The New Grammar of Ornament
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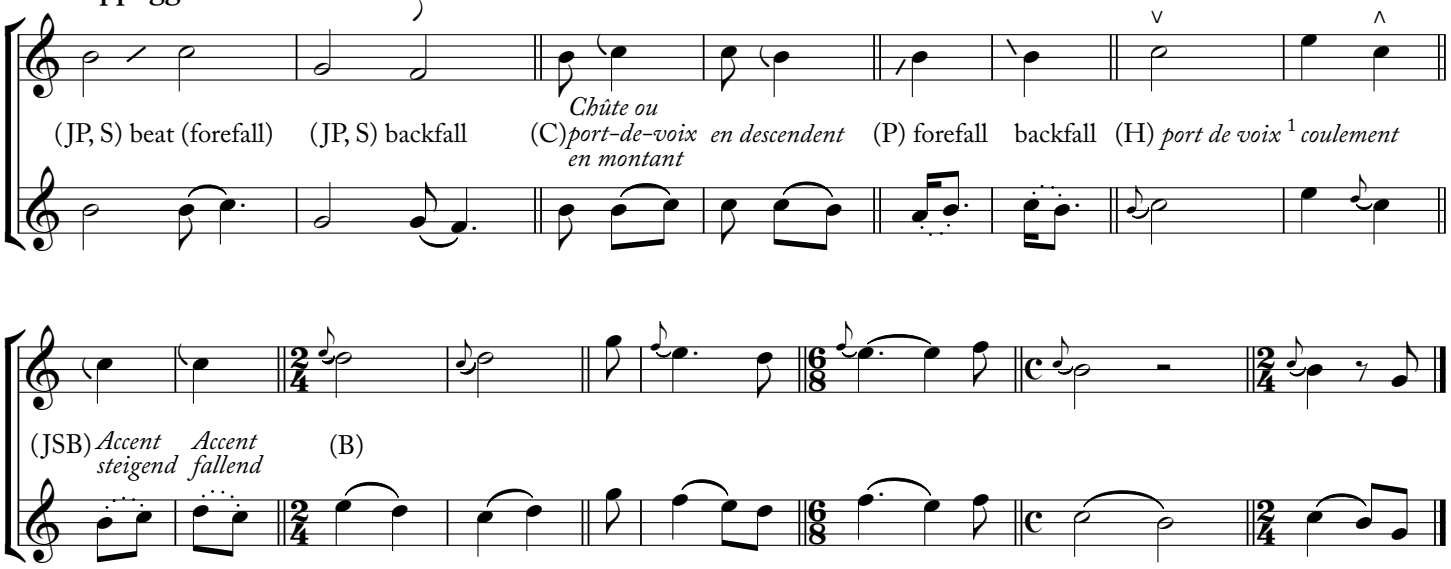
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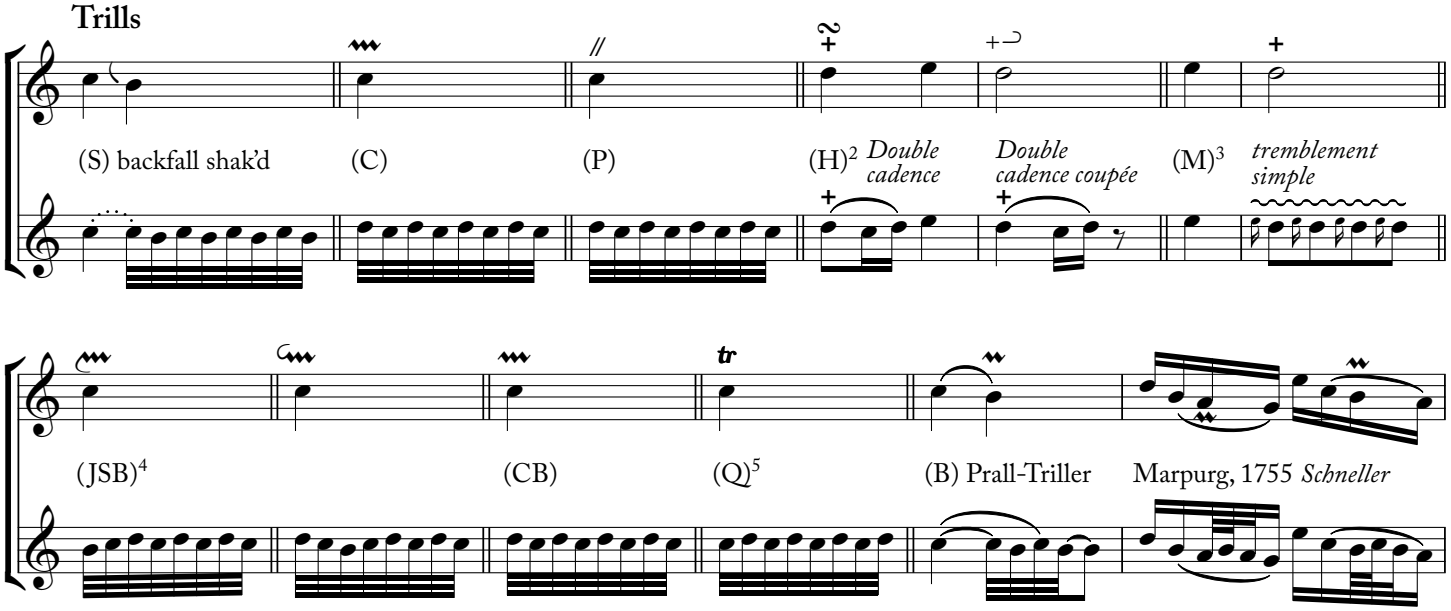
Ornaments

For comparison, a sampling of 100 years of ornaments from England, France, and Germany. A bewildering variety of signs and symbols were used at different times and places to indicate the same or similar figures (and composers often had their personal quirks as well) and, depending on context, signs may have very different interpretations.

Appoggiaturas
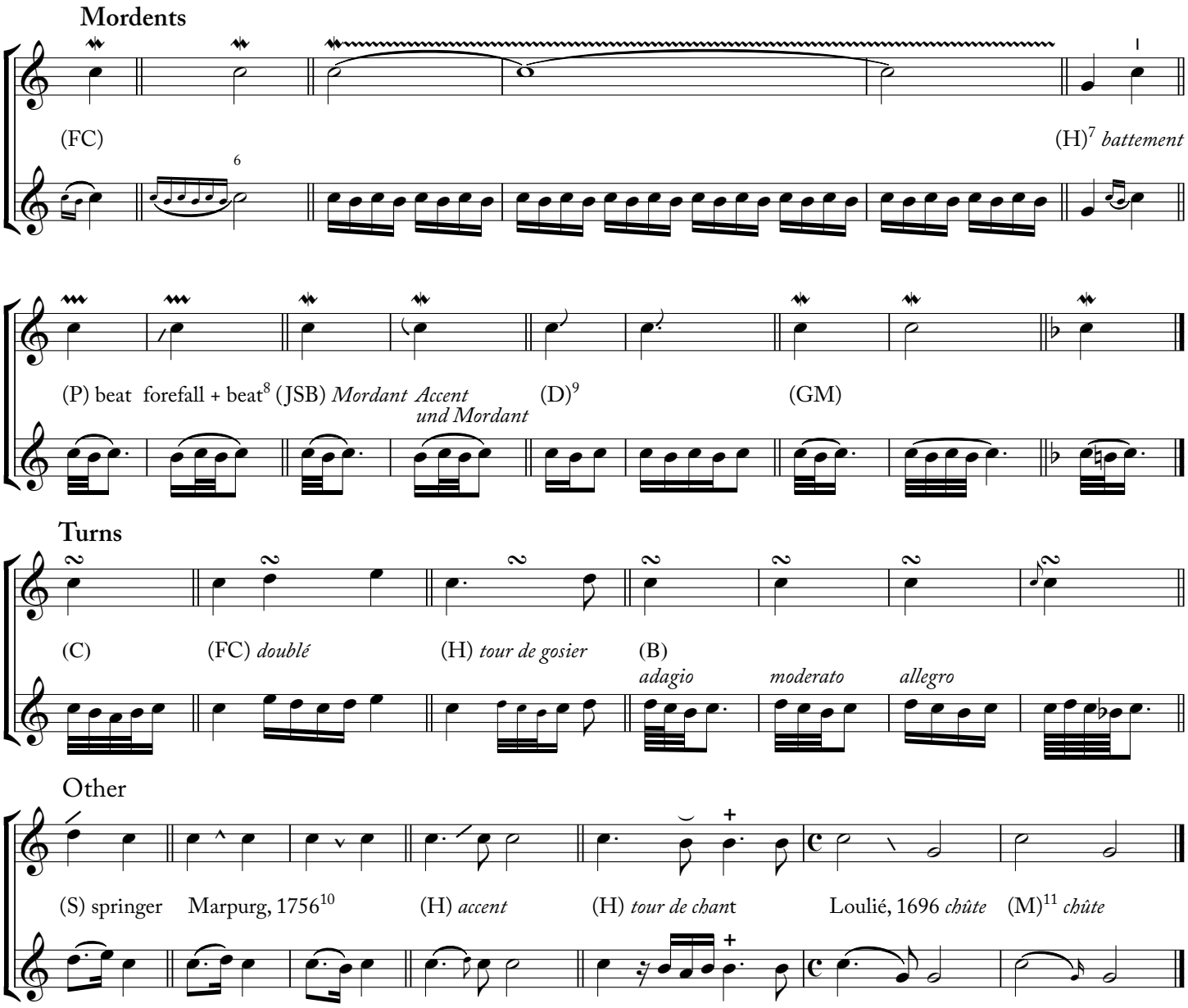


Trills



Key to sources:
JP) John Playford: *Introduction to the Skill of Musicke* (1654)
S) Christopher Simpson: *Chelys, or the Division Violist* (1659/1665)
C) Chambonnières (1670)
D) Jean-Henri D'Anglebert: *Pieces de clavecin* (1689), "Marques des Agrement et leur signification"
P) Henry Purcell: *The Harpsichord Master* (1697), "Rules for Graces"
FC) François Couperin: *Pièces de clavecin* (1713)
H) Jacques Martin Hotteterre: *Premier livre de pièces pour la flûte traversière...oeuvre second* (1715), "Avertissement"
JSB) J.S. Bach: *Clavier-Büchlein vor Wilhelm Friedemann Bach* (1720)
GM) Gottlieb Muffat: *Componimenti* (?1735)
M) Michel Pignolet de Montéclair: *Principies de Musique* (1736), "On Ornaments"
Q) Johann Joachim Quantz: *Versuch einer Answeisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen* (1752), Chapter VIII
B) C.P.E. Bach, *Versuch über die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen* (Berlin, 1753)

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[1] Hotteterre's *Démonstration* does not always clarify the intended rhythm. From his description in *Principes de la flûte traversières...* (1707) it appears that the *port de voix* is played on the beat, while the *coulement* (which fills the interval of a third) is played between the beats.

[2] Hotteterre describes a trill as "an agitation of two pitches, either a step or a half step apart, played alternately in rapid succession. The trill is started on the higher note and ends on the lower." He cautions not to rush the trill but to hold the first pitch (appoggiatura) about half the value of the written note.

[3] Monteclair describes the *tremblement* as composed of several *coulés* (descending appoggiature) strung together, the number and speed of the beats depending on the length of the note and character of the music.

[4] Compound trills with upper and lower turns.

[5] Quantz notes, however, that each trill begins with a preparation (i.e. an appoggiatura) either from above or below.

[6] In these examples, Couperin treats the *pincé* as an inverted trill; on the harpsichord, the repetition functions to sustain the pitch.

[7] In this example, the *battement* accentuates a leap. Hotteterre was very precise about notating ornamentation in his compositions; a *battement* is often used on the first note of a figure as well as on the second of two repeated pitches.

[8] From the mid 17th to the late 18th century, ornament tables pair the appoggiatura from below with the mordent. In the Avertissement of op. 2, Hotteterre observes that a *port de voix* is "almost always accommpanied by a battement."

[9] D'Anglebert, Muffat, Quantz, and others indicate more iterations on longer notes. Muffat and Quantz also suggest the possibility of chromatic alteration.

[10] Marpurg also notates the springer with a small note (as in Hotteterre's *Demonstration*).

[11] Montéclair writes, "This ornament is marked by a little note, N."