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Adam David Burdick

The Influence of French Baroque Dance on the Cantatas of Johann Sebastian Bach

Adam David Burdick

A dissertation
submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Musical Arts

University of Washington

2007

Program Authorized to Offer Degree:
School of Music

UMI Number: 3275851

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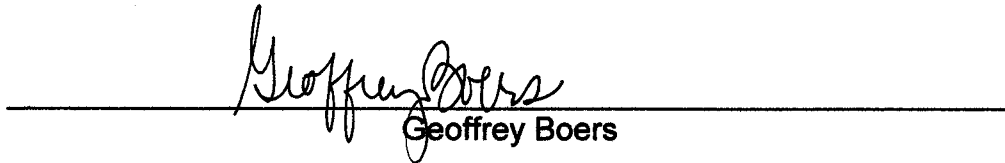

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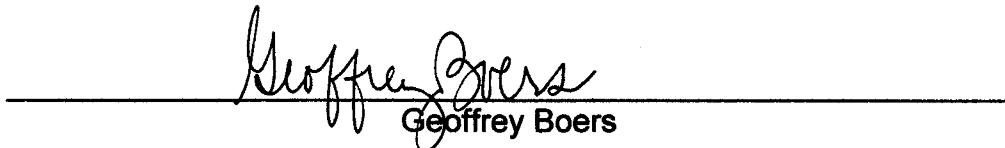

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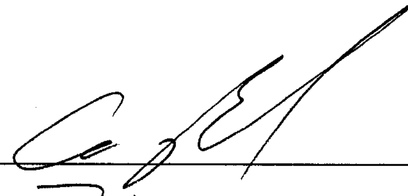
Signature 

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Abstract

The Influence of French Baroque Dance
on the Cantatas of Johann Sebastian Bach

Adam David Burdick

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Recent scholarship has shown that performers who understand dance characteristics in Johann Sebastian Bach's music can apply a more nuanced approach to the performance of that music. Though many performers would likely welcome the opportunity to learn more about expressing dance qualities in performance of Bach's music, few resources exist to guide them. This dissertation aims to encourage performers of Bach's cantatas to explore the richness of the dance elements in them.

Investigation into the context of the dances, the technical details of the dance steps, and their qualities of momentum, helps build a vocabulary with which to discuss specific instances of dance characteristics in Bach's cantatas. When the performer can identify ways in which a dance influences a musical composition, he has gained an array of specific musical insights about the piece, which will help him make expressive decisions about articulations, ornamentation, affect, and other musical issues. Interpretations gain greater clarity and shape, and the infectious kinesthetic quality of the dance comes to the fore in the music.

The dissertation focuses specifically on the impact on Germany and Bach's music of French Baroque dances popularized in the court of Louis XIV. Study of French Baroque cultural influence on Germany will also expose a practice in musicology of dismissing and suppressing French influence on German music and culture, especially in the works of Bach.

Bach's titled dances have prompted fruitful discussions on the significance of the dance in performance of Bach's dance-influenced music, and this paper will closely examine this topic. The dissertation will focus most intently on Bach's sarabande- and minuet-influenced titled dances and cantata movements. Several dances and movements will be explored for their dance characteristics, and implications for dance-inflected performance will be discussed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page
List of Figures ii
List of Musical Examples iii
Introduction 1
Chapter 1: French Influence on Germany and Bach 5
The Spread of French Culture: from Versailles to Leipzig 10
French Baroque Dance 17
Bach's Exposure to French Baroque Music and Musicians 21
Chapter 2: Dance Characteristics 27
Significance of Dance in Baroque Music 27
French Baroque Dance Steps and their Kinesthetic Qualities 35
Dance Qualities and their Implications for Tempos and *Affeke* 44
Chapter 3: Dance and Bach's Suites and Partitas 52
Sarabande History and Character 52
Bach's Use of Sarabande Elements 58
Minuet History and Character 67
Bach's Use of Minuet Elements 72
The Performance Tradition of the Cello Suites 76
Mislabeled Dance Movements and Editorial Ignorance 80
Chapter 4: Dance in the Cantatas 87
A Movement With Clear Minuet Structure: BWV 122 89
A Movement with Subtle Minuet Structure: BWV 8 93
A Movement with Distinct Sarabande Rhythms: BWV 6 103
A Sarabande-like Movement without "Sarabande Syncopation" Rhythms: BWV 113 108
A Movement with Evidence for Multiple Dance Types: BWV 124 114
Comparing Choral Recordings; Performance that Projects the Dance: BWV 75 121
Conclusion 127
Bibliography 130
Appendix A: Selected Characteristics of Dance Forms in Bach's Time 152
Appendix B: Period Account of Danced Sarabande 156
Appendix C: List of Considerations for Dance Influence 157

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure Number | Page

4.1. BWV 122, *Das neugeborne Kindelein*: Mvt. 1, Text 93
4.2. BWV 8, *Liebster Gott, wenn werd ich sterben?* Mvt. 1, Text........... 102
4.3. BWV 6, *Bleib bei uns, denn es will Abend werden*, Mvt. 1, Text..... 108
4.4. BWV 113, *Herr Jesu Christ, du höchstes Gut*, Mvt. 1, Text 114
4.5. BWV 124, *Meinen Jesum lass ich nicht*, Mvt. 1, Text 116
4.6. BWV 75, *Die Elenden sollen essen*, Mvt. 1, Text............................ 124

LIST OF MUSICAL EXAMPLES

Example Number Page

3.1. Charles Dieupart, Suite #1 in A major, Sarabande 57
3.2. Rhythm of "Sarabande Syncopation" 57
3.3. Bach, BWV 806, English Suite #1, Sarabande 59
3.4. Bach, BWV 1008, Cello Suite #2, Sarabande 62
3.5. Bach, BWV 830, Partita #6, Sarabande 64
3.6. Charles Dieupart, Suite #6 in F minor, Menuet 72
3.7. Bach, BWV 1008, Cello Suite #2, Menuet 73
3.8. Bach, BWV 817, French Suite #6, Menuet 74
3.9. Bach, BWV 825, Partita #1, Menuet 2 75
4.1. Bach, BWV 122, *Das neugeborne Kindelein* 90
4.2a. Bach, BWV 8, *Liebster Gott, wenn werd ich sterben?* 95
4.2b. Bach, BWV 8, *Liebster Gott, wenn werd ich sterben?*, Chorus..... 101
4.3a. Bach, BWV 6, *Bleib bei uns, denn es will Abend werden* 104
4.3b. Bach, BWV 6, *Bleib bei uns, denn es will Abend werden*, Chorus 105
4.4a. Bach, BWV 113, *Herr Jesu Christ, du höchstes Gut*..................... 109
4.4b. Bach, BWV 113, *Herr Jesu Christ, du höchstes Gut*, Chorus 113
4.5. Bach, BWV 124, *Meinen Jesum lass ich nicht*................................ 115
4.6. Bach, BWV 75, *Die Elenden sollen essen* 122

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Author wishes to express sincere appreciation to the many people who assisted with this project.

Cecilia Archuleta, Ryan Bede, Juliana Brandon, Joe Bynum, Bruce Carpenter, Darlene Franz, Bill Ham, Justin Henderlight, Chung-Lin Lee, Julie Parsons, Gene Peterson, Margaret Prezbindowski, Eileen Swanson, Nathan Whittaker, Carina Wolf, and Nancy Zylstra.

Charles Heiden

Tish Lopez

Brenda Banks

Families Jackson, Pender, and Wisneskie

Brothers Don and Dan and their families

Tonette Matera, Rachel Webster, Les Green

Gary and Marnie Cannon

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Geoffrey Boers

And to my wife, Lorraine, who assisted me in so many ways, I express my deepest appreciation and love.

Introduction

In the last thirty years, scholars have begun to investigate the ways in which dance, and music composed for dance, influenced Johann Sebastian Bach's music. This research has been most successfully presented by scholars who understand both dance and music, and can meaningfully articulate the ways in which the two disciplines interact. These writers have a consistent theme to their work: that a greater understanding of dance characteristics in Bach's music can result in a richer interpretation of and approach to the performance of that music. When the performer can identify ways in which a dance influences a musical composition, he has gained an array of specific musical insights about the piece, which will help him make expressive decisions about articulations and phrasing, tempo, ornamentation, *Affekt*,[1] and other

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[1] In his Grove Music Online article on the subject, George J. Buelow defines the term *Affekt* as follows: "In its German form, a term first employed extensively by German musicologists . . . to describe in Baroque music an aesthetic concept originally derived from Greek and Latin doctrines of rhetoric and oratory. Just as . . . orators employed the rhetorical means to control and direct the emotions of their audiences, so, in the language of classical rhetoric manuals and also Baroque music treatises, must the speaker (i.e. the composer) move the 'affects' (i.e. emotions) of the listener. . . . The affects, then, were rationalized emotional states or passions. After 1600 composers generally sought to express in their vocal music such affects as were related to the texts, for example sadness, anger, hate, joy, love and jealousy. During the 17th and early 18th centuries this meant that most compositions (or, in the case of longer works, individual sections or movements) expressed only a single affect. Composers in general sought a rational unity that was imposed on all the elements of a work by its affect. No single 'theory' of the affects was, however, established by the theorists of the Baroque period. But beginning with Mersenne and Kircher in the mid-17th century, many theorists, among them Werckmeister, Printz, Mattheson, Marpurg, Scheibe and Quantz, gave over large parts of their treatises to categorizing and describing types of affect as well as the affective connotations of scales, dance movements, rhythms, instruments, forms and styles." George J. Buelow, "Affects, theory of the," *Grove Music Online* ed. L. Macy (Accessed [12 July 2007]), <http://www.grovemusic.com.offcampus.lib.washington.edu/shared/views/article.html?section=music.00253>.

qualities. The performance gains greater clarity and shape, and the infectious kinesthetic quality of the dance comes to the fore in the music.

Though many performers would likely welcome the opportunity to learn more about expressing dance qualities in music performance, few resources exist to guide them, particularly in the case of Bach's music. In the first two centuries of biographical and analytical writing on Bach, writers who alluded to dance in Bach's music usually made only passing references to dance-like qualities, often not even identifying specific dance types. Readers have been left to infer the musical implications of these references. Similarly, performers find little guidance in their performing editions, which rarely include specific information about dance in Bach's music. Players of Bach's string, keyboard, lute and flute suites and partitas may have gained an impression of dance types through years of playing them. However, without guidance to clarify the unique characteristics of each dance, their knowledge may be limited to a few somewhat superficial musical details.[2]

This dissertation aims to provide an additional resource to performers interested in the study of dance in Bach's music, and will address dance influences in his cantatas in particular. It will explore the dances that spread from the French court of Louis XIV (ruled 1661-1715) to Germany during Bach's

[2] In the case of some long-lived dances, such as the minuet, an assumption of familiarity with the dance might even lead a performer away from appropriate style. The modern performer's understanding of the minuet may owe more to Mozart than to Bach or Lully. Ideally, the musician will approach each composer's minuets (or any other dance) with careful consideration of associated context – for example, the location and date of composition, the purpose of the music, and the character of the danced minuet at the time – and adjust his playing accordingly.

lifetime, paying particular attention to sarabandes and minuets. It will trace these dances from their French versions to Bach's own titled dances, and will identify elements of them in his cantatas. As we review the importance of French culture to Bach and Germany, we will also confront a prejudice long present in musicology, which tends to be dismissive of French music and culture, and especially its influence on the works of Bach.

It is not the intent of this dissertation to suggest that Bach's cantatas precisely fit the forms of French Baroque dance music. Even in many of his suites and partitas, which include titled dances obviously related to dance models, Bach expanded beyond the dance forms, using them as source material for ever-expanding creative explorations. In the cantata movements, Bach's often sparing use of dance elements prompts us to look less for evidence of large-scale forms than distinct appearances of a dance's qualities of rhythm, momentum, and phrase shape.

In this dissertation, we will identify these dance traits in the context of music examples from French Baroque composers, Bach's titled dances, and several cantata movements. We will discuss how the performer may use musical techniques to project the relevant dance qualities. We will also explore the kinesthetic qualities of the dance steps, and consider their possible implications for musical performance. Bach's titled dances have prompted the most fruitful scholarly discussion on the significance of the dance in

performance of Bach's dance-influenced music, so we will closely examine their contribution to the topic for lessons to apply to performance of the cantatas.

In addition to the use of many music examples, reference will be made to recordings in the course of the discussion. Recordings leave an historical record of performance practice changes over at least the last fifty years, and can help us gauge performers' and conductors' opinions on dance influence in various genres.

Many performance-practice issues which will arise in passing in this dissertation have been discussed at length by other scholars; for further detail on *notes inégales*, double-dotting, and ornamentation, readers are referred to work by Stephen Hefling and David Fuller. Similarly, though this dissertation will occasionally address Bach's melding of textual and dance *Affekte*, the topic has ramifications well beyond the scope of this document, especially when combined with the implications of key *Affekte*. Here one might find the writings of Rita Steblin and Eric Chafe an informative starting point.

Chapter 1: French Influence on Germany and Bach

The influence of French culture on Bach has not always been graciously acknowledged by his biographers, or considered of benefit to his music by musicologists. Yet, the impact of the French on Germany throughout the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century cannot be overstated. The Thirty Years War, fought between 1618 and 1648, had decimated much of the territory of what is now Germany. Struggling to rebuild in the years that followed, Germans actively imported French culture, and German artists and leaders welcomed French philosophy and aesthetics with great interest. In this environment, as will be shown later, Bach enjoyed many opportunities to encounter French styles, and assimilated them in every genre in which he composed.

However, through the latter eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the climate began to change. Stirred by a growing inclination toward nationalism, German writers began to reject all French influence, even denying its prior importance. Bach scholar Hans-Joachim Schulze cites an example of this phenomenon in a letter sent in 1827 by Karl Friedrich Zelter, a central figure in the revival of interest in Bach, to Johann Wolfgang von Goethe:

> For all his originality old Bach is the child of his time and his country, inevitably succumbing to the influence of the French, and in particular, of Couperin... In Bach's case, however, we can skim off this alien element,

> like a thin layer of foam, revealing the real substance immediately beneath it.[3]

Goethe responded,

> The important assertion you make that a thoroughly original composer like Bach allowed a foreign influence to have its effect on him, came as something of a surprise to me. I immediately looked up Franz [sic] Couperin in my biographical dictionary, and I fully comprehend how, given the great trend at that time in the Arts and Sciences, a Gallic element should have wafted over.[4]

Zelter confessed in a later letter that in fact this French influence cannot be separated out, but "permeates all" of Bach's music.[5] His disparaging references to the French "foam" reveal an innate prejudice, which Schulze ascribes not just to Zelter, but to other contemporaries of his, including Bach's first biographer, Johann Nikolaus Forkel. "In consequence," states Schulze, "biased Bach biographies appeared throughout the 19th and even the 20th centuries, quoting what were apparently the best authorities."[6]

Musicologist Matthew Dirst also references Zelter's views, as one example of a sentiment within German literature and other arts in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, in which "a rejection of the long-standing cultural hegemony of France—in literature, music and even the language used at court—was fundamental to [a] desire for a German culture."[7] In such a context, "other turn-of-the-century German critics went further [than

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[3] Han-Joachim Schulze, "The French Influence in Bach's Instrumental Music," *Early Music* 13, No. 2 (May, 1985): 180.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Matthew Dirst, "Bach's French Overtures and the Politics of Overdotting," *Early Music* 25, No. 1 (February 1997): 42.

Forkel], explaining away Bach's French-style works as regrettably unoriginal music."[8]

Dirst finds a similar tendency in the modern musicology of Frederick Neumann, and places him "at the end of a long line of nationalistic German writers, some of whom regretted Bach's occasional dabbling in foreign styles so much that they sought actively to suppress it."[9] Dirst examines Neumann's criticism of several pieces by Bach in which the manuscripts show changes in his notational practices regarding French rhythms.[10] According to Dirst, Neumann employs questionable musicological methods in a contorted effort to reject French elements in Bach's music. As the scholar behind one of the seminal works on ornamentation in the Baroque, Neumann wielded great authority in musicological circles.[11] If Dirst's claim is true, the covert anti-French bias in Neumann's work swayed many musicians to doubt French influence in Bach's works.

Musicologist Celia Applegate has also found nationalist trends in German musicology. Noting that German musicologists lauded Bach's "genius," but swept aside his "unoriginal" French-influenced music, Applegate suggests that pronouncements regarding "unoriginal" music and "genius" must

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[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid.
[10] In particular, the French Overture BWV 831 and 831a, and the Aria from the Goldberg Variations. Dirst, 39.
[11] Neumann, Frederick. *Ornamentation in Baroque and Post-Baroque Music, with special emphasis on J.S. Bach* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978).

be interpreted in the light of their cultural and political contexts.[12] These musicologists likely had unacknowledged pro-German political goals—yet their statements have been accepted at face value, and have influenced the canon of musical works heard and studied for generations. Scholars searching for references to the French influence in Bach's music must consider the possibility that generations of German musicologists have directly suppressed that evidence.[13]

A bias against French composers may even be exhibited in Grove Music Online's current article on Bach's "Background and Style."[14] The article is almost completely silent on French influence in Bach's compositional development, with a single reference to French composers drawn from a regrettably vague comment by Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach. In a 1775 letter to Forkel, C.P.E. lists several composers who influenced his father when young, and mentions a few Italians and numerous Germans by name, as well as "some old and good Frenchmen." [15] The article does not pursue the identity of those composers, though the fact of Bach's exposure to several specific composers

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[12] Celia Applegate, "What Is German Music? Reflections on the Role of Art in the Creation of the Nation," *German Studies Review* 15, German Identity (Winter, 1992): 26.

[13] Applegate contends that, though for some decades critics have recognized the presence of nationalism and other agendas in music criticism, "The serious study of music has . . . long neglected the role of nationalism in music because it has itself been profoundly shaped by nationalism, in ways that even now remain unexamined." Applegate, 26.

[14] "§III: (7) Johann Sebastian Bach 12. Background, style, influences," *Grove Music Online* ed. L. Macy (Accessed [31 March 2007]), http://www.grovemusic.com.offcampus.lib.washington.edu/shared/views/article.html?section=music.40023.3.7.12#music.40023.3.7.12.

[15] Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach. "In Answer to Questions about Bach." in *The Bach Reader,* ed. Hans T. David and Arthur Mendel, rev. with supp. (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1966), 278.

and their music is well known. Further, though the authors discuss at length Bach's compositional evolution at Weimar in response to Vivaldi's music, they make no mention of the French works that he also came to know at that time.[16] Considering the significance of the many instrumental dance pieces that followed this period, surely the composers that informed Bach's experiments in this genre are worthy of mention. The silence on this topic suggests a bias in this most reputable source that cannot be explained away by limitations of scope.

In light of the long history of unquestioned judgments, biased scholarship, and perhaps even active suppression of inconvenient facts, it is not surprising that the French influence in Bach's music has been buried so thoroughly. However, recent scholarship exploring the importance of French Baroque music and dance in European culture of the time may inspire further study on this marginalized subject, and help bring a deserving area of Bach scholarship to a wider audience of performers and listeners.[17] In the next section, we will discover the connection between these two fields of study, by exploring the circumstances in which French Baroque dance developed, and how it came to be a central part of cultural life in Bach's Germany.

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[16] As will be discussed later, the collection of music from Holland that Bach studied included works by French composers in addition to Vivaldi's music.

[17] Organist-musicologist Peter Williams urges further study of "the intense interest of German composers [during the Baroque] in the music of other countries—perhaps precisely the factor that helped German music to become the dominating force it later became." Peter Williams, *The Organ Music of J.S. Bach: Volume 3: A Background* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 102.

The Spread of French Culture: from Versailles to Leipzig

> In eighteenth-century European life… dance was without question the most popular form of social entertainment. It pervaded all levels of society and served a wide range of social functions. For the lower classes dancing served as a diversion from the toils of the day; the upper classes used it as a way of defining themselves individually within their class, and collectively apart from the lower classes; and for all levels the activity of dancing was a vehicle for courtship, ceremonies and celebrations. It seems that whenever and wherever people got together, there was bound to be dancing.[18]

This quote by musicologist Eric McKee helps a modern reader comprehend the pervasiveness of dance in Europe during the time of Johann Sebastian Bach. Surrounded as we are by entertainment in the twenty-first century, it is difficult to envision the excitement, anticipation, and pleasure that these social occasions evoked. Members of <u>all</u> classes danced, and therefore Bach's varied audiences and congregations undoubtedly included many who enjoyed the dance. It was in this environment that Bach composed his works—many of which prominently featured musical references to the latest popular dances. From the various suites, to the concertos, and even in the organ music and cantatas, dance music can be found throughout Bach's oeuvre.

One might argue that every culture and region has traditions of dance and folk music, and composers regularly incorporate them into their works.[19] However, the form of dance that exercised the greatest influence on Bach was <u>not</u> indigenous to his country, but an imported, remarkably sophisticated form of

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[18] Eric McKee, "Influences of the Early Eighteenth-Century Social Minuet on the Minuets from J.S. Bach's French Suites, BWV 812-817," *Music Analysis* 18, No. 2 (July 1999): 235.
[19] This is certainly true, and scholars and performers are urged to explore those relationships whenever the opportunity arises, since the musical implications can be so rewarding.

dance. French Baroque dance was uniquely placed to impact Germany and Bach as well, from the political motivations that prompted its widespread dissemination, to the notation systems which helped preserve and communicate it, and to its embodiment of high ideals and profound philosophical thought.

The widespread presence and the sophistication of French Baroque dance was due in great part to the interests of one man, the "Sun King," Louis XIV of France (1638-1715). Louis's court dominated Western European culture through the second half of the seventeenth century, and during his reign dance served as an icon of the power and magnificence of France.

Louis studied and practiced dancing assiduously from an early age, and performed publicly numerous times, even at the age of eight, according to dance scholar Wendy Hilton.[20] During the Regency, which lasted from 1643 until he assumed absolute power in 1661, Louis's taste for dance proved useful in a political context. Hilton tells us that in 1653, with France just recovering from a long period of civil war and political unrest brought on by its nobles, Prime Minister Jules Mazarin

> ...sought ways to reestablish confidence in his government and in the person of the King, who was then fourteen years old, beautiful to behold,

[20] Wendy Hilton, *Dance and Music of Court and Theater: Selected Writings of Wendy Hilton*, (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 1997), 5.

> and talented as a dancer. In the *ballet de cour*[21], Mazarin found an ideal for the achievement of this latter purpose.[22]

Mazarin caused a *ballet de cour* to be staged, which culminated in a grand ballet depicting the rising of the sun, in which the King performed the role of *le Roi Soleil.*[23] Thus began a practice of presenting dance-centered spectacles that had the political aim of impressing all of Europe with the glory of Louis XIV and of all France.[24]

After Louis achieved his majority in 1661, dance played multiple roles in serving the king's political goals. Recalling the political struggles of his childhood, the king did not entrust the governing of the country to his nobles, but appointed members of the lower classes to positions of power. Louis required all courtiers not involved in wars to attend on him at Versailles. There, they participated with him in creating a vision of grandeur to demonstrate the supremacy of France to the rest of the world—and dance was central to that vision.[25]

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[21] *Ballets de cour* were "lavish spectacles given in theaters constructed within the royal residences, [in which] the King, couriers and professional performers participated, and members of the public were admitted as spectators." Ibid., 4.
[22] Ibid., 7.
[23] This translates to "The Sun King"
[24] Ibid. Also dancing in the ballet de cour was Jean Baptiste Lully, who would later leverage his friendship with the King into an appointment as Superintendent of the King's Chamber Music. Lully's orchestra was renowned for its disciplined and uniform approach to ensemble playing, and directly influenced orchestras and playing styles throughout Europe.
[25] While Dorothy Olsson is correct that dance seemed to "establish the formality of official occasions while ornamenting and glorifying the power of the nobility," in truth it helped distract that nobility from vying for control – and therefore effectively weakened their power, while underscoring the king's. Dorothy Olsson, "Dance," in *A Performer's Guide to Seventeenth-Century Music*, Stewart Carter, ed. (New York: Schirmer Books, 1997), 341.

Louis's campaign to impress the rest of Europe was quite successful, and the influence of French culture on other parts of Europe was profound, particularly in Germany. As was stated above, throughout the second half of the seventeenth century, the cities and states of Germany were still recovering from the ravages of the Thirty Years War, and lacked a central government or cohesive sense of nationhood. In this rebuilding period, many looked to France for a model of prosperity and culture. As musicology and dance scholars Meredith Little and Natalie Jenne note, "Many German courts and cities imported culture from France and Italy as part of a peacetime cultural competition, striving to build brilliant, elegant centers of civility which would outshine those of their neighbors."[26]

In his book, *The Small German Courts in the Eighteenth Century*, Adrien Fauchier-Magnan details the extent to which French language, manners and culture infiltrated Germany in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. According to Fauchier-Magnan, the French language reigned supreme in the eighteenth-century court of Frederick II, as he spoke almost exclusively in French, and ordered the academies to follow suit.[27] Citing examples from correspondence and other writings, Fauchier-Magnan shows

[26] Meredith Ellis Little and Natalie Jenne, *Dance and the Music of J. S. Bach*, exp. ed., Music: Scholarship and Performance, ed. Paul Hillier (Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 2001), 3.

[27] Adrien Fauchier-Magnan, *The Small German Courts in the Eighteenth Century*, trans. Mervyn Savill (London: Methuen, 1958), 30-31.

how this tendency had spread throughout German courts, to the point that "no one dared to introduce a gentleman to the court unless he spoke French."[28]

In the pursuit of the adoption of French manners and exposure to culture, "every well-bred young German who would be called upon to hold an important position" took a coming-of-age journey through Europe, and particularly to France. Fauchier-Magnan describes the young noblemen trying "to become frenchified and lose the Germanic boorishness," and being dazzled by the magnificence of Versailles.[29] Many of these young noblemen developed a taste for French music while there, and brought back volumes of the latest French music. While in Weimar, Bach had the opportunity to study one such nobleman's collection of music, which was a turning point in his composing career.

Upon their return to Germany these princes and other nobles imported French musicians and dancers, and placed in their hands the direction of culture in German courts and cities. Many lesser nobles and other leading members of society in Germany followed the lead of their betters in imitating the French court, in as lavish a manner as they could sustain. Consequently, many French dancing masters came to be employed in German cities and courts during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, and French musicians were prized in the court orchestras. In addition, many Germans

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[28] Ibid., 30.
[29] Ibid., 34-36.

traveled to study dance and other arts in Paris, and found themselves in demand upon their return.

As the interest in French manners and culture spread from the German courts to the lower social circles, French (or French-trained) dancing masters and French dancing appeared in the cities and middle classes as well. Little and Jenne note evidence of French dancing in dancing master Samuel Rudolph Behrens' 1713 book, *L'art de Bien Danser, Oder Die Kunst wohl zu Tanzten.* In addition to instruction on French Court dancing, the book describes student productions in Leipzig which also featured French dance. According to Little and Jenne, "From this treatise one learns that French dance has passed well beyond the aristocratic courts and penetrated the middle-class world which surrounded Bach in Leipzig."[30]

Leipzig seems to have been a particularly important center for dance, and Behrens was not the only dancing master to publish materials on dancing there. Johannes Pasch (1653-1710) was born in Dresden but studied dance in Paris with Pierre Beauchamps, the director of the Royal Academy of Dance in Paris and personal dancing master to Louis XIV.[31] After his return to Germany, Pasch taught French Court dancing in Leipzig for nearly forty years, and also published a pamphlet there which included four French choreographies. Little and Jenne attest that in these choreographies the "steps and floor patterns are

[30] Little and Jenne, 13.

[31] Beauchamps was also the creator of the notation system published by Feuillet, as will be discussed later. Pasch's Leipzig students could hardly have found a more undiluted source of the true French style.

unchanged from the Paris originals, with no adjustments for German taste," which suggests that the dance practices current in Germany, at least in Leipzig, matched those in France.[32]

Another dancing master in Leipzig, Gottfried Taubert, published his extensive treatise on dance, *Rechtschaffener Tantzmeister*, in 1717. Within it, he included a translation of Feuillet's *Chorégraphie*, thus bringing to Germans a resource that had been rare, expensive, and even kept secret by French dancing masters.[33] Dance scholar Angelika Gerbes reports that, in his teaching practice, Taubert was careful to provide rhythmically correct demonstrations of the steps. He regularly drew the students' attention to musical concerns, such as how to distribute steps "correctly over the measures to create an harmonious cadence," "subtleties of the step-music correlations," and the "exact timing of all movements, whether they occurred during or between notes."[34] Taubert took care to ensure his students had an understanding of music, even testing them on musical concepts and using special methods for those who did not immediately grasp the music and the beat.

If Taubert's skills as a dancing master were matched by his colleagues, Leipzig enjoyed numerous citizens who were well-trained and solidly attentive to the music of the dance. It seems that when Bach arrived in Leipzig, he came

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[32] Ibid.,14.
[33] Angelika Gerbes, "Eighteenth Century Dance Instruction: The Course of Study Advocated by Gottfried Taubert," *Dance Research: The Journal of the Society for Dance Research* 10, No. 1 (Spring 1992): 40-1.
[34] Ibid., 48.

to a city which valued dance, and most notably a style of French Court dance with a direct, if somewhat dated, lineage from Versailles itself.

French Baroque Dance

We have seen above that the form of French Baroque dance that took root in Germany kept much of its character and refinement. Several factors combined to hone this art into a form that could span decades and spread across a continent. We saw Louis XIV's international political agenda played out in his dance spectacles, which dazzled visiting foreigners who returned home impressed by the glory of France. However, Louis also used dance for political purposes on a local level, as a cunning means of controlling the French nobility. The nobles' absorption in the dance and their highly competitive spirit helped power the development and refinement of the dance. In turn, the artists who created the productions elevated their meaning to express central tenets of French philosophy of the time. Bach was influenced by a form of dance that had reached a level of sophistication never seen before in Europe.

In the balls presented by Louis, precise preparations and political agendas—both overt, and perhaps more importantly, covert—dictated every step. The evening consisted almost exclusively of two-partner dances, with the succession of dancers selected well in advance according to rank. As McKee notes above, the dance served as a proving ground upon which the nobles

reaffirmed their position in the hierarchy of the nobility, and collectively demonstrated their superiority to all others present. Ultimately, these dancers represented France's power and sophistication to the visiting foreigners present at the ball and to the outside world.[35]

These dances were performed by mostly young, healthy, thoroughly trained dancers executing physically demanding and often complex steps that required strength, balance and control. However, as Hilton says, ostentatious displays of their skill were considered vulgar: "Choreographically even the most virtuosic steps were not stressed, but merely slipped into the rhythmic flow of the dance."[36] The French dancer cultivated the impression of *nonchalance*, with which he concealed the considerable effort involved in his actions.[37] By doing so in the presence of hundreds of spectators who knew these dances well, and therefore knew precisely how much effort he was concealing, he demonstrated his power in a much more subtle manner than with the fiery display of passion that might be found in an Italian dance.

The concept of nonchalance has direct implications for performers of music composed for French Baroque dance, as they should strive for a similarly poised quality in their playing. Ornamentation must be "slipped into" the flow of

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[35] It might be more accurate to say that the highest nobility of the court *of an age to dance publicly* performed in these dances. It is important to note that most of these dances were performed by young people, according to Rebecca Harris-Warrick, who found that performers at one ball averaged 21 years of age, and ranged in age from 10 years old to 31 years old. (Harris-Warrick adds that few continued to dance after reaching the age of thirty, except those whose power was great enough to render them free from the danger of ridicule.) Rebecca Harris-Warrick, "Ballroom Dancing at the Court of Louis XIV," *Early Music* 14, No. 1 (1986): 44.

[36] Hilton, 37-8.

[37] Little and Jenne, 8. For a more detailed discussion of this concept, see Shirley Wynne, "Complaisance: An Eighteenth-Century Cool," *Dance Scope* 5, No. 1 (1970).

the music, and the performers must maintain a posture and an attitude that in no way reveals underlying effort, and only displays properly controlled emotions. French musicians often looked with distaste at what they considered the excesses of Italian musicians and their overwrought manner of expressing passion in their playing—a fact modern performers of French music should keep in mind.

The quality of nonchalance cloaked more than the physical effort of dancing, for behind its projection lay a central theme in French Baroque culture, as asserted by scholar Betty Bang Mather:

> Perhaps more than any other art form, French Baroque dance music as developed at the French Court by Lully and his colleagues carefully balances firm control (reason) with strong releases of feeling (the passions).[38]

Mather explains that French philosopher Jean-Pierre de Crousaz identified five qualities of beauty that exist "independently of feelings": uniformity, variety, regularity, order, and proportion. Crousaz and others found examples of these qualities expressed in gardens and architecture, but Mather reveals their regular role as defining characteristics of French Baroque dance and music for dance. Put simply, the uniformity and simplicity of the melody and harmony, the variety offered by ornamentation, the even proportions of its phrasing, and the

[38] Betty Bang Mather, *Dance Rhythms of the French Baroque: A Handbook for Performance* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1987): 8.

regularity and order provided by its regular structure, all embody the French love of order or Reason.[39]

This disciplined system functioned as the vehicle for the regulated expression of emotions, or passions. Exploring the classical belief that passions could be evoked by specific rhythms and melodies, French composers aimed to depict those qualities in their music, while French dancing masters created choreographies intended to express them through movement.[40] Each dance came to be associated with a particular passion, or *Affekt*, though writers expressed differences of opinion on the appropriate *Affekt* of each dance. The concept was widely accepted, and Bach's contemporary Johann Mattheson was among those who articulated a system associating each dance type with an *Affekt*. Thus, the dance forms that Bach assimilated from his French models were already associated with their own *Affekte.*

Bach's music, dance-inflected or not, displays qualities associated with these balanced concepts of passion and reason. Nonchalance has a close counterpart in his music, in the *Affekte* that express serene or moderated emotions. In a piece with a moderate *Affekt*, the performer regulates his expression of passion. In his cantatas, Bach often combines the textual and dance *Affekte* to amplify their effect. For example, since a common *Affekt* of minuets is moderate joy, Bach often set texts of moderately joyful *Affekt* to

[39] Ibid., 9.
[40] Mather notes that Lully was highly acclaimed for his skill at representing the passions in his songs. Ibid., 12-13.

minuet rhythms. The juxtaposition of these *Affekte* offers clear implications for the performers, that tempo, ornamentation, dynamics, and tone quality should all be kept moderate, in keeping with the *Affekt*. We will address these implications in actual musical contexts in Chapters 3 and 4.

Bach's Exposure to French Baroque Music and Musicians

Though we have begun to see how French Baroque dance music exhibits qualities in common with Bach's music, it might be instructive to explore in more detail the ways in which Bach came into contact with French culture. Throughout his life, Bach actively sought out opportunities to become more familiar with French music and musicians. He personally copied out pieces by French composers, and took advantage of opportunities to meet and hear performances by French and French-influenced musicians, several of whom became friends. Bach's music regularly shows his incorporation of common French compositional practices.

Bach's exposure to French culture began early on in his life. Little and Jenne comment that Bach would have "encountered French language, music, dance, and theater while he was a student at the Michaelisschule in Lüneberg," through his contact with the upper-class young men attending the nearby Ritterakademie. Musicologist Karl Geiringer describes Bach's exposure to French culture through the Ritterakademie's students:

> The Academy was a center of French culture. French conversation, indispensable at that time to any high-born German, was obligatory between the students; and Sebastian with his quick mind may have become familiar with a language which he had no chance to study in his own schools. There were French plays he could attend and, what was more important, French music he could hear, as a pupil of Lully, Thomas de la Selle, taught dancing at the Academy to French tunes.[41]

In Geiringer's description we can see a verification of the strong French influence on upper-class Germans, described above by Fauchier-Magnan.

Bach's obituary states that while at Lüneberg he "had the opportunity, to go and listen to a then famous band kept by the Duke of Zelle, and consisting for the most part of Frenchmen; thus he acquired a thorough grounding in the French taste."[42] Organist and musicologist Peter Williams finds significant the fact that this orchestra "had French musicians and was not merely an importer of French music: playing methods were as crucial as actual repertory."[43] Therefore, even at this young age Bach became familiar with the playing styles that were not conveyed in mere notation.

Later, while at the court of Weimar, Bach had occasion to copy out works by at least two French composers, benefiting indirectly from a young nobleman's coming-of-age journey. According to a letter by Bach's pupil Philipp

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[41] Karl Geiringer, *Johann Sebastian Bach; The Culmination of an Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), 11.

[42] Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach and Johann Freidrich Agricola. "Obituary of J. S. Bach" in *The Bach Reader,* ed. Hans T. David and Arthur Mendel, rev. with supp. (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1966), 217.

[43] Williams' interest lies more in the context of ornamentation and structure, but it seems likely that the musicians' "playing methods" would also reflect their training and experience accompanying French dance. Though Bach may not have been new to French music, this opportunity to hear it played by experienced French musicians may indeed have had impact on him. Williams, 97.

David Kräuter, Prince Johann Ernst of Weimar had visited Holland in 1713, and brought back with him volumes of music, including Italian concerto repertoire by Vivaldi, and also French music, including excerpts from Lully's operas.[44] Williams notes that Bach probably copied Nicolas de Grigny's *Livre d'Orgue* from this collection, and cites related French characteristics in the French overture of Cantata BWV 61, *Nun komm der Heiden Heiland,* composed soon afterward.[45] Alfred Dürr points out that the opening movement to the cantata is an "ingenious combination of chorale arrangement and French Overture,"[46] and Williams suggests that Bach uses the chorale tune perhaps in "salute to de Grigny's fugue subjects drawn from Gregorian hymns."[47]

Walther Dehnhard states in his edition of the English Suites that also amid the collection of music brought from Holland, Bach found the *Six Suittes pour le Clavessin* by Charles Dieupart. Dehnhard suggests that these pieces, which "Bach himself transcribed . . . served him as a model and inspiration" for the English Suites, as well as other works.[48] Keyboardist and scholar David

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[44] Daniel R. Melamed, *J.S. Bach and the German Motet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 58-9.
[45] Williams' date is supported by David Schulenberg and others, but conflicts with that of Charles-Léon Koehlhoeffer, who in his edition of de Grigny's *Livre d'Orgue*, states that Bach copied the piece out while at the Michaelisschule, "in 1700 as the date at the bottom of the title-page shows." Williams, 100. David Schulenberg, *The Keyboard Music of J.S. Bach* 2[d] ed. (New York: Taylor & Francis Group, 2006), 37. Charles-Léon Koehlhoeffer. Introduction to *Livre d'Orgue*, by Nicolas de Grigny. ed. Charles-Léon Koehlhoeffer (Paris: Heugel & Cie, 1986), [page VII].
[46] Alfred Dürr, *The Cantatas of J.S. Bach*, rev. and trans. Richard D. P. Jones (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 77.
[47] Williams, 100.
[48] Dehnhard also argues, "Bach unquestionably knew the works of the French composers d'Angelbert, Le Roux, Rameau, Louis and François Couperin." Walther Dehnhard, Preface to *English Suites: BWV 806-811*, by Johann Sebastian Bach. ed. Walther Dehnhard. trans. Brian Long (Vienna: Wiener Urtext Edition, 2000), xi.

Schulenberg agrees, but notes that Bach extends beyond his French models, working out their rhythmic and melodic patterns "in imitative counterpoint, as in the gigues of Froberger, Reinken, and other Germans."[49] In both cases, with de Grigny and with Dieupart, Bach has assimilated disparate characteristics from French and German traditions into his own creative meld. We will compare excerpts from the suites of Dieupart and Bach in Chapter 2.

Not long after his exposure to this music, Bach had the opportunity to meet several French or French-trained musicians and dancing masters at the electoral Saxon and royal Polish court of Dresden. Bach's numerous visits to the court in Dresden began with an abortive organ duel with the French organist Louis Marchand in October 1717.[50] Though the duel did not take place, Han-Joachim Schulze observes that it was likely at this time that Bach made contact with "such eminent exponents of the French styles of composition and performance as [violinist and conductor Jean-Baptiste] Volumier, [flautist Pierre-Gabriel] Buffardin and [organist-composer] Christian Pezold."[51]

[49] Schulenberg, 37.
[50] The contest itself did not occur, as Bach's Obituary tells us: "It was learned, to the great astonishment of everyone, that Monsieur Marchand had, very early in the morning of that same day, left Dresden by a special coach." However, Bach performed at the organ nevertheless, and Wolff thinks it likely that "most of the members of the Dresden capelle attended Bach's performance," in which case Bach would surely have met and begun acquaintances with them. Bach and Agricola, 218-219. Christoph Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Learned Musician* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2000), 183.
[51] Buffardin visited Bach in Leipzig, according to C.P.E. Bach, and flute scholars believe Bach may have composed the Solo in A minor BWV 1013 for flute for the French virtuoso. For more information, see Barthold Kuijken, "Notes on Performance Practice," in *Solo für Flöte a-moll, BWV 1013*, by Johann Sebastian Bach, ed. Kuijken Barthold (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1990), 12.

Little and Jenne single out violinist Pantaleon Hebenstreit and Volumier as particular friends of Bach's from the Dresden Hofkapelle.[52] Hebenstreit had taught French dancing for many years, including appointments as dancing master at two lesser courts.[53] Volumier had been raised in the French court, and had been a dancing master, violinist, and Konzertmeister at the court of Frederick I in Berlin before coming to Dresden in 1709. In both Berlin and Dresden his orchestras were highly respected, in great part because of the uniform quality of their playing. Johann Joachim Quantz, who in 1716 was a member of the Dresden town band, aspiring to play in the court orchestra, commented later in his autobiography, "The Royal Orchestra at that time was already in a particularly flourishing state. Through the French equal style of execution introduced by Volumier, the concertmaster at that time, it already distinguished itself from many other orchestras."[54] In the preface to his translation of Quantz's autobiography, Edward Reilly notes that their technique was "grounded in the French discipline of orchestra playing used, from the time of Lully, in the performance of French overtures and dances."[55]

One can well understand Bach's interest in the court Bach scholar Christoph Wolff describes as "a European cultural center on a scale far beyond

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[52] Little and Jenne, 14.

[53] Hebenstreit's place in history owes more to his career in Dresden, where he was known for his virtuosic playing of the violin and the "pantaleon," "a large dulcimer of his own invention." Ibid.

[54] Quantz, Johann Joachim, "Lebenslauf, von ihm selbst entworfen," in *Historisch-kritische Beyträge zur Aufnahme der Musik*, by Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg, I (1755), pp. 206-7; quoted in Edward R. Reilly, Preface to *On Playing the Flute,* by Johann Joachim Quantz, Berlin, 1752. trans. Edward R. Reilly (London: Faber and Faber, 1966), xiii.

[55] Edward R. Reilly, Preface to *On Playing the Flute,* by Johann Joachim Quantz, Berlin, 1752, trans. Edward R. Reilly (London: Faber and Faber, 1966): xv.

anything he had known before."[56] After settling in Leipzig, he visited Dresden regularly, and counted among his friends and acquaintances musicians with strong ties and demonstrated commitment to French dance, music, and performance practices. From these accounts we can see that Bach found and made use of opportunities at most times of his life to explore French music. One may see the results of these opportunities throughout his compositional career, but especially dating from the Weimar years.

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[56] Wolff, 183.

Chapter 2: Dance Characteristics

In the prior chapter, we explored the historical context of French Baroque dance and dance music, and traced them from their origins in the court of Louis XIV to Germany, and to Leipzig in particular. We found that Bach exhibited a consistent desire to explore French music, understand its characteristic styles, and incorporate them into his music. In this chapter we will study the dance steps in more detail, examining their kinesthetic qualities, and exploring the relationship those qualities have to music composed for or inspired by dance.

Significance of the Dance in Baroque Music

Before we turn to these dances, however, we can find support for this study in the writings of Bach's student Johann Philipp Kirnberger, who exhorted his audience to become intimately familiar with the dances. In 1777 Kirnberger, one of the leading theoreticians of the late eighteenth century and a former student of Bach's, published his *Recueil d'airs de danse caractéristiques*, a collection of dances intended to provide musicians a means to improve their familiarity with them. A large portion of his preface to the book is included below, as his perspective can be enlightening reading for every performer of Baroque music:

> How will the musician give the piece he performs the appropriate expression, which the composer conceived, if he cannot determine, with the help of the various kinds of notes that occur therein, exactly what sort of movement and what character are appropriate to each kind of measure?
>
> In order to acquire the necessary qualities for a good performance, the musician can do nothing better than diligently play all sorts of characteristic dances. Each of these dance types has its own rhythm, its phrases of equal length, its accents at the same places in each motif; thus one identifies them easily, and through repeated practice, one unconsciously becomes accustomed to distinguishing the proper rhythm of each dance-type, defining its motifs and accents, so that finally one easily recognizes in a long piece the various and intermingling rhythms, phrases, and accents. Furthermore, one becomes accustomed to giving each piece its proper expression, since each kind of dance melody has its own characteristic measure and note values.
>
> On the other hand, if one neglects to practice the composition of characteristic dances, one will only with difficulty, or not at all, achieve a good melody. Above all, it is impossible to compose or to perform a fugue well if one does not know every type of rhythm; and, therefore, because this study is neglected today, music has sunk from its former dignity, and one can no longer endure fugues, because through miserable performance which defines neither phrase nor accents, they have become a mere chaos of sounds.[57]

Several themes in these few paragraphs apply directly to musicians today, and especially to the performance of Bach's music. First, Kirnberger confirms that composers of his time and before regularly composed with specific dances in mind, and stresses as nearly self-evident the need for musicians to know those dances in order to properly express each piece. Kirnberger places other musical concerns such as articulations, tempos, and *Affekte* in a subsidiary light, as qualities that will become clear with solid knowledge of the dance.

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[57] Newman W. Powell, "Kirnberger on Dance Rhythms, Fugues, and Characterization" in *Festschrift Theodore Hoelty-Nickel*, ed. Newman Powell (Valparaiso, IN: Valparaiso University, 1967), 67.

Kirnberger recognizes that a solid grasp of the dance will take time and effort, and exhorts the musician to practice industriously. Only through diligent attention to these dances will he gain the ability to perform them with the appropriate expression. Kirnberger argues that musicians must develop their familiarity with the characteristic motifs and accents within simple dances in order to recognize them in long pieces. He acknowledges that in such pieces dance characteristics might be found only as one among many intermingling musical elements, not necessarily dominant or ever-present. Particularly singling out fugues, he implies that musicians should be able to find and articulate dance rhythms within them—and the fact that many cannot is a direct cause of their poor performances. With these remarks, Kirnberger responds to complaints about Bach's music from his contemporaries and displays a prescient awareness of failings that trouble us today.

Though Kirnberger claims that musicians can assimilate dance character unconsciously through repeated practice, modern performers may need to incorporate detailed study of the dances themselves as well. While dances were a natural and obvious part of the culture in Bach's time, musicians today are far removed from that period and have many generations of other musical styles in their memories.[58] In 1967, musicologist Newman Powell echoed

[58] Powell considers these concerns to be central to modern musicians' difficulty in performing contrapuntal Baroque music with appropriate expression. Commenting on the change in musical texture between the height of Bach's career and time of Kirnberger's Preface, Powell stresses the shift from the Baroque fugue to the "highly articulate style current about 1777, in which motifs and phrases were clearly delineated from one another in their melodic and rhythmic construction." Powell argues that, like their Classical-period counterparts (as

Kirnberger and sounded an early call for dance scholarship, decrying the fact that study of "actual dance steps associated with each of the baroque dance types . . . has been almost totally neglected by twentieth-century musicians, even those especially interested in baroque style."[59] Since then, many scholars have begun to study how to clarify the unique qualities of Baroque dance-influenced music, and apply them to performances of Bach's music.

Powell notes that study of dance can inform many issues at the heart of current performance practice study, including *notes inégales*, dotted rhythms, articulations, tempo, and rhythmic play. Furthermore, Powell finds that all of these factors, conveyed through the dance, lead the musician to something greater, which he calls the "'quality of movement' – a rhythmic quality that goes beyond the merely literal observance of note values."[60] This "quality of movement" also implies a kinesthetic aspect we can associate with the music, and our study of the dances will look closely at their "swing," and its impact on dance-influenced music.

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described by Kirnberger), modern performers approach Baroque music in a style that does not match its character. Offering a neatly balanced formula to correct this, Powell suggests "Performers . . . must emphasize delineation and articulation of the component elements in music in which a strong sense of continuity is 'written in' . . . just as, conversely, performers must emphasize continuity in music which is written in a highly delineated and articulated idiom." The articulations implied by dance influence provide one means of delineating shapes in Baroque music. Ibid., 69.

[59] Ibid., 72.

[60] Ibid., 72-3. *Notes inégales* is a characteristic French performance practice, in which certain pairs of notes notated evenly on the page are played unequally. Issues such as the ratio of their unevenness, and the circumstances in which performers should apply them, are matters of great controversy in musicological circles. For an overview of the debate (up until 1993), see Stephen Hefling, *Rhythmic alteration in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century music: notes inégales and overdotting* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1993).

Meredith Little and Natalie Jenne were among the first scholars to study French Baroque dance and its influence on Bach's music, and each wrote articles that introduced the field to a wider audience of musicologists.[61] Later the two collaborated to write a unique book intended for performers as well as scholars, entitled *Dance and the Music of J.S. Bach*, which they published in 1991. Using the insights of dance rhythms and structure found in French and French-influenced Baroque dance compositions, they explore how that style influenced Bach, and suggest ways in which musicians may highlight dance characteristics in Bach's music. Though their comments on any given piece are necessarily brief, they anticipate that their readers will apply the principles of the book in their own explorations of Bach's music.

In their 2001 second edition, Little and Jenne add a large new chapter entitled "Dance Rhythms in Bach's Larger Works." The authors emphasize that their selections are not untitled dances, but "pieces in which Bach incorporated dance rhythms and other characteristics seen in the titled dances, and melded them into another artistic form."[62] They encourage readers to search for other works with elements of dance within them, and to draw on the lessons learned from the titled dances:

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[61] In particular, Meredith Little, "The Contribution of Dance Steps to Musical Analysis and Performance: La Bourgogne," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 28, No. 1 (1975): 112-24; and her follow-up report "French Court Dance in Germany at the Time of Johann Sebastian Bach: *La Bourgogne* in Paris and Leipzig," in *Report of the Twelfth Congress, International Musicological Society, Berkeley, 1977.* ed. Daniel Heartz and Bonnie Wade (Kassel, Germany: Bärenreiter, 1981), 730-34. Also, Natalie Jenne's series of three articles, "Bach's Use of Dance Rhythms in Fugues," *BACH* 4, No. 4 (1973): 18-26; *BACH* 5, No. 1 (1974): 3-8; and *BACH* 5, No. 2 (1974): 3-21.

[62] Little and Jenne, 204.

> When dance elements in such pieces are noticed and correctly identified, the performer can make the music spring to life. Insights about rhythm, perhaps the single most important consideration when one interprets notes on a page, are there to be discovered. If the piece is based on dance characteristics such as a particular dance rhythm, the performer already has important clues about the level of the beat, tempo, articulation, caesuras of lesser and greater weight, and affect [sic].[63]

Here and throughout the book, Little and Jenne seem to pass over the promising source of insight for musicians mentioned above: the exploration of the relationship between the kinesthetic qualities of the steps and their musical settings. Though for each dance type they explicitly graph the correspondence between dance steps and French dance music, their symbols convey only the most rudimentary kinesthetic qualities. They regularly recommend accents and articulations, but do not explain the correspondence between the suggested musical articulations and the physical actions of the dancer that inspired such articulations.[64] Most importantly, they never extend these connections to Bach's music, not even to his titled dances. Early in the book, the authors caution the reader "not to intellectualize rhythm," but instead feel rhythm "as an activity perceived primarily by the body."[65] Yet, they themselves seem to miss

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[63] Ibid.

[64] Diane McMullen points out this omission in her review of the book: "Some readers will seek more synthesis between music and dance analysis than is presented in this book. For instance, on page 96 there is a discussion of the arsic and thetic moments in a typical sarabande dance rhythm. A discussion of the implications of this for musical performance, even in pieces that were not meant for dancing, would have been interesting." Dianne M. McMullen, Review of *Dance and the Music of J.S. Bach*, by Meredith Little and Natalie Jenne, *Notes: The Quarterly Journal of the Music Library Association* 50, No. 1 (1993): 130.

[65] Little and Jenne, xii.

multiple opportunities to bring the unique insight of the dancer's physical experience of rhythm to the musician.

It is not clear why Little and Jenne do not make more use of the potentially powerful sources of insight that such a kinesthetic perspective could provide, especially when they imply that the reader should seek such an understanding. Perhaps they anticipate that some readers might too literally interpret a hypothesis that associates actual dancing with Bach's music. English keyboardist Colin Tilney seems to fix on such a literal interpretation in his review of Little and Jenne's book:

> The authors avoid the question of whether any of Bach's dances were intended to be danced at all or whether Bach, as a composer, was merely filling an abstract mould that he had inherited.[66]

Tilney's question does not immediately clarify the issue, as it forces the issue into a false dichotomy. But beneath his wording lies a concern central to this dissertation: When a piece by Bach shows dance influence, how literally and thoroughly should we apply to the music all that such a dance implies? We will address this issue from multiple angles, through the rest of the dissertation.

A brief reference to historical context will quickly clarify Tilney's question of whether these dances "were intended to be danced." During the weekly three-hour Lutheran Sunday service, Bach and his choir and instrumentalists

[66] Colin Tilney, Review of *Dance and the Music of J.S. Bach*, by Meredith Little and Natalie Jenne *American Recorder* 41 (January 2000): 19.

regularly performed two cantatas, one on either side of the hour-long sermon.[67] Since French dancing was popular in Leipzig, it seems likely that the congregants would recognize the well-known dance rhythms that appeared in Bach's music. We can safely assume, however, that the congregants did not rise up and begin to dance in the aisles. Similarly, we can lay aside the likelihood that any vocal works in Bach's oeuvre were "intended to be danced." The most cursory knowledge of the regimented social mores of the period would suggest such scenarios are unlikely in the extreme. As a keyboardist, Tilney may have Bach's titled dances in mind, especially those for keyboard. However, the structured nature of balls and formal dancing argue against the use of Bach's titled dances as accompaniments there as well.[68] Ultimately, the point is not to argue that no one ever danced to this music, but that during his composition of such pieces, *Bach was most likely not intending the music to be used for dancing.*

Yet, since dance characteristics are undoubtedly present in Bach's music, musicians need to revise their thinking from the overly simplistic question, "Is this movement danceable?" to the more useful question, "What characteristics of the dance in this piece might affect my musical choices, and

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[67] For more specific details about the order of service, see Wolff, 256-7.

[68] Consider the following series of issues such performance would raise: In what social or performance context might a dancer or dancers perform to this piece? Would the host and hostess of a lively ball allow its momentum to come to a halt with the interpolation of several movements of often extremely stylized dance music? Many of Bach's titled dance sets include several pieces that do not match dance forms. Given the usual simple nature of dance music, would dancers wish to make the extra effort to perform to such complex pieces? What adjustments would the dancers and musicians have to make to navigate Bach's departures from the dance form? Surely the effort required by such a collaboration would have left some record of the event.

how?" With this question in mind, we will begin to explore the details of the dances and dance steps themselves, to begin to build the musical and kinesthetic insights that can solidify our "feel" for the dances, and illuminate the musical techniques that will project them most effectively.

French Baroque Dance Steps and their Kinesthetic Qualities

To help us discover more about the characteristic steps and patterns of momentum in French Baroque dance, we can turn to many period accounts and instructional treatises as well as modern dance scholarship, particularly the valuable work of dance scholar Wendy Hilton. Hilton published a substantial volume entitled *Dance and Music of Court and Theater*, in which she explains in detail the character and technique of French dance during Louis XIV's time.[69] Though Hilton often describes steps in technical terms appropriate for dancers, musicians can use this detail to inform their musical response to the dance. She also makes use of "Feuillet notation," an eighteenth-century system of dance notation.[70]

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[69] Hilton, *Dance and Music of Court and Theater: Selected Writings of Wendy Hilton.*
[70] In about 1680 Louis asked Pierre Beauchamps, his personal dancing instructor and the director of the Royal Academy of Dance, to devise a means of dance notation. Though Beauchamps created the notation system, he did not publish it. Later a different dancing master, Raoul Auger Feuillet, published it in 1700 in his book, *Chorégraphie*, (and included no acknowledgement of its origin). Wendy Hilton, "A Dance for Kings: The 17th-century French Courante" *Early Music* 5, No. 2 (1977): 162.

Feuillet notation provides modern dance scholars the means by which many Baroque dances can be reconstructed.[71] The notation lays out the dance's *step-units*, which are combinations of steps that form a dance phrase.[72] In addition to showing the movements of the feet and legs, the choreographies also illustrate the direction of the torso in relationship to the room and particularly the Presence,[73] the spatial relationship between dancers in partner or group dances, and the timing of all of this in relation to the measures of music.[74]

In many cases, the dances notated by Feuillet and other dancing masters are printed along with the music to which the dance was choreographed. Musicians can make use of this valuable resource to determine what sort of music might be appropriate to accompany a particular dance or step-unit. When examined in context with the music, the dance notation can also show us the patterns of accent and release in the step-units,

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[71] Other variants of this dance notation were also used, including Kellom Tomlinson's similar system published in his book, *The Art of Dancing.* Kellom Tomlinson, *The Art of Dancing Explained by Reading and Figures: Whereby the Manner of Performing the Steps is Made Easy By a New and Familiar Method: Being the Original Work First Design'd in the Year 1724, And Now Published by Kellom Tomlinson, Dancing Master. In Two Books*, Facsimile reprint, 2nd ed. (New York: Dance Horizons, 1970).

[72] Most dances share a common set of step-units, choreographed in various combinations. One exception is the menuet, which features the *pas de menuet*, a step-unit exclusive to the minuet (and its near-relative, the passepied.)

[73] In the cases of balls at Versailles, the Presence was Louis XIV himself, who represented the nearest thing to the glory of God on earth. In other circumstances, the highest nobility present, or else the host, represented the Presence. Dances always began with a reverence to the Presence, in addition to honours to one's dancing partner, and during the dance one always kept in mind one's spatial relationship to the Presence.

[74] Those interested in applying choreographies to music should take note; in Feuillet notation, the *pliés* that correspond to the upbeat are always shown in the following measure, notated as part of the step-units they prepare. Wendy Hilton notes that Baroque dancing master Pierre Rameau modified Feuillet notation to show more accurately where the barline would fall in relation to the steps. Hilton, *Dance of Court*, 156.

which are reflected in the music composed for the dance. Composers use these same patterns in music based on dance types, even when it is stylized dance music, since those patterns define the character of that dance and type of music.

In descriptions of these patterns within music, this dissertation will use two terms drawn by Little and Jenne from Greek theory to identify those qualities: *arsis* and *thesis*. An arsic moment in a piece imparts a sense of motion to the listener, as do the most active steps in a dance, and a thetic moment conveys repose, like the close of a dance phrase.[75] The symbols [A], [a], [T] and [t] will be used to indicate arsic and thetic moments of greater and lesser motion and repose. Using these symbols, we can graph the harmonic-rhythmic shape of phrases, and compare the usual patterns of motion and repose in the dance to Dieupart's and Bach's settings. This view of Bach's response to the established dance phrases will provide one perspective into his manipulation of his French models.

While this harmonic-rhythmic graphing shows the shape of movement at the phrase level, understanding the movement in the original dance at a more detailed level is also helpful. The steps from French Baroque dance share actions with characteristic qualities of movement useful for a musician to know. As Kirnberger says, one performing music with dance rhythms should know

[75] It should be mentioned, however, that these correspondences display only the simplest dance-music relationships. Choreographers could and often did upset the expectations engendered by these patterns, and surprise with unexpected alternate step-units, thus creating cross-rhythms and other expressive devices.

their qualities well enough that he can recognize their musical counterparts when he encounters them, and respond to them expressively. Here we will explore several ways to incorporate the kinesthetic qualities of the dance movements into one's music, but interested readers are encouraged to go beyond the descriptions below and experiment with the actions themselves. A musician can best become familiar with these actions by observing them, or by experiencing them himself—ideally with the assistance of a dancer trained in Baroque dance. Once a musician has experienced the "feel" of the shifts of weight and changes of momentum, he can begin to imagine ways to apply that to music as well. Without going so far as to mime every physical gesture with a musical imitation of it, a knowledgeable musician can shape the musical phrase to the movement, and can at least convey musically the general momentum of a particular dance phrase.[76]

The first position we will examine is one of the most important positions in French Baroque dance, referred to as *half-toe*. A large proportion of steps pass through or sustain this position, in which the dancer rises onto the ball of one or both feet,[77] an action which requires perfect balance and well-honed

[76] Musicians just beginning to learn the steps and choreographies should be cautioned: they should not expect consistent one-to-one relationships between the timing of the components of the step-units and the notation of the music. For many dances, such as minuets, dancers find interest in the variety of versions of the step-units used, and in the resulting cross-rhythms created with the music. One may begin by learning the most common step-units, and identifying appropriate musical counterparts—but one will soon discover that many variations lie behind each model. Each offers its own unique opportunity for expression in movement—and a corresponding musical response.

[77] This is not to be confused with *en pointe*, the modern ballet technique in which the dancer balances on the tips of her toes, with the aid of specially reinforced shoes.

technique.[78] Half-toe is the basis of the position of *equilibrium*,[79] a transitional position passed through between most steps in the dances. The half-toe position is also highlighted in slower dances such as sarabandes, in which it offers dancers an opportunity to express the qualities of uplifted energy and even suspended time, which can be especially dramatic in momentary poses of arrested motion. Such moments provide musicians accompanying the dances an opportunity to emphasize similar qualities in the music, perhaps through accented attacks, dynamic shadings, or a hint of tempo *rubato*. At such times, the dancer is expected to cloak her efforts under an air of nonchalance—and the musician should take this cue to execute any ornaments with a matching air of grace and ease.

Hilton also identifies several other basic actions in step-units, and includes a visual image for each action, which helps us gain an impression of the character of its movement:

> The actions used in the step-units were *pas marchés* (walking steps usually made on half-toe), *pliés* (bends of the knees), *élevés* (rises up from bends usually on to half toe), *sautés* (very small springs), *glissés* (slides of the ball of the foot along the floor denoting a sustained quality), and *tournés* (pirouettes on the balls of both feet).[80]

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[78] Baroque dancer Anna Mansbridge describes the effort required to maintain that poised position as a "two-way pull going on physically" between the carriage and the solid grounding of the legs. Mansbridge, Anna, interview by author, Digital recording, Seattle, WA, 1 March 2007.

[79] When one is in the position of equilibrium, one balances with a straightened leg on one foot in half-toe, so that the center of balance is slightly offset to that side of the body, while the other leg is also straightened but lifted from the floor, and held at the side of the supporting leg. Meanwhile, the upper torso, arms, and head retain the usual uplifted carriage, and as always convey the impression of effortlessness and grace—of nonchalance.

[80] Wendy Hilton, "Dances to Music by Jean-Baptiste Lully," *Early Music* 14, No. 1 (February 1986): 52.

Perhaps the most ubiquitous of the actions listed by Hilton, the *plié* prepares the dancer for the following step-unit.[81] In the *plié*, which usually falls on the upbeat to a measure or a phrase, the dancer sinks to gather the energy for his next action. A musician can express the upbeat musically with a quality akin to the coiled readiness in the dancer's *plié*. Little suggests that a musician accompanying a *plié*

> may want to give it even more emphasis than the following downbeat. Useful techniques are the separation of the upbeat from the downbeat by leaving a small space between them, and the accenting of the upbeat more than the downbeat.[82]

The slight articulation Little recommends can have a quality of expectancy that can catch the attention of the listener. A violinist's detaché up-bow on the upbeat has this quality, with the listener's expectation fulfilled by the down-bow on the succeeding measure. The up-bow also gathers energy for the down-bow in a similar manner as the dancer's *plié* gathers kinetic energy for the next step unit. (In pieces based on the bourée, for example, the upbeats that begin each phrase would be prime candidates for such an articulation.) Performers should note, however, that Little's suggestion is only one possible articulation, and one must consider the dance context when applying expressive articulations to the music. Emphasizing the upbeat more than the downbeat might be more appropriate preceding a simple step such as a *pas marché* than for more vigorous movement such as a *jeté* (spring)—which might itself demand

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[81] The *plié* is also called a 'sink' or a 'bend' by English and American dancers.
[82] Meredith Ellis Little, 118.

a more dramatic accompanying accent.

Just as the upbeat of the measure has tended to be treated differently by musicians than by dancers, so has the first beat of the measure. As musicians, we speak of the stress on the downbeat, and envision the downward sweep of the conductor's arm—even the word suggests downward motion. For the dancer, the first beat of the phrase is the point at which the gathered energy of the *plié* is expressed upward and outward in a new step, perhaps an *elevé* or a *sauté*.[83] Ruth Waterman, an English violinist who lectures regularly on incorporating dance rhythms into one's playing, found that assimilating a dance response to downbeats revolutionized her playing:

> The first thing that struck me was that the step on the downbeats is almost always onto half-toe, causing the body to rise rather than fall. And balancing on one leg on half-toe needs control and poise (otherwise the body does risk a fall!). These basics alone affected my playing, goading me to search for a style of bowing and sense of rhythm that would reflect this feeling of lift and elegance.

In musical terms, the dancer's rise on the downbeat suggests that players should almost never lay a heavy stress on a downbeat. Rather, the performer must find an articulation and tone quality that conveys emphasis without undue weight. Players can imitate Waterman's insight for other dance articulations as well, contemplating their physical relationship with their instrument, and find the body positions and techniques which will produce sounds which best support

[83] It is ironic that even as we attempt to understand the relationship between the disciplines, terms from musicians' vocabulary can directly contradict dancers' terms for corresponding concepts, leading to misconceptions and disconnections. When a musician's 'upbeat' corresponds to a dancer's 'sink', and a 'downbeat' to a 'rise', it is no wonder that confusion between the two arises so often.

and correspond to the dancer's movement. They can supplement this exploration with technical advice from the writings of many period teachers and theorists.

Each of the dance steps mentioned by Hilton has a distinct energetic character and shape of movement, and musicians can become familiar with them and develop techniques to musically complement them. Steps such as *jetés* and *sautés* often appear in quicker dances like the bourée, and their springing quality calls for accents of a particular kind in the music—buoyant, not weighty. For string players, Quantz suggests a "short, light bow stroke" to match the step's character.[84] *Glissés*, on the other hand, are featured prominently in dances of slow sustained character, such as sarabandes and courantes. Their intensity demands a musical response of similar richness, and for such moments, Mather offers the "swell" recommended by composers such as Étienne Loulié and Marin Marais, with which players of bowed and wind instruments imitate the *messa di voce* of singers.[85]

Conductors can also guide performers to adjust body posture in response to a dance's *Affekt*. When preparing his orchestras for performances of Baroque music, conductor Geoffrey Boers attends to the body position of his players, particularly the violinists.[86] He requires them to maintain a poised position, somewhat similar in character to the upper-body posture of a dancer,

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[84] Jean-Claude Veilhan, *The Rules of Musical Interpretation in the Baroque Era* (Paris: Alphonse-Leduc & Cie Music Publishers, 1979), 72.
[85] Mather, 168-9.
[86] Geoffrey Boers, rehearsal attended by author, 26 May 2004, Seattle, University of Washington Chamber Singers, Johann Sebastian Bach, *Mass in B minor.*

and reminds them that though they sit in modern performances, as musicians in the Baroque they would have often been standing. He has found that bringing their attention to such physical concerns improves the quality of their tone, the agility and precision of their technique, and even their communication of the *Affekt* of the music. Conductors should consider how they might best encourage their vocalists and instrumentalists to express the character of the dance through body posture as well as their performing technique, not forgetting the potential their own conducting technique has for communicating *Affekt* and dance as well.

Musicians should consider these explorations and experimentations a pleasurable and creative way to "get into character" in their performances, as well as finding bountiful possibilities for musical expression. In this creative endeavor, one might follow the guidance of Waterman:

> First play it completely straight, subdividing accurately. If it feels severe and restricting, just imagine the rhythm functioning in the same way as the restrictive clothing of the dancers. They could not bend or swoop, yet they found expressive freedom in small movements of the hands and head. As players, we have a huge repertoire of devices to heighten expression and shape a phrase. In this case, we can experiment with dynamics, colour and articulation: small softenings at the ends of phrases, sudden contrasts, both subtle and bold, harder or gentler beginnings of notes and brilliant or tapered ends of notes—the possibilities are endless.[87]

[87] Ruth Waterman, "Rhythm: the Living, Lilting Pulse of Dance," *The Strad* 108, No. 1284 (April 1997): 419.

Dance Qualities and their Implications for Tempos and *Affekte*

In the prior section we studied the dance steps in detail, and identified ways in which their qualities can affect the shape of the music that accompanies them. On a larger scale, this study can also lend insight into considerations of tempo and *Affekt* for dance-influenced pieces.

When dance scholarship began to gain momentum in the latter part of the twentieth century, musicologists looked to their colleagues in dance to provide insights that would clarify tempos for dance music.[88] However, it became apparent that dance scholars usually based their tempo recommendations upon criteria related to the concerns of dancers, not musicians. Many musicians found that the dance scholars' recommendations made tempo issues more complicated rather than simplifying them, and often made impossible demands upon them in performance. Confronted with these tempo suggestions and Bach's complex settings of the dances, some musicians—even those actively interested in expressing dance character—began to question the usefulness of <u>any</u> application of dance models at all. As Tilney asks,

> Are the French choreographies still relevant to [Bach's] love of experiment and relentless ingenuity, or does his flow of small notes differ too widely from the step and swing of their notated movements? How

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[88] For those readers interested in the study of tempo markings and the debate over tempos for dances in the Baroque, Betty Bang Mather provides an excellent overview of the history of the debate. Mather, 126-134.

> can we achieve in our playing the grace of the dancers we watch when Bach just won't *stop*?[89]

In the simplest interpretation of this question, since none of Bach's music was composed for dancing, musicians performing it need not slavishly attempt to match tempos judged appropriate for dancers. We can consider this music stylized dance music, and take note of musicologist Robert Donington's caution about such music:

> [We are] confronted with instrumental forms which began as dances, but became more and more distantly removed from the ballroom and more and more liable to ornamental elaborations, as a result of which their tempos changed (usually by slowing down.)[90]

And yet, in spite of this necessary slowing of tempos, one must still confront the underlying question: when Bach extended his compositions beyond their dance models, did he anticipate that their complexity would force performers to abandon the dance qualities inherent in the models? Or, did he still expect that performers perceive and project the dance models in each piece?

We know that Kirnberger, Bach's own student, strongly recommended that performers learn to recognize and project the dances underlying Baroque pieces, even in dense polyphonic textures. This dissertation contends that

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[89] Tilney, 19. (Tilney's italics)

[90] Robert Donington, *Baroque Music: Style and Performance* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1982), 17. The pieces which accompany the notated dances (and provide much of what we know about French Court dance) were composed with no purpose other than to gracefully support the dance. Though often highly ornamented, these dance pieces were still melodically, harmonically, and structurally much simpler than their descendants in Bach's suites and other works. Playing such pieces at dance-appropriate tempos does not pose a problem for musicians, and a dancer might blithely expect a musician to apply a similar tempo to every dance of a similar title or character, regardless of composer or period.

most of Bach's titled dances, and many of his other dance-influenced works, retain close enough ties to the dance that attention to the original dance's characteristics can have a meaningful impact on performance. Performers of all of Bach's dance-influenced works have the opportunity to incorporate insights from dance into their interpretations, even when technical concerns require them to perform at tempos that do not match those of the original dance. Better yet, when musical (and textual, in vocal music) factors allow it, musicians performing dance-influenced pieces should certainly choose tempos appropriate for dancers—even for music that was not intended to be danced.

Musicologist Mary Cyr offers musicians a constructive way to view this concern: "Determining the appropriate spirit of a baroque composition is more important than setting its speed, for without the former, even the 'right' tempo will not draw the appropriate expression from a piece."[91] In Baroque music composed for dancing, discovering the *Affekt* of the dance is the most direct and powerful means to determine the spirit of the piece.[92] In stylized dance music, and even in music that is only distantly related to the dance, the dance's *Affekt* can still be a powerful factor determining the spirit of the piece, and well worth discovering.

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[91] Mary Cyr, *Performing Baroque Music* (Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 1992), 36.
[92] In Bach's works with dance characteristics, especially the vocal music, other factors share importance with the dance in determining the *Affekt* of the piece. Scholars such as Helen Hoekema Van Wyck have convincingly argued that Bach's choices of dance models in such works as the *St. Matthew Passion* were anything but arbitrary, and that their *Affekte* were intended to correlate in meaningful ways to the *Affekte* of the text. Helen Hoekema Van Wyck, "Mourning into Dancing: Dance Rhythms in J.S. Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*," *The Choral Journal* 40 (October 1999): 9-22.

As we have seen earlier in this chapter, each motion in a dance has its own nature. The sum of all these actions combined defines the *Affekt* of the dance. Therefore, it is the character of the dancer's movement that expresses a dance's *Affekt*, and issues of physical technique and body mechanics directly impact how successfully dancers represent the *Affekt* of each dance.

We can find an example of this in the limits that gravity imposes on dances which feature hops or springs. Hilton reminds us that "the body can defy gravity only for a limited amount of time," and therefore an absolute limit of slowness of tempo exists for dances which include these movements.[93] However, even before this limit is reached, dancers performing springing dance steps at too slow a tempo will find it difficult to project their energetic, buoyant quality and their joyful *Affekt*. Too slow a tempo taken for such a dance will distort its joyful *Affekt* into a languid or serious one.

This can apply even to pieces that are not intended to be danced, but only have dance-like characteristics. One may find this effect in Karl Richter's recording of the fourth movement of Cantata BWV 140, "Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme," which features characteristic bourée rhythms in the instrumental parts. At Richter's tempo of ♩ =50, the leaps and hops of a bourée would plod,

[93] Hilton, 264. Hilton points out that the aesthetics of the period – the emphasis on restraint and nonchalance, and even the constricting clothing – also dictate to us an even more narrow range of feasibility.

hardly indicative of joyfulness.[94] This is an example of a tempo taken so far out of its dance context that the connections between the music, the dance, and the dance *Affekt* have been severed: the spirit of the dance is unrecognizable in the music.

Another example of the relationship between *Affekt*, dance technique, and tempo can be illustrated by the degree to which a dancer bends in the *plié*. Skilled dancers can *plié* more deeply than beginners, and the range and control of their movement is an important expressive device. As the French Baroque dancing master Pierre Rameau comments, "As to the Sinks they should always be made full . . . because they render a Dance more agreeable; whereas when they are not, the Steps are hardly to be distinguished, and the Dance seems stiff and dry."[95] Slower dances such as sarabandes and courantes derive much of the expression of their serious *Affekte* from slow, rich movements like these *pliés*. At too fast a tempo the dancer does not have enough time to *plié* deeply, which diminishes the expressiveness of the action. Other steps will be similarly rushed and their dramatic impact lessened, weakening the overall projection of the dance *Affekt*.[96]

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[94] Johann Sebastian Bach, "*Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme,*" *Cantata BWV 140, Magnificat BWV 243.* Munich Bach Choir and Orchestra, Karl Richter, cond. Deutsche Grammophon, CD, 1962 (BWV 243)/1979.

[95] Rameau, Pierre, *The Dancing Master*, trans Cyril W. Beaumont (London: Beaumont, 1931), Facsimile reprint (New York: Dance Horizons, 1970); quoted in Hilton, 164.

[96] Musicians, especially those with less refined technique, may have a related difficulty with some of Bach's richly expressive pieces. As Albert Schweitzer dryly comments, "The better somebody plays Bach, the slower he may take the tempo, the worse one plays the quicker one must take it. To play well means to phrase all voices in the minutest detail, and to put in the correct accents. A certain speed limit has thus to be observed, as otherwise the listener might not be able to discern all details. . . . Indeed, whoever blurs every detail through bad phrasing

To avoid overly fast tempos of dance-influenced pieces, musicians may imagine the movement of dancers for guidance. If musicians perform a piece at a tempo so fast that a dancer would be unable to express the proper *Affekt*, they most likely have not grasped the kinesthetic sense of the musical shapes, and will not express the *Affekt* properly either. In such a case, the musicians must slow the tempo to find a point at which they can sense the changes of weight and momentum in the dance rhythms. This will lead them to a tempo with appropriate gravity for the *Affekt*, whether serious or light-hearted.

When the technical demands of a dance-influenced piece require that a musician perform it more slowly than the associated dance tempo, he may still express some part of that dance's character.[97] Usually this issue arises in complex pieces where the dance rhythms are obscured by the polyphonic or highly ornamented texture. From her study of dance rhythms in Bach's fugues, Natalie Jenne offers some guidance to performers attempting to reflect the dances in complex polyphonic textures. As the basis of her method, Jenne uses an analytical approach based on the idea that

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and wrong accentuation may be allowed to hasten the tempo – at least in this respect some interest will be left." Albert Schweitzer, *J. S. Bach*, (London, A. & C. Black, [1923]); quoted in Richard R. Efrati, *Treatise on the Execution and Interpretation of the Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin and the Suites for Solo Cello by Johann Sebastian Bach* (Zürich: Atlantis Musikbuch-Verlag AG, 1979), 217.

[97] Conductor Philip A. Kelsey offers the following thought as a means to consider the question, positing the existence of a video-recording of dancers performing a dance, which one could slow down or speed up at will: "Would some speed or other produce a "dance" that could be danced to the appropriate Bach movement? If so, then perhaps the spirit of the original dance is really there in Bach, but liberated from the necessary restrictions of human bodies moving in earth gravity." Philip A. Kelsey, personal communication. (Email) 2 May 2007 "Re: New Chapters 1-3."

> rhythmic qualities of motion and repose are inherent in the harmonies of a composition. [Kirnberger] equates dissonance with rhythmic activity (arsis) and consonance with rhythmic repose (thesis). Harmony, itself, has rhythmic significance. Therefore, harmonic analyses of Bach's fugues, by means of Kirnberger's method, will reveal their hidden rhythmic structure.[98]

Jenne suggests that a melodic-harmonic reduction will reveal appropriate groupings of notes, which will help the listener hear the shifts and momentum of the harmony. In addition, she suggests the use of *ritardando* and *notes inégales* in circumstances determined by the harmonic context.[99] These and other techniques will help delineate the phrasing that will project the hidden dance rhythms. These methods will also apply when heavily ornamented textures require a musician to play more slowly than the dance tempo would require, but we will address such cases in the following chapters.

Musicians interested in uncovering the dance elements in Bach's music should incorporate the kinesthetic qualities of the steps and movements described in this chapter, as part of a set of concepts they can apply to any of his pieces. As we discuss these and other means of identifying and presenting the dance character in his music, we will incorporate them into a basic set of considerations, stated in outline form in Appendix C.

In the next chapter, we will explore in detail the character of two dances, sarabandes and minuets. We will study music composed for these dances by Dieupart, and compare several of Bach's titled settings of them. This

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[98] Natalie Jenne, "Bach's Use of Dance Rhythms in Fugues, Part II," *BACH* 5, No. 1 (1974): 4-5.
[99] Natalie Jenne, "Bach's Use of Dance Rhythms in Fugues, Part III." *BACH* 5, No. 2 (1974): 3-7.

will help us gain a basic knowledge of these dances and a familiarity with Bach's responses to them, which we will apply to several cantata movements in Chapter 4.

Chapter 3: Dance and Bach's Suites and Partitas

With the prior discussion of French Baroque dance steps and terms in mind, we can discuss music composed based upon those dance styles in more detail. According to Little and Jenne, Bach composed more titled sarabandes than any other dance type, as well as a substantial number of minuets.[100] Conductors will find numerous cantata movements related to these two dances. Therefore, we will focus on sarabandes and minuets through the remainder of the dissertation, beginning with the titled dances, particularly those for cello and keyboard. We will observe how Bach imitated his French models and evolved beyond them, studying examples from the Dieupart suites that Bach copied, as well as Bach's own titled dances. We will see that Bach continued to make use of dance rhythms and even dance structures, but that through his creative modifications and extensions, his pieces grew rather distant from the dance floor.

Sarabande History and Character

From its first appearances in the early seventeenth-century, the sarabande was known for its passionate expression of emotion. Betty Bang Mather informs us that the *sarabanda* came from the New World to Spain, and

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[100] Little and Jenne, 102.

was "then introduced to Italy and France along with the Spanish guitar."[101]

Mather notes that

> *Sarabandas* and sarabandes went through a number of changes during the Baroque period. Their strumming patterns and rhythmic movements were altered to meet the requirements of metrical bar lines. Their phrasing was modified to fit the rhythms of French lyrics. Their tempo was moderated and their form changed.[102]

Thus it is a musically "tamed" sarabande that appears later in the century in the French Court, "a dance," according to Little and Jenne, "that seems calm, serious, and sometimes tender, but ordered, balanced, and sustained."[103] Yet Mansbridge observes that the Spanish origins of the piece, though calmed down by the French, still lent an "underlying sense of wildness" to the dance.[104] Mansbridge echoes Little and Jenne in referring to "teasing hesitations" and sudden changes in the character of movement in the dance, which hint at a passionate *Affekt* hidden beneath the reserve. This balance of powerful emotion beneath a serious mien can be seen throughout Bach's use of the dance, from the dance suites to the cantatas.

Sarabandes tend to have a preponderance of step-units of a slow, sustained character, with measured steps, glides, and moments of suspension on half-toe. The character of these dance steps helps distinguish the sarabande from other dances, such as the springing gigue, or the continuously moving bourée. However, choreographies also often interpolate occasional

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[101] Mather, 291.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Little and Jenne, 92.
[104] Interview with Anna Mansbridge, 3/1.

quicker steps within sarabandes, which add contrast and hint at the explosive, contained passion of the dance's *Affekt*.

Dancers have long found the sarabande to be rich with opportunities for expression, as one may see in a period account of a danced sarabande, included in Appendix B.[105] In her performances of sarabandes, Mansbridge responds to the passionate element through expressive changes of dynamics: changes in the speed and character of her movements. Within her arm movements she may incorporate gradations of speed, differentiations of smooth or accented motion, and greater and lesser amounts of tension or strength in the muscles. Mansbridge also expresses the hidden passion through changes of the speed or timing of particular step-units, surging ahead of the beat or delaying (hence the phrase "teasing hesitation") in an unexpected moment, yet always returning to the proper metric context within the larger framework of the dance.[106]

Like the step-unit elements we examined earlier, these additional expressive devices in the dance can correspond to musical gestures, such as changes in tone quality and dynamics, ornamentation, and use of *rubato*, particularly in featured solo parts. For example, a musician can convey a "teasing hesitation" with a dynamic swell on a note held slightly past its length,

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[105] Dance researcher Patricia Ranum found an account published in 1671 of a solo sarabande dance which vividly conveys this character. This account is included here in Appendix B. Patricia Ranum, "Audible Rhetoric and Mute Rhetoric: the 17th-century French Sarabande." *Early Music* 14, No.1 (1986): 35.

[106] Interview with Anna Mansbridge, 3/1.

or by performing ornaments with fluidity of rhythm that echoes the dance dynamics in upper body movements.

Reviewing the music composed for sarabandes, Little and Jenne identify a number of common traits: they are set in a time signature of 3, usually with three quarter-note beats per measure and changes of harmony at the beat level, and feature balanced phrases of four measures which create larger eight-measure periods.[107] Composers often express the dance's intensity with richly dissonant harmonies and slow tempos. Stylized sarabandes tend to match the serious and intense mood of the dance, though there are also variants, even among choreographed dances, with slightly faster tempos and less intense *Affekte*.

Little and Jenne suggest that sarabandes at the beginning of the eighteenth century featured an "invariable phrase length and shape" and a common use of question and answer patterns.[108] The four-measure phrases have two common patterns of arsis and thesis, or motion and repose, which Little and Jenne graph as [aTAT] or [aaAT].[109] In the [aTAT] pattern, the first measure has active, or arsic, rhythmic and harmonic content which leads to a reposeful, or thetic, second measure. The third measure is also arsic and leads the listener's ear to the repose of the fourth measure. In the other common

[107] For a listing of sarabande characteristics, please see Appendix A.
[108] Little and Jenne, 96.
[109] Ibid.

pattern, [aaAT], the first three measures become increasingly arsic and are resolved in the thesis of the fourth measure.

The graphing of these harmonic-rhythmic patterns helps clarify the patterns of activity and repose in the music, and provide one baseline for comparison of Bach's sarabandes. As we observe the ways in which Bach uses sarabande dance models, his departures from these harmonic-rhythmic patterns will help reveal how he has conformed to or expanded beyond his models, especially in his works which do not follow dance forms, such as the cantata movements. First, however, we will look at how these patterns appear in a typical French dance piece.

The sarabande shown in Music Example 3.1 is drawn from Charles Dieupart's Suite in A major, one of the *Six Suittes pour Clavessin* (published in 1701) that Bach copied in Weimar. Its triple meter, simple harmony, and regular phrase lengths model the traits described above, and the four-bar phrases in the example demonstrate both of the two usual harmonic-rhythmic patterns, [aTAT] and [AAAT]. In the first four measures, two-measure groupings alternate between motion and repose, following the [ATAT] pattern. In the latter four measures, the harmonic instability of measure 6 does not allow repose, but propels the piece through to a thesis in measure 8. Dieupart's orderly structure suits the dance well, and one may also see in it the French Baroque appreciation of regularity.

Music Example 3.1. Charles Dieupart, Suite #1 in A major, Sarabande, mm. 1-8.

The Dieupart also has abundant examples of a rhythmic pattern Little and Jenne consider a classic feature of French sarabandes, which they refer to as the "sarabande syncopation," shown here in Music Example 3.2. As described by Little and Jenne, "In this six-beat phrase, the second beat is the high point and is more strongly accented than the first; beat 4 is the thesis, or release from tension, and beat 6 is even more thetic."[110]

Music Example 3.2. Rhythm of "sarabande syncopation"

110 Ibid., 97.

Mather notes that in early guitar accompaniments of the dance, players emphasized the second beat of this rhythmic pattern with a strong downward strum. She finds that "this note is usually intensified in pieces of the *grand siecle* – at least in the first and third measures," and Dieupart does so here.[111] In each four-measure phrase, second beats in the first and third measures are highlighted by melodic shape, ornamentation, or dissonant harmony—or all three. Little and Jenne have suggested another method for performers to emphasize this sort of rhythm: the addition of an articulation to separate beats 1 and 2, as applied editorially in measures 1, 3, 5 and 7 of the Dieupart.[112]

This articulation stresses the second beat and emphasizes the arsic nature of the first measure, and often prepares the listener for the release into the thetic second measure, just as in the [aT] or [AT] patterns described above. This rhythm offers dancers and musicians a highlighted moment to express the passionate *Affekt* of the sarabande.

Bach's Use of Sarabande Elements

Music Example 3.3 excerpts the first section of the Sarabande from Bach's English Suite #1, BWV 806. Schulenberg tells us the English Suites were probably composed while Bach was in Weimar and reflect his knowledge

[111] Mather, 294-5.
[112] Little and Jenne, 97.

of contemporary French harpsichord practice, supplemented at that time by his study of the *Suittes* of Dieupart.[113]

Music Example 3.3. BWV 806, English Suite #1, Sarabande, mm. 1-8.

Bach sets the piece in 3/4, and clearly follows the sarabande structure, with two related four-bar phrases suggesting question and answer patterns, and balanced eight-measure phrases throughout the piece. He includes five "sarabande syncopation" rhythms, each of which falls in a different structural context or mode of emphasis: in measure 2 a simple resolution arrives at the consonant thesis, while in measure 3, a change of harmony on the second beat stresses the active climbing phrase. In measure 6, dissonance and a trill stress

[113] It is not known how the set was named the "English Suites"; according to Schulenberg no early source mentions such a name, but Forkel considered it a commonly-known title. Schulenberg observes that the suites do not have particularly English characteristics, and show just as much if not more "French" style than the French Suites. Schulenberg, 280-1; 299.

the second beat, changing a possible thesis into an arsic drive to measure 7. There, an additional trill and continued dissonance push toward the cadence in measure 8, itself a "sarabande syncopation." In this example Bach demonstrates several variations on the theme introduced in the Dieupart. We will encounter several of these variants in the remaining sarabandes and the cantata movements.

Bach stretches beyond his French models in other ways as well, including more active use of inner voices. Also, this piece exhibits the practice English musicologist John Butt has identified as "dovetailing" of phrases, in which Bach melds the opening of one phrase with the closing of another.[114] Here the technique appears in measure 4, in what might have been a thetic closure to the first four-bar phrase. Instead of allowing rest on the third beat, Bach adds an eighth-note run in the soprano (and movement in the bass and alto) that continues the movement through the thesis. One can read the eight-note run as part of the phrase to come as well as part of the closing phrase; Bach has dovetailed the beginning of one phrase with the close of another.

The importance of the dovetailed phrases can be expressed in terms of the harmonic-rhythmic structure of the piece. The first four phrases seem to match the usual sarabande phrasing of [ATAT] noted by Little and Jenne, in which the four measures in the dance come to a state of repose supported by the harmony, before moving on to the next phrase. However, the surface

[114] John Butt, *Bach: Mass in B Minor,* Cambridge Music Handbooks (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 72.

motion in the melody dovetails the phrases, undermining the repose in measure 4. In this way, Bach begins to depart from the usual structural patterns of the sarabande dance. In later sarabandes, he will use this same technique to extend his musical phrases well beyond the usual length of the dance phrases. Bach's second four-measure phrase follows the pattern of the Dieupart, with harmonic tension and rhythmic activity that propels the piece through to the resolution and thesis of measure 8.

Several features of the Sarabande from Bach's Cello Suite #2, BWV 1008, match the usual sarabande traits we have identified above (Music Example 3.4). One can see a pattern of four-measure phrases, all with related melodic and rhythmic themes. Characteristic sarabande rhythms appear in those themes, including the "sarabande syncopation," with important moments emphasized through trills, double stops, and greater rhythmic activity. Using the dovetailing effect again, Bach continues active motion through the cadences of the first two four-bar phrases to stretch the usual eight measure section to twelve measures, arriving at a clear thetic cadence only at the close of the twelfth measure. As in the English Suite example, he has activated usual points of thesis, drawing a line of continuous flow throughout the twelve measures. To extend beyond the usual eight measures of the sarabande phrase structure, he has repeated his first four measures with a slight variation, resulting in an A A' B structure. Bach has reached beyond the form, but this

technique may also recall the well-established tradition of varied repeats, or *doubles*, in many French dances.

Music Example 3.4. BWV 1008, Cello Suite #2, Sarabande, mm. 1-12.

Cellists playing this movement might project the missing dance structure by relaxing the activity of every fourth measure as much as possible—perhaps in measure 4 through a bit of rubato on gently-expressed trill, and a slight lift before the three eighth-note pickup into the next phrase.

In the Cello Suites, Bach's creation of a polyphonic texture from a single voice complicates the usual dance structure. Whether using arpeggiations or double-stops, Bach requires continual activity from the cellist in order to preserve the continuity of the separate voices. If the cellist also wishes to project the dance, he faces artistic choices and technical challenges, especially related to the double stops throughout the piece. The separate pitches of

double stops often cannot be sounded simultaneously, and the cellist must decide how quickly he will pass through each: if more quickly, he maintains the overall tempo and dance character; if more slowly, he allows each pitch and the resulting chord to sound more richly, but may disrupt the flow of the dance. Cellists disagree which of these is the most important aesthetic to uphold, though the current tradition seems to favor sonority over the dance.[115]

Though this specific technical issue may not come up within the cantata movements, it is helpful for conductors to consider questions of competing aesthetic choices and performance traditions. Conductors and performers will face questions that require a balance between concerns of tempo and richness of tone or other issues. In the choral tradition itself, it has not been that long since many conductors sacrificed agility for rich, full sonority. Such performances had their own power and majesty, but mostly likely did not represent the dance in the music very well. Observing similar debates in other genres of Bach's music helps us define our own aesthetic choices.

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[115] A performance tradition exists for the Cello Suites which some trace back to Pablo Casals' landmark recording of 1936. In the tradition, players take a rhythmically free approach to the double stops to allow the chords to sound most fully. In the hands of many cellists, this completely disrupts the dance rhythms. Andreas Moser, who was a partner of violinist Joseph Joachim, anticipated this manner of playing in his Preface to their edition of the Violin Partitas, published in 1902. Speaking of the violinist's approach to the Chaconne, Moser cautions the players that "The dance-rhythm . . . can only be brought out clearly when the last quaver is not burdened by a heavy double-stop." One wonders if the Cello Suites performance tradition lost sight of the dance rhythms in part because of its heavy emphasis on the sonorous double stops. Andreas Moser, Preface to *Six Sonatas and Partitas for Violin Solo*, by Johann Sebastian Bach, ed. Johannes Joachim and Andreas Moser (New York: International Music Company, 1950), [ii]. One interesting reference to the Casals recording and its impact on dance character in the suites can be found in the "Membership Letters" of Tim Janof's *Internet Cello Society*. Tim Janof, "Tutti Celli" Volume 11, Issue 2 "Membership Letters" 'Carrick; Little Rock,'" *Internet Cello Society* (Accessed [2 April 2007]), <http://www.cello.org/Newsletter/marapr05.htm>, 2005.

The Sarabande from Partita #6, BWV 830, shows a very different relationship between Bach's composition and his dance model, and yet underlying dance structure and rhythms can still be found (Music Example 3.5). The Partitas were composed in the 1720's, after the French and English Suites, and in Little and Jenne's estimation, "the Partita sarabandes are the ultimate example of dance stylization in all of Bach's works."[116] A single glance at the music communicates this extreme, as the complex notation reveals much more extensive ornamentation and complex texture. Bach also uses an

Music Example 3.5. BWV 830, Partita #6, Sarabande, mm. 1-6.

[116] Little and Jenne, 110.

unconventional upbeat, which distorts the listener's perception of the beat. A harmonic reduction can remove the non-essential pitches obscuring the underlying structure. Such a reduction will reveal the sarabande rhythms, and simultaneously clarify for the performer his phrasing and articulation. Several scholars remind performers to think of and play such pieces at the appropriate metric level. As Schulenberg writes,

> Even in heavily embellished adagios and sarabandes it is crucial that one still count halves or quarters, not eighths or sixteenths; subdividing causes the written-out embellishment to lose the character of passionate improvisation that it was meant to imitate. This will also happen if the tempo is too slow, making the music unduly solemn and dull.[117]

Though Schulenberg only speaks of losing the passionate, improvisatory character of the piece, his concern applies as well to its <u>dance</u> character. Little and Jenne recommend that players affix their sense of the structure to the metric levels used by the dance steps—in this case, stressing the first beat of each measure and choosing a tempo that allows the performance to reflect the quarter-note beats.[118] Performers can also use overdotting to emphasize important structural beats, and add other rhythmic highlights once an overall structure is firmly established.[119]

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[117] Schulenberg, 28.

[118] Little and Jenne, 112. Elsewhere, Little has suggested that in at least one sarabande, (from *La Bourgogne,* a suite of dances published in 1702), "...the dancers move primarily on the level of the measure; that is, one strong step per measure is the most common gesture. Thus, a four-bar sarabande phrase in stylized dance music might well be seen as consisting of four very slow beats, each with a triple subdivision. Thinking on the level of the dance steps, as opposed to accepting the usual conception of the sarabande as a dance with three slow beats to the measure, should result in a strong sense of movement and in a strikingly different pattern of articulations." Little, 119.

[119] Numerous recordings demonstrate that performers of this sarabande do not always successfully project a larger structure, or perhaps even make the attempt. However, Bernard

This practice of keeping the focus on the appropriate metric level applies to all of Bach's stylized dances and even dance-influenced pieces. It will help musicians to not become mired in diminutions, but perform them with the proper spirit, as ornaments to simple, grave steps. For role models, the musicians can look back once again to the dancers in Lully's court, who were able to express passion in their body dynamics while maintaining overall poise and nonchalance. Here, the musician's equivalent of poise and nonchalance are the solid, measured tread of the quarter-note beats, and his emotional distance from the furor of the diminutions. Such considerations are also pertinent in the performance of Bach's cantatas, particularly in the long and complex fugal passages. There, the conductor must guide the singers and players to shape their diminutions according to the larger metric structure, and to sense the meter kinesthetically. In this way, they can successfully negotiate the challenging parts and simultaneously project the appropriate *Affekt.*

This brief discussion of sarabandes in Bach's titled dances demonstrates that though the dance element in these pieces may be stylized, he continues to use their structure and rhythms as a basis for his creative exploration, and the

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Roberts' 2001 recording from Nimbus demonstrates exactly the character Little and Jenne describe: a very clear sense of dance at the quarter note beat, and all ornamentations graciously fitted in within that larger structure. Johann Sebastian Bach, *The Complete Partitas*, Bernard Roberts, piano, Nimbus Records (NI 5673/4), CD, 2001.

character of the dance can still be projected in these movements. We will find the same to be true for minuets, in the following section.

Minuet History and Character

Of all dances popular during the Baroque period, the minuet is most familiar to modern audiences. Because the dance retained its popularity through the eighteenth century and beyond, it has had a long and varied history, evolving and changing as a social and theatrical dance and even a movement in symphonies. Though scholars debate the origins of the minuet, most report that it appeared at the court of Louis XIV in the 1660's. By the 1680's, it had moved into the arenas of both social and theatrical dance, and had replaced the courante as the favorite dance in balls at Versailles. By the beginning of the 18th century, it had spread throughout Europe and even beyond, to Russia and the New World. As Little and Jenne remark, "as a dance it penetrated many different levels of society, from the highest to the lowest, and was performed in a wide variety of styles, ranging from noble to artificial and mannered."[120]

French Baroque minuets are triple-meter pieces, usually in 3/4 or 3/8, with fairly quick tempos and an *Affekt* of moderate gaiety or joy. Minuets use a step-unit, the *pas de menuet*, which is unique for two reasons. It is not found in

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[120] Little and Jenne, 62.

other dances, but is exclusive to the minuet (and the related passepied), and it is the only step-unit counted over two measures of music, or six beats. Because of the regular use of the *pas de menuet* in minuet choreographies, dancers count minuets in groupings of six beats, and dance rhythms and the music are usually structured according to that conception.

Numerous variations exist of the order and timing of steps within the *pas de menuet*, each with a different relationship to the accompanying music. For example, Mansbridge describes an "English" variant, in which the dancer takes a slow first step which lasts through the first three beats, followed by a *pas de bourée*, with steps on each of the latter three beats. This version therefore projects a sustained quality for the first measure, but moves quickly through the second. In another variation, which Mansbridge credits to Rameau, the dancer takes steps on the first, third, and fifth beats—in fact, physically expressing a hemiola.[121] Both step-units complement the music, but in very different ways. Such accentuation of beats in opposition to the music resulted in cross-rhythms between dance and music, which were a defining characteristic of minuets. As musicologist Tilden Russell observes, these cross-rhythms present "a subtle, constantly fluctuating, unpredictable interplay between the dance and music that offered aesthetic surprise and delight – both to the performers and

[121] Mansbridge, Anna, interview by author, Digital recording, Seattle, WA, 8 March 2007.

spectators – on a far higher level than would be possible through lockstep uniformity."[122]

Dancing master Pierre Rameau's 1725 description of the *pas de menuet* includes additional information for musicians to consider when performing minuets. Rameau informs us that in the two bars of music that accompany each *pas de menuet*, "there is a true and a false cadence. The true is the first, the false the second."[123] French Baroque writers in music used similar terms to identify *good* and *bad* measures, and also good and bad notes in the measure. Good measures received much greater emphasis than the bad measures, and good notes, which were often downbeats, received more stress than bad notes, which fell on the weak beats in a measure. All performers in music and dance developed techniques to accent the good beats, and pedagogies of the period regularly included accepted techniques used to express such emphasis.

Even the rudimentary conducting of the time reflected the weight placed on the good measure, as each two-measure unit was conducted with a gesture of two movements. According to Mather, "Loulié referred to the downward motion [of the conductor's hand] as the 'good count,' in contrast to the 'false count,' on which the hand is raised."[124] This simple gesture reflects the way in which dancers and composers thought of the minuet more accurately than modern conducting technique, which tends not to make the distinction between

[122] Tilden A. Russell, "The Unconventional Dance Minuet: Choreographies of the Menuet d'Exaudet," *Acta Musicologica* 64, Fasc. 2 (July-December 1992): 134.
[123] Pierre Rameau, *The Dancing Master.* trans. Cyril W. Beaumont (London: Beaumont, 1931), Facsimile reprint (New York: Dance Horizons, 1970), 66.
[124] Mather, 138.

good and bad measures in such pieces. Modern conductors should experiment with a conducting gesture that delineates good and bad measures, and should certainly make themselves familiar with the implications of good and bad measures or beats for phrase shapes, bowings, structure, and other performance practice issues. Some examples of these issues will arise in the context of the cantata movements discussed in Chapter 4.

Musically the minuet shares several similarities with the sarabande, though its tempos tend to be much faster. Harmonies tend to be simpler and less dissonant in minuets than in sarabandes, in keeping with the moderate *Affekt.* Like the sarabande, the minuet often features four- and eight-bar phrases, a logical extension of the dance's two-measure groupings. Little and Jenne note that many of the minuets of the early eighteenth century featured "balanced phrases and a clear sense of rhyme, or question with an expected answer."[125] While such regularity is not a given in Baroque minuets, in our examples here Dieupart and Bach follow the simpler structure of paired measures.

Though the so-called "sarabande syncopation" rhythmic pattern appears in both dances, the difference in its character in the two dances helps define a major contrast between them. As we saw in the discussion on kinesthetics and tempo in Chapter 2, the tempo at which one encounters this rhythm changes its

[125] Little and Jenne, 66. Scholars disagree on the nature of minuet structure; some argue that numerous composers wrote minuets with irregular phrase structures. See Sutton, Russell, and McKee for an introduction to the debate.

quality. In the context of the sarabande's slow quarter pulse, we noted above that the second beat of this pattern receives a special emphasis, often quite dramatic, in the dance and the music. In such pieces sarabande this pattern often communicates a serious and passionate *Affekt*. In the much faster minuet, with its metric level at the measure instead of the beat, the second beat in a "sarabande syncopation" flows by much more quickly. The speed of the tempo does not allow dancers and musicians time to emphasize that second beat with the same depth as in the sarabande. As a result, in the minuet the pattern has a lighter, more linear quality, matching the minuet's light *Affekt* of moderate gaiety.

Therefore, though the "sarabande syncopation" appears in both the minuet and the sarabande, this same rhythmic pattern responds very differently to the dances' different *Affekte*. This demonstration of the power of tempo to change the character of a rhythm has direct implications for musicians. When performing, one can add seriousness to a minuet by slowing the tempo, or lightness to a sarabande by increasing it. That is, one can adjust the *Affekt* by adjusting the tempo.

The minuet in Music Example 3.6 is from the sixth suite by Charles Dieupart, again part of the work copied by Bach at Weimar. The dance structure is immediately apparent, as the eight-measure phrase divides easily into four-measure and two-measure sub-sections. Even in this brief sample, Dieupart models a variety of characteristic minuet rhythms, including a

suggestion of a "sarabande syncopation" in measure 2, though it is weakened by its placement in the second measure. The harmonic context is simpler than in the sarabande example, with less use of expressive dissonance and therefore less opportunity for dramatic emphasis. The resolution of the harmonies in every second measure help define the two-measure groupings, and conform to the rise and fall of the arsic and thetic phrase shape.

[A T A T

A T A T]

Music Example 3.6. Charles Dieupart, Suite #6 in F minor, Menuet, mm. 1-8

Bach's Use of Minuet Elements

Since the Cello Suites were probably composed before the French Suites, the example from Cello Suite #2, BWV 1008, is the earliest of these Bach minuet examples (Music Example 3.7). The structure and rhythms of the dance are

easily identifiable, and Bach groups the two-bar combinations through the repetition of the motif in the opening two measures. He keeps a 6-beat count present and yet maintains momentum through to the eighth bar. As with the sarabande example, Bach presents the player with several double stops that might present an challenge, particularly those in the penultimate measure. However, cellist Tim Janof contends that the minuets can be performed at dance tempos.[126]

Music Example 3.7. BWV 1008, Cello Suite #2, Menuet, mm. 1-8

In Music Example 3.8, the minuet from Bach's French Suite #6, BWV 817, Bach follows the minuet structure and standard rhythmic patterns very closely, displaying two-bar groupings even more clearly than does Dieupart. Each grouping seems to visually correspond to the [AT] pattern of harmonic-rhythmic activity, except that Bach shifts rhythmic emphasis through the delayed bass entrance and the neighbor-note motion in the upper parts. The listener may find that his sense of the piece shifts with the entrance of the bass, to hear the first measure as an upbeat to the second. Bach has subverted the

[126] Tim Janof, "Baroque Dance and the Bach Cello Suites," *Internet Cello Society 2 November, 2002*, (Accessed [2 April 2007]), <http://www.cello.org/Newsletter/Articles/mansbridge/mansbridge.htm>.

usual minuet harmonic-rhythmic pattern throughout the piece, only returning to the expected structure at the close of the third and final strain. Performance of the piece that stresses the initial notes of the odd measures, perhaps with the addition of ornaments, and softens the bass entrance and activity of the even measures, can help the listener maintain a sense of the dance flow.

Music Example 3.8. BWV 817, French Suite #6, Menuet, mm. 1-8.

Music Example 3.9 is the second minuet in a set of two from Partita #1, BWV 825, and is somewhat less complex than its partner. This minuet and its fellows in the other Partitas also highlight the relative harmonic and rhythmic simplicity of minuets, as they are far less dramatically stylized than the sarabandes and other dance types.

Like the example from the French Suites above, the piece conforms to the structure of minuets, and its dominant rhythms match common *pas de menuet* step-unit patterns, as Little and Jenne have pointed out. They also note that Bach has extended the piece beyond his minuet models in several ways, with a four-voice texture in counterpoint, pedal points, and suspensions held across the bar line from bad to good measure.[127] The disruption of the usually clear distinction between good and bad measures undermines the usual 6-beat structure and suggests a continuous flow of notes. A creative performer might project the dance rhythms against the ambiguous context, exploiting the contrast between them.

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Music Example 3.9. BWV 825, Partita #1, Menuet 2, mm. 1-8.

[127] Little and Jenne, 81.

These examples show that, like their sarabande counterparts, Bach's titled minuets made use of the form and rhythms of French Baroque minuets, and extended well beyond those models. Yet, dance rhythms can still be found and reflected in one's performance of these pieces.

The Performance Tradition of the Cello Suites

In the preceding sections, we found that dance characteristics are undoubtedly present in Bach's titled dances, and began to explore how a performer can identify and reflect these characteristics in performance of Bach's works. Before we apply these concepts to the cantatas, a further look at Bach's Cello Suites, BWV 1007-1012, provides an excellent perspective on performers who have attempted to apply similar ideas to Bach's stylized dance music, especially since little research has addressed dance in the choral genre itself.

As we will see below, a strong performance tradition in the Cello Suites seems to discourage cellists from incorporating dance styles into their playing. Though this tradition runs counter to historical evidence, many modern cellists do not even attempt to engage dance elements they consider irrelevant. These cellists had counterparts among many conductors from the nineteenth and earlier twentieth centuries, who showed a similar disregard for historical context. Such conductors often led performances of the cantatas with massive ensembles and widely ranging tempos. These performances followed a

German Romantic tradition which we have seen did not generally acknowledge the French influence or the dance qualities in Bach's music.

However, circumstances have changed dramatically in the realm of choral music, and modern recordings reveal performers' keen interest in recent performance-practice research.[128] This likely extends to an interest in the study of dance in Bach's music as well, when the performers are aware of it. Yet, very little research or pedagogy has addressed dance-influenced performance of Bach's choral music. The Cello Suites and other titled dances have generated much more scholarly discussion of dance-influenced performance, despite the resistance or indifference of many prominent cellists to the idea. This literature raises issues that concern performers of any of Bach's dance-inflected music, and provides useful lessons worth exploring before studying the cantatas themselves.

Many cellists wishing to learn more about the Cello Suites' relationship to dance have collaborated with Baroque Dance specialists, and have drawn mixed conclusions from the experience. Tim Janof explored the suites with Baroque dancer Anna Mansbridge, and found difficulties with some of the movements, but also a few revelations that completely overturned his previous understanding of the pieces. Leslie Hirt Marckx participated in Baroque dance workshops for her dissertation (on French Baroque influences on the Bach

[128] In fact, many conductors double as musicologists, such as Ton Koopman and Andrew Parrott. Joshua Rifkin, at the center of the controversy over the size of Bach's chorus, has also recorded several of Bach's choral works.

Cello Suites) and stakes out a clear position: "The notion that performers need not concern themselves with attempting to retain characteristic elements in these dances because they are stylized concert pieces, and not choreographed dances, is false."[129]

However, Norwegian cellist Truls Mørk also studied the works with a Baroque Dance specialist, and came away from the experience convinced,

> the actual dance tempos were so slow that they would be unplayable on the cello. Nobody could dance to the Bach Cello Suites *as they are traditionally played* because the cellist's tempos would be much too fast. I'm not sure that it's appropriate to think of the Bach Suites in terms of dances. (emphasis mine)[130]

Though Mørk must have had some basis for making this statement, its careless generality makes it obviously incorrect, particularly in the light of Janof's much more thorough description of his findings with each dance type. Janof found that many traditional tempos fit the other dances quite comfortably, particularly the minuets, gavottes, and bourées. In fact, the gigues and sarabandes called for dance tempos *faster* than cellists' usual tempos.[131] It is possible that Mørk was recalling tempo concerns for the courante movements—a special case which we will discuss below.

In his statement, Mørk raises a doubt that other cellists echo. Yet when cellists give up on the idea of dance influence in a set of dance suites because

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[129] Leslie Hirt Marckx, "French Baroque Influences on Johann Sebastian Bach's 'Six Suites for Violoncello Solo' with an Emphasis on French Court Dance and Suite V" (DMA diss., University of Washington, 1998), 1.
[130] Tim Janof, "Conversation with Truls Mørk," *Internet Cello Society 2* (Accessed [1 May 2007]), <http://www.cello.org/Newsletter/Articles/mork.htm>, 4/13/1999>
[131] Janof, "Baroque Dance and the Bach Cello Suites."

of apparent discrepancies in tempos, they have fixated on the wrong issue. The discussions of Chapter 2 showed that the way to find the dance is not through tempo, but through the shared characteristics in the dance and the music—and especially the *Affekt* of the piece. The evidence is strong that most, if not all of the Cello Suites movements have a connection to dance that can shape their performance, and the experience of cellists like Hirt Marckx and Janof is an excellent starting point.

Unfortunately, much other information available to cellists passes on inaccurate impressions about the Cello Suites. Though it is not clear whether Nathaniel Rosen has ever worked with dancers, he states his opinion about the Suites' dance character unequivocally:

> People often talk about the notion that these pieces are dance movements. They're not dance movements! They are works for unaccompanied cello which have, with the exception of the Preludes, titles of dance movements.[132]

In this statement Rosen confuses function with form: while he is likely correct that the Suites were never meant to *function* as dance accompaniment, their *form* is undoubtedly based on actual dances, and his statement is mistaken. Rosen presents an *interpretive choice* not to incorporate dance elements into his playing as a factual statement that those dance elements do not exist in the work. He is of course free to make that choice, but as we have seen, the Cello Suites clearly stem from the established genre of dance suites, and the dances

[132] Ibid.

within them share multiple defining characteristics with their models, many of which were popular dances in Leipzig in Bach's day.

Though Rosen expresses himself unusually strongly, this view of the Cello Suites—and its attendant disregard for their historical context—is not uncommon. From compact disc liner notes[133] to the New Grove Dictionary of Music,[134] many widely-available resources do not clearly credit the influence of the French Baroque dance on the Suites, and some even disseminate completely incorrect information. On closer examination, this misinformation may span generations of cellists. Compelling evidence of labeling mistakes found in multiple editions of the Cello Suites suggests this is the case, as we will see in the next section.

Mislabeled Dance Movements and Editorial Ignorance

When Janof and Mansbridge explored the Courante movements in the Suites, he was "immediately taken aback" by the slowness of her suggested

[133] Sample quotes found by Marckx in liner notes from popular recordings of the Suites display a similar ignorance of the historical context. Two samples: "only the structure of the original dances remained . . . Their character as dances had disappeared," and "by Bach's time, the movements were dances in name only." The first quotation was excerpted from liner notes by Pieter Wispelwey in his 1989-90 recording, and the second quotation from notes by Peter Eliot Stone for a 1983 recording by Anner Bylsma. Marckx, Dissertation, 1.

[134] In the New Grove's brief article on Bach's works "*senza basso*" – including therefore various suites and partitas for cello, violin, and flute – one may distinguish only the faintest reference to dance in the description of the characteristics of the works: "dense counterpoint and refined harmony coupled with *distinctive rhythms*." (Emphasis mine) Apparently these rhythms are not distinctive enough to merit the inclusion of more detail, such as their dance basis. "Bach, §III: (7) Johann Sebastian Bach 19. Chamber music," *Grove Music Online* ed. L. Macy (Accessed [31 March 2007]), <http://www.grovemusic.com.offcampus.lib.washington.edu/shared/views/article.html?section=music.40023.3.7.19#music.40023.3.7.19>. 2007.

tempo, which was approximately MM=56.[135] Since the courantes sounded wrong to him at this tempo, Janof decided to investigate the matter further. He was surprised to find that Rameau describes the courante as "a very solemn dance with a nobler style and grander manner than the others," which Janof comments is "a far cry from the more upbeat character with which courantes are usually played by cellists."[136] He then discovered that five of the six so-called 'courantes' in Bach's Cello Suites are <u>not</u> courantes, but 'correntes'.[137] (The exception is the third movement from the Suite in C minor (No. 5, BWV 1011), which is a true courante.[138])

The corrente is an Italian dance, with numerous differences from the French courante, as the reader may see in the comparison of dances in Appendix A.[139] Little and Jenne inform us that the two titles were regularly confused during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; movements that were actually 'correntes' were labeled as 'courantes', and vice-versa.[140]

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[135] This is precisely the tempo suggested by Little and Jenne for the Courante in *La Bourgogne*, published in Leipzig in 1705. Little and Jenne, 117.
[136] Janof, "Baroque Dance and the Bach Cello Suites."
[137] Janof found this information in Little and Jenne, but it is also corroborated in Meredith Little and Suzanne Cusick's article on the courante in the New Grove Dictionary of Music. Meredith Little and Suzanne Cusick, "Courante," *Grove Music Online* ed. L. Macy (Accessed [1 April 2007]), <http://www.grovemusic.com.offcampus.lib.washington.edu/sharedviews/article.html?section=music.06707#music.06707>.
[138] Janof notes that "The c minor Courante does sound pretty good at Mansbridge's tempo." This makes sense, since the C minor Courante is the only true Courante of the six. Janof, Baroque Dance and the Bach Cello Suites.
[139] The two styles may have had an ancestor in common, according to Little and Cusick's "Courante" article.
[140] Little and Jenne, 134.

Indeed, Janof found that "all of the known Bach Cello Suite source manuscripts label these movements as 'courantes'."[141]

Janof notes that the first known published edition of the Suites (Norblin, 1825) labels all six movements, including the true Courante, No. 5 in C minor, as "Correntes," which is also incorrect.[142] While the Norblin edition is therefore correct for five out of six movements, the editor's complete reversal of *all six* titles is convincing evidence that he does not truly grasp the difference between the dance types. Similarly, multiple other editions betray their editors' lack of understanding of the difference, through dance titles that remain uncorrected and a complete absence of commentary to alert the performers. It is a mark of how distanced we are from familiarity with these dances, that editors can blithely mark "allegro," and include metronome markings nearly *three times* as fast as an appropriate courante tempo,[143] under the title of a dance well-documented as one of the slowest of baroque dances.[144]

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[141] Janof, "Baroque Dance and the Bach Cello Suites."
[142] Ibid.
[143] As one example: In the 1972 International Music Company edition, editor Pierre Fournier suggests a tempo of 𝅗𝅥. =circa 50 for the courante of Suite #3. This tempo is in line with tempos taken by several modern performers, if on the slow side. Translating this to three beats per measure, as would be appropriate for a courante, results in a tempo of ♩ =150 – nearly three times as fast as Little and Jenne's recommended tempo of MM=56. While Fournier's tempo is perfectly appropriate for a corrente, He gives no indication in the score or the preface that the movement should be considered a corrente, not a courante. Johann Sebastian Bach, *Six Suites for Cello Solo*, ed. Pierre Fournier (New York: International Music Company, 1972): 17. Company, 1972):
[144] Hilton, 263; Little and Jenne, 20; and Mather, 128, and other writers agree that, while period sources may be ambiguous with regard to precise tempos for each dance type, they all affirm the relative tempos of the dances in relation to each other – and the Courante is always among the slowest, if not the slowest.

The issue of editorial errors is not confined to the Cello Suites. Similar errors and omissions can be found in editions of Bach's Suites and Partitas for flute, keyboard, and violin.[145] As in the Cello Suites, courantes and correntes tend to be mislabeled in many editions, particularly in the French Suites for Keyboard, BWV 812-817. David Schulenberg notes another egregious example of mislabeling: in Bach's Fifth French Suite for Keyboard, an editor entitled the loure, a slow dance in 6/4, as a bourée, a quick dance in cut time.[146]

Little also points out that editors' mistakes are not confined to mislabeled movements and tempo indications. Reviewing the Bourée I in a nineteenth-century edition by Hans Bischoff of Bach's Partita in B minor for keyboard, BWV 831, Little shows that Bischoff's editorial articulations are "not based on French dance concepts," and therefore change the *Affekt*, the level of the beat, and the quality of movement in the piece.[147] Schulenberg also has found that numerous editors of Bach's keyboard Suites and Partitas have obscured the dance

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[145] Editions which discuss dance in their prefaces tend to much more accurately label movements. Three outstanding examples of these are Walther Dehnhard's edition of the English Suites, with interpretive notes by Colin Tilney, Klaus Engler's edition of the Six Partitas, with notes by Edith Picht-Axenfeld, and Judith Schneider's edition of and notes for the French Suites. Johann Sebastian Bach, *English Suites: BWV 806-811*, ed. Walther Dehnhard, fingerings and suggestions for performance by Colin Tilney (Vienna: Wiener Urtext Edition, Schott/Universal Edition, 1998); Bach, *Klavierübung I: Volume 1, Six Partitas*, ed. Klaus Engler, Fingering and remarks on interpretation by Edith Picht-Axenfeld (Vienna: Wiener Urtext Edition, Schott/Universal Edition, 1993); Bach, *French Suites*, ed. and comments Judith Schneider (Van Nuys, CA: Alfred Publishing, 1988).
[146] Schulenberg, 318.
[147] Little, 119-120

elements with their added articulation marks, misinterpreting the detached upbeat in particular.[148]

Since cantata movements do not have dance titles, this may seem less germane to them. However, performers of all of Bach's works would do well to note the ubiquitous and persistent presence of editorial errors like these, and consider all sources carefully, especially in older editions. In light of the paucity of dance scholarship, it follows that there is not a precedent for dance-informed editions, and musicians interested in projecting the dance in Bach's music must be sure that the editions they use do not work against them—as they have for cellists.

A cellist interested in studying the dance character of the suites could easily become confused by a description of a dance that does not match five of the six musical settings of courantes in Bach's Cello Suites. Without a thorough search delving beneath the many mistaken sources, it seems likely that he would decide, as others have before him, that in Bach's hands this music must have evolved beyond its dance form origins—and never explore the question again. Though Little and Jenne's clarification of the true nature of the five 'courantes' is over two decades old, and presumably other scholars and cellists have known of the error as well, one does not find references to cellists playing them as *correntes*—with or without the collaboration of dancers. According to

[148] According to Schulenberg, editors unfamiliar with the conventions of baroque dance use inappropriate models for their articulations, even adding slurs which connect the upbeat to the following downbeat, following a style common in the Classical period, but inappropriate in Baroque music. Schulenberg, 23.

the evidence above, generations of cellists have played these movements like correntes while thinking of them as courantes, and have developed a completely mistaken conception of what a 'courante' should be.[149]

Thus, a pattern emerges, anticipated in Donington's warning that one must "make sure of comparing the right version of the dance, and in its right historical condition."[150] This confusion of related French and Italian dance titles reveals just such a lack of careful attention to historical background. String players should know of the widely-discussed gulf between Baroque French and Italian string performance style. As Richard Efrati points out in his *Treatise on the Execution and Interpretation of the Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin and the Suites for Solo Cello by Johann Sebastian Bach*, "whilst the Italians were distinguished for their passionate performance, the French aimed at clarity, grace and restraint."[151]

The style of the correntes and gigas implies the virtuosic early-eighteenth Italian tradition of string writing and should immediately suggest a particular technical approach to cellists, clearly different from the French style implicit in the courantes and gigues. These national styles' contrasting approaches to the passions also imply differing degrees of emotional expression in each

[149] Janof's surprise at Mansbridge's courante tempo and descriptions of the dance's character is a telling example.
[150] Donington, 17. In fact, Donington addresses the courante issue directly elsewhere: "In the case of the courante, the name is a less reliable guide than usual, partly because different spellings confuse the issue of language and partly because the Italian form is found quite frequently with the French Name. But here the form itself is readily distinguishable." Robert Donington, *The Interpretation of Early Music*, revised ed. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1974), 103.
[151] Efrati, 224-5.

movement. The context may become more complicated when Bach assimilates both traditions in one piece, as regularly happens in the cantatas. However, in such a case the conductor and musicians should make their performance decisions based on their understanding of all relevant styles. Conductors should be able to <u>correctly</u> identify dance elements in a work, assimilate their significance into a wider understanding of the piece, and articulate to the performers the ramifications of those dance elements for their performance.

Chapter 4: Dance in the Cantatas

In the preceding chapters we have seen how the spread of French Baroque culture throughout Germany created an environment in which Bach could absorb its influence in his music. Delving in the details of steps in French Baroque dances, we have identified several of their common qualities of motion, and musical correlations to those qualities. We have compared titled dances by Bach and Dieupart, seeing Bach's extensions and interpolations from his French model. Finally, we have studied some of the issues involved in the performance tradition of the Cello Suites. The revelation that numerous editions of Bach's works have spread misinformed conceptions of titles, articulations and tempos to performers for generations, should spur us to look more closely and question those editions, and ultimately develop our own, well-informed interpretations.

In this final chapter of this dissertation, we will examine several choral movements from Bach's cantatas, and discover how Bach incorporates elements of French Baroque dance within them. We will encounter a range of Bach's treatments of dance characteristics, from movements with almost completely intact dance structure, to those with hints of dance-like rhythm interspersed with other compositional elements. In keeping with our prior study of sarabandes and minuets, we will study examples of cantata movements with characteristics of those dances.

It must be understood that the cantatas incorporate dance elements to different degrees. For movements whose connections are less obvious, conductors might think of themselves as detectives, searching out the remaining connections to the dance, and finding enough to re-create some semblance of its spirit in performance. In the course of this study, we will identify numerous factors for the conductor to consider as part of that search. These will form the basis of a palette of dance-related factors a conductor should consider when intending to project any French Baroque dance in a work by Bach. Readers can find a listing of these factors in Appendix C.

Often choral parts do not embody the dance characteristics as clearly as do their orchestral counterparts, and in such movements it is usually the instrumental parts that project the dance qualities most clearly. The degree to which dance elements can be discerned in a cantata's choral parts depends greatly upon the texture of the choral writing. The texture can be viewed along a spectrum, from simple and homophonic to complex and polyphonic, and choral parts which fall at the extremes of this spectrum have the least connection to dance character. However, Bach rarely leaves a chorale melody unembellished, and his simplest additions may convey a hint of the dance. Choristers may still participate in the projection of the dance, as the conductor finds dance-related insights in the orchestral parts that the singers can apply to phrasing, tone quality, *Affekt* and other performance choices.

A Movement With Clear Minuet Structure: BWV 122

The instrumental ritornello that opens the first movement of Bach's Cantata BWV 122, "Das neugeborne Kindelein," could almost have been written for dancing, so closely does it conform to minuet structure and dance rhythms (Music Example 4.1). The ritornello's sixteen measures divide evenly into four phrases, and further divide into two-bar groupings, which conform readily to dancers' six-beat count and *pas de menuet* patterns, with clear patterns of good and bad measures. The two-measure-long melodies are paired, with the second melody almost always a response to or variation on the first, in a consistent "question and answer" construction.

The simple texture and transparent construction of the ritornello provide a context in which the performers can clearly identify the shifting stresses of the good and bad, or stressed and unstressed measures. The conductor can lead the orchestra in gradually more sophisticated responses to its melodic and rhythmic shapes. One might begin with simple alternations of stress and release in the two-measure groups, and then suggest differentiations in degrees of emphasis between sets of two-bar and four-bar groups. Bach's shifting dynamics in measures 7, 9, 11, and 13 set a precedent for such a decision. Finally, the ensemble might experiment with musical representations of the kinesthetic shifts of weight and speed in the *pas de menuet* steps themselves.

Violin I
Oboe I
Violin II
Oboe II
Viola
Taille
Continuo
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
bc
S
A
Das
Das neu - ge -

Music Example 4.1. BWV 122, *Das neugeborne Kindelein,* Mvt. 1, mm. 1-26.

Music Example 4.1. BWV 122, *Das neugeborne Kindelein*, continued.

In some cases, the conductor might help the ensemble visualize these patterns by using a conducting gesture based on the method recommended by Loulié, of two motions per six-beat measure.

Study of minuet characteristics and *pas de menuet* step patterns, guided by the conductor or perhaps a Baroque dance specialist, will greatly improve musicians' ability to identify and delineate those characteristics in the music. As we noted in Chapter 3, each variation of the *pas de menuet* step-unit emphasizes the six beats of the two-measure minuet groups differently. Several of Bach's rhythmic patterns in this movement correspond directly to these variations. Following Waterman's suggestion of the wide variety of means of expression, performers could be encouraged to experiment with as many different musical shapes as they can invent. Holding the images of moving dancers in their minds, performers can shape their musical phrases according to the kinesthetic shifts they see—or even in opposition to them.

While the homophonic texture of the ritornello helps the instrumentalists directly experience unified dance rhythms, the polyphony in the choral parts obscures the "swing" of those dance rhythms for the singers. This presents them with a challenge as they attempt to reflect the minuet characteristics in their performance. Considered separately, the phrases in each of the lower three voices match *pas de menuet* step-unit rhythms and follow the shifting accents of good and bad measures. The voice parts' sequential imitative entries will cause their good and bad measures to be out of phase with each

other, but the singers can still recognize and project the dance rhythms, conforming to their own section's locally-defined pattern of accent and release. Bach's setting of the text will assist with this, as he has matched the text with the good and bad measures to naturally shape the text declamation with appropriate inflections, even in the midst of melismatic, polyphonic textures.

In sum, the rhythmic conflicts of the instrumental and choral parts will create interesting cross-rhythms, perhaps exactly the effect Bach intended. Such organized chaos might reflect Bach's portrayal of the joyful crowd in the text, celebrating the birth of Christ, with pockets of dancing revelers whose music conflicts with one another but contributes to an overall sense of joy (Figure 4.1).

Das neugeborne Kindelein,	The newborn little Child,
Das herzeliebe Jesulein	The darling little Jesus
Bringt abermal ein neues Jahr	Brings once again a New Year
Der auserwählten Christenschar.	To the chosen Christian throng.

Figure 4.1. BWV 122, *Das neugeborne Kindelein*: Mvt. 1, Text.

A Movement with Subtle Minuet Structure: BWV 8

In our study of Bach's titled minuets and the first movement from BWV 122, the minuet influence on these pieces has been easily identifiable. However, performers will often encounter movements in Bach's cantatas which have minuet characteristics that are less obvious. In the first movement of

Cantata BWV 8, "Liebster Gott, wenn werd ich sterben?," Bach makes use of minuet structure and phrase shapes, while extending the melodic material far beyond a minuet's usual scope (Music Example 4.2a). With the help of an analytic tool from theorist Eric McKee, we can dissect the piece to find the elements that are present, and can then use them to project the dance more effectively in our performances of this piece.

To the ear, this movement projects an audible structure very much reminiscent of a minuet. The repeated string arpeggios and the motion of the oboe parts convey the quick triple-meter flow of the dance. Upon listening to Masaaki Suzuki's recording of the minuet,[152] Mansbridge immediately agreed that this movement could be danceable as a minuet, and found the tempo (approximately 𝅗𝅥. =48) a good tempo for dancing, if a bit slow. She felt this tempo gave the dance a "lyrical" quality, which she expressed most beautifully when she danced to it. She also found that the texture of the piece, with its pizzicato strings, understated basso continuo, and high flute, endowed the music with a spacious character which lent itself to a quality of "suspension" appropriate to the minuet.[153]

However, when one studies the notation, the piece seems very distant from French Baroque minuets, with their transparent textures and short, simple

[152] Johann Sebastian Bach, *Cantatas #24: BWV 8, 33, 113*, Bach Collegium Japan, Masaaki Suzuki, cond. Bis Records AB (CD-1351), CD, 2004.
[153] Anna Mansbridge, Interview 8 March 2007.

Transverse flute
Oboe d'Amore 1
Oboe d'Amore 2
Violin I
pizzicato sempre
Violin II
pizzicato sempre
Viola
pizzicato sempre
Continuo

Fl.
Ob. dam. 1
Ob. dam. 2
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
bc

Music Example 4.2a. BWV 8, *Liebster Gott, wenn werd ich sterben?*, Mvt. 1, mm. 1-4.

phrases. The movement's meter of 12/8 is not usual for minuets, which are usually set in 3/8 or 3/4, or occasionally in 6/8. Also, the frequency of harmonic change, which occurs every half-measure throughout most of the piece, seems too languid a pace for a minuet, which usually features much more regular changes of harmony. Furthermore, the continuous polyphony in the two oboe parts, and Bach's long phrases and evasion of clear cadences, seem to defeat attempts to interpret the phrase structure of the movement according to the model of a minuet. But, McKee's theory reframes our perspective of these problematic characteristics, and shows that each of them in fact helps project the minuet.

McKee argues that in the minuet the *metrical structure,* not the *phrase structure,* was the key for dancers to keep time with the dance.[154] According to McKee, the minuet's repetition of paired measures creates a two-bar *hypermeter*, which delineates the metrical structure and provides the essential grounding for the two-measure *pas de menuet* step-unit.[155] From his studies of the French Suites, McKee argues that "Bach's practical knowledge of the minuet as it was danced is evidenced by the presence of a strong, unambiguous and consistently-held two-bar hypermetre in every minuet of the set."[156]

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[154] This argument is excerpted from McKee's contribution to a debate, primarily between Julia Sutton, Tilden Russell, and McKee, on the relationship of minuet phrase structure, metric structure, and the dance.

[155] McKee, 240-241.

[156] Ibid., 242.

McKee shows that Bach used a variety of musical means to make the hypermeter distinct, through *phenomenal accents*, which he defines as "any musical event that 'gives emphasis or stress to a moment in the musical flow.'"[157] McKee notes that "sudden changes in dynamic, register, contour, texture and timbre" are all possible methods to supply these accents, but that

> Bach uses phenomenal accents brought about by locating the inception of an 'event' of relatively long duration at the beginnings of every other bar. The event may be a pitch, harmony, texture, pattern of articulation, or some combination thereof. The beginnings of such durations receive an accent; when they are consistently placed two bars apart, a two-bar hypermetre emerges.[158]

McKee also notes that Bach uses changes of harmony and a particular phrase structure in which "new groups are consistently initiated every other bar," as other means to create phenomenal accents for his hypermeters.[159]

In the movement from Cantata BWV 8, we find that the application of McKee's theory of hypermeter to the movement immediately reveals its hidden minuet structure. In fact, the movement almost seems designed to illustrate the theory, so closely does it follow his criteria, though it reverses the usual relationship between the measures and the hypermeter. That is, in this 12/8 context, Bach's phenomenal accents project a *half-measure* 'hypermeter' rather than the two-measure hypermeter we would find in a piece in 3/8. Applying McKee's guidelines in a 12/8 piece, we look in particular at the first and seventh

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[157] Ibid. McKee is quoting Fred Lerdahl and Ray Jackendoff, *A Generative Theory of Tonal Music* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1983), 17-18.
[158] McKee, 242.
[159] Ibid., 244.

eighth notes of each measure for the phenomenal accents that define the hypermeter.

One obvious accent comes from the very static basso continuo, which sounds on the first and seventh eighth notes of each bar, through almost the entire piece. Changes of harmony also coincide with this rhythmic emphasis, occurring every half-measure. For both, occasional moments of greater rhythmic and harmonic activity accompany changes in the upper-voice texture, often as the piece approaches cadences. The harmony underlying the choral parts shows greater activity, particularly in the latter half of the movement, but those few interludes do not disturb the well-established metric structure.

It is in the context of the dual-oboe melody that McKee's theory most impressively clarifies the minuet structure. At first glance, the polyphonic interplay of the oboe parts, with their near-perpetual motion, seems to offer the strongest argument against consideration of the movement as a minuet, with wayward melodies that seem to recognize no dance-like bounds. However, the two parts constantly trade off phrases, always beginning in alternation on the first and third beats of the measure. Therefore this invariable pattern, in which new groups begin at the interval of the half-measure, delivers consistent, strong phenomenal accents which mark the half-measure hypermeter.

As we have discovered, though this movement does not initially display minuet characteristics in its melodic, rhythmic, or harmonic aspects, let alone in its phrase structure, every instrumental part projects the minuet structure

through phenomenal accents. The phenomenal accents also provide a context which the musicians can use as a guideline for shaping phrases.[160] However, before applying additional shaping, the players should recognize that Bach has already built natural rhythms of the minuet into the music, mainly in the slight sense of stress and release within each hypermeter.

Conductors can achieve a dance-like performance of this movement if they guide each part to project just these rhythms effectively, and need not explore minuet rhythms as reflected in *pas de menuet* step-units. To keep the quality of flowing, continuous motion, the conductor must ensure that all players perceive their parts on the level of the dotted quarter note, especially the oboes and the strings, rather than becoming caught up in eighth and sixteenth notes. Here we may recall Schulenberg's advice, discussed in the context of the Sarabande from Partita #6, to count on an appropriate metric level, so as not to lose the appropriate character. In that case, the intent was to keep the character of "passionate improvisation," but in this case, the performer will wish to maintain the elegant, flowing spaciousness of this movement.

The oboists might lightly shape their melodic lines, building momentum to and away from arrival points on the first and third beats and releases on thetic second and fourth beats. The string players will likely stress the first note of each triplet figure equally, and may even play every eighth note with equal stress. The conductor can encourage them to lightly stress the first beat of their

[160] In this 12/8 meter, the stressed first and third beats correspond to the good measures in a 3/8 piece, and the unstressed second and fourth beats match the bad measures.

first triplet, de-emphasize the first beat of the second triplet, and shape the interior eighth notes accordingly. In this way they may project the appropriate dotted-quarter-note metric level, and reflect the mild lilt of the good and bad beats. The basso continuo players should follow similar directives in their occasional arpeggiated figures, such as measure 8, and take particular care to lighten the weak beats. Such suggestions as these may help the whole ensemble sense the minuet structure more clearly.

In this piece, the choral part's most significant relationship to the minuet is not found in its rhythms, but in its moderate and serene *Affekt*. While the chorus parts have minuet-like rhythmic qualities, they do not participate directly in projecting the minuet with the instrumental parts (Music Example 4.2b). Each line of text begins with a three-eighth-note upbeat, which disorientates the text from the metric structure, and the singers' melodic lines seem also detached from the hypermeters found in the instrumental part. However, this could be interpreted as an intentional part of Bach's depiction of the *Affekt* of the text, in which we can imagine a speaker distanced from the world he describes, in a timeless state of serenity which admits neither hope nor fear (Figure 4.2). One could easily see this character in the dispassionate soprano part, which appears intermittently, set in a soaring legato over the background of the continuous motion of the orchestra, perhaps representing the passing of Time.

Music Example 4.2b. BWV 8, *Liebster Gott, wenn werd ich sterben?*, Chorus first entrance + oboe d'amore, Mvt. 1, mm. 13-16.

To project this textual *Affekt*, the conductor should encourage the choristers to sing with consistent legato, favoring expressive text declamation over weighted stresses on good and bad measures. Like the instrumentalists,

the singers must not become pedantic in their phrasing; not at the eighth-note pulse-level movement, nor even in their repeated dotted-quarter notes. Rather, they must reflect the character of the dance, "effortless, enchanting, flowing lightness," as Mansbridge phrases it.[161] The conductor can communicate this through the use of imagery, by asking the choristers to sing their parts as if they represented the arms and upper body of a dancer performing the minuet, rather than the busy, continuous motion of the feet. If singers observe dancers performing a minuet, or are guided through a few steps, they will have a clear image in mind of the poise of the dancers' heads and torsos, and the gracefulness and simplicity of their arm movements. This will convey the appropriate quality of character—and will simultaneously improve their body position for vocal technique and expressive singing.

Liebster Gott, wenn werd ich sterben?	Dearest God, when shall I die?
Meine Zeit läuft immer hin,	My time keeps running on,
Und des alten Adams Erben,	And old Adam's heirs,
Unter denen ich auch bin,	Among whom I also belong,
Haben dies zum Vaterteil,	Have this as patrimony:
Dass sie eine kleine Weil	That they are for a little while
Arm und elend sein auf Erden	Poor and miserable on earth
Und denn selber Erde werden.	And then become earth themselves.

Figure 4.2. BWV 8, Liebster Gott, wenn werd ich sterben? Mvt. 1, Text.

[161] Anna Mansbridge, Interview 8 March 2007.

A Movement with Distinct Sarabande Rhythms: BWV 6

In BWV 122 above, we saw an example of a cantata movement in which Bach incorporated obvious minuet structure and rhythms. Bach has included similarly distinct sarabande rhythms in the first movement of his Cantata BWV 6, "Bleib bei uns, denn es will Abend werden" (Music Example 4.3a). The piece is set in a slow 3/4 with a serious and passionate *Affekt*, but it is the recurrent rhythms that most markedly identify this movement as a sarabande. The main melodic motive, which appears in the oboe and later in the chorus, prominently features the "sarabande syncopation" described by Little and Jenne.[162] As we saw in Chapter 3, in this rhythm the second beat receives a stress or emphasis that often corresponds to an expressive movement in the dance. Bach seems to use the *Affekt* of the sarabande and the expressive nature of this rhythm in particular as an appropriate setting for the emotional character of the movement's text.

The sarabande rhythms provide a unifying device throughout the movement. This movement's terse two-line text does not have the scope to offer the usual framework of cantata texts, so the dance rhythm plays a larger role in clarifying the design of the piece.[163] The recurrence of the opening four-

[162] Little and Jenne, 97.
[163] Text in cantata movements usually conforms to "Bar Form," in which three sections of text, two *Stollens* and an *Abgesang*, delineate the structure of the movement. In such movements, the instrumental accompaniment for the two *Stollens* often remains quite similar to or even unchanged, while the *Abgesang* often inspires Bach to depart from or further develop the initial

Music Example 4.3a. BWV 6, *Bleib bei uns, denn es will Abend werden,* Movement 1, mm. 1-10.

theme. In this movement, the sparse text provides no such structure—perhaps Bach wishes to stress the simplicity and purity of the text's plea.

21

Soprano: Bleib' bei uns, bleib' bei uns, denn es will

Alto: Bleib' bei uns, bleib' bei uns,

Tenor: Bleib' bei uns, bleib' bei uns,

Bass: Bleib' bei uns, bleib' bei uns, denn es will A - bend

Continuo

26

S: A - bend wer - den und der Tag hat sich ge-nei - get

A: denn es will Abend wer - den und der Tag hat sich ge-nei get.

T: denn es will A-bend wer-den und der Tag hat sich ge-nei - get.

B: wer - - - den und der Tag hat sich ge - nei - get.

bc.

Music Example 4.3b. BWV 6, *Bleib bei uns, denn es will Abend werden,* Movement 1, Chorus first entrance, mm. 21-30.

bar motive and the continual presence of sarabande rhythms in the continuo provide structure for much of the movement.[164] Even in interludes when the upper parts no longer adhere to sarabande rhythms, the continuo part shapes the rhythmic context for the parts above, quietly continuing to emphasize the second beat with its repeated quarter-note/half-note pattern. Additionally, changes of harmony often fall on the second beats, adding an additional mild emphasis. The conductor may remind the continuo players of the dance rhythm and character, encouraging articulations between the first and second beats when appropriate, and thereby subtly communicating the dance rhythm throughout the movement.

The chorus projects the dance rhythms to a degree unusual in cantata movements, as Bach copies the main motive in the opening oboe parts nearly verbatim to the upper voices. In both the instrumental and choral appearances of the "sarabande syncopation," Bach emphasizes second beats with dissonant harmonies and trills. The conductor can suggest a variety of methods for the players and singers to stress these second beats. The performers may add emphasis with weight, "leaning" on the dissonance of the implied appoggiatura in the trill, beginning the trill slowly, and gradually accelerating. Or they may add "lift," with a slight accent on the second beat and an immediate quick trill in a slightly lighter tone. The conductor may share images of dance movements to communicate these contrasting accents—for these two examples, a slow

[164] A contrasting middle section is set in a different meter, with different themes and rhythms.

glissé or a rise to half-toe would correspond well—to fix their kinesthetic quality in the musicians' imaginations.

Bach's setting of the text itself articulates the dance rhythm and encourages the listener to hear the "sarabande syncopation." If the singers take care to emphasize the double plosive of "Blei<u>b</u> <u>b</u>ei," it creates a stopping of tone between the first and second beats akin to the articulation suggested by Little and Jenne. In movements in which choral parts share the dance rhythms so explicitly, conductors should watch for subtle textual effects of this sort in their study of the music. Considering Bach's regular use of text painting and other more profound textual-musical associations, other examples can certainly be found.

Bach weaves in other themes as well which have little or no connection to the dance. The fragments of imitative counterpoint which alternate with the main motive are built on pairs of eighth notes, themselves sigh motifs which can help project the passionate character of the *Affekt*, and also provide steady momentum underlining the dance. Also, a textually-inspired element murmurs in the background, as instrument families play repeated eighth-note pulses on unison pedal tones. Considering the text, one could interpret these pedals as a representation of the solid, continuing presence of God in response to the request in the text, "Stay with us" (Figure 4.3). With careful slurs that bind together the six eighth notes of every measure, Bach dissuades performers from shaping these eighth note sets according to the rhythms in the main

melodic parts. Therefore, conductors should not apply sarabande rhythms to these parts, but allow them to contrast with the sarabande-influenced parts around them.

Bleib bei uns, denn es will Abend werden, und der Tag hat sich geneiget.	Remain with us, for it is towards evening and the day has drawn to a close.[165]

Figure 4.3. BWV 6, Bleib bei uns, denn es will Abend werden, Mvt. 1, Text

A Sarabande-like Movement without "Sarabande Syncopation" Rhythms: BWV 113

In the prior section, we found that in BWV 6 Bach makes explicit use of the "sarabande syncopation." Conductors exploring sarabande influence in the cantatas will find that many of Bach's sarabande-like cantata movements do not include that rhythmic pattern. One such movement, Cantata BWV 113, "Herr Jesu Christ, du höchstes Gut," displays many sarabande characteristics, including a slow 3/4 meter, consistent four-bar phrases and a serious *Affekt*, and sarabande-like rhythms—but the "sarabande syncopation" never appears in the movement (Music Example 4.4a). And yet, hearing the movement, Mansbridge found that it "really captured what a very passionate sarabande should feel like musically."[166] Below we will identify the techniques used by Bach to make sarabande characteristics in this movement so recognizable to a dancer.

[165] Dürr, 278.
[166] Mansbridge, Interview 1 March 2007.

Oboe 1
Oboe 2
Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Continuo

Ob. 1
Ob. 2
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
bc

Music Example 4.4a. BWV 113, *Herr Jesu Christ, du Höchstes Gut*, Mvt. 1, mm. 1-8.

In the absence of the rhythmic emphasis of the "sarabande syncopation," Bach uses other means to project the movement's sarabande dance rhythms and generate its dance-like momentum. In the oboes' main motive, a series of appoggiaturas provide a recurring source of forward motion, as the harmonic tension of the dissonance propels the listener toward the second beat. The upper strings also contribute to the momentum toward beat two, with an upbeat expressed in a swirling sixteenth-note turn which is suddenly suspended in a dissonant chord on the first beat. Then, suddenly falling silent on the second beat, they leave this dissonance unresolved. The silence includes all instruments except the oboe, and the resolution of its appoggiatura must serve for all. The isolation seems to highlight the expressive quality of its resolution, and considering the *Affekt* of the piece, it does not seem far-fetched to hear this oboe appoggiatura as the sorrowful sigh of the human voice, in keeping with the text (Figure 4.4).

Through this calculated absence of sound and implied resolution, rather than through active rhythms and articulations, Bach subtly reinforces the sarabande dance rhythm and successfully conveys the appropriate *Affekt*. These second beats have a quality of suspension that suggests a particular sarabande step-unit variation, which Hilton found in sarabandes choreographed by Feuillet and a "M. Favier" to music by Lully.

> Three of the dances employ a step especially associated with the sarabande: the dancer rises on to half toe on beat one, pointing the free

> toe to the floor, and holds this position for the second beat, thereby *drawing attention to it by a lack of motion.* (emphasis mine)[167]

This step-unit calls for a different musical response than that suggested by Little and Jenne. In this case, a musical articulation placed between the first and second beat would only serve to undermine the subtlety of the emphasis. As Ruth Waterman comments, the continuous gliding motion of many steps in the sarabande "gives rise to a sustained intensity rather than a moment of sudden stress. Bach's writing corroborates this. His second beats are not dramatic: more like a mild raising of the eyebrows."[168]

Though the second beat is therefore still emphasized, performers will not serve this sort of emphasis well through heavy stresses or articulations. The technique suggested for other sarabandes by Little and Jenne, of shortening the first beat and adding an articulation before the second beat, would disrupt the momentum of the appoggiatura toward its resolution on the second beat.[169] A better alternative, particularly for the strings, would be the Baroque "swell" described in Chapter 2. Played *senza vibrato* on each of their quarter-note first beats, it could provide a special quality of momentum toward the second beat, without undue accent.

Bach also maintains rhythmic momentum throughout the phrases, by invigorating potentially thetic moments with a dotted-eighth/sixteenth-note figure. In the oboe parts, the repose of nearly every resolution of an

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[167] Hilton, "Dances by Lully," 58-9.
[168] Ruth Waterman, "Dance and Anti-Dance," *The Strad* 108, No. 1285 (1997): 537.
[169] Mansbridge, Interview 1 March 2007. Mansbridge describes sarabande choreographies as often having a "push toward the second beat."

appoggiatura is interrupted by a sixteenth note leap away—often to another appoggiatura. In later phrases, the basso continuo uses the same rhythmic figure to provide rhythmic vitality beneath the oboes' long notes. This phrase shape consistently matches Little and Jenne's [aaAT] model of harmonic-rhythmic activity, with its implication of building tension, released only in the last (fourth) measure. However, here even those ostensibly thetic fourth measures of each phrase are not allowed very much repose, as the basso continuo, supported also by the continual motion of repeated eighth notes in the strings, propels us into the next phrase. Conductors might experiment with emphasizing these effects through overdotting. Lengthening the dotted note could increase the fleeting sense of repose on the appoggiatura's resolution—perhaps in a manner that could be termed a "teasing hesitation," appropriate to a sarabande—and shortening the sixteenth increases the drama of its sudden leap away. The performers would need to find an appropriate degree of overdotting, and apply it sparingly, so as not to disrupt the continual sense of anguished tension and the sorrowful *Affekt* of the piece. One might interpret this continual harmonic and rhythmic tension as a conscious reference by Bach to the oppression of sin "ohne Ziel"—without end.

Though the choral part in this movement is a simple homophonic harmonization of the chorale melody, the singers also have opportunities to share in the expressive character of the piece (Music Example 4.4b). Bach has adjusted the chorale and its harmonization so that the voices, especially the alto

and tenor, often have suspensions or appoggiaturas that correlate to the appoggiaturas in the oboe melody. The choristers may use *messa di voce* to stress the dissonance of the first beat and resolution on the second beat, thereby expressing both the momentum of the sarabande and the pathos in the text. Though the serious and sorrowful nature of the text does not become clear until the third line of the text, all of the performers should express that *Affekt* from the first notes of the movement.

Music Example 4.4b. BWV 113, *Herr Jesu Christ, du Höchstes Gut*, Mvt. 1, Chorus first entrance + continuo, mm. 16-20.

Herr Jesu Christ, du höchstes Gut,	Lord Jesus Christ, you highest good,
Du Brunnquell aller Gnaden,	You fountain of all grace,
Sieh doch, wie ich in meinem Mut	See how in my spirit
Mit Schmerzen bin beladen	I am burdened with sorrows
Und in mir hab der Pfeile viel,	And have many arrows in me
Die im Gewissen ohne Ziel	That in my conscience, without end,
Mich armen Sünder drücken.	Oppress me, a poor sinner.[170]

Figure 4.4. BWV 113, *Herr Jesu Christ, du Höchstes Gut*, Mvt. 1, Text.

A Movement with Evidence for Multiple Dance Types: BWV 124

In each of the four cantata movements discussed so far, we have been able to distinguish dance characteristics in the music, identify the specific dances they imply, and explore possible techniques to bring out their qualities in performance. However, Bach often melds a variety of influences, and conductors may find that dance characteristics in a movement suggest more than one dance type. In such a case, the conductor should evaluate the evidence as thoroughly as possible and experiment with a variety of tempos and dance-inflected articulations. In some movements the conductor need not make an "either/or" choice of one dance type or another, but may choose a blend of dance elements, carefully selected to best represent the character and *Affekt* of the text. One example of this is the first movement of Cantata BWV

[170] Dürr, 496.

124, "Meinen Jesum laß ich nicht," which has characteristics which imply both minuet and sarabande dance influence (Music Example 4.5).

Music Example 4.5. BWV 124, *Meinen Jesum laß ich nicht*, Mvt. 1, mm.1-7.

When conductors come upon a dance movement that seems to defy categorization, a close reading of the text of the movement may clarify their choices. In many cases the *Affekt* of the text will favor one dance type over another, as Bach usually chooses dance and text *Affekte* which have clear connections.[171] The text of this movement, seen in Figure 4.5, does not provide an unequivocal reading for either the seriousness and passion of the sarabande, or the moderate gaiety of the minuet. One might consider the seriousness of the vow an important factor, though this context does not imply pain or sorrow as much as tenacity. One could also read this as cheerful determination, which might fit nicely with the moderate gaiety. A close reading of the text might lead to a more definitive interpretation, though such in-depth study is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

Meinem Jesum lass ich nicht,	I will not let my Jesus go,
Weil er sich für mich gegeben,	For He has given Himself for me
So erfordert meine Pflicht,	And thus demands my duty
Klettenweis an ihm zu kleben.	To stick to Him like a bur.
Er ist meines Lebens Licht,	He is the Light of my life;
Meinem Jesum lass ich nicht.	I will not let my Jesus go.[172]

Figure 4.5. BWV 124, *Meinen Jesum laß ich nicht*, Mvt. 1, Text.

As one may see in Music Example 4.5, Bach has created a very sparse texture in this piece, with staccato quarter notes in the strings and basso

[171] Schulze points out that some of Bach's choices of dance-text *Affekt* pairings are less comprehensible than others. He cites one example of an aria "from the chorale cantata *Was frag ich nach der Welt* BWV94, in which the soprano sings the ominous text: 'Es halt es mit der blinden Welt' to a cheerful Bourrée, representing the diametric opposite to the 'nausea' expressed in the text." Schulze, 184.

[172] Dürr, 186.

continuo, rests that isolate two-measure phrases, extended periods of dotted-eighth sixteenth figures, and long stretches with solo oboist and basso continuo. Harmonies are simple and consonant, and free of the passion-laden dissonances usually associated with sarabandes. These musical characteristics do not match the qualities of the sarabande dances we have seen so far, especially those with extended periods of slow, sustained motion and sudden flashes of passion. In terms of the dance's communication of *Affekt*, the staccato articulations and detached phrases diminish the impact that kinesthetic shifts of weight can make. Rather, the music seems linear in focus and slightly distanced from emotion—which correlates well with the higher metric level and moderate *Affekt* of the minuet.[173]

Viewing the movement as possibly minuet-influenced places other musical characteristics in a different light as well. The clearly delineated phrases and light texture for the orchestra, the simplicity of harmony, and the quality of continuous motion (in the oboe part) are all characteristic of minuet-like pieces. The movement fits a consistent pattern of two-measure units, though Bach occasionally disguises the regularity of the hypermeter through changes of texture, (such as in the hypermeter which includes measures 7 and 8).[174] Tutti entrances mark obvious phrases, and the sequences and harmonic

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[173] As we have seen, minuet *affekte* tend to be described as moderate, and the speed of the step-units does not allow for extremely deep actions—so the dancer focuses more on the flowing, continuous nature of the dance.
[174] As we found in the discussion of the two minuet-influenced cantata movements above, BWV 122 (Music Example 4.1) and BWV 8 (Music Example 4.2a), minuets require the clear presence of two-bar phrasing, or else an identifiable two-bar hypermeter.

structure delineate the hypermeter within the long sections of oboe and basso continuo. These musical features seem to suggest that the piece is primarily minuet-like.

The choral parts in this movement do not strongly support the case for either dance type. The imitative entries and mild polyphony of their first entrance soon gives way to a more homophonic texture which prevails through the rest of the piece. The rhyme scheme and phrase shapes fall easily into the triple meter context, especially in the appearances of the rhythmic figure

, but do not suggest dominant minuet or sarabande rhythmic patterns.

In sum, the chorus sings a slightly modified version of a chorale setting, and has little to do with the dance character of the piece.

Though we saw in Chapter 2 that a fixation on tempo can distract performers from other more important considerations of dance influence, testing tempos in response to assembled evidence can clarify the implications of that evidence. Now that we have considered our evidence from this movement, application of sarabande and minuet tempos will provide practical grounding to balance our theoretical conclusions. If we first consider the minuet tempos offered by Little and Jenne and by Mansbridge—(♩ =126-138 and ♩ =138-144)—we immediately see that the oboe's sixteenth-note runs would be

prohibitively challenging even at the slowest of these tempos.[175] Any depth of expression would be lost in the flurry of notes, if they could be played successfully at all. Clearly these minuet tempos cannot be applied to this piece. Now we have refined the range of potential tempos for this movement, and know that an upper limit exists beyond which tempos clearly distort musical aspects.

For the sarabande, the tempos suggested by Little and Jenne and Mansbridge range around ♩ =69-72.[176] Applying this tempo to the movement presents no technical difficulties for musicians. However, the character of the music at this tempo may not communicate an appropriate affect. The quarter-note rests, and even the spaces between the dotted eighths and sixteenth note, seem interminable. The oboe runs express neither excitement nor passion, but sound rather lugubrious. Most slow movements communicate some quality of passion, but this movement lacks dissonant harmonies or other elements that might inspire such passion, and this lack is exposed at this tempo. These aesthetic considerations place a *lower* limit on possible tempos for this movement, though some might disagree where that limit lies, and further refines the range of likely effective tempos.

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[175] Little and Jenne, 69. Anna Mansbridge, Seattle, to author, Edmonds, WA, 28 February 2007, Email.

[176] Little and Jenne, 95; Janof, "Baroque Dance and the Bach Cello Suites."

These findings seem to suggest that neither minuet nor sarabande tempos fit for this movement. However, not all dancers agree on the tempos given above by Little and Jenne and Mansbridge; Hilton recommends a much slower minuet tempo of ♩ =105.[177] Interestingly, this tempo almost precisely matches the tempo of ♩ =104 taken by Ton Koopman on his recording of the movement.[178] At this tempo, the oboe's sixteenth-note runs are quick but playable, and the movement has an overall character of lightness and grace, reminiscent of a minuet, but slightly more deliberate in character, as suggested by a sarabande. At Koopman's tempo, the piece balances the influence of both dances.

Though Koopman's tempo conveniently matches a dancer-sanctioned tempo, he could still have chosen a tempo that fell between the suggested tempos for these dances, based on his interpretation of the available dance, musical and textual information. All conductors have the opportunity to shift away from given dance tempos to arrive at a happy medium that balances technical issues, textual implications, dance characteristics, and any other important factors and influences. When these other factors do not impose

[177] Hilton, 266.
[178] Johann Sebastian Bach, *Cantatas Vol. 12: BWV 135, 124, 121, 111, 99, 78, 114, 91, 107, 116, 8*, The Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra & Choir, Ton Koopman, cond. Antoine Marchand, Challenge Classics (CC72212), CD, 2005.

limits, conductors may enjoy the flexibility to adjust the tempo—and therefore the movement's *Affekt*.

The breadth of the recommended minuet tempos suggests that *any* given dance may have a range of possible tempos, with a corresponding range of slightly different *Affekte*. If increasing the tempo were possible in this movement, the result would have a lighter character, with an even less serious *Affekt*. Alternatively, a conductor convinced of the seriousness of the textual *Affekt* might choose a tempo slower than Koopman's. The slower tempo would add a little kinesthetic weight to the dance and seriousness to the *Affekt*. When conductors make conscious choices of this sort with the character of the dance (or dances) in mind, they can then articulate the qualities they wish to impart to their performers, and through them, to the audience.

Comparing Choral Recordings; Performance that Projects the Dance: BWV 75

After the theoretical discussions of these five cantata movements, it may prove instructive to consider actual performances, so we will briefly compare two recordings and judge their effectiveness at projecting dance qualities in the opening movement of Cantata BWV 75, *Die Elenden sollen essen* (Music Example 4.6). The recordings were conducted by Helmuth Rilling, in 1971 for

Music Example 4.6. BWV 75, *Die Elenden sollen essen*, Mvt. 1, mm.1-5.

the Musical Heritage Society, and by Masaaki Suzuki in 1998 for Bis Records.[179]

This movement has several sarabande characteristics, including a 3/4 meter, a moderately slow tempo, use of expressive dissonances, and the ornamented sixteenth-note runs in the oboe. Dürr observes that the movement also has the qualities of a French overture, pointing out its "slow, solemn, sharply rhythmic opening" and later fugal section.[180] In the first few measures of this opening, the two conductors exhibit entirely different interpretations of the music and text. In Rilling's recording, the orchestra performs the opening motive quietly, with a light instrumental tone that seems to subdue the octave and minor sixth leaps, and diminishes the impact of the bass instruments in particular. The sixteenth-note upbeat and each of the quarter notes are played with their full written length, and the oboe's sixteenth-note solos are also played precisely in time. Throughout the instrumental introduction, the orchestra plays every pitch with equal stress and each phrase with minimal rhythmic shaping.

In his performances of Bach's works, Rilling has historically tended to stress textual issues, so his musical choices here may reflect an interpretation of the text. It is not clear how Bach intends to match his dramatic opening

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[179] Johann Sebastian Bach, *Cantata no. 75*, Frankfurter Kantorei, Stuttgart Bach Collegium, Helmuth Rilling, cond. Musical Heritage Society (MHS 1271), LP, 1971. *Cantatas #8: BWV 22, 23, 75*, Bach Collegium Japan, Masaaki Suzuki, cond. Bis Records AB, CD, 1998. It should be mentioned that, while Suzuki's orchestra uses period instruments, it may be that Rilling's does not—which could make for some differences in articulations, etc. However, the distinct difference between these two interpretations cannot be attributed entirely to a difference in the instruments.

[180] Dürr, 385.

music to this text, and Rilling's direction diminishes the drama of the music, perhaps in response to a milder quality he reads in the text (Figure 4.6). However, the circumstances of this work's first performance encourage a more dramatic reading, as it was Bach's first cantata performed in Leipzig. It seems likely that Bach intended to make a strong impression in his new role, and would not have performed the piece in the muted, bland manner of Rilling's recording.

Die Elenden sollen essen, dass sie satt werden, und die nach dem Herrn fragen, werden ihn preisen. Euer Herz soll ewiglich leben.'	The poor shall eat so that they shall be satisfied, and those that ask after the Lord shall praise Him. Your heart shall live for ever.'[181]

Figure 4.6. BWV 75, *Die Elenden sollen essen*, Mvt. 1, Text.

Suzuki's recording is distinctly different from Rilling's from the first note. He has his players shorten the sixteenth-note pick-up, as if double-dotting the rest on beat 2. They do not play the first quarter note full-length, but shorten it to approximately half its length, and thereby articulate a space before the second quarter note on beat 1, to heighten the sense of arrival there. The orchestra repeats this articulation for each appearance of this motive, and other releases on dotted patterns throughout the introduction impart similar qualities of lift and emphasis.

[181] Ibid., 381.

Suzuki gives his first oboist great latitude for expression, and allows the silence that surrounds the oboe's part to emphasize its soloistic nature. The oboist responds with expressive, passionate shaping of the sixteenth-note patterns in measures 2 and 4, through subtle tenutos, tempo rubato, and changes in dynamics. This oboist's performance of these soloistic flourishes recalls Mansbridge's description of dynamics in sarabandes, the expressive changes of speed and direction that dancers employ to express the hidden passion of the dance.

With just these few musical choices, Suzuki's performance conveys a powerful dramatic quality—and not coincidentally, a dance-like quality—that is missing from the Rilling recording. The use of overdotting, the articulations between the two quarter notes, the passionate ornamentation of the oboe part, and expressive shaping of the dance rhythms are part of the palette of techniques a musician can use to clarify dance rhythms in Bach's music. Suzuki's interpretation has shaped the music and revealed its dance character, even though he may not have consciously considered dance influence in the piece. Conductors who study the dance elements in a work can succeed as well at presenting dramatic, dance-like performances.

Readers are encouraged to explore recordings of other of Bach's cantatas for successful projections of dance character. In the absence of recordings by a conductor who champions the incorporation of dance elements in performance of Bach's vocal works, a few recordings still project the dance

qualities through other good musical instincts and the magic of Bach's own instincts. Interested conductors can improve on the examples by *consciously* applying dance principles to their own performances, with consistent, accurate, and expressive results.

Conclusion

It is part of Bach's greatness that the dance can be felt in his music without any study or foreknowledge at all. A listener who hears Bach performed well can easily hear dance in the music—even when the musicians themselves are not intentionally projecting dance in their performance. There is an infectious quality to much of Bach's music that inspires the body and spirit and implies dancing.

However, conductors who wish to actively and accurately participate in the projection of this dance quality need to educate themselves, to learn as much as they can about the dances that Bach knew and used in his music. Bach never replicates all the qualities of his French Baroque dance models. In any given piece he picks and chooses the dance characteristics he wishes to use, incorporates influences from other traditions, and follows his own creative impulses, resulting in complex, many-layered puzzles. Sorting through and assembling the pieces can be a pleasure, but it is important to know what they look like first.

Conductors must first know the dances in enough detail that they can accurately identify their appearance in the cantata movements. Kirnberger reminded us that all composers made use of these dances. Two centuries and more later, we now have even more dances to discover—but even a little

attention to them will benefit conductors. For those who are inspired, each one has a context laden with history that is a study in itself, and well worth the effort.

Becoming more familiar with the physical nature of these dances is a crucial part of this learning process. The body of a dancer can be a powerful and complex metaphor, a four-dimensional representation of the music, with a multitude of details to be studied and incorporated into conducting gesture, and instrumental and vocal technique. The words dancers use to describe qualities of momentum should be absorbed into the musician's conception of each step-unit, but those qualities are much more powerful when witnessed or personally, kinesthetically experienced.

Conductors must determine how distinctly the qualities of the dance appear in each part in their ensembles. Not all parts have obvious dance characteristics, and the performers will depend on conductors to help them find the dance in their own part, or in the parts of others. The conductors must identify the technical and musical means by which the dance elements can be most effectively projected, and consider the most effective way to communicate those means to their performers.

Conductors must be flexible in their approach, and understand that theoretical relationships between to the music and the dance must be tested by live musicians. Willingness to change tempos, articulations, *Affekte*, and other aspects of one's interpretation can lead to much subtler, more satisfying results.

The conductor who has incorporated all of this may keep faith with the image of Bach sketched by Johann Matthias Gesner, a former colleague of his from the Leipzig Thomas-Schule, of a musician "full of rhythm in every part of his body."[182] When one considers this vision, the continual presence of dance in Bach life, and his expression of it in his music, it is not so far fetched to imagine him dancing as well.

[182] Johann Matthias Gesner, Letter to Marcus Fabius Quintilanus, 1738; quoted in David and Mendel, 231.

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Appendix A:
Selected Characteristics of Dance Forms in Bach's Time

Compiled from Little and Jenne, *Dance and the Music of J.S. Bach*

Bourée Characteristics[183]

1. Duple Meter with 1-pulse upbeat
2. Joyful Affect
3. Moderately fast tempo
4. Balanced 4+4 phrases, or multiples thereof, with extensions
5. Characteristic rhythmic patterns
6. Simple harmonies

Gavotte Characteristics[184]

1. Duple meter beginning in middle of measure
2. Moderate, intimate affect, often pastoral, naïve, and simple
3. Moderate tempo
4. Clearly balanced 4+4 phrases, often in question-and-answer format; extensions rare
5. Characteristic rhythmic patterns
6. Simple harmonies

Minuet Characteristics[185]

1. Triple meter with one unequal beat per measure (see p 66-9); 3/8 signature, occasionally 3/4
2. Moderate affect: intimate, nonchalant; simple joy or peace
3. Moderate tempo
4. Balanced 4+4 phrases, or multiples thereof, with extensions
5. Characteristic rhythmic patterns
6. Simple harmonies, usually two chord changes per measure

Passepied Characteristics[186]

1. One ternary beat per measure, in 3/8 time with an upbeat
2. Affect is light, fickle, playful; sometimes pastoral; more lively than minuet

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[183] Little and Jenne, 205.
[184] Little and Jenne, 216.
[185] Little and Jenne, 224.
[186] Little and Jenne, 234.

3. Moderately fast tempo, a little faster than minuet
4. Balanced 4+4 phrases, or multiples thereof, with extensions; additive structure
5. Characteristic rhythmic patterns: offbeat rhythms part of "playful" affect
6. Simple harmonies

Courante Characteristics[187]

1. Triple Meter (3/2)
2. Serious affect: solemn, noble, grand, hopeful, majestic, earnest
3. Slow tempo (Slowest of all 3-beat dances)
4. Phrases of variable length
5. Rhythmic and metric ambiguity
6. Kirnberger: "nonfunctional harmony", deceptive/avoided cadences
7. Ornamentation appropriate, *notes inégales*

Corrente Characteristics[188]

1. Triple meter (3/4)
2. Affect: Sprightly, vigorous, gay, cheerful
3. Fast tempo, "skipping" quality
4. Phrases of variable length
5. Continuous elaboration in eighth- or sixteenth-notes
6. Slow harmonic rhythm
7. Ornamentation sparse, *notes inégales* not appropriate

Sarabande Characteristics[189]

1. Triple meter (3/4)
2. Serious affect: noble, majestic, yet passionate
3. Slow tempo
4. Balanced 4 + 4 phrase structure; extensions rare
5. Characteristic rhythmic patterns
6. Complex harmonies
7. Soloistic

French Gigue Characteristics[190]

1. Ternary beats grouped in twos, in 6/8, occasionally 3/8
2. Lively, sprightly, skipping type of affect
3. Relatively fast tempo

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[187] Little and Jenne,114-122.
[188] Little and Jenne, 132-136.
[189] Little and Jenne, 236.
[190] Little and Jenne, 250.

4. Often but not always begins with balanced 4 + 4 phrases
5. Sautillant figure (dotted eighth – sixteenth – eighth) predominates
6. Imitative texture
7. One or two harmonies per beat

Loure Characteristics[191]

1. Compound duple meter (6/4), with an upbeat
2. Serious affect: majestic, proud, or pastoral
3. Slow tempo
4. Phrases may be of equal or unequal length
5. Characteristic rhythmic patterns
6. Two harmonies per beat

Giga I Characteristics - Complex Style[192]

1. Two, three, or four ternary beats per measure in 6/8, 9/8, 12/8, 9/16, or 12/16 meter, with only two metric levels expressed in the notation; upbeat unusual; ternary figures on the lower metric level
2. Joyful affect with intense exuberance
3. Tempo moderate to moderately fast
4. Phrases long and unbalanced, with few internal cadences; relentless forward movement
5. Harmonic change normally on the highest note-value expressed in the notation, i.e., the dotted quarter note in 6/8 time, or the first and third divisions of that note, i.e. the long and the short
6. Contrapuntal texture, often with fugal construction
7. Virtuoso performance style
8. Jigging rhythms

Giga I Characteristics[193]

Balanced Style

1. Two, three, or four ternary beats per measure in 6/8, 9/8, or 12/8 meter, with only two metric levels expressed in the notation; upbeat usual; ternary figures on the lower metric level
2. Often joyful, but frequently nonchalant and happy-go-lucky
3. Tempo moderate to moderately fast
4. Phrases often balanced, especially at the beginning, frequent extensions as the piece progresses
5. Slow harmonic rhythm, sequential harmonies

[191] Little and Jenne, 255.
[192] Little and Jenne, 263.
[193] Little and Jenne, 264.

6. Homophonic texture, with some counterpoint; fugal construction is uncharacteristic
7. Jigging rhythms

Giga II Characteristics[194]

- One, two, or four ternary beats per measure in 3/8, 6/8, or 12/8, with duple subdivision of the ternary figures, usually with an upbeat
- Affect joyful and intense
- Jigging rhythms, usually explicit, or else implicit via harmonic changes
- Long phrases with few caesuras
- Dance-like lilt or character

[194] Little and Jenne, 275.

Appendix B:
Period Account of Danced Sarabande.[195]

At first he danced with a totally charming grace, with a serious and circumspect air, with an equal and slow rhythm, and with such a noble, beautiful, free and easy carriage that he hadd the majesty of a king, and inspired as much respect as he gave pleasure.

Then, standing taller and more assertively, and raising his arms to half-height and keeping them partly extended, he performed the most beautiful steps ever invented for the dance.

Sometimes he would glide imperceptibly, with no apparent movement of his feet and legs, and seemed to slide rather than to step. Sometimes, with the most beautiful timing in the world, he would remain suspended, immobile, and half leaning to the side with one foot in the air; and then, compensating for the rhythmic unit that had gone by, with another more precipitous unit he would almost fly, so rapid was his motion.

Sometimes he would advance with little skips, sometimes he would drop back with long steps that, although carefully planned, seemed to be done spontaneously, so well had he cloaked his art in skillful nonchalance.

Sometimes, for the pleasure of everyone present, he would turn to the right, and sometimes he would turn to the left; and when he reached the very middle of the empty floor, he would pirouette so quickly that the eye could not follow.

Now and then he would let a whole rhythmic unit go by, moving no more than a statue, and then, setting off like an arrow, he would be at the other end of the room before anyone had time to realize that he had departed.

But all this was nothing compared to what was observed when this gallant began to express the emotions of his soul through the motions of his body, and reveal them in his face, his eyes, his steps and his actions.

Sometimes he would cast languid and passionate glances throughout a slow and languid rhythmic unit; and then, as though weary of begin obliging, he would avert his eyes, as if he wished to hide his passion; and with a more precipitous motion, would snatch away the gift he had tendered.

Now and then he would express anger and spite with an impetuous and turbulent rhythmic unit; and then, evoking a sweeter passion by more moderate motions, he would sigh, swoon, let his eyes wander languidly; and certain sinuous movements of the arms and body, nonchalant, disjointed and passionate, made him appear so admirable and so charming that throughout this enchanting dance he won as many hearts as he attracted spectators.

[195] Ranum, Audible rhetoric, 35.

Appendix C: List of Considerations for Dance Influence

"What characteristics of the dance in this piece might affect my musical choices, and how?"

Meter:
- Triple or duple
- Implications of Denominator Size (3/8, 3/4, 3/2)

Rhythm
- Use of Characteristic Rhythmic Patterns
  - In main themes and accompaniment
  - In basso continuo rhythm
- Level of the Beat (Metric Levels)
- Implied by changes of harmony (Harmonic-Rhythmic Patterns)
- Caesuras/Cadences/Closing of Phrases

Tempo
- Texture – dense or simple
- Ornamentation or other diminutions
- Dance-related concerns (kinesthetics/body mechanics)

Harmony
- Simple or Complex
- Rate of Harmonic Change
- Expressive use of dissonance

Expressive devices
- Original Phrasing and Articulation Marks
- Ornamentation

Structure:
- Phrase Lengths
- Balanced Phrases
  - 16-, 8-, 4-, 2- bar phrases/groupings
  - "Good" and "bad" measures
  - Implied Question/Answer

Affekt
- Dance *Affekt*
- Text *Affekt*
  - Text declamation – fits the dance rhythm?

    - Shape of Head Motif
  - Rhyme scheme
  - Literal meanings – imply dance or movement?

Kinesthetic Qualities

- Upbeat ('Sink' for the dancer)
- Downbeat ('Rise' for the dancer)
- Shifts of weight and direction
  - Rise and fall
  - Quality of motion – jump/glide/step/turn
  - Swell/Diminish
  - Moments of suspension
- Motion expressing emotion (the kinesthetic-*Affekt* connection)
- Performer's body posture and technique

Other thoughts

- Look for other elements/parts that are not related to the dance, and let them contrast with dance rhythms
- How might your conducting communicate dance?
- Do not allow tempo changes to destroy associations with affect

VITA

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