

COMMUNICATIONS



REPORT

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TARTINI AND THE TWO FORMS OF *APPOGGIATURE*

A recent review in *Eighteenth-Century Music* (15/1 (2018), 71–78) by W. Dean Sutcliffe of Rohan H. Stewart-MacDonald, ed., *The Early Keyboard Sonata in Italy and Beyond* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2016) cited the discussion of ornamental ‘small notes’ in my chapter ‘The *appoggiatura breve* in Domenico Scarlatti’s *Sonate*’ (281–295), and I would like to clarify my position on this matter. As perhaps the most problematic issue in ornamentation, the small note came to have two completely different forms – short and long – identified by the same term. With the advent of the galant style in the 1730s, sources begin to attribute to Italy a usage in which the small note indicates an *appoggiatura* that takes time from the following main note. A manuscript copy of Giuseppe Tartini’s ‘Regole per arrivare a saper ben suonar il Violino’, prepared by his pupil Giovanni Francesco Nicolai, may be among the first to describe the new practice (see the facsimile included in Giuseppe Tartini, *Traité des agréments de la musique*, ed. Erwin R. Jacobi (Celle: Moeck, 1961), 4–9). Whereas modern usage usually applies the term ‘*appoggiatura*’ to an ornament that takes time from its main note, Tartini defines this ornament as having two forms: *lunga* and *breve*. The latter does not affect the main note at all. Today, the ‘Regole’ is dated as pre-1756 because portions are included in Leopold Mozart’s *Versuch einer gründlichen Violinschule* (Salzburg: author, 1756), but Tartini’s use of small quavers for both forms might indicate a much earlier date. Since the significance of his work seems largely unrecognized today, despite a fairly comprehensive overview in Frederick Neumann’s *Ornamentation in Baroque and Post-Baroque Music* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978, 174–177), a more detailed examination would be helpful.

Tartini defines the *appoggiatura lunga* as begun delicately and followed by a crescendo and diminuendo into the large note, to which is added a little trill. If the *appoggiatura* is instead written as a large note, one simply plays it more strongly than the following note and adds a little trill. The reason for using a small note is therefore to designate the more complex execution. Since the *appoggiatura lunga*’s purpose is to give nobility and a singing quality to the expression, Tartini says, it suits all slow and melancholy tempos. If used in cheerful and lively contexts, it would weaken the brilliance and enervate the vivacity that such tempos should produce. He limits the *lunga* form to strong beats (beat 1 in triple metre; beats 1 and 3 in duple metre) and warns against using it between notes of equal value. In his several examples of the *appoggiatura lunga*, virtually all are prepared by a suspension figure (‘Regole’, 4–6). One of these (Figure 1), whose realization of the small notes appears on the top staff, demonstrates the harmonic principles of the classic *appoggiatura lunga*, which correspond to those followed in composition.

By contrast, Tartini defines the *appoggiatura breve* as played very lightly, so that one hears the large note to a much greater extent than the grace. The strength of the bow or voice must be felt much more on the large note than on the small one. The ornament’s length is ‘indeterminate’ and should be as short as possible:

queste Appoggiature devono esser veloci in tal modo, che si senta sempre più la Nota, che l’Appoggiatura, e . . . la forza dell’Arcata, ossia della Voce, deve cader immediatamente sopra la Nota, non mai sopra l’Appoggiatura. Il loro valore è indeterminato (‘Regole’, 7).



Figure 1 Harmonic usage of the *appoggiatura lunga* in Giuseppe Tartini, 'Regole per arrivare a saper ben suonar il Violino', 8. Giuseppe Tartini, *Traité des agréments de la musique*, ed. Erwin R. Jacobi (Celle: Moeck, 1961), 72

these *appoggiaturas* must be rapid in such a way that the [main] note is always heard more than the *appoggiatura*, and . . . the strength of the bow or of the voice must fall immediately on the note, not ever on the *appoggiatura*. Its value is indeterminate.

After depicting the use of the *appoggiatura breve* in passages of descending thirds and seconds, and on any beat in any time signature, Tartini notes that it makes the expression sprightly and brilliant, in contrast to the song-like *appoggiatura lunga*. Since he defines these small notes as weaker tones, the main notes retain their rhythmic position. Unlike the *appoggiature lunga*, whose execution can be indicated by notes of conventional size, the *appoggiatura breve*'s length is too short to notate, so it requires no realization in the 'Regole'. Tartini also describes an ascending scalar passage in which each note is preceded by an *appoggiatura breve*. In such an instance, he advises taking time from the *preceding* note, so his illustration uses large notes to depict an ornament performed before the beat. Thus the *appoggiatura breve* itself has two forms: pre-beat and on-beat. The latter has so little rhythmic value that the main note appears to retain its rhythmic position.

Originally, the small note (or the symbol for it) was confined to Tartini's descriptions of the *appoggiatura breve*, and composers wrote the *appoggiatura lunga* in conventional large notes. Since the on-beat *appoggiatura breve* cannot be realized in standard notation, a few writers used what appears to us to be misleading notation, such as Lombard rhythm, to represent it. When they add a text to the music, however, it makes clear that the notation is not to be taken literally. Many more writers avoided notating the ornament altogether, but used such terms as 'no value whatever' to describe it.

At the end of his discussion of the trill (chapter 10, §32, 236) Mozart includes two examples from 'one of the most famous violinists of our time' ('Ich will ein paar Beyspiele hersetzen, die aus den Stücken eines der berühmtesten Violinisten unserer Zeit gezogen sind'). While he never mentions Tartini by name, his chapter 9 about the *Vorschlag* (the German term for *appoggiatura*) clearly follows some of the Italian's principles:

§2, 195. A figured-bass illustration of the long *Vorschlag* is similar to Tartini's in Figure 1 above. Mozart calls this descending form the most natural because it accords with the rigorous rules of composition.

§8, 200. For the long *Vorschlag*, Mozart describes the same complex execution as Tartini does for the *appoggiatura lunga* written as a small note.

§9, 200. For the short *Vorschlag*, Mozart adopts Tartini's definition: 'The strength [of the bow] falls not on the *Vorschlag*, but on the main note. The short *Vorschlag* is executed as rapidly as possible, and is not attacked strongly, but most delicately' ('die Stärke nicht auf den *Vorschlag*, sondern auf die Hauptnote fällt. Der kurze *Vorschlag* wird so geschwind gemacht, als es möglich ist, und wird nicht stark, sondern ganz schwach angegriffen').

While Mozart's treatment of the short *Vorschlag* is the same as Tartini's for the *appoggiatura breve*, his discussion of the ornament's long form differs in some respects. With one exception at the very end of Tartini's *appoggiatura* section (which seems to be an afterthought and might have been added by another hand, for we do not know if Nicolai made his copy directly from Tartini's own manuscript), his many examples follow



Figure 2 Contrasting forms of small notes in Antoine Mahaut, *Nouvelle methode pour apprendre en peu de tems à jouer de la flûte traversière* (Paris: de Lachvardiere, 1759), 22–23

the traditional compositional rules for the *appoggiatura lunga*. Mozart, on the other hand, expands its usage, so that one cannot easily distinguish between the short and long forms. He does not follow Tartini's advice to avoid the long form between notes of equal value, or to restrict it to strong beats. He also uses small notes of various values, including a semiquaver, which most writers associate with the short form.

The harmonic requirements for a small-note *Vorschlag* that takes a portion of the main note's value are specified in Johann Friedrich Agricola's *Anleitung zur Singkunst* (Berlin: Winter, 1757, 71–78) and in Johann Joachim Quantz's *Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversière zu spielen* (Berlin: Voss, 1752, chapter 8, §7–12, 79–80). These correspond to the rules for composers who write the ornament in conventional large notes:

- 1 limited to strong beats (beat 1 in triple metre; beats 1 and 3 in duple metre)
- 2 made on a long note that is preceded by a short note
- 3 limited to consonant harmony, where it creates a dissonance that resolves stepwise to consonance
- 4 prepared, most often by suspension.

Quantz also summarizes the proper use of the long *Vorschlag* (§12, 80): 'When a long note on the downbeat or upbeat [beat 3 in common time] follows one or more short notes and remains in a consonant harmony, a *Vorschlag* is to be made . . . before the long note' ('Wenn nach einer, oder etlichen kurzen Noten, im Niederschlage, oder Aufheben des Tactes, eine lange Note folgt, und in consonirender Harmonie liegen bleibt; so muss vor der langen . . . ein Vorschlag gemachet werden'). Later (chapter 9, §6, 102) he criticizes those who 'pay little heed to the rules of composition, which require not only that each dissonance be well prepared, but also that it receive its proper resolution . . . Otherwise, it becomes and remains a most offensive sound' ('Sie denken eben so wenig auf die Regeln der Setzkunst, welche erfordern, dass jede Dissonanz nicht nur gut vorbereitet werden, sondern auch ihre gehörige Auflösung bekommen . . . da sie ausserdem ein übellautender Klang seyn und bleiben würde').

In France, Antoine Mahaut's *Nouvelle methode pour apprendre en peu de tems à jouer de la flûte traversière* (Paris: de Lachvardiere, 1759, 22–23) cites Italian usage for a small note that takes time from the main note. In Mahaut's example (the realizations of which appear on the lower staff at A, B, C and D in Figure 2), this ornament falls at the end of a phrase and follows the customary harmonic rules. Since the small note in bar 7 (marked with an arrow) takes no time from the following note, the realization remains unchanged. Consider also the Lombard rhythm in bar 5, which must be written in standard notation because small notes do not convey a short-long interpretation.

As Italian musicians peregrinated through Europe, the *appoggiatura lunga* went with them. Predictably, great confusion resulted from using the same term and symbol for the appoggiatura's two diametrically opposed functions. Perhaps Mozart's examples that do not follow the above rules derived from Italian musicians who devised their own applications. Some commentators objected to the new practice and advised composers to continue writing the long appoggiatura in large notes. For example, Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg's *Anleitung zum Clavierspielen* (Berlin: Haude and Spener, 1755, 48) recommends using small notes only for the short form, as in the past, and declares that 'It is always better to write longer *Vorschläge* in conventional notation, regardless of how galant it appears when one does not do so' ('Bey längern



Vorschlägen ist es allezeit besser, denselben ordentlich auszuschreiben, so galant es auch aussieht, solches nicht zu thun'). Thus the purpose of the new notational fashion was no longer the very slow, artistic execution that Tartini had prescribed, but a way to inform the musical world that the composer was *au courant* with the galant style. While practice varied widely, printed music by most major composers of the time tends to confine the new practice to unambiguous settings, in which a small crotchet or minim indicates the ornament's true length. Long appoggiaturas of shorter value are usually written in conventional notation to differentiate them from small notes whose value is a quaver or less. Nevertheless, many dubious practices crept in. The long appoggiatura occurs much less frequently than the short one, not only because many composers chose to write it in standard notation to avoid misinterpretation, but also because it requires a particular harmonic context.

If everyone had followed Tartini's complex description of the *appoggiatura lunga*'s execution and function, there would have been no problem. But they didn't, and significant misuse ensued, as in Domenico Scarlatti's keyboard sonatas, most of which exist only in manuscripts by copyists whose small-note values are often inconsistent and capricious. In contrast, the most significant publication of Scarlatti's sonatas from his lifetime, the *Essercizi per Gravicembalo* (London, 1738), employs small notes in a consistent manner – and nearly all are demisemiquavers that signify a grace-note execution. Copyists were notorious for transcribing the value of small notes inaccurately. Even publications were susceptible to misprints. This is why Tartini's 'Regole', which distinguishes so clearly between the *appoggiatura's breve* and *lunga* forms, is a valuable guide for both scholars and performers.

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EIGHTH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE OF THE SOCIETY FOR EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY MUSIC
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Approximately sixty established scholars and graduate students gathered for this three-day conference, hosted by Florida State University College of Music, whose presentations displayed the vibrancy of scholarship on eighteenth-century music and musical life. All of the events, including a lovely evening reception outdoors, took place at the historic Mission San Luis. Originally established in 1656 by Spanish friars and Apalachee Native Americans, the site is now home to a living-history museum with reconstructed buildings and a conference centre, as well as being a repository of archaeological artefacts for the state of Florida. Attendees were given private tours of the Mission and its archaeological holdings. The latter included eighteenth-century pottery, shards of glassware and coins, many of them salvaged from shipwrecks. The museum's gigantic Council House, constructed from logs and woven palm fronds, was particularly impressive and striking. For those of us who were unfamiliar with the history of this area of the United States, the setting itself was eye-opening and educational.

The event's opening session sought better to contextualize two canonical composers: J. S. Bach and Joseph Haydn. Devon J. Borowski (University of Chicago) examined Bach's *Kaffeekantate* in light of increasing