificial, but, perhaps, also render (V) up the wrong meaning."

In other words, either the sentence itself, by its very construction, or the meaning as understood by the speaker (performer) should present the correct places for slight pauses and breaths. Where these are not immediately evident someone has to notate them. The writer or editor must ensure, through correct punctuation (in this sentence by a comma, a semi-colon, and these brackets), that the meaning is correctly rendered, enabling the speaker to pause and breathe in these notated places; thus ensuring unambiguous communication of the sentence's inherent message.

Besides not yet having mastered a good breathing technique, young performers are often guilty of either injudiciously breathing in the wrong places, or of chopping the phrases up unto separate sub-sections by too many breaths. This necessitates more articulations (probably each with its own accent, due to unformed breathing technique). The slur patterns will probably also be disturbed.

If the music does not naturally, of itself, immediately and unambiguously fall into phrases and sub-phrases, or if the composer or editor has not adequately delineated the phrases clearly, then it is the performer's and/or teacher's job to, in some way, analyse the music until the phrase structure becomes clear - thus enabling the performer to get a clearer picture of the phrase(s), breathe in the most effective places, and slur efficaciously. The unambiguous communication of the music's
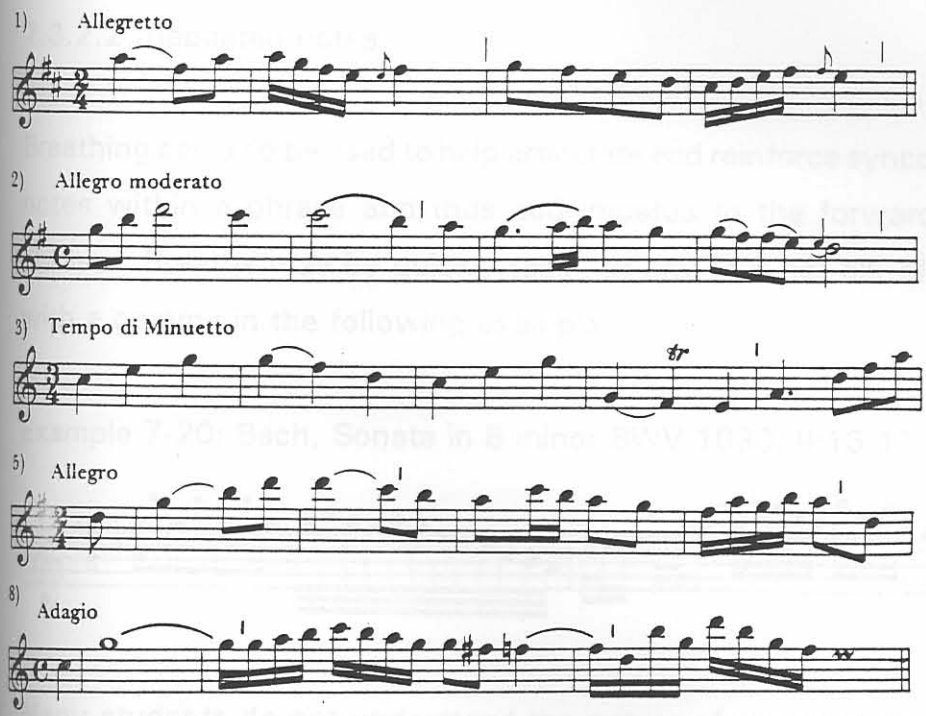
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inherent message depends upon the breathing patterns being woven into the natural framework of each phrase.

An analysis of the phrase structure of the music can be done by playing the passages through repeatedly until the music reveals its secrets; or by singing the music through; or by listening to recordings and concerts; or by visually searching the score for the phrase patterns - taking cognisance of aspects including sequences, imitations and anacruses. In all this the harmonic structure, the overall form, the dynamics and the printed phrasing must be taken into account, wherever applicable.

Tromlitz (1991:277-9) provides the following examples for discovering the subdivisions of phrases, and therefore the possible breathing places (indicated by the strokes):

Example 7-18:



In most cases which require some form of search for the best place to breathe in the course of a phrase, the requirement that the flow of the phrase not be interrupted is of paramount importance.

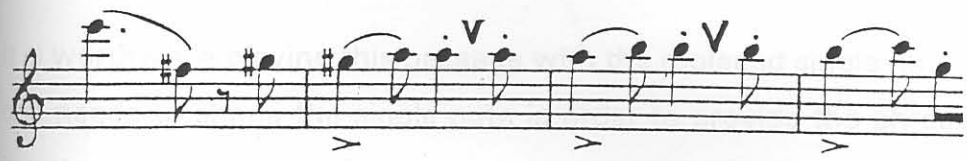
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7.3.2 Special cases

7.3.2.1 Snatched breaths

A passage such as that in Ex. 7-19 invites quick, choppy breaths which are not only entirely appropriate, but actively add to the effect. The many snatched breaths ensure that the attacks will be abrupt and accented, that the energy level of the music will match that of the breathing, and that the phrase's dynamic flow will consequently be actively enhanced:
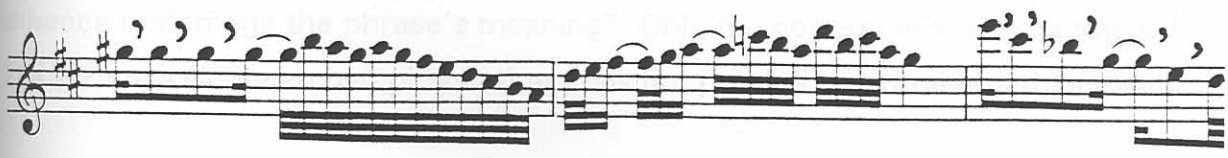
Example 7-19: Saint-Saëns, Tarantelle, Op. 6, mm. 102-105



7.3.2.2 Repeated notes

Breathing can also be used to help articulate and reinforce syncopations or repeated notes within a phrase and thus add impetus to the forward movement of the phrase. Breaths may be quickly taken at any (but not all) of the places marked with a comma in the following example:

Example 7-20: Bach, Sonata in B minor BWV 1030, II:13-15



Many students do not understand the nature of repeated notes within a phrase. One cannot equate them to, say, the second violin part in a Haydn string quartet, where the function of a repeated note passage may be almost totally rhythmic, playing only a supportive role to the main musical elements.

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In Ex. 7-21a the composer could have written a single A and a single E instead of the six A's (m. 2) and two E's (m. 3). But he repeated them in order to give the phrase more momentum, more forward drive. Repeated notes are written for a purpose - merely to articulate them equally does not give them that required momentum and direction.

Example 7-21a: Prokofiev, Sonata Op. 94, I:1-4



It is worthwhile playing this passage with the replaced single note and seeing how one needs to shape the single note in order to provide the phrase with the same impetus. This will provide an answer as to whether one can breathe and, if so, where:

Example 7-21b: Prokofiev, Sonata Op. 94, I:1-4 (repeated notes excised)



Do repeated notes, then, offer the performer a chance to breathe? And will breaths enhance or damage the phrase's meaning? Only the context will tell. Example 7-21a shows a single arched phrase that does not provide a natural breathing place.

7.3.2.3 Melodic matching
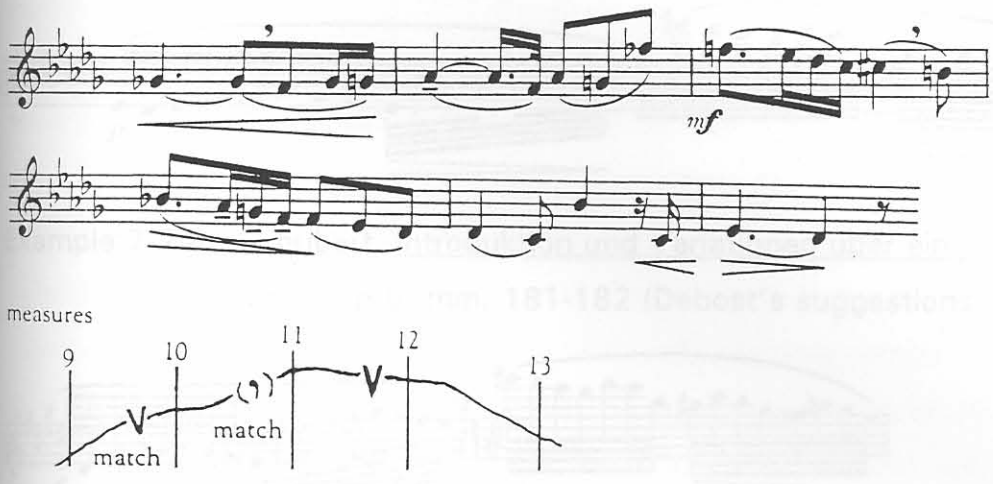
Most melodically-oriented phrases require, to a greater or lesser extent, some more subtle form of breathing approach and technique. As with the bowing patterns of a string player, the audience should not be aware of the performer's breathing -

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except where it may enhance the musical effect. There should, obviously, not be any audible sound of breathing.

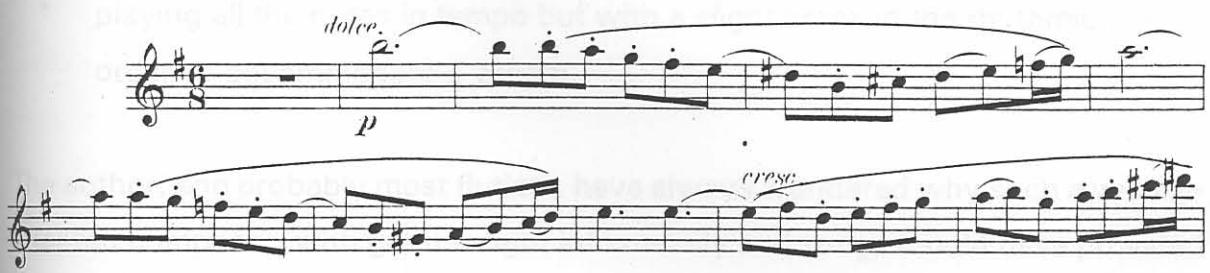
The breathing patterns and the feeling engendered thereby, both within the performer and on the musical product (i.e. the phrases), must match the character of the music. As Michel Debost says (1993:2), "always breathe in the direction of the phrase". He provides, as an example, the opening phrases of Gaubert's *Nocturne* and a diagrammatic representation of the musical contour of the passage:

Example 7-22: Gaubert, Nocturne, mm. 8-13



Debost refers to the necessity of "matching" the tonecolour and the musical drive of the note(s) immediately before and after the breath. This is even more critical in the opening of Fauré's *Fantaisie*, where the music must not be chopped up into three-bar phrases - rather the feel of one long phrase with internal sub-phrases should be cultivated:

Example 7-23: Fauré, Fantaisie, mm. 1-10

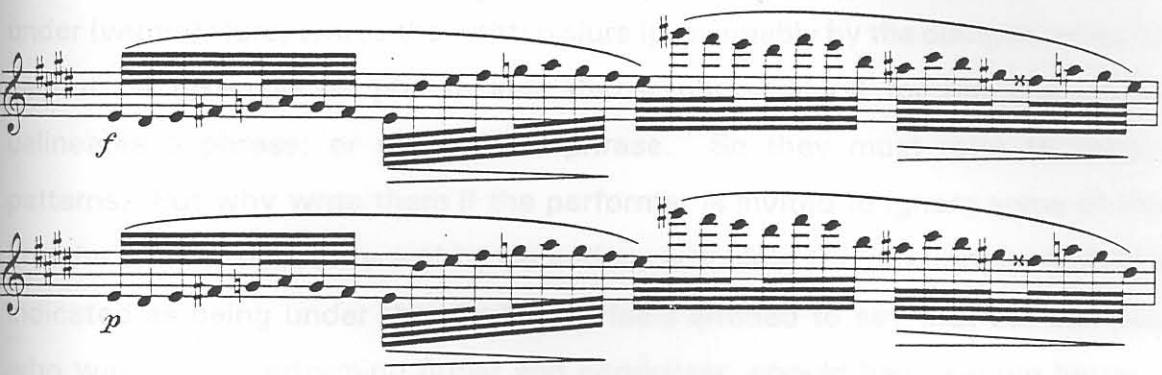


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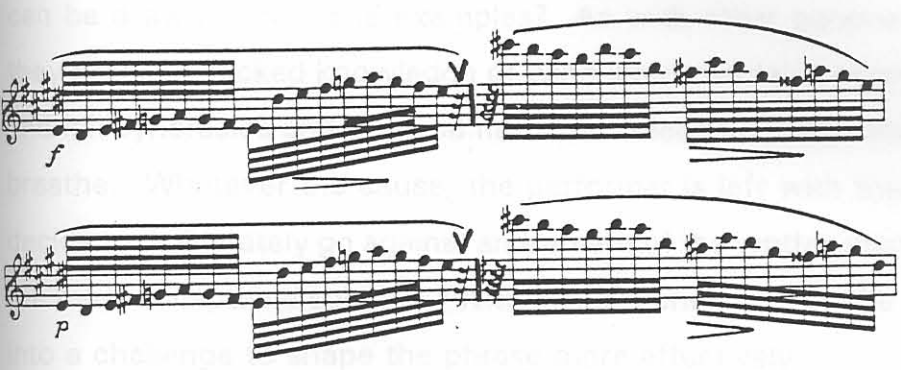
7.3.2.4 Making space for breaths

Debost openly admits (1993:4-5) to 'cheating' in the following passage in order to accommodate some breaths:

Example 7-24a: Schubert, Introduktion und Variationen über ein Thema Op.160, Variation 5, mm. 181-182



Example 7-24b: Schubert, Introduktion und Variationen über ein Thena Op. 160, Variation 5, mm. 181-182 (Debost's suggestions):



Debost's solution to Schubert's breathing problem is an attempt to both play all the written notes and to keep the pulse even - but at the expense of making each individual phrase sound slightly rushed at the end. Other solutions include:

* leaving out a note or two in order to create a breathing place and
* playing all the notes in tempo but with a slight break in the rhythmic flow in order to accommodate a breath.

The author, and probably most flutists, have always wondered why such a vocally-oriented composer, with great insight into melody and song, should have provided

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us with passages that necessarily require us to compromise the written notes or rhythms in some way. (See also Ex. 5-45b for a re-slurring of the same variation.)

7.3.3 Notated anomalies

There are many examples of ambiguities, from composers, editors and players alike, regarding breathing places. Example 7-22 contains breathing indications under (within) slurs, where the written slurs (presumably by the composer Gaubert) cannot be taken to be phrase indications (phrase-slurs) for not one of them delineates a phrase; or even a sub-phrase. So they must refer to tonguing patterns. But why write them if the performer is invited to ignore some of them, breathe and, of necessity and by definition, articulate the next note which is still indicated as being under the slur? One feels entitled to say that the composer, who was also a performing flutist and conductor, should have known better.

Whether the composer, the editor or the publisher is to blame, what conclusions can be drawn from these examples? As with other parameters of wind playing they probably lacked knowledge of wind instruments' characteristics, capabilities and idiosyncrasies and thus did not acknowledge or 'feel' the need for players to breathe. Whatever the cause, the performer is left with the problem and has to decide to deliberately go against an element of the written score in order to achieve the most acceptable solution. With insight, one can turn the necessity to breathe into a challenge to shape the phrase more effectively.

7.3.4 Deciding where to breathe

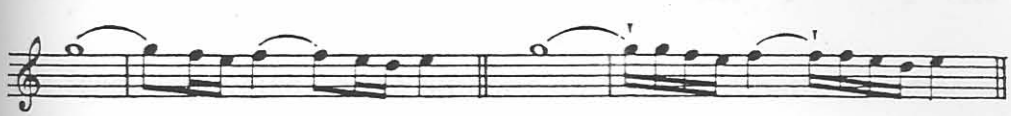
As depicted in Ex. 7-24 the wind performer is often faced with a situation where some 'rule' or other has to be broken in order to accommodate a breath. In all cases the correct solution must always be the most musical one, whatever 'rule' has to be broken.

Quantz (1966:88) makes some intriguing suggestions that highlight how today's

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'rules' (taste?) differ from those of, in this case, the 18th-century. He says that one may add in a note after the breath that follows a long note, as in this example:

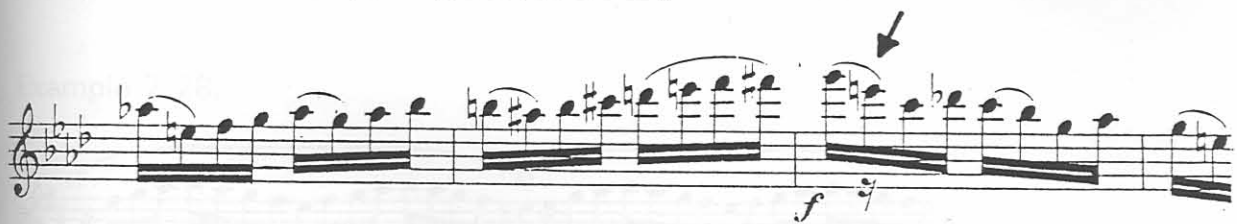
Example 7-25:



Regarding snatching quick breaths between successions of quick notes Quantz (1966:88-9) suggests that one "make the preceding note very short [...] and rush the following two or three notes a little, so that the beat is not retarded and none of the notes are omitted". This amounts to virtually the opposite of Debost's solution to the above Schubert problem, where the rushing of notes occurs *before* the breath (see Chapter 7.3.2.4). In both approaches the idea is to make room for a breath in the course of a phrase without discarding a note or notes and without altering the basic metrical pulse.

If one looks at Gaubert's *Allegro Scherzando* it is obvious that he does not sanction this 'rushing' of notes - and he was very much a performer/composer. On the contrary, he offers the following solution which necessitates the leaving out of a note (the E) in order to, at all costs, keep the even flow of quick notes:

Example 7-26: Gaubert, Allegro Scherzando, mm. 28-31



There are other examples of composers (or editors, with or without the composer's consent) offering suggestions as to how to accommodate breaths in difficult circumstances so as not to interrupt the flow of a phrase. In Ex. 7-27a the (presumed omitted) notes are not even printed:

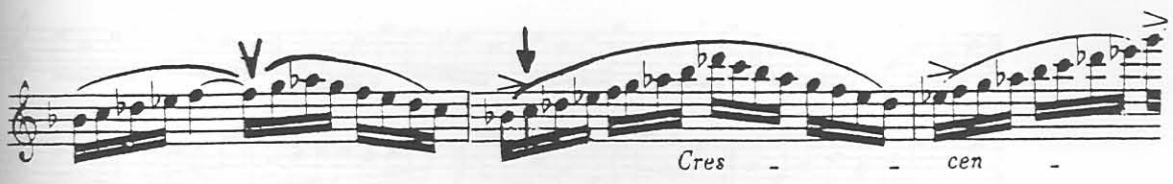
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Example 7-27a: Mouquet, La Flûte de Pan, I:53-55
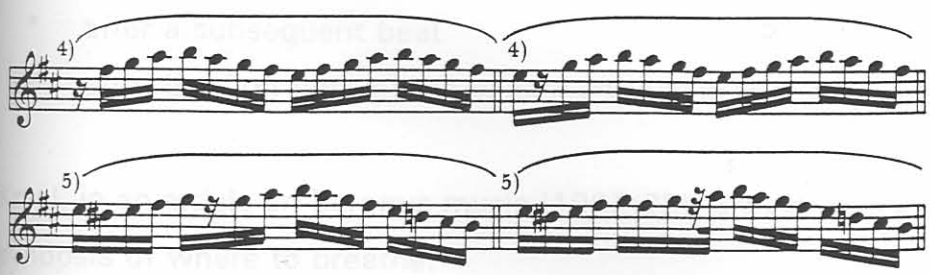


The following would, in the author's opinion, be a better solution as it subdivides the phrase in a more logical place and leaves both the flow of the phrase and the slur patterns more intact:

Example 7-27b: Mouquet, La Flûte de Pan, I:53-55 (altered by author)



Tromlitz (1991:282) fully sanctions the leaving out of notes in passages of running notes where breathing presents problems. The choice, he says, must be made between leaving out the first or last of four equal notes. In choosing, one must both "take council with one's feelings", and analyse which notes belong to the harmony. According to Tromlitz a harmony note may not be left out. He provides the following music example and then leaves out certain notes in order to accommodate the breathing:

Example 7-28:
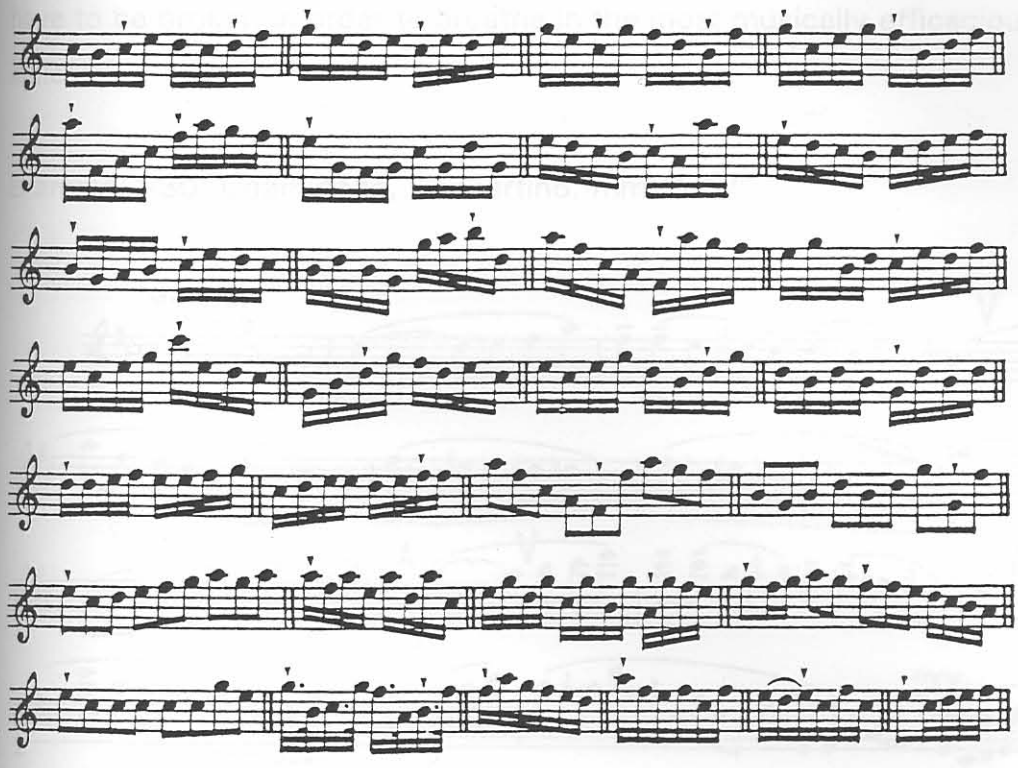


Certainly not all writers (or performers) advocate this approach. Regarding where to snatch quick breaths in running passages Quantz (1966:89) provides the

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following table - the possible breathing places are after any of the notes marked with a stroke above them:

Example 7-29:



He warns that it is "self-evident that you must take breath only when necessity requires, and not whenever notes like these occur". If one peruses the table carefully one sees that, apart from three, all the suggested breaths occur consistently in one of three places:

* immediately after the first beat of the bar
* after a subsequent beat
* after the first note of the widest interval in that sequence of notes.

Krysl, in an article on Baroque music (1992:23), provides an even more complete synopsis of where to breathe:
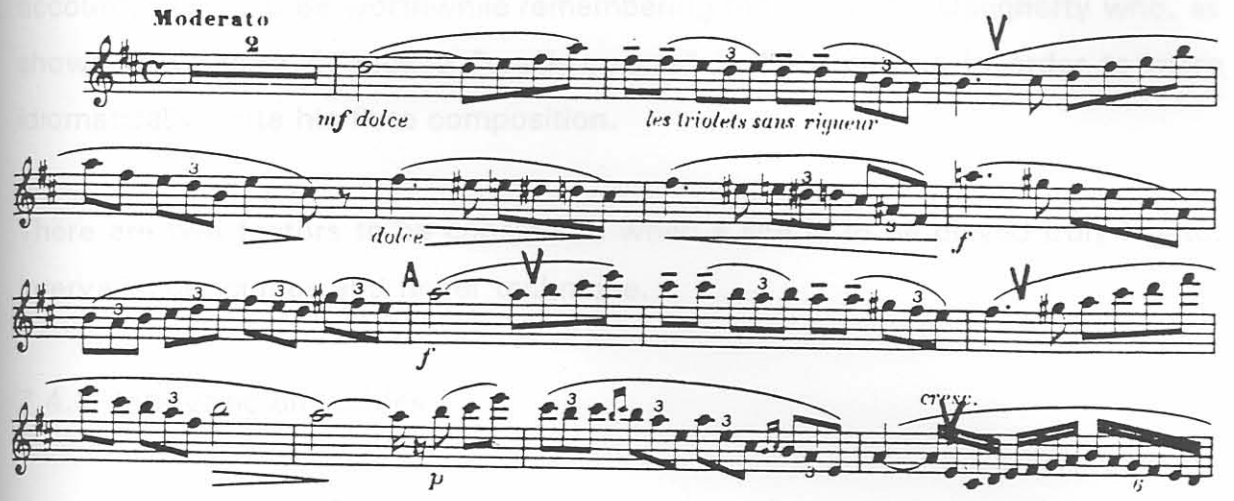
> [...] before wide melodic leaps; after long notes in the context of shorter note values; after the first note of a measure in quick passagework; before rhythmic patterns change; before notes that

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function as an anacrusis; at most notated rests; after harmonic cadences; after certain ornaments; and before a sudden change in dynamics.

The oft-played Concertino by Chaminade provides many examples of slurs that have to be broken in order to breathe in the most musically efficacious places, as indicated:

Example 7-30: Chaminade, Concertino, mm. 1-17



Both how the performer breathes and where he breathes has an influence on the interpretation of music (see Hinch 1991:83-87). A full integration of breathing into the flow of phrases often requires a considered approach. In all cases the music itself should dictate the breathing places; and these need not necessarily agree with any printed breathing suggestions, and may often necessitate the breaking of printed slurs.

7.4 Technique

With regard to the technical possibilities and deficiencies of the various musical instruments one may perhaps adapt George Orwell's oft plagiarized aphorism and state that 'No instruments are equal, but some are more unequal than others'. A

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composer, when writing for a specific instrument, should possess certain information regarding that instrument. He should, for instance, know that one cannot expect a smooth trombone glissando over a range more than three whole-tones - and even then the possible range is dependent upon the starting note.

A composer, when writing for a wind instrument, must take into consideration factors such as: the highest and lowest possible notes; the tone-colours of the various registers; the dynamic possibilities and limitations. Subtler technical factors that influence articulation and the interpretation of phrases are often not taken into account. It would be worthwhile remembering the composer Daugherty who, as shown in Chapter 4, took a "crash course" in flute playing in order to more idiomatically write his flute composition.

There are two factors to be considered when a slur is to be played truly legato: intervallic difficulties and finger technique.

7.4.1 Intervallic difficulties

Only an intimate knowledge of an instrument will reveal all the subtle intrinsic problems related to smoothly and easily slurring intervals.

On any wind instrument there are certain notes which are more responsive, more resonant, more flexible than the norm; and others which are less responsive, duller and more stubborn. One learns these anomalies as one progresses and (in most cases) learns to accept them and adapt to them. Playing techniques are developed which compensate for the unhomogeneousness of the sound quality throughout the range of the instrument and the unevenness of response of different notes to various attacks. Quite simply, certain intervals are more difficult to play slurred, and others more difficult to sharply detach.

Many students struggle with the slurred motives in the following phrase because, although the fingers may cope well enough with the patterns, the instrument does

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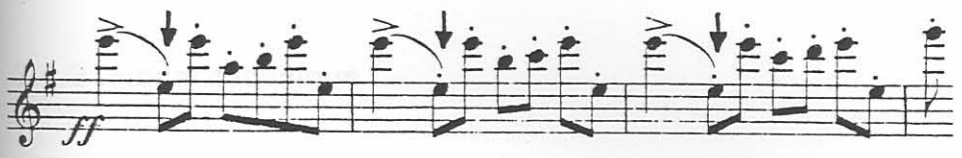
not speak the intervals clearly without perfect embouchure control:

Example 7-31: Poulenc, Sonata for flute and piano, I:30-31



Similarly with the following phrase, where the descending slurred octave E's do not speak easily:

Example 7-32: Roussel, Tityre, mm. 49-51



One might be able to simply list and grade, for every instrument, the most easily produced to most difficult slurred intervals - but imagine the cramping effect this would have on a composer's creative processes if he had to continually refer to some handbook of instrumental possibilities and impossibilities.

Within reason, it becomes the performer's task to overcome the deficiencies of his instrument in order to accommodate the creativity of the composer. For example there is a technical 'trick' (which involves lifting the right-hand little finger on the E) which facilitates the production of this smooth slurred interval:



Some performers even leave out the lower E (on the second beat) in Ex. 7-32 in order not to compromise the excited character of the passage. (This lower E is, in this particular case, doubled by the piano.)

On the other hand the slurred intervals in Ex. 7-31 remain uncomfortable (nothing could possibly be left out). No-one, it seems, considers changing the slurring.

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Would not, in any case, the following phrasing make the motive not only technically easier but also more musically effective?

Example 7-33: Ex. 7-31 re-slurred by the author



This re-phrasing makes the character of the motive (and hence the whole passage) more in keeping with the pert, bubbly, Neo-Classical character. This type of approach can often, if judiciously applied, improve the character and general interpretation of over-slurred music.

7.4.2 Finger technique
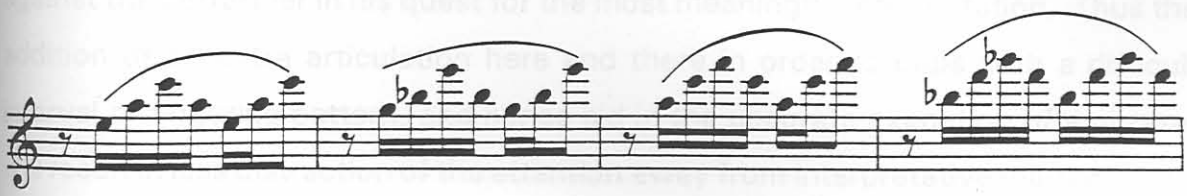
The technical aspect of the performer's control over his finger movements in effecting the succession of notes - what is usually succinctly referred to as 'technique' - can also influence the performance of slurs.

Players often make unnecessarily large finger movements when playing tricky passages. This has many drawbacks; including causing the instrument to move on (or in) the lips, and making passages rhythmically uneven. Galway (1982:122) mentions a subtler aspect by contrasting the technique of playing Indian bamboo flutes with that of the Boehm flute. The main difference being that the Boehm flute has a complex of keywork and levers to cope with. He concludes that in order to play legato the player must make "as little motion as possible with the fingers, and coax the music out of the flute" in order to obviate the sound and effect of a "rackety typewriter". The finger action should be that of caressing the keys. He makes the valid point that legato implies a "feeling of smoothness, of tenderness, of serenity" that should not only be evident in the finger actions, but "should be inside you, transmitting the caress through the fingers to the keys".

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The situation regarding the playing of, and phrasing on, the recorder, with its complexity of contrary finger movements, is certainly not an exact equivalent of that on other wind instruments, but Rowland-Jones (1992:85) makes the point that "a touch of tonguing [...] helps to achieve a smooth slur whenever a complex finger movement is involved". He speaks of "the impulse of a tiny tongue-movement". This is a technique often used by performers to overcome difficult intervals, especially complex large intervals in the high register. The following type of passage is often articulated in some way in order to make it sound more even and rhythmical:

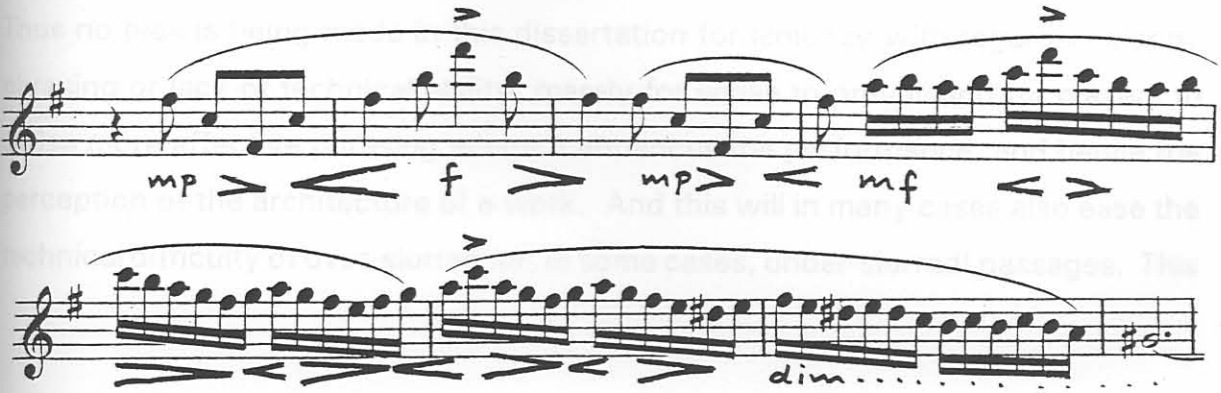
Example 7-34: Rutter, Suite Antique, Rondeau, mm. 83-87



7.5 Overcoming deficiencies

Students usually, to a greater or lesser extent, instinctively learn that difficult slurred sections of a motive or phrase can be more 'safely' negotiated (i.e. without notes cracking or not sounding) by means of simply alternately blowing softer and louder. These difficulties may be engendered by either intervallic or technical problems. Thus passages such as the following will be 'safer' with dynamics controlled and contoured more or less as indicated:

Example 7-35: Reinecke, Sonata Undine, I:86-93



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This does not actually result in a phrase that is non-legato, but the resulting dynamic undulations retard the feeling of smoothness, tenderness and serenity (Galway 1982:122). The resulting phrase may even be played so choppily as to sound tongued.

As part of the process and discipline of mastering their instrument students practise in order to overcome the inherent deficiencies and idiosyncrasies thereof. If these are not mastered to the extent that they become integrated into the playing technique (thus requiring no conscious directing) part of the attention must be withdrawn from interpretative matters in order to cope with these technical problems. Anything that distracts the attention while performing can only work against the performer in his quest for the most meaningful interpretation. Thus the addition of an extra articulation here and there in order to cope with a difficult interval or fingering pattern, and hence aid in the accurate execution of a phrase, will result in less distraction of the attention away from interpretative matters. This is especially true where a composer or editor has over-slurred a phrase.

Auer (1980:72) wrote that "[a]ll really beautiful phrasing depends, of course, in the last analysis, on technical perfection". If the techniques of articulation are defective the character and the nuances of the music will not be perceived by the listener; this will often be referred to as 'poor phrasing'. This is equally true if the finger technique is defective. With legato, a defective technique will lead to a discontinuity in the flow of the notes; the phrase will sound unrhythmical. As Pleeth states (1982:72): "It is first and foremost the architecture of a work [...] which imposes upon the player the technical command needed to achieve its fulfilment."

Thus no plea is being made in this dissertation for leniency with regard to sloppy phrasing or lack of technical ability; merely for sense to prevail and for players to utilise more effective phrasing where it enhances the performance, and hence the perception of the architecture of a work. And this will in many cases also ease the technical difficulty of over-slurred (or, in some cases, under-slurred) passages. This

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in turn allows the performer to most fully concentrate his attention on interpretative matters.

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CHAPTER 8

LANGUAGE AND MUSIC - ANALOGIES AND COMPARISONS

8.1 Introduction

Can music in any way be called a language? Are they in any way analogous? With regard to the musical phrase and the phrasing thereof what, if anything, can one learn from any form of comparison?

Attempts to describe music in terms of language are essentially artificial - although in wide general terms there are obvious points of contact, both being involved with notation, sound and communication.

8.2 Are comparisons valid?

Many people are prone to describe music in terms which equate it, on some level or other, with language - either the written or the spoken word. Some writers will make quite unequivocal statements, such as: "A phrase or musical idea is like a sentence." (McCaskill & Gilliam 1983:64); or "Each phrase is a musical thought, much as a sentence in spoken or written language" (Marion in Goll-Wilson 1992b:9); or "Notes are used in music as words are used in speech; they serve to construct a sentence or form an idea" (Baillot 1991:289). (It is at this point that a case is often made out for music being a Universal 'language', for it needs no prior setting up of, and learning of, patterns of meaning.)

But how accurate are these analogies? and how far should they be taken? For instance, in what possible way can it help the performer should he decide that it is true that a note = a word, a phrase = a sentence, a section = a paragraph, a movement = a chapter, etc?

There is, perhaps, some merit in the concept that the phrase is analogous to the

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sentence, for it does give the impression, correctly, that in some aspects it can stand on its own. It also gives the impression of forward movement, in as much as one cannot successfully stop the argument in the middle of a sentence. But an equal case might be laid out for comparing the phrase to a paragraph, as opposed to a sentence.

Baillot has suggested that a note is equated to a word. But a single word has, by definition, a meaning (although there may be more than one), whereas the individual note has not and needs a context (vertical and/or horizontal) in order to define a contextual meaning. So if a note has no individual meaning then perhaps the note should be equated to the single sound. Certainly most individual sounds will also have no communicatory value. Both a note and an individual spoken sound need to be placed in some logical context. Thus the note would be equated to the sound; the phrase to the word; the section to the sentence; the movement to the paragraph, etc. Altogether a fruitless exercise.

Perhaps Weston (1976:89) goes just far enough in suggesting that both musical and grammatical sentences must be "expressively narrated" (i.e. performed) in order to be "intelligible". (This performance/narration can be silent, in the mind.) "To carry interpretation to its fullest meaning each sentence must be considered as a shape complete in itself yet forming part of the total conception." This, at least, can be said of both music and language.

8.3 Grammar/Syntax

If attempts to equate the building blocks of music to those of language prove relatively fruitless, then perhaps a study of the building process will reveal meaningful analogies.

Koch, writing in the late 18th-century, sets out the clearest and most convincing arguments with regard to equating the grammar of language to the construction of music. After admitting that it is not really possible to do this, he makes the

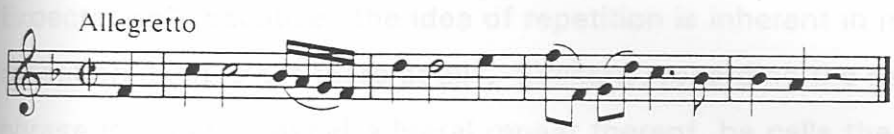
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following proposal (1983:4):

> If one could distinguish subject and predicate in melody as definitely as in speech [...] [t]hen an incomplete phrase [...] would be a melodic segment which lacked either a subject or a predicate. The completeness of a basic phrase would be shown through the joining of a predicate with a subject. An extended phrase would be either one in which more than one predicate had been joined with a subject, or one in which the subject, the predicate, or both had been defined more exactly through subordinate ideas.
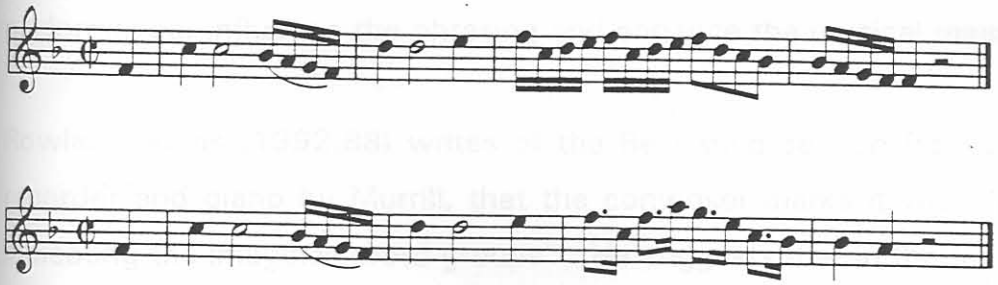
Koch continues by pursuing the argument through musical examples. The first example states a "complete basic phrase"; complete because it consists of two bars of subject (or main idea), followed by a two bar predicate. The predicate gives the subject "a certain direction, a certain definition":

Example 8-1a:



By substituting the second two bars (i.e. the predicate) with another two bars "the subject acquires another meaning, another turn" (Koch, 1983:5):

Example 8-1b:



After a series of examples in which he juggles and redefines the subject and the predicate Koch (1983:4) lays to rest his attempts to synthesise and define musical phrases by linguistic means and admits that, after all is said and done, one must "let feeling determine the completeness or incompleteness of phrases".

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Nevertheless, in a footnote (1983:6) he states that his reason for not pursuing the analogy further is that his treatise is aimed at "beginning musicians who wish to learn composition". He laments that further investigation of the matter will not be useful to these students as they "seldom have either grammatical knowledge of speech, or familiarity with that of logic which explains the different types of phrases and their closures". This suggests that there is in reality much more to be explored and learned about analogies with language, given a higher, more educated audience. Certain authors have explored this and other avenues in much detail.

Bernstein throughout his series of lectures *The Unanswered Question* (1976) also probes with great insight, but from a different viewpoint, the origins of music and language and offers several analogies - but they are more on the level of figures of speech than on the construction of language. For example he (1976:162) equates the concept of variation, in both music and literature, as being the "Violation of Expectation", because "the idea of repetition is inherent in music even when the repetition itself is not there at all". Similarly, regarding the gentle elaboration of a phrase in order to avoid a literal repeat thereof, he calls the transformation thus achieved "auxesis" (1976:167), which is generally applied to figures of speech and means "an increase in intensity". On this level the comparisons may offer some insight into both compositional techniques and the musical meaning. To the performer a concept such as "an increase in intensity" can be readily translated into musical terms and techniques; this, in turn, can lead to a more subtle or dynamic performance, influence the phrasing and enhance the musical meaning.

Rowland-Jones (1992:88) writes of the Recitativo section from the Sonata for recorder and piano by Murrill, that the composer marks it with "phrasing slurs indicating the imagined word-groups". He suggests that in the first two bars, "if each of the two opening groups of four quavers [...] were actually slurred, [the two groups] would be separated from each other too much. They each need to cohere only as much as would the syllables of two four-syllable words within a sentence." The suggestion, within the context of an instrumental recitative, that words be either imagined or the passage phrased as one would a vocal line, is obviously a

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valid one. Teachers often urge students to "sing the phrase more!".

Bernstein (1979:97), while probing the concepts of linguist and philosopher Noam Chomsky, uses a Mozart extract to demonstrate the use of "deletion" in music, whereby boring, exact symmetry is avoided, and a better overall balance is thus achieved. He makes the wonderful statement that Mozart, by means of its use, "makes the leap from prosy symmetry into poetic balance, that is, into art [...]. Mozart achieves thereby not the mere grammar of a sentence, but the *super*-grammar of an aesthetic surface".

That refined "aesthetic surface" must consequently demand of the interpreter a refinement of his interpretative skills (perhaps we could coin the term 'super-phrasing'). This is another way of describing the whole concept behind this dissertation.
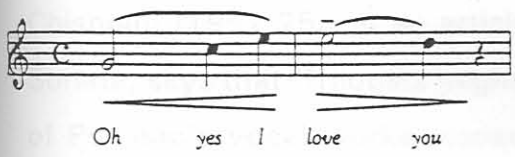
8.4 Speech and musical performance

Can a musical performance be equated to a recitation of poetry or prose?

8.4.1 Inflection

Bogorad (1991:12) says of the teaching of Marcel Moyse that for him music "had much in common with the inflections of speech. For example, the weak ending occurs in music as it does in every language". She provides the following example:

Example 8-2:



Using a phrase from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Bogorad (1991:14) provides this example of bad inflection: "*To* be or not *to* be, that is the question". Thus, in the

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area of inflection, we can equate the undulations, accentuations, and dynamic and timbral modulations of speech with those of music. Rowland-Jones (1992:160) states the situation thus:

> In the same way as an orator does not emphasize every word or even every point, or as a writer deliberately uses insignificant turns of phrase in a sentence in order to draw attention to those words that matter most, a good musician does not lovingly model every phrase in his music. Too much attention to detail may cause the player and the audience to lose sight of the structure and significance of the sonata as a whole.

Different languages, and the different dialects thereof, have different inflections - according to tradition and custom. These, in turn, are brought about and conditioned by the character of the local people. It is for this reason that the delicate nuances and inflections of, say, a French mélodie, while flowing naturally for a French soprano, will usually require careful study and intense preparation by one from, say, Japan or American. To overcome this the singer will assiduously study pronunciation and inflection with some linguistic expert. Nevertheless, few singers who specialise in, say, Italian opera will be expected to 'expertly' sing a Schubert lied or a Britten song.

With instrumentalists the picture is very different, and any flutist of any nationality will be expected to play Poulenc, Hindemith and Prokofiev with equal insight. The different inflections inherent in the various national characters of the composers, and suggested in the (imprecise) notation and harmonic structures, will have been learned by the instrumentalist by some musical osmosis during lessons, lectures, concerts and through listening to the media.

Chisholm (1992:25), in an article on the Cantilena movement from the Poulenc Sonata, says that "[f]lutists might benefit from listening to performances in French of Poulenc's vocal works, especially as interpreted by Pierre Bernac or Gérard Souzay. The French language itself has certain characteristics which contribute to dynamics and phrasing." She then specifies that "French syllables are extremely equal in stress, unlike English. The vowel is all-important: singers are advised not

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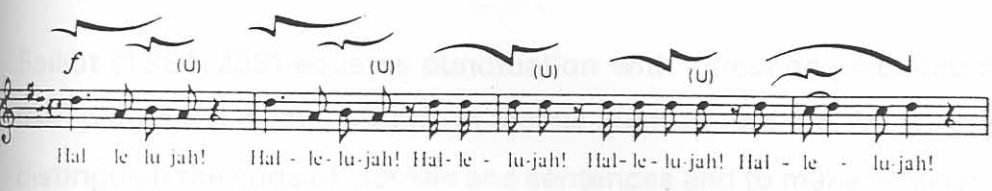
to stress the consonant to the degree they would in English or German." The flutist with this in mind will interpret this Cantilena with smooth flowing phrasing, and not indulge in the more turbulent stressed type of inflections, which would be more applicable to music based on the Germanic character and inflections of Hindemith, or the Russian of Prokofiev. This listening to idiomatic interpretations of French vocal works, as suggested by Chisholm (1992:25), should "promote a better understanding of some of Poulenc's markings". The same advice applies across the musical spectrum.

Boehm, a hundred years earlier in 1871 (1964:147), understood the connection between wind playing and singing:

> [The flutist] will learn by the study of good song music when and why a note should be played staccato, or be slurred with the next following; and when an accent or a crescendo or diminuendo in the tone strength, is necessary to bestow upon the music an expression corresponding to the words; and when a breath can be taken without breaking the correct declamation.

That the wind player can learn a good deal from vocal music and vocalists is not in question, but Barra (1983:35) takes pains to point out that "[p]hrasing is particularly problematic in vocal music". Here he is referring to areas where the "natural accents of the text" do not coincide with the metrical accents of the music. He provides the following example from the "Hallelujah Chorus" from *Messiah* by Handel where the musical emphasis falls on the closed vowel sound "lu", whereas the more ejaculatory open sound "jah" needs less emphasis:

Example 8-3: Handel, Messiah, "Hallelujah Chorus"



When this conflict arises he suggests the following (1983:35):

> The solution then depends upon the context. Usually the phrasing of

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> the music is the most flexible element. In these cases the natural emphasis of the text should predominate. At other times the accent patterns of the text and the music are simply irreconcilable. The choice in such cases must always be with the music.

The wind player does not have this particular problem. Nevertheless, much can be learned about a piece by considering where the regular metrical emphases do not coincide with those (textural emphases) defined by the phrases themselves.

8.4.2 Punctuation

Punctuation, in both music and language, is both breath-related and meaning-related. Wye (1985:9) states that commas and semi-colons influence a sentence in three ways:

1. They contribute to the *sense* of the sentence.
2. They assist in the *forward flow* of the meaning.
3. Your breathing can be part of the way you express the meaning of the writer.

It is, he avers, equally so in music.

Toff (1985:150) delineates two schools of thought regarding phrasing, "one more intuitive, the other more analytical". She states that the intuitive school "uses a verbal model, equating the function of phrasing with that of punctuation in language". She later refers the reader to Boehm's transcription for flute of a Mozart aria in which Boehm marks "articulation to match the verbal declamation" (see Ex. 8-5). Thus this so-called "intuitive school" apparently covers both the punctuation and inflection aspects of language and phrasing.
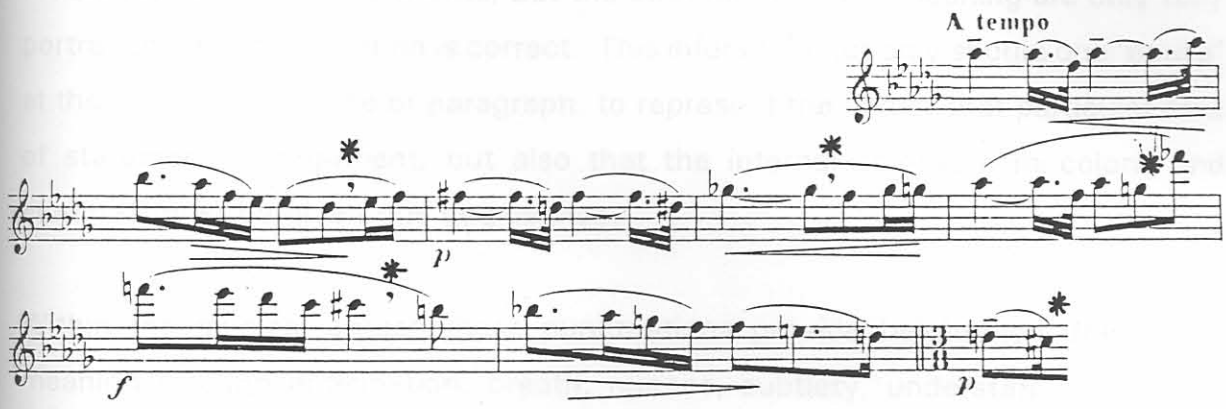
Baillot (1991:289) equates punctuation with inflection. He states that "we must use periods [i.e. full-stops] in music just as we do in written language, to distinguish the ends of clauses and sentences and to make it easier to understand". Weston (1976:89), being a practising clarinettist, provides a more practical viewpoint in suggesting that punctuation "produces a 'fall of voice' to a greater or

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lesser degree and its equivalent in music is the cadence".

Rosand (in Goll-Wilson 1990:9) refers to both punctuation and breathing, and says that the performer "should not be afraid to make a period, to let the music settle; too often we are in a hurry to play the next note". The following provides a good example of a section that can either be played metronomically (excellent practice, but not musically meaningful), or with due regard to the inherent punctuation and requiring commas at the places marked *:

Example 8-4: Gaubert, Nocturne, mm. 18-25



It is not only the placing of accents in "To be or not to be, that is the question" that render a delivery either meaningful or meaningless, but also the punctuation. "To be or not? To be that is! The question..." would totally pervert Shakespeare's intended meaning. For a musical phrase to be equally misrepresented one would need some gross inaccuracy; e.g. playing in the wrong key. But inappropriate phrasing would also go a long way towards rendering the phrase less meaningful.

The above perversion of Shakespeare's text underlines the fact that neither punctuation nor inflection can ever be separated from one another. The inflections of speech are analogous to musical attacks, articulations, accents and dynamics; whereas the punctuations have basically to do with the syntactic compartmentalisations of the written text into meaningful slurred groups, phrases, sections and wholes. But punctuation also has an effect on voice modulation, and

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hence on inflection. For instance, punctuations like !, ? and ... will influence the accentuation and dynamics (voice modulation) of certain words or word-groups, as in the above Shakespearean misrepresentation.

8.4.3 Summary: Punctuation and Inflection

If one can ever equate wind instrument playing with a vocal model, then it must surely be in the area of musical punctuation that success is assured. A phrase cannot be said to have 'meaning' as can a sentence constructed of specific-meaning words. It may, though, approximate the inflections, undulations and modulations of speech patterns; but the structure and the meaning are only fully portrayed if the punctuation is correct. This infers that not only should one 'pause' at the end of a sentence or paragraph, to represent the end of that particular area of statement or argument, but also that the internal colons, semi-colons and commas must be given due cognisance.

Within the musical phrase these punctuations provide heightened drama and meaning through anticipation, breath, nuance, subtlety, understatement, slight exaggeration, retardation, hesitancy and many other elements that the composer can only hint at - as can the author of the written word. Thus it becomes the performer's duty to punctuate and otherwise inflect the phrase - even if it requires the musical equivalent of adding to or subtracting from the written text a comma or colon; i.e. an articulation or a slur.

8.5 Vowels and consonants

To what extent need an instrumental performer take cognisance of the words when interpreting what was originally a vocal piece?

As far as meaning goes, it will certainly help to know whether the original words were "I dance gay and bright" or "I feel sad and blue". Besides guiding the emotional content, this knowledge could well influence the articulation and slurring

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chosen to best portray this emotion. The second is more likely than the first to be slurred; adding to the sadder and smoother feel. It will also tend towards a softer, slower and less articulated interpretation, with a gentler tone quality and a slower, less intense vibrato.

As for the actual sounds of the words, they could well influence the tone quality employed - a type of onomatopoeia. They could equally well influence the other elements of phrasing. A two-note group whose words employed open sounds such as "You are..." is more likely to be translated into a slurred group than would the more closed sounds of "This night...".

In order to illustrate and equate "the function of phrasing with that of punctuation in language" flutist and pedagogue Nancy Toff (1985:150) uses a transcription for flute by Boehm of an aria by Mozart (Ex. 8-5). In Boehm's transcription he provides, she claims, articulation "to match the verbal declamation". But one has to ask why it is that Boehm slurred the words "Bildniss" and "Regung"; and why the word "mit" (mm. 8 and 11) was not articulated. Presumably the former two words were slurred to maintain the unity of each individual word. The word "mit" was not articulated, in order to unify the groups of notes. Also, the semiquaver "diess" (m. 6) is left out in order to maintain the quaver up-beat pattern. These last two changes would appear to have been made for purely musical (abstract) reasons; these seemingly prevailing over the "verbal declamation".

It can be added that in the instrumental version no attempt was made by Boehm to differentiate between the various strengths of the different consonants. For example "kein" (m. 3) and the "-ter" in "Götter" (m. 9) receive the same treatment. To a wind instrumentalist a "k" articulation is vastly different to a "t" articulation. The same applies to vowel sounds, where, for instance a relatively weak vowel sound like "ü" is found on four strong beats (mm. 5,6,10 and 13). Conversely, strong vowel sounds as in "mein" and "kein" occur on weak beats.

In actual fact the instrumental version aims to produce a more homogenous whole

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in terms of sound, slurring and articulation than the vocal original. Neither the 'meaning' of the text, nor the varied sound pallette of the sung syllables are "matched", as Toff claims. Indeed, Harnoncourt (1982:44), in the course of discussing how Bach's vocal parts and instrumental parts often contain different articulations, states categorically that:

> The orchestra articulates in a different way than does the chorus. Even most 'Baroque Specialists' [...] want to even things out, to have everything as much alike as possible and to hear beautiful straight columns of sound, but not diversity.

In other words, vocal precepts do not in essence run parallel to instrumental precepts.

Example 8-5: Mozart, "Dies Bildnis ist bezaubernd schön" from Die Zauberflöte



8.6 Notation
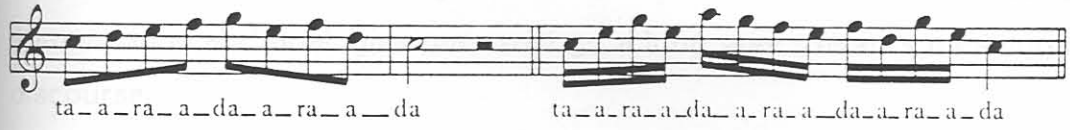
Tromlitz (1991:158), in discussing the performance of groups of notes, says that they should be approached in the manner of speech. Unlike the printed word where a space is provided between words on a page in order to render them immediately intelligible, in speaking (the performance of words)

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wordsareruntogether. Their intelligibility is provided by inflection, nuance, pause and volume. Similarly in music, groups of notes are rendered 'intelligible' by means of syllabic inflection, while the notes are joined up "with no audible space between them" to make phrases. Peck (in Estevan 1978:10) puts this concept into a practical context when he relates that "[m]any times I would like to have a very smooth phrase, so I will hold one note and sing the phrase in my mind while I'm holding that one note [...]. That gives me the feeling of what it's like to hold one air through the phrase."

Tromlitz (1991:158) notates similar advice by means of a line connecting the syllables (notes):

Example 8-6:



His footnote then relates that "since this connection of letters cannot be expressed in print in the same way as with a quill [pen], it has been necessary to make use of a straight line introduced between the letters". The most ancient of languages, Sanskrit, on which modern Indian languages are based (some having changed but minutely), and which also provided the basis for European languages, connects most letters/characters by means of a horizontal line, from which they are suspended. This line is termed "the line of consciousness" and runs through and connects words and word-groups.

Example 8-7:

तदेजति तन्नैजति

Performers would do well to consider this concept of a line of consciousness running through phrases. Its musical equivalent might be the much maligned

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'phrase-slur'. Thus, just as one does not pronounce the line of consciousness, so one does not play the phrase-slur. Its influence is a subtle one, where the performer should be aware of its implications; and the audience made aware of its influence - the individual notes of the phrase being linked not only by the performer's breath, but also by his 'line of consciousness', i.e. his constant awareness.

8.7 Communication

It was earlier stated that both language and music share an ability to communicate. (What is, or can be, communicated is not under discussion here.) Surely, through an investigation of their points of contact and comparisons between the two, the effectiveness of either as a means of meaningfully communicating can be enhanced? Thus, especially in the field of teaching others musical insight, comparisons and analogies may well go a long way towards meaningful musical discourse.

The exact possibilities inherent in a musical phrase may best be unlocked through a consideration of the nature of notes, motives, sub-phrases, phrases, etc. in the light of our knowledge and understanding of language - and the syntax, the inflections and the punctuation thereof - without in any way trying to make similarities fit into some artificial pattern.

Harnoncourt (1982:39) relates that music from about 1600 to 1800 was basically related to speech. Indeed it was often described as being "speech in tones". Harnoncourt coins the aphorism that "music prior to 1800 *speaks*, while subsequent music *paints*". This leads to the statement: "The former must be *understood*, since anything that is spoken presupposes understanding. The latter affects by means of moods which need not be understood, because they should be *felt*." This takes us into the world of aesthetics.

Bernstein (1976:79) states that language "leads a double life; it has a

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communicative function and an aesthetic function. Music has an aesthetic function only." In this he is not inferring that music is therefore inferior to language. For, as he says, a prose sentence may merely carry a statement, as in a weather report, whereas always "a phrase of music is a phrase of art". The only linguistic equivalent of music, he says, is "poetry".

In his renowned lectures *The Unanswered Question* one of Bernstein's hypotheses (1976:131) is that "music has intrinsic meanings of its own". These are "generated by a constant stream of metaphors, all of which are forms of poetic transformations". Music is, he says (1976:139), "a totally *metaphorical* language". A metaphor, to be more than just intelligible, to be more than just a glorified simile, to take the reader/listener beyond the surface level of conceptual understanding, must juxtapose different aspects of the Truth. Aristotle, he relates, puts metaphor "midway between the unintelligible and the commonplace". The use of metaphor is akin to the poet/composer presenting the reader/listener with a pair of red and green tinted glasses in order for an indistinct-looking picture to leap into 3-D, with all its perspective and vitality. "It is metaphor" said Aristotle (in Bernstein 1976:139) "which most produces knowledge."

Poetry offers the reader more than just the written word; more than a construction of letters into words, into sentences, into paragraphs, etc. Poetry is constructed of motives and phrases; suggestions and metaphors. In this sense music can be equated to poetry. The meaningful recitation of poetry is dependent upon nuance (including inflection and pronunciation): the meaningful performance of music is dependent upon phrasing (including articulation and slurring).

8.8 Conclusion

All the above discussion must be weighed up in the light of the fact that melodic-based (as opposed to dance-based) instrumental music is based on (not in imitation of) vocal precepts. Indeed E.T.A. Hoffmann is quoted (in Neubauer 1986:205) as stating that "instrumental music is an intensification of vocal music". But avant

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garde vocal performers, like Cathy Berberian, consider the need for vocal music to follow a text to be its biggest drawback and limitation. It might be said that they sing according to instrumental precepts. This would tie in with Boehm's flute transcription of Mozart's vocal line (see Chapter 8.5).

Taking the contrary stance in asking "[m]ust pure instrumental music not create a text for itself?" Novalis (in Neubauer 1986:202) must surely be suggesting that the interpretation of instrumental music can be enriched by treating the music as a medium for communication - as a type of language. This must be especially valid for the wind instrumentalist who, as do the reciter, the orator and the singer, works primarily with the breath and tongue. In this, the performer's sense of, and use of, phrasing will determine the efficacy of his communication - and hence the meaningfulness of his interpretation.

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CHAPTER 9

STRING PHRASING

9.1 Bowing

A statement such as that by Goll-Wilson (1990:9) to the effect that "the bow is to the violin what the air column is to the flute, and both need to be unrestricted" suggests that a wind player can learn much from studying the bowing patterns and/or techniques of violinists. Regarding musical sensitivity in general, and phrase playing in particular, Quantz (1966:90) states that "string players have a great advantage". There are two reasons for this: the different effects created by the up-bow and the down-bow, and the greater variety of attacks available to a string player.

9.1.1 Bowing choices

The string player is continually forced to make a choice between up-bow and down-bow. Even in passages which are marked *legato* he may have to make a number of bowing changes. This necessitates a continuous reflecting on the nature of the music and appropriate decision-making in order for the subsequent bowing patterns to best bring out the desired musical effect. In other words, the string player must delve into the very nature of the music in order to understand the phrase and its context; in order to choose the best bowings. Although this constant need to make decisions may appear to be a negative factor, and certainly is if incorrect decisions are made or if it interferes with feeling for or flow of the music, the added impetus of an extra down-bow or the added delicacy of an extra up-bow can add spice to what might become merely an attempt to play as smoothly or as evenly as possible. The cellist Anthony Pleeth (1982:69) sums up the master string player's position:

> Once we understand the shape of a phrase, then *it* will guide us to the bowings needed to give it its existence; in the end it is not

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> 'bowings' in the abstract sense we are after, but ways of using our bow to fulfil the *inherent* shape of a [phrase].

Similarly, for the wind player, it is not the slur patterns and the articulations per se that are important, but how they are employed in meaningfully shaping the phrase.

In a discussion on clarinet phrasing Brymer (1979:162-3) uses the following example:

Example 9-1a: Brahms, Sonata in Eb for clarinet and piano, I:1-3



This is how the phrase was presumably written by Brahms. But Brymer asks the question: "Did he really mean it to be cut up into little bits like this?" He suggests that one make "a few passes with a phantom bow-arm" in order to see for oneself that Brahms was writing with "bowing comfort" in mind. He further states that "[i]f you ask a good violinist to play it, although he will *bow* it as phrased, he will do his very best *not* to make it sound fragmented." The violinist will try, although changing the bow direction as suggested by the slurs, to make the phrase sound as *legato* as possible "with tiny touches of pressure as the bow changes occur". He then suggests that the clarinettist should, in fact, re-phrase the passage as below, "with just a gentle brush of the tongue at each of the points marked":

Example 9-1b: Brahms, Sonata in Eb for clarinet and piano, I:1-3



In order to emphasise the fact that he is advocating a flexible approach, Brymer adds that the clarinettist should feel free to use "no sort of tongue-action at all if it is felt that this is more natural." At no point does he suggest that the player

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should adhere to the written markings just because the composer put them there.

Brymer's example and advice is the exact opposite of that usually encountered. The usual situation, which initially instigated this dissertation, is where wind music is marked with vague too-long slurs which need to be further articulated in order to bring out the subtle inner phrases. Nevertheless Brymer is merely approaching the same problem of meaningful phrasing from the opposite direction.

Any analogy or simile can only be taken just *so* far, but in ambiguous phrasing situations the wind player should take cognisance of how a string player would approach and solve a phrasing/bowing problem. An answer that is both more immediate and more meaningful may thus be found more readily. For instance Tromlitz (1991:210) warns against playing fast passages without due articulation, and equates this to "a violinist who did not use any bowings in fast passages other than pulling it down for its full length, and shoving it back up again for just as long, each time droning out as many notes as he could with each bow-stroke".

Just as a string player needs to understand the inherent patterns of the music in order to choose the best bowing, so the wind player needs to similarly choose the best manner of phrasing. And getting a sense of the intensity of a certain down-bow attack, or the tenderness of a gentle up-bow stroke can add to the wind player's interpretation of a phrase.

9.1.2 Bow attacks

The variety of types and strengths of attacks is considerably greater on a string instrument than on a wind instrument. Not only that, but a greater degree of homogeneity is available than on wind instruments, where the type and intensity of attacks available varies greatly with range. A soft attack on a low oboe note is virtually impossible, whereas a *sforzando* attack on a low flute note is extremely difficult. Thus the wind player can often only try to emulate the string player in his playing of first notes of phrases.

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But one mistaken concept must be laid to rest: The wind player's choice of 'to tongue, or not to tongue', is not simply the equivalent of a string player's choice of up-bow or down-bow. The situations are in many areas analogous, but in the following complex ways:

* The bow meeting the string is analogous to the airstream as it strikes the edge of the flute mouth-hole (or enters the reed of a reed instrument) and produces a sound.

* The bow in action on the string is analogous to the diaphragmatic/intercostal control of the airstream.

* The speed with which the bow is set in action, the part of the bow used (frog or heel), the direction of the bow (up or down) and the weight given to the bow on the string at the moment of attack are analogous to the force given to the airstream (and therefore the speed thereof), the type of tongue action used and the type of embouchure used.

* After the sound has been initiated in, for example, a *tenuto* attack, the speed and weight of the bow is analogous to the diaphragm/intercostal supporting action only, with the embouchure in an accommodating role (the tongue having done its work).

* The subtle work done by the wrist, hand and fingers is analogous to subtle embouchure changes made (in conjunction with the support levels) during the various types of attack.

* String dynamics in the course of a phrase are effected by the speed of the bow and the pressure on the string; wind dynamics are effected by airstream speed and pressure exerted on the airstream by the embouchure.

Wind players too often articulate in a monotonous way, and would do well to
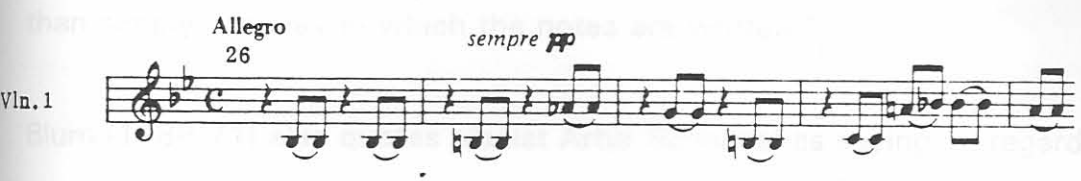
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consider the variety of effects created by both up- and down-bows at the various sections of the bow, and the bow speeds used to effect the various attacks.
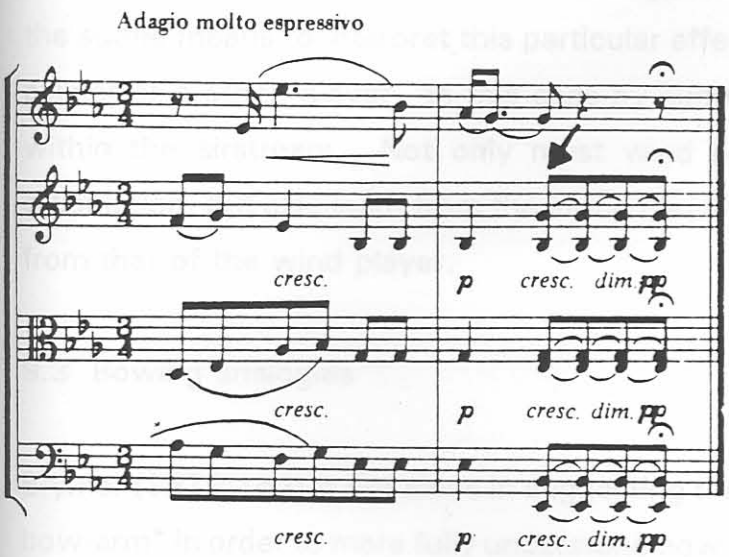
9.2 A special bowing case

Blum (1986:70-71) in conversations with a string quartet asked the members how they interpreted the repeated notes in the following two string passages as notated by Beethoven:

Example 9-2a: Beethoven, Grosse Fuge Op. 133, mm. 26-30



Example 9-2b: Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 130, V:53-54



For Ex. 9-2a Dalley (in Blum 1986:71) suggests playing "something between one note and two notes, possibly a double pulsation [...] with the vibrato, because it's hard to keep from doing too much if you make two impulses with the bow." Steinhardt, however, describes both making a "kind of swell from the first note to the second" and making "the second note an echo of the first". It is important, he

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says, to "convey a sense of tremulous agitation". Other concepts mentioned by the various string quartet members include: "some sort of shading"; and "[t]here's no certainty that Beethoven meant the figure to be interpreted in the same way in every case". It was agreed that the indicated dynamic would have a distinct bearing on the method employed.

The wind player can learn from this that musicians who are used to working on levels of great subtlety consider all possibilities and do not necessarily accept the score at face value. As Steinhardt says (in Blum 1986:71): "The most important determining factor in interpretation should always be the musical context rather than simply the way in which the notes are written."

Blum (1986:71) also quotes pianist Artur Schnabel as saying, in regard to similar repeated notes in Beethoven's piano music: "Perhaps it might be helpful to take some suitable word for this pair, a monosyllable, such as Du, whose vowel takes on a soulful emphasis." That statement suggests that perhaps the wind player has the subtle means to interpret this particular effect more successfully than either a pianist or a string player - in this case by subtly articulating under the slur, and within the airstream. Not only must wind players use this subtle means of articulation, but also learn from the string player's art - as a great pianist can learn from that of the wind player.

9.3 Bowing analogies

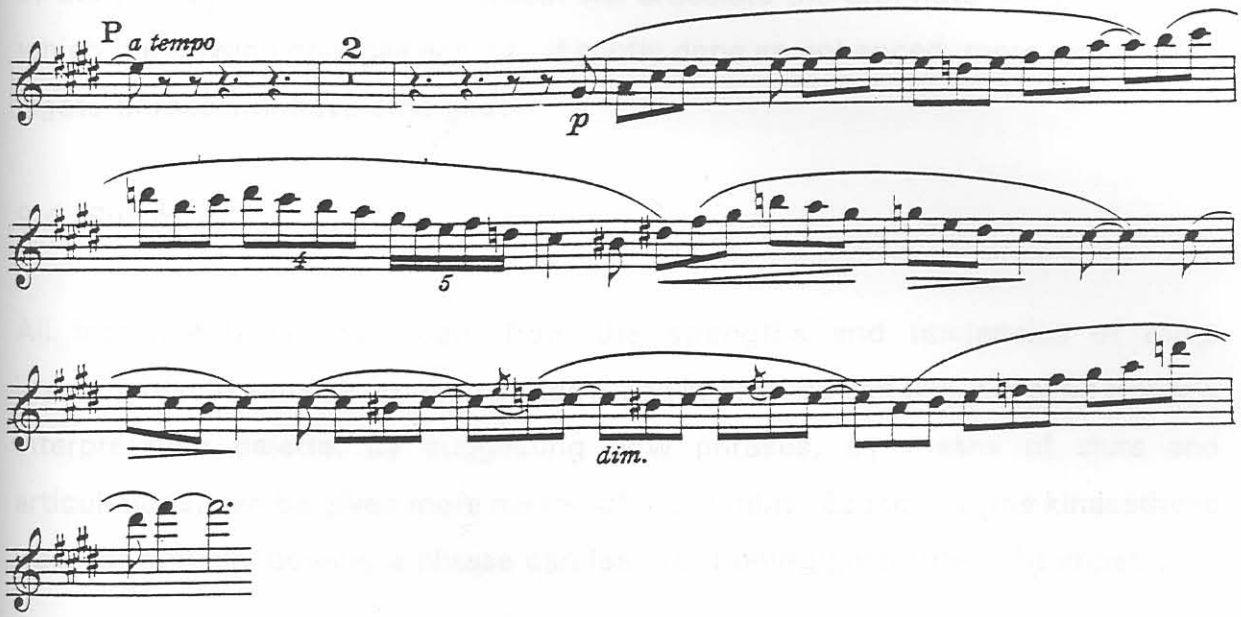
Brymer (1979:162) is not alone in suggesting that the wind player use a "phantom bow-arm" in order to more fully understand how to slur and articulate a phrase (see Chapter 9.1.1). Flutist Alain Marion (in Goll-Wilson 1992b:9) in his masterclasses describes wind phrasing in terms of bowing patterns, using physical demonstrations as a teaching tool to provide both a visual and a kinaesthetic feeling. It is possible to 'imagine' articulating from the wrist, from the elbow or from the shoulder - each providing its own kinetic impetus.

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It may not even be necessary to use physical actions at all, for Kincaid (Krell 1973:20) says that the wind player should "mentally superimpose the up and down bowing inflections". He is not suggesting that one should in any way attempt to visualise a violinist, or his bowing actions while actually performing. Rather that during practise, or as a teaching tool, it is the vital feel (sensation) of bowing patterns and strengths that gives insight into the energy levels and undulations of phrases.

As a descriptive teaching device then, bowing patterns and attacks can provide clues as to both the meaning and dynamic flow of phrases. They should also help provide insight into how to more subtly apply articulation and slurring to a phrase; more subtle than that exhibited in, for instance, the following insight-lacking and insensitive phrasing:

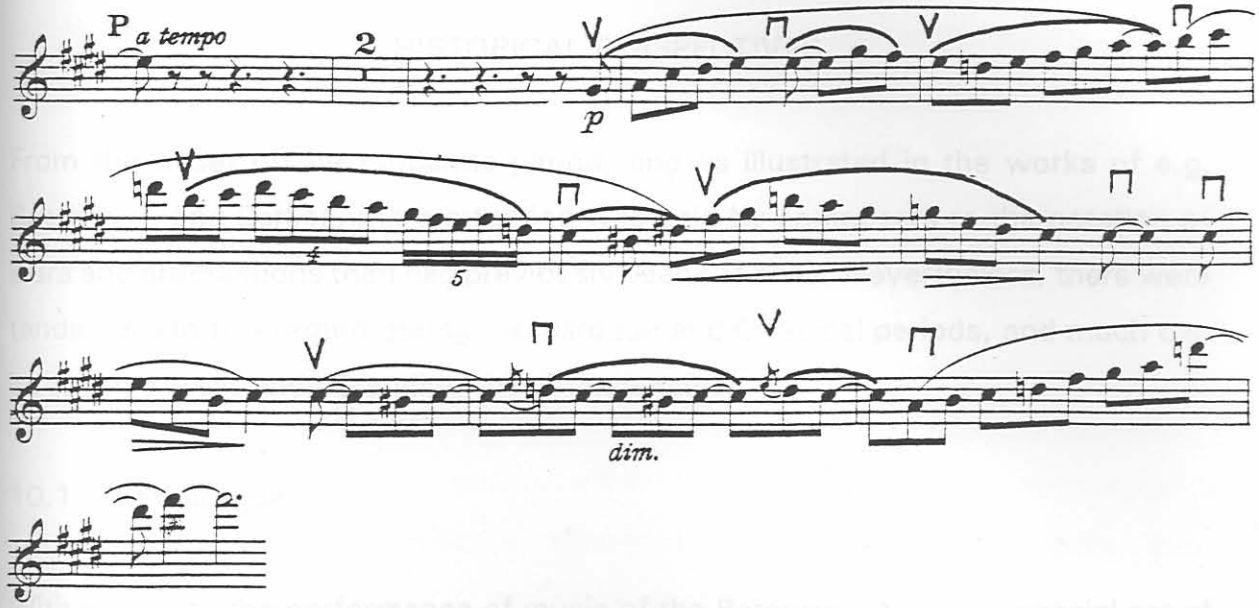
Example 9-3a: Griffes, Poem, mm. 268-280



This example demands more sensitivity, more shaping, more nuance (the reverse of Brymer's Brahms situation, Exx. 9-1a and 9-1b). Imagining the phrase bowed by a string player might result in the slur patterns of Ex. 9-3b; bowings (n = nobilis = down-bow; V = vilis = up-bow) are provided for the first note of each slur.

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Example 9-3b: Griffes, Poem, mm. 268-280 (re-slurred and bowed by the author)



Either the tongue, with a subtle variety of attacks (including Brymer's "gentle brush of the tongue"), or merely the breath will articulate the first note of each slur, on which the bowing changes occurs. If subtly done an enhanced, more meaningful, legato phrase will have emerged.

9.4 Summary

All instrumentalists can learn from the strengths and tendencies of other instruments. A sense of bowing patterns and intensities can add to a wind player's interpretative palette, by suggesting how phrases, by means of slurs and articulations, can be given more meaningful direction. Especially, the kinaesthetic 'feel' of actually bowing a phrase can lead to it being given the right impetus.

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CHAPTER 10

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

From the onset of the Romantic period, and as illustrated in the works of e.g. Beethoven and Berlioz, more attention was paid by composers to the notation of slurs and articulations than had previously been the case. Nevertheless, there were tendencies in this regard during the Baroque and Classical periods, and much can be learned from understanding these tendencies.

10.1 The Baroque

With regard to the performance of music of the Baroque era, a very special set of circumstances exists for the modern performer.

10.1.1 Baroque tendencies

Essentially it was unusual for composers of this era to notate more than a hint or two of their dynamic, articulation or slurring expectations in the course of a composition. The composer expected the performer to add articulation and slurring in accordance with common practice; that is to say, what was accepted at that time and in that place. This articulating and slurring of the musical line was thus on a par with, and may perhaps be considered a sub-section of, ornamentation. Indeed in most French and French-influenced music with its intricate (albeit superficial) ornamental expectations, the two aspects of ornamentation and slurring were fully intertwined. E.g. "Neighboring notes [N] and passing tones [P] are often slurred to chord tones" (Mather 1973:42).

Example 10-1:
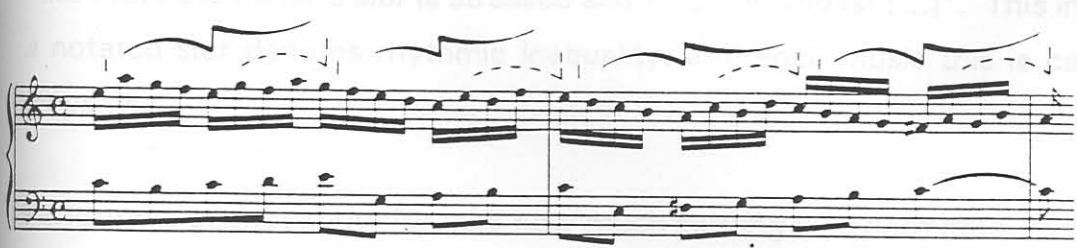


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But in one sense slurring was, and hence still is for the modern performer, an even more important component of performance than ornamentation. This is due to the fact that only certain types of movement demanded extensive ornamentation, whereas every movement needed to be, to a greater or lesser extent, slurred in order to duly emphasise the phrases, sub-phrases and motives. Mather (1973:43) says that "[f]rom about 1730 until well into the nineteenth century, slurs - especially of ornamental passages and virtuoso passage work - were often omitted by the composer and left to be added by the performer".

This is further borne out by Barra (1983:120) who writes that "[s]pecial care must be taken in Baroque music to articulate the internal subdivisions of the phrase". This articulating of the "internal subdivisions" will, obtusely, require less articulating than is printed in a virtually unslurred Urtext edition (see Chapter 4.7). Barra says, referring to Ex. 10- 2a, that the articulation of these subdivisions should be accomplished by either "inserting slight pauses between the motivic patterns, or, more subtly, by delicately shading the final tones of each impulse". But the insertion of slight pauses to delineate the patterns is a keyboard technique; the wind player would use slur patterns and different articulations to accomplish the same. The delicate shading (rounding-off) of the final tone of each internal subdivision will automatically result in some degree of emphasis being given to the first note of the next subdivision. This is an interpretative technique used by any wind or string instrumentalist. Barra provides the example with his own notational symbols to illustrate this:

Example 10-2a: Bach, Invention No. 1 in C, mm. 3-5



A wind player would notate this passage in the following way:

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Example 10.2b: Bach, Invention No. 1 in C, mm. 3-5



But this does not clearly delineate the implied two-part nature of the extract. Either of the following two patterns would better accomplish this:

Example 10-2c: Bach, Invention No. 1 in C, mm. 3-5



Example 10-2d: Bach, Invention No. 1 in C, mm. 3-5



Care must always be taken (and not only in Baroque music) not to overemphasise the patterns for, as Barra (1983:120) also points out, "this must be done without disturbing the rhythmic momentum". Too much concentration on the individual groups and too much accentuating the first note of each group will result in a chopped-up phrase. Nevertheless, the performer should bear in mind that the present day practice of playing Baroque music rhythmically equal was not always the case. Harnoncourt (1982:44) writes that the "Baroque principle" requires that "the first note under a slur is stressed and *held the longest* [...]". This implies that a notated slur denotes rhythmic inequality; in French music this is called *notes inégales.*

Performers cannot know for sure how much slurring was permitted, expected and performed during the Baroque era, and have to rely on clues from the composers and writers of that era. Certain writers (e.g. Harnoncourt) clearly bring out the fact

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that style was continually changing throughout the 18th- and early 19th-centuries.

In discussing the length to which notated notes should be held, Zaslaw (in Brown & Sadie 1989:213) makes the point that a more detached style of playing was expected in the Baroque, and that a more legato style gradually evolved thereafter. It was thus the slurs in Baroque music which, when notated, indicated contrasting legato areas - and thus differentiated between these more legato areas and the basic detached way of playing. Gradually this expectation reversed, so that in later music (pre-Classical and onwards) the "dots and strokes indicating detached playing" become the most important articulation marks, providing the differentiation in an evolving smoother style (Zaslaw in Brown & Sadie 1989:213).

All this begs questions like: How short is 'detached'? Is it akin to staccato? How much slurring was played? and in what patterns? In 1752 Quantz (1966:167) advised that the slurring of notes must be influenced by the intervals involved. Referring to passages of dotted notes in a *Grave* he says that "if the interval is not too great [the dotted notes] must be slurred softly and briefly to the following notes; in very large leaps, however, each note must be articulated separately". The application of this advice would result in the following slurring (author's slurs added - the dotted slur indicates possible additional slurs):

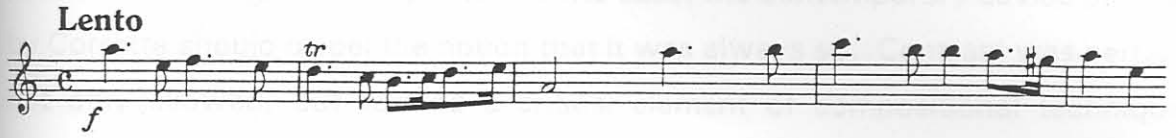
Example 10-3: Handel, Sonata in E min. for flute and b.c., I:12-13



A more cheerful slow movement, on the other hand, requires that "more of the notes must be articulated than slurred". In Ex. 10-4 all the notes will probably be tongued - in order to bring out the majestic and noble nature of this French Overture:

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Example 10-4: Telemann, Suite in A minor for recorder and strings, I:1-5



10.1.2 National differences

The ever-present difference of musical style and intent between the musics of France and Italy must be continually borne in mind when approaching Baroque interpretation. Krysl (1992:24) states that "slurs of more than two notes in length were uncommon in French instrumental style of the first half of the 18th-century; but Italian style used a variety of slurring patterns". Much Baroque music is neither French nor Italian, but it is always worth considering whether the particular composer, or the particular work, is based on French or Italian precepts; this will provide clues as to how much slurring would be appropriate. (Whether or not a performer in Birmingham would have had sufficient knowledge of contemporary Venetian performance practice will not be addressed here.)

10.1.3 Slur patterns

Krysl (1992:24) relates the following:

> Slurring two-by-two called for a little stress upon the first note, and triplet figures required slurring the first note to the second and articulating the third, or slurring all three together. Slurs of four or more notes were found in improvisatory preludes or elaborately ornamented slow movements [...].

Michel Corrette (1709-1795) (in Mather 1973:41) provides the same advice regarding triplets, but further warns that "it is not necessary or desirable to use the same slurring pattern throughout a movement." An oft-held misconception regarding Baroque music is that strict adherence to the *Affektenlehre* must be maintained, and a single character preserved throughout the piece or movement. According to this doctrine if the same phrasing patterns are maintained throughout

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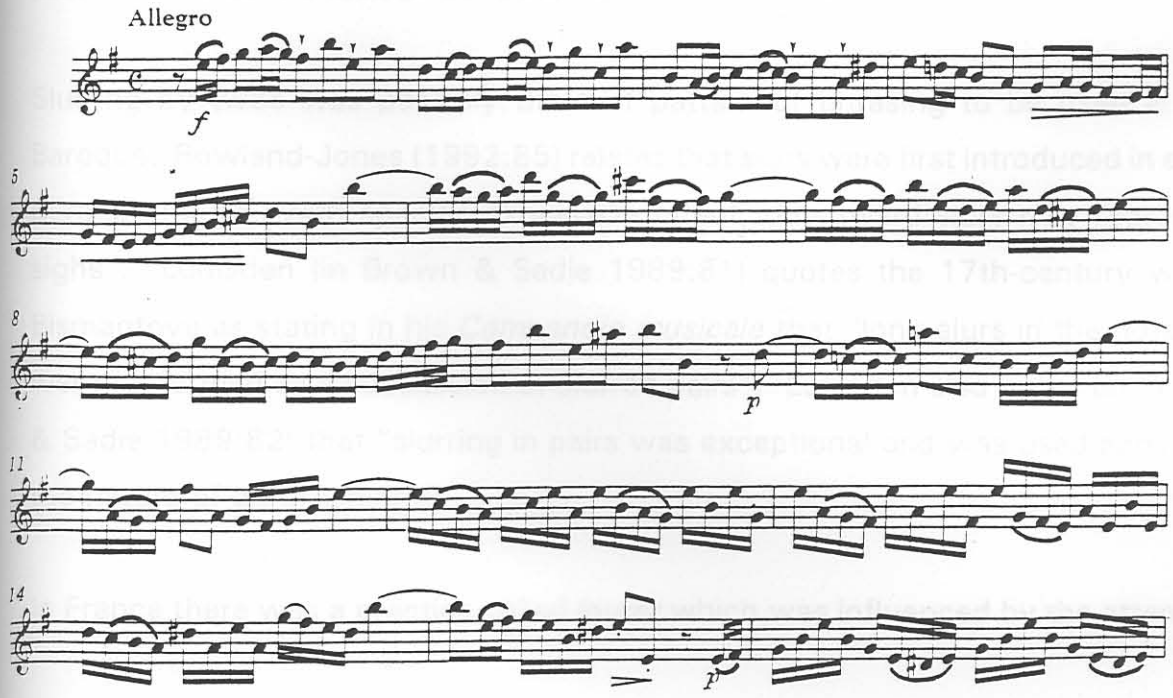
a single movement, then the same character is maintained and homogeneity assured. Although this may often be the case, the contemporary advice provided by Corrette should dispel the notion that it was always so. Contrast was certainly not only allowed, but formed a critical element of compositional technique - although not in the works of lesser French composers, and not in much dance orientated music. Examples abound of movements that, due to the unity imposed by the use of one important rhythmic motive throughout, exhibit the aforementioned homogeneity. A certain rigidity as to the use of one slurring pattern will then of necessity be imposed:

Example 10-5: Loeillet, Sonata in C Op. 3/1, III:13-17



But in many other cases there is a deliberate use of contrasting material that will necessitate the use of varying slur patterns. In Ex. 10-6 the articulation markings are by Bach, but the slurs are the author's suggestions:

Example 10-6: Bach, Sonata in E minor BWV 1034, II:1-16



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In any field it is the genius or mastercraftsman who is able to break the 'rules' at will and elevate his art to new heights. J S Bach in his masterful Sonata in B minor for flute and keyboard deliberately provides similar motives with different slur patterns:

Example 10-7a: Bach, Sonata in B minor BWV 1030, I:12-14



Example 10-7b: Bach, Sonata in B minor BWV 1030, I:49-50



Example 10-7c: Bach, Sonata in B minor BWV 1030, I:95-96



One can only conjecture as to whether this was to offer variety within a very long movement or to provide the performer with alternatives from which to choose one pattern; or was it a lack of consistency?

Slurring by twos was possibly the first pattern of phrasing to be used in the Baroque. Rowland-Jones (1992:85) relates that slurs were first introduced in early Baroque music "with specific expressive intent; downward slurs may represent sighs". Lumsden (in Brown & Sadie 1989:81) quotes the 17th-century writer Bismantova as stating in his *Compendio musicale* that "long slurs in the notation were performed as a succession of slurred pairs". Lumsden also notes (in Brown & Sadie 1989:82) that "slurring in pairs was exceptional and was used almost in the nature of an ornament".

In France there was a practice called *lourer* which was influenced by the attempts

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of composers to imitate the musette (a French bagpipe) incorporating the drone effect. The slurred pairs of notes were, according to one Abbé Démoz de la Salle writing in 1728, played "by slurring, caressing and rolling them in such a way that the notes are continuous, joined and connected [...] while perceptibly marking the first of each pair" (quoted by Lumsden in Brown & Sadie 1989:83). Mather (1973:39) concurs with this statement and offers further details regarding its origin. Due to the drone, these instruments "were incapable of clean articulations. The only means players [...] had of defining the beat was to lengthen and strengthen the long first note of pairs fitting within a beat". Mather provides the following example from *L'Art de Préluder* (1719) by Hotteterre:

Example 10-8:



It is clear that Hotteterre uses the long slur as an indication to play smoothly; it is not a phrase-slur. In this he is using notation more accurately than many later composers and editors.
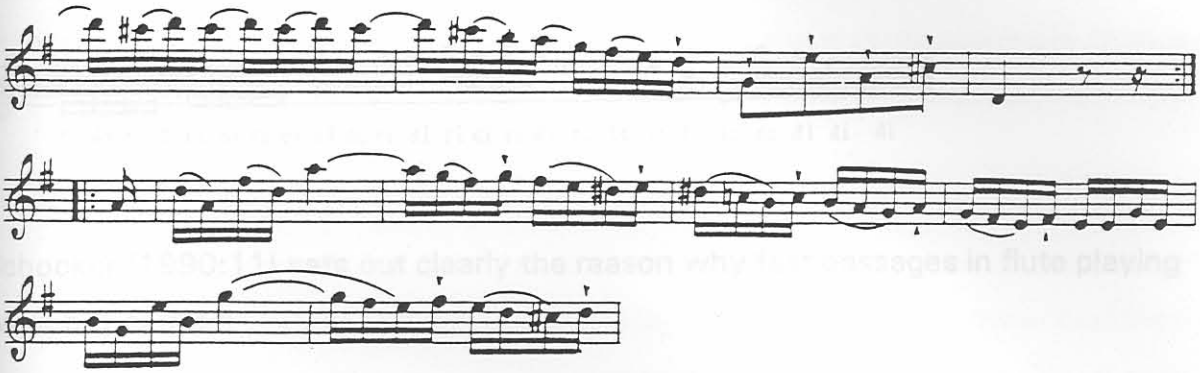
The slur patterns of the late Baroque obviously came down to the later composers. Mather (1973:43) relates the following, including quotations from Mahaut's *Nouvelle Méthode* of 1759:

> As was usual at this time, *slurring by twos* was the most common articulation pattern. A note on a strong count was normally slurred to the following note on a weak count, though occasionally the reverse pattern was used. *Three slurred, one tongued* was more common than *one tongued, three slurred*. *One tongued, two slurred, one tongued* was also possible. Slurring by fours was rare and long slurs were even rarer in quick movements of this period. *Two slurred, two detached* was a new articulation at mid-century which was destined to become the absolute favourite by the end of the century.

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Some of the various patterns as used in context are set out by Mahaut (Mather 1973:43-44):

Example 10-9: Mahaut, Study



Many fast movements, for example those by Handel and Telemann, were written and are printed in the Urtext editions without slurring. As Mather further notes (1973:43), "a long passage of sixteenth-notes was probably not intended to be played with clean and equal tongue strokes but varied instead with assorted slurrings". On the other hand "thirty-second notes were probably always slurred or were occasionally tongued very smoothly", as can be seen in the following example:

Example 10-10: Bach, Suite in B minor, Double, mm. 1-3



10.1.4 Syllabic articulation

Performing flutist Gary Schocker (1990:11) relates that 17th- and 18th-century performers "used syllabic articulation instead of slurring to phrase fast passages". This suggests the subtlest use of a variety of tongue strokes (consonants) and

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tongue/jaw positions (vowels). (See Quantz 1966:71-84 and Hinch 1991:24-7 for detailed descriptions.) The following single example from Quantz (1966:78) demonstrates the approach:

Example 10-11:



Schocker (1990:11) sets out clearly the reason why fast passages in flute playing were not slurred:

> The recorder and renaissance flute are not as well suited to slurring fast passages as the Boehm flute; their simpler design requires cross and fork fingerings to produce a chromatic scale. Consequently, they do not slur as cleanly, even in diatonic runs, as their modern counterparts.

He then discusses the *Allemande* from J S Bach's Partita for solo flute in A minor, and notes that "on a modern Boehm flute it is almost impossible to play musically [sic] throughout the entire first movement without developing a cotton mouth or a bruised tongue". That is rather overstating the case, as there are numerous recordings containing not a single non-tongued note, which are very successful - and musical! But the point Schocker is suggesting is that the modern flute (and hence flutist) has a much richer palette of articulation and slur patterns. It thus behoves the modern performer on a modern flute to phrase movements like these better, if it can result in a more meaningful performance. 'Authentic' performances on contemporary instruments (or replicas thereof) are in another category as the performer is deliberately attempting to re-create performance practices of earlier periods.

10.1.5 Choosing slur patterns

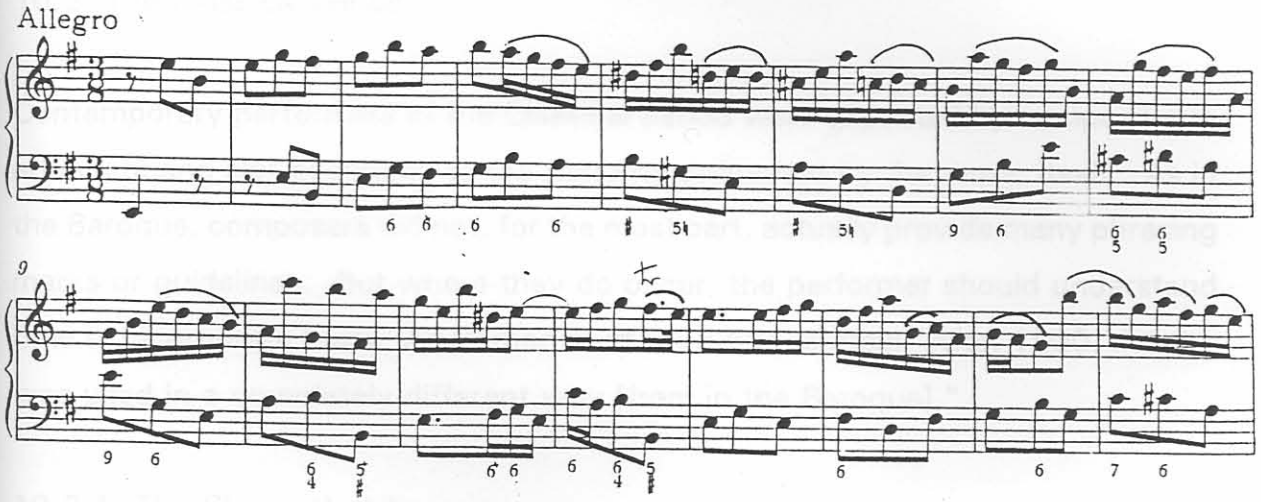
Especially in Baroque music, which is mostly built up from simple motives, it is

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critical to delineate these motives. But in most writings on the topic of slur patterns there is little or no talk of exactly what prompts a performer to decide on which pattern is best suited to a particular motive or phrase. It is only when actual music examples are provided that it becomes evident that the choice was not motivated by either whim or any vague 'style'. Slurs were chosen according to the inherent intervallic and rhythmic patterns (although there is always more than a single 'right' way to bring out these patterns). In this, the underlying harmony must always be kept in mind.

Wye (1989:8) bemoans the fact that students, in a particular masterclass, were "afraid to break the rules in baroque and classical music. By that I mean that they followed the printed page even if, for example, the breath marked was clearly unmusical, or the phrasing was unsuitable [...]." The following example shows how the slur patterns (chosen by the author of this dissertation) follow logically the musical argument as implied in the written note patterns:

Example 10-12: Handel, Sonata in E min. for flute and b.c., IV:1-16



A further point is brought up by Rowland-Jones (1992:160). He suggests that some Baroque passage-work was incorporated merely to "maintain impetus across a transition or modulation". In order not to bring too much attention to these bridging-passages he suggests playing them "in an almost neutral manner". This probably implies that the phrasing patterns should also be bland; in other words,

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all the notes should be tongued (or perhaps all slurred) in order merely to effect the drive towards the cadence without bringing undue attention to any particular notes or pattern of notes. One therefore needs to ascertain the contextual meaning of a phrase before being able to make principled judgements as to the most meaningful slur patterns to employ.

10.1.6 Summary: Baroque

Any attempt to systematize patterns of slurring in music of this era (or even later eras) can only lead to an artificial, stilted approach which negates the search for meaningful interpretations. The *music* must be the determinant, and the player must be guided by what it tells him. There should be little reliance on the printed slurring, which should merely be accepted as hints, or as one out of many possibilities. The patterns, sequences, imitations and intervals will always proffer logical and meaningful slur patterns if the performer approaches the printed notes in the manner explained in this chapter.

10.2 The Classical period

Contemporary performers of the Classical period were expected by composers to articulate and slur according to the patterns delineated by the music itself. As in the Baroque, composers did not, for the most part, actually provide many phrasing marks or guidelines. But where they do occur, the performer should understand *how* to incorporate them. As Harnoncourt (1982:44) states: "After 1800, the slur was used in a completely different way [from in the Baroque]."

10.2.1 The Classical style

During the Classical period there was a two-way process, where a large degree of trust was established and expected between composer and performer. This did not, apparently, automatically guarantee the correct phrasing of a composer's music, as contemporary writings reveal. Then, as now, a performer may not

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recognise the music's inherent patterns and phrase it otherwise.

The following passages (in Harnoncourt 1989:109), originally notated by the composer without any phrasing, require slurs as indicated below in order to bring out the inherent patterns:

Example 10-14a: Mozart, Symphony No. 35 K.385, IV:20-21



Interestingly, Harnoncourt equates these added slurs more to "emphasis signs" than to bowing (or tonguing) indications. Thus the above slurrings would emphasise the following rhythmic patterns:

Example 10-14b: Mozart, Symphony No. 35 K.385, IV:20-21



10.2.2 Staccato dots

The evolution from Baroque style to Classical style was marked by a change from "a more detached style of playing to a more legato one" (Zaslaw in Brown & Sadie 1989:213). Thus "dots and strokes" became "the most important marks of articulation", as opposed to the earlier slurs. In other words where slurs were previously used to cancel out the expected detached style of performing, dots and strokes came to be used to cancel out a generally more legato style.
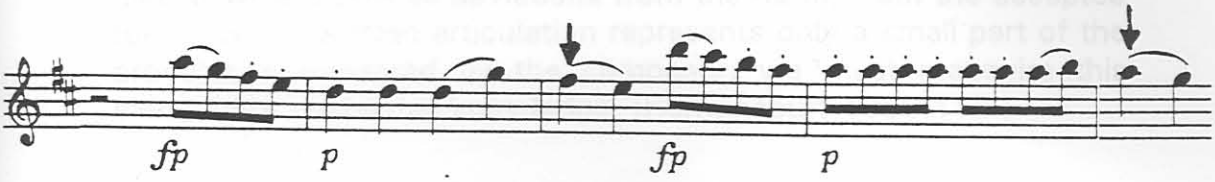
Harnoncourt (1989:114) makes an interesting point with regard to the meaning of dots (as in staccato dots) added above or below notes in the Classical period. He first states that composers, similar to the Baroque composer, expected the

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performers to add slurs, according to the patterns of notes, when none are notated; he then concludes that the most important function of the dot is that it "prevents an otherwise obligatory slur". Therefore a dot does not necessarily mean shortened and/or strongly attacked - merely separately tongued.
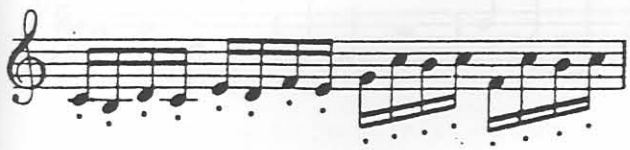
The following dissonance with its resolution would normally be played slurred in order to emphasise the dissonance and release its resolution in what is often called a "feminine ending":

Example 10-15: Mozart, Quartet in D K.285, III:126-130



Dots could be added by the composer in order to negate the *implied* slurs and so effect a change in character:

Example 10-16a: Mozart, Symphony No. 35 K.385, III:25



Thus Ex. 10-16a requires the dots in order to cancel out what would be the natural tendency (as generally expected of performers in this era) to play it with the following slur pattern:

Example 10-16b: Mozart, Symphony No. 35 K.385, III:25



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10.2.3 Deviations from the phrasing norm

One must remember that in the Classical period practically only works by contemporary composers were performed, so there was no influence of 'other styles' to confuse the issue - although, as in the Baroque, different nations had regional idiomatic idiosyncrasies. A composer could reasonably expect that most, if not all, of the 'established norm' in respect of performance practice would be known to local performers, who would thus automatically perform in this manner.

> It is therefore important that we realise that the [Classical] composers had to write down all deviations from the norm, from the accepted rules. Since written articulation represents only a small part of the articulation expected by the composer, we must reacquire this elementary traditional knowledge. (Harnoncourt 1989:112.)

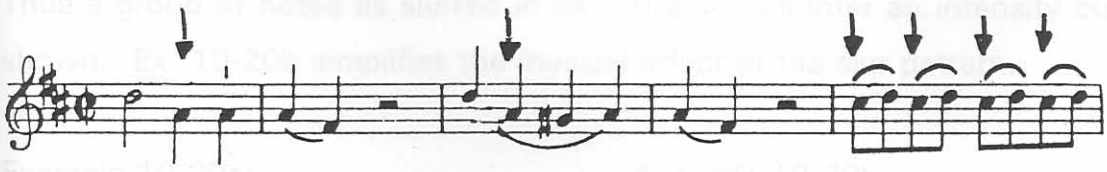
Harnoncourt (1989:109) quotes the following example in which Mozart deliberately notated slurs in order to ensure a phrasing different to that which would have been naturally interpreted by a contemporary performer:

Example 10-17a: Mozart, Symphony No. 35 K.385, IV:1-5



Had the slurs not been notated then it would have been performed thus:

Example 10-17b: Mozart, Symphony No. 35 K.385, IV:1-5



Consequently, if the passage in Ex. 10-18 is to be 'played as written, without slurrings', then how is the passage in Ex. 10-19a, with its obvious patterns to be played?

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Example 10-18: Mozart, Flute Quartet in D K.285, I:151-152



Example 10-19a: Mozart, Flute Quartet in D K.285, I:117-118



Surely then, Mozart expected Ex. 10-19a to be slurred in the following way:

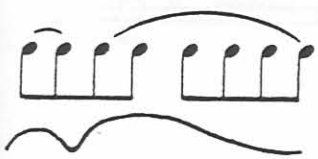
Example 10-19b: Mozart, Flute Quartet in D K.285, I:117-118 (author's slurs)



10.2.4 Long notes

Another Classical compositional and performing trait is the expectation that long individual notes were to be expressed as an attack which then gradually dies away, like a bell's tone fades. This bell-like manner of playing longer tones rendered the texture more transparent, and made acoustic room for subsequent new entries to be more easily heard and recognised. "[Slurred] groups of notes were treated dynamically like individual tones of the same duration." (Harnoncourt 1989:111.) Thus a group of notes as slurred in Ex. 10-20a, will infer an intensity curve as shown. Ex. 10-20b simplifies the musical effect of the slur pattern.

Example 10-20a:
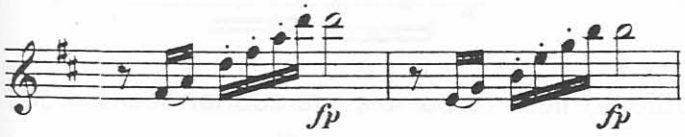


Example 10-20b



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Similarly, for the following two groups the long notes would be played bell-like:

Example 10-21: Mozart, Concerto in D K.314, I:134-135



10.3 General slur pattern tendencies: Baroque and Classical

The author has undertaken a study of slurs in Baroque and Classical music. For the purposes of this study only Urtext editions and examples of original slurring in various sources were consulted. The numerous examples throughout the books of Quantz (1966 - originally 1752) and Tromlitz (1991 - originally 1791) were examined in detail. A large number of tendencies were discerned.

The following list of tendencies has been drawn up in order to aid the performer in his choice of where and how to slur. It should be borne in mind that these are only 'tendencies' and are not intended to be definitive or prescriptive. Also, the tempo of any piece has a direct influence on the performer's choice (see 10m below). Each 'tendency' is numbered for easy reference, but the numbering does not reflect any degree of importance.

10.3.1 List of slur tendencies

10a Embellishments and written groups of notes indicating embellishments are played slurred:



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10b In combinations of large and small intervals the large interval will be articulated and the small interval(s) will be slurred:



10c Dissonances are slurred to their resolutions:
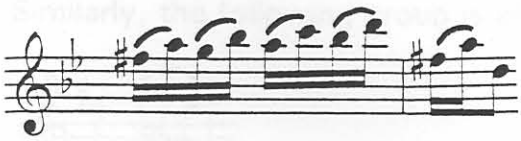


10d Semi-tone steps (especially involving leading notes) are slurred:
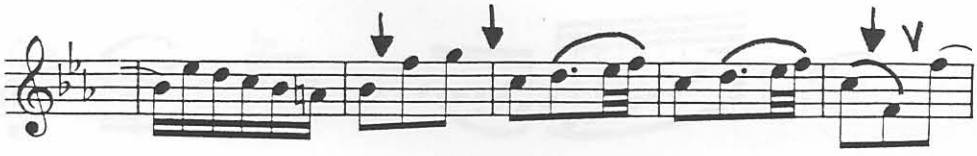


10e Arpeggio patterns can be either slurred or tongued; but where arpeggios and smoother groups exist in combination the arpeggio will usually be tongued, while the other notes are more likely to be slurred in some way:



10f Patterns of consecutive thirds can be slurred or tongued, but this should be consistently applied throughout the passage. They are more likely to be slurred:



10g Intervals larger than a fifth are generally tongued: while fifths can be slurred or tongued,according to the context:



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10h Repeated notes imply slurring in pairs, with the last repeated note to the next (different) note:



10i Dotted groups are slurred or tongued according to their character and placement in the music. But the following pattern will be slurred as follows:



The following more intricate groups will also be slurred:
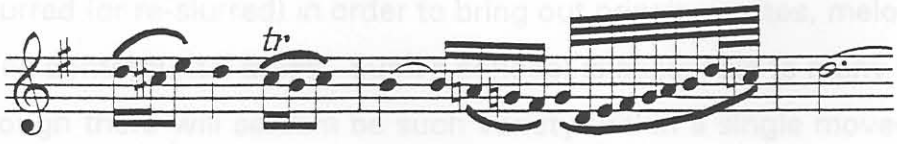




10j The Scotch snap (Lombardic style) is played slurred:



Similarly, the following group is also played slurred:
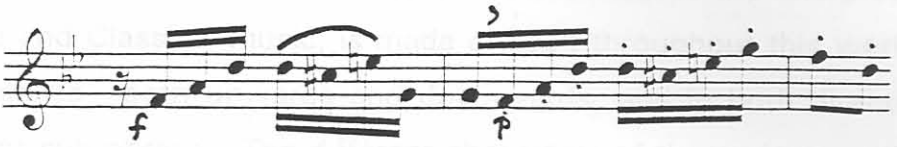


10k Flourishes, e.g. as in cadenzas, preludes and fantaisies, are played slurred, especially if grouped by beats:



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10l Echo effects and terrace dynamics are best effected by playing the soft group tongued or even staccato, while the loud group will be slurred or, at least, more slurred:



10m The tempo of a piece will have a great influence on the slur patterns. For example Quantz (1966:220) suggests that this pattern of slurs is suitable for a quick tempo:



Such a phrasing would suggest to a string player a down-up bow change for each group.

But for a slow movement he says that the following pattern is "more charming"; being less detached and thus smoother. The string player would execute this "in one stroke, but with a slight detaching of the bow-stroke after the first note".
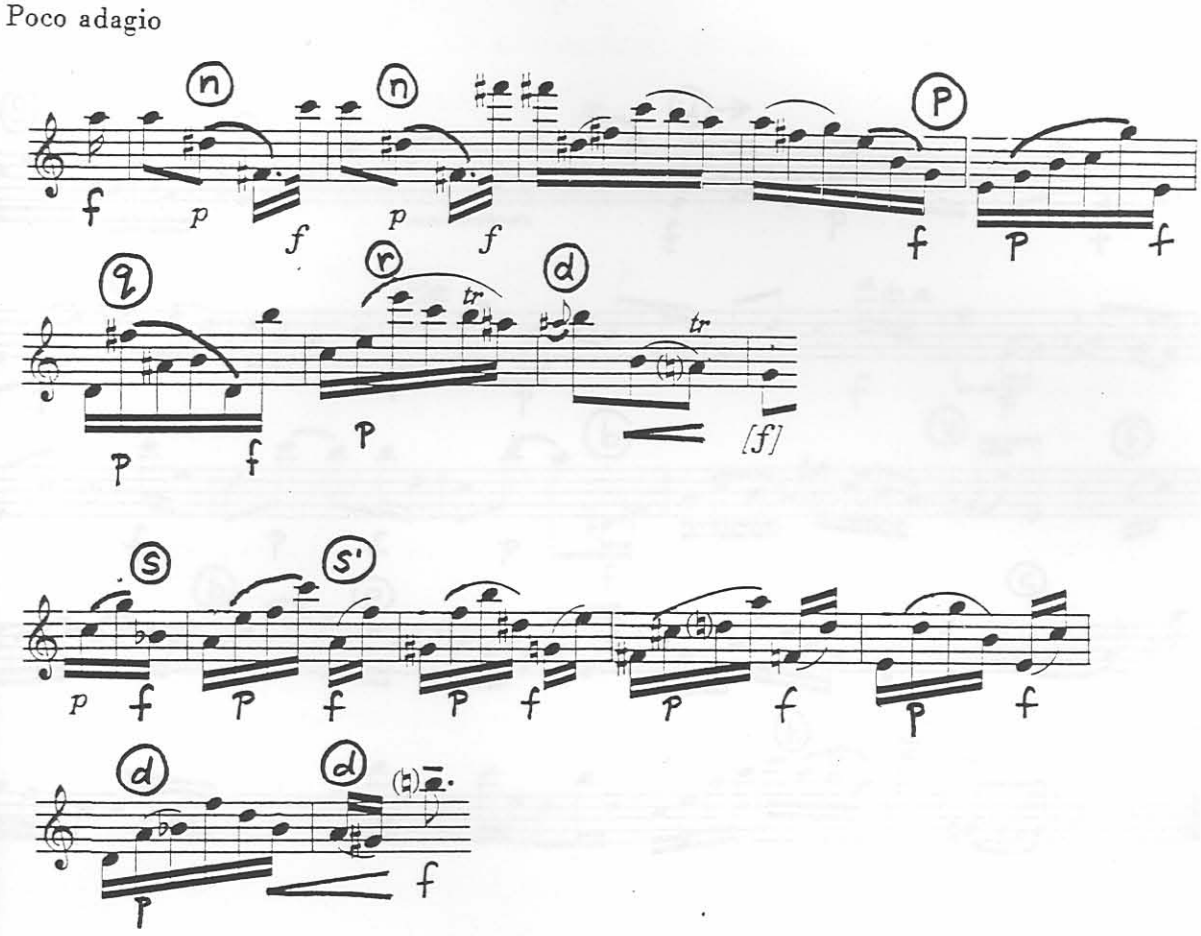


10.3.2 Re-slurring - a practical example

The following sections from two movements of the Sonata in A minor for solo flute by C P E Bach has been re-slurred by the author in an attempt to provide a working example of a fresh approach to slurring. Although certainly neither a pure Baroque work nor a typical Classical work, it provides many characteristic patterns that can be slurred (or re-slurred) in order to bring out principal notes, melodic patterns and implied contrapuntal areas. Such a concept is applicable to many Baroque works - although there will seldom be such variety within a single movement as there is

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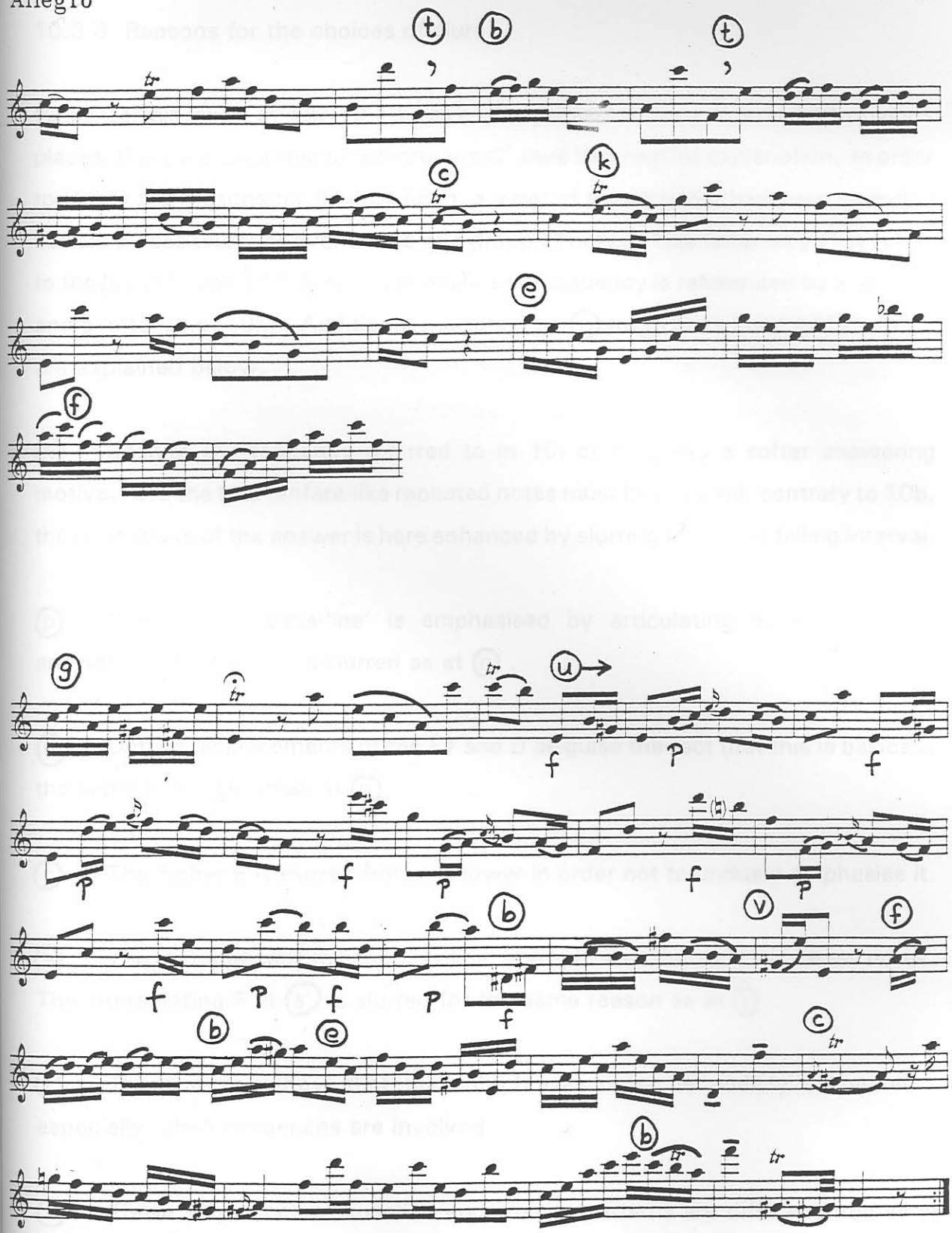
in this example. The same principles of slurring also apply to Classical works. Adding to the challenge of selecting the most meaningful slur patterns, the identification of motives and sub-phrases, essential to the interpretation of both Baroque and Classical music, is made difficult throughout this work by frequent octave shifts - both upwards and downwards, and in both directions within a motive or sub-phrase. The different characters of the various motives and sub-phrases also require dynamic shading - especially in respect of question and answer patterns. These have been notated, by the author, by means of **f** (strongly played) and **p** (more gently answered).

Example 10-22: C P E Bach, Sonata in A min. for solo flute Wq. 132 (extracts)



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Allegro



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10.3.3 Reasons for the choices of slurs

While certain slurs in Ex. 10-13 have been added in very logical and obvious places, there are a number of 'controversial' slurs that require explanation. In order to clarify the reasons for their addition, a letter of the alphabet has been placed in certain places under or over a note or a group of notes. This letter (e.g. (h)) refers to the list in Chapter 10.3.1, where each listed tendency is referenced by a number and a letter (e.g. 10h). Additionally letters from (n) to (v) have been added; these are explained below.

(n) Despite the tendency referred to in 10l of tonguing a softer answering motive, here the two fanfare-like repeated notes must be tongued; contrary to 10b, the gentleness of the answer is here enhanced by slurring the larger falling interval.

(p) A two-note 'bass-line' is emphasised by articulating both notes; the answering rising group is slurred as at (n).

(q) Octave displacements of the F# and D disguise the fact that this is basically the same rising group as at (p).

(r) The higher E is slurred from the lower in order not to unduely emphasise it.

(s) The chromatically falling 'bass-line' is emphasised by tonguing these notes. The interpolating F at (s') is slurred for the same reason as at (r).

(t) The commas show that the sub-phrases must be audibly delineated - especially when sequences are involved.

(u) These sequences of question and answer patterns are differentiated as at (n) and (p). This also concurs with the basic 10b tendency.

(v) As at (r).

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10.4 Summary: Baroque and Classical

As with all the music under discussion in this dissertation, the addition, whether by composer, editor or performer, of articulations and slurs to the written notes is merely an attempt to make the character of the music clear to the performer. They should never be considered as separate entities to be performed either just because they are written or just because they are 'stylistic'. The music itself can reveal its intrinsic patterns - either through investigation and analysis, or through conscious listening in practice and performance. This then guides the performer as to the best phrasing. Nevertheless, a knowledge of the history of performance practice can provide important insight, and this should be studied by all serious students and performers. Tendencies of any single era, if based on the music's intrinsic patterns, will very likely be relevant, and hence applicable, in music of other eras as well.

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CHAPTER 11

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 Conclusions

The meaningful performance of music, especially in the subtle areas of interpretation, demands that the performer understand the precise implication of every note, motive, sub-phrase and phrase. Each note must be played not merely with good tone and articulation, but with due regard for its place in the harmonic structure and its contribution to the overall form. The amount of tension or release given to it, the dynamic, the type of attack, the tonecolour, etc, must always be contextural: contextural in the sense that individual notes are combined to build motives or sub-phrases, which in turn form melodies or phrases. The performer's interpretation of, or manner of shaping, a phrase is called 'phrasing'. This term, together with ten others critical to a detailed discussion of these subtle areas of interpretation, has been defined in Chapter 3.

11.1.1 Notation

The author has attempted to show that a performer's own sense of phrasing is often at odds with the printed indications. These include written indications (like *dolce, cantabile*), dynamics, articulations and, most critically, slurs. In these areas music notation is an imprecise communication method.

Imprecise notation has the advantage of allowing the performer enough leeway to sculpt his own individual interpretations. The disadvantage occurs when composers, editors and/or arrangers confuse matters by incorrectly notating their intentions, being inconsistent, or actually writing or printing mistakes. It is mainly in the area of slurs that problems arise.

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11.1.2 Printed music - the ideal situation

While the performer realises (releases) one version of the possibilities that imprecise notation contains, the composer should initially make his intentions as clear as possible - through as precise a use of legible notation as possible. The editor should advise the performer, who probably does not possess the editor's knowledge and insight, and who probably does not have access to original scores and historical manuscripts and documents, on the composer's intention *where these are not entirely clear*. But the editor should leave the originally notated intentions where these are unambiguous.

The performer should attempt to understand the composer's intentions through attaining a practical knowledge of style. He should follow the composer's and editor's suggestions (where applicable) and then translate these intentions, using his interpretational insight, into meaningful sound.

11.1.3 Printed music - the actual situation

The inexactitudes of notation in respect of the subtle areas of interpretation is compounded, the author has contended, by composers often not using the standard notational system precisely enough. This is usually on account of composers' limited intimate knowledge of the peculiarities of wind instruments and wind playing. The situation is further exacerbated by editors not always advising performers with due insight. This latter is inexcusable when, as usually happens, the editor is actually a performer himself.

11.1.4 The performer's role

As has been demonstrated by the results of the test sent out to twenty performing/teaching wind players (see Chapter 6) it is not necessarily always the composer or editor who knows best. An expert on a wind instrument who is also a sensitive musician can, it has been shown, phrase a piece of music better than

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most composers and editors with their limited knowledge. Performers seem to be able to sense the character of the music, as it is being played; they instinctively feel the need to both delineate intrinsic note groupings and provide phrases with additional impulses by means of phrasing techniques. Many composers and editors too often phrase, it seems, according to visual groupings.

Wind performers, as the results of the test show, tend to use more and shorter slurs than composers and editors. Also, they do not appear to be in favour of phrase-slurs.

It is contended that the responsibilities of the performer intrinsically demand that he both rectify the inexactitudes, ambiguities and mistakes made by editors and composers due to their limited knowledge of the peculiarities of wind-playing, and utilize more meaningful phrasing.

11.1.5 Slurs

Slurs are notational devices used by composers to signify that the notes delineated by each slur should be played as a single group; slurs thus help suggest the various characters inherent in the music.

Slurs are omnipresent and, theoretically, utterly precise in their intention. To a wind player a slur over a group of notes indicates that the first note is to be articulated in some way and the rest of the notes played legato within the outblown airstream. To this rule is added the rider that no note under a slur is articulated.

But opposing this rider are a number of notational symbols which suggest otherwise. Thus the concept of tonguing-under-a-slur exists - with notes being articulated within the basic legato line (see Chapter 7.1.4). By its very nature this is an imprecise concept which is both misunderstood and ambiguously notated. The author has contended that many composers tend to use the notation of

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tongued-under-a-slur in cases where there is no precise way of notating exactly what they mentally hear. This presents the performer with many interpretational dilemmas; the performer having to carefully decide how to perform these notes, wherever they occur, using a rich palette of articulations.

The relatively precise nature of normal slurs is completely overthrown when phrase-slurs (see Chapter 3.2.11) are added. Some composers and editors use phrase-slurs to indicate the extent of a phrase; some to show the sub-phrases; and some to show that the notes are not to be articulated (tongued) separately (thus breaking the airstream), but articulated within the continuously outblown airstream.

When slurs and phrase-slurs are combined, the performer needs to continually make decisions regarding which notes to articulate and how hard to articulate them.

Very often phrase-slurs, and sometimes slurs, are written over natural breathing places. Here the musical meaning must prevail and the slur or phrase-slur broken in order to accommodate a natural-sounding breath. Suggestions on where and how to breathe are provided in Chapter 7.3.

11.1.6 Slur patterns

Composers should always have a reason for notating a slur. In writing for wind instruments, slur patterns very often help to bring out the various motives, two-part lines, interpolations and accompaniment figures in an otherwise single strand of sound. Discovering these intrinsic elements and slurring accordingly can often, if judiciously applied, improve the character and general interpretation of over-slurred music. Nevertheless, it is critically important to fully understand the phrase itself, and its context in the larger structure, before determining the most meaningful patterns of slurs.

Slurs should never be considered as separate entities to be performed either just

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because they are written or just because they are 'stylistic'. The music itself can reveal to a performer its intrinsic patterns - either through investigation and analysis, or through conscious listening in practice and performance - and guide him as to the best phrasing to employ. This aspect is discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

Dynamics and slur patterns often exist in a symbiotic relationship, where the one influences the other. Thus, in searching for the best slur patterns, the printed, or even the implied, dynamics can provide the performer with important clues. To this end, the printed dynamics can sometimes be used to suggest better slurring than that printed - this must, at the very least, be taken under consideration in developing one's interpretation of a phrase.

The most musically effective manner of phrasing should usually be sought for, but the author suggests that teachers actively encourage beginner wind instrumentalists who have technical difficulties, to utilize technically easier phrasing where it enhances their performance. No plea is being made in this dissertation for leniency with regard to sloppy phrasing or lack of technical ability, but this approach will in many cases ease the technical difficulty of over-slurred (or, in some cases, under-slurred) passages; this will allow the performer, in turn, to most fully concentrate his attention on interpretative matters.

11.1.7 In search of deeper insight

The printed word is rendered intelligible in speech (especially the meaningful recitation of poetry) through the speaker's utilization of inflection, nuance, pronunciation, pause and volume. Similarly in music, groups of notes are rendered 'intelligible' and meaningful through the performer's use of inflection (including tonecolour and vibrato - neither being discussed here), articulation, slur patterns, rubato and dynamics, while the notes are being joined up to make phrases.

In the search for the most meaningful way of phrasing a particular passage,

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music's analogies with language can often be effectively explored (see Chapter 8). A consideration of the link between both the written and the spoken word and musical performance can reveal deeper insight as regards the structure of a phrase and the phrasing thereof.

Besides considering vocal analogies, all instrumentalists can learn from the strengths and tendencies of other instruments. A sense of bowing patterns and intensities can add to a wind player's interpretative palette, by suggesting how phrases, by means of slurs and articulations, can be given more meaningful direction. Especially, the kinaesthetic 'feel' of actually bowing a phrase can lead to it being given the right impetus.

11.1.8 Historical perspective

A knowledge of the history of performance practice can provide important insight and should be acquired, through study, by all serious students and performers. Tendencies of any single era, if based on the music's intrinsic patterns, will very likely be relevant, and hence applicable, in music of other eras as well. To this end the author has provided a list of slurring tendencies from the Baroque and Classical periods (see Chapter 10.3.1).

11.2 Recommendations

Printed slurs for wind instruments are often inconsistent, ambiguous and/or inaccurate; as such they can hinder a performer's inherent feel for phrasing if slavishly followed.

After years of learning, practising, listening and performing, performers are in a position to take decisions on phrasing matters in order to produce meaningful interpretations. Especially, slurs need to be, and indeed can be, chosen or re-evaluated by performers using their interpretative insight gained over the years.

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Performers are encouraged, and indeed urged, to turn to the music itself, as a sounding art, with both intelligence and musical sensitivity whenever any discrepancy, inconsistency or ambiguity arises on the printed page. They are encouraged to both consider the phrasing (especially slurring) in the light of their musical knowledge and to sense the phrasing according to their musical impulse: that musical impulse which impelled each to become a practising musician, and which sustains each in the art of interpretation. The art of interpretation is thus enriched and refined by meaningful phrasing.

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APPENDIX A

Intermezzo for flute and piano by Edward German. Published by Rudall, Carte & Co. Bars 1 - 110.

Appendix A1: With slurs deleted by the author, and as sent out to the testees.

Appendix A2: Original slurs, as published.

Appendix A3: With slurs, articulations and breathing places as added by the testees. Only the most frequently used of the testees' patterns have been included - on a majority basis.

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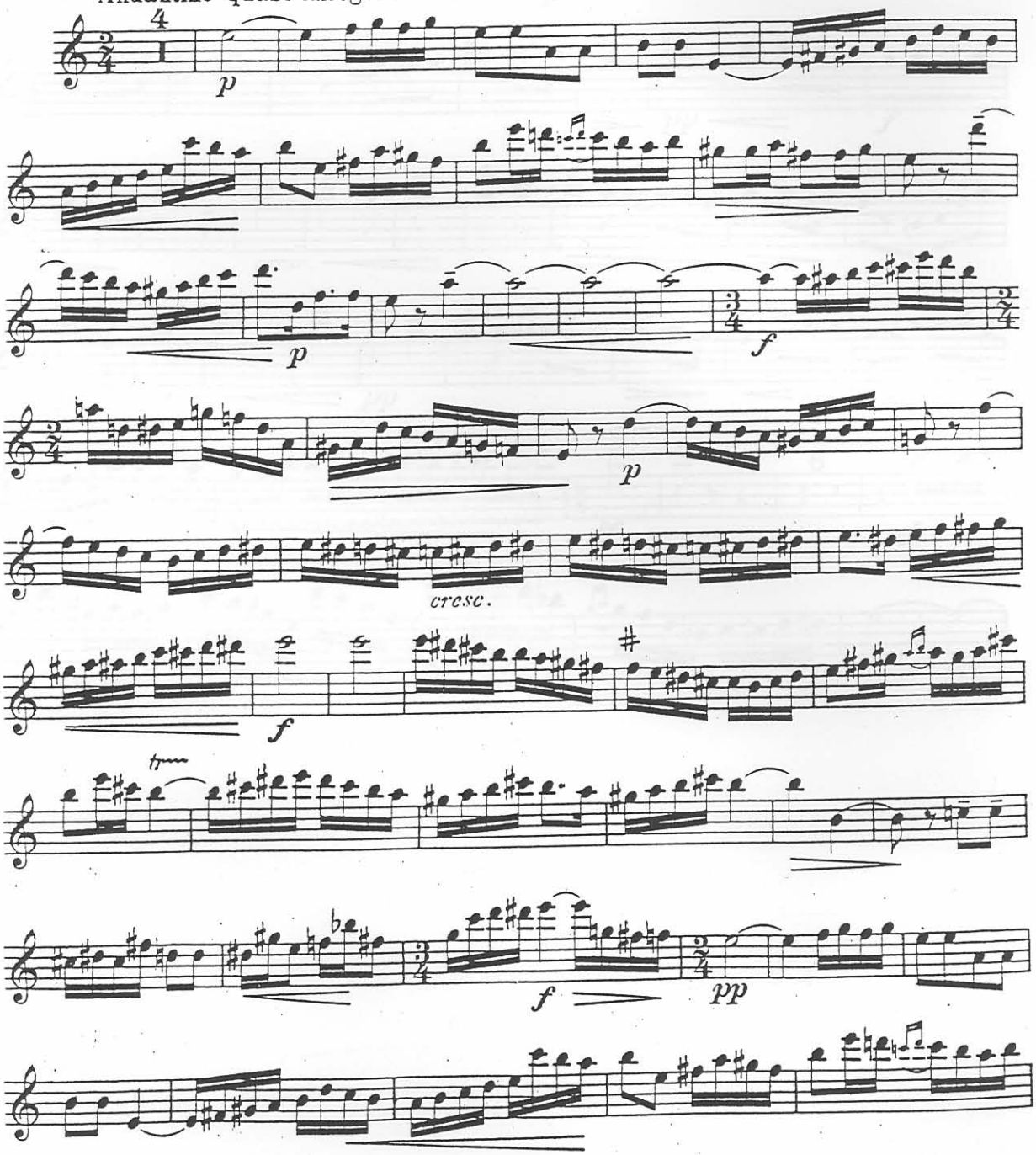
Appendix A1: With slurs deleted by the author, and as sent out to testees.

Intermezzo.

Flute.
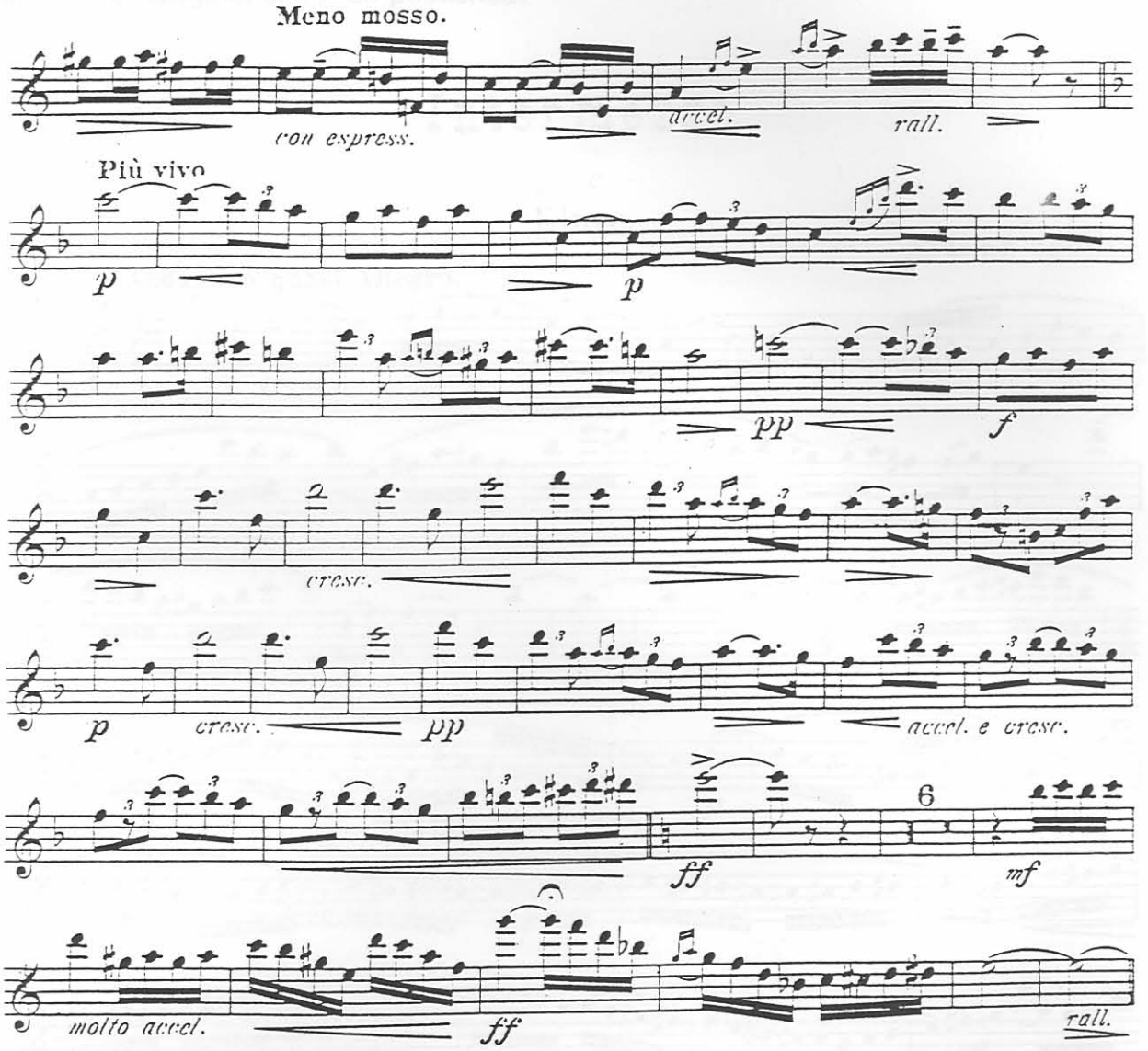
EDWARD GERMAN.

Andantino quasi Allegro.



Rudall Carte & Co. Ltd., 23 Berners St. London. W. 1.

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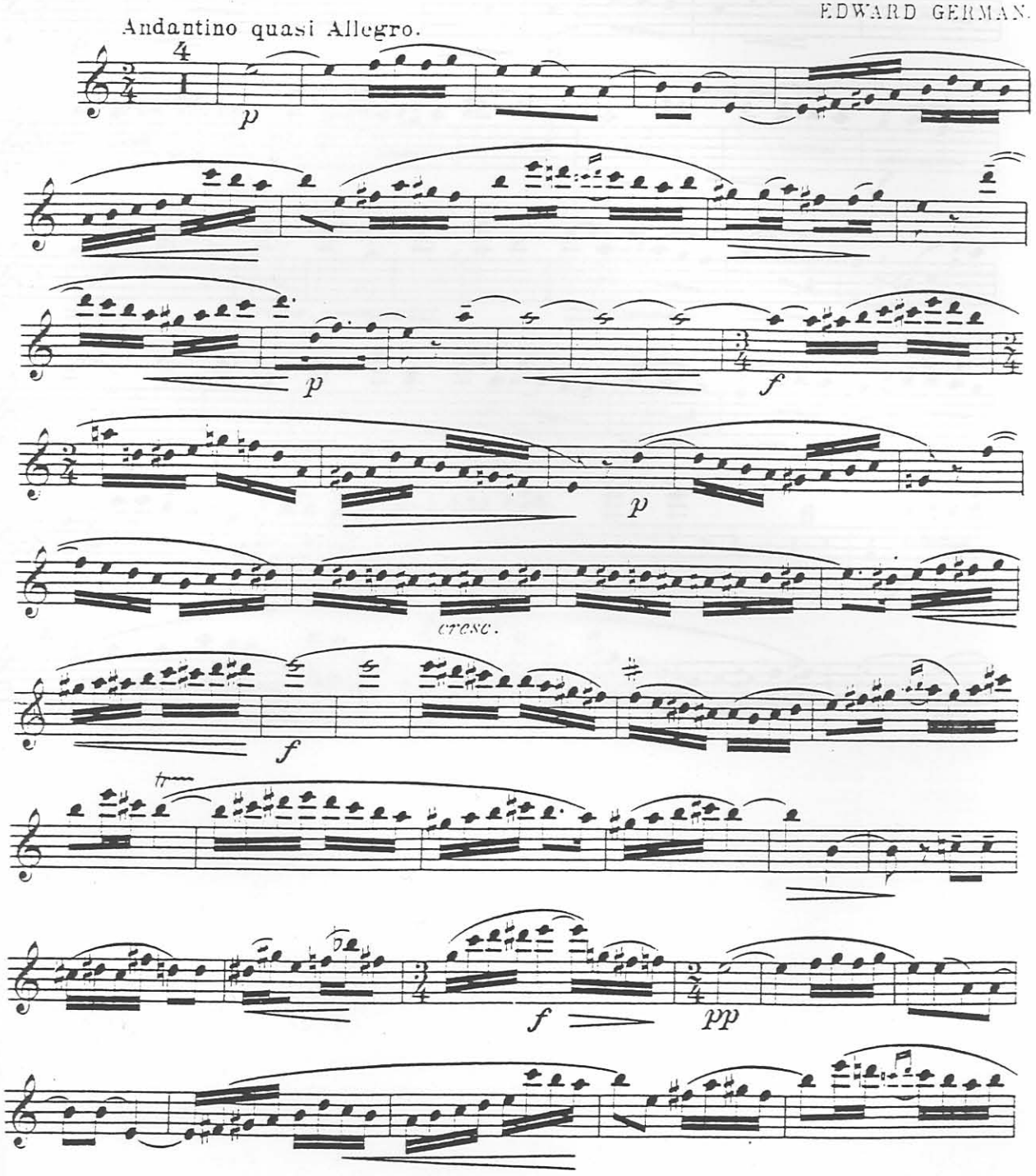


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Appendix A2: Original slurs, as published.

Intermezzo.
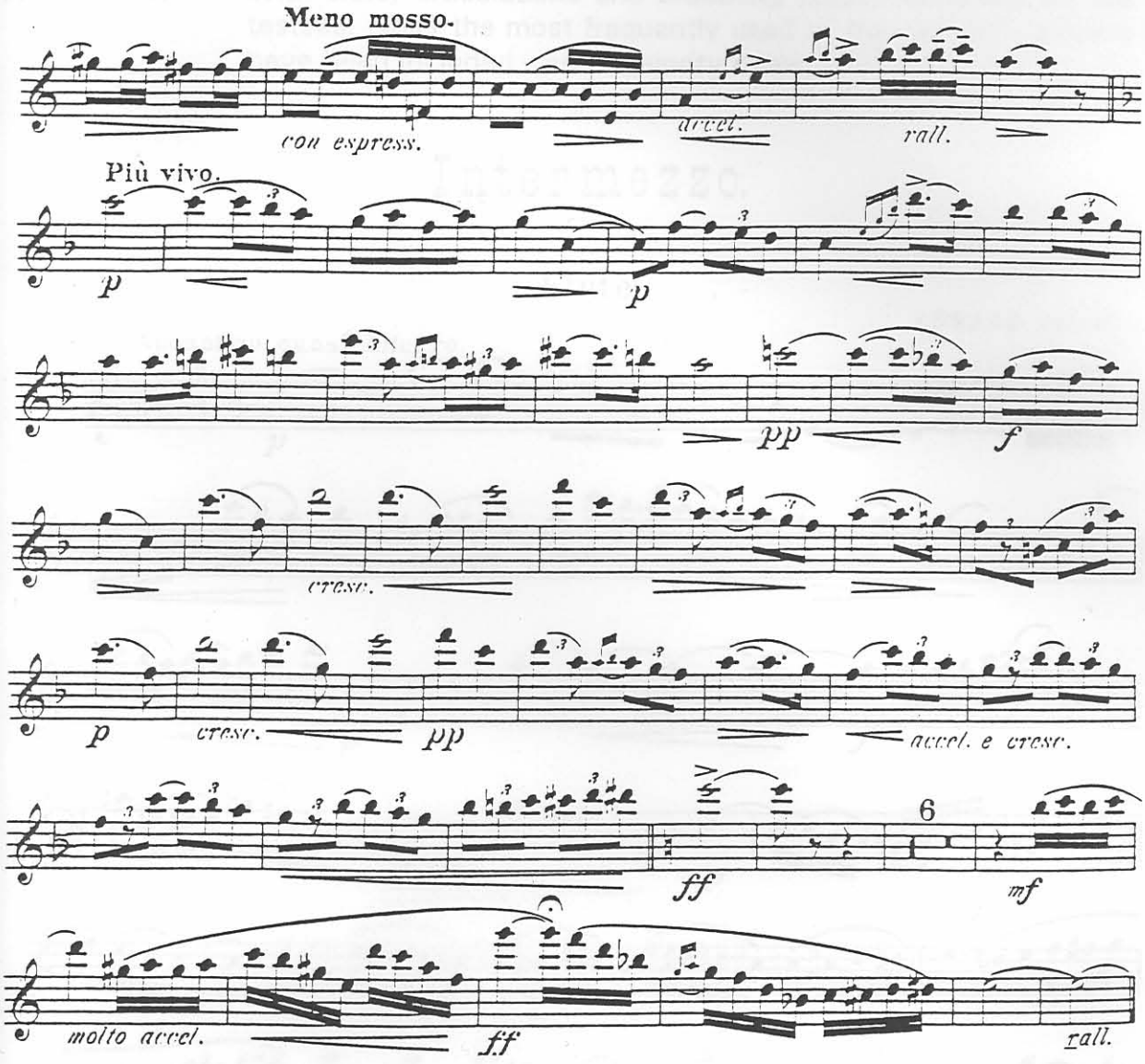
Flute.

EDWARD GERMAN.



Rudall Carte & Co. Ltd., 23 Berners St. London. W. 1.

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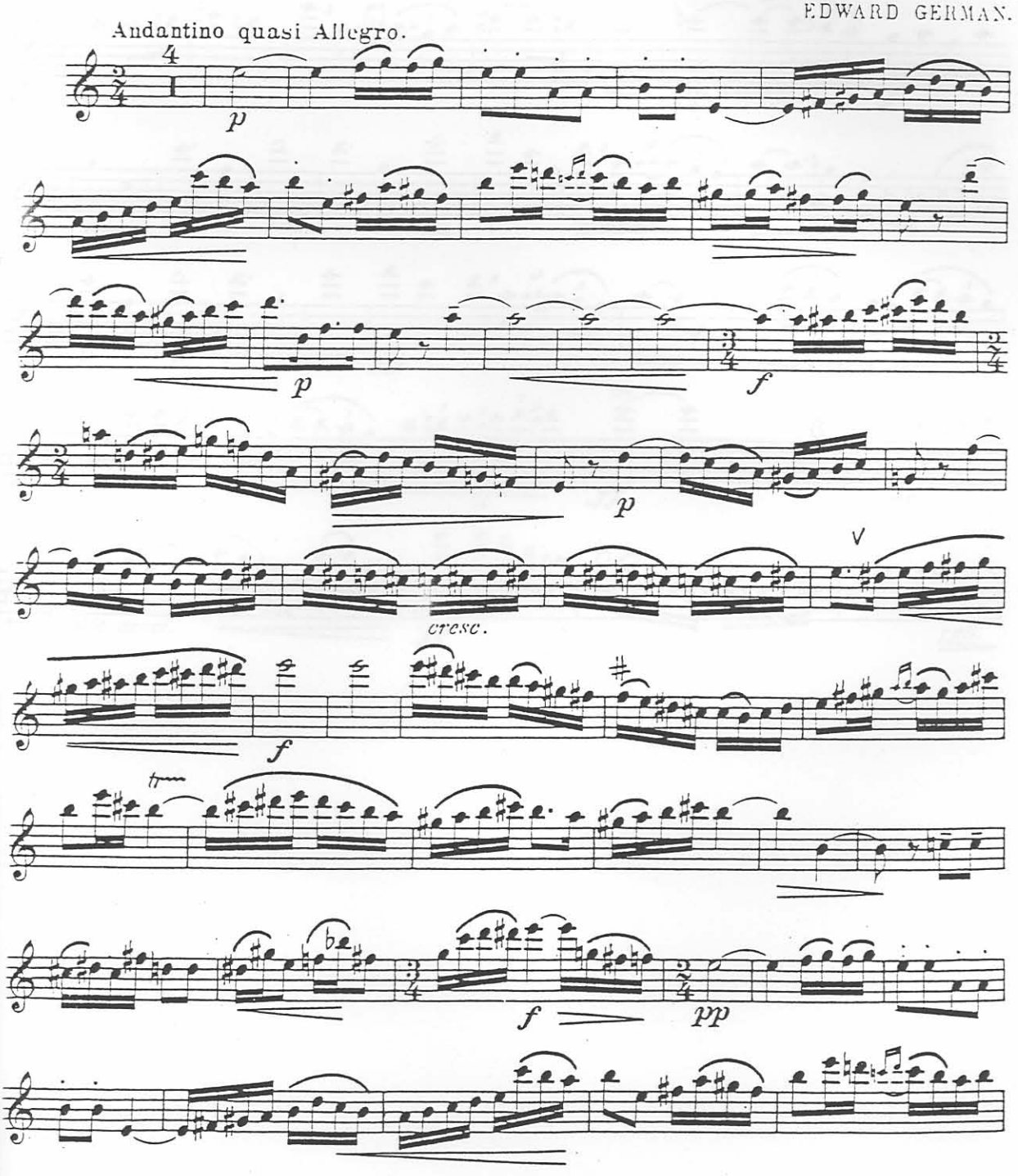


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Appendix A3: With slurs, articulations and breathing places as added by the testees. Only the most frequently used of the testees' patterns have been included - on a majority basis.

Intermezzo.
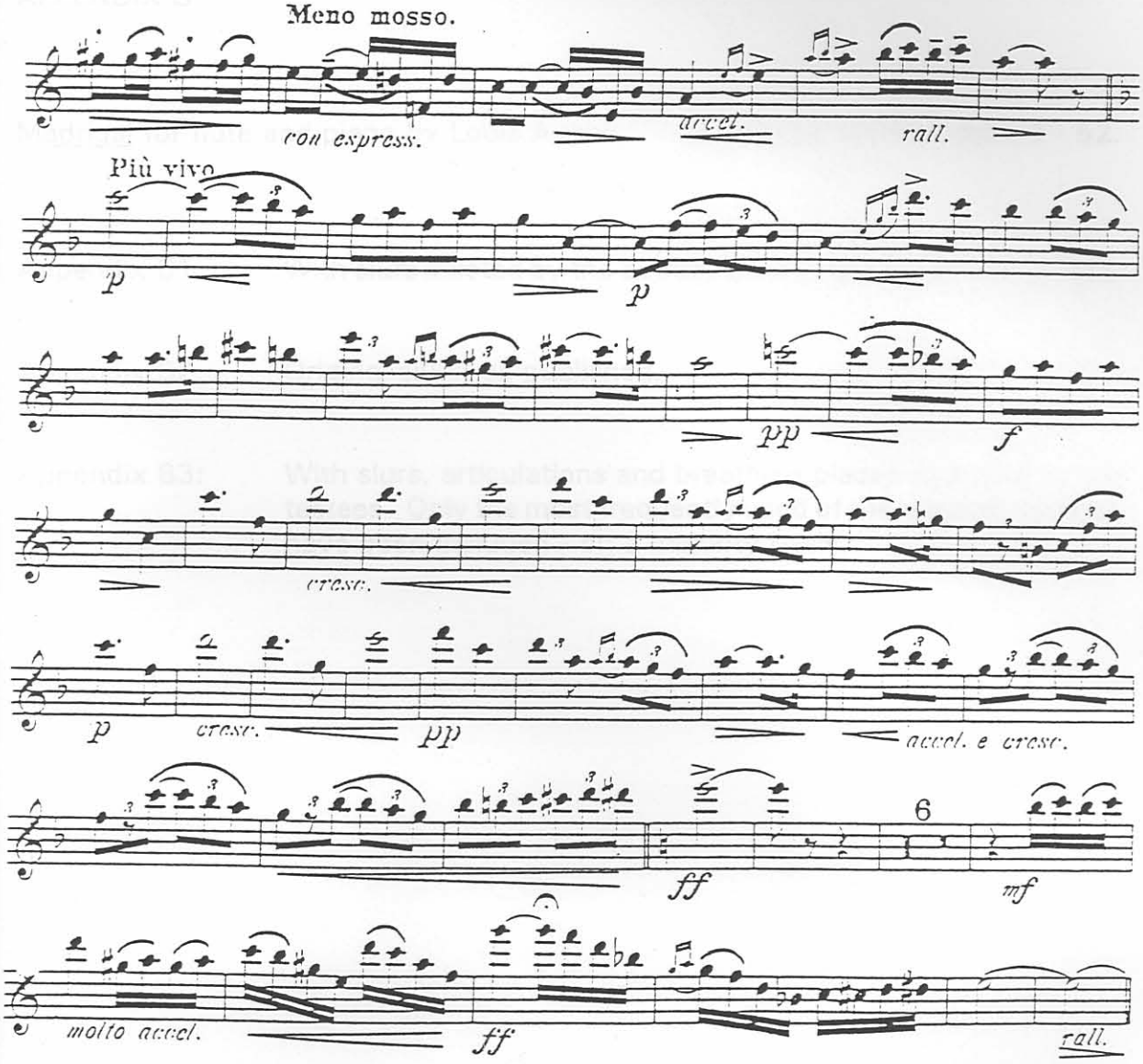
Flute.

EDWARD GERMAN.



Rudall Carte & Co. Ltd., 23 Berners St. London. W. 1.

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APPENDIX B

Madrigal for flute and piano by Louis Aubert. Published by Durand. Bars 1 - 52.

Appendix B1: With slurs deleted by the author, and as sent out to the testees.

Appendix B2: Original slurs, as published.

Appendix B3: With slurs, articulations and breathing places as added by the testees. Only the most frequently used of the testees' patterns have been included - on a majority basis.

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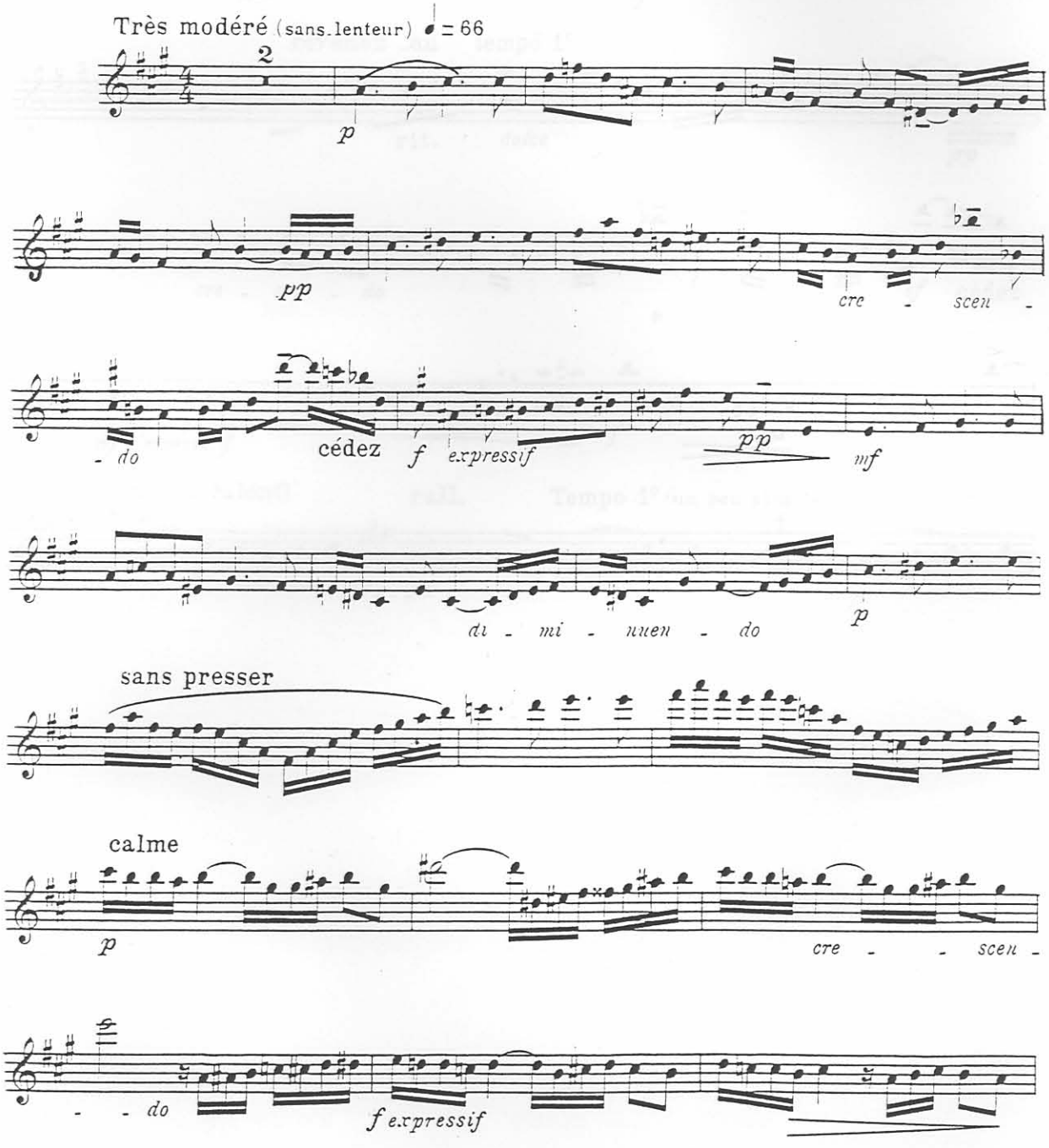
Appendix B1: With slurs deleted by the author, and as sent out to the testees.

MADRIGAL

LOUIS AUBERT
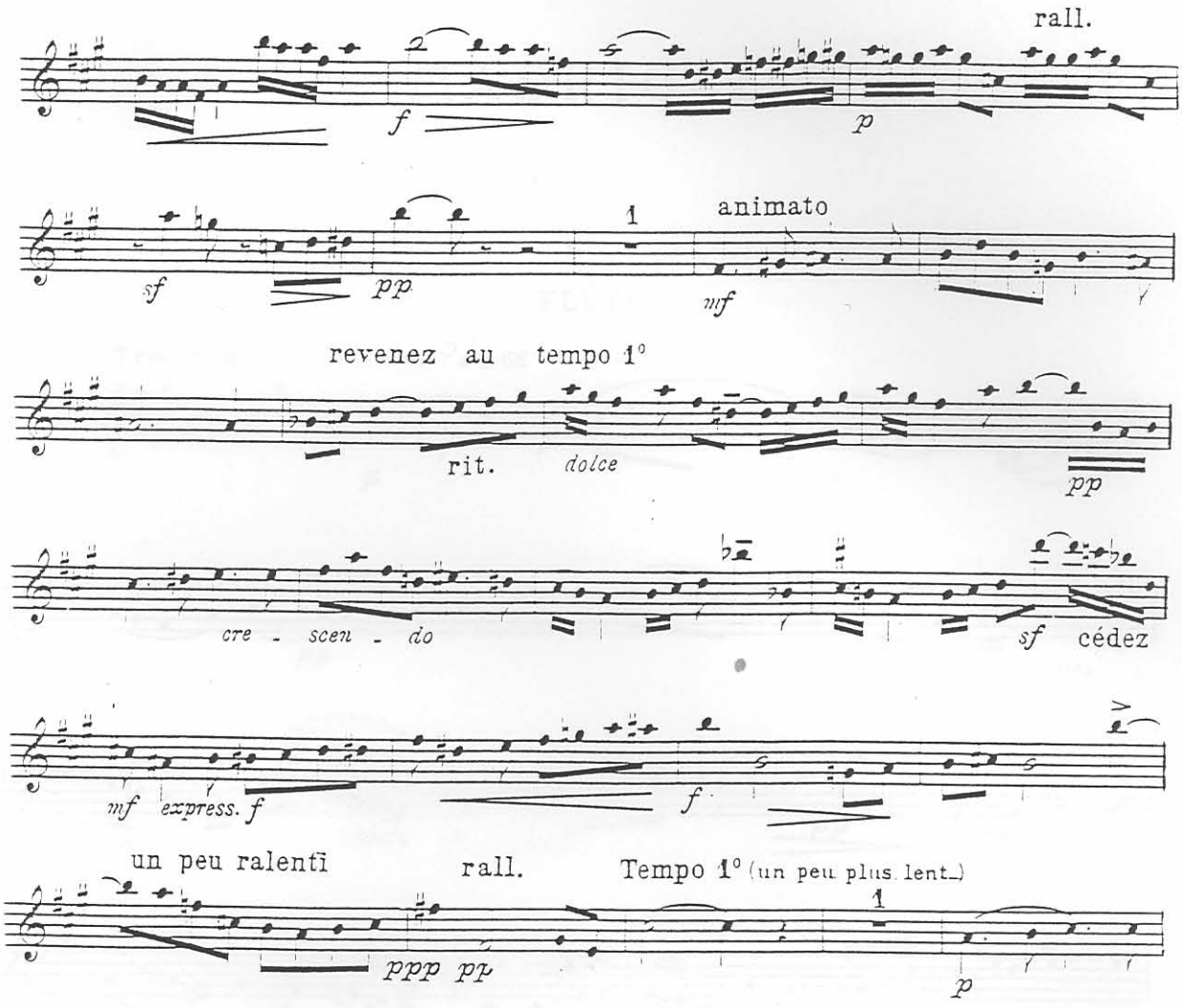
Op. 9 – Nº 1.

FLÛTE



Editions DURAND & Cie, Paris. D. & F. 6004 4 Place de la Madeleine.

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University of Pretoria etd – Hinch, J de C (1996)
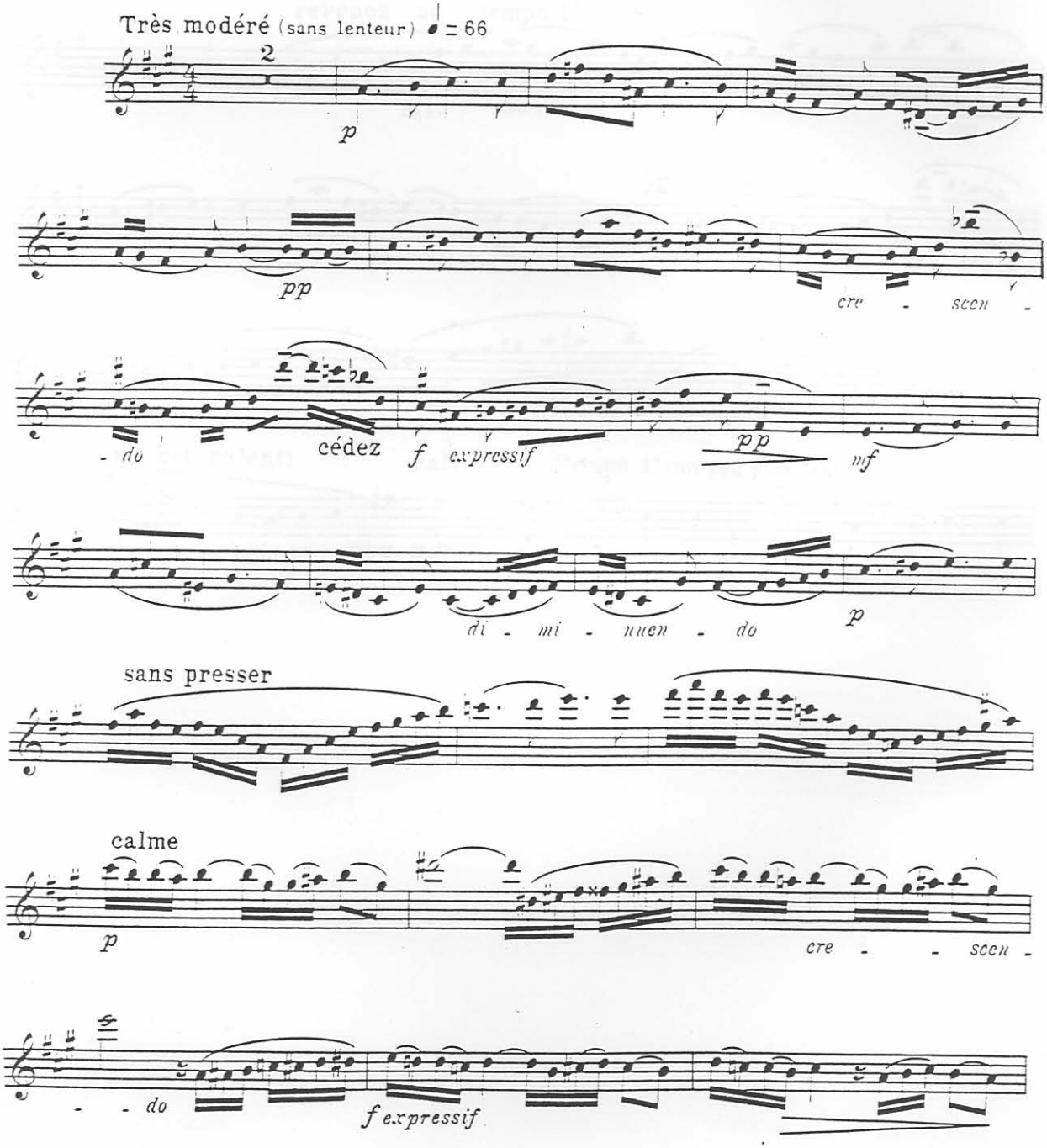
Appendix B2: Original slurs, as published.

MADRIGAL

LOUIS AUBERT
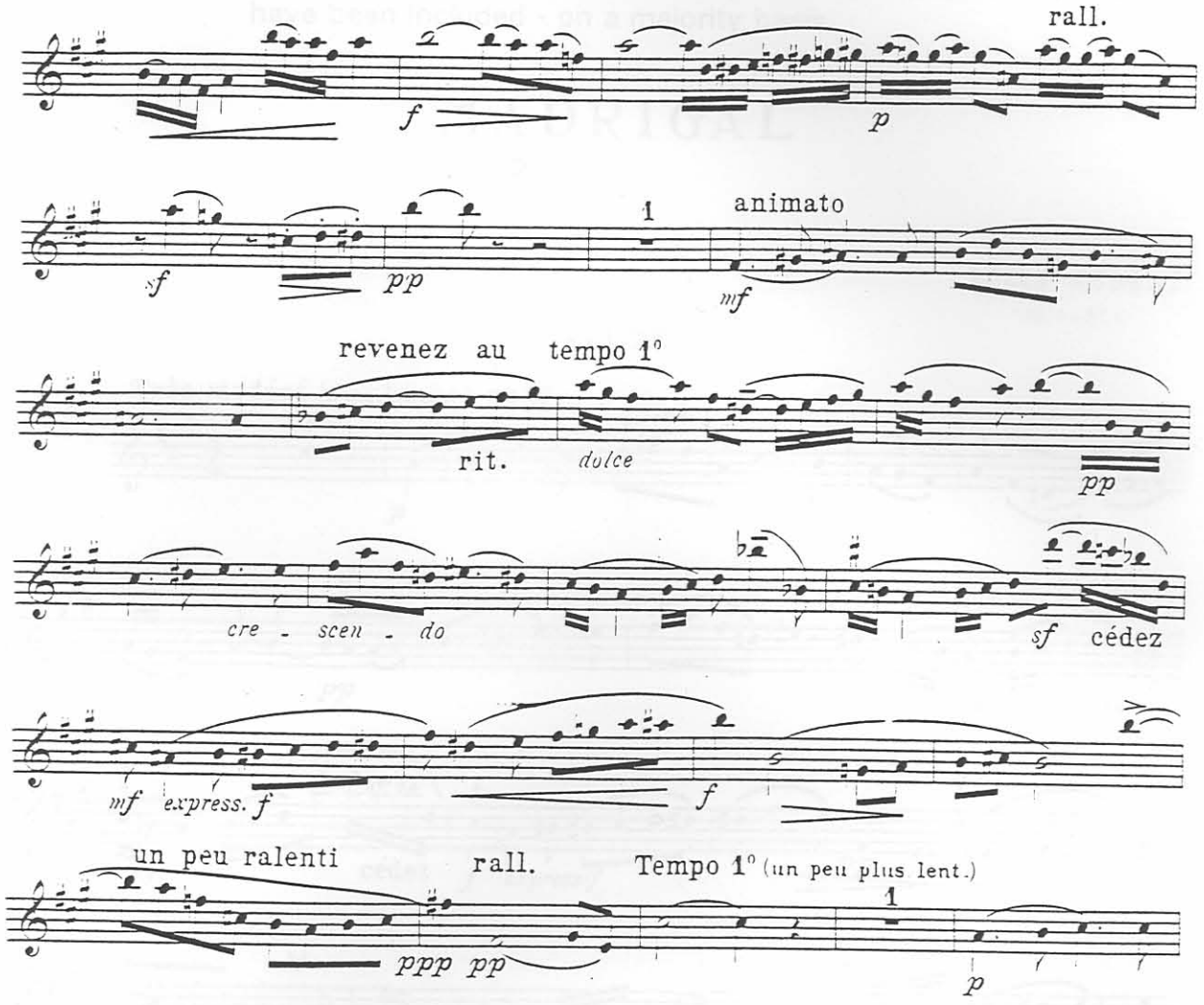
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FLÛTE



Editions DURAND & Cie, Paris. D. & F. 6004 4 Place de la Madeleine.

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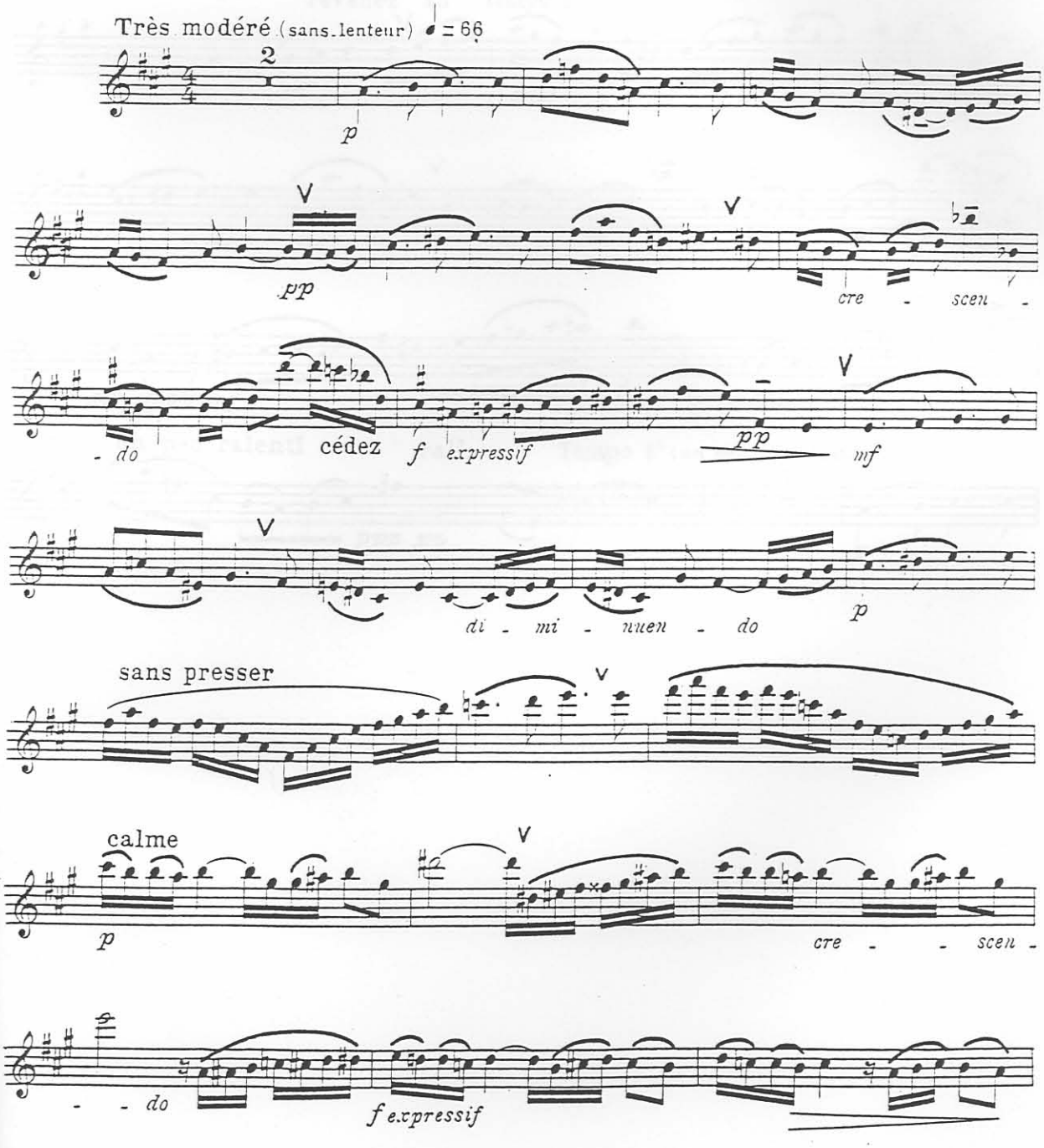
Appendix B3: With slurs, articulations and breathing places as added by the testees. Only the most frequently used of the testees' patterns have been included - on a majority basis.

MADRIGAL

LOUIS AUBERT
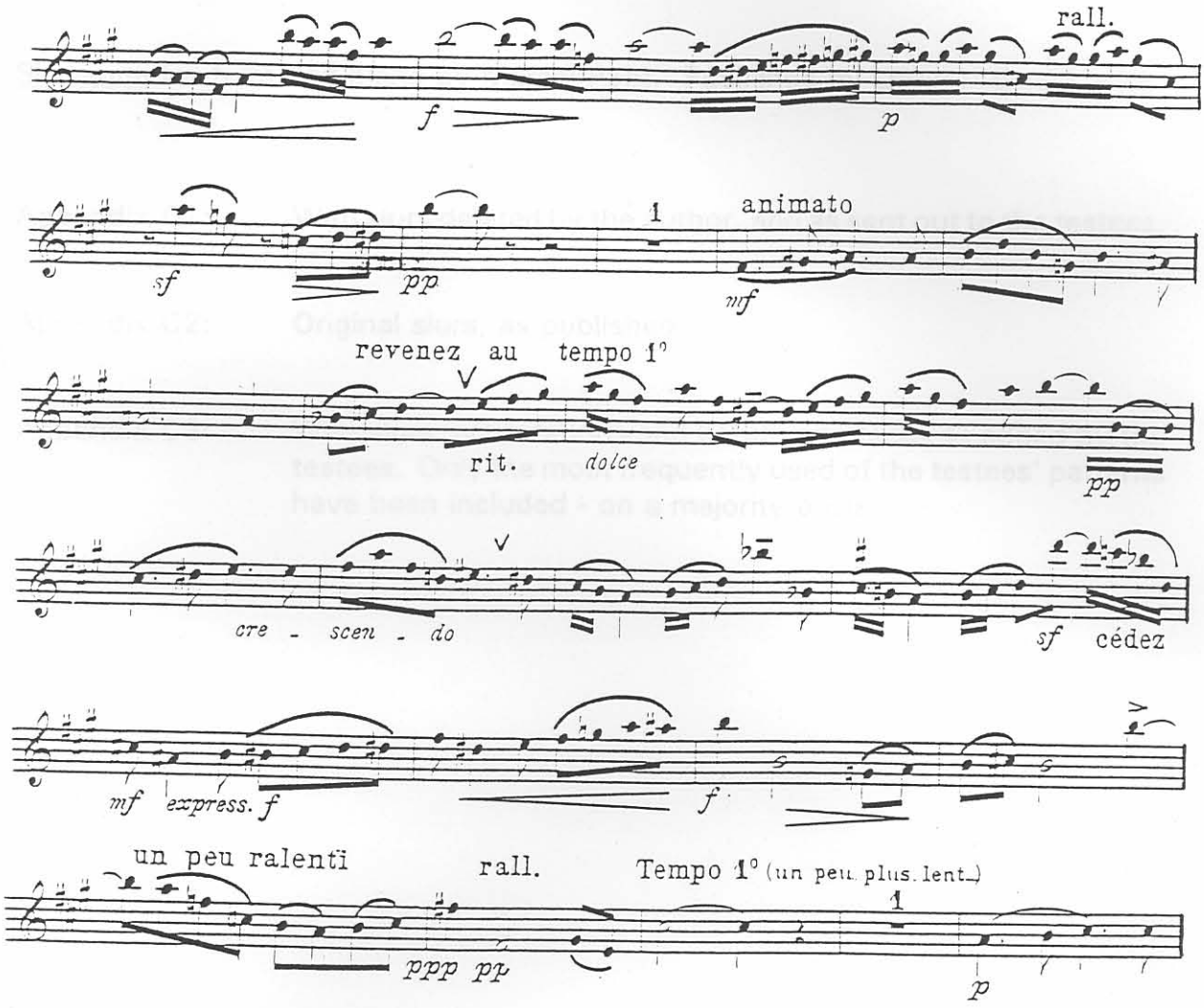
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FLÛTE



Editions DURAND & Cie, Paris. D. & F. 6004 4 Place de la Madeleine.

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APPENDIX C

Sicilienne for flute and piano by Marcel Poot. Published by Leduc. Bars 1 - 13.

Appendix C1: With slurs deleted by the author, and as sent out to the testees.

Appendix C2: Original slurs, as published.

Appendix C3: With slurs, articulations and breathing places as added by the testees. Only the most frequently used of the testees' patterns have been included - on a majority basis.

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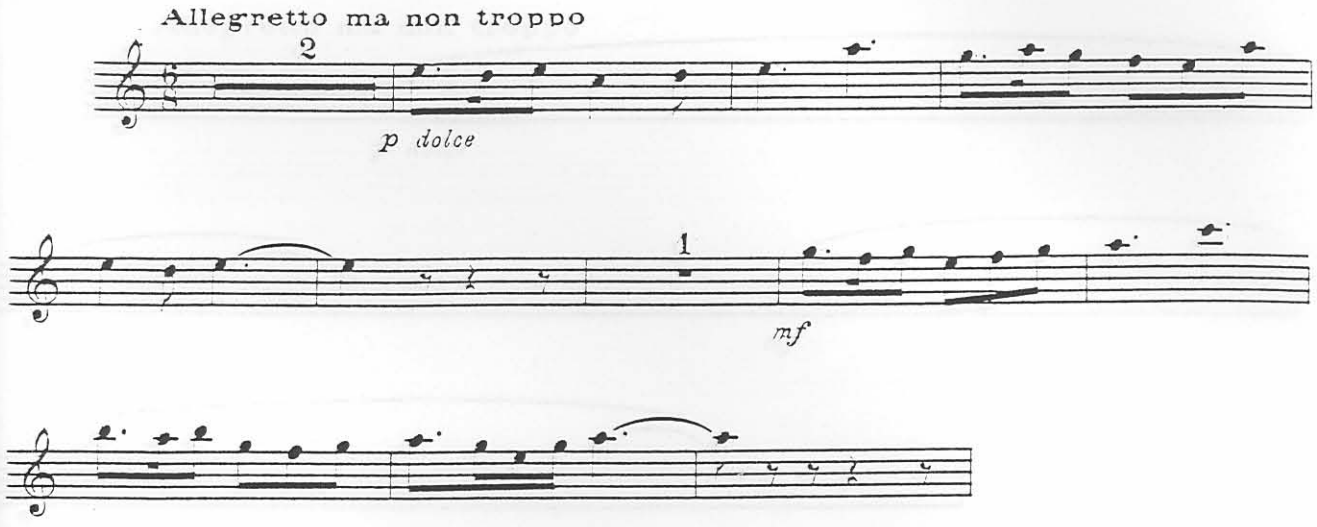
Appendix C1: With slurs deleted by the author, and as sent out to the testees.

SICILIENNE

pour Flûte et Piano

MARCEL POOT

FLÛTE



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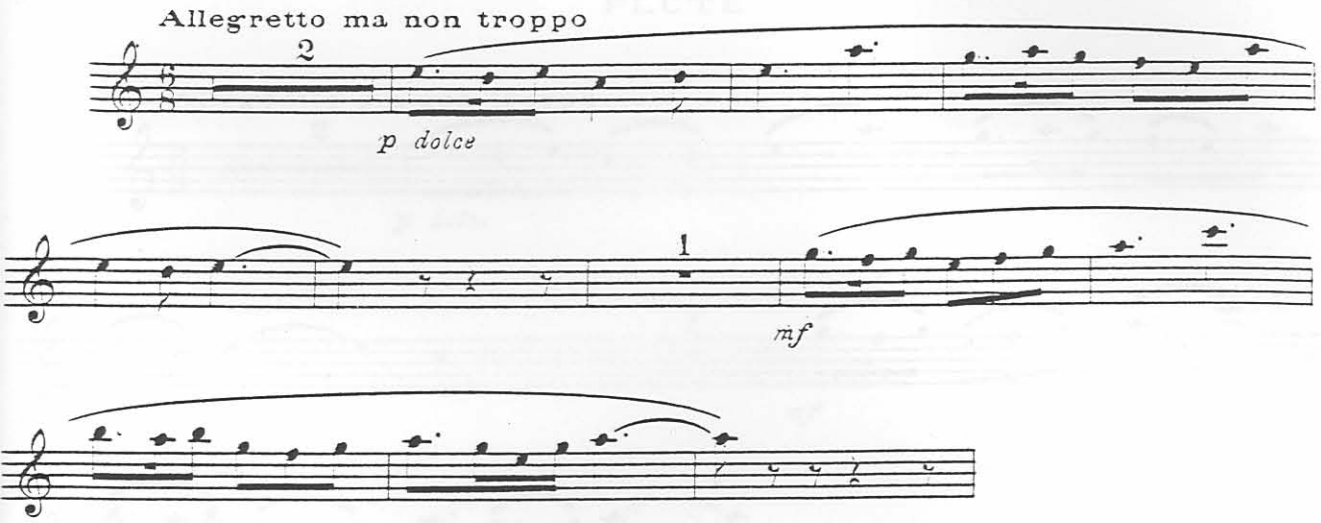
Appendix C2: Original slurs, as published.

SICILIENNE

pour Flûte et Piano
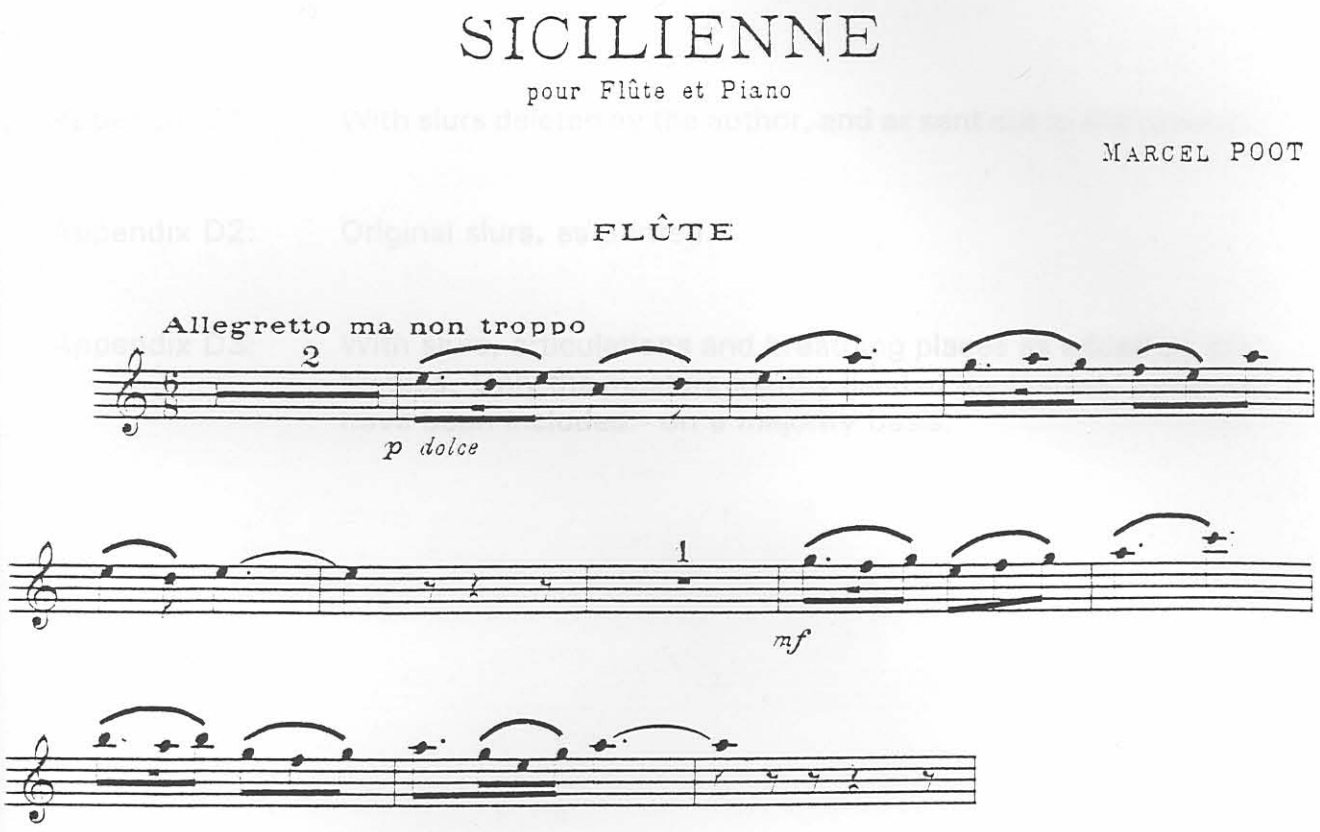
MARCEL POOT

FLÛTE



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Appendix C3: With slurs, articulations and breathing places as added by the testees. Only the most frequently used of the testees' patterns have been included - on a majority basis.



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APPENDIX D

Country Dance for flute and piano by C.R. Yuill-Smith. Published by Oxford University Press. Bars 1 - 16.

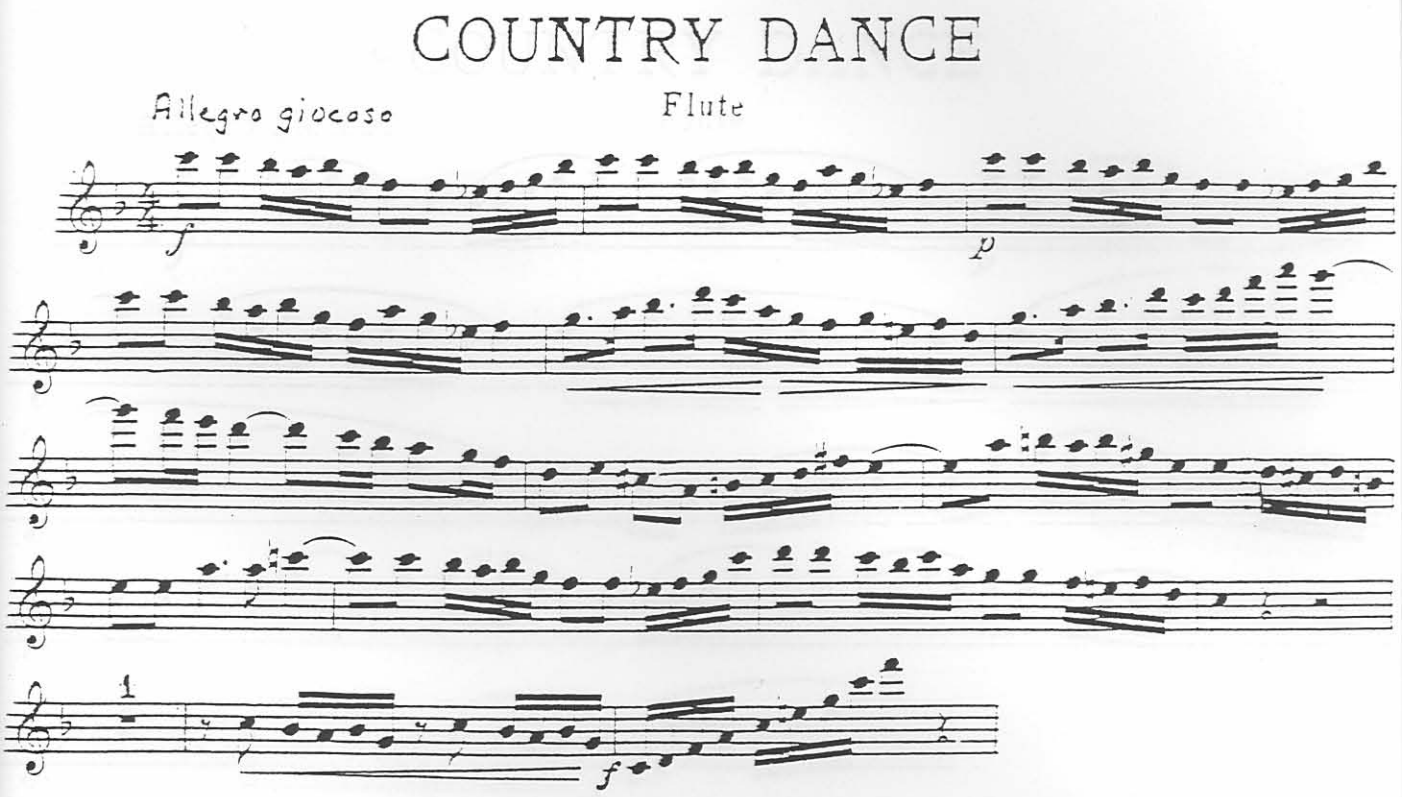
Appendix D1: With slurs deleted by the author, and as sent out to the testees.

Appendix D2: Original slurs, as printed.

Appendix D3: With slurs, articulations and breathing places as added by the testees. Only the most frequently used of the testees' patterns have been included - on a majority basis.

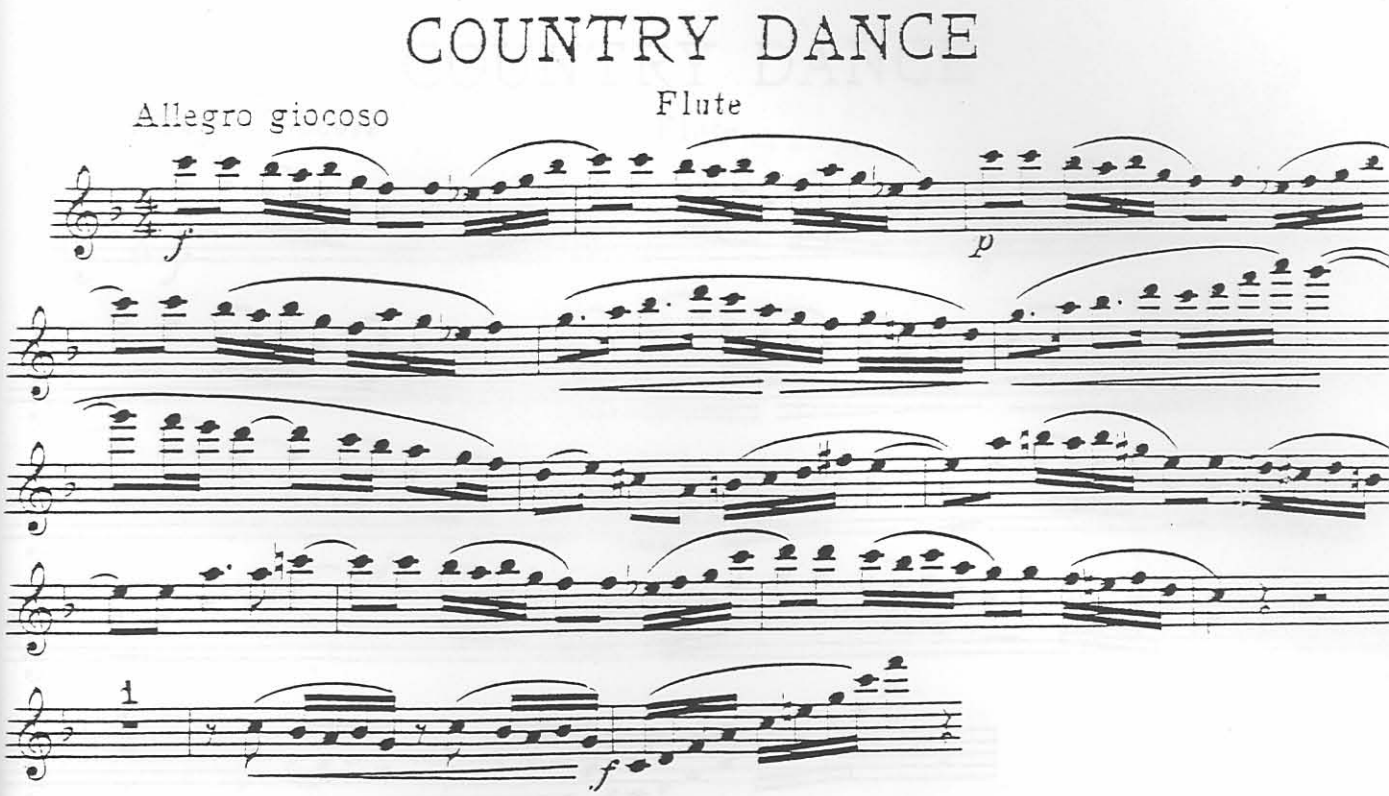
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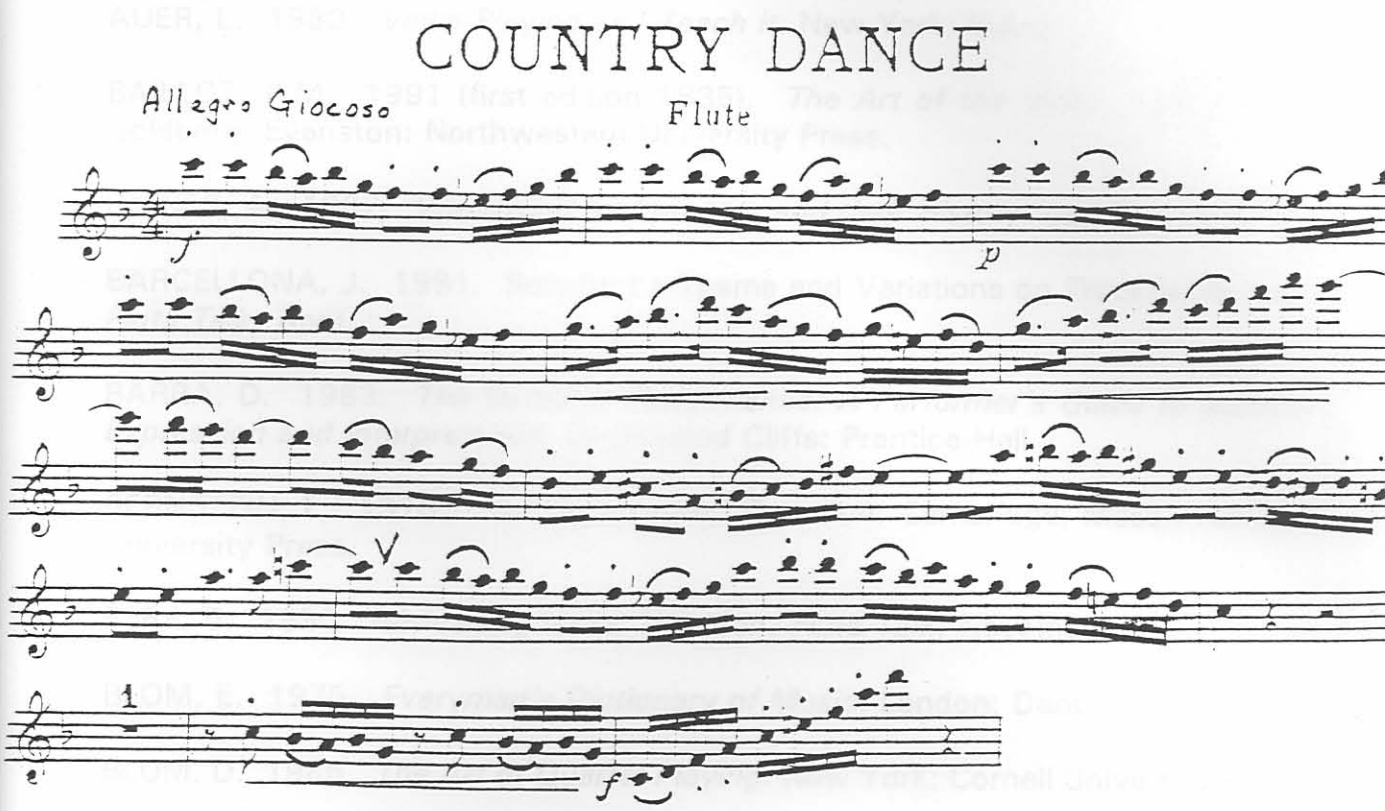


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Appendix D2: Original slurs, as published.



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Appendix D3: With slurs, articulations and breathing places as added by the testees. Only the most frequently used of the testees' patterns have been included - on a majority basis.



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