

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE TURN

The turn symbol cannot be found in either the flute or the cembalo version of the *A Minor Concerto*, *Wq. 166* and *Wq. 26* respectively. But there are many places where the sign is used in the cembalo versions of the other three concerti that Bach transcribed for the flute: the *Concerto in Bb Major*, *Wq. 28*; the *Concerto in A Major*, *Wq. 29*; and the *Concerto in G Major*, *Wq. 34*. These are important sources to use when studying any of the flute concerti because Bach does not use the turn symbol in works for nonkeyboard instruments. Instead the generic *tr* sign is once again relied upon by composers in the eighteenth century to stand for this ornament:

*Despite the musical worth of this ornament (i.e., the turn), its symbol is little known apart from the keyboard. It is often indicated by the signs of the trill. ...There are many examples in which the turn is better and easier than the trill.*¹⁹¹

*The lack of symbols aside from the keyboard often leads to the setting of the trill's sign in places where this ornament is ill at ease. Sometimes the speed of a piece makes it impossible to execute.*¹⁹²

191 *Ibid.*, 117.

192 *Ibid.*, 118.

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Before commencing a study of either the *Bb Major*, the *A Major*, or the *G Major Flute Concerti*, the flutist should consult the manuscript of the cembalo version of the concerto to locate places where Bach uses the turn symbol. True to Bach's own words in the above citations, the emblem is never written in the manuscripts of the four flute concerti, and yet it is found throughout three of the concerti for the cembalo. In many of these examples, the writing is identical or similar enough to warrant the interpretation of the flute's *tr* symbol as a turn. In certain places one will find that a turn symbol in the cembalo version has simply been omitted with no replacement sign in the flute version. If the measure in question appears to have undergone little change when transcribed for the flute, then there will probably be no harm in adding the turn to the version for the flute.

Three examples from Bach's *A Major Flute Concerto, Wq. 168*, will be examined where the turn symbol in the cembalo version has either been changed to a *tr*, or has been completely omitted. In the version of the concerto for flute, the *tr* sign is found over a half note with a quarter-note appoggiatura in measure 55 of the first movement. In the same location in the version for cembalo, the appoggiatura is written out as a quarter note in large notation and a turn sign is placed over the next quarter note:



Ex. #89a

(*A Major Flute Concerto*, I. Allegro, measures 55 and 56)