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Original Transcription System for Classical Guitar of Works Composed for the English Guitar (Guittar)

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Abstract

This article aims to present an original system of transcription for classical guitar of works originally composed for English guitar (*guittar*). This instrument, now forgotten, was popular in Europe and the British colonies mainly in the second half of the 18th century. A substantial corpus of musical literature, distinguished by its considerable artistic and educational value, has been composed for it, yet this body of work remains largely unexplored. It is also missing from concert and educational programs. Reaching for it will provide insight into the instrument, vital in its time, and fill a gap in the guitar repertoire, providing historical continuity from the Renaissance to the present.

The differences in design and tuning between the historical and modern instruments give rise to specific performance challenges. They concern, for example, the reproduction of fingering or the preservation of texture, which raises the need for a transcription intended specifically for the classical guitar. The transcription system developed by the author of this article is based on the use of the capabilities of today's guitar, but taking into account the common features of both instruments, the *guittar* idiom, the aesthetic principles of the era, the best possible tone or comfort of performance.

Keywords: English guitar, *guittar*, guitar repertoire of the second half of the 18th century, transcription

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Introduction

Significant discrepancies in design and tuning, and consequently in timbre or fingering, between the English guitar (*guitar*) and the modern classical guitar necessitate the transcription of extant works for the latter, a task that can be daunting for the contemporary guitarist. The method developed by the author was conceived as a tool to expand the guitar repertoire to include unknown compositions for *guitar* dating from the second half of the 18th century and the early 19th century¹. In order to perform this literature on the classical guitar, it is necessary to choose the appropriate transcription system. The development of such a system was undertaken by the author of this article. Addressing the primary issue necessitated a comparative analysis of the two instruments, considering factors such as tone, performance capabilities, and playing technique. This comparative approach also involved identifying their common features and, most importantly, understanding the historical performance and its relevance to contemporary practice.

1. English guitar (*guitar*) and classical guitar: design and performance capabilities

The English guitar existed in a variety of forms². The instrument was most commonly found in the British Isles³. It is also the location where the majority of compositions and educational works were produced. The *guitar* generally⁴ had 6 courses containing 10 strings: The first four courses had double strings (tuned in unison) and the two bass ones had single strings⁵ with open C tuning. Such guitars were produced, among others, by Frederick Hintz (1711–1772) ‘guitar-

¹ It concerns, among other things, Polish music for English guitar.

² See Małgorzata Żegleń-Włodarczyk, *The English guitar and the forgotten guitar repertoire of the second half of the 18th century*, ‘Edukacja Muzyczna’ 2022, no. 17, pp. 139–155, [DOI: 10.16926/em.2022.17.10].

³ Ph. Coggin, *This Easy and Agreeable Instrument: A History of the English Guitar*, ‘Early Music’ 1987, vol. 15, no 2, pp. 204–218, [DOI: 10.1093/earlyj/xv.2.205]; F.W. Galpin, *Old English Instruments of Music: Their History and Character*, Methuen, London 1910, p. 31.

⁴ R. Spencer, I. Harwood, *English guitar*, [in:] *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, [DOI: 10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.08823], source: <https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/display/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000008823>, [access 23.06.2024].

⁵ D. Rutherford, *The Ladies’ Pocket Guide or The Compleat Tutor for the Guitar*, D. Rutherford, London ca. 1756; R.B. Armstrong, *Musical instruments. English and Irish instruments*, vol. 2, T.A. Constable, Edinburgh 1908, p. 16.

maker to her Majesty and the Royal Family⁶, or the most prestigious factories, such as Longman & Broderip. This model is also the one to which the author refers to in her considerations.

In order to compare the English guitar with the classical guitar, it is necessary to inquire as to how the historical instrument compares with the contemporary one, and how that comparison affects the performance problems from the perspective of the instrument's development.

Table 1 summarizes the main differences in design, playing technique and notation for the two guitars in question⁷. As illustrated in the table, the *guittar* possesses a shorter scale, resulting in reduced distances between the frets. Consequently, when performing, the musician does not encounter the necessity of a spread finger placement in the left hand. It is quieter and less prone to dynamic and timbral differentiation. The smaller body also contributes to a shorter sustain of notes.

The primary distinction lies in the open tuning of the *guittar*, a feature that renders the reproduction of the original fingering on a classical guitar unfeasible. Metal strings also preclude the use of fingernails as a playing instrument and possess a different timbre than nylon/composite strings. Conversely, double strings require more precision but not allow to execute intricate ornamentation.

Table 1. Comparison of the English guitar (based on the model produced by Longman & Broderip in 1780) and the classical guitar: main differences.

| | English guitar | Classical guitar |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Scale length | ca. 42 cm | 65 cm |
| Tuning | c e g g c ¹ c ¹ e ¹ e ¹ g ¹ g ¹ | E A d g h e ¹ |
| No. of frets | 12 | 19 |
| Range | 2.5 octaves | 3.5 octaves |
| Strings – material | metal | nylon/composite (metal wound bass strings) |
| No. of strings | 10 (including 4 double strings), 6 courses | 6 |
| Playing technique – right hand | Fingers – similar to lute (little finger resting on the body) | Fingers, fingernails |
| Notation | Notes (octave shift), sporadically tablature | Notes (octave shift) |
| Instrument position | Similar to the lute, strap | Footstool/guitar support |

Source: own elaboration

⁶ J. Kloss, *Frederick Hintz – Guittar-maker to her Majesty and the Royal Family*, [in:] *The „Guittar” In Britain 1753–1800*, source: <http://www.justanothertune.com>, [access: 23.06.2024].

⁷ During the comparison, reference was made to the most popular model of English guitar, which was produced around 1780 by the Longman & Broderip works.

However, there are numerous similarities in the instruments' technical and performance capabilities. The employment of techniques such as dynamics and articulation differentiation, timbral registration, *barré* chords, and techniques such as *arpeggio*, *legato*, *portamento*, *vibrato*, muting of unwanted notes, and the use of a capo for key changes are evident in both.

1.1. Historical performance

A thorough examination of the extensive literature for the English guitar reveals that it was composed with the intention of mitigating technical challenges to the greatest extent feasible. Uncomplicated 'default' fingering, open strings, the most accessible finger arrangements, and low positions (primarily 1st and 2nd) were employed. In instances where the preservation of texture might have posed challenges for the performer, discrepancies in the form of reductions in conducted voices become discernible.



Figure 1 Simplification of texture: inconsistent leading of the melody with dyads in Tommaso Giordani's (ca. 1730–1806) Sonata⁸ | *Largo*

The keys of the compositions were adapted to the tuning. The majority of works (or arrangements for the *guittar* with open C tuning) were composed in C major⁹ (with infrequent use of C minor or A minor), allowing the composers to take advantage of the instrument's natural resonance. It appears that adhering to pragmatic concerns held greater significance than the rhetorical thinking characteristic of that period: the expression of music's emotion and meaning through tonality.

According to historical sources, a variety of distinctive techniques were employed during the performance. These techniques include *arpeggio* using a single finger of the right hand, up or down¹⁰, trills executed by *vibrato* alone¹¹, or

⁸ T. Giordani, *Six Solos for a Guitar with a thorough Bass for the Harpsicord and one Trio for a Guitar, Violin and Bass*, Longman & Broderip, London 1780.

⁹ Also G major/A major - for the *guittar* with open G or A tuning. See J. Oswald, *A Compleat Tutor for the Guittar, with Two Scales shewing the Method of Playing in the keys of C and G*, London 1760; G.B. Marella, *Compositions for the Cetra or Guittar op. 4 Book II of Guittar Lessons*, London 1762.

¹⁰ R. Bremner, *Instructions For The Guitar*, Edinburgh 1758.

¹¹ *Ibidem*.

legato performed with the left hand¹². Additionally significant and idiomatic to the English guitar due to its tuning are the frequent dyad ornaments.



Figure 2 Beginning of *Allegro* from Sonata IV containing idiomatic for the *guitar* double appoggiaturas in thirds

It is imperative to acknowledge the impact of various factors on performance, including the dimensions of the instrument, the manner in which it is held, the technical and performance capabilities, and the inherent limitations of double metal strings and low volume.

1.2. Contemporary performance: issues

The modern guitarist is bound to encounter performance difficulties when expanding the repertoire to include works composed for the historical guitar. The primary cause of these issues can be attributed to the previously mentioned discrepancies between the instruments. Due to different fingerings applied to the same places, the fingering must be meticulously considered. Occasionally, notes which are easily performed on the *guitar*, played on open strings, when performed on the modern instrument necessitate advanced fingerings, playing in high positions, employing *barré* techniques, and frequent position shifts. Given the inherent impossibility of reproducing all notes and harmonic structures with absolute precision (for instance, an identical chord arrangement) transcriptions necessitate adjustments to texture. It is also imperative to arrange the works in terms of form (typically due to publishing errors) and ornamentation. The implementation of certain embellishments, such as the aforementioned appoggiaturas in dyads, is not fully feasible on the classical guitar. In contrast, more complex, long ornaments are possible on its single strings. It is imperative to consider the utilization of means of expression that are characteristic of the aesthetics of music during the latter half of the 18th century. Additionally, it is crucial to take into account the application of capabilities and techniques that are prevalent in contemporary instruments. This includes techniques such as shaping the sound with nails, employing *legato* more frequently than on the *guitar*, varying articulation, dynamics, timbre, and agogics.

¹² Ibidem.

In order to illustrate the performance issues, examples from sonatas¹³ shall be used from the collection entitled *Six Solos¹⁴ for a Guitar with a thorough Bass for the Harpsicord and one Trio for a Guitar, Violin and Bass*, by T. Giordani. This collection was published in London in 1780 by Longman & Broderip. All solos were arranged for classical guitar and recorded by the author of this work.

The differences in fingering resulting from tuning are illustrated by a section of the *Tempo di Menuetto* from Sonata II (Figure 3). Performing it on the *guitarra* is relatively uncomplicated. The entire bar is played on open strings, and the transition to the subsequent bar requires the placement of the first and second fingers of the left hand¹⁵ in 1st position. In contrast, the classical guitar necessitates four position shifts (3rd-7th-5th-3rd) and a rapid transition to an awkward chord with a wide finger arrangement — 1, 3, and 4 (cf. Fig. 3).

The figure consists of two parts. The top part is a musical staff with a treble clef, showing a sequence of notes. Above the staff, red annotations indicate fingerings for classical guitar: III, VII, V, III. Below the staff, red numbers indicate fingerings for English guitar: 1, 3, 3, 3, 3, 1, 3. The bottom part shows a comparison of left-hand finger positions on classical guitar and English guitar. The classical guitar tablature (gitarra klasyczna) shows fingerings: T (3, 5, 5), A (8, 8, 0, 5, 7), B (8, 7). The English guitar tablature (gitarra angielska) shows fingerings: T (0, 0, 0, 0, 0), A (0, 0, 0, 0, 1), B (0, 0, 0, 0, 2).

Figure 3 Section of Var. 2 from *Tempo di Menuetto* from Sonata II by T. Giordani - notation prepared for classical guitar and comparison of left-hand finger positions on classical guitar and English guitar (tablature).

¹³ Here in the sense of Baroque solo sonatas (a 1) *da camera*. See M. Żegleń-Włodarczyk, „Sześć sonat solowych na gitarę angielską” Tommaso Giordaniego w perspektywie wykonawstwa historycznego i współczesnego, computer printout, doctoral thesis written under the supervision of prof. R. Orzechowska, Akademia Muzyczna im. Krzysztofa Pendereckiego, Kraków 2020, pp. 30, 42–43.

¹⁴ The term *solo* was usually applied to works written for single voice/solo instrument, in this case for the English guitar, with *basso continuo* accompaniment, and was equivalent to the phrase ‘solo sonata’ – *a uno/a 1*. This nomenclature was also prevalent in England, where the term ‘sonata’ was often used to denote trio sonatas. See P. Wilk, *Sonata na skrzypce solo w siedemnastowiecznych Włoszech*, Uniwersytet Wrocławski, Wrocław 2005, pp. 60, 64–65; and W.S. Newman, *The sonata in the Baroque era*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill 1959, p. 21.

¹⁵ The finger indications of the left hand adhere to standard guitar fingering: 1 - index finger, 2 - middle finger, 3 - ring finger, 4 - little finger.

A similar difficulty is posed by C major chords, which often appear due to the key of the works ending with a C note in the two-line octave. They are played on the English guitar with five open strings and only one finger of the left hand placed on the 5th fret of string ①. Conversely, the classical guitar demands the implementation of the *barré* technique in the fifth position and a wide left-hand fingering, which compromises the tonal quality, particularly during rapid position changes. The best solution seems to be to switch the order of the middle components of this chord. It provides an easy-to-play C major in 8th position.

gitarra klasyczna gitara angielska

| | | | |
|----------|---|----|---|
| | 8 | 8 | 5 |
| T | 5 | 8 | 0 |
| A | 5 | 9 | 0 |
| B | 7 | 10 | 0 |
| | 8 | 8 | 0 |

Figure 4 C major chord from *Largo* from Sonata I - left hand finger placement on classical guitar (original arrangement of notes - on the left, transcription - in the middle) and English guitar (on the right)

Such a modification neither alters the harmony nor the melody. For instance, in the final section of the *Largo* from Sonata I, its implementation enabled the execution of an extended passage in a single position, without the need to lift the fingers, thereby achieving a consistent sound throughout the chord.

During the arrangement of the fingering in the sonatas, the timbre factor was also taken into account. An example of this might be the progression in thirds from the *Andantino* from Sonata II, performed on *guitar* on open strings in 1st position. However, performing it on a classical guitar on strings ② and ③ does not pose significant technical challenges. Furthermore, this configuration enables to produce consistent tone throughout the piece.



gitara angielska

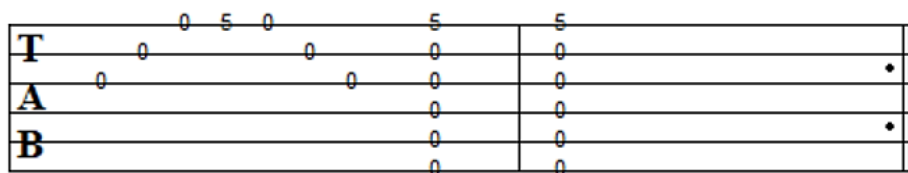


Figure 5 Ending of *Largo* from Sonata I - music notation (top) and the positioning of the fingers of the left hand on the English guitar (bottom)



Figure 6 Progression in thirds from *Andantino* (C major) from Sonata II - arrangement for classical guitar

The texture, which is well-suited to the capabilities of the English guitar, is not always feasible to reproduce on the contemporary instruments. It often needs arrangement. It is necessary to consider simplification, as evidenced by the fast *Allegro* movement from Sonata VI, wherein the dyads, simple to perform on the *guitar* (inconsistently led by the composer, due to the instrument's

narrow range) result in an unfavourable auditory experience when performed on the classical guitar. They require rapid changes in position and difficult fingering. Abandoning the lower voice in thirds and using *legato* technique in the transcription allow for a faster tempo and lightness. This solution is further reinforced by the fact that T. Giordani was not a guitarist. Instead, his primary focus, in his roles as conductor and director of the Royal Theatres in London and Dublin, was on the composition and production of operas¹⁶. The guitar appears occasionally in his work, and the collection *Six solos...* is the only work written for *guittar* as a solo instrument. This texture can be attributed to an unfamiliarity with the instrument and a natural inclination to rely on a larger performance apparatus that can effortlessly produce multiple notes simultaneously. To substantiate this thesis, one must turn to the most prominent composer-guitarists of the period. A study of works such as James Oswald's (1710–1769) *Twelve Divertissement For The Guitar* (1759) or Robert Bremner's (ca. 1713–1789) *Instructions For The Guitar* (1758)¹⁷ reveals that chords are rarely present in the fast parts, with the focus instead being on a single melodic line.

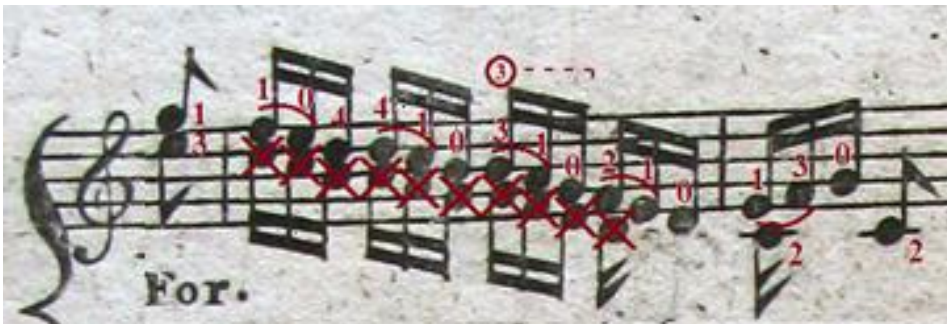


Figure 7 Progression in thirds in the *Allegro* from Sonata IV – notation and arrangement for classical guitar

In certain instances, enhancing the texture is advantageous to the tonal quality of the piece, particularly in consideration of the capabilities of the classical guitar. This pertains, inter alia, to instances wherein T. Giordani abandons the lower voice in dyads midway through a phrase, whereas on the modern instrument these do not pose significant problems, thereby allowing both voices to be retained in the transcription.

¹⁶ I. Cholij, *Giordani, Tommaso* (entry), [in:] *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 9, New York – London 2001, pp. 885–887; D.M. Greene, *Tommaso Giordani* (entry), [in:] *Biographical Encyclopedia of Composers*, vol. 1, The Reproducing Piano Roll Foundation, Cleveland 1985–2007, p. 350; A. Klein, *Giordani, Tommaso* (entry), [in:] *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart (MGG)*, biography part, vol. 7, Bärenreiter, Kassel 2002, p. 990–992.

¹⁷ R. Bremner, op. cit.



Figure 8 Section from *Largo* from Sonata I – arrangement for classical guitar (left) and performing the progression in thirds on English guitar (right)

Another example is the G major chord, which, when played on the *guitar*, involves notes that do not lie on adjacent strings. This means that it cannot be played with the thumb of the right hand as an uninterrupted *arpeggio*. However, when performing on the contemporary instrument, it is advantageous to execute it as a six-note chord, thereby attaining greater consistency of tone and, in certain instances, a more defined character or texture.

Due to the varying performance capabilities of the guitars, as well as the practice of adding own embellishments, which was a natural aspect of the aesthetic of the second half of the 18th century, the **ornamentation** also requires arrangement.

The pieces include long and short appoggiaturas, trills, mordents, turns, *Schleiffer/slur* or diminutions. Most are feasible on the contemporary instrument, others require some thought. For guidance on own ornamentation, see Part 2 of this article: *Conformity with the aesthetic principles of the second half of the 18th century...*

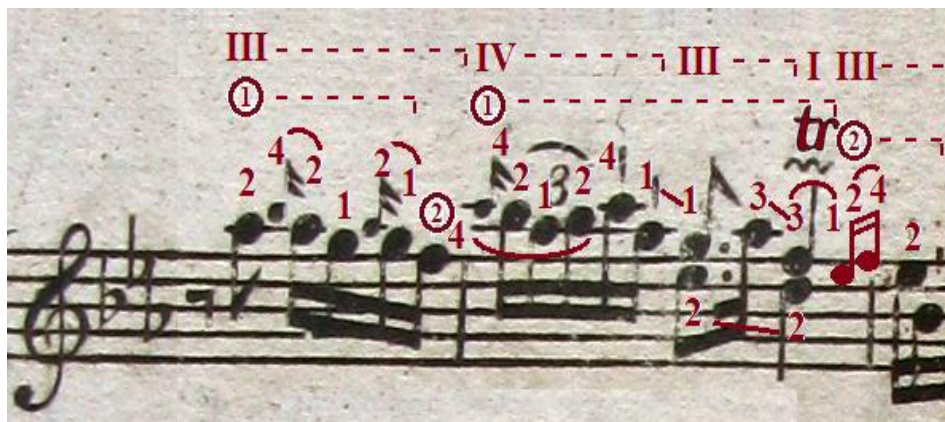


Figure 9 Section of *Largo* from Sonata III containing ornaments that can be performed on the classical guitar – arrangement for classical guitar

Another aspect that needs to be discussed is **timbre**. The utilisation of colour registers is evident in both guitars. However, these registers are more pronounced in the case of the classical guitar – a phenomenon attributable to various factors, including the larger dimensions of the body and materials utilised in the strings. An examination of historical editions of the guitar repertoire reveals the absence of any markings that would indicate techniques for sound production at the bridge (*sul ponticello*), above the neck (*sul tasto*), or in proximity to the sound hole (*ordinario*). However, the authors of the schools of playing recommended that advanced musicians differentiate their sound using the right hand:

The true Fort of the Instrument is best produced by touching the Strings between the Sound-hole and the Bridge, tho' it will occasion a pleasing Variety to play some Times near the Bridge, and afterwards as far up as the Little-finger will allow the others to reach; the Tone of the one representing the Lute, and the other the Pipe or Organ¹⁸.

Consequently, it can be deduced that the performers' independence was relied upon, whilst concurrently employing alternative techniques to change the timbre, including transposition of a motif or an extended section by an octave, alterations in articulation, dynamics, or texture density.

In order to convey the character of the works with greater depth, emphasise the contrast between movements, sections or motifs, differentiate the musical material and enrich the artistic expression, it is necessary to propose one's own timbre register when making a transcription, tailored to the character of the music.

It is imperative to acknowledge that original prints from the 18th century frequently contain various forms of inaccuracies, including publishing errors, as well as other ambiguities. These include the notation of embellishments, repetition marks (e.g. the absence of two dots next to vertical lines, although this mark – 'two vertical lines without dots'¹⁹, as noted by Johann Joachim Quantz [1697–1773], may have had the function of repetition), the lack of use of the 1st and 2nd voltas, or of the correct number of chromatic signs placed next to the key (e.g. two flats instead of three in the key of C minor), thus rendering it possible to incorrectly identify the form or key of works. This issue was so pervasive that it was addressed by Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714–1788):

The publisher made a fool of himself and added [embellishments] without my permission or knowledge. ... am certain that [the sonatas] are either not authored by me or, at most, badly copied – as is often the case²⁰.

¹⁸ Ibidem.

¹⁹ J.J. Quantz, *O zasadach gry na flecie poprzecznym*, translated by M. Nahajowski, Akademia Muzyczna, Łódź 2012, p. 61.

²⁰ C.Ph.E. Bach, *O prawdziwej sztuce gry na instrumentach klawiszowych*, M. Kraft, Astraia, Kraków 2017, p. 88.

In turn, in the introduction to the second part of his treatise, he wrote:

[...] it is necessary to immediately check the key markings, which may be written in an incorrect. In the past, D minor rarely contained the note B \flat , or C minor the note A \flat , etc. Some composers still write this way, whether out of habit, or out of a fondness for relics, or perhaps for other reasons²¹.

An example demonstrating the unclear notation of the repetition marks, the lack of marking of the 1st and 2nd voltas and the placement of two flats by the key in the key of C minor can be found in the *Larghetto* from Sonata V.



Figure 10 Beginning (left) and last measure of movement I and the beginning of movement II (right) of the *Larghetto* from Sonata V

It requires an arrangement in terms of the key signature and form as follows:



Figure 11 Arrangement of the last measure of part A of *Larghetto* from Sonata V for classical guitar (Edition Schott)

2. Transcription system for classical guitar of works composed for the English guitar (*guittar*)

An analysis of selected (British and Polish) works for the English guitar, treatises from the period, contemporary publications and a comparison of the 18th century and today's instrument (in terms of sound, performance capabilities, playing technique and common features), and above all knowledge of historical performance, allowed the author to develop a transcription system and implement it repeatedly when performing works written for the *guittar* on the classi-

²¹ Ibidem, p. 216.

cal guitar. Given the plurality and diversity of performance issues, it does not identify a single solution that will address all of them. The intention is for it to serve solely as a tool, a support and an aid for guitarists attempting to access literature composed for an instrument with a different tuning than the one currently being used.

In the process of arrangement, it is imperative that guitarists are guided by their own aptitudes, inclinations, and musical predilections. However, contemporary performance should adhere to historical aesthetic principles²² and be determined by timbre and, from a pragmatic perspective, playing comfort. A detailed description of the system's key features is provided below.

2.1. Maintaining the character, expression and intention of the composer and the work

In the process of arranging compositions written for the *guitarra*, it is imperative to acknowledge the fundamental difference in sound between historical and modern instruments and understand that the resultant arrangement will inevitably diverge from the original composition. It is evident that such a reconstruction is neither feasible nor essential, and moreover, it does not align with the author's objectives. In the traditional repertoire, compositions intended for the lute, baroque guitar, vihuela, harpsichord, cello or violin frequently emerge and are performed with the awareness that reproducing their original sound is impossible.

It is imperative to acknowledge the significance of interpretation when transcribing a piece, as it is crucial to capture the work's 'affects', character and expression while considering the commonalities between the two instruments and the performance capabilities of the classical guitar. As noted by J.J. Quanz:

The performer must endeavour to empathise with both the primary and secondary passions of the piece they are asked to express. And given that, in most works, feelings are subject to the principle of constant variation, the performer must know how to guess their nature, contained in each idea, and try to make the performance relevant to the affects that appear in the piece. It is only through this process that the performer can accurately interpret the composer's original intention. After all, there are different kinds of liveness and sadness²³.

In order to facilitate an accurate reading of the composer's mood and intentions, the presence of character or tempo indications written above the notes can be instrumental. Although these elements are intrinsically linked, the tempo

²² Further information regarding the aesthetic principles of the period from Baroque to Classicism can be found in sources such as: S. Łobaczewska, *Style muzyczne*, vol. 1, p. 1, PWM, Kraków 1960, or E. Fubini, *Historia estetyki muzycznej*, translated by Z. Skowron, Musica Jagiellonica, Kraków 1997.

²³ J.J. Quanz, op. cit., pp. 105.

itself depends on the individual preferences of the performer, the ensemble or the capabilities and limitations of the instrument/performance apparatus. According to C.Ph.E. Bach:

The tempo [...] is generally determined by the nature of the musical piece, but is particularly influenced by the most rapid notes and figures within the composition. Such insight will prevent the Allegro from being accelerated and the Adagio from becoming drowsy²⁴.

In the process of constructing expression, it is also imperative to use measures of artistic expression. This is best achieved through the implementation of both written markings and by proposing one's own dynamics, articulation, agogics and timbre, while adhering to the established rules of style.

Analysis is a pivotal instrument in facilitating comprehension of a piece and the selection of technical and performance measures. Furthermore, it facilitates the discernment of the work's intention, as articulated by Umberto Eco (1932–2016). This concept is related 'to certain levels of the act of interpreting the work and their interrelationships'²⁵ and is explained by the aforementioned author as follows: 'the intention of the author coincides with or diverges from the intention of the work...[and] the text is what it is, and creates its own effects [...]'²⁶

All of the mentioned factors are crucial for the correct interpretation of works for the English guitar. When transcribing, it is imperative to take these into account and try to preserve them as carefully as possible.

2.2. Best tone

As established earlier, an exact reproduction of the historic tone on the modern guitar is not possible. The main reason is the use of metal strings in the guitar, the sound of which, as Francis Bacon (1561–1626) wrote, was considered in the British Isles to be sweeter than the sound of gut strings²⁷.

Furthermore, the double strings and low-precision tuning mechanisms employed during that period did not permit the same intonation possibilities as contemporary instruments. However, given that the majority of literature was composed for the guitar with an open C tuning and in matching keys, a – slightly modified – typical classical guitar tuning can be used for contemporary performance, bringing it closer to the tuning appropriate for the English guitar. To do this, the notes of the C major chord should be tuned as accurately as possible,

²⁴ C.Ph.E. Bach, op. cit., p. 160.

²⁵ R. Borowiecka, *Twórczość religijna Pawła Łukaszeńskiego. Muzyka jako wyraz zmysłu wiary artysty*, Akademia Muzyczna, Kraków 2019, pp. 23–24.

²⁶ U. Eco, *Pomiędzy autorem i tekstem*, [in:] *Interpretacja i nadinterpretacja*, translated by T. Biedroń, Znak, Kraków 2008, pp. 76–98.

²⁷ F. Bacon, *The Philosophical Works of Francis Bacon, Baron of Verulam, Viscount St. Albans, and Lord High-Chancellor of England*, vol. 3, A. Millar, London 1740, p. 210.

especially those played on open ①, ⑥ and ③ strings, as these emphasise the natural resonance of the instrument.

The best way seems to be to first tune the c notes located on strings ⑥ and ⑤, c¹ on strings ③ and ②, c² on string ① and e on string ④. Next, one should check the notes E, e, e¹ and e² on strings ⑥, ⑤, ③, ② and ① and G, g and g¹ on all the strings, and finally tune the C major chords in 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 8th positions so that they sound relatively clean.

The proposed tuning is not difficult to achieve, and the resulting tonal benefits for works written in the key of C major cannot be overestimated. The tone is also influenced by the texture, fingering and comfort of performance, which will be discussed in more detail later in this article.

2.3. Use of means of artistic expression, characteristic techniques and performance capabilities of the classical guitar

When utilising the classical guitar, it is imperative to explore its full potential, particularly in terms of playing technique and means of artistic expression. These include *legato*, *arpeggio*, timbral, dynamic, agogic and articulatory differentiation. It is important that they are always suited to the character of the piece.

Contemporary performance involves shaping the sound with the nails of the right hand. Expanding the range of performance capabilities, this technique has a significant impact on tone and expression. It allows for playing louder than with fingertips (as was the case with the *guitar*), while still maintaining a clear sound. It is imperative to emphasise the utilisation of the *legato* technique, a method that was employed to a lesser extent on the English guitar in comparison to the classical guitar. Thanks to *legato*, it is possible to achieve, among other things, a faster tempo and lightness in scalar sections, the performance of complex ornaments and the emphasis of natural supports in the measure, such as long appoggiaturas, etc. It should be proposed to introduce own elements of artistic expression and, in the case of timbre selection, registers such as *sul tasto*, *ordinario*, *sul ponticello* and all their intermediate stages. Fast parts or runs can be made to sound sharper and brighter, while slow sections can be made to sound warmer and softer. It is also recommended to differentiate articulation, given that shorter articulation can convey a lower dynamic effect, and longer articulation can convey a higher volume effect²⁸. It therefore influences both the tone and timbre, and thus the expression of the piece. All of this is intended to enhance the artistic expression and emphasise the character of the music and the contrast between sections and even entire parts of larger forms.

²⁸ This technique is employed, for instance, in instruments with restricted capabilities for seamless dynamic variation, such as the harpsichord or organ.

2.4. Preserving the idiom of the English guitar

The performance of historical repertoire on the *guitar* involves the minimisation of technical difficulties and the exploitation of the instrument's inherent resonance. Those factors are important for transcription. The author is of the opinion that the idiom of the English guitar should be preserved, taking into account the means, techniques and capabilities of the modern guitar. Capturing the idiom of the English guitar, whilst simultaneously exploiting the resonance of the classical guitar, can be achieved through the employment of appropriate fingering. This involves using as many open strings as possible, primarily in chords. Furthermore, wherever possible, lower positions should and finger placements that are not overly demanding should be employed. Exceptions to this rule should be made in instances where the primary objective is tone, e.g., achieving consistent timbre in a progression in thirds by performing them on the same strings in higher positions.

2.5. Conformity with the aesthetic principles of the second half of the 18th century with particular reference to ornamentation and articulation

Another important aspect is the interpretation in line with the aesthetics of the second half of the 18th century. In the arrangement, it should be reflected mainly through ornamentation and articulation. And although the literature contains embellishments marked by the composers, some of them, such as those idiomatic to the *guitar* appoggiaturas in dyads, are difficult or impossible to perform on the classical guitar. In contrast, many others can be performed successfully.

As previously stated, it is characteristic of the era for the performers to incorporate their own embellishments. Guidance should be sought in historical treatises (e.g. C.Ph.E. Bach – *O prawdziwej sztuce gry na instrumentach klawiszowych*, Leopold Mozart – *Gruntowna szkoła skrzypcowa*²⁹, J.J. Quanz – *O zasadach gry na flecie poprzecznym*, Daniel Gottlob Türk – *Klavierschule, oder Anweisung zum Klavierspielen für Lehrer und Lernende, mit kritischen Anmerkungen*³⁰, Francesco Gasparini – *The Practical Harmonist at the Harpsichord*³¹ i in.) and schools for the English guitar (e.g. R. Bremner – *Instructions For The Guitar*, Giovanni Battista Marella – *Sixty-six Lessons for the Cetra or Guittar, in every key, both flat and sharp*³², J. Oswald – *A Compleat Tutor for the Guittar, with Two*

²⁹ L. Mozart, *Gruntowna szkoła skrzypcowa*, translated by K. Jerzewska, Stowarzyszenie Miłośników Kultury i Sztuki, Poznań 2007.

³⁰ D.G. Türk, *Klavierschule, oder Anweisung zum Klavierspielen für Lehrer und Lernende, mit kritischen Anmerkungen*, Hemmerde & Schwetschke, Leipzig – Halle 1789.

³¹ F. Gasparini, *The Practical Harmonist at the Harpsichord*, New Haven 1963.

³² G.B. Marella, *Sixty-six Lessons for the Cetra or Guittar, in every key, both flat and sharp*, London 1758.

*Scales shewing the Method of Playing in the keys of C and G*³³). They are also collected in contemporary sources, also in the form of studies on music performance on classical guitar (Nigel North – *Continuo Playing on the Lute, Archlute and Theorbo*³⁴, Jeffrey Copeland – *Ornamentation In Eighteenth-Century Guitar Music*³⁵, Robert Donington – *A performer's guide to baroque music*³⁶ and *The Interpretation of Early Music*³⁷, Peter Croton – *Performing Baroque Music on the Classical Guitar*³⁸, Mary Cyr – *Performing Baroque Music*³⁹, Przemysław Wiśniewski – *Ornamentacja w muzyce od XVI wieku do połowy XVIII stulecia*⁴⁰, Frederick Neumann – *Ornamentation in Baroque and Post-Baroque Music With Special Emphasis on J.S. Bach*⁴¹).

Based on the above sources, but also on one's own preferences or capabilities of the instrument, the following rules can be adopted: a richer ornamentation should be used in the slower movements, while in fast tempos short, single embellishments (such as mordents or short appoggiaturas) should be employed allowing the beat to be preserved; embellishments – on caesuras, fermatas, cadenzas, in transitions between movements/repetitions (in this case longer embellishments will sound better, e.g. scalar progressions); repetitions – after signs of repetition and in each successive demonstration of analogous sections, a different version of ornamentation can be proposed (e.g. diminutions, fragmenting the musical material and filling the melodic line/harmonic sections with notes of a scale or a chord).

2.6. Selecting the fingering with regard to technique and timbre

Due to the different tuning, the fingering on the modern guitar is different to that used on the historic instrument. It features fewer open strings, many options for fingering a single section, frequent position shifts, sometimes difficult, wide finger arrangements in the left hand or the need to use *barré*.

³³ J. Oswald, op. cit.

³⁴ N. North, *Continuo Playing on the Lute, Archlute and Theorbo*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington 1987.

³⁵ J. Copeland, *Ornamentation In Eighteenth-Century Guitar Music: An Examination Of Instruction Manuals From 1750–1800*, computer printout, doctoral thesis, supervisor: prof. F. Koonce, Arizona State University, Tempe 2012.

³⁶ R. Donington, *A performer's guide to baroque music*, Charles Scribner's Sons, London 1973.

³⁷ R. Donington, *The Interpretation of Early Music*, Faber & Faber, London 1963.

³⁸ P. Croton, *Performing Baroque Music on the Classical Guitar: a practical handbook based on historical sources*, CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, Scotts Valley 2015.

³⁹ M. Cyr, *Performing Baroque Music*, Routledge, London – New York 2011.

⁴⁰ P. Wiśniewski, *Ornamentacja w muzyce od XVI wieku do połowy XVIII stulecia*, 'Notes Muzyczny' 2015, no. 2(4), pp. 33–58.

⁴¹ F. Neumann, *Ornamentation in Baroque and Post-Baroque Music With Special Emphasis on J.S. Bach*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1983.

In order to preserve the character, texture or timbre of the pieces, while achieving the best possible tone, it is recommended that two main aspects guide the choice of fingering when solving performance problems: technique and timbre, with the idiom of the English guitar being taken into account wherever possible.

From a technical perspective, it is recommended to employ a fingering that facilitates the most efficient and comfortable finger arrangements. In certain circumstances, slight deviations from the sheet music may be required. This includes the alteration of the order of the middle chord components, a modification which permits technically simpler arrangements and also often seamless connections with adjacent notes/chords. As previously outlined, the integration of *legato* technique into musical arrangements is advantageous, particularly in sections where it serves to accentuate pivotal notes, accents, or natural supports within bars and rhythmic groupings. It is also not necessary to finger everything at all costs in low positions with open strings. On the classical guitar, particularly in the key of C major, it is frequently observed that utilising high positions or *barré* techniques can yield superior results in both technical and tonal aspects.

2.7. Deviations in texture with preservation of melodic line and harmony

Given the unfeasibility of reproducing the texture precisely on a contemporary instrument, it is imperative to allow for some deviation from the original score while ensuring the melodic line and harmony remain unaltered.

As shown by the note examples cited in Part 1, under *Contemporary performance...*, sometimes the best compromise is to simplify the texture, including omitting notes in the lower voice, such as in the progression in thirds or the ornamentation idiomatic to the *guitar*. In other instances, the texture can be enhanced with the intention of accentuating the character of the music or achieving greater timbral consistency. In certain instances, it is possible to preserve texture or colour over an extended section, however, this is often accompanied by more challenging finger arrangements.

2.8. Comfort of performance

The technical aspect is discussed in great detail, including considerations of performance comfort, in the section entitled *Selecting the fingering...* However, comfort of playing is of such significance that it must be emphasised as one of the fundamental components of the transcription system under discussion. This is because its role in determining tone, fingering, texture, embellishments, and its capacity to convey the character and expression of the music or the composer's intentions. Furthermore, it is closely related to the selection of appropriate means and techniques specific to the modern instrument.

At this juncture, it is imperative to underscore that the aforementioned principles do not exist in isolation, but are interconnected and interdependent.

Conclusion

The corpus of works dedicated to the English guitar is very rich. These were composed with both professional performers and amateurs in mind. It encompasses solo and chamber pieces, both secular and religious, vocal and instrumental works such as songs, cantatas, as well as instrumental pieces comprising sonatas, variations, dances, duos, trios, quartets, and arrangements of sections of operas and well-known works. In addition, it features music composed for larger ensembles⁴². The *guittar* was used by composers such as: Johann Christian Bach (1735–1782), T. Giordani, Rudolf Straube (1717–1785), Francesco Geminiani (1687–1762), G.B. Marella (ca. 1745–ca. 1778) or J. Oswald. It is also important to mention the Polish works⁴³ for ‘gittara/gittarra’ (mostly with open G tuning). These include variations, miniatures, arrangements of operas and even a school of playing, from manuscripts found in the archives of the Jagiellonian Library and the Diocesan Library in Sandomierz⁴⁴, as well as *Dodatki na gitarę angielską* [Supplements for the English guitar] to the monthly magazine ‘Wybór Pięknych Dzieł Muzycznych i Pieśni Polskich’ [Beautiful Polish Musical Works and Songs], published by Józef Elsner⁴⁵.

The author of this work is optimistic that the transcription system presented will motivate contemporary performers to explore the repertoire composed for the English guitar (*guittar*), and will facilitate the transcription of these works, incorporating the aforementioned aspects, thereby contributing to the expansion of the concert, academic and educational repertoire.

⁴² See M. Włodarczyk, *Bach i co dalej? Rzecz o zapomnianej literaturze gitarowej II połowy XVIII wieku i o gitarze angielskiej*, ‘MusiQs’ 2018, vol. 6, p. 3; M. Żegleń-Włodarczyk, *Gitara angielska i zapomniany repertuar gitarowy II połowy XVIII wieku*, ‘Edukacja Muzyczna’ 2022, no. 17, pp. 121–138, [DOI: 10.16926/em.2022.17.09]; idem, *Sonaty solowe na gitarę angielską Tommasa Giordaniego jako przykład literatury gitarowej II połowy XVIII wieku*, ‘Edukacja Muzyczna’ 2023, vol. 18, pp. 191–224, [DOI: 10.16926/em.2023.18.04]; J. Kloss, *Music For The Guittar Published In Britain 1756–1763*, [in:] *The „Guittar” In Britain 1753–1800*, source: <http://www.justanothertune.com> [access: 23.06. 2024].

⁴³ Here, the dominant key is G major which is characteristic of the Polish variety of the *guittar*, also known as *gittara* or *gittarra*. When transcribing, it is therefore necessary to modify the classical guitar’s tuning in order to achieve a G major chord that is as finely tuned as possible, especially in the 3rd and 7th positions.

⁴⁴ See W. Gurgul, *Gitara angielska w polskiej kulturze muzycznej przełomu XVIII i XIX wieku*, ‘Muzyka’ 2022, no. 67(1), pp. 65–95, [DOI: 10.36744/m.1147].

⁴⁵ *Dodatki na gitarę angielską* appeared in issues 1, 3, 5 and 11 of the monthly magazine ‘Wybór Pięknych Dzieł Muzycznych i Pieśni Polskich’ 1805. The pieces comprise those for *gittara* solo or with voice.

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Autorski system transkrypcji na gitarę klasyczną literatury skomponowanej na gitarę angielską (*guitar*)

Streszczenie

Niniejsza praca ma na celu przedstawienie nowego, autorskiego systemu transkrypcji na gitarę klasyczną twórczości pierwotnie skomponowanej na gitarę angielską (*guitar*). Instrument ten, dziś zapomniany, cieszył się popularnością na rynku europejskim i w koloniach brytyjskich głównie w II połowie XVIII wieku. Powstała na niego bogata, odznaczająca się znaczną wartością artystyczną i dydaktyczną, literatura muzyczna, która dotychczas w dużej mierze nie została zbadana. Brakuje również jej obecności w programach koncertowych i edukacyjnych. Sięgając po nią, uzyskamy wgląd w ów, niezwykle istotny w swoich czasach, instrument oraz wypełnimy lukę w repertuarze gitarowym, zapewniając jego historyczną ciągłość od renesansu do chwili obecnej.

Różnice w konstrukcji i stroju między instrumentem historycznym a współczesnym niosą ze sobą konkretne problemy wykonawcze. Dotyczą one choćby odwzorowania aplikatury (palcowania) czy zachowania faktury, co rodzi potrzebę stworzenia przekładu dedykowanego gitarze klasycznej. System transkrypcji opracowany przez autorkę artykułu opiera się na wykorzystaniu możliwości dzisiejszej gitary, ale z uwzględnieniem cech wspólnych obu instrumentów, idiomu *guitar*, założeń estetycznych epoki, jak najlepszego brzmienia czy komfortu wykonania.

Słowa kluczowe: gitara angielska, *guitar*, repertuar gitarowy II połowy XVIII wieku, transkrypcja.