

Graces

Ornamentation Practice in the Seventeenth Century

Handout for the Workshop on the Diminution Practices of the 16th & 17th Centuries for the Egidier Musikwerkstatt 2017

Pia Praetorius, Nürnberg 2017, reviewed in Weißenbrunn 2020

Introduction

The following slides are intended to give an overview, inspiring readers to look at this topic in more depth. Francesco Rognoni's treatise "Selva de varii passaggi" (1620) served as a guideline, giving a very clear and concise idea of the possibilities to embellish a work of music.

The embellishments described by Rognoni were used throughout the entire 17th century. In 1706, Martin Heinrich Fuhrmann published the singing tutor, "Musical Funnel with which a skilful teacher may infuse his pupils with the noble art of singing in today's manner". All embellishments described in the following can be found in his treatise of the beginning of the 18th century.

A quotation from Fuhrmann's wonderful introduction:

"The Manieren (*the German word for gratie, graces etc*) are the centre and focus of any good composition; to such an extent / that if a vocalist is be able to sing a piece completely with the metre/ but does not know how to find or add any competent Manieren in it/ people will say of him: he might have swallowed the entire musical school satchel complete with notes, tact, beats, pauses, intervals etc / but there were no Manieren in it, and so that an eager singer might get a taste of these musical sweetmeats and savour them / I will serve some up to him here. "

On that note: Buon Appetito...

Transition to Early Baroque 1580 - 1630

- In 1584, dalla Casa published a treatise on diminutions which demonstrated a change of style from Renaissance diminutions to early Baroque forms. For the first time, he used names for the shorter embellishment forms which already point towards the emerging Baroque period. Before him, theoreticians had only published the much more complex and much longer passaggi.
- Numerous theoretical works were published during this time, comprising both the old and the new styles, often using both simultaneously

The New Style

- Vocal and instrumental practices develop separately.
- Short embellishments are introduced, emphasising specific notes/ words in a phrase and stressing emotional expression.
- The rhythm of the passaggi becomes livelier, is no longer so uniform.
- The manner of the diminution is determined by the emotional content and the tempo of the composition rather than serving to illustrate the singer's virtuoso skills.

Two Types of Diminutions

Gratie

- Short embellishing formulae
- Only described in textbooks since the late 16th century

Passaggi

- Longer, more complex passages
- Taken over from older Renaissance tradition
- Found especially in cadences and improvised embellishments of solo works

Gratie - Graces in the Seventeenth Century

- Terms are used very differently in this period.
- Almost as many terms as theoreticians.
- Use of the terms tremolo and trillo very confusing.
- In practice, individual types of embellishments were often mixed.

Graces

- Portar della voceAt the beginning of a work or of a phrase, and on long notes
- AccentoTo emphasise words, as elegant link between two notes
- TremoloAt the end of dotted notes, in combination with accenti
- TrilloPreferably in cadences
- GropoIn cadences
- IntonatioAt the beginning of a work or phrase
- EsclamazioneAt the beginning of a work or phrase
- Tirata.....Downward and/or upward runs
- CascataFor an emotional shaping of downward runs
- Ribattuta di gola.....Adding rhythmic variety to uniform runs, may be used whenever variations are desired
- Mordant.....To emphasise words
- Anticipazione della syllaba/ Anticipazione della nota Before end notes or final notes

Francesco Rognoni

- In 1620, in Milan, Francesco Rognoni publishes “Selva de varii passaggi” (The Jungle of Various Diminutions).
- He also includes the newer, shorter embellishments which he calls gratie in the beginning of part 1, explaining them in detail and illustrating them with examples.
- With emotional words, passaggi should now be avoided. Instead, Rognoni recommends the following techniques:
- Replace passaggi by gratie, e.g. accenti and esclamationi.
- Use of crescendo und diminuendo
- Colouring the voice with a melancholy and pained expression, if the text demands this.
- This is intended to generate more variety, a greater wealth of variations, uniform runs are to be interrupted, listeners should not be bored by mere virtuosity.

Francesco Rognoni Selva de varii passaggi

AVVERTIMENTI
alli Benigni Lettori.

1 Il portar della voce, vuol esser con gratia, il che si fa rinforzando la voce su la prima nota à poco, à poco, e poi facendo il tremolo sopra la negra.

2 L'Accento vuol esser più tosto tardo, che altrimenti il vero accento è quello, che si fa discendendo, se ben hoggi di si v'è ancora quest'altro nell'ascendere, e tal volta da gusto all'vdoto, mà i buoni Cantanti lo fanno di raro, perché farebbe poi teffioso.

3 Il Tremolo si fa fonte, mà però con gratia, & si deve guardare di non farlo come fanno alcuni senza termine, che paiono Capretti; per il più il Tremolo si fa sopra il valor del ponto di ciascuna nota.

4 Il Gruppo quanto à me, pare che vadi scritto in questa maniera, che così la maggior parte de' valent'huomini l'hanno scritto, e così ancora il Trillo; auuertendo ogn'vno, che voglia imparar detto Trillo, o Gruppo di pigliar, & tibatter ciascuna nota con la gola sopra la vocale a, fino all'ultima Breue, o Semibreue, qual Trillo, o Gruppo si fa per il più sopra la penultima nota di qual si voglia Cadenza, o finali.

5 Il principiar sotto alle note, vuol esser, o di terza, o di quarta (però vi vuol giudicio,) perché non sempre farà buono il cominciar di terza, mà tal'hor di quarta, e questo stà all'orecchia del giudicioso Cantore per la dissonanza che può nascere; questo principiare non è altro, se non vn dar gratia alla voce nel principiar delle note.

6 L'Esclamationi si fanno nel discendere scemando à poco à poco la prima voce, e poi dando spirito, e viuacità alla nota che segue con vn tremolino.

7 Volendo passar da vna nota all'altra, fa bisogno portar bene la voce con gratia, tenendo bene le note pontate con darli il suo tremolo con spirito, e viuacità, guardandosi di non far due quinte, o due ottaue, che potrebbono auuenire, fermandosi vn poco più sopra la penultima nota, & si deve fuggir tal'incontro, dico ancora, che bisogna fermarsi sempre sopra la penultima di qual si voglia passaggio, & in particolar sopra il Trillo, o Gruppo per non dar subito in quella asprezza dell'ultima, perché farebbe di disgusto alli ascoltanti.

8 Il buon Cantore s'auuertirà di portar i suoi passaggi sopra le vocali, e non come fanno alcuni, che passeggiando pigliano simil forte di sillabe, come queste, guo, gu, bi, vi, si, tur, bar, bor, & altre simili, bisognerà fuggirle, perché non si può sentir di peggio.

9 Sono certi Cantori, che alle volte hanno vn certo modo di gorgheggiare (alla mores) battendo il passaggio à vn certo modo da tutti dispiaciuole, cantando a a a, che pare, che ridano, co' loro si possono assopigliare à quelli Etiopiani, o Mori; che racconta il Viaggio di Venetia in Gierusalemme; dice, che tal gente ne' Sacrificij loro cantano in questo modo, che par che ridano mostrando quanti denti hanno in bocca, da qui imparino, che la gorga vuol venir dal petto, e non dalla gola.

10 Se ben trouerete tal volta nell'ascendere, & discendere de' grado i passaggi, che non arriuanò al suo loco destinato, quello si è fatto per abbreviar l'Opera, perché farebbe stata di molto rilieuo; S'intende però, che studiando simil passaggi, si vadi fino alla sua disposizione, e più, secondo gli instrummenti.

I veri principij per cantar posito, e bene.
DOVE SI CONTIENE IL MODO DI PORTAR LA VOCE,
del dar la gratia nel principiar delle note, de' tremoli, de' gruppi, del trillo, con
alcune esclamationi non poco vtile à chi desidera cantar con gratia, e maniera.

Modo di portar la voce.

Allegretto Desiderando

ACCENTI.

Del Tremolo la dani modi.

Del Gruppo. Semplice.

Doppio.

Del Tremolo alle Note di Semibreue.

Del Trillo sopra la Minima.

Del Trillo sopra la Semibreue.

Prin. Modo.

Sec. Modo.

Esclamationi.

Quia anima mea afflicta, meum spiritus.

Del principiar sotto la nota.

Selea di varij Passaggi. Di Francesco Rognoni. Ad 2

Portar della voce

F. Rognoni, Selva de varii passaggi, 1620 :

- “The movement/progression of the voice should be graceful: this is achieved by becoming gradually louder on the first note to then execute the *tremolo* on the black note.”
- Start the note softly, then crescendo, adding a tremolo at the end of the note.
- The three lower lines show possible implementations of this sentence.
- “Rinforzando” – reinforcing, becoming louder on the first note, could also be translated differently: as a sharpening of the pitch, a kind of glissando to the next note.
- This, according to Doni (Trattato primo...1635) was used especially for sad and painful affects, as a kind of “portamento di voce” which in his opinion was more suited to female than male voices, though.
- Similar to the French “port de voix”, although the tie is placed differently here, and the embellishment is tied to the following note (Mersenne, Harmonie universelle, 1636).)

Modo di portar la voce

San - cta Ma - ri - a

San - cta Ma - ri - a

San - cta Ma - ri - a

San - cta Ma - ri - a

Port de voix - Mersenne, Harmonie universelle, 1636

* doublement du gosier (Tremolo, Trillo, Mordant)

Accento

- Accento = smaller embellishment with neighbour note(s)
- No really clear definition, is often also used as a synonym for shorter embellishments linking one note to the next which have no specific function, such as a *grosso* for embellishing cadences or exclamations and *intonatio* for starting the phrase.
- Examples in Rognoni and Bovicelli always use the upper neighbour note.
- Praetorius (1619) uses the upper and lower neighbour notes, right through to a third, he also describes the *intonatio* as *accentus*.
- Accento is also linked to other embellishments (Bovicelli mentions tremolo, Rognoni's examples have tremolo and trillo)
- "The accento should be executed rather earlier than later; the true accento is only used in a downward movement, even if nowadays sometimes another one is used in an upward progression (being sometimes pleasing to the ear), but good singers only perform it rarely, because otherwise it would be boring." (F. Rognoni, *Selva de varii passaggi* 1620)
- "The accento is simply an increasing (*crescere*) or sharpening (*alzare*) step on the note on which you want to execute the accento. This accento is not "beaten" (sharply articulated) with the voice (*batutto*), instead it is sung with a *legatura* of the voice in the manner of a trill. As soon the accento is sung, the voice will immediately be softened again." (Bartolomeo Bismantova, *Compendio musicale*, 1677)



Accento

- Further examples by F. Rognoni from Selva de varii passaggi
- Many rhythmic variations
- The upper neighbour note (in Rognoni = accento) is “aimed at” for different beats (*), tends to be rather later
- Embellishments are mixed (see examples 38, 20)
- Considered elegant to introduce accento from below (examples 11, 17, 3, 6)
- Sequences are intended for practicing and memorising.

F. Rognoni, Passaggi sopra le Semibrevi per dicendere (selection)

1 O - ra pro no - bis.

2 O - ra pro no - bis.

11 O - ra pro no - bis.

17 O - ra pro no - bis.

10 O - ra pro no - bis.

38 O - ra pro no - bis.

0 O - ra pro no - bis.

F. Rognoni, Passaggi sopra le Minime discendendo per grado (selection)

1 O - ra pro no - bis.

3 O - ra pro no - bis,

10 O - ra pro no - bis

6 O - ra pro no - bis

20 O - ra pro no - bis

0 O - ra pro no - bis

Accento

- Further examples by Rognoni from Selva de varii Passaggi
- Also for shorter notes
- Rognoni provides special examples for bass voices

F. Rognoni, Passaggi sopra le Seminime discendendo



F. Rognoni, Semibreve & minime discendo per grado la parte Basso



Accento

- Bovicelli, 1594
- Bovicelli shows that a tremolo may be added on the upper neighbour note (= accento).
- Different depending on whether they are on a minim (half note) or crotchet (quarter note):
- Greater possibility for rhythmic variations on minims, a tremolo is possible on the designated notes.
- The lower line shows the execution of the tremolo. Tremolo: trembling of the voice on one and the same note.
- Accenti on crotchets are rather less differentiated, because they are very fast. Tremolo is possible on the designated notes, however not a long one, since it would be too fast.

The image displays three musical staves, each consisting of a treble and a bass clef staff joined by a brace. The top staff of each system shows a sequence of notes: a minim (half note) followed by three crotchets (quarter notes). The bottom staff of each system shows the execution of a tremolo on the first note (the minim or crotchet), indicated by a small 'v' or '^' symbol above the note. The tremolo is represented by a series of rapid, slanted lines connecting the note to itself, creating a 'trembling' effect. The first system shows a tremolo on a minim. The second system shows a tremolo on a crotchet. The third system shows a tremolo on a crotchet, with the notes following it being more clearly defined.

Accento

Praetorius, 1619

- Three different kinds:
- Always long dotted notes
 - With the lower neighbour note
 - With the upper neighbour note
 - With a third in the direction of the melody
- Also includes the intonatio in accenti

Praetorius 1619
Folgen die Accentus über die sex voces Musicales ... im Auff und Niedersteigen
Danielis Bollii

The musical score is written in G-clef, C-clef, and F-clef staves. It shows three modes of accentus (2. modo and 3. modo) for the six vocal notes (Ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la). The notes are written as long dotted notes with various neighbor notes and thirds. The first mode (2. modo) shows the notes A., E., I., O., U. with various neighbor notes. The second mode (3. modo) shows the notes A., E., I., O., U. with various neighbor notes. The third mode (3. modo) shows the notes A., E., I., O., U. with various neighbor notes. The notes are written as long dotted notes with various neighbor notes and thirds.

Ut re mi fa sol la
Accenti simplici

2. modo
A. E. I. O. U.

3. modo
A. E. I. O. U.

7
La sol fa mi re ut.

A. E. I. O. U.

A. E. I. O. U.

A. E. I. O. U.

Tremolo/ Trillo

- Often the difference between tremolo and trillo often is not clear. Theoreticians' use of these terms is rather confusing.
- Repeated notes as well as embellishments with alternating notes (upper and lower neighbour notes) are described both as tremolo and as trillo.
- The difference might be in the execution: when executing a trillo, each sound is struck/sounded separately, sung precisely, while a tremolo is not precisely defined in rhythm, rather resembles a trembling, might also be more delicate, more subtle, something that can hardly be written down.
- Repetition of notes, shorter and longer ones, also with accelerando, seem to have been a very common type of embellishment.
- Tremolo possibly often in connection with dotted notes which start softly, then are given a crescendo and in the end merge in a tremolo.
- Rognoni refers to a quick repetition of one note both as trillo and as tremolo. But in his examples, he also describes alternating notes.
- Often, tremolo and trillo are mixed, and then referred to, for examples as „The Other Trillo“ (Praetorius).

Tremolo

Zacconi Pratica di musica, Buch 1, Kap 66, fol 60

- “Tremolo is the true door to entering the passaggi and to mastering embellishments; for any ship sails more easily, once it has been pushed into motion, rather than having to move by itself from the very beginning of the journey.”

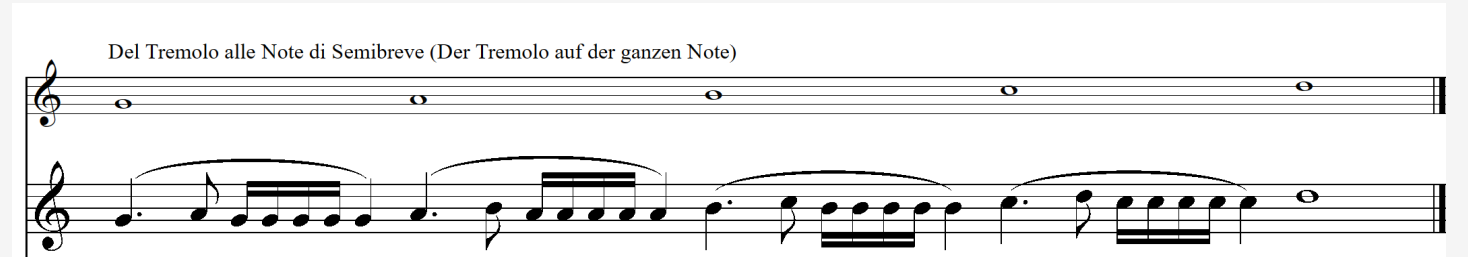
Francesco Rognoni "Selva de Varii Passaggi" 1620

- “Tremolo is used frequently, but tastefully; you should pay attention not to use them – as some do – incessantly, as if they were young goats.”

Tremolo

F. Rognoni, Selva de varii passaggi 1620

- Often used with dotted notes (later on he quotes examples which all start with a dotted note – see next slide):
 - „Is often executed on the note corresponding to the dotted value of each note.“
- Dotted notes are executed with a crescendo, and the tremolo is added at the end.
- 2 Modi: difference only in the frequency of the note repetitions? In Rognoni's examples (see following slide), the tremoli merge with the next note, rather than coming to a standstill on the note. Maybe this example was only intended as an exercise?



Tremolo

F. Rognoni, *Selva de varii passaggi*, 1620, p. 34

- About those values of notes where tremoli with various “figures” (groups of notes) are possible
- “You should pay attention that a semibreve (half note) which is on a stressed beat or which is dotted, should be started with a soft voice and slowly become louder, particularly on painful words; for true affect is generated if you can decrease and increase your voice, even on dotted crotchets (quarter notes).”
- All examples start with a dotted note.
- “Tremoli with various figures”: repetitions of notes, trills with alternating notes, groppo
- Some examples start with a tied note, some shorten the first note, some don’t.

Del Vallor delle notte per far il tremolo a diversi figure
(Über jene Notenwerte, auf denen tremoli mit diversen Figuren möglich sind)

The image displays two systems of musical notation, each consisting of three staves (treble, alto, and bass clefs). The top system illustrates various tremolo figures, including repetitions of notes, trills with alternating notes, and groppo. The bottom system shows more complex tremolo patterns, including those starting with a tied note or a shortened first note. The notation is in a historical style, using a single-clef system and a key signature of one flat (B-flat).

Trillo with Note Repetitions

F. Rognoni, Selva de varii passaggi 1620

- 1. type: uniform repetition of notes
- 2. Art: repetition of notes accelerates
- “Those who want to learn how to do this trillo or gruppo, should start each note in their throat and with the vowel a and re-articulate it (ribattere), right through to the last semibreve or breve. This trillo or gruppo is most often executed on the paenultima or on the finalis.”

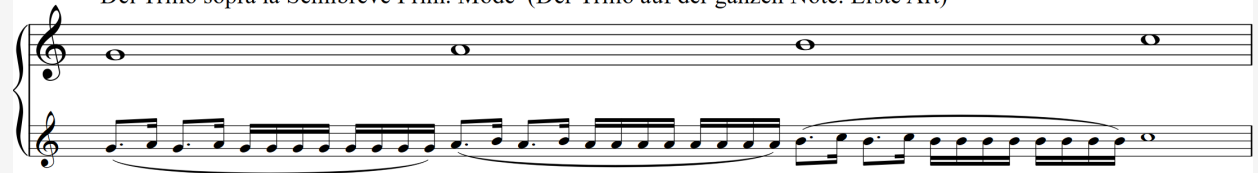
Sébastien de Brossard, Dictionnaire de musique, 1701

- Marked as T. or tr. or t.
- This might mean both:
 - Trill with alternating note (starting with the upper note)
 - Note repetition, accelerating
- He describes both as trillo.

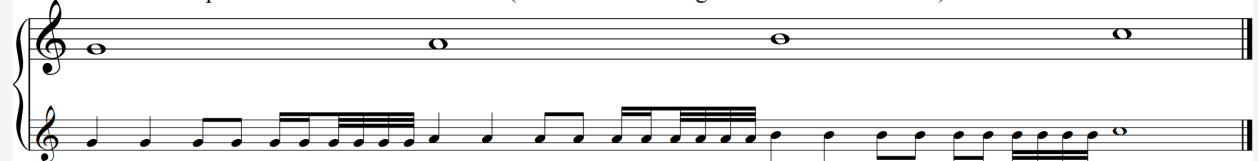
Francesco Rognoni "Selva die Varii Passaggi" 1620
Del Trillo sopra la Minima (Der Trillo auf der halben Note)



Del Trillo sopra la Semibreve Prim. Mode (Der Trillo auf der ganzen Note. Erste Art)



Del Trillo sopra la Semibreve Prim. Mode (Der Trillo auf der ganzen Note. Zweite Art)



The image displays three musical examples of trills from Francesco Rognoni's 1620 work "Selva die Varii Passaggi". Each example is presented on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The first example, "Del Trillo sopra la Minima", shows a trill on a half note. The second and third examples, "Del Trillo sopra la Semibreve Prim. Mode", show trills on whole notes. The second example is labeled "Erste Art" and the third "Zweite Art". The notation uses various note values and rests to illustrate the trill technique.

Trillo with Repetition of Notes

- Praetorius, 1619:
- Trillo designates a dulcet breeze, and it is a trembling of the voice on a note/and the same is two different things:
 1. First type: the one happens in unison in a clave, either in the linea or in the spatio; when many fast notes are repeated one after the other. This type of trill may be found abundantly in Claudio Monteverde and Giov: Rovetta.
- The first example corresponds precisely to the (textless) example given by Caccini.

Michael Praetorius, Syntagma musicum III, 1619



The Other Trillo

Praetorius, 1619:

- Second type:
- In reality, probably a mix of various embellishments was performed.
- “The Other Trillo is performed in different ways. And although it is impossible to correctly write down a trillo and to learn how to do it from something written / unless / it is done with viva praeceptoris voce, a live example/and it is sung and demonstrated for you/so that one may learn from the other/ just like the birds learn by observing ... Nevertheless, I have deemed it necessary, obiter, to note down several types [of trillo]/so that those who are currently still completely uninformed / may at least see something and get to know what roughly might be called a trillo.”

Praetorius, 1619
Der ander Trillo ist uff unterschiedene Arten gerichtet....über die Noten so mit Trillo formiert werden sollen
ein t. oder tr. oder tri. übergesetzt befindet...

Accent. I 2. 3. 4.

4 5. 6. 7. 8.

8 10. 11.

12 12. 13. 14.

Gruppo. Trillo. tr.

Trillo with Alternating Notes

- Rapid alternation between main note and upper or lower neighbour note.
- Almost always starts with the main note.
- Interval can be a minor or major second or a third (rare).
- Most often no longer than half the length of the main note.
- One, two or three repetitions.
- Fewer repetitions for shorter note lengths.

Girolamo Diruta *Il Transilvano*, 1593



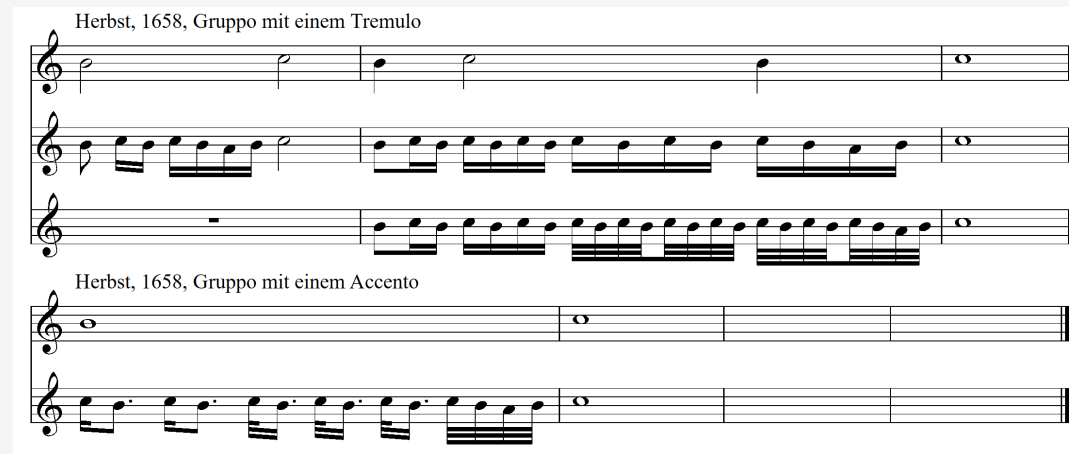
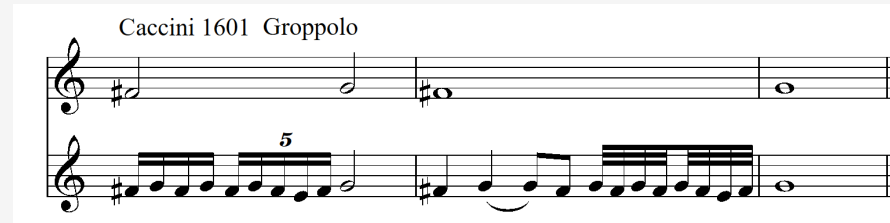
Trillo with Alternating Notes

- Praetorius calls this embellishment tremolus, preferring the tremulus ascendens
- Rapid alternation between main note and upper neighbour note = tremulus ascendus
- Rapid alternation between main note and lower neighbour note = tremulus descendus.
“This tremulo is not as good as the ascendens.”
- Praetorius: “Tremolo, vel Tremulo: is nothing but a trembling of the voice on one note. Organists call it mordant or moderant.”



Gropo

- Also called gruppo or groppetto
- Cadence trill, as elegant introduction to the final note
- “Gruppo or Trillo are most often used on the paenultima (penultimate note) of a cadence or on the finalis (final note).” (F. Rognoni, *Selva de varii passaggi* 1620)
- “Gruppo denotes a ball or roller, and it is a rapid up-and-down wavering of the voice, used in cadences and clausulis formalibus or final clauses, either with a previous tremolo or accento, but must be articulated more sharply than the tremolo.” (Herbst, *Musica Moderna Prattica*, 1658)
- Often starts with the main note, then upper neighbour note.
- Upper neighbour note also tied over from previous note.
- Caccini abbreviated this as g.



Gropppo

Bovicelli, 1594

2 types:

1. With uniform rhythm
 2. With slowed-down, calmer movement at the end = groppetto raffrenato
- “The second type is better suited in most cases, since it sounds more graceful and is more suitable before the final syllable. It means that you don’t hasten the end. All in all, it is important to avoid a restless ending.”
 - “Sometimes, you might also use the more uniform variation, if the text permits this.”

De - - - - - us

De - - - - - us.

Groppetto raffrenato

Groppetti di note uguali

Intonatio/Esclamatione

Caccini, 1602

- 3 possibilities for beginning a phrase:
 - Start with a crescendo, increasing the loudness of the note
 - As a rule, started on a lower note
 - This is good style and elegant
 - Caccini's favourite version for beginners
 - Start with a decrescendo (= esclamatione)
 - Starting on a rather higher note, followed by a downward line or leap
 - Mainly used for strong emotional expression
 - A crescendo on a high note often offends the ear
 - Start with lower neighbour note (second, third below) (= intonatio)
 - Pay attention to harmony
 - Is done too often, should be left to master singers

Intonatio

Bovicelli, 1594

- In order to make your voice sound elegant and graceful, both at the beginning and in other parts of the piece, you would usually begin a third or fourth below the first note (= intonation), but paying attention to the other parts.
- In this case, the notes should not be of equal length, but the first should be longer, the second shorter/faster. This is more graceful and has a livelier effect.
- In general, singing is more elegant, if there are variations in rhythm.

7 Intonatio eleganter mit rhythmisch abwechslungsreichen passaggi

The image shows a musical score for a piece titled 'Intonatio eleganter mit rhythmisch abwechslungsreichen passaggi'. It consists of four staves. The first staff is a reference staff with a single note on a treble clef. The second staff is labeled 'schlecht' (bad) and shows a poor intonation. The third and fourth staves are labeled 'gut' (good) and show good intonation with rhythmic variations. The lyrics 'De - - - - - us' are written below each staff.

Intonatio

- “Intonatio is about how a sung passage ought to be started, and there are different opinions about this: some say you ought to start on the proper initial note / some [say] a second below the proper note / but that then you gradually raise your voice: some say a third below: some a fourth: some say you should start with a graceful and soft voice.” (Praetorius, 1619)
- “Beginning on a lower note should be either from a third or a fourth below (however, a certain discernment would be necessary for this); for it will not always be favourable to start a third or fourth below; and because of the dissonance which might result from this, this decision is left to the discretion of the critical singer’s ear. This manner of beginning serves only to produce an elegant movement of the voice.” (F. Rognoni, Selva de varii passaggi 1620)



Francesco Rognoni "Selva die Varii Passaggi" 1620
Del principiar sotto la nota - Der Beginn unter der Note

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is a single treble clef staff with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It contains four measures, each with a single half note: the first is on the second line (F), the second is on the first space (C), the third is on the first line (B), and the fourth is on the first space (C). The bottom staff is a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a key signature of one flat. It contains four measures. The first measure has a half note on the second line (F) in the treble and a half note on the second space (C) in the bass. The second measure has a half note on the first space (C) in the treble and a half note on the first line (B) in the bass. The third measure has a half note on the first line (B) in the treble and a half note on the first space (C) in the bass. The fourth measure has a half note on the first space (C) in the treble and a half note on the first line (B) in the bass.

Intonatio = Cercar della nota

- Bernhard (Von der Singe-Kunst, oder Maniera, c1649) was probably the first to use the term cercar della nota
- Another term for intonatio
- May be used at the beginning, within a phrase and also on the final note.

Esclamazione

- “The ‘esclamationi’ are executed in an upward progression, with the first note sung increasingly softly and the following note made more spirited and livelier through a little trill (‘tremolino’).” (Rognoni)
- Decrescendo on the dotted note, a crescendo on the following shorter note, “un poco spirito”. (Caccini)
- Expression is different, dependent on whether the following note is reached in several steps or in one leap. Leaps make it “affetuoso”. (Caccini)
- Esclamazione may be used in downward progression in any passionate music, both with dotted minims (half notes) and crotchets (quarter notes). (Caccini)
- “Some people create an exceedingly passionate manner of singing, introducing crescendi and decrescendi and esclamationi everywhere without paying attention to whether the words demand such passion at all.” (Caccini)
- Especially used with painful, sad text (Rognoni, Caccini).

Esclamazione, Caccini, 1601

The image shows a musical score for a piece titled 'Esclamazione' by Caccini, 1601. It consists of four staves, each representing a different performance technique for the same lyrics: 'cor mio deh non lan - gui - re.' The first staff shows a decrescendo on the dotted note 'mio' followed by a crescendo on the crotchet 'deh', with the instruction '1 scemandola a poco a poco crescere con un poco più spirito'. The second staff shows a crescendo on the crotchet 'deh' immediately following the dotted note 'mio', with the instruction '2 crescere con un poco più spirito'. The third staff shows a leap from 'mio' to 'deh', with the instruction '3 la tenuta della nota'. The fourth staff shows a downward progression from 'mio' to 'deh', with the instruction '4 la tenuta della nota'.

3 possibilities according to Caccini

- 1 Decrescendo on the dotted first note, followed by a crescendo “con un poco piu spirito” on the following crotchet (quarter note)
- 2 Only a crescendo on the crotchet (quarter note) immediately following the dotted note
- 3 Keep volume level on E2, start the downward sixth leap softly, then increase loudness

Tirata

- “Tirata means a shot or an arrow/and these are long, rapid little runs/made gradatim, step by step, over a note/ running through the claves, upward and downward. The faster and more precisely these little runs are executed (but in such a manner that you may hear and discern every note quite purely and clearly), the better and more graceful they are.” (Herbst, Musica Moderna Prattica, 1658)
- First note a little longer.
- Articulate well.
- The faster, the better.

Herbst, 1658 Tiratae

Crüger, 1660, Tiratae

Herbst, 1658, 25 Exempla quarta höher in einen Discant transponiret

Ve - ni - te.

Ve - ni - te

Herbst, 1658, Vinticinque, Basso

Pa - tris A - men

Pa - tris A - men

Can - ta - te

Can - ta - te

Cascata

- Downward runs, similar to a waterfall or cascade.
- May run through an entire octave, but also sixth, fifth or fourth possible.
- Faster and not so fast cascades, uniform or with accelerando .

The image displays four musical staves, each illustrating a different type of 'Cascata' (waterfall) pattern. The first staff is labeled 'Caccini 1601' and shows a descending melodic line. The second staff is labeled 'Cascata scempia' and shows a descending melodic line. The third staff is labeled 'Cascata per ricorre il fiato' and shows a descending melodic line. The fourth staff is labeled 'Altra cascata simile' and shows a descending melodic line. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and accidentals, all in a single system.

Ribattuta di Gola

- (Literally “beating of the throat”) Rhythmised singing
- Uniform runs are dotted: long-short or short-long
- A simple, yet effective way of varying music
- Changes the emotional expression
- Dotted rhythms were very popular in the 17th century, corresponding to the period’s desire for variation and liveliness.

Herbst, 1658, Ribattuta di gola.

A. E. I. O. U.

Herbst, 1658, Ribattuta di gola doppia

A. E. I. O. U.

Herbst, 1658, Cadentia mit einem Accento

Ve - - - - - ni

Ve - - - - - ni

Herbst, 1658, Cento variati passaggi

8. Ve - ni Do - mi - ne.

8. Ve - ni Do - mi - ne.

1. In De - o. 2. Spe - ra - bo.

1. In De - o. 2. Spe - ra - bo.

Mordant

- Cavallieri refers to this embellishment as monachina.
- Abbreviated as m.
- With the lower neighbour note.
- Otherwise is rather rarely mentioned in treatises around 1600.

Cavalieri 1600



Anticipazione della syllaba/ Anticipazione della nota

- Anticipating a syllable
- Anticipating a note
- The last part of a note is separated off, and the following syllable or note is sung on it.
- Both versions are popular for endings.

Execution

F. Rognoni, *Selva de varii passaggi* 1620

- “All singers who want to learn this ‘trillo’, should start each note in their throat and with the vowel a, and re-articulate it (ribattere).”
- “There are certain singers who sing in a very special (Moorish] way, executing the diminution in a certain manner which displeases everybody and singing aaa so that they seem to be laughing. These may be compared to those Moors who when offering a sacrifice sing in such a manner that you get the impression that they laugh and show how many teeth they have in their mouths. It is from those Moors that the above singers seem to learn that the gorgia wants to come from the breast rather than the throat.”
- “Good singers will make an effort to execute the diminutions on the vowels; unlike those who when performing diminutions pick out syllables such as gnu, gu, bi, vi, si, tur, bar, bor and the like; this must be avoided, for you can hardly hear anything worse.”

Riccardo Rognoni „Passaggi per potersi essercitare nel diminuire“, 1592

- “Since often the same cadences occur in a work of music, you will need a great many different diminutions in order to provide variety.”
- “In complex and long diminutions, all singers are advised to beat the time with their foot, for their head is busy doing other things. It is under such strain that it often deludes itself about the tempo. Very often, due to the speed of a diminution, quite a few get lost towards the end.”

G. B. Bovicelli „Regole Passaggi di Musica“, Venedig, 1594

- In passaggi of semi-demiquavers (thirty-second notes) each note should be articulated. In passaggi of semiquavers (sixteenth notes), couples of semi-demiquavers (thirty-second notes) are lightly sung in passing.
- In leaps, the top note should be sung lightly.
- Do not breathe in the middle of a passaggio, if the notes have the same length.

Lodovico Zacconi

- The longer a note, the more suited it is to embellishment. Do not add embellishments to texted crotchets (quarter notes), in a melisma, small embellishments are alright. On minims (half notes) pay attention to the text, on semibreves (whole notes) and breves any amount of embellishments may be added.

Execution

Giovanni Camillo Maffei: Lettre sur le chant, Naples, 1562:

- It is recommended to practice in the early morning or 4-5 hours after eating, for with a full stomach, the windpipe cannot be as clean and pure as would be necessary to produce a clear and calm tone, which is above all other things required for diminishing.
- The fourth rule is not to make any movements with any other part of the body apart from the cimbalare (glottis), for we consider such people ugly who, while singing, shake their heads, twitch with their legs or move hand and feet.
- The tenth rule is that you should repeat these exercises many times without doing what many people do: when they have not achieved their intended goal in two to three attempts, they immediately stop and complain about Nature who did not gift them with the required ability.
- The best approach is to listen to those who have mastered the skill of diminishing.

