

21M011 (spring, 2006)
Ellen T. Harris
Lecture III

Baroque (order and extravagance)

Science: Newton (mechanics, gravity), Leibniz, Harvey (circulation of the blood), Kepler

Philosophy: Descartes (analysis and classification of human emotions), Spinoza, Locke, Hume (individual and the state)

Art: Rubens, Bernini, Tiepolo, Velasquez; elaborate formal gardens indicating man's control over nature

Literature, Drama and poetry: Milton, Racine, Dryden; birth of the novel: Fielding (Tom Jones), Defoe (Robinson Crusoe)

Exploration and colonialism: Hudson explores the later-named Hudson River (1609); landing of Pilgrims at Plymouth (1620); Manhattan bought from native Americans (1626); Boston founded (1630); Harvard University founded (1636)

Politics: absolutism ("divine right of kings") supplanting the Church as power base (Louis XIV [1638-1715]; Peter I, Tsar of Russia), Thirty Years War (1618-1648), English Civil War and Commonwealth period (1642-1660)

Rise of instrumental music

triple derivation: 1. dance and 2. virtuosity (e.g. Kemp's Jig), and 3. vocal music (form and texture)

Style features:

Texture: continuo homophony and counterpoint (points of imitation)

Harmony: 1) "functional harmony": each chord has its own function in relation to the home chord or tonic; 2) change from Renaissance: instead of 8 church modes, 2 modes (major and minor) transposable to/interchangeable at any pitch; 3) tuning (equal temperament) allowed free transposition; 4) increased use of dissonance as a means of increasing intensity and forward motion

Rhythm: definite and regular; clear meter, repeating beat patterns (dance), energy

Melody: extended (spinning out "endlessly"), ornamented and ornate, embedded use of sequence

Form: ground bass and ritornello (derived from vocal music)

Dynamics: strong contrasts (solo, ripieno; echo effects)

Tone color/Timbre: vastly increased in variety and originality, but in many cases flexible; "birth" of orchestra with core of strings (Louis XIV); continuo

Tempo: tends to be regular with even beat patterns (related to dance)

Today's genre:

Concerto (concerted [to bring together] or "concertare" [to dispute or contend])

solo vs. ripieno
movements in the tempo pattern fast-slow-fast

Terms:

concerto/ concerto grosso

basso continuo/ continuo/ figured bass (harmonic support of Baroque music, a bass line with numbers [figures] that indicate the specific chords; used in all but solo keyboard music)

ground bass/basso ostinato (found in Frescobaldi, *Passacaglia*; Vivaldi, slow movement; Purcell, aria; note: “ostinato” also used to depict repeated unit anywhere, not just in bass)

walking bass (a bass that moves in absolutely even notes, i.e. that “walks”: Bach Suite, Air)

(compare all three of the above to cantus firmus)

ritornello (return/refrain), theme, motive

solo, ripieno (full, ripe), tutti

suite, movement

cadence, cadenza

sequence (not to be confused with medieval sequence)

fugue, entry

1) Vivaldi, Violin Concerto in G, *La stravaganza*, Opus 4, No. 12 (1712-13) K 1.23

first movement: fast, ritornello form

- Note: 1) segmented ritornello (here abc), with the return of sections
2) sequence in b
3) increasing freedom of ritornello
4) solos largely episodic

second movement: slow, ground bass (variation form) K 1.24

- Note: 1) major to minor shift in variation 5&6
2) perhaps more familiar example is Pachelbel's “Canon”

third movement: fast, free ritornello form K 1.25

- Note: 1) opens with solo
2) Rit. 2 not related to Rit. 1
3) Rit. 3: minor

2) Bach, Brandenburg Concerto No. 5 for flute, violin, harpsichord, and orchestra (before 1721)

Performed by

Concertino:

Ole Nielsen, flute (G) Electrical Engineering and Computer Science

Amanda Wang, violin (G) Electrical Engineering and Computer Science

Mary Farbood, harpsichord (G) Media Arts and Sciences

Ripieno:

Jacqueline O'Connor, violin (06) Aeronautics and Astronautics

Marcus Thompson, viola (Faculty) Music and Theater Arts

Sunny Wicks, cello (07) Aeronautics and Astronautics
Paul Glenn, bass (guest) President of Bauer Associates

Kerman/Tomlinson provides the first movement only; we will study the entire work. The recording we will use for these movements is Boston Baroque, Martin Pearlman, director, *Brandenburg concertos nos. 4, 5 & 6* (Telarc, 1993)

first movement: fast, ritornello form K 2.1-5

- Note:
- 1) segmented ritornello as in Vivaldi (abc)
 - 2) solos contain recurring motives of their own (not just episodic): (a) descending scale, (b) triplets, (c) version of Rit. "b"
 - 3) long center section dominated by solos, unique motives
 - 4) opening section (R1-R5) closed in tonic key, returns after center section at R7, creating large ABA' form
 - 5) A' differs from A by inclusion of large cadenza (parallel to da capo form)

second movement: slow, ritornello form

- Note:
- 1) solo instruments only: trio sonata texture (two treble parts with continuo)
 - 2) continuing use of ritornello form with the contrast of solo vs. ripieno; ripieno signaled by harpsichord playing as continuo
 - 3) "solos" (or episodes) have independent motivic structure, nevertheless related to ritornello theme, with independent, solo harpsichord part (1st episode at 0:42 in Pearlman)
 - 4) inversion of episode theme (2nd episode at 1:26 in Pearlman)

third movement: fast, fugue

- Note:
- 1) fugue is like one enormous point of imitation
 - 2) soloists begin; ripieno treated as additional soloists
 - 3) the equality of the parts (entries) makes this essentially an ensemble movement without typical ritornello/solo alternation
 - 4) opening section includes all the entries followed by material related to fugue theme, moving away from tonic and returning for strong tonic cadence (at 1:16 in Pearlman)
 - 5) middle section largely for soloists with tutti interjections; harpsichord increasingly dominates, harmonic pedal increases tension before return to tonic (at 3:46 in Pearlman)
 - 6) final section is exact repetition of first (=da capo form)

Other baroque instrumental forms discussed in section:

dance suite (repeated binary form; minuet-trio form)

Frescobaldi (canzona = early fugal form based on point of imitation; passacaglia = type of ground bass) K 1:19-22

Bach (walking bass)

fugue Bach, *Art of Fugue* K 1.26-27